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THE CHANGING ROLE OF ELITE SOUTHERN WOMEN IN THE LOWER SOUTH
(1830-1900)

by

MARY ALEXANDRIA FAHEY

Under the Direction of Wendy Hamand Venet, PhD

ABSTRACT

The topic of the American Civil War is one that has long been studied by historians. This thesis looks to the often forgotten home front and explores the dynamic changes the elite women of the Lower South faced from the antebellum to the post bellum era. Through the exploration of diaries, journals, memoirs, and newspapers from the mid to late nineteenth century, the changing roles and responsibilities of the elite women during this time period are further explored. The stories of the elite women add to the overall history of the nineteenth century Lower South and allow the reader to understand these women through a different lens. While considered wealthy and unaffected by the Civil War, the primary accounts of these women illustrate just how much their lives were changed because of the war and how they continued to change once the war was over.

INDEX WORDS: American Civil War, Nineteenth century, Elite Southern women, Women,
Ladies Memorial Association, Women's work

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(1830-1900)

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MARY ALEXANDRIA FAHEY

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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MARY ALEXANDRIA FAHEY

Committee Chair: Wendy Venet

Committee: Jeffrey Young

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Studies

College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

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DEDICATION

To my family, who are forever offering their love and support. And a special thanks to the two special guys in my life, love you want.

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INTRODUCTION

*I am Southern born and Southern reared; my hopes, my desires, my sympathies, and my interests are with the land of my nativity. - Mary Jones*¹

“The Civil War was a mere episode in the lives of some women,” historian Mary Elizabeth Massey explained, “a gay interlude for a few, a profound experience for most, and a catastrophe for many.”² While the Civil War took place over one hundred and fifty years ago, it is a war that refuses to be forgotten, especially for Southerners with ancestral ties to those that fought and died in the war. It is the war that never went away.³ For me, the Civil War is never far away from my thoughts simply because of the close proximity to many of the war’s historical sites and battlefields. From my house, it does not take long for me to reach Kennesaw Mountain and see the battlefield or climb the mountain, and it is an even shorter drive to visit Marietta’s *Gone with the Wind Museum: Scarlett on the Square* where anyone with a desire to be Scarlett and Rhett for the day can dress up in replica outfits and tour the square. The front-page of the *Marietta Daily Journal* on Sunday, June 18, 2017, read: “Southern Memorial: Confederate Gen. Leonidas Polk honored at site where he died.” Along with an article about the memorial activities was a picture of a woman dressed in nineteenth century apparel holding a picture of Polk and a young boy dressed in his greys holding a ceremonial saber.⁴ Quite simply for me, the memory of the Civil War is all around and Confederate sympathizers are not hard to find. With the national park’s effort to conserve the land that was fought on— the war lives on. And while

¹ Mary Jones qtd. in Erskine Clarke, *Dwelling Place: A Plantation Epic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 279.

² Mary Elizabeth Massey, *Bonnet Brigades* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1966), 366.

³ James M. McPherson, “A War That Never Goes Away,” *American Heritage* 41, no. 2 (1990).

⁴ *Marietta Daily Journal* (Marietta, GA), June 18, 2017.

the men who fought and the battles that were won or lost are important to the story of the Civil War, so are the stories of those that were left behind on the homefront.

The everyday people, including women, are just as much a part of the Civil War story as the generals and soldiers themselves. The field of social history sheds light into the lives of the people left behind and makes it easier for modern day people to find a connection to the past. Thus, as social history started to become popular in the late 1960s and 1970s, U.S. historians turned their attention to the history of the everyday people of the nineteenth century American South. This thesis works to follow the path of previous historians by looking at the nineteenth century not through the eyes of the politicians or other power brokers among white men, but through the exploration of a specific group of elite women in the lower South. I define elite as members of the top tier of Southern society including slaveholding elite, plantation owners, and prominent business owners and merchants. Through a critical examination of diaries and memoirs published after the war I will trace the experiences of these elite lower South women from the outbreak of the Civil War up until the start of the twentieth century.⁵ By following this time period and these specific women, I hope to illustrate the connection between the Civil War and postbellum period in regards to elite women and their roles and responsibilities both inside and outside their homes and families. This thesis suggests that as elite women in the nineteenth century stepped up to contribute to the war effort they altered the traditional roles for women and concludes that their roles and responsibilities made it possible for them to adapt to the postbellum world around them.

⁵ When introducing each woman throughout the thesis, her status and family's occupation will be defined to provide the reader background to her individual status. I will use the lower South states of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Emphasis will be placed on Georgia and Louisiana.

There were an estimated 4.4 million women living in the Confederacy in 1861. Throughout the war, with the volunteers and the conscripted members of service, the war left the Southern homefront “a world of white women and of slaves.”⁶ For most of the war, women were left virtually alone with only a few men to protect them. Julia Johnson Fisher, a planter woman from Georgia, described the regiment leaving for the battlefield and leaving behind only four men within an eight-mile radius who were “lame and decrepit.”⁷ With the departure of the men, the women of the South found themselves thrust in a new world open to greater responsibilities both for their own families and in support of the new Confederacy. As the elite women of the lower South adjusted to their new roles they slowly left their antebellum roles and lifestyles behind as they came together to aid the Confederate soldiers. During the Civil War, there were massive campaigns, often spearheaded by elite women of financial means, to contribute to the support of the Confederate soldier. Women banded together to sew and knit uniforms and supplies, they raised money and collected food, and supported their soldiers without fail all in the name of the new Confederate nation. Unfortunately, at least for those who supported the new nation, the Confederacy fell at the war’s end. However, change had already swept through the South making it nearly impossible for the elite women to return to the lives they knew before the war.

The postbellum world once again shifted the foundations of the women and made it necessary for them to accept the changes in their lives, both on a personal and public level. One major change was the number of men who returned home from the war. Historian Anne Firor

⁶ Quotation from Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 30-31; Mary Elizabeth Massey, *Women in the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 28.

⁷ Julia Johnson Fisher, *Diary, 1864 (Transcript)* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1999), <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/fisherjulia/fisher.html>, 16.

Scott clarified the absence of men and wrote, “The war had created a generation of women without men.... The 1870 census recorded 25,000 more women than men in North Carolina, 36,000 in Georgia, 15,000 in Virginia, and 8,000 in South Carolina.”⁸ This absence continued to alter the lives of elite women and the roles they were to take in the post war period. Women took advantage of the skills learned during the war to help them in their postwar lives. Others, motivated by the freedoms gained during the war, continued to work towards further independence. The Civil War was a turning point for women working outside the home. Because of the Civil War women became more independent and gained an increased ability to go out on their own. Elizabeth Massey, in *Bonnet Brigades*, wrote, “The economic emancipation of women was the most important single factor in her social, intellectual, and political advancement, and the war did more in four years to change her economic status than had been accomplished in any preceding generation.”⁹ Each elite woman looked at throughout this thesis is unique and has a story to share, but there is a common link in that whatever their circumstance— their lives did not return to the antebellum lifestyle they experienced prior to the Civil War.

Multiple historians throughout the years have written about nineteenth century women. Historians on this topic, outside of the exception of Mary Elizabeth Massey who published in the late 1960s, break into two writing periods: the late 1980s to the 1990s and those writing in the 2000s to present day. Throughout these two breaks in time, the historiography on the topic is consistently divided into the three time periods.¹⁰ Only a few scholars span all three of the time

⁸ Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics 1830-1930* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1970), 106.

⁹ Massey, *Bonnet Brigades*, 340.

¹⁰ For work on antebellum, please see Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Catherine Clinton. While this list is not complete, for Civil War historians, please refer to Lisa Tendrich Frank, William Blair, Alexis Girardin Brown, Jacqueline Glass Campbell, and Mary Elizabeth Massey. There are also scholars who work within both the Civil War and Postwar period.

periods like I am attempting to do, but they all cover the topic in vastly different ways.¹¹ The historiography is split between praising the elite women and downplaying their accomplishments. Both sides of the argument acknowledge elite women added to the Civil War effort and their lives changed over the period of the second half of the nineteenth century; however, they divide on whether or not the women were willing to change.

Historians of the earlier period including George C. Rable and Drew Gilpin Faust argue the elite women did not want to change or cared about their status of independence after the war and were more than happy to revert back to the antebellum life. One major argument against women during the war stresses the lack of ‘true’ suffering the elite women went through based solely on their economic status. More recent historians argue the elite were ready to move forward after the war and still maintained a more dominant presence in the postwar period.¹² Relating the elite women to Scarlett and Tara Plantation in *Gone with the Wind* is another way some historians focus on the elite women. While most do work at illustrating why Tara did not truly exist, my work will break away from this as I will not compare my elite women in my primary sources to Margaret Mitchell’s fictional world.¹³

Historians Jane Turner Censer and Anne Firor Scott argue the elite were ready to move forward after the war and still maintained a more dominant presence in the postwar period.

Scott’s *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930* focuses on the antebellum,

¹¹ Laura F. Edwards’ *Scarlett Doesn’t Live Here Anymore* focuses on the three time periods, but also looks at lower class white women, slaves, and elite women. This method does not allow in-depth look at solely the elite women in each time period. Edwards’ also mainly focuses on the lives of Kate Stone and Gertrude Clanton Thomas where I will focus on a larger sampling of elite women. Catherine Clinton’s *Tara Revisited* also explores the three time periods, however, she again also focuses on the different classes of women from the time.

¹² Jane Turner Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 6.; For authors arguing on this side see Jacqueline Glass Campbell, Jane Turner Censer, Lisa Tendrich Frank, and Libra Rose Hilde.

¹³ Laura F. Edwards’ *Scarlett Doesn’t Live Here Anymore* and Catherine Clinton’s *Tara Revisited* are two examples of scholars using Tara as a comparison of the elite Southern women.

Civil War, and postwar period. While she spends a great deal of time on the postwar period, her focus is largely on the politics of the time. Turner's focus is solely on the Upper South states of Virginia and North Carolina and among plantation women. While both Turner and Scott cover the postwar period exclusively in their books, there is still room within the field to make a contribution. The Lower South during the postwar period remains largely understudied and there are gaps among both the area and gender I plan on focusing on. Between the two main historical arguments on the elite women, I fall within those supporting the strength and adaptability of the elite.

My thesis works to study these women through the roles they were forced to take on during and after the war to adapt to an ever-changing South. There is no question the war was the trigger of the changes they faced, but I argue the reason for the change does not matter. The elite women still stepped up, changed, and made a difference in both the Civil War and postbellum era. The motivations and reasons for change do not matter as much as the outcome of their change. The women continued doing their duty both inside and outside of the home and after the war maintained the changes in ways they felt comfortable with.

This thesis is broken into three chapters each focusing on a different aspect of the evolution of the elite Southern women from 1830 to 1900. The three chapters work to explore the importance of the elite women in the lower South, their contributions to the war effort, the change in the traditional patriarchal system, and their postbellum lives in the private and public spheres. The women looked at throughout this thesis range in what state they resided in after the war and their age. My sample of women also includes both women who lived both in cities and on plantations. Chapter one covers the Civil War period and sheds light on these women on the homefront and what their daily lives entailed. The role of women and the antebellum way of life

gradually slipped away as the women left behind on the homefront struggled to find their way during the war. The absence of men decidedly altered the way women lived their lives and what their new responsibilities were. The war necessitated the need for women to adapt from their antebellum selves. This chapter will explain the different ways the elite women were able to adapt to their new situations and how they were able to “cultivate a spirit of ‘self reliance’” and “practice ‘self-denial.’” While there are those who believe the war was a rich man’s war, but a poor man’s fight, the evidence suggests the elite southern women contributed to the war effort and became a large source of support, not only for their individual families, but also, for the Confederacy.¹⁴

Chapters two and three focus on women in the postbellum world. Chapter two looks at the working roles, both wage and nonwage employment, they took to help themselves and their families recover in the postbellum South. Chapter three deals with the benevolent work and political activism that arose from these women as the nineteenth century progressed. These chapters seek to clarify the different motivations elite women had to find work inside and out of the home, links the war efforts to the postwar activities, and explore the evolution of gender relationships. While the elite women were considered privileged and often thought to have not suffered as much during the war, I argue their lives were completely changed and out of the war a new breed of stronger, more independent women were born. The elite women in the postwar period were ready and able to throw off the patriarchy and become leaders in their own right.

¹⁴ Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 17 & 51.

PROLOGUE

Elite Women in the Antebellum South

I do not believe in ladies' assuming responsibilities, but when the Lord is pleased to lay them up them, I do not see why they should not trust him for grace and strength and go forward in their performance.- Mary Jones¹⁵

Before delving into women during the Civil War, one must understand the life of the antebellum woman. Married women in the antebellum period had few to no individual rights. For elite women there was more freedom than those of the lower classes, but they still remained under the legal hand of the patriarchy. One historian wrote, “The mistress of a plantation was the most complete slave on it.” Ladies were legal property of men—unmarried ladies were under the protection of a father, and married ladies under the protection of their husbands. The independence and freedom allowed to these women varied from plantation to plantation, but very rarely did a nineteenth century antebellum woman find herself completely independent. The antebellum South also practiced English common law, a set of marriage and property laws brought to America by the English colonists. According to English common law, women did not have a legal existence outside of their spouse. Women were unable to own property unless it was inherited, and had no legal rights of their own.¹⁶ This relationship between man and woman was part of “ancient household codes” where Paul’s biblical messages: “Wives, submit yourselves

¹⁵ Mary Jones qtd. in Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 291.

¹⁶ “Women and the Law,” *Women, Enterprise & Society*, https://www.library.hbs.edu/hc/wes/collections/women_law/; Quotation from Catherine Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South* (New York: University of Missouri, 1982), 16; Laura F. Edwards, *Scarlett Doesn't Live Here Anymore: Southern Women in the Civil War Era* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 12-13.

unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord” and ““Servants be obedient to them that are your Masters, according to the flesh”” were taken quite literally.¹⁷

Under this patriarchal system, social spheres formed. Women became the leaders of the private sphere and embraced “femininity, beauty, simplicity, and submissiveness,” and motherhood. Meanwhile, men dominated the public sphere, provided for the family, and protected the women. These spheres engaged the two genders into an unspoken agreement where women were placed on a pedestal and the men protected them. Life for the antebellum elite woman could be quite constricting; however, the elite women worked within this system and were an integral part to the family unit. Within their private sphere, elite women were tied closely to their homes and their work mostly revolved around that. Elite women on plantations were especially constricted because they lived in rural areas and because of this had few social outlets. Their rural living situation made it difficult to meet with other women, thus the closest relationships plantation women were among their own family that lived on the plantation. Elite women were responsible for their children and the management of their home and the care of their slaves.¹⁸

For the most part the elite women wrote of their daily activities that related to their education, their children, or their household responsibilities. Overseeing the making of clothing for slaves was one task the mistress of the plantation was responsible. Often this meant simply supervising a slave who would actually be the one making the clothes.¹⁹ Other suitable tasks for

¹⁷ Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 204.

¹⁸ Quotation from Alexis Girardin Brown, “The Women Left Behind: Transformation of the Southern Belle, 1840-1880,” *Historian* 62 (Summer 2000): 759-760.; Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 63-64.

¹⁹ Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 183.

the women were overseeing the slaves in times of illness. Fanny Kemble made it her mission to better the hygiene habits of her husband's slaves. She went as far as offering a nickel to any child who came to her with a clean face. After a few weeks of effort she was happy when one trip to the hospital revealed "that there really was an evident desire to conform to my instructions, and keep the place in a better condition than formerly."²⁰ Because of the value of a slave's life it was important for slave owners to pay attention and provide care for their sick slaves. This clarifies why a woman considered to be on a higher social level than a mere slave would take the time to note the health of their slaves. Common are journal entries like Ann Lewis Hardeman's who simply wrote: "No school yesterday all well except the servants Jenny, Green, Angeline & Hester."²¹

Elite antebellum women tended to their gardens, mended or made personal clothing items, and stepped up when they were needed. When Charles Colcock Jones was away from the family plantation in Liberty County, Mary turned her energies to "the management of their plantations and to the ordinary details of life in the low country." She oversaw repairs made to the home at their plantation Montevideo, ordered supplies for the slave settlements, and even took over Charles' ministerial role in teaching the slaves. For Mary, taking on this responsibility outside her normal realm was a "source of satisfaction" to her. While she did not believe in taking responsibilities outright that were normally set aside for men, she did what she needed to do. For some women of great financial mean, like Mary Jones, the plantation responsibilities

²⁰ Frances Anne Kemble, *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation in 1838-1839* (Athens: Brown Thrasher Books The University of Georgia Press, 1984), 117. Fanny was an outsider to the South and her perspective is unique to other elite plantation women, but her diary illustrates the close proximity these women had with their slaves.97-98.

²¹ Ann Lewis Hardeman, *An Evening When Alone: Four Journals of Single Women in the South, 1827-67*, ed. Michael O'Brien (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1993), 243. Ann Lewis Hardeman of Mississippi was a single woman who in 1849 was left in charge of her sister's six children. Ann moved in with her brother and his wife on their plantation.

extended to multiple properties. By 1846, Charles owned the three plantations Montevideo, Maybank, and Arcadia and oversaw his widowed sister Susan Cumming's three properties of White Oak, Social Bluff, and Lambert. After the death of her husband, Susan became responsible for her husband's properties despite having little business experience. Like Mary, in fact, even more so than Mary— Susan was up to to the challenge of working with the plantation managers to ensure the plantations were run smoothly. This included going over the ledgers, taking care of the slave settlements, and dealing with the cotton and rice crops. And while this is an impressive task for a woman in 1846— it was done all under the guidance of her brother Charles and a property manager Charles hired. Both Mary and Susan did what needed to be done for the sake of their property; however, it should be noted they did so with explicit direction from Charles Jones via letters.²²

Women of elite status had the opportunity to pursue an education— at least one that was considered suitable for women of that time period. Mothers were often responsible for their children's education and made sure they were either sent to the right schools or had proper tutors. Cornelia Jones Pond, of Georgia, recalled her “mother was very ambitious, instilling into our minds the importance of a good education. She would hear me recite all my lessons before starting to school.” Cornelia took her education seriously and often competed with her cousin Laura. Cornelia was determined to “not let her surpass me in anything.”²³ Gertrude Thomas, who studied at Wesleyan College, prided herself in her skill as a writer. In November 1848, Gertrude penned: “It comes just as natural for me [to] write in this journal as it does for me to eat a

²² Mary Jones qtd. in Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 291.

²³ Cornelia Jones Pond, *Recollections of a Southern Daughter: A Memoir by Cornelia Jones Pond of Liberty County*, ed. Lucinda H. MacKethan (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1998), 8.

meal.”²⁴ Girls were taught a variety of subjects ranging from English composition, grammar, math, sciences, history, and foreign languages. Elite families, like the Jones’, felt education was necessary for shaping children into nice “Christian gentleman and Christian ladies.”²⁵ Children were a reflection of their parents’ ability to rear the future generation of elite Southern men and women and because of this parents, especially mothers, paid attention to their children’s educations. Ann Lewis Hardeman illustrated the importance of education by frequently writing about the lessons and school activities of her nieces and nephews. When the children were not doing well with school she often wrote about it in her journal and continued to follow up with them.²⁶ Elite families valued the education of all their children, but boys and girls received different schooling based solely on their gender. Girls in the antebellum South were prepared for their future homes and families, and they were limited to career paths because of their gender.²⁷ While their education was limited it did not go to waste and their education would soon become an asset in the years to come.

Religion also played an important role in the lives of the lower South women and had a strong influence on how the women went about their daily lives, especially when dealing with their slaves. Christianity in the lower South served as a crucial foundation in the Southerners life. True conversion to the Lord was often a topic in the writings of the women. A young Gertrude Clanton Thomas of Georgia excitedly exclaimed in April of 1851:

What a change a very great change has taken place in my every feeling. Yesterday, I felt that although I had repented of my sins I was still unpardoned... I doubted. Now thank

²⁴ Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, *The Secret Eye: The Journal of Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, 1848-1889*, ed. Virginia Ingraham Burr (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 77.

²⁵ Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 218.

²⁶ Hardeman, *An Evening Alone*, 227.

²⁷ Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 218 & 221.

Heaven I feel certain of my acceptance with God. How delightful is the thought! How transporting! How rapturous. How divine. What a change. Can I ever doubt the goodness of my God, of my Saviour?²⁸

Throughout the 1850s, these antebellum elite women wrote of church and God constantly. For Ann Lewis Hardeman of Mississippi this simply was remarking whether or not her family was able to attend church that week. However, for converted Christians like Gertrude Thomas, Mary Jones, and Sarah F. Davidson, the diaries and letters illustrate how strong they felt about their relationship with the Lord.

While the men had the most responsibility with the lives of the slaves, the woman of the household came into constant contact with them. Most, if not all, of the diaries and memoirs covering the lives of elite women in the antebellum South refer constantly to their slaves. The women refer to clothing their slaves, tending to them during illness, and teaching them religion. All of these responsibilities are tied to the homestead and further tie the antebellum elite women to their home and ensured their sphere never needed to extend past their proper role in society. Elite women with slaves, especially those on a plantation, often involved themselves in the religious practices of the slaves. Mary Jones' husband Charles Colcock Jones pushed for the slaves in low country Georgia to be converted to Christianity and believed slaves "had been placed under their care." Charles felt the "salvation of the slaves' souls" was the responsibility of the master. Charles also knew that in Liberty County at least "most of the teachers of slaves were white women."²⁹

As the teaching of Christianity among the slaves spread, it entered into the women's sphere of responsibility. While staying on her husband Pierce Butler's family plantations, Fanny

²⁸ Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 87.

²⁹ Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 105 & 141.

Kemble spent much of her time among the plantation slaves listening to their complaints and problems. She also, like other women on plantations, spent time teaching the slaves. Most of this instruction revolved around religion and specific messages from the Bible. The Jones family constructed scripture cards with images to help in the instruction of their slaves to help them become fully converted to Christ. To help his own teaching of the slaves, Charles Jones met with Mrs. Pratt concerning her work with teaching slaves. Mrs Pratt, another member of the elite class, published her ““Scripture Sketches for Colored Persons”” in the *Charleston Observer* for others to use for their instruction. Mrs. Pratt took scriptural stories and taught slaves “how to follow the model of faithful servants and how to avoid the paths of unfaithful ones.” She did this by personally selecting stories from the Bible to illustrate the message she wanted to send.³⁰ However, some women felt teaching the slaves orally and with pictures alone would not help them be truly converted. Although teaching slaves to read and write was illegal in most states, a few elite women reference teaching their slaves basics in order to help their scripture progress.

After her conversion, Sarah F. Davidson of North Carolina spent much of her time attending to the religious instruction of her slaves and soon became “troubled and perplexed” with her lessons. She believed religious instruction could only be completed with a basic “knowledge of letters,” and so she set out to teach them to read. Because of the slaves “faithful attendance and application” they were soon able to complete simple religious tasks like repeating the Lord’s Prayer, and reading a few scriptures.³¹ Cornelia Jones Pond taught her personal slave

³⁰ Clarke, 126 & 140.

³¹ Sarah F. Davidson, *A Life in Antebellum Charlotte: The Private Journal of Sarah F. Davidson, 1837*, ed. Karen M. McConnell, Janet S. Dyer & Ann Williams (Charleston: The History Press, 2005), 41-42. While Sarah’s journal is not an example of one from the lower South, her experiences in the antebellum South do add valued content for this section of the thesis. Her diary will not be featured in any of the following chapters.

Kate to read simply because she did not “have much to do.”³² Fanny Kemble on the other hand taught a young slave to read in early 1839 simply because he asked and she felt “unrighteous laws are made to be broken.” When Aleck, Fanny’s young slave, asked to read she decided she would teach him despite potential consequences of being heavily fined and prison time. She ultimately concluded she “certainly intend[ed] to teach Aleck to read,” but she “certainly won’t tell Mr. [Butler] anything about it.” A month after starting her first lesson with Aleck, Fanny gave Aleck and another slave, Sally, a second reading lesson.³³ Because of her short stay on Butler Island, Fanny was not able to continue with the reading lessons and readers of Fanny’s journal never learn if Aleck and Sally were able to finish learning to read, but the seeds were planted by one woman willing to throw off traditional decorum and laws to teach these slaves to read. Despite these examples of women teaching slaves to read, elite women for the most part did not participate in further activities outside their personal sphere. Women understood the importance of staying within their socially accepted roles and knew there would be repercussions if they did not do so.

The consequences for women who did not follow this established patriarchal system were often severe. Fanny Kemble quickly learned this lesson as her own marriage with Butler became rockier as time passed on her stay on his plantation. By 1849, Fanny was not only divorced from Pierce, but lost custody of her daughters in the process. Fanny served as an example to other elite women of the importance of staying within the proper social spheres allowed to them through the patriarchal society. The antebellum South was a South of clear class and gendered boundaries where everyone knew exactly where they stood. The elite women knew

³² Pond, 48.

³³ Kemble, *Journal of a Residence*, 271-272 & 302.

their specific duties and sphere and understood their role in lower South life. While their sphere was limited and constrictive, the role these women played in their private lives helped shape them into the women they would become during the Civil War.

CHAPTER ONE

*Oh! To see and be in it all. I hate weary days of inaction. Yet what can women do but wait and suffer?- Kate Stone*³⁴

At the start of the war, elite women struggled with what to do. Not all women favored secession and many did not want to go to war. There was a struggle between patriotism and protectiveness. These Southern ladies wanted to show their support for the war, while at the same time ensuring their loved ones being sent off to fight would be safe. Kate Stone, of Louisiana, grieved when her brother William and Uncle Bo joined the cause. Although she was proud of their decision to join she could not help but worry. In fact, she often wrote about the efforts she and her mother went tried to convince her younger brothers, Coleman and Walter, from joining later in the war. Clara Solomon, from a merchant family in New Orleans, expressed her distress when her father left for the war. Clara exclaimed: “The world is made of partings, and they are the saddest things in life... God bless him, may he return home safe and victorious.”³⁵ Women throughout the South expressed concern as their loved ones left with the uncertainty of how long they would be gone and whether they would return at all.³⁶ As elite women of the lower South dealt with their conflicting emotions of patriotism and protectiveness, a new breed of elite women arose. Women, especially those of the elite class, worked together and played a vital role during the war for both their families and the Confederate soldiers. After asking the question “what can we do” and expressing the wish to be men and go and fight, the

³⁴ Kate Stone, *Brokenburn: The Journal of Kate Stone 1861-1868*, ed. John Q. Anderson (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972), 24.

³⁵ Clara Solomon, *The Civil War Diary of Clara Solomon: Growing Up in New Orleans 1861-1862*, ed. Elliott Ashkenazi (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 23.

³⁶ Sarah Huff, *My 80 Years in Atlanta* (The University of Virginia, 1937), 3.

ladies of the South obtained a new and worthy vocation to “suffer and be strong; to trust and be calm; to pray and be fervent” all in the name of the cause. In this newly ordained vocation, the ladies of the South stepped up and reshaped the homefront.³⁷

Under this new patriotic purpose, the ladies showed their support of the cause through flag presentations, Southern cockades, and wonderfully patriotic sendoffs. The poem “The Confederate Soldier’s Wife Parting From Her Husband!” summarized the patriotic fever sweeping the South: “Here is thy trusty blade!/ Take it, and wield it in a glorious cause;/ Defend our firesides, battle for the laws/ Which our forefathers made; / And stay, that on thy breast my hand/ May place the blue cockade!”³⁸ This poem, illustrated a wife proudly sending her husband off to war. There were no tears with this send off showing both her support and pride in sending off her beloved. In fact, tears were not the way to send the men off. The wife in this poem gave her husband both a symbolic representation of the fight with the blue cockade and a literal sword to do physical harm to any Yankee that stood in his way. Both women and men showed their support through the wearing of the cockades. One Confederate soldier wrote the Southern cockades “made by the ladies and our sweethearts” were seen all around. The cockades illustrated the beginning of the women’s political voice. Through the production and display of these cockades, the women vividly showed their support for the war.³⁹

³⁷ For ideas on patriotism and protectiveness please see Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 14-15.; Stone, 24. While William and Uncle Bo survived the war with minor wounds, both Coleman and Walter died while serving both dying before the age of 19.; Quotation in *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), April 27, 1861.

³⁸ “The Confederate Soldier’s Wife Parting From Her Husband! 1861” (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1999), Electronic Edition. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/wife/wife.html>.

³⁹ Quotation from “Co. Aytch” Maury Grays. *First Tennessee Regiment or, A Side Show of the Big Show*, ed. Sam R. Watkins, (The Project Gutenberg), PDFebook. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13202/13202.txt>.; George C. Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 48.; Oxford English Dictionary defines cockade as a ribbon, knot of ribbons, rosette, or the like, worn in the hat as a badge of office or party, or as part of a livery dress.

In the midst of the frenzy to send their men off to fight, women found flag making another way to rally to the cause and show their support. Making flags for the different military companies allowed women to give back to the men who were going off to war to defend them. Flag making became a “perfect mania” among the Confederate elite.⁴⁰ The flag followed the company with every step they took and in return the women felt they were with the company in spirit. In the early war effort, the ladies of the Confederacy jumped at the chance to be a part of the flag making and relished the grandiose presentations that followed. Working with the flags closely linked the women to the symbol of the new nation and cemented them as patriots for the cause. This also was another way for women to establish themselves as something more than those who stoked the home fires. With the flags they were *in* the war. Ladies throughout the lower South of all ages participated in the flag mania. Women drew flags in their diaries, sewed mini flags to their clothes, hung them outside their homes, wrote songs and poetry honoring the flag, traveled by train to get the material, and in some cases gave them to their slaves to wear and protect. Little children waved flags in the faces of Union soldiers and “screamed the ‘Bonnie Blue Flag’” to soldiers passing by.⁴¹ Sarah “Sallie” Clayton, in Georgia, kept a picture of the Confederate flag in her hat keeping it close for strength during the hard days of war. At times, women were quite brazen with their Confederate flag and patriotism, like young Sarah Morgan who wore her Confederate flag on her dress and walked around town in the Union occupied city of New Orleans.⁴²

⁴⁰ Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 91-92.

⁴¹ Solomon, 356-357.

⁴² *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), March 6, 1861.; Sarah Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City: A Memoir of Civil War Atlanta and the Old South*, ed. Robert S. Davis Jr., (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1999), 55.

While the enthusiasm for flag making was high, the flag presentations created bigger audiences and raised the patriotic fever even higher. These presentations furthered the ladies' commitment to the war and gave them a visual representation for what they were supporting. It also was a way for women to be involved in the war effort in a semi-political way. Sallie Clayton was present when the daughter of Colonel B.F. Yancey, Miss Caroline Yancey, made and presented the flag to the Georgia Volunteers, Captain Foreacre's company. Sallie's account with a substantial write up of the presentation in the *Southern Confederacy* newspaper give the reader a vivid picture of the frenzy of the presentation. Miss Yancey was noted for presenting not only a beautifully made flag, but also giving a "pretty" speech. After the speech, Captain Foreacre called the color bearer by name, Sergeant Fishback, and admonished him to "never allow its folds to trail in the dust." Sergeant Fishback carefully took the flag and exclaimed a resounding "Never! Never! Never!" The crowd went wild.⁴³ In early 1861 issues of the *Southern Confederacy*, there was constant talk of the beautiful flags presented to the men. The journalists were quick to emphasize both the beauty of the flags and the beauty and virtue of the ladies. The men going off to war and their leading generals particularly enjoyed these ceremonies and the pomp and circumstance that accompanied it. These large ceremonies made a big show and emphasized to the ladies how treasured they were and how important the work they were doing was.⁴⁴

These elite women, their flags, and the following flag presentations made a difference, and they impacted more than just the men going off to war. The flag presentation to the Gate City Guard in Atlanta was such a big affair the *Southern Confederacy* filled two columns

⁴³ Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City*, 44-45.

⁴⁴ *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), May 28, 1861.

dedicated to the reporting of this story, and even that was not enough to give all the details. The weather on the day of the Gate City Guard presentation was rainy and cloudy, but even the dismal weather was not enough to stop the crowds from forming to see the event. The streets and veranda were packed with ladies standing with umbrellas to protect themselves from the elements. The soldiers came in full military dress and did not give one thought to the “mud and slush in the street.” Miss Hanleiter, Miss Emeline Shaw, and Miss Mary Parr took their position in the front, and Miss Hanleiter presented a beautiful silk flag with the Latin phrase “In Hoc Signo Vinces (by this sign you shall conquer),” and a bouquet of Spring flowers. As the men marched away, the ladies of the Atlanta Female Institute, presented each member of the guard with a small homemade Confederate flag.⁴⁵

After the presentation, General J.H. Rice gave a speech on behalf of the ladies. With General Rice speaking for the ladies it was clear that although the women were able to participate in these political rallying of soldiers they were to only participate on the fringe. At this point in the early war period, elite women were still not only testing the political waters, but also getting adjusting to whether they really wanted to be more involved in the public sphere. Everything in these presentations was symbolic of the purity and beauty of the women and the strength and valor of the men. These ceremonies in 1861 still divided the women and the men. The women were to stay behind and support the war, but the men needed to “come forward, strike for the protection of our country— our homes, wives, sisters, and mothers; and if necessary, die in their defense.” After Rice’s speech, Miss Hanleiter was presented with a gold

⁴⁵ *Southern Confederacy*, (Atlanta, GA), April 1, 1861.; Wendy Hamand Venet, *A Changing Wind: Commerce and Conflict in Civil War Atlanta*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 38.; Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City*, 43.

watch with the inscription “Gate-City Guards, to Miss J.E. Hanleiter, April 1, 1861.”⁴⁶ On the surface the flag ceremonies might seem to be merely fluff or superficial, but they helped boost Southern morale. This boost was made possible because of the elite women and their commitment to the men. Their thoughtful making of the flags and their kind and beautiful smiles, the ladies of the South illustrated their support and rallied to the cause. With their support, it was easier for men to leave their homes and families to go and fight. The ceremonies conveyed how important the seemingly small acts women accomplished were to the war effort. While the men and boys were off in battle or felt discouraged, one look at the homemade flag would remind them what they were fighting for. The flag represented the purity and honor of women left behind.

After the flag presentations the soldiers then needed to leave for battle and there was no better way to do so than with a proper send off. When the Gate City Guards left for active service, women were among the crowds to wish them off and “bid them ‘Godspeed.’” Sallie Clayton, of Atlanta, recalled the train stations crowded with ladies at all times for the send off events. Most of the ladies recognized “in every soldier a father, husband, brother or son” and were anxious to help the men in any way they could. Another Georgian, Eliza Andrews, of Albany, described “parties of girls” visiting the station simply to watch the soldiers passing by. The sight of the ladies in every town or station waving and cheering with their handkerchiefs and boosting soldier morale uplifted more than one Confederate soldier.⁴⁷ Emma Prescott, of Columbus, Georgia, and other women in her community would throw food, including meat,

⁴⁶ *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), April 1, 1861.

⁴⁷ Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City*, 43.; Grays. *First Tennessee Regiment.*; Eliza Frances Andrews, *The War-Time Journal of a Georgia Girl, 1864-1865*, (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1908), 27. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/andrews/andrews.html>.

ginger cakes, and bread, to the passing trains carrying the soldiers. The ladies gave the men a “heartfelt and enthusiastic welcome” and “kisses as plentiful as blackberries.” Women sending the men off provided the men with one last reminder of women as symbols of what they were fighting for— the cause and for home. The physical manifestations of support for the war— the sewing, donations, etc., served an amazing purpose, but the simple visits to the train stations made just as large of an impact. Not every elite woman had the time or the means to donate financially to the war, but waving a handkerchief at the men was a free and worthwhile use of their time and resources.⁴⁸

As the war progressed, the new Confederate government realized it would need to depend on donations to fully outfit their soldiers and the war. With their men off and fighting elite women started sewing and knitting campaigns to contribute. Elite women in the antebellum period were more isolated and thus largely dependent on their own families for support. Contact with other women outside of their families was through limited social or church events, which further isolated the women. Families were the key unit for the antebellum women this was largely because of the geography of the South and the disbursement of the population. In this environment, antebellum women’s organizations did not exist on the same scale as in the North. Thus, for many ladies of the South, working together was new, but bind together these ladies did. Early in the war, sewing societies sprang up and the ladies rallied to the cause.⁴⁹ In July of 1861, Kate Stone, of Louisiana, wrote about meeting with Mrs. Boyd, the president of a ladies’ sewing

⁴⁸ Kenneth W. Noe, *Reluctant Rebels: The Confederates Who Joined the Army After 1861*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 68.; Mary Boykin Miller Chesnut, *A Diary From Dixie*, ed. Isabella D. Martin and Myrta Lockett Avery, (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1905), <http://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/chesnut/maryches.html>. 69.; Emma Jacqueline Slade Prescott, *Emma Jacqueline Slade Prescott Booklets*. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center. <http://ahc.galileo.usg.edu/ahc/search?keyword=Emma+Jacqueline+Slade&title=&creator=&year=&year-max=&source.digitalversion=yes&smode=advanced.>, 26.; Stone, *Brokenburn*, 143.

⁴⁹ Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 23.

society. When Kate confessed to not participating in any war efforts, sewing or otherwise, Mrs. Boyd was “horrified when we all acknowledged that we had not taken a stitch in the Cause.” The number of garments sewed by Mrs. Boyd and the women of the sewing society impressed Kate enough to form her own sewing group with local ladies. While serving on the soliciting committee of the society, Kate helped the men in grey by sewing uniforms and knitting items for the soldiers.⁵⁰

Ladies of the South worked to provide whatever their valiant soldiers needed by sewing and knitting items for their men. Thousands of Confederate soldiers needed to be outfitted with their uniforms and often the job fell to the women in their lives. Sarah Huff recalled her mother’s table “piled high with gray woolen cloth” to make the uniforms for her cousin and father.⁵¹ Making the uniforms was important and necessary work, but no need was too small as was evident in the massive call for women to knit socks for their soldiers. In the *Southern Watchman*, ads illustrated this need. One ad exclaimed, “Knit Socks, Knit!,” asking the women for 5,000 pairs of cotton and wool socks for the soldiers before the winter hit. Another ad in the same paper asked for another 3,000 pairs of socks for the cold feet of the hardworking soldier. Throughout the war, the *Southern Watchman* appealed to the patriotic women of Georgia to knit socks for the men. The article stressed the difference one pair of socks could make for the soldiers and called for the small sacrifice of each woman sending just one pair. For the woman without knitting needles, the newspaper could help with that as well. Week after week, the *Southern Confederacy* posted knitting needles for sale under the good investments section. Investing in knitting needles was investing in the war. Any patriotic woman could spare the time for just one pair of socks. Mary Boykin Miller Chesnut, whose husband was a chief advisor to

⁵⁰ Stone, *Brokenburn*, 39,47.

⁵¹ Huff, *My 80 Years*, 3.

President Jefferson Davis and a general in the Confederate army, worked to knit a pair of socks per day and commented on every woman having a knitting project in her hands. For many women their “knitting needles were never idle except on Sunday.”⁵² Mary Chesnut’s participation in the knitting effort illustrated how far up this project went. Mary’s participation showed that the elite class, especially those at the top, were willing to support their men, not just sit back and wait for others to get the job done.⁵³

To help with this effort, local businesses and government offices donated yarn to help the ladies reach their goal. The office of Georgia’s Quartermaster General wrote, “I will cheerfully send to you, or any one you may indicate, fifty bunches of five pounds each knitting yarn... to help the cause of supplying the ‘good, strong cotton socks’ you wish.” In cases of no donations, women would take old wool clothes card them and spin into thread and knit from the newly repurposed thread. At the start of the war, all hands were on deck. The government along with the elite families and business owners had the money to help the cause; however, by the end of the war most of the support came from the elite families.⁵⁴

For the elite ladies of the younger generation knitting and sewing, especially articles of clothing for war, was a new skill. Learning to weave and spin yarn was “all new work” for the young ladies of the Confederate.⁵⁵ Domestic slaves were responsible for the sewing, knitting, and mending for the families, so it was not necessary for young elite women to learn these domestic skills. However, once the war started that did not stop them from learning the skills necessary to

⁵² Pond, *Recollections of a Southern Daughter*, 64.

⁵³ *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), April-June 1862.; Chesnut, *A Diary From Dixie*, 106.

⁵⁴ *Southern Watchman* (Athens, GA), January- November 1863.; Prescott, *Emma Jacqueline Slade Prescott Booklets*, 16.

⁵⁵ Pond, *Recollections of a Southern Daughter*, 64.; Carrie Berry papers, MSS 29F, Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center, 1.

help the cause. Learning to sew and to knit became a political act for the elite women in the South. Women of all ages, including children, worked and were full of patriotic spirit. Inspired by the ladies' associations forming around them, a few children in Atlanta formed their own sewing society. The elite position of these ladies provided the freedom necessary for them to dedicate time and money to the cause. These donations signify a change in the women's responsibility from their antebellum selves. Not only were they making independent decisions on how to spend their families' resources, but they were always working together as groups of women producing items for use outside of their families. Through these seemingly small knitted items, elite women's spheres were expanding.

For most elite women, the call of their ancestors pulled them into the fever of supporting the war. Gertrude Thomas praised the women for "emulating the example of our Revolutionary mothers." In their eyes, the ladies of the South were going back to their roots and channeling their ancestors desire to give their all to a cause they believed in.⁵⁶ This tie is seen again in the *Southern Confederacy's* article "The Duty of the Ladies" written by "Ziola." Ziola articles appear throughout the war inspiring "patriotism, self-sacrifice, and perseverance." In April 1861, Ziola rallied the ladies of the Confederacy to be strong and embrace their roles as heroines emphasizing the "Southern heroines of '61 will be no whit behind their ancestors of '76."⁵⁷ Confederate women took pride in drawing ideas and exemplifying their ancestors from their Revolutionary history. Southern ladies rose to the challenge and supported the cause regardless of the challenges faced. Throughout her diary, Kate Stone expressed her frustration with learning to knit and praised her mother as a "famous knitter of socks," but Kate did not give up and

⁵⁶ Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 185.

⁵⁷ *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), April 27, 1861.; Venet, *A Changing Wind*, 50.

vowed to one day move onto more complicated projects.⁵⁸ The women worked diligently to master the skills needed to sew and knit for the soldiers and every woman “from old ladies to tiny tots” knitted for the cause.⁵⁹

These sewing societies rapidly evolved into official benevolent associations. These organizations called for the elite women to work together to help not only the soldiers, but the poor left behind in the lower classes. Two weeks after the start of the war there were an estimated 20,000 relief societies, big and small, established in both the Union and Confederacy. Many of these, especially in the South, were forced to disband due to lack of funds or civilian displacement, but many remained. By the end of 1861, the South counted at least 1,000 relief groups, 91 in Alabama alone. In July 1861, the Atlanta chapter of the Ladies’ Soldiers’ Relief Society officially formed with Mrs. Marie Westmoreland as president. Soon after, the hospital association formed quickly after naming Mrs. Isaac Winship as president.⁶⁰

These relief societies worked to provide whatever the army needed. Women started their work by sewing uniforms and collecting items for the regiments. Lucy Wood, a member of the Ladies’ Soldiers’ Relief Society, proclaimed: “Our needles are now our weapons.” Women worked both in these societies and also continued as individuals helping their personal loved ones. Elite women sent care packages or bundles to their men serving. Kate Stone and her mother prepared these packages frequently and mentioned including packages for other men in the same company that did not receive packages because they came from a poor background. Through their resources, the planter women touched the lives of so many of the Confederacy’s

⁵⁸ Thomas, *The Secret Eye* 185.; Stone, *Brokenburn*, 47.

⁵⁹ Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City*, 83.; Stone, *Brokenburn*, 47.

⁶⁰ *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, Georgia), April 27, 1861; Massey, *Women in the Civil War*, 32.; Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 24.; Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City*, 81-82.

men. The ladies of the South were proud of the accomplishments being made by their own hands, and they made a huge impact. The goods made were immediately sent to the different companies to be put to use.⁶¹ For the most part, they were able to change and fit the needs of the army well; however, there were some blunders along the way. With the newspapers and relief societies calling for socks for the soldiers, the army quickly found themselves with a surplus of socks. One Confederate soldier remarked “there was not a whole shirt in his whole regiment.” There are records of velvet slippers and mittens without holes for the trigger finger being sent to the soldiers.⁶² While these societies were not infallible, their motives were in the right place. As this was a new experience for the elite women to contribute to an organization larger than their families or plantations, their efforts should be acknowledged. After the first couple of mishaps, the women were more in tune with the needs of their men and accomplished great work.⁶³

The pride in their work was largely due to the excellent press given to the relief societies. Women writing on behalf of the society used eloquent language to draw women to the cause. After explaining the recent work of making uniforms for the West Point Guards, the author stressed this work being a “woman’s highest privilege, as well as solemn duty, to minister as far as in her power, to the wants and comfort of the *brave men*....”⁶⁴ This article accomplished two goals: first women who were already contributing to the war effort felt pride in participating in this sacred duty while also shaming those not yet contributing. In one article, Mrs. Westmoreland herself wrote a proclamation berating women for not participating in the relief association. By 1862 the numbers of the society had dropped from 150 to only 20. Westmoreland pleaded with

⁶¹ Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 24.; Stone, *Brokenburn*, 144.

⁶² Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 24.; Prescott, *Emma Jacqueline*, 26.; Massey, *Women in the Civil War*, 30.

⁶³ *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), April 27, 1861.; Venet, *A Changing Wind*, 41.

⁶⁴ *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), July 10, 1861.

the women to rally again and join the cause for as long as the war went on. This activism and newspaper writing is another example of the elite women leaving their private spheres and taking on new challenges and responsibilities. Women were now letting their voices and their desires be heard through new mediums, which reached larger audiences.⁶⁵

In 1864 during Sherman's campaign to take Atlanta, the secretary of the St. Phillips' Hospital Aid Society, Mrs. D.N. Judson, wrote an appeal on order of the president of the society, Mrs. H.T. Jones. This date signifies the continual support the elite women gave to the cause. The women were willing to continue fighting however long their government needed them even when their own resources were depleted. Time and again elite women showed their resourcefulness in dealing with the hardships of the war not only in caring for their families but also in the war. Judson's appeal once again rallies the women to the cause. Judson related to the women assuring them she knew what the war was doing to their families and their property. Judson understood the war was changing their lives, but assured them that did not excuse them from their responsibilities. Judson wrote many had forgotten the "wounded, mangled and dying soldiers, who have given all for the defense of your homes" who have put themselves between them and "the demons let loose upon our land." She ends her article by appealing to the women to lay aside the fears, panic, and join in the "noble work."⁶⁶ While the men attempted to rally for their families and those left at home, the leadership of the varying relief societies were using the same tactics. This consistency in printing in the newspaper and promoting their cause emphasized the importance of their efforts. The leaders of the relief associations understood how important they were to the war effort, and continually pushed the women to do more.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), May 29, 1864.

While women like Sallie Clayton, Kate Stone, Clara Solomon, and the like donated their time and energy to the relief society, Mary Chesnut donated the power behind her name. In order to help, Chesnut let the “letters fly” and called upon the women’s support at their homes. She wrote for the women to send clothes, money, and nurses to the cause. She was confident the patriotic women would be moved to do the work. Chesnut bragged when Mrs. Bradley Johnson “outgeneraled” North Carolina’s Governor by getting the regiment her husband served in clothes, arms, and ammunition. Using their bountiful resources, women were often able to send items to soldiers when the government could not. Women collected a variety of items including: quilts, blankets, pillows, clothing, towels, handkerchiefs, spices, dried fruit, wine, jelly, pickles, beeswax, books, matches, cooking ware, cash, and much more. Often these collections were influenced by what the president of the society felt they needed. Ads placed in the newspapers clarified what they needed from the women. Usually the ads emphasized the need of their sick soldiers to galvanize the collection. These goods were sent in bundles to the storeroom and eventually distributed where needed.⁶⁷ Week after week, newspapers filled their columns praising women by listing the donations given for each week. Both the print space allowed and the amount donated was impressive because of the importance they place on the women and their support. The early knitting blunders were in the past and the relief societies were bound together and making a difference.⁶⁸

Even though the numbers and participation of these women’s organizations fluctuated, they consistently supported the war. These planter women made a difference to the war. The goods they made, collected, and shipped to the men impacted not just their loved ones, but every

⁶⁷ *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), March-July 1862.

⁶⁸ Chesnut, *A Diary From Dixie*, 100.

soldier their bundles reached. The amount of resources these women throughout the South were able to collect and send off was so impressive, these women became a crutch for the Confederacy. When the Confederate government could not keep their own soldiers supplied, the women stepped up. When William T. Sherman made his march through the South, he not only attacked the army fortifications, but also went after the property of the women—those who even at such a late date in 1864, were still supporting their troops and sending aid. Sherman understood the important role the women played in the war effort, and he knew they needed to be stopped. By calling for total destruction of the land and resources of those on the homefront he ensured the war effort would be cut off and gravely hindered.⁶⁹

As the elite women became more comfortable with their new responsibilities they branched out even further with nursing and hospital associations. Sallie Clayton became an active participant of the hospital association that regularly met on Decatur Street. Here she, along with her peers, would sew, roll bandages, and scrape lint. Sallie was quite pleased with her effort and made note of the compliments given to the ladies for their work.⁷⁰ In New Orleans, Clara Solomon's school gathered medical supplies to send off. As they packed up the boxes Clara prayed: "May every wound, to which the lint, picked by the fingers of old & young, with warm Southern hearts devoted to their country, be applied, heal. May they all perform the missions for which they were intended."⁷¹ Other elite women used their time to serve the wounded soldiers. Women either traveled to work as nurses in Confederate hospitals, or they volunteered to help the soldiers occupying their town. The ladies dedicated to nursing in the Civil War never

⁶⁹ Lisa Tendrich Frank, *The Civilian War: Confederate Women and Union Soldiers during Sherman's March*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015), Ebook.

⁷⁰ Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City*, 81-82.

⁷¹ Solomon, *The Civil War Diary*, 336

received the credit they deserved, but the evidence reveals these women made difference in the war effort.⁷²

In 1861, all ladies of the South recognized the name Florence Nightingale, and the start of the war caused some women to yearn to enter the hospitals and help. In July 1861, Clara Solomon wrote, “Ladies are daily leaving. The other day 30 left— They are very much in want of nurses.”⁷³ However, going off to nurse the sick and wounded was not always possible— simply because they were women. At this time, leaders and white males in the Confederacy were torn between praising their elite women on the homefront for their efforts and support while at the same time not wanting to give the women too much freedom. For some Confederate men, white elite women nursing was going too far. The government needed the numbers the women could give them, but they resisted the idea of sending white women to do the job. Nursing was not considered proper for women of the elite class, especially young unmarried ladies. Many elite ladies pleaded with their parents to go and serve the military as nurses. One young woman, Julia Tutwiler, wrote a poem to appeal to her father. Julia dramatically wrote: “Shall I be a baseborn coward/ Harder hearted then the foe? / See, my country. Duty calls me: / Dearest Father, let me go!” Julia’s father did not relent and refused to allow her to become a nurse. Others did not heed their families’ commands or advice and went to the hospitals to serve anyway. While there the elite women learned asking their parents for approval to serve as a nurse was just the first obstacle they were to face; in the field the women quickly found a plethora of other problems and struggles to deal with.⁷⁴

⁷² Massey, *Women in the Civil War*, 64.

⁷³ Solomon, *The Civil War Diary*, 89.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 64, 43-44.; Libra Rose Hilde. *Worth a Dozen Men: Women and Nursing in the Civil War South*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012), Ebook.

The female nurses and hospital matrons struggled with the sexism of the male surgeons and doctors on staff. Kate Cumming, a daughter of a merchant in Alabama, left her home to become a hospital matron for the Confederacy. Here Kate quickly saw the discrimination in person. Male surgeons and doctors simply did not think women nurses were as capable as their male counterparts, and often hindered the ladies' ability to do their jobs effectively. These surgeons were prejudiced not only against allowing women to become nurses, but also against the ladies visiting the wounded men. In one hospital Kate worked in, ladies from the town came with milk and flowers for the wounded soldiers and one of the doctors turned the ladies away without a second glance. On top of this, he hardly allowed the nurses to prove their capability. Kate took her frustrations out in her diary and passionately wrote: "I only wish the doctors would let us try and see what we can do! Have we not noble examples of what our women have done?"⁷⁵

Since not all women were able to leave home and become a full time nurse others served through their visits to the hospitals in their areas. Mary Chesnut did not jump into the "Florence Nightingale business" at first, but was willing to visit the hospitals and provide company for the men. Hospital visitation illustrated the effort women put into caring for their soldiers. It was not uncommon for women to travel in order to care for their own wounded soldier, but many soldiers, especially those from poorer families, did not have the means for family to rush to their side. This allowed the ladies to step up and stand in for those that could not be there for their loved ones.⁷⁶ Elite women volunteered their time to visit those in need, and this was not an easy task. The injuries these Confederate nurses saw while caring for the wounded were haunting and life changing. Mary McCord, a hospital matron and friend of Mary Chesnut, dedicated all her

⁷⁵ Kate Cumming, *The Journal of Kate Cumming A Confederate Nurse, 1862-1865*, ed. Richard Harwell (Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1975), 3-4.

⁷⁶ Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 205.

time to the hospital needs as a way to remember the son she lost battle wounds. These women were in contact with dying men every time they visited. Eliza Andrews was impressed by the dedication of her friend Mary Joyner to the infirm and wounded. In Atlanta, Joyner was known as ‘the hospital angel’ and often received letters of gratitude from soldiers and their families. Nurses dedicated their time and energy, often worked long days, and slept in uncomfortable places, like storage rooms, all in the name of nursing. During the hospital visits, women often brought food, and items of comfort to the men. Women were seen as good contributors to the hospital because of their natural talents in being nurturing and caring towards the sick and wounded.⁷⁷

The majority of the elite women knew their only duty was to the soldiers. The goal was to serve and comfort not to catch themselves a husband. Women that were looking for more were quickly shuttled out of service and not welcomed back. Hospital matrons demanded women to “leave her beauty with her cloak and hat at the door.” Women were to come to the hospitals in nursing attire, as “Sisters of Charity, and not as fine ladies.” Strict dress codes were enforced for the women nurses— rules discouraged women from wearing their hoopskirts, colorful dresses, bows, and curls. These women placed the needs of the soldiers before their vanity, and focused only at the work at hand.⁷⁸

For the soldiers who needed to travel for their care, or were going home to recover, the Wayside Hospitals were established. One Wayside Hospital, established in Columbia, provided relief to help the wounded and sick as they traveled. Young women of the city, with the help of

⁷⁷ Ibid., 317.; Andrews, *The War-Time Journal*, 141.; Pauline Gordan Adams and Marilyn Myer Culpepper, “Nursing in the Civil War,” *The American Journal of Nursing* 88 (July 1988), 982.; Hilde, *Worth a Dozen Men*, Ebook.

⁷⁸ Cumming, *The Journal of Kate Cumming*, 5.; Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 203.; Adams and Culpepper, 982.

the local Ladies' Hospital Association worked to set up an area where the soldiers could get their wounds checked before moving onto their next destination. These hospitals set up helped the war effort and filled a much needed demand. It was noted that an estimated "seventy-five thousand soldiers" were helped through these hospitals. Mary Chesnut was one woman who stepped up and volunteered at these hospitals. Mary was glad to be part of this duty once again and felt it had been long enough since her last round of volunteering. In April 1864, Mary wrote:

I had excuses enough, but at heart I felt a coward and a skulker... There must be no dodging of duty. It will not do now to send provisions and pay for nurses. Something inside of me kept calling out, 'Go you shabby creature; you can't bear to see what those fine fellows have to bear.'⁷⁹

This diary entry expressed the need Mary and possibly other elite women felt to volunteer and fight for the cause, and their dedication and resourcefulness to help their soldiers. As with Judson's newspaper plea mentioned above, this journal entry was from 1864. This serves as another example of the consistent dedication of the war effort. The numbers of women ready to help and serve went in waves, but they lasted through the duration of the fight.

Nursing and volunteering at hospitals brought the women face-to-face with the horrors of death. While living in Atlanta, Emma Prescott visited the hospital on a daily basis. Emma remembered seeing amputated limbs thrown into an empty train car, and Kate Cumming saw limbs thrown into the courtyard of the hospital. Attending to amputees, both in surgery and during visits, put these women outside their comfort zone and placed images in their minds they could not get rid of. During Emma's visits, she often brought fresh fruit, and listened to whatever the men wanted to share with her. Her visits consisted mainly of providing support and lending an ear to the lonely sick and wounded. On one visit, Emma cared for a soldier suffering from a wound similar to the one that killed her brother. Emma set aside her pain and visited with him

⁷⁹ Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 205-6.

and even wrote his last letter to his mother. Mary Chesnut wrote, “I can never again shut out of view the sights I saw there of human misery.”⁸⁰ Nursing and visiting the sick also placed the women themselves in danger because of the disease and illnesses that followed the military hospitals. Sallie Clayton lost her younger sister, “Gussie”, to Typhoid fever most likely because of her visits to the hospitals. Even though she knew the risks, her sister continued to serve at the hospitals.⁸¹ These volunteers worked and continued to visit despite the pain and horror they witnessed. As nurses and hospital volunteers, elite women continued to expand their spheres into the realm of public service and forced white men to look at them a new light.

Throughout the war, the elite women in the lower South proved their determination to help make a difference in the outcome of the Civil War by dedicating their resources, including time and energy, to the cause. While their service in hospitals and other relief societies was valuable, it was not the only form of sacrifice they gave to their country. Elite women were not above the shortages and high inflation rates the Confederacy experienced during the war. Accounts from these women reference the hard times the war brought and their ingenuity in finding resources and substitutes. Newspapers emphasized the importance of being frugal and even went as far as linking women’s fashion and patriotism one and the same. A woman dressing in new clothes was considered a “want a patriotism” and a “mark of flunkeyism.”⁸²

Self-sufficiency was the theme of the war in the South, and the elite women stepped up to the challenge. The *Southern Confederacy* urged women to make, grow, or raise anything they could from home. Women were to spin, knit, and card for their families and their men at war.

⁸⁰ Prescott, *Emma Jacqueline*, 18-20.; Cumming, *The Journal of Kate Cumming*, 6.; Chesnut, *A Diary From Dixie*, 108.

⁸¹ Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City*, 19.

⁸² *Southern Banner* (Athens, GA), January- October 1863.; *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), November 22, 1862.

They needed to “make the same sacrifice for liberty, which [their] grandparents did in the time of old revolution... and give up luxuries.”⁸³ Once again, the media was quick to rally the women under the motivation of their revolutionary ancestors. The blockade hindered the goods women received and called for a need to go back to the ways of their American Revolutionary ancestors and started home manufacture. The call for homespun was heard throughout the South. President Jefferson Davis applauded the women wearing homespun. Songs and ballads were written rejoicing homespun: “Three cheers for the homespun dress / The Southern ladies wear. / Now Northern goods are out of date... / We scorn to wear a bit of silk / A bit of Northern lace...” In actual practice, homespun was not the best choice. It was scratchy and did not hold up well under washing, but that did not stop the women’s resourcefulness.⁸⁴ By participating in frugality and self-sufficiency the women demonstrated both their sacrifice and their commitment to the cause.

When homespun was not an option, women resorted to remaking old clothing items to make them last longer. In Kate Stone’s diary, she frequently wrote about her sewing and patching up clothes. Once her family evacuated to Texas, Kate had to buy used clothing from another woman in town and though it seemed “funny” was able to put aside fashion for her country. The elite women put their cause before their wants. Even with the war, elite women still cared about their appearance and fashion, but worked within the constraints of the war. In 1864, Julia Fisher commented on her family still wearing the same dresses as in 1860. Julia used fabrics, like curtains, sheets, and bedding, to make new clothes for her family. Julia was just one

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ George C. Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 94.; Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 46.

elite lower South woman taking this action as she wrote “all the old spinning wheels in the country have been put in operation and every thread that is spun has a quick demand.”⁸⁵

If the elite women struggled to find ways to cope with the fashion restraints of the Civil War, the struggle was nothing compared to the shortage of food they experienced. Food was common theme among the diaries of the women. Kate Stone saved seeds of all kinds to use in her own garden and budgeted out their allotted food for each day. Kate understood the sacrifices and the need for “strict economy.” Women “became the captains of industry in the great struggle for bread. It was impossible to buy anything. Each family had to be absolutely independent. In those hard fights for bread it was victory or starvation.”⁸⁶ Julia Fisher, of Georgia, found the food shortage particularly hard and wrote a very detailed account of what she ate. Women like, Julia and Clara Solomon often longed for items that were now considered luxuries like bread, butter, and sweetened tea, but the lack of resources did not allow for those comforts—even for the elite women.⁸⁷

Not only did the diet of the women change, but also the way they got their food. By 1864, many of Julia’s slaves had left the plantation and she was left isolated with an ailing father and younger siblings to take care of. Not allowing this to stop her, Julia stepped up and stepped outside of her comfort zone. On April 26th, 1864 Julia exclaimed only, “Killed a pig!”⁸⁸ This work and self-sufficiency was new to the ladies; however, they were still willing to suffer through and go without so their soldiers could have more. The food and good shortages were hard on these women, who for the most part had never gone without. The shortages threw the

⁸⁵ Stone, *Brokenburn*, 207.; Julia Johnson Fisher, *Diary, 1864 (Transcript)*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1999), <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/fisherjulia/fisher/html., 2>.

⁸⁶ Huff, *My 80 Years*, 7.

⁸⁷ Stone, *Brokenburn*, 18.; Fisher, *Diary, 1864*, 1 & 13.; Solomon, *The Civil War Diary*, 431.

⁸⁸ Fisher, *Diary, 1864*, 13.

ladies out of their comfort zone and forced them to do things they never had to do before, but they did and they survived this change. These changes strengthened their resolve and their desire to fight back against their enemies.

For most, the life with the food shortages was an intense hardship, and some elite women were not willing to let this go. Thus not only helping their own families, but the Confederate forces as well women started a new effort of fighting back. One popular way to help was through smuggling goods through the Northern blockades. Confederate supporters from the North would bring goods South with them while they moved South when the war broke out. Even elite women were not above search at the borders, and nothing was off limits. False hair, bustles, hoops, and petticoats were searched for goods. As one steamer took 450 Southern supporters from Washington back to the heart of the Confederate the baggage went through inspection. The inspection showed enough goods smuggled to fill a small store. Shoes, dry goods, clothing, thread, medicine, and many other necessities were found among the luggage. Although they were smuggling, the women were outraged and “humiliated to the deepest degree,” but still willing to do whatever they could to help the cause.⁸⁹

While smuggling through the women leaving the North was popular, women also attempted smuggling while traveling under their official traveling passes. One Northern newspaper, shared a story of finding a party of three, and going through the process of searching their persons as there was “something suspicious in their appearance.” The author went on to write, “a woman’s petticoat naturally covers an enormous mine of mischief,” and they went on to search it. Inside one of the women’s bustle there was “127 ounces of quinine... and a secret cipher document....” Smuggling goods was not a role elite women had in their antebellum life,

⁸⁹ Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, 117-118.; *Harper’s Weekly* (New York, NY), January 1863.

and is yet another example of their willingness to do whatever the Confederacy needed to make it through the war.⁹⁰

On top of adapting to the shortages and lack of resources, elite women also needed to adapt to life without men. As the South became “thinned out of men,” the women had no choice but to step up and fight for their protection.⁹¹ Elite women did not sit back and take Yankee occupation without a fight. Southern women made their distaste of the “barbarous vandals of the North” evident in their dress, language, and actions.⁹² While traveling down to Macon after Sherman’s March to the Sea, Eliza Andrews bitterly wrote:

Yankee, Yankee, is the one detestable word always ringing in Southern ears. If all the words of hatred in every language under heaven were lumped together into one huge epithet of detestation, they could not tell how I hate Yankees. They thwart all my plans, murder my friends, and make my life miserable.⁹³

Andrews wrote what most Southern women were thinking—everything wrong in their lives was because of the Northern aggressors. When Kate Cumming found herself in the position of nursing a captured Yankee from Iowa, and she quite plainly told him to go back and take his kind back up North and leave the South alone. Women started fighting first through insulting the Yankee soldiers and then verbally attacking them. They taught their children to hate the soldiers and not accept gifts or treats from them. These verbal attacks were witnessed both in the public and private spheres of the ladies’ lives. Southern ladies would exit streetcars when Yankee soldiers stepped onto the car, walked in the gutter to avoid walking by them, turned away from the men to show the men their backs, and even took to wearing “think veils and sunbonnets”

⁹⁰ *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper* (San Francisco, CA), November 22, 1862.; Please see the appendices for a copy of this image.

⁹¹ Louisa Walton qtd. in Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 31.

⁹² Solomon, *The Civil War Diary*, 20.

⁹³ Andrews, *The War-Time Journal*, 67.

otherwise known to Northerners as “Jeff Davis bonnets to avoid eye contact.”⁹⁴ In New Orleans, Clara was quite proud when she saw a group of “handsome officers of Butler’s staff” and was able to insult them in every way by walking on “the extremity of the pavement.” However, Clara did not support the women in New Orleans wearing black because of Yankee occupation. She believe it to be “silly” because their “is not *dead*, it is only *sick*. The Yankees are here on a *visit*.” She also disapproved of women wearing the Confederate flags on their dresses because she was sure the Union soldiers needed no other reminder of whose side the women were truly on.⁹⁵

After Yankees captured New Orleans, the women stepped up their assaults by spitting in the soldiers faces and throwing the contents of their chamber pots on them. The outspoken and unladylike behavior was a great example of the women stepping up and not only supporting their men, but making it obvious which side they supported. These practices were not something that would have been seen in antebellum woman. The behavior of the New Orleans elite women was so bad, Major General Benjamin Butler announced his famous General Order No. 28. Butler order that if any woman insulted a soldier of the United States either by “word, gesture, or movement” they would be “regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town playing her vocation.” Butler was not alone in thinking this proclamation would change the behavior of the Southern Women. *Harper’s Weekly*, posted a sketch of Southern women before and after the proclamation, which illustrated the Southern women transforming from angry bitter ‘prostitutes’ into lovely genteel ladies.⁹⁶ However, from Southern newspaper accounts and diaries of the ladies, this proclamation had the opposite effect and angered the woman and the

⁹⁴ Massey, *Women in the Civil War*, 41.; Andrews, *The War-Time Journal*, 67.; Cumming, *The Journal of Kate Cumming*, 6.; McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, 106.

⁹⁵ Solomon, *The Civil War Diary*, 354 & 431.

⁹⁶ *Harper’s Weekly* (New York, NY), July 12, 1862.; Please see the appendices for a copy of this newspaper cartoon.

Confederate soldiers even more. Under the Poet's Corner of the *Southern Watchman*, the featured poet, calls on the men to pick up the fight and protect their women from the devil that was General Butler. Once again the men were called to fight on behalf of their women because they needed protection. The men were proud of the protest the women demonstrated, but it was still their duty to fight.⁹⁷

Elite women also took a more physical stance regarding their distrust and dislike of the Yankees. Because the women were aware they were often left isolated on their plantations and without a white man in sight, women felt they needed to take their safety seriously. They adapted to the need and picked up not only the patriotic duty, but also one of self-preservation. This was a good decision since both escaped slaves and Yankee men threatened many planter women. Kate Stone recalled two instances where a gun was pointed at her face while the intruders searched her house for precious belongings. On one tense occasion, while her younger brothers were gone, Kate walked around with a pistol in her hand just in case, and she was prepared to use it.⁹⁸

In LaGrange, Georgia, a group of elite women formed the Nancy Harts Militia. These women, often wives of Confederate soldiers, joined together to protect themselves and their property from Northern invaders. The symbolism in their name once again drawing back to their revolutionary ancestors. The *Southern Confederacy* reported these women continually prepared for the enemy and emphasized the women were ready to confront them. The "Nancy Harts" met every Saturday and took their jobs seriously. The paper reported the group of women formed themselves into a "military corps for the purpose of drilling and target practice." This corps came

⁹⁷ McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, 104-5.; *Southern Watchman* (Athens, GA), June 11, 1862.

⁹⁸ Ward, J. Matthew, "Her Own Sense of Right: Civil War Rhetoric and Southern Women," *The Researcher: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 25 (Summer 2012): 30.; Stone, *Brokenburn*, 106-7.

with rankings and every woman had a role in the protection of their town. When Northern troops entered their town, the Nancy Harts met them at the town center and were able stop the men from ransacking their private property. The Nancy Harts were the perfect example of strong women willing to do anything to protect their homefront, even if that required them to step out of their familiar antebellum roles.⁹⁹

Often the struggle of the elite women is forgotten or deemed inconsequential because of the status of these women. It was thought because they had money, familial support, and property, including slaves, the elite women did not suffer or change because of the war. However, there is consistent evidence to argue against this claim. One example is of Kate Stone, who after Yankee occupation had to evacuate her plantation in Louisiana and escape to Texas with her mother and younger siblings.¹⁰⁰ The Civil War drastically altered the lives of the elite women. The once sheltered and protected Southern belles were quickly thrust into the war. The lack of resources provided from the newly established Confederacy, and the close proximity of the fighting forced women to experience the war in an active way. Throughout the war, elite women illustrated their resolve through joining together and supporting the war effort. This support wavered during the course of the war, but time and time again the women rallied and fought on. By the end of the war, most men were ready to give up the fight and go home, but the elite women kept fighting on. These women supported the Confederacy through their support and determination. These women faced death, saw the horrors of war, and continued to fight for their nation. After the war, most elite women did not go back to the way things used to be—plantations were decimated, slaves were freed, and thousands of loved ones were killed or

⁹⁹ “Nancy Harts Militia,” in New Georgia Encyclopedia, available online at <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/nancy-harts-militia> [accessed 20 June 2017].; *Southern Confederacy* (Atlanta, GA), June 1, 1861.

¹⁰⁰ Stone, *Brokenburn*.

missing. McCurry wrote, “Her War didn’t end in April 1865.” The women of the Confederacy lacked the closure often afforded to the soldiers who surrendered at the end of the war. Southern women clung to the idea of the Lost Cause and fought to keep the memory of the Civil War living. They used their resources and made a difference to the war, all while enduring the hardships and suffering from fighting a war on the homefront; however, their way of life and responsibilities would once again shift in the postbellum period.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Quotation from Stephanie McCurry, “Southern Women and their New Normal,” *America’s Civil War* 28 (May 2015): 23-26.; Caroline E. Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 135, 242-3.; Brown, “The Women Left Behind,” 759.

CHAPTER TWO

Women, born to endure, can long drag the weary burden of a wounded heart, but when once the strong, self-reliant man is broken in spirit, he sinks at once beneath the load. — Mary Ann

Cruise in *Cameron Hall*¹⁰²

The Spring of 1865 brought an end to the Civil War and the Confederacy, and an end to the flurry of elite women working together to contribute to their noble cause. Elite women of the lower South adapted to their new position in war times and evolved from antebellum women to war women. However, with the war's end the final consequences quickly caught up with the women and their families. The Confederacy lost close to one in five white men throughout the course of the war and nearly 620,000 men were killed. (260,000 of which were Confederate) To put this 620,000 into perspective this number is "approximately equal to the deaths in all other American wars from the Revolution to the Korean War combined."¹⁰³

During the war, women were aware of the Confederacy's losses and often expressed concern over their future. Hattie, a lady from Buckingham County, Virginia, wrote the editor of *the Southern Literary Messenger* in 1864 discussing the loss of Confederate men:

Having just finished reading your last number of the Literary Messenger, and especially a history of the war, by Howison, the reflection has been brought to my mind with *great force*, that after this war is closed, how vast a difference there will be in the number of males and females. Having made up my mind not to be an *old maid*, and having only a moderate fortune and less beauty, I fear I shall find it rather difficult to accomplish my wishes.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² M.A. Cruse, *Cameron Hall: A Story of the Civil War* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1867), 537.

¹⁰³ David Hacker, Libbra Hilde, and James Holland Jones, "The Effect of the Civil War on Southern Marriage Patterns," *The Journal of Southern History* 76, no.1 (2010): 39.

¹⁰⁴ "Editor's Table," *Southern Literary Messenger* 38, no. 2 (1864): 124, accessed July 3, 2017, <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moajrnl/acf2679.0038.002/124.>; Hacker, Hilde, and Jones, "The Effect of the Civil War," 40.

The lack of men skewed the gender balance of the antebellum South and the region's preconceived ideas of gender roles were changed. Traditional family formations and the understanding that white women were to only be wives and mothers changed as the war ended.¹⁰⁵ This unbalanced population led to the possibility that white Southern women in the postbellum could become spinsters dependent upon family members for economic support.¹⁰⁶ While the war "created a generation of women without men," the women found themselves once again needing to adapt to a new role in Southern society, and the elite women proved they were able to support themselves.¹⁰⁷ This chapter explores the postwar period from 1865-1900 and focuses on the working roles played by elite women in the lower South, including both in and outside of the home. This chapter seeks to clarify the different motivations elite women had to find work, links the war efforts to the postwar activities, and briefly explores the evolution of the patriarchal system.

The war allowed the women to reevaluate their need and their ability to earn a wage for their families. Elite woman learned to be independent and self-reliant during the war, often not only taking care of themselves, but binding together and serving a greater purpose. The war made the women more comfortable being part of the public sphere and they were ready to embrace this change in their postwar lives.¹⁰⁸ And while women were starting to become more comfortable in the public sphere, money still was a major factor for these women to find wage

¹⁰⁵ Hacker, Hilde, and Jones, "The Effect of the Civil War," 40.; Gilpin, *Mothers of Invention*, 139-52.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Scott, *The Southern Lady*, 106.

¹⁰⁸ Quotation from Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 75.; Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood 1865-1895*, 206.

work outside of the home. For many of these women they were motivated either out of financial necessity or need to help their families in the tough economic times of the postbellum era. Belle Kearney of Mississippi eloquently explained the change in women in the public sphere and wrote:

The women of the South have not sought work because they loved it; they have not gone before the public because it was desirable for themselves; they have not arrived at the wish for political equality with men simply by a process of reasoning; all this has been thrust upon them by a changed social and economic environment. It is the result of the evolution of events which was set in motion by the bombardment of Fort Sumter. At the close of the war when the entire South was lying prostrate and bleeding; her fertile fields left bare and desolate, her lovely homes ravaged by fire and sword; her young men slaughtered or disabled; her commerical streams choked and stagnated; her system of labor utterly and forever destroyed; her social affiliations blasted and every feature of life dazed and revolutionized, the women of that unhappy time arose in the majesty of their hitherto undreamed of strength and with forceful calmness and unassuming determination, put their hands figuratively and literally to the plow and have never faltered nor looked back.¹⁰⁹

Belle was quick to explain the sole reason for elite women taking work outside of the home was because the Civil War forced them into it. According to Belle, if the Civil War had not happened, the balance of gender roles and work would not have been upset. After the war, elite women were quick find balance between their personal and public lives and ensured the men in their lives that they did not ask for the change, but were only responding out of duty. Because the gender balance drastically altered during the war, it was important for elite women to assure their men they only sought out work because of the war and its consequences.

It was the women working together that helped the Civil War, and it was women continuing to work out of duty and responsibility that led women to continue working after the war. During the Civil War, elite women learned to work together within their families and

¹⁰⁹ Belle Kearney, *A Slaveholder's Daughter* (New York: The Abbey Press, 1900), 112, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/kearney/kearney.html>; Belle was born in 1863 in Madison County, Mississippi. Because her youth was spent in the postbellum period, she understood the importance of an education. Her father's plantation hit hard times after the war which also contributed to Belle's desire to teach and bring in an income.

communities on the homefront. Prior to the war, many of these elite women, especially those living on plantations, were isolated and depended solely on the men in their lives. The war changed this, a change, that continued into their postwar lives. With women entering the public sphere at a more consistent and ready rate, they started depending on their communities.¹¹⁰

While Southern white men often encouraged and bragged about the war efforts of their women, their postbellum attitudes shifted. Many white males wanted and expected their lives to go back to antebellum ways and did not approve of women entering the public sphere and leaving the home for work. However, elite women understood with the loss of property, possessions, loved ones, and slaves the antebellum lifestyles would be harder to return to. Women like Mary Ann Cruse of Huntsville, Alabama and Elizabeth Allston Pringle believed Southern women would handle the changes of postbellum life better than their male counterparts. Elizabeth recalled: “Most people think it proper to be very gloomy. Of course, it is hard, all the people who were rich are now very poor but there is no good being gloomy over it.”¹¹¹ Women needed and were motivated to work because of financial reasons, but also had a growing ambition to do more and become “nondependent.” Work for elite women in the postwar period was still in flux as they transitioned to the public sphere. The women entering the work force were new to this life, and the public sphere was also learning how to deal with these women entering the force. “Nondependence,” defined as women supporting themselves and not being a burden on others, was a driving factor for many elite women after the war.¹¹² Although

¹¹⁰ Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 157.; LeeAnn Whites, *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender: Augusta, Georgia 1860-1890* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), 117-199.

¹¹¹ Sarah E. Gardner, *Blood & Irony: Southern White Women's Narratives of the Civil War, 1861-1937* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2004), 69.; Elizabeth Allston Pringle, Elizabeth Allston Pringle, *Chronicles of "Chicora Wood"* (Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Company, 1922), 288.

¹¹² Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 205 & 206.

ambitious elite women needed to hide or color their true reasoning for seeking work, they were still able to break free and continue stepping into the public sphere. Because of new opportunities in the job market, albeit jobs that were considered more “traditional” woman’s work, women had a “greater incentive to excel for their chances for advancement and recognition were more numerous.”¹¹³

Some women did not trust in the ability of their menfolk to bounce back from the war and survive in the postbellum world. Belle Kearney believe the Southern men “sank under” the weight of their new poverty and “bore the pitiless stamp of incapacity to wrest success out of new conditions.”¹¹⁴ Many men did not return home from the war and those who did were often deeply affected from the trauma of their service. Reflecting on the effects of the Civil War, Belle wrote: “Many of the old families, boasting a long line of descent from blue-blooded and distinguished ancestors, soon were the most sorely pressed financially.”¹¹⁵ This, along with the loss of slave labor, further cemented elite women’s motivation to continue pushing into the public sphere. According to historian Drew Gilpin Faust, the women “found it difficult any longer to celebrate helplessness.” They could no longer afford to be left in the positions they were in during the war and fought to maintain their independence. Elite women worked to place themselves into new roles and “their frequent appearances in the public spheres of work and reform can perhaps best be understood as a determination never to be entirely helpless or dependent again.”¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Massey, *Bonnet Brigades*, 340.

¹¹⁴ Kearney, *A Slaveholder’s Daughter*, 43-44.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 251.

The first step for many of the elite women to enter into the workforce was a desire to learn and to become educated. Young ladies in the elite class were fortunate to have the financial means to secure an education. As discussed in the preface of this thesis, this access to education was present in the antebellum South. Parents of elite children took an avid interest in their children's education. However, education prior to the war was not standardized so each family came up with an educational system that worked best for their family. Not only was the education system not standardized, but it was also divided by gender. Young women were only to receive an education fit for a lady. This education included learning foreign languages, history, limited arithmetic, writing, calisthenics, and the arts.¹¹⁷ After being tutored by a governess or a private institution, an elite young lady had the opportunity for an advanced degree.

Even though the numbers of advanced degrees awarded to antebellum elite women were small, there were university institutions opened to women in the antebellum era that stayed open in the postbellum. These institutions once again provided limited opportunities for women, but it was a step in the right direction. Georgia alone was home to a few different options for young ladies to choose from. Wesleyan Female College in Macon opened in the 1830s and was one of the first women's colleges and the first to award the A.B. degree to a woman in America. The Southern Female College opened in 1843 in LaGrange, Georgia, and the Lucy Cobb Institute, a preparatory school in Athens, opened its doors in 1859. The Georgia Normal and Industrial College in Milledgeville opened in 1891 and "stressed professional and normal and industrial education" to the women of the South.¹¹⁸ All of these institutions continued in the postbellum

¹¹⁷ Pond, *Recollections of a Southern Daughter*, 24-26.; Pringle, *Chronicles of "Chicora Wood,"* 124-125.

¹¹⁸ F. N. Boney, "Higher Education in Georgia Prior to 1900," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 1 (1986): 117-125.; Georgia Normal and Industrial College is now Georgia College and State.

period to provide young women an opportunity for advanced education and allowed them to pursue work outside of the home. Elite young ladies, especially those in the postbellum South, understood the importance of an education and dedicated time and effort to increasing their secular knowledge.

Belle Kearney provides one example of a young woman who desired to increase her education starting at a young age. Belle wrote of spending time during her youth reading and studying, not only to pass the time and boredom but also with the sense she would one day need to use her mind. Belle was “hungry to be in a school of a high grade, and was willing to suffer to accomplish it.” When Belle’s father could no longer afford the tuition at her boarding school, Belle was ashamed of having to drop out, but she did not stop learning and continued fighting to become a teacher.¹¹⁹ During the war, Emma Florence LeConte, at the age of 17, valued her education and wrote, “I feel I must study— and education now is more important to me than ever. The only work I can look forward to is teaching and ought to be studying all I can.” Emma understood she would need to help her family financially and worked hard to be prepared. Emma often wrote of her studies, which included German, History, French, arithmetic, and algebra. She also practiced by teaching and preparing lessons for her younger sister Sallie.¹²⁰ In 1862, Elizabeth Allston Pringle and her younger sister attended Madame Togno’s school in Columbia, South Carolina. There she studied French, Italian, and music, which would become her “great pleasure.” At Madame Togno’s school, Elizabeth took two hours of music lessons, but felt “that was not enough” and begged Madame Togno for more time. Elizabeth was so dedicated to the

¹¹⁹ Kearney, *A Slaveholder’s Daughter*, 39.

¹²⁰ Emma Florence LeConte, *When the World Ended: The Diary of Emma LeConte*, ed. Earl Schenck Miers (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1957), 74-78, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/leconteemma/menu.html>.; Emma was born in Georgia, but spent the war years in Columbia, South Carolina.

study of music she got up early to practice at the piano before the fire was even started. Elizabeth remembered: “I accepted with many thanks; and all that winter I got up at six, broke the ice in my pitcher to perform my hasty ablutions, and putting on my cloak took my candle into the drawing-room, and often with tears rolling down my cheeks practised that hour!”¹²¹ Elizabeth, Belle, and Emma exemplify the dedication these young women had towards their education and this dedication and passion of learning served them well in the as postbellum teachers.

With an education secured, the natural route for elite women seeking work was to take the path of an educator. Prior to the war educators were mainly men; however, by the 1880s this was reversed and for the first time women dominated this field. Teaching before the war was considered a decent and respectable job, and after the war it became the “first thought of many upper-class women who needed to earn money.” Belle Kearney summarized this point and wrote: “To-day there is no position more highly honorable than that of a public school teacher.”¹²² The field of teaching was a way for women to use their “traditional” skills and put them to use for a wage. While the postbellum era provided more independence for these young women outside of the home, they were still constricted to the norms of the era. Young women were sticking to their “traditional” roles they were not becoming doctors, lawyers, or scientists. There were a few paths in the field of education women could rely on— they could work in a public schoolhouse, as a governess, or start their own private school out of their homes. Frances Butler Leigh, of the Georgia Sea Islands, even started a small school for the free laborers on her plantation.¹²³

¹²¹ Pringle, *Chronicles of “Chicora Wood,”* 176-180.

¹²² Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 251.; Scott, *The Southern Lady*, 110.; Kearney, *A Slaveholder’s Daughter*, 84.

¹²³ Frances Butler Leigh, *Ten Years on a Georgia Plantation Since the War* (London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1883), 93.; It should be noted that Frances is the daughter of Fanny Kemble and Pierce Butler mentioned in the

In August of 1865, Elizabeth Allston Pringle's mother, Adèle Petigru Allston, made plans to open a boarding house and school in their home in Charleston, South Carolina. At first, Elizabeth was distressed her mother expected her to teach and hated the thought. Elizabeth was miserable at how shallow her concerns about teaching were and confided in her journal: "Am I really just a butterfly? Is my love of pleasure the strongest thing about me? What an awful thought." By September Elizabeth's mother responded to her concerns and curtly silenced any remaining contention. Adèle admonished: "It would be a serious disappointment if all the money your Father so gladly spent on your education has been wasted." Adele had faith in Elizabeth's teaching ability, but refused any further argument from her daughter by ending the letter with a stern: "At any rate, you will come down for the opening of the school and we will see." By December, the school was open and Elizabeth was teaching the younger students, and by March of 1866 the school was a "grand success!" In the March 21, 1866 journal entry, Elizabeth gushed about how much she loved teaching and how happy she was with her new profession. Elizabeth was "amazed to see how clever" her mother was and happy her mother had the gumption to start the school.¹²⁴ Teaching was a way out of financial ruin and a way for these women to contribute to their families in a respectful way; however, as the years went on a few, like Elizabeth and Belle, continued teaching and enjoying the independence of bringing in their own money.

Although teaching was considered a respectable field, elite women still had to fight to stay at their jobs and worked hard doing so. Not only did teaching require lesson planning and classroom management, but also women often had to work hard to find their own pupils, and often fought with their own families for the ability to go out and work. The work was tiring and

preface of this thesis. While Fanny Kemble as against slavery and ended up losing her daughters and marriage over this issue, Frances Butler was raised with her father and his typical Southern beliefs.

¹²⁴ Pringle, *Chronicles of "Chicora Wood,"* 289-290 & 308-309.

demanding, for Gertrude Thomas remarked, “Today is [a] holiday. I am not so wedded to my new profession that I do not welcome Saturday with as much pleasure as either of my scholars.” Gertrude worked diligently at her school and for her students. She, like other teachers at the time, focused not only on her lesson plans, but getting enough pupils to keep the school open.¹²⁵

Gertrude also worried about her lack of education and mastery of her content material, and she understood she had to study just as much as her students in order to provide them with a proper education. Gertrude worried, “Indeed I am very conscious of my deficiency in that respect as well in arithmetic. I have had so little experience in that branch of knowledge since I left school that I feel that if I had more advanced pupils it might be necessary for me to study too.”¹²⁶

These elite ladies were in competition with male teachers and understood the unbalanced gendered educations they received held them back with their pupils at times and jeopardized their careers. When Elizabeth Allston Pringle taught in her mother’s schoolhouse, Elizabeth exclaimed: “If I had only had a man’s education. A good course of mathematics under a severe master would help me greatly, and I need help.”¹²⁷ Both Elizabeth and Gertrude felt their jobs were threatened because of the education they received. Each of these women worked hard to do their jobs well, and they took pride in ensuring they provided a good education for their students. However, the life of an early postbellum woman educator was still insecure because of their gender. Even though elite women were able to enter into the public sphere to teach, there were still boundaries to cross before gender equality could happen.

¹²⁵ Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 378.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Pringle, *Chronicles of “Chicora Wood,”* 341.

Financial hardships may have encouraged women to initially start teaching, but other motivations quickly appeared for these educators. Although Belle Kearney's family needed the income, her father was still reluctant for Belle to start teaching; however, Belle wrote, "Mother believed in me utterly." Belle was not only motivated to work because her family needed the money, but she truly became dedicated in the work. Belle took it upon herself to meet with the County Superintendent to petition for a teaching license so she could support herself at a school in Vernon. When the superintendent gave her the certificate she was filled with joy and displayed it "with all the pride of a conqueror." Her mother's support and faith in her and her desire to do something for herself motivated her enough to continue teaching. Within a few years of teaching, Belle left the public school system and opened her private school from the family home. Her father eventually came around and became one of Belle's most ardent supporters. Belle was motivated to keep teaching to make her parents proud and prove to herself and her parents she could succeed.¹²⁸

Teachers also found joy in watching their pupils do well. Gertrude often wrote of her students and gave specific examples of their success. The frequency of these diary entries illustrated how dedicated Gertrude became to her classroom and the pride she felt in her students. When her students started showing progress in February of 1880, Gertrude reflected, "There is something in the contact with their fresh pure young spirits which compensates me for the drudgery of teaching. It is pleasing to watch the gro[w]th of their little minds and strive to brighten and stimulate them as they try to learn."¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Kearney, *A Slaveholder's Daughter*, 74-84.

¹²⁹ Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 397.

Educational reform in the South also led as a motivator for women to start teaching. In the South after the war, the education system needed to be standardized and updated. The “surge of interest in education” after the war “contributed significantly to the changing patterns of women’s lives.” Still wary of the North and having teachers sent down, the South worked to train and educate their own teachers and have a stabilized education system. The *Hinds County Gazette* expressed dismay about this situation and called for the teachers to become trained and able to teach the children of the South.¹³⁰ Southerners knew education was linked to the future of the South being able to rebuild and progress. The South soon put teaching training into place and started a more organized educational system. Southern school reform also extended to the publication of textbooks and other school materials. Northern newspapers reprinted stories from Southern papers about this textbook reform. The *Boston Daily Advertiser* ran the title “Southern School Literature” which dramatically read:

Two thirds of the school books are gotten up in New England, by radical politicians, whose aim it is to poison the minds of the young against the South, Southern men, Southern women, and Southern customs and ideas. It is our duty to see that our young people shall not be corrupted and poisoned by New England infidelity, radicalism and heresy. Suspicion attaches to them all in these days of radicalism, where Northern preachers, teachers, lectures and writers are nearly all infected with the prevailing distemper.¹³¹

Schools in the South were encouraged to use Richardson & Co., publishers because they were “designed for Southern schools.”¹³² Just like the Southern women responded to the war time call for support, they also felt called to teach and soon the university programs offered to teachers,

¹³⁰ Scott, 110.; *The Hinds County Gazette*. Raymond, Mississippi May 25, 1866 Issue 34.

¹³¹ “Southern School Literature,” *Boston Daily Advertiser* (Boston, MA), July 31, 1866.

¹³² “More Philophobia,” *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* (Milwaukee, WI), August 3, 1866.

and the “three-day teacher-training institutes” were overbooked with women ready to enter the schoolhouse.¹³³

Writing, being published, and performing were other popular forms of wage work elite women turned to in the postwar period. In the years following the Civil War, there was a large demand for women to write their memoirs and submit their diaries for publishing.¹³⁴ White women were often inspired to become authors of all varieties by not only submitting their personal memories of the war but by also becoming what one scholar here called “creators of published songs, poetry, and novels.” Women turned to writing and performing for financial reasons, much like most of the wage work they sought, but they also sought to gain participation in the public sphere of the entertainment world.¹³⁵ As writers, the elite women were also able to play a crucial role “as disseminators of southern stories of the Civil War.” Through their writing they were able to “attain cultural hegemony” and ensure their stories of the *true* Civil War were heard. Women also were enticed by the thoughts of fame and public notice.

Women hoping to be noticed in the public sphere sought magazines and newspapers both at the state and national levels. The wives of Confederate soldiers, especially Confederate leaders, published their husband’s biographies. Each of these personal narratives and biographies allowed the women to further their “personal interpretations of the war” and started forming the “collective memory” of Southern defeat. Writing and publishing their personal narratives

¹³³ Scott, *The Southern Lady*, 112.

¹³⁴ Elite women like Sallie Clayton, Mary Gay, Kate Stone, Sarah F. Davidson, Fanny Kemble, Mary Chesnut, Kate Cumming, Elizabeth Pringle, Gertrude Thomas, and other women mentioned within this thesis are all examples of women who published their memories of the war.

¹³⁵ Quotation from Faust, *Mothers of Invention*, 161.; Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 228.

allowed these women to further place themselves in the public and redefine gender roles while at the same time fashioning a new identity for the New South.¹³⁶

Sarah A. Doresy of Louisiana took it upon herself to write the biography of Confederate General Henry Watkins Allen, Louisiana's former governor. While Doresy believed it was not a woman's place to write history, she firmly believed in women recording their version of the war and to counteract the North's view of the "great rebellion." Doresy felt it was:

very essential, for the sake of southern honor, and the position which may be accorded us in the future pages of impartial history, that we, Southern people, should also put on record on the files of Time, so far as we can, our version of the terrific struggle in which we have so recently engaged, and from which we have emerged, — after four years of unparalleled suffering, gallant resistance, and stern endurance of all the fiercest vicissitudes of any war ever waged by any peoples, broken in fortunes, defeated in battle, crushed, bleeding, and subjugated!¹³⁷

And while she openly expressed her disdain for women writing history, she felt it was suitable to write biography in which she often crossed the boundary into history writing and gave opinions about the war. She "employed her 'feminine mind' to write history" within her biography of General Allen.¹³⁸

Many elite women attempted to become published but only a few actually succeeded in doing so. While they all might not have succeeded in this venture, what is important is that they thought to try. The women who attempted it took different routes to become published. Some met with ease into the field and others struggled just to make even. Sarah Morgan Dawson, a young woman from New Orleans, was able to express herself through the editorials she wrote in the *Charleston News & Courier*, which she wrote under the pen name "Mr. Fowler." As "Mr.

¹³⁶ Gardner, *Blood & Irony*, 2-4.

¹³⁷ Gardner, *Blood & Irony*, 48.; Quotation from Sarah A. Doresy, *Recollections of Henry Watkins Allen: Brigadier-General Confederate States Army Ex-Governor of Louisiana* (New York: M. Doolady, 1866), 9.

¹³⁸ Gardner, *Blood & Irony*, 48.

Fowler” Sarah wrote about young Southern women in the postbellum. Sarah’s success was in large part because she was married to newspaper editor Francis Warrington Dawson; however, after the death of her husband she continued to write and garner success. Sarah published short stories, translated French literature, and in 1903 published *Les Aventures de Jeannot Lapin*, a version of the Southern Brer Rabbit fables.¹³⁹

Elizabeth Lyle Saxon, of South Carolina and Alabama, used the pen name “Annott Lyle” starting at the age of twelve and published in newspapers in Kentucky, South Carolina, and Pennsylvania.¹⁴⁰ Eliza Frances Andrews, known for *The War-Time Journal of A Georgia Girl, 1864-1865*, also became the secret newspaper editor of the *Washington Gazette* until the publisher found out Eliza was a woman. She published some of her articles under the name “Elzey Hay.” Her first piece was a newspaper article entitled “A Romance of Robbery” published in the *New York World* in 1865. Eliza was a woman of many talents that extended to teaching, publishing plays and books, and writing two textbooks in the field of botany.¹⁴¹ The fact that these three women, Eliza, Sarah, and Elizabeth, were able to publish their articles and stories in newspapers is an achievement that should be recognized. However, for the most part these women wrote under pen names either to hide their writings or to increase their likelihood

¹³⁹Giselle Roberts, “Sarah Morgan Dawson,” in *knowlouisiana.org Encyclopedia of Louisiana*, ed. David Johnson. Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, 2010–. Article published June 1, 2011. <http://www.knowlouisiana.org/entry/sarah-morgan-dawson>.; Sarah Morgan Dawson, *A Confederate Girl’s Diary* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1905), Introduction.

¹⁴⁰ Dawson, *A Confederate Girl’s Diary*, Introduction.; Elizabeth Lyle Saxon, *A Southern Woman’s War Time Reminiscences* (Memphis: Press of the Pilcher Printing Co., 1905), Summary and Introduction, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/saxon/summary.html>.; Elizabeth Saxon was born in Greenville, Tennessee but was schooled in Alabama and married a South Carolinian. She is best known for her work for the suffrage movement which will be discussed in the following chapter.

¹⁴¹ Scott, *The Southern Lady*, 119; Eliza Frances Andrews, *The War-Time Journal of Georgia Girl, 1864-1865* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1908), Summary, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/andrews/summary.html>.; Charlotte A. Ford, “Eliza Frances Andrews (Eliza Hay), Reporter,” in *Seeking a Voice: Images of Race and Gender in the 19th Century Press*, ed. David B. Sachsman, S. Kittrell Rushing, and Roy Morris Jr. (West Lafayette, Purdue University Press, 2009), 267-269.

of getting published. Women also had familial support, especially from their fathers or husbands, who also helped contribute to their success as published writers. These simple supports highlight the continued patriarchal system still functioning in the postbellum.

At the request of her children, Emily Jane Winkler Bealer, from Georgia, started writing a children's book in the 1870s in the hopes that it would not only be there for her children but could also provide a source of income for the struggling family. In Emily's case, she paid the hefty publication fees in order to get something published with the hope she would see a return on her investment. Emily wrote, "I am anxious about my dues at the Publication House. I have a number of books out."¹⁴² As the nineteenth century continued on, elite women became more comfortable with writing and publishing their work and ultimately receiving the praise they deserved. Loula Kendall Rogers of Barnesville, Georgia, became Georgia's poet laureate for her poetry honoring the Confederacy.¹⁴³ Another Georgian author, Augusta Jane Evans, broke the female stereotype by writing in all three-time periods (antebellum, Civil War, and postbellum) and found success in each one. Augusta wrote and published nine novels about Southern women. Her most popular novel was entitled *St. Elmo* (1866) which "sold a million copies within four months of its appearance and remained in print well into the 20th century." Her book *Macaria* (1864) was so popular it crossed the trade blockade and sold an estimated 5,000-bootlegged copies in the North. While her family was secure financially prior to the war, her writing was able to help them in the postbellum; however, she continued writing long after financial security indicating a need to continue working with her passion.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Transcription of Emily Jane Winkler Bealer diary, 1876-1886, MSS 24f, James G. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.

¹⁴³ Gardner, *Blood & Irony*, 43.

¹⁴⁴ Gardner, *Blood & Irony*, 15-16.; Quotation in Janet Gabler-Hover, "Augusta Jane Evans (Wilson) (1835-1909)," *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, 04 September 2013. Web. 30 June 2017.

Buried under insurmountable debt because of her husband's multiple failed business ventures, and his inability to run the plantation, Gertrude Thomas looked for additional work outside of her schoolroom to help her family. Gertrude, embarrassed and shy about the prospect of publishing wrote in her diary: "I wish to talk confidentially with someone and why not with you my Journal?" Gertrude went on and confided:

I wish to write for some paper or magazine and I particularly wish to make it profitable and I do not know 1st if I know how to write well enough, and 2nd wether I can persuade an editor to publish what I write. I am confident that I could furnish articles which will interest if I can but succeed in having them printed.

While Gertrude was hesitant to publish, she still came up with a plan and attempted to get herself published. Before submitting her work to any editors, she had her husband buy magazines and newspapers so she could research the different media outlets. Gertrude's research paid off as she was published numerous times throughout her life and even won awards for her writing.

Gertrude wrote on many subjects including housekeeping, politics, and family.¹⁴⁵ Trying to get published and becoming a writer were not something that would have occurred to many of these elite women before the Civil War, but with the confidence gained during their war efforts, many women were able to make the transition. Elite women used the doors that were open to them during the Civil War to keep pushing into the public light.

Writing was one way for elite women to express their artistic sides, but performing was another. During the war, ladies put on tableaux and charity fundraisers to raise money for the troops, and for some the art of performing continued. Ella May Powell, daughter of a doctor in Atlanta, was one example of a successful performer in the Lower South. Ella was both a performer and an author and epitomized the New South woman with her work in the public sphere. Ella made her living outside of the home through her performances. She kept a

¹⁴⁵ Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 397 & 448.

scrapbook of her many performances singing and of news clippings reviewing her work as an author. Ella was noted as “a highly gifted woman” by not only being an accomplished writer, but also singing “with the finest cultivation and recites with wonderful ability.” Her first novel, and one of her most famous, was *Clio, or Child of Fate* and was praised in many news clippings featured in her scrapbook.¹⁴⁶ These roles and forms of employment further cast elite women into the public sphere and away from their traditional roles of the antebellum.

As some women sought work outside of the home, some looked no further than their own households to take on new responsibilities, and an intrepid few did both. Elite women in the postbellum era, especially those living on plantations had their homesteads to worry about in the turbulent post war years. Women like Georgians Gertrude Thomas and Frances Butler Leigh were given property from their fathers to keep as part of their inheritance. After the war, Frances, from St. Simons, Georgia, returned to the family plantation with her father to help him restore their property. After his death in 1867, she continued running the plantations (located on St. Simons and Butler’s Island) without the help of her husband. Frances wrote, “As soon after as I was able I went down to the South to carry on his work, and to look after the negroes, who loved him so dearly.” She worked day and night to restore order to the plantation, which included balancing the books and working the free laborers to establish their contracts. This was hard and time-consuming work, but Frances was up to the challenge. She remained working for the plantation for ten years after the war. Ultimately, Frances’ plantations failed and she sold her property and return to England to be with her husband, however, she tried for ten years to participate in work often left to the men.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Ella May Powell scrapbooks, MSS #467f ; Ella May Powell was born in 1863 in Atlanta, Georgia. She was involved in teaching music and in the women’s suffrage movement.

¹⁴⁷ Frances Butler Leigh, *Ten Years on a Georgia Plantation Since the War*, 73, & 75-83.

Kate Stone and her widowed mother, Amanda Stone, looked after their plantation, Brokenburn in Louisiana, during and after the war. In her diary, Kate wrote about the crop trouble Brokenburn had in 1867. After the war, the Stone women struggled with the failing crops and adjusting to the free labor system. Kate wrote, “The Negroes demanded high wages, from \$20 to \$25 for men, in addition to the old rations of sugar, rice, tobacco, molasses, and sometimes times.” With her father dead and her oldest brother not quite the same after the war, Kate, under the guidance of matriarch Amanda, stepped up and helped with the plantation. Kate spoke highly of her mother and the powerful force she was on the plantation and exclaimed, “Mamma’s bright hopeful spirit never changes. She is as always the ruling power with us all, the center and light of our home.”¹⁴⁸ Finances at the Brokenburn plantation were tough in the postwar period, but Kate’s story illustrated the determination the postwar women had to continue moving forward and progressing the New South.

Kate Stone and her mother also highlight the dependency women had towards one another. After spending most of the war in a land without men, elite women needed to band together to survive. This continued in the postbellum period. Mothers and daughters worked together as Kate demonstrated. Elizabeth Allston Pringle and her mother, Adèle, also depended on each other when Elizabeth’s father died during the war. Elizabeth was impressed at her mother’s determination and grit to maintain their properties. Elizabeth confided in her journal: “Poor Mamma, who was perfectly unaccustomed to business, has had every thing upon her, and it is a perfect wonder to see her rise to each emergency as it comes.” Adèle handled the repairs on their damaged houses, including Chicora Woods, she dealt with hiring and letting go their free laborers, the finances, and the crops. And under Adèle’s guidance, Elizabeth eventually

¹⁴⁸ Kate Stone, *Brokenburn*, 368 & 377.

came into her own as elite woman rice planter.¹⁴⁹ When Elizabeth's husband, John Julius Pringle, died she took over managing his rice plantations. Elizabeth managed the planting “against heavy odds” and wrote of her experiences in *A Woman Rice Planter* under the pen name of “Patience Pennington.” Her experience as a rice planter shaped her identity so much so that the simple inscription “The Woman Rice Planter” was inscribed on her tombstone.¹⁵⁰

Wage work was not the only field that changed for elite women in the postwar period. With emancipation of slaves, the women now had to pay for labor that was once free to them. Because of the financial situations of most of these women, hiring enough staff to do all of the domestic work was impossible. While many of the women had to learn to take care of the house some during the war, many still had some slaves to depend on, so the postwar change was a shock to the women. As was shown in the last chapter, the elite women did not shirk away from the challenge of the Civil War and they did not shirk away from this. The women instead became “more adept” and “more ‘domesticated; however, it was in no way a natural transition.’”¹⁵¹ Gertrude Thomas wrote of the hard transition and exclaimed: “I think I was very foolish last month to make up beds and wash soiled dishes. I began seriously to think that it was in very bad taste to have three meals in one day...Then I complained if a knife or spoon was used by Mr. Thomas, if not placed in its proper place.”¹⁵² Gertrude was so tired of doing dishes and other forms of domestic work that she became cross with her husband for leaving dishes out of place. Gertrude and other women learning the ropes of household chores link these nineteenth century

¹⁴⁹ Pringle, *Chronicles of “Chicora Wood,”* 283 & 345.

¹⁵⁰ “Aged Lady Passed Away,” *Georgetown Times* (Georgetown, South Carolina), Dec. 9, 1921. <https://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=pv&GRid=22293908&PIpi=40744330>.

¹⁵¹ Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Womanhood*, 51.

¹⁵² Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 349.

women to modern young adult women. Reading stories like Gertrude's help modern audiences feel a connection to the past and understand these women were real and had real challenges to overcome.

At the young age of nine, Belle Kearney, was responsible for much of the household work for the family since her mother was often ill in bed. Belle recalled often going to school and then coming home and "on such occasions the cooking and the house-work fell to my lot in addition to other duties."¹⁵³ In most accounts, the elite women do not look back on their domestic duties with as much joy as their wage work, but they endured. These women were motivated to succeed and stay with the changing times. Georgian, Jane Louise Killian even wrote about shopping for a new stove with her sister which suggests elite women's willingness to adapt and make use of the new technology afforded to them.¹⁵⁴

Much of the domestic work carried on in the postwar period linked directly to the work elite women learned during their war efforts. Because of the hardships during the war and the skills they learned to support the troops, the women were able to carry these skills into the new time period. Lula Thompson of Mississippi wrote of her daily tasks which included spinning thread, knitting, and working in the yard. Gertrude constantly made clothes for her sons and husband. One woman even bought herself a cotton gin and worked in her garden to grow food for her family.¹⁵⁵ In late 1865-1866, Elizabeth Pringle wrote about sewing and remaking clothes out of old items (a practice that was common during the war and continued into the postbellum for most families). Elizabeth was proud of the new shirts she was able to make out of old

¹⁵³ Kearney, *A Slaveholder's Daughter*, 24.

¹⁵⁴ Jane Louisa Killian papers, MSS 447f, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.; Jane was born in 1826 and was married to James R. Crew and her second husband Lemuel Pratt Grant.

¹⁵⁵ Lula Thompson qtd. in Giselle Roberts, *The Confederate Belle* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), 165.; Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 351.; Scott, *The Southern Lady*, 110.

curtains because it proved her resourcefulness.¹⁵⁶ While the “cooking, chamber work, and sewing have taken up my time and attention” as Emily Bealer wrote in her diary, the elite women were somewhat prepared for the domestic work because of the war.¹⁵⁷

While domestic work was still work, it drew a distinct line between the public and private spheres. Because it was in the home this is work that is more suited to be defined as private sphere work, and many women were aware of the discrepancy between this work and their wage work. When Belle Kearney wanted to teach school her father originally thought it was tasteless because she would be out in the public working. Belle wrote of this hypocrisy: “It is true that for four years I had been in a pitiless tread-mill, but it was at home: the world did not know of it; and money, that degrading substance, had not been received for my labor. Household drudgery and public work were very different questions.”¹⁵⁸ This excerpt from Belle’s memoir emphasized the struggle between the elite women and the patriarchy and the Old South. Many women were responsible for the housework simply because the men thought it was considered women’s work and belonged in the private sphere.

The postbellum was another period of flux and change for elite women. After enduring four years of hardship and loss, they were once again tossed into uncertainty for their future. Within this uncertainty, they had two choices: continue fighting and adapting to the world around them or give up. The women like, Kate Stone, Gertrude Thomas, Elizabeth Pringle, Eliza Andrews, and others addressed in this chapter chose to fight. With their families depending on them, and their sense of ambition, they took to the public sphere as wage earners. These women

¹⁵⁶ Pringle, *Chronicles of “Chicora Woods,”* 291.

¹⁵⁷ Transcription of Emily Jane Winkler Bealer diary, 1876-1886, MSS #24f, James G. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.

¹⁵⁸ Kearney, *A Slaveholder’s Daughter*, 41.

completely changed the face of teaching and turned it into a female dominated profession. They wrote and shared their stories about the war and created a Southern memory to honor the Confederacy they loved and supported. Planter women worked business side of the plantations and dealt with their free laborers.

Within these new roles, elite women found themselves with greater responsibilities in both the public and private spheres. The antebellum roles tended to focus on the private sphere and the homestead, with slaves to help with the burden, but the postbellum women's work shifted to encompass both the private and public spheres adding greater burdens to the elite women. With their plates full, the elite women did not stop at wage work— their next adventure into the public realm would be taking on benevolent and political activism.

CHAPTER THREE

Why, if we should keep silence, while our children were being taught that their hero fathers were 'fiends, brutes, thieves, and murderers,' the very stones would cry out against us. No, We cannot let our children believe your History of the War. -Sallie F. Chapin¹⁵⁹

While wage and domestic work guided women into the public sphere, elite women also began participating in benevolent and political activism to help fully cement them into the public sphere. With their involvement in memorial or church fundraising groups, the elite women were able to leave the traditional patriarchal system of the Old South behind in a way that suited both them women and the men of the New South. Regardless of whether the women needed to work or not, most elite women started looking for ways to help their communities. Jane Turner Censer explained: “Women who did not need to work for wages nevertheless found opportunities to contribute to their society.” Elite women, used to working as a community during the war, continued helping those around them by banding together and seeking out those in need. According to Caroline Janney, author of *Burying the Dead but Not the Past*, elite women and their “devotion to the cause and participation in female-driven organizations did not end with Appomattox but grew stronger in the postwar period.”¹⁶⁰ Club activities became popular in the postbellum era, and as in the antebellum era, the church remained a central gathering point for elite women to work together and seek out benevolent service opportunities. Within one club organization, the Young Woman’s Christian Association,

¹⁵⁹ Sallie F. Moore Chapin, *Fitz-Hugh St. Clair: The South Carolina Rebel Boy; or. It’s No Crime to Be Born a Gentleman* (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1873), 40.

¹⁶⁰ 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), 5.

the women collected clothes and books for the poor, raised money for the widows' fund, and lent a hand where it was needed.

In addition to working within clubs to help their communities in the aftermath of the Civil War, women founded and participated in societies to memorialize and pay respects to fallen soldiers of the Civil War. This memorialization became possible through the formation of the Ladies' Memorial Associations (LMA) throughout the South.¹⁶¹ Almost as soon as the war ended, elite women formed chapters of the LMAs under the united purpose to never forget the fallen. There were an estimated seventy to one hundred chapters of the LMAs started throughout the South in the postbellum era. For many elite women, the war was not the end. Historian, Stephanie McCurry, simply wrote, "Her War didn't end in April 1865." There were deep resentments between the Southern elite women and their Northern counterparts. Gertrude Thomas, wrote on May 8, 1865: "Today I am more intensely opposed to the North than at any period of the war— We have been imposed upon."¹⁶² Sarah Lois Wadley, of Louisiana, exclaimed on May 13, 1865: "It makes my whole being fierce to think that we now stand in the condition of criminals for pardon, of 'erring brothers' to be forgiven and received."¹⁶³

The war did not provide the necessary closure for women, and the LMAs allowed women to participate and come to terms with the end of the war and the defeat of their cause. LMAs also allowed them to stand their ground and emphasize to the North that they believed in the Cause and were not going to let it be forgotten.¹⁶⁴ The women who participated in the various LMA

¹⁶¹ Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 206.; Kearney, *A Slaveholder's Daughter*, 127.

¹⁶² Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 264.

¹⁶³ Sarah Wadley, *Private Journal of Sarah L. Wadley*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina,) 339, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/wadley/wadley.html>.; Sarah grew up in Louisiana, but spent her war years in Georgia.

¹⁶⁴ Janney, *Burying the Dead*, 8.; Quotation from Stephanie McCurry, "Southern Women and their New Normal," *America's Civil Reconciliation*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 135, 242-3.

groups across the South worked to forge a positive memory of the Confederacy and started using Lost Cause rhetoric to ensure the Confederate traditions were both, not forgotten, but also, looked at in a positive light.¹⁶⁵

The Atlanta Ladies Memorial Association was formed on April 16, 1866. The purpose of the LMAs, according to the Atlanta Ladies Memorial Association by-laws, was fourfold: first, to preserve the memory of the Confederate dead and to honor them on Confederate Memorial Day; second, to mark the graves of the soldiers; third, to erect memorials in meaningful and historic places in the old Confederacy; and fourth, to maintain the records and mementos of their work.¹⁶⁶ For years, as seen in chapter one, the elite women poured their energies and resources into supporting the war effort. Their lives were consumed with helping their men and doing their part to fight for the cause. When the war was over, these energies and the desire to help and be productive did not go away. The women needed an outlet and the LMA chapters provided that. Using their time and resources during the war in groups like the Ladies' Relief and Hospital Association was a "duty and pleasure" for the elite women. After the war, it was a pleasure for the women to turn their focus on ways to aid the memory of the Confederacy.¹⁶⁷ They had a desire to keep working and to continue making a difference, but the women also had ulterior motives for establishing the LMA chapters throughout the South.

Elite women were not ready to give up the recently gained freedoms they won during the war. Citizens of the New South during the postbellum era understood that LMAs were the

¹⁶⁵ Janney, *Burying the Dead*, 2.

¹⁶⁶ Arlinda Smith Broady, "Photo Vault: Ladies Memorial Association honored Confederate dead." *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*. April 13, 2016 <http://www.ajc.com/news/local/photo-vault-ladies-memorial-association-honored-confederate-dead/2oYo3EFNZsIHvsPhMfaRYN/>; Atlanta Ladies Memorial Association records, 1866-1977, MSS #375, James G. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.

¹⁶⁷ *The Sunny South* (Atlanta, GA), November 23, 1878.

driving force of the Lost Cause rhetoric and the memorialization of the Confederacy was the ladies of the LMA chapters. Hidden in their fourfold agenda of remembering the forgotten, the LMA women further increased their political motives. Historian Caroline Janney emphasized the act of memory is not a “passive act.” After the war, the elite women quite purposefully set out to shape the memory of their Confederate soldiers. Through the actions of the LMAs and the yearly memorial days, the elite women made sure the shared memory was not that the war was about protecting slavery, but that it was about the Confederate’s fight for states’ rights.¹⁶⁸ Every action of the LMA women was politically motivated, but it was done in a way that was socially acceptable to the time period. The commemorative occasions avoided the appearance being political, but the commemorations were in fact political. Through the reburials and the building of monuments the women were letting their voices be heard. Through these actions, they ensured that the South would “never cease to revere the memories of those who fought beneath her banner and laid down their lives in vain for her liberty.”¹⁶⁹ The women in the LMAs were responsible for keeping the Confederate spirit and memory alive. It was not the war veterans, Southern politicians, or the UDCs that were able to first spin the Confederate memory in a positive light, but the LMAs that formed immediately after the end of the war. In Virginia, Janney explained it was the LMA groups who were “responsible for remaking military defeat into a political, social, and cultural victory for the white South.”¹⁷⁰

The first goal of the LMA chapters was to preserve the memory of the Confederate dead and honor their memory with Confederate Memorial Days (CMD). Mrs. Williams, of the

¹⁶⁸ Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, 4.; Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 46-48.

¹⁶⁹ Janney, *Burying the Past*, 2-4 & 8.; X, “To the Ladies Memorial Associations of the South,” *Charleston Courier, Tri-Weekly* (Charleston, South Carolina), Aug. 5, 1869.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 1-4.

Columbus, Georgia chapter wrote to the *Columbus Times* on March 12, 1866 explaining the importance of the Memorial Days: “We cannot raise monumental shafts and inscribe thereon their many deeds of heroism, but we can keep alive the memory of the debt we owe them, by dedicating at least one day in each year to embellishing their humble graves with flowers.”¹⁷¹ This letter was sent to various newspapers throughout the South, and illustrates the pull the LMA women had at the time. The Columbus chapter prided itself on being the ones that started the practice of the memorial days, but other chapters quickly jumped on board.

In May, the Richmond chapter pleaded to the “Women of the South” to participate in the Memorial Day activities. Mrs. W M. H. Macfarland, president of the chapter, appealed to the emotions of the Southerners and wrote in regards to the lost Confederates: “Dying, they left us the guardianship of their graves. These graves it is a grateful service to preserve and beautify. It is a service due alike to them and to their surviving friends.” This address was requested to be printed in all Southern papers and was reprinted several times in various papers across the South.¹⁷² The LMAs worked closely within their communities to organize and implement their memorial days. Sallie Clayton, her mother, and other women of Atlanta worked for days to clean the cemetery for Atlanta’s first memorial day. Sallie and her mother then wrote letters to the shop owners around town asking them to close their stores in reverence for the memorial service.¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ According to a footnote in Clayton’s *Requiem for a Lost City*, Mrs. Mary A. Williams got the idea for the memorial day when she and her daughter were placing flowers on her late husband’s grave. Her daughter then wanted to place flowers on all the other graves of the Confederate fallen.; Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City*, 171-172, footnote 14.

¹⁷² “To the Women of the South,” *Daily Richmond Examiner* (Richmond, VA), May 10, 1866.; “To the Women of the South,” *Daily News and Herald* (Savannah, GA), May 29, 1866.; “Decoration of the Graves of Our Departed.” *Daily News and Herald* (Savannah, GA), April 25, 1868.

¹⁷³ Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City*, 172.

For the most part these memorial days were unique to the local chapters. There was no unified date or agenda for the memorial days, but each chapter selected a specific date that held some meaning to the war. The women also chose sometime in the Spring in order to not only symbolize the rebirth and new life of the New South, but also because the flowers would be in full bloom.¹⁷⁴ The individual chapters were responsible for the memorial proceedings, and the “local customs and traditions... controlled these observances;” however, there were commonalities between the memorial activities. There were speakers, usually those with ties to the war, music, and the laying of flowers on the graves of the fallen.¹⁷⁵ The speakers were often prominent men in the community including doctors, lawyers, and reverends. The presence of these influential men is another indication of the overt political tones the commemorative services had. Memorial days often drew “an immense throng” of people who wanted to remember the fallen. In an 1868 CMD, the Atlanta chapter’s ceremony at Oakland Cemetery brought an estimated 10,000 people to the ceremony. Eleven years later, records indicate 15,000-20,000 people were present for the ceremonies in Richmond, Virginia.¹⁷⁶ These thousands of people were able to hear the specific messages the LMAs wanted them to hear.

These CMDs were important for the people of the South as a way to come together and mourn the loss of life. Nothing could stop the LMAs from planning their yearly memorial day. Poor weather could delay these memorial days, but they were always rescheduled. In 1895, the exercises in Atlanta were pushed to Sunday when the weather was more cooperative. Even though the ceremonies were postponed there was still a wonderful turnout, and the flowers,

¹⁷⁴ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederate*, 41.

¹⁷⁵ “Confederate Decoration Observances,” *The Daily Picayune* (New Orleans, LA), April 27, 1887.

¹⁷⁶ “Georgia,” *New-Orleans Commercial Bulletin* (New Orleans, LA), May 12, 1868.; “General News Items,” *Southwestern Christian Advocate* (New Orleans, LA), May 29, 1879.; “Savannah Soldierly,” *Georgia Weekly Telegraph and Georgia Journal & Messenger* (Macon, GA), Nov. 4, 1879.

music, speakers, military salutes were “incidents long to be treasured in memory.”¹⁷⁷ The ceremonies brought in thousands of Southerners of all stations to come remember the fallen. These memorial days, put on by the LMA chapters, even gained the attention of ex-Confederate President Jefferson Davis.

In 1883, Davis wrote a letter to the Montgomery, Alabama LMAs regretting he could not attend their memorial day services. Davis was proud of the efforts of the LMA women and wrote to emphasize the value of their yearly ceremonies. Davis understood the value of the LMA chapters and the role they played in ensuring the Confederate memory not be forgotten. This man, who once held the highest political office of the Confederacy, understood the women in the LMAs were doing more than simply placing flowers on the graves of the fallen. These women were shaping the collective memories of the New South. Davis wrote to the Montgomery chapter:

The annual offering of fresh flowers to the memory of the patriots who died in defence of the sacred principles for which the battles of the ‘war for independence’ were fought is the appropriate tribute should be as enduring as the ever recurring flowers of Spring. While the purest and the truest—the women of the South— come annually to deck the graves of their heroes, the youth of the land cannot grow up in ignorance or the old cease to remember the debt of gratitude due to those who died that their country might be free as their forefathers left it.”¹⁷⁸

The CMDs not only attracted the attention of powerful Southerners, but also Northerners. In a Virginia ceremony, the speakers spoke about the Union soldiers and placed flowers on not only the graves of the Confederate but also those of Union soldiers. This was reported in the New York paper *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper* in 1886. A Savannah newspaper also

¹⁷⁷ *The Sunny South* (Atlanta, GA), May 11, 1895.

¹⁷⁸ For more information on the idea of collective memory in the New South see Caroline E. Janney’s *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation*; *Fayetteville Observer* (Fayetteville, NC), May 17, 1883.

commented on the Union graves. The reporter wrote: “The graves of the Federals were not neglected. They, too, received attention and restoration, in respect to the loving ones, at a distance, who may one day come to reclaim their dead.”¹⁷⁹ The practice of covering graves of all the soldiers impressed a war widow of the North so much so she felt compelled to write a letter to the Montgomery chapter.

After one Memorial Day and after the remarks of Major Jones of Alabama, the Northern war widow sent a gift in the care of Mrs. B.S. Bibb, the president of the Montgomery, Alabama chapter of the LMA for Major Jones. The Union war widow, who wanted to remain anonymous passionately wrote:

For a long time I felt as if I could never forgive those who slew the defenders of the ‘Stars and Stripes,’ but when I think of the war-widowed mothers of the south, and see such language as this, it makes me tenderer and just to the south. I feel that men like this Major Jones must be noble and true in heart, and fought and died because they thought it was right. I want them to feel that such sentiments echo in the northern heart, and in truth, ‘tend to draw the whole country together for its healing.’ Out of the little that the war has left me I wish you to select a silver cup or some other suitable testimonial.

With money, the Montgomery LMAs bought a cup and had it engraved “To Major Thomas G. Jones, The Orator on Confederate Memorial day, April 1874; From A northern woman, widowed and bereft of her sons by the war, As a token of her appreciation of the Soldierly words spoken in kindness of the Northern Dead.”¹⁸⁰ Both the Northern newspaper coverage and the gift from the Northern widow illustrate the far-reaching influence of the Ladies’ Memorial Associations and their memorial days.

¹⁷⁹ *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper* (New York, New York), May 22, 1886.; “Honors to the Confederate Dead,” *The Daily News and Herald* (Savannah, GA), April 30, 1866.

¹⁸⁰ “North and South. A Union Lady’s Tribute to a Southern ex-Soldier Who Desires Peace and Reconciliation,” *Weekly Constitution* (Atlanta, GA), September 15, 1874.

When the people started to forget the Memorial Days and attendance went down, the LMAs were there to remind the citizens of the purpose and importance of the event. For the Charleston, South Carolina chapter, the Memorial Days were a way to renew their spirits and their dedication to the organization.¹⁸¹ The women worked hard and accomplished something that would last for years to come and their efforts were noticed. In an 1870 ceremony, Macon attorney Sidney Lanier addressed the LMAs: “I speak for them [fallen soldiers], when I thank you for this annual tribute of the early glories of the spring which you bring to lay upon their graves.”¹⁸² With their hard work and determination, the women were able to create a day of remembrance that still continues today.¹⁸³ The women were motivated to memorialize the fallen not only to put a use to their productive energies but to also ensure the rhetoric of the “Lost Cause,” that the LMAs helped spread, was not forgotten.

The second goal of the ladies was to mark the graves of the soldiers. In order to do so the women had to start by finding the fallen soldiers that died away from home and bringing their bodies to Confederate soil to be re-interred.¹⁸⁴ While men helped with this project, it was often the women leading the way to get the project completed. In fact, Sallie Clayton recalls it being the women who took charge of the interment of soldiers in Oakland cemetery and not the men who were also involved in the LMA.¹⁸⁵ In Raleigh, North Carolina, it was Sophia Partridge,

¹⁸¹ Atlanta Ladies Memorial Association records, 1866-1977, MSS #375, James G. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.; *The Charleston Courier, Tri-Weekly*, (Charleston, SC), June 23, 1868.

¹⁸² “An Address,” *Georgia Weekly Telegraph and Georgia Journal & Messenger* (Macon, GA), May 3, 1870.

¹⁸³ Confederate Memorial Days in the South are considered a controversial topic and because of this only Mississippi and Alabama still celebrate Confederate Memorial Day (as of 2016). CMD in Georgia is now simply called a “State Holiday” since 2015.; Emanuella Grinberg, “These States Are Observing Confederate Memorial Day on Monday,” *CNN*, April 24, 2017, <http://www.cnn.com/2017/04/24/us/confederate-memorial-day-2017/index.html>.

¹⁸⁴ *Weekly Constitution*, (Atlanta, GA), February 17, 1874.

¹⁸⁵ Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City*, 173.

LMA of North Carolina's first secretary, who pushed for the interment of the Confederate soldiers. According to Peter Pescud, author of *A Sketch of the Ladies' Memorial Association of Raleigh, N.C.*, when the women had to complete the "gruesome" work they did not complain or walk away from their responsibility.

In Atlanta, co-Vice President Mrs. Johnson "personally superintended removing the dead for ten miles around and through this city." The work was dirty and often the coffins needed repairs and at times they were full of the "most offensive fluid."¹⁸⁶ The LMA women took on the responsibility of hiring African Americans to help move the bodies. During this project, many women also had to come into contact with their Northern counterparts. Most elite women were not ready to be reconciled with the North and had a hard time dealing with them on during the re-interments. Sophia Partridge, wrote to her friend Fanny Lewis sharing one experience with the Yankees. Sally exclaimed: "Did I tell you in my last [letter] that the Yankees notified us that we must remove our dead *immediately* to make room for theirs? We felt insulted." Despite the unhygienic nature of the work and despite the fact this was not typical work suited for elite women, the women leaders of the LMAs felt it was their duty to find a proper resting place for the soldiers.¹⁸⁷

Mrs. Johnson successfully supervised the removal and reburial of over ninety bodies. Mrs. Johnson oversaw the entire reburial process including finding the limited lumber in the Atlanta area. One reporter wrote of the dedication Mrs. Johnson brought to her task by writing, "She went every day to see how the work was progressing." At one point, Mrs. Johnson had an

¹⁸⁶ Peter Pescud qtd. in Catherine W. Bishir, "A Strong Force of Ladies: Women, Politics, and Confederate Memorial Associations in Nineteenth-Century Raleigh," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 77, no. 4 (2000): 457 & 465.; Atlanta Ladies Memorial Association records, 1866-1977, MSS #375, James G. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.

¹⁸⁷ Sophia Partridge qtd. in Bisher, "*A Strong Force of Ladies*," 464.

altercation with a man at the lumberyard who was trying to take her lumber for the coffins. Holding her ground, she was able to have the man remove the lumber from his cart and load it onto hers. Under her supervision, three thousand Confederate soldiers were properly given a final resting place. This dedication to the removal and reburial project was seen time again throughout the South. The women in the LMA chapters of Winchester, Fredericksburg, Petersburg, Lynchburg, and Richmond, Virginia were responsible for the interment of the remains of more than 72,520 Confederates, which was about 28 percent of the 260,000 Confederates who fell in the war. The LMAs allowed the soldiers to be brought home and provided access to the families of the fallen.¹⁸⁸

After the soldiers were buried, the maintenance of the graves fell to the women and the different LMA chapters. This again took time, money, and volunteers to get the job done. In the late 1880s, Mrs. Milledge, in Atlanta, was again put to the task of asking for help with a restoration project. Some of the original headstones in Oakland cemetery were made of wood, and by the late 1800s this wood was rotting and the names starting to fade. The Atlanta LMAs worked to get these headstones replaced with granite. Appealing to one donor, Mrs. Milledge wrote, "The interest in the care of these graves is dying out so fast, and the necessity is so urgent upon us... now must be the time for it, or never." The LMAs not only wanted to honor and work for the Confederate fallen as a whole, but wanted to emphasize each individual. The Charleston chapter within one year dedicated 525 headstones, but remarked there was still work to do, and they were not giving up. This organization and their dedication to the individual was a key mission to the LMA mission. Censer wrote, "In their insistence that names of the dead be

¹⁸⁸ Atlanta Ladies Memorial Association records, 1866-1977, MSS #375, James G. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.; Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 195.; Janney, *Burying the Dead*, 9.

discovered and preserved on grave markers, were emphasizing the individual and trying to ensure that he was not forgotten.”¹⁸⁹

After establishing Confederate Memorial Days and marking the graves of the fallen soldiers, the LMA women started to erect memorials in meaningful and historic places in the old Confederacy. The memorials were an example of the women once again working as a unit to get a large job done. The elite women used their energies and experience to collect funds and build memorials to the South thus ensuring, through another means, their version of history would survive. The ladies responsible for erecting the memorials needed to make sure they were not just placed in an ideal location, but also that they portrayed the right sentiment. Between the years 1865 and 1885, the LMA women placed an estimated 70 percent of their monuments in cemeteries. This was done in order to call the thoughts and memories of the Southerners to the memories of the loss of life during the war. Seventy-five percent of the memorials used a funeral like design to evoke mourning.¹⁹⁰ Through these purposeful decisions, the elite women were able to erect monuments throughout the South that represented a specific version of their history of the Civil War and their losses.

While participation in the LMA chapters was volunteer oriented, the women did hard meaningful work and part of this work was reaching out to the communities and fundraising. This fundraising ranged from asking local businesses for donations, appealing to the government, and selling items. The women sold annual or life subscriptions to their organization, hosted

¹⁸⁹ Atlanta Ladies Memorial Association records, 1866-1977, MSS #375, James G. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.; *The Charleston Courier, Tri-Weekly* (Charleston, SC), June 23, 1868.; Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 195.

¹⁹⁰ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South 1865-1913*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 41.

lectures and sewing circles, and bazaars all to collect money.¹⁹¹ The financial side of fundraising pushed the women further into the public sphere and emphasized their willingness to go forward with their independence.¹⁹² When the Atlanta chapter raised funds for the building of the Lion of Atlanta that would eventually be placed in Oakland Cemetery the president of the chapter, Mrs. Milledge, reached out to several businesses offering them plots in the recently expanded Oakland Cemetery.¹⁹³ One donor responded by writing, “I will take [plot] no. 17 & will see you or the captain about the payment today or tomorrow.” The LMAs of Atlanta also worked with the local government to expand Oakland Cemetery and sell lots to donors. In a finance log from 1892, there was a detailed account of these lot purchases ranging from \$1.00 all the \$250.00. These donations continued into 1893 with steady donations and lots being sold at varying prices. Through these donations the LMAs of Atlanta raised upwards of 3,000 dollars all of which went to the building of the Lion of Atlanta. The Augusta chapter raised \$20,934.00 from 1868-1878 for their monument, and the New Orleans chapter fundraised more than \$20,000.¹⁹⁴

The LMA of Atlanta also reached out specifically to marble companies in the Atlanta area to donate their supplies to the building of the Lion of Atlanta and the making of the granite headstones. Mrs. Milledge herself wrote and haggled with the American Marble Company and Robbins Bros., Dealers in Marble, Granite and Limestone. From their correspondence, it was

¹⁹¹ Bisher, “A Strong Force of Ladies,” 459.; “Ladies’ Memorial Association,” *The Daily News and Herald* (Savannah, GA), Feb. 7, 1868.

¹⁹² *The Sunny South* (Atlanta, GA), Nov. 23, 1878.; Janney, *Burying the Dead*, Introduction.

¹⁹³ The Lion of Atlanta was dedicated on April 26, 1894.; The story of Mrs. Milledge and her chapter represent the next generation of LMA women committed to the Confederate memory.; Please see the appendices for a picture of the Lion of Atlanta.

¹⁹⁴ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 39.; That is roughly \$339,255.00 in today’s money.; “1868 dollars in 2016 dollars,” The Bureau of Labor Statistic’s annual Consumer Price Index, accessed November 11, 2016, <http://www.in2013dollars.com/1868-dollars-in-2016?amount=20934>.

clear the LMA of Atlanta not only wanted the best deal for their money, but they also had a specific look for the finished product. When the chapter was not satisfied with their product they had no problem letting the company know. In one letter to the chapter Mr. Newell, the treasurer of the Georgia office of American Marble Company wrote, “If you wish them corrected and will send them to us we will make the correction without charge. We are very glad that the headstones pleased you and that you got along so well with your hard task.”¹⁹⁵

The LMA fundraised for this project and also appealed to the state governments to provide funds. Throughout issues of the *Weekly Constitution*, there were records of funds diverted to this project to the individual chapters of the LMAs. In one instance, the state of Georgia gave “\$1,000 for expenses incurred in removing the bodies of Confederate dead from Gettysburg to Savannah.” Georgia’s Congress agreed to the giving money to the LMAs “unanimously by a rising vote” in order for the women to continue their work reburying the dead. The state giving money to this cause is significant because the federal government was purposefully *not* giving the South money for this project. The women of the LMAs were filling a void. The U.S. Congress appropriated money for the creation of a series of national cemeteries and the reburial of Union soldiers. The Congress refused to appropriate money for “rebels,” so the women of the South had to step in.¹⁹⁶ The fundraising alone emphasizes the ability of these women to work outside the home and their competence and dedication to do so. For the most part, the presidency and boards of the LMA chapters, including their treasures, were comprised solely of women. Gaines M. Foster explained, “Southern males believed that memorial projects belonged to the realm of sentiment in which women had innate abilities and over which they had

¹⁹⁵Atlanta Ladies Memorial Association records, 1866-1977, MSS #375, James G. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.

¹⁹⁶ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and The American Civil War*, (New York: Random House, 2009),

primary responsibility.” Therefore, the few men actually involved in the LMAs were there for financial or emotional support—not as active participants.¹⁹⁷ Using the organizational skills learned in the war period, the women worked to not only raise significant amounts of money, but also to keep detailed records of the money collected.¹⁹⁸

The women of the LMAs not only needed to fundraise and procure the funds for their various projects, but at times needed to petition to the government on the legality of their projects. In a letter to a Miss Mildred Lewis Rutherford, the first president of the Atlanta chapter, explained the legal process they went through to draft the by-laws in 1866 and the process of obtaining land in Oakland Cemetery. She wrote, “I asked the City for a certain amount of vacant land to reinter the Confederate dead lying in the trenches... There was some of this land not used, and we then asked the City to allow them to sell it, the proceeds to be used exclusively on Oakland Memorial Ground.” Years later in 1893, in order to expand the Oakland Cemetery and sell the added lots, the LMA first needed the government’s approval. This matter went to the Board of Health and the Mayor & General Counsel where Mrs. John Milledge needed the advice of lawyer Mr. Goodwin. Rather than using her husband to speak with the lawyer, Mrs. Milledge wrote Mr. Goodwin himself and made sure the chapter was legally safe to sell the added lots.¹⁹⁹

This was hard, time consuming work—and the work was slow. It often took decades for their work to even be complete. Art curator, Michael Panhorst, in his article “Devotion, Deception, and the Ladies Memorial Association,” provides a comprehensive timeline to the Alabama Confederate monument that stands today. Through this timeline, the perseverance of

¹⁹⁷ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 38.

¹⁹⁸ Atlanta Ladies Memorial Association records, 1866-1977, MSS #375, James G. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.; *The Sunny South*, November 23, 1878

¹⁹⁹ Atlanta Ladies Memorial Association records, 1866-1977, MSS #375, James G. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.

these women becomes clear and it is evident the women started with the end in mind and did not stop their work until the monument was completed. Fundraising for the project started immediately after the war ended in 1865. The Montgomery chapter was able to raise \$47,000. However, their first priority was to the reburial of the fallen and to the residents of the city who were in need. Because of these more pressing needs, the cornerstone was not laid until 1886, and the monument was not finished and dedicated until December of 1898, more than thirty years after the war ended.²⁰⁰ The women prioritized their agendas, got the most important work done first (the reburial of the fallen Confederate), and, while waiting for their monuments to be finished, they celebrated yearly with their Confederate Memorial Days.

The Ladies' Memorial Associations also worked to maintain the records and mementos of their work. The chapters set up organized presidency boards with each member having a specific duty to perform. The LMA chapters took their jobs of preserving their work and history very seriously. A quick glance at the boxes of LMA archive material at the Atlanta History Center exemplifies that. During his research, Michael Panhorst describes the Montgomery LMA's records as "remarkably comprehensive."²⁰¹ This women's organization was not haphazardly put together. The women took this memorial organization and its work seriously. There were various chapter meetings, newspaper addresses, and community activities to get people involved and to further preserve their memory. Sallie Clayton, Gertrude Thomas, and Kate Stone are just three examples of women previously looked at within this thesis that participated in LMA chapters. Gertrude Thomas even served on the board of the Augusta,

²⁰⁰ Michael Panhorst, "Devotion, Deception, and the Ladies Memorial Association, 1865-1898: The Mystery of the Alabama Confederate Monument," *The Alabama Review* (2012), 163-165, <http://www.uwa.edu/uploadedFiles/alabamareview/Panhorst.color.pdf>.

²⁰¹ Panhorst, "Devotion," 165.

Georgia chapter and helped with the fundraising for the Augusta, Georgia monument.²⁰² The work the women of the LMAs did was valued and gave the women purpose and often closure to the war period.

While some argue the women were only doing the work of the memorials because the men were unable to go against the United States government for fear of treason, the evidence above illustrates the dedication the women had to the LMA chapters and their mission.²⁰³ Many women lost loved ones in the war, witnessed the war firsthand, and had a stake in the memorial process just as much as the men. They also had a stake in the created memory of the Civil War. The early presidencies of the LMA boards were often women with spouses or fathers who fought in the war, some of whom lost their lives during the fight.²⁰⁴ The long-term dedication also illustrates the women's personal involvement and their belief in the importance of it. The LMA chapters were present for duration of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, and they were constantly working on remembering those that were lost.

From the examples given of the different projects the LMAs had going at the time, it is evident the women were working and changing the typical role of white elite women. With each fundraising project, Memorial Day, or monument built the women entered further into the public sphere and took on more responsibilities. It was voluntary work, but it was hard work. And in the cases of most women without their antebellum era financial security, the women not only volunteered with the LMAs but they also help some sort of wage work. The LMAs were important examples of the changing roles elite women took in the postbellum era. They were one of the first examples of southern "organized womanhood." Before the United Daughters of the

²⁰² Clayton, *Requiem for a Lost City*, 172-3.; Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 396 & 448.; Stone, *Brokenburn*, xl .

²⁰³ Janney, *Burying the Dead*, 199.

²⁰⁴ Bisher, "A Strong Force of Ladies," 457.

Confederacy, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Woman's Christian Temperance Movement there were the Ladies' Memorial Associations and they should be remembered.²⁰⁵ Catherine Bishir emphasized in her article, "A Strong Force of Ladies," the memorial associations gave the elite women the platform to "participate in organizational leadership in their communities." These women were not only allowed to participate but also encouraged by southern white males to take on roles in public light.²⁰⁶ It should be clarified, that although white southern men approved of their women participating in the memorial association, the women were still put on the antebellum and Civil War era pedestal of doing the work as only "lovely women" and "ministering angels."²⁰⁷ The women of the LMAs were doing work that is today considered political—they set the groundwork for future women's club organizations, but men of the time still perceived them as kind and gentle women not necessarily as women about to jump into more progressive reform projects.

The women at the time understood what they were doing was important and wanted to have records of their work so they would not be forgotten. There were mistakes in memory such as a mislabeled plaque in Manassas National Battlefield Park, but the work of historians like Caroline Janney, Catherine W. Bishir, Jane Turner Censer, and Gaines M. Foster all help to ensure the LMAs are not forgotten.²⁰⁸ Through the research of the well kept LMA records or

²⁰⁵ Janney, *Burying the Dead*, 4.

²⁰⁶ Bishir, "A Strong Force of Ladies," 456.

²⁰⁷ "Honors to the Confederate Dead." *Daily News and Herald*, (April 30, 1866).; "Decoration of the Graves of Our Departed," *Daily News and Herald*, (April 25, 1868).

²⁰⁸ In her book, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past*, Janney shared a story of a dedication sign in the Groveton Confederate Cemetery in the Manassas National Battlefield Park. The sign gave credit to the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDCs) for establishing the cemetery in 1866; however, Janney disputed this claim since the UDCs did not organize until the late 1890s. This story's of mistaken identity in terms of the credit given for the cemetery was to emphasize credit lost to the LMA chapters as the years have passed.

reading the historiography of the period modern day readers interested in Southern women's nineteenth century history will make true the claim of an 1870 reporter: "One day ye shall witness for yourselves, in burning acclamations of gratitude, how ye remember, and how ye shall eternally remember, the uncorrupted souls, the gracious hearts, the brave characters, the stainless eyes, the radiant smiles, and the tender fingers, of the women who glorified and sanctified the Southern Confederacy!"²⁰⁹ The Ladies' Memorial Associations and their accomplishments will not be forgotten or undervalued.

The efforts during the war prepared the women to continue working and they were able to work on a much larger scale. The LMAs gave the elite women the platform they needed to really push themselves into the public sphere and make it known they were ready and willing to continue working outside of the home. To the LMA women, this was valued and important. The LMAs helped women get the start at continuing to organize as women and fight to get something accomplished. The chapters were important and crucial to women's work because as Janney explained, the LMAs were vital to "the creation of an organized womanhood among southern white women." From the LMA associations, other women's memorial associations, women's rights, women's activism groups formed towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the elite women continued to work and change their role in society.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ "An Address." *Georgia Weekly Telegraph and Georgia Journal & Messenger* (Macon, GA), May 3, 1870.

²¹⁰ Janney, *Burying the Dead*, 40.

AFTERWARD

It is a favorite theory of mine that a woman may be thoroughly womanly, beautiful, charming and artistically dressed, and yet be also strong, brave and wise, intellectually the equal of any man and deeply thoughtful on the most intricate problems of the hour. –Eliza Archard Conner, of

Athens, Georgia²¹¹

The day of woman is not coming: it is here. –Anonymous²¹²

As the nineteenth century continued, elite women in the Lower South became more involved in activities in the public sphere. New South women started to have a clear mission to define what it meant to be a woman in the nineteenth century. Belle Kearney declared: “The word ‘woman’ is strong and dignified and suggests courteous consideration. Female is weak and almost insulting.”²¹³ Women like Belle understood the world was continuing to change and that they needed to change right along with it. With their combined efforts during the Civil War and the early postbellum era, the elite woman understood their new place in society and what was needed for them to continue to advance.

The United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) was one organization used by women of the late nineteenth century used to further their involvement in the public sphere. The UDC chapters started to form in 1894 and picked up and perfected the Lost Cause rhetoric that the LMAs started in the mid 1860s. The UDC members were the women of the younger generation. In most cases, these women were the daughters to the original LMA women. The various

²¹¹ Eliza Archard Conner, “Woman’s World in Paragraphs,” *Athens Weekly Banner* (Athens, GA), November 11, 1890.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Kearney, *A Slaveholder’s Daughter*, 39-41.

chapters of the UDCs called for women who loved the Lost Cause to “join in the work” and help others not to forget the war.²¹⁴ The UDCs objectives are historical, benevolent, educational, memorial, and patriotic in nature. The women involved strove to ensure the Lost Cause and the heroic men who fought in the war were not forgotten.²¹⁵ While the LMA women focused on remembering the fallen, the UDCs focused on interpreting the war for a new generation. Similar to the LMA women, the women involved in the UDC chapters were considered noble and virtuous women who were contributing something great to the South. The men respected and supported the women and their involvement in their local UDC chapters.

The women worked together to further the rhetoric of the Lost Cause by establishing Confederate museums throughout the South. The Wade Hampton chapter in South Carolina called for donations of Confederate relics for historical and educational purposes. The women wanted their museum exhibit to “preserve and illustrate the history and principles of our great people and inspire our descendants with sentiments of honor for the good and great men who have glorified our State by their high character and deeds of valor.” The women called for donations and pleaded: “Will you not honor us and aid our efforts by the gift or loan of some weapon, accouterment or other possession connected with the war, or the service you rendered the Confederacy?”²¹⁶ The women were able to received various donations for their relic room including: Gen Wade Hampton’s pistol, Gen M. C. Butler’s sword, Gen Ellison Caper’s war saddle, Lieut. H.W. Dixon’s sword, Cockade worn by Lieut. E. Middleton, ribbon that passed the blockade and cost \$25 per yard, memoir of Brig Gen James Conner with a picture (given by his

²¹⁴ “Work of Our Noble Women,” *The Weekly News and Courier* (Charleston, SC), June 3, 1896.

²¹⁵ “History of the UDC,” *United Daughters of the Confederacy*, <http://www.hqudc.org/history-of-the-united-daughters-of-the-confederacy/>; This organization is still active today in many states in the Lower South.

²¹⁶ “A Confederate Relic Room,” *The Weekly News and Courier* (Charleston, SC), May 20, 1896.

wife), war record of Brig Gen T. M. Logan, war music, pressed flowers from coffins, Confederate receipt book, and knitted gloves worn by President Davis²¹⁷

Following the example of the Wade Hampton women, the Georgia division of the UDC raised \$8,000 for the building of The Winnie Davis Memorial Hall in Athens, Georgia.²¹⁸ The Athens chapter set up a weeklong Confederate Museum in May of 1899 in order to raise funds to travel to the UDC state convention. The women collected relics of the Confederacy to display and had entertainment each night of the museum's opening. The women were very organized and detailed planning with various committees assigned to different tasks. In the newspaper article promoting the event, the chapter committee detailed who was responsible for tickets, decoration, refreshments, candy booth, flower booth, picture exhibit, old silver and jewelry, and Confederate money.²¹⁹ This organization and the ability to raise money and items for the museum show how capable these postbellum women had become in the public sphere.

The most radical departure from the antebellum lifestyle the elite women participated in was the different activist organizations that grew in popularity in the later part of the nineteenth century. The most popular movements in the South for activism were the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and to a lesser extent the National Woman Suffrage Association, which started in New York in 1869. Leaders among the elite woman took up women's rights issues and banded together with their Northern counterpart to fight to gain equality with the men. Working with their Northern partners was a break from the early postbellum period. After the war, many elite Southern women were not willing to reconcile with the North as was illustrated

²¹⁷ "Some of the Choice South Carolina Relics." *The Weekly News and Courier* (Charleston, South Carolina), July 8, 1896

²¹⁸ "Work Being on The Memorial Hall." *Weekly Banner* (Athens, GA) May 30, 1902.

²¹⁹ "Interesting Relics To Be Exhibited." *Weekly Banner* (Athens, GA) May 5, 1899.

in the discussion of the Ladies' Memorial Associations that formed shortly after the war's end. However, now these women had a common goal and understood they needed to be united and reconciled for their goal to succeed.²²⁰ During this time period, elite women began to see the inequality and began to fight against the injustice. In both of these organizations, the elite women of the South put aside their biases and distrust of Northerners and worked together to fight for their rights. Participation in these organizations put the elite women fully into the public sphere and fought to remove the last constraints of the patriarchy.

The motivations to enter into these organizations varied for each woman, but for Caroline Elizabeth Thomas Merrick, of Louisiana, it was a way to put aside grief and fight for something she believed in. After the death of her daughter, she was lost in grief until Mrs. Elizabeth L. Saxon said to her, ““Instead of grieving yourself to death for your daughter who is gone, rise up out of the ashes and do something for the other women who are left!”” With the full support of her husband behind her, Caroline became one of the most ardent supporters and spokeswoman for the suffrage movement in Louisiana.²²¹

The women apart of these organizations did not simply sit back support the cause from their homes. Many of them spoke at conventions, made and handed out pamphlets, wrote up petitions, and continued with the fight for their causes. The women were ready to become equals.

In her speech given at the 1897 State Constitutional Convention in New Orleans, Caroline said:

If women, the better half of humanity, were allowed a voice and influence in its councils, I believe it would be restored to its purity and ancient glory; and a nobler patriotism would be brought to life in the heart of this nation... It really appears strange to us, after we have brought up children and regulated out houses, where often we have the entire

²²⁰ Please see Caroline Janney's *Reunion and Reconciliation* for more about reconciliation between the North and the South.

²²¹ Caroline Elizabeth Thomas Merrick, *Old Times in Dixie Land: a Southern Matron's Memories*, (New York: Grafton Press, 1901), 125.

responsibility, with money and valuables placed in our charge, that a man can be found who would humiliate us by expressing an absolute fear to trust us with the ballot.... I cannot see how the simple act of voting can hurt or inure a true and noble woman any more than it degrades the brave and honorable man.²²²

The women worked hard to fight for the causes they supported, and while change was slow, they were able to accomplish great things.

Women involved in the WTCU kept a “vigilant eye” on business that surrendered to the Temperance movement to ensure they were not selling alcohol.²²³ By 1890, there were over 142,000 members of the WTCU at the national level. These numbers indicate women from across the United States, including those in the South, working together for a common goal.²²⁴ This work of the WTCU and other temperance organizations led to the eventual passage of the eighteenth amendment. This evolution of the roles of the elite women was made possible because of the transition from the antebellum to post war period. The strength the women gained during the Civil War, whether young or old, gave them the confidence to leave the private sphere and take the public one by storm.

The elite women from the antebellum to the postwar period evolved in a way that set the stage for women’s equality for the next generation. Many women used the skills learned during the war period to help them in their postwar lives. The elite women felt they had the right to be in the public sphere because of the responsibilities and praise during the war, and what they continued to do in the postwar period. Caroline Merrick wrote: “Women who had been fully occupied with the requirements of society and the responsibilities of a dependency of slaves, were now tossed to and fro amidst the exigencies and bewilderments of strange and for the most

²²² Merrick, *Old Times in Dixie Land*, 130-133.

²²³ “The Female Temperance Movement,” *Georgia Weekly Telegraph and Georgia Journal & Messenger* (Macon, GA), Feb. 17, 1874.

²²⁴ “Telegraphic Sparks,” *Athens Weekly Banner* (Athens, GA) Jan 21, 1890.

part painful circumstances, and were eager that new adjustments should relieve the strained situation, and that they might find out what to do.”²²⁵

Women, motivated by the freedoms gained during the Civil War, worked to move into the public sphere and find work. Women sought work for wages, in the home, and through volunteer or activism work, and they worked hard doing so. Equality with men did not come easily for the New South women, and had not fully been achieved by 1900, but these elite women made strides in this goal. The war taught these women that being dependent on men was not always reliable, and they needed to be able to stand on their own to survive. Although the financial status changed for many of the elite women after the end of the war, these women maintained their elite status through attitude and by maintaining their belief in racial superiority. While they no longer had slaves to depend on, the women still used their race to place themselves higher on the social ladder. Things changed drastically for these women, but they still were afforded privileges solely on their race and their antebellum status.

Despite these racial privileges, the women still met a lot of roadblocks and things were not always easy, but as historian Anya Jabour concludes in her work, *Scarlett's Sisters*, “feminism did emerge in the postwar South.” Elite Southern women increased their independence both in the private and public spheres. They entered the work force as teachers and writers, they formed political organizations like the LMAs and the UDCs, and they joined club organizations for women’s suffrage and the Temperance movement.”²²⁶ The elite women learned that through banding together they could accomplish great things. The women successfully entered the public sphere and evolved the patriarchy to their advantage.

²²⁵ Merrick, *Old Times in Dixie Land*, 172.

²²⁶ Anya Jabour, *Scarlett's Sisters: Young Women in the Old South*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 282.

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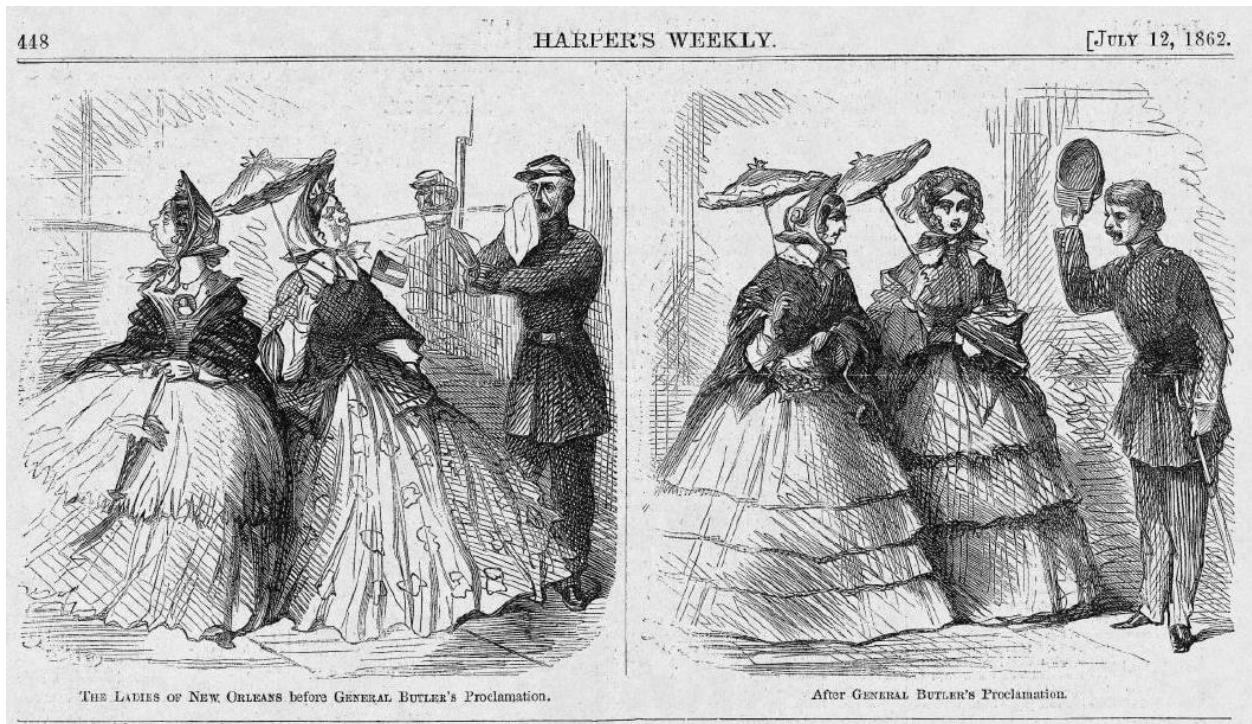
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APPENDIX A



(*Harper's Weekly*, July 12, 1862)

APPENDIX B



CRINOLINE AND QUININE—A DELICATE INVESTIGATION—SCENE AT THE PROVOST-MARSHAL'S, WASHINGTON—SEARCHING MISS BUCKNER FOR CONTRABAND SUPPLIES FOR THE REBELS—QUININE FOUND.—SEE PAGE 139.

(Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, November 22, 1862)

APPENDIX C

THE LION OF ATLANTA.

A Copy of the Lion of Lucerne to Commemorate the Confederate Dead.

The unknown soldiers who sacrificed their lives in the great lost cause of the Southern Confederacy are commemorated by a magnificent monument erected at Atlanta by the ladies of the Confederate Memorial association in the cemetery at Oakland. The design of the monument is eminently appropriate to the purpose for which it is designed. It is a reduced copy of Thorwaldsen's famous "Lion of Lucerne," which commemorates on the shore of Lake Lemman, in Switzerland, the valor and fidelity of the famous guard of Swiss soldiers who fell defending Louis XVI of France and his family from an attack of revolutionists.

This famous Swiss monument is an object of interest to all travelers in the little republic. It is the figure of a gi-



MONUMENT TO UNKNOWN CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS, ATLANTA.

(*The Sunny South*, May 5, 1894)