



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Backlash halts removal of Confederate symbols in New Orleans

By CAIN BURDEAU, AP, March 26, 2016

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Backlash against a plan to remove prominent Confederate monuments in New Orleans has been tinged by death threats, intimidation and even what may have been the torching of a contractor's Lamborghini.

For now, at least, things have gotten so nasty the city hasn't found a contractor willing to bear the risk of tearing down the monuments. The city doesn't have its own equipment to move them and is now in talks to find a company, even discussing doing the work at night to avoid further tumult. Further complicating the issue was a court ruling Friday that effectively put the removal on hold.

Initially, it appeared the monuments would be removed quickly after the majority black City Council on Dec. 17 voted 6-1 to approve the mayor's plan to take them down. The monuments, including towering figures of Gens. Robert E. Lee and P.G.T. Beauregard, have long been viewed by many here as symbols of racism and white supremacy.

The backlash is not surprising to Bill Quigley, a Loyola University law professor and longtime civil rights activist in New Orleans who's worked on behalf of a group demanding the monuments come down.

The South has seen such resistance before, during fights over school integration and efforts in the early 1990s to racially integrate Carnival parades in New Orleans.

"Fighting in the courts, fighting in the legislature, anonymous intimidation," Quigley said. "These are from the

same deck of cards that are used to stop all social change."

For all its reputation as a party city of fun and frolic, New Orleans is no stranger to social change and the tensions that come with it. It was the site of an early attempt to challenge racial segregation laws in the Plessy vs. Ferguson case and home to then-6-year-old Ruby Bridges whose battle to integrate her elementary school was immortalized in a Norman Rockwell painting.

New Orleans is a majority African-American city although the number of black residents has fallen since 2005's Hurricane Katrina drove many people from the city. Mayor Mitch Landrieu, who proposed the monuments' removal, rode to victory twice with overwhelming support from the city's black residents.

Nationally, the debate over Confederate symbols has become heated since nine parishioners were killed at a black church in South Carolina in June. South Carolina removed the Confederate flag from its statehouse grounds in the weeks after, and several Southern cities have since considered removing monuments.

"There is no doubt that there is a huge amount of rage over the attack on Confederate symbols," said Mark Potok with the Southern Poverty Law Center, an Alabama-based group that tracks extremist activity.

His group counted about 360 pro-Confederate battle flag rallies across the nation in the six months after the church shootings. Such rallies were rare before then, he said.

In New Orleans, things have turned particularly ugly.

In early January, as it beat back legal challenges seeking to stop the removal, the city hired a contractor to remove the monuments.

But H&O Investments LLC. of Baton Rouge soon pulled out of the job, citing death threats, "unkindly name-calling," outrage on social media and the threat of other businesses canceling contracts.

One day, several protesters came while H&O workers took measurements. Some of the protesters wore materials "with affiliation to white supremacy groups," said Roy Maughan Jr., a lawyer for the contractor.

That same day, Maughan said, "a specific articulated threat" was phoned into city authorities warning workers at the monuments to leave for their safety. On Jan. 12, H&O sent the city a letter saying it was dropping out.

Then, on Jan. 19, a Lamborghini belonging to the owner of H&O Investments was set on fire. The sports car was parked outside his office near Baton Rouge, Maughan said.

A national rental crane company the city had hoped to hire also refused to be involved.

The FBI and local fire investigators declined to comment. No arrests have been made.

After H&O withdrew, the city opened a public bid process to find a new contractor — and things got messy again.

When the names of companies interested in the work turned up on a city website, businesses were reportedly slammed with emails and telephone calls denouncing their involvement. The protest was organized at least in part by Save Our Circle, a group touting thousands of supporters who want a massive monument to Lee in Lee Circle preserved in the spot where it has stood since 1884.



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The city closed public viewing to the bidding process and has met with contractors without disclosing their names. The mayor declined requests for an interview.

Michel-Antoine Goitia-Nicolas said his reasons for supporting boycotts, making calls and joining protests on behalf of the monuments are personal: He traces his ancestry to Beauregard, a Louisiana native who led Rebel troops at the opening of the Civil War. A prominent equestrian statue of Beauregard at the entrance to City Park is slated to be taken down.

"It's totally divided this city," Goitia-Nicolas said of the city's plans.

Standing next to the Beauregard statue, Goitia-Nicolas said he was willing to chain himself to statues to stop the removal.

"Our lesson in history is that when we tear down the monuments of the past we rebuild the errors of our past," he said. He said he was proud of Beauregard, who he said "never owned slaves."

"Why take it down? Put a statue of somebody positive in black history right here, in the midst of Beauregard, or in the midst of Lee. We support that."

Just this month, a state lawmaker began pushing a bill meant to save the monuments. And on Friday, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals granted an injunction sought by opponents of removal. They argued that lifting and hauling the structures could cause irreparable damage that shouldn't be risked while appeals are pending.

"With this city, the way things go, it might not come down," Lisa Huber, a 39-year-old greenhouse gardener, said as she pondered the statue of Lee atop a 60-foot-high marble column, standing in his Confederate

uniform with his arms crossed, staring down the North.

"I think it should come down, just because of the symbolism behind it."

Army of volunteers helps restore historic New Orleans Civil War cemetery

Associated Press, March 31, 2016
CHALMETTE, La. (AP) — College students on spring break joined hundreds of other volunteers at a cemetery dating to the Civil War, realigning hundreds of tilted headstones and scrubbing grime from thousands more. Some mark the graves of Union soldiers, others are from later eras.

College students from Ohio and Boy Scouts from Texas were among more than 800 people who pitched in to restore graves at Chalmette National Cemetery near New Orleans. Many of the roughly 8,000 headstones were green with algae, stained with soot from nearby refineries or askew in spongy Mississippi River soil. Flooding from Hurricane Katrina in 2005 also took its toll.

"We're sitting on a delta," said Ranger Kristy Wallisch, spokeswoman for Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, which includes the cemetery. "Just like our houses and other things, these headstones start to sink under their own weight, and tilt."

More than a century and half since the end of the deadliest conflict on American soil, custodians of many such cemeteries are still doing battle in their upkeep.

This cemetery was created in 1864, when Union troops occupied New Orleans. Most of the Civil War-era

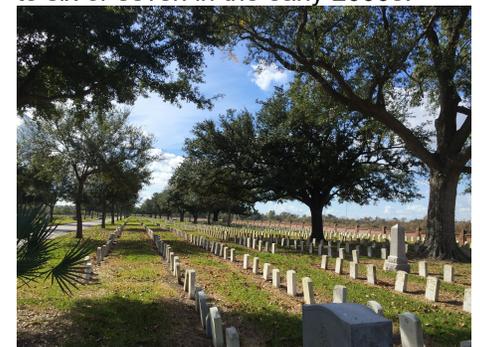
soldiers died of such diseases as yellow fever, dysentery and pneumonia, said park curator Kathy Lang.

"Some enlisted, say, in December and died in May from disease. That's kind of sad," she said. But New Orleans isn't unique: about two-thirds of the roughly 620,000 Civil War casualties died of disease, not wounds.

The National Park Service maintains 14 national cemeteries, the Department of Veterans Affairs 134 and the Army two, including Arlington National Cemetery outside Washington, D.C.

Nationwide budget cuts have not spared this cemetery. The budget for Jean Lafitte, which encompasses six sites around Louisiana, has been slashed from \$16.7 million in fiscal 2008 to \$5.8 million for fiscal 2016, Superintendent Lance Hatten said.

Wallisch said the Chalmette cemetery site — including an adjacent tract where the Battle of New Orleans was fought in 1815 — has just three or four maintenance workers compared to six or seven in the early 2000s.



Chalmette National Cemetery – Editor's photo

That's where the army of volunteers came in, including about 50 Ohio State University students seeking a different kind of spring break. The National Trust for Historical Preservation called volunteers ages



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16 to 70 to take part in its 3-year-old "HOPE Crew," or Hands-On Preservation Experience.

The Chalmette project began in early March and concludes Friday.

"We get people to work with their hands, have a very real and visceral experience and closer connection to restoration," said project coordinator Monica Rhodes.

A volunteer crew of professionals pulled headstones from the most misaligned sections of the cemetery early on. The non-pro volunteers took it from there, taking up shovels, buckets and sponges under the guidance of restoration experts.

Jason Church of the park service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training said Chalmette's cemetery is in a more industrial area than most national cemeteries. It's bounded by an oil refinery and a sugar refinery beside the Mississippi River.

He said more than 260 headstones have been realigned, though recent storms soaked the soil so much that few could be re-seated this week. "We're hitting water at 4 inches deep," Church said recently.

Volunteers made up for that by cleaning 600 to 800 headstones a day, he said, so that more than 5,000 headstones and well over 1,000 smaller markers had been cleaned days before Friday's project close.

About 6,000 unknown soldiers have only small marble markers, said Courtney "Cam" Amabile, the park's resources program assistant.

The 6-inch tall markers aren't much higher than the fire ant mounds and mudball "castles" of crawfish burrows dotting the grounds.

In total, Amabile tallied up 14,121 headstones and markers at the cemetery. Wallisch said about 7,300 Union soldiers and sailors are buried

at the site. All died somewhere in Louisiana during the war. The remaining graves hold military personnel who served in eras through the Vietnam War.

Nearly 130 Confederate soldiers also were buried in a mass grave at Chalmette but were moved after the war when Congress passed a law stating only Union soldiers could be buried in the national cemeteries, Wallisch said. Nearly 7,000 African-American civilian graves also were relocated, she said.

'The Most Northern of Southern Cities' – Philadelphia in the War

By Judith Giesberg, New York Times
Like many Mid-Atlantic cities, Philadelphia was split between Unionist and pro-Southern sentiments. In early 1861 crowds cheered at a rally to support the seceding states, while the city's political leaders offered Independence Hall as the site for a special convention to conciliate the secession crisis.

But pro-Unionist crowds would have their day, too. On April 15, 1861, the day President Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 three-month volunteers, angry crowds surged up Chestnut Street, through the heart of the city's mercantile neighborhood, after rumors circulated that the office of a small newspaper was flying a palmetto flag. Amid cries of "down with it" and "tear it out," members of the crowd wound their way up a narrow staircase to the paper's third-floor offices, pushed past a man holding a pistol, and began throwing copies of the paper out the window.

When Mayor Alexander Henry arrived at the scene, waving a large American flag and calling for reason, the crowd simply moved on to other targets. Several horse-drawn carts

loaded with bales of cotton unwittingly made their way up Chestnut, and according to a local paper, "hundreds of men picked the fabric from its covering, and amid groans and cheers, filled the air with the light material."

Angry city residents seemed intent on ripping out any remnants of southern sympathy from the city that had so recently tendered an open invitation to secessionists. Not content with ensuring the loyalty of the businesses along Chestnut and Market streets, rioters, happening upon individuals with suspect loyalties, attacked and savagely beat at least two men. They visited the homes of several prominent military leaders and demanded pledges of allegiance. Was it possible that Philadelphia — a city that one historian labeled "the most northern of southern cities" — had turned a corner in the wake of Ft. Sumter?

Not likely. Spontaneous expressions of patriotic anger aside, rebel sympathies continued to run deep in the city of brotherly love. Like the country, it was riven with political disagreement. A Democratic stronghold, cracks began appearing in the city's political armor in 1858 when Henry became mayor as a People's Party candidate, an election in which he espoused a watered down version of Republican Party nativism — minus that party's antislavery sentiments. Pennsylvania Republicans managed to get Andrew Curtin elected governor in 1860 by carefully distancing themselves from national political questions, slavery in particular.

In both cases, Republican inroads resulted more from a hopelessly divided Democratic party than a change in public opinion about antislavery politics. Pennsylvania was



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a border state, and it was often unclear on what side of that border the state stood.

In Philadelphia, it was clear. Home to a small but vibrant interracial abolitionist community and the largest free black population in the North, Philadelphia was nonetheless virulently opposed to even the mildest expressions of anti-slavery sentiment. In December 1859 John Brown's wife, Mary, was scheduled to stop in Philadelphia to have her husband's body embalmed before taking it to New York for burial. But Mayor Henry, sensing trouble, ordered the train not to stop, while city officials lured away an angry crowd with a decoy coffin.

These same sentiments informed Philadelphia's actions during the secession winter. On Dec. 13, 1860, four days before South Carolina's legislature convened to draw up orders of secession, the city turned out for a rally, where prominent Democrats spoke on behalf of the rights of slaveholders and called on city residents to renew their commitment to returning fugitive slaves. In January, these same men echoed South Carolina's legislators — and by then, legislators in Mississippi, Florida and Alabama as well — when they declared the federal compact dissolved and called on Pennsylvania "to determine with whom her lot should be cast." Had the Keystone State followed Philadelphia's lead, Pennsylvania might have seceded before the Upper South.

The city's prominent black activists, like William Still, must have chuckled at a December rally, where speakers asked Philadelphians to renew their commitment to returning fugitives — they knew better than anyone that the city had never been a safe refuge for escaped slaves. A major figure in the

Underground Railroad, Still helped hundreds of slaves escape through Philadelphia, but never openly: federal marshals, set on enforcing the Fugitive Slave Law, could count on the support of judges and city officials, and they met with little resistance when they seized suspected fugitives off the streets.

That is, until March 1860, when a group of young activists tried to rescue a fugitive by attacking the federal marshals as they led the man to the train station. The mission failed, but it signaled a new militancy among this next generation of black activists, men like Octavius Catto, who were willing to confront the city's racism head on (and who would later turn their service in the Colored Troops into a demand for equality). This put activists like Catto and his fiancée, Caroline Le Count, a teacher and leader of a campaign to desegregate street cars, at the forefront of a movement to reconstruct the North.

But if young black activists put the city ahead of the game, white Philadelphia did not follow their lead. The rebel assault on Fort Sumter in April 1861 may have raised patriotic hackles and elicited charged attacks on rebel sympathizers, but beneath the surface, the city was as divided as ever. In July 1862, self-described "solid citizens of Philadelphia" held a rally in support of the Union, at which speakers tried to rekindle patriotic enthusiasm by invoking the memory of Sumter. Remember when we were attacked, one speaker insisted, and "all men professed loyalty." But others remembered things differently, and Philadelphia continued to be home to out-spoken critics of the Lincoln administration.



Courtesy of Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries Georgia slave owner and Philadelphia resident Pierce Butler, circa 1847.

Pierce Butler, well-known Georgia slave-owner and Fanny Kemble's ex-husband, is a case in point. In August 1861, under Lincoln's first suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, Butler was arrested and held briefly for treason and smuggling, but he continued to live in the city unharassed until nearly the end of the war. In August 1862, Charles Ingersoll, member of a prominent Philadelphia family, was held for several days after delivering a speech condemning the war. Neither outspoken copperhead was discouraged by his brief internment. They were hardly the only Philadelphians holding those opinions. When Robert E. Lee's army invaded the state, the mayor could not find enough volunteers to protect the slumbering city. On the same day that Harper's Weekly reported that Lee's men were occupying Chambersburg, bearing down on Harrisburg and posed to sweep through the state, a



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local paper found it "lamentable" that Philadelphia's streets were "swarming with able-bodied men" not in uniform. To the "unconcerned spectator," the Public Ledger newspaper complained on June 30, 1863, it seemed as if Philadelphians "were insensible to their danger and had made up their minds that it was but little of their concern whether the rebels over-ran the State and occupied the city."

Things didn't end with Appomattox, either: the city was occupied, briefly, in 1870 when the marshal called in a company of marines to protect blacks voting for the first time under the Force Act, legislation aimed at curbing Klan violence in the unregenerate South. Troops were not called back to Philadelphia the following fall, though, when black voters were gunned down in the street, including, among others, Octavius Catto.

Evidence of this other Philadelphia remained visible even as rioters ripped down palmetto flags and beat up rebel sympathizers, for people of color were also targeted with violence that day in April 1861. While they waited for a flag to be raised at a suspect residence, for instance, rioters "amused themselves by riding a poor colored individual on a rail." Frederick Douglass believed there was not a city to be found "in which prejudice against color is more rampant than in Philadelphia," and it was this other city that would ultimately win the day.

'A Great Fight for Freedom' A black Marylander's struggle to join the Union Army.

By Ronald S. Coddington, New York Times

The overcast skies of Jan. 1, 1863, ushered in the era of emancipation across the Kansas prairie. The absence of sunshine, though, did not dampen the spirits of the men of the First Kansas Colored Infantry at their camp at Fort Scott. That afternoon they celebrated the issuance of President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in what an eyewitness described as the old-fashioned Southern style: barbecue and speechmaking.

Three flags, all sewn by women of color, floated above the gathering of about 500 people. The festivities commenced with a performance of "The Star-Spangled Banner," and everyone joined in the chorus. Then, the soldiers sat down at tables arranged in a large rectangle outside the regimental headquarters. The men feasted on roasted ox, hogs and chickens, and stuffed themselves with bread, cakes and other delicacies. Regimental officers and special guests sat at a separate reserved table.

After dinner, the men were marched before their officers, and listened to speeches by their colonel and others. An observer declared the remarks of one black captain to be the most original of the day for their humor and earnestness.



William Dominick Matthews pictured as a first lieutenant, circa 1865. Credit Collection of the Kansas State Historical Society

That man, a 35-year-old Marylander named William D. Matthews, had played a crucial role in the recruitment of the regiment. His comments, entitled "The Southern Loyalists," opened with a friendly warning: "I cannot make a speech, but that you'll find out." He continued, "I was not privileged enough to have been raised in a State where I could obtain an education. I am a Southern man with Northern principles, am therefore entitled, both from that fact and my color, to represent the Southern loyalist, a few of whom are around us to-day, and many more waiting our coming."

Matthews soon arrived at his central point. "To-day is a day for great rejoicing with us. The President has proclaimed freedom. The Southern loyalists hear and intend to take it. I am not surprised while I rejoice. As a thinking man I never doubted this day would come, for I believed in God. It



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was a crime to hold and a sin to be a slave. If the Bible be true, we know that there can be no nation unpunished in which such are permitted. For my part, I believe myself responsible to God for my acts and not to man. Therefore I claim to be entitled to as much of His freedom as any other man, and if His act debarred me therefrom, then He would not be a just God."

Matthews concluded with a rousing war cry: "Let me speak a word to my people. Now is our time to strike. Our own exertions and our own muscle must make us men. If we fight we shall be respected."

Matthews's journey to Kansas began along the Eastern Shore of the Old Line State, where he was born free to mixed-race parents. His father, Joseph, was a man of African descent who hailed from Delaware. His mother, the half-white slave daughter of a Frenchman, had gained her release from bondage upon her father's death.

In a 1904 interview, Matthews recognized the limits of liberty for himself and other freeborn African-Americans in the antebellum 19th century. "In the days of slavery a free man fared worse than a slave, for the master's interest in his prosperity sometimes caused him to help his slave but free men had no protection."

Matthews moved to Baltimore in the late 1840s and worked as a sailor until 1854, when he purchased his own vessel and worked the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River. But discriminatory laws limited his ability to make a living. He sold the boat and left Maryland. "I always believed in freedom and determined to find a place freer than that State," he declared. Matthews relocated to

Kansas in 1856, where he "found a great fight for freedom in progress."

Matthews quickly made a name for himself as an enterprising businessman. "In Leavenworth I opened a large eating house where I was patronized by most of the wealthy whites of the town." But he also used his position and resources to help escaped slaves. "While I entertained them in the front of the house my back door was always ajar for the fleeing traveler on the Underground Railroad which had one of its terminals at my house and in connection with John Brown and other anti-slavery men I succeeded in baffling the pursuers," he said. "At one time I had secreted in my house, one hundred slaves, every one of whom were safely landed where they could be free." Matthews also collaborated with local abolitionists, including the suffragist Susan B. Anthony's brother, Daniel, to resist slave hunters.

That summer, the Kansas senator Jim Lane interpreted an order to recruit new regiments to include black troops. Thanks to Matthews's network of connections he had made in the white and black communities, he was perfectly positioned as a recruiter. According to a newspaper article, "The first 'man of color' taken into the scheme was Matthews. He not only raised his own company, but he brought in 200 ex-slaves to swell the ranks." This number is likely exaggerated, as records in the War Department credit him with a still impressive 81 recruits. Whatever the number, volunteers throughout the regiment regarded him as more than an organizer. "Matthews was the ruling spirit with the men," one said. "He more than any one person, black or white, held the organization together."

The article continued, "White men were to hold the commissioned offices in the first colored regiment. But it was agreed by the leaders of the movement to make soldiers of ex-slaves that one captaincy should be given to Matthews, in view of his invaluable service in recruiting and holding together the men."

Months passed while Matthews and his comrades waited to formally muster into the Union Army. During this time, a 240-man federal force, which included a detachment of troops from the First, marched into Missouri with orders to break up a gang of rebel guerrillas. On Oct. 29, 1862, it engaged in a victorious skirmish along the slope of a low hill known as Island Mound. One of the rebel leaders reportedly told a New York Times correspondent that "the black devils fought like tigers, and that the white officers had got them so trained that not one would surrender, though they tried to take a prisoner."

In mid-January 1863, about two weeks after the Emancipation Day barbecue, the men formally mustered — without Matthews. The officer assigned to muster him in declined to do so, he explained, because he lacked the authority to enroll a person of African descent as a company officer. The captaincy instead went to a white man.

A distraught and disappointed Matthews worried about the impact of the decision on his recruits and fired off a letter of protest to Senator Lane. Outraged friends worked military and political channels on his behalf. But these efforts failed to reverse the decision.

Matthews returned to Leavenworth. After stints as a policeman and an army recruiter, he signed up men for



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the Independent Battery, United States Colored Light Artillery.

In February 1865, with the end of the war clearly in sight, attitudes towards black officers had shifted slightly in their favor. Matthews mustered in as a lieutenant and served with distinction. One of his superiors praised him: "You have been a model of proper discipline and subordination, strictly attentive to duty, promptly obedient to orders, and acting with a wise discretion in all matters requiring the exercise of your individual judgment."

Matthews mustered out with his comrades in October 1865 and returned to his home and wife, Fanny, whom he married shortly before he enlisted in the artillery. They raised four children who lived to maturity.

Matthews became an influential figure in politics as a member of the Kansas Republican Central Committee. He died in 1906 at age 78.

When Dixie Put Slaves on the Money

By Kevin Levin, The Daily Beast, April 21, 2016

Harriet Tubman is not the first African American to appear on currency in this land—Confederates were quick to feature slaves on their money during the Civil War.

Another racial barrier was overcome with the United States Treasury's decision to replace Andrew Jackson with Harriet Tubman on the \$20 bill and add Martin Luther King Jr. to the back of the \$5 bill. While the announcement has been received with a great deal of excitement, it is not the first time in American history that African Americans have been featured on currency.

African Americans were depicted in a wide range of scenes on Confederate

currency during the first year of the war. Their presence reveals how leaders of the new nation hoped to be viewed by foreign countries but, more importantly, these banknotes or Treasury notes highlight the importance that Confederate leaders placed on the preservation of slavery and white supremacy to their new nation.

Images of slaves on currency in the 1860s were not new. Individual Southern states included scenes of enslaved blacks on their currency beginning in the 1820s, which helped to fuel the expansion of the Cotton South and its place in a vibrant Atlantic economy that extended to European banks and manufacturing centers.

The first Confederate banknotes introduced images that became commonplace moving forward. Political icons such as presidents George Washington and Andrew Jackson attest to the Confederacy's embrace of iconic national leaders and a need to secure its legitimacy. The inclusion of South Carolina Sen. John C. Calhoun reflects his role as the intellectual father and defender of the slaveholding South. These men were featured alongside popular symbols of liberty and freedom as well as symbols of the goddess of peace (Minerva) and the goddess of agriculture (Ceres). Vignettes of slaves round out numerous individual bills and point to what was distinct about Southern society. Their placement among these other representations provided reassurance that slavery was protected both by law and by tradition.

The \$50 bill issued in Montgomery, Alabama, in March 1861, for example, features slaves hoeing cotton. Like other vignettes it is a peaceful pastoral scene that depicts slaves

diligently working without any oversight and in full view of the plantation mansion.



Author's photo

These scenes provided a stark contrast to how many white Southerners perceived their Northern neighbors, who had embraced a morality associated with industry and free labor. Issued a few months later, the \$10 bill once again depicts slaves in the field, this time during the harvest season. Both bills introduce slaves that are well dressed and working without any threats of physical violence, which by the beginning of the war had defined many Northern accounts of the South's "peculiar institution."

A slave loading cotton bales onto a cart and a sailor leaning against an anchor on the \$100 bill—also authorized in 1861—evokes the hopes of a peaceful end to the war. Images of slaves disappear from Confederate currency issued after 1862 in favor of a new nationalism that highlighted the nation's leaders, martial symbols, and scenes of war. Bank notes featured Confederate leaders such as Davis and Stephens as well as the martyred "Stonewall" Jackson, the only general featured on Confederate currency.