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The 'Hoover Scare' in South Carolina, 1887:  
An Attempt to Organize Black Farm Labor

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Thirty years ago, Herbert Gutman pointed out that without "detailed knowledge of the 'local world' inhabited by white and Negro workers" in the late nineteenth-century South, we cannot fully understand the early days of organized labor in the South.<sup>1</sup> A close study of the short-lived Cooperative Workers of America (CWA) in several upstate South Carolina counties in 1887 reveals in some detail how racial antagonisms and fears affected the organization and downfall of a labor organization in the region. The CWA might have succeeded: In South Carolina it drew upon earlier models of organizing by black laborers and tapped into a pool of local leadership. Yet, the CWA failed, due partly to inopportune timing. It arose as the Knights of Labor began to decline in the South and just before the Farmers Alliance, a movement ambivalent if not hostile to black agricultural wage laborers, began its swift ascent in South Carolina. Despite its brief tenure and lack of tangible accomplishments, the CWA and the way in which it was squelched had some immediate effects and provided an early demonstration of the efficacy of force as a response to black or biracial labor organizations in this part of the South.

Hiram F. Hover,<sup>1</sup> the President and Chief Organizer of the CWA, emerges from relative obscurity in early 1886 and returns to that state by late 1887. He claimed Lexington, Kentucky, as

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<sup>1</sup> Hover spelled his name "Hover" in a letter to Terence V. Powderly, May 22, 1886, reel 16, Terence V. Powderly Papers. However, most contemporary and secondary sources referred to him as "Hoover," so in discussing the "Hoover scare" and the "Hoover clubs" that Hover formed, I will follow my sources and use the incorrect spelling of the name.

his home, and other reports claimed he was a native of Texas. His wife, from Aiken, South Carolina, was a travelling agent for a dress chart company, and Hover himself also taught dresscutting. In late 1885, Hover joined the Knights of Labor in Knoxville, and during the winter of 1885-1886 travelled through western North Carolina. He bought a house in Hickory, North Carolina, where he and his wife intended to settle. At this time, and probably in conjunction with the travel required for his business, Hover began to proselytize for the Knights in various towns across the North Carolina Piedmont, even going so far as to have a four-page version of his standard speech printed up for distribution. Hover was not, however, an authorized organizer for the Knights of Labor, and his freelance work brought him into conflict with both local and state leaders of the Knights in North Carolina.<sup>2</sup>

Hover's conflict with the Knights of Labor leadership led him to create his own independent labor organization: the Cooperative Workers of America. Later, Hover would charge Grand Master Workman Powderly with "selling out the Knights of Labor for money" and claim that "their constitution does not suite his views of the great national questions which are now struggling for a solution."<sup>3</sup> The distinction Hover saw between his organization and the Knights is not so readily apparent to other eyes: The CWA constitution is essentially the same as the Knights of Labor 1884 constitution with a few additional provisions.<sup>4</sup> These new provisions emphasize reforms in electoral policy and government bureaucracy and call for "the establishment of a free co-operative school system." Hover also criticized the Knights of Labor for using strikes, preferring instead a plan of creating cooperative stores. While Powderly shared Hover's disapproval of strikes, he was not able to prevent the Knights of Labor from becoming involved in strikes such as the Augusta Textile Strike of 1886 and the Great Southwest Strike.<sup>5</sup> After establishing an executive board for the CWA in Hickory, Hover set out to organize local branches of the CWA. He may have decided that his bad experience with the Knights in North Carolina would hinder the development of his organization

there, or he may have simply realized that South Carolina presented greater opportunities for new organizing efforts, for that is where he directed his efforts.

Hover began his campaign of organizing local branches of the CWA in February of 1887 in Spartanburg County, South Carolina.<sup>6</sup> Around the tenth of February, Hover appeared in downtown Spartanburg, a growing cotton mill center, and spoke for two and a half hours to a crowd of three or four hundred men, about three quarters of whom were black. After denouncing the Knights of Labor and the Grange for misusing fees collected from members, he explained the ideas of his own organization, the CWA.<sup>7</sup>

After this initial appearance, Hover moved west through upstate South Carolina. Although "Hoover clubs," as the CWA locals were commonly known, sprang up in southern Spartanburg County, northern Laurens County, southern Greenville County, and eastern Pickens County, Hover himself probably did not travel to these rural areas. He was in Greenville during the first week of March and gave an extensive interview to the Greenville News at that time.<sup>8</sup> From here, his next appearance was in Walhalla, the county seat of Oconee County, in the third week of March. Hover arrived here around the middle of March and tried to organize CWA locals, but he was not as successful in Oconee County as he had been in other locales. Hover was jailed overnight on a vagrancy charge and went to trial the next morning. When the court adjourned for lunch in the middle of Hover's case, the prisoner was given permission to leave the court to consult with his attorney. Once court resumed at three o'clock, Hover was nowhere to be seen, "and in a short time the conviction was fixed upon the court, jury, witnesses and spectators that the prisoner's mode and habit of life as a vagrant was so irresistible that he was still 'roving' at large in parts unknown."<sup>9</sup> Hover made his way through parts of eastern Georgia organizing locals until he was shot by a mob of white farmers in Warrenton on May 19. Hover did survive, though, and after returning with his wife to Hickory, he moved to New York.<sup>10</sup>

As the strong response by black workers to the CWA suggests, black South Carolinians were well accustomed to this sort of local organization, particularly in the form of the Union League. After the Civil War, local "marching companies" helped create a sense of community and maintain communication networks among freedmen.<sup>11</sup> Historian Julie Saville suggests that "[b]y such measures [marching and drilling], ex-slaves were fashioning a corporate identity advanced in comparison with other American agricultural workers of the time."<sup>12</sup> In addition to these quasi-military organizations, Union League organizers canvassed the state in support of the 1867 referendum for a constitutional convention and "especially wanted to reach freedpeople on plantations and farms beyond easy access of rail, steamer, or coach."<sup>13</sup> When it came time for the special election, "virtually every black man eligible to vote had registered" in Greenville County, and registration rates in Pickens and Spartanburg counties ran close to 90 percent.<sup>14</sup> Saville characterizes South Carolina Union Leagues as "hybrid organizations, part political machine, part labor union, part popular tribunal, part moral or intellectual improvement body, part renters' association, part retail cooperative."<sup>15</sup> The CWA, by coincidence or by design, fulfilled many of these same roles. Some CWA meetings took place in black churches, another center of community life and organization.<sup>16</sup>

For all the "incendiary" speeches Hoover made and all the attention he attracted during his brief sweep through upstate South Carolina, it appears to have been a handful of local black organizers who did the legwork of establishing CWA locals. The exact details of how local CWA organizations were formed are scarce, but an inquisition later revealed that the organizer would go through the "country talking to the colored people wherever he could find them alone, in the fields or in the houses . . . and read[ing] the labor catechism and constitution to his hearers."<sup>17</sup> From the beginning, then, the organization was judiciously hidden from local whites. Using black organizers was logical since they would have aroused less notice moving through the black community than

would Hover, a white man. Black laborers would probably also have been more likely to consider potentially radical ideas presented by someone whose background was similar to their own and who was, in many cases, already known to them. Around the same time, the Knights of Labor was using black organizers to recruit black workers for similar reasons.<sup>18</sup> Hover also distributed printed material, probably the constitution and a version of his speech about labor previously discussed, to his local organizers. The "clubs," as they were called, need not be large: "Whenever he [the organizer] could get five or more to agree to join his society he assembled them at a member's house, administered to them an oath of secrecy, and left them to study the catechism and constitution."<sup>19</sup> Each club had a secretary, a treasurer, and a president, all elected.<sup>20</sup> "The members of the Club paid fifty-five cents each as an initiation fee" and a second "degree" was available for one dollar, this amount to be used in the eventual establishment of a cooperative store "where all the members could trade and buy at wholesale rates."<sup>21</sup> Although Hover had made detailed plans for a cooperative store, none was ever opened in South Carolina.

The most active local organizer for the CWA was Sherman McCrary, who organized several clubs in southern Greenville County. The Charleston News and Courier described McCrary as "a young black man from the Laurel Creek section," but the Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer further identified him as the "son of Isham McCrary."<sup>22</sup> If the 1880 census is correct, Isham was nine years old in 1880 and was living next to the household of fifty-three year old Isham, who was probably actually his grandfather. Sherman would have been sixteen in 1887, young, but certainly old enough to be doing a man's work on the farm as a farm laborer. As the grandson of Isham McCrary, Sherman certainly would have been familiar with secret organizations and the idea of blacks standing up for their rights: His grandfather had testified in Spartanburg on July 8, 1871, before the Congressional investigating committee looking into the Ku Klux Klan.<sup>23</sup> Isham McCrary testified because he was "aiming to stand up to them [the Ku Klux Klan]," and his grandson Sherman seems to have inherited some of his resolve to "bring the colored race together."<sup>24</sup> One

account suggests that Sherman's brother, probably seventeen-year-old Aaron, was also an active CWA organizer.<sup>25</sup>

McCrary began his organizing work in February in the area of southern Greenville County between Fountain Inn and Simpsonville and Fairview. At least "[t]wo societies were formed, one near Hopewell Church in the Simpsonville community, and the other near Fountain Inn."<sup>26</sup> McCrary's success in this area is indicated by the fact that "[a]bout two-thirds of the colored people of the community connected themselves with these clubs."<sup>27</sup> Around April 1, 1887, McCrary held a meeting at Pleasant View Baptist Church in the Fairview community and organized a club there. This club held meetings late at night, guarded by four armed pickets.<sup>28</sup> McCrary organized another club "at Riley Owens's (colored,) below Fairview, and another near Huff's Mills."<sup>29</sup> Huff's Mill lay on the Reedy Fork of the Reedy River (now known as Huff Creek) in Grove Township about six and a half miles northwest of Fairview. Referring to maps of the area further illustrates the success McCrary had here; all five clubs mentioned lie within six and a half miles of one another.<sup>30</sup>

Other than Sherman McCrary, sources list seven other CWA members from Fairview by name. Four have proven impossible to document in other records, but snapshots of Riley Owens, Allen Dorroh, and Lee Harrison from the 1880 agricultural and population censuses reveal some similarities. None of the three owned or rented a farm; all were farm laborers. Owens, at fifty-nine, was the oldest, but Dorroh was forty-two and Harrison thirty-five. All three had at least six children. These local leaders of the CWA, then, tended to be middle-aged farm laborers with large families who were reliant on the wages paid by white farm owners.

Fairview seems to have been the epicenter of the Hoover movement, but there were a number of other clubs scattered through the rural areas where Greenville, Spartanburg, and Laurens Counties meet. In addition to the cluster of clubs around Fairview, three clubs formed in the Laurel Creek section between Fairview and Greenville, just north and west of present-day Mauldin. At least one club lay about thirteen miles to the northeast at Cedar Grove in Young's Township,

Laurens County, and one about fifteen miles to the northeast near Woodruff in Spartanburg County.<sup>31</sup> Hover's speech in Spartanburg in February led to the formation by the end of April of a club at Cedar Hill, near Greer.<sup>32</sup> At the end of June, J. S. Shelton of Fair Forest, just west of Spartanburg on the railroad, publicly denied being a leader of the CWA.<sup>33</sup> The Spartanburg Herald claimed to "know positively of a secret organization in this city" as early as May.<sup>34</sup> There were even rumors of a "secret organization among the negroes" of the "Toney Creek section" of Anderson County, halfway between Piedmont and Pelzer on the Saluda River, approximately eleven miles southwest from Fairview near Williamston.<sup>35</sup> A flicker of interest also arose in northern Spartanburg County around Campton and Campobello, where "A. H. Floyd, a colored teacher, . . . attended a convention of the Co-operative Workers at Friendship church on the 9th instant [July] and there were 175 to 200 delegates present."<sup>36</sup>

The influence of the strong cluster of CWA clubs around Fairview extended all the way to Dacusville, thirty miles northwest in neighboring Pickens County. Reports appearing at the end of June claimed that "the members of the organization in that Township [Dacusville] are nearly all white men, but it is claimed that Lee Garrett, colored, is the leader." Garrett, in fact, was from Fairview and probably had been sent by McCrary after the Fairview clubs organized. Lee Garrett was about twenty-five in 1887. After spending the first few years of his life in Laurens, he had grown up in Fairview Township and spent most of the rest of his life there. However, in 1884, he is listed in the Greenville City Directory as a farmer residing southeast of the city limits, in the direction of Laurel Creek. This suggests the possibility that he learned of the CWA in Greenville and then travelled back to his home area of Fairview to spread the organization, winding up in Dacusville.<sup>37</sup> A farmer in Easley, a railroad town immediately south of the rural village of Dacusville, "found posted in his cow pasture" the following notice:<sup>38</sup>

Notice

We the members of the so-called Knights of Labor, respectfully invite all who wish to know about this institution, to be at Dacusville, S.C., the 4th July next and the Honorable D. R. Speer will deliver a speech. Come one and all.

Respectfully,

## KNIGHTS OF LABOR

June 28, 1887.

Other "notices [were] posted up at various places in Easley and Dacusville townships."<sup>39</sup> This more open form of recruitment contrasts sharply with the furtive methods employed elsewhere. Such forthright measures were probably made possible by the larger number of white members of the CWA in Dacusville and the expectation of support from Speer, a Republican lawyer from Greenville.<sup>40</sup>

The other center of the CWA's membership in South Carolina was the city of Greenville itself. By March 1887, local organizer Lee Minor, "a bright mulatto and ex-barber," boasted of "fifteen different clubs" in Greenville numbering five hundred members of whom "most" were black.<sup>41</sup> Surprisingly, the Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer does not dispute these figures and, in fact, goes on to report a "mass meeting" in the West End of Greenville with "three hundred members . . . in attendance."<sup>42</sup> In the city, both the nature of the organization and the characteristics of its leadership was different. In rural areas, CWA clubs drew from a population made up almost entirely of farm laborers. Greenville was a booming textile center, offering a much broader variety of occupations. The two rural organizers, Sherman McCrary and Lee Garrett, were both young, although certainly part of the working world. The two identifiable leaders of the Greenville organization, Lee Minor and Tom Briar, were older and had jobs that gave them greater independence than farm labor. Minor had been a barber in Greenville for at least four years by 1888. His position as a barber would have given him independence from the supervision of a white boss and would also have provided opportunities to make extensive contacts throughout the black community that made up the West End of Greenville where his shop was located.<sup>43</sup> Minor was also a member of the Neptune Fire Company, one of two black volunteer fire companies in Greenville.<sup>44</sup> The Neptune Fire Company had been involved in politics as well, helping to elect industrialist T. C. Gower mayor in 1870.<sup>45</sup>



Although Tom Briar is never explicitly identified as a leader of the CWA in Greenville, he did have a very heated dispute with a white Republican from Austin Township who criticized the CWA. It is unlikely that a community leader of Briar's experience and standing would not have filled some leadership position in the CWA. Born in South Carolina in 1842, Briar, a blacksmith, began purchasing property in Greenville in 1867 and by 1870 owned five hundred dollars worth of real estate. In 1876, he was Chair of the Republican Party in Greenville County, and during the tumultuous election of 1876, Briar led Greenville black Republicans in a forcible attempt to gain access to the polls. Briar was also the secretary of the Palmetto Fire Company in 1884. He may well have known Minor through their mutual involvement in firefighting. Finally, it is worth noting that Briar's wife, Julia, was a dressmaker; Hover, a dresscutter, may have met Tom Briar through Julia.<sup>46</sup>

The Hoover movement was strongest in those townships where cotton was important and the black population was highest. The five townships with the most CWA activity were Fairview Township, Greenville Township, Young's Township, Woodruffs Township, and Cross Anchor Township. Greenville, as an urban center, may be something of an anomaly, but the other four, which are contiguous, show similar characteristics. The percentage of black population is in the forties, and the percentage of tilled land devoted to cotton for the counties as a whole is 35 percent or greater, rising to as much as 50 percent in Young's Township, Laurens County. In contrast, the townships of Dacusville in Pickens County and Wagener in Oconee (where Walhalla is located) have black populations about 20 percent lower, suggesting that a certain threshold population density of blacks provided a strong enough network to create and sustain CWA organizations.

Counties and Townships with CWA Activity	Population Percent Black, 1880	Percent of Tilled Land in Cotton, 1880
Greenville County		35
Fairview	48.6	
Grove	41.8	

Oaklawn	37.1	
Dunklin	42.6	
Greenville	51.8	
<u>Laurens County</u>		.50
Young's	45.0	
Dial	37.5	
<u>Oconee County</u>		.24
Wagener	26.7	
<u>Pickens County</u>		.28
Dacusville	21.0	
<u>Spartanburg County</u>		.41
Campobello	25.5	
Fair Forest	46.6	
Cross Anchor	33.0	
Woodruffs	42.2	

The black residents of Fairview Township, the rural area where the CWA was strongest, were predominantly wage laborers working for white farmers on relatively small farms. In 1880, three quarters of the farms in Fairview Township were seventy-five acres or smaller, and only three were larger than 150 acres. Sixty-five percent of these modest farms were owned by white farmers; blacks owned only ten of the 197 farms in the township. Of the twenty-three farms operated by blacks, ten owned their own land, eleven rented for cash, and two sharecropped. Black farm operators only hired 184 weeks of labor by blacks in 1879, leaving the other 12,204 weeks of labor by blacks to white farm operators. Not counting the members of households of black farm operators, who probably worked on their own farms, approximately 523 blacks worked for white farmers, representing 88 percent of the black agricultural laborers and 79 percent of all black laborers in Fairview Township. The economic life of Fairview Township in 1880 centered around black laborers working for white farmers. Certainly, any plan to improve the situation of such workers would have found a large audience there.<sup>47</sup>

The "Hoover Scare," as it was referred to in the newspapers, followed other labor disturbances in South Carolina, debates over legislation regulating contracts, and reports of violent conspiracies involving blacks. In 1886, the Knights of Labor had engaged in a strike against the textile mills of Augusta.<sup>48</sup> After six hundred Knights left the mills in July, the mill owners responded with a lockout. Without adequate financial support, the striking mill workers were vulnerable to mass evictions in late September. A representative from the Knights General Executive Board negotiated a settlement with mill owners, and the strikers returned to work on November 8, but "[i]n a strike-lockout that had lasted nearly three months and cost the Knights, local and national, over \$60,000, the order in Augusta had been effectively curbed."<sup>49</sup> Even after the loss in Augusta, the Knights managed to briefly organize locals in the mills at Piedmont, Pelzer, and Clifton.<sup>50</sup>

Near the end of December 1886 the South Carolina legislature debated the "contract bill" as a means of preventing the Knights of Labor from organizing farm laborers in South Carolina. South Carolina state senators feared that "an organization of the negroes by the Knights of Labor next summer [1887] would ruin the cotton planter" and particularly worried about the potential for "a strike in the cotton fields at the beginning of the picking season."<sup>51</sup> The bill itself placed tremendous restrictions on efforts to organize farm laborers, strictly limiting any "interference" between employer and employee and giving a broad definition to the term "contract." The language of the bill was as follows:

Section 2,084. It shall be deemed a conspiracy and shall be a misdemeanor for any persons, united, organized, associated or banded together, to interfere by threats, force, or in any other way, with any contract between any employer or employee, whether such contract be verbal or in writing, or to permit any person for them or in their name, or on behalf of such union, association, organization, or band, to interfere with any

employer or employee, whether the contract between them be verbal or in writing, for wages or for any other consideration, to prevent the execution of such contract; and each and every one convicted of this offence shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than six months, or fined not less than two hundred dollars, or both fined and imprisoned, in the discretion of the Court. Each one of such contracts interfered with as above prescribed shall constitute a separate and distinct offence herein.<sup>52</sup>

The bill passed the Senate with the strong support of merchants and planters and was sent on to the House, but the bill was postponed to the next legislative session and eventually died in committee after the Knights of Labor exerted considerable effort to oppose it on a national level.<sup>53</sup>

Another factor contributing to the Hoover scare and the way its events unfolded was a series of reports around the beginning of the year concerning secret societies of blacks bent on violence towards whites. On November 30, 1886, a young white boy named Johnnie Goode was murdered in western York County, just east of Spartanburg County, and four black men were committed to jail on suspicion of murder following the coroner's inquest. The inquest, however, also revealed the alleged existence of a band of perhaps forty black men led by the four already imprisoned whose purpose was apparently to carry out organized campaigns of theft and attacks on specific whites against whom they had grievances. Although none of the attacks were carried out, it was during one such theft of cotton that Goode was murdered.<sup>54</sup> Following this in early January 1887 was a report from nearby Fort Mill concerning an alleged conspiracy by blacks there to murder several whites.<sup>55</sup> These events show that white South Carolinians in 1887 were already worried that the Knights of Labor or a similar group might organize black farm laborers and encourage them to seek, violently perhaps, a better return for their labor.

Although the Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer reported on the existence of a substantial CWA organization in Greenville as early as March 1887, it was not until late June that

reports of Hoover clubs in rural areas set off a panic that led to the use of force to suppress the organization. White landowners may have reacted harshly to the CWA precisely because they feared the consequences of a successful organization of black laborers. An editorial in the Charleston News and Courier expressed this position well:

The aversion of the farmers to any combination of colored laborers is not unreasonable. It is difficult enough to keep organizations of white laborers within proper bounds. The colored people have less self-control and when acting in a body are proportionately more dangerous. It is more than likely that the object of the organizations in Laurens was primarily, and is by the rules, to protect the members against unfair dealing and to secure to them better pay than they now receive. From this to claiming the earth is—for the unreflecting and heedless colored people—a short and easy step.<sup>56</sup>

Other newspapers emphasized the danger of a strike in June or July "just as the critical period for the farmer has arrived."<sup>57</sup> However, most concluded that the black farmers, whether wage laborers, renting for cash, or sharecropping, would realize such a strike would harm them as much or more than their landlords.

The first stirrings of the Hoover scare came from Spartanburg and Laurens Counties at the end of May 1887, although the groundwork for the scare had been laid even before all the Hoover clubs were organized. An anonymous correspondent wrote in the Carolina Spartan on March 23 that "[n]egroes are threatening publicly to use the torch." He suggested that "the best thing that can be done now to prevent loss of life and property is to organize vigilant committees to deal with such characters as are threatening life and the destruction of property by fire." The editors responded with a lengthy column intended to calm their readers, but the sentiments of the anonymous correspondent seem to have slowly gained converts over the next two months. By June 1, the Carolina Spartan reported that the "Hoover movement" had created secret societies of blacks with armed guards in various parts of Spartanburg County. In the first week of June, three different residents of the

Woodruff area of Spartanburg County wrote to Adjutant and Inspector General M. L. Bonham, Jr., asking about forming military companies to defend themselves against the Hoover clubs.<sup>58</sup> Bonham and Jonathan Scoggin, Bonham's clerk, explained that by law no new companies could be formed but suggested the writers contact one another.<sup>59</sup> Although both Scoggin and Bonham appeared hesitant to believe all that the letters apparently alleged, a June 12 letter from W. P. Coker of Cedar Grove, a village in the extreme northern portion of Laurens County adjacent to the Enoree River, in which he "asks [about the] militia law & for arms for troop of Cav'y for protection against negroes" appears to have increased their concern.<sup>60</sup> Scoggin replied that "there is a very uneasy feeling prevalent around there, and it is possible that a good military company . . . would have a tranquilizing effect . . ."<sup>61</sup> The series of letters to and from the Adjutant and Inspector General's office showed residents of several communities that the Hoover clubs were more widespread than they may have realized.

It was at about this time that newspapers became cognizant of the Hoover clubs and that the Hoover scare took off in earnest. The Charleston News and Courier reported that "near Cedar Grove, Young's township, the negroes have organized themselves into secret organizations known as Knights of Labor." The fact that "the meetings are held with closed doors and armed doorkeepers and armed pickets" seems to have inflamed the minds of area residents, leading to a cycle of rumor which held that "the negroes have been made to believe that this country belongs to them . . . and that they will maintain these extraordinary claims with their lives." The alleged end result of the plan was a familiar one: "They think that they will obtain their rights quickest by exterminating the older whites and enslaving the young men. The young women they will take for their wives."<sup>62</sup> Threatening but less violent rumors about the Hoover clubs had already surfaced in May in Spartanburg County. There someone reported "a rumor that about the last of this month laborers will strike for higher wages, and tenants for lower rents. If their demands are not acceded to they

will quit the crops until ruin compels the owner to come to terms. If they are starved out before this time, they will go to the town and come to this city and rifle the stores."<sup>63</sup>

Governor John P. Richardson sent Scoggin to Cedar Grove. On June 15, Scoggin arrived at the home of Dr. Jonathan A. Westmoreland in Cedar Grove and met with several citizens. While Scoggin did not believe there was an immediate threat, the fact that so many local citizens had already formed a cavalry troop led him to recommend that the organization be recognized as part of the state militia and supplied with arms.<sup>64</sup> After his visit, Scoggin seems to have taken the situation a bit more seriously, acknowledging that "[i]t may be possible that this feeling of unrest is somewhat exaggerated, but the formation of these Co.s, many members of which are advanced in life, proves beyond doubt that there must be something to cause this feeling."<sup>65</sup>

Scoggin caught cold during his trip and was delayed four or five days, so Governor Richardson dispatched Colonel J. H. Traynham "of the governor's staff" to investigate, assisted by Captain L. E. Irby of the Laurens Guards, a local state militia unit. Traynham and Irby visited Cedar Grove on June 18.<sup>66</sup> Irby told newspaper correspondents that while there were secret organizations which met "near the lines of Laurens and Greenville counties, on the Greenville side," "the various dire threats that have been so widely circulated cannot be traced authoritatively to the organization."<sup>67</sup> Traynham's report confirmed what Irby had said. On the basis of this information, Governor Richardson decided to "maintain a position of dignified watchfulness" and had "Adj. Gen. Bonham . . . supply with arms the new cavalry company raised in the neighborhood."<sup>68</sup> In a letter to Captain Jonathan A. Westmoreland sending commissions for the officers of the new cavalry troop, Bonham wrote, "I sincerely trust that the arrival of the arms will restore confidence and be the means of recalling the deluded followers of Hoover to their senses."<sup>69</sup> What the newspaper accounts do not mention and the Military Department records only allude to is that Bonham and Richardson appear to have ignored the regulation against new companies in the interest of restoring calm to the area. "The sensation," concluded the Charleston News and Courier correspondent, "may be considered as

over," yet no sooner had the Hoover scare died down in Laurens County than it arose just across the county line in Greenville County.

The Hoover scare in the Fairview area of southern Greenville County was more extensive and more extensively documented in the newspapers than its earlier manifestation in Laurens County. The manner in which these clubs were suppressed varied substantially from the Laurens County experience as well. An editorial pointed out that "[t]he State laws furnish abundant means of punishing lawlessness, and of stamping it out. Within the law, and by the appointed methods, there is ample means of protection and repression. There is no need, therefore, of precipitate or premature action."<sup>70</sup> The farmers in the Fairview area, however, saw things in a different light and formed vigilance committees, rather than formal militia companies, which carried out admittedly illegal inquisitions which effectively squelched the organization there and provided a model for neighboring communities for dealing with their own real or imagined "Hoover scares."

The Hoover scare at Fairview, like the one in neighboring Laurens County, began with outlandish rumors spreading as whites became aware of the clandestine meetings blacks were holding. In Fairview, the rumors sounded much like those in Laurens County. "Threats to strike were soon enlarged to burning, afterwards to killing of the men and making the wives and children their slaves, killing the old people, appropriating the girls to their own uses, etc. Soon all these rumors were put into one, and the whole extirpation of the white race seemed to be threatened and the confiscation of their property was to take place soon."<sup>71</sup> The course the scraps of information which provided the basis for the rumors took is revealing. According to one correspondent, "[a] few of the colored women of the community began to drop a hint here and there, which led the white women of the neighborhood to fear that the negroes meant mischief, and this alarm of the wives and daughters of the whites was so extensive that the white men could not leave home at night, for any purpose whatever."<sup>72</sup>



The white men of the area tried to obtain information about the clubs' plans from blacks, but no one would admit membership in or even the existence of the secret organizations, so on Saturday, June 25, 1887, a number of the white men of the neighborhood met to discuss the situation.<sup>73</sup> The vigilance committee made plans to reconvene in a week, on July 2, to hear the report of an executive committee appointed to investigate the matter. This executive committee, however, encountered continued recalcitrance from blacks suspected of membership in the organizations, so a meeting was called early for Wednesday, June 29. "The [white] club met in the hall over Peden and Co.'s store, and was attended by nearly every [white] man in the community."<sup>74</sup> After some discussion, the group decided to simply "bring the leaders before the club and then and there talk the matter over with them."<sup>75</sup> Armed groups from the vigilance committee were sent out to the countryside to round up the suspected leaders of the organization.<sup>76</sup> Under duress, the first man captured, a leader of his local Hoover club, "told where his club list and papers were and they were found and seized."<sup>77</sup> Once the seventeen leaders had been brought in, the meeting moved from the relatively public room over Peden's store to "Mr. James E. Savage's spring grove nearby," a move certainly calculated to terrorize the victims of this inquisition. Although "the colored people were assured that no bodily harm should befall them," it would have been impossible to overlook the threat implicit in removing the proceedings to a more isolated location.<sup>78</sup> The principal of the Fairview school, Professor J. W. Kennedy, took down the questions and answers in writing, and "[b]y piecing the stories together, and re-examinations and cross-examinations, the bottom of the whole thing was reached."<sup>79</sup> After the facts of the organization were ascertained, "the colored people agreed to disband their organizations and the whites agreed to protect them from any bodily harm from either colored or white people."<sup>80</sup>

After the unofficial inquisition at Fairview, the surrounding communities where Hoover clubs had been organized or were suspected to have been organized carried out similar inquisitions. The first, on Thursday, June 30, centered around Hopewell Church about three miles north of

Fairview and just west of the town of Fountain Inn. It followed the form of the Fairview inquisition closely.<sup>81</sup> Although the round-up of club members appears to have relied more on intimidation than outright force, one black teacher later told a newspaper correspondent that "the better class of white people ought to have taken entire control of the matter, and not allowed some of the lower classes of white people to have come to the colored people and driven them around like dumb cattle."<sup>82</sup> The Hopewell inquisition, perhaps due to the presence of a trial justice and, according to one account, the sheriff, was frank about its nature and purpose: "Each of them [the Hooverites] was carefully informed that he was held by an illegal body of men representing only public sentiment; but that sentiment was strong enough to make the sheriff, the trial justices and the law powerless to oppose it, and that the men were ready and able to make and carry out their own decisions."<sup>83</sup> Although "some of the colored men were evidently badly frightened . . . while they sat around on the ground outside awaiting their turns," after the questioning was completed and the men were told to disband their organizations, the "well pleased and contented looking party of negroes" went home.<sup>84</sup>

Several factors account for the relatively low level of outright violence used in suppressing the CWA. First, the plan of armed insurrection existed only in the minds of the white vigilantes; the black CWA members had never planned any kind of violence and were certainly not prepared for it. Second, when the vigilantes rounded up CWA members, none gave any direct resistance. Only two or three even ran from the well-armed riders sent to fetch them. These riders, after all, were "the lower class of whites" who might be expected to have even less compunction about killing any black who resisted than their social betters. Third, the movement was so strongly supported in the communities in which it was active that to simply do away with CWA members would have removed upwards of two-thirds of the black population and an even larger proportion of the available day laborers. And even limited killing would probably have led to massive emigration of survivors as happened any number of times in upstate South Carolina. Blacks were already leaving Spartanburg County in the spring of 1887 in a small but steady stream. White vigilantes involved in

the 1887 sugar workers' strike in Louisiana or the 1891 confrontation between planters and the Leflore County Colored Farmers Alliance in Mississippi could better afford to use violence since black laborers were still immigrating to those areas. The CWA members survived the Hoover scare partly because they were an integral part of the local economic structure and partly because they were fortunate that no one panicked.<sup>85</sup>

Violence against the leaders of the CWA, however, was a viable option. White landowners in Georgia found shotguns effective tools to prevent Hoover clubs from taking root around Warrenton. Newspapers all along Hoover's South Carolina trail crowded the news of his supposed death. Fewer noted his surprising recovery. Local leaders were also threatened. After the Fairview inquisition, a newspaper corrected the false rumor that Sherman McCrary's brother had just narrowly escaped lynching in York County for the murder of Johnnie Goode. Sherman McCrary announced that "he has stopped work as an organizer, but will stay in town [Greenville] until that fact becomes better known."<sup>86</sup> Likewise, when asked if he planned to attend the July 4 meeting in Dacusville, Lee Minor "said he didn't believe it would be best for him to go outside of Greenville city until the excitement had died out."<sup>87</sup>

The next few days saw several communities across the southern half of Greenville County form vigilance committees and scour the farms and countryside to discover and disband any Hoover organizations. Armed groups disbanded three Hoover clubs in the Poplar Springs area eight miles south of Greenville on July 1.<sup>88</sup> Also that day, the Cedar Grove club was shut down.<sup>89</sup> Whites from Oak Lawn and Dunklin Townships in Greenville County to the south and west of Fairview Township met at Lickville (about three miles south of modern-day Ware Place on the Greenville-Augusta road), and another vigilance committee met at Old Hundred, just east of Ware Place, on Monday, July 4, but neither of these groups discovered any new Hoover clubs.<sup>90</sup>

The terroristic suppression of the CWA in lower Greenville County created great excitement both locally and nationwide and fairly extinguished the organization in the other locations where it

had existed. As rumors exaggerating the danger posed by the CWA circulated among white residents, rumors exaggerating the severity of its suppression circulated among blacks as far away as Greenville. Those returning to Greenville from Fairview after the inquisition found "a collection of colored preachers and other citizens at the depot, excited by stories of wholesale slaughter in Fairview."<sup>91</sup> The discoveries of the white club in Fairview about the plans of the Hoover clubs were greatly exaggerated as they passed to neighboring communities, and it was not until the newspapers arrived with more accurate accounts that excitement began to subside.<sup>92</sup>

The Greenville organization of the CWA which had inspired so little concern in March felt the effects of the fear generated by the Fairview inquisition. Rather than attend the meeting in Dacusville on July 4, Minor announced a meeting of Hoover organizations in Greenville for the day after.<sup>93</sup> About four o'clock that afternoon, about 150 blacks gathered in the city park to listen to Minor's address. Under the circumstances, Minor probably felt it advisable to bring the CWA into the open in Greenville to avoid the development of the sort of rumors that arose in Fairview. In his speech he "denied emphatically and repeatedly that the Co-operative Workers had ever made threats of any kind against the whites or encouraged hostility between the races in any shape or form."<sup>94</sup>

The planned July 4 meeting of the Hoover organization in Dacusville, although it did cause a certain amount of apprehension, turned out to be no cause for alarm. The notices for the meeting posted in the Dacusville and Easley areas were put up after the inquisition at Fairview, but before complete accounts of those events were available in the newspapers. It is possible that the Dacusville meeting, like Lee Minor's speech in Greenville, may have been called to bring the organization out into the open to avoid sparking retaliation similar to that visited upon the Hoover organizations of southern Greenville County. From the first reports of Hooverism in Dacusville, however, the tenor was different: Of all the Hoover clubs, only the one in Dacusville seems to have provoked any deep concern over its capability to disrupt the established social and economic order. A June 29 report claimed that "in Pickens [County] some white settlers have joined," and a report a

couple of days later that "there is a remote possibility of some disturbance at an unexpected meeting at Dacusville on Monday."<sup>95</sup> The meeting may also have been intended to demonstrate the peaceful nature of the organization to its own white members in order to prevent them from panicking over rumors like those circulating at Fairview.

The fears proved to be unfounded. On July 4, about two hundred white men (not CWA members) turned out with shotguns close at hand.<sup>96</sup> Reports a few days earlier revealed that "[a]n informal police organization has been made in that township [Dacusville] and mounted men are picketing the roads at night."<sup>97</sup> About twenty or thirty blacks were present, but no CWA organizer appeared, nor did D. R. Speer, the announced speaker. Only one person rose to speak for the CWA: A youth named Tom Singleton complained about the stock law and the Democratic Party.<sup>98</sup> After Singleton's brief speech, John W. Thomas, president of the Dacusville Democratic Club, used the opportunity of the gathering to hold a Democratic meeting with addresses by several speakers, including a reading of the CWA constitution and by-laws. The CWA, as a viable movement with the potential to effect change for laborers in South Carolina, was dead.

Thomas W. Kremm and Diane Neal suggest that the Hoover movement was doomed from the very beginning by the overwhelming force that white landowners would bring to bear against any such movement that sought to alter the economic relations between themselves and their black tenants and laborers.<sup>99</sup> This is only part of the answer, however. Certainly, the overwhelming physical force that the white landowners in Spartanburg, Laurens, Greenville, and Pickens counties were able to muster played a central role in ending the CWA almost before it began, but a lack of solidarity and a poorly conceived plan of action were also critical to the CWA's failure.

The leaders of the vigilance committees and newly-formed militia units tended to come from the elite of the rural communities they represented. Around Woodruff in Spartanburg County where the Hoover scare began, two of the leaders of the anti-CWA movement represented both the older,

antebellum elite as well as the rising class of New South leaders. J. Belton Kilgore was a wealthy planter who would later become mayor of Woodruff. Both he and his brother-in-law, W. W. Simpson, had been charter members of the First Presbyterian Church when it formed in 1877. By 1887, Kilgore was no stranger to intimidation: He had been very active as a Red Shirt in the 1876 election.<sup>100</sup> While Kilgore farmed his large plantation, Simpson had opened a dry goods store in Woodruff in 1885. By 1889, Kilgore and Simpson were in business together as cotton brokers, and in 1900, the two were among the founders of the first cotton mill in Woodruff.<sup>101</sup>

Four members of the Fairview vigilance committee were named in newspaper reports: Dr. David R. Anderson, James E. Savage, Adam S. Peden, and J. W. Kennedy. Anderson, a fifty-three year old physician, merchant, and planter who was the largest landowner in the Fairview community, directed the proceeding. In 1880, Anderson owned over five hundred acres of land and paid out twelve hundred dollars in wages. James E. Savage was in his early eighties, but was a much less substantial farmer, owning only forty-four acres.<sup>102</sup> Peden and Kennedy represented a younger, more mobile element of rural society. Peden, thirty years old in 1887, began as a clerk and by 1887 had his own store at the main crossroads of Fairview. He moved to Fountain Inn in 1913 and ran a store there.<sup>103</sup> J. W. Kennedy served as a notary public and as principal of the Fairview school. In 1888, he went on to become the third president of Presbyterian College in nearby Laurens County.<sup>104</sup> All but Kennedy were elders of the Fairview Presbyterian Church.<sup>105</sup>

In addition to strong opposition from white elites aided by lower class whites, however, the CWA faced a lack of solidarity in its own ranks. To begin with, the movement failed to build a biracial coalition of workers as envisioned by Hover. When Hover first entered South Carolina, the crowd he spoke to in Spartanburg contained both blacks and whites, but eventually only the locals in Dacusville and Greenville contained both blacks and whites. In this respect, the CWA was much like the Knights of Labor. Especially by 1887, many rural whites were abandoning the Knights of Labor because of "charges that the Knights represented social equality and Republicanism."<sup>106</sup> The

CWA in Greenville reached out to the white members of the Republican Party for support, but after the white Republicans saw how things were going, they chose not to throw in their lots with the upstart organization. D. R. Speer, described as "a Greenville lawyer and Republican," was scheduled to speak at the July 4 meeting in Dacusville, but when the day came, he protested that he had nothing to do with the CWA.<sup>107</sup> Likewise, Tom Briar, at one time chairman of the Greenville County Republican Party, had a loud, public argument with John B. Hyde, a white Republican who lived between Greenville and Fairview, over Hyde's denunciation of the CWA.<sup>108</sup>

Divisions within the black community also contributed to the downfall of the CWA. After the Fairview inquisition, a black teacher noted bitterly that "when anything is gotten up in their [blacks'] weak judgement for the benefit of their race, there is always some unprincipled person among them . . . ready for sale for a pitiful peck of meal or sack of flour or plug of tobacco."<sup>109</sup> At least one white planter in eastern North Carolina employed a black spy to keep him informed of the clandestine activities of a Knights of Labor Local Assembly, but in this case, it is more likely that a black informer gave up the names of the leaders of the local Hoover clubs once the vigilance committee met on June 29, 1887.<sup>110</sup> Whereas Hover seems to have attracted broad support in portions of Greenville, Spartanburg, and Laurens counties, his visit to Oconee County led to several weeks of "wrangling over . . . labor organizations" in the black churches, resulting in fights that were resolved in criminal court. In a letter printed in the Walhalla newspaper, a black farmer named J. T. Donaldson denounced Hover and similar "sharppers" who had come around collecting money and promoting various organizations. He also suggested that Hover was from the North and that the CWA should "send colored men to supply our social necessities, in whom common sense teaches we should more readily invest our confidence." Donaldson's letter closed by encouraging his fellows to "reject these hellish devices" and pursue betterment through education rather than through direct attacks on the economic structure.<sup>111</sup>

Different interests based on gender could have played a role in undermining the CWA. The Fairview inquisition revealed that whites learned of the CWA when black women dropped hints to white women. On the surface, this situation makes little sense. Women were admitted as members of the CWA on equal standing with men. The majority of black women in Fairview Township worked alongside their husbands as farm laborers. It would seem that their interests should be parallel. However, the identifiable leaders of the CWA locals were all landless farm laborers, and they all had large families. It is possible that their wives, fearing not only for their husbands' safety but for their own and their children's well-being, sought to sabotage the CWA before its plans could go very far in order to prevent the more severe retaliation that could be expected had a strike actually occurred.

The CWA failed not just because of problems with those who opposed it and those who supported it, but because of essential problems in the nature of the organization and the means it used to attempt to reach its goals. The CWA intended to strengthen the position of workers, especially black workers, by decreasing their dependence on the credit system, but its plan of cooperative stores was impractical. This cooperative plan closely mirrored trends in the Knights of Labor during 1887 and 1888, when "rural and small town locals emphasized consumer cooperatives."<sup>112</sup> The Farmers' Alliance, which would arrive in South Carolina only a few months after the demise of the CWA, also centered its efforts on cooperation. The Farmers' Alliance, however, "whose members were primarily landowning farmers," had far more resources upon which to draw than did the rural, black day-laborers who made up the bulk of the membership of the CWA.<sup>113</sup> The CWA's large membership in Greenville could have supplied more capital than the smaller rural locals, but even the Farmers' Alliance, which opened a cooperative exchange in Greenville in 1890, was not able to make a success of a consumer cooperative.<sup>114</sup> Details of the CWA plan were published in the Hickory Western Carolinian in August, and even the most optimistic and charitable analysis could not fail to conclude that without a substantial membership,



the costs would far outweigh any potential savings.<sup>115</sup> The impractical nature of the plans for a cooperative store, which could only come to fruition in the long term and with a much larger membership than the CWA ever obtained, failed to provide CWA members with any tangible, immediate benefits. The Knights of Labor had encountered similar problems as they tried to educate workers in the South to the very idea of organization.<sup>116</sup>

With the goal of reduced prices at the cooperative stores still in the distance, a few local CWA members, in opposition to Hover's plans, contemplated ways to increase the wages whites paid for their labor. According to one member from near Simpsonville, "Some talk was had about increasing the price of labor."<sup>117</sup> Two CWA members interrogated at Fairview mentioned plans to strike for wages of one dollar per day.<sup>118</sup> While members of many CWA locals denied that strikes were ever discussed, a few scattered suggestions of a strike might have been sufficient to spark the rumors that resulted in the demise of the CWA.

In order to build a large enough membership to make the cooperative store feasible, the CWA needed to maintain secrecy. However, the public nature of Hover's early work--a public speech in Spartanburg, a newspaper interview in Greenville--made it unlikely that such secrecy could be preserved. As early as March, whites realized that blacks were organizing in Spartanburg, and according to one member "after July, the Club was to be open publicly at all the meetings."<sup>119</sup> Indeed, July 4 saw a public meeting at Dacusville as well as the first public meeting in the city of Greenville. By July 4, of course, the CWA had been crushed in Fairview, the center of its support.

The Hoover scare had a direct effect on the militia of South Carolina. Three new companies—in Cedar Grove, Woodruff, and Dacusville—were formed as a result and substantial numbers of arms were put in the hands of those who would use them to control black labor.<sup>120</sup> The cavalry company in Cedar Grove had at least fifty members, and the Dacusville group was reported to have as many as 180 men, although only fifty-five were on the initial roll.<sup>121</sup> The Hoover scare may have also had a slight and indirect effect on the subject of state militias outside of South Carolina. On

June 14, 1887, Bonham received a letter from Peter Reilly of Atlanta, who may have been affiliated with the Georgia legislature, asking about appropriations for the militia and laws concerning it in South Carolina. Scoggin's reply suggested that

It would seem to be the imperative duty of the Legislators of States situated as are the Cotton States, with an immense mass of citizens of an alien race, generally ignorant, and, at present, passively inimical to the whites, and apt to be misled by designing men, to provide ample means, in the interest and for the preservation of both races, for securing peace & securing and for prosecuting any disturbance.

Indeed, lack of money was one of the principal reasons Scoggin routinely cited for explaining why new military companies had been outlawed.<sup>122</sup> At the end of the year, Governor Richardson used the Hoover scare as a means of convincing the General Assembly to strengthen their financial support of the state militia. He noted a

considerable increase in the number of military companies in the State—eight having been reorganized in some of the upper Counties—a result caused mainly by a well grounded feeling of insecurity arising from the unexpected discovery of the existence throughout those Counties of secret labor organizations.<sup>123</sup>

Emphasizing the danger posed by the Hoover clubs more than he did at the time, Richardson commended "the militia as a conservator of the peace."

In addition to generating militia units, the Hoover scare produced at least two new farmers' organizations. As the scare was winding down, the Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer reported that "[a]t the last meeting of the Club [the white citizens' investigating committee] at Old Hundred, it changed itself to 'The Old Hundred Farmers' Club.' . . . The subject for their next meeting is the turnip crop, . . . It has nearly forty members."<sup>124</sup> Likewise, the white club at Fairview formed a Farmers' Club three days after disbanding the Hoover clubs in the area. Its president was Dr. David R. Anderson, one of its vice presidents was A. S. Peden, and its secretary was J. W. Kennedy. The

topic of the first announced meeting: "The Prime Object of Labor."<sup>125</sup> The "Backwoods Bachelor" who sent in news from Fork Shoals about the Old Hundred Farmers' Club noted the irony of this development: "When we come to think of it, it is a little strange that the whites should organize for exactly the same purpose that the negroes claim was theirs; i.e., to obtain a greater reward for their labor and to get meat and bread cheaper."<sup>126</sup> It is possible that these clubs were later affiliated with the Farmers' Alliance, but they were weighted not towards the small farmers who made up the backbone of the Alliance, but towards the very large landowners and merchants against whom Alliancemen struggled.

For black laborers, the entire Hoover scare seems to have had relatively little effect, particularly in the short term. The newspapers reported no increases in emigration after the end of the CWA. Instead of bringing rural, black laborers together, the CWA seems to have driven them apart in Oconee County. However, the CWA did provide brief experience for a few hundred people in the basic principles and practices of organization. In Greenville and Dacusville, CWA locals included both black and white members. This experience may have been helpful four decades later when black and white workers united to form the Unemployed Council in Greenville in 1931. Like the CWA, though, the Unemployed Council was overcome by naked force, this time in the form of the Ku Klux Klan and the Greenville police. The effect of the CWA on individuals is difficult to trace. Tom Singleton, the CWA supporter from Dacusville, went on to a long career as a merchant in Westminster in Oconee County. Lee Minor spent two years in prison for a shooting in 1889 and eventually settled in Williamston to work as a barber with his brother. Tom Briar continued to run his blacksmith shop and eventually worked for a few years as a bailiff at the United States District Court in Greenville. Although James A. Briar, the seventeen-year-old son of Tom Briar in 1887, never had the political opportunities open to his father during Reconstruction, it is just possible that a brief experience with the CWA as a young adult may have been the factor that explains why he went

on to be active in civil rights struggles in Greenville for the rest of his life and helped organize the Greenville chapter of the NAACP.<sup>127</sup>

## Notes

1. Herbert Gutman, "The Negro and the United Mine Workers" in Julius Jacobson, ed., The Negro and the American Labor Movement (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor, 1968), 117.
2. The sources for this biographical sketch include: Spartanburg (S.C.) Carolina Spartan, May 25, 1887; Spartanburg Carolina Spartan, June 1, 1887 (quoting Atlanta Constitution); H. F. Hover to Terence V. Powderly, May 22, 1886, Terence V. Powderly Papers, reel 16, including a four-page printed version of Hover's speech and assorted North Carolina newspaper clippings; Concord (N.C.) Times, April 15, 1886; Concord Times, April 22, 1886.
3. Spartanburg Carolina Spartan, February 16, 1887; Pickens (S.C.) Sentinel, March 10, 1887.
4. Charleston News and Courier, June 22, 1887; Norman J. Ware, The Labor Movement in the United States, 1860-1895: A Study in Democracy (Gloucester, Ma.: Peter Smith, 1959), 378-379.
5. Melton McLaurin, The Knights of Labor in the South (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), 52-55, 68-73; Leon Fink, Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor and American Politics (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 120-122.
6. There is slight evidence that Hover may have been active among the mill workers at Fishing Creek Factory in Chester County and the black farm laborers in the same vicinity, probably before he came to Spartanburg, according to a report in the Columbia Daily Register, June 17, 1887.
7. Greenville (S.C.) Enterprise and Mountaineer, February 16, 1887 (quoting Spartanburg Herald, February 11, 1887).
8. Pickens Sentinel, March 10, 1887.
9. Walhalla (S.C.) Keowee Courier, March 24, 1887.
10. Matthew Hild, "Organizing Across the Color Line: The Knights of Labor and Black Recruitment Efforts in Small-Town Georgia" Georgia Historical Quarterly (Summer 1997), 298-305; Hickory (N.C.) Western Carolinian, August 26, September 16, 1887.
11. Julie Saville, The Work of Reconstruction: From Slave to Wage Laborer in South Carolina, 1860-1870 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 116.
12. Saville, The Work of Reconstruction, 150.
13. Saville, Work of Reconstruction, 163.
14. Saville, Work of Reconstruction, 167.
15. Saville, Work of Reconstruction, 186.

16. George Brown Tindall, South Carolina Negroes, 1877-1900. (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1952), 186-208; Saville, Work of Reconstruction, 163-166.
17. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887).
18. McLaurin, The Knights of Labor in the South, 136.
19. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887).
20. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887); Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
21. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887; Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887).
22. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887); Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887. Laurel Creek flows into the Reedy River from the northeast about seven miles south-southeast of Greenville.
23. U.S. Congress, Joint Select Committee to Inquire into the Conditions of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States, Testimony Taken by the Joint Select Committee to Inquire into the Conditions of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States (The Ku-Klux Conspiracy) (Washington, D.C.:GPO, 1872), 538.
24. The Ku-Klux Conspiracy, 551, 539; Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
25. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887; 1880 S.C. Census, Greenville County, Fairview Township.
26. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
27. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
28. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
29. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, June 29, 1887.
30. This and all other spatial references refer to a 1903 cadastral map of Greenville County at the Greenville County Public Library, a 1907 cadastral map of Laurens County by W. H. Nash at the Laurens County Public Library, the U.S. Geological Survey Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) accessed through Yale University's Peabody Museum (<http://www.peabody.yale.edu/other/gnis/SC.html>), 1997 maps produced by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, an 1882 Greenville County cadastral map of Greenville County by Paul B. Kyzer from the collections of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History,

Columbia (henceforth SCDAH) (MB 22, folder 7), an 1887 cadastral map of Spartanburg County by E. H. McCollough from the collections of SCDAH (MB 10, folder 2), and various recent county highway maps.

31. Charleston News and Courier, June 20, 1887.
32. Spartanburg Carolina Spartan, May 4, 1887.
33. Spartanburg Carolina Spartan, June 29, 1887.
34. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, May 11, 1887 (quoting Spartanburg Herald, May 6, 1887).
35. Charleston News and Courier, July 11, 1887. Toney Creek is very near Williamston, where Lee Minor's family lived and where he himself lived after the turn of the century.
36. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 27, 1887 (quoting Spartanburg Herald, July 20, 1887); Carolina Spartan, July 20, 1887.
37. 1870 South Carolina Census, Laurens County, Laurens Township; 1880 South Carolina Census, Greenville County, Fairview Township; 1900 South Carolina Census, Greenville County, Fairview Township; 1910 South Carolina Census, Greenville County, Fairview Township; Lee Garrett, South Carolina Death Certificate #1366 (1919); City Directory of Greenville, 1883-1884 (Atlanta: H. H. Dickson, 1883), 151.
38. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
39. June 30, 1887.
40. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 13, 1887.
41. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, March 16, 1887.
42. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, March 16, 1887.
43. F. J. Gates, comp., Greenville, S.C. City and County Directory, Spring 1888 (Greenville, S.C.:J. R. Shannon, 1888), 207.
44. Columbia Daily Register, July 1, 1887.
45. Judith G. Bainbridge, Greenville's West End (Greenville, S.C.: Westend Association, 1993), 9.
46. Augusta Chronicle, July 5, 1887; Greenville County Register of Mesne Conveyance, Grantee

Index to Deeds, microfilm at Greenville County Library; 1870 South Carolina Census, Greenville County, Greenville Township; Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, November 8, 1876; William D. Browning, Firefighting in Greenville, 1840-1990 (Greenville, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1991), 17; 1880 South Carolina Census, Greenville County, Greenville Township.

47. This data comes from the population and agricultural censuses for Greenville County, Fairview Township.

48. McLaurin, The Knights of Labor in the South, 69-73.

49. McLaurin, The Knights of Labor in the South, 73.

50. Melton McLaurin, "Early Labor Union Organizational Efforts in South Carolina Cotton Mills, 1880-1905" South Carolina Historical Magazine 72 (1971), 48.

51. Charleston News and Courier, December 17 and 18, 1886. Such a strike did occur briefly in 1891. See the Charleston News and Courier, September 10, 13, and 15, 1891.

52. Charleston News and Courier, December 17, 1886.

53. Charleston News and Courier, December 17, 18, and 27, 1886; Kessler, 266.

54. Charleston News and Courier, December 16, 1886.

55. Chester (S.C.) Reporter, January 13, 1887 (quoting Charlotte Chronicle).

56. Charleston News and Courier, June 20, 1887.

57. Spartanburg Carolina Spartan, June 1, 1887.

58. Milledge Lipscomb Bonham was the son of Milledge Luke Bonham (governor of South Carolina) and the father of historian Milledge Louis Bonham, according to Walker Scott Utsey, ed., Who's Who in South Carolina, 1934-1935 (Columbia, S.C.: Current Historical Association, 1935), 51.

59. Letters at SCDAH, Military Department, Adjutant and Inspector General, Abstracts of Letters Received, 1882-1896, and Letterbooks, 1887-1896. Letter from W. W. Simpson, May 30, 1887, 237; letter from Jonathan Scoggin to S. E. Mason, June 3, 1887, 449; letter from M. L. Bonham to P. P. Yarbrough, June 8, 1887, 474; Spartanburg Unit of the Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration, A History of Spartanburg County (Spartanburg, S.C.: Band & White, 1940), 75; letter from Jonathan Scoggin to W. W. Simpson, June 1, 1887, 440; letter from M. L. Bonham to P. P. Yarbrough, June 8, 1887.

60. Letter from W. P. Coker, June 12, 1887. SCDAH. Military Department. Adjutant and Inspector



General. Abstracts of Letters Received. 1882-1896, 240.

61. Jonathan Scoggin to W. P. Coker, June 14, 1887. SCDAH. Military Department. Adjutant and Inspector General. Letterbooks. 1887-1896, 483.

62. Charleston News and Courier, June 20, 1887. These ideas and descriptions of the consequences of an "insurrection" are remarkably consistent with those from slave revolts and seem to tap into a stock of images and phrases that existed continuously for nearly two hundred years. See, for instance, Winthrop D. Jordan, White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 110-15, 152-54. For examples in South Carolina, see Saville, The Work of Reconstruction, 148-49, and an even more exact parallel in Dan T. Carter, "The Anatomy of Fear: The Christmas Day Insurrection Scare of 1865," Journal of Southern History 42:3 (August 1976), 345-64, especially 347-48.

63. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, May 11, 1887.

64. Letter from Jonathan Scoggin to Senator J. B. Crews, June 27, 1887. SCDAH. Military Department. Adjutant and Inspector General. Letterbooks. 1887-1896, 507.

65. Letter from Jonathan Scoggin to Capt. E. Bacon, June 30, 1887. SCDAH. Military Department. Adjutant and Inspector General. Letterbooks. 1887-1896, 519.

66. Charleston News and Courier, June 23, 1887.

67. Charleston News and Courier, June 22, 1887.

68. Charleston News and Courier, June 23, 1887.

69. Letter from M. L. Bonham, Jr., to Jonathan A. Westmoreland, June 29, 1887. SCDAH. Military Department. Adjutant and Inspector General. Letterbooks. 1887-1896.

70. Charleston News and Courier, June 20, 1887.

71. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.

72. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.

73. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.

74. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887.

75. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.

76. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887).

77. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887).
78. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
79. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887).
80. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
81. Charleston News and Courier, July 1 and 3 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887), 1887.
82. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
83. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887).
84. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887).
85. Nearly every issue of the Spartanburg Carolina Spartan from February through May of 1887 remarked on the emigration of groups of black families; Kenneth Kann, "The Knights of Labor and the Southern Black Worker," Labor History 18:1 (Winter 1977), 66-68; William F. Holmes, "The Leflore County Massacre and the Demise of the Colored Farmers' Alliance," Phylon 34 (September 1973), 267-74; Edward L. Ayers, The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction (New York: Oxford, 1992), 22-24.
86. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887).
87. Columbia Daily Register, July 1, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, June 30, 1887).
88. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
89. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
90. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
91. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887 (quoting Greenville News, July 1, 1887).
92. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 13, 1887. The New York Times, which had reported briefly on the excitement in Laurens County on June 22, reprinted a shortened version of the Charleston News and Courier story on July 3.
93. Charleston News and Courier, July 5, 1887.
94. Charleston News and Courier, July 6, 1887.
95. Charleston News and Courier, June 29 and July 2, 1887.

96. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 13, 1887 (quoting Easley (S.C.) Messenger, July 8, 1887); Charleston News and Courier, July 7, 1887.
97. Columbia Daily Register, July 1, 1887.
98. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 13, 1887 (quoting Easley Messenger, July 8, 1887). Shawn Everett Kantor and J. Morgan Kousser point out that "[i]n South Carolina and some counties and militia districts in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, however, the stock law was imposed in the late nineteenth century [1881 in the case of South Carolina] by the state legislature without referendum or petition." Shawn Everett Kantor and J. Morgan Kousser, "Common Sense or Commonwealth? The Fence Law and Institutional Change in the Postbellum South," Journal of Southern History 59:2 (May 1993), 201. In mid-June, two of Tom Singleton's brothers got into a fight with the sons of a landowner in whose creek they were seining, suggesting that for the Singleton family, and probably others in Dacusville Township of similar means, living off the land was an important supplement to farming. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, June 15, 1887.
99. Thomas W. Kremm and Diane Neal, "Clandestine Black Labor Societies and White Fear: Hiram F. Hoover and the 'Cooperative Workers of America' in the South" Labor History 19:2 (Spring 1978), 226-237.
100. Charleston News and Courier, July 28, 1935.
101. Hannah Barton Irby, Woodruff: An Historical View (n.l.: n.p., 1974), 25, 76, 4, 18, 61; John Belton O'Neill Landrum, History of Spartanburg County (1900; rpt. Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Company, 1977), 449.
102. F. J. Gates, comp., Greenville, S.C. City and County Directory, Spring 1888 (Greenville, S.C.:J. R. Shannon, 1888), 207; 1880 South Carolina Census, Greenville County, Fairview Township.
103. Mary Lou Stewart Garrett, History of Fairview Presbyterian Church of Greenville County, South Carolina (n.l.: Fairview Presbyterian Church, 1986), 63; Caroline S. Coleman and B. C. Givens, History of Fountain Inn (Fountain Inn, S.C.: n.p., 1965), 11.
104. Papers of Gov. Sheppard (1886-1888), Appointments of County Officials, 157, SCDAH; Ben Hay Hammett, The Spirit of PC: A Centennial History of Presbyterian College (Clinton, S.C.: Jacobs Press, 1982), 11.
105. Garrett, History of Fairview Presbyterian Church, 63.
106. Robert C. McMath, Jr., "Southern White Farmers and the Organization of Black Farm Workers: A North Carolina Document," Labor History, 18:1 (Winter 1977), 117.
107. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6 and 13, 1887.

108. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, November 8, 1876; Augusta Chronicle, July 5, 1887.
109. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
110. McMath, "Southern White Farmers," 118-19.
111. Walhalla Keowee Courier, March 24, 1887.
112. McLaurin, The Knights of Labor in the South, 128
113. McLaurin, The Knights of Labor in the South, 130.
114. Robert C. McMath, Jr., Populist Vanguard: A History of the Southern Farmers' Alliance (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 51; Archie Vernon Huff, Greenville: The History of the City and County in the South Carolina Piedmont (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), 224.
115. Hickory Western Carolinian, August 19, 1887.
116. McLaurin, The Knights of Labor in the South, 114.
117. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
118. Charleston News and Courier, July 3, 1887.
119. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
120. The creation of these companies is recorded in a series of letters including, in addition to those cited earlier: J. B. Kilgore, Woodruff, to Bonham, June 15; J. B. Kilgore to Bonham, June 18; Capt. J. A. Westmoreland to Bonham, June 27; Lt. J. B. Kilgore to Bonham, July 5; S. J. Prior, Dacusville, to Bonham, July 18; S. J. Prior to Bonham, July 27; Lt. J. B. Kilgore to Bonham, July 29; Lt. Kilgore and Sergt. Coker to Bonham, August 17; Capt. S. J. Prior to Bonham, August 20; Lt. J. B. Kilgore to Bonham, August 22; J. J. Morgan, Dacusville, to Bonham, September 16; all at SCDAH. Military Department. Adjutant and Inspector General. Abstracts of Letters Received. 1882-1896.
121. Letter from Sergt. W. P. Coker to Bonham, October 31, 1887. SCDAH. Military Department. Adjutant and Inspector General. Abstracts of Letters Received. 1887-1896, 279; Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 20, 1887, quoting Pickens Sentinel, July 14, 1887; letter from Capt. S. J. Prior to Bonham, August 20. SCDAH. Military Department. Adjutant and Inspector General. Abstracts of Letters Received. 1887-1896, 259.
122. Letter from Jonathan Scoggin to Edward McKarrick, July 6, 1887. SCDAH. Military Department. Adjutant and Inspector General. Letterbooks. 1887-1896, 528.

123. Message of John Peter Richardson, Governor, to the General Assembly of South Carolina, at the Regular Session Beginning November 22, 1887. (Columbia, S.C.: Charles A. Calvo, State Printer, 1887), 21.
124. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 13, 1887.
125. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 6, 1887.
126. Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, July 13, 1887.
127. Edwin D. Hoffman, "The Genesis of the Modern Movement For Equal Rights in South Carolina, 1930-1939" Journal of Negro History 44:4 (October 1959):357, 366; Thomas P. Singleton, South Carolina Death Certificate #19947 (1941), SCDAH; Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer, March 20, 1889; 1900 South Carolina Census, Anderson County, Williamston Township; 1900 South Carolina Census, Greenville County, Greenville Township; 1910 South Carolina Census, Greenville County, Greenville Township; Huff, Greenville, 281, 282, 356; interview with A. J. Whittenberg, Greenville, S.C., August 22, 1998.