EDUCATION OR INDOCTRINATION: THE LOST CAUSE IN THREE SOUTH CAROLINA MUSEUMS

by

Carly A. Collins

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in
History

Charlotte

2024

Approved by:

_____
Dr. Willie Griffin

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Dr. Karen L. Cox

_____
Dr. John David Smith

ABSTRACT

CARLY A. COLLINS. Education or Indoctrination: The Lost Cause in Three South Carolina Museums. (Under the direction of DR. WILLIE GRIFFIN)

This master's thesis examines the histories of Columbia's South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, Charleston's Museum at Market Hall, and Greenville's Museum and Library of Confederate History to promote the Lost Cause. The Lost Cause has prevailed as a popular memory of the South, veiling the accurate representation of the antebellum South as a society reliant on slave labor. This study argues that these three museums and others like them indoctrinate visitors with the myth of the Lost Cause through exhibits, education, and community outreach. The Relic Room was established by Columbia's local United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) chapter in 1896, gained funding through the state a decade later, and eventually came under the control of the state over the next several decades. Following a reunion of the United Confederate Veterans in Charleston, the local UDC chapter established the Museum at Market Hall in 1899 in a building that was central to Charleston's economic and social history, which centered around the African slave trade. As the brainchild of the local camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV), Greenville's museum was founded in 1993 and was part of a major shift of Confederate memorial organizations away from outright support of white supremacy toward the stance that the Lost Cause narrative represented "heritage, not hate." The persistence of the Lost Cause in museums indicates that many white southerners continue to wrestle with conflicting memories and narratives of the Civil War, and museums that perpetuate the myth only further exacerbate the white southern struggle to acknowledge a dark past of slavery and exploitation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my thesis committee. Thank you to my thesis chair, Dr. Willie Griffin, for his encouragement, feedback, and guidance during my writing process. His valuable advice and profound belief in my work have pushed me to become a better writer and historian. I would like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Karen L. Cox, whose book *No Common Ground: Confederate Monuments and the Ongoing Fight For Racial Justice* sparked my interest in the Lost Cause and inspired me to conduct my own research on it. I would also like to thank Dr. John David Smith, whose extensive knowledge of southern history and helpful comments were incredibly useful for my project.

I am grateful for the History Department, especially Dr. Tina Shull and Dr. Ritika Prasad, for always providing me with unwavering support and valuable insight. Thank you to all my classmates who read my chapter drafts and provided practical suggestions to make my work stronger. Many thanks to all the museum employees I spoke to during my three research trips. Their eagerness to share stories of their museums has greatly contributed to my project.

Lastly, I would like to thank my parents, who accompanied me on my research trips with unwavering patience and encouragement, and my boyfriend, Hunter, who never doubted my ability to write a compelling thesis. Thank you for encouraging me to follow my passion for public history.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AME	African Methodist Episcopal
BCB	Budget and Control Board
LMA(s)	Ladies' Memorial Association(s)
MLCH	Museum and Library of Confederate History
MMH	Museum at Market Hall
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NCM	National Confederate Museum
SCCRRMM	South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum
SCV	Sons of Confederate Veterans
UCV	United Confederate Veterans
UDC	United Daughters of the Confederacy
WMB	War Memorial Building

INTRODUCTION

On May 10, 2015, Dylann Roof visited the Museum and Library of Confederate History in Greenville, South Carolina. This visit was one of his many trips to various history museums and plantations across the state of South Carolina. Taking pictures at several heritage and museum sites, Roof published his photos on his website *lastrhodesian.com*, where he also wrote a 2,500-word manifesto on his racist views of Black people and support of white supremacy.[1]

Roughly a month after visiting the Greenville museum, Roof murdered nine African Americans at the Charleston Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church on June 17. His violent, racially motivated act sparked a divisive debate across the country, especially in the South, where numerous Confederate memorial organizations and individuals continue to celebrate the fallen Confederacy and their interpretations of the causes and outcomes of the Civil War. Federal prosecutors claimed that Roof's access to the numerous online articles on Black-on-White crime influenced his violent killings. Yet historians should consider his obsession with Confederate history and the institution of slavery as potential reasons why Roof was a white supremacist as well. Indeed, many newspaper articles have detailed Roof's journey around South Carolina as almost a "build-up" to the nine murders. His travels also beg the question as to *why* he chose to visit these museums and sites.

Historians have argued that Confederate memorialization and the fabricated memories of the causes and aftermath of the Civil War, otherwise known as the Lost Cause, are two sides of the same coin. There are various elements in the narrative of the Lost Cause, that was first extensively written about by native Virginian and wartime journalist Edward A. Pollard in *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (1866). The most important

[1] Frances Robles, "Dylann Roof Photos and a Manifesto Are Posted on Website," *New York Times*, June 20, 2015, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/21/us/dylann-storm-roof-photos-website-charleston-church-shooting.html.

of these is that the South fought in the Civil War to protect the constitutional principle of states' rights, rather than to preserve the institution of slavery. Indeed, in the decades following the end of the war, southern politicians, many of whom were Confederate veterans, often referred to the war as a fight for "southern independence," with some even asserting that the North fought against southern liberty and loyal slaves.[2]

Another significant tenet of the Lost Cause is the notion that slavery was a benevolent institution that was "the mildest in the world; which did not rest on acts of debasement and disenfranchisement, but elevated the African, and was in the interest of human improvement."[3] The Lost Cause stance on slavery reflects the concept of white supremacy, that southern slaveholders and other proslavery ideologies embraced in order to argue that it was natural for white people to dominate over African and African American slaves. Another component of the Lost Cause is the admiration for Confederate generals and leaders, especially General Robert E. Lee and General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. By honorably surrendering to the Union's persistent military power, Confederate soldiers were "the heroic defenders of American principles" and deserved recognition.[4]

Although Dylann Roof most likely adopted his prejudices prior to his museum visits, institutions that present the Confederacy as a romanticized past with loyal enslaved African Americans can certainly reinforce a racist individual's viewpoints. Roof's deadly deeds illustrate the dangerous consequences of a museum's presentation of a mythological narrative. Therefore, it is vital to understand how the Lost Cause has worked its way into educational spaces. Its

[2] Adam H. Domby, *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020), 43.
[3] Edward A. Pollard, *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (New York: E.B. Treat & Co., 1866), 46.
[4] Domby, *The False Cause,* 4.

journey began after the Civil War, when mournful white southerners quickly assumed the duties of honoring Confederate soldiers and the alleged noble cause they fought for.

Civil War & Confederate Memorialization

The Ladies' Memorial Associations (LMAs), which were primarily comprised of white southern widows who lost their husbands in the war, started raising funds to maintain cemeteries and decorative gravestones for Confederate soldiers a year after the Civil War ended. The LMAs' work to honor Confederate soldiers were the first efforts "responsible for remaking military defeat into a political, social, and cultural victory for the white South."[5] While the LMAs certainly helped initiate Confederate memorialization, other organizations followed suit. In 1890, daughters of Confederate veterans formed groups to continue the work of memorial associations in celebrating Confederate history and soldiers' legacies. In 1894, these women organized the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) and helped to reshape the South in the following decades.[6]

The UDC quickly started to advocate for the erection of Confederate monuments across the South and swiftly assumed responsibility for creating and maintaining the commemorative memory of Confederate soldiers.[7] While the region's veterans preserved items from their wartime service, women's organizations were the main catalysts in operating Confederate relic museums that emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Therefore, the UDC established a distinct identity for southern women, who became the primary collectors and caretakers of Civil War relics. These relic rooms turned to the public for donations, much like

[5] Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 3.
[6] Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 23.
[7] Previous scholarship on Confederate memorial groups referred to the UDC organization and its regional chapters as "the Daughters," so I do the same throughout this thesis. I use the same rationale when referring to the SCV as "the Sons."

local history museums did. Many white southerners donated artifacts that represented the common soldier – the main hero in the Lost Cause narrative. However, because the Lost Cause glorified Confederate generals and leaders, relic museums regularly accepted objects that represented Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, even if the artifact was as minuscule as a piece of their hair.[8]

The significance of labeling Civil War objects as relics implies that these artifacts are sacred. Indeed, relics "can 'speak,' authenticating and authorizing claims and actions," that in turn can promote a specific memory or ideology.[9] Although relic museums had collections of Confederate battle flags and weaponry, ordinary objects such as canteens and a deck of cards symbolized not only the everyday soldier, but also resonated with mournful southerners who collected similar items. In other words, relic rooms encouraged visitors to engage in the popular southern memory of the Civil War as a noble southern fight to preserve the antebellum South, that was now a romanticized past.[10] This thesis aims to explore the persistence of the Lost Cause in three South Carolina museums, specifically analyzing the histories, exhibits, and educational strategies of each institution.

Historiography

My research is part of a broader examination of the many southern institutions and individuals that continue to maintain the myth of the Lost Cause. Scholars began to carefully scrutinize and debunk the Lost Cause myth in the early 1970s, often linking it to how defeated white southerners commemorated Confederate soldiers and the antebellum South. Rollin G.

[8] Teresa Barnett, *Sacred Relics: Pieces of the Past in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 109-110.
[9] Matthew Dennis, *American Relics and the Politics of Public Memory* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2023), xv.
[10] Barnett, *Sacred Relics,* 112.

Osterweis' book *The Myth of the Lost Cause, 1865-1900* (1973) analyzed the multiple tactics white southerners used to perpetuate the Lost Cause through organizations, including the Ku Klux Klan, as well as in newspapers, textbooks, and religious gatherings. He discussed how in the late nineteenth century the UDC and Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) monitored children's education on the Civil War by ensuring textbooks taught "the history of the Confederate States of America, along with a 'proper presentation' of American history," otherwise known as the southern perspective of the war.[11]

Charles R. Wilson examined the myth of the Lost Cause through a religious lens in *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (1980). He argued that defeated southerners interpreted the Civil War as "a moral-religious crusade against the atheistic North."[12] This encouraged Christian church leaders to associate Confederate symbols with their faith, ultimately leading to the creation of the civil religion of the Lost Cause. As Wilson's book demonstrated, Osterweis's work paved new avenues for future historians to look at more specific examples of how Confederate memorial organizations sustained Lost Cause ideas through numerous approaches.

Gaines M. Foster helped establish the contemporary scholarship on the Lost Cause and how white southerners worked to perpetuate it. In *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913* (1988), he argued that white southerners used Lost Cause beliefs to ease anxieties of new social orders, such as Reconstruction and the new freedom of Black southerners. White southerners argued that they had fought for the constitutional principle of states' rights, which enabled white southerners to completely

[11] Rollin G. Osterweis, *The Myth of the Lost Cause*, *1865-1900* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1973), 112.
[12] Charles R. Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 8.

circumvent the subject of slavery as a main reason for the cause of the Civil War. However, they feared emerging racial equality because it was a severe threat to white supremacy. Because Lost Cause rhetoric was so prominent in the South after the war, Confederate memorialization served as "support for the status quo than for revitalization."[13] Similar to Foster's work, David W. Blight's *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (2001) explored the idea that popular memory was a core element of establishing and maintaining the Lost Cause. He argued that southern white supremacist views of the Civil War overruled the possibility of racial equality because many white southerners detested Reconstruction. Thus, the white supremacist ideology triumphed and manipulated the popular memories of the Civil War and slavery.

Scholars soon became interested in *who* had major roles in sustaining the Lost Cause. They identified the UDC and SCV as the most influential organizations. Karen L. Cox's *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (2003) provided a detailed history and analysis of the UDC's role in preserving Confederate culture and the Lost Cause. Importantly, Cox asserted that although several organizations commemorated the Confederacy through the Lost Cause memory, the UDC led the effort to memorialize the antebellum South and vindicate their ancestors. Another important work that examined a specific Lost Cause narrative is Kevin Levin's *Searching for Black Confederates: The Civil War's Most Persistent Myth* (2019). Levin discussed how in the late twentieth century the SCV fabricated the story of slaves who gallantly served in the Confederate army in order to combat widespread beliefs that the South fought in the Civil War to preserve

[13] Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 125.

slavery.[14] Levin contended that there is no evidence that Black Confederates were predominantly combat soldiers; instead, they primarily served as camp slaves.

Other historians have focused more closely on specific states and cities. Thomas J. Brown's *Civil War Canon: Sites of Confederate Memory in South Carolina* (2015) outlined the memorialization of Lost Cause narratives in South Carolina. Looking specifically at South Carolina over the last 175 years, Brown examined monuments celebrating southern politicians and proslavery advocates like John C. Calhoun, discussed how Charleston's tourism industry incorporated and then eliminated Lost Cause ideals in various sites, and also highlighted the resistance to the Lost Cause that occurred in the 1980s, when many South Carolinians started protesting the presence of the Confederate flag and other memorials. Brown's work, especially his discussion on the Relic Room in Columbia, provides important insights into understanding how relic museums perpetuate the Lost Cause.

Lastly, there is abundant scholarship on the Neo-Confederate ideology that emerged in the late twentieth century. Euan Hague, Heidi Beirich, and Edward H. Sebesta examine the emergence and sustainability of the Neo-Confederate movement in *Neo-Confederacy: A Critical Introduction* (2008). For the purposes of this thesis, Neo-Confederacy is "a reactionary movement with an ideology against modernity conceiving its ideas and politics within a historical framework of the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865) and the history of the American South."[15] The ideology memorializes the Lost Cause, especially southern states' rights to secede, yet tacitly supports white nationalism. The two main groups that adopted the Neo-Confederate

[14] Kevin Levin, *Searching for Black Confederates: The Civil War's Most Persistent Myth* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 4.
[15] Euan Hague, Edward H. Sebesta, and Heidi Beirich, "Introduction: Neo-Confederacy and the New Dixie Manifesto," in *Neo-Confederacy: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Euan Hague, Edward H. Sebesta, and Heidi Beirich (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 8.

ideology are the SCV and the League of the South, though I only discuss the former in this thesis.[16]

Although many renowned historians have researched and written books and articles on how the Lost Cause ideology perpetuates erroneous depictions of the past, the Lost Cause myth persists throughout the South in public educational spaces, such as museums. This thesis will add to the historiography of the Lost Cause and how white southerners have fought to preserve it. It will also fill a historiographical gap by discussing and analyzing the dangerous presence of these particular museums in the South, that historians have yet to research and analyze thoroughly.

The Educational Purpose of Museums

Historians have argued for decades that the Lost Cause's central tenets parallel white supremacy, so museums founded on Lost Cause ideals certainly reflect white supremacist values. Museums are significant in that they are educational institutions with specific purposes. Many history museums use educational programs and community interactions to educate the public on certain histories. According to the International Council of Museums' current definition of a museum: "A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing."[17]

[16] The League of the South is a white supremacist group with strong ties to the American alt-right movement, which is a far-right, white nationalist ideology. It formed in 1994 with the intent to establish "a free and independent Southern republic" of the former Confederate states. League of the South, accessed May 1, 2024, https://leagueofthesouth.com/.

[17] "Museum Definition," International Council of Museums, accessed May 1, 2024, https://icom.museum/en/resources/standards-guidelines/museum-definition/.

Museums, therefore, possess an educational purpose for the public. They provide "communal empowerment" and are evaluated by the effectiveness of their educational services.[18] Additionally, museums commonly engage with other public organizations, furthering their influence among local communities. People visit museums to learn regional and national histories and visitors' memories are often influenced by how museums present historical narratives. Therefore, because museums play a significant role in the public's education, they can ultimately influence visitors' interpretations of history based on *what* they present and *how* they present it. Museums centered on the fabricated memories of the Lost Cause then pose a problem by indoctrinating rather than educating the public.

The Case of South Carolina

Nearly every state from the Confederacy took part in memorializing its fallen soldiers, revising the narrative from one of defeat to that of a noble cause. South Carolina presents a unique case in commemorating the war and the Confederacy because it was the first southern state to secede from the Union and around 20,000 South Carolinians died in the Civil War.[19] Due to these challenges and losses, Civil War commemoration became an integral part of the state's identity. South Carolinians used the Lost Cause to ease their way into the emerging modern society of the United States, especially with racial equality. In this case, South Carolina's Confederate memorials arose out of "a variety of initiatives" that allowed white southerners to adapt to new societal changes while maintaining a hold on their romanticized vision of the Confederacy.[20]

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[18] Stephen Weil, "From Being About Something to Being for Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum," *Daedalus* 128, no. 3, (1999): 229.
[19] William J. Rivers, *Roll of the Dead: South Carolina Troops, Confederate States Service* (Columbia: South Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1886).
[20] Thomas J. Brown, *Civil War Canon: Sites of Confederate Memory in South Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 7.

Despite South Carolina's long endorsement of the Lost Cause, including but not limited to its museums and monuments that commemorate the Confederacy, many South Carolinians continue to grapple with conflicting memories of the Civil War and antebellum South. This became quite apparent in relation to the 2015 legislation that removed the Confederate Battle Flag from the statehouse grounds in the wake of the Charleston Massacre of nine African Americans.[21] Many South Carolinians rejoiced at this removal, but others labeled it as an attack on their southern heritage. However, South Carolina still signifies its connection to the Lost Cause through three museums in Columbia, Charleston, and Greenville.

Overview of "Education or Indoctrination"

My research process involved visiting each museum, interviewing employees in leadership positions, and analyzing each institution's founding documents, mission statements, exhibits, and publications such as brochures, newsletters, and papers.[22] I have also used social media posts, each museum's website, and local newspaper articles to better understand each institution's outreach methods and effectiveness in attracting visitors. Each chapter has a few photographs of the respective museum in order to offer visuals that cannot be completely expressed with words.

The first chapter, "Collecting the Past & Shaping the Present: The South Carolina Confederate Relic Room & Military Museum," explores the history of Columbia's Relic Room, the place that received the Confederate flag removed from the statehouse grounds in 2015. Founded in 1896, the museum originally functioned as a space for the local UDC chapter's Civil War relics and now receives significant state-funding. Even though museum professionals

[21] "South Carolina governor signs law ordering removal of Confederate flag," *The Guardian*, July 9, 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jul/09/south-carolina-confederate-flag-friday.
[22] Although I received permission from every interviewee to include their names in this thesis, I decided to keep each interviewee's identity private due to confidentiality purposes.

manage the institution now, the Relic Room continues to perpetuate the Lost Cause in its exhibit titled "South Carolina Martial Traditions" and educational programming.

The second chapter, "Combating the Annihilation of History: The Museum at Market Hall," outlines the multiple ways the Museum at Market Hall perpetuates the Lost Cause in the historic city of Charleston. The Charleston UDC Chapter #4 opened the museum in 1899 and has solely managed it since its founding, symbolizing the Daughters' priority to protect the Lost Cause's place in educational spaces. The second chapter examines the museum's exhibit, educational strategies, and relationship with other Confederate memorial organizations, revealing its main objective – preserving the Lost Cause.

The third and final chapter, "Presenting the Truth: The Museum and Library of Confederate History," covers the history and educational tactics of the museum Roof visited in May 2015 in Greenville. The SCV Camp 36 founded the museum in 1996 and perpetuates the Lost Cause by claiming that the ideology is the "truth" regardless of what several historians have argued for decades. By educating its audience on the "truth," the Museum and Library of Confederate History exemplifies another way the Lost Cause has entered educational spaces in the South.

CHAPTER 1

COLLECTING THE PAST & SHAPING THE PRESENT: THE SOUTH CAROLINA CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM & MILITARY MUSEUM

"Is it everyone's heritage? It's not mine." These words came from Kim Hunter, an African American woman who came to pay her respects alongside several other mourners at the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston weeks after Dylan Roof murdered nine worshippers. The concept and significance of heritage was a main tool in pro-flag supporters' arguments regarding the removal of the Confederate battle flag from the South Carolina statehouse grounds on July 9, 2015. Despite the alleged erasure of Confederate heritage, the state government still signifies its connection to the Lost Cause through its management and funding of the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum (SCCRRMM) in the city of Columbia.

The Relic Room, the place that received the Confederate flag removed from the statehouse grounds, has a history steeped in the symbols of the Confederacy. Founded in 1896, the museum originally functioned as a space for Civil War relics of the local UDC chapter. As the collection quickly grew, the museum acquired funding from the state in 1909. Over the next few decades, the state government gained full control over the SCCRRMM. The Relic Room continues to perpetuate the Lost Cause through its military history narrative, lack of context on the first-hand experience of slavery, and extensive display of war relics. This chapter discusses how the museum plays a significant role in sustaining the Lost Cause along these lines, as well as how its educational programs, community interactions, and relationship with the state government reflect its continued pursuit to interpret the Civil War through the lens of the Lost Cause.

The History of the SCCRRMM

As discussed earlier, the UDC advocated for public Confederate memorialization, including the erection of monuments and celebration of Confederate Memorial Day. However, some UDC chapters followed a different path – opening relic museums. Sally Elmore Taylor, a founder of the UDC Wade Hampton Chapter of Columbia, South Carolina, petitioned for the establishment of a Confederate Record and Relic Room in March 1896. Taylor emphasized that while this collection would house military and home front artifacts, it would also reflect the role that white southern women had in preserving Confederate relics. Indeed, the relic room initially showcased domestic objects, such as women's clothing and household items, in its central display case.[23] Although the relic room displayed military artifacts as well, the home front objects supported Taylor's emphasis that "Relics and records are symbols. There is subtle spirit in these, and if we do not reach it and bind it to our uses we will have bread without salt."[24]

The Relic Room sat in the library of the South Carolina College (later University of South Carolina) for five years, then moved to the statehouse in 1901, thanks to Taylor's successful campaign for more adequate space. Because of its extensive collection of domestic objects, the Daughters' museum symbolized the new notion that "white southern women were entitled to articulate community ideals in public spaces."[25] However, the Wade Hampton Chapter also used military artifacts to memorialize Confederate generals and officers, that opposed the UDC's traditional commemoration of the common soldier.[26]

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[23] Thomas Brown, *Civil War Canon: Sites of Confederate Memory* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 109.
[24] Mrs. Taylor's Address, Minutes of the Second Annual Convention of the South Carolina Division, U.D.C., 9 December 1896, South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Archives, Columbia.
[25] Brown, *Civil War Canon*, 108.
[26] Ibid., 111.

The Relic Room's collection rapidly expanded as local newspapers and politicians encouraged southerners to donate their Confederate relics to the SCCRRMM.[27] Thus, the museum operated as a space where these southerners' memories were recognized and celebrated. Due to the museum's new position in the statehouse, the Daughters sought funding from the General Assembly. In 1909, the state granted the Wade Hampton chapter an annual appropriation of $150 to pay the museum custodian's salary.[28] Over the next few decades, the Relic Room's state funding would gradually increase, along with the state government's growing interest in managing the museum itself.

The SCCRRMM maintained its influence in Columbia when it relocated to the Archives Building in 1960. However, the Daughters, especially the museum's custodian Luvie C. Land, clashed with the State Archives male employees in the Archives Building. For example, State Archives director J.H. Easterby assumed that the Archives would eventually absorb the Relic Room despite the Wade Hampton Chapter's persistence on being the sole caretakers of the collection.[29] In 1960, the same year the museum moved to the Archives building, the state legislature approved a bill for the SCCRRMM and State Archives to move to the new War Memorial Building (WMB).[30] At the time, the Relic Room annually received the board's smallest appropriation of $3,800 in the state budget.[31] Still, the museum gained recognition as "a

[27] "A Scene Which Stirred the Old Soldiers' Hearts," *The State*, May 18, 1906, 1.
[28] Caitlin Cutrona, "'We Are Going to Be Reckoned With:' the South Carolina UDC and the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Museum, 1986-2000" (Master's Thesis, University of South Carolina- Columbia, 2021), 12, http://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd/6242.
[29] Kristie L. DaFoe, "Shifting Authority at the Confederate Relic Room, 1960-1986" (Master's Thesis, University of South Carolina-Columbia, 2015), 11, https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd/3117.
[30] "SC Archives Building Now Step Nearer," *The State*, February 27, 1957, 24.
[31] Hank Leifermann, "Relic Room's Money: The Smallest Appropriation," *The State*, April 28, 1963, 43.

mecca for historians and school children" in local newspapers, especially during the Civil War Centennial.[32]

As part of the SCCRRMM's move to the WMB in 1971, its budget from the Budget and Control Board (BCB) increased to $6,000 for maintenance and utilities, which caused the state government to become more "entangled and interested in the affairs of the museum."[33] UDC member LaVerne Watson, the custodian at the time, organized the relics by time period to demonstrate that the Relic Room's collections were from several different eras in South Carolina's military history.[34] The museum's new space in the WMB required more employees, that brought in the museum's first male staff members. With these new workers came new job descriptions, such as a director and curator. As the BCB had financial power over every employee's job title, they faced a difficult decision of selecting a new director of the SCCRRMM after Watson retired in 1986. The board narrowed down their choices to John A. Martin Jr. and UDC member Dotsy Boineau, two of the museum's associate curators. The board ultimately chose Martin, much to the Daughters' dismay since this was the first time in the Relic Room's history that the director of the museum would not be a UDC member or a woman.[35]

The UDC struggled to maintain authority at the SCCRRMM after Martin's hire in 1986. This was most evident during the 1997 General Assembly legislation session. Although UDC Wade Hampton chapter members were vigorously collecting state relics from wars other than the Civil War, especially the Spanish-American War and World War I, they still visualized the Relic Room as "a museum that centered the Confederacy within a larger story about South Carolina

[32] Kathleen Lewis Sloan, "Relics Bring to Life Confederate Period," *The State*, June 11, 1961, 5.
[33] DaFoe, "Shifting Authority at the Confederate Relic Room, 1960-1986," 18.
[34] Ibid., 21-4.
[35] Ibid., 34-35.

history."[36] However, in 1997, South Carolina's state senator John Courson challenged the SCCRRMM's purpose as a museum that encompassed all of South Carolina military's history. Courson and a few other South Carolina politicians argued that the Relic Room should transition into a museum that focused solely on the Confederacy and not display artifacts from other war periods. He also introduced a South Carolina Confederate Museum Committee, that would comprise five members, including the South Carolina SCV commander and South Carolina UDC president.

Courson's suggestions angered members of the Wade Hampton Chapter, especially Boineau, who was one of the museum's curators at the time. She criticized Courson's designation of the SCV commander to be the committee's chairman, that sharply contrasted with the Daughters' long history of owning and running the SCCRRMM.[37] Boineau and other chapter members also disapproved of Courson's idea of changing the name of the museum to "South Carolina Confederate Museum." Although the name at the time was "South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Museum," the inclusion of "relic" represented the UDC's history of collecting and presenting Civil War artifacts.[38] Thus, this clash between state politicians and the UDC represented the historic gendered aspect behind commemorating Confederate soldiers and memory.

Although Courson's suggestions did not materialize, the BCB did receive full control over the SCCRRMM in June 1998 per the 1997-1998 appropriations bill.[39] This legislation included authority over the museum's collection, so the museum could not deaccession any objects without state approval. The board was also granted control over moving the Relic Room

[36] Cutrona, "'We Are Going to Be Reckoned With,'" 87, 91.
[37] Ibid., 97.
[38] Ibid., 100.
[39] Ibid., 111.

to the Columbia Mills Building, where the State Museum resided since its opening in 1988. However, the board ensured that the Relic Room would function as its own museum in the building.

The next task for the BCB was to hire a new director. The UDC obviously advocated for one of their own – Dotsy Boineau. The BCB, however, ultimately decided to hire Allen Roberson, a museum professional in South Carolina. One of the first changes that Roberson made was to the permanent exhibits. By 2002, the SCCRRMM opened their new exhibit "South Carolina Martial Traditions," that covers the state's military history from the American Revolution to the War on Terror.[40] Four years later, the museum changed its name to its current title "South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum," in order to emphasize that the museum was not solely centered on Confederate history, but rather all of South Carolina's military history. Boineau continued to work at the SCCRRMM, but frequently bickered with Roberson over his authority over her. She, and other Daughters, insisted that the UDC and the Relic Room would always be linked, even after Boineau's retirement in 2000.[41] In 2015, the BCB transferred full governance over the museum to the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission. The museum is currently an independent agency and received $1.5 million for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.[42] It still functions as a relic room and military museum, although its narrative of the Civil War and depiction of the antebellum period in South Carolina represent the myth of the Lost Cause.

[40] "Main Gallery," South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, https://www.crr.sc.gov/exhibits/currentexhibits/maingallery
[41] Cutrona, "'We Are Going to Be Reckoned With,' 126.
[42] South Carolina General Assembly, *Journal of the Senate of the State of South Carolina*, 125th sess., June 14, 2023, Section 30, South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission, 72.

The Visitor Experience at the Relic Room

The Relic Room still stands in the State Museum, although visitors must pay a separate admission fee to gain entry to the SCCRRMM. There are currently five paid employees at the Relic Room, including the executive director, curator of education, registrar, and two administrative positions, and it is currently accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, which "increases your museum's credibility and value to funders, policy makers, insurers, community and peers."[43] During my visit to the museum, I interviewed an employee and learned about the museum's exhibits and educational strategies. The employee provided me with vital background information on how the SCCRRMM's permanent exhibits effectively portray South Carolina's military history.

The Relic Room's intended purpose has shifted throughout the past century, as the UDC and state have disagreed over the main focus of the museum. Its current mission statement is: "The South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum serves as the State's military history museum by collecting, preserving, and exhibiting South Carolina's military material culture from the colonial era to the present, and by providing superior educational experiences and programming."[44] Despite its mission statement, the SCCRRMM still highlights the Civil War and the Confederacy throughout its exhibits. This is most evident in its only permanent exhibit, "South Carolina Martial Traditions." The exhibit begins at the front of the museum, opening with a statement on South Carolina's military history. Its label stresses the significance of South Carolina's fights in the wars from 1776 to 1861, along with describing the

[43] "Accreditation," American Alliance of Museums, accessed December 3, 2023, https://www.aam-us.org/programs/accreditation-excellence-programs/accreditation/.
[44] "About," South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, accessed September 19, 2023, https://www.crr.sc.gov/about.

state as "the very embodiment of Southern martial spirit, pro-slavery and states' rights politics, and resistance to federal authority."[45]

Throughout the exhibit, it is quite evident that the SCCRRMM presents South Carolina as a spirited actor in the Civil War. Past the entrance wall label that describes South Carolina's relevance in the American Revolution, the exhibit invites visitors to walk along the circular room and read the several wall labels that chronologically narrate the Civil War. The first two displays that discuss how the Civil War began are titled "The Economic Impact of Slavery" and "The Nullification Crisis."[46] The museum purposefully placed these two labels next to each other to offer some neutrality between the two commonly disputed main causes of the Civil War: slavery and states' rights. The two labels are also supposed to emphasize the "experience of the soldier."[47] However, upon closer inspection, the label on slavery functions as an introduction to the Nullification Crisis label, adding to the misinterpretation that the fight for states' rights was the main cause of the Civil War.

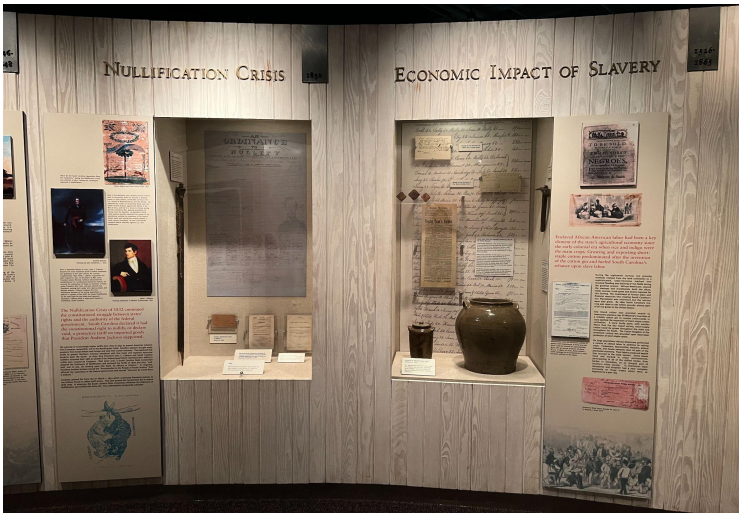

Figure 1: "South Carolina Martial Traditions," Exhibit in South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum. Photograph taken by the author on July 14, 2023.

[45] "South Carolina Martial Traditions," Exhibit in South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum.
[46] Ibid.
[47] SCCRRMM employee, interview by author, July 14, 2023.

The label "The Economic Impact of Slavery" discusses how South Carolinians relied economically on enslaved African Americans' labor to sustain their growing economy. It elaborates on the several tasks that slaves completed, such as clearing rice fields, picking cotton, and working on large plantations.[48] The SCCRRMM further expands on the state's economic reliance on slavery by displaying receipts for slave purchases, slave tags, and some pottery allegedly produced by slaves. Whether or not former slaves donated these items, especially the pottery, the text does not elaborate on the first-hand experience of enslaved people. Furthermore, purchase receipts and tags do not completely "represent their [slaves'] wartime experiences in any way," because there is no mention or representation of the brutal torture slaves endured from whips, coffle chains, and other weapons.[49] This lack of context contributes to the Lost Cause myth that slavery was a benevolent institution with kind, paternal masters.

In all the item descriptions, the SCCRRMM fails to detail the experiences of enslaved populations, including the fear of torture or punishment by their masters, separation from their families, or the overall brutality of being owned and controlled by a person. Memory studies scholars often emphasize the idea that communities and individuals attribute a certain level of significance to a memory, especially concerning wartime events and memorials. Yet they also, usually willingly, forget other pieces of history that are not as compelling as others or do not align with a specific narrative.[50] Although South Carolina Martial Traditions does not explicitly assert that slavery was a benevolent institution, a main tenet of the Lost Cause, the SCCRRMM's lack of information on the experiences of the enslaved suggests that the museum centers itself on a different narrative — states' rights.

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[48] "South Carolina Martial Traditions," Exhibit in South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum.
[49] Barnett, *Sacred Relics,* 109.
[50] Keir Reeves, "Sites of Memory," in *History, Memory, and Public Life: The Past in the Present*, ed. Anna K. Maerker, Simon Sleight, and Adam Sutcliffe (London: Routledge, 2018), 71.

The Nullification Crisis label explains how in 1832 John C. Calhoun and South Carolina nullifiers fought against oppressive federal authority, deepening the conflicting between states' rights and the federal government's power to impose tariffs. The label discusses how nullifiers expressed great concern over "excessive burdens upon the South," yet does not go into detail on why the South would immensely suffer due to its economic reliance on enslaved labor.[51] Furthermore, the items on display for this label contribute to the states' rights narrative. Some artifacts include a facsimile of the Ordinance of Nullification, an envelope addressed to Calhoun, and a minuscule lock of Calhoun's hair.[52] Bearing in mind that most of the objects on display originate from the UDC Wade Hampton chapter's collections, it is important to note that the items and narratives for each label have distinct connections. The "Economic Impact of Slavery" artifacts consist mainly of slave purchase receipts, while the "Nullification Crisis" display contains drafts of Calhoun's speeches, portraits of Calhoun and Andrew Jackson, and brief descriptions of both men's political careers. Although the SCCRRMM concentrates on the state's military history, it is apparent that social history does not hold a place in the museum, even where there is room, such as "The Economic Impact of Slavery" label.

The museum also dedicates an entire label to the Ordinance of Secession. The label, titled "Secession: A New Nation," narrates how South Carolinians came to the decision to secede from the Union. Because Abraham Lincoln's 1860 presidential election was the "beginning of the final assault on the political and social institutions of their state," many South Carolinians challenged the power of the federal government to restrict states from seceding.[53] Citing directly from the South Carolina General Assembly's convention on the election, the label specifies that

[51] "South Carolina Martial Traditions," Exhibit in South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.

the state delegates pursued secession due to the state's push for independence. The display case contains a few items that represent the significance of South Carolina's declaration of secession, including a lithograph of the Ordinance of Secession and the feather quill that one of the delegates used to sign it. The case also includes an original copy of the *Charleston Mercury's* famous broadside titled "The Union is Dissolved!" This newspaper, owned by the "Father of Secession," Robert Barnwell Rhett Sr., clearly stated that pre-Civil War South Carolina faced "the extinction of slavery" and this time period was a "crisis at fate."[54] However, the SCCRRMM's label on secession does not explicitly state what "political and social institutions" South Carolinians sought to protect. Thus, the Relic Room avoids defining the main reason for South Carolina's secession: the potential loss of enslaved labor.

The next several labels on the Civil War mainly highlight the various South Carolina units in the Confederate army as well as statistical data on the number of enlisted men. For example, at the end of the exhibit's room, there is a large map detailing where each regiment training camp was in the state. There is also abundant information on the early Union attacks in the South, including the first time both sides encountered each other at the Battle of Manassas. Another label that may capture visitors' eyes appears in its own corner, titled "The South Carolina Martial Tradition." Without narrating a particular war, this label celebrates the state's military history in multiple wars and conflicts, including the Stono Rebellion of 1739, the largest slave rebellion in the state. The label states that these events led to the creation of slave patrols, and even notes the racial violence in the State Militia during Reconstruction. The label's case includes an image of African American children pretending to be in a militia unit with wooden

[54] "What Shall the South Carolina Legislature Do?" *Charleston Mercury*, November 3, 1860.

weaponry, one of the few photographs of Black southerners in the South Carolina Martial Traditions permanent exhibit.

A more significant example of African American history that appears in the exhibit is the label "Fight For Freedom." It features the story of the Port Royal Experiment (1862-65), a Quaker and abolitionist program that established over thirty schools for escaped slaves in the Port Royal region. These slaves escaped during the Union's gradual siege of Charleston when many planters fled their homes due to impending Union attacks. The label also highlights how many escaped slaves enlisted in the Union army after Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation went into effect in 1863. Lastly, the label narrates the historically significant story of the Confederate gunboat *Planter*, whose slave crew assumed control while Confederate soldiers were on land.[55] These few instances of African American history in South Carolina's Martial Traditions do offer historical narratives of Black southerners' roles in South Carolina's military history, yet the exhibit does not detail their enslaved experiences, especially information as to *why* enslaved persons escaped from plantations when their masters fled.

The SCCRRMM displays some of its original collection of home front artifacts, but frames these objects in a military history narrative. One example is its label on the Confederate Printing Plant in Columbia, that employed over 150 women in August 1864. It also features a few quotes from South Carolina women on the difficulties of relying on self-sufficiency during the Civil War. The exhibit does not include its original displays of women's domestic products; instead, it incorporates South Carolina women's roles as printing plant employees and domestic workers into the military history narrative of the museum, all the while emphasizing that South Carolina had a significant role in supporting the Confederacy.

[55] "South Carolina Martial Traditions," Exhibit in South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum.

After narrating the Civil War, the exhibit defines the Reconstruction era in a textbook fashion, discussing Radical Republicans' efforts to eradicate slavery and its lingering impact as well as South Carolina's 1868 constitutional convention. It briefly mentions the 1865 enactment of the Black Codes and defines them as "laws that restricted African-Americans to a social and economic status that echoed antebellum slavery," but lacks any specific examples of how racial violence and prejudice continued to dominate the South for several decades after the war. The last few labels of the exhibit provide more information on the formation of Confederate memorial organizations, specifically the United Confederate Veterans and the UDC, including the Wade Hampton Chapter. It credits the Wade Hampton Chapter as the founder of the SCCRRMM's collection, yet does not include any information on how the museum has evolved into a state-run institution.[56]

The last few labels of "South Carolina Martial Traditions" discuss the notion of "relics" and how they preserve specific memories of the Confederacy. The label "'The Best I Have to Offer' The Idea of the Civil War 'Relic'" recognizes Confederate veteran Dr. Benjamin Hammet Teague as a "Civil War collector" who acquired relics as "sacred symbols of Lost Cause ideals."[57] Several influential southern figures, notably Jefferson Davis, applauded Dr. Teague's work because he sent souvenirs such as battle flag fragments to them. However, this label reveals a subtle yet significant motive of the SCCRRMM. Even though at least one member of the Wade Hampton Chapter ran the museum until 2000, the museum neglects to credit these members, or even the UDC organization, for preserving these objects for several decades. Instead, the Relic Room highlights Dr. Teague as a prominent relic collector who sustained "Lost Cause ideals," that the museum does not define either. This begs the question: does the museum connect Teague

[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.

to the Lost Cause so visitors do not associate the Wade Hampton Chapter or the current employees with it?

Education & Community Interactions

A museum exhibit is just one method to present a specific narrative to visitors. Many history museums use educational programs and community interactions to educate the public on certain histories. Because the Relic Room is a state-funded museum, there are several educational programs and events for the general public.

The SCCRRMM has multiple education programs, that are usually led by the Curator of Education. School groups of all ages come to the museum for guided tours, that can also include tours of the State Museum.[58] Additionally, the Relic Room has a "Homeschool Friday" series that includes lessons on military history, such as "How to Study a Battle." The museum's mission in educational programs is to educate young students on the different experiences and perspectives of war soldiers without "endorsing a whole person, just their individual decisions."[59] Indeed, a museum employee stressed that the museum portrays historical actors as "real people" and they try to connect students with these historical figures in museum tours. The employee also noted that schoolchildren usually wander into the Relic Room from the State Museum, which is convenient for the SCCRRMM to get more visitors throughout the day.

The Relic Room has an annual, free-admission SwordFest program where participants of all ages learn historical techniques of swordplay, from Japanese sword-drawing to Civil War combat, using foam swords.[60] The interviewee described this program as "picking what people

[58] "School Tours," South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, accessed October 30, 2023, https://www.crr.sc.gov/education/schooltours

[59] SCCRRMM employee, interview by author, July 14, 2023.

[60] "Swordfest Returns To The Relic Room Feb. 11" South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, accessed October 30, 2023, https://crr.sc.gov/node/65.

are interested in and using it." Indeed, many adult groups have attended Swordfest or requested a private sword demonstration program. Some groups that have participated in their own educational programs with the museum include Cadet organizations, SCV camps, UDC chapters, Sons of American Revolution groups, and local church groups. In regard to adult education, the museum does not "pander to any audience;" rather, employees encourage adults to talk to each other during tours. However, many older adults attend the museum's Lunch and Learn series, that involves guest lectures on historical topics related to the state's military history.[61]

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Curator of Education presented digital slideshows on "1860s topics" to senior centers. However, the museum has an "old school" approach in presenting history because there are no technological features in the exhibit South Carolina Martial Traditions. The new temporary exhibit "A War with No Front Lines: South Carolina and the Vietnam War, 1965-1973" uses some technology, yet the permanent exhibit encourages "human interaction." With its educational programs catered to several audiences, the interviewee expressed "hopefully history becomes more important. That's what we're after."[62] The Relic Room certainly details South Carolina's military history, but does not elaborate on the dangers of the Lost Cause myth that some people, such as Dylann Roof, may consider true.

Neo-Confederate Ideologies in the SCCRRMM

Despite the Relic Room's mission statement and embrace of South Carolina's martial spirit in its exhibits, it is undeniable that the museum partakes in the growing Neo-Confederate ideology that persists in the South. The SCCRRMM's gift shop is just one space where the museum clearly endorses the Neo-Confederate ideology. Right behind the front desk, the gift

[61] "Lunch & Learn," South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, accessed October 30, 2023, https://crr.sc.gov/education/lunchlearn.
[62] SCCRRMM employee, interview by author, July 14, 2023.

shop displays a number of books on South Carolina's military history, mainly on Civil War battles and Confederate war leaders. The most eye-catching items for sale, however, are Confederate merchandise. T-shirts, Confederate flags of several sizes, postcards, and even shot glasses with the Confederate battle flag are scattered throughout the gift shop.

Figure 2: Gift shop display in South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum. Photograph taken by the author on July 14, 2023.

Even though the Relic Room defines itself as a military museum that presents the history of South Carolina's involvement in several wars, the gift shop items for sale imply that Confederate memorialization is the institution's main priority.

Not only does the SCCRRMM sell Confederate battle flags, but it also displays some original ones as well. A few exhibit walls display frayed flags bearing the Southern Cross, along with labels describing the artifacts' uses during the war. However, the most unscathed flag – the statehouse flag removed in 2015 – sits alone. As discussed earlier, South Carolina Governor

Nikki Haley had signed legislation to promptly take down the statehouse flag after Roof had murdered nine African Americans in Charleston. The Relic Room received the flag for its collection and had an opportunity to discuss the dangers of the Neo-Confederate ideology that Roof and many white southern individuals and organizations perpetuate.

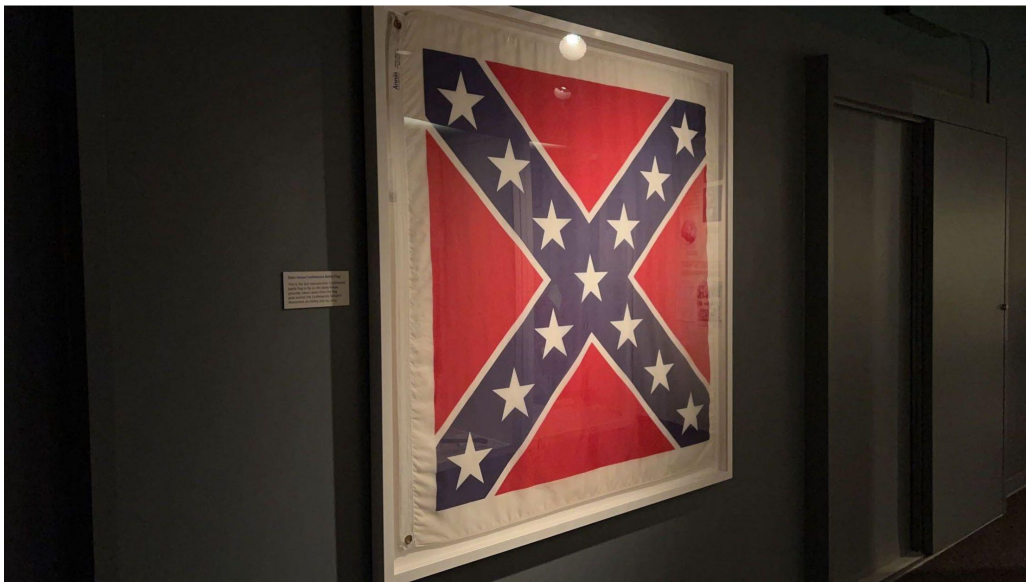

Figure 3: Confederate Battle Flag display in South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum. Photograph taken by the author on July 14, 2023.

However, the label next to the flag offers no context on why the flag was removed. The text reads: "This is the last reproduction Confederate battle flag to fly on the State House grounds, taken down from the flag pole behind the Confederate Soldier's Monument on Friday, July 10, 2015." The SCCRRMM fails to educate visitors on why the Confederate battle flag is a controversial symbol in the United States. The emblem inarguably represents a Southern society that enslaved African Americans. Additionally, Neo-Confederates used the flag to symbolize their racist views of Black Americans during the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s.[63]

[63] Gerald R. Webster and Jonathan I. Leib, "Fighting for the Lost Cause: The Confederate Battle Flag and Neo-Confederacy," in *Neo-Confederacy: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Euan Hague, Edward H. Sebesta, and Heidi Beirich (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 169-70.

Before the Charleston Massacre, Roof had uploaded photographs of himself holding the battle flag online, representing his devotion to the Lost Cause and racist ideologies.[64] Therefore, while some white southerners may define the flag as a mark of their heritage, it is primarily a symbol of white supremacy.

Considering the museum's lack of information on why Confederate symbols are dangerous, it is evident who the SCCRRMM caters to – white southerners who support the Lost Cause. As noted earlier, the states' rights narrative and the absence of enslaved experiences in the exhibit South Carolina Martial Traditions speaks volumes on what the museum values: the Lost Cause. Although there are no employed UDC members there, the Relic Room's connection to the Lost Cause is just as stable as it was in 1896. The museum serves as a space where the public can learn about the Civil War through the lens of the Lost Cause, all the while surrounded by relics that represent a romanticized southern society. This depiction of the South is not everyone's heritage, like Hunter suggested. Rather, it is one of many public spaces in South Carolina that glorifies the fallen Confederacy and antebellum South. The South Carolina state government is not only funding the Relic Room. It is funding the Lost Cause.

[64] Frances Robles, "Dylann Roof Photos and a Manifesto Are Posted on Website," *New York Times*, June 20, 2015, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/21/us/dylann-storm-roof-photos-website-charleston-church-shooting.html.

CHAPTER 2

COMBATING THE ANNIHILIATION OF HISTORY: THE MUSEUM AT MARKET HALL

The city where Roof committed the Charleston Massacre significantly shaped the institution of slavery. Charleston, South Carolina, was the Cradle of the Confederacy for several reasons. Firstly, its harbor was the leading port for the debarkation of enslaved Africans transported to North America throughout the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Although the international trade ended in 1808, white Charlestonians auctioned slaves to local and traveling slaveholders. The enslaved population outnumbered white Charlestonians for most of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, leading up to the Civil War. Many of its white residents, especially wealthy planters, saw abolition as a threat to the financial stability of their city and livelihoods and were heavily invested in preserving the institution. Even when the city banned public slave sales in 1856, auctioneers continued trading slaves until 1865, when the Civil War ended and President Abraham Lincoln abolished slavery.[65]

For over a century, the architects of Charleston's slaveholding economy had, for good reason, grown fearful of potential slave uprisings. The most significant, the Stono Rebellion of 1739 that killed twenty-five white colonists, prompted the enactment of the Negro Act of 1740, that restricted several freedoms that many slaves had not even exercised at the time. The whites' response to the rebellion also included penalties for masters who treated their slaves harshly, as well as the establishment of a school that educated the enslaved on Christian values, such as obedience and deference, although the outcome of these pursuits were trivial.[66] Still, white

[65] Ethan J. Kytle and Blain Roberts, *Denmark Vesey's Garden: Slavery and Memory in the Cradle of the Confederacy* (New York: The New Press, 2018), 6-7,19.
[66] Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), 323-24.

Charlestonians constantly heard of slave insurrections in other southern cities, so any large congregation of slaves or free Blacks frightened slaveholders.

In 1822, a former slave, Denmark Vesey, planned a slave revolt with several other enslaved and free Black Charlestonians after was unable to purchase the freedom of his enslaved wife. Before any action on Vesey's part, white southerners' fears quickly materialized and city authorities arrested Vesey as well as 131 slaves and free Blacks, with many including Vesey being executed. In order to prevent another insurrection, or rather, an uprising that never occurred, the city of Charleston established a boarding house for the city guards, that became known as The Citadel. The city council also constructed a Guard House and a Work House, where arrested slaves endured torture. The City Guard had an overwhelming presence in the city, determined to capture any slaves who disobeyed their masters.[67]

Not only was Charleston a main actor in the Trans-Atlantic and domestic slave trade, but the Civil War began in the city. The victory at Fort Sumter in 1861 gave white Charlestonians hope that they had the wherewithal to defend slavery, but as the war waged on in other parts of the South, devastatingly high death tolls of Confederate soldiers along with strategic battle losses occurred and white southerners started to fear that their cause was lost. In the summer of 1863, Union forces bombarded Charleston for a total of 545 days. The city lay in shambles, with many white Charlestonians fleeing their homes for inland safety especially when General William Tecumseh Sherman led his troops northward from Georgia into South Carolina en route to Columbia, the state capital. Soon after, the Confederates surrendered the war in April 1865.

Historians have argued for decades that the end of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery did not generate racial equality. On the contrary, white southerners fought to keep their

[67] Kytle and Roberts, *Denmark Vesey's Garden*, 20-22.

racial hierarchies through laws and policing, including Black Codes and Jim Crow laws. Another way defeated and mournful southerners kept the memory of the antebellum South alive was through Confederate commemoration. Not only did Confederate memorial organizations support Lost Cause beliefs, but commemorators also ensured that the ideology would materialize in public spaces, such as monuments. Although not a Confederate leader, John C. Calhoun was a revered figure among white South Carolinians due to his pro-slavery stance and advocacy for secession. After his death in 1850, white Charlestonians quickly honored him with an extravagant funeral, annual parades on his birthday, and, eventually, a monument in 1887. The Ladies' Calhoun Monument Association worked to construct a 40-foot tall monument with a prominent statue of Calhoun on top in Marion Square.

However, not all Charlestonians supported a monument dedicated to a pro-slavery politician. Incidents of vandalism arose, and African Americans were the first to be blamed. In the 1890s, the Ladies' Calhoun Monument Association petitioned for a taller, inaccessible monument to avoid acts of defacement. An almost 100-foot monument replaced the original, although many Black Charlestonians continued to mock the memorial and Calhoun well into the twentieth century, with a former slave summarizing the Black stance on Calhoun with "no man was ever hated as much as him by a group of people."[68]

Well into the twenty-first century, protestors vandalized the statue and argued that a pro-slavery advocate did not deserve such a prominent monument in Charleston. The city council removed the monument in June 2020 as part of the Confederate monument removal and social

[68] Thomas J. Brown, *Civil War Canon: Sites of Confederate Memory in South Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 89.

justice movements that quickly gained momentum following the murder of George Floyd.[69] Charleston, however, still represents a romanticized image of the antebellum South, with many of its antiquated buildings, plantations, and forts intact and open to the public. Several of the city's tourist attractions tell the story of the Civil War, but neglect to identify the main cause of the war – slavery. The Calhoun statue was not alone in memorializing the Lost Cause, as many tourism and historic sites do so in Charleston's self-proclaimed "America's Most Historic City."[70] One of these particular pockets of history is the Museum at Market Hall (MMH).

The History of Market Hall

Nestled in a historic, often busy area of downtown Charleston, the site of the MMH originally functioned as a city market built in 1789 at the intersection of Market and Meeting Streets. This market operated for almost half a century until 1835, when the Grand Lodge of Ancient Freemasons of South Carolina petitioned for the erection of a Masonic Hall at the site. The city approved the plan and the Freemasons started constructing the hall, but a great fire destroyed the entire building and marketplace in 1838. The City Council decided that the city should own a hall at that site instead, so the city terminated their deal with the Freemasons and built a hall for Charlestonians. Architect Edward Brickell White designed a Greek Revival plan for the hall, a common architectural style for civic buildings at the time, and the city began constructing the building in summer of 1840. By the following spring, the finished site was a large rectangular hall with long windows and a decorative ceiling, along with four grand Roman columns supporting its façade.[71]

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[69] Meg Kinnard, "Slavery Advocate's Statue Removed in South Carolina," *The Associated Press*, June 24, 2020, https://apnews.com/article/us-news-ap-top-news-sc-state-wire-slavery-south-carolina-a88ad98372bbb810d1261d61acb5350f.
[70] Kytle and Roberts, *Denmark Vesey's Garden*, 7.
[71] Nic Butler, "The Public Life of Charleston's Market Hall," *Charleston Time Machine*, July 18, 2021, https://www.ccpl.org/charleston-time-machine/public-life-charlestons-market-hall#_edn18.

Although the hall served as a workspace for the chief clerk and assistant clerks of the market, as well as a gathering place for the commissioners of the market, the elegant, spacious Market Hall had another purpose of hosting large gatherings of Charlestonians. These meetings included social club meet-ups, lectures, and military groups, such as the Calhoun Guards, until 1861. After the first year of the Civil War, many impoverished families in Charleston came to Market Hall to find aid, such as food and medical supplies, from the Soldiers' Board of Relief.[72]

After the war ended, gatherings at Market Hall resumed in a similar fashion compared to the pre-Civil War years. However, a developing community started to hold and attend events at Market Hall. Free Black Charlestonians gradually extended the social life of the city's Market Hall. Some of these meetings included a ball for the Terpsichorean Club, a Black elite group, as well as musical events for St. Mark's Episcopal Church and the Fourth Baptist Church. These gatherings dwindled in the late 1870s as the Democratic Party took control of the city's politics, all the while enforcing segregation for Black residents. However, by then many organizations had their own gathering places compared to immediately after the war when many of Charleston's buildings lay in ruin.

While Charlestonians slowly rebuilt the city after the devastation of the war, memorial organizations started forming across the South for the purpose of commemorating fallen Confederate soldiers and the Lost Cause. Charleston was no exception, especially considering its principal role in the growth of slavery. In November 1894, local Confederate veterans' daughters founded the Charleston Chapter #4 of the UDC, meaning that they were the fourth chapter to be created in the entire UDC. Like many other chapters, the Charleston Daughters collected war relics for the purpose of preserving the Lost Cause and commemorating Confederate soldiers.

[72] "Soldiers' Directory," *Charleston Daily Courier*, May 30, 1862, 4.

They kept their collection in a "chapter room" at the Mills House Hotel for three years. In 1899, the United Confederate Veterans (UCV) held a reunion in Charleston, and many of their gatherings took place at Market Hall. During the reunion, many veterans took an interest in helping the Daughters find a bigger space for their collection. Market Hall offered a viable option due to its prominence as a gathering place in the city as well as the city-wide pursuit in preserving the Lost Cause. In October 1899, the Daughters opened a "Confederate museum" at Market Hall.[73]

As the museum took over the space in the grand Market Hall, previous gatherings soon ceased, such as the commissioners of the market, who soon received their own building for meetings. The Daughters quickly gained influence as caretakers of the museum's relics, and in turn began perpetuating the Lost Cause through children's education. In 1904, the museum held an essay contest for children that promoted Lost Cause ideals. One member, Mary B. Poppenheim, who was the president-general of the UDC from 1917-1919, worked with the museum caretakers to ensure that school textbooks did not include any claims that the issue of slavery caused the Civil War or any general bias toward the South.[74] Accordingly, the Lost Cause lingered in Charleston throughout much of the twentieth century, especially during the Civil War Centennial (1961-65), when thousands of tourists flocked to Fort Sumter. The first year of the Centennial drew 9,000 more visitors compared to the year prior. Public social events, like the center city parade, that attracted 65,000 attendees wearing Confederate merchandise, and a historical pageant at The Citadel football stadium, made no references to slavery besides "indentured servitude" and aligned more with the Lost Cause stance on the peculiar institution. The Centennial celebrations reveal that Charleston tourism only memorialized a specific

[73] "About," Museum at Market Hall, accessed February 9, 2024, https://www.museumatmarkethall.com/about.html.
[74] Kytle and Roberts, *Denmark Vesey's Garden*, 134.

narrative and did not consider Black tourists "as part of the traveling public," although many Blacks had attended the city's Centennial.[75]

In 1973, Market Hall was designated as a National Historic Landmark. The building was not immune to natural disaster, however. Hurricane Hugo demolished many buildings in the city in 1989, including the roof and several windows of Market Hall. Heavy rain fell through the building and tarnished many of the relics the Daughters had displayed for almost a century. They evacuated the rest of the collection to another space in the city and awaited reconstruction of Market Hall.[76]

Charleston's City Council worked on gaining several levels of assistance to restore Market Hall, yet reconstruction did not end until 2002. During this time of restoration, the city had to establish a lease with the Daughters regarding the ownership of Market Hall. The Charleston chapter had purportedly received a lease from the city in 1899, but there is no public record of that agreement. On June 25, 2002, the Daughters signed a ninety-nine year lease with the city for one dollar a year. The Confederate Museum finally reopened on February 14, 2003, and will celebrate its 125th anniversary in October 2024.[77]

The Fight for Confederate Remembrance

The Charleston UDC Chapter still runs the MMH. The current director and only paid employee is Jill Hunter Powell, who assumed duty after June Murray Wells, the former director, passed away on November 30, 2020. Wells managed the museum for sixty years and took responsibility for saving the rain-soaked collection during Hurricane Hugo. She was known for

[75] Ibid., 298-99.
[76] It is unclear where the Charleston Chapter kept their relics for fourteen years after Hurricane Hugo struck. However, it can be assumed that they did not present their collection to the public during this time away from Market Hall.
[77] Butler, "The Public Life of Charleston's Market Hall."

her determination to teach visitors about the tragedy of the Civil War, emphasizing that there was no aspect of the war worth glorifying.[78] Although the war devastation was not worthy of praise, Wells believed that the men who fought and died for the noble cause were. Wells served as president-general of the UDC from 1998 to 2000 and publicly opposed the potential removal of the Confederate battle flag on statehouse grounds in Columbia in early 2000. She specifically denounced the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) representatives who argued that the flag was a symbol of hate that did not deserve attention in a public space. Wells, on the other hand, stated, "It was put up there for good and honorable reasons. It must not come down with dishonor for false reasons and because of force."[79] The UDC president-general and museum director firmly believed that the South should have won the war and should be kept in the "public's mind."[80]

The Charleston UDC Chapter mourned not only Wells in 2020, but also another important component of the institution – the word "Confederate." In the summer of 2020, the MMH changed its name from "Confederate Museum" to "Museum at Market Hall." There is no public declaration or documentation of this name change, but the most plausible explanation would be that the Daughters feared losing their museum due to the city's ownership of Market Hall and the 2020 Black Lives Matter social justice movement and growing opposition to the Lost Cause.[81] In fact, throughout that summer the museum Facebook page posted several online

[78] Brian Hicks, "A farewell to one of the last grande dames of Charleston's history," *Charleston Post and Courier*, December 2, 2020, 19.
[79] June Murray Wells, "South Carolina State Flag and the Lee Mural in Richmond, Virginia," January 29, 2000.
[80] "Honoring the fallen on Confederate Memorial Day," *ABC News*, May 10, 2012, https://abcnews4.com/archive/honoring-the-fallen-on-confederate-memorial-day.
[81] There are several comments on the museum's Facebook posts dating in Summer 2020. Many commenters blamed politics for the name change, mainly "PC" (politically correct) and "SJW" (Social Justice Warrior) influences. The museum page responded to one comment – perhaps the Daughters' unofficial statement on the name change. Museum at Market Hall, "Hello, rest assured no decisions were made lightly nor are we caving into the 'PC crowd' you refer to. We still remain the Confederate museum but our DBA [Doing Business As] is now going to be Museum at Market Hall due to the City owning the building and trying to stay open and keep the collection in front of the public," Facebook, August 6, 2020, https://www.facebook.com/museumatmarkethall.

petitions to save Confederate monuments in South Carolina and other southern states. The MMH also feared safety concerns after the May 31, 2020 night riots in Charleston, when peaceful protests turned into vandalism and looting of businesses in the central business district, not too far from the museum.[82] Situated in a hotbed of complex racial history, as well as in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, the museum closed its doors in early June until late 2020, when it had limited hours on Saturdays.

Today the museum is open four days a week from Thursday to Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Daughters offer tours by appointment and research requests in the museum's library. There is an admission fee of $7.00 with discounts for veterans and children. The museum relies on admission fees and donations for its funding, including wages and utilities, due to the fact that it is a 501(c)(3) organization.[83] Because only Daughters manage the museum, many of their postings on their website and Facebook relate to the UDC local and national organizations. For example, the museum hosted the national vice president and SC division president in May 2023. The Facebook page also has photographs of some Daughters with the SCV Fort Sumter camp on Confederate Memorial Day 2023. Because the Charleston Chapter has managed the institution since 1899, the MMH functions as a physical space that represents the Daughters' memories of the Civil War, the antebellum South, and the Lost Cause, through the use of objects.

The MMH Collection

The MMH presents the Charleston UDC Chapter's collection of war relics with simple descriptions and connections to the common Confederate soldier, a hero of the Lost Cause narrative. Unlike the Relic Room in Columbia, the MMH has no chronological flow in its

[82] Museum at Market Hall, "Due to the ongoing pandemic and safety concerns, the Confederate Museum is closed until further notice," Facebook, June 4, 2020, https://www.facebook.com/museumatmarkethall.
[83] Robert Behre, "The Confederate Museum continues on, minus the 'Confederate,'" *Charleston Post and Courier,* March 14, 2021, 2.

exhibit. Glass cases filled with various relics appear throughout the hall, with displays of flags along the walls. The first thing visitors may see, however, is a “Daughters of Confederacy” plaque high on the far wall of the museum. The plaque overlooks the exhibit, signifying who owns the museum and tells the stories behind the objects, that are displayed.

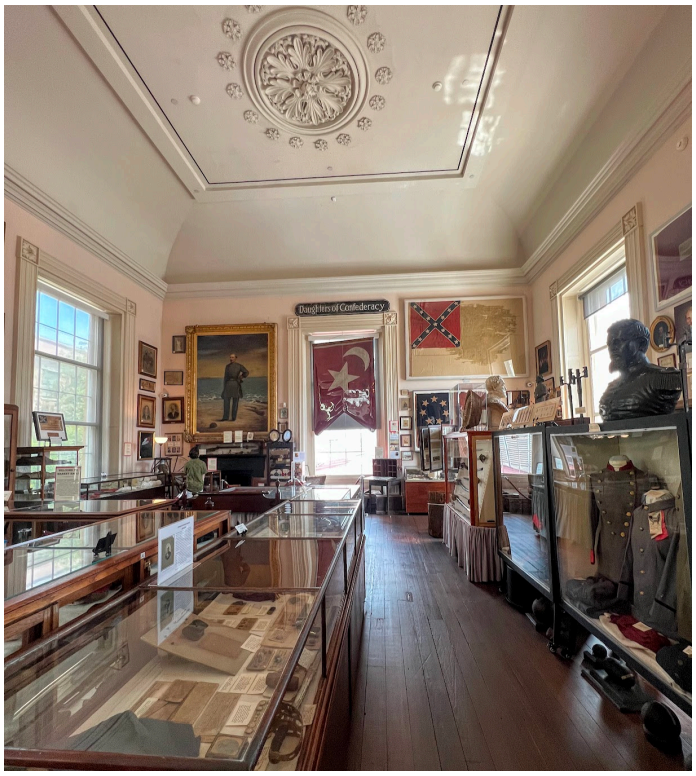

Figure 4: Wall plaque in the Museum at Market Hall. Photograph taken by the author on August 10, 2023.

Just behind the welcome desk begins a few rows of display cases that contain several different objects from the pre-Civil War period, wartime years, and long after the war, especially during the UDC’s prime Lost Cause memorialization years. Down one row there is a paper sign holder titled “Welcome to Market Hall!” with a brief description of the building’s history and current use as a museum. Many of the rows contain wartime relics, including fragments of bullet shells, camp supplies, flags, and clothing fragments accompanied with labels describing the artifacts such as where they were found, who found them, and their use. Several objects,

uniforms, swords, buttons, and badges, have more specific labels on their origins, including which general or officer wore or used the relic.

Although the Lost Cause myth glorifies the common soldier as a hero in the Civil War, the MMH certainly highlights Confederate officers in its exhibit. Portraits and photographs of these men line several wall spaces and many cases contain newspaper clippings about them. Confederate General Robert E. Lee and President Jefferson Davis hold special places in the museum with a few cases dedicated to their relics. Some of these objects include handwritten letters, portraits of their families, and the most minuscule of all – a strand of hair from each man. There are other objects in the cases that do not fit into a typical relic category, such as a piece of bark from the tree where Lee pitched his tent during his surrender at the Appomattox Court House. Davis's case contains some tiles and pieces of a ceiling centerpiece from his mansion. These items may appear trivial, but they represent a main Lost Cause tenet: white southerners' admiration for Confederate war generals and political leaders. Indeed, Lost Cause supporters regarded Lee as a "God-like embodiment of a leader whose cause could be defeated only by overpowering odds."[84] Davis was not only the president of the Confederacy, but he also painted Dixie as an ideal society with paternal masters who transformed barbaric slaves into faithful servants in his memoir *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* (1881). White southerners mourned his death in 1889 because he represented the alleged southern noble fight and suffering during Reconstruction.[85] The UDC and other Confederate memorial associations continue to commemorate Lee and Davis as much as their predecessors did.

[84] David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 258.
[85] Ibid., 259-60, 266.

The museum also commemorates John C. Calhoun by displaying his death bed frame, along with a brief biographical description of the proslavery politician. The label discusses his political career, highlighting his positions as secretary of war and vice president under multiple presidents. The description includes his last words, "The South, the poor South!" yet neither elaborates on his vocal proslavery stance nor his influence on South Carolina's decision to secede from the Union, both of which are significant to his legacy.[86]

Former director Wells' mission for the museum to reveal the southern tragedy of the Civil War is quite apparent in the museum's exhibit labels. Not only do several cases contain soldiers' items from the war, but many others also display the home front experience – the women who stayed home while their male relatives fought for the alleged noble cause. There are homespun fabrics and small fashion accessories, with many originating from plantations. There is no information on *who* hand wove these materials on plantations; but they most likely appear to represent the women on the southern home front. Additionally, there are several children's items, including dolls, school pamphlets, and clothing garments – including a dress made from a Confederate battle flag. One particular object is a large china head doll from Miss May Snowden, who carried it during Major General William T. Sherman's march in Columbia in 1865. The label says, "It [the doll] was taken from her by one of the Federal soldiers but a more kind hearted one, seeing the distress of the little girl, recovered it for her." This story paints a picture of a war-torn South, with white innocent southerners, including children, enduring attacks from destructive Union soldiers. The doll label therefore communicates a narrative that identifies white southerners as victims of northern aggression.

[86] Much of the description of Calhoun directly matches his Wikipedia page biography. "John C. Calhoun," Wikimedia Foundation, last modified February 28, 2024, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_C._Calhoun.

Dispersed in several cases around the exhibit are several items that represent white Charlestonians' experiences during the Civil War. A row of civilian shoes along with medicine bags and a bandage from a Charleston hospital fill one case while sheet music for the song "Our Southern Flag" dedicated to The Citadel Cadets resides in another. A nearby case contains punch bowls and glassware from the UCV Reunion in 1899, when the museum first opened. Lastly, there is a separate case for six slave badges that the museum owns. From 1800 to the abolition of slavery in 1865, Charleston enacted a law that required hired-out slaves to wear copper badges to signify their status and trade. In several instances, slaveholders would give some of the earned wages to their slaves, although many other masters kept the money for themselves. This practice was unique to Charleston and the badges serve as physical reminders of how central slavery was to the city and the Confederacy.

Figure 5: Display case containing slave badges in the Museum at Market Hall. Photograph taken by the author on August 10, 2023.

Here a case sign briefly states how enslaved persons in Charleston built the city "with their skills and they were responsible for much of the daily duties and routines." The description explains the concept of slave badges yet neglects to address Charleston's instrumental role in preserving the institution of slavery until 1865. Furthermore, the badges are the only objects associated with slavery in the museum, even though there are several plantation objects like clothing and kitchenware that were most likely made or used by slaves. Lastly, the case sign fails to identify slaves as African American or Black. They are only addressed by their status, further revealing how the MMH disregards educating visitors on the brutal realities of slavery and the racist southern policies and culture that followed it.

The museum has much more information and items memorializing other Charlestonians, even commemorating the UDC Charleston Chapter's history and efforts to perpetuate the Lost Cause. A long glass table features clothing, photographs, and several papers detailing the origins and charitable work done by the organization. A few descriptions detail the history of the national UDC's founding and descriptions of their five objectives: Historical, Benevolent, Educational, Memorial, and Patriotic. The display also includes letters from American soldiers thanking the Daughters for their donated beds and medical tools to the American Military Hospital #1 in Neuilly, France, during World War I. Lastly, the display has a copy of the UDC magazine's *In Memoriam* February 2021 edition with a photograph of Wells on the cover.

The UDC's history holds a significant space in the museum, but as discussed earlier, so does military history. In a corner of the museum lies a rifled cannon – the first of many experimental guns made in the Confederacy in 1861. This is the largest weapon in the museum and distinguishes itself from the guns and swords scattered throughout the hall. A few frames of Confederate currency line the walls next to the cannon. There is a great deal of Confederate

currency in display cases, that the museum writes in a case sign that although the South did not receive legal tender for its currency, it was "patriotism alone that gave it any value." One particular frame by the cannon showcases a printed copy of Lewis L. Simons' *The Lost Cause* lithograph, a popular poster design that features medallion portraits of Lost Cause heroes Lee, Davis, Stonewall Jackson, Joseph E. Johnston, and P.G.T Beauregard, a Confederate flag in the center, and Confederate currency framing the Confederate heroes.

Figure 6: *The Lost Cause* Lithograph in the Museum at Market Hall. Photograph taken by the author on August 10, 2023.

In the center appears a poem titled "Confederate States Money" by P.C. Carlton that mourns the loss of the currency, symbolizing the Confederacy's demise. Other symbols, such as the Palmetto tree and an image of a Fort Sumter in ruins, also represent the war's destruction and noble Southern fight.[87] The print is the only object in the museum that specifically has the phrase "The Lost Cause" and it provides no label for historical context for the phrase. Like the Relic Room in

[87] Mark E. Neely, Harold Holzer, and Gabor S. Boritt, *The Confederate Image: Prints of the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 103-6. The authors do not state the print's creation or published date.

Columbia, the MMH clearly endorses the Lost Cause ideology yet does not define it for its visitors.

Education and Outreach

Because the museum has limited funding, the Charleston UDC Chapter does not run traditional educational programs. However, the MMH has a video playing during visiting hours on the history of the museum and a brief summary of the Civil War. The short film, entitled "History Matters," briefly discusses Market Hall's architecture and history, asserting, "Contrary to local legends, slaves were never auctioned here in the city market."[88] The narrator highlights major events in the beginning of the war, including South Carolina's secession, the Battle of Fort Sumter, and northern and southern perspectives on the war. Additionally, the commentor asserts that the northerners believed they were fighting rebels while southern men were "rushed to defend hearth and home against invaders."[89] According to the narrator, the Civil War was a nationwide tragedy that lasted much longer than anyone would have predicted. However, "both Black and white" Charlestonians suffered through Reconstruction "as there was little to eat and survival was difficult." The voice-over explains that the city's residents were still suffering from the Union army's bombardment that destroyed buildings and streets a decade earlier.[90]

The last few minutes of "History Matters" discusses the history of the MMH, starting with its founding at the College of Charleston. According to a museum employee, many people do not know that the museum first opened at the college, but the Daughters kept their collection there until moving to the Mills House Hotel and to its current home in Market Hall.[91] The narrator states that the Charleston Daughters "dedicate[d] themselves to preserving their history

[88] There is, in fact, no evidence that slave auctions occurred at Market Hall. "History Matters," minutes 0:45-48.
[89] "History Matters," minutes 3:12-18.
[90] "History Matters," minutes 6:05-15.
[91] MMH employee, interview by author, August 10, 2023.

and honoring their ancestors," much like UDC chapters did across the South. The video ends with the narrator's welcome to the museum "with all original artifacts and a research library" available to visitors. The library has an extensive collection of books, ranging from children's literature to military historical accounts to multiple volumes on the histories of South Carolina infantries and regiments. The video clearly has a narrative that the museum favors by omitting discussions of the institution of slavery, reasons for state secession, and recent controversies involving the Confederate battle flag, such as its removal from the South Carolina statehouse grounds in 2015. Indeed, the narrator only states that Confederate troops carried the battle flag on battlefields, that was its only purpose, and the battle flag was never an official Confederate national flag.

No matter its original use, the Confederate battle flag primarily symbolizes the Lost Cause and Confederate memorialization. The museum displays replicas of the battle flag in its small gift shop in its entrance, where a plethora of handheld flags, magnets, and stickers bearing the emblem are for sale. T-shirts and hats with the palmetto tree and the political cartoon "Join, or Die," also line the shelves. Many of these items are for sale on the museum's website, that also reveals how the MMH maintains ties to other organizations affiliated or separate from the Daughters.[92] The Museum at Market Hall Friends Program has four tiers that anyone can join to become a member and donate annually. The Daughters also established and manage the Children of the Confederacy chapter in Charleston, that several other UDC chapters had formed for their respective regions shortly after the organization's founding in 1894.[93]

[92] "Our Store," Museum at Market Hall, accessed February 9, 2024, https://www.museumatmarkethall.com/store.html.
[93] Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 173.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the museum had around 150 daily visitors, including local school groups. The museum has reacquired its normal number of visitors since pandemic restrictions have lifted, with 117 patrons one day in summer 2023, signifying the MMH's prominence in Charleston. The Daughters do not advertise the museum other than on its website and Facebook because the Market Hall is already a busy area in Charleston's tourist hub. Most visitors are tourists, especially from cruise ships, but some include authors and Civil War historians, such as Karen Stokes, a Charleston Daughter, who frequent the museum.[94] Several of Stokes' books are available for purchase at the gift shop, including her book *The Immortal 600: Surviving Civil War Charleston and Savannah* (2013) that examines a group of Confederate prisoners of war who suffered horrible treatment in Union forts, adding to the Lost Cause notion that white southerners were victims of northern aggression and violence.

The Charleston UDC Chapter holds great pride in solely managing their museum for almost 125 years and intend to keep it that way. Yet their mission in educating the public using traditional UDC methods, such as textbook campaigns and monument dedications, is not limited to loaning items to like-minded organizations, like the SCV. In early 2023, the MMH loaned two preserved battle flags to the National Confederate Museum (NCM) in Columbia, Tennessee.[95] The museum opened in October 2020 and also functions as the SCV general headquarters office. The NCM presents its mission much more directly than the MMH by stating: "Visitors to the National Confederate Museum in Columbia will be given the true history of the War Between the States, not the re-imagined, watered-down versions fabricated by modern 'scholars.'" Additionally, the museum's purpose is to present the southern perspective of the Civil War, one

[94] MMH employee, interview by author, August 10, 2023.
[95] Museum at Market Hall, "We were so happy to see Adam Southern, Director of the National Confederate Museum in TN here today visiting with us," Facebook, April 27, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/museumatmarkethall.

that has allegedly come under attack by "ideological fascism" and "'it's all about slavery' provocateurs."[96]

The MMH certainly does not make these claims in its online interactions or exhibits, but its relationship with the NCM is worth mentioning. Since their founding, both the SCV and UDC have advocated for the education of the southern perspective of the Civil War for schoolchildren to university students to the general public. Beginning in the mid-1890s, both organizations conducted "pro-Confederate textbook campaigns" that oversaw school books' southern histories to ensure that children were learning the "true" history of the South and especially the Civil War. Many SCV camps and UDC chapters also lobbied for American history professorships in southern universities and the establishment of state archives in the early twentieth century. Both organizations also sought to establish museums, that were for people who did not read books or study history extensively.[97] Therefore, museums were and are an integral part of both organizations' efforts to preserve their perspective of the causes and outcomes of the Civil War, the Lost Cause, and to vindicate their ancestors. Indeed, the MMH is actively fighting against the "annihilation of history," or what the NCM refers to as the fictitious versions of the Civil War and antebellum South written by historians.[98] Although both organizations share similar goals, each desires to manage their own operations exclusively. Only Charleston Chapter #4 UDC members can volunteer or intern at the MMH and the Tennessee museum is entirely owned, operated, and curated by the SCV. Nonetheless, both work to combat versions of Civil War history that do not align with their Lost Cause values.

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[96] "About Us," The National Confederate Museum, accessed March 3, 2024, https://theconfederatemuseum.com/about-us/.
[97] Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters. The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 124; Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 116, 186.
[98] MMH employee, interview by author, August 10, 2023.

The MMH in Today's Charleston

The MMH is essentially a part of the Charleston UDC Chapter's broader pursuit to preserve the Lost Cause for purposes of education. Although its exhibit does not directly endorse the Lost Cause, the UDC tradition of educating the public on "true" history that maintains a romanticized portrayal of the antebellum South remains quite evident. Its presentation of relics from Lee and Davis, depiction of Union soldiers in publications, such as Stokes' *The Immortal 600*, and display cases, and lack of any discussion on the institution and firsthand experience of slavery exemplify the MMH's mission to perpetuate the Lost Cause.

In a city like Charleston, where tense racial inequities persist, such as unjust policing, gentrification, and state-wide attacks on race-based education, it is vital that educational spaces represent the Black southern experience, that started to become an important element of the city's tourism industry in preserving history by the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.[99] There are public spaces that do so, such as the Old Slave Mart Museum, that opened in 2007 and exhibits the history of enslavement in Charleston at the last slave auction building in the city. The International African American Museum at a former slave port where enslaved Africans first stepped on American soil is dedicated to presenting the international experience of African Americans, from captivity to slavery to contributing to various aspects of African and African American cultures. Other initiatives, including the McLeod Plantation's presentation of slavery and a monument honoring Denmark Vesey, also demonstrate more inclusive ways that Charleston engages with its complicated past concerning race and exploitation.[100] The MMH, on

[99] Adam Parker and Rickey Ciapha Dennis Jr., "Community-based policing is all the rage in North Charleston. Does it work?" *Charleston Post and Courier*, June 11, 2023, 1; Rickey Ciapha Dennis Jr., "Black population being cut out in North Charleston's proposed district map, critics say," *Charleston Post and Courier*, January 30, 2023, 1; Adam Parker, "On 60th anniversary of Charleston school integration, 5 trailblazers recall challenges,'" *Charleston Post and Courier*, March 5, 2023, 1.
[100] Kytle and Roberts, *Denmark Vesey's Garden*, 327-31.

the other hand, only represents a history that vindicates Confederate soldiers and paints a picture of an idyllic South.

Located at the bustling Market Hall, the UDC's museum symbolizes Charleston's complex reckoning with its past. As several tourists visit the museum daily, they come face-to-face with relics that symbolize and memorialize the Lost Cause. Also, when museums and sites that present long-ignored narratives of African Americans prosper in the same city as the MMH, it shows that many Charlestonians still grapple with contrasting narratives of the causes and aftermath of the Civil War. Indeed, Dylann Roof chose Charleston as his target due to its past Black to white ratio and slave trade history.[101] Certain memories may lose traction in the Cradle of the Confederacy, but the MMH will continue to perpetuate the Lost Cause mythology as long as it has space to do so.

[101] Glenn Smith, Jennifer Berry Hawes, and Abigail Darlington, "Dylann Roof says he chose Charleston, Emanuel AME for massacre because they were historic, meaningful," *Charleston Post and Courier*, December 10, 2016, 1.

CHAPTER 3

PRESENTING THE TRUTH: THE MUSEUM & LIBRARY OF CONFEDERATE HISTORY

The Pettigru historic district, known for its classic early twentieth century architectural style homes, lies east of downtown Greenville, South Carolina. A rather unassuming bungalow at the south end of Boyce Avenue houses the Museum and Library of Confederate History (MLCH). Anyone driving down the street will notice the museum's golden cannon prominently displayed on the front lawn, but visitors will find much more about the Lost Cause by going inside. In May 2015, Dylann Roof ventured beyond the cannon, walked up the front porch stairs, signed his name in the logbook, and found himself surrounded by Civil War artifacts. At some point during his visit he also took a photograph of himself standing in front of the museum.

Figure 7: The Museum and Library of Confederate History. Photograph taken by the author on July 21, 2023.

Like Columbia's Relic Room and Charleston's Museum at Market Hall, these relics represent a romanticized past life – when Confederate soldiers fought for a cause dear to southern hearts.

Although many Greenvillians were reluctant to secede from the Union, the city became instrumental during the Civil War and sought to memorialize the fallen Confederacy and Lost Cause in various ways.

The main source of employment in Greenville was agriculture, yet only seventy-seven slaveholders qualified as planters in 1860, representing the city's small slave-owning high class. Though not nearly as affluent as Charleston, Greenville relied on the institution of slavery and sought to protect it as many South Carolinians began supporting secession in the mid-nineteenth century. Still, Greenville was a Unionist stronghold in the early 1850s, and Benjamin F. Perry, a member of the South Carolina House of Representatives, founded the only Unionist newspaper in the state, *The Southern Patriot*, in 1851 to combat rising secessionist attitudes. Perry was not an abolitionist; instead he believed secession would weaken the institution. He maintained his stance even as white Greenvillians grew wary of the Republican party's rise to power and John Brown's efforts to arm the enslaved by raiding Harper's Ferry National Armory and Arsenal in 1859.[102]

Greenville remained divided on secession until Abraham Lincoln's presidential election in 1860, when the state legislature called for a convention on secession. More Greenvillians started supporting secession and had attended a public courthouse meeting where they created a slate of delegates for the state secession convention. Here secessionists stated that Lincoln and Vice President Hannibal Hamlin regarded slavery "as a moral, social and political evil, and [did] not accede to the decision of the Supreme Court on the Dred Scott case."[103] The five selected Greenville delegates that attended the convention were all slaveholders, including James C.

[102] Archie Vernon Huff, Jr., *Greenville: The History of the City and County in the South Carolina Piedmont* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2020), 128-30.
[103] *Southern Enterprise*, November 22, 1860, quoted in Huff, *Greenville*, 133.

Furman, the president of Furman University. All five signed the Ordinance of Secession, signifying that the primary reason for seceding was to maintain slavery in the South.

While Greenville men served in the 16th South Carolina Infantry Regiment with fifteen companies, the city also aided in the war effort by producing clothing and weaponry at the Batesville Mill and State Military Works near the railroad. Many women formed ladies' associations that provided relief and hospital aid to soldiers, that were similarly practiced in other southern cities. War refugees sought safety in Greenville, especially during Charleston's siege in 1863 and Union General William Tecumseh Sherman's march in Columbia in 1865. However, feelings of security ended when Union Major General George Stoneman led a raid through Greenville to pursue Jefferson Davis a few weeks after Robert E. Lee's surrender. Local witnesses described the terror that followed the raid, as Union soldiers sacked shops and stole weapons and horses.[104] The Civil War had ended, but a collective memory of aggressive northerners and a loss of the beloved institution of slavery persisted.

Like many other southern cities, Greenville's economy struggled during Reconstruction but not to the same degree as cities with higher enslaved populations did. Greenville greatly supported the Democratic campaign for the 1876 state governor election to remove Republican control from the state. Civilians greeted the nominee, former Confederate general Wade Hampton III, with praise and admiration during his campaign visit to the city. Although Hampton's win signified a Republican and white victory, Reconstruction in Greenville was still successful in some ways for free Blacks who gained new schools and churches, yet many former slaves had already left the city for other states.[105]

[104] Huff, *Greenville*, 144.
[105] Ibid., 170.

Much like the rest of the defeated South, Greenville strove to keep the memory of the Lost Cause alive through Confederate commemoration. White Greenvillians and southerners across the South grieved after Robert E. Lee's death in 1870 and Jefferson Davis's in 1889. Another effort to sustain the Lost Cause included the establishment of a Ladies Memorial Association (LMA), that raised funds to erect a monument dedicated to the common Confederate soldier. In September 1892, the LMA unveiled a Confederate soldier monument downtown on North Main Street along with an inscription that included an excerpt from the poem "Sentinel Songs" by Confederate poet Abram Joseph Ryan: "Success is not the test/the world shall yet decide/in truth's clear far off light/ that the soldiers/ who wore the grey and died/with Lee, were in the right."[106] This poem clearly conveys fundamental Lost Cause beliefs – that Confederates were right and the Union was wrong.

Greenville continued memorializing the Lost Cause in its public spaces, but in the 1920s, there was more traffic and infrastructure downtown, making the monument on North Main Street an obstruction. The city council decided to move the memorial to the front of the courthouse in 1922, but the statue of the soldier mysteriously disappeared at night during construction. The local UDC chapter and Confederate veterans sought an injunction that forced the city to stop moving the monument, so the statue-less structure stood in front of the courthouse for two years. In 1924, the city moved the memorial to a designated plaza just outside the gates of downtown Springwood cemetery, where it still stands today.

In recent years, many Greenvillians have sparked outrage at the monument's placement and existence. After the 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, Greenville civilians on both sides of the Confederate monument removal debate gathered at the statue in the

[106] Ibid., 208; Karen L. Cox, *No Common Ground: Confederate Monuments and the Ongoing Fight For Racial Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021), 77.

cemetery. After this protest, Mayor Knox White promised to install a new plaque at the monument base that would "'contextualize' how the South seceded from the Union with slavery as a central motivation." Yet White's promises remain unfulfilled.[107] A similar protest happened again in the summer of 2020 when approximately 150 monument defenders carried rifles and Confederate battle flags while around fifty removal supporters flew Black Lives Matter banners at the monument, resulting in violence and five arrests. Many protestors suggested that the city could move the monument inside the gates of the cemetery near Confederate graves compared to its easily accessible location. However, the South Carolina Heritage Act of 2000 prohibits altering or removing historical monuments on public property unless two-thirds of the state legislature votes in favor. Thus, the monument still stands, signifying which Civil War narrative Greenville favors the most – the Lost Cause.[108]

Remembering the Cause in Greenville

The SCV Camp 36, the founders of the MLCH, is quite effective in preserving their perspective of southern history in Greenville. Like the Relic Room and the Museum at Market Hall, the MLCH perpetuates the myth of the Lost Cause through objects and educational strategies while arguing that their version of history is the "truth." Around a century before the museum's founding, the national SCV did not measure up to the UDC's efforts to sustain the Lost Cause. Founded in 1896, the SCV had similar aims as the UDC, but was disinclined to perform the same duties as the women, such as schooling and monument building. The UDC and UCV claimed that many of the SCV members whose fathers had served in the Civil War were

[107] Eric Connor, "Calls to Remove Greenville's Confederate statue stir 3 years after unfulfilled compromise," *The Post and Courier: Greenville Edition*, July 2, 2020.
[108] Eric Connor, "There's a deal to move Greenville's Confederate monument, protest organizer claims," *The Post and Courier: Greenville Edition*, August 12, 2020.

"more concerned with making money than with honoring their ancestors."[109] Many SCV leaders financially assisted the UDC with monument erections, which helped the Sons gradually gain acceptance from the Daughters.

The two organizations continued memorializing the Lost Cause narrative that maintained a profound presence in the South until the mid-twentieth century civil rights movement, when the SCV started to veer toward a slightly different ideological stance. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 forced southern politicians to start pressing for Black votes, which, in turn, made white supremacy, a component of the traditional Lost Cause rhetoric, an outdated political campaign tactic. The SCV followed suit, especially during the rise of conservatism in the 1980s, and adopted their modern argument that Confederate memorialization is "heritage, not hate." The Sons also challenged traditional narratives of the war, claiming that it was a battle between two nations, often replacing "Civil War" with "The War for Southern Independence" in their discourse. The new slogan and phrasing signified that white supremacy was not a SCV value, and certainly not their ancestors' either.[110]

During this change in their objective, the SCV Camp 36 opened a room of Civil War artifacts to the public in the Jones-Brashier Funeral Home in the outskirts of Greenville in 1993. A year later, the men discussed moving their relics and extensive book collection to a more spacious site. In 1994, the Sons made a down payment on their current site on Boyce Avenue in the Pettigru Historic District and opened the museum to the public two years later. They fully paid their mortgage in 2004 and acquired the adjacent building, a small house that looks very

[109] Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 46.
[110] During my visit to the museum, an employee corrected my saying of "Civil War" and replaced it with "The War for Southern Independence" due to the fact that the war was allegedly between two countries. David R. Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War: The American South and Southern History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 40; Kris Plunkett, "The Modern Lost Cause Narrative of the Sons of Confederate Veterans" (Master's Thesis, Tulane University, 2022), 9.

similar to the museum, in 2009. Although the SCV planned to have their expanding library in the extra building, they currently use the annex for meetings for themselves, their women's auxiliary called the Order of the Confederate Rose, the Hunley UDC chapter, Children of the Confederacy, and other memorial organizations. The MLCH is open every day except Tuesdays and Thursdays, that are reserved for occasional school tours, and all volunteers must be SCV Camp 36 members. The museum is a 501(c)(3) organization and does not compensate any volunteers, even the director Mike Couch.

Like the Museum at Market Hall, the MLCH thematically organized important relics in display cases and on the walls in the main building. Many of these objects include weaponry, currency, uniforms, and photographs that include portraits of all the South Carolina Confederate generals. Another wall has paintings of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis, situated above Palmetto armory and what the Sons refer to as "the best gun in the world" – a Morse Carbine – that was produced at the local State Military Works, established in 1862.[111] Most of these artifacts have labels identifying what they are and the year they were made.

Figure 8: An exhibit wall dedicated to Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis in the Museum and Library of Confederate History. Photograph taken by the author on July 21, 2023.

[111] Huff, *Greenville*, 137; The display case also contains a copy of Robert S. Siegler's book *The Best Gun in the World: George Woodward Morse and the South Carolina State Military Works* (2017).

The museum represents the southern home front in a small room by displaying clothing, furniture, and accessories that may have been in antebellum homes during the war. Unlike many of the weapon displays, the objects in the home front room do not have descriptive labels, presumably because these relics do not represent the Confederate military effort like weapons do. Additionally, there are very few indications on who these home front items belonged to before they were out on display in the museum. However, there are multiple mentions of a particular woman named Mattie Clyburn Rice in another room. There is a case full of memorial booklets for her funeral and photographs of Rice, an African American woman who was "the Real Daughter of the Confederacy" due to being the daughter of Weary Clyburn, a former slave who served in the Confederate army. Although Rice joined her local UDC chapter in the early 2000s, the SCV mainly took charge in using her ancestry to argue that Black southerners fought in the Confederacy for the same reasons as white soldiers, otherwise known as the myth of Black Confederates. The myth emerged in the late 1970s in conjunction with the "heritage, not hate" rhetoric that the SCV strongly promoted "to embrace their Lost Cause unapologetically without running the risk of being viewed as racially insensitive or worse."[112]

Most historians, notably Kevin M. Levin, asserted that there is no evidence that Black Confederate soldiers' primary roles were to fight in battle; instead, most served as camp servants, with many forced to follow their masters into battlefields. Nonetheless, Confederate heritage groups used the myth to argue that their memorial purposes were strictly about heritage, not race. In 2012, a year after the Civil War sesquicentennial, SCV members organized a North Carolina marker in Monroe that was dedicated to "Confederate Pensioners of Color," even though nine of

[112] Kevin M. Levin, *Searching for Black Confederates: The Civil War's Most Persistent Myth* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 4

the ten pensioners listed on the marker were enslaved. The MLCH has a copy of the dedication pamphlet in its case for Rice, who was a main petitioner for the marker.

Weary Clyburn, who was listed on the Monroe marker, was a perfect model of the Black Confederate who fought alongside white soldiers for the southern cause. According to family research conducted by Rice, her father had fought in the Battle of Port Royal, where he carried his master, Captain Frank Clyburn, on his shoulders to safety. The North Carolina Division of the SCV unveiled a military headstone for Weary Clyburn in 2008, where many of his descendants attended to honor his service. However, the headstone does not denote Clyburn's racial identity or slave status. It merely states that he was a soldier of the 12th South Carolina Infantry in the Civil War. The SCV publicly announced that this omission was their intention so visitors would interpret that Clyburn was a soldier, not a slave.[113]

The SCV also commemorated Rice by holding an official ceremony at her gravesite after her death in 2014. Shortly after, the mayor of High Point also declared that October 18, 2014 would be Mattie Clyburn Rice Day. The museum has a copy of this proclamation on display in Rice's case. The Greenville Sons also display a few photographs of Black men in Confederate uniforms on a wall, exemplifying the Black Confederate myth. Next to one photograph is a framed paper with a paragraph about Black Confederates, including how many "skilled black workers" were in the Confederate military branches and "earned on average three times the wages of white Confederate soldiers and more than most Confederate army officers." Enslaved persons at Confederate camps had few opportunities to earn money for themselves; when they did, they usually worked quickly and efficiently, taking advantage of serving hundreds of soldiers they camped with. At some points, camp slaves would make more money at a time than

[113] Ibid., 168.

their master was as a soldier, but slaveholders quickly noticed this and would limit or restrict altogether slaves' few privileges. Therefore, even if a camp slave earned more money than a white Confederate soldier or officer, their slaveholder usually took their earnings for themselves, demonstrating the master-slave power dynamic that prevailed throughout the South, even in the military.[114]

Figure 9: Black Confederates display in the Museum and Library of Confederate History. Photograph taken by the author on July 21, 2023.

The paragraph also cites Frederick Douglass, who stated in his newspaper that there were Black Confederates fighting battles, yet Douglass strategically published this to persuade Lincoln to allow Black men to serve in the Union army.[115] There are printed copies of quotes about Black Confederates from Confederate and Union soldiers and officers, as well as newspapers and official records, that visitors are free to take. All of the quotes discuss the presence of Black men in Confederate ranks, describing many as armed combat soldiers. At the bottom of the paper, a short paragraph written by SCV Camp 36 states that Black men fought alongside white

[114] Ibid., 25-6.
[115] Ibid., 10.

Confederates because “their country was invaded by a foreign army,” further emphasizing the notion that Black Confederates fought to defend their country, even if they were enslaved. The MLCH’s display and publication certainly contributes to the Black Confederate myth by presenting these claims as the truth, even though they neglect to address Black southerners’ primary roles as camp slaves.

The remaining displayed objects represent the Confederate military effort, including a model of a Confederate steam runner named Presto and a small replica of Fort Sumter. Other items in the museum, such as printed copies of arguments supporting the central pillars of the Lost Cause that visitors take as souvenirs, symbolically hold just as significant a place as the relics do. Many of these harangues also appear on the museum’s website and many discuss slavery, secession, and Lincoln. A paper titled “Did South Carolina invent secession?” highlights several instances when New England states threatened secession over taxes, new state admissions, and other matters. Another paper discusses the history of slavery, claiming that slavery “did not begin or end with the Confederacy.” The argument rests on evidence that the North engaged in slavery, less than six percent of white southerners owned slaves, and that slavery had been around since biblical times. However, there is no context on how the South, especially South Carolina, economically relied on the institution of slavery – enough to fight in a war to protect it. These two papers reveal one of the museum’s agendas and strategies: to vindicate their ancestors’ actions regarding secession and slavery by presenting facts.

The museum’s online and printed publications also convey defensiveness and distaste for Lincoln. Some criticisms include Lincoln’s support of the right to secede, constitutional violations such as suspending habeas corpus and declaring martial law in the North, and the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation. One publication’s main assertion regarding emancipation was that

Lincoln did not have the power to abolish slavery in another nation. Furthermore, Lincoln only freed slaves from seceded states instead of all states, emphasizing that Lincoln was not anti-slavery but rather anti-Confederacy. Indeed, another paper lists five quotes from Lincoln implying that he did not intend to completely terminate slavery or establish racial equality.

A more extreme argument the Sons published online and in print involves a connection between Communism and Reconstruction. The paper begins explaining how Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels' Communist Manifesto sparked communist revolutions across Europe shortly after its publication in 1848. Many revolutionaries fled to the United States and supported the Union during the Civil War. The museum's paper lists ten points from Part II of the Communist Manifesto and provides connections to Reconstruction policies in South Carolina from 1865 to 1877. Many of the manifesto's principles involve taxation, property confiscation, and free labor ideologies. The remarks under each numbered point connect northern efforts to reconstruct the South to broad Communist ideals, yet the piece more strongly indicates how white southerners detested Reconstruction. The Sons clearly reveal their abhorrence for Reconstruction by identifying the Red Shirts, white supremacist gun clubs who targeted Republicans, as heroes on their website.

South Carolinians specifically endured strict and abrupt Reconstruction policies and programs. Many newly freed African Americans took political office, demonstrating how Reconstruction disrupted the traditional southern practice of only having white people in powerful positions. In addition, Reconstruction lasted longer in South Carolina compared to other states, with the exception of Louisiana and Florida.[116] The last few years of Reconstruction, especially 1876, witnessed political chaos and violence as Red Shirts terrorized Republicans so

[116] Bruce E. Baker, *What Reconstruction Meant: Historical Memory in the American South* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 10.

the Democratic Party could regain control of the state. Therefore, white southerners, especially in South Carolina, remembered Reconstruction as an oppressive regime that could only be defeated "through heroic efforts, and, at times, bloody sacrifices." It is no wonder then that the Sons at the MLCH scorn Reconstruction and refer to the violent Red Shirts as an army that "instituted the democratic rule of government that exists today."[117]

The Educational Purpose of the MLCH

The SCV Camp 36 certainly aims to educate visitors on their version of the "truth" through what they believe is a persuasive presentation of artifacts and printed souvenir copies of arguments that support Lost Cause beliefs. Moreover, the Sons strive to inform their audiences on the southern perspective of the war with their quarterly newsletters, library and purchasable books, school tours, and community programs. *The Stainless Banner* newsletters, that were first published in 2006, include two main sections. The Director's Report discusses current and upcoming events and news about the museum, and the Curator's Corner usually examines an artifact on display or a new library book. The newsletters exemplify the main goals of the MLCH: education and preservation of the Lost Cause.

The Sons maintain their library in the same manner as they do with their displays. The Vance Drawdy Research Library, named after one of the museum's founders, holds sixteen hundred books, including rosters of Confederate soldiers, biographies of Confederate generals and leaders, and other history books that contain Lost Cause perspectives of the Civil War. Many visitors use the library for research, including authors who write on the southern perspective of the war. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the museum received around 12,000 visitors a year

[117] "The Red Shirt," Museum and Library of Confederate History, *Blogger*, accessed March 22, 2024, http://www.confederatemuseumandlibrary.org/.

from all fifty states. Many visitors are members of Confederate memorial groups, especially the SCV.[118]

From the museum's founding to today, a primary purpose of the MLCH has been education. Indeed, their mission statement reads:

> The mission of the 16th Regiment, South Carolina Volunteers, Museum of Confederate History, is to protect, preserve and defend the memory, history and heritage of the two hundred fifty thousand (250,000) gallant Confederate soldiers who gave their lives during the War Between the States. In fact the Museum will honor all those who served the cause of the Confederate States of America. Foremost is the duty to provide a true and accurate historical perspective of the War period in an educational manner and to preserve the cultural heritage and artifacts of the South. Central to this mission of education is the development and maintenance of an extensive research library in conjunction with the Museum. This library will be available without cost to the public for genealogical research as well as research on the War and related issues. The Museum Board of Directors welcomes all who search for the TRUTH.[119]

Throughout the newsletters, specifically in the Director's Report, the writers discuss several school tours that visit the museum regularly. These groups include public and private schools, as well as homeschooled students. Many of the public school groups visit in March when students learn about state history.[120]

The museum's newsletters frequently mention their scheduled school tours, but the Sons also stress the importance of educating the youth during the modern "attack by the liberals and progressives who want to destroy the Southern culture."[121] Indeed, Couch, the museum's director, repeatedly emphasized the notion that children are the future, so a critical goal of the MLCH is to educate them on the "truth." Not only can students learn about the Lost Cause by visiting the museum and library, but they can also do so by purchasing books in the gift shop.

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[118] MLCH employee, interview by author, July 21, 2023.
[119] "Home," Museum and Library of Confederate History, *Blogger*, accessed March 22, 2024, http://www.confederatemuseumandlibrary.org/.
[120] MLCH employee, interview by author, July 21, 2023.
[121] Mike Couch, "Director's Report," *The Stainless Banner*, vol. 12, no.1 (First Quarter, 2016).

Historical nonfiction books line the shop's shelves, including first-hand accounts of the war, extensive studies on battles, and school books. The museum even has the original Lost Cause book for sale – Edward Pollard's *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (1866). There are also playing cards, flags, license plates, and mugs with the Confederate battle flag emblem and the "heritage, not hate" slogan.

The museum contains physical symbols of the Lost Cause, but their community outreach with other organizations reflects their objective to maintain a memory of an idyllic South through entertainment. Their annual pre-pandemic event, Christmas in Dixie, consisted of four Friday evenings of Christmas music by local musicians, including a children's choir. Many members of the Hunley UDC chapter and Order of the Confederate Rose volunteered and attended Christmas in Dixie, signifying the event's memorialization of the Lost Cause and antebellum South.[122] Outside of the museum, the Sons routinely set up tables with artifacts and gift shop items at Civil War battle reenactments and local events to advertise the institution. Additionally, the MLCH's brochure appears in several tourist centers and other museums across the state. The Sons certainly make their presence known in Greenville and throughout the South, demonstrating their mission to educate the public on the "truth."

Presenting the Neo-Confederate Truth

The MLCH's display of war relics, its Black Confederate narrative, harangues on why the Confederacy was fighting for independence and not slavery, and its educational purpose to uncover the "truth" all demonstrate the Sons' persistence to sustain the Lost Cause. Their multiple strategies mirror other museums and organizations with similar goals, such as the National Confederate Museum (NCM) in Columbia, Tennessee. Although I already discussed

[122] Mike Couch, "Director's Report," *The Stainless Banner*, vol. 7, no. 1 (First Quarter, 2011).

the NCM's ties to the Lost Cause and compared it with the Museum at Market Hall, it is worth noting that the NCM and MLCH have strikingly similar language in their mission statements. Both museums use "The War Between States" and "War for Southern Independence" interchangeably rather than the traditional name, "Civil War." Additionally, both apply the idea that the government presents an obstacle to their objectives in presenting the truth. The NCM's website states that the SCV did not use any government funding to build or maintain their museum, proudly asserting that "no politically-correct politician or justice warrior can dictate what can be displayed in the museum or how it shall be interpreted."[123] This distrust in the government started with the Civil War and only accelerated during the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Likewise, the MLCH does not receive or even want government funding either because there are "strings attached."[124]

Both institutions also discern current social justice movements as attacks on their southern heritage. The MLCH's newsletters in the late 2010s to early 2020s project themes of defensiveness and sorrow. Couch elaborated on how the victors always write war narratives, even if they are devoid of "honest, objective historical analysis." He compared this pattern to recent Confederate monument removals, equating it with erasing histories of men who founded the United States. Some newsletters from the early 2020s reference historical excerpts to support Lost Cause principles. One significant example is Couch's report in the second quarter of 2022, where he cites English sea captain and slave trader William Snelgrave's *A New Account of Some Parts of Guinea and the Slave Trade* (1734). Couch referenced Snelgrave's justifications for the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in order "to try to understand the policies of the 1700s and 1800s

[123] "Home," The National Confederate Museum, accessed March 22, 2024, https://theconfederatemuseum.com/.
[124] MLCH employee, interview by author, July 21, 2023.

toward slavery."[125] Snelgrave's points included the notions that African war captives would be killed if Europeans did not enslave them, slaves had better livelihoods on plantations compared to their homelands, and African captives were better suited to work in hot climates. Snelgrave concluded his argument by insisting that the institution of slavery had far more benefits than disadvantages for slaves.

Couch's use of Snelgrave's work does not contextualize the economy of the eighteenth and nineteenth century United States. Although Couch provides no remarks of his own after citing Snelgrave, readers can find the director's argument in between the lines. Snelgrave's justifications all reflect the Lost Cause principle that slaves enjoyed their captivity and their paternal masters were doing them a favor by saving them from barbaric civilizations. Edward Pollard, the author of one of the Lost Cause's founding publications, directly stated this tenet: "[slavery] protected the negro in life and limb, and in many personal rights, and, by the practice of the system, bestowed upon him a sum of individual indulgences, which made him altogether the most striking type in the world of cheerfulness and contentment."[126] In another newsletter, published three years prior, Couch discusses Jefferson Davis's pre-Civil War "slave utopia" at Davis Bend, where he fed and housed hundreds of slaves better than many other plantations in the South. Couch uses this story to vindicate Davis as a slaveholding, defended Confederate president.[127] By applying Snelgrave's account to his report, and narrating the story of Davis's slave model community, Couch reveals a core aim of the MLCH and SCV – perpetuating the Lost Cause.

[125] Mike Couch, "Director's Report," *The Stainless Banner*, vol. 18 no. 2 (Second Quarter, 2022).
[126] Edward A. Pollard, *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (New York: E. B. Treat and Co., 1866) 49.
[127] Mike Couch, "Director's Report," *The Stainless Banner*, vol. 15, no. 2 (Second Quarter, 2019).

Throughout their newsletters, the museum employees refer to "the Cause" – the Lost Cause – as their main reason for preserving the history of the fight for southern independence. This is certainly a main goal of the Sons, but, as scholars have argued, white supremacy remains a central value to the organization. In the early 2000s, many SCV leaders became members of white supremacist groups. Today, many SCV camps argue that they are not racist either due to having Black members or narrowly defining "racism" so it does not apply to any Neo-Confederate ideologies. However, the SCV is inherently racist and advocates for white supremacy by commemorating the Confederacy, a "nation" that held slaves in inferior positions and fought in a war in order to keep it that way.[128]

The MLCH garnered much attention after the Charleston Massacre. During an interview with a local newspaper, Couch expressed that Roof's visit and violent actions did not represent the museum's mission.[129] However, the fact that Roof chose to visit and take a photograph at the MLCH reveals his connection to the Lost Cause, a central value of the museum and SCV. While Roof committed a horrific massacre in the name of white supremacy, we should not forget his devotion to the Lost Cause.

[128] Euan Hague and Edward H. Sebesta, "Neo-Confederacy and the Understanding of Race," in *Neo-Confederacy: A Critical Introduction*, eds. Euan Hague, Heidi Beirich, and Edward H. Sebesta (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 132.
[129] Laura Boles, "Confederate Museum Director: Roof's Visit/Picture Not Connected to Charleston Killings," *WSPA*, June 23, 2015. https://www.wspa.com/news/confederate-museum-director-roofs-visit-picture-not-connected-to-charleston-killings/.

CONCLUSION

Dylann Roof's visits to history museums that memorialize the Lost Cause are just one example of how these institutions based on mythological narratives can feed into a racist individual's mindset. These museums exemplify how the Lost Cause has prevailed as a popular memory of the antebellum South and the causes and outcomes of the Civil War. The three institutions also represent the vigorous efforts of Confederate memorial organizations, the UDC and SCV, to educate the public on fabricated narratives all the while vindicating their ancestors. The South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, the Museum at Market Hall, and the Museum and Library of Confederate History are not merely heritage sites that commemorate fallen Confederate soldiers. They are physical reminders of how the Lost Cause has entered public educational spaces.

Resistance to the Lost Cause has grown in recent years, especially following the 2020 social justice movement "Black Lives Matter," when thousands of Americans protested the presence of Confederate monuments in public places. In response, monument defenders such as the SCV attended these protests to protect the shrines dedicated to a romanticized southern past. Defenders' claims that monument removals are "erasing history" and not "preserving heritage" followed this nationwide movement, especially after the removal of the General Robert E. Lee statue in Richmond, Virginia on September 8, 2021. Removing Confederate monuments that are "weapons in the larger arsenal of white supremacy" does not "erase history."[130] The act more so symbolizes a step toward addressing and confronting racial injustice that has prevailed in the United States for centuries.

[130] Karen L. Cox, *No Common Ground: Confederate Monuments and the Ongoing Fight For Racial Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021), 4.

The most striking example of how museums centered on the Lost Cause can entirely shift their purpose is the American Civil War Museum in Richmond, the former Confederate capital. The White House of the Confederacy, where President Jefferson Davis had lived during the Civil War, opened as the "Confederate Museum" in 1896. For over seventy years, the museum, managed by the Confederate Memorial Literary Society women's organization, had incorporated Lost Cause ideals in its exhibits. The museum's mission gradually shifted after its name changed to the "Museum of the Confederacy" in 1970.[131] The museum merged with the American Civil War Center in 2013, becoming the American Civil War Museum and prioritizing long-ignored histories of African Americans during and after the Civil War. This vastly different purpose of the Confederate Museum signifies a shift in the popular memory of the South, although there is much more work to be done regarding widespread Confederate memorialization.

The three museums that I have thoroughly discussed in the previous chapters are hindrances to challenging the nation's past riddled with white supremacy. The state-funded Relic Room in Columbia represents South Carolina's ongoing endorsement of the Lost Cause, and its position in the State Museum only strengthens its connection with the state. Charleston's Museum at Market Hall exemplifies the former slave port city's grappling with fabricated memories and an idealized past. The Museum and Library of Confederate History directly defines the Lost Cause as the "truth," signifying that the Lost Cause's fictitious version of history remains a dominating narrative in the South.

Even if these sites mainly appeal to Lost Cause devotees, the idea that museums are sources of truth is shattered. The American Alliance of Museums reports that people tend to trust

[131] Andrew M. Davenport, "A New Civil War Museum Speaks Truths in the Former Capital of the Confederacy," *Smithsonian Magazine*, May 2, 2019, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/civil-war-museum-speaks-truths-former-capital-of-confederacy-180972085/.

museums more than researchers and scientists due to presenting factual evidence, displaying original and authentic objects, and having research-oriented purposes.[132] With this much power, museums that memorialize the Lost Cause can successfully influence visitors' notions of "truth," no matter how historically inaccurate they are.

[132] Wilkening Consulting for the American Alliance of Museums, "Museums and Trust 2021," accessed March 28, 2024, https://www.aam-us.org/2021/09/30/museums-and-trust-2021/.

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