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Thomas M. Campbell Award

Beginning with Volumes 6/7, the Florida Conference of Historians has presented the Thomas M. Campbell Award for the best paper published in the Annual Proceedings (now Annals) of that year.

Thomas M. (Tom) Campbell was the driving force behind the creation of the Florida Conference of Historians, at that time called The Florida College Teachers of History, over 40 years ago. It was his personality and hard work that kept the conference moving forward. Simply put, in those early years he was the conference.

Tom was a professor of U.S. Diplomatic history at Florida State University. The Thomas M. Campbell Award is in his name so that we may recognize and remember his efforts on behalf of the Florida Conference of Historians

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Blaine T. Browne Award

Beginning with the current volume, the Florida Conference of Historians will present the Blaine T. Browne Award, given to the best paper written by a graduate student who presents at the annual meeting and publishes in the Annals.

Dr. Browne earned a doctorate in American history at the University of Oklahoma in 1985. He subsequently taught at several universities and colleges before joining the faculty at Broward College in 1988. An active participant in the Florida Conference of Historians since 1994, Dr. Browne has presented at annual meetings and published in the *Selected Annual Proceedings of the Florida Conference of Historians*, the predecessor of the *Annals*. Now retired from Broward College, in 2014 Dr. Browne generously provided the seed money for this award.

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2019: Colin Cook, University of Central Florida

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J. Calvitt Clarke III Award

Beginning with volume 20, the Florida Conference of Historians has presented the J. Calvitt Clarke III Award for the best undergraduate research paper published in the Annals.

In 2012, Dr. Clarke, Professor Emeritus at Jacksonville University and a strong supporter of undergraduate research, graciously provided the seed funding for this important award. He is a frequent contributor and the founding editor of the predecessor to the *Annals*, the *Selected Annual Proceedings of the Florida Conference of Historians*.

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A Note from the Editor

Welcome to volume 26 of *FCH Annals*, featuring selected papers presented at the 58th Annual Meeting of the Florida Conference of Historians, hosted by Tallahassee Community College. The conference took place at the Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park in Tallahassee, Florida, February 15-17, 2018. As always, a wide variety of topics and time periods are covered in this volume. Congratulations to this year's award winners, including Steven Nicklas and Jonas Kauffeldt for "Candor and Censorship: German Soldiers and the *Feldpost* System of WWII" (Campbell Award); second-time recipient Colin Cook for "Rousing the Nation: Narratives of Dunkirk in the British Media, 1939-1940" (Browne Award); and Jeffrey Coltman-Cormier for "Rationalizing Indian Removal: Representations of Indigenous Peoples and American Identity" (Clarke Award). It is a pleasure to work with such outstanding scholars.

Michael S. Cole
22 February 2020

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The German Sabotage Campaign of 1915-1916

Heribert von Feilitzsch
Independent Scholar

On 6 January 1915, the Imperial German Admiralty requested that the military and naval attachés in Washington, Franz von Papen and Karl Boy-Ed respectively, initiate sabotage against logistics installations, ships, and munitions factories in the United States and Canada.¹ This request only surfaced as a memorandum in the Imperial Foreign Office.² The Foreign Office subsequently sent a formal sabotage order to the Chief of the Political Section of the Imperial General Staff, Section IIIB, Rudolf Nadolny, for transmission to the United States on 23 January.³ These fateful instructions clearly linked the German government to attacks on the officially neutral United States. The ensuing sabotage campaign resulted in far more destruction and property damage than the American government accused Germany of after the war and subsequent historians estimated.

Captain Thomas J. Tunney, who recounted his experiences in the war as head of New York's bomb squad, detailed several mysterious fires on ships in January and February 1915. According to Tunney, three ships, the *SS Orton*, *SS Hennington Court*, and *SS Carlton*, caught fire without an apparent reason in those first two months of the year. None of the fires on these three ships made it into the papers and, therefore, could not be verified as the beginning of the bomb plot.⁴ However, other ship fires entered the news: on 7 February, the British freighter *SS Grindon Hall* caught fire in Norfolk harbor.⁵ On 16 February, the Italian steamer *Regina d'Italia*, loaded with oil, kerosene, and cotton burst into flames at Pier B in Jersey City, New Jersey. The steamer's destination was Naples, Italy. The fire destroyed the entire cargo. No reason could be determined other than that the conflagration started among the cotton bales in the forward hold. Dockworkers found a cigar bomb, a chemically timed, small incendiary device made from lead. It was hidden in a bag of sugar on the English freighter *SS Knutsford* in New York harbor on 29 February.⁶ The Italian steamer *SS San Guglielmo* sailed from Galveston, Texas,

¹ Document re-printed in Reinhard R. Doerries, *Prelude to the Easter Rising: Sir Roger Casement in Imperial Germany* (Portland: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000), 75.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁴ Thomas J. Tunney, *Throttled: The Detection of the German and Anarchist Bomb Plotters in the United States* (Boston: Small Maynard and Company, 1919), 128. The *Hennington Court* appears to have caught on fire in February 1916. The *Orton*, *Lake Erie*, could not be found as having burned in January 1915. The *Carlton* also could not be verified.

⁵ *New York Times*, 8 Feb. 1915.

⁶ "Von Papen named in Plot" *New York Times*, 13 April 1916. "The literature of the First World War has named these infernal machines indifferently 'pencil bombs' and cigar bombs.' They looked externally like a cross between the two. Inside a copper disk bisected the bomb vertically. A chemical which has a rapid corrosive effect on copper filled the upper compartment. When it had eaten through the disk it came into contact with the chemical in the lower compartment. The combination produced instantly a flame as hot as a tiny fragment of the sun. The acid did not begin to work on the copper until one broke off a little knob at the upper end. Then it became a time-bomb, the time – from two days to a week – being regulated by the thickness or thinness of the copper disk." Emanuel Victor Voska and Will Irwin, *Spy and Counter-Spy* (London: George G. Harrap and Co Ltd., 1941), 112.

“by way of New York” with six thousand bales of cotton on 16 March. The ship made it to Naples but mysteriously caught fire as it docked at the destination on 11 April. The entire cargo burned, causing \$200,000 in damages (\$4.2 million in today’s value).⁷ These ship fires were not the only ones.

There are indications that the Foreign Office memorandum from 6 January 1915, that mentioned the Admiralty’s request to initiate sabotage in the United States, yielded other immediate results. On 18 January 1915, five days after the German bomb maker, Dr. Walter Scheele, received his first lead pipe delivery used to build firebombs, a large steel mill of the John A. Roebling’s Sons Company in Trenton, New Jersey, mysteriously caught fire and burnt to the ground.⁸ The factory was located approximately sixty miles from Scheele’s lab. Roebling specialized in steel wires and produced anti-submarine netting and artillery chains for the Entente. Insurance companies estimated the extensive damage (without any loss of life) to be a staggering \$1.5 million (\$315 million in today’s value).⁹ According to the owners, there were no combustibles in the plant.¹⁰

A second fire at Roebling in November 1915 destroyed another twenty-nine factory buildings on the grounds. Again, the cause was mysterious. The fire had started in a pile of jute rope. Most likely soaked in some type of accelerant, the fire spread quickly out of control. When workers tried to use the factory fire alarm they realized that it had been disabled.¹¹ *Metal Industry Magazine* reported in April 1915, “the recent \$1,000,000 fire at the plant of the John A. Roebling’s Sons Company was caused by some one [sic] not in sympathy with the concern manufacturing trace chains for the Allies. Previous to the fire an attempt was made to blow up the big plant.”¹² Whether or not the fire started as a result of Dr. Scheele’s early versions of the cigar bomb has never been established. The fact that investigators found no trace of what caused the fires supports the theory that Scheele’s incendiary bombs were the culprits, since they were much smaller than traditional explosives and melted completely after ignition. These early fires typically do not figure into accounts of Dr. Scheele’s activities because they happened before the official start of the firebomb plot as described in sabotage agent Franz Rintelen’s wartime memoir, *The Dark Invader*. However, the fires bear a striking similarity to the admitted sabotage acts that started in the end of April.

Well-funded sabotage teams sprung up in 1915 across the United States. Dr. Scheele worked as a chemist for Bayer before he started his own laboratory in Hoboken, New Jersey. He was a sleeper agent, paid by the German government

⁷ “Big Cotton Cargo Burnt,” *New York Times*, 11 Apr. 1915.

⁸ “Spy Hint in Roebling Fire,” *New York Times*, 20 Jan. 1915.

⁹ Henry Landau, *The Enemy Within: The Inside Story of German Sabotage in America* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1937), 36. *Metal Industry Magazine* reported the fire to have occurred in February. *Metal Industry Magazine*, vol. 13, Jan. to Dec. 1915.

¹⁰ *Metal Industry Magazine*, vol. 13, Jan. to Dec. 1915.

¹¹ “Munition Plant Fires Laid to Incendiaries,” *New York Times*, 21 Nov. 1915.

¹² *Metal Industry Magazine*, vol. 13, Jan. to Dec. 1915.

years before the war started to conduct industrial espionage and stand by for any mission the German military intelligence division might have for him. As soon as the war started in Europe, Scheele had the task of finding ways to circumvent the British sea blockade using chemical processes to disguise fertilizer, oil, and other contraband. In San Francisco, agents under the command of German Consul General Franz Bopp blew up a dynamite-laden ship in the Seattle harbor in May 1915, causing great damage to shipping bound for the Russian front. In Detroit, Consul Curt von Reiszwitz supported German agent Albert Kaltschmidt's group attacking targets in Canada and the industrial areas of the Great Lakes region. In New Orleans, a sabotage cell under the leadership of Irish nationalist and German agent Norton O'Leary successfully planted firebombs on Allied ships starting in March of 1915. The Haskell, New Jersey, gun cotton drying plant of DuPont blew up on 5 March 1915, killing five and wrecking four buildings.¹³ The Equitable Powder Plant in Alton, Illinois suffered a large explosion on 1 April. Three days later, the New Jersey Freight Depot at Pompton Lakes, New Jersey, went up, destroying train loads of percussion caps for artillery shells.¹⁴ It is not clear if these explosions all resulted from sabotage by individuals, from attacks organized by the German government, or from simple work accidents. However, all incidents suspiciously supported the push to slow munitions production and shipment to Germany's enemies.

In Baltimore, a sabotage cell under Paul Hilken, the managing director of the North German Lloyd, stood accused of sourcing firebombs from Scheele throughout 1915, yet the *New York Times* never mentioned a single ship leaving the Baltimore harbor that caught on fire in that year.¹⁵ However, serious fires severely damaged the American warship *USS Oklahoma* in the Camden, New Jersey, shipyard. Two more U.S. navy ships mysteriously caught on fire in the Philadelphia navy shipyard a few weeks later. The government, obviously embarrassed about this string of "accidents," never admitted that sabotage was a probable cause. However, the *Philadelphia Evening Ledger* quoted government insiders in Washington as saying, "the fire on the *Oklahoma* strengthened the suspicion that the United States is being subjected to the hostile activities of partisans of the war in Europe."¹⁶ The *Oklahoma* entered service with a year delay in 1916. She succumbed to flames and capsized in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, taking 429 members of her crew down with her.

Authorities suspected seventeen major fires that occurred in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland in 1915, in addition to the navy yard fires, as the handiwork of German agents. Most notable were the explosions in the facilities of major

¹³ "5 Killed in Powder Mill," *New York Times*, 7 Mar. 1915.

¹⁴ Landau, *The Enemy Within*, 305.

¹⁵ *New York Times*, calendar year 1915, survey of articles containing steamer, ship, or fire in the headlines.

¹⁶ "Nine Compartments Damaged By Flames on Great Warship," *Philadelphia Evening Ledger*, 21 July 1915.

producers of war materials for the Allies, all to the south of New York. Several munitions plants of DuPont, the Aetna factory in Grove Run, New York, Bethlehem Steel in the eponymous Pennsylvania town, the Baldwin Locomotive Company in Eddystone, Pennsylvania, and John A. Roebling's Sons in Trenton, New Jersey for a second time, all blew up or caught on fire that year. The two consecutive fires that destroyed large portions of Bethlehem Steel's production facilities caused celebrations in pubs all over Germany with toasts to the destruction of this hated company.

A conflagration that could have started as a result of firebombs in Baltimore harbor in June 1916 incinerated two steamers and caught the grain elevators on fire. Insurance companies estimated the damage to be over \$2 million.¹⁷ The prized jackpot of all targets blew up in the summer of 1916, which subsequent investigations traced to the sabotage cell around Paul Hilken in Baltimore. His group planned and executed the destruction of the Black Tom loading terminals in the New York harbor in July 1916. The Lehigh Valley Railroad Company's loading terminal on Black Tom Island in New Jersey had enough explosives stacked in its warehouses and dock sheds that their combustion caused an explosion powerful enough to cause an earthquake registering an estimated 5.5 on the Richter scale.¹⁸ It could be felt as far south as Baltimore, where Paul Hilken and his fellow conspirators toasted to the success of their mission.

The supplies Dr. Scheele, the main bomb maker of the German sabotage campaign, purchased to produce the bombs give an indication when the firebombing project became industrial. Scheele had built cigar bombs in his lab in 1914 and showed them to the German military attaché Franz von Papen. A large-scale firebombing campaign, however, required large-scale production that exceeded the capacity of his lab. The initial production of the bombs was slow and tedious, and many of them malfunctioned. After meetings involving German Naval Attaché Karl Boy-Ed, who by rank and responsibility had to have given the nod to proceed, the sabotage team decided to move production of the lead hulls of the cigar bombs to the interned North German Lloyd steamer, *Kaiser Friedrich der Grosse*. This decision came sometime between 11 April and 13 April 1915. The workmanship of the cigar garnered the admiration of people like New York Bomb Squad Captain Thomas Tunney. He investigated their origin later in 1915 and called the quality of the bombs "thorough."¹⁹ The German bomb maker ordered a truckload of lead pipe on 13 April 1915, which truckers delivered first to Scheele's laboratory in Hoboken but then transferred to the North German Lloyd pier the

¹⁷ "4 to 10 Die in Blast and Grain Pier Fire," *New York Times*, 14 June 1916.

¹⁸ The Richter scale was not used then, however, geologists estimated the impact of the explosions based on eyewitness accounts and damage assessments years later.

¹⁹ Tunney, *Throttled*, 130.

next day.²⁰ Scheele purchased more lead on 20 April, and again on 28 April.²¹ All these purchases ended up at the North German Lloyd pier.

The production of the cigars in the workshop of the *Kaiser Friedrich der Grosse* proceeded in earnest on 13 April 1915.²² The production team hired three additional sailors with the skills to produce a precision product. For an additional fourteen dollars in cash per day the sailors cut the lead pipes to size, soldered the corroding aluminum membrane, and cut the fill caps into the cigars.²³ Two German agents then carried the bomb casings to Dr. Scheele's laboratory, where the chemist inspected them, and filled them with the volatile chemicals.²⁴ The agents then took the filled bombs to two German merchant marine captains, who arranged for them to be placed on ships.²⁵ The bomb factory produced between thirty-five and forty bombs per day.²⁶ In his statement to American authorities in 1918, Scheele put the total amount of bombs produced between April 1915 and April 1916 at five hundred.

Without a doubt, the *Kaiser Friedrich der Grosse* produced far more bombs than the arrested conspirators admitted. Scheele's generally accepted number seems far lower than conservative estimates would yield with the historical facts in mind. The bomb shop received three deliveries of lead pipe in April 1915, one per week for three weeks. If the weekly spacing represented the actual use of the lead, and considering the production volume of thirty-five per day, the shop worked for fifteen days, producing 525 bombs in April alone. Even with the assumption that German sabotage agent Franz Rintelen halted the production after bombs had been discovered on the steamer *Kirk Oswald* in Marseille in mid-June, over 1,400 bombs must have been manufactured in 1915. These are in addition to those Dr. Scheele made before April in his own shop. If the chief engineer of the *Kaiser Friedrich der Grosse* can be believed, ten bombs were placed on any ship selected for destruction.²⁷ It seems that only about one third of the targets could be identified in the end.

However, this is not all. Three more lead pipe purchases in January and February 1916 support the fact that another slew of firebombs hit U.S. installations in the first seven months of that year. Fifteen additional ships reportedly caught fire, allowing for the suspicion that another fifty had been bombed. Cigar bombs likely even set the Canadian parliament in Ottawa on fire in February 1916. Multiple factories

²⁰ NA RG 65 FBI Case Files, M1085, File 8000-925, Statement of trucker Heine.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² NA RG 65 FBI Case Files, M1085, File 8000-925, Memo to Department, 22 Apr. 1916. Also *Ibid.*, Statement of Georg Preidel. Preidel told investigators that the production of the bombs started in March or the beginning of April, which, if true, would place the establishment of the bomb factory on the steamer before the arrival of Rintelen, another indication that the whole project was well underway when he arrived.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Statement of von Kleist.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, Statements of Garbade, Paradis, and Preidel.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Statement of Dr. Scheele.

²⁷ "Bomb Plot Men, Deserted in Jail, May Name Chiefs," *New York Times*, 15 Apr. 1916.

exploded in May, June, and July 1916. The grand prize, the largest loading dock for Entente munitions on Black Tom Island in the New York harbor, exploded at the end of July, after German agents used incendiary devices to start the conflagration.

It will never be possible to positively identify every ship that the German sabotage agents targeted in 1915 and 1916. The American government accused three German agents of having firebombed thirty-five ships valued at \$10 million (\$210 million in today's value) between 1 January 1915 and their arrest on 13 April 1916.²⁸ Approximately \$12 million (\$252 million in today's value) of damages occurred at the same time, as the result of fires in war industry factories. But the senior German officials involved in the sabotage campaign never told what they knew, despite many efforts of the Mixed Claims Commission lawyers during the 1920s and 30s. There are several important reasons: the German government could not and would not admit to committing acts of war against the United States during the neutrality period of 1914 to 1917. Franz von Papen, in particular, who became German Chancellor in 1932, wanted nothing to do with the sabotage campaign. He denied ever working with Dr. Scheele on bomb plots. Finally, Franz Rintelen, who served a four-year prison sentence in the United States until 1922, desperate for attention, an acknowledgement of his service by the German government, and in order to boost his book sales, tried to take all the credit for the sabotage campaign. Since he only arrived on 3 April 1915, there could not have been earlier firebombs to fit his story.

It is impossible to ascertain exactly which fires resulted from sabotage, and which did not. Factory fires, especially where combustibles were involved in the production, happened as a matter of course. However, overall fire damages in the U.S. actually declined nationally, as well as in New York in 1915.²⁹ Other statistics also illustrate the difficulty of assessing the size of the German campaign against factories. Nineteen factories, which in 1915 would have been among the war material producers, reported fires in 1914.³⁰ The total damage from these fires for the calendar year was estimated at \$10 million. Twenty-seven fires destroyed approximately \$12 million worth of land, equipment, and goods during the twelve months after the sabotage campaign commenced.³¹

Many of the latter fires had been attributed to the German sabotage campaign, although the Mixed Claims Commission awarded only a tiny fraction of these damages to claimants. Considering that factories sprung up like mushrooms in 1915, and that war production required manufacturers to enter into the production of explosives, munitions, metal milling, and other fire-prone processes, the outbreak of large fires in munitions facilities does not seem surprising. However,

²⁸ NA RG 87 U.S. Secret Service, A1, Entry 65, "Synopsis of Franz von Rintelen Mission."

²⁹ *New York Times*, 6 January 1916; 1 May 1916.

³⁰ The losses are an aggregate of the reported damages in newspapers. Excluding the \$12 million losses of the Salem, Massachusetts fire in June 1914, the total comes to \$10.235 million.

³¹ *Ibid.*

it was certainly possible and fitting for saboteurs to cause fires in such facilities and remain undetected. The real number of arsons will never be known. However, the destruction of major American factories, such as Bethlehem Steel, John A. Roebling and Sons, Baldwin Locomotive Company, DuPont, Aetna, and others certainly occupied the top spots on the German military attaché's target list.

The firebombed ships provide much better data to analyze. The group of saboteurs around Dr. Scheele admitted their crimes and helped assemble numbers to their efforts. The thirty-five ships the group stood accused of having firebombed are documented. An additional group of thirty-nine ships that also suffered suspicious fires in the same time period brings the number of targets to seventy-four. Embarrassed U.S. authorities downplayed and tried to hide the fact that German sabotage agents obviously had breached navy yards in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Five American warships suffered fire damages. The *USS Oklahoma* and *USS New York*, two new battleships in construction, were almost completely destroyed.³²

American, British, and French authorities found cigars on thirteen ships in the time period between January 1915 and April 1916, most notably on the *SS Kirk Oswald* in Marseille on 10 May 1915. The *Kirk Oswald* was not the first ship on which authorities discovered bombs. The *SS Cressington Court*, the *SS Lord Erne*, and the *SS Lord Downshire* all had unexploded bombs in their holds when they docked in Le Havre. However, the French government sent only the incendiary devices found in Marseille to New York. Captain Tunney of the New York Bomb Squad used these bombs to uncover first lighter captains (carriers that transferred freight from warehouses to freighters), who had arranged the placement of the bombs, and later the entire plot.

The statistics for ship fires are much more revealing than for factories. In the calendar year 1914, ten ships reported fires in the hold, five of these before the war started. Three of these fires seemed suspicious: one occurred on a sugar transport at the end of October 1914; one was on a coal tender to supply the British fleet also at the end of October; and the third concerned a horse transport at the beginning of November. These three fires seem to have had a connection with the war. They likely represented early attempts of sabotage the German military attaché von Papen organized. Even considering all ten fires in 1914 as the statistical baseline, sixty-six fires in 1915 stand out in stark contrast to that baseline.³³ The fires occurred in sugar shipments in fourteen cases, leading American investigators to the German captains operating the inner harbor delivery carriers. Sugar does not

³² "Two More U.S. Warships Attacked by Fire Epidemic" and "Nine Compartments Damaged By Flames On Great Warship," *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, 21 July 1915.

³³ Tunney mentioned these three ships as bombed in January and February 1915. The *Hennington Court* he quoted actually was the *SS Hanmington Court*, which was firebombed in February 1916. The other two ships could not be verified at all.

have a history of accidental combustion. Coal, cotton, and hay are all materials that are well known to combust accidentally, especially in combination with moisture.

Thirty-five ships that went up in flames originated in New York, all of them near, or next to the piers where German ships were interned. Fifteen ship fires entered the news between January and May 1916, ten of which originated in New York. Five fires occurred on ships from June to December, one determined accidental. A potentially larger number of ship fires, besides the reported incidents, never made it into the news because the crews managed to extinguish the blazes. Finally, the U.S. Navy held back information on the embarrassing destruction of its ships in navy yards.

The sabotage campaign, although alive and well in 1916 and 1917, shifted focus from attacking ships to sabotaging major installations such as harbors and large factories. There is insufficient evidence to prove German agents' involvement the fires in the port of Norfolk in May, or San Francisco and Baltimore in June 1916. However, the attack on the Black Tom terminal in July is a proven German sabotage act. These fires caused tens of millions of dollars in damages to installations, finished goods, and shipping. Lawsuits, stretched into the 1930s, most notably the one concerning the Black Tom Island, which was finally settled for \$95 million in 1953.

Despite many arrests and the expulsion of diplomats, the American government could not root out the saboteurs in the vast country. The sabotage campaign of the German Empire that started at the end of January 1915 made it painfully clear to the U.S. government that, over the long haul, America would have to join the Allies. The German actions against the United States after January 1915 – the submarine war against commercial shipping, the cornering of American industries, the firebomb campaign, even the attempt to introduce biological weapons of mass destruction into the mix – presented a massive and imminent threat to the national security of the country. President Wilson, although keeping up the pretense of neutrality, while remaining unwilling or unable to reduce the flow of supplies to the Entente at the same time, prepared for the worst. Although still eighteen months away, war with Germany seemed to turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Appendix: Firebombed Ships 1915

Ship Name	Sailing Date	Accident Date	Proven Incendiaries	Reporting Date	Origination	Destination	Source	Comments
Grindon Hall	2/2/1915	2/7/1915		2/7/1915	Havana	London	NYT	Came into Norfolk harbor ablaze
Regma d'Italia	2/17/1915	2/16/1915		2/17/1915	New York	Naples	NYT	Cotton caught on fire, had passengers, oil and munitions
La Touraine	2/27/1915	3/7/1915	Proven	3/9/1915	New York	Le Harve	NYT	Burned for three days
San Guglielmo	3/16/1915	4/11/1915	Proven	4/11/1915	Galveston, Tex.	Naples	NYT	Stopped in New York before crossing Atlantic, 6000 bales of cotton destroyed
Devon City	4/27/1915	4/27/1915	Proven	5/12/1915	New York	Le Harve	NYT	Caught fire at docks
Cressington Court	4/29/1915	5/5/1915	Proven	5/13/1915	New York	Le Harve	NYT	Bombs discovered, loaded at South Brooklyn Piers next to HAPAG ships

Ship Name	Sailing Date	Accident Date	Proven Incendiaries	Reporting Date	Origination	Destination	Source	Comments
Lord Erme	4/29/1915	5/5/1915	Proven	5/13/1915	New York	Le Harve	NYT	Bombs discovered, loaded at South Brooklyn Piers next to HAPAG ships
Kristianiaford	5/1/1915	5/7/1915		5/17/1915	Bergen	New York	NYT	1,300 Passengers
Lord Downshire	5/1/1915	5/9/1915	Proven	5/15/1915	New York	Le Harve	NYT	Bombs discovered, loaded at South Brooklyn Piers next to HAPAG ships
Kirkoswald	5/2/1915	5/10/1915	Proven	5/20/1915	New York	Marseille	NYT	4 Bombs discovered, loaded at South Brooklyn Piers next to HAPAG ships
Samland	5/1/1915	5/13/1915	Proven	5/13/1915	New York	London	NYT	Caught fire at sea
Chiyu Maru	5/1/1915	5/15/1915		5/17/1915	San Francisco	Yokohama	NYT	7,000 ton freighter

Ship Name	Sailing Date	Accident Date	Proven Incendiaries	Reporting Date	Origination	Destination	Source	Comments
Bankdale	5/8/1915	5/16/1915	Proven	5/24/1915	New York	Le Harve	NYT	Bombs discovered, loaded at South Brooklyn Piers next to HAPAG ships
Strathtay	5/8/1915	5/20/1915	Proven	6/2/1915	New York	Marseille	NYT	Caught fire at sea
Anglo-Saxon		5/21/1915		5/21/1915	New York	London	Landau	Bombs found
Penlee	6/12/1915	6/12/1915	Proven	6/13/1915	Philadelphia	Le Harve	NYT	Burned in harbor, two fires, sabotage suspected
Lord Ormonde		7/1/1915	Proven	12/20/1915	New York	Le Harve	NYT	Sugar cargo caught on fire, not much damage
USS Alabama		7/1/1915		7/21/1915		in dock	NYT	Incendiary fires all at the same places, close to powder magazines
USS New Jersey		7/1/1915		7/21/1915		in dock	NYT	Incendiary fires all at the same places, close to powder magazines

Ship Name	Sailing Date	Accident Date	Proven Incendiaries	Reporting Date	Origination	Destination	Source	Comments
USS San Francisco		7/1/1915		7/21/1915		in dock	NYT	Inciendary fires all at the same places, close to powder megazines
Minnehaha	7/4/1915	7/7/1915	Proven	7/15/1915	New York	London	NYT	Had to be towed to Halifax, munitions cargo destroyed
Cragside		7/12/1915	Proven	7/25/1915	New York	Marseille	NYT	Bombs discovered, loaded at South Brooklyn Piers next to HAPAG ships
USS Oklahoma		7/19/1915	Proven	7/20/1915	Camden, N.J.	in dock	NYT	Burned with two separate fires at opposite ends of the ship, no cause found, ship badly damaged
Knutsford		7/20/1915	Proven	7/20/1915	New York		NYT	Caught fire at sea
Vulcan		7/20/1915		7/20/1915	Portsmouth, Maine		NYT	Coal fire

Ship Name	Sailing Date	Accident Date	Proven Incendiaries	Reporting Date	Origination	Destination	Source	Comments
Cragside		7/24/1915	Proven	7/25/1915	New York	Gibraltar	NYT	Burned in harbor, entire cargo of sugar destroyed
Mystery Ship		7/25/1915		7/26/1915	New York	Unknown	NYT	Ship could not be identified, sank, no survivors
Arabic	7/27/1915	7/27/1915	Proven	11/5/1915	New York	London	NYT	Two sticks of dynamite found
Assuncion de Larinaga		8/9/1915	Proven	8/9/1915			Landau	Caught fire at sea
Williston		8/13/1915	Proven	8/13/1915			Landau	Bombs found
Rotterdam	8/21/1915	8/25/1915	Proven	9/3/1915	New York	London	NYT	Caught fire at sea, carried red cross donations for Germany
Dixie	8/27/1915	8/27/1915	Proven	8/27/1915	New York	in dock	NYT	Caught fire at docks, lighter for cargo ships
FFF	8/27/1915	8/27/1915	Proven	8/30/1915	New York	in dock	NYT	Caught fire at docks, lighter for cargo ships

Ship Name	Sailing Date	Accident Date	Proven Incendiaries	Reporting Date	Origination	Destination	Source	Comments
Sant' Anna	9/8/1915	9/12/1915	Proven	9/13/1915	New York	Marseille	NYT	Caught fire at sea, 1700 Italian reservists on board, 18 bombs found, \$100,000 cargo destroyed, burned in Brooklyn pier exactly one year before
Lapland	9/16/1915	9/15/1915	Proven	9/16/1915	New York	Liverpool	NYT	Bombs discovered dockside
Athimai	9/16/1915	9/19/1915	Proven	9/19/1915	New York	Constantinople	NYT	Caught fire at sea, 470 passengers
San Guglielmo	9/27/1915	9/27/1915	Proven	11/5/1915	New York	Naples	NYT	Bombs found at dock, dynamite
Colorado	10/23/1915	10/25/1915		10/26/1915	Charleston, S.C.	New York	NYT	Cotton cargo burned
Euterpe	11/2/1915	11/2/1915	Proven	11/5/1915	New York	in dock	NYT	Started burning in seven places simultaneously, 8564 bags of sugar entirely destroyed

Ship Name	Sailing Date	Accident Date	Proven Incendiaries	Reporting Date	Origination	Destination	Source	Comments
Rio Lages	10/31/1915	11/4/1915	Proven	11/9/1915	New York	Queenstown	NYT	Caught fire at sea, sugar, loaded at Yonkers, destroyed
USS Prairie		11/7/1915		11/7/1915	New York		NYT	Fay arrest, supposed attempt made
Ancona		11/7/1915					Landau	Caught fire at sea
Rochambeau	11/1/1915	11/8/1915	Proven	11/21/1915	New York	Bordeaux	NYT	Caught fire at sea, no cause determined, 418 passengers, coal bunker fire, 13,000 GRT
Livieta	11/9/1915	11/9/1915		11/12/1915	Port Arthur, Tex.	Buenos Aires	NYT	Oil tanker exploded as a result of a bomb
Barkdale	11/15/1915	11/26/1915	Proven	11/27/1915	New York	Bordeaux	NYT	Caught fire on sea, 100 bales of cotton burned
Lord Ormonde	11/24/1915	11/28/1915	Proven	12/20/1915	New York	Bordeaux	NYT	Horses and sugar, caught fire at sea

Ship Name	Sailing Date	Accident Date	Proven Incendiaries	Reporting Date	Origination	Destination	Source	Comments
Tynningham	12/1/1915	12/5/1915	Proven	12/12/1915	New York	Liverpool	NYT	Two separate fires at sea, sugar cargo destroyed
Virginia	12/18/1915	12/20/1915		12/18/1915	Richmond, Va.	New York	NYT	Barge with horses sank after sabotage, 600 horses drowned in Hudson
Alston		12/24/1915	Proven	12/24/1915			Landau	Dynamite found while at sea
Inchmoor	12/26/1915	12/26/1915	Proven	12/26/1915	New York	in dock	NYT	Sugar cargo caught on fire
Manchuria		12/26/1915					Landau	Caught fire while at sea

Candor and Censorship: German Soldiers and the *Feldpost* System of WWII

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The Study Collection

This article is based on research compiled over the last seven years for a book-length manuscript that focuses on the personal accounts of German soldiers from the Second World War as recorded in their letters home. Research into German war letters is necessary to fully understand the nature of the common soldier's involvement in the conflict. "The Wehrmacht," the institution in which these individuals served, "was an army of conscripts, whose 18 million troops came from all social classes in all parts of Germany. This also means that in their range of nationalist leanings they varied from fanatical Nazis through the politically indifferent to critics of the regime. In putting on a uniform, soldiers by no means shed the worldview and values that they had held in civilian life."¹ Unfortunately, according to the *Museum für Kommunikation* in Berlin, there are now only an estimated 120,000 to 150,000 surviving war letters out of the approximately 30 to 40 billion letters that were mailed during the war.² Time is running out, and more letters are being lost every day. As of March 2018, 1,067 different letters and documents have been translated and processed; they include: 1,049 private letters, from 80 different individuals, 18 official letters and documents, and two wartime diaries. The letters were written by individuals who represented just about every branch of the German military, the Nazi political establishment, and the wider civilian population. Included in the corpus are letters to and from soldiers in the Wehrmacht, the Luftwaffe, the Kriegsmarine, the Waffen SS, the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD),³ the *Reichsarbeitsdienst* (RAD),⁴ Pioneer Units, and two punishment battalions: the Waffen SS Sonderkommando Dirlwanger and the 560th, Z. B. V (for special service) Grenadier Battalion.

To maintain a statistically valid, unbiased sample, the contents of the letters were translated after they were selected for use in the study. The selection of the letters for inclusion was based solely on the unit identification of the individuals who wrote

¹ Jörg Echternkamp, ed., *German Wartime Society 1939-1945: Exploitation, Interpretations, Exclusion*, 9/2, *Germany and the Second World War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2014), 71.

² Museum für Kommunikation, "Katrin Kilian: The Medium 'War Letter' as An Object of Interdisciplinary Research. Archives, State of Research and Processing of the Sources from the Second World War (Dissertation)," <http://warletters.de/english/e8-kilian-diss.html>. The German government estimates that only 120-150,000 wartime letters survive while some researchers, including independent scholars, suggest the number could be quite a bit higher. The overall quantity of mail sent is also possibly higher than official estimates, perhaps numbering as many as fifty billion items. See Stephen G. Fritz, *Frontsoldaten: The German Soldier in the Second World War* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1995), 9.

³ The SD was the security branch of the Nazi Party. In the fall of 1939 it was consolidated with other policing services under one single organizational agency, the Reich Security Main Office.

⁴ The RAD was the National Labor Service. All German males served in the RAD prior to military service.

the letters. All the letters were written between 1937 and 1945. It is imperative that all primary sources be randomly selected. Otherwise, the result of the research will be predetermined by the selected letters and subject to manipulation. In an ideal world, it would also be helpful to have the same number of letters from each individual represented in the corpus. That approach is impractical because of the small number of surviving World War II letters and could only be achieved by randomly selecting far fewer letters, thereby eliminating relevant references to wartime events.

Once the letters were translated, they were arranged chronologically and all the necessary research was done to weave the story of the war around them. At this point, a second collection of letters was compiled, which included all letters that referenced censorship or contained information that was obviously or technically in violation of the Special Wartime Penal Code of August 17, 1938 (*Kriegssonderstrafrechtsverordnung* or KSSVO for short); it is this grouping of 114 letters that will be the subject of this article.

Shorter letters are included in their entirety in the text; however, with one exception, only the relevant passages have been included from longer letters. This was necessary because of space concerns. In an effort to deal with this issue, scanned color copies of all original letters referenced in the text can be found on the following permanent website: www.germanwarletters.com. All letters are numbered consecutively to match their appearance in the text.

A Brief Historiography

The impact of censorship on the average German soldier and the people he corresponded with remains an underexplored area of study.⁵ Martin Humburg, in his stellar work *Das Gesicht des Krieges* (1998), is one scholar who has investigated this question, helping to broaden the scope of what we know. Similarly, in earlier texts such as *Das andere Gesicht des Krieges* (1982), edited by Ortwin Buchbender and Reinhold Sterz, and *Geschichte der Deutschen Feldpost, 1937-1945* (1993) by Gerhard Oberleitner, as well as the more recent, shorter studies by Detlef Vogel in *Der Krieg des kleinen Mannes* (1992) and Benjamin Ziemann in *Der Brief* (1996), significant contributions have been made to our understanding of censorship and the responses of soldiers to those rules and restrictions. But more study is needed, especially as any work on “forces mail” (*Feldpost*)⁶ is constrained

⁵ Katrin Kilian, “Moods in Wartime: The Emotions Expressed in Forces Mail” in Echternkamp, ed., *German Wartime Society 1939-1945: Exploitation, Interpretations, Exclusion*, 9/2, 254.

⁶ The Feldpost system was established during imperial times and continued to operate until the conclusion of the Second World War.

in its conclusions by the quite limited number of letters available as compared with the tens of billions of items of correspondence that were passed during the war. Another scholar, Katrin Kilian, who has worked diligently over the past ten to fifteen years to analyze forces mail more generally, is rightly regarded as an authority on the subject. In fact, her relatively recent work published in *Germany and the Second World War* (2014) provides a detailed study of the correspondence of over thirty German servicemen. Humburg's findings of some fifteen years earlier mirrors Kilian's in the sense that it also was based on hundreds of letters but only from a fairly small number (twenty-five) of soldiers.

Our research, however modest, intends to further support much of what has been established about censorship of forces mail but also, where possible, to expand upon the arguments of these above-mentioned scholars. Through our consideration of previously unexplored letters, we are helping to widen and deepen the source material upon which all researchers can now reflect. It collectively serves to strengthen the basis for making determinations about forces mail, as it is founded on a greater body of material.

The German Military Postal System: The *Feldpost*

Soldiers serving in the German military during the Second World War were on occasion transferred from one division to another but more frequently from one field army to another. In most cases, the one thing that stayed consistent was the soldiers' regimental affiliation. Regimental identification was indeed the key to finding the location of an individual soldier at any given point in time during the war. This was important for the sending and receiving of personal and official correspondence. All of this was made possible through the use of the Feldpost number. The number functioned as a sort of ZIP code. A new number would be assigned to a soldier each time he changed regiments, or in some cases battalions. Since the soldier's name and number were the only necessary address, the system had the added benefit of helping keep military base locations secret. The Feldpost number can be found on any letter sent by German military personnel from a location outside of the Greater German Reich. It is typically found on the outer envelope or cover and is located within a stamped circle, which also contains the national emblem, an eagle, atop a swastika within a wreath.

By any estimation, the German Feldpost provided a remarkably efficient service for the men of the German military. The post was always given the highest priority in transportation, both in the air and on the ground. An amazing example of the Feldpost's proficiency is the fact that the German 6th Army, surrounded at Stalingrad, continued to receive mail up until January 18, 1943, less than two weeks before the surrender of the garrison.⁷ German commanders understood the

⁷ David Stone, *Hitler's Army: The Men, Machines, and Organization, 1939-1945* (Minneapolis: Zenith Press, 2009), 208.

importance of morale and how morale is maintained by a constant flow of mail from home. Before military engagements, a great effort was made to get the mail to the troops.

Military Regulations and Censorship

As a result of the mutiny of the German military at the end of World War I, the Nazi hierarchy and the German High Command became very concerned about the possibility of a recurrence in the war that they had been told to anticipate; therefore the KSSVO was passed into law. The directive went into effect in August 1939.⁸ This ruling was primarily directed against those who were guilty of the offense of "demoralization of the Armed Forces," but it also included those who refused military service. The law was designed to protect against what the Nazis viewed as subversion of the war effort, undermining military morale, sedition, and defeatism.⁹ Actions forbidden by the new legislation included, but were not limited to, the following: remarks critical of Nazi party ideology; expressions of doubts about the legitimacy or possible failure of the national struggle; dissemination of news about battlefield losses; and making references to poor or declining morale, desertions and casting doubt on the accuracy of official military reports. Penalties for violation of this legislation were severe, ranging from lengthy prison terms to the death penalty. The decree itself applied to the military as well as civilians. This made it possible to subject all people who were in violation to prosecution.

The law also stated that anyone "who attempted to evade military service completely, partially or for certain periods of time by means of self-mutilation or by means intended for deception or by any other means" should be sentenced to death.¹⁰ Over 3,000 military judges further defined the law and imposed the death penalty as the standard punishment for conscientious objection as well.¹¹ Therefore anyone who did not comply with the draft after mobilization of the German Armed Forces could expect to be sentenced to death and subsequently executed.¹² By war's end, military courts had ordered the execution of approximately 50,000 men.¹³

Denunciations and incriminating letters seem to be the primary method the Gestapo used to bring charges against subversives in both the general population and the military.¹⁴ Current estimates place the number of cases, against both civilians and members of the German military who were charged, at approximately

⁸ Ingo Müller, *Hitler's Justice: The Courts of The Third Reich*, trans. Deborah L. Schneider (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 183-184.

⁹ Detlef Garbe, *Between Resistance and Martyrdom: Jehovah's Witnesses in the Third Reich* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 410.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 358-359.

¹¹ Michael Stolleis, *The Law and the Swastika: Studies on Legal History in Nazi Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 151-152.

¹² Garbe, *Between Resistance and Martyrdom*, 358-359.

¹³ Stolleis, *The Law and the Swastika*, 151-152.

¹⁴ See Robert Gellately, *The Gestapo and German Society: Enforcing Racial Policy 1933-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). See also *The Nazis: A Warning from History*, directed by Laurence Rees (London: BBC Worldwide, 1997), DVD.

3 million.¹⁵ The most famous victims of the law were the members of die *Weißerose* (the White Rose) student rebellion in Munich, which included active members of the German military as well as civilians.

There were in reality three different but related types of censorship that had a profound effect on the way the letters were written and even how they were sent:

1. Political, which was meant to stop negative comments made by civilians or military personnel about the Nazi party or the operation of the government.
2. Military, which was meant to stop comments that would undermine morale and the command structure, or unintentional comments that might provide usable information to the enemy. Spreading rumors of all types was banned, as was the taking and mailing of photos and illustrations that showed military installations. The dissemination of enemy propaganda – Allied (primarily the Soviet Union) and domestic – was forbidden.
3. Self-censorship, which occurred when members of the military were less than honest with their family members at home about the true nature of their situation. This usually occurred when the soldier in question was trying to shield his relatives and friends at home from the realities of the war.¹⁶

The fact that these letters traveled such substantial distances in a relatively short period of time indicates that the letters were inspected by the military itself before being put into the post and that only a small sample of letters were selected for inspection.¹⁷ This would allow the Officer in Command to potentially know quickly of any serious violations such as the inclusion of information that was deemed classified or defeatist by the military.¹⁸

All letters sent through the military Feldpost system were subject to inspection:

When a letter was censored, it was at first marked “for further processing” and forwarded to the intelligence officer. Critical comments constituted the offence of “subversion” under National-Socialist law and the perpetrator could be punished with imprisonment, penitentiary or death sentence. Although the contents of private letters could not be compared to subversive activities and there was no legal basis for prosecution, the total numbers of sentences due to “subversion” against the authors of war letters is estimated at 30,000 to 40,000.¹⁹

Even though the censors only inspected a small portion of the letters, censorship received a lot of attention in the media. This probably convinced the soldiers that

¹⁵ Stolleis, *The Law and the Swastika*, 151-152.

¹⁶ Echternkamp, ed., *German Wartime Society 1939-1945: Exploitation, Interpretations, Exclusion*, 9/2, *Germany and the Second World War*, 75.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Fritz, *Frontsoldaten*, 9.

¹⁹ Museum für Kommunikation, “Katrin Kilian: The Medium ‘War Letter’ as an Object of Interdisciplinary Research. Archives, State of Research and Processing of the Sources from the Second World War.”

it was more pervasive than it actually was.²⁰ Despite the risk, a significant number of letters in the study collection (just under 11 percent) contained forbidden comments that were in some cases treasonous; this almost certainly indicates the growing unhappiness that many average soldiers felt about Nazism, regulations in general, and the way the war was being fought. In addition, as the war progressed, soldiers discovered ways to avoid the military censors altogether.²¹

Censorship of Civilian Post

It was true that all German mail was, in theory, subject to inspection, however very little domestic mail was actually checked. Much of the German censorship effort was directed at international mail leaving the Greater German Reich. This was, however, not the case if an individual was suspected of violating Nazi policies. Starting in 1939, any German citizen wishing to send mail overseas was required to apply for a postal control card. When sending a parcel or letter, one had to present the item for inspection with both the postal control card and identification papers. The postmaster would then affix a stamp to the back of the card. Each card had room for twenty-four stamps; when it was full, the sender needed to acquire a new card at the local police station.²² The mail would then be sent from local post offices to the "Foreign Letter and Telegram Examining Station" in Berlin. It was soon discovered that one facility would be totally inadequate and, subsequently, additional offices were established throughout the Greater German Reich.²³

Degrees of Noncompliance with the KSSVO Regulations

Based on reading the letters, it is apparent that most new conscripts obeyed the KSSVO. It is impossible to say if this was done because of a sense of duty or fear of the policy itself or because of an unwillingness to discuss the harsh details of war with family members. The converse is also true, as veterans of the Russian Front tended to be more straightforward in their correspondence and much less concerned about potential violations of censorship regulations. Indeed, in some cases the men held the regulations in contempt. The general feeling was that, since most soldiers were serving on the Russian Front already, there was very little that the authorities could do in the form of additional punishment; indeed if they chose to enforce the law to the letter it would have had a profoundly negative effect on what was left of German morale in the East.²⁴

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Fritz, *Frontsoldaten*, 9.

²² Ray Cowdery and Stephanie Cowdery, *Papers Please! Identity Documents, Permits and Authorizations of the Third Reich* (Pottsville: Reddick Military Publishing, 2010), 87-88.

²³ PostalCensorship.com, "German Postal Censorship in World War II," http://www.postalcensorship.com/examples/ww2germany/c_ww2ger.html.

²⁴ This view is supported by additional recent research. See Frederick C. Tubach and Sally P. Tubach, *German Voices: Memories of Life during Hitler's Third Reich* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 202.

Representative Examples of Censorship Violations by Category

Out of a total of 1,067 letters, 114 - or just under 11 percent of the total number of letters in the corpus - were in clear or technical violation of German censorship policy.

Military Security Violations

These letters contain comments about troop movements, deployment, and weapons development. In addition, some contain references to specific military operations or secret military policies such as the "Commissar Order."

Before the start of Operation Barbarossa, Hitler's Commissar Order was issued by the *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* (OKW) on 6 June 1941; the order's official name was "Guidelines for the Treatment of Political Commissars." In the order, instructions were given that any Soviet political commissar identified among captured Soviets should be executed on the spot. The justification for this obviously illegal decree was that, as a result of intense indoctrination of the political commissars, it was probable that they would promote unrest and rebellion in prisoner of war camps. Only a few copies of this order were ever produced and distributed, and only to the highest ranking officers. These officers were, in turn, instructed to inform their subordinates verbally. Because the order had the unwanted effect of stopping Soviet troops from surrendering, it was officially canceled one year later.²⁵

Military personnel were strictly forbidden to discuss the order with anyone outside of the armed forces, so we were surprised to find any reference to it in our corpus of letters. The letter in question, written by Heinrich B. to his family, is presented in its entirety below in order to provide the full context for the disclosure:

Yesterday I received my first parcels since being in Russia, thank you very much. We are advancing all the time. The Red enemy has been pushed back more than 100 km; we are following the infantry and motorized troops. I had no notion before what war was all about; we've already been through some fighter-bomber attacks. They usually select horse-drawn vehicles as their victims, but when German flak and planes are about, we don't see the Russians at all. It is very warm, and we get sandstorms here. When we return to Germany, we will all suffer from dirty lungs. We tie wet cloths around our mouths when it gets too bad. I am part of the wedge that advances from Luck to Roanowa and then on to Kiev, the capital city of the Ukraine. The Ukrainians are decent people, when we enter a town or village they welcome us with flowers and banners across the streets. They are glad that we've chased the Bolsheviks out. No one speaks German here. It is an honor for

²⁵ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "The Commissar Order," <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007454>.

us to be part of Adolf Hitler's Wehrmacht and especially the horse artillery, although I would rather like to be motorized, so we could keep up with the other mechanized troops and the heavy artillery which is far out in front of us because we cannot keep up that tempo. The horses are dying because they don't get enough oats. I have a sickle on my wagon, and at each opportunity, I cut some clover for my horses. Small groups of enemy partisans come out of the forests and cornfields at night to attack us so we have to be on constant guard. Let us hope we all will return in good health. Six weeks from now, Russia will be free of Communism, but I don't want to be part of the Central front that will take Moscow. Any Red Commissar taken prisoner will be shot by us. Here tonight we will be crossing the river, stay brave back home until the war in Europe is over.²⁶

The following two letters are also typical examples of security violations. In the first letter, Sergeant Leo D. of the Sixty-third Infantry Reserve Battalion informed his wife, in great detail, of his exact location at a German POW camp in Besancon, France:

It would have been ok in Mühlhausen but suddenly we got orders to move out, but only our Company. The rest of the Battalion is still near Mühlhausen. They sent us to Besancon to reinforce a Guard Battalion to look after a POW camp. I was spear headed to go there and meet the Battalion Commander to find lodging for us.²⁷

The next letter, written by Artur K. to his family, discloses his unit's general location on the Eastern Front. As both letters contained references to militarily sensitive information, they were problematic to send and could have resulted in severe punishment:

We shall not get any mail now for a while until it has sorted itself out here. Right now we are in a large village between Vyazma and Smolensk; the village is still not ruined. At the time the Russians retreated from here, the people were left behind. We made camp between the huts and buildings in tents, and our job is to hunt the partisans. It is not a bad area; then and there the villagers swap things with us for tobacco and cigarettes. We get milk and eggs or potatoes.²⁸

²⁶ Heinrich B. to his family, from Russia, 27 June 1941, Private Collection, Letter no. 45. Pvt. Heinrich B. served in the 117th Artillery Regiment of the 111th Infantry Division.

²⁷ Leo D. to his wife, from Besancon, France, 7 July 1940, Private Collection, Letter no. 92. Sergeant D. would later be promoted to captain.

²⁸ Artur K. to his family, from Russia, 28 June 1942, Private Collection, Letter no. 284. Artur K. served with the 112th Panzer Grenadier Regiment of the Twentieth Panzer Division.

Political Violations

The letters in this category contain disparaging remarks about the prosecution of the war, and the destruction of incriminating evidence. Considering the fact that all inspected letters were processed at the front by men who shared the same fate as those who wrote the letters, it then makes sense that inspecting officers would have had a great deal of sympathy for the soldiers writing home. Late in the war, the Wehrmacht would focus what resources it had available on stopping the transmission of important military information and probably cared less about what any given enlisted man or officer thought about Hitler.

As German war losses increased, the harsh enforcement of the Special Wartime Penal Code became a losing proposition. It made no sense, after all, to execute men who could be utilized to stem the Soviet advances, yet still the number of soldiers condemned by the courts for violation of the KSSVO directive was extremely high, in excess of several divisions. As a result, an emphasis on military necessity over ideology was implemented by the Wehrmacht in the east when circumstances warranted such decision-making. Jeff Rutherford has shown that this approach had varying impacts on the theater of war, but it reveals that military policy could exhibit a flexibility that broke from strict ideological guidelines.²⁹ In fact, even commanders who were well known for being strict disciplinarians engaged in cover-ups of offenses and persuaded the courts to reduce penalties.³⁰ These officers "feared the mushrooming of a culture of denunciations and, subsequently, of distrust within the Army. Such a culture would destroy the very basis of the Wehrmacht's fighting power."³¹

The following three letters are typical examples of correspondence that contains political violations of the directive. In the initial one, the soldier clearly expresses profound doubts about the sacrifices that he and other Germans are making, and suggests the losses of life have been wasteful and without purpose: "when and where did Alfred get killed? It is such a shame, he was a great friend, and one of the best from the family. What good has it all done, how many of my old schoolmates are dead?"³²

The sentiment conveyed in the next letter is different, as the focus is mainly on official propaganda and what purpose it serves. While the soldier questions the veracity of the promises being made, he also suggests that ultimate victory is possible, perhaps working to deflect any potential accusations of defeatism:

²⁹ Jeff Rutherford, "Life and Death in the Demiansk Pocket: The 123rd Infantry Division in Combat and Occupation," *Central European History* 41 (2008): 347-380.

³⁰ Müller, *Hitler's Justice*, 187.

³¹ Thomas Kühne, *The Rise and Fall of Comradeship: Hitler's Soldiers, Male Bonding, and Mass Violence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 179.

³² Artur K. to his parents, from Zgierz, Poland, 24 September 1942, Private Collection, Letter no. 293.

I have just been reading the newspaper article about the revenge weapons; a rather unbelievable story is told there, and we are supposed to believe all that? The article is just a pill to calm down the nerves of the German people. They have nothing to believe in anymore, so that's why it is published; we know that this year we will either win the war or we will lose it. I just wonder what "Adolf" has to say in his speech on January 30.³³

The theme of defeatism, however, is most evident in the third letter. A feeling of despair pervades the passage, and the notion that the situation is hopeless is clear as even the experienced, veteran troops at the front are questioning the possibility of securing final victory:

The company Capt. gave a statement yesterday, he said that "the officers ought to drill the soldiers much more, so they find it a relief to be sent to the front trench." I leave it to you at home to think that over. Almost every day some of our men are executed who try to get out of the service with self-inflicted wounds. Even very small infractions are severely punished here. When will there be no more war, when will there be a time once again when we can unload these murderous instruments and go home? When can we stop digging into the ground like moles until our mind(s) go crazy? Even the older ones that have fought in the past are giving up.³⁴

Military Morale Violations

These letters contain comments about the hopelessness of the war, its dehumanizing effects, and how much the men desperately wanted to come home. There are also letters that are totally defeatist in the body of the text but then, at the very end, include an inevitable expression of belief in "final victory." The writers seemed to think that stating they still believed in final victory would mitigate all the preceding negative statements in the letter. Based on the number of examples, this feeling was held by many of the soldiers.

Most of the soldiers who wrote letters represented in our study collection were drafted after the fall of Poland and in anticipation of Operation Barbarossa. For them, the invasion of Russia was their first taste of real combat. The majority of these letters reflect a sense of anticipation, and in some cases dread, but afterward they typically wrote about the combat in a very matter-of-fact way and without much detail. Of course every soldier's personal experience was different; some were horrifying while others were probably anti-climactic. In some letters, however, nothing was held back and the writers shared the sheer terror of the moment even with family members at home. The lack of self-censorship was not something done

³³ Heinrich B. to his parents, from "In the Field," 27 January 1944, Private Collection, Letter no. 225.

³⁴ Heinrich B. to his parents, from Romania, 7 July 1944, Private Collection, Letter no. 248.

intentionally to undermine morale but, as evidenced below, it certainly would have had that effect and would have been identified as a violation by the censors:

A quick few words from the front and I send greetings. I shall never in my life forget the last few days. I lived in constant fear. I can only tell you about it when I am home one day, if I ever see home again. I am okay, but please pray for me, so God shows me the way out of this horror. We've got the Reds on the run now, so I send greetings.³⁵

By the end of the Soviet Winter Counteroffensive of 1941-42, the myth of German invincibility was shattered. The tide was beginning to turn, and already during that spring of 1942 German losses climbed above 40 percent. Prior to the failed German advance on Moscow in 1941 there was little for the postal censors to be concerned about; from the German perspective, all the news was wonderful. Circumstances changed, however, when temperatures hit forty degrees below zero, and the Siberian reinforcements arrived.³⁶ Hitler's rather unrealistic expectations and lack of adequate logistical planning left millions of Germans in a life or death situation. All of this fear, anger, and frustration is reflected in the soldiers' letters home, censors be damned.

Under the growing pressures of war, some soldiers expressed openly their feelings about the conflict and the adversities that they faced. One problem inherent in modern warfare was so-called "friendly fire," a reality that censors would not have wanted soldiers to divulge. However, the letter below expresses understandable anger about exactly such an incident:

Something else, on September 13th I received a card from Berthold FP #07633, please write to him and thank him in my name. I have to go now, we are under another alert, planes are bombing us, but these are our own planes who are peppering our lines. These pilots need their a--holes torn open; they are supposed to be bombing the artillery positions east of the Volga!³⁷

Concerns were also expressed over inadequate resources and the squandering of men. The following letter relates that frontline efforts to stem the tide of the Soviet advance were unlikely to succeed, and the soldier is concerned that some of his comrades are being used in a manner that is counter to their original training, thus sacrificing them needlessly:

Right now a defensive line is being built but nobody thinks it will stop the enemy. There are no strong lines, not enough men and weapons. We keep on believing, but I see no immediate solution where we can win this war and

³⁵ Heinrich B. to his parents and other relatives, from Russia, 2 July 1941, Private Collection, Letter no. 46.

³⁶ The temperature forty degrees below zero is the same in both Centigrade and Fahrenheit.

³⁷ Edmund O. to his parents, from Stalingrad, Russia, 27 September 1942, Private Collection, Letter no. 400. Edmund O. served with First Machine Gun Battalion of the Fifth Panzer Jäger Regiment.

nobody here believes in miracles anymore. . . . The thing that bothers me most is that all the younger men from the artillery are used for infantry and that the survival chances there are only one out of 10.³⁸

Feelings of melancholy and waning morale were also found in such letters sent home. Not only were soldiers prone to reveal their doubts about the successful outcome of the war, but some further indicated a sense of despair. In the next letter, the soldier is alluding to the reality that the war is far from some glorious campaign but rather an all-consuming struggle that is tearing families asunder and leaving the soldiers emotionally bruised and stunted:

Today we also had a few wounded and a dead comrade from an enemy artillery attack. He died at 6 PM; an hour later a letter came for him from his wife who had just given birth to a healthy baby boy. What a sad day for a mother and a wife. At home, there will be tears and lamentations, and here hardly anyone takes notice anymore when a comrade dies. Let's hope for a speedy end to the war.³⁹

Draft Avoidance, Desertion, and Self-Inflicted Wounds

Any effort to avoid service was very serious and was referenced in the letters only in indirect and cryptic ways. All three of the above charges carried the death penalty. Of course, anyone who avoided the draft would, by definition, not be writing letters home from the Russian Front. Despite the martial spirit of the typical German soldier, the nature of the war in the East was such that desertion became a problem. Before the war was over between 300,000 and 400,000 men became deserters, or approximately 2 percent of the total German military.⁴⁰ During the course of the war approximately 35,000 of these men were sentenced to death. Of those men, 20,000 were actually executed while the rest were either sent to concentration camps or to penal battalions.⁴¹

The below-listed letter, discussed above under "Political Violations," contains elements that also infringe on political policy, including the description of the execution of German soldiers for attempting to evade continued military service through self-inflicted wounds:

The company Capt. gave a statement yesterday, he said that "the officers ought to drill the soldiers much more, so they find it a relief to be sent to the front trench." I leave it to you at home to think that over. Almost every day some of our men are executed who try to get out of the service with self-inflicted

³⁸ Heinrich B. to his parents, from Russia, 15 October 1943, Private Collection, Letter no. 204.

³⁹ Artur D. to his sister and brother-in-law, from Russia, 8 July 1943, Private Collection, Letter no. 336. Cpl. Artur D. served with Ninetieth Infantry Regiment of the Twentieth Mechanized Infantry Division.

⁴⁰ Feldgrau.com, "German desertion rate....," <https://www.feldgrau.net/forum/viewtopic.php?t=34164>.

⁴¹ Steven R. Welch, "Harsh but Just?" German Military Justice in the Second World War: A Comparative Study of the Court-Martialing of German and US Deserters," *German History* 17, no. 3 (1990): 387-388, 392, n. 82.

wounds. Even very small infractions are severely punished here. When will there be no more war, when will there be a time once again when we can unload these murderous instruments and go home? When can we stop digging into the ground like moles until our mind(s) go crazy? Even the older ones that have fought in the past are giving up.⁴²

The soldier who wrote the following letter was diagnosed with cholera. In several earlier letters he wrote home explaining that men were contracting the disease and it was from a contaminated water source. The wording of his letter below indicates that he was perhaps aware of what he was doing when he drank the tainted water. If so, it constituted a very safe way to end up in a hospital for six months and avoid the firing squad: “[d]o not worry about my sickness, you must understand. I will not tell you yet, you know, silence is golden.”⁴³ A similarly serious violation is evident in the next letter in which the soldier writes home from the Russian front to his younger brother advising him to do everything possible to stay home on the farm and avoid conscription. The passage was carefully worded but its meaning is obvious:

A few words I want to write to you. I am well here and hope that you are too. I've had no mail from home lately. So how far are you along with the harvest? Have you done your assigned job and did you operate the baler and the motor? But let me tell you that you should rather work day and night at home than come here. Have you been called up yet? Be on guard, stay at home if you can until the war is over!⁴⁴

The Black Market

These letters reference aims to either purchase or supply rationed goods, such as gasoline or alcohol. Dealings with the black market could potentially carry a death sentence, although as the war continued the black market became more and more important to supply items that reminded people of an earlier, peacetime life.⁴⁵ Yet purchasing goods from the black market would be one's avenue of last resort, something usually risked only to secure necessities or desired luxuries. One such example appears below, in which the rationed items of coffee and soap are discussed: “Please let me know how much income I get now? I cannot tell anyone if they ask about it here. . . . Yesterday I mailed two parcels with coffee and before yesterday two more with soap so let's hope it all gets there.”⁴⁶ A more problematic situation is referenced in the second letter, as the soldier is discussing the procurement of items well in excess of personal use or need. The quantities

⁴² Heinrich B. to his parents, from Romania, 7 July 1944, Private Collection, Letter no. 248.

⁴³ Heinrich B. to his parents, from Rothenburg, Germany, 19 October 1942, Private Collection, Letter no. 144.

⁴⁴ Artur K. to his brother, from Russia, 27 August 1942, Private Collection, Letter no. 291.

⁴⁵ Frederick Hoefler, “The Nazi Penal System – I,” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 35, no. 6 (1945): 389.

⁴⁶ Leo D. to his wife, from France, 18 July 1940, Private Collection, Letter no. 102.

cited instead suggest that he and his family were engaged in not only buying from the black market but also selling such items: “now, you want to know what’s in the box from Vitmanter? I think 20 bottles of champagne, we took two out from 22, so there are 20 left. Then there are nine bottles of cognac, or did we take any out? Just keep them all for Whitsun for now. Leave the others in the box”⁴⁷

Letters that Mentioned Censorship Regulations and/or How to Avoid Them

In the study collection we found several letters that referenced the censorship regulations. They reflect that soldiers were very aware of the rules and wanted to avoid being caught in the web of rules governing violations: “we are not allowed to tell you what we do here; our letters are censored.”⁴⁸ These very same sentiments are evident in the next letter as well, but are fleshed out in greater detail: “At long last I am able to send you letters again and Rosl, I know that you have been waiting to hear from me. But we were not allowed to write, it was strictly forbidden and penalties were harsh for those who did.”⁴⁹ It is also clear that not everyone was fortunate to navigate these rules successfully, as indicated in the letter below.⁵⁰ This soldier is alluding to punishments he suffered as a consequence of falling afoul of the stipulated regulations: “I won’t mention here the situation at the Front and the state of war, at least not me; once before I was the victim of a huge mistake, but now, come what may, no one can see into my brain, no one knows what I think.” It seems, therefore, that the safest way to express questionable opinions was to circumvent the censors in their entirety, by finding other means to deliver one’s communications.

Avoiding the *Feldpost* Inspectors Altogether

This was typically done in one of two ways; either a soldier would write a letter and ask a comrade in his unit to deliver it by hand to his family back in Germany, or he would carry the letter back across the borders of the Greater German Reich and then mail the letter through the regular post.⁵¹ In this way, he would avoid most censors because mail sent and received within Germany and its annexed territories was typically not subject to postal inspection. Although it was never stated specifically why mail was being sent home with comrades to be either hand-delivered or mailed within Germany itself, it certainly was implied in the letters that this was being done to avoid the *Feldpost* inspectors. There was really no other reason for it because the civilian post was always slower and more expensive

⁴⁷ “Pappi” B. to his wife, from Paris, France, 18 May 1941, Private Collection, Letter no. 449. Capt. “Pappi” B. was assigned to the Wehrmacht Central Intelligence Office in Paris.

⁴⁸ Werner K. to his parents, from France, 9 March 1943, Private Collection, Letter no. 317. Werner K. served with the Sixth Panzer Grenadier Regiment of the Seventh Panzer Division.

⁴⁹ Leo D. to his wife, from France, 16 May 1940, Private Collection, Letter no. 68.

⁵⁰ Erick K. to his parents, from Russia, 14 December 1942, Private Collection, Letter no. 408. Cpl. Erich K. served with the 394th Panzer Grenadier Regiment of the Third Panzer Division.

⁵¹ This would not be as difficult as it sounds because all German troops drafted from a particular region would serve in the same division. Typically these men knew each other prior to going into the service.

than the Feldpost. A number of letters in the collection (see the two excerpted below) were personally delivered, and comments about hand-delivered mail were relatively frequent in the collection in general. In the first excerpt, the soldier is acknowledging the violation as well as expressing profound defeatist sentiments: "The war will go on here until the last battalion is destroyed. I'm not supposed to write that, but there is not much hope of the war's end and a return for us. I'm writing this because a comrade is going on furlough and he will mail the letter for me."⁵² The second excerpt was typed by a very disgruntled soldier who was in a field hospital. He had been wounded during the retreat through the Ukraine in the autumn of 1943. The soldier, who we only know as Herman, does not include any return address information. The letter is typed on card stock and includes a newspaper clipping, which he proceeds to condemn as being intentionally inaccurate. Both the letter and clipping are translated below:

Look at this bit of newspaper clipping and you can see what a load of rubbish they report at times. This snippet is from the end of August when I was already behind the Dnieper River. I am well, a comrade from the Army office is mailing this letter. My stay in hospital will be a bit longer than I had anticipated. Last night we had an alert and a few bombs were dropped 200 m away into a field. I just got the news that Emil Prechtel was killed too, he was with us at the Donetz and that makes 12 of our comrades from our old company that are buried in Russia. War is shit, who uttered the words "dying is nice"?

**Successful counterattacks near Belgorod.
From the Führer headquarters August 21. The High Command
announces:**

The Russians attacked along the River Mius South and Southwest of Belgorod. All attacks were repulsed with heavy losses for the enemy. Counterattacks by the army and Waffen SS units broke deep into the Soviet hinterland. In addition all Russian attacks were broken up in the area southwest of Wjasma and Staraja Russia, south of Lake Ladoga.⁵³

Summary and Conclusions

With the enactment of the KSSVO in August of 1939, the stage was set for the imposition of strict censorship of forces mail. The laws were enforced, and thousands of men were arrested, tried, and many were executed. The Wehrmacht certainly wanted to stop the spread of demoralizing or defeatist remarks from the front, but there was a fine line between controlling the message and enforcing

⁵² Heinrich B. to his parents, from "In the East," 19 October 1943, Private Collection, Letter no. 206.

⁵³ Herman X. to relatives, from Auerbach in Vogtland, Germany, 30 October 1943, Private Collection, Letter/Card no. 455. The specific details about Herman X's unit and service record are unknown.

such harsh legislation that ultimately could do more damage to the war effort than uncensored letters.

The single most unexpected finding made during the study was the fact that so many German soldiers frequently chose to ignore the KSSVO regulations when they wrote home. This behavior was especially surprising because the potential for conviction of a capital crime was quite high. However, the one thing in the soldier's favor was the fact that the censors were overwhelmed with millions and millions of letters. It is also true that the military courts were under pressure from high-ranking Wehrmacht officers to reduce the severity of penalties for convicted soldiers.

In retrospect, it makes perfect sense that soldiers who lived through so much for so long and who faced death every day would not be easily intimidated by Nazi military judges back in Germany. It is one thing to arrest and execute a deserter, it is quite another to arrest and execute a soldier who expressed doubts about winning the war in a letter home. As a result, it soon became apparent to the German High Command that if the regulations were enforced to the letter of the law, the result would potentially be the arrest and trial of many more men badly needed at the front. It was, therefore, in the military's best interest that certain aspects of the KSSVO legislation be ignored. This is an important example of conflicting goals of the Nazi party and the primary mission of the German military. Throughout the conflict, the goals of the Nazi party were not always the same as, or even compatible with, the military's aim of winning the war. For example, in the East, where Nazi racial policy forbade a more conciliatory policy toward the Ukraine. A German proclamation of Ukrainian autonomy would have certainly resulted in much higher numbers of Ukrainian volunteers and a greatly reduced partisan problem, and quite possibly German victory in the East.

The letters indicate that late in the war the military was much less concerned about political policy than it was about military matters. It was certainly not troubled about negative statements regarding Nazi party policy or even Hitler; whereas to speak ill of the Nazi party was still a capital offence for a civilian in Germany proper. It seems, in the end, that Nazi Germany was powerful enough to compel over 17 million of her men and boys to go to war, but not strong enough to control what they thought or wrote home in their letters. The KSSVO is an interesting artifact of the struggle between authoritarian government and freedom of thought and expression. It was a conflict in which censorship played a major, but ultimately losing role.

Rousing the Nation: Narratives of Dunkirk in the British Media, 1939-1940

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British historian A. J. P. Taylor described the evacuation of British troops from Dunkirk in the summer of 1940 as both “a great deliverance and a great disaster.”¹ Strategically, British efforts to protect France from German invasion in the early months of World War II were a failure. However, British journalists viewed the operation in a positive way, focusing on the fact that thousands of Allied troops were rescued. Over time, several narratives developed out of the Dunkirk evacuation. These narratives focused on the heroism and stoicism of the British people, the strength of the British military, the determination of the British nation itself, and the importance of Britain's French allies. While these heroic narratives had roots in the early reporting of the war, they really began to develop during the evacuation. As the war progressed, these narratives continued to evolve, contributing to British coverage of events later in the conflict, such as the Blitz.

Research Focus and Background

This research is primarily concerned with the British Home Front during World War II. All the journalistic narratives perpetuated by the British media and government were directed at the Home Front. There is an extensive historiography of scholarly works focusing on the Home Front in this period, divided into two distinct waves of scholarship.²

The first wave of Home Front scholarship began immediately after the war's conclusion in 1945 and continued until the late 1970s. This wave featured mostly wartime historians who experienced the events in Britain firsthand, viewing them in a positive way and downplaying many negative aspects of the period. For these scholars, turbulent events such as Dunkirk and the Blitz provided a “coming of age for Britain,” when their mutual suffering brought greater unity and social cohesion.³

¹ A. J. P. Taylor, *English History, 1914-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 486.

² Jose Harris, “War and Social History: Britain and the Home Front during the Second World War,” *Contemporary European History* 1, no. 1 (Mar. 1992): 17-20.

³ Craig Stewart-Hunter, “Britain Can Take It’: Rethinking British Morale in 1940,” *Student Pulse* 3, no. 3 (2011), <http://www.studentpulse.com/articles/406/britain-can-take-it-rethinking-british-morale-in-1940>. For examples of first wave historians, see Richard Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy: History of the Second World War* (London: HMSO, 1950); Taylor, *English History, 1914-1945*; Angus Calder, *The People's War: Britain, 1939-45* (New York: Random House, 1969); Henry Pelling, *Britain and the Second World War*, 2nd ed. (London: Collins, 1972); Norman Longmate, *How We Lived Then: A History of Everyday Life during the Second World War* (London: Random House UK, 2002).

Beginning in the late 1970s, this reverent attitude began to change, as more revisionist studies of the war began to appear.⁴ Scholars of this second wave were mostly born after World War II, and they examined the wartime years in a much more critical manner. In addition, second wave historians had increased access to British government reports and archives which provided additional perspective on the Home Front.⁵ Angus Calder articulated many of these revisionist arguments in his study *The Myth of the Blitz*, asserting that popular narratives had minimized many British problems of that period, such as civil unrest and objections to the war.⁶ Further Home Front histories continued to develop these arguments over the next several decades.⁷

This research examines the British Home Front in a more indirect manner, through the narratives which were supplied to the British people by the media and the government. As such, it draws on other second wave histories, but this study is primarily concerned with the journalistic narratives and how they were constructed. Focusing on Dunkirk provides a narrow research scope, allowing these narratives to be more clearly analyzed. Charting the evolution of these journalistic trends will provide greater insight into the wartime experiences of both the British populace and the media.

Before examining these narratives, some context is needed on the development of government censorship during the war. Initially, Britain's newly created Ministry of Information issued rather vague, "voluntary censorship guidelines" for journalists.⁸ There was very little government censorship during these first few months of the war. However, this freedom of the press ended with the Dunkirk evacuation in May 1940. Churchill's government enacted regulations giving the state the ability to suppress "any material calculated to foment opposition to the war."⁹ The government mostly used these powers to suppress fascist and Communist-leaning publications, while issuing warnings to more moderate newspapers. By 1942, Britain was in a more favorable wartime situation, and the

⁴ See Tom Harrison, *Living Through the Blitz* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011). Harrison's study was one of the early revisionist histories of this period, examining the fearful reactions of ordinary British people and the shortcomings of the British government during the Blitz.

⁵ Stewart-Hunter, "Rethinking British Morale in 1940;" Harris, "War and Social History," 17-20.

⁶ Angus Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*, 2nd ed. (London: Pimlico, 1992).

⁷ See Clive Ponting, *1940: Myth and Reality* (London: Ivan R. Dee, 1993); Sonya O. Rose, *Which People's War?: National Identity and Citizenship in Britain, 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Peter Stansky, *The First Day of the Blitz* (London: Yale University Press, 2007); Susan R. Grayzel, *At Home and Under Fire: Air Raids and Culture in Britain from the Great War to the Blitz* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). For a particular focus on Home Front propaganda and media, see Sian Nicholas, *The Echo of War: Home Front Propaganda and the Wartime BBC, 1939-45* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

⁸ K. Fred Gillum, "Censorship During World War II," *Salem Press Encyclopedia* (Ipswich: Salem Press, 2015). EBSCO Discovery Service, Research Starters Database. Page numbers are not included in the full text database article.

⁹ Aaron L. Goldman, "Press Freedom in Britain During World War II," *Journalism History* 22 (Winter 1997): 146-155. EBSCO Discovery Service, Communication & Mass Media Database. Page numbers are not included in the full text database article.

government returned to a less draconian system of “voluntary censorship” for the remainder of the conflict.¹⁰

British Journalism Early in the War

British journalism at the start of the Second World War was marked by optimism, nationalism, and a lack of government interference. During this early period, journalistic narratives of British military strength, stoicism and determination began to develop in the press. The British media eventually expanded upon these themes after the Dunkirk evacuation.

In September 1939, the British media focused on the nation's declaration of war against Nazi Germany.¹¹ In the 3 September edition of the *Nottingham Evening Post*, the front page headline proclaims, “Britain at War with Germany,” detailing Prime Minister Chamberlain's speech in which he expressed regret for appeasement and hopes for a British victory.¹² It emphasizes “Britain's Determination” in the struggle and its desire to save “the world from Nazi tyranny,” early examples of British heroic narratives.¹³

Coverage of these events also dominates the 3 September 1939 front page of the *Derby Evening Telegraph*, with headlines asserting that “Hitlerism Must be Crushed,” and “United Nation – Titanic Task Ahead.”¹⁴ Similar messages appear in many British newspapers from the early days of the war, reflecting a belief among the British media that the Empire would persevere in the struggle.

The *Citizen's* headlines from 3 September 1939 contain many of these tropes: “Britain at War – Germany Ignores Final Ultimatum: Premier's Dramatic Broadcast.”¹⁵ In a similar manner to the other newspapers, the rest of the *Citizen's* front page is mostly devoted to Chamberlain's speech and diplomatic failures. This trend among early-war British newspapers is reminiscent of later articles on Dunkirk, when the media heavily focused on Churchill's speeches.

Two months later, these themes still appeared prominently in the British media. Articles from the 9 November 1939 edition of the *Times* emphasize the glorification of British military forces and the nation's opposition to Germany. Headlines in this edition proclaim “Churchill's Confidence” in the British naval forces, as well as describing an “Air Duel” in which a British pilot shot down a German

¹⁰ Communist-leaning publications which were suppressed include the *Daily Worker* and the *Week*. They were allowed to publish again in the summer of 1942, when British censorship policies began to relax. All fascist publications and organizations were suppressed during the war. More moderate newspapers such as the *Daily Mirror* and the *Times* were issued warnings. Goldman, “Press Freedom in Britain During World War II.”

¹¹ Taylor, *English History, 1914-1945*, 451-453.

¹² “Britain at War with Germany – Premier's Momentous Statement in the Commons.” *Nottingham Evening Post*, 3 Sept. 1939. British newspapers from this period often cited the author of articles as “Our Own Correspondent,” or “Our Special Correspondent.” Consequently, it is difficult to attribute specific authorship to many of these cited newspaper articles, beyond the newspaper title itself.

¹³ “Britain at War with Germany.” *Nottingham Evening Post*, 3 Sept. 1939.

¹⁴ “Hitlerism Must be Crushed.” *Derby Evening Telegraph*, 3 Sept. 1939; “United Nation – Titanic Task Ahead.” *Derby Evening Telegraph*, 3 Sept. 1939.

¹⁵ “Britain At War – Germany Ignores Final Ultimatum: Premier's Dramatic Broadcast.” *Citizen*, 3 Sept. 1939.

reconnaissance plane.¹⁶ These articles provide useful examples of this early phase in British war coverage, when journalistic narratives of British stoicism, military strength, and determination initially developed. However, it was not all positive, as British journalists noted there would be some trying times ahead for the nation.

British Journalistic Coverage of Dunkirk

The most important phase for both British journalism and morale came with the Dunkirk evacuation in the summer of 1940, which marked a “turning-point in the war.”¹⁷ Such an event should have been demoralizing for the British nation, but instead it had an opposite effect, as the media began to cover Dunkirk in a rousing and awe-inspiring style. Several familiar heroic narratives continued in this coverage, foreshadowed by earlier media reports. This journalistic coverage presented Dunkirk as a legendary, almost mythological event in British history.¹⁸ At the same time, government censorship expanded after Dunkirk, as Churchill's regime suppressed alternative viewpoints.¹⁹

Early reports of Dunkirk were more reserved, as the full heroic narrative of the evacuation had not fully developed. On 31 May 1940, the *Times* ran headlines focusing on the British Expeditionary Force's (BEF) “Gallant Fight.”²⁰ These are the beginnings of the Dunkirk narratives which developed over the following week. The article discusses the courage and ingenuity of the military in the evacuation, emphasizing that both the Navy and the Royal Air Force (RAF) are playing their part. Overall, the *Times* characterizes Dunkirk as a “fighting retreat,” praising its heroism but acknowledging its negative aspects.²¹

Many of these early themes are also present in the 31 May 1940 edition of the *Daily Express*. Its main headline proclaims that there are “Tens of thousands safely home already – Many more coming by day and night.”²² The article praises the BEF soldiers in particular, extolling them as “unbeatable” despite the numerous hardships which they endured. Continuing in this tone of hero-worship, the paper emphasizes the number of British troops who have already made it home, noting that these soldiers are returning under “the guns of the British fleet, under the

16 “The War at Sea – Mr. Churchill's Confidence,” *Times*, 9 Nov. 1939; “Air Duel Five Miles Up – German Machine Shot Down,” *Times*, 9 Nov. 1939.

17 Nicholas, *The Echo of War*, 57.

18 Angus Calder asserts that this “myth of Dunkirk” has been particularly pervasive because it contains a potent mix of defeats and triumphs, contributing to the development of these heroic narratives: “[N]o one writing about the retreat and evacuation could have got away with putting a radiant heroic gloss over all. Only the maritime operation could be represented as a typical triumph of British naval tradition... but there was something precisely extra – ‘The lifting... was a wonderful improvisation by the seamen of this people.’” Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*, 156. See also Christopher Coker, “Dunkirk, and Other British Myths,” *The National Interest* 22 (Winter 1990): 74-82.

19 Goldman, “Press Freedom in Britain During World War II”; Gillum, “Censorship During World War II.”

20 “BEF's Gallant Fight,” *Times*, 31 May 1940.

21 *Ibid.*; “A Fighting Retreat,” *Times*, 31 May 1940.

22 “Tens of Thousands Safely Home Already,” *Daily Express*, 31 May 1940.

wings of the Royal Air Force.”²³ In contrast to other articles on Dunkirk, the *Daily Express* features virtually no negativity about the operation at all.

These themes continue to develop in the 1 June 1940 edition of the *Times*. This edition focuses on the fact that British troop withdrawals from Dunkirk are “Far in Excess of Expectations.”²⁴ This is significant because initially, it was feared that the bulk of the British ground forces on the Continent would be captured or killed. The article notes that the number of returning soldiers has “surpassed” previous estimates, with comparatively minimal losses.²⁵ This edition also continues the theme of emphasizing the contribution of each British military branch. There is a section on the RAF's heavy bombing of German units, pointing out the emerging air superiority of the Allies. Another section of the edition examines the Navy's role, asserting that this type of maritime evacuation is “one of the most difficult of all operations in war.”²⁶ Regarding the Army, another section notes the “tireless determination” which marks the stoic Allied soldiers who have been defending Dunkirk.²⁷ This section is particularly noteworthy for its theme of praise for Britain's allies, as French troops are repeatedly commended for their military virtue. Other articles in this edition extol the “harassing raids by French bombers” on German forces, as well as the French ground units who still resisted the German *blitzkrieg*.²⁸ This journalistic narrative is also noteworthy because it is not solely concerned with British nationalism, focusing instead on the achievements of the French.

As the evacuation progressed, British newspapers took an even more heroic approach. On 3 June 1940, the *Daily Sketch* ran an edition with the headline “Dunkirk Defence Defies 300,000.”²⁹ This edition proclaims in glowing terms that “four-fifths of the BEF” are saved already, with more on the way.³⁰ By this point, the sheer numbers of the operation led to journalistic coverage which was filled with praise and heroic narratives.

With the evacuation entering its last stages, newspapers mixed in coverage of the event with summaries of Churchill's speeches. The 5 June 1940 edition of the *Daily Mirror* is a good example of this narrative development, featuring the headline “Dunkirk – Last Men Go.”³¹ The main focus of the article is the enormity of the operation, although the *Daily Mirror* authors are not as blatant with their hero-worship. In addition, this issue continues to praise French allies, noting that several hundred French vessels aided in the evacuation.³² However, the

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ “Rapid Flow of Troops Through Dunkirk,” *Times*, 1 June 1940.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ “The Navy's Part,” *Times*, 1 June 1940.

²⁷ “Homecoming of BEF,” *Times*, 1 June 1940.

²⁸ “Harassing Raids by French Bombers – Supplies Dropped to Land Forces,” *Times*, 1 June 1940.

²⁹ “Dunkirk Defence Defies 300,000,” *Daily Sketch*, 3 June 1940.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ “Dunkirk – Last Men Go,” *Daily Mirror*, 5 June 1940.

³² *Ibid.*

Daily Mirror's other headline overshadows the Dunkirk coverage – Churchill's proclamation of "We Never Surrender."³³ The *Daily Mirror* praises Churchill's vow that "We will defend our island, whatever the cost."³⁴ Media coverage of Churchill's speech greatly contributed to the mythological qualities of Dunkirk in the British consciousness. The Prime Minister was able to take a potentially demoralizing defeat and turn it into a rallying cry for British patriotism.

Further examples of these journalistic narratives are prominent in the 5 June 1940 edition of the *Daily Mail*, with the headline, "Dunkirk: The End – 335,000 Men Saved, Port Wrecked."³⁵ This article contains heroic praise for the British soldiers, describing them in romantic and nationalistic terms while vilifying the Axis forces: "The men of the heroic rearguard, who had withdrawn from town... stepped to safety under a hail of German bullets and shells."³⁶ The 5 June edition of the *Times* echoes these heroic sentiments with its headline, "Bulk of the BEF Saved."³⁷ This edition asserts that there is "no braver epic" than Dunkirk, praising the soldiers' "fine spirit" during the ordeal as well as the French contribution to the operation.³⁸

Overall, this phase represents an important development of journalistic narratives during the war. British coverage of Dunkirk utilized themes such as British heroism, military strength, perseverance, and allied support. While some of these themes had roots in earlier reporting, they all developed significantly during this period. Dunkirk became part of Britain's national consciousness, influencing public perceptions and media coverage of the war.

British Journalism After Dunkirk

After Dunkirk, these narratives continued to evolve in the British media, particularly during key events such as the Blitz. During this series of German bombings, some scholars asserted that a "Blitz spirit" developed which united the British public, while other historians have contended that this unifying force was merely propaganda.³⁹ As this myth of the Blitz developed in the media, journalists drew direct parallels between the Blitz and Dunkirk.

The 29 August 1940 edition of the *Daily Sketch* begins with the headline, "Nazis Raid London – And 13 Towns."⁴⁰ Although the article acknowledges the damage done by the German raids, it also focuses on RAF achievements in shooting down

³³ "We Never Surrender," *Daily Mirror*, 5 June 1940.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ "Dunkirk: The End," *Daily Mail*, 5 June 1940.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ "Bulk of the B.E.F. Saved," *Times*, 5 June 1940.

³⁸ "No Braver Epic," *Times*, 5 June 1940; "France Can Be Proud," *Times*, June 5, 1940.

³⁹ Darren Kelsey, "The Myth of the 'Blitz Spirit' in British Newspaper Responses to the July 7th Bombings," *Social Semiotics* 23, no. 1 (2013): 83-99, Taylor and Francis Online Database, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10350330.2012.707034>; Kelsey, "The Myth of the 'Blitz Spirit'"; Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*, 1-5.

⁴⁰ *Daily Sketch* (Manchester), 29 August 1940.

German bombers.⁴¹ Another parallel appeared in the 9 September 1940 edition of the *Daily Express*. Lamenting that the “Blitz Bombing of London Goes on All Night,” the front-page nonetheless proclaims that the nation “will get through,” recalling themes of British determination.⁴² Another story asserts that the “civilian population is taking its Dunkirk,” describing “a ragged, sleepless army whose homes had been smashed” wandering through the streets of the East End.⁴³ This direct comparison to Dunkirk exemplifies the language used by newspapers to report on the Blitz.

These themes continued several days later in the 16 September 1940 edition of the *Times*, which highlights a successful British defense against *Luftwaffe* bombers.⁴⁴ The article portrays the British air force as being the overwhelming winner of this engagement, conforming to journalistic narratives of British military superiority. Finally, this edition also contains an article which asserts that “Britain Stands Firm,” emphasizing British resolve.⁴⁵

In its 16 November 1940 edition, the *Daily Mirror* describes a German bombing raid on the smaller town of Coventry, beginning with the headline “Night Blitz Begins in Provinces.”⁴⁶ The main article notes that the bombing inflicted heavy casualties, featuring more negativity than other coverage of German bombings.⁴⁷ However, another headline on the front page helps to temper some of this despair, as it boldly celebrates Britain's “Biggest Raid on Huns.”⁴⁸ This article details a successful British bombing attack on Berlin, advancing heroic and nationalistic narratives while also distracting readers from the horrific Coventry raid.⁴⁹

Conclusion

British journalism during the Second World War utilized several narrative themes, emphasizing the stoicism of the British people, the might of the British military, the nation's determination, and the aid of its allies. Although many of these narratives developed organically, the British government also aided in their creation by censoring and warning newspapers. Dunkirk was a critical turning point for the evolution of these narratives, as after the evacuation, these themes developed further in articles covering other wartime events. Journalists continued to reference the “spirit of Dunkirk,” using the event as a rallying cry for the British nation throughout World War II.⁵⁰

⁴¹ “Nazis Raid London – And 13 Towns,” *Daily Sketch*, 29 Aug. 1940.

⁴² “Blitz Bombing of London Goes on All Night,” *Daily Express*, 9 Sept. 1940; Midgley, “Blitz Bombing of London.”

⁴³ “The Cockneys Are in It,” *Daily Express*, 9 Sept. 1940.

⁴⁴ “RAF Batter Invasion Machine,” *Times*, 16 Sept. 1940.

⁴⁵ “Britain Stands Firm,” *Times*, 16 Sept. 1940.

⁴⁶ “Night Blitz Begins in Provinces,” *Daily Mirror*, 16 Nov. 1940.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ “Biggest Raid on Huns,” *Daily Mirror*, 16 Nov. 1940.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Calder, *The People's War*, 576.

The Transatlantic Economy and the Transformation of North Texas

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During the late nineteenth century regional growth in animal husbandry, agriculture, and forestry activities marked the development of the Texas economy. The growing foreign demand for cotton enabled the South, the Southwest in particular, to concentrate its resources on production of this staple, using the earnings to pay the East for manufactured goods and financial and shipping services, and the West for food and livestock. The internal market for the goods and services of each region widened in part due to the foreign market for cotton. Ultimately, the specialization of the region's agriculture and its later industrialization depended upon demand for raw cotton in Great Britain. Transportation improvements in the region proved a key part of this process. In the post-Civil War era, the building of a more extensive rail network shifted the cotton culture from the Southeast to the Southwest. Foreign immigrants, although far fewer in number than those arriving in the Northeast, played an outsized role in this shift and the resultant economic transformation of the region.

As the economic historian Frank Thistlewaite put it five decades ago, "the Anglo-American partnership transcended the facts of economic geography. The North Atlantic trade merely provided the underpinning for a complex structure of social relationships which bound together important elements in the northern United States and Great Britain into a single community."¹ While Thistlewaite was referring to the original idea of the creation of the Atlantic World linking the communities bordering the Atlantic Ocean in the nineteenth century, this statement also applies to Dallas, far in the U.S. interior, at a much later stage.

The city of Dallas was a key component in shifting cotton culture to the Southwest. It became the major inland spot market and shipping point in both the Cotton Belt and in the United States during the period 1885-1930. Its dominance is in part explained by its close working relationship to Great Britain, as manifested by, or reflected in, the presence of so many Britons and other immigrants living in the city. This business and cultural connection ensured that Dallas became a major player in the international transatlantic cotton trade linking the city to the Lancashire textile district in the heart of industrial Great Britain. It also dictated that the city's fortunes would later suffer as a result of these same connections, but that lay far in the future.

The association between cotton and the city of Dallas began in 1851 with the building of the city's first cotton gin. In subsequent decades Dallas emerged as

¹ Frank Thistlewaite, "Atlantic Partnership," *The Economic History Review* 12, no. 1 (1954): 7.

one of the great cotton centers of the world and from time to time the world's largest spot, as opposed to futures, market for that important commodity. With the development of the rich backlands surrounding Dallas, and the improvement of transportation and communication facilities, by the early 1900s Dallas vied with New Orleans, Memphis, Vicksburg and other Mississippi Valley markets in importance as a marketing center of the money crop of the Southland on the international market.

At the time of the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861, the proportion of the raw material imported from the United States into Great Britain stood at 80 percent. The collapse of the trade due to the War, while it wrought economic havoc in Texas and the rest of the American South, would set the stage for Texas to enter the Atlantic World in greater force in the postwar era.

After the War the worldwide flow of cotton resumed. The laying of the second, more durable transatlantic telegraph cable in 1865 combined with the opening of the Suez Canal in late 1869 and the increased use of steamships for American export cotton, reduced the number of bales at sea by revolutionizing the speed of commerce, providing an example of what Karl Marx once termed "the annihilation of space by time."² The increasing use of futures contracts, and most significantly, the re-entry of King Cotton onto the world market after the American Civil War renewed the expansion of the Cotton Belt, especially to Texas, and led to a tripling of U.S. cotton exports in the period 1872-1891.³ It also marked the creation of an increasingly complex international network involving the movement of people and expertise, with the locus of that system the U.S.-British relationship.

Central to the creation of this international network was the operation of cotton compress industry and the role that technological innovation played in the cotton trade. During the early period of the cotton industry, carriers set freight rates for cotton based on low-density gin bales. In the period after the Civil War, steamship companies, in an effort to make cotton for export more competitive in the international market, paid for the compression of the bales in order to free up cargo space and lower the cost of shipping. While cotton compresses sprang up all over the South, they clustered in the Southwest, particularly in Texas. This sprang from a number of factors, not the least of which remained the success attained by the Southeastern states in realizing part of Henry Grady's dream of basing the post-Civil War New South's rise upon the cotton milling industry. The relatively short distances involved in shipping the raw cotton produced in the interior to the new regional mills obviated the need for compression. In the Southwest, however, the large scale development of milling failed to take hold for a variety of reasons, the most important of which was a lack of investment capital. Consequently the

² Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*: Notebook V – The Chapter on Capital, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1857/grundrisse/ch10.htm>.

³ B. R. Mitchell and P. Deane, *The Statistical Abstract of British Historical Studies* (London: Cambridge, 1962), 180-181.

raw cotton produced in the region, especially cotton produced in Texas, remained destined for overseas export. Compresses, therefore, continued to be essential for the success of Texas cotton in the international cotton trade and contributed to the aforementioned transatlantic exchange of people and expertise.

The cotton merchant trade depended upon the compress industry for numerous services in connection with the physical handling of cotton incidental to the processes of concentration and merchandising. The cotton crop, one of the most bulky of American crops, required a number of processing steps along the way to market. As noted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture the compress industry was key to “the present system of packaging cotton at the gin in so-called squares or flat bales of low density necessitates the compression of these gin bales to greater density in order to effect economies.”⁴

Dallas eventually became the center of compress manufacture and emerged as the most economically dynamic city in Texas from the late nineteenth into the first third of the twentieth century. The central role of the cotton industry to the city’s overall economic expansion can be found in the 1870s. For example, in November 1872 the *Dallas Herald Weekly* predicted that up to fifteen thousand bales of cotton would be shipped from Dallas by the end of the year. A year later the estimate has increased to forty-thousand bales. The Herald boasted that this ever increasing shipment of cotton from Dallas made the city “a better market for the planter and the small country merchant, than any point west or south of us.”⁵ Two years later, a spokesman for the National Cotton Exchange, which represented cotton buyers from Dallas, Galveston, and other ports in the United States and England, rated Dallas “as one of the principal cotton markets of the South.”⁶

Immigrants played a key role in the growth and subsequent economic boom in the city. Mayor Benjamin Long, born in Zurich, Switzerland in 1838, came to the city with his parents in 1855.⁷ Long, the son of schoolmaster and grandson of a Lutheran minister, later became active in civic life. In September 1868 Joseph J. Reynolds, the military governor of Texas, appointed Long mayor of Dallas. He served until April 1870 when a combination of his mother’s illness and growing hostility from the Redeemers in the area caused him to resign and return to Switzerland.⁸ Long’s resignation, however, did not spell the end of his stay in Dallas. While in Switzerland he recruited Swiss and Belgian families for

⁴ John W. Wright and Charles A. Bennett, “The Compression of Cotton and Related Problems” (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service and Bureau of Agricultural Chemistry and Engineering, Nov. 1940), 3.

⁵ *Dallas Herald Weekly*, 6 Nov. 1873, 1.

⁶ *Dallas Herald Weekly*, 4 Sept. 1874, 4.

⁷ *Proud Heritage*, vol. I, 1, Dallas County Pioneer Association, <http://www.dallaspioneer.org/stories/pioneers.php>.

⁸ The Redeemers resented the Federal military occupation, the efforts of the North to impose equal rights for the newly freed African-Americans, and strove to “redeem” the South through the use of violence and intimidation through such organizations as the Klu Klux Klan.

settlement in the city and they arrived there in December 1870, after having to walk the last seventy miles into town from the terminus of the Houston and Texas Railroad in Hallsville.⁹ After his return Long donated his personal funds to help establish the new fire department's first engine house on Commerce Street in 1871.

The following year, in 1872, Dallas voters elected Long mayor along with the city's first elected Board of Alderman. Once back in office the of mayor, Long, in conjunction with the Dallas business community, bought two acres of property on Pacific Avenue between Lamar and Griffin Streets and donated it to the Texas and Pacific Railroad for their first depot.¹⁰ The arrival of the railroads caused the population of Dallas to jump from 1,500 to 7,000 within a few months. During Long's second term in office, 1872-1874, the first public utilities came to the city, in the form of horse and mule drawn streetcars on Main Street, and outdoor lighting for the streets. Despite his contributions, Long, once again, faced hostility from the conservative Dallasites eager to return to antebellum racial policies and throw off Northern influence. Rather than run for re-election Long accepted a federal appointment as United States Commissioner for the North District of Texas in 1874. Long's efforts provided the foundation of a transportation infrastructure that aided the development of the city's cotton industry and to the emigration of other Europeans to the city that helped to lay the basis for the success of that industry.

Dallas's can-do attitude, what its city boosters later termed the "Dallas Spirit," was evident in acquiring rail service for the city. When, in 1873, the Houston Texas & Central asked for 130 acres and \$5,000 in gold in exchange for extending service into the city, Dallas leaders exclaimed "all right!"¹¹ This line provided the city with its first rail link to the Gulf of Mexico, acted as a spur to business, especially that in cotton, and an attractant for further rail development. Other railroads like Texas and St. Louis Southwestern Railway and the St. Louis, Arkansas and Texas Railway played an important role in the expansion of the city's cotton trade. The last two lines were eventually combined with other area lines into what came to be known as the Cotton Belt Route. This provided a strong symbolic link between the success of the railroads around Dallas and the city's success in the cotton trade. As rail service improved, the local cotton buyer became a vital factor in the industry. And as time passed, the necessities of the market drove the local buyer to become a skilled merchandiser capable of providing an always-ready market for the cotton farmer and meeting the exacting needs of the world's, particularly, Lancashire's, cotton mills.

European immigrants also continued to play their part in the growth of the city. Thomas J. O'Connor arrived in Dallas in 1880. O'Connor, born in Cork County, Ireland, came to America on the same ship as George Bannerman Dealey, the

⁹ *Proud Heritage*, vol. 1, 2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹¹ *Dallas Morning News*, 25 Apr. 1920, Section One, 7.

eventual publisher of the Dallas Morning News. O'Connor started in Dallas as a railroad workman, became a naturalized citizen in 1886, and eventually rose to leadership of the Southern Traction Company. During his association with the company, O'Connor built the interurban lines between Dallas and Waco and Dallas and Corsicana. His company also built some of the early railroad lines for the Santa Fe, Cotton Belt, and Missouri-Kansas railroads. O'Connor later served nine times as a delegate to the state Democratic convention and ran unsuccessfully for mayor.

Other Britons also arrived early in the area's history and paved the way for the later success of the city and the cotton business. One of those men, George Bannerman Dealey, was born in 1859 in Manchester, England at the very heart of the Lancashire textile district. He came to the United States at the age of eleven when his father moved the family from Liverpool to Galveston to open a shoe shop. Starting as an office boy at the *Galveston News*, Dealey eventually worked his way up to correspondent and received an assignment, in 1882, as the news staff correspondent to Dallas, Waco, and Houston. On 6 October 1884, while staying in Dallas, he covered a huge fire at the city's only cotton compress, one that threatened the destruction of the entire city and was not extinguished until fire-fighting equipment from Fort Worth arrived on the scene. His efforts earned him a promotion and the pivotal role in the establishment of the *Dallas Morning News* in 1885.¹² Dealey's connection to the cotton industry lasted for decades as his publication became a tireless booster of Dallas, cotton and, eventually, the Dallas Cotton Exchange. A continuous stream of Britons seeking their fortune in a "can-do" city followed him to Dallas. Most of those men dealt in cotton.

By 1885 Dallas ranked first in manufactures in the state and became the region's leading financial center. Cotton fueled this dynamism and transformed the city. From 1885, when Dallas had ten small manufacturing facilities, to 1892 when Dallas hosted 127 factories employing 2,700 people, growth in the manufacturing sector made Dallas the state's leader in factory growth and prompted one city booster to extol the city as "The Great Southwestern Metropolis."¹³ It remained a metropolis, however, built on a foundation of cotton. While financial services, particularly insurance and banking, along with the oil industry, later came to dominate the city's economy, the cotton trade and all its ancillary industries laid the foundation for Dallas's economic success in the twentieth century.

Dallas city boosters continued to extol and promote the economic growth of the city and the control of its surrounding region. In 1892 one of those boosters zealously proclaimed that "the growth of the City of Dallas the past two years is

¹² "Services to be Held Sunday for Pioneer Railroad Builder," *Dallas Morning News*, 17 July 1954, Section Two, 8.

¹³ "Texas and Her Metropolis," *Dallas Illustrated (Dallas Times-Herald)*, 1892), 6.

one of the wonders of the age.”¹⁴ He supported this prolix contention by noting that for the previous twenty-five years the city’s population doubled every four years and predicted continued phenomenal growth for Dallas. This prediction rested on success in the agricultural sector, with the booster pronouncing, “the foundations of the City are laid in the center of one of the largest and richest agricultural areas in the civilized world.”¹⁵ Already by this time the area of North Texas surrounding Dallas contained over one-third of the State’s population, produced over one-third of the Texas cotton crop, and the bulk of the corn, wheat, lumber, iron, and coal in the State.

Looking back at the previous two decades of growth, the 1892 *History of Dallas* asserted that the arrival of railroad connections was the definitive event that foretold Dallas’s destiny:

The future of Dallas as a great city in the Southwest first dawned upon the citizens when the two great railroad lines, the Missouri Pacific and the Houston & Texas Central, arrived and intersected each other in the then small town of Dallas, in 1872. This was the beginning of that marvelous growth. . . . Being centrally situated as it is, without any strong commercial competitors nearby, and in one of the most fertile sections of the country in America, and being the commercial, manufacturing, and distributing center of Texas . . . it is but natural for it to attract attention.¹⁶

In his book *Nature’s Metropolis*, historian William Cronon contended that as a group, city booster proclamations present a consistent picture of how a small number of urban centers like Chicago would absorb the western landscape into a commercial system.¹⁷ The experience in Dallas, and the statements of its boosters, certainly fits his model for the development of its northern competitor as a center for a large agricultural hinterland. At this time, many communities claimed to be like Chicago — it was a way of stating, or perhaps overstating their boosterism. The rhetorical excess in Dallas illustrates that Dallas boosters believed their city hard on the heels of Chicago. In 1892 they had compared the two cities, and proclaimed: “Dallas, like Chicago, will grow into a large and magnificent city. It is bound to be a wonder of American civilization.”¹⁸

Beginning in 1900 and for the next three decades of the twentieth century most of the Dallas cotton bound for export passed through the Port of Galveston. Initially, this choice stemmed from the ability of that port to handle the massive quantities of cotton for export. It also involved the limits nature imposed on the Port of

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ *History of Dallas*, published by the *Dallas Herald*, 1892, 15.

¹⁷ William Cronon, *Nature’s Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1991), 46.

¹⁸ *Dallas Herald*, 4 Sept. 1874, 4.

Houston, which prevented that port from growing into a major export center. Later, after 1916, the economic rivalry between Dallas and Houston, what urban historian Roger Lotchin called the “Darwinian competition among cities,” strengthened the Dallas-Galveston relationship.¹⁹ When Houston’s business and political leaders secured federal funding for the massive dredging project, one that eventually transformed the city’s port into one of the world’s busiest, the Dallas-Galveston connection intensified. This resulted from a combination of long-standing business relationships between Dallas cotton exporters and Galveston shippers and a growing sense among Dallas business leaders that Houston’s growth threatened Dallas’s economic pre-eminence in the state. It was a pre-eminence buttressed by population growth and a concomitant increase in the manufacturing sector.

At the turn of the twentieth century cotton continued to serve as the chief crop grown by North Texas farmers. During this period it seemed to be found growing everywhere in the state. By 1900 it was still “at the fore of agricultural crops because of its high per acre value.”²⁰ The importance of cotton can be seen in the types of industries aided or created as a result of the crop, including cotton textile mills, cotton compresses, cotton ginning and gin manufactures, cotton oil mills, and even the railroads. “Although data on investments are none too accurate,” stated economist John S. Spratt, “probably as much as one-fourth of the state’s \$90,000,000 industrial structure for 1900 was invested in cotton.”²¹

By 1905 only seven shipping firms handled all of Dallas cotton business. Increased cotton production in the area surrounding the city forced business leaders to react. In 1907 Dallas became such a center for cotton that members of the industry formed the Dallas Cotton Exchange, originally comprised of twenty-two full members and sixteen associate members, together with supporting elements of the shipping business — futures brokers, foreign exchange dealers, foreign buyer’s representatives, and insurance specialists. The purpose of the Exchange was to supply members with up-to-date market quotations, rules and regulations for the trade, weather reports, and other conditions affecting the cotton crop. These included estimates of acreage, production and consumption figures, and the establishment of affiliations with markets around the world. This transatlantic affiliation oftentimes proved contentious and almost from the Exchange’s birth it became embroiled in disputes with its customers across the Atlantic. The Dallas Cotton Exchange, however, possessed a key advantage in establishing these affiliations and dealing with disputes — many of its original members already had an affiliation with the city’s most important market, that in Great Britain.

Other immigrants, not only Britons, played pivotal roles in the city and the creation of the cotton exchange. Sheppard W. King emerged as a key leader who

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Michael Q. Hook, *The Struggle for Dominance: Urban Rivalry in North Texas, 1870-1910* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 141.

²¹ Ibid., 70.

established Dallas as one of the world's great spot cotton markets and helped build the transatlantic bridge to the Lancashire district and other European markets. A native of Union Springs, Alabama, King moved to Texas in 1882 with his parents where the family settled in Waxahachie, about thirty miles south of Dallas.²² The elder King entered the cotton business and introduced his son to it at the age of sixteen, renting out fifty acres to the younger King who successfully raised a bale per acre and made \$400 with his first crop.²³ Young Sheppard moved on to the job of cotton classifier in his father's company and then struck out on his own, moving to Dallas in 1887 where he joined the cotton firm of Carver-Frierson & Company. By 1903 the company made King a partner in the firm and two years later King formed his own company.

King's firm, King-Collie, gained international fame, at one time maintaining a home office in Dallas and offices in Oklahoma, New Orleans, New York, Liverpool, and Milan, Italy. King's international outlook made him one of the first individuals in Dallas to realize the possibilities in the transatlantic cotton trade and he surfaced as a driving force behind the establishment of the Dallas Cotton Exchange, seeing the organization as a way to rationalize the Texas cotton market and realize those possibilities.

The roots of the Dallas Cotton Exchange also spanned the Atlantic. Another early leader of the Dallas Exchange, Arthur H. Cleaver, originally from Great Britain and one of four founding members of the organization, helped establish a compress-transport committee similar to committees on other exchanges.²⁴ Cleaver charged the committee to jointly approach, with the shipping committees of other Texas exchanges, the Galveston Maritime Association, and arrange that any cotton exporter could ship its cotton through an exchange bill of lading without incurring any demurrage arising from inadequate railroad or steamship services.²⁵ Efforts to mitigate losses from damaged shipments lasted for decades.

At the same time, in 1908, Dallas businessmen organized the Chamber of Commerce. This body grew out of the desire of the various promotional and commercial groups to establish a central association through which to promote the economic interests of the city. The group proposed to provide the "proper direction" to "all commercial movements;" to distribute information about the city and county; to expand trade; to attract agricultural products to the local markets; to seek additional manufacturers; and to boost the "commercial, industrial, and other interest of the city."²⁶

²² Dallas Morning News, 2 Feb. 1946, Section One, 3.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Dallas Cotton Exchange, Stockholders Meeting minutes, 17 Apr. 1907, 3. Dallas Historical Society.

²⁵ Dallas Cotton Exchange, Stockholders Meeting minutes, 3 Sept. 1907, 11. Dallas Historical Society.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Between 1908 and 1911 the Dallas Cotton Exchange occupied half of the basement of the Scollard Court Building at 1200 Main St.²⁷ In 1912, responding to the need for more space to conduct its growing business, the leading members of the Exchange banded together to form the Exporters Realty Company, the purpose of which was to build a new home for the growing cotton industry of Dallas. The result was an imposing, for the city at that time, fourteen-story structure, located on the corner of Akard and Wood Streets. This structure served as the focal point for the city's economic activity until its replacement by an even larger structure in 1926.

The interdependence between Dallas and its hinterland grew even as the city's economy diversified. In 1912 writers for the Dallas Chamber of Commerce proclaimed, "Dallas prosperity is directly dependent on the prosperity of the Texas farmer."²⁸ The Chamber maintained that this relationship rested on three pillars: Dallas's role as the largest manufacturer in the Southwest of farm implements; the twenty-five export cotton buyers in the city who bought and exported more cotton than the cotton buyers in any other city in the country; the role of Dallas banks and the Dallas Cotton Exchange that together formed a close connecting link between the foreign buyer and the Texas farmer.

In 1912 Dallas exporters bought more cotton than those of any other city in the country and exported one-third of the Texas crop, valued at \$110 million.²⁹ Belying the argument of the renowned historian of Southern urban history David Goldfield that cotton kept the South in the thrall of northern financial interests, Dallas banks financed 90 percent of the city's cotton business that year.

While the advent of another war, this time the First World War, disrupted the transatlantic economy yet again, cotton was king in Texas and Dallas well into the 1920s. In 1922 the continued importance of the cotton trade to the city's economy led the Dallas Chamber of Commerce to declare that "cotton is the king of the Southwest and Dallas is its seat of government."³⁰ Dallas banks financed one-third of the Texas crop and the city's cotton merchants handled thousands of bales from adjoining states. Those merchants wired Dallas reports to world market centers as to the condition of the Texas crop and "the world's business pulse beats rapidly or slowly according to whether those reports are favorable."³¹ In that same year Dallas city boosters at the Chamber emphasized the centrality of all phases of the cotton industry to the economic wellbeing of the city. They noted with pride, "cotton is produced, ginned, and turned into cloth in Dallas County."³² The industry employed several thousand people in the County and "contributes millions in bank

²⁷ "Dallas Cotton Exchange," *Dallas Morning News*, 7 Oct. 1928, copy of article in Exchange archives at Dallas Historical Society.

²⁸ Dallas Chamber of Commerce, *Dallas Spirit*, vol. 2, no. 6, Nov. 1912, 2.

²⁹ Dallas Chamber of Commerce, *Dallas*, vol. 1, no. 6, June 1922, 16.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

clearings.”³³ According to the Chamber, these contributions to the local economy caused the city’s residents to “appreciate the industry and local banks and business houses that take a liberal and progressive view of the financing and advancement of cotton interests in the entire Southwest.”³⁴ Frank C. Smith, president of the Chamber, foresaw a business recovery linked to a recovery in the cotton trade, “cotton prices have increased around 100% the past year, this being favorably reflected in business.”³⁵ Smith went on to proclaim the growing optimism in the business community and that “Dallas has confidence. We know the famous Dallas Spirit.”³⁶

In this period Dallas also emerged as the largest manufacturing center in the world of cotton gin and cottonseed oil machinery. Dallas-built machinery ginned half of the world’s cotton at that time.³⁷ Two great plants, the Continental Gin Co. and the Murray Company, maintained five large distributing branches with territories in Europe, Russia, India, Egypt, Mexico, and South America. Not coincidentally, the city also maintained third place in the world in the manufacture of farm implements. The production and marketing of raw cotton, therefore, played a significant role in the creation of Dallas’s manufacturing base in the first quarter of the twentieth century.

The city’s building records reflected the increase in manufacturing. The president of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce, Frank C. Smith, noted “the vitality of Dallas business was indicated by the fact that during 1921 the city broke all of its building records.”³⁸ This building boom left the city the skyscraper center of the Southwest with sixty-four buildings from six to twenty-nine stories tall and two more buildings over twenty stories under construction in 1922.³⁹ Cotton played a major role in shaping the city’s skyline. T. M. Cullum, president of the Dallas Chamber in 1924, proclaimed “the seven-story Cotton Exchange building and the eight-story Thomas building are landmarks in the city’s skyline.”⁴⁰ These landmarks represented a long-term economic process that pre-dated World War One.

A number of industry related organizations that called the city home buttressed Dallas’s importance to the cotton industry. By 1922, in addition to the Dallas Cotton Exchange, the Texas Banker’s Association, Texas Cotton Ginner’s Association, Texas Cotton Seed Crusher’s Association, Texas Chamber of Commerce, and Texas Farm Bureau all maintained their headquarters in the city. These organizations helped to fill downtown office space and helped to boost the city’s employment rolls. In addition, their presence in the city reinforced the cotton

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Dallas Chamber of Commerce, *Dallas*, vol. 1, no. 1, Jan. 1922, 3.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Dallas Chamber of Commerce, *Dallas*, vol. 3, no. 1, Jan. 1924, 10.

connection and created a synergy that helped boost the city's economy when Texas cotton production took off later in the decade. Dallas proved to be the focus for that takeoff, one that increasingly linked the city to the transatlantic world.

Already firmly established as the business center for the Great Southwest—an area encompassing Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, and New Mexico—the year 1923 marked a recovery from the postwar economic doldrums for Dallas. Revenues went up across the board with industrial production setting a new record and wholesalers showing a 17.5 percent increase, and the value of all manufactured goods in the city increased by \$14 million over 1922, an increase of 14 percent.⁴¹ Records of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce showed the city home to 696 factories, exceeding by far any other city in Texas, causing Clyde V. Wallis, industrial commissioner for the Dallas Chamber for Commerce, to comment: “at the center of population, and near the geographic center of this territory, is situated Dallas, chief commercial, financial, and industrial city of the Southwest.”⁴² This comment reflected the prevailing view of the city's business community and the idea of Dallas developing along the lines outlined by William Cronon in his study of Chicago's economic development. As in that city, in Dallas the city's location combined with already existing economic advantages to, in the words of Wallis, reap the benefits of “its location, its transportation facilities, its financial institutions, and the concentration about it of the wealth and population of the Southwest,” and make Dallas the recognized logical focal point for the entire region.⁴³

Such signs of progress also prompted O. D. Davis, secretary of the Manufacturer's Association of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce, to exclaim “greater Dallas has made more definite progress in industrial production in the last twelve months than at any time in her history.”⁴⁴ The cotton industry still played a major role in that industrial progress.

Also in 1923, Dallas continued leading the country in the production of cotton ginning machinery and cottonseed products, taking the lead from Memphis, Tennessee in the production of cottonseed products in that year. Of the sixty-six new manufacturing plants added to the City's industrial base in 1923, the Dallas Chamber's Clyde V. Wallis considered of primary importance the new \$1 million textile mill opened that year near Love Field. Wallis believed “the greatest outstanding development in the immediate past has been along textile lines,” and with the opening of the mill at Love Field “Dallas now occupies a premier position in the (Texas) textile industry.”⁴⁵ Wallis held out great hope for the further

⁴¹ “Greatest Business Year in History of Dallas Close: Still Greater Period Looms,” *Dallas Morning News*, 3 Jan. 1924, 10.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

development of the City's textile industry, an industry that he noted "was making such rapid strides in the Southwest."⁴⁶

In 1924 the city exported 1,498,253 bales of cotton.⁴⁷ Valued at \$220 million, the exports of the city exceeded those of forty-one states, went to every continent, and engaged 149 firms. Of the \$219,958,775 in exports, \$217,301,215 of it in 1924 stemmed from the export of raw cotton. Statistics obtained by the Port of Galveston from the export declarations of Dallas shippers show that Dallas exported 759,891 bales through the port in 1924, valued at \$112,266,986. Houston processed 211,034 bales from Dallas valued at \$30,021,669. By the middle of the 1920s, therefore, Dallas ruled King Cotton, as part of an international network, and cotton proved vital to the city's continued prosperity.

The growing centrality of Dallas to the North Texas economy acted as a magnet for related cotton industry organizations. Enhancing the city's position as the leading inland cotton market of the nation, the American Cotton Grower's Exchange established its headquarters in Dallas, alongside the Texas Farm Bureau Federation, in the 1920s. This organization, said to be the largest cooperative marketing body in the world, announced it hoped to market one-fourth of the South's cotton crop in 1924. Legally enforceable contracts, good for five years, signed by farmers to deliver cotton to state organizations of the national body, provided the basis for the organization's marketing efforts. The Exchange pledged itself to market any surplus cotton that could not be handled by the state organization. This organization was part of a larger national growth of farmer's cooperatives in the decade after World War One.

By 1926 the link between cotton, the city, and the world market grew even stronger. Louis M. Bourne, a cotton man and president of the Chamber, emphasized both the importance of the cotton trade and its role in linking the city to world markets when he asserted "the handling of cotton is the single largest item of trade in this city, outranks manufacturing, and accounts for 98 percent of all Dallas exports."⁴⁸ By this time Dallas exports exceeded those of forty-three states.

Decades later one British cotton man got it right when he proclaimed "the bonanza in the American cotton business commenced in the reconstruction era after the Civil War, and lasted until ten years after the Second World War, a period of eighty years."⁴⁹ While Dallas relied on staple agriculture to grow its economy, it also started the process of industrialization that made it the manufacturing center for the Texas, greatly contributing to the State's rise to fourteenth place in the nation for manufactures by 1920, representing a 4800 percent increase in

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Dallas Chamber of Commerce, *Dallas*, vol 4, no. 8, Aug. 1925, 7.

⁴⁸ Dallas Chamber of Commerce, *Dallas*, vol. 5, no. 2, Feb. 1926, 10.

⁴⁹ Roger L. Dixon, *The Cotton Bonanza, 1870-1950, by a participant, 1908-1960*, 1.

four decades.⁵⁰ Obviously, a concomitant growth in the population fueled this tremendous growth in the economy of Texas and Dallas. From 1880 to 1920 the City's population went from 10,358 to 215,498, representing a mind-boggling 2,000 percent increase. Much of that increase depended on the health of the area's cotton fields. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, Dallas grew into, in the words of Southwestern Merchant's M. H. Wolfe, "America's Cotton Center."⁵¹ One could add to that Great Britain's Cotton Center. Dallas exporters bought more cotton than any other city in the country during this period.

The State of Texas, with Dallas playing a major role, underwent a massive economic transformation in the years 1880-1930. This process transformed the state from the traditional view, held by other sections of the country, of Texas as part of the Deep South: rural, backward, and dependent upon agriculture almost exclusively, and going nowhere. By the beginning of the twentieth century, an area that eventually encompassed more than forty percent of the nation's cotton production formed in northeast Texas, southeastern Oklahoma, southern Arkansas, and western Louisiana. At the center of this region, serving as its nerve center, sat the city of Dallas. The production of raw cotton, along with its marketing, sale and shipment from Dallas, served as a major catalyst for the development of the city's and the state's manufacturing base. City boosters played a major role in encouraging such growth and helped to strengthen Dallas's connection to the world cotton market. Dallas's population growth went hand-in-hand with the growth of its manufacturing sector. Along the way, city leaders faced a number of challenges. These included war, economic downturn and the changing nature of the cotton trade. Even today cotton still accounts for approximately 30 percent of total agricultural production.⁵² Obviously, as in all other areas of agriculture, increasing mechanization sharply reduced farm employment, increased capital investment, and led to agribusinesses taking over the bulk of cotton production. These developments, along with overproduction and the advent of the Great Depression, led to the demise of the small cotton farmer and eventually marked the end of an era for Dallas and Texas.

The two decades after the conclusion of the American Civil War saw more than six million new European immigrants enter the United States, with many of them headed for the West. More of them than ever before came from Central and Eastern Europe, but the greatest single group still came from Great Britain.⁵³ These Britons exerted a powerful social leadership in their new communities. This was certainly the case in Dallas. Britons helped to create an "English colony" in the city that influenced Dallas economic and cultural life well into the twentieth century. Frank

⁵⁰ "The Riches of Texas: Cotton, Minerals, and Manufacturing Industries," *Manchester Guardian Commercial*, a special report from its correspondent in San Antonio, Texas, 27 Dec. 1928, 720.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² "Texas: The Economy," *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1, <http://continuum.uta.edu:2408/cgi-bin/article>.

⁵³ Frank Thistlewaite, "Atlantic Partnership," *The Economic History Review* 7, no. 1 (1954): 13.

Thistlewaite, an economic historian, aptly described the process in New York, noting “this British colony in exile read the Albion newspaper, celebrated the royal birthday, and joined St. George’s and St. Andrew’s societies attempting to re-create their world in New York.”⁵⁴ Dallas could easily be substituted for New York in that description. Meanwhile, Great Britain, besides still supplying new immigrants to the United States, also supplied significant amounts of investment capital. By 1910, \$6 billion in foreign capital, over half of it from Great Britain, was invested in the United States.⁵⁵

Ultimately, Dallas’s success in creating a transportation infrastructure acted as a magnet for immigrants, as well as raw materials and manufacturers, making the city the leading manufacturing center of Texas and the Southwest until the rise of Houston after World War Two. The transatlantic cotton trade laid the foundation of Dallas’s early economic success, and the Dallas-Lancashire link was key to that success. The city’s reliance upon a staple crop, cotton, and its transatlantic link to industrial Great Britain and the concomitant influx of Britons, thus shaped how the city and surrounding region developed from the late-nineteenth well into the twentieth century.

⁵⁴ Thistlewaite, 15.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Tracking a Prophet's Last Betrayal: Seeking Safety on the Wakulla River

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Standing guard three miles north of the Gulf of Mexico's Apalache Bay is the Spanish Fuerte San Marcos de Apalache. It was constructed at the confluence of the Wakulla and St. Marks rivers in North Florida. A rudimentary fortification was reluctantly built in the late seventeenth century supposedly to protect Spanish mission sites inland. But when regimes changed from Spanish to British and back to Spanish authority by 1783 a more substantial limestone fortification replaced the rustic one.

As a symbol of protection, the fort was also a symbol of Spain's sovereignty. It attracted pirates, looters, and a U.S. major general whose officers betrayed and killed not only their own native brothers, but a Red Stick chief seeking refuge three miles north of the fortification. His death foreshadowed the end of the Creek Nation, and Florida's Second Spanish Period, during which time, trade with the Creek Indians had taken precedence over military affairs. This article traces the arrival on the Wakulla River of two opposing factions of the Creek Nation. Their fates were determined by the location on the Wakulla river. It, too, became a footnote to American history because its significance is obscured by mistaken identities.

In the waning months of British rule in 1783, Governor Patrick Tonyn in St. Augustine confronted a flood of people arriving in British East Florida. These also included Indians, some from as far away as the Great Lakes. But Tonyn could not promise continued British support. To keep an estimated 3,000 Creek Indians cooperative and away from any warpath, Tonyn agreed with Alexander McGillivray, chief of the Upper Creek Indians, and Tonyn's trading partners, William Panton and John Leslie, to allow a trading post "within reasonable access of Creek settlements." The location chosen was adjacent to the unfinished Fuerte San Marcos de Apalache.¹

Living around and indeed within the unfinished and abandoned fortification when Britain retroceded Florida to Spain was a substantial native population that some numbered in the hundreds if not thousands. Their homes included a two-story limestone structure and outbuildings that had been constructed southwest of the fort on its western river approach. That portion of the river, securing the fort and port Apalachy from intruders from the Gulf of Mexico, was called the Apalachy River although there seem to be many different names on the few Spanish and even

¹ William S. Coker, "Entrepreneurs in the British and Spanish Florida, 1775-1821" *Historical Sketches of Panton, Leslie and Company* (Pensacola: University Press West Florida, 1976).

scarcer British maps of the period. Today, the Apalachy River has morphed into the St. Marks River. It flows past a long-gone beacon that sat atop the two-story structure, guiding ships into the port adjacent to Fuerte San Marcos de Apalache.

Upriver communities north of the fort along the broad Wakulla River looked to the fort and adjacent port Apalachy to provide safe transport to the Caribbean. Conversely, the location attracted Caribbean refugees arriving during the Napoleonic Wars who were told to move on to the substantial town on the U.S. border called Miccosukee. Others fled into Spanish Florida in the other direction, south across the border. They were Upper Creek refugees whose land in Alabama and Georgia was lost to the United States as a result of the Creek War of 1813-1814. Displaced by famine and hunted by Americans, the most prominent of those native refugees was a follower of the Prophet movement, Hillis Hadjo, also known as Prophet Josiah Francis, a Red Stick (or Upper Creek) chief and shaman.² In 1815, the Prophet sent his family to safety at a location of his choosing on the Wakulla River, three miles north of the fort. It was easily accessible either by horse or by water. The community is referred to as Francis Town, although it is not visible on any maps or referenced in any books.³

Others living along the river a few decades earlier included Lower Creeks William and John Kennard. An 1815 map alerts to their presence at the head of the river, near the Wakulla Spring. According to Spanish cartographer and surveyor Vicente Pintado, they had two two-story buildings at the spring.⁴ During the American Revolution, the Kennards took advantage of the possibility to serve a newly emerging sovereign. Siding with the United States, the Kennards, who were mixed European-Creek people, used their generation-old affiliation as traders to the Creeks and informants to the government to get permission or a license to sell merchandise from the Panton warehouse to those living along the Wakulla River. A few years prior to their request, the Panton store, established in 1783 on the Wakulla River, had been looted and burned. The Spanish apprehended the leader of the marauding party, William Augustus Bowles, and sent him into exile in the Philippines.⁵

Thanks to the Kennards, though, merchandise continued to flow to buyers in Spanish Florida and north across the invisible U.S. border. The Kennards settled forty enslaved Africans and cattle at Wakulla Spring; the cattle may have been driven south across the border from their settlement near today's Albany.

² Archive at San Marcos de Apalache Historic State Park, St. Marks, Florida; John Sugden, "The Southern Indians in the War of 1812: The Closing Phase," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (1982): 273-312.

³ Dale Cox, *Milly Francis: The Life and Times of the Creek Pocahontas* (Bascom, Fla.: Old Kitchen Books, 2013), 49-50.

⁴ Vicente Sebastián Pintado, *Plano borrador de las posesiones los Señores Forbes y Compañía entre los Rios Apalachicola y San Marcos en la Florida Occidental*, 1817, 82 x 68 cm, Library of Congress, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3932a.lh000880>.

⁵ David Narret, *Adventurism and Empire, The Struggle for Mastery in the Louisiana-Florida Borderlands, 1762-1803* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 238.

In the last decade of the eighteenth century, the Kennards were part of a major network of mercantile and diplomatic contacts the United States had developed with the Spanish and the Indians along the Georgia borders. The Kennards had local knowledge about the Wakulla River, with its source a scant fourteen miles north of the fort, and this location became a convenience to all involved. That was particularly true when Thomas Jefferson claimed a “natural right” to access the Gulf of Mexico “on rivers originating in American territory.” Luckily for the Kennards, the Wakulla River originated at the Wakulla Spring, 31 miles below the American border, well within the Spanish province.⁶

The downriver location of Fuerte San Marcos de Apalache enabled the Kennard existence and their movement of cattle on the hoof. The obscure Wakulla River and St. Marks River are among five southward flowing rivers in Florida’s Big Bend. They were the only ones shielded from invaders arriving by sea from the Gulf of Mexico and their remoteness provide an enigmatic footnote to Florida’s history. The approach to the fort from the bay was probably called Pinar by the Spanish to describe the lush pineland that has given way to marshland today. The more common name has been Apalachy, which has been confused with the much wider Apalachicola River west of this location by people unfamiliar with the Big Bend of Florida.

The confluence of the two rivers and the fort’s location is south of an Apalache Indian village called Aute on the west bank of the Wakulla River, approximately one mile south of the Wakulla Spring boil. In 1528 Spanish conquistadors arrived at Aute, having traveled overland north and west from a Tampa Bay location. From Aute, the Spaniards rode south to find the cost, now known as Apalache Bay. Ever since their disastrous attempt to evade the Apalache Indians, the area is known as The Last Outpost of Empire. The fort, adjacent warehouses, ample grazing opportunities for cattle and horses, and the fact that the Wakulla River’s source was south of the U.S. border, facilitated frontier trade.⁷

Creek Indians were accustomed to a variety of merchandise and were pleased when the Panton, Leslie & Co. partners opened a warehouse near the fort, and a store on the river. With Spain’s blessing, the British traders installed another partner, John Leslie’s brother Robert, as an accountant at the fort. He oversaw the annual arrival of merchandise on Panton ships from England. He also became well-known to individuals using the port to ship cattle to the Caribbean. The obscurity of the short but wide river provided a perfect cover to the sons of well-known Creek rancher and intermediary Jack Kennard.⁸

⁶ J. C. A. Stagg, *Borderlines in Borderlands: James Madison and the Spanish American Frontier, 1776-1821* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 39, 40-43, 57.

⁷ Aute

⁸ Thomas D. Watson, “Continuity in Commerce: Development of the Panton, Leslie and Company Trade Monopoly in West Florida,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (1976): 548.

The Kennards, whose presence on the Wakulla River lasted for many decades, followed in their grandfather's footsteps. Daniel Kennard began trading along the eastern border of South Carolina's colony following the end of the Yamasee War in 1717. His son Jack maintained relations with the British East Florida governor, Patrick Tonyn, and John Leslie. And his sons spread out from southeast Georgia into Spanish Florida and into the western Creek lands near the Flint and Chattahoochee rivers.⁹

But what did they do in these lands? From a long letter in 1796 that Jack sent to Robert Leslie at the fort, Kennard, almost nostalgically, recounts his long friendship with Robert's brother, John, and with William Panton whom he had known since his own youthful days at St. Augustine. Jack died that same year, and while the letter's tone is melancholy, it is also stern. He admonishes the firm's insistence on debt payment. Kennard reminds Panton's partner, Robert Leslie, that nine of his "negros" were left at Apalachy either as a down payment or as equity. The amount the Kennards owed to the Panton firm was one of the largest on the Panton books.¹⁰

What could Jack Kennard and his sons, William and John, have obtained to owe such a large amount? The kind of merchandise that was available to shoppers at the Wakulla Spring trading post, in addition to the usual goods they received, included gunpowder, ammunition, rifles, and muskets. These are not on any officially approved trade goods list. Panton's ships, during hazardous times of war, navigated circuitous routes from London via Charleston, Havana, and other Caribbean ports to deliver such goods to Apalachy, Pensacola, and Mobile.

Beginning in 1787, unless ships sailed under a British flag, the Spanish wanted a guarantee of security from the governor at New Orleans, Marques de Campo, to protect the delivery of skins destined for London. Spain was concerned that without such protection, the trade deficit would be horrendous. Indeed, the threat of native peoples obtaining merchandise from U.S. government-run "factories" after 1796 provided competition harmful to the Panton Firm, and thus Spain.¹¹

Ships that included contraband such as rifles obtained permission to sail as neutral ships with special passports and clearances during the war between Spain and Britain (1796). During this time, the Kennards expanded their connections and solidified their adherence to the United States via James Seagrove on the St. Mary's River in Georgia. Seagrove, the interim Indian Superintendent, recommended to

⁹ John Henry Logan, *A History of the Upper Country of South Carolina from the Earliest Periods to the Close of the War of Independence* (Charleston: S. G. Courtenay & Co.; Columbia: P. B. Glass, 1859), <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=zfAxQAAMAAl&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA340>.

¹⁰ John Cannard (Kennard) to Robert Leslie, 21 January 1796, Forbes-Innerarity Papers, 81/13, reel 147P, PKY Library, University of Florida, Gainesville.

¹¹ Miro and Navarro to Marques del Campo, 14 March 1787, East Florida Papers, reel 3, PKY Library, University of Florida, Gainesville.

the U.S. government that William Kennard be accepted as the new Lower Creek Chief after Alexander McGillivray's death in 1793.¹²

One of Spain's conditions to maintain benign Indian affairs in Spanish Florida was the availability of rifles for hunting purposes. When permission to carry contraband was granted and the Spanish intendent at New Orleans bought 1,000 rifles it was to bolster trade. "Without guns," it was said, "there would not be sufficient deer and other hides to repay Pantón."¹³ The availability of rifles might have seemed opportune to hunt deer, but with increased pressure on the native population from white settlers pushing across a border along the rugged Appalachians, rifles became a deterrent north of the Spanish Florida frontier with the United States as well. By smuggling rifles and ammunition arriving at Fuerte San Marcos de Apalache, the Kennards became providers to both Lower Creeks and the United States. It was one of the shifts in markets that increased their prestige in the coming nineteenth century. The other shift resulted from the scarcity of deer hides. When hundreds of thousands of deer hides were shipped year after year, that resource became scarce or nonexistent. As a result, the trade changed from deer hides to cowhides.¹⁴

John and William Kennard represented a new generation for whom it was obvious that the old bartering currency was fading fast. One suspects that their father, Jack, had probably learned from his father, Daniel, that any overland delivery of trade goods also required hundreds of horses. William Kennard was a horse breeder in a land that was coveted by one nation—the United States—and governed by another, Spain. Yet even as cattle began replacing deer by the turn of the century, the Creeks continued their participation in the market economy through bartering or the availability of credit. The Kennards were among a few well-off ranchers who owned thousands of cattle near today's Albany, Georgia, and who had shrewdly established a presence in Spanish Florida not far from the Gulf of Mexico. Their cattle, though, had not stopped them from overreaching their debts to the Pantón firm.¹⁵

When Pantón gave the Spanish a list of debtors in 1800, the Kennards may have owed the most, but other Creeks were also listed. Spain offered no solution to the situation. But Thomas Jefferson's civilization program did. It came into play a couple of years after Pantón's death in 1801 and altered ownership of the western bank of the Wakulla River, opposite Fuerte San Marcos de Apalache. By then, the heir to the Pantón firm was John Forbes. He continued efforts to collect these

¹² Seagrove to Secretary of War, *American State Papers*, 13 September 1792, vol. 1: 389. <https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwsplink.html#anchor2>.

¹³ Letter from Spanish Intendent at New Orleans, Juan Ventura Morales, to Antonio Ullloa, 30 June 1797, AGI Sto. Do. 2614.

¹⁴ Robbie Ethridge, *Creek Country, The Creek Indians and Their World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2003), 73, 173.

¹⁵ Lee W. Formwalt, "Violence and Diplomacy in the Creek Country: Jack Kinnard, the Chehaw, and the U.S. Government in Late Eighteenth-Century Southwest Georgia," *Journal of Southwest Georgia History* 7 (1989-1992). Special thanks to Thronateeska Heritage Foundation, Albany, Ga.

debts, aided by the U.S. government's "civilization policy."¹⁶ Jefferson outlined his "civilizing" policy to Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Benjamin Hawkins, for the Flint River in today's Georgia. All Indians were to be incorporated gradually into the "fabric of the United States, first by moderating the expansion of Anglo-Americans into Indian lands, and second, by simultaneously sending agents of civilization to the tribes."¹⁷

The coming upheavals along the Wakulla River were linked to the Kennards through their connection with the Panton firm. Although it affected land in Spanish Florida, they encountered Jefferson's dictates regarding Indian debts that would be owed both to the United States, and the Panton Firm:

To promote this disposition to exchange lands, which they have to spare and we want, for necessities, which we have to spare and they want, we shall push our trading uses, and be glad to see the good and influential individuals among them run in debt, because we observe that when these debts get beyond what the individuals can pay, they become willing to lop them off by a cession of lands.¹⁸

The "lopping off," as Jefferson styled the land grab, would eventually involve the successor to the Panton firm, John Forbes, the Kennards, and other Creeks.

The civilization program promoted by the United States underscored the conviction "that the only way to a lasting tranquility along the border was to cancel out Spain's influence. It is mostly through its control of trade through Panton, Leslie and Company that Spain is able to keep the Creek border country in an uproar." Panton had worried, not unnecessarily, that the firm was "threatened with ruin" with the introduction of the factory system in the United States.¹⁹ The American civilizing undertaking and Spain's attempt to keep peace between Creek nationals promoted distrust. Factions developed on all sides that believed neither the British nor the Spanish had any right to Indian lands.²⁰

The Kennards saw an opportunity in the growing political wrangling and haggling. The absence of any marked or visible boundary between the U.S. Mississippi territory and Spanish Florida allowed for unrestricted transportation of cattle on the hoof, merchandise on packhorses, and intelligence either verbally or by letters, that Kennard's slaves relayed to Robert Leslie near the fort before and

¹⁶ Anthony F. C. Wallace, *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1999). Wallace argues that Jefferson needed the lands to protect the country.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ "President Thomas Jefferson to William Henry Harrison, Governor of the Indiana Territory, 1803," Digital History, University of Houston, http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/active_learning/explorations/indian_removal/jefferson_to_harrison.cfm

¹⁹ Arthur Preston Whitaker, *Documents Relating to the Commercial Policy of Spain in the Floridas* (DeLand: Florida State Historical Society documents, 1931), xxxix.

²⁰ Melissa A. Stock, "Sovereign or Suzerain: Alexander McGillivray's Argument for Creek Independence after the Treaty of Paris of 1783," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 92, no. 2, (2008): 149. She quotes Alexander McGillivray stating in 1784, "If the British Nation has been Compell'd to Withdraw its protection from us, She has no right to give up a Country she never could call her own."

after his death in 1796.²¹ The well-established Kennard road between the new U.S. Indian Agency on the Flint River and Trader's Hill near the Atlantic Coast included a spur south across the frontier to the Kennards at Wakulla Spring and onward to Spanish Fuerte San Marcos de Apalache. Cattle and slaves arrived in that area after the boundary treaty in 1795, thus assuring the Kennards an outlet through Spanish Florida. The Kennards continued to drive cattle via the Wakulla route to the Apalachee port for shipment to the Caribbean.

Hawkins had arrived in 1796 on the Flint River, "charged with maintaining friendly relations with the Spanish governors of Louisiana and Florida." He was also "at the center of a vast intelligence network of Indians and whites and blacks," some of which was provided by the Kennards. Hawkins simply described the large Kennard place ninety-two miles south of the Flint River on Kinchafoonee Creek (in today's Albany) as the Cowpen, where on numerous occasions horses and slaves appeared or were stolen. At such times, Hawkins—who also handed out licenses to sell horses—adjudicated instances brought before him. Eventually, Hawkins implemented Jefferson's idea to keep providing merchandise in exchange for land in the Mississippi territory. The first transaction to forgive debts in Spanish Florida was along the Wakulla River.²²

By the time the situation at Fuerte San Marcos de Apalache had reached calamitous proportions in 1800 with Bowles' sacking of the fort, the Kennard name had become well established. William Kennard was present at the 1802 Spanish-initiated treaty gathering at the fort. At the meeting, 1,200 Creeks gathered in and around the fort area to agree to halt infighting between the Creeks and Seminoles. And since the trade goods from Britain no longer arrived through the Panton warehouse, Spain agreed to provide merchandise. It was probably not to be, and John Forbes, Panton's successor after his death, was more interested in converting debts into surveyed tracts of land.²³ Forbes was keenly aware that Jefferson wanted to forgive debts in return for land. The debtors in the American territory were many, but the plan hinged on the apprehension of the adventurer Bowles.

Meanwhile, the American civilization plan progressed well in the new century, according to reports to the War Department. The Lower Creeks at this time "were more rapidly adopting the ways of civilization than the Upper Creeks," Hawkins assured the federal government. An amusing image emerges as one envisions the Creeks interacting with the Creek agency on the Flint River riding through the country with spinning wheels tied to their horses. By 1812, according to Hawkins, at the opening of a previously hotly contested federal road cutting diagonally

²¹ Gilbert C. Din, *War on the Gulf Coast: The Spanish Fight Against William Augustus Bowles* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012.) Din includes Billy Cannard (sic).

²² Florette Henri, *The Southern Indians and Benjamin Hawkins, 1796-1816* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), 120-134; Benjamin Hawkins, *The Collected Works of Benjamin Hawkins* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 6538.

²³ Treaty, *ibid.*

through today's Georgia and Alabama, the Creeks were to be handed one thousand spinning wheels "one thousand pairs of cotton cards, and a quantity of iron."²⁴ Before that new road was built, there was the matter of Bowles, the interloper. The United States let it be known via Hawkins and Jefferson that it wholeheartedly supported Spain's idea to capture him.²⁵

The international border splitting the United States from Spanish Florida caused continuous disruptions, unsettling the Creek people living north and south of this border. "The patrimony of the Indians was their lands, and of this the chiefs were highly aware," and, according to James Doster, they were also keenly knowledgeable of "tricks by which they might be cheated out of lands."²⁶

William Kennard joined a handful of others in 1804 to dispute a Forbes claim on land. At a meeting on the Apalachicola River, arranged following Bowles's apprehension in 1803 at Hickory Ground in today's Alabama, he argued that Forbes had no claim on him that entitled him to take land along the Wakulla River, as he owed the firm no money. His opposition to an imminent survey and the idea that all Creeks were responsible for all and any monies owed to the Forbes (formerly Pantan firm) enterprise marks the first instance in Creek history that a private Indian individual convinced authorities that the land was his.

The one square mile exclusion from the subsequent Hartfield survey along the Wakulla River established Kennard's boundary one mile west and one mile south of the spring boil. In 1804 surveyor Asa Hartfield re-traced cross-hatches on trees, bent saplings, and the other common boundary identifiers right after Bowles had been captured. An additional 1.4 million acres of land was added in 1811 between the Apalachicola and St. Marks rivers. Collectively, the lands are known as the Forbes Purchase. Hartfield returned a second time to complete the surveys, noting that few Indians were left.²⁷

A decade later these empty lands began to fill again. The loss of millions of acres to the United States after the Creek wars between 1813 and 1814 forced starving and landless Upper Creek refugees across the border into Florida. Coming during the War of 1812, when the Kennards supported the American attacks on Upper Creeks, one of their prophetic leaders, Joseph Francis, or Hillis Hadjo and his family, were among the bedraggled forced to leave and who eventually came to the Wakulla River.

Aiding in the defeat of the Red Sticks (Upper Creeks) was Major General Andrew Jackson. On 27 March 1814, Red Stick defenders "were almost completely

²⁴ Hawkins, 2: 592-94.

²⁵ Arthur Preston Whitaker, *The Spanish-American Frontier, 1783-1795, The Westward Movement and the Spanish Retreat in the Mississippi Valley* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1929), http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Places/America/United_States/_Topics/history/_Texts/WHISAF/12*.html.

²⁶ James F. Doster, *Creek Indians: The Creek Indians and Their Florida Lands 1740-1823* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974), 11, 13.

²⁷ Knetsch, Joe. "The Forbes Purchase: A Further Look." *The Florida Surveyor* (October 2002).

destroyed.” It was the end of the last major battle in the Creek War. Hundreds of dead warriors and many more civilians dead or “nearly so from starvation and exposure,” forced survivors to flee into Florida.²⁸ In May 1815 Prophet Francis sent his family to the Wakulla River. He himself went to Britain to plead the Creek case to the Prince Regent. But he returned without any promises, joining his wife and daughters at Francis Town again in 1818.

The fortunes of the Kennards were now solidly intertwined with the United States. So when Major General Andrew Jackson invaded Spanish Florida in 1818, first destroying a British or Negro Fort on the Apalachicola River and then moving across northern Florida with 1,500 Creeks, William and John Kennard were part of the force. It was not so much the Wakulla River that was the object of Jackson’s raids, but the Spanish fort and any remnants of British sympathizers.²⁹

Jackson arrived, took over the fort, and Billy, an enslaved African belonging to the Kennards, immediately informed Jackson of the return to the Wakulla River of Prophet Francis. The betrayal cost Francis his life. Intrigued by a Union Jack flying atop a U.S. supply ship, and hoping the supplies from England were aboard, Francis boarded and was apprehended. Jackson immediately ordered him and another Creek Chief, Hopothemicco, to be hanged on 18 April 1818. Jackson continued east to the Suwanee River, along with the Kennards, and upon his return to the fort, and a short trial to convict and put to death two British traders, he rode north along the Kennard road to rest at Wakulla Spring before continuing to Pensacola.³⁰

Some say this was the beginning of the longest war in American history. The 45-year-long Seminole Wars, as they are collectively known, foreshadowed Jackson’s 1830 push for Indian removal. By then, the Prophet’s family had returned to Alabama before being relocated. The Kennards, though, were given the privilege and opportunity to travel west to select the land on which to settle.

And so, on Thursday, 15 March 1827, Daniel Kennard boarded the Fort Adams, a side-wheel steamboat, in Montgomery (present-day Alabama). As described to a council of Creek Indians, such a boat was “a canoe with fire in the bottom and smoke reaching to the heavens.” Kennard left Montgomery in the company of four good friends for a planned exploratory trip west to the Indian territory. It is unknown to whom Daniel, the great-grandson of Daniel Kennard who began the saga in 1718, was related, either John or William.³¹

²⁸ Kathryn E. Holland, Braund, ed., *Tohopeka: Rethinking the Creek War and the War of 1812* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2012), 2-6.

²⁹ James G. Cusick, and Sherry Johnson, eds., *Andrew Jackson in Florida, 1814-1821, Forging His Legacy* (Cocoa, Fla.: Florida Historical Society Press, 2016).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, based on terrain descriptions of Captain Hugh Young, 216.

³¹ Christopher D. Haverman, *Rivers of Sand: Creek Indian Emigration, Relocation, and Ethnic Cleansing in the American South* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 45. Col. McKenney’s talk to the Creeks, November 1827; John H. Martin, ed., “List of documents relating to the negotiation of ratified and unratified treaties with various Indian Tribes, 1801-1869, special list no. 6,” Washington, D.C. 1949, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.RatIndTreat>. The treaty with the Creeks of 24 January 1826, explains “their wish to

The United States began a decades long legal battle about title to lands along the Wakulla River, the Forbes Survey, and the fort at St. Marks that was not settled until 1835, during Florida's territorial period. Forgotten were the Kennards, the Apalachy River, the Prophet, and indeed the purpose of Fuerte San Marcos de Apalache, the last outpost of empire.³²

remove west of the Mississippi . . . and with their assent, that a delegation of five persons shall be sent by them . . . to examine the Indian country."

³² Blake A. Watson, "Buying West Florida from the Indians: the Forbes Purchase and *Mitchel v. United States* (1835)," *FIU Law Review* 9, no. 2 (Spring 2014), <http://collections.law.fiu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1228&context=lawreview>; John C. Upchurch, "Aspects of the Development and Exploration of the Forbes Purchase," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (1969): 117-139.

Florida River Tragedies: How Economics Trumped Ecology to Damage the Fenholloway River

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In the mid-twentieth century, economics was a powerful incentive in rural Florida areas desperate for development, jobs, and tax revenue. Disregarding the environmental damage that might ensue, state and local politicians along with business boosters traded the beauty and health of the Fenholloway River for promises of progress that left it heavily polluted for the next six decades.

Using rivers for industrial purposes such as powering textile mills and hydroelectric plants was common practice in the United States. But most of those rivers were fast-flowing and followed a gravitational flow to the sea. Florida's rivers are notoriously flat and slow-moving and, as such, were not suitable for such endeavors. Several, however, were manipulated to better serve human uses.

The Miami, Caloosahatchee, and St. Lucie rivers were damaged in the early twentieth century in an attempt to achieve the ultimate vision of the era — draining the Everglades. The subtropical Miami River, once described as “as beautiful a stream as ever flowed through an unbroken wilderness” was dynamited; as a result, its rapids were removed and “silt once trapped behind them could now pour freely into the once crystalline waters of Biscayne Bay,” writes historian Luther J. Carter. The Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie rivers were turned into canals by 1920 in order to rapidly drain waters from Lake Okeechobee. Today the heavily polluted waters they carry from the lake have caused massive algae blooms and fish kills in coastal estuaries.¹

As these projects demonstrate, Florida leaders were often happy to engineer Florida waterways for human desires such as drainage and navigation. And when proposals arose to convert the Fenholloway River into a conduit for industrial pollution, authorities held this same attitude, acting quickly to embrace this scheme in order to take advantage of whatever streams of economic opportunities might flow their way. There was no regard for the historic, aesthetic, and ecological value of this waterway — only the lure of cash, jobs, and potential taxes. How this happened and the economic conversations of those involved is the focus of this paper.

The Fenholloway River is located in Taylor County and runs through the city of Perry. It is a largely rural area with thick forests that for more than a century have fed lumber mills and turpentine operations. The pinewoods are expansive and once

¹ Michael Grunwald, *The Swamp: The Everglades, Florida, and the Politics of Paradise* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), 173; Luther J. Carter, *The Florida Experience: Land and Water Policy in a Growth State* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 71.

provided shelter for native people and Confederate Army deserters.² Its timber industry boomed from the nineteenth into the twentieth century when old-growth pines and cypress were cut and, again, in the late twentieth century when second-growth cypress were cut and processed for landscaping mulch.³ The wood also went to building products, construction, and, later to pulpwood mill operations.

The waterway winds through the county on a 26-mile journey from a large wetlands area known as San Pedro Bay to the Gulf of Mexico along an area known, appropriately, as the Big Bend coast. Like many Florida rivers, the Fenholloway is a sluggish, tannin-colored waterway lined with trees and abundant vegetation. It once was a paradise for recreation — boating, fishing, and swimming. In the early 1900s health-seeking visitors from across the country flocked to the Hampton Springs Hotel, located on a sulfur spring that fed into the river west of Perry. There they would “drink and bathe in the cool waters of this spring, which were said to have curative powers,” including help for “indigestion, rheumatism, dyspepsia, stomach and liver troubles, and skin disease.” Today the springs are in a county park.⁴ East of Perry was Fenholloway Spring, which added to the water’s flow. These spring waters were bottled and sold commercially, starting in 1922, but ended when the river’s springs dried up in the 1950s.⁵

By 1925, Perry had “three hotels, three restaurants, an ice manufacturing plant, two jewelry stores, 12 dry goods stores, telephone service, and a printing press.” But it was not a rich place and the Great Depression ended many ambitious development schemes in the area, leaving it a mostly rural, low-income community.⁶

As was the case with many such communities, Taylor County boosters had big dreams. After World War II, business and forestry leaders promoted the area as the “Pine Tree Capital of the South,” celebrating it with a festival that originated in the 1950s and continues today. It claims to have the “World’s Largest FREE Fish Fry.”⁷ But the city was not prospering, and the war brought a decrease in population; Taylor County went from 11,565 residents in 1940 to 10,416 a decade later. When the opportunity came for a large company to buy out an old sawmill and convert it to a pulpwood mill operation for production of cellulose products,

² The Taylor County Historical Society, “Brief History of Taylor County, Florida,” <http://www.taylorcountyhistory.com/research/brief-history-of-taylor-county-florida/>.

³ Jack E. Davis, *The Gulf: The Making of an American Sea* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corp., 2017), 428.

⁴ “Brief History of Taylor County”; Rick Kilby, “Bottled Water and the Mouse: Florida’s New Faux Spring,” *Old Florida*, <http://studiohourglass.blogspot.com/2015/09/bottled-spring-water-and-mouse-floridas.html>.

⁵ Taylor County and Perry, Florida History, “Fenholloway” <https://sites.google.com/site/taylorcountyhistory/home/fenholloway>.

⁶ “Brief History of Taylor County.”

⁷ *Ibid.*; Perry Taylor County Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Development, “Upcoming Events in Taylor County, Florida,” <http://www.taylorflorida.com/events.php>.

local leaders jumped on the bandwagon.⁸ The mill needed a steady water source to operate and the Fenholloway appeared to be the perfect solution.

County and city leaders joined with the Procter & Gamble Company (P&G) in heading to Tallahassee in 1947 to ask the Florida legislature to make that dream come true. House Bill 242 did just that, granting the “Right and Power to Discharge and Deposit Sewage, Industrial and Chemical Wastes and Effluents” into the river.⁹ The Fenholloway, once a recreational mecca, now was classified as an industrial river — sacrificed in hopes of generating jobs and tax revenue.

Two months after the legislature’s vote, state Rep. Gus J. Dekle, a car dealer who represented Taylor County and sponsored the bill, told local Rotary Club members that he saw the county at a “cross-roads” with a “drastic change in its economic structure at hand. ‘The days of our virgin pine saw-timber are over,’” he pointed out while emphasizing that there was a bright future for local forestry and pulpwood operations.¹⁰

This was not the first time the state legislature had accommodated local industry in this way. In 1941 it declared northeastern Nassau County to be an “industrial county,” which allowed “sewage and industrial waste into its tidal water” as a matter of public interest. “Thus,” writes Carter, “the subsequent defilement of the Amelia River and destruction of shrimp nursery beds by pulp mills operated by the Rayonier Corporation and the Container Corporation of America were, by legislative fiat, defined as acts of corporate citizenship instead of as crimes against nature.” Carter said the legislature of this era “consistently put the interests of industry and private property ahead of the state’s — and the public’s — own interests.”¹¹ In 1998, the Amelia River joined the Fenholloway in being listed as one of Florida’s most polluted rivers.¹²

Since Reconstruction, “southern elites” had promoted their areas as good places for industrial development, touting local natural resources, an available labor force, and “lax regulation,” writes geographer William D. Solecki, who describes the pulp mill industry’s relationship to the city of Perry as “paternalism.” In such cases, the company “takes on the role of the benevolent but authoritarian father and controls the provision of goods received as payment for work.” History has shown that owners of such companies exercised great influence, typically controlling “every facet of economic, political and social life within the host town.” Such was

⁸ Leslie Kemp Poole, *Saving Florida: Women’s Fight for the Environment in the Twentieth Century* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2015), 186.

⁹ Chapter 24952 *Laws of Florida*, Special Acts of 1947. Bill 242.

¹⁰ “Dekle Is Speaker To Taylor Rotary,” *Tallahassee Democrat*, 11 June 1947, 5.

¹¹ Carter, *The Florida Experience*, 46.

¹² “Five Waterways ‘Most Polluted,’” Ft. Lauderdale *Sun-Sentinel* 11 Sept. 1998, http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/1998-09-11/news/9809110149_1_worst-polluter-rayonier-discharges.

the case in Perry, Florida, where the company's status and power over the economy later reframed the debate away from its impact on environmental health.¹³

Historian Gloria G. Horning views the Fenholloway tradeoff as "a classic example of 'environmental blackmail.' That is, if a state or community will allow an organization to build an environmentally unfriendly plant or dump, and pollute the air, water, and land as it pleases, the organization will provide jobs."¹⁴

The plant, known as P&G Buckeye Cellulose, took trees and turned them into cellulose products used in food and paper goods. With its first shipment of goods in 1954, local leaders celebrated the new \$25 million plant, located five miles east of town, that covered fifty-four acres and was surrounded by a corporate-owned 570,000-acre tree farm. The *Tallahassee Democrat* reported that the new plant "brought new activity to the entire area," including new housing, improved streets, doubled water capacity at the city water plant, and new "commercial enterprises," including a radio station. It employed 350 production workers with another 150 employees for "related activities." The plant also promised a "scientific restoration" program in which it would plant more than 3 million pine seedlings that year.¹⁵

Before construction of the plant, reported the *Tampa Tribune*, "Perry had been a dormant town with little to look forward to. The sound of construction on the mill had the effect of an alarm clock on the community. Jarred awake from its lethargy, Perry started to develop the biggest boom in its history."¹⁶

From its first year of operation, environmental problems caused by the plant's operations were evident. Water pumped from the aquifer, initially estimated at more than 40 million gallons a day, dried up nearby springs such as Fenholloway Spring that once filled bottles of water and supplied water to the river. The plant emitted the usual noxious rotting egg smell of a pulp mill, but now so did the effluent into the river that carried industrial wastes. Despite this, area boosters considered the pollution to be the price of success.

As one newspaper recounted, when Claude Kirk, Florida's governor from 1967-1971, visited Perry, the mayor offered an apology for the stench from the mill. But "Kirk wouldn't have it. 'Don't apologize,' Kirk said. 'Why that's the smell of money.'"¹⁷ The odor from the plant "smells like silver to most people around here," Taylor County Commissioner Bert Fife remarked in 1972.¹⁸

The belief that America's natural resources, including rivers, were meant to be manipulated in any way that benefitted humans was common in the first seven

¹³ William D. Solecki, "Paternalism, Pollution and Protest in a Company Town," *Political Geography* 15, no. 5 (1996): 7, 10, 17.

¹⁴ Gloria G. Horning, "Social Network and Environmental Justice: A Case Study in Perry, Florida" (PhD diss., Florida State University, 2005), 41.

¹⁵ "New Foley Cellulose Pulp Plant Will Make First Shipment Today," *Tallahassee Democrat*, 9 July 1954, 3.

¹⁶ "Huge Pulp Plant Breathes New Economic Life into Wide Area of N. Florida," *Tampa Tribune*, 25 July 1954, C-1.

¹⁷ Ron Cunningham, "Arrogance is the history of Florida," *Ocala Star-Banner*, Ocala.com, 13 March 2016, <http://www.ocala.com/opinion/20160313/ron-cunningham-arrogance-is-the-history-of-florida>

¹⁸ Stan Witwer, "Inside Buckeye's Florida Empire," *St. Petersburg Times Floridian Magazine*, 18 June 1972, 7.

decades of the twentieth century. In a 1964 address to celebrate the beginning of a project to build the Cross Florida Barge Canal across north Florida, President Lyndon B. Johnson hailed human dominion over nature. “God was good to this country,” Johnson told an appreciative crowd. “He endowed it with resources unsurpassed in their variety and their abundance. But in His wisdom the Creator left something for men to do for themselves. He gave us great rivers, but He left them to run wild in the flood, and sometimes to go dry in the drought — and sometimes to rain when we have a celebration. But He left it to us to control these carriers of commerce.” Johnson added, “The challenge of a modern society is to make the resources of nature useful and beneficial to the community. So this is the passkey to economic growth, to sensible and to valid prosperity; to create a value where none existed before is to enlarge the hoard of Nature's bounty and to make it serve all of our citizens.”¹⁹

The canal venture that Johnson celebrated was one of two large-scale projects that severely degraded two of Florida's rivers in the 1960s. The Cross Florida Barge Canal dammed the charming, jungle-lined Ocklawaha River, in an attempt to create a transportation waterway across the peninsula. The project was halted by presidential edict in 1971 after a massive grassroots protest convinced federal officials that the canal would not yield promised economic benefits and that environmental damage had not been considered in its creation.

During the same decade the ninety-mile long Kissimmee River, which once meandered through a wide floodplain on its way south into Lake Okeechobee, was turned into Canal C-38 as part of a massive Everglades drainage plan — a “tragic and costly blunder” that cost \$34 million, according to Carter, that has become “a symbol of water resource management gone awry.” The damage to the Kissimmee was evident and immediate by the completion of its canal in the 1970s; since then a \$500 million partial restoration of the river has been accomplished, refilling one-third of the ditch. Today the Ocklawaha River remains blocked by a dam, its waters no longer navigable between the St. Johns River and Silver Springs.²⁰

Back in Taylor County, many residents agreed with Johnson's philosophy of using a river to accomplish economic benefits. They counted their blessings when smelling the stench of the mill despite the fact that it had degraded one of the area's most beautiful waterways. Alarms about the Buckeye plant's pollution sounded in the 1960s as Americans were awakening to growing air and water pollution crises across the country. By then the plant had undergone three major expansions and some local residents were complaining about its odor, a lack of oxygen in the river for fish, and the possible effect of the river's pollution on the Gulf of Mexico. Still, as one retired schoolteacher told the *St. Petersburg Times* in 1965, no one

¹⁹ Lyndon B. Johnson, “198 - Remarks at the Ground-Breaking Ceremony for the Florida Cross-State Barge Canal,” The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26085>.

²⁰ Carter, *The Florida Experience*, 103-106; Grunwald, *The Swamp*, 275-276.

was going to complain about the plant because it likely employed some of their relatives: “it’s the best thing that ever happened to Taylor County.”²¹

With the passage of the federal 1972 Clean Water Act, Florida officials were forced to respond to the condition of the state’s waters, relying on federal funding for many initiatives. Among them was the cleanup of the Fenholloway; the Florida Pollution Control Board gave \$13 million to Buckeye that year for a pollution abatement program.²²

Even though the river’s pollution was apparent, Commissioner Fife in 1972 still considered that a valuable tradeoff for the area’s economy. “We have 33 million reasons for being patient with Buckeye, . . . each one of them colored dollar bill green. We are happy that the company is doing something about its pollution. But if we had to make a hard, final choice, most people around here would take the plant and all its disagreeable features rather than lose that payroll and the other benefits we get from Buckeye.” That year the company had a \$13 million payroll for its 1,000 plant employees, paid another \$12 million for 1,000 loggers on its forestry lands, and infused another \$8 million into the area, including \$2.25 million in state and local taxes, reported Stan Witwer of the *St. Petersburg Times*.²³

Biologists of that era, however, were concerned about Buckeye’s impact on the natural environment. The company’s forestry lands were monocultures — planted with one type of pine — which did not mimic biodiverse Florida forests, and the company was draining wetlands to plant even more pines. Wildlife biologist Lovett Williams Jr. with the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission was worried in 1972 about the quality of the Fenholloway’s waters — not just that they had low oxygen levels, which was recognized, but that the river might contain toxic substances. “‘If it tastes bad,’ Williams said — and no one argues that the Fenholloway’s water tastes bad — ‘it’s got something bad in it besides oxygen depletion. You can’t taste oxygen depletion.’”²⁴

“As part of a good-neighbor policy P&G made concerted efforts to reduce pollution emissions,” writes Solecki. These included a \$3 million effort to reduce effluent in 1967 and reducing air emissions through technology that included kiln scrubbers and an electrostatic precipitator on a recovery boiler in 1970. By the late 1970s, according to Solecki, the plant had made “substantial improvements in its odor control and air and water pollution control capacities.” But the improvements were not the sole burden of the company, the costs in excess of \$100 million since the 1970s were funded in part by governmental incentive programs. Despite

²¹ Don Pride, “Industry’s Good Citizen But (Too Bad) It Stinks,” *St. Petersburg Times*, 31 Oct. 1965, B-15.

²² Tom Raum, “U.S. Is Shortchanging on Pollution Aid: Florida,” *St. Petersburg Times*, 15 Nov. 1972, B-1, B-3.

²³ Witwer, “Inside Buckeye’s Florida Empire,” 8.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 12.

awards from a state agency and an environmental group, years later problems still were brewing.²⁵

But this time a very determined woman would take on Buckeye and eschew economic reasoning. She argued, instead, that the health of a river and of the county's people was far more important than the revenues from the plant. Joy Towles Ezell was a child when she witnessed a 1954 fish kill on the river caused by the new plant. Her grandfather was among the few who had opposed Buckeye in 1947, warning that "it would ruin local water supplies." By 1981, the proof was in the well water tap at Ezell's grandmother's home. As she was warned, it smelled "like it's got Buckeye in it."²⁶

A holder of two agriculture-related degrees, Ezell understood the implications. The plant had contaminated her family's well, located 20 miles from the pulp mill operations, and that of private wells across the county. She was shocked to learn that one of the contaminants was dioxin, a dangerous carcinogen that has been implicated in three-quarters of the nation's Superfund hazardous waste sites. Ezell immediately started drinking bottled water and started gathering data and with thirty other people in 1989 founded an advocacy group called HOPE, which stands for Help Our Polluted Environment; it eventually grew to some 500 members.²⁷

News media got wind of the story and Ezell received hundreds of telephone calls from local residents, including Buckeye employees, who shared her concerns about the effects of the mill's pollution on their health. By 1990 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which declared the Fenholloway the most polluted river in Florida, warned against eating fish from the river.²⁸

Later studies showed that the mill was producing 200 times more dioxin than the EPA considered safe and that fish in the river were changing sexes and some insects were deformed. It was also alarming that a 10-square-mile dead zone had formed in the Gulf of Mexico at the river's mouth — an unnatural feature in an area that promotes itself as the "Nature Coast." Dioxin has been linked to a number of illnesses, including several cancers as well as liver, neurological, and immune system disorders.²⁹

But not everyone was happy with HOPE and Ezell, particularly business interests. After all, the plant had become the county's largest employer; by the 1980s it had a payroll of \$40 million with 1,000 employees and it supported another 1,000 in

²⁵ Solecki, "Paternalism, Pollution and Protest in a Company Town," 11.

²⁶ Poole, *Saving Florida*, 187.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 187-188; Davis, *The Gulf*, 429.

²⁸ Poole, *Saving Florida*, 188.

²⁹ Julie Hauserman, "Dioxin at Mill Too High," *St. Petersburg Times*, 9 Feb. 2001. http://www.sptimes.com/News/020901/news_pf/State/Dioxin_at_mill_too_hi.shtml; Diane Roberts, "The world's a Dirty Place when You Are Poor," *St. Petersburg Times*, 9 Sept. 2007. http://www.sptimes.com/2007/09/09/news_pf/Opinion/The_world_s_a_dirty_p.shtml; Horning, "Social Network and Environmental Justice," 44-45.

related industries. P&G accounted for almost half the taxes collected in Taylor County, leading some to refer to the mill as “Uncle Buck.”³⁰

The company also had been working for decades to present a good community image, creating a lake for fishing and camping as well as other area recreational areas in conjunction with the Florida Forest Service and the state Fresh Water Fish and Game Commission.³¹

Ezell had telephone threats and hate mail and was described by a local newspaper as an “armed radical environmental terrorist.” HOPE activists “were labeled as ‘trouble makers’” and Ezell likened it to the ordeal in “*The Scarlet Letter*. Mainstream leaders in the community blacklisted her, claiming she was an outsider with no real community ties,” notes Horning, despite the fact that Ezell’s family history in Taylor County stretched back more than four generations.³²

Ezell was determined to get action. She contacted numerous members of the news media, filed lawsuits, appeared at public hearings, and even solicited the help of the wife of P&G’s CEO, who listened to her pleas framed from a mother’s point of view. In 1991 HOPE took a public tactic by attending a meeting of the state Environmental Regulatory Commission (ERC). There HOPE members offered fish dinners to a P&G executive and an ERC commissioner; one fish came from the Fenholloway and the other from a clean state river. When HOPE refused to say which fish came from which river, the men declined the dinners. It was a public dare and later that day the ERC voted to tighten river dioxin standards.³³

For the next few years Ezell and HOPE continued the Fenholloway campaign, getting national media attention from *Sixty Minutes* and *National Geographic* along with many state newspapers. Mill managers, responding to Ezell’s demands, started supplying bottled water and agreed to drill 600 new wells. In 1997 the activists’ work paid off when the legislature voted to redesignate the Fenholloway a Class 3 recreational river, mandating that it be safe for fishing and swimming. However, the company had been operating without a valid permit owing to extensions by the state while it came up with a cleanup plan.³⁴

The key to HOPE’s fight for the Fenholloway, Ezell says, is the grassroots involvement of women. While men might look at the economics of an environmental issue, women focus on the well-being of their families. When children and homes are at risk, beware. “Women are fierce about protecting their children and so they are going to stand up and do the right thing,” she said. “No matter how scary or how intimidating they might feel in their own community, women eventually get

³⁰ Solecki, “Paternalism, Pollution and Protest in a Company Town,” 10-11.

³¹ Pride, “Industry’s Good Citizen But (Too Bad) It Stinks,” B-1.

³² Poole, *Saving Florida*, 188; Horning, “Social Network and Environmental Justice,” 13.

³³ Poole, *Saving Florida*, 188; Leslie Poole, “Let Florida Be Green: Women, Activism, And the Environmental Century 1900-2000” (PhD dissertation, University of Florida, 2012), 303-305.

³⁴ Poole, *Saving Florida*, 189; Thomas B. Pfankuch, “Work is Under Way to Revive the Industrial-Use Fenholloway River,” *Jacksonville Times-Union*, 5 June 2002.

the gumption and strength to stand up and say what needs to be said.” She also believes that if there had been women in the 1947 legislature they might have fought the Fenholloway’s fouling.³⁵

Three decades later, Ezell and HOPE still are fighting for a clean Fenholloway. The plant, which has changed ownership and now is operated by Georgia-Pacific, owned by Koch Industries since 2013, has pledged to clean up the river. One solution the company proposes it to build a fifteen-mile pipeline to send up to 58 million gallons of discharge daily to mile twenty of the river near the Fenholloway’s mouth at the Gulf of Mexico. But Koch Industries has a poor record when it comes to industrial pollution: a study by the University of Massachusetts Amherst’s Political Economy Research Institute lists the company among “the top 30 polluters of America’s air, water and climate,” according to *Rolling Stone* magazine.³⁶

The proposed Gulf disposal solution does not sit well with Gulf Coast communities that might be subject to the pollution riding along watery currents. At a 2016 public hearing in Wakulla County, a company spokesman said the plan was to improve plant effluent treatment by March 2019 and then send it to the river’s mouth by March 2021. This news upset many residents, whose coastline is within twenty miles of the proposed outfall, leading many to worry that the pollution will kill seagrass beds and an emerging oyster industry. Georgia-Pacific spokesman Scott Mixon said since 1990, the mill has spent some \$120 million in improvements, resulting in “significant water quality improvements in the Fenholloway River.” The company and its “mill are committed to meeting clean water standards, improving and protecting the quality of the Fenholloway,” he wrote.³⁷ Despite these assurances, Wakulla County commissioners voted unanimously to oppose the pipeline. As of this publication, the project is awaiting a final permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.³⁸

The final lesson of the Fenholloway, then, is waiting to be written. Whether economics will continue to triumph over a healthy environment will be the question of the future, and in this case a cleaner Fenholloway could mean the tradeoff of a more degraded Gulf of Mexico. There are signs that residents in this beautiful but rural area are beginning to change their perspectives.

“The powers that be (Buckeye, the Chamber of Commerce, the County Commission) seem to have decided that Taylor citizens will accept any old daft scheme, no matter how destructive, as long as there’s money in it,” writes Diane

³⁵ Poole, “Let Florida Be Green,” 305, 307.

³⁶ Davis, *The Gulf*, 517; Tim Dickinson, “Inside the Koch Brothers’ Toxic Empire,” *Rolling Stone*, 24 Sept. 2014, <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/inside-the-koch-brothers-toxic-empire-20140924>; Joy Towles Ezell, telephone interview with author March 9, 2018.

³⁷ Nicole Zema, “Water Experts Pipe Up,” *Wakulla News*, 20 July 2016. <http://www.thewakullanews.com/content/water-experts-pipe>; Davis, *The Gulf*, 517.

³⁸ Erin Lisch, “Wakulla Commission Opposes Proposed Pipeline,” WCTV.com, <http://www.wctv.com/content/news/Commissioners-Proctor-Kessler-try-to-stop-pipeline-to-Gulf-of-Mexico-389665742.html>.

Roberts of Florida State University, who notes that Taylor County residents in the last decade have fought off other economic pollution schemes. “However, they’ve met with resistance. One bright idea, now abandoned, was to turn the vast piney woods into a bombing range. A planned resort megalopolis on a still-pristine section of the coast is in trouble, what with the developer wanting to scrape a deep yacht channel through protected sea grasses in a publicly owned aquatic preserve. A proposed coal-fired power plant, which would have coughed out mercury and other heavy metals, looks iffy.”³⁹

³⁹ Roberts, “The World’s a Dirty Place when You Are Poor.”

Special Section
Selected Undergraduate Articles

Hurricanes and Hegemony: A Study of American Imperialism in Puerto Rico, 1898-1940

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As a resident of Florida, I know that hurricane season (June through November) is always observed with caution and characterized by people rushing to the supermarket to stock up on bottled water and non-perishable food items. The hurricane season of 2017 was particularly long and destructive with seventeen named storms, ten hurricanes, and six hurricanes that were Category 3 or above.¹ Hurricane Irma, which hit Florida, and Maria, that ravaged Puerto Rico, prompted me to study how hurricanes affect the political, economic, and social structures of the communities they hit. I experienced firsthand what it was like to flee from my home and hope it would be standing after the storm passed. I was unscathed by Irma, but weeks later Maria smashed into Puerto Rico and completely disrupted every aspect of life there. The less-than-swift response of the U.S. government in sending aid to Puerto Rico brought up the over century-old question: what is Puerto Rico's relationship to the United States? Around this time I read Stuart Schwartz's 1992 article entitled, "The Hurricane of San Ciriaco: Disaster, Politics, and Society in Puerto Rico, 1899-1901." Schwartz analyzed how the hurricane that struck Puerto Rico on 8 August 1899 affected the political, economic, and social makeup of the island while under U.S. occupation.² By examining the effects the hurricane, he concluded that "San Ciriaco did not cause the political decision to place Puerto Rico in dependent status, but it did create a context that made the decision easier."³ This essay expounds upon Schwartz's political argument and also asserts that San Ciriaco played a larger role economically, socially, and culturally in the American hegemonic process than previously stated.

This essay is organized into three sections focusing on how the United States used the effects of San Ciriaco to assert dominion over Puerto Rico politically, economically, socially, and culturally. Methodologically, I employ similar techniques to those of Charles Walker in his monograph *Shaky Colonialism: The 1746 Earthquake-Tsunami in Lima, Peru, and Its Long Aftermath* and Matthew Mulcahy in his essay "A Tempestuous Spirit Called Hurri Cano: Hurricanes and Colonial Society in the British Greater Caribbean."⁴ Walker and Mulcahy studied

¹ Jonathan Belles, "2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season Recap: 17 Moments We'll Never Forget," <https://weather.com/storms/hurricane/news/2017-11-11-moments-hurricane-season-atlantic-irma-maria-harvey>.

² Stuart Schwartz, "The Hurricane of San Ciriaco: Disaster, Politics, and Society in Puerto Rico, 1899-1901," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 72, no. 3 (August 1992): 303-304. In Puerto Rico, hurricanes were traditionally given the name of a Catholic saint on whose day the hurricane made landfall.

³ Schwartz, 334.

⁴ Charles F. Walker, *Shaky Colonialism: The 1746 Earthquake-Tsunami in Lima, Peru, and Its Long Aftermath* (Raleigh: Duke University Press, 2008), and Matthew Mulcahy, "A Tempestuous Spirit Called Hurri Cano: Hurricanes and Colonial Society in the British Greater Caribbean," in *American Disasters*, ed. Steven Biel (New York: New York University Press, 2001).

specific disasters in order to examine the underlying political, economic, and social characteristics of the societies affected. By studying San Ciriaco and its' effects, the underlying political, economic, social, and cultural composition of the island during U.S. involvement will become clearer. The first section, "Changes in Sovereignty and the American Hegemonic Process" examines the changes in sovereignty that took place before the hurricane and assesses how the hurricane affected Puerto Rico's status during the American occupation. My economic analysis, "From Coffee to Sugar" uses census records and a report from the military governor to argue that the hurricane significantly aided the U.S. decision to switch Puerto Rico's agrarian economy from coffee cultivation toward increased sugar cultivation. The social and cultural discussion, "The *Jibaro* Myth and Identity Formation" explores the effects that the American occupation and San Ciriaco had on the construction of Puerto Rican identity. Specifically, I investigate a myth formulated by elites in the 1750s that continued into the 1940s. In this myth, elites used an image of a poor peasant farmer (*jibaro*) as a symbol of what it meant to be Puerto Rican in an attempt to forge a national identity.

Changes in Sovereignty and the American Hegemonic Process

This discussion examines the changes in sovereignty starting with Spanish colonial rule to the autonomous period and through the U.S. occupation. In his article, Schwartz discussed how San Ciriaco played a limited role in shaping the American decision to exercise an increased imperial rule over Puerto Rico.⁵ I will examine Schwartz's argument and evaluate to what extent the U.S. government used the effects of the hurricane to further their hegemonic role over the island.

Puerto Rico was under Spanish Colonial rule from 1493 until 1898. The discussion of autonomy took shape in 1880s and persisted into the 1890s.⁶ During this time, two political factions had formed on the island, the autonomist party and the liberal party.⁷ Luis Munoz Rivera led the liberal party and campaigned for increased autonomy and decentralization from Spain.⁸ To achieve that status Munoz Rivera stated that Puerto Rico needed to have increased representation in the Spanish Cortes in order to lobby for a favorable outcome.⁹ Thus Munoz Rivera allied with the Spanish Liberal party headed by Praxedes Mateo Sagasta.¹⁰ Puerto Rican statesmen of both parties wanted to come to a political settlement amicably. They often compared themselves to Cuba when lobbying for concessions. Munoz Rivera argued that Puerto Rico was in a better position than Cuba to ask for

⁵ Schwartz, 334.

⁶ Edward J. Berbusse, *The United States in Puerto Rico 1898-1900* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1966), 54..

⁷ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁰ Maldonado-Denis, 48.

increased autonomy because they had never actively rebelled against Spain.¹¹ He traveled to Spain in 1896 and 1897 to further argue this position. Then on 25 November 1897, the autonomous charter for Puerto Rico was signed by Sagasta, the new Spanish Prime Minister and ally of Munoz Rivera.¹² This gave Puerto Rico quasi-dominion status while keeping its representation in the Cortes.¹³ The Insular Cabinet was made the main governing body during the autonomous period. It was comprised of democratically elected Puerto Ricans. In its short tenure Munoz Rivera was named secretary of the government.¹⁴ Just after the election of the insular cabinet had taken place, U.S. forces landed at Guanica on 25 July 1898.

Scholars have studied the U.S. involvement in Puerto Rico between 1898 and 1940 in great detail. One of the first monographs to examine the U.S. occupation in depth was *The United States in Puerto Rico 1898-1900* by Edward J. Berbusse in 1966. This work was situated around the political and economic factors that contributed to American hegemony. His book used both Spanish and English language sources. For these reasons Berbusse's work is a fundamental starting place for studying U.S. involvement in Puerto Rico. Manuel Maldonado-Denis' monograph *Puerto Rico: A Socio-Historic Interpretation* was published in 1968. Maldonado-Denis presented Puerto Rican history from the Spanish colonial period to the then present from the perspective of a Puerto Rican nationalist. He was fiercely critical of the American view of Puerto Rican history and American scholars who wrote about Puerto Rico.¹⁵ These first studies provided a foundation for examining U.S. involvement in Puerto Rico. Both monographs are grounded in census records, reports of military governors, Puerto Rican literature, and English and Spanish language periodicals.

In his monograph *Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History Since 1898* Cesar J. Ayala stated that, initially, Munoz Rivera and his liberals had welcomed the U.S. occupation and viewed the United States as "the State of states and the Republic of republics."¹⁶ Nevertheless, U.S. forces took nineteen days to quell the little resistance that faced them.¹⁷ A military government was established after the conquest and President McKinley appointed General Nelson Miles to serve as Military Governor.¹⁸ Munoz Rivera actively collaborated with the military government by publishing pro-American articles in his newspaper *La Democracia* to lobby for Puerto Rico's inclusion as a state.¹⁹ His attempts would prove to be

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹² Berbusse, 56.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁵ Manuel Maldonado-Denis, *Puerto Rico: A Socio-Historic Interpretation*, trans. by Elena Vialo (New York: Random House, 1972), 4.

¹⁶ Cesar J. Ayala and Rafael Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History Since 1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 24.

¹⁷ Ayala and Bernabe, 14.

¹⁸ General George Davis, *Report of Brigadier General George W. Davis U.S.V. on the Civil Affairs of Puerto Rico 1899* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), 12

¹⁹ Berbusse, 78.

futile as the insular cabinet was abolished by the new Military Governor General Brooke on 29 November 1898.²⁰ The military government was now the sole governing body of Puerto Rico when the Treaty of Paris was signed with Spain on 1 December 1898. The provisions of the treaty ended the Spanish-American War, ceded Puerto Rico to the U.S., and classified the island as a protectorate.²¹

General George Davis took over command of the military government on 8 May 1899 and attempted to bring an insular government back to Puerto Rico.²² In his *Report on the Civil Affairs of Puerto Rico*, General Davis stated that elections for the insular cabinet and local offices had just been held when San Ciriaco hit.²³ Davis immediately asked Washington to send an abundance of aid in the form of food, clothes, and building supplies so that the island could begin to rebuild and recover.²⁴ The hurricane caused destruction to property and the agricultural industry, thwarting any hope for Puerto Rican self-governance. By this time, Davis had already developed strong opinions about the unlikelihood of Puerto Ricans' being able to govern themselves, stating in his report that

Puerto Rico, unlike Dominica, Haiti, and Venezuela, and many other republics, never was, is not, and probably never will be, independent. It is now a possession of the United States and must so continue until Congress decides otherwise. Whatever government may be given to the island, it will be subject to the general control of Congress, having no local army or navy.²⁵

On page 76 of the report Davis laid out his plan for the dependent government of Puerto Rico. His main proposals stated that the island be under direct executive control by the President and the Secretary of State of the United States, a U.S. born governor appointed by the President would be the chief executive of the dependent government, and lastly, a bicameral legislature, with an executive council made up of Americans, would be the main legislative body, and a council of elected Puerto Ricans would serve as the secondary legislative body.²⁶ Additional important provisions stated that Puerto Rico could not trade with any other country except the United States, and all laws passed by the bicameral legislature of the island could be vetoed at any time by the U.S. congress.²⁷ The Foraker Act (also known as the Organic Act of 1900) was signed by President McKinley on 12 April 1900, to establish a civil government in Puerto Rico. The act went into operation on 1 May of that year when the first civil governor Charles Allen took office. This act cemented U.S. hegemony over the island.

²⁰ Davis, 11.

²¹ Maldonado-Denis, 62.

²² Davis, 12.

²³ *Ibid.*, 21.

²⁴ "Relief Measures Adopted," *New York Times*, 12 Aug. 1899.

²⁵ Davis, 74.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 76.

²⁷ Berbusse, 166.

In 1901, Marian George published a book for intermediate grade school children entitled *Little Journeys to Cuba and Porto Rico*. In the book she referred to Puerto Rico as “our new possession.”²⁸ The book was published under the guise of a travel book, to educate young children about the new colonial possessions the United States had just added to its empire. The imperial actions taken by government in Washington were validated by the Monroe Doctrine of 1823. The doctrine stated that any intervention into the western hemisphere by external powers was cause for the United States to take military action against said power.²⁹ The United States had a legal obligation to defend Puerto Rico from Spanish rule; however, the Monroe Doctrine did not include any rhetoric about taking colonies or becoming an imperial power. Ultimately, I agree with Schwartz and conclude that the hurricane made the decision to place Puerto Rico under dependent status easier. However economic, social, and cultural factors also played a significant part in the American hegemonic process.

From a Coffee to Sugar Economy

An amendment to the Dingley Tariff in 1901 incorporated Puerto Rico into the U.S. tariff system. Before the U.S. invasion and San Ciriaco, coffee was the primary crop cultivated and exported.³⁰ This amendment retained the tariff on imported coffee but it did allow sugar and tobacco to be freely imported.³¹ Thus the U.S. domination of the Puerto Rican economy began.

The widely accepted outlook was that, when the United States invaded the island, land tenure among Puerto Ricans significantly decreased because U.S. absentee corporations seized significant portions of land and drove off peasants and common folk.³² This view has come under challenge by scholars such as Cesar Ayala and Laird Bergad. In 2002, Ayala and Bergad produced an article entitled “Rural Puerto Rico in the Early Twentieth Century Reconsidered: Land and Society, 1899-1915” in which they critiqued the former scholarship for not looking at the sources closely. They asserted that by examining the Foraker Act and Puerto Rican censuses taken in 1899 and 1910, “the first decade of U.S. occupation was characterized by growth of small farms rather than by their expropriation.”³³

²⁸ Marian George, *Little Journeys to Cuba and Porto Rico* (Chicago: A. Flanagan Company, 1901), 3.

²⁹ Ayala and Bernabe, 29.

³⁰ Cesar Ayala and Laird W. Bergad, “Rural Puerto Rico in the Early Twentieth Century Reconsidered: Land and Society, 1899-1915,” *Latin American Research Review* 37, no. 2 (2002): 67.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 67.

³² This view was expressed in further detail by Bailey Diffie and Justine Diffie in *Porto Rico: A Broken Pledge* (New York: Vanguard, 1931); Harvey S. Perloff, *Puerto Rico's Economic Future* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1950); James Dietz, *Economic History of Puerto Rico: Institutional Change and Capitalist Development* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986); Schwartz, , 303-304; and Lillian Guerra, *Popular Expression and National Identity in Puerto Rico* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998).

³³ Ayala and Bergad, 70-71.

Stuart Schwartz took the position that the military government put the burden of economic reform on the planters and the elite.³⁴ He cited the reports of Military Governor Davis and the censuses extensively. He also argued that if the planter relief program instituted under Davis had been better implemented and administered, the coffee industry might not have been significantly reduced.³⁵ I will build upon what Ayala, Bergad, and Schwartz have written to argue that while land tenure increased or stayed stagnant, the United States took advantage of the destruction wrought by San Ciriaco to shift the Puerto Rican agrarian economy. By focusing on sugar cultivation and jettisoning coffee, the United States was able to stimulate the Puerto Rican economy while serving its own economic interests.

As previously stated, in the mid to late 1800s, coffee was the primary crop produced and exported by Puerto Rico. The main markets for coffee were Cuba and Europe because the Spanish were committed to a mercantilist economy.³⁶ Laird Bergad, in his 1978 article "The Agrarian History of Puerto Rico 1870-1930," asserted that the coffee industry could never effectively penetrate the U.S. market because Brazil had a monopoly on U.S. coffee imports.³⁷ Brazil was able to produce coffee much faster and cheaper due to slave labor until 1888 when slavery was abolished.³⁸ This caused a boom in the Puerto Rican coffee industry during the 1880s and up until 1898 when coffee accounted for 54 percent of all exports.³⁹ After the U.S. occupation, the census of 1899 stated that prior to that date, 41 percent of Puerto Rico's land was dedicated to cultivating coffee. The primary regions where coffee was grown were Mayaguez, Arecibo, Ponce, and Aguadilla. In these regions over 40 percent of the land was used for coffee production with Mayaguez leading the way at 54 percent. Of the total land producing coffee, 91 percent of it was occupied by whites and only 7 percent by mixed-race people. 88 percent of the whites that occupied these lands owned them and the other 12 percent of whites either rented or were laborers. It can be inferred that a significant amount of jibaros (working class peasants) could have made up the 12 percent that did not own land. The 7 percent of mixed-race people who occupied these coffee producing areas owned the land and there were few instances of mixed people renting land.⁴⁰ A reason for this more diverse ratio in land ownership was that coffee production was not as tedious nor as labor intensive as sugar production. Those who owned or rented coffee producing land were generally more well to do before the hurricane.⁴¹ With that being said, 91 percent of all cultivated lands including sugar, tobacco,

³⁴ Schwartz, 334.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 334.

³⁶ Ayala and Bergad, 67.

³⁷ Laird W. Bergad, "Agrarian History of Puerto Rico: 1870-1930," *Latin American Research Review* 13, no. 3 (1978), 68.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 68.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁴⁰ *Report on the Census of Puerto, 1899* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), 152-153.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 124.

and subsistence crops were owned by either white or mixed race people, so it is clear that a large number of the rural population owned their own homes, worked on their land, and were permanent residents.⁴² Land ownership of small farms continued to increase throughout the first decade of the 1900s despite the sugar and coffee industries becoming more centralized.⁴³ To compare, in Cuba only 43.5 percent of cultivated lands were owned rather than rented, which put power in the hands of a few Spanish oligarchs.⁴⁴ The destruction San Ciriaco caused to the coffee industry made it easier for the United States to facilitate a dramatic switch from an emphasis on coffee production to sugar production, though land tenure would continue to increase.

General Davis in his report gave a detailed account of the sugar and coffee industries and assessed that Puerto Rico should be allowed to export sugar freely to the United States to help stimulate the economy.⁴⁵ He also estimated that because of the storm the coffee crop would take five years to regenerate and that it should be disregarded as an export of value.⁴⁶ Davis also noted that before the U.S. occupation, “more than half of all the coffee sent out of the island went to Cuba and Spain, and now those markets are practically lost.” The Foraker Act and an amendment to the Dingley Tariff in 1901 set up the Puerto Rican economy to unilaterally focus on sugar production. A provision in the Foraker Act stated that U.S. interests could only occupy up to 500 acres of land per enterprise, and that Puerto Rico could not trade with any other country except the United States.⁴⁷ Subsequently, after the hurricane, U.S. absentee sugar corporations started setting up shop and did not adhere to the Foraker Act’s land ownership provision. The Aguirre Sugar Company in 1899, the South Porto Rico Sugar Company in 1901, and the Fajardo Sugar Company in 1905 were the three main corporations that dominated the export of Puerto Rican sugar into the 1930s. These corporations bought land in the Fajardo and Guanica regions from local sugar planters and coffee planters.⁴⁸ However, most plantations and refineries were owned by Puerto Ricans, but the U.S. sugar companies had a monopoly on who the Puerto Rican planters could sell to.⁴⁹ In 1901 Puerto Rico was included into the Dingley Tariff which meant that sugar from Puerto Rico would not be taxed upon entering the United States.⁵⁰ This was done to stimulate the Puerto Rican economy while also furthering U.S. sugar interests. Coffee was not included in the Dingley Tariff

⁴² *Ibid.*, 18.

⁴³ Bergad and Ayala, 73.

⁴⁴ *Census 1899*, 18.

⁴⁵ General George Davis, *Report of Brigadier General George W. Davis U.S.V. on the Civil Affairs of Puerto Rico 1899* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), 39.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁴⁷ Ayala and Bergad, 72.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 67.

but still had a minor presence in the economy into the 1920s.⁵¹ In 1928 another hurricane, San Felipe, destroyed the coffee crop.⁵² This hurricane, coupled with global economic depression, completely eliminated coffee as a crop of relevance.

Schwartz asserted that if the planter relief program instituted by General Davis after San Ciriaco had had better oversight and had been run more efficiently the coffee industry would have been revitalized.⁵³ The planter relief program gave food to the planters and elites and charged them with distributing the relief to the rural poor (*jibaros*).⁵⁴ As General Davis pointed out, the planter relief program put too much responsibility in the hands of the planter class and created a system of indentured servitude for the rural poor.⁵⁵ The program was more focused on the coffee regions because they were the most decimated after the hurricane. The standard wage for coffee industry workers was higher than sugar industry workers but because of the hurricane's destruction to the elite's property they no longer were able to pay the workers' wages.⁵⁶ So the modest stipend of food promised was seen as a slight because the coffee workers were now reduced to even worse poverty.⁵⁷ Schwartz focused on the failures of the planter relief program, and less on the centralization of the sugar industry or land tenure. More research needs to be done about the planter relief program but the evidence that Schwartz compiled raises some questions. It can be argued that this program was instituted by the U.S. government and the sugar elites of Puerto Rico to suppress the coffee industry and make the switch to sugar more definite. It can also be inferred that, socially and culturally, the increased poverty the rural coffee laborers and later sugar laborers experienced during the planter relief program could have been viewed as an effort by elites to maintain the social hierarchy. However, Schwartz's analysis does not extensively cover the social or cultural effects that San Ciriaco had on Puerto Rican society.

The *Jibaro* Myth and Identity Formation in Puerto Rican Society and Culture

The social hierarchy in Puerto Rico was undergoing significant changes since the 1750s. The conflict between native born creoles, white or mixed race peasants (*jibaros*), and Spanish born *peninsulares* was exacerbated by the wars of independence that swept through Latin America in the 1780s-1820s.⁵⁸ Puerto Rico was very different from the rest of Latin America during the Spanish period because there was never an independence movement. However, creoles responded

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁵² Bergad, 85.

⁵³ Schwartz, 334.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 326.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 330.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 330.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 332.

⁵⁸ Florencia E. Mallon, *Peasant and Nation: The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 4

differently to the wars of independence and struggled to construct an identity because they were not elite like the peninsulares but not as impoverished as the jibaros. At this time creole intellectuals began to formulate a myth in literature and poetry that being a jibaro was what it meant to be Puerto Rican.⁵⁹ The construction of this myth would continue throughout the U.S. occupation and into the 1930s and 1940s with the rise of the populist Partido Popular Democratico (PPD). This section examines the extent to which San Ciriaco played a role in furthering the jibaro myth, and assess how the myth impacted Puerto Rican society.

The historiography of peasants as national figures has been a prolific field of study starting in the 1950s and must briefly be discussed to understand how scholars have written about this theme in a wider Latin American context. The anthropologist Sidney Mintz's article "Folk-Urban Continuum and Rural Proletarian Community" (1953) is not about the jibaros specifically, but he did argue that the presence of a rural folk proletarian identity in Latin American countries such as Mexico and Peru was forged by the bourgeoisie. In 1995, Florencia Mallon's book *Peasant and Nation: The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru* critiqued Mintz's argument by asserting that in the Latin American experience there was not a capitalist bourgeoisie dominating the proletariat but rather indigenous people and mixed race peasants struggling with creoles and peninsular Spaniards.⁶⁰ She also introduced a concept called the hegemonic process.⁶¹ She theorized that in order for a hegemonic outcome to occur there must be a process of domination and collaboration from lower classes and elites.⁶² The lower classes also engaged in counter hegemony or resistance in order to form their concept of the Other. This concept of the Other is very present in both the lower class and elite identity formation. The peasant viewed the Other as Spanish and white, while the elite viewed the Other as a peasant who was indigenous or mixed race and ignorant.⁶³ Mallon concluded that this trend was present throughout Latin America at the end of the 1700s and continued into the 1900s because the wars of independence and neocolonialism challenged identity. These works provide a basis for understanding how the rural peasant and the elite of Latin America used their conception of the Other to attempt to forge a national identity.

Francisco Scarano's article called "The Jibaro Masquerade and the Subaltern Politics of Creole Identity Formation in Puerto Rico: 1745-1823" examined the first instance in Puerto Rico of jibaro culture being appropriated by *creole* elite writers to forge a national identity in response to the Latin American wars of independence. As Scarano pointed out, this group of creole intellectuals was liberal

⁵⁹ Francisco Scarano, "The Jibaro Masquerade and the Subaltern Politics of Creole Identity Formation in Puerto Rico: 1745-1823," *American Historical Review* 101, no. 5 (December 1996), 1400.

⁶⁰ Mallon, 8.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 7.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 9.

mindful and prone to nationalism, but referred to themselves as “humble jibaros” when signing their works in order to conceal their identities from the peninsular Spanish.⁶⁴ They were able to somewhat hide their identity by producing literature and poetry in colloquial Spanish that captured the jibaro way of life, but criticized the conservative Spanish, and promoted liberalism and nationalism.⁶⁵ These early liberal elites would be confronted by those who were in favor of colonial rule.

Juan Nieves was an elite Puerto Rican who published an essay after the U.S. occupation entitled *La Anexión de Puerto Rico a los Estados Unidos de America* in 1899. Nieves stated that he could never imagine a time when Puerto Rico could or should govern itself.⁶⁶ He went on to say, “the island is mainly made up of peasants who are not educated, and lazy.”⁶⁷ He does not use the word jibaro, but the rhetoric that he employed was an indicator that he had bought into the myth. He stated he was going to pledge his allegiance to the United States, and was excited for a new colonial regime to govern the island.⁶⁸ Luis Munoz Rivera, the liberal autonomist, championed increased autonomy, first with Spain and then the United States. He sought support from jibaros and propped them up as national figures. Rivera actively participated in representing the jibaro in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and did not use an alias. His newspaper, *La Democracia*, published poetry and articles about the jibaro. His son Luis Munoz Marin would continue to write about the jibaro, and use it as a symbol of what it meant to be Puerto Rican.⁶⁹

The most exhaustive work about the jibaro as a symbol of identity was Lillian Guerra’s monograph *Popular Expression and National Identity in Puerto Rico: Struggle For Self, Community, and Nation* in 1998. She used the writings of Luis Munoz Marin, Llorens Torres, Antonio Pedreira, and other Puerto Rican intellectuals who wrote about the jibaro during the late 1800s and early 1900s. She argued that the sudden change in sovereignty created an identity crisis for elites.⁷⁰ Concomitantly, Americanization supplanted the elites from the former status they had enjoyed under Spanish colonialism and the autonomous period. An article published in *La Democracia* several days after the hurricane hit alluded to the identity crises, by stating that the destruction of property and the general disarray of the island may lead to social upheaval.⁷¹ Many elites could no longer cultivate their land or afford to pay their workers, which further brought their social status into question. The hurricane also caused these intellectuals to reflect upon the lingering questions: am I Spanish? Am I American? And what does it mean to

⁶⁴ Scarano, 1400.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 1401.

⁶⁶ Juan B. Nieves, *La Anexión de Puerto Rico a los Estados Unidos* (Ponce: Listin Comercial, 1899), 8.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁶⁹ Guerra, 90.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 122.

⁷¹ “Tempestad e Inundacion,” *La Democracia*, 15 Aug. 1899.

be Puerto Rican? Once again these displaced intellectuals turned to the myth of the jibaro in an attempt to solidify what it meant to be Puerto Rican.⁷² During the American occupation, and after the hurricane, the identity of the Other switched from Spanish to American.⁷³ The United States was seen as the Other until Luis Munoz Marin's rise as a populist leader hailed the United States as a paternal figure.

Eileen Suarez Findlay studied how the jibaro myth persisted into the mid-1900s after San Ciriaco in her book *We Are Left Without a Father Here: Masculinity, Domesticity, and Migration in Post War Puerto Rico*, published in 2014. She focused on how the Partido Popular Democratico (PPD) used the jibaro myth to define gender roles and construct identity.⁷⁴ By this time the PPD was the dominant party in Puerto Rico and viewed the United States not as the Other, but as a father figure who Puerto Ricans should aspire to emulate.⁷⁵ In a micro historical study, Findlay examined an instance in which the PPD funded and sanctioned working class laborers to migrate to Michigan and work in the sugar beet fields.⁷⁶ These workers were not paid fair wages or fed properly, all while the PPD claimed that these were quintessential Puerto Rican men who were providing for their families back home in Puerto Rico.⁷⁷ This incident was covered up by the PPD, but the party still ardently tried to construct identity using the jibaro as a symbol.⁷⁸ The PPD began to lose support in the late 1950s and 1960s, but still holds power in Puerto Rico today.

Schwartz only mentioned the jibaro in passing and did not examine the myth in any great detail. He focused on how the rebuilding after San Ciriaco and the influence of the U.S. military government affected social relations.⁷⁹ These factors clearly affected the social makeup of the island, but because he did not explore the jibaro, myth Schwartz's analysis is fragmentary. San Ciriaco played a part in continuing the jibaro myth by displacing local elites from their property, which caused their social status to come under scrutiny. This myth continued to impact Puerto Rican society well into the 1940s and 1950s with the emergence of Luis Munoz Marin and the PPD.

Conclusions and Prospective Research

Examining Puerto Rico before and after the destructive San Ciriaco hurricane makes it clear that the hurricane had a major consequences on the island's political and economic life, and an equally significant impact on its society and culture.

⁷² Guerra, 123.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁷⁴ Findlay, 37.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 182.

⁷⁹ Schwartz, 313

I agree with Schwartz in his political argument that San Ciriaco made it easier for the policymakers in Washington to assert dominion over the island, but was ultimately not the only cause, since economic and social factors were also of critical importance. After reviewing General Davis's report, closely examining the Puerto Rican census of 1899, and studying the arguments in Ayala and Bergad's article, I must disagree with Schwartz's economic argument. It is very clear that in the aftermath of San Ciriaco, the United States unilaterally changed the focus of the Puerto Rico's economy. This switch from an emphasis on coffee to an emphasis on sugar was convenient for the United States because it helped to stimulate the Puerto Rican economy, while also benefiting American economic interests. Social hierarchy in Puerto Rico rapidly changed at the onset of American occupation. Entrenched colonial inequalities had caused identity crises in the past, which led to the appropriation of the jibaro myth, and aided the construction of the Other. With a new colonial power, these past issues were brought up again, and worsened by the displacement of elites from their land caused by San Ciriaco. Schwartz did not examine how the jibaro myth was affected by the hurricane, and by failing to do so his analysis is incomplete. San Ciriaco had a larger effect on the economic, social, and cultural facets of American hegemony in Puerto Rico than previously expressed, though more research still needs to be done.

The study of relations between Puerto Rico and the United States would likely benefit from more projects that explore social and cultural issues. Specifically, research should be carried out on the jibaro myth. A study that examines why the symbol of the jibaro grew whiter over time would be beneficial in understanding how racial stereotypes developed under U.S. rule.⁸⁰ Another useful line of inquiry would be to examine how hurricane San Felipe, which hit the island in 1928, played a role in the way Puerto Ricans viewed the world economic depression of the 1930s. Studies like these will further help in comprehending the complex history of Puerto Rico and its awkward relationship with United States. Hurricane Maria brings this story up to date and reminds us that all these issues are still not only relevant but are becoming even more complicated.

⁸⁰ See Philip J. Deloria's monograph, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). In it he discussed instances of white American men adopting Indian traditions, images, and clothing in colonial New England.

Rationalizing Indian Removal: Representations of Indigenous Peoples and American Identity

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The strongest passion of an Indian's soul is revenge. To gratify it, distance, danger, and toil are held as nothing. But there is no manliness in his vengeance. He loves to steal upon his enemy, in the silence of the forest, or in his midnight slumbers, and to glut himself, like a ravenous wolf, in undistinguished slaughter.¹

Thomas Francis Gordon, 1829

The messages conveyed in the above description of indigenous peoples did not merely serve to entertain contemporary readers; they undergirded the core understandings that Americans and the colonialist American state possessed of indigenous peoples in North America. As indigenous peoples were — and still are — subject to the domination of the state, these understandings resulted in significant ramifications for their treatment. This dynamic was best exemplified by historical writing surrounding the policy of Indian Removal in 1830 under President Andrew Jackson. Implementation of Removal relied upon a particular set of views of indigenous peoples and whites that justified domination of the former by the latter. Writers of early American history from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century increasingly promulgated dehumanizing representations of indigenous peoples in contrast to positive characterizations of whites. Doing so justified and rationalized Removal, in addition to empowering American colonial expansion.

While some scholars have addressed the power of language in terms of representation, they have not applied that recognition specifically to the interpretation of works pertaining to American history. Scholars have emphasized different aspects related to the representations and views of indigenous peoples by white Americans. Andrew Jackson internalized a condescending view of indigenous peoples, according to biographer Robert V. Remini's interpretation in an essay on Jackson's legacy. Remini specifically notes that Jackson was "paternalistic" towards indigenous peoples and that he believed they needed to "be civilized" due to, as put by Jackson, the "savage customs and manner" they exhibited.² But, Remini goes further and posits that, in terms of Jackson's support for Removal, "[i]t was not greed or racism that motivated him. After living with the Indian problem for many years . . . he came to the unshakeable conclusion that the

¹ Thomas Francis Gordon, *The history of Pennsylvania, from its discovery by Europeans, to the Declaration of independence in 1776* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Carey, 1829), 51-52.

² Robert V. Remini, *The Legacy of Andrew Jackson: Essays on Democracy, Indian Removal, and Slavery* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 45-46, 49.

only policy that benefitted both peoples, white and red, was removal.”³ However, as will be elaborated below, Removal solely benefitted whites at the expense of indigenous societies. By no measure did both groups benefit. Additionally, it is entirely unreasonable to believe that Jackson’s racist attitude, which was similar to those of many other Americans at the time, played no role in a set of policies that blatantly discriminated against a marginalized group. Even though Jackson appears to have genuinely believed that Indian Removal was a “humanitarian” approach that would preserve indigenous life and cultures, this cannot be used to argue that his negative perceptions of indigenous peoples were absent in his policy decisions.⁴ Doing so obfuscates the ideological relationships between language, representation, and power which facilitated removal.

Rather than take Jackson’s claims at face value, Jason Edward Black utilizes a New History-like approach to the rhetoric of Indian Removal in *American Indians and the Rhetoric of Removal and Allotment*. Black believes there was a significant connection between the rhetorical descriptions of indigenous peoples and the manner in which white Americans as a collective treated indigenous peoples because “identities come about by forging one conception out of another to give dimension and depth to an understanding of community.”⁵ With this assumption about the interlinked importance of representation and identity, particularly within the colonial context, Black recognizes that, as Jackson and others purported that Indian Removal was designed to help indigenous peoples, representations of the latter groups played an important role in how white Americans understood themselves and their policies: “[a]s Natives were saved ‘from white aggression,’ government rhetoric reaffirmed white dominance as much as it provided land to the government or aid to Native nations.”⁶ Overall, Black insists on viewing language as an exploitable coercive tool. This recognition of language’s power is important for understanding the justification and rationalization of Removal.

Black’s convincing approach informs this paper’s reading of representations of indigenous peoples in four works by early American historians found in the Marvin & Sybil Weiner *Spirit of America* Collection at Florida Atlantic University. By building upon the arguments made by Black, this paper contributes to the literature by specifically interpreting the relationship between historians’ construction of American identity and their representations of indigenous peoples and, together, how they were used to justify and rationalize Removal. Works by historical authors are valid and useful primary sources because their reading audiences would have attributed greater truth-value and authenticity to them over other sources, such as obviously fictional writing. One of these authors, Henry

³ Remini, *The Legacy of Andrew Jackson*, 57.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁵ Jason Edward Black, *American Indians and the Rhetoric of Removal and Allotment* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2015), 7.

⁶ Black, *American Indians and the Rhetoric of Removal and Allotment*, 6.

Trumbull, explicitly insisted that the historically “true and accurate conception” of engagements between colonizers and indigenous peoples in his work could be used by Americans to better understand the success of their country and its heritage.⁷ In Trumbull’s view, which was likely similar to the others, the role of writing about the history of the United States was to enable Americans to apply their country’s purported past achievements as models to build from in the pursuit of future goals, such as territorial expansion. With this in mind, analyzing writings specifically by historians contributes to a better understanding of indigenous-American relations in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by showing that the negative representations of indigenous peoples were a key component in the justification of anti-indigenous violence and American colonial domination. It also indicates that negative representations of individuals and social groups can be used to garner support for wielding the state’s destructive power against them.

The history of North America. Containing a review of the customs and manners of the original inhabitants; the first settlement of the British colonies, their rise and progress, from the earliest period to the time of their becoming united, free and independent states was published in 1789 by Rev. Mr. Cooper, a pseudonym for a Richard Johnson of Philadelphia. Bolstered by the impactful prestige associated with his position as pastor, Cooper’s work exemplified negative characterizations of indigenous peoples almost half a century before Removal. In his narrative of Europeans’ arrival in North America, Cooper expressed a number of negative themes in his representations of indigenous peoples. He described them as uncivilized: “Europeans, on their first arrival in America, found the Indians quite naked, except those parts, which it is common for the most uncivilized people to conceal.”⁸ In tandem with being uncivilized, Cooper equated indigenous peoples with the natural world, claiming that in their violence they were “like the wild beasts of the forest.”⁹ Their violence, moreover, was practically essential to them, as “[a]lmost the sole occupation of the American Indian is war.”¹⁰ Cooper also insisted to readers that this violence reflected a distortion of gender: in contrast to European standards, women could even “[forget] the female nature” and engage in cannibalistic consumption of prisoners of war.¹¹ In these various ways, Cooper represented indigenous peoples as inferior.

Cooper’s overall representation of indigenous peoples as inferior was important because it provided him with the power to juxtapose them against enlightened

⁷ Henry Trumbull, *History of the Discovery of America, of the landing of our forefathers, at Plymouth, and of their most remarkable engagements with the Indians, in New-England, from their first landing in 1620, until the final subjugation of the natives in 1669 [i.e., 1679] To which is annexed, the defeat of Generals Braddock, Harmer & St. Clair, by the Indians at the westward, &c* (New York: Grant & Wells, 1810), v.

⁸ Rev. Mr. Cooper, *The history of North America. Containing a review of the customs and manners of the original inhabitants; the first settlement of the British colonies, their rise and progress, from the earliest period to the time of their becoming united, free and independent states* (London: E. Newbery, 1789), 14.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 29.

white Europeans in a superior-inferior dichotomy. Cooper summarized the effect of the perceived contrast between the two groups as making

us more sensible . . . of the value of commerce, the benefits of a civilized life, and the lights derived from literature, which, if they have abated the force of some of the natural virtues by the luxuries which attend them, have taken out likewise the sting of our natural vices, and softened the ferocity of the human race.¹²

Through this statement, Cooper posited that Europeans were more developed as human beings than indigenous peoples simply because of differing societal characteristics.

While this view incorporated condescension toward indigenous peoples, it did also imply that people could change through cultural products from a natural, savage state to a more civilized form of being. Moreover, despite the clearly negative manner in which he represented indigenous peoples, Cooper did explicitly refer to them as “inhabitants,” as in the title of his work. This was particularly telling in a context in which colonists believed themselves superior for their extractive and private ownership-oriented approach toward land ownership and cultivation, as opposed to indigenous lifestyles which largely avoided permanent settlement on and intensive use of particular pieces of land.¹³ By using the term “inhabitants,” Cooper endowed indigenous peoples with a minor sense of permanence. Doing so meant that he viewed them as at least somewhat legitimate peoples who lived in recognizably human societies. In other words, Cooper did not essentialize indigenous peoples as fundamentally wretched. Overall, though, Cooper’s *The history of North America* reflected themes which would carry on in historical writings that included negative representations of indigenous peoples. In later works written closer to the period of Removal, representations of indigenous peoples caricatured them to an even further degree.

In 1810, Henry Trumbull published *History of the discovery of America, of the landing of our forefathers, at Plymouth, and of their most remarkable engagements with the Indians, in New-England, from their first landing in 1620, until the final subjugation of the natives in 1669 [i.e., 1679] To which is annexed, the defeat of Generals Braddock, Harmer & St. Clair; by the Indians at the westward, &c.* In contrast to Cooper, Trumbull went beyond negative characterizations and fully dehumanized indigenous peoples. He did this by referring only to white European colonists as humankind: in his formulation, it was only after the colonization of North America by Europeans against indigenous peoples, or “fierce and bloodthirsty Savages,” that “the new world like the old became subject to man.”¹⁴

¹² *Ibid.*, 31.

¹³ William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 54-57.

¹⁴ Trumbull, *History of the Discovery of America*, iv.

In characterizing indigenous peoples in this way, Trumbull praised the Europeans' violent conquest, conveying that it was necessary in order for civilization to exist.

Trumbull also portrayed indigenous peoples as an existential threat to the existence of American civilization. When describing the American Revolution against the British monarchy, he claimed the British supported indigenous peoples, or "sons of barbarity," as a means to harm Americans "who were struggling in the cause of liberty!"¹⁵ Associating indigenous peoples with the British reinforced the national idea that Americans have always been under siege from external oppressors. As such, Trumbull argued "that the savages were the first aggressors" in the range of antagonistic relations between colonists and indigenous peoples both before and throughout the history of the United States.¹⁶ To demonstrate this, Trumbull created an entire appendix of violent incidents which were allegedly the fault of indigenous peoples, thereby expanding the narrative of white American victimization. In this sense, Trumbull instilled the notion that, for the safety of whites, preemptive violence had to be used against indigenous peoples; this manner of thinking was the exact same rationale used to justify Removal just two decades later.

Indian Removal occurred during a consequential alteration in American identity. The rhetoric and domestic policies of President Jackson shifted the underpinning of American identity to rely upon expansionist desire, as Black describes, "[transforming] Thomas Jefferson's yeoman farmer into a pioneer, exploring the nation and widening its territory."¹⁷ While numerous factors led to the articulation of Manifest Destiny as the American ideal, a key factor was the clamor for land. This stemmed from Jackson's acquiescence to whites' desires for valuable natural resources found within indigenous territories, such as gold.¹⁸ The change in American identity and the desire for natural wealth resulted in a massive increase in the forced relocation of indigenous peoples, many of whom had already been continually pushed west for centuries as a consequence of colonization. The principal tool for newer dislocation in the Jackson era was the 1830 Indian Removal Act which directed the violent moving by the American state of numerous tribes, including the Choctaws, the Creeks, and the Cherokee to what is now Oklahoma. Justification for Removal did not occur in a vacuum, however. The material desire for power undergirding such violence was clear, but what transformed these motives into what became behavior considered legitimate by the state and Americans was the representation of indigenous peoples. This representation was found in the two works discussed so far, as well as in others closer to the actual time of Removal.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 83.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 142.

¹⁷ Black, *American Indians and the Rhetoric of Removal and Allotment*, 37.

¹⁸ Wilson, *The Earth Shall Weep*, 165. This point contradicts Remini's insistence in *The Legacy of Andrew Jackson*, 57, that economic interests played no role in Jackson's support of Removal.

In 1829, one year before Removal, Thomas Francis Gordon published *The history of Pennsylvania, from its discovery by Europeans, to the Declaration of independence in 1776*. This work best exemplified contemporary representations of indigenous peoples. In contrast to Cooper's use of the word *inhabitants* for indigenous peoples, Gordon exclusively reserved the term *inhabitants* for Europeans who colonized North America.¹⁹ As such, Gordon posited that the "tribes had advanced little beyond the rudest state of nature," adding to the pre-existing dehumanization of them. For Gordon, this revolved around the fact that "[t]hey had no written language, unless rude drawings may this be considered."²⁰ Further building on his claim that indigenous peoples were uncivilized and not as developed as Europeans, Gordon, as shown in the epigraph at the beginning of this article, asserted claims which encapsulated early American historians' views of indigenous peoples: they were more animal-like than human, men and women were perverse in terms of gender, and their uncontrollable violence posed an intrinsic threat to the United States.²¹ Beyond these themes, Gordon also touched upon the topics of language and religion in his representation of indigenous peoples.

According to Gordon, "[a] cultivated language usually denotes great civilization. But our aborigines seem to have confined their efforts to the improvement of their speech" only in order for chiefs to be obeyed and for those who have suffered crimes to best redress their victimization as they wish; "[a]mong such a people . . . eloquence is the handmaid of ambition, and all power must depend upon the talent of persuasion." In other words, to Gordon, the "many beauties" of indigenous peoples' languages merely represented cultural and political mechanisms for manipulation by an essential mindset, rather than the simple existence of human societies with unique languages.²² This view fit the larger context of the time in which philologists and Native consultants who studied indigenous languages operated under the assumption that language was intrinsically tied to thought and mental capacity. With this assumption in their research, they concluded, albeit with some debate, that the structure of indigenous peoples' languages hindered their ability to civilize beyond their inferior state.²³ This belief that the languages of indigenous peoples demonstrated their essential inferiority clearly found its way into Gordon's work. It lent credence to the pro-Removal notion that indigenous peoples were inescapably faulty in their development in contrast to whites. Another lens through which Gordon represented them was religion.

¹⁹ Gordon, *The History of Pennsylvania*, 22.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 50-51.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 51-52.

²² *Ibid.*, 50.

²³ Sean P. Harvey, "'Must Not Their Languages Be Savage and Barbarous Like Them?': Philology, Indian Removal, and Race Science," *Journal of the Early Republic* 30, no. 4 (Winter 2010): 507.

In *The History of Pennsylvania*, Gordon described the “religion” of indigenous peoples — implying that the wide array of tribes all shared a monolithic form of spirituality — as “simple, and . . . may be considered as evidence of their purity and strength of mind, or of the nakedness and barrenness of their genius.”²⁴ In other words, Gordon thought that the simplistic or unenlightened mind of indigenous peoples, along with other traits such as language, could be attributed to their religion. While Gordon had also labeled indigenous peoples as threateningly violent, his description of religion reflected Americans’ paternalism towards indigenous peoples that assumed the latter were deprived of capability. Such paternalism was rooted in writings by Christian missionaries from the United Kingdom in the United States. Though missionary writings were not as popular as other contemporary literary genres, they contributed “to notions that Indians should be pitied, saved, and mourned, sometimes all at once” and spurred the development of “a benevolent imperialist rhetoric.”²⁵ Put another way, the missionaries’ representations of indigenous peoples conveyed that the latter needed to be rescued from themselves and their own derelict cultures by white civilization. This colonial mindset infiltrated not just British thought, but American politics, specifically in the justification of Removal.²⁶ In terms of Gordon’s incorporation of paternalism-derived beliefs in *The History of Pennsylvania*, his description of indigenous peoples’ simplicity, based in their religion, reflected the purported need to control indigenous peoples for their own sake. These alleged traits only further cemented the American state’s assumption that it could directly manage indigenous peoples without their consent or input, all the while engaging in actions which would, in reality, negatively affect them.

Gordon’s overall representation of indigenous peoples as illegitimate, sub-human, violent, mentally deficient, and incapable of self-control justified the logic of Removal. Considering that Gordon’s work was published only a year before Removal, he may very well have intentionally inserted his ideas into the policy debate. If so, he succeeded. Though it served a different function, the construction of American history in tandem with negative characterizations of indigenous peoples by a historical work after the real-life occurrence of Removal rationalized the policy and solidified its relevance to American identity.

The fourth and final book examined here is *Ramsay’s History of South Carolina, From its First Settlement in 1670 to the Year 1808* by David Ramsay, a well-known Member of Congress, physician, and historian. The work was originally published as two separate volumes in 1809 shortly before Ramsay’s assassination by a former patient, but they were also published in a combined volume in 1858,

²⁴ Gordon, *The History of Pennsylvania*, 51.

²⁵ Laura M. Stevens, *The Poor Indians: British Missionaries, Native Americans, and Colonial Sensibility* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 33.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

almost three decades after the implementation of Removal. This indicates that, in line with his contemporary reputation, Ramsay's book was popular both before and after Removal and that his representation of indigenous peoples would have been known by and relevant to many. Therefore, the themes in his book would have justified Removal to its facilitators, in addition to rationalizing it to later readers. As such, Ramsay's work is perhaps the most critical to analyze for understanding exactly how early writers of American history concretely inserted rationalization of oppressive policies against indigenous peoples like Removal into subsequent American historical consciousness.

In contrast to Gordon's use of paternalism to justify Removal, Ramsay generally did not rely upon paternalism in his representation of indigenous peoples. However, Ramsay perpetuated the heavy emphasis on the non-human and uncivilized nature and the threat of indigenous peoples. Like Gordon, Ramsay strictly referred to white colonists in North America as "inhabitants."²⁷ To him, when North America was "discovered" by Europeans, there was no pre-existing "permanent settlement" of any kind, thereby ignoring indigenous societies.²⁸ Relatedly, Ramsay continued to dehumanize indigenous peoples by characterizing them as "savage tribes" which "roamed over, rather than inhabited" the land.²⁹ This communicated that they had no legitimate attachment to physical place and, therefore, that all land was open to whites. Ramsay also specifically recounted the acquisition by colonists of the Carolinas. He said it was beneficial because "it removed the savages at a greater distance from the settlement, and allowed the inhabitants liberty to extend backwards" into other spaces.³⁰ This positive narrative of Carolinian history precisely mirrored the displacement of indigenous peoples by whites for land as had happened through Removal earlier in the century. For post-Removal readers, this thinking fundamentally rationalized the policy.

Additionally, Ramsay embraced the notion that whites were intrinsically threatened by the indigenous presence. To him, those who were part of the colonial project were victimized "white men, exposed to the heat of the climate and the terrors of the surrounding savages."³¹ Accordingly, it was impossible for Europeans — or later, white Americans and the American state — to commit a wrong against indigenous peoples. This belief congealed rationalization of the policy, along with other actions which displaced or, otherwise, marginalized them. It also further entrenched a view of American history as the expansion of righteous civilization against uncivilized, inferior, and dangerous natives. The republishing

²⁷ David Ramsay, *Ramsay's History of North Carolina, From its First Settlement in 1670 to the Year 1808* (Newberry: W. J. Duffie, 1858), 7.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

of Ramsay's book can be interpreted as showing that American identity came to rely upon Removal as both an integral and positive piece of American history.

The representation of indigenous peoples by early American historians justified and subsequently rationalized the policy of Indian Removal, as well as a generally expansionist United States. The historians executed this in multiple ways. They mostly did not consider indigenous peoples as legitimate inhabitants of North America. Next, they deemed indigenous peoples as helpless and inferior to whites, based on language, religion, and gender dysfunction. The historical writings also dehumanized and equated indigenous peoples with nature and considered them to be a violent and existential threat to the United States. In an overall amalgamation of these themes, Indian Removal was rationalized as a means to protect and uplift white Americans and to simultaneously destroy and save indigenous peoples from themselves.

This process demonstrates that representation is directly tied to power. It impacts how people and entities understand themselves and behave toward others, as well as contribute to the production of unequal power relationships. Beyond the specific occurrence of Removal, this lesson of representation's impact can be applied to the United States more generally. Oppressive attitudes and policies today are justified by negative representations of women, the LGBTQ community, religious minorities, migrants and refugees, people of color, and marginalized socioeconomic classes. Moreover, people in positions of power oftentimes present histories in such a way as to rationalize inequality and to obfuscate competing perspectives which go against their own self-interests. Perhaps, by recognizing the centrality of representation to political, economic, and social power, we can better resist its negative consequences and work to re-imagine American identity in a more representative, inclusive, and democratic way.