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Keepers of History, Shapers of Memory: The Florida Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1895 1930

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KEEPERS OF HISTORY, SHAPERS OF MEMORY:
THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UNITED DAUGHTERS OF THE CONFEDERACY, 1895-1930

By

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Ralph Krumdieck and Lynne Coates. Two people who knew how to inspire.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... vi

INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................................ 1

1. CHAPTER ONE: HISTORIOGRAPHY AND THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED DAUGHTERS OF THE
CONFEDERACY AND THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UDC .......................................................... 4
   1.1 Historiography and History of the UDC .............................................................................. 4
   1.2 History of the Florida Division .......................................................................................... 11

2. CHAPTER TWO: THE MISSION OF THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UDC ............................. 16
   2.1 Historical Interpretation .................................................................................................... 19
   2.2 Social Issues ...................................................................................................................... 25

3. CHAPTER THREE: THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UDC AND PUBLIC EDUCATION ............ 31
   3.1 Textbook Campaign ........................................................................................................ 33
   3.2 The Banks Affair .............................................................................................................. 37

4. CHAPTER FOUR: FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UDC MONUMENTS .................................... 44
   4.1 Local Monuments ............................................................................................................. 44
   4.2 The Olustee Monument ................................................................................................... 48

CONCLUSION ................................................................................................................................. 55

REFERENCES ..................................................................................................................................... 58

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH .................................................................................................................. 63
ABSTRACT

From 1895 to the 1930s, The United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) established itself as one of Florida’s foremost interpreters of Confederate heritage. By examining the organization at the time of its greatest influence in Florida, this thesis demonstrates the ways in which the Daughters sought to forge a “usable past” from their Confederate legacy: to produce heritage from history. Specifically, it explains the Daughters’ attempts to influence school curriculum to teach their favored historical narrative and to shape public consciousness of the Civil War through monuments and commemorative ceremonies. Since heritage always straddles the gap between past and present, it also explores how the Daughters’ activities and rhetoric addressed the social issues of their own time such as race and gender. Sources used include the minutes of UDC conventions, newspaper records, and document collections at the State Archives of Florida, Florida State University, University of Florida, and Emory University.
INTRODUCTION

In its heyday in the early twentieth century, the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) occupied a unique position in Southern society. This organization stood at the intersection of the old but evolving Confederate memorial tradition and Southern women’s newly expanding social roles. For the women of Florida’s white, elite families, as for their compatriots throughout the South, the UDC presented an appealing opportunity to promote the social values that mattered most to them, influence their surrounding society, and reaffirm their own class status by creating social interactions within a circumscribed circle of peers. All of these activities were carried out in the name of protecting the patriarchal values of antebellum society, a construct that helped the UDC gain acceptance from their male peers who might have otherwise disapproved of the UDC’s activism.

Emboldened by this license from social censure, the Florida Division of the UDC vigorously carried out its mission: to forge a “usable past” from Florida’s Confederate legacy—to transform history into heritage. Heritage is a concept that defies easy definition, but David Lowenthal’s formulation that heritage comprises objects, cultural traditions, and ideological concepts that speak to “roots, identity, [and] belonging” is appropriate for this study.¹ As Lowenthal demonstrates, heritage and history draw from the same wellspring of the past, but are not at all the same entity. History strives for accuracy and clarity, heritage seeks meaning and relevancy. History rejects bias, heritage embraces a partisan approach to past events as a crucial link between past and present. Heritage is not “bad” history, it is a completely different way of understanding the past that emphasizes the use of historical figures, stories, and concepts to build personal and group identities for the present.²

Florida’s Daughters insisted that the stories they told were history: true, accurate, and impartial representations of the Southern past, but the result was unquestionably heritage: the parables, origin stories, and myths that the UDC hoped would form the basis of a new and great

² Lowenthal, Possessed by the Past, 102-4.
Southern people. In reality, Lowenthal’s careful distinction between the two concepts, while useful for modern analysis, had no meaning for the UDC. The Daughters allowed only one interpretation of Confederate history, so this history was indistinguishable from Southern heritage in their eyes.

Division President Esther Carlotta demonstrated this fusion of history and heritage perfectly in an article written for the St. Augustine chapter of the UDC in 1909. After a brief affirmation that the UDC was a patriotic organization devoted to the United States government, Carlotta got to heart of the matter:

Let us still remember that our first and most sacred duty is to guard our southern heritage; the land and the memories which have come down to us from our fathers; to preserve its honor and its high ideals...without prejudice or bitterness, but without fear or apology...without boasting or blatancy, but fairly, clearly and truly, set before the world the story of the South, in its undimmed beauty; that ‘he who reads may read’ the record of patriotism, heroism and fortitude which is written in crimson lines on the white pages of southern history.3

This seamless integration of appeals for impartiality with passionately partisan rhetoric characterized the UDC’s approach to the Confederate past. Even Carlotta’s use of colors was significant. Florida’s Daughters wished to see the history of the Confederacy written not only with ink but with the blood of Southern ancestors, its meaning inscribed not only in books but upon the hearts and minds of the state’s white, Anglo-Saxon population.

It is tempting to view the Daughters’ heritage activities as nothing more than a frantic rearguard action against the spreading commercialization of Southern culture as a manufacturing economy grew to eclipse the older, agrarian way of life. However, this characterization is only partly accurate. Members of the Florida UDC did bemoan the profit driven bent of the New South, as did Southern female activists of all types, but the Daughters were not opposed to modernization itself, only the potential corruption of Southern values that the adaptation of “Northern” industrial methods threatened.4 Florida’s Daughters hoped that

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3 Esther Carlotta, “Confederate Organizations and Why We Form Them,” 1909, United Daughters of the Confederacy Florida Division Scrapbooks 1900-1930, Collection #M96-18, State Archives of Florida (SAF) (hereafter cited as UDC Scrapbooks).

heritage, which “clarifies pasts so as to infuse them with present purposes,” could ensure that whatever mythic qualities constituted Southern identity in the past would not be lost to future generations.5

The exact content of this heritage varied in detail, but invariably emphasized the righteousness of the Confederate cause and promoted both regional pride and national patriotism. Important social issues of the present, especially questions of race and gender, also entered the UDC discourse and were debated from various historical and contemporary standpoints. This historical activism made the UDC, which was avowedly a nonpolitical organization, nonetheless quite influential to at least the social politics of the time.

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5 Lowenthal, Possessed by the Past, xi.
CHAPTER ONE

HISTORIOGRAPHY AND THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED DAUGHTERS OF
THE CONFEDERACY AND THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UDC

The United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) flourished in the period 1894 to approximately 1930, a time of economic, political, and social change in the United States. In the South, the UDC was an integral part of a broader pattern of memorialization and celebration of the Confederacy that stretched back to the end of the Civil War, but was most prevalent from the 1870s on. At the same time, the UDC was a women’s association operating during a time when such organizations were exercising unprecedented influence in American society. The intersection of these trends makes the UDC an intriguing subject for scholarly study. The Florida Division, formed just a few years after the national organization, rose from small beginnings to become the state’s foremost female hereditary and historical association, as well as a leader of its Confederate heritage.

1.1: Historiography and History of the UDC

Female historical commemorative activities began in the South during Reconstruction, when honoring the memory of the recently defeated Confederacy was so intuitively understood as a political act that, as John Neff puts it, “the duty of commemoration fell in the South to those whom society considered politically irrelevant—women.” Through local and autonomous Ladies Memorial Associations (LMAs), Southern women decorated graves of Confederate soldiers and erected monuments to the fallen, quietly at first, and then with greater visibility as the efforts of Reconstruction receded. By the 1880s, many LMAs renamed

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6 John Neff, Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 146.
themselves Daughters of the Confederacy, in honor of Jefferson Davis’ daughter Winnie Davis who adopted the appellation “Daughter of the Confederacy” at this time.\(^7\)

These disparate organizations were first brought together through the efforts of two women: Caroline Goodlett of Kentucky and Anna Raines of Georgia. Goodlett and Raines cofounded the National Association of the Daughters of the Confederacy in 1894, renamed United Daughters of the Confederacy the following year. The organization was national in scale, subdivided into state divisions and local chapters. Throughout the organization’s existence, membership has been restricted to the female descendants of Southerners of either sex who served the cause of the Confederacy during the Civil War. Notwithstanding this constraint, membership grew exponentially in the organization’s early years, numbering nearly 100,000 by 1918.\(^8\)

Over the organization’s first three decades, the UDC became a visible part of Southern society: raising monuments, supporting indigent Confederate veterans, and placing history books sympathetic to the Confederate cause in the nation’s schools and libraries. Other UDC activities included providing college scholarships for young descendents of Confederates and presenting medals of honor to veterans of more recent conflicts, especially the First World War.\(^9\) The organization continues today, although its public visibility and activity has decreased dramatically.

The UDC’s emergence in the 1890s places the organization at an interesting time in Southern and American history. As a historical society, the UDC stood in good company in the late nineteenth century, surrounded by the recently formed Daughters of the American Revolution, Daughters of the War of 1812, and Colonial Dames of America, as well as older organizations such as the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities and the Mount

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\(^{8}\) For a complete account of the founding of the UDC, see: Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 8-27 or the UDC’s institutional history: Mary Poppenheim et al., *The History of the United Daughters of the Confederacy* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1956).

Vernon Ladies Association. Women across the nation formed organizations to preserve heritage and history.¹⁰

Nor was the contemporary urge to memorialize the past exclusively an American phenomenon. Just as the economic and social changes of the New South prompted the UDC to turn to their Confederate past for contemporary lessons, W. Fitzhugh Brundage argues that “wrenching economic transformation, political turmoil, and chronic social tensions” was characteristic of the entire Western world at the end of the nineteenth century.¹¹ In response, European governments from the United Kingdom to Germany encouraged the commemoration of their national histories through monuments and other methods familiar to the UDC. Brundage refers to this phenomenon as “‘invented’ tradition,” and it is clearly compatible with Lowenthal’s concept of heritage. Lowenthal’s assertion that heritage plays an “essential role in husbanding community, identity, [and] continuity,” clearly appealed to more than just Southern women.¹²

Of all these groups, the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) bore the greatest resemblance to the UDC. The DAR was founded just four years before the UDC, had similar lineage requirements for its members, and engaged in monument construction and other commemorative activities very similar to those of the UDC. During the 1920s, the DAR even protested school textbooks that did not represent “true American history,” a very close parallel to the UDC’s concern over the representation of the Confederacy in public education.¹³

Yet the UDC was different from other historical and hereditary organizations. UDC membership, while still restrictive, was open to far more women than the clannish societies devoted to the nation’s oldest families. Far more importantly, the UDC was not, for all its rhetoric of devotion to the United States, one historical and patriotic association among many. The heart and soul of the UDC was its Southern regionalism, an aspect which both set the UDC

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¹² Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past*, xi.
apart from its sister organizations and accounts for its success among Southern women. As Karen Cox, the only historian to write a book length study of the UDC, notes: “Southern women joined other organizations as well, but they joined the Daughters in greater numbers.” The UDC thrived because it came into being during the “Lost Cause” era of Southern history when the region’s Confederate legacy eclipsed all other strains of Southern and American heritage.

The Lost Cause phenomenon, which began in the 1870s led by prominent former Confederates such as Jubal A. Early and Alexander Stephens, had by the 1890s been transformed from a fringe movement of embittered writers to a region-wide celebration of the Confederate past that embraced almost all white Southerners. Academic works on the Lost Cause that discuss Southern organizations spawned by the movement generally focus on the activities of the United Confederate Veterans (UCV), an association founded in 1889 for the purpose of unifying various regional “camps” of Confederate veterans into a single organization to better promote pride of the South’s Confederate heritage.

The UCV was the inspiration and model, in both name and function, for the UDC and the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV), as the Veterans engaged in a few monument raising campaigns and first tackled the issue of anti-Southern textbooks in Southern schools. Rollin Osterweis even goes so far as to describe the UDC as an “auxiliary” of the UCV, a label that only appropriately applies to the SCV. However, the UCV was primarily concerned with veteran reunions, events in which the UDC played a peripheral role at best. The UCV was also limited by the fact that many of its members were already elderly by 1889. As the years passed, the UCV’s irreplaceable membership decreased rapidly. In 1894 the UCV was at the peak of its influence, but it rapidly declined as the Daughters ascended. The work of carrying the South’s Confederate heritage into the twentieth century would rest primarily on the UDC.

Gaines M. Foster’s *Ghosts of the Confederacy* traces the development of the Lost Cause “tradition” in more detail than Osterweis, moving from the earliest memoirists through more scholarly defenses of the Southern cause, to the tradition’s supposed apex in the Confederate

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14 Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 29.
veteran movement of the 1880s and 1890s. Along the way, Foster demonstrates a shift in both the tone and activities of those involved in creating the tradition. The hostile attitude of early writers softened into an acceptance of sectional reconciliation as the South emerged from Reconstruction and experienced rapid economic growth in the late nineteenth century.\(^\text{18}\)

Foster acknowledges the attempt of the UDC to continue the legacy established by the Confederate veterans, but he judges the attempt a failure, arguing that professional historians established the national discourse on the Civil War from the beginning of the twentieth century onward.\(^\text{19}\) Cox disagrees vehemently on this point, contending that the transfer of authority from male to female Lost Cause proponents did not signify the decline of the phenomenon, but rather its further entrenchment into the fabric of Southern society. According to Cox, the Lost Cause declined as a central aspect of Southern life not because the economic realities of the New South made it obsolete, but because the UDC had so successfully implanted its narratives into Southern culture that further activism became unnecessary.\(^\text{20}\)

Brundage supports Cox’s position on the prominence of the UDC, noting that “the influence of the UCV was ephemeral,” an unavoidable result of the fact that its membership was relegated to a single, rapidly aging generation. As for the SCV, Brundage believes that the organization “faltered from its inception.” Brundage also notes the conflict between the Daughters and professional historians, but declines to declare either the dominant voice.\(^\text{21}\)

David Blight presents an alternative view of the Lost Cause era in *Race and Reunion* that focuses on Foster’s theme of reconciliation in the late nineteenth century and its implication for American race relations. Blight believes that the language of national reunification that the later Lost Cause advocates advanced was a reunification of the white North and the white South, excluding the possibility that the Civil War would be remembered as an “emancipationist” struggle whose primary legacy was the ending of slavery.\(^\text{22}\) The UDC is

\(^{18}\) Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 3-8.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., 180-91.

\(^{20}\) Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 4-5 and 161.


frequently featured in Blight’s book, although he makes little distinction between the nature of its activities and those of the UCV, SCV, and similar male proponents of the Lost Cause.\(^2^3\)

As this study is centered on the history and activities of the Florida Division of the UDC, it makes few claims regarding the region or nation-wide impact of the UDC and the Lost Cause movement. This thesis agrees with Cox’s assertion that the UDC successfully carried the Lost Cause forward after the decline of the veteran movement but, whereas Cox argues that the UDC reached a peak of influence at the end of the First World War and gradually began to fade in prominence, this study extends the time period to 1930. Florida’s Daughters enjoyed social influence and prominence at least until this date and their activities in the social, political, and cultural world of the 1920s merit examination.\(^2^4\) This thesis does not contest Blight’s argument that the theme of reconciliation, as well as many elements of the Lost Cause, was predicated on the ideology of white supremacy, and it produces evidence in favor of it.

Influential as the UDC was to the development of the Lost Cause tradition, it also stood out as an important institution in the progress of Southern women’s history. The UDC belonged to a nationwide movement of women’s clubs that sprang up in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, dedicated to everything from literature to radical social reform. According to Brundage, the “tireless and invasive clubwoman” was so common in the 1880s and 1890s that male society made her “a popular figure of ridicule,” a reaction that Brundage interprets as a defense mechanism against “the expansion of white women’s cultural influence within the public sphere.”\(^2^5\)

Historians unanimously agree that club activity expanded women’s social role during this time period, in marked contrast to the domestic ideal of the earlier nineteenth century. The true significance of Southern female societies such as the UDC, however, has remained a matter of contention. Anne Firor Scott sees all Southern female voluntary activity from the missionary societies of the 1870s to temperance activism in the early 1900s as inherently progressive and conducive to the emancipation of women from their constrictive domestic

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\(^2^3\) See for example: 272-274, 290-294, 344.
\(^2^4\) Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 6-7.
\(^2^5\) Brundage, “Woman’s Hand and Hart and Deathless Love” in *Monuments to the Lost Cause*, 71.
existence. Scott places the UDC within this general movement, yet even she acknowledges that “the image of the lady was slow to die” among those who cherished the antebellum past.

Foster, focusing more heavily on the social values that the UDC advocated, cautions that “too much could easily be made of the way the UDC expanded the female role.” He argues instead that most Daughters truly believed in the conservative Southern values of previous generations. Like Scott, Foster also recognizes that exceptions existed to his generalization, as he points to the presence of true progressives within the UDC ranks.

Cox, whose familiarity with the UDC exceeds that of either previous author, offers a more balanced view of the UDC’s relationship with the women’s movement. Like Scott, Cox sees the UDC as one progressive women’s club among many, and believes that many Daughters were genuine social reformers comparable to members of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union and suffrage organizations. However, Cox takes the UDC’s rhetoric on gender relations seriously rather than dismiss it as a mask for achieving social acceptance as Scott does. Most UDC members genuinely wanted to retain their “image as traditional women” while also working for change in the wider society. A certain sense of irony is inevitable in considering these conflicting goals.

Florida’s Daughters present examples of both types of Southern women, although the progressives tend to have been more vocal on gender issues. As later chapters make clear, contradictions were common in the gender ideologies of Florida’s Daughters, which often praised the conventional and the liberated woman simultaneously. These tensions and contradictions, while real, never distracted from the heritage agenda of the UDC.

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27 Scott, *The Southern Lady*, 221.
29 Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 29.
30 Ibid., 32.
1.2: History of the Florida Division UDC

UDC activity in Florida began in 1895, when the two year old Confederate Home Association in Jacksonville became the nineteenth chapter of the UDC. The Confederate Home Association was founded under the influence of the Jacksonville camp of the UCV as a women’s auxiliary unit to help support the city’s Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Home for needy veterans. Susan Hartridge, the daughter of early Florida pioneer Madison Livingston for whom the town of Madison was named, led both the Home Association and the new UDC chapter.31

UDC local chapters in Florida sprang up quickly in the year following. In January of 1896, Hartridge took the initiative to form the State Division under the advisement of Anna Raines, who took a personal interest in seeing the UDC take root in the southern neighbor of her native Georgia. Delegates from Lake City, Ocala, Brooksville, and Palatka answered Hartridge’s call to come together “for the purpose of perpetuating and commemorating the memory of our loved ones who fought and died for a cause that to them seemed just and right.”32 The Division’s first president was Julia Weed, wife of the Episcopal Bishop of Florida and a fellow Jacksonville resident, ensuring that this city would retain control of the fledgling Division for the next several years.33 Weed succeeded to the presidency of the national organization in 1899, leaving the Division presidency to Nancy Tench of Gainesville, wife of Confederate Major John W. Tench.

Most high officers of the Division continued to be selected from the female elite of Florida during the early years of the twentieth century, including Florence Cooley, daughter of a state legislator and Division President 1902-1904, and Floride Lydia Pearson Fleming, wife of former Governor Francis Fleming and longtime vice-regent for the Florida Room at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. When it formed in 1898, Tallahassee’s Anna Jackson Chapter included Mary Davis Bloxham, wife of then Governor William Dunning Bloxham; Caroline M.

32 Emma Gayle McFadeen, “Forming the Florida Division UDC,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
33 Cathryn Garth Lancaster, Early Years of the Florida Division UDC 1896-1921 (1985?), 5-6.
Brevard, granddaughter of Florida Territorial Governor Richard Keith Call; and three other
granddaughters and great-granddaughters of former governors.  

General membership in the Division was much more varied and contained women from
more modest backgrounds. The Division constitution defined eligible members as “widows,
wives, mothers, sisters, nieces and lineal descendants” of Confederate veterans, Southern men
“who loyally gave aid to the cause,” and “Southern women, of whose personal service and loyal
aid to the Southern cause during the war, proof can be given.” Although the Division’s
membership requirements were theoretically classless, the membership fee and availability of
free time that participation in the UDC required generally prohibited working class women from
joining. According to Cox, the participation of “objectionable” women was a matter of concern
for the national organization, and led some Daughters to call for stricter membership
requirements. The Florida Division has no record of involvement in this dispute.

The Florida Division grew slowly but steadily during its early years, reaching 13 chapters
and 560 members by 1900, and 41 chapters with a membership of 2,566 by 1925. Compared
to some other state divisions such as Texas, which by 1902 already contained 5,000 members,
Florida’s numbers appear small. Weed ascribed her state’s low membership in 1900 to the
large numbers of transplanted Northerners in the southern part of the state. “Tampa marks the
southern limit of the work of the [UDC]” Weed explained, and although many south Florida
cities did establish chapters, the fact that not a single Division president between 1895 and
1930 came from south of Orlando does testify to the northern orientation of Division.

The UDC’s 1925 membership represented 1.1 percent of all white Florida women over
the age of 21, a figure that rises to 1.5 percent when all counties south of Tampa are ignored.
This is largely consistent with 1905 when the Division’s approximately 1000 members made up
1.2 percent of the same demographic statewide and 1.4 in the northern and central portions of

34 Lancaster, Early Years of the Florida Division, 13, 18; Effie Morrison Scott, Centennial History of Anna Jackson
35 Constitution Florida Division Daughters of the Confederacy, Minutes of the Seventeenth Annual Convention,
Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (1912), 223.
36 Cox, Dixie’s Daughters, 30-1.
38 Cox, Dixie’s Daughters, 29.
39 Julia Weed, “Report of the Florida Division” Minutes of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the United Daughters of the
Confederacy (Tennessee: Foster & Webb, 1900), 36.
the state. The explosive growth of south Florida in the intervening 20 years accounts for the slight discrepancy.\(^{40}\)

All Florida Daughters were also required to submit documentary proof of their connection, by birth or marriage, to a Confederate bloodline, a provision that the Division leadership rigorously enforced from 1901 onward. This frustrated many Florida women who were more accustomed to relying on “personal contacts” for their genealogical information, and probably helps account for the Division’s relatively low membership. The fact that so many women who joined the UDC in Florida were born in other parts of the South no doubt complicated the acquisition of documentation.\(^{41}\)

While the Florida UDC may have been smaller than most Southern state divisions, the UDC was still one of the largest women’s associations in Florida at its peak. The Florida Society DAR also began in 1895, and also in Jacksonville, but by 1927 only claimed 1,480 members.\(^{42}\) The state chapter of the Colonial Dames of America in 1925 held just 110 names in its member roster.\(^{43}\) Only the massive General Federation of Women’s Clubs had definitively higher numbers in this period, with 11,138 Florida members in 1933, but the GFWC was committed to volunteerism and community service exclusively. The UDC was Florida’s undisputed leader of women’s hereditary, historical societies.\(^{44}\)

The activities of the Florida Division closely mirrored those of the national organization since, as Cox notes, “there was a regional consistency in the types of activities in which the Daughters engaged because the objectives were dictated by the general organization.”\(^{45}\)

Florida’s Daughters raised monuments throughout the state and campaigned for the use of pro-Southern textbooks in the public school system, as later chapters elaborate. Supporting the Jacksonville Soldiers and Sailors Home continued to be a high priority for the Division. The

\(^{40}\) Florida Department of Agriculture, *The Third Census of the State of Florida taken in the year 1905*, 54; ----, *The Fifth Census of the State of Florida taken in the year 1925*, 91.

\(^{41}\) Lancaster, *Early Years of the Florida Division*, 19.

\(^{42}\) Florida Daughters of the American Revolution *Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Conference*, 1927, 40.

\(^{43}\) The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Florida, 1925. n.p.

\(^{44}\) The Register of Women’s Clubs Volume XXXIV (New York: Essex publishing, 1933), 146.

\(^{45}\) Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 3.
Daughters had no representation on the Home’s governing board until 1921 when the state assumed ownership, despite repeated requests for representation to the Florida Division UCV.46

Crosses of military service, essay contests, and college scholarships were all activities that occupied Florida’s Daughters in the Division’s early years, although monument projects took the most time and money, and textbook campaigns raised the most passion. The collection and dissemination of historical works, both primary documents and later memoirs and interviews was a special concern of the Division, which established the office of Division Historian in its 1896 constitution. The national UDC did not create the office of Historian General until 1908. Mary Dickison, wife and biographer of Confederate Colonel J.J. Dickison, was the Division’s first historian, followed by Caroline Brevard in 1900.47

The Division seems to have reached a peak of activity during the Presidency of Esther Carlotta (1909-1916) of St. Augustine. Carlotta, an Episcopal Sister of the Order of the Resurrection, pursued the work of the Division so vigorously that in 1913 she suffered a nonfatal heart attack that her physician attributed to the stress of her position in the UDC.48 Carlotta’s stress was no doubt compounded by internal opposition to her “domineering” leadership.49 At the 1912 Division Convention, Carlotta’s reelection was interrupted by an exchange with a rival faction that the modesty of the recording secretary did not allow her to relate.50 Although she considered resigning, Carlotta went on to lead the Division through both the Enoch Banks controversy and the completion of the Olustee Monument.

The Florida Division suffered a period of stagnation and decline in membership from the 1930s on, and the organization never achieved the same level of activity or visibility that it had enjoyed in its first three decades. The Division’s membership in 2006 was 1,675, a miniscule percentage of the adult, white female population of Florida in the twenty first century.51 For reasons discussed in the conclusion, Florida’s Daughters gradually lost the drive that compelled

46 Lancaster, Early Years of the Florida Division, 55.
48 Minutes of the 18th Annual Convention, Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (1913), 35.
49 Lancaster, Early Years of the Florida Division, 46.
50 Minutes of the 17th Annual Convention, Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (1912).
51 United Daughters of the Confederacy Florida Division Minutes of the 111th Annual Convention (2006), 241.
them to enforce the public veneration of Confederate heritage, and thus maintain their relevance to contemporary society.
CHAPTER TWO

THE MISSION OF THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UDC

The transmission of Florida’s Confederate heritage was an active task, and it animated the Division with a strong sense of mission in its early years. Obtaining a voice in the public sphere would be worthless for the Division if they had no message to impart, so the Daughters attempted to forge a collective account of the causes, course, and legacy of the Civil War that could be communicated to the present generation in a more or less coherent form. The essays, articles, memoirs, and oral histories that the Daughters used to craft a narrative form the bulk of early Florida Division material that has survived to the present.

Since the resulting narrative was as much heritage as history, it spoke directly to the social issues of the early twentieth century as much as it explained those of the nineteenth. Defense of slavery translated smoothly into support for racial segregation, and the travails of Confederate women were invoked in various ways by Daughters engaged in the debate over woman suffrage. Despite the sometimes contentious and contradictory circumstances under which Florida’s Daughters invoked their organization’s core historical narrative, no Daughter ever sought to radically alter the contents of that narrative. As the perceived heritage of the South, the UDC’s historical message demanded the same “uncritical endorsement” that Lowenthal argues is an essential component of all heritage campaigns.52

Founded 31 years after the end of the war, the early members of the Florida Division UDC were multi-generational, consisting of both elderly women who lived through the conflict and the next generation whose memories spanned the Reconstruction period and the subsequent Lost Cause cultural phenomenon. For both types of members, defending the Confederate cause was tantamount to defending themselves, their families, and the society in which they lived and breathed. It was almost inevitable that the organization’s “overarching

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52 Lowenthal, Possessed by the Past, 121.
objective…was vindication for the Confederate generation,” an objective that they labored for untiiringly.\(^{53}\)

As Florida’s Daughters stressed many times, the UDC was, first and foremost, a historical organization. The UDC constitution pledged all Daughters “to collect and preserve the materials for a truthful history of the war between the Confederate States and the United States of America” as their highest responsibility.\(^{54}\) Florida Division Historian Beatrice Sellers Howe reinforced the centrality of historical work to the Florida Division in 1907, when she reminded Daughters at the Division Convention that “We are primarily a historical society and though not makers of history, we are only a degree removed as ‘keepers of history.’ In our hands lies the history of the South, as it shall be told to future generations.”\(^{55}\)

While the historical nature of the UDC’s work was never questioned, one issue that remained contested in internal discussions was whether their historical activity was primarily narrative or archival. The Daughters debated whether the UDC should focus on the writing of history or the collection of primary documents. When Division Historian Blanche Leigh compiled historical scrapbooks for the Division in 1927, she chose to begin each one with a poem that supports the latter view, stating “In the future some historian will come forth strong and wise/he will go back in his studies far beyond our gathered dates/…he will hold the scales of justice, he will measure praise and blame/and the South will stand the verdict and will stand it without shame.”\(^{56}\) Despite this modest self identification as the gatherers rather than writers of history, Daughters, including Leigh wrote history constantly, were perfectly comfortable holding the scales of justice themselves.

The UDC’s historical meta-narrative was not unique to their organization, and will be familiar to scholars of Southern history, as it followed the same pro-Confederate lines of argument established by Alexander H. Stephens, Albert T. Bledsoe, Robert L. Dabney, and others in the immediate postwar years. Bledsoe’s *Is Davis a Traitor?* of 1866 and Stephens’ *Constitutional View of the Late War of 1870* established the theory that secession was a

\(^{53}\) Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 3.

\(^{54}\) Esther Carlotta, “Confederate Organizations and why we form them,” 1909, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.

\(^{55}\) Beatrice Sellers Howe, Letter to Florida Division Convention, 1907, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.

\(^{56}\) Anonymous, poem on front page of “Scapbook of the Florida Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy 1926-7,” 1927?, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
constitutional right, while Dabney reaffirmed the antebellum justification of slavery for a new generation in *A Defense of Virginia*, published in 1867.\textsuperscript{57} However, if the Daughters added little to the content of this preexisting narrative, they were unique in the lengths they went to promote it.

The importance that the Daughters attached to their historical and social mission was reflected in the frequency with which religious language punctuated their discussions of history. As Charles Wilson notes, “religion...saturated the United Daughters of the Confederacy” to a greater degree than in other Confederate societies, and provided them with a “crusading zeal to the Lost Cause religion.”\textsuperscript{58} Florida’s Children of the Confederacy, the youth auxiliary of the UDC, used *A Confederate Catechism* by Virginia historian Lyon Tyler as a textbook. This intriguing book faithfully replicated the form and function of its religious progenitors by providing question and answer drills on Civil War history, designed to enable rote memorization of the hallowed historical canon.\textsuperscript{59} Such pedantic measures were not used in adult literature, but the words “sacred,” and “holy,” appear regularly in nearly all UDC writings. Lowenthal’s observation that “devotion to heritage is a spiritual calling” rings true in the case of the UDC.\textsuperscript{60}

Even when the UDC’s mission was not described with explicitly religious terminology, leaders such as Esther Carlotta constantly attempted to convince the rank and file of the transcendent importance of their work. At the 1911 Division Convention, Carlotta offered the following exhortation to the gathered delegates:

Either our organization must mean *very much*, or it means *nothing*... We must live up to our *raison d’etre*, or else we *should*, and eventually *will* cease to exist, but as an organization which is most strictly memorial, which has for its chief object the keeping fair and fragrant the name and the fame of the dead, we have a recognized cause for existence, a specific duty to discharge.\textsuperscript{61}

This impassioned sense of purpose defined the approach Florida’s Daughters took to the telling of history.

\textsuperscript{57} Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 49.
\textsuperscript{60} Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past*, 1.
\textsuperscript{61} Carlotta, “President’s Message,” *Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Convention, Florida Division, United Daughters of the Confederacy*, (1911), 5-6.
2.1: Historical Interpretation

The UDC felt called upon to correct many points of America’s historical understanding of the Civil War and Reconstruction, but no single event generated as much attention or passion as the act of secession. Daughters varied in the extent to which they pursued a justification of secession, but all hewed to a narrative that emphasized, above all, the image of the South as a victim unjustly deprived of her rights. Secession was either a sacred constitutional right that required no explanation, or a desperate act forced upon the South by a bullying Federal government under the control of Northern interests.

Lyon Tyler’s *Confederate Catechism* goes into greater detail than most accounts on the cause of secession. Tyler claimed that secession was inevitable given that “the Union consisted from the first of two jarring nations having different interests, that were brought to the breaking point in 1861 by the intemperate agitation in the North against everything Southern.” The idea of “two jarring nations” was further explained by Daughter Mary Tousler as a result of the fact that “the South was predominantly settled by the Cavaliers—the best blood of England,” as opposed to the inferior, Puritan North. The American Civil War could thus be seen as a strange continuation of the English Civil War, with the image of a noble Southern aristocracy battling a vulgar Northern mob that the comparison implied.

However inventive such explanations of the conflict’s origin are, they are compatible with but not representative of the majority of UDC opinions on the subject. Some Daughters ignored the causes of secession in favor of defending the act’s constitutionality. Many echoed the claim that “when the constitution of the United States was adopted at the close of the Revolution, each state had the right to withdraw.” Thus, whatever the cause of secession, the onus of initiating the bloody conflict rested upon the North for refusing to recognize this right.

Still others preferred to skip explanation altogether and instead invoke an extremely vague atmosphere of Southern victimhood. The South was simply “alarmed for the continuance

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62 Lyon Gardiner Tyler, *A Confederate Catechism*, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
63 Mary Tousler, “The Boys of the South in the World War,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
64 Anonymous, “General J.J. Dickison and his Men,” n.d. UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
of her rights,” and thus it “arose...to uphold its States Rights.” The phrase “States Rights” often takes on a strange grammatical form in these discussions, usually capitalized and without an apostrophe, and sometimes used as a singular noun: “when States Rights was crushed.” This peculiar usage suggests that to the minds of many Daughters, “States Rights” represented not a group of separate, definable political rights, but rather a singular entity requiring only a ritualistic invocation, not an explanation.

The most controversial issue surrounding secession was the role played by the institution of slavery, and it is here where the UDC historical narrative is actually tolerant of some diversity of opinion, although within certain boundaries. All Daughters felt compelled to defend the Old South from any moral responsibility for slavery, but differed in how closely they associated it with the cause of the war. Esther Carlotta spoke for many Daughters with her assertion that “In reality, the South fought for the inherent right of state sovereignty, and the North fought to preserve the Federal Union; slavery was but a dramatic stage setting for the real conflict.”

Others were less quick to deny the centrality of slavery to secession and the war, perhaps reflecting the preponderance of descendants of elite slaveholding families in the Florida UDC. Some Daughters forthrightly declared that slavery was the leading cause of secession, citing the “unjust, cruel, and tyrannical” efforts of the North to block the expansion of slavery as justification enough for dissolution of the Union. An unidentified elderly Daughter remembered being unable to understand why, in the years leading up to secession, “fanatical abolitionists” wanted to prevent her slave holding family from “doing with our own property as we pleased.” In her opinion, “abolitionism and fanaticism, with petty political trickery, drove the southern states from the Union.”

Tyler’s Catechism attempted a paradoxical middle ground position by claiming simultaneously that “the attempted linking of slavery and secession with war is merely an effort

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66 Mary Anne Baird, “Jefferson Davis,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
67 Carlotta, “Confederate Organizations,” 1909, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
68 Cox, Dixie’s Daughters, 30-32.
69 Anonymous, relative of J.H. Walford, untitled reminiscence of Civil War, n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
to obscure the issue—‘a red herring drawn across the trail,’” and that “it was the vindictive, intemperate anti-slavery movement that was at the bottom of all the troubles.” Tyler does not explain how a war prompted by an anti-slavery movement could have no association with slavery. However, the catechism leaves its reader with the certainty that, whatever the root cause of the conflict, the North bore full moral responsibility for the carnage.\(^\text{70}\)

While the UDC sometimes struggled to maintain message discipline on the issue of secession, the same cannot be said of the war itself. Many historical essays and reminiscences produced or collected by the UDC began with a formulaic defense of the Confederate cause that copied one of the narrative options outlined above, this was often preamble to the heart of the submission. In the majority of cases, Florida’s Daughters wrote first and foremost about the wartime experiences of families and individuals. Unlike the earliest Lost Cause historians who focused entirely on military and political history, many Daughters chose to collect the experiences of ordinary Southerners in a manner recognizable to modern social historians.

Daughter Julia Norris stated this belief clearly when she complained that “undue prominence has been given to the deeds of those in high position, the commanders of armies, those who organized great movements, and too little is said of... the deeds of the privates, the men in the ranks.”\(^\text{71}\) Other Daughters were less explicit about celebrating the Confederate common man and merely sidestepped the political aspect of the war so as to avoid getting bogged down with arguments of secession and slavery. Several, including Mary Dickison and Julia Norris, employed the metaphor of a storm for the coming of the war, implying that it might as well have been an act of God, making human agency irrelevant. The important thing was to record the personal heroism and suffering of their own ancestors for posterity.\(^\text{72}\)

This was especially evident in historical pieces that dealt with the wartime experiences of Southern women, a specialty of the UDC. From the organization’s founding, the UDC expressed the collection of women’s history as a clear priority, with the tacit understanding that the male-dominated historical profession was likely to ignore this realm of history. As Susie

\(^{70}\) Tyler, Confederate Catechism, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF. n.p.

\(^{71}\) Julia Norris, “Reminiscences of one of Dickinson’s Men,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.

\(^{72}\) Norris, “Florida’s First Flag,” n.d., and Mary Dickison, “Dickison and his Men,” n.d., quoted by anonymous in UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
Jackson of Gainesville put it, “allow me to say it with clearness and much emphasis: OUR SOUTHERN HEROINES WERE NO LESS CONSPICUOUS.”

UDC writings on women’s wartime history generally convey the sense that the author is rescuing her female subjects from neglect and oblivion.

The representation of Southern women UDC histories varied somewhat, but shared the common theme that Southern women suffered immensely during the war and therefore deserved the same recognition for their service as their male counterparts. An essay from Gainesville’s J.J. Finley chapter entitled “The Burden the Women Bore” is typical in its description of “complexions roughened in the uncongenial winds, eyes sadden in the daily scenes of war, and hearts ached because they could do so little after all.” “Cheerful and patient suffering” was thus represented as the general wartime experience of Southern women.

Some Daughters stopped at the extreme suffering of Confederate women, thereby reinforcing the tragedy of the war and the resultant honor due to these women for persevering through it. Others went further to suggest that the hardships of war ended forever the sheltered antebellum life of elite white women, perhaps for the better. As Carlotta testified to the Appalachian Exposition of 1910, “Fingers that tied love knots and embroidered banners, learned to spin and weave, to knit and sew on rough garments; to tend the sick and comfort the dying and bury the dead…the womanhood of the south…suffered and was strong.”

This muscular vision of Southern womanhood no doubt appealed to the progressives within the UDC ranks as a ready metaphor for their own struggle for gender equality.

However, the idea that the UDC’s interpretation of Confederate women’s experience showed that they challenged their social gender roles should not be taken too far. Though some essays and speeches came close to articulating this position, others propagated romanticized accounts of “those gentle, refined ladies, sheltered and cared for more tenderly than any other women have ever been.” Celebrations of the paradisiacal antebellum condition and the robust postbellum woman existed side by side with little friction.

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73 Mrs. L.W. Jackson, “The Heroines of the Southern Confederacy,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
74 J.J. Finley Chapter, “The Burden the Women Bore,” 1909, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
75 Carlotta, “Confederate Women in History,” address before the Women’s Congress of the Appalachian Exposition, Knoxville TN, October 6, 1910, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
It is also important to note that while the variety and specificity of wartime experiences challenged the UDC’s ability to communicate a unified narrative, no individual account of personal or family experiences defied an overarching theme that Confederate soldiers and civilians were honorable, brave, and heroic individuals. Like the mother of Gainesville Daughter Mary Canfield, many of Florida’s Daughters simply “took little interest in political discussions—contented to leave them to the men of her country.” The UDC’s engagement with the social aspects of Civil War history generally complemented, rather than challenged, narratives of political history.

Florida Division records reveal only one instance in which the organization’s leadership expressed frustration at the less than disciplined nature of personal reminiscences, when the unidentified historian of the Madison chapter reported to her fellow Daughters that Historian-General Mildred Rutherford recently laid “stress on gathering and preserving data for coming history from old letters: especially those written at the front by the Confederate soldiers.” Madison’s historian sheepishly admitted that “reminiscences are faulty and seldom fill the proper niche. The facts are thrown together in a mess and they are ‘sorely mixed,’” but concluded by asking for understanding. After all, “is it any wonder that the memory proves treacherous after the lapse of half a century?”

Concern over the verity of individual memory is understandable from the perspective of a chapter historian, but does not reflect the attitude of most Florida Daughters. Norris believed it a “sacred duty” of the descendents of Confederate veterans to “perpetuate these reminiscences that have come to us from lips that we shall hear speak no more.” As Southern heritage, the personal reminiscences of Confederates were more prized for their lineage than their accuracy.

Political narrative returned when Daughters discussed the period of Reconstruction. While the war years were sometimes cast as a dark cloud from which emerged the silver lining of a Southern people, and especially women, made stronger and more unified through suffering, Reconstruction was uniformly described as a period of unrelenting tragedy.

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77 Mary Canfield, “A Noble Mississippi Woman,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
78 Historian, Elizabeth Harris Chapter, “Awakened Memories,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
79 Norris, “Florida’s First Flag,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
Daughters’ descriptions of Reconstruction usually consisted of two elements that combined the political narrative of secession and the social narrative of the war: a description of the trials and tribulations of individuals and families, and a broad condemnation of the disintegration of the racial hierarchy in that period.

The UDC compiled a myriad of accounts documenting the humiliation of Southerners during Reconstruction mostly focusing on the seizure of property by Union soldiers, similar to their gathered accounts of wartime suffering. What distinguished these latter accounts was their explicit focus on racial politics, whereas many of the accounts of secession attempted to downplay the importance of race to the conflict, as we have seen. Reconstruction was represented as a time when the South was subject to “radical rule and negro oppression,” when “black heels were on white necks.”

The presence of black regiments in conquered Southern cities was particularly galling to Daughters such as Elizabeth Sheldon who told the Lake City chapter in 1909 that “BLUE-BRASS-EBONY, was a combination that did not appeal to me- indeed I question if the ‘prince of darkness’ with his entire satanic host and sulphuric [sic] odor could have impressed me with greater indignation, and I blush to add, intimidation.” Since the greatest problem of Reconstruction was emancipation, all UDC histories agree that its solution was “that wonderful campaign [by the Southern Redeemer politicians] which put to flight the robber barons and restored white supremacy.”

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81 Elizabeth Coffee Sheldon, “Grandfather a Prisoner,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
82 Mrs. F.R. Gary, untitled essay, n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
2.2: Social Issues

Unsurprisingly, given the social environment in which they functioned, Florida’s Daughters openly advocated white supremacy as a proper organizing principle for society and an integral aspect of their Confederate heritage. For Blanche Leigh, “our sires who wore the grey” fought primarily to “[preserve] the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race,” and she urged her fellow Daughters not to “break faith” with such a noble goal. In this, the Florida Division was not alone. In 1901, the national organization adopted a motto that pledged to educate the descendents of “the men who wore the grey...and thereby fasten more securely the rights and privileges of citizenship upon a pure Anglo-Saxon race.” The UDC left no doubt that the Confederate heritage they promoted applied to the white, specifically Anglo-Saxon, race exclusively.

The historical accounts of Florida Daughters are replete with paeans to slavery and the race relations of the antebellum South. The Children of the Confederacy could learn from Tyler that “the negroes were the most spoiled domestics in the world...the beneficiary rather than the victim of slavery.” If the slaves themselves had a different view of the matter, their opinion was irrelevant. After all, according to Tyler, “taking ignorant negroes and making them work was no more criminal violation of democracy or self-government than there is to-day in keeping the Filipinos [sic] under political duress.” Although rarer, some Daughters also commented unfavorably on the present condition of the African American population, such as Mrs. A.P. Sebring of Bronson who commented to the members of her chapter that: “Find today a negro who had a hard master, and you find a good servant; on the other hand, find one that was treated with much leniency and kindness, and you find an independent and worthless negro.” Florida’s Daughters were perfectly willing to embrace the legacy of slavery as part of their heritage message.

84 Anonymous, Report of the General Convention, 1901, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
85 Tyler, A Confederate Catechism, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
86 Mrs. A.P. Sebring, “In Times of Peace, Prepare for War,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF. Note: Married women in the UDC were identified by their husband’s name in all formal documents. Before the mid 1920s, the husband’s name was often the only identification given. Later records include the Daughter’s given name in parenthesis. Daughters are identified by their given names in this thesis except in cases where identification is impossible, in which case the husband’s name is preserved.
The most prominent memoirist of the antebellum era in the Florida Division was the long time Honorary President of the Division, Susan Bradford Eppes. Eppes, who wrote of her recollections growing up in Pine Hill Plantation near Tallahassee, similarly lamented the “white man’s problem” that resulted from emancipation, but also associated slavery with a balanced and hierarchical society that transcended race alone. In Eppes’ opinion:

The American Bolshevist, who hopes to overthrow our government...the bomb-sender, who is too cowardly to come out in the open to do his evil deeds—the labor-agitator, who would incite others to destroy that which it has taken men of wealth and brains generations to build up—each and all of these, are but re-incarnations of the CARPET-BAGGER.87

Contemporary concerns were seldom linked to historical precedents quite so explicitly in the works of Florida Daughters, but Eppes’ defense of a conservative social system was not unique. Given that this was the general racial attitude of the UDC, it is also no surprise that the Ku Klux Klan was treated mostly favorably by the UDC, both the original “first” Klan of the nineteenth century and the organization’s second manifestation of the 1920s. An anonymous Madison Daughter who identified herself as a former “member of the Invisible Empire,” exhorted her chapter “that it is their duty to love and honor the Ku Klux Klan.” Although she allowed that “perhaps some good men drifted away from their moorings against their better judgment,” the ex-Klanswoman put up a spirited defense of her organization, arguing that the vast majority of crimes attributed to the Klan were in fact committed by “members of the Union League,” and that “the Klan did good, effective service for Madison County.”88

Another, similarly anonymous account showed a more hesitant attitude towards “the old KKK,” admitting that though the first Klan’s original intent was noble, “the organization soon became perverted.” Even more than the first, this second author stressed the conditions that gave rise to the Klan, specifically the “vast multitude of ignorant slavish men, women and children who were helpless as infants after being suddenly thrust into rights and privileges never experienced in a single stage before in the entire evolution of the race.” Whatever the

abuses of the first Klan, the author put greater faith the new Klan that “stands unreservedly and unashamedly for white supremacy in America.”

Florida’s Daughters did not see eye to eye on all social issues, but the principal of white supremacy was never challenged by those Daughters who wrote on race. Most, such as Harriet Whitaker, were willing to grant that there were “innate good qualities of the negro race,” and indeed were eager to celebrate the “faithfulness of the old black mammies and daddies” as a model to the current generation of black Americans. Political and social equality of the races, however, was viewed as a threat to the stability of society.

The contemporary politics of gender, as well as race, also found their way into UDC discussions, as was inevitable for a women’s organization that wished to play such an active social role. As previously discussed, Florida’s Daughters had differing assessments of Confederate women’s history, but the women’s suffrage campaign that grew at the same time as the UDC brought a focus on contemporary gender issues. While many Daughters continued to voice their nostalgia for the antebellum period, gender relations in the world in which they now lived bore less and less resemblance to that of their foremothers. Some UDC members were willing to grasp the opportunities offered by women’s political emancipation.

The UDC’s apolitical nature forbade the organization as a whole from taking a stand for or against woman suffrage, but individual Daughters had no such restrictions. Suffrage historian Elna Green characterizes the UDC as “quite strongly antisuffrage” and it is entirely possible that many or even a majority of Florida Daughters had a negative opinion of the Nineteenth Amendment, although they left no record of this sentiment. The same cannot be said of the Division’s pro suffrage members, such as Caroline Brevard who served in the leadership of the Florida Equal Suffrage Association from 1913 to 1918.

Blanche Leigh combined a celebration of female suffrage with the traditional mission of the UDC at the 1926 Division Convention, arguing that “We need the vote, daughters, the

power of the ballot, a power we can secure and control through the individual vote of daughters.” With this newfound political strength, “we do not need to lobby, to seek men’s votes or beg for legislative approval, if we secure a large enough membership that will exercise that right given us, the right of the ballot.” Continuing, Leigh waxed poetic on the power of the New Woman to accomplish the goals of the UDC. She wrote: “Our need is for: women of strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready hands/...women who possess opinions and a will/tall women, sun crowned, who live above the fog/in public duty and private thinking/then will wrongs be righted and justice will prevail.”

Fortunately for Leigh, the new types of women that she admired were entering the UDC at this time. Although biographies of individual daughters are rare, the few that do exist point to a newly publicly active UDC membership in the 1920s. Such was the case with Jessie Wauchope of Tampa, a remarkable woman who began teaching in public schools at the age of sixteen, studied education, business, and German at the Peabody Normal College, toured Europe, established a Business Women’s Club in Tampa, helped oust corrupt police officers, and ran the prohibition division of the local sheriff’s office. Gertrude Corbet was another such unconventional Florida Daughter, as she became one of Florida’s first female lawyers in 1898 and served on the staffs of Governor Napoleon P. Broward and Senator William James Bryan before heading Jacksonville’s Martha Reid chapter later in life. While not actively involved in the suffrage movement before 1920, Corbet was a founding member of the Florida State League of Women Voters in 1921, a precursor to the modern League of Women Voters of Florida. The traditional gender roles of the Old South were, if not gone, then at least under serious challenge, even among those who still paid lip service to upholding them.

Again, debates over the proper place of women in society did not seem to impact the historical work of the Florida Division. Perhaps because the gender legacy of Confederate women was open to multiple interpretations, women who held different attitudes on gender

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93 Leigh, “Historian’s Report,” 1926, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
equality could still come together to promote Confederate heritage. Daughters such as Leigh who proudly endorsed the ideal of the New Woman seemed to view the empowerment of women as a powerful means to accomplish the historical work of the Division, rather than a challenge to the conservative legacy of the Old South.

The final social message of the UDC was sectional reconciliation between North and South. From the start, the UDC was quite vocal in calling for reconciliation, and vociferously defended their organization from charges that it was accomplishing just the opposite. Susan Hartridge made sure to stress to the representatives at the Division’s charter meeting that “the object of such an organization is not to stir up strife, nor to bring back and perpetuate the sectional feelings that existed during the war.”96 Not all Daughters shared in this sentiment. An anonymous elderly Florida Daughter complained in 1910 that “I imagine I would have been better able to love my northern brothers and sisters...if I had been born in later years.”97 Those Northerners who “creep down here from those frozen hills and valleys to bathe in our warm sunshine and sit under our orange trees to hear our birds sing” would receive no “warm clasp of the hand” from this Floridian.98

As predicted, those who were born in later years exhibited a different attitude. Daughter Natalie Brown Bradford of Tampa travelled to Cuba during the Spanish-American War and married her husband, the son of a Union veteran, there. Bradford’s playful biographer recorded that “she met several ‘cruel and inhuman’ Yankee Generals, officers in the Spanish American war, who proved to be quite charming; though they delighted in teasing the little southern girl.” When General Adna Chaffee commented that he was “with Sherman on his march to the sea, and took dinner in Atlanta,” Bradford “sassed” him by saying that “she reckoned he used her grandmother’s house as fuel to cook his dinner.” Chaffee “thought it a great joke, and thereafter called her ‘miss Johnny Reb.’”99 While the Daughters took their historical work seriously, the later generation was sufficiently removed from the actual events to transform the passions of wartime into witty banter, if the occasion called for it.

96 Quoted in McFadeen, “Forming the Florida Division,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
98 Ibid.
World War I also proved to be of great importance for the reconciliation goal of the UDC. While the UDC had been active in the pacifist movement prior to 1917, the entry of the United States into the conflict gave the Daughters the chance to prove their own patriotism and, by extension, the fact that their Confederate ancestors had truly fought for the principles of the Constitution. The UDC taught that Southerners could be dual patriots, like the Southern Doughboys in France who were “clad in the American uniform and keyed to the strains of ‘Dixie.’”

Meanwhile, the Daughters were not idle at home. The national organization halted all monument construction during the war and contributed $132,194 to relief agencies, including funding for “American Hospital no. 1 Neuilly Sur Seine, the largest Red Cross hospital in France.” In 1918, Florida Division President Irene McCreary reported that many Florida Daughters joined Red Cross auxiliaries and that their children all knit “for the soldier boys.” All of this went to show “that the Southern women of the 20th century have the spirit of their ancestors of 76 and 60.”

Whether they dealt with personal memory, family legacy, the historical reputation of the South, or the pressing social questions of the day, Florida’s Daughters clearly demonstrated that although the UDC was an historical association, it was by no means antiquarian. UDC members passionately believed that Confederate history was Southern heritage, and this passion helped sustain the organization’s momentum in its first several decades. The same passion compelled the Daughters to disseminate their message to as wide an audience as possible, starting with the current generation of school children.

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100 Mary Tousler, “The Boys of the South in the World War,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
101 Irene McCreary, “Report of the Florida Division” in Minutes of the Twenty Fourth Annual Convention, United Daughters of the Confederacy (Richmond: Richmond Press Inc, 1918), 356.
102 Anonymous, “Southern Women’s War Work,” n.d., UDC Scrapbooks, SAF. For more on the UDC in World War I, see Cox, Dixie’s Daughters, 141-158.
CHAPTER THREE

THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UDC AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

All the zeal in the world could not help the Florida Daughters have the impact they wished to see in society without practical strategies. Given the high importance that the UDC placed on teaching their message to subsequent generations, it was only natural that Florida’s Daughters would turn their attention to their state’s educational system. Few UDC members were educators themselves, but they were able to influence the representation of the Civil War in Florida’s school system at both the state and local levels by promoting the use of pro-Southern textbooks.

Florida’s Daughters were not alone in their attention to the treatment of Southern history in textbooks. Southerners had been concerned about unfavorable representations of their region in textbooks since the Antebellum Era, when Southern intellectuals fretted over the presence of supposed abolitionist propaganda being introduced to their children from Northern school books. As previously noted, the UCV had undertaken the task of rooting pro-Northern textbooks from Southern schools, but the Veterans had done little beyond publishing lists of approved books, with no provision for enforcing the adoption of these books by school boards. By 1899 the UCV had deemphasized even this activity, declaring that they need only “keep watch upon the histories of the day.” Florida’s UCV and SCV divisions apparently took no action on textbooks used in the state, to the great frustration of the Daughters.103

The UDC spread to Florida at an opportune time to influence textbook selection, as the state was moving towards greater standardization of its education system in the 1890s. Florida had maintained a system of public schools since the antebellum period, but the state’s 1885 constitution sought to reform public education by creating an administrative framework for education consisting of the State Board of Education, county superintendents, and finally local

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103 Pierce, Public Opinion and The Teaching of History, 136-46, 150.
school boards. This administrative apparatus helped the state impose uniform standards on public schools, and it increasingly did so from the 1890s on. In 1899, the Legislature called for uniform textbook use in elementary schools, although it provided no methods for enforcing the ruling.

This was corrected in 1911, when the Florida State Textbook Commission was created with the sole purpose of selecting schoolbooks that would be used throughout the state for primary schools. Unlike earlier attempts at textbook regulation, the Commission had the power to fine non-cooperative districts. In 1917, supplementary legislation expanded the Commission’s authority to include high school curricula as well. As a result, the Daughters could now expect their lobbying efforts to influence school curriculum used uniformly throughout the state. The Textbook Commission’s 1911 authorizing legislation even mandated that “none of said text books shall contain anything of a partisan or sectarian character.” While the reasoning behind this language is not clear, the UDC treated it as a clear invitation to leverage its favorite rhetoric of Northern bias against offending school books.

Florida’s Daughters might have contented themselves with influencing the selection of school curriculum in the state but in 1911 they were able to extend their influence to the university level. In February of that year, University of Florida Professor Enoch Marvin Banks published an ill-advised article on the 50 year anniversary of the war, questioning the morality and advisability of secession. The events that followed, which culminated in the forced resignation of Dr. Banks, demonstrated both the power of the Florida Division and the severity with which it treated those hostile to its historical message.

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3.1: Textbook Campaign

The importance that the Florida Division placed on having only “friendly” textbooks in the state’s schools can hardly be overstated. In the Division’s first annual report to the UDC national convention in 1897, Julia Weed exuberantly described her Division’s efforts towards “the securing of proper school histories to place in the schools where our children are being educated.” In furtherance of this goal, Weed and the Florida Daughters went “to the very root of the matter” and succeeded in introducing a bill to the state legislature that would require school boards to adopt textbooks that were “true and reliable, giving honor where honor is due, and training up our children in the knowledge of true Southern history.”

The bill in question, “An Act to Protect the Children of Florida from the Baneful Influence of False, Partial and Partisan Instruction in the Public Schools thereof,” did not mention history specifically, but forbade “unjust instruction by books or otherwise.” The act required school boards to investigate any allegations of misconduct by school teachers who, if found guilty, were to be suspended immediately with the option to appeal to the State Board of Education. President Weed justified this rather heavy handed mandate by citing a parent’s need to “send our children on their life [sic] way learned in the history of the past, and ready to give a reason for the faith that is in them,” a thinly veiled reference to 1st Peter 3:15 without the original’s appeal to meekness and fear.

The bill failed to pass, but its introduction still represented a major early success for the UDC’s attempt to mold Florida’s school curriculum. Any number of reasons may explain the bill’s failure, but there is no reason to believe that the legislature was concerned that such a bill would give organizations such as the UDC too much control over Florida’s system of education. In 1891, the state legislature declared Jefferson Davis’ birthday of June 3 a school holiday so as to “perpetuate in the minds of the people the purity of life, the intellectual ability, the heroic

108 Ibid., 13.
109 A Bill To Be Entitled: An Act to Protect the Children of Florida from the Baneful Influence of False, Partial and Partisan Instruction in the Public Schools thereof,” 1897, Florida Legislature Senate Bill Files 1845-1927, #5 50, SAF.
fortitude, and the patriotic character” of the Confederate president. The Florida Division had no great uphill battle to fight to capture the sympathy of the state legislature.\textsuperscript{111}

In the absence of immediate state support, Florida’s Daughters forged ahead in their own efforts to monitor school books. As early as 1901, Jacksonville’s very active Martha Reid Chapter established a committee to meet weekly and review textbooks for proper deference to the Confederate cause.\textsuperscript{112} In 1923, the state Division followed suit. It established a book committee whose first action was to blacklist the textbook of a certain “Mr. Andrews,” a Baltimorean who committed the strange crime of “using Lincoln...for commercial purposes.”\textsuperscript{113}

The UDC involvement in state textbooks included the promotion of friendly texts as well as the censorship of those unfriendly to the UDC’s purposes. In 1920, the Division Historian appeared before the State Textbook Commission to promote Waddy Thomson’s A History of the United States that was published in 1904.\textsuperscript{114} This book, which forthrightly declared that the right of secession was “thoroughly recognized” and that the North recklessly reinterpreted the Constitution to maintain its tyrannical chokehold on the national government, was found to be neither partial nor partisan by both the UDC and the Florida Textbook Commission.\textsuperscript{115}

One prominent Florida Daughter, the aforementioned Caroline Brevard, took the extra step and wrote a textbook herself in 1904, entitled History and Government of Florida. Brevard, who taught History and English at Florida State College for Women in Tallahassee, also served as Division Historian for the UDC from 1900 to 1904 and again from 1909 to 1912. Brevard’s successor as Division Historian, Mrs. F.R. Gary, dutifully exhorted Florida’s Daughters to “invite an examination of [the book’s] contents by the Superintendents of Education in every county of the State.”\textsuperscript{116} Brevard’s book received mixed reviews from the State Textbook Commission, which described it in 1911 as “a good teachable history,” but utterly rejected it in 1923—three

\textsuperscript{111} Quoted in Pierce, Public Opinion and the Teaching of History, 56.
\textsuperscript{112} Nancy Tench, “Report of the Florida Division” in Minutes of the Seventh Annual Convention, United Daughters of the Confederacy (Nashville: Foster & Webb, 1901), 58.
\textsuperscript{113} Minutes of the 28\textsuperscript{th} Annual Convention, Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (1923), 71.
\textsuperscript{114} Minutes of the 25\textsuperscript{th} Annual Convention, Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (1920), 33.
\textsuperscript{115} Waddy Thomson, A History of the United States (Lexington: D.C. Heath & co, 1904), 341.
years after the author’s death—as “uninteresting and difficult to understand.” Brevard dedicated a large portion of her book to discussing the Civil War in Florida, and she ended her heroic recounting of battles in which Florida troops took part with the following homily:

We honor the memory of the men of that army not only because they were brave, but because they counted no sacrifice too great to be made for their State and no loss too heavy to be born for her.118

Confederate soldiers thus became civics lessons in bravery and self sacrifice, a model for young Floridians to emulate.

As the rhetoric they used suggests, Florida’s Daughters saw their textbook campaign not simply as a matter of protecting schoolchildren from historical errors resulting from poor scholarship, but rather as an ideological struggle between themselves and the historical establishment. If the Daughters’ historical mission could be compared to the Protestant religious tradition from which it freely borrowed symbols and concepts, mainstream historians took the part of the demonic adversaries to the Daughter’s righteous quest. In more secular terms, Lowenthal concedes as the inevitable the fact that “in asserting our own virtues, we harp on others’ vices.” “Belligerent antagonism” seems to be an unfortunate yet unavoidable aspect of heritage.119

Lily Grey Baell, the organizer of the first Children of the Confederacy chapter in Florida warned the state convention in 1907 of young minds “unstable and debauched by false history and subtle historians.” Baell also stressed the need for action from the UDC, as “so little interest is manifested by [the Florida SCV] in the past or present of our war history as to forbid hope of any permanent good being effected by such associations.”120 The Daughters were on their own in the quest against the insidious historians.

The sense of urgency had not diminished by 1922, when Division Vice President Mrs. F.M. Hudson lamented that “makers of history have suffered much at the hands of prejudiced, biased writers.” Hudson compared the current state of affairs to Tories writing the history of

119 Lowenthal, Possessed by the Past, 89.
120 Lily Grey Baell, “United Daughters of the Confederacy Florida Division Convention, 1907,” UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
the American Revolution, or Germans producing the historiography of World War I.\(^{121}\) The fact that Germans and Tories had a great deal in common with the Confederacy as defeated adversaries of the United States did not seem to bother Hudson.

The origin of the UDC’s permanent vendetta against the historical profession no doubt lies in the works of late nineteenth century amateur historians such as James F. Rhodes, James Schouler, and John B. McMaster, Northern writers who indeed freely excoriated the antebellum South as the land of cruel aristocrats and the Confederacy as an unconstitutional rebellion.\(^{122}\) These works dominated the textbook field nationwide until 1900 and, likely forged the view of Florida’s Daughters of textbooks and historians forever.\(^{123}\) Florence Murphy recalled that “the hot blood came to my cheeks” when she read anything unfavorable to the South in her school textbooks.\(^{124}\) Weed similarly claimed to have collected “many marred pages of the histories used in Southern schools, blotted and marked out by the indignant little Southerners who refuse to believe the reports of the ‘great four-years war.’”\(^{125}\)

However, by 1900 a shift was well underway in the historical trade, as more Southerners entered the ranks of the historical profession and as new professional norms emphasized objectivity and dispassionate writing.\(^{126}\) The new professionals were less eager than their amateur predecessors to enter the fraught field of Civil War history. In 1910, Historian Andrew C. McLaughlin even vetoed a proposal that the American Historical Association discuss Southern secession because he felt that “this kind of controversial matter” was not proper for the AHA to take on.\(^{127}\) Those who did stepped with caution, mindful of William E. Dodd’s complaint in 1904 that even the very best Southern high school teacher considered it his

\(^{121}\) Hudson, Mrs. F.M. “Report of the Vice President” Minutes of the 27th Annual Convention, Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (1922), 17.


\(^{124}\) Lancaster, Early History of the Florida Division, 28.

\(^{125}\) Need, “Florida” in Minutes of the Fourth Annual Meeting, 13.


highest duty to “prove conclusively to each and every pupil, and more particularly to their parents, that the South was entirely right in going to war in 1860 and that slavery was not the cause for which its people were contending.”

Despite the friendlier attitude of the historical profession, the Florida Division stood ready to strike at the slightest sign of anti-southern sentiment from teachers of history. In 1911, the Daughters were handed a golden opportunity when a historian from their own state, University of Florida Professor Enoch Marvin Banks, made the mistake of weighing in on one of the UDC’s most carefully guarded subjects.

3.2: The Banks Affair

Professor Banks, a Georgian who had led the departments of History and Economics at the University of Florida since 1907, was not a likely candidate to confront the established narrative of the UDC, given that he was a native Southerner and studied under the influential Southern apologist William A. Dunning at Columbia University. Dunning argued that Reconstruction was an unmitigated disaster for the South, a time when Northern carpetbaggers colluded with freedmen to oppress the white Southern majority. Banks’ earlier and later writings establish that he shared his former professor’s views on Reconstruction, a view also perfectly congruent with that of the UDC. However, Banks’ pro-Confederate piety was not perfect, as he demonstrated on the 50 year anniversary of the formation of the Confederate government with an article in the New York based intellectual journal the Independent.

Banks submitted “A Semi-Centennial View of Secession” to appear in the February edition of the Independent, an unobtrusive piece nestled among dry analyses of world economics and debates on the proposed direct election of U.S. Senators. The article was consistently academic and collegial in tone, not surprising given that it began life as a conversation paper prepared for a faculty discussion group. After a brief introduction in

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128 William Dodd, “Some Difficulties of the History Teacher in the South” in The South Atlantic Quarterly (April, 1904), 118.
129 Bailey, “Free Speech at the University of Florida,” 5.
130 Vernon L. Wharton, “Reconstruction” in Writing Southern History, eds. Link and Patrick, 298-9.
131 Bailey, “Free Speech at the University of Florida,” 2.
which Banks acknowledged that his opinions might offend some, the professor attempted to assuage his future critics by claiming that “it is not the purpose of this paper to effect a direct alteration of this Southern Conviction,” and took comfort in the fact that “the South is becoming more tolerant of a free discussion of its past and present policies.”

This preamble finished, Banks proceeded to deconstruct and critique the constitutional justification for secession. While secession may have been legitimate in 1787, Banks argued, by 1860 “integrating forces” had transformed the United States into a true nation, rather than a compact of sovereign states. Moreover, the right of states to secede was nothing more than that, a debatable and abstract political right. It said nothing about the motivation behind secession that was, Banks asserted, “the institution of negro slavery.”

Having established slavery at the heart of the sectional conflict, Banks then proceeded into more dangerous waters. Operating as they were in a constricted, nineteenth century worldview, Banks wrote that Southern politicians of the 1860s failed to recognize that there was an “evolutionary order of things in morals, in governments, and in all manner of social institutions.” Therefore, he argued, they did not see the reality that slavery was an “anachronism” in “an advancing civilization.”

Finally, Banks disastrously advocated a mild iteration of moral relativism, stating that:

Right and wrong are neither absolute nor static conceptions, but on the contrary they are decidedly relative and dynamic descriptions of conduct—conduct being right or wrong according to the degree in which it tends to promote or retard human welfare.

With this in mind, “we are led irresistibly to the conclusion that the North was relatively in the right, while the South was relatively in the wrong.” Amazingly, Banks seemed truly unaware of the reaction such words could provoke in the South of the early twentieth century, saturated as it was for the past four decades by the heritage of the Lost Cause.

The *Independent*’s circulation in the Deep South was probably not large, and Banks’ article may have gone unnoticed if not for Willis M. Ball, editor of Jacksonville’s *Florida Times*

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133 Ibid., 302
134 Ibid., 300.
135 Ibid., 302.
Union. On February 16, Ball broke the news of Banks’ article to many Floridians in a lengthy editorial. Tellingly, Ball’s editorial almost entirely ignored Banks’ historical argument, focusing all his attention upon the professor’s social transgressions. After quoting Banks’ damning statements on morality, Ball warned his readers in blunt terms what Banks’ philosophy would mean: “Accept this dictum, and the country ceases to be a republic, the constitution loses its authority…Protestantism loses the reason heretofore pleaded for its existence.”  

Four days later, Ball again publicly attacked Banks, calling his views “historically inaccurate and morally untrue and politically immoral.”

Rhetoric against Banks rose to new heights one week later, when former Florida state Senator John S. Beard sent an open letter to many Florida newspapers claiming that Banks’ article “promotes anarchy” and was “an outrage upon truth and upon decency.” Importantly, Beard called upon “every camp of the Confederate veterans, every chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy, and every camp of the sons of veterans in the State of Florida should enter a loud and emphatic protest against the retention of Mr. Banks.” As Beard saw it,

The primary, if not the sole purpose of those patriotic associations is to preserve and disseminate the truths of history as to secession, but if…Mr. Banks is to fill the chair of history and economics in the principal institution of learning in the state, than these patriotic organizations are worse than useless in the state of Florida and might as well dissolve.

The Daughters were listening.

A brief, but fierce letter writing campaign followed in which the UCV, SCV, and UDC flooded Florida’s newspapers and legislators with complaints about Banks’ article. Carlotta reported being bombarded with “letters, protests and resolutions against the retention of Professor Banks at the University of Florida” from almost every UDC chapter in the state and “the entire executive board.” Prodded by this powerful response, as well as her “own sense of right,” Carlotta sent personal letters to both Governor Albert W. Gilchrist and the Florida
Educational Board of Control, stating that Banks “is not fitted to teach true and un-prejudiced history, and that therefore he should not be retained in his present position in the University of our State.”

Banks was, at first, incredulous at the vitriol of the reaction against him. While he tentatively offered his resignation to University of Florida President Albert A. Murphree as early as February 20th, his personal correspondence indicates that he clearly hoped that Murphree would put up a fight on his behalf. As he put it to his sister Samantha on the 22nd, “I know what attitude I would take if I were President of the University under similar circumstances.” By mid-March, Banks was far less confident of his future at the University, confiding to his friend I.P. Bradley that Murphree was being subjected to “great pressure” from “various organizations such as the Daughters of the Confederacy.” While he still believed that Murphree could turn the incident into cause célèbre for academic freedom in the South, Banks now doubted that the University’s President was “quite big enough and strong enough to seize the opportunity.”

As he waited for the determination of the University’s Board of Control on April 1st, Banks busied himself with responding to some of his critics. In a deferential letter that differed dramatically from the rhetoric leveled against him, Banks defended himself to Mrs. J.P. Moorhead of the Ocala chapter UDC as having “no desire to drag in the dust the record and memory of our fathers.” Rather, Banks argued that he honored his Confederate ancestors by exhibiting the “courage and manhood to say and say openly...that our fathers made a mistake in regard to secession and ran counter to the true path of progress.” After all, if “your noble-spirited organization should comment the virtues of heroism and honest manhood,” Banks saw no reason why he should be attacked for following the tradition of independence established by the Confederate generation. Despite the confident tone of the correspondence, Banks’ true mental state was more accurately captured by a handwritten note he added to one copy of the letter, pondering “Did I go too far in answering this Daughter of the Confederacy?”

143 Carlotta to Gilchrist, Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Convention, 1911, 27.
144 Banks, Enoch Marvin to sister “Sam,” February 22, 1911. Enoch Marvin Banks Papers, Collection #1121, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University (hereafter cited as Banks Papers).
145 Banks to I.P. Bradley, March 16, 1911, Banks Papers.
146 Banks to Mrs. J.P. Moorhead, March 18, 1911, Banks Papers.
President Murphree was initially hesitant to accept the Banks’ resignation, but the professor had assessed his employer’s character correctly. After some private hand wringing about the academic integrity of the University, Murphree reluctantly proposed that Banks’ resignation be accepted at the April meeting of the Board of Control. The motion passed, and Banks retreated to his home state of Georgia where he unexpectedly passed away eight months later.\textsuperscript{147}

News of Banks’ resignation had not spread to most members of the Florida UDC by the time the division held its annual convention, with the result that the Banks article entered into the reports of many chapters, marking a break from the usually dry and procedural nature of the reports. Jacksonville’s Annie Purdue Sebring chapter mentioned that they had “introduced resolutions condemning the article written by E.M. Banks, professor of history and economics in the University of Florida,”\textsuperscript{148} Dade City’s delegates expressed their “disapproval of Prof. Banks’ article in \textit{The Independent},”\textsuperscript{149} and while Leesburg’s chapter admitted they had not even read the article, they too felt it necessary to “disapprove of any unfairness or untruths regarding our grand Southland.”\textsuperscript{150} Carlotta was able to calm her constituent’s disturbed sensibilities by noting in her opening address that she had received “a courteous reply [from Governor Gilchrist and the Board of Control] stating that professor Banks’ resignation has been received.”\textsuperscript{151}

At the UDC national convention the following November, Carlotta simply reported that her division “protested against the retention of the Chair of History in our State University of a man whose published writings proved him so unjust to the South’s attitude in 1861 as to unfit him for that position. His place has been filled by another.” The Division had won an important battle.\textsuperscript{152}

\textsuperscript{147} Bailey, “Free Speech at the University of Florida,” 1, 14-16. Also “Minutes Florida Board of Control” April 1, 1911, Film 9409, Florida State University Libraries.
\textsuperscript{148} “Report of Annie Purdue Sebring Chapter” \textit{Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Convention}, (1911), 142.
\textsuperscript{149} “Report of Confederate Grey Chapter” \textit{Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Convention}, (1911), 130.
\textsuperscript{150} “Report of R.E. Lee Chapter” \textit{Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Convention}, (1911), 140.
\textsuperscript{151} “Historian’s Message.” \textit{Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Convention}, (1911), 27.
\textsuperscript{152} Carlotta, “Report of the Florida Division” \textit{Minutes of the Eighteenth Annual Convention, United Daughters of the Confederacy}, (1911), UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
Following Banks’ resignation, several prominent voices were raised in defense of the embattled former professor. The *Independent* and the Atlanta *Constitution* ran several opinion pieces harshly critical of Florida’s reaction to Banks’ article, calling it “a mental gag law,” “a sad condition of things,” and “a disgrace to the University and the state.” Most of Banks’ defenders adopted the simple position that, whatever his opinions, Banks deserved at least the basic freedom of speech entitled to him under the Constitution, if not the more advanced consideration of academic freedom. Former University of Florida President Andrew Sledd bemoaned the overly politicized nature of higher education in Florida, as members of the Board of Control were appointees of the governor and depended on maintaining a good relationship with the state’s political leaders to avoid “losing appropriations and patronage for their institution.” The editor of the *Constitution* pleaded that, if Banks’ ideas were incorrect, “let them be combated in the open, dissected, analyzed, disproved mercilessly, but let this not be accomplished by the suppression of personal convictions.”

However, the criticism elicited neither apology nor explanation from the University or any of Banks’ attackers. For their part, the UDC seemed to forget the Banks incident quickly, accepting the professor’s resignation as a natural consequence of his historical misconduct. The only future mention of the incident occurred in the 1924 Division Convention, when a Mrs. McCready remembered that a University of Florida professor “was asked for his immediate resignation” following comments he made “disloyal to the South,” an example that she used to urge her fellow Daughters to push for the dismissal of questionable teachers from public schools.

The Banks affair was one of the clearest demonstrations of the Daughters’ conception of Confederate history as Southern heritage. Banks, trained in the ethos of the emerging field of professional historians, viewed history as a matter of objective knowledge to be arrived at by a scientific process involving the thorough investigation of primary sources, followed by extensive peer review and critique. Historical narratives crafted using these techniques that met with the

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154 Andrew Sledd, “The Dismissal of Professor Banks” *The Independent* (April 13, 1911) 1113-14.


approval of most members of the peer group were then considered to be both true and noncontroversial, arrived at, as they were, by pure and detached research conducted by a member of the professional circle.\textsuperscript{157} Banks’ belief that “the calm light of history” would cast aside the shadows of bias as well as ignorance demonstrates the professor’s commitment to this ideal.\textsuperscript{158}

What Banks did not understand was the role of the Confederacy as heritage. Banks sought to attack bias with research, but as Lowenthal points out, “bias is the main point of heritage. Prejudiced pride in the past is not a sorry consequence of heritage; it is its essential purpose. Heritage thereby attests our identity and affirms our worth.”\textsuperscript{159} Hence the excoriation of Banks as disloyal to the South, his argument accused of fostering political immorality and anarchism. By questioning a point of history, Banks believed he was helping to increase the general knowledge of humanity, but by questioning Southern heritage, he was assaulting the foundations of society in the eyes of his critics.

Florida’s Daughters viewed a compliant system of education as essential to communicating their version of Confederate history and thus instilling the values of Southern heritage. Most organizations that wished to effect social change have attempted to take advantage of the fact that school children are uniquely susceptible to social propaganda when it is communicated through the school system, so the UDC’s focus in this area was understandable. However, formal schooling is only one source for the development of an individual’s social values, and Florida’s Daughters did not restrict the dissemination of their message to the school system alone. The physical landscape of Florida towns offered another venue for the UDC to pursue its heritage agenda through monuments.

\textsuperscript{157} Novick, \textit{That Noble Dream}, 51-53.
\textsuperscript{158} Banks, “A Semi-Centennial View of Secession,” 299.
\textsuperscript{159} Lowenthal, \textit{Possessed by the Past}, 122.
CHAPTER FOUR

FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE UDC MONUMENTS

Confederate monuments were a high priority for the Florida UDC as well as the national organization. The white residents of local communities expressed solidarity through the public commemoration of their Confederate past. Monuments in Civil War historic sites of regional or national prominence ensured that the UDC’s interpretation of their significance was made a permanent element of the physical landscape. Florida lacked the wealth of prominent Civil War sites that states such as Virginia and Tennessee possessed, but the Florida Division was determined to ensure that Florida’s only major battlefield, that of Olustee, received the best monumental commemoration possible.

4.1: Local Monuments

Monuments were an integral activity of the UDC from the organization’s founding, as the erection of privately funded and organized Confederate monuments was already an established element of Lost Cause culture by the 1890s. The national organization sponsored several large monument projects to which all Daughters were expected to contribute, such as Jefferson Davis’ massive shrine in Richmond and the Confederate memorial at Arlington Cemetery, as well as encouraging local divisions and chapters to construct their own. It was at the local level that most Confederate monuments were built, varying in size and form according to local conditions.

Florida was no exception to this trend. The first Confederate monument in Florida appeared in 1871 in DeFuniak Springs, a simple obelisk erected by a local Ladies Memorial Association. Its inscription is remarkably dark and funereal, a dirge for the “lifeless form[s]” of

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Florida’s Confederate soldiers “dissolv[ing] into dust” in far away battlefields. This mournful mood was characteristic of early Confederate commemorative activities, but had disappeared almost entirely by the time the UDC entered the commemorative field. St. Augustine, Marianna, Tallahassee, Quincy, Jacksonville, and Pensacola had all completed Confederate monuments by the time the UDC came to Florida. Pensacola’s 1891 monument, in particular, was considered a landmark achievement; a thirty four foot high column surmounted by an eight foot tall statue of a Confederate Soldier. The monument cost Pensacola citizens $5000 and no doubt helped contribute to later interest in UDC work in west Florida. The Pensacola chapter of the UDC was formed in 1899 and in 1903 took ownership of the monument from the now defunct Confederate Monument Association that had erected it.

One other prominent Florida monument was the work of neither the UDC nor a Ladies Memorial Association, yet is significant for the public image of the Confederate woman that it conveys. This is the monument to Confederate women in Jacksonville, the centerpiece of the city’s Confederate Park erected by the Florida Division UCV in 1915. The UCV monument, one of very few which Florida’s Veterans erected, depicts a seated woman holding a son and daughter close to her sides. On the woman’s lap is large book which the children gaze at intently.

While the pages of the book are blank, there is little doubt that it is a history of the war, a fact confirmed by the monument’s sculptor. The dedicatory plaque only mentions that Florida’s Confederate women “sacrificed their all upon their country’s altar,” but the fact that the woman is depicted as an educator speaks to the extent to which the UDC had linked Southern women and the teaching of the next generation in the public mind. The ambitious monument cost $10,000, of which $5,000 came from the State Legislature, which was happy to

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162 Florida Division UDC, Florida’s Confederate Monuments & Markers 2004 (Florida Division UDC, 2003), n.p.
163 Brundage, “Women’s Hand and Heart and Deathless Love” in Monuments to the Lost Cause eds Mills and Simpson, 64.
165 Cynthia Mills, “Gratitude and Gender Wars: Monuments to the Women of the Sixties” in Monuments to the Lost Cause eds Mills and Simpson, 194-6.
help honor the “heroic devotion and self-sacrifice” of “the Women of Florida and of the South.” 166

The organization of the Florida Division of the UDC increased interest in monument construction throughout the state. Division Historian Beatrice Howe exhorted the 1907 Division convention to “build monuments to the valor and fortitude of our soldiers,” and monument construction projects frequently appear in chapter reports at Division conventions. 167 By 1925 even Miami and Key West had joined the dozens of northern Florida communities containing Confederate memorials of one kind or another. 168 Nearly all followed the templates established by DeFuniak Springs and Jacksonville, taking the form of either an obelisk or a statue of a Confederate infantryman elevated on a tall pedestal. The latter format was most common, with examples in Palatka, Tampa, Lakeland, and Ocala, among others. 169

The ubiquity and representational nature of this “common soldier” monument type has prompted inquiry from scholars such as Kirk Savage, who sees an attempt to create “a standard ‘American’ type” in the white but ethnically vague features of the mass produced common soldier statuary that adorned monumental pedestals in the North and South alike. 170 Florida’s Daughters may have sympathized with this racially conscious identity construction, but they never openly attached such significance to the form of their monuments. Instead, the forms of monuments were often determined by the availability of resources and popularity of prevailing styles.

This is not to say that the UDC did not care about the cultural significance attached to their monuments. Florida’s Daughters were very concerned that their monuments were properly understood by the viewing public, as monuments were second only to education in the dissemination of the UDC’s message. To this end, the UDC orchestrated the unveilings of their monuments to best communicate their desired message to the public.

166 “An Act to Aid the Florida Division of Confederate Veterans to Erect in This State a Monument or Memorial in Honor of the Women of Florida and of the South in Memory of Their Heroism, Devotion and Self-sacrifice During the Civil War in 1861-1865, and to Appropriate Five Thousand Dollars Therefor. [sic] Acts and Resolutions of the Legislature 1911, 54-5. 167 Beatrice Sellers Howe, Letter to Florida Division Convention, 1907, UDC Scrapbooks, SAF. 168 Florida Division UDC. Florida’s Confederate Monuments, n.p. 169 Ibid., 46, 64, 70. 170 Kirk Savage, Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 162.
The unveiling of UDC monuments was an occasion for celebration in all Florida communities, as newspaper accounts make clear. The *Ocala Evening Star* reported that “Ocala has never seen a better, more inspiring crowd” for the 1902 dedication of their city monument, Palatka’s ceremony in 1924 attracted an estimated attendance of 14,000, and Jacksonville’s 1898 monument unveiling took place “in the midst of a vast throng.” City streets were frequently festooned with Confederate and American flags for the occasion, and the day’s festivities usually began with a parade such as Lake City’s 1901 procession that included a brass band, military units, and floats from every civic organization in the city.

At the heart of the celebrations was the unveiling itself, which was preceded by sometimes elaborate ceremonies or “exercises,” including multiple orators. Orators varied in prominence from U.S. Senator Duncan U. Fletcher and Governor Cary A. Hardee who spoke at Jacksonville and Marianna respectively, to important local citizens. Whatever their social station, the orators always interpreted the meaning of the monuments to the public, stressing the need to honor the heroism of Southern soldiers and sacrifices of their families. Speakers occasionally touched on the more complex aspects of Civil War history, such as ex-Governor Francis P. Fleming whose tedious explication of the constitutionality of secession probably prompted a few yawns from the assembled throngs in Jacksonville.

Whether they were subjected to tedious speakers or not, the crowds that attended unveilings seem to have been captivated by the momentousness of the occasion. The exercises which preceded the unveiling of Tampa’s monument in 1911 took place in a theater that was “filled to overflow with men, women, and children,” many of whom “stood throughout the exercises, which continued almost two hours.” The *Palatka Daily News*, which in 1961 looked back at the unveiling of their city’s monument in 1924, concluded that the event would “long be remembered by not only the citizens of Putnam County but by residents of this entire

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172 *The Citizen-Reporter [Lake City]*, January 4, 1901.
174 *Florida Times-Union*, June 6, 1898.
Monuments were by far the most publicly visible aspect of the UDC’s work, and the Daughters made sure to put on a good show while the public attention lasted.

The only member of the UDC to address the crowd at an unveiling appears to be Sarah Brash of Tampa, who spoke at the dedication of her city’s monument in 1911. Brash went further than most male orators in making explicit the lessons that the public should draw from the monument. For veterans, Brash believed monuments should “bring back memories of the hard fought battles” and “make the blood move faster in his veins.” To the children of veterans, she argued that monuments help “venerate their memories for what they suffered,” and to the third generation, the sight of monuments “teaches...respect for the dead.”

However, even if Florida’s Daughters were absent from the speaker’s podium at unveilings, they were omnipresent in the pageantry surrounding the event. The UDC ran floats in the parades, sat on stages during the speeches, and pulled the cords to unveil the monument. This mix of modesty and leadership demonstrated the easy manner in which the women of the UDC blended public activism with the ideal of the demure Southern woman. Although the Daughters usually surrendered the public spotlight during these events, their efforts had brought the monuments into being, and the white community-wide celebration in honor of their Confederate ancestors served the purpose of the UDC well.

4.2: The Olustee Monument

The Battle of Olustee, an 1864 Confederate victory in northern Florida, was the largest Civil War battle fought on Florida soil and therefore an irresistible symbol and vehicle for the Florida UDC. The battle took place in a pine forest wilderness that, by the late nineteenth century, had neither been developed nor commemorated in any way, making it an ideal project for the Daughters to tackle. The prominent historical value of the event also helped justify state involvement. Of all the activities undertaken by the Florida UDC, the commemoration of Olustee involved the most state collaboration.

176 Tampa Morning Tribune, February 9, 1911.
177 See for example: Cox, Dixie’s Daughters, 10-11 and 20-21.
The initial impetus for constructing a monument at the Olustee battlefield came from Mrs. J.N. Whitner of Jacksonville, the widow of a Confederate artillerist who fought in the battle. Whitner’s resolution to the Division’s second convention of 1897 stated “that the U.D.C. pledge themselves to raise a fund for the purpose of erecting a shaft to mark the Battlefield of Olustee, Florida’s most famous battle.” Division President Julia Weed repeated this event to the UDC national convention, saying that her Division “pledged themselves to erecting a shaft to mark the battlefield of Olustee, a Florida battle field, and one of the bloodiest battles of the war.” Weed’s hyperbole aside, the face that she chose to announce her Division’s resolution to mark Olustee in her brief address to the national organization indicates the importance that Florida’s Daughters attached to the Olustee monument.

While the smaller monuments that individual chapters were erecting were generally paid for through local fundraising efforts, the Florida Division clearly felt that Olustee deserved a more substantial investment than they could provide on their own. For this, the UDC requested funding from the state, and in 1899 the state legislature appropriated $2500 for the monument and appointed a commission to oversee the monument’s completion.

However, the Daughters soon found that working with the state had its drawbacks as well as advantages. The legislative act authorizing the construction of the monument duly praised the Florida Division for “the laudable effort of raising funds” for the monument, but also declared that the new memorial would honor both “the Federal and Confederate officers and soldiers” of Olustee. Horrified, the Daughters nearly ended their cooperation with the state then and there. Mrs. C.A. Finley of Lake City stated that: “We are willing to and desirous of doing our best for a monument there or elsewhere dedicated to our dead, but solemnly and positively refuse to couple the record of our fallen dead with that of aliens to the Confederate

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178 Murfree, History of Martha Reid Chapter, 11.
States and the United States.” Finley’s mention of the “alien” element in the Union army is the only time a Florida Daughter specifically invoked the common Lost Cause belief that the Northern victory was caused by the large number of immigrants in the Union army. After a “unanimous objection” from the Division Convention of 1900, the Legislature agreed to drop the stipulation that both sides be honored. Friendly reconciliation with Northerners was one thing, but the Division was not prepared to share the glory of a Confederate victory with their former foes.

While much appreciated, the money from the state was still not enough for the scale of commemoration that the UDC planned for Olustee, so for the next 13 years fundraising for the Olustee monument became a constant preoccupation for the Florida Division. In 1905, after six years of inaction, President Belle Stockbridge disappointedly reported that Olustee remained an “unfinished business,” with only $224.99 raised so far. The Division decided to prod the state into action by appointing their own Olustee committee to meet with the state commission and help move the process forward. However, by 1908 the Olustee Monument Committee had accomplished little, as its treasurer Helen Parramore stated “with a sad heart” that the monument was already overdue for completion, with no progress from the legislative commission and few donations.

One year later, the monument project was revitalized when Austin B. Fletcher of Lake City donated a tract of land on the site of the historic battlefield to the state. This news lifted the UDC’s mood dramatically. Esther Carlotta cheerfully told the state convention that “the early completion of our own special Florida Monument, Olustee, is assured, and the Commission appointed by the State for erecting it is earnestly at work to that end.”

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182 Mrs. A.C. Finley, “Lake City Chapter” Proceedings of the Annual State Convention of the Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (Lake City: H.L. Dodd, 1900), 14.
183 Blight, Race and Reunion, 93.
184 Lancaster, Early Years of the Florida Division, 60-1.
185 Belle Stockbridge, “Report of the President” Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of the Florida Division, United Daughters of the Confederacy 1905 (Florida: Citizen-Reporter Print, 1906), 12, 22.
188 Carlotta, “Report of the President” Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Convention Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (Florida Division UDC, 1909), 3.
The earnest work of the state commission and UDC committee culminated three years later when the Olustee monument, a stone tower with simple decorative elements, was finally unveiled on October 23, 1912. The ceremony attracted a large crowd including many members of the Florida Division of the United Confederate Veterans. Carlotta was in attendance together with Parramore as “matron of honor,” but chose to have Whitner present the monument’s title deed to Governor Albert W. Gilchrist as a tribute to her role as the monument’s originator. However, Carlotta had no intention of abandoning Florida’s largest Confederate monument to the uncertainty of state maintenance, and therefore “reserved to the Florida Division U.D.C. the privilege and right of caring for and protecting the monument and beautifying and keeping in order the grounds belonging thereto.”

The UDC tackled their new responsibility with vigor, if not abundant resources. Whitner, now the chairman of the Olustee Committee, reported to the Division in 1915 that she had arranged for the area surrounding the monument to be cleared, as it was her opinion that the grounds “should not be left as now covered with weeds, but should be enclosed by a substantial fence of iron.” Whitner’s plan for the future of the monument site included “a stone archway and iron gate fronting the Seaboard Railway” and “flowers and shrubs” to beautify the area. At the same time, the Olustee Committee had only raised $20.40 so far for this ambitious project, making it unlikely that it would be completed anytime soon.

Facing a financial bind, the Daughters again turned to the state for financial support. In 1920, the legislature approved an annual appropriation of $400 for upkeep of the monument, but the Daughters had now decided that costly landscaping would be worthless without a permanent caretaker on the site. In 1923, the Daughters successfully introduced a bill to the state legislature calling for $5000 for the construction of a caretaker’s residence which, although it bore the approval of Governor Cary A. Hardee, failed to pass. Newspaperman J.C.

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189 Carlotta, “Report of the President” Minutes of the Eighteenth Annual Convention Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (Florida Division UDC, 1913), 33-34.
190 Mrs. J.N. Whitner, “Report of the Olustee Committee” Minutes of the Twentieth Annual Convention, Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (Florida Division UDC, 1915), 73-4.
191 Whitner, “Report of the Olustee Committee” Minutes of the Twenty Sixth Annual Convention, Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (Florida Division UDC, 1921), 125.
Trice’s wry comment that $5000 “should buy quite a snug little residence for a three or six hundred dollar a year caretaker to live in” may reflect the opinion of the legislature.\(^\text{192}\)

Two years later, the Daughter’s lobbying finally paid off when the legislature passed a much more modest appropriation bill calling for two yearly payments of $1800. This, together with the approximately $1500 that the UDC had managed to raise on their own, provided for the construction of a small caretaker’s cottage on the grounds of the Olustee monument and the hiring of a full time custodian.\(^\text{193}\) State appropriations for support of the monument continued for the next 24 years in amounts varying from $400 to $1000. The only exception appears to by 1930, when a request for $1000 was denied. Daughter Julia H. Norris concluded that this defeat was not “because the members of the legislature were not in sympathy with our cause, but was the result of the economic depression in our state, as well as in the nation.”\(^\text{194}\)

With the support of state funding, the Daughters were able to pursue their vision for the monument grounds, which was now more accurately described as a park. In 1925, the park was simply “kept green all winter with Italian rye grass.”\(^\text{195}\) The next year development increased substantially, as the Daughters collected “plants and palms” from throughout the state to beautify in the park, and installed a “light and water system” to maintain it. 1928 was an especially productive year, as a variety of tropical plants were introduced into the park, a lily pond and bird baths were installed, and a large sign was finally erected over the park’s entrance. Plans for topping the monument with a “Beacon Light” were thankfully abandoned.\(^\text{196}\) Various small improvements were made to the park over the succeeding years, but the Daughters had achieved the objective they had labored for since 1897.

\(^{192}\) J.C. Trice quoted in Whitner, “Report of the Olustee Committee” Minutes of the Twenty Eighth Annual Convention, Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (Florida Division UDC, 1923), 125.

\(^{193}\) Mrs. John C. Miller, “Report of the Olustee Committee” Minutes of the Thirty First Annual Convention, Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (Florida Division UDC, 1926), 93-7.

\(^{194}\) Julia H. Norris, “Report of Legislation Committee” Minutes of the Thirty Fifth Annual Convention, Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (Florida Division UDC, 1930), 101.

\(^{195}\) Miller, “Report of the Olustee Committee” Minutes of the Thirty First Annual Convention (Florida: Florida Division UDC, 1926), 98.

\(^{196}\) Mrs. T.M. Dorman, “Report of Olustee Park and Monument” Minutes of the Thirty Third Annual Convention (Florida Division UDC, 1928), 74-5.
The efforts of the Florida Division UDC at the Olustee Battlefield are an interesting case study in Civil War battlefield preservation. The historical battlefield lay within an undeveloped area of pine woods, one of many in northern Florida at the time, but one that nevertheless had been claimed by numerous timber interests. Despite being willing to dedicate significant time and money to the erection and maintenance of a large monument, the Division never even considered purchasing more land than the small 5-acre plot that contained their monument and park for future preservation. As luck would have it, the entire battlefield fell within the Osceola National Forest that was created in 1931, but it could just as easily have gone the way of much of north Florida’s timber land that was rapidly converted to development of one kind or another in the early twentieth century.197

In one sense, the UDC’s lack of concern over the conservation of the battlefield land reflected a larger trend among early Civil War battlefield preservationists who “never imagined that urban encroachment would eventually threaten the integrity of rural battlefields.”198 However, the attitude of the UDC goes beyond this assumption, as they displayed no respect for the historical integrity of the small section of the battlefield they did have control over, introducing aggressive landscaping and exotic plant species to create a beautiful park rather than convey the historical reality of the battlefield.

These actions suggest that the UDC valued the battlefield of Olustee more highly as a symbol and metaphor than as an objective piece of history. Florida’s Daughters glowingly described Olustee as “the field of Florida’s soil that drank deepest of Southern blood,” “a living memory,” and a “Sacred Plot of Ground.”199 Finley epitomized the rhetoric surrounding the Olustee monument in 1900, when she appealed to her fellow Daughters to “erect a humble shaft that will proclaim from its endearing surface for generations to come that ‘Here is sacred

197 National Forest Service. “Welcome to the Osceola!” Osceola National Forest
199 Whitner, “Report of the Olustee Committee” Minutes of the Twentieth Annual Convention, 74; Whitner, “Report of the Olustee Committee” Minutes of the Twenty Sixth Annual Convention, 95; Miller, “Report of the Olustee Committee” Minutes of the Thirty First Annual Convention, 98.
ground,’ for here is interred the Confederate martyr—patriot—hero! The monument was equally historical marker and shrine, and the UDC used it as a ceremonial space for the rituals of Confederate Memorial Day each April 26th.

Preservation in this context refers less to the maintenance of the physical reality of the past and more to the retention of the social values that the UDC believed the Confederacy embodied. In 1905, Lake City’s Stonewall Jackson Chapter even tried, briefly, to get the location of the monument moved to someplace within Lake City, as they believed that the “heroic event” ought to be commemorated in a civic center rather than “down in the heart of the woods.” The monument’s metaphoric significance was also emphasized in 1924 when a small scale model of the monument was featured in the UDC float in Tallahassee’s Historical Days parade. The float was manned by Confederate veterans of the battle, and was clearly intended more to honor their actions than to convey a historical lesson.

The role of the UDC at Olustee can thus be seen as heritage preservation more than historical preservation. The true significance of the Olustee monument is best exemplified by the inscriptions on the monument’s back side that state that Olustee’s Confederate troops fought for “the cause of liberty and state sovereignty,” and “triumphed here in defense of their homes and firesides.” This was the same mixture of political apologetics and celebration of heroism which pervaded all the historical work of the UDC. The monument at Olustee stood, and stands to this day, less as a historical marker than a totem pole to the sacred heritage of the Lost Cause.

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200 Finley, “Lake City Chapter” Proceedings of the Annual Convention, 13.
201 Mrs. S. Boteler Thompson, “Report of the Stonewall Jackson Chapter” Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of the Florida Division, 25.
202 Miller, “Report of Olustee Committee” Minutes of the Thirtieth Annual Convention, Florida Division United Daughters of the Confederacy (Florida Division UDC, 1925), 92.
CONCLUSION

The Florida Division of the UDC continued to evolve as American society changed and new generations of women took up the mantel of defending the Confederate legacy. There was relatively little change from the 1920s to the 1930s, except in the way in which the Daughters organized their own history. Whereas previous scrapbooks had brimmed with essays, speeches, and historical documents of all description, beginning in the 1930s the volumes began to resemble more traditional scrapbooks consisting mainly of newspaper clippings and photographs, most of which were self referential to the activities of the UDC and of little utility to determining the objectives of the organization. It is thus difficult to say to what extent this shift in the internal organization of the UDC’s historical material reflected changes in the organization’s principles.

Throughout the 1930s the Florida Division continued to engage in the same basic activities as they had done earlier, including Confederate Memorial Days, essay contests, and scholarships, but the tone of these events had changed. Karen Cox suggests that as early as 1918 the Daughters had reason to believe that “vindication for the Confederate generation had been achieved,” as “by the 1920s most southern states had adopted pro-Confederate textbooks” and “classrooms often included a portrait of Robert E. Lee next to that of George Washington.”

It is certainly reasonable to believe that much of the earlier fight went out of the UDC because the organization had achieved its main objectives. Previously, Daughters had preached crusades against the “falsehoods” of Civil War history and agitated for white supremacy, national reconciliation and, sometimes, gender emancipation. In 1939, the most controversial issues were the selection of the English actress Vivien Leigh over an American Southern actresses to star in Gone With the Wind, and a statement by Winston Churchill to the effect that “all the heroism of the South could not redeem their cause from the stain of slavery, just as all the courage and skill which the Germans always show in war, will not free them from the

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203 Cox, Dixie’s Daughters, 159-160.
reproach of Naziism." When the UDC complained, the soon-to-be Prime Minister’s office sent a polite, noncommittal apology. 204

Having achieved, at least for the moment, the goals they had fought for, the Florida Division and UDC as a whole seems to have become more inward looking, focusing on the social functions and events that had previously played a secondary role to the work of the organization. Gaines Foster attributes the decline of the Confederate Veteran’s movement in the 1890s to the same phenomenon, as the United Confederate Veterans became more interested in the pageantry and social activities of their reunions than the mission they were supposed to be fulfilling. 205

From the 1960s onward, this trend accelerated. The UDC’s Scrapbooks consist of page after page of label-less photographs from conventions that reveal an increasingly graying membership, and local newspaper clips that alternate between coverage of the society events that now dominated UDC conventions, and concern on the part of UDC officials over their ability to attract new members. 206 The Daughters more closely resemble country club members than social activists.

The UDC’s former racial bombast was replaced by an utter silence on race as the Civil Rights movement played out around them, and their disconnect with contemporary events continued even after the Lost Cause narrative they had worked so hard to construct started to come undone in the education system. By 1972, the UDC was forced to actively defend itself against the charge of being “a stagnant group of old ladies who revel in the past without regard to present or future,” a far cry from the robust shapers of public opinion of fifty years before. 207

With this, the UDC had come full circle. An organization that had been born out of the politics of a particular era, and had seized upon the politics of that era to gain power and influence now faced the possibility of obsolescence, as far as their public image was concerned. The Daughters’ commitment to history and heritage, once the driving force of their organization that had put them into the forefront of public debates and the shaping of public

204 Eugenia Lamar, “Report of the President-General for 1939,” UDC Scrapbooks, SAF.
205 Foster, Ghosts of the Confederacy, 169-171.
207 Richmond Times-Dispatch, November 15, 1972 B9.
memory now marked them as moribund, perhaps because the historical narrative that had so
impacted the early twentieth century failed to speak meaningfully to the politics of the
century’s latter decades.
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