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Lest We Forget: Ladies' Memorial Associations in Georgia and the Creation of the Lost Cause

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LEST WE FORGET: LADIES' MEMORIAL ASSOCIATIONS IN GEORGIA AND
THE CREATION OF THE LOST CAUSE

by

LINDSAY ANN HINNANT

Under the Direction of Wendy Hamand Venet, PhD

ABSTRACT

Ladies' Memorial Associations (LMAs) initially formed after the Civil War in order to provide proper burials for dead Confederate soldiers. Women in LMAs raised funds to beautify cemeteries and erect monuments. However, their work was hardly limited to caring for the dead as the actions of the LMAs can be considered the beginnings of the Lost Cause. Even if the LMAs did not necessarily realize it or intend it, their work was visibly political and had far-reaching implications, especially for a subsequent women's group, the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC). Until now, little research has been conducted on the LMA chapters in Georgia. This work brings Southern women of the post-Civil War era back into the historical narrative and demonstrates their involvement in the creation of the Lost Cause.

INDEX WORDS: Ladies' Memorial Associations, United Daughters of the Confederacy, Civil War, Lost Cause, cemeteries, monuments

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Georgia State University

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Lindsay Ann Hinnant
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THE CREATION OF THE LOST CAUSE

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DEDICATION

For my parents – thanks for always encouraging me to follow my dreams

Also, for Max kitty – thanks for the joy you brought to my writing and always being willing to
keep my lap warm

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There are several people throughout my academic career who have helped me reach this point. Firstly, I want to thank my parents, who encouraged me to follow my passions and provided me with their constant support.

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1 INTRODUCTION: WHO ARE THE LADIES?

“Lest We Forget” is a common motto of military remembrance activities. This phrase invokes a sense of nostalgia, commemoration, and oftentimes pride towards those who have served in the military and especially for those who lost their lives in the line of duty. However, “Lest We Forget,” takes on a different connotation when used in reference to fallen soldiers of the Confederate States of America during the American Civil War. When used in this manner, the present day, “Lest We Forget” invokes images of the slave South and the Lost Cause. Those defeated in war frequently experience difficulty in rationalizing and accepting their loss. The former Confederate states were no exception to this generalization, as commemoration work in the South began before the Civil War started in April of 1861.

The Civil War is touted as the deadliest time in the history of the United States. The estimated death toll from this brief four-year war is over 620,000 people. This daunting number resulted from changing military equipment, the convenience of the railroad, and the expanding industry that extended the length of the war and in turn prolonged the wartime killing. Ironically, however, more Civil War soldiers died from disease than combat related wounds.¹

One of the most distressing aspects of war to a Civil War soldier was the prospect that he would most likely die away from home and not receive a proper burial. The burial rituals following a battle were crude at best, sometimes just consisting of shallow, unmarked graves adjacent to the battlefields. Over 40% of Confederate soldiers died without any form of grave identification. This idea provided a great source of mourning for women in the former

¹ Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), xi, 4.

Confederate states of the American South. Given that there was no official or governmental concern for the Confederate dead, Southern women took up the cause.²

The women of the Ladies' Memorial Associations (LMAs or Ladies) spearheaded this work of remembrance. Interestingly, given their dedication to the memory of Confederate soldiers – the women of the LMAs are generally not remembered. It is paradoxical that “Lest We Forget” did not seem to apply to the actual women doing the remembrance work in the post- Civil War era.

LMA who members worked tirelessly to rebury soldiers, conduct Memorial Day ceremonies, and erect monuments following the war – “Lest We Forget” – are forgotten or are incorrectly remembered as women of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), not just by the general public but even by historians. For example, in her book, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*, Karen L. Cox provides a photograph of the Confederate monument in Augusta, Georgia. The caption accompanying the photograph states: “The most common Confederate monuments built by the UDC are those that appear in town squares, like this one in Augusta, Georgia.”³ It would have been impossible for the UDC to build this monument given that the monument itself bears the inscription “Erected A.D. 1878 by the Ladies Memorial Association of Augusta” and that the UDC was not even founded until 1894.⁴ This means the monument was in place sixteen years before the UDC even existed and yet the LMAs are not given the proper credit for their work. While it is possible that this was just an oversight on Cox's part, it is quite telling to have such an error happen when the inscription on the monument so plainly proves otherwise.

² Ibid., 9, 62-63, 102, 148-151, 237.

³ Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 50.

⁴ Ibid., 2.

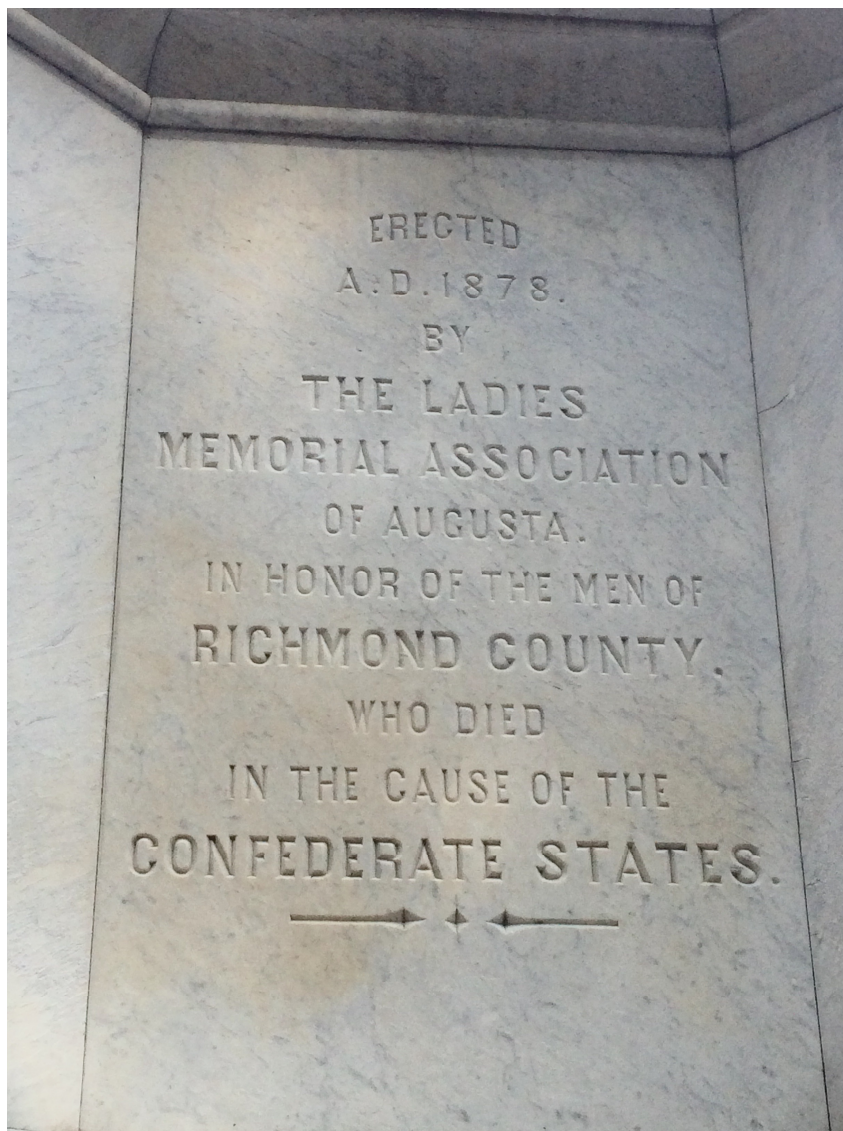


Figure 1: Engraving on Monument in Augusta
(Photo courtesy of author.)

Currently, Caroline Janney's *Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* is the only scholarly published book on the subject of LMAs. She writes, "the LMAs' primary objective was to honor the sacrifices and lives of those Confederate men who had fallen in battle."⁵ The LMAs organized locally and in many cases

⁵ Caroline Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 8.

began their work before the war even ended. Most often, these groups sprang from the Soldier's Aid Societies, sewing groups, and hospital groups that had been active during the war.⁶ The work of the LMAs was oftentimes both necessary and practical. As LeeAnn Whites argues, "the immediate physical problems of the Confederate dead went far beyond simply tending the graves of those men who had died unknown or unclaimed by their kindred during the war...the poor condition of war cemeteries everywhere begged for attention."⁷

Janney's work, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, while extremely valuable to expanding knowledge of the LMAs and their impact, only discusses chapters in Virginia even though there were chapters in other states such as Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Mississippi, and Alabama. According to Janney, "Virginia offers the most fruitful study because of its prominence during the years of the Confederacy and its significance as a bastion of Lost Cause rhetoric and figures."⁸

This study, conversely, will focus on several LMA chapters in Georgia in order to test Janney's conclusions in other state. It should be noted that Georgians fought in almost every battle of the Civil War, and gave approximately 112,000 soldiers to the Confederacy by the end of the war. This demonstrates that Georgia and its inhabitants, both soldier and civilian, male and female, did have a great effect on the war and the events after the war. Virginia was not the only

⁶ Ibid., 16-21.

⁷ LeeAnn Whites, "'Stand by Your Man': The Ladies Memorial Association and the Reconstruction of Southern White Manhood." In *Gender Matters: Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Making of the New South* by LeeAnn Whites (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 88.

⁸ Janney. *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 8.

state of influence. In fact, only Virginia ranks higher than Georgia in the number of soldiers offered to the Confederate cause.⁹

This study will expand the narrative of the Georgia LMAs by making them the main focus of investigation, instead of the cursory examination they have previously been given. Seventeen different Ladies Memorial Associations from Georgia eventually joined the Confederated Southern Memorial Association (CSMA) by 1904. These include the cities of Albany, Americus, Atlanta, Athens, Augusta, Brunswick, Columbus, Madison, Marietta, Resaca, Rome, Sandersville, Savannah, Sparta, Thomson, Washington, and Waynesboro. While some cities obviously had larger and more active groups than others, it is interesting to note that at one point, Georgia had more active LMA groups than Virginia.¹⁰ Virginia is not the only state with prominent LMA groups. This study will also consider the process by which the LMAs lost ground to a new group, the UDC.

In terms of sources, this study tries to reveal the thoughts and actions of six LMA chapters in the state of Georgia by examining chapter records (such as meeting minutes, written correspondence, and charters) and newspapers, along with a physical study of the actual monuments erected by these groups and comparing them to the information provided in *History of the Confederated Memorial Associations of the South*. Additionally, the UDC chapter records from each of these cities, where available, will be utilized as a chronological comparison. It should be noted that the chapter records within each archive are very subjective and some larger cities, such as Atlanta and Augusta, had much more material than the smaller cities, such as Macon and Columbus. Regardless of the extensiveness of their collection, these LMA chapter

⁹ Barry L. Brown and Gordon R. Elwell, *Crossroads of Conflict: A Guide to Civil War Sites in Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010), xix, xiii.

¹⁰ Confederated Southern Memorial Association. *History of the Confederated Memorial Associations of the South* (New Orleans: The Graham Press, 1904), table of contents.

records provide a much-needed glimpse into how white, Southern, middle and upper class women used the resources available to them to shape the South after the Civil War. This study will situate the women of Georgia into the historiography of the post-Civil War era and demonstrate both the strengths and limitations of these women in creating the Lost Cause along with the political gains they made for themselves and later women's groups.

Specifically, this work will examine the LMA chapters in Atlanta, Athens, Augusta, Columbus, Macon, and Savannah due to the availability of chapter records and the fact that these are fairly large cities that played an active role in the war effort. Given that most LMA groups were eventually incorporated into local UDC groups in the early part of the twentieth century, LMA chapter records can be challenging to find. LMA chapter records are often confused for UDC chapter records. Luckily, some of the Atlanta, Athens, Augusta, Columbus, Macon, and Savannah chapter records still exist. Before beginning an in depth look at the chapter records, however, it is beneficial to know what these cities were like at the time of the Civil War and the role they played in the war effort. Additionally, it is helpful to know what the chapters were writing about themselves in the *History of the Confederate Memorial Associations of the South* in the years after the war.¹¹

¹¹ To provide some background on the LMA Georgia chapters, a brief summary of each LMA chapter is provided. These summaries come from the *History of the Confederate Memorial Associations of the South* published in 1904. While helpful in giving a general sense of what each chapter was like and who the members were, any information from the *History of the Confederate Memorial Associations of the South* should be viewed with skepticism. Given that this book was published while many LMA chapters were still active and the specific chapters personally submitted the profiles for publication, the information contained within *History of the Confederate Memorial Associations of the South* could be biased and/or factually inaccurate. The profiles were written in such a way as to make each chapter seem as prestigious and productive as possible. Aside from the introduction, the *History of the Confederate Memorial Associations of the South* will solely be used for cross-reference due to its biased nature.

To begin with, Atlanta, incorporated in 1848, served as a major transportation hub in Georgia and the endpoint of the Western and Atlantic Railroad. When Georgia seceded from the Union in January of 1861, Atlanta had a population of about 10,000. Due to Atlanta's railroad connections, it was a crucial center for manufacturing war materials in addition to housing several large hospitals. By 1863, Atlanta was well fortified but by July of 1864, Major General William T. Sherman reached the city with the assigned goal to force the surrender of Atlanta while also destroying the Confederate Army of Tennessee. After the destruction of the railroad and heavy bombardment, Atlanta surrendered on September 2, 1864, compelling the Confederate army to go on the offensive. It was also a political victory for President Abraham Lincoln, which led to his re-election to a second term.¹² Atlanta now serves as the capital of Georgia.

After the war, Eugenia Hamilton Goode Morgan founded the Atlanta Ladies' Memorial Association in April of 1866. Morgan previously served as Secretary of the Atlanta Hospital Association, reiterating Atlanta's importance as a hospital center. Morgan joined forces with Caroline Maria Clayton, Mrs. John Simmons, and friends to raise \$350 in order to begin work in Oakland Cemetery. The ladies worked in clearing some of the graves of dead Confederates and wove wreaths and crosses from cedar harvested from Stone Mountain. Additionally, they petitioned for local businesses to close in observance of Memorial Day on April 26th. Thus Atlanta observed its first Confederate Memorial Day just one year after the war ended.¹³ The Atlanta chapter profile continues by describing subsequent Memorial Days organized by the LMA and how the celebrations grew in elaborateness. Biases show through, however, when Inez Sledge, the author of the profile, states,

¹² Brown and Elwell, *Crossroads of Conflict*, 77-78.

¹³ Inez Sledge, Ladies' Memorial Association, Atlanta, Georgia, *History of the Confederate Memorial Associations of the South*, 88-90.

“it must be remembered that Atlanta was burned to the ground in 1864 by General Sherman, and her impoverished citizens found it difficult to get lumber to rebuild their homes. The ladies of the Memorial Association were compelled to have lumber to make boxes to bury the dead. Mrs. Johnson went to Stone Mountain, where she heard some lumber could be bought. She superintended the making of the boxes, until the three thousand unknown patriots were given a Christian burial.”¹⁴

The rest of the chapter profile is a rather sterile account of member activities, Memorial Day speakers and happenings, and the building of two monuments in the cemetery. Sledge does make an effort to note that the Atlanta LMA was reorganized on October 16, 1884 and given an official charter.¹⁵

Located about seventy miles from Atlanta, Athens is home to the University of Georgia (established 1785) and is renowned for its antebellum architecture. During the war, Athens had a home guard that saw combat at the Battle of Barber’s Creek in August of 1864. Unlike Atlanta, Athens had a much more modest role in the war effort, as it was not a transportation hub. Athens, however, was home to many Confederate leaders such as Howell Cobb, Joseph Henry Lumpkin, and Thomas R. R. Cobb. Additionally, by 1862, the Cook and Brother Confederate Armory was in Athens.¹⁶

Similar to Atlanta, the Athens LMA was founded by a woman who was already involved in the war effort. In this case, the Athens LMA grew out of the Ladies’ Aid Society. Laura Cobb Rutherford served as the first president and she made it her mission to erect a monument to the Confederate dead from Athens. Using language similar to Sledge’s Atlanta profile, Rosa Woodberry, the author of the Athens profile states, “finally, after years of struggle and

¹⁴ Sledge, *History of the Confederated Memorial Associations of the South*, 92.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 96.

¹⁶ Brown and Elwell, *Crossroads of Conflict*, 132-136.

remarkable industry and patience, the noble monument, telling its eloquent story, pointed its snowy, enduring column to the sky.”¹⁷

Situated on the Savannah River, about 130 miles east of Atlanta, Augusta was another industrial city that was a major transportation hub. Augusta boasted the Confederate Powder Works, the Augusta Arsenal, and the Leech and Rigdon Revolver Factory as well as many as five hospital facilities. Augusta was vital to the Confederate effort in that its gunpowder works, built in 1862, produced approximately ninety-five percent of the Confederacy’s gunpowder.¹⁸ Over the course of four years, the Confederacy never ran out of gunpowder in any battles because of the constant supply from Augusta. Despite its importance to the Confederate army, the Union army under Sherman never passed through Augusta.¹⁹

The Augusta LMA, organized in 1868, arose from the Ladies’ Relief and Hospital Association. Their first project was beautifying the graves of 337 soldiers before turning to the task of erecting a monument. Interesting, the unknown author of the Augusta profile is sure to mention “even the colored people contributed to the funds [of building a monument] by two benefit performances of the ‘Cotton States Minstrels’ of Augusta...this evidence of interest and kind feeling was much appreciated.”²⁰ In an impressive feat, the Augusta LMA collected over \$17,000 in just three years and decided to have the monument carved from marble from Carrarra, Italy. The monument was unveiled in 1878. The Augusta profile ends with the Augusta LMA

¹⁷Rosa Woodberry, Ladies’ Memorial Association, Athens, Georgia, *History of the Confederated Memorial Associations of the South*, 106.

¹⁸ Brown and Elwell, *Crossroads of Conflict*, 161.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 161.

²⁰ Ladies’ Memorial Association, Augusta, Georgia, *History of the Confederated Memorial Associations of the South*, 107-108.

being absorbed into the UDC to ensure that future generations continued the work that was already started.²¹

Located in the center of the state, Columbus was also a major center of Southern manufacturing on the Chattahoochee River. In fact, the only place that produced more supplies for the Confederate army was Richmond, Virginia. Columbus had the use of the river and two railroads – one that ran west to Alabama and one that ran to northern Georgia. Columbus's claim to fame, however, came from its steel-rolling mill that produced materials necessary for building gunboats to secure the Chattahoochee River. Even though Columbus helped to produce the gunboats, there was never a significant naval battle in the area. Additionally, the war did not touch Columbus until 1865 when Confederate troops marched through the city to divert Sherman. By April 1865, Columbus fell to Union Brigadier General James H. Wilson.²²

As the case with Atlanta, Athens, and Augusta, the Columbus LMA grew out of the Soldiers' Aid Society. The Columbus profile uses religious language in regards to the creation of the LMA in that "after the Crucifixion of the Confederacy, in April, 1865, the Soldiers' Aid Society had no soldiers to aid... verily these Marys guard their dead... the Ladies' Memorial Association, like the Phoenix, rose from the ashes of the Soldiers' Aid Society, which was consumed in the fires that burnt the Confederacy."²³ The Columbus LMA organized in early 1866 with Mrs. Robert Carter serving as the first president with the immediate task of improving the cemetery.²⁴ It was Mary Williams of Columbus who was the most vocal in designating April

²¹ Ibid., 109-110, 113.

²² Brown and Elwell, *Crossroads of Conflict*, 121.

²³ Sallie Marshall-Martin Harrison and Anna Caroline Benning, Ladies' Memorial Association, Columbus, Georgia, *History of the Confederate Memorial Associations of the South*, 123.

²⁴ Ibid., 124.

26th as Confederate Memorial Day. By 1881, the Columbus chapter completed their monument at a cost of \$5,000.²⁵

Macon, about eighty miles south of Atlanta, was considered the most significant transportation center in central Georgia. Macon was also home to the Confederate States Arsenal, which produced ammunition, cannons, and small arms as well as housing a small-arms repair facility. Camp Oglethorpe, a prisoner-of-war camp for Union officers, was also in Macon. For the most part, Macon was untouched during the Civil War, even though it served as a hospital center like Atlanta and Augusta. Macon first saw combat on July 30, 1864 when Major General George Stoneman attempted to take the city, but Confederate Major General Howell Cobb along with General Joseph E. Johnston, the Georgia militia, home guard, and six hundred Tennessee Confederates were able to deter Stoneman. Macon saw battle once again in November 1864 during Sherman's March to the Sea. This skirmish, between Federal Brigadier General Judson Kilpatrick and Confederate Major General Joseph Wheeler, is known as the Battle of Walnut Creek.²⁶

Savannah, Georgia's first city, founded in 1733, served as the terminus of Sherman's March to the Sea in December 1864. As a port city, Savannah was well defended and was not touched by the war until Sherman, with a force of sixty-two thousand, entrenched themselves west of the city and began a bombardment with siege guns. On December 20th, all Confederate soldiers vacated the city, allowing Brigadier General John W. Geary to walk into Savannah

²⁵ Harrison and Benning, *History of the Confederated Memorial Associations of the South*, 124-125, 130.

²⁶ Brown and Elwell, *Crossroads of Conflict*, 142-143.

without impediments on the 21st. A day later, Savannah surrendered to Sherman and much of the city was spared from destruction.²⁷

Although the Atlanta, Athens, Augusta, and Columbus chapters provided profiles in *History of the Confederated Memorial Associations of the South*, Macon did not. Additionally, the Savannah profile lists the inscriptions on the monuments in Savannah. There is no way to know why the Macon and Savannah profiles in this published compilation are so lacking or whether Macon even participated in the Confederated Southern Memorial Association activities.

Based on a cursory examination of the featured Georgia cities and their LMA chapters, it is evident that the women in Georgia were continuing their involvement with the war effort even after the battles had ended under the façade of mourning. Faust links the public and private aspects of mourning and memorialization in the South during the Civil War in that “to respectfully bury one’s neighbors and kin was a personal and private act; to honor those who had risen up in rebellion against the national government was unavoidably public and political.”²⁸ Janney continues this trend with her argument that women’s mourning activities in the immediate post-war period need to be reconsidered as a “political response” to Reconstruction, in order to revise the historiography of the Lost Cause even if that was not the original intention of these groups.²⁹

It is important to realize that political participation, with regards to the LMAs, does not necessarily translate to suffrage and direct involvement in political parties. Janney explains that Confederate women were involved in the war effort by petitioning the government, offering criticism of political and military leaders, and providing supplies to the army. These white

²⁷ Ibid., 191-192.

²⁸ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 242.

²⁹ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 3.

women continued to be involved after the war ended as well. Following the trend established by Janney, politics with regards to the LMAs refers to “the ability of individuals or groups to wield influence in their communities, state, or region.”³⁰ In this sense, women of the LMAs could be political without overtly appearing so. They could continue “political involvement” even though the war was over by using their words and actions to influence Reconstruction efforts and craft the Lost Cause in the South.

The LMAs were so successful, in part, because white men assumed women were outside of the political sphere.³¹ Whites even states that “the [LMA] problem was how to provide a means for the reconstruction of their men’s self-image without reconstructing themselves in the process – or at least without appearing to do so.”³² In fact, men oftentimes supported the LMAs financially and in kind because “men certainly found a valuable political reason for supporting women’s efforts that allowed all former Confederates to honor their past.”³³ In kind contributions included things such as making speeches and consulting with contractors on behalf of the Ladies.³⁴ By keeping the men involved with certain tasks and strategically deferring to them when needed, the women could advance their own agendas without placing too much attention on themselves.

It is imperative to remember, however, that white women were civically involved during the antebellum period but much of this influence was lost to Union soldiers and freed people after the war. Antoinette G. Van Zelm, a historian who focuses on women’s organizations in the

³⁰ Ibid., 6, 5.

³¹ Ibid., 6.

³² Whites, “‘Stand by Your Man’: The Ladies Memorial Association and the Reconstruction of Southern White Manhood,” 90.

³³ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 7.

³⁴ Whites, “‘Stand by Your Man’: The Ladies Memorial Association and the Reconstruction of Southern White Manhood,” 90.

nineteenth century, argues “through their activity in honor of the Confederate dead, female Lost Cause adherents sought to reclaim the civic arena” they lost.³⁵ This notion puts a new angle on the goals of the LMAs – not only were they attempting to honor the dead while being more politically active, they were trying to gain back some of the political influence that was taken from them.

That political influence, however, did not go unnoticed while it was happening. From 1865 to 1915, white southerners often acknowledged and praised the essential role the LMAs played in creating the traditions that honored former Confederates and increased white southern solidarity, which is a contrast to today’s assumptions.³⁶ The LMA name frequently appeared in newspapers advertising for fundraisers and upcoming Memorial Day activities in addition to being listed directly on the Confederate monuments they built. White, upper class citizens, both male and female, within Georgia no doubt personally knew someone who was a member of an LMA. This demonstrates that collective forgetting and misremembering did not happen until the twentieth century after the objectives and membership characteristics of the LMAs started to shift and the UDC gained prominence.

By the 1880s, when most of the cemetery and reburial work was completed, a new cohort of women joined the LMAs and the nature of the organization began to change. These new members experienced the war as young women and they represented the “New South.”³⁷ Additionally, at this time, there was a renewed “interest in soldier’s pensions, the death of

³⁵ Antoinette G. Van Zelm, “Virginia Women as Public Citizens: Emancipation Day Celebrations and Lost Cause Commemorations, 1863-1890.” In *Negotiating Boundaries of Southern Womanhood: Dealing with the Powers That Be*, edited by Janet L. Coryell, Thomas H. Appleton, Jr., Anastatia Sims, and Sandra Gioia Treadway (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 81.

³⁶ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 2.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 135-138.

Jefferson Davis, the beginnings of industrialization, integration into the national economy and mass culture, gender anxieties, and racial tensions [that] all contributed to the development of a regional celebration that honored white southerners' self-sacrifice and honor."³⁸ Unfortunately, these fractures and changes in membership allowed for the rival UDC to gain prominence as the goals and objectives of the LMAs were altered.

It should be noted that the LMAs recognized their declining status and made efforts to rebuild the reputation of their group by various means and compete with the UDC. For example, in 1900, Julia A. Garside of the Southern Memorial Association of Fayetteville, Arkansas requested for all LMAs to join forces to create the Confederated Southern Memorial Association (CSMA). "Emblematic of their mission to sear the memory of the Confederacy into every southern heart, [the delegates of the CSMA] selected as their motto 'Lest We Forget,'" again demonstrating the irony between the goals of the LMAs and their eventual fate.³⁹ Even though the LMAs adopted "Lest We Forget" as their official slogan, these women are still largely forgotten.

Ultimately, the LMAs throughout the South were overtaken and eclipsed by the UDC, a well-organized and national group made up of a younger cohort of women. The UDC organized nearly three decades after the LMAs and they did not focus solely on burial and memorial work. According to Cox, the UDC altered the Lost Cause by making it a program of justification and not just memorialization and commemoration.⁴⁰ The UDC was more concerned about rewriting the Civil War and Confederate history rather than just remembering it. Additionally, since the UDC was a national versus community-based group that continued well into twenty-first

³⁸ Ibid., 138-139.

³⁹ Ibid., 178 -179.

⁴⁰ Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 1.

century, it has received more attention from scholars and the media.⁴¹ As a result, the contributions of the LMAs to the history of the South, the Civil War, and the creation of the Lost Cause were by and large forgotten or erased as the UDC gained national presence in the later years.

The women of the LMAs, however, achieved much more than cemetery work and being a start-up group for the UDC, even if they are not immediately remembered for it. According to Faust, whose research focuses on death in the Civil War, these groups had an additional purpose in that “southern civilians, largely women, mobilized private means to accomplish what federal resources would not...their efforts to claim and honor the Confederate dead – and the organizations they spawned – became a means of keeping sectional identity and energy not just alive but strong.”⁴² Whether knowingly or inadvertently, the LMAs helped to create a vision of the former Confederacy that would endure for decades, along with creating opportunities for women to be more politically involved. This would become the most important and controversial contribution of the LMAs – their efforts in creating the beginnings of the “Lost Cause” of the South in the post-war period, as Faust suggests. LMAs are most often considered inconsequential to the development of the Lost Cause and are on the whole discounted.⁴³ It is now time to put these ladies from all over the South back into the historical narrative. Even though their work has been overlooked, it is not insignificant, especially with regards to the active creation of a collective, and often contested, memory of the Civil War in the South.

As mentioned by Janney, historians such as David Blight and W. Fitzhugh Brundage “have demonstrated the ways in which northerners and southerners, white and black, participants

⁴¹ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 3.

⁴² Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 238.

⁴³ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 2.

and civilians, interpreted Civil War memory through veterans' reunions, memorial celebrations, and the construction of monuments."⁴⁴ LMAs put themselves at the center of this creation of this contested Civil War memory.

Blight, in his seminal work entitled *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, maintains that Memorial Day after the Civil War evolved from strife between three different, and sometimes intersecting groups: blacks and their former white abolitionist allies, white Northerners, and white Southerners. Oftentimes, the white Southern vision was based in a resistance to reconciliation and Reconstruction efforts, whether overtly or covertly. It was, however, definitely women who were primarily responsible for the organization of Memorial Day activities, such as gathering flowers and coordinating people for cemetery work.⁴⁵

Brundage, in *The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory*, argues that elite white women were in a particularly good position to influence collective memory because few other groups were able to organize and disperse "memories" to the degree as women, especially the LMAs and later the UDC. Brundage continues his argument by showing how even though women were not allowed to vote for over fifty years after the war ended, they had political influence in that "the collective memory promoted by white women came to be viewed as authoritative tradition, it became an instrument of power."⁴⁶ The white Southern women were using their position in society to their advantage, without appearing to overstep boundaries.

Before discussing the exact nature of the LMA contributions to the creation of the Lost Cause, it is important to first understand what it is. The Lost Cause and the involvement of

⁴⁴ Ibid., 4.

⁴⁵ David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2001), 65, 71.

⁴⁶ W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2005), 15.

ladies concerning the Civil War has several interacting components. For one, according to Gary Gallagher, the Lost Cause “myth” was generally considered a form of Southern advocacy in order to rationalize the Civil War.⁴⁷ Furthermore, supporters of the myth claimed that slavery was not the central contentious issue between the North and the South, abolitionists provoked the start of the war, slavery in the South would have eventually ended on its own, slaves were actually happy with their captive condition, and there were just too many cultural differences between the North and the South. The Lost Cause myth also idealized the home front and the Confederate soldier while stressing the lawfulness of secession.⁴⁸ In short, the Lost Cause attempted to take all blame away from the South for the sectional conflict.

Additionally, the Lost Cause linked both religion and history to have an even more lasting impact. In this sense, the Lost Cause became somewhat of a Southern “civil religion” with the elements of a formal religion, including mythology, symbolism, theology, values, and institutions, which monuments and Memorial Day activities could reinforce.⁴⁹ Given the fact that the Lost Cause was linked to religion made it even more acceptable and noble for women to be involved in its perpetuation.

Some historians, however, prefer not to use the terms “myth” or “civil religion” because they have contested definitions and they suggest that the Lost Cause served “as a permanent basis of social identity.”⁵⁰ Gaines M. Foster argues that it would be more appropriate to examine these issues through the lens of public history and discern exactly which organizations and rituals

⁴⁷ Gary W. Gallagher, “The Anatomy of the Myth.” In *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History*, edited by Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 14.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

⁴⁹ Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1980), 14.

⁵⁰ Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, The Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 7-8.

were supporting the Lost Cause.⁵¹ It would be incorrect to say that all Southerners and certainly black Southerners accepted the Lost Cause as the basis of their social identity. Examining the issue through the lens of public history, however, fits well with the LMAs because they oftentimes displayed their work publicly, as with the case of monuments. It is clear from the varying definitions that the shaping of memory of the Civil War and perpetuation of the Lost Cause was and continues to be a contested issue.

One thing that is clear is the perpetuation of the Lost Cause was especially aided by the work of the LMAs because these organizations “were clearly dedicated to the reconstruction of southern white men...[and] the Ladies Memorial Associations had by far the largest membership of an women’s organizations in the South, certainly through the 1870s and perhaps into the 1880s.”⁵² In a way, the LMAs explained and dealt with Reconstruction issues in a gender-conservative manner in order to valorize the Confederates involved in the Civil War, as argued by Whites.⁵³ This type of work was considered proper for ladies as mentioned by Faust and Fitzhugh Brundage.

It should be noted that there are opposing arguments to those of Whites and Faust who suggest that Southern women reverted back to their antebellum roles when the war was over and only worked to restore men to power instead of purposefully increasing their political involvement. Stephanie McCurry, whose research focuses on yeoman women, argues that the defeat of the Confederate nation forced a reckoning with the political desires, not just of white male voters originally involved in the creation of the Confederacy, but of unfranchised white

⁵¹ Ibid., 5.

⁵² Whites, “‘Stand by Your Man’: The Ladies Memorial Association and the Reconstruction of Southern White Manhood.” 86-87.

⁵³ Ibid., 90.

women and slaves.⁵⁴ Interestingly, in an earlier text, Faust argues that Southern white women following the war were not content with their helpless pre-war status and “the actions of white women in a wide range of postwar arenas and their frequent appearances in the public spheres of work and reform can perhaps be best understood as a determination never to be entirely helpless or dependent again.”⁵⁵ Women were no longer content with their antebellum status and apparently actively worked to change that status while simultaneously working within and maintaining the Lost Cause. These conflicting views demonstrate the ongoing debate concerning women’s roles post-war.

In addition to helping create the Lost Cause after the Civil War and paving the way for more female political involvement, the LMAs are also responsible for paving the way for the women’s club movement in the former Confederate states and throughout the nation. The LMAs demonstrated how women could organize, whether that be for political reasons, commemoration reasons, or fundraising reasons to reach a goal especially as the nineteenth century gave rise to Progressivism and other women’s organizations, like the UDC. As Rebecca Montgomery has pointed out, “many women involved in historical work and social reform regarded themselves as the tenuous thread that connected past, present, and future, bringing order out of chaos” and that is exactly what the LMAs tried to do within the South they knew.⁵⁶

Women’s group work, however, was not limited to the South. In her second work, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation*, Janney truly puts women

⁵⁴ Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 359.

⁵⁵ Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 251.

⁵⁶ Rebecca Montgomery, “Lost Cause Mythology in New South Reform.” In *Negotiating Boundaries of Southern Womanhood: Dealing with the Powers That Be*, edited by Janet L. Coryell, Thomas H. Appleton, Jr., Anastatia Sims, and Sandra Gioia Treadway (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 180-181.

and their club work back into the post-war narrative, showing comparisons between the North and the South. Women in the North with Union sympathies created war-related organizations as well. For example, the Woman's Relief Corp (WRC) was the most popular women's group having corps in every state, except Alabama, and it grew exponentially from about 10,000 members post-war to approximately 118,000 members by 1900.⁵⁷ Even though the WRC was generally made up of a more diverse group of women than the southern organizations, they could be as equally obstinate to reconciliation efforts.⁵⁸ It was the LMAs of the South, however, that set the precedent for memorialization work.

⁵⁷ Caroline E. Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 245.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 246.

2 EVOLUTION OF LADIES' MEMORIAL ASSOCIATIONS IN GEORGIA

More than a decade after the Civil War, on Confederate Memorial Day, 1876, women of the Augusta Ladies Memorial Association claimed “the custom of strewing flowers over the graves of these brave dead will never be discontinued or neglected in this land of ours.”⁵⁹ The Augusta LMA was still hard at work caring for the Confederate dead even though the war had been over for eleven years and they showed no sign of slowing down.

The work of the Ladies' Memorial Associations in Georgia began in earnest as soon as the Civil War ended. Each group was organized locally and focused on projects within their cities, at least in the immediate post-war era. It was not until the LMAs formed the Confederated Southern Memorial Association in 1900 that the groups collaborated on a grand scale. Within their local groups, however, several common trends can be found amongst the Atlanta, Athens, Augusta, Columbus, Macon, and Savannah LMAs. These trends include similar start-ups, monument building and design challenges, fundraising efforts, deference to men, and community perceptions. The striking commonalities amongst the independent LMA groups throughout Georgia demonstrate the passion these women had for their memorial work and the influence they had in the post-war era to organize and achieve their goals.

Like their counterparts in other states such as Virginia, the LMAs in Georgia generally formed from women's aid groups that were active during the Civil War and prior to it. Leadership came from prominent white women, most of them married, and involved in school and church organizations.⁶⁰ For example, the Augusta LMA president in the 1870s, Martha Carter, born in 1806, served as the head of her household. She had been married to a doctor and

⁵⁹ “Arrangements for the Celebration of Memorial Day,” *Augusta Chronicle*, April 9, 1876.

⁶⁰ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 16.

had \$10,000 in real estate along with \$1,000 in personal assets.⁶¹ Another Augusta LMA member was Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, who served as secretary of the Augusta LMA for a number of years. Thomas was born in 1834 to an elite family, educated at Wesleyan Female College in Macon, married a businessman, and then worked as a teacher.⁶² The Savannah LMA president beginning in the 1860s, Julia Williamson, born in 1822, was married to John, the city treasurer. He possessed \$20,000 in real estate along with \$10,000 in personal assets.⁶³ The founding Macon LMA president, Jane Hardeman, born in 1828, was married to Thomas, a merchant. Thomas Hardeman had \$3,000 in real estate and \$25,000 in personal assets.⁶⁴ Finally, the Atlanta LMA president in the 1890s, Fannie Milledge, born in 1845, was married to John, a lawyer who became a Confederate colonel.⁶⁵ Based on this small sample of Georgia LMA officers, women in their late thirties or older joined the LMAs, their husbands held skilled jobs, and there was a sizable amount of property and other assets within the household.

While the LMA groups did not outright make notes of excluding certain women, there was definitely a sense of selectiveness within the organizations. For one, the women in the groups needed to have enough free time to devote to the LMAs for meetings, fundraising, and grave decorations. In the years immediately after the war, the Georgia LMAs were kept occupied with the reorganization of cemeteries along with gathering the necessary materials and funds to

⁶¹ 1870; Census Place: *Augusta Ward 2, Richmond, Georgia*; Roll: *M593_172*; Page: *62A*; Image: *393*; Family History Library Film: *545671*, ancestry.com.

⁶² Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, *The Secret Eye: The Journal of Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, 1848-1889*, ed. Virginia Ingraham Burr (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 3-10.

⁶³ 1870; Census Place: *Savannah Division 21, Chatham, Georgia*; Roll: *M593_141*; Page: *187A*; Image: *694*; Family History Library Film: *545640*, ancestry.com.

⁶⁴ 1860; Census Place: *Vineville, Bibb, Georgia*; Roll: *M653_111*; Page: *566*; Image: *570*; Family History Library Film: *803111*, ancestry.com.

⁶⁵ 1880; Census Place: *Atlanta, Fulton, Georgia*; Roll: *148*; Family History Film: *1254148*; Page: *246B*; Enumeration District: *093*; Image: *0134*, ancestry.com.

complete their work. Only women of a certain status were afforded such “leisure” time after the war to devote to philanthropy work. Additionally, some of the Georgia LMA groups required membership dues or penalty fees for missed meetings. The Athens LMA declared in its bylaws “there shall be no admission fee to the association...we invite all to come ‘without money and without price’ and lay their grateful offerings,” but if an Athens LMA member missed a scheduled meeting, she would fined \$1 which was required to be paid promptly.⁶⁶ The Augusta and Savannah chapters had a different approach. The Savannah LMA decided in 1867 that each lady had to pay \$1 to become an annual member and it was not until 1918 that the Augusta LMA reduced its membership fee from \$1 to \$.50.⁶⁷ The fact that some LMA chapters in Georgia required membership fees demonstrates that these groups were quite elite. Most people, especially in the South, could not afford to pay such money to join an organization in the post-war economy amidst a general decline in the standard of living.⁶⁸ The Augusta LMA meeting minutes in 1872 even lament, “in consequence of the extreme depression of the people generally soon after the war, there were no immediate [monetary] demands made upon them.”⁶⁹ The variance in membership fees also exhibits the autonomy of the chapters. Each group could make its own rules.

⁶⁶ Athens Ladies’ Memorial Association Bylaws, 1868, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia (hereafter cited as Hargrett Library).

⁶⁷ Savannah Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, February 18, 1867, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia (hereafter cited as GHS) and Augusta Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, February 15, 1918, Ladies’ Memorial Chapter Records, Reese Library, Georgia Regents University, Augusta, Georgia (hereafter Reese Library).

⁶⁸ George C. Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 241.

⁶⁹ Augusta Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, April 22, 1872, Ladies’ Memorial Chapter Records, Reese Library.

After establishing their groups and bylaws, the Georgia LMAs began their work. Based on their meeting records and in accordance with Janney's work, the immediate task of the Georgia LMAs was to tend to the cemeteries and graves of the Confederate soldiers along with designating an annual Decoration Day or Memorial Day.

Interestingly, the Ladies of Columbus, most especially Mary Williams, claim to be the first to call for an official Decoration Day on April 26th. Williams was vocal in her petitions to designate April 26th as Decoration Day throughout the former Confederate states. She published an article in the *Columbus Times* on March 12, 1866 that was then distributed to other newspapers in Southern cities because "legislative enactments may not be made to do honor to their memories, but the veriest radical that ever traced his genealogy back to the deck of the May Flower, could not refuse us the simple privilege or paying honor to those who died defending the life, honor and happiness of the Southern women." Williams additionally puts forth the argument that the current generation should not debate whether the Confederacy was valid in seceding, but rather leave the debate for future generations.⁷⁰

It is curious that Williams makes the Civil War about the protection of Southern (white) women without a single mention of slavery being at the center of the sectional conflict and simultaneously being opposed to discussing the causes of the war. Williams's choice of words demonstrates that she potentially recognized the true cause of the war but refused to accept it. These few sentences are evidence of the creation of the Lost Cause, as defined by Gallagher in *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History*, and quite prophetic because the Civil War still remains a highly contested scholarly subject; the current generation is still debating its

⁷⁰ Atlanta Ladies' Memorial Association Communication from Mary Williams, March 12, 1866, Ladies' Memorial Association Chapter Records, Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, Georgia (hereafter KRC).

cause. What is less debatable, however, is that hardly one year after the war, a Georgia LMA woman was attempting to rewrite history in favor of the slave South.

While Williams and other members of the Columbus LMA kept themselves occupied by making their petitions for an official Decoration Day, the rest of the Georgia LMAs were completing their cemetery work. While the LMAs were active in the immediate post-war period, as their founding goal was to provide Confederate soldiers with honorable burials, their chapter records and meeting minutes are rather sparse during this time. Most of the LMAs did not begin detailed meeting minutes until the 1870s, the 1880s, or even later. Perhaps their groups were only haphazardly organized and they did not keep a strict record book or perhaps this information has just been lost to time.

Meeting minutes, however, are not the only place LMAs were discussed. As seen with Williams in Columbus, local newspapers reported LMA updates and happenings before the Ladies themselves wrote about them and these articles were later collected and included in the chapter records. The Macon LMA chapter records provide a good example. On April 27, 1866, the *Macon Daily Telegraph* featured an article, “The Consecrated Day,” which detailed the activities of the Macon LMA the previous day – April 26th, Decoration Day. The article explains how “the graves of the Federals were not neglected” and the weather was cooperative at Rose Hill Cemetery to make for a pleasant day.⁷¹ It is interesting that the newspaper makes a special point of noting that the graves of the Union soldiers were tended to as well, even if the Ladies were there to honor the Confederates. While this could be viewed as a display of reconciliation, the Macon LMA, under the direction of President Jane Hardeman, probably did this to covertly

⁷¹ “The Consecrated Day,” *Macon Daily Telegraph*, April 27, 1866.

demonstrate their superiority to the Federal government.⁷² Since the Federal government did not make any special efforts to care for the Confederate dead, the LMAs took up the task.⁷³ That the women in Macon would use their time and energy to do something that the Federal government would not reciprocate for Confederates is quite noteworthy.

With regards to Memorial Day in Augusta in 1876, the Ladies claimed that they would never forget to decorate the graves of the fallen soldiers.⁷⁴ Even ten years after the Civil War, the Augusta LMA was keeping up the tradition of decorating the graves and claimed that they would never give up that tradition. This is an ironic statement considering what would happen in the twentieth century and beyond.

The LMAs outside of Columbus, Macon, and Augusta were active in the immediate post-war years as well. The earliest chapter records from Savannah date from February 18, 1867. At this meeting, the Ladies gathered to form a group for with the purpose of tending to the Confederate graves in Laurel Grove Cemetery and Julia Williamson was elected president of the new group. Additionally, the new Savannah LMA decided to only require an annual meeting on April 20th and further designated April 26th to “be still observed as the day for decorating the last earthly resting place of our fallen brave.”⁷⁵ It is evident that in just one year after publication, Williams’ suggestion for officially designating April 26th as Decoration Day was taking root throughout Georgia. The Savannah LMA met again in April 1868 and April 1869 in accordance with their annual meeting requirement. They gathered flowers to decorate the graves and began

⁷² Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 9. According to Blight, reconciliation was “forging unifying myths and making remembering safe.” When the Macon LMAs tended to the Union graves, they could have been showing their willingness to care for dead soldiers, no matter which side they fought for. This would have certainly fallen within the boundaries of reconciliation.

⁷³ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 237.

⁷⁴ “Arrangements for the Celebration of Memorial Day,” *Augusta Chronicle*, April 9, 1876.

⁷⁵ Savannah Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, February 18, 1867, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, GHS.

discussing fundraising options, such as taking up a collection at the cemetery on Decoration Day or holding a fair in December. By April 20, 1869, the Savannah LMA had a modest fund of \$233.44. That the Savannah LMA originally only planned to meet once a year contrasts with the Athens LMA that stated in its bylaws that they would meet the first Tuesday of every month. This is again a demonstration of the autonomy of each chapter.⁷⁶ The LMAs worked independently to achieve the same task.

Just a few years later, the Augusta LMA began recording in earnest their meeting minutes and gathering on a regular basis with their earliest entry coming from April 22, 1872. Martha Carter was elected president, Catherine Steiner vice president, and April 26th was designated Decoration Day. This further demonstrates the prevalence of April 26th as Decoration/Memorial Day in the Confederate cemeteries throughout the state as suggested by Williams in Columbus. Just a few years later, however, both Carter and Steiner died and the Augusta LMA was slightly reorganized under an official constitution in the early 1870s. This new constitution clearly stated the latest goal of the LMAs: “the erection of a suitable Monument in the cemetery of the city of Augusta, in Memory of the noble men who laid down their lives in defence of Constitution of Liberty; whether they fell in battle or died from disease and wherever buried; and the stranger dead who now sleep in our midst.”⁷⁷ Even the wording of the LMA objectives hints at Lost Cause rhetoric – the Confederate soldiers were noble men who were defending liberty, they were not defending slavery. While the Augusta LMA constitution was probably not meant to be seen by the general public, the way they wrote about themselves and their goals demonstrates

⁷⁶ Athens Ladies’ Memorial Association Bylaws, 1868, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, Hargrett Library.

⁷⁷ Augusta Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, April 22, 1872 and Constitution, Ladies’ Memorial Chapter Records, Reese Library.

elements of the Lost Cause were certainly present within the group and their founding documents.

The Augusta LMA records, along with those of Savannah, are also among the first to mention fundraising for building a Confederate monument. Donations collected at the cemetery resulted in a modest, yet commendable, starting fund of \$221.65.⁷⁸ This was similar to the fundraising tactics used in Savannah to create a monument.

By the 1870s, the Georgia LMAs were more organized and began to take on tasks other than decorating the graves of Confederate soldiers. On April 20, 1870, the Savannah LMA recorded that they sent \$100 to Richmond, Virginia to help the LMAs there in removing dead Confederates from the Gettysburg, Pennsylvania battlefield.⁷⁹ Janney notes that Southern women were content that the fallen soldiers in the South were well tended to, but they did not know the status of those still laying in northern battlefields, most especially Gettysburg. With the help of Dr. Rufus Weaver beginning in the spring of 1871, 101 Confederate bodies were disinterred from the Gettysburg battlefield and shipped to Savannah so that the “bones of [the] honored and loved soldiers [were returned] to their native soil”.⁸⁰ With monetary help from the Atlanta LMA in the form of a \$1000 donation, these Gettysburg dead were then reinterred at Laurel Grove Cemetery.⁸¹ Nine years later, the Savannah LMA accepted a donated “Statue of

⁷⁸ Augusta Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, April 22, 1872, Ladies’ Memorial Chapter Records, Reese Library.

⁷⁹ Savannah Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, April 20, 1870, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, GHS.

⁸⁰ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 119-121 and Savannah Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, May 28, 1871, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, GHS

⁸¹ “General Appropriation Act,” *Weekly Constitution*, February 17, 1874.

Silence” to be placed at the cemetery to overlook these 101 soldiers for perpetuity.⁸² “Silence” was originally incorporated into the design of the Confederate monument in Savannah but it was removed and placed in Laurel Grove when the monument was redesigned. While it was true that the LMAs throughout the South had complete autonomy and usually focused on local projects, the Gettysburg re-interment project demonstrates several LMAs, even those from different states, working together. As the years passed, the LMAs would begin to work more collaboratively.

It is also around this time, the 1870s and later, that the Georgia LMAs began their greatest undertaking – erecting Confederate monuments. By this point, most of the cemetery work was done and the Ladies were moving on to more involved projects that required more time and money. The Ladies had find ways to get the finances needed for the monuments and as a result many of the groups used creative means to achieve fundraising goals. The monuments that the Georgia LMAs funded and designed are the most tangible piece of the Lost Cause they helped to construct. The monuments are unmoving stone and metal structures that remain standing today.

As seen with Augusta, however, the role of the LMAs in the creation of these monuments is often forgotten or mistaken for the UDC, or the specific LMA chapter did not save the discussions involved in getting the monuments completed and in place. For example, the cornerstone for the first Confederate monument in Atlanta was laid in 1870, just five years after the close of the Civil War, in Oakland Cemetery. The monument, a 65-foot obelisk made from Stone Mountain granite with the inscription “Our Confederate Dead,” was dedicated on April 26,

⁸² Savannah Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, May 30, 1879, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, GHS.

1874 costing the Atlanta LMA a discounted price of \$8,000.⁸³ Much pomp and circumstance surrounded the unveiling of the monument as a crowd of about fifteen thousand people gathered in the cemetery on that Memorial Day. The event was even featured prominently in the *Atlanta Constitution*.⁸⁴ It was not until twenty years later, however, that the Atlanta LMA kept detailed records concerning the creation of a second monument, the Lion of Atlanta, also in Oakland Cemetery.

Out of the six cities featured in this study, the Augusta, Savannah, and Atlanta LMAs kept the most detailed records of the struggles they faced when building their Confederate monuments. Augusta was the first of these LMAs to complete a monument. Discussions for the Augusta monument began in April of 1873. The Ladies decided to hold a benefit concert in order to raise money. The newly elected president, M. Walton, made it clear in this meeting that no one would be given complimentary admission to the upcoming concert, except for guests of the performers.⁸⁵ This action reveals the pressing need to raise as much money as possible to build the Confederate monument. The Augusta LMA then considered hosting a spring fair but decided to postpone until the winter because they were still concerned about the financial pressures on the community.⁸⁶ Their patience rewarded them with a successful turnout later in the year. Seven months later, the Augusta Ladies held their Christmas fair in order to grow the sum of \$2,716.69 even more.⁸⁷

⁸³ Wendy Hamand Venet, *A Changing Wind: Commerce and Conflict in Civil War Atlanta* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 219 and David N. Wiggins, *Georgia's Confederate Monuments and Cemeteries* (Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 36.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 219.

⁸⁵ Augusta Ladies' Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, April 5, 1873, Ladies' Memorial Chapter Records, Reese Library.

⁸⁶ "Memorial Association!", *Augusta Chronicle*, December 14, 1873.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, December 1, 1873.

It was not until the next June that members of the Augusta LMA started to design their monument. The biggest debate was deciding between a marble monument or a marble and granite combination. However, the Augusta LMA meeting minute book states, “after general inspection and deliberation, it was proposed by some gentlemen present to have one monument wholly of marble...a committee of gentlemen was therefore appointed to visit different marble works during the ensuing summer and report designs and prices.”⁸⁸ This is the first time men are mentioned in the Augusta record. It is telling that the Ladies appear to have handled all of their business by themselves up until this point. The women deferred to the men quite easily when decisions concerning the very public and very expensive monument needed to be made. There did not appear to even have been a debate concerning the subject – the *gentlemen* decided the issue. This is just one example from one specific chapter of deference to men concerning the creation of Confederates monuments. It occurs also in other chapters at different times. This demonstrates that while women were civically active (raising money, soliciting for volunteers, and organizing Memorial Day happenings) they were still not fully in charge. Men had the final say. While the women could be credited with initiating the cemetery work and the building of monuments, and therefore the beginnings of the Lost Cause, it was the men who carried forth the idea as they made the lasting decisions concerning the design of the monuments and they served as the keynote speakers during the monument unveiling ceremonies.

The fall of 1874 was a busy and productive time for the Augusta LMA. Their funds increased to \$9,550.31 in less than a year and the Ladies showed no signs of letting up their efforts. The Ladies were contracting with the Cotton State Minstrels to plan another benefit

⁸⁸ Ibid., June 1874.

concert as well as planning a bazaar for the Christmas holiday.⁸⁹ The Augusta Ladies were being creative in their efforts of getting the monument built. Janney discusses similar fundraising tactics in Virginia in that they were effective ways of raising money without seeming to ask too much from the impoverished citizens in the South.⁹⁰ The donors could get something in return, such as a handmade craft or entrance into a concert.

The next year, 1875, was somewhat of a disappointment to the Augusta LMA. While the Van Gunder and Young Company made progress on the monument after the sketch of the monument was approved unanimously, the Ladies had an unexpected expense. Over \$3,000 was needed to buy headstones and complete cemetery maintenance. The Ladies lamented into 1876 that work “was progressing slowly, owing to the scarcity of money” and that attendance at the meetings was declining even though “the work of the Association is still very dear to the hearts of many.”⁹¹ Although it appeared the Augusta LMA was struggling, they were not going to lose hope and disband the organization.

The LMA of Augusta made progress toward completion of the Augusta Confederate monument in 1877. By April of that year, the Ladies paid sculptor F. Markwalter \$14,490 to create the monument with the requirement that he finish it by April 26, 1878. That October, Markwalter informed the Augusta LMA that work had begun on the monument but he needed photographs in order to complete the statues of Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, T. R. R. Cobb, and William Henry Walker for the base of the monument. Additionally, Markwalter guaranteed the Ladies that the monument would be completed by the next Memorial Day.⁹² Unfortunately,

⁸⁹ Ibid., October 14, 1874.

⁹⁰ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 93.

⁹¹ Augusta Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, June 30, 1875; October 18, 1875; April 20, 1876; and October 25, 1876, Ladies’ Memorial Chapter Records, Reese Library.

⁹² Ibid., April 1, 1877 and October 5, 1877.

sculptors making promises about deadlines they could not keep was a common trend amongst LMA Confederate monument projects. Ultimately, the Augusta monument was not in place until November of 1878, several months after Memorial Day. A similar situation would happen in Atlanta.



Figure 2: Detail of Statues at Base of Augusta Monument
(Photo courtesy of author.)

Markwalter's inability to finish the Augusta monument on time became evident in the LMA meeting minutes from April 11, 1878 due to a delay of the shipment of the marble from Italy in addition to import duties. The Ladies were obviously disappointed but not discouraged because the problem was out of their control. They were willing to delay their plans for the best Italian marble; they just wanted the monument in place as soon as possible and they did not want to wait until the next Memorial Day to unveil it.⁹³ In the meantime, the Augusta LMA needed to discuss what would be inscribed on the monument. In another act of deference to men, the Augusta LMA followed the opinion of a group of former soldiers who believed that adding the individual names of soldiers would "lessen the dignity of its mission" and make the monument less beautiful. While the Augusta LMA ultimately conceded to this suggestion, they made sure they credited themselves with the construction of the monument on one of the four inscribed sides at the base of the monument. The inscriptions on the other sides at the base certainly speak to Lost Cause sentiments. The Ladies carefully chose their words, especially with the phrasing "No nation rose so white and fair; none fell so pure of crime."⁹⁴ This phrase alone shows complete denial of what the Civil War was about and attempts to re-write history to favor Confederates for living in a "pure nation." Labeling the Confederate nation as white, fair, and pure additionally invokes imagery of a virgin maid further linking women with the Lost Cause.

Finally, on November 7, 1878, the Augusta monument was unveiled in a grand ceremony. The Ladies profusely thanked all those in the community who helped in creating the monument. While the building of the monument depleted the Augusta LMA account to a mere \$578, it was their fervent hope that their arduous work would be appreciated for generations to

⁹³ Ibid., April 11, 1878.

⁹⁴ Ibid., June 24, 1878.

come and serve as a “memorial cenotaph towering so grandly conspicuous” to the Confederate dead.⁹⁵

Although Savannah did not complete the final version of its Confederate monument until after Augusta did so, the Savannah LMA actually began planning a project as early as April 1872. At this time, a new president was elected and the Savannah LMA had on hand \$6,888.83. The Ladies decided to ask the mayor and city council if the monument could be placed in Forsyth Park.⁹⁶ They believed this to be an appropriate location because tall trees or church steeples would not obstruct the height of the monument and the Confederate soldiers from Savannah had performed their drills in that area.⁹⁷ It is not stated exactly when the mayor and council agreed to this plan, but they eventually did so, as evidenced by the fact that the Confederate monument is still standing in Forsyth Park to this day.

The next year, 1873, the Savannah Ladies began a contract with a Canadian architect by the name of Robert Reid to work on the monument. They invited Reid to visit Savannah to see the space where the monument would be installed and gather inspiration. It was at this time that the Ladies began to express worries concerning the price of the monument. They tried all means of raising money, and as seen with other cities, the LMAs could get creative. In an unusual case, the Savannah Ladies invited “Madame Jarley” to bring her famous wax figures to entertain the Savannah residents in 1875 in order to raise money for the monument.⁹⁸ It would take nearly \$24,000 to complete it but “it was suggested that some of the elaborate work might be

⁹⁵ Ibid., November 7, 1878.

⁹⁶ Savannah Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, April 20, 1872, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, GHS.

⁹⁷ Frank Wheeler, “‘Our Confederate Dead’: The Story Behind Savannah’s Confederate Monument.” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 82, no. 2 (July 1, 1998): 389.

⁹⁸ “Entertainment at the Theatre,” *Savannah Morning News*, May 20, 1865.

suppressed thus reducing the expenses.”⁹⁹ This is a similar situation to what was happening in Augusta. Money was scarce so the Ladies had to be savvy with their budgets. They did not want to let the community down so they found ways to lower the cost of the monument by altering parts of the design. For example, the Savannah LMA considered substituting vases for soldier figures at the base of the monument in order to save \$4,000.¹⁰⁰

One important aspect of monument building that should not be overlooked was the laying of the cornerstone before the monument was even finished. The Savannah LMA used cornerstone laying as a time to celebrate and keep the community interested in their project. A year before the monument was erected, the Ladies laid the cornerstone with members of the city council, the military, and Masons “taking part in the pageantry” in much the same manner as the celebration surrounding the installation of the Atlanta and Augusta monuments.¹⁰¹ The Savannah Ladies requested that businesses close at two in the afternoon on the day of the cornerstone laying so that everyone could be present for the ceremony.¹⁰² The Savannah LMA even imbedded a time capsule in the cornerstone of the monument containing items such as a copy of Georgia’s secession papers, some documents signed by General Robert E. Lee, and a Confederate flag from 1861.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Savannah Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, April 19, 1873, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, GHS.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., undated.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., June 19, 1874.

¹⁰² “Our Honored Dead: Laying the Cornerstone of the Confederate Monument - Programme of Arrangements,” *Savannah Morning News*, June 15, 1874.

¹⁰³ “Noted Mementos in the Cornerstone Box,” *Savannah Morning News*, May 25, 1875.

By May 24, 1875, the Savannah Confederate monument was complete and in place – but that did not mean the work of the Ladies was over. Issues concerning the monument would continue for another four years.¹⁰⁴

On March 4, 1878, the Savannah LMA recorded an interesting incident in their meeting minute book. At this meeting, “a proposition was made by a friend, Mr. [George] DeRenne, of the Association to remove the figures from the Monument, close up the canopy with stone and place a bronze statue of a Confederate Soldier on the top...the statue to be given by himself & he also to pay for the stone slabs & the other necessary expenses.” The Savannah LMA discussed the issue and voted unanimously to accept the changes.¹⁰⁵ This incident is another example of deference to men. When a man suggested making major design changes to the monument that cost thousands of dollars and years to complete, the Ladies agreed. Perhaps the Ladies would not have been so quick to agree if their organization had to pay for the redesign rather than the individual suggesting the changes. While there is no way to know why DeRenne did not like the original design, or how many others in the community had similar sentiments, it is quite telling that the Ladies allowed it to be changed when their previous actions speak to the unchanging and permanent nature of monuments.

The redesigned Savannah monument was finally complete and rededicated in May 1879, only after much debate.¹⁰⁶ For one, the Ladies believed that the effect of the bronze statue on top of the monument would be lost if it was elevated too high. Also, they thought cannonballs,

¹⁰⁴ Wiggins, *Georgia's Confederate Monuments and Cemeteries*, 105-106.

¹⁰⁵ Savannah Ladies' Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, March 4, 1878, Ladies' Memorial Association Chapter Records, GHS.

¹⁰⁶ Wiggins, *Georgia's Confederate Monuments and Cemeteries*, 106.

instead of vases, at the base of the monument would be more appropriate.¹⁰⁷ These debates demonstrate that even if the Savannah LMA conceded to the design changes, they were going to have the final say. Perhaps the Ladies were not satisfied with allowing men to make all the decisions and still wanted to have credit for assisting with the redesign.



Figure 3: Drawing of Redesigned Monument in Savannah
 (Photo courtesy of author, located at Georgia Historical Society in Savannah, GA, Collection No. 2258.)

¹⁰⁷ Savannah Ladies' Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, May 16, 1879 and June 3, 1879, Ladies' Memorial Association Chapter Records, GHS.

The LMA of Atlanta was the next chapter to begin designing a Confederate monument. While the Atlanta LMA already installed a monument in Oakland Cemetery in 1874 and members kept busy with other philanthropic tasks outside of the cemetery, they desired an additional monument specifically for fallen unknown Confederate soldiers.¹⁰⁸ This is a twist on what was seen in Augusta and Savannah. Additionally, the records concerning the creation of this monument, known as the Lion of Atlanta, are from correspondences between the Atlanta LMA president, Fannie Milledge, and the sculptor, T. M. Brady of the Georgia Marble Finishing Works in Canton, Georgia, rather than meeting minutes. They provide a unique perspective concerning the challenges of creating the monument from the sculptor's point of view rather than the Ladies.

Discussion of the Lion of Atlanta sculpture began in 1892. From the beginning of its commission, the Ladies and Brady knew that the lion needed to be large and impressive because they were performing an important service for the Confederate community. In a letter from November of 1892, Brady told Milledge that “the more I consider the matter, the more I am convinced that our last of idea of the lion is by far the best possible memorial to the unknown dead Confederates – and to be truly effective it must be rugged and massive and of heroic proportions, commensurate with the purpose for which it is erected.”¹⁰⁹ This letter also mentions the inspiration of the monument: the Lion of Lucerne.¹¹⁰ It seems that honoring the unknown

¹⁰⁸ In 1876, the Atlanta LMA coordinated with the Ladies' Benevolent Society to build a home for Confederate widows and orphans, as evident in the “Local Notes” of the *Sunny South* on April 22, 1876. This action is most similar to the tasks undertaken by the UDC in later years.

¹⁰⁹ T. M. Brady to Fanny Milledge, November 4, 1892, Ladies' Memorial Association Chapter Records, KRC.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

Confederate dead was a worthy enough purpose for the grand sculpture; the Atlanta Ladies and Brady knew they needed something striking and different than the obelisk installed years earlier.

Later that same month, Brady discussed the dimensions, price, and further design issues with Milledge. Brady stated that he could carve the lion from an eight-foot block of stone for \$1000 or a ten-foot block of stone for \$1500. Eventually, the Ladies decided on an eight-foot block with a pedestal for \$1200. Brady did, however, make a special request to speak with Milledge's husband "in regards to the disposition of the Confederate Battle Flag."¹¹¹ Just as with Augusta and Savannah, the Atlanta LMA had to defer to men. It seems as if the Atlanta Ladies were not knowledgeable to make such a decision; only a man could determine how the battle flag should look. Instances such as this seem to undermine the Ladies abilities, especially since Brady wanted to speak directly to the man instead of trusting the answer to come through the LMA.

The next correspondence from Brady came nearly a year later in October of 1893. Brady assured Milledge of the progress of the work as he told her that he had two carvers, in addition to himself, regularly working on the sculpture. He promised it to ready by winter or early spring. It seems that Brady was trying to make amends for the project delay. Also, Brady told her that the stone block for the sculpture ended up being nine feet, instead of eight feet agreed on a year earlier.¹¹² One wonders why it took nearly a year for Brady to begin working on the monument, but it is not until the next letter a few days later that the truth behind this delay was revealed. Apparently, Brady "waited patiently for a choice block and [thought he] been rewarded [with]

¹¹¹ T. M. Brady to Fanny Milledge, November 26, 1892, Ladies' Memorial Association Chapter Records, KRC

¹¹² *Ibid.*, October 19, 1893.

the choicest block ever quarried in Georgia.”¹¹³ This is a similar situation to what happened in Augusta when the sculptor had to wait on stone to be imported from Italy. Problems like this show the difficulties the Georgia LMAs faced when getting their monuments completed. Many times the issues were out of their control; they could do nothing about the quarrying of stone. In the end though, the Ladies did not let up and they achieved their objectives.

The following spring, Brady was in contact with Milledge again. In a letter from March of 1894, Brady lamented, “I suppose it would be as well to say nothing about the money price of the work, as I should not care to undertake another again for same money. This is creating so much talk it may be the means of bringing to me another work of the kind in the future.”¹¹⁴ This seems to be an odd statement for a sculptor to make concerning his project. It makes one wonder if Brady discounted the price of the monument for the Ladies after the initial negotiations. Compared to the previous Atlanta monument, and the monuments in the other cities, the Lion was quite a bargain. In an undated letter from about the same time, Brady made sure President Milledge knew he was going to carve his name discreetly in the corner of the sculpture.¹¹⁵ Again, this is an odd statement for the sculptor to make considering the project was to be dedicated to deceased soldiers in a cemetery and not necessarily an advertisement for Brady. Additionally, as evidenced on the monument, Brady’s name is featured prominently on the front of the sculpture while the organization that commissioned the work, the Atlanta Ladies’ Memorial Association, is not visible until one walks around to the back of the sculpture. Perhaps the Atlanta Ladies did not want to bring unnecessary attention to themselves but rather fit within

¹¹³ Ibid., October 26, 1893.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., March 30, 1894.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., undated.

society's expectation of them especially since the monument was going to be placed in a cemetery.

April of 1894 was a hectic month for both Brady and the Atlanta LMA. Brady had to finish, ship, and install the sculpture while the Ladies prepared for the monument unveiling during the annual Confederate Memorial Day celebrations. Additionally, the Lion was creating quite a scandal. Brady reported to Milledge that the *Atlanta Journal* dispatched a journalist to get a photograph of the monument. However, Brady would not allow the photograph to be taken because he wanted to keep the monument a secret until unveiling.¹¹⁶ As seen with the other cities, Memorial Day was still considered the only appropriate day for such an event. These occasions provided the community with a celebration and a renewed interest in the Civil War, all while perpetuating the Lost Cause.

A few days later, Brady updated Milledge about the finishing touches on the Lion. In the same letter, Brady also said, "I never thought for a moment that the work would create the stir it has, they are coming for miles around to see it and if it gives one half the satisfaction to the people of Atlanta the Old Confederate Veterans and above all the Ladies Memorial Association I will indeed be well repaid for the time and toil."¹¹⁷ There is so much irony in this statement considering many LMA groups were forgotten about as the years passed or were misremembered as the UDC. The work of the Ladies was arduous, often thankless, and then overlooked. It is obvious that at the time they were originally working, the Ladies were deemed important members of the memorial community, but they were still women without the same privileges as men.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., April 4, 1894.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., April 11, 1894.

In one of the last letters he wrote to Milledge before the installation of the monument, Brady said something that fit perfectly with the idea of perpetuating the Lost Cause myth. He told her, “I rejoice our work has been so satisfactory and also that the Ladies Memorial Association have erected a fitting symbol to the fidelity and valor of the southern soldiers a memorial that will tell its story to every beholder in all the ages that are to come.”¹¹⁸ Brady and the Atlanta Ladies knew they were creating a physical structure to valorize the unknown Confederate soldier that would remain in the cemetery for perpetuity – allowing no one in the South, most especially white Southerners who visited the cemetery, to forget the Civil War, thereby aiding in the creating of the Lost Cause.



Figure 4: Lion of Atlanta
(Photo courtesy of author.)

¹¹⁸ Ibid., April 21, 1894..

Although they did not keep as detailed records, the Athens, Columbus, and Macon LMAs also erected Confederate monuments following the Civil War. The Athens LMA laid the cornerstone of their monument on May 5, 1871 at the intersection of College and Washington Streets. The monument was completed on June 3, 1872 and was later moved to Broad Street in 1912. It is 32-feet tall, made of marble, and in the shape of a steeple; it cost the Athens LMA \$4,444.44.¹¹⁹ Markwalter, the same person who would complete the Augusta monument six years later, designed it. There are various inscriptions along the sides of the monument, including credit to the Athens LMA and phrases such as “In Her Country’s Memory, Her Brave Are Immortal” and “Bright Angels Come and Guard Our Sleeping Heroes.”¹²⁰ As seen with other monuments in Georgia, the LMAs used eloquent wording to valorize the soldiers and play upon the emotions of those who would view the monument. The Athens LMA was doing their part to craft the Lost Cause.

While the Athens LMA did not keep official records concerning the actual design of the monument, the Athens LMA was featured in an article advertising “A Grand Fair” to raise money for the monument. Newspapers provide a gauge of the local perception of the LMAs and particularly what was being requested of the community. Newspapers are especially helpful when trying to learn about chapters that do not have existing records concerning the creation of their monuments. According to an undated newspaper clipping, the Athens Ladies implored “every true hearted Southern man, woman, and child to help us in this labor of love.”¹²¹ The

¹¹⁹ Wiggins, *Georgia’s Confederate Monuments and Cemeteries*, 35.

¹²⁰ E. Merton Coulter, “The Confederate Monument in Athens,” *The Georgia Review* 10, no. 1 (April 1956): 64-67.

¹²¹ Athens Ladies’ Memorial Association Newspaper Article, “A Grand Fair”, undated, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, Hargrett Library.

Ladies were eloquent in their request. They asked for any donations, whether they were monetary or in kind, whether from the rich or from the poor. The Athens LMA certainly played upon Lost Cause sentiments when they stated, “we trust there are no ingrates amongst us, who feel there is naught for them to do in this pure work of love.”¹²² Additionally, the Athens LMA asked for sincere cooperation from the ex-Confederate Survivor’s Association in planning Memorial Day activities as a sign of reverence to the deceased former President of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis.¹²³ There is no doubt this statement was directed only towards white Southerners; freedmen would certainly not feel grateful towards Confederate soldiers.

Columbus got its Confederate monument in May of 1879, just one month after the Columbus LMA laid the cornerstone of the monument in Salisbury Park. The monument takes the shape of a marble obelisk covered with a battle flag and topped with a funeral urn. Cannons, cannonballs, swords, rifles, along with the Georgia and Confederate seals adorn the obelisk. The monument cost the Columbus LMA \$4,500.¹²⁴

Just a few months after the monument in Columbus was complete, the Macon LMA completed its monument. A crowd of about 35,000 people, including the governor of Georgia, was at the dedication ceremony on October 29, 1879 in the square near the Bibb County courthouse. This huge gathering wanted to witness the unveiling of the 37-foot tall Carrara marble structure topped with a statue of a soldier. The soldier statue itself was quite impressive at nearly eleven feet tall.¹²⁵

Aside from the immense crowd attending the dedication ceremony, the creation of the Macon Confederate monument has a curious story that definitely fits into the Lost Cause

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ “Confederate Veterans,” *Athens Weekly Banner*, April 15, 1890.

¹²⁴ Wiggins, *Georgia’s Confederate Monuments and Cemeteries*, 54.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 87.

ideology and the role of women in politics. Firstly, on May 13, 1875, the Macon LMA was featured in an article in the *Macon Telegraph and Messenger* describing their financial situation and reiterating to the community that donations would help the Ladies complete their Confederate monument faster. None of this is much different than LMA updates in other cities, but this particular article reiterated that a monument commemorating dead Confederate soldiers would also demonstrate “the love and devotion of the Southern women.”¹²⁶ While Faust explained that mourning and grave decoration were considered appropriate work for women in the post-Civil War South because the women were just completing work that “needed” to be done, this newspaper article argues quite the opposite.¹²⁷ This is one of the first newspaper articles or chapter records to so plainly state the women built monuments to commemorate themselves. The article states, “in honoring the dead soldiers, the ladies are unwittingly honoring themselves; for it is the highest civilization which is the most careful of the memory of its dead.”¹²⁸ While this may certainly be a generalized observation, the author of this article in Macon could see that the Ladies were not solely concerned with the Confederate dead. They were an organization trying to bring about change by “honoring themselves,” but not taking credit for it – it was “unwitting.”

Secondly, there was a debate concerning where the Macon monument should be located: the park or the courthouse square. In another article in the *Macon Telegraph and Messenger* on May 15, 1875, the Macon LMA was staunchly opposed to installing the monument in the park because the park was desolate and uninviting during the winter months; people would not be able

¹²⁶ “Annual Financial Statement,” *Macon Telegraph and Messenger*, May 13, 1875.

¹²⁷ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 242.

¹²⁸ “Annual Financial Statement,” *Macon Telegraph and Messenger*, May 13, 1875.

to view it for a good portion of the year.¹²⁹ They believed the monument was best suited for the courthouse square, or business district, because it would be more visible by the Macon citizens who could “feel its appearance daily grow a part of their existence.”¹³⁰ It is obvious that the Macon LMA had strong opinions about why the monument should be erected near the courthouse versus the park and the Ladies’ wishes were eventually honored. While it may seem that the Ladies would be the ultimate authority on the placement of the monument for which they were designing and raising money, it is important to remember that women were still disenfranchised in 1875. If the issue came to an official vote (it is unknown of whether it was a formal or informal decision process), the Macon LMA would have been left out. This is just another idiosyncrasy concerning LMAs – they could assert much influence in certain areas, but they were still often prohibited from being overtly politically active.

The timeline of how the Georgia LMAs built their monuments, dealings with contractors and raising funds, however, is not the only significant part of the story. The actual design of the monuments and their locations within the cities speaks volumes about the Lost Cause and the creation of public memory, particularly in the South. Some of the first monuments, erected immediately following the war in cemeteries, took on more funerary designs, like obelisks, pillars, and steeples decorated with urns or vases.¹³¹ These monuments oftentimes looked like any other monument within cemeteries and could only be distinguished as a Confederate monument upon reading the inscriptions. The first monument in Atlanta serves as a perfect example of this type of monument. It was not until the 1870s that the monuments would feature

¹²⁹ “Confederate Monument: Objections to its Location in the Park,” *Macon Telegraph and Messenger*, May 15, 1875.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, 156.

military motifs, such as the Confederate flag and cannonballs, with soldier statues.¹³² The Augusta, Macon, and Savannah monuments all feature military motifs and soldiers. Foster argues that the solitary soldier at the top of the monument was usually at rest with his rifle on the ground and he seemed emotionless and without personality. He was not the gallant knight many supposed him to be.¹³³ This is certainly true of the Augusta, Macon, and Savannah monuments. The soldiers appear rather peaceful but because of their elevation, it is difficult to know what they truly look like. The exception to this is the four statues at the base of the Augusta monument that take on the likenesses of Lee, Jackson, Cobb, and Walker. Interestingly, these rather generic soldier monuments are similar to the ones erected in the North, and could even be contracted from the same sculptors, the only difference being the uniform of the soldier.¹³⁴

Evidence shows that the Georgia Ladies were concerned with where their monuments would be placed in addition to what their monuments would look like. Janney points out that Unionists in the North were usually not limited as to where they could erect monuments but Southerners were. The former Confederates generally installed their monuments in cemeteries in order to portray it as a sense of mourning especially in the years immediately following the war.¹³⁵ Under the suspicious eye of the Federal government, Southerners did not want to do anything that would look too much like publicly glorifying former Confederates. This is evident in the first monument erected in Atlanta, at Oakland Cemetery, and the beautification efforts in Savannah, at Laurel Grove Cemetery – they were cloaked under mourning activities in the cemeteries and not obvious attempts at creating the Lost Cause.

¹³² Ibid., 156.

¹³³ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 129.

¹³⁴ *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory*, edited by Cynthia Mills and Pamela H. Simpson, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2003), xxiii.

¹³⁵ Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, 135.

As the years passed, however, the Ladies wanted the most grand monuments, budgets permitting, in the most public places in order to have the most impact on the community. Again, Janney's observation that beginning in the late 1870s, the LMAs would erect Confederate monuments in more public places because the LMAs "no longer felt compelled to secure their memorials behind cemetery walls" holds true for Georgia.¹³⁶ The monuments in Athens, Augusta, Columbus, Macon, and Savannah (which all were erected in the 1870s) are located in public parks and squares and were unveiled amidst ostentatious ceremonies.

Once the LMAs entered the 1880s, however, their organization began to change. The cemetery work was done, except for the yearly maintenance on Memorial Day, most monuments were completed, at least for the chapters in this study, and fifteen years had elapsed since the Civil War ended. Several of the original presidents and founding members of the LMAs, especially those who were actually active in the soldier's aid societies during the war had passed away. With this in mind, the 1880s can be considered the beginning of the end of the LMAs as they were originally conceived. The Georgia LMAs played their role in launching the Lost Cause sentiments but they would find themselves scrambling to stay relevant as the years continued. They would pick up new tactics and change old strategies – in the end, however, they could not compete with the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 156.

3 LMAS BECOME UDC

In 1897, the Savannah LMA resolved that their organization “merged into the Daughters of the Confederacy and that all funds and securities belonging to the [LMA] should be turned over to the treasurer of the Daughters of the Confederacy with the stipulation that they should not be divested from their original purpose.”¹³⁷ Given that the Savannah LMA worked tirelessly since the end of the Civil War to care for the cemeteries and create Confederate monuments, it is quite telling that they so willingly relinquished their assets to a rival organization that was only three years old. This action provides a glimpse into what changes were in store for all of the Georgia LMAs in the coming years.

By the 1880s, the nature of the Georgia LMAs began to change significantly. The majority of the cemetery work was finished and the monuments were installed in Atlanta, Athens, Augusta, Columbus, Macon, and Savannah, even if other Georgia cities would not install their monuments until years later. April 26th was for the most part observed as Confederate Memorial Day throughout the state. The leadership of the Georgia LMAs changed as the years progressed, founding presidents passed away, and new women replaced them. In short, the LMAs that formed in 1865 from soldier’s aid societies looked vastly different than the LMAs fifteen years later. Changes for the LMAs were additionally compounded by the creation of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the UDC, or simply, the Daughters amongst other women’s groups and causes.

By 1900, the UDC had overshadowed the LMAs as the South’s leading organization of pro-Confederate women. It was at this point that the Lost Cause began to take root in its most current form. As explained by Blight, “as Southerners began to unveil their local soldiers’

¹³⁷ Savannah Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, April 21, 1897, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, GHS.

monuments, and as the victory over Reconstruction became part of their narrative of Confederate heritage, Lost Cause orators moved from mournful to more triumphant tones.”¹³⁸ The most well known version of the Lost Cause, initiated by the LMAs and solidified by the UDC and other pro-Confederate groups, has five interacting components: glorify Southern soldiers, use the Confederate past to protect against political and social disorder, protect the Confederate past from enemies, do not accept the reconciliationist view of the cause of the war, and finally reinvigorate white supremacy.¹³⁹

One Georgia woman who shifted her interests away from the LMAs was Maria Westmoreland of Atlanta. Westmoreland serves an example of a Georgia LMA member who became a public figure through her LMA experience then moved on, both figuratively and literally. An original member of the Atlanta LMA, she had previously served in the local Ladies’ Soldier Relief Society. After the war, she became a playwright and wrote two novels, *Heart-Hungry* and *Clifford Troupe*. In 1871, Westmoreland visited New York with her husband to meet with her publishing company and by 1873 she moved to New York, without her husband. Westmoreland continued to write for a number of years and take part in speaking engagements. She was a staunch advocate for increased educational opportunities for women as a means of women’s economic advancement. Westmoreland even believed that women should be admitted to the University of Georgia. Although she realized it was inevitable, she was not an outright supporter of women’s suffrage.¹⁴⁰

As seen with Westmoreland in Atlanta, the Georgia LMAs could easily lose members so they implemented various tactics to keep their organizations relevant in the aftermath of

¹³⁸ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 265.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 274.

¹⁴⁰ Venet, *A Changing Wind*, 215-216.

monument building. For one, these Ladies tried to introduce young girls to the LMAs in order to have a new cohort of women ready to join. Secondly, they continued their annual planning of Memorial Day and maintained the cemeteries. Their most radical measure, however, was creating the Confederated Southern Memorial Association and joining forces with various LMAs throughout the South. Finally, in an effort to keep some semblance of their work alive, many LMAs combined their groups with the UDC.

A common trend among the Georgia LMAs was to introduce school-age children, especially girls, to their organization. This was done in an effort to keep the LMAs in the spotlight and have a steady stream of new members ready to join the groups. Janney explains how some LMAs even organized “junior” associations that took on the same tasks, such as cemetery maintenance, as the adult organization. Interestingly, the junior organizations that Janney studied in Virginia, were not limited to girls. Even though boys could join them, the most prestigious offices were reserved for girls because they were considered most appropriate for this type of work.¹⁴¹

One of the earliest mentions of a child-member in Georgia LMA hails from Atlanta. On May 15, 1872 before the Lion was even installed in Oakland Cemetery, the *Atlanta Sun* published an article concerning a six-year-old girl named Gussie Strong. Strong inquired of the Atlanta LMA president in 1870 about why she could not be a member. Since there was no real reason why Strong could not join the LMA, the president promptly made her a member in addition to giving her “the first place of honor.”¹⁴² Not only was this an altruistic action to please a little girl, it was also a strategic move on behalf of the Atlanta LMA. By this point no doubt, the Ladies realized the nature of the organization was changing and their mission had the

¹⁴¹ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 157-159.

¹⁴² Atlanta Ladies’ Memorial Association Article, *Atlanta Sun*, May 15, 1872.

potential to become irrelevant. Therefore, they needed “these little sprites [to] grow up in loving the labors of this Association and [to] perpetuate its life and glory” in order for it to survive.¹⁴³ Making little girls feel special and important would encourage more of them to join the LMAs. The Atlanta LMA also had children take direct part in Memorial Day activities by having the “Children of the Confederacy” escort the carriages of the Ladies to the cemetery.¹⁴⁴ It is clear that the LMA leaders in Atlanta wanted total community involvement – from the youngest to the oldest citizens.

Today, the UDC is often credited with inculcating “southern values” in white school children but evidence suggests the LMAs actually started the process. The Augusta LMA actively sought to influence children years into the twentieth century. In the fall of 1919, the Augusta Ladies considered sponsoring a Junior Memorial Association while simultaneously requesting that “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” to no longer be taught in local schools and sung in churches. The Ladies opposed this song because it was most associated with the Union army and the anti-slavery effort. In addition to monitoring what children could sing, the Augusta LMA monitored what they could learn in school. On March 16, 1920, the Augusta LMA president gave a speech “concerning the serious mistake our Southern people are making in citing to our children to Abraham Lincoln and others who bitterly opposed our principles as heroes.”¹⁴⁵ The president petitioned the board of education to remove all books glorifying Lincoln from schools and libraries.¹⁴⁶ These actions are indicative of a shift in the goals of the LMAs by the 1920s; the Ladies had clearly moved their work outside of the cemetery. Even if

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ “Memorial Day: Ladies’ Memorial Association Announces All the Details for April 26th,” *Sunny South*, April 22, 1899.

¹⁴⁵ Augusta Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, September 19, 1919 and March 16, 1920, Ladies’ Memorial Chapter Records, Reese Library.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., March 16, 1920.

they did not realize it at the time, the Ladies were attempting to prevent being overtaken by the UDC. They therefore began to take on different tasks to stay relevant.

In addition to the previously mentioned measures, such as influencing school curricula and soliciting child members, LMAs throughout the South began to join the Confederated Southern Memorial Association (CSMA). Julia A. Garside of Fayetteville, Arkansas was the first to call for a uniting of the LMAs in the spring of 1900. The first CSMA meeting was held on May 30, 1900 in Louisville, Kentucky with delegates from many LMAs in attendance. The purpose of the first meeting was to write a constitution and bylaws, designate committees, and elect officers. To keep the spirit of the CSMA in line with the goals of the LMAs from the 1860s, the Ladies in attendance decided their objectives would be to preserve the history of the Confederacy, teach children to honor Confederate soldiers, and continue to direct Memorial Day activities. It was also at this time that the CSMA adopted “Lest We Forget” as its official motto, unbeknownst of the irony that would befall them.¹⁴⁷

It is important to remember that the CSMA was not meant to patrol the activities of the individual LMA chapters. There was no hierarchy and the chapters would maintain complete autonomy to complete tasks in their respective communities as they saw fit. The purpose of the CSMA was to provide a system of support and a “closer bond of fellowship and a determined effort to perpetuate in history the testimony of the broken hearted women and maimed heroes of ’61-’65.”¹⁴⁸ Additionally, the newly organized CSMA recognized the need to have support of the veterans. They knew that the men of the United Confederate Veterans (UCV) could provide the CSMA with valuable monetary and political backing. In a plea to the UCV just one day after the formation of the CSMA, the Ladies referred to themselves as ““veterans as much as the gray,

¹⁴⁷ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 178.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 178-179 and *History of the Confederated Memorial Associations of the South*, 31.

battle scarred old soldiers, though we bided at home” which served as a stark contrast to the new generation of Daughters.¹⁴⁹ The CSMA gained the unanimous support of the UCV by claiming to be their “partners in the traditions of the Lost Cause.”¹⁵⁰

By 1901, just one year after its formation, the CSMA reportedly doubled in size with twenty-eight LMAs joining and by 1903, fifty-five LMAs were represented in the CSMA.¹⁵¹ Four years after the organization formed, the Ladies of the CSMA published the *History of the Confederated Memorial Associations of the South* to detail the work of individual chapters. This was an attempt to give the CSMA legitimacy as well as inform readers of the progress the LMAs had made since the end of the war.

¹⁴⁹ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 180.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

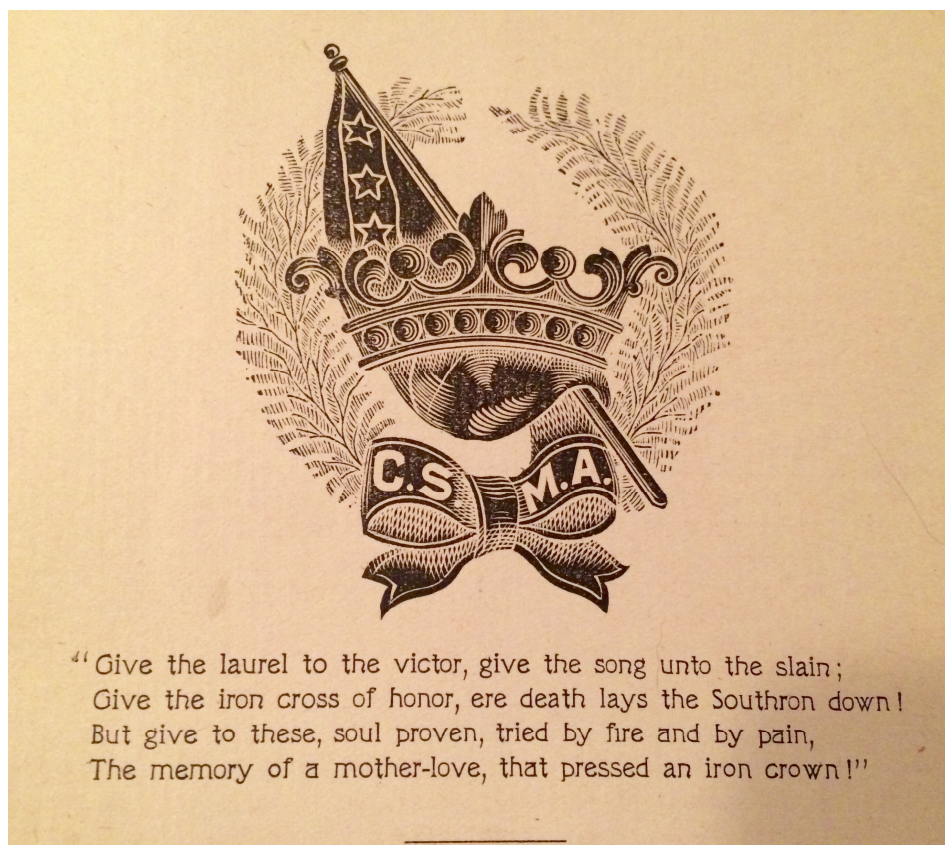


Figure 5: Emblem of CSMA

(Photo courtesy of author, located in *History of the Confederate Memorial Associations of the South*.)

The Georgia LMAs did not shy away from joining the CSMA and seventeen individual LMAs from Georgia did join by 1904. According to the *History of the Confederate Memorial Associations of the South*, the following Georgia LMAs joined the CSMA: Albany, Americus, Atlanta, Athens, Augusta, Brunswick, Columbus, Madison, Marietta, Resaca, Rome, Sandersville, Savannah, Sparta, Thomson, Washington, and Waynesboro.¹⁵² For unknown reasons, Macon did not appear to have been a part of the CSMA because it has no entry.

Chapter records for the Atlanta and the Augusta LMAs mention their involvement with the CSMA. The Ladies in Atlanta wholeheartedly accepted the official Constitution of the CSMA and kept a copy of it in their chapter records to guide their organization. Article II,

¹⁵² *History of the Confederate Memorial Associations of the South*, table of contents.

Section One of this constitution was especially relevant to the work of the LMAs in that it explicitly stated the purpose of the Association “shall be strictly Memorial and Historical,” demonstrating a preoccupation with the past rather than the present.¹⁵³ The constitution additionally states how members of the CSMA should teach children to honor the Confederate soldiers and to involve children in memorial activities from a young age in that they would be prepared to carry the mission of organization into the future.¹⁵⁴ These official statements are not unlike the duties the LMAs were previously performing; however, the constitution made them irrefutable. These objectives are similar to the ones simultaneously endorsed by the UDC a few years earlier except the UDC expanded from Memorial and Historical.

In 1903, the Augusta LMA adopted the same official CSMA constitution as Atlanta. One noted difference, however, was Amendment III found in the Augusta records. This amendment created the Office of the Historian. The purpose of this officer was to “give to the public – thru the press, if necessary – any truth pertaining to Confederate history, when said truth is a correction of falsehoods hurtful to the South.”¹⁵⁵ While it is not certain exactly what “falsehoods” the LMA historian would have been trying to correct, there is no doubt that these actions fit within the Lost Cause. The Ladies designated a person to rewrite any history with which they did not agree share it the media.

The Augusta Ladies had another attempt at influencing history a few years later. In 1921, just one year after the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution gave women the right to vote, the Augusta LMA had a grievance with the State Legislature of Georgia. The Augusta LMA

¹⁵³ Constitution of the Confederate Southern Memorial Association, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, KRC.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Augusta Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, October 17, 1917, Ladies’ Memorial Chapter Records, Reese Library.

was concerned that when May 30th became the officially recognized national Memorial Day, then having April 26th as Memorial Day would become obsolete. The Augusta Ladies lamented, “two Memorial Days would not long survive and that we, as Georgians, who created the first Memorial Day, could not sit supinely by, and see our Memorial Day lost to us!”¹⁵⁶ Although there is now a national Memorial Day celebrated in May, the LMAs would be pleased to know that the state of Georgia still does recognize Confederate Memorial Day on April 26th. All state offices are closed on this day demonstrating that two memorial days has actually lasted.¹⁵⁷ Nearly one hundred years after their grievance, the LMAs are still influencing Georgia with the Lost Cause.

One curious media appearance of the LMA from the twentieth century hails from Columbus. The Columbus LMA continued to plan Confederate Memorial Day activities, such as maintaining the cemeteries and selecting speakers for the events. In 1938, the Columbus LMA chose local attorney T. Hicks Fort to be the keynote speaker at the celebrations held at Springer Opera House.¹⁵⁸

While this particular Memorial Day is not of great importance, the nature of Fort’s speech and the manner in which it was described by the Columbus newspaper is quite telling. According to the newspaper, Fort boasted that “the purest Anglo-Saxon blood is here in the South” and “the natural conservatism of the South will be of great help to the nation as a whole.”¹⁵⁹ Fort continued his speech with praise for Margaret Mitchell’s Civil War novel, *Gone with the Wind*. According to Fort, *Gone with the Wind* “has ‘nailed and corrected more lies

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., July 13, 1921.

¹⁵⁷ “Observing State Holidays,” <https://georgia.gov/popular-topic/observing-state-holidays> (accessed July 14, 2015).

¹⁵⁸ This newspaper clipping, entitled “Tribute is Paid Today To Confederacy” dated April 26, 1938 from an unidentified newspaper, is located in the LMA vertical file in Columbus.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

against the South' than any other one work."¹⁶⁰ Fort's statement fits squarely within the Lost Cause rhetoric given the subject matter and reception of *Gone with the Wind*. The irony is that *Gone with the Wind* actually created more lies and myths than it dispelled.

Margaret Mitchell, an Atlanta native, reluctantly published her epic tale in 1936 and it sold an impressive one million copies in the first six months after its publication. Simply put, *Gone with the Wind* is the fictional story of Scarlett O'Hara, a Southern belle from Georgia, whose life is turned upside down by the Civil War. Mitchell's publisher, Macmillan, was a northern-based company who marketed *Gone with the Wind* as an accurate and authentic portrayal of the South during the Civil War. By 1937, just one year after it was released, the publisher estimated that nearly ten million people had read *Gone with the Wind*.¹⁶¹

The LMAs most certainly would have approved of Mitchell's novel as it glorified the Old South and made Federal troops into the enemy even after the battles were fought. *Gone with the Wind* was subsequently made into a blockbuster feature film in 1939, starring Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable, which increased its popularity and furthered stereotypes of the South and the Civil War. More than seventy-five years after its initial release, *Gone with the Wind* remains the highest grossing film of all time.¹⁶² *Gone with the Wind*, especially the film version, painted a picture of the South that fit perfectly within the Lost Cause. It made the Old South into a grand place with white-columned plantations and happy slaves. The film even portrayed the Ku Klux Klan as a welcomed organization that would promote white supremacy.

Despite the LMAs' efforts to recruit child-members, organize nationally, and plan annual Confederate Memorial Day celebrations, they eventually lost ground to the UDC. As early as

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Karen L. Cox, *Dreaming of Dixie: How the South Was Created in American Popular Culture* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 106.

¹⁶² Ibid., 93.

1890, women were organizing into groups called “Daughters of the Confederacy” named in honor of Winnie Davis, the daughter of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. In fact, one of the first people to use the phrase, “daughter of the Confederacy” was General John B. Gordon in 1886 in reference to Winnie Davis as he introduced her during a speaking engagement.¹⁶³ As compared to the battle scarred veterans to whom the LMAs of previous years compared themselves, Winnie Davis was known for her youthfulness and striking beauty. This would have been a stark contrast to the image the LMAs were trying to portray.

Not only can Georgia claim to be the originator of Confederate Memorial Day, but also one of its residents, Anna Davenport Raines of Savannah, was one of the founders of the UDC. Raines was born around 1854 and her father served as a Confederate officer; she was a true “daughter” of the Confederacy as she would have been too young to join the LMA group in Savannah when it first started.¹⁶⁴ She was opposed to sectional reconciliation and wrote, “no true Southerner can ever embrace this new religion and those who do should be ostracized by the ‘Daughters of the Confederacy’.”¹⁶⁵ In 1894, Raines began correspondence with Caroline Goodlett of Nashville, Tennessee about forming a coalition of Confederate women’s organizations.¹⁶⁶

On September 10, 1894, the UDC was officially founded in Nashville, Tennessee.¹⁶⁷ The UDC, at its inception and still today, has five objectives for its organization: memorial, benevolent, historical, educational, and social. The unstated overarching goal of the UDC, however, was the “vindication for the Confederate generation” which is a deviation from the

¹⁶³ “The Daughters: Origin of the Daughter of the Confederacy,” *Athens Banner*, April 26, 1912.

¹⁶⁴ 1900; Census Place: *Savannah, Chatham, Georgia*; Roll: 186; Page: 17A; Enumeration District: 0071; FHL microfilm: 1240186, ancestry.com.

¹⁶⁵ Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 141.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

¹⁶⁷ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 168.

LMA goals.¹⁶⁸ The LMAs were most concerned with the dead, while the UDC was most concerned with the living.

Like the LMAs, the UDC was composed of elite, white women. Additionally, their organization neatly fit within their expected gender roles while simultaneously pushing the boundaries of women's political involvement in an era before women's suffrage.¹⁶⁹ One noted difference between the LMAs and the UDC, however, was the UDC's requirement that members prove Confederate lineage, which remains a requirement for membership. This requirement was a source of debate at the creation of the UDC, as some founders argued that many women could potentially be excluded if only descendants of soldiers were qualified for membership while others were concerned about the preservation of harmony within the group. Raines was a supporter of exclusive membership. Eventually, it was decided at the UDC convention in Atlanta in November 1895 that women could join the UDC if they had either a male or female Confederate relative.¹⁷⁰

In general, the women of the UDC continued the work started by the LMAs. They built monuments, helped organize Memorial Day activities, and advocated on behalf of Confederate veterans. For example, the Athens UDC made a request through the local newspaper that residents should volunteer their vehicles for Confederate veterans to be escorted in on Memorial Day in 1913.¹⁷¹ While the LMA stated goals were strictly memorial and historical, as outlined in

¹⁶⁸ Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 2-3.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 5, 10.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 22-27. While there is no way to know for sure why the UDC decided that the term "Confederacy" be in the name of their organization, it is a telling contrast to the LMAs. By just comparing their names, there is a stark contrast between the groups – one is youthful and specific to the Confederacy while the other is quite general and does not give an indication to the age of the members. It is evident that the UDC wanted a direct connection to the Confederacy and this attitude shows with their white supremacist interpretation of the Lost Cause.

¹⁷¹ "Automobiles for Veterans on Memorial Day," *Athens Banner*, April 25, 1913.

the constitution of the CSMA, the UDC desired to push these objectives even further by adding benevolent, educational, and social to their organization.¹⁷² They realized that they were a younger generation and they were in a strategically convenient point in furthering the Lost Cause as the LMAs did much of the footwork decades earlier. Also, the LMAs provided the UDC with much guidance in establishing their local chapters and supplied a natural base of membership.¹⁷³ The UDC no doubt benefitted from the support and advice of the older women and would most likely not have been as successful as they were without the cooperation of the LMAs in the early years.

Women in Georgia did not hesitate in joining the UDC. As mentioned, the LMAs provided a baseline and the UDC was often a choice organization for the daughters of LMA members to join. In fact, many of the Georgia LMA chapters mentioned the UDC in their records, especially in regards to the maintenance of Confederate monuments and the need to monitor curriculum in schools. Newspapers often reported on the LMAs and UDC working together for Memorial Day activities. Some Georgia LMAs merged with the UDC quickly and willingly, while others chose to keep their groups separate well into the twentieth century.

As early as 1897, just three years after its creation, the UDC was courting the Savannah LMA for a merger. On April 4, 1897, Marie Dreese, the secretary of the Savannah UDC, addressed a letter to the Savannah LMA. For context, Dreese was born about 1878, making her in her early twenties by time she assumed the role of secretary.¹⁷⁴ She is an example of a woman

¹⁷² Constitution of the Confederate Southern Memorial Association, Ladies' Memorial Association Chapter Records, KRC.

¹⁷³ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 169.

¹⁷⁴ 1920; Census Place: Savannah, Chatham, Georgia; Roll: T625_241; Page: 24A; Enumeration District: 89; Image: 1137, ancestry.com.

born after the Civil War who got involved in the makings of the Lost Cause, even though she did not have any lived experiences of the war itself.

In rather blunt but eloquent language, Dreese wrote that they “respectfully ask the Ladies’ Memorial Association to merge their association with ours – and permit us a successor to perpetuate their work.”¹⁷⁵ It appears that the Savannah UDC believed it could better take care of the memorial activities in their city, as evident in a more formal letter sent by Dreese just one month later. In the second letter, Dreese applauded the Savannah LMA for its work and “whereas wishing to show our appreciation of their untiring goal, their time devoting to the cause so dear to our hearts, [and] their self sacrifices” which were needed to erect the monument in Forsyth Park, again requested a merger.¹⁷⁶ Clearly, the Savannah UDC was relentless in its quest to take over the activities of the Savannah LMA. UDC members probably assumed the work of the “old ladies” was complete they should be the ones to inherit further tasks. The Savannah UDC surely believed memorial and historical activities were not enough to further the Lost Cause. While there are no official documents within the Savannah LMA records that address a completion of the merger, one can safely assume it did happen in Savannah as the LMA records end abruptly after the letters from Dreese.

Similar to Savannah, the UDC recording secretary in Augusta around 1915, Mary Ruth Weigle, was born after the war in 1873.¹⁷⁷ Weigle would have been in her forties by the time she became secretary and she would not have any lived experiences of the war.

¹⁷⁵ Marie Dreese letter to LMA, Savannah Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, April 4, 1897, Ladies’ Memorial Association Chapter Records, GHS.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, May 17, 1897.

¹⁷⁷ United Daughters of the Confederacy Meeting Minute Book, 1915, United Daughters of the Confederacy Chapter Records, Reese Library, Georgia Regents University, Augusta, Georgia and 1910; Census Place: *Augusta Ward 1, Richmond, Georgia*; Roll: *T624_210*; Page: *4B*; Enumeration District: *0051*; FHL microfilm: *1374223*.

The Augusta LMA records indicate, however, unlike the happenings in Savannah, that the Augusta LMA chapters and the Augusta UDC chapters collaborated on several projects into the 1900s before merging. For one, the Augusta Ladies debated whether or not they should work with the Augusta UDC in raising funds to replace the destroyed pictures of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, and General Robert E. Lee in schools that had burned. It was agreed that the two groups should work together to replace the pictures.¹⁷⁸ Secondly, the Augusta LMA gained the support of the Augusta UDC in banning “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” from schools.¹⁷⁹ Next, on March 16, 1920, the Augusta LMA president informed the Ladies that the local newspaper, the *Augusta Chronicle*, had given the Augusta LMA and the Augusta UDC chapters a joint column in the Sunday edition of the newspaper “in the interests of the truth of history.”¹⁸⁰ Finally, the Augusta LMA noted cooperating with the Augusta UDC to place a copy of Charles Landon Carter Minor’s *The Real Lincoln: From the Testimony of his Contemporaries* in the libraries of the white schools in Richmond County.¹⁸¹

September 2, 1924 is the last entry in the Augusta LMA records meeting book. The August UDC records meeting book began in 1897 and continued until the mid-1930s. The Augusta UDC record detailed activities such as creating a Civil War survivor’s fund, celebrating General Lee’s birthday, collaborating with the Atlanta UDC chapter to pay for work in the Resaca cemetery, and communicating with the Rome UDC chapter concerning school curriculum – activities that are similar to those previously attributed to the LMAs. In addition, beginning in 1912 and continuing until 1960, the Augusta UDC organized, and marched in, a

¹⁷⁸ Augusta Ladies’ Memorial Association Meeting Minute Book, April 15, 1919, Ladies’ Memorial Chapter Records, Reese Library.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., February 10, 1920.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., March 16, 1920.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., October 5, 1920.

Confederate Memorial Day parade on Broad Street with school-age children and cadets from the Academy of Richmond County.¹⁸² While no official merger is recorded in Augusta, it is highly likely that Augusta LMA ended about the time the chapter record ended. It is clear that the Augusta LMA and Augusta UDC chapters were previously working together on projects within the community so the merger was most likely without conflict.

Unlike Savannah and Augusta, the Atlanta, Athens, Columbus, and Macon LMA records do not have direct references to their chapters and the UDC working together. The Georgia LMA records tend to end in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, regardless of whether the LMAs remained active. Specifically, the Atlanta records end in 1894 except for sparse newspaper clippings and references to Memorial Day that continue until 1977, the Athens records in 1902, the Columbus records in 1938 except for newspaper references until 1967, and the Macon records in 1939 except for newspaper references until 1956. The nature of these records can be attributed to the expected decline of the organization with the rise of the UDC in addition to the UDC incorporating LMA records into their own.

Georgia UDC records, on the other hand, are generally scrapbooks of newspaper clippings, photographs, and other memorabilia related to Confederate history. The UDC records from Atlanta, Athens, Columbus, Macon, and Savannah do not contain meeting minutes like many of the LMA records did. This can be attributed to the fact that the UDC is still a very active organization with chapters throughout the United States. The UDC most likely retains its own records at their headquarters in Richmond, Virginia or within the individual chapters. Augusta, on the other hand, has substantial records until the 1930s.

¹⁸² Wiggins, *Georgia's Confederate Monuments and Cemeteries*, 40.

Regardless of the amount of available records, the LMAs and the UDC provided women in Georgia the opportunity to pursue their passions. Two examples to demonstrate the varying stance of women who were in the LMAs and UDC are Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas of Augusta and Mildred Lewis Rutherford of Athens. Thomas, who served as an officer in the Augusta LMA, eventually became the recording secretary and national treasurer of the UDC after moving to Atlanta in 1893 at the age of fifty-nine.¹⁸³ Thomas represents the many women who were members of both an LMA and the UDC. Having lived through the war and being of the social elite, she could be both a Lady and Daughter as long as she had to desire to work towards the objectives of each group.

Thomas is of additional interest because she was a strong advocate for women's suffrage and the temperance movement. She attended the meeting of the National American Women Suffrage Association in Atlanta in 1895. Four years later, she was elected president of the Georgia Woman Suffrage Association. Additionally, Thomas traveled to suffrage and temperance conventions throughout the United States all while writing articles and speaking in public on behalf of women until her death in 1907.¹⁸⁴ Thomas serves as an impressive example of how a woman was politically active before being granted the right to vote. She demonstrates that women could organize, hold office, and try to better society for women all while being a member of the LMA and then UDC. It should be noted, however, that the LMA was the first to provide Thomas with a platform to join other interest groups while remaining within her prescribed gender role. As with Westmoreland in Atlanta, Thomas gained valuable experiences from the LMA.

¹⁸³ Ella Thomas, *The Secret Eye: The Journal of Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, 1848-1889*, ed. Virginia Ingraham Burr, 16-19.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

Mildred Rutherford of Athens, however, while similar in some aspects, is quite the opposite of Thomas. Rutherford was born in Athens in 1851 to a prominent family. Her uncles were the Confederate leaders Thomas R. R. Cobb and Howell Cobb.¹⁸⁵ In line with the UDC requirements, Rutherford was a proven descendent of Confederates. Thomas Cobb is even featured on the Confederate monument in Augusta.

Like Thomas, Rutherford was well educated and believed women should be afforded to opportunity to attend school. She even became principal, president, and then director of the Lucy Cobb Institute in Athens. Interestingly, although she was a supporter of traditional gender roles, Rutherford never married.¹⁸⁶

Given that Rutherford was hardly ten years old when the Civil War started, and only in her mid-teens by the time the war ended, she would not have been an ideal member for the Athens LMA at its inception in the 1860s. A few decades later, in 1888, she was elected president of the Athens LMA. She would remain in this office until her death.¹⁸⁷ Rutherford, like Thomas, is an example of crossover between the LMA and the UDC. Women were certainly not opposed to being members of both groups; they just came to realize the mission of the LMAs was taken over by the UDC.

By 1899, Rutherford secured her position as president of the Georgia division of the UDC. By 1911, she was historian general of the national organization and had proven her

¹⁸⁵ Grace Elizabeth Hale, “‘Some Women Have Never Been Reconstructed’: Mildred Lewis Rutherford, Lucy M. Stanton, and the Racial Politics of White Southern Womanhood, 1900-1930,” in *Georgia in Black and White: Explorations of the Race Relations of a Southern State, 1865-1950*, ed. John C. Inscoe (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 176-177.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 177-178.

¹⁸⁷ Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 39.

devotion to the Daughters.¹⁸⁸ Rutherford took her role in promoting the Lost Cause very seriously, and in terms of female supporters, she is considered one of the most notorious. She openly embraced traditional gender roles, white supremacy, racism, and the Ku Klux Klan. In fact, at a speech given at the UDC Convention in 1914, Rutherford is reported as saying, “the Ku Klux Klan is an absolute necessity in the South at this time,” and their violence should be excused as a means of perpetuating white supremacy.¹⁸⁹ Rutherford truly believed in a version of the “Old South” in which women did not challenge white male power and slaves thrived under bondage.¹⁹⁰ She used her position as historian general to push forth her ideas of southern history, in conjunction with the universal UDC objectives of “historical and educational.” Rutherford believed that each southern college and university should have a Southern History and Literature Department. The rationale behind creating such a department would be to educate future teachers. The belief was that “unless [they] reach the school and the school children, all of [the South’s] fine traditions and noble ideals will be in danger of perishing at no very distant time.”¹⁹¹

One part of Rutherford’s ideology that was vastly different from that of Thomas’s concerns Rutherford’s support of the anti-suffrage movement. Rutherford believed that women should not vote because it was not a traditional gender role; by not voting, women were staying true to the Lost Cause. Rutherford was a member of the Georgia Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage and even spoke to the Georgia House of Representatives on the subject.¹⁹² Given her opposition to women’s suffrage, it is ironic that Rutherford was willing to address the

¹⁸⁸ Mildred Lewis Rutherford, *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, (Athens: University of Georgia, 2013), <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/mildred-lewis-rutherford-1851-1928>.

¹⁸⁹ Hale, ‘Some Women Have Never Been Reconstructed,’ 179-180.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 179, 181.

¹⁹¹ “Chair of Southern History and Literature at Peabody College,” *Weekly Banner*, August 1, 1913.

¹⁹² Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 40.

House. She seemed to have gone against her own advice on the public role of women on numerous occasions.

Rutherford's most memorable quirk, however, was not her open support of the Ku Klux Klan or her belief that women should not vote, but rather the bizarre way she dressed for her public appearances. Rutherford demonstrated her desire to bring back the ways of the Old South, specifically the refinement of the plantation mistress, when she arrived at events in her 1860s-style dress and her hair in curls.¹⁹³



Figure 6: Colorized Photograph of Mildred Rutherford
(Courtesy of Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries.)

Laura Martin Rose, Rutherford's successor as historian-general of the UDC, was an even stauncher supporter of the Klan. She truly believed the purpose of the Klan was to restore order

¹⁹³ Ibid., 39.

throughout the South and Rose actually wrote a history book entitled *The Ku Klux Klan or Invisible Empire*. This history was officially endorsed by the UDC and then distributed to schools.¹⁹⁴ This serves as further evidence that the UDC was concerned with promoting white supremacy; they were not just concerned with honoring the dead.

While the Atlanta, Athens, Augusta, Columbus, Macon, and Savannah LMA chapters featured in this study built their monuments in the nineteenth century, the UDC, as well as the UCV and SCV, did continue to raise funds, build Confederate monuments, and promote the Lost Cause. Southern men who organized Confederate veterans into camps and held annual reunions started the UCV, or United Confederate Veterans in 1889. The UCV focused most of their efforts on venerating Jefferson Davis and served as advisors for the women's groups. The UCV was likened to the LMAs because the members were of the same age group and had usually lived through the Civil War. In 1896, businessmen and politicians formed the SCV, or Sons of Confederate Veterans. These men had objectives very similar to those of the UDC – promote the Lost Cause.¹⁹⁵ Like the UDC, the SCV is still an active organization and eligible members must prove they are descended from a Confederate veteran. They state they are “a historical, patriotic, and non-political organization dedicated to insuring that a true history of the 1861-1865 period is preserved.”¹⁹⁶

Various cases of non-LMA built monuments can be found throughout Georgia. For example, Atlanta gained a Confederate monument in Westview Cemetery. Westview Cemetery

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 109-110.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 13, 39 52, 5.

¹⁹⁶ “What is the Sons of Confederate Veterans?”, Sons of Confederate Veterans, <http://www.scv.org/about/whatis.php> (accessed July 14, 2015).

was founded in 1884 because Oakland Cemetery was nearing capacity.¹⁹⁷ The monument in Westview, provided by the Confederate Veterans Association of Fulton County, is filled with symbolism, has cannons, an hourglass, a pair of angel's wings, in addition to images representing each branch of the military. The Columbus UDC placed a small monument in Riverside Cemetery in 1942. This monument lists the names of 12 veterans. Macon has an unusual monument dedicated to women of the South. The R. A. Smith UCV Camp planned the monument, but it was actually completed by the Macon UDC and unveiled on June 3, 1911. The monument takes the shape of an obelisk with figures of women and children giving aid to a soldier. Finally, two additional Confederate monuments can be found in Laurel Grove Cemetery in Savannah. The McLaws Camp #596 UCV placed a five-foot obelisk and the Confederate Veterans Association of Savannah placed a four-by-five-foot tablet.¹⁹⁸ These examples demonstrate the LMAs began the monument building trend immediately after the war, but they were certainly not the only ones to complete them, especially as the LMAs became less popular.

In addition to the impressive monuments in cities throughout the state, Georgia can also claim the largest Confederate monument – Stone Mountain. Located just outside of Atlanta, Stone Mountain is the biggest exposed piece of granite in the world, towering 780 feet above the terrain.¹⁹⁹ Atlanta UDC members began planning for a monument at Stone Mountain in 1915 but Atlanta businessmen who were eager to attract tourists and make a profit, attempted to take over the project by 1924. The men, however, were not able to complete monument because the

¹⁹⁷ "History of Westview Cemetery," Westview Cemetery, <http://www.westviewcemetery.com/history.html> (accessed July 14, 2015).

¹⁹⁸ Wiggins, *Georgia's Confederate Monuments and Cemeteries*, 37, 55, 88, 106.

¹⁹⁹ David Wiggins, *Remembering Georgia's Confederates* (Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 125.

UDC fought to maintain control of its construction.²⁰⁰ Mildred Rutherford was even directly involved in the creation of the monument at Stone Mountain as she served as Vice-President of the Stone Mountain Association.²⁰¹

In 1958, the state of Georgia purchased the mountain and the Georgia General Assembly formed the Stone Mountain Memorial Association to oversee completion of the project.²⁰² The monument at Stone Mountain was finally complete by 1970. This monument consists of images of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, General Robert E. Lee, and General “Stonewall” Jackson carved into the side of the granite mountain. Its completed dimensions are 90 feet tall, 190 feet wide, and 400 feet above the ground.²⁰³ Stone Mountain Park, located on Robert E. Lee Boulevard, remains a popular tourist attraction in Georgia and was once considered the eighth wonder of the world.²⁰⁴

As seen with Stone Mountain, the UDC chapters were generally the ones to assume and complete monument building in the twentieth century, but sometimes the Georgia UDC had to complete preservation tasks rather than new projects. Such was the case in Macon in the 1950s. By 1956, the Confederate monument in Macon was a traffic obstruction and the mayor, Benjamin Franklin Merritt, deemed that the monument should be moved. Members of the

²⁰⁰ W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), 47-48.

²⁰¹ Virginia Clare, *Thunder and Stars: The Life of Mildred Rutherford* (Oglethorpe University, Georgia: Oglethorpe University Press, 1941), 233.

²⁰² “Confederate Memorial Carving,” Stone Mountain Park, <http://www.stonemountainpark.com/activities/history-nature/Confederate-Memorial-Carving> (accessed July 5, 2015).

²⁰³ Wiggins, *Remembering Georgia’s Confederates*, 125.

²⁰⁴ “Shows and Entertainment,” Stone Mountain Park, <http://www.stonemountainpark.com/activities/shows-entertainment> (accessed July 14, 2015) and Grace Elizabeth Hale, “Granite Stopped Time: The Stone Mountain Memorial and the Representation of White Southern Identity,” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 82, no. 1 (April 1, 1998), 26.

Sidney Lanier Chapter UDC, most notably Mary Lou Barton, argued that the monument was on sacred ground and that no group should move it.²⁰⁵ Within a few weeks, the monument was set to move to a nearby park. Given that they lost the relocation battle, the UDC members also protested turning the statue to face north. Merritt responded that the statue “has faced south long enough.”²⁰⁶ While the UDC could try its best, they could not fight progress and the monument was moved.

As the twentieth century continued on, the UDC in Georgia and throughout the nation consistently gained more members and more prominence. The UDC was even allowed to install a Confederate monument in Arlington National Cemetery on June 4, 1914. Moses Jacob Ezekiel, a native of Virginia and a Confederate veteran, designed the monument. This act of installing a Confederate monument designed by a Confederate veteran was a great victory for the UDC because it brought national recognition to the organization. It demonstrated that they were a patriotic organization deemed worthy enough to erect a monument in a national cemetery just outside of the nation’s capital. Both Northerners and Southerners were present at the ceremony, along with President Woodrow Wilson. This act was considered a form of sectional reconciliation, even if it was not intentional.²⁰⁷

By the end of World War I, the UDC was no longer building monuments and there were few Confederate veterans and widows left who needed assistance. Lost Cause rhetoric was entrenched in Southern, white schools via textbook purges and guided history curriculum. It was at this point that the UDC could change its emphasis – Southern vindication. The UDC members proved their patriotism during World War I and Northerners were even beginning to accept the

²⁰⁵“Confederate Monument will be Moved by City,” *Macon Telegraph* March 14, 1956.

²⁰⁶ “About Face, 75-Yard Move Set for Statue,” *Macon Telegraph* March 29, 1956.

²⁰⁷Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 68-72 and Marc Leepson, "Sculpting the Cause." *Civil War Times* 46, no. 9 (November 2007): 48-51.

narrative of the Lost Cause, as evident in the placement of a Confederate monument at Arlington.²⁰⁸

The Georgia LMAs, along with the Georgia UDC chapters that are still active today, established themselves as an effective force in the South after the Civil War. These ladies, in an effort to honor dead soldiers from an illegitimate country that only survived four years, organized, fundraised, and petitioned for the Lost Cause they truly believed in. Their actions would have ramifications for the next 150 years – both for the good and for the bad.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 157-158.

4 EPILOGUE: SIGNIFICANCE OF LMAS

“History is written by the victors” is an oft-used phrase in reference to military history. While in most instances this could be true, it does not apply to the South in the post-Civil War era. The Ladies’ Memorial Associations and later the United Daughters of the Confederacy made sure that Confederate culture was perpetuated and their version of history prevailed in school textbooks, newspapers, and public ceremonies even as it appeared the nation had finally reached a phase of reconciliation. The women of the LMAs and the UDC were determined to promote the Lost Cause in the South – and they succeeded for nearly 150 years.

Gone with the Wind, most especially the film, serves a perfect example of the promotion of the Lost Cause in the South and throughout the world. The film premiered in Atlanta on December 15, 1939 bringing the fictionalized “land of Cavalier and Cotton Fields called the Old South” to the big screen for millions to see. As seen in the 1938 Columbus Memorial Day speech, many white Southerners believed *Gone with the Wind* represented a true image of the South playing directly into Lost Cause rhetoric. The LMAs and the UDC certainly appreciated these efforts, as it promoted their objectives. Interestingly, after the movie premiere, the Atlanta LMA made Vivien Leigh, the actress who portrayed Scarlett O’Hara, into an honorary member of their group. Additionally, the Atlanta LMA applauded *Gone with the Wind* producer David O. Selznick ““for making the picture conform to the facts of history’.”²⁰⁹

Throughout Georgia, LMAs no longer care for the cemeteries and monuments or host Confederate Memorial Day events. In fact, there are no known active LMA chapters left in the state. Members of the UDC now complete the tasks started by the LMAs. As Janney eloquently

²⁰⁹ Cox, *Dreaming of Dixie*, 94.

phrased, “even as their legacy continues, the Ladies have largely been forgotten with the passage of time” but it important to remember that whether the LMAs intended it or not, the Lost Cause ideas they encouraged after the war provided the foundation for many of the racial and social tensions concerning Confederate memory that still persist in the South today, most especially with the UDC.²¹⁰

The current tasks of the UDC are hardly confined to the cemetery and monument building. As seen as early as the 1920s, the UDC was more concerned with current happenings with the living than strictly caring for the dead and building monuments. They desired to push the boundaries of the LMA objectives outside of the cemetery, especially once women acquired the right to vote. With this milestone, women could be more openly political instead of shrouding their actions under the shield of mourning.

With the 100th anniversary of the Civil War in the 1960s, the nation debated the proper means of remembering the war. In essence, the debate was between historians who wanted to educate the public on the war and politicians who wanted to make money from the pageantry all while the entire nation was trying to figure how continued racial segregation would fit in the narrative. In the midst of this debate was the proper use of Confederate symbols, such as the battle flag. As historian Robert Cook stated, “the UDC and the SCV did not always agree with radical segregationists on the proper use of Confederate symbols like the battle flag, but they all believed that diffusing their particular version of the southern past was essential if the region’s institutions and customs – indeed, its very identity – were to survive the interconnected threats of federal power, modernity, and what they regarded as creeping socialism.”²¹¹

²¹⁰ Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past*, 195, 199.

²¹¹ Robert J. Cook, *Troubled Commemoration: The American Civil War Centennial, 1961-1965* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 76.

Currently, the UDC objectives are: historical, benevolent, educational, memorial, and patriotic. No longer is “social” considered an objective of the UDC as it was at its founding. The UDC prides itself on its “patriotic” duties, most especially providing assistance during wartime and providing services to veterans of all wars. For example, according to the United Daughters of the Confederacy website, members of the UDC volunteer “countless hours every year” working with veterans in the Veterans Affairs Hospitals and nursing homes in at least eighteen states.²¹² It seems that the UDC is attempting to be more inclusive even if their membership is still limited to descendants of Confederate veterans. Their philanthropic efforts might be, in part, an effort to diffuse controversy.

Most recently, in the wake of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, issues of Confederate memory have arisen again in a tragic fashion. On June 17, 2015, Dylann Roof, a 21-year-old white man, entered Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, a historically black church. Roof opened fire on those gathered for a prayer meeting, ultimately killing nine people.²¹³ In the days following the attack, there was national outcry to remove the Confederate battle flag from the South Carolina state grounds because it was similar to the one waved by Roof in photographs taken prior to the killings. Many linked Roof’s actions to lingering sentiments from the Civil War, as he purposefully attacked a historically black church, was known to make racist statements, and was seen displaying the Confederate battle flag. After

²¹² “Objectives of the UDC,” United Daughters of the Confederacy, <http://www.hqudc.org/objectives/> (accessed July 12, 2015).

²¹³ “Who is Dylann Roof, Charleston church massacre suspect?”, *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, June 18, 2015.

much public debate, the flag was removed from the state capitol in Columbia, South Carolina on July 10, 2015 where it had flown for more than fifty years.²¹⁴

Roof's devastating actions and the resulting debate over the flag demonstrate that even though the Civil War ended 150 years ago, the Lost Cause remains an issue today. Despite the fact that there are no more LMAs in Georgia, the work of the LMAs and the still active UDC, have been brought into the discussion of Civil War memory as many call for the removal of Confederate symbols from public grounds – monuments included. For example, Georgia State Senator Gloria Frazier demands the removal of the Confederate monument in downtown Augusta where it has stood since 1878, saying it glorifies the Confederacy. John Hayes, a history professor at Georgia Regents University in Augusta, has emphasized that the Charleston Massacre has “reignited the debate about the true motivations of the Confederacy and whether or not the promotion of slavery and oppression can ever be removed from that heritage” in addition to bluntly stating that the top of the monument is adorned with “a white man with a gun.”²¹⁵ Also, Georgia State Senator Harold Jones believes that there should be a discussion to discontinue Confederate Memorial Day on April 26th throughout the state. Finally, the state has halted all new issuances of SCV license plates, which featured two Confederate battle flags, until the plates can be redesigned.²¹⁶

On a grander scale, the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) is currently calling for a removal of all Confederate symbols from Stone Mountain. This includes possibly sandblasting away the carvings of Davis, Lee, and Jackson from the face of the

²¹⁴ “The Moment the Confederate Flag Was Lowered in South Carolina,” *The New York Times*, July 10, 2015.

²¹⁵ “Some want debate over Confederate symbols in Augusta,” *Augusta Chronicle*, June 27, 2015.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

mountain in addition to removing any Confederate flags. The argument is that because the monument is on state park grounds, it should no longer serve as a monument to the Confederacy.²¹⁷ It is obvious that the Lost Cause is still alive in the minds of some Georgians and Southerners in general, as these objects have been permanently linked with the Confederacy – all thanks to the work of LMAs and the UDC after the Civil War.

There is no way to know where the debate over Confederate symbols will lead in the upcoming years. Confederate monuments and Confederate battle flags have dotted the landscape of the South for decades but it is quite possible this could change as people more outwardly describe these symbols as perpetuating racism rather than purely a form of remembrance.

Putting military history and racial sentiments aside, these monuments are not just about emotionless soldier statues atop a piece of stone commemorating a nation that lasted only four years. They also tell the story of the women who built them. One has to look deeper into the historical records to find their stories, but they are there and they are important. White women in the post-Civil War South gained much autonomy, even if it is not recognized, for the LMAs gave women the chance to recruit members, hold fundraisers, work with sculptors, network with other women's groups, and plan for community-wide monument unveiling ceremonies because they needed honor the dead Confederate soldiers. As mentioned by Faust in *This Republic of Suffering*, the LMAs were performing burial and memorial services for the South that Congress would not supply.²¹⁸ At the same time, all of these activities culminated into the Lost Cause. While the LMAs may not be solely responsible for its creation, they are an integral part of the

²¹⁷ "NAACP wants removal of Confederate generals from Stone Mountain," *WSB-TV Channel 2 Atlanta*, July 14, 2015, <http://www.wsbtv.com/news/news/national/naacp-wants-removal-confederate-generals-stone-mou/nmyYD>.

²¹⁸ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 237.

Lost Cause. They set the stage for the success of other groups such as the UDC, the UCV, and the SCV who carried the Lost Cause into the twenty-first century.

Despite the negativity surrounding the Confederacy and the Lost Cause, the LMAs serve as an example of the political acumen of women in an era when they were supposed to be politically inactive. They gave women a public platform. The LMAs need to be written back into the historical narrative of the post-war era “lest we forget” an important part of United States history. If the Confederate monuments are destroyed, or even removed from their current locations, it is not just an erasure of a Confederate symbol; it is an erasure of women’s history as well.

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