



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE
SUPERIOR COURT DIVISION

COUNTY OF CHATHAM

19 CVS 00809

BARBARA CLARK PUGH; GENE TERRELL)
BROOKS; THOMAS HENRY CLEGG; THE)
WINNIE DAVIS CHAPTER 259 OF THE)
UNITED DAUGHTERS OF THE)
CONFEDERACY,)
Plaintiffs,)

**AFFIDAVIT OF CHATHAM
FOR ALL**

v.)

KAREN HOWARD; MIKE DASHER;)
DIANNA HALES; JIM CRAWFORD; AND,)
ANDY WILKIE, in their official capacities as)
members of the Board or County)
Commissioners of Chatham County, North)
Carolina,)
Defendants,)

I, Del Turner, do hereby say under oath the following:

1. I am of legal age and competent to provide this affidavit. All the information herein is based on my own personal knowledge unless otherwise indicated.
2. I am African American, and serve as Chair of the Board of Directors of Chatham For All("CFA"), a community-based organization dedicated to lawful and peaceful education, advocacy, and engagement to persuade the Chatham County Board of Commissioners ("BOCC") to remove the Confederate Monument ("the Monument"), from

public property, because of the racially discriminatory hate speech it constitutes in its current location in front of the historic courthouse in the center of Pittsboro, and the severe division, fear, intimidation, harassment, and harm that discriminatory speech causes to residents in our community.. I am authorized to provide this affidavit on behalf of CFA..

3. I was born in 1949, and throughout my childhood spent most summers in Chatham County, where my mother was born and raised. I attended the Goldston Colored School (now J.S. Waters Elementary School) in 1955, and later attended Laurinburg Institute (a black high school), studied pre-law at Campbell University and history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I hold an Associate Degree in History from Central Carolina Community College.

4. I moved permanently to Chatham in 1991 and have lived here ever since. I raised my granddaughter here. She attended J.S. Waters and Chatham Central High School, and now my great-grandson is attending J.S. Waters. I have been civically involved in the County since 1994, when I joined Head Start's Policy Council. I have served on Chatham County Partnership for Children's Board, Chatham County Planning Board, Chatham County's Affordable Housing Task Force, and the Community Health Assessment Team. In addition to CFA, I currently serve on Chatham County's Board of Education and Chatham Housing Initiative.

4. The Supreme Court has said that public monuments speak for the people, and that is why Chatham For All has advocated for the removal of the Confederate monument located in front of the historic county courthouse in Pittsboro's center.

5. That monument, because of its location, speaks for Chatham County and perpetuates the false “Lost Cause” narrative concerning the Confederacy, which in fact engaged in treason and the violent defense of human enslavement. The Civil War happened, the South lost, but because there was no constitutional provision for addressing secession, leaders of the Confederacy essentially got a “pass” for their treason.

6. After their defeat, supporters of the Confederacy, including the United Daughters of the Confederacy (“UDC”), constructed a false narrative that down-played the role of slavery in the decision to secede, and made Confederates seem the victim in order to mitigate and obscure their responsibility for the war. Central to the Lost Cause narrative are the defamatory inferences about the enslaved African Americans (e.g., that they were happy to be slaves, otherwise incapable, savages, etc.) which were used to justify slavery and the narrative’s assertion that the Civil War was not about slavery. The result was the dehumanization, demonization and subjugation of African Americans, which became institutionalized by law during the Jim Crow era at the beginning of the 20th century. The UDC erected their Monument in Pittsboro at that time to celebrate white supremacy and subordination of African Americans in Chatham County.

7. This false narrative, which is prominent in textbooks and history books used in public schools in some areas to this day, has cultivated dangerous and discriminatory attitudes toward African Americans, as evidenced by the vicious manifesto and subsequent murders by Dylan Roof in 2015. Ironically, it was the response by advocates across the nation to remove confederate symbols of hate on public property in

the wake of those murders that led the NC legislature to pass the law protecting such symbols in our state. .

8. In an effort to promote racial justice and equity in our community and to engage the County Commissioners to act to remove the monument, CFA began broad based public education and advocacy campaign to expose the Lost Cause narrative the monument represents and its painful and divisive impacts on our community. CFA members wrote letters, circulated and presented the Commissioners with a petition signed by over 900 people seeking removal of the monument, engaged in public outreach and education, and repeatedly attended and spoke out at public meetings on this matter. Copies of statements and letters from CFA and its members to the BOCC are attached hereto and incorporated by reference as Attachment 1.

9. CFA is seeking to intervene to defend against this action by the UDC and the individual plaintiffs in order to protect our organizational interests, as well as the interests of our members, as described above. If that monument is allowed to remain where it is, it will frustrate our mission to address the County's role in perpetuating a racially discriminatory and false historical account. Furthermore, it will require CFA to expend further resources to counter the harmful Lost Cause narrative and combat the legacy of racism the monument represents.

10. Our interests are not adequately represented by the Defendants in this action, who are very differently situated from CFA in important respects related to this litigation, especially regarding our constitutional rights to instruct our elected officials and to hold them accountable. CFA worked diligently, according to established and

fundamental democratic principles, to pursue its mission and address the Monument's harmful racial impacts. This litigation seeks to undermine those efforts, and in doing so threatens those rights and subverts our interests in ensuring that the BOCC effectively represents the will of the people, particularly with regard to the vital public issue of racial justice and equality. If we are not allowed to intervene to defend against the Plaintiffs' claims, the disposition of this action may impair our ability to protect our rights and interests.

This, the 4th day of November, 2019

Del Turner

Del Turner

North Carolina

Chatham County

I, the undersigned notary public, hereby certify that DEL TURNER personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution of this AFFIDAVIT.

Witness my hand and official seal, this the 4th day of November, 2019.

Notary Public

My commission expires _____, 20____.

This, the 4th day of November, 2019

Del Turner

Del Turner

North Carolina

Chatham County

I, the undersigned notary public, hereby certify that DEL TURNER personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution of this AFFIDAVIT.

Witness my hand and official seal, this the 4th day of November, 2019.

Elyse Haddix

Notary Public

My commission expires Aug. 28, 2019.

**Presentation to the Chatham County Board of Commissioners
Request to Remove Confederate Monument**

April 15, 2019

By Carl E. Thompson, Sr.

Mr. Chairman and members of the board; thank you for this opportunity to come before you to speak regarding the issue that is before us this evening. I'm Carl E. Thompson, Sr. and I've served for many years in Chatham County as a local church pastor, elected official, community college educator, and entrepreneur. And, I'm here tonight advocating for the removal of the confederate monument from the courthouse square.

Over the course of my public life of service, I have made many acquaintances of differing ethnicity, religions, and with various political and social views. We've sometimes vehemently disagreed, but have always ultimately agreed to disagree, out of respect for one another. And while there is deep division among us around this issue, my hope is that we can one day come together to dialogue, in the spirit of truth and reconciliation.

All monuments convey or represent something. One may inspire pride and nostalgia to some, whereas in others it evokes memories of pain and suffering. It all depends on how each person interprets the history of it.

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I know the monument is viewed by some as a historical reminder of the men who fought for the confederate army, but let me tell you what it means to me, as an African American growing up and living in this county, and my understanding of the history that it represents.

As a child, I grew up in the fifties and early sixties in the segregated south and experienced the degradation and dehumanization that this system of injustice wrought. I remember when we traveled as families on vacations, we always traveled together for protection and support and out of necessity, packed picnic lunches and snacks for the long journeys. The laws that existed made public facilities such as restaurants and restrooms off limits to us.

As one of a small group of children, I experienced voluntary integration of the public schools in the sixties, and while I have very fond memories of Chatham Central H.S. I also have poignant memories of threats of violence and animosity during the early years.

Upon graduation from college, I moved back to Chatham County to live just as many of my friends were moving away to find better opportunities. There weren't many for people of color in this county in 1976, but I wanted to stay to try and make a difference in people's lives. I became a candidate for the office of county commissioner in 1977 and won, by the

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grace of God, becoming the first African American to hold that office since Reconstruction.

During my sixteen years as a public servant, I obviously spent a lot of time in and around the courthouse in performance of my duties. And I have to say, it sometimes felt surreal making decisions to protect the rights of all Chatham citizens in the shadow of an image, on a pedestal no less, who would deny me of mine.

There are many valid reasons this statue should be removed from the front of the most prominent building in our county. The foremost is that it does not reflect the core American values contained in our country's constitution that you, our county commissioners swore to uphold. Our constitution as a document is the embodiment of the ideals of justice, human rights for all, nonviolence, civil discourse, equal protection under the law, fairness, safety, integrity, accountability and truth.

This monument to the confederate cause does not embody or reflect any of our values.

Mitch Landrieu, the Mayor of New Orleans so eloquently sums this up by stating the following:

“These statues are not just stone and metal. They are not just innocent remembrances of a benign history. These

4.

monuments purposefully celebrate a fictional, sanitizes Confederacy, ignoring the death, ignoring the enslavement and the terror that it actually stood for.”

The presence of this monument sends an ambiguous message to anyone who comes to our county as to which side we stand on the constitutional ideas I’ve just mentioned. This government represents all the people of Chatham County and there should therefore be no doubt in anyone’s mind about the values we represent and hold dear.

As our county elected leaders, you have the opportunity to do what is right rather than what is expedient. Allow history to remember you as being for the cause of what is morally right and just. I believe this verse from the book of Isaiah in the Bible is most appropriate. It reads:

“Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.”

Reconciliation can only come when truth is acknowledged and there is a sincere attempt to eradicate all vestiges of hate, oppression and man’s inhumanity to man. Germany stands out as a truly remarkable symbol of reconciliation and truth by removing all monuments to Hitler and the Third Reich from public view.

5.

Lastly, I'm here tonight for my children, grandchildren, and their many generations to follow, in this county. I want them to inherit a place where diversity, justice, equity, good will and quality of life are celebrated. I've spent my entire life working towards that goal, and while we have much progress to make; every time we are collectively moved by the Spirit of justice and righteousness, to act to remove a symbol of oppression and injustice from our midst, we are progressively moving towards that goal.

Thank you

Request by Chatham For All to Return the Confederate Monument to the United Daughters of the Confederacy

April 15, 2019

Dear Commissioners,

Following a year and a half of individual comment, information and requests, Chatham For All, a group of Chatham residents, is offering historical and legal information on the Confederate monument in front of the Courthouse, and a petition to request that the Commissioners return it to its owner, the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

We offer the following documentation to support our request:

- 1) Request and Supporting Information (submitted to the Chatham County Clerk on April 4, 2019)
- 2) A petition from Chatham County residents requesting removal of the monument and its return to the United Daughters of the Confederacy
- 3) Remarks from Chatham For All presented to the Board of Commissioners April 15, 2019
- 4) Presentation including dedication speeches and the original license agreement between Chatham County and the Winnie Davis Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy
- 5) To provide context for the above, we also submit the following documentation, historical background and further reading, providing printed copies where feasible:
 - a. Historical and social context of confederate monuments:
<http://origins.osu.edu/article/what-we-talk-about-when-we-talk-about-confederate-monuments>
 - b. Background information on the Daughters of the Confederacy's efforts to promote the 'Lost Cause' narrative: <https://www.vox.com/videos/2017/10/25/16545362/southern-socialites-civil-war-history>
 - c. Summary and map of Confederate monuments that have been removed or are under consideration for removal:
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/08/16/us/confederate-monuments-removed.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=C69371CF04485E6C821BC0B73CB63DA4&gwt=pay>
 - d. The 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution, guaranteeing equal protection under the law: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/amendmentxiv>
 - e. The social impact of confederate memorabilia: <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/07/the-science-of-why-taking-down-the-confederate-flag-matters/454353/>
 - f. The public costs of confederate memorabilia:
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/costs-confederacy-special-report-180970731/>
 - g. The psychological impacts of public memorials:
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042813014286>

- h. Interview with Professor Kirk Savage of the University of Pittsburgh, expert on public monuments: <https://talkpoverty.org/2017/08/17/confederate-monuments-expert-explains-memorialized-white-supremacy/>
- i. An overview of the reconstruction period, historically relevant to the erection of the monument in Chatham County: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/reconstruction-one-of-the-most-misunderstood-chapters-in-american-history/>
- j. Historians from University of Arizona on the power of monuments: <https://uanews.arizona.edu/story/four-questions-ua-historians-power-monuments>
- k. Article from The Guardian on the subject of removing monuments: <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/sep/26/statue-wars-what-should-we-do-with-troublesome-monuments>
- l. Interview with historians highlighting the problems of contextualization: <https://www.gpbnews.org/post/politics-contextualizing-confederate-monuments>
- m. Stanford Law Review article on the relationship between monuments and speech: <https://www.stanfordlawreview.org/online/confederate-statute-removal/>
- n. American Historical Association statement on Confederate Monuments: <https://www.historians.org/Documents/AHA%20Letters/AHA%20Statement%20on%20Confederate%20Monuments.pdf>

6) We also reference the following books, social and historical analyses:

- a. "Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture" by Professor Karen Cox, UNC Charlotte
- b. "The Rich Man's Memory That A Poor Man Buys: Analysis of Confederate Monuments and Memorials in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina, 1868-1914" by William Christopher Laws, Masters Thesis at North Carolina Central for a Masters of Arts in 2017
- c. "The Cost of Racism for People of Color: Contextualizing Experiences of Discrimination, Edited by Alvin N. Alvarez, PhD, Christopher T. H. Liang, PhD, and Helen A. Neville, PhD

We trust the above information and documentation will help to make your decision a straightforward one. With confidence in your leadership and thanks for your consideration,

Chatham For All
April 15, 2019

Following a year and a half of individual comment, information and requests, Chatham For All, a group of Chatham residents, is here to talk about the Confederate monument in front of the Courthouse and to request that the Commissioners return it to its owner, the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

In support of this request we offer the following facts and reasoning:

1.The Monument

The monument in front of the historic courthouse in Pittsboro was paid for and is owned by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, Winnie Davis Chapter. That chapter's current location is given as 183 White Tail Lane, Siler City 27344. The monument was designed in Durham and manufactured in Ohio.

The monument is located there pursuant to the written license granted by the Chatham County Commissioners on July 8, 1907. The license granted by the Commissioners at that time permitted the owner to "erect on the court-house square and in front of the court-house a monument to Chatham's Confederate soldiers, and to cut down the shade tree in front of the court-house near to the place proposed for said monument; and the said monument may remain in the care and keeping of the said Daughters of the Confederacy." It allowed that group to relocate the monument from their property to the public property in front of the courthouse where it is to this day. As a matter of law, this license, like all licenses that do not include specific terms to the contrary, can be terminated at any time by any party for any reason or no reason.

2. History

The confederate monument in Pittsboro symbolizes and promotes values which do not reflect an equitable community. Like many similar monuments in the South, this one was conceived, paid for and dedicated by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, a group devoted to promoting a narrative that the Civil War was not fought over slavery and that slavery was generally benign. Most of these monuments were erected long after the Civil War, frequently and notably in response to apparent progress in efforts for racial equity. The content of dedication speeches offered throughout the State shines a bright light on the message the monuments were meant to convey. In 1909, Governor William Walton Kitchin of N.C. said the following at the dedication of the Confederate monument in Granville County:

"We have seen the white man come in contact with the brown man of the tropics and the brown man went down. We have seen him knock at the gates of the yellow man in the East, and they opened at his will. We have seen him face the black man in his native African home, and the black man gave him the path. We have seen him press the red man and the red man is disappearing from the face of the Earth. You see what the whole country is starting to recognize, that it is not the power of all the armies ever drilled or of all the constitutions ever written to make the white man and the black races equal."

The argument that Confederate monuments are about history and not white supremacy simply doesn't hold up. Furthermore, this particular monument is not representative of Chatham

County, either before the Civil War or afterwards. Chatham County voted 86% against secession in February 1861. President of the Winnie Davis Chapter of the UDC, Mrs. Henry London, reported "uphill work at first to create and then keep up interest" in their cause. Within a week after the unveiling of the monument, it was defaced in the middle of the night with grease and/or shoe polish.

3. Freedom of Expression

The continued presence of private property on public land forces the county government and every person in the County to endorse the values the monument embodies and promotes. This is in violation of the First Amendment free speech rights of county government and of every member of the community. This past January a trial court in Alabama (Alabama v. City of Birmingham, CV 17-903426-MGG) ruled that it was not even necessary to interpret that state's law restricting moving or removing of Confederate Monuments, because the law violated the US Constitution. The court, relying on a string of decisions of the United States Supreme Court, held a municipality has a legally protected First Amendment right to free speech. *Walker v. Texas Div., Sons of Confederate Veterans Inc.*, 135 S. Ct. 2239 (2015); *Pleasant Grove City v. Summum*, 555 U.S. 460, (2009) ("(p)ermanent monuments displayed on public property typically represent government speech") *Id.* at 470.

The U.S. Supreme Court also stated that a monument's message changes with time, noting a "study of war memorials found that people reinterpret the meaning of these monuments as historical interpretations and the society around them changes." *Id.* at 477. The Alabama state court held that a city has a constitutional right "speak for itself, to say what it wishes and to select the views that it wants to express." Here Chatham County is the speaker, and every day is forced to endorse the views of the monument's owner. Our County has first amendment rights. The privately owned monument on public land is speaking for us, but County Commissioners have the authority and right to determine how we should best represent ourselves as an equitable community.

4. Local Sovereignty

North Carolina State law purports, in certain circumstances, to limit the moving of certain "objects of remembrance". That law is not applicable here, as it specifically lists as excluded from the law the following: "An object of remembrance owned by a private party and that is the subject of a legal agreement between the private party and the State or a political subdivision of the state governing the removal or relocation of that property" (NC General Statutes, section 100-2.1(c)(2)). This is not a loophole in the law. This is the design of the law.

The County Commissioners have the authority to rescind the 1907 license agreement between the County and the owner of the monument, which would require that it either be removed from public property or that some new arrangement be entered into with the private owner. The property owner's First Amendment rights are fully protected as they are free to place it on private property, be that a cemetery, museum, or some other location not within the County's civic space.

5. An Opportunity for Leadership

Today the important and real negative impact of the monument's continued presence in Pittsboro cannot be ignored. We have an opportunity to distinguish ourselves as a community interested in a future which provides the opportunities our residents deserve. Good leadership is about shaping our communities in the most positive ways we can envision. Everyone has the capacity to bring good leadership to public issues like this one. The residents supporting this request are leading the effort to define the positive outcomes our county can achieve, and the reasons why we should achieve them. But we rely on you as government officials—decision-making leaders—to bring about those outcomes.

Regardless of your views on the causes of the Civil War, there is a soldier defending the right to own other people guarding the most prominent symbol of justice in our County. If you agree that removing the statue from public grounds is in Chatham's best interest, then act now. Waiting until after some threat to public safety, vandalism, or other harm to the community—which to be clear we are not advocating, but has happened in other similar scenarios—gives the false impression that the public interests you are advancing are defined by the crisis moment itself.

We urge you to act swiftly, with thoughtfulness, wisdom and demonstrable leadership. We only do our best when we are challenged.

Remarks to the Chatham County Commissioners
4/15/2019

Thank you for providing us a chance to voice our concerns tonight. My name is Chris Kaman, and I have lived in Chatham County since 1981.

I was born in Charlotte, North Carolina and raised in Memphis, Tennessee. My great grandfather, William Mitchell Morgan, fought for the South as a member of the Mississippi Confederate Army. He was 19 at the time, and never received any pay during the Civil War.

I do not know why this young man fought. Was it out of loyalty to his home and family? Perhaps. Or maybe he thought that the white "race" was superior to the black "race," that slavery of blacks was the natural order of things, and so the South had a right to continue slavery as its economic foundation. Perhaps.

I was raised to believe in the honor of the South, and to revere the Confederate soldiers who died fighting for the South. Yet, my life and my perspectives began to change when I was in the 7th grade in Memphis. I began attending a school that was integrated with about a 40% black. I formed friendships with some of them who in turn began to defend me from others who saw me as a rather defenseless fat, white boy. I was a student at this school when Martin Luther King came to help the sanitation workers struggle for dignity, and he met his tragic end. I continued to change as I had more black friends, and watched the civil rights movement continue into the 1970s and beyond. As I grew older I continued to learn more about the South, the real horrors of slavery, the travesty of the Jim Crow era, and persistent interpersonal, and structural racism.

I recently read a book which is a must read for Southerners who want to come to grips with the actual history of Confederate Monuments. UNC Charlotte Professor of History Karen Cox published a book titled "Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture." The book shows how United Daughters of the

Confederacy (also known just as the “Daughters”¹) was extremely effective in its efforts to vindicate the South which in fact whitewashed the horrors of slavery; their attempt is part of a narrative called the “Lost Cause”².

Between 1900 and 1914 they bought and installed 21 monuments to the Confederacy here in the Piedmont in public spaces, like courthouses and town squares.³ However, in the period between 1868 and 1900 only 6 memorials had been placed in the Piedmont, and 5 of them were placed in cemeteries⁴ by organizations which preceded the Daughters which was founded in 1894. The monument outside of the courthouse is owned by the local Winnie Davis Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and was erected by their efforts in 1907.

The Daughters were also successful in the rewriting of history books (mainly in the South) to change the causes of the civil war from a war to maintain slavery to a war about states rights, and Northern aggression⁵. They sought to portray slaves as happy, and owners as benevolent masters⁶ who took good care of them. Examples of this pro-Confederate historical perspective can also be found the chapter titled “The Negro” in the book “Chatham County 1771-1971” which is available at the Chatham County Library.⁷

The Daughters also promoted essays which spoke of the “civilizing influence” of slavery on those enslaved.⁸ The Daughters embraced the

¹ See “Dixie’s Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture” by Prof. Karen Cox, UNC Charlotte, p xii.

² See <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/how-i-learned-about-cult-lost-cause-180968426/> and <https://mountainx.com/news/asheville-archives-the-lost-cause-narrative/>. See also https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lost_Cause_of_the_Confederacy.

³ From “The Rich Man’s Memory That A Poor Man Buys: Analysis of Confederate Monuments and Memorials in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina, 1868-1914” by William Christopher Laws, Masters Thesis at North Carolina Central for a Masters of Arts in 2017, p 66.

⁴ From “The Rich Man’s Memory...”, p 64.

⁵ Dixie’s Daughters, Chapter 7, pp 118-140.

⁶ Dixie’s Daughters, page 104.

⁷ See Chatham County 1771-1971, “The Negro” pp. 319-348.

⁸ Dixie’s Daughters, page 105.

KKK as “chivalrous knights”.⁹ In 1913 the Daughters endorsed the book written by one of its members; it was titled “The Ku Klux Klan or the Invisible Empire.” It praised Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest, founder of the KKK, and it praised the efforts of the KKK. The book was included as a supplementary textbook in Mississippi.¹⁰ By the 1920s most Southern states had adopted pro-Confederate textbooks largely from the efforts of the Daughters.¹¹

Despite these very successful efforts of the Daughters, all Southerners today who claim to know the historical truths about the South must admit that the South seceded from the Union to maintain its economy and slavery was the basis of its economy. Most modern historians have concluded such¹². In fact South Carolina, Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas and Virginia explicitly stated that in their articles of secession.¹³ President Lincoln in his second inaugural address cited slavery as the cause of the Civil War.¹⁴ This inconvenient truth is something we Southerners today must have the humility to confess, and the courage to redress.

The monument outside of the courthouse no longer reflects the values and attitudes of the majority of Chatham County citizens, if indeed it ever did.¹⁵ The monument is out of touch with our Constitution, particularly 14th amendment which guarantees equal protection under the law. The courthouse should be a venue which embodies the principles of justice and equal treatment of all people, rather than the complete opposite. This contradiction needs to be resolved; the monument should be removed from

⁹ Dixie's Daughters, page 108.

¹⁰ Dixie's Daughters, page 110.

¹¹ Dixie's Daughters, page 160.

¹² See <https://uanews.arizona.edu/story/four-questions-ua-historians-power-monuments>.

¹³ See <https://www.historynet.com/which-states-referred-to-slavery-in-their-cause-of-secession.htm>.

¹⁴ See http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/lincoln2.asp.

¹⁵ From “The Rich Man's Memory...”, p 8-22. Chatham County voted 86% against succession in 1861 (p 17) as did the state by 194 votes. In May 1861 a 2nd statewide vote approved succession, but Lee does not mention Chatham's vote specifically.

our courthouse grounds and returned to the Winnie Davis Chapter in a timely manner.

Many cities and states across the country, including the South, have removed or relocated their Confederate monuments to Civil War cemeteries, and to other more appropriate venues than courthouses and publicly owned spaces¹⁶. I urge you to join with them in making our public spaces a place for all people.

Now I invite Carl Thompson to give us his perspective.

¹⁶ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Removal_of_Confederate_monuments_and_memorials

Chatham For All

A presentation to the Commissioners from residents of Chatham County

April 15, 2019

1

I. Introduction

- Introduction
- Overview of Confederate monuments in general and this monument in particular
- Impacts of monuments on people and communities
- Specific legal parameters for the Chatham statue
- NC General Statutes, section 100-2.1(c)(2)

2

Agreement

- Gave permission for the UDC to "erect on the court-house square and in front of the court-house a monument to Chatham's Confederate soldiers, and to cut down the shade tree in front of the court-house near to the place proposed for said monument; and the said monument may remain in the care and keeping of the said Daughters of the Confederacy and such person or persons as they may hereafter designate."
- The monument is neither state nor county property (and thus not subject to state jurisdiction); it is owned by the Winnie Davis chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.



DESCRIPTION: Authorization from the Chatham County Commissioners to the Winnie Davis Chapter UDC, to erect a Confederate monument in front of the courthouse. July 8, 1907.
SOURCE: Winnie Davis Chapter UDC Records, ORG 121.3, NCDAH

Office of the Board of County Commissioners of Chatham County, M.C.
ORDERED, That the Winnie Davis Chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy are hereby authorized and permitted to erect on the court-house square and in front of the court-house a monument to Chatham's Confederate soldiers, and to cut down the shade tree in front of the court-house near to the place proposed for said monument; and the said monument may remain in the care and keeping of the said Daughters of the Confederacy and such person or persons as they may hereafter designate.
This July 8th, 1907.

3

Agreement

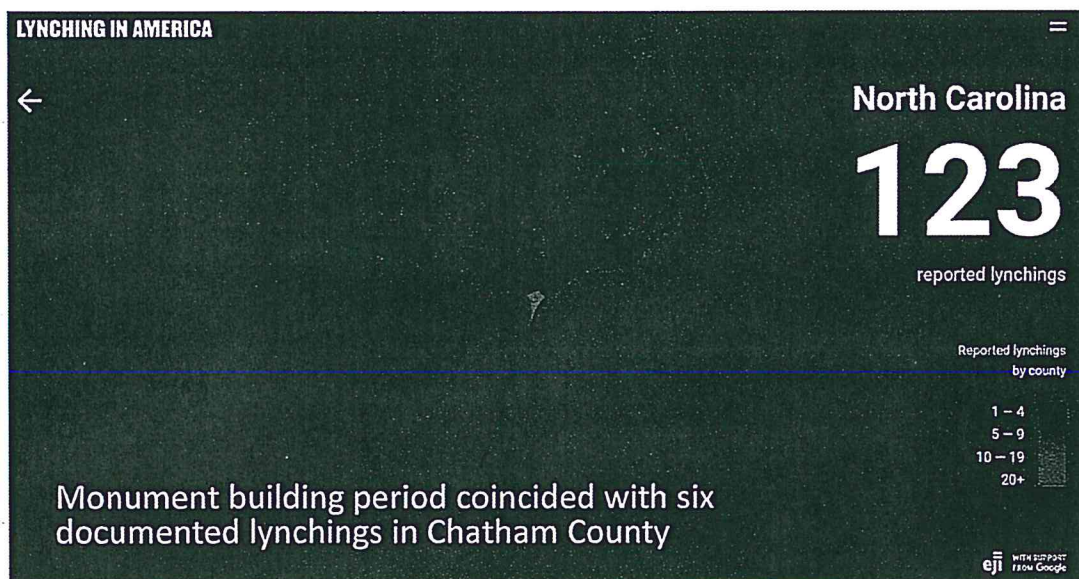
- The County Commissioners have the authority to rescind the 1907 license agreement between the County and the owner of the monument, which would also require it to be removed from public property. The property owner's First Amendment rights are fully protected as they are free to place it on private unofficial property.
- The continued presence of private property on public land forces the county government and every person in the County to endorse the values the monument embodies and promotes. This is in violation of the First Amendment free speech rights of every member of the community.

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II. Historical Context

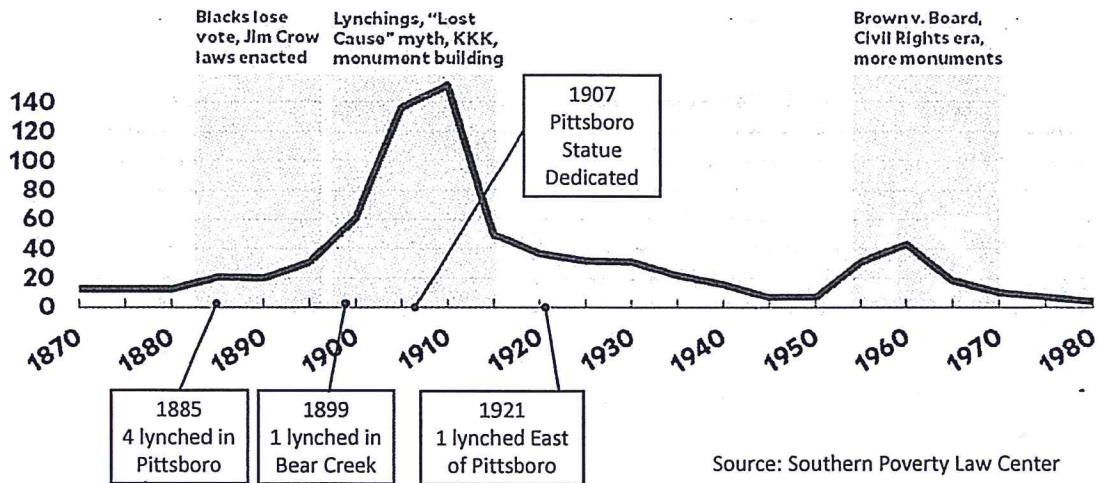
- Historical context in which Chatham's statue was erected
- United Daughters of Confederacy Campaign
- Lost Cause narrative
- 20th century efforts to disenfranchise non-white voters
- Acknowledging a more complete and honest history

5



6

Confederate Monument and Statue Building By Five-Year Periods, 1870-1980



7

Statue Dedication Speeches

"We have seen the white man come in contact with the brown man of the tropics and the brown man went down. We have seen him knock at the gates of the yellow man in the East, and they opened at his will. We have seen him face the black man in his native African home, and the black man gave him the path. We have seen him press the red man and the red man is disappearing from the face of the Earth. You see what the whole country is beginning to recognize, that it is not the power of all the armies ever drilled or of all the constitutions ever written to make the white man and black races equal."

NC Governor W.W. Kitchin, 1909 dedication in Granville County, NC

"One hundred yards from where we stand [on Franklin Street], less than ninety days perhaps after my return from Appomattox, I horse-whipped a negro wench until her skirts hung in shreds, because upon the streets of this quiet village she had publicly insulted an maligned a Southern lady, and then rushed for protection to these University buildings where was stationed a garrison of 100 Federal soldiers. I performed the pleasing duty in the immediate presence of the entire garrison, and for thirty nights afterward slept with a double-barrel shotgun under my head."

Julian Carr, 1913 dedication of "Silent Sam" in Chapel Hill, NC

8

III. Community Perspective

- Why we are here
 - On behalf of a large group of Chatham residents, we request that you return Confederate statue to its owner, the United Daughters of the Confederacy
- Who is bringing this request today
 - Residents of Chatham County: Democrats, Republicans and Independents, young and old, white, black, Latinx, new and old residents, all over the County, veterans and non-veterans, descendants of the Confederacy
- Our values
 - Human rights, free speech, equality, nonviolence, civil discourse, equal protection under the law, justice, fairness, safety, equality, diversity, integrity, accountability, truth
 - Values that commissioners committed to uphold when elected
 - Statue is in direct conflict with these values
- What it represents personally and to our community
 - Impact of the statue's symbolism

9

What These Statues Mean Now

"These statues are not just stone and metal. They are not just innocent remembrances of a benign history. These monuments purposefully celebrate a fictional, sanitized Confederacy, ignoring the death, ignoring the enslavement and the terror that it actually stood for."

Mitch Landrieu, Mayor of New Orleans

10

IV. Chatham Monument and Our Request

- Chatham County in the Civil War
- Winnie Davis Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy
- Nature of Agreement
- The Case for Removal
- Our Request



11

The Statue in Chatham: Dedication



Chatham Record, 1907

"Courage and fidelity to duty were inborn in this Southern race."

"Their memory is a rich legacy for your children's children and the whole race wears the honor you have conferred upon it."

"In the long centuries that are to come, legend and song in this fair Southland will keep right the story of the confederate soldier."

NC Supreme Court Chief Justice Walter Clark,
August 23, 1907 Pittsboro dedication speech

12

Our Request

Uphold the American values of liberty and justice for all:

Rescind the agreement with United Daughters of the Confederacy and ask them to remove their statue from our civic space.



Thank you again for considering this matter, and for your work on behalf of the county. My name is Emily Moose and I am a resident of Chatham County, here in that capacity alone.

My great-great-grandmother was a Daughter of the Confederacy, and while I don't share their views, I qualify to be one. My great-great-grandfather fought for the Confederate army and I'm told lived out his final years with a Union bullet lodged in his neck. Growing up in North Carolina, I heard the 'Lost Cause' narrative my whole childhood. Things like, "we were always good to our slaves;" or "it was a different time." I was an adult before I acknowledged that the only purpose of these lies was to protect the speaker from their own conscience, validate their blindness to another person's humanity and normalize the brutality inflicted in the name of white supremacy. If a child can be convinced that another person didn't suffer as a slave, perhaps it's easier for that child to grow into an adult that sees some humans as less human than others.

I'm not going to pass that lie onto the next generation, and I don't believe our civic spaces or schools should, either. The United Daughters of the Confederacy (or UDC) aggressively portrayed slavery as generally benign and immaterial to the Civil War. As a mother, I am deeply disturbed at how effective they were in indoctrinating an always-captive audience, our children, into internalizing a false and insidious history. What they did affected every child in every school that used textbooks influenced by the UDC—whether their parents supported the Confederacy or not. Moreover, their false narrative is still being taught, and is being illustrated and reinforced by the monument in front of our courthouse. My hope for my children—and all children—is that Chatham County will serve as a model for undoing the damage done, and have the courage to tell our full story.

In the previous presentations we heard the broader historical context of this effort by the UDC to glorify the Confederacy. Let's look specifically at Chatham's monument. In the early 1900's, over 40 years after the end of the Civil War—before which, 86 per cent of the white male voters in Chatham County rejected secession—the UDC led a three-year, in their words "uphill," campaign to erect this statue of an unknown Confederate soldier. This campaign was consistent with similar UDC efforts across the state and country, many of which have now been removed or relocated with community support.

On July 8, 1907, the Commissioners sitting in your seats authorized the Winnie Davis Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy to cut down a tree in front of the courthouse and erect the monument you see today, granting that it may "remain in the care and keeping" of the UDC. The full license agreement is included in your packet for reference.

The dedication speech in Pittsboro glorified the Confederate effort to defend slavery and the "southern race"—which implicitly meant the white race. This particular chapter of the UDC subsequently contributed funds toward a banner for the Ku Klux Klan. Other local dedication speeches to these UDC-inspired monuments explicitly promoted white supremacy, with one such speech given by a leader of the Wilmington Coup who openly called for the murder of any black person attempting to vote. The dedication speeches of that time are included in our documentation.

I understand and respect that some see their heritage in this statue; my own great-grandmother would say that monuments like this are simply teaching history and should stay put. If I could speak with her, I'd tell her that I love her, but I don't agree with her, and neither does the historical record. This statue is not instructive, objective history, but a message from the United Daughters of the Confederacy at the beginning of the 20th Century—a message we have been repeating on their behalf for over a hundred years. And while some suggest it may remain as a teachable reminder of the mistakes of the past, this statue doesn't say, "We made a mistake." Outside of a museum or cemetery and divorced from historical context, a symbol this ambiguous is

not a good teacher. If this statue personifies today's UDC then they should have it to cherish for themselves, whether in a cemetery, museum, or another location outside of our civic space.

History has shown us that no one is immune from oppression, and while in this particular case it was race, random differences have always been used to justify the denial of humanity, whether it's ethnicity, religion, gender, geography, tribe, language or countless others. If we truly believe in equity, liberty and justice for all, and genuinely pursue those precious American values, we should uphold them unequivocally.

In addition to our values, as commissioners you have compelling economic reasons to reconsider the iconic welcome mat of our County. We are striving to present ourselves as a world-class community, ready for investment from employers offering good jobs. These employers seek communities that welcome everyone, where the value of basic human rights is not in question. This monument drives away many who would enrich our community, and I urge you to consider the economic implications of inaction.

We do not seek to change history; we cannot. No matter your views on the Civil War, **a statue defending one group's subjugation of another blocks the door to our county's most prominent symbol of justice and government.** Regardless of our ethnicity, background or political persuasion, this impacts us as Americans and as human beings. The American Historical Association supports community decisions to remove monuments like ours, saying, "What changes with such removals is what American communities decide is worthy of civic honor." Having lived here for over a decade, I know that as a community that values fairness, justice, equity, neighborliness, representative democracy, truth and rule of law, we can take action to better demonstrate those values.

We have presented a petition to you with over 900 signatures from residents of Chatham County, most of which have been hand-gathered, and which cross geographic, political and demographic lines. This has been a neighbor-to-neighbor community effort. Everyone who signed this petition has a story about why this monument didn't represent our community in 1907 and doesn't today. We are as much a part of history as those who came before us, and must now decide if this is the message we want to send about our community, because that's what we do every day it stands. As commissioners, please ask yourselves: Would you erect this statue today? And if the answer is no, then it's time to return it to its rightful owner without delay.

In your packet you have a summary of the facts around this statue, including the clear legal case for removal. The license states that this monument is the private property of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and the County has merely authorized its placement here. It is fully within your rights to rescind that authorization, and we propose that you do so immediately. It's past time for Chatham County Commissioners to exercise their duty of care by removing this symbol which rebukes equal protection under the law and constitutes a threat to the general welfare of all Chatham's citizens.

We hereby request that you terminate the license agreement with the United Daughters of the Confederacy and require them to remove their private property from our civic space. In the spirit of the final words of the Pledge of Allegiance recited earlier, "with liberty and justice for all," we eagerly await your swift action.

Good evening Commissioners, and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this evening. My name is Howard Fifer and I live in Chatham County. I am here to introduce Chatham For All, a group of County residents who values liberty and justice for all, and shares grave concerns about the continued presence of the Confederate monument at the entrance to our courthouse. We are also here to present petitions signed by over 900 Chatham residents, young and old, Republicans and Democrats, lifelong residents and newcomers, white, black, Latinx and others - a group as varied as the County itself - and who all request that you remove the monument, as required by the law and the facts.

We are here because you, the Commissioners, have the legal authority to rescind the 1907 license agreement granted to the United Daughters of the Confederacy by your predecessors. The Daughters, not the County, are owners of the monument. North Carolina general statutes Section 100-2.1, which governs the County's actions with respect to removing the monument, does not apply because the monument falls under one of the exceptions written into the law (section c-2). It is private property on county land under a license agreement, which is revocable by the County. This is not a loophole in the law. This is the design of the law.

We do not come here to try to erase history. Through the clamor created by those opposing its removal you should remain focused on facts not in dispute:

- 1)- The monument celebrates the Confederate States of America, as stated right on the pedestal.
- 2)- The Confederate States of America were created to defend slavery, requiring the continued enslavement of African Americans. See section IX of the permanent Confederate Constitution.
- 3)-The Confederate States of America were intended to defy the rule of the laws of the United States and maintain a hierarchy without regard to equality and natural rights of all human beings.

Just listen to the words spoken in 1909 in Granville County, by Governor William Walton Kitchin at the unveiling of the monument there, when he said it is not within "the power of all the armies ever drilled or of all the constitutions ever written to make the white man and the black races equal."

Certainly, no one here in Chatham County, regardless of point of view vis a vis the monument, would use those appalling words today. At the same time, that true historical context of the

monument must be acknowledged. That message, uttered back in 1909 still is, and always will be, linked to Confederate monuments.

You should also be aware of your legal obligation to remove this monument. Because it occupies our town center in front of our historic court house on County property, as a matter of law as determined by the U.S. Supreme Court, it constitutes government speech. Because it is a monument celebrating the Confederacy, it celebrates the enslavement of African Americans, and therefore violates the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States constitution and Article 1, Section 19 of the North Carolina Constitution.

Any monument in the center of our community, any government speech, should voice our best shared values. Please tell the Daughters of the Confederacy to retrieve its property.

Thank you for the work you do for all of the people of our County.

Our first speaker is Chris Kaman.

THE RICH MAN'S MEMORY THAT THE POOR MAN BUYS: ANALYSIS OF
CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS IN THE PIEDMONT REGION OF
NORTH CAROLINA, 1868-1914

BY

William Christopher Laws

A Thesis Submitted to
The Faculty of the Graduate School at
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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree
Master of Arts

Durham
2017

Approved by



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ABSTRACT

LAWS, WILLIAM C., M.A. The Rich Man's Memory That the Poor Man Buys: Analysis of Confederate Monuments and Memorials in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina, 1868-1914. (2017)

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The purpose of this study is to determine the themes presented in the dedication ceremonies of Confederate monuments in the Piedmont region of North Carolina, between 1868 and 1914. Analysis of the inscriptions on the monuments, the speeches that the main orators gave, and musical selections of the ceremonies were considered when determining the themes presented.

Additionally, the political climate of the Piedmont region in 1860 and 1861 was examined to determine the level of Unionism that existed in the region before North Carolina's secession from the Union in May 1861. A quantitative analysis was then done to determine the wealth of the men in the North Carolina General Assembly in 1860, along with the wealth of the orator's families in 1860. A comparison was then done to show the disparity of wealth between those two groups and the average county wealth of the Piedmont counties in 1860.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Ever since I was a child, I have been fascinated by the American Civil War. Like many people born in this part of the country, I have familial ties to this conflict, as eight of my ancestors were veterans of the Civil War. I am the 2nd Great-Grandson of Green LaFayette Renn of Granville County, NC; the 3rd Great-Grandson of Elmore Gates of Orange County, NC; Adison Green Bridgers of Wake County, NC; Richard Toombs of Charlotte County, VA; Howell T. Graves of Mecklenburg County, VA; John Camp of Cleveland County, NC; and Leonard Laws of Orange County, NC; the 4th Great-Grandson of John Crosby Caminade of Oconee County, SC; Empsey Green of Macon County, NC; Ezekiel Long of Anderson County, SC; John R. Cannon of Pickens County, SC; and Levi M. Taylor of Pickens County, SC. Levi Taylor did not survive the war.

Immediately after my graduation from East Carolina University in 2006, I had the opportunity to work at Bennett Place State Historic Site as a Historic Interpreter. Bennett Place was the site of the largest troop surrender of the Civil War, where General Joseph Johnston surrendered the 89,000 troops under his command to General Sherman, in a small farm house about 4 miles from where I grew up. At Bennett Place, I encountered visitors from various places around the country, even the world, and I was exposed to diverse opinions on the issue of secession, as well as how the Confederacy should be memorialized.

My interest in how the Civil War should be interpreted and memorialized in the 21st Century is what prompted this study. When I began my graduate studies at North Carolina Central University in 2015, Confederate monuments were a controversial subject in the news. That summer, in response to the racially-motivated murders of

nine African American people in a Charleston Church by an admitted white supremacist, South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley removed the Confederate flag from the statehouse grounds. Debates over the fate of other Confederate Monuments in the South are a current source of controversy. In an article printed by the *Washington Post* in May 2016, Monica Hesse described a study conducted by University of North Carolina professor, W. Fitzhugh Brundage, who investigated how many statues and monuments were present in North Carolina. His study concluded that there were over 200 monuments present in the State, with the majority being to Confederate soldiers.¹

People support the Confederate monuments because they view them as a symbol of their heritage, while opponents see them as honoring a government that supported the institution of slavery. David Lowenthal argues in his book, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* that history and heritage are two completely different concepts that are often confused with each other. History is meant to be objective, using facts gleaned from primary sources and written from the perspective of an unbiased observer. Heritage, on the other hand, is a construction of human memory, is subjective, and serves to continue a set of beliefs passed down from one generation to the next; it is rooted in presentist views. People hang on to heritage to explain their place and circumstances in the modern world.

Heritage is sometimes looked down upon for its subjective nature, but Lowenthal argues that history is often guilty of similar crimes. He says, "[h]eritage is scolded for swerving from the true past—selecting, altering, inventing. But history also does

¹Monica Hesse, "The South's Confederate-monument problem is not going away," *Washington Post* (Washington D.C.), May 8, 2016.

this...history departs from the past in being an interpretation rather than a replica: it is a view, not a copy of what happened.”² Lowenthal also observes that many people cling to heritage because of the distant nature of history. They see history as something that happened long before living memories, and as something that is impersonal. Lowenthal claims that because of this, “the worth of heritage is likewise gauged not by critical test but by current potency.”³ For those people, heritage serves their present, while history simply does not. This presents a problem for heritage subscribers, as they can only accept historical accounts that fit comfortably within their existing worldviews and memories.

According to Lowenthal, “History tells all who listen what has happened and how things came to be as they are. Heritage passes on exclusive myths of origin and continuance, endowing a select group with prestige and common purpose.”⁴ This idea is supported by the words of an Indian tribal spokesman quoted by Lowenthal, “It’s our culture and history, and we do not have to prove [it] to anyone by footnoting.”⁵ Heritage provides people something to rally around and that gives them a sense of community.

Lowenthal discusses how the past should be interpreted to achieve the most accurate account possible. He says that one of the goals of heritage is to “collapse the entire past into a single frame... [and] stressing the likeness of the past and present.”⁶ By doing this, people feel that they are upholding a way of life, traditions, and a glorious

²David Lowenthal. *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 112.

³Ibid., 127.

⁴Ibid., 128.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Lowenthal, 139.

past. Lowenthal stresses the need that communities have to create a romantic account of the past. They “aim to impose their own moral versions of the past” that support their ancestors’ legacies.⁷ In order to combat this, narratives need to be written that do not promote grandiose, romantic, and inflated accounts of historical events but rather focus more on the realities of everyday existence. “What heritage does not highlight it often hides. We are bound to forget much of the past, but heritage leaves out far more than history,” therefore it is important to narrate history as it was; good, bad, and ugly.⁸ People cling to heritage because it is easier to omit from memory things that are unpleasant and disgusting. It is human nature. However, history should take precedence when telling stories of the past, and those stories need to be inclusive of all groups who were involved.

A common way to remember and acknowledge traumatic, oppressive and painful events has been through monuments and memorials. According to Erika Doss, memorials serve as a material embodiment and repository of a society’s memories. She says that “today’s ‘obsession with memory’ and memorials is grounded in a vastly expanded US demographic and in heightened expectations of rights and representation among the nation’s increasingly diverse publics.”⁹ Simply stated, as more groups gain a voice and influence in public spheres, they want their stories commemorated in public spaces.

⁷ Lowenthal, 143.

⁸ Lowenthal, 156.

⁹Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 19.

An explosion of commemoration through statues and monuments took place between the 1870s and the 1920s. "After the divisiveness of the Civil War, countless American cities and towns vied for statues (and other symbolic markers) that helped reimagine...the 'affective bonds of nationalism.' Statues not only embellished the postbellum public landscape but encouraged passionate and consensual understandings of nationhood."¹⁰ Doss also notes that these monuments are erected by groups to publicly promote their views and causes. She writes that "traditional Western monument[s] fall into three categories: the funerary monument, the monument to historical events or ideas, and the monument to great men."¹¹ Monuments are the most ancient way that human beings have used to record the events and people of the past, and also to maintain and pass along their narratives and heritage. They are also key markers that are "memory aids: materialist modes of privileging particular histories and values," and are responsible for the transmittal of "communal emotions."¹²

The United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) were responsible for the erection of most of the South's monuments to the Confederacy. Karen Cox writes that the "UDC Members had much invested in preserving the social structures and culture of the Old South. Clearly, they shared the privileges that accompanied membership in their race and class."¹³ She also writes that 93% of Confederate monuments were built after 1895 and that 50% of all Confederate monuments were built between 1903 and 1912.¹⁴

¹⁰Ibid., 20.

¹¹Ibid., 37.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of the Confederate Culture* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2003), 38.

¹⁴Ibid., 50.

The monuments held more significance than simply honoring the memories of fallen soldiers, they “were a ritual gathering of the entire white community—men, women, and children—to honor the nation that never was.”¹⁵

It was at the turn of the 20th Century when the “Lost Cause of the Confederacy” narrative became prevalent. Historian Reid Mitchell describes the Lost Cause as “the defining Southern memory...a myth of Confederate unity and nobility of purpose that transcended the reality of their experience.”¹⁶ He argues that even though the Confederate soldiers lost the war, Confederate sympathizers gained victory through promoting the ideals of the antebellum South, establishing a sense of unity among whites to maintain the same white supremacist social order that existed before the Civil War.

While there has been much that has been written about the Civil War and Confederate monuments in general, I wanted to examine specifically the Piedmont Region. While beginning my initial research, I was intrigued to find that there was heavy resistance, especially in the Piedmont and Mountain regions, to North Carolina’s secession before the firing on Fort Sumter in 1861. This made me wonder if the prevalent Unionism in this area would have been included in the monument dedication ceremonies over the next 50 years. I decided to direct my research into what the actual words that were used in these ceremonies were, and if any of the antebellum Unionism would resurface in these monuments ceremonies.

¹⁵Ibid., 60.

¹⁶Reid Mitchell, *Civil War Soldiers* (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 179.

This study has three goals that I hope to accomplish: First, investigate and provide accounts of the monument dedication ceremonies, and establish the degree of Unionism present in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina during the period immediately before the Civil War, by using both qualitative and quantitative evidence. Second, it will investigate the themes presented in the monument dedication ceremonies in the Piedmont Region, between the years 1868 and 1914. Third, it analyzes and draws comparisons to the level of wealth between the common person and the political leaders of North Carolina and then makes inferences on how wealth affected their views on secession in 1861. I will conduct a similar analysis and comparison between the orators' family wealth in 1860, compared to the average wealth of the county, which will be determined by adding the total amounts of real estate and personal estate documented by the 1860 US Census, and dividing that number by the county's free population. I argue that the narrative created by these orators during the presentation of the monuments in the Piedmont was one that did not acknowledge the Unionism present in the region, that lacked enthusiasm for the war by the common person, and also promoted white supremacy, which would keep them in power.

CHAPTER II

“They That Dance Must Pay the Fiddler”: Resistance and Opposition to Secession and Civil War in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina, 1856-1862

The people of the Piedmont region in early 1861 were staunchly opposed to the idea of North Carolina seceding from the United States and were aware of the negative impact that North Carolina joining the Confederacy would bring. The government of North Carolina betrayed these people by denying them the right to democratically make their voices heard, leaving many in the Piedmont to fight for a cause they did not endorse or may not have believed in.

North Carolina had a different political climate than many of her southern neighbors. In many southern states during the antebellum period, especially in the Deep South, the Democratic Party dominated the regional politics of the state, essentially placing its constituents under the rule of a one-party political system. Such was not the case in North Carolina. Both the Democrats and Whigs held significant influence over North Carolina politics between 1834 and 1850, with the Whigs holding the majority until 1850.¹⁷ The Democrats garnered their strength from counties with the largest slave populations, while Whigs won support in the two-thirds of the counties with a white population greater or equal to the statewide mean white population up through the gubernatorial election of 1850.¹⁸ By the election of 1856, that had changed, with the Democrats winning the majority in 60 percent of those same counties, while continuing their dominance in counties with large slave populations.¹⁹

¹⁷Thomas E. Jeffrey, *State Parties and National Politics: North Carolina, 1815-1861* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989), 68.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 283.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

Because North Carolinians had experienced shifting balances of power between political parties in recent memory, the people of North Carolina had been accustomed to the changing of the political guard, unlike other states where the Democratic Party and its platforms were unopposed. Because of this, North Carolinians were more prepared to handle the possibility of the Republicans winning the presidency in 1860 than their southern neighbors. The North Carolina Democratic Party Platform of 1856 recognized that there were three other parties present that they would have to contend with: the Whigs, the "Black Republicans," and the Know-Nothing Party, who they considered "corrupting and dangerous in its tendencies and influence."²⁰ While the Republican Party had no presence in North Carolina prior to the Civil War, the North Carolina Democrats were aware of their growing influence in national politics, which gave them cause for concern.²¹

As the Republican Party grew in influence, Abraham Lincoln's election as President of the United States became a very realistic possibility in 1860. Because of the non-existent presence of the Republican Party in the southern states, as well as their platform against the expansion of slavery into new territories, this was a frightening development for politicians in the South, who feared that Abraham Lincoln would begin the steps to abolish slavery in the South, which was central to the southern economy. Before the election, in a letter dated October 5th, 1860, William Gist, the governor of South Carolina, wrote to Governor John Ellis of North Carolina, to discuss the idea of

²⁰"Democratic Platform 1856," Box 1, Folder 7, John Willis Ellis Papers, #242, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

²¹Ibid.

seceding from the Union, asking Governor Ellis for his support in calling for the “full [and] free interchange of opinion between the Executives of the southern, [and] more especially the cotton states.”²²

Governor Ellis, a strong supporter of state’s rights, chose to adopt a “wait and see” approach regarding the idea of secession from the Union. He knew that the people of North Carolina would not be united in their feelings on how North Carolina should respond to the election of a Republican candidate to the presidency. A common feeling among North Carolinians was that Lincoln would prove to be powerless as the Republicans were still in the minority in Senate in 1860, and held only a plurality but not a majority in the House of Representatives, so breaking away from the Union was not an appropriate action. Ellis advocated that North Carolina have patience, and first see how the new administration’s policies would affect the South.²³ Some felt that immediate secession from the Union upon Lincoln’s election was the correct course of action, as a citizen from Wadesboro, North Carolina, articulated in a letter written to Governor Ellis, in which the citizen said, “We think here now is the time to strike for a Southern Confederacy, believing that either the negro or the Union has to go, and as much as no desire the latter (with our Constitutional rights) we can see no earthly chance of maintaining it, and therefore no longer wish a nominal Union...”²⁴

²²“William H. Gist to John W. Ellis, October 5, 1860,” Box 1, Folder 9, John Willis Ellis Papers, #242, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

²³John Gilchrist Barrett, *The Civil War in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 4.

²⁴“Citizen of Wadesborough, NC to John W. Ellis, November 26, 1860,” Box 1 Folder 9 John Willis Ellis Papers, #242, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Not all North Carolina's citizens shared the sentiments of the Wadesboro citizen. Moreover, the idea of breaking away from the Union was troubling to many in North Carolina. The mayor and several citizens of Fayetteville, who worried about the possibility of an armed rebellion by those sympathetic to the secessionist cause, appealed to the federal government in November 1860 to send troops to the city to defend the federal arsenal there. Governor Ellis was completely unaware of the fact that federal troops had been sent to North Carolina until he read in the *Charlotte Bulletin* on November 17th "that the President [James Buchanan] had ordered a Company of U.S. troops to Fayetteville at the 'request of the Governor of North Carolina.'"²⁵ The governor wrote to the newspaper, saying, "I had no previous knowledge of the President's intention to send such troops to Fayetteville, and certainly never made such a request of him. I know nothing of his purposes in doing so, and regard the measure as wholly unnecessary within itself, and at this time, exceedingly imprudent, as tending to increase the irritation of the public mind."²⁶ Ellis was understandably concerned over the possibility of rumors creating panic among the people of North Carolina that a separation from the Union and armed rebellion were possible. On November 22nd, 1860, Ellis received an explanation from the United States Secretary of War of the reason for the deployment of troops to North Carolina:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 19th instant inquiring the reason for stationing troops at the United States arsenal at Fayetteville, and urging their immediate removal. In reply, I beg to enclose, for your information, a copy of a letter from the Mayor of Fayetteville, accompanied

²⁵"Letter from John W. Ellis to Charlotte Bulletin, November 17, 1860," Box 1, Folder 9, John Willis Ellis Papers, #242, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

²⁶*Ibid.*

by petitions from sundry citizens of that town, requesting that the troops in question might be stationed there for the protection of the arms and ammunition at the post. I regret that this movement of troops, made at considerable expense to the United States, and intended, alone, to give a sense of security to the feelings of the people who applied for the guard, should have been considered by the Executive of North Carolina as a ground of complaint. It will give me great pleasure to remove the troops from the arsenal, at your request, particularly, as their services are much needed elsewhere.²⁷

The fact that the mayor and citizens of Fayetteville appealed to the federal government rather than the state for support shows that they recognized the federal government's ownership of that arsenal and that they did not want to see it used for an armed rebellion that would bring war to the Union.

Many in the Piedmont region did not regard a Republican victory in the presidential election in 1860 as enough reason to secede from the Union. Even though the Republicans were not on the ballot in North Carolina, most people in the Piedmont region demonstrated loyalty to the Union by overwhelmingly voting for John Bell, one of the candidates for president in 1860 who was a supporter of the preservation of the Union.²⁸ Bell viewed Lincoln's election as being "in strict accordance with the regulations prescribed by the Constitution and laws" and that "the objection to it is that it was effected by a purely sectional party, organized upon the principle of hostility to

²⁷"John B. Floyd to John W. Ellis, November 22, 1860," Folder 9, John Willis Ellis Papers, #242, Folder 9, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

²⁸Robert C. Kenzer, *Kinship and Neighborhood in a Southern Community: Orange County, North Carolina, 1849-1881* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1987), 66.

Slavery.”²⁹ Many North Carolinians from the Piedmont region shared these sentiments: Lincoln’s election was not a just cause for leaving the Union.

After South Carolina seceded from the Union on December 20th, 1860, it was clear that North Carolina would have to address the question of whether or not she would join her neighbor to the south. Most North Carolinians were not in favor of immediately following the lead of South Carolina. In fact, newspapers in the Piedmont openly condemned this idea, and questioned why North Carolina should go to South Carolina’s aid. An article printed in the *Raleigh Weekly Standard* on December 12, 1860, opposed South Carolina’s request for aid:

Should the State secede with South Carolina? We think not. Should she, in any event, separate herself from the middle, breadstuff States, and unite her destinies with the cotton States? We think not. No cotton State has thus far even consulted her, though several of them are preparing to go out. It is true no middle State has consulted her, but this fact affords the best proof that the middle States are not even contemplating that decision. The interests of North Carolina are much more identified with Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Maryland than they are with South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas....Any attempt to establish a ‘cotton Confederacy’ will fail. It might last a few years, and it might escape a degrading dependence on foreign powers; but the people of such a Confederacy would not be able to subsist on cotton. A king is nothing without lords and commons.³⁰

The *Raleigh Register* shared this opinion, charging South Carolina with wanting to destroy the Union: “[South Carolina] received the news of election with as much joy as the State of Massachusetts, because she thought that election furnished her with the

²⁹“The Secession Excitement; Letter From Hon. John Bell,” *New York Times* (New York, NY), December 12, 1860.

³⁰“What Shall Be Done?” *Raleigh Weekly Standard* (Raleigh, NC), December 12, 1860.

long sought pretext of destroying the Union.”³¹ The *Register* argued that North and South Carolina did not have shared interests, that North Carolina had prospered because of its membership in the Union, and that North Carolina should reject South Carolina’s call to join her. According to the *Raleigh Register*, “[t]he North Carolinian who has not State pride sufficient to make him indignantly spurn any attempt of our Southern neighbor to dragoon this State into treason and civil war, is a bastard son of the soil on which was first sounded the key-note of American liberty.”³²

The people of the Piedmont were not shy to make their feelings known on the issue of secession. The citizens of Orange County met in the Cane Creek neighborhood in January 1861 to debate whether they would vote to hold a convention to support secession.³³ The citizens there “passed resolutions that pointed to the small plurality of Lincoln’s election, recognized the constitutional restrictions on presidential power, and rejected the calls for a state convention to debate secession.”³⁴ They believed that Abraham Lincoln would respect his constitutional role and not step outside of that role, and ultimately, his presidency would not have much effect on their lives.

During the yearly celebration of the 1815 Battle of New Orleans victory by Andrew Jackson that same month, the residents of Orange County demonstrated their loyalty to the Union. At the point in the evening when toasts were being given, the first two toasts were in support of the Union, to which the crowd responded with gunshots and cheers.³⁵

³¹“Why Should North Carolina Secede?” *Raleigh Register* (Raleigh, NC) December 1, 1860.

³²*Ibid.*

³³Kenzer, 67.

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵*Ibid.*

Later in the evening, a toast was given in support of North Carolina breaking away from the Union and joining South Carolina. That toast was woefully received, "one gun and no cheers."³⁶

William Holden, the editor of the *Raleigh Weekly Standard*, frequently published a column in his newspaper titled, "Voice of the People," in which he printed letters he had received on the issue of secession. Holden, a vocal Unionist and critic of Governor Ellis's "wait and see" tactics, gave a mouthpiece to everyday citizens who wanted to voice their support of the Union. "I do not want to see the Union dissolved," wrote a man from Davidson County.³⁷ "The course of the *Standard* meets the approval of the mass of the people in this section. May Providence overrule fanaticism and restore peace to our country," added another citizen of Harnett County.³⁸ Another man from Chatham County expressed that nothing good could come from leaving the Union, adding that "I am not much of a politician, but I am unable to foresee anything but anarchy and probably a military despotism outside of the federal Union. I am not aware of any grievance that may not be remedied better in the Union than out of it."³⁹

Even merchants were using the fever pitch of the Piedmont's unionist patriotism to their advantage. In an advertisement placed by J.B. Franklin for his store in Raleigh on January 9, 1861, Franklin stated "DOWN WITH THE POLITICIANS! THIS UNION MUST BE PRESERVED BY THE PEOPLE!"⁴⁰ While the rest of the advertisement dealt with the promotion of his goods, the point was clear: a merchant would not have made

³⁶Ibid., 68.

³⁷"Voice of the People," *Raleigh Weekly Standard* (Raleigh, NC), January 9, 1861.

³⁸Ibid., February 20, 1861.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰"Down With the Politicians!" *Raleigh Register* (Raleigh, NC), January 9, 1861.