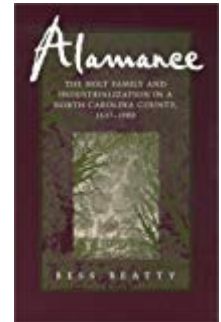


**Bess Beatty.** *Alamance: The Holt Family and Industrialization in a North Carolina County, 1837-1900.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999. xx + 247 pp. \$45.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-8071-2449-9.



**Reviewed by** Michael Gagnon

**Published on** H-South (October, 2000)

### A Useful Beginning

Thank goodness someone finally published a monograph length case study of the process of early Southern industrialization. The growth of manufacturing, particularly of cotton textiles, outside the South is well documented for the nineteenth century. For the North, in addition to well written summaries of the industrializing process across the expanse of the entire nineteenth century, one may find case studies that explore the means of capital formation, of labor transformation, and of technology transfer. One may also find works that explore how regional culture or how the size of a business firm factored into the process of industrialization in a specific locale. There was no single monolithic method of creating an industrial North; instead today's literature paints a multi-faceted portrait of an uneven process in which human decisions shaped the future of an evolving economy.[1]

In contrast, the infant steps of Southern industry remain largely unknown. While most scholars of the Southern economy understand that the South did industrialize in the first half of

the nineteenth century, the monographic literature reflects neither the extent nor the importance of Southern manufacturing before the advent of the "New South" in the 1880s. Prior to the late 1970s, monographs on antebellum Southern manufactures fell into four categories: encyclopedic state-wide surveys of textile production that were long on details but short on explanation; books that sought to highlight the changes wrought in the era summarized by Henry Grady's terse phrase, the "New South;" studies of slave labor in all forms of non-agricultural production; and explanations of planter class hegemony. C. Vann Woodward and Eugene Genovese are the most influential of those authors, and their conclusions, from widely differing perspectives, continue to mislead the non-specialist into believing that early Southern manufacturing was neither widespread nor important.[2] Case studies that suggested including industrial work as a permanent aspect of the Southern economy before 1880 could only be found as articles, and many unfortunately focused on merely convincing readers that factories actually existed in the South in fair-

ly large numbers.[3] Such methods failed to overcome the influence of Woodward and Genovese.

By 1980, however, two new strands emerged in the historiography of early Southern industrialization. The "Prussian Road" arrived in the South as students of Barrington Moore applied his theories about conservative modernization to the New South. The two monographs that defined this new movement again looked at entire states, North Carolina and Alabama, rather than seeking answers in specific locales. Reviewers of these works were generally unimpressed and felt that the authors overlooked the details of industrialization that preceded the era of their studies. At about the same time as this new theoretical approach was being tried, two well-known economists applied cliometrics to the aggregate productive forces of antebellum Southern industry in order to discover that the Southern economy was indeed different from that of the North, and they concluded that slavery was probably the culprit. More recent studies, however, determined that much of the North also failed to adequately emulate the intensity of New England's industrialization, and that the agricultural areas of the North exhibited a similar "deplorable scarcity" of factories without the benefit of a slave economy to blame.[4] To date, the monographic literature on early Southern industry continues to substitute aggregation and theory for tangible evidence of an actual process taking place. The problem was simply that the real process of early Southern industrialization apparently proved too difficult to document in a scholarly book. But now Bess Beatty has changed that.

Bess Beatty's *Alamance* is an important, although schizophrenic, work that represents the nature of social relations of her subject. On the one hand, Professor Beatty intends to reclaim the reputation of Edwin Michael Holt and his family as primary developers of North Carolina's textile industry in the nineteenth century, and she dedicates most of the book toward investigating the

business practices and social standing of this elite family from the 1770s to 1900. On the other hand, interspersed within the chronology of her narrative of the Holt family enterprises, she also seeks to uncover the life experiences of the largely "inarticulate" industrial workers in the Holt family factories. Combining traditional elite sources with the methods of social history, Beatty creates a complex work that demonstrates that individual perspectives of interconnected lives are necessarily segmented and incomplete, and that these differing views of the same phenomenon are often irreconcilable, particularly when the perspectives are divided by notions of class and gender. In *Alamance* the elite and the plain folk found that the reality of their lives rarely met outside the factory door.

Edwin Holt, and the two succeeding generations of his progeny, carved out a niche as the family that dominated the development of cotton manufacturing in North Carolina for nearly a century. Descended from members of the colonial elite, in 1837 Edwin Holt eschewed a strictly agricultural life to borrow money from a family friend to start a small cotton spinning factory in partnership with his brother-in-law. Making money conservatively, Holt reinvested his profits in the business by purchasing looms and dyeing equipment. He expanded production in the 1850s so he could ship to the Philadelphia wholesale market in addition to the local market, as his factory finally connected to the emerging rail network that he supported as a North Carolina legislator. At the same time, Holt paid off his debts, bought out his partner, and began introducing his sons to the management of cotton mills.

In 1857, the senior Holt bought a second factory and then sold it to his son, Thomas, in 1860. Thomas Holt then began producing a gingham cloth known as Alamance plaids that proved so popular in the North that it earned the Holt mills a national reputation. With the coming of war, textiles proved instrumental to the ability of the

Confederacy to wage war, and manufacturers such as the Holts became wealthy in the production of war materiel. Unscathed by the destruction of the national conflict, the Holts immediately began expanding production following the defeat and Edwin Holt bought up the agricultural property of his non-manufacturing relatives as a way of supporting them in their time of need. Although he retired from the day-to-day management of his businesses following the war, Edwin Holt continued to advise his family on business ventures and brought his sons-in-law into the business as well. By his death in 1884, Edwin Holt's estate was valued at over a million dollars, and his sons and grandsons constituted an industrial dynasty, having built or purchased many more mills in the Carolina piedmont.

The author of *Alamance* paid particular attention to documenting the demographic and the cultural evolution of the Southern labor force at Holt's mills. From the start, Edwin Holt adopted the Rhode Island system of textile production in developing a small factory (Holt's mill opened with only 300 spindles in 1838) with an attendant mill village, and employing whole families to work in the mill. In short, Bess Beatty demonstrates that much of what we know about postbellum mill villages also applies to antebellum and Civil War factory communities, and in doing so, she shows that the factors that made New South industrialism successful were worked out prior to the advent of the New South. While women and children made up the mass of workers in these typically small factories located in rural sites in order to take advantage of available water-power, Beatty also tells us that Edwin Holt took special care in hiring female headed families (pp. 54-55). Not only was the cost of hiring only women and children marginally less than the cost of hiring men in addition to the rest of their families, but, since women had less opportunities to move on, female headed families were expected to be more complacent and steady in their work. As one underlying theme throughout, Beatty takes special

care to demonstrate the irony that textile workers were anything but docile in their relations to the mill owners, and that "challenges to harmony came in distinctly male and female ways" (p. 66).

At its best, *Alamance* offers new insights for both the generalist and the specialist. For the generalist, it not only corrects misconceptions about Southern industrialization gained from standard graduate school readings, but it also explores many of the recurrent themes found in any good work of Southern history. The author investigates continuity and change across the watershed of the Civil War, elite participation in non-agricultural business pursuits, and the shape of Southern industrial paternalism. Specialists will find Beatty's discussions of technology transfer and the effects of the Civil War on the intensification of industrial success both informative and convincing.

While arguing mainly against Dwight Billings' *Planters and the Making of a "New South": Class, Politics, and Development in North Carolina, 1865-1900* and others of the Prussian Road school, and to a lesser extent against C. Vann Woodward's *Origins of the New South*, this book focuses on one of the central paradoxes of human history: that fundamental stability can undergird monumental change; that the more things change, the more they stay the same. As Professor Beatty has pointed out in previous articles, several of Billings' examples of the revolution from above, of an agricultural elite that moved from dominating plantation slaves to dominating textile workers, were sons, nephews and sons-in-law of antebellum industrialists.[5] This was neither an elite conspiracy to maintain a commanding position for their class nor a "new" industrial middle-class rising to displace the old landed elite. (To be fair, Woodward hedged his comments when discussing the antebellum textile industry.[6]) Instead, this was simply generational change amidst the maturing of an industrial revolution already well underway. This case study encourages understanding change and continuity as variant perspectives

of the same complex phenomena rather than as absolutes in their own right.

As a subset of the continuity question, Beatty attacks the notion that planters uniformly opposed Southern industrialization. Through the family of Edwin Holt, Beatty ably shows that planters engaged in industrial pursuits in the Old South, and that at least a segment of the elite considered themselves both planters and manufacturers, simultaneously. Holt compartmentalized his agricultural and industrial activities, maintaining the use of slaves for the former and free whites for the latter. The concurrent development of these different aspects of his estate allowed him to expand his industrial pursuits without disrupting existing social institutions. And his children continued these evolutionary practices so that great changes were wrought over a long period of time for the family. But, the changes appeared to have taken place in distinctly shorter periods for the communities in which they located their factories, particularly for those founded after the Civil War.

Despite the Holts' persistent economic vision of an industrializing South, they never appeared as pariahs of the society in which they were embedded. Indeed, throughout the time under study, the Holt family participated in politics, and by the second generation of industrialization, one was elected governor of the state. Future historians of planter ideology will now need to incorporate the economic activities of the sizeable manufacturing segment of the planter class, such as that represented by Edwin Holt and his heirs, to create a more nuanced portrait of antebellum society. While emancipation and the precipitous fall in the price of cotton affected the postbellum investment abilities and portfolio choices of the remnants of the pre-war planter class, the diversity of antebellum economic activity allowed many to prosper, economically and politically, in the new era following the war.

Beatty also tackles the issue of paternalism with considerable insight. In the "Introduction," she invokes E. P. Thompson to remind us that paternalism is one of those large porous terms that defies exact definition, and that it rests upon an elite perspective of social relations (p. xviii). Since she is a social historian, Beatty attempts to break through the elite perspective and thus, throughout the book, she demonstrates numerous episodes in which the plain folk working in the mills resisted elite interference in their lives. This resistance culminated in a long strike in 1900, shortly after the Holt family declared a strike unthinkable by their operatives. On a related tack, she very convincingly shows how the Holts and other industrializing elites created mill villages not out of the philanthropy of *noblese oblige* but rather, out of economic necessity, as a means of recruiting and retaining scarce labor for their factories. Similarly, paternalism evaporated when mill hands became unable to work. In one of many examples of non-paternal behavior, when a worker who enjoyed the long-term trust of the mill owner was injured in an industrial accident, the factory owner simply fired him.

Paternalism began as a means to induce the industrial labor of a rural society and ended when the worker could no longer produce. Most importantly, Beatty consistently reminds her readers that the ideas that we normally denote as paternalism were not strictly Southern. Quoting Phil Scranton, she explains that paternalism was a transitional element in the evolution of American capitalism that played a particularly strong role in the textile industry (p. 189). American industrialists, both North and South, used paternalism when it benefited them to do so, and quickly jettisoned any aspect that no longer served their purposes. Both workers and owners understood paternalism as a one-directional use of power, as a means of coercion and social control. Textile workers knew better than to expect real reciprocity from unequal power relations.

Finally, both the generalist and the specialist will find the chapter on the Civil War useful and enlightening. Although the war proved extremely profitable for industrialists in the South, it was not without its challenges. Factory owners were frequently accused of "extortion" which was the common term for profiteering. And they insisted upon earning a profit, even in the face of a floundering war effort. What appeared unpatriotic about profiting during a time of national need is consistent with the production of war goods by "defense contractors" in all the wars fought by Americans. Why should Confederate industrialists be expected to destroy their personal fortune to benefit the country? Whether these profits were truly excessive remains difficult to assess, and Beatty wisely sidesteps the issue. Instead, she looks at other activity in which Southern industrialists, particularly the Holt Family, dealt with the war as a personal issue. The Holts gave money and materiel to local militias. Several of Edwin Holt's sons and nephews served the Confederacy, and some were wounded and died in that cause.

Beatty, I think, does considerable justice to her topic by showing the tension between the "Patriot for Profit" designation usually assigned to such seeming profiteering and the personal stake the family had in this war. Very importantly, this chapter of *Alamance* should be assigned as required reading in all undergraduate Civil War classes to start a discussion of the "Lost Cause" mythology. She very clearly explodes that myth by showing how different classes had different stakes in the war. With dissimilar resources, different classes found very distinct ways to survive the war: the wealthy stayed home to manage their needed industrial and agricultural resources, skilled labor produced war materiel far from the battlefield, and many of the poor of North Carolina simply deserted. Bess Beatty addresses all of this succinctly.

Specialists in Southern industrialization will find Beatty's discussion of technology transfer

particularly interesting. Holt's factories were generally turn-key operations; he purchased his equipment in the North and hired skilled technicians to assemble and run his factories while he managed the commercial aspects of the operation. Even after Holt and his sons eventually acquired technical skills, the manufacturers of their production equipment still generally supplied them with the technicians to assemble the equipment once it arrived from the North (usually from machine shops in Paterson, New Jersey) and to train their operatives. Likewise, their overseers, superintendents and other skilled workers generally came from the North or from Europe.

Unlike similar operations in Georgia, the North Carolina factories neither developed the ancillary operations of machine shops and spindle lathing mills that allowed greater independence from Northern suppliers, nor did they create a homegrown set of factory superintendents. [7] Thus one can see already that several processes of industrialization were at work in the American South during the nineteenth century. *Alamance* is instructive, therefore, in beginning to establish the differences between industrialization in areas with little (or late) access to transportation networks and those, such as Georgia, where the industrial and transportation revolutions went hand in hand at an early stage.

Less convincingly, *Alamance* attempts to explore gender and race relations within nineteenth century Southern industrial enterprises. Throughout the book, Professor Beatty highlights the experience of women, of both elite and plain-folk backgrounds. The problem comes not from her efforts but from the lack of sources left by those she wishes to discuss. Whenever Beatty explores gender issues at length, she generally extrapolates from the historiography how the women in her study "probably" experienced the same familial relations, education, or travel opportunities as others in the same class (e.g. pp. 33-35, 48-49). She is more successful in explaining how non-elite

women were prevented from assuming positions of leadership within the mills.

African-Americans also claim their share of the text, but again we learn little that is new. Edwin Holt tolerated Klan terrorism directed against his former slaves, particularly when they voted for the Republican ticket (a ticket that Holt initially supported). Beatty demonstrates the agency of the freedmen when one of Holt's former slaves testified against him in the Ku Klux Klan inquiry in Congress despite the repeated threats and attacks he suffered. Like the factory operatives, women and people of color appear intelligent and capable of knowing their own self-interest in this work. But little new emerges about either group that cannot be found elsewhere.

Despite the many important aspects of early Southern industrialization addressed by *Alamance*, Beatty misses several important opportunities to illuminate even more. Foremost is the issue of context. While we are told that Edwin Holt started with a three hundred spindle spinning mill, and that he later added more spindles as well as looms and dyeing equipment, we are never supplied with numbers or dates. While the record of the Holt enterprises may not reveal that data, other easily accessed sources do. The federal manufacturing census from 1840 onward, despite its many failings (largely of omission rather than of commission), generally reported the number of spindles, amount of capital invested, value of output and number of workers of each factory. Without a sense of the change over time of at least one of these measures of productive capacity, the extent of Holt's manufactures is anecdotal at best, and allows the skeptic to question the merit of studying the Holt family factories.

Secondly, one never quite understands how the Alamance Factory fit in with other factories in its surrounding area. From Beatty's description, one senses that Alamance was located within an existing manufacturing district, but her singular focus on the Holt family generally precluded an

understanding of the chronology of industrial development in North Carolina and of the Alamance Factory's place within that development. One cannot tell from her work how many factories preceded or followed construction of Holt's Alamance Factory, nor can one tell whether those factories were larger, smaller or about the same size as the one she studies. A map showing the relation of Alamance to other factories would have been extremely helpful, particularly to those unfamiliar with the geography of North Carolina. A few tables similarly would have allowed readers to evaluate the growth of the factory in relation to those around it.

Thirdly, one presumes that a case study has greater implications for understanding similar activities in the region. One never gets a clue about how the Alamance Factory relates to developments elsewhere in the South. It turns out that three hundred spindles and a few looms is pretty small potatoes compared to factories erected in Georgia at the same time, which averaged more than a thousand spindles in 1840. The aggregate manufacturing statistics for North Carolina in the same census indicate that the state possessed many more, but much smaller, factories than Georgia.[8] Without a discussion of this type of context, we will never know if the Alamance Factory was representative of industrialization in antebellum North Carolina, and if there was a (probable) sub-regional variation between the size of manufacturing establishments within the antebellum South.

Another missed opportunity, in my opinion, is the failure to confront some of the central questions about Southern industry that Gavin Wright posed in 1979.[9] Wright asked why Southern industry started a full generation after Northern industrial efforts, why the mill building boom of the 1840s failed to secure a solid industrial base for continued Southern industrialization, and why the New South waited fifteen years following the end of the Civil War to begin. Again, these ques-

tion (and derivations of them) provide context for greater understanding of the actual process of industrialization.

The question of origins of Southern manufacturing efforts is really one of motivation. Why did Southerners choose to start manufacturing textiles? Beatty explains that Holt began manufacturing against his father's wishes, but she never gives an explanation as to Holt's motives. Similarly, she implies that Holt's father opposed his industrial investment from a sense that such activities were either ungentlemanly or unSouthern, but they could have easily been simply a fear that an investment in a field in which young Edwin had no experience was simply a poor investment choice.

Southerners had already invested; in fact, much of the South's industrializing efforts followed a lengthy report issued by a member of the North Carolina legislature in 1828, at the time that Southerners came to see the inevitability of passage of the tariff of abominations. Industrialization is inherently political, yet we do not discover Edwin Holt's initial political feelings about the endeavor that he devoted his entire adult life, even though the discussion had been going on around him for ten years preceding his initial investment. Did young Edwin become a Whig because he was a manufacturer defending his class interests (which is what Beatty implies), or did he become a manufacturer because he was a Southern Whig who sought greater economic independence for the South within the federal union? Only an explanation of his motives would reveal the answer to this "chicken or egg" question, and its answer would appropriately shed light on how manufacturers intended their enterprises to proceed.

With Beatty's almost singular focus on the Holt family, one would not know that the South experienced a cycle of boom and bust in its textile industry from the late 1840s to the late 1850s. With the end of the long depression following the Panic of 1837, Southerners sought lucrative investments for their idle capital. Clearly putting ev-

everything into agricultural investments (i.e. slaves and land) had proved fatal during the depression. Similarly, transportation investments frequently failed to deliver promised rewards. So, like the small investors lured into Internet startups in the 1990s by the promise of high profits, from roughly 1845 to 1851, Southern investors flocked to the promised high returns of cotton mills. Those with solid business plans, skilled superintendents, and adequate labor and capitalization succeeded even when the international market for coarse cotton textiles collapsed in the early 1850s; many more Southern factories failed and left investors with a sour taste for future Southern industrial investment for years to come.

Placing Edwin Holt within this cycle might explain some of his behavior. Perhaps his two favorite maxims: "You will have your good years and your bad years; stick to business," and "Put your profits into your business," are experiential statements of how he held his business together during the textile depression of the 1850s (p. 130). Similarly, Holt's organization of his factories as family enterprises may reflect an understanding of the pressures that shareholders can exert on company management in a corporation. Surely Holt saw that shareholders routinely drained operating funds from many factories by requiring steady dividends in the 1850s despite the poor market for their goods, a move that forced many textile companies to fail. A consideration of this first cycle of textile experience could illuminate much.

Beatty does consider Wright's third question, about why Southern industrial "take-off" waited fifteen years after the Civil War ended. She effectively demonstrates that the Holt family experienced this delay. Although the Holts easily and profitably re-entered the Northern textile market almost as soon as the war ended, they still only operated three factories at the end of the 1870s. By the turn of the century, however, they operated over twenty-five such factories (p. 126). In part,

this expansion came from the generational turnover, as second and third generation members of the Holt family mill-men erected or purchased their own factories. Other parts of Beatty's explanation include the extension of the transportation network, the credit granted by Northern machine shops for textile machinery purchases, the maturing and expansion of the Southern labor force, and the improvements in technology as factories moved away from water-power.

Although a personal interest of my own, as part of this topic I would have included a discussion of the conversion from Confederate to American currency at the end of the war. Clearly the Holts made money as defense contractors, but they were paid in Confederate currency. How did they convert that wealth so that it outlasted the Confederacy? Did they purchase tangible goods such as land or physical improvements to their factories? Or did they convert Confederate currency to a foreign currency or to specie? And, as with all the other questions, how did the Holts' experience compare to that of other textile manufacturers? What is the context of the Holt family's industrial experience?

Professor Beatty's bibliography is extensive. Its secondary sources are particularly good for someone looking to construct a reading list on early American industrialization, both North and South. My only complaint is that while she includes important works on Northern industrialization, her bibliography omits chestnuts on non-North Carolinian Southern industrialization, such as Lander's *The Textile Industry in Antebellum South Carolina* and Randall Miller's *The Cotton Mill Movement in Antebellum Alabama*. Her list of scholarly articles is broader, but even here she lists only the few of Richard W. Griffin's articles that dealt specifically with North Carolina.

For primary documents, Doctor Beatty researched all the appropriate archives, but (to nitpick a little) her citations will sometimes grate on the specialist's nerves, as when she cites Har-

vard's R. G. Dun collection as "Dun and Bradstreet." I always cringe when I read a review asking why an author did not look at a reviewer's pet set of documents, but I would like to suggest a source overlooked by this study that future researchers of Civil War industries should consult. The "Citizen Files," consisting of more than 1100 rolls of microfilm at the National Archives, record many of the purchases made by the Confederate government and enable the researcher to get a good sense of the volume of goods sold by firms and individuals.[10] One should know any variation of the firm's name as well as the names of anyone within the firm who might have been responsible for selling goods. Again, this is an excellent bibliography and I heartily recommend it for new students to the field.

Despite my comments about missed opportunities, I consider this a useful and important work. Many will want to use chapters as supplemental readings in undergraduate courses, but will probably not want to use the entire text. At the graduate level, Beatty's book will provide much gist for discussion of planter hegemony and the origins of the New South. Specialists in labor history will mine its chapters on workers to use as comparisons to the communities they are researching. *Alamance* is the first word in the monographic literature on early Southern industrialization. And with such a successful beginning, I trust it will not be the last.

#### Notes

[1]. Robert Dalzell, *Enterprising Elite: The Boston Associates and the World They Made* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987); Thomas Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1979); H. J. Habakkuk, *American and British Technology in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, England: At the University Press, 1962.); David Jeremy, *Transatlantic Industrial Revolution: The Diffusion of Textile Technolo-*



*gies Between Britain and America, 1790 - 1830s* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1981); Walter Licht, *Industrializing America: the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore : John Hopkins University Press, 1995); Jonathan Prude, *The Coming of Industrial Order: Town and Factory Life in Rural Massachusetts, 1810-1860* (New York and Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Philip Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism: The Textile Manufacture at Philadelphia, 1800 - 1885* (New York and Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Cynthia J. Shelton, *The Mills of Manayunk: Industrialization and Social Conflict in the Philadelphia Region, 1787-1837* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); and Anthony F. C. Wallace, *Rockdale: The Growth of an American Village in the Early Industrial Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978) are just a few of the more prominent examples of this extensive literature.

[2]. The first category includes very useful, but underutilized works like Ernest M. Lander, Jr., *The Textile Industry in Antebellum South Carolina* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), and Randall Miller, *The Cotton Mill Movement in Antebellum Alabama* (New York: Arno Press, 1978). The second group includes such classics as Broadus Mitchell, *The Rise of Cotton Mills in the South* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1921), and C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*, Vol. IX of *A History of the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951). Examples of the third type include Robert Starobin, *Industrial Slavery in the Old South* (New York, and Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1970), and Charles B. Dew, *Ironmaker to the Confederacy: Joseph R. Anderson and the Tredegar Iron Works* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966.) Eugene Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965), remains the most important of the fourth category.

[3]. See the many articles of Richard W. Griffin in the 1950s and 1960s.

[4]. Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy; Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966); Jonathan Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South: Alabama, 1860-1885* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978); and Dwight B. Billings, Jr., *Planters and the Making of a "New South": Class, Politics, and Development in North Carolina, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979). Assessments of the Prussian Road abound in reviews of the two books that dealt with Southern industrialization. For two examples, see Lawrence Powell, "The Prussians Are Coming." *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 71 (Winter, 1987): 638-667; and see James C. Cobb, "Beyond Planters and Industrialists: A New Perspective of the New South." *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 54 (February 1988): 45-68. The cliometric approach is best defined by Fred Bateman and Thomas Weiss, *A Deplorable Scarcity: The Failure of Industrialization in the Slave Economy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981). For a convincing corrective to Bateman and Weiss, see Kenneth L. Sokoloff and Viken Tchakerian, "Manufacturing Where Agriculture Predominates: Evidence from the South and Midwest in 1860." *Explorations in Economic History* 34 (1997): 243-264.

[5]. Bess Beatty, "Textile Labor in the North Carolina Piedmont: Mill Owner Images and Mill Worker Response, 1830-1890," *Labor History* 25 (Fall 1984), 485-503; and Bess Beatty, "The Edwin Holt Family: Nineteenth-Century Capitalists in North Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review* 63 (October 1986), 511-535.

[6]. C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 131.

[7]. Michael Gagnon, "Transition to an Industrial South: Athens, Georgia, 1830-1870," Atlanta, Emory University dissertation, 1999.

[8]. National Archives, Record Group 29, Records of Census Bureau, Entry 322, "Schedules of Mines, Agriculture, Commerce, Manufactures, etc, (1840) - Georgia." *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States as Obtained at the Department of State, from the Returns of the 6th Census* (Washington: Thomas Allen, 1841; reprinted New York: Norman Ross Publishing Inc., 1990.) James D. B. De Bow, *The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850* (Washington: Robert Armstrong, 1853; reprinted New York: Norman Ross Publishing Inc., 1990). Joseph C. Kennedy, *Abstract of the Statistics of Manufactures according to the returns of the Seventh Census*, (Washington: U.S. Government Document, 1859; reprinted New York: Norman Ross Publishing Inc., 1990.) *Manufactures of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the original returns of the Eight Census*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1865; reprinted New York: Norman Ross Publishing Inc., 1990.) Francis A. Walker, *The Statistics of the Wealth and Industry of the United States ... compiled from the original returns of the Ninth census*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872; reprinted New York: Norman Ross Publishing Inc., 1990.) *Report on Manufacturing Industries in the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1895.)

[9]. Gavin Wright, "Cheap Labor and Southern Textiles before 1880." *Journal of Economic History* 39 (September 1979): 655-680.

[10]. National Archives, Record Group 109, entry 180, "Firms that Did Business with the Confederate Government" (commonly known as the "Citizen Files"), microfilm series m346.

Copyright (c) 2000 by H-Net, all rights reserved. This work may be copied for non-profit educational use if proper credit is given to the author and the list. For other permission, please contact H-Net@H-Net.MSU.EDU.

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at <https://networks.h-net.org/h-south>

**Citation:** Michael Gagnon. Review of Beatty, Bess. *Alamance: The Holt Family and Industrialization in a North Carolina County, 1837-1900*. H-South, H-Net Reviews. October, 2000.

**URL:** <https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=4599>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States License.