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Who Were the Scalawags?

By ALLEN W. TRELEASE

IN THE DEMONOLOGY OF RECONSTRUCTION NO REPUTATION IS BLACKER than that of the native white Republican. The illiterate and poverty-stricken Negro was often an object of compassion, and the carpetbagger could be partially excused as an outlander with no ties of kinship or sentiment in the land he plundered. But native white Republicans were traitors to race and section alike, and thus deserving of the deepest contempt. The term "scalawag," by which they were designated, is said to have come from Scalloway, "a district in the Shetland Islands where small, runty cattle and horses were bred." Later it became a synonym for scamp, loafer, or rascal, whence it found its way into the lexicon of Reconstruction politics. In this context some people would confine the term in all its impurity to actual officeholders or office seekers. The *Dictionary of Americanisms*, however, defines scalawag more broadly as "a Southerner who supported the Congressional plan of reconstruction."¹ It includes, therefore, white Republican voters, who are the real subject of this article.

Like so much of the conventional view of Reconstruction, the caricature of the scalawag as a traitor to race and section gained more and more currency with the lapse of time, as the original receded from sight. What began as a political canard was carried over into canon within a generation by historians and the general public North and South, who came to accept the Democratic opposition's view of Reconstruction as historical truth. Many historians, like the Southern Conservatives of the period, made little or no effort to explain the alleged treason of the scalawags beyond assigning them such character deficiencies as disloyalty, cowardice, greed, or lust for power.² Others identified them with wartime

¹ John Hope Franklin, *Reconstruction After the Civil War* (Chicago, 1961), 98; E. Merton Coulter, *The South During Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge, 1947), 125; Mitford M. Mathews (ed.), *A Dictionary of Americanisms* (2 vols., Chicago, 1951), II, 1465.

² Francis B. Simkins and Robert H. Woody, *South Carolina During Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill, 1932), 74; Ellis P. Oberholtzer, *A History of the United States Since the Civil War* (5 vols., New York, 1917-1937), II, 24; James G. Randall, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (Boston, 1937), 847. For an example of contemporary invective, only slightly toned down by later historians, see Herbert Barnes, "The Scalawag," *Southern Magazine*, XV (September 1874), 302-307.

Unionists who had opposed secession and co-operated unwillingly if at all with the Southern war effort.³ Seldom until recently were the white Republicans credited with worthy motives, and then it was usually in the course of impugning their judgment. Rare indeed was the scholar who would agree with W. E. B. Du Bois's characterization of them as "that part of the white South who saw a vision of democracy across racial lines."⁴ Commonly the only good word to be said of the whole lot was that a better element existed among them which went over to the Conservative camp at an early date.

Until the 1940's, white Republicans were usually identified with the lower or poorer elements of Southern society, if they were identified at all. An exception was Walter Lynwood Fleming, who referred to them in one of his later writings as possessing "whatever claims the [Southern Republican] party had to respectability, education, political experience, and property." By the same token, Fleming was one of the few until recently who paid any attention to their political antecedents, listing them as "former Whigs" as well as "former Unionists . . . Confederate deserters, and a few unscrupulous politicians."⁵

Reconstruction historiography has itself been reconstructed since 1940. In the process the scalawag has been reclassified to a degree, if not fully rehabilitated. Much credit for this belongs to David Donald, whose 1944 article in this journal, "The Scalawag in Mississippi Reconstruction," represented one of the freshest breezes to sweep this landscape in many years. In Donald's view the Mississippi scalawags were predominantly "old-line" Whigs who had opposed the Democrats before the war, opposed secession at its commencement, and, whatever their attitude in

³ William A. Dunning, *Reconstruction, Political and Economic, 1865-1877* (New York, 1907), 116; Walter Lynwood Fleming, *The Sequel of Appomattox* (New Haven, 1919), 222; William W. Davis, *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Florida* (New York, 1913), 483.

⁴ James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850* (9 vols., New York, 1893-1919), VI, 91; W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (New York, 1935), 350.

⁵ Fleming, *Sequel of Appomattox*, 222. The near-contemporary estimates of North Carolina carpetbagger Albion Tourgée are interesting in this connection: "Those Union men who really maintained their integrity and devotion to the Federal Union through the war, and embraced the republican view at its close, were . . . mostly of that class who are neither rich nor poor, who were land-owners, but not slave-owners." A few pages later, however, he categorized 24 per cent of the white Republicans as illiterate and 55 or 60 per cent as landless day laborers or sharecroppers. *A Fool's Errand . . .* [together with] *The Invisible Empire* (New York, 1880), 152, 159.

wartime, were now eager to resume battle with the state-rights and (supposedly) egalitarian Democracy. As the cream of the old planter-business aristocracy, they accepted Negro suffrage in the hope of controlling the votes of their former slaves for their own purposes.⁶ More recently, in his revision of James G. Randall's book, *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, Donald extends this interpretation to most of the South. The major exceptions, he says, were North Carolina and Alabama, where the scalawags were chiefly hill-country farmers who had opposed both the prewar plantation system and the war itself.⁷

By implication at least, Donald's interpretation gains support from the recent investigations by Thomas B. Alexander of "persistent Whiggery" in the postwar South. In the elections of 1865, held under Presidential auspices, former Whigs very nearly swept the field according to Alexander's findings. By 1869, he believes, the Southern Whigs fell into four groups. A small number of old "unconditional Unionists" were wholeheartedly in the Radical camp from the beginning of congressional Reconstruction. A larger number, answering Donald's description, were also in the Republican party, advocating universal suffrage and universal amnesty in the hope of leading the movement into more conservative channels. A third group, which Alexander believes to be the largest by 1869 or 1870 and destined to grow larger still after 1872, had affiliated with the Democrats or Conservatives in opposition to Radical Reconstruction. The fourth group, ever shrinking in size, consisted of die-hard Whigs who refused to join either existing party and worked for a rebirth of the old party of Henry Clay.⁸

Despite the appeal of Donald's ex-Whig interpretation, it has gained only partial acceptance. Speaking also of Mississippi, Vernon L. Wharton asserts that the white Republicans at first "were largely a poverty-stricken element who had been Unionists during the war." Then, more in keeping with Donald, he continues: "There was also an element of planters and businessmen which increased rapidly in numbers until 1874. Many of these men

⁶ David Donald, "The Scalawag in Mississippi Reconstruction," *Journal of Southern History*, X (November 1944), 447-60. See also C. Vann Woodward, *Reunion and Reaction* (Boston, 1951), 42-43; Bernard A. Weisberger, "The Dark and Bloody Ground of Reconstruction Historiography," *Journal of Southern History*, XXV (November 1959), 431; T. Harry Williams, "An Analysis of Some Reconstruction Attitudes," *ibid.*, XII (November 1946), 475-76, 481.

⁷ *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (2d ed., Boston, 1961), 627-28.

⁸ "Persistent Whiggery in the Confederate South, 1860-1877," *Journal of Southern History*, XXVII (August 1961), 311, 319-20.

had been Whigs before the war . . ." John Hope Franklin says in his recent survey of the period that the white Republicans were basically Unionists who had opposed secession and the war. Most of these people, he implies, were distinctly not of the planter class and had long resented its domination. He says nothing of prewar political affiliation.⁹

There is no agreement on the point of wartime Unionism either. Many of Donald's ex-Whig Republicans had been officers in the Confederate army, and E. Merton Coulter goes further yet in declaring that many prominent Southern Radicals had been outstanding secessionists. Coulter is more loath than the others to abandon the old Conservative fortifications; to him the scalawags were "those who had a grievance against the ante-bellum ruling class; who felt social inferiority; who disliked the rigors of war; who opposed conscription, impressment, and the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus during the war; in fact, almost 'every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented' . . ."¹⁰

Until recently the only common ground among treatments of the scalawag was a common aversion to him, and now we have lost even that. Moreover, such characterizations as have been made were frequently given in the process of moving on to other, more congenial topics. Apart from a few leaders like James L. Alcorn in Mississippi and Parson Brownlow in Tennessee, the native Republicans have received next to no attention. Thus despite their acknowledged importance in the Radical movement, they remain an unknown quantity.

A wider acquaintance can be gotten by several means. That which follows is primarily statistical. It attempts in the first place to isolate the bulk of the native white Republicans geographically through a comparison of election returns and census data for each Southern county for which election returns were available. Using this information, it tries next to supply a basis for closer study and surer generalization than has been possible heretofore concerning their economic and social conditions, their prior political affiliations, and their reasons for supporting the Radical party.

Several assumptions are made at the outset which, in the nature of things, will be more controversial than the arithmetic proceeding from them. The first is that Negroes during the period of

⁹ Vernon L. Wharton, *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890* (Chapel Hill, 1947), 157; Franklin, *Reconstruction After the Civil War*, 98-99.

¹⁰ *South During Reconstruction*, 124.

Radical ascendancy cast their votes overwhelmingly for Republican candidates. Although there are exceptions, the assumption is borne out by an examination of election returns from the black belt counties and by a comparison of the Republican percentage of the vote with the percentage of Negroes in the population. (See Tables 1 and 2.) There are very few counties in which the proportion of Republican votes to the total number cast was significantly lower than the proportion of Negroes to the total population, and in some of these cases the result clearly was produced by Negro abstention, voluntary or enforced, rather than by their voting the Democratic ticket.

A second assumption hardly requires verification: despite the influential role of the Northern carpetbag element in shaping the course of Southern Reconstruction, the Northerners were so few in number in any locality that they cannot materially affect a statistical computation based on population and election totals.

The third assumption—the working principle on which this analysis mainly rests—follows from the first two: wherever the percentage of Republican votes significantly exceeds the percentage of Negro population, and where the total voter turnout in a fair election is near normal, we may expect to find native white Republicans.

Students of the period will recognize several methodological hurdles to be cleared in making a study of this nature. Many Reconstruction elections were carried or miscarried by fraud, violence, or intimidation; disfranchisement of ex-Confederates was a factor in some elections; and the census of 1870, which would normally be used in figuring the proportion of Negroes, was notoriously inaccurate in that respect. None of these obstacles can be evaded or explained away altogether; yet they are less critical on closer inspection than they at first appear.

It is true that most election returns of the time are not ideal bases for statistical analysis. In this study the Presidential election of 1872 was singled out for special attention, other contests being used only to ascertain the political complexion of each county during the period as a whole. For this latter purpose, from four to six (normally, five) elections were chosen in each of the ex-Confederate states, nearly all of them involving statewide contests for either the Presidency or high state office. They include the Presidential elections of 1868, 1872, and 1876, as well as intervening state contests, chiefly in 1870 and 1874. (For the states of Mississippi, Virginia, Texas, and Tennessee, the election of

1868 was not used; the first three had not yet been readmitted, and in Tennessee there was such wholesale proscription of ex-Confederates as to render the returns nearly valueless in determining actual opinion.)¹¹

Of them all, the election of 1872 was the natural choice for a closer analysis in determining the location of white Republican voters. By comparison with the other Presidential elections of 1868 and 1876, it was conducted with relative fairness in nearly every state. Disfranchisement of ex-Confederates was largely over by that time and the wholesale proscription of Negroes was still in the future, except in Georgia.¹² In this election President Grant won a second term by defeating the Democratic-Liberal Republican coalition headed by Horace Greeley. Although Greeley, the old abolitionist crusader, failed perceptibly to warm the hearts of Southern Conservatives, this contest had the advantage of presenting to all Southern voters the Reconstruction policies of the Grant administration in about as clear-cut a fashion as any policy

¹¹ Presidential election data are taken from W. Dean Burnham, *Presidential Ballots, 1836-1892* (Baltimore, 1955); returns from other elections are taken from *The Tribune Almanac and Political Register, 1870-1875* (New York, 1870-1875).

¹² The suffrage restrictions placed on ex-Confederates by the congressional Reconstruction acts were gradually superseded by state action as each state was readmitted to the Union. Disabilities contained in the Fourteenth Amendment applied to officeholding rather than voting, and nearly all of these were lifted by congressional action in 1872 and earlier. J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton, "The Removal of Legal and Political Disabilities, 1868-1898," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, II (October 1903), 346-58, and III (January 1904), 39-51. The radical state constitutions of 1868, as finally adopted, provided for universal manhood suffrage in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and Mississippi. In 1870 this was secured in Louisiana by constitutional amendment and in Tennessee by the adoption of a new constitution. Disfranchisement in South Carolina and Texas was very slight to begin with, and apparently was negligible by 1872. In Alabama the originally heavy disqualifications were lifted in part by legislative action in 1868; Fleming says that "several thousand" were still disfranchised after 1870, but this did not prevent the state from showing a voter turnout of 65 per cent in 1872, the largest in the South. Only Arkansas, therefore, applied significant restrictions upon white voters by 1872, the number of persons affected being very hard to estimate. See William A. Dunning, *Essays on the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York, 1931), 196-98; Coulter, *South During Reconstruction*, 136, 349; Charles W. Ramsdell, *Reconstruction in Texas* (New York, 1910), 252-55; William A. Russ, Jr., "Disfranchisement in Louisiana (1862-70)," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XVIII (July 1935), 579-80, and "Radical Disfranchisement in South Carolina (1867-1868)," *Susquehanna University Studies*, I (1939), 155; Walter Lynwood Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* (New York, 1905), 749, 752.

Louisiana is of comparatively little significance in the present study. Frauds were so extensive there in 1872 that it is impossible to know the true vote in many parishes; for this reason only those parish totals are included on which the two parties agreed—a minority of the whole. For the election of 1872 in Georgia, see note 18 below.

is apt to be presented in an American election. It fell during the period of Radical ascendancy in most states and found two-party politics in as active and healthy a condition as the South has known them since before the Civil War. The Liberal Republican movement had comparatively little impact in the South, where 1872 constituted the high watermark of postwar Republicanism.

Population figures for 1872 normally would have been drawn from the preceding census, then only two years old. But in view of the inadequacy of the 1870 census, especially in its underenumeration of Southern Negroes,¹³ that of 1880 was chosen as being more accurate on the whole.¹⁴ The difference in time was not so critical as it might appear on the surface, since census data were used primarily to determine the proportion of Negroes rather than total population. There is no evidence to suggest that this ratio changed significantly in many places between 1872 and 1880.¹⁵

Changes in county boundaries occurring between 1872 and 1880 create another complication, but only in Texas was the number of changes significant. In most cases they had little effect on the proportion of Negro population in the counties so altered, if we are to judge by similar changes between 1880 and 1890. Such counties, therefore, were not omitted from the computation.

The natural first step in determining political patterns and isolating the white Republicans is to look at the electoral majority of each county in the light of its racial composition. When all Southern counties making returns in 1872 are arranged according to their proportion of Negro population, with black belt counties like Issaquena in Mississippi and Beaufort in South Carolina at the top and white counties like those of the Appalachian highlands at the bottom, several predictable but nonetheless striking facts emerge. The predominantly Negro counties were overwhelmingly Republican in 1872 and most of them remained in that column through 1876. By the same token, the white counties tended to vote Demo-

¹³ Francis A. Walker, "Statistics of the Colored Race in the United States," American Statistical Association, *Publications*, II (1890), 95-99, 106.

¹⁴ *Tenth Census*, Vol. I, *Statistics of the Population of the United States* . . . (Washington, 1883).

¹⁵ The appropriate data are not readily available prior to 1880, but in only 28 of the 950-odd counties in the ex-Confederate states did the proportion of Negroes to total population vary by 10 per cent or more in 1880 from the figures for 1890. In only five counties was the variance more than 15 per cent. U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negro Population, 1790-1915* (Washington, 1918), 776-97. Even in Texas, despite a rapid increase in total population during this period, the proportion of Negroes county by county remained nearly the same.

cratic during these same years, although there were frequent exceptions. In 1872 all the 27 counties where Negroes constituted 80 per cent or more of the population were Republican; those 70-79 per cent Negro were Republican by 44 to 4; the proportion falls gradually through those counties having 20-29 per cent of their population Negro, only 17 per cent of which voted Republican; then the proportion voting Republican rises to 26 per cent in each of the last two classes. This last phenomenon, in counties where less than a fifth of the population was Negro, can be explained only by the presence of substantial numbers of white Republicans!

The same pattern holds true of these counties in a majority of the elections chosen between 1868 and 1876. In these elections the number of counties in the Republican column is somewhat less in each Negro population class, but the two sets of figures, if reduced to lines on a graph, run nearly parallel. The greatest spread—that is, the greatest Republican attrition for the period as a whole, compared with the high of 1872—appears in those counties having between 30 per cent and 59 per cent Negroes. Here, presumably, Negro disfranchisement was most feasible and most effective by 1876 in creating Democratic majorities, and here, too, a relatively slight shift in white sentiment could more easily transform Democratic minorities into majorities. Although these figures, for both 1872 and the other election years, do not indicate the numbers of individual voters involved, they suggest that the freedmen were overwhelmingly Republican in sentiment, that most whites voted Democratic, and that the white Republican minority was largely concentrated in counties with the smallest Negro populations! Further evidence on these points can be gotten by comparing the Republican and Negro percentages in 1872 in each county.

A standard criticism of the American electoral process is that so few eligible voters bother to participate. The situation was generally worse a century ago. Across the country only half of the adult males (according to the 1880 census) cast votes for President in 1872, but unlike today the South exactly equaled the national average. Alabama led the former Confederacy with a turnout of 65 per cent, while Arkansas and Georgia brought up the rear with 43 per cent.¹⁶ The South's relatively favorable position

¹⁶ Texas registered only 30 per cent, but its large population increase in this period makes the 1880 totals there too high to be applied meaningfully in 1872. As noted above, Arkansas had disfranchised certain classes of ex-Confederates,

was owing in large measure to an active two-party system and Negro suffrage.¹⁷

In so far as white Democrats failed to vote, their action would raise artificially the percentage of Republican voters in a given county. And since the computations which follow are based on a comparison of the Republican percentages with Negro population ratios, it could lead to an exaggeration of white Republican strength. Non-voting among Negroes would of course create the opposite effect. For this reason abstention involving one race more than the other is a matter of some concern. The available figures on turnout of eligible voters between 1868 and 1880 would indicate that abstention was a recognizable factor in 1872 in South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia. In all three states fewer persons voted than in 1868, and the number of voters rose sharply again in 1876. White persons were primarily involved in the Carolinas; only in Georgia is there evidence of non-voting on a large scale among Negroes.¹⁸

With so many pitfalls and incalculables, it is wise to concede a wide margin for error and look for white Republicans in quantity only in those counties where the Republican percentage exceeded the percentage of Negroes by at least twenty. (Tables 1 and 2 both show horizontally the relationship between these two proportions, giving the number of counties in each category. Table 1

which may help to account for her poor showing, but a large population growth is probably at least as responsible. Georgia is accounted for, at least in part, by Negro disfranchisement.

¹⁷ In fact, the voter turnout corresponded significantly to the proportion of Negro population, ranging from 65 per cent in the black belts down to 32 per cent where Negroes were less than a tenth of the whole. Viewed from another perspective, voter participation exceeded the sectional average in those counties where the percentage of Republican votes to the total number cast roughly equaled the proportion of Negro population—where, in other words, there was apparently a fairly clear division between Negro Republicans and white Democrats. The average turnout fell where the Republican percentage was materially less than that of Negroes, indicating that freedmen were being disfranchised. And in those counties presumably containing most of the white Republicans—where the Republican percentage was materially greater than the Negro—voter participation was higher, but still below the sectional average. This last group of counties was predominantly white in population, and corresponded in this regard to the white counties as a whole.

¹⁸ The historians of Reconstruction in North and South Carolina mention apathy among Democrats in both states in 1872. Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina During Reconstruction*, 467-68; J. C. de Roulhac Hamilton, *Reconstruction in North Carolina* (New York, 1914), 591-92. Negro disfranchisement in Georgia in 1872 is referred to in C. Mildred Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia* (New York, 1915), 275, and Jack B. Scroggs, "Southern Reconstruction: A Radical View," *Journal of Southern History*, XXIV (November 1958), 424-25.

TABLE 1
 Republican percentage of vote in
 Southern counties in 1872 compared with
 percentage of Negroes in the population—by states
 (figures in line with states represent number of counties)

	Exceeds Negro percentage by:					Diff. less than		Less than Negro percentage by:					Totals	
	50 or more	40- 49	30- 39	20- 29	10- 19	5- 9	5% 5%	5- 9	10- 19	20- 29	30- 39	40- 49		50 or more
Ala.	1	3	3	6	7	7	22	6	6	3	1		65	
Ark.	9	4	4	9	11	8	9	4	1	1			60	
Fla.			2	2	7	5	13	6	2		1		38	
Ga.	4	4	4	5	12	12	35	9	16	19	6	5	5	
La.*						4	7	1	1	1			136	
Miss.				1	13	12	38	3	4				14	
N. C.	5	11	10	20	19	14	12	1					71	
S. C.			3	6	16	4	2	1					92	
Tenn.	20	12	7	8	12	9	16	5	2				32	
Tex.	6	3	6	7	34	25	46	5	2			1	91	
Va.**		2	2	9	25	17	45	8		1			135	
Totals:	45	39	41	73	156	117	245	49	34	25	8	6	5	843
	354					411		78						

* Incomplete

** Includes independent cities which voted separately

is arranged vertically by states, and Table 2 according to density of Negro population.) In about half of the Southern counties for which we have 1872 election results (411 out of 843), these two percentages were within ten points of one another. Probably these figures are more than coincidental, and represent a substantial division between white Democrats and Negro Republicans. These counties were to be found in every region of the South, in areas that were preponderantly white as well as in the black belts. As a matter of fact, about two thirds of the black belt counties fell in this category, as did a majority of all counties which were more than 40 per cent Negro in composition. Below that point, the smaller the proportion of Negroes, the more likelihood there was of finding white Republicans.

! In less than 10 per cent of the counties (78, of which two thirds were in Georgia) the Republican percentage was materially below

TABLE 2
 Republican percentage of vote in
 Southern counties in 1872 compared with
 percentage of Negroes in the population—by density
 of Negro population
 (figures in line with percentages represent number of counties)

%	Exceeds Negro percentage by:					Diff. less than		Less than Negro percentage by:					Totals	
	50 or more	40- 49	30- 39	20- 20	10- 19	5- 9	5% 5%	5- 9	10- 19	20- 29	30- 39	40- 49		50 or more
90+													2	
80-89						8	8	1	1	2	1		20	
70-79						1	7	26	2	4	5		47	
60-69				1	2	14	12	32	8	7	4	1	3	87
50-59				1	3	12	14	54	12	6	5	3	3	110
40-49				1	4	18	20	36	5	3	2	1	3	93
30-39					2	14	31	20	25	9	4	3	3	111
20-29	2	3	7	13	31	13	20	9	6	4			108	
10-19	12	15	11	13	21	16	16	1	3				108	
5-9	16	9	9	16	16	4	7	2					79	
0-4	15	12	9	8	12	3	19						78	
Totals:	45	39	41	73	156	117	245	49	34	25	8	6	5	843
	354					411		78						

that of Negroes, indicating that substantial numbers of freedmen either voted Democratic or did not vote at all. That the latter was common is shown by a relatively low voter turnout in these counties, especially in those where the Republican and Negro proportional differences were greatest. Columbia County, Georgia, for example, with a population 71 per cent Negro, cast but 6 per cent of its vote for Grant and only 14 per cent of its adult males voted at all. Counties with a similar population distribution in other states commonly showed a voter turnout of 65 per cent and a Republican majority of about 70 per cent.

! In the remaining counties (354 out of 843, or 42 per cent of the whole) the Republican percentage exceeded that of Negroes by at least ten. It is here that we must look for the great majority of white Republicans. In almost half (156) of these counties the Republican percentage was larger by only 10 to 19 points; in the

rest it ranged up to a differential of more than 50. The presence of white Republicans by no means insured Republican victories in these counties; in fact a slight majority (179 to 173) went Democratic in 1872 and even more voted that way in a majority of other elections of the time. (See Table 3.) In most of those which went Republican, Negro voters contributed significantly to the victory and often the Negro Republicans outnumbered the white. As a general rule, however, most of the white Republican votes were cast in counties where the Negro population was slight. More than nine tenths of the counties in which white Republicanism is identifiable had white majorities, and over half were at least 80 per cent white in composition. (See the left-hand columns of Table 2.) In only 45, or about 5 per cent of all Southern counties, did the Republican percentage outweigh the proportion of Negroes by 50 or more, indicating an absolute majority of white Republicans among the electorate.¹⁹

Geographically, the counties containing the largest proportions of white Republicans are chiefly concentrated in the mountain regions of East Tennessee, western North Carolina, and northwest Arkansas. (See Map.) Those with smaller proportions are scattered more widely, with every state except Louisiana represented by at least nine counties in which the Republican percentage outweighed that of Negroes by 10-29 points. Texas and, deceptively, South Carolina are the only states besides the three mentioned above in which the statewide differential was more than ten.²⁰ In Texas the greatest number of white Republicans was found along the Rio Grande River and in the central part of the state. Both areas were more or less frontier regions, the former containing a

¹⁹ These counties, by states, are as follows: *Alabama*: Winston; *Arkansas*: Crawford, Franklin, Newton, Perry, Pike, Pope, Sarber (now Logan), Sebastian, Searcy; *Georgia*: Charlton, Fannin, Gilmer, Pickens; *North Carolina*: Ashe, Cherokee, Mitchell, Polk, Wilkes; *Tennessee*: Anderson, Blount, Campbell, Carter, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Hancock, James (now part of Hamilton), Jefferson, Johnson, Loudon, Marion, Morgan, Roane, Scott, Sevier, Union, Washington; *Texas*: Kendall, Kinney, Medina, Presidio, Starr, Zapata.

²⁰ Louisiana, for the reason given above, is represented very incompletely in all calculations. As suggested earlier, South Carolina probably appears here primarily as a result of white abstention from voting. There were very few white Republicans in the state, according to the witnesses before the congressional Ku Klux committee who were asked about this subject; here too most of them were apparently concentrated in the up-country, in such counties as Spartanburg and York. See *Testimony Taken by the Joint Select Committee to Inquire into the Condition of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States*, Senate Reports, 42 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 41: *South Carolina*, 5, 56, 196, 208, 247, 738. North Carolina, where abstention was also a factor, would almost certainly have appeared in the list anyway.

TABLE 3
Political Behavior, 1836-1876, of
Counties Containing White Republicans

Rep. vote % in 1872 exceeds Negro pop. % by:	Total Counties	1836-52* (Majority of Pres. elections)		1860		Union Major- ity**	1872		1868-76 (Majority of Pres. elections)	
		Whig	Dem.	Democrat (Breck- inridge)	Const. Union (Bell)		Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.
50 or more	45	15	16	20	16	18	45	0	33	10
40-49	39	12	16	21	14	18	28	10	12	27
30-39	41	10	16	22	10	14	15	26	3	37
20-29	73	18	33	35	22	24	29	44	10	61
10-19	156	22	85	98	26	35	56	99	33	120
Totals:	354	77	166	196	88	109	173	179	91	255

* Omits South Carolina

** Combined popular majority for Bell and Douglas

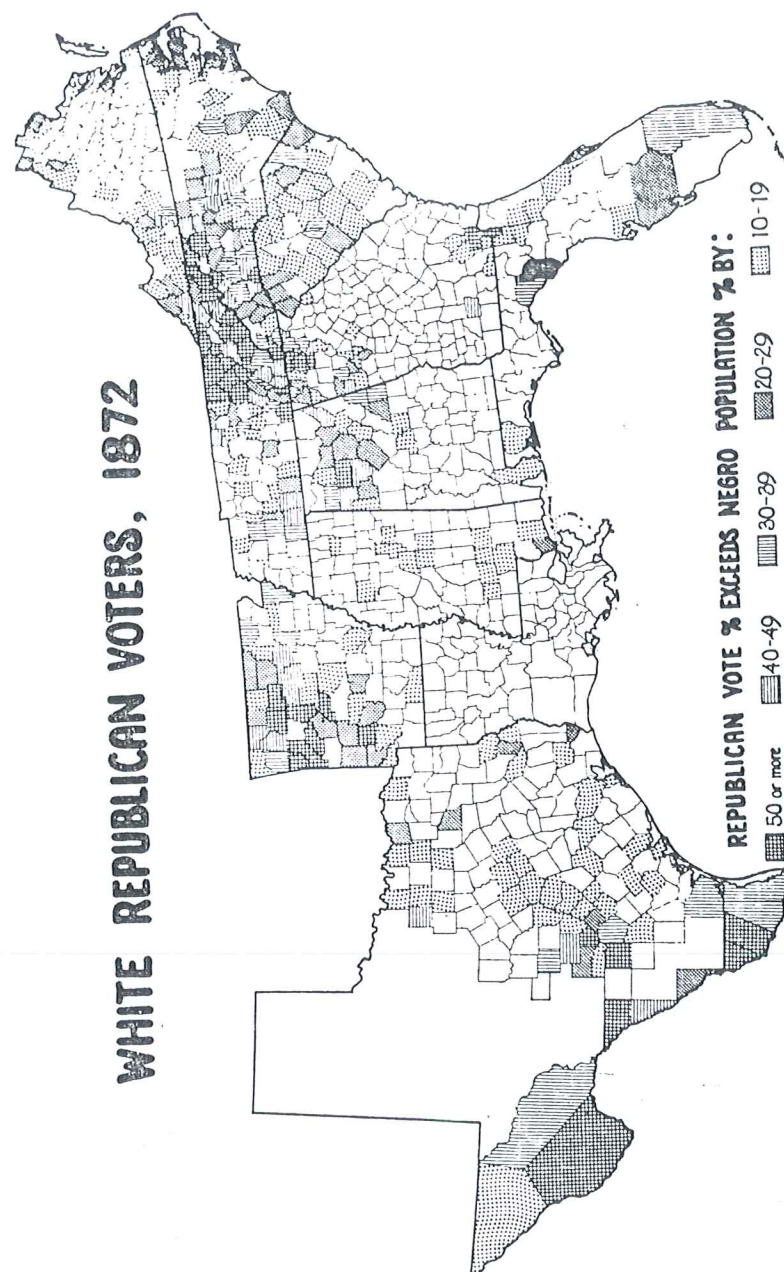
large Mexican and the latter a large German element in its population. Elsewhere hilly, remote, and less prosperous areas were most prominent, such as the northern parts of Alabama and Georgia.²¹ Fully half of Arkansas is represented, nearly all of it lying above a diagonal line drawn between the northeast and southwest corners of the state. By contrast, the areas most noticeable by their lack of white Republicans are east Texas, Louisiana (in so far as we have reliable election records), the bulk of Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, and Virginia, and the southern half of Alabama.¹

¹ In no state, taken as a whole, were white Republicans even close to a majority of all white voters in 1872. Any estimate of their total numbers is hazardous in the extreme because it must rest on so many variables. In terms of votes cast, however, a figure in the neighborhood of 150,000 might be near the mark. Almost half of this number were found in the two states of Tennessee and North Carolina, where they may have constituted a third of all white voters. Arkansas, Texas, and Virginia, in that order, accounted for most of the remainder. Throughout the South, white Republicans cast perhaps 10 per cent of all the votes recorded in 1872, about 20 per cent of those cast by white men, and about 20 per cent of those cast by Republicans.²²

¹ Few as they were, these voters provided the margin of victory in many counties. The election of 1872 found 384 Southern counties in the Republican column, compared with only 248 during a

²¹ The presence of Republicanism in north Georgia is substantiated in Judson C. Ward, "The Republican Party in Bourbon Georgia, 1872-1890," *Journal of Southern History*, IX (May 1943), 197-98.

²² These are very rough guesses, subject to considerable modification. However, they are so much at variance with the estimate made (many years later) by John R. Lynch, the Mississippi Negro congressman, which both Donald and Wharton have cited approvingly, that the disagreement should be noted. After 1872, Lynch wrote, accessions of white aristocrats to the Republican party provided the Negro with a more congenial leadership than theretofore, and by 1875 about 25-30 per cent of the Southern whites were affiliated with it. These, he said, were "among the best and most substantial men of that section." *The Facts of Reconstruction* (New York, 1913), 106. Actually, as Donald and others have pointed out, most of the aristocrats who became Republicans had done so before 1872. By that year the flow was out of, rather than into, the party because of their inability to control it or to compete with the carpetbaggers for Negro support. By 1875 Radicalism was a lost cause in all but four Southern states, due to white defection and the suppression of Negroes. See Donald, "The Scalawag in Mississippi Reconstruction," 449-50, 453-60; Alexander, "Persistent Whiggery in the Confederate South," 319-23; and Wharton, *The Negro in Mississippi*, 157. Wharton's estimate of 15,000-20,000 white Republicans in Mississippi (*ibid.*) also seems much too high, the figure likely being nearer 7,000. Fleming is probably closer to the mark, if a bit too conservative, in his estimate of 4,000-5,000 in Alabama. *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 735, 771.



majority of the elections sampled from 1868 through 1876. Most of the Republican attrition in these other contests occurred in predominantly white counties or those of nearly equal racial distribution, rather than in the black belts. While 173 counties with appreciable numbers of white Republicans cast Republican majorities in 1872, only 71 did so in 1876 and only 91 in a majority of the sampled elections. (See Table 3.) On the other hand, counties in which Negroes formed 70 per cent or more of the population (and in which, accordingly, there were few white Republicans) showed little change in voting behavior: these counties went Republican in 1872 by a margin of 71 to 4 and remained in that column during most of the sampled elections by a margin of 66 to 7.²³ Although Negro disfranchisement was a factor by 1876 in creating some of these shifts, the white Republican minority of 1872 contained most of the independent voters who to a significant degree held the balance of power during Reconstruction.

Through its figures on assessed valuation, the census of 1850 provides a further means of examining the white Republicans. In the 125 counties in which the Republican percentage of the vote exceeded the percentage of Negroes by 30 or more, the per capita wealth was only \$106, compared with \$145 for the South as a whole. The larger the proportion of white Republicans, in fact, the lower was the per capita wealth. It amounted to only \$90 in those counties where white Republicans were presumably in a majority, \$104 where the Republican percentage exceeded that of Negroes by 40-49 points, and \$122 where the difference was 30-39. Nine states (all but Louisiana and Mississippi) possessed counties in at least one of these three categories, and in all but Texas the per capita wealth of the counties involved was significantly less than that of the state at large. With some exceptions, the chief of them being in Texas, these were regions of comparatively low soil fertility where the plantation system and Negro slavery had not penetrated extensively. The evidence suggests, therefore, that most white Republican voters of 1872 were small farmers, noticeably poorer than the Southern average, and having little in common with the ex-slaveholders who had frequently dominated affairs in their respective states.

Having located these people with at least rough precision, we

²³ In every election several counties are excluded from the computation because their returns are doubtful or they are reported as equally divided; furthermore, new counties were formed from time to time, so that numerical totals rarely match over a period of years.

can go further and test the theory that most of them were former Whigs. In the first place, the counties in which the Republican percentage exceeded that of Negroes by 40 or more (that is, where white Republicans were a majority or large minority of all voters) were divided almost evenly between those which had voted Whig in a majority of the five Presidential elections between 1836 and 1852, and those which had voted Democratic. (See Table 3.) Significantly, all but one of the 27 ex-Whig counties were found in Tennessee and North Carolina. The 32 ex-Democratic counties, on the other hand, were scattered in seven states. Where the Republican percentage exceeded that of Negroes by only 10 to 39, the proportion of ex-Democratic counties is much larger (134 to 50); again, most (35) of the ex-Whig counties were in Tennessee and North Carolina, with Virginia contributing 11 of the remaining 15.²⁴

If we reverse our viewpoint and examine the postwar affiliation of all ante bellum Whig counties, we must note first that about half of these had Negro majorities. The black belt counties were largely Whig in their prewar affiliation and, as we have seen, the white minority which cast these votes before 1861 was almost solidly Democratic during Reconstruction. That these counties voted Republican overwhelmingly after the war was owing almost exclusively to the newly enfranchised black majority. In the ex-Whig counties where whites predominated slightly less than half (53 out of 117) voted Republican in 1872 and less than a quarter (26) did so in most of the sampled Reconstruction elections. Again Tennessee, North Carolina, and, to a lesser extent, Virginia, were conspicuous variants. They accounted for 50 of the 53 white ex-Whig counties voting Republican in 1872, and 24 of the 26 voting that way in a majority of the sampled contests between 1868 and 1876. (Even in these three states almost as many of the white ex-Whig counties voted Democratic as Republican in 1872, and a large majority did so in most of the sampled elections.) Only in these three states, apparently, was there much ground for identifying postwar Republicans with prewar Whigs, and even there the correspondence was by no means complete.

One may still object, perhaps, that elsewhere white Republicans constituted a Whig minority before the war, too few in number to carry their counties in most of the elections between 1836 and 1852, and thus not shown in the preceding calculations. This ob-

²⁴ South Carolina is omitted because her Presidential electors were not chosen by popular vote until after the war.

jection is not sustained by an examination of the formerly Democratic counties outside of these three states, where white Republicans in 1872 were a majority or near-majority of all voters. There were 29 such counties, located in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia and Texas, nearly all of them less than 10 per cent Negro in composition. In these counties the Republican voters of 1872 so far outnumbered the highest total of prewar non-Democratic voters—those who cast Constitutional Union party ballots in 1860—that almost half of them had to have switched from the Democratic party. This proportion may well have been much greater. Moreover the Republican gain was not owing significantly to population growth, for except in Texas the total vote in these counties was smaller in 1872 than in 1860.²⁵

In general, therefore, a sound basis for identifying prewar Whigs with postwar Republicans exists only in Tennessee, North Carolina, and to some extent in Virginia. Elsewhere the converse was often true: most of the white Republicans of 1872 seem to have been Jacksonian Democrats before the war. Furthermore, the Whig areas of white population which went Republican during Reconstruction were the habitat of the Appalachian highlander. The planter-businessman aristocracy to which Professor Donald and others have referred seems in general to have found the postwar Democratic or Conservative camp more congenial.²⁶ Doubtless the minority of this group who did join the Radicals carried more weight in terms of leadership and prestige than their numbers alone would indicate, but they were hardly more typical of the white Republicans as a whole than of their own class.

Unionism before and during the war is more difficult to trace through election returns. To a degree, support of John C. Breckinridge in 1860 implied sympathy for a stronger assertion of Southern claims against the North, while Stephen A. Douglas and John Bell were more definitely Unionist candidates. Lincoln of course drew almost no votes from the states that were shortly to form the Confederacy. Of the counties with a significant number of white Republicans in 1872, 196 had cast a plurality of their votes for

²⁵ In these counties the Republican vote of 1872 exceeded the Constitutional Union vote of 1860 by 87 per cent. This figure, broken down by states, is as follows: Alabama (4 counties) 222 per cent; Arkansas (12 counties) 58 per cent; Georgia (8 counties) 107 per cent; and Texas (5 counties) 151 per cent.

²⁶ According to these findings, very few white Republicans were to be found in Mississippi, the state Donald was concerned with. It is possible, therefore, that the Whig planter element in the party loomed comparatively larger there than in most states.

Breckinridge, 88 voted for Bell and the Constitutional Union ticket, and only 3 went for Douglas. (See Table 3.²⁷) Bell and Douglas together received a majority of the votes cast in 109 of these counties, slightly more than a third of the total. Even among the top few counties where white Republicans were most numerous in 1872, less than half had cast "Unionist" (Bell plus Douglas) majorities in 1860. The states of North Carolina and Tennessee again contribute—as they did in the analysis of formerly Whig areas—a large percentage of the "Unionist" counties where white Republicans were later prominent. As a matter of fact, support for the Whig party between 1836 and 1852 so nearly coincided with support for Bell in 1860 that (even after Douglas' votes were added to Bell's) both of these bear the same relationship to postwar Republicanism. Support for Bell and Breckinridge, at least, seems to have reflected political habit as much as Unionist or secessionist feeling in 1860. A majority of Whig voters probably supported Bell in 1860 and became Democrats or Conservatives during Radical Reconstruction.

A better index to Unionist sentiment lies in the attitudes reflected during the secession movement in the several states, and in evidences of wartime disaffection. Here the correlation with postwar Republicanism seems a good deal clearer.²⁸ It is well established that, while Unionism was to be found in all parts of the South in 1860 and afterward, the areas of greatest concentration were the mountain regions of East Tennessee, western North Carolina and Virginia, and adjacent portions of other states, as well as northern Alabama, northwest Arkansas, and parts of west and north Texas.²⁹ These, as we have seen, are almost precisely the areas where white Republican votes were most numerous in 1872. A great many Unionists (including many in the regions)

²⁷ South Carolina is again omitted, as her Presidential electors in 1860 were chosen by the legislature.

²⁸ The several state campaigns fought over the issue of secession or of calling a secession convention do not lend themselves readily to the kind of analysis attempted above. No single yardstick can be held up to all of these contests; the demarcation between Unionists and secessionists was not always clear, and conditions and attitudes varied greatly from state to state as well as from one month to the next during the secession crisis.

²⁹ Georgia L. Tatum, *Disloyalty in the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill, 1934), esp. 4-13; Ella Lonn, *Desertion During the Civil War* (New York, 1928), esp. frontispiece map; Ralph A. Wooster, *The Secession Conventions of the South* (Princeton, 1962), esp. 262-66; Allan Nevins, *The Emergence of Lincoln* (2 vols., New York, 1950), II, 322-24, 423, 428; Clement Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy* (New York, 1961), 19-42, 266; E. Merton Coulter, *The Confederate States of America, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge, 1950), 84-85.

mentioned) never affiliated with the Republican party and some Republicans had been Confederate sympathizers, active as well as passive, during the war. But the correspondence between the two is closer than that between Whiggery and Republicanism—so close as to be more than coincidental.³⁰

It is worthwhile, therefore, to attempt a reconstruction of the relationships which existed between these three elements of Whiggery, Unionism, and Republicanism. The Southern Whigs were not a class party, associated everywhere and exclusively with a single economic interest. In most states, however, they appear to have been strongest among the large planters and among those professional and mercantile groups closely allied with or dependent upon the planters. Except for East Tennessee and adjacent parts of North Carolina and Virginia, they were weaker in the "white belts" of small farms and few slaves.³¹

Unionists in 1860-1861 fell into two main categories. The first of these was composed of large planters and their allies, though by no means all or even necessarily a majority of them, and the second consisted of persons near the opposite end of the spectrum—yeoman farmers in the more isolated parts of the South where slavery had penetrated comparatively little. Of the two groups, the former had been primarily Whig in politics and was decidedly the more lukewarm in opposing the tide of secession; True conservatives, they abhorred disunionist extremism; but they also had a vested interest in the status quo and the South's peculiar institution. Their Unionism was often conditional, therefore, taking the form of co-operationism in preference to immediate and separate state action in withdrawing from the Union. But once the die was cast, they either threw in their lot with the Confederacy (frequently rising to positions of military or political prominence), or retired to the sidelines for the duration.

The second group, more often Democrats than Whigs except in parts of the Appalachian highlands, was more uncompromising. Its members were either openly or covertly disloyal to the Con-

³⁰ An examination of Southern Republican newspapers and political speeches reveals far more appeals to men of Unionist leanings during and prior to the war, than to former Whigs as such. Southern Republicans also commonly regarded Andrew Jackson as one of their forebears because of his opposition to nullification in 1832.

³¹ Cf. Arthur C. Cole, *The Whig Party in the South* (Washington, 1913); Charles Grier Sellers, Jr., "Who Were the Southern Whigs?" *American Historical Review*, LIX (January 1954), 335-46; Grady McWhiney, "Were the Whigs a Class Party in Alabama?" *Journal of Southern History*, XXIII (November 1957), 510-22.

federacy, and some even served in the Union army; among these people especially the wartime peace societies flourished. Their militant hostility to the dominant order in the South was born of economic and social conditions, which in turn sprang from their geographic environment. Lacking slaves, they had no vested interest in protecting or perpetuating that institution, and in fact were often hostile to it. The threats to white supremacy or the "Southern way of life" posed by abolitionists and free soilers were often no more immediate to them than to farmers of Pennsylvania or Illinois. Their opposition to the dominant planter class in their respective states was of long standing; by 1860 it was a customary and primary political motivation, regardless of the local vagaries of party affiliation. Occasionally ethnic factors entered the picture too, as among the Texas Germans, who tended to be antislavery in outlook.³²

Under Presidential Reconstruction, as Professor Alexander has shown, the first group of Unionists came fully into its own. Political leaders who had been least conspicuous in the secession movement—and most of these were ex-Whigs—tended to dominate the scene in most states in 1865 and 1866.³³ Only in Tennessee did the mountain Unionists (also Whigs primarily) sufficiently coincide with this group, or were they sufficiently numerous, to take

³² The literature on Southern Unionism is large and, in conformity with the conclusions reached here, it helps to compensate for the dearth of writings on the scalawag. For the matters discussed here see, in addition to the works already cited, Thomas B. Alexander, "Persistent Whiggery in Alabama and the Lower South, 1860-1867," *Alabama Review*, XII (January 1959), 37-40; Clarence P. Denman, *The Secession Movement in Alabama* (Montgomery, Ala., 1933), 117-19; Hugh C. Bailey, "Disaffection in the Alabama Hill Country, 1861," *Civil War History*, IV (June 1958), 183-93, and "Disloyalty in Early Confederate Alabama," *Journal of Southern History*, XXIII (November 1957), 522-28; Ted R. Worley, "The Arkansas Peace Society of 1861: A Study in Mountain Unionism," *ibid.*, XXIV (November 1958), 454-55; Jack B. Scroggs, "Arkansas in the Secession Crisis," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, XII (Autumn, 1953), 190-91, 196-97, 221; J. Carlyle Sitterson, *The Secession Movement in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, 1939), 10-20, 104-106, 158 ff., 216-25; Lillian A. Kibler, "Unionist Sentiment in South Carolina in 1860," *Journal of Southern History*, IV (August 1938), 355, 359, 361; J. Reuben Sheeler, "The Development of Unionism in East Tennessee," *Journal of Negro History*, XXIX (April 1944), 195-96, 202; Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill, 1940), esp. 46-52; Claude Elliott, "Union Sentiment in Texas, 1861-1865," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, L (April 1947), 449-77; Charles W. Ramsdell, "The Frontier and Secession," in *Studies in Southern History and Politics Inscribed to William Archibald Dunning . . .* (New York, 1914), 63-79; Henry T. Shanks, *The Secession Movement in Virginia, 1847-1861* (Richmond, 1934), 113-15, 137, 156-60; Shanks, "Disloyalty to the Confederacy in Southwestern Virginia, 1861-1865," *North Carolina Historical Review*, XXI (April 1944), 118-35.

³³ Alexander, "Persistent Whiggery in the Confederate South," 311-13.

over themselves the process of Reconstruction. Elsewhere they were a relatively small minority which supported the Johnson governments without exercising much control over them.

With the passage of the Reconstruction acts in 1867 and 1868, the political scene changed abruptly in every state but Tennessee. The old Whig planters, lawyers, and merchants presently in control were as shocked at the implications of Radical Republicanism as most Democrats and secessionists. Although some of them, like Alcorn in Mississippi and Lewis E. Parsons in Alabama, decided to go along with the new dispensation in the hope of controlling or at least tempering it, a larger number were actively or passively hostile from the outset. Those who joined the Republican party were disillusioned on discovering that they could not control the movement in the interests of conservatism; moreover they were reviled by their fellows as traitors to their caste and class, and they soon began dropping out. Such men certainly fall in the category of native white Republicans—or scalawags, if we must use the term—but they provided only part of the leadership before 1872 or thereabouts and almost none of the votes.

The great majority of native white Republicans, as the statistical analysis above shows, came within the second category, the hill-country farmers. Merely to establish their identity as a group and point out their dissimilarities from the surrounding white majority is to leave a great deal unsaid. It must suffice as a basis of generalization, however, until fuller studies are made, indicating in some detail where they stood on the issues of the day, both local and general, and why. For many of these people, though by no means all, affiliation with the Radicals was a natural resumption of their earlier political outlook.

While opposing many interests of the planter class, the Republican party was identified with policies which had been almost uniquely popular in the mountain areas before the war. These included political and social reform of an egalitarian cast, together with such governmental aids to economic development as the protective tariff and subsidies for railway construction. They held a natural appeal for people living in areas of relatively unprofitable agriculture but blessed with abundant supplies of power, labor, and mineral resources. In some mountain districts the local Whig party was most closely identified with these demands before the war, and in other areas it had been the Democrats. But probably no party in the nineteenth century, locally as well as nationally, was as closely associated with all of them as the Republican party

in the years immediately following the Civil War. Many of the mountaineers therefore gravitated to the Republican party during Reconstruction, where they remain in large measure today. Their radicalism was a factor in temporary fusions with the Populist party and other insurgent groups after Reconstruction, and is still recognizable in recent years.³⁴

The spectacular events taking place between 1860 and 1877 make it easy to overlook the substantial element of continuity which underlay them. Even during Radical Reconstruction, party allegiance was in some measure dependent upon local issues, habits, and loyalties as opposed to the greater questions of state and national concern. This was especially true, in all likelihood, of the more remote districts where the Negro and slavery were less critical issues. Thus despite the overall appeal of the Radical program in these regions, there is no more reason to believe that all mountain Republicans consistently favored all Republican policies (where these were consistent) than that all white Democrats consistently opposed them.³⁵

The question of racial equality is a case in point. Anti-Negro prejudice had infected nearly all Southern whites (and most Northerners, too) regardless of party, class, or geographic location.³⁶ In most areas there were enough freedmen to constitute at least the illusion of a threat to white supremacy; thus few whites

³⁴ See Sitterson, *Secession Movement in North Carolina*, 17-18; V. O. Key, Jr., *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York, 1949), 280-85; and C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge, 1951), 99-106, 275-77. Many of the views expressed here concerning the relationships of Whiggery and Republicanism are substantiated in the case of Tennessee in Milton Henry, "What Became of the Tennessee Whigs?" *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XI (March 1952), 57-62. He holds that the wealthier ex-Whig counties tended to become Democratic during Reconstruction while the poorer ones (most of them being in East Tennessee) became Republican.

³⁵ There is a good discussion of this question in Thomas B. Alexander, "Whiggery and Reconstruction in Tennessee," *Journal of Southern History*, XVI (August 1950), 291-305. See also three articles by Verton M. Queener: "East Tennessee Sentiment and the Secession Movement, November, 1860-June, 1861," *East Tennessee Historical Society, Publications*, XX (1948), 59-83; "The Origin of the Republican Party in East Tennessee," *ibid.*, XIII (1941), 66-90; and "A Decade of East Tennessee Republicanism, 1867-1876," *ibid.*, XIV (1942), 59-86. Although there are no comparable studies of the white Republican movement in other states, it is likely that the others conformed to the same general pattern discernible in Tennessee.

³⁶ For racial attitudes in the hill country, see Alexander, "Whiggery and Reconstruction in Tennessee," 299; Queener, "East Tennessee Sentiment and the Secession Movement," 66-68, and "Decade of East Tennessee Republicanism," 59-86; Sitterson, *Secession Movement in North Carolina*, 104-106; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 771-73, 779-80.

joined the Republican party to begin with and many of those who did dropped out early. Personal conviction united with social pressure—often expressed physically—to keep a large majority in the party of conservatism and white supremacy. But if this preoccupation was indeed the “central theme of Southern history,” it confirms once more the highlanders’ isolation from the main stream of Southern life. For they almost alone enjoyed the luxury of ignoring it without undue pain. Among them as among Northerners, traditional loyalties and antipathies within the white community, as well as issues normally unrelated to the race question, had freer rein. There was comparatively little distinction locally between the top and bottom rails of society, and Radical policies did little or nothing to disturb unpleasantly the customary ways of life. These small farmers were free, therefore, to join (or not to join) the anti-planter, Radical, Union party with less reference either to the albatross of Negro equality or to other major issues of Reconstruction policy.³⁷

If secession and the “solid South” of later days were sectional responses to purely sectional conditions, it may be said that Southern white Republicanism (like mountain Unionism) was in part an even more provincial response to yet more local issues. Although a working political democracy may have come closer to realization in parts of the hill country than elsewhere in the South, Du Bois’s “vision of democracy across racial lines” was—alas—too utopian.

³⁷ As a group of north Georgia Democrats put it in 1868, “This is the ‘Missionary ground,’ politically speaking, of the State. The people of this section, being free from the burden of the negro, are divided.” J. W. Avery *et al.* to Alexander H. Stephens, September 28, 1868, in Stephens Papers (Emory University, Atlanta). In time, however, and particularly after Reconstruction, when the hope of winning elections at the state level gave way to patronage mongering, the Republican party in several states split into “lily white” and “black and tan” factions. See Key, *Southern Politics*, 286-91; Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 276-77, 461-65; and Ward, “The Republican Party in Bourbon Georgia,” 207-209.

Joseph Addison Turner: Southern Editor During the Civil War

By LAWRENCE HUFF

JOSEPH ADDISON TURNER, WHO IS CHIEFLY REMEMBERED AS THE FIRST employer of Joel Chandler Harris, gained fame in his own right as one of the most notable editors in the South during the late ante bellum and Civil War years. Born in 1826 in Putnam County, Georgia, some eighty miles southeast of Atlanta, he established his reputation before the war as a lawyer, magazine editor, and member of the state legislature. It is as an editor, however, that he achieved greatest distinction. Working most of the time from his plantation Turnwold, in Putnam County, he was the editor over a period of some twenty years of a series of magazines or journals, the best known of which were two he published during the early sixties, the *Plantation* and the *Countryman*. In addition to these editorial enterprises he was also the author of two volumes of verse and contributed to such periodicals as *Godey's Lady's Book*, *De Bow's Review*, the *Southern Field and Fireside*, and the *Southern Literary Messenger*.¹

His career combined in unusual fashion the roles of littérateur, critic, and Southern political commentator. It is this combination of roles that makes him noteworthy. Secession and the Civil War were close about him while he edited the *Plantation* and the *Countryman*, yet both periodicals were always more than simply wartime publications. They record not only the times of crisis in which he worked but also the extent to which he sought to ad-

¹ The best source of information on Turner is his Journal. It consists of several notebooks of manuscript material, containing autobiographical entries and copies of numerous letters. The original is in the possession of Mrs. J. D. Turner of East Point, Georgia, and a microfilm copy is owned by the Emory University Library. The pages of the manuscript are not numbered satisfactorily; hence in this article it is referred to simply as Turner's Journal. The most extensive study of his life and literary activities is Lawrence Huff, *Joseph Addison Turner: A Study in the Culture of Ante-Bellum Middle Georgia* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1958). See also Bertram Holland Flanders, *Early Georgia Magazines* (Athens, Ga., 1944), 93-95, 150-57, 164-77; and Lawrence Huff, “The Literary Publications of Joseph Addison Turner,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XLVI (September 1962), 223-36.