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Heyward Shepherd: The Faithful Slave Memorial

ABSTRACT

During the 1920s and 1930s the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) and the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) received considerable publicity with their cosponsorship of a "faithful slave" monument in Harpers Ferry. Sitting in Lower Town Harpers Ferry in the midst of an urban landscape, the Heyward Shepherd Monument has different meanings to Southern heritage groups, the National Park Service, and the NAACP. Its tumultuous history shows the dynamic nature of commemorative landscapes, and it demonstrates how different interest groups interpret this landscape feature. The Heyward Shepherd Monument still stands in the national park and the National Park Service sees itself as the custodian of this cultural resource. While the UDC and the SCV see the monument as an important symbol of Southern heritage, the NAACP has lobbied to have it removed from the landscape.

Introduction

After the American Civil War both Northerners and Southerners built monuments to commemorate their dead. Northerners celebrated their victory and paid tribute to their heroes, while the Southerners used monument building to remember a cause and mourn their losses. Monuments in the South became a vehicle for Southerners to justify their cause and recall a way of life where race served as a means to create hierarchy in society. Several scholars have provided in-depth histories of postbellum monument building (McPherson 1982:488; Foster 1987: 5; Kammen 1991:117). One type of monument that has received little attention is the erection of the "faithful slave" monuments.

From the beginning of the Jim Crow era through the 20th century, Southern heritage groups like the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) and the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) became interested in not only paying tribute to the fallen soldier but also extending the ideology that slaves were loyal to the system of slavery. The faithful slave myth became a vehi-

cle for Southerners to justify the institution of slavery. Southern heritage groups paid homage to slaves and servants who did not rebel against their masters during the Civil War, and they gave them a martyr status. One such memorial, known as the Heyward Shepherd Monument, was erected in Harpers Ferry in 1931, and it provides an example of a landscape of conflict.

The Heyward Shepherd Memorial in Harpers Ferry

Martyrdom for Heyward Shepherd

The inscription on the Heyward Shepherd monument recalls the John Brown raid, one of the most controversial events in American history. Brown, who had gained a national reputation as an abolitionist, planned to capture the U.S. Armory at Harpers Ferry. He believed that his actions would encourage an uprising of enslaved blacks who would join him, and, together, they would march south to free other enslaved people (Shackel 1995, 1996).

On the night of 16 October 1859, Brown and his party of 21 men captured the federal arsenal with relative ease. A group of marines under the command of Colonel Robert E. Lee eventually captured Brown. Not a single enslaved person came to John Brown's aid (Anderson 1861: 36; Hinton 1894:311ff, 709ff; Villard 1910:440; Oates 1970:293-300). Brown's actions led to his execution; he was found guilty of treason and hanged on 2 December 1859. Northern abolitionists immediately hailed John Brown as a martyr, while many Southerners claimed that his attack on the U.S. Armory amounted to treason and death was a just penalty for his act.

One of the great ironies of the raid is that the first person killed was Heyward Shepherd, a free African American working for the B&O Railroad. Shepherd served as a baggage handler and sometimes tended the railroad office (Barry 1903: 84; Shackel 2000a). The memory of Heyward Shepherd, controlled by the white press, became an important tool in the late-19th and early-20th centuries in aiding and justifying the faithful slave myth. The press used Shepherd both to

justify the existing social system and to demonize John Brown. The *Virginia Free Press (VFP)* (1859:2) reported, "he was shot down like a dog. A humble negro as he was, his life was worth more than all of the desperadoes of the party, and his memory will be revered, when theirs will only be thought of with execution." The editorial described Shepherd as "an unoffending trust worthy free Negro man" (VFP 1859:2).

The term "inoffensive colored railroad porter" or some version of it, like "industrious inoffensive colored man," first used in the newspaper's 27 October 1859, account of the raid, was often used to describe Shepherd in subsequent accounts. This phrase dismayed many African American groups, and they vocalized their discontent in African American presses (VFP 1879:2, 1887:3, 1888:2, 1894:2, 1895:2, 1896:2, 1899:2, 1902:2; *Farmers Advocate* 1920:2). One newspaper, located in a nearby community, tuned into the rhetoric of the VFP. The *Pioneer Press's* editor, J. R. Clifford, wrote that if Shepherd was "an industrious, inoffensive colored man' we rather take sides with John Brown, i.e., if Brown considered him inoffensive enough to be killed, we have no fault to find" (*Pioneer Press* qtd. in VFP 1893:2).

While the black press tried to counter the dominant white memory, the white press continually reminded its readers that Shepherd was faithful to the existing system and was satisfied with his subordinated role in society—a second-class citizen. This new memory of Heyward Shepherd helped lay the foundation work for a faithful slave memorial in Harpers Ferry.

Memorializing Heyward Shepherd

In 1894 rumors stirred around Harpers Ferry that African Americans, led by Frederick Douglas, wanted to erect an obelisk to commemorate the deeds of John Brown. The VFP (1894:2) immediately responded by calling Shepherd "the industrious, inoffensive colored man [and] by the way, it is suggested that the white people erect a monument to the memory of Brown's first victim at Harper's Ferry." The following year, an obelisk commemorating John Brown was erected at the site of the engine house on B&O Railroad property. It seemed as though the voice of the VFP editor fell on deaf ears, since it took years before any groups began a serious discussion

on erecting a monument to Shepherd. Whether the newspaper had any influence in creating the momentum is uncertain.

Founded in 1895, the UDC debated the erection of a faithful slave monument only a decade later (*Confederate Veteran [CV]* March 1905: 123–124). Some UDC members believed that a "faithful slave monument" could serve as a vehicle to counter the memory created by Northerners about the South and the institution of slavery (CV 1905:123). The UDC wanted a monument dedicated to

the loyal slaves to whose care the women and children were intrusted during the entire period of the War between the States. To those slaves who watched the fireside, tilled the soil, helped spin, weave, and make raiment for the master and sons on the battlefield—to those slaves who protected and provided for the families at home is due a monument (CV 1905:123).

In that same article, UDC members claimed that a "Faithful Slave Monument" would tell future generations "that the white men of the South were the negro's best friend then and that the men of the South are the negro's best friend today" (CV 1905:123–124).

The 1907 national UDC meeting could not agree on the creation of a monument, so they postponed any consideration until a later time. The idea of a faithful slave monument lay dormant for more than a decade until Matthew Page Andrews, a member and strong supporter of the SCV, believed it was appropriate to erect a "faithful slave monument" at Harpers Ferry to honor a "faithful slave" killed during the John Brown raid (Poppenheim 1938:77).

In a speech at the 1920 UDC annual national meeting, President-General Mary McKinney recommended that the membership follow Andrews's anti-Brown lead so that "future generations may be impressed with the real truth [about Brown]." McKinney told the group that Brown killed a faithful slave "because he held too dear the lives of 'Ole Massa' and 'Ole Miss'us,' to fulfill Brown's orders of rapine and murder." McKinney remarked, "The hero of Harpers Ferry was not the Soldier of Fortune, but a black man who gave his life for his friends. Honor his memory. With a thrill of appreciation tell to future listeners the story of this faithful slave, who stood between Southern womanhood and a renegade adventurer" (UDC

1920:40). The convention applauded and elected to work with the SCV to erect a monument at Harpers Ferry "to the faithful slave who gave his life in defense of his master during the John Brown raid" (CV 1921:117). Both the UDC and the SCV agreed to contribute \$500 dollars toward the monument with the cost not exceeding \$1,000 (CV 1920:436). The leadership of the SCV suggested that the boulder should be 6 ft. 2 in. high, 3 ft. 6 in. wide, and 2 ft. thick (UDC 1921:208–209). The president of the UDC asked Andrews to write an inscription for the "Faithful Slave Memorial."

The committee struggled to find an appropriate site for the memorial. Initially they contacted the B&O Railroad and asked for permission to erect the monument on its property. The proposed location was on "a vacant triangle lot at the intersection of streets opposite the B. & O. Railroad Station" (qtd. in Johnson 1997: 8). The location is significant since the John Brown Fort obelisk, erected in 1895, stands nearby. Both monuments would have stood in direct sight of each other. The railroad asked the town of Harpers Ferry how they felt about the planned monument, and they forwarded the proposed inscription to the town council. The inscription read:

Here in the night of October 16, 1859, Heyward Shepherd, an industrious and respected colored man, was mortally wounded by John Brown's raiders. In the pursuance of his duties as watchman, he became the first victim of the attempted insurrection.

The Negroes of the neighborhood, true to their Christian training, would have no part with those who offered pikes and staves for bloody massacre.

This boulder is set up by the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the United Daughters of the Confederacy as a memorial to Heyward Shepherd exemplifying the character and faithfulness of thousands of Negroes who, under many temptations throughout subsequent years of war, so conducted themselves that no stain was left upon a record which is the peculiar heritage of the American people, and an everlasting tribute to the best in both races (UDC 1921:209).

Henry McDonald, town recorder for Harpers Ferry and president of a college established for African Americans, Storer College, wrote on the request that he "saw to it that the offer was rejected" (Carr 1922). McDonald then wrote the B&O Railroad, remarking that the council

opposed the erection of the monument. He noted that the town council

look[s] with disfavor upon the placing in our midst such a monument as proposed with the inscription thereon suggested, as being likely to occasion [sic] unpleasant racial feelings in a community where we are so entirely free from it. We see no good purpose that can be served in this case and believe that harm would result to our community (McDonald 1922).

The railroad agreed, believing that the monument "might disturb the existing pleasant relations" (G. Campbell 1922; UDC 1922:216–218).

The UDC searched for an alternative place for their Faithful Slave Memorial. The work of the Faithful Slave Committee slowed considerably after 1924 (UDC 1924:227–228) as the strength of the Ku Klux Klan grew in the South. By 1924 there were more than two million members of the KKK, which had a strong presence in Harpers Ferry. Klan activities caused a deep division between the town residents; some African American students, fearing for their lives, resigned from Storer College. Many residents cautioned that the promotion of southern heritage would further ignite racial strife in town (Taylor 1922; *Farmers Advocate* 1923).

The Faithful Slave Memorial Committee floundered for another five years, until Elizabeth Bashinsky became the president-general of the UDC in 1930. She committed the organization to erecting the monument in Harpers Ferry, "but not until the inscription should be changed omitting every word of bitterness, since we wished it to perpetuate loyalty & truth rather than any word that might suggest any bitterness or reflect upon the cruelty of others" (CV 1930:4). With this new spirit, Andrews agreed to change the wording on the boulder to accommodate some phrases that the town council had requested years earlier. He also inserted the word "freeman" and made a reference to Shepherd's employment with the B&O Railroad (Johnson 1997:12–13).

After a decade of work to locate a place for the monument, the UDC and UCV finally succeeded. At the beginning of the Great Depression, African Americans found themselves further segregated by Jim Crow legislation. Harpers Ferrians elected James Ranson, the son of a Confederate veteran as mayor in 1930. Within a year, the town council had unanimously agreed to allow the Faithful Slave Monument to be erected

in Harpers Ferry. Dr. Walter E. Dittmeyer, a druggist and member of the local committee, allowed the placement of the monument on his property on the sidewalk of Potomac Street. It faces the John Brown Fort obelisk, close to where the raiders shot Heyward Shepherd and is easily visible from the railroad tracks. Visitors could readily see it when they disembarked from the train (Andrews [1932]).

A date was set for the dedication, and the speakers included McDonald, still president of Storer College, as well as members of southern heritage groups. Prior to the dedication, many people inquired about McDonald's participation in the unveiling of the memorial. A friend, Boyd Sutler, wrote to McDonald and expressed his concern over having McDonald speak at the ceremony, since Andrews had made several undesirable comments about the marker in the *Confederate Veteran* and other "unreconstructed, publications." Sutler remembered Andrews saying that the marker would act "as an antidote to John Brownism of the period" in front of McDonald (Sutler 1931). The *Afro-American*, a Baltimore newspaper, telegraphed McDonald and asked if he planned to make an address "AT UNVEILING UNCLE TOM, ANTI JOHN BROWN MONUMENT, OCTOBER FIFTEENTH" (*Afro-American* 1931). The secretary of the NAACP, Walter White, also wrote McDonald four days before the ceremonies and asked him to consider the implications of his participation. He suggested that the participation of the president of Storer College could only legitimize the "Lost Cause."

This attempt to destroy the truth and to perpetuate a story that Negroes did not participate of their own free will in the struggle for their emancipation, and the effort to vilify the name of John Brown, will be heartily condemned by all individuals, North and South and of both races, whatever may be their opinion of the wisdom of the action of John Brown (White 1931).

McDonald responded to the *Afro-American* and reassured them that he was not participating in any ceremonies that celebrated an "Uncle Tom anti John Brown monument." He claimed that it was a unique gathering that "will voice the spirit of fellowship and enduring good will. It is an expression of a new era of inter-racial understanding" (McDonald 1931a). McDonald also responded to White's letter, reassuring him

that he was informed by the event coordinators that these ceremonies would not vilify John Brown. "If it had, I would be the last man to be identified therewith" (McDonald 1931b). McDonald hoped that the ceremonies would create good will.

Unveiling the Memorial

On 10 October 1931, about 300 whites and 100 blacks came to the dedication of the Heyward Shepherd monument (Andrews [1932]:6, 19, 32; Johnson 1997:13). The granite boulder monument stood against a building along Potomac Street, covered with a Confederate flag and surrounded by green ivy. Across the street stood a speaker's stand draped in Confederate red and white bunting, along the B&O Railroad embankment. The invocation was delivered by the Reverend Richard E. Washington, a son of the late George Washington of Jefferson County and a near relative of Colonel Lewis Washington, one of the first hostages of the raid. Dr. McDonald made the introductory remarks (Figure 1). He proclaimed that the event should not be a day to "remember discord and a past, however memorable and glorious," but we should look into the future with "the spirit of peace" inspired by the memorial. He believed that African Americans would see "this truth," that whites were willing to share their advantages with all races who were faithful (McDonald 1931c).

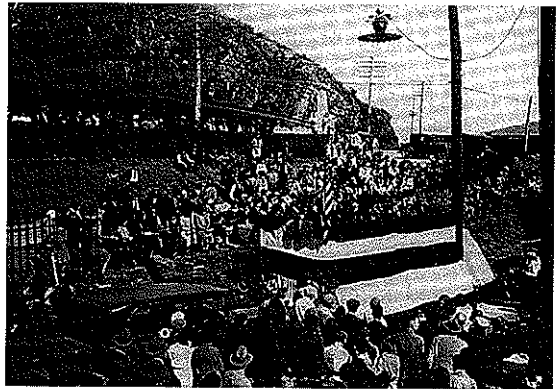


FIGURE 1. Henry T. McDonald, President of Storer College, addressing the crowd at the unveiling of the Heyward Shepherd Memorial, 10 October 1931. (Courtesy of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, HF 1233.)

Then Andrews offered the historical address of the dedication. Andrews's speech criticized John Brown and justified slavery, rather than memorializing Heyward Shepherd. He noted that John Brown was mentally ill and suffered from "some kind of warped psychosis or paranoia," and was a crazed man who attempted to overthrow the United States Government (Andrews [1932]:25). Andrews argued that changes in the economy would have gradually emancipated all of the slaves. He also tried to reason the necessity of slavery. He remarked, "When we stop to think of the Dark Continent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, are we not justified in wondering if the bondage of the body in America, which, however, freed the soul of the captive, was not preferable to the bondage of both soul and body which enveloped the life of the majority of those captured on the Congo" (Andrews [1932]:20). For a good part of his speech, Andrews claimed that the Africans had a better life in this country, and that those who went back to Africa to settle in Liberia saw the continent as uncivilized. Taking a paternalistic tone, Andrews quoted letters of former slaves in Liberia begging their white sponsors for money, food, and clothing. He noted that the conditions there were too unfriendly to survive (Andrews [1932]:20-23). Andrews praised Southerners for nurturing and caring for their slaves. "Should not some measure of praise be granted by public opinion to the Southern white people who raised another race up from the lowest known scale more rapidly, perhaps, than any people had ever risen before?" (Andrews 1932:23).

The president general of the UDC, Bashinsky, told of her love of country and also of her devotion to the Confederate flag. She stated that the slaves in the United States did not violently rise against their masters like they did in Haiti because they were well-clothed, fed, and housed, treated kindly, and taught Christianity. Bashinsky remarked that Heyward Shepherd "gave his life in defense of his employer's property, and in memory of many others of his race who were loyal and true during a period that tried men's souls ... Heyward Shepherd's conduct was honorable, just, and true, and merits the praise we bring him" (CV 1931:411). She proceeded to demonize John Brown and then spent the majority of her time talking about the loyalty of many slaves during the

war (CV 1931:412). In her closing remarks, Bashinsky returned to Shepherd and noted that the boulder was dedicated to Shepherd and other blacks who were faithful to the system. "It commemorates the loyalty, courage, and self-sacrifice of Heyward Shepherd and thousands of others of his race who would, like him, have suffered death rather than betray their masters or to be false to a trust" (CV 1931:413-414). The *Shepherdstown Register* (1931) noted that Bashinsky was "loudly applauded, for every word that she uttered could be distinctly heard and was heartily approved."

After Bashinsky's speech, the memorial was unveiled by several local women, including Mary Loretta Kern, granddaughter of a confederate soldier. The memorial's inscription reads:

ON THE NIGHT OF OCTOBER 16, 1859,/ Heyward SHEPHERD AN INDUSTRIOUS/ AND RESPECTED COLORED FREEMAN,/ WAS MORTALLY WOUNDED/ BY JOHN/ BROWN'S RAIDERS. IN PURSUANCE/ OF HIS DUTIES AS AN EMPLOYEE OF/ THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD/ COMPANY,/ HE BECAME THE FIRST VICTIM OF THIS ATTEMPTED INSURRECTION.

THIS BOULDER IS ERECTED BY/ THE UNITED DAUGHTERS OF THE/ CONFEDERACY AND THE SONS OF/ CONFEDERATE VETERANS AS A/ MEMORIAL TO HEYWOOD SHEPHERD,/ EXEMPLIFYING THE CHARACTER AND/ FAITHFULNESS OF THOUSANDS OF/ NEGROES WHO, UNDER MANY/ TEMPTATIONS THROUGHOUT/ SUBSEQUENT YEARS OF WAR, SO/ CONDUCTED THEMSELVES THAT/ NO STAIN WAS LEFT UPON A RECORD/ WHICH IS THE PECULIAR HERITAGE/ OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, AND AN/ EVERLASTING TRIBUTE TO THE BEST/ IN BOTH RACES (UDC 1931:58-59).

The chairman of the memorial committee, Mary Dowling Bond, placed a wreath on the monument. Then the Storer College Singers were scheduled to sing.

Taking exception to the tone of the event, the musical director, Pearl Tatum stood and turned to the crowd. She did not speak about the music, but, rather, she protested the tone of the event. She remarked to the crowd,

I am the daughter of a Connecticut volunteer, who wore the blue, who fought for the freedom of my people, for which John Brown struck the first blow. Today we are looking forward to the future, forgetting those things of the past. We are pushing forward to a larger freedom, not in the spirit of the black mammy but in the

spirit of the new freedom and rising youth (*Pittsburgh Courier* 1931).

The choir group then sang their schedule of songs. Reverend Dr. George F. Bragg, a distinguished African American clergyman, gave the benediction (Andrews [1932]:5).

Fallout after the Ceremony

The *Afro-American* immediately attacked both McDonald and Rev. Bragg for their participation in the ceremonies (Andrews 1931). Meanwhile, many African American groups praised Pearl Tatum for her “fortitude in defense of that much maligned champion of human rights, John Brown ... and your repudiation of the ‘Black mammy’ and ‘Uncle Tom’ servility that certain agencies seek to glorify and perpetuate” (Winters 1931). W.E.B. Du Bois wrote in the *Crisis* (1932:467) that the dedication was a “pro-slavery celebration” and called McDonald’s and Bragg’s participation in the event “disgraceful.”

The *Washington Tribune* (1932) called McDonald and the trustees, the “white Judases” of Storer College. The paper noted that they were the men who assisted the UDC in erecting a memorial to “glorify human slavery.” The *Washington Tribune* remarked that the college was “a failure” and “a detriment to Negro freedom and manhood,” and it urged African Americans to ostracize the college. The *Afro-American* described McDonald as the kind of white leader who was more dangerous than racist demagogues—“the Bleases, Tillmans, or Heflins,” southern Senators who championed black disenfranchisement and who fueled white hatred of blacks for political gains. The newspaper remarked, “it was written in every facial expression that Dr. McDonald, apologist for those Southern whites, who would desecrate John Brown’s memory while glorifying the slave regime, must go” (*Afro-American* 1932). McDonald weathered the immediate storm and retired 12 years later, being replaced by an African American.

The National Park Service in a Landscape of Conflict

In the 1950s, the National Park Service acquired all of the land in Lower Town Harpers Ferry, including the Heyward Shepherd Memorial

along with the building against which it stood. It also acquired much of the controversy associated with the monument. Funding was available for building renovations in the park in the mid 1970s, and the buildings adjacent to the Heyward Shepherd memorial underwent renovations in 1976. The National Park Service removed the memorial to its maintenance yard. UDC delegates met with the park superintendent, and they were initially satisfied since the monument would be protected from construction activities (*Martinsburg Journal* 1976:7; *Spirit of Jefferson* 1976). Members of the UDC and the SCV visited the monument again in 1980, and found it still in storage four years after the initial visit. They wanted to see it on display again in Lower Town Harpers Ferry, where hundreds of visitors could view it every day. The park superintendent maintained that the “4 ton boulder was in the maintenance yard for its protection due to historic building restoration as authorized by Congress and which is not complete” (Harpers Ferry National Historical Park 1980).

In 1981 the Heyward Shepherd memorial was moved back to its original location in Lower Town Harpers Ferry, against a three-story building on Potomac Street. When the park received reports of possible plans to deface the monument, the park superintendent, Donald Campbell, ordered that it be covered by a plywood box (Meyers 1995:C2) (Figure 2). Campbell justified this action as necessary to protect the monument since it is considered an important cultural resource in Harpers Ferry National Historical Park (D. Campbell 1996). The park intended



FIGURE 2. The Heyward Shepherd Memorial covered in a plywood box, 1994. (Photograph by Paul A. Shackel.)

to redisplay the monument with an interpretive sign. The proposed text read:

JOHN BROWN'S RAID ON THE ARMORY AT HARPERS FERRY CAUSED THE DEATH OF FOUR TOWNSPEOPLE. ONE OF THOSE DIED IN THE FIGHTING WAS HEYWARD SHEPHERD, A RAILROAD BAGGAGEMASTER AND A FREE BLACK.

ALTHOUGH THE TRUE IDENTITY OF HIS ASSAILANT IS UNCERTAIN, SHEPHERD SOON BECAME A SYMBOL OF THE "FAITHFUL SERVANT" AMONG THOSE WHO DEPLORED BROWN'S ACTION AGAINST THE TRADITIONAL SOUTHERN WAY OF LIFE.

THIS MONUMENT, PLACED HERE IN 1931, REFLECTS THESE TRADITIONAL VIEWS (Anonymous 1981).

The southern heritage groups rejected this wording and the National Park Service found itself caught between conflicting organizations. Much debate followed about the uncovering of the monument and proposed interpretive text. While the NAACP saw the monument as offensive, the UDC and SCV wanted the monument uncovered and displayed to the public. The president of the West Virginia chapter of the NAACP interprets the monument as a statement that claims "all slaves were satisfied to be whipped, raped, tortured, torn away from their families and sold." He remarked that it is "terrible to have one of these organizations imply that these people, my ancestors, were satisfied. That is down right ridiculous" (Tolbert qtd. in R. White 1989:4). If the box were removed, it would tell visitors that African Americans were "satisfied and had no desire for freedom. No one can come around here and tell me that was so" (Tolbert qtd. in R. White 1989:4).

Mrs. Dewey Wood of the UDC did not want to see the proposed interpretive sign next to the Heyward Shepherd monument. She believed that the message on the boulder is clear in its meaning. She remarked, "Why should the NAACP be opposed to this? It is a monument to one of their people ... There were 40,000 slaves in Maryland, and none of them came to [John Brown's] support. They were loyal to their people. ... I really don't know what they find offensive about it" (Wood qtd. in R. White 1989:4).

Campbell views the monument as an historic artifact, and since the UDC, SCV, and the

NAACP could not reach a compromise, he was reluctant to make any decision to uncover the boulder and interpret it. "Until we get some agreement, we must keep it in safe keeping" (D. Campbell qtd. in R. White 1989:11). Interest to redisplay the monument waned in the late 1980s, and it remained enclosed in plywood, unnoticed by the many people who came to the national park.

On 13 January 1994, Elliot Cummings, commander, Maryland Division, Sons of the Confederate Veterans, wrote Superintendent Campbell and remarked that the covering of the Heyward Shepherd memorial was a "serious and disturbing situation" (Cummings 1994a). When the National Park Service told him that the monument would only be uncovered when an interpretive display was created, Cummings demanded that the monument be returned to the SCV, and they would find a suitable place for its display on private property (Cummings 1994b). One year later, Senator Jesse Helms, Republican, South Carolina, received a letter from Cummings. He argued against an interpretive sign next to the monument to explain its historical context. "This is the exact same line used by the perverters of history at the Smithsonian to justify a distorted story line about the Enola Gay. ... This kind of thinking jeopardizes the heritage of all of us" (Cummings 1995).

Under pressure from Senator Helms, the park superintendent removed the plywood crate on 9 June 1995, without telling any of the concerned groups, and placed the monument on display again to the public. Beside the monument stands a wayside to create a context for the monument (Figure 3). It reads:

On October 17, 1859, abolitionist John Brown attacked Harpers Ferry to launch a war against slavery. Heyward Shepherd, a free African-American railroad baggage master, was shot and killed by Brown's men shortly after midnight.

Seventy-two years later, on October 10, 1931, a crowd estimated to include 300 whites and 100 blacks gathered to unveil and dedicate the Shepherd Monument.

During the ceremony, voices rose to praise and denounce the monument. Conceived around the turn of the century, the monument endured controversy. In 1905, the United Daughters of the Confederacy stated that "erecting the monument would influence for good the present and coming generations, and prove that the people of the South who owned slaves valued and

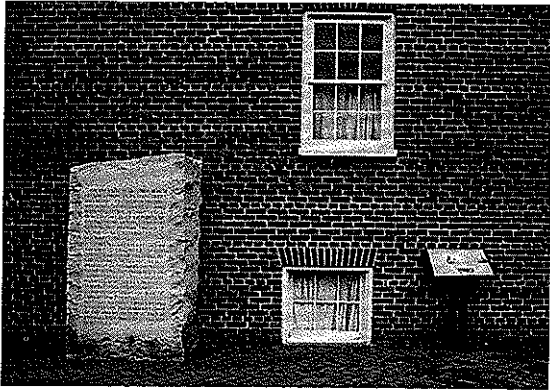


FIGURE 3. The Heyward Shepherd Memorial uncovered with an interpretive sign placed to the right of the monument, 1995.

respected their good qualities as no one else ever did or will do."

Also on the wayside is a section titled "Another Perspective:"

In 1932, W.E.B. Du Bois, founder of the Niagara Movement, and a founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), responded to the Shepherd monument by penning these words: Here/ John Brown/ Aimed at Human History/ A Blow/ That woke a guilty nation/ With him fought/ Seven Slaves and sons of slaves./ Over his crucified corpse/ Marched 200,000 black soldiers/ and 4,000,000 freedmen/ Singing/ 'John Brown's Body lies a mouldering in the grave/ But his Soul Goes marching on.

In response to the new interpretive wayside, the honorary president of the West Virginia Division of the UDC remarked, "They put there just what they wanted. It still isn't the true history" (qtd. in Meyer 1995:C2). The SCV was also outraged that an interpretive sign was placed adjacent to the monument. The commander of the Maryland Division demanded that the national park give the monument back to those who paid for it (the UDC and the SCV) or remove the interpretive wayside sign. He issued a "heritage violation" to those on his division's mailing list, asking Civil War reenactment groups to boycott events at the park, unless they removed the sign. "My position is that the monument should not be interpreted," said Cummings. "They should be allowed to exist as they are and people should be allowed to make whatever interpretation they

want ... Do I get to put an interpretive plaque on the Lincoln Memorial saying this man was responsible for the deaths of 250,000 Southerners and usurped the Constitution" (qtd. in Bailey 1995:22).

Campbell responded by saying that the wayside does not interpret the monument. "Everything on the wayside exhibit is history—what happened here at Harpers Ferry and the African-American perspective on the monument. ... It's a minimum amount of contextual information necessary to explain the story" (qtd. in Bailey 1995:22). Cummings fumed, "Contextual labeling—that's just a buzzword. It's the park service trying to develop a politically correct line" (qtd. in Bailey 1995:23). "It is history," replied Campbell. "It's minimum, its neutral, and we invite visitors to come see it and make up their own minds" (qtd. in Bailey 1995:23).

The president of the West Virginia chapter of the NAACP never wanted the monument to be unveiled in 1995. James Tolbert remarked, "I don't think it's history. I think it is a misrepresentation of the life and role of Heyward Shepherd. We don't think that the Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of the Confederacy had that much love for Negroes" (qtd. in Deutsch 1995:1A). During its August meeting, the NAACP chapter passed a resolution that condemned the monument (Bailes 1995:A1). Tolbert later added, "I believe it should be taken by crane to the Potomac River and dropped at the river's deepest point (qtd. in Deutsch 1995:9A; *Jet Magazine* 1995:22–23).

Conclusion

After the American Civil War members of the Harpers Ferry community used the landscape to commemorate and memorialize a past. For instance, industrial ruins of private and government factories destroyed by the war were allowed to stand and decay. The ruins became part of a vernacular landscape that memorialized early industry. Industry was remembered as a necessary evil that brought progress, and the horrors of factory work were forgotten (Shackel 1994, 1999, 2000a, 2000b).

In much the same way, memorialization of the Civil War became a matter of who could control the memory of the event. In the case

of monument building, Southerners reminisced about the goodwill and loyalty between master and slaves. By the late-19th century many of the advancements made by blacks in the South were eliminated under Jim Crow legislation. Many Southerners believed that African Americans could only play a subservient role in a new and segregated South. They claimed that blacks under Reconstruction were inept in handling their newfound freedom. This notion became part of popular culture with the release of such early-20th-century movies like *The Birth of a Nation* (Foner 1988:xix-xxi; Ayers 1992:136-158; Johnson 1997).

The creation of the Shepherd memorial became part of this larger campaign by southern heritage groups such as the UDC and SCV to remember a lost cause and to justify the system of the plantation south. These southern heritage groups believed that Shepherd was true to the existing system and, therefore, the monument became a vehicle to show the world that African Americans did not take up arms against the South or revolt against the institution of slavery because they were content with the status quo. They were inept to govern themselves or to take a much larger role in society.

African Americans were not pleased with the erection of the Heyward Shepherd Monument in 1931, and they are still battling with the UDC and the SCV over the meaning of the monument. While the two southern heritage groups fought to have the monument restored to its original location, the NAACP was bitter over the fact that the memorial is once again on view to the American public. As long as the monument stands in Lower Town Harpers Ferry, its meaning will be contested and it will be part of a landscape of conflict.

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