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Report on Slavery and Racism in the History of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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REPORT ON SLAVERY AND RACISM IN THE HISTORY OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



**THE
SOUTHERN BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends:

We are living in an age of historical reckoning. Communities, nations, institutions, Christian churches, and denominations are now called upon to ask hard questions and, when necessary, to face hard realities. This is true of the Southern Baptist Convention, and it is true for The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

In 1995, when Southern Baptists celebrated the one-hundred fiftieth anniversary of the founding of our convention, we recognized a reckoning was required. The Convention overwhelmingly adopted an historic resolution which, among other affirmations, stated:

Our relationship to African-Americans has been hindered from the beginning by the role that slavery played in the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention; many of our Southern Baptist forbears defended the right to own slaves, and either participated in, supported, or acquiesced in the particularly inhumane nature of American slavery; and in later years Southern Baptists failed, in many cases, to support, and in some cases opposed, legitimate initiatives to secure the civil rights of African-Americans.

That was an historic act in which the Southern Baptist Convention also declared to the public, “we apologize to all African-Americans for condoning and/or perpetuating individual and systemic racism in our lifetime; and we genuinely repent of racism of which we have been guilty, whether consciously or unconsciously and we ask forgiveness from our African-American brothers and sisters, acknowledging that our own healing is at stake.”

That was more than twenty years ago. I was honored to be part of the small working group of both white and African-American Southern Baptists who drafted that historic statement. Then, as now, I was president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. At that time, I think it is safe to say that most Southern Baptists, having made this painful acknowledgement and lamenting this history, hoped to dwell no longer on the painful aspects of our legacy.

That is not possible, nor is it right. It is past time that The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary—the first and oldest institution of the Southern Baptist Convention—must face a reckoning of our own. Since our founding in 1859, at no moment has the history of this school been separated, by even the slightest degree, from the history of the denomination. What is true of the Convention was and is true of her mother seminary. We share the same history, serve the same churches, cherish the same gospel, confess the same doctrine, and bear the same burdens.

We cannot escape the fact that the honest lament of the SBC should have been accompanied by the honest lament of her first school, first seminary, and first institution. We knew ourselves to be fully

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included in the spirit and substance of that resolution in 1995, but the moral burden of history requires a more direct and far more candid acknowledgement of the legacy of this school in the horrifying realities of American slavery, Jim Crow segregation, racism, and even the avowal of white racial supremacy. The fact that these horrors of history are shared with the region, the nation, and with so many prominent institutions does not excuse our failure to expose our own history, our own story, our own cherished heroes, to an honest accounting—to ourselves and to the watching world.

We have been guilty of a sinful absence of historical curiosity. We knew, and we could not fail to know, that slavery and deep racism were in the story. We comforted ourselves that we could know this, but since these events were so far behind us, we could move on without awkward and embarrassing investigations and conversations.

In the larger secular world, just about every major institution of American public life is being called to account for some aspect of its history. This cultural conversation, often confused and intense, is far from over. I also believe that no secular worldview can bear the weight of this reckoning. Thanks be to God, we hold to a theology grounded in Holy Scripture that is able to bear this weight. We know that evil is not merely moral wrong; it is sin, a falling short of the glory of God and the breaking of God's commandment. We understand the wrong of American slavery and segregation to be sin, a rebellion against God's creation of human beings equally in his image.

We do have heroes and heroines, even as we find them in the Bible. But, in the end, the Bible reveals only one true hero, Jesus Christ. Even the heroes and heroines of faith honored in the Bible, as in Hebrews 11, were sinners. That same Bible is honest about their sin. We must be equally honest about our theological, denominational, and institutional heroes.

The founding faculty of this school—all four of them—were deeply involved in slavery and deeply complicit in the defense of slavery. Many of their successors on this faculty, throughout the period of Reconstruction and well into the twentieth century, advocated segregation, the inferiority of African-Americans, and openly embraced the ideology of the Lost Cause of southern slavery.

What we knew in generalities we now know in detail. As president of this school, I have sought models for how an institution can honestly deal with such truths. In candor, I found the most encouraging model in the approach of Princeton University in its "Princeton & Slavery" project. Princeton's report begins with these words: "Princeton University, founded as the College of New Jersey in 1746, exemplifies the central paradox of American history. From the start, liberty and slavery were intertwined."

If you change the name of the school and the year of its founding, you could make the same statement about almost any prominent and early institution of American life through at least some point in the nineteenth century. Those words would certainly be true of Southern Seminary.

A year ago, I asked a team of Southern Seminary and Boyce College faculty members to spend twelve months conducting a thorough investigation of these questions. Some of our own students were asking these questions. We all should have been asking these questions. How can a school like Princeton University face the truth while we, holding to the truth of the gospel, would refuse to do the same?

The chairman was Dr. Gregory A. Wills, professor of church history and former dean of the School of Theology. Author of our sesquicentennial history, published by Oxford University Press, and a skilled historian, Dr. Wills convened the meetings and wrote the draft of the report. Others serving with him include Dr. Jarvis J. Williams, associate professor of New Testament interpretation; Dr. Curtis A. Woods, assistant professor of applied theology and biblical spirituality and associate executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention; Dr. Matthew J. Hall, dean of Boyce College; Dr. John D. Wilsey, associate professor of church history; and Dr. Kevin Jones, associate dean of Boyce College at the time of commissioning and now interim chair of the School of Education and Human Development at Kentucky

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State University. To each of them we owe a great debt. Their year of labor is now an important contribution to Southern Seminary's history.

With this letter, I release this entire report to the public. Nothing has been withheld. At the onset, I made a pledge to this team that I would hold nothing from the public and would release their report in full.

What does all of this mean? We are faced with very hard questions, but they are not new to historic Christianity. When I arrived as a student at the Seminary in 1980, I came ready to make the history of this school my history, even as the history of the Southern Baptist Convention is my history. Over time, I had to think some hard thoughts. How could Christians hold, simultaneously, such right and wrong beliefs? How could a heroic figure like Martin Luther, that great paragon of the Reformation, teach, defend, and define the glorious truths of the gospel while expressing vile medieval anti-Semitism? The questions come again and again.

Eventually, the questions come home. How could our founders, James P. Boyce, John Broadus, Basil Manly Jr., and William Williams, serve as such defenders of biblical truth, the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the confessional convictions of this Seminary, and at the same time own human beings as slaves—based on an ideology of race—and defend American slavery as an institution?

Like Luther, they were creatures of their own time and social imagination, to be sure. But this does not excuse them, nor will it excuse us. The very confessional convictions they bequeathed to us reveal that there is only one standard by which Christians must make such judgments, and that is the sole authority of the Bible. They preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to all people, slave and free. We hold to that same gospel, pointing sinners to the promise of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Like our founders, we believe that repentance, which they confessed as an “evangelical grace,” is essential to the gospel. The very gospel truths that they taught, defined, and handed down to us are the very truths that allow us to release this report with both lament and conviction.

We must repent of our own sins, we cannot repent for the dead. We must, however, offer full lament for a legacy we inherit, and a story that is now ours. But this report is not the shattering of images. Boyce, Broadus, Manly, and Williams would be first to make that clear. As Christians, we know no total sanctification or perfection in this life. We await something better, our future glorification by Christ.

We also rejoice in knowing that Christ is creating a new humanity, purchased with his precious blood. Thanks be to God, we are seeing the promise of that new humanity, right here on the campus of Southern Seminary and Boyce College. Right here, right now, we see students and faculty representing many races and nations and ethnicities. Our commitment is to see this school, founded in a legacy of slavery, look every day more like the people born anew by the gospel of Jesus Christ, showing Christ's glory in redeemed sinners drawn from every tongue and tribe and people and nation.

We are particularly humbled by the grace and love of the many African-Americans who are counted among our alumni, students, faculty, and trustees. Our commitment is that this school will honor you, cherish you, and welcome you—everyday, evermore. You are many and you are precious to this school. You are helping us to write the present and the future, by God's grace and to God's glory.

In light of the burdens of history, some schools hasten to remove names, announce plans, and declare moral superiority. That is not what I intend to do, nor do I believe that to be what the Southern Baptist Convention or our Board of Trustees would have us to do.

We do not evaluate our Christian forebears from a position of our own moral innocence. Christians know that there is no such innocence. But we must judge, even as we will be judged, by the unchanging Word of God and the deposit of biblical truth.

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Consistent with our theology and the demands of truth, we will not attempt to rewrite the past, nor can we unwrite the past. Instead, we will write the truth as best we can know it. We will tell the story in full, and not hide. By God's grace we will hold without compromise to the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

We will seek to be faithful to Jesus Christ, his gospel, and his commands. May God lead us, guide us, correct us, protect us, and teach us. This is our witness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Albert Mohler, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

R. Albert Mohler, Jr., President

December 12, 2018

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In late 2017, Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. appointed a committee of six persons to prepare a report on the legacy of slavery and racism in the history of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The committee's members were Dr. Curtis Woods, Dr. John Wilsey, Dr. Kevin Jones, Dr. Jarvis Williams, Dr. Matthew J. Hall, and Dr. Gregory Wills. This is our report.

Although parts of this history have long been known, much of the story has never been told. We have undertaken extensive review of the published and unpublished sources that relate most directly to the history of the institution. We have searched for additional resources that could shed light on this story. Some voices are strikingly absent. The voices of many of the black agents in this story have not been preserved. The natural limits of time and resources no doubt mean that there are additional parts of this story that may yet come to light. The surviving and accessible sources, however, illuminate the story sufficiently to reveal its features with rather precise delineations.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The history of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is intertwined with the history of American slavery and the commitment to white supremacy which supported it. Slavery left its mark on the seminary just as it did upon the American nation as a whole. The denomination that established it spoke distinctly in support of the morality of slaveholding and the justness of the Confederate effort to preserve it. The seminary's donors and trustees advanced the interests of slavery from positions of leadership in society and in the church.

The seminary's leaders held to the contradictory commitments enshrined in the nation's foundational commitments. In 1776 Americans declared that all men were created equal and were endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights. In the United States Constitution, however, Americans effectively consigned black slaves to inequality as non-persons whose inalienable rights to life and liberty were indeed alienated.

The contradiction went far deeper. As Christians, the seminary's leaders regarded blacks as equal in human nature and dignity because God created all humanity from one person. They therefore labored to save the eternal souls of blacks no less than of whites. They urged them to repent of their sins and entrust themselves to God's mercy through faith in Jesus Christ, who suffered for the sins of blacks and whites alike, and rose again from the dead to give eternal life to all who believed in him, to both blacks and whites, in order to make them one body.

They contradicted these commitments however by asserting white superiority and defending racial inequality. The racism that was fundamental to the defense of slavery in America endured long after the end of legal slavery. The belief in white supremacy that undergirded slavery also undergirded new forms of racial oppression. The seminary's leaders long shared that belief and therefore failed to combat effectively the injustices stemming from it.

1. The seminary's founding faculty all held slaves. James P. Boyce, John A. Broadus, Basil Manly Jr., and William Williams together owned more than fifty persons. They invested capital in slaves who could earn for their owners an annual cash return on their investment.

2. The seminary's early faculty and trustees defended the righteousness of slaveholding. The seminary faculty supported the righteousness of slaveholding and opposed efforts to limit the institution. A number of the seminary's prominent trustees advanced public defenses of slavery. James L. Reynolds argued that slavery was in the best interest of the slaves themselves. Joseph E. Brown argued that slavery

was no mere necessary evil, but rather a God-ordained institution to be perpetuated. Despite his early opposition to slavery as a young man, Basil Manly Sr. eventually became one of its most ardent apologists. Patrick H. Mell contended that slavery was essential to civil society. Iveson L. Brookes suggested that slavery was “an institution of heaven.” All three of these shared a common theological argument in defense of slavery. They argued first that slaveholding was righteous because the inferiority of blacks indicated God’s providential will for their enslavement, corroborated by Noah’s prophetic cursing of Ham. They argued second that slaveholding was righteous because southern slaves accrued such remarkable material and spiritual benefits from it.

Additionally, these voices not only defended slavery in theory, but in actual practice as well, denying that abuses, violence, assault, and rape were in any way commonplace or systemic. Instead, they thought these to be exceptions. Their perspective was undoubtedly veiled by their dependence on hired overseers who were charged with the violent enforcement of the slave system. Furthermore, in their defense of slavery, the faculty and some prominent trustees assumed black inferiority, even as they often professed concern for the welfare of slaves.

3. Upon Abraham Lincoln’s election, the seminary faculty sought to preserve slavery. They believed that Lincoln’s election threatened the extinction of slavery. Boyce believed that sudden secession would be disastrous, and that negotiation with the Republicans would produce guarantees of protection for slavery. Manly and Williams seemed to view secession as the only hope for preserving slavery. Additionally, trustees such as Benjamin Pressley had made arguments for secession as early as 1851, claiming that defending slavery was of such vital priority that southern states should be prepared to leave the Union.

4. The seminary supported the Confederacy’s cause to preserve slavery. Faculty, trustees, and students joined the effort to defend the independence of the Confederacy. Boyce served in the army at the start and at the end of the war, and served in the South Carolina legislature for the entire war. At the 1863 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, Broadus drafted and presented resolutions pledging Southern Baptist support for the Confederacy. Broadus and Manly wrote and published literature calling soldiers to believe in Christ and follow him faithfully. Broadus preached the gospel among the soldiers. Students, as well as future faculty members, fought and served as chaplains. All sought God’s blessing for Confederate victory and independence.

5. After emancipation, the seminary faculty opposed racial equality. The faculty called for justice and sympathy for blacks, and supported the ministries of black churches and schools, but they defended white rule and the disfranchisement of blacks based upon the doctrine of white supremacy. Manly concluded that the presence of freed slaves in Greenville was an “incubus and plague.” If order was to be preserved in the South, the faculty concluded, white political control was essential. And when the question of relocating the seminary arose, Broadus positively assessed one potential location as desirable since it was “in a white man’s country.” While serving in the South Carolina state constitutional convention in 1865, Boyce delivered a speech arguing that “this is a white man’s government,” but would also in subsequent years advocate for passage of the fourteenth amendment and for acceptance of the terms of the Reconstruction Acts. In an 1868 speech before the northern Baptists’ Home Mission Society, Manly openly conceded, “We at the South do not recognize the social equality of the negro” and expressly condemned the idea of extending suffrage to black Americans.

6. In the Reconstruction era, the faculty supported the restoration of white rule in the South. The seminary faculty applauded restoration of white rule reflected in the election of Democrat Wade Hampton as governor of South Carolina and in the broad Democratic victories throughout the South. They supported also the legal curtailment of the civil rights of blacks that these victories promised. William Whitsitt, a lifelong admirer of Hampton, assured his students that “whites will rule in the South.”

7. Joseph E. Brown, the seminary’s most important donor and chairman of its Board of Trustees 1880-1894, earned much of his fortune by the exploitation of mostly black convict-lease laborers. Joseph E. Brown’s coal mines and iron furnaces coerced the full extent of labor from Georgia convicts by employing the same brutal punishments and tortures formerly employed by slave drivers. The legal system entrapped thousands of black men, often on trumped up charges and without any due process protections, and earned money for sheriffs and state treasuries by selling their labor. It was worse than slavery. Investigations of Brown’s Dade Coal operation concluded that “if there is a hell on earth, it is the Dade coal mines.” Brown reaped enormous profits from his coal and iron businesses. His 1880 gift of \$50,000 was instrumental in saving the seminary from financial collapse. At his death, the seminary honored him for his service as a trustee and for the generous financial support he had provided.

8. The seminary faculty urged just and humane treatment for blacks. The seminary faculty taught the equal humanity of blacks and whites. They commended the authenticity of the Christian faith and piety of black believers. And they opposed the violence and injustice that blacks in the South widely suffered. Broadus repudiated American slavery in 1882. William J. McGlothlin rejected previous attempts to connect the curse of Ham to blackness or justification for slavery. Broadus chastised white Christians for assuming their worship was more acceptable to God than that offered by black Christians. Several faculty and trustees lamented the prevalence of lynching in the South.

9. Before the 1940s, the seminary faculty generally approved the Lost Cause mythology. White southern apologists rewrote southern history in order to meet the needs of the Jim Crow era. They construed the Old South as an idyllic place for both slaves and masters, claimed that the South went to war to uphold their honor rather than slavery, and blamed postwar evils on such Radical Republican policy blunders as granting the freedmen legal equality and the vote. The faculty generally commended the Lost Cause rendering of southern history. Archibald T. Robertson celebrated the writings of Thomas Dixon for their portrayal of race relations and as useful justification for the disenfranchisement of black Americans. William O. Carver expressed doubts as to black “capacity for development.” He concluded that “in the United States there is found the only large group of Negroes yet rescued from heathenism and set on the road to civilization.” Carver also delivered an overt eulogy to the Lost Cause in 1935, celebrating the virtue, honor, and heroism of those who had given their lives for the Confederacy.

10. Until the 1940s, the seminary faculty supported black education and the segregation of schools and society. They supported black theological education provided that it was racially segregated. Many faculty members taught black preachers in intensive institutes, in coordination with Simmons University, and in private instruction. They supported black theological schools. Some of the most prominent of these efforts were the Kentucky Baptist Convention’s New Era Institutes in the 1890s. President Mullins urged Southern Baptists to cooperate with the National Baptist Convention in the establishment of the American Baptist Theological Seminary in 1924. However, they also regularly refused

to admit qualified black applicants to the seminary's degree programs and generally supported racial segregation throughout society. The seminary still largely insisted on the racial hierarchy of white superiority in broader American culture. Explaining his support for Herbert Hoover's 1928 presidential campaign, Mullins reasoned that supporting Hoover would provide better security for white rule in the South than supporting Democrat Al Smith. In defense of Jim Crow laws, professor Charles Gardner concluded they were necessary given "the absolute demonstration of the political incapacity of the negro race, viewed as a whole."

11. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the seminary faculty appealed to science to support their belief in white superiority. The faculty believed that science had demonstrated black inferiority. They were convinced of the superiority of white civilization and that this justified racial inequality. They did so with full confidence that their views were the conclusions of empirical observation undergirded by leading scientific authorities. Writing in 1882, Broadus advanced this sort of thinking, concluding that supposed black moral inferiority was connected to biological inferiority. For his part, Mullins put the matter starkly: "It is immoral and wrong to demand that negro civilization should be placed on par with white. This is fundamentally the issue." In his estimation, black political participation was the primary culprit in the "race problem." Charles Gardner concluded that science had established the inferiority of blacks, appealing to pseudo-scientific studies that concluded that whites were the products of more advanced evolutionary processes: "The negro should in some way be brought to the frank recognition of his racial inferiority."

12. The seminary admitted blacks to its degree programs in 1940 and integrated its classrooms in 1951. President John R. Sampey and the faculty were convinced that they must admit qualified applicants and began doing so in 1940. Kentucky's "Day Law" prohibited integrated education, so for eleven years, black students received instruction off campus or in professors' offices. Most of these met at the Baptist Fellowship Center in downtown Louisville. The seminary's first black graduate was Garland Offutt, who earned a Th.M. in 1944 and was subsequently admitted to the seminary's Ph.D. program. However, under legal counsel, the seminary did not permit Offutt to participate in the regular commencement exercises, but instead awarded his degree in the final chapel service of the term. President Ellis Fuller recommended and trustees enacted fully integrated programs and classrooms in 1951. In the following year, the first black students participated in regular graduation services, including B.J. Miller, Claude Taylor, and J.V. Bottoms.

13. The seminary faculty supported civil rights for blacks but had mixed appraisals of the Civil Rights Movement. While the seminary faculty generally urged compliance with the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, they largely supported a moderate approach to advance civil rights for blacks and were uncomfortable with Martin Luther King Jr.'s direct-action tactics. The seminary nevertheless invited King to deliver the Julius Brown Gay Lecture in 1961 and became increasingly supportive of the Civil Rights Movement. The seminary invited other civil rights leaders to deliver endowed lectures and appointed its first black scholar to the faculty in 1986.

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Basil Manly Jr. owned other slaves in addition to those in Greenville. The free schedule of the 1860 census for the Greenville District indicated that Manly's "personal estate" (all property other than real estate) was \$43,700. The average value of individual slaves was about \$900 in 1860, so the declared value of Manly's Greenville slaves amounted to perhaps as little as \$6,300 of Manly's "personal estate."² Most of the remaining \$37,400 represented the value of other slaves that Manly owned. He probably owned at least thirty persons and may have owned as many as forty in all. Probably all of the



James P. Boyce estate in Greenville, where he held twenty-three enslaved persons.

additional slaves were in Alabama. Slaveholders commonly leased their slaves to farmers or business owners who paid the slaveowner a monthly or annual payment in return for the slave's labor. Manly apparently leased his Alabama slaves. In 1862 he brought at least thirteen slaves from Alabama to South Carolina to help him operate a plantation while the seminary was closed on account of the war.³

Boyce also probably owned other slaves besides the twenty-three in Greenville. His familiarity with the financial opportunity available to those who had capital to invest in slaves suggests that at times he invested capital either in buying skilled slaves who could be leased, or in loaning capital to those who purchased slaves for leasing. In November 1864, Boyce advised Broadus that a group of nineteen slaves, who apparently were about to be sold, would be a wise investment, since expenses and taxes would be recovered by hiring them out, especially in the case of a carpenter and a blacksmith, who "ought to pay very handsomely."⁴

Boyce's "personal estate" value was \$330,000 in the 1860 census. This valuation included such property as stocks, bonds, silver, and jewelry, in addition to slaves. Boyce had large holdings in stocks and bonds, and thus it is difficult to assess what proportion of the \$330,000 may have been slaves who did not live in Greenville.⁵

² Caitlin Rosenthal estimated the total value of 3,950,511 American slaves counted in the 1860 census at \$3.1-3.6 billion, an average between \$785 and \$911 per slave (Caitlin Rosenthal, *Accounting for Slavery: Masters and Management* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018], 153-54. James L. Huston used a conservative estimate of \$3 billion for the total value in 1860, an average of \$759 per slave (James L. Huston, *Calculating the Value of the Union: Slavery, Property Rights, and the Economic Origins of the Civil War* [Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003], 27-29). Based on Manly's correspondence, he does not appear to have owned much in the other categories of "personal estate," which included such property as stocks, bonds, jewelry, and silver.

³ Bureau of the Census, Free Schedule, Greenville, 1860; NARA mf. series 653, reel 1220, p. 408.

⁴ James P. Boyce to John A. Broadus, 30 Nov. 1864, box 2, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

⁵ Bureau of the Census, Free schedule, Greenville, 1860; NARA mf. series 653, reel 1220, p. 408.

2—DEFENDING SLAVERY

All of the seminary's founding professors supported the morality of holding slaves as property. None apparently produced articles, sermons, or essays defending slavery, but all indicated at various times that they believed that slaveholding was legitimate and ethical in principle and had proved beneficial in practice. William Williams testified to his support of slavery in a New York newspaper in 1866. Before the war, he wrote, white southerners were nearly unanimous in their belief that slavery was just, and now that slavery was abolished, "we still maintain that slaveholding is morally right."⁶

After the war, Broadus also bore witness to his conviction that slaveholding was morally just. A student in 1882 recorded, as best he was able, Broadus's lecture on Philemon: "As to Philemon, twenty years ago it was impossible to discuss this epistle impartially on account of feeling about slaveholding. Paul evidently recognized right of ownership. Wesley said, 'slavery the sum of all villainies.' Paul sent a fugitive slave back to [his] master and [did] not ask [his] master to liberate him. Paul also regulates the duties of this relation. But it does not [teach] that slavery is a desirable relation, though it is a lawful [one]. E.g., Paul and Peter taught that Christians should honor [the] Roman emperor and obey his officers, and yet he [was] a cruel despot. It [does] not follow that despotism [is] desirable. Bible [did] not teach neither what [was] said at South or at North."⁷

Crawford H. Toy, professor of Old Testament interpretation 1869-1879, the seminary's fifth professor, apparently owned no slaves but supported the morality of slavery. He reassessed the justifications of slaveholding when the Civil War began. He told Broadus in 1861 that he had worked out to his own satisfaction answers to the "objections against regarding slavery as a divine institution."⁸ A decade after the abolition of slavery, Toy still defended the Fugitive Slave Law and argued that when God commanded the Israelites not to return a slave to his or her master, this applied only to Jewish slaves who became slaves voluntarily. Israelite slaves were not considered property, Toy suggested, because their children were not enslaved merely because their parents were. The Jews held foreign slaves as property, however, and it would have been "absurd" to permit them to gain freedom merely by running away.⁹

Although none of the faculty apparently defended slavery publicly before the Civil War, a number of the seminary's prominent trustees did.

Edwin T. Winkler, president of the Home Mission Board 1872-1881, and a seminary trustee 1868-1873 and 1878-1884, summarized the moral justifications of slavery as held by South Carolina's white Christians in 1850:

They do not regard it as a sin, for they find duties, which spring directly from its existence, imposed by the Scriptures. . . . They do not regard it as a moral evil; though they admit that evil is connected with it, as it is with every social, civil, or moral relation, into which man can enter. . . . They do not believe slavery to be a political evil; and no sophistry can convince them which undertakes to prove that a system of labor, which—as few systems do—amply provides for the wants of the laborer, imparting to him food, clothing, shelter and defense, in sickness medicine, and in an old age an asylum; which covers immense regions with luxuriance, which would other-

⁶ William Williams, "A South Carolina View of It," *New York Examiner and Chronicle*, 25 Jan. 1866, 1.

⁷ John Broadus, in T. T. Eaton, Lecture Notebook, 30 Mar. 1882, box 4, T. T. Eaton Papers, SBTS.

⁸ Crawford H. Toy to John A. Broadus, 23 Oct. 1861, box 1, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

⁹ Crawford Toy, in A. J. Holt, Notebook of C. H. Toy's Old Testament Class, 4 Jan. 1875, 191, SBTS.

wise, on account of the heat of the climate, escape cultivation; and thus which supplies the factories, and clothes the nakedness of the world—that such a system can justly be regarded as an evil by or to any human being.¹⁰

James L. Reynolds, professor of classics and moral philosophy at the University of South Carolina 1851-1873, editor of the South Carolina weekly newspaper, the *Confederate Baptist* 1862-1865, and a Southern Seminary trustee 1872-1878, defended slavery by arguing that slavery promoted the welfare of enslaved Africans. Slaves fared better under slavery than poor persons did under free labor. Free labor systems provided little incentive to protect the poor, since natural human selfishness induced the wealthy and powerful to reduce them to practical vassalage, exploiting their labor without concern for their welfare. But under slavery, the selfish interests of masters and slaves were harmonious and secured “the discharge of the mutual obligations, because under slavery “the protection and support of the laborer” were in the “interest of the employer.”¹¹

At the 1863 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, Georgia governor Joseph E. Brown, who served on the seminary’s board of trustees 1872-1877 and 1880-1894, and whose \$50,000 gift saved the seminary from imminent collapse in 1880, reminded his fellow white Baptists of the great benefits of slavery in order to urge them to adopt an expression of their support of the Confederacy and its war to preserve slavery: “All must admit that the institution of slavery is one of the prime causes of the war, and that its perpetuation depends upon the success of our arms.” It was necessary to assure southern whites that in the present crisis Southern Baptist leaders stood in shoulder-to-shoulder with other whites in support of slavery:

I know the time was when the Southern church apologized for the institution. While they denied that it was per se sinful, they admitted that it was a great political and social evil. Many added that it was a moral evil. But the investigation of the subject, with the study of the Scriptures, has satisfied not only our statesmen, but Christians of all denominations, that it is neither a moral, social nor political evil. . . . I believe, sir, that it is an institution of God, and that we have revealed to us in the Holy Bible clear and overwhelming evidence of its establishment by Him and of his intention to perpetuate it.¹²

At least three trustees produced comprehensive vindications of the legitimacy of slaveholding: Basil Manly Sr., Iveson L. Brookes, and Patrick H. Mell. As southern leaders grew increasingly indignant regarding the aggressive tactics of northern black and white abolitionists—especially the mailing of abolitionist literature to southern post offices and seeking to introduce abolitionist petitions in Congress—white southerners, in the 1840s and 1850s, produced a large number of sermons, articles, and books defending slavery.

¹⁰ Edwin T. Winkler, “The South and Slavery,” *Southern Baptist*, 4 Sept. 1850, 1. Winkler was elected to the founding faculty of the seminary by the education conventions of 1857 and 1858, but he declined.

¹¹ James L. Reynolds, “Slavery,” *Confederate Baptist*, 15 Oct. 1862, 2. Reynolds taught also at Furman, Mercer, and Georgetown, where he was also president. See J. C. Furman, “A Biographical Sketch of Rev. J. L. Reynolds, D.D.,” *Baptist Courier*, 3 Jan. 1878, 2; and Maximilian LaBorde, *History of the South Carolina College* (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans, and Cogswell, 1874), 528.

¹² Joseph E. Brown, “Speech of Governor Brown in the Baptist Biennial Convention,” *Christian Index*, 25 May 1863, 2.

Basil Manly Sr., one of the most influential Baptist ministers in the South, served as president of the University of Alabama 1837-1855 and chairman of the seminary's board of trustees 1859-1868. He drafted the 1844 "Alabama Resolutions" which resulted in the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention in response to the Triennial Convention's refusal to appoint slaveholders as missionaries.¹³ He strongly supported southern secession, and had concluded since the early 1830s that the South would find it necessary to secede from the Union. In November 1860, shortly after Lincoln's election, he wrote the resolutions adopted by the Alabama State Baptist Convention urging Alabama to withdraw from the United States, since the federal government did not uphold southerners' constitutional rights "with reference to our peculiar property," that is, with reference to holding slaves as property.¹⁴ He served as the official chaplain of the Alabama secession convention, and of the provisional congress of the Confederate States of America, and of the inauguration of Jefferson Davis as president of the Confederacy.¹⁵

As a young man Manly held that slavery in practice was wrong. Manly described slavery as evil in an 1821 address "On the Emancipation of Slaves" given during his final year of studies at the University of South Carolina. "Slavery," he said, "is an evil under which this country has long groaned." He judged that slavery was not intrinsically sinful, but rather judged it sinful because it produced various evils in practice. It was "utterly repugnant to the spirit of republican institutions," it threatened to destroy the federal union, and it would in time incite terrible slave insurrections. Like other white evangelicals of the era, he seemed to conclude that no practical policy of emancipating slaves could be devised. This was a common view of slavery among white evangelicals from 1780 to 1830, and was similar to Thomas Jefferson's view in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*.¹⁶

Manly however afterward changed his mind and concluded that slavery was beneficial. In 1837 he preached an important sermon on the "Duties of Masters and Servants" in which he argued that God established slavery as the permanent condition of Africans after the flood. Noah's prophecy condemning Canaan to perpetual slavery was observably fulfilled by the African race. "Whatever interpretation you choose to give, look at the facts. That man's race, in all times, in all countries, not excepting his own, has been in a state of servitude. In Africa, three-fourths [are] slaves." The "African Negro race," Manly said, was distinguishable from all other races by several physical characteristics and had made no material progress in six thousand years. "Efforts have been made at different periods to civilize them," but without success. "From age to age they have fulfilled this saying of Noah. If it be not meant of them, of what people is it meant?"¹⁷

¹³ The resolutions specifically asked whether the convention's foreign mission board would appoint slaveholders. The board replied that they would not. Manly first presented the resolutions to the Tuscaloosa Baptist Association and they were afterward adopted by the Alabama State Baptist Convention. Also in 1844 the Georgia Baptist Convention nominated a slaveholder for appointment by the home mission board and the board rejected him. See Southern Baptist Convention, *Proceedings* (Richmond, VA: H. K. Ellyson, 1845), 12-13, 17-20; Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 135-38; Thomas S. Kidd and Barry Hankins, *Baptists in America: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 98-147; and Anthony L. Chute, Nathan A. Finn, and Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Baptist Story: From English Sect to Global Movement* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2015), 152-62.

¹⁴ See A. James Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 291.

¹⁵ Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 292-95.

¹⁶ Basil Manly Sr., "On the Emancipation of Slaves" (1821), Basil Manly Sr. Papers, Special Collections, James B. Duke Library, Furman University; Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 9th American edition (Boston: H. Sprague, 1802), 190-99.

¹⁷ Basil Manly Sr., "Duties of Masters and Servants," no. 8 of Manly's "Sermons on Duty," in Basil Manly Manuscript Sermons and Notes, SBTS. See also Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 213-15.

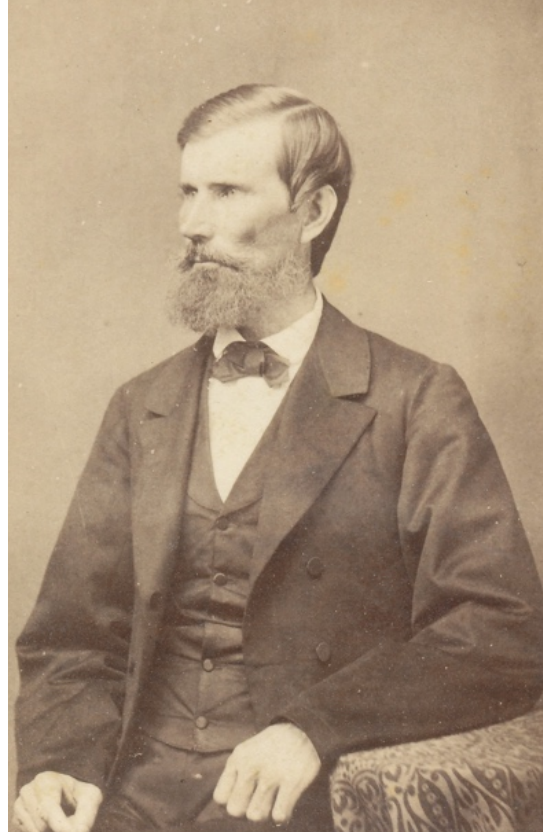
Since God in his providence had established this permanent relationship, it would be folly and sin to seek to disrupt it. “We cannot alter the facts, nor the providence of God.” We must choose either “submission to an overruling providence” designed by God’s “wisdom and goodness to bring good out of this dispensation,” or else “resistance to omnipotence.” Providence indicated that it was in accordance with God’s will that blacks should be slaves. To oppose the enslavement of blacks was therefore to rebel against God’s authority.

In no other aspect of human experience did white evangelicals argue that God’s providence revealed a moral duty that must be obeyed. They held that smallpox epidemics came by God’s providence, but that did not reveal a moral duty to spread smallpox. On the contrary, they held that they had a moral duty to resist the spread of smallpox and to save its victims if possible. And so with every misfortune under God’s providential rule. Except one. When it came to the enslavement of blacks, they argued the reverse. Africans were the subjugated by God’s providence, therefore all had a duty to assist and preserve their subjugation.

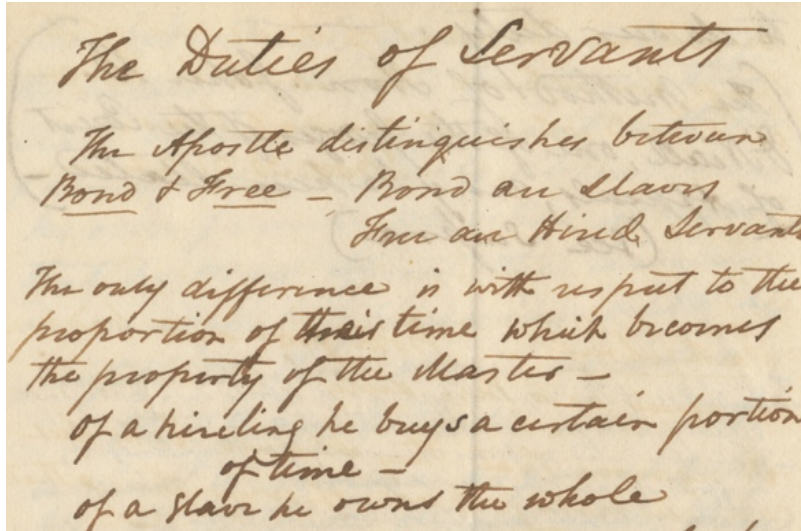
Since God appointed Africans to perpetual slavery, Manly waived as irrelevant objections concerning how they first came to be enslaved, suggesting that it did not matter that they had been kidnapped—that they were stolen property. “Whatever may have been the motives of men engaged in their transportation, God has overruled it for good.” Manly further suggested that since God appointed them to a state of perpetual slavery, they had no natural right to freedom. “All will depend on the question, ‘Is liberty of person given to all?’ God gives power to some and bondage to others. Only God can be held accountable for the differences in social condition and inequalities of human capacity. To quarrel with this will be to waste our rage upon a dispensation as old as nature.” Slavery was a natural constitutive element of all human society.

The fact that slavery produced remarkable benefits to both blacks and whites suggested also that God established it for the good of all. Manly asserted that southern slaves received better clothing, food, and care, and were subjected to less labor, than the laboring classes of Europe or of the northern states. Their condition was also far superior that of free blacks in northern cities, in the British West Indies, and in Haiti. And if they were still in Africa, they would be under “worse bondage.” Slavery as it existed in South, Manly concluded, could not be condemned in principle or in practice.

Throughout his long career, Manly repeatedly urged slaveholders not to sell slaves except under dire necessity, since God had constituted them part of the slaveholder’s human family. Manly nevertheless defended the right to buy and sell slaves and sometimes judged it necessary to sell his own slaves. Northern abolitionists widely criticized him when he defended this right by saying that “I had no more doubt or compunction [about it] than in pocketing the price of a horse or anything else that belonged to



Patrick H. Mell (1814–1888)



A page from Basil Manly's 1837 sermon defending the enslavement of blacks.

me.”¹⁸ Manly owned several plantations in Alabama and Mississippi, the chief one consisting of one thousand acres in Alabama, and owned at least thirty-eight persons in 1860.¹⁹

Two other trustees published arguments similar to Manly's. Patrick H. Mell, president of the University of Georgia 1878-1888, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1863-1871 and 1880-1887, and Southern Seminary trustee 1868-1878, published *Slavery: A Treatise Showing That Slavery Is neither*

a Moral, Political, nor Social Evil in 1844. God had established that slavery was “essential to the existence of civil society,” Mell said, and had appointed Africans to serve as slaves forever: “From Ham were descended the nations that occupied the land of Canaan and those that now constitute the African or negro race. Their inheritance, according to prophecy, has been and will continue to be slavery.”²⁰

Mell concluded that southern whites would not abolish slavery, since as practiced in the South it was a positive moral good sanctioned by God and by the nature of things. “Slavery is advantageous both to the white and the colored race, and until it becomes a pecuniary evil, so long as we have the Bible, our reason, and our independence, we expect to maintain it.” Slavery was a blessing to blacks in the South, Mell argued, for “in every respect, the condition of the slave in these United States is better than that occupied by his brethren in any part of the world now or during any past age.”²¹

Iveson L. Brookes, a seminary trustee 1859-1861, was a prominent South Carolina Baptist pastor and slaveholder who wrote a number of newspaper articles and two short books defending slavery. Brookes published *Defence of the South against the Reproaches and Incroachments of the North* in 1850, and *A Defence of Southern Slavery against the Attacks of Henry Clay and Alexander Campbell* in 1851. Brookes's arguments resembled Manly's and Mell's. He advanced the premise that “Slavery, especially Negro Slavery, is an institution of heaven and intended for the mutual benefit of master and slave, as proved by the Bible and exemplified in the condition of the Society and the prosperity of the Southern States.” And he argued that God appointed Africans as slaves for all time: “God himself instituted human slavery when he authorized Noah to doom the posterity of Ham, through his youngest son Canaan (see Genesis ix.), to perpetual servitude.” The enslavement of blacks was perpetual “not merely upon the authority of Bible prophecy,” but also upon the “inferiority of intellect which characterizes the descendants of Canaan.”

¹⁸ Basil Manly Sr. to George Ide, 27 Aug. 1844, quoted in Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 219-22.

¹⁹ Fuller, *Chaplain to the Confederacy*, 261-65, 307.

²⁰ Patrick H. Mell, *Slavery: A Treatise Showing That Slavery Is neither a Moral, Political, nor Social Evil* (Penfield, GA: Benjamin Brantly, 1844), 15.

²¹ Mell, *Slavery*, 36, 37.

God gave whites a “superior order of intellect” and thereby God gave “power to the white race over the negro race.”²²

All four of the seminary’s founding professors undoubtedly agreed substantially with the slavery-as-a-positive-good views of such trustees as Winkler, Manly, Brookes, and Mell. The public trust they retained and the positions they took after the war substantiate this conclusion. The trust of Southern Baptists and of the white community was necessary to retain prominent pulpits or teaching positions—this was especially true of the new seminary struggling to attain sufficient public trust in order to raise its endowment. Any suspicion regarding their support of slavery would have made their positions untenable. South Carolina whites especially were vigilant to detect any sign of disloyalty regarding slavery.²³

Boyce described his own views as “ultra proslavery.” He seemed to mean by this that slavery was a positive good that God had intended as a foundation of the entire nation’s greatness. He meant by it also that the United States Constitution itself recognized the right of citizens to hold slaves as legal property. Any restriction on slaveholding in the states and territories was effectively to deprive citizens of their property rights without due process of law and was therefore unconstitutional.²⁴



Lizzie Boyce and her enslaved nursemaid, circa 1855.

²² Iveson L. Brookes, *Defence of the South against the Reproaches and Incroachments of the North* (Hamburg, SC: The Republican Office, 1850), [iii], 8-9, 20.

²³ William H. Brisbane, editor of the South Carolina Baptist newspaper, fled the state to preserve his life after he freed many of his slaves in 1835. Richard Fuller, one of the most prominent Southern Baptist preachers, was warned by leading whites of Beaufort, South Carolina, that they would forcibly prevent him from setting foot in Beaufort, because his defense of slavery was compromised by support for colonization. James M. Pendleton, a professor at Southern Baptists’ Union University in Tennessee, was a slaveholder but held the older evangelical view, like the one expressed in Basil Manly’s 1821 address. Pendleton fled to the North after war began because his views caused him to lose the trust of the white community around Nashville. In South Carolina, Presbyterian missionary John Pinney had to flee Columbia in 1833 because he was promoting the mission to Liberia, which existed for the colonization of emancipated American slaves. Both Pendleton and Pinney sustained southern slaveholding, but at the same time believed that it should be abolished. See J. Brent Morris, “We Are Verily Guilty concerning Our Brother’: The Abolitionist Transformation of Planter William Henry Brisbane,” *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 111 (2010): 118-150; M. T. Mendenhall to William B. Johnson, 26 Feb. 1851, William B. Johnson Papers, James B. Duke Library, Furman University; James M. Pendleton, *Reminiscences of a Long Life* (Louisville, KY: Baptist Book Concern, 1891), 112-32; Erskine Clarke, *By the Rivers of Water: A Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Odyssey* (New York: Basic Books, 2013), 60, 74; and Gregory A. Wills, *The First Baptist Church of Columbia, South Carolina, 1809-2002* (Brentwood, TN: Baptist History and Heritage Society, 2003), 106-108.

²⁴ James P. Boyce to H. A. Tupper, 1860, quoted in John A. Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce* (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1893), 185. Identification as ultra proslavery in the 1850s seemed usually to refer to the claim that the United States Constitution provided full protection of slaveholders’ right to hold slaves as property, and that therefore it was unconstitutional to restrict slavery from any of the states and territories.

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White Southern Baptist clergy made a point of defending slavery in part in order to overcome the distrust of white slaveholders. Many white southerners distrusted evangelical religion and the evangelical clergy on the subject of slavery because evangelicals held that the gospel of Jesus Christ spoke directly to the humanity of slaves as creatures created in image of God and as objects of God's compassion and mercy through repentance and faith in Christ. White evangelical clergy devoted much attention to seeking the conversion of slaves. White Baptist preachers baptized the converts among the slaves, often in the same water and at the same time as white converts, and introduced them into their churches as spiritual equals of whites. White Baptist preachers insisted on teaching Christianity to converts among the slaves and paid special attention to those whom God had chosen to be gospel ministers, whose serious piety, intellectual gifts, and speaking ability marked them out. Baptist churches ordained such slaves as gospel ministers, with authority to preach and teach the gospel. And Baptist preachers emphasized of the duties of masters in ways that seemed to indict many southern slaveholders of treating their slaves inhumanely.

The distrust of evangelical religion deepened when such converts led slave insurrections, as in the case of the Denmark Vesey insurrection in Charleston, South Carolina in 1822. It was in response to such distrust that the white delegates to the 1822 South Carolina Baptist Convention asked Richard Furman, pastor of the important Charleston First Baptist Church, to write a letter to the governor explaining the views of white South Carolina Baptists with reference to slavery. The convention endorsed Furman's letter the following year. It left no doubt that South Carolina's white Baptists were committed to defending slavery as just and good.

Since abolitionists generally appealed to the Bible as one of their chief weapons against slavery, white southerners generally relied on the evangelical clergy's interpretations of scripture in defense of slaveholding. They produced many of the most influential defenses of slaveholding from the 1830s until the abolition of slavery.²⁵

Southern Baptist defenders of slavery vindicated slavery as it existed in the South by appealing to an abstract form of slavery that hardly existed in fact. They generally described slavery in terms of what slavery should be, not according to how it was ordinarily practiced. Since slavery in practice did not measure up to its ideal, it was necessary to argue for slavery as an ideal construct and then insinuate that this ideal characterized slavery in actual practice. They instructed slaveholders regarding how they ought to treat their slaves, and then defended those instructions as if they represented the actual practice of slavery.

Southern Seminary's faculty and trustees were sincerely convinced that they were interpreting the Bible and evaluating the moral status of slavery correctly. Slaveholding affected the shape of nearly all aspects of experience in most parts of the South and formed the basis of plans for securing stability and prosperity for wives and children. Throughout the nation the slave economy was fundamental to

²⁵ On proslavery arguments in America, see Lacy K. Ford, *Deliver Us from Evil: The Slavery Question in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Larry E. Tise, *Proslavery: A History of the Defense of Slavery in America, 1701-1840* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1987); Charles F. Irons, *The Origins of Proslavery Christianity: White and Black Evangelicals in Colonial and Antebellum Virginia* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Jeffrey Robert Young, ed., *Proslavery and Sectional Thought in the Early South, 1740-1829: An Anthology* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2006); and Drew Gilpin Faust, ed., *The Ideology of Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Antebellum South, 1830-1860* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1981).

prosperity of a large swath of American business and finance.²⁶ In consequence, slavery perverted the social conscience of most southern and many northern whites.²⁷ Evangelical slaveholders were persuaded that they treated slaves justly because in their experience of slavery, whippings, sexual assaults, and the selling of slaves and the breaking up of families, seemed to them infrequent. Many slaveholders left the daily business of managing plantation slaves in the hands of an overseer whose job depended on making sufficient profit to service debts and to afford new investments. As a general rule, such results were achieved only by frequent recourse to brutal whippings, a rule proven by the increasing efficiency of such methods within the cotton plantation system. The slaves who suffered the consequences of such “infrequent” occurrences saw clearly that such evils were intrinsic to the American system of slavery, and that even when they were owned by masters who were committed to more humane treatment of their slaves, the threat of brutality stalked them day and night, for at any moment they might be sold away from family and home if, as commonly occurred, their master needed to raise cash to pay debts or to invest in new opportunities, or in the event of the slaveholder’s death.²⁸

The slavery that evangelical apologists defended was a slavery in which such evils rarely occurred and when they did occur, they were censured by other whites in the community. In ideal slavery, masters put the welfare of their slaves before profits, did not yield to desires of sexual assault and abuse, and mistreatment of slaves was rare and discountenanced by all respectable whites. The definitions of mistreatment and of just treatment depended substantially on one’s race. White Americans had the luxury of making excuses for mistreatment and of averting their eyes when such distressing occurrences came before them.²⁹

Appeals to the Bible helped soothe slaveholders’ consciences regarding the origins, character, and practice of slaveholding. It was the assertion of black inferiority however that seemed to produce conviction, for it transformed strained interpretations and theological error into the reasonable conclusions of common sense. Whites established their claims of black inferiority upon the observable ignorance and poverty of blacks. They simultaneously prevented both slaves and free blacks from receiving education and accumulating property. Evidence demonstrating the equal intellectual capacities of blacks was either ignored or waived as irrelevant exceptions.³⁰

Many slaves showed such high capacities of intelligence and power of self-government that masters gave them freedom to get their own work and manage their jobs and their lives without interference,

²⁶ See especially Edward E. Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014); Calvin Schermerhorn, *The Business of Slavery and the Rise of American Capitalism, 1815-1860* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015); Walter Johnson, *Dark River of Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2013); and Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman, eds., *Slavery’s Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

²⁷ See Francis Wayland’s discussion of slavery and social conscience in *The Limitations of Human Responsibility* (Boston: Gould, Kendall, and Lincoln, 1838), 161-88. White evangelical defenders of slavery seemed to view Wayland’s anti-slavery section of his *Elements of Moral Science* (Boston: Gould, Kendall, and Lincoln, 1835) as the most important argument against slavery.

²⁸ See especially Edward Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told*; and David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

²⁹ One of the substantial reasons that abolitionism gained support among some whites was the success of abolitionist publications in calling attention to the inhumanity of slavery by means of first-persons accounts of slaves themselves, of which Frederick Douglass’s 1845 *Narrative* was the most famous. See especially Manish Sinha, *The Slave’s Cause: A History of Abolition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016).

³⁰ Thomas Jefferson’s discussions of the natural capabilities of blacks helped shape majority white opinion in America until the second half of the twentieth century. See Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 9th American edition (Boston: H. Sprague, 1802), 190-99.

as long as they paid their masters what they required. In 1862 Basil Manly Jr. planned to bid as much as \$1800 for a shoemaker. He and two others visited the slave to observe him making shoes in order to appraise his value. Manly was satisfied that with his skills and intelligence the man could earn at least \$2 per day. He intended to buy him, but he judged that the man was worth more than he could afford to pay, and other buyers would outbid him.³¹ James P. Boyce purchased such a highly skilled and competent slave for \$3,500 in Greenville. Boyce provided him with a complete set of carpentry tools, Boyce's daughter remembered, and "let him take contracts for work, as he was intelligent enough to manage the entire building of a house."³²

The seminary faculty's actions suggested concern for the welfare of the slaves, but their construal of black slavery as fundamental to the social order corrupted and limited the concern. In 1848 during Manly's first pastorate in Alabama, he devoted most of his attention to ministry among the slave population.³³ In 1856 Andrew Marshall, the renowned pastor of the Savannah African Baptist Church, arrived in Richmond ill and weak, and asked Manly to direct him to some place where he could stay. Manly violated social custom and invited Marshall to stay in his own home. Marshall's illness was severe. Manly provided for Marshall's care for this final month of Marshall's life. He died in Manly's home.³⁴ All the professors preached and labored among slaves as well as among whites.³⁵

Evangelical clergy's concern for slaves and their interest in preaching the gospel to them made many white southerners uneasy, despite the clergy's outspoken defense of slavery. In the view of many whites, such attention and concern toward slaves posed dangers to the peace and order of southern society, since it could spread discontent among slaves concerning their condition, which would then produce absconders and insurrectionists. In 1859 Broadus gave a lecture in Richmond urging masters that they had an obligation to provide Christian preaching and instruction to their slaves. More than 50 percent of Virginia's white households held slaves. The *Richmond Dispatch* refused to report the lecture because of the editor's opposition to Christian evangelism and teaching among slaves.³⁶

3—SECESSION AND SLAVERY

Among the seminary's professors, Boyce and Broadus wanted the South to attempt a negotiated settlement before secession. Boyce believed that secession was not yet necessary. He believed that when the South presented its claims, northern leaders would support a compromise that would preserve the Union with slavery.³⁷

³¹ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil Manly Sr. and Sarah Manly, 26 Oct. 1862, Manly Family Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

³² Quoted in John A. Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce* (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1893), 364. Lizzie Boyce remembered that her father bought him because he was the husband of a valued slave in Boyce's household, and he was otherwise going to be sold away and separated from his wife. There can be little doubt that Boyce paid the price that the market would bear, and the price was so high because he could earn substantial sums of money for his owner. Boyce would have established a price based on a calculation of how many years it would take for him to recover his \$3,500 investment.

³³ Basil Manly Jr. to Crawford H. Toy, 7 Feb. 1873, Letterbook Two, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

³⁴ Unsigned, "Death of Rev. Andrew Marshall," *Christian Index*, 14 Jan. 1857, 7.

³⁵ See Broadus, *Memoir of Boyce*, 91-92.

³⁶ Jeremiah B. Jeter to John A. Broadus, 21 Feb. 1859, box 6, A. T. Robertson Papers, SBTS.

³⁷ See Broadus, *Memoir of Boyce*, 177; J. M. Broadus to John A. Broadus, 21 Dec. 1860, John A. Broadus Papers, SBTS. Crawford H. Toy assumed however that Broadus supported secession in Nov. 1860. See Crawford H. Toy to John A. Broadus, 28 Nov. 1860, A. T. Robertson Papers, SBTS.

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Boyce opposed secession not because he opposed slavery but because he supported it. He told his friend Henry A. Tupper that preserving the union was the only hope for preserving slavery. Secession might finally be necessary, he said, but “we shall have to go through a long and bloody war.” If the southern states seceded, they would experience “constant civil discord until slavery will be abolished.” The whole situation suggested to Boyce that God was punishing the South for its sinful abuses of slavery:

I believe I see in all this the end of slavery. I believe we are cutting its throat, curtailing its domain. And I have been, and am, an ultra pro-slavery man. Yet I bow to what God will do. I feel that our sins as to this institution have cursed us—that the negroes have not been cared for in their marital and religious relations as they should be; and I fear God is going to sweep it away, after having left it thus long enough to show us how great we might be, were we to act as we ought in this matter.³⁸

God was about to remove slavery, not because it was immoral, but because southern whites abused slaves in failing to honor and protect the sanctity of marriage and the necessities of their souls.³⁹

Manly and Williams seem to have backed secession immediately upon Lincoln’s election.⁴⁰ The arguments for secession had been popular among many southern whites since the slavery compromises of 1850. Benjamin C. Pressley, a South Carolina Baptist who was a trustee of the seminary 1859-1869, represented well the arguments vindicating secession. He argued at length that the 1850 compromises were unconstitutional infringements on the rights of slaveholders. New England merchants could distribute and sell their textiles, brooms, and rum in every state of the union, but southerners could not send slaves to labor in California or sell them in the nation’s capital.

Pressley’s central objection however was that northern majorities now supported the ultimate destruction of slavery. Unless the South seceded, the controversy over slavery “must continue to widen, until fierce and uncontrollable civil war be the result.” The free states sought to strangle slavery by restricting its spread into new territories and states, with the result that the House of Representatives and the Senate attained antislavery majorities. The free states also diminished the economic vitality of the slaveholding states by imposing tariffs on the sale of southern agricultural products, allowing New England capitalists to buy cotton at artificially depressed prices, ensuring northern profits at southern expense. Above all they refused to honor the constitutional protections on property by prohibiting slaveholders from taking slaves into some of the free states when they travel there, but especially by the broad northern commitment to disobey the fugitive slave law. And they supported efforts to spread abolitionist opinions in the South, even among slaves. The North, Pressley concluded, would not “deviate from its fixed purpose to destroy slavery.” The South however would not abandon slavery. “Slavery is an institution that the South is determined to maintain. It is so interwoven with all her interests, that not only prosperity, but her very existence is dependent upon it.” The only solution was the secession of the slave states and the formation of an independent southern confederacy.⁴¹

³⁸ Boyce to H. A. Tupper, Dec. 1860, quoted in Broadus, *Memoir of James P. Boyce*, 185.

³⁹ Boyce to his sister, 10 Jan. 1861, quoted in Broadus, *Memoir of James P. Boyce*, 185.

⁴⁰ Their support of immediate secession is suggested by Broadus’s statement that the faculty was initially divided on the question of secession, and by Manly’s own statements and his quote of Williams regarding the deceit and malice of northern Republican newspapers. See Broadus, *Memoir of Boyce*, 177; Basil Manly Jr. to Parents, 23 Feb. 1861 and 8 Mar. 1861, Basil Manly Papers, 1842-1893, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

⁴¹ Pressley, *Reasons for the Dissolution of the Union* (Charleston, SC: A. J. Burke, 1851), 5-11.

Pressley published these arguments in 1851. Lincoln's election seemed to fulfill the predictions of Pressley and other early secession advocates. With Lincoln's election, secession arguments became compelling to most white southerners. Once white majorities voted for secession, Boyce, like most unionist white southerners, readily identified with the cause of his state and with the aims of the southern Confederacy.

4—THE SLAVEHOLDERS' REPUBLIC AND THE CIVIL WAR

The seminary's faculty, students, and trustees contributed to the efforts of the slaveholding states to preserve slavery through creation of a slaveholding republic. Most students volunteered in 1861 and served as soldiers or as army chaplains in defense of the new Confederacy. The rest were soon conscripted or needed at home. Only a handful of students remained to close the session in the spring of 1862. The seminary did not hold classes again until three and a half years later.

Of the four founding professors, only Boyce served in the Confederate army. He served as chaplain in 16th South Carolina Infantry from November 1861 until May 1862. He was elected to the South Carolina legislature in October 1862 and served two terms until the fall of the Confederacy. He introduced a bill pledging that the state of South Carolina would endorse its proportion of the Confederate government's two hundred million dollar bond issue. The bill won passage in South Carolina. As a result, the Confederacy's Secretary of the Treasury appointed Boyce to lobby the other states to follow South Carolina's example. He abandoned the effort when European demand for Confederate bonds evaporated after Lee's defeat at Gettysburg and Grant's conquest of Vicksburg. During the final six months of the war, Boyce served as aide-de-camp for South Carolina governor Andrew G. Magrath and as provost-marshal of Columbia, with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He believed that he was the last Confederate to evacuate Columbia as Sherman's Union troops occupied the city.⁴²

When the seminary closed in 1862, William Williams sought to provide for his family by operating a farm. He rented one in Whitehall, South Carolina, near Greenwood. To make ends meet, he hired out one of his slaves for about one hundred dollars per year.⁴³ He also served as pastor of several churches.

Manly also moved his family to a farm. He purchased a plantation near the town of Ninety-Six, South Carolina. He believed that he lacked the ability to manage the plantation and supervise the slaves,



James P. Boyce in his Confederate uniform. He served as a chaplain in a South Carolina infantry regiment, 1861–1862.

⁴² Broadus, *Memoir of Boyce*, 183-97.

⁴³ William Williams to John A. Broadus, n.d. [perhaps late 1863], box 16, John A. Broadus Papers, SBTS.

and decided therefore that he must hire an overseer. To gain the overseer's exemption from military service, a plantation needed to have at least twenty slaves on it. When the contracts for his Alabama slaves expired at the end of the year, he brought them to his South Carolina farm.⁴⁴ The slaves comprised four families. At the end of the war they totaled about thirty persons.⁴⁵

Even with the overseer, Manly could not get the plantation to earn a profit. The slaves grew wheat, raised hogs, and raised sheep and processed their wool into cloth.⁴⁶ In order to supply churches that needed preaching and in order to earn additional income, Manly served as pastor of the Fellowship Baptist Church, Damascus Baptist Church, and the Siloam Baptist Church, preaching once or twice per month at each. In 1864 he moved his family to a parsonage provided by the Fellowship congregation.⁴⁷ In 1864 there was a revival especially among the blacks in parts of South Carolina. Manly preached many times to black congregations. On one Sunday at the height of the revival he reported that he baptized fourteen black converts.⁴⁸

Broadus remained in Greenville and served as pastor of several country churches. He and Manly established the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and began publishing *Kind Words*, a newspaper directed especially at children. The two wrote and published literature for use in Sunday schools and for army chaplains and colporteurs to distribute to evangelize and encourage soldiers to follow Christ while in the army.

At the 1863 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Augusta, Georgia, Broadus drafted resolutions pledging Southern Baptist support for the Confederacy. Broadus presented the report and resolutions of the committee on "the state of the country." The report affirmed that the war was "just and necessary" and expressed confidence in its "ultimate success." It cautioned however that victory depended on God's blessing and that "our sins have deserved the terrible calamities that God has set upon us." They therefore called southern whites to "penitence, humiliation and a hearty turning to God." After many speeches, the convention adopted the resolutions "unanimously."⁴⁹

In the summer of 1863 Broadus went to Virginia to preach the gospel among Confederate soldiers in the Army of Virginia. General Stonewall Jackson had asked one of his chaplains, J. William Jones, one of the seminary's first graduates, to invite the South's finest preachers to come to labor among the soldiers, and mentioned Broadus by name. When Broadus arrived, he found the army returning from the Gettysburg campaign. For three months he preached to them in their scattered camps and hospitals. He typically preached three times a day, though sometimes more. He went also to the hospitals to encourage faith in Christ with tender words, earnest counsel, and fervent prayers. Large crowds of soldiers began to gather wherever he preached. On one appointed day of fasting, around five thousand soldiers and officers attended. In one brigade, more than two hundred soldiers professed repentance and faith in

⁴⁴ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil Manly Sr. and Sarah Manly, 26 Oct. 1862, Manly Family Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

⁴⁵ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil Manly Sr. and Sarah Manly, 10 July 1865, Manly Collection, SBTS.

⁴⁶ Basil Manly Jr. to John A. Broadus, 26 Oct. 1864, John A. Broadus Papers, SBTS.

⁴⁷ Basil Manly Jr. to Charles Manly, 5 Nov. 1864, Manly Family Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

⁴⁸ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil Manly Sr. and Sarah Manly, 25 July 1864, Manly Family Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

⁴⁹ Southern Baptist Convention, *Proceedings of the Ninth Biennial Session of the Southern Baptist Convention*, 1863, 18-19, 54.

Christ during Broadus's two weeks among them. Similar numbers professed faith in other brigades that summer.⁵⁰

Four professors who joined the faculty after the war were Confederate veterans. Crawford H. Toy served in several units throughout the war. He reported in 1861 that he was torn by "desire to take another session" at the seminary and "inclination to do heroic deeds against our enemies."⁵¹ He opted for heroic deeds. He joined a Norfolk artillery unit in early 1862, served as chaplain of a Georgia regiment, was imprisoned at Fort McHenry until paroled, and then taught calculus and physics to artillery officers at the University of Alabama until the end of the war. William H. Whitsitt, who served as a professor 1872-1898 and as president 1895-1898, fought in a Tennessee cavalry regiment for the entire war, the final two years as a chaplain. At seventeen, Franklin H. Kerfoot, professor of systematic theology 1887-1899, joined Moseby's Virginia cavalry regiment for the latter stages of the war. Henry H. Harris, professor of biblical introduction and polemics for the final two years of his life, 1895-1897, attended the seminary for only one month in 1862, having served in a Virginia infantry regiment before attending the seminary and afterward serving in artillery and engineering units until Lee's surrender in 1865.⁵²

The memory of military experiences in the Confederate cause played an important role in shaping the identity of white southerners after the Civil War. The portrayal of the Christian character of the South's generals, of the audacity of their exploits, and of the loyalty, piety, and heroism of southern soldiers shaped southern whites' views of the benevolence of southern slaveholders and of the injustice of Yankee interference. And this way of remembering the past powerfully shaped their positions on race and society. Seminary faculty reflexively nurtured such memories through the mid-twentieth century.

5—RECONSTRUCTION

The seminary faculty urged South Carolina's whites to treat the freed slaves with justice, humanity, consideration, and kindness. But they were caught in a contradiction. Justice and benevolence had to pass through the sieve of white superiority. The conviction of white superiority perverted justice and humanity into injustice and inhumanity. It established a social order that justified and protected both legal and illegal oppression.

Basil Manly Jr. felt sympathy for his freed slaves, but his sympathies could not overcome the barriers of his own racial prejudice. When the war ended, Manly told his former slaves that they were free to leave or to stay and work. He proposed "to feed and clothe them as heretofore," and to give fifteen bushels of corn to every man, ten bushels to every woman or boy, and five bushels to every girl, and "to allow them besides, the produce of their patch, which is likely to yield about 10 bu[shels] to each of the four families."⁵³ His former slaves all decided to stay and work on Manly's farm. The farm had to supply the needs of the thirty freedmen and Manly's family of twelve.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ J. William Jones, "Dr. John A. Broadus as Evangelist in Lee's Army," *Seminary Magazine* (1895): 53-58.

⁵¹ Crawford H. Toy to John A. Broadus, 23 Oct. 1861, John A. Broadus Papers, SBTS.

⁵² John Pollard, "Our New Professor," *Seminary Magazine* 9 (1895), 1.

⁵³ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil Manly Sr. and Sarah Manly, 10 July 1865, Manly Collection, SBTS.

⁵⁴ Basil Manly to John A. Broadus, 9 Sept. 1865, box 2, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

There was naturally some bitterness and suspicion. One of his former slaves, Ben, traveled to Augusta to seek better opportunities. As freedmen throughout the South discovered, without means or opportunity of gaining their own land and economic independence, better prospects were rare and most freedmen had little alternative to agreeing to a contract to continue in their former duties. Ben returned and all the freedmen on Manly's farm agreed to the annual employment contract that Manly offered.⁵⁵

On his journey to Augusta, Ben was questioned by federal authorities. Manly felt that Ben's responses were technically nearly true, but by omission and insinuation gave a false representation:

I learn from some other negroes, who were in the company and who returned, that Ben met, on his way to Augusta, Dr. French, who is one of the superintendents of freedmen, and Gen. Gillmore, and had some conversation with them. They asked him who he belonged to? Dr. Manly. Had he driven him off? No Sir. Had he told him he was free? No sir. Had he heard it? Yes, but he heard it from other people, not from Master. Had he made any contact with his former servants? No sir. Did he treat them well? Well, one thing was certain, he didn't half feed them. The fellow looked sleek and fat and was dressed up in a shiny hat and nice clothes. He never knew what it was to want a meal, victuals, in his life. And that is the sort of tale he had to tell which even if nearly true in fact, yet by its omissions and implications, conveyed a decided false impression. I had spoken to them months ago in regard to their freedom, had promised them reasonable and fair wages, tho[ugh] not specifying the amount. And they all, Ben particularly, expressed themselves satisfied, and desirous to stay. I told them also, if they wanted to go away, to do so the next morning, or take a little time to get ready, and I shouldn't hinder them in the least, only they must take their families.⁵⁶



Basil Manly, Jr. (1825–1892)

Manly believed that his former slaves who continued to work his plantation were responsible for stealing thirty of his hogs over a period of months.⁵⁷ Manly now reflected with bitterness upon his experience of the slave system that he formerly upheld and justified: "It is noticeable, as a pretty general thing, that the men who had been proverbially hard masters had less difficulty in retaining their servants than others. Mr. Moon my neighbor has been rewarded w[ith] insolence and neglect for his life-long tenderness and liberality towards his. . . . I desire to deal justly and even liberally with mine. After this year, I wash my hands of them. I have never made money of them, have only indulged when I should have governed them, and have had far more of worry and anxiety than of comfort from the position of owner. I should

⁵⁵ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil and Sarah Manly, 10 July 1865, Manly Collection of Manuscripts, microfilm 2A, SBTS.

⁵⁶ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil Manly Sr. and Sarah Manly, 10 July 1865, Manly Collection, SBTS.

⁵⁷ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil and Sarah Manly, 21 July 1865, Manly Collection of Manuscripts, microfilm, reel 2A, SBTS.

try to part from them with friendly feelings and the best wishes of their future welfare.”⁵⁸ He sold the farm.

Manly moved back to Greenville for the reopening of the seminary in the late fall of 1865. Relations between the races were tense. The widespread harassment, violence, and oppression of blacks in much of the state led the editors of the *Charleston Leader* to commend plans for South Carolina blacks to migrate west.⁵⁹ Whites throughout the state sought to drive blacks out of their communities and towns. Manly preferred such a separation of the races. He believed that the presence of the freed slaves in Greenville caused intolerable evils. Their presence was an “incubus and plague” upon Greenville, and he believed that it “might become a desirable place of residence” if it “could be cleared of negroes and establish a system of free schools.”⁶⁰

The federal officer responsible for maintaining law and order in the Greenville district, Lt. Col. C. S. Brown, reported in October 1865 that blacks suffered there under conditions that were worse than slavery. They had no real freedom. Assassinations, robberies, assaults multiplied. “In recent weeks five blacks and three federal soldiers were murdered there. Some of the whites delighted in killing blacks and were determined by such violence to drive blacks from the region.”⁶¹

For the next twenty years black and white South Carolinians sought to advance different visions of South Carolina’s social order. Most whites envisioned a social order in which blacks would either be driven away or occupy the bottom rung of society as laborers and servants, without property, power, or true independence. Most whites opposed the education of blacks. White terrorists throughout the state burned churches and schoolhouses where blacks were being educated. Teachers who educated blacks were threatened, harassed, beaten, and sometimes murdered for their efforts. Whites who helped educate blacks or who sold them property, came under threats, harassment, and violence. Blacks who sought education or property were yet more vulnerable to coercive violence.⁶² Because of the oppression and violence that blacks experienced, Manly believed in 1866 that most blacks would choose to emigrate from the South Carolina upcountry.⁶³

Whites generally sought to keep blacks impoverished and uneducated, and then argued that their degraded condition was the basis of their unequal treatment. Whites were committed to the permanent subordination, impoverishment, and illiteracy of blacks. Whites’ efforts to keep blacks in a socially and economically degraded condition provided daily provocations to blacks. White vigilantes were keen to make an example of any white or black who took a public stand for the equal rights of blacks.

When a white man killed a black man in a fight on July 15, 1866, in Greenville, a large crowd of black men gathered at the courthouse square to demand justice. Some threatened to burn down the city,

⁵⁸ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil Manly Sr. and Sarah Manly, 10 July 1865, Manly Collection, SBTS.

⁵⁹ “Migration of the Colored People,” *Charleston Leader*, 25 Aug. 1866, 2.

⁶⁰ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil and Sarah Manly, 21 July 1865, Manly Collection of Manuscripts, microfilm, reel 2A, SBTS.

⁶¹ Lt. Col. C. S. Brown [Anderson Court House] to Brvt. Brig. Genl. C. H. Howard, 23 Oct. 1865, Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of South Carolina, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870, National Archives Microfilm Publication M869, roll 34.

⁶² See W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 549-81; Douglas R. Egerton, *The Wars of Reconstruction: The Brief, Violent History of America’s Most Progressive Era* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014).

⁶³ Basil Manly Jr. to unspecified recipient, n.d. [c. 18 July 1866], Manly Family Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

and arsonists set fire to two structures that night. Basil Manly Jr. reported that although he did not expect his home to come under attack from arsonists, he was prepared to defend his home in case an attempt was made. He loaded his shotgun, his revolver, and his Spencer rifle as a precaution.⁶⁴ Such disturbances could erupt at any time, as Manly observed, “whenever any low fellow of either color chooses to provoke or practice violence.”⁶⁵

The faculty believed that any solution to the racial tensions in southern states must include the restoration of southern white political control. Crawford Toy expressed misgivings in late 1868 about moving to Greenville because he feared that blacks and the southern whites who collaborated with the northern Republicans there might make social conditions intolerable: “Is it tolerable? Are negroes and scalawags not worse than elsewhere?”⁶⁶ Broadus and Manly were not sure that it was tolerable, but they persuaded Toy to move to Greenville anyway. Broadus had similar misgivings. As the seminary faculty discussed leaving South Carolina in order to re-establish the seminary elsewhere, Broadus commended the merits of moving the seminary to Lynchburg, Virginia. Among the inducements, Broadus said, was that Lynchburg was “in a white man’s country.”⁶⁷

Manly’s opposition to racial equality led him to leave South Carolina and accept the presidency of Kentucky Baptists’ Georgetown College in 1871. He believed that the imposition of federal power to enforce racial equality imperiled liberty and that political corruption vitiated Republican rule in both Washington and South Carolina. Republican rule in South Carolina was upheld by the large voting population of freed slaves, and federal and state office holders included many blacks. In higher education, Republican governments in southern states were reforming southern colleges and universities, replacing Democrats with Republicans on the boards of trustees and on the faculties. White Democrats in the South responded with assassinations and violence to discourage black political participation. Manly saw no hope of ending the corruption or the violence: “Everything seems to me tending toward despotism, corruption on one side and violence and brutal passion on the other.” He declined election as the president of the University of Alabama, where his father had long served as president, largely on the same account. He planned to remain in Kentucky unless ill health required him to move further south.

Furman University has been suggested to me, but I am afraid about the funds, and I see no future for S.C. The big, black foot is on her fair neck. I mourn over her with a grief almost hopeless and despairing. I cannot find much light on the path of any of our states. La., Ala., Ark., all are struggling for very life. But poor S.C. seems to me worst off of all, on account of the great preponderance of blacks. I am not sure that the northern states are any safer than we from the advancing trend of ‘the man on horseback’ [a reference to a military dictator, in this case, President Ulysses S. Grant.]. . . . Wish I could take a brighter view. All around seems dark to me. Only above is it bright. Here we have no continuing city, here no ‘kingdom that cannot be moved.’ But, blessed be God, we have such a kingdom, and we shall soon see its manifested glory. It is ours already, and shall be ours forever.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil Manly Sr. and Sarah Manly, 15 July 1866, Manly Family Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

⁶⁵ Basil Manly Jr. to unspecified recipient, n.d. [c. 18 July 1866], Manly Family Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

⁶⁶ Crawford H. Toy to John A. Broadus, 2 Dec. 1868, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

⁶⁷ John A. Broadus to James P. Boyce, 23 Apr. 1868, Boyce Papers, SBTS.

⁶⁸ Basil Manly Jr. to John A. Broadus, 27 Dec. 1872, box 4, Broadus Papers.

James P. Boyce also believed that political control by South Carolina's white population was essential to resolving racial tensions. He ran for election for the constitutional convention that South Carolina white leaders planned in order to adopt a new state constitution and re-establish a functioning state government. Since Boyce had served in the Confederate government, he needed a presidential pardon to regain citizenship and to hold office. Johnson granted the pardon.⁶⁹



James P. Boyce (1827–1888)

Boyce was elected to the 1865 state constitutional convention. On September 21, the convention of white representatives debated whether the black population would be counted in the apportionment of representatives to the South Carolina House of Representatives. All the members agreed that blacks in South Carolina should not have the right to vote in state elections. The majority believed that if the constitution counted the black population for the purposes of apportioning representation, it would serve as the “entering wedge of negro suffrage.” Boyce supported the majority opposed to counting blacks in the apportionment. Sidney Andrews, a northern journalist present to observe the proceedings, recorded that Boyce gave a speech in support of the majority view against counting the black population. One of his arguments was simply that “this is a white man’s government.”⁷⁰

Boyce employed a phrase that whites uttered thousands of times before and after 1865. It was a fundamental commitment of the Democratic Party. The provisional governor appointed by President Andrew Johnson, Benjamin F. Perry, had used the phrase in his published address and charge to the convention.

Five years earlier, Perry had opposed the fire-eaters and lost his campaign for election to the 1860 secession convention because he urged remaining in the union. In his address to the 1865 constitutional convention, he appealed to the fact that many northern states excluded blacks from voting and urged that South Carolina should do the same. Radical Republicans in North demanded that southern states establish the right of the freed slaves to vote, but, Perry wrote, “they forget that this is a white man’s government, and intended for white men only.”⁷¹ President Johnson similarly opposed black voting rights on the plea that Americans had established a “white man’s

⁶⁹ Benjamin F. Perry wrote Andrew Johnson requesting the pardon for Boyce. See *The Papers of Andrew Johnson: Vol. 8, May-August 1865*, ed. Paul H. Bergeron (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 626; *ibid.*, vol. 12 (1995), 432.

⁷⁰ Sidney Andrews, *The South since the War: As Shown by Fourteen Weeks of Travel and Observation in Georgia and the Carolinas* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866), 72.

⁷¹ Benjamin F. Perry, “Message of Gov. Perry,” *Daily Phoenix* (Columbia, SC), 15 Sept. 1865, 1.

government.”⁷² When Republicans in Congress introduced a bill to establish black voting rights in the District of Columbia in early 1866, many “northern Democrats were as outraged as their southern brethren.” One New York Democrat protested loudly that “this was a white man’s government.”⁷³

In 1866 Boyce privately urged white South Carolina legislators and Governor James Orr to ratify the fourteenth amendment to the United States Constitution, which guaranteed equal protection and due process rights to all citizens, including the freed slaves, and prohibited from federal and state office most of the South’s most influential white political leaders. South Carolina rejected the amendment, as did the legislatures of nine other rebel states plus Delaware, Maryland, and Kentucky. In response, Congress passed a series of Reconstruction Acts that required rebel states to draft new state constitutions to be submitted for approval by Congress, adopt the fourteenth amendment, and grant voting rights to blacks, all in order to gain readmission to the United States.⁷⁴

In 1867 Boyce urged white South Carolinians to accept the terms imposed by the Reconstruction Acts. If South Carolina whites would submit voluntarily to the demands of the Republican-controlled Congress, then they would have nothing to fear from the votes of black South Carolinians, who, Boyce believed, would cooperate with all whites who would “deal with them justly and fairly.”⁷⁵

The seminary faculty’s opposition to granting equal civil rights to blacks proved little hindrance to raising money for the seminary among northern whites. The seminary relied heavily on the benevolence of northern Baptists to sustain the school during the last third of the nineteenth century. They traveled and communicated with northern whites regularly. White northern Baptists gave substantial sums to the seminary, without which it surely would not have survived. They made it clear to northern whites that they opposed racial equality.

Basil Manly Jr. attended the 1868 meeting of the northern Baptists’ Home Mission Society in New York City. The meeting discussed their work among the freedmen in the South. Manly explained to the meeting why white Southern Baptists opposed suffrage for blacks:

We at the South do not recognize the social equality of the negro. All the rights which he has by law we have no desire to interfere with, but we cannot entrust to him the management of the interests of our country for this simple reason: God and man know he is not competent to control them. We recognize slavery as dead, and we have no desire nor idea of its restoration in any form, but the political control of our country we cannot consent to transfer into their hands. You may do it, and we must submit, but of our own voluntary effort we will not—we cannot. This report uses the expression all rights and duties of citizenship. If by that word is to be understood suffrage, we cannot endorse that expression—for whatever may be our views upon that matter, we have no right to express any opinion in this religious body. We have no disposition to deny

⁷² Andrew Johnson said this a number of times. See e.g. his “Speech on the Restoration of the State Government,” 21 Jan. 1864, in James S. Jones, *Life of Andrew Johnson: Seventeenth President of the United States* (Greeneville, TN: East Tennessee Publishing Co., 1901), 97; and Hans L. Trefousse, *Andrew Johnson: A Biography* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1989), 183, 332.

⁷³ See Douglas R. Egerton, *The Wars of Reconstruction*, 198.

⁷⁴ James P. Boyce, “What Ought We to Do about Reconstruction,” *Keowee Courier* (Pickens, SC), 4 May 1867, 2. Among the Democratic Party successes of 1868, the legislatures of Oregon, Ohio, and New Jersey rescinded the Fourteenth Amendment, though without avail, since Secretary of State William Seward declared it officially ratified on July 28, 1868.

⁷⁵ James P. Boyce, “What Ought We to Do about Reconstruction,” *Keowee Courier* (Pickens, SC), 4 May 1867, 2. The *Columbia Daily Phoenix* quoted from Boyce’s letter to urge its readers to submit and accept the fourteenth amendment and voting rights for blacks (“Gov. Perry’s Position—Public Sentiment,” 9 May 1867, 2).

them the rights of freedmen, or of Baptists, or of the ministry. But upon the question of suffrage we have no right to commit this organization to republican or democratic principles—to take the side of any political party.

It is proper, however that I should add that we have the deepest interest in the elevation of the colored people, and their advancement in morals, in education and everything that goes to make up the dignity of man. We are far more deeply interested in them than any other people under Heaven, because we have got to dwell amongst them, or leave the graves of our kindred and the homes of our youth. If they are vicious, corrupt, ignorant, debased, we suffer. It makes little difference to you Northerners, but all our interests, our homes, our welfare, depends upon the society which surrounds us. Everything that we hold dear is pledged to enlist our efforts to promote their education. We feel no hostility toward them, or desire that it should exist. Our ministers have always preached to them, and still continue to preach to them as opportunity allows. I have baptized more colored than white persons. I preach constantly to a larger colored than white membership. Immediately on my return I preach the funeral of a colored man at his own dying request. The colored people love us; they have confidence in us. We ask you to help us in our work amongst them. If you will, God be thanked. If you will not, “still we rejoice that in every way Christ is preached.”⁷⁶

Broadus was at the meeting also. He too rejected black equality: “My views as to the folly and wrong of trying to bring about social equality between white and black, were distinctly and strongly expressed.”⁷⁷

In 1872 Boyce attended meetings with northern Baptists and was the only Southern Baptist who spoke in the meetings. He criticized Edward Bright, editor of the New York Baptists’ *Examiner and Chronicle* for his views, but won enthusiastic applause and expressions of support from the gathered Baptist leaders. It was a delicate task. He needed to win the trust and affection of wealthy northern Baptists, without whose donations the seminary would have collapsed. He needed therefore to show sufficient respect for the political opinions of white northern Baptists to gain their support, and at the same time affirm his loyalty to white Southern Baptist political sentiments to retain the trust of the denomination, without which the seminary would have few students and no future. Boyce personally identified with the so-called Bourbon Democrats, who affirmed principles of justice and peace for blacks in the South, and perhaps a limited share of political power, although without political or social equality. The populist faction of Democrats pursued a virulent program of limiting the power, wealth, and opportunity of blacks, in order that they should live under white control as a submissive labor force, or else emigrate from the South. Both factions opposed the Republican rule in the federal and state governments and their commitment to black suffrage and racial equality. Boyce believed that he succeeded. “I am sure I said nothing any Bourbon could object to.”⁷⁸ He deepened Northern Baptist regard for the seminary without violating southern orthodoxy regarding white rule.

Since white Baptists refused to recognize the civil equality of blacks, black Baptists began organizing their own churches. In doing so, they did not withdraw fellowship or excommunicate the white part of the church. White Baptists discouraged this separation. Manly was chairman of a committee of the Edgefield Baptist Association who resolved that they “disapprove of their being organized into separate churches,” and reminded the fellow white Baptists that love, the honor of Christ, and the good of the

⁷⁶ Basil Manly, quoted in “Dr. Manly and the Colored Man,” *South Carolina Baptist*, 5 June 1868, 2.

⁷⁷ John A. Broadus, “Speech of Dr. Broadus in New York,” *South Carolina Baptist*, 26 June 1868, 2.

⁷⁸ James P. Boyce to John A. Broadus, 1 June 1872, Broadus Papers.

community required white Baptist pastors to teach and correct black members remaining in their churches with great “leniency and patience” toward their faults and errors. They urged “self-denying diligence and zeal” in pursuing gospel labor among blacks, for God blessed such labors with the conversions of many thousands of the blacks, even though the majority of southern whites “will not honor us for such toil.”⁷⁹ Manly frequently preached for black Baptist congregations, who continued to invite him to preach to them.⁸⁰ Their regard for his ministry did not however indicate their approval of his belief in their social inferiority or of his opposition to their desire to form black churches independent of white control.

Broadus said that he enjoyed preaching to blacks more than to whites. Respect for decorum made white audiences “too undemonstrative,” whereas “the colored people are desirable hearers,” for they were helpful listeners, more sympathetic and demonstrative.⁸¹ In 1871 Boyce preached by invitation to the Springfield Baptist Church for the dedication of their new building. The church was constituted in 1868 by blacks who had requested dismission from the white-controlled Greenville First Baptist Church, whose members had ordained their pastor, Gabriel Poole, and four deacons, the previous year.⁸² Although Greenville cemeteries were segregated, Manly made arrangements for the burial of Aunt Sally, a freed slave, near the Manly and Broadus burial plots in the white section of the Greenville cemetery.⁸³

In 1872 William Williams preached the funeral sermon for one of the most prominent blacks in Greenville, a Baptist layman named Dudley Talley. Talley was born a slave in 1799. As young man, sharing the wish of all slaves that his son might be free, he bought his son’s freedom for \$800 earned with remarkable industry and diligence. He had earned such confidence in his own character and ability that when he was sold, he persuaded a white man in Greenville to purchase him on his promise to repay him if the man would give him liberty to act on his own. He accumulated considerable real estate by the time of his death. He asked Williams to preach his funeral. A large congregation of blacks and whites attended the funeral service in the black Baptist church in Greenville.⁸⁴

William J. Alexander, who graduated from the seminary in 1876, began an informal black pastor’s college in Edgefield, South Carolina, where he was pastor of the Edgefield Baptist Church. A local black Baptist pastor asked him to teach him the Bible and Alexander agreed. Soon six others joined their sessions. Amid the violent election season of the summer and fall of 1876, some whites in the community voiced strong objections, and some of the white members of Alexander’s church questioned the propriety of it since it was controversial and made the church an object of scorn in the white community. An influential Edgefield physician cursed Alexander publicly for teaching a “N—— School” [sic] and urged white men not to allow their wives and daughters to hear Alexander preach.⁸⁵ Edgefield was a focal point of the no-compromise faction of the Democratic Party. Their “Edgefield Plan” directed their statewide campaign during the 1876 election season to restore white political and social control in the state. In nearby Hamburg, party activists and other whites murdered five black men in cold-blood in the early

⁷⁹ Edgefield Baptist Association, Minutes, 1865, 7.

⁸⁰ Basil Manly Jr. to Basil and Sarah Manly, 24 Nov. 1865, microfilm, reel 2, Manly Collection of Manuscripts, SBTS.

⁸¹ John A. Broadus, “A Remarkable Conversion, *Standard* (Chicago), 7 June 1883, 1.

⁸² Archie V. Huff Jr., *Greenville: History of the City and County in the South Carolina Piedmont* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), 173.

⁸³ Basil Manly Jr. to John A. Broadus, 12 July 1870, box 3, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

⁸⁴ “Death of a Well-Known Colored Citizen,” *Greenville Enterprise*, 17 Jan. 1872, 2. William Williams to Basil Manly Jr., 8 Jan. 1872, Manly Collection of Manuscripts, microfilm reel 2B, SBTS.

⁸⁵ W. J. Alexander to John A. Broadus, 5 June 1876, box 7, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

morning of July 9, 1876. A coroner's jury subsequently issued ninety-four indictments for murder—none were prosecuted. Between September 15 and 21, whites in nearby Ellenton killed as many as one hundred blacks. Whites who taught blacks faced harassment, violence, and sometimes were murdered. But the black students were far more vulnerable to violence and murder than Alexander. White teachers showed courage—the students a great deal more. The teacher and students nevertheless continued throughout the violent 1876 election season. Despite “opposition within and without the church,” Alexander continued to teach the black preachers until he moved to Darlington the following year.⁸⁶

6—THE ELECTION OF 1876 AND THE RESTORATION OF WHITE RULE

The seminary faculty supported the restoration of white control in South Carolina and applauded the extensive victory of the Democratic Party in the 1876 election. South Carolina whites widely supported the Democratic Party candidate, Confederate war hero Wade Hampton, for governor. Democratic Party leaders secured their victory by relying on their organized Red Shirts and rifle clubs to suppress the black vote by means of intimidation and violence. They assassinated as many as 150 black leaders in the campaign. The faculty and students supported Hampton. Alumnus William C. Lindsay rejoiced in Hampton's election and told South Carolina Baptists that the victory for Hampton was a “good and perfect gift” from God.⁸⁷

John A. Broadus was one of three leaders chosen to address the raucous crowds that gathered in Greenville on November 10, 1876, to celebrate Hampton's election. When news of Hampton's victory reached Greenville, citizens went around outside for two hours shouting, ringing bells, and beating drums. They made a mass procession accompanied by the firing of cannons. They gathered at the Mansion House, where Broadus, James Furman, and Ellison Capers, gave eloquent expression to the crowd's joyful feelings.

Now that southern state governments were securely under the control of southern whites, Broadus urged them to uphold justice for blacks, establish strong support for black schools and colleges, and bring an end to racialized and violent political divisions:

There will be a noble opportunity for them to win the full confidence of the colored citizens. Let it appear that all the rights of these citizens are scrupulously respected, that they are treated with fairness and kindness. Let their common schools and higher institutions be well supported and well conducted. Let our Christian white people encourage and assist their Sunday schools, and our intelligent ministers show fraternal feeling toward their ministers and churches. And all this not only in some cases, but as a general thing. Then the dread ‘color line’ in politics, which bodes evil to all, will gradually be broken. Heaven send the day when there shall be new political parties, with new names, and each party shall include both white people and black people.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ W. J. Alexander to John A. Broadus, 14 Sept. 1876, box 7, Broadus Papers; *ibid.*, 26 Mar. 1877. On Hampton, see Rod Andrew Jr., *Wade Hampton: Confederate Warrior to Southern Redeemer* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), esp. 361-91.

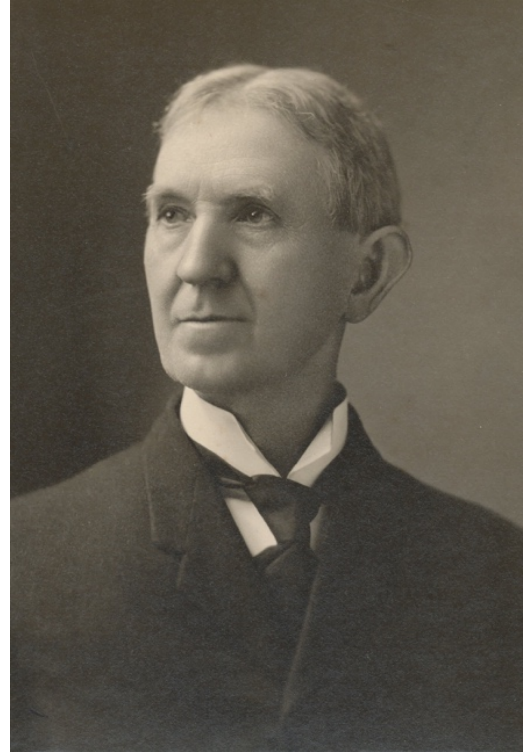
⁸⁷ William C. Lindsay, “To the Baptists of South Carolina,” *Working Christian*, 16 Nov. 1876, 2.

⁸⁸ John A. Broadus, “Miscellanea,” *Religious Herald*, 23 Nov. 1876, 2.

William H. Whitsitt enthusiastically supported the Democrats 1876 campaign to restore white rule in South Carolina. When Republican governor Daniel Chamberlain outlawed the white Democrats' rifle clubs who pressed their campaign of intimidation and violence to prevent blacks from running for office or voting in the 1876 election, Whitsitt was dismayed. He thought Chamberlain's orders an "unwarranted use of government powers" because it gave Republicans an advantage. When Wade Hampton won the election, restoring white rule to South Carolina, Whitsitt rejoiced. He obtained a "life-sized steel engraving" of Hampton and hung it over the mantle in his study for many years.⁸⁹

The faculty held that whites were superior and should therefore hold political power. "Knowledge is power," Whitsitt told his students in 1892. "The whites will rule in the South."⁹⁰ Whitsitt praised British society for its racial homogeneity: "The fortunate thing about the mixture of peoples on British soil is that they were of one color."⁹¹

The 1876 election held fateful consequences for southern blacks for three generations. The faculty identified with Wade Hampton's Bourbon version of white rule, which included in principle respect for the black population's legal rights and some concessions to political participation of select black leaders. Populist Democrats on the other hand supported Ben Tillman's version, which opposed any concession to black rights or black political participation. When South Carolina whites elected Tillman governor in 1890, Broadus expressed some surprise. Edwin C. Dargan, who later succeeded Broadus as professor of homiletics, explained to Broadus how Tillman privately organized and publicly encouraged white vigilantes to harass, intimidate, and attack black citizens. Since 1876, Dargan reminded Broadus,



William H. Whitsitt (1841–1911)

the Democrats, otherwise the native white people, have been continuously in power, though numerically in the minority. The methods of obtaining and keeping this ascendancy have been partly unobjectionable, but not wholly so. No doubt more people have practiced both fraud and intimidation upon ignorant voters. The better elements of society have not done the dirty work, but they have enjoyed the fruits of it, and have connived at it as a sad choice of evils. Now the old culture and wealth of the state, represented in the well-known upper class sometimes bitterly called 'aristocracy' by the middle and lower classes, came to the front, got the offices, made the laws, and as far as possible under the changed conditions re-installed ante-bellum conditions. . . . The middle and lower class represented chiefly by the farmers and that in the middle and upper

⁸⁹ See James H. Slatton, *W. H. Whitsitt: The Man and the Controversy* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2009), 69-71.

⁹⁰ William H. Whitsitt, "Sayings of the Professors," *Seminary Magazine* 6 (1892): 188.

⁹¹ William H. Whitsitt, "Sayings of the Professors," *Seminary Magazine* 6 (1892): 106.

counties, considered that they had done most of the work for white supremacy, both as to number of voters and actual work, and they have chafed under the thought that the old 'upper crust,' 'down country folks,' 'Charleston aristocracy,' should have assumed so largely the direction of affairs and chiefly engaged the offices.⁹²

The faculty continued to hold the contradictory commitments to both the essential inferiority and the divinely assigned human equality of blacks. They wanted white rule coupled with basic legal protections of blacks. The two still were not compatible in practice. White supremacy, whether administered by Hamptonites or Tillmanites, meant that, in practical terms, the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments, which in principle abolished slavery, established equal protection of the law for all persons, and established black voting rights, in fact afforded no protection for southern blacks. Southern whites nullified three constitutional amendments by legislation, intimidation, and terrorism.

7—JOSEPH E. BROWN AND THE CONVICT-LEASE SYSTEM

In 1880 Joseph E. Brown saved the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He offered to give \$50,000 without any conditions. Boyce made the gift conditional on the success of raising an additional \$150,000. And he did succeed. Brown's gift was so evidently an answer to the specific prayers of Boyce, the faculty, and the students, that none doubted that it was God's extraordinary work of provision. Before Brown's gift, he had already served on the seminary's board of trustees from 1872 to 1877. After his \$50,000 contribution, he naturally was nominated and elected to the board of trustees again in 1880. He served on the board until his death in 1894, and was its chairman 1883-1894.

Brown was, as the most extensive study of his life noted, the most influential man in Georgia from 1857 until the late 1880s.⁹³ Brown grew up working his family's farm in the mountainous terrain of northeast Georgia. He borrowed money to gain three years' of formal education in South Carolina. He taught school in Canton, Georgia, to repay the debt and began studying law. A benefactor noticed his hard work and intellectual gifts and paid his way to Yale Law School. Brown returned to establish a prosperous legal practice in Canton. He won election to the state legislature in 1849 and as a circuit judge in 1855. He was elected governor and served from 1857 to 1865. After the war, Brown served five years as chief justice of Georgia's Supreme Court and two terms as a United States Senator.

Brown's views on the politics of slavery were apparently similar to those of Boyce and Benjamin C. Pressley. He had always opposed the 1850 compromises. He opposed prohibiting slavery from California and from other parts of the Union. On the day of the 1860 election and before the results were known, he asked the legislature to set a date for an election of delegates to a secession convention and he asked for an appropriation of one million dollars to begin military preparations. He believed that these actions would help secure a negotiated resolution of the political conflict and thereby preserve both slavery and the union. The legislature granted both requests.⁹⁴

When Lincoln's victory was announced, Brown immediately published his arguments in favor of Georgia's secession from the United States. Lincoln represented a political party, Brown wrote, whose

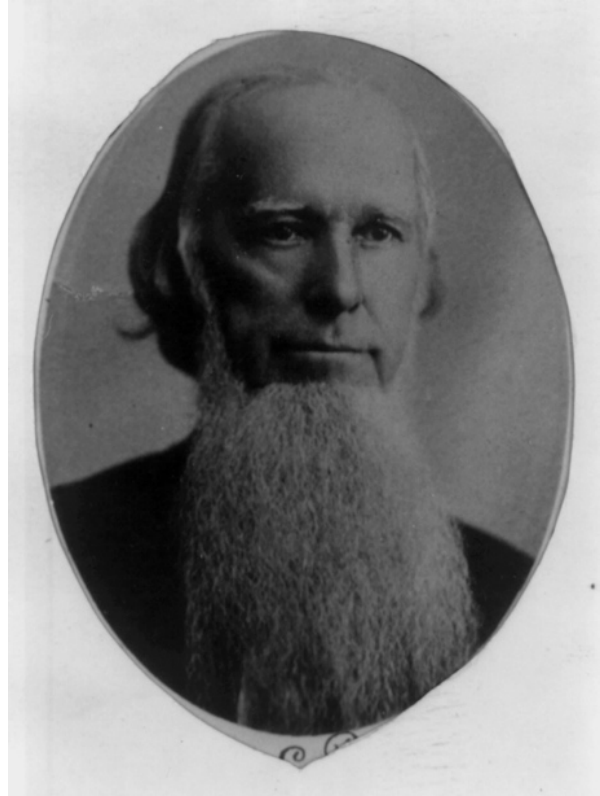
⁹² Edwin C. Dargan to John A. Broadus, 9 Feb. 1891, box 16, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

⁹³ Joseph H. Parks, *Joseph E. Brown of Georgia* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 578.

⁹⁴ Derrell C. Roberts, *Joseph E. Brown and the Politics of Reconstruction* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1973), 11-13.

principles were “deadly hostile to the institution of slavery and openly at war with the fundamental doctrines of the Constitution.” The Lincoln presidency would result in “the total abolition of slavery and the utter ruin of the South.”⁹⁵

During Reconstruction, Brown, like Boyce in South Carolina, advocated quick reconciliation with the North and submission to its terms of reunion. He even became a scalawag—he joined the Republican party and identified with its moderate members. He advocated submission to the terms dictated by the president or by Congress, which meant accepting the legal equality of the freed slaves, but he did not believe that full equality could actually exist. He qualified his advocacy of accepting the Republican terms of reunion: “I did not say that the negroes are equals of the white race. God did not make them so; and man can never change the status which the Creator assigned to them. . . . They will never be placed upon a basis of political equality with us.”⁹⁶ Brown personally held that blacks should not have the right to hold political office—that was the birthright of whites—but as the chief justice of the Georgia Supreme Court, he ruled that according to the law, black legislators must be allowed to serve in their duly elected positions.⁹⁷



Joseph E. Brown (1821–1894)

In 1881 Brown expressed concern that white rule could be overthrown in a new campaign to unite black voters with white independent voters to defeat Democratic candidates in the South. “I thank you for your kind note just received,” Brown wrote James P. Boyce. “I am glad you take what seems to me to be the proper view of the situation here. If it were the small matter of a few offices and who should fill them from now to 1st Dec. the Democrats would have less excuse and not so full a justification of their conduct but this matter is intended to go far beyond that. The contract with Malone looks to the reconstruction of Va. first and then of the whole South by taking the negro element and putting it with what is known as the independent element and forming a party of it stronger than the democratic or white party. There is going to be a very serious effort made to put it into execution all over the south which would virtually put the white race back under the domination of the colored.”⁹⁸

When Brown died in 1894, the faculty, students, and trustees adopted resolutions in honor of him. The faculty sent Franklin H. Kerfoot, Boyce’s successor in the chair of theology, as the seminary’s representative to the funeral, since Broadus, who was by then president, was too ill to attend. Kerfoot expressed the seminary’s gratitude for Brown’s close relationship to the seminary:

⁹⁵ Brown’s public letter was dated 7 Dec. 1860 and was published in the leading newspapers and as a broadside. See Parks, *Joseph E. Brown*, 114–115.

⁹⁶ Roberts, *Joseph E. Brown*, 33–59, 78–79; quote from the *Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel*, 11 June 1865, quoted in Roberts, 40.

⁹⁷ Roberts, *Joseph E. Brown*, 66–68.

⁹⁸ Joseph E. Brown to James P. Boyce, 8 Apr. 1881, box 16, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Governor Brown was a friend and helper of our Seminary. . . . He has been for years, and was at the time of his death, the honored president of our Board of Trustees. When his pressing duties and the condition of his health permitted he was with us at our annual meetings. He presided with dignity and grace, and courtesy to all, and by his earnest belief in an educated ministry, and his wise counsels, and his abiding interest in the Seminary, and his repeated gifts, he continued to contribute to its prosperity.⁹⁹

Brown's name has endured in memory for another reason—he earned much of his vast fortune by leasing convicts from the state of Georgia. His exploitation of black convict laborers made his Georgia and Tennessee coal and steel operations notorious as places of suffering and hopelessness. This legacy endured in southern folk songs.

Joe Brown, Joe Brown,
He's a mean white man,
He's a mean white man.
I know, honey, he put them shackles around,
Around my leg.¹⁰⁰

In 1932 folklorist Lawrence Gellert transcribed the songs of a convict chain-gang near Augusta, Georgia. One song recalled the experience of convicts who were leased by the state to Brown's Dade Coal Company.

Says I'm bound to Joe Brown's coal mine,
Says I'm bound to Joe Brown's coal mine.
And it's Lordy me and it's Lordy mine,
Says I'm bound to Joe Brown's coal mine.¹⁰¹

In his 1958 recording, "Beat It on down the Line," Jesse Fuller, who grew up in Georgia in the early twentieth century, evoked the memory of Joe Brown to represent the bleak prospects of blacks who decided to return to the South: "Lord, I'm going back to my 'used to be,' down in Joe Brown's coal mine."¹⁰²

Before the war, Brown was an upcountry attorney and planter who won election as a state senator representing Cherokee and Cobb counties, and as a circuit court judge. He won election as governor of Georgia in 1857 and led Georgia to secede from the United States. Throughout his life, he bought land when he saw a good value and sold it for profit whenever he needed capital for another good opportunity. He made a great deal of money buying and selling mineral rights in north Georgia in the 1850s.¹⁰³

He was a slaveholder. His wife, Elizabeth Grisham Brown, brought several slaves into the marriage.¹⁰⁴ She recorded in her diary that her husband bought at least eight slaves between 1853 and 1855,

⁹⁹ Franklin H. Kerfoot, "Hon. Joseph Emerson Brown," *Seminary Magazine* 8 (1894): 130-131.

¹⁰⁰ Alex Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work of Free Labor: The Political Economy of Convict Labor in the New South* (New York: Verso Books, 1996), 105.

¹⁰¹ Gellert cited in Matthew J. Mancini, *One Dies, Get Another: Convict Leasing in the American South, 1866-1928* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), 81.

¹⁰² Jesse Fuller, "Beat It on down the Line," *The Lone Cat LP* (Good Time Jazz Records, 1958).

¹⁰³ Parks, *Joseph E. Brown*, 16-17.

¹⁰⁴ Parks, *Joseph E. Brown*, 5.

and that they often had large numbers of slaves at their place.¹⁰⁵ William Ward, one of Brown's former slaves, recalled many years later that Brown held fifty to seventy-five slaves, most of whom he hired out to other farmers and businesses who paid him for their labor. Brown may have bought and sold slaves as investments the same way he did land and mineral rights. Elizabeth Brown recorded in her diary that her slave "Celia gave me some insolent jaw for which her master whipped her."¹⁰⁶ She recorded that on another occasion he "whipped Emma [Celia's daughter] for nothing to show me he was master."¹⁰⁷

Ward remembered Brown as "a kind person" who "never mistreated his slaves," but who had them whipped for such infractions as fighting, stealing, and visiting other plantations without permission. Ward said that "one of the soundest thrashings he ever got was for stealing Mr. Brown's whiskey." Few of Brown's slaves attempted escape, partly because of his mildness and partly because Brown kept "a pack of blood hounds."¹⁰⁸

Both the Republican and the Democratic governments in Georgia leased state prisoners to repair the railroads that Sherman's troops destroyed and to construct new lines. In 1873 it became apparent that the legislature was going to expand convict leasing to other industries and Brown established the Dade Coal Company.¹⁰⁹ In 1874 the state of Georgia granted a lease to Brown's Dade Coal Company for 88 of the state's 616 convicts. By the end of the year, the state had sent 152 convicts to Dade Coal, which paid the state less than \$800 for their labor. Many, perhaps all, of Brown's convicts were leased from the state of Georgia. It is possible however that his businesses leased others convicted of minor offenses in county and local jurisdictions, often on fabricated charges in sham legal proceedings—sheriffs rarely recorded the names of the victims of such proceedings and were not required to report them to state authorities.¹¹⁰

The Dade Coal Company formed the nucleus of Brown's enterprises. With Dade Coal's profits and capital investment raised by Boston financier Jacob Seaver, Brown established a conglomerate trust, the Georgia Mining, Manufacturing, and Investment Company, comprising six distinct corporations engaged in coal and iron mining, coke furnace operations, and pig iron production. For two decades these enterprises helped drive industrial and economic growth in Georgia. Convict-lease laborers extracted the coal that fuelled Georgia's expanding railroad network, powered Georgia's industries, and fired Brown's iron furnaces. By the time of Brown's death in 1894, Dade Coal worked 550 convicts, by far the largest number of any lessee. And it was all enormously profitable for Brown, who personally netted \$98,000 from Dade Coal Company in 1880 alone.¹¹¹

Convict labor was intended for blacks. Southern state and county governments used the convict-lease system to provide a reliable source of cheap labor especially for mining, manufacturing, railroad construction, and turpentine extraction. By 1876 nearly all of Georgia's coal miners were convicts, and the vast majority were black. Of the 371 convicts working in the Dade coal mines in 1880, 340 were black, 92 percent. Southern legislatures drafted harsh penalties for new regulations against loitering,

¹⁰⁵ Parks, *Joseph E. Brown*, 16.

¹⁰⁶ Parks, *Joseph E. Brown*, 16, footnote.

¹⁰⁷ Parks, *Joseph E. Brown*, 11, 16.

¹⁰⁸ William Ward, *Works Progress Administration Slave Narratives*, Georgia, vol. 13, pt. 4, 128-33.

¹⁰⁹ For an account of convict leasing in Georgia, and Joseph E. Brown's role in it, see Mancini, *One Dies, Get Another*, 81-98; and Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work*, 105-25.

¹¹⁰ See Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (New York: Anchor Books, 2008); David M. Osofsky, *Worse Than Slavery: Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996); Mancini, *One Dies, Get Another*.

¹¹¹ Mancini, *One Dies, Get Another*, 86.

breaking a labor contract, and carrying a weapon, such as were suited to special enforcement to entrap blacks in the convict-lease system and as a means of social and economic control of blacks.¹¹²

White judges and juries tended to convict and punish black defendants on severe charges with harsh sentences, and to acquit white defendants or relax their punishments. Many black defendants were innocent or had committed minor infractions. White sheriffs and employers colluded to contrive charges against blacks who came to their attention because they were not sufficiently deferential to whites, or because an employer needed a new supply of convict laborers, or to reinforce the policy that blacks must do what whites tell them to do.¹¹³

The convict-lease system of penal labor was better suited to abuse than slavery itself. Lessees paid such small sums for each convict that they had very little economic stake in the health or survival of the convicts. As one lessee in North Carolina phrased it, “if one dies, get another.”¹¹⁴

Convict lessees generally overworked convicts, punished them with cruel severity for any failure to perform at high efficiency, held them in wretched conditions, and fed them poorly. These conditions and the inherent dangers of mining coal led to a high death rate—thirteen of Dade Coal’s convicts died in the first nine months. The Dade Coal Company mines required each convict to mine a specified number of tons each day. The number differed for each convict. Any convict who failed to make his quota would be whipped severely. Some “whipping bosses” whipped newly arrived convicts daily upon their arrival to “break them in.”¹¹⁵

Quotas were deliberately kept beyond the reach of reasonable labor, to extort from convicts the maximum effort possible. Those who made their daily quota too easily or regularly, would have their quota increased. Since convicts’ chief motivation was to make their quota to avoid being whipped, they did not have time to take safety precautions, and convicts died in convict mine accidents at twice the rate of free labor mines.

Brown claimed that the work was quite “moderate,” and that the convicts were well treated. He held that blacks would not work effectively or even take adequate care of themselves unless they were compelled to do so. The forced labor of the convict leases was therefore beneficial to black convicts.¹¹⁶

Grand juries and legislative committees investigated the conditions of the convict camps and mines periodically, and varied wildly in their evaluation of the conditions there. The record is clear enough—the camps were places with poor sanitation, poor food, excessive labor, unsafe conditions, and brutal punishments for the least infractions. Georgia legislator W. H. Styles investigated the conditions at Brown’s mines in 1892 and concluded that “if there is a hell on earth, it is the Dade coal mines.”¹¹⁷ In 1886, 109 convicts refused to work at Brown’s coke furnaces to protest their wretched working conditions—the excessive labor required, the brutal punishments, and the poor food. They said that they “were ready to die, and would as soon be dead as to live in torture.” The keeper of the convicts isolated the men and starved them until the strike collapsed a few days later.¹¹⁸

Brown was no outlier. His views of white superiority and his easy defense of the convict-lease penal system were fairly common. Henry H. Tucker, a member of Southern Seminary’s board of trustees

¹¹² See esp. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*, 1-83.

¹¹³ See esp. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*, 117-54.

¹¹⁴ The quote is from a southern delegate to the 1883 National Prison Association meeting, cited by Hastings Hart in Mancini, *One Dies, Get Another*, 3.

¹¹⁵ Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work*, 134. See similarly, Mancini, *One Dies, Get Another*, 51, 75-76, 93-94.

¹¹⁶ See Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work*, 126-51.

¹¹⁷ Cited in Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work*, 142.

¹¹⁸ Mancini, *One Dies, Get Another*, 90.

1880-1889 who had served as president of Mercer University and chancellor of the University of Georgia, defended the practice of convict leasing in Georgia when the National Prison Association met in Atlanta in 1886. He claimed that Georgia's convicts were well cared for because they were fully protected by laws that guaranteed humane treatment and access to good food, rest, clothing, and healthcare. The laws were sure to be honored, Tucker argued, because the men who paid the state treasury for the leases were "sure to be men of character, . . . worthy of respect and confidence," who would have an interest in the welfare of the convicts. Tucker concluded with the absurd claim that the system was not really even punishment for black convicts, since they were suited to this kind of labor and enjoyed better food and clothing in the camps than they did in freedom.¹¹⁹

The corruption, the cronyism, and the bald brutality of the convict-lease system made it sufficiently unpopular among voting whites in the South that Progressive political leaders came to oppose it. In Georgia, governor Hoke Smith won election on a Southern Progressive platform of statewide prohibition of alcohol, constitutional disfranchisement of black Georgians, and abolition of the convict-lease system, and accomplished all three in 1908.

It is impossible to know how many of the seminary's donors and trustees were involved in the convict-lease labor system, but given its extensive implementation throughout the South, it is reasonable to conclude that Joseph E. Brown was not the only one. Donors were donors because they engaged in a range of business operations of such scale that they could not have avoided all involvement in the common business and labor practices of the day.

Some donors no doubt profited from businesses predicated on slave industries in Latin America. Cuba abolished slavery in 1886. Brazil was the last nation in the Americas to abolish slavery two years later. Slave labor undergirded the economically efficient production of sugar and coffee. Both nations benefitted from the steep decline in sugar production in the United States as a result of emancipation. The Levering brothers in Baltimore were two of the seminary's most important donors and played leading roles as trustees. Much of their fortune derived from the coffee business. When coffee prices collapsed in 1889, one result was that the Leverings would probably be unable to contribute to the seminary's critical building campaign that year.¹²⁰ It is likely that their fortune derived in significant measure from slave labor in Brazil and Cuba.

8—IN DEFENSE OF BLACK RIGHTS

The seminary faculty from the 1880s through the 1930s further advanced the contradictory impulses of evangelical convictions and the doctrine of white superiority. One side of that contradiction recognized that blacks had rights of justice and humanity. The seminary faculty taught the equal humanity of blacks and whites, and the authenticity of the Christian faith of black believers. And they opposed the violence and injustice that blacks in America widely suffered.

John A. Broadus repudiated American slavery in 1882. He condemned the greed that drove the establishment and spread of slavery in America.

Our fathers, in New England, in the Middle Colonies, and in the South, brought African slaves to America for reasons of their own, which it is impossible to justify, and useless now to censure. The God of our fathers has set them free by overruling a vast amount of human selfishness and

¹¹⁹ Mancini, *One Dies, Get Another*, 92-93.

¹²⁰ See Franklin H. Kerfoot to John A. Broadus, 22 July 1889, box 12, Broadus Papers, SBTs.



John A. Broadus (1827–1895)

passion in long-continued political and military conflict. Let the dead past bury its dead. Forgetting the things which are behind, let us reach forth to those things which are before.¹²¹

It was time for southern whites to establish a new economic order and abandon justifications of slavery.

William J. McGlothlin, professor of church history at the seminary 1896-1919, rejected the construal of the curse of Ham as a justification of enslavement of blacks, since Noah had cursed Canaan, not Ham. In 1894 McGlothlin, who was already teaching a number of language courses at the seminary, was quoted in the seminary's magazine denouncing the use of the curse of Ham as a justification of the enslavement of blacks. The curse of Ham, McGlothlin explained, had no reference any people other than the Canaanites:

Why the curse of Noah fell upon Canaan instead of Ham, who committed the shameful sin against his father, has always been a puzzle to me; whatever may have been the reason, the facts of the later history were the fulfillment of the curse. In Gen. 10:15 ff, we find that the nations who descended from Canaan were at the Exodus the inhabitants of the promised land; viz., the Sidonians, the Hittites, the Jebusites, etc. Most of the nations here mentioned can be certainly identified as living within the boundaries of the land of promise, and the others very probably did so. Now, in later times all these tribes were either exterminated or reduced to a condition of servitude by the Shemites, thus fulfilling the curse of Gen. 9:26: 'Blessed be Jehovah the God of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant.' Moses might well point out as he recited this curse, that it had not fallen on all the Hamites, some of whom were very powerful, but its whole dark shadow rested on the Canaanites.¹²²

Broadus corrected white Christians for assuming that their worship was more acceptable to God than the worship offered by black Christians. Broadus defended the authenticity and goodness of the Christian experience and worship of black churches and criticized those whites who looked upon black Christianity with contempt:

You look with incredulous contempt or horror upon the worship of many negroes. Perchance the angels have a rather poor opinion of your worship. And it may be that he who knows all things knows that both you and these poor degraded men do really love him, and are trying to worship and serve him amid all your imperfections. Some are unwilling to admit that there has been true conversion, when the 'experience' includes seeing visions and hearing voices. Yet John

¹²¹ John A. Broadus, "As to the Colored People," *Standard* (Chicago), 1 Feb. 1883, 1. Other papers reprinted the address, e.g., the *Baptist Courier*, 15 Feb. 1883, 1.

¹²² William J. McGlothlin, "Sparks from the Anvil," *Seminary Magazine* 8 (1894): 124-25.

Bunyan, when convicted of sin, heard voices, as he relates in his 'Grace Abounding,' and Augustine at the time of his conversion saw a beautiful vision, as described in his 'Confessions.' Moreover, even as the morality, we must make some allowance for race tendencies and social influences. Converted Asiatics have still a grievous tendency to lying; converted Africans to licentiousness; converted slaves to stealing. Paul's converts at Corinth showed several years afterwards a sad proclivity to the peculiar Corinthian vices.¹²³

Benjamin C. Pressley, a seminary trustee 1859-1869, grew frustrated as a South Carolina circuit court judge in the 1880s because when whites in South Carolina lynched blacks, they typically went unpunished. He pressed for indictments of lynchers in his judicial district. When he finally convinced a grand jury in Edgefield to bring indictments against accused white lynchers in 1885, the jury at their trial refused to convict them.¹²⁴

In 1889 Basil Manly Jr. urged whites to ensure justice and equal rights for blacks in America:

The only way then to deal with the black man whom we find in America—is to give him his rights, cordially, frankly, fully.

The freedman is a man, neither more nor less. And it is not so much as a freedman that we are concerned about him. It is rather as a freeman. Whatever he was, this thing is certain—he is now a freeman, by the highest organic law of our government, by the constitution of the United States, by the separate action of the respective states. His past condition of servitude is not unimportant, as affecting his present state and our present responsibilities. But the momentous question is not what he was, but what he is, and especially what he is going to be. And with that question we have something to do.

He is not a babe, to be fondled and petted. He is not a brute, to be trampled and despised. He is not a fiend or a savage to be shunned and dreaded, nor an angel to be admired and flattered. He is simply a man, with the capabilities and duties of any other man, so far as he is competent to discharge them, liable to the same temptations and frailties, heir of the same immortality, and redeemed by the same precious blood. . . . First and foremost, he needs to be fairly treated. To have the truth [told] about him, the whole truth if practicable, but at all events to nothing but the truth; to have fair opportunities to labor, and to get honest pay for [it, to] have a chance to become educated and to develop whatever there is [in] him, in good and noble directions, in short to have a fair field.

Next, and mainly, our colored brethren need the gospel.

I shall not draw any terrible picture of their deplorable state, with a good deal of red in the brush, for two reasons—first, they would not be true; and second, there is no need of them. There is enough to rouse any thoughtful man to action in the fact that here in our midst is to be found a nation within a nation, twice as great in number today as the whole American people were one hundred years ago, when our independence was achieved. They are said to number now not less than seven millions, . . .

And in the emergency we welcome cordially the liberal aid of our Northern brethren, who have done, especially in the important matter of education institutions, a work which in our

¹²³ John A. Broadus, "As to the Colored People," *Standard* (Chicago), 1 Feb. 1883, 1.

¹²⁴ Bruce E. Baker, *This Mob Will Surely Take My Life: Lynchings in the Carolinas, 1871-1947* (New York: Continuum Press, 2008), 69.

crippled condition it would have been impossible for the South to have undertaken, or to carry through.

Let us each do all we can in this great enterprise.¹²⁵

In 1893, Broadus urged whites to put an end to lynching, whereby white mobs murdered principally black victims without fear of prosecution. The Louisville *Courier-Journal* published his “Some Earnest Words As to Lynching.” “The thing is wrong,” he said, “getting worse,” and it was “high time” for southern whites to “come out and condemn this business of lynching.” He argued first that the two rationales by which whites justified lynching were invalid. Lynchings did not in fact deter criminal acts by inspiring greater terror than a judicial execution or a life sentence. And the penalty for the worst crimes was in fact highly appropriate in most of the southern states—the penalty for rape was death or life imprisonment in most of the southern states. Broadus argued second that the prevalence of lynching hindered solving race problems in the South, for it alienated both blacks and northern whites, rendering them enemies rather than allies in forging racial policy in the South. Broadus argued finally that if southern whites did not stop the lynchings, it would bring ruin to American civilization. “It is a question of justice,” Broadus concluded, “of fundamental right, of essential civilization, of human welfare.”¹²⁶

Charles S. Gardner, who taught preaching and sociology at the seminary 1907-1929, also condemned the injustices perpetrated against blacks in America. Many whites held such “coarse and brutal” attitudes toward blacks that they treated blacks as worthy only of being “brow-beaten, hounded, and killed.” Such whites were “devilish” and “dangerous,” a “menace to society.” They “sin against common justice in so high-handed and reckless a fashion as to make thoughtful men, in the words of Thomas Jefferson, ‘tremble for their country when they remember that God is just.’” Lynchings and other injustices must therefore be eradicated.¹²⁷

9—THE MYTH OF THE LOST CAUSE

The seminary’s faculty largely accepted the mythology about the South known as the “Lost Cause.” Advanced immediately after the Civil War by promoters of southern righteousness in their secession and defensive war, of the superiority of southern culture, and of the evils of Radical Republicanism. By around 1900 it became the common white orthodoxy of America generally and of the South especially. Its ideas were ensconced in the tomes of scholarship produced in American universities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It became known as the Dunning School after William A. Dunning, a Columbia University professor who promoted the interpretation through his books and through the work of scholars who earned their doctorates under his supervision. It became the standard interpretation of the Civil War, Reconstruction, and white supremacy.¹²⁸

Its greatest influence however spread by means of popular literature, from Thomas Dixon’s novels to Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone with the Wind*. This is how American whites generally came to remember

¹²⁵ Basil Manly Jr., “Our Brother in Black,” *Seminary Magazine* 2 (1889): 137-39.

¹²⁶ John A. Broadus, “Some Earnest Words on Lynching,” *Mt. Sterling (KY) Advocate*, 3 Oct. 1893, 8. The *Advocate* reprinted the article from the Louisville *Courier-Journal*.

¹²⁷ Charles S. Gardner, “The Negro and the White Man,” pp. 5, typescript, Charles S. Gardner Papers, SBTS.

¹²⁸ See Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, eds., *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000); and Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

the Civil War and its aftermath. For southern whites in particular, it was not just history, it was mythology in the proper sense. It powerfully shaped identity. It inculcated proper values. It reshaped Christianity itself into a civil religion. And it rendered the correct analysis of present racial problems and policies.

Lost Cause mythology was an interpretation of history that justified racial segregation and the disfranchisement and oppression of blacks. It was predicated on the doctrine of white superiority and the assertion that blacks generally lacked the capacity for learning, literature, and self-governance. Since Radical Republican policies establishing the full social and political equality of blacks were based on the conviction that blacks were fully capable of education and self-governance, they were, from the perspective of southern whites, doomed to failure. It hardly requires saying that those failures, if they were such, were due largely to the extensive white efforts to deny blacks equality, freedom, education, and the franchise. The long persistence of the myth of the Lost Cause is a testament to its power to shape identity and politics. It is a testament to the power of sin to blind and mislead even educated and spiritual persons.

Archibald T. Robertson, one of the seminary's most accomplished and influential scholars, who taught at the seminary 1888-1934, praised Thomas Dixon's portrayal of race relations. Dixon had gained immense popularity in New York City first as a Baptist preacher and then as a non-denominational preacher. His chief interest was social Christianity, but his social gospel emphasized conservative social policies rather than liberal ones. He resigned his pastorate in 1899 and became a popular national lecturer.

Dixon's solution to the race problem in America both reflected and intensified the populist white commitment to the exclusion and subordination of blacks. He outlined the problem and its solution in his 1902 novel, *The Leopard's Spots*, which he designed as a refutation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Dixon asked Robertson to review the book, and described it as a "historical study of the Race Question from 1865 to 1900."¹²⁹

Dixon crafted the novel and its two sequels to create sympathetic assent to the Lost Cause revisionist history. This reading of southern history suggested that there was divine meaning to the defeat and desolation of the South. In God's providence, southern white Christians developed a society based on the values of family, loyalty, honor, duty, and religion in which white fathers loved, protected, nurtured, and educated their wives, children, and slaves, producing a society of virtue, harmony, and prosperity for all persons, from wealthy masters of large plantations to the humblest slaves. The South went to war for the sake of honor and for the principle of sacred state rights over federal tyranny, and with full



Archibald T. Robertson (1863–1934)

¹²⁹ Thomas Dixon to Archibald T. Robertson, 4 Mar. 1902, Robertson Papers, SBTS. For discussion of Dixon's role in advancing the Lost Cause, see John Hope Franklin, "The Birth of a Nation: Propaganda as History," in Franklin, *Race and History: Selected Essays, 1938-1988* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 10-23; and Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*, 267-69; and Egerton, *Wars of Reconstruction*, 328-33.

Dixon's book defends this disfranchisement with brilliant power, but leaves the ultimate fate of the Negro without a solution. He makes a trumpet call to the Anglo-Saxon race to maintain the supremacy now regained in the South.

Robertson's review of *The Leopard's Spots*, by Thomas Dixon

knowledge that they could not prevail in a contest of arms with the North. Hence, it was a lost cause from the start. But God intended the South's sufferings to perfect the nation, not merely by suffering the vast grief for lost sons, husbands, and fathers, and a shattering economic privation, but also by suffering the subsequent grief of the corrupt and despotic rule of Radical Repub-

lican carpetbaggers and freedmen. Purified by suffering, southern whites emerged from this crucible to re-establish white rule based on the superiority of the white race.¹³⁰

Robertson published his review of Dixon's *The Leopard's Spots* in Louisville's *Baptist Argus*. Robertson, who like Dixon grew up in North Carolina and who attended Wake Forest University at the same time as Dixon, vouched for the "truthfulness of the picture drawn." White North Carolinians had lived through the scenes Dixon described, and Robertson hoped that northerners would read the book and learn the true history of the South. "But the day has passed," Robertson wrote,

for the North longer to throw stones on the Negro question and this point is here emphasized. Lynchings of Negroes occur in the North, aye, in New York and Kansas. That does not make lynchings right by any means. It only shows that the North loves the Negro if he stays down South. The book is brilliant and powerful, realistic and tragic, inspiring and sorrowful. The dominance of the white race now seems certain in the South, but the cloud still rests over the Negro. Our hope is in God. We must do our duty by the Negro, Christianize and civilize him, and save him from going down the vortex if we can. We will do more by looking at the facts, and Mr. Dixon's book will make us all do that.¹³¹

Dixon's work had direct implications for social policy, and so he intended. "Dixon's book defends this disfranchisement [of blacks] with brilliant power," Robertson concluded, "but leaves the ultimate fate of the Negro without a solution. He makes a trumpet call to the Anglo-Saxon race to maintain the supremacy now regained in the South." Robertson could find nothing of substance to criticize. In a review of Dixon's *The One Woman* the following year, Robertson remained enthusiastic about *The Leopard's Spots* and its remarkable popularity. He still maintained that Dixon "endeavored to picture the Negro problem as it is, and this he did with marvelous power."¹³²

Robertson felt that his own experiences confirmed Dixon's interpretation. Robertson's earliest memories of his own father related to the family's financial struggles in the Reconstruction era. His father had held "nearly a hundred" slaves before emancipation. In the harsh economic conditions of post-war North Carolina, he was unable to make his farm profitable. "He finally faced bankruptcy and the estate had to be sold and a new start made elsewhere."¹³³ He remembered hard struggles for food and clothing. He remembered also the high tensions of the 1876 presidential election, in which southern

¹³⁰ On Dixon, see Anthony Slide, *American Racist: The Life and Films of Thomas Dixon* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2004); and Michele K. Gillespie and Randal L. Hall, eds., *Thomas Dixon Jr. and the Birth of Modern America* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2006).

¹³¹ Archibald T. Robertson, "The Problem of the Negro," *Baptist Argus*, 10 Apr. 1902, 5.

¹³² Archibald T. Robertson, "Thomas Dixon's New Book: 'The One Woman,'" *Baptist Argus*, 20 Aug. 1903, 1.

¹³³ Archibald T. Robertson, "Recollections of My Early Life: Part 1," *Virginia Baptist Register* 26 (1987): 1327.

whites placed their hope of “redemption” in the election of the Democratic candidate, Samuel Tilden. “I recall the great political campaign of 1876 when the Ku Klux Klan ceased to operate because the peril of Negro domination passed with the overthrow of the carpet-bag government in the Carolinas. There had been little trouble in Statesville, but I heard Senator Ransom and Gov. Zebulon B. Vance speak in thrilling tones as they told of the horrible experiences of white women in eastern North Carolina and along the South Carolina border. I marched one night in a torchlight procession for Tilden and Vance and helped save the country. When Tilden was counted out I was very blue.”¹³⁴

Less than one month before Robertson received an advance copy of Dixon’s *The Leopard’s Spots*, he received a letter from seminary graduate William L. Pickard informing Robertson that he resigned his pulpit in Cleveland, Ohio, in order to move back to the South, lest his daughters come under the influence of false ideas about the old South.



William O. Carver (1868–1954)

The time had come when I felt that my daughters must be taken out of that atmosphere of wrong theories as to the Negro problems. The North is honest in its view, but densely ignorant and unjust. . . . ‘Uncle Toms Cabin’ and its fearful teaching are the school in which the North learned, and still learns its ideas of our Southland. I determined that my girls should grow up in the South.¹³⁵

William O. Carver, who taught on the seminary faculty 1898–1943, disagreed with Robertson concerning the merits of Dixon’s novels, but on little else.¹³⁶ He justified racial inequality and sustained white superiority. He disapproved of blacks agitating for racial equality. He wrote a letter to Booker T. Washington questioning him concerning the report of his dining at the same table with President Theodore Roosevelt and his family in the White House.¹³⁷

Carver wrote the article on “Negroes” in the highly respected *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* in 1916 and repeated the misconceptions of the Dunning School and Dixon’s novels. Carver was dismissive of the abilities and accomplishments of blacks, and vindicated the policies of white superiority in

¹³⁴ Archibald T. Robertson, “Recollections of My Early Life: Part 2,” *Virginia Baptist Register* 27 (1988): 1359.

¹³⁵ William L. Pickard to Archibald T. Robertson, 20 Feb. 1902, Robertson Papers, SBTS.

¹³⁶ See Mark R. Wilson, *William Owen Carver’s Controversies in the Baptist South* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2010), 124–29.

¹³⁷ William O. Carver to Booker T. Washington, 25 Mar. 1904, box 235, Booker T. Washington Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC. In keeping with Washington’s policy regarding such matters, he did not respond. See Emmett J. Scott to William O. Carver, 29 Mar. 1904, W. O. Carver Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, TN. For a sympathetic early account of this controversy and its context, see Emmett J. Scott and Lyman Beecher Stowe, *Booker T. Washington: Builder of a Civilization*, (New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1916), 107–34. See also Louis R. Harlan, *Booker T. Washington: Volume 2, The Wizard of Tuskegee* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 3–31.

the political and social order. Since the “enlightened leadership” among blacks consisted mostly of men of mixed race, Carver concluded that blacks’ “capacity for development” could not yet be determined. It was not possible “yet to affirm that the Negro has shown capacity for sufficient education, initiative, and resource to be capable of a native and independent realization of the ideals of Christian culture.”¹³⁸

He claimed that such Reconstruction-era efforts as the protections afforded by the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments to the United States Constitution were well-intended but mistaken. “To remove all disabilities of the freed men and to guarantee to them full and equal rights of citizenship” was a practical impossibility. “The effort to confer immediate and full citizenship, with suffrage and possible official position included, upon 1,000,000 men just out of slavery was a political and social blunder, working grievous wrongs to whites and blacks alike.” Carver seemed to justify the “various illegal devices” applied in late nineteenth century to prevent blacks from voting, since in the early twentieth century the same was being accomplished by the legal device of legislation establishing literacy tests in order to vote, but granting exemptions to most whites by means of a “grandfather clause.” Carver felt that southern whites had proved that “the problems of race adjustment could best be worked out in the regions where they existed,” and the problem “was in process of solution.”¹³⁹

Most blacks, Carver said, did not desire social equality with whites and “recognized the impossibility of it.” The rare “aggressive efforts” to establish equal social relations of blacks and whites were “inspired by the vicious or misguided sentimental influence of white people.”¹⁴⁰ He doubted the capability of the majority of blacks for academic education, since “more and more expert opinion suggests, and practical experience approves, vocational training for the majority of Negroes, involving a large element of industrial and domestic instruction and training.”¹⁴¹

Carver claimed that in America alone had blacks advanced. “In the United States there is found the only large group of Negroes yet rescued from heathenism and set forward on the road to civilization.” He nevertheless construed the Christianity of American blacks as primitive—it existed in the primal stage of emotivist and experientialist religion, not yet having attained the “rational” and “ethical” elements of more mature evolution of religion. The morality of blacks, Carver argued, “represents a crude and undeveloped stage of religious ethics.” This fact explained the high rate of law breaking in black society, for the civil and criminal laws in the United States were “designed for the stage of civilization reached by the white race,” or alternatively, “for the restraint of the Negro race within the limits approved by the white race.” And so “all these things must be taken into account in judging the records of crime and vice in a people yet at a backward stage of the road from savagery to Christian civilization.”¹⁴²

Carver criticized legislation in Iowa, Arkansas, and Michigan that prohibited Americans of Japanese heritage from owning property or attending college.

Such inhuman, unamerican, and anti-Christian acts reveal how dangerous is race prejudice in this land of ours which is trying to think that we are engaged in a mighty, holy, crusade in behalf

¹³⁸ William O. Carver, “Negroes (United States),” in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, vol. 9 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1917), 298.

¹³⁹ Carver, “Negroes,” 293.

¹⁴⁰ Carver, “Negroes,” 294.

¹⁴¹ Carver, “Negroes,” 295.

¹⁴² Carver, “Negroes,” 298, 296.

of human rights and freedom for all the peoples of the world. These acts remind us also how great is our task of evangelizing and Christianizing our own country.¹⁴³

He did not seem to feel any contradiction in protesting such racist legislation against Americans of Japanese heritage while justifying the need for Jim Crow regulations for American blacks.

In 1935 Carver gave a powerful rendering of the Lost Cause mythology at Louisville's Cave Hill Cemetery on Confederate Memorial Day. Only those who felt a "deep and intelligent reverence" for the "virtues, the chivalries, the heroism, and the spiritual nobilities" of the defeated Confederacy could have a "right to speak for them or even to speak of them." In 1865 they "sat among the ashes of their homes, the debris of their fortunes, the graves of their dead, the destitution of their material condition" with pious resignation to the will of God. The South's armies included some of the greatest commanders and the most valorous soldiers in all human history. But the "glory of military prowess" faded before the glory of the "living sacrifice and service in the interest of humanity" that marked true manhood in the service of Christ. It was the southern manhood—Christian devotion and concern for the welfare of others—on display in the Confederacy that trained their descendants in the virtues that could produce a better society. Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson were rightly honored for their manhood more than for their "transcendent skill as soldiers." The Confederacy's "permanent victories are not that fine catalogue beginning with Bull Run and finally ending in the secondary strokes of genius and character that delayed so long" their defeat.

They placed "duty, ideals, and principles" above the practical considerations deriving from fear or pragmatic analysis. The soldiers performed their duty without vice or hatred. "Never was there an army in history that remained throughout so free from the debaucheries of warfare. They never offended against the sacred sense of duty to defend their homes and their ideals. Since they feared God, they kept themselves from those vices that would stain their records or shame their mothers and wives. Among the civilians during the war there were "no profiteers to batten off the necessities of a desperate conflict." The southern slaves "remained loyal while their masters fought a war."

The "greatness of the South" appeared above all in southerners' "victory over hatred and revenge and sullenness," despite the long suspicion and contempt with which northerners regarded them. Without cringing or losing their self-respect, they regained the confidence of the North by their patient and persistent labors to rebuild southern society. From the time of their defeat,

southern whites were able to live in harmonious relations with their freedmen, and at once to begin under the new conditions to provide and extend the development of the humanity and human integrity of the black folk by means of religion and education. . . . The two races have managed marvelously to live together. And all this would have progressed far more rapidly than it did had not the South had its spirit brow-beaten, its intelligence insulted, and its efforts hindered by mistaken distrust and impudence of the new friends of the Negro in the North and from the North.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ William O. Carver, "Dragon's Teeth," typescript, Carver Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

¹⁴⁴ William O. Carver, "Permanent Victories of the Confederacy," typescript, William Owen Carver Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

Carver's remarkable assertions of southern virtue were not gleaned from the letters, diaries, sermons, or newspapers of the South during the war, but from the writings of the Lost Cause historians.

The Lost Cause construal of Confederate military virtue and valor shaped the identity of many southern whites. When news reached Greenville in October, 1870, that Robert E. Lee had died, church bells rang for two hours and businesses closed. A large crowd assembled at the courthouse. James P. Boyce offered a set of resolutions. Basil Manly Jr. addressed the crowd, along with Benjamin F. Perry, James C. Furman, and William K. Easley.

John R. Sampey, professor at the seminary 1885-1942 and president 1929-1942, and who served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention 1936-1938, invoked the moral example of Robert E. Lee so frequently that it became second nature. When asked in 1944 whom he considered the "greatest character" outside the Bible in human history, he did not hesitate: "Robert E. Lee, without a doubt! . . . He was as nearly the perfect Christian gentleman as any since Christ. He was a man of high temper, but he mastered it. His character was symmetrical. There were no ugly knots. Lincoln was strong, but he was awkward and angular. Lee possessed beauty and harmony of character, poise and conviction, clarity and purity. He has been my human ideal."¹⁴⁵

A student remembered that once in class Sampey was describing the perfect character of the Lord Jesus and said that Jesus was a good man, "as good as Robert E. Lee." He immediately recognized the heresy and corrected himself—"better, better" than Robert E. Lee.¹⁴⁶ Another student recounted an episode in 1942 in which Sampey "brought quite a roar of laughter from the chapel group one morning while speaking of the bravery of Jesus. He was keyed up in G and when words threatened to prove inadequate he declared, 'Our Lord was a brave man—braver even than Robert E. Lee!'"¹⁴⁷

Some members of the faculty dissented from certain aspects of the Lost Cause mythology. Franklin H. Kerfoot remembered correctly that the South seceded to preserve slavery: "The country went to war on the extension of slavery into the territories."¹⁴⁸

Edwin C. Dargan, who succeeded Broadus as professor of preaching and who taught at the seminary 1892-1907, criticized the Lost Cause mythology in a review of J. William Jones's writings. Jones was a graduate of the seminary's first session. He was appointed as a missionary to China in 1860 but the board did not send him due to secession and war. He served as assistant secretary of the Home Mission Board. He served one year raising money for the seminary. He spent the entire war as a chaplain. He helped develop and spread the myth of the Lost Cause. He published biographies of Jefferson Davis and Stonewall Jackson, three books on Robert E. Lee, and several others related to the Confederate cause. He was also secretary of the Southern Historical Society for twelve years. Jones told Dargan that Broadus had offered "strong commendations of several of my books," and concluded that Dargan's criticism must be attributable to Yankee heresies. It could only be evidence of the "deleterious effects of the teaching of Yankee books when South Carolinians can so heartily condemn the man whose sin has been, and is, that he clings to the faith of the Fathers, believes in the old doctrine of home rule, and the Sovereignty of the States, and tries to tell the truth about our heroic history."¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Gaines S. Dobbins, "Doctor Sampey at Eighty-One," *Western Recorder*, 26 Oct. 1944, 10; and John R. Sampey, "An Interview with Doctor Sampey," box 11, Ellis A. Fuller Papers, SBTS.

¹⁴⁶ Herschel H. Hobbs related this anecdote in memoir, *My Faith and Message* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1993), 66. See also John R. Sampey to Mrs. S. E. Stephens, 29 Jan. 1936, John R. Sampey Papers, SBTS.

¹⁴⁷ Palmer Brooks to Olin T. Binkley, 15 Jan. 1942, Binkley Papers, Wake Forest University.

¹⁴⁸ Franklin H. Kerfoot, *Third Annual Baptist Autumnal Conference* (New York: Judson Printing Co., 1885), 62.

¹⁴⁹ J. William Jones to Edwin C. Dargan, 31 July 1896, E. C. Dargan Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

At least one Southern Seminary trustee went on record ridiculing Thomas Dixon's mythological rendering of southern history. Dixon developed a highly successful play from his Reconstruction novels, which later became the screenplay of one of the most successful films in history, *The Birth of a Nation*. Amzi C. Dixon, a seminary graduate who also served as a trustee 1885-1890, judged that the play's message was "rotten and slimy." Amzi Dixon was Thomas Dixon's brother.¹⁵⁰

10—EDUCATION AND SEGREGATION

The seminary faculty supported black education as long as it was racially segregated. Broadus praised the work of the Richmond Theological Seminary (later Virginia Union University) in educating black preachers and commended it to John D. Rockefeller as worthy of his support.¹⁵¹ Boyce accepted appointment as one of the founding trustees of the Slater Fund, established by cotton-mill and wool-mill manufacturer John F. Slater in 1882 with a one million dollar endowment to provide aid for the Christian education of blacks. Trustees allocated proceeds of the fund each year to such colleges as Hampton, Tuskegee, Atlanta, Clark, and Shaw, as well as to secondary schools.¹⁵² W. E. B. Du Bois judged that the trustees' "singularly wise administration" of the Slater Fund was "perhaps the greatest single impulse toward the economic emancipation of the Negro."¹⁵³ Boyce served as a trustee until his death in 1888. Broadus accepted his election as a trustee in 1889 as Boyce's replacement, and served until his death in 1896.

The faculty and graduates of the seminary taught black Baptist pastors and aspiring preachers in intensive "New Era institutes" and by regular private instruction. In 1879, the General Association of the Colored Baptists of Kentucky opened Simmons University in Louisville. The faculty of Southern Seminary taught courses there for many years.¹⁵⁴

The faculty did not admit black students to their regular classrooms. They did however teach black preachers in their offices or in other locations. John A. Broadus tutored Charles H. Parrish in Greek privately. Parrish served as pastor of Louisville's Calvary Baptist Church and became a teacher of Greek at Simmons University. His son also taught at Simmons and became the first black scholar appointed the faculty of any historically white university in the South when he joined the faculty of the University of Louisville in 1951.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁰ Amzi C. Dixon quoted in the *Atlanta Constitution*, 16 Mar. 1906, 7, cited by Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*, 269.

¹⁵¹ John D. Rockefeller to John A. Broadus, 14 Mar. 1885, box 10, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

¹⁵² See John E. Fischer, *The John F. Slater Fund: A Nineteenth Century Affirmative Action for Negro Education* (New York: University Press of America, 1986).

¹⁵³ Du Bois quote from Benjamin Brawley, "Early Efforts for Industrial Education," in Trustees of the John F. Slater Fund, *Occasional Papers*, No. 22 (1923), 14; cited by Fischer, *The Slater Fund*, xviii-xix.

¹⁵⁴ Simmons University began as the Kentucky Normal and Theological Institute, and was called Simmons University from 1918 until 1931, when it became Simmons Bible College, and is now called Simmons College of Kentucky. See J. Blain Hudson, "Simmons College of Kentucky," in Gerald L. Smith, Karen C. McDaniel, and John A. Hardin, eds., *Kentucky African American Encyclopedia* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2015), 451-53; Lawrence H. Williams, *Black Higher Education in Kentucky, 1879-1930: The History of Simmons University* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1987); "African American Education," in John E. Kleber, ed., *Encyclopedia of Louisville* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 12-14; and A. W. Pegues, *Our Baptist Ministers and Schools* (Springfield, MA: Willey and Co., 1892), 606.

¹⁵⁵ Lawrence H. Williams, *The Charles H. Parrishes: Pioneers in African-American Religion and Education, 1880-1989* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003); John A. Hardin, "Parrish, Charles Henry, Sr.," in John E. Kleber, ed., *Encyclopedia of Louisville* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 694-695; and John A. Hardin, "Parrish, Charles Henry,

THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



Edgar Y. Mullins (1860–1928)

In the 1890s the seminary's professors lectured to black preachers and theology students under the auspices of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's New Era Institutes. The convention held thirty of these training programs in 1898. At the Louisville program, president Whitsitt and professors Dargan, Kerfoot, McGlothlin, and Eager joined forces with two black professors, C. L. Purce, president of Selma University, and J. C. Woods, to provide lectures to the participants.¹⁵⁶ Professor Kerfoot and Robertson lectured also at the New Era Institute in Shelbyville.¹⁵⁷

Edgar Y. Mullins, seminary president 1899-1928, advanced the cause of theological education of black Baptists by leading Southern Baptists to cooperate with the National Baptist Convention to establish a seminary to train pastors, the American Baptist Theological Seminary, established in Nashville in 1924. The National Baptist Convention appointed a committee to confer with Southern Baptists for the purpose of mutual counsel and cooperation with Southern Baptists in the enterprise. Mullins favored the proposal and made the motion that the 1913 Southern Baptist Convention not only appoint a committee to confer

with the National Baptists' committee, but that Southern Baptists now "pledge ourselves" to provide "financial assistance." The motion passed.¹⁵⁸ Mullins served as chairman of the committee, and won the convention's approval of its recommendation to cooperate with the National Baptist Convention in establishing the proposed seminary, and to pledge Southern Baptists to raise fifty thousand dollars to accomplish this.¹⁵⁹

The seminary faculty also aided Louisville's Simmons University. William O. Carver urged white Baptists to support an effort to raise one hundred thousand dollars for Simmons. White Baptists pledged to raise eighty thousand dollars among white Baptists provided that black Baptists raised twenty thousand dollars. C. H. Parrish, who had been refused admission to the seminary and who was now the president of Simmons, told Carver that they accepted the proposal. "I thought it well to apprise you that the colored brethren stand by the proposition of our white brethren to try to raise \$80,000 in five years, and the colored brethren \$20,000, are leaving no stone unturned to meet the proposition, by raising our part."¹⁶⁰

Jr.," in *ibid.*, 694; and A. D. Muse, *Viewing Life's Sunset from Pike's Peak: Life Story of T. T. Martin* (Louisville, KY: T. T. Muse, n.d.), 213-14.

¹⁵⁶ Unsigned, "Preacher's Conference," *Baptist Argus*, 27 Jan. 1898, 218.

¹⁵⁷ W. D. Bolton, "Seminary Notes," *Baptist Argus*, 10 Feb. 1898, 249.

¹⁵⁸ *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1913* (Nashville: Marshall and Bruce, [1913]), 21.

¹⁵⁹ *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1914* (Nashville: Marshall and Bruce, [1914]), 25-27.

¹⁶⁰ C. H. Parrish to W. O. Carver, 23 Feb. 1927, William Owen Carver Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives. See also W. O. Carver to A. G. Moseley, 15 Mar. 1927, Carver Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary opposed integrated theological education and did not admit black students. Broadus wondered in 1875 if perhaps admitting an Indian student would induce black Baptists to seek admission. Boyce recommended admitting the Indian student, since Indian churches remained in the Southern Baptist Convention, whereas black churches had separated from it.

I think our admission of Indians will not complicate our work as to negroes. The Indian territory and this Indian are counted with the Southern Baptist Convention for whose constituency we [the seminary] are established. The negroes have cut themselves off from connection with that and this will relieve us. Besides, long before the war the white colleges north and south have not objected to Indian students. I think you had better encourage this man if all be right.¹⁶¹

When two Southern Baptist students wanted to transfer from Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania to Southern Seminary in 1876 because Crozer granted admission to a black student, Boyce and Broadus favored admitting them. But Boyce judged them “very foolish.” He warned Broadus that the pair should not be allowed to feel that they were heroes for withdrawing from Crozer. Their act was also blameworthy since it could further inflame the political tensions of the 1876 election season.¹⁶²

When the seminary moved to Louisville in 1877, some of the black pastors asked permission to attend the lectures as auditors merely. The faculty refused and proposed alternatively a plan of lectures to be given by some of Louisville’s white Baptist pastors and the seminary faculty together. “On an inquiry by certain colored Baptist preachers of Louisville, whether they would be allowed to attend Seminary lectures as spectators. The Faculty took no action, but it was agreed that the Chairman (to whom the enquiry was addressed) should suggest to the colored brethren that it would be better to have a separate course of lectures for them by the pastors of the city, in which the Seminary Professors would take part.”¹⁶³

The earliest record of a black student requesting formal admission seems to have occurred also in that first fall in Louisville. On Oct. 11, 1877, the faculty minutes recorded that “the Secretary presented a letter from a colored brother, inquiring whether colored men are admitted to the Seminary as students. Directed to answer that no provision has been made here for colored men.”¹⁶⁴ It was only the first of many such refusals.

When asked again in 1877 about admitting an American Indian student, the faculty of Boyce, Broadus, Toy, and Whitsitt stated a policy against admitting any student with black ancestry: “A communication was presented by Prof. Broadus from Rev. H. T. Buckner concerning the admission of an Indian into the Seminary. Prof. Broadus was requested to inform Mr. Buckner that the Indian would be received if he had no negro blood in him.”¹⁶⁵ The faculty gave the same stipulation when J. S. Murrow, a missionary to the Choctaw tribe, sought admission for his adopted son, Jesse Murrow. He was “pure Indian” and was admitted.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ James P. Boyce to John A. Broadus, 23 Aug. 1875, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

¹⁶² James P. Boyce to John A. Broadus, 26 Oct. 1876, Broadus Papers, SBTS. See also J. T. E. Thornhill to John A. Broadus, 26 Oct. 1876, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

¹⁶³ Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Faculty Minutes, 29 Aug. 1877, SBTS.

¹⁶⁴ Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Faculty Minutes, 11 Oct. 1877, SBTS.

¹⁶⁵ Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Faculty Minutes, 11 Oct. 1877, SBTS.

¹⁶⁶ J. S. Murrow to John A. Broadus, 18 May 1883, box 10, Broadus Papers, SBTS. Jesse Murrow apparently never matriculated however.

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In 1889, a young black Baptist preacher in Detroit, A. D. Chandler, applied for admission. The faculty refused. Chandler appealed the decision. "The bond of love which holds the interests of Christ's church united is the equality of its members," Chandler wrote, and therefore the church's institutions should acknowledge that equality. He had attended Denison College in Ohio, and found acceptance among the white students, including those from the South, he said. "All I desire is to be admitted to the class rooms."¹⁶⁷

Broadus explained the faculty's position:

I reply that (as sufficiently intimated in my former letter) we should not think it desirable for you to enter our seminary as a student, and if, notwithstanding that intimation and this, you should present yourself, I am quite sure the faculty would decline to admit you. You are aware that in such a decision there would be no real hardship to you, as you can enter without difficulty in numerous excellent seminaries, some now locally nearer you than ours, and others (supported or directed by the American Baptist Home Mission Society) in which you would have many fellow students with whom you would most likely be specially associated through life in ministerial labor."¹⁶⁸

Chandler afterward served as the pastor and missionary in Detroit, and was an influential leader in the National Baptist Convention.

A black man in Jamaica requested permission to enroll in 1890. He believed that since he was a foreigner, the seminary could safely admit him. "I noticed that you are not at liberty to receive any coloured student in your Seminary. I am a coloured man but as stranger from Jamaica I trust I will be accepted to fit myself for the Lord's work."¹⁶⁹ The white pastor of the Oberlin Baptist Church in Ohio asked the faculty in 1891 to admit a young black preacher from Oberlin.¹⁷⁰ Neither was admitted.

Education of blacks, Mullins said in 1922, could not be accomplished in schools for whites. When A. J. Barton asked Mullins whether the seminary would admit a black Baptist pastor and teacher, W. G. Merriwether of Alexandria, Louisiana, Mullins refused: "I sympathize very much with the request of this brother, and wish it were possible for us to do something for him. But it is not possible. If we were to undertake work of this kind, we would be overwhelmed with such requests. The institution here has, from the beginning, been for white students, and you can easily imagine the result if we were to attempt to change the policy in this regard."¹⁷¹

Edgar Y. Mullins appealed to white supremacy as a justification of his support for Republican Party presidential candidate Herbert Hoover against the Democratic Party candidate Al Smith in the 1928 presidential election. Mullins received criticism for this, since it threatened to split the white vote in the South and thereby endanger white rule. Mullins countered that Al Smith's opposition to prohibition was also a critical issue.¹⁷² One Southern Baptist criticized Mullins for putting the two issues on par:

¹⁶⁷ A. D. Chandler to S.B.T.S. Faculty, 7 July 1889, box 12, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

¹⁶⁸ John A. Broadus to A. D. Chandler, 16 July 1889, box 12 Broadus Papers, SBTS.

¹⁶⁹ J. C. Lewis to John A. Broadus, 26 July 1890, box 13, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

¹⁷⁰ J. C. Rose to John A. Broadus, 10 Sept. 1891, box 14, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

¹⁷¹ Edgar Y. Mullins to A. J. Barton, 25 May 1922, box 28, Edgar Y. Mullins Papers, SBTS.

¹⁷² See Edgar Y. Mullins to Henry J. Allen, 14 Aug. 1928, Mullins Papers, SBTS; and Edgar Y. Mullins to M. A. Perry, 30 Aug. 1928, Mullins Papers, SBTS.

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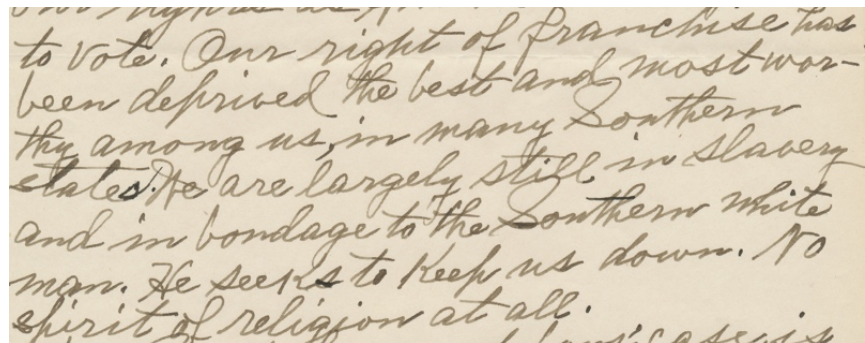
If the southern people divide on the prohibition issue it will give the negroes of the South the balance of power and you have only to look back to the days of reconstruction (1865-1876) to know what will follow such a division of the white people. White supremacy, and not prohibition, is the paramount issue, in my opinion, in the south and always will be so long as the negroes are allied with the Republican party and are the backbone of that party in the South.¹⁷³

Mullins however argued that a stronger Republican party in the South would actually strengthen white control by giving the Republicans a great stake in safeguarding it.

The politicians are trying to scare the South with the 'nigger' bugaboo, and they will work that for all it is worth, but I think it can be met decisively by the friends of Hoover and the opponents of Al Smith. . . . The South is very short-sighted when it imagines that if some Southern states were to become Republican in presidential elections we would be exposed to the danger of negro domination. On the contrary if the South were divided in its allegiance to the Democrats and Republican parties, it would add tremendously to the power of the South in Congress to prevent any such legislation as the 'force bill' or any other legislation looking toward social equality among negroes and whites of the South. In other words the Republican party would have a tremendous stake and interest in pleasing the South if part of the South adhered to it.¹⁷⁴

Neither Mullins nor his colleague Archibald T. Robertson however were sufficiently orthodox on racial segregation to satisfy the *Atlanta Journal*. Mullins and Robertson were the chief planners and organizers of the Baptist World Alliance, and they invited black Baptist denominations to join the group. The first meeting took place in London in 1905, and the mixing of white Southern Baptist leaders with black Baptist leaders sitting and speaking together on the same platform incited scornful contempt of the *Atlanta Journal*.¹⁷⁵

Charles S. Gardner defended the segregation codes of the Jim Crow South. Gardner asserted that there existed a "law of social exclusion" that benefitted both races while they remained separate. The segregation of blacks from whites "in the use of public conveyances such as railway and street cars; their exclusion from hotels and theaters, etc., patronized by white people, and the political disabilities imposed upon them" were not harmful measures. They aroused black resentment only because these privileges had been extended during Reconstruction but had since been withdrawn—and because outside the South, blacks did not experience these limitations, with the exception of segregated hotel accommodations. As for the



A page from J. W. Bailey's 1935 letter to John R. Sampey, urging white Baptist preachers to speak out against racial injustice and segregation.

¹⁷³ J. M. Swanson to W. R. L. Smith, 26 July 1928, Mullins Papers, SBTS.

¹⁷⁴ Edgar Y. Mullins to B. H. Lovelace, 2 Aug. 1928, Mullins Papers, SBTS.

¹⁷⁵ The reporter did not identify the white Southern Baptist leaders' names, but indicted them all for having anything to do with the integrated affair.



John R. Sampey (1863-1946)

political discrimination against blacks, Gardner argued, “it is based upon the absolute demonstration of the political incapacity of the negro race, viewed as a whole; an incapacity so signally exhibited under so many varied conditions and in so many lands and through such long periods of time as to be no longer open to question in any mind at once candid and well informed.”¹⁷⁶

John R. Sampey defended the segregated seating at the 1935 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Memphis. About fifty black Baptist pastors agreed formally to attend the sessions of the meeting after R. G. Lee, a prominent white Southern Baptist pastor in Memphis, invited them personally to attend. When they arrived and learned that blacks attending the Southern Baptist Convention were assigned segregated seats in the third gallery, most refused the indignity and departed. One of those who remained was J. W. Bailey, who had served as the founding director of the National Baptist Convention’s Department of Evangelism and as an evangelist of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Home Mission Board 1912-1919 and was well known and respected among both black and white Baptists.¹⁷⁷ He chose to ig-

nore the usher’s insistence that he sit in the segregated section and instead took a seat on the floor near the platform.

Bailey wrote a letter to Sampey afterward urging Southern Baptist pastors to take their stand against segregation and injustice:

I wonder when will white Christians take segregation out of religion. . . . Nothing I know discounts the white man’s religion more than this. He seemed to the Negro to be worshipping his color more than his God, his ancestry more than the Bible. It is hard now to hold our young educated people to the belief that the white man has any religion at all. White pastors say nothing about lynching in their pulpits, nothing about justice and a square deal for his black brother, as you did, nothing about the antilynching bill now before Congress. They are all against it. Nothing about our rights as American citizens to vote. Our right of franchise has been deprived. The best and most worthy among us, in many Southern States. We are largely still in slavery and in bondage to the Southern white man. He seeks to keep us down.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Charles S. Gardner, “The Negro and the White Man,” pp. 5-6, typescript, Charles S. Gardner Papers, SBTS.

¹⁷⁷ J. W. Bailey to John R. Sampey, 24 Dec. 1937, Sampey Papers, SBTS. See Samuel W. Bacote, ed., *Who’s Who among the Colored Baptists of the United States* (Kansas City, MO: Franklin Hudson Publishing, 1913), 169-70; and J. W. Bailey, *Autobiography of Rev. J. W. Bailey* (n.p.: 1950), 25, 38.

¹⁷⁸ J. W. Bailey to John R. Sampey, 23 May 1935, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

Bailey nevertheless praised Sampey's statements on race in his closing address as president-elect of the convention. In principle Sampey condemned segregation in the churches. When he rose to address the convention, he noted the presence of black Baptist visitors, and recognized Bailey by name. Sampey then asserted that "all racial distinctions must be blotted out in religion." Bailey said that Sampey gave him more hope than any previous convention president: "You struck a death blow to race hatred in religious circles."¹⁷⁹

Sampey's reply upheld racial discrimination. He told Bailey that the "tie that binds us together ought to be strong enough to overcome racial prejudice," but defended segregation.

I have never seen any good reason why in our Conventions and other religious meetings our colored visitors should not be put in some special section of the auditorium. I do think, however, that they ought not to be sent away up to the third gallery. . . . As President of the Convention, I shall do whatever I can to make it pleasant for our colored Baptist ministers and laymen who attend the meeting of the Convention at St. Louis. If we can find a desirable location for our colored brethren from which they can both see and hear to advantage as our guests. I could wish that we had at least a hundred in regular attendance.¹⁸⁰

Sampey asked the arrangements committee for the 1937 convention meeting in New Orleans to assign black Baptist visitors a desirable seating location. "I could wish that very desirable space on the floor should be reserved for them. When they are put at the extreme rear or in the gallery, it is difficult to persuade them to attend our sessions."¹⁸¹ Sampey however relented to the committee's plea that the most desirable location was not on the floor but in the first gallery near the platform.¹⁸²

The contradictory impulses of the doctrine of white superiority and Christian love led to the seminary's faculty to support the theological education for black Baptists but to insist on racial segregation in theological education and in other areas.

11—SCIENTIFIC RACISM

The seminary faculty taught white superiority and the inferiority of black capacities for civilization. They did so with full confidence their views were the conclusions of empirical observation undergirded by leading scientific authorities. In 1882 John Broadus advanced an ethnography rooted in the history of different African races as a basis for whites to arrive at an accurate understanding of American blacks. He did not need to say that it should also serve as the basis for social policy.

The Negroes in the United States come from several quite distinct races, at least three of which, even at the present day, present broadly marked differences. I called attention to this matter in another paper last spring and am very glad to find that Col. Williams in his useful 'History of the Negro Race in America,' chap. VI. brings out substantially corresponding facts in regard to the races of Western Africa. (a) The brown Negroes are apt to be confounded by persons who have not observed them through life with mulattoes, but really have no white blood, and are of the

¹⁷⁹ J. W. Bailey to John R. Sampey, 23 May 1935, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

¹⁸⁰ John R. Sampey to J. W. Bailey, 10 June 1935, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

¹⁸¹ John R. Sampey to Everett Gill Jr., 6 Mar. 1937, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

¹⁸² Everett Gill Jr. to John R. Sampey, 19 Mar. 1937, Sampey Papers, SBTS; John R. Sampey to Everett Gill Jr., 31 Mar. 1937, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

same color in the inland western portions of Central Africa. There they are half civilized, having walled towns and fixed laws. And here in America they are almost uniformly intelligent. It would appear that they have often instinctively abstained from intermarriage with the blacks. . . . (b) There are black Negroes, thoroughly black, who yet have good features—sharp nose, thin lips, good foreheads. These are evidently distinct, not only from the first, but from the third class, and are apt to be larger and stronger than the brown people. This second class are likewise comparatively intelligent. . . . (c) The typical Negro, with thick lips, flat nose, protruding jaws, narrow and retreating forehead, is entirely distinct from the other two races, and vastly inferior in point of intelligence. For my part, I never saw one of these who could be regarded as very intelligent.

There was also an immense difference as to the improvement of the negroes while held as slaves. In the grain country, especially on the smaller plantations, they worked side by side with their owners, and the children were often playmates. This was not in all respects good for either race, but it materially improved the intelligence of the slaves. On the great plantations, however, and especially in the cotton, rice and sugar regions, only the house servants were thus privileged, while the great mass of the negroes lived quite apart from the whites, destitute of such educating contact, and fully maintaining among themselves the horrid superstitions and low moral sentiments which they had brought from Africa. It is often stated in the newspapers that the negroes of some Southern region are ‘relapsing’ into barbarism; but alas! a very large proportion of them have been barbarians all the while. When the United States forces took Beaufort in South Carolina, several planters of that neighborhood brought up their hundreds of slaves to Greenville (near the mountains), where I lived. It was curious to see the aversion and contempt with which our negroes regarded them. They were, indeed, thorough savages, in aspect, in tone of voice, in ignorance and manners—always excepting the few who had been house-servants.¹⁸³

Broadus believed that racial characteristics were determined by long centuries of custom, education, religion, and culture. And he believed that all these matters were transmitted by inheritance. That is, races developed moral characteristics, intelligence, customs, and taste, over centuries, and that these were transmitted by inheritance. “Most of those faults came with their fathers from Africa, inherited from untold generations. But the other day I read a letter from a former pupil, who is a missionary on the Guinea coast, describing evils among the converts striking similar to those observed in our own colored churches. It is a vast and difficult task to lift up the lower races of mankind into Christian enlightenment.”¹⁸⁴

Broadus’s characterizations were not original. Many whites found such characterizations compelling. W. J. Cushing, a Southern Seminary donor in New England, praised the helpfulness of Broadus’s article.¹⁸⁵

The seminary faculty in the early twentieth century seemed as fully convinced of white superiority as any of their predecessors. William J. McGlothlin endorsed the faculty’s wisdom in refusing to admit blacks to the seminary classrooms while criticizing Theodore Roosevelt for dining with Booker T. Washington at the White House: “I think I could eat at the same table with Booker Washington with but little lingering prejudice, and I certainly have no ill feeling against Mr. R[oosevelt] for doing so. But it was not wise for him nor would it be for me to eat with him. A couple of years ago the Seminary refused

¹⁸³ John A. Broadus, “As to the Colored People,” *Standard* (Chicago), 1 Feb. 1883, 1.

¹⁸⁴ John A. Broadus, “As to the Colored People,” *Standard* (Chicago), 1 Feb. 1883, 1.

¹⁸⁵ W. J. Cushing to John A. Broadus, 4 May 1885, box 10, Broadus Papers, SBTS.

to let a pastor in Louisville attend the classes simply and solely because he was a Negro. Perhaps that was wise." The president of the United States and the faculty of the seminary both were under necessity of showing proper regard for "the feelings and prejudice of the people." He nevertheless regretted that public opinion imposed the necessity of refusing admission to blacks: "The pity of it! We are willing to go into their churches and try, through the imperfect medium of a 'New Era' Institute, to instruct them, but will not let them attend the theological institution of their denomination which we proclaim as the best on earth. It is still the old era."¹⁸⁶

Edgar Y. Mullins was committed to the standard segregationist reasoning.

If the mass of negroes will follow the sanest and wisest leaders among them, there will be little difficulty in solving the negro problem. The difficulty of the situation consists chiefly in the fact that there are visionaries and radicals among the negroes and also among the white people of the North, who demand more for the negro than he can reasonably hope to get. I believe, however, that the most practical and wisest and most sympathetic people North and South desire in all possible ways to make the negro all that it is possible for him to become under existing conditions. As things are now, it is practically a contest between two civilizations; that is to say, so long as the negro seeks equality in all respects with the whites. It is immoral and wrong to demand that negro civilization should be placed on a par with white. This is fundamentally the issue. The future development of the two races side by side must take the fact into account. Personally I have the strongest sympathy for the negro in his struggles and believe that there is a great future for him, and that it will come by quiet evolution under moral and intellectual influences.¹⁸⁷

The "sanest and wisest" of black leaders in Mullins's view was Booker T. Washington. "Washington was," Mullins wrote, "remarkably sane and balanced in his views as to the place and future of the Negro. He cherished no illusions as to social equality between Negroes and the white people of the South."¹⁸⁸ Mullins, as editor-in-chief of the seminary's journal, the *Review and Expositor*, endorsed the publication of Washington's article, "Fifty Years of Negro Freedom," in 1913.¹⁸⁹

In 1907 Mullins summarized his views of the race problem. It was chiefly a result, he believed, of blacks' participation in politics.

1. . . . The negro in politics is where the trouble comes. 2. The attitude of our community is favorable toward the education of negroes. 3. The educated negro of our community occupies a friendly attitude toward the whites, and is respected as a negro, but not recognized socially. 4. The greatest obstacles to be overcome in the solution of the race problem will be race prejudice on both sides and the incompetency of the negro for civic life, and for the most part his immorality. 5. The whites will have much to do with the solution of the problem in exhibiting a friendly attitude and encouraging the negro in his upward strivings. 6. Education will not give him social recognition in the South, but it will fit him to discharge his political duties.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ William J. McGlothlin to William O. Carver, 5 Nov. 1901, Carver Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

¹⁸⁷ Edgar Y. Mullins to O. H. Van Norden, 12 Jan. 1907, Letterpress Book 31, p. 631 SBTS.

¹⁸⁸ Mullins, "Introduction," in B. F. Riley, *The Life and Times of Booker T. Washington* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1916), 8.

¹⁸⁹ Booker T. Washington, "Fifty Years of Negro Freedom," *Review and Expositor* 10 (1913): 81-88.

¹⁹⁰ Edgar Y. Mullins to O. S. Price, 26 Dec. 1907, Letterpress Book 31, 926, SBTS.

Charles S. Gardner argued that science had established the inferiority of blacks. Since the early nineteenth century, scientific racism contributed powerfully to the hardening of racial prejudice and injustice in America. Gardner relied heavily on the writings of the race scientists in constructing his understanding of the nature of the race problem in America and its solution.

The most notable and permanent elevation of the race has come not by normal processes of social progress, not by self-development, but physiologically, by receiving the blood of higher races into its veins. The process by which this infusion has taken place in America is shocking to the moral sense; but the facts of the negro's history clearly demonstrate that he owes to it substantially all of his uplift. The leaders of the negroes are the result of this admixture. All the achievements of which the negroes boast and on which their friends and well-wishers predicate hope of future race-power must be placed to the credit of this infusion. If there be any exceptions to this rule—and I never heard of one authentic instance—they are so rare as to confirm and not disprove it.

Prof. A. H. Keane in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* declares without qualification: "No full-blooded negro has ever been distinguished as a man of science, a poet, or an artist, and the fundamental equality claimed for him by ignorant philanthropists is belied by the whole history of the race throughout the historic period." It is the simple truth to say that the negro race has never risen appreciably except by mixture with a superior race. Whether this mulatto product of race fusion can become a stable, permanent race is an open question; . . . by a process of natural selection, there will ultimately appear a definite and relatively fixed race-type of mulattoes. The process of infusion will continue, though not at so great a rate as formerly, and the process of diffusion the white blood throughout the race will continue without abatement; and it seems that the ultimate result must be the disappearance, after many generations, of the pure-blooded negro in America. . . . and in proportion as the negro race ceases to be negro we may expect its capacity for progress proportionately to increase. These conclusions will be confirmed by the consideration of another series of facts. Dr. Robert Bennett Bean has recently given out the results of a comparative study of the brains of negroes and whites . . . Dr. Bean sums up the contrast between the races thus: "The one has a larger frontal region of the brain, the other a larger region behind; the one is subjective, the other objective; the one a great reasoner, the other pre-eminently emotional; the one domineering, but having great self-control, the other meek and submissive, but violent and lacking self-control when the passions are aroused; the one a very advanced race, the other a very backward one. The Caucasian and the negro are fundamentally opposite extremes in evolution." . . . Education cannot repeal the decree of nature which closes the sutures of the negro's skull at a certain period. It can only develop the power of that brain as highly as possible under that fatal limitation. To



Charles S. Gardner (1859–1948)

change these physiological results of age-long evolution only age-long evolution will avail. . . . It is time to turn to the consideration of certain facts of criminology bearing on our problem. . . . Through constituting only about 32 percent of the total population of the South the negroes contribute an average of nearly 90 percent of our criminals. . . . Degeneracy accompanies evolution as its shadow. . . . But there is another phenomenon of a related type which cannot be thus accounted for, viz., the abnormal immorality of the negroes.¹⁹¹

The solution to the race problem then consisted of blacks accepting inferiority and whites acting responsibly: "On the one hand it seems necessary that the negro should in some way be brought to the frank recognition of his racial inferiority. . . . On the other hand, the white man ought to be brought to recognize that his racial superiority does not necessarily imply superior personal merits; . . . but is only the ground of a personal responsibility."¹⁹² The white scientists no less than the white historians developed their scholarship to be suitable for social policy in support of white supremacy.

12—INTEGRATING THE SEMINARY

John R. Sampey and the faculty developed a plan to confer Southern Baptist Theological Seminary degrees on theology students at Simmons University who passed a program including instruction from the seminary's faculty: "I should like very much to see the work of Simmons University in the Theological Department so related to The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary that it would be possible after a few years for the Seminary not only to lend its professors and teaching fellows as members of the Faculty of the colored school for preachers, but also after due time to confer its degrees upon those who attain proper scholastic standards."¹⁹³ Beginning in 1935 the seminary loaned Jesse B. Weatherspoon and other professors and teaching fellows to teach theology courses at Simmons. "The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has lent to this school the services of Dr. J. B. Weatherspoon for two hours a week during the past two years. We have also employed two young men as Teaching Fellows and lent them to Simmons University."¹⁹⁴

Financial exigencies had forced Simmons to greatly reduce its undergraduate course offerings, and there were few students who were sufficiently prepared to undertake graduate work. As a result, this program was not accomplishing the training of black Baptist preachers to the extent that black Baptist leaders and Sampey had hoped. So they developed a different approach which they initiated in 1940. Sampey explained that

I find genuine interest in the education of our negro Baptist preachers on the part of my colleagues of the Faculty and also the members of the Board. I am hoping we may be able in the future to work out some plan whereby we can take part in the training of young negro Baptist ministers. . . . Here in Kentucky there is a law against having white and colored students in the same school. Of course, this could be avoided by having a center for the colored students in another part of Louisville and under the control of our colored brethren. If all the standards in such a

¹⁹¹ Charles Spurgeon Gardner, "The Negro and the White Man," typescript, pp. 4-6, Charles S. Gardner Papers, SBTS.

¹⁹² Charles Spurgeon Gardner, "The Negro and the White Man," typescript, p. 4, Charles S. Gardner Papers, SBTS.

¹⁹³ John R. Sampey to Mrs. George McWilliams, 21 Apr. 1936, Sampey Papers, SBTS; John R. Sampey to Noble Y. Beall, 24 Apr. 1936, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

¹⁹⁴ John R. Sampey to Curtis Lee Laws, 15 Dec. 1936, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

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school could be set up and maintained by our Seminary . . . I think that all the Seminary could hope to do if the movement is inaugurated would be to furnish free of charge enough Professors and Assistants to keep our young colored ministers busy with their theological studies. It would be our aim to maintain just as high standards from the teachers and require from the students just as high standards of scholarship as in our own Seminary.¹⁹⁵

Because Kentucky's "Day Law" prohibited blacks and whites at the same school, Sampey argued, "we must in some way have a separate dormitory and school rooms in which to train our colored brethren. Of course, there is a great deal of prejudice that will be met, and we must try in every way not to stir this up but to carry on the work with as little friction as possible."¹⁹⁶ But it was not the Day Law alone that stood in the way of opening the seminary's on-campus classrooms and dormitories to black students. "In the theological seminary we ought to be able to rise above all racial prejudice," Sampey held, but he knew that some of the students from the deep South, and no doubt the churches that sent them, would not consent, for they had already made it clear that they "resented any invitation to Negro students to eat in our dining room at the Seminary."¹⁹⁷

The seminary's "department for Negro preachers" opened in September 1940 and the courses offered were "identical" with those offered on campus at "The Beeches."¹⁹⁸ Sampey and the faculty recruited students and raised money to defray the costs of room and board.¹⁹⁹ Officially called the Negro Extension Department, classes met at the Baptist Fellowship Center at 1023 West Madison St., which also aided students with room and board. Students applied for admission with the seminary's registrar. Almost from the start, the faculty worked to get black students integrated with the on-campus coursework. At least two students in the first year took their classes on campus, but

SOUTHERN BAPTIST SEMINARY HAS FIRST NEGRO GRADUATE

Thursday, May 4, marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of Southern Baptists, in their endeavors to increase Christian efficiency among all people, by conferring the Degree of Master in Theology on Rev. Garland Kemble Offutt of Ashland, Ky., the son of the late Rev. E. T. Offutt and Mrs. Joanna K. Offutt of Lexington. The Rev. G. K. Offutt is the first Negro to receive a degree of any kind from that great institution of Christian Training, during the many years of its existence.

At 10:30 a. m. the procession was impressively led by President Ellis A. Fuller and the Robed Faculty, composed of some of the most efficient scholars and Christian trainers of our age, and the young candidate marched with humility, mingled with dignity, among them and was followed by a group of one hundred and twenty-six fellow candidates which had among them one from Cuba and another from Romania.

After Dr. Hugh Pickett of Parkersburg, W. Va., had delivered the Missionary Message, Dr. Fuller invited the candidate to come forward and informed the audience that the young man had walked among them in a way that proved to all that he was a high class Christian minister of the gospel, and that he had the highest respect

of the entire faculty and student body, that he had attained a high grade of scholarship that made him eligible to study for his doctorate in any institution in the world.

The entire audience joined in an applause that was all that could have been expected upon any auspicious occasion that has or may take place in one of the greatest institutions for Christian training and fellowship in the world.



GARLAND KEMBLE OFFUTT

Garland Offutt (1908–1976) was the seminary's first African-American graduate.

¹⁹⁵ John R. Sampey to T. O. Fuller, 20 Apr. 1940, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

¹⁹⁶ John R. Sampey to H. T. Sims, 15 May 1940, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

¹⁹⁷ John R. Sampey to Blanche Sydnor White, 20 Sept. 1940, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

¹⁹⁸ John R. Sampey to Ralph A. Herring, 26 July 1940, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

¹⁹⁹ John R. Sampey to R. B. McTier, 16 Aug. 1940, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

in the professors' offices rather than in the classrooms with their white fellow students. Faculty met with Kentucky's attorney-general to discuss how to integrate the classrooms without violating the law.²⁰⁰

The first black graduate was Garland Offutt, who earned a Th.M. in 1944. Offutt then gained admission to the seminary's Ph.D. program. Some professors apparently violated the Day Law by inviting Offutt, quite reasonably, to join the regular doctoral seminar class meetings. Henlee Barnette reported that "after receiving the Th.M. degree, Offutt was invited by some professors of the seminary to sit in regular classes."²⁰¹ Ellis A. Fuller, the seminary's president 1942-1950, commended him as "one of the finest men I have ever known."²⁰²

The seminary's attorney advised the seminary to hold separate graduation ceremonies in 1944, since an integrated ceremony would be a violation of the Day Law. As a result, the seminary awarded Offutt his Th.M. degree in the final chapel service of the year rather than at the official commencement service.²⁰³

On March 29-30, 1946, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary united with Simmons University and the Baptist Fellowship Center to sponsor the "South-Wide Interracial Conference of Baptist Theological Students." About seventy-five persons attended the sessions on the seminary's campus, including representatives from Southern Seminary and six historically black colleges. The students who attended were impatient for desegregation. Garland Offutt counseled a certain realism about what white Southern Baptists would tolerate: "The Divinity School is not sovereign. Often it finds itself limited by its constituency."²⁰⁴ Ellis Fuller expressed a similar sentiment when he commended the conference to Southwestern Seminary president E. D. Head:

It is a thing we must encourage, but it is not without its problems. It also has its dangers. I could wish at times that students would understand what Jesus meant when he said, 'My time is not yet,' and then devote their time and energy in getting ready for that time. The inter-racial aspects did not bother us as nothing was involved more than joint sessions in our chapel. I regret to say



Garland Offutt receives his diploma from president Ellis Fuller, May 4, 1944.

²⁰⁰ John R. Sampey to Marshall A. Talley, 31 Aug. 1941, Sampey Papers, SBTS.

²⁰¹ Henlee Barnette, "Southern Baptist Seminary and African American Students," typescript, Henlee Barnette Papers, Wake Forest University.

²⁰² Ellis A. Fuller to E. P. Alldredge, 17 Sept. 1943, Fuller Papers, SBTS.

²⁰³ Franklin P. Hays to Ellis A. Fuller, 4 Apr. 1944, Fuller Papers, SBTS; Ellis A. Fuller to Mrs. William O. Carver, 25 Apr. 1944, Fuller Papers, SBTS.

²⁰⁴ "South-Wide Interracial Conference of Baptist Theological Students," Cornell Goerner Collection, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

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that the race problem is becoming more and more complex and, obviously, more difficult. We must be Christian and at the same time wise and discreet.²⁰⁵

Some faculty were impatient also. Harold W. Tribble taught theology at the seminary from 1925 until 1947, when he left to serve as president of Andover Newton Theological Seminary in Massachusetts. Tribble confided to a friend that although he loved Southern Seminary and the South, he could have more effective ministry outside the constraints of Southern Baptists and the South. One of the chief reasons was to pursue “a more realistic handling of the race problem in graduate education.”²⁰⁶



B. J. Miller, B.D., 1952, was a member of the first fully integrated class in the seminary's history.

In the summer of 1949, the University of Kentucky admitted a number of black students into graduate and professional degree programs in response to judicial ruling in a lawsuit brought by black plaintiffs seeking admission to the university. In March, 1950, the Kentucky legislature amended the Day Law sufficiently to permit integrated classrooms in most graduate and some undergraduate programs. The University of Louisville admitted black graduate students in 1950 and integrated undergraduate programs in 1951.

The faculty supported integration of the classroom. So did most students. A student group asked 754 seminary students, “Are you willing for a few qualified Negro college graduates to be admitted to our seminary classes on a non-segregated basis?” They reported that 94.7 percent replied Yes, 1.7 percent replied No, and 3.7 percent expressed no opinion.²⁰⁷

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees approved a committee to study the question of admitting black students to the seminary's classrooms. The committee consisted of three trustees (William Harrison Williams, H. I. Hester, and F. A. Sampson), three professors (Cornell Goerner, Theron Price, and Jesse Weatherspoon), and president Ellis Fuller.

Many Southern Baptist leaders opposed integrating the seminary. Dot Nelson, president of Mississippi College, for example, counseled against it: “I am sorry that that Negro question continues to bob up. Those who want the Seminary to take the brunt of it by opening its doors to a half dozen students are beginning at the wrong end of the line. They ought to start with the churches and then the denominational colleges, and by the time they got all of that working smoothly we would be ready for them at the Seminary.”²⁰⁸

²⁰⁵ Ellis A. Fuller to E. D. Head, 23 Sept. 1947, Fuller Papers, SBTS.

²⁰⁶ Harold W. Tribble to A. C. Miller, 30 Sept. 1947, Harold W. Tribble Papers, Wake Forest University.

²⁰⁷ “Statement Regarding Admitting Negroes,” William O. Carver Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

²⁰⁸ Dot M. Nelson to Ellis A. Fuller, 14 Apr. 1950, Fuller Papers, SBTS.

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In 1950 however, Ellis Fuller decided that it was time to integrate the seminary. He seemed to believe that segregation in Christian institutions was inconsistent with the scriptures. He recognized that if the seminary integrated against the strongly held feelings of a majority of the churches, it could gravely damage the seminary. But he seemed convinced that the Christian faith required opening the seminary fully to black students as soon as it could be accomplished. He was encouraged by the strong support of faculty and students for integration. He was “impressed” by how much the trustees had changed since they had last discussed the matter in 1947. Most were now “sympathetic” to the proposal. He also noted the implications of this position: “It seems to me that the same Christianity would demand that we open our colleges, our hospitals, our orphanages, and our churches. I am thoroughly convinced that Southern Baptist leaders ought to abandon their ‘say-nothing’ policy and approach this whole question courageously and intelligently.”²⁰⁹

Fuller died in late 1950 before the seminary’s trustees could act on his recommendation. When they met, they adopted it. On March 13, 1951 they voted to admit black students to integrated classrooms. They did so “almost unanimously.”²¹⁰ They wanted to avoid “radical implications concerning the race issue,” and adopted the following statement:

Since legal barriers have been removed and because of the urgent need of adequate seminary training in the South for Negro Baptist students who are at present deprived of proper theological education, beginning with the session 1951-52 carefully selected Negroes will be admitted on the following basis: Negro men who are candidates for the B.D., Th.M, or Th.D. and who hold as prerequisite the B.A. degree or its equivalent from an accredited college or university, will be admitted to classes, library, and all academic rights and privileges.²¹¹

In 1952, the first black students participated in the regular graduation services. Among the B.D. graduates were the Reverend B. J. Miller, founder and pastor of St. Stephen Baptist Church and grandfather of Dr. Kevin Cosby, the current pastor of St. Stephen Baptist Church; Claude Taylor, pastor in Shelbyville; and J. V. Bottoms, pastor of the historic Green Street Baptist Church in Louisville for 36 years.”²¹²



Jesse V. Bottoms, B.D., 1952, was a member of the first fully integrated class in the seminary’s history.

²⁰⁹ Ellis A. Fuller to Norman Cox, 22 June 1950, Fuller Papers, SBTS.

²¹⁰ Gaines S. Dobbins, untitled, *The Tie*, 1 Apr. 1951, 2.

²¹¹ Untitled, *The Tie*, 1 Apr. 1951, 9.

²¹² Henlee Barnette, “Southern Baptist Seminary and African-American Students,” Henlee Barnette Papers, Wake Forest University. See also, Henlee Barnette, “Negro Students in Southern Baptist Seminaries,” *Review and Expositor* 53 (1956): 207-10.

13—THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT AND BEYOND

The seminary faculty supported civil rights for blacks and submission to legally enforced integration of public schools after the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. They generally commended a gradual approach and were uncomfortable with the direct-action tactics of Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. With some exceptions, they represented the moderate white view held by many white Southern Baptist pastors. King addressed the shortcomings of this approach in his 1963 "Letter from a Birmingham Jail."

When black delegates to the 1947 Baptist World Alliance meeting in Copenhagen reported that they had experienced racial discrimination at the meeting, the Southern Baptist delegates disputed the claim. Ellis A. Fuller wrote Louie Newton, editor of the *Georgia Christian Index*, in support of Newton's response to the accusations: "I am grateful that you are doing what you are doing in regard to the negro situation. I saw a copy of *The Afro*, a negro paper published in Newark, New Jersey. It was the most vicious and contradictory thing that I ever read. . . . these negroes . . . interpreted every hardship in terms of race discrimination."²¹³

In 1956 W. A. Criswell, one of the seminary's most influential alumni, gave an address at the South Carolina Evangelism Conference in which he made a point of justifying racial segregation. Southern whites generally insisted on segregated education and were broadly committed to defying the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling that declared separate but equal public education unconstitutional. Criswell's defense of segregation was so emphatic that the South Carolina legislature invited him to repeat his address to them—and he did so. Criswell's public position on the question of segregation changed years later, when in the summer of 1968 he preached a sermon at the First Baptist Church of Dallas entitled, "The Church of the Open Door," in which he called on the congregation to forsake its segregationist membership policy.²¹⁴

But when Criswell's 1956 comments became known, some of the seminary's faculty were embarrassed. Cornell Goerner, professor of missions at the seminary 1935-1957 and a longtime friend of Criswell, wrote Criswell a letter condemning his support of segregation:

All of us know that Negroes themselves want their own churches and will continue to segregate themselves voluntarily in many ways. I have said that if it were known that they could join our churches if they wanted to we would be surprised at how few would choose to do so. But it would be a great spiritual victory if we could give a convincing demonstration of the fact that we really believe what we preach when we quote Paul saying, that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither bond nor free, male or female; that he breaks down the middle wall of partition and makes men one, etc. Yes, there are going to continue to be natural groupings, by class, by temperament, by taste, by race, and many other standards. But this will all be voluntary. That is the very point at issue. You make a curious leap in your logic. You argue for your right to segregate yourself, as you please. The Negro wants the same right. But the issue is not voluntary segregation, but enforced segregation, on the basis of race and color alone, in the public schools and on public transportation . . . and then, if we will face it, in churches. Follow your own logic. Allow

²¹³ Ellis A. Fuller to Louie D. Newton, 9 Sept. 1947, Fuller Papers, SBTS.

²¹⁴ "Baptist Leader Blasts Integration as 'Idiocy,'" *The State* (Columbia, SC), 22 Feb. 1956; "Criswell Challenges Open Doors for Dallas," *Baptist Courier*, 20 June 1968, 10; Mark Newman, *Getting Right with God: Southern Baptists and Desegregation, 1945-1995* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2001), 60-63, 84.

the Negro to segregate himself, and have confidence that for the most part he will do it, and leave you free to choose your own associates too. But the Supreme Court has ruled that, in public matters, he must have the same right of choice as you and I have. There is just no way around this principle, either as an expression of American democracy or as an expression of the supra-racial character of the Christian faith. . . . I hope we can still be friends. But this thing is as deep as life with me. I may still wind up in Africa myself, who knows? I cannot agree with either the logic, the wisdom, or the spirit of your speech. It makes me bleed inside.²¹⁵

Like most of the faculty, Goerner was also a moderate regarding the advance of civil rights for blacks. He believed that all persons should receive equal treatment before the law. He opposed segregation. But he also believed that efforts to force desegregation too quickly would do more harm than good and would delay achieving the goal.

I am in favor of the rights of the Negro. But it is my settled conviction that many who are working for desegregation and the rights of the Negro are actually hindering the cause which they seek to set forward. They are creating antagonisms and strong reactions on the part of persons who otherwise would have been willing to move slowly toward the ultimate goal. I am sure you see evidences of this throughout the South.²¹⁶

Duke K. McCall, president of the seminary 1951-1982, agreed with Goerner. Christianity required ending racial injustices, including involuntary segregation. But progress would come gradually. And the principles of Christian love and justice, especially since popular evangelist Billy Graham was promoting it, would move southern whites ultimately to end racial injustice.

In the South the churches have been the most powerful moderating force curbing the tendency to violence in the present situations. . . . It is obvious that the message of the gospel was bound to destroy all forms of racial injustice eventually. . . . One is naive indeed who thinks that the only approach to the problem of racial injustice today is a full scale assault on those who believe in slower or different solutions to the problem. Mr. Graham has actually made a tremendous contribution to the acceptance of the equality of all men of all races under God. Because of the respect and affection in which he is held by so many, his quiet but firm words and his example have done more good in the realm of race relations than the oratory of a dozen professional reformers.²¹⁷

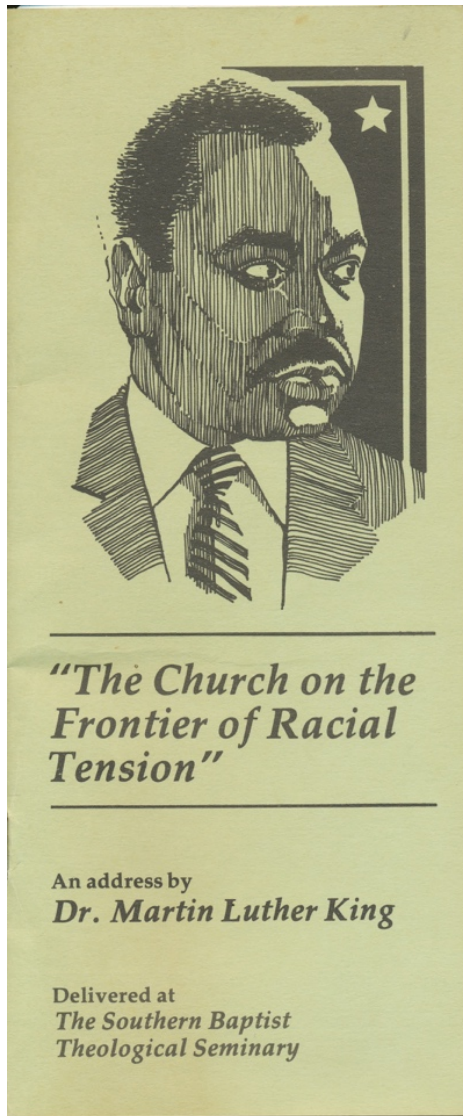
Jesse B. Weatherspoon, who taught preaching at the seminary 1929-1959, wrote the report of the denomination's Christian Life Commission endorsing the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and won the convention's approval of the report.²¹⁸ Prior to joining the seminary faculty, professor Nolan Howington was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Little Rock, Arkansas, when he urged whites there to support the school board's plan for desegregating the public schools. He preached a Sunday morning

²¹⁵ H. Cornell Goerner to W. A. Criswell, 28 Apr. 1956, H. Cornell Goerner Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

²¹⁶ H. Cornell Goerner to James M. Bulman, 2 Aug. 1956, H. Cornell Goerner Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

²¹⁷ Duke K. McCall to Harold Fey, 5 Sept. 1956, Duke K. McCall Papers, SBTS.

²¹⁸ Henlee Barnette, "The General and the Colonel," typescript, Henlee Barnette Papers, Wake Forest University.



The seminary published an edition of King's Julius Brown Gay lecture.

sermon in May, 1957, to urge his church's support. It was a controversial stand, unpopular among Little Rock's white population—they rejected the desegregation plan emphatically.²¹⁹ Howington resigned shortly afterward to join the seminary faculty. When other seminary graduates attempted to lead their churches to rescind their segregationist policies, they experienced similar opposition from within and from without their congregations. Fred Lawton, pastor of the Orangeburg, South Carolina, Baptist Church, led such an effort in 1956. The community's white political leaders waged a campaign against him.²²⁰

The seminary showed its support for black civil rights in other ways. Henlee Barnette began teaching a course on race relations in 1956. The course was limited to seventy-five students and had a waiting list of around fifty students.²²¹ The seminary's journal, the *Review and Expositor*, published articles supporting an end to segregation. Duke K. McCall participated in a roundtable discussion on desegregation and the church for *Life Magazine* in 1956.²²²

In 1957 ethics professor Henlee Barnette delivered to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Chicago an address on the current racial tensions. He declared that discrimination and segregation were morally wrong and that therefore the church had a right to speak out against them. He praised Southern Baptists for the progress they had made in recent years:

Our churches have tended to become conditioned more by our culture than by our Christ. So often our churches merely reflect the standards, the folkways, and the mores of the community, rather than the ethical standards of Christianity. But Baptists have made progress in race relations and I am proud to be a Baptist at this point. . . . Our Christian Life Commission has

taken the lead in many instances with reference to race relations. This Convention approved, in 1947, a statement of principles in race relations, which has been published in a pamphlet . . . This is the most forthright and solid statement of the Christian way in race relations that I know anything about. . . . In 1954 this Convention approved a resolution which stated that we believe that

²¹⁹ Mark Newman, *Getting Right with God*, 158-59.

²²⁰ Wayne Oates to Olin T. Binkley, 14 July 1956, Binkley Papers, Wake Forest University. On southern white clergy and the civil rights movement, see Elaine Allen Lechtreck, *Southern White Ministers and the Civil Rights Movement* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2018); and Carolyn Renee Dupont, *Mississippi Praying: Southern White Evangelicals and the Civil Rights Movement, 1945-1975* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).

²²¹ Henlee Barnette to Newton Rayzor, 21 Sept. 1956, Henlee Barnette Papers, Wake Forest University.

²²² "A Round Table Has Debate on Christians' Moral Duty," *Life Magazine*, 1 Oct. 1956, 139-162.

the Supreme Court's decision to desegregate the public schools was in harmony with the principles of the Constitution of the United States and with the Christian principles of conduct. All of this is wonderful. . . . But we must never be satisfied with making mere pronouncements. We must translate these principles into daily living. . . . Pronouncements are insufficient. We must go beyond pronouncements to practice.²²³

The convention voted to adopt the report.

Many Southern Baptists opposed the seminary's support for black civil rights and integrated public education. They attacked the seminary when they learned that Martin Luther King Jr. addressed a packed chapel on April 19, 1961, to advocate church support of racial desegregation. The faculty had approved the proposal of the faculty's visiting lectures committee to have a full-week Julius Brown Gay Lecture series in which each of four speakers would deliver an address on an important social problem and finally appear together in panel discussion. McCall apparently protested having King on campus for an entire week, but in any case the three other lecturers could not accommodate their schedules to fit in the week-long lectureship series.²²⁴ The new plan called for King to give a single Julius Brown Gay Lecture, combined with additional meetings with students and faculty. Just prior to King's address, 251 students signed a petition subsequently submitted Louisville's mayor. The petition called for the end of racial segregation in the city's restaurants and other establishments.

King's 1961 chapel message was "The Church on the Frontier of Racial Tension." King believed that Americans at that time had the "privilege of standing between two ages: the dying old and the emerging new." In the old age that was now passing away "the Bible and religion were used to give slavery moral justification. And so many argued that the Negro was inferior by nature because of Noah's curse upon the children of Ham. The Apostle Paul's dictum became a watchword, 'Servants, be obedient to your master.'" Some concluded that "the Negro is not a man."

But now in the mid-twentieth century, King said, it was a period of transition to a more just social order. The 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* signaled that the old injustices of racial segregation and discrimination would be remedied.

In 1954 the Supreme Court . . . said in substance . . . that separate facilities are inherently unequal, and that to segregate a child on the basis of his race is to deny that child equal protection of the law. . . . To put it figuratively in Biblical language, we've broken loose from the Egypt of slavery and we've moved through the wilderness of segregation, and now we stand on the border of the promised land of integration.

But to complete the transition to the new order, the churches must play their part. For "all people do not welcome this emerging new order. . . . We see it in the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan. We see it in the birth of white citizens councils." And so the church "has a significant role to play in this period because the issue is not merely the political issue; it is a moral issue. Since the church has a moral responsibility of being the moral guardian of society, then it cannot evade its responsibility in this very tense

²²³ Henlee Barnette, "Southern Baptists: Pronouncement and Practice," typescript, Henlee Barnette Papers, Wake Forest University.

²²⁴ Allen W. Graves to SBTS Trustees, 1 May 1961, Duke K. McCall Papers, SBTS; Duke K. McCall to Ramsey Polard, 24 Apr. 1961, Duke K McCall Papers, SBTS.

period of transition.” The churches had a moral duty to tell the truth about blacks in America. “The Negro is still the last hired and first fired,” because employers do not permit blacks to enter training programs to develop into skilled laborers. “The church can make it clear that the Negro is not inherently criminal. The church can say that poverty and ignorance breed crime, whatever the racial group may be . . . that if there are lagging standards within the Negro community, they lag because of segregation and discrimination, and that it is a tortuous logic to use the tragic results of segregation as an argument for the continuation of it.” The churches had a moral duty to oppose segregation, and to begin in their own congregations. “Where there is segregation in any area the church must be willing to stand up with an action program. One of the best ways that the church can do this is to remove the yoke of segregation from its own body.” The churches will thus play the central part to “bring into being this society of brotherhood, transforming the dangling discords of our south-land into a beautiful symphony of peaceful relationships, and this will be the day, figuratively speaking, ‘the morning stars will sing together and the sons of God will shout for joy.’”²²⁵



Martin Luther King, Jr. with members of the faculty and staff, April 19, 1961.
Left to right: Jim Austin, Allen Graves, Wayne Ward, Martin Luther King, Jr.,
Hugh Peterson, Nolan Howington, and G. Willis Bennett.

Reports estimated that 1,400 persons squeezed into the chapel to hear King’s address. King also met with the seminary faculty, and discussed civil rights issues for an hour with around 500 students, at the conclusion of which the students gave King a standing ovation.²²⁶

Many white Southern Baptists were not pleased. Some protested vehemently. A number of churches withdrew their financial support of the seminary in response. The Dothan, Alabama, First Baptist Church voted on July 19, 1961 to send no funds to support the seminary. Seven other Alabama

²²⁵ Martin Luther King Jr., “Address Given by Martin Luther King at SBTS,” typescript, Duke K. McCall Papers, SBTS.

²²⁶ Ora Spaid, “Dr. King Says ‘Segregation Is Dead,’” *Louisville Courier Journal*, 20 Apr. 1961.



Duke K. McCall (1914–2013)

churches, including a Montgomery church with 3,200 members, voted to withhold support.²²⁷ An attorney and Sunday School teacher in another Southern Baptist church in Montgomery wrote McCall calling for his resignation: “We know Martin Luther King for what he is, and how you, as president of this institution could permit such a racist agitator to appear before your student body is beyond me. The thing that disturbs us most is the fact that after his speech, more than 250 students under your supervision signed a petition calling upon the mayor of Louisville to desegregate its restaurants, in honor of this agitator. Our class voted Sunday to withhold all contributions from the ‘General Fund’ of our church until our church takes action in withholding its support from the Seminary. . . . We voted not to contribute even one cent to an institution whose president would permit a man like Martin Luther King to appear as a speaker before our future preachers.”²²⁸

McCall began to distance the seminary from King’s “extreme” message.²²⁹ In a letter to W. D. Malone, a prominent Alabama layman who organized an extensive campaign against the seminary in protest of King’s invitation, McCall expressed some regret over King’s visit: “It is clear that, in total assessment, the visit of Martin Luther King produced more liabilities than assets.” McCall also regretted that such stalwart segregationists as Alabama layman Dean Fleming were guaranteeing a federally imposed integration rather than a voluntary one. “Dean Fleming is the sort of fool who is hastening the day of enforced integration for the South. That will be as tragic as the outcome of the Civil War and as inevitable unless some intelligent men like yourself work out alternative answers. I do not write with such feeling as an outsider but rather as a Southerner who weeps with frustration over the fact that the less intelligent white Southerner has been pitted against the smartest Negroes with the result not only that enforced legal segregation is dying but also many other values of Southern culture and life are going to die with it.”²³⁰

McCall and the trustee officers apologized for inviting King: “The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, together with President Duke K. McCall, wishes to express regret for any offense caused by the recent visit of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., to the campus of the Seminary.”²³¹

²²⁷ Alton Cumbs, “In Protest over King Invitation: Six Baptist Churches Withhold Seminary Fund,” 24 July 1961, newspaper clipping, Duke K. McCall Papers, SBTS; “Southern Trustees Make King Statement,” Baptist Press, 9 Aug. 1961.

²²⁸ R. L. Farnell to Duke K. McCall, in “Mr. Farnell on King’s Louisville Speech,” 3 Aug. 1961, newspaper clipping, Duke K. McCall Papers, SBTS.

²²⁹ Duke K. McCall to Rev. Louis Wilhite, 1 Aug. 1961, Duke K. McCall Papers, SBTS.

²³⁰ Duke K. McCall to W. D. Fleming, 10 June 1961, Duke K. McCall Papers, SBTS. The letter became public shortly afterward and kept making the rounds for some time. The fundamentalist *Bible Baptist Tribune*, for example, reprinted it on 11 Aug. 1961, 6.

²³¹ Ernest L. Honts, “To All Persons Who Have Written the Seminary Protesting the Visit of Martin Luther King,” 27 July 1961, typescript, Duke K. McCall Papers, SBTS; “Baptist Seminary Sorry about Furor,” *Louisville Times*, 9 Aug. 1961; “Seminary: Apology for King Campus Visit,” *Christian Index*, 10 Aug. 1961; Leon Macon, “Louisville Seminary Makes a Statement,” *Alabama Baptist*, 10 Aug. 1961.

They also formally requested that the faculty obtain trustee approval before inviting any speaker who was “currently involved in a public controversy.”²³²

It was not much of an apology. This was deliberate. It was intended to provide the seminary’s supporters in Alabama with a means to defend the seminary. They used it to claim that the seminary regretted inviting King, had apologized for it, and would not repeat a similar offense. Alabama trustee J. R. White, pastor of Montgomery First Baptist Church, released a statement playing up the apology:

The enclosed statement is an apology for the unfortunate visit of the Rev. Martin Luther King to the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. It expresses the sincere regret of the trustees together with President Duke K. McCall. Unfortunately history is irreversible. If we could change the past, we would, but that is impossible. We do regret the mistake that was made. Steps have been taken to help prevent the recurrence of this kind of error.²³³

McCall took offense however when many interpreted the apology in the same way that White did. He wrote a memo to the editors of the state Baptist newspapers explaining that the apology was intended to meet a local situation and should be interpreted in a more limited way according to its strict construction and intent.²³⁴ McCall, like most Southern Baptist leaders, wanted to remain in the well-worn moderate path on segregation and civil rights. They wanted gradual change that was planned and adopted voluntarily by southern whites, not sudden integration imposed by federal authority.

McCall attempted to position the seminary as opposed to both segregation and King’s direct-action tactics. He told at least one of those who wrote him to complain of King’s visit that initially King was not invited to give an address at all, but was only invited to participate as one member of a panel discussion. “Approval upon him as a person or upon his methods or objectives would not at all be implied by inviting him in to participate in a panel discussion (as the original faculty guest speakers committee did invite him). Unfortunately, the dates at which the panelists could be here got crossed up in such a way that King ended up not as a member of a panel but as a speaker.” McCall in the same letter suggested that in fact King did not even give a formal address, but only attended two ethics classes to allow students to ask questions of him. “King’s visit was essentially in terms of two classes in Christian Ethics before whom he was to appear for questions and answers. I have only recently been told that the president of the Kentucky White Citizen’s Council also appeared before these two classes. Thus, the two extreme positions were presented to the students. . . . Clearly Southern Seminary does not belong to any organized movement and has no intention of promoting King or his program.”²³⁵

McCall believed that he had always sought the middle ground on the most controversial issues facing Southern Baptists: race issues, theological differences, church-state relations, and growing federal power through legislation and spending programs. He was a moderate. But the intensity of the violence and social strife of 1968 led him to conclude that the honorable middle ground was disappearing. Voices on both sides drove moderates from their middle ground by construing them as dupes or defenders of the other party. McCall felt that the supporters of radical civil rights reform convicted him of supporting

²³² Ernest L. Honts to SBTS Faculty, 27 July 1961, Duke K. McCall Papers, SBTS.

²³³ “Southern Baptist Seminary Trustees and President Duke McCall ‘Regret’ King Visit,” *Alabama Baptist*, 10 Aug. 1961.

²³⁴ Duke K. McCall to the Editors, 14 Aug. 1961, Duke K. McCall Papers, SBTS.

²³⁵ Duke K. McCall to Rev. Louis Wilhite, 1 Aug. 1961, Duke K. McCall Papers, SBTS.

“white supremacy” since he did not agree with their program. He felt that the radical segregationists convicting him of supporting “black power” since he did agree with them. “The moderates among us are dying out because deliberate distortion of our position throws us into extremist camps, which we abhor.”²³⁶

Professors Henlee Barnette, Wayne Oates, and Nolan Howington, collected from the faculty two hundred dollars to give to the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham in response to the brutal bombing there which killed four young girls and did extensive damage to the church. “No amount of money can repair the hurt done to the bereaved loved ones who lost their children as a result of such an inhuman and monstrous act. Nor can a little cash atone for our failure as Christians to act courageously in the struggle for racial justice. But a contribution will say, in a small way, that we have a concern for human life, human dignity, and the right of every citizen of this country to freedom of worship and first class citizenship.”²³⁷

The seminary faculty invited other black preachers and theologians to deliver its endowed lectureships after King’s 1961 Julius Brown Gay Lectures. Benjamin Mays, president of Morehouse College and Chairman of the National Conference on Religion and Race, delivered the Julius Brown Gay Lectures on November 21-22, 1963. Subsequent lecturers included such civil rights leaders as D. E. King, pastor of Chicago’s Monumental Baptist Church, Gardner C. Taylor, renowned homiletician and pastor of one of the largest churches in America, the Concord Baptist Church of Christ in New York, and theologian and civil rights activist John Perkins.

Professor Henlee Barnette reported that members of the seminary faculty and student body participated the civil rights march in Lexington in 1964: “On March 5, 1964, Dr. King led a march on Frankfort, the Capitol of Kentucky. Joining him were . . . Jackie Robinson and 10,000 others—the largest demonstration the capitol had ever witnessed. . . . About 10 percent of the group was white. Among these were Dr. Nolan P. Howington, Professor of Christian Ethics, Dr. and Mrs. Wayne Ward, Professor of Theology, Dr. Willis Bennett, Professor of Christian Ethics, myself, also Professor of Christian Ethics, and a large number of students all from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.”²³⁸

The seminary came to reject notions of white superiority that characterized the seminary’s leadership for so much of its history. In the decades following the civil rights movement, the seminary continued to struggle with the legacy of slavery and racism. This report documents the contradictions and complexities of the experience of Southern Baptists and race in America. We have not overcome all the contradictions, but we are committed to doing so. In 1995, the Southern Baptist Convention repudiated racism and slavery, lamented Southern Baptist support of slavery and racism, denounced racism “in all its forms, as deplorable sin,” and apologized for Southern Baptist participation in “individual and systemic racism.”²³⁹

President R. Albert Mohler Jr. has written against the “heresy of racial superiority” and has called the seminary and Southern Baptists to faithfulness “by embracing and celebrating” the diversity of ethnicities. In his spring 2015 convocation address, he showed how this is a fundamental element of God’s

²³⁶ Duke K. McCall, “Death of a Moderate,” *Report from the Capital*, Jan. 1969, 5.

²³⁷ Henlee Barnette to All Faculty Members, 17 Sept. 1962, Henlee Barnette Papers, Wake Forest University.

²³⁸ Henlee H. Barnette, “March on Frankfort,” undated typescript, Henlee H. Barnette Papers, Wake Forest University.

²³⁹ *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention*, 1995, 80-81; reprinted in Jarvis J. Williams and Kevin M. Jones, eds, *Removing the Stain of Racism from the Southern Baptist Convention* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2017), liv-lvi.

purpose in the gospel: “We have come from a table of nations and a tower of Babel to a covenant with Abraham and a new covenant in blood to a table set in honor of a Lamb. Diversity is not an accident or a problem—it’s a sign of God’s providence and promise. If the church gets this wrong, it’s not just getting race and ethnic difference wrong. It’s getting the gospel wrong.”²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ R. Albert Mohler Jr., “The Heresy of Racial Superiority—Confronting the Past, and Confronting the Truth,” 23 June 2015, <https://albertmohler.com/2015/06/23/the-heresy-of-racial-superiority-confronting-the-past-and-confronting-the-truth/>; R. Albert Mohler Jr., “The Table of the Nations, the Tower of Babel, and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb: Part 2,” <https://albertmohler.com/2015/02/27/the-table-of-the-nations-the-tower-of-babel-and-the-marriage-supper-of-the-lamb-part-2/>; R. Albert Mohler Jr., “Conceived in Sin, Called by the Gospel: The Root Cause of the Stain of Racism in the Southern Baptist Convention,” in Williams and Jones, eds., *Removing the Stain of Racism*, 5.