

Branding Dixie

The Selling of the American South, 1890-1930

Karen L. Cox

Story of the Confederate States is going with a whoop! It is the best chance of the whole year to make money. . . . The book just hits the nail right on the head. . . . If for any reason you can't possibly take hold of it quickly, won't you do some friend, as well as us, a favor by calling attention to this great money-making opportunity? —B. F. Johnson Publishing, Richmond, Virginia, circa 1895

The B. F. Johnson Publishing Company's attempts to recruit salesmen for one of its many publications in southern history and literature captures the energy of late nineteenth-century marketing as well as the rise of mass consumerism. It combines the language of profit with that of promise. As Johnson himself wrote in 1895 to a potential salesman shortly after publication of the book, "We are offering you a chance to make money never equaled before." Then he continued, "It is a book for which the people have been waiting for years, *and they want it*. The name alone will secure an order in hundreds of cases."¹

Johnson's entrepreneurial spirit was, on some level, at odds with what he proposed to sell—a book that touted the Confederate past. Johnson used the tactics of modernity—marketing and advertising—to promote a book written in the antimodern tradition of the Lost Cause. The *Story of the Confederate States*, Johnson explained to a salesman from Tennessee, told the true tale of the efforts to "establish a separate Southern Confederacy" and of the heroism of southern soldiers. Yet even as Johnson wrote of the need to preserve such stories, he was guided more by profit than sentiment. As he explained, this was a "money-making" opportunity for the right salesman, who stood to benefit from the sale of "dozens, scores, hundreds, and even thousands of copies."²

Johnson's story illustrates the earning potential associated with selling Dixie—in this case, the South's version of the Civil War. Books represented one of several means of profiting from the sale of the Lost Cause. Moreover, southern businesses were not alone in their efforts to tap into the market for all things Dixie. Northern entrepreneurs—book publishers, producers of consumer goods, and music publishers—also recognized the profitability of employing the Dixie brand. On both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line, businessmen sought to capitalize on the marketing and consumption of a Dixie that incorporated the mythology and traditions of the southern past.

Distinctions existed, however. Southern advertisements of consumer items produced in the region tended to use a more martial iconography, applying images of Confederate generals or the battle flag to promote their products. Northern ad firms also found southern images useful for marketing products, yet these images tended to draw attention away from southern militarism and postwar racial violence, focusing instead on the ease of southern life. Thus, tranquil plantation scenes and disarming racial stereotypes were employed to suggest a life of leisure, a docile servant population, and happy-go-lucky race relations. This version of Dixie offered an idyllic counterpoint to modernity—specifically, to rapid urbanization and industrialization—that created what historian T. J. Jackson Lears calls “feelings of unreality.” In the South, however, those feelings of unreality were less about urbanization and industrialization than about the rise of enfranchised African Americans during Reconstruction and about the populist challenge to white supremacy in the late nineteenth century. Either way, according to Lears, companies offered products that ameliorated those anxieties through what he identifies as a “therapeutic ethos” in advertising.³

Whether the advertising was martial in spirit, as practiced among southern companies, or focused on the sentimental and exotic, as manifested in the North, both regions help to illustrate the profitability of branding Dixie (that is, the South) in the age of modern advertising and the emergence of a mass consumer society. Dixie became a brand in a broad sense, and as a brand it conveyed the values of the product as well as the values of white society.⁴ As Grace Elizabeth Hale writes, “By 1930, DixieBrand meant a regional identity made or marketed as southern.” Once identified with easily recognizable—and abstracted—symbols, the selling and consumption of Dixie could take place both inside and outside of the region with little heed to the changes affecting the lived South.⁵

The Road to Reconciliation

Understanding the emergence of Dixie as a brand requires understanding the South's evolution after the Civil War as well as its changing relationship with the North. White southerners emerged from defeat by embracing the ideology of the Lost Cause, which allowed them to honor the defeated in the immediate aftermath of the war. After Reconstruction and the return of home rule, southerners celebrated Confederate veterans as heroes and the cause of southern nationalism as just. The Lost Cause phenomenon of the late nineteenth century helped to perpetuate the mythology of the Old South and provided a strong bulwark against modernity and the New South creed favorable to regional industrialization.⁶

The South's relationship with the North underwent significant changes in the decades following the Civil War. White southerners resented Reconstruction and deplored any rights of citizenship granted to blacks; furthermore, southern whites considered military occupation an insult added to injury. Although the "tragic era" remained a significant part of Confederate memory, when it ended in 1877 and former Confederates renewed their claim to governing the South, the road to reconciliation with the North appeared within reach.

At war's end, many northerners too wanted a swift reconciliation with the South, and that sentiment subsequently strengthened. As David Blight argues, the North's interest in reconciliation with the South overshadowed one of the primary outcomes of the war—emancipation. Shoring up a national brotherhood based on Anglo-Saxon supremacy overshadowed the enforcement of the Reconstruction amendments ratified to guarantee the civil liberties newly awarded to the freed slaves. More importantly, the South represented an enormous market for the northern economy. The North's historical amnesia, moreover, meant that southern governments were free to treat their black citizens as they pleased. The result, according to Blight, was that within the politics of Civil War memory, the northern reconciliationist view blended with the South's white supremacist view to eclipse the black memory of the war as about emancipation. By accepting the South's historical revisionism, northerners met a major condition for reconciliation with the white South. This development paved the way for what Nina Silber calls the "romance of reunion," expressed through veterans' reunions of the Blue and Gray as well as in popular culture.⁷

A Changing Economy

In addition to the social reconciliation of northern and southern whites, the process of cultural reconciliation that emerged between the regions

can be understood through the examination of the production and consumption of consumer goods in the rapidly changing U.S. economy during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, changes that made branding Dixie possible. Most significantly, the shift from an economy based primarily on agriculture to one increasingly based on industrial production and mass consumption led to changes in the marketplace. Indeed, the end of the nineteenth century marked the rise of the national mass market. Urbanization contributed to this change, as did the significant growth of the national rail network. According to historian Richard Tedlow, "The completion of the new transportation and communication infrastructure made it possible to distribute goods nationally."⁸

New technology created machines that were faster and could produce thousands of units of a product, from cigarettes to breakfast cereals. Production was possible on a scale never before imagined, as were the accompanying profits. This type of production helped meet consumer demands in far-flung markets and created consumers for a variety of luxury goods. Mass production contributed to another important nineteenth-century development—mass marketing and the development of brands.

The South certainly did not experience the same manufacturing growth as the North, despite the best efforts of Henry Grady and other champions of the New South creed. Even though the South served as the North's "colonial economy" for several decades following the Civil War, by the end of the nineteenth century, southern citizens were consumers in the national economy, if not through mail-order catalogs then through magazines with national circulations or regional magazines in which northern companies advertised. Indeed, the emergence of modern advertising in popular magazines linked northerners and southerners as consumers of like products and, in many cases, the values reflected in the marketing of those products.⁹

The Emergence of Modern Advertising

For most of the nineteenth century, the majority of advertising appeared in newspapers. When advertisements appeared in literary magazines, editors usually confined such items to the rear of the journal because of the general disregard for advertising. Religious magazines—some of the most popular publications between the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—were the exception. Such publications profited handsomely from advertising, stimulated by the controversies between the emergent Fundamentalist and Social Gospel movements as well as the debate over evolution sparked by publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871).¹⁰

Patent-medicine hawkers and insurance companies often purchased the most ad space in nineteenth-century newspapers and magazines and remained important sources of advertising revenue into the early twentieth century. Yet between 1865 and 1900, advertising assumed an even more important role in the marketplace. The rise of marketing across the spectrum of American business enterprises corresponded to the rise of mass production and consumption as well as the expansion of popular magazines. By the end of the century, popular magazines had higher circulations than religious and literary publications, a development spurred by expanding modern advertising expenditures. That advertising, aimed at selling luxury goods to middle-class consumers, resulted directly from the rise of mass production.¹¹

By the dawn of the twentieth century, businesses developed marketing strategies to facilitate mass consumption, thereby signifying changes in advertising. A competitive market saturated with similar products required companies and entrepreneurs to mark their product as somehow unique. As one scholar puts it, "Advertising came to be the major communications link between mass production and mass consumption." Advertising, which for most of the nineteenth century did little more than describe a product and its purpose in simple language, now incorporated slogans and hyperbolic messages to appeal to consumers. More importantly, manufacturers sought to sustain their customer base by creating a "supername—a brand."¹²

Before the emergence of brands, soap was soap; with the creation of brands, *Ivory* or *Pearl's* immediately conveyed not just soap but soap with supposedly unique qualities assigned by the manufacturer. The rise of brand-name advertising proved effective, as consumers increasingly depended on brands to assure them of "real or perceived quality." Brand-name advertising rapidly expanded in the early twentieth century.¹³ Moreover, brands and messaging in advertising not only attracted new consumers because of quality but also, according to Lears, created new customers based on perceived cultural values associated with the product.¹⁴

Advertising Values

Branding and consuming Dixie can best be understood through an examination of advertising as a medium that can both reflect and reinforce cultural values. Richard Pollay, who has written extensively on the history of advertising, argues that "whether advertising imagery reflects the present or the future, it supports an image of society, and that is enough to warrant our attention." Not all of a society's cultural values are reinforced, however, and those values conveyed through advertising have

social and cultural implications. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the way Dixie was branded.¹⁵

What did it mean to brand Dixie? How was the South branded and what was conveyed in advertising in the pivotal period between 1890 and 1930? For the purposes of this essay, *Dixie* serves as both symbol and brand. The actual word *Dixie*, when used in the message of an advertisement, symbolized something much broader than a geographic region. It conveyed ideas about landscape and memory, race and class, a rural rather than urban society, an agricultural rather than industrial economy, and an antimodern rather than modern worldview. In numerous instances, the term *Dixie* cast its meaning through the lens of the Confederate past. The Dixie brand conveyed a product that represented a region and a regional identity. When used as part of a product name, as in Dixie Cigarettes or Dixie Nerve and Bone Liniment, it often (though not exclusively) meant the product was manufactured in the South.¹⁶

The cultural meaning of *Dixie*, moreover, varied between regional and national publications. While regional magazines constituted an obvious place to brand Dixie and to employ the rhetoric of the Lost Cause and the Old South, national advertisers also employed those messages. They capitalized on northern sentiments about reconciliation with the South. Thus, branding Dixie in national magazines might include images of a plantation or a black servant on a product to suggest that the product offered some amelioration from the stress and anxiety associated with rapid urbanization and industrialization. The manufacturers of Gold Dust Twins washing powders, for example, advertised "Let the Gold Dust Twins do your work," suggesting that the product, like docile and obedient servants, provided the consumer with more leisure time. Such advertising also came at a time when southern values on race gained traction nationwide, particularly as northern whites reacted negatively to the influx of ethnic immigrants from southern and eastern Europe.

Branding Dixie in the South was a relatively simple proposition. A healthy market for all things Dixie encouraged the proliferation of regional imagery in advertising at the turn of the twentieth century. Sales of monuments and pro-Confederate books, for example, allowed regional businesses to create new consumers of Confederate products by branding those products as having been made in the South or using iconography instantly recognized by southern consumers raised on the Lost Cause mythology. They could literally purchase Confederate memory. Martial icons such as the Confederate battle flag and Robert E. Lee, for example, regularly appeared in advertisements and instantly conveyed messages to consumers about proper regional identity and values. Popular literature and eventually the film *Birth of a Nation* also marketed the Ku Klux Klan to southern consumers. Yet D. W. Griffith's epic, based on Thomas

Dixon's best-selling novel *The Clansman*, also appealed to northern audiences. Again, the shared cultural values of white supremacy and racism were sold to both northerners and southerners.

Icons of the Old South, especially the mammy, often depicted as a large black woman wearing a kerchief (most recognizably, Aunt Jemima), appeared with less frequency in regional advertising but were favored by northern manufacturers who advertised nationally.¹⁷ Southern businesses more often employed images of southern industry and Confederate heritage during this period, as southern race relations were not conducive to romanticized images of blacks in advertising, even though southern whites thought that the uncle and the mammy served as ideal role models for the younger generation of blacks. Northern publishers and businesses, conversely, marketed to a broader national audience that bought into these stock images of docile and happy black servants because they represented a life of leisure to consumers whose lives in the urban-industrial North were anything but leisurely.

This essay discusses the branding of Dixie within the region based on advertising found in the *Confederate Veteran*, a regional monthly published between 1893 and 1932 with a circulation of around twenty thousand. The magazine provides an obvious choice for examining the advertisement of Confederate culture and is useful for identifying regional businesses as well as national advertisers that recognized a niche market among consumers of the popular publication.

Advertising in the *Veteran* (the shorthand used by contemporaries) reflected trends in modern advertising. Just like national magazines, the *Veteran* hosted ads for patent medicines and insurance companies, railroads and private schools, and domestic goods that appealed to women, whom manufacturers increasingly recognized as their most important consumers. What differentiated ads placed by southern businesses from those placed by northern enterprises was the link to the Confederacy, either through language or through regional icons.¹⁸

Among the regular advertisements of patent medicines was Dr. G. H. Tichenor's "Antiseptic Refrigerant for Wounds." Tichenor's medicine was manufactured in New Orleans, and its label incorporated a small group of Confederate soldiers hoisting the battle flag. While the product itself claimed to heal wounds "quicker and with less pain on man or beast than any compound known," it was vetted by the fact that George Tichenor was a Confederate veteran. The brand was pure Dixie, made in the South by a physician whose military service had taught him firsthand about the dangers of flesh wounds. The perceived quality of the product, moreover, was directly linked to an image of honor, the heroic southern soldiers holding aloft the Confederate flag.¹⁹

DR. G. H. TICHENOR'S
ANTISEPTIC
REFRIGERANT

— FOR —
WOUNDS
 OF EVERY CHARACTER ON



MAN OR BEAST

— DIRECTIONS. —
*Apply with hand soft brush or
 feather every 2 to 4 hours
 FOR INCISED WOUNDS USE SYRINGE*

— PREPARED BY —
DR. G. H. TICHENOR,
NEW ORLEANS, LA.

REGISTER IN U.S. PATENT OFFICE 1883

xxxxxx

It heals a wound quick-
 er and with
 less pain on
 man or beast
 than any
 compound
 known. It
 destroys bac-
 teria and all
 insect life; it
 prevents pain,
 sore throat,
 sore lungs,
 sore muscles,
 sore any-
 thing; cures
 diarrhoea
 and colic at
 once. Absor-
 lute cure for
 colic, botts,
 poll-evil, and
 fistula in
 horses and
 mules.

x

*At all drug-
 gists, 25c.,
 50c., and \$1.*

Dr. G. T. Tichenor of New Orleans used his battlefield experiences to certify the effectiveness of his antiseptic product, as seen here in an ad from the April 1906 issue of *Confederate Veteran*.



VETERANS, ATTENTION!

Chew Stars and Bars Tobacco.

Made from old, ripe leaf. No heartburn. Ask your dealer for it, or send us 15 cents in stamps for a piece, and get with it a "Stars and Bars" Calendar, with all the Con-

federate flags in colors, and history of each flag.

TAYLOR BROS., Dept. A., Winston-Salem, N. C.

Railroads and tobacco companies often lured consumers not only by associating products and services with the Confederacy but also by offering Confederate-related mementos, as in this ad for Stars and Bars Tobacco from the March 1906 issue of *Confederate Veteran*.

The South's various tobacco companies were some of the earliest businesses to adopt advertising budgets and tap postwar nostalgia for the Lost Cause. The American Tobacco Company advertised nationally, yet smaller regional companies also placed a Dixie spin on their advertisements. In 1906, Taylor Brothers of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, advertised its "Stars and Bars" chewing tobacco by appealing directly to veterans and with the purchase of a plug of tobacco offered consumers a "Stars and Bars" calendar "with all Confederate flags in colors, and a history of each flag." Richmond, Virginia, tobacco manufacturers Allen and Ginter, which never advertised in the *Veteran*, manufactured Dixie Cigarettes and pioneered a new advertising gimmick, collectible trading cards. By 1929, Edgeworth Tobacco, also of Richmond, exploited the new technology of radio through its own station, WRVA, which adopted the slogan "Down Where the South Begins." In addition to promoting the link between its station and the "capital of the Southland," the cigarette manufacturer promoted the links between its company and the Confederate history of the Richmond area, telling its listeners, "Our station endeavors to send to you the spirit of hospitality, graciousness and charm that characterizes the Southland."²⁰

Souvenirs—essentially luxury items—frequently appeared for sale in the *Veteran*. S. Thomas and Brothers of Charleston, South Carolina, sold "Confederate buttons, souvenir spoons, pictures of Fort Sumter, President Jefferson Davis, Gen. Lee, Gen. Johnston, Gen. Gordon, [and] Gen. Hampton." S. N. Meyer of Washington, D.C., described his "Ladies' Belt Plates" with the raised letters "C.S.A." as "handsome and useful

souvenir[s].” The manufacturer of “The Game of Confederate Heroes” classified the item as both a family souvenir and a means of fund-raising for a worthy cause—the preservation of Confederate memory. The game consisted of fifty-two cards “divided into thirteen books,” a reference to the thirteen states recognized by the Confederacy as having seceded from the Union. The cards featured color illustrations of Confederate military and political leaders, and the proceeds from the sale of the game went to the Sam Davis Monument Fund in Nashville, Tennessee. As luxury items, these products used the Dixie brand for appeal, and the ads suggested that such items were, like Confederate “relics,” sacred.²¹

Increasing rail travel required that railroad companies advertise, and here again, the Dixie brand was evident. The earliest railroad advertisements listed nothing more than times of service, but practices changed with the advent of additional rail lines and tourism travel. Between 1900 and 1920, the *Veteran* regularly included ads for the Dixie Flyer as well as the Cotton Belt Route. The Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad and the Illinois Central ran the Dixie Flyer along tracks stretching from Chicago to Florida variously promoted as the Dixie Route, the Lookout Mountain Route, the Battlefields Route, and the Dixie Line. Traveling through Dixie on a train that carried the same name helped to brand the route. The St. Louis Southwestern Railway, operator of the Cotton Belt Route from St. Louis into Texas, lured veterans to a reunion in the Lone Star State by offering its travelers a “free picture of Gen. Lee” along with a copy of his farewell address “suitable for framing.” In this instance, the South’s most honored hero of the Civil War was used to brand the rail service.²²

Some advertised items met specific market demands. Uniforms for attending reunions of Confederate veterans or of the Blue and the Gray represented a niche market for both northern and southern companies. Both M. C. Lilley and Company of Cincinnati and (after 1910) the Pettibone Company of Louisville, Kentucky, exploited the demand for reproduction uniforms. As the aging veteran population dwindled, Nashville’s National Casket Company appealed to consumers with the message that “Confederate Veterans should be buried in Confederate gray broadcloth-covered caskets.” Recognizing that its products were not a necessity for burial, the company accentuated the emotional appeal of the Lost Cause to sell its Confederate-themed caskets. The Dixie Artificial Limb Company fulfilled a real need among both Confederate veterans and their descendants who lost limbs during the Spanish-American War. J. C. Griffin, who managed the Nashville-based company, advertised to its potential customers to abandon the “OLD PEG LEG,” which caused embarrassment, in favor of his “improved willow wood limbs.” For amputees considering new wooden arms or legs, the idea that the

manufacturer was based in Dixie may have afforded some additional psychological comfort.²³

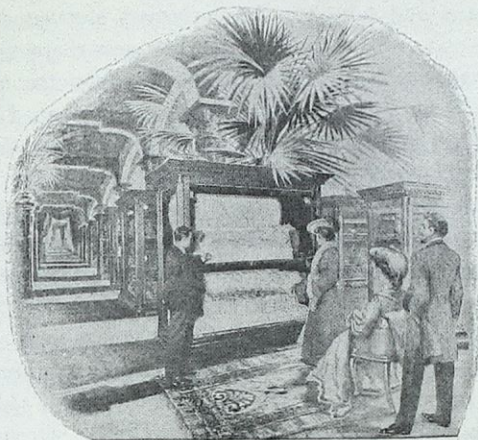
The most frequent categories of goods advertised in the *Veteran* between 1890 and 1930 were monuments and books. Monuments represented the most public symbols of the Lost Cause, and between 1895 and the First World War, hundreds were placed on the southern landscape, efforts spearheaded by the United Daughters of the Confederacy as a way of honoring their Confederate forbears. Thus, monument companies found a ready-made market for their products. Two companies—the Muldoon Monument Company of Louisville, Kentucky, and the McNeel Marble Company of Marietta, Georgia—advertised regularly in the *Veteran* between 1910 and 1920, targeting their ads directly at the Daughters. Muldoon claimed to be the “oldest and most reliable” company, responsible for “nine-tenths of the Confederate Monuments in the United States.” The advertisements often employed the image of a Confederate soldier cast in stone, and the companies celebrated their history of working with the Daughters to build monuments throughout the South.

Publishers of southern history and literature filled the pages of the *Veteran* as well as national literary magazines with ads. Pro-southern and pro-Confederate literature was the order of the day in the early twentieth century, and both regional and national publishers sought to meet and heighten consumer demand. Publishers in the major literary centers of New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago advertised in the *Veteran*, as did noted southern companies such as Richmond’s B. F. Johnson, Baltimore’s Page Publishing, and the University Press of Nashville.

New York publishers published as much racist literature set in Dixie as southern publishers did, which begs the question of why white southerners were convinced that northern histories of the war misrepresented Confederate history. Although part of the answer may lie in the fact that northern publishers indeed put out literature condemning the Confederate rebellion, southerners may also have preferred to buy their books from B. F. Johnson rather than from Scribner as a means of both supporting regional businesses and expressing southern pride. To tap the southern market, Yankee companies had to clearly demonstrate their Confederate sympathies before gaining the hard-earned dollars of southern consumers. For example, Neale Publishing, though headquartered in New York’s famous Flatiron Building, emphasized that white southerners with Confederate sympathies had founded the firm.²⁴

A plethora of other northern companies also sought to exploit the demand for pro-Confederate goods. The profitability of the Lost Cause attracted the entrepreneurial interest of a wide range of businesses. An Ohio uniform manufacturer specializing in fraternal regalia for a variety of national organizations attempted to meet the needs of men attending

THE COUCH BEAUTIFUL



It is not what you pay for, but what you get, that needs your attention in our line. Confederate Veterans should be buried in Confederate gray broadcloth-covered caskets. See that all your friends are laid away in NATIONAL caskets, the standard of *quality* everywhere. Inquire of your undertaker.

National Casket Company

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

In this May 1912 *Confederate Veteran* ad, National Casket sought to attract southern customers by promoting the company's loyalty to the Confederacy.

Confederate veterans' reunions. Flag companies in New York and New Jersey filled consumer demand by manufacturing, selling, and advertising Confederate flags and bunting. Branding Dixie extended into the national marketplace as both northern and southern manufacturers associated the quality and value of their products with the qualities and values that northern advertisers and subsequently consumers associated with the South. The association of quality with southernness thereby alleviated southerners' hesitancy to contribute to the North's economic might.

Print and later radio and television advertising demeaned blacks by creating stereotypical images that regularly appeared in national marketing campaigns. The black mammy and uncle caricatures appealed to white consumers nationwide, because the image often presented blacks as docile servants who willingly cared for their white employers. Furthermore, these faithful servants projected the image of leisure to which white middle-class consumers aspired. Significantly, the ad campaigns that branded Aunt Jemima and Maxwell House (based on a real Nashville hotel) as icons of the Old South were developed by a prominent New York advertising agency, J. Walter Thompson.²⁵

The Thompson agency successfully employed black stereotypes and southern style, influencing other advertisers, who used similar images in their ad campaigns. New York publisher E. P. Dutton and Company advertised a book *ABC in Dixie: A Plantation Alphabet* (1904) by using a cartoonlike figure of an elderly black man in a top hat and tails that suggested the male house servants of the Old South. Indeed, according to the ad, the book offers "verses and pictures of the old plantation types." The book formed part of Dutton's catalog of juvenile literature meant to "appeal to the little folks, whether they have been in Dixie land or not." Many consumers fell into the latter category.²⁶

National advertisements suggestive of "southernness" were not limited to black stereotypes alone. *Life* magazine included a number of national advertisements beckoning consumers of all things reminiscent of the Old South. Gorham, a manufacturer of silverware, advertised in *Life* in 1928 that its Colfax line was "a delightful reflection of southern hospitality," much like that used by the "charming hostesses of the Colonial South." A Philadelphia distillery ad campaign for Dixie Belle Gin promoted an image of upper-class leisure often associated with the planter South. J. B. Lippincott, a Philadelphia book publisher, carried a large inventory of romance novels in which northern men married southern women, the literary symbol of sectional reconciliation.²⁷ While Coca-Cola emerged as the best-known manufacturer based in the South during this period, the company was committed to being national in its appeal, even though the company's chair, Asa Candler, was staunchly Confederate in his sym-

pathies. Other southern companies, however, participated in projecting the Old South, Dixie brand. In a 1924 issue of *Life*, Mississippi's Natchez Baking Company advertised its Ole Missus Fruit Cake as "made in Dixie." Nunnally's, an Atlanta-based candy manufacturer, advertised its chocolates as renowned "ever since the old days of the storied South." Using the image of a southern belle being wooed by her beau, the candy was described as having "subtle undertones of flavor that emphasize so delightfully its Southern witchery," well before Margaret Mitchell introduced the world to Scarlett O'Hara.²⁸

An important advancement in advertising during the 1920s and 1930s was what historian Roland Marchand calls the "social tableaux." Advertisements of this type usually depict a "slice of life" and serve as reflections on society. While advertisers remained focused on profits, these tableaux depicted scenes reflective of contemporary cultural values, attempting to make products synonymous with that culture. The ad's message is not simply a slogan but an entire story created by the scene. The advertised item becomes a memory trigger, transporting the consumer back through time.²⁹

One example of the social tableau that perpetuates the Dixie/Old South theme is an advertisement for Crab Orchard Whiskey, distilled in Louisville, Kentucky. The slice of life is a scene of the old Crab Orchard Springs Hotel, where people came for such "Southern delicacies as barbequed squirrel" or "roast 'possum and candied yams." They washed it down, of course, with bourbon whiskey, "a flavor which even the flower of old-time Kentucky's gentility praised." Crab Orchard Whiskey, in this case, was branded as old-fashioned Dixie, with the accompanying value of being associated with southern gentility. It became, according to its ads, "America's fastest-selling whiskey."³⁰

Sounds of Dixie

Perhaps the most entertaining and effective way marketers branded Dixie was through popular culture, especially the sale of sheet music about the region. Before there was radio, there was parlor music, and between 1890 and 1930, sheet music on various Dixie themes reached the height of popularity. In the 1890s, white audiences helped popularize the genre of music about the South known as coon songs. By 1910, those songs had been replaced by the music of Tin Pan Alley, with more of a focus on the South generally rather than specifically on southern blacks, although racial stereotypes remained present in both the lyrics and in the artwork that appeared on sheet music covers. Interestingly, this music was not being produced in the South or by southern musicians but in the North.

New York City's Tin Pan Alley musicians and songwriters wrote hundreds of songs about the South, often using *Dixie* in the titles. Music publishers in New York, Detroit, and Chicago sold thousands of copies of these piano pieces, which were played at home and made popular by vaudeville acts such as the Misses Campbell, who achieved fame through their rendition of the song "You're as Dear to Me as 'Dixie' Was to Lee."³¹

Ironically, Jewish immigrants living in New York City who had never laid eyes on the American South wrote most of these Dixie songs. Irving Berlin composed several pieces on Dixie, including "The Dixie Volunteers" (1917) and "When It's Night Time Down in Dixieland" (1914). His publishing company, Waterson, Berlin, and Snyder, produced numerous other Dixie-themed pieces. Jerome H. Remick, who operated publishing offices in Detroit as well as New York, was responsible for a substantial portion of the market for sheet music on Dixie, including such titles as "Down South Everybody's Happy" (1917).

"Are You from Dixie?" "How's Ev'ry Little Thing in Dixie?" "When the Sun Goes Down in Dixie," and "She's Dixie All the Time" touted the leisurely pace of life in the South as the antithesis of modernity. Songwriters again and again told of days gone by or of a life they wished they had enjoyed or perhaps missed. The lyrics reveal a fascination with the "exotic" South, a place in a warm climate with happy-go-lucky blacks, genteel white women, and a rural landscape awash in moonlight and magnolias. The lyrics from "Dixie Lullaby" (1919), published in St. Louis, offer a typical description of the romanticized South:

There's a tale that they tell about Dixie
It's heaven on earth so they say,
With the birds and the flowers where I spent happy hours
And the tho't of it takes me away

CHORUS

Down in Dear old Dixie where the flowers bloom
Down in Dear old Dixie in the month of June
Floating down the river in a birch canoe
And singing love's song to you
In the fields of cotton where I used to roam
On the old plantation of my Southern home,
Back in Alabamy, back beside my mammy
That's my Dixie Lullaby.³²

Isaac Goldberg, who lectured and wrote about American popular music, published his treatment of the genre in *Tin Pan Alley* (1930). In it, he relates the story of famous lyricist Gus Kahn, who was asked why the "song boys" of the North wrote about the South. Kahn replied that

ARE YOU FROM DIXIE?

('CAUSE I'M FROM DIXIE, TOO!)



WORDS BY
JACK YELLEN
MUSIC BY
GEORGE L. COBB

WRITERS OF
"IT'S ALL A DREAM"
"JUST FOR TO-NIGHT," ETC.

M. WITMARK & SONS
NEW YORK CHICAGO SAN FRANCISCO LONDON

ALSO PUBLISHED
AS A

**ONE
STEP**

Sheet music, such as for the song "Are You from Dixie?" (1915), celebrated the pastoral scenery of a South little changed by the Civil War. (Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

"Southern place-and-State names lent themselves to rhyming." Goldberg added what he believed to be a "deeper reason" for the fascination the South held for so many northern songwriters. "Paradise," he wrote, "is never where we are. The South has become our Never-never Land—the symbol of the Land where the lotus blooms and dreams come true."³³

For Goldberg, the South was an exotic place. The region was branded so often, in so many different marketing ploys, that perceptions of the South—indeed, southern identity itself—became detached from reality. For songwriters as well as for the ad men who sought to brand the region, the South increasingly represented a respite from the afflictions of modernity. If, for northerners, "paradise" was never where they were, then "Dixie" was paradise, even if the reality did not match the myth. Only the idea of Dixie was needed to make it seem real, and the nation's consumers ate it up with a spoon.

NOTES

1. B. F. Johnson Publishing to J. T. Nolen, B. F. Johnson Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond.

2. Ibid.

3. T. J. Jackson Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization: Advertising and the Therapeutic Roots of Consumer Culture, 1880–1930," in *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880–1980*, ed. Richard Wightman Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears (New York: Pantheon, 1983), 7.

4. The numerous secondary sources on the history of advertising in the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries include Frank Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1929); Fox and Lears, *Culture of Consumption*; Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators* (New York: Morrow, 1982); Roland Marchand, *Advertising and the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Richard S. Tedlow, *New and Improved: The Story of Mass Marketing in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1990); James D. Norris, *Advertising and the Transformation of American Society, 1865–1920* (New York: Greenwood, 1990).

5. Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890–1940* (New York: Pantheon, 1998), 146–47.

6. On the Lost Cause, see Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865–1920* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980); Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865–1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). On the New South creed, see Paul Gaston, *The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking* (New York: Knopf, 1970).

7. David Blight, *Romance and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001); Nina Silber, *The*

Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South, 1865-1900 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).

8. Tedlow, *New and Improved*, 14; Fox, *Mirror Makers*, 22. See also Jib Fowles, *Advertising and Popular Culture* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1996), 32-33.

9. Tedlow, *New and Improved*, 11. On the South as a "colonial economy" of the North, see C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951).

10. Norris, *Advertising and the Transformation of American Society*, 29.

11. *Ibid.*, 31, 33; Fox, *Mirror Makers*, 28-35.

12. Tedlow, *New and Improved*, 14.

13. Norris, *Advertising and the Transformation of American Society*, 99; Tedlow, *New and Improved*, 14-15.

14. Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization," 6-14.

15. Russell W. Belk and Richard W. Pollay, "Images of Ourselves: The Good Life in Twentieth Century Advertising," *Journal of Consumer Research* 11 (March 1985): 888. Important works on advertising and cultural values include Fowles, *Advertising and Popular Culture*, 28-29; Marchand, *Advertising and the American Dream*; Monica Brasted, "The Reframing of Traditional Cultural Values: Consumption and World War I," *Advertising and Society Review* 5, no. 4 (2004), 1; T. J. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market* (New York: Pantheon, 1989).

16. Hale, *Making Whiteness*, 146. Hale's arguments about buying and selling within the region as well as imagery of the region itself are useful, though her analysis of advertising focuses on black stereotypes in national advertising.

17. On the use of blacks in advertising, see Marilyn Kern-Foxworth, *Aunt Jemima, Uncle Ben, and Rastus: Blacks in Advertising, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1994); M. M. Manring, *Slave in a Box: The Strange Career of Aunt Jemima* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 9. See also Hale, *Making Whiteness*, 121-98.

18. *Confederate Veteran* was published in Nashville, Tennessee, from 1893 until 1913 by Sumner A. Cunningham and from 1913 until 1932 by Edith A. Pope, Cunningham's secretary.

19. "Tichenor's Antiseptic Refrigerant for Wounds" (advertisement), *Confederate Veteran*, April 1906.

20. "Stars and Bars Tobacco" (advertisement), *Confederate Veteran*, March 1906; Allen and Ginter Trading Cards, Benjamin Meade Everard Scrapbook, 1889-1890, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond; *Souvenir Radio Log*, WRVA, Richmond, Virginia, "Down Where the South Begins," *the Edgeworth Tobacco Station* (Richmond, Va.: Larus, 1929), Virginia Historical Society, Richmond.

21. "S. Thomas & Bro." (advertisement), *Confederate Veteran*, circa 1910; "S. N. Meyer" (advertisement), *Confederate Veteran*, April 1906; "The Game of Confederate Heroes" (advertisement), *Confederate Veteran*, June 1899.

22. "Cotton Belt Route" (advertisement), *Confederate Veteran*, February 1902.