

Chapter 2

A WAR REMEMBERED, A WAR REUSED

*The past is never dead. It's not even past.*¹

Hollywood did not suddenly discover the Civil War - it was already firmly established in American culture and memory. It 'still exists,' says David Goldfield, 'an event without temporal boundaries, an interminable struggle that has generated perhaps as many casualties since its alleged end in 1865 as during the four preceding years.'² Its deeds and legacy have burned into popular consciousness, spawning great myths and inspiring a range of popular culture from memoirs to plays, re-enactments to memorabilia, monuments to novels, genealogy to poetry, painting and music. Hollywood took up the Civil War in its earliest days and more films have been made about it than on any other historical event.

The continuing influence of the Civil War

Of the three significant and formative events in the history of the United States – the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers (1620), the Declaration of Independence and the Revolutionary war (1776-83) and the Civil War (1861-65) - it is the latter that still looms across the American landscape. Thomas Pressly suggested an answer when he wrote that the Civil War 'seemed to involve questions which go to the very heart of national life: the relationship between the national government and the states....the question of 'majority rule' in a constitutional democracy....the role of the Negro in American life: the question of what economic policies the national government should adopt.'³ These are great issues, but civil wars have another side, they evoke great emotions and great loyalties, especially in the defeated side, which echo down the generations.

It is not only white Americans who look back to the Civil War and the issues that it raised – of equality, national identity and race. African Americans also look to it to regain and reaffirm their place in American history. In September 1996 African American re-enactors marched along the same victory parade route in Washington D. C. as only white soldiers of the Grand Army of the Republic had done in May 1865. Two years later the Spirit of Freedom, designed by an African-American sculptor, was unveiled in the centre of a Wall

of Honor dedicated to, and listing, all the members of the United States Colored Troops - including their white officers.⁴

Emotion inevitably produces distortion and the South, desperate to come to terms with the consequences of a devastating defeat, occupation and emancipation, produced the myth of the Lost Cause. The South, so the myth established, had fought to preserve states' rights, not to preserve slavery; it had fought for what it believed to be right; its soldiers had fought bravely and honourably and were only finally overwhelmed by vastly superior forces; the North had provoked, and then invaded, the South and destroyed its superior civilisation; the slaves, with their limited abilities, had been generally happy and contented, well looked after and received moral education and care in the most favourable paternalistic environment; and Reconstruction was a courageous battle against the despoilers of Southern values – the Yankees and the African Americans.⁵ Around this myth the South came together – it had not been united before, not even during the war – and in 1877, after regaining political power in the eleven secession states, the white political aristocracy was left to nurture its traditions, establish new rites and to take charge of the memory of the Civil War - or the 'War Between the States' as the South renamed it in 1898.⁶

By 1900 the memory of the Civil War for most white Americans had coalesced into one of reconciliation and white supremacy. North and South had gradually come together as veterans from both sides found common ground in reflecting on their experiences of a bloody war of American against American. This reconciliation between the white North and the white South was symbolised in the Spanish-American War of 1898, as the South enthusiastically embraced the chance to demonstrate its prowess in war and loyalty to the nation, and was cemented at the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg in 1913. The emancipationist vision held by the African Americans was pushed into the background of white consciousness. But it stayed with the former slaves in their memories and memorials, to re-emerge with great force in the mid-twentieth century, to transform America.⁷

It is the handing down of these memories that places the Civil War in the forefront of American history. Memories are not only handed down formally through educational institutions but informally as part of family history and community myths and tradition. In the South, says David Goldfield, history is not learned, it is handed down and what was

handed down was both gloriously heroic and burningly painful. It is always the painful memories of suffering and loss that are carried deep in the psyche.⁸ D. W. Griffith is not alone in accepting the centrality of family memory in revisiting the past. Roy Rozenzweig and David Thelen asked a sample of people about the role of the past in their lives. Most people said that the past was both familial and concrete and cited stories told by family members and instanced photographs that triggered memories. When they were asked who was most trusted in speaking about the past, the answer given was grandparents, relatives and eyewitnesses.⁹ With the oral tradition so strong as a mediator of the past it is little wonder that the white South was able to maintain its myths of defeat and of a past glorious age which it buttressed by the formal and informal institutions it developed. The last Civil War veteran only died in 1959, while the centennial stimulated ordinary Americans to research their family's involvement in the war.¹⁰ Today there are numerous internet sites, battle re-enactments and heritage centres to reaffirm and relive the past.¹¹

The Civil War occupies a unique place in American history. It was the last war fought on American soil. It was characterised by a series of bloody battles that left over 620,000 dead – more than all the casualties of all other wars fought by American soldiers put together – and many thousands more wounded.¹² There was scarcely a family in the North or South that did not mourn dead soldiers or harbour disabled veterans.¹³ The major battles and events – such as Pickett's charge at Gettysburg – are burned into American myth and history. Both sides, according to the myth, fought with great honour and bravery for causes they both deemed to be right. To Bruce Catton, in 1958, this was patriotism at the highest level: ordinary Americans teaching future Americans what patriotism is all about. The Civil War became a place from which to measure the dimensions of almost everything that happened in the United States since that time.¹⁴ Robert Penn Warren declared that,

(t)he Civil War is, for the American imagination, the greatest single event in our history. Without too much wrenching, it may, in fact, be said, to *be* American history.' It was only with the Civil War that the 'more perfect union' became a reality, and we became a nation..... The Civil War became our only 'felt history.....It is an overwhelming and vital image of human, and national, experience.¹⁵

Thirty years later Shelby Foote concurred when he commented that

any understanding of this nation has to be based....on an understanding of the Civil

War.....[it] defined us as to what we are, and it opened us to what we became, good and bad.....this enormous catastrophe.....was the crossroads of our being.¹⁶

Alan Noble, observing how the Civil War tends to be defined in clichés, comments that ‘(t)hese images, each laden with emotion, are in our bones.’¹⁷ With these views, the Civil War takes on a quasi-mystical experience. Out of the ashes of the conflict a new nation was born. The Civil War therefore becomes the myth of rebirth - ironically echoed in *Birth* with its overt racism – giving the nation the opportunity to return to its ideals.¹⁸

One of the major results of the war was to remake the United States into a truly ‘united’ nation. Instead of using the plural phrase ‘the United States are,’ it could now be said that ‘the United States is.’¹⁹ While states’ rights remained embedded in the Constitution, and would continue to be raised in the future in the dynamic tension of local versus national powers and responsibilities, it would no longer be associated with secession.²⁰ Lincoln had saved the Union and the Union was to become the nation. During the war Lincoln increasingly referred to the ‘nation’, rather than just the ‘Union’, and to the future of that nation as one of democratic and representative government.²¹ However his assassination led to a different path than the one he had mapped out ‘with malice towards none and with charity to all’ to bring the country back together again.²²

The second major result of the war was that it settled the question of slavery. The Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 and the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments (1865-69) abolished slavery, defined and guaranteed citizenship and the right to vote to all citizens. However, apart from the short-lived Freedmen’s Bureau, the African Americans were left in an increasingly racist environment.²³ They were gradually isolated and segregated from whites through the Jim Crow²⁴ laws enacted by the southern states, which were given constitutional legitimacy by the Supreme Court in 1896.²⁵ With the vast majority of the former slaves remaining in the South, Northerners could slip away from the ‘problem’ of making equality a reality. The North had kept its word: freedom and citizenship had been given to the slaves. If there were any problems arising from that then it was a matter for the Southern states. Yet the unfinished business of the Civil War – ‘the problem of the colour line’ - refused to go away.²⁶ Race and the Civil War were inseparable and by the mid-twentieth century they presented an increasing challenge to America’s domestic and foreign policies.

The bitter legacy of resentment and hatred of white Southerners towards the Yankees, and their culture of white supremacy and racism towards the African Americans, was brought out forcefully in the 1950s and 1960s by the resurgence of the Civil Rights Movement, which followed the Supreme Court's judgement against segregated public schools in 1954.²⁷ This produced a white backlash which was articulated at every level in southern society through the establishment of White Citizens Councils, the re-emergence of the Ku Klux Klan the reiteration of states' rights and white supremacy, and the fears of miscegenation. Then the Centennial celebrations of the Civil War (1961-65) provided the opportunity to celebrate the Lost Cause in all its finery, bravery and romanticism. The Confederate battle flag was hoisted over state capitols as a gesture of defiance against the federal government's support for desegregation and the descendants of the Confederacy donned the 'gray' to re-enact their victory at the first battle of Bull Run in July 1961. Although civil rights legislation was passed, the re-emergence of the Right, symbolised by Nixon winning the presidential election in 1968, led to a period in which the process of desegregation slowed down, then left to 'benign neglect' and finally stopped under Ronald Reagan.²⁸ The liberal consensus had disintegrated, to be replaced by a neo-conservatism increasingly supported by a more fundamentalist religious attitude to the issues of the day.

Towards the end of the 1990s there were heated campaigns in Mississippi, South Carolina and Georgia as to whether the Confederate battle flag – the 'southern cross' – or its incorporation into state flags should continue to be flown from state houses.²⁹ Neo-Confederate organisations took root.³⁰ Whilst these and other similar groups are very small they represent far more. In the elections of 2000 the Republican governor of South Carolina was voted out of office because he had 'abandoned the Lost Cause and called for the [Confederate] flag's removal,' while the Supreme Court in Virginia ruled, in 2001, that a state law banning the burning of crosses was unconstitutional.³¹ However the swing to the right has not completely taken over as the new prosecutions of civil rights murderers, who were cleared by all-white juries in the 1950s and 1960s, testifies.³² And in 2003 Trent Lott, the leader of the Republicans in the senate, was forced to resign after he paid tribute to Strom Thurmond, the one-time 'Dixiecrat' segregationist presidential candidate, as the man that the country should have voted for in 1948.³³

The Civil War and popular culture

Just as the political landscape continuously references back to the Civil War so too has popular culture used and reused the war.³⁴ Immediately after the war the South sought to justify its defeat by inventing the Confederate tradition around the myth of the Lost Cause. This helped to explain to nineteenth century Southerners how and why they lost and helped them to cope with the cultural implications of defeat.³⁵ Southerners also found other ways of dealing with their loss through Confederate Memorial Days and erecting statues and memorials to remember and honour the Confederate dead. Confederate veterans met in local 'survivors' associations' and formed a 'national' organisation in 1889 - the United Confederate Veterans (UCV).³⁶ The UCV had support organisations – the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) founded in 1894 and the United Sons of Confederate Veterans (USCV) founded in 1896 – which were dedicated to ensure that the Confederate tradition would live on, as well as the magazine, the *Confederate Veteran*, established in 1893.³⁷

What developed in the South in the years following the Civil War was a new culture that embraced all levels of white society in its attempt to control both the past and the future. As the historian Ray Browne says, '(p)opular culture is the way of life in which and by which most people in a society live.....It is the every day world around us.....It is the way of living we inherit, practice and modify as we please.....it is the dreams we dream while asleep.'³⁸ Jim Cullen comments that the

power of popular culture is to offer large numbers of people explanations of why things are the way things are – and what, if anything can be done about it. Infuse this power with history – explanations of how things came to be the way they are – and you have a potent agent for influencing the thinking, and thus the actions, of millions of people.... Popular culture has played a critical role[in] remembering the Civil War.³⁹

The way the South established a memory of the Civil War shows how collective memory can be moulded and the past distorted. Southerners realised that the right education was essential for the Confederate memory to continue. The UCV and the UDC established historical committees to promote a 'proper' appreciation of the war by establishing a 'true' history and to see that children were taught only a Southern understanding of the war.⁴⁰ The UCV also proposed that the term 'Rebel' should no longer be used and the Civil War called 'The War Between the States.'

The North was equally guilty of distortion.⁴¹ To the South's 'alibi' of the Lost Cause the North took the high ground of the 'Treasury of Virtue,' waving the 'bloody shirt' at each election, forgetting their changes of policy from saving the Union to a gradual freeing of the slaves through military necessity.⁴² The North had also established a popular culture of Memorial Days, veterans associations - the Grand Army of the Republic - and memoirs – especially those of Sherman (1875) and Grant (1884) - reminiscences and monuments to the dead.⁴³ Military reminiscences became popular: *The Philadelphia Weekly Times* published a series of articles from March 1877 by former Union and Confederate soldiers and civilians; while the Century magazine's 'Century War Series', 1884-87 was published as *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* in 1887.⁴⁴ The editors of the *Century* wished to engender 'no passions or prejudices of the war, and wanted articles that demonstrated 'sacrifice, resourcefulness, bravery.'⁴⁵

It was not until the late 1870s that the Civil War theme was taken up by novelists with the emphasis upon reconciliation, usually through marriage.⁴⁶ Novels of the 1880s, writes Nina Silber, were dripping with sentimentality and devoted to reunion. Many had a plantation theme and sold well.⁴⁷ By the 1890s the Civil War theme came to dominate the theatre.⁴⁸ The novels and plays showed that the planter aristocracy fascinated northerners as well as southerners, by the 'drama of failure, economic deprivation and finally redemption with northern assistance.' It also showed that the North, which had ultimately fought a devastating war to free the slaves, had accepted the South's racial codes. In play after play the African Americans were portrayed as loyal and devoted servants to their Confederate masters.⁴⁹ So acceptable had this portrayal become, that Southern racist novels, such as Thomas Nelson Page's *Red Rock* (1898) and Thomas Dixon, Jr.'s *The Leopard's Spots* (1902) and *The Clansman* (1905) became best sellers.⁵⁰ Only in Steven Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) is the war treated in a more realistic way. But the book is devoid of ideology and any discussion of causes. After World War I the interest of novelists in the Civil War lapsed until the late 1920s when major novels began to appear at regular intervals.⁵¹ Many were later made into films and, in the last decades of the twentieth century, into television films.⁵²

For most Americans the memory of the Civil War was the memory of the battles and Gettysburg became the war's symbolic representation. It was the 'sacred ground' of

memory,⁵³ the place where Union and Confederate veterans could celebrate ‘a joint and precious heritage.’ Due to the bravery and heroism shown by both sides, committed as they were to strong, heartfelt principles, Gettysburg became an ‘American’ victory in which no side lost. It also became a memory of whiteness, as African Americans were barred from the Decoration Day procession from 1869.⁵⁴ At the fiftieth anniversary ‘(o)nly obscure references exist of any black veterans...[although] numerous black men worked as camp labourers.’⁵⁵

Gettysburg continued to be celebrated. The seventy-fifth anniversary (1938), the last one at which the ‘Blue and the Gray’ came together, was overshadowed by the threat of war in Europe. The centennial in 1963 was overshadowed by the civil rights struggle. However, at the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary (1988) the landscape of memory had changed. War was no longer an act for brave, honourable and principled men to fight great causes but an act of political decision in a global power game. America had suffered a psychological, if not a military, defeat in Vietnam. The Civil Rights Movement had altered forever many of the beliefs and institutions that had existed even twenty-five years before. The theme in 1988 was ‘Peace Eternal in a World United’ – giving the celebration ‘an inter-racial and international flavour.’⁵⁶ The following year the film *Glory* was released – the first, and only, film so far to place African Americans fighting in the Civil War at the centre of the narrative.⁵⁷

The ‘desire to connect to history’ became increasingly significant in the second half of the twentieth century.⁵⁸ In the 1950s a Civil War sub-culture emerged with the establishment of round tables, the collection of memorabilia and re-enactments.⁵⁹ This interest was accelerated by the coming centennial celebrations, which, following *Brown*, southerners used to protest against the perceived threats to their culture and way of life. The celebrations became an opportunity to display the superiority of the Old South – in cultural activities and displays and in battlefield re-enactments.

Re-enactments were started by the veteran organisations in the nineteenth century but a century later they took on the mantle of ‘living history’ satisfying a curiosity about, and a need to connect to, the past. Interest waned in re-enacting after the Centennial, which coincided with the passing of the Civil Rights legislation and the divisive Vietnam War, but picked up again in the 1980s as America recovered its sense of authority under the

ultra-conservative President Reagan. Realism now became the central theme. Re-enactors research their roles in great depth wanting to experience 'living history' and have little interest in the causes and consequences of the war.⁶⁰ The same is true with living history museums where the past is filtered by nostalgia through sanitised recreations of Ante Bellum society and authenticity replaces criticism. The Civil War became just the battlefields where women and race were barely mentioned. The Mississippi Division of Tourism Department, for example, only mentions race in the context of loyal 'former slaves who fought for the Confederacy.' However, the commercial possibilities of inclusion are now being exploited.⁶¹ Disney's new theme park on American history emphasises racial and ethnic minorities, slavery and industrial exploitation.⁶² In the last few years even Civil Rights venues are becoming part of heritage.⁶³

Supporting and feeding this interest in the Civil War are a number of popular and professional magazines,⁶⁴ discussion groups such as the Abraham Lincoln Association, and a large number of internet sites devoted to the Civil War. However many of the sites are pro-Confederate ranging from individuals to established organisations such as the SCV. In an age that increasingly acknowledges the emancipationist vision of the Civil War the SCV unashamedly follows the Lost Cause myth and is dedicated to 'insuring that a *true history* (emphasis added) of the 1861-1865 period is preserved.' The 'peculiar institution' of slavery is not mentioned.⁶⁵ The attitude of the SCV may be single-focused and against the gathering mainstream approach to America's past but is it so very far away from the greatest influence in popular culture in its memory and representation of the Civil War, Hollywood and increasingly, since the 1970s, television?

Hollywood and the Civil War

Hollywood picked up and developed its interest in the Civil War from the popular culture of the 1900s. Newsreels of veteran commemorative meetings and ceremonies had been captured on film from 1896 and proved very popular. Story or feature films based on the Civil War began in 1908 and were produced almost every year until the mid-1970s with the majority occurring during four cycles - 1908-17, 1934-42, 1946-58 and 1964-72. As Hollywood's vision of the Civil War became integrated into popular culture so the memory of the Civil War became Hollywood's memory.

Despite being a new medium Hollywood did not adopt a different approach in representing the Civil War but drew upon the images present in other forms of popular culture. What Hollywood did, however, was to redefine it in moving images and sell it to a new mass audience – the working class communities and the new immigrants in the cities. These images were repeated in hundreds of films until the image of the Civil War was Hollywood's image. While the first films had taken a Northern view, by 1911 two-thirds took a Southern perspective with slavery shown as a benign system and African Americans – normally white actors in black face – confined to the background as loyal servants.⁶⁶ The Civil War was a white war with, generally, a happy ending of reconciliation through marriage – the 'family' (America) reunited again.

Hollywood's early focus on the Civil War showed the nascent industry how American history could be used for entertainment. It was stimulated by the growing interest in the coming semi-centennial, which Congress agreed to celebrate with a special ceremony to commemorate the Battle of Gettysburg. America looked positively to this 'Peace Jubilee' and filmmakers saw a great business opportunity to participate in the national celebrations.⁶⁷ In the years up to America's entry into World War I in 1917, Civil War films became a major genre peaking in 1913 to coincide with the celebrations at Gettysburg. (See Appendices 1 and 5.)

Civil War films were successful because they satisfied the interests of the producers, exhibitors, leaders of society and the audience. The producers, who were mainly white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, and the exhibitors, who came mainly from a variety of entrepreneurial and immigrant backgrounds, shared the same objectives.⁶⁸ They wanted to retain control of the industry, fight off the European competition, displace their main leisure competitor, vaudeville, and attract the middle classes.⁶⁹ They also shared the same objectives as the religious and political leaders of society, the Progressives, who wanted a safe and controlled leisure industry, which would also provide moral up-lift and education for the immigrant and working class communities. After the compromise agreement over censorship in 1909,⁷⁰ film content began to change to exhibit more wholesome American values. Civil War films based on family, duty, honour, sacrifice and patriotism with eventual reconciliation and unity provided an appropriate counter to the more *risqué* European films. Because they depicted American history it was felt that they would attract the middle classes as well as giving the new immigrants an understanding of America.⁷¹

The producers knew that audiences were fascinated by war, as they had shown ‘tremendous interest’ in the siege of Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905-6.⁷² In 1908 Burton Albee visited a large number of Nickelodeons and found out that what the public wanted was ‘action, pathos, patriotism’ – but only if there ‘were battles, uniforms and fighting – and love stories with happy endings.’⁷³ Civil War films had these in plenty. The story lines were far more accessible to the immigrant and working class communities who, it was felt, would be unable to ‘recognise the narrative events of a classic tale, work of literature, a popular play, a familiar myth unless they were in some way explained.’⁷⁴

The second cycle of Civil War films appeared in the mid-1930s. The experience of the Depression had altered public attitudes and Hollywood had produced films that challenged traditional values by calling ‘into question sexual propriety, social decorum and the institutions of law and order.’⁷⁵ However, with Roosevelt’s election America’s mood changed and Hollywood returned to its Civil War myths, steeped in nostalgia and stressing unity, family, reconciliation and a determination to overcome adversity. The films were safe conveyors of America’s moral values as Hollywood clamped down on sex and violence through the strict implementation of the industry’s Production Code. As the 1930s ended with war in Europe, *Gone with the Wind* (1939) became the defining, and most successful, film of the Civil War. But the political and social environment was changing and, whilst the film retold the war and Reconstruction from a southern perspective, there were indications of change in its representation and presentation of the issues.

World War II changed attitudes to race and more African Americans appeared in significant roles as Hollywood yielded to the continual pressure from the civil rights movement.⁷⁶ After the war Hollywood produced message pictures attacking racial prejudice and anti-Semitism. Civil War films began to reflect this change through expressions of equality and a change in the representation of African Americans. However, under the intense pressure of anti-communism even indirect criticism came to be seen as an attack on America. African Americans disappeared from Civil War films as they reverted to narratives of personal, North-South conflict either during the war or in post-war westerns. Unity and reconciliation often came as North and South joined together to fight against uncivilised forces – represented by the Native Americans. The future had to be won on the screen, as the Cold War had to be won in the present.

From the late 1940s Hollywood was under pressure from internal and external forces, which ultimately changed the industry but also influenced the films it produced. Externally there were the intertwining pressures of the Cold War and the Civil Rights Movement: internally there was the challenge of television, declining audiences,⁷⁷ the loss of control over exhibition⁷⁸ and the increasing costs of production. Hollywood turned to the western, and especially the Civil War western, to offset its losses.

In the mid-1950s the changes in the political agenda following *Brown*, and the ending of the more virulent aspects of anti-communism, emboldened Hollywood to resume addressing issues of race and national identity in Civil War films. But the increasing unrest in the South over civil rights and the failure of high profile Civil War films⁷⁹ created uncertainty, which even the Centennial celebrations could not resolve. Faced by the prospect of showing Civil War conflict on the screen with civil rights conflict on the streets Hollywood turned away from the Civil War and the celebrations to less controversial and more patriotic subjects.

Hollywood returned to the Civil War after John F. Kennedy committed himself to civil rights legislation in 1963. The Civil Rights Movement was now legitimised in the face of the South's brutal reaction to desegregation. Hollywood returned to where it was ten years earlier promoting a better understanding of race relations and national identity. The Civil Rights Movement had achieved the breakthrough that Allen and Gomery suggested had happened twenty years before. African Americans appeared in positive roles, freeing the slaves was now an accepted war aim, black male/white female attraction a possibility and far more Southerners than Northerners became the villains. However, the escalating war in Vietnam and continuing social unrest at home altered the contours once again. Civil War films became a vehicle to explore the nature of the war in Vietnam and the issues it raised at home. There were few winners in this new environment with films ending in violence, without unity or reconciliation, reflecting the social unrest in America.

After America's retreat from Vietnam in the early 1970s the Civil War themes of reconciliation and unity for the future of America were no longer relevant. The liberal coalition had been destroyed in the late 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement had splintered and radicals sought individual solutions in alternative lifestyles and the recognition of

minority interests. The Civil War faded from Hollywood's agenda. In the last quarter of the twentieth century only eleven Civil War films were produced (see Appendix 7).

- ¹ William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1960), 81.
- ² David Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 1.
- ³ Thomas J. Pressly, *Americans Interpret their Civil War* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 18.
- ⁴ This showed uniformed African-American soldiers, a sailor and women, children and elders seeking strength together. The listing of names was completed in 1999. Available from: afroamcivilwar.org/discover.html (accessed 2 February, 2004).
- ⁵ Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War*, p.4. The term the 'Lost Cause' was probably first used by Edward A Pollard in his 1866 book *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates*. However it was Jefferson Davis, the former president of the Confederacy, with his two-volume memoir *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* in 1881 that encapsulated the case and rhetoric of the South's defence and firmly established the Confederate tradition with the Lost Cause at its heart.
- ⁶ Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause and the Emergence of the New South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 118.
- ⁷ David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, Harvard University Press, 2001), 2-3.
- ⁸ Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War*, 12, 16. Also see Ira Berlin, 'American Slavery in History and Memory and the Search for Social Justice,' *Journal of American History*, 90 (March, 2004), 1251-68.
- ⁹ Roy Rozenzweig and David Thelen, *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998) book review by Ann Fabian, *Reviews in American History*, 27, (1999), 630-35.
- ¹⁰ This was Walter Williams of Houston Texas, who died in December 1959. Robert Cook, 'From Shiloh to Selma: The Impact of the Civil War Centennial on the Black Freedom Struggle in the United States, 1961-65', in Brian Ward and Tony Badger, (eds.), *The Making of Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement* (Basingstoke: MacMillan Press, 1996), 134.
- ¹¹ Typing 'American Civil War' on Google gave 79,000,000 hits (14 January, 2005).
- ¹² Hugh Tulloch, *The Debate on the American Civil War Era* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 104.
- ¹³ Charles Joyner, ' "Forget, Hell!": The Civil War in Southern Memory' in Susan-Mary Grant and Peter J Parish, (eds.), *Legacy of Disunion: The Enduring significance of the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 23.
- ¹⁴ Bruce Catton, *America Goes to War* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1958), 68-9.
- ¹⁵ Robert Penn Warren, *The Legacy of the Civil War: Meditations on the Centennial* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), 3-4.
- ¹⁶ Shelby Foote in *The Civil War*, a documentary for television by Ken Burns, 1990.
- ¹⁷ Alan T. Noble, *Lee Considered* (1991), quoted in Robert Lang (ed.), *The Birth of a Nation: D. W. Griffith, Director* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 5.
- ¹⁸ Susan-Mary Grant, 'Civil War and American Nationalism' in Susan-Mary Grant and Peter J Parish (eds.), *Legacy of Disunion: The Enduring Significance of the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 189-206.

- ¹⁹ Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The 'Objectivity Question' and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, first published 1988), 72; Shelby Foote in *The Civil War*, a documentary for television by Ken Burns, 1990.
- ²⁰ The tenth Amendment to the Constitution states that 'The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.' Robert Birley, (ed.), *Speeches and Documents in American History, (Volume I) 1776-1815*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), 173.
- ²¹ Tulloch, *The Debate on the American Civil War Era*, 110.
- ²² See Lincoln's Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction in 1863 and his Second Inaugural Address in 1865 in Birley, (ed.), *Speeches and Documents in American History*, 286-9, 299.
- ²³ This lasted from 1866-72 and mainly provided humanitarian aid, legal protection for labour contracts and education.
- ²⁴ 'Jim Crow' became a synonym for the African-American after Thomas D. Rice wrote a minstrel dance tune of that name in 1832 which became so popular with white audiences that Rice changed his name to J. C. Rice. Rice's character of Jim Crow was that of a stereotypical, elderly, lame slave who murdered the English language and performed foolish antics. The term was adopted in the 1890s when the southern states began to formalise their state laws into a code.
- ²⁵ In the case of *Plessey v. Ferguson* the court ruled that states could provide 'separate but equal' public facilities. This ruling lasted until the *Brown* judgement of 1954.
- ²⁶ W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1903, reprinted 1997), 45.
- ²⁷ This was the case of *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*. It will be referred to as *Brown* in the text.
- ²⁸ Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War in the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 272.
- ²⁹ Over the years the 'Southern Cross' has 'become' not only the sole Confederate battle flag but also the national flag of the Confederacy. The Confederacy changed its national flag three times during the war and several different battle flags were used. Borgna Brunner, *The Learning Network*. Available from: infoplease.com/spot/confederate.html (accessed 5 June, 2004)
- ³⁰ For example the League of the South, the Council of Conservative Citizens, the Heritage Preservation Society and the Confederate States of America. They have policies that attack multiculturalism, defend the values of the Confederacy and some propose the repeal of laws giving citizenship to African Americans and votes to women. *The Guardian*, 18 September, 2000.
- ³¹ Duncan Campbell, *The Guardian*, 18 September, 2000; *Searchlight*, February, 2000, 26; *The Guardian*, 3 November, 2001.
- ³² For example the murder of Emmett Till in 1955 and the three civil rights workers James Chaney, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman in 1964.
- ³³ One of his campaign documents said that electing Harry Truman would mean 'anti-lynching and anti-segregation proposals will become the law of the land and our way of life in the South will be gone forever.' (*The Guardian*, 21 December, 2002). Although he lost, Thurmond received 1.1 million votes translating into 39 electoral college votes. Thomas Dewey, the Republican Party candidate, only received 189 electoral college votes. (Harold Jackson, *The Guardian*, 28 June, 2003.)
- ³⁴ Jim Cullen, *The Civil War in Popular Culture: A Reusable Past* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 3.
- ³⁵ Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 8.

- ³⁶ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 77, 81-4, 158, 267-70; Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 105.
- ³⁷ In 1896 children were drawn into formal organisations when some Chapters of Children of the Confederacy were formed. In 1908 the USCV dropped the initial 'U' as the initials were also being used for the veteran organisation - the United States Colored Volunteers. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 173, 105.
- ³⁸ Ray B. Browne, 'Conversations with scholars of American Popular Culture' in *Americana, The Journal of American Popular Culture 1900 to the Present* (Autumn, 2002). Available from: http://americanpopularculture.com/journal/articles/fall_2002/browne.htm.
- ³⁹ Cullen, *The Civil War in Popular Culture*, 13. See also John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration and Patriotism in the Twentieth century* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994).
- ⁴⁰ Separate history textbooks were still being produced in 1965. John T. Kirby, *Media-Made Dixie* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, revised 1986, first published 1978), 78. Celia Elizabeth O'Leary, ' "Blood Brothers:" The Racialisation of Patriotism, 1865-1918' in John Bodnar, (ed.), *Bonds of Affection: Americans Define their Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 65-6
- ⁴¹ Michael Kammen, *In the Past Lane: Historical Perspectives on American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 204.
- ⁴² Warren, *The Legacy of the Civil War*, 54-66.
- ⁴³ The Northern veterans were just as determined as the Southern veterans that the history of the Civil War should be taught from a Union point of view. O'Leary, ' "Blood Brothers" ' in Bodnar, (ed.), *Bonds of Affection*, 66.
- ⁴⁴ D. W. Griffith used *Leaders and Battles of the Civil War*, which had been republished to coincide with the semi-centennial. Richard Schickel, *D. W. Griffith: An American Life, 1875-1949* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 227.
- ⁴⁵ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 164, 242; Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 69.
- ⁴⁶ The first major novel on the Civil War theme had been John W. De Forest's *Miss Ravenel's Conversion from Secession to Loyalty* in 1867.
- ⁴⁷ Nina Silber, *The Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 105.
- ⁴⁸ Evelyn Ehrlich, 'The Civil War in Early Film: Origin and Development of a Genre' in Warren French, (ed.), *The South and Film* (Jackson, Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 1981), 70-1
- ⁴⁹ Silber, *The Romance of Reunion*, 105-8.
- ⁵⁰ *The Clansman* became the chief source for the second part of D. W. Griffith's film *Birth of a Nation* (1915).
- ⁵¹ Between 1916 and 1928 not one book on a southern subject appeared on the best seller's list. Kirby, *Media-Made Dixie*, 44.
- ⁵² Among the most well known novels are Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* (1936), which continued the Lost Cause tradition; James Street's *Tap Roots* (1942), which looked at the war from a Southern abolitionist viewpoint; Ross Lockridge, Jr.'s, *Raintree County* (1948) taking a Northern abolitionist view; Robert Penn Warren's *Band of Angels* (1955) which examines the question of identity through the eyes of a mixed-race woman in the South; Michael Shaara's *The Killer Angels* (1974) about the *Battle of Gettysburg* told from the soldier's perspective on both sides; and Charles Frazier's *Cold Mountain* (1997) an anti-war novel of the war and home-front in the South.⁵²

- ⁵³ Edward Tabor Linenthal, *Sacred Ground: Americans and their Battlefields* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991).
- ⁵⁴ Linenthal, *Sacred Ground*, 90, 104-8, 119 (note 6).
- ⁵⁵ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 385.
- ⁵⁶ Linenthal, *Sacred Ground*, 102.
- ⁵⁷ The film is based on the formation, and the military engagement at Fort Wagner, of the 54th Massachusetts Colored Infantry led by Robert Gould Shaw. The only Civil War memorial to African American troops, before 1998 was included in the Shaw Memorial erected in Boston on 31st May 1897.
- ⁵⁸ George Lipsitz, *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1990), 36.
- ⁵⁹ Linenthal, *Sacred Ground*, 97. The first round table was established in Chicago in 1940 and there are now about 200. Jim Cullen, *The Civil War in Popular Culture*, 180.
- ⁶⁰ Cullen, *The Civil War in Popular Culture*, 173-98.
- ⁶¹ Tara McPherson, 'Both Kind of Arms: Remembering the Civil War,' *The Velvet Light Trap*, 35 (1995), 3-4.
- ⁶² Robert Burgoyne, *Film Nation: Hollywood Looks at US History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 1.
- ⁶³ Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War*, 307-9.
- ⁶⁴ Magazines such as *Civil War Times*, *Civil War News*, *Blue and Gray* and *America's Civil War*.
- ⁶⁵ Available from: <http://scv.org/about/whatis.asp> (accessed on 16 June 2004).
- ⁶⁶ There were no film production companies in the South until the winter of 1908-9 when Kalem went to Jacksonville in Florida and very few exchanges – companies that organised the distribution of films. David Robinson, *From Peep-Show to Palace: The Birth of the American Film* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 115.
- ⁶⁷ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 385.
- ⁶⁸ Eileen Bowser, *The Transformation of Cinema, 1907-15* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 35.
- ⁶⁹ Bowser, *The Transformation of Cinema*, 8-18.
- ⁷⁰ The New York Board of Motion Picture Censorship – soon renamed the National Board of Motion Picture Review – was funded by the film industry. Robert Sklar, *Movie-made America: A Cultural History of American Movies, Revised and Updated* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994, first published 1975), 30-32.
- ⁷¹ Lary May, *Screening Out the Past: the Birth of Mass culture and the Motion Picture Industry* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 52-5; Sklar, *Movie-made America*, 30-2; Charles Musser, *The Emergence of Cinema: The American Screen to 1907* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 432, 488; Bowser, *The Transformation of Cinema*, 18.
- ⁷² Musser, *The Emergence of Cinema*, 446.
- ⁷³ Bowser, *The Transformation of Cinema*, 167.
- ⁷⁴ Bowser, *The Transformation of Cinema*, 54. During the last three decades there has been considerable discussion about the composition of the early cinema audience. Up to the 1970s it was accepted that it was

mainly composed of members of the working class and new immigrants; then research into local neighbourhoods and smaller towns pointed to a considerable middle class clientele as well. However, as the Nickelodeons served local communities, it would seem that Eileen Bowser's view that the 'Nickelodeon audience was neither monolithic nor immutable is probably about right.' Bowser, *The Transformation of Cinema*, 2. A discussion of the latest research on early audiences can be found in Melvyn Stokes and Richard Maltby, (eds.), *American Movie Audiences: From the Turn of the Century to the Early Sound Era* (London: British Film Institute, 1999).

⁷⁵ Sklar, *Movie-made America*, 175.

⁷⁶ Robert C. Allen and Douglas Gomery, *Film History: Theory and Practice* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1985), 159.

⁷⁷ The number of television sets had grown from a few thousand in 1946 to 42.2 million in 1956. Weekly admissions halved between 1946 and 1956, from its peak of ninety million, with the development of suburbs and the growth of local leisure activities at some distance from the downtown movie theatres. Irving Bernstein, *Hollywood at the Crossroads: An Economic Study of the Motion Picture Industry for the American Federation of Labor Film Council*, (California: AFL Film Council, December, 1957), 2, 73.

⁷⁸ *United States v. Paramount Pictures, Inc., et al.* The case had been started in 1938 as an anti-trust suit brought by the Justice Department against the five major studios for their control of the main distribution outlets and forcing conditions on the independent exhibitors. It had been delayed in 1940 with a trial agreement on consent decrees but was resumed in 1944. The Supreme Court proposed the break up of vertical integration within the industry and the 'divorcement' of the majors from exhibition by the sale of their theatres but remitted the final decision to the district court, which confirmed the decision in 1949. Sklar *Movie-Made America*, 272-4.

⁷⁹ *Raintree County* (1957), *Band of Angels* (1957).