

CAN WE BE SAVED?: EDWARD OWINGS GUERRANT AND THE MISSION
MOVEMENT ON THE CUMBERLAND PLATEAU, 1861-1916

A Thesis
by
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ABSTRACT

CAN WE BE SAVED?: EDWARD OWINGS GUERRANT AND THE MISSION MOVEMENT ON THE CUMBERLAND PLATEAU, 1861-1916 (May 2012)

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The purpose of this thesis is to study Edward Guerrant's influence on the benevolence movement in eastern Kentucky. The importance of this work lies in the historiographical revisions made regarding the mission movement and the development of Appalachian identity. Generally, Guerrant is portrayed in scholarly literature as a minor philanthropic figure. As a result, this paper emphasizes the vital role Guerrant played in the expansion of mission projects in Appalachia. Guerrant started by founding churches, congregations, and small schools, which primarily focused on individual salvation. However, he incorporated liberal theological philosophies and Progressive Era reforms to implement a comprehensive social uplift project that culminated with the formation of settlement schools. Guerrant supplemented the growth of his mountain work with promotion articles found in popular religious journals. The writings focused on the pure ethnicity of Appalachian people during a time of extreme xenophobic attitudes. The thesis uses all of Guerrant contributions to identity development, religiosity, and cultural and social change in the Mountain South to illustrate his importance as an altruistic demagogue.

DEDICATION

I would simply like to thank everyone that played an integral role in my graduate school experience by listing their names. The list is in no particular order. Dr. Bruce E. Stewart, Dr. James Goff, Jackie and Ron Merrifield, Ted and Pat Cook, Dr. Conrad Oswald, Dr. René Horst, Dr. Lisa Holiday, Allen “Big County” Sherrill, Dan Michalak, Paige Badame, Brent Lane, Susie Rivenbark, Justin Philbeck, Dr. Michael Wade, Russell Paige, Dr. David Hamilton, Dr. Richard Smoot, Dr. Ellen Furlough, Dr. CeCe Conway, Dr. T.R.C. Hutton, and April Leigh Walters.

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INTRODUCTION

Appalachia has held an incongruous position within American culture. The region, inauspiciously described through the pen of writers and journalists after the Civil War, represented a portion of society that formed a unique culture. The meteoric rise of Appalachia as a cultural phenomenon challenged Americans to define the region. Through newspapers, short stories, and local-color writings, the Mountain South was collectively seen as a culturally homogenous region that simply fell “behind the times.”¹ Moreover, mountain folk represented a part of American society that was marginalized through its separation from modernity. The mission movement validated the conviction that the region differed from mainstream culture, and altruistic workers promoted the idea of Appalachian backwardness. During the nineteenth century, missionaries focused primarily on the integration of mainline denominational Christianity into mountain society. However, after the turn of the century, the intrusiveness of benevolence work in the mountains increased with the liberalization of social uplift. The expansion of mission work resulted in an increase in Appalachian awareness, and helped add to the constructed perceptions. Both socially and culturally, the mission movement defined the history of the Mountain South because benevolence workers attempted to change the fundamentally accepted flaws of Appalachians. Such a milieu of cultural exchange makes missionaries essential historiographical figures in the development of Appalachian identity.

¹ Henry D. Shapiro, *Appalachia On Our Mind: The Southern Mountains and Mountaineers in the American Consciousness, 1870-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 115.

Of all the altruistic workers in the Appalachian mountains, none were as intrinsically involved in the expansion of the Appalachian mission movement as Edward Owings Guerrant. An intriguing and intellectual figure, Guerrant first discovered Appalachian culture while serving with the Confederacy during the Civil War. He later returned to the mountainous regions of Kentucky and started religious missions as a Presbyterian evangelist. However, Guerrant's philanthropic work ultimately adopted liberal and Progressive Era philosophies, which expanded his spiritual venture into a comprehensive communal uplift project. Guerrant's benevolence efforts were aided by his influential publications that promoted Appalachian neediness. Through his writings in religious journals, Guerrant presented mountain folk as pure Americans who descended from Revolutionary ancestors. The support for his missions largely came from Guerrant's ability to adduce Appalachians as worthy recipients of social outreach. During his career, Guerrant started more churches and schools than any other benevolence worker. But more importantly, Guerrant contributed to the development of Appalachian consciousness through a series of pithy, promotional articles. Guerrant's significance in Appalachian history was critical because of the cultural impact his benevolence efforts had in the mountains. Moreover, the effects of his missions and writings influenced the way many Americans viewed the region for decades after his death.

"Can We Be Saved?" is a contextual biography that examines how the larger social and religious cultures effected the mission movement in Appalachia. The piece primarily focuses on Edward Guerrant's life; however, the narrative overviews time periods before and after his life to illustrate how historical events shaped his mountain work. "Can We Be Saved?" analyzes how theological vicissitudes were affected by the economic growth in

American society and the resulting social class formations. Additionally, the thesis explores the power of the mass media and how public consciousness of Appalachian society impacted the mission movement. The benevolence movement in Appalachia came almost exclusively from forces outside the region. As a result, understanding the motives of mission workers is vital to the historical research.

The first chapter of “Can We Be Saved?” explores Guerrant’s early life, his education, and the Civil War in Appalachia. He was born in a central Kentucky town, the son of a physician, and became an excellent student at an early age. Guerrant earned a scholarship to Centre College, where he was introduced to Presbyterian evangelist Stuart Robinson. The theological principles of the Southern Presbyterian leader helped Guerrant develop his foundation in religious evangelicalism and revivalism. After graduation, the Civil War erupted and Guerrant joined the Confederate Army, where his education and writing ability earned him an adjunct position. During the War, Guerrant fought with different Confederate units throughout Appalachia and the guerrilla warfare that subjugated the region forced the local populations into close interaction with soldiers on both sides. The battle conditions gave Guerrant a close look at Appalachian people and their culture. As such, he was the only missionary with the unique experience of living in the mountains before journalistic sensationalism skewed perceptions of the region. Finally, the chapter looks at Guerrant’s education at Union Theological Seminary after the War, as well as his initial return to Appalachia to promote his mission work.

Chapter Two comprehensively explores how Guerrant shaped the perceptions of Appalachia through his writings in religious journals and texts. Guerrant began to expand his mountain work by writing books and articles that portrayed mountain folk as needy

recipients of religious, social, and economic uplift. The chapter also chronicles the major theological changes in America that influenced the missionary mindset. The great evangelist Dwight Moody preached that all Christians held the responsibility to spread the Word. The new theological principles supported individual salvation and moved much of church's power out of the pulpit and into the parishioners.² One question addressed, is how the new ideological shift effected Guerrant's decision to split from the Presbyterian Church to start his own missionary organization. The chapter is critical to the thesis because it argues that Guerrant helped the contemporary conceptualization of Appalachia as a distinct region. Additionally, the second chapter illustrates how the larger religious trends shaped mountain mission work.

The final chapter examines Guerrant's role in the settlement school movement in eastern Kentucky. The 1890s and 1900s saw the rise of the settlement house as a new form of altruism in America. The crusade was an offshoot of the Social Gospel movement, which changed the mentality of missionaries and made their charitable work expand beyond proselytization. The settlements in Appalachia copied the model of settlement houses in large cities throughout the world with the goal of making sweeping social change in distressed communities. Guerrant created two settlement schools that provided a progressive education, supplemented with a wide variety of programs and activities. The Stuart Robinson School, the last benevolence project of Guerrant's career, is studied in detail using research from one of the school's superintendents. Finally, the chapter introduces the idea that settlement graduates added to the exodus of Appalachia's educated populous.

² William R. Hutchison, *Religious Pluralism in America: The Contentious History of a Founding Ideal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 64-65.

“Can We Be Saved?” uses Guerrant’s personal diary, his books and articles, and a wide variety of religious and social scholarship for contextualization. Guerrant kept a diary, which is housed at the University of North Carolina’s Southern Historical Collection, from 1856 to 1916. The collection consists of hundreds of pocket diaries that primarily contain entries regarding daily tasks. William C. Davis and Meredith L. Swentor edited and published Guerrant’s war diaries, which makes information about the Civil War more accessible. The rest of the diary provides brief insights, within the wash of daily minutia, into Guerrant’s opinions of Appalachian society, plans for missions, and theological rhetoric. Other heavily used primary sources are Guerrant’s books and articles. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, he wrote full-length books that surveyed religion, Appalachian culture, and mission work. Guerrant’s articles, which appeared in evangelic and religious journals, took a focused look on Appalachian life and provided personal narratives about mountain people. The sparing use of Guerrant’s manuscripts and articles by scholars, gives “Can We Be Saved?” a new perspective on the mission movement, American religion, and Appalachian history.

In the 1980s, the research of the mission movement in Appalachia developed within larger topics of Appalachian history, primarily in the development of cultural stereotypes. In *Appalachia On Our Mind*, Henry Shapiro surmises that motives of benevolence workers were largely related to the Protestant denomination’s need for a uniform Christian society. Shapiro believes that church leaders developed perceptions of Appalachia from the sensationalized works of journalists, travel, and local-color writings.³ Furthermore, his study focuses on the progress of the Northern churches’ exclusion of the Southern denominations

³ Shapiro, *Appalachia on Our Mind*, 32.

from the mountain mission field. Despite some solid findings, Shapiro over-emphasizes the conflict between Northern and Southern Churches and neglects to examine the effects of theological liberalism on the philosophies of social uplift. David Whisnant's *All That Is Native and Fine* concentrates on the cultural imposition of the benevolence work in the mountains. Whisnant's conclusions resulted from a case study of the Hindman Settlement School that researches the ramifications of the establishment of outside gender roles, ballad collecting, and the importation of external customs. Whisnant argues that Hindman students became part of a cultural exchange that marginalized mountain society when outsiders forced predetermined cultural stereotypes on mountain people.⁴ The cerebral study challenges previously conceived notions of the virtuous elements of the settlement house movement and weigh the power politics and culture wielded over social uplift programs in the mountains. The subsequent stage saw a more comprehensive study, which finds a grassroots origins of many of the benevolence projects.

The second phase of scholarly literature starts a trend of analyzing the effects of individual settlements. Additionally, the newer works focus heavily on the leaders and founders of the secular house missions. Both *Challenge and Change in Appalachia* and *A College for Appalachia*, for instance, infer the importance of Progressive reforms in Appalachian philanthropy. The former, authored by Jess Stoddart, investigates the progress of the Hindman Settlement School under its founders, Katherine Pettit and May Stone, and introduces the influence of Southern Progressivism into the Appalachian benevolence field.⁵ Additionally, the text surveys the importance that Pettit and Stone placed on the preservation

⁴ David E. Whisnant, *All That Is Native and Fine: The Politics of Culture in an American Region* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), xiii.

⁵ Jess Stoddart, *Challenge and Change in Appalachia: The Story of the Hindman Settlement School* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2002), 9.

of indigenous traditions and the impact of having the two reform-minded women in leadership positions within the Knott County, Kentucky community. David Searles' *A College for Appalachia* chronicles Alice Lloyd and the development of her settlement school projects that culminated with the founding and perpetuation of the Alice Lloyd College, also located in Knott County. Searles' demonstrates the influence of Northeastern Progressivism on the benevolence movement. He argues that Lloyd, a Unitarian, philanthropist and a strict disciplinarian, trumped other outside mountain workers because she did not subscribe to the idea that Appalachians were victims of their environment.⁶ Instead, Lloyd believed in empowering students through a harsh curriculum of liberal arts, health, and etiquette classes.⁷ Although both works are largely biographical, they challenge the previously accepted idea that imperialism and cultural imposition defined mountain mission work. The authors also reconstruct the change of the benevolence movement in the context of the Progressive Era reform movement. But despite the expansion of scholarship on the Appalachian mission movement over the past thirty years, Guerrant's influence on the historiography remains moot.

Most scholars have relegated Guerrant's role in American history to a one-dimensional religious figure who sent missionaries to the mountains under the guise of cultural imperialism. Furthermore, literature places Guerrant into a tertiary role by excluding him from the discussion as a social reformer, educator, or publicist for Appalachia. In *Appalachia On Our Mind*, Henry Shapiro consigns Guerrant's life to one paragraph. The book's brief description states that Guerrant was a Southern Presbyterian layman, who

⁶ P. David Searles, *A College for Appalachia: Alice Lloyd on Caney Creek* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1995), 3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 68.

started thirteen schools and founded his own organization.⁸ Deborah McCauley notes Guerrant's promotional campaign to present Appalachians as "unchurched." However, she incorrectly portrays Guerrant as a denominational demagogue, working solely to eradicate mountain culture in place of more modern thought and customs.⁹ Mark Huddle wrote one of the only works purely dedicated to Guerrant's mountain work. In "Soul Winner," Huddle gives a thorough overview of Guerrant's life and work. Although he paints Guerrant in the proper light as a missionary and social reformer, he does not underscore the importance of his role in the development of Appalachian conceptualization. In general, scholars have overlooked Guerrant's impact on Appalachian identity and the mission movement's connection to the larger religious culture in America.

"Can We Be Saved?" adds two major points to the discussion of Appalachia history in relation to the benevolence movement. The first is Guerrant's overall impact on the missions and settlements that began in the 1880s and grew through the 1950s. Although Guerrant started as a Presbyterian missionary, interdenominationalism later represented a strong point of his missions. Outside of Appalachia, Guerrant's writings helped to add to the conceptualization of Appalachia as an exceptional region and culture within American society. The religious press was never duly represented in the study of the development of Appalachian stereotypes. Finally, "Can We Be Saved?" gives a brief study of the settlement schools started by Guerrant and their impact on the local communities. To date, the only studies on individual settlement schools are *A College For Appalachia* and *Challenge and Change in Appalachia*. However, both pieces leave a void regarding faith based missions that

⁸ Shapiro, *Appalachia on Our Mind*, 56.

⁹ Deborah McCauley, *Appalachian Mountain Religion: A History* (Chicago and Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 412-413.

essentially pioneered the social uplift movement in the region. The importance of this thesis lies in the connection of religious thought and the rise of altruism in America. Moreover, Guerrant's life exemplifies the association of theology and charitable work, while also adding a narrative to the cultural and social effects of the mission movement.

**CHAPTER ONE:
REVIALISTS, THE CIVIL WAR, AND THE DISCOVERY OF APPALACHIA**

When Edward Guerrant left his home in 1861 to join the Confederate Army, he traveled through eastern Kentucky and discovered a “unique” people living in Appalachia. During this lengthy trip over the Cumberlands, Guerrant and his fellow Kentucky Rebels boarded with the Day family. Guerrant described the scenery around the home as the most sublime and romantic he had ever witnessed. In the residence lived a family of ten, who possessed only one bucket, a churn, and one cooking utensil with a skillet. They had to draw water for cooking, washing, and bathing from a muddy branch. According to Guerrant, the family was crowded in a small cabin, with frozen little girls and half naked boys, barefooted and bareheaded. The mother was a buxom, bouncing, and girlish woman who made terrible demonstrations with cake dough, wadding the batter up to her elbows. The men ate sour kraut, cabbage, and sorghum, but the food was a welcome change from their meals on the trail. That night, they slept three men to a bed and awoke the next day surprisingly refreshed.¹⁰

That morning, Guerrant and his comrades met Mr. Day, who had just arrived from nearby Campton, where he traded goods. Day was a noble, intelligent man that seemed more informed than the common mountaineer. Guerrant was surprised by Day’s confidence and lack of fear when he returned home to find a house full of soldiers. He greeted the guests genuinely, told jokes, and impressed them with his knowledge of the region. The group

¹⁰ Edward Owings Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate: The Headquarter Diary of Edward Owings Guerrant*, ed. William C. Davis and Meredith L. Swentor (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 17.

subsequently hired him as a guide to lead them through some of the roughest country in eastern Kentucky to Rock House Creek near the Virginia line. Until Guerrant encountered Mr. Day, he believed that the eastern Kentuckians were an ignorant people, eking out a meager existence in the hollows. But how could this man, whose family lived in squalor, be so sound of mind and witty? Meeting Mr. Day, sparked within Guerrant an interest in Appalachian people that would last for the rest of his life.

During the Civil War, Guerrant believed to have discovered an exceptional culture and people in Appalachia. Growing up during the highly-charged social and political times of antebellum America, Guerrant experienced Appalachia for the first time through lens of a Confederate evangelical. While traveling through eastern Kentucky, he developed the opinion that isolation and overpopulation had caused mountain society to lag behind the rest of America. Guerrant believed that mountain life had created a detrimental societal “island” that required help from the outside world to bring the civilization up to modern standards. His rationale grew out of the exposure to the new theological doctrine of evangelicalism, which in turn spawned from early-nineteenth century religious revivalism. The philosophies of social activism and personal salvation influenced Guerrant’s perceptions, and made him lead the call for altruistic efforts in the Mountain South.

Antebellum Kentucky arose as a religious center by hosting a series of important revivals that helped launch the Second Great Awakening. The 1801 Cane Ridge Revival, which took place in Bourbon County, Kentucky, marked the beginning of a new evangelical movement among Protestants in the western United States. On the expanding frontier, the Protestant denominations revamped their theological underpinnings in an attempt to increase church participation. The preachers broke away from conservatism both in their preaching

style and in their ideology. The Cane Ridge Revival saw the dramatic oratory of evangelicals at their best. Crying, screaming, jerking, and even barking was incorporated in the sermons of the preachers and their congregants.¹¹ Doctrinally, church leaders also moved away from the Protestants of the eighteenth century by focusing on mass conversions, social activism, personal salvation, and biblical inerrancy. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, each denomination increasingly branched out and claimed their stake on the American religious landscape.

During the rise of the great Protestant denominations, the Presbyterian Church experienced a sharp division. Two sects of the Church arose around the turn of the century due to the 1801 Plan of Union. The Plan, approved by the Presbyterian General Assembly, tied together Presbyterians and New England Congregationalists to strengthen Presbyterian missions and prevent divisive competition between the two groups.¹² By the 1830s, the decision to coexist with Congregationalists led to a split within the Presbyterian Church. Old School Presbyterians, who opposed the Union, contended that their Calvinism was historically aligned with the Westminster Confession of Faith, John Calvin, Augustine, and the Bible itself. The very term “Old School theology” indicates that its adherents wanted to retain traditional Reformed doctrines. Princeton theologians Archibald Alexander and Charles Hodge believed that their theology faithfully reflected reformed beliefs and should be central in American Presbyterianism. They wanted a “consistent Calvinism” and developed distinct views on confessionalism, revivalism, and church polity. The Old Schoolers accused New School theologians like Albert Barnes and Lyman Beecher of

¹¹ Barry Harkins, *American Evangelicals: A Contemporary History of a Mainstream Religious Movement* (Landham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 13.

¹²D. G. Hart and John R. Muether, *Seeking a Better Country: 300 Years of American Presbyterianism* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2007), 85.

dropping pure Calvinism and adopting the philosophies of New Haven theologian Nathaniel Taylor.¹³ The Edwardsian or New Light Calvinists' ideas of original sin and true virtue conflicted with the fundamentals taught by the Old Schoolers. Because of their stand on these issues, the Old School faction expelled the New School from the Church in 1837.¹⁴

The Presbyterian Church divided further over the issues of slavery, secession, and state's rights. Northern and Southern factions of the Church arose during the 1850s. This split largely focused on political issues, mainly involving the right to maintain and expand slavery into the new territories. The Southern Church aligned ideologically and politically with Southern leaders who favored secession. In Kentucky, Presbyterians followed John C. Breckinridge, who had served as a senator and the Vice President under James Buchanan.¹⁵ He failed as a Presidential candidate in the 1860 election, but garnered fame for his outspoken attacks on Lincoln and the Republican Party. Breckinridge, a Centre College graduate, believed in the separation of church and state. However, he argued that biblical support of slavery gave the Church moral jurisdiction to preside over the political issue. Leaders like Breckenridge widened the split between Southern and Northern clergy and laity by publicizing and sensationalizing the ideological differences. The Presbyterian Church's divisions before the Civil War reflected the societal divide over slavery. Furthermore, the Church's liturgical structure led to complications during the vast expansion of Protestantism in antebellum society.

¹³ Douglas Sweeney, *Nathaniel Taylor, New Haven Theology, and the Legacy of Jonathan Edwards* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2003), 31.

¹⁴ Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 116.

¹⁵ Wolmer L. Jones, *Generals in Blue and Gray: Davis' Generals* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004), 210.

The hierarchical nature of the Presbyterian Church posed additional challenges during the Second Great Awakening. Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians all began vying for dominance by using revivals to increase their appeal to lower-class Americans.¹⁶ Many of the revivals that took place in Texas, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky during the 1850s were lay movements brought on by social unrest. The religious phenomenon was a reaction to the economic depression and the tensions created by the politically charged issues of slavery, territorial expansion, and secession.¹⁷ Presbyterians did not have the success of the other mainline denominations on the Western Frontier because of the structure of the Church. Presbyterian revivalism became a top down movement and lacked the grassroots origins of other churches. One reason for the Church's struggles was the doctrinal system that required an educated clergy and congregants receptive to the Presbyterian's catechetical organization.¹⁸ As the Church developed through the first part of the century, its successful revivals were held at universities and colleges, as opposed to courthouses or public lands. The Presbyterian Church appealed to young, educated Southerners who felt excluded from the Northern religious, social, and political factions. As a result, eager and zealous students like Guerrant represented the church's target demographic and their foundation for the future.

Guerrant's introduction to the Presbyterian Church came during a little known series of revivals put on by the Church in the late 1850s. The revivals reflected the frontier spirit of the early nineteenth century that promoted the ideals of the Old School Calvinists. Guerrant's public conversion during the 1857 revival became the beginning of his dedication to God and his eventual accession to the calling of the mission field.

¹⁶ Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 435.

¹⁷ Robert Hastings Nichols, *The Growth of the Christian Church* (London: Westminster Press, 1914), 174.

¹⁸ Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 444.

Family and Early Life

The Guerrant family descended from French Huguenots who, facing religious persecution, immigrated to Virginia in 1700. The French monarch, Louis XIV, feared that Protestantism threatened his royal powers and revoked the Edict of Nantes, a decree issued in 1598 by Henry IV that gave French Protestants substantial rights.¹⁹ In 1681, Louis furthered his persecution by disallowing marriage between Protestants and Catholics, removing non-Catholics from public office, banning emigration, and forcing all Protestants to convert to Catholicism. The British government realized that it could capitalize on the French's negative attitude towards religious diversity and offer Protestants refuge in the American colonies. With the influx of French Huguenots in the Virginia colony, the Crown believed that it had secured an educated and well-tempered populous that posed little threat to social order. Unlike many of the other colonists in Virginia, the Huguenots were motivated by religious freedom rather than profits. The first wave of Huguenots left from France and England on British ships in 1700, bound for a new life in Virginia that placed personal freedoms over allegiance to a monarch.

The Guerrant family started a long history of French Huguenots in the James River Valley. In the summer of 1700, Daniel Guerrant, along with his wife and four children, left St. Nazaire, France aboard the *Nassau* and settled in Manakintowne, Virginia.²⁰ Although little is known about the Guerrant's during the first one hundred years in the James River Valley, they, like most of the French Huguenots, assimilated into Virginian planter society and shed their allegiances to the Old World. Edward Guerrant's father, Henry, was born on

¹⁹ Warren C. Scoville, *The Persecution of Huguenots and French Economic Development, 1680-1720* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2006), 64.

²⁰ J. Gray McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant: Apostle to the Southern Highlanders* (Richmond: Richmond Press, 1950), 1-2.

August 15, 1808 in New Canton, Virginia. A fifth-generation descendent from the first Guerrant who had migrated to Virginia, Henry completed his elementary studies at a school near his home. In 1822, the fifteen-year-old enrolled in Washington College, now Washington and Lee. According to the university's records, he was one of nineteen students who started that year; however, he was not among those who graduated from his class. Henry later moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he practiced medicine with his uncle and attended lectures at the city's new medical college. In 1833, he moved to Charleston, South Carolina, and started his own practice. But the opportunities of the western frontier soon drew Henry to Kentucky. In 1835, Henry, although his grandfather owned a farm in Montgomery County, chose to move to adjoining Bath County in the burgeoning town of Sharpsburg.²¹ The town's close proximity to Lexington and Mt. Sterling, along with its three churches, one tavern, four stores, two saw mills, a bagging factory, and a boys' and girls' school, seemed a prime location for a new medical practice.²² However, the town attracted six doctors by 1840. Many growing municipalities experienced an overflow of physicians because of the lack of training or uniform certification required to practice medicine.²³ The overwhelming number of doctors hurt Henry financially, a problem that would plague the Guerrants for the next thirty years. Despite a lack of consistent income, he and his wife, Mary Beaufort Howe Owings, started a large family in their new home in Kentucky.

The first of eight children, Edward Guerrant was born on February 28, 1838. Like many rural Kentuckians, Guerrant experienced death, loss, and poverty. Two of his siblings, William and Martha, died during childbirth, while three others, Marshall, Julia, and Lucy,

²¹ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 3.

²² *Ibid.*, 3.

²³ Judith W. Leavitt and Ronald Numbers, eds., *Sickness and Health in America: Readings in the History of Medicine and Public Health* (Madison: Wisconsin University Press, 1997), 333.

died before or during their twenties. The biggest blow came when his mother died on January 6, 1850. In desperate need of help to raise his large family, Henry hired a “devoted” black servant to work at the household.²⁴ Henry never remarried and channeled all his energy into work and educating his children. With his business continually waning, Henry sent his children to board with family members so they could attend school and not further burden the home financially. Despite losing his mother, Guerrant benefited from his father’s dedication to educating his children. The young pupil soon funneled his efforts into schooling and rapidly became a model student.

Education

Guerrant began his education during a time of great change in American history. During the 1840s, President James K. Polk proclaimed Manifest Destiny as the United States’ policy regarding Westward expansion. Northern Whigs and Southerners were divided on whether or not to support the Mexican-American War. To make matters worse, the issue of slavery and secession loomed over Congress. In Kentucky, these political and social issues threatened to divide the Protestant denominations. Seminaries and denominationally sponsored colleges started spreading throughout the region and gave churches a platform to extend their ideology to the burgeoning middle-class. The Guerrant family’s commitment to education paid off when young Guerrant earned a place in prestigious Centre College. There, he developed his religious and political philosophies under the auspices of great Presbyterian leaders.

At an early age, Guerrant developed into an exceptional student. During his young years, Guerrant attended three different primary schools. He first studied in Sharpsburg, but

²⁴ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 8. There is no evidence indicating the black servant was male or female, freed or enslaved.

his father soon sent him away from home to receive a more advanced education. Guerrant first went to the Flat Creek School, and then to the Highland Learning Institute, which specialized in preparing students for college. While there, he received praise from teachers and classmates. The principal wrote to Henry notifying him, “to secure funds to make sure Edward is able to further his education.”²⁵ A classmate also recalled that Guerrant was a good athlete whom students always elected for any leadership position.²⁶ Guerrant’s brilliance in writing, speech, and management skills earned him a coveted spot at the state’s premier Presbyterian college.

In 1856, Guerrant enrolled in Centre College in Danville, Kentucky. Chartered in 1819, Centre became the second college in the state, after Transylvania, and the first school sponsored by the Presbyterian Church. While at Centre, he received a classical education studying Latin, Greek, English, mathematics, physics, and chemistry. In addition to developing public speaking skills and honing his talents as a debater, he joined the school’s literary society, published poetry, edited the school newspaper, and served as class president his junior year.²⁷ Upon graduation in 1860, Guerrant was named salutatorian of the class. But the most critical part of Guerrant’s college experience came during an 1857 revival, in which, he publically converted and joined the Presbyterian Church.

During the 1850s, Danville emerged as the unofficial capital for Presbyterian education in Kentucky. Unlike other Protestant denominations, Presbyterian clergy needed a classic education and theological training for ordination. As such, the Church chartered the Danville Theological Seminary in 1853, and appointed the famous Louisville minister, Stuart

²⁵ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 7.

²⁶ Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 3.

²⁷ Mark Andrew Huddle, “Soul Winner: Edward O. Guerrant, the Kentucky Home Missions, and the “Discovery” of Appalachia,” *Ohio Valley History* 5, no. 4 (Winter 2005): 49.

Robinson to recruit potential clergymen from Centre's brightest students.²⁸ In 1857, Lewis Green, another prominent theologian, became the President of Centre, where he and Robinson immediately began holding revivals to increase Presbyterianism in central Kentucky. During one of the revivals, Guerrant drew the attention of Robinson and Green when he publically committed his life to Christ and gave a stirring testimonial to the crowd. Both men recognized Guerrant's intangible abilities and encouraged him to pursue theology after graduation.²⁹ Despite an offer to attend Columbia Theological Seminary, which trained the top Presbyterian minds of the South, Guerrant decided to stay in central Kentucky to study theology.

Guerrant's education was based on the new religious philosophies founded during the Second Great Awakening. The Presbyterian Church adopted the ideological principles of the revivalist movements, thereby opening a new set of less conservative principles. But what does that mean theologically? Furthermore, did the Church canonize any of the new ideas that grew from revivalism? The *Presbyterian Critic*, a religious journal published from 1855 to 1897, helped solidify the Church's new doctrine, which was highlighted by social activism, personal salvation, and biblical inerrancy. The journal reflected the need for uniformity within the vast network of Presbyteries, ministers, deacons, elders, and private

²⁸ Richard Collins and Lewis Collins, *History of Kentucky: Embracing Incidents of Pioneer Life* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 2003), 88.

²⁹ Green, a Presbyterian pastor, professor, and school administrator, was born in 1806 near Woodford County, Kentucky but lived with different families in the region while growing up. He started his academic career at Transylvania University in Lexington, but eventually graduated from Centre. He later studied theology at Harvard, Yale, and the University of Halle in Germany. During his professional career, Green taught at Centre, Hanover College, and at the Theological Seminary of the Alleghenies. Meanwhile, he also pastored churches and led local revivals that promoted the Presbyterian denomination. Finally, Green ended his career at his alma mater, where he served as president from 1857 until his death in 1863. See Collins and Collins, *History of Kentucky: Embracing Incidents of Pioneer Life*, 88.

members concerned with the efficiency and zeal of the Church's philosophies.³⁰ Its editors strove to situate the Church in an apolitical role within the context of American society. However, the ideas in the text clearly expressed a Southern doctrine adopted from James H. Thornwell.³¹ The *Critic* attempted to maintain a centrist demeanor, its Southern overtones appealed primarily to Old School Presbyterians in the former slave states. Despite the political biases, the journal brought different ideas of evangelical revivalism to the forefront of Presbyterian literature. Moreover, the grassroots approach of revivalism gave missionaries a new platform to reach potential church members. The Presbyterian Church never committed canonically to revivalism. Nevertheless, the theoretical principles of individualism, biblical truth, and social uplift started to infiltrate the discourse of the clergy, laity, and religious literature. The new belief system placed the responsibility of spreading the Gospel on church leaders and congregants. Furthermore, the guilt-driven philosophies meshed well with the growing Presbyterian altruistic community. Primarily, the revivalist principles of the Second Great Awakening were incorporated into theology informally. But clergy members used the ideas of social crusading, individual salvation, and biblical realism to explore and challenge canonical doctrine. One leader, in particular, founded his pedagogical methods on revivalism and helped develop the Church's use of revivalism.

Stuart Robinson, who introduced Guerrant to Southern theological fundamentals, served as a leading figure in the revivalist movement within the Presbyterian Church. Robinson studied at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, and, after graduating, gained

³⁰ Preston D. Graham and Stuart Robinson, *A Kingdom Not of this World: Stuart Robinson's Struggle to Distinguish the Sacred from the Secular During the Civil War* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2002), 193.

³¹ Thornwell became a central figure in the Southern Presbyterian Old School sect. He renounced Catholicism and strongly advocated personal salvation. See Graham and Robinson, *A Kingdom Not of this World*, 193.

national notoriety for his political, religious, and ecclesiological writings. He served as the senior editor for the *Presbyterian Critic* and influenced the organization of the political alignments for the Presbyterian Church. Due to Robinson's prominent status, in 1857, the Old School Assembly appointed him as president of the newly founded Danville Theological Seminary.³² During his tenure as president, he recognized Guerrant's potential as a writer and orator, as such, Robinson recruited him to attend the central Kentucky seminary. As Guerrant's mentor, he schooled the young pupil on the theological philosophies, internal political workings, and the hierarchical structure of the Church. Robinson also appealed to Guerrant's proclivities toward the Southern cause. Before the War, Robinson preached the evils of Northern aggression and condemned fellow Presbyterians who supported President Abraham Lincoln. During the War, Robinson, along with Robinson H. Young, led the Southern faction of the Presbyterian Church. In 1862, he purchased the *True Presbyterian*, a popular religious journal, in order to promote proslavery and anti-Union ideas.³³ Later that year, federal troops seized the paper's assets and issued a warrant for Robinson's arrest. He subsequently fled to Toronto, Canada for the remainder of the War.³⁴ Robinson's unequivocal political support for the South, forced young Guerrant to face the dichotomy of religiosity and secular policy. Southern preachers, in theory, stayed out of secular issues and focused on saving souls.³⁵ However, pressure from local political and community leaders often pushed clergy into advocating for slavery, states' rights, and other Southern ideologies.

³² Graham and Robinson, *A Kingdom Not of this World*, 12.

³³ Robinson purchased the *Presbyterian Herald* and changed the name of the journal to the *True Presbyterian*. The journal had a modest circulation in Louisville in the 1850s and 1860s. He was ultimately trying to combat the Pro-Union Protestants, led by James Craik, in Louisville by promoting Southern religious values in the journal. See John E. Kleber, *The Encyclopedia of Louisville* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2001), 725.

³⁴ John E. Kleber, *The Encyclopedia of Louisville* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2001), 725.

³⁵ Michael T. Bernath, *Confederate Minds: The Struggle for Intellectual Independence in the Civil War South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 105.

Robinson embraced the duality and used his public position as an editor to pass his ideas to along readers. Guerrant's introduction to the Church, politics, and the power of print media came under the tutelage of Robinson's polarity.

After graduating from Centre, Guerrant enrolled in the Danville Theological Seminary with the full sponsorship of Robinson. The ministry seemed like the natural path for Guerrant because of his eloquent writing ability, passion for theology, and masterful oratory. But the culmination of political rivalries between the North and South peaked shortly following Guerrant's graduation and abruptly changed his life. Guerrant's experiences during the Civil War would spark his fascination with the people and culture of the Mountain South. Ultimately, the perspicacity led to the development of mountain missions, and the growth of a secular social uplift movement in Appalachia.

Civil War

During the Civil War, the Appalachian Mountains became a highly contested region due to its strategic value and natural resources.³⁶ But neither the North nor the South maintained large offensive forces in the highlands. Although the occupational armies did cause fierce fighting, the region never saw large scale battles like Gettysburg or Chancellorsville. Instead, the occupiers, from both the North and South, were many times seen as hostile occupiers that repressed mountain inhabitants.³⁷ The Civil War in Appalachia exemplified the conflict between the accomplishment of military goals and the maintenance of civilian life.³⁸ The political allegiances in the Mountain South varied regionally because of the varied range of slaveholding populations and the unique economic connections to

³⁶ Brian Dallas McKnight, *Contested Borderland: The Civil War in Appalachian Kentucky and Virginia* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 2.

³⁷ Inscoc and McKinney, *The Heart of Confederate Appalachia*, 106.

³⁸ McKnight, *Contested Borderland*, 2.

Northern and Southern cities. The diverse delineations caused Appalachians to experience the War in different ways and at different times. For example, on the eve of the Civil War, western North Carolina was viewed by Northern sympathizers as a potential bastion of Unionism. Conversely, Southern supporters believed that the region would serve as a center for capital and a logistical stronghold after the war.³⁹ However, both factions' plan never materialized, and western North Carolina remained largely out of the conflict until the final year of the conflict. In Kentucky, guerrilla warfare dominated the landscape, while in eastern Tennessee and southwest Virginia strategic campaigns tore apart the countryside.⁴⁰ The eclectic set of loyalties within Appalachian society made for exclusive circumstances on the battlefield and an inimitable relationship between armies and civilians. Appalachia's Civil War reflected the conflict's vigorous divisions. But, the lines were not drawn by geographic location. Instead, the region was divided socially and economically with a complexity not seen elsewhere during the war.

The Civil War provided Guerrant with an introduction to Appalachian society. During the conflict, he served as an adjunct and secretary in eastern Kentucky, southwest Virginia, and eastern Tennessee. Guerrant's first perceptions of Appalachia suggested to him that isolation and overpopulation within the narrow, infertile valleys had caused social backwardness. His initial postulates about Appalachia do not mirror all of his later summations about the Anglo-Saxon purity of the people or the outright absence of religion. Guerrant's diary primarily gave a window into the daily life of a Confederate soldier in Appalachia. But his writings also showed the disparity found in the later sensational

³⁹ John Insoe and Gordon McKinney, *The Heart of Confederate Appalachia: Western North Carolina in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 7.

⁴⁰ Insoe and McKinney, *The Heart of Confederate Appalachia*, 7.

promotion of Appalachia through the print media. Although Guerrant left seminary to join the Confederacy, the enlisted ranks of the army served as practical training ground for the burgeoning revivalist movement.

Like many other Confederate soldiers, Guerrant continued many of the religious traditions of the Second Great Awakening during the Civil War. Bands of men regularly held revivals, where vivacious sermons and mass conversions often occurred. The soldiers' religiosity mirrored the South's acceptance of evangelical Protestantism, which originated from the idea that the Confederate cause defined itself as more Godly than that of the North. The Confederate Constitution, Jefferson Davis' speeches, military announcements, and denominational publications all established religion as the fundamental idiom of the Southerner's national identity.⁴¹ Although religious zeal formed a part of Confederate ideology, soldiers' participation in revivals rose sharply after young men experienced the horrors of death and violence in combat. Guerrant's cultural and religious lessons in the Mountain South came to shape his career and reinforced his choice to leave Robinson and the seminary to aid his Southern brethren. He later recalled that his four years in the mountains served as the defining religious training of his life.⁴²

Following the fall of Fort Sumter in April 1861, Guerrant decided to join the Confederate Army. In the summer of 1861, Guerrant intended to accompany several thousand other Kentuckians to recruiting camps along the Tennessee border, but an illness delayed his departure.⁴³ Later that year, Guerrant received word that former Kentucky politician, Brigadier General Humphrey Marshall, had formed a volunteer brigade of

⁴¹ Drew Gilpin Faust, "Christian Soldiers: The Meaning of Revivalism in the Confederate Army," *The Journal of Southern History* 53 no. 1 (February 1987): 64.

⁴² McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 21.

⁴³ Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 4.

Kentuckians in southwest Virginia.⁴⁴ He left immediately and traveled with a small group of men over the Cumberland Plateau into Virginia, where he enlisted as a private in Company E of the First Battalion Kentucky Mounted Rifles. Guerrant served as an infantryman, but by early 1862, he earned a position as a clerk and secretary directly under Marshall. Throughout 1862, Guerrant fought in southwest Virginia, where Marshall amassed his forces in the Cumberland Gap to protect valuable salt, coal, and iron resources located in the region. The defensive position of Guerrant's battalion afforded him the time to observe the intricacies of life in southwest Virginia.

During the trip through eastern Kentucky to Virginia, Guerrant noted that the region lacked proper roads, schools, and other vital infrastructures.⁴⁵ The first trip through the mountains introduced Guerrant to eastern Kentucky society, where he ultimately focused his mission work, believing that the Cumberlands fell into the lowest social conditions in Appalachia. The poor environment in Kentucky became truly apparent after he observed Virginia society. Although Guerrant noted some similarities with the overall apathy of society, he observed the differences that industry had brought to the Virginia mountain communities. In the first week of May 1862, Guerrant's brigade passed through Abington, Virginia, heading to the salt-production town of Saltville. The Smyth County town served as the "Salt Capital of the Confederacy," providing about two-thirds of the salt for the South

⁴⁴ General Humphrey Marshall was born on January 13, 1812 in Frankfort, Kentucky. He graduated from West Point in 1832 and received a commission as a second lieutenant. After his obligatory service he practiced law and became involved in Whig politics. Marshall rejoined the service as a colonel in the 1st Kentucky Calvary during the Mexican-American War, and subsequently was appointed by President Fillmore as a minister to China from 1852 to 1854. Upon his return from the East he was elected to the House of Representatives, and during this time he served as supporter for John Breckenridge during the 1860 Presidential Election. During the Civil War, Marshall served from 1861 to 1863 and after the War he moved to Louisville where he practiced law until his death in 1872. See James K. Klotter, *The Kentucky Encyclopedia* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1992), 610.

⁴⁵ Edward Owings Guerrant, Diary, November 1861, Edward Owings Guerrant Papers 1856-1917, Wilson Library Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Ac. No. 2826.

during the Civil War.⁴⁶ Saltville was Guerrant's first experience with a "company town." He described the settlement as a dirty, smoky, dusty row of houses occupied by inhabitants unconcerned with the monumental events unfolding around them.⁴⁷ Despite Saltville's shabby appearance, the salt mine provided funding for roads, jobs, schools, and technology. The region benefitted from its natural resources sooner than other Appalachian communities on the west side of the mountain range because of its propinquity to eastern cities. The connection with the outside world relied on the railroads built to facilitate the extraction of natural resources. Guerrant believed that the influx of "modern" society had helped the mountaineers of Virginia overcome their isolation and raise living standards above the those found in eastern Kentucky.⁴⁸ But Guerrant's synopsis on Appalachia Virginian society was interrupted when the salt mines were attacked by Northern forces.

In May 1862, Guerrant experienced his most intense fighting of the War during the Battle of Princeton Courthouse. His battalion traveled from Saltville to Mercer County, Virginia, to cut off two brigades of Union soldiers. Led by Jacob Dolson Cox, the Union forces attacked Marshall's men, attempting to take control the strategic cities of Bristol and Abington. The battle lasted for three days and resulted in Marshall and his forces triumphing over the Federal troops. The Confederate victory relieved the Lynchburg & Knoxville Railroad and southwestern Virginia from the Union threat. After the triumph, General Robert E. Lee personally wrote a letter of commendation to Marshall for his valiant efforts in the

⁴⁶ Robert C. Whisonant, "Geology and the Civil War in Southwestern Virginia: The Smyth County Saltworks," *Virginia Minerals* 42 no.3 (August 1996): 21.

⁴⁷ Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 78-83.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 80-85.

mountains.⁴⁹ Although the total number of deaths remained unknown, casualties were said to have reached over 129 on both sides.⁵⁰ The Battle of Princeton Court House introduced Guerrant to the terrors of intense fighting. The battle motivated Guerrant to take a noncombat role, and, for the remainder of the War, he served in a clerical position.

After the Battle of Princeton Courthouse, Guerrant requested and was appointed a position as clerk to the assistant adjunct general. As the clerk for the battalion, Guerrant worked as a secretary, office manager, and staff writer for General Marshall. But on June 25, 1862, only after a month in his new position, Guerrant received a medical discharge for a lingering stomach ailment.⁵¹ The separation did not last long, and Guerrant returned in July, initially serving as a civilian volunteer. By the end of 1862, he earned a commission as an officer. The promotion came from Marshall, who saw the promise and dedication in Guerrant after their service together in Virginia. Marshall, a high intellectual, boasted many of the same proclivities toward politics, oratory, and religion as Guerrant, and the two men connected through their shared passion for scholarly study and discussion. Both also agreed on the strategic trajectory for the Rebels, believing that the Confederates needed to control Kentucky and secure the Ohio River as a natural boundary. The fight for Kentucky defined the rest of the War for Guerrant and, consequently, increased his contact with Appalachian Kentucky.

Early in the Civil War, Southern generals hoped to occupy the Bluegrass state, but overwhelming Unionist support stymied their efforts. The move to control Kentucky became

⁴⁹ George Dallas Mosgrove, *Kentucky Cavaliers in Dixie: Reminiscences of a Confederate Cavalryman* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 41.

⁵⁰ David Stephen Heidler, Jeanne T. Heidler, and David J. Coles, *Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A Political, Social, and Military History* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002), 1156.

⁵¹ Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 40.

a critical issue for Confederate leadership and a point of contention for Southern generals. Some officials believed that the state would serve as a buffer from the North and allow the South to control shipping through the major waterway junction where the Ohio meets the Mississippi River.⁵² Others argued that running the Northern forces out of Kentucky would be too costly and that Union support from civilians prevented a recapture of the border state. Despite the strategic quarrel the Southern leadership decided on a planned invasion, a move that would cost the Confederacy.

The dichotomy of historical, social, and economic agendas within Kentucky made the region one of the high contested Border States during the Civil War. Politically and socially divided, Kentucky remained heavily pro-slavery, but did not secede from the Union.⁵³ Like many Kentuckians, Guerrant's family, friends, and colleagues were divided over the issue of secession and the consequent Civil War. In 1861, a group of Guerrant's classmates from Centre joined the Union and headed to Ohio. Guerrant referred to his former friends, now Union loyalists, as "traitors."⁵⁴ Guerrant's father and brother were arrested by Union soldiers for writing treasonous literature. The pair was held in a jail in Ohio, but the Federal government dropped the charges. The political struggle among Guerrant's acquaintances reflected the larger disunion within the Commonwealth. The fight for Kentucky was deemed a high priority for the North and South because of the region's strategic value. Northern troops controlled Kentucky throughout the war, but faced sporadic, violent attacks from Southern forces in a somewhat unorganized effort to retake the state. Appalachian based

⁵² Lowell Hayes Harrison, *The Civil War in Kentucky* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), 42.

⁵³ Kent Masterson Brown, *The Civil War in Kentucky: Battle for the Bluegrass State* (Cambridge, MA: DeCapo Press, 2000), 4.

⁵⁴ Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 102.

Rebel brigades spearheaded the invasions into the border state, and the Kentucky campaign made up a vital part of Guerrant's war experience.

In the late summer of 1862, the Confederates attempted to retake the Bluegrass State. Marshall received orders to head west over the mountains to aid General Braxton Bragg and General Kirby Smith in a three-pronged assault. Confederate officials believed that Kentuckians loyal to the South would take up arms against the Federal troops and aid in the invasion.⁵⁵ In early October, the Southern armies faced General Don Carlos Buell and the Army of Ohio in numerous skirmishes, the most of important which culminated in the Battle of Perryville on October 8, 1862. Although Guerrant's battalion did not fight directly in the battle, it faced the residual effects of the miscalculations of the Confederate generals. An error by Bragg caused a misallocation of troops, which caused the demise of the Confederates at Perryville. The blunder led to increasing dissent among the Confederate officers about the overall strategy for a Southern victory. The loss forced Guerrant's battalion to retreat back into the Cumberland region. Moreover, the defeat effectively wiped out the Southern forces from the Bluegrass State. The Confederates only returned to central Kentucky periodically under the command of General John Hunt Morgan during his famous raids.

While Guerrant and his fellow Rebels retreated back into the Appalachians, he came into close contact with mountain people. The passage over the mountains represented Guerrant's most thorough observation of upland culture. The first trip over the mountains from Kentucky to Virginia had occurred during the harsh central Appalachian winter and he had contacted only a few highlanders west of the Eastern Continental Divide. But during the

⁵⁵ Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 141.

harvest season, families eagerly awaited to catch a glimpse of soldiers from the Civil War. The majority of Guerrant's initial writings of Appalachian Kentucky continually noted the large family sizes and disproportionate amount of children in relation to farmable land. In the 1862 pass through eastern Kentucky, he penned in his diary, "As poor and desolate as this mountain country generally is, it is fruitful in peaches and children. Any number of flax-headed, bare-footed cunning-eyed, little dirty 'lords of creation' and ladies may be seen at every shanty, crowded between these rock-ribbed hills."⁵⁶ The amount of farmland in the valleys did not require the large labor force needed in other regions of rural America at the time. The population in eastern Kentucky grew up to 25 percent a decade during the nineteenth century and the resulting farm subdivisions led to soil depletion.⁵⁷ While crossing the Cumberlands near the Kentucky-Virginia border, Guerrant and his men stayed with a Mr. William Robnett and his family. The overcrowded house contained three beds, one table, one chair, three stools, and one ladder. "The entire home measured eight by ten feet and all the men and boys slept in one room," Guerrant wrote jokingly, "with Ben, Sam, Pete, Bob, Tom, Dick, and Harry-Polly, Kate, Susan, and Mr. and Mrs. Robnett, and the rest of the family."⁵⁸ Guerrant's journal entries noted some considerable challenges faced by Appalachian farmers. Consequently, the familial and farming issues made Guerrant believe that the mountainous region of Kentucky needed social reform.

The trip back through Kentucky ultimately encouraged Guerrant to return to the ministry. Shortly after his battalion's loss at Perryville, Guerrant made an abrupt decision to

⁵⁶ Guerrant Diary, March 1863.

⁵⁷ Dwight B. Billings and Kathleen M. Blee, "Agriculture and Poverty in the Kentucky Mountains," in *Appalachian in the Making*, ed. Mary Beth Purdue, Dwight B. Billings, and Altina Laura Waller (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 260.

⁵⁸ Guerrant Diary, March 1863.

resign from the army and enroll in the seminary. Guerrant never gave a precise reason for leaving the army, but seeing the death and destruction of battle or the notion to start an altruistic project in Appalachia most likely factored into the choice. Although he did not immediately resign his commission, Guerrant started making serious inquiries into resuming his theological training. Believing that the Confederate victory was imminent and that his service in the military was no longer warranted, Guerrant wrote a letter to the Columbia Theological Seminary asking to enroll for classes in the fall. However, he received a letter from an administrator informing him that the school had closed due to the war. Guerrant also inquired about attending Halle, Lewis Green's *alma mater*, in Germany, but, the depreciation of Confederate dollars made the trip impossible. After Guerrant realized he could not return to seminary, he increasingly became involved in religious revivalism. His diary revealed the refocus with lay revivals. He attended lectures, helped recruit converts, and started developing his own sermons. During his first furlough in Virginia, Guerrant sought out a Presbyterian preacher and attended one of the clergyman's outdoor sermons. The minister's lesson defended the contemporary topics of natural theology and Augustinianism.⁵⁹ Guerrant called the teachings "undesirable" because he felt that the audience of soldiers could not comprehend the scholarly message.⁶⁰ The sermon reflected the conservative intellectual and institutional philosophies of the Presbyterian Church, which contrasted with the traditional "fire-breathers" found in most Southern states.⁶¹ Since Guerrant did not finish seminary, he could not lead Presbyterian congregations. Nonetheless, he found inspiration in the varied Protestant influences brought by the enlisted men. The amalgamation helped Guerrant

⁵⁹Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 560.

⁶⁰ Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 202.

⁶¹ Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout and Charles Reagan Wilson, *Religion and the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 317.

develop a tolerant attitude toward other Protestant denominations.⁶² Although Guerrant believed that had God divined a Confederate victory, the North's ability to prolong the war kept the young officer in Appalachia for two more years.

Throughout the first six months of 1863, Guerrant participated in the long, sustained east Tennessee campaign. Much to his dismay, General Marshall had retired, and Guerrant now found himself under the command of General John S. Williams. The Confederates fought numerous skirmishes with General Ambrose Burnside who commanded Union troops in the Knoxville area. Until the Siege of Knoxville, in the winter of 1863, guerrilla warfare subjugated the campaign in eastern Tennessee.⁶³ For Guerrant, the tour in Tennessee became significant because he met his future wife, Mary Jane DeVault. During the Battle of Pugh's Hill, a small scuffle fought near Leesburg, Tennessee, Guerrant stopped by "Sunny Side," the DeVault homeplace, to refill water supplies.⁶⁴ He immediately fell in love with the youngest daughter in the family and promised to return after the Civil War to take Mary Jane's hand in marriage. The Battle of Pugh's Hill was part of three other small quarrels that involved a trap set by Burnside to defeat the Southern forces and allow the Union to take Abington.⁶⁵ The Union officer, however, failed to crush the Rebel forces, and Guerrant and the Kentucky battalion retreated into the mountains of Virginia yet again.

By the fall of 1863, Guerrant served under the command of General John Hunt Morgan, whom he idolized for the officer's persistent attempts to win back Kentucky for the Confederacy. Earlier that year, the famous Kentucky Raids earned Morgan a reputation

⁶² Guerrant Diary, March 1863.

⁶³ Noel C. Fisher, *War at Every Door: Partisan Politics and Guerrilla Violence in East Tennessee, 1860-1869* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 79.

⁶⁴ Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 345-348.

⁶⁵ Robert Perry, *Jack May's War: Colonel Andrew Jackson May and the Civil War in Eastern Kentucky, Eastern Tennessee, and Southwest Virginia* (Johnson City, TN: The Overmountain Press, 1998), 89.

among Confederate Kentuckians as a chivalrous patriot who remained blindly devoted to the Southern cause.⁶⁶ Morgan did not exemplify the classically trained Southern officer. His first experience in the Army had come when he enlisted as a private during the Mexican-American War. By the time his unit reached Mexico, Morgan received a commission as a second lieutenant. After the Mexican-American War, he returned to his family's home in Lexington, Kentucky, and worked as farmer. Morgan also maintained a militia dubbed the "Lexington Rifles," where he drilled soldiers and stockpiled artillery.⁶⁷ After the outbreak of the Civil War, Morgan incorporated his militia into the Confederate Army and he received the rank of colonel. Morgan's raids produced an imposing psychological effect on Northerners and were covered extensively in the media on both sides of the conflict.⁶⁸ Southern leaders harnessed Morgan's ability to increase moral throughout the Southern ranks. However, his guerrilla tactics were frowned on by some of the more traditional leaders in the Rebel military. Although Morgan's support varied from Southern leader, his defeats in Kentucky in late 1863 and on the Ohio River in late 1863 and early 1864 contributed to the Confederate retreat from the Border States.

Morgan's last offensives in Kentucky, southern Ohio, and southern Indiana resulted in the final Rebel removal from the Bluegrass Region. The three light cavalry units Morgan led fought in the Battles of Buffington Island, Corydon, Salineville, and Mt. Sterling. Guerrant traveled with one of the battalions that saw action in the First and Second Battle of Mt. Sterling. During the first battle, the Kentucky Rifle Brigade met Union forces led by Brigadier General Stephen Burbridge. The federal troops came prepared for the small unit

⁶⁶ Edison H. Thomas, *John Hunt Morgan and His Raiders* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1985), 41.

⁶⁷ James A. Ramage, *Rebel Raider: The Life of General John Hunt Morgan* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1985), 22.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 200.

and the Rebels folded quickly and retreated to wait for reinforcements. The two armies met again at Mt. Sterling, but Morgan's Second Brigade arrived late, forcing the Confederates to fight shorthanded again. Although the Mt. Sterling engagement proved one of the fiercest battles of the war for Guerrant, the Union armies soundly defeated the outmanned Southerners. After these series of losses, Morgan and his soldiers started stealing horses, raiding private homes, and heisting banks and stores. The Confederate leadership tried to cover up such unbecoming behavior to save the reputation of Morgan as a Southern patriot.⁶⁹ Guerrant also lost respect for Morgan during the lootings, believing that the famous raider had lost his moral disposition.⁷⁰ In September 1864, Morgan was killed in a Union cavalry raid in Greeneville, Tennessee.⁷¹ Morgan's death coincided with the fall of Atlanta and represented the continual decline of the Confederate cause. In late fall of 1864, Guerrant wrote: "The moral effect of the loss of Atlanta is much greater than its material loss."⁷² Back in Kentucky, Guerrant and his Kentucky brigades were forced to retreat back to Appalachia, which served as one of the last strategic footholds for the South.

By the end of the Civil War, Guerrant and his men were stationed in southwestern Virginia. Rumors of John Breckenridge leading another attack in Kentucky stirred around the camp and gave the Kentucky Brigade hope for an honorable redemption. Late in 1864, Guerrant reported to General George Blake Cosby, who planned to participate in the Virginia Valley Campaign.⁷³ A major battle never occurred and the Southern army retreated back to Saltville, where Guerrant's brigade fought a few small skirmishes. But with the fall of

⁶⁹ Mosgrove, *Kentucky Cavaliers in Dixie*, 142.

⁷⁰ Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 460.

⁷¹ Thomas, *John Hunt Morgan and His Raiders*, 113-114.

⁷² Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 523.

⁷³ Bruce S. Allardice and Lawrence L. Hewitt, *Kentuckians in Gray: Confederate Generals and Field Officers of the Bluegrass State* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 67.

Charleston and Wilmington in early 1865 and the subsequent naval blockade, disillusionment and mounting tensions arose throughout the Confederate troops in southwestern Virginia. Finally, in April of 1865, news of Lee's surrender hit the camp, much to the dismay of Guerrant who simply wrote in his diary, "It is finished."⁷⁴ When the war ended, Guerrant concluded his duties as adjunct and returned to Mt. Sterling. That May, Guerrant recorded in his diary, "We fought the good fight, and kept the faith, and though the crown of victory did not encircle their brow, the triumph of the deathless principle they defended so heroically."⁷⁵

Throughout the Civil War, Guerrant lived amongst the "peculiar" inhabitants of the Appalachian region. Having spent time throughout different areas of the Mountain South, Guerrant believed that the eastern Kentucky region on the Cumberland Plateau had fallen to aberrantly low social conditions. He compared Appalachian Virginia's schools, railroads, and social strata to his native Kentucky. Guerrant surmised that the latter had fallen behind because of the paucity of industry and employment opportunities. But Guerrant's initial impressions of Appalachia did not reflect all of his later sentiments, which developed during his mission work. In his war diary, Guerrant never mentioned the "pure Anglo-Saxon" genealogy of mountain folk. Nor did he reference the lack of religion as a cause of the social problems. From his war experience, he concluded that the inaccessibility of eastern Kentucky communities led to economic disparity and lowered living conditions. Following the Civil War, Guerrant's perceptions would change while conducting his first medical and mission trips to eastern Kentucky. After later trips, he attempted to create an image of Appalachian neediness that would appeal to middle-class Americans. Guerrant's time in Appalachian

⁷⁴ Guerrant, *Bluegrass Confederate*, 681.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 689.

made him inimitable among benevolence workers because he developed his own perceptions of mountain culture before the region succumbed to journalistic hyperbole.

Post-Civil War

Following the Civil War, Guerrant returned to Sharpsburg, where he started to explore possible career paths. After briefly teaching at a local primary school, he decided to follow in his father's footsteps and attend medical school. Guerrant weighed his options between medical school and seminary, finally deciding that a Christian doctor would provide more practical service than a minister.⁷⁶ In 1865, Guerrant enrolled in Jefferson Medical in Philadelphia, before transferring to Bellevue Medical School in New York City one year later. Upon graduation in 1867, Guerrant returned to Kentucky and married Mary Jane DeVault, whom he met during the Civil War. The couple eventually had nine children; the first, Grace, would later accompany Guerrant on his trips to the mountains, help him keep records of his work, and edit two of his books.⁷⁷ Guerrant's initial move away from ministry did not deter him from pursuing social activism. On the contrary, the applied ability to address physical ailments gave Guerrant his start in altruistic work. In 1868, Guerrant opened his medical practice in Mt. Sterling, but he also allocated a large amount of time to travel east on horseback into small mountain communities to visit patients who otherwise did not have access to medical care.

After only a few years of practicing medicine, Guerrant was led back into the ministry. The handsome income he was making at his office put him in spiritual peril. When he expanded his business in 1870 and sold a share to an outside medical firm he wrote, "How

⁷⁶ Edward O. Guerrant, *The Gospel of the Lilies* (Boston: Sherman, French, and Company, 1912), 94.

⁷⁷ Huddle, "Soul Winner," 30.

hardly shall a rich man enter the Kingdom of Heaven?!”⁷⁸ Guerrant believed that he needed to return to the seminary to serve God’s will. During the summer of 1873, Guerrant increasingly questioned the decision to pursue medicine instead of the ministry. By the end of the summer, he quit his medical practice and settled all of his outstanding accounts. Guerrant then enrolled in Union Theological Seminary in the fall of 1873.

At Union, Guerrant excelled inside and outside of the classroom and studied under imposing and influential religious figures. Located in Hampden-Sydney, Virginia, Union was the most heralded Presbyterian College for divinity training in the South. The school boasted two giants in the world of religious academia, Robert L. Dabney and Charles Briggs, both of whom arrived in the 1870s after the reunion of the New and Old School Presbyterian Church. The two men brought their own unique philosophies to the school’s curriculum and helped make Union a bastion of liberal theology.⁷⁹ Briggs, a New York City native and former Union soldier, started his career as an avid Old Schooler, but he later adopted extreme liberal ideologies. Briggs published fifteen texts that outlined his liberal theology, based on his belief in biblical fallibility. The unorthodox summations fundamentally challenged the Presbyterian belief system by arguing that reasoning, more than scripture enlighten mankind.⁸⁰ Additionally, he posited that biblical inerrancy was a modern idea, and not originally sanctioned by the Westminster Confession, the 1646 Calvinist doctrine that the Presbyterian Church followed.⁸¹ The New York theologian ultimately faced excommunication from the Church for his biblical theology. Guerrant, like other young

⁷⁸ Guerrant Diary, June 1870.

⁷⁹ Gary J. Dorrien, *The Making of American Liberal Theology: Idealism, Realism, and Modernity, 1900-1950* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 21.

⁸⁰ James L. Kugel, *How to Read the Bible: A Guide to Scripture, Then and Now* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008), 2-4.

⁸¹ Daniel H. Borus, *Twentieth-century Multiplicity: American Thought and Culture, 1900-1920* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 52.

theological students interested in evangelism, was drawn to the rousing liberalism and unique interpretations of biblical and Presbyterian liturgy presented by Briggs.

A more influential figure in Guerrant's education and his personal life was Robert L. Dabney. Born on March 20, 1820 in Louisa County, Virginia, Dabney emerged as a prominent Southern Presbyterian theologian and an ecclesiastical historian before the Civil War.⁸² During the Civil War, Dabney served as the chaplain of the 17th Virginia Infantry of the Confederate Army, and later was appointed to the Chief of Staff to General Stonewall Jackson.⁸³ Following the war, Dabney, who historian C. Vann Woodward described as a champion of the Lost Cause, supported the expansion of Presbyterian missions with the goal of promoting Southern ideologies.⁸⁴ One of the Church's first proponents of organized mission work, Dabney argued that Presbyterian leaders' needed to focus not only on China and other Asia countries, but also on neglected regions within the United States.⁸⁵ As Guerrant's advisor at Union, Dabney challenged the pupil academically. The men connected under the auspices of their shared the Confederate Christian ideology. For entertainment, Dabney and Guerrant held heated debates for the Seminary's students, covering topics of biblical inerrancy, African American education, and natural versus philosophical theology. Guerrant became Dabney's prized protégé and he was recognized as one of Union's top students. Dr. Bishop, a theology professor, insisted that Guerrant's sheer intellect was superior to most other students, faculty, and clergy.⁸⁶ In the spring of 1875, Guerrant

⁸² Thomas Cary Johnson, *The Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1903), 11.

⁸³ Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 66.

⁸⁴ Comer Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 110.

⁸⁵ Johnson, *The Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney*, 25.

⁸⁶ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 71.

graduated from Union at the top of his class. Guerrant's experience at the Seminary bolstered him into the exclusive world of the Presbyterian elite, which gave him a prominent role within the Church.

Guerrant's years at Union put him in contact with influential Presbyterian leaders, many of whom introduced the fledgling minister to the Church's mission programs. In addition to guidance concerning missionary work from Dabney, Guerrant graduated with missionary and future Church official Samuel Chester. Chester was raised in a devout Christian home in Mt. Holly, Arkansas. He obtained his undergraduate degree from Washington College.⁸⁷ He was appointed Secretary of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, where he served for over twenty years. As Secretary, Chester held a powerful position that enabled him to wield influence over the Church's missionary policy. Despite a fundamental quarrel regarding the importance of rural domestic missions, Guerrant's relationship with Chester helped provide support and funding from Church leaders for the Appalachian mission movement. In the post-Civil War world of Presbyterian politics, networking was essential for prospective clergyman to receive pastoral appointments and to earn status within the Church's hierarchy.⁸⁸ Union provided Guerrant with the necessary notoriety and alliances to ensure his spot behind the pulpit and eventually as a missionary leader.

In the summer of 1875, Guerrant returned to Mt. Sterling and started his career as a Presbyterian preacher and missionary. The Church appointed Guerrant the pastor of three

⁸⁷ Christopher M. Duncan, "Benjamin Morgan Palmer: Southern Presbyterian Divine," (Ph.D. diss., Auburn University, 2008), 174.

⁸⁸ Mark A. Noll and Luke E. Harlow, *Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the Present* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2007), 214-215.

regional churches, and he quickly gained a reputation as a superior orator and preacher.⁸⁹ At the Synod meeting in Covington, Kentucky, in 1877, Church leaders nominated Guerrant to the Committee of Home Missions, much to the delight of Dabney, Chester, and Stuart Robinson, all of whom had fought for his membership.⁹⁰ Guerrant's first task on the Committee was to assess the Presbyterian presence within the Commonwealth. In a fiery report, he concluded that the Presbyterians neglected their duties within the state and blamed the Church's leaders for the low number of Presbyterian congregations.⁹¹ He used the paucity of Presbyterian churches in eastern Kentucky as an example to underscore his argument to push for increased altruism in the mountains. Guerrant proclaimed to the Committee members, "Only one days ride east of Mt. Sterling, there are four county seats which have no houses of worship, and some of these towns contain hundreds of souls. They have jails and gambling halls, but no house of God's worship."⁹² Church leaders were compelled to accept Guerrant's less than flattering assessment of their policy because of his stint in the Mountain South while fighting for the Confederacy. Throughout his report, Guerrant cited historical knowledge of Appalachian religiosity and used both his practical experience and theological training to validate his position. Guerrant's initial report gave him a solid reputation within leadership circles and afforded him upward mobility in the Church's competitive hierarchical structure.

Guerrant rapidly gained the attention of Church leaders in Louisville with his work in Mt. Sterling and as a member of the Committee of Home Missions. In 1879, he was offered a position as pastor of the historic First Presbyterian Church in Louisville. By then, Louisville

⁸⁹ Huddle, "Soul Winner," 25.

⁹⁰ Edward O. Guerrant, *The Soul Winner* (Lexington: John B. Morton & Company, 1896), 119.

⁹¹ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 78.

⁹² Guerrant, *Soul Winner*, 121-129.

had emerged as the epicenter of the Southern Presbyterian Church and Guerrant capitalized on his new position.⁹³ He used his new found association with Presbyterian policy makers to challenge their plan, which placed domestic missions as secondary to foreign missions. Guerrant cited the logistical problems and financial burdens accompanied with overseas benevolence work. In an 1880 speech at First Presbyterian Church, Guerrant argued that home missions in the South were essential to rebuilding the moral, social, and economic foundation of the former Confederate states.⁹⁴ Guerrant successfully appealed to the patriotic nature of Church administrators to gather support for his first altruistic endeavor in Appalachia. Given the growth of First Presbyterian and Guerrant's successful affiliation with the Committee of Home Missions, in 1881, the Church made Guerrant the Evangelist of the Synod of Kentucky.⁹⁵ Guerrant resigned his pastorate in Louisville, and immediately started focusing solely on mission work. For the next thirty-five years, Guerrant started scores of churches, formed countless congregations, and converted thousands of people. The Presbyterian Church supported the initial stages of Guerrant's mission movement in Appalachia. However, in the ensuing years, the changing theology within American religious culture overtook the denominational influence in the home mission phenomenon.

Guerrant came of age amidst a tumultuous political and religious backdrop. In the mid-nineteenth century, the ideological differences within the Presbyterian Church challenged the denomination's theological fundamentals. The issues of slavery, state's rights, and internal improvements, which previously were suppressed with a series of political compromises, finally led to secession and war. But within the disunion, opportunities arose

⁹³ Kleber, *Encyclopedia of Louisville*, 543.

⁹⁴ Guerrant, *Soul Winner*, 171.

⁹⁵ Edward O. Guerrant, *The Galax Gatherers: Gospel among the Southern Highlanders* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1910), viii.

for Guerrant to fight for his beloved Confederate brethren, and later, to align with powerful factions of the Southern Presbyterian Church. Both the Church and the Rebel army provided Guerrant with an education in religiosity. The former introduced Guerrant to complex ideas about Calvinism, personal salvation, and ecclesiological thought. The latter provided him with practical knowledge about the effects and power of revivalism. But most importantly, the Civil War placed Guerrant in a variety of regions within Appalachia, where he discovered a marginalized population. The encounters with mountain folk ultimately inspired Guerrant to return to seminary and pursue a career in the mountain home mission field. Additionally, his knowledge of the region bolstered him into a leadership role within the domestic altruistic community. The first decade of Guerrant's career was served solely under the guise of the Southern Presbyterian Church and its theological underpinnings. However, the rise of the united theological principles of American evangelism, under the leadership of Dwight Moody, led Guerrant into interdenominational mission work. The succeeding phases of Guerrant's mission work were defined by the morals of his consistently heterogeneous spiritual beliefs. Furthermore, Guerrant used the power of the national media to bolster his movement by creating the image of Appalachians in need and worthy of social redemption.

**CHAPTER TWO:
EVANGELICALS, THE SOUL WINNERS SOCIETY, AND GUERRANT'S
APPALACHIA**

In an 1897 sermon to the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Guerrant addressed the religious penury in the mountains of Kentucky. He informed the church members that tens of thousands of eastern Kentuckians had never heard a sermon of any kind. The reason for the paucity of religion involved spiritual, geographic, and social difficulties. Guerrant blamed the Devil for keeping the Gospel away from mountain folk. He also stated that it remained difficult to find ministers willing to travel to the far reaches of Appalachia and face the hardships of life in a strange and new land. But Guerrant insisted that it was the congregants' duty to go into the mountains and preach. He told them that mountain people were a noble people who loved the Church and wanted the Gospel. Guerrant left the congregants with a question, "In thinking of them as in thinking of the heathen, the question is not, 'Can they be saved without the Gospel?' but, 'Can we be saved if we do not send them the Gospel?'"⁹⁶

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, industry and urbanization permanently changed the fabric of American society. The growing cities filled with farmers and European immigrants in search of improved lifestyles. After the Civil War, economic expansion drove the goals of Gilded Age politicians and industrialists. Socially, the divide between rich and poor grew and a class consciousness developed that separated society along

⁹⁶ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 135-137.

economic lines.⁹⁷ A burgeoning middle-class also developed during this period of economic change. The progressively-minded group of doctors, lawyers, and merchants that emerged in the final decades of the nineteenth century believed that the lower, exploited rungs of society needed assistance and protection from the dangers and social ills of industrial America.⁹⁸ Religion further influenced the formation of the philanthropically inclined citizenry by introducing wide-scale evangelical thought. Revival movements gave people the ideological basis for spreading social uplift through religion.

In the 1870s, Kentucky transformed from a rural, agriculturally based society to an industrial state. The most important factor in this shift came from the expanding railroad systems that opened markets and created cheaper goods. The rails overtook the interstate waterways as the preferred form of transportation because of their speed and efficiency.⁹⁹ Mechanized production started to overtake cottage industry and more Kentuckians relied on manufactured goods. Louisville and Lexington developed into manufacturing centers, producing dry goods, textbooks, milled flour, and legal distilled whiskey.¹⁰⁰ Heavy extractive industry also led to the implementation of the railroads. The rails allowed companies to extract valuable timber and coal from the eastern Kentucky mountains. Industrialization encouraged an increase in wage earners and facilitated the growth of an urban middle-class. The prosperity within Kentucky's urban areas caused a similar social activism movement that occurred through the North and Midwestern United States. However, the rural Appalachian regions of Kentucky did not develop the philanthropically-minded middle-class found in

⁹⁷ Mark Wahlgren Summers, *Party Games: Getting, Keeping, and Using Power in Gilded Age Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 186.

⁹⁸ Andrea Tone, *The Business of Benevolence: Industrial Paternalism in Progressive America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 23-24.

⁹⁹ Hambleton Tapp and James K. Klotter, *Kentucky: Decades of Discord* (Lexington: University of Press of Kentucky, 1977), 53.

¹⁰⁰ James K. Klotter, *A New History of Kentucky* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 139.

previously established industrialized areas. As a result, in the 1890s and early 1900s, the proletariat remained primarily sheltered from the outside voices calling for social justice.

Benevolence and mission work, which emerged after the Civil War, grew through the late nineteenth century and peaked during the early twentieth century. Protestants began sending missionaries to China and Pacific Island countries as early as the 1820s, but domestic mission work failed to increase until the ascent of evangelicalism. The call to spread religion was central to the doctrine of Protestant denominations. The impetus for the doctrinal change was industrialization and the resulting hardships suffered by the working classes. Without a minimum wage, insurance, or worker compensation, workers were held at the mercy of capitalists. The growth of social consciousness resonated first with women's groups and organizations. These female assemblages, made up of middle-class Protestants, incorporated beliefs of their own self image to justify a wide range of social uplift activities.¹⁰¹ The mission movement in Appalachia reflected many of the same principles found in urban areas. But the movement was spurred on by the failures of altruism in the former slave states after the Civil War.

Reconstruction in the South marked the beginning of denominationally-sponsored domestic mission work in the United States. Northern whites sought to help blacks break free from the chains of oppression through religion and education. Philanthropic groups supported the movement and aimed to give Southern blacks a chance at financial independence. The groups argued that blacks were ignorant, immoral, yet also religious by nature and worthy of redemption. Believing that they had failed to uplift African-Americans, however, benevolence groups shifted their attention to Appalachia following Reconstruction. Many

¹⁰¹ Lori D. Ginzberg, *Work and the Women of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 3.

Northerners saw similarities with blacks in the South and whites in mountains. Both groups lived in isolated pockets, without access to educational systems and under impoverished conditions. However, mountain society differed in one critical way: it was white.¹⁰² The racial continuity gave the altruistic workers an inherent connection to Appalachians and ultimately increased their commitment to improve social conditions in the mountains.

The benevolence movement in Appalachia posed different challenges because the region initially lacked an internal push for activism. Native Appalachians did not perceive any “problems” with their society. As such, uplift efforts originated from outside the region. The call for uplift emerged as Appalachia society developed into part of popular culture in American society after the Civil War. By the 1880s, the *New York Times* began extensive coverage of feuds in the region, which swayed many Americans to believe that upland culture was inherently violent and lawless. When benevolence workers entered the region, they noted the problems of poverty, isolation, and social backwardness that plagued the mountains. They also insisted that Appalachians remained “unchurched.” As a result, the call to spread Protestantism in the mountains largely grew from the belief that the region was void of religion. A primary hindrance was the absence of transportation and complex logistics of mission projects in Appalachia. The ancient mountain range hampered the creation and maintenance of roads and other transportation arteries. Unlike metropolitan areas, missionaries argued that mountain society lacked the internal infrastructure necessary for workers to uproot and live in the mountains for months. An increased level of commitment and funding was required for mountain altruistic work when compared to urban missions. Ultimately, denominations served a vital role by providing financial and logistical

¹⁰² James K. Klotter, “The Black South and White Appalachia,” *The Journal of American History* 66 no. 4 (March 1980): 832.

support to make inroads into Appalachia until the railways penetrated further in the hollows with the advent of more extractive industry.

Guerrant contributed to the benevolence and mission movement by establishing missions and creating perceptions of mountain people through his promotional writings. During the 1890s and 1900s, Guerrant worked with the Presbyterian Church as well as his own mission group to implement social and religious uplift projects in the Cumberlands and beyond. Guerrant founded churches, schools, and clinics, all of which aimed to uplift Appalachian residents. He claimed that the religious void in the region had caused the majority of the perceived social problems, and only by spreading the Gospel could mountaineers realize improved social conditions. Moreover, Guerrant used the print media to popularize his movement. Capitalizing on the mounting xenophobia of late-nineteenth-century Americans, he portrayed mountain people as a pure race of Anglo-Saxons who remained untouched by the outside world. Guerrant also used new guilt-driven theological principles of evangelic to convince outsiders that it was their moral responsibility to save Appalachians. Most scholars have argued that benevolence workers in the mountains consisted of women's groups fueled by a sense of middle-class idealism who trudged into the hills on their own accord at the same time industrialization emerged. However, Guerrant's mountain work began before the railroads reached the hollows and provided much of the infrastructure and promotion for later mission work.

First Missionary Work

After his appointment as Evangelist of the Synod of Kentucky in the winter of 1881, Guerrant concentrated his mission efforts on the people of eastern Kentucky. As Evangelist of the Synod, he oversaw the spread of Presbyterianism in the eastern two-thirds of the state,

which included the Bluegrass and mountainous regions. Immediately after his appointment, Guerrant moved back to Mt. Sterling because of his local support in the region and the city's proximity to the Cumberland Region. For the next five years, Guerrant did not pastor a church, choosing instead to focus solely on expanding the Presbyterian missions in the eastern part of the state. During the first half of the 1880s, Guerrant also moved away from strict Presbyterianism after being exposed to the theology of the evangelist movements from Britain and the Northeastern United States. His new found religious beliefs opened ideological doors and gave him a foothold in interdenominational cooperation that would later represent a cornerstone of Guerrant's mission efforts.

Guerrant's mission work in Appalachia started while he served as the pastor of First Presbyterian in Louisville. His full efforts became available after his appointment to the Synod. Even during the bustle of being a pastor in the one of the Queen City's largest churches, Guerrant took two trips to the mountains to visit the Highlands Mission School.¹⁰³ Founded in the late 1870s, the school was one of the first mountain missions sponsored by the Presbyterian Church. Upon Guerrant's return to the region, he took control of the operations at Highlands. The School increased its enrollment 150 percent during Guerrant's two-year tenure as interim director. An 1881 article in the *New York Evangelist* hailed the successes of the Highlands School, located outside Clay City, Kentucky, claiming that it "brought much needed religion and education to a distraught place."¹⁰⁴ The publicity in the religious journal was the first of many pieces that garnered national attention to the mission movement and Guerrant. Although he valued the tenure at the Highlands Mission School,

¹⁰³ Guerrant later founded a settlement school named Highland Institute. Although the two institutions shared a similar name they were not connected in any way.

¹⁰⁴ "Ministers and Churches," *New York Evangelist* 52 no. 3 (January 20, 1881): 5.

Guerrant resigned the position, believing that the Church needed to move mission efforts into the Cumberland Plateau region. In the early 1880s, Guerrant returned to the Cumberland Mountains, where he had served the Confederacy nearly twenty years earlier, to pioneer the Presbyterian's mountain mission work.

In 1883, Guerrant embarked on the first of several trips to the Cumberland region as a missionary under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church. Along the journey, Guerrant used revivals to encourage mountain people to visit his makeshift churches. In June 1883, Guerrant led a series of meetings that started in Clark County and then followed up the Kentucky River toward the mountains. The first revival, held in a country store, with the bar as a pulpit, saw thirty people confess their sins.¹⁰⁵ Within a few months, the new congregation bought the old building and converted it to serve as the town's first Presbyterian Church.¹⁰⁶ For the rest of the summer, Guerrant traveled in the region, where he perfected his craft and developed methods to draw in large crowds. He recruited young seminary students from Danville to help promote his revivals and began making connections with local leaders within the communities that he proselytized.¹⁰⁷ During his first full year as Evangelist of the Synod, Guerrant preached over three hundred sermons, organized ten churches with thirty nine officers, and brought eight hundred people into the Church.¹⁰⁸ An explanation for Guerrant's almost instant success came from his well-rounded approach toward uplift. Not only did he promise people salvation, he sought to alleviate the educational and medical problems that plagued southeastern Kentuckians. The notice from larger religious and lay populaces across the growing media markets helped Guerrant

¹⁰⁵ Guerrant Diary, July 1882.

¹⁰⁶ "Ministers and Churches," *New York Evangelist* 54 no.29 (July 19, 1883): 4.

¹⁰⁷ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 93.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 94.

financially. It also made Guerrant realize the power of print media that he later used to help bring Appalachia to the forefront of American culture.

In addition to ministry, Guerrant's medical training opened a new way of reaching people in the mountains. The impromptu and organized clinics Guerrant held created a level of trust within Appalachian's traditional communities. In an 1884 diary entry, Guerrant described the crowds of people that showed up to hear the gospel, but mainly they came to have their ailments assessed by a trained professional.¹⁰⁹ Robert Dabney, Guerrant's mentor at Union, endorsed the idea of preaching then healing, believing that it gave Guerrant a prophetic-like quality.¹¹⁰ Guerrant carried a large tent with a portable organ that he set up and preached to crowds in the morning, while during the lunch recess he held medical clinics. Some of the clinics Guerrant organized continued to operate into the 1930s. A major focus of the medical campaigns was battling trachoma, a debilitating eye disease that had infected nearly 10 percent of eastern Kentuckians.¹¹¹ Trachoma continued to plague mountain communities through the 1910s, and fighting the ailment was crucial to most benevolence workers. Guerrant took a pragmatic approach to attack social burdens and believed that medicine represented one of the conduits to saving souls. But, above all, he believed that interdenominationalism would lead missionaries to spread a purer form of Protestantism into Appalachia.

¹⁰⁹ Guerrant Diary, August 1884.

¹¹⁰ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 98.

¹¹¹ John McMullen, "Trachoma: A Study of its Prevalence in the Mountain Section of Eastern Kentucky," *Public Health Reports (1896-1970)* 30, no. 10 (March 1915): 678.

Guerrant often coordinated mission work with other Protestants, which was rare in the denominationally driven mission field.¹¹² In 1884, Guerrant spent six months in the mountains with his Methodists, Baptist, and Unitarian “brethren” organizing revivals, creating churches, and continuing his medical clinics. On September 21, 1884, Guerrant held a successful revival in Jackson, the Breathitt County seat, in which 129 people confessed, 33 of which were Methodists, two into the Reformed Church, and the remaining 94 joined the Presbyterians.¹¹³ The meeting in Jackson began Guerrant’s collaboration with other denominations in Appalachia. He argued that mountain work was “God’s work” and warned that drawing denominational lines created a rift for the overall movement. Nevertheless, Guerrant remained under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church, which believed that their doctrine and liturgy needed to be used exclusively to spread the proper religion among mountain people. In a letter to the Church leaders in 1885, Guerrant insisted that working with sister Churches functioned as a critical component to his mission work while Evangelist of the Synod.¹¹⁴ The Church never adequately responded to Guerrant’s cries for coalescing with other churches to improve the efforts of the missions. But the Presbyterian leadership by no means overtly opposed Guerrant’s work with other denominations, suggesting that scholars’ summations that Guerrant and the Church were at odds is tenuous at best. During his tenure as Evangelist of the Synod, Guerrant added 2,707 new members to the Presbyterian Church, organized 23 congregations in Central and Eastern Kentucky, and

¹¹² In Mark Huddle’s piece, “Soul Winner,” he argued that Guerrant and the Presbyterian Church fought over the direction of the missions in Appalachia. And that tensions between Guerrant and the Church helped lead to Guerrant’s eventual spilt from the Presbyterians.

¹¹³ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 98.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 98.

raised \$16,781 for the coffers.¹¹⁵ Guerrant's reputation continued to grow in both secular and non-secular circles and his undeniable successes earned him a promotion to Evangelist-at-Large.

During the mid-1880s and early 1890s, Guerrant continued to maintain congregations in the Bluegrass Region while pioneering mission work in the mountains. In 1885, Guerrant formed a church in Wilmore, just outside Lexington, which was his first pastorate since the beginning of the decade. He remained the preacher at the Wilmore church until 1901. The leadership also appointed him to pastor the oldest Presbyterian Church in the state, Troy Presbyterian, where he led until his break from the Church in 1896. In addition to his obligatory pastorates, Guerrant served as a visiting minister at churches throughout the South during the 1890s. For the next ten years, Guerrant divided his time between leading services and mission work.

In 1886, Guerrant's appointment as Evangelist-at-Large allowed him to finally have the resources to implement his mountain work on the scale that he desired. His diary entries reflect the seemingly endless number of church dedications and new members. In July 1885, the *Hartford Daily Courant* commended Guerrant's work with Appalachian people by stating that he "was civilizing by Christianizing."¹¹⁶ The fruitfulness of his missions also afforded him the opportunity to move into more prestigious and well-paying jobs. In September 1888, a church in Richmond, Kentucky, offered Guerrant a position pastoring part-time. One month later, a large church in Selma, Alabama, extended Guerrant an invitation to serve as their associate pastor. In 1889, Guerrant became a potential political figure when he was

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 101.

¹¹⁶ "What Three Men Are Doing," *Hartford Daily Courant* 29 (July 1885): 2.

nominated for the Office of Public Instruction of Kentucky on the anti-Goebel ticket.¹¹⁷

Lacking a desire to serve as a public official, he promptly turned down the nomination, and continued his goal of expanding mountain missions. By 1896, when Guerrant officially separated from the Presbyterian Church, he had risen as a national figure in secular and non-secular circles. His popularity and expertise from his experiences in the Civil War and missions gave validity to his opinions about Appalachia on the international level. The mission movement in Appalachia was not just a religious crusade to save the unchurched souls of its people, Guerrant preached, but also a campaign to spread Protestantism and bring Appalachian society to the forefront of American consciousness.

Between 1886 and 1896, Guerrant expanded his churches in the Bluegrass and mountain regions of Kentucky. His home churches in Troy and Wilmore added a total of 450 members, of which 250 of the congregants were newly received into the Church. Despite splitting time between his churches, his missions continued to develop. In September 1889, Guerrant took a two-week tour in the mountains, started three churches and added 57 new members.¹¹⁸ The following year, Guerrant traveled to Beattyville, St. Helens, Stanton, and Clay City, where he added 25 new church members and raised \$1035 for the construction of a local Presbyterian Church. By the early 1890s, Guerrant also started to combine education

¹¹⁷ During the late 1800s, William Goebel became a controversial figure in Kentucky politics. From 1887 to 1890, he served in the State Senate and in 1890 he served on the state's constitutional convention. He advocated expanded civil rights for blacks and women, railroad regulation, restriction of toll roads, the abolition of lotteries, expansion of workers' rights, and an end to the monopoly of state text book sales. In 1895, he was acquitted for killing John Sanford, a political rival, in a dispute. But after 1898 most of the opposition to Goebel stemmed from the so-called, Goebel Election Law, which gave broad powers to a three man committee whose early members were allied with Goebel. A controversy vote count in the 1899 Gubernatorial Election, elected Goebel's Republican rival, William S. Taylor. By the end of January 1900, the count proved fraudulent, but on the 30th Goebel was shot and killed on his way to the Capital. Goebel became the only Governor in American history to die in office of wounds inflicted by an assassin. See James K. Klotter, *William Goebel: The Politics of Wrath* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1997).

¹¹⁸ Guerrant Diary, February 1890.

with his evangelical approach to address spiritual, social, and educational problems in eastern Kentucky. The formula of uplift, which Guerrant pioneered and quickly mastered, served as the template used by mountain benevolence workers throughout the first half of the twentieth century.

During the 1890s, Guerrant's movement arose to the forefront of philanthropic efforts in the United States. The expansion of extractive industry helped bring the social problems of Appalachia to the attention of the burgeoning progressive reformers. Both capitalists and benevolence workers thought Appalachia society differed from "modern" America, and they sought to bring change to the region.¹¹⁹ The industrialists believed that electric power, wage jobs, and modern amenities would change the region. Conversely, benevolence workers held that education, religion, and modern ideological thought brought social change. Guerrant's first major step in the mission movement came in 1896, when he separated from the Presbyterian Church and created his own philanthropic organization. Using his experience as a Presbyterian missionary and what he had learned about the new accessibility of mass media, he soon strengthened the movement on the Cumberland Plateau.

Soul Winner

Guerrant's new nondenominational benevolence organization, "The Society of Soul Winners" incorporated a social uplift agenda that outshined the efforts of the Synod. The Soul Winners Society also moved away from the theology of the Presbyterian Church by integrating the ideas of the guilt driven Holiness movement that gained popular in the urban Northeast. Guerrant's connections with Northeastern philanthropic groups increased because of his adoption of the new burgeoning theological principles and through his writings in

¹¹⁹ Ron D. Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982), 43.

popular evangelical journals. The social awareness of middle-class, urban Americans led them to start looking for other projects, outside of their cities. The Society of Soul Winners facilitated the connection between Guerrant and charitable donors, giving him an upper hand on the strict denominationalists that relied solely on church members for support. Guerrant sometimes appeared at odds with the Presbyterian leadership, and his split from the Church seemed to imply that association had soured between him and the Church. However, his persistent loyalty to Presbyterianism, and the honors he received after his death from the Church's leaders, clouds the understanding of the relationship.¹²⁰ That being said, why did Guerrant chose to separate from the highly competitive world of the Presbyterian Church and create his own mission group?

Some scholars have argued that Guerrant's defection from the Presbyterian Church resulted because of ideological and, perhaps, personal hostilities. However, the evidence used to formulate the summation remains tenuous at best. On one occasion, Guerrant attacked Church leaders for not allocating enough resources to mission projects in Appalachian. In another letter, Guerrant further accused the Church of narrow-mindedness in regards to interdenominational work. Conversely, the Church's willingness to promote and honor Guerrant suggests that no conflict existed between the two. Guerrant quickly moved up the church's hierarchical ladder during the 1880s and 1890s, being appointed Evangelist of the Synod and then Evangelist-At-Large, one of the highest positions within the church. Following Guerrant's death in 1916, church leaders also named the Presbytery that made up the eastern part of Kentucky after Guerrant. More likely than not, Guerrant's desire to expand

¹²⁰ Huddle, "Soul Winner," 61.

his theological horizons and need for autonomy in promotional publications that did not focus on solely expanding Presbyterianism caused him to move away from the church.

Gilded Age theologians influenced Guerrant divergence from the Old School Presbyterian ideology and to adopt the grassroots principles of personal salvation. In the late 1880s, Dwight L. Moody, an evangelist and missionary, influenced Guerrant's ideological principles and he started adopting Moody's methods regarding mission work. Moody became the first entrepreneurial evangelist to expand his mission efforts without the backing of a church.¹²¹ He developed the idea of adjusting the evangelical message to accommodate the audience. Additionally, Moody promoted his work through mass media and presented the recipients of his work in a sympathetic and appealing manner to readers. Moody's ideology marked the rise of Armenianism over Calvinism in Protestantism and the transfer of power from church leaders to the congregation of interdenominational-minded laity.¹²² Although Guerrant did not shed all of his allegiances with the old Presbyterian worship and liturgy, he began to incorporate new ideas of depravity and spiritual guilt that helped to justify the saving of Appalachians.

By 1896, Moody's influence on evangelicals became worldwide and his new theological and philosophical approach toward mission efforts centered on personal social uplift.¹²³ Born on February 5, 1837, in Northfield, Massachusetts, Moody grew up in the Unitarian and Congregationalist Churches of Boston. He relocated to Chicago, where he became known for his "Sunday Schools." The services were so popular that President

¹²¹ Harold W. Mann, review of *Dwight L. Moody: American Evangelist, 1837-1899*, by James F. Findlay, *The Journal of Southern History* 35 no.4 (November 1969): 608.

¹²² James F. Findlay, *Dwight L. Moody: American Evangelist, 1837-1899* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 14.

¹²³ Bruce J. Evensen, *God's Man for the Gilded Age: D.L. Moody and the Rise of Modern Mass Evangelism* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 17.

Abraham Lincoln visited and spoke at one of the meeting.¹²⁴ In 1875, Moody added to the famous evangelical text *The Wordless Book*, and became world-renowned for his methodological approach to preaching and spreading Christianity.¹²⁵ During the 1870s, Moody also started holding large revivals. He adapted new techniques of revivalism to appeal to the growing urban populations. The following decade, Moody used education as the foundation for his evangelical work. Moody started three branches of his Bible Institute in Massachusetts and Chicago and held a series of non-denominational summer camps near his hometown. During the 1890s, Moody's organization faced opposition from both conservatives and liberals due to his independent stance regarding theology and politics. Although he became more conservative with age, Moody made enemies because he did not place an emphasis on doctrinal orthodoxy.¹²⁶ Despite facing personal conflicts about theological divisions, by the end of the century, Moody became widely accepted as the most prominent evangelical in the United States.¹²⁷

During his long career as an evangelical, Moody also incorporated a strong missionary element in his message. After moving to Chicago to start a shoe manufacturing company, he began to recognize the destitute conditions in the slums of the city. In 1858, Moody opened his first Sunday School at the YMCA in the North Market Hall district. Three

¹²⁴ Kevin Belmonte, *D.L. Moody* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010), xi.

¹²⁵ *The Wordless Book* by Charles Haddon Spurgeon was originally published in 1866, but a new edition was published in 1875 with Moody's addition, which became the handbook for evangelical preachers teaching to children and people of other cultures. The book assigned a color system to theological ideas. In the first edition, black represented the sins of humanity, red the blood of Jesus, and white the righteousness of Christ. Moody added, the color gold, which represented the Kingdom of Heaven. The text became synonymous with foreign missions in the 1880s and 1890s and served as a guide to present Christianity to uneducated people. See Alwyn Austin, *China's Millions: The China Inland Mission and Late Qing Society, 1832-1905* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2007), 9-13.

¹²⁶ James Findlay, "Dwight L. Moody: Evangelist of the Gilded Age, 1837-1899," *Church History* 30 no. 2 (June 1961): 232.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 232.

years later, Moody left his business to concentration exclusively on social and evangelical work. His first missions reached out to German and Scandinavian immigrants who suffered under the strains of urban life in America.¹²⁸ Moody found unique ways to increase participation by offering candy and pony rides to draw in children and holding English classes to attract adults.¹²⁹ He believed that the growing urban, proletariat needed a promise of salvation in the afterlife to combat their worldly lives that were full of poverty, hunger, and strife. Moody focused on a group of people that did not fit into the fabric of American culture because he could adjust his message to fit their needs.¹³⁰ Much like Guerrant in Appalachia, Moody served the people that the mainstream had condemned.

Moody received neither theological training in higher education, nor officially affiliated with a denomination.¹³¹ The lack of schooling damaged Moody's validity among church leadership, but it also gave him the flexibility to adapt his message to potential followers. Above all, Moody believed in the supreme authority of the scriptures. As a result, he applied his theory of biblical inerrancy to an ideological principle that emphasized a universal concern for mankind.¹³² According to the philosophy, man was emotionally involved with his relationship with God by stories and metaphors that related to his everyday lives. Moody's ideas focused on personal salvation based on a relationship with God and Christ, but he also believed that the burden of responsibility to pass the gospel to the masses fell on the evangelical.¹³³ The guilt-driven mentality of Moody's evangelical school of

¹²⁸ Myron Raymond Chartier, *The Social Views of Dwight L. Moody and Their Relation to the Workingman of 1860-1900* (Fort Hays: Kansas State College, 1969), 54.

¹²⁹ Belmonte, *D.L. Moody*, xi.

¹³⁰ W.A.W. Williams, *The Life and Work of Dwight L. Moody: The Great Evangelist of the 19th Century* (New York: Cosimo, 2006), 68.

¹³¹ Lyle W. Dorsett, *A Passion for Souls* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2003), 80.

¹³² Williams, *The Life and Work of Dwight L. Moody*, 16.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 16.

thought transferred smoothly to Guerrant's subjects in the mountains. Guerrant's move away from Reformed Calvinism was based largely on Moody's ideological stance involving obligatory evangelism. Moreover, the autonomy Moody enjoyed from not having denominational sponsorship granted him the freedom to print and preach without the restrictions of censorship.¹³⁴ The liberty to print gave Moody the ability to control the perceptions of his movement and to present his congregants as worthy recipients of charity. A large part of Moody's success related to reaching supporters and followers via print media, and Guerrant believed that he needed to create a constructed acuity of Appalachian people to maximize support from outside philanthropic sources.

Guerrant's first book, *The Soul Winner*, laid out his goals and ideologies for the society he founded when he broke away from the Presbyterian Church in 1896. Based on a series of lectures given by Guerrant at the Central Kentucky Theological Seminary (now the Lexington Theological Seminary), the book explained the duties and responsibilities of an evangelical minister. The text also contained field notes and portions of Guerrant's annual reports to the Synod of Kentucky. *Soul Winner* enabled Guerrant to capitalize on the power of media. His ability as a gifted writer proved a critical factor in ultimately advancing mountain work because he gave the movement a voice. The split from the Church and the subsequent publication of Guerrant's first book, marked the beginning of Guerrant's career outside of the auguries of the Church.

Soul Winner soon became a didactic handbook for evangelists wanting to hold successful revivals. The book contained instructions for preaching style, hour-by-hour format for revivals, and strategies to appeal to wider audiences. The first section of the book

¹³⁴ Dorsett, *A Passion for Souls*, 80.

explained the roles and duties of the preacher. Guerrant advised ministers to keep their language simple and their sermons short as to not alienate the uneducated.¹³⁵ The next part advised young preachers on polemics, attitude, and patience. Guerrant argued that controversy and religion did not mix (unless the debate involved non-Protestants) and that unification should take precedent over theological disputes.¹³⁶ The text even gave instruction for procedures in inclement weather.¹³⁷ Guerrant's first major work not only served as a textbook at seminaries in the South, it also helped create a call for ministers to aid in Appalachian uplift. A review of the book appeared in the *Christian Observer* and the reviewer stated that the chapters were concise, the sentences were pithy, and the advice for young ministers was good.¹³⁸ Guerrant did not ignore the effects that his writings produced on his mountain work and he owed his refined approach to mission work to the famed preacher, Dwight Moody.

Guerrant's first work emphasized the messianic paternalism shared by many late-nineteenth century. *The Soul Winner* emphasized the importance of taking agency of Appalachian's religiosity to ensure salvation. In reference to the leadership role of missionaries, Guerrant wrote, "lead them, because they cannot lead themselves to the Gospel."¹³⁹ He combined new and old philosophies regarding paternalism toward the perceived subordinate class of mountain people. All of his education at Union involving mission work had come from the famed preacher Robert Dabney, who believed that a moral

¹³⁵ Guerrant, *The Soul Winner*, 20-25.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 15,20-25.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 20-25.

¹³⁸ "Valuable Works of Southern Authors," *Christian Observer* 86 no.47 (November 18, 1896): 2.

¹³⁹ Guerrant, *The Soul Winner*, 54.

decay would inevitably lead to communal deterioration.¹⁴⁰ Moody, shared the same attitude toward paternalism as Dabney, and preached that poor classes needed guidance and leadership to navigate through the changing world.¹⁴¹ However, Moody believed in a guilt-driven philosophy that made mission work obligatory for all Christians. Given Guerrant's paternalistic influences, it is no surprise that the slogan for the Society of Soul Winners became, "The question is not whether they can be saved without the Gospel but whether can we be saved if we do not give it to them?"¹⁴²

The Soul Winner was the first in a series of texts and articles that Guerrant wrote to promote his mission work. These writings also created ideas about Appalachia that increased the appeal of the people to audiences outside of the region. The texts were as much propaganda as they were informative. The Soul Winners, the book and organization, began Guerrant's personal crusade to save Appalachians from their isolation from religion and modernity. Before he could accomplish this, however, he needed to draw attention to the region and its people. Like other writers of the time, Guerrant used Appalachia's unique culture as the backdrop to his stories.

Appalachian Conceptualization

During the 1890s, Guerrant branched out beyond evangelical preaching to advance the mission movement. With the growing mass media and booming transportation sector, information traveled faster than ever before. Guerrant embraced the idea of using new technologies to draw attention to his work in Kentucky, and his writings served as the main conduit to increase support for mission efforts. His ideas about life and people in the

¹⁴⁰ Wilson, *Baptized in Blood*, 92.

¹⁴¹ Williams, *The Life and Work of Dwight L. Moody*, 23.

¹⁴² Guerrant, *The Galax Gatherers*, XII.

mountains, specifically eastern Kentucky, shaped the way Americans viewed the region. Although large newspapers and fiction writers had already published stories about the mountains, Guerrant promoted his pieces to the growing philanthropically-minded Protestant middle-class. His works reflected many of the same stereotypes presented by other writers; however, he focused on the racial purity and “unchurched” nature of the highland population. The majority of his books and articles created an image of cultural homogeneity in Appalachia, but he also took care to acknowledge that the Cumberland region of eastern Kentucky had reached the lowest social conditions in Appalachia.

Since the 1970s, scholars have argued that Appalachian became a distinct entity after the Civil War due to journalistic sensationalism. By the turn of the twentieth century, Appalachia had developed a reputation for backwardness, violence, lawlessness, drunkenness, and ignorance. The *New York Times*, for instance, often reported about widespread feuds in the region, while local-color writers romanticized Appalachian people and lifestyles. But recent historians have overlooked the impact that religious figures had on the conceptualization of Appalachia. Moreover, scholarship has lacked an analysis of how flourishing religious journals shaped the journalistic field and perceptions of mountain life.

In addition to *The Soul Winner*, Guerrant published two books and wrote numerous articles in religious journals that helped to develop concepts of Appalachia and promote mountain work. Guerrant focused on three major points about Appalachian society that he believed made it different from the rest of America. He first emphasized the racial and ethnic purity of Appalachian people. Second, he argued that the people never received the Word of God, labeling them “unchurched.” Finally, Guerrant presented the region as morally and socially destitute, citing feuds, gambling, illegal liquor distillation, and drinking as plaguing

Appalachia. Guerrant's crusade in Appalachian became contingent upon his ability to sponsor sympathy and interest in highlanders. His carefully constructed writings dovetailed with pertinent issues facing Americans, making mountain people seem desperate for moral reconstruction.

In 1890, Guerrant published his first personal publications that dealt with the socio-economic and cultural problems in Appalachia. "Bloody Breathitt," printed in brochure form, circulated throughout the eastern United States during the early 1890s. Some 20,000 copies were printed and distributed by the *Christian Observer* and sent to Presbyteries, where they were spread among church members.¹⁴³ The publication touched on economics, food, industry, politics, and the unchurched nature of the people. Guerrant argued that the residents of Breathitt County, Kentucky, suffered from social ills like gambling and violence due to the lack of religion. The brochure gave an overview of the problems in Appalachia and introduced Guerrant to the impact of the modern print media. More importantly, Guerrant developed a relationship with *Christian Observer* that blossomed throughout the last two decades of his life. The journal became Guerrant's channel to reach casual readers on a mass scale and touch new audiences around the globe.

According to church historian James E. Bradley, by 1800, the religious journal surpassed pamphlets and written sermons as the preferred medium of mass communication for preachers and other spiritual leaders.¹⁴⁴ Throughout the nineteenth century, thousands of different journals were published worldwide and their popularity only spread. Guerrant wrote primarily in the *Christian Observer*, a prevalent Presbyterian religious journal, which began

¹⁴³ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 51.

¹⁴⁴ James E. Bradley, review of *The Religious Press of Britain* by Joseph L. Altholz *Church History* 60 no.4 (December 1989): 568-569.

publishing in the late 1820s. The journal survived though the split of the Church, the Civil War, numerous political and theological controversies, and still prints today. As the cornerstone of Guerrant's publicity machine, the *Observer* and its longstanding reputation helped give the Appalachian mission movement validity with readers. Furthermore, the journal's support of Guerrant added to his national prominence as a preacher, missionary, and expert on Appalachian culture.

In 1827, the *Christian Observer's* storied history started under the guidance of Amasa Converse. The journal formed and was renamed in 1839, when Converse merged the *Visitor and Telegraph*, the *Southern Religious Telegraph* and the *Philadelphia Observer* (the continuation itself of the *Religious Remembrancer*).¹⁴⁵ That following year, the Presbyterian Church officially began its affiliation with the *Christian Observer*. The periodical promoted Southern ideologies, but also sought to reunify the northern and southern factions of the Presbyterian Church. During the Civil War, Lincoln drew up a list of publications to suppress and key civilians to imprison. Under the guise of national security, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton ordered the *Christian Observer* closed, its assets confiscated, and its founder, Amasa Converse, jailed.¹⁴⁶ The war measures created stiff opposition in strongly Christian areas like Philadelphia, where the *Christian Observer* was published. The United States District Attorney rejected the order as unjustifiable and a violation of freedom of the press. Converse closed his doors in the City of Brotherly Love and opened for business back in Richmond three weeks later. At the close of the war, the *Christian Observer* moved to

¹⁴⁵ Thomas William Herringshaw, *Herringshaw's National Library of American Biography* (Chicago: American Publishers' Association, 1909), 93.

¹⁴⁶ Arnold Shankman, "Converse, The Christian Observer and Civil War Censorship," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 52 (1974); 230.

Louisville, Kentucky and had a worldwide circulation over 100,000.¹⁴⁷ Between the 1820s and first part of the twentieth century, the *Observer* absorbed more than 14 other religious publications, serving as the voice of the Presbyterian Church. By the time of his death in 1872, Converse had become one of the most celebrated Presbyterian publishers.¹⁴⁸ Guerrant published thirteen articles in the *Observer* over a 15 year period. The *Observer* served as Guerrant's largest media outlet and many of the articles written the journal became chapters or sections later found in his books. His articles in the journal promoted his mission work primarily by creating the image of racial homogeneity among mountain people.

During the 1880s and 1890s, the rise of immigration resulted in xenophobia within American society. Beginning in the 1870s, the United States experienced an influx of immigration and for the first time many of the immigrants came from eastern and southern Europe.¹⁴⁹ Americans also developed a distinct nationalistic and jingoistic attitude toward to new wave of migrants.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, the majority of these immigrants had Catholic backgrounds, which created competition between Protestant denominations. Guerrant capitalized on the phenomenon by presenting mountain people as racially pure and untouched by the outside world. Interestingly, during the Civil War, Guerrant never mentioned race or the Anglo-Saxon purity of mountain people. He constructed the idea of the "purity" of Appalachian people partially based on reality, but mainly to appeal to his middle-class readership. To gather support for his cause, Guerrant addressed American's need to restore the wholesomeness of their Anglo-Saxon heritage. By presenting mountain folk as a

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 245.

¹⁴⁸ Elmer J. O'Brien, *The Wilderness, The Nation, and The Electronic Era: American Christianity and Religious Communication, 1620-2000 : An Annotated Bibliography* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 483.

¹⁴⁹ Tyler Adbinder, *Nativism and Slavery: The Northern Know Nothings and the Politics of the 1850s* (London: Oxford University Press, 1994), 272.

¹⁵⁰ Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 123.

decendent of “pure” Americans, Guerrant linked his Protestant audience to the people living in the Appalachian mountains.

In the development of Guerrant’s writing about ethnicity, he stressed Appalachia’s connection to the Scottish Highlands. In one of his first articles published in the *Observer* in 1896, Guerrant claimed that nearly every surname in the mountains was McDonald, McLean, McNeal, McQueen, Murray, or Miller.¹⁵¹ He described the people living in the Appalachians as the largest group of whites that had never heard the message of modern Protestantism.¹⁵² Guerrant appealed to Americans’ jingoistic attitudes to help create a connection between the perceived backward population of Appalachia and middle-class Americans in the East and Midwest. In the article “Facts Worth Knowing,” Guerrant referred to Appalachians as the “decendents of Revolutionary Sires and the most American of Americans.”¹⁵³ Unlike local-color writers and journalists who portrayed mountain residents as a backward race, Guerrant presented them as pure Americans, untainted by the outside world. But their isolation from modern society, he argued, had caused a lag in religious and social standards. Guerrant’s articles in the *Observer* became factual accounts akin to scientific studies, as opposed to tales of mountain lore. However, Guerrant second full-length book, *Galax Gatherers*, reflected much of the sensationalism found in other early-twentieth-century writings on Appalachian culture.

Galax Gatherers reviewed Guerrant’s personal experiences of spreading the gospel in the mountains. The book included numerous notations about racial homogeneity and wholesomeness. One chapter in the highly romanticized book, “The Scots-Irish,” detailed the

¹⁵¹ Edward Guerrant, “A Letter From Dr. Guerrant,” *Christian Observer* 84 no.14 (April 1, 1896): 13.

¹⁵² Edward Guerrant, “The Reason Why,” *Christian Observer* 97 no.27 (July 7, 1909): 12.

¹⁵³ Edward Guerrant, “Facts Worth Knowing,” *Christian Observer* 95 no.48 (November 27, 1907): 9.

settling and spread of that ethnic group throughout Appalachia.¹⁵⁴ He gave an overview of the origins of the migration from the Old World into the Revolutionary roots of the Appalachian settlement. Guerrant described the people who crossed the mountain range and moved to the Cumberland Plateau as pure Anglo-Saxon and Scots-Irish with no adulteration.¹⁵⁵ He complemented uplanders on their intelligence, independent spirit, and willingness to accept God into their lives. The narrative told a story about traveling to a hamlet named Glenclairn in eastern Kentucky. Guerrant stated that the town, obviously named by a Scotsman, became populated by “fine and noble citizens that [had] never heard the Word of God.”¹⁵⁶ The book also featured a chapter entitled, “Dan McIntosh,” that gave a biography of a mountaineer’s life in the Cumberlands. Guerrant recalled that the Dan’s attitude toward school did not amalgamate with his “Highland” blood, and he quickly graduated into drinking, swearing, gambling, and fighting.¹⁵⁷ However, Dan recouped his life after hearing Guerrant’s sermon one day on Troublesome Creek. The “old, old story” was new to Dan, but his receptive nature allowed him to take in the Word and ultimately become a missionary and faithful follower. Guerrant’s story about Dan McIntosh embodies the connections he wanted to make about race and religious ignorance. He presented eastern Kentuckians as victims of their environment, who, given the chance, could change with the help of outsiders. The connection between racial purity and religious ignorance linked Guerrant’s audience with Appalachian residents and created a sense of urgency and responsibility for outsiders to help their lost brethren to find salvation.

¹⁵⁴ Guerrant, *Galax Gatherers*, 24.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 101.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

The texts used obligatory methods to appeal to the evangelical ideas growing in Protestantism and reflected Moody's influence on Guerrant. He used a parable from Paul in the Book of Romans on a mission trip taken by the Ladies' Working Society as an example of the responsibility and sacrifice required to complete God's Will in the mountains. The book quoted Paul and stated, "Yes, they cannot hear unless a herald be sent announcing the Good News."¹⁵⁸ Like Paul and his followers, the women rode their carriages to the modest temples in the mountains without one trunk among them.¹⁵⁹ They took only what they could carry in their hands and lived among mountain folk for weeks. Despite the hardships, the serene beauty of the land and people humbled the women. Guerrant added narrative to his pieces to personalize the experience of life in the mountains and how individuals impacted the conditions. But he also utilized the threat of other "false" religions stealing Appalachian souls if outsiders did not act immediately to save mountain people.

Striking fear in his readers, Guerrant warned that Mormonism threatened to take over in the mountains. Guerrant argued that Mormon missionaries outnumbered Protestant missionaries two to one in Appalachia.¹⁶⁰ The Mormons became a source of opposition for the Protestant denominations during the nineteenth century, and instead Presbyterians found their theology appalling.¹⁶¹ Guerrant tried to demonize Mormon leaders Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Parley Pratt, and Brigham Young, stating, "They never looked on without coveting his neighbor's fair wife, good horse, or profitable investment."¹⁶² He also argued

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 205.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 206. Guerrant compared the women's trip to the parable of Paul found in Romans 10 (11-14).

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 121-122.

¹⁶¹ Homer McMillan, *"Unfinished Tasks" of the Southern Presbyterian Church* (Richmond, VA: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1922), 177.

¹⁶² Guerrant, *The Galax Gatherers*, 120.

that these men were “sheep in wolves clothing” who preyed on mountain souls.¹⁶³ Guerrant’s personal attacks on the leaders’ character sought to undermine Mormonism in the eyes of his lay readership. However, he compiled a doctrinal stance against Mormon in order to challenge their belief system and lessen philanthropic support.

The fundamental argument that Guerrant made against the Mormon belief system was based on their theological principles. Guerrant posited that the doctrine of the Mormon Church rested on two pillars: polytheism and polygamy.¹⁶⁴ Guerrant interpreted that Mormons believed that Adam served as the original Mormon god, and, in their system, deities, angels, and men all are the same species. Guerrant ultimately argued that the Mormon Church worshipped man. According to Guerrant, the idolatrous man worship was exemplified by polygamy and the belief that the Holy Ghost took the form of a man. Believing that Jesus took three wives, Guerrant argued, Joseph Smith endorsed polygamy. Guerrant cited John D. Lee, an influential bishop in the Mormon Church for thirty-seven years, who confessed to having 19 wives and 64 children.¹⁶⁵ He argued that Brigham Young served as high priest in the Church and wielded his own power over his followers and eliminated personal salvation with God.¹⁶⁶ But Guerrant’s ability to sell the dangers of Mormonism reaching Kentuckians created enough weight to sway support for Protestant mountain mission work.

Guerrant accomplished several major goals with the publication of *Galax Gatherers*. A review of the book by Dr. W.W. Moore, president of Union Theological Seminary, claimed that the text gave the world a true knowledge of the vastly greater and wilder

¹⁶³ Ibid., 10.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 121.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 122.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 121.

Appalachian region. Moreover, he stated that *Galax Gatherers* had made the same impact on Appalachia as Sir Walter Scott's, *The Lady of the Lake* and *Rob Roy*, did on the Highlands of Scotland to the world.¹⁶⁷ In 1911, the book marked a high point for the mission movement when a publication announcement for *Galax Gatherers* made the *Publishers' Weekly*.¹⁶⁸ According to Alice Payne Hackett, a notable literary critic, from 1895 to 1912, *Publishers' Weekly* reflected a more accurate picture than the *New York Times* of best-selling books in the United States.¹⁶⁹ The notoriety of Guerrant, the mission movement, and his writing allowed Guerrant to return to his first passion of theological thought.

Guerrant's final book became a capstone to an influential and prominent career as a writer. Published in 1912, *The Gospel of the Lilies* gave Guerrant's interpretation of Mark 6: 28-29, which read, "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Guerrant took this verse and related ideas to themes including faith, forgiveness, sinning, and salvation. He argued that people needed to trust God like the lilies in the wild.¹⁷⁰ He also focused on the simplicity of Jesus' sermons and how he had appealed to the working-class peoples during his life. The text moves away from a full narrative about Appalachia, but the teachings of the book remained deeply related to his ideals of social and moral uplift. The book's introduction, written by Reverend Egbert Watson Smith, the Executive Secretary of Foreign Missions for the Presbyterian Church,

¹⁶⁷ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 152.

¹⁶⁸ *The Publishers' Weekly: The American Book Trade Journal* 79 no. 18 (May 6, 1911): 1842.

¹⁶⁹ Michael Korda, *Making the List: A Cultural History of the American Bestseller, 1900-1999* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 2001), xxvii.

¹⁷⁰ Guerrant, *Gospel of the Lilies*, 4.

strongly endorsed Guerrant and his mission movement in the Appalachian Mountains.¹⁷¹

Smith overviewed Guerrant's accomplishments and goals for evangelical work and supported many of the arguments he made regarding race, ethnicity, and social degradation found in the highlands. But a consistent overtone found in all of Guerrant's writings remained the religious ignorance of upland people.

From the beginning, Guerrant preached about the "unchurched" people of the Appalachian Mountains. As he traveled through the eastern half of Kentucky, Guerrant insisted that he saw only gambling halls, bars, and jails.¹⁷² Guerrant's omission of any religious activity in Appalachia, however, did not reflect reality. The mountainous regions of Kentucky, Tennessee, and North Carolina had maintained rich religious traditions throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹⁷³ Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians had always occupied the region. The Holiness-Penacostal movement and the Baptists sub-denominations also flourished in the eastern part of Kentucky, where Guerrant focused much of his mountain work.¹⁷⁴ Guerrant's sole mention of any religion in Appalachian came from a 1900 article that noted the presence of a Hardshell Baptist Church operating in eastern Kentucky.¹⁷⁵ He argued that the preacher and congregants seemed, "clever but narrow in

¹⁷¹ Reverend Egbert Watson Smith authored the *Creed of the Presbyterian* in 1901 that served as a textbook for the history and doctrine of the Church. By 1920 the book became the most widely circulated text about Presbyterianism in America.

¹⁷² Edward O. Guerrant, "The Church on the Grape Vine," *Christian Observer* 87 no.30 (July 26, 1899): 11.

¹⁷³ Bill Leonard, *Christianity in Appalachia: Profiles in Regional Pluralism* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 147.

¹⁷⁴ Howard Dorgan, *The Old Regular Baptists of Central Appalachia: Brothers and Sisters in Hope* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001), 2-6.

¹⁷⁵ The Hardshell Baptists is another term for Primitive Baptists. Primitive or Hardshells Baptists worship in churches with no décor or religious relics. They also believe in gender separation during service and congregational autonomy. For more information see Howard Dorgan, *Giving Glory to God in Appalachia: Worship Practices of Six Baptist Subdenominations* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990).

thought.”¹⁷⁶ Besides the brief passage about the Baptist subset, Guerrant clung to the idea that the four million inhabitants of Appalachia remained without religion. Guerrant’s convenient exclusion of religion as a part of Appalachian culture related directly to his need to create an image of a religiously-deserted mountain people.

During the 1890s and 1900s, Guerrant continued to serve as a leading figure in the mission movement. Although he participated in trips through Appalachia after starting the Society of Soul Winners, he focused primarily on promoting the uplift movement on a large scale by targeting an audience capable of contributing logistically and financially to his missions. Meanwhile, Guerrant embarked on an oral campaign that included stops in New York, Washington, D.C., Asheville, Charlotte, and St. Louis.¹⁷⁷ In 1896, a writer for the *Christian Observer*, who attended a service held by Guerrant in Birmingham, stated that the evangelical preached with more love and earnestness than one he had ever heard before or since.¹⁷⁸ Guerrant recalled a trip to New York, where he preached to large crowd in the pouring rain. While there, he saw a difference in the houses, stores, streets, and carriages, but not in the people. He stated, “The same human hearts, trials, temptations, sin, and sorrow were found in New York and Appalachia alike.”¹⁷⁹ Guerrant’s message mirrored the theses found in his writings. However, the sermons served to provide illiterate audiences with information about Appalachia and the mission movement. In 1900, illiteracy rates in the Northeast averaged 15.3 percent, while in the South most areas hovered around 30 percent.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Edward O. Guerrant, “Mouth of Lost Creek on Troublesome,” *Christian Observer* 84 no.32 (August 5, 1896): 10.

¹⁷⁷ The only remnants of the content of Guerrant’s speeches became small blurbs in religious journals that mentioned where he spoke.

¹⁷⁸ Reverend Dr. Handley, “Alabama,” *Christian Observer* 84 no.4 (January 22, 1896): 13.

¹⁷⁹ Edward O. Guerrant “Dr. Guerrant in New York,” *Christian Observer* 84 no.45 (November 4, 1896): 13.

¹⁸⁰ Richard Franklin Bense *The Political Economy of American Industrialization, 1877-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 34.

Within the potentially less-educated populous, Guerrant searched for people willing to uproot and head to Appalachia to serve as novice missionaries. Guerrant found avenues in every aspect of his movement to increase the volume of readers, missionaries, and supporters. His brilliant organizational and writing skills ultimately allowed him to take a movement from humble beginnings to the top of the philanthropic mission field.

For Guerrant, the mission movement became his second war in the mountains. During the first, he tried to free his beloved Confederacy from Northern “tyranny.” During the second, he attempted to free mountain people from religious emptiness. His approach, although intensely religious, was quite pragmatic and brilliant. He made outsiders feel responsible for the lower social conditions in Appalachia, and tied the two groups together with genealogical evidence. Between 1896 and 1906, the Society of Soul Winners sent 362 missionaries into the mountains, where they held over 22,000 public services. In total, Guerrant’s workers recorded 6,304 conversions. The organization also started 879 Bible Schools, 56 churches and schools that enrolled nearly 40,000 pupils, and founded three orphanages.¹⁸¹ The number of missionaries, schools, and churches reflected the success and influence that Guerrant had in the mountains. Moreover, Guerrant’s publications capitalized on the power of media and helped his mountain work by creating an identity for Appalachia that made the region’s inhabitants seem worthy of chartable uplift. Guerrant added a new kind of benevolent force in Appalachia by integrating differing ideas about mountain culture into the fabric of American society. During his final years as an evangelical, Guerrant continued his mountain work, but adopted new ideological principles that reflected the liberal and progressive reforms of the early twentieth century.

¹⁸¹ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 142.

CHAPTER THREE: THE SOCIAL GOSPEL, SETTLEMENT SCHOOLS, AND GUERRANT'S LEGACY

In 1910, Guerrant founded his final settlement school at the newly build L&N railroad depot in Blackey, Kentucky. The meek school started in a shack with only one teacher. However, by 1932, the Stuart Robinson School (SRS) encompassed over fifty acres, boasting two dormitories, a classroom building, dining hall, gymnasium, and quarters for the teachers. The campus also operated a functional dairy, slaughter house, and farm that allowed the institution to remain self-sufficient. The school served as the social focal point of the community near Blackey and parents moved to the area on the North Fork of the Kentucky River to ensure that their children attended. The athletics, social clubs, and school newspaper gave students an experience found only in well-funded schools. The SRS also brought exchange students from Central America, teachers from all over the United States, and top physicians to provide students with health care. With a well-rounded academic curriculum, including mandatory biblical studies, the school brought every aspect of knowledge and culture from the “outside world” deep into the heart of Appalachia. The school flourished for almost fifty years, until Letcher County purchased the property and converted the campus into the county’s sole high school.

Guerrant’s final benevolence work in Appalachia mirrored the ideological and theological movements sweeping throughout Protestant America. During the first thirty years of his career, Guerrant believed that a lack of religion in Appalachia had caused social and economic destitution. Principally, proselytizing to individuals remained the focus of

Guerrant's missions. However, after the turn of the twentieth century, Guerrant shed his theories of personal salvation and began a fundamental change based on communal religious and social redemption. The Progressive Era missionary attempted to broaden religious appeal by incorporating laity into church organizations and utilizing modern marketing techniques.¹⁸² As a result, missions addressed communal problems with a less profound religious message in order to reach a wider audience.¹⁸³ Guerrant, along with secular leaders, used this less religious approach and applied it to his altruistic work in Appalachia. Ultimately, Guerrant became the central religious figure in the settlement school movement in the region, founding two settlements that received accreditation as high schools and functioned as community centers. During the final phase of Guerrant's career, he adopted many liberal and progressive reforms that helped incorporate his religious projects into an inclusive social uplift movement.

Liberal Protestantism and the Progressive Era

Progressive Era reforms encouraged benevolence workers to expand their goals to address education, temperance, labor justice, and political equality for all of society.¹⁸⁴ The development of altruism mirrored the expansion of industry and the resulting growth of the urban working class. Social uplift advocates strove to create change in distressed communities by building permanent settlements that developed into oases of opportunity for marginalized populations. But settlement workers differed from other benevolent movements

¹⁸² Robert A. Bickers and Rosemary E. Seton, *Missionary Encounters: Sources and Issues* (London: Psychology Press, 1996), 34.

¹⁸³ William Kostlevy, *Holy Jumpers: Evangelicals and Radicals in Progressive Era America* (London: Oxford University Press, 2010), 29.

¹⁸⁴ Ann Trolander, "Hull House and the Settlement House Movement," *Journal of Urban History* 17 (1991): 415.

because they saw themselves as reformers, not as charity workers.¹⁸⁵ Modern scholars have questioned the liberal and progressive nature of settlements, arguing that the projects were less democratic than their leaders claimed, were racist and exclusionary, and engaged in class control as opposed to creating social change.¹⁸⁶ However, contemporaries of the time found that the settlement house was the only means to produce successful results within industrial communities.¹⁸⁷ The influence of Progressive Era reforms started an intellectual shift among Americans, but it also splintered into religious thought and encouraged ministers like Guerrant to create a faith-based settlement movement that replaced traditional missions.¹⁸⁸

The religious influence on the settlements came from the Social Gospel Movement. The Social Gospel represented the Protestant sect of the progressive movement, which originated from the evangelical and revival traditions of the early nineteenth century. Evangelicalism, the dominant force in American Protestant religion in the nineteenth century, emphasized individual redemption and was driven by traditionally conservative theological principles.¹⁸⁹ Although the fundamentalist nature of American religion held personal salvation paramount to orthodoxy, the communal nature of the “Awakenings” always supported socially driven societal improvement through religion.¹⁹⁰ By the 1860s, doctrinal liberalism came from influential preachers like Albert Barnes and Samuel Shoemaker.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁵ Walter I. Trattner, *From Poor Law to Welfare State: A History of Social Welfare in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999), 163.

¹⁸⁶ Ruth Crocker, *Social Work and Social Order: The Settlement Movement in Two Industrial Cities, 1889-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 20.

¹⁸⁷ Graham Taylor, “Social Movement in the Church,” *The Commons* 54 (January 1901):10-11.

¹⁸⁸ Michael Fabricant and Robert Fisher, *Settlement Houses Under Siege: The Struggle to Sustain Community Organizations in New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 42.

¹⁸⁹ James Davidson Hunter, *American Evangelicalism: Conservative Religion and the Quandary of Modernity* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983), 34.

¹⁹⁰ Ronald Cedric White and Charles Howard Hopkins, *The Social Gospel: Religion and Reform in Changing America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976), 5.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

These pastors made the important connection between personal salvation and community improvement.¹⁹² A major intellectual influence for liberal thought was the influx of philosophically and scientifically based theological writings growing from leading American and German universities.¹⁹³ However, economic changes and the resulting societal dynamics developing in urban areas motivated the ideological shift. In short, the disparity between rich and poor caused from industrial capitalism inspired a religious movement intended to improve society. Theologians, church leaders, and preachers increasingly shifted their church's message and belief system to address new problems that developed in the ravenous Gilded Age landscape. For Guerrant, the philosophical transference applied to the rural Appalachian landscape during the growth of extractive industry. The principles that guided Guerrant's communal approach came from the leading liberal Protestant figures and their publications. The headship of the Social Gospel Movement challenged previously accepted ideas regarding the personal nature of spiritual redemption, primarily through the new booming mass medium formats of religious journals and non-denominationally supported books.

Represented by a loose confederation of theologians and clergy members, the leadership of the Social Gospel tried to improve the lives of poor and working-class people in the United States through faith-based social uplift. However, Walter Rauschenbusch, a leading figure in the movement, attempted to unify the Social Gospelers through a series of books that defined the movement's theological principles. In 1907, he published *Christianity for the Social Crisis*, which argued that Christians needed to take individual responsibility for

¹⁹² Ibid., 8.

¹⁹³ Ahlstrom, *Theology in America*, 72-74.

the state of their society.¹⁹⁴ *Theology for the Social Gospel*, printed in 1917 and based on a series of lectures, presented Rauschenbusch's ideas about social realism and society's ability to create evil.¹⁹⁵ Rauschenbusch believed that society and industry created a "Kingdom of Evil" that manifested through its people. The influence of Rauschenbusch's work helped to create a liberal theological base in Protestantism and in the politicization of the religion.¹⁹⁶ Although Rauschenbusch defined the ideology of the Social Gospel, another leader introduced the principles of the movement to the benevolence field.

Washington Gladden embodied the principles of the Social Gospel and functioned as the leading figure in the movement through his vast social projects and wide appeal. Gladden, an early pioneer in the Social Gospel and labor ideology, promoted his ideas supporting labor unions, opposing segregation, and enhancing new social theological theories through his forty different books.¹⁹⁷ He became the first Social Gospel figure to back and implement the use of settlement schools and houses on a large scale. As president and vice-president of the American Missionary Association (AMA), Gladden's position made him central to the faith-based settlement house movement because of his ability to regulate and, in principal, set unofficial standards for settlements using the organization's authority.¹⁹⁸ After leaving the AMA in the late 1890s, he organized a settlement house in Columbus, Ohio, that served the poor and homeless.¹⁹⁹ Gladden's settlement project focused primarily

¹⁹⁴ Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity for the Social Crisis* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1907), xii.

¹⁹⁵ Ahlstrom, *Theology in America*, 533.

¹⁹⁶ Ahlstrom, *Theology in America*, 544.

¹⁹⁷ Gladden, born in born in 1836 in Pottsgrove, Pennsylvania, was a preacher and started a Congregationalist Church in New York's Hell's Kitchen neighborhood. He later moved to Columbus Ohio where he served as a political leader, union advocate and writer.

¹⁹⁸ Gary J. Dorrien, *The Making of American Liberal Theology: Imagining Progressive Religion* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001) ,304.

¹⁹⁹ E. Brooks Holifield, *God's Ambassadors: A History of the Christian Clergy in America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2007) ,165.

on people displaced or exploited by big business in the booming Columbus industrial landscape.²⁰⁰ In *Social Salvation*, a 1902 publication of a series of canonical lectures, Gladden outlined his progressive plan regarding social settlements. He argued that communal cooperation and social opportunities empowered the working class proletariat to improve their lives. Moreover, the book posited that rural communities needed social uplift more than city dwellers due to their geographic separation from the seats of charitable work and lack of access to social programs and educational literature.²⁰¹ Gladden, the first major theological figure who advocated for settlement work, recognized their applicability in rural regions and believed that the communal culture of the settlement house meshed well with the social intricacies of frontier regions. His publications helped to bolster the religious intellectual crusade, while his leadership position atop the AMA influenced the national missionary community.

The settlement house movement characterized the growing benevolent-minded middle class, Progressive Era social reforms, and Social Gospel idealists. The movement originated in England during the mid-nineteenth century when philanthropic groups started to address social problems found in the slums of London. In 1886, the first settlement house opened in the United States in New York City after Stanton Coit visited the famous Toynbee House in London.²⁰² Inspired by the settlement house in London and Coit's efforts in New York, distinguished social reformers Jane Addams and Helen Gates Starr founded the

²⁰⁰ Jacob Henry Dorn, *Washington Gladden: Prophet of the Social Gospel* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1968), 98.

²⁰¹ Washington Gladden, *Social Salvation* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1902), 203.

²⁰² Rosemary Chapin, *Social Policy for Effective Practice: A Strengths Approach* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2010), 48.

renowned Hull House in Chicago in 1889.²⁰³ By the turn of the century, the Hull House received international praise for its efforts in the working-class Chicago neighborhood of Near West Side. Along with other settlement house leaders, Addams and Starr believed that the proletariat lived in impoverished communities due to social, educational, and political exclusion rather than from individual deficiencies.²⁰⁴ The movement leaders also focused on identifying the causes of social problems and using community resources to provide solutions. As a result, the settlement house leadership focused on making changes at the legislative level in the form of wage minimums, workers' rights, and political suffrage.²⁰⁵ Although Guerrant and his fellow benevolence workers never politicized their movement, they inherently adopted the principles of the settlement house and applied the Progressive Era philosophies to their work in the mountains.

The settlement school movement in Appalachia originated from the same ideological underpinnings that fueled settlement houses in Chicago and New York. However, the first settlements represented a part of a religious crusade sponsored by national church organizations. The Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Reformed, and Mormons all sent preachers to Appalachia to convert mountain people, form congregations, and increase societal living standards. The churches and missionaries faced different challenges than their urban cousins because of denominational competition and the rough topography of the Mountain South. Guerrant, like his metropolitan counterparts, believed that change started by intervening in individual's lives and introducing new ideas and cultural customs to improve

²⁰³ Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Jane Addams and the Dream of American Democracy: A Life* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 10.

²⁰⁴ Chapin, *Social Policy for Effective Practice: A Strengths Approach*, 49.

²⁰⁵ June Axinn, and Mark J. Stern, *Social Welfare: A History of the American Response to Need* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 25.

life. Mountain workers quickly adapted the approach of Northern reformers, which addressed educational, medical, and economic problems. Additionally, with the advent of the railroads via the coal and timber industry, the field opened up to new, non-church affiliated philanthropic groups. As a result, philanthropy in Appalachia was opened to an eclectic set of new reformers who expanded and influenced the phenomenon.

The Settlement House Movement in Appalachia

The Hindman and Pine Mountain Settlement Schools grew into the most prominent settlements found in Appalachia. Katherine Pettit and May Stone, the founders of Hindman and natives of Lexington, Kentucky, developed an interest in James Addams' philanthropic efforts and thought her tactics needed application in Appalachia. The growing journalistic focus on mountain life drew the attention of Pettit and Stone, both of whom started to see Appalachia as a new field for Progressive philanthropy. Additionally, the pair shared a connection to the charitable Breckenridge family.²⁰⁶ Madeline McDowell Breckenridge, a close friend of Pettit and wife to Desha Breckenridge who owned the *Lexington Herald*, became one of Kentucky's most well-known progressive female figures in Kentucky. Her wealth and influence helped the settlement project in eastern Kentucky by garnering support among regional and national philanthropic organizations.²⁰⁷ With the help of Breckenridge, Pettit and Stone organized a walking tour of Knott County, guided by Mary McCartney, a teacher and missionary from the Presbyterian Academy in Hazard. After the trip, Pettit and Stone decided that the Troublesome Creek region, an area extensively promoted by Guerrant, made an ideal location for a social uplift project comparable to Addams'. Although the pair

²⁰⁶ James Klotter, *The Breckenridges of Kentucky, 1760-1981* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986), 201.

²⁰⁷ Anne Firor Scott, "After Suffrage: Southern Women in the Twenties," *Journal of Southern History* 30 no.3 (August 1964): 300.

supported the efforts of denominational missions, they sought to improve on the previous benevolence efforts of the missionaries by incorporating different techniques.²⁰⁸ In 1902, with the support of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, Pettit and Stone opened Hindman Settlement School. The school at Hindman brought progressive reforms to the school's curriculum and incorporated local community members to initiate the first settlement house in the Appalachian mountains.

Pettit and Stone founded Hindman on progressive educational principles, cultural preservation projects, and general societal improvement. The women immediately introduced a kindergarten program, borrowed from a model developed by German social scientists that gave younger children a foundation in basic studies and hygiene to promote long-term educational success.²⁰⁹ Hindman also emulated the curriculum found in progressive secondary schools throughout the United States. The school primarily based its educational philosophy on the teachings of John Dewey.²¹⁰ Dewey, the father of progressive education, headed the Laboratory School at the University of Chicago, where he pioneered research that connected higher educational levels with increased social conditions.²¹¹ In addition to a progressive curriculum, Pettit and Stone began a cultural preservation project that promoted traditions like basket weaving and English ballads. People at Hindman worked with famed ballad collector Cecil Sharp, which helped the school become the center for ballad collecting in Appalachia.²¹² Despite these successes, Pettit left Hindman in 1913 to start the Pine Mountain Settlement School. This new school used a similar template as Hindman, but

²⁰⁸ Stoddart, *Challenge and Change in Appalachia*, 28.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 14.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

²¹¹ Steven C. Rockefeller, *John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism* (Princeton: Columbia University Press, 1991), 25.

²¹² G. L. Kittredge, "Ballads and Rhymes From Kentucky," *The Journal of American Folklore* 20 no. 79 (October-December 1907): 251.

served children in the more rural Black Mountain region of Harlan County through an economic cooperative.²¹³ During the first half of the twentieth century, both schools excelled in their respective regions. Pettit and Stone also continued to receive national recognition for their work in eastern Kentucky. The most important aspect of the Hindman and Pine Mountain Settlements was their progressive and secular influences of the benevolence movement and in eastern Kentucky communities. However, another woman brought several urban philosophies from the Boston philanthropic community to the mountains that made the longest lasting impact in the region.

During the early 1900s, Alice Spencer Geddes Lloyd honed her skills as an educator and philanthropist in the religiously and culturally diverse landscape of Boston, Massachusetts. Lloyd prided her methods on discipline and creating a strong education foundation.²¹⁴ She developed these techniques in her home town of Boston, which was a center of progressive reform. Around 1900, the city turned awash with social progressives throughout the diverse society. The reform movement in Boston was exceptional because it incorporated the working, middle, and upper classes, moderates and radicals, female and males, and secular and religious groups.²¹⁵ Her service with the Unitarian church also exposed her to the reformed principles of several Social Gospel leaders.²¹⁶ The Unitarian Church in Boston focused on societal change through education by primarily reaching out to displaced youths in the undeveloped immigrant neighborhoods. Lloyd carried the psyche of

²¹³ C. Maurice Wieting, "The Place of Consumers' Cooperation in the School Curriculum," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 16 no.8 (April 1943): 504.

²¹⁴ Alice Spencer Lloyd Geddes was born in Athol, Massachusetts in 1876. She studied at Radcliff College where she studies journalism. In 1902 she was the publisher and editor of *The Cambridge Press* the first publication in American with an all-female staff.

²¹⁵ Arthur Mann, *Yankee Reformers in the Urban Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), 234.

²¹⁶ Charles Hopkins, *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), 56.

her Church to Appalachia by bringing opportunity to mountain children who lacked a structured educational system. However, the Bostonian refused to reinforce the idea that mountain folk were victims of their own societal circumstances. Lloyd's brand of reform sought to empower mountain people in order to create internal improvements within the region.

In 1916, Alice Lloyd moved to Knott County, Kentucky, bringing her Northeastern influenced progressive reforms of education, health care, and agricultural with her. Lloyd's settlement school provided a highly structured program that attempted to change the patterns of behavior in Appalachia. Early in 1915, a Boston philanthropic group put her in contact with the leaders at Hindman and, in the summer, she and her husband moved to Knott County to explore a new benevolent field. Lloyd received a building and a small plot of land at Ivis, near Hindman in Knott County, from the Presbyterian Church.²¹⁷ The "Hope Cottage" served as a Presbyterian missionary outpost since the 1890s and almost certainly originated from one of Guerrant's missionary trips. The school at Ivis represented one of many elementary schools founded by Lloyd in eastern Kentucky, but the Caney Ridge Junior College ultimately reaped the most success. Opened in 1923, the College served the community of eastern Knott County by providing education under the premise that students either remain or return to the region after completing their education.²¹⁸ A strict and stubborn disciplinarian, Lloyd believed in austere-enforced gender roles on her campus. She prohibited girls from owning high heel shoes, wearing makeup or jewelry, and banned any unauthorized meetings between the sexes. But she also used progressive cooperative

²¹⁷ Searles, *A College for Appalachia*, 27.

²¹⁸ Marc Landy and Mieke Landy, "Higher Learning in Appalachia," *Journal of Higher Education* 42 no.3 (March 1971):171.

educational techniques to build the foundation for student success after graduation. In 1962, Caney Ridge was renamed the Alice Lloyd College, and, in 1980, the school began functioning as a four year institution.²¹⁹ Educationally, Alice Lloyd College arguably left the largest footprint on eastern Kentucky because of the longevity of the institution.

Since the 1970s, scholars have attributed the origins of the philanthropic efforts in eastern Kentucky to women's groups, most notably the Women's Christians Temperance Union and volunteers from the Northeast and the Kentucky Bluegrass region.²²⁰ Researchers have focused primarily on Pettit, Stone, and Lloyd because their settlements flourished during their lifetimes and they left a wider variety of primary sources. Guerrant's "mountain work," as he called it, has remained ignored by scholars of religion and history for the opposite reason of his female counterparts. His settlements grew after his death and the sources he left focus on theological trends and reflect journalistic sensationalism. However, Guerrant adopted many of the same ideas that grew from the Progressive Era and the Social Gospel Movement. Moreover, he embraced the socially liberal philosophies from secular colleagues and incorporated them into his settlement schools. Appalachian historians have tended to relegate Guerrant's role as an imperialistic minded missionary. Furthermore, his contributions to the settlement house movement in Appalachia remained overlooked because of his reputation as a purely religious figure.

Scholars have critiqued the settlement movement by arguing that the schools imposed outside perceptions on mountain people. Historians have also contended that benevolence workers altered mountain culture by forcing new cultural customs into the foundations of

²¹⁹ Searles, *A College for Appalachia*, 1.

²²⁰ Dewey E. Grantham, "The Contours of Southern Progressivism," *The American Historical Review* 86 no. 5 (December 1981): 1052.

Appalachia's sociological makeup.²²¹ Guerrant's form of Christian education fell under the most severe level of scrutiny in scholarship because of its stereotypical paternalistic attitude toward Appalachians. However, Guerrant stayed cognizant of the fact that his presence affected the cultural makeup of the people he contacted. In *The Soul Winner*, he instructed missionaries to avoid imposing or changing native customs. He told preachers in training to not teach morals or manners and to let their congregants have their own way of dressing, cooking, talking, and eating.²²² He even cited historical precedent, stating: "Dr. Lindley said the Zulus never wore a shirt till converted."²²³ Guerrant's conscious effort to preserve mountain culture and his awareness of the potential cultural impact spoke to the belief that indigenous Appalachian culture differed from the rest of the United States. Despite efforts to preserve culture through programs that reinforced indigenous traditions, it remained impossible to successfully blend an outside ideology on an established society with local ideas, morals and institutions.²²⁴ Moreover, the intrusive nature of the settlement movement increased the impact on cultural exchange between mountain people and altruistic workers. As a result, Guerrant's social projects, when shifting from missions to settlement schools, retained many of the invasive characteristics noted by scholars. Guerrant's work in Appalachia provides new outlets for scholarship because his unique role as a reformer, educator, and proselytizer. However, his career reinforces many of the accepted ideas regarding the psychological impact of Appalachian benevolence workers.

²²¹ Shapiro, *Appalachian on Our Mind*, 20.

²²² Guerrant, *The Soul Winner*, 97-99.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 99. Daniel Lindley became a well-known American missionary in South Africa during the 1830s and 1840s. Lindley worked in the Port Natal region and worked with European missionaries to coalesce Christian missions during the early explorations of the continent. See George McCall Theal, *History of South Africa Since September 1795* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 294.

²²⁴ Whisnant, *All That Is Native and Fine*, 177.

The last ten years of Guerrant's life saw massive change and growth in the field of American benevolence. By 1906, Guerrant became fully engrossed in the settlement school movement and new principles that altered the goals of his organization. Social transformation through education fueled Guerrant's newly organized campuses. However, at each school, the evangelical message remained part of the curriculum for students. The founding of settlement schools also forced Guerrant into a management position that obligated him to oversee a multiplicity of duties. The permanent schools required qualified teachers, maintenance, logistical support, and educational supplies. In 1907, Guerrant recorded 71 full-time employees who received paychecks every month and maintained a yearly budget over \$14,000.²²⁵ Before his death in 1916, Guerrant led two settlement schools that educated primary and secondary level students in addition to all of his missions and churches. Although Guerrant's personal trips to Appalachia slowed because of his age and ailments, he continued to serve as a demagogue for the benevolence movement.

Guerrant adopted many of the liberal theological and progressive concepts emerging from the Social Gospel Movement. Dwight L. Moody's ideas of personal salvation conflicted with the growing liberal theologians that stressed philosophical pragmatism and naturalistic empiricism.²²⁶ Guerrant's shift to the socially-driven liberal theology shone through his altruistic work and publications. Less orientated toward saving individual souls, mountain work now sought to primarily address social issues. This change made Guerrant focus on large-scale, expensive projects that aimed to transform mountain communities and offer opportunities that rivaled more developed communities. In 1915, Guerrant wrote in reference to the students of the Stuart Robinson School, "No such institutions is in reach for hundred,

²²⁵ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 159.

²²⁶ Dorrien, *The Making of American Liberal Theology*, 18.

yes, thousands of these bright children who walk miles through mud and over mountains to this school.”²²⁷ Similar to progressive reformers, Guerrant focused on primary education believing that changing young people in society would stop the cycle of ignorance and insolvency. The move from faith to educationally based charity forced missionaries to expand their fundamental approach to their work and caused a dulling and broadening of their religious message. After the turn of the twentieth century, mountain missionaries, in general, developed a less adversarial attitude toward other denominations, focused less on biblical inerrancy, and started to emphasize God’s love and Jesus’ deeds as the fundamental aspect of their religious message.²²⁸

After 1910, Guerrant’s writings reflected his differing theological principles and changing attitude toward philanthropy. The 1912 publication of *The Gospel of the Lilies* gave commentary and interpretation of biblical parables and personal narratives about the spiritual paths of individuals. The manuscript itself broke Guerrant’s custom of writing primarily about Appalachia or to promote his mission movement by delving into topics that incorporated the metaphysical symbolism prominent in contemporary theology. Using “lilies” as a representation of mankind, the text outlined three analogous points that examined how God and mankind related together in the context of nature.²²⁹ The first element analyzed the creation and care of the lilies and how God was signified as the sole provider for the wild plants. The second part pleaded that mankind needed to faithfully trust God for protection and life, much like wild flowers in a field. Finally, Guerrant compared the changing of the seasons to the ebb and flow of life and posited that man needed to follow God through the

²²⁷ Edward O. Guerrant, “To the Farthest Cumberlands,” *Christian Observer* 12 no.1 (August 1915): 43.

²²⁸ William R. Hutchison, *Between the Times: The Travail of the Protestant Establishment in America, 1900-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 246.

²²⁹ Guerrant, *Gospel of the Lilies*, 4.

harsh times and the followers would receive a reward with the rejuvenated spring.²³⁰ The moral of the book focused on the liberal idea that incorporated the laws of nature into the relationship between God and mankind. The text also explored the personification of the beauty and love of God through nature.²³¹

To supplement the naturalistic view of doctrine, Guerrant created a message that appealed to contemporary social issues as a means of answering theological questions about faith, sin, and humanity. Chapter twenty-one, titled “Compel Them To Come In,” called people to join the universal “Great Supper.” The chapter associated a lack of religion to the pitfalls of society. Guerrant wrote that the poor in society never received an “invitation to the feast” because the privileged had failed in their duty to spread the Word.²³² Moreover, Guerrant addressed how the changing industrial landscape had caused inexpressible suffering for millions of people.²³³ He continued by explaining how clergy members needed to hear the call of a more open and accepting Church, so that the “doors of Heaven are closed to no one.”²³⁴ Guerrant further suggested that church leadership loosen its connection to liturgy and move to a biblically based teaching process that focused on the Books of the Gospel and lessons learned from scriptural parables. The decline of conservative theologians in popular religious literature influenced Guerrant to shift his principles away from Moody’s individualistic ideologies and into the booming Social Gospel field.

In addition to *The Christian Observer*, the *Presbyterian Survey* and its subsidiary the *Missionary Survey*, promoted mission work to a more expansive, eclectic audience. The

²³⁰ Ibid., 5.

²³¹ Frank Lambert, *Religion in American Politics: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 139.

²³² Guerrant, *Gospel of the Lilies*, 192.

²³³ Ibid., 194.

²³⁴ Ibid., 194.

Survey, a more liberal set of journals that circulated about 50,000 copies in 1915, boasted a diverse offering of pieces that touched on mission work, Church news, race issues, and current secular affairs not addressed in other religious journals.²³⁵ In 1911, the *Survey* chronicled the history of Guerrant's mountain work and its impact on mountain communities. Additionally, the piece surveyed his influence on American missionary movement as a whole.²³⁶ The article posited that the effectiveness of the settlements in Appalachia far outweighed the religiously orientated missions. Additionally, the author mentioned Guerrant's naturalistic view and personally referred to uplanders as "mountain daisies."²³⁷ To conclude, the writer argued that Guerrant helped bring attention to the "best blood" of people who lived in America and commended him on conveying faith and opportunity to mountain society. The publications in the 1910s echoed the change in theology and missionary mentality. Moreover, the journals started to reprint and accept the philosophical principles used by Guerrant.

Fundamentally, the transformation in the philanthropic and religious culture called for missions to switch their focus from religion to education. As a result, Guerrant shifted his funding into two large projects that paralleled other settlements like Hindman or the Hull Hull House. The Highland Institute, near Hazard, and the Stuart Robinson School located in Blackey in Letcher County, both provided kindergarten through high school education, housed dormitory students, and provided social and recreational programs for students and community members. The faith-based settlement founders believed that their religious zeal and education, supplemented by Christian values, helped mountain people break the patterns

²³⁵ William Megginson, "What is the Training School," *Presbyterian Survey* 4 no. 3 (March 1915): 169.

²³⁶ S. L. Morris, "In The Mountains With Dr. Guerrant," *Missionary Survey* 1 (November 1911): 14.

²³⁷ Morris, "In The Mountains With Dr. Guerrant," 15.

of violence and illegal activities.²³⁸ Whether a settlement school originated from secular or religious organizations, strong funding and leadership were necessary to maintain the large mountain institutions.

Given the expansive nature of Guerrant's organization, his final project became transferring the Society of Soul Winners to another entity to ensure the preservation of his mountain work. In 1907, Guerrant realized that his settlements required continuous funding for support. His age and declining health forced him to start making a decision in regards to the future of his beloved mission organizations. In 1909, the Executive Committee of the Society of Soul Winners started to make plans to shift some of the organizations' responsibilities to a denominational institution.²³⁹ In his diary, Guerrant recalled a meeting of the Committee members, where they discussed to which denomination to transfer the Society of Soul Winners assets.²⁴⁰ The entry furthered the question about potential tensions between Guerrant and the Presbyterian Church and why he did not presume the church would take over his nondenominational work. Over the next two years, the leaders of the Society of Soul Winners discussed the future of the benevolent organization and ultimately decided to move the Society's assets to the Home Mission Work of the General Presbyterian Assembly. The move symbolized an important turning point for the Presbyterians since, during the time period, the Church continually attempted to expand their mission efforts in Appalachia. They believed that a strong foothold in rural America would give their mission efforts validity and show their flexibility when dealing with diverse populations. The Church's missions fell behind other denominations because their leadership required more education and

²³⁸ William E. Ellis, *A History of Education in Kentucky* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2011) ,103.

²³⁹ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 183.

²⁴⁰ Guerrant Diary, March 1909.

understanding of liturgy. They also required their congregants to understand biblical law, which furthered strained the Presbyterian's efforts.²⁴¹ When the news broke in 1911 that Guerrant was moving the Society of Soul Winners into the control of the Presbyterian Church, the *Presbyterian Standard* reported that, "Dr. E.O. Guerrant is a spectacle in accord with the unsurpassed motives and chief missions of the Church." The article then claimed that the acquisition created difficulties within the Church because some of the donations and holdings originated with money from other denominations.²⁴² In the minds of Presbyterians, procuring the Society of Soul Winners exemplified a political victory that gave them an upper hand in the Appalachian mission field. However, Guerrant's interdenominational work mucked the bureaucratic works of the Presbyterian Church. Despite some begrudging from both parties, the Church and Guerrant benefitted from the merger.

Succumbing to illness, Guerrant increasingly spent time at his home during his last years of life. From childhood, Guerrant had suffered from mysterious stomach and intestinal ailments that intensified during his waning years. Guerrant delegated more duties to the secretary of the Society of Soul Winners and called on the National Assembly to assume more responsibilities. In 1913, he had complained of complications that stemmed from rheumatism. Despite being plagued with joint and stomach pain, Guerrant journeyed through the Cumberlands to oversee the early development his most elaborate uplift project: the Stuart Robinson School. On his last trip to eastern Kentucky in September 1915, Guerrant preached to a group in the rain at Blackey about "The Hand of Jesus," a sermon given by

²⁴¹ A. Hamish Ion, *The Cross in the Dark Valley: The Canadian Protestant Missionary Movement in the Japanese Empire, 1931-1945* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1999), 25.

²⁴² "Editorial," *Presbyterian Standard* 29 (March 1911): 42.

famed Calvinist Theologian and president of Colby College, Jeremiah Chaplin.²⁴³ He told his followers to extend their hand out to neighbors in the name of Christ and that God's reach symbolized power, friendship, faith, charity, and benediction.²⁴⁴ After 1915, Guerrant spent the majority of his time on his 100 acre estate, Belvoir, near Wilmore. On April 26, 1916, Guerrant died in Douglas, Georgia after returning from a trip to Jacksonville, Florida. Although the cause of death remained unknown, Guerrant may have died from rheumatic fever. The forethought to secure the Society of Soul Winners and its holdings with the Presbyterians ensured the continuity of Guerrant's projects. Guerrant was buried near his home with a Confederate soldier's burial. His death marked the end of an era within the Protestant mission community in Appalachia. However, his settlement schools left a strong legacy that exemplified the evolution of his crusade to save the souls of mountain folk.

Highland Institute and the Stuart Robinson School

Late in 1907, Guerrant founded his first fully integrated settlement school, the Highland College. Located in Puncheon Camp in Breathitt County, Highland originated from a Sunday School started by Guerrant in his early years with the Synod. During the first year of the school's existence, Guerrant's allocated the majority of his resources to directing and organizing its construction. He was involved in every step from the groundbreaking through the hiring of the principal and teachers. In the preliminary stages, Guerrant organized the residents of Puncheon and made contracts with locals for the timber and labor. In May 1907, "Proctor Bill" recruited a large group of men and boys who cut 10,000 feet of timber for the

²⁴³ Guerrant Diary, September 1915.

²⁴⁴ Jeremiah Chaplin, *The Hand of Jesus* (Boston: A.F. Graves, 1868), 11.

construction of the schoolhouse and teachers cottages.²⁴⁵ By August, the campus boasted a fully furnished three-room cottage for teachers and a large schoolhouse with a capacity for 100 students. Over the next year, as funding increased, Guerrant added amenities like stoves, carpets, rugs, chairs, lamps, and desks. In the fall of 1908, the school enrolled 82 students and received its official accreditation as a high school from the Commonwealth of Kentucky.²⁴⁶ The school's success afforded a visit from Governor Augustus E. Wilson. The Governor spoke to a crowd of over 1,000 mountain people about the importance of the establishment of law and order in the region and credited Guerrant's missions for "taking the initial step toward civility."²⁴⁷ The school and campus continued to grow, making Highland, Guerrant's first community mission that addressed educational solvency as its primary objective.

Over the next seven years, Guerrant continued to raise funds for additions to the "Log College," making the school a fundamental piece of infrastructure for the community.²⁴⁸ In 1910, a Connecticut woman donated the resources to have a twenty-five student dormitory built on campus.²⁴⁹ Two years later, a donation from the Louisville Presbytery allowed for the erection of a hospital on campus, staffed with a full-time nurse and doctor.²⁵⁰ The

²⁴⁵ Guerrant Diary, May 13, 1907. Reverend William Little, also known as "Proctor Bill" was a mountain preacher that Guerrant took under his wing. "Proctor Bill" became the title of a chapter in the *Galax Gatherers* and the story of his life became an example of the power of Guerrant's mission work. Bill, a former drinker and gambler who spent time in prison, was never educated but exemplified the spirit and desire of Appalachian people that Guerrant used to draw in church members and to raise money from outside philanthropists.

²⁴⁶ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 166.

²⁴⁷ Guerrant Diary, July 15, 1909.

²⁴⁸ Guerrant nicknamed Highland the "Log College" after the first Presbyterian Theological Seminary in America started by William Tennent. The seminary, located near Princeton, New Jersey, opened in the mid-1700s and operated out of a simple one room cabin. Tennent, along with his four sons, trained students for a life in the Presbyterian ministry. The school also became one of the precursors to the founding of Princeton College and the school's seminary. See Guy S. Klett, "Documentary History of William Tennent, and the Log College," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 28 (1950): 37-64.

²⁴⁹ McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 170.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 170.

Highland Hospital, the first permanent medical center in Breathitt County, provided health care for the school, local residents, and the surrounding counties.²⁵¹ By 1915, Highland consisted of seven total buildings, including the hospital, doctor's residence, the school building, two large dormitories (the "Julia Broadhead" and "Leona Blake"), a refectory, and cottage for the teachers.²⁵² The school and community also joined forces to organize and build a Presbyterian Church that took in over 100 congregants. Highland enrolled between 100 and 200 students per year during its fifty year history. In the 1930s, the school added a farm, laundry, cannery, dairy, and a school paper that reached a circulation of 1,500.²⁵³ The Second World War years marked the peak of the school's activities and enrollment, but, due to the rise of public schools and a lack of philanthropic support, Highland closed around 1950. The Log College evolved into Guerrant's ideal mission that incorporated Christian education with communal cooperation. But Guerrant's final school, which existed in Letcher County, the next county over, created the long standing social, moral, and educational change that Guerrant wanted to leave as his legacy on the Appalachian landscape.

The Stuart Robinson School embodied every quality of the Protestant home mission movement, providing Christian education, work programs, and a full array of activities for students. The SRS's mission grew out of Guerrant's new vision for Appalachian communities and reflected the collective ideologies of Social Gospel and Progressive Era reformers. The school was the most successful of any of the Society of Soul Winners' settlements, but most of the growth came after the organization dissolved. However, the successes of the educational program at the SRS led to many promising students leaving

²⁵¹ Edward Guerrant, "Puncheon Camp," *Presbyterian Survey* 4 no. 4 (April 1915): 250.

²⁵² Guerrant, "Puncheon Camp," 250.

²⁵³ *In The Land of Breathitt* (Breathitt County Board of Education, 1979), 150.

Appalachia for opportunities not available in the declining post-World War II mountain economy. Moreover, the SRS illustrated how religious settlements adopted Progressive Era principles and shed certain aspects of the messianic insouciances described by the majority of scholarship.

The development of the Stuart Robinson School, aptly named after Guerrant's mentor, fell under the same piquant promotional campaign of Guerrant's previous Appalachian missions. According to lore, Captain C.F. Huhlein and Reverend Thomas Thalbet, the future Superintendent of Home Missions in the West Lexington Presbytery, traveled to eastern Kentucky for a vacation and to scout arenas for missions. During the trip, they came across a group of 30 boys swimming in the North Fork of the Kentucky River. Only a few of the children knew of a Sunday School, and even fewer had actually attended one. Once Guerrant heard the story from his missionaries, he personally traveled to Blackey in order to assess the situation and found the region in need of new mission.²⁵⁴ Despite this romanticized tale, Guerrant most likely picked the location of his settlement school because of the rising coal production, which led to the construction of the new Lexington & Nashville railroad head at Blackey, Kentucky.²⁵⁵ The industry encouraged population increases and made finances from locals more available to support a large settlement campus. In 1910, Guerrant organized a new Sunday school and a few classes to test the possibilities of forming a new campus similar to the Highland Institute. The small group of students, missionaries, and parishioners represented the origins of the Stuart Robinson School.

²⁵⁴ W.L. Cooper, *Stuart Robinson School and Its Work* (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1936), 4.

²⁵⁵ The railroad marked the first railway to enter Letcher County and was directly related to increase of the timber and coal industry in the county. See Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountains*, 142.

Although the school officially opened in 1914 the conditions at SRS remained Spartan into the 1920s. The first campus sat on a steep hill that overlooked the city of Blackey. The grounds held a schoolhouse, one dormitory, and two cottages. None of the buildings provided sewage or plumbing systems. The dormitory, a two-story structure with a basement, held girls on the first floor and boys on the second. The basement served as the kitchen and dining hall for the students, teachers, and other staff. All the buildings used coal or wood fire stoves for heating, as electric lights were not installed until 1919. Despite these less than desirable conditions in its inaugural year the school employed a pastor, Reverend Henderson, five teachers, and enrolled 120 twenty students.²⁵⁶ Like at Highland, Governor Wilson made the trip to SRS in October 1914 for a dedication ceremony and publically commended Guerrant for his efforts. The *Lexington Herald* reported about the ceremony, which included speeches from Governor Wilson, Henry S. Baker, the president of State University (later renamed the University of Kentucky), and Guerrant.²⁵⁷ Thanks to the publicity and a successful fundraising campaign by the Assembly's Home Mission Committee, the SRS received enough money to move to an ideal location with a modern campus.

In 1921, the Home Mission Committee's funding afforded Stuart Robinson the opportunity to become one of the most prominent schools in eastern Kentucky. The SRS initially received a total of \$75,000 and a land donation a few miles upstream between the towns of Blackey and Letcher. Construction of the new administration building began immediately.²⁵⁸ The three-story structure held the school's offices, all the classrooms, and an

²⁵⁶ S.L. Morris, "Many Mountain Missions," *Christian Observer* 30 no.3 (September 16, 1914): 21.

²⁵⁷ "This My Speech," *Lexington Herald*, October 10, 1914.

²⁵⁸ Cooper, *Stuart Robinson School and Its Work*, 24-27.

auditorium. Two dormitories then went up a few hundred yards from the main building. Another donation from the Woman's Auxiliary of the Southern Presbyterian Church helped to cover the costs of the new dorms. In 1923, the school added a dining hall, kitchen, and administrator's quarters. Between 1924 and 1930, the campus erected a teacher's cottage, a gymnasium, an athletic field, and sidewalks and driveways that connected the entire sixteen-acre campus.²⁵⁹ All the buildings on campus used steam heat, indoor plumbing, and electric lights. Although outside civil engineers helped design the structures, the majority of the labor was done by local citizens and students. By 1930, through donations from Presbyterian organizations and private citizens, the SRS held one of the largest enrollments of any settlement schools in eastern Kentucky with 430 students.²⁶⁰

The school's leadership held a vital role in the development of the SRS's by implementing unique programs, reaching new students, and making the school competitive compared to the public options. In 1916, Reverend E.V. Tadlock served as the first director after Guerrant personally appointed him due to his reputed experience with Presbyterian home missions. Tadlock, a Lexington native and graduate from Kentucky State College, excelled as a writer, missionary, and educator.²⁶¹ In 1902, he wrote "Four Histories of Lexington" for the *Lexington Morning Herald*. The piece outlined the historical transformations of Lexington during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the early 1900s, Guerrant and Tadlock had met in Selma, Alabama, at a Presbyterian mission school,

²⁵⁹ Cooper, *Stuart Robinson School and Its Work*, 27.

²⁶⁰ The exact enrollments of all the settlement schools remain unknown. Jess Stottard claimed that by the late 1920s the Hindman Settlement School enrolled close to one-hundred high school students, which made up a quarter of the entire student body. See Stottard, *Challenge and Change in Appalachia*, 86 and McAllister, *Edward O. Guerrant*, 201.

²⁶¹ Lucien A. Buck, *The Record of Sigma Alpha Epsilon*, Volume 24(Sigma Alpha Epsilon, 1904), 26,512.

where he taught basic elementary level classes and bible study.²⁶² Tadlock closely followed the ideology of the Social Gospel. He and Guerrant agreed on the use of social aid, education, and religion as a major force to create cultural change.²⁶³ While director, Tadlock oversaw the construction of the new SRS campus, hired all of its teachers, and spearheaded the expansion of the farm and many of the vocational programs. In 1924, after the death of J.W. Tyler, Tadlock received an appointment as Superintendent of Mountain Work for the Assembly's Home Mission Committee and left SRS.²⁶⁴ Although Tadlock excelled at the SRS, he was constantly restrained by the construction process. With the foundation he laid, the SRS and its new director, were emboldened to spread the educational, economic, and social influence of the school.

In 1924, William Lee Cooper took control of the Stuart Robinson School and implemented a new plan that addressed shortcomings by adopting a sound business strategy. Cooper, an aggressive reformer, received an A.B. from the University of North Carolina in 1911 and a B.S. from North Carolina State in 1933, both in education.²⁶⁵ Cooper believed the most pressing issue was the school's lack of health care. As such, in 1924, Cooper organized an unprecedented visit from the Mayo brothers that also brought Kentucky's State Department of Health.²⁶⁶ William and Charles committed to non-profit and philanthropic ventures early in their careers, and took a special interest in frontier medicine.²⁶⁷ The special clinic brought over 1000 people from the surrounding area to have their maladies checked. William Mayo and Annie S. Veetch, a pediatrician, preformed major surgeries on adults and

²⁶² E.V. Tadlock, "Church Problems in the Mountains," *Mountain Life and Work* 6 no.1 (April 1930): 36.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 34-39.

²⁶⁴ Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South, 1890-1972* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1973), 103.

²⁶⁵ *Private Independent Schools* (J.E. Bunting, 1957) ,863.

²⁶⁶ Cooper, *Stuart Robinson School and Its Work*, 86.

²⁶⁷ Leonard C. Schlup and James G. Ryan, *Historical Dictionary of the Gilded Age* (Amonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2003) , 299.

children alike. As a result of the clinic, Dr. Veetch of the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health in Louisville, along with registered nurse Mary Virginia Bird, created the first permanent health care initiative in the SRS. After some economic wrangling among the Assembly for Home Missions and donations from private citizens, Bird was able to serve as the campus' permanent health care official.²⁶⁸ Bird treated patients and referred serious cases to physicians that visited the SRS semi-annually. However, her main task was health education and preventative care. She began to teach students about proper diet, eye and dental care, and the harmful effects of tobacco, candy, and alcohol.²⁶⁹ A 1931 article in *The Yodeler*, the SRS's newspaper, praised the nurse, stating that since her presence on campus, the school had not experienced an epidemic. As the health care initiative grew, the SRS added an annual dental clinic, typhoid vaccinations, and pre-natal care for students and members of the community. The progresses of such auxiliary programs were predicated on Cooper's financial planning and initiatives.

In the early 1930s, Cooper implemented the "Self-Help Plan" for Stuart Robinson to ensure an internal source of funding. The school offered a Work Scholarship program to create fiscally responsible students and provide opportunities to students who did not live in the Blackey community. The idea dovetailed with goal of creating a campus that provided goods, food, and services for the school, students, and the surrounding communities. The dormitories on campus housed boys and girls in the program. The students worked on the campus and in return, they received room and board, basic amenities, and an education. The dormitory student became commonplace on settlement schools in Appalachia, which allowed them to provide outreach opportunities to children who lived outside the community, could

²⁶⁸ Cooper, *Stuart Robinson School and Its Work*, 88.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 88.

not afford the tuition, or were displaced from their parents due to coal mining accidents.²⁷⁰

The SRS used their male students to work on the farm, help with construction projects, and to run the dairy. Female students worked in the clothing department, helped with crafts, and worked in the dining hall. The dorm kids served an integral role for the campus' infrastructure that enabled the school to keep costs down and productivity up. Their labor allowed the other programs to flourish and compete with local vendors for business.

Cooper organized a department that received used clothing from the Assembly's donations, and resold them to eastern Kentuckians. For shipping, the school purchased 36 by 27 inch canvas bags from the Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills out of Atlanta and sent them off to locations throughout the United States to take in donations.²⁷¹ In an eight-year period, SRS received 5,697 bags of clothing and the school averaged a \$5.70 profit per unit.²⁷² The business model, which did not sell on credit and priced items based on income, allowed the SRS to undersell other haberdasheries. The influx of money from coal mining operations and the related support industries allowed the program to thrive in the depression-era market. The clothing department's ability to compete with local businesses exemplified the school's ability to provide cooperative platforms, which gave students real world experience and helped the institution's budget. Money from the sales partially paid for the construction of the gymnasium and teachers' quarters. Additionally, the residual product clothed students without proper attire. Although the SRS implemented profitable undertakings, the school continued to rely on the Assembly's funding, donations, tuition, and meticulous bookkeeping to stay in the black.

²⁷⁰ William G. Roy, *Reds, Whites, and Blues: Social Movements, Folk Music, and Race in the United States* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 62-63.

²⁷¹ Cooper, *Stuart Robinson School and Its Work*, 48.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 48.

The money made from business ventures such as the clothing department allowed the school to maintain numerous extracurricular activities. The boys fielded varsity football, basketball, and track teams, while girls participated in cheerleading and girls' basketball.²⁷³ The school published a monthly paper called *The Yodeler* that circulated through Presbyterian Churches in the middle-South and the local eastern Kentucky mission churches. The school also maintained two literary societies, a Glee Club, Home Economics Club, and a social club for non-dormitory students that included non-students from the community.²⁷⁴ The eclectic offerings at the SRS gave mountain children an opportunity to attend high school without having to move near a county seat. Moreover, unlike public schools, the curriculum and social programs served to prepare students for a post-secondary education.

The SRS combined Christian-based education and Progressive Era reforms that attempted to ensure high retention, graduation rates, and prepare promising students for college. In 1918, the SRS conferred its first high school diplomas on Fred, Lawrence, and Vincent Caudill. Three years later, the school's first female, Lucy Jarvis, graduated.²⁷⁵ During the transition to the new campus, only a few students completed their degrees. But, in 1925, nine students received diplomas. By 1933, an average of 25 students graduated each year. Throughout the 1930s, the SRS averaged a fifteen to one teacher to student ratio. The administration maintained such a low number proportion to ensure students received a college preparatory education. In 1934, the SRS graduated three students from the University of Georgia, two from the University of North Carolina, and one from Flora McDonald

²⁷³ Interestingly, the football field was only ninety yards long, so when one team scored a touchdown on the short side of the field, they backed the ball out to the 10 yard line and finished the possession. The most likely reason for the short field was the lack of flat land in the area by the school.

²⁷⁴ "What They Are Doing," *Mountain Life and Work* 11 no.4 (January 1936): 25.

²⁷⁵ Cooper, *Stuart Robinson School and Its Work*, 64.

College, Winthrop College, and the State Teachers' College in Harrisonburg, Virginia.²⁷⁶ In fact, roughly one-third of this class received a college degree, making SRS graduates three times more likely to graduate from college than the average high school student during the time period.²⁷⁷ The school continued to grow through the 1950s and consistently placed students into colleges across the nation. In 1957, Letcher County purchased the SRS and absorbed the settlement school into the county system. The former settlement school was incorporated into Letcher County High School and initially served as the main secondary school in the county, and later as a satellite campus. In 2003, the land was purchased by a local Christian organization, Calvary Campus, which holds events on the former SRS grounds, including a reunion of former students that continues to be held biennially.

Some of the SRS's notable alumnus included Juanita Kreps (1938) and Gurney Norman (1955). Kreps, the daughter of a coal miner, attended Berea College and earned her M.A. and PhD degrees at Duke University. Her academic and professional concentration analyzed the labor demographics of women and older workers. She taught at Denison University, Hofstra College, Queens College, and Duke. Kreps also broke the gender barrier twice by becoming the first women board member on the New York Stock exchange and, in 1977, the first female to serve as the United States Secretary of Commerce during the Jimmy Carter administration.²⁷⁸ Norman, a dorm boy, attended the SRS from 1946 to 1955, after bouncing around among family members as a child. He attended the University of Kentucky and Stanford University and later received a position as a faculty member at Kentucky. Norman authored *Divine Rights Trip* (1971), *Kinfolks* (1977), and recently helped to promote

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 64.

²⁷⁷ Claudia Dale Goldin and Lawrence F. Katz, *The Race Between Education and Technology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 278.

²⁷⁸ Robert D. McFadden, "Juanita M. Kreps, Commerce Secretary, Dies at 89," *New York Times* July 7, 2010.

Appalachian and Affrilachian literature. In 2009, Norman served as the Poet Laureate for the State of Kentucky.²⁷⁹ Although students from SRS showed great academic and professional prowess after graduation, most of the students found success outside of their home communities. The quality of education received at the SRS and other settlement schools hurt the retention of college educated people on the already economically depleted region.²⁸⁰ As a result, the social strata of Appalachia lacked a solid middle-class work force and continued to make economic development difficult.

One unforeseen effect of the settlement school movement was the institutions' contribution to the "brain drain" that occurred in eastern Kentucky during the 1950s and 1960s. The region started to suffer economically after World War II, largely due to the declining demand for coal that forced many Appalachian miners to migrate to Midwestern cities.²⁸¹ Many doctors, lawyers, educators, and other professionals also left the region because of its shrinking customer base, poor public funding, and declining economic conditions. During the 1950s, eastern Kentucky lost 35 percent of its total population and, for the first time, the region's traditionally high birth rates fell below the national average.²⁸² An integral part of the exodus was the young college-educated men and women that left eastern Kentucky and never returned.²⁸³ With the exception of Alice Lloyd, community development after graduation was not overtly promoted by settlement schools. Conversely, settlement schools like the SRS gave students a college preparatory education and facilitated them on a

²⁷⁹ Wade H. Hall, *The Kentucky Anthology: Two Hundred Years of Writing in the Bluegrass State* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2005), 405.

²⁸⁰ Ron Eller, *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 193.

²⁸¹ Clyde B. McCoy and James S. Brown, "Appalachian Migration to Midwestern Cities," in *The Invisible Minority: Urban Appalachians*, ed. William W. Philliber and Clyde B. McCoy (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1981), 36.

²⁸² James S. Brown and George A. Hillery, "The Great Migration, 1940-1960," in *The Southern Appalachian Region a Survey*, ed. Thomas R. Ford (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1962), 59.

²⁸³ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 27.

path to life outside of Appalachia. Ultimately, the school's liberal agenda which had intended to raise social conditions in eastern Kentucky, added to the depletion of the region's overall intellectual and socio-economic wealth.

The rise of the settlement house movement in Appalachia reflected the larger socially-minded uplift culture that developed within philanthropic communities in large urban areas. Edward Guerrant succeeded in the mountains because he adopted the eclectic variety of theological and ideological principles that influenced Progressive Era altruism. He espoused the Social Gospel message and worked in an interdenominational capacity. The interplay between the religious and secular made mountain missions appealing in philanthropic circles on the East Coast, which afforded financial sponsorship for large-scale projects. Guerrant's background, dating from the Civil War through his mission in the late nineteenth century, also enhanced his reputation as an expert on Appalachian people, culture, and society. His ability to navigate the mission field without a Church affiliation allowed him to secure outside funds, build internal support from locals, freely publish personal works without censorship, and face less opposition from conflicting Church leaders. On the settlement's campuses, Guerrant incorporated the educational reforms of the Progressive Era with the religious and social programs of the Social Gospel. Evident by the matriculation and graduation rates, the SRS's curriculum prepared students for college by building a strong educational foundation. As a result, the settlements succeeded in their mission. However, the schools added an unforeseen result by contributing to the intellectual exodus out of Appalachia. Guerrant's original missions fed into the settlements, which gave him a foothold

in regions where he had previously started churches, preached, and held clinics. The story of the mission movement in Appalachia is largely the story of Edward Owings Guerrant.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁴ McMillan, *Unfinished Tasks*, 99.

CONCLUSION

Guerrant lived during a time of great religious and social change in America. His career was instrumental in the development of the settlement school movement and in the creation of Appalachian identity within popular American culture. Guerrant's first missions, founded under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church, laid the groundwork for his efforts with his private organization, which ultimately oversaw the growth of two settlement schools. He was able to garner support for his mountain work by bringing Appalachia to the forefront of the philanthropic community. Guerrant portrayed mountain people as progeny of the purest American stock during a time of heavy immigration and nativism. He intrinsically understood that to build a strong mission organization, the group needed support from local community leaders, outside charitable donors, and other secular and denominational altruistic groups. As a result, his comprehension of missionary politics and ability to manipulate the perceptions of Appalachian people gave Guerrant an advantageous platform to implement his faith-based social uplift project.

Guerrant differentiated himself from other benevolence workers because of his experience in Appalachia during the Civil War. Guerrant was the only Progressive Era mission or benevolence worker to live or have a personal experience with Appalachian culture, before the arrival of local-color writers and journalists. Missionaries started focusing their efforts in the Mountain South following the failures of Reconstruction and its inability to effect change within African-American communities in the South.²⁸⁵ This shift was

²⁸⁵ Klotter, "The Black South and White Appalachia," 832.

intrinsically related to the shared ethnicity of altruistic workers and their mountain recipients. Guerrant spearheaded the movement in Appalachia by promoting the racial purity of mountaineers. Mountain folk's "whiteness" connected them to members of charitable and religious organizations, which in turn helped fund the mission movement. Guerrant's war experience, his contribution to overall idea about Appalachian neediness, and the creation of a homogenous racial identity made him a significant figure in the development of mountain altruistic work.

In the 1880s, Guerrant laid the groundwork for the settlement house movement that began around the turn of the twentieth century. His primary tool became his ability to treat medical problems in between his fervent and eloquent sermons. Guerrant addressed health issues among mountain people and provided a service beyond his spiritual promises of salvation. The tangible benefits of Guerrant's clinics gave his missions a pragmatic purpose and avoided an imperialistic reputation among mountain people. As his missions developed into larger endeavors, he continued to expand the clinics and included education about preventative health care and hygiene. The addition of health clinics differentiated Guerrant's mission from the other denominational projects. Furthermore, he realized the benefit of offering social services, which created a template for a more complete uplift project. Although the Church gave Guerrant his initial backing for mountain missions, the limitations of the censorship, bureaucratic red tape, and denominational boundaries forced Guerrant to pursue a personal venture to expand his mountain work.

Guerrant's split with the Presbyterian Church and the subsequent founding of his private organization defined the religious benevolence movement in eastern Kentucky. The separation resulted from Guerrant's need to have literary freedom to publicize his own

private organization without the censorship required through the Church. Additionally, Church leaders did not condone Guerrant's utilization of interdenominational cooperation in his missions. The Church's missionary policy excluded other theological and denominational influences that they believed tainted their message to potential followers. This policy complicated the transition of the Society of Soul Winners into the Church's Assembly. But the challenge failed to quell the Church's aspiration to take over Guerrant's vast missionary empire and incorporate his organization into its faltering rural mission projects. The split and reunion of Guerrant with the Presbyterians reflected the Church's historical inflexibility and unwillingness to concede its theological and liturgical underpinnings.²⁸⁶ Conversely, Guerrant used the Church's platform and resources to initiate his evangelical work, to free himself from the bureaucratic constraints, and orientate his settlements back into the Church's system to ensure financial security. Theology and denominational competition played a large role in the settlement school movement. However, the incorporation of secular progressive educational and social reforms defined the movement's final transition. Guerrant's evolution into the liberal religious and Progressive Era philosophies helped bolster the role of faith-based settlement schools in Appalachia. Moreover, the reform-minded beliefs of the early twentieth century came to define the comprehensive educational and social uplift movement that grew in the Appalachia mountains.

“Can We Be Saved?” opens a new question about the social impact that settlement schools had on the declining socio-economic landscape of Appalachia. Most studies that focus on the social and cultural impact of missionaries examine how outsiders held agency over mountain people and the way in which their ideas about upland society imposed false

²⁸⁶ Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 814.

and glamorized stereotypes. Scholars have also researched the psychological impact of cultural preservation projects. However, besides brief notations from Henry Shapiro acknowledging that schools promoted emigration, the long-term effect of settlement school's overall depletion or addition of intellectual and economic resources remains barely studied.²⁸⁷ Ron Eller started the process of researching the "brain drain" out of Appalachian communities in *Uneven Ground*, but the text emphasizes the economic cause and effect of the exodus. "Can We Be Saved?" presents the idea that settlement leaders believed that students needed to leave mountain society to break the cycle of poverty. A more thorough revision of the long-term effects of the home missions and settlements started by the Progressive reformers is necessary to cognize the Appalachian benevolence movement's impact on mountain society.

Scholarship on Edward Owings Guerrant helps to broaden understandings of American religiosity in relation to the mission and benevolence movement in Appalachia. His life, in the context of American history, personifies the theological shifts in Protestantism and how the religious changes effected the social and cultural movements in rural and urban society. Within Appalachian history, Guerrant's story adds new pieces into the development of Appalachian conceptualization. Additionally, academic literature regarding Guerrant's settlement schools demonstrates the prominent role religious reformers played in the movement. Guerrant's contributions made him a polarizing figure during his lifetime. However, Guerrant has fallen victim to scholarly amnesia because of his reputation as a religious demagogue and cultural imperialist. Trumping the trend of interdisciplinary studies

²⁸⁷ Whisnant, *All That Is Native and Fine*, 137.

and micro-histories in Appalachia scholarship, “Can We Be Saved?” places Guerrant into an elevated role within the historiography of American altruism.

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VITA

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