

**The 2004 JAMES PINCKNEY HARRISON LECTURES IN HISTORY**

**Lyon Gardiner Tyler Department of History**

**Monday, March 29, 2004, 4:30 PM Andrews Hall 101**

**“Honor, Secession, and Civil War”**

**© Bertram Wyatt-Brown**

The great Virginia historian and biographer Douglas Southall Freeman may have venerated Robert E. Lee beyond all basis. Yet in 1937, he asked a still unresolved question. The Richmond Pulitzer-Prize winner wondered why a rational calculation of risks, as war clouds gathered, received so little notice in the underpopulated, industrially ill-equipped South. The secessionists’ saber-rattling of 1859-61 might disclose,” Freeman is quoted to exclaim, “a clinically perfect case in the psychosis of war.”<sup>1</sup> He was reflecting the pacifistic mood of the interwar period. The popular scholarship of the day attributed the crisis to a “blundering” antebellum “generation.” Americans fell into the mess of war, so the refrain went, because its leaders were incompetent, demagogic, and uncourageous. Freeman’s comment itself reflects that orientation by defining calls to arms as “psychotic.”

Well, that idea died, and other explanations quickly filled the void. Nowadays the reasons for war come down to two antithetical theories. Neo-Confederates claim that a stout defense of southern “liberty” and constitutional state-rights drew thousands to initiate a war against Northern Aggression, as it is often phrased in such circles. Most academic historians, however, propose the fundamental issue of slavery, without which, they contend, the nation would never have resorted to a military coercion.<sup>2</sup>

A third possibility springs to mind. In a sense, it embraces both of these but alters their character, too. As I see it, the country was no longer united on one of the basic ethical modes that had helped to win the Revolutionary triumph, as sketched last week. In the fast-developing nation some seventy years later, the ideals and traditions of honor had developed separate meanings, North and South. Only one conflict, lengthy and bloody though it was, occupies us this afternoon. That opportunity permits a treatment not just of the ethical rationale for entry into war, to which notion we had to confine discussion on Monday last. Instead, at this time we can extend the discussion to honor in actual combat, and then, in a final third section, to the consequences of peace and uneasy, complicated reunion.

To begin with the morally-driven motives, slaveholding--its God-given rights or its hellish offenses--lay at the heart of the matter, to be sure. For nearly thirty years before the outbreak in 1861, the American abolitionists had denounced the South's planter class as cruel, debauched, self-serving, and unchristian and doomed to eternal damnation. By the 1850s their verbal knives had stabbed deep into the Southern psyche. In 1856 at a convention of Radical Abolitionists in Syracuse, New York, the great black leader Frederick Douglass summed up the participants' fiery mood. "Liberty," he announced, "must either cut the throat of slavery or slavery would cut the throat of liberty." Others there proposed that slaveholders must be met at the point of the bayonet."<sup>3</sup> Such verbal insults could not go unanswered, Southerners, or at least their fire-eating compatriots, so maintained.

Adding to Southern outrage was the translation of words into deeds. John Brown's Harpers Ferry expedition signified a new antislavery strategy--a direct affront not only to white security but also the very soul and heart of Southern self-esteem. He presented a truly dangerous application of terror. A Norfolk paper called it "a most insane demonstration by a band of northern fanatics."<sup>4</sup> Not only were Yankees assaulting slaveholders in print and pulpit but in plots for Southern destruction. All this was done in the name, as the white Southerners saw it, of a perverted moral righteousness. International anarchists later called Brown's style of action an attentat. Terrorism was designed then as nowadays not just to kill indiscriminately but to challenge the power of the state by arousing the victimized masses to height of indignation and violence against alleged oppression. Sanctified in intensely religious terms as the perpetrators have often claimed, the strike against slavery would also degrade the honor of the institutions against which the enterprise was directed. America had not yet experienced a subversive mission of this kind before John Brown's conspiracy against slavery. It would do so in recent times but the situations were comparable in some respects. The dueling spirit easily transformed itself into an obsession with the glories of battle. According to German historian Ute Frevert, warmongering in the years before 1914 appealed to the German bourgeoisie because of longstanding discontent with "ever tighter social, political, and economic chains." A member of that social class recalled in 1920, "The war was bound to be a grand, powerful, solemn experience. It seemed to us to be a manly act."<sup>5</sup> Students and faculty members, reserve officers, most of them bourgeois, and the landed gentry applied Germanic thoroughness to the custom. In 1874, Wilhelm I had proclaimed to his military forces: "I expect the entire officer corps of my army that they will regard honor, henceforth as hitherto, as their greatest treasure; to keep it pure and unstained must

be the holiest duty of the whole corps, as of the individual.” Such a position found expression in the way foreign affairs were supposed to be conducted. Heinrich von Treitsche, the Prussian historian, put the matter clearly: “If the flag of the state is insulted, it is the duty of the State to demand satisfaction, and if satisfaction is not forthcoming, to declare war, however trivial the occasion may appear, for the State must strain every nerve to preserve for itself the respect which it enjoys in the state system.”<sup>6</sup>

Honor was thus involved in the state-rights political argument—the Union as a marriage of equal partners. The problem was that with a weakening base in the House of Representatives and the danger of losing both the Senate and Presidency, southern political influence was visibly slipping away. Free soil and the Republican demand for greater Northern control of affairs was gaining enormous strength. Senator William H. Seward of New York told the Senate during the Kansas debates that the North “would take the Government” soon and obliterate the South’s undeserved control of national affairs—thanks to the 3/5th compromise and the subservience of Northern Democratic Doughfaces. State rights upheld of secession begun—these were the stark choices, both backed by the ethic of status recognition—the equality of northern and southern notions of honor. Senator James Henry Hammond had long boasted that Southern rule of the country would never end so long as cotton was king. He cautioned South Carolinians before the 1860 election not to promote secession. He saw that war would mean disaster. Yet, he followed Alexander Stephens and Robert Toombs’ decisions to surrender their Senate seats. Hammond wrote his son Marcus, however, that resignation from office had become “an epidemic and very foolish. It reminds me of the Japanese who when insulted rip open their own bowels. . .God knows the end.”<sup>7</sup> *James Henry Hammond and the Old South: A Design for Mastery* ((Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 358. Death before dishonor, he implied, but he felt no elation but only premonitions of loss and ruin.<sup>8</sup>

Even though Hammond had begun to float with the popular tide, he alone had offered a pragmatic appraisal of how things really were—the kind of calculation that Douglas Southall Freeman had found so rare. The man of honor feels that defense of reputation and virility must come before all else. Otherwise, he is open to charges of effeminacy and fear. As Ulysses complains of his warrior colleagues:

They tax our policy and call it cowardice,  
Count wisdom as no member of the war,  
Foretell prescience, and esteem no act  
But that of hand.<sup>9</sup>

Under these circumstances, the reasons why the slaveholder felt so

threatened by northern criticism should be clear. The dread of public humiliation, especially in the highly charged political setting, was a burden not to be casually dismissed. In general terms, whenever the public response to claims for respect is indifferent, disbelieving, hostile, or derisive, the claimant for honor feels as blasted, as degraded as if struck in the face or unceremoniously thrown to the ground. He is driven to a sense of shame--the very opposite of honor. The response is twofold: first, a denial that he, a persecuted but peace-loving citizen, seeks more than his due; and second, his outraged "honor" requires immediate vindication, by force of arms if need be. This was especially true for the antebellum Southerner because he could hardly escape doubts that his section was perceived by the world as inferior, morally and materially. "Reputation is everything," said Senator Hammond. "Everything with me depends upon the estimation in which I am held," confessed secessionist thinker and novelist Beverley Tucker of William and Mary. Personal reputation for character, valor, and integrity did not end there. Individual self-regard encompassed wider spheres. As a result, the southerner took as personal insult the criticisms leveled at slave society as a whole.<sup>10</sup> Writing in his diary, a Johnny Reb in Virginia was convinced that his side would win the war. "We are fighting for our property and our homes," he explained, whereas "they, for the flimsy and abstract idea that a Negro is equal to an Anglo American."<sup>11</sup> Honor and racial domination were inseparable concepts.<sup>12</sup>

In a remarkable way, this concept of honor was easily combined with the religious traditions of the Evangelical South. For instance, the Rt. Rev. Francis H. Rutledge of Florida, but originally from South Carolina, came out boldly for secession. So rabid was he that he pledged five-hundred-dollars payable to the state as soon as the legislature passed an ordinance of secession."<sup>13</sup> Nor was he the only ecclesiastical figure to sport his disunionist colors so openly. The Rev. Thomas Goulding at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Columbus, South Carolina, once announced that "Disunion would be, in national politics, to prefer weakness to strength--degradation to honorable rank. The Central Presbyterian proudly boasted in May 1861, "Virginia's gallant sons. . .have sprung forward to the defense of their insulted Mother; assured that they are contending for the most sacred rights, and for the dearest interests for which patriot soldiers ever drew the sword."<sup>14</sup> In a fine essay, Edward Crowther concludes that a set of values had developed which he identifies as "a holy honor." Under this banner Southern whites "cloaked their society," and in the name of that cause "they were prepared to fight and die."<sup>15</sup>

Liberty for the white male required all but absolute power over the dark-

skinned races. Otherwise, it was not to be considered fully achieved. Abraham Lincoln had observed, “We all declare for liberty; but in using the same word, we do not all mean the same thing.” For some it signifies a man’s right to do as he sees fit with himself or his labor, the President continued, but others “mean for some men to do as they please with other men and the product of other men’s labor.”<sup>16</sup> Just as honor was posed against shame, so liberty’s opposite was slavery, analogies with their own system of labor that Southerners of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries constantly invoked. Racial bondage did not signify hypocrisy according to the values of white Southerners. Instead, it was the very underpinning of their concept of liberty

In contrast, the Yankee version of honor had taken a different turn. It was less connected to family and community. Instead it was tied to institution and abstract symbol—nationhood, the flag, the perpetual Union. Melinda Lawson in her new book, *Patriot Fires*, explains that a sense of patriotism quickly developed in the war period. The Yankees’ ideas of nationhood were somewhat unformed and “lacking in significant content.” New and patriotic activities and institutions—Union Leagues, Sanitary Commission fairs, parades, flag ceremonies provided the setting for a sense of a more glorious future. That vision “served as a tocsin,” she argues, “for a nation inclined too much toward the pursuit of individual happiness, too little toward sacrifice for the good of the whole.”<sup>17</sup> Long before in 1830, however, Daniel Webster in his famous address against the state-rights position of South Carolinian Robert Hayne had put the matter succinctly. Union was synonymous with liberty. If the United States broke into “dishonored fragments” as the orator put it, the land would be subject to “civil feuds,” resulting in “fraternal blood.” National honor required a unified government. Abraham Lincoln’s idea of honor was inseparable from Webster’s premises, and he had revered the old statesman.<sup>18</sup> The Northern version represented, to use Peter Berger’s term, an “*embourgeoisement*” of the concept—diminishing its feudal, patriarchal and familial overtones and adding an impersonal, middle-class element.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, there was a complete disconnection among some Republican politicians with the whole concept of honor. Before the final collapse of the Union, Senator Benjamin Wade of Ohio was known for his radical disdain for things Southern. Casting aside the perfunctory senatorial courtesies he bluntly warned fire-eating Senator Robert Toombs of Georgia, “We cannot get a divorce. If you get out, your states will be left occupying the same relations to us as now.” Expect the same controversies over fugitive slaves, tariff issues, free labor and free soil as then in play. The Northern states could not let the slave states to do as they

liked. "You may not like us, but you cannot get rid of us. We are to live together eternally," like it or not. And so, in effect, shut up.<sup>20</sup>

Honor, reverence for flag, and appeal to divine, however, formed the usual combination suited to the rhetorical war. The Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, Dispatch rhapsodized in May 1861 that "love of country has burst so suddenly and sublimely upon us, that the most sanguine have been surprised and amazed." The editorial further explained that the rush of young men to arms and the display of flags and bunting from church spires demonstrate that we are in the hand of God, and that He has become our Protector and our President."<sup>21</sup>

With regard to part 2, we must consider in brief fashion the role of honor in warfare itself.

James McPherson convincingly argues that young men went to war knowing why they did so—not for adventure, not for the pay or chance for booty, but chiefly out of one ideological conviction or another—Johnny Reb for defense of hearth and way of life, Yanks for flag and Union, and some even at the start for slave emancipation. Of course, motives are slippery commodities. But the prospect of glory and immortal recognition for valor was a major component, one that the officers encouraged. At the first battle of Manassas, the chief commander General P. T. G. Beauregard, exhorted the troops, "Fight on, brave Virginia boys; the day is ours everywhere else, and it must be here also." In response the soldiers, recalled Billy Woodward of Augusta, Virginia, gave "a loud cheer, we rushed forward, determined to do as commanded or die."<sup>22</sup>

Not surprisingly, as Gerald Linderman notes, "Those who most imperatively urged enlistment were the women. They no less than soldiers expected courageous behavior and anathematized cowardice."<sup>23</sup> Far from being the passive belles of legend, they were at first at least eager to see their brothers, lovers, and fathers act the part of heroes. In her famous diary Mary Chesnut, wife of Senator James Chesnut of South Carolina, who had resigned his seat in Washington, December 1860, reported that the Charleston ladies of her set satisfied themselves that "God is on our side." Why? asked Mrs. Chesnut. The deity, of course, "hates the Yankees," as one tea-sipper stiffly replied. Another rejoined piously, "You'll think that well of Him."<sup>24</sup> Presenting a "talismanic flag," the virginal Sallie O. Smith of Marshall, Texas, addressed the W. P. Lane Rangers in April 1861. "Know that beneath these slender forms which ordinarily your gallantry 'suffers not the winds of Heaven to visit too roughly,'" she declaimed, "there slumbers no indifference to your fame your fortune or your achievements" as you prepare to challenge "menaces of madness and discomfited FANATICISM."<sup>25</sup> In the Upper South, the Rebel sentiments of the women lasted well into the war itself. According to a

Private Erisman serving in Union-occupied Nashville the “ladies ‘are all secesh and wear a secesh flag for Aprons and have a belt around their waists with an Ivory handled Colt Revolving Pistol of the best quality sticking in it.”<sup>26</sup>

With regard to the soldiers themselves, honor proved to be the only “legal authority,” as it were available. Honor’s mandate has always required fidelity to fellow soldiers. To let them down was tantamount to ostracism and contempt. For instance, a wounded color-bearer asked private William A. Fletcher to take the 5th Texas regimental flag. Fletcher promptly refused, saying, “I am too cowardly for a flag-bearer to risk myself; and I find the oftener I can load and shoot the better able am I to maintain my honor.”<sup>27</sup> A foot soldier in the 20th Georgia Regiment spoke for many when he declared, “I had rather dye on the battle field than to disgrace my self & the hole [sic] family.”<sup>28</sup> That sense of familial pride was an integral part of the ethic.

In warfare, the absolutes of bravery are its essence because they manifest to all--from general to bugler--the marks of individual reliability under life-threatening stress. So it was on the Northern side as well as the Southern. The idea almost seems part of men's nature--the pursuit of honor, the dread of dishonor. Certainly Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, hero at Little Round Top, thought so. An officer, he mused, is so conscious of his “responsibility for his men, for his cause, or for the fight that the instinct to seek safety is overcome by the instinct of honor.”<sup>29</sup>

These points about valor are obvious, but there are corollaries. Honor could be invoked as a talisman of future triumph. Southerners were likely to say at the close of the war, all had been lost save honor. They meant that, because honor survived, success would yet be theirs even after the laying down of arms. At a memorial service for the Confederate dead, the Rev. William Nelson Pendleton of Lexington, Virginia, in 1869 advised that his listeners should turn from the “gloom of political bondage” and await the moment when honor, “born of truth and baptized in the blood of our brothers shall outlive the persecutions of a merciless enemy.”<sup>30</sup>

Cowardice, on the other hand, could never be erased, even on grounds that forgiveness and peaceful intention were legitimate, Christian responses. To hide the other cheek is not to turn it, proponents of honor insisted. Less well grasped in our modern age, at least, was the notion that since honor traditionally was attached to blood--the blood of heroes that is inheritable--its shedding assumed a consecrated character. Prior to recent times, to die in war therefore did more than elicit the gratitude of nation, community, and kindred; it also became the warrior’s mark of inextinguishable glory. It was assumed that God would honor that

sacrifice. In 1879, the Philadelphia Press described a ceremony for a dead Civil-War veteran as “a sacred, operatic drama . . . a solemn ritual of the grand Army, which is scarcely inferior to the services of the Church.”<sup>31</sup>

The remarks so far scarcely do justice to the theme of honor in wartime on either side. But the last question--the effects of victory and defeat--are yet to be treated. To introduce the theme of restored Union and fallen Confederacy, consider what occurred on 12 April 1865\ at Appomattox Courthouse. By nine in the morning General Joshua Chamberlain, hero of Gettysburg, had arranged his troops to accept the surrender of Major General John B. Gordon’s Corps. It was General Grant’s policy to treat the Rebels as respectfully as circumstance allowed. Chamberlain was prepared to comply.

Without stirring drums, blaring trumpets or any music whatsoever, Gordon’s emotionally drained soldiers fell into line and marched down the hill toward the Courthouse. Meantime, Chamberlain, he recalled the event, gave orders for the men to reach “the position of ‘salute’ in the manual of arms as each body of the Confederates passed us.” He did not command the officers to bark: “present arms.” Inappropriately, that order would have signified “the highest possible honor to be paid even to a president.”<sup>32</sup> Instead, it was the “carry arms” command, with the weapon “held by the right hand and perpendicular to the shoulder.” Chamberlain signaled the bugler as Gordon arrived opposite himself. While the notes filled the air, the Union ranks came to “‘attention,’” Chamberlain recollected. There rang out the crisp, chunky noise of the soldiers’ hands as they grasped musket stocks in unison.

According to Chamberlain, General Gordon was in no mood for the ritual. “His chin drooped to his breast, downhearted and dejected in appearance almost beyond description.” But hearing the bugle and “snap of arms,” Gordon touched “his horse gently with his spur, so that the animal slightly reared, and as he wheeled, horse and rider made one motion, the horse’s head swung down with a graceful bow and General Gordon dropped his sword point to his toe in salutation.” Then, the war-weary Rebels draped their old and tattered battle flags on the piles of weapons or spread them reverently on the ground. Some Confederates “rushed, regardless of all discipline from the ranks, bent about their old flags, and pressed them to their lips with burning tears.”<sup>33</sup> In an interview with a Boston journalist in 1878, Chamberlain explained the meaning of the ceremony: “Whatever was surrendered and laid down, it was not manhood, and not honor. Manhood arose, and honor was pledged and received.” The allusion to a marital love pledged and ratified by formal tie was appropriate to the re-uniting of the temporarily separated sections. General Lee’s officers, Chamberlain asserted, knew that the rules of

honor required them never again to take up arms against the United States. “They are men of honor, and they meant it, and their word of honor is good,” the Union general had then affirmed. He concluded, “God, in . . . His mercy, in His great covenant with our fathers, set slavery in the forefront, and it was swept aside as with a whirlwind, when the mighty pageant of the people passed on to its triumph.”<sup>34</sup>

Alas, if only the Union victory had been as complete as Chamberlain implied. The first disaster to undo that military triumph was Lincoln’s assassination—another instance in which honor played a major part. Too often historians, some of them offering only a few lines to the tragedy, have not acknowledged just how calamitous it was in changing the divided, agonized nation’s destiny.<sup>35</sup> The consequences of Lincoln’s death disappeared in the maelstrom of post-war confusions and political strife.

In any case, John Wilkes Booth won a partial triumph against the allegedly tyrannical leader of the North. He could be said to represent the Southern counterpoint to John Brown’s actions at Harpers Ferry. Both men could be characterized as half-mad zealots. John Brown was guided, he thought, by a ruthless God’s demands for racial justice. In contrast, Booth, the matinee idol of that day, took his measure from the sacred play-book of honor, to coin a phrase. He consciously sought to imitate the glorious work of Brutus in Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar. Reared in slaveholding Harford County, Maryland, the actor delighted in the hierarchy of races, sexes, nationalities (he hated the Irish), and degrees of wealth. He cherished the warrior’s recipe for action, the bid for immortal glory. Booth’s sister Asia explained that her brother killed Lincoln “so that his name might live in history. . . forever.”<sup>36</sup>

The obsession to achieve immortality in national memory often motivates the all but suicidal assassin. After his capture for assassinating Prince Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo, the Serb nationalist wrote these lines in prison:

“He who wants to live, has to die  
He who is ready to die, will live forever”

Booth will not be the last religious murderer to be mentioned in these lectures.

The long-term effect of Lincoln’s slaying was profound. Gone was the leader who had patiently guided Union victory, deftly steered his government, party, and people through perilous crises, and established the basis for black freedom. At the White House there presided in 1865 a war Democrat possessed of limited skills, unshakeable race prejudices, and intense loyalty to states’ sovereignty. The freed people had full reason to mourn. With Reconstruction in uncertain hands, the Union public gradually relinquished commitments to the

former slaves and grew ever more weary of crippled Republican efforts to create a bi-racial Southern coalition. Lincoln could never have solved all the problems of the postwar years. His departure, however, irremediably constricted the movement to fulfil the ideals of Union and to open the path toward racial equity. Thanks to Booth and romantic notions of honorable murder, the President's death in office assured white Southerners of what became a century-long era of unchecked ascendancy, white over black.

In the South, the humiliation of defeat—the antithesis of honor--was hard to bear. On a collective scale, demoralization had set in as early as 1864. Confederate politician Howell Cobb found Georgian civilians to be “depressed, disaffected, and too many of them disloyal.” “Shall we indeed fight on against the decrees of God, to utter extermination!” a former secessionist editor wondered. Was it “the will of God . . . or the suggestion of the Demon of Pride” that kept the Confederate insanity afloat? “I say Peace!”<sup>37</sup> Such feelings were made worse by the actual surrender of the Rebel armies.

Among the varieties of reaction to the catastrophic loss was a retreat to a psychological redoubt that might be called Fort Denial. A Dr. Samuel Preston Moore denounced rumors that Lee had given up the fight as a “moral impossibility.” “No one is willing to believe it,” declared one Mississippian as late as 20 April.<sup>38</sup> At first the Rev. J. Henry Smith, minister of the Presbyterian Church at Greensboro, North Carolina, had half-disbelieved rumors of Lee’s capitulation. When he discovered the truth, he declared it the “Saddest of days!” The clergyman found himself unable to leave his bed. He made no entries in his daily journal. He moaned, “The doings & feelings, the disheartening, the gloom & burden & sorrow--no pen can describe. Oh is all gone? My bleeding, suffering country! Are all the prayers, the vows, the blood & lives & property of thousands & tears of many thousands in vain?”<sup>39</sup>

At least for a time, even the most pious found that their faith was shaken to the core. Ellen House, for instance, undertook to curb her bitterness over the defeat and desolation. “We have depended too much on Gen. Lee too little on God.”<sup>40</sup> As the end drew near, even the godfearing General Josiah Gorgas mourned, “What have we done that the Almighty should scourge us with such a war--so relentless and so repugnant?”<sup>41</sup>

Others bore the yoke of despair all the rest of their days. Some wealthy slaveholders found it impossible to adjust to defeat, penury, loss of command over slaves, and the monotony of living in a demoralized social environment. It might be called the Ashley Wilkes syndrome. Tendencies to depression could well spring from genetic and other factors besides war experiences. Yet, the latter does

explain the over drinking of former Rebel surgeon Algernon Sidney Porter, M.D., father of the writer who went by the nom de plume O. Henry. During the war he had hacked off limbs of screaming soldiers day after day, sights, sounds, and smells to make anyone half-distracted for the rest of life. Dr. Porter kept a shed out back of the house as a hideout. He would lock the door and pretend to be at work on some marvelous invention, a flying machine, a steam-run carriage, a mechanical cotton-picker, or a perpetual-motion contraption. Much of the time, though, he was holding communion with a bottle or a potion of laudanum.<sup>42</sup>

Likewise, the poet Henry Timrod of Charleston had fallen into complete “numbness of heart” as his friend Paul Hayne had mused. Outwardly cheerful throughout the conflict, he nonetheless privately sounded a different tone.<sup>43</sup> After the war, he had been forced to sell almost all the family's household furnishings, to support a wife and family. Consumption carried him off in 1867. His last poem had a touching simplicity.

In a dim and murky chamber,  
I am breathing my life away;  
Some one draws a curtain softly  
And I watch the broadening day.  
As it purples in the zenith,  
As it brightens on the lawn,  
There's a hush of death about me,  
And a whisper, “He is gone!”

And so it was. The slave South, land of prosperity, power in national circles, and white ownership in chattels, was gone as Timrod's poem suggested on a more personal scale. It had died not only from a fear of slave insurrections but also of Northern power. Yet, in my estimation, a primary and perhaps primitive dedication to the code of honor was the South's undoing.

Yet, as the next lecture will illustrate, the influence of motives for defending honor did not vanish from national consideration. This would be particularly so under the leadership of Southern Presidents. As the prior wars discussed demonstrate, white Southerners have long proved the most truculent of Americans against the nation's real or imagined enemies.

## Endnotes

---

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Douglas Southall Freeman, The South to Posterity: An Introduction to the Writing of Confederate History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939), 197-204, in Emory Thomas in Warm Ashes: Issues in Southern History at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century. Edited by Winfred B. Moore Jr., Kyle S. Sinisi, and David H. White Jr. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 11.

<sup>2</sup> A fine essay by George C. Rable points out that state rights was long held to be the great affliction of the Confederate war effort, so entrenched was the theory in the Southern mentality. See George C. Rable, "Beyond State Rights: The Shadowy World of Confederate Politics" in James M. McPherson and William J. Cooper, Jr. eds., Writing the Civil War: The Quest to Understand (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 135-53.

<sup>3</sup> John Stauffer, The Black Hearts of Men: Radical Abolitionists and the Transformation of Race (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 21.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in William A. Link, Roots of Secession: Slavery and Politics in Antebellum Virginia (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 179.

<sup>5</sup> Frevert, Men of Honour, quotation, 201.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Avner Offer, "Going to War in 1914: A Matter of Honor?" Politics and Society 23 (June 1995): 216.

<sup>7</sup> James Henry Hammond to Marcus C. M. Hammond, 12 November 1860, in Carol Bleser, The Hammonds of Redcliffe (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 88; see also James Henry Hammond to William Gilmore Simms, 13 November 1860, quoted in Drew Gilpin Faust,

<sup>8</sup> See Leonard L. Richards, The Slave Power: The Free North and Southern Domination, 1780-1860 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 214. See also Alexander Stephens, "Speech Against Secession [November 14, 1860], in Cleveland, Alexander Stephens in Public and Private, 704-708; Lawrence T. McDonnell, "Struggle Against Suicide: James Henry Hammond and the Secession of South Carolina," Southern Studies, XXII (Summer 1983):109-37; Drew Gilpin Faust, James Henry Hammond and the Old South: A Design for Mastery (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 331-59; Ralph A. Wooster, "The Secession of the Lower South: An Examination of Changing Interpretations," Civil War History, VII (? 1961), 117-27.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, I, iii, 197-200; see essays of J. G. Peristiany (ed.), Honor and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society (London: , 1965).

<sup>10</sup> George M. Fredrickson, The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny 1817-1914 (New York: Harper & Row, 1971); see also Pitt-Rivers, "Honor," 503-511; Hammond and Tucker quoted in Steven Mac Stowe, "'The Touchiness' of the Gentleman Planter: The Sense of Esteem and Continuity in the Antebellum South,"

---

Psychohistory Review, VIII (? 1978), 6-15.

11 Quoted in James M. McPherson, What They Fought For, 56.

12 David H. Fisher, Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 412.

13 Quoted in Goen, Broken Churches, Broken Nation, 173. On Rutledge, see Joseph D. Cushman, A Goodly Heritage: The Episcopal Church in Florida, 1821-1892 (Gainesville, Fla.: University of Florida Press, 1965), 42-44; entry for January 4, 1861, William Kauffman Scarborough, ed., The Diary of Edmund Ruffin: Toward Independence October, 1856-April, 1861 (3 vols.: Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972), 1:524.

14 Quoted in Goen, Broken Churches, Broken Nation, 173. Goulding quoted in Mitchell Snay, "Gospel of Disunion: Religion and the Rise of Southern Separatism, 1830-1861," (Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis University, 1984), 14 and 19.

15 Edward Crowther, "Holy Honor: Sacred and Secular in the Old South," Journal of Southern History 58 (November 1992):636.

16 James M. McPherson, Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 43-44.

17 Melinda Lawson, Patriot Fires: Forging a New American Nationalism in the Civil War North (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 39.

18 Webster quoted in William Lee Miller, Lincoln's Virtues: An Ethical Biography (New York: Knopf, 2002), 113.

19 *Ibid.*, 87. ?

20 Wade quoted in Ulrich B. Phillips, The Life of Robert Toombs (New York: Macmillan Company, 1913), 187.

21 Dispatch quoted in Ayers, In the Presence of Mine Enemies, 160.

22 Quoted in Edward L. Ayers, In the Presence of the Mine Enemies: War in the Heart of America 1859-1863 ((New York: W. W. Norton, 2003), 195.

23 Linderman quoted in Drew Gilpin Faust, Mothers of Invention, chapter 1.

24 Entry for April 13, 1861, in C. Vann Woodward, ed., Mary Chesnut's Civil War (Yale University Press, 1981), 48.

25 Euripides, The Trojan Women, in Euripides III, ed. David Green and Richard Lattimore (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 144.

- 
- 26 Quoted in Ayers, In the Presence of Mine Enemies, 235.
- 27 William A. Fletcher, Rebel Private, Front and Rear: Memoirs of a Confederate Soldier (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1951), 57.
- 28 Quoted in McPherson, For Cause and Comrades, 80.
- 29 Quoted in Bertram Wyatt-Brown, "America's Holy War"( review of James M. McPherson, For Cause and Comrades), New York Review of Books 44 (November 6, 1997): 43-47 .
- 30 William Nelson Pendleton, quoted in Gaines M. Foster, Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913 (Oxford University Press, 1987), 42.
- 31 Philadelphia Press, quoted in Stuart McConnell, Glorious Contentment: The Grand Army of the Republic, 1865-1900 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 125.
- 32 Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, "Bayonet Forward": My Civil War Reminiscences (Gettysburg: Stan Clark Military Books, 1994), 236; Alice Rains Trulock, In the Hands of Providence: Joshua L. Chamberlain and the American Civil War (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 302.
- 33 Chamberlain, Bayonet Forward, 236.
- 34 Quoted in Trulock, In the Hands of Providence, 303.
- 35 Allan Nevins, The War for the Union: The Organized War to Victory, 1864-1865 vol. 4 (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1971), 319; see, for instance, James M. McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 853. (McPherson, it must added, compensates for this casual reference with his other, valuable works on Abraham Lincoln.)
- 36 Booth to Mary Ann Holmes Booth, November 1864, in John Rhodehamel and Louise Taper, eds., "Right or Wrong, God Judge Me": The Writings of John Wilkes Booth (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 130; Asia Booth Clarke, The Unlocked Book (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1938), 157-58.
- 37 These Georgians are cited in David Williams, Rich Man's War: Class, Caste, and Confederate Defeat in the Lower Chattahoochie Valley (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 173.
- 38 Entries for 11, 14, 20 April 1865, Samuel A. Agnew Diary, SHC, UNC; Dr. Samuel Preston Moore, quoted in entry for 17 April 1865, Kate: The Journal of a Confederate Nurse, ed. Richard Barksdale Harwell (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), 271.
- 39 See entries for 11 and 17 April 1865 in "The Civil War Decade in Greensboro, N.C. as Recorded in the Diary of Rev. Mr. J. Henry Smith, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church of

---

Greensboro,” transcript, 118, 119, in the possession of O. Norris Smith, M.D., of Greensboro, NC. I am indebted to Dr. Smith for the use of this valuable diary, written by his grandfather.

40 Ellen House, quoted in Eugene D. Genovese, The Consuming Fire: The Fall of the Confederacy in the Mind of the White Christian South (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 66.

41 Entry for 6 January 1865, Vandiver, ed., Civil War Diary of General Josiah Gorgas, 164.

42 E. Hudson Long, O. Henry: The Man and His Work (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949), 11; Richard O’Connor, O. Henry: The Legendary Life of William S. Porter (New York: Doubleday, 1970), 6-7.

43 Timrod, Collected Poems, 100.