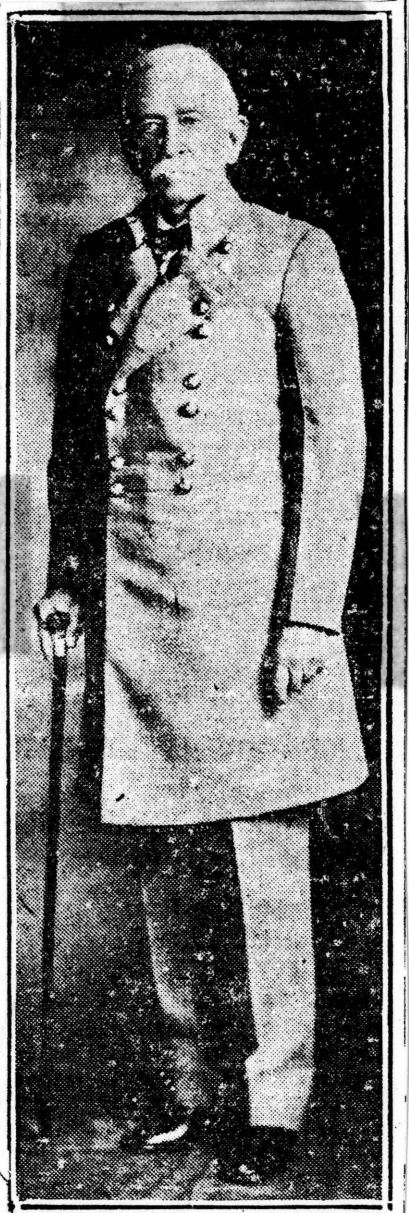


Albert Taylor Goodwyn: An
Adamistic Look At The South.

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Photograph by A. P.

GEN. A. T. GOODWYN

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper I have attempted to tell the story of the life of one man, Albert Taylor Goodwyn, and by doing so shed a small ray of light on the history of the South. Albert Goodwyn lived from 1842 until 1931. His life spanned the periods of the Old South, and the Civil war, Reconstruction, Redemption, entrenchment and change.

Henry Adams felt that one could best understand history when glimpses of the obscure and "unimportant" mixed with the pictures of the great and "important." A multitude of writers has given us pictures of the great. I offer a glimpse of the obscure -- an "Adamistic look."

Chapter I

"Comrades: Our Confederate organization was notably invited by the Federal government to participate in the inaugural ceremonies for the incoming President on March 4, (1929), the first time an invitation of this kind has been given to our United Confederate Veterans.

" I accepted the invitation in the prayerful hope that this was designed to be a public declaration that sectionalism was dead and that every loyal citizen was expected to use his influence to harmonize our vast country in patriotic unity of spirit and purpose."¹

"Without asperity in my heart for any man alive or dead— but with proud devoted loyalty to Southern traditions and history, I shall recall some facts provoking the war, and uncover some impressive and indefensible facts of the war— doing my mite in promoting the full truth to aid scholarship in giving us an American history that will do justice to all concerned."²

(emphasis mine)

These two statements were made within three months by the same man. I think that they help illustrate, in part, the paradox that was Albert Taylor Goodwyn and that is

the South. They both recognized, and do recognize, the need for progress but were, and are, unfortunately held partially in check by some intangibles that are the past.

Albert Taylor Goodwyn's family came to the colony of Virginia from Wales³ most probably at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Thomas Goodwyn, Albert Taylor's great-great-great grandfather lived in Surrey County, Virginia where his son John was born.⁴ In 1760 John and his son, Robert, who had been born in 1741 moved to South Carolina.⁵ Robert settled in Saxeogtha Township and his son John was born that same year. Before the Revolutionary War Robert was a Tax Collector and Justice of the Peace in Saxeogtha Township.⁶

John Goodwyn, Robert's son, was a lieutenant during the Revolutionary War in the Captain James Taylor's Company.⁷ In 1786 John married Captain Taylor's daughter Sarah.⁸ They lived near Columbia, South Carolina and raised a large family. Their thirteenth child Albert Gallatin Goodwyn was born November 29, 1807.⁹

Albert attended South Carolina College and studied medicine at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.¹⁰ In 1829, soon after he had finished his schooling, he moved southward through Georgia to Alabama where he bought some land a little South East of Montgomery.¹¹

In Montgomery Albert met, courted and married Harriet Bibb, daughter of Peyton Bibb, one of Alabama's wealthiest planters,

and niece of the state's first two governors, William and Thomas Bibb. They were married on February 21, 1832.¹² Soon after the marriage Dr. Goodwyn lost his land. He had unfortunately endorsed the bond of a friend who defaulted.¹³ Peyton Bibb then gave his son-in-law and daughter some land near Robinson Springs, where they built their house. The house was a one-story affair built in the midst of some trees on the crest of a hill. Dr. Goodwyn, his wife and family lived there until 1869 when the house burned.¹⁴

Dr. Goodwyn both practiced medicine and worked as a planter, slowly increasing his holdings of land and slaves. At the time of Albert Taylor's birth Dr. Goodwyn had about 2,000 acres and 100 slaves.¹⁵

Albert Taylor Goodwyn was born December 17, 1842, the sixth child and second son of Albert Gallatin Goodwyn and Harriet Bibb. Their first son John died at the age of seven making Albert Taylor the oldest male heir.¹⁶

Albert grew up in and around Robinson Springs. He received his schooling first at home and later at a school for boys in Montgomery, some 12 miles south of Robinson Springs.¹⁷ Albert was a very active boy. He and his younger brother Billy continually raised hell and fought.¹⁸ In addition to Billy, he had a Negro child named Jerry assigned to him as play-mate and slave. Jerry remained Albert's personal slave and handyman until the battle of Chickamauga.¹⁹

At the age of nine Albert had an accident that curtailed his activity greatly for quite some time.²⁰ He was playing in the stable loft one day when he stepped on a loose plank and fell. The end of the plank hit him and imbedded a splinter as thick as a man's finger in his head. He was taken to the house and his father sent to Montgomery for a surgeon. The surgeon was Dr. Marion Sims, who was, like Albert's father, a graduate of Jefferson Medical College. Dr. Sims later became famous for his surgical and research work at home and abroad.²¹ Dr. Sims said he could not give Albert an anesthetic and asked that he be held still on the table on which he had been placed. Albert was very conscious and objected to being held. He bargained with his father to find out what he could get for keeping still. His father said that he would give him a pony and a double-barrelled shot gun. Albert agreed and remained perfectly still during the entire operation. For several years after the operation he had to wear a silver plate on the side of his head and had to avoid most games. But, for compensation, he did have his new pony and shot gun. In his later life Gen. Goodwyn said that when the splinter was removed he lost about a teaspoonful of his brains. He claimed that otherwise he might have been a smart and wise man.²²

Albert grew up in relative ease and comfort. He was used to being waited on. The slaves did all the work in the house and fields. This, perhaps, explains why in the later years of hardship he refused to let his own children do manual work in the fields, and why, for the rest of his life, he disliked carrying bundles and

running errands.

At the age of seventeen and when the controversy between North and South was reaching a peak, Albert entered South Carolina College in Columbia. There Albert was a member of the Euphradian Literary Society, ranked second in his class in Greek and Mathematics and was a cadet in the college military corps.²³

Chapter II

In 1860 began the series of events that were to change life as Albert Goodwyn knew it. Lincoln was elected. South Carolina seceded and was followed by other southern states. The Confederate States of America were formed. Federal forts and properties were seized by the various states. Sumter was fired on, and the War began.

The South Carolina corps of cadets was sent to Charleston as the tension over Fort Sumter increased.²⁴ Lincoln had decided not to evacuate the fort while the Confederacy was demanding evacuation. At 3:30 in the morning of April 12 three of General Beauregard's aides, Col. Chestnut, Lt. Col. Chisolm and Capt. Lee, told Major Anderson that the Confederacy would open fire in an hour.²⁵ The South Carolina cadets found themselves in the midst of that situation. Though they took no actual part in the bombardment of Sumter, they were caught up in the excitement of the Confederate Cause.

In 1929 in looking back on the episode Albert Goodwyn said, "It will be a proud and happy memory to the end that I was among the soldiers who faced the enemy at the threshold in the battle of Sumter. The first gun was fired early on Friday

morning, April 12, 1861, and I now clearly recall the impressive incidents of that notable day. I see vessels with troops and supplies for the besieged fort at anchor in the bay, just beyond reach of our shells. I see and hear the thundering cannon, continuously all day Friday and Friday night until Saturday noon, when flames began to leap from the smoking fort, greeted by cheers from Confederate forces— for they knew the end was near. In a short while the big guns cease their horrible roar and we heard loud cheering as the white flag waved over Sumter— succeeded (sic.) by more cheering as the wonderful news was heard that not a drop of human blood had been shed on either side. Terms were arranged whereby the commander was to salute his flag before hauling it down, and he and his garrison were to be transferred to the vessels in the bay... As the steamer with the garrison on board moved from Sumter to the receiving vessels in the bay, the Confederates along the shore stood in line with their hats off, in honor of their gallantry in defense."²⁷

General Goodwyn's recollections seem basically accurate but are tinged with a romanticism that is typical of the post war South. People remember what they want to remember. The South in its poverty and disillusionment after the war wanted to recall a glorious, honorable, flag-waving past.

After the surrender of Sumter the South Carolina cadets were dismissed and allowed to return home.²⁸ Albert Goodwyn returned to Alabama. Practically as soon as he got home he enlisted. As a private he became secretary to Colonel William Goodwyn of the 45th Alabama Regiment of Volunteers.²⁹ Albert's

apparent good luck at drawing such a billet was really a case of parental pull. His father had arranged for Albert to get the assignment. It was not too difficult a task since Colonel Goodwyn was Dr. Goodwyn's cousin. Dr. Goodwyn took steps to see that his son was cared for. He sent Albert's body servant, Jerry, off to war with him.³⁰ Jerry "served" with Albert until the battle of Chickamauga. During the battle Jerry became frightened and hid behind a tent. The tent was hit by cannon fire and collapsed on him. This, understandably, scared the hell out of Jerry. He had had his fill of war; he left.³¹

Albert apparently did not appreciate his soft assignment his father had gotten for him. He got himself transferred to Cox's Battalion of Sharpshooters. He progressed from the rank of private to first sergeant of Company "E" of the battalion to lieutenant.³² In 1863 Company E was transferred from Cox's Battalion to the Ninth Alabama Battalion. The Ninth Alabama was re-named the 58th Alabama Regiment, and Company E was re-designated as Company K.³³ In November 1863 the 58th Alabama Regiment became embroiled in the Battle of Missionary Ridge. During that battle young lieutenant Goodwyn was captured by the Union forces. As a prisoner of war he was sent to Johnson's Island, Ohio, on Lake Erie.³⁴

Johnson's Island was a prison for officers. The roll call of December 7, 1863 listed 2361 prisoners all but 59 of whom were officers. As a prison for officers the conditions were much better than they were at the notorious prisons for enlisted men on both sides. The prison day generally started about

6:00 a.m. The prisoners were allowed to get up early if they wished but no one was allowed to leave quarters until the garrison flag had been raised. The prison day usually ended with sun set. The Sabbath day was generally observed. Prisoners were allowed to write and receive letters and could receive packages, though sometimes the packages were rifled by the guards. In the summer the prisoners were allowed to swim in the lake (something that pollution has made a lot less healthy today).³⁵

In January of 1864 the Sandusky, Ohio, Commercial Registrar in commenting on life at the prison said, "The officers over the men have at all times conducted themselves as gentlemen, and have been very kind and lenient, nor do they suffer the prisoners to be insulted or abused in any way."³⁶ Yet, life at the prison was far from idyllic. No Confederate rank or title was recognized in the prison— a fact inconsistent perhaps with the policy that made the prison almost exclusively for officers. There was often a shortage of food. The island was flat, and, because of that, the drainage was poor. The prison hospital was in a poor state of cleanliness and was poorly heated in the winter. The prisoners' quarters were also dirty and poorly heated. An extra health hazard was created by the burials which were carelessly made in an unfenced cemetery one half mile from camp. Yet, in spite of the conditions the mortality rate was light. A Dr. Steedman of the First Regiment

of Alabama Volunteers attributed that to the fact that Johnson's Island was a prison for officers who were generally young educated men in the prime of life. Also there were no local diseases on the island. The cold of late fall, winter, and early spring was not conducive to the development of many diseases when there was adequate protection from it for the prisoners.³⁷

Goodwyn's imprisonment appears to have been relatively painless. He expected the war to last much longer than it did. In June 1864 he wrote his sister, "I expect to be home about January 1868. The war I hope will end by that time and then I will be exchanged."³⁸ His main affliction while in prison was homesickness and he anxiously awaited letters and news from home.³⁹ One of his main complaints about prison was the lack of female companionship. In one of his letters to his sister he complained about not being able to hear the sound of a lady's voice.⁴⁰

While he was in prison he was elevated to the rank of Captain in the Confederate army.⁴¹ (Captain was the title by which he was addressed for most of the rest of his life. It was only after he had been made Commander of the Army of Tennessee division of the United Confederate Veterans and elevated to the rank of General that people started calling him General Goodwyn instead of Captain Goodwyn)

Captain Goodwyn was released from Johnson's Island in June of 1865.⁴² In 1926 he told of his return to his beloved and destroyed South. "I found myself with hundreds of others,

marching afoot from Chattanooga to Atlanta, and marching afoot from Atlanta to this beloved city of Montgomery, the railroads having been destroyed, while the whole route was marked by desolation. I vividly recall the pathetic scenes of this march. Among them, my one legged comrades on their crutches moving slowly along, and in spite of their disabled condition, and signs of desolation on all sides, greeting, with smiles, their fellow soldiers. Nor can I forget the sight of Atlanta in ashes with her helpless people in their agony and despair, victims of the vandal spirit of destruction."⁴³

Chapter III

When Captain Goodwyn finally reached home he found his father in despair and in the position of many, if not most southern planters and farmers. Dr. Goodwyn had plenty of land but no one to work it. His stock and most everything of value was gone. Dr. Goodwyn was never really able to face the changed conditions and the responsibility for the family and for attempts at economic rehabilitation fell on Albert.⁴⁴

When Albert had returned to his ruined home he was, at first, partially cheered out of his journey-induced weariness and despair by the sight of one hundred bales of cotton stacked by the barn. Confederate money was worthless but cotton was another question - it was almost as good as gold. However, Albert soon learned that three days before Appomatox his father had sold the cotton to a Montgomery broker, a Mr. Warren, for sixty thousand dollars in Confederate money. The money was worthless and the cotton worth everything. There had been no written agreement and the money had not even been paid. Yet, as far as Dr. Goodwyn was concerned there was no question or problem - the deal had been made and had to be carried through. It was.⁴⁵ That is but an

extreme example of the concept of honor and devotion to honesty that Albert had been taught from childhood. His concept of honor and belief in a gentleman's unquestioned honesty was perhaps the overriding characteristic of his life.

In spite of the state of his finances Dr. Goodwyn was determined that Albert should finish his college education. Somehow he raised the necessary money and in 1866 Albert entered the University of Virginia. At Virginia he revived Delta Psi fraternity and became president of the Jefferson Literary society. He graduated in the spring of 1867 with an A.B. degree from the School of Moral Philosophy.⁴⁶

In June of 1867 Albert Goodwyn returned to Robinson Springs to find conditions much the same as they had been two years earlier when he had come home. His father was too upset and bewildered by the sudden reversal of fortune that had come with the war to cope with the new conditions of poverty and the political realities of Reconstruction. Albert, therefore, adopted the responsibility for the family and helped his father attempt some degree of economic rehabilitation.⁴⁷

The hard work and the economic and political pains of Reconstruction left lasting marks on General Goodwyn. Reconstruction further developed his seriousness and gave rise to some bitterness, but most important, it contributed to the development of a fierce pride in the past, a pride that has been typical of the South. That pride was, for so long, one of the factors that held back the development of the South and kept the South so far apart from the

rest of the country. Sixty-two years after he had come home from U. Va. General Goodwyn said, "We fought ten years of political war to save our civilization after our Southland had been divided into military districts by a sectional despotism of selfishness, greed, deception and hate. The wisdom, endurance courage and the loyalty of a people were never more sternly tested than during those deplorable years. . ."

In an article, Uncle Bill Mack of Alabama, Priscilla Goodwyn Griffin, one of Albert Goodwyn's daughters, has described part of Albert's attempts to get the plantation back on its economic feet. Albert would get up at four o'clock in the morning and ride nine miles to the plantation on the river to get the hands to work by six o'clock. Uncle Bill Mack, an old Negro former slave, servant and family friend, explained the necessity for the early rising, "You see, them lazy ribbah niggahs, they ain't gettin' to work in de cool o' de mawin less'n Masse Ab an' me starts 'em. It was sour pickels to me to see yo' pa wurkin' lak dat mos' as if he want no gen'lman, jes' lak some Yankee overseeh. I'd tell him I didn't lak it and he'd laugh and allus say de same thing 'alte Tempus, alte moas' - which I s'pos'n meant niggahs doan change an if yo' can't have no oyahseeh yo' got to watch 'em yo'sef." ("alte tempus, alte Moas" meant "altera tempora, alteri mores.")⁴⁸

Though it seems he worked very hard, Albert did not spend his whole time trying to get the plantation back in shape.

Montgomery was just a short ride away and there he could enjoy the company of the young ladies he had missed while on Johnson's Island. It was on one of his visits to Montgomery that he met the woman who became his wife, Priscilla Cooper Tyler.

One evening Gardner Foster, a close friend of Albert's, suggested that they go call on the Tyler sisters. Albert had met two of the sisters, Letetia and Elizabeth, at a party in Montgomery and readily agreed to his friend's proposal.⁴⁹ The evening the young men called on the Tylers it was just by coincidence that Albert met Priscilla, for it was only earlier that day that she had returned from Florida where she had been governess for Senator Yulee's three little girls.⁵⁰ When Albert and his friend arrived at the Tyler house Priscilla was upstairs unpacking. She did not want to come down and meet the two young men but her mother insisted.⁵¹ (It was a little courtesy that developed in many Southern families that every member of the family in the house at the time of a visit should meet and welcome the callers.) To spite her mother and because she did not want to visit with the young men, Priscilla did not make an effort to fix herself up. She went downstairs in the same state of disarray that she had been in while unpacking. For the duration of the visit she directed her conversation to Gardner Foster, whom she knew quite well, and seemed oblivious to Albert's presence. Yet, apparently, Albert was quite impressed with her for he told Gardner on the way home that he had met the girl he would marry.⁵²

True to his military training having once picked his objective

Albert did not retreat until it was taken. After having proposed at least seventy-seven times he finally got Priscilla to say "Yes."⁵³ They were married December 22, 1869 in Saint John's Episcopal Church in Montgomery.⁵⁴

Priscilla Cooper Tyler was a granddaughter of President Tyler. Her mother, Priscilla Cooper, was the daughter of an eminent Shakespearian actor, Thomas Apthorpe Cooper. Her mother had acted as hostess in the White House for her father-in-law because of the illness and subsequent death of the president's wife. Priscilla's father, Robert Tyler, had served as his father's secretary until the President remarried. He had then moved his small family to Bristol, Pennsylvania.⁵⁵

When Lincoln was elected Robert Tyler was chairman of the Pennsylvania State Democratic Executive Committee. He let it be known that his sympathies were with the South. With the bombardment of Fort Sumter and the secession of Virginia his southern sympathies received wider and wider publicity. A mob formed and marched on his business offices that were in Philadelphia. He was warned in time and left for Bristol. However, the mob spirit followed him and a mob marched on his house after hanging him in effigy. They were only stopped by bad weather and the intervention of General William Reading Montgomery who assured the mob Tyler was not in his house (he was at a neighbor's) and dispersed them. The day after that Robert left for Richmond via Ohio. His family followed him shortly, travelling south by way of Washington, D. C. on a pass signed by General Emmett Patterson.

They went to Marietta, Georgia, to Mrs. Tyler's brother's place. When the Confederate Capital was moved from Montgomery to Richmond and when Robert Tyler was named Registrar of the Confederate treasury, the family moved to Richmond and stayed, for awhile, at John Tyler's home, "Sherwood Forest," on the James River. When the Union forces drew near to Richmond, Robert Tyler sent his family South through Mariette to Mt. Meigs, near Montgomery, Alabama. After the war Robert Tyler joined his family in Montgomery, and became, in 1866, editor of The Montgomery Advertiser. Priscilla, after the war, went to Baltimore to teach in her Aunt Letitia Semple's school. From teaching in Baltimore, the girls that she taught were about her own age and younger, she went to Florida as governess for Senator Yulee's children, as previously mentioned.⁵⁶

About three weeks before his wedding Albert's family home at Robinson Springs burned down. He and his wife moved into a house in Montgomery, where they lived for several years. Their first son, Robert Tyler, was born there November 4, 1870, as was their first daughter, Adele, November 6, 1873.⁵⁷ When Adele was about a year old and while his wife was away on a reading tour (Mrs. Goodwyn had inherited her grandfather's acting ability and was a very talented reader who made several tours through the country) *Albert* he moved his family back to Robinson Springs. At first Albert ^{he} rented a house, but soon he bought and rebuilt a house near his old family home. He planted a grove of elm trees in front of the house and they, in time, gave the place its name, "Elm Hill."

"Elm Hill" was a comfortable, wide, one-story house built on the crest of a hill. The house was white with green shutters and a wide encircling porch. (Wide porches are a distinguishing mark of many deep South houses of that period and earlier, for they helped protect against the summer heat and kept the interior relatively cool.) The structure was built on a basic square floor plan with a large central hall and rooms to either side, but with wings (probably additions Albert made when he bought the house) that broke up the total square effect. The kitchen was originally built separate from the house but was later connected by a latticed porch.⁵⁹

It was at "Elm Hill" that Albert's three other children were born; Albert Gallatin on October 1, 1875, Gardner Foster on February 17, 1880 and Priscilla Cooper on February 25, 1887.⁶⁰ He was a devoted father but it was to his daughters he showed the greatest amount of affection. He gave all his children all he could. Even in the hardest times he never allowed his sons to work regularly in the fields. However, he was speaking of his daughters when he wrote to his wife in 1887, "It is true that there is no love on earth so pure as that of a father or mother for daughter. It is more so than that of a husband for wife for in that comes desire - more so than father to son, for this is associated with worldly ambition - for daughter is nothing but pure anxious heavenly love."⁶¹

Albert worked hard to keep the plantation a working concern and to keep out of debt. When he did not have to fight the army

worms he had to fight drought and when it wasn't drought, it was one of a million other worries. In 1886 for the first, and I believe only time in recorded history the Alabama River flooded all along its banks around Montgomery.⁶³ It was a total disaster for Albert Goodwyn. In writing about the flood Albert's youngest daughter Priscilla wrote, "It swept away nearly everything on our twenty-five hundred acre plantation - every fence, all the livestock, most of the houses. . . He had made a gallant fight to hold on to the plantation. . . But the burden of debt and poverty was now too overpowering. . . and he sold the plantation for a song, land on river not being at a premium then. It must have been a dreadful wrench for him, for he had love of land bred in his bones as some men have it for the seas. And there was a sense of pride of inheritance as well, for his ancestors had been big land owners. From plantation to farm. The first of his line to let down tradition. His own clear grasp of the changing order of life made this pulling up of roots no less painful for him, though he bore it gallantly."⁶⁴ The farm Albert Goodwyn had left was two hundred fifty acres around the main house at Robinson Springs.⁶⁵

Chapter IV

Political Reconstruction was over in Alabama by 1875 when the Bourbons, or Redeemers, were in control of the state government.⁶⁶ Albert Goodwyn quite actively thought and talked about the political problems of the day and, in 1875, shared in the return to power of the state Democrats. He was appointed State Inspector of the Convict Department and held that office through two administrations until 1879.⁶⁷

In 1885 Captain Goodwyn ran for the State House of Representatives as a representative from Elmore County and won. His work while in the state House was mostly on local matters. His most significant bill was designed to give relief to men maimed and disabled during the Civil War. The bill was unanimously approved and signed into law by the governor.⁶⁸

The Civil War had the effect on southern agriculture of restoring it to, essentially, a frontier stage of development.⁶⁹ It destroyed the monopoly on the ownership of land held by the planter class. After the war many landowners found themselves penniless. Their slaves were gone and their Confederate securities were worthless. Often thousands of acres of the best land

was sold for a few dollars per acre. Plantations were sold or broken up or rented out to tenant farmers.⁷⁰ The small farmers became, in the years after the war, the predominant type of agriculturalist in the South as they had become in the West. Whether tenants or proprietors, the post-war farmers were almost without exception in a chronic condition of abject poverty. Those who purchased land could do so usually only by means of deferred payments, which they met with difficulty. Those who were tenants were at best barely able to live on what they could make. Having started with nothing at the close of the war, both classes of farmers found it next to impossible to accumulate enough reserve to carry them from one harvest to the next. . . .⁷¹

In the 1870's and 80's Albert Goodwyn became increasingly aware of the needs and plight of the farmer. Though, perhaps, better off than many of the farmers in the South, he had first hand knowledge of their problems. He knew about the low crop prices, the high cost of necessities, the natural adversities, the tight money problem and, though a second-hand knowledge, the crop-lien system.⁷²

In Alabama in 1860 the average value of land was \$9.20 an acre; in 1880 the average value was \$4.19 an acre including buildings. In 1860 the average size of the Alabama farm was 347 acres; 139 acres in 1880; and only 126 acres in 1890. In 1860 the average value of farm implements and machinery was \$135 per farm while in 1890 the average value was only \$29 per

farm. During this decrease in farm size and values the Alabama population had grown and was one-third larger in 1890 than it was in 1860. These figures⁷³ all point to the farmers' over-riding problem, poverty. The farmer in Alabama had been moved by the war and lack of money from a position of high prestige to one of low status. He was shackled by poverty, the crop-lien system and an inability to get loans.⁷⁴

Farmers from the early 1870's on, all over the country, showed a great tendency to organize in order to express their grievances.⁷⁵ In Alabama the farmers organized in the Grange, The State Agricultural Society, and the Farmer Alliance.⁷⁶

The Grange was more of a social organization than were the other two, though it did exert some political influence. The State Agricultural Society was supposed to be a non-political arm of the State Department of Agriculture.⁷⁷ Its purpose was to be, "the collection and diffusion of information pertaining to the productive industries of the state, the promotion of progressive profitable agriculture, and organization for the advancement of these objects."⁷⁸ The society formed a state-wide association of local agricultural clubs under the direction of the Commissioner of the State Department of Agriculture. Though the local clubs were not great successes because they lacked the secret goodies of the Alliance, the association gave the Commissioner of Agriculture an important state-wide base of political power.⁷⁹ The importance of such a state-wide base became quite ^{obvious} ~~important~~ when Commissioner

Reuben F. Kolb ran as the Alliance candidate for governor in 1890.

In March of 1887 the first branch of the Farmers Alliance in Alabama was established at Beach Grove, Madison County.⁸⁰ Other branches of the Alliance spread rapidly through the state. The Alliance had originated in Texas as early as 1875.⁸¹ It was supposedly a farmer's club with a constitution when if followed strictly would have kept it out of politics. However, the Alliance was, practically from the first, embroiled in politics.⁸²

The Alliance captured the imagination of the Alabama farmer. It was a secret organization wrapped with mystery and brotherhood. The goal of the Alliance was to eliminate the middleman and, hence, improve prices, improve home life, promote education, build factories and procure needed legislation. As elsewhere, almost as soon as it was formed, the Alabama Alliance became engaged in politics.⁸⁴

In December 1889 the Southern Farmers Alliance and the Northwestern Farmers Alliance held a national meeting in St. Louis. The Knights of Labor had a convention at the same time in St. Louis, Missouri and co-operated with the two alliance groups in drawing up platforms and demands.⁸⁵ There were eight Alabama delegates at the meeting including Reuben F. Kolb.⁸⁶ The two Alliance groups did not reach a plan of consolidation at the meeting, but they did propose a loose confederation and

drew up a set of demands.⁸⁷ The demands accepted by the Southern Alliance were: 1) The abolition of national banks and the issuance of paper treasury notes in large volume. 2) laws against dealings in agricultural futures (a reaction to the crop-lien system). 3) free and unlimited coinage of silver. 4) prohibition of alien land ownership, 5) equal taxation not to be used to benefit a specific class or interest, 6) issuance by Congress of fractional paper currency, 7) the ownership of the means of communication and transportation by the government which would operate them in the people's interests.⁸⁸

The St. Louis demands were attacked by the Conservative Democratic leadership in Alabama. However, three months after the national meeting the Alabama state alliances adopted the St. Louis demands.⁸⁹ Albert Goodwyn was among those men taking part in the Alliance Movement.⁹⁰ It is not known whether or not he agreed with all the St. Louis demands but he did believe that free silver and fairer taxation (lower tariffs) were necessary to help the farmer rid himself of his problems.⁹¹ He knew that more money in circulation and greater purchasing power were necessary to lift the burden of poverty from the farmers' backs. Like William Jennings Bryan, a man he came to admire very much, he felt free silver and a low tariff would accomplish that.

When Commissioner Reuben Kolb returned from the St. Louis Alliance meeting he announced he would be a candidate for governor.⁹² He was an alliance man and an alliance candidate. The Alabama alliance became embroiled in politics⁹³ and Captain

Albert Goodwyn as an alliance supporter became an enthusiastic Kolb backer.⁹⁴

I must pause here to note that the entrance and involvement of the Alabama alliance in politics was the political expression of the Agrarian Revolt in Alabama. The alliance's involvement in politics resulted, as we shall see, in a split in the state Democratic party. That split was, for all practical purposes, also the political expression of populism in Alabama. A pure Populist Party was formed and Reuben Kolb later openly embraced it. Yet the pure Populist Party never became important politically except as a way to damn opponents by association.⁹⁵

It is important to keep in mind that agrarianism, or populism, in Alabama was largely stimulated in its political expression by racism.⁹⁶ In Alabama political populism was more of a political disagreement than a social uprising. It was racism that prevented a pure Populist Party from becoming a potent political force in the state.

The motives behind the formation of the Farmers' Alliance in Alabama were economic.⁹⁷ The farmer realized that he had to do something to relieve the poverty in which he lived. The farmer could not effectively give voice to his grievances within the Democratic Party because he had no way of reaching the leadership. That is why the Alliance stepped into politics. The farmer could not find effective methods of expressing himself within the Conservative Democratic framework because the party elite, the establishment, controlled the party through

manipulation of the negro votes in the black-belt counties. In short, the farmer wanted a return to pure white supremacy. The farmers would not desert the Democratic Party for some third party. It was felt that continued white supremacy demanded a unified Democratic Party. People felt an allegiance to the party that had redeemed the state. They could not use the Republican party as a vehicle for reform - that was just unthinkable. They had to act within the Democratic party and that political action split the party. The farmers wanted a return to true white supremacy where they could control their party. With that control they could initiate reforms.⁹⁹ The Alliance faction of the Democratic party never gained control of the state. However, the Democratic party after 1896 moved to adopt most of the programs advocated by its agrarian faction. In that sense they were successful.¹⁰⁰

With Captain Goodwyn and others as backers, Reuben Kolb campaigned throughout the state for the Democratic nomination, which was equal to election, in 1890.¹⁰¹ When the nominating convention met at the end of May a majority of the delegates were farmers.¹⁰² However, that did not mean that Kolb and the Alliance had the convention sewn up. The farmers were, on the whole, unexperienced politically while the executive committee was definitely anti-Kolb and anti-Alliance.¹⁰³ Most of Alabama's public officials openly voiced strong disapproval of the Alliance plans. At the end of the third day of the convention, after the thirty-eighth ballot the situation looked

deadlocked. Kolb needed only a few votes to gain the necessary majority, but that had been the situation ever since the first ballot.¹⁰⁴ The three establishment candidates split the rest of the votes between them. That night after much political wheeling and dealing two of the three anti-Kolb, anti-Alliance candidates agreed that the next day they would throw their support behind Colonel Thomas G. Jones.¹⁰⁵ Jones had had the least number of ballots up to then and the Kolb supporters among whom Goodwyn was numbered, felt that some unholy deal had been made.¹⁰⁶ Yet, before the balloting was finished Kolb's floor manager withdrew his name and moved that Jones's nomination be unanimous. He did not want to endanger party unity.¹⁰⁷ After Colonel Jones's acceptance speech Kolb pledged his support to the party and said he would support and campaign for the nominee.¹⁰⁸

The Democratic campaign was scheduled to open at Eufaula, Alabama. Kolb was supposed to speak for the Democratic nominee. Yet, at Eufaula, in spite of his previous pledges of support, Kolb claimed the nomination had been stolen from him. From then on Kolb became more vehement in his charges of fraud at the convention and he never again spoke to the Democratic nominee. Almost as soon as the election was over, Kolb began his campaign for the 1892 nomination.¹⁰⁹

Kolb's cries of fraud were taken up by the Alliance men and he campaigned under the Alliance banner all during 1891. It had been unwritten law in the Democratic Party that the incumbent be re-elected, but Kolb and the Alliance challenged that.

In 1891 the Alabama Farmers Alliance adopted the "Ocala Platforms" that had been adopted in December 1890 at the national Alliance meeting in Ocala, Florida. The demands of the platform included: 1) abolition of national banks, 2) a sub-treasury plan, 3) prevention of the dealing in agricultural future, 4) free silver, 5) prohibition of alien land ownership, 6) lower tariffs, 7) graduated income tax, and 8) direct election of senators.¹¹⁰ The platform was damned by the Conservative Democrats as complete radical irresponsibility.¹¹¹

The conservative press, led by The Montgomery Advertiser, actively and, often violently, attacked the Kolbites. The press claimed that the Republicans and Greenbackers were joining the Alliance in order to get control of the Democratic Party.¹¹²

In this campaign of 1892 Albert Goodwyn, as a Kolb supporter, ran for the State Senate and his oldest son, Tyler, though just twenty-one, ran for clerk of the circuit court in Elmore County.¹¹³ Both men ran on the Alliance platform.

As the State Democratic nominating convention drew near it was obvious that there was bound to be some kind of clash between Kolb and Jones. Both sides claimed irregularities in the other's procurment of delegates and there were several duplicate sets of delegates.¹¹⁴ Six days before the Convention opened the party Executive Committee met to decide on the seating of the contesting delegations.¹¹⁵ The committee was controlled

by the conservatives of the regular Democratic party and most of the Jones delegates were seated. The decision by the Executive Committee convinced Kolb and many of his supporters that another fix was in the making.

On Tuesday night, June 7, the evening before the regular Democratic convention was to open at the State Capitol, Reuben Kolb and his supporters met in McDonald's Opera House.¹¹⁶ Plans for the meeting had been made in advance, most probably after the Executive Committee's decisions. Admission was by ticket only, and the session was kept secret. Captain Albert Goodwyn, as an Alliance leader, presided over the meeting.¹¹⁷ The supposed purpose of the meeting was to draw up various proposals to present to the Democratic Convention the next day. a resolution was adopted to appoint a committee that would meet with a similar one from the regular convention to smooth out the differences that had developed in the Democratic party. The committee was appointed and Goodwyn named the chairman, P. G. Bowman. to carry the proposal to the regular convention.¹¹⁸

The Capitol Convention, as the regular convention was called, would have none of the Kolbites plan.¹¹⁹ The basic Kolb plan was to hold state-wide primaries on June 28, to decide who would be the Democratic nominee.¹²⁰

After having been turned down by the Capitol Convention, the Kolb supporters re-met at the Opera House and the meeting developed into a second state convention.¹²¹ Albert Goodwyn and some other Kolb supporters attended the Capitol Convention, however. It is not known why Goodwyn attended the Capitol Convention.

The events that followed the convention and the election show that he still supported the Alliance and Kolb as strongly as ever. It is this author's guess that he did not want to abandon the established processes of the regular party. It is also possible that he felt it was a political necessity for him, as a candidate for the State Senate, to attend.

The Capitol Convention, as expected, nominated Jones and drew up a platform that called for state's rights, a lower tariff, better schools, free labor as opposed to convict labor, government ownership of the railroads and telegraph and nebulously called for free silver.¹²³

The delegates of the Opera House convention declared themselves the true, pure Jeffersonian Democrats and nominated Kolb by acclamation.¹²⁴ They adopted a set of resolutions as a platform that favored; currency expansions, free and unlimited coinage of silver, fair elections, protection of negro rights (a bait for the negro vote), good schools, equitable taxation, legislation for the improvement of agriculture and labor, an end of the convict-lease system and advocated a national graduated income tax.¹²⁵ The "platform" of the Opera House Jeffersonian Democrats was not so entirely different from that of the regular convention.

The campaign was a violent one.¹²⁶ The Republicans and the newly formed National People's Party aided the Kolbites whenever possible. That fact alone tended to make the campaign more bitter with the conservative Democrats vehemently denouncing any

thing that smacked of Republicanism.¹²⁷

Election day was August 1, 1892. When the votes were counted Jones was declared the victor and governor by a majority of 11,435.¹²⁸ Most all the Democratic ticket was elected. Albert Goodwyn was one of the Alliancemen who was more successful than most. He was elected to represent the counties of Chilton, Shelby and Elmore in the State Senate.¹²⁹ His son, Tyler, also won on the Alliance ticket.¹³⁰

The Jeffersonian Democrats felt that Kolb had been counted out at the polls.¹³¹ Captain Goodwyn was one of the supporters who felt that Jones had won with the use of fraud.¹³² The day after he took his place in the Alabama Senate he introduced a bill that allow "any qualified elector of Alabama to contest the late election, held on the first Monday in August, 1892, for governor, Secretary of State, State Auditor, State Treasurer, superintendent of Education, attorney general, and Commissioner of Agriculture."¹³³ Senator Goodwyn put up a valiant fight in favor of his bill but his Senate colleagues tacked on some unsavory amendments that doomed it.¹³⁴

On September 15, 1892 the Jeffersonian Democrats and the Populist Party of Alabama held a joint convention.¹³⁵ The purpose of the convention was to form an alliance that would support the national Populist candidate in the November elections. Senator Goodwyn was one of the speakers at the joint convention.¹³⁶ It was no secret that the Republicans supported any joint move by the two "parties". That added fuel to the criticism that

denounced the joint move as "the major crime of 1892."¹³⁷ The joint support did nothing to affect the outcome of the November 8 national elections. Cleveland overwhelmingly carried the state.¹³⁸

As Alabama looked forward to the election of 1894, it was obvious that dissent and faction would again rip the state politically. If 1893 was to be any indication it looked as if Alabama politics, which had already been at the boiling point for three years, would explode.¹³⁹ In May 1893 the Jeffersonian state executive committee with Albert Goodwyn as chairman met with the Populist executive committee in Birmingham.¹⁴⁰ The Populist committee held no formal sessions but apparently sanctioned that which was done by the Jeffersonians.¹⁴¹ The Jeffersonians drew up a plan for harmony in state politics which Chairman Goodwyn was authorized to submit to the regular Democrats. The chief features of the plan were: 1) A state primary to name the full ticket for the August election, 2) participation of all white electors, and 3) opposition to all legislation which might limit white suffrage.¹⁴²

The regular State Democratic committee met at the beginning of June and turned down the Goodwyn proposal. They felt harmony was desirable, if not necessary, but did not want to admit those who had been opponents of the party to the primaries.¹⁴⁸ The Goodwyn proposal would have had the effect of creating open primaries in Alabama. The committee responded to the proposal with a counter-proposal. Chairman Goodwyn answered the counter-

proposal saying, "Your committee had placed all hopes of reconciliation and peace beyond the reach of the Jeffersonian Democracy, except upon terms which require forfeiture of manhood and self-respect."¹⁴⁴ The two committees continued throughout the year to search for a way to peace, but to no avail.¹⁴⁵ The Jeffersonians attacked the regular party on the grounds that the establishment favored keeping many whites out and controlling the party with thousands of Negro votes. Captain Goodwyn stated, "It seems that holding office by colored votes had become so alluring and fascinating to the organized Democrats that they propose to embrace the colored brother, take him into their councils and share the honors with him."¹⁴⁶

With all hopes for peace out the window the two factions prepared for the inevitable clash. Reuben Kolb was again the Jeffersonian-Populist standard bearer and Colonel William C. Gates was the regular nominee.¹⁴⁷ The economic conditions of the time (enforced) the Jeffersonian-progressive campaign charges of fraud and neglect of the white voter. The repercussions of the panic of 1893 were felt throughout the state.¹⁴⁸

Captain Goodwyn, as chairman of the Jeffersonians, set the tone of their platform in a speech before the Jeffersonian convention in which he advocated free silver, a low tariff, a graduated income tax and a free, open ballot with an honest count.¹⁴⁹ The regular Democrats attacked the platform and pointed to the Sayre Election Bill as proof that they favored election

reforms. (In practice the Sayre Bill made fraud just a little easier.)

During the campaign Kolb had the support of the farmers and laboring people while Oates was backed by the business interests and those who could not desert the party that redeemed their state. Charges were flung back and forth in what one writer has called "the most memorable campaign in the State's history."¹⁵⁰ The Jeffersonians had a fair amount of trouble financing their campaign.¹⁵¹ Plates were passed among the crowds at the Populist and Alliance meetings. The Democrats charged that Reuben F. Kolb whom they called R(un) F(orever) Kolb, defrauded the people in his political maneuvering and was a traitor to the state.¹⁵² Kolb travelled the state in a covered wagon while his supporters sported corn cob pipes and decorated their carriages and wagons with cobs. Oates stumped the state with his fighting spirit and his supporters decorated their hats and lapels with oats.¹⁵³ The campaign took on the fervor of a religious crusade, one side fighting for justice and popular government and the other for efficiency and order.¹⁵⁴

Election day was August 6, 1894. When counted the returns gave Oates a majority of 27,000.¹⁵⁴ Kolb was furious as were his supporters. He charged that the results were the product of buying and fraud. He claimed that he had carried forty out of one hundred and fifty-one white counties and that he had won by at least 18,000 votes.¹⁵⁵ Complaints were bitter but there was no legal way to contest the election since Senator Goodwyn's bill which would

have provided such a way had been defeated in 1892.

When the State legislature convened in November after the elections and during, still, plenty of controversy, Senator Goodwyn sponsored a resolution that provided for a committee "to formulate a bill in the interest of a pure ballot and a fair count, or such amendments to present election laws as will secure honesty in elections in Alabama."¹⁵⁶ The resolution was defeated.

To protest the election results and the inauguration of Colonel Oates as governor, Kolb and his supporters staged a "peoples" inauguration in Montgomery on December 1, 1894.¹⁵⁷ Kolb actually believed he was governor and sent messages to the state legislature demanding that he be recognized as such.¹⁵⁸ The messages were, of course, ignored and for all practical purposes Kolb passed out of the picture. One writer had said that this was, "a pitiful ending for one whose career had seemed so promising. A perusal of the records of the time and a few moments' interview with the old leaders of the organized Democracy will convince one that Kolb was the victim of the manipulation of election returns in the Black Belt."¹⁵⁹

In the national elections that were held November 6, 1894 the Jeffersonian-Populists had candidates in all of the Congressional races.¹⁶⁰ Albert Goodwyn was involved in what was probably the most lively of those contests in the fifth congressional district where he faced Judge James E. Cobb.¹⁶¹ "Captain Goodwyn was one of the most able debators and exponents of the

people's cause to be found anywhere. Mentally alert, charming, and possessed of a vast store of information, a facile tongue, and a spotless career, the Captain was a worthy foe, as Judge Cobb discovered."¹⁶²

Captain Goodwyn wrote to Judge Cobb before the contest and asked him to co-operate in planning an election "that may be absolutely above reproach."¹⁶³ He also suggested that they debate and discuss the issues of the campaign at various places in the district.¹⁶⁴ Judge Cobb agreed to debate Captain Goodwyn but he refused to interfere with the regular election system.¹⁶⁵ He said he felt that the election laws adequately controlled elections. Captain Goodwyn played up Cobb's refusal and one can guess that that helped his campaign. After three years of continual cries of fraud people might have started to feel the system needed change.

Captain Goodwyn based his campaign on the Jeffersonian Democratic platform, a platform which was Goodwyn inspired, and on the charges of election frauds.¹⁶⁶

The two candidates were well-known in the district as good speakers. That and the great interest in politics of the time turned out large crowds at the debates as the two candidates stumped together. People often came to the debates from miles around bringing their whole family and having a barbecue or picnic after the speeches.¹⁶⁷

Captain Goodwyn's youngest daughter Priscilla recounted her memories of one of the debates. "As soon as the speaking

began I decided that I didn't like Judge Cobb, though I knew outside of politics he and father were pleasant enough friends, distant cousins in fact. He had a rather nasal drawl in contrast to father's full ringing voice; looked cross-patchy I thought. No one could vote for him against father. And father would then 'get his seat, ' as people said. That sentence bothered me. Suppose he didn't get his seat - would he have to start standing up all the time? Not at home any way - perhaps only when he went to Washington. That day they talked and talked, first Judge Cobb and then father. . . . Once Judge Cobb said with a little mocking laugh, 'My friends, I don't like to tell on my honorable opponent here on the platform with me, but, do you know, he makes exactly the same speech everywhere we go.'

'Tell the whole truth, Judge, tell the whole truth.' called out father in a stage whisper.

'What do you mean, sir?' demanded Judge Cobb.

'Tell the whole truth, Judge,' repeated father pleasantly 'tell you pray to God every night I'll change that speech!'"¹⁶⁸

That is certainly a biased account but I feel that it gives some of the flavor of the campaign.

When the votes were counted, Judge Cobb was declared the winner by 748 votes.¹⁶⁹ After some of his friends told him about various election irregularities, Captain Goodwyn decided to contest the election.¹⁷⁰ He claimed that he had been elected by a majority of more than 2,000 votes. He charged that, "the

apparent result of the election was procured by fraud, ballot-box stuffing, changing legal votes. . . and bribery and intimidation of voters."¹⁷¹

The Congressional Committee on Privileges and Elections after studying the results of its investigation, some 564 pages of printed testimony, declared that the seat for the Fifth Alabama Congressional District rightfully belonged to Albert T. Goodwyn.¹⁷² On April 22, 1896 the Congress voted 121 to 45 to seat Captain Goodwyn.¹⁷³

While in the House Captain Goodwyn spent most of his time studying and voting on contested elections cases. He made no major speeches and was not connected with any major legislation other than to vote on it.¹⁷⁴

The day that it was announced that he had been seated Albert Goodwyn announced his candidacy for governor of Alabama.¹⁷⁵ At the Jeffersonian-Populist convention in Montgomery starting April 28 there was great enthusiasm for Goodwyn's candidacy.¹⁷⁶ W. M. Coleman nominated Captain Goodwyn and Reuben F. Kolb, among others, seconded his nomination.¹⁷⁷ He was subsequently nominated by the Jeffersonian-Populists and accepted by the Lily White Republicans.¹⁷⁸ It was a union of political expediency that was condemned throughout the state by the regular party.

The main planks of the platform on which Captain Goodwyn ran were: 1) free ballot; 2) fair count; 3) free silver; 4) limited protective tariff; and 5) competent inspectors at

all polling places.¹⁷⁹ However, the main thrust of his campaign was built around cries of fraud in the black belt counties.¹⁸⁰

In July 1896 the National Democratic Convention nominated William Jennings Bryan for president after his famous "Cross of Gold" speech. Captain Goodwyn was a staunch admirer of Mr. Bryan. His split with the Democratic party was only state wide, not nation wide.¹⁸¹

The regular Democratic nominee for governor was Captain Joseph F. Johnston, a free silver Democrat with Populist leanings.¹⁸² Johnston and Goodwyn conducted a very vigorous campaign, taking the issues to all corners of the state.¹⁸³

By the time of the campaign there was very little difference between the platforms of the two parties. The Montgomery Advertiser, an organ of the regular party, stated, "What is the difference between an organized Democrat and a straight Populist? The Democrats have gone over to the Populist platform and why shouldn't the Populists return the compliment by coming over to the Democratic nominee?"¹⁸⁴

With the two party platforms similar some issue had to be found to differentiate between the two candidates. The result was a campaign of name calling not by the candidates themselves but by their followers and supporting press. The Jeffersonian-Populists accused Johnston of being a fake liberal and tried to tie him to his party's historical conservatism.¹⁸⁵ The regular Democratic press was more vicious than the populists and attacked Goodwyn as a "nigger lover."¹⁸⁶ While in Congress he had

voted to seat a Negro over a white man in a contested election case and the press played that up.¹⁸⁷ The Montgomery Advertiser said, "Goodwyn and his crowd would bring back the evil of the carpetbag, scalawag and Negro Republican Rule. The way to prevent it is to vote the Democratic ticket."¹⁸⁸ That was an old trick often used to preserve party unity in the past and used even more in the early 1900's while the South was concretizing its Jim Crow System.

Captain Goodwyn offered to debate Captain Johnston as he had Judge Cobb in 1894. The regular Democrats felt that the offer, the way it was worded, implied dishonesty in the handling of elections and refused. Captain Goodwyn publicized the refusal and said, "The discourteous manner in which Captain Johnston has seen fit to return my letter precludes me from offering any further direct propositions to him."¹⁸⁹

Election day was August 6, 1896 and though a large number of Alabamians went to the polls the total number of voters was less than in 1894. This indicates that there was less interest in the election. After six years of constant political warfare the Alabama people were just plain tired of it. Johnston won the election with an official vote of 128,541 to Goodwyn's 89,290.¹⁹⁰ Captain Goodwyn felt that he had been beaten by fraud¹⁹¹ and his friends urged him to contest the election. However, there was no legal way to contest the election and Captain Goodwyn was above the Kolb tactics of 1894.

1896 pretty much marked the end of an Agrarian-Populist

movement in Alabama.¹⁹² The Democrats had taken over, gradually, the Populist platform and demands. Captain Goodwyn recognized that fact in 1924 when he said that Jeffersonian-Populism died because the major parties took over the Populist programs.¹⁹³ He said that he felt that that was a Populist victory and that in "its purposes and its results" the Populist movement was "the most important since the Revolutionary War."

In 1898 Captain Goodwyn again ran for Congress from the fifth Congressional District, this time against Willis P. Brewer.¹⁹⁴ He was defeated by a vote of 13,587 to 8,742. His friends again convinced him to contest the election. He filed an official notice but because of a lack of money he was unable to follow it through.¹⁹⁵

After that loss Captain Goodwyn retired from politics and, after awhile, returned to the regular Democratic fold. He did enter politics once more, in 1918, when he ran for the Democratic nomination for State Fish and Game Warden. He entered the primary against the advice of some of his friends, and lost.¹⁹⁶

Chapter V

The period from the 1860's until 1894 had been one of financial hardship for Albert Goodwyn and his family.¹⁹⁷ His election to Congress, however, changed that. He was able to take the little money he received for his short service, put his financial house in order and make some improvements on his farm. After he retired from politics in 1898, Captain Goodwyn was able to return to "Elm Hill" to spend his time farming and with his family.

He again became embroiled in the everyday problems of the country. He gave his colored help advice on such earthshaking matters as how to remove a man from a deacon's seat in their church because he got drunk every Saturday and Sunday, and received advice from them on such things as how equitably to divide up the watermelon crop.¹⁹⁸

Though out of politics, he retained his interest in education. In the Alliance he had openly voiced the need for better schools and he continued doing so. He was concerned with the state of both white and colored education and was interested in Booker T. Washington's Institute ~~of~~ ^{at} Tuskegee.¹⁹⁹

Captain Goodwyn, ~~however~~, remained interested in politics, wrote letters and held several appointed offices. He was appointed, by Governor Comer, as a member of the board of control of the Soldiers Home at Mountain Creek and, by Governor O'Neal, as a Trustee of the district Agricultural School.²⁰⁰

In the period after Captain Goodwyn retired from politics there was an increase in the organization of, and interest in, Confederate Civil War veterans organizations.²⁰¹ Captain Goodwyn was very interested in the formation of those groups and in the uniting of the former soldiers. In connection with the organization of the veteran groups the Captain was also interested in seeing justice done to the history of the Civil War period. To further that aim he made speeches before veterans' organizations, wrote articles, and frequently wrote letters to newspapers.

There are many paradoxes to Albert Goodwyn's life, but this period points out the most obvious. He had been, with the agrarian revolt, a prophet of the future. He had looked to the past and to the present, had seen they needed change and then worked for that change. In this period of his life we see him, still with his sharp, clear mind, glorifying the past that he had earlier found lacking. Albert Goodwyn never believed in the system of slavery.²⁰² He felt it was an injustice to both the Negro and the white man. Yet, he glorified the society that had been built upon that peculiar institution. The Civil War had been a bloody, dirty war, yet the Confederate

veterans glorified and praised it until it seemed the golden hour of their triumph, not their hour of defeat.

I'm sure that in the state of poverty in which the South existed there was some need to remind people that things had been and could be better. The "could be better" was the hope of the agrarians all through the South as expressed in the Populists revolts. The "had been better" was the role played by the romantically gilded memories of the Old South and the War between the States. That picture of the past and those memories were too long held before too many as a picture of utopia. The South's great look to the past has stunted her economic and political growth. It also has stunted, and probably most important in the consideration of the United States today, the development of better race relations.

I stated at the beginning of this paper that Albert Goodwyn was held in check by the past. I think that this period of his life shows, more than any other, that to be true. He wrote in a letter to The Montgomery Advertiser during this period, "The practical issue, as I see it, is between the two major political parties. I have personal friends in the Republican party, whom I hold in high esteem, but who, I am confident, would not be in that party if they had seen and heard what I have seen and heard during my retrospection. Loyalty to their ancestors and ancestral traditions would forbid."²⁰³ The memories he held of the Old South, and of Reconstruction held him, as they held the whole South, tightly to the one party system.

Albert Goodwyn's memories of the past were not the groping for something to cling to that they could have so easily been for other men. They reflected a pride in a code of honesty and chivalry that he lived up to all his life. In a 1927 letter to The Montgomery Advertiser he wrote, "At the sunset of the Confederacy, there stood four devoted exponents of our cause whom we hold in loving reverence; Jefferson Davis, commander-in-chief; Robert E. Lee, commander-in-arms; John C. Breckinridge, secretary of war, and Judah P. Benjamin, secretary of state. We confidently invite the diligent student to show that one of these loyal representatives ever wrote a line or uttered a speech that would jar the sensibilities of a modest woman, or suggest a dishonest thought to a fellow man. Let them stand on their own merits in the noon day light of time."

In 1924 Albert Goodwyn was elected a Major General in the United Confederate Veterans and was made commander of the Alabama Division.²⁰⁴ In 1926 he became a Lieutenant General in the U.C.V. when he was elected commander of the Department of the Army of Tennessee.²⁰⁵ In 1928 when he was 86 years old he received the highest honor the U.C.V. could offer him when he was elected Commander-in-chief of that organization at their Little Rock, Arkansas, reunion.²⁰⁶ At that time he told his comrades, "I'd rather be commander-in-chief of the United Confederate Veterans than to be President of the United States."²⁰⁷

In February 1929 the President-elect of the United States,

Herbert Hoover, invited General Goodwyn and the U.C.V. to participate in the inauguration ceremonies on March 4.²⁰⁸ There was quite a feeling in the South at the time that General Goodwyn should decline the invitation.²⁰⁹ However, the invitation delighted the General because it was national recognition for the veterans of the Confederacy. He accepted the invitation and was determined to be present in his grey uniform and with the stars and bars. In accepting the invitation General Goodwyn said, "Your courteous invitation to participate in the unaugural parade was received. I shall endeavor to be present with members of my staff. Any effort to bring our great country together in one spirit and one purpose is a patriotic movement."²¹⁰ The journey to Washington was made even more meaningful for General Goodwyn when the flag of the Confederacy received a salute from those on the reviewing stand as it passed by.²¹¹

On June 5, 1929 General Goodwyn gave the keynote address at the 39th Reunion of the U.C.V. at Charlotte, N.C. The main thrust of his address was a plea for the correction of what he called the "errors and falsehoods of prevailing history." In the address he brought up the old southern point that though the South may have owned slaves the pious New England states controlled most all of the slave trading ships. He also stood up for Jefferson Davis as the victim of many inaccurate and biased accounts.

Perhaps the most notable theme in the speech was his attack on Lincoln. The claim made by some that Lincoln was a

friend of the South seemed utterly indefensible to him. He said, "In my reading and research in history, I have failed to find where President Lincoln in his long and varied life ever uttered a single line of kindness and sympathy for the people of the South."²¹² He quoted Frazier's Magazine of London in saying, "Abraham Lincoln is responsible to humanity and humanity's God for all the blood that has been shed in the unholy war, for every life and limb that has been lost, for every widow and orphan that has been bereft."²¹³ He said that he felt that the American people were honest and open minded. He felt that they would grasp the historical truth when it was presented to them. Then, "North and South, East and West, joined in purpose and hope and effort, for honor and freedom and glory, will not be buried in the irrevocable past."²¹⁴

General Goodwyn retired as commander-in-chief of the U.C.V. in 1929 after being named honorary commander-in-chief for life.²¹⁵ (While he was active in the U.C.V. he had also been named honorary vice-president of the Robert E. Lee Memorial ^{FOUNDATION} ²¹⁶) He settled down at "Elm Hill" to watch and comment on the world. He vigorously worked to get the 1931 reunion of the U.C.V. to be held in Montgomery.²¹⁷ He got the city of Montgomery to issue the invitation and, through his son Tyler, who was a representative in the state house, he got the State of Alabama to provide \$50,000 for the care and entertainment of the veterans while they were in Montgomery.²¹⁸

He looked forward to attending the reunion, but when it

came he was too weak. General Goodwyn died at his daughter Adele's home in Birmingham on July 1, 1931. Funeral services were held at St. John's Episcopal Church in Montgomery, the same church in which he was married. He was buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Montgomery.²¹⁹

In tribute to General Goodwyn the Alabama legislature passed a resolution expressing sorrow at his death and honoring his life and achievements.²²⁰ The Birmingham News payed tribute to the General in a feature editorial that ended, "Sound in mind, incorruptible, physically straight, mentally forthright in all his walks and ways, Albert T. Goodwyn lived the Good Life in all the breadth and bigness of its meanings."²²¹

I cannot dispense with the life of Albert Goodwyn without some mention of his general philosophy and his religion.

His general philosophy was similar to that of Robert E. Lee. He felt that all men were gentlemen and ought to act like, and be treated like such. It was a philosophy that he tried to live up to and one he expected others to fulfill.

In religion he was a deistic Unitarian who belonged to the Episcopal Church. He said that he liked the Episcopal Church because it never interfered with his politics or religion.²²² His wife was at first an Episcopalian and was the reason why he joined that church. A while after their marriage she became a Unitarian - that was a step that he could condone. However, when she became a Christian Scientist he would go no farther. He was a deist. He felt that the organized church

was a force for good as long as its clergymen stayed out of politics. He hated any form of religious discrimination. However, he would tell his wife that he could see no more good in Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy than he could see in Lincoln! ²²³

CONCLUSION

We have the life of Albert Taylor Goodwyn. What does that give us? It gives us the picture of a man who was certainly no financial success and whose political career went downhill to the point where he could not win a nomination for Game Warden. The question, then, is why bother to write about him? The answer to that can be partially found in the introduction. I have attempted to give an "Adamistic look" at the South. I feel that the life of Albert Goodwyn while spanning decades has in it much that is typical of the South. It has hopes of success, but ultimate mediocrity. It has economic struggle and political struggle. It sees desire for white supremacy bring political unity. And, what I think is most important, it has visions of progress held in check by an overglorification and veneration of the past.

The South today has made much progress since the 1930's when it was this nation's number one economic problem. Yet, I would agree that in many, or most, instances this is false progress. Certainly, the South has more factories and jobs and money, but it also has much poverty, veneration of the past and bigotry.

In 1916 Professor U. B. Phillips wrote that the main historical theme in the South was a desire to maintain white supremacy.²²⁴ I believe that is still a valid statement. I believe that until the South can stop looking to the past and until

race relations can be bettered the South can have no true progress. Is it progress to have more jobs and money yet to look to the past and hold up the flag of the Confederacy as a symbol of hatred, sectionalism and white supremacy? Is it progress to demand state's rights in order to submerge certain human rights? Is it progress to build factories and roads and football stadiums while people go hungry and sick? These are problems of the whole country but ones that may be articulated and seen easiest in the South.

Why did I write about Albert Taylor Goodwyn? Mainly to give an "Adamistic view" but also, because "Perhaps the chief offering that history. . . can make to this generation lies in its capacity to enlarge the comprehension and sympathies of the human mind and spirit."²²⁵ Maybe this small effort, when taken with the total picture, can help enlarge our comprehension and sympathy.

Footnotes

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