

Local Patterns Of Divergence *Sewanee's History*

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**1860-
1875**

What local patterns of differences or divergence provided most significant in the early period of Sewanee's history, from 1860-1875?

01

Racial Relations

02

Gender Roles

03

**Civil War
Differences**

04

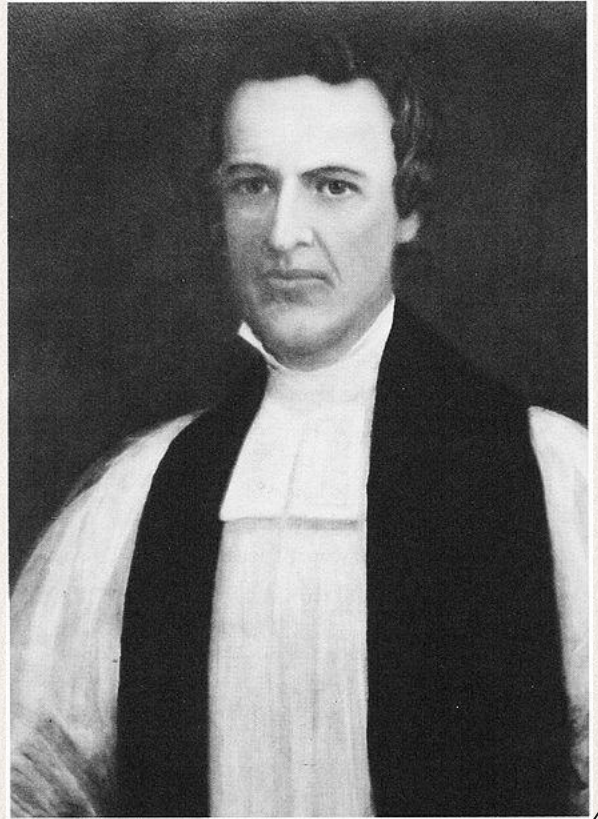
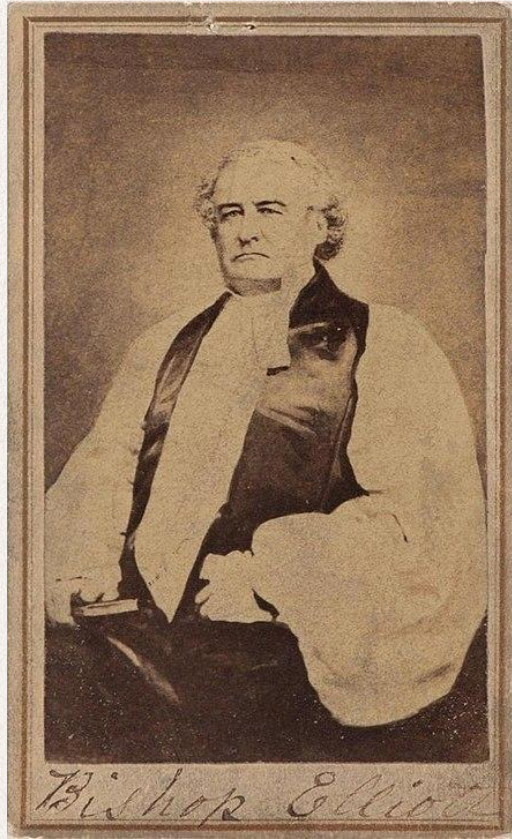
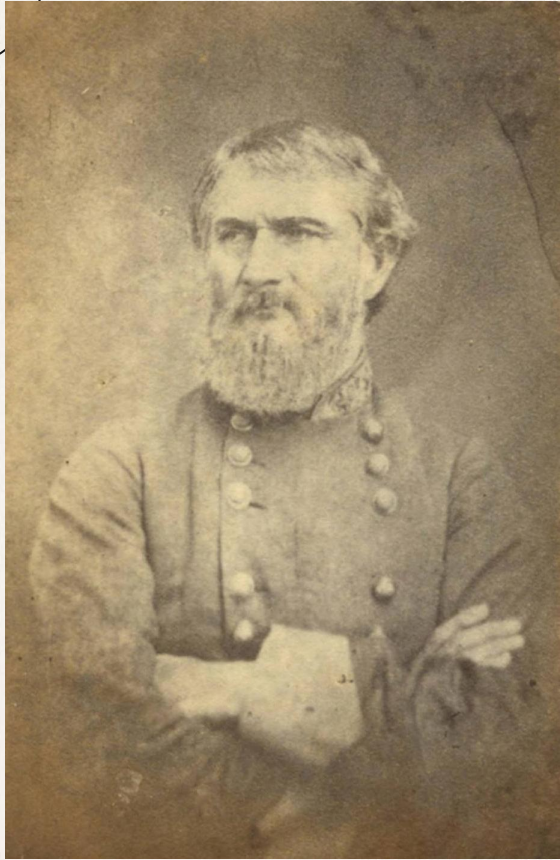
**Economic
Disparities**

05

Land Use

06

**Campus
Development**



Cornerstone Ceremony - October 10, 1860

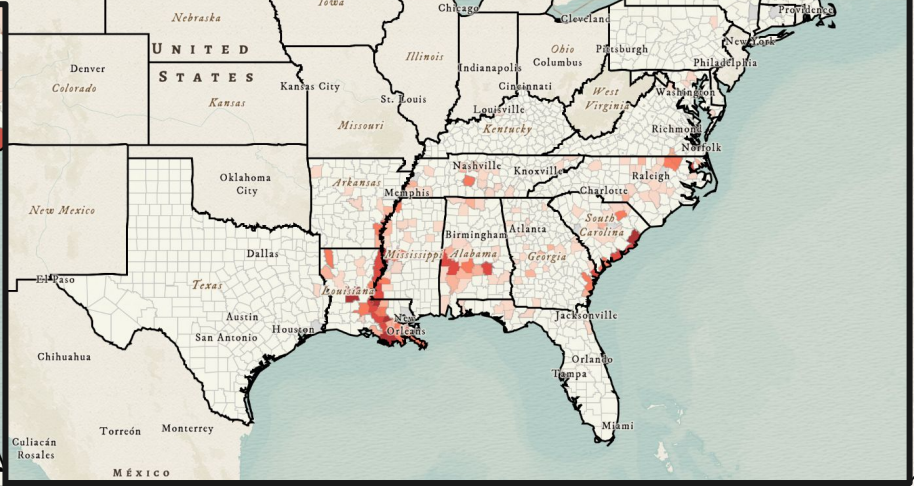
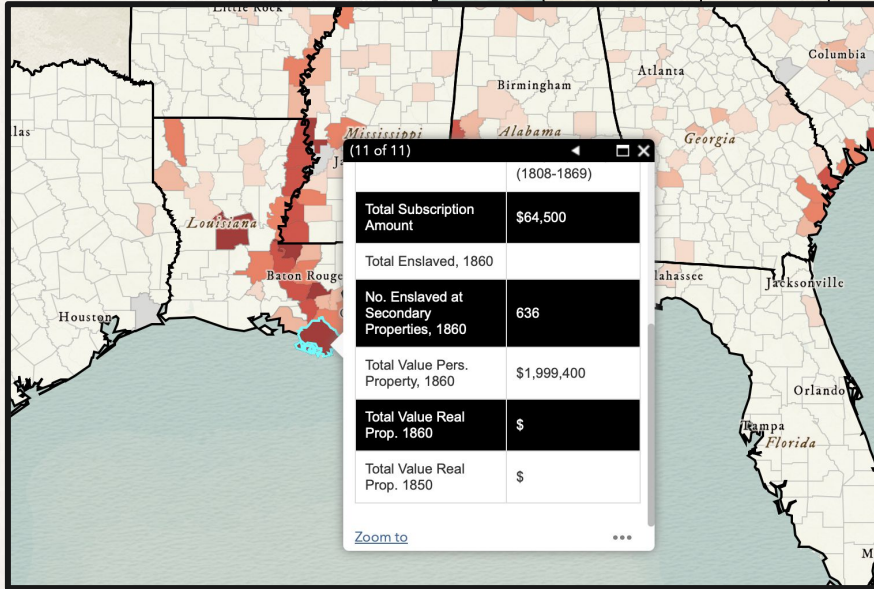
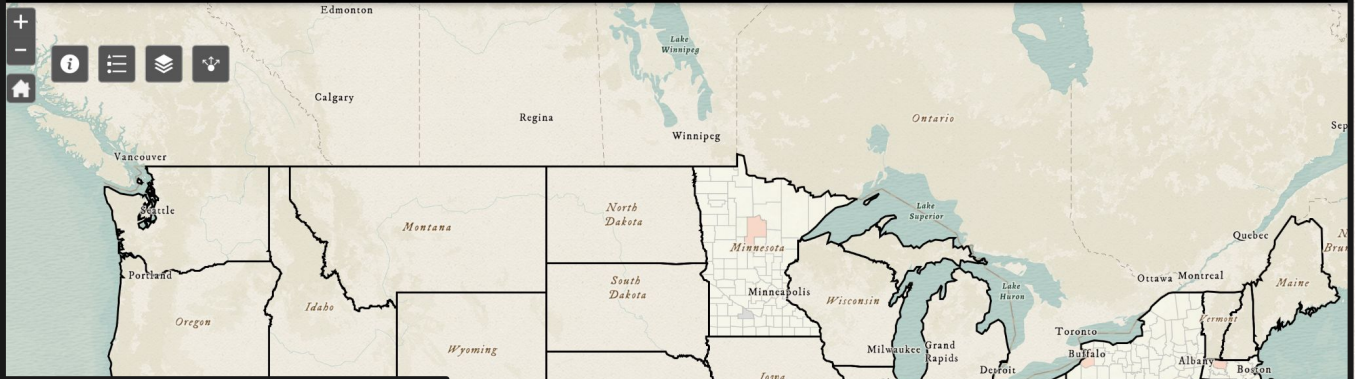
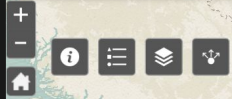
“One can believe that they foresaw the social and economic turmoil that might follow a Republican victory and sought through the laying of the University’s cornerstone to transform their still improbable Magnificent Idea into a present reality, setting a sea anchor to secure it against the impending storm.

The cornerstone - the instrument chosen for the purpose - clothed this high, symbolic purpose with a massive, terrestrial physicality..”

- Merritt R. Blakeslee

Founding Funders

by the Roberson Project



Women's Roles and Expectations



Education and Church Influence

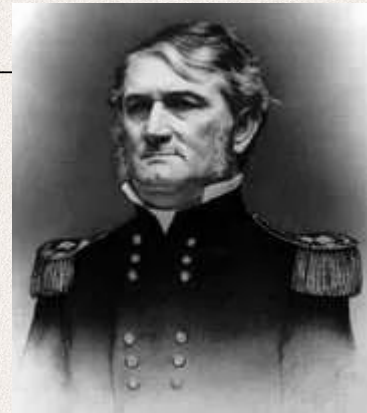
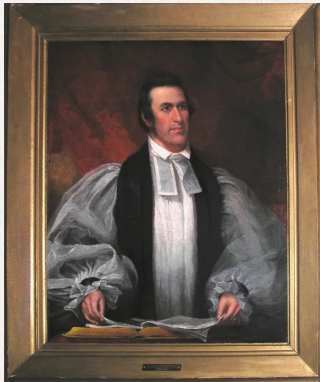


Contrasting Experiences



Civil War Differences in Sewanee

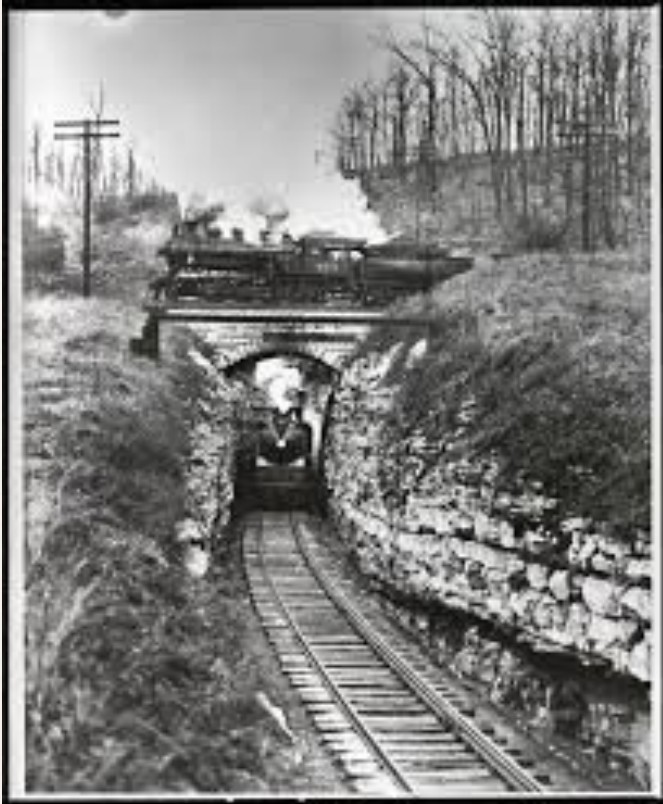
- Same day as the cornerstone ceremony Lincoln won swing states that ultimately led to him winning the election
- James Otey opposed secession while Polk and Elliott favored it
- Otey was whig and unionist while Polk was a democrat and early secessionist
- The two men represented a big issue that the university had at its founding stages, which is whether it is better to be a national institution rooted in the south, or a southern institution that was chiefly confined to the south.



Local Differences around Sewanee

- Economic
 - Reliance on agriculture
 - Plantation economy favored slavery around Sewanee but wasn't a part of life on top of the plateau
 - Smaller farmers opposed slavery because it took away from their economic interests because they couldn't afford slaves and therefore fell behind in production
- Religious
 - University founded by episcopalians which in turn the leadership liked southern ideals
 - Promoted the defense of slavery and states rights
 - After the war in 1865 Sewanee had a loss of their \$500,000 endowment, no students, and no formal instruction

Economic Differences and Land Use



- Large differences in the economic backgrounds of those living in “Depot Village” and those who came to found the University.
 - Real estate values of the founders much larger than those of who they hired for Cornerstone preparations (1860 Federal Census Records).
 - Founders saw the resources of the plateau as economic resources for the University; Polk concerned with coal and timber (Smith pp 59).
 - Locals saw the resources of the plateau as job sources; think sawmills, coal mines, and railroad work.
- The separation of what we now know as the “Town” and “Gown” of Sewanee.
 - Seen in Gonce’s 1924 letter.
 - Large behavioral difference in the “country folk” and “preachers”.

Sewanee's Campus Development



- 11,000 acres donated to start the campus
- The Civil War's destruction of the University
- Bishop Quintard, Dr. David Pise, and George Fairbanks efforts to reconstruct the University

Citations

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