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Rod Andrew. *Wade Hampton: Confederate Warrior to Southern Redeemer.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008. 640 pp. $40.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8078-3193-9.

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Wade Hampton and Reconstuction

Wade Hampton III (1818-1902) is a historical figure whose name is known to South Carolinians and whose careers–antebellum planting, Civil War cavalry, Reconstruction politics, and New South industry-building–have served as models for various grand interpretations. For instance, Joel Roudolphe Williamson in *Crucible of Race* (1984) used Hampton to build a model of "Volksgeistian Conservatism" for racialist perspectives; and the late C[omer] Vann Woodward (1908-1999), in his widely cited *Strange Career of Jim Crow* (1955; rev. ed. 2000), employed Hampton as his model for conservatives who accepted and in some cases even advanced a limited amount of pre-Jim Crow racial integration. In studies of economic history, Hampton serves as Woodward's model for an Old South planter who in the postbellum New South "bows, makes his peace with Yankee capitalism and goes into a new economy" building railroads and textile factories and thus becoming himself a New Man in a New Economy–creating a region more bourgeois, more capitalist, and generally quite different than the antebellum societal organicism.[1] In contradistinction, James Tice Moore, Dwight Billings, Carl Degler, David Herbert Donald, and others note Hampton's continuing economic dominance after the war and thus use him as a model for how the landed elite took a "Prussian road" to industrial development based on continuing Old South values and practices (and above all people and personalities). Although he did not footnote anything, Wilbur J. Cash in *Mind of the South* (1938) surely relied on Hampton for his own memorable images of captains of cavalry who became captains of industry in an unchanging proto-Dorian South.

And at the personal level Hampton is everywhere for the reviewer: As a child I read South Carolina poet laureate Archibald Rutledge's memoirs and verses concerning the Hampton family estates; I went to a high school named for Wade Hampton, with our classroom buildings named for his plantation estates and the class yearbook named for his great cavalry exploits at the battle of Trevilian Station; and I saw–then and now–his equestrian statue on state capitol grounds. And, when I removed to teach in the Virginia Highlands, I found Hampton here too, holding land and slaves in Abingdon (as well as western North Carolina and black-belt Mississippi), and with sections of the town's Martha Washington Inn named for those same plantation estates already known to me.

But what do I actually *know* about Wade Hampton? Above all, is he really significant, and how useful is he for those important big-picture models used by historians? What does he illustrate and illuminate about the landholding elite who ran the Old South, led the fighting of the Civil War, and then for a time ran the New South? It is these large questions that Rod Andrew Jr. addresses in this handsome and eminently useful book.

For the antebellum and war years, Andrew organizes Hampton's life around three themes, each of which is a term of some controversy, but he gives a working definition that is logical for each. Most important, the terms are then extended into the postbellum and New South years, but with the important notation that context of new business and political structures has changed the meaning of those terms. The terms are *paternalism*, *honor*, and *chivalry*. By paternalism, Andrew means a sense among the landed elite that they had a birthright to govern and to lead, and that with that birthright came a sense of *noblesse oblige* (defined by Andrew in structural and not sentimental terms) to their perceived inferiors, especially African Americans. He notes correctly that the "tragedy" of such paternalism is that it could never lead to racial justice or equality, since it was "built on the assumption of black inferiority" (p. xiii). Concerning honor, Andrew is less precise, but the concept involves a public stance that venerated one's forebears, respected "ferocity of will," celebrated warlike virtues in combat ("mar-

tial valor"), and displayed public integrity defined as dependability and personal autonomy (p. xiv). Lacking is any reflection of Bertram Wyatt-Brown's sense (*Southern Honor* [1982]) of the "primitive" and self-defeating irony in such concepts; although Andrew cites Wyatt-Brown's monograph, the narrative is innocent of those insights, which would have given Andrew's biography still more depth. Andrew deftly weaves chivalry into the obviously interconnected unironic sense of honor and paternalism, noting that the landed elite sought to add a "layer of external restraint" (p. xii) onto all its responsible public actions.

When the chance arrived to end meaningful black participation in Reconstruction–such politics was after all the racist core of so-styled Redemption and of continuing Lost Cause celebrations–Hampton benefited from what can only be called "white terrorism," and this is explained, not excused, as an effort to "vindicate" his own conduct in the war and the sacrifices made by his family, friends, and caste. Andrew specifically notes the wartime burning of Columbia and William Tecumseh Sherman's destruction of Hampton family land and possessions as crimes that Southerners felt needed to be vindicated; and then he deftly ties those vindictive emotions to the high taxes and economic abuses of Radical Reconstruction–as well as the very assault on white racist values represented by black men voting and holding office. Andrew is exactly on target with this statement: "In Hampton's chivalric bearing, personal misfortunes, and proud refusal to apologize for the past, white southerners thought they saw themselves. And they liked what they thought they saw. This quest for vindication, for redemption, for meaning and validation in the face of tragedy, then, was not only Wade Hampton's story after the Civil War. It forms a central part of the story line in the saga of the American South" (p. xv).

One worry with such a perspective is that the biographer might become too much engaged with the personhood of the subject and end up either defending or attacking too vigorously without detaching sufficiently to help students understand the subject. Andrew, however, is completely successful in detaching himself while still showing concern and even some compassion. In fact, his careful handling of Hampton's response to the battlefield death of his son Frank on October 27, 1864 and the almost simultaneous wounding of his son Wade Hampton IV, is a form of art as well as social science: Andrew shows that Hampton's incredible reserve and public honoring of his sons' sacrifices by saluting them and going right back into battle at Burgess Mill (or Boydton Plank Road) was not so much a superhuman act as a careful fulfillment of the requirements of of gentlemanly honor, for which he had trained in Aristotlean fashion for a lifetime. Hampton was thus neither superhuman nor supercallous, but rather propitiously in tune with a subculture's training appropriate to his station in his land.

The use of biography to illuminate and illustrate important broad patterns–what Mark Twain famously called the way history "rhymes"–is important also for military historians with respect to Wade Hampton's performance as a cavalry officer in the Civil War. Looking with care at each battle and also at broader strategic issues, Andrew shows that Hampton exhibited some flaws but withal was a successful cavalry leader–especially with his tactics of logistical preparation for each engagement and his rather "Northern tactic" of dismounting his men to fight effectively as infantry at important junctures. Indeed, Andrew leads the reader to a conclusion that Hampton was for this war and–given the limited resources of manpower and horseflesh–for the Army of Northern Virginia, better fitted (Aristotle again!) for his tasks than the more glamorous J. E. B. Stuart, whose bold swings around entire opposing armies sometimes cost dearly in men and horses and left his unit out of communication with Robert Edward Lee at moments when Lee sorely needed to be in communication with him.

Turning to Reconstruction, Andrew makes his way successfully through. Tests for *good* history in the period involve the racist massacres in Hamburg, Ellenton, and Charleston; conservative Democratic voter fraud in Laurens and Edgefield counties; and the Red Shirt excesses of conservative Democrats organized by Hampton's onetime cavalry officers Matthew Calbraith Butler and Martin Witherspoon Gary. In each case, Andrew tells the story true, noting the negrophobic violence perpetrated by Hampton's supporters and scoring the old general for his failure to manage fully his unruly lieutenants in what were awful instances of racist abuse. On the other hand, Andrew also marshals a gracious plenty of credible primary-source evidence that Hampton did finally restrain the Red Shirts from their worst excesses, and was in the end responsible for a peaceful transfer of political power in a way that for a long season ensured the legitimacy of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments.

To answer the questions, then, Andrew shows that Wade Hampton III was both a significant tactician and strategist in Civil War battles, and a conservative and paternalist racist who played an important role in ending Reconstruction–and thus diminishing power among black people–but who also tempered the awful negro-

phobia that emerged with his lethally destructive successor, Benjamin Ryan Tillman. Finding the right balance, Andrew concludes: "The forces that drove him were pain, tragedy, a thirst for redemption and vindication, the desire for peace and stability, personal religious faith, and the social ideals of the antebellum aristocrat–not dreams of either racial equality or racial proscription" (p. 502).

Note

[1]. Quotation is from Interview: C. Vann Woodward, November 9, 1978, Roper Papers, Southern Historical Collection of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; theme is developed in Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, History of the South Series, ed. Ellis Merton Coulter and Wendell Holmes Stephenson (1951; rev. ed. with expanded bibliography Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986).

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