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## Education in the South: 1870-1930

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Anne Bachman Hyde

Education in the South: 1870-1930

Joe Mixon

Historiography

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The fight for better education in the South after the Civil War was a long, arduous process. Illiteracy was at extreme levels as Reconstruction was under way. Many people in the South saw this and tried to remedy the problem as best they could. This paper will look at how education levels in the South increased through the eyes of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the United Confederate Veterans, the Cherokee Indians, and most important of all, Anne Bachman Hyde.

First, one must look at the South directly following the Civil War. The entire region was torn apart. There was a lot of reconstructing to be done for the current, as well as the next few generations. Many in the North still resented people in the South for breaking apart the Union. There were differing views on how the Southern people saw themselves. Since this paper is looking at the increase in educational standards and literacy, we will look at just how that came about. Most people in the South still saw themselves as different from the North in many ways, which meant that there were specific aspects of the South that they wanted to preserve. This is the rhetoric that was circulated throughout the South post-Civil War.

One requirement of a reconstituted people is unity. Unity requires action that is essential for the continuation of the people and that is fixed to their position. The first rhetorical action seen as predetermined and required of the Southern people was to defend or stand up for the South and its people. People of the South were asked, what is a traitor? The general answer was, one who betrays trust or one who is unfaithful to one's country. A second question was asked, do you like to think of your fathers, grandfathers and relatives who fought in this Great War, as traitors? The overwhelming answer was no. So the following questions were inevitable, then what are you going to do about it? Do you think it is right to sit in silence, and hear that brave Southern soldiers were traitors? Their answer was a resounding no. Most said, we will deny the

false charge, and prove it by history.<sup>1</sup> This rhetoric meant that a traitor was a person unfaithful to his or her country. Reasoning that because the South's fathers, grandfathers, and relatives belonged to their own separate and official nation meant that they could not possibly be traitors. Instead, according to this popular Southern interpretation, the Southern people's ancestors were patriots and heroes worthy of being defended. The catechisms held that the children of the next generation would be held responsible as good Southern people for not only "thinking" of their Confederate forebears as not traitors, but also "proving" and defending it to anyone who so challenged.<sup>2</sup>

A second rhetorical action necessary for preservation of the Southern people was actively remembering their collective past so as to keep the South and its people alive in the present. The United Daughters of the Confederacy organized to "preserve the true history of the Confederacy and keep in sacred memory the brave deeds of the men of the South, with no bitterness toward the government of the United States under which we live." After all, as literal Daughters of the Confederacy, it was a familial duty to carry on the collective history and memories of their Confederate parents into the next generation. So too as Children of the Confederacy, the South's young people were called to take responsibility for "preserving true history" and keeping the Confederacy and its heroes alive "in sacred memory."<sup>3</sup>

The act of remembering the South's forebears was to take place under the government of the United States. This response reveals the women's position that the United States was not the

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<sup>1</sup>Barrett Codieck. 2012. "Keepers of History, Shapers of Memory: The Florida Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1895–1930." M.A., Florida State University.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

South's government: It was the other government under which the Southern nation lived. Even so, the United Daughters of the Confederacy clearly states that there is "no bitterness" between North and South. Considering the character of the South's collective history, identity, and location, these actions and commitments were tied to the Southern people. If the "Children" of the Confederacy were to forget their past, then the fear was essentially that they would melt away just like Confederates. Furthermore, what these actions did was situate the Southern people as rhetorical beings accountable for sustaining Southern existence.<sup>4</sup> This was the mindset of the day, and still is in some circles, including the current United Daughters of the Confederacy.<sup>5</sup>

Thus said, the former Confederate States had little opportunity to better the education of their children. However, With Reconstruction ended and the Northern occupying armies withdrawn from the South, as afore mentioned, the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) began organizing Children of the Confederacy auxiliary groups in 1896 to teach the next generation about their Southern past. While their mothers attended UDC meetings, the children met and learned Southern and Confederate history from UDC approved textbooks.<sup>6</sup> One should remember that because of the slave trade and the beliefs of Europeans back in the 1800s, Africans were thought of as being savages that were taken from the "lowest forms of jungle life."

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<sup>4</sup> Amy L Heyse. "Reconstituting the Next Generation: An Analysis of the United Daughters of the Confederacy's Catechisms for Children." *Southern Communication Journal* 76, no. 1 (January 2011): 55-75. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 15, 2017).

<sup>5</sup> Patricia M. Bryson. *United Daughters of the Confederacy*. Richmond, Virginia, 2016 [cited 2/16 2017]. Available from <http://www.hqudc.org/>.

<sup>6</sup> Amy L Heyse. "Reconstituting the Next Generation: An Analysis of the United Daughters of the Confederacy's Catechisms for Children." *Southern Communication Journal* 76, no. 1 (January 2011): 55-75. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed February 15, 2017).

The Southern woman was the one who (in some cases) began training and teaching these “heathen” people and molding their characters, in addition to their own children.<sup>7</sup>

Prior to this, the United Daughters of the Confederacy Memorial Association was organized in 1894 and was involved in a variety of commemorative activities across the country, such as erecting monuments, decorating the graves of fallen soldiers, organizing parades and banquets, and awarding crosses of honor to veterans of war. By the time the UDC formed, white ex-Confederates had already regained some rhetorical agency with the reconstitution of a new Southern people, as afore mentioned. Southern subjects identified themselves as “Southerners” and sometimes as “Americans” rather than as “Confederates” and they dedicated themselves to renewed purposes in regional and national affairs. The UDC was one important mechanism in the effort to perpetuate and give rhetorical force to the reconstituted Southern people, especially with their work with children.

As soon as the Civil War ended, numbers were generated from each state and people began to find real issues with illiteracy. Before the French Revolution there were 28,000,000 people in France, of whom 27,000,000 were illiterates. In the whole South, nearly half of the people, white and black, were illiterates. However, they did not expect any such calamity as befell France. Yet, they were too near the “ragged edge” when so large a proportion of those who at the polls deciding the destiny of the country could not read the votes they cast, and so were tools for demagogues. They most definitely could not afford to risk their prosperity and their

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<sup>7</sup> Matthew Page Andrews. 1865. *Women of the South in War Times*. Baltimore, MD: United Daughters of the Confederacy.

lives upon such conditions.<sup>8</sup>

Interest in education didn't stop with only the white schools. Specifically in North Carolina there were strides to include everyone in the increase in education. As a proof of the personal interest which the people were taking in the colored schools in the South, that in as many as three of the largest towns in North Carolina, the graded schools for both races were managed by the same white superintendent. Also that some of the most prominent physicians were instructing a class of colored medical students in Shaw University, Raleigh, N. C. In addition, the son of a prominent clergyman and doctor of divinity of the Southern Presbyterian church had been giving instruction to colored men in Biddle University, Charlotte, N. C., and the Principal of one of the most successful private schools, who taught for more than seven years in the University Normal School, took charge of the Colored Normal School at New Berne, N.C.<sup>9</sup>

Questions then arose from the example of North Carolina. How grandly, then, under all these circumstances can the U.S. Government show the world, by this appropriation, the estimation or standard in which education is held in the United States? How grandly can the U.S. Government endorse the labors of the thousands of hard worked and poorly paid teachers, that noble army of so much for others and so little for themselves? How grandly can the U.S. Government supplement the liberality of benevolent people in the North, who, from their private resources, have given more than \$10,000,000 since the surrender, for the education of illiterates in the South?<sup>10</sup>

The War between the States was one of the grandest dramas of all the ages. Its results

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<sup>8</sup> Robert Bingham. 1884. *The New South*. Bingham School, North Carolina. 11, 22-23.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Bingham. 1884. *The New South*. Bingham School, North Carolina. 11, 22-23.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. 22-23.

have been momentous. It advanced the civilization of this country wonderfully. We are today a century ahead of what we would have been without it. The clash of arms ceased years ago; but the belief still exists that the war will not really end till the leprosy of illiteracy is removed from the people whom the war impoverished, and from the people whom it enfranchised and armed with the rights of citizenship. What a grand ending of the war forever, what a grand dropping of the curtain upon the grandest drama of the grandest century of all the ages, for the United States Government to make this grand appropriation for education.<sup>11</sup>

Speaking of government subsidy and appropriation, after the Civil War, the U.S. government turned its eye towards the Cherokee Nation. During the war, the Cherokee Nation formed an alliance with the Confederacy. Since the Cherokee Nation was back under the wing of the United States, the 1866 Treaty required the Cherokee to emancipate all of their slaves and gave citizenship to all free men (including African Americans) who resided in Cherokee land. Many of these free men were used to being politically active in the tribe, therefore, transitioning to being under the United States and not having much of a voice would be a real shocker to most.<sup>12</sup>

The Oklahoma Territory became subject to change under the government of the United States as well. Because the Oklahoma Territory could not officially become a state unless certain measures were taken, the U.S. government decided to step in. In 1887, the Dawes Act forced the entire land grant to be broken up into sections for individuals to claim their own plot of land for their families. Even further, the U.S. government broke up the tribal governmental system of

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<sup>11</sup> Robert Bingham. 1884. *The New South*. Bingham School, North Carolina. 11, 22-23.

<sup>12</sup> "Treaty with the Cherokee, 1866." Archived June 30, 2010, at the Wayback Machine. *Oklahoma Historical Society: Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties. Vol. 2, Treaties*. (Retrieved January 10, 2010).



courts as well as their education programs and other civic programs with the Curtis Act of 1898. All of this was deemed necessary for the Oklahoma Territory to be considered for statehood. Five main tribes in the Indian Territory tried to create their own State of Sequoyah to be solely for Native Americans, however, they were shut down by Washington D.C. in 1905.<sup>13</sup>

For Native Americans in the South who continued living there after Reconstruction had ended, segregation became just as hard as for African Americans because the white middle and upper classes simply saw them all as colored people. This definition of colored people fell under all the constructed Jim Crow Laws, which were designed to limit these people from voting in elections and limit them from civil rights. These segregation laws leaked into the downward spiral of the educational system in South as well, which many saw, and tried to remedy.<sup>14</sup>

To mention one such person who could see this downward trend at somewhat of an alarming rate, Anne Bachman Hyde decided to do something about it. Together with her father, pastor Dr. Jonathan W. Bachman, and one of her closest friends, Penelope Johnson Allen, Anne decided to help promote the increase of education in the South, starting with the Cherokee Nation in and around the city of Chattanooga.<sup>15</sup> A central location was set for a mission that was eventually called Brainerd Mission. The American Board of Foreign Missions founded Brainerd Mission in 1817 before the Civil War to support Native Americans. A small but dedicated group of missionaries set out to institute a plan for the education of the Cherokee Indians. Not only was the civilization of the tribe rapidly increased, the Gospel was brought to them as well. President

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> "Treaty with the Cherokee, 1866." Archived June 30, 2010, at the Wayback Machine. *Oklahoma Historical Society: Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties. Vol. 2, Treaties.* (Retrieved January 10, 2010).

<sup>15</sup> Lena Barton Kain. Bench Dedication, Brainerd Cemetery. 1963 March 13, Penelope Johnson Allen Brainerd Mission Correspondence and Photographs, Special Collections, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

Monroe visited the mission in 1819 and authorized a project for a new girl's dormitory as a government subsidy of one thousand dollars.<sup>16</sup>

The school maintained a program for agriculture, mechanical arts, and domestic science, and it is quite possibly the first school in North America to include scientific agriculture as a part of the curriculum.<sup>17</sup> It is easy for historians to say that the Cherokee were the most civilized Indian tribe in North America at this point in time. They were the only tribe to have their own written language, constitution, and a modern governmental system.<sup>18</sup> One of the first ever Native American women to be formally educated anywhere was Caroline Brown, at this school at the Brainerd Mission. After graduation, she began working at the school and became the first Native American woman whose writings were extensively published.<sup>19</sup>

At the conclusion of the War, together with her friend, Penelope Johnson Allen (Nell), Anne Bachman Hyde continued to help promote the increase of education in the South along with Brainerd Mission. Anne was particularly excited when Nell decided to write a book on Brainerd Mission. In keeping with the example of the Brainerd Mission in Chattanooga as a center for education that encompassed more than just white males, Nell and Anne firmly

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<sup>16</sup> Penelope Johnson Allen. Correspondence with Kenneth McKellar, 1935 January 29, Penelope Johnson Allen Brainerd Mission Correspondence and Photographs, Special Collections, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Accessed 15 Feb. 2017.

<sup>17</sup> Penelope Johnson Allen. Correspondence with Kenneth McKellar, 1935 January 29, Penelope Johnson Allen Brainerd Mission Correspondence and Photographs, Special Collections, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Accessed 15 Feb. 2017.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Kasee, C.R. "Brown, Catharine. Cherokee Sister: The Collected Writings of Catharine Brown, 1818-1823." *CHOICE: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, Aug. 2014, p. 2250+. *Academic OneFile*. Accessed 15 Feb. 2017.

believed that education should not only be increased, but also increased for **all**. They were very excited to see what the future had in store for the city of Chattanooga.<sup>20</sup>

As a city, Chattanooga epitomized the growth and increase of education in the South through the end of the 1800s and into the new century. To see this, we will look at the budding organization called the United Confederate Veterans. Held in New Orleans on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1889, the first convention of United Confederate Veterans organized a National Confederate Veterans Association. The organization was created to be “be strictly social, literary, historical and benevolent.”<sup>21</sup> The first General of the United Confederate Veterans selected Chattanooga to be the place for the first Reunion of all ex-Confederate soldiers. Post-Civil War, “one of the most sanguinary, and at the same time one of the most notable struggles of which history gives any record” the Confederate Veterans were to reunite in the city of Chattanooga. Twenty-five years later, the battles of Chickamauga, Lookout Mountain, and Missionary Ridge were made historic monuments to celebrate “a great triumph of peace.” These noted battles were to be put into the history books as some of the hardest and possibly the most important of the war.<sup>22</sup>

So great has been the improvement and so rapid the growth of Chattanooga since the war, that the visiting veterans who have not been here since they left in 1863 will find it difficult to recognize in the present beautiful city of 50,000 people, with its handsome structures, beautiful churches, and wonderful progress, its hundreds of shops, factories and furnaces, from the battle-stormed, straggling village of tumble down shanties that remained at the close of hostilities.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Anne B. Hyde. Correspondence with Penelope Johnson Allen, 1933 October 1. Penelope Johnson Allen Brainerd Mission Correspondence and Photographs, Special Collections, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Accessed 15 Feb. 2017.

<sup>21</sup> J.B Gordon. “First Annual Convention.” *United Confederate Veterans*. Chattanooga, TN. July 3-5, 1890.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

General Gordon of the United Confederate Veterans writes about Chattanooga from the perspective of the first Reunion. He mentions that the prospects for Chattanooga's growth up to 1880 were very slim. However, during the year 1880, "numerous enterprises were set on foot that promised much for the future of the city; men who had returned from the war to their homes impoverished and disheartened began to reap some of the benefits of their pluck and energy."<sup>24</sup> This included an increase in education for the residents of the city. Many people from all over the country began to travel to the slowly opening gateway to the South. In 1887, prosperity soared and huge investments were made, furthering the development of business and putting all doubts about the growing city to rest. However, not only was it growing from the outside, it was growing from within.

At the time of the First Reunion of the United Confederates, there were nine railroad lines entering the city with more projected into the immediate future, making Chattanooga the railroad center of the South. General Gordon writes that the city enjoyed "all the comforts and conveniences of larger cities." People could easily travel in comfort and at low cost through the city by using a steam railroad, electrical railroads and horse carriages. Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge could then be easily reached by means of steam and electricity. At the time, three separate rail lines could reach the Chickamauga Battlefield.<sup>25</sup> The city of Chattanooga was such an important example to the rest of the country of just how important education can be in pursuing progress.

As a local historian from Chattanooga, Anne Bachman Hyde donated her personal library

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> J.B Gordon. "First Annual Convention." *United Confederate Veterans*. Chattanooga, TN. July 3-5, 1890.

of over 1,200 books to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) in 1950. This collection included a huge amount of literature and Civil War history from the South and Chattanooga specifically. She served as the Historian-General of the UDC for a few years as well, which shows even more her dedication to the preservation of Southern history. In addition, her passion for education was evident in her pursuits towards bettering her local University.

Steve Cox, the librarian of the Special Collections archive at UTC took it upon himself to undergo the first inventory of Mrs. Hyde's collection. He mentioned, "I had processed the collection in 2002, shortly after I came to UTC, but I wasn't as familiar with local and Tennessee history as I am now. In the past few years I started identifying certain items in the collection that convinced me I needed to re-evaluate it."<sup>26</sup> He spent several months processing Mrs. Hyde's collection and found several key items of note. Mr. Cox discovered that Anne Bachman Hyde liked to hide things in her books. Pun not intended. These included "letters from authors, newspaper book reviews, and in one she even pasted in rare Confederate currency, postage stamps, and Civil War-era photographs of Confederate officers."<sup>27</sup>

In addition, Anne Bachman Hyde's collection contains notes on the Brainerd Mission and the Cherokee Indians; talked about previously.<sup>28</sup> This passion for bettering those around her, including Native and African Americans, was second to none. The Brainerd Mission was dedicated to helping out the Cherokee who had stayed in the Chattanooga area and also, who had

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<sup>26</sup> Steve Cox. "Hyde Collection In Special Collections Reveals More Treasures." University of Tennessee at Chattanooga [database online]. Library of UTC, 2009 [cited 1]. Available from <http://blog.utc.edu/library/2009/02/27/hyde-collection-in-special-collections-reveals-more-treasures/> (accessed January 26, 2017).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

been subject of the cruel oppression of Southern segregation and discrimination. Her main avocation of service was that of the education for the young people of her community.

Anne Bachman Hyde contributed to the furthering of education in more ways than one. With her membership in the United Daughters of the Confederacy as their General-Historian, she was able to influence education locally in Chattanooga as well as nationally throughout the United States. Her interest in the Cherokee Indians also contributed to the increase of their educational standards in the Brainerd Mission near Chattanooga. Leading into the early 1900s, the South saw tremendous growth in education. Mrs. Hyde helped push this growth to its limits and maximize the education of the Children of the Confederacy as well as all young people throughout the South, specifically within the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. In addition, she also promoted a college education for women.

During the 1930s there was a massive explosion in female college students and graduates in the United States. At the turn of the century in 1900, there were just over 85,000 female college students, however, only about 5,000 earned a bachelor's degree. By the 1940s the number of female college students reached about 601,000, 77,000 of whom completed a bachelor's degree. One explanation of this increase, as stated by Margaret Nash in *Teachers College Record*, was the "contemporary discourse that reinforced the need for higher education for women in their positions as wives, mothers, citizens, and professionals."<sup>29</sup>

Due to the fact that a preferred role for a middle class woman in the 1930s was a wife and mother above all other things, when people argued for women's education, they were also arguing for eugenics, equality, and citizenship. For women to receive a formal education meant

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<sup>29</sup> Margaret Nash; Lisa Romero (2012). "Citizenship for the College Girl: Challenges and Opportunities in Higher Education for Women in the United States in the 1930s". *Teachers College Record*. 114 (2): 18.

that they now understood how to utilize their civil responsibilities, especially with their vote. In 1935, 62% of women who graduated with a college degree exercised their right to vote as compared to 50% voter turnout of women without a college degree. Education was training women to become leaders. Anne Bachman Hyde capitalized on this.<sup>30</sup>

In conclusion, the fight for better education in the South after the Civil War was a long, arduous process. We saw how education levels in the South increased through the eyes of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, United Confederate Veterans, the Cherokee Indians, and most important of all, Anne Bachman Hyde. The UDC and UCV both contributed abundantly to the promotion and overall increase of education in the South. Through the Brainerd Mission and UTC Anne Bachman Hyde was also able to personally touch the lives of many in helping to better education in the South through higher educational standards and equality for women. As Mrs. Hyde writes in her poem *Flag Day*:

With song and praise  
 We come to raise  
 The fairest flag the breezes know,  
 For glory holds  
 Within thy folds  
 Such deeds as ancient Rome could show.  
 Nor Spartan land  
 Had braver band  
 Than they who raised thee first on high,  
 Nor fame's bright scroll  
 More radiant roll  
 Than they who for thee dared to die.  
 Virginia's son  
 Our Washington  
 First placed thee on the field of Mars,  
 Where he has led  
 With valiant tread  
 We follow still the stripes and stars.  
 Should war's rude shock

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

Our freedom mock  
With dread alarms from sky or sea,  
"In Dixie's land  
We'll take our stand"  
To serve and live and die for thee.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Anne Bachman Hyde. *Flag day*. Reference & Circulation Section Virginia State Library Richmond, Virginia. 1st ed. Vol. 1. Virginia State Library. Available from <http://www.virginiamemory.com/transcribe/scripto/transcribe/5418/14970> (accessed January 30, 2017).



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