Dr. Tichenor’s ‘Lost Cause’: The Rise of New Orleans’s Confederate Culture during the Gilded Age

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Dr. Tichenor’s ‘Lost Cause’: The Rise of New Orleans’s Confederate Culture during the Gilded Age

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the University of New Orleans in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History

by
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B.A. Hawaii Pacific University, 2011
M.A. Hawaii Pacific University, 2014

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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of Illustrations</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Orleans as a Space of Opportunity</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Tichenor</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grifting the Lost Cause in New Orleans</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confederate Memorial Hall, UCV, and the UDC</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cementing a Confederate Identity</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Illustrations

Jefferson Davis Memorial Dedication.................................................................1
Jefferson Davis Memorial Association Letter..................................................3
George Tichenor Jr. article, *Times Picayune*......................................................4
Tichenor Antiseptic bottle, Sheet music, and modern bottle of antiseptic..........8
Early George Tichenor newspaper articles......................................................19
Early Antiseptic advertisement and Medical article..........................................20
Memorial Hall Newspaper header..................................................................21
Sketch of Memorial Hall..................................................................................23
Notable Louisianans ......................................................................................30
Pen Drawing of George Tichenor....................................................................35
Abstract

Serving three times as president of the Cavalry Association, Camp Nine of the United Confederate Veterans (UCV), George Tichenor was instrumental in forging Lost Cause ideology into a potent social force in New Orleans. Though more widely remembered in New Orleans for his antiseptic invention, his support of Confederate monuments, Confederate activism, and his wife Margret’s role as vice-president of a chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are lesser known aspects of Tichenor’s life in New Orleans. This paper examines the cultural changes taking place in New Orleans that allowed Tichenor to become a leader of the Lost Cause movement that transformed New Orleans, with a focus on social networking via the United Confederate Veterans and the collaborative nature of their work with the UDC in New Orleans, a collaboration that opened a cultural and societal pathway for Lost Cause ideology to permeate Southern cities and influence national thinking on how to interpret the history of the Civil War.

Keywords: United Confederate Veterans (UCV); United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC); George Tichenor; Margret Tichenor; Gilded Age; Memorialization; New Orleans; Lost Cause; Confederate States of America; White Supremacy
Introduction

February 22, 1911, was an unseasonably cold day in the city of New Orleans. Despite what the *Times Picayune* described as “raw and chilly” weather, distinguished guests and a reported 20,000 on-lookers gathered at a city-donated parcel of land at the intersection of Canal Street and Jefferson Davis Parkway for the unveiling of the highly anticipated monument to Jefferson Davis, the late president of the Confederacy. The day’s festivities began with members of the military, veterans, college students, Boy Scouts and various civic associations parading from Lee Statue to the Davis Memorial ceremony site. Leading the marchers were the governor of Louisiana and the mayor of New Orleans. Arriving at the intersection of Canal Street, and Jefferson Davis Parkway, the parade procession was welcomed by 500 school girls who sat on an elevated platform to one side of the monument dressed in red, white, and blue and arranged to represent the Confederate flag. To add to the festivities, the school-children serenaded guests with renditions of “Dixie” and “America.”

(Left) Head of the parade making its way towards Canal Street. (Right) Crowds gathered for the unveiling, Confederate flag arrangement in the background. Photos: *Confederate Veteran Magazine*, May, 1911 Edition.
As the parade made its way towards the neutral ground, a buzz of excitement and anticipation began to fill the air as the Confederate flag-draped statue of Jefferson Davis watched on in the foreground. At 3:30 p.m., the assemblage was called to order and Father L.J. Kavanaugh delivered an invocation. Following the invocation, General William E. Mickie, adjutant general of the United Confederate Veterans (UCV) read a general order issued by the commander-in-chief of the UCV, George W. Gordon. In closing, the order states that “Too much praise cannot be given to the noble women who inaugurated or who have assisted in the work of creating this testimonial to the memory of and glory of our illustrious and venerated countryman.”

Praise for the “steadfast” and “loyal” women of the South continued with each passing speaker, and specifically for Jefferson Davis Memorial Association (JDMA) president Mrs. Katie Behan, and her “helpers.” The monument’s completion was a labor of love for Mrs. W. J. Behan. Behan was the wife of former mayor William J. Behan, a Confederate veteran who fought against the Metropolitan Police in the Battle of Liberty Place. Mrs. Behan’s leadership in organizing the JDMA and the various chapters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) was matched only by her fundraising ability. Mrs. Behan frequently utilized the UCV’s magazine, the Confederate Veteran Magazine placing appeals for funds to support the Jefferson Davis Monument.

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3 The 1874 Battle of Liberty Place was a battle fought between militant conservative Democrats (the White League) and Municipal Police and federal forces. The three-day battle ended in victory for the Democrats and aided in returning white Southern Democrats to power in New Orleans.
The magazine acted as a social networking and fund-raising tool for both the UCV and UDC, helping bind the various veteran camps and groups together. It is not surprising, then, that in its pages we also find the name of one of the most engaged families in the local campaign to honor the former Confederacy. In its May, 1911 edition, eleven pages are dedicated to its coverage of the Davis Monument unveiling in New Orleans. Several sections of the pages were used to list the names of groups and individuals that contributed to the monument. In the lists of names- the name Tichenor appears repeatedly. *Directors of Davis Monument Association* -- Dr. George H. Tichenor, *Life Members*-- Mrs. Margret Tichenor and Dr. George H. Tichenor, *United Sons of Confederate Veterans as Life Members*--Mr. and Mrs. Rolla Tichenor, and *Members Paid in-full*--Mr. and Mrs. George H. Tichenor, George H. Tichenor Jr., and Mr. and Mrs. Rolla Tichenor.

The Tichenor family arrived in New Orleans from Baton Rouge in 1889, and thanks to George Tichenor’s Confederate veteran status and his fabled antiseptic invention, the couple’s stock rose rapidly within elite white social circles in the city. Having taken over the reins of the fledgling JDMA five years previously, Mrs. Behan and “helpers” like Margret Tichenor had scored another success for the Lost Cause.\(^4\) Margret appears on the board of trustees for the Jefferson Davis Monument Association acting as Correspondence Secretary.\(^5\) (See photo below)

\(^4\) Lost Cause ideology highlighted the constitutionality of secession and the primacy of states-rights, adding that provocateurs from the North and different social evolutions of the two regions as the leading causes of the war, not slavery. Historical inquiry has stripped away much of the Lost Cause’s legitimacy as an accurate interpretation of events surrounding the Civil War.

\(^5\) Mrs. W.J. Behan, "Erection of Jefferson Davis Monument." Memorial Association Papers, Louisiana Historical Association Collection, Louisiana Research Collection.
During the first decade of the twentieth century George and Margret Tichenor appear almost daily in local newspaper articles concerning monument committees like the JDMA, Confederate Women Memorial Committees, Decoration Day events, Memorial Day celebrations, and across a wide variety of Confederate social and civic functions. The Tichenor sons were active members in the Sons and Daughters of the Confederacy. By 1928 Rolls A. Tichenor, Tichenor’s youngest son, had risen to Major and Assistant Quartermaster General in the United Sons of Confederate Veterans and prominence as a lawyer. His eldest son, George Jr., was a Tulane graduate and practicing physician. George Jr. is found in various op-eds opining upon the virtues of sterilization of the city’s undesirables as means of reducing crime (Below). George Tichenor used his standing as a Confederate and successful businessman to aid Margret in her fund raising for efforts for the JDMA. A family of Confederate loyalists dedicated to the Lost Cause were in attendance.

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**Letters**

**THE STERILIZATION BILL**

New Orleans, June 2, 1928.

Editor of The Times-Picayune:

Opposition to sterilization in Louisiana in the past has been due to ignorance. There are twenty-three states that have sterilization laws and in none have undesirable results or injustice been done. Kentucky has recently joined this group. In California more than 7000 persons who would otherwise have been kept in strict confinement and an unnecessary tax burden, have been sterilized and many returned to their homes, thereby causing large numbers of hospital inmates who have learned of the good results to request this operation.

While they cannot be rescued from low-grade intelligence, they can be granted liberty and made much happier than in life confinement. In order to prevent our state being swamped with our ever increasing incompetents and inasmuch as the profession accepts the investigations which have been carried on for a generation to have shown that feeble-minded parents never produced normal children, there should be no hesitancy in relieving these unfortunates of the misery of life confinement by a simple, painless operation which does not affect the normal functions except making parenthood impossible.

GEORGE H. TICHENOR, M. D.

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6 *State Times*, Baton Rouge, October 19, 1928.
7 *Daily Picayune*, June 2, 1928.
Confederate monuments and statues across the South have stood as a reminder that the South lost the war but won the fight over the narrative of the conflict. These celebrated victories for the Lost Cause in New Orleans, the South, and elsewhere owe much to the tireless efforts of families like the Tichenors, determined women like Behan, and organizations like the UDC and UCV. It is unlikely that the Tichenor family and those gathered on that city-donated parcel of land could ever imagined an event like the one that occurred over century after that raw and chilly day of Jefferson Davis veneration and celebration of the Lost Cause in New Orleans.

May 11, 2017, was anything but raw and chilly in New Orleans. The day’s cloud coverage trapped in the heat keeping the city steamy well into the night and the early morning. It was during these early morning hours, around three a.m., when workers, hidden by masks and dark clothing made their way to the corner of Canal Street and Jefferson Davis Parkway. Due to fears of protest and unrest, the workers set about their task under the light of streetlamps, construction equipment, and the moon. The job requiring workers to conceal their identity and work under the cover of darkness was the removal of the 106-year-old monument to Jefferson Davis. The seemingly sudden wave of interest in removing Confederate monuments by cities and communities across the South and elsewhere has revived public interest in why the monuments were erected in the first place and who was behind their creation and placement.

Historian Karen Cox was often called upon to comment on these developments. Her 2003 book, *Dixie Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*, credits the various ladies’ organizations that supported the construction of Confederate monuments and she highlights a major transition in their work that occurred in the first decades of the twentieth century. According to Cox, the UDC’s shift towards a celebratory phase of the Lost Cause allowed the group to take on an increasingly political role. The political
role was shaped by the progressive spirit of the age and the group followed the trend of reform and benevolence. The rhetoric associated with this transition still placed women as moral guardians, but it put the group’s efforts into a political context and their agenda--to romanticize and elevate the South’s role in the Civil War, eliminating slavery as its cause and glorifying the reasons for succession—became an increasingly public affair.8

This transformation of their role into a political one had long-standing implications for Southern cities, such as New Orleans, and their very public monument dedications. Cox argues that initially Confederate veterans themselves played little to no role in the creation of monuments across the South and elsewhere. Cox, however, only scratches the surface of the collaborative relationship between the United Confederate Veterans and the United Daughters of the Confederacy in New Orleans. Various veteran groups and influential Southern loyalists had always been willing to lend a hand to the efforts of Confederate women’s groups. The 1889 aligning of various Confederate veteran groups in New Orleans to form the UCV provided the UDC with influential backers in the years to come. George and Margret Tichenor filled leadership positions in the UCV and UDC, using their prospective organizations’ local chapters in New Orleans in a collaborative manner to memorialize, celebrate and promote the Lost Cause.

Examining George and Margret Tichenor and their family’s role in cementing a culture founded on the vindication and memorialization of the Lost Cause in New Orleans reveals a complex narrative of collaborative political maneuvering driven by racism, fear, and greed. Rather than down-play the role of women’s groups in promoting and venerating the Confederacy, this paper will argue that because of the UDC’s efforts, the aging Confederate

veterans of the UCV were able to become very public collaborators in a strategy to elevate Lost Cause ideology. The story of the Tichenor family helps to demonstrate the power of historical memory and its creation through their involvement in the cultural and political transformations that took place in the city of New Orleans during the Gilded Age.

Close examination of the *Times Picayune* archive and copies of the *Confederate Veteran* reveals a Tichenor family that embodies the cooperative spirit and solidarity shared by the UDC and UCV in their support of promoting the Lost Cause. Further, Tichenor’s business success capitalized on the veneration of the Lost Cause Confederacy, boosting business opportunities and the family’s standing in elite white society. One look at the original labelling of “Dr. Tichenor’s Antiseptic” demonstrates Tichenor’s desire to profit from his fabled role as the South’s most famous doctor, the product owing its creation to Tichenor’s time as a Confederate soldier. The label pictures a Confederate battle flag held high into a smoke-filled sky as Confederate soldiers triumphantly march forward and over the bodies of their vanquished foe.

The Tichenor name remains fairly well-known to locals of New Orleans, and the Confederate lore that surrounds his product provided the Tichenor family with great wealth and influence in the city. As an ode to the longevity of Tichenor’s standing in New Orleans, Tichenor’s product website history page informs consumers that Dr. Tichenor lived to the happy age of 85 - long enough to see the antiseptic that carried his name become a staple in thousands of homes across the land. Since its creation nearly 150 years ago, more than 500,000,000 bottles of Dr. Tichenor’s Antiseptic have been used, and that number continues to grow. The product evolved over the decades, from an antiseptic cure-all to a blistering mouthwash. Yet even though

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the Confederate battle flag has long since been removed from the front label of the bottle, the product backstory remains rooted in Confederate lore. Tichenor advertisements, radio jingles, and products became part of New Orleans culture, especially by the mid-twentieth century.

The Tichenor family provides an alternative narrative to scholarship that places the growth of Lost Cause culture firmly in the realm of the post-war Ladies’ Associations and the United Daughters of the Confederacy. George and Margret Tichenor and their family’s efforts, reflecting the collaborative efforts of the UCV and UDC helped to preserve Confederate culture and transform New Orleans from a multi-ethnic port city into a Confederate metropolis. Each Tichenor served the Lost Cause: Margret Tichenor served as vice-president of Chapter 72 of the UDC. George Tichenor served three times as president of Camp Nine Cavalry Division UCV and between the years 1916-1918 as General of Louisiana UCV. Both Tichenor sons and their wives were members of the United Sons of Confederate Veterans (USCV) and UDC. An overview of what came before the Tichenor family, UCV, and UDC arrived in New Orleans aids in understanding what made the city an ideal location for the Tichenor’s and Confederate culture to thrive.
New Orleans as a Space of Opportunity

New Orleans was the South’s largest and most prosperous city before the Civil War. The city’s ideal geographical location allowed it to flourish and dominate Mississippi River Valley commerce and access to broader global trade via the Gulf of Mexico made the city a valuable prize for Union forces. Architect Benjamin Latrobe, on his approach to the city by ship in 1819 reported hearing, “a more incessant, loud, and various gabble of tongues of all tones that was ever heard at Babel.”10 New Orleans, an ethnically diverse city, a polyglot, with French-African roots and a three-tiered racial hierarchy, had little in common with other Southern cities. It has been argued that the 1803 Louisiana Purchase paved the way for a fundamental cultural shift to take place in the city of New Orleans, an Americanization brought on by an influx of American Protestants into the city.11 Beginning in 1803, and another wave during the 1830s, coupled with large-scale Irish and German immigration in the 1840s and 50s and the decline in the population of free people of color represent a significant change in the social order of the city.

The waves of mostly Anglo-American Protestant migrations from Pennsylvania, New York and New England occurring between 1803 and the 1850s gave the city an American makeover. As a result of these migrations, the city’s banking, insurance and shipping sectors became dominated by Northerners. The Americanization of the city was also aided by a declining population of free people of color, largely French speaking and Catholic, who during the 1830s made up a quarter of the city’s population. With each passing year, Anglo-American

migration to the city chipped away at other populations. This decrease was also due in part to planter-controlled legislature that was increasingly hostile to free people of color.¹²

By 1854, Anglo-Americans gained an upper hand in controlling local politics, aided heavily by the Know-Nothing party’s strong nativist rhetoric. Over time a determined faction of this group helped turn the city toward secession. In the 1850s New Orleans was a divided city when it came to the question of secession. As Gerald Capers noted, older residents generally supported the Confederacy and newer residents, whether Northern born or foreign born, tended to oppose secession and would provide a critical mass of Unionist support during federal occupation.¹³

In 1860, the population of New Orleans more closely resembled that of cities found in the Northeast than it did other prosperous Southern cities like Mobile. Of the roughly 180,000 residents residing in and around New Orleans in 1860, near 40 percent were foreign born immigrants. Mobile comes in a distant second, only 24 percent or 7,000 residents being foreign born. The city’s enslaved population, relative to the true population, was also not typical of other comparable Southern cities: eight percent of residents in New Orleans were enslaved, when compared to Charleston, which had the highest urban enslaved population at 59 percent.¹⁴

The city of New Orleans became far more “Confederate” after the war than it was during or prior to the Civil War. New Orleans of 1861 was a marginal Confederate city and the city’s

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time as a wartime Confederate metropolis lasted only fifteen months. Confederates and their political allies began drawing up the battle plans for creating a bona-fide Southern identity for the city almost as quickly as the city had folded to Union forces. Efforts to stave off Union capture of the mouth of the Mississippi River were abysmal and on May 1, 1862, Major General Benjamin Butler and his Union forces occupied the city.

Butler’s actions and reputation during the initial Union occupation of New Orleans aided later efforts by ex-Confederates and loyalists to create a narrative of oppressive occupation. By the end of Presidential Reconstruction in 1865, the process of turning New Orleans into a Confederate city was well underway. The city of New Orleans did not become a Confederate monument repository because the city was steeped in Southern traditions or guided by loyalty to the Confederacy and its leaders. The narrative offered by the Confederacy served to fill that need for place and identity for those citizens threatened by ethnic conflict, race, and class. As Basil W. Duke recalled after Appomattox, “a host from the parts of the South flocked to New Orleans. There were living in the city, between the years 1865-1870, almost as many ex-Southern soldiers bearing the title “General” as there are today in the United Confederate Veterans.”

The testing ground for Southern revisionism and cultural development would not take place in Charleston or Richmond, it would be a multi-phased endeavor on the least culturally Confederate city in the South: New Orleans. The conflation of the events at Liberty Place and the Civil War helped create a common cause: the struggle against federal occupation and the

15 Howard Hunter, "Late to the Dance: New Orleans and the Emergence of a Confederate City," Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association 57, no. 3 (Summer 2016): 322.
wrongs perpetrated against the good citizenry of New Orleans, would help cement Lost Cause ideology in the city. The Lost Cause provided Southerners with a viable means of maintaining their honor, but was also a valuable tool for both the North and the South when it came to national reconciliation.\textsuperscript{18}

With the removal of federal troops from New Orleans in 1877, the aging Confederate veterans and their offspring residing in the city no longer had to contend with one of the biggest challenges to their civic and political ambitions. It became clear to some former Confederate leaders that violence like that which took place at the Battle of Liberty Place, would hinder the cause and that a different strategy to disenfranchise black voters was needed. Street violence was arguably political fodder for the Republicans and possibly had increased support for the passing of the 14\textsuperscript{th} and 15\textsuperscript{th} Amendments. Violence, of course, continued but had to be publicly divorced from the Southern nationalists wearing suits who sought to influence city politics and shape the hearts and minds of other whites residing in the city.

The UDC’s political maneuvering on both the national and regional scale created a string of victories for the Lost Cause. During the turn of the twentieth-century a nostalgic celebration of Southern nationalism blossomed, and the growth of Southern populism meant that organizations like the UCV and UDC often found that they had free reign in Southern cities, especially New Orleans. The UDC’s stated objective was to honor the memory of those who served and died in the service of the Confederate States of America by collecting and preserving the material necessary for a truthful history of the Civil War. The UDC also aimed to protect, preserve, and mark the places made historic by those who fought to defend the Confederacy. Hence, it provided

the Confederate veterans of the UCV in New Orleans with ideal partners in winning the war for the hearts and minds of the white citizens of New Orleans.

By the turn of the twentieth century, New Orleans rivaled Richmond as the center of Confederate sentiment and civic engagement. This transformation was due in part to the white citizenry of the city who felt oppressed under Union occupation, creating sympathy towards Confederate romanticized notions of harmonious Southern societies and the maintenance of white supremacy. This expression of Confederate ideology became a common interpretation among Northern and Southern-born residents of the city of New Orleans. Faith in white supremacy bound the white population together and proved persuasive enough to aid in not only reconciling New Orleans, but a nation.

The Gilded Age New Orleans provided the context for these postbellum cultural and social changes. Men like Tichenor could reinvent themselves as a kind of aging Confederate gentry. Tichenor had a story to exploit, not only for personal gain, but the gain of Confederate culture and ideology. Gilded Age Confederate veterans, like Tichenor and the impact of their Confederate civic engagement on the social and cultural develop of the city of New Orleans reveals the intricacies of cultural change. New Orleans serves as an example of how transformative white fear mixed with civic ambition and manufactured collective memory can be. The joining of various Confederate groups in 1889 that formed the UCV, combined with their alignment with the UDC, strengthened the political power and influence of Confederate culture and ideology in the city of New Orleans. George Tichenor is but one of many Confederate veterans who would dedicate the autumn of their lives to transforming the culture and historical memory of a city whose cultural traditions are not wholly grounded in American Anglo-Saxon Protestant traditions.
Ambitious Confederates like Tichenor transformed the largest port city in the South into a Confederate metropolis, and could buy power, wealth, and influence for Confederate groups in the city. A study of Tichenor and his family of Confederates provides a window into this world of Confederate grit. A willing participant and loyal foot soldier of the Lost Cause, Tichenor not only provides a face to the story of Confederate culture’s rise in New Orleans but reveals a collaboration on the part of the UCV and UDC fueled by white supremacy. Understanding Tichenor’s background and his success aids in understanding Tichenor and the Lost Cause’s success in New Orleans.

George Humphrey Tichenor

George Humphrey Tichenor was born April 17, 1837, in Ohio County, Kentucky to Rolla and Elizabeth Tichenor, both natives of Kentucky. Tichenor’s early education and childhood took place on the banks of the Green River in neighboring McLean County in the small village of Rumsey, Kentucky. Little is known of Tichenor’s early life, but he appears in the Census of 1860, aged 24 years, working in the manufacture of explosive guncotton and as a resident of Davidson County, Tennessee. The 1860 edition of Nashville City and Business Directory for 1860-61 lists Tichenor as “Prof G.H. Tichenor, operator in oriental and positive pictures, instruction given in the art on the most reasonable terms.” At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, Tichenor volunteered for a Confederate company, the Williamson County Dare-Devils of Tennessee.

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What is known of George Tichenor’s life as a Confederate soldier comes from diaries he kept from 1861 to 1863 and his Certificate to be Given at the Time of Discharge. In one of Tichenor’s diary entries, he notes the number of men in his unit (77) and discusses their individual professions, noting several medical men and druggists, but listing himself as “artist.”

Tichenor saw action on several battlefields in Tennessee and Mississippi. According to his Confederate war record, Tichenor took part in twenty-four engagements including rear guard and support deployment at the Battle of Shiloh, Iuka, Britton’s Lane, and at the second battle of Corinth. Over time, legends became attached to Tichenor’s Confederate service. Their origins are elusive, and it is possible that Tichenor himself spawned them, but whatever the origins, one legend proved an invaluable asset to Tichenor during his post-war life.

During a November 1863 skirmish near Memphis, Tichenor sustained a leg wound that called for amputation. Tichenor refused amputation and took up residence in the home of a sympathetic local, where he treated his wound with a concoction of his own creation. Using the concoction, Tichenor’s leg healed and a full recovery made. The legend continues: that Tichenor used his creation to treat his fellow Confederates, pioneering antiseptic surgery. Also, that Tichenor steadfastly refused to allow for antiseptic’s use by the Federal Army. The legend also contends that Tichenor served as Acting Assistant Surgeon in the Confederate Army having studied for and passed the Medical Board Appointment Examination.

The myth surrounding Tichenor’s Confederate service is based on half-truths, embellishments, and outright lies. Tichenor’s discharge summary from the Confederate Army makes no mention of Tichenor ever having served in any medical capacity during his

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enlistment. The actual battle for Memphis was a naval engagement and occurred on June 6, 1862, ending in Union victory and occupation of the city. Tichenor’s unit was in the vicinity, and there are records of land skirmishes having occurred. However, his diaries offer no evidence that supports the legend. Tichenor records only a self-inflicted gunshot wound on October 9, 1862, that occurred while cleaning his sidearm. Tichenor’s cause of discharge cites a gunshot wound to his left forearm occurring on 9th October 1862.

There were no diary entries again until January 31, 1863 and all diary entries would end by April 1863. Neither Tichenor’s official June 7, 1863, Confederate discharge record service nor his diaries reveal any details that would support the legend that came to surround Tichenor. Later in Tichenor’s life, these wartime fables afforded him civic opportunities and business success in New Orleans. The story remains foundational to his antiseptic business to this day, the history page of the company website reads,

> When George was a young enlisted soldier in the War between the States, he was appointed acting assistant surgeon. While at this post, he developed the original Dr. Tichenor's antiseptic formula. In 1863, he was wounded in a battle near Memphis. Fearing infection, army hospital surgeons ordered that his leg be amputated. Against medical advice, and with the assistance of friends, he left the hospital and saved his leg using the antiseptic formula he had developed. Dr. Tichenor went on to pioneer the use of antiseptic surgery during the Civil War and saved the lives and limbs of many soldiers.

Tichenor’s civilian life began on November 12, 1863, with his marriage to Margret Ann Drane in Canton, Mississippi. The Tichenor’s held a brief residence at 363 Broadway, New York City, before returning to Canton and in 1869, Tichenor listed himself as a doctor for the

26 Louisiana State University, “Tichenor Diaries”.
27 Trotter, Antiseptic Solution,” 91.
first time on a patent for an inhaler before moving to Liberty, Mississippi.\textsuperscript{28} It was during Tichenor’s time in Liberty that he sold off his photography equipment, in which he had dabbled prior to and immediately following the war, to pursue a career in medicine. In Liberty, Mississippi Tichenor first was licensed to practice medicine, paying a ten-dollar fee.\textsuperscript{29}

In 1877, once Tichenor made his way across the Mississippi River to Red River Landing, Louisiana, details of his personal life took a tragic turn. Tichenor lost his younger brother and three children to yellow fever. Also, during this time Tichenor worked on treatments for yellow fever, published on treatments for snakebites, received a patent for his antiseptic and experienced the devastation of the Mississippi River’s flood season. In 1884, Tichenor moved to Baton Rouge and within a year, he formed a business partnership with Sherrouse, a medical supply company headquartered in New Orleans. He also became a fully licensed medical doctor in Louisiana.\textsuperscript{30}

Much of the life of Tichenor prior to his arrival in New Orleans in 1889 is documented in the research of Michael Trotter, a resident and practicing physician of Greenville, Mississippi. In his two-part article entitled: “G.H. Tichenor MD. and His Antiseptic Solution: The Mississippi Years,” published in the \textit{Mississippi Medical Association Journal}. Trotter draws on Tichenor’s diaries and family letters to investigate Tichenor’s early life, Confederate service, and Tichenor’s antiseptic folklore. Trotter’s research is well sourced and provides insight into Tichenor’s life. However, the scope of Trotter’s research ends where Tichenor’s life in New Orleans begins and

\textsuperscript{28} Trotter, “Antiseptic Solution,” 89.
\textsuperscript{30} Trotter, “Part Two of Two,” 128.
he does not examine in any detail the events that unfolded in Tichenor’s life once he moved to Red River Landing, Baton Rouge, in 1885, or four years later when he arrived in New Orleans.

It is clear that during this period Tichenor gained a level of prominence in the communities of Red River Landing and Baton Rouge, campaigning and making speeches concerning flood control measures on the Mississippi River and leasing a building in Baton Rouge to manufacture his antiseptic. A change of fortune began taking shape for Tichenor in Baton Rouge, and in 1889, he struck out for the bigger markets of New Orleans where he gained leadership positions within the United Confederate Veterans, financial gains via his antiseptic, and an upgrade in social status.

**Grifting the Lost Cause in New Orleans**

The earliest mention of Tichenor found in New Orleans media is an 1868 *Daily Picayune* article entitled “An Impressive Incident” copied from the *Birmingham Mail* reporting on the recent Louisiana Constitutional Convention. Tichenor’s name appears as Rev. Dr. Tichenor and is said to have been asked to lead a prayer at the convention. (See photo left)31 An odd 1883 article (See photo right) entitled, “The Southern Confederacy Recognized by The United States Government after a Lapse of Twenty Years,” the unnamed author of the article found the situation confusing because most of the page after the brief write-up is dedicated to advertising George Tichenor’s antiseptic. His Confederate battle-flag-waving hero dominated his product


32 *Daily-Picayune*, January 22, 1868.
It appears that Tichenor had already recognized the profitability of reaffirming the antiseptic’s Confederate roots.

Though Tichenor’s medical credentials as a doctor were dubious, he was progressing in creating a financially successful practice. In 1882, Tichenor began to be recognized as a medical doctor in Louisiana, and he is on a list of persons without a diploma with more than five years’ practice and entitled to practice in the State, under Section 3 Act 31, of 1882 (See pg. 20). The graph also notes that Tichenor had moved to Baton Rouge from Red River Landing. An article in the Baton Rouge Advocate announces the arrival of Tichenor when his new laboratory was completed in the Laguier building on the corner of Florida and Lafayette streets. Over the next several years while residing in Baton Rouge, an increase in advertising took place like the one found in the March 28, 1885 Capitolian-Advocate (See pg. 20).

Advertisements were not his only tact. Tichenor continued to opine upon various medical treatments in op-eds for local newspapers, like the August 16 edition of Daily Capitolian-

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33 Daily-Picayune, May 12, 1883.
34 Daily Capitolian-Advocate, March 28, 1885.
35 Daily Advocate, January 23, 1885.
Advocate article titled “Charbon and its Treatment.” The article is easily summarized as Tichenor vouching for and promoting his antiseptic as a cure.\textsuperscript{36}

Tichenor’s op-eds were not limited to medicine. From 1885 on, the archives of local newspapers reveal a Tichenor who appeared to have figured out a recipe for success: aligning his Confederate veteran status and the Lost Cause to his antiseptic. An early op-ed had highlighted the grandness of the South and its people due to their ability to prosper after the war’s conclusion and generally strikes a tone of reconciliation.\textsuperscript{37} Tichenor’s op-eds took a decidedly more Lost Cause tone by his 1889 arrival in New Orleans.

Tichenor’s May, 17, 1889, article in the Daily Advocate newspaper, also published in the Daily-Picayune, demonstrates this change in tone well. Cropped snuggly into the top left corner of page three, below an all caps printed “Sketch of Memorial Hall,” a small note is included to inform readers that the full-page article they are about to read was “Prepared at the request and direction of G.H. Tichenor, commander of the Veterans Confederate States Cavalry Ass’n., Camp No. 9 UCV.”

\textsuperscript{36} Daily Capitolian-Advocate, August 16, 1885.
\textsuperscript{37} Daily Capitolian-Advocate, June 17, 1885.
Tichenor offers a prelude to the article crediting and quoting his “eloquent” and “earnest” friend J.A. Chalaron, to whom Tichenor credits much of the article’s content.\textsuperscript{38} Chalaron pays homage to the bravery of the fighting Confederates from New Orleans and laments the “story of insult and oppression heaped upon her (New Orleans) inhabitants who could not flee from the hated rule, has oft been told, but never will attain the truth of the reality.”\textsuperscript{39} Mixed in among the various Lost Cause tropes, Chalaron points to a specific injustice dating from the earliest days of post-Confederate surrender Union occupation of the city. Order No. 14. issued on July 18, 1866, by Major General P. H. Sheridan from Military District Headquarters in New Orleans forbade construction of Confederate monuments, dissolved all Confederate organizations, and made clear that commanders were expected to faithfully execute and enforce the order.

Chalaron draws a direct line from Order Fourteen to the Mechanic’s Hall Massacre, : “the bloody events of the 30\textsuperscript{th} of July 1866 was the opening encounter of the fierce battle she now entered upon and waged for ten years for her rights.”\textsuperscript{40} In this case, Chalaron is correct in

\textsuperscript{38}Daily Advocate, May 17, 1889, (Chalaron, a Confederate veteran, worked greatly for the cause and was instrumental in leading initiatives for the 1892 launched and UCV sponsored Historical Association projects). See also Confederate Veterans, "The Last Roll: Obituary of Col. J.A. Chalaron," United Confederate Veteran, January, 1910.

\textsuperscript{39} Daily Advocate, May 17, 1889.

\textsuperscript{40} Daily Advocate, May 17, 1889, (The event that Chalaron referenced is the calling of a second Constitutional Convention in 1866 which led to horrific violence and the murder of African Americans by Southern white nationalists. During the decade and a half of Radical Reconstruction in Louisiana, particularly in New Orleans, an intense, occasionally violent, contest between those who favored Reconstruction policies and those who fought for white supremacy as the ideology that would guide public policy).
describing the massacre as the opening encounter of a fierce battle. A violent political war
waged on behalf of white supremacy was getting underway in New Orleans.

In between Chalaron’s growing list of perceived slights and injustices perpetrated upon
the people of New Orleans during Reconstruction, he comments on work of the Ladies
Benevolent Societies that sprang up in the city following Confederate surrender. These societies
were responsible for erecting one of the first monuments to the Confederacy at Greenwood
Cemetery, dedicated on Friday, April 10, 1874 in New Orleans.41 The article is full of praise for
the women’s efforts in confronting what he called “wicked lies” told by Northerners. Their
efforts on behalf of destitute veterans and their continued lobbying of state, regional and local
politicians on their behalf received effusive praise.

After re-hashing Reconstruction-era grievances Charlron strikes a celebratory tone when
mentioning the newly renovated and refurbished memorial to the Confederacy: Confederate
Memorial Hall.42 Much of the planning for memorialization events, monument construction,
galas, historical meetings, and social and civic organizing of the Confederate cause now had a
permanent home on less than an acre of land at 929 Camp Street in New Orleans. The UCV and
UDC appear almost in equal measure in the local newspapers and their meetings more often than
not took place at Memorial Hall. Often the two groups are discussed in articles describing their
collaboration in civic interests to benefit Confederates.

41 Hunter, “Late to the Dance,” 309. See also Lady’s Benevolent Association of New
Orleans, Dedication of the Confederate Monument, at Greenwood Cemetery, Jas. A. Gresham,
(New Orleans, 1874).

42 Memorial Hall was built in a popular architectural style of its time, the Richardsonian
Romanesque. Henry Hobson Richardson, who lived nearby on Julia Street, was a leading
architect in 1885. He had developed a style that bears his name, the Richardsonian Romanesque.
The Howard Library was one of the master productions of the famous architect. Richardson died
in 1886 prior to the construction of the Howard Library and the conception of Memorial Hall.
The design was given to the local architectural firm of Sully & Toledano.
The Tichenor article was published in celebration of the completed expansion and refurbishing of Confederate Memorial Hall. A sketch, centered in the middle of the article with a nod to the architects, “Sully, Burton, & Stone, Ltd. Architects” printed below it (See photo above), offered readers a chance to view the upgrades. The article that surrounds the sketch does not describe how memorial works on behalf of Confederate veterans as much as it offers a drawn-out list of Southern grievances stemming from Union occupation of New Orleans. At the time of completion in 1890, this Romanesque revival was also a crowning achievement of an altogether different sort of revival. However, the revival was in reality a Confederate last stand, one last push by the rapidly aging veterans and nationalists of the South to orchestrate and imprint their version of history and Southern culture on New Orleans.

Where St. Charles Avenue meets Lee Circle (where a monument to Robert E. Lee stood before its removal in 2016) take the Andrew Higgins Blvd exit, make a quick left onto Camp Street and you've arrived at Confederate commemoration headquarters in New Orleans. At first glance the National WWII Museum and the Contemporary Arts Center dominate the immediate landscape but nestled snuggly against the Ogden Museum of Southern Art sits Confederate
Memorial Hall. Lee Circle, previously Tivoli Circle, a grass field for the circus and later a carousel, is a roundabout of contradiction; from the massive gray building of the WWII Museum that resembles an oversized Higgins boat, to the sleek modern architecture of the Ogden and finally after a few glances around, if you look closely, there sits Tichenor’s “Sketch” of Memorial Hall, a hall that was built to house Confederate relics, to honor Southern sacrifice and for memorialization of Confederates and their cause. During Tichenor’s life, Memorial Hall served as headquarters for the growing Confederate civic movement and the business of United Confederate Veterans and offshoot groups like the UDC and USCV.

On January 8, 1891, Confederate Memorial Hall opened its door to the public. A wealthy philanthropist, Frank Howard, organized a Board of Governors consisting of twenty-five members, five members taken from each local Confederate association and five members were drawn from the Howard Memorial Library Board of Directors. The men would go on to form the Louisiana Historic Society (LHA). On April 11, 1889, Mr. Howard and Colonel Owen from the Washington Artillery drafted a charter under the LHA and it consisted of members from the following Confederate veteran associations: The Army of Tennessee, the Army of Northern Virginia, the Washington Artillery, and the Association of Confederate States Cavalry. Frank Howard then offered the use of one of the alcoves in the newly constructed Howard Library [next to the current museum] for a repository of Confederate artifacts. He also agreed to erect, at his own expense, a suitable building as an annex to the library if the collection continued to grow. As president of the newly formed LHA, Frank Howard worked closely with Colonel Owen in the construction of a new building next to the Howard Library. Funding for the Howard Library and construction of the Howard Annex (as it was then referred to, the future Confederate
Memorial Hall) was made possible through the fortunes amassed by Frank’s father, Charles T. Howard.⁴³

Tichenor and other like-minded veterans were responsible for procuring many of the artifacts that are on display at Memorial Hall. Most of these items are still on display to this day or remain stored there. The most diverse and extensive holdings are the personal items of Jefferson Davis that were donated by his wife, Varina, shortly after her husband’s December 6, 1889 death in New Orleans. The numerous chapters of the UCV and UDC used the hall regularly to conduct affairs, sometimes together, sometimes not, but always for the same reason: promoting the Lost Cause.

Though various veteran groups existed before the UCV’s founding, none matched their reach and influence in the South. The association was instrumental in creating a far-flung interconnected support system whereby Confederate veterans could organize, socialize, reminisce, network, seek out business opportunities and romanticize the glory days of youth and war. The UCV was founded on June 10, 1889 in New Orleans, in the recorded proceedings of Convention for Organization and Adoption of the Constitution of The United Confederate Veterans, (Tichenor was in attendance as well) held J.L.M. Curry, after addressing those in attendance concluded his address with a simple, yet, potent wish,

> We wish, nevertheless, to see to it that our children do not grow up with false notions of their fathers and with disgraceful apologies for their conduct.⁴⁴

The better part of a quarter of a century had passed since the war’s end before Southern veterans formed a counterpart organization comparable to the April 6, 1866 founded Grand

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Army of the Republic, a fraternal organization for veterans of the Union Army. Uncertain futures and concerns with surviving everyday life, the shame of defeat, memories of battlefield horrors and how organizing would be perceived by the North may have all contributed to the delay of Southern veterans organizing.\footnote{Herman Hattaway. "The United Confederate Veterans in Louisiana." \textit{Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association} 16, no. 1 (1975): 7} The passing of Confederate Army leadership who had been responsible for conducting the war, meant the rank and file members were generally drawn from the middle and working classes from across the South.\footnote{Herman Hattaway. “UCV in Louisiana,” 21. (The association’s origins are traceable to an earlier era of veterans’ groups that began in 1870, in Richmond, Virginia with the formation of the Association of the Army of Northern Virginia. During the following years regional Confederate veterans’ groups appeared across the South; The Association of the Army of Tennessee in 1877, an Association of Confederate Survivors formed in 1878 in Augusta, Georgia and in 1883, Robert E. Lee Camp Number One formed in Richmond. Tichenor himself was as elected three times as commander of the Cavalry Association Camp 9 in New Orleans. The camp would be absorbed by the UCV but continued to operate independently with Tichenor at the helm.)} The newly formed group’s publishing arm, \textit{The Confederate Veteran Magazine} under the ownership of Sumner Cunningham, was published monthly until 1932.\footnote{Herman Hattaway."Clio's Southern Soldiers: The United Confederate Veterans and History." \textit{Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association} 12, no. 3 (Summer 1971), 216.} In the first edition of \textit{The Confederate Veteran}, Cunningham, in a brief letter to readers addressed from his headquarters in New Orleans on September 20, 1892, stated clearly the magazine’s purpose.\footnote{Sumner Cunningham, "Letter from Editor," \textit{United Confederate Veteran Magazine}, January 1893,1.}

\begin{quote}
The Confederate Veteran is intended as an organ of communication between Confederate soldiers and those who are interested in them and their affairs, and its purpose is to furnish a volume of information which will be acceptable to the public, even those who fought on the other side. It will at once be sent to every Confederate Veteran organization in existence and the patronage of such bodies is earnestly sought.\footnote{Sumner Cunningham, "Letter from Editor," \textit{United Confederate Veteran Magazine}, January 1893,1.}
\end{quote}
The magazine’s stated purpose proved effective: the publication served as a space for veterans to pen their recollections of heroism on the battlefield, the virtue of the Confederate struggle, as well as a place to advertise products and business services. Tichenor’s antiseptic advertisements featured frequently on its pages. Tichenor himself used the magazine to raise awareness of various causes including pension plans for veterans, retirement homes, soliciting financial support for a memorial to Confederate Southern women, and an occasional tribute to his own mythology.49

Strong evidence from its own publications suggest that the organization, though not charity focused, became a means of increasing business prospects and a means to enhance one’s name. UDC members often used the pages of the magazine to pen rebukes to any and all they deemed as having been insulting to the South. If the Confederate Veteran Magazine, is understood as a social networking publication, then viewing the UCV as a civically engaged propaganda arm of the Lost Cause Confederacy is not a stretch. The publication, the conventions, reunions, memorial dedications and museum creations were all orchestrated at Memorial Hall, the plans made public on the pages of local newspapers. The Confederate Veteran Magazine carried the message out of New Orleans to other Southern cities and states. The leadership of UCV camps in New Orleans met regularly at Memorial Hall and often with leadership of UDC chapters to discuss their education and textbook initiatives, monument fundraisers, memorial and reunion planning and the general business of local and regional camps.

49 Confederate Veterans, "Concerning Monument to our Women," Confederate Veteran Magazine, 1898, 50.
The group’s collaborative efforts continued to pay dividends. The reunions, in time, took on a festive feel that drew in non-veterans from the local community and received local media attention. The Lost Cause sympathies were vital to the gatherings, and the awarding of medals to Confederate veterans, like the Southern Cross of Honor, often by representatives from the UDC received celebratory media coverage in New Orleans. These functions, in fact, were akin to more modern professional trade conventions all of which Tichenor was a leading organizer and participant. These reunions often drew veterans from across the South. During the 1890s and the early part of the 20th century attendance would remain high, the UVC’s 1903 reunion in New Orleans allegedly had higher public turnout than Mardi Gras parades.\textsuperscript{50} Reunions were one of the most exciting aspects of UCV membership. New Orleans hosted the national gatherings five times in 1889, 1892, 1903, 1906, and 1923. UCV, Shreveport hosted one in 1936. In each year when hosted in New Orleans, both George and Margaret Tichenor made public pleas for the meeting’s success and both the UCV and UDC local chapters were active in fundraising drives. Using New Orleans newspapers and the \textit{Confederate Veteran Magazine}, George and Margaret Tichenor also aided in coordinating “Decoration Days” in New Orleans and across the South.\textsuperscript{51}

In 1892, the UCV formed a historical association in New Orleans with the aim of promoting understanding of the war and its causes. With a sense that its cause would not be viewed kindly with the passage of time, the leaders from the UDC and UCV began to aid in the establishment of museums, sponsored exhibitions and engaged civically to promote Lost Cause ideology via school textbooks. Though Tichenor himself would not be an active writer for the association (unlike his friend Chalaron), he nevertheless contributed over the years. In a

\textsuperscript{50} Hattaway, "Clio's Southern Soldiers," 214.
\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Daily Picayune}, April 7, 1901.
On November 5, 1907, article in *The Daily Picayune*, Tichenor is quoted at the camp’s regular monthly meeting at Memorial Hall imploring “every member to attract young people to the meetings and the he wants their mantles to fall upon the younger generation.” Tichenor’s image in the media is that of a businessman and professional Confederate.

The UCV spawned other organizations that did indeed carry the Lost Cause torch. The Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of the Confederacy being two of the better known and still operating groups. The June 12, 1906 announcement of Margret Tichenor’s election as vice-president of the New Orleans Chapter 72 of the Daughters in *The Daily Picayune* begins to reveal a family that enjoyed the benefits of George Tichenor’s Confederate service as well. Her husband George was on-hand to pin Southern Crosses of Honor on the newly elected women. After internal strife and conflict began to tear at the chapter and at George Tichenor’s behest, a Stonewall Jackson Chapter was created on June 21, 1907. Margret was elected vice-president.

The Tichenor family, through several generations are traceable via local media. In searching newspapers databases, the Tichenor family name is a constant presence from the 1880s through to the 1950s. Son Rolla Tichenor advertised his law practice and appears frequently in articles detailing Confederate civic engagements. The eldest son, Tichenor Jr., likewise wrote op-eds and advertised his medical services, and the family business was advertised almost daily for decades.

The Tichenor name is almost exclusively associated with Confederate civic culture, and associated activities. When Jefferson Davis was removed from New Orleans to be re-buried in

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52 *Daily Picayune*, November 5, 1907.
53 *Daily Picayune*, June 12, 1906.
54 *Daily Picayune*, June 21, 1907.
Richmond, Tichenor’s name appears in the article as a pallbearer for the casket. The Tichenors were not always the story, but if the article concerned Confederate civic and political activities, more often than not a Tichenor name appears somewhere in the article.

**Cementing a Confederate Identity**

By the turn of the twentieth century, Tichenor and his antiseptic were well-known to the residents of New Orleans. Over the next two decades, up to Tichenor’s 1923 death, his media coverage began to read less like the life and times of a Confederate celebrity and more like coverage that is expected for an elder-statesmen and civic leader of the community. Tichenor’s wife and children still featured prominently in the society columns of local papers. An article in the December 30, 1913, edition of the *Daily Picayune*, “Notable Louisianans,” demonstrates well the esteem and standing that Tichenor was able to procure for himself as well as his family.

Below each featured notable’s photograph is a brief write-up describing what makes each of these men so notable. Tichenor’s photo is the first from the left. The other notables proceeding Tichenor are Auguste Martelo Jiménez, Tulane graduate and ex-president of the New

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Orleans Tax Association, consul of Columbia in New Orleans since 1907; -- Prentice E. Edrington Jr., son of a prominent judge of the twenty-fifth Judicial District -- Celeo Davila, Honduran consul, and well-known local physician Dr. S.W. Stafford. Tichenor’s social standing had risen meteorically and Tichenor’s biography is indeed notable on several fronts.

The biography is notable for the sheer amount of falsehoods it contains. First among them is Tichenor having created or invented antiseptic surgery via his famous remedy that he first concocted during the Civil War. Concerning Tichenor the biographer wrote, that Dr. George H. Tichenor is “one of the best-known business and professional men in New Orleans who many years ago discovered the properties that have been combined to make Tichenor’s antiseptic a leading remedy, probably the best-known and best advertised preparation made in the South.” The author continues by recounting Tichenor’s capture of federal troops, treating his own battle wounds, and enrolling new recruits, and then being appointed acting assistant surgeon having passed the examination of the medical board.

The final paragraphs of the article, dedicated to Tichenor’s life in New Orleans, are the most revealing with regard to Tichenor. The first line is itself an error: the author places Tichenor in New Orleans at war’s end, “After the war Dr. Tichenor came to New Orleans and has resided here most of the time since.” In reality, Tichenor spent the decade following the end of the war in Mississippi, often residing with his father-in-law while looking for ways to make money.

56 *Daily Picayune*, December 30, 1913.
57 *Daily Picayune*, December 30, 1913.
58 *Daily Picayune*, December 30, 1913.
The strength and endurance of Tichenor’s mythology and Confederate service is apparent and Tichenor’s backstory seems to have been taken at face value, at least by those who benefited by the rise of Confederate culture in New Orleans. The biographical piece in “Notable Louisianans” recounts one version of the many fables attached to Tichenor. “An old veteran has told a good story about Tichenor, the author recalls, after the war, when the soldiers had come home poor, he saw the doctor walking on the street dressed up and wearing a silk hat. The veteran was surprised and demanded to know how the doctor struck it so rich. Oh, I invented a small contrivance and sold it to a Yankee for $500; replied the doctor. Later he invented the antiseptic which he has manufactured ever since, and which is now sold through a large company in this city.”59 Like much of Tichenor’s life, separating fact from fiction is hard going, but one thing is clear, Tichenor did not arrive in New Orleans after the war and he certainly did not invent antiseptic surgery.

The longevity of the myths surrounding Tichenor’s life can also be evidenced by looking on the shelves of drugstores across greater metropolitan New Orleans and the Gulf South. Nestled amongst and sometimes obscured by brand after brand of mouthwashes will sit a 16-fluid ounce bottle of Dr. Tichenor’s All-Natural Peppermint Mouthwash Concentrate, and as a reminder of the old fable, the front label is framed by the words “Original Formula since 1864.” The story of a poor Kentucky boy caught up in the Civil War and happening upon a life-saving solution after being grievously wounded fighting heroically for the South is a reoccurring theme used to propel Tichenor to local fame and fortune. The career of George Tichenor, a grifter with no real heroism to hang his hat who became an influential civic leader a in the city, aids in tracing the rise of Confederate culture in New Orleans.

59 *Daily Picayune*, December 30, 1913.
Conclusion

George Tichenor helped create and maintain Lost Cause ideology and culture during his life. His self-authored story, though fiction, was strategically important in promoting Confederate culture during turn of the century New Orleans. These stories promoted the preferred recollection of events by ex-Confederates and disseminated it to a population. These myths, repeated in texts, became historicized and allowed for perceptions to become indisputable truth, especially in a society such as the South that was enduring social instability. These perceptions provided a foundation for the aging Gilded Age veterans to cement a culture based on white supremacy and Confederate sympathy, while it aided in promoting their own legacies as honorable men. Over the last thirty years, historians have chipped away at Lost Cause ideology, rebuffing its basic tenants and scrutinizing the details, but it remains as true today as it did after the Reconstruction era: The North may have won the war, but the South won the peace.

Confederates with a little more than veteran status, or simply with a good story, were ensured a safe haven in New Orleans. Tichenor and other like-minded veterans of the UCV camps who worked steadfastly on behalf of the Lost Cause had ambitious and powerful allies in the various UDC chapters. In coordination they unified a culture and made concerted efforts to ensure New Orleans became what they deemed a culturally Southern city. The Americanized New Orleans was thoroughly Confederized by families like the Tichenors and the allied UDC, UCV, and USCV Confederate organizations by the early twentieth century. Tichenor’s name doesn't spring to mind when pondering famous Confederates, though many New Orleanians recognize Tichenor’s name and product. The lesser-known Confederate veterans like Tichenor were the everyday men who succeeded in securing temporary salvation for their legacies. Redemption, reconciliation, acceptance, and often prosperity, if only temporary, were the war
prizes awarded to the foot soldiers of the Lost Cause. Tichenor and veterans like him found ways to exploit the rise of postwar Southern populism to their own benefit and by default of their success were able to hold political and ideological sway in their communities.

Even with the removal of Federal troops from New Orleans in 1877, whites still faced a threat to their predominance, but in a city torn by class and ethnic conflict, white supremacy and Lost Cause ideology helped mitigate divisions amongst whites.60 It was this unity in “whiteness” that the Gilded Age Confederate veterans and the UDC of New Orleans used to consolidate the cultural changes that were fought for by their predecessors during Reconstruction. Due in part to coming together of various Confederate groups under one collective banner like the UDC, UCV and their publication Confederate Veteran magazine, a cultural and societal pathway was opened for Lost Cause ideology to permeate Southern cities and influence national thinking on how to interpret the history of the Civil War. Tichenor was not alone: many veterans used the city of New Orleans as a launching pad for re-building their life after the war, but Tichenor’s arrival, having coincided with the formation of the UCV, which he presided on three consecutive occasions in the title of Louisiana Commander, puts a name and face to the Lost Cause culture that George and Margret Tichenor helped create and use for personal enrichment while acting as drivers of Confederate cultural in New Orleans.

60 Hunter, “Dance,” 299.
The above caption reads: “Believe me we did ourselves proud when we elected him commander of the Louisiana Division of the UCV.”

61 Times-Picayune, June 4, 1917.
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Vita

Granville R. Morris was born in the city of Owensboro, in Ohio County, Kentucky. Tichenor’s Antiseptic was a forgotten part of his childhood until he returned to the United States in 2014. While waiting for lost luggage, he saw the product on a Wal-Mart shelf at three in the morning; something rang a bell, but it was during his first year as a graduate student at the University of New Orleans that all the dots connected. While researching Reconstruction-era topics for his thesis, he happened upon the name George Tichenor. A google search and a phone call to his mother revealed that the Tichenor name remains well-known in Ohio County. The product was used and kept on-hand at all times by his grandmother to treat the ever-occurring cuts and scrapes of her grandchildren and his mother reminded him that a local Tichenor girl was an early childhood crush of his. He received a Bachelor of Arts with majors in Humanities and Philosophy in 2011 and a Master of Art in Organizational Change and Development from Hawaii Pacific University in 2014. He has worked as a translator and credentialed language teacher for the City of Narita in Chiba Prefecture Japan and taught as a licensed English Language Arts and Social Studies middle school teacher in New Orleans.