

**Slow Creatures of Attachment:**  
**Changing Worldviews After the Abolition of Slavery in the Family of Charles Colcock**  
**Jones, Sr., 1837-1892**

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## Introduction

In 1892, Presbyterian minister Robert Mallard, then of New Orleans, praised the work of his late father-in-law, Charles Colcock Jones, Sr. of Liberty County, Georgia, for his work furthering the religious education of slaves in the American South. Citing Jones's 1834-1847 reports to the Association for the Religious Instruction of the Negro, Mallard also applauded Southern slaveholders as a class for their efforts toward "conquering by truth and love Africa-in-America for Christ."<sup>1</sup> Jones himself was not so acclamatory in his assessment of slaveholders' efforts. In an 1847 book of suggestions for the education of black Southerners both free and enslaved, he criticized slaveholders for being "remiss in the discharge of their duties" to educate their slaves in Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Jones did not share the "exalted opinion of the Southern slave-holder" that Mallard hoped to create with his book.<sup>3</sup>

Mallard and Jones's different appraisals on slaveholders' efforts to provide for their slaves' religious education exemplify a shift in the worldviews of Southern elites following abolition. Many slaveholders in the antebellum South criticized Southern society, even if they believed it good overall. Thomas Jefferson described the master-slave relation as "a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions" in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* while, in another part of the book, distinguishing the relative humanness of Southern slavery from the brutality of the patriarchal slavery of classical antiquity.<sup>4</sup> Historians Eugene D. Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese argue in *Fatal Self-Deception* that many slaveholders were aware that slavery

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Quarterman Mallard, D. D., *Plantation Life Before Emancipation* (Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, 1892). 150.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Colcock Jones, *Suggestions on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the Southern States* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1847). 7.

<sup>3</sup> Mallard, *Plantation Life Before Emancipation*, 143.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1954). 162; 141-142.

could corrupt their children's morals and took steps to counteract that influence.<sup>5</sup> After the abolition of slavery, Southern intellectuals abandoned many of these social and cultural criticisms in favor of building a *post-facto* defense of Southern slavery and advocating the myth of the Lost Cause.

“Slow is a creature of attachment,” announced Charles Colcock Jones Jr. in an 1851 speech, for they are tied to “those master interests, which concern communities, nations, and the world.”<sup>6</sup> These words describe the character of the Jones family's change in thought following abolition. The pre-war writings of the Jones family demonstrate their attachments to the “master interests” of protecting slavery, preserving the rule of law, and promoting Christian morality in the South. The family members changed how they thought about those interests as Northern anti-slavery rhetoric turned into the Civil War and abolition. Still, they remained attached to their pre-war “master interests.” Creatures of attachment that they were, their intellectual changes came slowly and often centered around a continued defense of slavery, rule of law, and Christian morality.

In this thesis, I detail overarching patterns in thought in the members of the Jones family before, during, and after the Civil War with a focus on their understanding of the relationship between religion, law, and class hierarchy in Southern American society. Before the war, the members of the Jones family saw religion and law as apolitical protections against Northern attacks on Southern slavery through political and discursive channels. The events of the war changed their perspective. Members of the family saw religion and politics as entwined as they increasingly saw the North and its political leaders as atheistic, and their interpretations of the

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<sup>5</sup> Eugene D. Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Fatal Self-Deception: Slaveholding Paternalism in the Old South* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). 16-24.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Colcock Jones, Jr., “National Attachment,” September 3rd, 1851, MS215, Box 1, Folder 23, Charles Colcock Jones, Jr. Family Papers (hereafter, JFP), Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia (Hereafter, HRBM).

law became subservient to the wartime needs of the Southern planter class. After abolition, the loss of the family's class position loomed large in their worldviews. Some family members turned to a defense of slavery and its memory, and the works in which they did so demonstrate how the defense of slavery and the antebellum South defined their views on religion and the law. The defense of slavery dictated the family's worldviews before abolition and continued to do so after abolition. But as Northern actions undermined Southern social structures and political autonomy, the family's defense of slavery also became a way to define themselves in opposition to the North, altering their understanding of themselves, their class, and the society they lived in.

Other historians have greatly developed our understanding of the worldviews of the slaveholding class. The works of Eugene D. Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese in particular give a detailed analysis of common themes in the worldviews of Southern slaveholders in the antebellum period. Their book *Mind of the Master Class* offers the most detailed examination of the ideology of antebellum slaveholders of any historical work.<sup>7</sup> Other works that focus on post-abolition intellectual shifts in the South tend to emphasize general trends in thought about specific aspects of Southern society. Other scholarship focuses on changes in perception of social groups and identities, after abolition. Thavolia Glymph's *Out of the Plantation Household*, for example, tracks changing notions of womanhood among black and white Southern women, and Stephen A. West's *From Yeoman to Redneck* analyzes changing perceptions of poor white Southerners among Southern elites.<sup>8</sup> While these contributions offer much insight into the beliefs and change in thought of Southern slaveholders, they focus on group-wide trends in thought and

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<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, *Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholders' Worldview*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>8</sup> Thavolia Glymph, *Out of the House of Bondage: the Transformation of the Plantation Household*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).; Stephen A. West, *From Yeoman to Redneck in the South Carolina Upcountry, 1850-1915* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008).

therefore miss the specific ways that individual slaveholders' understandings of the world around them changed after abolition.

This thesis seeks to grant a greater understanding of the intricacies of how slaveholders' worldviews changed following abolition by examining the family of the Reverend Charles Colcock Jones, Sr. Charles Colcock Jones, Sr. was a Presbyterian minister, planter, and slaveholder in Liberty County, Georgia. Sometimes referred to by his contemporaries as the "Apostle to the Negro Slaves," Jones was best known for his domestic missionary work among slaves in his home county and advocating for the religious education of slaves throughout the South.<sup>9</sup> He was also a wealthy planter; Jones owned three plantations in Liberty County, and by 1860 owned 129 slaves.<sup>10</sup> He had three kids with his cousin and wife, Mary Jones. Charles Colcock Jones, Jr. (referred to in this essay as Charles Jr. to avoid confusion with his father) was the eldest, followed by his brother Joseph Jones and their younger sister Mary Sharpe Jones (referred to in this essay as Mary Sharpe to avoid confusion with her mother).

The men of the Jones family each held distinguished positions in Southern society. Charles, as discussed above, was renowned for his work as a minister; Robert Mallard, who joined the family after marrying Mary Sharpe, was also a respected member of the clergy. Mary and Charles Sr. encouraged their sons to take up professions.<sup>11</sup> Joseph became a physician and served as a surgeon for the Confederate Army during the Civil War. After the war, he accepted a professorship at the University of Nashville's medical school.<sup>12</sup> Charles Jr. was a lawyer before he was elected Mayor of Savannah in 1860. During the Civil War, he served as an officer in the

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<sup>9</sup> Erskine Clarke, *Dwelling Place: A Plantation Epic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005). ix.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Mason Myers, editor, *The Children of Pride: a True Story of Georgia and the Civil War*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972). 17.

<sup>11</sup> James William Berry, "Growing Up in the Old South: The Childhood of Charles Colcock Jones, Jr. (PhD Diss., Princeton University, 1981). 327, 337-338. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

<sup>12</sup> Myers, *The Children of Pride*. 1573.

Confederate Army. After the war, he moved to New York City to continue practicing law and eventually became a historian.<sup>13</sup>

Members of the Jones family left behind many writings before and after abolition in the form of published books and archived private family papers. In many of these writings, the members of the family reflect on their social status and their relationships to their slaves, free members of American society, and American social institutions. The men of the family, with the exception of Joseph, often reflected on Southern society from the perspective of their offices in both their public writings and private correspondences. While the women of the family did not occupy offices that brought them before the public in the same way as the men, their correspondence and private writings demonstrate that they too reflected on Southern society and their position in it. Mary Jones habitually expressed her views on public matters in her letters to other family members. Mary Sharpe also expressed her thoughts in her letters and her journal. Sections of the journal that she wrote during the occupation of Liberty County by the Union Army were eventually published after her death.<sup>14</sup>

My thesis draws from the published works of the members of the Jones family and their private correspondences and writings, including those published by Robert Manson Myers in his book *The Children of Pride*.<sup>15</sup> These sources do not equally cover all members of the family. The men wrote most of the published books and pamphlets, and the archives are skewed toward the immediate family of Charles Jr., who collected the family papers. By analyzing the family's available writings, I have tracked how members of the Jones family adjusted, abandoned, and affirmed aspects of their worldviews in response to the actions of abolitionists, the events of the

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 1568.

<sup>14</sup> Mary Sharpe Jones, *Yankees A'Coming: One Month's Experience During the Invasion of Liberty County, Georgia, 1864-1865* (Tuscaloosa: Confederate Publishing Co., 1959).

<sup>15</sup> Myers, *The Children of Pride*.



civil war, and the loss of their class position after abolition. In doing so, I hope to shed light on how personal experiences and interpersonal relationships shaped the changing worldviews of Southern slaveholders as a whole following the abolition of slavery.

## Chapter 1: The Antebellum Period

Charles Colcock Jones, Sr.'s religious beliefs underpinned the Jones Family's understanding of their responsibilities as slaveholders. Charles Sr. felt strongly about the duties of slaveholders as Christians and wrote extensively about the importance and benefits of fulfilling these duties. Among these responsibilities was providing for slaves' religious education, a responsibility that he thought slaveholding Southerners particularly neglected. The failure of the South to fulfill this duty troubled him. He admonished slaveholders in his book *Suggestions on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the Southern States* (hereafter referred to as his *Suggestions*) that they were "remiss in the discharge of their duties" in failing to convert the "wilderness and moral wastes" of their plantations into "fruitful fields... of the Lord" through educating slaves in Christianity.<sup>16</sup> Charles Sr. was concerned about the moral state of the slaveholding South, which he feared was failing to build itself up as a good Christian society. As a planter and a pastor, he felt obliged to remind slaveholders what a morally and spiritually just household looked like. To help slaveholders fulfill that obligation, he wrote a catechism based on his experience preaching to slaves in Liberty County. He intended for pastors and slaveholders to use his catechism as a manual for the religious instruction of slaves, later writing his *Suggestions* to offer guidelines for pastoral conduct to domestic missionaries.<sup>17</sup>

Charles Sr.'s belief in the importance of religious duties was the focal point of his work proselytizing among the slaves, and these duties took up much of his catechism. He dedicated six subsections of the introduction to enumerating the duties of husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, and servants, followed by passages of scripture conveying other commands and promises of Christianity, extending invitations to convert, and stressing the value and need for

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<sup>16</sup> Jones, *Suggestions*, 7.

<sup>17</sup> Charles Colcock Jones, *A Catechism, of Scripture Doctrine and Practice, for Families and Sabbath Schools Designed Also for the Oral Instruction of Colored Persons*. 4-5.; Jones, *Suggestions*, 2.

the salvation of the soul.<sup>18</sup> The order in which he arranged scriptural passages—listing commands to uphold certain social responsibilities ahead of other passages—illustrates the importance he attached to religious education. For him, fulfilling one's scriptural duties was what made someone a good Christian.

A sense of religious obligation was not, however, the only reason that Charles stressed particular duties so strongly in his catechism. Though he believed in the obligation to fulfill all of one's Christian duties, his emphasis on the duties of husbands and wives, parents and children, and masters and servants was particular to his plan for the education of black Southerners. Like many white Southerners, Charles believed that black Southerners—whether enslaved or free—lacked a proper sense of morality. In assessing black Southerners' moral condition in his *Suggestions*, he listed a number of supposed failings, starting with their “violations of the marriage contract” (apparently forgetting that slaves were denied the right to a marriage contract) and moving on to their supposed “general disregard of virtue, honesty and truth,” “want of kindness to each other,” and “tendency to drunkenness, and to idleness.”<sup>19</sup> Such lapses from propriety, which he found all too common among black Southerners, tormented him.

Charles Sr.'s anxiety about the moral condition of black Southerners spurred his determination to carry out missionary work among the slaves because he attributed their moral condition to their “ignorance... of the doctrines and duties of Christianity.”<sup>20</sup> But he did not deem them uniquely immoral, only “as degraded as any other class of people in the United States.”<sup>21</sup> He continued to hold this belief throughout his life. In 1861, he denounced racial arguments about black Southerners' moral condition, arguing that they have the same “intellectual and

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<sup>18</sup> Jones, *Catechism*, 16-19.

<sup>19</sup> Jones, *Suggestions*, 7.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 6.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, 7.

spiritual nature” as white Southerners.<sup>22</sup> This belief is why he so deplored white Southern Christians’ failure to work at improving black Southerners’ spiritual state.<sup>23</sup> Rather than an essential racial quality, Charles Sr. saw the problem as correctable; and he considered it the duty of white Southern Christians, who regularly dealt with black Southerners, to fix this problem. During and after the Civil War, many of his family members would disagree with this belief.

Although improving the moral and religious condition of black Southerners was the stated goal of Charles Sr.'s religious program, he expected other benefits to accrue from it. Religious education, as he saw it, offered a solution to the social ills of Southern society, particularly those arising from slavery. He constantly returned to the theme of conflict between slaves and their owners in his religious writing. Drawing attention to the practical applications of the scriptural duties of servants, he emphasized that slaves must “obey [their masters] in *all things... with endeavor to please them well.*” Even if masters were “hard and unjust,” he insisted, slaves were to “*take it patiently, [and refer] their case to God.*”<sup>24</sup> Charles Sr. regarded the teaching of these practical applications of scripture as a means of taming conflict between slaves and their owners. He was convinced that teaching scripture as his *Catechism* prescribed would address Southern slaveholders' complaints about their slaves’ idleness and disobedience and ease their worries about slaves running away.

In other sections of the *Catechism*, the practical applications that Charles Sr. laid out take a more explicitly admonitory tone. For example, he suggests that slaveholders tell their servants that while they “may sometimes suppose that they may... lie to and deceive, and steal from their masters,” God “requires truth in honesty, in all persons and under all circumstances.”<sup>25</sup> He also

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<sup>22</sup> Mallard, *Plantation Life Before Emancipation*, 199.

<sup>23</sup> Jones, *Suggestions*, 9.

<sup>24</sup> Jones, *Catechism*, 130.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 130-131.

suggests they teach their slaves that it is “contrary also to the will of God... *either to runaway, or to harbour a runaway*.”<sup>26</sup> In both of these excerpts, Charles Sr. makes assumptions about what notions of morality slaves already have. By making such assumptions, he makes it clear that religious education serves not only to impart religious doctrine but also to correct troublesome conduct.

The corrective potential and material benefits of Christian instruction figured into Charles Sr.'s insistence that slaveholders allow and provide for the religious education of their slaves. In one section of his *Suggestions*, he recommends that, when persuading slaveholders to allow the establishment of Sabbath schools, pastors should not only mention slaveholders' religious obligations, but also “point out the intimate relation which the Sunday school holds to their peace, comfort, and interest as owners.”<sup>27</sup> In another section, he argues that if slaveholders “invest a little capital in *the minds and hearts* of their people... it will prove... a peace-giving and profitable investment.”<sup>28</sup> These appeals to self-interest differ in tone from his appeals to slaveholders' religious responsibilities.

Charles Sr.'s public appeal to the slaveholders' material self-interest is unusual for him. He generally bases his advocacy of Christian education for black Southerners—whether free or enslaved—on religious and moral obligations. It is fair to ask whether he had his own enlightened self-interest as a planter in mind or whether he judged an appeal to enlightened self-interest the likeliest way to convince planters who were less devout than he to missionary work. Charles Sr. was under no illusions that knowledge of religious obligation would be enough to compel slaveholders to fulfill their Christian duties. If it were, there would have been no need in the first place for his advocacy of the religious education of black Southerners. Slaveholders,

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<sup>26</sup> Jones, *Catechism*, 131.

<sup>27</sup> Jones, *Suggestions*, 24.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 37.

as he knew, took their material interests into account when making decisions about their business affairs. To effectively advocate for the religious education of slaves, he could not ignore its material benefits.

Charles Sr. did not consciously undertake religious education of slaves with a view towards profit, believing as he did that the scriptural duties of slaveholders as masters prohibited them from “treat[ing] their people too much as creatures of profit.”<sup>29</sup> He underlined the slaveholders’ scriptural duties not only to themselves but also to their slaves: duties that included providing well for their servants’ needs, keeping their families together, allowing them adequate time for rest, and above all, acting with the knowledge that they “have a Master in heaven, to whom they shall account.”<sup>30</sup> Slaveholders could not, he reasoned, “look for improvement on the part of his people... unless his people see that he is himself under the control of correct principles.”<sup>31</sup> For Charles Sr., the duties of slaveholders as masters were as important to the moral state of the South as the duties of slaves as servants.

Yet Charles Sr. did not construe the rules of religious duty as equally binding on slaves and their owners. For example, he did not recommend that pastors take steps to ensure the equal fulfillment of a plantation household’s Christian duties. In the rules that he lays out for missionaries charged with plantation preaching, he defers to slaveholders in almost every case. He instructed missionaries to give notice for every plantation visit, even after already gaining permission to preach. Missionaries should “hear no tales respecting [the slaves’] owners, or managers, or drivers,” but rather “support... the peace and order of society” and preach obedience toward the owners whom “God in his providence has placed in authority” over

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<sup>29</sup> Jones, *Suggestions*, 31.

<sup>30</sup> Jones, *Catechism*, 128-129.

<sup>31</sup> Jones, *Suggestions*, 35.

slaves.<sup>32</sup> These rules for missionary conduct display the distance between Charles Sr.'s doctrine of religious duty and its real-world application. Though Charles Sr. believed that slaveholders must fulfill their duties if they wished the slaves to fulfill theirs, his recommendations for religious education assigned a higher priority to disciplining slaves than to disciplining masters. One can, in part, understand his rules for missionary work as upholding the doctrine that masters receive their authority from God and that servants must therefore always display obedience towards them. However, that doctrine does not explain his recommendation against hearing complaints about owners or engaging with plantation affairs. If Charles Sr. believed that a master's duty was as important as a servant's, why recommend that missionaries take such a hands-off approach to plantation affairs?

Historian Eugene D. Genovese presents one explanation of Charles's recommendations for missionaries. Genovese argues that because owners did not always trust the overseers they hired, they often relied on slaves for information about plantation affairs. This reliance allowed slaves to take advantage of tensions between their owners and overseers by making complaints against overseers, pitting the two against one another in an attempt to ease conditions for themselves.<sup>33</sup> Charles Sr.'s recommendation also prevented missionaries from compelling slaveholders to respond to slaves' complaints. Frederick Douglass argued that listening to slaves' complaints converted slaveholders into overseers and compelled them to take the complaints into account, causing them a "great loss of time and labor."<sup>34</sup> If missionaries entertained slaves' complaints, they would burden the slaveholders and risk losing permission to preach to slaves. By instructing missionaries to "hear no tales" about owners and overseers, Charles Sr. prevented

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<sup>32</sup> Jones, *Suggestions*, 28.

<sup>33</sup> Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972). 18-21.

<sup>34</sup> Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (Waiheke Island: The Floating Press, 2009). 100.

slave owner hostility against missionaries which would have compromised his goal of educating slaves in Christianity.

But practical concerns are not the only reason why Charles Sr. would recommend that missionaries defer to owners and avoid hearing slaves' complaints. His recommendation can also be explained as the product of a tension between his doctrine of duty on the one hand and, on the other, his views about the role of the Church in Southern society. Though Charles Sr. proposed religion as a solution to the social problems of the South, he—like many members of the family—opposed the assertion of religious authority to urge social or political change. Many Southerners did.<sup>35</sup> The Jones family made their position clear when speaking about abolitionists. In a letter to his parents, Charles Jr. condemned the “stupefying fanaticism” of clergymen who invoked their pastoral status to advance abolitionist views, judging such conduct “not only unbecoming a minister but unworthy a sensible person upon a secular occasion.”<sup>36</sup> This excerpt exhibits the family's view on the proper role of religious authorities in Southern society. Charles Jr. probably expected his parents to agree with him; he did not typically express strong opinions about religion, leading his parents to worry about his perceived lack of religiosity.<sup>37</sup> It seems likely, then, that he took his cue from them on the proper role of ministers in society.

Charles Sr.'s deference to slaveholders probably came from both the practical need to maintain the goodwill of owners and his beliefs about the proper role of the church in society. Both the plantation and the slaves that he preached to were the property of slaveholders, who held both the legal and social right to control affairs relating to their possessions. Missionaries' ability to pursue the religious education of slaves depended on the consent of planters, who could

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<sup>35</sup> Fox-Genovese and Genovese, *Mind of the Master Class*, 494.

<sup>36</sup> Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. and Mrs. C. C. Jones, June 13th, 1854, in *The Children of Pride: a True Story of Georgia and the Civil War*, Ed. Robert Manson Myers. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972). 44.

<sup>37</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., June 7th, 1854, *The Children of Pride*. 40; Rev. C. C. Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., October 3rd, 1859, *The Children of Pride*. 522-523. Mrs. Mary Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., February 28th, 1860, *The Children of Pride*, 564-565.



withdraw their consent if they were dissatisfied with the results. If a missionary entertained the complaints of slaves, thus allowing slaves to foment conflict between missionaries and owners, owners would not allow missionaries on their plantations. Charles Sr. would have considered this practical concern, even if he did not specifically mention it in his *Suggestions*. In any case, he considered it inappropriate for a man of the cloth to publicly condemn particular slaveholders for how they handled their affairs.

Taken together, the above factors explain Charles Sr.'s disproportionate focus on the morality of slaves relative to slaveholders. From a practical standpoint, he needed to preserve goodwill with the owners of the slaves whom he taught, lest they revoke his right to continue his work. Hearing complaints from slaves or underemphasizing the importance of obedience to slaves jeopardized that goodwill. While it was his duty as a pastor to remind slaveholders of their duties to their slaves, acting too forcefully would ill become a man of his station. Charles recognized the social ills caused by Southern slavery and believed that religious education could prevent conflicts between the slave and slaveholding classes. But he did not view the resolution of social conflict as the goal of his religious work. Rather, he understood positive social effects to be the natural result of morally just and spiritually healthy Christian households. The motivation of his work was as he stated at the start of his *Suggestions*: to convert the “moral wastes” of plantations into “fruitful fields and vineyards of the Lord.”<sup>38</sup> Believing that black Southerners needed intellectual, religious, and moral improvement, he deemed it his—and every Christian’s—duty to fulfill that need.

While Charles Sr. primarily concerned himself with the spiritual state of the South, Charles Jr. turned his attention to political concerns. Perhaps because of his experience as a lawyer, Charles Jr. often criticized government officials and wrote to his father expressing his

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<sup>38</sup> Jones, *Suggestions*. 7.

contempt for them. A distrust of democracy often underlaid his contempt. In October of 1859, Charles Jr. wrote to his father about the upcoming municipal election, telling him that “every good citizen whose eyes are not blinded by party professions and personal or friendly interests” could see how poorly the current administration enforced the laws of the city.<sup>39</sup> In the same month, he complained about the state legislature’s election of Richard Francis Lyon to the Georgia Supreme Court. Considering Lyon unqualified for the position, Charles Jr. told his father that the judgeship had “become a matter of political intrigue.”<sup>40</sup> He bemoaned the “disregard of settled authority” shown in recent decisions by the court, and argued that it “had best... be abolished” to preserve the integrity of the law.<sup>41</sup> Charles Jr.’s reaction to the election of Lyon highlights his belief that the law transcends its application by legal institutions. Although the Supreme Court of Georgia was tasked with determining the meaning of the law, Charles Jr. understood the law to exist separately from the court’s interpretation.

Charles Jr. was not the only member of the family who was troubled by the political state of the South. Every member of the Jones family, concerned about the political and social condition of the country, paid close attention to current affairs in the years leading up to the Civil War. The activities of northern abolitionists alarmed them, as what Mary Jones had previously referred to as a “war of words” increasingly devolved into a war of actions.<sup>42</sup> Perceiving abolitionists as seditious, some members of the family feared meddling by Northerners aimed at undermining their position as slaveholders and Southern society as a whole. In a letter to Mary Sharpe Jones, her then-suitor, Robert Mallard, betrayed his own unease while attributing to “some persons here” a suspicion that “some strolling organ-grinders who passed through the

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<sup>39</sup> Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, October 6th, 1859, *The Children of Pride*. 523.

<sup>40</sup> Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, November 11th, 1859, *The Children of Pride*. 533.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, 534.

<sup>42</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., November 7th, 1859, *The Children of Pride*. 528.

county” might tamper with the slaves.<sup>43</sup> Though affairs in the South seemed mostly stable, the latent threat of abolitionist attacks left many in the family uneasy.

Because the family had not anticipated that abolitionists would resort to violence against slaveholders, John Brown’s raid on Harpers Ferry in 1859 jarred them, confirming their worst fears about abolitionists. Mary wrote to Charles Jr.: “I have never realized before that the malicious fanaticism of the North could extend to such organized and practical results. It is no longer a war of words.”<sup>44</sup> The realization changed the Jones family’s approach to the threat of abolition. Charles Sr. wrote Charles Jr. that “the whole abolition crusade... *ends in the sword*,” leaving “no place... for forbearance—no ground for compromises.”<sup>45</sup> John Brown and his co-conspirators had demonstrated to the Jones family that abolitionists were set on destroying the institution of slavery by any means necessary, shaking the family’s faith that abolitionism could be combatted through politics and debate.

Though the family lost faith in the power of words and politics to combat abolitionism, they retained their trust in the law to protect the South against Northern politics. The trial of Anthony Burns in 1854 under the new fugitive slave act of 1850 buoyed that trust. The trial followed the arrest of Anthony Burns, a runaway slave owned by Colonel Charles F. Suttle of Virginia, who was arrested by a slavehunter in Boston. Suttle’s attempt to take Burns back to Virginia triggered outrage among and inspired action by Northern abolitionists. A group of radical abolitionists attacked the court in an attempt to free Burns so that he might flee to Canada, but failed. To prevent future attempts to free Burns before the trial, government officials called in the militia and two companies of U.S. Marines to guard the courthouse. These measures proved necessary to keep out the two hundred abolitionists marching outside the courthouse.

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<sup>43</sup> Rev. Robert Q. Mallard to Miss Mary Sharpe Jones, December 29th, 1856, *The Children of Pride*. 284.

<sup>44</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., November 7th, 1859, *The Children of Pride*. 528.

<sup>45</sup> Rev. Charles C. C. Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., November 7th, 1859, *The Children of Pride*. 527.

Charles Jr., who volunteered to stand guard at the courthouse, witnessed firsthand the conflict between abolitionists and the Boston government.<sup>46</sup> Unable to free Anthony Burns by force, abolitionists resorted to legal means, calling six witnesses to testify that Burns could not be Suttle's slave since he had been in Boston for at least three weeks before Suttle claimed Burns had run away.<sup>47</sup> Despite the efforts of abolitionists and Burns's attorney, the judge decided in Suttle's favor and Burns was taken back to Virginia.

The actions of abolitionists in response to the Burns case angered and concerned some members of the family. Mary wrote to Charles Jr. expressing her "deep anxiety" for his well-being in the "atmosphere of abolitionism" of that city.<sup>48</sup> Charles Sr. was especially incensed by the conduct of abolitionists, telling Charles Jr. that they "demonstrate themselves in this case to be fanatics of the worst sort, setting at defiance all laws... all truth, all decency, without one redeeming quality."<sup>49</sup> Charles Jr. complained about the "flat palpable perjury" of witnesses who supported Burns's story, alleging that abolitionists held "secret meetings" to organize false testimony.<sup>50</sup> His outrage at the conduct of abolitionists shook his faith in the Union: "[d]o not be surprised if when I return home you find me a *confirmed disunionist*," he warned his father.<sup>51</sup> Though it is unclear whether or not Charles Jr. fully lost faith in the Union, the question of national unity continued to plague him. Three months after the trial, he contemplated the issue in a draft of his speech "National Attachments," writing that "when a nation fails to appreciate the true value of [their attachments to one another]... then may we expect speedy dissolution and decay."<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Manisha Sinha, *The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016). 515-517.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 517.

<sup>48</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., June 12th, 1854, *The Children of Pride*. 41.

<sup>49</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., June 12th, 1854, *The Children of Pride*. 42.

<sup>50</sup> Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, May 30th, 1854, *The Children of Pride*, 38.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Charles Colcock Jones, Jr., "National Attachments," September 3rd, 1854, JFP, HRBM.

But while the actions of Northern abolitionists in the Burns case dismayed the family, the judge's decision in favor of Burns's owner affirmed at least Charles Sr.'s belief that the law was beyond politics. In a letter to Charles Jr., Charles Sr. applauded the decision while reminding his son about the importance of the Union: "You will see... the silent, potent majesty of the law, executed to the letter in open day... and you will see also that there is *power* in our government."<sup>53</sup> To him, the state and federal governments were a bulwark against the radicalism of the North. Though abolitionism seemed to spread rapidly, Charles Sr. felt reassured that the law would protect their interests.

Charles Jr. shared his father's belief that the law was a line of defense for the slaveholding class, as demonstrated in the conversations between the two on whether or not to pursue legal action against Susan Dunham of Savannah. Dunham had hired and harbored (unknowingly, she claimed) the Jones family's runaway slave, Jane. Charles Jr. took charge of assessing the situation, interviewing John Baker (who spoke in Mrs. Dunham's place, as she was away on vacation) about the conditions under which Jane came to work for Mrs. Dunham.<sup>54</sup> Satisfied that Mrs. Dunham was "honestly deceived" by Jane, he concluded that a trial would be pointless and recommended that his father not press charges "unless there [is] an obligation resting upon one for purposes of affecting the general good, order, and well-being of society."<sup>55</sup> Charles Sr. agreed.<sup>56</sup>

Though Charles Sr. took Charles Jr.'s advice not to prosecute Mrs. Dunham, Charles Jr.'s caveat reveals how he understood the law's relationship to the interests of slaveholders. The most obvious impact of prosecuting Mrs. Dunham on the well-being of society would be

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<sup>53</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., June 12th, 1854, *The Children of Pride*. 43.

<sup>54</sup> Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, October 1st, 1856, *The Children of Pride*. 240-241.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 241.

<sup>56</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., October 2nd, 1856, *The Children of Pride*. 243.

demonstrating to the public that intentionally harboring fugitive slaves is not tolerable, thus upholding the interests of slaveholders. One can infer, then, that Charles Jr. probably understood the well-being of the slaveholding class to be the general interest of society. By weighing the impact of prosecuting Mrs. Dunham on the interests of slaveholders in general equally with the impact on his family, Charles Jr. reveals his belief that the purpose of the law is to uphold the interest of slave owners as a class, not just as individuals. Charles Sr. apparently shared that belief.

Because the family had faith that the law would serve their interests, they did not worry about the future of slavery in the Union. True, abolitionist attacks on Southern slavery were increasingly serious and threatening to the lives and livelihoods of Southern planters. But the family held faith that the laws of the nation would preserve their way of life, protect their property, and prevent abolitionists from changing the Southern social order. The family as a whole did not yet consider secession feasible or desirable. Even after John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry, Charles Sr. expressed his desire to keep the Union together: "the fortunes of the American republic are embarked in one vessel, and neither stem nor stern shall be broken up without damage and loss of the whole."<sup>57</sup> In June of 1860, Charles Sr.'s friend, Audley King, expressed a similar sentiment: "disunion is impossible. Our reason leaves us the day we agree to dissolve so sacred and essential a tie and bond."<sup>58</sup> They were not the only Southerners that felt this way. Many Confederates opposed secession up until the formation of the Confederacy, including Robert E. Lee and Vice-President of the Confederacy Alexander Stevens.<sup>59</sup> Southern ministers and theologians like Charles Sr. were especially slow to denounce the Union.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., November 7th, 1859, *Children of Pride*, 528.

<sup>58</sup> Audley King to Rev. C. C. Jones, June 5th, 1860, *Children of Pride*, 584.

<sup>59</sup> David M. Potter, *The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976). 463.

<sup>60</sup> Fox-Genovese and Genovese, *Mind of the Master Class*, 479-480.

Frightening as Harpers Ferry and the actions of abolitionists during the Burns trial were, they did not shake the Jones family's faith in the Union. But this faith could not last forever, and events would soon test their trust in the law and government of the Republic to protect their interests.

## Chapter 2: The War Years

The events of the Civil War upended the Jones family's understanding of the world around them. The response of the North to Southern secession led the family members to redefine their self-perception in opposition to their enemies. Their perception of Northern aggression as unchristian strengthened the family's commitment to their faith and led them to thoroughly integrate religion into their approach to politics. Charles Jr.'s view of the law as sacrosanct, though generally reaffirmed, wavered in response to direct challenges to the authority of Southern slaveholders. Mary Sharpe and Mary Jones' trust in social convention and social status, however, remained constant, even in the face of a Union invasion. These shifts in the family's thoughts during the war guided their actions after the war ended and defined their reflections on the antebellum South.

In the days leading up to the secession of Georgia, almost none in the Jones family expected war. Days before Abraham Lincoln's electoral victory, Charles Sr. remarked that he did not anticipate "any serious disturbance in the event of... the withdrawal of one or more southern states," arguing that Lincoln's government would have no way of justifying war.<sup>61</sup> Mary concurred with her husband, telling Charles Jr. that she could not "see a shadow of reason for civil war in the event of a Southern confederacy."<sup>62</sup> Charles Jr., perhaps due to his greater personal experience with Northern lawyers and politics more generally, was not so optimistic. If Lincoln were elected, he wrote to his father that the secession of any state "may precipitate us into all the terrors of intestine war."<sup>63</sup> Charles Sr. soon adopted a similar perspective, writing to

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<sup>61</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr., October 27th, 1860, *The Children of Pride*. 625.

<sup>62</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr., November 15th, 1860, *The Children of Pride*. 627.

<sup>63</sup> Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, October 18th, 1860, *The Children of Pride*. 621.



Charles Jr. a week after Lincoln's election that the "arrogance and confidence" of the free states may "urge them to attempt our subjugation."<sup>64</sup>

Regardless of the possibility of war, the members of the family remained devoted to secession. Charles Jr., the earliest to express support for the cause, was the most committed in his actions to seeing a Southern confederacy form. Charles Jr., acting as mayor, held a meeting in Savannah aiming to promote the cause of secession in Georgia.<sup>65</sup> When Georgia seceded, Mary Sharpe wrote to her mother in celebration: "How do you feel now, dear Mother, now that *we* are in a foreign land? Did you illuminate when you heard of Georgia's secession?"<sup>66</sup> Of those Southerners who continued to support the Union, she joked how pitiful it was that they "could not be transferred immediately to New England."<sup>67</sup> Her quickness to dismiss dissident Southerners highlights the depth of her commitment to secession.

Mary Sharpe's mother was not as quick as other members of the family to celebrate secession, describing her mixed feelings in a letter to Charles Jr. While recognizing the need for secession to "protect [the South] from entire destruction," she also grieved the end of the Union.<sup>68</sup> She worried about the effect of secession on future generations, asking: "what will constitute their national pride and glory?" She retained a love for the Union of 1776, but from her perspective, "*That Union* has passed away."<sup>69</sup> For her, secession was the sad product of the decline of national unity, rather than the rejection of it; the fight of the Southern confederacy was, therefore, a conservative struggle for the continuation of the original principles of the nation.

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<sup>64</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr., November 15th, 1860, *The Children of Pride*. 628.

<sup>65</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Mrs. Mary S. Mallard, December 13th, 1860, *The Children of Pride*. 634.

<sup>66</sup> Mrs. Mary S. Mallard to Mrs. Mary Jones, January 25th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 646.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr., January 3rd, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 641.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

Each member of the family, driven by a commitment to the defense of their state, took part in the war effort. Charles Jr., upon finishing his term as Mayor, joined the Confederate army as first lieutenant of Company B of the Oglethorpe Light Infantry, stationed in Georgia.<sup>70</sup> He later accepted a position as lieutenant colonel of light artillery on the staff of General Hugh Mercer.<sup>71</sup> Joseph also served in the Confederate Army as a surgeon.<sup>72</sup> The women of the family quickly turned themselves to aiding the war effort by volunteering to produce supplies for the Confederate troops. Mary Sharpe became the treasurer and secretary of her local organization of women supporting the war effort.<sup>73</sup> She and her mother both also worked to personally support Joseph, making 125 bullets and cartridges for his rifle in case he was called to fight.<sup>74</sup> Charles Sr. praised his aunt, Eliza G. Robarts, for her efforts to support the Confederacy, adding that among its people, there were “none more active than the ladies.”<sup>75</sup>

Charles Sr. for his part, joined the war of words against unionists in the church. At Mary’s urging, he hurried to write a defense of secession for the *Southern Presbyterian Review* in response to an article by the theologian Dr. Charles Hodge, though he never published it.<sup>76</sup> Hodge’s article, which denounced secessionists as politically and morally corrupt, apparently angered many in the Jones family and their immediate circle.<sup>77</sup> Charles Jr. advised his father on the content of his response, offering his interpretation of political facts as a counter to one of

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<sup>70</sup> Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. and Mrs. C. C. Jones, July 29th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 723-724.

<sup>71</sup> Col. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, November 28th, 1862, *The Children of Pride*. 991.

<sup>72</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Mrs. Mary S. Mallard, October 26th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 779.

<sup>73</sup> Mrs. Mary S. Mallard to Rev. C. C. Jones, August 12th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 736.

<sup>74</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr., June 18th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 697.

<sup>75</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Mrs. Eliza G. Robarts, November 4th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 786.

<sup>76</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr., January 24th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 645; Rev. C. C. Jones to Rev. David H. Porter, April 30th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 671.

<sup>77</sup> Dr. Charles Hodge, “The State of the Country,” in *The Princeton Review* (January 1861). 1-32. [link.gale.com/apps/doc/CY0103104092/SABN?u=columbiau&sid=summon&xid=44cfe4d1&pg=1](http://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CY0103104092/SABN?u=columbiau&sid=summon&xid=44cfe4d1&pg=1).

Hodge's arguments.<sup>78</sup> Friends in the church to whom Charles Sr. had sent an early copy of his response praised him for it and thanked him for his taking on the task of rebutting Hodge.<sup>79</sup>

Charles Sr.'s response to Dr. Hodge represents one of the most significant shifts in his thought on religion and politics. Before the war, Charles Sr. considered discussing politics in one's capacity as a minister inappropriate. But his belief in the separation of politics and religion disintegrated immediately before the war, and during the war, he praised the Confederate Constitution for acknowledging "the Almighty God," and noted that while the old United States had "never had a *Christian President*... Our first President is accredited a *Christian Man*."<sup>80</sup> After secession, he quickly called for the division of the Presbyterian church, arguing (after once more disparaging Dr. Hodge's article) that the North and South were "two people distinctly and politically now," and that "ecclesiastical connections conform to civil and political."<sup>81</sup> He was not alone in this belief. Eight months later, Southern Presbyterian ministers (Charles Sr. included) met in a General Assembly to announce the establishment of the Presbyterian Church of the Confederate States of America.<sup>82</sup>

Charles Sr. was not the only member of his family for whom religion and politics began to merge. Robert Mallard, also a Presbyterian minister, attended the General Assembly for the separation of the Church with Charles Sr. and praised the intellect of those in attendance.<sup>83</sup> Charles Jr., whose family often complained that he was not religious, also praised the explicitly Christian Confederate Constitution for acknowledging "in the most emphatic manner... the

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<sup>78</sup> Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, January 28th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 648.

<sup>79</sup> Rev. A. A. Porter to Rev. C. C. Jones, February 15th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 649-650; Rev. W. M. Cunningham to Rev. C. C. Jones, February 18th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 650-651; Rev. Joseph R. Wilson to Rev. C. C. Jones, February 19th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*, 651-652; Rev. John Jones to Rev. and Mrs. C. C. Jones, March 5th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*, 657.

<sup>80</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Lt. Charles C. Jones, Jr., March 3rd, 1862, *The Children of Pride*. 855.

<sup>81</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Rev. David H. Porter, April 30th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 670.

<sup>82</sup> Mallard, *Plantation Life Before Emancipation*, 172.

<sup>83</sup> Rev. R. Q. Mallard to Mrs. Mary S. Mallard, December 11th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 814-815.

Living God,” going as far as to say that “the old Federal Constitution was a godless instrument.”<sup>84</sup> He made the comment before his religious epiphany following the death of his wife, Ruth.<sup>85</sup> Mary’s brother, the Reverend John Jones, wrote to his sister and brother-in-law that his sermons during “the past three Sabbaths... dwelt chiefly on the war,” specifically discussing its causes and “the evidences of God’s favor to the South.”<sup>86</sup> Still, some members of the family held that politics and religion should be separate. Mary C. Nisbet, Charles Sr.’s niece, wrote to Mary Jones complaining about her pastor’s frequent political sermons, saying that she would “go to some other church till he gets upon a new theme.”<sup>87</sup>

The family’s merging of politics with religion is best understood as a reaction to their perception of Northern Republicans. The members of the family often denounced the Union Government’s response to secession as an affront to moral and spiritual justice. Their references to morality and religion usually came alongside appeals to political and legal justice. Charles Jr. was especially vocal in this respect, probably because of his contact with the war as an officer in the Confederate Army. In a letter to his mother, Charles Jr. compared the Union Army to Ephraim from the Bible, saying “they are joined to their idols of fanaticism, of infidelity, of lawlessness.”<sup>88</sup> In a letter to both of his parents, he declared the war a struggle for “all that is sacred in honor, pure in principle, true in religion, and valuable in life.”<sup>89</sup> Mary E. Robarts, a cousin of the family, wrote that the North had “departed from the worship of the Living God” to “worship flags and union.”<sup>90</sup> Charles Sr. was hesitant to put all of the moral blame on the North. He wrote to his aunt, Eliza G. Robarts, that the South had been “sinning with the Northern

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<sup>84</sup> Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. and Mrs. C. C. Jones, July 29th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 725.

<sup>85</sup> Hon. Charles C. Jones to Rev. C. C. Jones, October 1st, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 756-757.

<sup>86</sup> Rev. John Jones to Rev. and Mrs. C. C. Jones, May 31st, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 690.

<sup>87</sup> Mrs. Mary C. Nisbet to Mrs. Mary Jones, January 17th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 642.

<sup>88</sup> Lt. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Mrs. Mary Jones, December 18th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 788.

<sup>89</sup> Lt. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. and Mrs. C. C. Jones, April 8th, 1862, *The Children of Pride*. 872.

<sup>90</sup> Miss Mary E. Robarts to Mrs. Mary Jones, May 31st, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 689.

People as a Nation,” and hoped that in the war “the Lord may use us as rods of correction to each other.”<sup>91</sup> Because the war, though a political matter, affronted the Jones family’s Christian beliefs, they felt obliged to reaffirm their devotion to God by incorporating their religious beliefs into their politics.

Even though secession and war led the members of the Jones family to merge religion with politics, it also led some members of the family to reaffirm their belief that the law transcended its political application. As a lawyer, Charles Jr. wrote the most on this topic. He spent the first year of the war finishing his term as mayor of Savannah, and in the military served as an officer and judge advocate. He, therefore, had the greatest understanding of and most contact with the law as it was applied by both the Union Government and the governments of the Confederacy. His interpretation of the application of various laws, many of which he communicated to his parents, either out of frustration or satisfaction, offers insight into the changes and consistencies of his understanding of the law as an abstract concept.

Charles Jr. generally remained steadfast in his belief that law and government transcended their application—or misapplication, as he often saw it—by government officials. He frequently questioned the actions of those in his government, at times even to his own detriment. He disapproved of Governor Joseph E. Brown’s allowing himself to be elected for a third term, writing to Charles sarcastically: “if for a third term, why not for life?”<sup>92</sup> While Charles Jr. served in the army, he turned down General John King Jackson’s offer of a promotion to the judge advocacy of his division, which he had originally been inclined to accept.<sup>93</sup> Charles Jr. gave many reasons for his refusal in a letter to his father, a primary one being his doubt that Jackson had the authority to offer it: “I think he acted rather unadvisedly... without consulting

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<sup>91</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Mrs. Eliza G. Robarts, July 4th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 709.

<sup>92</sup> Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, September 14th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 745.

<sup>93</sup> Lt. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Mrs. Mary Jones, January 11th, 1862, *The Children of Pride*. 830-831.

the organic act of the legislature providing for the raising of the state forces.”<sup>94</sup> Charles Jr.’s appeal to the law in questioning his superior’s actions, even when not questioning his actions would have personally benefited him, demonstrates the high rank that the law held in his worldview.

Charles Jr.’s strong commitment to law and justice in the wartime domestic affairs of the Confederacy grew out of his contempt for the conduct of Lincoln’s government. Like most of his family, Charles Jr. had long believed that the North had no regard for law and order. But he became particularly outspoken on this issue in response to the Union’s wartime policies. Charles Jr. expressed his belief in the necessity of upholding the law early in the war, writing to his father and mother:

I cannot bring my mind to entertain even the impression that a God of justice and of truth will permit a blinded, fanatical people, who already have set at naught all rules of equality, of right, and of honor; who flagrantly violate the inalienable right of private liberty by an arrogant suspension of the privilege of habeas corpus... who set at defiance the right of private property by seizing Negroes, the personal chattel of others... [and] who substitute military despotism in the place of constitutional liberty... to triumph in this unholy war. We have our sins and our shortcomings, but... we may honestly thank god that we are not as they are.<sup>95</sup>

In this excerpt, Charles Jr. makes clear the connection he sees between upholding the law in the domestic sphere and winning the war against the North. His appeal to God shows that he views the rights afforded by the law as sacred objects, and their abridgment as high crimes both in a legal and spiritual sense. Committing such crimes would lose the South God’s favor. He, therefore, believed that the Confederacy had a duty to uphold the law in all its actions, not only because it was legally just, but because failing to do so would cost them the war.

But despite frequently expressing his devotion to the law, some of the Union’s wartime policies tested Charles Jr.’s commitment to upholding the rights the law afforded. The first

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<sup>94</sup> Lt. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, January 20th, 1862, *The Children of Pride*. 832.

<sup>95</sup> Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. and Mrs. C. C. Jones, June 10th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 695.

Confiscation Act of 1861, which authorized the Union government to seize any property (including slaves) used to support the Confederacy, was one such policy. Though Charles Jr. decried the confiscation of slaves by the Union government as violating the right of property, as mayor of Savannah he enforced the confiscation of property owned by northerners without hesitation.<sup>96</sup> He did so on the justification that it was necessary to fully cut ties with the North: “the more absolute the separation the better.”<sup>97</sup> Charles Sr. agreed with his son’s reasoning, adding that with the confiscations, “there will be money enough to pay for all the Negroes stolen and emancipated.”<sup>98</sup> For both Charles and Charles Jr., Northern infringement on the system of slavery constituted a grave enough offense that it justified their violating the property rights of Northerners.

More drastic than Charles Jr. and Charles Sr.’s responses to the Confiscation Acts was their response to Lincoln’s issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. Most members of the family did not comment on the proclamation in their letters, perhaps because it did not represent to them any change in the Union government’s intentions. Charles Jr. and Charles Sr.’s comments on the proclamation show no surprise at Lincoln’s actions. Shortly after the order was announced, Charles Jr. conveyed his interpretation of the document to his father, calling it “the crowning act of the series of black and diabolical transactions which have marked the entire course of [Lincoln’s] administration.”<sup>99</sup> Charles Sr. agreed, adding that the Northern war strategy had “become one for the perpetration of every brutal crime—for robbery, arson, and insurrection.”<sup>100</sup> Charles Sr.’s emphasis on criminality and brutality does not vary from his earlier characterizations of the conduct of the Union government.

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<sup>96</sup> Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, October 7th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 762.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr., October 9th, 1861, *The Children of Pride*. 764.

<sup>99</sup> Lt. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, September 27th, 1862, *The Children of Pride*. 967.

<sup>100</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Lt. Charles C. Jones, Jr., September 30th, 1862, *The Children of Pride*. 969.

But while Charles Sr. and Charles Jr. were not surprised by the Emancipation Proclamation, they were nonetheless outraged by Union officials' disregard for the Southern social order. The proclamation was the final straw for them—a confirmation that the North was beyond any moral redemption. “The North,” Charles Jr. wrote, “furnishes an example of refined barbarity, moral degeneracy, religious impiety, soulless honor, and absolute almost beyond belief.”<sup>101</sup> Though he acknowledged that the proclamation had no practical effect in unoccupied parts of the South, Charles Jr. argued that the document was an attempt to inspire slave rebellion and that all Union soldiers were complicit in this attempt. Questioning whether such soldiers were entitled to consideration as prisoners of war, he argued that any future prisoners caught from the Union Army could be tried and punished according to Georgia law for inciting insurrection—that is, they could be put to death.<sup>102</sup> Charles Sr. agreed and took things one step further, stating that the government would be justified in “putting every prisoner taken to instantaneous death,” without the need for trial.<sup>103</sup>

Charles Sr. took a similar position when discussing runaway slaves suspected of treason. After three of his sister's slaves (along with his slave, Cato) reportedly deserted her plantation to seek refuge with Union troops, Charles Sr. asked if they could be “summarily dealt with... under the head of insurrection” for “casting off the authority of their masters,” calling them “traitors of the worst kind.”<sup>104</sup> Charles Jr., while unsympathetic to such slaves, was less harsh than his father. Though he admitted that “a white man... apprehended under such circumstances... would be hung,” he argued that treasonous slaves could not be dealt with in the same way because of their “ignorance, credulity... the absence of political ties of allegiance, [and] the peculiar status of the

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<sup>101</sup> Lt. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, September 27th, 1862, *The Children of Pride*, 968.

<sup>102</sup> Lt. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, September 27th, 1862, *The Children of Pride*, 967-968.

<sup>103</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Lt. Charles C. Jones, September 30th, 1862, *The Children of Pride*, 969.

<sup>104</sup> Rev. C. C. Jones to Lt. Charles C. Jones, Jr., July 21st, 1862, *The Children of Pride*, 935.



race.”<sup>105</sup> Only in the case that a slave attempted to get others to escape with them or was “found under circumstances which indicate he is a spy,” should they “undoubtedly suffer death.”<sup>106</sup>

Notably, Charles Jr.’s unfavorable view of the character of black slaves was the only reason he spoke so mildly.

In light of Charles Sr. and Charles Jr.’s reactions to potentially treasonous slaves, their responses to the Emancipation Proclamation broke from their typical rhetoric about the law. It is not unusual for either man to advocate punishing slaves for violating the law. It is, however, unusual for them to advocate executing prisoners of war for violating domestic laws. While they framed the actions of the North as unlawful or as moral crimes, at no point did they refer to those actions as criminal infractions that could be punished by local government authorities. The two men also did not normally view retaliation as a just response to Union indecencies. Even if their statements about prisoners of war were not intended as genuine recommendations, this shift in rhetoric demonstrates the two men’s commitment to slavery and how central that commitment was to their interpretation of the war. The disregard shown for slaveholders’ authority over their slaves by the Emancipation Proclamation was a grave offense to Charles Sr. and Charles Jr. Northern interference with the authority of slaveholders was an extenuating circumstance that in their minds justified violating rights that they otherwise deemed inalienable.

Charles Sr. and Charles Jr.’s discussion of how to deal with treasonous slaves also demonstrates the difference in how the two men regarded their slaves’ status as people and as parts of Southern society. Charles Sr.’s desire to punish the slaves who deserted his sister’s plantation shows that he believed slaves had a duty to not only be loyal to their owners but also to share their owners’ loyalties. By calling for the runaway slaves’ execution as insurrectionists

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<sup>105</sup> Lt. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Rev. C. C. Jones, July 19th, 1862, *The Children of Pride*, 934.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

and describing them as traitors, he implicitly argues that slaves knew about that duty and were intelligent enough to understand it well. They, therefore, deserved the same punishment as white Southerners for betraying their loyalties. Charles Jr. believed differently, arguing both that slaves held no allegiance to any political body and that their poor intellectual condition excused them from the status of traitor. Because he did not share his father's view of slaves' intellectual capabilities, he did not agree that slaves could be executed for treason as white Southerners could.

Mary Jones also broke from Charles Sr.'s view of slaves during the war. As the events of the war threatened her power over her slaves, she became more hostile toward black Southerners as a whole. During the Union occupation of Georgia, she lamented the fate she saw for black Southerners after abolition arguing that "all history, from their first existence, proves" that Africans "perish when brought in conflict with the intellectual superiority of the Caucasian race."<sup>107</sup> Historian Erskine Clarke, quoting this section of Mary's journal, argues that it marks her abandonment of Charles Sr.'s view of black Southerners as "one laboring class among the many of the earth" in favor of "a racial argument that had long been used by the most radical proslavery people."<sup>108</sup> Her discussion of black Southerners after abolition would confirm Clarke's interpretation.

The Union occupation undoubtedly challenged the Jones family's class position and authority as slaveholders. Still, some members of the family retained their trust in the privileges of their class position even as the Union government dismantled their social position. The accounts of Mary Jones and Mary Sharpe Mallard during the Union occupation of Georgia demonstrate this fact. As the Union Army took control of Liberty County, Mary Sharpe

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<sup>107</sup> Mary Jones, "Journal of Mary Jones," January 11th, 1865, in *The Children of Pride*, 1244.

<sup>108</sup> Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 445.

recounted with indignity how little respect occupying soldiers showed for the property of the members of their household, both white and black. She described in a journal entry one soldier's ransacking through her belongings while searching the family's Montevideo home: "he put his hands into everything, even a little trunk containing needle books, boxes of hair, and other small things. All this under cover of searching for arms and ammunition."<sup>109</sup> In another entry, she described an interaction between Union soldiers and her slave Mary Ann, who "kept [the soldiers] from taking the wardrobe of her deceased daughter by calling out: 'Them dead people clothes!'"<sup>110</sup> Mary Sharpe's anger when she recounts these incidents shows the degradation she felt in dealing with the occupying Union soldiers; however, she did not express surprise at the soldiers' disregard for her property rights.

But despite Mary Sharpe and her mother's hostile confrontations with Union soldiers, the two women still hoped their social status would compel officers of the occupying army to protect them. During one search of the house, Mary Sharpe described how her mother "found one man who seemed to make a little show of authority... [and] appealed to him, and he came up and ordered the men out."<sup>111</sup> In another entry, she recounted how her mother pleaded for the help of another officer: "I come to entreat your protection for my family, and that you will not allow your soldiers to enter my dwelling."<sup>112</sup> When another band of Union soldiers came to the house without an officer, Mary Jones attempted to wield the authority of previous officers, though without success: "I told [the soldier] the officers had said the soldiers must not enter private dwellings. He replied: 'there is no officer; we are independent scouts and do as we please.'"<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Mary Sharpe Mallard, "Journal of Mary S. Mallard," December 13th, 1864, *The Children of Pride*. 1223.

<sup>110</sup> Mary Sharpe Mallard, "Journal of Mary S. Mallard," December 25th, 1864, *The Children of Pride*. 1237.

<sup>111</sup> Mary Sharpe Mallard, "Journal of Mary S. Mallard," December 16th, 1864, *The Children of Pride*. 1227.

<sup>112</sup> Mary Sharpe Mallard, "Journal of Mary S. Mallard," December 17th, 1864, *The Children of Pride*. 1228.

<sup>113</sup> Mary Jones, "Journal of Mary Jones," December 24th, 1864, *The Children of Pride*. 1235.

Mary Sharpe Mallard and Mary Jones' appeals to the Union Army officers demonstrates the depth of the women's faith that their social status would protect them. The two women were not surprised by the disrespect for their property exhibited by the Union soldiers, likely because their perception of the Union was already that they did not respect the right of private property. But despite this perception of the Union, the two women—and Mary Jones in particular—appealed to Union Army officers to protect them from further violations of their property. Though they did not trust members of the Union Army in general, they still believed that appealing to officers, who Mary and Mary Sharpe likely considered equal to them in social status, would bring them relief. The two women probably based this belief on their expectation of proper manners in men of their status. Mary and Charles Sr. stressed the importance of proper manners to their children, believing it marked their status as social elites.<sup>114</sup> Mary and Mary Sharpe therefore would have expected the Union officers to exhibit the same manners they would have expected of any man of their rank. Their trust that these officers would act in their favor, despite their views about the Union, shows how much faith the two women had in elite social conventions.

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<sup>114</sup> Berry, "Growing Up," 320-324.

### Chapter 3: After the War

The end of the Civil War brought significant upheaval for all members of Southern society, to which the Jones family was not an exception. The abolition of slavery was not the only change in the household; the deaths of Charles Jr.'s wife Ruth in 1861 and of Charles Sr. in 1863 left the family altered in structure. Mary, now a widow, took on the responsibility of caring for Mary Ruth, Charles Jr. and Ruth's only surviving daughter, while Charles Jr. served as a lieutenant colonel in the Confederate army.<sup>115</sup> Two years after Ruth died, Charles Jr. married Eva Berrien Eve, Ruth's cousin once removed and a bridesmaid at her wedding.<sup>116</sup> He returned to Savannah, now out of a job, and was reunited with Mary Ruth in July.<sup>117</sup> Mary Sharpe and her husband Robert had moved to Atlanta, where Robert had accepted a position during the war at the Central Presbyterian Church.<sup>118</sup> Meanwhile, Joseph had been called to Washington to testify in the trial of the commander of the Andersonville prison, a Confederate Prisoner of War camp at which Joseph served as a medical officer.<sup>119</sup>

Before long, the family scattered to an even greater degree than before. Charles Jr., seeing few opportunities to make a living in Savannah, accepted an offer from his former law partner to join him in a practice in New York in 1866.<sup>120</sup> Mary Sharpe prepared to move from Atlanta to New Orleans shortly after Charles Jr. left since her husband Robert was called to a pastorate there.<sup>121</sup> At the same time, Joseph had accepted a professorship at the University of Nashville's medical school, remaining there for two years before accepting another professorship at the

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<sup>115</sup> Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 422.

<sup>116</sup> Myers, *The Children of Pride*. 1516.

<sup>117</sup> Mrs. Eva B. Jones to Mrs. Mary Jones, June 13th, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1273-1274; Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Mrs. Mary Jones, July 28th, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1283.

<sup>118</sup> Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 422-423.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid*, 458.

<sup>120</sup> Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Mrs. Mary Jones, November 15th, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1306; Mrs. Mary Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., February 26th, 1866, *The Children of Pride*. 1327.

<sup>121</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Mrs. Mary S. Mallard, June 20th, 1866, *The Children of Pride*, 1344-1345; Mrs. Mary Jones to Rev. R. Q. Mallard, July 11th, 1866, *The Children of Pride*. 1346.

University of Louisiana and joining his sister and brother-in-law in New Orleans.<sup>122</sup> Mary remained at Montevideo, along with her recently emancipated servants.

Immediately after the war, the family lamented the loss of their class position and the abolition of slavery. In a letter to Mary, Eva described abolition as “a most unprecedented robbery... only intended for a greater humiliation and loss to us.”<sup>123</sup> In later letters, she is scandalized that Charles Jr. was forced to work in a “most primitive style,” while she found herself forced to sew her own clothes and clean her own house.<sup>124</sup> Charles Jr. told his mother that they “will all have to recognize the fact... that our former slaves have been set free, [and] that we have no further legal claim upon their services.”<sup>125</sup> Despite their lamentations, the family did not lose all power over their former slaves, as evidenced by Mary’s brother John’s calling on Yankee soldiers to put down rebellions by hired freedmen working his fields.<sup>126</sup>

In the wake of emancipation, the family was forced to negotiate contracts with any freedmen whose services they wished to retain. Now without the property relation of slavery, the family’s feelings about those who once composed their household changed. Charles Jr., who decided to take an active role in negotiations, wrote to his mother: “Now that they are all free, there are several of them not worth the hiring. Please name... which of them you wish at Montevideo.”<sup>127</sup> She responded that she “must employ those who will be useful,” but preferred those who she knew, “provided they will be faithful.”<sup>128</sup> There were a few slaves who she had doubts about. Cato, she told Charles Jr., was “a most insolent, indolent, and dishonest man,” and

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<sup>122</sup> Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 458.

<sup>123</sup> Mrs. Eva B. Jones to Mrs. Mary Jones, June 13th, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1274.

<sup>124</sup> Mrs. Eva B. Jones to Mrs. Mary Jones, June 27th, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1276; Mrs. Eva B. Jones to Mrs. Mary Jones, July 14th, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1280.

<sup>125</sup> Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Mrs. Mary Jones, July 28th, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1284.

<sup>126</sup> Rev. John Jones to Mrs. Mary Jones, August 21st, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1292.

<sup>127</sup> Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr. to Mrs. Mary Jones, September 2nd, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1294.

<sup>128</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., September 6th, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1296.

she would not welcome him back.<sup>129</sup> Tom she would like to have, but only if he would be “obedient and industrious.”<sup>130</sup> In another letter, she told Mary Sharpe that she was “not at all anxious” to have another Freedman, Niger, and his family return to the plantation—but, she added, “if they come and will attend to their work, I will do the best I can by them.”<sup>131</sup>

Mary’s frank discussion of how she perceived her servants’ usefulness and faithfulness demonstrates how the abolition of slavery changed her relationship to her former slaves. During slavery, Mary expressed her belief that all of her slaves were a member of her household and acknowledged her duty to provide for them regardless of how productive or honest they were. But now that Mary had to make contracts with her servants on an individual basis, she felt less bound to provide for those who once made up her household. In the case of Cato, this change is explained by the betrayal she felt by his deserting Montevideo during the war. But in the case of Tom, Niger, and Niger’s family, her relationship with them changed because she perceived them as useless workers. After abolition, Mary stopped seeing her servants as members of her household who she was obliged to support. Instead, she now saw them as employees who, despite her personal connections with them, were only entitled to support as compensation for satisfactory labor.

As Mary’s understanding of her relationship to her servants changed, so too did her views on black Southerners as a whole. Mary often expressed racist views towards black people after the war, justifying her beliefs by pointing to interactions with her former slaves. In a letter to Mary Sharpe, Mary complains about her former slaves’ poor service and lack of loyalty, then generalizes about black Southerners as a whole based on that perception of her former slaves: “I shall cease my anxieties for the race. My life long... I have been laboring and caring for them...

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<sup>129</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Mr. Charles C. Jones, Jr., September 6th, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1296.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Mrs. Mary S. Mallad, October 25th, 1865, *The Children of Pride*. 1302.

and this is their return.”<sup>132</sup> In the same letter, she criticized two neighbors for renting their land to freedmen, calling their decision “very injurious to the best interest of the community.”<sup>133</sup> By 1867, she had declared dead her late husband’s goal to improve black Southerners’ intellectual condition, telling Mary Sharpe that she could not see “by what means the Negro is to be elevated to an intelligent and reliable laborer.”<sup>134</sup> She was not the only member of the family who became more hostile to black Southerners following abolition. John Jones, Mary’s brother, writing from experience with his slaves, told his sister that white planters were “clinging too much to a race who are more than willing to let us go.”<sup>135</sup>

Still, some members of the family retained Charles Sr.’s belief that religious education would improve the allegedly poor moral and intellectual condition of black Southerners. But even when they retained this belief, they still broke from Charles Sr.’s class-based view by racializing black Southerners’ moral condition, although they did so less explicitly than did Mary. While discussing early colonial regulations on slavery in his *History of Georgia*, Charles Jr. noted the failure of the Trustees of the Georgia Province to recognize what he believed to be the “necessity for [slaves’] religious instruction” to improve their moral condition.<sup>136</sup> In the same paragraph, he implicitly argued that white Southerners, regardless of their class, were morally superior to black slaves by contending that slaves’ inclination for “the exhibition of violent passions” made necessary “the protection of the whites” through strict regulations on slaves’ actions.<sup>137</sup> Robert Mallard praises Charles Sr.’s missionary work, which he believed improved the spiritual and intellectual condition of slaves, in his book *Plantation Life Before Emancipation*.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Mrs. Mary S. Mallard, November 17th, 1865, in *The Children of Pride*, 1308.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 1308-1309.

<sup>134</sup> Mrs. Mary Jones to Mrs. Mary S. Mallard, January 8th, 1867, in *The Children of Pride*, 1369.

<sup>135</sup> Rev. John Jones to Mrs. Mary Jones, August 21st, 1865, in *The Children of Pride*, 1292.

<sup>136</sup> Charles Colcock Jones, Jr., LL. D., *The History of Georgia, vol. 1.* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1883). 485.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> Mallard, *Plantation Life Before Emancipation*, 114-120.



Still, he ascribes moral qualities to racial traits in another section of the book, speculating that the “intrinsic inoffensiveness of the race” might explain the “noble conduct of the negro” during the Civil War.<sup>139</sup>

Robert Mallard may not have deeply believed that black Southerners’ conduct during the Civil War was due to an essential racial trait. Given that he wrote *Plantation Life Before Emancipation* with the hope of reducing racial animosity, he may have only speculated about positive racial traits to encourage a positive view of black Southerners in the reader. Unlike Mary, Robert did not hate black Southerners for their actions during the Civil War. Though the “unhappy events immediately succeeding” abolition certainly upset him, he did not blame emancipated slaves for those events.<sup>140</sup> Rather, he echoed Charles Jr.’s argument about potentially treasonous slaves during the war, saying that former slaveholders could not hate black Southerners for being “suddenly and without any preparation invested with the responsibility and (in their intellectual condition) dangerous privilege of citizenship.”<sup>141</sup> He hoped that reminding the public of the “kindly feelings” that he claimed “bound together” white and black Southerners before abolition would produce “at least an approximate solution of the race problem.”<sup>142</sup>

Through attempting to fix racial animosity, Robert Mallard also formulated a defense of slavery based on the efforts of Southern slaveholders to provide for their slaves’ religious education. In doing so, he borrowed from Charles Sr.’s religious defense of slavery while also diverging from his father-in-law’s understanding of religious obligation by commending slaveholders’ efforts to educate their slaves in Christianity in instances when Charles Sr. did not. Charles Sr. frequently criticized slaveholders for failing to educate their slaves in Christianity,

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<sup>139</sup> Mallard, *Plantation Life Before Emancipation*, 209, 232.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, vii.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 236.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

which was their religious duty. As a missionary, he aimed to correct this failure.<sup>143</sup> Robert certainly knew his father-in-law's criticisms of slaveholders, if not from personal conversation then from reading Charles Sr.'s *Suggestions*. Still, Robert uses Charles Sr.'s reports to the Association for the Religious Instruction of the Negroes to "inspire... an exalted opinion of the Southern slave-holder."<sup>144</sup>

That Robert cited Charles Sr.'s missionary reports to praise slaveholders' efforts to provide for their slaves' religious education shows that he did not share his father-in-law's understanding of the relationship between slavery and religion. Working from the same accounts of slaveholders' actions that Charles Sr. based his critique of the planter class on, Robert came to the conclusion that slaveholders deserved praise for providing for their slaves' religious education. Robert's different interpretation of Charles Sr.'s reports indicates that he understood slaveholders' duty to teach Christianity to their slaves differently from his father-in-law. For Charles Sr., instructing slaves in Christianity was part of being a Christian master, and failing to fulfill that duty was sinful. Robert, however, believed that slaveholders who provided for their slaves' material needs were moral regardless of how they provided for their slaves' spiritual needs. Unlike his father-in-law, he believed that instructing slaves in Christianity was not an obligation but rather an altruistic endeavor. The fact that slaveholders provided for their slaves' religious instruction, therefore, proved to Robert the benevolence of the planter class.

Though Robert's understanding of the relationship between religion and slavery diverged from that of Charles Sr., he shared the belief that Charles Sr. and other members of the Jones family expressed during the Civil War that religion should guide politics and society. Robert expresses this belief most clearly in his portrayal of the antebellum Southern church. While

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<sup>143</sup> See ch. 1, p. 9-10.

<sup>144</sup> Mallard, *Plantation Life Before Emancipation*, 143.

remembering his time as a pastor in Liberty County, he recalls fondly how black and white Southerners worshiped together in the same congregation under the administration of white clergy, a situation which he holds is common to most of the South.<sup>145</sup> He also upholds the legacy of his father-in-law, framing the evangelical labors of Charles Sr. as an example of perfect conduct by a pastor of the Church. Among the labors that Robert praises are Charles Sr.'s rules to not deal with the affairs of others' plantations, to preach obedience to all authority, and to privately recommend that slaveholders improve slaves' conditions.<sup>146</sup>

Although Robert does not make an explicit argument regarding the applicability of religious life to social and political organization, his framing of religious life in the Antebellum South carries the implication that southern society would benefit from adopting similar practices. By positioning his father-in-law's religious efforts as part of the same "labors" as his attempts to reform the institution of slavery, Robert conflates religious practices with social practices, therefore arguing implicitly that it is indeed the role of religious leaders to interfere in the organization of society. Further, his inclusion of how religious instruction was a job reserved for white southerners in a chapter discussing the impact of religious practices on the relationship between masters and slaves suggests that he believes white governance over black southerners is important, and that the structure of the Church is proof of that fact. Despite explicitly expressing beliefs to the contrary, Robert clearly sees the social and political good of the South as related to the religious good and views his ecclesiastical position as granting him authority to comment on social and political organization.

Like Robert, Charles Jr. remained committed to the defense of slavery after the war, and he demonstrated this commitment in his *History of Georgia*. While he discusses slavery

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid, 74.

<sup>146</sup> Mallard, *Plantation Life Before Emancipation*, 106-112.

throughout the first volume, focusing his analysis on how slavery came to exist in the province and, later, the colony. He depicts the history of slavery in the state as the product of a conflict between the Trustees of the Georgia Province, who resisted the introduction of slavery, and pro-slavery colonists, a group that he represents as containing most of the colonial population. In constructing this historical narrative, Charles Jr. conflates the desires of the planting class with the needs of the colony as a whole and, in doing so, reveals how his understanding of the law changed following abolition.

The historical beliefs Charles Jr. expresses in his *History of Georgia* show how his commitment to the defense of slavery and the supremacy of the slaveholding class persisted after abolition. In Chapter VI, for instance, his framing of the initial ban on slavery imposed by the Trustees of the Georgia province demonstrates how he continued to associate the needs of slaveholders with the needs of Southern Society in general. He starts by detailing the justification given by the Trustees that the introduction of slavery would reduce their ability to provide economic opportunity for poor English settlers and act as a buffer against Spanish Florida, therefore violating the charter of the province.<sup>147</sup> He then closes this discussion by reflecting on the prohibition and looking toward the future. “The prohibition was doubtless salutary in its operation,” he argued, “but there soon came a time, in the development of the plantation, when its abrogation was found essential to the prosperity, nay, to the life itself of the province.”<sup>148</sup> His description of the prohibition’s effects as “salutary” prioritizes the desires of wealthy planters in his historical narrative. By centering the development of the plantation as the key factor in the success of the province, Charles Jr. also implicitly argues that planters and pro-slavery advocates were the main historical actors responsible for the prosperity of the state.

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<sup>147</sup> Jones, *History of Georgia*, 110-111.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 111-112.

Charles Jr. emphasizes the needs of the plantation and the future slaveholding class throughout his discussion of the Trustees' policies on slavery, and his analysis prioritizes those needs over the Trustees' other policy goals. In Chapter XIX, he outlines the Trustees' rejection of a 1738 petition to introduce slavery to the province. The petition, signed by 121 men in the province, argued that slavery would allow Georgia planters to increase the production of export crops.<sup>149</sup> The Trustees rejected the petition for the same reasons that they imposed their initial prohibition on slavery, though with a heavier emphasis on the need to preserve the security of the province. The recent memory of the destruction caused by a slave insurrection in South Carolina earlier that year, which was incited by Spanish military forces in Florida who promised freedom, protection, and arms to revolting slaves, convinced the Trustees that introducing slavery would undermine the ability of the province to act as a buffer between Florida and the English colonies.<sup>150</sup> Charles Jr. challenges their decision, arguing that "it may well be questioned whether the adoption of a different policy, permitting the introduction of negro slaves... would not have materially advanced the prosperity of the plantation."<sup>151</sup>

In chapter XXVI, Charles Jr. demonstrates the post-abolition persistence of his wartime willingness to further the interests of slaveholders at the expense of rule of law. Here, he criticizes not only the material goals that the Trustees prioritized but also their adherence to a conservative interpretation of the Georgia Charter. He argues in this section that the Trustees "sacrificed the material interest of the plantation to their notions of policy and propriety" by continuing to prohibit slavery in the Georgia province throughout the late 1740s and early 1750s.<sup>152</sup> His attitude toward colonists who flouted the prohibition, meanwhile, is uncritical to

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<sup>149</sup> Jones, *History of Georgia*, 303-304.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid*, 304-311.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid*, 312.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid*, 418-419.

the point of endorsement. After noting the “impolicy” of the prohibition, he argues that “it was now more evident than ever that... the development of the province would be fatally obstructed [without slavery]. The colonists determined, therefore, to disregard the injunctions of the trustees.”<sup>153</sup>

Charles Jr.’s acceptance of colonists’ fragrant violation of colonial law breaks from usual support for strict adherence to the law and almost seems to indicate that he abandoned his belief in rule of law. But he did not cease to care about the rule of law. After abolition, he continued to appeal to the law to defend the actions and interests of slaveholders, and he taught his son, Charles Edgeworth Jones, to do the same. In 1884, Charles Jr. sent a letter to Charles Edgeworth commending him for a speech he had given to his fraternal society, which partially dealt with the topic of Southern secession. Charles Jr. affirmed to his son that “the defense of our slave property” played a role in the decision to secede, but reminded him as well that “behind all arguments of expediency, the right of secession can be justified upon constitutional grounds,” citing arguments put forth by Jefferson Davis and pro-slavery attorney Albert Taylor Bledsoe.<sup>154</sup> That Charles Jr. felt it important to teach the legal defense of secession to his son, who was born two years after the Civil War ended, shows that he still valued adherence to the law after abolition.

Given his continued belief in the rule of law, Charles Jr.’s different treatment of the Trustees and his treatment of pro-slavery colonists reveals how Charles Jr.’s understanding of the relationship between the law and the slaveholding class changed following abolition. During the Civil War, Charles Jr.’s belief that the law protected slaveholders’ interests wavered after Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. The immediate threat to Southern slavery and his

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<sup>153</sup> Jones, *History of Georgia*, 419-420.

<sup>154</sup> Charles Colcock Jones, Jr. to Charles Edgeworth Jones, October 27th, 1884, JFP, HRBM.

family's property that the proclamation posed led Charles Jr. to ignore a conservative interpretation of the law by calling for the execution of Union soldiers caught as prisoners. The actions of the Trustees, however, were not an immediate threat; still, Charles Jr. criticized their conservative interpretation of their charter because it stood in the way of the development of the plantation. His criticism of the Trustees and near-endorsement of colonists who broke the law shows that his response to the Emancipation Proclamation was not a transient deviation from his beliefs in response to an immediate threat to slavery. Rather, it marked a permanent shift from believing that the law protects slaveholders' interests to believing that the law is subservient to slaveholders' interests.

### Conclusion

The end of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery radically changed the Jones family's relationship to the world around them, and their shifts in thought reflected that change. But even as their social position changed, the family stayed attached to their self-image as noble slaveholding elites, altering their understandings of Southern society to reflect their experiences. They based their antebellum beliefs about religion and law around a defense of slavery, and they continued to defend the memory of slavery after abolition and, by necessity, the memory of slaveholders. In doing so, they broke from many of their pre-war views. Charles Jr. set aside his conservative interpretation of the law to defend the legacy of slavery, and Robert Mallard disregarded Charles Sr.'s critiques of Southern slaveholders to encourage friendly views of the planter class

But there were some aspects of the family's antebellum beliefs that they could not adapt so easily to their position after the war. Enraged by the conduct of the Union during the war, the family as a whole incorporated their Christian faith into their politics, forgetting their disdain for those who politicized religion before the war. And Mary, forced to recognize her former slaves' autonomy after their emancipation, turned against black Southerners entirely. In doing so, she denounced her husband's core belief that black Southerners were spiritually and intellectually equal to white Southerners. The social relations upon which the Jones family based their views about black Southerners and the relationship between religion and politics were fundamentally shattered by their loss of control over their slaves and the seemingly atheistic behavior of the North.

The changes in thought that the members of the Jones family underwent highlight how personal experiences during and after the Civil War shaped the broader post-abolition intellectual



shift of Southern elites. The interactions that the members of the Jones family had with Northern abolitionists, Union soldiers, and their former slaves influenced how they interpreted the events of the war and the social upheaval that abolition brought. Responding to these interactions, the family changed their understanding of the society they lived in while still holding on to those values that were most essential to their sense of self. They saw themselves as static personalities in a changing world, and they adjusted their beliefs accordingly.

Yet the members of the Jones family were not static, as their intellectual adjustments show. The members of the family who lived past the war did not simply transition from conservatives upholding the antebellum Southern social order to reactionaries yearning for a return to the past. Many members of the family did not desire a return to slavery, or at least claimed not to. Those who did desire a return to slavery recognized that abolition was probably permanent. Rather than advocate the restoration of slavery, the members of the Jones family turned toward adjusting to the new social order imposed upon them by the North. Abolition had stripped them of the material basis for their social position, but it had not taken away their social status. The family, therefore, turned their efforts toward defending that status.

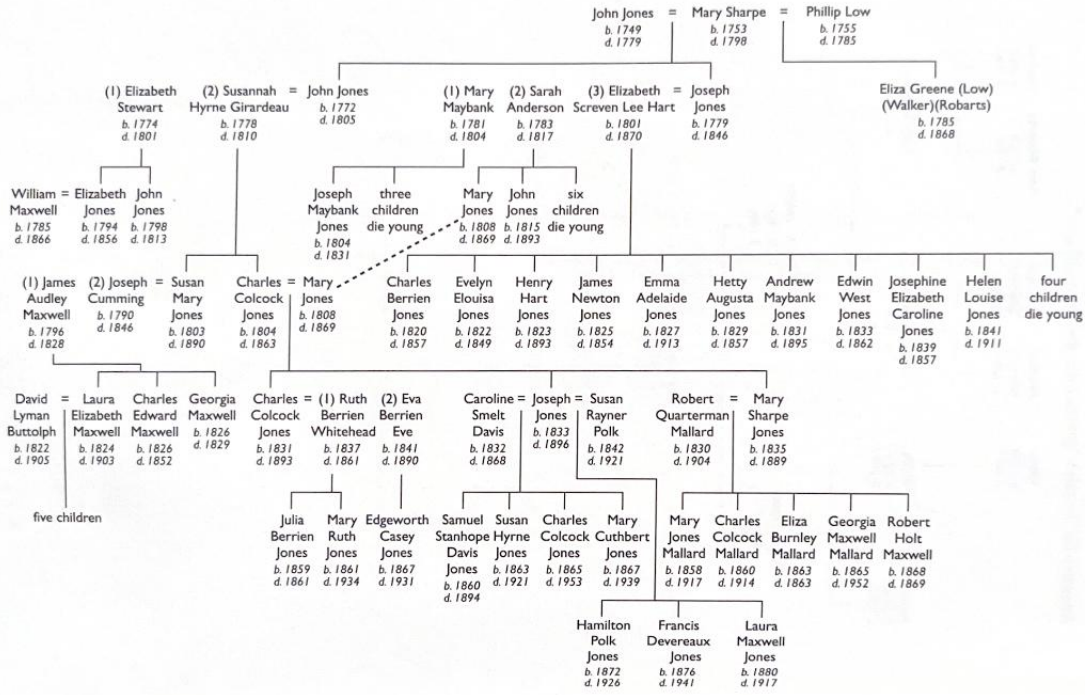
The Jones family's defense of their social status was not always a conservative effort. Because the social system that gave the family their status had been abolished, they needed to map the position they formerly occupied onto a new social landscape. Such an endeavor required them to develop a new ideology that justified both their continued power over black Southerners and how they obtained that power. With slavery abolished and anti-slavery beliefs dominating national thought, the family ceased their criticisms of slaveholders in order to defend the system that gave them the power that they wanted to keep. Simultaneously, most of the family abandoned Charles Sr.'s mission of using religious education to improve the allegedly poor

intellectual and moral condition of black Southerners. Instead, they began advocating for a new system of white governance over black Southerners, claiming such a social system was necessary either to protect white Southerners from black Southerners or to protect black Southerners from themselves. Such a social order would have placed former slaveholders like the Jones family in high social positions, allowing them to restore their lost social position and power over former slaves.

Ultimately, the Jones family's attachment to their social status and position governed how their worldviews changed. While they deeply held their antebellum beliefs about religion, politics, and the law, they ultimately held those beliefs because they rationalized and were compatible with their position in the Southern social order. When abolition and Northern intervention threatened their social position, the Jones family's beliefs no longer served them well. During the war, they held on to many of their beliefs as their hope for a Southern victory required them to uphold the doctrines so carefully constructed to defend Southern slavery. Yet the challenges the South faced during the war also pushed them to go against those doctrines in their actions. After the war, the conditions of a post-slavery society demanded that they construct new doctrines to preserve the status of former slaveholders, even if they could not preserve slavery itself. The Jones family's transition from their antebellum beliefs to their postbellum beliefs highlights the central role of maintaining status in the ideologies of elites, as well as demonstrates how the impact of social change on conservative thought.

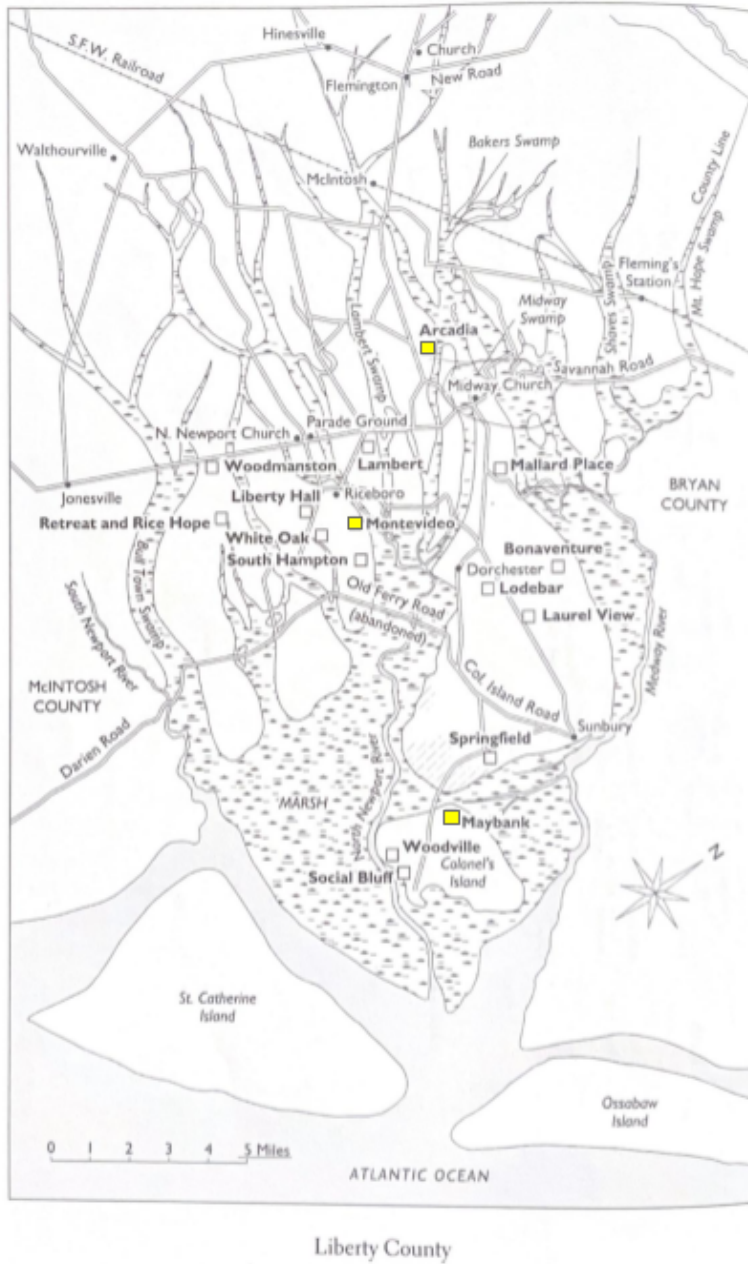
Appendix

John and Mary Jones



Appendix 1: The Jones family tree.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>155</sup> Erskine Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, 504.



**Appendix 2:** Map of Liberty County, Georgia, with plantations of Charles Colcock Jones, Sr. highlighted.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>156</sup> Erskine Clarke, *Dwelling Place*, xvi.

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