

DRINKIN', FIGHTIN', PRAYIN': THE SOUTHERN WHITE MALE IN THE CIVIL
WAR ERA

by

JAMES HILL WELBORN III

(Under the Direction of Stephen Berry)

ABSTRACT

The Old South's masculine culture involved two dominant ethics that historians have explored well, though independently. The first, masculine honor, prioritized the public recognition and defense of white male claims to reputation and authority; it also, to a perhaps lesser degree, emphasized private self-reflective fantasies of worthiness to claim such honor, and self-castigations for consistent fallings-short. The second ethic was piety, an emphasis on moral self-reflection and an encouragement of believers to curb excessive pride and passion and ready themselves for God's Kingdom.

Obviously honor and piety could pull a man in different directions. The former ended at the dueling grounds. The latter ended at the communion table. Piety, to a degree, operated as a check on the more hedonistic and anarchic aspects of honor. But in Edgefield, South Carolina in the 1830s, and increasingly across the South as war approached, the honor creed came to capture piety, creating a new compound, a wrathful ethic I call "righteous honor"—the ethic in which the South would make war in defense of its material interests, first against Indians and Mexicans, then later against the American Union itself.

Even as “righteous honor” came to dominate white men’s public culture, privately they struggled more than ever to live up to its dictates. White southern men knew well what vices undermined their righteous claims: sensual and sexual lust, alcoholic indulgence, wanton violence, and unrestrained racial exploitation. More than ever, these needed to be conquered. More than ever in the late antebellum period, “*self-mastery*” became key to the public culture of the South. And, more than ever, the struggle (and inability) to achieve that mastery produced a tension, indeed a fury, that found its best release in the Civil War.

Drinkin’, Fightin’, Prayin’: The Southern White Male in the Civil War Era unmaskes the personal, emotional, and moral dimensions of antebellum white southern manhood as it lurched toward its self-destructive apotheosis and cast about for justification, explanation, and direction in the breach and aftermath.

INDEX WORDS: Righteous Honor; Self-Mastery; Honor; Religion; Manhood; Morality; Antebellum South; South Carolina; Civil War

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DEDICATION

To my parents, James Hill Welborn Jr. & Lila Davis Welborn: In ways too numerous to count and too significant to aptly describe, I would not be here without you.

To my great-grandmother and grandmother, Eva Bunch Hinson (“Granny”) & Margaret Elizabeth Hinson Davis (“Bebbe”): Models of strength, faith, and family whose memory I will always carry with me.

To my wife, Leslie Maureen-Crean Welborn: For a lifetime together as each others’ best friends, biggest fans, and truest loves.

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I have truly been blessed in my life and my work, and doing justice to the many people and places responsible for these blessings is a lesson in humility for which I am eternally grateful. What follows falls far short of what is due, for what I have been given far exceeds what I probably deserve...

I entered upon the path to professional historian at Clemson University. It was there in those hills among the Clemson family that I realized my love of the past would be my future. After dabbling in architecture (too much math) and law (too much law), I finally settled on an undergraduate history major, and upon graduation, immediately began my graduate studies. Dr. Paul Christopher Anderson proved an early and on-going source of inspiration and guidance. His influence—through candid advice, honest criticism, and encouraging counsel—over the past decade-and-change has been and continues to be a shining example of history—researched, written, and taught—at its finest. Dr. Rod Andrew proved equally inspiring and supportive. I continue to pattern my perspectives as a teacher and scholar to his example. Dr. Thomas Oberdan offered me my first academic job, first as his teaching assistant and later as a temporary instructor, and provided essential advice and the room to grow as I cultivated my fledgling teaching persona and philosophy.

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As Clarence Oddbody famously wrote in Frank Capra’s classic *It’s a Wonderful Life*, “No man is a failure who has friends.” If Clarence was right, then any failure on my part will be wholly self-inflicted, because I’ve been blessed with the best friends anyone could ever hope for. If I didn’t know better, I would swear I’ve known Robby Poister forever, but regardless, I’m immensely grateful to know him now and to continue to count him and his wonderful wife Mari-Catherine among my best friends henceforth. Matt and Kylie Hulbert have been keen editors, steadfast supporters, and true friends throughout. Chris and Daryn Marsh have been great friends who’ve provided a willing ear, helping hand, and bountiful “spread” during monthly “supper club” meetings, each one of which has been a pleasure. I’m extremely grateful for the conviviality I’ve enjoyed with my entire LeConte Hall graduate cohort, past and present, without whom my time in Athens would have been much more arduous and much less fulfilling.

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My younger brother and sister have both heard me ramble on about history for longer than either can probably remember, and both have usually expressed (or at least feigned) genuine interest. From playing "North & South" on NES, "Battleground Gettysburg" in MS DOS, and just about every other Civil War computer/console game ever made, to re-enacting battles in our back yard, my brother Christopher was my first and remains my best friend. My sister Averi has always been a source of joy and pride.

From her early days of showing off a “cannon” arm at the little league ballpark to the beautiful and intelligent young woman she has become, I have reveled in every dance recital and college paper that I’ve been privileged to take part in and bear witness to.

My Crean in-laws have always been supportive of and interested in my continually evolving (and seemingly interminable) “book,” and I thank them all—Lilburn Creans, Charleston Creans, and Snellville Schutters—for their love and support.

And the best comes last—my wife Leslie. She said yes to a lifetime together knowing full well that she’d be sharing her husband and home with long-dead historical figures and an endless roster of Clemson sports figures, with a mountain of books and a never-ending stream of ballgames, but she remains my most interesting study, my most inspiring source, and my most perfect match.

Soli Deo Gloria

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INTRODUCTION

DRINKIN', FIGHTIN', & PRAYIN' IN OLD EDGEFIELD & THE OLD SOUTH

*"But evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them...All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete."*¹

In 1854, several distinguished intellectuals in Charleston, South Carolina publicly petitioned their fellow South Carolinian William Gilmore Simms to deliver his popular oration entitled *Poetry and the Practical*. In this series of lectures, delivered repeatedly in revised forms across the South from 1851 to 1854, Simms promoted the proverbial poet's claims upon humanity by arguing, as one Simms scholar later surmised, that "the poet's major duty, as minister to man, was to kindle a desire for the spiritual."²

Taking the podium in Charleston in the early summer of 1854, Simms brought his intimate knowledge of his native state and region to bear in an inspirational harangue. His audience, he knew, were capitalists through and through, and they would need to be flattered before they could be reformed. "The acquisition of wealth is, in fact, a moral duty," Simms assured them, "since our very capacity for virtuous usefulness depends much upon the extent and variety of our resources. The instincts of man all lead to acquisition." But Simms quickly warned his listeners not to follow these instincts blindly, asserting that, "the better policy is to teach *against* the instincts, lest they rise into

¹ "The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy, Chapter 3, Verses 13-17," *The Holy Bible, New King James Version*.

² James Everett Kibler Jr., "Introduction," to William Gilmore Simms, *Poetry and the Practical*, (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1996), xxiii.

dominion over the reason, and usurp all the better possessions of the soul. It is from this very struggle of the soul against the instincts that virtue takes her birth.” “To strengthen our virtue,” he continued, “we must humble the instincts, lest they grow beyond our human need, beyond our capacity to control them, and depress and devour our virtues.”³

It is the current historiographical fashion to emphasize the degree to which the slave regime of the Old South was intensely capitalistic. Indeed, one has a difficult time remembering how historians were ever persuaded that the economy of the Old South was somehow “precapitalist” or “seigneurial.” A new wave of historians have completely overturned such thinking: The Old South—now understood as a “plantation-industrial complex” stretching from Richmond to Rio—was not the backward fringe but the leading edge and driving engine of an industrializing Atlantic World; and the Old Southwest is now seen as a land of capitalism run amok, a place where cheap land, wildcat banking, and massively leveraged slave fortunes created a speculative economy unlike any seen in the United States before the Gilded Age.⁴

³ Simms, Kibler, ed., *Poetry and the Practical*, 21.

⁴ For more on this prevailing analytical perspective on the Old South as a region rife with speculation and debt, boom and bust cycles, “flush times” and failures, see especially: Edward J. Balleisen, *Navigating Failure: Bankruptcy and Commercial Society in Antebellum America*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Edward E. Baptist, *Creating an Old South: Middle Florida’s Plantation Frontier before the Civil War*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Joan E. Cashin, *A Family Venture: Men and Women on the Southern Frontier*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); Toby Ditz, “Shipwrecked: Imperiled Masculinity and the Representation of Business Failures among Philadelphia’s Eighteenth-Century Merchants,” *Journal of American History* 81, (1994), 51-80; Daniel S. Dupre, *Transforming the Cotton Frontier: Madison County, Alabama, 1800-1840*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997); Bruce Mann, *Republic of Debtors: Bankruptcy in the Age of American Independence*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); James David Miller, *South by Southwest: Planter Migration and Identity in the Slave South*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002); James Oakes, *The Ruling Race: A History of American Slaveholders*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982) and ; Joshua D. Rothman, *Flush Times & Fever Dreams: A Story of Capitalism and Slavery in the Age of Jackson*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012); Scott A. Sandage, *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); David Silkenat, *Moments of Despair: Suicide, Divorce, & Debt in Civil War North Carolina*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); J. Mills Thornton, *Politics and Power in a Slave Society: Alabama, 1800-1860*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).

This is all true so far as it goes. But the white South's experience of itself—an experience that led to secession and war—was not limited to material interests, however massive, and material interests alone do not explain the South's violent reaction to Lincoln's election.

The Old South's masculine culture, of which Simms was product and proponent, involved two dominant ethics that historians have explored well, though independently. The first, masculine honor, prioritized the public recognition and defense of white male claims to reputation and authority; it also, to a perhaps lesser degree, emphasized private self-reflective fantasies of worthiness to claim such honor, and self-castigations for consistent fallings-short.

The second ethic was piety, an emphasis on moral self-reflection and an encouragement of believers to curb excessive pride and passion and ready themselves for God's Kingdom. Obviously honor and piety could pull a man in different directions. The former ended at the dueling grounds. The latter ended at the communion table. Piety, to a degree, operated as a check on the more hedonistic and anarchic aspects of honor. But, as *Drinkin', Fightin', Prayin': The Southern White Male in the Civil War Era* will argue, in Edgefield, South Carolina in the 1830s, and increasingly across the South as war approached, the honor creed came to capture piety, creating a new compound, a wrathful ethic I call "righteous honor"—the ethic in which the South would make war in defense of its material interests.

For these issues as they related specifically to southern investment and commerce in slaves, see especially: Stephen Deyle, *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005); Robert H. Gudmestad, *A Troublesome Commerce: The Transformation of the Interstate Slave Trade*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003); Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Richard Holcombe Kilbourne, *Debt, Investment, Slaves: Credit Relations in East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, 1825-1885*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1995).

Even as “righteous honor” came to dominate men’s public culture, privately they struggled more than ever to live up to its dictates. Southern men knew well what vices undermined their righteous claims: sensual and sexual lust, alcoholic indulgence, wanton violence, and unrestrained racial exploitation. More than ever, these needed to be conquered: How could the white South hope to do battle with the heathen North, how could they be prepared for Armageddon, if they could not put their own houses in order? More than ever in the late antebellum period, “self-mastery” became key to the public culture of the South. And, more than ever, the struggle (and inability) to achieve that mastery produced a tension, indeed a fury, that found its best release in war.⁵

⁵ The internal contradictions within antebellum southern honor culture and its relationship to both violence and religion emphasized herein build most directly upon the following: Peter S. Carmichael, *The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 2-18, 59-8891-120; Charity R. Carney, *Ministers and Masters: Methodism, Manhood, and Honor in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 5- 37, 138-141; A. James Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000); Lorri Glover, *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 17-22; Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, & Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), ix-xii, 1-18, 19-99, 101-164; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics & Behavior in the Old South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1982), vii-xix, 14-15, 60-61, 99-114, 129-147, 298-299, 493 and *The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1880s*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), xi-xix, 83-105. Other works to engage these southern cultural contradictions include: Edward Ayers, *Vengeance & Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th-Century American South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1984), 9-33, 118-125 and Dickson D. Bruce Jr., *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 12-14, 112-113, 233-240.

The focus on the personal and emotional aspects of these cultural tensions, as emphasized here and in subsequent chapters, builds most directly upon the following works: Stephen W. Berry, *All That Makes A Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 19-22, 34; John Mayfield, *Counterfeit Gentlemen: Manhood and Humor in the Old South*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009), xiii-xxviii, 25-47, 83-104; Steven M. Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South: Ritual in the Lives of the Planters*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), ix-xviii, 5-49.

The concept of self-mastery emphasized herein comes most directly from Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 246-250. Other works to emphasize self-control or self-discipline within the southern honor code and/or southern evangelicalism include: Edward L. Ayers, *Vengeance & Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th-Century American South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1984), 27-33; Dickson D. Bruce Jr., *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 8-12, 233-240; Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South*, x-xviii, 1-49.

* * *

Historians have ably described the Old South's honor culture, and have made a persuasive case that a peculiar variant of masculinity prevailed in both its public spaces and private homes. The earliest forays pitted the "cavalier" South against the "puritan" North, and emphasized southern cultural tendencies towards excessive violence and oppressive social hierarchies. The South in this narrative appears largely irreligious, with secular concerns outweighing sacred ones, and racial preoccupations fundamentally shaping the whole. Seeking to account for cultural differences between North and South that ultimately ended in a bloody Civil War, these historians have argued for two fundamentally opposed societies with deep-seated disparities rooted in the colonies and intensified in the antebellum period, fomenting an impending, irrepressible conflict. The South figures as the conservative, reactionary party, looking to archaic traditions in resistance to modern, progressive developments. The North, in contrast, fully invests in this modern progress, and embraces the reforms designed to bring it to fruition.⁶

As these and subsequent historians have shown, a large part of that regional divergence owed to Southern cultural peculiarities, which developed from and adapted to the immense social changes underway in early nineteenth-century America at large.

⁶ This conception of the antebellum North as South as competing societies in the midst of an emerging sectional crisis that eventually led to the Civil War is exemplified in the following works: Jan C. Dawson, "The Puritan and Cavalier: The South's Perception of Contrasting Traditions," *The Journal of Southern History* (Vol. 44, No. 4, November, 1978): pp; Eric Foner, *Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980) and *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); William W. Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816-1836*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965) and *The Road to Disunion, Vol. 1: Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1854*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) and *The Road to Disunion, Vol. 2: Secessionists Triumphant, 1854-1861*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Eugene D. Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South*, (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1989 ed.); David M. Potter, *The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861*, (New York: Harper Colophon, 1976); William R. Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and American National Character*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993 ed.); Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Yankee Saints and Southern Sinners*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985).

Scholars have cited a strict racial hierarchy, a pronounced patriarchal order, and a conservative religious mentality as the various foundations of southern distinctiveness.⁷ Others have emphasized commonalities between North and South, as both regions responded to the same fundamental social changes—economic expansion into increasingly global market economies and political expansion wrought by universal white male suffrage—in culturally specific ways endemic to the respective regions.⁸ Still other

⁷ A number of historians have examined how southern distinctiveness—social, cultural, and economic—evolved during the antebellum period. Central to all is the assumption of southern exceptionalism emanating from the institution of slavery and its formidable role in widening the sectional divide and fomenting secession and war: For slavery and southern politics, see especially: Waldo W. Braden, ed., *Oratory in the Old South, 1828-1860*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970); Lacy K. Ford, *Origins of Southern Radicalism: The South Carolina Upcountry, 1800-1860*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1988), 97-214; Kenneth Greenberg, *Masters and Statesmen: The Political Culture of American Slavery*, (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985); Eugene D. Genovese, *The Slaveholders' Dilemma: Freedom and Progress in Southern Conservative Thought, 1820-1860*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1992); Christopher J. Olsen, *Political Culture and Secession in Mississippi: Masculinity, Honor, and the Antiparty Tradition, 1830-1860*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); W. Stuart Town, *Oratory and Rhetoric in the Nineteenth-Century South: A Rhetoric of Defense*, (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1998).

For slavery and southern violence, see especially: Dickson D. Bruce, *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979); John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South, 1800-1860*, (Urbana and Chicago, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2002 ed.); Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001); Richard E. Nisbett & Dov Cohen, *Culture of Honor: The Psychology of Violence in the South*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1996).

For slavery and southern religion, see especially: Robert M. Calhoon, *Evangelicals and Conservatives in the Early South, 1740-1861*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988); John Patrick Daly, *When Slavery was Called Freedom: Evangelicalism, Proslavery, and the Causes of the Civil War*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2002); Elizabeth Fox-Genovese & Eugene D. Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholder's Worldview*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 2005); E. Brooks Holifield, *Gentlemen Theologians: American Theology in Southern Culture, 1785-1860*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1978); Charles F. Irons, *The Origins of Proslavery Christianity: White and Black Evangelicals in Colonial and Antebellum Virginia*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

For slavery and the southern legal system, see especially: Paul Finkleman, ed., *Slavery and the Law*, (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002 ed.); Ariela J. Gross, *Double Character: Slavery and Mastery in the Antebellum Southern Courtroom*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000); Hadden, *Slave Patrols*; Hoffer, *The Caning of Charles Sumner*; Timothy S. Huebner, *The Southern Judicial Tradition: State Judges and Sectional Distinctiveness, 1790-1890*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994); Thomas D. Morris, *Southern Slavery and the Law: 1619-1860*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

⁸ Many historians have noted the cultural commonalities between North and South in the antebellum era, especially with regard to the reform impulse and the economic, social, and political changes that initiated its associated increase in moral concern. For the most relevant of these works, see especially: Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*, (New York: Random House, Inc., 1993).

scholars have illustrated the validity of both perspectives, showing how the very commonalities that bound the antebellum North and South together simultaneously exacerbated regional differences and expanded the sectional divide.⁹

Southern conceptions of honor played a pivotal role in shaping the complex southern culture and sectional crisis these works collectively describe.¹⁰ That honor, as

ed.); Richard J. Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America*, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1997); Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture*, (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998 ed.); T. Gregory Garvey, *Creating a Culture of Reform in Antebellum America*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006); Stephen Mintz, *Moralists and Modernizers: America's Pre-Civil War Reformers*, (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism & Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War*, (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980 ed.).

For the most important works informing this conception of the Market Revolution in America, see especially: John Lauritz Larson, *The Market Revolution in America: Liberty, Ambition, and the Eclipse of the Common Good*, (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Scott C. Martin, ed., *Cultural Change and the Market Revolution in America, 1789-1860*, (Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2005); Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1991); Melvin Stokes & Stephen Conway, eds., *The Market Revolution in America: Social, Political, and Religious Expressions, 1800-1880*, (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1996).

For works that emphasize regionally specific reactions to these national social and economic transformations, see especially: Frank J. Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820-1865*, (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 2006); Clayton E. Cramer, *Concealed Weapon Laws of the Early Republic: Dueling, Southern Violence, and Moral Reform*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999); Tom Downy, *Planting a Capitalist South: Masters, Merchants, and Manufacturers in the Southern Interior, 1790-1860*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006); Ami Pflugrad-Jackisch, *Brothers of a Vow: Secret Fraternal Orders and the Transformation of White Male Culture in Antebellum Virginia*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010); Beth Barton Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up: Progress and the Pulpit in Nineteenth-Century Virginia*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Kenneth Moore Startup, *The Root of All Evil: The Protestant Clergy and the Economic Mind of the Old South*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997); Jonathan Daniel Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class, 1800-1861*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Jonathan Daniel Wells & Jennifer R. Green, eds., *The Southern Middle Class in the Long Nineteenth Century*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011).

⁹ The most relevant works to proffer this more complex perspective, especially concerning the prominence of religious morality in shaping reactions to the market revolution, the sectional crisis, secession, and the Civil War, include: Margaret Abruzzo, *Polemical Pain: Slavery, Cruelty, and the Rise of Humanitarianism*, (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011); Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, & Charles Reagan Wilson, eds., *Religion and the American Civil War*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Randall M. Miller, *Both Prayed to the Same God: Religion and Faith in the American Civil War*, (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2007); Mark A. Noll, *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006); George C. Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Alter of the Nation: A Moral History of the American Civil War*, (New York: Viking, Penguin Group, 2006).

¹⁰ Southern honor drew upon a bevy of historical antecedents, from the ancient world through the nineteenth century. For an analysis of European conceptions of honor and honor cultures that informed notions of honor in the American South, see the following: Francois Billacois & Trista Selous, eds., *The*

many historians have shown, was pervasive in the antebellum South. It privileged white male authority and upheld a strict hierarchical view of society; one which placed white men of wealth at the top and rendered dependent white males, women, and African-Americans subservient to elite white male authority. Other scholars have confirmed the pervasiveness of the honor ethic in the Old South, but have emphasized its performative nature. They focus on its tendency to encourage men to wear many masks in their coded

Duel : Its Rise and Fall in Early Modern France, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990); Peter Duffy, *The Killing of Major Denis Mahon: A Mystery of Old Ireland*, (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2008); Ute Frevert, *Men of Honour : A Social and Cultural History of the Duel*, (New York, NY: Polity Press, 1995); Barbara Holland, *Gentlemen's Blood: A History of Dueling, from Swords at Dawn to Pistols at Dusk*, (New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2003); Steven C. Hughes, *The Politics of the Sword: Dueling, Honor, and Masculinity in Modern Italy*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007); Giles Hunt, *The Duel: Castlereagh, Canning, and Deadly Cabinet Rivalry*, (London, England: I.B. Tauris, 2008); James Kelly, *That Damned Thing Called Honour: Dueling in Ireland, 1570-1860*, (Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press, 1995); Victor Gordon Kiernan, *The Duel in European History: Honour and the Reign of Aristocracy*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1988); Kevin McAleer, *Dueling: The Cult of Honor in Fin-de-Siecle Germany*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Robert A. Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Irina Reyfman, *Ritualized Violence Russian Style: The Duel in Russian Culture and Literature*, (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); Helmut Walser Smith, *The Butcher's Tale: Murder and Anti-Semitism in a German Town*, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002); Peter C. Spierenburg, ed., *Men and Violence: Gender, Honor, and Rituals in Modern Europe and America*, (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1998); Benjamin Cummings Truman, *The Field of Honor: A Complete History of Dueling in All Countries; Including the Judicial Duel of Europe, the Private Duel of the Civilized World, and Specific Descriptions of All the Noted Hostile Meetings in Europe and America*, (New York, NY: Ford, Howard, & Hulbert, 1884).

For analysis of honor cultures in a broad nineteenth-century American context, especially its relationship to violence from the colonial period through the Civil War era, see: Michael A. Bellesiles, ed., *Lethal Imagination: Violence and Brutality in American History*, (New York: New York University Press, 1999) and *Arming America: The Origins of A National Gun Culture*, (Brooklyn, NY: Soft Skull Press, 2000); Richard Maxwell Brown, *Strain of Violence: Historical Studies of American Violence and Vigilantism*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1975); Ryan Chamberlain, *Pistols, Politics, and the Press: Dueling in 19th Century American Journalism*, (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2009); Carole Emberton, *Beyond Redemption: Race, Violence, and the American South after the Civil War*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2013); Lorien Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs: Violence, Honor, and Manhood in the Union Army*, (New York: New York University Press, 2010); Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001); Robert Gross, *The Minutemen and Their World*, (New York: NY: Hill & Wang, 1976); Mark E. Kann, *The Gendering of American Politics: Found Mothers, Founding Fathers, and Political Patriarchy*, (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1999) and *Taming Passion for the Public Good: Policing Sex in the Early Republic*, (New York: New York University Press, 2013); Jon Pahl, *Empire of Sacrifice: The Religious Origins of American Violence*, (New York: New York University Press, 2010); Don C. Seitz, *Famous American Duels: With Some Account of the Causes that Led Up to Them and the Men Engaged*, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, Publishers, 1929); Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *This Violent Empire: The Birth of an American National Identity*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010); William Oliver Stevens, *Pistols at Ten Paces: The Story of The Code of Honor in America*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1940).

and ritualized correspondence and confrontations with one another, most vividly displayed in the formal duel.¹¹ Some historians have further argued that such honor and violence pervaded southern male society even among lower class southern whites, albeit with more virile expectations and more brutal manifestations.¹² Still others have bridged the social gap, showing how the southern middle class—yeomen, merchants, and professionals—similarly abided by honor’s dictates in their domestic and public concerns by aspiring to and adapting forms of elite honorable restraint while shunning lower-class

¹¹ On the prominence of violence within southern culture generally and the importance of honor in fomenting southern violence, see especially: Edward L. Ayers, *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th-Century American South*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Brown, *Strain of Violence*, 3-103; Bruce Jr., *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South and The Kentucky Tragedy: A Story of Conflict and Change in Antebellum America*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006); Cramer, *Concealed Weapons Laws of the Early Republic*; Clement Eaton, “Mob Violence in the Old South,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 29, No. 3, (Dec. 1942): 351-370; Jeff Forret, *Race Relations at the Margins: Slaves and Poor Whites in the Antebellum Southern Countryside*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006); Lisa Tendrich Frank & Daniel Kilbride, eds., *Southern Character: Essays in Honor of Bertram Wyatt-Brown*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011), 45-55, 102-115; Franklin, *The Militant South*; Sheldon Hackney, “Southern Violence,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 74, No. 3, (Feb. 1969): 906-925; Williamjames Hull Hoffer, *The Caning of Charles Sumner: Honor, Idealism, and the Origins of the Civil War*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010); Nisbett & Cohen, *Culture of Honor*; Olsen, *Political Culture and Secession in Mississippi*; Nicolas W. Proctor, *Bathed in Blood: Hunting and Mastery in the Old South*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2002); William K. Scarborough, *The Allstons of Chicora Wood: Wealth, Honor, and Gentility in the South Carolina Lowcountry*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011); Jack Kenny Williams, *Vogues in Villainy: Crime and Retribution in Antebellum South Carolina*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1959); Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982) and *The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1890s*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

For analyses that emphasize the performative nature of southern honor, especially as manifested in the elite duel, see especially: Kenneth Greenberg, *Honor & Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, The Pro-slavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, And Gambling in the Old South*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp; Steven M. Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South: Ritual in the Lives of the Planters*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 5-49; Jack Kenny Williams, *Dueling in the Old South: Vignettes of Social History*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000 ed.);

¹² On southern honor and violence as manifested among the lower classes of antebellum southern society, see especially: Edward Isham, Charles C. Bolton and Scott P. Culcasure, eds., *The Confessions of Edward Isham: A Poor White Life of the Old South*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998); Charles C. Bolton, *Poor Whites of the Antebellum South: Tenants and Laborers in Central North Carolina and Northeast Mississippi*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994); Elliot J. Gorn, “‘Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch’: The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 90, No. 1, (Feb. 1985): 18-43.

“barbarity.”¹³ Collectively these works describe the southern honor culture engaged in *Drinkin’, Fightin’, Prayin’*. Honor, however, was not the sole ethical influence operating on southern male minds and mores.

Historians have also long acknowledged the American South as the “Bible Belt” of the nation, and have adeptly described the prominence of Protestant Evangelicals in fastening that moniker upon the region. Most of this literature begins at the First Great Awakening of the mid-eighteenth century, paying particular attention to the Evangelist George Whitefield and his significant but limited influence in Virginia and the coastal South. Though an Anglican establishment officially marked the colonial period, most historians agree that southern religion languished during this period, especially as compared to New England Puritans, Pennsylvania Quakers, and Maryland Catholics.¹⁴

¹³ On middle-class manifestations of southern honor and violence during the antebellum period, see especially: Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 102-120; Jennifer R. Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class in the Old South*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, & the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995); Pflugrad-Jackisch, *Brothers of a Vow*; Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class*; Wells & Green, eds., *The Southern Middle Class in the Long Nineteenth Century*; Amanda Reese Mushal, *My Word is My Bond”: Honor, Commerce, and Status in the Antebellum South*,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 2010).

¹⁴ For a broad overview of the religious landscape in America between 1730 and 1865, see especially: Paul K. Conkin, *The Uneasy Center: Reformed Christianity in Antebellum America*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*, (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1989); Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1785-1865*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Frank Lambert, *The Founding Fathers and the Place of Religion in America*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Mark A. Noll, *America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) and *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield, and the Wesleys*, (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003); Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2003 ed.).

For an overview of southern religious history, see especially: Tod A. Baker, Robert P. Steed, & Laurence W. Moreland, eds., *Religion and Politics in the South: Mass and Elite Perspectives*, (New York: Praeger Special Studies, 1983); Samuel S. Hill Jr., ed., *Religion and the Solid South*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972) and *Religion in the Southern States: A Historical Study*, (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1983) and *Varieties of Southern Religious Experience*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988); Beth Barton Schweiger & Donald G. Mathews, eds., *Religion in the American South: Protestants and others in History and Culture*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Charles Reagan Wilson, ed., *Religion in the South*, (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1985);

The true religious awakening in the South occurred a half-century later as Protestant Evangelical Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians descended upon the southern backcountry and ignited a revivalist fervor that waxed and waned for most of the early nineteenth century. Two general conclusions that emerge from this literature inform *Drinkin', Fightin', Prayin'*; the First Great Awakening had limited influence beyond the coastal South, and the Second Great Awakening, or Great Revival, initiated the transformation of the southern religious landscape toward the now familiar Protestant Evangelical Bible Belt.¹⁵

Charles Reagan Wilson & Mark Silk, eds., *Religion and Public Life in the South in the Evangelical Mode*, (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005).

For more on religion in the southern colonies as outlined herein, see especially: Nicholas M. Beasley, *Christian Ritual and the Creation of British Slave Societies, 1650-1780*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009); Robert M. Calhoon, *Evangelicals and Conservatives in the Early South, 1740-1861*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988).

For more on the First Great Awakening and its legacies in the South and the nation as outlined herein, see especially: Charles Frederick Irons, *The Origins of Proslavery Christianity: White and Black Evangelicals in Colonial and Antebellum Virginia*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999 ed.); Thomas Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007); Frank Lambert, *'Pedlar in Divinity': George Whitefield and the Transatlantic Revivals*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994) and *Inventing the "Great Awakening,"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Janet Moore Lindman, *Bodies of Belief: Baptist Community in Early America*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Cynthia Lynn Lyerly, *Methodism and the Southern Mind, 1770-1810*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998); Donald G. Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1977); Philip N. Mulder, *A Controversial Spirit: Evangelical Awakenings in the South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002); Underwood & Burke, *The Dawn of Religious Freedom in South Carolina*;

¹⁵ On the importance of the Second Great Awakening (or Great Revival) on the development and expansion of Protestant Evangelicalism in the South, see especially: John B. Boles, *The Great Revival: Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1996 ed.); Calhoon, *Evangelicals and Conservatives in the Early South*; Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*; Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Irons, *The Origins of Proslavery Christianity*; Anne C. Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order, 1800-1860*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980); Lyerly, *Methodism and the Southern Mind*; Monica Najar, *Evangelizing the South: A Social History of Church and State in Early America*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008); Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*; Mulder, *A Controversial Spirit*; Najar, *Evangelizing the South*; Schweiger & Mathews, eds., *Religion in the American South*; John Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury & The Methodists*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009); Gregory A. Wills, *Democratic Religion: Freedom, Authority, and Church Discipline in the Baptist South, 1785-1900*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997).

The nature of this transformation, however, is the subject of extensive historical debate. Many scholars locate its origins on the southern frontier, citing the powerful emotionalism of frontier religious revivals as the catalyst for a general explosion of religious sentiment and denominational affiliation across the South.¹⁶ Others argue that the inroads made during the First Great Awakening—in Virginia and along the southern coast to Charleston and Savannah—eventually encouraged the dissemination of the Protestant Evangelical message into the backcountry, from whence it spread across the Appalachians into the frontier.¹⁷ Regardless of its origins, three broad conclusions that emerge from these works ground the religious perspectives in *Drinkin', Fightin', Prayin'*: that Protestant Evangelicals—Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians—assumed the mantle of proselytizing the backcountry; that their emphasis on the conversion experience lent these revivals an unprecedented emotional fervor; and that a pervasive spirituality enveloped the region.

The definition and periodization of religious awakening and/or revival vary in this literature, with some arguing for a clear distinction between the First and Second Great Awakenings, while others see both as part a longer process of religious awakening and the cultural ascension of Protestant Evangelical mores. What remains central to both camps is the emphasis on the period from 1730 to 1830, generally recognized, regardless of particular emphasis, as the period when Protestant Evangelicals assumed primacy in American religion. Most also locate the rise of evangelicalism in the South during this period and see the rise of southern religion as pivotal to the overall ascension of Protestant Evangelicals nationally.

¹⁶ The prominence of the frontier revival in the development and expansion of southern Protestant Evangelicalism is most prevalent in the following: Boles, *The Great Revival*; Heyrman, *Southern Cross*; Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order*; Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*; Christopher Waldrep, “The Making of a Border State Society: James McGready, the Great Revival, and the Prosecution of Profanity in Kentucky,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 99, No. 3, (June 1994): 767-784.

¹⁷ Other scholars acknowledge the importance of the frontier revivals and the modes of worship they engendered, but place equal importance upon the more “conservative” element within southern Protestant Evangelicalism that emanated from footholds established during the First Great Awakening, in Virginia and along the Southern coast in cities like Wilmington, Charleston, and Savannah, into the southern backcountry. The most pertinent of these works include: Calhoun, *Evangelicals and Conservatives in the Early South*; Holifield, *The Gentlemen Theologians*; Irons, *The Origins of Proslavery Christianity*; Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia*; Kidd, *The Great Awakening*; Lambert, ‘*Pedlar in Divinity*’; Lindman, *Bodies of Belief*; Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*; Hortense C. Woodson, *Giant in the Land: The Life of William B. Johnson, First President of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1845-1851*. (Springfield, Missouri: Particular Baptist Press, 2005 ed.).

The cultural interaction between this increased spirituality, established customs, and emerging social and economic changes figures prominently in many religious histories of the South. Historians have been particularly thorough in analyzing the relationship between this growing southern religiosity and moral reform movements, especially as applied to the politics of slavery. Many credit southern religion for the South's conservatism, arguing that a commitment to upholding racial hierarchies superseded all other concerns.¹⁸ Others recognize religion's more ambiguous role, locating both the impetus for reform and the maintenance of tradition within the churches and among the clergy.¹⁹ A desire to determine Civil War causation shapes most of these analyses, and the denominational schisms of the 1830s and 1840s often loom large as the

¹⁸ Many studies of southern religion make connections between southern political conservatism, especially regarding racial slavery and gender hierarchy, and the rise of a distinctly southern proslavery Protestant Evangelical Christianity. The most relevant of these works include: John B. Boles, ed., *Masters & Slaves in the House of the Lord: Race and Religion in the American South, 1740-1870*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1988); Calhoun, *Evangelicals and Conservatives in the Early South*; Richard J. Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America*, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1997); Daly, *When Slavery was Called Freedom*; Glenn Feldman, ed., *Politics and Religion in the White South*, (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 2005); Heyrman, *Southern Cross*; Samuel S. Hill, *Southern Churches in Crisis Revisited*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999 ed.); Irons, *The Origins of Proslavery Christianity*; Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order*; Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*; John R. McKivigan & Mitchal Snay, eds., *Religion and the Antebellum Debate over Slavery*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998); Sinha, *The Counter-revolution of Slavery*; Snay, *Gospel of Disunion*.

¹⁹ Other historians have qualified this link between political conservatism and Protestant Evangelicalism, noting how southern religious groups responded to the same moral concerns as their northern counterparts, albeit with a sense of paternalism attuned to the strictures of southern racial and gender hierarchies. Most important among these works are: Janet D. Cornelius, *Slave Missions and the Black Church in the Antebellum South*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999); Fox-Genovese & Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class*; Jean E. Friedman, *The Enclosed Garden: Women and Community in the Evangelical South, 1830-1900*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985); Craig T. Friend & Anya Jabour, eds., *Family Values in the Old South*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010); Eugene D. Genovese, *The Slaveholders' Dilemma: Freedom and Progress in Southern Conservative Thought, 1820-1860*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1992); Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up*; Scott Stephan, *Redeeming the Southern Family: Evangelical Women and Domestic Devotion in the Antebellum South*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008).

For a broad overview of the emerging antebellum culture of reform, see especially: Robert H. Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling: American Reform and the Religious Imagination*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1994); Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America*, xvii-xix, 1-49; Garvey, *Creating the Culture of Reform in Antebellum America*, 1-73; Mintz, *Moralists and Modernizers*; Rita Roberts, *Evangelicalism and the Politics of Reform in Northern Black Thought, 1776-1863*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010), 53-102; Smith, *Revivalism & Social Reform*.

embodiment of sectional strife and poignant precursors to political secession. Southern religious interpretations—of the sectional crisis, secession debates, and causes of the war—remain central in many historical works on the antebellum South. *Drinkin’*, *Fightin’*, *Prayin’* accepts the complicated religious evolution collectively demonstrated in these works and asserts that a Protestant Evangelical ethic governed the actions, shaped the discourse, and defined meaning for many antebellum southerners. Pious and impious alike employed a spiritual language and engaged in a spiritual outlook that became—and largely remains—a characteristically southern cultural trait.²⁰

The breadth and depth of each of these historical currents—the honorable South and the Bible Belt South—belie historians’ overarching failure to effectively analyze their mutuality in the antebellum period. By and large, historians have dissected what was in-dissectible for antebellum southern men. Some scholars have argued that Southern Protestant Evangelicals compromised their early beliefs to accommodate the dominant southern cultural traditions associated with honor and slavery, enabling an evangelical social ascension to antebellum respectability. This ascension fueled growing sectional divisions and contributed to the Civil War.²¹ More recently, other historians have

²⁰ The pervasive spirituality within southern culture—its origins, its evolutions, and its contemporary manifestations—find most extensive treatment in: Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980) and *Judgment & Grace in Dixie: Southern Faiths from Faulkner to Elvis*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985) and *Flashes of a Southern Spirit: Meanings of the Spirit in the U.S. South*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011). Other works that illustrate a pervasive nineteenth-century southern spirituality as emphasized herein include: Hill Jr., *Religion and the Solid South*, 37; Underwood & Burke, *The Dawn of Religious Freedom in South Carolina*; 146-164.

²¹ Several works argue that Protestant Evangelicalism came to the South as a cultural transplant, and thus had to compromise its earliest principles, especially regarding southern hierarchies of race, class, and gender, in order to ascend the southern social ladder to social and cultural prominence. The following works detail this rise and its inherent compromise, which they locate around 1830 and largely attribute to increased moral questioning of slavery and the growing need for a southern moral defense of its institutions: Boles, *The Great Revival and Masters and Slaves in the House of the Lord*; Calhoun, *Evangelicals and Conservatives*; Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics*; Heyrman, *Southern Cross*; Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order*; Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*.

tempered this analysis by showing how an expanding Southern Evangelical ethic subtly transformed older notions of honor and patriarchy, capitalizing on the inherent tensions within honor itself—between primal aggression and genteel respectability—to promote the latter over the former in closer accordance with Evangelical piety.²² But endemic to both of these analytical strains is a failure to see *both* honor *and* evangelical piety as part of the same cultural ethic of righteous honor. Honor and religious piety were often at odds in their proscriptions, especially with regard to masculine vice and violence. But they were also complementary moral ethics that sought to ensure masculine moral righteousness by promoting the proper application of white male prerogative. *Drinkin', Fightin', Prayin': The Southern White Male in the Civil War Era* seeks to exhibit the extent to which antebellum southern men understood themselves and their role in society according to this combined ethic of righteous honor. By separating these inseparable ethics, historians have rendered the true ideal and identity of southern manhood impotent.

Gender historians have only partially mitigated this analytical trend. Several works connect the causes and interpretations of the Civil War to prevailing and evolving gender ideals. The most successful of these exercise a keen awareness of generational disparities and highlight “southern sons’” attempts to redefine and reassert “all that makes a man.” in the “last generation” before the Civil War. Nostalgia for the glories

²² Other historians acknowledge the early “radical” potential of southern Protestant Evangelicalism and its eventual “compromise” with prevailing southern cultural norms. But they complicate the nature of this “compromise,” identifying a strong tendency toward emerging middle-class mores (emphasizing respectability, work ethic, and masculine restraint, in particular) such as those observed among northern evangelicals of the period. The most pertinent of these works include: Bushman, *The Refinement of America*; Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood*; Friedman, *The Enclosed Garden*; Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class*; Mintz, *Moralists and Modernizers*; Mushal, “My Word is My Bond;”; Pflugrad-Jackisch, *Brothers of a Vow*; Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up*; Stephan, *Redeeming the Southern Family*; Wells, *The Origins of the Southern Middle Class*.

they attributed to their fathers continually combated present pressures and future specters, lending this antebellum generation of southerners a particularly conflicted vision of masculine identity. This conflicted identity and the generational pressures it entailed made them eager for glory, personal and communal, regional and national. Personal combat provided one means of achieving such glory, and the southern man's sense of honor became pricklier than ever. War provided another outlet—against Indians, Mexicans, and ultimately other Americans. Both provided an opportunity for young southern men to prove their mettle by facing the fire, lending manhood a deadly seriousness throughout the period.²³

But as one scholar has more recently shown, such a stern conception of masculine honor just as frequently masqueraded as humor throughout the antebellum period.

²³ Lorri Glover, *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation*. Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007); Stephen W. Berry, *All that Makes a Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Peter S. Carmichael, *The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

For the broad theoretical conceptions of gender and masculinity informing these perspectives on the nineteenth-century American South, see especially: R.W. Connell, *Masculinities*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 27-44; David D. Gilmore, *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity*, (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1990), 1-77. On masculinity and religion, see: Donald Capps, *Men and their Religion: Honor, Hope, and Humor*, (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 2002), ix-xix, 5-25; Charles H. Lippy, *Do Real Men Pray?: Images of the Christian Man and Male Spirituality in White Protestant America*, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2005), xiv-xv, 5-13; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *The House of Percy: Honor, Melancholy, and Imagination in a Southern Family*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994);

Other studies that emphasize generational distinctions in the evolution of nineteenth-century southern manhood include: Rod Andrew Jr., *Long Gray Lines: The Southern Military School Tradition, 1839-1915*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Stephen W. Berry, ed., *Princes of Cotton: Four Diaries of Young Men in the South, 1848-1860*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007); Friend & Glover, *Southern Manhood*; Craig T. Friend, ed., *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South since Reconstruction*. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2009); Friend & Jabour, eds., *Family Values in the Old South*; Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class in the Old South*; Amy Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*; Robert F. Pace, *Halls of Honor: College Men in the Old South*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004); Jennings L. Wagoner Jr., "Honor and Dishonor at Mr. Jefferson's University: The Antebellum Years," *History of Education Quarterly* (Vol. 26, No. 2, Summer, 1986); William E. Walker, "The South Carolina College Duel of 1833," *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine* (Vol. 52, No. 3, July, 1951); Timothy J. Williams, "Intellectual Manhood: Becoming Men of the Republic at a Southern University, 1795-1861," (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, 2010); Wyatt-Brown, *The Shaping of Southern Culture*.

Confronted with seemingly absurd personal and social contradictions between honor, an emerging market culture, and evangelicalism, antebellum southern literature revealed southern men's tendency to variously and sometimes simultaneously exalt their virtues, hide their shame, and mock their moralistic pretensions through humor. In doing so, this work has redressed a fundamental oversight in the gendered approach to southern manhood by incorporating honor and religion into the ethical analysis of the antebellum South. As brilliantly as these gendered analyses have dredged the depths of southern male motivations in love and ambition, in peace and in war, only one engages the religious values and mores of the era. *Drinkin', Fightin', Prayin'* rectifies this neglect by emphasizing that the revivalist fervor of the early nineteenth century did not pass over these men. Their attempts to meet their fathers' expectations as well as the challenges of an expanding market economy and political base could not help but incorporate the religious morality that pervaded the era.²⁴

Other works on southern manhood and religion explicitly engage the interrelation of southern honor, religion, and manhood by implying that a tenuous antebellum balance of these masculine ethical ideals collapsed in the postwar South, as the masculine honor culture competed against a growing, and largely feminized, evangelical culture.²⁵ A more

²⁴ John Mayfield, *Counterfeit Gentlemen: Manhood and Humor in the Old South*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2009) and "'The Soul of a Man!': William Gilmore Simms and the Myths of Southern Manhood," *Journal of the Early Republic* (Vol. 15, No. 3, Special Issue on Gender in the Early Republic, Autumn, 1995); Other studies to emphasize the role of humor in mitigating the vagaries of southern masculine culture include: M. Thomas Inge & Edward J. Placentino, eds., *The Humor of the Old South*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2001).

²⁵ Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), ix-xii, 1-18, 89-99, 103-174. The focus of the present study is on southern manhood and masculinity, especially the masculine self, its public projections, and the conflicts between the ideals informing them. As such, it largely assumes and corroborates the prevailing historiographical wisdom as it relates to the role of women in shaping these masculine ideals and identities. For the most relevant works relating to this aspect of southern manhood as emphasized here, see especially: Berry, *All That Makes A Man*, 95-113; Carney, *Ministers and Masters*, 65-90; Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South*, (Chapel Hill: The

recent work on antebellum Baptist minister Basil Manly Sr. explores this connection in more detail to argue that Manly indeed managed a tenuous balance between the demands of honor and piety throughout his life.²⁶ Another recent work takes on antebellum Methodist manhood and similarly connects honor and piety in the lives of prominent Methodist ministers, arguing for a distinct version of Methodist manhood in which these clergymen balanced their roles as ministers and masters through a restrained patriarchy and a refined paternalism.²⁷ All consider honor and piety in tandem, but none conceive of them in the same way that antebellum southern men themselves did—as inseparable parts of the same moral ethic. The collective image that emerges from these gendered studies of southern religion and culture is an ideal of southern manhood at war with itself and with southern society as a whole. Most have argued that southern men faced an either-or proposition: either succumb to a feminized Protestant Evangelical piety or rebel by upholding more traditional honor-bound masculine mores.²⁸ Others have presented a more complex tension in the lives of ministers, revealing much of the personal tension that colored the relationship of evangelical ministers to the broader southern society, but even they perpetuate the same tendency to separate honor and piety in ways unfathomable to most antebellum southern men.

As Drinkin', Fightin', Prayin': The Southern White Male in the Civil War Era

will show, antebellum southern men did not pick and choose between various aspects of

University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Friedman, *The Enclosed Garden*, 21-53; Heyrman, *Southern Cross*, 117-205; Cynthia A. Kierner, *Beyond the Household: Women's Place in the Early South, 1700-1835*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 139-211; Jan Lewis, "The Republican Wife: Virtue and Seduction in the Early Republic," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, Vol. 44, No. 4, (Oct. 1987): 689-721; Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, 97-134; McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds*, 135-207; Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up*, 150-163.

²⁶ Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 1-10, 26-55, 228-258.

²⁷ Charity R. Carney, *Ministers and Masters: Methodism, Manhood, and Honor in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 5-37, 138-141.

²⁸ Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 1-18.

these ethics, but inextricably linked both in their minds and applied both in their daily walks. In the Old South, a white man might beat someone in the street for insulting him in the same language he used to insult himself in nightly prayers to the Almighty that he might become a better man.²⁹

No place is better suited to analyze the evolution of the related ethics of “righteous honor” and “self mastery” than Edgefield, South Carolina, a district widely known for its honor culture but also steeped in evangelical fervor. Midway up the Savannah River on the state’s southern border, the Edgefield District was created by the state legislature in 1785 and by the turn of the nineteenth century had grown to be the fifth largest in the state. Its population initially consisted mainly of yeomen and middling planters; in 1800 the white population numbered 13,063 while the black population stood at just 5,067, but thirty years later the black population (mostly slaves) had increased three-fold, outnumbering the white population 15,522 to 14,957, a trend which continued

²⁹ The resurgent subfield of emotions history forms the theoretical and methodological basis of the perspectives pursued herein. Historian Peter N. Stearns is the dean of emotions history within the American history. The most influential of his works consulted herein include: Carol Z. Stearns & Peter N. Stearns, *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Self-Control in America’s History*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1986); Peter N. Stearns, *Jealousy: The Evolution of an Emotion in American History*, (New York: New York University Press, 1989); Peter N. Stearns and Jan Lewis, eds., *An Emotional History of the United States*, (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Peter N. Stearns, *Battleground of Desire: The Struggle for Self-Control in Modern America*, (New York: New York University Press, 1999).

The following works in anthropology, psycho-social studies, philosophy, and political science also inform the historical approach to emotions pursued herein: Simon Clarke, Paul Hoggett, & Simon Thompson, eds., *Emotion, Politics and Society*, (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Rom Harre, ed., *The Social Construction of Emotions*, (New York, NY: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1986); Rebecca Kingston & Leonard Ferry, eds., *Bringing the Passions Back In: The Emotions in Political Philosophy*, (Vancouver, British Columbia: University of British Columbia Press, 2008); W. Russell Neuman, George E. Marcus, Ann N. Crigler, & Michael MacKuen, eds., *The Affect Effect: Dynamics of Emotion in Political Thinking and Behavior*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Other scholars to pioneer perspectives and methodologies in emotions history include: Nicole Eustace, *Passion is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Karen Lystra, *Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989); William M Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Daniel Wickberg, "Heterosexual White Male: Some Recent Inversions in American Cultural History," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 92, No. 1, (June 2005): 136-57 and "What is the History of Sensibilities?: On Cultural Histories, Old and New," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 112, No. 3, (2007): 661-684.

through 1860, signifying the growing presence and influence of a wealthy white planter class, despite the continued predominance of yeomen and merchants. The district became increasingly plantation-oriented, with greater reliance upon slave labor and staple-crop agriculture—namely cotton—but it never approached the overtly aristocratic stature of many Lowcountry districts.³⁰

Whether planter or yeoman or merchant, Edgefield's white male population was belligerently Southern, boasting a history replete with distinguished soldiers and statesmen who flaunted their bravado and continuously fought and died—against common enemies and one another—in defense of the personal and public honor all held so dear. These Edgefield men had to be fluent in the language and ritual of southern honor. For the Edgefield man, failure to perform the duties of honor risked dishonor—personal, familial, and communal—that the Edgefield community would not countenance.³¹ This Edgefield tradition paraded across the century and invaded the minds

³⁰ Orville Vernon Burton, *In My Father's House are Many Mansions: Family and Community in Edgefield, South Carolina*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 5, 19-20; Catherine Clinton, "Wallowing in a Swamp of Sin: Parson Weems, Sex, and Murder in Early South Carolina," in Catherine Clinton & Michele Gillespie, eds., *The Devil's Lane: Sex and Race in the Early South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997), 28-29.

³¹ Edgefield County, South Carolina, has an established historical reputation for a tradition of honor-bound violence, political and military prowess, and masculine proficiency. The most thorough analyses of this Edgefield tradition for honor and violence are: Orville Vernon Burton, *In My Father's House*, xviii-21, 47-147; Brown, *Strain of Violence*, 37-103; John A. Chapman, *History of Edgefield County: From the Earliest Settlements to 1897*, (Newberry, South Carolina: Elbert H. Aull, Publisher and Printer, 1897), 5-90; Lacy K. Ford, "Origins of the Edgefield Tradition: The Late Antebellum Experience and the Roots of Political Insurgency," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* (98, No. 4, October 1997); James Hill Welborn III, "Fighting for Revival: Southern Honor and Evangelical Revival in Edgefield County, South Carolina, 1800-1860," (MA thesis, Clemson University, 2007), 11-38.

For general references to this prevailing reputation, see especially: T. Felder Dorn, *The Guns of Meeting Street: A Southern Tragedy*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001); Downey, *Planting a Capitalist South*; John C. Meleney, *The Public Life of Aedanus Burke: Revolutionary Republican in Post-Revolutionary South Carolina*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 16-39, 70-71, 100-101, 246-248; John Hammond Moore, *Carnival of Blood: Dueling, Lynching, and Murder in South Carolina, 1880-1920*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 1-28, 104-123; William Mylne, Ted Ruddock, ed., *Travels in the Colonies in 1773-1775: Described in the Letters of William Mylne*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993), 19-60; John Belton O'Neill, *Biographical Sketches of the Bench and Bar of South Carolina, Volume I*, (Charleston, South Carolina: S.G. Courtenay &

of all who bore it witness. Parson Mason Locke Weems reviled early Edgefield as “pandemonium itself, a very district of Devils.”³² A half-century later, the tradition persisted unabated, warranting the antebellum exclamation, “If you’re going to commit a murder, do it in Edgefield, as jurors there understand the idiosyncrasies of a gentleman!”³³ Into the late 1870s, Edgefield’s tradition continued to invite ridicule, particularly from Judge Thomas Jefferson Mackey of the state judicial circuit, who once

Co., Publishers, 1859), pp?; Arthur G. Powell, *I Can Go Home Again*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1943), 24-26; Randy Roberts & James S. Olson, *A Line in the Sand: The Alamo in Blood and Memory*, (New York: The Free Press, 2001), 2-4, 28-29, 116, 156-157;

For more on the prominence of Edgefield politicians in perpetuating this reputation, see: Brooks, *South Carolina Bench and Bar*; John C. Calhoun, Clyde N. Wilson, ed., *The Essential Calhoun: Selections from Writings, Speeches, and Letters*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1992), 293-298; John B. Edmunds Jr., *Francis W. Pickens and the Politics of Destruction*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986); Drew Gilpin Faust, *James Henry Hammond and the Old South: A Design for Mastery*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982); James Henry Hammond, Carol Bleser, ed., *The Hammonds of Redcliffe*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); James Henry Hammond, Carol Bleser, ed., *Secret and Sacred: The Diaries of James Henry Hammond, a Southern Slaveholder*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Hoffer, *The Caning of Charles Sumner*; Stephen Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman & the Reconstruction of White Supremacy*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 10-39; Alvy L. King, *Louis T. Wigfall: Southern Fire-eater*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970); Elizabeth Merritt, *James Henry Hammond, 1807-1864*, (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1923); Francis Butler Simkins, *Pitchfork Ben Tillman*, *South Carolinian*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1944), 23-46;

Several works on Edgefield native J. Strom Thurmond make reference to this Edgefield tradition and its primacy well into the twentieth century: Jack Bass & Marilyn W. Thompson, *Ol’ Strom: An Unauthorized Biography of Strom Thurmond*, (Atlanta, GA: Longstreet Press, Inc., 1998), 7-23; Jack Bass & Marilyn Thompson, *Strom: The Complicated Personal and Political Life of Strom Thurmond*, (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2005), 3-18; Nadine Cohodas, *Strom Thurmond and the Politics of Southern Change*, (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 18-36; Joseph Crespino, *Strom Thurmond’s America*, (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 2012), 15-33; Joseph C. Ellers, *Strom Thurmond, The Public Man*, (Orangeburg, SC: Sandlapper Publishing, Inc., 1993), 1-14; Alberta Lachicotte, *Rebel Senator: Strom Thurmond of South Carolina*, (New York, NY: The Devin-Adair Company, 1966), 1-10; Essie Mae Washington-Williams & William Stadiem, *Dear Senator: A Memoir of the Daughter of Strom Thurmond*, (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2005).

³² Mason Lock Weems, *The Devil In Petticoats, or God’s Revenge Against Husband Killing*, (Edgefield, South Carolina: Advertiser Print—Bacon and Adams, 1878 ed.), 1.

³³ This quote attributed to Wade Harrison of Troy, South Carolina, sometime in the antebellum period. It is representative of the reputation Edgefield “enjoyed” across South Carolina. During his seventy-five years, Mr. Harrison’s father and grandfather told him this fact many times over. The origin of the quote itself is not known, but the elder Harrison gentlemen were fond of repeating it. Courtesy of Bettis Rainsford (local Edgefield historian) and Tricia Price Glenn (Edgefield County Archivist) as gleaned from records at the Edgefield County Archives (hereafter ECA).

declared, “I am going to hold court in Edgefield, and I expect a somewhat exciting term, as the fall shooting is about to commence.”³⁴

But alongside the familiar ethic of honor that resulted in the obscene number of duels, shootouts, and fisticuffs for which Edgefield men gained infamy, was an equally dynamic and pervasive ethic of piety. Predominantly Protestant Evangelical, and overwhelmingly Baptist and Methodist, religious revivals reverberated throughout the Edgefield community during the early nineteenth century. These revivals spawned expansive religious communities with an alternate social ethic. The editor of the *Edgefield Advertiser* captured the “violence” with which this alternate ethic had taken hold in the community when in the summer of 1854 he proclaimed, “There is something primitive in camp-meetings that always pleased our fancy as well as satisfied our taste and judgment.” “Noting is, or could be, more appropriate than these occasional encampments,” he continued, “[for] sinner as we are, we almost fancied ourselves in the camp of war, and preparing mind and body and soul...to march into the dreadful conflict.” “The camp meetings have a tendency,” the editor concluded, “to remind the Christian, Methodist and Baptist, of the great warfare in which they are engaged...and to that alone, we attribute all that is great or glorious, or wise beyond other ages, in this generation of men.”³⁵ As Edgefield grew and prospered both honor and piety came to define its communal moral ethic, inseparably linked as the righteous honor that guided its ideal of true manhood.³⁶

³⁴ U.R. Brooks, *South Carolina Bench and Bar, Volume I*, (Columbia: The State Company, 1908), 199.

³⁵ Arthur Simkins, “The Mount Vernon Camp-Meeting, August 17, 1854,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

³⁶ Edgefield’s nineteenth-century religious development has received less attention than its tradition of violence and masculine prowess, but several works have documented the major epochs in that history. As in South Carolina generally, religion—especially of the Protestant Evangelical persuasion that has come to define southern religion—came relatively late to Edgefield. Its waning beginnings belied its later explosion, however, and by the mid-nineteenth-century, Methodists and Baptists spiritually dominated. The following

If Edgefield, the assumed microcosm of the familiar antebellum South, can be made unfamiliar to scholars, we will have achieved something important: a new look at the Old South. The first three chapters of *Drinkin', Fightin', Prayin'* exhibit and analyze the most influential characteristics of Edgefield, South Carolina as they pertained to the mutuality of honor and religion in shaping southern masculine ideals and identity.

Chapter One, "The Edgefield Tradition: Honor, Violence, & Manhood," establishes Edgefield's nineteenth-century reputation for honor-violence, tracing its earliest origins and its more "refined" antebellum manifestations in the southern code duello. It argues that Edgefield embraced and embodied the broader evolution of southern masculine violence from a Colonial- and Revolutionary-era emphasis on virility and its visceral consequences to a self-conceived moral "refinement" actuated through the structured language and ritual of a southern code of honor.³⁷

works chart this religious development, from irreligious origins to hyper-religious ascendancy: Burton, *In My Father's House*, 21-28; Chapman, *History of Edgefield County*, 72-74, 91-92, 290-298, 306-328; Ford, *Origins of Southern Radicalism*, 26-28; Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 42-45; 269-302; Lewis Leary, *The Book-peddling Parson: An Account of the Life and Works of Mason Locke Weems, Patriot, Pitchman, Author, and Purveyor of Morality to the Citizenry of the early United States of America*, (New York: Algonquin Books, 1984), 117-140; Charles H. Lippy, ed., *Religion in South Carolina*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993), 2-14; Poole, *Never Surrender*, 15-16, 36-56; James L. Underwood & William Lewis Burke, eds., *The Dawn of Religious Freedom in South Carolina*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 146-164; Woodson, *Giant in the Land*, 45-79; A. James Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 26-55; Welborn III, "Fighting for Revival," 39-65.

³⁷ Orville Vernon Burton, "In My Father's House Are Many Leaders: Can The Extreme Be Typical?," *The Proceedings of The South Carolina Historical Association, 1987*, (Aiken: South Carolina Historical Association, 1988): 23-32. Burton argues that Edgefield as he and others have analyzed it was extreme in the preponderance of political leadership at the state and national level who hailed from there; in the conspicuous role that many of these leaders played in creating and even exclaiming the county's reputation for violence. But Burton also argues that Edgefield was "representative in its statistical similarity to South Carolina as a whole and representative of southern values." (p.30). This perspective on Edgefield is affirmed when one turns upon the county's "cultural duality," which stemmed from its vibrant honor culture and its Protestant Evangelical spirituality as they evolved together in this particular place during the first half of the nineteenth century.. In many ways, Edgefield's honor code was more aggressive, assertive, and conspicuous in its application; the same could be said of its religious development. That both developed alongside one another at the same time renders this cultural aspect of this place somewhat unique. But such cultural developments happened simultaneously at other times in other places in much the same way, and as such, what happened in Edgefield as it pertains to honor and religion and the evolution of

Chapter Two, “The Spirit of Edgefield: Protestant Evangelical Spirituality & Morality,” establishes Edgefield’s vibrant spiritual life and the fervent religious tenor of the district during the first half of the nineteenth century. It asserts that Edgefield witnessed a rapid expansion of Protestant Evangelical religion during this period, and that this growth fundamentally shaped the moral purview of devout and irreligious alike.

Chapter Three, “The Rhythm of Old Edgefield: Righteous Honor & Southern Manhood,” illustrates how white men in early antebellum Edgefield embraced both honor and religious piety in forming their identities and ideals as southerners. Their masculine sense of self, and the moral standard to which they held themselves accountable, combined male honor and religious piety in the ideal of righteous honor. The chapter contends that southern men would not and could not separate conceptions of honor and piety. Both were inseparably linked in their minds, forming the moral standard of righteous honor by which they judged southern manhood. The three chapters collectively analyze Edgefield’s community ethics of honor and piety as they evolved and eventually converged in the ethic of righteous honor during the early antebellum period.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six collectively demonstrate how this early antebellum ideal of righteous honor evolved through the antebellum period, in the midst of the sectional crisis and the coming of the Civil War. Chapter Four, “Hell-Bent & Heaven-Sent: Self-Mastery & the Southern Male,” describes how individual southern men employed righteous honor to cope with moral failings and exorcise inner demons. It considers the emotional facets of this struggle to subdue their passions and argues that these highly personal travails had a profound impact on their ideals and identities. Most

southern masculine ideals and identities sheds representative light on such cultural developments elsewhere across the South.

particularly, it illustrates how southern men conflated their struggle for self-mastery with the sectional conflict; both were part of the same battle for moral supremacy.

Chapter Five, “Excessive & Expressive: Preston Brooks, Righteous Violence, & the Southern Male,” takes Preston Smith Brooks of Edgefield, South Carolina as a case study, the personification of righteous honor and violence as conceived and enacted by southern men during the antebellum sectional crisis. Through his filial relationship and personal history, Preston Brooks’s most infamous act—the caning of Charles Sumner in 1856—becomes for him an act of righteous violence, retribution in answer to Sumner’s alleged affront to southern righteous honor. The chapter thus shows the extent to which white southern men like Brooks justified violence in defense of that most sacred ideal.

Chapter Six, “Secular Patriarchy, Sacred Paternalism: Basil Manly Jr., Self-Mastery, & Southern Slavery,” takes another Edgefieldian, Baptist Reverend Basil Manly Jr., as a case study. Through him, his father, and their evolving perspectives on southern slavery, mastery, and morality during the sectional crisis, the chapter argues that the same personal moral struggles with vice and violence, which prompted southern men to redouble their efforts to achieve righteous honor, also fundamentally shaped their perspectives on the institution of slavery at large and their individual roles as ministers and masters within it.

The Epilogue carries these themes through the Civil War and Reconstruction with broad strokes, using the Manly family—Basil Sr., wife Sarah, and sons Basil Jr. and Charles—to suggest that righteous honor and self-mastery survived the war even as these ethics were fundamentally altered by it and its consequences. The Manlys’ application of these values to meet new wartime and postwar realities suggests that the ideological roots

of the “Lost Cause” and the “New South” were derived from familiar antebellum ethics to simultaneously serve both “reactionary” and “progressive” agendas, lending the mind of the postwar South much of its divided quality.³⁸

Taken whole, *Drinkin’, Fightin’, Prayin’: The Southern White Male in the Civil War Era* unmask the personal, emotional, and moral dimensions of antebellum white southern manhood as it lurched toward its self-destructive apotheosis and cast about for justification, explanation, and direction in the breach and aftermath.

³⁸ W.J. Cash, *The Mind of the South*, (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1941).

CHAPTER 1

THE EDGEFIELD TRADITION: HONOR, VIOLENCE, & MANHOOD

*“If you’re going to commit a murder, do it in Edgefield, as jurors there understand the idiosyncrasies of a gentleman!”*³⁹

In (in)famously codifying the Old South’s code duello in 1838, South Carolina Governor John Lyde Wilson claimed to be actuated by a fierce sense of morality. Most men went about their lives “in the true spirit of Christian benevolence,” and sought only to add “in any way to the sum of human happiness.” But when such a man met with “encroachments upon [his] natural rights,” “if he be subjected ... to insult and disgrace,” he was duty-bound to “guard [his most sacred] possessions with more watchful zeal than life itself.” “When one finds himself avoided in society,” Wilson concluded, “and traces all his misfortunes and misery to the slanderous tongue of the calumniator, who...has sapped and undermined his reputation, he must be more or less than man to submit in silence.”⁴⁰

Wilson denied that in publishing his *Code of Honor*, he “was an advocate of dueling, or that he wished to introduce it as the proper mode of deciding all personal difficulties and misunderstandings.” “The indiscriminate and frequent appeal to arms, to settle trivial disputes and misunderstandings, cannot be too severely censured and

³⁹ This quote attributed to Wade Harrison of Troy, South Carolina, sometime in the antebellum period. It is representative of the reputation Edgefield has “enjoyed” across South Carolina. During his seventy-five years, Mr. Harrison’s father and grandfather told him this fact many times over. The origin of the quote itself is not known, but the elder Harrison gentlemen were fond of repeating it. Courtesy of Bettis Rainsford (local Edgefield historian) and Tricia Price Glenn (Edgefield County Archivist) as gleaned from records at the Edgefield County Archives (hereafter ECA).

⁴⁰ John Lyde Wilson, *The Code of Honor, or, Rules for the Government of Principles and Seconds in Duelling*, (Charleston, SC: T.J. Eccles, Publisher, 1838), 1.

deprecated,” he said. Indeed, Wilson saw his published code as a step toward a time when dueling should “cease to exist entirely, in society.” Moreover, he hoped to “inculcate in the rising generation” an awareness that “nothing was more derogatory to the honor of a gentleman, than to wound the feelings of any one, however humble.” According to Wilson’s honor code, the truly moral man would thus endeavor “scrupulously to guard individual honor, by a high personal self respect, and the practice of every commendable virtue,” and in doing so would render such a system of education “universal, [so that] we should seldom hear, if ever, of any more duelling.”⁴¹

In ways historians have yet to fully appreciate, religious morality increasingly took hold across the antebellum Southern landscape, and even men like Wilson looked for alternatives to the more primal demands of southern manhood. Of course they were not ready to give up their code entirely. “If a man be smote on one cheek in public, and he turns the other, which is also smitten, and he offers no resistance, but blesses him that so despitefully used him,” Wilson intoned, “I am aware...that he is in the exercise of great Christian forbearance, highly recommended and enjoined by many very good men, but utterly repugnant to those feelings which nature and education have implanted in the

⁴¹ Wilson, *The Code of Honor*, 2. J. Grahame Long, *Dueling in Charleston: Violence Refined in the Holy City*, (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2012), 45-54. Long discusses South Carolina Governor John Llyde Wilson’s published code of honor as an attempt to check the wanton violence provoked by the political tensions surrounding the Nullification Controversy. This chapter extends this perspective and connects the published code to religious developments in the state, especially in the religious moral tenor in which Wilson justified his publication and its intended purposes. Few scholarly works have analyzed Wilson’s published honor code in this or any other context. The most extensive analysis of the southern honor code’s emphasis on masculine self-control can be found in: Steven M. Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South: Ritual in the Lives of the Planters*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 6-49 and Jack Kenny Williams, “The Code of Honor in Ante-bellum South Carolina,” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 54, No. 3, (July 1953): 113-128. Other works to discuss Wilson’s published code include: Joe L. Coker, *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause: Southern White Evangelicals and the Prohibition Movement*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 177-198; James Landale, *The Last Duel: A True Story of Death and Honour*, (New York, NY: Canongate, 2005), 95-100; Anne C. Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order, 1800-1860*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 180-185.

human character.” But Wilson’s Code was designed to reduce the amount of cheek-smiting in the first place; to structure men’s language through ritual forms and procedures promised to subdue the passions that so often gave way to wanton personal violence, while also upholding the moral virtues espoused by prevailing religious doctrine. Thus, as Wilson emphasized, his published code did not promote dueling but self-control and the primacy of proper conduct toward others. *Controlled* violence was part of good breeding and good manners; it was the essence of the slave South in the white mind.⁴²

⁴² Wilson, *The Code of Honor*, 1-2. For more on the internal contradictions within antebellum southern honor culture and its relationship to both violence and religion as emphasized herein see especially: Peter S. Carmichael, *The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 2-18, 59-88, 91-120; Charity R. Carney, *Ministers and Masters: Methodism, Manhood, and Honor in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 5-37, 138-141; A. James Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000); Lorri Glover, *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 17-22; Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, & Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), ix-xii, 1-18, 19-99, 101-164; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics & Behavior in the Old South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1982), vii-xix, 14-15, 60-61, 99-114, 129-147, 298-299, 493 and *The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1880s*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), xi-xix, 83-105. Other works to engage these southern cultural contradictions include: Edward Ayers, *Vengeance & Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th-Century American South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1984), 9-33, 118-125 and Dickson D. Bruce Jr., *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 12-14, 112-113, 233-240. The development and evolving influence of religion in Old Edgefield will be outlined fully in Chapter 2. The convergence of these dominant ethical systems—honor and religious piety—in the ideal of “righteous honor” will be outlined in Chapter 3 and expounded in succeeding chapters.

The most relevant works to engage the broader relationship between southern honor culture and the southern social order, especially slavery, as emphasized herein, include: Ariela J. Gross, *Double Character: Slavery and Mastery in the Antebellum Southern Courtroom*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2000), 47-71, 98-121; Kenneth S. Greenberg, *Masters and Statesmen: The Political Culture of American Slavery*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985) and *Honor & Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, The Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, Gambling in the Old South*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996). Greenberg gives scant attention to religion, but rather locates the tensions within the southern honor culture as it (and southern slavery generally) related to notions of republicanism.

For more on the personal and emotional aspects of these cultural tensions, as emphasized herein, see especially: Stephen W. Berry, *All That Makes A Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 19-22, 34; John Mayfield, *Counterfeit Gentlemen: Manhood and Humor in the Old South*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009), xiii-xxviii, 25-47, 83-104; Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South*, ix-xviii, 5-49.

Of course violence did not always play out in the South according to Wilson's code. In Edgefield, South Carolina the attempt of Wilson and others to circumscribe honor violence within layers of Christian comportment and internalized self-restraint very nearly failed, creating a more unstable compound that often made violence more rather than less likely, though much of that violence was redirected into sectional rage.⁴³

Edgefield's first white settlers were families who had ventured inland from the coast, northward from Augusta, Georgia, and southward from the North Carolina hills and beyond as early as 1748. Conflict between these settlers and local Cherokee Indians culminated in the bloody Cherokee War of 1760-61, when longstanding tensions over land and commercial rights finally erupted into outright warfare. Colonial expeditionary forces and Cherokee war parties engaged in a series of brutal raids involving close, hand-to-hand combat in the sparsely settled backcountry. A 1761 peace treaty quelled tensions by reserving specified lands in the far western portion of the state to the Cherokees and opening the remainder of the backcountry to white settlement. By the end of the decade, rapid in-migration resulted in nearly three-quarters of South Carolina's population residing in the backcountry.⁴⁴

The social flux that followed then erupted into a series of pitched battles *among* the white settlers. This so-called Regulator Movement of the late 1760s brought decades

⁴³ For more on antebellum southern honor in its most violent manifestations, see especially: Richard Maxwell Brown, *Strain of Violence: Historical Studies of American Violence and Vigilantism*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1975), 3-103; Bruce Jr., *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*; John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South, 1800-1861*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002 ed.), 2-13, 33-79; Elliot J. Gorn, "Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch": The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry," *The American Historical Review* Vol. 90, No. 1, (Feb. 1985): 18-43; Greenberg, *Masters and Statesmen and Honor & Slavery*; Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 41-104, 130.

⁴⁴ For more on the Cherokee War, see Robert M. Weir, *Colonial South Carolina: A History*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1997 ed.), 265-275. For more on Anglo-Indian relations in South Carolina during the colonial and revolutionary era, see especially: Tom Hatley, *The Dividing Paths: Cherokees and South Carolinians Through the Revolutionary Era*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1993).

of frustrations—between Lowcountry and backcountry, white settlers and remnant Cherokees, and rival families—to a brutal head. Anglican itinerant Charles Woodmason traveled extensively in the backcountry during the period, and his observations captured the ambiguous nature of Regulator violence. Woodmason generally excoriated the backcountry populace as men and women of “abandoned morals, and profligate Principles—Rude, Ignorant—Void of Manners, Education or Good Breeding;” there being “no genteel or Polite Person among them” they were more or less “continually drunk.” In 1767, Woodmason nevertheless empathized with these backcountry people in their exposure to “the Depredations of Robbers” and their impotence “without Laws or Government Churches Schools or Ministers—No Police established—and all Property quite insecure.” In the absence of such authority, Woodmason asserted that they were “neglected and slighted by those in Authority” and applauded them as “they rose in Arms—pursued the Rogues, broke up their Gangs...and drove the Idle, Vicious and Profligate out of the Province.”⁴⁵

Even after this wave of violence broke and receded, Woodmason warned that “the Regulators (so the Populace call themselves) will not long be passive.” And indeed, the Regulators shortly became so violent that Woodmason himself withdrew his support: “great insolencies are now committed by those fellows who call themselves *Regulators*—They are [ever] wanton in Wickedness and Impudence—And they triumph in their Licentiousness.”⁴⁶ Such tensions persisted until the colonial government finally

⁴⁵ Charles Woodmason, Richard J. Hooker, ed., *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution: The Journal and Other Writings of Charles Woodmason, Anglican Itinerant*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1953), 27-28, 54.

⁴⁶ Woodmason, *The Carolina Backcountry*, 27-28, 54. For more on the Regulator Movement in South Carolina, see Weir, 275-289; Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 211-216; Rachel N. Klein, *Unification of a Slave State: The Rise of the Planter*

conceded backcountry demands for greater political representation and a circuit court system in a series of 1769 ordinances. Woodmason's observations and the results of both the Cherokee War and the Regulator Movement confirm an early Edgefield familiarity—bordering on comfort—with violence.⁴⁷

Such violence proved relentless, as the American Revolution in the South Carolina backcountry more resembled a blood feud between neighbors than a military engagement between nations. Vicious combat between local Tory and Whig families defined the war in the backcountry and deeply divided the Edgefield area. These conflicts mingled with intermittent official military actions in the area to make the Revolution in Ninety-Six District [the western-most of seven colonial judicial districts established in 1769, of which the Edgefield area was a substantial part] one of the bloodiest and most contentious theatres of the war. An editorial to the *Augusta Chronicle* by William and Thomas Butler later recalled the tumult by proclaiming “we formerly knew William and Robert Melton of Little Saluda River in Edgefield County” who “during the late war between America and Great Britain...were Tories and out-liers and plunderers... with William Cunningham at the time of those cruel murders, robberies and house burnings in the winter of 1781 and 1782 that were perpetrated by the said William Cunningham and his men.”⁴⁸

Class in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1760-1808, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 47-77.

⁴⁷ For more on these social and cultural tensions within colonial South Carolina in general and Edgefield in particular, see especially: Woodmason, *The Carolina Backcountry*, 165-296; Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 36-77; John A. Chapman, *History of Edgefield County from the Earliest Settlements to 1897* (Newberry, SC: Elbert H. Aull, Publisher and Printer, 1897), 5-71; Orville Vernon Burton, *In My Father's House are Many Mansions: Family and Community in Edgefield, South Carolina* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 18-21.

⁴⁸ “South Carolina, Edgefield County,” March 14, 1794, *Augusta Chronicle*. For more on the American Revolution in South Carolina, especially the intensely personal and irregular nature of the conflict in the backcountry, see especially: Edgar, *South Carolina*, 226-246 and *Partisans & Redcoats: The Southern*

After the establishment of the new American nation, the South Carolina state legislature created the Edgefield District in 1785 and it quickly emerged as a dominant force in the state. Its proximity to Augusta, Georgia, on the Savannah River, rendered it an ideal agricultural and commercial center for the fledgling South Carolina backcountry. Augusta, formally established in 1736, became a pivotal market for the Georgia and South Carolina piedmont. Several trading posts had engaged Native Americans in commerce as early as the 1740s, and by the first decade of the nineteenth century, Augusta served as the main commercial hub for the piedmont's steadily growing cotton economy. Edgefield's "first families"—the Butlers, Brooks, Jeters, Martins, Ryans, Simkins, and many others—established Edgefield Courthouse as a major way-station along the road to Augusta and solidified their prominence, and that of their community, in the Augusta hinterlands.⁴⁹

These families did not solidify their position with "soft" power. Indeed, the early Edgefield populace, high and low alike, presumed a certain level of violence in the exercise of social intercourse. Their exploits littered Edgefield's early court docket, with over 400 cases of criminal violence splattering the county's criminal journal with blood. Several cases, most of them involving working class and middling white men, revealed the extent to which brutality colored the early Edgefield scene, as several combatants had their "ear bit off in an affray," or experienced the "gouging out of one eye." Others illuminated the growing "refinement" of Edgefield's violence, especially among its "higher sort," through the formal "sending of a challenge" or honorable "affray." One

Conflict That Turned the Tide of the American Revolution, (New York, NY: Perennial, 2003); Weir, *Colonial South Carolina*, 321-229; Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 78-148.

⁴⁹ For more on the tensions in revolutionary and post-revolutionary Edgefield specifically, see: Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 109-148; Chapman, *History of Edgefield*, 5-71; John Rigdon, *First Families of Edgefield, Volume I*, (Powder Springs, GA: Eastern Digital Resources, 2011).

John Ously even went so far as to publish his transgression in the press: “I do hereby certify that in April last there was a challenge of a duel from me presented to James W. Prather of Lincoln County, Geo. And he has not accepted it. I therefore publish him as a mean, lying rascally coward.” All of these cases brought down only nominal fines or jail time from the Edgefield Circuit Court.⁵⁰

Episcopalian itinerant and book peddler Parson Mason Locke Weems delighted in haranguing Edgefield for this brutally violent past and present. He published a series of pamphlets designed as religious moral tracts to convert the wayward from sin. Writing in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, Parson Weems penned these stern literary warnings against all manner of ill-repute, from drinking, gambling, and adultery to the more life-threatening concerns of domestic abuse, dueling, and murder, and he pawed them off at every rural hamlet and county seat he encountered throughout the South. His

⁵⁰ Between 1785 and 1830 (the year that the Village of Edgefield was officially incorporated as the county seat) there are on record 424 cases of violence, with twenty-seven of these cases being for murder. The following cases are the most representative of this broader trend toward violence, and refer only to white crime, predominantly between white men, and include the charges of assault, assault and battery, riot, manslaughter, murder, sending a challenge, affray, assault with intent to murder: “On motion of Samuel Evans by Charles Goodwyn his attorney; it being proved by the oath of John Harris that his (Evans) ear was bit off in an affray. Ordered that this proof be admitted to the records of this court,” Spring Term, 1786; “Ordered on the motion of Henry Bolton who had his ear bit off in an affray, proved by John Perryman, be admitted to the records of this court,” Winter Term, 1789; “The State v. Harry Martin, Assault and gouging out one of the eyes of Richard Mirchum,” Fall Term, 1804; “On motion of the Solicitor – ordered that a bench warrant be issued against Henry Martin, a bill of indictment being found against him for assaulting and gouging out one of the eyes of Richard Michum,” Fall Term, 1805; *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes/ECA*; “Davis Parkins affidavit. Personally appeared and made oath that he was present and did see A. Boddy in a skirmish with Young P. Salter and did see him bite a piece out of the said Salter’s right ear,” October 4, 1824; “Edgefield District – Personally appeared Lot Etheridge and John Jennings and sayeth on their oath that they were personally present and did see Allen Corley bite off a part of Solomon Richardson’s left ear on the 28th day of August, 1815. Also, the said Allen Corley sayeth on his oath that he did bite the said Richardson’s ear off as above mentioned, Sworn before me this 16th day of November 1815, Spear Price J.P.,” November 16, 1815—Solomon Richardson from Lot Etheridge, *Edgefield County Deed Book/ECA*; “Ordered that a bench warrant be issued against Nathan Barker and Sampson Butler Esq. for sending and carrying a challenge to Phillip Burt,” Spring Term, 1804; “The State vs. Dr. Nathan Barker – For sending a challenge. Guilty. To stand committed until a fine of fifty dollars if paid,” Fall Term, 1804; “The State v. Nathan Barker, sending a challenge,” Spring Term, 1805; “The State v. Nathan Barker, sending a challenge,” Fall Term, 1805; “The State vs. William (or Walter) Taylor, sending a challenge,” Spring Term, 1813; “The State vs. David Barrontine and Nathan Joiner, Affray,” Fall Term, 1824, *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes/ECA*; “Notification to the Public,” October 1, 1808, *Augusta Chronicle*.

frequent sojourns though Edgefield and the South Carolina backcountry gave him a mountain of material from which to draw, and he never shied from dispensing it fully. As Weems' pandemonic "district of devils," Edgefield played host to most of what he despised, and inspired much of what he would write. In doing so, Weems unwittingly transformed Edgefield's relatively typical colonial and early republican violence into a sensational popular image, imprinting Edgefield and its inhabitants with an indelible reputation for violence.

That reputation for a violent past—real or imagined—would fundamentally influence Edgefield's future. Subsequent generations would hold themselves to its standard. And their actions would be judged accordingly from abroad. As Edgefield progressed through the first decades of the nineteenth century, a fundamental tension developed around this reputation. To be an Edgefield man was to defend all one held dear, violently if necessary. But as Edgefield distanced itself from its frontier origins, its leading men increasingly upheld a more refined sense of honor as a means of maintaining that distance and promoting continued progress. Seeing themselves as men of honor, they reinterpreted Edgefield's past through honor's prism; Edgefield's violent past had prepared them to lead the district and confront the challenges of the future with manly fortitude. But lurking just beneath this emerging belief in honorable violence was a fear of regression into frontier lawlessness, recklessness, and unmanly disorder. This insecurity drove many Edgefield men to exalt the honor code as the best hope of a more promising future, without renouncing the district's more visceral past. And it was upon this insecurity that Parson Mason Locke Weems would prey.⁵¹

⁵¹ Mason Locke Weems, *The Devil In Petticoats, or, God's Revenge Against Husband Killing*, (Edgefield, SC: Advertiser Print—Bacon and Adams, 1878 ed.), 1. This post-Civil War edition was just one in a long

Parson Weems' disdain for Edgefield was first aired in 1808 with his extremely popular *God's Revenge Against Murder, or, The Drown'd Wife*, in which he documented the late-eighteenth-century drowning of Mary Findley by her husband Ned Findley, both of Edgefield District, just eight days into their marriage. With classic tongue-in-cheek, Weems proclaimed that "it may excite the surprise of some, that a district now so civilized should ever have given birth to such a monster." He then assured that such "surprise will cease, when it comes to be remembered that Edgefield is a mere *nothing now* to what it was in days *of yore*." He continued, "even till the last twenty years the citizens of Edgefield, to speak moderately, were a *rapid set*" and asserted that "club law of course was mightily in fashion. A tough pull of the snout was *all one* as an indictment—a broken head passed current for a *capital* argument—and a stunning knock to the ground *settled the hash*." In his view, "the people then had no more notion of

line of reprinted Weems' works. As was his custom throughout his career as an author, peddler, and religious cleric, Weems himself published multiple editions of this story, the last of which appeared in 1823 under the revised title, *The Bad Wife's Looking Glass, or, God's Revenge Against Cruelty to Husbands*, (Charleston, SC: Printed for the author, 1823). This 1823 edition was consulted for the account of the Cotton murder that follows. For more on Weems and his litany of tales, see especially: Catherine Clinton, "Wallowing in a Swamp of Sin: Parson Weems, Sex, and Murder in Early South Carolina," in Catherine Clinton & Michele Gillespie, eds., *The Devil's Lane: Sex and Race in the Early South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997): 24-36.

For more on Edgefield's violent history, in reality and reputation, see especially: Brown, *Strain of Violence*, 6, 39-40, 58-59, 67-90; Burton, *In My Father's House*, xviii, 6, 73-75, 90-95; John B. Edmunds Jr., *Francis W. Pickens and the Politics of Destruction*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 2-20; Lacy K. Ford, "Origins of the Edgefield Tradition: The Late Antebellum Experience and the Roots of Political Insurgency," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 98, No. 4, (Oct. 1997): 328-248; Stephen Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman & the Reconstruction of White Supremacy*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 10-39; Alvy L. King, *Louis T. Wigfall: Southern Fire-eater*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970), 3-47; Francis Butler Simkins, *Pitchfork Ben Tillman: South Carolinian*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002 ed.), 23-46. Other studies that reference Edgefield's reputation for violence include: Jack Bass & Marilyn W. Thompson, *Strom: The Complicated Personal and Public Life of Strom Thurmond*, (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2005), 3-18; Joseph Crespiro, *Strom Thurmond's America*, (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 2012), 15-33; T. Felder Dorn, *The Guns of Meeting Street: A Southern Tragedy*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 3-6; Tom Downey, *Planting a Capitalist South: Masters, Merchants, and Manufacturers in the Southern Interior, 1790-1860*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006), 1-34; Arthur G. Powell, *I Can Go Home Again*, (Spartanburg, SC: The Reprint Company, Publishers, 1984), 24-26; Randy Roberts & James S. Olson, *A Line in the Sand: The Alamo in Blood and Memory*, (New York, NY: Touchstone, 2001), 2-4, 28-29, 116, 156-157; Leonard Todd, *Carolina Clay: The Life and Legend of the Slave Potter Dave*, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), 1-9, 103-113.

restraint, than the Indians; and if only *touched* by the trammels of law, would jump and kick...”⁵²

Weems painted a raucous picture of early Edgefield, one in which even its tribunals overflowed with rancor, as he related the story of a defendant whose suit had gone against him “bound[ing] out of the Court house like a shot out of a shovel, and, stripping to the buff, went ripping and tearing about the yard like a mad man!” The enraged defendant then allegedly commenced to “damning both judge and jury for all the pick-pocket sons of bitches he could think of! and daring them to come out, *only to come out*, and he’d shew ‘em, ‘*God damn ‘em, what it was to give judgment against a gentleman like him!!*’” Court in those days was likely to reveal, “poor *blackguards* by the dozen, with batter’d jaws and bung’d eyes, poking about like blind dunghill cocks on a *Saft-Tuesday*.” And the excitement knew no bounds, for “here you might have heard the Bullies hard at it; some laying on each other like mad horses; and others likes drunken brutes, bawling out at every blow... ‘*now’s your time—Gouge! gouge! damn you, why don’t you gouge?*’” The facetious Weems then concluded: “this, I am told, was *old Edgefield*, some five and twenty years ago!” all based on “four days which I spent there at a crouded[sic] court last month” during which he “had not the pain to see a *single drunkard!* nor a *single fight!*” As some of his later tales would attest, this new Edgefield retained much of its former self in its penchant for violent display.⁵³

The “poor Findley” whose woeful story Weems related, “was born in Edgefield when it was a place of but *low degree*; and thence, probably, he took a taint of the old leaven which stuck him to the last.” This taint led Findley to murder his wife, and for that

⁵² Weems, *God’s Revenge Against Murder, or, The Drown’d Wife, Fourth Edition*, (Philadelphia, PA: Printed for the Author—John Adams, 1808), 3-4; Clinton, “Wallowing in a Swamp of Sin,” 28-31.

⁵³ Weems, *God’s Revenge Against Murder*, 4-5; Clinton, “Wallowing in a Swamp of Sin,” 28-31.

murder he hung from the public gallows. Though Weems utilized the story to remind neglectful parents and wayward youths of their religious moral duty, his account of the murder also revealed the role that honor played in Edgefield. Ned Findley had clearly dishonored himself, his family, and the community with his heinous crime, and for that he was duly punished with a suitably shameful death. His violent act did not uphold or adhere to the honor code and he was summarily sentenced to death for the unmanly affront.⁵⁴

But another Edgefield murder would muddy those waters. Mason Locke Weems's most scathing reproof of the Edgefield District came in his wildly popular pamphlet *The Devil in Petticoats, or, God's Revenge against Husband-Killing*, initially published in 1810. In it Weems recounted the life of Mrs. Rebecca "Becky" Cotton of Edgefield in all its gory detail. In 1794, she had murdered her husband with an axe "and with arms braced up of hell, drove at his defenceless head a furious blow which...burst the skull and sunk deeply into his brain." Then, "supposing, thence, that he was dead enough, she waked up her brother Davy" and "with his assistance dragged the corpse of her husband into a small meat-house" where "thinking she saw him move an eye, she tied a rope round his neck, and throwing the other end over a rafter, drew him up from the ground" and there left him "half hanging" as she retired to bed. In the darkness of the dawn, she again woke Davy and together they "dragged the corpse into the garden and buried it in the potato vault." But her neighbors soon grew suspicious of her husband John's absence, and threatened young Davy until he reluctantly revealed the grim truth and its sordid proof. But Becky Cotton avoided immediate capture as she fled westward. Edgefield's concerned citizenry soon formed a posse and in hot pursuit they overcame the murderess

⁵⁴ Weems, *God's Revenge Against Murder*, 5, 6-40; Clinton, "Wallowing in a Swamp of Sin," 28-31.

within days. All eagerly anticipated her trial and (it was hoped) speedy punishment. “Accordingly she was tried. But O! strange to tell, and as hard to be believed, she was acquitted! The longing gallows and gibbet were both disappointed...the sheriff’s branding iron and the constable’s cowhide were not permitted to scar, or even to approach her polished skin.”⁵⁵

In describing how Becky Cotton thus “came off clear” Parson Weems waxed most eloquently in his derision of her native Edgefield. He laid the fault of her fallen nature at the feet of her father, who had neglected to encourage in her “delights in virtue,” and as a result she began “resting her glory and conquest on the immortal charms of mind [that] have confided to all the vain attractions of a little skin deep beauty.” As Weems recounted, Becky Kannady Cotton’s father, James Kannady, “the wretched old man! was borne to a bloody grave long before *his eye was dim or his natural strength abated*” because he was “selfish; and his neighbors were not *benevolent*...sordid and selfish as himself, their blood was quickly roused by jarring interest; and their anger as fiercely inflamed by the slightest threat of loss.” These “wretched men, with fiery faces and uplifted clubs, met in the fields amidst the mingled roar of worrying dogs and tortured swine” and “a shameful fray ensued, which terminated to the disadvantage of Mr. Kannady who crawled home, barbarously beaten.” But James Kannady survived the assault, and successfully argued his case in the Charleston courts, after which he returned to Edgefield and loudly proclaimed that he had “so nicely matched the rascals.”⁵⁶

Such a public affront would not long stand in Edgefield. Kannady’s antagonists, “burning with tenfold rage...and seeing no way of escaping the rod of shame and loss

⁵⁵ Weems, *The Bad Wife’s Looking Glass*, 19-26; Clinton, “Wallowing in a Swamp of Sin,” 31-33.

⁵⁶ Weems, *The Bad Wife’s Looking Glass*, 4-8, 26; Clinton, “Wallowing in a Swamp of Sin,” 31-33.

which he held over their heads...bravely struck hands with the Devil to kill him!” They proceeded and “with this infernal view they loaded their guns, and mounting their horses, dashed off in open daylight” whence “they triumphantly exclaimed ‘*O ho! you old villain! So you are overtaken at last are you? On your knees you damned Rascal, and say your prayers, or you’ll be in Hell in three minutes, for you have only that time to live.*’” They then placed a “gun to the old man’s side and shot him through the heart.” Through this tumult, Becky Cotton vainly entreated the mob to spare her father’s life, while her husband, John Cotton, “sat petrified with terror during this shocking scene.” His inaction sealed his fate, and she later exacted her revenge with one swift axe-blow.⁵⁷

Her acquittal by the Edgefield court surprised Parson Weems. The subsequent defense of her character by the Edgefield populace shocked his sensibilities. Her physical beauty bewitched “the admiring throng” who crowded the courthouse while “the stern features of justice were all relaxed, and both lawyers and jury, hanging forward from their seats with fondly rolling eyes were heard to exclaim, ‘*O Heavens what a charming creature!*’” An observing bystander supposedly rejoined, “‘*Yes, if she had not been such a murderer!*’” to which one of the jury indignantly replied, “‘*A Murderer! A murderer sir! ‘tis false. Such an angel could never have been a murderer.*’” Her seduction ultimately succeeded not only in acquittal, but betrothal, to a Major Gellis, one of the jury and “a respectable citizen...of handsome property.” Parson Weems concluded that God exacted justice where Edgefield had failed when Becky Cotton was murdered by her brother Stephen on the courthouse steps in 1807, the result of a long-standing tension between them.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Weems, *The Bad Wife’s Looking Glass*, 8-11; Clinton, “Wallowing in a Swamp of Sin,” 31-33.

⁵⁸ Weems, *The Bad Wife’s Looking Glass*, 26-41; Clinton, “Wallowing in a Swamp of Sin,” 31-33.

Weems meant for his treatment of Becky Cotton's travails to morally instruct, and the immense popularity of this particular tract seemingly confirmed his success. But despite his intent, Weems also gave readers a self-righteous position from which to read an indulgent tale of immorality, and inadvertently confirmed and advertised Edgefield's growing reputation for honor and violence. Honor and shame certainly motivated both James Kannady and his persecutors, whose actions ultimately proved to be the root of Becky Cotton's murder. The Edgefield community assumed that such honor often required a violent defense. This expectation extended even to Becky's murder of her husband, who had repeatedly shown himself bereft of honor, most conspicuously in his failure to defend her or her father in the face of assault. Even her heinous deed could seem justified according to that sense of honor. And as Weems himself lamented, her subsequent acquittal and betrothal to an upstanding Edgefield citizen seemingly affirmed that communal response.⁵⁹

The tension between virility and refinement within Edgefield manhood and its honor code persisted, as did masculine insecurities and community reservations over the proper balance of honor and violence. U.S. Senator George McDuffie personified that balance for many in his Edgefield home. In the summer of 1822, McDuffie engaged his political archrival William Cummings in a formal duel that conspicuously captured these tensions as well as the public eye. McDuffie and Cummings had exchanged insults in the weeks prior to their exchange of shots, with Cummings initiating the public affair of

⁵⁹ Clinton, "Wallowing in a Swamp of Sin," 33-36. Clinton does not engage in an analysis of the masculine honor culture latent in Weems's accounts, but she does argue that Weems was pivotal in perpetuating a particular reputation for Edgefield in particular and South Carolina and even the South more broadly, one of an early and violent infamy that was slowly curbed in the wake of religious awakenings in the early nineteenth century. Weems undoubtedly saw himself as an itinerate preacher and moralizing author at the vanguard of this religious moralizing crusade to save the southern backcountry from itself and its formerly sinful ways.

honor by “posting” McDuffie. He asserted that McDuffie had “virtually denied me the satisfaction demanded of him” and pronounced the Congressman “an EQUIVOCATING SCOUNDREL AND BASE COWARD!” Cummings then mocked McDuffie’s printed response “a hand-bill in his own best style” by declaring “he is never afraid of shedding his ink, and generally answers charges of cowardice by words.”⁶⁰

McDuffie, in that handbill, returned Cummings’ fire with equal fervor: “I gratuitously offered Col. Cumming the satisfaction due to a gentleman when in the estimation of the whole community he was disgraced as unworthy of notice.” He continued, “I appointed a day and place and forewarned that I would meet him on no other. He actually refused to meet me; seeking under false pretences, to obtain a day to which he was not entitled.” McDuffie then lowered the boom: “I have seen Col. Cumming on the ground of combat embolden his cowardly nerves by artificial stimulants. I know him to be a coward, who has been driven only by desperation to the course he has pursued,” before finally accusing Cummings of “the effrontery [of denying]...that he stimulated internally by the habitual use of opium in addition to the [spirituous?] liquid in which he washed his face the moment before he took his stand?”⁶¹

Their combat finally commenced in the early morning dew of June 8th, 1822 at the Sister’s Ferry, just miles below Augusta, Georgia on the Savannah River. McDuffie fell wounded after the first fire, while Cummings emerged unscathed, and the duel ended. But the affair of honor continued unabated, as both parties (through their seconds) filled the press with declarations, explanations, and justifications aimed at shaping public perception of the affair and claiming victory for their partisan. McDuffie emerged from

⁶⁰ “Copy: Greenville, 5th Septermber, 1822,” September 19, 1822,” *Augusta Chronicle*.

⁶¹ “Copy: Mr. McDuffie’s Handbill Posted up at Greenville Courthouse,” September 24, 1822, *Augusta Chronicle*.

this war of words the victor, physically wounded but with a heightened reputation, which he carried back to Congress, into a thriving local law practice, and eventually to the South Carolina Governorship. McDuffie—and his Edgefield constituents—certainly upheld the Edgefield “tradition” for violent defense of personal, and communal, honor.⁶²

However, formal duels in the McDuffie-Cummings mold were few and far between in early Edgefield, at least as publicly rumored, reported, or acknowledged. And bloodless affrays paled in comparison to heinous bloodlettings that appeared on the county court docket. “Another murder in Edgefield” came to symbolize the district’s growing reputation for violence, as newspapers across the state reported Edgefield’s “exploits” with derisive ardor. “Another horrid murder was committed in Edgefield District,” the Pendleton, South Carolina *Messenger* proclaimed in 1825, when “Peter Morgan, who resided near the junction of Turkey and Steven’s Creek” was cut down in the “horrid deed” by “Alexander Howl, son-in-law to the deceased.” In the wake of a “tax gathering” both parties had attended, the Pendleton *South Carolina Republican* related that Morgan, who “stood high among his neighbors as an honest, upright citizen...one of the survivors of the Revolutionary War [who] was at the siege of Yorktown when Cornwallis was captured,” had “picked up a board and retreating struck Howl one blow” after Howl had “pressed harder on the old man” as their dispute unfolded. “Howl then seized him by the throat with his left hand and with the right inflicted a mortal wound in the left groin, with a Spanish knife, which cut the main artery.” Morgan “expired in 15 minutes” while Howl “made his escape.” This familial brawl became in the hands of

⁶² “The Duel,” June 19, 1822; “Duel,” June 26, 1822; “Reply,” July 24, 1822; “Captain Elmore’s statement,” July 24, 1822, *Pendleton Messenger*, “Copy-Mr. McDuffie’s Handbill posted up at Greenville Courthouse,” September 24, 1822; “Explanatory Statement-published in Handbills in Augusta,” September 24, 1822; “For the Chronicle,” September 28, 1822; “For the Chronicle,” October 12, 1822, *Augusta Chronicle*.

Pendleton's editors a symbol of Edgefield's lawlessness, even as they defended the action of one of its honorable citizens, Morgan, who had initiated the violence.⁶³

Yet another murder trial stole headlines two years later, this one involving local entrepreneur Henry Shultz, founder and mayor of the recently developed town of Hamburg, South Carolina, located on the Savannah River at the southernmost edge of Edgefield District. Shultz had made his name and a fleeting fortune as a merchant and banker in nearby Augusta, Georgia during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. But expensive legal battles with rival Augusta banks and merchants increasingly depleted his accounts and weakened his resolve. After several legal setbacks, he desperately thrust a loaded pistol into his own mouth and pulled the trigger sometime around 1820. He miraculously survived, and after a brief recuperation seemed little worse for wear. Granted this new lease on life, he fell headlong into his new design—to erect the town of Hamburg, South Carolina as a commercial rival to Augusta, Georgia directly across the Savannah River. In this he largely succeeded, and by the mid-1820s Hamburg had siphoned off much of the South Carolina cotton trade that had previously been contracted in Augusta. But success again proved fleeting. In 1824, a theft in one of his Hamburg wagon yards riled Shultz's considerably violent temper, and he ordered the suspected larcenist, a young man named Alexander Boyd, to be severely whipped. When Boyd died from this lashing, the Edgefield District Circuit Court indicted Shultz for murder, though

⁶³ "Another horrid murder;" April 20, 1825, *Pendleton Messenger*; "Another horrid murder," April 20, 1825, *Pendleton South Carolina Republican*. A similar incident five years later also drew derision from the Augusta press, as one "Jonathan Williams inflicted a mortal wound, with a rifle, upon John W. Yates, whereof he died on the 12th. The Jury of Inquest rendered a verdict of Murder. Williams has escaped from justice" as reported in "From the Edgefield (S.C.) Carolinian," October 27, 1830; "We were misinformed," November 11, 1830, *Augusta Chronicle*; Yet another similar murder appeared that same year, wherein Joseph M. Knapp murdered his alleged in-law, a Mr. White, for what appeared to the editors to be the killing of "an aged old man, whose only crime was the accumulation, by honesty and industry, of large estate for ungrateful heirs," "Murder of Mr. White," June 25, 1830, *Edgefield Hive*.

he was convicted on a reduced charge of manslaughter in 1827 and thus avoided the hangman's noose, serving just six months in the Edgefield jail.⁶⁴

Press coverage of this trial again confirmed the ambiguous relationship of Edgefield's leading men to violence. Augusta's leading newspaper, the *Chronicle*, frequently ridiculed Edgefield, its neighbor across the Savannah, for the prevalence of criminal violence, but in the Shultz case the paper's editors heralded one of Edgefield's most conspicuous perpetrators by declaring, "the character of Mr. Shultz for twenty years past was given by gentlemen of the first respectability from both States, and it was equally gratifying to his friends and those of humanity to find it unequally in acts of charity, humanity, and benevolence" and "on the trial he proved a character for generosity, humanity, and benevolence equaled by few and surpassed by none." They concluded that "even in the unfortunate affair in which he violated the laws, and which has brought on him so much public censure and self reproach, he was not the voluntary actor," and owing to Shultz's reputation, the jury's verdict of manslaughter "seemed to give general satisfaction." Violence born of a just cause and exacted with proper tact could be tolerated as a necessary defense of honor. Such honor could countenance a wide range of white male transgressions, so long as those men exhibited an honorable character and carried themselves accordingly. The case of Henry Shultz illustrated the lengths to which an honorable reputation could and would permit violent retribution.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Edwin J. Scott, *Random Recollections of a Long Life, 1806-1876*, (Columbia, SC: Charles A. Calvo, Publisher, 1884), 25-28; Charles G. Cordle, *Henry Shultz and the Founding of Hamburg, South Carolina: Studies in Georgia History and Government*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1940), 79-93.

⁶⁵ "The Trial of Henry Shultz and Alexander Boyd," October 13, 1827;" "Extract of a letter dated 'Edgefield Court House, 5th Oct. 1827,'" October 27, 1827; In the same article, another murder trial receives cursory mention, "Absalom Roe was tried for the killing of his brother, Wm. Roe, and found guilty of murder," further displaying the extent of violence, in reputation and in deed, "enjoyed" by Edgefield's citizens among their neighboring communities, *Augusta Chronicle*.

A tenuous balance between maintaining honor's manly virility and curbing its most violent excesses defined the Edgefield tradition. By 1830, many accepted that the formal duel promised to best serve such restraining ends, and its practice became more conspicuous, if only nominally more frequent, in the years that followed. The year 1830 also marked the incorporation of the town of Edgefield Courthouse, signifying for many the supposed advance of the civilizing influences and social order that often accompanied such municipal establishment. While much of the rest of the nation had largely discarded the "code duello" by 1830, Southerners maintained their adherence to this more traditional concept of honor, and Edgefield was first among the adherents. Edgefield tradition viewed the duel as a necessary check on masculine recklessness, and its courts reflected the mores of their constituency by turning a blind eye and a deaf ear to affairs of honor in their midst. Indictments for "sending a challenge" or "affray" disappeared from the judicial record after 1824. Judicial silence, however, did not signal abatement of the practice. And Edgefield's public eye took applauding, if reserved, notice.⁶⁶

The Edgefield tradition grew stronger and its adherents more stalwart, with each succeeding duel. On August 9, 1843, the editors of the *Advertiser* reported that James Gardner and "our brother Jones of the *Chronicle and Sentinel*" had recently resorted to "horrida bella" near the town of Hamburg, but "after an exchange of shots, their feelings of resentment seemed to be satiated, and they left the ground." Edgefield's editors congratulated both Georgia men for their "scatheless [sic] escape from the field of Mars"

⁶⁶ Between 1830 and 1860, 386 cases of violence were brought to trial, including thirty-two cases of murder. These figures refer only to cases involving white crime, predominantly between white men and include charges of assault, assault and battery, riot, affray, and murder as they denoted in the court minutes. In this sense they follow the pattern revealed earlier in the cases referenced between 1785 and 1830, with two notable exceptions: only one of these cases involved an "affray" and none carry the charge of "dueling" or the "sending of a challenge," *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes/ECA*.

but added “we regret our soil being made the scene of such gladiatorship, and would prefer the gentlemen settling their disputes at home, in Georgia.” Another “affair of honor came off” the following year near Hamburg “when Col. John Cunningham and S. McGowan, Esq., both of Abbeville...fought with U.S. Yangers, at a distance of thirty paces. Mr. McGowan was severely wounded.” According to these accounts, such violence was not necessarily to be shunned, but it should at least include men of Edgefield if the district was to host such bloodshed. These visiting gentlemen obviously knew well Edgefield’s reputation for looking the other way when it came to the “idiosyncrasies of a gentleman.”⁶⁷

Other affairs of honor involved prominent Edgefield politicians. Senator Andrew Pickens Butler engaged in two such affairs during his Congressional tenure. The first began in August of 1848, when Butler challenged Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton “to mortal combat, on account of the harsh language used by the latter to him in the course of debate in the Senate on Sunday morning. Col. Benton accepted the challenge, and the time was fixed for the deadly encounter.” However, Virginia “police got wind of the matter, and both parties were arrested and bound over to keep the peace. Mutual friends are endeavoring to settle the difficulty.” The *Advertiser* then reported on August 17th that “the difficulty between Senators Butler and Benton has been adjusted...settled without a meeting. Mr. Butler leaves for home tomorrow morning.” The editors then opined, “the conduct of Mr. Benton was that of a bully, while Mr. Butler’s was

⁶⁷ “A Duel,” August 9, 1843, *Edgefield Advertiser*. This duel involved one of the newspaper editors from nearby Augusta, Georgia. At that time, the paper was owned and edited by two brothers, William S. and James W. Jones. It is unclear which of the Jones brothers engaged in this particular duel, but regardless the action confirms several prevailing antebellum assumptions about Edgefield (for violence, and a lenient attitude toward affairs of honor) and newspaper men (for their rather frequent engagement in affairs of this kind); “Duel,” March 20, 1844, *Edgefield Advertiser*. This last quote a reference to the epigraph at the front of this chapter, from the Williamson family of Troy, SC, regarding Edgefield’s reputation for violence.

characterized by the cool deliberate courage which neither offers nor submits to insult.”

By all accounts, the affair was ended. However, the following week’s paper brought news of a complication. The editors rescinded their previous report that the affair had been “*honorably adjusted*,” citing “statements furnishing the exact version of the matter, which was, that Judge Butler’s friend, although urging it for three successive days, could get no reply to his correspondence” from Benton or his second. Benton was thus assumed to have “refused the challenge” to which Edgefield’s editors observed, “He did not reply, and thus the affair terminated, at whose expense the public can at once see.”⁶⁸

Just three years later, Senator Butler again engaged in an affair of honor with a fellow senator, this time Henry Foote of Mississippi. “It will be seen,” the *Advertiser* reported, “that Senator Butler has already encountered Mississippi’s Foote, without being upset or in the least degree injured. On the contrary, he has made use of an excellent opportunity of giving the old wrangler a very decent castigation early in the action.” For his action, the editors “among many others, return[ed] the Judge...sincere thanks, adding the usual cry of ‘hit him again’ with a hearty good will.” Edgefield’s tradition served its leaders—of the pen and in politics—well, as long as their collective sense of honor emerged unblemished.⁶⁹

But the line between formal duel and informal recontre often blurred. Even the perpetrators of Edgefield’s most wanton destruction of life—in shootouts, brawls, and various other fisticuffs—evinced a sense of the personal and public honor often at stake.

⁶⁸ “Duel in Prospect—Messrs. Butler and Benton,” August 9, 1848; “Difficulty between Judge A.P. Butler and Hon. Thomas Benton,” August 22, 1848; “In our last number,” August 30, 1848, *Edgefield Advertiser*; The editors of the *Advertiser* also took notice of other duels on the national stage, even when Edgefield men were not involved: “The difficulty existing between Messrs. [Thomas H.] Baly [of VA] and [Garret] Davis [of KY] of the House of Representatives has been settled,” “The Duel,” January 13, 1847, *Edgefield Advertiser*.

⁶⁹ “Butler vs. Foote,” December 18, 1851, *Edgefield Advertiser*.

Though eschewing the formal exchange of pens and pistols that governed the “code duello,” many of these more frequent violent confrontations partially assumed the mode if not entirely the means of the southern honor code, broadly conceived. The press and the reading public recognized those stakes all too well. Between 1830 and 1860, nearly 400 such cases came before the Edgefield County Court, and many of these played out conspicuously before the public.

The shooting of Adam Taylor by J.P. Terry found its way onto the pages of the *Advertiser* in the closing weeks of November, 1838. Witnesses agreed that Terry went armed with a gun, but did not brandish it “until Taylor advanced with a rock drawn back, threatening to kill Terry - and then it was that the direction of the gun changed.” At that point, “Taylor seized the muzzle of the gun with his left hand and ‘jerked’ it violently” and “the gun fired.”⁷⁰ On January 4th, 1842, the *Advertiser* reported another “melancholy affray” between Samuel Tomkins and Alexander Nixon, the product of “some difference, which resulted in the death of Mr. Tomkins by Nixon shooting him in the left temple, with a ball from a pistol.” Nixon initially fled the scene, was later apprehended and tried on the spring court docket, but was found not guilty by a jury of his peers.⁷¹

On September 4th, 1844, Joseph W. Glover assaulted Lovett Gomillion upon the Edgefield County Courthouse steps. Glover confronted Gomillion after a public Sheriff’s sale about an alleged insult and exclaimed, “damn you Gomillion, prepare and defend yourself!” before discharging his pistol. He then advanced steadily toward Gomillion, pistol raised, the latter slowly retreating. At just eight feet apart, Gomillion suddenly

⁷⁰ “On the 3rd inst.,” November 15, 1838; “Mr. Editor,” November 22, 1838; “We cheerfully give place,” November 22, 1838; Another affray involving assault with a rock occurred just two years later, between Ansley J. Colvin and Philip Falkner: “Colvin came to his death, by a wound inflicted on the left side of the head, with a rock, by one Philip Falkner,” “An Inquest was held,” August 19, 1841, *Edgefield Advertiser*.

⁷¹ “Melancholy Affray,” January 4, 1842, *Edgefield Advertiser*.

turned, pistol ablaze, and shot Glover “in his breast” causing him to “pitch forward into a gully,” dead when he hit the ground. Gomillion, who immediately entered into custody, later pled self defense and was found not guilty of murder.⁷² Yet another “fatal recontre” befell Edgefield the following year, when Charles Price angrily “entered the store of Mr. A.B. Griffin,” and upon spotting Benjamin F. Jones in the corner, declared he had “met a rascal he didn’t expect to meet and had heard he had said his daughter had sworn a lie.” Jones answered this declaration with, “she had sworn a lie!” Price replied by shooting Jones through the heart with a shotgun, killing him instantly. He then “walked out, told witnesses he was done working, and left” the scene. Authorities later apprehended Price, who was convicted for manslaughter, and imprisoned for one year.⁷³

While these disputes between relative unknowns over relative trivialities may have stretched the logic of honor in some minds, others condoned such actions as the justifiable result of honor-bound difficulties between men. Many cases exhibited the extent to which the law, the newspapers, and the reading public conspired to couch seemingly brutal homicides in the language and ritual of the honor code. According to that code, as many interpreted it, otherwise respectable white men in the community sometimes disagreed to the point of physical confrontation. As long as they conducted themselves according to the tenets of honor, their blows—even with deadly results—could be abided as their prerogative. Reared in the Edgefield tradition for honor and violence, such men could justify—and could expect community sanction of—such violence if properly pursued.

⁷² “Inquisition into the death of Joseph W. Glover,” September 2, 1844, *Edgefield County Coroner’s Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868/ECA*; “Fatal Recontre,” September 4, 1844, *Edgefield Advertiser*.

⁷³ “An Inquisition into the death of Benjamin F. Jones,” March 24, 1845,” *Edgefield County Coroner’s Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868/ECA*; “Fatal Recontre,” March 25, 1845, *Edgefield Advertiser*; “The State v. Charles Price,” Fall Term, 1845, *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes/ECA*.

Several of these occurrences involved local “grog shops” whose “spirituous” offerings “tempt[ed] men to drunkenness and ruin;” yet these cases maintained a ritual formality often lacking in such places. On July 8th, 1851, “an argument over money took place near the entrance of Spann’s bar room in Edgefield between William Cloud and Phillip Goode,” wherein Cloud tried “to back away honorably but Goode would not let him,” and despite attempts to calm the two men, who had both been drinking, “Goode pulled out his pistol and shot Cloud in the chest,” killing him “almost immediately.” Goode eventually stood trial at the fall term of court and was released on the issue of a bench warrant. On the evening of March 2nd, 1852, “Eldred Glover entered Doby’s Bar and demanded that Dr. [Walker] Samuel explain a letter... Samuel refused an explanation, and challenged Glover to meet him the next Monday at Sand Bar Ferry saying, ‘and you shall have satisfaction with the weapons of warfare.’” After Glover ignored this challenge and again inquired about the letter, Samuel vehemently responded that he “wished to have no correspondence with a damned rascal!” and turned away. Glover then punched Samuel, who “dropped his saddlebags and drew his pistol and fired twice at Glover inside the bar.” Glover took to the streets, with Samuel in hot pursuit and firing again, this time maiming Glover with “a gunshot wound that entered one side of his abdomen and exited the other.” Glover died of his wounds within twenty-four hours. Dr. Samuel offered himself up to authorities and stood trial during the fall term, when he was convicted of manslaughter, fined \$1,000 and imprisoned for one year.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ “For the Advertiser,” July 17, 1851, *Edgefield Advertiser*; “Inquisition into the death of William Cloud,” *Edgefield County Coroner’s Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868/ECA*; “A Startling Tragedy,” July 10, 1851, *Edgefield Advertiser*; “The State v. Phillip P. Goode,” Fall Term, 1852, *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes*; “Inquisition into the death of Eldred Glover,” March 2, 1852, *Edgefield County Coroner’s Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868/ECA*; “Melancholy Affray,” March 4, 1852, *Edgefield Advertiser*; “The State v. Walker B. Samuel,” Fall Term, 1852, *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes/ECA*.

These inebriated confrontations also spilled out into the public thoroughfares. A shooting on the Courthouse square occurred over a game of faro at the local Planters Hotel on the evening of July 21st, 1856. George D. Tillman and E.T. Davis were gaming amongst a crowd of onlookers huddled in their room. A dispute arose over the amount of the bet and James H. Christian, a local mechanic who was among the spectators, vociferously denied Tillman's claim. After unsuccessfully appealing to the crowd for support, Tillman denounced Christian a "damned rascal and liar!" He then further exclaimed, "you damned scoundrel," to which an incensed Christian replied, "Who do *you* call a damned scoundrel!" The two slowly advanced toward each other when Tillman suddenly fired his pistol, causing Christian to spin around, throw "his arms across his chest," and exclaim, "Tillman, you've killed me!" Tillman evaded the law for two years, absconding with the notorious filibuster and "gray-eyed man of destiny" William Walker to Nicaragua. J.H. Christian's family attempted to "Stop the Murderer!" by offering a reward for Tillman's capture in the *Advertiser*, but to no avail. Upon his return late the following year, Tillman offered himself up to authorities, was tried during the spring of 1858, convicted of manslaughter, fined \$2,000, and imprisoned for two years.⁷⁵

Yet another Tillman son found trouble in 1860, when John Tillman (younger brother to George D. and both older brothers to the later infamous Benjamin Ryan Tillman) met George C. Mays and his son John along the Plank Road connecting Edgefield Village and the town of Hamburg. Mays shouted at Tillman, calling him a

⁷⁵ "The death of J.H. Christian by George D. Tillman," July 21, 1856, *Edgefield County Coroner's Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868/ECA*; "Most Melancholy Occurrence," July 23, 1856; "Stop the Murder!," October 15, 1856; "Mr. George D. Tillman," November 25, 1857; "G.D. Tillman, Esq.," February 10, 1858; "Second Week of Court," March 10, 1858; *Edgefield Advertiser*; "The State v. George Tillman," Spring Term, 1858, *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes/ECA*. Reference to William Walker, the gray-eyed man of destiny, and his filibustering exploits in Nicaragua taken from, Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 135-169.

“damned rascal!, pulling his pistol” and refusing to give up the road. Tillman said he was unarmed and declared Mays a “damned liar!,” to which the elder Mays replied, “damn you! I’ll kill you anyway!” before hitting Tillman with a pistol shot to the chest. Tillman then told Mays, “I am a dead man, shoot until you are satisfied,” and Mays fired a second shot hitting him in the arm.” John Mays also pulled his pistol and demanded that “Tillman get out of his buggy before he fired 2-3 more balls.” Tillman drove off severely wounded and “in great agony” to his family’s nearby mill. Dr. Walker B. Samuel there treated Tillman’s fatal wounds and later related how in death he had declared, “it was not worth while to do anything for him...he was a dead man...he felt the blood running internally...he knew he was shot through and...there was no chance for him.” Both George and John Mays were tried in the spring of 1860 and found not guilty.⁷⁶

The town of Hamburg hosted another bloody affray in the final days before South Carolina’s secession from the Union. Three brothers, Joseph, Wade, and Musco Samuel, confronted James Reynolds on December 18th, 1860 and accused him of an insult. When Reynolds denied the accusation, Wade Samuel declared that he “told a damn lie!” Joseph Samuel heightened the accusation when he “proceeded to call Reynolds an abolitionist and accuse him of helping free blacks to the north. He told Reynolds never to speak to him again.” Reynolds defiantly “replied he would speak to him or any other man he wished” at which Joseph Samuel “hit Reynolds over the head, apparently killing him instantly.” All three Samuel brothers “drew their pistols, but a crowd that had gathered urged them not to shoot.” They warned the crowd “that they would shoot any person attempting to aid Reynolds.” But despite the warning, Stephen Shaw emerged from the

⁷⁶ “Inquisition into the death of John M. Tillman,” May 6, 1860, *Edgefield County Coroner’s Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868/ECA*; “Death of Mr. John M. Tillman,” May 9, 1860; “Court Week,” October 1860, *Edgefield Advertiser*.

crowd and knelt to assist the dying Reynolds. The three brothers then “fired 10-12 shots at Shaw. Joseph was believed to have fired the fatal shot to Shaw’s jaw. Wade also hit Shaw with a very deliberately aimed shot to the side.” All were brought to trial in the spring of 1861, when Joseph was convicted of manslaughter, sentenced to two years, six months imprisonment, and fined \$1,000. Wade and Musco were found not guilty. All three were released from their recognizance regarding the death of Stephen Shaw.⁷⁷

In all of these cases, from the Taylor-Terry fight in 1838 through the Samuel-Reynolds-Shaw shootout in 1860, the language and ritual of honor governed, however coarsely, the violent action as it unfolded. And Edgefield’s juries repeatedly confirmed this in their reduction of murder charges to manslaughter convictions, which carried considerable fines and jail time, but precluded the shame of the hangman’s noose at the public gallows. In the Edgefield tradition, violence that abided by the code of honor fell under the jurisdiction of white male prerogative, a territory into which the state rarely ventured and public juries were unwilling to invade. That prerogative supposedly solidified their society, and the honor inherent in these cases and others like them purportedly preserved that prerogative and the social order.

But honor could not account for all social evils, and it fell far short of justifying all violent acts. Wanton domestic violence against dependents white and black, as well as impassioned public violence fueled by lust, or greed, or perversion, or alcohol, fell beyond the bounds of the honor code. And such violence abounded, despite claims that honor restrained passions and governed the social hierarchy accordingly. Divergence of

⁷⁷ “Inquisition into the death of James Reynolds,” December 18, 1860; “Inquisition into the death of Stephen Shaw,” December 18, 1860, *Edgefield County Coroner’s Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868/ECA*; “The State v. Jos. G. Samuel, Wade Samuel, and Musco Samuel Jr.,” Spring Term, 1861, *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes/ECA*.

this sort strained the delicate balance between masculine prerogative and excess, and worried the very white men whom honor entitled to heightened social positions, which their tradition of honor and violence sought to ensure.

The case of Martin Posey quite literally brought home the grim reality of what could transpire when honor failed; the household over which supposedly honorable white men presided, and which formed the basis of an orderly slave society, descended into chaos. The Edgefield Circuit Court sentenced Martin Posey to “be hanged by the neck until his body be dead” for accessory to the murder of his wife Matilda, and for the murder of his slave Appling, whom he had incited to kill his wife. Posey went to the gallows on February 1st, 1850.⁷⁸

The entire trial, and the execution of its death sentence, seemed to confirm the chaotic results of such dishonor, as each moment met with considerable excitement. “The Court House was crowded, and the excitement high,” the *Advertiser* reported, and “the Jury during the recesses of the Court and at night were put in custody, and kept entirely separate from the community.” The near-hysteria continued on the day of Posey’s public hanging, with the *Advertiser* again reporting it “a day memorable in the annals of our District. The oldest inhabitants do not recollect ever to have seen so many people collected at this Village. The concourse may be estimated from four thousand to five thousand persons.” The assembled crowd “composed of men, women, children and negroes, on streets, stairways and rooftops, on foot, on horseback, in Buggies and Carriages came and went” with the “only events to disturb the calmness and melancholy

⁷⁸ “Inquisition into the death of Matilda Posey,” February 26, 1849; “Inquisition into the death of a slave named Appling, the property of Martin Posey,” April 5, 1849, *Edgefield County Coroner’s Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868/ECA*.

of the day...a few drunken brawls in the afternoon, which ended in several fisticuffs, that produced no more serious results, we believe, than a few scratches and bloody noses.”⁷⁹

This excitement did not cease upon Posey’s execution. Nearly ten years later, the *Advertiser* lived up to its name by offering a “record of past days and dark scenes” surrounding “the Trial of MARTIN POSEY for the Murder of his Wife, Matilda H. Posey, and Negro Slave Appling” in “an interesting pamphlet of about 75 pages, giving a true and exact account of a crime committed in Edgefield District in 1849.” Edgefield’s grisly reputation for violence sold papers, especially when the murder broke the bounds of its honor code. The trial of Martin Posey and cases like it served dual purposes; they were chilling reminders that lost honor meant lost order, as well as scintillating portraits of an often raucous (and cautiously celebrated) community history. The Edgefield tradition bestowed an uneasy comfort with criminal violence. Even that which honor did not condone could still serve honorable ends.⁸⁰

That fine line extended into acts of racial violence. The court dockets and press pages teemed with accounts of white brutality toward black slaves. The case of Russell Harden epitomized this brutality. Harden appeared before the Edgefield Circuit Court twice within two years for the crime of murdering a slave. The jury revealed the larger

⁷⁹ “Trial of Martin Posey,” October 10, 1849; “State Trials,” October 17, 1849; “The Trial of Martin Posey,” December 26, 1849; “It will be seen by reference,” December 26, 1849; “The Great Attraction,” February 6, 1850, *Edgefield Advertiser*.

⁸⁰ “Trial of Martin Posey!,” March 17, 1858, *Edgefield Advertiser*; “The State v. Martin Posey; Murder of Matilda H. Posey;” “The State v. Martin Posey, Murder of his slave named Appling,” *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes/ECA*; Several other cases involving domestic violence against household dependents similarly stretched the bounds of honor and its ability to maintain familial and social control: The early cases of Rebecca Cotton (1794) and Ned Findley (1804), popularized in the writings of Mason Locke Weems, captured the family and social crises that befell a man bereft of honor. The Cotton case found the pages of the *Advertiser* again in 1857, when an advertisement entitled “Edgefield Fifty Years Ago! Life and Death of Becky Cotton, The Devil in Petticoats, or God’s Revenge Against Husband Killing!” ran with the declaring, “This work is replete with interest, especially so to the citizens of Edgefield District, as it contains quite a fair “showing up” of the dark days and murderous deeds of old Edgefield a half century since,” October 7, 1857, *Edgefield Advertiser*; “The State v. Edward Findley,” Spring Term, 1804, *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes/ECA*.

community's fears when they found Harden "guilty of killing in a sudden heat of passion." Yet the crime carried only a \$500 fine and six-months imprisonment, also revealing the implicit recognition that white racial control sometimes required violent demonstration toward black slaves. And the state only with extreme reticence ventured across the threshold of another white man's household, and even then, decrees came with extreme caution.⁸¹

Perhaps that implicit acceptance prompted Harden to commit his next brutal act with little fear of legal reprisal. On September 19th, 1848, the county coroner investigated the death of another Harden slave, Stephney, eventually ruling that Harden "did feloniously kill the slave Stephney against the peace and dignity of the State." The nature of the crime exacerbated its effects: Harden had severely whipped and paddled Stephney for insubordination twice in the span of two weeks. When Stephney refused Harden's command a third time, Harden became irate. He "tied a chain around the deceased's neck and fastened it to a pole in the...hog gallows... where they killed and cleaned hogs" in order to "prevent him from running away," but after "two or three hours Stephney died." Harden and his sons Miles and Elbert then loaded Stephney's body into a wagon and "hauled it to the Savannah River about five miles away" where they "fastened a large sledge hammer and a heavy plow hoe to Stephney's body and put him in the river at their landing... sometime after midnight and before daylight." They then actively reported to neighbors "that their slave Stephney had run away." But the body was soon discovered at a

⁸¹ "The State v. Russell Harden, Murder of a slave," Spring Term, 1846; Fall Term, 1846, *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes/ECA*. For more on the tenuous balance of power between southern courts, law enforcement, and social mores, especially notions of patriarchy and the white masculine honor culture, see: Peter W. Bardaglio, *Reconstructing the Household: Families, Sex, & the Law in the Nineteenth-Century South*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 3-36; Gross, *Double Character*, 47-71, 98-121; Hadden, *Slave Patrols*, 68-152.

nearby plantation and brought under inquest, ultimately resulting in Harden's conviction. Again reticence to interfere with white prerogative checked the state's action. Despite a prior record of slave cruelty and even murder, Harden was "admitted to bail in the amount of four thousand dollars with two securities on condition of his appearance in court next term" and that "in the meantime he will be of good behavior and keep the peace toward all the good citizens of this State." After he satisfied these terms, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty during the following session.⁸²

The state's (and jurors') deference to white male prerogative did not apply solely to the household. Such prerogatives could and did play out in very public ways in very public places, and often embroiled state courts despite their reservations. The case of Joseph Williams exemplified the trend. On January 18th, 1857, "Williams had been drinking and was antagonistic and yelling for his horse" when he entered S.F. Goode's Blacksmith's shop just off the Edgefield Courthouse square. He soon got into an argument with two slaves, Hamp and Bill, who worked at the shop. Despite being

⁸² "The State v. Russell, Miles, Elbert, Isiah Harden, Unlawfully beating a slave," Fall Term, 1848; "The State v. Russell Harden, Murder of a slave," Fall Term, 1848; Spring Term, 1848; *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes*; "Inquisition into the death of Stephney, a slave belonging to Russell Harden," September 19, 1848, *Edgefield County Coroner's Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868*; A litany of similar cases involving white violence toward black slaves fill the Edgefield record: Murder of a negro, 1 count; Murdering a slave, 24 counts; Killing a negro, 4 counts; Assault with intent to murder a slave, 2 counts; Cruel treatment of a slave, 1 count; Unlawfully beating and whipping a slave, 33 counts, *Edgefield County General Sessions Court Minutes*; "An inquisition held on the body of a negro man slave named Pleasant," March 23, 1836; "The dead body of Peter, property of Joel Abney," June 15, 1838; "An inquisition into the death of the slave Randall, property of Francis Bettis," May 9, 1844; "Inquisition into the death of Rose, the slave of Michael Long," March 9, 1846; "Inquisition into the death of Robert a slave, property of Edward Hampton," April 6, 1847; "Inquisition into the death of Ann, the slave of B.F. Landrum," November 23, 1848; "Inquisition into the death of William, the slave of Chesley Wells," February 8, 1849; "Inquisition into the death of Dina, the slave of Michael Long," May 21, 1849; "Inquisition into the death of a slave named Henry, the property of William H. Moss," June 2, 1849; "Inquisition into the death of Green, a slave belonging to John Cheatham," July 21, 1850; "Inquest into the death of a slave named Minda, the property of George Robinson," August 18, 1851; "Inquisition into the death of a slave named Aaron, the property of Larkin Swearingen," December 3, 1851; "The dead body of Henry, a slave of Arthur Glover," April 30, 1857; "Inquisition into the slave of David M. Glover," September 13, 1860, *Edgefield County Coroner's Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868/ECA*; "Another Homicide," September 19, 1849; "Another Homicide," November 7, 1849, *Edgefield Advertiser*.

supported by Bill in the argument, Williams belligerently “told both Bill and Hamp that he was going to shoot them” before “the two men left the shop and Williams fell over. When he got up he pulled out his pistol and said, ‘God Dammed you I will shoot you!’” At this point, a third slave named Richmond, who had witnessed the entire exchange, “said to Williams, ‘go ahead and shoot,’” to which Williams vehemently “swung his pistol around to Richmond and told him he would shoot him instead.” Richmond exclaimed, “‘then shoot me God damn you!’” before “Williams shot him twice in the head and he died instantly.” Williams was incarcerated for the murder of a slave following the March court session. His drunkenness had stripped him of his honor to the point of quarreling with slaves, a foreboding prospect that struck a sensitive nerve in the southern psyche. Honor could not abide a drunken lack of control, and would not countenance the leveling effect such dishonor could foment between white and black.⁸³

Thus stood the Edgefield tradition on the precipice of the Civil War. Adherents claimed honor acted as a restraint, a controlling moral influence against excessive masculine violence, whether domestic or public in nature, intra- or interracial in

⁸³ Alcohol fueled this purportedly “dishonorable” violence to an alarming degree in Edgefield: “Inquisition into the death of a slave Richmond, the property of Col. A. Simkins,” January 18, 1857; “Inquisition into the death of William Bailey,” July 18, 1846, *Edgefield County Coroner’s Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868/ECA*; “Melancholy Affray,” July 22, 1846; “Trial of Thomas Prince,” October 14, 1846, *Edgefield Advertiser*; “Inquisition into the death of Edmund Brown of Greenville District,” February 25, 1853; “Inquisition into the death of Simon C. Wood,” December 25, 1857; “Inquest into the dead body of Eldridge Padget,” February 9, 1859; “Inquest into the dead body of A.G. Leek,” February 23, 1859, *Edgefield County Coroner’s Book of Inquisitions, 1844-1868/ECA*; “Sale day and court,” October 3, 1855; “Effect of No License,” October 31, 1855; Found dead,” November 21, 1855, *Edgefield Advertiser*.

For more on the complications posed to southern ethics, ideologies, and institutions by various forms of interracial social intercourse, see especially: Jeff Forret, *Race Relations at the Margins: Slaves and Poor Whites in the Antebellum Southern Countryside*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006), 1-19, 157-183.

execution. Such violence—enacted by certain men toward proscribed ends according to finite rules—was accepted as a necessary part of white mastery in a slave society.⁸⁴

But a litany of dishonorable violence against dependent blacks and whites, men and women, exposed just causes for considerable anxieties. The tensions within the white male honor ethic exposed the reservations these men held about its solidifying influence within their own lives and their slave society. As they questioned their ability to control their passions by maintaining honor, they opened themselves and their society to criticism and ridicule from within and without. These criticisms came in many forms and spawned many responses. A pivotal challenge—and potential ally—would arise with the South's other dominant social ethic: Protestant Evangelical religious spirituality. Edgefield proved equally fertile ground for cultivating that alternative social ethic and reaping the fruits of its moralizing labors.

⁸⁴ For more on honor and mastery in the evolving conceptions of antebellum southern manhood emphasized herein, see especially: Craig Thompson Friend & Lorri Glover, eds., *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2004), vii-xvii, 1-16, 22-42, 92-107, 113-131, 174-188; Glover, *Southern Sons*, 1-5, 9-34, 83-111; Carmichael, *The Last Generation*; Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, ix-xii, 1-18; Carney, *Ministers and Masters*; Berry, *All That Makes A Man*; Mayfield, *Counterfeit Gentlemen*; McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds*; Stowe, *Intimacy and Power*.

CHAPTER II

THE SPIRIT OF EDGEFIELD: PROTESTANT EVANGELICAL SPIRITUALITY & MORALITY

“To give you an idea of the spirit of the [Edgefield] people... God has indeed in a most signal manner blessed the church... The work is spreading... even where the revival has not yet appeared... a sense of eternal things had taken hold of their minds.”⁸⁵

Edgefield’s religious history before 1820 marked the rise of Protestant Evangelical Christianity in the South Carolina backcountry, and its social ethic formed a cornerstone of the Edgefield community from the outset. New Light Baptists made significant gains in Edgefield as early as 1760, when the Reverend Daniel Marshall began itinerating in the area. A native New Englander then over fifty years of age, Marshall had established himself as an accomplished evangelist by founding vibrant church communities in Virginia and North Carolina. His lifelong pattern of following God’s call into new fields of toil brought him to the South Carolina backcountry, where he ultimately settled near Edgefield and began a successful ministry.⁸⁶

Reverend Marshall founded eight churches in and around Edgefield, all of them emanating from the first, Stephen’s Creek Baptist, which he founded in 1762. Stephen’s Creek, located ten miles north of Augusta, Georgia, provided Marshall a base of operations to evangelize the region. Evidence of his success came with the founding of

⁸⁵ “Reverend Basil Manly Sr. to Mr. Alexander McDonald of Beaufort, South Carolina, November 25, 1822 [clarification added],” quoted in, Carol Hardy Bryan, “BASIL MANLY II: Distinguished Baptist Leader Had Important Ties to Edgefield,” *Quill: Official Publication of the Old Edgefield Genealogical Society*, (March-April, 2003). Originally attributed therein to, Louise Manly, *The Manly Family, An Account of the Descendants of Captain Basil Manly of the Revolution and Related Families*, (Greenville, SC: unpublished, 1930), 98-100.

⁸⁶ Ray Thomas, *Daniel and Abraham Marshall: Pioneer Baptist Evangelists to the South*, (Springfield, MO: The Particular Baptist Press, 2006 ed.).

Horn's Creek Baptist Church, located some six miles south of Edgefield Courthouse, in 1768. The Horn's Creek brethren later praised Marshall as "one of the first ministers of [the Baptist] denomination that ever preached the Gospel in this part of the State, whose faith and zeal in the ministry was very early the means of conviction, and the conversion, of precious souls to God." As the seeds of the American Revolution were being sown, Baptists had staked their claim as Edgefield's spiritual leader.⁸⁷

On the eve of that Revolution, even the stodgy Anglican itinerant Charles Woodmason grudgingly acknowledged the preponderance of these New Light Baptists throughout the South Carolina backcountry. His Anglican affiliation dictated a patronizing, if not wholly dismissive attitude toward the various dissenting sects he encountered. He expressed particular disdain for their preference of adult baptism by explaining, "they had a numerous Progeny for Baptism—rather chusing[sic] they should grow up to Maturity without Baptism." He then reluctantly admitted his belief that "some few among [the New Light Baptist clergy] mean Well—But they are [un]equal to the Task they undertake. They set about effecting in an Instant, what requires both Labour and Time—They apply to the Passions, not the Understanding of the People." In another encounter, he opined, that he "met here with some serious Christians But the Generality very loose, dissolute, Idle People—Without either Religion or Goodness—The same may be said of the whole Body of the People in these Back Parts."⁸⁸

Despite his Anglican reticence to credit New Light Baptist religious advances, Woodmason's backcountry observations clearly revealed an early Protestant Evangelical

⁸⁷ William Robertson, "Early History of the [Horn's Creek Baptist] Church, May 11, 1824," Horn's Creek Baptist Church Minutes, 1824-1860 (hereafter HCB)/Tompkins Genealogical Library, Edgefield, South Carolina (hereafter TGL); Thomas, *Daniel and Abraham Marshall*.

⁸⁸ Charles Woodmason, Richard J. Hooker, ed., *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1953), 6-14, 117.

presence. His inability—and those of his denomination—to gain a solid spiritual foothold in the backcountry did not mean religion languished among its residents. The backcountry preference for a more emotional religious experience troubled Anglicans like Woodmason, who decried the tendency to come “to Sermon with Itching Ears only, not with any Disposition of Heart, or Sentiment of Mind” and to “Assemble out of Curiosity, not Devotion, and seem so pleas’d with their native Ignorance, as to be offended at any Attempts to rouse them out of it.” But one man’s sinful emotion is another’s spiritual salvation. Baptist congregations continued to multiply into the post-Revolutionary period and provided a firm spiritual foundation grounded in an emerging Protestant Evangelical ethic.⁸⁹

But these Baptists were not alone. Like most Methodist Episcopal Church communities throughout the South, early Edgefield Methodism originated in the work of circuit riding ministers. According to one local church historian, “the earliest [record of Methodism] discovered so far is a description of the first circuit to cover the Edgefield area—the Cherokee circuit. James Jenkins, an important figure in South Carolina Methodism, notes in his autobiography that the Cherokee circuit was formed in 1789.” This sprawling circuit covered nearly 300 miles and stretched from the Savannah River northward to Saluda and westward to Cherokee Town, enveloping the districts of Edgefield, Abbeville, and Pendleton. In 1791, Butler’s Methodist Episcopal Meeting

⁸⁹ Woodmason, *The Carolina Backcountry*, 13. For more on this emerging Protestant Evangelical ethic as it developed and evolved in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century South Carolina, see especially: Lacy K. Ford, *Origins of Southern Radicalism: The South Carolina Upcountry, 1800-1860*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1988), 19-43; Rachel N. Klein, *Unification of a Slave State: The Rise of the Planter Class in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1760-1808*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 269-302; Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995), 130-207; Alan Galloway, *The Formation of a Planter Elite: Jonathan Bryan and the Southern Colonial Frontier*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2007 ed.), 30-54.

House was established on the property of James Butler. But such permanent houses of worship were rare, as the circuit riders who traversed the Edgefield area more typically preached wherever they could—private homes, public taverns, courthouses, other denominational meeting houses, even outdoors—and as frequently as travel would permit. Methodist Episcopal Bishop Francis Asbury affirmed Edgefield’s growing Methodist community with three visits to the area in 1801, 1807, and 1809.⁹⁰

The Great Revival ingrained this emerging Protestant Evangelical ethic into the very fabric of the Edgefield community. This spiritual awakening brought much of the South Carolina backcountry into the Protestant Evangelical fold by drawing upon the revival fervor that had enveloped communities across the South between 1800 and 1810. In Edgefield, this fervor spread forth from predominantly Baptist and Methodist pulpits. In 1809, the Reverends Samuel Marsh and John Landrum of Horn’s Creek Baptist Church presided over “a Great and Glorious revival of religion... the greatest revival we have known. There were about three hundred members added to this church.”⁹¹

During the last of his Edgefield visits, Methodist Episcopal Bishop Francis Asbury credited the extensive Methodist presence in Edgefield for fomenting this spiritual revival in observing, “the Baptists are carrying all before them; they are indebted to Methodist camp meetings for this.” Both Methodist camp meetings and Baptist protracted meetings “received by experience” hundreds of members, while also resulting in many a “backslider restored.” The nature of the Methodist circuit system certainly contributed to this cross-denominational outpouring of religious spirit. Largely without

⁹⁰ Kevin Cooley, “Clues of Early Methodism in Edgefield County, April 2004;” “A Brief History of Edgefield United Methodist Church, April 2004,” Edgefield United Methodist Church Records (hereafter EUMC)/TGL.

⁹¹ Robertson, “Early History,” HCB/TGL.

their own permanent houses of worship, Methodist circuit riders borrowed frequently the pulpits of their Baptist brethren. A Methodist revival could thus quickly embrace attending Baptists. As the dean of Edgefield history has noted, “limited preaching meant that when a preacher was available, people of different denominations would attend the same church; hence the values of different denominations were mingled.”⁹²

This mingling of values enabled an awakening of the Edgefield spirit to ameliorate sectarian division and even extend beyond denominational affiliation. Revivals were very public, social affairs, rivaling judicial court days and commercial sale days for the anticipation and attendance of the Edgefield community. Many who remained beyond the Protestant Evangelical fold attended revivals as they did these other community events, and thus were exposed to Protestant Evangelical values and teachings. Such exposure led many to join Edgefield churches; it led even more to a familiarity with the Protestant Evangelical ethic. This ethic broadly embraced spiritual self-reflection and morality, stressing their mutual importance in bringing about religious conversion. While many, especially men, stopped short of conversion and abstained from officially joining a particular denomination or congregation, the esteem of individual spiritual growth and moral concern pervaded, suggesting “that at least some of the churches exhibited a degree of tolerance necessary to foster a larger sense of community,” one well versed in the morality and language of Protestant Evangelicalism.⁹³

This communal ethic only increased as the century progressed, manifested most conspicuously in the expansion of existing churches and the construction of new ones. Most of this expansion occurred among Baptists and Methodists, and was initiated by

⁹² Francis Asbury as quoted in Orville Vernon Burton, *In My Father's House are Many Mansions*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 22-23.

⁹³ Burton, *In My Father's House*, 23.

revival. By the 1820s, both denominations had made annual meetings a regular part of the church calendar, and many of these sparked revivals of several days duration. Most of these differed from earlier revivals in that they were an established part of the annual clerical calendar. As such, they served as important administrative meetings and outreach expositions, retaining much of the emotion of former revivals but lacking their sense of spontaneity. These “revivals” came to resemble reunions, reaffirming rather than pioneering a sense of the spiritual among the church brethren and the community at large. Some proved more emotionally affecting and therefore more protracted than others, but a continuous cycle of revival became a primary means of maintaining the faith within individual churches and promoting a continued spirituality within the broader community.⁹⁴

Local Baptists again took the lead. A young Baptist preacher named Basil Manly Sr. entered Edgefield from Columbia in 1821, where he would soon graduate valedictorian from the South Carolina College. He assumed the pastorate of Little Stephen’s Creek Baptist Church, some 10 miles north of Edgefield Courthouse, in 1822, and presided over a revival that began during his first full summer there. As he publicly recounted, the revival fervor appeared “suddenly, and like an electric shock, the Divine power seemed to be poured out on the whole congregation...it was truly astonishing—I never saw such things before—So universal an effect.” This revival gained momentum—and statewide notoriety—throughout the summer and fall of 1822. Manly’s name became

⁹⁴ For a more detailed analysis of the early growth of the Protestant Evangelical ethic in Edgefield, see especially: Burton, *In My Father’s House*, 21-69; Hortense C. Woodson, *Giant in the Land: The Life of William B. Johnson, First President of the South Baptist Convention, 1845-1851*, (Springfield, MI: Particular Baptist Press, 2005 ed.), 55-90; A. James Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 39-55; John A. Chapman, *History of Edgefield County: From the Earliest Settlements to 1897*, (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1999 ed.), 73-74, 91-92.

synonymous with the “Edgefield Revival” he encouraged. This revival success prompted Manly, along with several prominent families in Edgefield, to found the Edgefield Village Baptist Church in 1823, the first Baptist church in the town of Edgefield proper. As the decade unfolded, both Manly and the Edgefield community thus became driving forces in the advance of South Carolina Baptism.⁹⁵

When Baptist minister William Bullein Johnson ascended the pulpit at the Edgefield Village Baptist Church for the first time in 1830, he was entering his 48th year, over half of which he had dedicated to Baptist ministerial service. His name stood among those most exalted of South Carolina Baptists—Oliver Hart, Edmund Botsford, and Richard Furman—all of whom he credited with lighting the fire of his own faith, and whom Baptists statewide revered for advancing the faith across the Palmetto State. As an aging veteran of numerous Baptist pulpits in Euhaw and Columbia, South Carolina, as well as Savannah, Georgia, Johnson entered an Edgefield community primed for spiritual advance. His ministerial brother and personal friend Basil Manly Sr. had done the priming through the 1820s revivals. Its success led to the founding of the Edgefield Village Baptist Church in 1823, as well as the Edgefield Female Academy, both of which Johnson had been called to direct. Edgefield became a central figure in the annals of South Carolina religious development, and the names of its spiritual leaders, Johnson foremost among them, became familiar across the state and region.⁹⁶

Edgefield Methodists made similar gains during the period. A prominent Methodist society near Sleepy Creek, thirteen miles north of Edgefield Village, had

⁹⁵ Basil Manly Sr., “Letter to the Editor,” *Southern Intelligencer* 1 (August 10, 1822), 127, as quoted in A. James Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 44-49.

⁹⁶ Woodson, *Giant in the Land*, 1-79; Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 41-55.

formed McKendree Methodist Church in 1817. In 1825 title was given to the Harmony Methodist Church some six miles east of the village on the Edgefield and Augusta road. And the first permanent Methodist Church serving the village itself was erected in 1820, just one mile north in Pottersville. The Quarterly Conference minutes from 1831 listed twenty-five churches within the Saluda Circuit, which encompassed Edgefield District. Many of these were Baptist meeting houses utilized by Methodist circuit riders at least twice monthly. “The Reverend Stephen Olin, visiting Methodist divine, preached on January 31, 1821,” said one report, while another observed that, “on September 4th of the same year, Mr. Bray, another Methodist circuit rider, delivered a sermon from Matthew 2:3, giving the Baptists a strong Wesleyan interpretation of the words, ‘How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation.’” By 1831, this decade of growth culminated in the construction of a Methodist meeting house on Buncombe Street near the home of local luminary Hansford Mims, just off the Edgefield Courthouse square.⁹⁷

Revivals were the primary means of extending the faith by growing the churches. Edgefield Baptists and Methodists alike relied upon revivals to expand their numbers and influence. Together with the Methodist circuit riding tradition, these revivals further fomented the community spirit that prevailed in Edgefield. Local church records and the fledgling local press both give credence to the centrality of revivals in this spiritual growth among the Edgefield populace. A series of religious revivals during the next two decades inundated Edgefield in spiritual fervor. The Baptist Reverend William B. Johnson guided his own revival shortly after arriving in Edgefield in 1831. From his pulpit at Edgefield Village Baptist Church, the revival fervor commenced on the second Tuesday in August, when “preaching [was] appointed at candlelight,” which introduced

⁹⁷ Cooley, “Clues of Early Methodism;” M.N. Rainsford, “Edgefield Methodism, (undated),” EUMC/TGL.

“some pleasing prospects of a revival” as “Christians began to pray in earnest for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.”⁹⁸

These prospects quickly came to fruition over the next several days as “the Lord began to show himself in a powerful manner. God’s people greatly encouraged and sinners began to look about...Sinners began to tremble and cry mightily to God what they should do to be saved...the spirit of the Lord was evidently seen and felt among the people, and some conversions spoke of.” Weekend services affirmed the onset of a full-fledged revival: “several conversions talked of at this service—all hearts gladdened and much prayer was sent up to God for a continuation of his Holy Spirit upon us...the balance of this Holy day [Sunday] was spent in preaching, praying, and exhorting, and it was now most evident, that God intended a mighty display of power among the people.”⁹⁹ As the progenitor of this revival, Johnson later reflected that “it pleased our Heavenly Father to grant us a spiritual revival, accompanied with the addition of many redeemed souls to the church. I have been present at many such meetings, but none, that I have ever attended, were equal to this.”¹⁰⁰

The interdenominational aspect of this revival particularly captured Johnson’s attention, as he explained that “of those who were, according to their own statements,

⁹⁸ “August 1831,” Edgefield Baptist Church Records (hereafter EBC)/TGL. Edgefield largely mirrored regional trends in Methodist growth in particular and religious growth in general during the period, especially with regard to the prominence of revivals in the expansion of the Protestant Evangelical ethic. For more on these broad regional trends in religious growth, see especially: John B. Boles, *The Great Revival: Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1996 ed.), 1-24, 70-142; Donald G. Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), 1-97; Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 3-161, 220-226; Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999 ed.), 144-177, 241-322; Philip N. Mulder, *A Controversial Spirit: Evangelical Awakenings in the South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3-88, 110-148; Mark A. Noll, *America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3-18, 73-92, 159-224, 330-364; John Wigger, *American Saint: Francis Asbury & The Methodists*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1-13, 47-85, 313-328, 401-418.

⁹⁹ “August 1831,” EBC/TGL.

¹⁰⁰ William B. Johnson as quoted in, Woodson, *Giant in the Land*, 73-74.

made recipients of a hope which maketh not ashamed...Some of these intend uniting with the Episcopalians, some with the Presbyterians, others have already joined the Methodists” in addition to those claimed by his own Baptists. Johnson credited a Methodist camp meeting the year before as the inspiration for the Edgefield revival.¹⁰¹

The impact went beyond even this ecumenical connection, as Johnson’s biographer later gleaned from several accounts, “even persons who professed no religious faith were impressed with the results of the revivals which had spread to other places,” with “not fewer than five hundred souls” having ultimately “received deep awakenings.”¹⁰² The Horn’s Creek Baptist Church confirmed the trend over the next three years, as more than thirty persons experienced conversion and joined the church during protracted meetings, each of several days duration. The Baptist Church at Little Stephen’s Creek further extended the revival’s impact when “several men and women came forward and united themselves to the Church by experience” during protracted meetings in 1833 and 1834.¹⁰³ Reverend Johnson himself later observed that the revival “came upon the inhabitants like the mighty shock of an earthquake, overturning the foundations of skepticism and the self-wrought schemes of salvation, and convincing every one that there was a power and reality in the religion of Jesus Christ...The impulse given here reached to every part of the District of Edgefield and even beyond its limits in certain directions.”¹⁰⁴

Revival fervor again swept through the Edgefield community between 1838 and 1841, when local Baptist and Methodist churches reported an extensive outpouring of

¹⁰¹ William B. Johnson as quoted in, Woodson, *Giant in the Land*, 74, 76.

¹⁰² Woodson, *Giant in the Land*, 74, 79.

¹⁰³ “August 1831, 1832, 1834,” Horn’s Creek Baptist Church Records (hereafter HCB); “August 1833, 1834,” Little Stephen’s Creek Baptist Church Records (hereafter LSCB)/TGL.

¹⁰⁴ William B. Johnson as quoted in, Woodson, *Giant in the Land*, 77-78.

religious spirit among their brethren. Protracted meetings in Johnson's Edgefield Village Baptist Church during the summer of 1838 brought nearly forty new souls into the church and again prompted district-wide revivals among both Baptist and Methodist congregations. The Village Baptist Church felt compelled to record the "public thanks of the church to Almighty God, for this special outpouring of his spirit upon the church and the inhabitants of this place."¹⁰⁵ Little Stephen's Creek Baptist followed suit the next year when their protracted meeting saw thirty-four join the church, thanks in large part to Rev. Johnson who had accepted an invitation to preach on the occasion.¹⁰⁶

This latest revival spawned continual protracted meetings into the new decade at both Edgefield Village and Little Stephen's Creek Baptist Churches, during which "the church was greatly refreshed by the Lord. . . The word of God was faithfully preached to the people, many were deeply affected and some were brought to rejoice with salvation of God." "Our Heavenly Father was pleased to pour out his blessing upon us, and revive our drooping spirits."¹⁰⁷ The *Edgefield Advertiser* celebrated the revival in announcing "several very interesting" protracted meetings that "have been and are still going on in various parts of our district," paying particular attention to those at Little Stephen's Creek and the Village Church, as well as others "going on at Antioch and Dry Creek—and we hope they may be blessed in a like manner."¹⁰⁸

Like the revival a decade before, this one also evinced an ecumenical tenor, especially among the Edgefield Methodists. The *Advertiser* took note of this when it observed, "a very interesting meeting at Mt. Vernon by the Methodist denomination

¹⁰⁵ "August & September 1838," EBC/TGL.

¹⁰⁶ "July & August 1839," LSCB/TGL.

¹⁰⁷ "September 1842, August 1843," EBC; "August 1843," LSCB/TGL.

¹⁰⁸ "Protracted Meetings, August 26th, 1841," *Edgefield Advertiser*, ECA.

closed last week, where we understand about forty joined the Church.” This meeting occurred simultaneous to those among the various Baptist churches the paper had already acknowledged. And the Methodists, too, saw the work spreading. In August of 1844, the *Advertiser* received a letter confirming “that there had been a considerable revival, and that many souls had been happily converted, about forty of which had been already added to the M. E. Church. The meeting was very large, and still in progress, on Monday evening last.”¹⁰⁹

Through 1848, the pages of the *Advertiser* teemed with similar reports of revival meetings among both Methodists and Baptists. This revival fervor culminated over three decades of religious growth, and prompted a beaming editorial appraisal of the Edgefield spirit in 1851: “We have in this District, thirty-one Baptist Churches, nearly all of which have large congregations, the general deportment of which, is altogether praiseworthy and such as becomes a Christian people.” The author further noted, “we have twenty-three Methodist Churches, and though their congregations are not at all times very large, yet it is exceedingly pleasant to any one to see the happy greetings and the good feeling that prevail amongst them.” The Edgefield spirit was thus firmly grounded in the Protestant Evangelical tradition, a tradition that would continue to shape the religious development of the district for decades to come.¹¹⁰

This spiritual growth manifested itself most visibly in the new houses of worship that had pervaded the district by the 1850s. The *Advertiser* took “real satisfaction” in noticing the “great improvement, of late, in our houses of worship throughout the country,” citing new buildings at Rocky Creek, Stephen’s Creek, Antioch, and Dry Creek

¹⁰⁹ “Revival, August 1844,” *Edgefield Advertiser*, ECA.

¹¹⁰ “For the Advertiser, April 3rd, 1851,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

churches as in “every way creditable to those congregations of the Baptist denomination.” This public praise extended as well to the Methodists, who showed themselves equally “alive to the duty of honoring God with appropriate tabernacles for the observance of His religion, as their improving Chapels throughout the district testify.” The paper’s editors then admitted, “true, the Almighty will hear a prayer breathed in a forest as readily as one that goes up from the most magnificent cathedral,” before venturing that “He may, nevertheless, be well pleased with that pious solicitude of his people, which seeks to advance the externals of his religion to greater respectability, *that good may come of it.*” They then triumphantly asserted, “while men of the world are contributing their thousands to increase the splendor of their Museums and Theatres, should not Christians do something to add attractiveness, in the eyes of non-professors, to the temples where they exhibit the truths of revelation and the wonders of the Trinity!,” finally concluding that “we hope to see the day, when men shall think that it does not, at least, interfere with undefiled religion, to increase the beauty of our sanctuaries, within the bounds of propriety and simplicity.”¹¹¹ In the public eye, these physical refinements matched the spiritual refinement such edifices encouraged.

These houses of worship bore witness to the continued prosperity of the Edgefield spirit. The dominant Baptist and Methodist denominations appeared especially blessed, as they again experienced several waves of religious revival throughout the 1850s. The first of these originated at Horn’s Creek Baptist during a “fourteen days protracted meeting” late in the summer of 1852.¹¹² According to the *Advertiser* the meeting met “with unusual success. Many have been aroused to a sense of the great importance of renewing their

¹¹¹ “Our Country Churches, June 19th, 1851,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹¹² “September 1852,” HCB/TGL.

ways, and not a few have gone forward for membership... The excitement still continues unabated.”¹¹³ This excitement quickly spread, as “A religious meeting...at the Methodist Church...protracted for several days” and found praise in the public record. A protracted meeting among the congregants at Mt. Tabor Baptist Church, some “six miles North-East of Edgefield C.H.” met with similar excitement the following year. Methodist camp meetings and Baptist protracted meetings abounded throughout the summer of 1854, resulting in a renewed revival fervor that carried over into the following year.¹¹⁴

A visiting preacher elicited this outpouring of the spirit in the Edgefield Village Baptist Church. His “powerful reasoning and masterly eloquence” convinced “all of the ‘error of their way’” and brought “them to a firm determination to try and serve the Lord. This has been a remarkable season of refreshing to all Christians.” All of this the minister accomplished, per the *Advertiser*, with “no unnecessary excitement,” “nothing has so far occurred to produce any unpleasantness, but every thing has been conducted ‘decently and in order.’”¹¹⁵ Again, the fervor spread. On August 29th, 1855, the *Advertiser* praised the “religious influence prevailing to an extraordinary extent in this time in many parts of our District,” taking particular notice of “a meeting which had been continued for many days at Horn’s Creek Baptist Church” that “seemed to indicate no abatement of the religious interest. There was an uncommonly large concourse of people present, and evidently a disposition to linger about the spot with which were associated many pleasing recollections.” The Horn’s Creek Church was not alone. In editorial reports “from many other sections, we also learn that meetings have been held that have resulted in the

¹¹³ “Revival of Religion, September 29th, 1852,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹¹⁴ “Camp Meeting, July 6th, 1854;” “Religious Items, August 10th, 1854;” “Religious Items, September 10th, 1854;” “Revivals, November 2nd, 1854;” “Revivals, April 18th, 1855,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹¹⁵ “Religious Revival, April 18th, 1855,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

accession of large numbers to the Churches, and others are in progress, which promise abundant success. At Little Stephen's Creek we understand over one hundred have recently joined."¹¹⁶ In reflecting upon this spiritual scene, the *Advertiser* extolled, "our village has not known a period of such intense religious excitement since 1831 as has prevailed in the Baptist congregation" of late. In paying homage to Edgefield's historical legacy of religious revival and the stalwart ministers who had guided it, the editors acknowledged the prominent spirit of Edgefield past and present.

Edgefield's Methodists contributed mightily as well, and they too soon partook of this latest revival fervor. The *Advertiser* made note of their efforts in early summer of 1855 "a religious revival has been in progress...for some days under the labors of Rev. Mr. Evans, of the Methodist Church" in the town of Hamburg, some twenty-four miles south of Edgefield Village. This caused the editors much "rejoicing that the 'marble hearts' of [this] community are at length becoming changed in to hearts of flesh and blood." Camp meetings at Bethlehem Methodist and Mt. Vernon Camp Ground extended the revival among Edgefield's Methodists. The spirit even spilled the bounds of Edgefield District, enveloping churches in Abbeville, Aiken, and Newberry as well. All of which prompted the editors' approving declaring, "it does indeed seem that the times of 'refreshing from the presence of the Lord' are upon the land."¹¹⁷

The last antebellum decade witnessed a particularly eventful revival season. Announcements for Methodist camp meetings and Baptist protracted meetings filled the Edgefield press and local church minutes between 1856 and 1860.¹¹⁸ One meeting in late

¹¹⁶ "Revivals, August 29th, 1855," *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹¹⁷ "More Revivals, May 2nd, 1855," *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹¹⁸ "Camp Meeting, July 16th, 1856;" "Religious Notice, August 20th, 1856;" "Camp Meeting, August 20th, 1856;" "Camp Meeting, August 5th, 1857;" "Edgefield Baptist Association, September 2nd, 1857;"

August 1856 at Dry Creek Baptist Church, about nine miles north east of Edgefield Village, was reportedly “immense,” while later that same month Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church, nine miles north of Hamburg, “experienced a gracious revival” during a protracted meeting.¹¹⁹ Both churches again experienced revivals in 1858 and 1859. En route to the Dry Creek Baptist meeting, “the Columbia road was alive with carriages, barouches, buggies, wagons, carts, etc., carrying the old and the young, the good and the bad, male and female, white and black, to the scene of action...the rush was immense.”¹²⁰ An “interesting meeting of sixteen days duration” at Mt. Lebanon Baptist late the following summer added nearly thirty converts. Other area churches followed suit. Red Bank Baptist Church, twenty miles north in Saluda, experienced “accessions [that] were most cheering” while Mt. Tabor Baptist Church, “in this vicinity,” likewise witnessed “a very promising meeting.”¹²¹ The Edgefield Village Baptist Church too, experienced this ongoing revival. A report in October of 1858 revealed “a series of very interesting meetings” among the Village Baptist brethren, during which “the seed of much good has been sown, which will yet spring up and bring forth fruit in due season.”¹²²

Edgefield’s Methodists rivaled the fervor of their Baptist counterparts during the latter part of the decade. In 1857, the *Advertiser’s* editors declared themselves “highly gratified in announcing that the Methodist Church in our Town is enjoying a refreshing season of Divine favor... A goodly number has been added to the Church, and numbers are enquiring after the ‘truth as it is in Jesus.’” They then expressed the hope that “the

Protracted Meeting, October 7th, 1857;” “Camp Meeting at Mt. Vernon, August 4th, 1858;” “Large Religious Meeting, August 25th, 1858;” “Camp Meeting, September 15th, 1858;” “Religious Meetings, August 10th, 1859;” “Religious Meetings, August 31st, 1859;” “Religious, September 7th, 1859,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹¹⁹ “Big Meetings,” August 27th, 1856,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹²⁰ “Large Religious Meeting, August 25th, 1858,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹²¹ “Religious News, September 21st, 1859,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹²² “Religious, October 6th, 1858,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

blessings of the Lord still be poured out until there will be none left who are not rejoicing in that ‘hope which maketh not ashamed.’”¹²³ The following year the editors again deemed it “gratifying to learn that numerous additions have been made to the Methodist congregations of the Edgefield circuit during the current year. There has been an unusual degree of religious interest manifested among the churches, and the good work still progresses.”¹²⁴ This continuous revival fervor convinced these editors that, “A strong religious influence appears to have prevailed...throughout this District,” especially among the Methodist and Baptist denominations. These “first two branches of Christians” “largely preponderate[d] in Edgefield” and could “be said to have swept the District.”¹²⁵

The interdenominational aspect of this vibrant Edgefield spirit emerged most fervently during these frequent revival seasons. “Sunday last was a great day in Edgefield” declared the *Advertiser* in approbation, with “a Methodist camp-meeting on one side [of the District] and a Baptist association on the other. Large crowds were in attendance at both places,” which promoted “a good deal of religious feeling...all was harmony and satisfaction.” The value of these meetings in fostering a community spirit seemed obvious, as the editors opined, “these occasions, besides their religious benefits, serve as pleasant reunions for the people and tend to foster friendlier feelings between different neighborhoods.” Religious and non-religious alike imbibed of the spiritual outpouring such revivals entailed; both individuals and the community derived benefits from these dispensations of faith and morality.¹²⁶

¹²³ “Revival in the Methodist Church, September 9th, 1857,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹²⁴ “Methodist Revival, October 27th, 1858,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹²⁵ “State of the Churches, September 19th, 1855,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹²⁶ “Camp Meeting and Association, September 17th, 1856,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

By 1859, these benefits warranted editorial celebration: “it affords us sincere gratification to be permitted to record the fact of considerable religious progress in our quiet community...This has been especially observable in the Baptist congregation...But the good work has not been limited to this congregation” as “the Methodist Church, has also been wielding the sword of the spirit with zeal and energy.” Even the more typically reserved Trinity Episcopal Church partook of the revival spirit, as its minister “rendered faithful and exemplary service by his earnest and forcible lectures” during “the Baptist meetings, which have been continued nightly for several weeks.” The “unselfish devotion to the advancement of the Church Universal” that pervaded this revival certainly confirmed the ecumenical nature of the Edgefield Spirit. Edgefield’s public eye thus concluded that “All together, the religious privileges, with which our community is now being blessed, are such as to arrest the respect if not the gratitude of every witness. It is indeed ‘a day-spring from on high’ which no one surely can mark with indifference.”¹²⁷

On the brink of the Civil War, Edgefield—like much of the South—exuded a religious spirit that promoted a Protestant Evangelical concern for morality. The centrality of revival and the ecumenical nature of religious worship in Edgefield meant that even those outside the Protestant Evangelical fold partook of its ethic to some degree. This effusive moral concern drove the “religious progress” of the Edgefield community at large.

But behind this exuberant Edgefield spirit lurked a gnawing sense of spiritual anxiety. For every conversion there remained countless unredeemed; for every revival season there languished years of religious indifference. Despite their celebration of Edgefield’s long history of spiritual “progress,” the most honest inhabitants could equally

¹²⁷ “Religious Progress, June 22nd, 1859,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

lament, “the worst of it with our people seems to be that they won’t *stay converted*.”¹²⁸

Even in Edgefield’s most influential churches, such anxieties frequently reared their ugly visage. The church records of Edgefield’s Baptist and Methodist congregations belied a pattern of “backsliding” throughout the antebellum period. The pattern exhibits at once the pervasive moral concern that accompanied the growing antebellum Edgefield spirit, as well as the inability of even the most pious men of the Edgefield community to fully realize its Protestant Evangelical ideal.¹²⁹

Masculine excesses in drinking, fighting, racial violence, and sexual indiscretion—domestic and public—loomed large in the list of egregious sins for which church members were disciplined. Edgefield’s Baptist divine William B. Johnson had a long history of censuring such masculine waywardness, and feelings he had expressed as early as 1810 he undoubtedly wielded again twenty years later from his pulpit: “gross and scandalous sins, the more refined part of mankind, though destitute of true, vital religion, generally censure and avoid.” “A Christian,” he continued “must have departed far already from the line of duty and rectitude, before he can come under very strong

¹²⁸ “Revivals, November 2nd, 1854,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

¹²⁹ For the most relevant historical analyses of these persistent anxieties within and between southern culture and southern religion—over the institution of slavery most particularly—as emphasized herein, see especially: John B. Boles, ed., *Masters & Slaves in the House of the Lord: Race and Religion in the American South, 1740-1870*, (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1988), 1-126; Jean Friedman, *The Enclosed Garden: Women and Community in the Evangelical South, 1830-1900*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), ix-xvi, 3-20, 39-91; Eugene D. Genovese, *The Slaveholder’s Dilemma: Freedom and Progress in Southern Conservative Thought, 1820-1860*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003 ed.), 1-73; Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 28-76, 117-160, 193-252; Charles F. Irons, *The Origins of Proslavery Christianity: White and Black Evangelicals in Colonial and Antebellum Virginia*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 1-21, 52-62, 96-104, 133-209; Anne C. Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order, 1800-1860*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 91-256; Cynthia Lynn Lyerly, *Methodism and the Southern Mind, 1770-1810*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3-10, 146-186; Ted Ownby, ed., *Black and White Cultural Interaction in the Antebellum South*, (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993), ix-xix, 55-88; Beth Barton Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up: Progress and the Pulpit in Nineteenth-Century Virginia*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), 3-89; Kenneth Moore Startup, *The Root of All Evil: The Protestant Clergy and the Economic Mind of the Old South*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997), 1-34.

temptations...to commit such sins which are directly contrary to the law of God and...to decency and respect in civil society.” Johnson then denounced those men, “who have been once decent in their manners, of amiable dispositions, and even virtuous principles,” but who “by giving way to a fondness for merry, idle company, have become eventually the wretched slaves of drunkenness, profanity, and debauchery, and of every pernicious, shameful vice, and crime,” and were “thus ruined forever!”¹³⁰

In Johnson’s view, these wayward souls corrupted not only themselves but also “the souls of their families.” He believed that “many wear out their own strength, and life, as well as of their servants and dependants,” and are “rigorous, even to cruelty, in exacting the utmost exertions in labor from those under their control.” “The result of all is,” Johnson concluded, “that the public interests of religion, as well as its spirit, are neglected....The pious education of children is neglected,” he bemoaned, and they “are permitted to waste their precious time in forming habits for idleness, ignorance, and vice.” And the “religious instruction of servants is entirely neglected, though their labor is exacted in full measure.” The excesses of wayward men corrupted the souls of all their acquaintances, domestic and public, personal and professional, man or woman, white or black.¹³¹

Such remonstrance elicited frequent congregational rebukes of masculine waywardness in Edgefield. Several cases prove representative of the profuse whole, beginning with the 1825 “case of Vann Swearingin” whom the Horn’s Creek Baptist Church to which he belonged “charged with fighting.” Swearingin “plead justification to this charge” for which the church brethren “disciplined and restored [him] to full church

¹³⁰ William B. Johnson, “An Admonition Against Worldly Conformity: The Circular Letter of the Charleston Baptist Association, (1810),” Appendix B, Woodson, *Giant in the Land*, 175-179.

¹³¹ Johnson, “An Admonition Against Worldly Conformity,” in Woodson, *Giant in the Land*, 175-179.

fellowship.” In acknowledging his transgression and vowing to improve, Swearingin avoided scornful expulsion from the church. Three years later, the “Case of Brother Bettis” did not terminate quite so amiably. Bettis was “charged with rioting” and summarily “expelled from the church.” His failure to admit to or repent of the deed suggests that he, unlike his fellow congregant Mr. Swearingin, remained defiant and defensive and incurred the harshest of penalties. Penitence was paramount to forgiveness, while recalcitrance provoked strict censure. In 1834, two members of Little Stephens Creek Baptist Church, Willis Holstin and Marshall Faulkner, proved this rule. They had reportedly engaged “in personal combat” but received no discipline beyond rebuke and admonishment, due to their confession and repentant expressions. Similarly, when John Quattlebaum, also of Little Stephen’s Creek Baptist, “reported Thomas Youngblood had a difficulty at Edgefield Courthouse on sale day,” the church “committee found he was ‘in no way criminal in what he did.’”¹³²

A string of similar cases several years later, again at Horn’s Creek Baptist, further demonstrated the anxieties attending such masculine excess. In June 1839, “Brother Edward S. Mays [was] disciplined for fighting.” But after an extended Biblical rebuke from the church he “confessed his wrong [and was] restored.” He was even elected a delegate to the Edgefield Baptist Association annual meeting later that same year. The following winter, “Brother William Doby came forward and informed the church that he had been fighting” frequently with his cousin. After some consideration the “church agreed his that his personal apology to his cousin would be satisfactory.” Later that year, the brethren lodged a complaint “against James Whitlock for intoxication and fighting”

¹³² “Case of Vann Swearingin, February 1825;” “Case of Mr. Bettis, July 1828,” HCB; “January 1837,” LSCB/TGL.

for which he was “expelled from church membership” outright. In all of these cases, the church seemingly assumed that a repentant sinner could be redeemed but a recalcitrant one could corrupt the whole, and exacted discipline accordingly.¹³³

Public drunkenness and frequent intoxication often initiated such violent confrontations, so this particular vice incurred the persistent censure of church brethren. At Little Stephen’s Creek Baptist, “Brother Thomas Youngblood came before the church” in 1833 “and professed repentance for having drank too much for which he had resolved for the future to abstain altogether.” The following January, fellow congregant “John Miller professed intoxication, professed repentance [and was] forgiven and restored by the church.” Another church member, John Harlin, later “confessed intoxication and trusted he should do so no more, and would try to be a man on his guard for the future.”¹³⁴

Many others, including Lewis Bledsoe, John Hill, and John Nicholson, followed suit. Thomas Youngblood, Bledsoe, Harlin, and Miller had “professed repentance” and “resolved...to abstain” from such excesses. Others were less repentant. James Youngblood frequently found himself before the church committee for intoxication between 1834 and 1837. In 1840, Charles Parrott, was “expelled due to admittance of drinking too much.” Both merely admitted to their transgressions but evinced no signs of repentance or future abstinence, repeatedly falling into liquor’s sinful embrace. Parrott declared that he “thought it no harm to keep spirits at home and to get drunk provided he laid down and slept it off.” A church committee received his admission of guilt and

¹³³ “June 1839;” “February 1840;” “November 1840,” HCB/TGL.

¹³⁴ “September 6, 1833, Thomas Youngblood; Charles Parrott;” “January 11, 1834;” “March & April 1834, James Youngblood; John Hill;” “September 1834;” “October 1835, John Harlin,” LSCB/TGL.

subsequent lack of remorse “unfavorably” and he was promptly “excluded from church membership.” The same sentence earlier befell James Youngblood.¹³⁵

Perhaps these cases prompted the church to more aggressively assert its influence in the lives of its male members when it took into consideration the “neglect which too many of our Brothers show toward Church by failing to attend our regular church conference days” and resolved that “any member who shall fail to attend for two meetings in succession shall give sufficient excuse—and if failing to attend three meetings in succession shall be under censure of the church.” The measure apparently produced little change in result, as over a decade later such disciplinary cases continued to afflict the congregation, prompting another resolution which decreed “that in all cases for the future where a member is guilty of frequency of capital offences, such as intoxication, gambling, dancing, or any other offence that is not in accordance with church discipline and it is known by the church, that we dispose of them—in other words expel them immediately.” Dr. Walker Samuel, prominent doctor and active church member, felt the effects of this resolution directly when he was “expelled from the church” in 1853 after a very public altercation with Eldred Glover inside Doby’s Bar in the Edgefield district.¹³⁶

This unequivocating harshness betrayed the growing anxiety and frustration with masculine transgressions. These excesses jeopardized the sanctity of the church as a congregational body and a social model. That men, entrusted with both church and social authority, should undermine their own authority through these sinful excesses compounded the anxiety. The inability to control themselves made white men’s control

“December 13, 1835;” “March 1836, Lewis Bledsoe;” “December 1836, John Nicholson;” “March 1837, James Youngblood,” LSCB/TGL.

¹³⁶ “June 1840;” “June 1853,” HCB/TGL.

of their own households feel all the more tenuous. These households included the neglected “servants and dependants,” black and white, male and female, to whom the Reverend Johnson referred when he admonished masculine “indulgence of envy, resentment, malice, and revenge, those fires of hell; and the gratification of sensual, licentious appetites, crimes which are too common in the world.”¹³⁷

The disciplinary records of Edgefield’s most prominent congregations bear out this persistent anxiety. Domestic discord drew the ire of Edgefield congregations on several occasions. In 1838, the Horn’s Creek Baptist church levied “a charge against Brother Stiron [sic] for neglect of his family” for which he was censured by the brethren. In December of 1853, “Brother William H. Mathis reported Brother S.B. Griffin to the church as being in disorder...it was concluded that he be expelled from the church.” Four years later, Brother E.M. Swearingen reported L.B. [illegible] as being in disorder...the brethren...thought it best to expel him and acted accordingly. He was therefore expelled.” The following year, Dr. Walker Samuel was “reported as being in disorder” and after several months deliberation, the brethren ultimately “thought best to and did expel him.” Such familial disorder threatened the sanctity of the home, upon which the stability of society rested. The persistence of these cases in all of Edgefield’s prominent congregations unveils this fundamental anxiety, which shaped all manner of church disciplinary action designed to secure the social order by maintaining the sanctity of family life.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Johnson, “An Admonition Against Worldly Conformity,” in Woodson, *Giant in the Land*, 178.

¹³⁸ “May 1838; March 1857; July, August, October, November 1838, March, April, May, June 1839, HCB/TGL. The church minutes from other prominent Edgefield evangelical churches—Antioch Baptist (hereafter ABC); Big Stephen’s Creek Baptist (BSCB), Dry Creek Baptist (DCB), Edgefield Village Baptist, Little Stephen’s Creek Baptist, Philippi Baptist (PBC), Red Oak Grove Baptist (ROGB), Republican Baptist (RBC), and Sweetwater Baptist (SBC)/James B. Duke Special Collections Library,

Cases involving neglect of and brutality toward slaves occurred with relative frequency. In the spring of 1832, the Horn's Creek Baptist brethren cited "Brother William Walker...for hiring Negroes to work on the Sabbath" and expelled him from fellowship. During the summer of 1840, "Brother William Colclazuer having accidentally killed one of his own negro boys by striking him in the head with a stick" for which he "disciplined himself" and was issued a stern rebuke from the church, but retained in fellowship. In 1853, "Jim belonging to A.J. Hughes who being expelled from this church a few months ago now complains of being harshly treated" was "disposed of," the church "not thinking him worthy of fellowship." Horn's Creek proves representative of a general trend among Edgefield's churches. If left unchecked, white masters' unwarranted violence against—as well as ungoverned leniency or neglect of—their slaves could further undermine the sanctity of the home and the paternalistic order of society. The incessant disciplinary action of the churches along these lines epitomized these concerns and the anxious tension they created between paternalistic stewardship and patriarchal control.¹³⁹

Perhaps white masters' oscillation between a negligent and impassioned posture toward their black dependents prodded the churches to more actively curb slave disobedience and exact harsher punishments against slave transgressions. The white members of Horn's Creek Baptist frequently recorded disciplinary measures against their black church brethren. Alcoholic indulgence accounted for many of these cases, beginning with the citation of "Joe, belonging to M. Mims for intoxication" in late 1828, to which he "came forward" early the next year and "confessed he had drank too much

Furman University (hereafter Furman)—all evince a similar record of disciplinary measures between 1830 and 1860 as explicitly referenced from Horn's Creek and Antioch Baptist in the pages that follow.

¹³⁹ "May 1832; June, July 1840; HCB/TGL

and declared his sorrow and was restored by the church.” But later that summer, Joe again crossed the church and was expelled for “living in disorder.” These alcoholic excesses on the part of slaves never failed to excite white church brethren to disciplinary action. The measures taken by Horn’s Creek again prove representative of the Edgefield community of faith on this score. Slaves frequently came before church tribunals for intoxication and drunkenness, and the discipline they received varied according to the frequency of the crime. One-time offenders typically received leniency if they exhibited a repentant demeanor; but slaves who repeatedly fell off the proverbial wagon received little reprieve, and were often expelled from the church outright. In this way, the churches’ discipline of its imbibing black members differed little from that administered toward its white ones.¹⁴⁰

Theft proved a persistent worry, as evidenced by Horn’s Creek Baptist’s 1831 expulsion of “York, belonging to F. Bettis” who came before the church “for his misconduct” and was expelled during the next month’s meeting “for being concerned in hogstealing.” At Antioch Baptist, “Brother James Griffin informed against his servants Peter and Peggy for theft,” for which the church found them “guilty of said act and therefore declared non-fellowship with them.” Again in 1834, the Antioch church levied a charge “against Sister Boyd’s Milly for theft,” but a lack of proof later proved it untenable and she was “restored to fellowship.” Similar cases proliferated among Edgefield’s most prominent congregations throughout the antebellum era.¹⁴¹

Sexual licentiousness among black church brethren drew the consistent ire of their white masters. Perhaps these sexual transgressions exhibited the slave system’s perpetual

¹⁴⁰ ““December 1828; February, August 1829; HCB/TGL

¹⁴¹ “November, December 1831; HCB/TGL; “August 1832; March, June 1834,” ABC/Furman

sensual temptation too vividly for comfort. “Sally belonging to Thos. Ransford [was] expelled for adultery” by the Horn’s Creek church in the summer of 1833. Antioch Baptist also recorded that year “a charge was laid in against Mr. Land. Williams’ Jenny...for the sin of adultery” and that a committee “believe[d] her to be guilty of the crime...therefore excommunication was declared against her.” The Horn’s Creek Baptist church meeting in May of the following year had been “rejoiced in since it [was] the finest since the revival of [18]32” before “the feeling of the brethren [was] wounded with the information [that] the black brethren, viz. Spincer, belonging to W. Nobles; Abram, belonging to Col. Buckhalter; and Jeremiah, belonging to Mr. Irving [were] impeached of adultery.” In the spring of 1838, “a black sister viz. Rose...the property of Francis Bettis” was expelled “for lewd conduct.” Later that year, “Jack belonging to Esqr. F. Bettis [was expelled] for the sin of adultery, a repeat offense for which the church deemed him unworthy of fellowship. “Jim, belonging to John Dobey was cited to the church for a misdemeanor” in May of 1850, and the following month “Jim was expelled for having dismissed [his] lawful wife and tak[en] up with another woman.” The discipline administered at Horn’s Creek and Antioch toward slave adultery and sexual promiscuity found its equal across the Edgefield evangelical community.¹⁴²

Slave violence presented the most visceral challenge to racial authority, both secular and sacred. In 1833, the Horn’s Creek church heard “reports for fighting against Samuel, belonging to Benj. Hatcher,” for which he was cited, rebuked, but ultimately restored to church fellowship. Another case against “a negro man of Thomas Rainsford for improper conduct by the name of Namdon” ultimately terminated in his expulsion

¹⁴² “August 1833,” HCB; “July 1833,” ABC/Furman; “May, June 1834; May 1838; May, June 1850; HCB/TGL

from fellowship in 1836. Later that year a slave named “Jim, belonging to Simion Dinkins [was found] in disorder,” as was another slave, “Jim, belonging to Frances Bettis” who were both “excommunicated from the church.” Late in the summer of 1853, “Jim belonging to B. Bettis was expelled for having a fight with his overseer and for swearing repeatedly.” Again, Horn’s Creek sets the mold for the broader Edgefield community. Disciplinary cases against overt slave violence abounded in the records of Edgefield’s churches. Like the discipline administered against black alcoholic abuse, theft, and sexual transgression, that against violence perpetuated the tension between paternalism and patriarchy, between saving a wayward soul and punishing a recalcitrant slave.¹⁴³

The persistence of these slave transgressions belied the effectiveness of church discipline, prompting the Horn’s Creek brethren to seek alternative redress. In October of 1841, “Brother H.H. Mayfair...suggested the propriety of appointing two of the coloured [sic] brethren to overlook the coloured members, which met the cordial approbation of the church.” Two particular black members, “Jack belonging to Mr. Francis Bettis, and Primus the property of Mrs. Ryan, were appointed for that purpose.” At a meeting early the following year, the church sought the permission of “Mr. Francis Bettis...for Jack to be appointed to overlook and report the conduct of the coloured members” which was granted. This added disciplinary oversight coincided with another proposal to augment the spiritual education of said black brethren, when “the propriety of an extra sermon to the coloured part of the congregation was laid before the church and they concluded to leave it to the discretion of their minister,” who later approved the measure. Such measures on the part of Edgefield’s churches maintained their paternalistic posture, but

¹⁴³ “December 1833, February 1834; September 1835, November 1839; February 1836; HCB/TGL

also revealed a persistent anxiety concerning their own self control and the ever-present temptations afflicting the slave system they inhabited.¹⁴⁴

The similarity between the discipline exacted against white and black brethren alike for the same sins of excess revealed a deep-seated distrust of white male control—of the self, the home, and the racial hierarchy. The persistent inability of white men to curb their passions rendered their social power suspect, and cast a considerable shadow of doubt upon the sanctity of the southern social order. If white men consistently backslid into sin, how could black dependents be expected to meet the same moral obligations, when the southern social hierarchy assumed the supremacy of the former over the latter? This reasoning produced a tension between the necessity of racial control and the primacy of spiritual brotherhood, which lent the entire southern social system a pervasive anxiety. That anxiety manifested itself in the home, the sanctuary, and the very streets of villages like Edgefield that proliferated across the southern landscape.¹⁴⁵

Drawing on this religious history and heritage, the Edgefield community entered the antebellum period with a strong Protestant Evangelical morality. Those morals had been forged over roughly sixty years of religious development, accomplished through a markedly Protestant Evangelical mode of worship and revival. Led by local Baptist and Methodist congregations, Edgefield evangelicals had shaped the morals of the

¹⁴⁴ “October 1841, January 1842,” HCB/TGL.

¹⁴⁵ For more on the masculine anxieties within southern religion as emphasized herein, see especially: Charity R. Carney, *Ministers and Masters: Methodism, Manhood, and Honor in the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 1-37; Heyrman, *Southern Cross*, 117-252; Friedman, *The Enclosed Garden*, 21-38; Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 1-25; Janet Moore Lindman, “Acting the Manly Christian: White Evangelical Masculinity in Revolutionary Virginia,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Thrid Series, Vol. 57, No. 3, (Apr. 2000): 393-416; Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order*, 30-64, 91-129; Lysterly, *Methodism and the Southern Mind*, 73-186; Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, 20-38, 120-124; John Mayfield, *Counterfeit Gentlemen: Manhood and Humore in the Old South*, (Gainseville: University Press of Florida, 2009), xiii-xxvii, 25-47; McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds*, 171-207; Steven M Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South: Ritual in the Lives of the Planters*, (Batltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), xiii-xviii, 1-49.

community directly and indirectly, through concerted conversion efforts and casual conversations. In expanding their prominence and influence in Edgefield, these Protestant Evangelicals did much more than convert new souls to fill a growing number of new houses of worship; they grafted a distinct religious moral ethic onto the Edgefield scene, one ecumenical and even universal in its effects. Members of other denominations—lay and clergy alike—couldn't help but confront its message and methods. Non-members and wayward souls likewise heard its message, experienced its methods, and conversed in its moralized language, even if they flatly refused to align with its institutions. By 1820 this Protestant Evangelical piety formed the foundation and parameters of morality in Edgefield.

Honor and evangelicalism equally dictated the moral strictures of the broader Edgefield community. Both ethics privileged white men with authority, but both also exhibited a tension between curbing white masculine excess and justifying white masculine prerogative. By 1820 Edgefield's leading white men went well armed with both a prickly sense of honor and a pervasive, occasionally self-righteous, sense of evangelical spiritual morality. These sometimes dueling, sometimes reinforcing, cultures guided these men and their community into the antebellum era, and governed their thoughts, words, and actions. This first antebellum generation in Edgefield navigated the tensions within and between both their honor and piety. In doing so they upheld a masculine ideal of righteous honor that combined both moral ethics to maintain their personal sanctity, their households', and their community's, and thereby preserve the southern social order. It was a mandate with both secular and sacred implications, one which this first antebellum generation of men believed was paramount to upholding

southern mores in the present, so that their sons might inherit them in good standing and apply them in good faith to meet what seemed an increasingly ominous sectional divide.

CHAPTER III

THE RHYTHM OF OLD EDGEFIELD: RIGHTEOUS HONOR & SOUTHERN MANHOOD

“When you have caught the rhythm of Old Edgefield you will discover that here, God and the Devil are often one and the same.”¹⁴⁶

When the Episcopal itinerant Parson Mason Locke Weems vilified Edgefield as a “very district of devils,” he did so in light of the county’s well-established tradition for honor and violence. His stories had certainly contributed to Edgefield’s reputation on that score. But by recounting its vices in the same breath as he expounded its virtues, Weems exposed an early duality of mind in the Edgefield District. He had turned upon Edgefield repeatedly for its grisly past and present, but in his moralizing he also actively spread the gospel about its more promising future. His accounts of the brutal murders committed by Edgefield’s own Ned Findley against his wife, or Becky Cotton against her husband, seemingly confirmed the inherent sinfulness of the devils. By 1820, however, Weems had borne equal witness to another prominent Edgefield trait—Protestant Evangelical religiosity—even as he continued to disparage the district’s lingering demonic tendencies. “Blessed be God for sending such *judges* as Trezevant, Johnson, and Brevard” he acclaimed, “and blessed be God for such preachers as Marsh, Lendrum[sic] and Marshall: for in no place have the labours of judges and preachers been crown’d with

¹⁴⁶ Tricia Price Glenn, an Edgefield native in every sense but her birthplace, has for some time been the head archivist in Edgefield County. She exhibits a love for her adopted home and a passion for its history, and her duties as archivist have allowed her an intimate understanding thereof. She contributes articles chronicling “This Day in Edgefield History” for the *Edgefield Advertiser*, one of which is the source of this quoted appraisal of Edgefield’s history and culture, Edgefield County Archives (hereafter ECA.)

more singular success.” He then triumphantly concluded, “Edgefield, with but *few exceptions*, is now quite a *decent place*, a district of gentlemen and Christians.”¹⁴⁷

It was “Christian gentlemen” such as these who imbibed of Edgefield’s dueling cultures and forged its sense of righteous honor in the early antebellum years. Their sense of honor and piety were inextricably linked. Both ethics allowed for, even expected, a certain oscillation between rising and falling, momentary passions and forgiveness, backsliding and returning to the fold. The dual cultural legacy of Edgefield’s past bore out this fact. It was not the one or the other that made this community work: it was the murder and the return to family; the debauch and the return to Jesus; all displayed the broad range of accepted white male conduct, and it played out by the hour on the street and in the pews. All underlined at once male responsibilities *and* illimitable freedoms. There was almost nothing a white man might do for which he would not (ultimately) forgive himself, and in turn expect to be forgiven by his family and his community, his congregation (if he had joined one) and ultimately, his maker.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Mason Locke Weems, *The Devil In Petticoats, or, God’s Revenge Against Husband Killing*, (Edgefield, South Carolina: Advertiser Print—Bacon and Adams, 1878 ed.), 1. This post-Civil War edition was just one in a long line of reprinted Weems works. As was his custom throughout his career as an author, peddler, and religious cleric, Weems himself published multiple editions of this story, the last of which appeared in 1823 under the revised title, *The Bad Wife’s Looking Glass, or, God’s Revenge Against Cruelty to Husbands*, (Charleston, SC: Printed for the author, 1823); Mason Locke Weems, *God’s Revenge Against Murder, or, The Drown’d Wife, Fourth Edition*, (Philadelphia: Printed for the author—John Adams, 1808), 5.

¹⁴⁸ For the most relevant historical literature regarding the cultural tensions between southern honor and religion, particularly those that emphasize various aspects of the mutuality between these ethical ideals, see especially: Charity R. Carney, *Ministers and Masters: Methodism, Manhood, and Honor in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 5- 37, 138-141; A. James Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000); John Mayfield, *Counterfeit Gentlemen: Manhood and Humor in the Old South*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009), xiii-xxviii, 25-47, 83-104; Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South*, ix-xviii, 5-49; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics & Behavior in the Old South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1982), vii-xix, 14-15, 60-61, 99-114, 129-147, 298-299, 493 and *The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1880s*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), xi-xix, 83-105.

Other works to engage these southern cultural contradictions but emphasize the conflicts between honor and religious piety as ethical ideals within the southern social order include: Edward Ayers,

Three Baptist ministers—Basil Manly Sr., Iveson Lewis Brookes, and William Bullein Johnson—personified the clerical pursuit of this ethical ideal of righteous honor in Edgefield. Several of their non-clerical neighbors—James Bones, Dr. John Hughes, Dr. John Milligan, and Whitfield Brooks—exhibited the more secular experience of righteous honor and its moral mandates. The private lives of these self-described “Christian gentlemen” reflected Edgefield’s cultural duality. Theirs was not a choice between an eye for an eye or turning the other cheek. Their righteous honor demanded manly fortitude in upholding the moral tenets they held sacred. Curbing personal vice and channeling personal violence—self-mastery—loomed especially large in that endeavor and permeated their thoughts, words, and deeds as ministers and laymen, masters and merchants, husbands and fathers. As part of the first generation of white southern men tasked with merging these two dominant ethical traditions, these Edgefield men personified the process by which righteous honor came to govern white masculine mores, and define white southern manhood in the decades to come.¹⁴⁹

Iveson Lewis Brookes, born in Rockingham County, North Carolina on November 2, 1793, shared what seemed by all accounts a cordial but distant relationship with his father Jonathan Brookes. Of the middling planter class, Brookes’s filial relationship reflected the expectations typical of his set—to acquire land, slaves, and an

Vengeance & Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th-Century American South, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1984), 9-33, 118-125; Dickson D. Bruce Jr., *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 12-14, 112-113, 233-240; Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, & Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), ix-xii, 1-18, 19-99, 101-164.

¹⁴⁹ Lorri Glover, *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 17-22 and “‘Let Us Manufacture Men’: Educating Elite Boys in the Early National South,” in Craig Thompson Friend & Lorri Glover, eds., *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2004): 22-42. Glover focuses on the patriarchal pressures and filial anxieties animating southern sons during the early national period. This chapter extends this generational analysis to take into greater account the dual ethics of honor and religious piety influencing this generation of white southern men.

honorable reputation that would advance the family name. These expectations, and Brookes's constant pursuit of their achievement, figured prominently in his correspondence with his father. A veteran of the American Revolution, Jonathan Brookes had acquired considerable status as a planter in North Carolina, and as his eldest son, young Iveson bore the mantle of continuing this familial distinction. His education at the University North Carolina set him firmly upon a path to prestige, but it also introduced him to his true calling—Iveson Brookes experienced conversion and joined the Baptist church while at UNC, and began his ministerial career during his senior year in 1819. Brookes henceforth remained committed to both his secular father's expectations and his heavenly father's demands, and attempted to appease both throughout his life. This tenuous balancing act shaped his beliefs and behaviors henceforth as a son, a father, a spiritual leader and father figure to his flock.¹⁵⁰

Iveson Brookes demonstrated this duality most clearly in his early correspondence with his father. Brookes did not answer the religious call lightly or precipitously. Religion had come to feed his soul, but he continued to bury himself in his secular subjects. "It is to me a dry study," he complained, "more particularly when so increased as to prevent my attention to other sources of mental improvement and especially when it encroaches on my enjoyment of *religious privileges*." He continued, "I hope the moments spent in reading and meditating on the sacred promises of the Gospel afford me too much real comfort to be exchanged for profession of such knowledge as pertains chiefly to *this world*," before concluding "I however feel willing to curtail some of my religious engagements for a time and make a sacrifice...this will certainly tend to my future

¹⁵⁰ William S. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, Vol. I, A-C, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 234-235.

promotion and usefulness to *this world*. For this reason I am still anxious to continue at college.”¹⁵¹

Finally though, Brookes had to admit to himself and his father that he was destined to be a preacher. “In regard to my course after leaving college,” he told him, “I have not fully determined the manner in which to proceed. It is probable you have calculated on my attempting to preach the Gospel and could my prospect for usefulness in ministry appear reasonably good it is presumable that you would have no objections to my engaging in that most *exalted and respectable calling*. It is my *greatest earthly desire* to preach.”¹⁵² Brookes continually balanced secular and sacred in his filial relationship and professional ambition.¹⁵³

Basil Manly Sr. was born in 1798 to Captain John Basil Manly, who had earned his rank and reputation during the American Revolution. This reputation, firmly planted in Pittsboro, just south of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, served as a model for his sons to follow. Basil, the second son and namesake of Captain John Basil, bore much of this burden. A singular event altered his course, however, from that of his father or brothers; he experienced conversion to the Baptist faith in 1814 at the age of sixteen.¹⁵⁴ This conversion ushered in a tension between honor and piety that colored the remainder of his days. In an 1819 letter to his father, a young Manly expounded upon his prospects for the coming summer and fall, and took special care to enumerate the financial gains attending every option. All involved some form of religious service. Manly closed the letter by

¹⁵¹“Iveson L. Brookes to Jonathan Brookes, February 13, 1818 [emphasis added],” Iveson L. Brookes Papers (hereafter ILB)/Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, The University of North Carolina (hereafter UNC).

¹⁵²“Iveson L. Brookes to Jonathan Brookes, August 29, 1818 [emphasis added],” ILB/UNC.

¹⁵³ Iveson L. Brookes to Jonathan Brookes, August 17, September, November 9, 1816, May 10, October 19, November 2, 1817, November 17, 1818, March 22, 1819, January 26, 1820, October 25, 1822, ILB/UNC.

¹⁵⁴ A. James Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 11-20.

saying, “such are prospects—God knows how they will terminate. I think I desire to throw myself into His Almighty hands to be guided as He sees most fit. I have thought proper to make this explanation to you. I hope you will approve my determinations.” He ended with “believe me as ever your *dutiful* and affectionate son.”¹⁵⁵ Here Manly blatantly exhibited his duality of mind, presenting his worldly prospects in answer to his secular father, while throwing himself at the mercy of his Heavenly one. He evinced this duality frequently in correspondence with the Captain.¹⁵⁶

In 1819, Iveson Brookes and Basil Manly crossed paths while preaching near Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Both were born on the eve of the Second Great Awakening into prosperous southern families and as such, they symbolized the first generation of southern men to be faced with the prospect of balancing secular honor and sacred piety throughout their lives. Given their similar backgrounds and mutual calling to preach the gospel, the two became instant friends. Both sought to balance earthly distinction and spiritual growth, to make worldly honors serve spiritual ends. That balance could be tenuous. Their calling eventually carried each of them into Edgefield, where both easily recognized the tensions between worldly honor and religious piety that presided among its people. Both men seemed ideally suited to minister such a population. Themselves the product of pressures to adhere to the masculine expectations of southern honor, they saw in Edgefield a chance to promote an ideal that merged religious piety with manly honor. Each left their ministerial mark on Edgefield and fomented the pervasive religious spirit

¹⁵⁵ Basil Manly Sr. to Captain John Basil Manly, May 21, 1819, Basil Manly Sr. Papers (hereafter BMSr)/South Carolina Baptist Collection, Duke Library, Furman University (hereafter Furman).

¹⁵⁶ Basil Manly Sr. to Captain John Basil Manly, October 15, 1817, December 21, 1819, October 11, 1820; Basil Manly Sr. to Charles Manly, January 12, 1824, BMSr/Furman.

of the early antebellum Edgefield community. In so doing, they proved pivotal in the formation of Edgefield's emerging sense of righteous honor during the era.¹⁵⁷

Basil Manly Sr. took his first pastoral charge at Edgefield's Little Stephen's Creek Baptist Church in 1822, which he quickly parlayed into a resounding religious revival. In the wake of this revival, Manly joined several prominent Edgefield families in founding the Edgefield Village Baptist Church in 1823, and was elected its first minister. These early professional successes met with equal personal happiness; Manly met his wife, Sarah Murray Rudolph, during his first summer in Edgefield and the two married three years later on December 23, 1824. Thus Edgefield secured a permanent and sacred position in Manly's heart and hearth. Even after leaving Edgefield in 1827 for professional opportunities in Charleston, South Carolina and later, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Manly and his family remained intimately tied to their Edgefield home.¹⁵⁸

In both personal reflections and public projections, Rev. Basil Manly Sr. bore out the sense of righteous honor so prevalent in Edgefield and so prominent in his own life. His sermons frequently touched on the relationship between secular and sacred, with morality the touchstone of a life governed by that ideal. "Moralists divide law into the law of honour, the Holy Scriptures, [and] the law of the land. But what is this law of honour?," he asked rhetorically before proffering, "it sanctions every enormity. Jabez was honourable on a different law. It was the honour of *usefulness* and *devotion* [to God]." In referencing the Old Testament account of Jabez, whom the Bible described as "more honourable than his brethren" and who had "called on God...saying, 'Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me,

¹⁵⁷ Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 43-55.

¹⁵⁸ Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 43-55.

and that thou wouldst keep *me* from evil, that it may not grieve me!,”” Manly renders the common earthly distinction between honor and piety moot. Honor could not be separated into secular and sacred, for any true secular honor inherently contained a sacred sanctification. The two served each other, or honor was absent. Upon this moral foundation of righteous honor Manly seemingly rested his personal manhood and that of his congregations, his communities, his region, and his nation.¹⁵⁹

This interconnection between honor, piety, and manhood pervaded his thoughts, both personal and public. In an early sermon drawn from the Book of Romans, Manly took up this theme by declaring, “great as sin and its fruit might be to cast dishonour on God, grace would do him more honour, than if sin had not had existence... Sin abounds in the conscience, the sinners own convictions and grace abounds most, usually, where the sense of sin is greatest.” He concluded that “if heretofore sin has abounded in our past life, and we have been very zealous in its pursuit, we should now be proportionally zealous that grace may much more abound.” This grace would sanction his conclusion that “this only answers to the moral government of God. He devotes moral above natural distinctions. For the purposes of life men are variously endorsed. But for purposes of his moral government all are brought to a level; all stand on the same ground.” In another sermon he reiterated the point by avowing, “the design of the gospel is to profit us, it was given to us to reform our manners (morals), to elevate our minds; above all to save our lost and wretched souls... Faith in us is necessary to secure this design.” Only through faith could men repair “the dishonour heaped on God” by their inherent sinfulness. Here again Manly grappled with the distinction between worldly honor and sacred piety, and

¹⁵⁹ “March 13, 1837,” Church journal entry, BMSr/Furman; “I Chronicles, Chapter 4, Verses 9-10,” in *The Holy Bible, Old & New Testaments in the King James Version*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, Inc., 1987 ed.), 363.

concluded the two inseparably linked in the overall pursuit of moral righteousness. A moral life invoked both honor and piety in equal measure.¹⁶⁰

These were not mere abstractions slated to appease pious congregants from his Sunday pulpit. Manly evinced this persistent tension between honor and piety throughout his adult life. His entry into the ministry first tested his mettle on this score by bringing him into conflict with Captain Manly's more secularly-minded designs for his namesake, namely planting and politics. That trial foreshadowed many others. While at South Carolina College, Manly gained the renown of his peers as much for his scholarly prowess as his preaching talents. His success in the former confirmed his intention to pursue the latter, but the pursuit was not without its trials and tribulations. His time in college taught him the necessity of projecting a manly comportment in his efforts to touch other men's souls. In his native South, such manliness held honor in utmost esteem, and his peers at South Carolina College ranked first among the adherents. The defense of both in the face of affront sometimes demanded violence—verbal and physical—that often threatened to excite his otherwise composed nature.¹⁶¹

Just such an affront brought these personal tensions to a public head on December 3, 1821, when Manly defended his honor against a jealous rival during graduation exercises at South Carolina College. His elder brother Charles later recounted that Manly parried the knife of his rival and “flew upon him like a raging tiger, seizing him by the throat with both hands, bore him to the ground, throwing himself heavily upon his body where the fellow could neither kick nor ‘holler.’” The sons of South Carolina's aristocratic gentry who witnessed the scene declared that Manly “had been cowardly

¹⁶⁰ “Sermon from Romans Chapter 5, Verse 20, September 18, 1828;” “Sermon from Letter of James Chapter 3, Verse 13, 1828;” “Sermon from Hebrews Chapter 4, Verse 2, Undated,” BMSr/Furman

¹⁶¹ Basil Manly Jr. and Charles Manly as quoted in Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 26-27.

attacked without provocation and that he should have his satisfaction.” After the assailants were separated and that satisfaction achieved, this genteel audience cheered Manly and “threw up their hats and swore it was the best fight they had ever seen a Baptist preacher make.” As their adulation suggests, such physical confrontations were rare among southern divines, and Manly’s own experience proved the point; this was the only recorded instance in which he resorted to physical assault to answer an affront.¹⁶²

The southern honor code itself sought to preclude physical confrontation between principals by ritualizing the verbal and written “violence” of these affairs, and Manly frequently exhibited his literacy in these ritual forms. He often found himself embroiled in clerical controversies that played out in the pages of the religious press. Many of these disputes were nothing more than doctrinal or sectarian squabbles, manifested in public press debates. But these public debates often turned into personal disputes. In these “rhetorical duels,” the line between spiritual discussion and personal affront blurred.¹⁶³

¹⁶² Basil Manly Jr. and Charles Manly as quoted in Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 26-27. Historians have tended to focus on religious denunciations of dueling and the “code duello” as corrupting influences that encouraged sinful personal violence, and with good reason; in their public pronouncements and private lives, the overwhelming majority of southern ministers avoided physical violence. The most relevant works that emphasize this prevailing perspective include: Ayers, *Vengeance & Justice*; Bruce Jr., *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*; Ownby, *Subduing Satan*.

More recently, some scholars have begun to complicate this relationship, pointing toward a more ambiguous personal relationship between southern divines and masculine honor culture. The most relevant works to forward this perspective are: Carney, *Ministers and Masters* and Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*. Recent graduate level work has mined this vein even more deeply: Robert Elder, “Southern Saints and Sacred Honor: Evangelicalism, Honor, Community, and the Self in South Carolina and Georgia, 1784-1860,” (PhD diss., Emory University, 2010) and James Hill Welborn III, “Fighting for Revival: Southern Honor and Evangelicalism in Edgefield County, South Carolina, 1800-1860,” (MA thesis, Clemson University, 2007).

¹⁶³ For more on the southern honor code’s emphasis on masculine self-control see especially: Steven M. Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South: Ritual in the Lives of the Planters*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 6-49. Other works to discuss Wilson’s published code include: Joe L. Coker, *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause: Southern White Evangelicals and the Prohibition Movement*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 177-198; James Landale, *The Last Duel: A True Story of Death and Honour*, (New York, NY: Canongate, 2005), 95-100.

For more on southern ministers dueling with the pen rather than the sword, see Carney, *Ministers and Masters*, 21-28.

Manly's righteous honor certainly shaped just such a confrontation with an alleged charlatan named Jesse Denson in the summer of 1827. On June 4th of that year, Manly noted in his church journal a discussion he'd had that morning with a friend named Jacob Axon on the subject of Mr. Denson. Manly recounted, "Denson had been traveling and begging for years in [the] character of a Baptist preacher. Latterly he had not been received by the denomination. On his coming to Charleston in May, I had, in answer to some published inquiries respecting him, caused him to be *published* as no Baptist, and as an *imposter*." He continued, "for this, after a good deal of newspaper writing, he had threatened to prosecute me, unless I gave him *satisfaction*. I could give him none and would not recede from the ground I had taken. Mr. Axson, with the utmost address, obliged him to desist; and obtained from him a written obligation that he would not say or do anything against me." Manly had thus engaged a "second" in John Axson, whose role was to attempt an honorable arbitration of the Denson affair. Clearly, Manly adhered to the form, if only part of the function, of the southern honor code. True to his sense of Christian manliness, he actively averted physical violence. But in achieving this Christian restraint he revealed his intimate knowledge of the language and ritual of southern honor.¹⁶⁴

Manly's personal friend and professional kinsman Rev. Iveson L. Brookes understood such tensions all too well. Brookes frequently expressed the same tenuous personal balance between secular and sacred honor and piety as his friend Basil Manly. Though Manly ultimately took charge of the Baptist Church at Edgefield's Little Stephen's Creek for which both pastors had initially been called, the two friends shared

¹⁶⁴ "June 4, 1827, Church Journal entry [emphasis added]," BMSr/Furman.

an affinity for Edgefield that persisted even as their callings carried them beyond its borders. Having conceded the Little Stephen's Creek pastorate to Manly, Brookes took his first pastorate that same year some 115 miles west-southwest in Eatonton, Georgia. Like Manly, he too quickly met and married his first wife during his inaugural year in Eatonton. He and Lucina Sarah Walker were married on September 22, 1822. She bore him his only son Walker in October 1826 but died just two months later. He married again in 1828, to Prudence Echols Irvin Johnson of Wilkes County, Georgia, but she too passed away in 1830. He married his third wife, the widow Sarah Julia Oliver Myers, in 1831, and from her received title to plantations near the town of Woodville in the Edgefield District, where he moved shortly after his nuptials and remained the balance of his life. He itinerated between several Edgefield churches from that date forward, leaving for just four years to administer the Penfield Female Academy in Penfield, Georgia. Thus Brookes, like his close friend Manly, developed spiritual, martial, and temporal ties to Edgefield that never ceased.¹⁶⁵

His permanent entry into Edgefield only honed his earliest inclinations toward the sense of righteous honor that had attracted him to the district. A young Brookes belied this inclination when he reflected upon a death in the family of a college acquaintance by lamenting: "How awful must be the case of a sinner on whom the wrath of God abideth while in life to be forced to enter the gloomy vale of death and launch into an unknown world to appear in the more immediate presence of an angry Judge and experience the realities of eternal despair!" He no doubt thought of his own failings when he concluded, "What folly is it to spend the days of youth and health in the pleasures of sin or the pursuit of earthly treasures to the neglect of immortality and the concerns of Eternity." In

¹⁶⁵ Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, 234-235.

thus contemplating his future prospects, young Brookes visibly vacillated between secular and sacred desires, and evinced the tension between honor and piety that would color his life; “yet men prefer the toys of the world and the pleasures of sense to the treasures of heaven, the salvation of God, the enjoyment of everlasting happiness.”¹⁶⁶

A later letter to his father laid bare these personal tensions: “Whatever station in life may be designed in the purposes of Providence to be filled by me and whatever part of the world may be set apart to be the place of my residence and the theatre of my action are things known with certainty only to God.” He then declared, “It is my part to acquiesce in the dispensations of his Providence, to trust implicitly in his Sovereign Mercy and omnipotent Grace and to submit in humility and obedience to the teachings and leadings of his holy spirit,” before rejoining “yet as creatures of intelligence and foresight we are permitted to consult our reason and deduce such conclusions from present appearances and impressions as justify at least a conditional resolution as to the future course and purposes of our life.”¹⁶⁷

He reconciled these competing motives by reasoning that “in drawing inferences from reason and the nature of things to direct us in our pursuits we should be also cautious in our consultations to make the word of God the main of our counsel,” as only by “such a method of proceeding we shall be sure to have the glory of God in view as the ultimate end of our purposes and his service set before us as the great end of our existence and the grand source of our action.” But he admitted the difficulty in maintaining such spiritual resolve in the face of temporal temptation. He confessed himself “truly fearful” of his belief “that preaching the gospel to sinners is the only

¹⁶⁶ “Iveson L. Brookes to Jonathan Brookes, August 29, 1818,” ILB/UNC.

¹⁶⁷ “Iveson L. Brookes to Jonathan Brookes, November 11, 1818,” ILB/UNC.

employment in which I can engage in a professional character,” and cited his “unworthiness and inability” as the reason for which “I shrink from the cross and think it impossible for me to fill a station so dignified or perform a task so arduous.”¹⁶⁸

But more than personal reservations about his abilities fueled young Brookes’ fear of temptation. He also worried that “when the Lord joins with my flesh and conducts me to the point of the mountain (Earthly vanity) I am presented with a very exclusive prospect beautified by all the objects Satan and imagination can exhibit among which the most illustrious and attractive is the Temple of fame.” He observed that “in the courts of this temple are to be discovered walking in majesty rulers and officers of state together with a train of professional characters who bear the ensigns of wealth and honor,” before ultimately reminding himself that “all its couriers are falling for hasty and inevitable destruction. It reminds me of the shortness of time and certain approach of Death bids me behold a world that lush in inequity and which must shortly appear as the awful tribunal of God.” Upon such reflections Iveson Brookes based his ultimate resolution “that the great object of my life under present circumstances is to attempt to preach the Gospel of Salvation to sinners.”¹⁶⁹

Another more senior Edgefield minister provided further fodder for Edgefield’s dueling cultural heritage. William Bullein Johnson was born near Beaufort, South Carolina on June 13, 1782 to Joseph and Mary Bullein Johnson. Unlike his fellow Edgefield Baptist brethren, Johnson described his own father as “being of a roving disposition . . . often absent from home” and acknowledged he “was therefore less under his instruction and example than my mother’s.” His mother attempted to fill the paternal

¹⁶⁸ “Iveson L. Brookes to Jonathan Brookes, November 11, 1818,” ILB/UNC.

¹⁶⁹ “Iveson L. Brookes to Jonathan Brookes, November 11, 1818,” ILB/UNC.

void and drew praise from her faithful son as “an intelligent and pious woman” who “bestowed great pains on my intellectual and moral culture . . . She sought to imbue my mind, at an early age, with profound reverence for the Holy Scriptures.” She had “taught me also the great principles of the doctrine of Christ which were so impressed upon my mind that they were of great service to me when I began to preach.” Her influence and example drove Johnson’s intense religiosity, and though she herself could never supplant his absent father, the love of a higher paternity became his life’s calling.¹⁷⁰

His paternal influence came most fervently from his Baptist mentors—Oliver Hart, Edmund Botsford, and Richard Furman—who shaped his early manhood in their own faithful image. His biographer later described their influence by asserting, “the faith of his fathers . . . was his by inheritance and teaching; and it was to become his by regeneration.” Like these early mentors, Johnson himself later assumed a paternal role for many within the Baptist faith, a role which carried him into Edgefield to build upon the work of two prominent South Carolina Baptist sons—Basil Manly Sr. and Iveson L. Brookes. He came late upon the Edgefield scene, accepting a call to administer the Edgefield Female Academy and to preside over the Edgefield Village Baptist Church in 1830. Both institutions had grown out of the religious revivals of the previous decade, revivals that the younger Reverends Basil Manly Sr. and Iveson L. Brookes had helped foment. Johnson’s personal history, like those of these ministerial brothers, reflected the righteous honor ideal becoming evermore prevalent in the Edgefield community. All experienced the constant personal and public tension between secular and sacred, between honor and piety. This cultural duality came to define Edgefield and

¹⁷⁰ William Bullein Johnson, “Reminiscences,” as quoted in Hortense C. Woodson, *Giant in the Land: The Life of William B. Johnson, First President of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1845-1851*, (Springfield, MO: Particular Baptist Press, 2005 ed.), 1, 5.

fundamentally shaped all who fell into her embrace, whether by birth, betrothal, or baptism—by faith or by fire. Reverend Johnson, like Iveson L. Brookes and Basil Manly Sr. before him, proved pivotal in forging the manly ideal of righteous honor that guided Edgefield’s men into the antebellum era.¹⁷¹

In one particularly poignant homily entitled “God is Love,” composed in 1812 during his early ministerial career, Reverend Johnson directly addressed the difficulties confronting such men in a world of iniquity: “sin has introduced into our world confusion, strife, and every evil work. Hence arise those painful scenes which are presented to our view in the affairs of men. Hurried on to the commission of deeds awfully abandoned,” Johnson continued, “man acts toward his brother man, rather as the enemy of his race, than as a member of the same common family.” He then surmised that “in this disordered state of things, suffering humanity bleeds at every pore. Unillumined by the light of divine truth, the mind is at a loss to explain, and can perceive no termination of, the confusion and misery which excites its compassion,” before concluding “it wonders, but cannot tell, where the dreadful scene will end. It is overwhelmed with astonishment in the contemplation of this confused state.” He went on to say that “every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed,” that men “voluntarily, and in violation of the strongest principles of moral obligation” and rebel “against the throne of their Sovereign” the Lord God above.¹⁷²

It was in answer to these moral obstacles that Johnson most fervently drew upon his nascent sense of righteous honor by proclaiming that only “the mind enlightened from above, and sanctified by grace” could recognize “the Deity, who is glorious in holiness,

¹⁷¹ William Bullein Johnson, “Reminiscences,” as quoted in Woodson, *Giant in the Land*, 1, 5.

¹⁷² “William B. Johnson sermon, ‘God is Love,’ November 4, 1822,” William Bullein Johnson papers (hereafter WBJ)/UNC.

excellent in counsel, and wonderful in working, as permitting, and overruling, the present disordered condition of the world, for the promotion of his own glory.” He then identified “the medium, through which this heavenly advocate and powerful intercessor obtained her suit” as none other than “the Lord Jesus Christ” in whom the “transgression of man involved in it the guilt of infinite moral evil” as well as “the manifestation of the divine love, in the redemption of the transgressor, which should maintain the dignity and preserve the rights of God’s moral government.” By embracing the sacred honor of God as paramount, men opened themselves to the moral righteousness that characterized the truest manhood. In Johnson’s native South Carolina, both honor and piety governed that morality, and men drew upon both to approach their manly ideal.

Johnson enacted this sense of righteous honor in his own life. In the 1840s, he became embroiled in an ongoing clerical debate between various Baptist ministers and educators—principally James Reynolds, James Mims, and James Furman. The content of this debate—by inference a dispute over the proper relationship between individual churches and denominational conventions—mattered less than the manner in which it unfolded. In a series of newspaper articles between 1846 and 1849, Reynolds, Furman, and Mims jostled in the religious press, generally avoiding the line that often turned such public debates into heated personal disputes. But sometime in late 1846, Rev. Reynolds crossed that line and penned a personal attack against James Mims and James Furman, calling into question their character as Christians and as men.

In a string of letters, Johnson attempted to arbitrate between the various parties and save face for the faith. Assessing Reynolds’ character and argument in a letter to James Furman, Johnson observed, “alas! my brother, how true is it, that ‘man at his best

estate is altogether vanity.’ The defense of [Professor Reynolds] is a sad proof of this truth in himself. The spirit of it is anything but Christian, dignified, or manly.”¹⁷³ In a later letter to Furman, Johnson again sized up the arguments and the manner of their opponent by asserting, “Reynolds . . . I am very sorry to see, descends to an unmanly mode of repelling the thrusts of his antagonist.”¹⁷⁴ A letter to James Mims confirmed this opinion of Reynolds, but requested further information regarding the allegations made by him. Clearly, Johnson was toeing a fine line between fulfilling his professional obligations and serving a friend in need, as he made repeated requests for additional information regarding the affair. “I wish to have full information on all points before I write,” he said.¹⁷⁵

All of Johnson’s correspondence regarding the matter took this form, as he carefully weighed his duties as Baptist leader against his loyalties as fraternal friend and confidant. In effect he performed the role of second in this “rhetorical duel” between clerical combatants, arbitrating the conflict through very measured printed responses. In doing so he, like his Baptist brothers Basil Manly and Iveson Brookes, belied an acute literacy in the language and ritual of southern honor and acknowledged its importance in upholding southern Christian manhood.¹⁷⁶

These ministers’ attempt to balance the demands of southern manhood—embodied in the dueling nature of their personal honor and piety—reflected the inherent tensions of being male in the early antebellum South. Fostered in their youth and fueled

¹⁷³ William B. Johnson to James C. Furman, January 1847, WBJ-Furman.

¹⁷⁴ William B. Johnson to James C. Furman, November 17, 1847, WBJ-Furman.

¹⁷⁵ William B. Johnson to James S. Mims, March 25, 1848, WBJ-Furman.

¹⁷⁶ William B. Johnson to James C. Furman, October 20, November 19, 1847, January 25, March 10, March 27, April 12, April 28, May 5, 1848; M.L. Mendenhall to William B. Johnson, November 27, 1847; William B. Johnson to James S. Mims, April 15, April 29, May 13, September 2, September 25, October 7, 1848, WBJ-Furman.

in Edgefield, these ministers made no distinction between honor and piety; both were inseparably linked in their ideal of righteous honor, and that ideal defined their manhood. But one did not have to be a minister to experience such tensions, and to subscribe to such an ideal. Many a non-cleric navigated the same cultural tensions between secular and sacred, honorable and pious, and arrived at the same masculine ideal of righteous honor.¹⁷⁷

James Bones and Dr. John Hughes both settled their families in Edgefield sometime in the early nineteenth century. Bones had five sons—James Jr., John, Robert, Samuel, and William—who all of came of age in the 1820s and became planters and merchants in the Edgefield and Augusta area. He also had a daughter, Martha, who married John H. Hughes, eldest son and namesake of Dr. John Hughes, in 1831. The Hughes and Bones families typified Edgefield's middling planter class by the early antebellum years and maintained an intimate connection with each other and the Edgefield community throughout the antebellum era. Edgefield's tradition for honor and violence, as well as its pervasive Protestant Evangelical ethic, permeated both families. Dr. John Hughes's sister Elizabeth married the Baptist preacher Nicholas Ware Hodges of Abbeville and Edgefield, in 1820, while one of his cousins, Lucy T. Butler later

¹⁷⁷ The focus on masculine anxieties emphasized here builds most directly upon the following works: Stephen Berry, *All That Makes A Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3-44; Peter S. Carmichael, *The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 2-18, 59-88; Carney, *Ministers and Master*; Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 30-64, 91-129; Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*; Janet Moore Lindman, "Acting the Manly Christian: White Evangelical Masculinity in Revolutionary Virginia," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Thrid Series, Vol. 57, No. 3, (Apr. 2000): 393-416; Anne C. Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order, 1800-1860*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 30-64, 91-129; Cynthia Lynn Lyerly, *Methodism and the Southern Mind*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998), 146-186; Donald G. Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), 20-38, 120-124; John Mayfield, *Counterfeit Gentlemen: Manhood and Humore in the Old South*, (Gainseville: University Press of Florida, 2009), xiii-xxvii, 25-47; McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds*; Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South*.

married prominent Edgefield Methodist minister Joseph Moore. Through these personal and community connections, Protestant Evangelical morality became a staple in the Hughes and Bones families.

An early note by an unidentified member of the Hughes family (most likely its patriarch Dr. John Hughes) betrays, however, the cultural tensions these families shared with each other and their Edgefield neighbors. In 1811 reflections on the role of religious clergy in wartime resulted in the declaration that the “clergy is still seeking in a religion which is called the religion of peace for pretences and the means of discord and of war; it is embroiling families in the hope of dividing the state; so difficult it is for that order of man to be taught to renounce riches and authority... There is a great difference betwixt what is incomprehensible by reason and what is contradictory to it.”¹⁷⁸ Recognizing such contradictions did not make reconciling them any easier. Copies of two sermons by unidentified preachers that were saved by the family attest to the continued anxieties such tensions spawned. The first, entitled “Those Who Sin Against God,” proclaimed that such sinners would be “condemned by him as those who live in the open violation of his Law: and although their sins may not be of as aggravated a nature, yet their condemnation will be as sure.” It then explained that “sins may be divided into inward and outward, i.e. the sins of the heart and the sins of the life... from within, out of the hearth of men, proceed *evil* thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; All these *evil* things come from within, and defile the man.” The sermon then concluded, “hence it is very evident that evil or wicked tempers indulged in the heart form the first class of moral *evil*, and is

¹⁷⁸ “Anonymous Hughes family note on religious clergy and war, 1811,” Hughes Family papers (hereafter HFP)/UNC.

the fountain or source from whence all the evil or bad conversation and conduct that men and women are guilty of” and “from that source proceeds lying, hypocrisy, profane swearing, cheating, defrauding, evil speaking, quarreling, fighting, licentiousness, and in a word, the whole haven of moral *evil* of which men are guilty.”¹⁷⁹

In the view of this anonymous pastor, “when man refuses to obey the will of their maker, sets up his will and pursues it in opposition to the will of God, he often runs into many excesses of moral evil, lives in the practice of sin, both of omission and commission, and brings ruin and destruction upon himself.” The only salvation was in “turn[ing] from your evil ways, and seek[ing] the Lord in earnest... that you may obtain mercy, and escape all those evils and dreadful consequences of sin, that will overtake the wicked, and the haters of righteousness.” The copy of this sermon, expressly requested from its unidentified author, revealed the self-reflective spiritual doubts so common among Protestant Evangelicals of the period. But its subject also exposed the pressing temporal concerns that often caused such spiritual consternation. Echoing the anxieties espoused in the sermons of Edgefield’s most prominent Baptist and Methodist leaders, the Hughes family profoundly experienced the same moral tensions between secular and sacred duty, between temporal honor and religious piety.¹⁸⁰

Another requested copy of another anonymously authored sermon nearly ten years later revealed more of the same, but offered proscriptive measures to reconcile these cultural tensions. “The Gospel is not merely a negative system...it is not enough that we cease to do evil, we must also learn to do well,” its anonymous author asserted before proffering, “we must not only break off from the practice of every sin and live a

¹⁷⁹ “Sermon by anonymous preacher, June, 1840,” HFP/UNC.

¹⁸⁰ “Sermon by anonymous preacher, June, 1840,” HFP/UNC.

blameless life, but we are required to cultivate and have in exercise love, faith, humility, and devotion toward God, purity, chastity, and temperance towards ourselves and righteousness, truth and charity towards our fellow men.” The preacher then worried aloud that “many seem to be regardless of practical piety, and it is to be feared that they accommodate their opinions to their conversation and conduct. They separate the branches of religion and reduce its importance in such a way as that their minds and consciences are easy and quiet although in their lives they are worldly, prayerless, and indifferent to the honor and glory of God.”

Perhaps counting themselves among the “multitudes [who] deceive themselves by balancing one part of their character against another, and vainly hope to weigh down their sins and irregularities by opposing to them their good qualities,” whom this preacher admonished, the Hughes family certainly sought to put into practice the pastor’s ideal, which urged that “if men would hearken more to reason and the word of God, and less to the false dictates and prejudices of their own corrupt hearts, we would see holier, better, and more useful Christians.”¹⁸¹

The first antebellum generation of Bones and Hughes men especially felt this gnawing tension between temporal honor and religious piety. Personal and familial honor figured prominently in letters from John and Samuel Bones to their father James. In an 1830 missive, John discussed the temporal situation and moral state of his brother Robert. “I must say that Robert being so long from home after the fourth of July was highly improper, and what I did not expect he would have been guilty of,” John confessed before explaining, “I see no impropriety in his having joined in the festivity of the day with his neighbors, but he ought to have avoided getting into improper company.” The

¹⁸¹ “Sermon by anonymous preacher heard near Winnsboro, South Carolina, June 16, 1849,” HFP/UNC.

elder brother then declared, “without a correct course of conduct he would not expect any aid or assistance from me” but admonished his father by relating that “I have observed with great pain that your treatment of Robert has not been such as to make his time agreeable at home. You are much more harsh [sic] with him than you are with any of your negroes.”¹⁸²

John further lamented that when Robert “left this place to return to you he certainly gave up apparently favorable prospects and is now unfit for any other business than that of a planter, which after all is much the happiest life in this country when people are attentive.” If “a plan by which he might be able to do something for himself” could be devised and “by which he [Robert] may have an interest in the plantation,” John confidently concluded “I have no doubts [it] will stimulate him to great exertions.” In his mind, a planter’s status would confer honor upon Robert, the responsibility of which would in turn compel him to moral righteousness and social respectability. Without honor’s moral imperatives, Robert might languish under his father’s seemingly cruel reproaches and ultimately bring shame upon himself and the family by falling in with “improper company.” The attainment of temporal success and manly honor had moral consequences, something both John and his father James understood all too well in their anxious planning on Robert’s behalf.¹⁸³

John’s younger brother Samuel similarly expressed an intimate understanding of this connection between temporal honor and spiritual morality. James Bones had earlier written his son Samuel to gauge the truth of an allegation made against his character. Samuel responded by declaring himself “a good deal surprised at the contents” of that

¹⁸² “John Bones to James Bones (father), July 24, 1828,” HFP/UNC.

¹⁸³ “John Bones to James Bones (father), July 24, 1828,” HFP/UNC.

letter, and assured his father: “as to what the fellow said it only convinces me that the opinion I have formed of him was correct; that he is a damned weak, vain, lying fool. As to our being friends this was false; as to what he said about my drinking too much wine, with my friend at night, he again lies.”¹⁸⁴

He further denied the accusation by explaining that “if it was really the fact, he has never had an opportunity of knowing, for I never have been in his company at night or at any other time except when he came into the store,” before denouncing the accuser, “when I have a friend or associate they must be gentlemen, as such I have never considered him. As to what he said give yourself no anxiousness about it for in the first place it is false and you may rest assured that my friends never will have cause to fear for me on that account.” Samuel answered this personal affront by denying his assailant any semblance of the manly honor he himself defended. As a “damned weak, vain, lying fool” his adversary deserved neither the time nor effort that an answer to this affront would require, and Samuel therefore determined, “I will now drop the subject as it is unpleasant to me.” His personal honor secured in his father’s eyes, an incensed Samuel nonetheless rested on honor’s laurels by exhibiting his gentlemanly restraint and deeming his accuser unworthy of further notice.¹⁸⁵

A third Bones brother, the sickly William, evinced a more overtly religious morality in reflecting upon his own mortality to his older brother John: “God knows that I have had a dreary and lonely time of it... I have long since given over all idea of ever being partially restored to health, and endeavored to look forward to my fate with as much calmness and resignation as I came possessed of.” He then prayed, “may the

¹⁸⁴ “Samuel Bones to James Bones (father), October 4, 1834,” HFP/UNC.

¹⁸⁵ “Samuel Bones to James Bones (father), October 4, 1834,” HFP/UNC.

Almighty give me grace to persevere it and prepare for the awful change” before proclaiming, “oh! my dear brother what pleasure and comfort does the reliance on the mercies of a divine Saviour afford a person in my situation. It is a medicine to the soul that is indescribable and will cheer a person at the last moments beyond anything else.”¹⁸⁶

When William later died of his unstated affliction, a family friend named W.G. Stavelly offered similarly pious condolences, hinting at the spiritual tenor prevailing within the Bones family circle: “it is trying on parents to be disposed of children...it is their calculation that their children should perform to them the last rites of humanity, but, when it pleases Providence, to invert this order, and when the parent has to perform the duty of the child, Oh, it is most afflictive.” “To a mind thoroughly imbued with a conviction of an overruling Providence,” he continued, “convinced of immortality, even persuaded that all things are to work to good for those who love and serve God, such visitations are divested of everything unseemly and contentment, which the world cannot give, becomes its slave.” Upon these reflections Stavelly concluded, “it has ever been my hope, as now it is my belief, that such lessons shall not be lost on you.... We should be persuaded that our Redeemer liveth, and that he is able to save for the betterment.”¹⁸⁷

Like the Hughes and Bones families, that of Joseph Milligan came to Edgefield around the turn of the nineteenth century. They came bearing a moral stamp of approval from their fellow Presbyterian congregants at nearby Hopewell Long Cane in Abbeville County, South Carolina, who certified that “Joseph Milligan has lived the seven years past in this congregation, been a spirited supporter, lived an honest and useful life both as a citizen and Christian... [and] is in full communion in the church and has been for some

¹⁸⁶ “William Bones to James Bones, March 11, 1830,” HFP/UNC.

¹⁸⁷ “W.G. Stavelly to James Bones, August 15, 1832,” HFP/UNC.

time past in the station of a lay elder.” As such their previous brethren “cordially recommended [them] to any society they may choose to join.” The Milligans ultimately settled in the southern part of the Edgefield District near what would later become the town of Hamburg. There they welcomed the birth of their son Joseph Milligan Jr. in 1800. By 1830, Joseph Jr. had established himself as a physician and druggist of some means in Hamburg with a burgeoning family of his own.¹⁸⁸

Friends and family often wrote to Dr. Milligan upon religious matters of which he obviously took a sincere interest. In the summer of 1835, John Dickson, a friend from nearby Augusta, wrote the doctor to inform him that “the Baptist Church has received very many accessions. 60 (white and black) were converted last Sunday...it is thought the Baptists will have to build another church soon, and I do think it would be good policy for them to do it.” He then discussed the effects of this revival on their own mutual Presbyterian denomination by observing, “The attention among the young... in the Second Pres[byterian] Ch[urch] has not entirely ceased, but I cannot say I think the work as deep, thorough, or extensive as it was. Pray for us that the Spirit of God may not be withheld.”¹⁸⁹

Another friend named H.K. Silliman of Charleston wrote in the fall of 1847 about a mutual acquaintance who had become a preacher. “I have heard Fleming *preach*, for you must know after all his *rascalities* he turned *minister*, his first church was on James Island” Silliman recounted, and when “a great many persons thereunto inquired not only from me but others as to his reputation, I merely said time would show and that I did not think they would be pleased long with him. The case came out exactly, for they caught

¹⁸⁸ “Letter of Dismissal from Hopewell Long Cane Presbyterian Church, Abbeville, South Carolina, February 5, 1793,” Milligan Family papers (hereafter MFP)/UNC.

¹⁸⁹ “John Dickson to Dr. Joseph Milligan, June 10, 1835,” MFP/UNC.

him or suspected him of some dirty tricks and sent him off.” He then concluded that “it may be set down as a good rule that unless a man is so constantly and quickly changing the fault is greatly on his side... I hate to say it but I believe he is a *damned hypocrite*.” As if chastising himself as much as his current subject of derision, Silliman then confessed, “when I told you I was so steady, you must not think I am exactly a Saint yet; I still enjoy myself but in a quieter way than I used to.” An answer to Dr. Milligan’s apparent admonishment regarding Silliman’s social habits, this confession of a dear friend implied Milligan espoused a strict personal piety for himself, his family, and his most intimate friends.¹⁹⁰

Perhaps this devout sense of piety emanated from his sister Jane Milligan of Charleston, who frequently expressed her religious feelings in long missives to her brother. In the fall of 1835 she wrote, “my dear Joseph although you have been made to drink deeply of the cup of sorrow at times, yet there has been so much mercy, and grace manifested toward you, and your family, that I cannot but view every event as a link in the chain of Providence,” which she believed was destined “to fit you for an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away.” “Let us then endeavor to view God as a kind and merciful father,” she continued, “who never afflicts willingly, but always with the benevolent design of preparing us for usefulness here, and happiness hereafter.”¹⁹¹

In another letter later that year, Jane revealed the need for such pious remonstrance when she opined, “you must excuse me my dear Joseph but I do think that you are wrong in feeling that life has no charms, and inducements for you... our Father

¹⁹⁰ “H.K. Silliman to Dr. Joseph Milligan, October 5, 1847,” MFP/UNC.

¹⁹¹ “Jane Milligan to Dr. Joseph Milligan, September 12, 1835,” MFP/UNC.

knows when, and how to chastise us, and we may rest assured that no other way, than the one he has chosen would be as profitable to us.” She further illustrated the point through her own example, saying “my happiest moments have been those, when I could yield up my own will entirely and feel that I would not have things different from what they are, even if I could,” before finally concluding, “I know that it is much easier to preach, than to practice, but difficult as it may be to attain this frame of mind, still it is attainable, and it is our duty to strive after it.” Given their close relationship, his sister certainly influenced much of Dr. Milligan’s own religious piety, which undoubtedly shaped the model he set for his growing family.¹⁹²

However, as piously-minded as Dr. Milligan repeatedly showed himself to be, he maintained a considerable concern for temporal matters, and was no stranger to the demands of manly honor as exacted in his Edgefield County home. In a letter to his daughter-in-law Olivia during the summer of 1848, Dr. Milligan callously observed that their mutual acquaintance “Fred Selleck made a speech the other day, Friday, at a barbeque given to the returned Abbeville Volunteers. They say that Fred is about to get into a duel. I don’t know the name of the other party.” He then revealed the close nature of his acquaintance in announcing “Fred will be invited to a barbeque to be given on the 10th August... I hope he may come over, for I would be pleased to see him.” For a man who seemingly admonished friends and family alike for their moral transgressions (and per his sister Jane, bemoaned his own moral failings at every turn), this eagerness to consort with a potential duelist unveils the extent to which the honor code pervaded the worldview of southern men like Dr. Milligan. Violence in defense of honor seemed almost commonplace. His friend Fred Selleck had obviously given offense with his

¹⁹² “Jane Milligan to Dr. Joseph Milligan, November 24, 1835,” MFP/UNC.

speech, and from the reaction of Dr. Milligan, he had to face the consequences in an affair of honor. Never party to an affair of honor himself and presumably opposed to such an affair on grounds of religious morality, Dr. Milligan nonetheless countenanced just such an affair involving a close personal friend, never hinting at even the slightest reservation. Men like Dr. Milligan were common in the antebellum South. Relatively few engaged in affairs of honor, while fewer still fought duels. Many espoused basic tenets of religious morality, and did so in a decidedly Protestant Evangelical tone even if they remained outside the fold of those denominations that heralded such a moral ethic most fervently.¹⁹³

Whitfield Brooks further epitomized the type. The Brooks family ranked among the oldest and most venerated in the history of Edgefield, where Whitfield himself was born in 1790 to Zachariah and Elizabeth Butler Brooks. Zachariah Brooks had gained renown as a Captain during the Revolutionary War and had served under Colonel William Butler, Whitfield's maternal grandfather. Whitfield Brooks' own family perpetuated the privileged status of the Brooks name into the early antebellum years as a member of Edgefield's planter elite. He personified Edgefield's dueling cultural heritage for honor and piety. Though himself a founding member of the socially elite Trinity Episcopal Church in Edgefield, his wife Mary Parsons Carroll Brooks joined the Edgefield Village Baptist Church and he frequently attended Baptist worship service and protracted meetings at her side. Through her the Protestant Evangelical ethic entered his home and mind and shaped the moral standard of righteous honor he exalted as the patriarch of a growing family. This moral standard held both honor and piety in high

¹⁹³ "Dr. Joseph Milligan to Octavia Milligan, July 25, 1848," MFP/UNC.

esteem, and deemed both paramount to the maintenance of southern manhood. Brooks pursued this ideal in both his public and private affairs.

Brooks regularly attended Episcopal worship services, but just as frequently partook of local Baptist and Methodist preaching. As a pious and emotionally reserved Episcopalian, Brooks rarely failed to express his distaste for some of their more audacious practices: “my great objection to these public exhibitions by children [among the Baptists] is that it places them in an unnatural position, which they soon feel to be both false and embarrassing and which too generally ends in open apostacy[sic] or in hypocrisy, either of which has a pernicious effect upon the young mind,” as well as their lack of education: “the [Baptist] ministers are good men but without education or intelligence.”¹⁹⁴

Despite these liturgical reservations, however, Brooks still frequented their services and generally commended their moral tenets. One prayer committed to his journal revealed his reflective piety and its intimate connection to the more temporal concerns he had for himself and his family. In one breath Brooks acknowledged that “a reasonable mind should be content and should be especially thankful to the great Giver of every good gift, that our lot has been cast in a land of plenty and of social, religious and political liberty” while also asserting “if we will perform our part and faithfully employ our time in the attainment of moral and intellectual excellence there can be no doubt, that we shall enjoy our due share of the happiness, prosperity and success, that crown the labors of the deserving and meritorious in this life.” Temporal honors rewarded spiritual morality, and when properly attained and deployed, the former could and should enlarge

¹⁹⁴ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, August 31, 1841; January 1, 1842,” Whitfield Brooks Journal, Volume I (hereafter WBJ1)/Used with permission from the personal files of Dr. James O. Farmer, University of South Carolina-Aiken (hereafter JOF).

the latter. Brooks often committed such prayers and pious thoughts to his journal, revealing an inner piety that shaped his outward morality.¹⁹⁵

These non-clerical “Christian gentlemen” mirrored their ministerial counterparts in both their honor-consciousness and their spiritual concern; they all held common communion under the strictures of righteous honor. Collectively, theirs was a male world of love and ritual; the love of and for family, friends, and in a circumscribed sense, even slaves, were all governed by the rituals of righteous honor. But mothers and sisters, wives and daughters all played an especially prominent role in fostering the spirituality of these men: in bringing religious moral tenets into their intimate spaces; in softening the rough edges of their masculine interactions; in helping these men to control themselves so that they might more effectively control those dependent upon them; in rendering their exercise of authority more righteous.¹⁹⁶

Or so these men claimed, and their personal lives attested. William Johnson explicitly credited his mother for the strength of his faith and its attendant moral fortitude; Whitfield Brooks heralded his wife’s pivotal role in shaping his moral outlook, and helping him toe the proper moral line as a slave master and patriarch; Joseph Milligan leaned on his sister’s fervent faith in good times and bad, and sought her moral counsel at frequent intervals. Though their public interactions with one another largely determined their status—secular and sacred—in each other’s eyes, white southern men’s

¹⁹⁵ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, August 31, 1841; January 1, 1842,” WBJ1/JOF.

¹⁹⁶ For the complex relationship between Protestant Evangelicalism and evolving American gender norms in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century, especially the contested line between asserting feminine moral authority and submitting to the prevailing patriarchal order, see especially: Catherine Brekus, *Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America, 1740-1845*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: “Woman’s Sphere” in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), 126-159; Susan Juster, *Disorderly Women: Sexual Politics and Evangelicalism in Revolutionary New England*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Goodwives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750* (New York, NY: Knopf, 1980), 239.

ideals and identities never strayed far from their women in mind, body, or spirit. Though righteous honor was a decidedly masculine ethic, the very foundation of their ideal of southern manhood, southern women were always present as tangible sources of spiritual strength and symbolic reminders of what it was all for.¹⁹⁷

Whether clerics or politicians, doctors or lawyers, merchants or planters, Edgefield's leading men in the early antebellum era carved out a tenuous balance between personal honor and piety, forging their masculine ideal of righteous honor that they hoped would guide them, their families, community, state, and region into the foreboding years ahead. Much of their success would depend on their sons, in whom they fervently sought to ingrain this masculine standard of morality, and over whom they anxiously fretted when it faltered. As one of the sacred sermons saved by the family of John H. Hughes expressed it, "one design for which the family relation was instituted was that there a holy end might be trained up for the service of God, and he has promised his blessing to all who will seek to train their offspring for him." That their sons would indeed falter was expected; the balance, after all, was recognizably tenuous, as their own lives could attest. The masculine anxieties afflicting honor and piety within the South's strict hierarchies of race and gender persisted. But the standard of righteous honor embodied the best hope of the most promising future, and the sons of Edgefield's—and

¹⁹⁷ For more on the prominent role played by women in shaping southern masculine ideals and identities, both within and beyond the confines of Protestant Evangelical churches through the early antebellum period, see especially: Berry, *All That Makes A Man*, 95-113; Carney, *Ministers and Masters*, 65-90; Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Friedman, *The Enclosed Garden*, 21-53; Heyrman, *Southern Cross*, 117-205; Cynthia A. Kerner, *Beyond the Household: Women's Place in the Early South, 1700-1835*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 139-211; Jan Lewis, "The Republican Wife: Virtue and Seduction in the Early Republic," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, Vol. 44, No. 4, (Oct. 1987): 689-721; Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, 97-134; McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds*, 135-207; Beth Barton Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up: Progress and the Pulpit in Nineteenth-Century Virginia*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), 150-163.

the South's—first antebellum generation would be the ultimate arbiters of that promise as they confronted the growing sectional crisis of the late antebellum years.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁸ “Sermon by anonymous preacher heard near Winnsboro, South Carolina, June 16, 1849,” HFP/UNC; “Revivals, November 2, 1854,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

CHAPTER IV

HELL-BENT & HEAVEN-SENT: SELF-MASTERY & THE SOUTHERN MALE

*“Could I even venture to mingle the solemn with the ludicrous, even for the purposes of honourable contrast, I could adduce from this county instances of the most numerous and wonderful transitions, from vice and folly to virtue and holiness, which have ever, perhaps, been witnessed since the days of the apostolic ministry.”*¹⁹⁹

Walker Brookes was frantic as the summer of 1846 came to a close. During a recent visit home to South Carolina, he had confessed to his father, Baptist Reverend Iveson L. Brookes, a regrettable propensity toward an “illicit gratification of lust” and “excess of self abuse” in the “stolen pleasures” of the “solitary vice.” He later professed his extreme anxiety that such indulgences would render him physically and morally deficient for marriage. This anxiety prompted him to seek medical advice when he returned to school, which only amplified his worst fears. Medical professionals and health reformers at the time widely cited blindness, impotence, muscular atrophy, and even insanity as the most probable results of masturbatory indulgence.²⁰⁰ Burdened with this knowledge of the potential dire straits he had brought down upon himself, Walker wrote his father shortly thereafter in utter despair, crushed by his own self-debasement. His father tried to reassure him, saying that he’d consulted with a Doctor Chapman who had said “that your

¹⁹⁹ Augustus Baldwin Longstreet; M.E. Bradford, ed., *Georgia Scenes*, (Nashville, Tennessee: J.S. Sanders & Company, 1992 ed.), 9. Though describing Georgia’s Lincoln County, Longstreet’s description easily applied to antebellum Edgefield County, South Carolina, where he in fact had familial ties.

²⁰⁰ Stephen Nissenbaum, *Sex, Diet,, and Debility in Jacksonian America: Sylvester Graham and Health Reform*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980); Jayme A. Sokolow, *Eros and Modernization: Sylvester Graham, Health Reform, and the Origins of Victorian Sexuality*, (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1983).

case has nothing alarming about it and moral treatment is all that is necessary; that you had become unnecessarily alarmed by the misrepresentations of a quack.”²⁰¹

“As to the opinion of the authors you have read differing from that of Doctor Chapman,” Reverend Brookes continued, “you will find in those fatal cases that the subjects had long indulged most exceptionally and unnaturally and were perhaps so given over of God to work their destruction with greediness that they could not cease from their wicked acts, some repeating the act not only daily but from 10 to 20 times per day.” He also reminded his son that such had been his own opinion upon their most recent farewell: “I told you that in so young a person who had discovered the wickedness and numerous consequences of such practices, and had abandoned the actual indulgence, restoration would be effected in due time by carefully abstaining from all causes of excitement to these organs. I am still of just the same opinion.” Concerning the prospect of marriage, the elder Brookes assured his son that if he would “simply let yourself alone and attend to your lawful and proper pursuits...in due time you will be relieved and be in a fit condition for marriage...as soon as you will have fixed upon the course you may determine to pursue and be sufficiently matured in judgment and experience to make a wise choice in selecting a partner for life.”²⁰²

In assuaging his son’s fears, however, the elder Brookes revealed his own, as well as the tensions that shaped his moral purview. His God wielded both condemnation and compassion with a heavy Providential hand; both Old and New Testaments shaped his view of God’s role in human affairs. Judgment was unbending; forgiveness hard to come by. As befitting a man of the cloth, his paternal advice concerning his son’s sinful self-

²⁰¹ “Iveson Lewis Brookes to Walker Brookes, August 7, 1846,” Iveson Lewis Brooks papers, 1793-1865 (hereafter ILB)/South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina (hereafter USC).

²⁰² “Iveson Lewis Brookes to Walker Brookes, August 7, 1846,” ILB/USC.

pollution invoked these religious principles. “I tell you, my son, you must look to God as your great Physician” Reverend Brookes advised, for “His grace is the sovereign remedy for the effects of sins and that alone can restrain the corruptions of poor fallen human nature and enable the reformed sensualist to keep his body under. I hope you have learned a practical lesson of experience in reference to lust and you may rest assured that all carnal indulgences turn to excess and are ruinous in their results.” He then warned, “The Devil puts the unwary youth to work in onerous ways, promising him the reward of happiness, but his wages are misery here and eternal death hereafter. But God’s order is to mortify the members while upon the earth, deny yourself of all ungodliness to worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and Godly in this present life.”²⁰³ “Let not the demon of hell any longer deceive you with his flattering tales” he chided before concluding, “You know those who follow his dictates in the illicit indulgences of the unclean passion must reap a copious crop of misery.”²⁰⁴

In their frank discussion of transgression and its consequences, the Reverend Iveson Brookes and his son Walker revealed white southern men’s conviction that self-mastery was the linchpin of individual and collective destiny. All manner of vices—particularly alcohol, gambling, covetousness, and illicit sensual and sexual practices—tempted southern white men for whom the path to sin was always right in front of them. Stills, grog shops, and gambling dens were rife in the South, as were willing or unwilling slave girls. (An unidentified Southerner merchant interviewed by Frederick Law Olmsted reluctantly admitted that there were but two lads in his small town in Alabama who were not paying the “penalty of licentiousness” (venereal disease) for their conduct with

²⁰³ “Iveson Lewis Brookes to Walker Brookes, August 7, 1846,” ILB/USC.

²⁰⁴ “Iveson Lewis Brookes to Walker Brookes, August 7, 1846,” ILB/USC.

slaves. We “might as well have [our sons] educated in a brothel at once, as in the way they [are] growing up,” he admitted.) But if the temptations were many, the consequences were grave. If Southern men could not control their own physical and emotional urges, how could they answer themselves much less the North? How could they justify the social and political power that secured their peculiar prerogatives in the slave South?²⁰⁵

Iveson Brookes’s personal friend, professional associate, and sometime Edgefield neighbor, Reverend Basil Manly Sr., drew similar connections between personal and public morality in the South. These ministers considered it their duty to administer sound moral principles to their families, their flocks, and southern society at large. Their place atop their households, their congregations, and—as white men—the southern racial hierarchy mandated that they themselves exhibit the righteous honor widely considered the foundation of their authority. Inculcating their sons in this moral duty assumed a primacy in their exercise of that authority. But in this respect these pastors were not alone. Other Edgefield patriarchs exhibited strikingly similar concerns for the morality of their families and communities. One did not have to be a preacher to experience the moral tensions of righteous honor. The Brooks, Bones, and Milligan families expressed equally fervent moral concern, and similarly sought to instill such a concern in their sons.

²⁰⁵ Frederick Law Olmsted, *Journeys and Explorations in the Cotton Kingdom: A Traveller’s Observations on Cotton and Slavery in the American States, Volume II*, (London: Sampson Low, Son, and Co., 1861), 229-230. The primacy of self-mastery within southern manhood, as argued here, has been alluded to most directly in the following: Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 246-250. Other works to emphasize self-control or self-discipline within the southern honor code and/or southern evangelicalism include: Edward L. Ayers, *Vengeance & Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th-Century American South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1984), 27-33; Dickson D. Bruce Jr., *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 8-12, 233-240; Steven M. Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South: Ritual in the Lives of the Planters*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), x-xviii, 1-49;

All believed that their crusade began at home, as they attempted to purge themselves, their households, and especially their sons of vice.

Reverend Brookes certainly recognized the slippery slope these vices entailed and made the connection explicit in another letter to his son Walker. After assuaging his son's fears, and admonishing his faults, Brookes launched into a more general harangue against the vices plaguing mankind. He warned young Walker that submission to one vice very often resulted in enslavement to all. "No chain is more galling and despotic than that with which the devil binds the unfortunate immoderate" Brookes asserted, and the "indulgence of an appetite for stimulating drinks is no less deceptive [than carnal lust] and in its results equally ruinous to body, mind, and soul." "My dear boy," he continued, "resolve deliberately and voluntary to sign the temperance pledge and be a freeman." Brookes clearly believed that self-pollution of any kind led easily into self-pollution of every kind and all were forms of self-enslavement.²⁰⁶

For Brookes this was equally true of gambling, which he described as being as "demoralizing and fatally ruinous perhaps as any branch of the devil's services." "Like all Satan's plans of destruction," Brookes cautioned, "the initiatory step is called innocent but the grades are few to the top of this vice." Singling out chess, dice, cards, and faro as particular pitfalls, Reverend Brookes observed that the gambler, like his archetype the Devil, would, once fallen, "only thenceforth goeth up and down and to and fro seeking whom he may devour." "My son," Brookes concluded, "if you have been tempted to engage at any of these usually called innocent games, remember that they are [the] beginning of the worst of vices."²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ "Iveson Lewis Brookes to Walker Brookes, August 7, 1846," ILB/USC.

²⁰⁷ "Iveson Lewis Brookes to Walker Brookes, August 7, 1846," ILB/USC.

Over a decade after his son had confessed a penchant for masturbation that bordered on mania, Reverend Brookes fielded a similarly anxious admission from his nephew John M. Carter. His response contained the same religious principles alongside the same tone of reassurance and the same sense that the white man can either control himself or find himself the slave of his desires. “Let your habits be in accordance to health and pure morality and they will prove a great blessing. But if corrupt and unchaste they will prove to be tyrants and will inflict curse upon soul and body,” he intoned.

It is likely that Brookes fielded so many of these young men’s confessions precisely because he was a preacher and because the young men understood what was happening to them as a spiritual failing with deep spiritual consequences. In this they were not unique to their section. Brookes routinely advised young men to read Connecticut Presbyterian Reverend Sylvester Graham’s *Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, first published in 1834.²⁰⁸ The Reverend Graham had gained national renown during the antebellum period as a moral and dietary reformer and published many of his lectures, none more prominent or provocative than the *Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, which outlined the physical and moral causes of youthful lust while proffering various means of abating it. Graham conveyed the import of his undertaking when he declared, “There is no point of morality of more importance....Through a fear of contaminating the minds of youth, it has long been considered the wisest measure to keep them in ignorance....So that while parents have been resting securely in the idea of the ignorance

²⁰⁸ “Iveson Lewis Brookes to John M. Carter, January 28, 1859,” ILB/USC.

and purity of their children, these have been drinking in the most corrupt and depraving knowledge.”²⁰⁹

Graham thus laid the onus of social corruption at the feet of neglectful (or naïve) parents, and sought to inform both parent and child in the sins of the flesh and instruct them on how to eliminate the evil. “In the first place,” Graham continued, “self pollution is actually a very great and rapidly increasingly evil in our country,” as is “illicit commerce between the sexes... [and] sexual excess within the pale of wedlock,” while “efforts to encourage illicit and promiscuous commerce between the sexes are already very extensive, and are daily becoming more extensive, bold, and efficient.” “Are they who know the truth to hold their peace...and see this destroying flood of error and pollution roll over the earth?,” asked Graham before responding, “Humanity, Virtue, Religion answer—‘No!’”²¹⁰

Reverend Brookes’s emphasis on self-mastery, then, was not entirely unique to his native South. As a slave-owning southern divine, he could invoke the northern-born Reverend Graham’s instructions because they both believed that irreverent self-pollution begot rampant social corruption and eroded national righteousness. But the ends to which Brookes and Graham pursued that self-control differed. Though Graham never publicly expressed his views on the South or its institution of slavery, as a prominent New

²⁰⁹ Sylvester Graham, *Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, (Boston: George W. Light, 1 Cornhill, 1838 ed.), 9-10. For more on the emerging antebellum reform culture in America, of which Sylvester Graham in particular and many clerics in general played a prominent part, see especially: Robert H. Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling: American Reform and the Religious Imagination*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1994); Richard J. Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America*, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1997), xvii-xix, 1-49; T. Gregory Garvey, *Creating the Culture of Reform in Antebellum America*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2006), 1-73; Steven Mintz, *Moralists and Modernizers: America’s Pre-Civil War Reformers*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Rita Roberts, *Evangelicalism and the Politics of Reform in Northern Black Thought, 1776-1863*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010), 53-102; Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism & Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980 ed.).

²¹⁰ Graham, *Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, 20-22.

England Presbyterian he likely believed that slavery too was an indulgence and a sin.

Brookes on the other hand believed slave mastery underlined and demonstrated the white right to rule. Indeed, slaves were slaves in part because they were incapable of mastering themselves. The North, moreover, seemed to be failing at self-mastery; Northerners so often succumbed to the temptations of lust, avarice, prostitution, and free love that the region seemed a second Sodom and Gomorrah.²¹¹

What most galled Brookes was the North's singular hypocrisy. New Englanders too had "what they modestly call their helps," people Brookes genuinely believed had been marked out for "a state of slavery, under other names it is true, but for the most part far worse than our state of negro slavery." "These [New England servants] all through life, are engaged in hard and drudgery service, for which the pittance they get barely affords food and clothes, and often through the freak of the employer, or for their own faults they are turned off, homeless and penniless, finding it difficult without a recommendation to get their heads into a shelter on any terms." He beseeched anyone to, "Go look into the back streets and crowded cellars of London, and New York, the metropolitan cities of the old and new world, not to refer you to Boston, and you will see a condition of squalidness, hunger and sickness without medical aid." What concerned Brookes most, however, was that this debased northern society, as he saw it, dared to cast moral judgment on *his* native South. Northerners posited their social structure as the high

²¹¹ Iveson L. Brookes, *A Defense of the South Against the Reproaches and Encroachments of the North: In Which Slavery is Shown to be an Institution of God Intended to Form the Basis of the Best Social State and the Only Safeguard to the Permanence of a Republican Government*, (Hamburg, South Carolina: Republican Office, 1850).

road to moral righteousness, as opposed to the low (southern) road to hell fire and damnation.²¹²

Even northern ministers joined in the fray, with stones in one hand and the Bible in the other, ready to pillory the South for its peculiar institution: “What the clergy of the North will do with the Bible,” Brookes incredulously observed, “as the text book from which the rule of human duty and obligation should be primarily drawn I cannot conceive.” All of it appeared a self-righteous delusion to Brookes, and one which threatened to undermine the southern social order where self-mastery stood the best chance of success. The “bright galaxy of talents for which the south has long been, and is now distinguished, give the negative to the defamatory rantings of northern [radicals],” Brookes declared before concluding, “We think that instead of such barbarism [as is alleged by northerners], truth and impartial history must concede to the slaveholding states, the traits of noble-mindedness, kind-heartedness, benevolence, generosity, hospitality, politeness and polish of manners, as characteristic of citizens of the South.”²¹³

²¹² Iveson L. Brookes, *A Defense of the South*, 12-18. For more on the broad contours of southern proslavery arguments as they evolved during the antebellum period, see especially: Drew Gilpin Faust, ed., *The Ideology of Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Antebellum South, 1830-1860*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981); Lacy K. Ford, *Deliver Us From Evil: The Slavery Question in the Old South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 481-534; William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion, Volume II: Secessionists Triumphant, 1854-1861*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 25-58; Larry E. Tise, *Proslavery: A History of the Defense of Slavery in America, 1701-1840*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1987).

²¹³ “Iveson L. Brookes to Bro. James, April 10, 1854;” ILB/USC; Brookes, *A Defense of the South*, 32-33. Iveson Brookes was not alone among southern clerics in this assessment of the North or his proslavery position. For more on proslavery southern clerics, see especially: John Patrick Daly, *When Slavery Was Called Freedom: Evangelicalism, Proslavery, and the Causes of the Civil War*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2002); Charles F. Irons, *The Origins of Proslavery Christianity: White and Black Evangelicals in Colonial and Antebellum Virginia*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 133-246; James O. Farmer Jr., *The Metaphysical Confederacy: James Henley Thornwell and the Synthesis of Southern Values*, (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986); John R. McKivigan & Mitchell Snay, eds., *Religion and the Antebellum Debate Over Slavery*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1998); Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

Basil Manly Sr. frequently expounded upon similar themes of youthful passion and the threat they posed to these sanctified southern traits in his sermons, no doubt thinking of his eldest and namesake, Basil Manly Jr., as he proffered moral advice from his Sunday pulpits. In one sermon, the Reverend Manly decreed that “*Character depends on purity. Whatever reputation may be gained without it is either the bubble of accidental circumstances, the whitewash of hypocrisy, or the dreadful distinction of devils.*” In his view, “Remorse of conscience follows the sins of youth on every remembrance,” but purity “stamps character with solid worth.” In quoting the ninth verse of Psalm 119, which asks “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?,” Manly answered, “By the way of a young man is meant whatever in him is likely to be affected by purity or impurity, to his principles as well as to his conduct, his character as well as habits... To change his way is to commit and avoid whatever may be considered *low and impure*.”²¹⁴

A proper religious frame of mind, then, constituted “the foundation of all true happiness and success,” and Manly argued in several sermons that this foundation was best laid in early life. “Youth affords advantages for obtaining religion beyond any other period of life. The heart is then tender, the habits unformed, the attention capable of concentration,” he argued, and as such, “Those who come to religion late labor under many disadvantages and are wanting in the tender[ness] and beauty of religion, as well as the joy.” But if instilled with an “early piety,” Manly believed the mind “undergoes timely discipline, takes a holy, lovely direction, whence easy and perpetual improvements are made.” Upon that rock, so Manly thought, the innocent youth should build his faith and

²¹⁴ Basil Manly Sr., “‘Purity in the Young,’ Sermon from Psalms 119, Verse 9, January 4, 1829,” [emphasis his], BMSr/Furman. For the most thorough account of Basil Manly Sr.’s life and career, especially his southern masculine identity and its evolution during the sectional crisis, see: A. James Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

practice his piety, and the southern social order could rest assured in its place in the right.²¹⁵

In most cases, Manly was not directing such messages at the youth in his flock. He had sense enough to know that it was the parents who were likely to listen, and Manly Sr. often wove parenting advice into his sermons. “Parents,” he hectored one Sunday, this concern for the proper moral instruction and deportment of youth “is not without its interest to you. For though you may be gathered to your grave before the evil come on them...does not the apprehension fill you with the deepest anxiety?”²¹⁶ “The character,” Manly Sr. asserted, when cultivated through a religious frame of mind “acquires all the solidarity of confirmed habit, and the young Christian is saved despair of those perpetual backslidings to which some good men are exposed.”²¹⁷

Carnality, obviously, was the besetting sin of youth, but Basil Manly Sr. and his Baptist brother Iveson Brookes saw in themselves and their sons countless other temptations embroiling both personal and public morality. Ambition and greed, particularly in the North, had become so widely and deeply indulged that Manly Sr. feared for the soul of the nation. “‘Seekest thou great things for thyself?’” he asked his congregation. “‘Seek them not;’” “[We must offer] *a check to inordinate ambition* so common to young minds,” he urged his flock. “That ambition of *elevated station* is to be distinguished from a desire for true *excellence of character*. The latter is a most commendable ambition.” “It is a very common temptation,” he continued, as “all young

²¹⁵ Basil Manly Sr. *Seek ye First the Kingdom of God*,” “‘Because Their Heart was Tender,’ Sermon from Chronicles, Chapter 34, Verses 27-28, Undated;” Basil Manly Sr., “‘To Be Carnally Minded is Death,’ Sermon from Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 6, Undated,” BMSr/Furman.

²¹⁶ Basil Manly Sr., “‘Because Their Heart Was Tender,’ Sermon from Chronicles, Chapter 34, Verses 27-28, Undated,” BMSr/Furman.

²¹⁷ Basil Manly Sr. *Seek ye First the Kingdom of God*,” “‘Because Their Heart was Tender,’ Sermon from Chronicles, Chapter 34, Verses 27-28, Undated;” Basil Manly Sr., “‘To Be Carnally Minded is Death,’ Sermon from Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 6, Undated,” BMSr/Furman.

minds are sanguine, romantic,” to “expect and desire something considerable.” But by “seeking great things” in this way, youthful minds pursue “a worse ambition, an ambition of ease and indolence at the expense of God’s cause.” “This should be corrected,” he concluded, so as to “throw into shade all desires after wealth, fame, etc.” for their own sake, and rather promote their achievement according to the designs of Providence.²¹⁸

But the spectre of the North as they imagined it hit hauntingly close to home. In discussing his son Walker with an old college friend, Iveson Brookes admitted, “I have long hoped God intends to make a preacher of him but he says he has not received a call to preach... He derived from his grandfather a pretty property and married a Baptist girl of equal estate and is perhaps too much immersed in the world like his father to preach much.” Brookes was perfectly aware that any lecture he might give his son, he had already given ineffectually to himself. “On settling and engaging in planting, the devil too readily persuaded me to give up study and recover health by an active life. The result was I became too much engrossed in the finances of the world and my usefulness in the ministry has been greatly cut short.”²¹⁹

The elder Brookes utilized this confession as a warning for his son to guard against avarice. He deemed the present state of commerce “truly discouraging” and called “for retrenchment and economy” before admitting that for several years he had, “foolishly caught the wild mania for getting rich which so universally prevailed...and [had gone] largely in debt on the credit system.” The father then effectively demanded his son to do

²¹⁸ Basil Manly Sr., “‘Seekest Thou Great Things for Thyself?’, Sermon from Jeremiah, Chapter 45, Verse 5, Undated;” Basil Manly Sr., “‘Who is a Wise Man...?’, Sermon from James, Chapter 3, Verse 13, 1828,” BMSr/Furman. For more on Manly in this paternal role—within his own family, his faith, and his profession, see: Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 154-211, 228-253.

²¹⁹ “Iveson Lewis Brookes to Brother Creathe, June 13, 1859;” “Iveson Lewis Brookes to Walker Brookes, May 10, 1848,” ILB/USC.

as I say and not as I do when he acknowledged that though he had “frequently cautioned [Walker] against extravagance” he now urged him to “retrench from your course of several years passed or you will inevitably find yourself involved in pecuniary matters” as I found myself. “My advice to you,” he finished, “is to set down to your proper course studies making decency rather than show your model of life.” Toward this end the reverend eventually took solace in the fact that “[Walker] is an active church member...a deacon, conducts the Sunday school, leads prayer meetings and in absence of their preacher lectures the congregation.” But both their paths to such respectable moral standing proved arduous. They recognized the very same moral failings in themselves that they so vehemently despised when they leered at the North. The very same capitalistic greed that they believed had overrun the North threatened to penetrate the South, corrupt its soul, and undermine its claims to mastery.²²⁰

Basil Manly Sr. likewise revealed much about his own moral shortcomings in attempting to curb them in his son. Like many preachers, Manly Sr. frequently bemoaned his unworthiness for his calling by confessing to his journal: “A cold and dull frame has seized me, and long absence from duty has destroyed my facilities of connection and expression.” He later complained, “Thoughts incessantly wandering. I impute the wandering state of my thoughts, which has now become a *habitual moral disease*, to the

²²⁰ “Iveson Lewis Brookes to Brother Creathe, June 13, 1859;” “Iveson Lewis Brookes to Walker Brookes, May 10, 1848,” ILB/USC. Here Brookes acknowledged, and lamented, the corruptions he believed attendant upon the burgeoning market revolution that was sweeping the American landscape. For more on the effects of the market revolution in the antebellum South generally, see especially: Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1991);

For more on clerical responses to the market revolution and their effects on prevailing attitudes toward private and public morality, see especially: Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 254-267; Beth Barton Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up: Progress and the Pulpit in Nineteenth-Century Virginia*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), 4, 11-54; Sellers, *The Market Revolution*, 202-236; Kenneth Moore Startup, *The Root of All Evil: The Protestant Clergy and the Economic Mind of the Old South*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997).

hurried and *superficial* manner in which all my reading and reflection have for some months been conducted... and [to] occupation in worldly things.” “My experience for some months has been very peculiar,” Manly Sr. admitted; “My frames have exhibited almost constant barrenness and destitution, and if a gleam of tenderness has at any time visited me it has been but seldom and momentary.” He worried over this frequently depressed spiritual state precisely because of the awesome responsibility he felt as the head of a burgeoning family, the pastor of a burgeoning church, and a white man in a burgeoning slave society. If he, as a minister of the sacred gospels, constantly struggled to uphold the moral tenets of his faith and station, how could less pious men be expected to resist the temptations surrounding them within the slave South and bearing down on them from the allegedly hedonistic North?²²¹

The Reverend Manly Sr. attempted to salve his fears and answer his own critique by attributing this personal spiritual discomfort to Divine workings. “I think I have been made willing to walk on in darkness if this should be God’s chosen method of bringing souls to the knowledge of the truth,” he suggested before confessing, “I think indeed that my proneness to pride is such that I could not *bear* both blessings at once, i.e. usefulness and personal comfort.” Similar bouts with a melancholy spiritual state plagued Manly Sr. throughout his life, as he frequently expressed feelings of depression and languidness concerning his spiritual frame of mind. He attributed most of to his own moral failings and an excessive worldly pride and consciousness. His awesome responsibility as both a biological and spiritual father only heightened the burden of what he felt to be damning evidence of his personal depravity. He well understood the familial and even sectional consequences of these personal travails. As a moral example for his sons and his

²²¹ “Basil Manly Sr. Church Journal, January 28; February 1, 1827, BMSr/Furman.

congregations, he personified the moral standard with which they could collectively combat the North. In this light, his personal failings became southern failings, and these southern failings portended the dissolution of the very authority to which he laid claim and upon which southern society itself was built.²²²

Ultimately the younger Manly would rival his father as a Baptist minister and spiritual leader in the South. Their strikingly similar career paths confirmed their personal similarities, chief among them a constant self-reflection and a cycle of lamentation and recommitment to spiritual betterment. As a young man, Manly Jr. declared his resolve to cultivate his own sense of self-mastery: “The habits I now form, the character I now assume, and the reputation and standing among men I now acquire will be very liable to be permanent. If I can now preserve a manly, mild, honorable, and in a word Christian deportment, if I conduct myself with decency and order and prudence, I shall not only acquire a reputation for being so but will necessarily become of that temper and frame of mind.” And on that foundation Manly Jr. would build his church. And in taking his father as his model, he well knew that self control and self discipline were paramount to achieving all that he desired.²²³

Early in life, however, Manly Jr. recognized the difficulties of achieving righteous honor through self-mastery. “*Heavenly minded men* are indeed rare,” the younger Manly lamented. “[Even] my [own] thoughts...when running in pious channels... on usefulness in the world and self improvement [frequently stray and] piety becomes like the indistinct flashes and sudden but inconstant gleams of the Aurora Borealis.” “There is nothing that grieves me more than these alternate religious and sinful frames,” he concluded. “Not

²²² “Basil Manly Sr. Church Journal, April 7, 1828,” BMSr/Furman.

²²³ Basil Manly Jr., “Diary entry, February 2, 1843; August 16, 1840; June 16, 1842,” Basil Manly Jr. papers (hereafter BMJr)/Furman.

that I dislike the first, but the last, they give me more doubts and fears and anxieties than anything else and drive me sometimes to the very brink of despair.” What Manly Jr. most wanted from religion was an end to such self-wrangling; he wanted to surrender himself to control himself; if God would just take the helm, he could revel in a kind of faith that “shall at *all times* [rule] *my affections* as well as my reason.”²²⁴

The temptations of vice appeared frequently in Manly Jr.’s diary—the place that captured, and sponsored, his spiritual struggles. His father had long kept a diary to give voice to certain thoughts and emotions too honest and self-effacing for public consumption in the South. His diary had been his confidant; a secret receptacle for those most private of feelings. Basil Manly Jr. followed his father’s example very early in life, and quickly surpassed his father in his devotion to this emotional release. His diary became for him a sort of sacramental ritual in which he confessed and confronted his deepest personal fears and most threatening moral failings. “If now when my mind is, as it were, being molded for life,” he observed while in college, “I throw...dirt chips and trash into the mold, so as to fill it up with anything but the right thing, when it comes into use these sticks and trash will be forever in the way. And what is more, I will know that they have taken the place of more important matters.” And he admitted that he too often, “yielded up myself an easy prey to all kinds of temptations, and have lost almost all my self control.” The need for self-mastery—and his constant failure in achieving it—was the very point of the diary. It was a chronicle of the attempt to be good, a place to confess

²²⁴ Basil Manly Jr., “Diary entry, August 20, 1843; November 15, 1844;” BMJr/Furman.

consistent shortfalls; there was, after all, a certain solace in accountability, in learning to fall and to pick himself again in an endless cycle of despair, regret, and recommitment.²²⁵

In the sequestered safety of his diary, Manly Jr. further confessed, “I have been sadly deficient in private duty...Secret sins have crept in and have met with unrestrained indulgence...I am indeed low down...The older I get and the longer I live the more evidences do I see of the perverseness of my own heart.” “Passions wild and ungovernable course through my mind with a powerful yet unperceived effect,” he later bemoaned; “Imagination calls up fanciful scenes of danger, of insult, of temptation, and then all the strong passions... whirl like a tempest within my bosom.” That tempest proved unrelenting, and as frequently as he expressed his belief that “I feel a strong desire to do something in winning souls to Christ” as a minister of the gospel, he also bewailed, “I have *backslidden*! I have *backslidden*!” Such backsliding, as his father had long warned and he himself had consistently worried, imperiled his temporal happiness and spiritual progress. Self-mastery was rooted in unstable ground, and the slightest indulgence of temptation could result in irreparable moral erosion. Erosion of this kind—in someone aspiring to save souls and in so doing, to redeem the South in all its peculiarity—would not do and could not be permitted. Knowing that habits formed in youth could prove hard to shake, the burden of this responsibility weighed heavily upon young Manly Jr. as he confronted his own moral misgivings and prepared himself to meet the dual challenges of ministering to the slave South and defending it against aspersions—and alledged corruptions—from the North.

²²⁵ Basil Manly Jr., “Diary entry, June 7, 1841; July 18, 1841; July 17, 1842; August 5, 1843; May 8, 1842; November 24, 1844,” BMJr/Furman.

Basil Manly Jr. understood that this burden was not easily borne; that these challenges would not be easily met. “How soon, how easily, how imperceptibly does the careless Christian fall!” he deplored; “With what silent, gradual enticements is he lured away from his love! Without alarming him, without shocking him, but with soothing devices and flattering suggestions, the Devil leads him on and causes him to fall.”²²⁶ Like his father, Basil Manly Jr. struggled throughout his life to reconcile his desire for secular success with the demands of his spiritual calling. Both demanded he master himself by curbing his desires and channeling his ambitions toward morally sanctified ends. Only then would he realize the righteous honor he held sacred, and become the man his secular standing and spiritual station decreed. Only then could he speak confidently of the Divine sanction attending southern institutions and ward off perceived northern threats. If he failed, southern society might fail with him, and follow the North down the rabbit hole of capitalistic aggrandizement, unchecked greed, and unrestrained passion. Abhorrent as it seemed, such a fate beckoned each time his vices overtook him; each time his morality succumbed to temptation; each time he failed to master his bodily urges or emotional lusts. Such weakness undermined his claims to authority, which endangered the southern social order that very authority was meant to uphold.

Walker Brookes also imbibed the moral teachings of his father, Reverend Iveson Brookes, and just as frequently exhibited the anxieties attending the pursuit of righteous honor through self-mastery. That struggle was a personal as well as familial one. His sister Virginia certainly expressed a constant concern over her brother’s tendency toward sinful vice. “My darling, my only Brother,” she wrote, “I pass many, many, sad

²²⁶ Basil Manly Jr., “Diary entry, June 7, 1841; July 18, 1841; July 17, 1842; August 5, 1843; May 8, 1842; November 24, 1844,” BMJr/Furman.

reflections on you. I fear you are too careless about your immortal soul. I beg you, I implore you, to turn from your wicked ways and devote the remainder of your life to the service of God.” She then urged, “Let not Satan tempt you to die in your sins. Oh! How long will you be wedded to this world; how long will you find pleasure in its follies.” In another letter she reiterated the theme by declaring, “I hope those admonitions you have so often received will yet profit you and you may not die as one who knows no God, as those who pass through life in prosperity and forget they have a maker.”²²⁷

Walker echoed his sister’s evaluations when he admitted to his father, “I have been rather extravagant in my habits” and “am anxious... for I am living beyond my means.” He later confessed, “as to myself I am still floundering in [spiritual] darkness,” but declared himself, “fully resolved with the help of God never to give up prayer again and to read more attentively the Scriptures.” His wife Harriet confirmed these low opinions in lamenting, “I am more than ever exercised and greatly troubled about my beloved husband’s choosing the God of Abraham and Israel and Jesus as his God. Oh! I see clearly that he has everything to urge and encourage more than ever a Christian course,” before praying, “God grant that the solemn warnings of his Providence may melt his heart. God has blessed him in every way all his life.” Harriet’s anxiety, and Walker’s continued “floundering,” prompted her to implore her father-in-law and his father, Reverend Iveson Brookes, to join her in daily, earnest prayers for her husband’s salvation. “My dear husband appears to be in a troubled state of mind and I notice his constant searching of the sacred scriptures,” she cried before exclaiming, “Oh! I cannot give up his precious soul...Oh! May God set him in the right way and make him a blessing to the church and his family and servants.” Walker Brookes, like Basil Manly

²²⁷ “Virginia Brookes to Walker Brookes, July 17, 1849; January 28, 1848;” ILB/USC.

Jr., put himself on the spiritual rack, in an attempt to master his bodily urges and emotional desires. And their personal travails became family trials, as mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, wives and children collectively and consciously tried to hold men accountable.²²⁸

The Brookes and Manly men collectively understood that southern virtue demanded masculine self-mastery. And these men were not alone in their struggles. Their Edgefield neighbors frequently confronted the same vices and worried over the same backsliding tendencies in the pages of the *Edgefield Advertiser*. Its editors frequently voiced their moral concerns, especially concerning alcohol abuse and the degradations it inflicted on men, their households, and the community at large. In the early spring of 1845, these editors decried “the sad events to which we have alluded” so frequently, from wanton gambling and promiscuous sexuality to reckless violence and loss of life, “undoubtedly are in great measure to be ascribed to the unfortunate use of strong drink, and we hope the day is not distant when such a course of riot and confusion will no longer be felt.” They resolved that, “When all who are now engaged in selling, and all who drink, shall be *persuaded* to abandon their practices—then we shall be freed from occurrences” such as these in our midst.²²⁹

Their call for temperance seemingly fell on deaf ears, however, for fifteen years later, they again lamented “the many sad and deplorable occurrences that are brought about directly through the agency of the licensed rum shops that are scattered here and there over this otherwise great and glorious land—shops,” they declared, “that are kept without any regard to law or order, where midnight revelry and all manner of wickedness

²²⁸ “Walker Brookes to Iveson L. Brookes, November 23, 1853;” “Harriet Brookes to Iveson L. Brookes, April 5, 1853; December, 1853,” ILB/UNC.

²²⁹ “Court of Sessions, April 9, 1845;” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

is carried on, and where, even in the sunlight of Heaven our blessed Sabbath day is desecrated by men drunk and maddened with the poisonous drinks of the present age.” “Such dens, although few and far between in this District, should be exterminated forthwith and forever,” they exhorted, and it was “the duty of all good citizens to arise in their majesty and expugn from their community these loathsome places of resort, or see that the laws are rigidly and strictly enforced against those who may fearlessly and wantonly violate them.” In their view, passions ran amuck when alcohol flowed freely and control—of the self and society— was predicated on white men’s ability to harness their passions and hold their liquor. These moral failings—so publicly reviled—were the same vices which bedeviled the clerical families of Reverends Brookes and Manly and seemed equally poised to rend the hearts and hearths of their more secular-minded neighbors: the Brooks, Bones, and Milligan families.²³⁰

Whitfield Brooks, the antebellum patriarch of a prosperous Edgefield family dynasty, lived his life according to his sense of righteous honor, which he deemed best secured through self-mastery. He demanded this of himself and especially of his eldest son Preston. “We should not neglect to employ every means that it is calculated to improve the heart and to purify it from the low passions and desires, which a love of this world and its treasures is sure to inspire,” he once professed to his journal. He believed resolutely that the “One distinguishing difference between a good and bad man is, that the good man mortifies and controls his passions while the bad yields to and is governed by them.” Wanton drinking, gambling, and other nefarious “pleasures” could easily enslave men to vice and immorality. The elder Brooks later assessed his eldest son accordingly, deeming him “deficient in moral energy and decision, in mental activity”

²³⁰ “Another Fatal Affray, October 24, 1860,” *Edgefield Advertiser*.

and “too indulgent in more physical gratifications,” before asserting, “The spiritual man must overcome the more corporeal.” Whitfield Brooks thus echoed precisely the tenor of his ministerial neighbors’ admonitions to their sons, and mirrored the same personal tensions between honor and piety that plagued those religious divines.²³¹

A founding member of Edgefield’s more socially prestigious and emotionally reserved Trinity Episcopal Church, Whitfield Brooks nonetheless imbibed much of the pervasive Protestant Evangelical ethic of his Baptist and Methodist neighbors, chiefly because his wife, the former Mary Parsons Carroll, converted to the Baptist faith and brought its message into their home. In the absence of an Episcopal priest, or during revivals in the Edgefield evangelical churches, Whitfield frequently heard Baptist and Methodist sermons, and undoubtedly conversed even more frequently with members of these sects in his daily affairs. A similar moral concern thus bound the Edgefield community of faith together, and pervaded their thoughts, words, and deeds as they presided over their farms and families, all the while pondering their futures.

Whitfield Brooks wanted his own life to serve as a fitting example for his sons to follow, and he strove to uphold the tenets befitting the “good man” he so often reiterated for himself and his progeny. The elder Brooks frequently decried the prevailing tendency toward drunkenness and debauchery in his native district, and through his diatribes he sought to deter his sons from similar transgressions. “This is sale day and so very clear and inviting that I anticipate a large gathering at the Village,” he wrote in 1841, and he fully expected the day to be attended by “cases of drunkenness in the afternoon.” Another sale day several months later evoked the same commentary on “several cases of

²³¹ Whitfield Brooks diary entry, March 27, 1842; November 17, 1846,” Brooks Diary, Volume 1 (hereafter WBV1)/Used with permission from the personal files of Dr. James O. Farmer, Emeritus Professor of History, University of South Carolina-Aiken, (hereafter JOF).

drunkenness” enacted by “a number of persons collected from all quarters of the district.” A particularly disdainful note in his journal recounted, “a disgusting exhibition of drunkenness at the sale among the crowd generally and many instances among the self-righteous Baptists” at Stephen’s Creek. Such sentiments were again aroused the following spring when he ruefully noted a recent pottery sale where he “learned that almost every one of the company got shamefully drunk, among whom, were some young gentleman, of whom better things and higher hopes were anticipated.” Brooks rarely missed an opportunity to point out the pitfalls of drunkenness and its attending immoralities.²³²

But the father struggled to maintain the example to his son. In describing a party he attended in the spring of 1842, the elder Brooks denoted, “There was neither wine nor other strong drink and neither seemed to be necessary to the comfort of the company. It is a good example and I am *tempted* to follow it. There would be more honor in the observance than in the break of it.” In doing so, he revealed his continued preference for temperance and moderation, but implied a gnawing inability to uphold his own standard. During the summer of 1842, Brooks recorded his attendance at “a meeting of the temperance society last evening in the Courthouse,” at which the “Society was dissolved and a union formed with the new mechanic’s Washingtonian abstinence Society.” Here Whitfield Brooks witnessed a local shift from temperance to teetotal abstention, but failed to count himself among the converts. He further exhibited his weakening resolve in commenting on a Washingtonian Society meeting the following year. “A gentleman from Baltimore by the name of Carey has been lecturing in the Village on the subject of temperance to large audiences,” he recorded before continuing, “I heard him on Monday

²³² Whitfield Brooks journal entry, September 6; December 6; December 29, 1841; March 7, 1843;

night & was rather pleased with the tenor and scope of his remarks and particularly with his explanation of the principles, on which the Washingtonian temperance society was organized.” He further explained, “It is regarded in the light of a social reform, to be affected by social and voluntary associations, disconnected & independent of both church and State,” but expressed reservations that “He [Mr. Carey] is not however the plain, unpretending and simple-hearted man, that he has been represented, who tells his story of sorrow and suffering in modest subdued & heart touching language but his vanity induces him to play the actor and occasionally to aspire to the honors of the orator.” He then woefully concluded, “I fear that he is converting what was at first a disinterested experiment in the cause of benevolence, into a trade for making money. The moment he looses sight of his original purpose and prostitutes his powers to selfish ends, he becomes a contemptible mountebank.”²³³

Brooks’s own reservations apparently found public voice later that month when he noted, “no news except in regard to a little dissatisfaction between the Temperance and non-temperance portions of the Villagers in regard to some proceeding of the former

²³³ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, April 15, 1842; July 12, 1842; May 11, 1843, [emphasis added]” WBV1/JOF. For more on the temperance movement and prohibition initiatives in the antebellum South, see especially: Douglas W. Carlson, “‘Drinks He to His Own Undoing’: Temperance Ideology in the Deep South,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, Vol. 18, No. 4, (Winter 1998): 659-691; Joe L. Coker, *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause: Southern White Evangelicals and the Prohibition Movement*, (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2007); John Allen Kraut, *The Origins of Prohibition*, (New York, NY: A.A. Knopf, 1925); C.C. Pearson & J. Edwin Hendricks, *Liquor and Anti-Liquor in Virginia, 1619-1919*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1967); Ian Tyrell, *Sobering Up: From Temperance to Prohibition in Antebellum America, 1800-1860*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979) and “Drink and Temperance in the Antebellum South: An Overview and Interpretation,” *Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 48, No. 4, (Nov. 1982): 485-510; John W. Quist, *Restless Visionaries: The Social Roots of Antebellum Reform in Alabama and Michigan*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998); William J. Rorabaugh, “The Sons of Temperance in Antebellum Jasper County,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No. 3, (Fall 1980): 263-279; James Benson Sellers, *The Prohibition Movement in Alabama, 1702-1943*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1943); Henry A. Scomp, *King Alcohol in the Realm of King Cotton, or, A History of the Liquor Traffic and of the Temperance Movement in Georgia from 1733 to 1887*, (Chicago: Press of the Blakely Printing Company, 1888); Daniel J. Whitener, *Prohibition in North Carolina, 1715-1946*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1945); Lee J. Willis, *Southern Prohibition: Race, Reform, and Public Life in Middle Florida, 1821-1920*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2011), 1-66.

in relation to the observance, not celebration, of the 4th of July” upcoming. By September, Brooks despaired that “a more riotous, drunken, and fighting company have not been seen in the public square in five years.” This prevailing spirit of intemperance hit close to home the following spring when Brooks reported “evidence of a good deal of drunkenness through the sense of hearing as many noisy and drunken men passed my house,” while the following July 4th celebrations witnessed “a large quantity of ardent spirits drank.” At a temperance convention held in Edgefield that August, Brooks professed himself “much entertained and gratified with the proceedings...and here record my approbation of their principles and purposes,” declaring, “I was an attentive observer and listener and really at last was very much in the condition of Agrippa before Paul – “I was almost persuaded to give my signature to the pledge”

But pledge he did not, for after a party given by Col. Andrew Pickens the following November, Brooks noted, “His dinner was excellent and his wines various and choice,” but then complained of “a paroxism of headache from which I suffered through the entire day.” He bemoaned, “It is a great drawback upon my happiness that I cannot participate in the social pleasures of the festive board without paying a heavy penalty in suffering the succeeding day, be my indulgence ever so temperate and cautious.”²³⁴ Despite continued interest in and support of the local temperance movement, Whitfield Brooks stopped short of taking the abstinence pledge, and failed to curb his indulgence at the “festive board.”

Perhaps his own alcoholic indulgences heightened his sensitivity to such abuses in his midst, for Brooks continued to decry the local prevalence of an intemperate spirit. “I

²³⁴ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, May 24; September 4, 1843; May 10; July 4; August 1; November 5; November 6, 1844,” WBV1/JOF.

returned home in the afternoon,” he noted in the winter of 1845, “witnessing on the road several exhibitions of drunkenness and immorality, showing to the feelings of every friend of good order and social reform α improvement.” In the spring he again deplored this local propensity for alcoholic excess when he observed, “an exhibition of beastly drunkenness, discreditable to the District and offensive to the eye of decency. The temperance societies,” he continued, “have reformed a portion of the drinking community but the other portion now drink to greater excess, than formerly and in their drunken debaucheries have less regard for decency and public opinion than they ever had.”

Temperance and moderation promised temporal success and spiritual salvation, but all proved difficult to attain and even harder to sustain. His own lapses only heightened his anxieties over the moral failings of others, none more so than his eldest son. All seemed to threaten the moral foundation of southern society at large, a threat only heightened by ever-more frequent reports of Northern derision of the slave South. If Brooks and his sons couldn’t control themselves, if their neighbors continued in their debauches, how could they justify their gender and racial prerogatives against criticism from abroad? How could they win the sectional conflict over the nation’s moral destiny?²³⁵

For men like Whitfield Brooks, success in that conflict and the promise of the future rested with their sons, and as the eldest son in the Brooks family, Preston Brooks bore the lion’s share of this burden. Preston sorely felt the weight of these expectations throughout his life, and frequently expressed his admiration for his father’s honorable and

²³⁵ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, February 9; April 7, 1845;” WBV1/JOF. For more on the prominence of alcoholic consumption in the early republic and antebellum era, see especially: William J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1979); Mark Edward Lender & James Kriby Martin, *Drinking In America: A History, The Revised and Expanded Edition*, (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1987), 1-86; Willis, *Southern Prohibition*, 1-14.

For more on the emergence of the temperance movement in reaction to this American habit for pronounced alcoholic consumption, see especially: Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling*, 81-104.

pious example. Despite his father's personal bouts with intemperance and immoderation, Preston still proclaimed, "He is a model character for purity and justice," before asserting, "A better husband and father never lived." Upon his father's death in 1851, Preston unleashed thirty-two years of pent-up feelings for one he had so long revered and from whom he had inherited his own righteous honor and the burden of expectations it entailed. "May God bless the best of Fathers and truest of men with all the rewards permissive to the 'just man,'" he prayed at Christmas in 1851; "God bless him. Even in his suffering and near approach to death, he takes interest in all family matters like a well man." Just three days later, Whitfield Brooks passed away, prompting Preston to declare "it pleased God to release my beloved father from the suffering he had been enduring for years past. I was with him during the last day & a half & he died in my arms. A kinder parent never lived nor a juster [sic] man than Whitfield Brooks." In reflecting on his father's lifelong model of righteous honor, Preston turned his thoughts inward, fervently praying in his journal, "God grant that the blessing which my father bestowed on me, with his hand on my head, may stimulate me to be in his language 'an upright, virtuous man' and that I may emulate his example and meet [him] in Heaven!..." Oh! May my life be as honorable and useful and my end be as composed and confident as his was."²³⁶

In his lifelong attempt to live up to their mutual manhood ideal, Preston evinced the same righteous honor he so fervently attributed to his "noble father." The moral demands of that ideal, and his perceived inability to meet them, plagued Preston throughout his life. In reflecting on his father's life, a thirty-two-year-old Preston echoed his father's earlier assessment of his character when he confessed to his diary, "I have not

²³⁶ "Preston Brooks diary entry, 1849; December 25; December 28, 1851," Preston Smith Brooks papers (hereafter PSB)/USC.

been well for nearly a year. I am a great sinner but trust in the all atoning blood of an immaculate Savior to blot out my past transgressions and fervently pray that He will enable me to lead a new life, to discharge my duty with honesty and propriety, and to become one whose walk may be viewed even as a holy man.” He admitted, “ this looks strange from me but I feel what I write and ‘his blood can redeem, though our sins be like scarlet and made white as snow,” before declaring, “I rose this morning with strong feelings of gratitude to my Heavenly Father for the innumerable blessings he has given me in almost everything I could desire, but especially for his continued forbearance towards my multitudinous and oft-repeated sins, and his permitting me to live in comfort when justice might long since have cast me off.” He then professed his fervent “hope yet to be known to the wicked of the world as an avowed consistent and humble Christian and that my own heart and my daily acts may be my most steadfast approvers.”²³⁷

Strengthened by this resolve, he proclaimed, “Now I feel right!” In the same breath, however, he confided to his journal the utter lack of faith he felt in this newfound spiritual resolve. “What a commentary it is upon the sinfulness of my nature and the villainy of humanity,” he continued, “when my understanding tells me that should temptation assail me, I will sin grievously before night. Oh! Deliver me from temptation and make me, my Father, such as I know happiness, respectability, earthly and heavenly good but reasonably require.”²³⁸ Preston knew as well as his father had that there was more than just personal happiness and salvation at stake; the sanctity of southern families, the stability of southern society, and the moral fate of the nation hung in the balance. His personal struggle to overcome temptation personified the South’s struggles to overcome

²³⁷ “Preston Brooks diary entry, December 28, 1851; August 6, 1849,” PSB/USC.

²³⁸ “Preston Brooks diary entry, December 28, 1851; August 6, 1849,” PSB/USC.

its faults and present a united, morally justifiable front against Northern aspersion, and to defend itself against the threat of perceived Northern corruptions.

Others in the Edgefield community took up this call for improved morality and demanded adherence to the masculine ideal of righteous honor to achieve those ends. James Bones' family enjoyed deep roots and extensive connections in the Edgefield community. His daughter Martha married Dr. John H. Hughes, eldest son of Dr. John Hughes and his respected Edgefield family, in 1831. Besides Martha, James Bones had five other children, all sons—James Thomas Jr., John, Robert, Samuel, and William—who achieved considerable wealth and status as planters in the southern part of the Edgefield District. Beneath this façade of wealth and prestige, however, lurked a family demon—alcoholism. Thomas Bones wrote his father admitting that, “For the last eighteen months, I had gradually fell [sic] into the same error that all in our family have ruined themselves by, but thanks to the Almighty I have seen through my error...for how mortifying would it be,” he continued, “to my dear parents to have it cast in their truth that their son Thomas died from a glass of ardent spirits.” That this alcoholism afflicted the father as well as the son young Thomas revealed when he urged, “my dear father say for what length of time you will only take one drink in the day and I do assure you as I believe in futurity that I shall adhere to whatever you say, and especially on my mothers and your account.”²³⁹

This affliction extended to the habits of the younger Bones son, Robert, as well. Youngest brother William related to his older brother John that Robert had recently moved in with a family member who “appears glad to get him away from Chester and

²³⁹ “James Thomas Bones to James Bones, September 1, 1822,” Hughes Family papers (hereafter HFP)/UNC.

thinks by taking him from his old associates that it may be the means of making him more temperate and steady and bring him to a proper sense of the manner he has been going on.” Their cousin Ann Adams corroborated these suspicions when she wrote their sister Mary with a warning to “Tell Robert... Mr. McGowen’s son Michael died on Saturday last purely by drinking,” and that despite several doctors who had “told him his danger and admonished him respecting his conduct” the “unfortunate wretch he only got about to join his company in intoxication when he was called before the Judge of quick and dead to give an account of his actions.” Thus father and sons alike, with support from their family, strove to improve their moral resolution as well as their physical constitution, and they looked to God to guide them in the effort. Conscious of their temporal status and fearful of their spiritual state, they sought divine guidance to secure both through self-mastery, evincing the same righteous honor that guided the morals of many of their Edgefield neighbors.²⁴⁰ All understood that such self-mastery was the key to sustaining proper slave mastery, and to meeting domestic and foreign aspersions against southern institutions with moral certainty.

Another Edgefield doctor, Joseph Milligan, achieved success as a physician in Hamburg, South Carolina and gained considerable prestige across the Edgefield District. This success enabled him to send his son, Joseph Jr., to medical school in Charleston. In their frequent correspondence, father and son revealed the primacy of self-mastery in their calculations of both temporal and spiritual success. “Our Lord tells us that ‘a man’s life consisteth not in the abundances of things which he possesseth.’ It is a blunder to think that money brings happiness. Contentment only does it,” Dr. Milligan intoned to his

²⁴⁰ “William Bones to John Bones, December 5, 1829;” “Ann Adams to Mary Bones, January 4, 1830,” HFP/UNC.

son before asserting, “If you deport yourself with dignity (*not haughtiness*, for a great mistake is often made here) and exhibit and feel in your intercourse with others a sincere desire to make them happy, and crush within yourself the tidings of a selfish spirit, you will be beloved and success will follow you.” He exhorted his son to, “Trust in God, and everything will come out right. If you do not trust in Him, He will thwart all your plans.” Dr. Milligan later expressed his most earnest desire: “May He guide you in the way of all truth and enable you to lead a useful life, a life of self-denial and devotion to your duties both to God and man.” The doctor expected his son to deny indulgences in more secular urges, especially those of avarice for wealth and station, and to seek instead a personal piety and moral righteousness, through which all other secular success would come in time. Honor in this world—personal and professional—demanded honor to God through a pious moral bearing. That righteous honor was best achieved through mastery of the self. That self-mastery was the cornerstone of the southern slave system and the best means of securing its moral sanctity as a defense against Northern affronts.²⁴¹

Joseph Milligan Jr., however, belied a propensity to indulge the very desires that most threatened both his professional prospects and spiritual state. “We think his most prominent fault is that of spending money foolishly,” his aunt once confided to her brother, Joseph’s father; “We often tell him of it, and as both you and Henry Bruns [her husband] have been very faithful in pointing out this to him, I hope he will be brought to see his error in time.” Joseph Jr.’s uncle, the same Henry Bruns, affirmed this tendency to prioritize secular over sacred concerns when he wrote Dr. Milligan urging him to “examine Joe’s knees medically. I am afraid he is weak about those parts, as he has been

²⁴¹ “Dr. Joseph Milligan to Joseph Milligan Jr., June 11, 1846; September 8, 1849,” Milligan Family papers (hereafter MFP)/UNC.

in the habit of always sitting in church in time of prayer. The fashion in church with us is to stand on this occasion. If you can do any for him in this respect, pray don't neglect it."²⁴²

Thus confronted with his son's moral failings, Dr. Milligan prayed, "May God bless you, and give you the inclination to persevere in the habits of industry which your friends so highly commend in you," and beseeched young Joseph to "Ask the assistance of the Almighty to strengthen those habits, to correct whatever is wrong in the *motives* which actuate you, and to enable you to devote the learning and wisdom you are now acquiring to the glory of His name and the benefit of mankind." The doctor here confirmed a longstanding desire for his son: "I wish that you could be impressed with the truth that your soul is of more value to you than everything else." He later warned young Joseph against excessive pride and the avarice that so often accompanied it by observing, "There are some persons who are spoiled by commendations of the kind you are receiving. They think that under such circumstances they may safely intermit, or altogether suspend, future exertions and become inflated with vanity and self esteem." "I trust," he concluded, "that you have too much good sense to be affected in this way, and that expressions of approbation of your moral and intellectual habits will only spur you on to higher developments of those sentiments and faculties which raise man to the position which it was originally intended he should occupy by his benevolent creator." This sense of righteous honor guided both father and son in what would become their shared professions as medical physicians and Presbyterians. As such, they comprehended their secular professions and spiritual affinity both as a form of moral stewardship, and

²⁴² "Jane Milligan to Dr. Joseph Milligan, January 12, 1841;" "Henry M. Bruns to Dr. Joseph Milligan, July 29, 1840," MFP/UNC.

knew that such stewardship was essential to combating assaults against their society from abroad.²⁴³

Collectively, these fathers and sons exhibited the tensions that defined antebellum white southern manhood, and personified the righteous honor such manhood required. In seeking to realize the ideal through self-mastery, the Brookes and Manly men vividly illustrated the emotional convergence of personal and public honor and piety, as well as the central role these ethics played in dictating the moral tenets of masculine virtue. Threatened at every turn by vice, these men strove to attain the manly virtues inherent in righteous honor, and did so as part of their larger effort to sustain their privileged place in the southern social order. Their particular experience as ministers captured the most explicit merging of these southern values, but pointed toward a broader masculine experience of moral tension that enveloped minister and master, planter and professional alike during the antebellum era. The Brooks, Bones, and Milligan men experienced this more secular tension between honor and piety. All called Edgefield home for formative periods, if not all, of their lives, and reflected its particular history of honor and spirituality in their intensely emotional pursuit of personal and public morality. Their own consciences, their Edgefield community, and their Southern sectional identity embraced righteous honor in defining manhood.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ “Dr. Joseph Milligan to Joseph Milligan Jr., April 25, 1840; March 15, 1841,” MFP/UNC.

²⁴⁴ The most relevant works in anthropology, psycho-social studies, philosophy, and political science informing this historical approach to emotions include: Simon Clarke, Paul Hoggett, & Simon Thompson, eds., *Emotion, Politics and Society*, (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Rom Harre, ed., *The Social Construction of Emotions*, (New York, NY: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1986); Rebecca Kingston & Leonard Ferry, eds., *Bringing the Passions Back In: The Emotions in Political Philosophy*, (Vancouver, British Columbia: University of British Columbia Press, 2008); W. Russell Neuman, George E. Marcus, Ann N. Crigler, & Michael MacKuen, eds., *The Affect Effect: Dynamics of Emotion in Political Thinking and Behavior*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Historian Peter N. Stearns figures as the dean of emotions history in the United States. The most influential of his works as applied here include: Carol Z. Stearns & Peter N. Stearns, *Anger: The Struggle*

Their righteous honor convinced them of the sanctity of their cause and the wickedness of the North. In their eyes, the North embodied the debased results of unrestrained lust and greed; the corruption of true religious faith and piety; the complete loss of honor. Northern vices would oppress Southern virtues if righteous honor was not upheld by the southern men it invested with authority. This masculine standard of righteous honor required constant defense against such corruption and vice, and sometimes that defense necessitated violent acts that, ironically, threatened the very moral foundations upon which their collective values were based. Father and son encountered and engaged this culture of violence in both word and deed throughout the antebellum era. In rhetoric and action they would define themselves, their community, and their section according to this righteous honor, and would defend them all against comers.²⁴⁵

for Emotional Self-Control in America's History, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1986); Peter N. Stearns, *Jealousy: The Evolution of an Emotion in American History*, (New York: New York University Press, 1989); Peter N. Stearns and Jan Lewis, eds., *An Emotional History of the United States*, (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Peter N. Stearns, *Battleground of Desire: The Struggle for Self-Control in Modern America*, (New York: New York University Press, 1999).

Other scholars to pioneer perspectives and methodologies in emotions history include: Nicole Eustace, *Passion is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Karen Lystra, *Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989); William M Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

²⁴⁵ For emotional perspectives relating specifically to the sectional crisis in antebellum America, as discussed here, see especially: Stephen Berry, *All that Makes a Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Stowe, *Intimacy and Power in the Old South*, 1-4, 250-254; Michael Woods, "The Heart of the Sectional Conflict: Emotion, Politics, and the Coming of the American Civil War," (PhD. diss., University of South Carolina, 2012) and "The Indignation of Freedom-Loving People: The Caning of Charles Sumner and Emotion in Antebellum Politics," *The Journal of Social History* 44, No. 3, (Spring 2011): 689-705.

CHAPTER V

EXCESSIVE & EXPRESSIVE: PRESTON BROOKS, RIGHTEOUS VIOLENCE, & THE SOUTHERN MALE

*“On the table, and on each side of him, lay—strangely associated—his bible and his pistols. He had been about to refer, with an everyday philosophy, to one or the other of them for consolation.”*²⁴⁶

Preston Brooks very early exhibited a propensity for violence, long before he battered Massachusetts’ famed abolitionist, U.S. Senator Charles Sumner, with the gutta-percha cane. Violent retributions against fellow students, local law enforcement, and political rivals during his youth presaged later impressions of him as a “Southern Hotspur;” *the* symbol of southern male recklessness as shaped by the barbaric slave regime. The 1856 attack on Senator Sumner and divergent reactions to it north and south only fortified the image. But acceptance of this caricatured “Bully Brooks” oversimplified the complex moral purview of Preston Smith Brooks in particular and antebellum southern white men in general. Though undeniably protective of his own honor, and sensitive to the point of bloodshed when faced with an affront, Brooks equally resembled other southern men in the genuineness of his spiritual struggles.²⁴⁷

For Brooks and many southern men of the era, violence was a necessary and even salutary aspect of society. The southern code of honor, as they saw it, did not promote but contained violence to its proper forms and proper ends. The point was not to kill men but to *be* men. “Death before dishonor” was every man’s creed—and ritualized forms of

²⁴⁶ William Gilmore Simms; John Caldwell Guilds, ed., *Martin Faber: The Story of a Criminal*, (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 2005 ed.), 39.

²⁴⁷ The only scholarly biographical treatment of Preston Brooks is: Robert Neil Mathis, “Preston Smith Brooks: The Man and His Image.” *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 79 (October 1978): 296-310.

facing death underlined white self-mastery. The fact that Africans had allowed themselves to be enslaved was evidence enough of their worthiness to be such; the fact that Indians seemed to prefer racial extermination was one of the more admirable things about them.²⁴⁸

In such an environment, religion acted less as a check on the honor code than as a complementary (and sometimes captured) system. While obviously reared in a religious tradition that centered on Christ's redeeming love, the South's Christianity was also inflected with an Old Testament outlook toward social relations and the role of violence. God, in short, was not a leveling love but a hierarchical authority, and white men were his agents on earth, smiting vice and corruption to maintain the proper social order. Such righteous violence, then, served sacred and honorable ends by ensuring that all did their duty to themselves, their society, and their God. Men like Preston Brooks, then, were less conscious of their awesome power than they were their awesome responsibility.

Brooks stood above his peers at South Carolina College during the late 1830s for his exploits in honor-bound belligerence, no insignificant feat in a place noted for its turbulent student-faculty relations and frequent fisticuffs among the student body. In Brooks's four years alone, numerous violent confrontations involving concealed weapons, drunkenness, and riot littered the school's disciplinary record. The faculty expelled two students in 1837 for homicide. The following year the student body incited open rebellion against the faculty after the expulsion of a member of the junior class, prompting a series of subsequent outbursts. South Carolina College was, in short, a rough-and-tumble place, despite drawing its student body from the finest aristocratic

²⁴⁸ Stephen Berry, ed. *Princes of Cotton: Four Diaries of Young Men in the South, 1848-1860*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2007), xii.

families in the state. In spite or perhaps because of these sons' pretensions to honor, recklessness and violence pervaded their collegiate years, and Preston Brooks led the way.²⁴⁹

In 1838, Brooks's exploits provoked a special meeting of the Board of Trustees, when the college president learned that Brooks and a fellow student named Lewis Simons had recently been "involved in some difficulty," wherein "a challenge had been sent by one of the parties" resulting in a "quarrel between them." Simons had confessed to sending Brooks a challenge and had argued that he "could not avoid this course; the insult being of such a nature that he felt compelled to notice it in this way." Brooks provided the Trustees with a more detailed explanation, claiming that both he and Simons were distinguished members of the school's "Clariosophic Society" and had both come up for the same elected position. Initially, according to Brooks, Simons had deferred, promising "he would not electioneer against him." But after his opponent reneged on this agreement, Brooks admitted that "he said to some of his friends that Simons had falsified his word, which coming to the notice of the latter he sent.... a challenge to fight a duel."

²⁴⁹ For analysis of other infamous antebellum affairs of honor at South Carolina College, see: Maximilian La Borde, *History of the South Carolina College: From Its Incorporation December 19, 1801 to November 25, 1857*, (Columbia, SC: Peter B. Glass, 1859); Louis P. Towles, "A Matter of Honor at South Carolina College, 1822," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 94, No. 1, (Jan. 1993): 6-18; William E. Walker, "The South Carolina College Duel of 1833," *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 52, No. 3, (July 1951): 140-142; W. Scott Poole, *Never Surrender: Confederate Memory and Conservatism in the South Carolina Upcountry*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2004), 168, n.31, 235.

South Carolina College was not unique in this aspect during the antebellum period. For more on southern college life in the Old South, especially tendencies toward hyper-masculine honor-violence, see: E. Merton Coulter, *College Life in the Old South: As Seen at the University of Georgia*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1983 ed.); L. Ray Drinkwater, "Honor and Student Misconduct in Southern Antebellum Colleges," *Southern Humanities Review*, Vol. 27, No. 4, (Fall 1993); Robert F. Pace & Christopher A. Bjornsen, "Adolescent Honor and College Student Behavior in the Old South," *Southern Cultures*, Vol. 6, No. 3, (Fall 2000): 9-28; Robert F. Pace, *Halls of Honor: College Men in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004); Jennings L. Wagoner, "Honor and Dishonor at Mr. Jefferson's University: The Antebellum Years," *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 2, (Summer 1986): 155-179; Charles Coleman Wall, Jr., "Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia, 1825 to 1861," (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1978); Timothy J. Williams, "Intellectual Manhood: Becoming Men of the Republic at a Southern University, 1795-1861," Ph.D. diss., The University of North Carolina, 2010).

Brooks accepted the challenge, and both “repaired to Mr. Simon’s room,” where Brooks told his antagonist, “they were both boys and under College laws, that he would give him a boy’s satisfaction, but would not fight while in college.”²⁵⁰

After considerable speculation by both parties the following day as to whether the other was scouring the campus with pistols and mal-intent, the two finally squared off when Simons confronted Brooks in the schoolyard and handed him a formal challenge. Brooks accepted it, at which Simons “drew a horse whip and gave him a cut,” prompting Brooks to draw his pistols and bid his adversary to “stand off and defend himself.” Simons then backed up several paces and “exclaimed, ‘I am not armed!’” “On hearing this,” Brooks recounted that he “threw away the pistol and said I will now give you a boy’s satisfaction if that is what you wish,” and “they engaged in a personal encounter again, and here the matter ended.” The board summarily expelled Simons and suspended Brooks for carrying a deadly weapon and threatening the life of a fellow student. Though re-admitted the following semester, Brooks did little to settle down.²⁵¹

Indeed Brooks’s prickly sense of honor again embroiled him in controversy during his senior year of 1839, when he assailed the local Columbia jail after hearing a report that his brother “had been carried by the town marshal in an ignominious manner to the guard house.” Brandishing two pistols given him by a friend, Brooks procured some ammunition from a local shop, “loaded his pistols and proceeded to the Guard House with the design of rescuing his brother from his supposed ignominious treatment.” Upon arriving to find his brother no longer in confinement, he admitted that “he

²⁵⁰ “Report of a special meeting of the South Carolina College Board of Trustees, January 4, 1838,” Preston Smith Brooks papers (hereafter PSB)/South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina (hereafter USC).

²⁵¹ “Report from Board of Trustees meeting, January 4, 1838,” PSB/USC.

continued to display his pistols in a threatening manner and proclaimed his intention of shooting the aggressors.” Citing the defense of his family’s name and honor, “he urged in extenuation of his conduct that he had not considered himself subject to the discipline of the college, because his examinations were completed.” He further explained “that his offense against the laws of morality and the land, which he did not wish to justify, was one which the natural excitement of the circumstances [and] the fervor of youth should render venial.” Brooks was expelled and thus never officially graduated, but this mattered little in a time when a college degree was unnecessary for pursuing a career in law and politics. Besides, unlike the college faculty, Brooks’s Edgefield peers only admired his conduct.²⁵² Brooks had shown himself well-versed in the form and ritual of southern honor, and exhibited the lengths to which he was willing to go to defend that honor against all comers. He thus entered manhood well armed, with personal honor, a penchant for violently defending it, and community sanction of both.

Preston Brooks quickly parlayed his honorable reputation into professional success, studying law under the tutelage of Senator George McDuffie of Edgefield. Brooks’s star seemed on the rise, as McDuffie also introduced him to the Edgefield political scene that determined much of the state’s political course. One of his earliest forays into this political world would have a lasting impact on his prospects and perspective, both personal and political. Tensions ran high during the 1840 South Carolina gubernatorial election between John P. Richardson and Edgefield’s own James Henry Hammond, and both Brooks and fellow Edgefield rival Louis T. Wigfall vigorously fanned the factional flames that engulfed the campaign. Perceived insults from

²⁵² “Report of the Secretary of the Faculty for the Expulsion of Preston S. Brooks, South Carolina College, November 27, 1839,” PSB/USC.

both camps led to several violent recontres, one resulting in the death of Brooks's nephew, Thomas Bird, at the hands of Wigfall. Upon hearing of his nephew's demise, Brooks reportedly vowed "I'll kill Wigfall!"²⁵³ As his father later recounted, "my son Preston challenged Wigfall, which was accepted," at the conclusion of a "hostile meeting" between Wigfall and Brooks relative Colonel James P. Carroll on November 4, 1840. With his cousin (former South Carolina Governor and later Colonel of the Palmetto Regiment in Mexico) Pierce Mason Butler acting as second, young Preston proceeded with the affair a week later on a "small, sterile, and bleak island in the [Savannah] River, called goat island...having no accommodations but its insulated situation which protected the party from interruption."²⁵⁴

Preston's father, Whitfield Brooks, considered the entire affair one "of trial, suffering, and solicitude of a painful nature, beyond any thing that I have encountered in all my past life."²⁵⁵ His sense of righteous honor manifested itself most poignantly in this very public affair. He solemnly declared that "one man [Louis T. Wigfall], has caused me more grief, vexation and suffering than I have had to bear from all the other crosses, losses, or misfortunes of a life of fifty years," and prayed, "may God take mercy on him for the mischief he has done and correct the error of his ways, and may he have mercy upon me and forgive whatever faults and sins I may have committed in the unpleasant warfare with this rash and misguided young man, which has been forced upon me and upon my family." "I hereby attest," he continued, "in the presence of Heaven, that a

²⁵³ "The Code Duello—A Man of Honor talks of a Famous Duel near Augusta, undated," PSB/USC.

²⁵⁴ "Whitfield Brooks journal entry, November 3-4, 11, 1840," Whitfield Brooks Journal Volume 1 (hereafter WBV1)/Personal files of Dr. James O. Farmer, Emeritus Professor of History at the University of South Carolina-Aiken (hereafter JOF). For the most thorough analysis of the entire Brooks-Wigfall affair of honor, see: Alvy L. King, *Louis T. Wigfall: Southern Fire-eater*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970), 20-47; Eric H. Walther, *The Fire-Eaters*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 160-194.

²⁵⁵ "Whitfield Brooks journal entry, November 30, 1840," WBV1/JOF.

quarrel with that young man was not sought by me, nor was it acceptable to my wishes and purposes. I was willing to do everything consistent with truth and honor to avoid any hostility with him” but “In an unguarded hour...he suffered himself to be seduced into the support of a cause, which finally absorbed all his thoughts and engrossed all his wishes and hopes and in defence [sic] of which, he was prepared to sacrifice all the social relations of life, with the feelings of kindness and sympathy to which they usually give birth.” Brooks then vividly displayed his sense of impending moral judgment when he stated “I leave this record to vindicate myself, when the passing of the hour shall have passed away and when truth may claim her empire, with some hopes of being heard and respected.”²⁵⁶

Despite such fatherly remonstrance and being “hurried into the fight without the necessary preparation,” Preston had doggedly refused to back down, and the battle with Wigfall commenced. As his father later narrated “the first shot was ineffectual...at the second fire both were wounded and both fell. *I saw my son fall.* My feelings at that occurrence, may be more easily conceived than described.”²⁵⁷ Upon examining Preston’s wound it was discovered that “the ball had entered near the spine, passing through the fleshy part of the left hip and touching the bone, and then passing through the left arm, shattering one of the bones” while Wigfall had been “shot through both thighs.” Due to the isolation afforded this field of honor both combatants “were forced to remain on the island during the night, on the very spots, where they fell.”²⁵⁸ A long night wet with rain and feverish sweat only worsened Preston’s prospects as the wounds were surgically

²⁵⁶ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, November 30, 1840,” WBJ1/JOF.

²⁵⁷ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, November 11, 1840 [emphasis added],” WBV1/JOF.

²⁵⁸ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, November 11, 1840,” WBV1/JOF.

attended. He spent the remainder of the month on the mend, fitful bouts with fever bedeviling his recovery at every turn.

Over a year later, Whitfield Brooks again admonished himself and his son for the presumed folly when he recounted, “on this day twelve months past my son Preston and Wigfall had a hostile meeting in the Savannah River...So far the day resembles the one on which they met. My situation and feelings are however widely different. I and my family are now in the enjoyment of health and contentment.” By implication, his son’s heedless passion and recklessness had imperiled not only his personal safety but the security of the entire family. The family’s honor thus secured, however regrettably, Whitfield shifted his thoughts into more pleasant channels and professed, “I thank God that my worldly condition is easy and my worldly prospects as cheering and as prosperous as I have reason to expect or as falls to the lot of most men. I desire in the spirit of humility to return thanks and adoration to God for his many mercies and privileges.”²⁵⁹ The temporal and spiritual sanctity of the family mingled in the personal honor and piety of the father, and projected onto the son. When finally free from death’s icy grip, the physical damage to Preston’s hip paled only in comparison to the psychological damage inflicted by these paternal rebukes.

But Whitfield Brooks struggled to maintain a consistent example to his son and conveyed mixed messages regarding the more violent passions. Temperance and moderation purportedly guided his actions at the “festive board” as well on the “field of honor,” and he frequently decried Edgefield’s prevailing tendency toward violent transgressions. These tirades against excessive violence in the Edgefield District pursued a resolute purpose: to deter Preston from indulging his more indiscrete inclinations. The

²⁵⁹ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, November 11, 1841,” WBV1/JOF.

admonitions Whitfield heaped upon Preston after the Wigfall duel ascribed to a familiar pattern that the elder Brooks often exhibited in referencing such cases occurring in their native Edgefield District. “Within the last four years more deaths by violence and casualty have occurred in this District than in any of the old states in the Union” he bemoaned in early 1843, before recounting a litany of such violent outrages, none more personally mournful than when “Wigfall shot my poor or nephew Thomas Bird in a street rencounter.” “In fact the violence and bloodshed,” he continued, “have almost rivaled the new states of Mississippi or Arkansas.” His own familial loss mirrored countless others felt throughout the Edgefield District, and Brooks lamented the affliction even as he expressed recalcitrance at Wigfall’s attack and the family turmoil it engendered.²⁶⁰

In addressing another local affair of honor later that year, Whitfield Brooks forcefully declared, “it is always a matter of regret for private quarrels to be blazoned before the public in the columns of a newspaper. It is a sort of prostitution of the public press.”²⁶¹ He reiterated the theme that very same summer when he observed another “quarrel and the publications in the papers [that] were the topics of conversation in every coterie. This personal affair has assumed a very vituperative character and has already involved the families of high respectability.” “These personal altercations,” he continued, “should be excluded from the public prints, and not thrust upon the eye in disregard of all propriety and in some instances even of decency.”²⁶² Brooks, then, opposed the public nature of these affairs more than the violence they entailed. Such violence was often demanded of public men, but they and the press should have the sense to keep them from disturbing the public peace. In short, the duel—when properly applied—enabled this

²⁶⁰ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, January 14, 1843,” WBV1/JOF.

²⁶¹ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, July 22, 1843,” WBV1/JOF.

²⁶² “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, August 5, 1843,” WBV1/JOF.

requisite masculine violence to proceed without embroiling the entire community in the physical carnage and emotional chaos. When allowed to spill over into the press, the duel lost its efficacy and its actors forfeited their claims to honor, rendering themselves no better than those who succumbed to their violent passions and shot it out in the public square.

He poignantly revealed this perspective in detailing yet another violent recontre in the district on sale day the following September, when “Joseph Glover came up and calling upon Lovett Gomillion to defend himself drew a pistol and fired” as both parties descended the Edgefield Courthouse steps. “The ball passed through the coat of Gomillion in 2 or 3 places but did not touch his body,” Brooks noted, and “Gomillion also fired his pistol charged with buckshot,” injuring an innocent bystander. “He also discharged another pistol at Glover,” Brooks continued, “which entered Glover’s side” and “killed him instantly. Several other persons were in eminent danger” as well. Brooks then observed, “I have seen no one who condemns Gomillion, as he was forced in self-defense to shoot Glover or be run out of the Village. Glover had sworn to kill him and the attack was deliberate and premeditated.” “This spot of ground has been the theatre of two bloody encounters with firearms in each of which life was taken,” he continued before asking, “is there no method by legislative enactment to punish offenders, who carry about them deadly weapons in such manner as to prevent a pernicious and savage practice, now too much in vogue among riotous and quarrelsome men? It is much to be desired that some remedy be devised to put this practice down.” Though acknowledging—along with the wider Edgefield community—that Gomillion was honor-bound to retaliate, Brooks nevertheless implied that such scenes of public violence constituted an egregious

misapplication of the southern honor code and threatened the moral sanctity of the men and community they enveloped in bloodshed.²⁶³

Brooks's desire to see such scenes eradicated from the Edgefield landscape went unfulfilled, for the spring of 1845 prompted him to grumble: "there is also prevailing in the District a sanguinary spirit of revenge, that has made violence and bloodshed common occurrences in our Village on public occasions." "Whenever a dispute arises and proceeds to violence," he continued, "the use of deadly weapons is constantly resorted to and the spilling of human blood or taking human life is regarded with very little more repugnance or abhorrence than killing a wild beast. In fact there is no portion of the United States, where life is regarded at so cheap a rate and I regret to say that public opinion in this District is greatly at fault in this matter." He then mournfully concluded, "death by violence has become so common, that it has ceased to shock public sentiment, [and] the consequence is, that the law is disregarded and the offender escapes punishment."²⁶⁴

But Whitfield Brooks proved equally fervent in his support of and participation in the rituals of the honor code. He considered them an essential masculine prerogative. One particular personal affair of honor prompted Whitfield Brooks to convene with "Judge [Andrew Pickens] Butler, Col. [Pierce Mason] Butler, [Dr. Maximilian] Laborde, [John or Abner?] Blocker, and James Carroll" in June of 1841 to take "a question under consultation, in which our son Preston was mainly concerned and on which there finally was little or no difference among us. Our decision was to fight."²⁶⁵ This family council and its decision stemmed from an extensive correspondence between Louis Wigfall, Preston Brooks, and their respective supporters that succeeded their near-deadly duel of

²⁶³ "Whitfield Brooks journal entry, September 2, 1844," WBV1/JOF.

²⁶⁴ "Whitfield Brooks journal entry, April 7, 1845," WBV2/JOF.

²⁶⁵ "Whitfield Brooks journal entry, June 27, 1841," WBV1/JOF.

1840. Perhaps Whitfield's lingering resentment of Wigfall for the distress he caused the Brooks family urged his obdurate response. All parties presumably delighted, however, when the affair was honorably adjusted without a second recourse to pistols at dawn. Despite this sober termination of the affair, Whitfield Brooks had nonetheless belied his own propensity toward violent retribution when personal and familial honor faced affront. Religious scruples aside, sometimes the preservation of a life dedicated to "the attainment of moral and intellectual excellence...deserving and meritorious" of divine favor demanded violent defense, and any man worthy of the name would not fail to meet the challenge with a stout resolution grounded in the fervent belief that his cause was indeed morally righteous. With so much and so many dependent on his manly bearing, a man like Whitfield Brooks saw clearly that both honor and religious piety should govern his words and deeds and guide the family whose moral instruction and bodily protection was his solemn vow. Such righteous honor shaped his, his family's, and his society's moral standards and manly identity.²⁶⁶

Whitfield Brooks's righteous honor, then, produced a wavering attitude toward honor and its violence, which resurfaced with yet another Edgefield affair of honor in 1841. He took special notice of two visiting men from Charleston and declared, "their object in coming to this place at this time was to interpose their kind offices, in terminating a private quarrel, which has continued to agitate the society of this place for the last twelve months. I am sure that they did no good, and I fear they may have made matters worse."²⁶⁷ Maybe their shortcomings urged him to more resolutely pursue a similar function in an honorable recontre the following summer. "I left home with Mr.

²⁶⁶ "Whitfield Brooks journal entry, June 27, 1841; January 1, 1841," WBJ1/JOF.

²⁶⁷ "Whitfield Brooks journal entry, July 5, 1841," WBV1/JOF.

Lipscomb for Greenwood in Abbeville to offer our friendly mediation to effect a reconciliation between the two adverse parties at that place,” he later recounted to his journal. “We arrived...and sought an interview first with one party and then the other and found each in a proper temper of mind, to admit of reconciliation.” “After hearing the statement of each party,” he continued, “we drew up the terms of reconciliation, to which in the end by patience and perseverance, we got them to accede, which happily terminated the dispute and adjusted all their difficulties.”²⁶⁸ Thus Brooks succeeded where the Charleston delegates had failed. He maintained the primacy of honor while avoiding the violent scenes he deplored, but did so by invoking the very same honor of the men he had been called upon to serve as second. In his experience, defense of honor did not inevitably result in violence, but could in fact curb such violence in favor of more reasoned and dispassionate consultation. But the balance was recognizably tenuous, and Brooks knew as well as his honor-conscious peers that such a defense sometimes rendered violence unavoidable.

“Heard this morning of several affairs of honor, which are expected to terminate in a fight unless compromised by friends,” Brooks sorrowfully observed in the summer of 1843.²⁶⁹ During that same year he reported another affair of honor in which “Mr. Yancy had cursed Mr. Wilson of Abbeville in the public square in front of Goodman’s hotel,” but made a hopeful note “that Wilson did not resent it.” The affair persisted, however, as in August Brooks noted to his journal, “it is reported that the difficulty between Yancy and Alexander has been compromised.” He then denounced the affair in a familiar tone by recounting, “they raised a storm and waged a bitter war of words to the great

²⁶⁸ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, June 30, 1842,” WBV1/JOF.

²⁶⁹ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, July 24, 1843,” WBV1/JOF.

excitement and annoyance of the public.” But Brooks again wavered in his professed abhorrence at such honor-bound difficulties when he concluded that the affair had given “their friends an opportunity of displaying their diplomatic ingenuity and talents of restoring sweet peace between the belligerents. It is better to waste ink than to spill blood.” He came full circle in declaring, “the repeated recurrence of these personal quarrels and affairs of honor is brutalizing the feelings of our people and inculcating false tastes and principles into our children. They ought and must be discountenanced.”²⁷⁰

This concern for the district’s youth hit home the following year, when his son Preston again found himself in honor-bound difficulty, and Whitfield expressed his frustration over the affair and its handling. “Mr. Cross made a demand on our son Preston to retract certain unspecified but alleged injurious remarks in disparagement of his character through his special and confidential friend Col. Eldred Simkins, who,” Brooks facetiously noted, “seems in the way of my family whenever mischief and strife are threatened. We certainly have great reason to entertain good will and kindness toward this peacemaking gentleman for lending himself to any adventurer, who happens to take offense with a member of my family.”²⁷¹ He then concluded that, “I had arranged to go to my plantation but was induced to postpone my departure in the hope of seeing a settlement of the difficulty between my son Preston and Mr. Cross,” which he presumably did before the affair came to blows.²⁷² Later that month, Brooks continued his harangue against Colonel Simkins and his family when he noted, “I was considerably indisposed a part of the day but the very reality that Col. S[imkins], with his meddling, pragmatical wife, had taken their permanent departure from our neighborhood was a sort

²⁷⁰ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, March 27, 1844; August 12, 1843,” WBV1/JOF.

²⁷¹ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, October 30, 1843,” WBV1/JOF.

²⁷² “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, November 1, 1843,” WBV1/JOF.

of compensation for present suffering.” He then explained, “this gentleman and his lady have suffered no occasion to pass where an opportunity was afforded, of exhibiting unfriendly and even hostile feeling toward me and my family. I cannot account for it for I never designed to give them cause. I am gratified at their departure.” But he asserted that “I follow them with no resentful feeling, at least I wish them no harm, but rather as full proportion of Heaven’s blessings, as they may hereafter merit.”²⁷³ Personal and family honor mingled with personal piety at every turn and enveloped every relationship—with his family, his neighbors, and his maker.

Brooks continued to vacillate in his response to Edgefield’s honor-bound violence. In March of 1844, he evinced the very same passions supposedly suppressed under the strictures of the honor code. “I went over to Augusta, purchased a few articles and returned to Hamburg,” where that night “a fracas commenced between my father’s Servant Phill and a forward son of Hubbards, which resulted in violence to the servant by the son and a good deal of insolence on the part of the father to me who” he deemed “a drunken, cowardly beast and who has no knowledge of the conduct, due to a gentleman. He was so offensive to me that I left his house and took quarters at Hunters’.”²⁷⁴ His dander up, Brooks later that very same month commented on an honorable affair between two “Abbeville Belligerents, Messrs. Cunningham and McGowan,” who, “with a portion of their friends are in our Village, waging a war of words and shedding of ink, which must end in a hostile meeting if the parties have the requisite pluck.” He then asserted, “it is a woman’s privilege to scold and quarrel but men should either fight at once or keep

²⁷³ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, November 15, 1843,” WBV1/JOF.

²⁷⁴ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, March 6, 1844,” WBV1/JOF.

the peace.”²⁷⁵ Fight they did, as Brooks observed several days later, “it is understood that the hostile party from Abbeville have left this place for Augusta under an arrangement to fight on Saturday next with rifles.” His passions apparently cooled, for he expressed his “fear that one of the combatants may be killed for the quarrel is bitter and the weapons deadly.”²⁷⁶ He later “learned that McGowan and Cunningham had met, fought with rifles, and that McCowan was shot in the head, but it was supposed not to be mortal. It is to be hoped that this quarrel will end here and further bloodshed be spared.”²⁷⁷

Thus in the same breath, in a span of only a few days, Brooks exhibited his impassioned excitement when affronted, his willingness to abide violent response in such cases, as well as his regret over the dangerous and sometimes deadly results such violence promoted. Perhaps these trials of personal and communal honor increased his resolve to avoid such violence if at all possible. In the summer of 1845 he was back in a conciliatory role, having “made an effort...to settle an angry dispute between Mr. Spann and the Reverend Mr. McCorkadale, which has already and is likely to involve several families.” He rejoiced that “Spann exhibited a good temper and willingness to compromise the dispute,” but regretted “Mr. McCorkadle was not very lamblike, although he professed a wish to settle the matter. I hope that I may succeed.”²⁷⁸

²⁷⁵ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, March 11, 1844,” WBV1/JOF.

²⁷⁶ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, March 13, 1844,” WBV1/JOF.

²⁷⁷ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, March 16, 1844,” WBV1/JOF.

²⁷⁸ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, June 13, 1845,” WBV2/JOF. Whitfield Brooks belied an ambiguous relationship with the code duello. Others in antebellum southern society were less conflicted, at least in their public pronouncements. Fellow Edgefieldian, Episcopal Reverend Arthur Wigfall, older brother to Louis T. Wigfall, sermonized most directly against dueling in the following: Arthur Wigfall, *A Sermon Upon Duelling*, (Grahamville, SC: A.E. Miller, 1856). In this published sermon Wigfall publicly expressed what many southern men, clerics and non-clerics alike, claimed to privately profess; that dueling was morally suspect if not wholly wrong. But outside the cloth, most of these private professions stopped well short of public denouncements or outright refusals to engage in affairs of honor.

For more on anti-dueling sentiment in the Old South, see especially: Charity R. Carney, *Ministers and Masters: Methodism, Manhood, and Honor in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 12-24; Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible*

In this conciliatory role, Whitfield Brooks most resembled his clerical Edgefield neighbors. All expected much from themselves and their progeny, but their masculine standard proffered a mixed message for their eldest sons to follow. Restraint jockeyed with obduracy in the righteous honor of the fathers, and perhaps inevitably promoted the same in the sons. Always the focus of Whitfield's wary gaze, Preston Brooks felt it more intensely and critically than ever in the wake of his duel with Louis Wigfall. As his collegiate record and early political career indicated, Preston rarely backed away from an affront. But he strove just as ardently to become the "upright, virtuous man" his father so often invoked. The burden of a father's expectations for his first son carried additional weight after the Wigfall duel that Preston would continue to bear—with a limp and a cane—into all future endeavors.

This added weight of expectation and accompanying physical debility converged during the Mexican War, in which Preston Brooks sought desperately to fulfill the former and overcome the latter in a cloak of martial glory. As this war with Mexico loomed imminent, Whitfield Brooks beamed, "my Son Preston is endeavoring to form a company" drawn from "the young men of the District," and had aligned himself to the "great unanimity and enthusiasm prevail[ing] in every quarter" at this "most gratifying evidence of the patriotism and spirit of our people." He then declared, "this is the time to test the mettle of men."²⁷⁹ That spirit and mettle received affirmation when Colonel

Belt, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 211, 246-250; Anne C. Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order, 1800-1860*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 180-185.

For more on anti-dueling sentiment within the broader antebellum culture of reform, see especially: Robert H. Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling: American Reform and the Religious Imagination*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1994), 42-44; Thomas J. Carmody, "The Anti-Dueling Movement," in Robert H. Ellison, ed., *A New History of the Sermon: The Nineteenth Century*, (Boston, MA: Brill, 2010), 341-366.

²⁷⁹ Whitfield Brooks journal entry, May 18, 1846," WBV2/JOF.

Pierce Mason Butler granted his Edgefield cousin Preston Brooks a captain's commission in the "Palmetto Regiment" of South Carolina Volunteers and praised, "I am *much* gratified at the spirit and patriotism evinced by your self and other officers. From Old Edgefield, nothing less was expected."²⁸⁰ Whitfield Brooks heralded his son, who "was elected Captain without opposition," and celebrated his "warm and patriotic appeal to [the men of Edgefield's] gallantry and State pride, to rally under the Palmetto banner, to march to the theatre, where glory and honor invite them."²⁸¹ He even praised the "pretty flag, which Miss Susan Pickens was working for the Volunteer company, called [the] 'Old 96 Boys,' which is commanded by my son Preston," who "upon receiving the colours...responded in a manly speech, in which the thoughts were happily conceived and eloquently delivered." He deemed it "one of the most imposing and interesting ceremonies that I have ever witnessed. It was a beautiful pageant or in the language of a spectator it was a 'perfect picture.'"²⁸²

Whitfield's jubilation added to the chorus of the Edgefield throng that gathered to send these gallant sons off to war: "to me the occasion was deeply exciting as two of my sons were among the Volunteers and taking an active part in making up the company." He then added, "if high spirit, ardent patriotism, and manly bearing are qualities of which a father should be proud in his offspring, I feel that I have reason to be satisfied with my sons." "They carry with them my blessing and my earnest prayers," he continued, "that the God of the Universe may protect and guard them from danger and injury in the perils, which lie before them and after they shall have discharged their duty

²⁸⁰ "Colonel Pierce Mason Butler to Captain Preston Smith Brooks, South Carolina Volunteers (SCV), December 6, 1846," Preston Smith Brooks Papers, 1819-1857 (hereafter PSB)/South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina (hereafter USC).

²⁸¹ "Whitfield Brooks journal entry, June 8, 1846; , June 29, 1846; November 26, 1846," WBV2/JOF.

²⁸² "Whitfield Brooks journal entry, July 10, 1846," WBV2/JOF.

to their Country to restore them safe and unhurt to their homes.”²⁸³ He later opined, “the entire audience seemed inspired with patriotic ardour and the day passed off finely and very much to the gratification of every citizen, who felt an interest in the honor and character of the District.” He singled out Preston by noting that “the Captain of the Volunteers is exceedingly popular with his men at this time” for having contributed to what “was a glorious occasion for Old Edgefield and long to be remembered as a proud day in her annals.”²⁸⁴

When these sons of Edgefield finally embarked for Mexico, Whitfield could scarcely contain his paternal and communal pride as he proclaimed, “the occasion was solemn and interesting to all and especially to those who had children and relatives — The hoary father and the gentle maiden dropped a tear by the side of the agonized mother at parting with those gallant spirits.” He then fervently prayed, “may the God of battles shield them in the hour of peril, cover them with his aegis in the day of trial and bring them, after they shall have faithfully served their Country, back to their homes and their families.”²⁸⁵ At that he and his family “parted with our sons and with heavy hearts and moist eyes directed our course homewards,” concluding a scene that “was impressive and affecting and will long be remembered by the Palmetto regiment and the people of this District.”²⁸⁶

The necessity of community and religious sanction did not escape the military leaders tasked with leading these sons off to battle. Colonel Pierce Mason Butler,

²⁸³ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, November 30, 1846,” WBV2/JOF.

²⁸⁴ Whitfield Brooks journal entry, December 7; December 8, 1846,” WBV2/JOF.

²⁸⁵ Whitfield Brooks journal entry, December 8, 1846,” WBV2/JOF.

²⁸⁶ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, December 31, 1846; December 5, 1846,” WBV2/JOF; Whitfield Brooks journal entry, January 2, 1847,” Whitfield Brooks Journal Volume 3, 1847-1849 (hereafter WBV3)/JOF.

commander of the Palmetto Regiment—relative and neighbor to many in its Company D “The Old 96 Boys,”—understood such righteous honor all too well. He praised South Carolina Methodist Bishop Whitefoord Smith for his parting address to the troops as they assembled in Charleston, bound for Mexico. In a personal letter to Reverend Smith, Colonel Butler commended the address and observed that “the peculiar appropriateness of your discourse today before the Volunteers was regarded as happy to all. The effect was apparent.” The Colonel then requested a printed copy, as “no idle complement,” but rather for the purpose of printing “as many as one thousand copies, in the best form for the use of the Volunteers and a few friends.” He considered the Reverend’s words, “most solemn and impressive” and earnestly believed they would “render service to me and the Regiment and I sincerely hope be the means of disseminating the Holy Christian faith of our land.”²⁸⁷

No wonder an Edgefield son like Preston Brooks placed such importance on achieving glory in Mexico. His Edgefield community expected much of its sons as they paraded off to war, and Preston occupied a prominent place in the procession. This communal pressure only heightened more personal ones. After disappointing his “noble father” during the Wigfall affair, he avidly sought a chance to redeem himself in his father’s eyes. The war with Mexico seemed the perfect chance to fulfill both. But fate did not comply, and Preston’s past transgressions would continue to afflict his future prospects. After landing in Mexico, Preston’s injured hip inflamed. He limped down interminable Mexican roads with a “singular movement in his gait” and a “curious drag

²⁸⁷ “Colonel Pierce Mason Butler to Reverend Whitefoord Smith, December 26, 1846,” Whitefoord Smith papers (hereafter WSP)/Rubenstein Special Collections Library, Duke University (hereafter Duke).

of the left leg.”²⁸⁸ A sweltering tropical heat compounded his agony as piercing leg pangs crippled his every stride. Yet he bullied on, refusing rest and recuperation in a desperate effort to keep apace. His relentless exertions brought on “a severe attack” of “roasting typhoid fever,” rendering him “too unwell to resume the duties of his office *for months to come*.”²⁸⁹ Just weeks after landing with his “Old 96 Boys” in Vera Cruz, Mexico, Captain Brooks found himself laid up behind the lines—far removed from his place at the head of the column.

Granted official sick leave and consigned to recruiting duties back home in Edgefield, Captain Preston Brooks fought enlistment quotas rather than Mexican soldiers. As the war raged without him, he felt the tinge of doubt being cast upon his character by the homefolk; having failed to achieve glory in the field, he met with equally dismal success behind the lines, reporting “the spirit of volunteering in this state...quite destroyed.”²⁹⁰ Shackled to a desk and denied his main chance, Captain Brooks surely brooded over the cause of this late misfortune—the moment when the very honor now so imperiled was defended with near-deadly determination—his duel with Wigfall. This brooding fueled his desperate desire to return to grace in his father’s eyes via military distinction in Mexico. To rejoin the fight appeared his only means to regain “before the

²⁸⁸ “Public statement of James Davis, formerly surgeon in the Palmetto Regiment, South Carolina Volunteers, regarding Capt. Preston S. Brooks, October 7, 1847,” PSB/USC.

²⁸⁹ “Public statement of James Davis, formerly surgeon in the Palmetto Regiment, South Carolina Volunteers, regarding Capt. Preston S. Brooks, October 7, 1847; “James Davis, Surgeon, SCV, Surgeon’s Certificate for Captain Preston S. Brooks, Company D, May 2, 1847,” PSB/USC.

²⁹⁰ “Captain Preston S. Brooks to Adj. General R. Jones, July 2, 1847; Abner P. Blocker to Captain Preston S. Brooks, January 4, 1848,” PSB/USC. In the first letter, Brooks asks to be reassigned to his unit, but should he be denied that request, he asks to be reassigned to the upper districts of South Carolina, implying that his reputation among his Edgefield brethren is withering along with his recruiting prospects. In the second letter, Brooks’s cousin Abner Blocker makes reference to slanderous comments directed at Brooks by Edgefield neighbors, asserting, “I was pained to hear a few days ago...that Bill Jones had slandered you this summer in his communications to some of your company. I mean his brother. All that I have to say about it is that I will see when I visit Edge [field] and will put a stop to any talk about you as I did last summer in one or two instances.”

people of my district the confidence and respect of which I value more than life itself” and to overcome “the extreme regret and mortification...that I feel on account of ~~my~~ ~~absence~~ being denied ~~my part~~ the privilege of playing my part in the great battles” of the war.²⁹¹ He refused to accept any suggestion that a peace treaty was imminent and the contest concluded, and remained determined to realize such “stirring and glorious events...and opportunity for distinctions for which he had volunteered and for which his soul panted.”²⁹² This “first wish of his heart” consumed him to the point that he sought “every chance for a fight” and did “not feel fear.”²⁹³

He hounded his superiors to get back into the fray, and citing “a peculiar obligation to return to my men” he “respectfully ask[ed] to be ordered to [his] regiment.”²⁹⁴ His persistence—and his family’s influence—ultimately prevailed as he received orders to “proceed without delay to join your company now serving with the main army under Major General Scott, in or near the City of Mexico.”²⁹⁵ His “undisguised rapture” at this news, however, was short-lived.²⁹⁶ Captain Preston Smith Brooks landed in Mexico to find the fighting nearly finished and the war all but over. General Winfield Scott’s army, South Carolina’s Palmetto Regiment, and Edgefield’s own “Old 96 Boys” had cloaked themselves in blood and glory by capturing Mexico City just weeks earlier. Preston’s prospects for glory fell with the Mexican capital and the many relatives and neighbors slain in its conquest. Colonel Pierce Mason Butler, Preston’s cousin and commander, fell at the Battle of Churubusco, his horse and legs shot

²⁹¹ “Captain Preston S. Brooks to Dr. Davis, September 25, 1847,” PSB/USC.

²⁹² “Whitfield Brooks to J.A. Black, January 12, 1848,” PSB/USC.

²⁹³ “Whitfield Brooks to J.A. Black, January 12, 1848,” PSB/USC.

²⁹⁴ “Captain Preston S. Brooks to Adjutant General R. Jones, July 2, 1847,” PSB/USC.

²⁹⁵ “Adjutant General R. Jones to Captain Preston S. Brooks, September 23, 1847,” PSB/USC.

²⁹⁶ “Diary of Whitfield Brooks, Vol. III, September 30, 1847,” WBV3/JOE.

out from under him. But Butler had refused to relinquish command for more than a moment, returning to the field “dragging his wounded limbs along as he went from company to company instructing the commander of each.”²⁹⁷ His gallant return was rewarded with a shot to the head, which killed him instantly. Another cousin, Sergeant William Butler Blocker “was cut in two by a cannon ball, while leading [his] company in their intrepid charge upon the [Ciudadela],” while still another cousin “Dick Watson, belonged to the storming party and was wounded in three places.” He ultimately perished of his wounds.²⁹⁸

The most crushing blow, however, came when Preston’s younger brother Whitfield Jr. succumbed to wounds received at the Battle of Churubusco. Their father was inconsolable: he had lost two cousins, one nephew, and one son—his namesake and favorite. “It would be difficult to find a man,” the elder Brooks grieved “the blood of whose family has been poured out more copiously or freely on the soil of Mexico” where “at the Battle of Churubusco, I lost...the noblest son that *father ever raised*.”²⁹⁹ His less noble eldest son took the loss especially hard, in no small part because his father touted the younger Whitfield with such zeal and lamented his demise with such heartache. The boy had been “so young, so buoyant, so full of hope and bright anticipation” that it was difficult to part with him. But Whitfield found solace in that the boy had died “like a chevalier knight in the cause of his country and defense of her standard while his heart was yet pure and untouched by selfishness and unsullied by vice.”³⁰⁰

²⁹⁷ R.G.M. Dunovant, *The Palmetto Regiment, South Carolina Volunteers, 1846-1848. The Battles in the Valley of Mexico, 1847, Part 2*, (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans & Cogswell Co., 1897), 13, quoted in Jack Allen Meyer, *South Carolina in the Mexican War: A History of the Palmetto Regiment of Volunteers, 1846-1917*, (Columbia: The South Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1996), 89.

²⁹⁸ “Whitfield Brooks to James A. Black, December 20, 1847,” PSB/USC.

²⁹⁹ “Whitfield Brooks to James A. Black, December 20, 1847,” PSB/USC.

³⁰⁰ “Whitfield Brooks to James A. Black, December 20, 1847,” PSB/USC.

Such a noble death had eluded Preston despite his reckless “panting” for an opportunity. He felt unduly responsible for not having been there to sacrifice his own life that the hero may have lived, to protect the “noble boy” whom he loved and admired and his father unconditionally adored.³⁰¹ His father’s pity proved of little consolation: “poor fellow... the death of his brother [has] crushed him to the very earth... He now pants for an opportunity of doing something to repair, what he conceives he has lost.”³⁰² The loss—of his brother, his father’s confidence, and his honor—was devastating. Added to these family losses were over thirty of his own Company D, Edgefield’s “Old 96 Boys.” Captain Preston Brooks had missed it. *All* of it.

Mexico cast a long, cold shadow over the remainder of Preston Brooks’ life, and his depression proved as protracted as it was deep. Two years after the war, he still went regularly to his brother’s tomb. “My grief for the dear boy is yet green,” he admitted to his diary, “and I doubt I will ever be able to speak of him with composure.”³⁰³ And death seemed to have followed him home, for it plagued his family at every turn. In April of 1849, the near-loss of his pregnant wife in a carriage accident seemed benign compared to the chain of death that followed on its heels. His young daughter—born while he was in Mexico—took sick and died unexpectedly that year and his father died in his arms just two years later after a prolonged illness. A severely depressed Preston Brooks confessed in 1851 that his bleeding heart felt the “most painful forebodings. It is my fate to lose

³⁰¹ “Abner P. Blocker to Capt. Preston S. Brooks, January 4, 1848,” PSB/USC.

³⁰² “Whitfield Brooks to James A. Black, January 12, 1848; December 20, 1847,” PSB/USC.

³⁰³ “Extracts from the Diary of Preston S. Brooks by his wife Martha, April, 1849,” PSB/USC.

almost all I dearly love...It seems as if I am destined to lose everything associated with the Mexican campaign.”³⁰⁴

This grim pallor tainted even the brightest moments of Preston Brooks’ remaining years. Preston Smith Brooks entered the United States House of Representatives on March 4, 1853, and his first thoughts turned to his deceased father: “how my beloved Father would have rejoined in my victory. God bless his memory.”³⁰⁵ After finally realizing a modicum of the success for which he had yearned and which his father had always expected, this “victory” felt hollow. Even from the grave, paternal expectations—and his consistent disappointment of them—continued to haunt Representative Brooks. His most infamous act—the caning of Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner—presented one final chance at distinction, at making his mark in the heat of battle, and had been long in ferment.

On May 19 and 20, 1856, all of Washington had been captivated by Senator Charles Sumner’s strident castigation of the “Slave Power” in a speech he entitled, “The Crime Against Kansas.” In his remarks, Sumner personally insulted South Carolina Senator Andrew Pickens Butler, Brooks’s second cousin. “The senator from South Carolina,” Sumner noted, “has read many books of chivalry, and believes himself a chivalrous knight...honor[able] and courage[ous]. Of course he has chosen a mistress to whom he has made his vows, and who, though ugly to others, is always lovely to him; though polluted in the sight of the world, is chaste in his sight—I mean the harlot, slavery.” This implication that Butler slept with his slaves was just the beginning,

³⁰⁴ Extracts from the Diary of Preston S. Brooks by his wife Martha, April 1849,” PSB/USC. For a recent study that emphasizes the prominent influence of the Mexican War on Preston Brooks’s life, see: Kenneth A. Deitreich, “‘The Sly Mendacity of Hints’: Preston Brooks and the War with Mexico,” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 113, No. 4, (Oct. 2012): 290-314.

³⁰⁵ “Extracts from the Diary of Preston S. Brooks by his wife Martha, March, 1853,” PSB/USC.

however. A recent stroke victim, Butler occasionally wore a small spittoon around his neck to catch the labial juices he could no longer control. Sumner had no qualms in folding this handicap into his attack. Butler, he said, “overflowed with rage” and, “with incoherent phrases, discharged the loose expectoration of his speech, now upon her [Kansas’s] representative, and then upon her people.” “The senator touches nothing which he does not disfigure,” Sumner concluded. “He cannot open his mouth, but out there flies a blunder.”³⁰⁶

The Slave Power Butler so shamelessly represented and defended, Sumner claimed, was motivated by an uncommon lust, a fiendish desire to “rape a virgin Territory.” Chaste, lily-white Kansas had been overpowered, pressed into the “hateful embrace of slavery,” and now she would bear a “heinous offspring,” the ultimate object of the South’s depraved longing, a dusky new slave state. “Here in our Republic,” Sumner noted, “*force*—aye, sir, *FORCE*—has been openly employed in compelling Kansas to this pollution.”³⁰⁷ In casting the South as the black rapist of white Civilization, Sumner had pressed *the* button; he knew it (“I shall pronounce the most thorough Philippic ever uttered in a legislative body,” he said) and his audience knew it (“that damn fool is going to get himself shot by some other damned fool!” exclaimed Stephen A. Douglas, pacing the back of the chamber).³⁰⁸ It wasn’t merely that Sumner had

³⁰⁶ Charles Sumner, *The Crime Against Kansas*, (Boston: J.P. Jewett, 1856), 9, 86. For the most complete analysis of Sumner’s speech and reactions to it, see especially: Michael D. Pierson, “‘All Southern Society Is Assailed by the Foulest Charges’: Charles Sumner’s ‘The Crime against Kansas’ and the Escalation of Republican Anti-Slavery Rhetoric,” *New England Quarterly*, Vol. 68, No. 4, (December 1995), 531-57; Carol Lasser, “Voyeuristic Abolitionism: Sex, Gender, and the Transformation of Antislavery Rhetoric,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, Volume 28, No. 1, (Spring 2008), 83-114.

³⁰⁷ Sumner, *The Crime Against Kansas*, 5.

³⁰⁸ “Charles Sumner to Theodore Parker, May 17, 1856,” Edward L. Pierce, ed., *Memoirs and Letters of Charles Sumner, Volume 3, 1845-1860*, (London, England: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1893), 438-439; Stephen Douglas as quoted in John Lockwood & Charles Lockwood, *The Siege of Washington*:

insulted Andrew Butler, or run-down South Carolina's Revolutionary heritage, or even implied that Southerners slept with their slaves. He had leveled the ultimate insult; he had rendered even the South's noblest impulses—its claims to benevolent Christian mastery and an enlightened social order—wholly monstrous. That insult demanded a response, and Preston Brooks was primed to oblige.³⁰⁹

For Brooks, the caning distilled a lifetime of frustrations into one potent batch of emotional release. With fellow South Carolina Representative Laurence M. Keitt manning the still and filling the jugs, Brooks uncorked these frustrations and poured them out with “thirty first-rate stripes...every lick...where it was intended,” shattering his gutta-percha cane and causing Sumner to “bellow like a calf.”³¹⁰ The ubiquitous cane—symbol of Preston's youthful intemperance, filial failings, and fall from grace at his brother's death in Mexico—brought this lifelong burden to bear across Sumner's brow. In the process he vindicated himself according to his father's lessons in righteous honor. Steeped in the southern code of honor, the violent outburst smacked of Old Testament moral righteousness, where God's earthly instrument wielded the Divine sword to smite out injustice. It embodied the masculine moral standard of righteous honor upheld by many antebellum southern men. Brooks captured the connection best when he noted, “the

The Untold Story of the Twelve Days that Shook the Union, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), 98.

³⁰⁹ The best single volume on the caning is: Williamjames Hull Hoffer, *The Caning of Charles Sumner: Honor, Idealism, and the Origins of the Civil War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010). See also Rachel Shelden, “Washington Brotherhood: Friendship, Politics, and the Coming of the Civil War,” University of Virginia, dissertation, 2011; Harlan Gradin, “Losing Control: The Caning of Charles Sumner and the Breakdown of Antebellum Political Culture,” University of North Carolina, dissertation, 1991; Michael D. Pierson, *Free Hearts and Free Homes: Gender and American Antislavery Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); James Corbett David, “The Politics of Emasculation: The Caning of Charles Sumner and Elite Ideologies of Manhood in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century United States,” *Gender & History* (August 2007), 324-45; Manisha Sinha, “The Caning of Charles Sumner: Slavery, Race, and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War,” *Journal of the Early Republic* (Summer 2003), 233-62. For a rich set of documents relating to the caning, see: T. Lloyd Benson, ed., *The Caning of Senator Sumner*, (Belmont, CA: Thomson-Wadsworth, 2004).

³¹⁰ “Extracts from the Diary of Preston S. Brooks by his wife Martha, March, 1853,” PSB/USC.

fragments of the stick are begged for as *sacred relicts*. Every southern man is delighted.”³¹¹

These Edgefield men—Whitfield Brooks, his son Preston, his family and friends—personified the shifting ideal of righteous honor that guided antebellum southern men into their embattled futures. Their Edgefield home, with its cultural duality, convinced them that cultivating this ideal promoted the very self-mastery with which those futures would be secured. Violence had long pervaded the Edgefield scene, and frequently forced men to confront its often heinous results. Fathers and sons drew upon their sense of righteous honor to mitigate, as well as consecrate, such violence as they deemed appropriate. The effort added personal and emotional depth to a growing sense of southern regional identity in the late antebellum years. Their personal honor and piety merged with an increasingly strident southern cultural ideal of manhood that placed righteous honor front and center.

Whitfield and Preston Brooks had pursued this ideal relentlessly. But neither would see the end of this pursuit. Whitfield had died in 1851, while Preston fell prey to the croup just months after the caning at just thirty-seven years old. Neither had to bear arms in defense of their sacred ideal against perceived threats from abroad; neither had to endure the mental anguish and bodily trials unleashed by the war they had wrought. But in their death they became martyrs to an ideal untested; symbols of righteous honor undefiled and unassailed. They had personified southern righteous honor: Whitfield as an

³¹¹ “Preston Brooks to J.H. Brooks, Esq., May 23, 1856,” PSB/USC. For a more detailed treatment of Keitt’s role in the caning, see: John Holt Merchant, Jr., “Laurence M. Keitt: South Carolina Fire-Eater,” dissertation, University of Virginia, 1976. For more on Keitt, see: Walther, *The Fire-Eaters*, 160-94 and Stephen Berry, *All That Makes A Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 47-64, 79-80. For more on the role of alcohol in fortifying their spirits before the assault, see Hoffer, *The Caning*, p. 71.

example and inspiration to his son, Preston as symbol for their native South as a whole. And what's more, Preston had successfully defended that righteous honor against assault before a premature death claimed him. Like his brother Whitfield Jr. before him, whose untimely death had preserved him in perfection, Preston's early demise suspended him in a symbolic perfection he had yearned for—and failed to attain—all his life.

Senator Sumner's rhetorical assault had indeed been personal, but it had been so much more. It struck the very core of all white southern men reared in a slave society. It had defamed a whole society, and had disgraced an entire region by allusion, implication, and outright brazenness, saying what abolitionists had persistently alleged and what white southern men themselves had long feared (or ignored): that southern slavery corrupted all it touched by condoning and encouraging the very urges that self-mastery and righteous honor purportedly regulated. In death, even one as inglorious as that which befell Preston Brooks, he accomplished what his caning alone could not; he provided the symbolic sword to complement the shield of southern righteous honor. This ideal would carry countless southern fathers and sons through the period's sectional strife. They would author its evolution, its destruction, and ultimately its resurrection in the years to come, through secession, civil war, and reconstruction. The pistol and the Bible symbolically merged in their thoughts, words, and deeds—rendering the personal and local regionally and nationally significant—constructing the altar upon which the rapidly growing nation would determine its moral destiny.

CHAPTER VI

SECULAR PATRIARCHY, SACRED PATERNALISM: BASIL MANLY JR., SELF-MASTERY, & SOUTHERN SLAVERY

*“They are surrounded by their bondsmen and dependents; and the customary intercourse of society familiarizes their minds to the relation of high and low degree.”*³¹²

In 1821 a collegiate Basil Manly Sr. sounded much the abolitionist as he authored an early intellectual foray on the subject of southern slavery: “Slavery is an evil under which this country has long groaned. Introduced at first from motives of avarice, it had been perpetuated in this country partly as a convenience, partly through necessity, without exciting, till within a few years past, any general apprehension. But now,” he observed, “its prevalence and continual increase are such as compels us to ask, whether there be not danger in its further continuance, while the injuries inflicted on its wretched victims make the long neglected appeal to the feelings of humanity to devise, if possible, a plan for its removal.” He recognized particularly the regional lines beginning to harden on the question, claiming “that if contending parties are not reconciled, the fair fabric of our Union (I shudder to think of it) must totter to its basis.”³¹³

Basil Manly Sr. was born into a slave-owning family, and eventually became a slaveholding patriarch in his own right. He represented a generation of white southern men who had been the first to marry traditional forms of masculine honor to emerging

³¹² John Pendleton Kennedy, *Swallow Barn, or, A Sojourn in the Old Dominion*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986 ed.), 71.

³¹³ “Basil Manly Sr. speech at South Carolina College entitled, ‘On the Emancipation of Slaves,’ April 1821,” Basil Manly Sr papers (hereafter BMSr)/James B. Duke Special Collections Library, Furman University (hereafter Furman); A. James Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 32-36.

modes of Protestant Evangelical morality; the first to bend honor's more primal virility in compliance with religious moral mandates; the first to conceive of religious morality in the context of a ritualized honor code. They were the authors of the antebellum South's fledgling sense of righteous honor. As such, Manly Sr. and his peers had been woefully aware of their cultural contradictions: slaveholders who had proclaimed that all men were created equal in their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; men of honor prone to excessive pride and passion, who denounced violence but often made recourse to it in defense of honor; and men who could see slavery as an evil, though they believed it a necessary one.³¹⁴

Once antislavery sentiments and abolitionist harangues began to issue forth from Northern pulpits, presses, and parlors, such southern self-criticism smacked of treason. Men like Basil Manly Sr. had inculcated their sons with a sense of righteous honor, but as

³¹⁴ Many historians have emphasized the radical antislavery potential of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century Protestant Evangelical message in the South, but have argued that as these groups—Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians most prominent among them—gained social acceptance they compromised their radical views and increasingly reinforced the dominant social hierarchies, including racial slavery. The classic studies in this line include: Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 3-76, Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999 ed.); Anne C. Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order, 1800-1860*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 186-218; Cynthia Lynn Lyerly, *Methodism and the Southern Mind, 1770-1810*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998), 47-72, 119-175; Donald G. Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), 66-80.

Other scholars have tempered this assertion of radical potential, emphasizing instead the colonial and early republic roots of antebellum proslavery Christianity. The clearest assertion of this perspective is: Elizabeth Fox-Genovese & Eugene Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholders' Worldview*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Others to chart the ideological origins of proslavery Christianity include: James O. Farmer, *The Metaphysical Confederacy: James Henley Thornwell and the Synthesis of Southern Values*, (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986) and John Patrick Daly, *When Slavery Was Called Freedom: Evangelicalism, Proslavery, and the Causes of the Civil War*, (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2002).

More recently, Charles F. Irons has complicated that both narratives by focusing on black-white interactions within southern evangelical communities, arguing that continuous interracial interaction within these communities from the late colonial period through the antebellum period, more than outside abolitionist threats, provided the impetus for the southern proslavery Christianity in all of its subtle variations across the antebellum era: Irons, *The Origins of Proslavery Christianity: White and Black Virginians in Colonial and Antebellum Virginia*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008).

sectional tensions heightened this carefully balanced moral ethic—already strained—threatened to break under the pressure. All northern critiques of the slave South became part of the abolitionist menace in the southern mind, an affront to southern honor and a potential perversion of southern morality. This menace was, for white southern men, unbecoming, threatening, and insulting, and it warranted a response, one that should and would be in accordance with their righteous honor.³¹⁵

The Reverend Manly Sr.'s son, Basil Manly Jr., personified this tumultuous shift away from self-criticism toward self-justification and self-defense. Whereas his father's generation had been allowed to look inward in their attempts to reconcile contradictions and correct moral wrongs, Basil Manly Jr.'s generation considered such self-doubt perilous. The persistent evidence of personal failings and social deficiencies only heightened their anxiety as they desperately attempted to answer the Northern threat. This generational ethical gap is the particular concern of this chapter and one of paramount importance in understanding how Basil Manly Jr. and his generation ultimately decided that withdrawal from the American Union was their only chance of successfully reconciling their ideals and their institutions. But even as the sons began to mistrust their fathers' tendency to express these doubts, they nonetheless hungered for paternal advice and craved paternal models that might provide some, any, means of resolving their personal anxiety over slavery's internal contradictions.³¹⁶

³¹⁵ For an analysis of Basil Manly's Sr.'s evolving perspectives on southern slavery, see: Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 116-124, 212-227. The most comprehensive analysis of the variety and evolution of southern perspectives on slavery is: Lacy K. Ford, *Deliver Us From Evil: The Slavery Question in the Old South*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009)

³¹⁶ Peter S. Carmichael, *The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 19-58; Eugene D. Genovese, *The Slaveholders' Dilemma: Freedom and Progress in Southern Conservative Thought, 1820-1860*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003 ed.); Beth Barton Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up: Progress and the Pulpit in Nineteenth-Century Virginia*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000). All of these works purport

For Manly Sr. slavery seemed “utterly repugnant to the spirit of our republican institutions.” Like Thomas Jefferson, he took some solace in the notion that slavery had been thrust upon the South, particularly by the British, leaving his society with a moral conundrum. Slavery, Manly Sr. believed, was obviously bad for slaves. But, again like Jefferson, he also saw its degrading potential for white society. “Who can say,” he continued, “that some such and powerful combination will not trample on the liberties and privileges of the common people, whom many are even now learning to consider little superior to their slaves.”³¹⁷

Added to this anxiety was the readily observable fact, as young Manly Sr. saw it, that, “the slave population, increasing so much faster than that of the white, will almost certainly be dangerous to the lives and liberties of the people of this country.” He admitted that, “in their present uninformed state, little danger need be apprehended from an insurrection of the slaves. But they are becoming gradually more and more informed,” especially as, “their daily intercourse with their masters and observations of manners and customs, their necessary employments, their privileges, nay their very opinions will become the means of improvement to them.” Armed with the very revolutionary rhetoric held sacred in American hearts, Manly Sr. had little trouble imagining their “ardor and enthusiasm naturally arising out of such considerations,” and supposing them “able to

some aspect of the perspective emphasized here, which engages southerners’ ambiguous, ambivalent, and anxiety-ridden relationship to history, slavery, and “progress.”

³¹⁷ “Basil Manly Sr. speech at South Carolina College entitled, ‘On the Emancipation of Slaves,’ April 1821,” BMSr/Furman; Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 32-36. For more on the proscribed antislavery sentiments of Thomas Jefferson as emphasized here, see: John Chester Miller, *The Wolf by the Ears: Thomas Jefferson and Slavery*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991).

number a population equal to that of the white,” they would be thus “prepared for any act of violence to which a long oppression can prompt a revengeful mind.”³¹⁸

Overburdened by this fear of racial vengeance that drew forth the grisly visage of St. Domingo in his mind, Manly Sr. judged that, “if the emancipation and transportation of slaves be necessary to the permanent safety and interest of our country, we should be justifiable in sending them,” and “emancipation can at least be defended on this principle.”³¹⁹

But alongside this animating fear was a nettlesome sense of moral responsibility, wherein he decreed, “justice demands it at our hands for that ill-fated people, and their injuries and long servitude call upon us loudly...not only to restore to them the enjoyment of their ancient rights and privileges, but along with these, to endeavour according to our ability to bestow on them the blessings of civil and religious society.” Manly Sr. surmised that, “the fault of our ancestors, or of the universe, cannot disannul the law of Heaven which brings all men into this world equally free,” and fervently believed that “however the laws of inheritance sanctioned by the Constitution...and the improbability of effecting their emancipation at once, may palliate the charge of tyranny and injustice to which we are exposed, they can never wholly vindicate us from it.” “Nor,” he continued, “can they for a moment free us from the obligation of attempting to serve the cause of freedom in every practicable method.”³²⁰

³¹⁸ “Basil Manly Sr. speech at South Carolina College entitled, ‘On the Emancipation of Slaves,’ April 1821,” BMSr/Furman.

³¹⁹ “Basil Manly Sr. speech at South Carolina College entitled, ‘On the Emancipation of Slaves,’ April 1821,” BMSr/Furman; Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 32-36.

³²⁰ “Basil Manly Sr. speech at South Carolina College entitled, ‘On the Emancipation of Slaves,’ April 1821,” BMSr/Furman; Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 32-36. For more on the emergence of paternalism as a defense of southern slavery, see: Ford, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 141-203.

But this question of “what is a practicable method—one which promises to serve the double purpose of our safety and their freedom,” remained unanswered in his mind. “To invest them with the privileges of freedom in promiscuous distribution amongst us,” he argued, “or to assign them a territory even in the remotest of our western wilds, would be fatal either to them or ourselves. So that the question of emancipation at length resolves itself into that of colonization at a distance from us.”³²¹ “I cannot avoid indulging the pleasing anticipation,” he concluded, “that in the progress of civilization, of liberty and religion, which are all engaged to support this cause, the time may yet arrive when the government may with propriety declare herself the friend of universal emancipation.”³²²

Reverend Manly Sr. was not alone among his friends and Edgefield associates in his youthful attack upon the evil tendencies of the southern slave system. Manly Sr.’s professional associate, sometime Edgefield neighbor, and personal friend, Baptist minister Iveson L. Brookes once declared, “when at Chapel Hill I was a sort of abolitionist.”³²³ Their neighbor Whitfield Brooks revealed a nascent uncertainty concerning the morality of slavery when he described its inherent travails. “It is a difficult task to perform our duties towards [the slaves] of our household with reference to their proper and necessary government and to our sense of humanity,” he noted, and “without the enforcement of perfect subordination the slave becomes unruly and

³²¹ “Basil Manly Sr. speech at South Carolina College entitled, ‘On the Emancipation of Slaves,’ April 1821,” BMSr/Furman; Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 32-36.

³²² “Basil Manly Sr. speech at South Carolina College entitled, ‘On the Emancipation of Slaves,’ April 1821,” BMSr/Furman; Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 32-36. For more on southern debates over colonization and emancipation, see: Ford, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 299-328, 361-389..

³²³ “Iveson L. Brookes to Bro. Creath, June 13, 1859,” Iveson Lewis Brookes papers(hereafter ILB)/South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina(hereafter USC).

troublesome and the rigid enforcement of discipline is painful and distasteful to the owner so that upon the whole it is often a conflict between duty and feeling.”³²⁴

All three men felt compelled to lay these reservations aside as a northern abolitionist critique of southern slavery emerged in the 1820s and 1830s. Each man developed staunch proslavery positions that applied his sense of righteous honor to the moral dilemma presented by southern slavery. And each sought to instill this perspective in the rising generation. But the result for both fathers and sons never approached the moral certainty they so often projected and so earnestly sought. Their sense of moral righteousness and grievance, affirmed by their patriarchal prerogatives, failed to fully silence the inherent moral tensions of their ideal, which informed their identities as southern men embroiled in the sectional struggle for the future of slavery and the nation.³²⁵

That struggle began not with abstract political principles but with deeply personal moral philosophies. As Whitfield Brooks privately expressed to his journal in the fall of 1840: “The happiness or misery of man depends more on his physical organization and temper of mind, than upon the accidental circumstances of State or conditions in which he is placed.” “Self possession and acquiescence amidst and to the changes and conditions of life, which lie beyond our power of prevention or control,” he continued, “is the best possible philosophy for the contentment or happiness of the subject.”³²⁶ A man must content himself with his station in life and strive to maximize his potential within that sphere of influence. Only then would he find the peace and tranquility

³²⁴ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, June 16, 1844,” Whitfield Brooks Journal, Volume 1(hereafter WBV1)/ Used with permission from the personal files of Dr. James O. Farmer, University of South Carolina-Aiken (hereafter JOF).

³²⁵ For more on slavery and secession, see: Ford, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 447-480, 505-534.

³²⁶ Whitfield Brooks journal entry, October 30, 1842,” WBV1/JOF.

attending success and happiness. It is ironic, even telling, that Brooks's advice to himself to surrender to circumstance undoubtedly echoed his advice to his slaves. Both he and they, so the argument went, had had little to say in defining their respective roles, but such was the lot ordained for them, and it was the duty of man—master and servant alike—to fulfill his role without question. “The world is thus” has ever been a powerful argument for those who effectively order the world in their collective, daily decisions, and Brooks personified the type in the antebellum South.

The only thing that remained for white Southern men, then, was to accept the station to which they'd risen and to dutifully exercise its responsibilities (and, conveniently, its prerogatives.) The hardest thing to master, of course, was the household of the self. Only certain men were capable of achieving the level of self-awareness and self-control that fully justified, in their own minds, their own social control. Whitfield Brooks made the connection explicit when he noted, “consistency is the rarest of all virtues” and life's temptations tended to “gradually undermine and sap the moral principle.” In observing men in his native Edgefield, he saw that time and again a man would “become the antipode of himself in his political opinions, principles and conduct and yet can look at the change without a blush or a feeling of shame.” This, in his view, would not do. For to “preserve the Soul's whiteness is one of the first dictates of Sound wisdom, if we wish a peaceful conscience.”³²⁷

Believing that divine wisdom emanated from these philosophies, men such as Whitfield Brooks, Iveson Brooks, and Basil Manly Sr. had searched all their lives for confirmation of their own moral righteousness. In ministering to his flocks, Reverend Manly Sr. had often encountered what he perceived as signs of the Lord's work among

³²⁷ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, August 5, 1844,” WBV1/JOF.

the black members of his church. Early in his career, he took special notice of two such cases. The first involved a slave preacher named Sambo Deas, in whose story Manly Sr. declared himself, “very much impressed in hearing.” “He was licensed in writing by Dr. [Richard] Furman to preach to coloured persons,” Manly Sr. remembered, “and while in the exercise of this duty he was seized by a patrol, and very severely whipped, and his license taken from him. He said before the church afterward, that the Lord so strengthened him, he severely felt the lashes as they laid open his flesh, that he could bear ten times as much for Christ.” After praising several other sacrificial acts on the part of this Sambo Deas, Reverend Manly happily reported that, “the old man died in the enjoyment of that peace,” which comes from a life well-lived according to divine teachings.³²⁸

Just months later Manly Sr. recorded another case involving a slave member of his church, named Langford, who had served the church for years, according to Manly Sr., as sexton. “This day came to see me in some distress of mind one of the oldest coloured members of our church,” Manly recounted before detailing Langford’s personal history as it was known to him. Native to Africa, he had been orphaned at an early age, and sold into slavery at just 8 or 10 years old. “On the passage,” Manly narrated, “a dreadful storm arose which prevented any from standing on deck. While the slaves were in the hold the Captain and sailors went into the cabin, and [Langford] heard them saying, ‘Oh! Lord, Oh! Lord!’ He knew not then the language, or what it meant, yet he remembered the words.” Manly Sr. then moved the narrative several years forward, when a young Langford was confronted by an elderly black member of the Baptist Church about his relationship to Christ Jesus. “‘Do you know Jesus Christ?’, this woman had

³²⁸ “Basil Manly Sr. church journal entry, January 9, 1828,” BMSr/Furman.

asked, to which he replied in the negative, though “tempted to say ‘yes,’ as he thought he might by that means get rid of the old woman’s exhortation. The old woman then spoke further to him, and from that moment conviction fastened on his mind. He felt his sin, and his lost estate.” Manly Sr. gleaned personal and religious meaning from the old man’s tale by recounting: “now it came to his mind that this very person who was teaching him his need, was the one that the Captain and Sailors had called Lord...Not long after Jesus revealed himself to him. He joined the church.” Manly then expressed with awe his belief that, “the old man has been a great blessing to his colour...[and] It is truly affecting to hear the old man tell all his travail, and all the goodness of God to him, and see him weep for his want of love,” before concluding, “he seems to bless God for bringing him to this country, slave as he has been; and I believe he has ever maintained a truly pious course.”³²⁹

In both cases, Manly Sr. interpreted the slaves’ stories through the prism of his own righteous honor. Their benighted state as slaves, and the horrific trials inflicted upon them thereof, were but God’s way of bringing them into the light of Christ. In an odd way, the very existence of the slave system proved the salvation of these slaves’ souls. Without bondage, so Manly Sr. surmised, these slaves would have remained lost in the spiritual darkness of a heathen land. And what’s more, as he garnered from the personal history of Langford, these slaves themselves counted their enslavement and subsequent introduction to Christ among God’s blessings.

The Reverend Manly Sr. shared such interpretations with many of his Edgefield associates and southern brethren. Fellow Baptist itinerant Reverend William P. Hill

³²⁹ “Basil Manly Sr. church journal entry, March 21, 1828,” BMSr/Furman; Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 71-72.

frequently took note of slave religious exercises in traversing the Edgefield District. Many of these observations reflected on the relationship between patriarchal control of slaves and the perceived parallel duty to instruct them in the sacred mysteries. In one note on a local planter named “Brother L. Ayer,” Hill joyously recorded that “his servants had a house in which they met 3 nights in each week for worship. [Three] of his men read the Scriptures and exhort and pray with their fellow servants. I agreed to preach for them.” He then recounted that, “after tea, a servant (the leader) met me at the door with a candle and conducted me to their house of worship, where I found all the servants collected, singing. I preached during the service [and] they were remarkably attentive.” Reverend Hill then remembered with satisfaction that, “after leaving the pulpit several came to me and expressed their thankfulness for the service rendered,” and declared, “on this plantation, the servants are contented, well fed, and moderately worked, which is the general character of the neighborhood.”³³⁰

Whitfield Brooks recorded a similarly self-righteous account in his own journal in 1844. “Mrs. B[rooks] directed all our little negroes to be dressed this morning and to attend at Sunday school. It was no unpleasant sight to a benevolent mind,” he reflected, “to see them with clean dresses and newly combed heads marching towards the Church, to meet the Pastor and his assistants, their faces beaming with smiles and gratification.” This paternalistic turn then merged with his patriarchal position as he remembered, “this is the anniversary of our marriage. Twenty six years ago Mrs. B. and I united our destinies and I truly thank God...I believe that neither Mrs. B or myself are tired of our bonds but on the contrary that every day that is added to our married state only makes us

³³⁰ “William P. Hill diary entry, November 24, 1846,” William P. Hill Diary, 1846-1849 (hereafter WPH)/Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina (hereafter UNC).

dearer and more necessary to each other.” “We and our household are in health,” Brooks reported, “and enjoying a reasonable share of success and prosperity in whatever appertains to this life. I humbly pray unto God,” he concluded, “that he would keep us in such a subdued and thankful frame of mind, so that we may never be unmindful or insensible to his great blessings and of our utter and total dependence upon his munificent hand.”³³¹

He returned to the theme two years later when he reflected upon the day’s survey of his plantation and crops. Accompanied by his son and several of his most trusted slaves, Brooks had observed with glee the progress and overall success of his domain. “I cannot close my remarks, without noting the fact, that this excursion was one of the most instructive and agreeable in which I have participated for many a day. The weather was clear and mild and the company intelligent and entertaining,” he reflected with pleasure before concluding, “they ought to occur more frequently as a means of social improvement and as a stimulus to our agents and negroes, who are made to take pride in the exhibition of a good crop and well ordered plantation.”³³² His obvious jubilation at his financial prospects seemingly paled only in comparison to the personal satisfaction he gained as a result of the proper mode by which it had been accomplished. He sat atop a well-ordered household, peopled by industrious servants and contented dependents who all looked up to him with pride in their hearts. This, so he thought, was the embodiment of domestic peace and racial harmony, such as only could come from a well-managed slave system.

³³¹ “Whitfield Brooks journal entry, June 16, 1844,” WBV1/JOF.

³³² “WB journal entry, June 26, 1846,” Whitfield Brooks Journal, Volume 2(hereafter WBV2)/JOF.

From this highest of highs, Whitfield Brooks a year later descended to the lowest of lows. He had recently learned that his son Whitfield Jr. had made the ultimate sacrifice in the war with Mexico and the loss remained a fresh wound upon his heart for years to follow. Even in the midst of this sorrow, however, Whitfield Brooks found reason for hope in the ultimate wisdom of the Divine will. In a final letter from a convalescent Whitfield Jr., received after the boy's ultimate demise from his wounds, the father read encouraging words from his favorite son about his most faithful slave. "[Whitfield Jr.] also makes a favorable report...of my old Servant Joseph, whom I have owned for thirty years," he noted in his journal. The mourning father read on with bittersweet avidity to find that, "he states that he has been faithful and attentive and contented to remain with his young Master Whitfield with great cheerfulness because he thought that I would be better satisfied, than for him to return." Whitfield Sr. then declared of Joseph, "he has been a faithful servant to me and carries out his fidelity to my children, which is very gratifying to my feelings and for which he shall receive a due reward."³³³ Such loyalty, he believed, could not be bought or compelled, but had to be earned through intimate relation and cultivated through genuine exchange of feeling. Joseph's faithfulness and fidelity proved to Whitfield Sr., at his darkest hour, an enormous consolation.

In such soothing examples of moral sanctity (and sanctimoniousness), these Edgefield fathers had taken their solace. But they had also been constantly confronted with the ominous reality that threatened to tear it all apart. In the winter of 1833, Basil Manly Sr., for instance, finally closed the book on a case that had troubled him for several years. He made special note that he had recently purchased a woman named Lydia Frierson from a Mr. Asa Russ, "one of the heirs of Mr. Frierson," the woman's

³³³ WB journal entry, April 25, 1847," Whitfield Brooks Journal, Volume 3(hereafter WBV3)/JOF.

previous owner. Reverend Manly Sr. noted with pleasure that the woman now served as “our worthy and respected old nurse.” Earlier in the summer of 1829, he had first mentioned this woman in his church journal, “who in the honesty of her heart confesses to me that her master *compels* her to live in constant adultery with him.” He observed that she was a member of the church, and seemed “broken hearted on account of [her master’s transgressions against her person]. Although this was a secret known only to God and herself ... she has abstained from communion for years on account of it.” Manly Sr. then naively recounted that, “I advised her to remonstrate kindly with her master, and firmly and decidedly to tell him that she could not consent to sin if he would not hear her mild remonstrance.” Perhaps expectedly, Manly later reported that she had “been to me today to say that she has used every means in her power, and that he threatens her most dreadfully if she resisted him. I assured her that it is better for her to die, than to sin, [and] that she surely can prevent the evil if she be resolute and firm,” before chiding that “God will not hold her guiltless while any possible means of preventing it, even to the risk of life itself, remains untried.”³³⁴

Obviously Manly Sr. was obtuse enough not to see that he was blaming a woman for her own repeated rape; nor did such events quite coalesce in his mind to an indictment of the whole system. But such examples gradually did eat at the corners of his conscience. Nearly two full decades later, the pastor declared, “my mind is made up on several points, with relation to the...nearly 40 negroes of all sorts, some of which I must keep, whom I cannot separate, and I would not know what to do with the money if I were to sell them.” He resolved to settle them on a farm somewhere in the Alabama

³³⁴ “Basil Manly Sr. church journal entry, June 22, 1829,” BMSr/Furman; Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 72-74.

countryside, as he saw “no alternative...but to keep them, dispose of them safely to myself, beneficently to them, and make the best of a necessity that I can no longer wade or defer.” In explanation of this decision, he expressed his “wish to settle them in a region where I might go myself, when it is necessary for me to retire from public life, i.e. such a region as would be desirable for health and religious institutions.” He further delineated that, “I do not wish to place them in a region...of interminable negro quarters, without the neighborhood of churches, the practicability of religious instructions, and the meliorating influences, except the lash of the overseer.” “I will not place people in such a situation if I can help it,” he continued. “they have no defense but the protection of the master; and this would look like delivering over the sheep to the wolves for safe keeping... Negroes are always better off remote from a village,” and “it would not be an insufferable difficulty, provided the place were in itself desirable, and surrounded with adequate religious advantages for *that class of people*.”³³⁵

Through such fantasies, men like Manly Sr. sought to somehow quarantine the slave system from itself, and they from it. The next generation could not afford to play these mental games. The issue was too pressing, too personal, too pivotal for southern sons like Basil Manly Jr. to postpone any longer. They knew and felt that slavery’s ultimate fate was in their hands and, that the crucial moment was upon them. For every good reason, the North and the slaves themselves saw past temporizing for precisely what it was, and they now sought to precipitate a crisis that was at once as psychological as it was material. By 1844 Basil Manly Jr. was observing the growing abolitionist threat at the heart of national discussions over slavery’s future as a student at the Newton Theological Institute in Massachusetts. “I see that the Christian Reflector, published in

³³⁵ “Basil Manly Sr. to J.L.M. Curry, December 2, 1852,” BMSr/Furman.

Boston, announced a prize of 25 dollars for the best essay on, ‘The Motives Which Should Induce Christians at the South to Make Efforts for the Abolition of Slavery,’ he noted before ruminating, “I suppose [the author] intends to circulate it far and wide among us poor benighted Southerners, and thereby rouse us to action.” Manly Jr. then declared ambivalently, “I wish heartily he could. I wish light will spread among us to rouse us to our duty and to cause us, not perhaps to liberate [the slaves] but to send them the word of God and to give them better instruction in the principles of the doctrines of Christ. I should like to say something about this. I may some of these days.”³³⁶

That day finally came in Richmond, Virginia ten years later when Manly Jr., by then a leading Baptist minister in that bustling city, publicly acknowledged how closely his subject of “The South in the Nation” would “come home to every man’s life and daily thoughts,” before declaring, “it cannot be disguised either from ourselves or others that the citizens of the Southern states of this Confederacy stand, in a moral position, not only peculiar but isolated and alone.” He then explained what must have been glaringly apparent to his audience after thirty years of political turmoil and the more recent outbreak of violence in Kansas. “Amid much that we have in common with other nations and with other parts of our own nation,” Manly Jr. explained, “there are some facts in our case, so prominent in their distinctiveness and so influential in their bearing as to mark us

³³⁶ “Basil Manly Jr. diary entry, October 4, 1844,” Basil Manly Jr. papers (hereafter BMJr)/Furman. For more on this growing southern fear, and northern hope, that southern slavery, if contained, would kill itself with its own inherent maladies, see especially: James Oakes, *Freedom National: The Destruction of Slavery in the United States, 1861-1865*, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2013), 1-83 and especially *The Scorpion’s Sting: Antislavery and the Coming of the Civil War*, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014).

for a peculiar destiny. Whatever that destiny may be, it is the part of manliness not to shrink from it.”³³⁷

In playing that “part of manliness,” Basil Manly Jr. and his generation perceived a growing crisis, one that they feared would rock them and their society to its core. Reared in a tradition that exalted past achievements and human progress with equal fervor, Basil Manly Jr. felt the burden of that tradition bearing down upon him with each and every salvo fired across the sectional divide. In giving voice to this burden he tried desperately to salve his troubled soul by declaring, “we are apt to feel too little our connection with the past, and with one another, and to look on ourselves as solitary individuals living in an isolated present,” but, he continued, “the connections between us and our fellow men are almost infinitely numerous. No man liveth to himself. Each influences and is influenced by all the remainder...Nor does this influence die with the death of individuals.” “We stand upon the building of former ages,” he proclaimed, and “they have not lived in vain,” for “other generations shall come after us whose feet shall rest upon that which our hands have built.”³³⁸

Here then is a recognition of an eternal truth: the past is created *in the present* with a thousand choices made and *unmade*. Indeed, the trouble for Basil Manly Jr. was that his father’s generation had been grossly indecisive. They had lamented and wrung their hands and declared slavery “an evil they knew not well how to deal with.” How then was Manly Jr. to convince himself that his traditions, handed down by his father, were sound; that southern slavery as an institution *was* just, though the Southern founders had

³³⁷ “Basil Manly Jr. lecture before the Richmond Athenaeum, ‘The South in the Nation,’ 1854,” BMJr/Furman.

³³⁸ “Basil Manly Jr. lecture before the Richmond Athenaeum, ‘The South in the Nation,’ 1854,” BMJr/Furman.

said that it wasn't; that he (and other) Christian masters *were* divinely ordained to shore up what was once understood to be an evil, not by debating its merits (as their fathers' had done) but by defending them.

"We are not what or where our Fathers were. We have the experience of the ages that are passed," Manly Jr. tried to explain in Richmond in 1854, as much to himself as to his assembled audience. "We stand on the shoulders of the giants that were on the earth, and have an advantage over them, even though intellectually their inferiors." But with all those advantages, Manly Jr.'s generation was, except for the more desperate sectional situation, little different from his father's—flawed, struggling, self-justifying, half-denying, half-acknowledging, always-temporizing, always delaying, always shrugging and throwing up their hands at all that has been "thrust" upon them by God and circumstance, never allowing all that *was* in their power—all because tomorrow was another day, with bills to pay and children to send to school. Thus, as helplessly as his father before him, did Manly Jr. lay the entire dilemma at the feet of the Almighty: "it is a cheering thought if we have faith to believe that there is a law of progress in human nature according to which God is bringing to pass all things and it is a glorious thing to look at history thus in the light of its relations to God's principles."³³⁹

Basil Manly Jr. earnestly wanted to see himself and his native region in a spiritual light. He yearned for his righteous honor to enable him to render southern slavery, if properly administered by Christian men, not as a blight upon human history but as the extension of those very principles inherited from "the giants that were on the earth." But

³³⁹ Genovese, *The Slaveholders' Dilemma*. The psychological interpretation ventured here applies a generational perspective to the ideological and identity crisis confronting white southern men during the sectional controversy over slavery. A similar generation perspective applied to northern political leaders of the era in: George B. Forgie, *Patricide in the House Divided: A Psychological Interpretation of Lincoln and His Age*, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1979).

he could not deny that the South was increasingly alone on the planet. “Leaving untouched now all influences which grow out of the general spirit of the age, and all which affect us in common with other portions of our country,” he continued, “I propose to consider *the Peculiar Agencies operating on Southern Character*,” the foremost among them emanating from “our social constitution...an institution of slavery” by which “we are separated from almost all the civilized world.” Basil Manly Jr. could never quite admit that maybe the South found itself alone because it was actually on the wrong side of history. He sought his solace, the way his father did in the notion that “the world is thus,” never admitting, “thus have I made the world.” And so his generation lost their grasp on rational logic. Unable to reconcile the ideological and cultural contradictions embedded in their “way of life,” they lashed out at any who pointed out the contradictions.³⁴⁰

But this does not mean that privately they ceased to be able to see them. Basil Manly Jr. was deeply ambivalent about the ways in which living in a slave society had stamped his own peculiar character. In 1844, when a school friend was called out in front of his peers for failing to return a library book, Manly Jr. had concluded, “I am happy that it was not I who was thus roughly treated, for I should have been apt to make some harsh reply, which I should regret having done...*but such things will not do.*”³⁴¹ Manly Jr. had then explained this righteous indignation over the affair, which “taken in connection with

³⁴⁰ For more on the social and political manifestations of this besieged mentality and its increasingly aggressive defensive posture, see especially: Lacy K. Ford, *Origins of Southern Radicalism: The South Carolina Upcountry, 1800-1860*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1988), 99-144; Lorri Glover, *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 165-179; Kenneth S. Greenberg, *Masters and Statesmen: The Political Culture of American Slavery*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988 ed.), 85-103, 107-146; Manisha Sinha, *The Counterrevolution of Slavery: Politics and Ideology in Antebellum South Carolina*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

³⁴¹ “Basil Manly Jr. diary entry, November 23, 1844 [emphasis added],” BMJr/Furman.

the *tone and manner*, the *public time and place* at which it was uttered, seems to me an outrage on Newhall's feelings. Because one of us, for the convenience of the rest undertakes a duty of this kind, he is not thereby *degraded to the level of a slave*, and liable to be publicly taunted and called to account in that way."³⁴²

Later that year, Manly Jr. reflected on a trip he had taken with his father the previous spring, during which he remembered, "we had some conversation about Grandfather Manly. He spoke of his being, particularly in his later years, a man of such vehemence when he was roused that no one dared meddle with him or could pretend to do anything with him." He recounted, "father said that *he* perceived the same violent terrible spirit encroaching on himself more and more in his later years, [that] when he was younger all this was more restrained but now he could hardly contain himself when anything exciting entered his mind." Basil Jr. then admitted, "I perceive, I think, the symptoms of the same hereditary malady in myself," and confessed that his hot "temper if indulged may lead to an utter ruin of my usefulness and not impossibly to derangement." He reflected that "while at home, I was compelled to restrain myself and was rather remarkable for staidness and collectedness and quietness in my way of doing things. Yet internally and to myself there were symptoms of the same violence when roused." "This same tendency of mind to run into a terrible and unreasonable pitch of excitement when roused," he admitted, "may be indicated by the thoughts I have recorded in many places...of this journal. If this growing habit be not repressed it will take full possession of me and I shall become 'such a son of Belial that a man cannot

³⁴² "Basil Manly Jr. diary entry, November 23, 1844 [emphasis added]," BMJr/Furman. For more on this relationship between southern honor and slavery, see: Kenneth S. Greenberg, *Honor & Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, The Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, Gambling in the Old South*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 24-50.

“speak unto me.” Manly Jr. did not and could not go so far as to blame his upbringing in a slave society for encouraging his hot-headedness. Indeed, he managed to draw the opposite conclusion: “I think that having slaves under me, or at least obedient to my orders tended in great measure to reduce this instability, for I find it has risen much since I have been [at the North].” He then explained, “Their incapability of resistance and utter subjection made it constantly necessary for me to restrain myself. Here no such necessity for watching and restraint has been impressed on me.”³⁴³

For Manly Jr. then mastery and self-mastery were deeply related. He did not question the right of slaveholding but was preoccupied by questions of how to do it right. “The right of slavery I hold to be undeniable. Whatever noisy demagogues and turbulent agitators may [say] about human rights, freedom, and equality,” he once declared, “it cannot be denied that the Bible sanctions slavery under a form as to all important circumstances similar to America’s, and enjoined upon the slave the duty of obedience.”³⁴⁴ But the institution enjoined whites also. “By the Golden Rule we are bound to do unto others as we would that others should do unto us. Applying this rule to the case of the slave are we not found to teach them the way to God, the manner in which a sinner may be justified and his soul saved? By the general duty of benevolence we

³⁴³ “Basil Manly Jr. diary entry, December 22, 1844,” BMJr/Furman. For more on the tortured logic of southern paternalism, especially in relation to proslavery Christianity, as it evolved during the antebellum era see especially: Carmichael, *The Last Generation*, 59-88; Charity R. Carney, *Ministers and Masters: Methodism, Manhood, and Honor in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 114-135; Ricahrd J. Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America*, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 153-159, 255-258, 269-272, 285-292; Eugene Genovese & Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Fatal Self-Deception: Slaveholding Paternalism in the Old South*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011) and Genovese & Fox-Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class*; Greenberg, *Masters and Statesmen*, 85-103; John R. McKivigan & Mitchell Snay, eds., *Religion and the Antebellum Debate Over Slavery*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1998); Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

³⁴⁴ “Basil Manly Jr. unpublished exposition entitled, ‘The Duty of Giving Religious Instruction to the Colored Population,’ Undated,” BMJr/Furman.

would be bound to give them this instruction. They are men as we; they have minds as we; they have souls as we, immortal souls capable of an infinity of weal or woe. As men, as Christians, we are bound to care for them.”³⁴⁵

This paternalistic conviction motivated him to act. As early as 1843, he privately decried the prevailing position of the Baptist Church toward missionary work among the slaves and claimed that, “none but the Methodist Church pretends to pay any attention to the blacks. Even the members of our church, and the very preachers...know almost nothing about doctrine” as it related to slavery. This Manly Jr. based on his observation that, “the sermons which were preached last year were far, far above [the slaves’] comprehension and did them not the smallest particle of good...[and] no other means of instructing them was adopted.” He considered slaves thus instructed “left as sheep without a shepherd” and reiterated, “it is the duty it seems to me of the whites, since they deprive [slaves] of the privilege of reading the word of God, to instruct them themselves.” He advocated for a black Sunday School, which he privately expressed his willingness to lead. “Without any extravagant opinion of my own acquirement,” Manly Jr. ventured, “I suppose it pretty certain that I know more of the doctrine and meaning of the Bible than most of our colored people.” Manly Jr. was vaguely conscious that in making such a proposal, he was overstepping his bounds. “As to shame I don’t think I shall be or at any rate ought to be ashamed of doing good,” he said.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁵ “Basil Manly Jr. unpublished exposition entitled, ‘The Duty of Giving Religious Instruction to the Colored Population,’ Undated,” BMJr/Furman.

³⁴⁶ “Basil Manly Jr. diary entry, February 5, 1843,” BMJr/Furman. For more on the biracial complexities of southern evangelicalism, especially in relation to the missions to the slaves that became increasingly prevalent beginning in the 1830s, see especially: John B. Boles, ed., *Masters & Slaves in the House of the Lord: Race and Religion in the American South, 1740-1870*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1988), 1-126; Janet D. Cornelius, *Slave Missions and the Black Church in the Antebellum South*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999); Sylvia Frey, “Shaking the Dry Bones: The Dialectic

In a letter to a Baptist colleague two years later, Manly Jr. expressed the same concern for the religious instruction of slaves: “I want to urge upon you what I know is near your heart, the situation of our colored population,” a subject that he believed “presents serious and important questions applying to the conscience and the feelings of every other Southerner,” most prominent among them: “are we doing our duty to our slaves in point of religious instruction? What more *can* we do? What more *might* we, in conscience and morality, and in a view of our relations to them and to *our* Master, to do? How are we to do it, so as to secure their best interests, and ours? “These questions,” he concluded, “appeal to us all for an answer, and who can answer them with satisfaction?!”³⁴⁷

Manly Jr. then opined that the “character and amount of religious instruction to [slaves] are both lamentably deficient,” and bemoaned that, “few indeed receive any instruction except as to their work...And when the instruction that is pretended to be given is examined,” one finds that, “they are taught that in shouting and noise, in unseemly indecencies and long ‘experiences,’ consists the essence of true religion.” In this manner he believed, “they are taught to put their trust in bodily exercise which profiteth little, in meetings and songs [and] outward observances, neglecting altogether the weightier matters of faith and love to God.” Manly Jr. expressed his “grief and horror” at the tendency of such instruction “to encourage and produce lustful passions and the worst sort of vices” among the slaves, with the ultimate result being that, “the negroes regard a great shouting and noise on Sunday as a full and complete atonement for all the negligence of the week.” He then caustically asked, “is this the Christian religion?

of Conversion,” in Ted Ownby, ed., *Black & White Cultural Interaction in the Antebellum South*, (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993); Irons, *The Origins of Proslavery Christianity*, 97-209.

³⁴⁷ “Basil Manly Jr. to Reverend Curtis, February 12, 1844,” BMJr/Furman.

Is this the religion we owe to our servants?" His paternalistic convictions rendered his reply obvious. He believed that proper Christian slave mastery meant the proper moral instruction of black slaves by their white masters. Only then could the southern slave system make claims to divine sanctification. Only then could Christian masters exalt their virtues as masters in a benevolent slave regime.³⁴⁸

But even as Basil Manly Jr. reiterated his concern for the moral and spiritual state of black slaves, he recognized the social obstacles confronting its resolution. "In whatever we do with regard to ameliorating their religious condition," he intoned, "the *greatest* caution and circumspection must be used. The laws of this state" curtailing the rights of masters to instruct their slaves "are unusually severe, but we must take care always to be within the law so that no one can accuse us of transgressing them in the slightest particular." Though he admitted that, "in practice...and in reality these laws are not *usually* observed," he decreed, "our rule must be nevertheless to 'give no one occasion of offense to any one,' to give no one an opportunity to interrupt or molest us, on any reasonable plea or pretext whatsoever." The fate of their slaves' souls as well as their own demanded that they "provide against the possibility of any such interruption by introducing...persons of such weight and respectability into the work as to frown down malcontents and evil doers." In short, cultivating the support of prominent slaveowners in pursuing this mission to their slaves was paramount to its success.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁸ "Basil Manly Jr. to Reverend Curtis, February 12, 1844," BMJr/Furman.

³⁴⁹ "Basil Manly Jr. to Reverend Curtis, February 12, 1844," BMJr/Furman. For more on slavery and the southern legal system, see especially: Paul Finkelman, ed., *Slavery and the Law*, (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002 ed.); Ariela J. Gross, *Double Character: Slavery and Mastery in the Antebellum Southern Courtroom*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000); Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001); Timothy S. Huebner, *The Southern Judicial Tradition: State Judges and Sectional Distinctiveness, 1790-1890*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994); Thomas D. Morris, *Southern Slavery and the Law: 1619-1860*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

The growing sectional hostility no doubt prompted Manly Jr. to then exclaim, “I regard the present time, the exact present, as a most favorable juncture for commencing...now is the time,” and “in the arrangements regard must be had not only to their influence on the blacks but also to the way in which the owners will relish them. Everything must not only be but *seem* fair and open and inviting examination.”³⁵⁰

Even as Manly Jr. sought to reform slavery from within, he railed against the reformers of the North who assailed it from without. He announced himself actively opposed to “interference with our institutions from any foreign quarter,” and decreed that, “slavery, whether a curse or a blessing, whether a wise or an unwise institution, belongs to the Southern people and none but they can interfere with it or with any of its consequences and any interference will be liable to suspicion and opposition.” He well knew “our Northern neighbors think otherwise,” but conceded that “if they were content with holding their opinions and leaving others to the enjoyments of their rights and privileges all would be well.”³⁵¹

And this was what most incensed Manly Jr. The North was, to his mind, making the slave system worse while the South generally and Manly Jr. specifically was trying to make it better. “The practical effect,” of abolition agitation on the slaves, Manly Jr. said, “has been to change a comparatively easy lot into a much more severe one and to deprive our slaves of many privileges and gratifications which could once be granted to them.”³⁵² He even blamed Northerners for slaves’ illiteracy, or as he put it, “the peculiar situation in which our laws place [the slaves].” Though “we, the authors and sustainers of those

³⁵⁰ “Basil Manly Jr. to Reverend Curtis, February 12, 1844,” BMJr/Furman.

³⁵¹ “Basil Manly Jr. unpublished exposition entitled, ‘The Duty of Giving Religious Instruction to the Colored Population,’ Undated,” BMJr/Furman.

³⁵² “Basil Manly Jr. unpublished exposition entitled, ‘The Duty of Giving Religious Instruction to the Colored Population,’ Undated,” BMJr/Furman.

laws,” he explained, “are bound to give them religious instruction,” the encroachment of the North had rendered it “necessary to prohibit teaching them to read. Hence they are [not] enabled to read their Bibles and one great source of information open to every white man however poor, provided he be anxious to learn, is closed to them.” Because of this state of affairs, foisted, as Manly Jr. saw it, upon the South from abroad, “we are therefore bound, so long as this law exists (and it is an obviously necessary one) to compensate them for the loss...of knowledge.”³⁵³

Such was the tangled logic of men like Basil Manly Jr. They would reform the system if they could, and they could vaguely acknowledge it had gone from bad to worse, but it wasn’t their fault, and if only they could be left alone to reform it themselves, all would be well and happy. “The fact that of all these melancholy results take place,” he said, “we, the South, Southern men, Southern students, ministers, churches, are not to blame for it. We excluded nobody,” he explained. “We shut out nobody. We only demanded that we should be admitted to the common society on terms of perfect equality, and this was denied to us. *We have been excluded*, and the foundation of that Chinese wall has been laid by other hands than ours.”³⁵⁴ He later repeated the denunciation by charging that the abolitionists, “all think slavery a great sin, and pray loudly that oppression may cease in the earth. I like to see conscientiousness, but not for other people’s sins. I like to see confession of one’s own offenses, not of another person’s ... Yet such it seems to me is much of the strictness of New England Christianity.”³⁵⁵

³⁵³ “Basil Manly Jr. unpublished exposition entitled, ‘The Duty of Giving Religious Instruction to the Colored Population,’ Undated,” BMJr/Furman.

³⁵⁴ Basil Manly Jr. diary entry, March 7, 1845,” BMJr/Furman.

³⁵⁵ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, February 3, 1845,” BMJr/Furman. For the best analysis of the antislavery and abolitionist movements in the north, which Manly Jr. so grossly conflated and indiscriminately despised, see especially: Robert H. Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling: American Reform and the Religious Imagination*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1994), 129-162; Carwardine, *Evangelicals and*

The spiritual bind in which Manly Jr. found himself—the crisis of faith and confidence, the plaintive lashing out at the North for problems that originated in a Southern system all once knew as evil—was of course entirely what the abolitionists had hoped to sponsor. By the time Manly Jr. had entered his profession, he had for the whole of his life felt besieged, self-righteous and self-despised. But he had made his choice when he had left his northern seminary during the split of the Baptist Church. “If the South should absolutely have to withdraw” from national Baptist institutions, he said, it “may make it unpleasant for me to remain [in the North].” He thought perhaps his own edification and the moral future of his native South best served by returning South.³⁵⁶

He justified this conclusion by admitting that if he stayed he would “be looked down on here as low spirited and sneered at in the South as a sneak,” and would “be taking an equivocal position before my Southern Brethren. All my feelings are with them. I am one of the South. I believe as they do. I feel as they do.” With his southern brethren thus “cast out ... to remain contentedly and quietly under the very shade of the body from which they are expelled, would be to say the least a very ambiguous position. It would be saying,” he continued, “you indeed are insulted but I am not, and therefore I am not one of you. I join in justifying the act which shuts you out.” “But such is not my feeling,” he continued, and such ambiguity “might hinder my future usefulness in the South.” “The South is my home,” he declared, and “there I expect to live and labor and there I expect

Politics, 133-143, 235-255, 258-269, 279-318; John R. McKivigan & Mitchell Snay, eds., *Religion and the Antebellum Debate Over Slavery*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1998); Steven Mintz, *Moralists and Modernizers: America's Pre-Civil War Reformers*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 117-153; Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Lewis Tappan and the Evangelical War Against Slavery*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997 ed). More recently, Margaret Abruzzo has contextualized the antislavery and abolitionist movements within the broader emergence of humanitarianism: Abruzzo, *Polemical Pain: Slavery, Cruelty, and the Rise of Humanitarianism*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).

³⁵⁶ “Basil Manly Jr. diary entry, December 15, 1844,” BMJr/Furman.

to die. There if anywhere is my call, among the poor and destitute. I am bound to do nothing *unnecessarily* which shall impair their confidence in me as a whole-souled Southerner.” As such he resolved that he had “a duty which I am afraid we have been neglecting to Southern Institutions. If all who *can* go away, it will be long before any good Institutions are raised at the South.”³⁵⁷

Manly Jr. admitted that the controversy over slavery would only follow him South, and that his removal or the removal of any and all Southerners from Northern institutions would not abate the sectional fervor. He also viewed “the intercourse with persons so different from myself and our Southern people as no contemptible advantage. They differ in opinions, in feelings, in habits.” As such he could “compare myself with them, and neither yielding to a stiffened prejudice, nor to a hasty adoption of any and everything new, may learn much from such associations.”³⁵⁸ With these justifications for staying, Basil Manly Jr. effectively paralyzed himself into inaction as he vacillated between extremes. In one breath he believed he had “made up my mind pretty fully to stay,” while in the next contrary evidence would throw him “all aback” into “an unsettled state of mind, excited, roused, unable to do anything else” but contemplate anew “all my doubts and fears and waverings as to the subject.”³⁵⁹

Crippled with indecision, Manly Jr. practiced what he would later preach; he looked to his father for answers. Just before he left the seminary, in 1845, he wrote his parents in an effort to clarify the workings of his own mind. “In the first place it seems to

³⁵⁷ Basil Manly Jr. diary entry, March 5, 1845,” BMJr/Furman. For more on the tangled logic of secession in relation to southern ideals and identities in the midst of the sectional crisis, see especially: Carmichael, *The Last Generation*, 18, 29-30, Ford, *Origins of Southern Radicalism*, 338-373; Greenberg, *Masters and Statesmen*, 104-146; Sinha, *The Counterrevolution of Slavery*, 187-254.

³⁵⁸ “Basil Manly Jr. diary entry, March 4, 1845,” BMJr/Furman

³⁵⁹ “Basil Manly Jr. diary entry, March 3, 1845,” BMJr/Furman.

me there is an obligation...on Southern young men to sustain Southern Institutions. If those who are able run off to the North to get their education,” he reasoned, “it sanctions the vainglorious boast that we can do nothing without the North, and are dependent on it,” while “at the same time it depresses the character of our own institutions by draining off the cream of the South to a Northern soil and it depressed the reputation of them too.” “Northern men,” he had observed, “interpret the coming of each man as adding his testimony to the fact that a good education cannot be obtained at the South [and] that there are not men enough of intelligence and liberal training to build up literary institutions.” This “seem[ed] to point the Southerner” home.³⁶⁰

In their series of missives during the spring of 1845, the son expressed to his father the “hope [that] you will not consider my views the rash judgments of a heated mind,” though “I am roused I confess. The spirit of my father is in me and I feel like wrapping myself in my own dignity and retiring.” But he asserted that, “I have been calm, cool, patient. I have come, I have seen, I am satisfied,” before finally proclaiming “we could not in honor act otherwise.”³⁶¹

The dithering of Manly Jr. reveals the growing discomfort of his generation in the face of deficient ideals, a debased slave system, and a northern threat to expose both. But he could not so fully turn against his father’s generation, against his filial duty. “My prejudices,” he confessed, “are all on the side of my forefathers and countrymen and while I have at various times ... entertained doubts as to the morality of slavery, my prevailing opinion has always been that it was not in itself a sin to be the owner of a slave. In that conviction I am deeply and firmly settled.” The problem, of course, was the

³⁶⁰ Basil Manly Jr. diary entry, March 7, 8, 1845” BMJr/Furman.

³⁶¹ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, February 24, 1845,” BMJr/Furman.

system's "great liability to abuse," a liability which rendered slavery "an *evil*" in his mind, one which he would "be glad when, by proper peaceful and Christian-like means, it shall be everywhere abolished." But when and by what means that abolition would occur, if not now and by abolitionists? These were the places Manly Jr.'s mind could not and would not go; these were places he and his generation (ultimately) would rather murder or die than go.³⁶²

In looking haplessly to his father's generation for consolation and guidance, Basil Manly Jr. exemplified the reaction of many southern sons across the South as the impending crisis drew nearer. The sectional struggle for the soul of the nation played out in extremely personal terms that were woven into the social, political, and religious fabric of the country. Southern patriarchs—aging fathers and maturing sons alike—understood the stakes all too well, and remained conscious of the connection between past and present, between personal and public, throughout the ordeal. As Basil Manly Jr. confessed himself, "this whole matter has caused a severe mental struggle in me, which has made me look forward and backward into my past history and my future prospects, which has brought still nearer to me the 'stern realities of life,' ...and which has revealed to me secrets in my own nature which I never knew so fully before." That soul-searching quest for answers—to the slavery question and the nagging self-doubt over its morality—drew southern men together across generational gaps and socio-economic divisions.³⁶³

³⁶² The violence that pervaded the south's peculiar institution belied the limits of the paternalistic ideal purported by proslavery Christians like Manly Jr. For more on the inherent violence within the slave system see especially: Dickson D. Bruce Jr., *Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979); Jeff Forret, *Race Relations at the Margins: Slaves and Poor Whites in the Antebellum Southern Countryside*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006), 157-222; John Hope Franklin, *The Militant South, 1800-1861*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002 ed.), 63-79; Gross, *Double Character*, 98-121; Hadden, *Slave Patrols*, 41-172.

³⁶³ "Basil Manly Jr. to parents, April 14, 1845," Manly Family papers(hereafter MFP)/Southern Baptist Historical Library & Archives (hereafter SBHL).

Basil Manly Jr.'s personal journey along this path mirrored that of many others in his native region as the 1840s came to a close and the 1850s unfolded. "To me indeed self-study has seemed for the last several years *the most important study* and accordingly my private thoughts, my nightly meditations, have been many of them turned inward upon myself, to see and know for myself who and what that 'myself' might be," he wrote before admitting his simultaneous preoccupation with public perception; "I was comparing myself with myself or with others and I know not but this was often carried to an excess, leading to morbid sensibility, vanity, and selfishness. Everything I did everything I saw or heard was made to contribute by comparison to forming an estimate of myself." Ultimately the result of all this introspection was to find a place where a combination of denial, transference, projection, and contradictory consciousness allowed Manly Jr. to come to some kind of peace in the choices he had made. I have "placed on surer foundations my estimate of myself," he said after wrestling with his feelings over slavery. "I feel now certain of things which formerly I did but dimly conjecture, and suppose, and hope, with regard to myself. And I now reconcile self judgments which formerly seemed contradictory."³⁶⁴

Having achieved this personal reconciliation, Manly Jr. turned his attention to the sectional divide slavery had created. The young pastor now seemed affirmed in his ideological beliefs and resolved to act upon the righteous honor that his father had so long exalted and which he himself had so long sought to enact. "I suppose the separation [of North and South] to be inevitable and have just made up my mind to it as one of those things disagreeable indeed and unhoped for but which must come to pass," Manly Jr.

³⁶⁴ "Basil Manly Jr. to parents, April 14, 1845," MFP/SBHL.

reasoned before declaring, “the truth is abolition or not, slavery or not, there are many other important reasons for a division.”³⁶⁵

Even as he came to this resolution, he sought his father’s blessing, and explained both the difficulty in reaching this decision (“You can conceive of the difficulty of it, by remembering how hard it probably was during Nullification times to keep from being suspected of undue leaning to one or the other party.”), as well as the moral necessity of seeing it through (“Is this the atmosphere for piety to blossom in? Yet Oh! [that] it is not [one] which will cause a declension in piety. It is inward corruption and absence from God, and these will blind the *soul* at any time.) He confessed his fear that “I am not watchful as I should be. May God help me. I don’t want to *talk* about this matter, but to *feel* and to *act*, to come and implore [the] grace of him that is mighty to save.” If southern men were true to their righteous honor, Manly Jr. fervently believed that God would sanction southern separation from an increasingly aggressive abolitionist North.³⁶⁶

This very personal mission played out thousands of times over in the hearts and minds of southern men across the South during the decade and a half that followed, bringing them face to face with a sobering reality: the dissolution of their slave society, the American Union, or both. On the precipice of civil war, southern slavery presented them with the ultimate moral dilemma; either confess their sinfulness, admit their dishonor, and relent to the abolitionist onslaught, or marshal both their religious beliefs and their sense of honor to defend themselves and their way of life. Their aggrieved sense of righteous honor and their power of denial preordained their decision.

³⁶⁵ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, April 22, 1845,” MFP/SBHL.

³⁶⁶ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, April 22, 1845,” MFP/SBHL.

EPILOGUE

RIGHTEOUS HONOR & SELF-MASTERY IN THE CIVIL WAR & RECONSTRUCTION

“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power.”³⁶⁷

Indeed the war came. It raged four years and took the lives of over 700,000 American men, dismembered and disfigured tens of thousands of others, and left the entire nation searching for answers. Some issues that had long confounded the nation this civil war had resolved: the bloodletting forcefully determined that racial slavery would cease to exist in the United States, and further mandated that the power of the Federal Government in its relation to the individual states would be expanded—these United States became *the* United States.³⁶⁸

But these answers begot even more confounding questions: what effect would the unprecedented death, dismemberment, and destruction have on the nation’s future? Could

³⁶⁷ “The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy, Chapter 3, Verses 1-5,” *The Holy Bible, New King James Version*.

³⁶⁸ The latest death toll figures increased the commonly accepted numbers by 20 percent and were compiled and analyzed in: J. David Hacker, “Census-Based Count of the Civil War Dead,” *Civil War History*, Vol. 57, No. 4, (Dec. 2011): 307-348. The best single-volume analysis of the American Civil War in its military, political, and social context is still: James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1988). For the most comprehensive military history of the war, see: David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War*, (New York, NY: Touchstone, 2001).

On the expansion of federal power during and after the Civil War, see: Richard Franklin Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859-1877*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

For an analysis of the national psychological reactions to and effects of this unprecedented death and destruction, see especially: Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008) and Megan Kate Nelson, *Ruin Nation: Destruction and the American Civil War*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2012).

North and South reconcile? Was a peaceful reunification and reunion possible and what would it look like? What would emancipation mean for freedmen's rights and privileges—full equality? Second-class citizenship? Race war? Their ultimate demise? In what directions would Federal power extend? Would it expand unilaterally to conspicuously enter the lives of individuals, or selectively in response to particular issues in particular places at particular times? How far and to what ends would the Federal Government go to shape the fate of freedmen?³⁶⁹

These questions, which confronted the entire nation from the time the shooting commenced until well after it finally subsided, would be answered by white southern men according to their ideal of righteous honor. Their experience of war—as soldiers and civilians—would alter that ethical ideal, as would the economic and social changes that followed in the war's wake. This altered ethical ideal would help them to make sense of defeat, and to remake themselves, their households, and their society in the face of new realities.³⁷⁰

When the shooting subsided, white southern men looked forward and backward simultaneously, haunted by specters of the past and future. Some, like James Chesnut, husband of the famous diarist, would retreat to their porches and drink themselves into a

³⁶⁹ The most comprehensive overview of the post-war social and political landscape is: Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*, (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1988). The best single volume analysis of the contested legacies of the Civil War and Reconstruction is: David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2001). Other important perspectives on contested post-war cultural memory include: Alice Fahs & Joan Waugh, eds., *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004); John R. Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005).

The best analysis of African American attempts to shape the southern cultural memory of the war and its results are: Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 64-77, 300-337 and Kathleen Ann Clark, *Defining Moments: African American Commemoration & Political Culture in the South, 1863-1913*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005)

³⁷⁰ Beth Barton Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up: Progress and the Pulpit in Nineteenth-Century Virginia*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), 91-108.

grey haze. Others, like Edmund Ruffin, made quicker work of it, putting a bullet through his brain rather than live with defeat. But most men, gradually, determined to pick up the pieces. And what emerged—the “New South,” the “Lost Cause”—would both be profoundly shaped by the twin ethics I have spent such time elaborating, “self-mastery” on the one hand, and “righteous honor” on the other.³⁷¹

The Reverends Manly—the aging Basil Sr. and his sons Basil Jr. and Charles—oscillated between self-condemning despair and self-righteous indignation as the Civil War drew near. Such oscillation continued through the conflict, as they desperately cast about for signs that God’s favor rested with the South, while simultaneously interpreting every Confederate setback as evidence of God’s chastisement. (It was a cycle they knew well, however novel its political shape and consequences). Basil Manly Jr. felt in the fall of 1860 that “the prospects in politics are dark. We are drifting we know not whither,” but resolved that “God knows, and God rules, that is all, and that is enough.” But he had little faith in the leadership of men, especially those rising to the fore throughout the South early in the war. “Between fanatics on the one hand, and silly braggadocios, whose best excuse is their lack of the power of serious thought [on the other],” Manly Jr. facetiously concluded that, “we are likely to have our public affairs nicely managed.”³⁷²

³⁷¹ For more on the “Lost Cause” memory of the Civil War and Reconstruction, see especially: Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 255-299; Thomas L. Connelly & Barbara L. Bellows, *God and General Longstreet: The Lost Cause and the Southern Mind*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982); Gary W. Gallagher & Alan T. Nolan, eds., *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2009 ed.); For more on the connections between the “Lost Cause” and the “New South,” see especially: Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, The Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1987) and Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise & Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 172-200; Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up*, 129-148.

³⁷² Basil Manly Jr. to parents, October 26, 1860,” Manly Family papers (hereafter MFP)/Furman. For more on the profoundly religious worldviews of both northerners and southerners in the Civil War Era, see especially: Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, Charles Reagan Wilson, eds., *Religion and the American*

His father, the Reverend Basil Manly Sr., agreed. “Everywhere in this state, excitement is very high,” he observed with caution in December of 1860. When asked to participate in Alabama’s secession convention the following January, Manly Sr. expressed mixed feelings. On the one hand, he admitted, “I am afraid there is some snare of the Devil laid under this seeming honor,” while on the other he declared his long-standing doubts as to whether “the South can safely remain in this Union.” He asserted that “for the last 32 years” he had been “in favor of the formation of a Southern Confederacy, peaceably, if we might, but was willing to *fight it out*, if we must. I am of the same mind still.” The same issues were at stake, but he had recognized that “things are becoming more complicated and difficult the farther we go.” Even as late as November of 1860 he had admitted he could “conclude nothing” concerning “the *time*, *manner*, and *occasion* of effecting this separation,” leaving “that to the statesmen and people of my country. But whenever, and however, they throw themselves on their independency to maintain Southern rights, I expect to be with them.”³⁷³

But when secession became reality in eleven southern states by February of 1861, Basil Manly Sr. and his family unabashedly celebrated the measure. Reverend Manly Sr. dubbed northerners “infatuated tyrants” and declared, “*the Union is dissolved*, and can never be re-constructed. All the world in arms cannot force us back into it. No concessions or promises they can make, with tears in their eyes and ropes on their necks, can win our confidence.” “200,000!!! Let them come!,” he then blasted; “I will not

Civil War, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998); Robert J. Miller, *Both Prayed to the Same God: Religion and Faith in the American Civil War*, (New York, NY: Lexington Books, 2007); Mark A. Noll, *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Kyle N. Osborn, “Masters of Fate: Efficacy and Emotion in the Civil War South,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Georgia, 2013); George C. Rable, *God’s Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the American Civil War*, (New York, NY: Viking Press, 2006).

³⁷³ “Basil Manly Sr. to children, November 4, 1860,” MFP/Furman.

believe, till it occurs, that men can be such fools.” The North will soon “wake up one day to find that the Union is dissolved, and can never be reconstructed,” he continued; “that the South is resolved, and can never be conquered. They do not know that we can fight on for a century, if need be... The Yankees will find out that we occupy no subaltern or precarious position in the great world.”³⁷⁴

As winter turned to spring in 1861, Manly Sr. repeatedly expressed his resolve that even if “we should have war for a century, as the consequence of our position, I would not recede an inch from it,” before explaining, “since they know of no bond of Union but force, it is well we have found it out, and taken our affairs into our own hands. Were there no other ground for the utter and final disruption of the Union, *this is enough*.” Later he reiterated his stance and expressed his belief that the North hadn’t the resolve for war: “you need not be afraid of any drill or mustering at the North. There will be no war. If there could be a war, it would be a mighty help and make reconstruction impossible.”³⁷⁵ But whether in peaceful separation or bloody severance, he concluded, “the bridges are cut down, and the ships are burnt behind us. The sword is drawn, and the scabbard is thrown away. We never intend to be in any sort of dependence upon those men again. If they make war upon us, then all friendly intercourse, for generations and ages, will cease.”³⁷⁶

The entire impending trial would be, in Manly Sr.’s view, a test from God. “If we are fulfilling the will of God in what are doing, our deeds are to give luster to the days on

³⁷⁴ “Basil Manly Sr. to children, January 13, 1861,” MFP/Furman; Osborn, “Masters of Fate.”

³⁷⁵ “Basil Manly Sr. to Basil Manly Jr., April 3, 1861,” MFP/Furman.

³⁷⁶ “Basil Manly Sr. to children, January 13, 1861,” MFP/Furman. For more on southern religious interpretations of the war, see especially: Peter S. Carmichael, *The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 179-211; Eugene D. Genovese, *A Consuming Fire: The Fall of the Confederacy in the Mind of the White Christian South*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1998); Osborn, “Masters of Fate.”

which they were done. Let our acts stand by themselves, bad or good,” he decreed before asserting, “if God blesses them, our posterity will have national holidays all their own, made illustrious by what we are now doing.”³⁷⁷ Regardless of the outcome, however, he took solace in reflecting that even “‘power accumulated in bad hands!’...is permitted in the Government of God; *always for their own overthrow* at last, but sometimes a temporary purpose is served in chastising guilty nations, even God’s own people.” But then, he concluded, “having used the rod for its destined purpose, He *breaks it up*, and *throws it into the fire*.”³⁷⁸ Thus even as Reverend Manly Sr. touted the righteousness of the Confederate cause, he left room for its failing. Believing even the best of men to be inherently sinful, even the best of causes, which he believed the Confederate experiment to be, could prove but the folly of man.³⁷⁹

Such an outlook sprang from the bosom of Basil Manly Sr.’s family. His sons all served the Confederate cause, the two youngest—Fuller and James—by the sword and the two eldest—Basil Jr. and Charles—from the pulpit. Basil Jr. and Charles eventually wielded both sword and spirit as army chaplains. Their mother and Basil Sr.’s wife, Sarah Manly, reinforced their collective sense of righteous honor. “I have always desired my children to do their duty as Christians and faithful, honorable citizens,” she proclaimed in early 1861. In the wake of Fort Sumter’s bombardment, she supported her sons’ desire to serve the Confederacy in whatever capacity they chose. “I believe our cause is just,” she declared, “and that God can deliver us from all our enemies, but it is not to be expected that we shall have another ‘*bloodless victory*’ and God only knows whether my sons may

³⁷⁷ “Basil Manly Sr. to Basil Manly Jr., February 16, 1861,” MFP/Furman.

³⁷⁸ “Basil Manly Sr. to children, January 23, 1861,” MFP/Furman.

³⁷⁹ For a general overview of Manly’s experience of the Civil War, see: A. James Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 287-308.

not fall a sacrifice to their country's cause." "God prepare us for all that is before us," she prayerfully concluded.³⁸⁰

The hard times before them surpassed even their most pessimistic expectations and tested their faith, especially as the weather and military action in the summer of 1861 heated up. "I feel just this way about this war," Charles ruminated: "that life, property (shall I say?) religion itself will be worthless, unless we are successful in it."³⁸¹ His father set the same tone for his entire family when he declared "a day of retribution is at hand....God defend the Right!"³⁸² "It seems to me," the patriarch continued, "that a thousand adverse battles would not shake my resolution to go on while any head can be made against the foe." By the spring of 1862 he contended he was "too sternly set, to give voice to joy, even when peace returns, but shall retain the same grave sternness, to stand on the defensive, forever, against every form of approach. If I ever get to Heaven," he finished, "and see any good Yankees there, I hope I shall rejoice then. There will be no need of stern reserve and vigilance then."³⁸³

But lurking just beneath this confident resolve was a nagging doubt, one seemingly affirmed with every Confederate defeat during the war's first two years. Manly Sr. admitted in the summer of 1861 that "it grieves me to hear of [Yankee] feet polluting and cursing a foot of our soil. God, I trust, will overrule it for good."³⁸⁴ "If God intends to chastise us, we shall be chastised. That will be for our good," he later rationalized. "If it be the will of God, I do not wish to survive the subjugation of my

³⁸⁰ "Sarah M. Manly to son Richard Fuller Manly, April 24, 1861," MFP/Furman.

³⁸¹ "Charles Manly to mother Sarah M. Manly, July 22, 1861," MFP/Furman.

³⁸² "Basil Manly Sr. to children, June 8, 1861," MFP/Furman.

³⁸³ "Basil Manly Sr. to Basil Manly Jr., February 12, 1862," MFP/Furman; Osborn, "Masters of Fate."

³⁸⁴ "Basil Manly Sr. to children, August 31, 1861," MFP/Furman.

country. But this is a result,” he assured himself, “I by no means apprehend.”³⁸⁵ His son Basil Jr. recognized that “for us, not to be beaten is to conquer. But I rejoice with trembling,” he admitted early the following winter; “It is a terrible girdle of fire with which they have striven to encircle us, and their malice, and command of the means of offense are unfortunately both unlimited, while we have to fight with our *hands tied*. But I trust we should be enabled to maintain our ground.”³⁸⁶ “I suppose the real crisis of the war has yet to come,” Charles Manly surmised shortly thereafter, “and many more of our men will be needed on the battlefield...things are coming rapidly to a serious issue and must be seriously met.”³⁸⁷ “Surely,” he then reasoned the following summer, “a righteous God will avenge such things. What a horrid war they are forcing upon us. ‘No quarter,’ it is as the sound of a knell.”³⁸⁸ His brother Basil Jr. agreed as he prayed, “the Lord deliver us out of the hand of our enemies!, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in holiness and righteousness, all our days.”³⁸⁹

This emotional burden grew with every defeat, intensifying the earnestness of his prayers. It also quickened the pulse and roused the family into more concerted action. Basil Sr. saw clearly that “the effect of disasters on my boys is to make them anxious to enter the war. Charles, James, and Fuller have all written about it. So far from discouraging them, I have an idea that when they get located, I will go and join them.” “All our faith, courage, fortitude, endurance, and martial resources will now be required,” he continued, “or we shall be overrun...life is not too precious to be offered in such a

³⁸⁵ “Basil Manly Sr. to son Richard Fuller Manly, October 7, 1861,” MFP/Furman.

³⁸⁶ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, February 13, 1862,” MFP/Furman.

³⁸⁷ “Charles Manly to parents, February 14, 1862,” MFP/Furman.

³⁸⁸ “Charles Manly to parents, August 8, 1862,” MFP/Furman.

³⁸⁹ “Basil Manly Sr. to son Richard Fuller Manly, February 14, 1862,” MFP/Furman. Here the Manlys clearly exhibited the embattled state of mind common to white southern Christians as analyzed by Genovese, *A Consuming Fire*.

cause.” He then concluded with a prayer: “the Lord direct and preserve us all!, and bring our country out of trouble!”³⁹⁰

What could Manly sons do except echo such sentiments? Son Charles asked, “how can I bear it that an insolent enemy pollutes our soil, [and] seriously threatens the structure of all we hold dear?”³⁹¹ “If the pinch comes,” he resolved, “let all [of us] meet the enemy, *if it be but to die* defending our homes. Life is nothing if our liberty be gone.”³⁹² He finally concluded, “I believe the stress on our country greater now than ever before.”³⁹³ But “in Him is all our hope. If He be for us, we must succeed, finally.”³⁹⁴ Basil Jr. concurred, even after a stretch of Confederate losses. “This mighty war, how it is stretching out to proportions and protraction far beyond the imagination of the puny mortals who thought they controlled it!,” he lamented; “who knows what revelations it may still make, of humble character or of divine purpose? We have learned some lessons, but the impression is not yet deep enough, or broad enough. The burning iron must be still deeper stamped into the scorched flesh.”³⁹⁵

Sarah Manly reinforced the zealous tone of her husband and sons. This war, in her view, was the cross her family was now called to bear. “Most true it is that the religion of Jesus is the religion of the cross, and that there never was a true Christian without a cross,” she had explained in 1861. Her family had enjoyed such abundance and good

³⁹⁰ “Basil Manly Sr. to Basil Manly Jr., February 20, 1862,” MFP/Furman. For a general analysis of Confederate chaplains, see: John Wesley Brinsfield Jr., ed., *The Spirit Divided: Memoirs of Civil War Chaplains—The Confederacy*, (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2006).

³⁹¹ “Charles Manly to mother Sarah M. Manly, July 22, 1861,” MFP/Furman.

³⁹² “Charles Manly to parents, February 18, 1862,” MFP/Furman.

³⁹³ “Charles Manly to parents, February 19, 1862,” MFP/Furman.

³⁹⁴ “Charles Manly to brother Basil Manly Jr., February 10, 1862,” MFP/Furman.

³⁹⁵ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, Undated,” Manly family/SBHL. The Manly family mirrored many others in this constant searching for divine approbation or condemnation for their cause, an emotional cycle that pervaded the rank-and-file of the armies themselves, according to: Steven E. Woodworth, *While God is Marching On: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001) and Kent T. Dollar, *Soldiers of the Cross: Confederate Soldier-Christians and the Impact of War on Their Faith*, (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2005).

fortune in the antebellum period; her boys were strapping and fine. This made the clouds on the horizon seem even darker and to her children she admitted her “painful misgiving arising from the exemption [her family had enjoyed] from the crosses which others bear.” “I have not *coveted* afflictions, but I have often thought that as a family we have been *remarkably* exempt from deep searching afflictions.” The Civil War now seemed to portend afflictions in abundance. Her greatest hope was that in their present trial, God would guide the family toward “that which is most for their spiritual as well as temporal benefit”³⁹⁶ “My trust is alone in God,” she concluded, “who is able to defend us against our invaders.”³⁹⁷ “God is able to give us the victory,” she pronounced, “but I fear our sins are so great and numerous that we will have to be more severely chastised before we are prepared for a blessing.”³⁹⁸

As Sarah Manly alluded, the old familiar vices called into question the entire Confederate project, and they seemed, if anything, more abroad in the land. Reverend Manly Sr. swore that “drunken officers, incompetent, and inattentive to the necessary wants of the men are the bane of our army. If we are beaten, the fault lies there.”³⁹⁹ He bluntly said as much in a later letter to his son Basil Jr.: “I fear incompetency or unfaithfulness in the governing powers, and I fear that drunkenness is to ruin us all...the worst things that I see are not the enemy, or their armaments, but the universal

³⁹⁶ “Sarah M. Manly to children, June 5, 1861,” MFP/Furman. For more on the gendered impact of the war on southern women, see especially: LeAnn Whites, *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender: Augusta, Georgia, 1860-1890*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), 41-63.

³⁹⁷ “Sarah M. Manly to son Richard Fuller Manly, October 7, 1861,” MFP/Furman.

³⁹⁸ “Sarah M. Manly to son Basil Manly Jr., March 9, 1862,” MFP/Furman. For more on this prevailing sense that Confederate defeat was a form of Divine chastisement, see especially: Daniel W. Stowell, *Rebuilding Zion: The Religious Reconstruction of the South, 1863-1877*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998), 33-48.

³⁹⁹ “Basil Manly Sr. to children, February 3, 1862,” MFP/Furman.

drunkenness that everywhere sweeps over high and low.”⁴⁰⁰ Such degradation worried him, for in his view, it threatened to provoke God’s wrath against the Confederacy. “It looks like the sluice of ruin is rolling over us fast.”⁴⁰¹ “Have we been mistaken in our men?” he continued. “Are we to be betrayed, insulted, and ruined by the persons we have chosen to conduct this revolution?” he asked before answering, “it really seems so. And we may have before us the alternative of *another* revolution, or *subjugation* [for] when people have lost their public virtue, and public agents are not brought to stern responsibility, the few pious and good fall with the rest. Their only safe resort is the grave.” “Oh! that God would hide me, in the grave,” he prayed, “before I see the ruin of my country!”⁴⁰²

His eldest son Basil Jr. was similarly despondent and defiant by turns. “I feel chagrined, disappointed, disheartened,” he admitted in the winter of 1862. “These alternating extremes of protracted lethargy and sudden convulsive alarms, these late discoveries of amazing and irreparable neglects,” he bemoaned, “these calls on private liberality, enterprise, and patriotism to remedy official stupidity, indolence, and negligence, these loud boastings beforehand and shameful confessions afterward are enough to drive a wise man mad.” He then echoed his father’s pessimism in declaring, “I have begun to think that we may look out for subjugation, that we are doomed, that our earthly all is fated to ruin, that we are to be conquered, not by the energy or valor of our outnumbering enemies, but by our own supineness and neglect.” He concluded that if

⁴⁰⁰ “Basil Manly Sr. to Basil Manly Jr., March 3, 1862,” MFP/Furman.

⁴⁰¹ “Basil Manly Sr. to children, March 23, 1862,” MFP/Furman.

⁴⁰² “Basil Manly Sr. to Basil Manly Jr., March 26, 1862,” “Basil Manly Sr. to children, October 21, 1861,” MFP/Furman.

such corruption continued, the Southern Confederacy would find itself “not fit to be free,” its men “not fit to be masters of our own soil, or rulers of ourselves.”⁴⁰³

Predictably, the impact of emancipation figured as the most egregious potentiality in the Manlys’ minds. Even in the first months of the war, Basil Sr. had seen clearly that the war would fundamentally alter race relations in the South and the nation. He observed that “many negroes in all our towns, male and female, can read, and they see the papers regularly...and hear our conversations. They seem not to attend, but they form their own conclusions *in silence*.” He saw in such conclusions a potential catastrophe, a conclusion confirmed by repeated newspaper reports telling how “many negroes have turned against their houses, have joined the enemy, and have even helped them to plans for capturing their owners, as well as for obtaining supplies. The Yankees,” he then derided, “now talk of freedom for them,” and he considered all the proposed plans for such merely “golden visions and delusions, which the negro has not sagacity to dispel. Unless the hand of God interpose, they will be allured and entangled, and the result of any extended outbreak will be the destruction (annihilation) of their race, perhaps of the other race, too.”⁴⁰⁴

But Reverend Manly Sr.’s derision of the Union’s emancipation proposals did not preclude him from assessing his own relationship to the black slaves in his midst. He worried especially over the spiritual state of the slaves in his family, his congregation, and his community. How to reach them and make good on southern claims to their proper moral instruction was a persistent source of consternation for the aging minister. “It is the most difficult problem of the Southern Pastor, to know what to do with [the coloured population], and do it.” The issue, which had plagued his conscience since youth,

⁴⁰³ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, November 4, 1862,” MFP/Furman.

⁴⁰⁴ “Basil Manly Sr. to Basil Manly Jr., December 20, 1861,” MFP/Furman.

engrossed his every thought in the wake of defeat and emancipation. He even authored a treatise on the freedmen in the months following the surrender of Confederate forces and the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment. Its purpose seemed to be to confront the issue of emancipation directly, in an effort to salve his personal fears and resolve a regional (and national) dilemma: what was to become of the freedmen?⁴⁰⁵

The issue, as he explained it, was one of paramount concern. “The history of the black man in America is one of the most striking chapters in the providential designs of God with this country,” he wrote; “he is a factor that enters, sometimes most perplexingly, into every problem—social, financial, religious, or political—that agitates the public mind.” Despite white fears, reservations, and prejudices, the black man “is here, and he is going to stay...it is a part of [our] business to see what becomes of him. I am not ascribing exaggerated importance to the negro,” he continued, “when I say that he cannot be ignored or neglected without harm to the gravest interest of our country: for I am but uttering what is the glory of our land, that no class in it, however humble, can be ignored or despised without affecting the welfare of all.”⁴⁰⁶

Having laid out the import of his subject, he then struck a surprisingly optimistic tone. “The only way then to deal with the black man whom we find in America—is to give him his rights, cordially, frankly, fully,” he declared before asserting a decidedly paternalistic perspective: “the freedman is a man, neither more nor less...His past condition of servitude is not unimportant, as affecting his present state and our present responsibilities.” In Manly Sr.’s mind, “the momentous question is not what he was, but what he is, and especially what he is going to be...he is not a babe, to be fondled and

⁴⁰⁵ “Basil Manly Sr. to children, February 3, 1862, “ MFP/Furman.

⁴⁰⁶ Basil Manly Sr., “‘Our Brother in Black: A Treatise on the Freedmen,’ Undated,” Basil Manly Sr. papers (hereafter BMSr)/Furman.

pitied. He is not a brute, to be trampled and despised. He is not a fiend or a savage to be shunned and dreaded, nor an angel to be admired and flattered. He is simply a man.” He then proclaimed, “Oh! how hard it is to know, and how harder still to do just what is right!,” before asserting that “the question is not how much can be got out of the colored man as a worker, nor how much use can be made of him as a voter, but how much can be put into him as a man, how much can be done for him as an immortal?”⁴⁰⁷

Manly Sr. then reiterated his belief that “first and foremost [the freedman] needs to be fairly treated;...to have fair opportunities for labor, and to get honest pay for it, to have a chance to...develop whatever there is in him...in short to have a fair field.” The reverend even went so far as to say that southerners like himself would “welcome cordially the liberal aid of our Northern brethren, who have done, especially in the important matter of educational institutions, a work which in our crippled condition it would have been impossible for the South to have undertaken, for to carry through.”⁴⁰⁸

Such an amiable outlook on the postwar prospects for the South, white and black, are shocking, especially from someone so fervently supportive of southern secession before the war, so invested in the Confederate cause during the war, and so devastated with Confederate defeat and the prospects of emancipation it entailed. But when viewed through the moral prism of righteous honor, such an outlook only affirmed Manly Sr.’s lifelong emphasis on self-mastery as the foundation of that sacred ethical ideal, which he believed had sanctified the southern social order under slavery. Why, he no doubt thought, would emancipation render such an ideal null and void? Why wouldn’t southern

⁴⁰⁷ Basil Manly Sr., “‘Our Brother in Black: A Treatise on the Freedmen,’ Undated,” Basil Manly Sr. papers (hereafter BMSr)/Furman.

⁴⁰⁸ Basil Manly Sr., “‘Our Brother in Black: A Treatise on the Freedmen,’ Undated,” Basil Manly Sr. papers (hereafter BMSr)/Furman.

white men like himself continue to promote self-mastery and righteous honor? A man's obligations did not stop with defeat; nor did his prerogatives.

Basil Jr. shared his father's concern for the moral state of former southern slaves. "Slavery I consider drawing near its end, let the conflict terminate however it may, he reasoned in early 1865. "Nor is it a source of profound regret in my mind. It has elevated the slave. It has sundered but not elevated the master. Perhaps some new system," he opined before predicting that, "serfdom or peonage, or some semi-feudal arrangement may grow up out of the confusion and chaos which the war is breeding, that will serve to elevate both master and slave, or in some way fulfill providential designs." Citing recent southern proposals to arm slaves in Confederate military service as proof, he reckoned that even if the Confederate States achieved independence, its system of slavery would be no more. "Already the indications are very obvious of a striking change of sentiment in reference to this subject among the thoughtful men of the army," he noted before concluding, "events move rapidly in Revolutions when melted in the crucible of war, people become much more fluid and capable of abandoning long cherished views and deep-rooted sentiments."⁴⁰⁹

In coming to terms with this increasingly probable outcome, he speculated on the possible means by which it would be enacted. Just south of Greenville, South Carolina in May of 1865, he recorded the results of a recent meeting with his slaves on the subject of emancipation. "Perhaps it was premature," he wrote to his parents, "but we know they had heard and would hear a good deal on the subject, and perhaps much that was

⁴⁰⁹ "Basil Manly Jr. to parents, March 20, 1865," MFP/Furman. For an overview of the complicated and various evangelical perspectives on race and religion in the postwar period, see: Edward J. Blum, *Reforging The White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005).

incorrect, and we might do good by a plain talk. I told them,” he continued, “that there were movements going on which could not well be understood yet, but there was a probability that they might after awhile become free and have to shift for themselves, and...I had no intention to resist it, nor fall out with them about it.” He recalled that he had told them he “should probably give them a part of the crop...so they ought to do their best, without watching or urging,” and that “as long as they staid on the place we must have order and obedience, as their master [he] expected to make no difference in [his] treatment of them and should stand no airs nor assumptions on their part.” He had then decreed that “if they were satisfied to stay on those terms and work the crop through, they might do so. If not, the sooner they cleared out the better...but, if they behaved well, [he] intended to support them as usual.” “I told them I did not say they were free, they were not;” he concluded, “but that I thought probably they would be.” He finished on a self-assuring note in proclaiming, “of course they all wanted to stay.”⁴¹⁰

As a pastor with a paternalistic worldview, Basil Manly Jr.’s attitude toward the freedmen and his proposals regarding the proper white response to their emancipation followed predictably pious channels. He shared with his father a resolution his church had recently made regarding its black congregants, one which sought to answer the question: “what arrangements under existing circumstances are best for the discipline and instruction of our colored members?” He told his father that his mind had been “unsettled as to the course that ought to be pursued” but that the final resolution reflected his “convictions that our serenity as citizens and our happiness as Christians depends on our

⁴¹⁰ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, May 24, 1865,” MFP/Furman. For more on the uneven pace of emancipation across the South, see: Katharine L. Dvorak, “After Apocalypse, Moses,” in John B. Boles, ed., *Masters & Slaves in the House of the Lord: Race and Religion in the American South, 1740-1870*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1988), 173-191.

attempting faithfully to discharge the duty of instructing them.” He justified these convictions by proclaiming, “it can’t be wrong to teach sinful men God’s word, and to strive with Christian zeal to win their confidence that we may lead them to Heaven.”⁴¹¹

One of the resolution’s animating concerns was that “in many of the churches [the freedmen] are more numerous than the whites” and the members worried that “the novel circumstances of their condition” had “alienated them from their former owners...[and] shaken a large portion of them from their adherence to Jesus.” To avoid such alienation, the congregation had resolved “that we should not withhold from our colored members kind, earnest, scriptural instruction and faithful discipline,” arguing that “so long as they dwell among us, self interest as well as benevolence and regard for the honor of Christians requires such care, however laborious it may be.”⁴¹²

Despite this expressed concern for the moral state of former master and former slave alike, the realities of Confederate defeat soon forced Basil Jr. to shift his focus to the more temporal concerns attending emancipation. “Everything here seems settling down solidly and stolidly into the conclusion that the war is over, that we must just take the best we can get, and comport ourselves by the assurance that ‘what is to be, will be,’” he remarked in May of 1865.⁴¹³ “We hear that the negroes in this state are declared free,” he noted later that month, “but are advised to stay with their so called owners, making contracts to work out the present crop and be paid in a part of the proceeds.”⁴¹⁴

⁴¹¹ “Basil Manly Jr. to Basil Manly Sr., September 7, 1865,” MFP/Furman.

⁴¹² “Basil Manly Jr. to Basil Manly Sr., September 7, 1865,” MFP/Furman. For more on white southern efforts to rebuild their religious communities and retain their black membership while maintaining some semblance of moral authority over them, see: Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up*, 109-127; Stowell, *Rebuilding Zion*, 100-113.

⁴¹³ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, May 1, 1865,” MFP/Furman.

⁴¹⁴ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, May 4 to 25, 1865,” MFP/Furman.

Manly Jr. proceeded to outline the stipulations of the Union policy toward freedmen as he understood it, citing specifically the mandate that any labor contracts with former slaves had to be in writing and had to meet the approval of the local military commander. He further explained the clause requiring planters to reserve half their crops for “fair” distribution to the laborers, and to provide “all necessary subsistence tools.” Failure to secure such contracts, he then explained, would result in the planter’s forfeiture of the entire crop. If a planter tried to avoid these mandates by refusing to cultivate his land, it would be seized by the government to be distributed among colonies of freedmen. He predicted the policy would result in “most of the valuable plantations...becom[ing] government property and...[being] disposed of to benefit these colonies of blacks from the interior.” In this way, Manly dubiously surmised that “the region lining the coast appears to be set apart for the Paradise of Darkeydom, whither the ‘freedmen from the interior’ are to be transported and have lots assigned them. That,” he noted caustically, “may have the effect of depleting the upper country at least to some extent, and delivering us in part of the lazy and fickle who look for freedom as meaning a life without work, and who long for some change of locality if of nothing else.”⁴¹⁵

After laying bare these pessimistic expectations, Basil Jr. then vented his anger by asserting “much has been said of the violations of the marriage relation by masters who break it up by removals. But there will be more families broken up and more negro women and children left worse than widows and orphans in one year after freedom than has been the case in 20 years altogether” under slavery. “For all these events, however, we are not responsible,” he proclaimed. “Still the effects of it we shall have to bear as well as witness. Our eyes will be pained by the sight of misery which we shall lack means

⁴¹⁵ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, May 4 to 25, 1865,” MFP/Furman.

to relieve,” he lamented before continuing, “our ears will be assailed with applications perhaps from our own former slaves...while the scanty remains of former affluence will be insufficient to provide for our own wants, and bestow upon them too.” He predicted that rampant “stealing will provoke killing, and that will be revenged by midnight burnings and aggressive action,” before facetiously concluding, “nice country this will be to live in.”⁴¹⁶

It was with such low expectations that he set about re-ordering his own household affairs. “I have just returned from an ineffectual effort to make a ‘contract’ with my plantation hands,” he wrote to his father in August of 1865; “they refuse to *sign any paper*. I suppose this arises from a report which it is likely the negro troops set afloat, that signing a contract signs away their liberty, and brings them again into bondage.” He then explained that “they do not object to the terms I offer” but were nevertheless “going ahead in rather a slipshod way.” He observed that most “*profess* to be at work, and are quite civil and respectful, [and] have no notion of leaving” but that after the new year he would be forced to “see to my own children and their support and have the darkies to see to theirs.” He then expressed his despair in the face of “dark times, proceedings, humiliations, doubts, [and] but little sunshine or joy or hope except Heavenwards” before

⁴¹⁶ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, May 4 to 25, 1865,” MFP/Furman. The most comprehensive analysis of the violence attending Reconstruction on the ground in the South is: George C. Rable, *But There Was No Peace: The Role of Violence in the Politics of Reconstruction*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1984).

For more on the violent nature of Reconstruction in South Carolina specifically, see especially: Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 377-429; Stephen Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman & the Reconstruction of White Supremacy*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 40-79; W. Scott Poole, *Never Surrender: Confederate Memory and Conservatism in the South Carolina Upcountry*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2004); Rable, *But There Was No Peace*, 81-100; 163-185; Francis Butler Simkins, *Pitchfork Ben Tillman: South Carolinian*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002 ed.), 47-77.

praying hopefully; “let the days past be gone, swiftly, silently, irrevocably...may God forgive what was amiss, and bless any feeble attempts to do good.”⁴¹⁷

Manly Sr.’s tone also turned dark as Reconstruction proceeded. “We too have made an entire change in our servants,” he told his son in the summer of 1868. “The change has been an improvement. We have better servants, and not so many ‘hangers on’ and consumers” before concluding, “I think the most of [the freedmen] will die out before they learn to make the necessary change” but in the meantime it was imperative that they “be watched and held to a rigid account.”⁴¹⁸ As for what would become of those freedmen turned out of their homes, he callously reasoned several months before that “we are destined to get better servants and cheaper, by slow degrees. The negroes will die out and disappear, except the few that early learn to be industrious and managing. And they will be glad to keep a place, when they get it.”⁴¹⁹ As for the rest, he had similarly felt “we scarcely need to commiserate any of the poor negroes now. They will run their course rapidly to extinction.”⁴²⁰

Clearly straightened circumstances, armed blacks, and widespread uncertainty had soured the Manlys’ more paternalistic notions and replaced them with distrust, disgust, and despair. Perhaps that explains how Basil Manly Sr., who had cautiously declared the end of slavery a blessing and who had urged his fellow former masters to look to the welfare of their former slaves as they navigated the tumultuous road of newfound freedom, eventually threw up his hands in dejection. He even seriously contemplated expatriating to Brazil or some other South American country, noting that “here are many

⁴¹⁷ “Basil Manly Jr. to parents, August 15, 1865,” MFP/Furman.

⁴¹⁸ “Basil Manly Sr. to children, June 10, 1868,” Manly family/SBHL.

⁴¹⁹ “Basil Manly Sr. to children, February 5, 1868,” Manly family/SBHL.

⁴²⁰ “Basil Manly Sr. to children, January 20, 1868,” Manly family/SBHL.

more that would gladly leave if they could save enough out of the wreck of their fortunes to take them away.” But he checked himself when he admitted, “I am too old, and too much of an invalid, to lead in an enterprise of emigration. Else I think I should prefer some other country to that which now remains, encumbered as it is.” He then admitted that “for some time I thought there would be no need of my taking any oath to the Yankee Government” but “as time has passed I become informed that not only will no right be regarded or recognized or protected without it, but I may be proceeded against as worth more than \$20,000. I have therefore taken the customary oath and have applied for *pardon*.” He mournfully concluded, “I expect gradual impoverishment and the utter waste of all that we possess.”⁴²¹

Such despondency did not wholly stifle the Manly spirit. “I am becoming less and less inclined to any intercourse with the northern people,” he confessed in the winter of 1868. “Their very framework of mind and principles is different from ours. Their civilization is different. They seem to have a religion that pushes them on with zeal and a certain liberality in the use of money,” he noted, “but I have failed to discern anything love-some in their character. When we get into another world, we may understand each other better.”⁴²²

Basil Sr. died in the winter of 1868—just short of his seventy-first birthday—leaving it to his sons to reconcile themselves to defeat and emancipation. Basil Manly Jr.

⁴²¹ “Basil Manly Sr. to children, July 7, 1865,” MFP/Furman. For more on former Confederate exiles and various exodus schemes, see especially: Lawrence F. Hill, “The Confederate Exodus to Latin America, I,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 39, (Oct. 1935): 100-134 and “The Confederate Exodus to Latin America, II,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 39, (Jan. 1936): 161-199; Robert C. Poister, “The Business of Exile: The Money and Memory of a ‘Confederate’ Family in Cuba,” (MA thesis, University of Georgia, 2012); Andrew Rolle, *The Lost Cause: The Confederate Exodus to Mexico*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965); Donald E. Sutherland, “Exiles, Emigrants, and Sojourners: The Post-Civil War Confederate Exodus in Perspective,” *Civil War History*, Vol. 31, No. 3, (Sept. 1985): 237-256.

⁴²² “Basil Manly Sr. to children, February 5, 1868,” Manly family/SBHL.

personified this continued emotional struggle in reflecting on a recent trip to Arlington, Virginia in 1870. He admitted that the sight of Robert E. Lee's former plantation awakened "some bitter feelings, born of the war and its results," but quickly asserted that these eventually gave way "to more overwhelming, and I trust more profitable thoughts." He proceeded to laud the character and career of General Robert Edward Lee as a model of southern righteous honor and manhood. He struck a reconciliationist chord when he proclaimed that upon Lee's death, "the homage we render is due from all alike. If the South loved him, the North honored him, and all may join in bewailing him. We gather," he continued, "not to dig in the grave, 'with hateful assiduity, for roots of bitterness;' not to revive the rancor of past struggles, or stimulate the ardor of impending conflicts; but to learn the lessons which God's Providence writes on the tomb of one of earth's noblest heroes, lessons which may tend to moderate rather than inflame the peculiar excitements of the times."⁴²³

In expounding further upon his subject, Manly Jr. anticipated a pillar of what would become the South's civil religion—the Lost Cause. "The same spirit of unassuming simplicity and self sacrifice, which moved him through the war," Manly Jr. argued, "controlled his course at its close, and decided the direction of his subsequent labors. It is easier to rise gracefully than to descend," he then asserted, "but to bear losses and humiliation and overwhelming disaster is the severest test of true magnanimity...it is not difficult to be grand in victory. It requires greatness to be grand in defeat." Despite the great odds stacked against him during his command of the Confederate Army of

⁴²³ Basil Manly Jr., "A Tribute to Robert E. Lee, 1870," BMJr/Furman.

Northern Virginia, Manly Jr. claimed that Lee had indeed remained “grand in defeat,” in life and even in death.⁴²⁴

Manly Jr. singled out Lee’s Christian restraint as the source of his virtue and the strength of his manhood. Even after defeat, Manly insisted, “he spoke only to calm the raging passions, or cheer the despairing energies of the people for whom he would gladly have died, to counsel trust in God, quiet industry, honest endeavors to build up the mind fragments, and retrieve in peace what we had lost in fatal war.” This Lee did, according to Manly Jr., “with scarcely an external indication of the volcanic emotions which he restrained and controlled.” Lee thus embodied the best of the Southern Confederacy and especially the men who had fought for it, those “thoughtful men, who threw themselves into that war...not actuated by blind passion,” not “influenced by regard to their present and immediate interests, by the value of their slave property,” but rather “actuated by a noble motive, sincere and honorable, even if misguided.”⁴²⁵

In giving this tribute to Lee, Basil Manly Jr. presaged countless reassertions of southern righteous honor and manhood to follow in the coming decades. As Federal Reconstruction ended and white southern men “redeemed” their state governments, they whitewashed the public memory of the Civil War and Reconstruction and re-asserted white supremacy through legal disfranchisement, as well as the segregation of—and extralegal violence toward—southern blacks. Southern ethical ideals of righteous honor and manhood reflected and promoted the change.⁴²⁶

⁴²⁴ Basil Manly Jr., “A Tribute to Robert E. Lee, 1870,” BMJr/Furman.

⁴²⁵ Basil Manly Jr., “A Tribute to Robert E. Lee, 1870,” BMJr/Furman.

⁴²⁶ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 255-299; Connelly & Bellows, *God and General Longstreet*; Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*; Gallagher & Nolan, eds., *The Myth of the Lost Cause*; Wilson, *Baptized in Blood*. Many historians have highlighted the pivotal role played by southern white women in such Confederate commemoration ceremonies and rituals, and later, in broader Confederate memorialization projects: William Alan Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914*,

A commencement speech delivered at the University of Georgia nearly a decade after Basil Manly Jr. penned his tribute illustrated the extent to which such conceptions of southern righteous honor and manhood had taken hold. Elijah Alexander Brown epitomized the rising generation of southern men. Just eight years old when the Civil War ended and the son of Georgia's famed wartime governor Joseph E. Brown, Elijah Brown and his generation came of age during Reconstruction, and cut their political teeth in securing the "Redemption" that followed. Feeling burdened with the fallout from their fathers' exploits, they authored both the "Lost Cause" faith and "New South" creed that would presumably guide the South into its future. To justify their claims to authority, they adapted their father's ideals of self-mastery and righteous honor to new circumstances. At the expense of southern black rights, they would reassert white southern manhood.⁴²⁷

Brown took up these themes explicitly in his 1879 commencement speech. "One of the noblest and most pleasing, as well as the most admirable and highly appreciated traits in the human character is that of *true manliness*," he decreed in his opening statement. "It is 'a pearl of great price' for the attainment of which each and *every one of us* should assiduously labor, and in which we should strive to perfect ourselves. One of our greatest aims," he continued, "should be to thoroughly know ourselves, without which we cannot attain to the highest rank of true manhood, which will prepare us to live

(Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003); Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations & the Lost Cause*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Whites, *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender*, 132-224.

⁴²⁷ For an analysis of the tensions between the "Lost Cause" religion and the "New South" creed, see especially: Carmichael, *The Last Generation*, 213-236 and Schweiger, *The Gospel Working Up*, 171-194.

for *our country*, and make every necessary sacrifice in her behalf, and to devote ourselves to the cause of that ‘religion which is pure and undefiled.’”⁴²⁸

Having reasserted the primacy of self-mastery in the achievement of righteous honor and true manhood, Brown then proceeded to outline “the lofty traits of true manliness” in full: “fidelity to our country and to our God, ~~firmness (of purpose, steadiness of deportment, courtesy)~~, stability of character, promptness in meeting every engagement, ~~(nobleness of mind)~~, courage in the discharge of every duty, justice to all, unwavering integrity, and strict conformity to the path of virtue and rectitude.” “A true man,” he persisted, “is one whose virtues cannot justly be impeached by even the bitterest of his enemies: whose *reputation* is not stained by the least degree of intolerance or enmity: whose kindness of heart is such as to restrain his lips from utterance tending to wound even his conquered foes.”⁴²⁹ John Lyde Wilson could not have said it better.

⁴²⁸ “W. Speer to Elijah Alexander Brown, July 27, 1879, containing copy of a speech entitled, “‘True Manliness,’ delivered July 24, 1879,” Elijah J. Brown papers (hereafter EJB)/The Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Richard B. Russell Special Collections Building, University of Georgia (hereafter Hargrett).

⁴²⁹ “W. Speer to Elijah Alexander Brown, July 27, 1879, containing copy of a speech entitled, “‘True Manliness,’ delivered July 24, 1879,” EJB/Hargrett.

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