Experiencing Defeat, Remembering Victory: The Army of Tennessee in War and Memory, 1861-1930

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Abstract
This dissertation explores the meaning of the Civil War in the South by examining white Southerners' perceptions of the Army of Tennessee from 1861 to 1930. While scholarship on the war's memory is immense and growing, little of this literature examines the memory of the Confederacy's war effort in the western theater—the area of operations military historians now deem central to the war's outcome. This project rectifies that oversight by examining white Southerners' memory of the Army of Tennessee in the post-war decades. Unlike Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, the Confederacy's primary western field army suffered a near endless string of battlefield defeats and a revolving door of incapable, egotistical, and irascible commanders. Its wartime record is hardly complimentary to the Lost Cause which insisted on the martial, moral, and masculine superiority of Confederate officers and soldiers.

An examination into the popular historical memory of the Army of Tennessee reveals two significant developments that change our understanding of how post-war white Southerners conceptualized the Confederate war-effort and processed the trauma of defeat. First, despite historians' insistence that white Southerners focused their attention and memories on Lee and his army, the western theater occupies a more prominent place in the post-war Confederate mind than previously thought. Second, unlike that of the eastern army, the Army of Tennessee's memory was constructed in a fragmented manner that allowed for the circumvention of its wartime record. For the army to maintain both prevalence in Confederate memory and synchronicity with the Lost Cause narrative of the war, it could not be remembered in the same holistic manner as "General Lee's Army." In focusing their memories on isolated moments, contingencies, units, or individuals—as opposed to the army as an inclusive institution—ex-Confederates succeeded in reconciling the army's record with the Lost Cause.

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Americans remember their Civil War. There were many white women in the WRC who praised the historical memorial of African Americans during that bloody conflict and both white and black members celebrated the twin victories of the war: Union and emancipation. Grand Army of the Republic and Woman’s Relief Corps National Museum, Springfield, IL; Journal of the Tenth Annual Convention of the Woman’s Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, Washington D.C., September 21-24, 1892, 35, 492-493; Anne E. Marshall, Creating a Confederate Kentucky: The Lost Cause and Civil War Memory in a Border State (Chapel. Foster, Gaines M. Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913. Dissertation Prospectus: The Army of Tennessee in War and Memory, 1865-1930. Bookmark. Download. The Nathan Bedford Forrest monument and tomb located in the recently re-named Health Sciences Park in Memphis, Tennessee has been a controversial place since its inception. In 1905, Forrest’s body was exhumed from the historic Elmwood more. The Nathan Bedford Forrest monument and tomb located in the recently re-named Health Sciences Park in Memphis, Tennessee has been a controversial place since its inception. In 1905, Forrest’s body was exhumed from the historic Elmwood Cemetery and placed in the center of Memphis creating a pilgrimage site for Forrest as a civic icon of mythological statu Army of Tennessee, primary Confederate army of the Western Theatre during the American Civil War (1861–65). Although the army fought in numerous engagements, it won few victories. In addition to facing some of the Union’s most capable generals, the army was plagued by problems of command, supply, and logistics for the duration of the war. Historians have identified the string of defeats suffered by the Army of Tennessee as a primary cause of Confederate defeat in the war. Origins and early campaigns. Although the Army of Tennessee would not receive its permanent title until November 1862, for