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# The Social and Civic Impacts of Robert Winship Woodruff in the City of Atlanta During the 1960s

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THE SOCIAL AND CIVIC IMPACTS OF  
ROBERT WINSHIP WOODRUFF  
IN THE CITY OF ATLANTA  
DURING THE 1960s

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate School of  
Clemson University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
History

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by  
Andrew Cromer Land  
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Accepted by:  
Dr. H. Roger Grant, Committee Chair  
Dr. Jerome V. Reel, Jr.  
Dr. Paul C. Anderson

## ABSTRACT

Robert Winship Woodruff was born December 6, 1889, and died March 7, 1985. For more than sixty-two years he headed the Coca-Cola Company, headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. Woodruff amassed a tremendous fortune and was for years the richest man in Georgia and one of the wealthiest in the South. His wealth made him extremely powerful in political circles, and he came to dominate the city of Atlanta in a way unlike any other private citizen in any other comparable American city of the time. Though he never held elected or appointed political office, Woodruff controlled all major policy decisions made under the administrations of Mayors William Berry Hartsfield (1932-1941 and 1943-1961) and Ivan Allen, Jr. (1962-1969). He also had tremendous influence on Georgia governors and U. S. Congressmen and Senators from that state.

The decade of the 1960s was the time at which Woodruff's personal power and influence were at their peak. He recognized that Atlanta was on the cusp of great social change stemming from the civil rights movement, and he believed that by guiding and supporting Atlanta's

leaders, he could ensure that progress would be made in a timely fashion and with a minimum of rancor. Woodruff personally underwrote many of the city's endeavors to combat poverty, make slum areas more livable, and provide cultural and art venues for Atlanta's citizens. His support, given in his characteristically behind-the-scenes manner, was critical to steady leadership and, therefore, peace in Atlanta during the 1960s.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my father, Jerry E. Land, who sparked and sustained my love of history and, especially, Robert W. Woodruff. This thesis exists because of his unflagging encouragement, love, and steadfast support.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Without the gracious assistance of many individuals and the blessings of the Almighty this thesis would not have been created.

Tremendous thanks go to my major professor, Dr. H. Roger Grant, who provided immeasurable assistance and guidance. These, as well as his unfailing good humor, are much appreciated. I also thank Dr. Paul C. Anderson, one of my thesis committee's three members, who shepherded me through this process.

Dr. Jerome V. Reel, Jr., is an integral part not only of my academic pursuits, but also of my life. Having worked with him as an assistant for four years and having known him for nearly eight, I have been able to observe the giant stature and character of this man. He is my boss, to be sure, but he also is a mentor and a very valued friend.

At Clemson, Linda Bridges, Dr. Reel's longtime assistant, has shown her tremendous support to me through the many kindnesses she has extended to me during all of my years here. There have been many a morning that would have been less productive were it not for her thoughtfulness in ensuring my coffee cup was always filled. And Barbara Rogers and Mary Ann Rampey have provided invaluable assistance in

making sure that this work was progressing as it should. The generosity of these three ladies is much appreciated.

Drew Niederriter, my long-suffering roommate, has listened patiently as I described, ad nauseum at times, facets of Woodruff's life that I was struggling to understand, and he graciously read every page of the manuscript. His contributions have been invaluable, as have those of Ward Buzzell, a Clemson alumnus and frequent breakfast companion. Ward's multitudinous career and life experiences, as well as his strong faith, have influenced me and given me countless insights into not only the human animal, but also the sweep of history itself.

David Dickerson, a student himself of Georgia history; Mary Ann Prater, a friend on Clemson's faculty; Ray Prock, my former roommate and a friend for over a decade; Margaret Thompson, a gifted Classicist and friend; Nancy Land, one of my aunts and a retired English professor; Eddie Smith, my neighbor, close friend, and confidant during all of my Clemson years; and Glenn Robertson, a retired Washington journalist of amazing acuity, each have offered much encouragement and constructive feedback. Whenever I encountered a problem, these friends were there to listen, and their perspectives were always most helpful.

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Charles McTier, Sam Massell, Walter W. Driver, Jr., Hugo Welch, Oliver Markham Healey, and Gary Lanneau graciously gave of their time in interviews and by opening doors so that I could glimpse the environs that Robert Woodruff moved through during his life. Mr. and Mrs. Guy Milner opened their home, the former Woodruff residence, to me, and Arina Meeuwsen and Nancy Fortier on their staff extended every possible courtesy to me to facilitate a productive visit.

I am particularly indebted to my aunt and uncle, Sara and Bill Reace, who generously allowed me to stay at their Atlanta home during my visits to the city for research purposes. They have listened over many meals to my summaries of research done on this day or that one, and they have been uniquely and completely supportive throughout.

Ann Sullivan, a special friend since childhood, has provided unstinting encouragement. Whenever I was frustrated with this project, Ann would uplift me with her good humor, and that would refresh my soul enough to type another page or chapter.

My parents, Jerry and Emily Land, are the biggest blessing of my life, and that has been on display, as it always has been, during the years that this thesis was being written. Words are not extant to properly thank them for all they have done to support and equip me for this task. I only can offer love and these thanks.

Many others contributed in various ways to this work. They are not forgotten, and they are thanked. Space is the only constraint on individually recognizing them.

This product is better because all those named above provided assistance to me but, of course, despite their best efforts to eradicate such, any remaining errors are mine alone.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   | Page |
|---|------|
| TITLE PAGE .....  | i    |
| ABSTRACT .....  | iii  |
| DEDICATION .....  | v    |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....   | vii  |
| CHAPTER   |      |
| 1. THE TUMULT AND THE<br>SHOUTING, 1889-1959 .....                  | 1    |
| Stirrings .....   | 2    |
| Settling Down and Settling In.....                                  | 7    |
| Coming Home .....   | 9    |
| Atlanta’s Greatest Citizen Leader.....                              | 10   |
| 2. THE BIGGEST OF THE<br>“BIG MULES,” 1960-1963 .....               | 13   |
| Environs.....   | 19   |
| The Hallowed Grounds of Ichauway:<br>The Soul of Bob Woodruff ..... | 26   |
| The End of the Hartsfield Era.....                                  | 32   |
| The Rise of Ivan Allen .....  | 45   |
| A Fateful Day in June .....   | 58   |
| 3. “IVAN, YOU’RE ABSOLUTELY<br>RIGHT,” 1963-1967 .....              | 65   |
| Camelot and the New South .....                                     | 70   |
| From JFK to LBJ.....  | 82   |

Table of Contents (Continued)

|   | Page |
|---|------|
| 3. "IVAN, YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT," 1963-1967 (Continued) |      |
| Racial Harmony at the Dinkler Plaza.....                  | 90   |
| Onward and Upward.....                                    | 98   |
| Forward Atlanta, Backwards Georgia.....                   | 103  |
| Turbulence: Summerhill and<br>Lester Maddox.....          | 110  |
| 4. "A CITY TOO BUSY TO HATE,"<br>1968-1970.....           | 119  |
| "You understand what I'm saying?".....                    | 122  |
| A Year of Losses.....                                     | 141  |
| A Changing of the Guard and<br>Continued Losses.....      | 149  |
| 5. "THE WISEST MAN I EVER<br>KNEW," 1970-1985.....        | 155  |
| Ninety-five Roses.....                                    | 159  |
| NOTES.....  | 165  |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY.....   | 183  |

## CHAPTER ONE: THE TUMULT AND THE SHOUTING, 1889-1959

For Atlanta, Georgia, the path to peace during the civil rights movement that culminated in the 1960s began, in a very real sense, in Farmington, Connecticut, in 1653. For it was there, in that decidedly Yankee bastion, that Robert Winship Woodruff's paternal great-great-great-great-great-grandfather, Matthew, established his permanent American home. Though there is no written evidence as to Matthew Woodruff's country of origin, it is likely that he was English (Anglo-Saxon; ancestors centuries earlier had been Knight's Templars), and he was born in 1612.\* Around 1640-1641, he came to what would become the Hartford area and to nearby Farmington twelve years later. Matthew was a successful farmer and, when he was not battling the Mohawk Indians of the region, served for a time as constable. He was a member of the church in Farmington and, other than that, little else is known about him. In 1682, he died in that community.<sup>1</sup>

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\* Woodruffs were recorded as being residents of Oxford, Lincoln, Huntington, York, Surrey Devon, and Kent counties in England. One of the first references to a Woodruff in England is to John Woderove, of Oxford, in 1273, although one older record indicates that a Woodruff lived in Warwickshire in 1170. Additionally, the name Woodruff "originated from a common herb which was used extensively in England," mainly to give a pleasant odor to prayer books, and "if a person used it he or she would be thus nicknamed."

Matthew's third son, Samuel Woodruff (1661-1742), was the first white settler of Southington, Connecticut. It was Samuel's line through which Robert Woodruff could trace himself to Matthew and, thus, to the beginning of the Woodruff family in America. A distant relative wrote to Robert once that, as far as she could tell, "the family tree goes back to 1500 . . . and there are many Lords and Ladies on the tree. There were two brothers, one a wood merchant, very wealthy, and the other was Lord Mayor of London . . .". Whatever the profession, it seems that, from the start, the Woodruff clan was destined for success.<sup>2</sup>

### Stirrings

On December 6, 1889, Robert Winship Woodruff – the man who would lead the Coca-Cola Company to worldwide prominence and who would become a director of, among other companies, American Express, Metropolitan Life Insurance, and the Southern Railway – was born in Columbus, Georgia, the city that was (and is) the highest navigable point on the Chattahoochee River.<sup>3</sup>

The son of Ernest and Emily Winship Woodruff, Robert was a Sagittarius and, while he was not given to such beliefs so far as is known, he certainly embodied the characteristics that traditionally accompany

that sign of the Zodiac. “Restless is most evident in those born under Sagittarius than those under any other sign,” read an interpretation found in his files decades later. “You are not too often optimistic.”<sup>4</sup>

That assessment would prove astonishingly correct in Woodruff’s case – except for his optimism for the salability of Coca-Cola. His favorite aphorism was “The future will always belong to the discontented,” and he kept close at hand the book excerpt that was the source of that, his guiding philosophy. From Gerald Horton Bath’s *Whatsoever Things*, the excerpt, titled “Salute to the Discontented,” reads

Perhaps psychiatrists wouldn’t like the news to leak out too generally, but the truth is that the people who do most for mankind – and are the happiest – are the discontented, people who are not satisfied with things as they are and who find happiness in trying to improve them. Oliver LaFarge, Pulitzer Prize [winning] novelist of some years back, wrote: “Were it not for the twin forces of curiosity and discontent, man would still be living in caves and brush shelters, inadequately clad in crude skins, and nourished by half-burned, half-cooked gobbets of whatever animals he managed to kill with the crudest, stone-tipped weapons. Curiosity is not unique in man, but man alone fortified it with speculation so that he could wonder ‘why’ and ‘what would happen if.’”

America’s astounding success stems largely from the fact that we have been blessed, from Jamestown to the present, with people who thought things could be better, and had the get-up-and-get to do something about it! Discontent is the steam in the boiler of progress. Religion itself grows out of the divine craving of man to be the best person of which he is capable.<sup>5</sup>

Woodruff was one of these people who thought – who *knew* – that things could be better.

To be sure, his first glimpse of the degree to which things could be better came in his childhood comparisons of his father and his mother. Imbued with a sweet spirit, Emily (Emie) Woodruff lavished attention and kindnesses upon her first-born son. But his father, Ernest, was a proponent of what now would be termed “tough love,” and he was, by all accounts, purely a bastard – a mean, impossible man in many ways. He felt that Emie spoiled their son, that he ought to be out scrapping for himself rather than having things handed to him. Ernest was hard on Robert – indeed, he must have been almost impossible to deal with – and Emie sought to shelter Robert from his father’s tirades. “He was much harder on me than on his other sons,” Robert would remember a lifetime later.<sup>6</sup>

Growing up, Robert first attended Edgewood Avenue Grammar School in Atlanta, where his parents had moved to further Ernest’s business ventures. Following that, he proceeded to Boys’ High School, but before he could graduate, he was shipped off to Georgia Military Academy (now Woodward Academy, named for its longtime headmaster, Col. J. C. Woodward), from which he graduated in 1908. His grades were

never laudable, as he was much more interested in extracurricular fun.<sup>†</sup> Shortly after matriculating there in September 1906, Woodruff became business manager of the school newspaper and the school annual. He was cadet sergeant of the school's color guard unit in 1907, and by his senior year he had advanced to cadet first lieutenant in the corps of cadets. The military bearing he acquired at GMA would be with him the rest of his life, as would his distaste for anything – or anyone – tedious or even mildly boring.<sup>7</sup>

After graduating from Georgia Military Academy, Ernest insisted upon enrolling Robert at Emory, then a small college in Oxford, Georgia. This was in direct opposition to the advice Ernest had received from Colonel Woodward, a man who likely knew – really *knew* – Robert better than his own father. “Don’t send Robert to school anymore,” Woodward had counseled. “You’ll ruin him.” But, with visions of Robert attending college and becoming a banker (as Ernest was), Ernest pressed forward. The results were disastrous.<sup>8</sup>

At Emory, as at GMA, young Robert was far more interested in the world outside the classroom than he was about anything to be learned in a

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<sup>†</sup> This predisposition made an impression on Colonel Woodward – so much so that in 1912, Woodward, finding his school in financial troubles, turned to his former student for help in raising money to equip the first band in GMA’s history. Woodruff answered his call and, in appreciation of his efforts, Woodward renamed the band “The Robert W. Woodruff Band.” It still carries that name.

book. Decades later, the pattern still held true; he once dictated a letter to someone who had suggested that, given his then-failing eyesight, he make it a habit to read books set in large type. "I never cultivated the habit of reading books. My preference has been to concentrate on doing things myself rather than read about other people doing things," he said, and that fairly well captured another of his guiding philosophies.<sup>9</sup>

At Emory, Woodruff quickly became involved in what passed as the campus's social world. Likeable, with a charismatic personality, Woodruff drew others to him, setting another pattern of his life. He was initiated as a member of the Kappa Alpha Order, and he hung around the local general store that doubled as the KA headquarters, swapping stories and being not too productive. In time, the bills he accumulated at that store made it home to Atlanta – and to his father, who was livid.<sup>10</sup>

In time, it became clear to everyone – even to Emory President James Dickey – that the son of the famed Atlanta banker and businessman was failing in his coursework. Wording it as delicately as possible, Dickey composed a letter to Ernest that would change, forever and for the worse, the relationship between Ernest and his eldest son. "I do not think it advisable for him to return to college this term as he has not done satisfactory work and cannot therefore make up what he would lose

before returning again.” Not to put too fine a point on it, Robert was being dismissed. Returning home, Robert encountered an unsurprisingly and monumentally perturbed Ernest Woodruff waiting for him. “Damn it, boy,” the old man began, “it’s only three generations from shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves. Learn something!” But Robert was nonplussed. Looking his father in the eye, he calmly replied, “I’ll take the shirtsleeves now.”<sup>11</sup>

### *Settling Down and Settling In*

Because he was not returning to Emory, and since he was faced with the debts he had incurred at the general store in Oxford, Robert went to work. For a year, he was an apprentice – a sand-shoveler, really – at the General Pipe and Foundry Company. (In his later years he would reflect that “good old muscle jobs aren’t so bad,” but it is highly unlikely that Woodruff felt that way at the time.) Then, in 1911, he became a salesman for the General Fire Extinguisher Company, also in Atlanta, and shortly after this he hopped jobs again, this time to the Atlantic Ice and Coal Company, one of his father’s concerns. He distinguished himself as a diligent worker and an enthusiastic and effective salesman, and he earned the respect of his supervisors. For the first time, Woodruff felt he had

found his calling, that he was good at something. And that something was selling.<sup>12</sup>

The best sale he ever made, he was fond of saying in decades to come, was persuading Nell Kendall Hodgson of Athens, Georgia, to become Mrs. Robert W. Woodruff. An attractive brunette, Nell first met Woodruff at a friend's home in Atlanta. Smitten, Robert often thereafter would make the trip to Nell's home to visit her. Nell was vivacious, a born storyteller, and Robert was drawn to her. They seemed to have an instant rapport, and it was more than that, too. "They were a very devoted couple. Nell [was] deeply in love. ...[and Bob] adored her," recalled Dorothy Hodgson Jones, Nell's youngest sister.<sup>13</sup>

Because of a dispute over his compensation, Woodruff quit his job at Atlantic Ice and Coal shortly after he and Nell were married on October 17, 1912, and he became the Atlanta salesman for White Motor Company, the manufacturer of heavy trucks and similar equipment that was headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio. Using his connections and his natural companionability as selling tools, Woodruff quickly rose through the ranks at White. By 1922, having served in the U.S. Army's Ordnance Department during World War I (he was discharged with the rank of

Major), Woodruff had built a prosperous career at White and had been promoted to the posts of vice president and general manager.<sup>14</sup>

### Coming Home

In 1919, Ernest Woodruff, as president of the Trust Company of Georgia and as the head of a syndicate of banks that included Guaranty Trust of New York, purchased the Coca-Cola Company from the heirs of its longtime owner, Asa Candler.‡ The price was \$25 million -- \$15 million in cash and the other \$10 million in preferred stock.<sup>15</sup>

Three years later, the Coca-Cola company faced a financial shortfall resulting from bad decisions made by the previous management on sugar purchases. (They had taken options at the wrong time, anticipating a rise in prices, but instead the price plummeted, leaving the company in millions of dollars of debt.) Aware of Robert's gifts as a salesman, the directors began agitating for his selection as their new president – or so the story goes. More plausible is the story that, having fought with his son so long, Ernest Woodruff was ready to concede that Robert had tremendous business acumen, and Ernest viewed the presidency of Coca-Cola as the perfect place for his son to succeed further. Whatever the case,

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‡ The Coca-Cola Company they purchased, as today, is concerned with selling syrup in concentrated form to the bottlers, who then sell the finished products to the public. Therefore, Woodruff's syndicate bought the parent company, not the bottlers.

Robert was elected to the Coca-Cola board of directors on February 26, 1923, and just more than two months later, on April 28, he was became president of the company. For the next sixty-two years, he would guide the company and the city in which it is headquartered. “He *was* Coke,” a business reporter and historian, Constance Hays, would summarize at the turn of the next century. And she was right.<sup>16</sup>

### *Atlanta’s Greatest Citizen-Leader*

Robert Woodruff was also the embodiment of Atlanta’s progress. At Coca-Cola, a longtime associate once opined, “Candler put us on our feet, but Woodruff gave us wings.” He built Coke into a worldwide enterprise selling millions of cans, bottles, and fountain cups of that famous, carbonated, brown sugar-water every day. He built himself a fortune and a towering reputation as well. That business base, fortune, and reputation were the tools he used to guide Atlanta for decades. Not content merely to head the world’s largest soft-drink concern, Woodruff aimed to put his mark on the city – *his* city – and he did. He gave it wings, too.<sup>17</sup>

This thesis seeks to explore Woodruff’s impact on that city – Atlanta – during the tension-charged days of the civil rights movement.

The scope is limited to the 1960s, which provides a remarkably rich collection of events, now a part of American history, that changed the course of the civil rights movement, the attitudes of Southerners, and the definitions of American life.

Woodruff, more than any other individual, was responsible for dictating the course that Atlanta took in those years. Because of its size and economic presence, Atlanta was able, to a large degree, to set the tones and policies that the rest of the South would follow, albeit sometimes with a delay. In the 1960s, more than at any other time, Woodruff was at the center of the political, cultural, and social activities of the city. Physically, he was not omnipresent or anything approaching visible, but in terms of influence, he towered over everyone and everything else like a colossus. No decision of any consequence was made without his input; no significant course of action was adopted without his approval.

Woodruff could be viewed with justification now as a hero, a monolithic figure in the history of Atlanta and the South. And he does qualify as such, but while his positive attributes are many, he was not without flaws. There were, to be sure, bad decisions made with his input. Some of these may have been costly by any measure. However, because

he was at the helm during these years, Atlanta emerged from the 1960s still full of fight, still able to make progress as it had for years, still able to live up to its unofficial designation as the capital of the New South.

There are those who practice the profession of history who decry so-called “great man” histories. Their argument is that no one person can make or break the fate of a city, a state, a region, or a nation. They are probably right, most of the time and in most situations. They are probably correct in the case of Atlanta.

However, in the 1960s, there was a great man who, for years prior to that decade, had guided Atlanta. This same great man shepherded the city through the decade that grappled with the Kennedy assassinations, the rising tide of liberalism, increasing rights for black Americans and women, strife at home arising from the civil rights struggle and the war in Vietnam, and the horrific gunning down of Martin Luther King, Jr.

That great man was Robert Winship Woodruff, and because of his social and civic impacts, Atlanta’s official motto, *Resurgens*, is still relevant.

## **CHAPTER TWO: THE BIGGEST OF THE "BIG MULES," 1960-1963**

Had he wished it, Robert Woodruff could have led quite a peaceful existence in the heady, tumultuous, and sometimes perplexing 1960s. He turned 73 in 1962, and no one had claims on his time, no one could make demands of him. Having formally retired from the chairmanship of the Coca-Cola Company in February 1955, he remained chair of the Finance Committee of Coke's Board of Directors, and he still appeared in his office suite almost daily when he was in Atlanta, where each morning a freshly cut Tropicana rose was placed in a silver bud vase on his desk. At Coca-Cola he insisted on having final approval of all major decisions affecting the business, although by this time he left the day-to-day minutiae to others. One of the highlights of the day, aside from the stock quotations delivered to him at 10:05, 12:05, and upon the market's close, was the luncheon he gave daily for a select handful of his cronies. Luncheon in the Woodruff dining room took place at 12:30 sharp, and even though invitations to it came quite literally at the last minute, if a person received one, he was expected to drop whatever else he might have planned and hustle to the Boss's fourth floor base of operations. Invariably cocktails

preceded luncheon; Woodruff was especially fond of martinis at this hour of the day and generally prevailed upon his guests to imbibe as well.

(From time-to-time guests would persuade Woodruff's dining room staff to make their martinis with water rather than gin so that they could retain a clear head throughout the luncheon.)<sup>18</sup>

Although Woodruff was not involved with the day-to-day affairs of the Coca-Cola Company, he was in touch with the pulse of his business, which some said was like a child to him. With a cigar clamped tightly between his teeth, he gruffly barked orders and responded to queries and solicitations for his approval with somewhat incoherent mumbles, the deciphering of which became something of an art form within the company. Woodruff, said a longtime Atlanta reporter, was "utterly accustomed to having his way," and he brooked no opposition to his dictums or his habits – right down to his trademark cigars. His territorial instincts and his baronial nature were omnipresent, just as were his cigars and the other accoutrements of his power. "I've seen him move an ashtray out of the way so he could put the ashes on the floor. He didn't wish to be told he had to put his ashes in a dish," remembered Woodruff's chief of staff, Joseph W. (Joe) Jones, who more than any other person knew Atlanta's most prominent citizen's whims and desires. Woodruff was

utterly accustomed to more than merely having his way; he wanted to control every aspect of any situation in which he found himself, and he did so quite often through sheer force of personality.<sup>19</sup>

Ultimately, though he had been plagued all his life by what his friend Richard (Dick) Gresham, a Baptist minister, called his “sense of futility,” Woodruff obstinately refused to withdraw from the scene in which he had played so much a part for so long – at least not now. As early as 1961, old age had been a topic of thought for him. A friend in those days sent him a copy of a talk he gave on the subject, and Woodruff kept it at hand for many years in his personal files. Titled “The Art of Growing Old Gracefully,” it spoke to the looming issue of retirement, calling that denouement “one of the unhappy tragedies of this generation.” In a likely pleasing turn of phrase for Woodruff, the text continued to say that “everyone should, as far as possible, keep busy at something. I know of no other way to perpetuate long life and happiness.” By the early 1960s Woodruff had lived already a long life by the standards of the era, and certainly his wealth could be a catalyst for his happiness, but Woodruff, perhaps remembering lines from his beloved *If*, doggedly remained, as he might have said, in the saddle.<sup>20</sup>

The trappings of Woodruff's wealth were on display in the manner of those with generations of experience as members of the moneyed class. His father, Ernest, had been president of the Trust Company of Georgia and had fathered multiple business mergers in Atlanta, Columbus (Georgia), and Birmingham. As a child, Woodruff played with his two younger brothers in a luxurious home on Edgewood Avenue; a contemporary account of the house noted that "Mrs. Woodruff has only to touch certain buttons, turn little handles and knobs" to command electric lights, window shutters, and servants alike. Ernest Woodruff, though he was misanthropic and fanatically frugal to the core in his personal expenses (he would not pay more than \$2 for a dress shirt, for instance), and though he vowed that his sons would not be lavished with unnecessary extravagances, his eldest son had an appetite for the finer things, occasionally with disastrous results. (Once, young Bob charged several multiples of his allowance at a clothing store and raided his father's closet, taking back to Emory University with him such sartorial splendors as a walking stick, prompting a full-scale dressing-down from Ernest.) This appetite would never be fully satisfied, and while he was never ostentatious by the standards of the rich with his mode of living, Woodruff quickly came to expect and enjoy the good life. His aides and

servants scampered constantly to ensure that he would always move about in comfort.<sup>21</sup>

Woodruff was easily the richest of the Atlanta rich, controlling the largest concentration of capital anywhere in the South and dominating the members of the power structure, which was in Atlanta a collection of twenty-five or thirty of the most prominent citizens: business chieftains (those from Coca-Cola, Rich's Department Store, Life of Georgia, Scripto, Genuine Parts Company), bankers (Trust Company of Georgia, Citizens and Southern, First National), lawyers (King and Spalding, which operated out of the same building as the Trust Company, dominated this category), clergy, and one or two men from Emory University. The members of the power structure were all male and all white, which may seem rather odd from the vantage point of several decades hence but which at the time was accepted and even expected. These men dined and drank at the same clubs, they saw one another at the same golf courses, they socialized in the same homes and at the same retreats (The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, was a favorite). Theirs was a charmed world, and circulating in it was a treasured privilege.<sup>22</sup>

Atlantans not moving about in this refined, rarefied world, often referred to the power brokers as the “Big Mules.” There was no other Big Mule who made a decision without consulting the Biggest Mule of all, the man at the corner of North Avenue and Plum Street, the man known to only a few as “Bob” – Robert Winship Woodruff. Mills Lane, the exuberant, chain-smoking head of the Citizens and Southern Bank, noted without a hint of jest that Robert Woodruff was the only man in Atlanta who could “snap his fingers and everybody would genuflect.” If Atlanta were a kingdom, Woodruff was its unquestioned, absolute monarch.<sup>23</sup>

In these years, Woodruff traveled about the country and the world frequently, keeping to a pattern he had established decades earlier. Typically, he and Nell spent two weeks in Atlanta, and then two weeks elsewhere, as a pattern. Wherever he and Nell were, the Woodruffs enjoyed and even expected a constant whirl of business and social entertaining. Nowhere was Woodruff’s tendency towards constant companionship more in evidence than in Atlanta, where he regularly exhausted aides and friends as he moved about with his customary restlessness. “And of course we all breathed a sigh of relief, in a way, when they were out of town,” noted a favorite niece, Martha Ellis, some years after Woodruff’s death. There was a calm after the storm, so to

speak, “because we then no longer had to be sure they were invited out to dinner.” Since Woodruff had an insatiable desire for company, he and Nell seldom dined at Tuxedo Road, and they were the most reliable accepters of the dinner invitations of friends. They nearly always arrived first, before any other guests had appeared. Robert Woodruff especially enjoyed dining in close friends’ homes; there, he was out of the reach of telephones, messengers, and supplicants. The Woodruffs’ arrival was in itself distinctive; often, he and Nell traveled in separate cars. With this arrangement, Woodruff could leave if he became bored, a not uncommon occurrence, and he could stay if he became engaged in conversation and drinks without worrying about Nell’s wishes. There, he could control the situation. There, he was utterly catered to, which is exactly what he wanted.<sup>24</sup>

### Environs

When traveling in these years, the Woodruffs invariably used Coca-Cola airplanes – all of which had (and still bear) tail numbers ending in “RW” – to shuttle between Tuxedo Road, the TE Ranch in Cody, Wyoming, the River House on 52<sup>nd</sup> Street in New York City, and Woodruff’s favorite base of operations, Ichauway, his plantation in

southwest Georgia. Woodruff's great wealth and power, cultivated over his decades at the helm of Coca-Cola and fostered by his inheritance, allowed him to own these many residences. Once, when his father criticized him for living the high life and moving among his plush homes, Woodruff shot back, "But Pa, do you know any other man with four houses and the same wife in all of them?"<sup>25</sup>

Woodruff maintained a gleaming white brick, columned, Georgian mansion in the most exclusive section of Buckhead, Atlanta's haven for the well-to-do. In a 1961 profile of the "Big Mules," a writer for *Fortune* called Woodruff's home "Buckhead's chief tourist attraction, set deep in an enclave that Atlantans irreverently call the 'Fingerbowl'." He further noted that Buckhead was "the biggest encampment of top business executives in the southeastern U.S." and colorfully continued to say:

Physically, the suburb is a hilly expanse of tall Georgia pines, precipitous ridges, lush valleys, winding roads, and handsome houses. In the springtime, rising out of the red Georgia soil – a soil reddened deeper, Atlantans sometimes say, by long-spilled Yankee blood – are forests of flowering dogwood, azaleas, and redbuds.<sup>26</sup>

Unlike Vestavia Hills, the Birmingham, Alabama, equivalent of Buckhead that sat over a mountain from the city, Woodruff's neighborhood was just six miles from the heart of downtown Atlanta, which meant that he and his peers were in close touch with the

happenings and pulse of their community. This suited Woodruff's controlling personality and fulfilled his desire to keep watch over Atlanta's progress and well-being. As he noted when introducing a visitor to Mayor William B. Hartsfield during those years, "Bill thinks he runs the city. Hell, it's *my* city."<sup>27</sup>

The Tuxedo Road home, Woodruff's fourth in Atlanta, was purchased in 1947 for an amount in excess of \$200,000, a then-startling amount (over \$2 million today). (Prior to Tuxedo Road, the Woodruff's had lived in Inman Park, in an apartment at Juniper and Eighth Streets, and on a twenty-acre "urban plantation" on Springdale Road, complete with a stable for their horses and a log cabin, dominated by a giant stag head and stone fireplace, that served as a playhouse of sorts for Woodruff and his cronies.) On Tuxedo Road, he could live, as newspaperman Ralph McGill put it, "among the better element of the city," a view that pervaded the moneyed classes then as now. Billed as "one of Atlanta's biggest real estate deals involving a home," the transaction afforded the Woodruffs and their guests the amenities and palatial setting of the former Charles King mansion. Built in the late 1930s by the playboy son of an Atlanta loan-shark, the home featured hand-painted murals, fireplaces throughout, two swimming pools, servants' quarters, a guest house, and a

living room on the main floor that covered nearly two thousand square feet, which was noted to be roughly half the size of the ballroom at the Piedmont Driving Club. The home was situated on ten lushly landscaped acres and was reached by a long, tree-lined driveway. Nell Woodruff was delighted with her new home – “It’s about time we had a decent place to live!” she was heard to say at the time – although Woodruff himself, who never liked change, muttered occasionally after moving in, “I wish to hell I was living back on Springdale Road.” Regardless of sentiments, Tuxedo Road was now home, and it would remain so until Woodruff’s death.<sup>28</sup>

The TE Ranch just outside Cody, Wyoming, stood in marked contrast to the high polish of the Tuxedo Road home. Once owned by Buffalo Bill Cody, a hero of Woodruff’s in his youth, the ranch had fallen into disrepair and was bought at a discount by Woodruff in 1941. Their first guests of many were entertained there in the fall of 1942 after substantial renovations were made to the ranch, all in time for the Woodruff’s thirtieth anniversary celebration. The ranch was located southwest of Cody; to reach it from Yellowstone National Park, one was required to traverse some fifty-three miles into Cody itself and then follow South Fork Road to an obscure turn-off leading to the entrance drive. The main house was situated near the bottom of the Absaroka Range. From

there the Woodruffs enjoyed horseback riding on the multitudinous trails leading into the surrounding hills. The main house was outfitted handsomely with custom-made, locally crafted, heavy wooden furniture adorned with deer hooves, horns and antlers of moose and other big game, and rustic designs in a western form of the arts and crafts style. The TE Ranch was often described as Nell's favorite among their homes, and although Woodruff himself was sometimes bored there, he knew she loved the beauty of the West. He once told her, gruffly as usual, that she could be "the boss" at the TE, while he would retain that title elsewhere.<sup>29</sup>

The Woodruffs' New York environs consisted of a tower duplex apartment in the innately old-money confines of the River House, a towering mass of gray brick and stone at the end of East 52<sup>nd</sup> Street in Manhattan. The building, an H-shaped affair rising thirty stories above the East River and exuding glamour and status, was constructed in the early 1930s. Prior to the erection of the FDR Drive a few years before the Woodruffs first leased (and later bought) their duplex, the River House featured its own dock to facilitate the easy mooring of its tenants' private yachts. The building was exclusive; a private drive off 52<sup>nd</sup> Street led tenants and their guests into a striking black-marble-floored lobby. From the lobby, replete with huge cloakrooms to serve hordes of guests, tenants

rode on semi-private elevators to their homes in the sky. In the River House, Nell Woodruff sought to create for her husband and their guests a comforting and comfortable environment, and she supervised all facets of the decorating process. Indicative of her deference to him and her consideration of his needs and wants above her own is the abrupt switch she made when, having settled on one apartment in the building, Woodruff learned another, larger one was available, and bought it instead. This action left Nell to change totally her plans for interior design with but a moment's notice. (Nell's willingness to abide by Woodruff's wishes was permanently evident as well in one memorably tangible way: she kept a suitcase packed and waiting at all times in case he or Joe Jones called with the news, sudden to her, of an impending departure on the part of the Boss.)<sup>30</sup>

The Woodruffs' apartment, occupying the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> floors of the tower portion of the building, contained a drawing room, library, dining room, quarters for five servants, kitchen, pantry, and a foyer with a majestic curving staircase on the lower floor; the upper floor held six master suites and a fireplace-adorned boudoir. (The library contained dozens of books, mainly gifts to the Woodruffs from friends and publishers, and while it appears that Mrs. Woodruff loved to read,

Woodruff did not. There was speculation that he was dyslexic, which was likely, and friends swore he had never read a book in his life.) When they set up housekeeping at River House in the late 1940s, these rooms became quickly the center of the Woodruffs' social world when they, and especially when he, needed to be in the city. A staff of three – a cook and two maids (one each for upstairs and downstairs) – cared for the Woodruffs while at River House. Although Helmi, the cook they engaged, was quite capable by all accounts, Woodruff often preferred to dine at “21” or at the Stork Club. Ever deferent even though she much preferred to have a calm dinner at River House, Nell would instruct Helmi to pack away the hors d’oeuvres for another time, phone for reservations, and off the Woodruffs would go, chauffeured in one of the two Cadillacs they kept in New York.<sup>§</sup> Favored family and friends, such as niece Nell Hodgson (later Nell Hodgson Watt) and newspaper publisher turned Eisenhower Cabinet secretary Oveta Culp Hobby, were assigned more or less permanently to several of the suites and were free to use them on jaunts to New York as well. The apartment in the River House, in short, was perfectly suited to Woodruff’s needs personally, professionally, and socially. Indeed, the only sour note seems to have

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<sup>§</sup> The Woodruff’s New York Cadillacs bore vanity license tags RW-1 and RW-2.

been the presence of a large Pepsi-Cola sign across the East River, which Woodruff could see through the window from his seat at the dining room table. Even this would not upset Woodruff's world, however. To hear Nell Woodruff tell it, seeing that sign each morning he spent in Manhattan motivated Woodruff. His longtime chief pilot remembered that the sign provided Woodruff with "his get-up-and-go [to] head down to the Coke office and give 'em hell."<sup>31</sup>

*The Hallowed Grounds of Ichauway: The Soul of Bob Woodruff*

For all the baronial splendor of the gleaming white brick and columns of the Tuxedo Road mansion, for all the rugged charm of the TE Ranch, and despite the posh worldliness of the River House apartment, the nearly 30,000 acres that composed Ichauway and the dozens of servants, field hands, and farmers who tended it were, one suspects, Bob Woodruff's idea of Heaven on earth. There, as in no other place, he was "lord and master of the estate."<sup>32</sup>

Woodruff, with his former employer Walter White and a nearby friend, Richard Tift, had begun to amass Ichauway's vast acreage in the 1920s. The now-29,000 acre plantation peaked in its size in the early 1960s, when it exceeded 40,000 pristine, undisturbed acres of south Georgia

countryside. Replete with wiregrass and containing what is believed to be the largest privately-held stand of long-leaf pines anywhere, the plantation is situated just off state Highway 91 in Baker County outside Newton, Georgia.<sup>33</sup>

Woodruff used Ichauway as both a haven of relaxation and as a place for networking and negotiating far from Atlanta and its pressures and interruptions. Invitations to Ichauway were prized, ardently sought after, and rare. Woodruff's visitors were almost always socially and professionally prominent. (One of Woodruff's greatest friends, the golfer Bobby Jones, was a frequent guest and liked to practice his swing on golf balls on the Ichauway skeet range. Employees there still remember having to retrieve the golf balls he sent flying down the hill below the range.) After one treasured visit to Ichauway, Ivan Allen, Jr., wrote Woodruff a fawning letter containing "a toast to Bob Woodruff and 'Ichauway' Plantation" that read like the opening screen graphics of *Gone With the Wind*.

Here was the land of cavaliers and cotton fields called the Old South. Here in this proud world gallantry took its last bow. . . . The glories of the Old South are gone except here where the traits of courtesy, courage and hospitality still prevail.

Woodruff paid dearly to have such an environment to which he could retreat; he lavished resources in excess of \$60,000 per year, as

Allen's letter encouraged, to "carry on the semblance of the very best in a former great era." Allen would enjoy the Boss's hospitality there for years to come.<sup>34</sup>

Ichauway's environment was antebellum, save its modern conveniences like indoor plumbing, refrigeration, and electric lighting. The main dwelling – the "Big House" – was spacious but not lavish. Woodruff had designed it that way to encourage himself and his guests to spend most of their time at Ichauway outdoors, and its location, on a bluff overlooking the Ichauwaynotchaway Creek and its limestone banks, seemed to beckon dwellers outside. A photograph from the time shows a black handler with a group of Woodruff's prized pointers that an observer not aware of modern photographic techniques could have identified as one hundred years older than it was. That Woodruff was utterly comfortable at Ichauway was incongruous with the stand he took in Atlanta against the radical segregationist elements and for the movement of the South into the modern era vis-à-vis integration, respect, and tolerance.<sup>35</sup>

But the mores of Baker County were not those of Atlantans. Baker County, long known as "Bad Baker" due to the amount of race-baiting and violence that occurred there, was the political area in which most of

Ichauway was situated, and Woodruff's servants, field hands, and the like all had to face the challenges brought to them by county authorities.

Woodruff, who first had company at Ichauway in the winter of 1929-1930, realized this sad fact from the outset. In 1933, a black man was lynched within sight of the plantation's store. Woodruff's response to this brutal crime was surprising for a man of his time, place, and stature. From Atlanta, Woodruff dispatched a unit of Pinkerton detectives to attempt to identify the perpetrators, demonstrating his knowledge of an inability to rely on Baker County authorities and also showing his compassion for his fellow man, whether black or white. The upshots of Woodruff's efforts were that, while the men responsible for the lynching never were found, the black population of Ichauway was thereafter seldom bothered, and within that group Woodruff's popularity reached new heights.<sup>36</sup>

It was not only his employees and neighbors' physical safety that Woodruff was concerned with, however; their over-all health was on his mind as well. Shortly after building and occupying Ichauway, Woodruff was seated on the porch of his home (House No. 1 at Ichauway, then and now) when an elderly black man approached. He allowed as how he wanted to pay his respects to the "new boss," and just as he began to introduce himself, he fell to the ground, shaking violently. Woodruff

asked one of his employees what had happened, and when he was told that it was a malarial seizure, Woodruff reacted characteristically. What could be done, he wanted to know, and when?

The answer was to obtain a supply of quinine to combat the disease, first, and then to prevent it from gaining such a hold in the future. The quinine was obtained and dispensed, and Woodruff had Emory University establish, in conjunction with the U.S. Public Health Service, a field station next to the Ichauway general store. This endeavor reflected Woodruff's growing commitment to Emory and to his fellow Georgians, and the research and methods developed at that field station later were used in the Pacific Theatre of World War II. Additionally, the Ichauway model contributed to the structure of the Centers for Disease Control, which was established and headquartered in Atlanta years later. (It sits on a parcel abutting the Emory campus and is another legacy of the Woodruff vision for Atlanta.)<sup>37</sup>

One of the most often quoted anecdotes about Woodruff's loyalty to his black farmers, and their loyalty and absolute deference to him as results thereof, is that told about Woodruff's actions in the aftermath of a fire that destroyed a black church just beyond the boundaries of the plantation. When the church burned, the congregation found itself

without a formal place of worship, for the members could not afford to rebuild. Aware of these circumstances, Woodruff acted through an outside agent and paid for the construction of a new church. Such obfuscation was used to preserve Woodruff's anonymity in making these provisions, although Woodruff's involvement was not too long a secret. The church members quickly guessed – correctly – that Ichauway's master was responsible for their good fortune, and they wanted to thank him. Deferring to his wishes while at the same time giving thanks, the congregation ingeniously wrote a thank-you letter to God, and they sent a carbon-copy to Robert Woodruff.<sup>38</sup>

The whole episode of Woodruff's largesse and the response of blacks at Ichauway to it illuminate nicely the manner in which the races dealt with each other in the paternalistic society that then prevailed. Woodruff cared for them, but did not show that compassion directly, and the blacks who benefited from that compassion were careful not to acknowledge it in a way that overstepped the boundaries within which they were expected to act. So it was in the Georgia hinterlands, but it was not to be this way much longer in the state capital.

### *The End of the Hartsfield Era*

At the dawn of the 1960s, a political change greeted Atlanta, and not just in terms of what was referred to by the power structure as “the race issue.” By mid-1961, longtime mayor William Berry Hartsfield finally announced his retirement. Hartsfield, ever the pragmatist, did not want to leave City Hall but wanted even more than that to divorce Pearl, his wife of nearly fifty years, and marry a pert, striking widow, Tollie Toland. He knew that his political career, no matter what the merits and regardless of the good works he had under his belt, would never survive such actions, and he bowed out. The manner in which he gave Ivan Allen, Jr., the news that the field was open to the younger man was quite typical, both in the way Ivan Allen asked the question and in the way Hartsfield formed his answer. In his memoirs, Allen remembered going to see the old mayor.

I made an appointment with him for two o’clock one afternoon, but he didn’t walk into his office until 3:15. Then, for forty-five minutes, he paced the floor and talked about the hardships of being mayor: the stacks of papers and the unwillingness of the Board of Aldermen to cooperate with him. (“They’re either out drinking martinis, playing golf, or out of town.”) For a total of two hours, then, I had been sitting around waiting to ask him one simple question.

When I finally got a chance I said, “Mr. Harstfield, I wonder if you’d let me make a statement?”

“Go ahead,” he said.

“I think you can be re-elected. I’ll put ten thousand dollars in your campaign fund and take a leave of absence from my company so I can be your campaign manager. I can help you with the younger people, and you can be re-elected.”

He said, “You wouldn’t make an offer like that unless you wanted something, now, would you?”

“No, sir,” I said. “If you’re *not* going to run, I’d like for you to make an announcement so that the rest of us can get in the race.”

He went over to the window and stood there for a few minutes, mumbling to himself as the afternoon light played over his tired hulking frame and accented the wrinkles on his hands and neck. When he turned around he sounded like a very old, very tired man. “I’ve had this job for twenty-three years,” he said. “I’m seventy-two years old, and I’ve been married for forty-eight of ‘em, and now I’m in love with a very wonderful young lady and I want to marry her. I can’t get a divorce and be re-elected mayor. If you’ll send Helen Bullard over here tomorrow, I’ll make my announcement and get out of the race so you boys can go on about your business.\*\*

“I’ve been around long enough.”<sup>39</sup>

Prior to his meeting with Allen, Hartsfield had shared his thinking with Woodruff, and Woodruff agreed, essentially telling the “old tiger” that his time was up. Woodruff knew the facts, as Hartsfield did, but he was quicker to face them than the mayor. To be sure, Hartsfield would

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\*\* Bullard was the high priestess of Atlanta politics for decades. She deftly guided Hartsfield through a large part of his mayoralty and helped Ivan Allen, Jr., to make political hay out of the events he faced as Atlanta’s chief executive in the 1960s. Her diminutive stature and Caesar-like haircut belied her acuity and intuition.

have come to terms with them, but just as in everything else he deferred to Woodruff's judgment, a source of strength he had come to rely upon.<sup>40</sup>

Hartsfield and Woodruff had a long political connection as well as a friendship. Hartsfield, though, was dominated by Woodruff, just as were all but a few of those who ever knew the Boss. Their relationship, as has been mentioned, went back to Woodruff's days as a salesman for General Fire Extinguisher. Hartsfield was then his male secretary, precisely recording in fine script the orders Woodruff had taken that day and seeing that they were properly fulfilled, delivered, and paid.

Hartsfield did not share Woodruff's aristocratic breeding; the son of a foundryman, he had not had the opportunities that Woodruff had, but he made up for that with his brimming energy and political acuity. Though not a relationship of equals, for Hartsfield was dominated by and not a member of the power structure he sought to serve, Woodruff and Hartsfield had a great deal of respect for each other, and that respect was manifest in many tangible and visible ways. Hartsfield's office contained a prominently placed, finely framed portrait of Woodruff, in front of which the mayor often was photographed with visitors. Woodruff furnished City Hall with all the free Coke its executives and staff could drink, and Hartsfield was quick to offer his guests a cold sample of the

city's most famous product. Hartsfield even found a way to incorporate paying homage to Woodruff and Coca-Cola in photo opportunities and other official ceremonies. On several occasions he was photographed holding a giant Coca-Cola bottle, more than two feet tall, which he broke over the nose of a Trans World Airlines plane making its first trip to Atlanta, and he posed with similar Coke props when being photographed with the reigning Miss Atlanta each year. Hartsfield's allegiance to Woodruff was total.<sup>41</sup>

When Hartsfield finally decided to retire, Woodruff made sure he would be comfortable. Having included Hartsfield in his private stock speculation syndicate for years, Woodruff now placed him on retainer as counsel to the Coca-Cola Company and ensured his material well-being through other arrangements, including Hartsfield's appointment to chair the Southeastern Fair in the early 1960s. Soon, Hartsfield was bringing home compensation in excess of \$60,000 per annum, far more than his salary during his last years as mayor. Woodruff also saw that Hartsfield was not forgotten by the public he had served so long and so well. In 1961, during one of the periodic sprucing-up and expansion episodes of the Atlanta airport, Woodruff commissioned a handsome portrait of the former mayor to hang in a prominent public space. As was his custom,

Woodruff made certain that these actions were seen as “publicly anonymous,” though insiders, as usual, were well aware from whence the benefaction came.<sup>42</sup>

Though Hartsfield would later take comfort in his non-mayoral responsibilities, in early 1961 the reins of power were pried not so easily from his hands. Despite his knowledge of the decision he would have to make, almost inevitably so, Hartsfield still fretted about deciding to vacate the executive chair. Following his announcement that he would not again be a candidate, the newspapers tried to write appropriate summations and tributes of the man and his work. Perhaps the *Atlanta Journal* came closest when it printed the following:

He’s got a hot temper, a stinging tongue, a strong will, a quick wit, a kind heart, a sense of history, a sense of destiny, a sense of humor, a capacity for growth, and a built-in finely tuned

political radar set that seldom has failed him in his public life.<sup>43</sup>

Bill Hartsfield was a Southern progressive, a liberal with a hearty dose of pragmatism and understanding. His achievements were legion and legendary. Writing two days after Hartsfield’s announcement, Gene Patterson, editor of the *Atlanta Journal*, penned an editorial tribute to the mayor he had covered for so many years. Patterson began, “So long, Bill,” and proceeded to sum up with equal parts of homespun conversational

tone, sophistication, and familiarity the achievements and personal idiosyncrasies of the old mayor. Patterson focused on Hartsfield's lasting impacts, noting

You were mighty right about this town. You understood her. She's not just a big brute of a concrete settlement. She has strength, heart, soul, honor and beauty. You gave her all of that. Plaza Park, the airport, a monkey house with sculpture on it, blossoms in pots in the middle of Marietta Street—little parts of a big beauty...

You made Atlanta something more than Marthasville, Bill.<sup>††</sup> She believes in a decent regard for the opposite race and the opposite point of view. She believes in culture, in education, in compassion and vigor. She's a part of the world. You were a key man in making her what she is. You rode her streets alone at night to watch over her sleep. You sat at her political bedside on Saturdays and Sundays while the rest of us sat on our patios. You fought mighty battles for her, and gave her voice.<sup>44</sup>

Hartsfield's legacy was a large one, and his shoes would be tough to fill. That legacy was one to which successors could add, though, rather than one by which they would be awed into inaction. The new mayor, Ivan Allen, Jr., was aware of this acutely.

Because of the work Hartsfield had done, Ivan Allen, Jr., could take office as less a caretaker and more a builder on a foundation well established. As he sat at home on that June day and read Editor

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<sup>††</sup> Marthasville was the second name of the city, Terminus having been the first and Atlanta the third and final. The name Marthasville was chosen in honor of the daughter of the governor at the time.

Patterson's words – "She believes in a decent regard for the opposite race..." – he knew that, as a fellow Southern progressive and liberal, he was the right man for the job, and he had been given an ideal predecessor.

Ivan Allen had not been raised a liberal; he had been groomed conservatively as the young scion that he was to follow in his father's footsteps as executive head of the large office equipment concern that bore both men's names. By 1961, the firm had grown from selling typewriters here and there (including one to Asa Candler) [Pomerantz] to a bustling business of some four hundred employees, fanning out across the Southeast peddling everything from furniture to carbon paper. Ivan Allen, Sr., was a native of Dalton, Georgia, a town just across the Georgia line from Chattanooga, Tennessee, and as a young man he moved to Atlanta, the city that became his home and that fostered his fortune. Prominent for years in local political circles (although he held office only for two years, as a Georgia state Legislator), Ivan, Sr., wanted only what was best for his only child, and he continually sought to mold Ivan, Jr., into a powerhouse of financial, political, and social influence.<sup>45</sup>

The elder Ivan by 1961 was fading; he still drove downtown, but did so wildly, as he stopped for no other stoplights except those that had

been in place since the 1910s, when he first started driving that route.‡

The highlight of his day was the cocktail hour, held promptly at 5:00 at the massive home he and his wife, Irene, occupied at 2600 Peachtree Road.

There, he sipped contentedly on his old fashioned, and dispensed erudition and retold old tales to those who stopped by.<sup>46</sup>

Though by then he was passing the torch to his son, Ivan, Sr., kept his political ear to the ground as ever. He was acutely aware of the problems his son faced; indeed, he always had followed those issues. Fifteen years earlier, in 1947, he and Ivan, Jr., had a serious conversation, a commonplace occurrence by this time between the two men. Ivan, Sr., sat solemnly in his office at the Ivan Allen – Marshall Company and counseled his son on the biggest problem the younger Ivan would face:

My generation has completely failed in every way to enlighten or solve the major issue which our section of the country has: the racial issue. We haven't confronted ourselves with it. There is great prejudice, great trial and tribulation over the whole thing. We've kept the nigger not in a second-class but in a third- or fourth-class position, and as a result we've impoverished him and we've impoverished this section of the country. And the Southeast will never amount to anything until it brings its level of citizenship up. The very idea: here we are advocating human

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‡ Atlanta's longtime chief of police, Herbert Jenkins, approached Ivan, Jr., in 1963 about this, and after he described the terrorizing driving style of the elder Allen, he said, "No policeman in Atlanta is going to arrest your father. They're sure not gonna arrest him while you're mayor. But if he keeps running through red lights sooner or later he's gonna have a wreck. That's what I'm worried about." Ivan, Jr., quickly and quietly took the matter up with his father, and the problem vanished soon thereafter.

decency and freedom all over the world, and we find ourselves with dirty skirts at home. It's time for some major changes. Your generation is going to be confronted with it, and it will be the greatest agony that any generation ever went through.<sup>47</sup>

This may have been some of the most beneficial and prescient advice Ivan, Sr., ever gave to Ivan, Jr., although by the standards of the current era his words read as awfully prejudiced, condescending, and crude. They also read as remarkably forthright, especially given the time and place in which they were uttered. Despite using the dreaded “n” word, Ivan, Sr., was, “in the context of that time,” basically “a liberal,” as his son remembered. “He used the term ‘nigger’ without blinking, . . . but he didn’t say it with malice.” In this way Ivan, Sr., was not unlike the great majority of Southerners. His son’s generation, though, would not take it for granted that the black population would distinguish between “nigger” used as a common noun and “nigger” used as an epithet and dripping with racial hatred. Ivan, Jr., learned early to change his own vocabulary. Though he had used the word Negro to describe black people, Ivan, Jr., pronounced it as if the word were spelled “nigra.” Under Helen Bullard’s tutelage he came to refer to blacks as Negroes, and his pronunciation became flawless. Not once in future years did his articulation differ from “knee-grow,” which was then perfectly acceptable to black Americans.<sup>48</sup>

Ivan Allen, Jr., had a long way to go to embracing “the race issue” and even farther to solving it. That he was one of the power structure and not an observer or tool of it meant that for him the learning curve would be steep, as it would for all of the Big Mules. Allen could not shift responsibility for handling racial issues to the powers-that-be, for he was one of them, and his colleagues – and even his family – expected him to step into the breach and continue Atlanta’s onward and upward trajectory. For all of the Big Mules, accepting the changing balance of the races was a bitter pill, for it upset their finely crafted and ordered world.

Ivan Allen may have been pampered in his world of privilege, but he was not without grit and toughness. During his campaign, Allen frequently encountered naysayers and pessimists. Characteristically, Allen met these people – his opponents – head-on. He demonstrated a penchant for deft and politically astute footwork between opposite sides. Allen, who had at one time been a segregationist, was attacked by his opponents for his prior stances. Critics released a copy of a letter Ivan, Jr., had sent to then-governor Marvin Griffin calling for the retention of segregation in Georgia and, if possible, an African colonization program that would send Atlanta’s blacks back to that continent. Acting quickly after this letter, an open secret of sorts, had come out, Allen asked the

Reverend William Holmes Borders, a prominent black leader, to meet with him. Allen explained himself and showed a copy of the letter to Borders, who replied with a smile, "Mister Allen, don't worry. We Negroes don't like anybody better than a reconstructed Southern white man."<sup>49</sup>

Just a year before, at the onset of the tumultuous civil rights struggle and only three years after the passage of the 1957 Civil Rights Act, Woodruff himself had written to Ralph Hayes in a sarcastic aside that he did not understand all the race controversy and that he hoped "appropriate civil rights laws" would be enacted to ensure "the right of a chimpanzee to vote."<sup>50</sup>

Woodruff was, of course, not the only Big Mule that had not yet grasped the gravity and inevitability of the situation, nor was he by any means the least perceptive of the changes to come. But it is instructive that he was comfortable expressing himself in this way, even if to a close associate. Woodruff's main concern at this point was business pragmatism. His personal feelings had not yet been addressed. As with so much in his life, Woodruff would discuss this issue *ad nauseum* with his closest friends, his aides, even his valet and chauffeur, before he made up his mind on the race question. His deliberations on this matter probably

occurred less during his business days and more in the silence of his sleepless nights, his deliberations during his afternoon nap, and other times he spent, alone and relaxed with a cigar or pipe and his favored Johnnie Walker Black Label Scotch.<sup>51</sup>

Former Mayor Hartsfield could easily have written the same letter, replete with the same sentiments, as Woodruff did. In fact, his letters were often more jarring, in hindsight. Shortly after leaving City Hall, and newly ensconced as a practicing attorney in the Grant Building downtown, Hartsfield sent a letter to Woodruff. Jocular in tone and addressed to "Bob," for Hartsfield was one of the select few allowed to address "the Boss" by name, his letter was composed of one terse sentence which read, "Herewith is the latest contribution to the lighter side of the race controversy." Enclosed, though, was the real gem of the note, the reason it was written. Entitled "The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, by Martin Luther King," the enclosure was a card, about three-by-five inches and printed on heavy paper, which had somehow come into Hartsfield's possession. The card read:

John F. and Bobby Kennedy are my shepherds. I shall not want.  
They maketh me to lie down in front of white theaters.  
They leadeth me into the white universities.  
They restoreth my welfare checks.  
They leadeth me down the path of sit-ins, for the communist sake.

Yea, though I walk through the heart of Dixie, I shall fear no  
police, for Bobby is with me.  
His tear gas and paratroopers, they comfort me.  
They prepareth me a table in the presence of the white folks.  
They annointest my head with anti-kink hair straighteners.  
My Buick, Pontiac, and Cadillac gas tanks runneth over.  
The Supreme Court and the Urban League shall follow me all the  
days of my life.  
And I shall dwell in the house of the Federal Housing Project  
forever.<sup>52</sup>

The words of this card, horrendously blasphemous though they were, surely elicited peals of laughter from Woodruff and his cronies, who viewed the Kennedy Administration with suspicion and mistrust. If the exchanges between the Big Mules seem unholy and abominable today, that misses the point. They represent the swallowing of an inevitable reality taken with the bittersweet flavoring of nervous laughter on the part of the power brokers. Times were changing. The Atlanta of the future, and indeed the South of the future, was not going to be as it was.

Parodies of the Scriptures notwithstanding, neither Hartsfield nor Woodruff knew just yet how far the new mayor, the member of the younger generation they had entrusted with the day-to-day guidance of their city, was going to carry them in their attitudes and thinking. They were counting on him, and he was entrusting his future to them.

*The Rise of Ivan Allen*

Ivan, Jr., was the ultimate up-and-coming member of the Atlanta power structure. He was deferential to his elders (both in terms of power and in age) to a fault. Never once did he address Robert Woodruff, for example, as anything but “Mr. Woodruff” or, in later years, “Boss.” “Daddy knew Mr. Woodruff as Bob, of course, which my generation never did. ... I knew him as Mr. Woodruff, of course,” Ivan, Jr., noted a few years after Woodruff had died. He was the perfect successor, in short, and he blossomed in his new role and with his newfound influence. Certainly he had been groomed to take such a prominent position; now that he had it, he exercised it with aplomb and the confidence borne of his breeding.<sup>53</sup>

What’s more, Ivan, Jr., was naturally likeable. He could approach anyone directly in his patrician yet disarming way, a gregariousness possibly resulting from his being an only child and desiring companionship from the earliest of ages. His appeal was wide, as he charmed both whites and blacks with his forthrightness and his sense of timing. Even his occasional gaffes turned out well for him. For instance, he once made the offhand remark among friends that, “I inherited money, I married money, and I made money.” The remark finally circulated long

enough to give it wide exposure, and by the time the press picked up the scent and printed what Ivan, Jr., had said, most readers had seen and been impressed by him and merely laughed it off.<sup>54</sup>

Some readers, though, could not forget the remark. To them, it typified not only the gulf of wealth that separated them from the white power structure, but it also made them question, if for only a moment, the seemingly progressive mayor's stance on the issues that were most important to them: more equal opportunity for jobs, greater respect, the desegregation of lunch counters and department stores, and so on. If the mayor can trivialize his own financial situation, some of them must have thought, then how seriously is he capable of considering the issues we are passionate about?

As it turned out, though, the remark made no deep impression on anyone, and soon the mayor and the power structure and the black leadership were back to work. Hopefully, they all prayed, their work would be for peace and for the betterment of the city. And Ivan, Jr., who learned through all of this that he had a bit more political-skill-honing to do, watched his tongue more carefully.

Whatever his minor transgressions, in the new mayor Woodruff and the other Big Mules had a trustworthy leader, a new leader of a team

that had served them well for so long. Ivan Allen, Jr., catered to the needs of his biggest supporters, as any neophyte politico would know to do, but he also deferred greatly to the needs, real and imagined, of Atlanta's "leading citizen." Woodruff had but to grumble a wish to Joe Jones and the wheels would begin to turn, with Jones making a telephone call here, sending a letter there, or engaging in an elevator conversation with the right person, all in the hopes of satisfying the Boss.<sup>55</sup>

Woodruff's command over not only the business community but also over the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen was stunning, even shocking, by today's standards. Atlanta was – and still is – markedly different from New York or Chicago. With no heavily unionized industry, no organized crime influences "worthy of the name," and no political machine or party boss on hand, Atlanta belonged to the businessmen who ran it and lived in and around it. Wrote a historian of Coca-Cola, Woodruff was "their unquestioned captain," and that this was the case meant, very really, that his power was nearly total. He loved Atlanta, cared for her, nurtured her, fiercely protected her, and sought to broaden her scope and prosperity. In turn, her other boosters elevated Woodruff, for they saw in his leadership and his philosophies enlightened paternalism rather than despotic tyranny or unbecoming behavior as an

abuse of his power. Paraphrasing the old saw about General Motors, it often was said that what was good for Coca-Cola was good for Atlanta. It could also have been said that what was good in Bob Woodruff's eyes was good for Atlanta, for it happened that what he decided was prudent determined the course of action that would be taken, regardless of the issue.<sup>56</sup>

Woodruff's power, such as it was, was not wasted. Rather, it was expended on issues close to his ideals and close to him personally. Occasionally his concerns and the steps taken to allay them were somewhat humorous. Doris Lockerman Kennedy remembered one such episode in her biography of Woodruff's wife, Nell:

The nation was resisting prohibition and Woodruff was doing his part. He developed a fine wine cellar in their home on Springdale. While they were out of town, someone broke into the wine cellar and stole everything.

When he returned, Bob called Chief James L. Beavers [of the Atlanta Police Department] and told him he had an idea [that] someone in his department knew something about the burglary. He added that the house would be unoccupied for 24 hours and he would like to have his liquor returned. Nothing would be said about the incident if the wine showed up.

In the allotted 24 hours, the cellar was restored.<sup>57</sup>

Though humorous, the liquor incident was instructive: City government would bow and scrape before Bob Woodruff no matter what the magnitude of the issue.

And attend to Bob Woodruff that government's members did. Once, when one of Woodruff's staff cars was ticketed near Five Points, in the heart of downtown, the citation was intercepted before it could be mailed and was enclosed, having been voided, with a incredible, toadying letter of apology from Herbert Jenkins, Atlanta's longtime police chief. This was done even though Woodruff had not seen the ticket and probably never would have. Jenkins wrote it, one suspects, because he wanted to convey one more time to "the Boss" that his every wish would be granted and that the very thought of one of Woodruff's cars being ticketed was anathema to the police department and its chief.<sup>58</sup>

This episode is telling but does not illustrate fully the relationship Woodruff enjoyed with Jenkins and his staff. Jenkins personally patrolled Woodruff's house in Buckhead and carefully supervised other officers who did so. The chief also assisted Woodruff in selecting his watchmen, running background checks on them, and he himself corresponded with representatives of security device manufacturers as well as the Atlanta office of Southern Bell when Woodruff decided to install a burglar alarm

system at Tuxedo Road. There, in the kitchen, Woodruff also kept a radio tuned day and night to the police band. Fearful of a kidnapping and somewhat paranoid and cryptic by nature, Woodruff required a certain type of care and feeding that Jenkins provided with aplomb. In letters that often began "My dear Mr. Woodruff," Jenkins provided "the Boss" with copies of speeches he expected to make, reports of crime trends around the nation, and commentary on issues faced by modern policemen, in addition to multitudinous expressions of gratitude. "Thank you for the beautiful watch," began one such missive from the 1960s. "This is not only the most accurate timepiece I have ever seen, but it is also the most attractive." Most importantly, Jenkins relayed guarantees that Woodruff's wishes were being carried out. "Thank you very much for your phone call and your suggestion. It is a very timely one and I wish to assure you that it will be followed to the letter," opened another such communiqué.<sup>59</sup>

Woodruff's relationship with the city was not one-sided. Certainly he lavished the community with gifts, favors, and influence. Woodruff's sense of civic obligation was tremendous; he had equally grand plans for the future of Atlanta. The Atlanta of Woodruff's dreams would play second fiddle to no city, for it would be a Mecca of culture, education, and

medical superiority as well as financial powerhouse. Every step Woodruff took was one of calculation, of longing, and goal-oriented. Atlanta in these years was like a giant chess game, and Woodruff not only knew all the moves, but he also conducted the kings and bishops and pawns, moving them to the correct location at the proper time.

Woodruff understood, as many of his peers did but as many others never would, that Atlanta was a city on the make. He intended to control its destiny, just as he had guided and shaped the Coca-Cola company for decades: by running the affairs of the city himself, with little interference and most certainly no second-guessing from anyone. Woodruff kept in a pocket of his suit a stack of memo cards on which he would jot a directive or a suggestion frequently, and the bearer of one of these cream-colored cards did exactly what it prescribed. One of Woodruff's cards was the equivalent of a Papal encyclical in the changing yet parochial world of Atlanta, and while the observation that Woodruff ran the city "literally out of his pocket" was catchy, it also was very accurate. Woodruff had the acuity and the vision to operate in this manner.<sup>60</sup>

Woodruff's talents and his power were but tools in building a better, more vibrant, richer Atlanta. He meant to put them all to use. His confidence in his abilities – both intangible and financial – was high, and

he brought it as well as his resources to bear on outsiders who in his views did not yet recognize that Atlanta was on the cusp of greatness. During the 1950s, at a meeting of the Ford Foundation's board, Woodruff listened as one of his colleagues proposed the distribution of grants to a handful of thriving medical schools, mainly in the East. Woodruff spoke up and suggested that the grants be more widely distributed. When this idea met opposition, Woodruff firmly declared that if his advice was not heeded, he would vote against the first plan, and he would make a stink about it in the press. Sensing that he was gaining ground but not yet home free, he sought to douse any remaining suspicions of his peers as to his motives. "Now don't y'all worry about Emory," Woodruff said, "I can take care of Emory myself." For years his largesse had covered the annual deficits of the medical school there, his fellow board members knew, and Woodruff served notice on them that he had no intention of ending this practice. On the contrary, Woodruff declared his intention through his actions to take Emory to the top of the heap. In the face of Woodruff's unyielding position, the Ford Foundation accepted his plan. Such acquiescence was a normal part of the Woodruff world, and it kept him happy, which benefited Atlanta and the entire region.<sup>61</sup>

Woodruff was possessed of an unshakeable sense of civic obligation, perhaps with a touch of *noblese oblige*, that never dissipated or waned. This feeling drove Woodruff to use his power for his city's benefit, and in so doing Woodruff burnished his image as a benevolent powerhouse. Perception being reality, Woodruff's power did then actually increase, and the whole cycle was started anew. That power was the one constant in the sea of change that was Atlanta – and much of the country – in the 1960s.

In 1962, the clearest change on the local scene was the presence of Ivan Allen, Jr., in the executive suite at city hall. The new mayor was full of energy and expected results. Like his patriarchal guide, he brooked little opposition from those under him. The difference between him and Woodruff is that Allen deferred to his superiors; since Woodruff had none, he did not share this practicality. Woodruff expected results and was not pleased in the least when anyone, the mayor included, did not deliver on a promise. Allen was fortunate in that he realized this, as everyone did, and did not disappoint “the Boss,” a towering figure that one historian has called “the genuine wizard of Atlanta's Oz.” Allen's political trump card was Woodruff, and he could not afford to lose the

support that a grunt or a nod between puffs on one of Woodruff's cigars conveyed.<sup>62</sup>

In addition to his energy and can-do temperament, Allen was also willing to listen carefully to black residents. He seemed to sympathize genuinely with their concerns. Recalling his days only two years before, when he helped to mediate the discussions between Atlanta University students (black) and the management of Rich's Department Store (all white) over policies of segregation in that famous emporium, Ivan noted that he and his fellow peace-seeker, Mills Lane, chairman of the Citizens and Southern National Bank, had encountered difficulty almost from the start. Those difficulties were deficiencies in their own experience and perception. Allen remembered that listening to the complaints of the students "was, frankly, the first time Mills and I had given any thought to most of these difficulties faced by the Negro." None of their peers had given any thought to the matter, either, and Allen knew that.

I think what we were doing was closing our eyes and hoping the problem would go away. It was the nature of our upbringing that we had seldom come into contact with the problems of the Negro in America, except to note that our maids had come from an awfully long way from wherever they lived to get to our homes every day so they could clean our rooms and wash our dishes and mind our children, and

we really had little preparation for something like this. A part of the Southern Way of Life was that you really didn't *see*

Negroes when there were in a store or walking the streets downtown. You didn't happen to think that maybe they had no restroom to use while shopping, or that they had to buy dresses or slacks without first being able to try them on for size, or that when they became hungry they had the choice of either waiting until they got back to their own neighborhood grill or else sidling up, hat in hand, to the back door of a white man's restaurant and ordering something to go.<sup>63</sup>

Before finally deciding on a progressive course, there was talk in the Rich's boardroom of making the store all-white; after all, blacks did not account for a large percentage of the store's annual sales, so why not just exclude them all together and be done with it? So went the thinking, but then, as Allen himself conceded, "that is how naïve we were on the race issue at that point, on the verge of the greatest civil rights struggle in the history of the United States."<sup>64</sup>

Such was the atmosphere in which the new mayor cut his teeth as the chief executive of the capital of the New South. It was out of these early experiences that he gained the insight that he *could* be mayor, *could* do great things for his city. Now here he was, comfortably entrenched in the fourth floor executive suite at City Hall, and he was off to a rocky start.

Problems do not take vacations, nor do they cease – or take a "pause that refreshes," as the Coca-Cola crowd might say – for the

transition of power. Allen began being pelted with the problems of the mayor immediately after taking the reigns from Bill Hartsfield. However, he did not enter the mayor's office without a plan. In fact, the plan Allen used was one he had developed during the Christmas holidays of 1959, as he prepared to step up to the presidency of the Chamber of Commerce for the year 1961. He discussed his ideas with the president and the chairman of the board of the First National Bank of Atlanta, both of whom made approving remarks and encouraged Allen. The scheme that Allen set forth that Christmas evolved into a white paper, polished and yet with points that were "broad and simple, and it seemed that most of them could be accomplished more or less as a byproduct of the business and civic community." In other words, Woodruff's team would guide Atlanta more than ever with the acceptance of Allen's plan.<sup>65</sup>

That plan, the Chamber's Six-Point Program that would guide not only the Chamber but also the entire city for the next decade, included emphases on schools, expressways, urban renewal, the construction of an auditorium-coliseum and stadium, creation of a rapid transit system, and a "Forward Atlanta" promotional campaign for the city. The plan was accepted unanimously, and Allen was not surprised. As he noted later, the approval of the plan meant that "we had chartered our course as only

we, as old-fashioned civic-minded businessmen, knew how. The Six-Point Program was a broad plan of development that could fall on its face if the businessmen making up the 'power structure' in Atlanta didn't fully believe in it and take the initiative as they had always done in seeing that it was carried out. I felt confident that they would." Even though the execution of the plan would surely prove rocky, Allen had made a masterstroke in incubating and then carefully gaining approval for his plan. Now that everyone he needed was on board, the upward trajectory so carefully planned could be sought in earnest.<sup>66</sup>

Just as problems take no vacations, theory is easier than practice. In theory, 1962 should have been a banner year. But soon after taking office, the new mayor's desk was heaped high with problems. Allen's first blunder was the erection of a barricade in the middle of Peyton Road, a heretofore white-home-lined street southwest of the city center that was a target of real-estate blockbusting. Hearing the increasingly voluble complaints of white residents in the area, and taking to heart the moans of realtors who feared that an influx of black residents would drive property values down, Allen took action. As was his custom, he moved decisively, but on this occasion he terribly misjudged the public reaction to the solution he proposed. The barricade Allen ordered built was steel-

reinforced and sunk deep into the asphalt. Ostensibly its presence would prevent blacks from moving in and whites from moving out, but all it did was create a political nightmare. Just as soon as the I-beams supporting the wooden structure were secured, public outcry reached a fever pitch. Hartsfield, unhappily settling into retirement, saw a chance to comment, to re-enter the political arena, and he took it by offering up his erudition to anyone who would listen. "Never do anything they [the press] can take a picture of," Hartsfield was fond of saying, and Allen had apparently forgotten that. Within days, the barricade came down and tensions subsided, but not before Allen had suffered a setback and Atlanta, newly likened to Berlin for its famous wall, had gained a better appreciation of the delicacy of any discussion, action, or thought about racial issues. When the dust settled, Woodruff and the business community he led were still firmly behind Allen, and Allen knew it.<sup>67</sup>

### *A Fateful Day in June*

The tall, courtly Allen was still adjusting to his new office when, on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, tragedy befell Atlanta. This time, though, the peril was not home-grown. On a Air France jet departing Orly Field outside Paris were over 100 prominent Atlantans, patrons of the arts who had been on a

month-long sight-seeing tour of Europe to gather ideas for improving Atlanta's arts community and its holdings. (The High Museum, now ensconced in a Richard Meier-designed edifice in the heart of Midtown, was then modestly located in an old home that had none of the comforts and not nearly enough space that were desired.) The plane crashed on takeoff, killing all but three individuals aboard in a hellish conflagration – what Ivan Allen later remarked was Atlanta's "greatest personal tragedy since General Sherman's visit." Details were at first unclear, but when they emerged, the evidence pointed to pilot error. The pilot, it was conjectured, had sought to correct problems on takeoff by locking the wheels. Observers noticed a change in engine noise as the plane throttled up for takeoff, and this change was later taken to be an indicator of a problem quickly developing. Once the pilot locked the jet's wheels, white smoke began to be seen from the runway by passengers in the terminal.<sup>68</sup>

Allen later described what happened:

The tires wore off, and then the rims. A tremendous amount of static electricity was building up as the plane slithered off the end of the runway. It clipped a couple of telephone poles, bounced across a narrow access road, slid another thousand feet on its belly and finally slammed into a small stone cottage, which spun it around and broke the tail section free, saving the lives of three stewardesses. Of the 127 persons aboard, those three were the only ones to live.<sup>69</sup>

The pilot's attempt to abort cost him and his passengers, except those three stewardesses, to die in a fireball just off Orly Field, a horrible ending to what was, one Atlantan later recalled, "*the* trip to go on."<sup>70</sup>

Rushing back to Atlanta from his farm in the Georgia countryside, Allen gathered up city attorney Edwin Sterne, packed a suitcase, tended to the press at City Hall, and flew immediately to Paris. As usual, the mayor was ready to pay for his tickets and related expenses with cash from his own billfold; ever the patrician, he was unconcerned with expense reports and other mundane details of bureaucratic life. Years later he remembered wondering en route to the airport whether he had enough cash to cover the plane fare. (He did; he kept \$1,500 in a safety deposit box at his office, along with his passport.) He and Sterne were met at the Atlanta airport by an Air France official who told the mayor and attorney that complimentary first-class tickets for them had been arranged by Air France. Sterne cautiously accepted the tickets with the understanding that if a conflict developed later (i.e., if it was determined that the city had to take an anti-Air France position), the city would pay for the tickets. Allen and Sterne, with WSB newsman Aubrey Morris in tow, settled in for a long night flight.<sup>71</sup>

Upon arrival in Paris, there was little Allen could do, yet he wanted, even needed, to be on the scene. After running a gauntlet of French dignitaries, including a personal emissary of Charles de Gaulle and the chairman of the board of Air France, all attired in striped pants and frock coats, Allen held an impromptu press conference at Orly Airport for some 150 reporters from around the world. This was a vast difference to the small, informal press briefings he was used to in Atlanta, where attendance rarely exceeded ten. But the mayor, new though he may have been, proved equal to the task, the first of many that day.

Breaking free immediately after the conference, Allen led his party and his French hosts to the crash scene. He felt, rightly as it turned out, that since the victims of the crash were of his social class and were, in many instances, his friends, that he should be there as a surrogate representative of the families who had suffered a terrible loss. Allen insisted on personally identifying the charred remains of those Atlantans at a makeshift morgue near the airport, and he was equally insistent that he be allowed to view the crash site proper. It all had happened so quickly and was such a shock to all involved that one suspects Allen forced himself to walk through the crash site to convince himself that the awful news was true. On his trip, he spied a pastel dress that looked to

him very much like one Nancy Fredericks, a friend since childhood, owned. His bent down and picked up another find, a brochure for the trip that somehow had emerged only half-incinerated. The irony was acute. The brochure's headline was "Your trip will be unforgettable." When Allen picked it up, it crumbled to pieces.

Atlanta reeled. Most of the victims' peers were that morning at their respective churches, and only minutes after the crash whispers rustled through the congregations. Soon, the houses of worship disgorged their startled communicants, who were all struggling to absorb the news. In other parts of the city, relatives and in some cases siblings were at a loss as to what to tell children whose parents would never come home. One young boy, Tom Reynolds, was watching cartoons that Sunday when the station broke in with the news. His older sister, Pat, struggled to console him in a tableau that played itself out in countless Atlanta living rooms that day. Crowds thronged around the Air France offices near Five Points and clamored for news, but information coming from Paris was scant. What was known, and for a time all that was known, was that the jet had indeed crashed, but it would be later that long Sunday before Atlanta knew the magnitude of her loss.

For Allen and his social colleagues, the losses were unbearable. In the weeks to come, funeral after funeral was held. Many of the same mourners seemed perpetually clothed in black as they moved from church to synagogue and temple. A large portion of the best and brightest of Atlanta had been killed in one fell swoop. Allen lost many friends, including the girl he asked on his first date. He had ridden his bicycle to Nancy Fredericks' house as a boy one afternoon. They both had married others – she had wed Bob Pegram – but the friendship survived strong, and now she was gone.

After staying three more days in Paris, long enough for a memorial service for the crash victims at the American Cathedral, Allen and his weary party returned to Atlanta, which was still a shocked city.<sup>72</sup>

It was Allen's task to calm the city and to keep it moving forward at its traditional, rapid clip.



### CHAPTER THREE: "IVAN, YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT," 1963-1967

Woodruff's reaction to the terrible crash at Paris's Orly Field is not known, but certainly we can surmise that he was shocked and saddened by the loss. In the wake of the tragedy, the formerly fighting factions of the Atlanta art world – those who wanted a museum, those who wanted an art school, those who wanted an alternative to a civic center-type building – coalesced, and they did so with Woodruff's prodding. The Atlantans that had died that summer day in Paris were working collaboratively, more or less, to advance the arts community in Atlanta, and to continue the petty infighting now seemed, well, petty.

An instructive moment arose in the birth of the arts center when Phillip Weltner, a retired professor and Woodruff's unofficial emissary on the arts center project, found himself unable to sway the opinion toward a comprehensive, all-encompassing plan. Weltner found he could not gain the cooperation of James Carmichael, who in addition to his cultural passions was head of Scripto, the large pen and pencil manufacturer headquartered in Atlanta. Begging Woodruff to intervene, Weltner said, "I cannot handle Jimmy. You can." Given his prior support of the

proposed arts center and his disdain for inefficiency, Woodruff welcomed the challenge and summoned Carmichael and a handful of other interested parties to his private dining room in the Coca-Cola building.<sup>73</sup>

Woodruff accomplished over lunch what Ivan Allen and Phillip Weltner could not in a long series of letters, telephone calls, and face-to-face entreaties. Such was the power of Robert Woodruff. No one could afford to be the person who caused Woodruff's support to vanish from a project, an occurrence that would likely doom the endeavor. Carmichael, who was politically astute if somewhat obstinate at times, recognized this, and Woodruff knew that he recognized it. That was the point, and Woodruff's luncheon yielded the desired result. Following the luncheon, Carmichael sent Woodruff a letter remarkable in its deference and, more than that, in its plain language about the civic aims of Atlanta.

[My interests in the art school model, which would include an art museum mostly as an afterthought] is purely one of civic duty to which I have committed myself because I strongly feel it is a basic need if we are to remain and further develop as a cosmopolitan city and as the cultural, as well as the business and medical, capital of the Southeast.

He was now behind the all-arts model for the new center, he said

...because I have understood that this is one of the things that interests you and which you would like to be able to bring into being for the community. My first interest is always on the side of trying to assist in any cause in which you are even remotely interested.<sup>74</sup>

Not surprisingly, the arts center planning proceeded with minimal acrimony and great success. Woodruff ultimately donated more than six million dollars to help realize the Atlanta Memorial Arts Center, which opened in 1966. Prominently displayed on the grounds is a sculpture by Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) called "The Shade." The cast-stone wall behind Rodin's work, a stooped male figure that was a gift from the government of France in tribute to the victims of the Orly crash, bears an inscription that reads: "Dedicated to all who truly believe the arts are a continuing effort of the human spirit to find meaning in existence." Today, the hulking, yet oddly graceful, edifice of the main building bears Woodruff's name, as do all the buildings that compose the complex he did so much to bring about.<sup>75</sup>

Looking back, it may seem odd that Woodruff would show so much interest in a home for cultural activities he found incredibly uninteresting. "I'm not a patron of the arts," he would later tell a reporter. "But we want Atlanta to be a well rounded community, and I have been assured that we need the center to fill a gap." Also, if one looks back at the Carmichael letter, one catches a further glimpse of Woodruff's pragmatic thinking. As with moderation in race relations, promoting the arts meant more and better business for Atlanta.<sup>76</sup>

In the world of Coca-Cola, Woodruff found himself enmeshed in a struggle to find a new president for his company. Lee Talley, a veteran Coke executive, had stepped into the breach in 1958, following a string of lackluster and even incompetent puppet presidents whom Woodruff had installed. Talley served Woodruff and the company slavishly, and by 1962 he was tired. When he told Woodruff that he was leaving, Woodruff hounded him to stay, but Talley was adamant. Woodruff ultimately settled on J. Paul Austin, a graduate of Harvard College and the Harvard Law School and surely the most cerebral man to enter the executive suite at Coke's downtown headquarters up to that point. Austin was a hard-charging man who easily took over the day-to-day operations of the company, which was reaching new heights almost daily in the go-go 1960s. Equally appealing to Woodruff, he paid due deference to the old man, leaving Woodruff free to make the big decisions about the company's future as he had since 1923. They became a team, though not of equals, and for a time the partnership flourished. No one was fooled into thinking that Austin was the real "boss," though; Woodruff still controlled the board and chaired its Finance Committee, and he still yielded what amounted to a solitary proxy over more than half of the outstanding shares of Coca-Cola. Austin could have the presidency, and

ultimately he would be named chairman and chief executive officer, but power at Coca-Cola was where you found it, and you found it in Woodruff's custom-built suite on the fourth floor of Coke's brick headquarters near the Georgia Tech campus.<sup>77</sup>

With things having calmed down a bit in Coca-Cola's executive suite, Woodruff resumed his travel-packed existence, moving about constantly and devoting his time to causes as he saw fit. Coca-Cola's home base seemed to travel with Woodruff, as did the foundation of his power, and Woodruff by the 1960s was determined to keep that base of power and control in Georgia, the state of his birth and the place that he loved. No major decision would be made without his counsel and approval in the tumultuous years of the Civil Rights Movement, an echo of the method in which policy had been set for decades. As Frederick Allen observed, "Woodruff," after nearly forty years at the top of Atlanta's power structure, "still had power – more of it, in fact, than ever before – and he meant to use it in the pivotal decade at hand, the 1960s.....[The decade's struggles] would be like a quail hunt, with Woodruff in charge."<sup>78</sup>

### Camelot and the New South

The early 1960s were an effervescent, heady, optimistic time in America. John F. Kennedy was president, at 43 the youngest man ever elected to the position, and his youthful and vibrant family brought, as Kennedy would pronounce it, renewed “vigah” to the American experience, which now emanated stronger than ever from the White House. Kennedy’s two-button Brooks Brothers suits and mop of auburn hair became fashion statements that were widely copied, and his well-known rocking chairs gained a cult following, even in the mayor’s office at Atlanta City Hall. In what redecorating that was done with the change in administrations, Allen arranged several of the rockers in front of his desk. They spoke volumes about Allen’s approach. Gone were the somewhat stodgy Hartsfield days; they belonged to a different era. Atlanta was on the move, the momentum was palpable, and its mayor led the charge.

All was not, of course, smooth sailing, and in due course the next crisis Allen would have to face came into view. The South remained heavily segregated, and that segregation stretched from lunch counters to water fountains to restrooms and hotel rooms. It was restaurants and hotels that composed the newest target of civil rights activists for whom

the backward, segregationist ways of the South were anathema, and a bill to quash segregation in those locales was up for debate in Congress in the summer of 1963. The Public Accommodations Bill raised the blood of many in the South for whom the old ways were equal to the Gospels. The bill was intended by President John F. Kennedy as a precursor to a broader, more liberal Civil Rights Act. Its passage, it was thought, would be another nail in the coffin of the much mythologized "Old South," which even Bill Hartsfield had proclaimed was "a cruel lie." "So many speak of magnolias and beautiful ladies and soft nights, and so many of them had only hookworm and poverty," Hartsfield had declared; he believed not in living in a past that never existed but rather of taking up Henry Grady's call for a "New South" – an industrialized South – that would bring prosperity to all.<sup>79</sup>

Allen agreed with Hartsfield's assessment, and unlike during the Hartsfield years, the times were moderately politically safe for Allen to say so. He decided privately that he would come out in support of the bill, and then President Kennedy, working through mutual friend Morris Abram, asked him to come to Washington to testify on the bill's behalf. Allen agonized over the decision, pondering with his wife whether he should testify in such a public forum. President Kennedy himself called

Allen at city hall to encourage him to make the trip.<sup>80</sup> Louise Allen, a strong woman who was tasked with raising their three sons and handling an endless stream of dinner parties and the like as her husband's business and political career rocketed forward, spoke directly to him.

If you fail to do what you think is right now, you will have failed in what was your purpose in going into the mayor's office: to do what you thought was right without worry of political repercussions. You'll have a hard time living with yourself the rest of your life if you don't do it. I don't think you can be re-elected if you *do* go, but if you feel it's right, then go and accept the consequences. You'll feel better the rest of your life.<sup>81</sup>

This counsel swayed Allen, as one might expect, but likely he had not made the decision fully. That occurred when he asked to see Woodruff to gain his advice.

Meeting in Woodruff's office, Allen painstakingly set before Woodruff the situation at hand and laid bare his own thought process regarding the trip and his testimony, which he had tediously drafted over the previous weeks. The scene was a memorable one: the older, baronial Woodruff, leaning back in his huge leather chair, puffing on his omnipresent cigar, knocking ashes off of its tip occasionally into the large brass spittoon next to the left leg of the desk, and the younger, courtly Allen, explaining with tremendous sense of purpose and sincerity his quandary to the man who always to him would be "Mr. Woodruff."

Woodruff considered what Allen told him and then said, with his customary firmness, "You're in a dilemma, and I know it's going to be a very unpopular thing to do, but you've made up your mind and you're probably right about it, and I think you should go." Woodruff's suggestion was, for all practical purposes, an order, and Allen knew it. Woodruff also seemed to be saying that Allen ought to worry about moving Atlanta forward and leave the elephant in the closet of re-election to him.<sup>82</sup>

Following his meeting with Woodruff, Allen modified his testimony one last time to include the suggestion for a time delay for small towns in the accommodations law, which Woodruff had suggested. (And, of course, one of Woodruff's suggestions was, in fact, an order.) The conversation with Woodruff strengthened Allen's resolve and, following a meeting with 24 black leaders at Atlanta's Butler Street YMCA, who were overjoyed at the mayor's efforts but worried about the impact it would have on his future ability to continue to assist them, Allen packed his bags and caught a plane for Washington.<sup>83</sup>

When that jet took off from Atlanta's growing airport, Allen left behind him a town that did not seem to have the same vision of the future that he did, whatever its protestations to the contrary. As Allen

remembered, it seemed no one was in favor of the bill. Newspapers and radio and television stations in the city had opposed it, as had the political leadership. "The white man on the street" was against the measure, and the black power structure had told him to his face that they liked his testimony, but they questioned the feasibility of actually delivering it. But Allen persevered.<sup>84</sup>

The patrician mayor flew to Washington on the evening of July 25 and checked into the Madison Hotel on Fifteenth Street. There, while hastily eating his breakfast on the morning of his appearance before the Senate Committee on Commerce, he granted an interview to Margaret Shannon, Washington correspondent of the *Atlanta Journal*. Sitting with him in his room at the Madison and reading the testimony from Allen's own typed copy, she asked, as had so many before her, "You're not going to say that, are you?"<sup>85</sup>

He was, and he did, although contrary to his expectations Allen's appearance before the committee started amiably enough. At first he was welcomed by John Pastore, U.S. Senator from Rhode Island and chairman of the committee and who, after hearing Allen's testimony, said, "When a man like you comes before this committee today and recites his story in such forthright manner, with such courage, I am proud to be here to listen

to you, Sir.” But Pastore’s genial, respectful commentary would soon pale in the face of the abuse that Allen was subjected to by South Carolina’s brash, arch-segregationist J. Strom Thurmond. Allen himself admitted that Thurmond, who once had declared that “I will never favor mixing the races,” simply “represented the dark side of the South to me. He was the epitome of all the professional segregationists I had ever known – prejudice personified – and a man whom I could not respect in any sense.”<sup>86</sup>

Thurmond began to needle Allen with questions that dissected the testimony he had given moments before. At times it seemed as if Thurmond wanted Allen to trip over his own words, and at others it appeared that Thurmond was setting Allen up to be a scapegoat to which he could point when with his sure-to-be-angry constituents should the bill pass. But Allen held his ground and remained unperturbed and unruffled. After fifteen minutes of this back-and-forth, Pastore interrupted and sharply rebuked Thurmond. Lecturing his fellow Senator, Pastore intoned, “I hope that we won’t begin to fling at these witnesses the type of ‘when did you stop beating your wife?’ sort of question, because that, I think, is most unfair.” Thurmond, in Allen’s

words, “was beginning to boil” by then, and he sought the floor. The exchange that followed typifies the tension of those days.

THURMOND: I resent it.  
PASTORE: Let the Senator from South Carolina resent it.

[The audience in the gallery then cheered.]

THURMOND: Mr. Chairman, I am surprised that you permit applauding in this room.  
PASTORE: I didn’t do anything about that.  
THURMOND: You did nothing to stop it.  
PASTORE: I can’t stop it after it happens.  
THURMOND: Mr. Chairman, if you wish to give vent to the feelings here, and if you wish to have such a common quorum, that is a matter of view while you preside.  
PASTORE: Mr. Thurmond, I don’t know who is in this room. It is the general public.  
THURMOND: I can tell you who is in here. It is a bunch of left-wingers who favor this bill, and who are taking your position, and you know it.<sup>87</sup>

Pastore and Thurmond, representing more than they knew the positions of North and South, went on in this vein for another fifteen minutes. Once that ideological clash had died down, Allen was asked a few more questions. Immediately prior to his excusal from the hearing, another Senator on the committee remarked that the Senate had been “visited by a man of quiet courage this morning.” (Four days later, Governor Carl Sanders would visit himself upon the Senate; Sanders’ testimony would be nearly opposite Allen’s, and Sanders would remark

that “if a determination is made on the national level in S.1732 [the Public Accommodations Bill] that the cork will be put in the bottle of mutual cooperation and will make this great moral issue one which is dependent upon federal force alone for its corrections. I deplore that. I hope it will not happen.”) Though Allen was the mouthpiece, it seems fair to say that it was Robert Woodruff who provided the enthusiasm that allowed that courage to be displayed.<sup>88</sup>

On his own and also with that support, Allen had from the start been confident and cocksure in his actions. His constituents knew it, as Allen constantly tried to demonstrate his steadfast devotion to liberalism. In one memorable instance, in the fall of 1962, an aide raced into his office at city hall and announced to the mayor that there was a problem in the basement cafeteria. That problem was that a prominent black lawyer, Prudence Herndon, and some of her guests wanted to cool off with a few soft drinks, and they had asked to be served in the city cafeteria. Complicating matters, the cafeteria, though technically not segregated, was understood to be for whites only. And Mrs. Herndon was so informed, leaving her and her young charges, several students from Atlanta University, to wait on a solution in the lobby of city hall. Allen found them there, and Herndon explained her problem to him, leaving

him slightly puzzled. He offered that since she was not a city employee, and since only city workers could be served by the cafeteria, perhaps that was the reason for the denial of service. "Yes," Herndon replied, "but I think there was another reason." The mayor agreed and asked what he could do. Herndon told Allen that she would prefer if he handled the situation, and Allen invited the party to join him in the cafeteria as his guests. As Allen led his guests into the cafeteria, he later recalled, "I wondered what I was getting myself into."<sup>89</sup>

Here you are, I thought [Allen reflected], a new mayor with seven or eight thousand city employees, trying to make your way, trying to gain their support, trying to gain their favor, wanting to be friendly, wanting to build an organization. And now you are getting ready to lead a confrontation against them on the testiest issue they have: eating with black people.<sup>90</sup>

Allen entered the cafeteria and was greeted with a stony silence.

When the counter waitress refused to serve the mayor and his newly acquired guests, he told her to leave her post so he could serve them all himself. Recovering, she grudgingly agreed and, drinks in hand, the group took their seats. As soon as they sat down, everyone else in the cafeteria – nearly 100 employees, all white, as Allen remembered – walked out. Allen was dejected, but, after only a few minutes absence, employees filed back in and resumed their afternoon coffee break. He would only learn later what had brought about their return. The same aide who had

alerted him to the situation, George Royal, was waiting for such a walkout and confronted the bigots when they stepped into the adjacent lobby.

“You’re a bunch of damned fools,” he roared at them, “giving up your cafeteria just because some young students want to cool off with a Coke.”

Allen’s courage and Royal’s tenacity had carried the day, and so ended the desegregation of the city hall cafeteria – one more victory for Allen, and more evidence that he meant what he said.<sup>91</sup>

Returning to Atlanta after his testimony on behalf of the Public Accommodations Bill, Allen was coming home as the only elected official in the South to have testified on behalf of the bill. When he landed in Atlanta, he found criticism awaiting him, despite laudatory editorials by Eastern newspapers. (The *New York Times* had said that only rarely was “the oratorical fog on Capitol Hill . . . pierced by a voice resonant with courage and dignity,” which was fairly typical of reactions in that region.) Immediate reactions ranged from a denunciation by the *Albany* (Georgia) *Herald* of “the Mayor’s slick, political moralizing” to a headline from a Rome, Georgia, editorial, which read, “Glad Mr. Allen is Atlanta’s Mayor.” Clearly, in the many hamlets that composed the major portion of Georgia, Atlanta and its mayor were seen as having strange, unpalatable views. Even the *Atlanta Constitution* refused to switch its position,

although it did print commentary stating that Allen had “stood courageously for what he sincerely believed and we admire him for that.” Allen’s mail was more favorable; by his count, he received 167 pieces of mail in support of and 90 in opposition to his position in the first week following his Senate appearance. However, he did receive the occasional vicious telegram. One read: “I wish to nominate you as Mr. Mau Mau of 1963. I understand that you are a half-brother of Martin Luther King.” Allen cringed at such backward views.<sup>92</sup>

Although the tide soon would turn – the *Atlanta Constitution* would reprint the admiring editorial from the *New York Times* the following week, and some of Allen’s peers, including Richard H. Rich of Rich’s, the mammoth department store, made statements on his behalf – at first the reaction was harsh. Even Robert Woodruff was not spared. Several of his friends conjectured that he had finally grown senile or had at least lost his wisdom. Others brashly criticized him in a way normally unthinkable. Woodruff dismissed his critics, telling them, “You’d better keep yourself flexible. Things are not going to be like they were.” And Woodruff, like Allen, stood firm. As the dust settled, the real wisdom was plain to see: Atlanta’s image was brighter than ever.<sup>93</sup>

The same could be said for Woodruff's image, which already had a luster attained by only a few American businessmen in history. That spring, he had celebrated his fortieth anniversary with the Coca-Cola Company. As usual on such occasions, friends and admirers wrote to wish him well. One letter he received would be particularly remembered. Hughes Spalding, one of Woodruff's good friends and a valuable resource to him as a name partner in King and Spalding, *the* law firm in Atlanta, wrote that, "Forty years ago you took hold of a wobbly corporation and turned it into the greatest national and international success story of the century." Whether the superlative was accurate was a matter of debate, but certainly Woodruff had built a rock solid reputation as a brilliant businessman. That, however, was not Spalding's main focus, and he continued to say that

If your life was only a story of material success, I would have written you a simple note of congratulations or sent you a telegram; but your accomplishments in the spiritual field outweigh all others. Some of this is undoubtedly due to the softening influences of your wonderful mother and wife, but much is inherent in your nature.

I have noted over the years that you lend a helping hand to those who suffer from human weaknesses; that you are fair and just even to those whom you may be on the verge of disliking because they have offended you; that you value your friends and are kind and considerate to them during

life and attentive to those they left behind them. You possess charity, the greatest of virtues, and have a compassionate heart.<sup>94</sup>

*From JFK to LBJ*

The fall of 1963 is generally viewed as a time of monumental change for America – an awakening of sorts. John Kennedy was gunned down in Dallas in November, rocking the nation, and Lyndon Johnson became the 36<sup>th</sup> president. It is not often remembered that Nixon was in Dallas that day, too. Defeated in the 1962 California gubernatorial race, Nixon had appealed to Coke for a job but was denied. “We don’t need that son of a bitch on the payroll,” said one executive at the time. Woodruff agreed with that assessment, and Nixon went to work for Pepsi as a lawyer-cum-lobbyist. His purpose in Dallas was to deliver a speech on Pepsi’s behalf – a speech, it seemed, aimed more at upsetting the Kennedy-Johnson ticket for 1964 than selling soda.<sup>95</sup>

Woodruff had never been particularly friendly with John Kennedy; there were no ill feelings, and Woodruff made sure of that, but Lyndon Johnson had been Woodruff’s choice for president as the 1960 campaign neared. Using his network of contacts, Woodruff made an ally of

Kennedy, and only that summer had a photograph of JFK sipping a Coke been placed in Woodruff's office, a location of honor.<sup>96</sup> §§

Now, Lyndon Johnson was in the White House, and LBJ took advantage of every opportunity to cultivate the wealthy and powerful Woodruff. Woodruff kept in his files a handwritten note from Johnson, sent through a mutual friend, that read "Tell Bob to come see me whenever he's in town. L.B.J." The note, on White House stationery, must have pleased Woodruff, who since the Eisenhower years had enjoyed a "key to the back door" (Secret Service Pass No. 1, to be exact)<sup>\*\*\*</sup> and stopped by the Executive Mansion frequently for a drink with its esteemed occupant.<sup>97</sup>

A change in chief executives meant that the country was going to pursue a more aggressive push for equal civil rights for whites and blacks alike. The liberalism of the 1960s was rising, and Lyndon Johnson was to be its chief proponent.

The civil rights movement had been gaining strength throughout the South. In 1962, in Oxford, Mississippi, the University of Mississippi

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§§ Woodruff, using the Coca-Cola governmental affairs team as his "ears to the ground," was constantly kept apprised of political developments throughout the country. When Ronald Reagan's popularity surged and he ran for re-election in 1970, for instance, Woodruff wrote a \$1,000 check to help defray campaign expenses.

\*\*\* Under Eisenhower, Woodruff also held Pass No. 1, although in 1959 he was issued another, No. 6309, which indicated that he stood an even six feet tall, weighed 180 pounds, and had, remarkably, very brown hair even at that age.

had been integrated, albeit forcibly and nastily. On January 28, 1963, Clemson Agricultural College in upstate South Carolina peaceably desegregated in an episode later characterized by the *Saturday Evening Post* as “integration with dignity.” Sit-ins were commonplace; Rich’s and other downtown establishments had been subjected to them already. Greensboro, North Carolina, and its Woolworth’s lunch counter had been constantly in the news in 1960 for sit-ins and disturbances there. Atlanta’s own public schools would be desegregated the following year, the push for which already had begun. All over the South, change was occurring. The only differences seemed to be in magnitude and level of accompanying violence.<sup>98</sup>

Woodruff recognized, as most thoughtful people did by the 1960s, that the civil rights era was going to bring about changes, and he wanted to see them come to fruition as peaceably as possible. He was fond of saying, in a black dialect, “Ah tries to cooperate with the inevitable.” The trick was, Joe Jones points out, knowing exactly *what* was inevitable and what was mere sound and fury. Woodruff, who prided himself on being able to see “over the next hill,” was better equipped than most to determine what was and what was not going to transpire. His tremendous intuitive senses alerted him to forthcoming changes and

allowed him to guide the city toward those changes calmly and peaceably. In business negotiations, Woodruff was apt to jot, "We should move forward with a minimum of acrimony," and that summed up his attitude toward the race issue. Perhaps, even, it would have been better stated this way: "We should move forward with a minimum of acrimony that negatively impacts the business community." Whatever the case, Woodruff was moving his friends and colleagues ahead, just as he struggled within himself to find his true position. By the mid-1960s, Woodruff was not the same man who surely laughed at the parody of the Twenty-Third Psalm that Hartsfield had sent him only a few years before.<sup>99</sup>

That struggle was on display at noon on August 3, 1964, in his office suite when, chatting over martinis before luncheon with several Coca-Cola board members, Woodruff made his private views known – very plainly. Nothing was helpful about the forays of Yankees and super-charged liberals – "beatnik-type persons," in Woodruff's phrase – into the South under the pretense of helping the black man achieve his rightful place in society, he declared. All these interlopers wished to do was to stir up a stink and gain publicity. He wished they would all go home and let the South solve its own problems.<sup>100</sup>

To be sure, that was not the posture he assumed in public or semi-public forums. His position had advanced since Hartsfield's letter had crossed his desk two years earlier, but it had not advanced to meet non-Southern views just yet, as his utterances made plain. When Woodruff made these remarks, he was in the company of *his* men, men who owed their fortunes and their allegiances to him. That is, with one exception: a complicated Northerner named William Appleton Coolidge.

Coolidge was wealthy, though not on the Woodruff scale. (Woodruff's wealth at the time was estimated at nearly \$150 million, while Coolidge probably had less than \$20 million. Of that, some of his wealth came from the family textile fortune of which he was an heir, and \$2 million was in Coca-Cola stock he acquired at the time of the Minute Maid merger.) And it was that wealth, plus a good dose of northern liberalism, that allowed Coolidge to speak freely, just as Woodruff had done before that day's board meeting.<sup>101</sup>

He said nothing to Woodruff's face, perhaps knowing he and his views were greatly outnumbered there in the Coke executive suite. But after he returned home to Boston, Coolidge dictated a letter that was as sharp a rebuke as anyone ever hurled at Robert Woodruff.

“I was not surprised, although slightly grieved, to hear you make a remark the other day that was very disparaging of the quality of the Mississippi Civil Rights volunteers,” Coolidge began, in a tone that only can be described as condescending.

The horrible tragedy of this whole business lies in the feeling that fine Southerners like yourself have – that the coloured man does not really seek for his self-respect. I do not know how that is going to be brought home to you. I only hope it is not through bloodshed.

I am always tempted, myself, to join in some such type of protest but have felt that, when the time came, my influence would be greater if I had not committed myself in that way.

...The coloured man does seek for his self-respect, even though he has to obscure that fact if he wishes to gain favor with even the best of the Southern white people.<sup>102</sup>

Woodruff, in so many words, was madder than hell when Coolidge’s missive, enclosing an article from a recent edition of the *New York Times* on the subject, landed on his desk. In Woodruff’s view, Coolidge’s attitude typified everything that was wrong with outside interference in Southern matters – interference he had been speaking of on the occasion in question. In between bouts of open anger, Woodruff must have wondered: Doesn’t this eccentric Yankee understand what I am saying?<sup>103</sup>

He did not, and if he had he would not have agreed with it. And it was while simmering on this disconnect in views that Woodruff got angrier and angrier.

Had Woodruff not shown enough compassion to blacks? Had he not given millions of dollars to the city for its whites *and* its black citizens? Was he not the person who had made all the difference in Ivan Allen's Public Accommodations Bill testimony as well as in the progressive policies that Allen and Hartsfield before him had been able to advocate? What more did this damn Yankee want of him?

Woodruff, dictating for the record his version of events, asked himself these questions – and answered them.

The record of my interest in the Negro race in the areas of health, education, recreation, etc., is not anything of which I am ashamed. My understanding of the Negro and his problems would be endorsed, I believe, by the competent Negro leadership in any community.<sup>104</sup>

Faithful as always, Joe Jones sought to curb his boss's anger by composing a draft reply to be sent, over Woodruff's signature, to Coolidge. Woodruff himself dictated a draft to Lucille Huffman, his longtime secretary. Woodruff's dictation, a preliminary draft of his reply, contained sharp commentary.

I wouldn't want to go into the matter of who profited the most from the practice of hauling Negroes from Africa and

selling them to Southern planters as slaves. My impression is that money received from this business formed the basis of several New England, especially Massachusetts, family fortunes.<sup>105</sup>

Jones sought, wisely, to soften this proposed reply to something a bit more benign. In the first of ten additional drafts, Woodruff, after thanking Coolidge for his note “commenting on the casual remark I made during luncheon when you were in Atlanta,” again sought to fire back on Coolidge. “I am sorry you do not seem to have a better understanding of the subject we were discussing,” Woodruff dictated at the end of that draft. (Trying further to calm Woodruff, Joe Jones typed several suggestions on the bottom of this letter, hoping, one can surmise, that Woodruff’s temper would not get the better of him.) Woodruff even asked Paul Austin to suggest a reply for him, and Austin suggested a terse, two-line letter that claimed “I found your comments interesting.”<sup>106</sup>

Several drafts and eleven days later, the version of Woodruff’s reply that was sent to Boston was even milder. His ire having been moderated by Joe Jones and his private secretary, Lucille Huffman, the letter was merely an acknowledgement of Coolidge’s attack. As Frederick Allen noted, Woodruff’s tone is remarkable in its dignity and calm. “Thanks so much for sending it along,” Woodruff wrote in reference to Coolidge’s note.<sup>107</sup>

We can be certain Woodruff was about as thankful for any input from Coolidge as a dog is for fleas. He did not have much rapport with Coolidge, who was philosophical in his musings and was not at all comfortable with the quick, to-the-point board meetings that Woodruff insisted upon. Coolidge emerged onto the Coca-Cola scene from the culture of Minute Maid, in which he had heavily invested before that company was purchased by Coke in the early 1960s, and the corporate cultures, if they could be called such, of the two companies were far apart. Board meetings at Minute Maid took days. At Coca-Cola they seldom exceeded a few hours.

It has been conjectured that, after receiving such a critical letter, Woodruff's resolve to move the South forward in its views deepened and strengthened. There likely is truth to that hypothesis. Whatever the case, Woodruff would need as much strength as he could muster to see Atlanta over her next hurdle.<sup>108</sup>

#### *Racial Harmony at the Dinkler Plaza*

Martin Luther King, Jr., was, of course, the popular leader of the civil rights movement. An Atlantan and a minister like his father, King preached non-violence and urged his followers to work aggressively with,

rather than flatly against, the white man to make progress. For his innumerable efforts on behalf of black Americans, and mainly for his embrace of non-violent tactics, King in late 1964 was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, and he flew off to Oslo, Norway, to accept.<sup>†††</sup>

Simultaneously, the civil rights movement was gathering extra steam in the wake of Lyndon Johnson's triumphant re-election that fall. Ever politically astute and genuinely friendly, Woodruff on November 4, 1964, dashed off a telegram to Johnson, now president in his own right, who was savoring victory at his ranch in Texas. The missive said, in part, "For your legion of friends and admirers – and for the country – it was an especially significant triumph. Am sorry it wasn't unanimous."<sup>109</sup>

Upon reading the press release announcing King's award, Ivan Allen knew he had a problem. Others recognized this, too. The problem was this: King, a native son, was about to receive one of the world's highest honors. However, he was black. How would official Atlanta react?

The answer was soon apparent. A group of four prominent, liberal Atlantans set out to honor Dr. King at a dinner soon after his return from accepting the prize. Archbishop Paul J. Halinan, Rabbi Jacob Rothschild,

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<sup>†††</sup> Birmingham's "Bull" Connor's reaction was typical of men of his backwards view. "They're [the Nobel Peace Prize committee] scraping the bottom of the barrel," Connor derisively opined.

Dr. Benjamin Mays, and Ralph McGill organized a dinner for Dr. King at the posh Dinkler Plaza Hotel downtown.<sup>##</sup> There were to be 1,000 tickets, on sale for \$6.50 each. And it was planned to be a grand affair, scheduled for January 27, 1965. The problem was, no one wanted to buy tickets.<sup>110</sup>

Woodruff got his letter. After consulting with Boisfeuillet Jones, the head of the Emily and Ernest Woodruff Foundation, the group created after his parents' death, he asked Jones to reply. "I will be glad to be one of the one hundred Atlanta citizens serving as a sponsoring group for this recognition dinner," Jones jotted on Woodruff's behalf. No less active than ever at seventy-five, Woodruff was then at Ichauway, where he was recovering from a riding accident that left him bruised but broke no bones. And it was there that Ivan Allen and Paul Austin visited him to alert him to what a man of his intuitive faculties must already have known: there was rising a fierce tide of opposition to the dinner in Atlanta.<sup>111</sup>

Already storm clouds were on the horizon; on December 29, the *Atlanta Journal* had published an article headlined "Banquet for Dr. King Meets Obstacles Here." Similarly ominous was the appearance in the *New*

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<sup>##</sup> The Dinkler Plaza in those years embodied everything chic and up-and-coming about Atlanta. It underwent a tremendous expansion in the mid-1960s and was the location of the Atlanta branch of the Playboy Club, which could be entered from the side of the building facing Luckie Street.

*York Times* of a report on the turmoil under the title “Banquet to Honor Dr. King Sets Off Quiet Dispute Here.”<sup>112</sup>

Woodruff reacted calmly, by all accounts, but he must have been worried about his city’s image and the grave embarrassment it would suffer if the dinner did not come off smoothly. After a quail hunt in Ichauway’s plentiful wiregrass one afternoon, Woodruff gave Allen and Austin the word: they were to relay his support for the dinner to the troops in Atlanta and tell them that he, Robert Woodruff, the Biggest Mule of Them All, expected them to be present for the upcoming event.

Upon returning to the city, Austin convened a meeting of the power structure at the ultra-exclusive Piedmont Driving Club, since 1887 a popular and chic retreat for Atlanta society that was and is situated on a hill overlooking the sweeping terrain of Piedmont Park. That this meeting promoting racial comity was held in the all-white, old-line bastion of the Piedmont Driving Club was an irony that occurred to no one at the time. Standing in the marbled splendor of the clubhouse, Austin leered at his guests and told them that, as good Atlantans, they must attend the Dinkler Plaza event. For emphasis, and as if no one was aware of it, Austin added that Woodruff was in support of the dinner and that he, too,

wished everyone to go. Allen capped off the meeting by taking a first calm and then accusatory tone with these, the dons of the establishment.<sup>113</sup>

Well, gentlemen, I have listened to your reasons for support and I am sure I'll find that you will support it financially and that you will glory in the very fine national publicity that you will receive. But on the night of the banquet it's my guess that very few of you will be present. Most of you will be out of town or sick, and you'll send someone to represent you.

Don't let it worry you, though. The Mayor will be there.<sup>114</sup>

And there he would be. Only two weeks after the *Atlanta Journal* had printed its article on the difficulties the banquet was encountering – and only days after Woodruff's wishes had been communicated – the sponsorship lists were full and tickets were selling rapidly. By the night of the dinner, January 27, not 1,000 but 1,500 tickets had been sold to a standing-room-only crowd. Allen sat right next to Dr. and Mrs. King at the head table, chatting amiably with the guests as the young King children played underfoot. In his remarks, Allen noted that, "Through the years, as history is wrought, some men are destined to be leaders of humanity and to shape the future courses of the world. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is such a man." The dinner, which lasted three hours, had as its centerpiece a stirring, forty-five-minute speech by Dr. King himself, who famously said that "there are in the white South millions of people of

good will, whose voices are yet unheard, whose course is yet unclear, and whose courageous acts are yet unseen.”<sup>115</sup>

Allen presented King with a proclamation of congratulations by the city, and King was also given a tremendous, crystal Steuben bowl. The idea of the bowl had been Janice Rothschild’s, and it had arrived, rush-delivery and special order from Steuben in Corning, New York. Etched with a picture of a dogwood, the city’s symbol, the handsome gift was a token of the good intentions of white Atlanta to its most famous black son.<sup>116</sup>

Outside the Dinkler Plaza, there was but one sour note during the whole evening. More protest was expected; indeed, police coverage was heavy both outside and inside the hotel, where many plainclothes officers were placed strategically in the ballroom in case of trouble. Charlie Lebedin, who owned Leb’s Restaurant across the street from the hotel, stood on the sidewalk outside yelling, “Peace...peace...peace with violence! Peace! A lot of baloney!”<sup>sss</sup> Leb, whose restaurant had been the site of several sit-ins and who claimed that demonstrators had previously

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<sup>sss</sup> Leb’s and the area immediately around it had been a flashpoint for racial demonstrations all year. Earlier, in protest of the desegregation mandated by the Public Accommodations Bill, hooded and robed Klansmen had paraded up and down the street in front of Leb’s, a busy area of downtown near Five Points, holding signs that read, “Please STAY OUT...NEGROES and WHITES MIX HERE.” Later, he would say, “I was never a segregationist. But I am today. They [the demonstrators] made me one.”

urinated on his floor and damaged furniture, was led away deftly by an Atlanta policeman, who said, “Charlie, be careful. Don’t get in trouble.”<sup>117</sup>

Overall, though, when Atlanta awoke on Thursday, January 28, 1965, it could give itself a much-deserved, at-first-unexpected pat on the back. The dinner, carried live on network radio and on the Voice of America, had been a success. That Friday, the *Atlanta Constitution* would publish an editorial titled “In Doing Honor to Dr. King, Atlanta Did Honor to Itself Before the World.” “Ten years ago,” the editorial noted, “such a gathering would have been impossible – not because Atlanta lacked men of goodwill, but because custom and law would have barred the way.” Papers around the country also praised the banquet, the man it honored, and the city that hosted it.<sup>118</sup>

Although Woodruff did not attend the dinner – he was still convalescing at Ichauway and rarely attended large functions anyway – his stamp of approval was crucial to the success the event enjoyed. His endorsement of the affair trumped what *Time* magazine would call the protestations of “segregationist bankers” and merchants “who feared that their participation in the testimonial might cost them white customers.” Though the writers at *Time* were unaware of Woodruff’s intervention, they wrote of the tension that had pervaded before it by saying that “for a

while things got so sticky McGill considered calling the dinner off.” And though Allen led the charge toward success after Woodruff issued his decree, Bill Hartsfield, attuned as ever to the machinations of the press, told *Time* that he had “had to do a little selling job” to ensure the dinner’s success.<sup>119</sup>

I reminded them [the members of the power structure] that the whole town gave Bobby Jones a parade when he won the four golf titles [the Grand Slam]...

I reminded them that they gave a big welcome to Atlanta’s war heroes, too.

Dr. King, I told them, was being honored as a Nobel prizewinner, not because he sat down at a lunch counter or picketed over in Selma.<sup>120</sup>

How much influence Hartsfield had over the resulting outcome of the King dinner is debatable. He had by then been out of office for over two years, and in this time he had divorced his long-suffering wife, Pearl, and married much younger woman named Tollie Toland. The former mayor’s personal reputation had been diminished slightly as a result, but his opinions, due to his solid reputation as a dynamic and can-do executive, carried weight regardless of what went on in his private life, within reason of course. Certainly his voice joining the chorus of encouragement did not hurt. Whatever the case, the King dinner signaled as nothing else had that Atlanta was a progressive city, a place that

wanted to grow and hungered to be seen as tolerant. The dinner was a high point for race relations in Atlanta, which would descend again before a plateau of peace would be achieved.<sup>121</sup>

### *Onward and Upward*

By 1965, Ivan Allen had hit his stride. Atlanta was relatively peaceful, and it was growing at an amazing rate. Since “M Day” in 1959, when the city celebrated its one millionth resident, the city had risen from the ashes of the Civil War’s last vestiges at a remarkable clip. Old and new businesses were growing. Unemployment rates were as low as could be found anywhere in the nation. The new Atlanta Civic Center, long needed, as well as airport expansions and a stadium for the Braves, formerly of Milwaukee, were either finished or almost complete. (In a Name-the-Stadium contest, “Nut Bowl” had been a submission. It was rejected.) Between \$47 million and \$130 million in new building projects were expected to be undertaken in 1966, setting a new record over 1965, also a banner year. Atlanta was a national leader in the amount of nuclear fallout-shelter space it contained, and, on the more comfortable side, hotel rooms in the city had doubled since 1960. On Sunday, March 23, 1975, Lewis Grizzard, writing in the combined *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*,

noted that in 1965, “stars fell on [an] optimistic Atlanta.” Signs that year were everywhere that he was right.<sup>122</sup>

Those stars were not falling without a little prodding. Using his tremendous connections in the power structure, Ivan Allen was moving Atlanta forward at an amazing clip. In the mid-1960s, borrowing a concept from New York’s John Lindsay, Allen began a program that would attempt to improve conditions for children in Atlanta’s slums by placing sand boxes, swing sets, and portable swimming pools in vacant lots. One of Allen’s aides, Dan Sweat, recalled that as the project began gathering steam, the mayor wanted to know how much an installation would cost. “Six thousand dollars each,” Sweat nervously replied.

Allen never hesitated. Declaring that “we can’t wait for them” – meaning the Board of Aldermen, which would have to approve such expenditures – he yanked from his desk drawer his own personal checkbook, wrote a check for \$6,000, and handed it to an astonished Sweat.

“Here, I’m buying my Play Lot,” Allen told his aide, and the mayor then instructed Sweat to “call Billy Sterne [head of the Trust Company of Georgia]. You call Dick Rich [chief of Rich’s Department Stores].” He named a few more Big Mules, and then he instructed Sweat to “tell each

one of them to send you a check for \$6,000. Then call Mr. Woodruff's office and tell him we want him to match the total."

Sweat dutifully placed the calls, and he received a quick lesson in the ways of Atlanta's elite when he received answers. "Nobody blinked an eye," Sweat later said. The program was up-and-running soon, another Allen success and another accomplishment for Atlanta. From the slums to the heart of the city, progress was being made everywhere and in tangible ways.<sup>123</sup>

The Trust Company of Georgia, the Woodruff bank, had in 1962 opened a futuristic branch, its first, on Monroe Drive in midtown. The concrete structure had a curious, space-age appearance with a scalloped roofline and drive-through windows teller windows that looked like lily pads. Designed by Henri Jova, the bank won an American Institute for Architects award of merit for its stunning, ground-breaking design, which featured chrome-trimmed furniture and bright red carpeting. "It was a difficult sell," Jova remembered nearly a half-century later. "Atlanta had a reputation for encouraging modern work in business structures; the exception, of course, was banks. Banks had to have four columns and be very traditional." Difficult sell or not, the branch proved a hit with

customers, and it helped to signal that the staid Trust Company could compete in the new era.<sup>124</sup>

Another architect would have an even greater impact on the Atlanta skyline than Jova ever dreamed of making. John Portman, a Georgia Tech graduate, began making his deep imprint on Atlanta in 1956, when he partnered with Griffith Edwards, a former professor of his at Tech, in an architectural practice. (He had opened a practice of his own in 1953.) By the late 1950s, Portman wanted to branch out into development, and so he convinced real estate magnate Ben Massell and three other associates to support financially his idea for a merchandise mart in downtown. By 1961, the 22-story mart had arisen from a previously underused parcel in the heart of the city, at Peachtree and Harris Streets, and it became wildly successful almost immediately.

Seeing that older hotels like the Henry Grady, one block down Peachtree toward Five Points, the center of the business district, could not support the demand mart attendees placed on them, Portman again assumed the role of architect-as-developer, and began planning for a major hotel across the street from the mart. Beginning with the typical closed-corridor city hotel model, Portman found himself frustrated, and he quickly abandoned that concept for a design featuring an atrium more

than 20 stories high and more than 100 feet square. The rooms of the new hotel would be entered from balconies overlooking the atrium, and each would have its own private balcony with a view of the city. The crowning touch to this futuristic structure was the blue-domed Polaris Room restaurant that sat atop the elevator core a story above the glass roof and resembled a spaceship. For years, the glow of lights underneath the blue glass would dominate the Atlanta skyline at night, just as the tan structure did during the day. At first rebuffed by Conrad Hilton himself, who remarked, "That concrete monster will never fly!" on a visit to the site during construction, Portman persuaded Donald Pritzker of the Hyatt chain to assume management of the hotel, and soon its occupancy rates and revenues were outpacing even the most optimistic predictions. Portman had arrived, and in the years to come the three-block stretch of Peachtree Street that he controlled would begin to resemble midtown Manhattan in its collection of skyscrapers and eateries.\*\*\*\* Portman's Peachtree Center, the name he gave to his new mixed-use urban development, heralded the dawn of a new era in Atlanta – an era filled with hope and forward-looking men who were staking their very own fortunes on the future of their city.<sup>125</sup>

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\*\*\*\* He later would do the same for a forgotten, flophouse-filled area of San Francisco's downtown, from which would emerge Embarcadero Center, a partnership with David Rockefeller and Texas developer Trammel Crow.

As Atlanta's luck soared, Coca-Cola experienced similarly stunning success. By 1966, Robert Woodruff had been at the "helm" of the company – not always by dint of title but always in fact – for forty-three years. He was omnipresent and was known as "the Boss" to everyone in the Coca-Cola empire. And by the mid-1960s that empire was flying higher than ever. For true Coca-Cola men, their product was "a religion as well as a business." In 1966, 327,000,000 gallons of syrup was sold, representing a nineteen-fold increase over the 17,300,000 gallons sold in 1923, Woodruff's first year as president. Even more impressive was the more than 1,000-fold stratospheric climb of earnings per share on Coca-Cola stock, which had stood at sixteen cents per share in 1923 (on 500,000 shares of common stock outstanding) and now, in 1966, was \$2.90 per share on 28,500,000 outstanding shares.<sup>+++</sup> Fittingly, the stock still traded under the ticker symbol KO on the New York Stock Exchange. And it should have. It was, by all accounts, a knock-out.<sup>126</sup>

*Forward Atlanta, Backwards Georgia*

In the 1920s, under Ivan Allen's father, a promotional campaign was launched to draw capital, visitors, and conventions to the city. The

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<sup>+++</sup> This increase exceeded inflation by more than a factor of nine.

name: Forward Atlanta. For decades, Atlanta could pride itself as being the most progressive city in the South, even if it was still largely segregated and managed (barely) to keep Ku Klux Klan and other violent influences at bay.<sup>127</sup>

Ivan Allen, Jr., sought to keep Atlanta in its position as the example of tolerance for the Georgia hinterlands and the rest of the South. Chatting with Mills Lane, head of Citizens' and Southern Bank, one day in 1965, Allen expressed his continued discontentment with the segregationist policies of the Commerce Club, a posh retreat for the power structure in the heart of downtown. In 1963, Allen had attempted to throw the annual dinner he gave for the state legislature in those environs, only finding that since state Senator Leroy Johnson, a newly elected black representative, was to be in attendance, he would have to cancel the whole event or move it elsewhere. (Allen cancelled.) Listening to Allen, Lane thought in his characteristically impatient way and finally said, "Look, the issue of Negroes coming into the Commerce Club has been with us a long time, and we've never faced up to it. I know how you feel about it, so why don't you bring it up at the next meeting of the board?"

Allen planned to do just that, although the next meeting was, in Allen's words, a "big one that included Robert Woodruff, three bank

presidents, and some of the city's most prominent white business leaders – sixteen of them in all.” When those sixteen Big Mules had gathered, Lane pressed Allen publicly to relate to the group what was on his mind. And Allen, faced with no alternative, no way to back out, stood up and addressed his fellow board members. “Gentlemen,” he began, “let’s don’t beat around the bush. We can’t dodge this issue the rest of our lives. This is the club of commerce, in which we’ve tried to cut across all lines in the city and bring the entire business community together. I’m making a motion that we accept Negro citizens as guests.”

Deafening silence greeted the mayor’s motion. Not one person spoke, and not one second to his motion was offered. Then, “finally,” Allen remembered, “Mr. Woodruff leaned over to me and said in an audible whisper, ‘Ivan, you’re absolutely right.’” That did it. Allen’s motion immediately was seconded – several times over, in fact – and the motion passed unanimously.

As Allen recalled, “It was an eloquent testimony to the influence of Robert Woodruff over Atlanta’s younger white business leaders.” Allen had again advocated a position out in front of that favored by most of the establishment, and Robert Woodruff had been there to support him and

ensure his success. Because of Allen, and even more because of Woodruff, Atlanta became more and more racially tolerant.<sup>128</sup>

The remainder of the state of Georgia was, by and large, the exact opposite. In 1966, following Governor Carl Sanders's term, a pitched battle was waged for the Georgia chief executive's seat between Lester Maddox, representing Ivan Allen's "dark side of the South," and Howard "Bo" Callaway, a moderate from LaGrange. Maddox, an Atlanta native, owned the popular Pickrick ("You PICK it out, we'll RICK it up!") restaurant near both the Coca-Cola headquarters and Georgia Tech campuses. The Pickrick's fried chicken was a hit with the locals, and as they clamored into the restaurant for it, they were subjected to the philosophies of the establishment's owner.

Maddox, a small, slight man with a bulbous, bald head, was then at his peak as a staunch segregationist. The day after President Johnson signed the 1964 Civil Rights Act, two black men had attempted to eat at the Pickrick, and Maddox chased them from the parking lot with a pistol, all the while yelling profanely, among other phrases, "Get out of here and don't come back!" He was supported by a number of customers, aware of Maddox's plans for resistance, held pick-ax handles he had kept on hand for just such a moment. It was, even in the context of the South in those

days, a shocking moment. Maddox went to court, for in addition to appearing there to defend his right to refuse service to blacks, he had been charged with pointing a gun at his would-be customers. (He was found not guilty on all counts by an all-white jury.) When he lost his battle to keep the Pickrick segregated, he entertained reporters by telling them, "I'm not going to integrate. If I lose everything, I'm not worried. Lyndon Johnson said he's going to eradicate poverty, didn't he?"<sup>129</sup>

Though Woodruff and his cronies were backing Calloway, "Old Bo," as he was called by Coke's chief lobbyist, showed little in the way of political aptitude. In fact, he appeared as a rank amateur, much unsuited for the spotlight much less for the Governor's Office. Calloway could not relate to his peers and performed even worse with black audiences, which cost him popularity in Atlanta. In the general election, however, Calloway carried the popular vote in Georgia, but not by a large enough margin to win outright. By law, the Georgia legislature was therefore charged with choosing a victor. As Lester Maddox reflected the segregationist views then still prevailing among its members, the legislature chose Maddox to fill the chief executive's slot. That event that made Ivan Allen and other progressives grind their teeth.<sup>130</sup>

The outcome, as far as those progressives were concerned, was as horrible as could be imagined. Lester Maddox, that evil segregationist, was sitting under the gold dome of Georgia's capitol building, and he was going to rewind time to the Civil War era. So went the thoughts, and with justification: Maddox was not timid in describing his view of the black race or what he perceived to be injustices done to Americans, particularly Southerners, by the federal government. A photograph of the era shows Maddox standing somberly over a casket labeled "Freedom, Liberty, and Independence," and prominent in his restaurant was a sign detailing Maddox's own blatantly bigoted views. Labeled "To the World," the sign was meant as a primer for all those who did not, but may wish to, hold Maddox's views. "The American Free Enterprise System," it began, as well as

- Constitutional Government • States Rights
- Private Property Rights • Individual Rights • Freedom and Liberty...

Lies Here, and All Over America,

**STABBED, BLEEDING AND DYING<sup>131</sup>**

Maddox's written rant went on to list, in six bombastic categories, those he viewed as responsible for these ills. Perhaps most audacious was that sixth category. Maddox therein charged "The Mayor of My City, The

Governor of My State and Other Public Officials Who Were On Our Side Until They Decided to Get Elected.” Soon after these signs went up, Maddox would close the Pickrick rather than serve black customers. For Maddox, old habits definitely died hard.<sup>132</sup>

Maddox felt that Ivan Allen and his colleagues were out to kill them with a vengeance, which they most certainly were. Only earlier that election year, on September 6, 1966, had a riot developed in Summerhill, a poor, black community south of the center city that once had been 354 acres of house after house of middle class whites. An estimated 10,000 blacks lived there, most in dilapidated, pest-infested hovels. Summerhill took first place in at least four categories of no positive distinction whatsoever: the city’s figures, by neighborhood, of rape, juvenile delinquency, robbery, and murder. It was an area situated, ironically enough, in sight of the greatest urban renewal project Atlanta had ever known: the new Atlanta Stadium, which had been completed in a record-setting fifty-one weeks and at a cost of approximately \$18 million. And it was an area that could erupt with a riot just as easily as an ice cube could melt on an Atlanta sidewalk that stiflingly hot summer.<sup>133</sup>

*Turbulence: Summerhill and Lester Maddox*

Erupt it did. A white Atlanta policeman received a tip that a young black man, suspected of stealing a car, was joyriding in Summerhill. The officer proceeded there, found the suspect, and began to take him into custody. During the arrest, however, the young man jerked away from the officer and ran. Reacting quickly, but perhaps not as wisely as hindsight might have prescribed, the policeman shot the fleeing suspect in the leg.

Militant civil rights activist Stokely Carmichael, who was a constant thorn in Ivan Allen's side, began spreading rumors house to house in that neighborhood that the young man had been murdered on the porch of his mother's house. Seeking to further provoke the Summerhill residents, Carmichael implored them to rise up and take action lest "Whitey kills us all."

The riot soon began, and hundreds, if not thousands, of blacks filled the streets, overturning and setting fire to cars, hurling bricks through windows, and milling about in a state of high agitation. Allen had been alerted to the trouble, and, as he had planned to do in just such a moment, he left for the scene after alerting Governor Carl Sanders, still in office, to send 200 state troopers to assist the Atlanta police force. As he

raced out of his office, Allen also ordered his secretary to call twenty-five black ministers who could help him restore peace and who had agreed to help at a moment's notice. If ever he needed them, Allen needed them now.<sup>134</sup>

Allen was driven to the scene by his primary aide, George Royal, and they stopped first at a prominent intersection on Capitol Avenue. They observed the destruction that already had occurred and noted that the paltry number of policemen on the scene were helpless to contain the violence. Clearly, quick and conciliatory action was needed.

As he had proved in the city hall cafeteria, on the campaign trail, and in the weeks leading up to the King dinner, Allen was no coward. And he was not one this day, either. Gathering up Royal and a uniformed policeman named Morris Redding, Allen, dressed in a conservative, tailor-made, gray business suit, entered the fray. Allen, as he noted later, was trying to show the crowd that their mayor was there – there for *them* – and that there was no need for such violence. He also was trying to divert the rioters from destructive pursuits until help arrived that could contain them, peaceably, once and for all.<sup>135</sup>

Jumping from Royal's official car, Allen approached the ranking officer then on the scene, Captain Oscar Jordan, and asked, "Is the chief

[Herbert Jenkins] here yet?" Told that the police chief was not yet there, Allen said, "All right, until he arrives I'm in charge," to which Jordan dutifully replied, "Yes, sir, Mr. Mayor."

"Let's go, George," Allen said to Royal.

An astonished Royal asked the mayor what he was planning to do, and the mayor answered, "I'm going to walk through the damned thing."<sup>136</sup>

Walking up and down the streets of Summerhill, a path was cleared for them. Most of the rioters stood in awe that their mayor, the whitest of the white men they so feared, was in their presence, would have the sheer intestinal fortitude to enter their domain – and a place light years away from his own privileged sphere of operations. But there he walked, and aside from a few rioters spitting on him, the walk was peaceful. Amazed rioters, catching sight of the mayor, would whisper with astonishment, "It's the Mayor! It's the Mayor!" as if they could not quite believe it.<sup>137</sup>

Allen was having trouble comprehending he was there, too, once he was, in fact, on that troubled ground.

I don't think I can ever relate my exact feelings. I knew a knife could be stuck into me and nobody would ever know who did it. I knew I could be pounced upon and trampled. I knew I could be hit by a brickbat flying from a hedge. I knew I could be shot

from a second story window. With every step I became less confident that I was going to be able to do any good.<sup>138</sup>

But his demeanor belied none of those inner thoughts. He stopped in the dead center of the crowd, urged them to select representatives to talk with him, and suggested they proceed up Capitol Avenue to the new stadium, which he proposed would serve as a site for mediation.

For a few moments it looked as if the mayor's gambit might work. But then, as uniformed policemen began to clear a path to the stadium, and as the rioters saw those uniformed policemen, the very embodiment of their worst fears, progress disintegrated. A protester shouted, "We ain't going to no white man's goddam stadium. They'll get you in there and the po-leeses will shoot you down. . . . Get the white honkey bastards before they get you."<sup>139</sup>

No sooner had the last syllables of that charge left the protester's lips than Allen realized the crowd was nearer violence than ever. His attempts to squelch the violence had failed. Something else would have to be done, lest the entire district, with the mayor in the middle of it, erupt into bloodshed and pandemonium. The crowd had grown and consolidated, and it was at a main juncture of that consolidation, another intersection along Capitol Avenue, that the mayor made a final pitch for a non-violent resolution to the crisis.

As he recalled later, someone handed Allen a bullhorn and urged him atop a police car sitting, yet undamaged, in that intersection. As Allen agreed and as aides scampered to help the mayor first onto the hood and then onto the roof of the cruiser, doubts began to flurry about in the mayor's mind.<sup>140</sup>

I knew I had made a serious tactical mistake the minute I stood on the top of that car, alone, vulnerable and exposed, looking down at a mob of 2,000 people, taunting me.<sup>141</sup>

Seeing the futility of his new effort, Allen tried one more last-ditch effort for peace by calling from the crowd a young, "responsible looking black man" in clerical clothes to join him on the car's top and to pray. The plan backfired, though, when Allen had no sooner handed over the bullhorn than *this* minister, not one of Allen's twenty-five, began to berate the mayor to his face for his appeals for peace. Making matters worse, a Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) follower then seized the bullhorn and declared that "Atlanta is a Cracker town. It's no different from Watts. The Mayor walks around on plush carpet and wears \$500 suits and eats big steaks, while we eat pig feet and chitlins." This young man, clad in a tattered blue pullover, began a chant of, "Black Power! Black Power! Black Power!" The situation was then hopeless, as was Allen's position atop the police car, where, remarkably, he still stood.

As the cries of “Black Power!” grew louder and the crowd closed in around him, Allen, who had been trying with limited success to maintain his balance, jumped from the car top and landed in the friendly arms of Redding and Royal.<sup>142</sup>

His exodus having completed its first stage, true pandemonium set in. Tear gas canisters flew through the air and exploded, flooding the streetscape with their noxious fog. No more immune than anyone else to the gas’s effects, Allen yanked his silk handkerchief from his suit’s outside breast pocket and pressed it to his nostrils, fighting to keep the fumes from his airways. About that time, Herbert Jenkins, Chief of Police, arrived and Allen consulted with him about the next move he, the mayor, should take.<sup>143</sup>

“For God’s sake, mayor, you’ve hit a home run. Now get out of here and get straightened out while you’ve got the chance,” Jenkins implored, and Allen beat a hasty retreat to his office, where he changed out of clothes now soaking wet and had a quick shower before catching his breath with his wife, Louise, who had been watching the events unfold on television all afternoon and who now, as she was always, was at her husband’s side.

After Allen's departure, more than 1,000 policemen – mostly Atlanta cops, with a helpful infusion of state troopers – calmed the situation in Summerhill. Shattered glass littered the landscape, and tear gas could still be smelled, but there was no blood, there were no deaths. Atlanta's Summerhill was no Watts, where earlier that year thirty-four people had lost their lives in a similar riot. Only seventy-five Summerhill rioters were arrested, and only sixteen would require hospital care.<sup>144</sup>

Atlantans, both black and white, digested the news of a riot quicker and easier than they did the mental image of their mayor – their *white* mayor, pillar of the establishment – having the guts to jump on top of a car in a sea of rioters and try to calm them. For those who had been at the scene, the reality of the situation was hard to comprehend. Hosea Williams, a prominent figure in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and an intimate of Martin Luther King, Jr., recalled, "I couldn't believe some white man had that nerve [to climb atop the police car]. He was crazy! He had the guts of a lion."<sup>145</sup>

Others felt the same way. Hubert Humphrey, then Vice President of the United States, said that "If there is a hero on the domestic scene today, it's Ivan Allen of Atlanta." "No other mayor of any city experiencing the trauma of riots has so behaved," wrote Ralph McGill,

surely remembering the deplorable performance of Sam Yorty of Los Angeles (whom Allen had once called “the sorriest white man’s mayor that ever stepped on two feet”) during the Watts riots. “Even the more angry and bitter could not fail to respect him.”<sup>146</sup>

John Sibley, by then the dean of the Georgia legal establishment and an entrenched figure in the power structure, wrote Allen, the son of the man who’d been his friend for so many years, that “The late Mr. Jack Spalding [one of the founders of King and Spalding, Sibley’s firm and the most blue-blood, establishment law firm in Atlanta then and now] often made the remark that ‘blood counts.’ He applied this to race horses as well as to me. Your courageous leadership and action during the recent riot again evidences the truth of that statement.”<sup>147</sup>

Not all of Allen’s mail was positive, of course, and in due time the negative reactions came pouring in. One city resident wrote that Allen had “given great dinners for such scoundrels as Martin Luther King and have brought Atlanta to the point of nothing much better than Harlem itself,” while another writer offered sarcasm: “Dear Ivan: The next time you get on top of a car down in Nigger Town we suggest you wear a parachute. You really took off like a jet.” For the most part, however,

Atlantans and people nationwide praised Allen's actions. To them, Allen was a beacon of hope for the continued progress of the South.<sup>148</sup>

Allen was undeterred by his critics' salvos – even if it appeared that soon, the Governor's chamber at the state capitol would be filled by Lester Maddox. Ignoring his responsibilities as a fellow Democrat, Allen lashed out at Maddox just after his primary victory. His statement captured the feelings of the business establishment – Bob Woodruff's men.

It is deplorable that the combined forces of ignorance, prejudice, reactionism and duplicity of many Republican voters have thrust upon the State of Georgia Lester Maddox, a totally unqualified individual as the Democratic Nominee for Governor. We cannot permit our state's progress to be stopped and reversed by [Maddox].<sup>149</sup>

The mayor's statement had little impact, and despite protestations and pleas from many quarters, on January 10, 1967, lawmakers selected Lester Maddox as the next governor by a vote of 182 to 62. Atlanta had always had trouble reconciling itself with the rest of Georgia. Now, Atlanta gasped and prepared to continue its progress despite Maddox's pistol-waving, demagogic ways.<sup>150</sup>

## CHAPTER FOUR: "A CITY TOO BUSY TO HATE," 1968-1970

Years earlier, before the multitudinous changes of the 1960s had appeared and before Atlanta had met them with all its might, then-Mayor William Berry Hartsfield had granted an interview to *Newsweek* correspondent Bill Emerson. Chatting with Emerson, Hartsfield revealed his thoughts about the direction in which he was trying to steer the city he had been elected for so long to lead.

We are a city too busy to hate. It's the pattern of modern Atlanta, set by Henry Grady. Our life blood is communication, connect with the balance of the nation. We seethe under the fact that we are not held in high regard by either political party. We strive to undo the damage that the South's demagogues do to the South and try to make an opposite impression from that created by the loud-mouthed clowns. Our aim in life is to make no business, no industry, no educational or social organization ashamed of the dateline "Atlanta."

Remember...the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment guarantees Northern money equal treatment. The secret of our success: We roll a red carpet out for every damn Yankee who comes in here with two strong hands and some money. We break our necks to sell him.<sup>151</sup>

And for years, Hartsfield had done just that: Sell as many people as possible on Atlanta, the city of the *modern*, not the bigoted, South. Ivan Allen was following in Hartsfield's footsteps, putting a new polish on liberalism (and especially liberalism in the South) as he went.

Both men, each powerful and charismatic in his own right, had been able to govern because the men of the business establishment – the Big Mules – were behind them. Those Big Mules were led by the Biggest Mule of them all, the gruff-speaking, cigar-chomping, empire-building, civic-boosting Robert Woodruff.

Woodruff was at his best when he held court, chomping on that omnipresent cigar – fifteen or twenty a day, mostly Uppmann 50s, according to Joe Jones’ recollections – and responding tersely to opinions put forward to him for his approval, denouncement, or neutral comment. And that court, the Woodruff court, the ultimate of seals of approval, the absolute key to governing – to living – in Atlanta, was held wherever Woodruff happened to be at the moment. “When he gets an idea,” Hughes Spalding once observed, “you can depend on it, others will get the idea.”<sup>152</sup>

“How is policy really developed?” was one of the questions the University of North Carolina sociologist Floyd Hunter asked of Woodruff when conducting research for his 1953 masterwork, *Community Power Structure*. “Is it made in board rooms, or where?”

Woodruff's reply was as instructive as it was amazing in its candor.<sup>###</sup> Without cracking a smile, perfectly seriously, Woodruff said, "It's made wherever I am. I may be at Ichauway, on a boat, anyplace I call it."<sup>153</sup>

More startling than Woodruff's bald admission of his own power was the fact that it was true. There was no exaggeration in his statement, no hyperbole, no insincere self-deprecation, no hedging. Woodruff was *the* power in Atlanta. He knew it, and he knew everyone else knew it. Without Woodruff, not much of any consequence was accomplished in the city that he hoped to "put...in the center of the world."<sup>154</sup>

It was not only policy matters that Woodruff sought to control. His influence extended to the most mundane aspects of the lives of those around him. Once, at a suite in the Biltmore Hotel in New York, Woodruff led a fellow business chieftain off to a bedroom to discuss a serious matter that was then pending, leaving his aides and the others in his party to cool their heels in the living room. Turner Jones, a Coca-Cola executive along on the trip, grew tired of waiting. He stood up and said,

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<sup>###</sup> Also surprising is the fact that Woodruff spoke to Hunter at all. He disdained publicity and for years employed a public relations agency, in the person of Steve Hannagan, to keep his name *out* of the papers. Woodruff recognized that more power could be exercised behind the scenes, and that is where he preferred to stay. One can only guess at the amount of persuasion Hunter had to use to get Woodruff to open up to this degree; Woodruff likely interrogated him at length to be sure of the veracity of Hunter's claim, which was accurate, that his identity would not be revealed in Hunter's then-upcoming book. (It wasn't, nor would it be for decades.)

“I’m getting hungry. When are we going to eat?” Holland Judkins, a high-ranking figure in the Biltmore hotel chain who happened to be in the room that afternoon, turned to Turner Jones and said, “Turner, sit down. Mr. Woodruff will let you know when you’re hungry.” That was the end of *that*, Joe Jones, who also was present, remembered.<sup>155</sup>

Woodruff’s statement rang true most clearly at a moment that Atlanta, in the greatest sense of the words, was in the center of the world – dead center, spotlights on, all microphones live, red lights blinking. And policy was set “wherever I am,” which at that moment was in Washington, D.C. To be more specific, Atlanta’s policy at this crucial moment was being set, via telephone, from the Oval Office and a suite at the Mayflower Hotel a few blocks away. For it was in these two locations that Woodruff found himself on the evening of April 4, 1968.<sup>156</sup>

*“You understand what I’m saying?”*

For America, 1968 had not been easy, not even at the start. Embroiled in the Vietnam War, Lyndon Johnson could not catch a moment’s rest, a minute’s peace. Worn down, on March 31, 1968, he announced he would not seek another term as president. Had the country not been suffering the tremendous casualties it was in that Asian

quagmire, and had the din of discord not already grown so loud, the nation might have breathed a sigh of relief. But for the American nation, much more tumult was to come, and it would come quickly.

April 4, 1968, found Martin Luther King, Jr., in Memphis, where he had traveled to mediate another of the civil rights movement's episodes of discord. His work, lending assistance to striking sanitation workers in that western Tennessee city, done for the day, King was chatting with his lieutenants at his hotel. Standing outside his room with Ralph David Abernathy, on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel, a shot rang out in the early evening air and struck King, the inspiration of millions of American blacks and their hopes for equal rights personified. Abernathy watched as King fell and crumpled on the concrete, blood spilling from his now lifeless body. "Martin," Abernathy said, cradling King's head in his arms, "It's all right. This is Ralph. Martin, can you hear me?" "Oh my God, my God, it's all over," Andrew Young, standing nearby, sobbed heavily.<sup>157</sup>

There was little anyone could do. The bullet had entered King's body between the shoulder and neck – reports were at first unclear – and had performed its dreadful, evil work with nauseating speed. The bullet had, in fact, shattered King's jaw and snapped his spinal column. Sirens wailing though the Memphis dusk, an ambulance rushed King to St.

Joseph's Hospital. Though the American people would not learn of this for a while, there was nothing anyone could do to save King. In a flash, his life had been violently taken. He was pronounced dead at St. Joseph's at 7:05 p.m.<sup>158</sup>

In Buckhead, Ivan and Louise Allen were watching television in the bedroom of their home. Up until that moment, they were more concerned with the rain falling steadily outside than they were with the news broadcast greeting their eyes and ears. Nearby, Nancy Creek, which flowed by at the foot of the Allen property, was becoming overburdened with the day's precipitation. The Allens wondered if the waters would exceed the banks of the creek and encroach upon the gently sloping field that separated it from their elegant home.

Now there was more to worry about than any amount of storm water. "Martin Luther King, Jr., Shot in Memphis," flashed across the television screen, and seconds later a newsman was filling the frame, explaining, as if Allen did not know, what this meant for the plight of black Americans and, indeed, for the nation as a whole.

Stunned, the mayor gathered himself up, as he had done so many times before, and said, "First Kennedy, now King." Pausing a moment,

allowing the news to sink in, giving himself time to crystallize a course of action, he then said, firmly and decisively, "I must go to Mrs. King."<sup>159</sup>

Allen's reaction was not calculated for political gain or personal prestige-building. King was an Atlantan, as was his wife, as was Allen himself, and if an Atlantan was in trouble then he, as mayor and as a proud city father, would go to lend a hand. There was no question what Allen's action would be. By then, in his seventh year as mayor, Allen had grown into the role in such a way and with such natural ease that his responses, while still thoughtful, were genuine and second-nature.

Back in Memphis, Jesse Jackson rushed to find a telephone. He was then one of King's assistants, and it fell to him that spring night to place the call he had always dreaded making, as they all had. Each of the King lieutenants knew what their boss was doing was provoking a lot of anger from ne'er-do-wells and backwards segregationists, and somewhere in the back of each man's mind was the knowledge that someone might try to kill their leader. Day after day, these men pushed these thoughts out and focused on the message of the movement, as one could expect Dr. King did as well. Dialing Coretta Scott King in Atlanta, Jackson must have been awash with emotion. When Mrs. King picked up the receiver in her home in Vine City, a slumlike neighborhood south of Five Points, Jackson was

matter-of-fact. “Coretta, Doc just got shot. I would advise you to take the next thing smoking,” meaning the next flight to Memphis.<sup>160</sup>

Ivan Allen set out immediately for Mrs. King. Louise, his steadfastly supportive wife and the “strong emotional foundation” of the Allen family, insisted upon going with the mayor. “I’ll get a coat.” She didn’t ask. Wherever he went, she was going also. “A lot of times, a woman can do better with another woman,” Louise would say later; she was going not as much to support Ivan as she was to be helpful, to be a comfort, to Mrs. King, with whom, as a woman, she felt a certain kinship instinctively.<sup>161</sup>

Before he departed his home on Northside Drive, the mayor called Mrs. King. After asking if she had seen or heard the news bulletins, Allen wanted to know if she would like to fly to Memphis. Both answers were affirmative. There was, she said, an Eastern Air Lines jet leaving in an hour – at 8:25 – and Mrs. King said she wanted to be on it. “I’m coming over myself,” Allen assured her, and they would take the plane together. Upon hanging up with Mrs. King, Allen phoned police headquarters and ordered a car dispatched to the King home. Then, grabbing his own coat and an umbrella, the mayor and his wife raced down Northside Drive in their Chevrolet, through the center city and toward Vine City.

Arriving at 234 Sunset Avenue, the King's brick home, Allen was met by Coretta King and a uniformed policeman, who was escorting her into an official car for the trip to the airport. Allen's faithful assistant, George Royal, soon screeched to a stop in front of the home in another patrol car, and it was with Royal that Allen rode that night so that he would have access to radio communications to order the airport to hold the Eastern flight. Roaring off down the rain-slicked streets toward the airport, Allen's mind whirled. His mind first was on Dr. King and the struggles he had made on behalf of his people, all black Americans. Allen recalled the 1964 Dinkler Plaza dinner and other occasions, such as Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) meetings he had attended with King at John Portman's new Regency Hyatt House on Peachtree Street, that the two men had been together. Allen had observed King closely and, in the years the two leaders had known each other, Allen had gained a profound appreciation for the young preacher who was, against all odds, championing a cause that needed championing in the worst way. King and Allen had a powerful mutual respect. Once, at a dinner in 1965 in New York, as King accepted an honor from the American Jewish Committee, he praised Allen effusively. "Adding to the honor [received tonight] is the fact that I have been accompanied here by

the mayor of Atlanta, Georgia: my good and close friend, Ivan Allen, Jr.," King had intoned, catching Allen by surprise. As he stood, modestly, to be recognized by thunderous applause, Allen realized just how much his admiration for King had grown and how close they had become. Each brought the other along in his thinking: King broadened Allen's view beyond Atlanta's plights, and Allen made King privy to information on the white power structure and the quickly disintegrating ways of the South they both sought to change.<sup>162</sup>

Alternating between reflection and barking orders on the police band radio in front of him, Allen found himself pulling into the curve-way at the airport. Spying police Captain Morris Redding a few steps away, Allen handed him \$200 from his own wallet and hurriedly said, "Morris, for God's sake, get two tickets for Memphis!" Then, calmer now, he walked to Mrs. King and, taking her arm, escorted her at a dogtrot through the Eastern Air Lines terminal to the Memphis-bound plane, which still was being held on Allen's order. Only a handful of reporters were there, so quickly had events transpired.

Allen sought to console Mrs. King. "It is such a senseless thing," he remarked, his voice never wavering but full of emotion. "When will people ever learn?"<sup>163</sup>

All at once, King's secretary, Dora McDonald, rushed over to Mrs. King and said, "Come on!" Leading her away, McDonald said, "We need a room where we can sit down," and the two women stepped into the lounge area of a women's restroom.<sup>164</sup>

Allen was left standing alone, but his respite was brief, for in another second he was being approached, hurriedly, by an Eastern official who told the mayor he was wanted on the phone. Lifting the receiver of a house line out of its cradle, Allen heard the man on the other end, an executive with Eastern Air Lines calling from Memphis, tell him that "I've been asked to inform you that Dr. King is dead."

Reeling though he was, the mayor was deliberate, thoughtful, cautious in his response. "I want you to go back and reaffirm your statement and be positive that this is right," Allen replied. By now Louise was standing at Allen's side, listening and supporting. The Eastern representative was ready for the mayor's request. "Mayor Allen," he began, "I have been instructed to affirm and *reaffirm* to you that Dr. King is dead. We're trying to furnish you the information as quickly as possible."<sup>165</sup>

Allen dropped the receiver back into its slot and turned away. This was the news he and millions of others across the nation had dreaded, had

hoped would not come. But here it was, and as he pivoted back toward Louise, she understood without a word exchanged between them the news her husband had just received.

The Allens knew that Ivan must now perform a horrific task: informing Mrs. King, officially and without doubt, that her husband, the hope of so many, black and white alike, was dead. (George Christian, White House Press Secretary, had confirmed the news to Lyndon Johnson only moments before Allen was similarly notified.) Slowly and thoughtfully opening the lounge door, the Allens found Mrs. King and Dora McDonald together, weeping and embracing each other, seeking solace. Both women suspected the worst, but had not yet been officially informed. "Mrs. King," Allen began, formally and with dignity, "I have to inform you that Dr. King is dead."<sup>166</sup>

The tears now flowed without pause from Coretta King. Allen removed the fine silk handkerchief from his suit pocket and handed it to her, trying to be helpful. "Is it your wish to go to Memphis?" he asked. "I should go back home and see about the children," Mrs. King, ever strong, replied. "And then decide about going to Memphis."<sup>167</sup>

His mouth now a flat line, his whole body a manifestation of the grief they all felt, the mayor led Mrs. King out of the airport and helped

her into the official car still waiting at the curb. They proceeded back to Vine City, and it was there, upon returning, that the most difficult people to tell of Dr. King's death had to be told. Innocently, not understanding the presence of all the people now gathered in their home, seven-year-old Dexter King approached his mother. "Mommy," he asked, "when is Daddy coming home?" Mrs. King stoically led the children into a bedroom, where she delivered the dreadful news.<sup>168</sup>

For the moment, Vine City was quiet, but Ivan Allen feared that it, along with other poor, black areas in Atlanta, would erupt into violence. His fears were not unfounded. Atlanta's crime rates were rising dramatically; the murder rate for the previous year had shattered all previous records. Riots had broken out coast-to-coast in recent months, from Washington to Louisville to Detroit and Newark. Dozens were dead. In a now-famous report by the Kerner Commission, headed by Illinois governor Otto Kerner and charged by President Johnson to determine the basic causes of black unrest, the problem was summed up nicely: "What white Americans have never fully understood – but what the Negro can never forget – is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto," the commission said, damningly. "White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it."<sup>169</sup>

And Ivan Allen, the most visible symbol of that white society in Atlanta, sought to keep the ghettos in his city from tearing Atlanta apart. For now, all was quiet. Only a handful of minor disturbances had been reported. But at least nineteen other American cities already were scenes of street fighting, looting, and arson. How long would the peace last in Atlanta?<sup>170</sup>

How long could it last, indeed, with Lester Maddox fanning the flames of racial discord from his seat in the Georgia capitol? What would *his* reaction be? Glee? Jubilation? Antagonistic remarks? No one knew but, as Allen himself later reflected, "I always felt that Maddox was the worst thing that happened in Georgia. . . . He had a glib tongue, and he sure was a nuisance." ("You can't get away from the fact [that] this man was elected partially by the third of the people of Georgia who hate Niggers," Allen had said, ruefully, in the wake of Maddox's election two years earlier.) Maddox, in other words, was a constant potential source of trouble, of disruption of Atlanta's progress.<sup>171</sup>

Back in Vine City, Ivan and Louise Allen departed the King home, and he raced downtown to his office at city hall, where reporters were gathering. It was nearly ten o'clock. Bone weary already but with no chance of slowing down in sight, Allen gave them a brief statement, which

denounced the tragic murder and urged Atlantans to be calm. The mayor then took action to ensure that calm would be maintained. City policemen were placed on emergency shifts, each to last twelve hours, until further notice. Black leaders were alerted that the mayor was doing all he could, implying the corollary that he was asking them to do all *they* could, too. Newspaper executives in the city were encouraged to play the story in a dignified manner, to assist the city in keeping its dignified posture in these dark hours. And then, for the first time in his tenure as mayor, Ivan Allen dialed the White House. He felt it necessary to let Lyndon Johnson know, as he knew Johnson would want to know, that the situation in Atlanta was under control.<sup>172</sup>

Johnson was not immediately available, but within minutes he called back. "What does it look like down there?" was the President's first question, and Allen had an answer ready for him. Everything, for the moment, was calm. The rain was helping keep everyone indoors, the mayor reported. "I'm worried, but I'm hopeful," he said. "We've had to commit a lot of troops already," the President replied, in Allen's words, "as cool as he could be." "I hope we don't have to send anybody down there. I hope if it gets bad in Atlanta the National Guard can take care of it." <sup>173</sup>

No one yet knew if the National Guard would need to be called up or if events would spin that far out of control. But Allen and the other city fathers were crossing their fingers, hard. Allen hastily but thoughtfully continued to monitor the city from the mayor's office, and reports continued to be encouraging: no violence was evident. Maybe, Allen thought, Atlanta would make it through the night unscathed.

At the time the shooting of Martin Luther King, Jr., had jangled across the teletype, Robert Woodruff had been sitting in the Oval Office with former Georgia Governor Carl Sanders. The two men were with the president for an informal social call, and as Thomas (Tom) Johnson, then an aide to the president and later the head of the Cable News Network (CNN), rushed in with the teletype copy in his hand, the president and his two visitors were relaxing with a drink before Johnson had to leave for a Democratic Party dinner at the Washington Hilton Hotel.<sup>174</sup>

Soon after Lyndon Johnson received the news, Woodruff and Sanders took their leave and returned to the Mayflower Hotel, where both men had suites. Upon walking through the door of his suite, Woodruff instructed Joe Jones to reach Ivan Allen by telephone. Jones tried for hours and finally, in the wee hours of the next morning, got through to Allen, who was still at city hall. Allen came on the line, and Jones told

him that Woodruff would like to speak with him. As Allen remembered, Woodruff “was very dignified...[and the] breadth of [his] wisdom and experience [were evident in] his calling me from Washington that night.”

He said, “Mr. Mayor” – which he didn’t normally say – “How are things in Atlanta?” Here again, he wanted all the information. I told him what I’d done and where I’d been, and he listened intently. I went into everything. Then he said, “Now, Ivan,” – he shifted his gears entirely – he said, “You’ve done pretty good so far.”

I felt like saying, “I’ve done damn good.”

He said, “Tomorrow, or the next day, when they bring King’s body back, Atlanta’s going to be the center of the universe.” And he went on to talk about the news media. And he said, “Everything must be right in Atlanta. You may be confronted with a lot of expenditures that the city can’t pay for. I want everything to be right in Atlanta. Everything must be perfect.”

“You understand what I’m saying, Ivan?”

I knew exactly what he was saying. [It was a] great boost.<sup>175</sup>

Allen’s appreciation for Woodruff’s counsel only increased in the coming days and years. “That’s just supreme wisdom, knowing what was going to happen,” he would say, recalling the events of that night over twenty years later. “Mr. Woodruff was always the key.”<sup>176</sup>

Woodruff had offered Ivan Allen and Atlanta a blank check to ensure that the city was able to put forward the same dignified, courtly, calm front it had on all other occasions when race entered the picture.

Woodruff instinctively knew and understood what Allen had not yet had time to contemplate. This might well be Atlanta's biggest moment in the spotlight and everything depended on how the King funeral was handled. For years Woodruff had poured heart, soul, and millions of dollars into building his city, and he was not about to stand by and watch the good, business-friendly reputation he had fostered torn asunder.

Allen finally went home and fell asleep after four o'clock that next morning, April 5. In less than three hours, he had snapped himself back out of bed, and as he gulped a cup of coffee, he read Ralph McGill's column in that morning's *Atlanta Constitution*. "At the moment the trigger man fired, Martin Luther King was the free man. The white killer (or killers), was a slave to fear, a slave to his own sense of inferiority, a slave to hatred, a slave to all the bloody instincts that surge in a brain when a human being decides to become a beast." McGill's column was poignant and thought-provoking as usual. Characteristically, he struck directly at the heart of the matter in a way that few others could.<sup>177</sup>

Allen still feared for his city's safety. He hastened to the Atlanta University Center, the black nexus of higher education in Atlanta, where a march was planned for later that morning. There he met with the presidents of the Center, all the while watching students gather for the

upcoming march on the street below the second-story window of the AUC conference room. "I'm going down there," Allen announced amid pleas from the AUC leadership for him not to interfere and that he would not be welcomed.

"This is a black people's march," the mayor was told once he had approached the students and asked to march with them. "We don't want white people mixing in." Allen understood. He replied, "I want you to know you are welcome to march in this town," and then got into a police car with Gene Patterson, editor of the *Constitution*, and Morris Redding. The three men followed the march for a while and, although the mayor was "afraid they'd be breaking every window along the street right now," not one trace of violence was shown. The students, like the power structure, intended to keep Atlanta's mourning on a plane of civility.<sup>178</sup>

On Friday, King's body was flown in from Memphis, and Allen was on hand at the airport to receive it. He began making plans for the funeral and the crowds that would accompany it (and that Woodruff had foreseen). In the days to come, between 150,000 and 200,000 people would descend upon Atlanta. Eastern Air Lines put more charter flights into Atlanta in a two-day period than into any other city in the company's history. Over forty Greyhound buses, each bearing at least forty

mourners, were en route from New York City alone. The mourners were not all black, nor were they all commoners. Jacqueline Kennedy, herself a widow in the same tragic manner as Mrs. King, Wilt Chamberlain, Richard Nixon, Marlon Brando, and Harry Belafonte came to the funeral, held that next Tuesday. Hubert Humphrey attended as Lyndon Johnson's representative. Ivan and Louise Allen were there, of course. (Woodruff was not present, but then, he shunned all such public occasions.)<sup>179</sup>

Ivan Allen had given city employees the day off that Tuesday so that they could attend the funeral or mourn in their own ways, and though few whites attended the services, the gesture was appropriate and appreciated. It also stood in direct contrast to actions taken by Lester Maddox who, segregationist to the core, refused to close the capitol. He treated the seat of Georgia's government as a fort, surrounding it with state troopers and preparing for the worst. He felt certain that the mourners would storm the building and possibly harm him. And a more telling tableau played itself out the morning of the funeral when Maddox, incensed at the flags on the capitol grounds having been lowered to half-mast out of respect for King, strode across the lawn intending to raise them anew. "There were three television crews, CBS, NBC, and ABC, and they had every camera trained on him," Ivan Allen recalled. "I will never

forget how utterly perplexed he was as he realized the eyes of television were watching him." Maddox retreated back into the building, leaving the flags where they were.<sup>180</sup>

After the funeral ceremony was over, King's casket, made of African mahogany, was gingerly placed upon a rough-hewn farm wagon drawn by two Alabama mules. The wagon, a startlingly incisive symbol of the distance covered and still remaining in the civil rights movement, led a procession of mourners to Morehouse College for another memorial service before King's body's committal at Southview Cemetery. At Morehouse, the Reverend Benjamin Mays eulogized King.<sup>181</sup>

Jesus died at 33, Joan of Arc at 19, Byron and Burns at 36, Keats and Marlowe at 29 and Shelley at 30, Dunbar before 35, John Fitzgerald Kennedy at 46, William Rainey Harper at 49 and Martin Luther King, Jr., at 39.

It isn't how long but how well.<sup>182</sup>

The end of the day came over an open grave at Southview, ready to receive the slain civil rights leader's body. With a spring wind blowing, Ralph David Abernathy, for years a King lieutenant, intoned, "This cemetery is too small for his spirit but we submit his body to the ground." And soon King's epitaph would rise above the gravesite. "FREE AT LAST. FREE AT LAST. THANK GOD ALMIGHTY, I'M FREE AT LAST."

That day, the whole city – indeed, the whole world – centered on the homecoming of its most famous black son, Martin Luther King, Jr.<sup>183</sup>

Lester Maddox had spent the day surrounded by state troopers and “cowering” in his office, blinds closed. One reporter overheard a Maddox aide make a cruel, tasteless joke as the funeral cortege passed the capitol. “Yep, caught the guy that did it [shot King] and gave him five days in jail – for shooting ‘coons out of season,” the aide said to peals of bigoted, backwards laughter. Allen was in the middle of the cortege, marching behind the mule-drawn wagon. As he said later, “I remember glancing over toward the Capitol and thanking God that I was on the side I was on, instead of on the side of the racists who have plagued Georgia and the rest of the South for more than one hundred years.” Despite Maddox, the Atlanta of Robert Woodruff and Ivan Allen had received Martin Luther King, Jr., well.<sup>184</sup>

The nation recognized this, too, and in short order praise began to flow in for the leaders, both black and white, of King’s hometown. The *Atlanta Constitution* praised Allen, saying he had been “tops in meeting the crises” of the 1960s. Letters to the mayor’s office were, by one count, “running 202 to six in support of Allen’s graciousness toward the King family.” Ralph Abernathy went out of his way to praise Allen and Atlanta

in remarks he made in the days after the funeral. The *New York Times* noted that the sense of duty and calm pervaded from Allen's office down to the lowest ranks of policemen and other city employees. Ivan Allen, with a blank check of support from Robert Woodruff, had once again shepherded Atlanta through dark days.<sup>185</sup>

### *A Year of Losses*

If 1968 had not been good for America, it certainly had been no better for Robert Woodruff. By the end of the year he was as beaten and battered by the strain of events as he ever had been. Woodruff was by then on the eve of his eightieth birthday, and as age began to take its toll – visibly, now, for the first time – so did the challenges he was asked to face, almost on a daily basis.<sup>186</sup>

His friends were dying in ever-increasing numbers. Politics in Atlanta were changing – by 1970, Allen, by his own choice, would no longer be mayor, and Woodruff's direct involvement in city hall affairs would end with Allen's administration. Woodruff, never out in front, never in the spotlight, began to withdraw further into his own tight circle of friends.<sup>187</sup>

A few weeks after Woodruff's fateful visit with Lyndon Johnson, he dictated a letter to the President that was as remarkable for what it said as for what it did not. By then, Johnson had announced that he would not again run for the Oval Office, and Martin Luther King, Jr., had been killed and buried. Perhaps in an attempt not to remind Johnson of all the pressures that bore down upon him daily, Woodruff mentioned none of that. And so another routine "Dear Mr. President" letter went:

When I got back to Atlanta last week-end I was very pleased to find the photograph taken with Carl Sanders on the evening April 4<sup>th</sup> which you so thoughtfully and kindly autographed. I appreciated the opportunity to have a little informal visit with you and hope we can do it again.

Thanks so much for the picture and, as always, my very best to you.

Yours sincerely...<sup>188</sup>

In fact, though Woodruff's letter belies none of it, much had changed in Atlanta, in Washington, and across the country. Riots and looting, fires and unrest had plagued the nation in the wake of King's death, and by May 20, the date of Woodruff's note to Johnson, the wounds were only beginning to scab over. Years would pass before they would be but a memory, but scars would remain.

Perhaps Woodruff did not want to dwell on the heartaches that America – and he, personally – had experienced. The year was not yet half over when he penned his note to Johnson, and yet it had brought with it a lifetime of tragedies.

That January, while at Ichauway, Woodruff's beloved Nell, his wife of more than fifty-five years, had died. Her decline had been noticeable to nearly everyone. Woodruff's personal physician had grown concerned when Nell began having mini-strokes. Her memory began to come and go and her appearance would change during these bouts. On a Friday, January 20, 1968, Woodruff and Nell traveled to Ichauway with several friends, where they relaxed for the weekend.

On Sunday evening, Nell was sitting in the living room, watching *Peyton Place* at about ten o'clock, when she began to feel weak. Woodruff and the other guests were in their own rooms by the time Woodruff's valet, Luther Cain, passed by Nell's chair. He noticed that something was amiss; she could not respond to him or get out of her chair. Carrying her into her bedroom, Cain became aware of the degree of her unresponsiveness. Doctors were summoned from Camilla, a nearby community, and Nell was transported via ambulance to Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital in Albany. Oxygen was administered en route, and at

first it was suspected that Nell had suffered a massive stroke. She remained in the hospital overnight, and she was listed in a “deep coma,” her pulse and blood pressure remaining constant. Woodruff and Luther Cain were at her side.<sup>189</sup>

The next afternoon, Nell died from what turned out to be a cerebral hemorrhage. She was 75. Born in 1892, she had been married to Woodruff since October 17, 1912. They were utterly and completely devoted to each other. By all accounts, neither ever entertained the possibility of infidelity. Lawrence Calhoun, Woodruff’s longtime chauffeur and quite the ladies’ man himself, was questioned about Woodruff’s possible extramarital assignations once by a reporter with *Fortune* magazine. Calhoun told him that Woodruff was not inclined to enter into such activities. The *Fortune* man pressed him for more details, not believing that a man as dynamic and powerful as Woodruff could withstand temptations of that sort. The reporter asked Calhoun, “How can you convince me?” And Calhoun, ever faithful but ever truthful, replied, “I’ll tell you, I’ve been working for Mr. Woodruff for I don’t know how many years, and in all that time I’ve been trying to catch him myself.” (He never did.) Joe Jones amplified this point, saying, “Mr. Woodruff was never by himself [with a woman]. Never!” Even though

both these testimonials come from those close to and faithful to Woodruff, they can be taken as truth; no contradictory accounts ever emerged.<sup>190</sup>

Following Nell's death, the *Atlanta Constitution* wrote that her "passing . . . takes from Atlanta and the South a gracious lady, a worker for good, a kind and vital spirit rare among us. . . . Not only as the devoted wife of a towering figure, but in her own right as a gentlewoman possessed of compassion and concern and commitment to others, she leaves a life in which her high qualities will endure and illuminate the way on."<sup>191</sup>

Woodruff was shattered, and his sense of loss was total. Nell had been the steadying influence in his life for decades, and now she was gone. He hardly knew, at first, how to continue. Not even the deaths of his youngest brother or his parents had affected him so deeply.

Woodruff returned to Atlanta, and after he buried Nell, he seems to have fallen into the worst period of discontentment of his life. He was prone to such moments of depression, but in times past he had been resilient and bounced back. Now, he seemed less inclined to put up a fight.

Woodruff's secretary, Lucille Huffman, who had been at his side since 1928, recognized this change in her boss and sought to boost his

spirits. Usually she wrote him small notes, usually on business matters, but now she put pen to paper and wrote him a two-page, heartfelt letter.<sup>192</sup>

“Dear Mr. Woodruff,” she began as always,

To have gone 78 rounds with life and be regarded at all times as a great man because of the positive qualities you possess should give you the basic urge to enjoy [life] to the fullest.

You are, I know, troubled about many things – business, events, people, your health and the welfare of many individuals. There are many hardships along life’s path as one grows older.

The good examples set are the richest bequest a man can leave behind him and the good examples you have set in integrity, morals and compassion have touched the lives of many people who are the better for having known and been associated with you.

When you grow depressed, as you often do, you are aware of the disillusionments of life and people – this has been with you along the years but they were a challenge, an incentive in your youth rather than a depression.

It is a lonely reward to be placed on a pedestal – but there you are in the lives of so many people, many more than you will acknowledge and so your right to live as you want to live becomes less and less at your disposal. Too many people reach out towards you to absorb the goodness you possess.<sup>193</sup>

Huffman ended her letter by urging Woodruff to take more time for himself, for “relaxation, recreation and pleasures.” He tried to heed her advice, but he found that he could not. His life, it seemed, was over.

Woodruff had been always a heavy drinker, and now, with all the friends in the world but, without Nell, alone, he turned to liquor again, this time harder than ever before. In years past, he even had enjoyed humor about drinking – not his, but in general – but now, there was no room for humor. His penchant for Scotch grew stronger and he began consuming it at such a rate that some of his friends, fearing for his safety, paid to have an elevator installed in his home on Tuxedo Road so as to lessen the risk of his injuring himself on the home’s curving, marble staircase when he went to bed at night. Nell’s death seems to have intensified his drinking habits. Joe Jones and other close associates observed this trend at close range.<sup>194</sup>

Other changes altered Woodruff’s world. His brother, George, retired that year from the Board of Directors of the Trust Company of Georgia, marking, as the press noted, the “first time in 75 years [that] a board of directors elected by the bank didn’t include a name closely associated with both the Trust Company and Coca-Cola – Woodruff.” Both Woodruff and his brother were slowing down, although both would continue in advisory capacities at the Trust Company.<sup>195</sup>

While his personal world was evolving dramatically, Woodruff’s financial position was as solid as ever. With over 450,000 shares of Coca-

Cola common stock and, all told, worth more than \$150 million, Woodruff was the richest man in Georgia. (George was third.) At Coca-Cola, Paul Austin was still at the tiller, and profits continued to zoom. Woodruff's melancholy was deepened by these figures and scenarios. He, not someone else, had been on an upward trajectory and in the forefront of civic affairs for decades, and he wanted to stay there. The idea of remaining in the background, of letting Paul Austin and others at Coca-Cola – *his* company, after all – seem to make all the decisions caused Woodruff to grind his teeth. (Even so, he continued to make the major decisions himself. Austin could have as much press as he wanted, but Woodruff still held sway over the board.)<sup>196</sup>

As 1968 wore on, Woodruff was confronted with reminders of his former life, his life with Nell, and continuing demands upon his time. By mid-year, Atlanta was bouncing back fully from the King tragedy. By then, even after violence had erupted in so many cities and caused so much destruction, Atlanta “had the glow of a Monet,” in the words of one national reporter. But by the fall, Woodruff was far from glowing. October was approaching, and October always was a special month for Woodruff, because it contained an extra special day: October 17, the day in 1912 on which he and Nell had been married. As that day approached

– it would be his first in 55 years without her – Joe Jones had to remind his boss of the new reality.<sup>197</sup>

“I don’t know what to do about our anniversary. I don’t know what I’m going to do on our anniversary,” Jones remembers Woodruff saying one fall day. It fell to Jones to answer him. “Sad as it may be, there’s nothing to do, nothing to be done. The anniversary is over.” Reality was beginning to sink in.<sup>198</sup>

#### *A Changing of the Guard and Continued Losses*

In 1969, Ivan Allen, having made it clear that, after two terms, he would not run again, left city hall. “Eight years was long enough in the mayor’s office,” Ivan Allen would write several years after his administration ended. The year before, he had, in his words, begun “quietly passing the word in strictest confidence to some of the top leaders in the city,” including Woodruff, so that they could begin planning for a new mayor. Allen formally announced that he would not run again in a speech to the Atlanta Rotary Club in January of that year, which provided a full, unencumbered nine months for campaigning.<sup>199</sup>

Times were changing, though, and in the 1969 race, the dialogue that had existed for so long between the white and black leaders of

Atlanta was beginning to break down. Blacks realized that they wielded real power at the ballot box and were no longer beholden to the white power structure to have their voices heard. Additionally, new and younger leaders had been waiting in the wings of the black leadership, and they were demanding to be heard. Their first instinct was not to do business as it always had been done – i.e., in negotiations with the Ivan Allens of the world – but to do it themselves.<sup>200</sup>

Three candidates emerged in the early jockeying of the mayoral race: Sam Massell, the Vice-Mayor; businessman Rodney Cook; and Everett Millican, a conservative City Alderman and Gulf Oil executive. The Big Mules backed Cook but, after a tumultuous campaign season and race, Massell won, even though Ivan Allen had never cared a great deal for him and even though Allen had, in the last days of the campaign, spoken out publicly against him. (Allen spoke not from feelings of anti-Semitism; he was concerned with alleged campaign improprieties.) Massell, a man of Jewish derivation, was Atlanta's first non-WASP mayor.<sup>201</sup>

Looking back, Allen observed that "it was clear that a new coalition – labor, liberals, and blacks – had won this mayoralty race." Maynard Jackson, a prominent black attorney and a later mayor of Atlanta, won the

vice-mayor's slot, becoming the first black executive the city had ever had. (The Big Mules had backed Jackson somewhat reluctantly, as they recognized that the old ways could not hold on forever.) When all results were tallied, blacks filled one third of elected positions in city government by 1969, and this in a city where the black population was slightly less than half. Clearly, the old order was passing.<sup>202</sup>

And again, it was passing for Robert Woodruff as well. In early 1969, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Woodruff's pal and hunting buddy (in addition to famous General and President of the United States), died, and Woodruff attended the funeral at Washington's National Cathedral.<sup>203</sup>

Ralph McGill died that year as well, bringing Woodruff even more pause. Between them, Woodruff and McGill had left an indelible impression on Atlanta all through the 1960s. Editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* for years, he had won a Pulitzer in 1959 for his reporting on race issues, and he continued to speak frankly about those issues until he died. He was short and chunky and never paid too much attention to whether his hair was ruffled, but he was brilliant, and he was the conscience of Atlanta, speaking to and for Atlantans in his columns, editorials, speeches, and around whichever dining room table he found himself on any given night.<sup>204</sup>

As *Time* and *Life* magazines' Atlanta bureau chief remembered,

His dogged but reasoned crusade earned him the enmity of the Ku Klux Klan, White Citizens Councils [sic] and other racists. He was threatened and vilified. His house was shot at, garbage was strewn on his lawn and he was the target of endless obscene phone calls. Constantly, he had to worry about the safety of his wife and son. Yet, when he died... the South had become a vastly changed and better place,

and certainly a good part of the credit was his. As a colleague put it, "Mac had guts when it took guts to have guts."<sup>205</sup>

McGill *did* have guts, and it was Robert Woodruff, who kept McGill's typewriter clattering out those columns, editorials, speeches, and what-have-you by making it clear to his publisher that, if Atlanta Newspapers, Inc., fired McGill, Woodruff would hire him immediately and at any salary McGill cared to name.<sup>206</sup>

After McGill died, tributes poured in to the usual places – his home, the mortuary, the paper's offices – but several landed on Woodruff's desk. "Since I know no one here who knew Ralph allow me to share his loss with you," one admirer of McGill's, writing from New York, said.

This was a man who not only disagreed with his own people, but lived with them and loved them and made them respect him while he did it. This is the kind of bravery and wisdom that heals and unites. It is much better than rejecting and running away. In our disrupted time there have not been many like him, North or South.<sup>207</sup>

Woodruff agreed with these sentiments and replied to the author of them, saying, "His ideas and his ideals will speak to many generations to come. I personally feel not only sad that he is gone but very lonesome."<sup>208</sup>

Atlanta made it through the sixties because it had a remarkably gifted and diplomatic mayor, because Lester Maddox chose to remain silent rather than speak from his bigoted mouth on most occasions, and because people like Ralph McGill pushed Atlantans, black and white alike, towards tolerance and mutual respect.

But Atlanta never would have had the foundation on which to build in these ways nor the energy and courage to do so had not one man been there in constant support. That man, the man who sat in the big leather chair at 310 North Avenue, was Robert Woodruff, and at the end of the 1960s, he remained, as ever, the Biggest of the Big Mules.



## CHAPTER FIVE: "THE WISEST MAN I EVER KNEW," 1970-1985

At the beginning of the 1970s, reflecting on Atlanta's remarkable progress through the 1960s and its emergence as a preeminent city, not only in the South but in the United States as a whole, Ivan Allen made the following observations:

There were many reasons why Atlanta managed the race issue while other cities like Birmingham in the South and Newark in the north fumbled around and nearly let it kill them. For one thing, Atlanta was one of the more sophisticated and cosmopolitan cities in the United States, in spite of its sleepy Southern façade, a city top-heavy with people who were well-educated white-collar workers and executives and had come there from all over and chosen to stay there because they loved Atlanta. For another reason, the city was economically sound – and social progress can be made only when there is economic progress. And I will not deny that some of my impetuous acts – leading the black students into the City Hall cafeteria, testifying in behalf of the Civil Rights Act in Washington, going to the side of Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., when her husband was shot – helped drag a sometimes reluctant white community toward racial understanding.

But I think the most important factor in Atlanta's attempts to cope with the race issue during the sixties was the presence of a large established black community and a pragmatic white business "power structure." When you look around you will find that no other city of the sixties had, at the core of its economic and social base, black and white leaders who were so willing to understand each other and work with each other:

to make recommendations, to make concessions, to make

personal sacrifices, in order to accomplish the most good for the most people.<sup>209</sup>

These were sentiments with which Woodruff would have agreed, and he certainly was in a position to know. Not only in Atlanta, but throughout the South, people recognized that Atlanta was different, that there was something special about the way it carried itself and stayed seemingly above the fray, putting forth a calm and dignified appearance in the face of tumult elsewhere. Atlanta was spared because it had good leaders, black and white, and because it was economically prosperous, just as Ivan Allen opined. But the facts that the economic boom had the energy that it did and that white businessmen knew they were free to work pragmatically with black leaders were able to be recognized as facts because of one man: Robert Woodruff. Had he not fought to preserve tranquility, had he not given firm and resolute support to Allen, had he not done everything in his power to ensure that Coca-Cola, the Trust Company of Georgia, Rich's, King and Spalding, Scripto, and the other major businesses and their leaders concentrated on Atlanta's continued growth rather than descending into the maelstrom of bickering and bigotry, Atlanta may well have gone the way of Birmingham.

"Atlanta was his baby," a friend and the later head of the Woodruff Foundation, Charles (Pete) McTier, reflected two decades after Woodruff's

1985 death. He did not expect or desire to be recognized for his good deeds. He did not require to be loved by many. Considering Woodruff's place in the array of Big Mules in Atlanta, McTier asserted that he led them, and that this group was "progressive, engaged, and assertive" and that they were, almost to a man, "citizen-leaders" or "servant-leaders."<sup>210</sup>

Woodruff understood all of this acutely, and he knew he was the only man in Atlanta who could lead the charge to save it. He did not, first and foremost, want to see business progress derailed, especially as federal funding was reaching all-time highs for urban projects and corporations were basking in the glow of the jet age, heady 1960s. "Mr. Woodruff understood that everybody's a customer of Coca-Cola," an associate recalled. In addition to backing Ivan Allen, Woodruff gathered in his dining room and elsewhere a group of the city's most powerful individuals, such as former Mayor Hartsfield, to confront the potential discord that faced the city in typical Woodruff style: head-on. And that group then went forth and negotiated, however quietly, with the city's black leadership, which counted among its members Atlanta Life Insurance head A. T. Walden, John Wesley Dobbs, a businessman, and Martin Luther King, Jr., the most powerful spokesman of the civil rights era. Additionally, Woodruff kept Ralph McGill, an outspoken columnist

and the editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*, in power with the promise of a job if the paper ever fired him for his writings on racial responsibility and moderation.<sup>211</sup>

“Ultimately, he came to understand that the Coca-Cola Company made a huge difference in the city and that he had a big role in that,” observed Phil Mooney, Coca-Cola’s chief archivist. “And [Woodruff realized] that if he was to have a legacy, it should be where the Company was headquartered.” Woodruff was at heart a Southerner who was concerned with the progress of the South. “He never put on that [international] aura.”<sup>212</sup>

“There never was any doubt, during all my years of business experience, that Mr. Woodruff was always the key, he was always at the top, where everything happened. He was the dominant factor, and his approval, even though it was anonymous, the fact that he was participating . . . was the stamp of approval that made something a success,” Ivan Allen said, twenty years after he had left city hall and several years after Woodruff had died. “Mr. Woodruff was *the* man in Atlanta.”<sup>213</sup>

Robert Woodruff, said longtime friend, beneficiary, and former Georgia Governor Carl E. Sanders

was wise enough and perceptive enough to believe, number one, that the law of the land in this country was the supreme law that we had to accept or we would have chaos, and number two, that it was inevitable that you couldn't have two classes of citizens, that you had to have a standard by which everyone was given similar treatment, and I think that's where he was coming from. I think he accepted that probably early on, while a lot of people were still wandering around trying to figure out if they could organize another Civil War.

He was the wisest man I ever knew.<sup>214</sup>

Woodruff's skills and remarkable guidance of the city – *his* city – were noticed decades later by a scholar of the period, Glenn Eskew, who wrote that, as a result of Woodruff's actions and those of his colleagues in the power structure, "the city weathered the civil rights movement relatively untouched by the storms that battered other southern cities. Atlanta thus epitomized the southern transition in positive race relations and provided a role model for progressive leadership in the region."<sup>215</sup>

Because of Woodruff, Atlanta was able to keep its image as "the city too busy to hate."<sup>216</sup>

### *Ninety-five Roses*

Woodruff lived another fifteen years and passed away at Emory University Hospital, the institution he had done so much to build, in a penthouse suite in the G-wing of the building constructed especially for

him. At 9:36 p.m. on March 7, 1985, the man known to so many simply as “the Boss” took his last breath.<sup>217</sup>

The previous December, Woodruff had celebrated his ninety-fifth birthday, and he seemed pleased to have reached that milestone. John Sibley, the aged counselor who for decades had been a Woodruff intimate, sent ninety-five red roses to his friend on that occasion, along with a tender letter expressing his congratulations. Woodruff by then was not eating much and was wasting away. Though he was still showered, shaved, and dressed each day, Joe Jones and others who were with Woodruff in those days could tell that death was not too far away. “He decided he’d lived long enough,” Jones said.<sup>218</sup>

Even to Jones, who had been with Woodruff for nearly forty years, Woodruff remained an enigma, a riddle never fully soluble. He was innately baronial: one photograph of a birthday party held for him at Tuxedo Road in the 1970s shows Woodruff at the head of the table, leaning back slightly and beaming as a cake is presented to him. All eyes around the table are on him, the all-black domestic staff are gathered around in their uniforms, and he is the center of attention. The expression on his face is priceless; it seems to say, “This is exactly what

*should* be happening right now. This is the most natural thing in the world.”<sup>219</sup>

He was horribly impatient. Once, on a trip to his ranch in Cody, Wyoming, Joe Jones had left him in his room for a few minutes while Jones tended to his own bags. When he returned a while later, “He was sitting at his desk, [and he] had not taken off his hat. And he looked at his watch – he always wore his watch under his wrist – [and] he said, ‘We have been here forty-five minutes. I’m ready to go.’” Another time, in Rome, Jones had persuaded Woodruff to tour the city one Sunday morning. Jones had wanted to get out of the hotel and see the sights, and he thought Woodruff should do the same. Once in the cab and having gone only a few blocks, the driver said, “Two blocks over there to the left is St. Peter’s.” The driver asked if he should turn, if he should proceed toward St. Peter’s. But Woodruff would have none of it. “This is close enough,” he barked. “Drive on.”<sup>220</sup>

He was amazingly driven. “His whole life really was built around his work. [He had] no distractions,” Phil Mooney recalled. It was conjectured that Woodruff was dyslexic; he hated to read and seldom read anything longer than one page. He relied on others for news and information. And he had no interest in the arts, but he understood the

value of them in relation to Atlanta's growth.<sup>§§§§</sup> Woodruff's heart and soul went into his quest to build the Coca-Cola Company. He was really "tough and demanding, very focused on the business," an associate said years later. "Even if he'd had a big night" – a hangover, in other words, "he'd come to work anyway," Joe Jones remembered. He might take a nap, but they were short, because there simply was no time for such in the Woodruff world. There was not time, that is, until Woodruff passed his ninety-fourth birthday. In 1984, Woodruff finally retired from the Coca-Cola Board of Directors, which he had led for sixty-one years. Upon his retirement, *Forbes* magazine, long friendly to Woodruff, wrote, "Coca-Cola was put on the map – the whole world map – by Bob Woodruff, who, after 61 years at it, has only just retired as a director. That the Coke flag is so firmly implanted and more universally treasured around the world than any other brand or flag was his doing in 30 years as Coke's CEO." Regardless of the title he held at any particular time, Bob Woodruff remained "the Boss."<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>§§§§</sup> Louise Allen, on a trip across Britain, Europe, and Africa, contemplated the impact of Woodruff's gifts of millions of dollars to the arts in Atlanta and how those gifts had so propelled culture there. She wrote, from Nairobi, Kenya, to Woodruff that "It crossed my mind several times that what you have [done] and are doing for Atlanta is very like what the de Medici family did for Florence. It will be lasting, loved and enjoyed by future generations."

There were other eccentricities. Though he held, by the end of his life, some \$250 million in Coca-Cola stock alone, and though he gave away his fortune at a terrific rate (\$105 million to Emory at one fell swoop in 1979) he was insistent on cashing his Social Security checks. (By his ninetieth birthday, he still held 17% of Coca-Cola common stock.) He had flown on a commercial airliner only once, from Birmingham to Memphis, and he had hated the experience; therefore, from then on he flew only on the Coca-Cola planes. Then, too, there were the cigars and the commands in the form of grunts.<sup>222</sup>

Whatever his idiosyncrasies, Woodruff was much admired. And it was not only governors, business titans, and other luminaries who felt that way. One letter that Woodruff kept at hand in his personal files was from a man who, as a college student, had worked at the main gate at Coke headquarters.

During several years of my college [career] and first years of medical school I worked downstairs at the gate and just wanted to take this opportunity\*\*\*\* to let you know of the high estimate [sic] I hold you [in]. Best wishes for your continued health and direction of a company which you have made.

In these days and times when we have so few heroes, I want you to know that you rank right up there with John Wayne and Superman...Had I elected a business career, I am sure you would have been my ideal...<sup>223</sup>

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\*\*\*\* An article titled "The Cigar Has Come Back" had just appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*. It detailed Woodruff's continued power – even at age 90.

Many men felt the same way. Woodruff was a towering figure, not only in business, but also in life; not only in Atlanta, but also throughout the South and nation; not only in his personal conduct, but also in his attitudes and actions toward his fellow man. "Star-dusted saint, mud-spattered sinner," Ralph Hayes had called him years earlier, and that description fit nicely. Woodruff was not perfect, but his blend of intellect and intuition, of challenges and philanthropy, and of paternalistic, thoughtful, and deliberate guidance ensured that Atlanta's progress was unimpeded during the civil rights era.

Once, during his governorship, Carl Sanders had appointed Woodruff an honorary general on his staff. Such appointments were common for significant supporters – only the appointments usually were for the rank of colonel. In transmitting the appointment, Sanders had a letter prepared that said the commission was commensurate with "your status in Georgia's affairs," adding that "you now outrank us all."<sup>224</sup>

The designation and the description were apt, for in Atlanta, in Georgia, and in the South in the 1960s, Robert Winship Woodruff constantly displayed that he did, in fact, outrank them all.

## NOTES

### NOTES for CHAPTER ONE

<sup>1</sup> Secretary to RWW to John W. Greene, 29 September 1941, Robert Winship Woodruff Papers; Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library; Robert W. Woodruff Library; Emory University (hereafter cited as RWW Papers). "The Genealogy of the Robert Winship Woodruff Family," unsigned booklet (but composed by Lucille Huffman), RWW Papers. Charles Guarino and Albert Seddon, "'Woodruff' Derived From Fragrant Herb," *Pensacola (Florida) Journal*, 27 September 1967. Footnote: "The Genealogy of the Robert Winship Woodruff Family." Guarino and Seddon article.

<sup>2</sup> "The Genealogy of the Robert Winship Woodruff Family." Alice Louise Clark to RWW, 21 May 1941, RWW Papers. Clark was descended from the wood merchant. Frank W. Harrold to RWW, 7 February 1927, RWW Papers.

<sup>3</sup> "R. W. Woodruff – Business Affiliations – June 1, 1962," unsigned listing, RWW Papers.

<sup>4</sup> "The Ninth House of the Zodiac," unsigned and undated article, RWW Papers.

<sup>5</sup> Gerald Horton Bath, "Salute to the Discontented," excerpt from *Whatsoever Things* (Stetson University, n.d.), RWW Papers.

<sup>6</sup> Frederick L. Allen, *Secret Formula: How Brilliant Marketing and Relentless Salesmanship Made Coca-Cola the Best-Known Product in the World* (New York: HarperBusiness, 1994) (Quotations and citations are taken from the 1995 paperback edition.) 137, 139-141 (hereafter cited as Allen, *Secret Formula*). Mark Pendergrast, *For God, Country, and Coca-Cola: The Definitive History of the Great American Soft Drink and the Company That Makes It* (New York: Basic Books, 1993) (Quotations and citations are taken from the 2000 edition.) (hereafter cited as Pendergrast) 151.

<sup>7</sup> "Chronological Highlights, Robert Winship Woodruff, as of September 1983," unsigned listing, RWW Papers. William R. Brewster, Jr., President of Georgia Military Academy, to Lucille Huffman, 7 September 1962, RWW Papers. Author's observations of photographs, RWW Papers. Footnote: William R. Brewster, Jr., to Lucille Huffman, 7 September 1962, RWW Papers.

<sup>8</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 141.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 141-143, 366.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 142-144, 159.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

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<sup>12</sup> “Chronological Highlights...” Allen, *Secret Formula*, 144.

<sup>13</sup> Author’s observation of RWW’s responses to questions of various reporters, RWW Papers. Dorothy Hodgson Jones, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 10 January 1990, transcript, Frederick L. Allen Papers; Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library; Robert W. Woodruff Library; Emory University (hereafter cited as Allen Papers).

<sup>14</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 144. “Chronological Highlights...”

<sup>15</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 95-98. Harold H. Martin, *Three Strong Pillars: The Story of the Trust Company of Georgia* (Atlanta: Trust Company of Georgia, 1974) 37-41.

<sup>16</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 150-151, 153-154. Pendergrast, 154-155, 157. Constance L. Hays, *The Real Thing: Truth and Power at the Coca-Cola Company* (New York: Random House, 2004) 79.

<sup>17</sup> E. J. Kahn, Jr., *The Big Drink: The Story of Coca-Cola* (New York: Random House, 1960) 63.

#### NOTES for CHAPTER TWO

<sup>18</sup> Joseph W. Jones to Dr. E. Garland Herndon, Jr., 20 October 1969, RWW Papers. Author’s observations during visit to Woodruff’s office suite at Coca-Cola Headquarters, Atlanta, 17 October 2005. Woodruff’s suite, moved from the 25<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> floor following his death, is preserved just as he left it. In fact, the paper calendar on his desk, now yellowed, is turned to 7 March 1985, the last day of his life. Allen, *Secret Formula*, 304-305. Roberto C. Goizueta, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 5 December 1989, transcript, Allen Papers. Frederick L. Allen, *Atlanta Rising: The Invention of an International City: 1946-1996* (Atlanta: Longstreet Press, 1996) (hereafter cited as Allen, *Atlanta Rising*) 116.

<sup>19</sup> Ralph S. Whitworth, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 25 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers. Allen, *Atlanta Rising*, 116. Joseph W. Jones, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 31 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers. Henry Lumpkin Bowden, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 10 March 1990, transcript, Allen Papers.

<sup>20</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 352. Clarence N. Walker, “The Art of Growing Old Gracefully,” privately published text of a speech, 17 February 1961, RWW Papers. Copy of Rudyard Kipling’s “If” in RWW Papers. “If” was a favorite poem of Woodruff’s.

<sup>21</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 137-139, 142, 144. Della Wager Wells, *George Woodruff: A Life of Quiet Achievement* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1987) 21-23.

<sup>22</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 290-291. Likely the best study of the Atlanta power structure at this time is Floyd Hunter’s *Community Power Structure* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The

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University of North Carolina Press, 1953), which was written using changed names to protect the Big Mules' privacy but which, through Hunter's notes at Emory and other analysis, can be illuminated.

<sup>23</sup> Seymour Freedgood, "Life in Buckhead," *Fortune*, September 1961, 111. Allen, *Secret Formula*, 291.

<sup>24</sup> Martha Ellis, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 26 October 1989, transcript, Allen Papers. Isabelle Scarborough (Mrs. J. Elliott Scarborough, Jr.), interview by Frederick L. Allen, 30 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers. Joseph W. Jones, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 31 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers. Roberto C. Goizueta, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 5 December 1989, transcript, Allen Papers.

<sup>25</sup> Doris Lockerman Kennedy, *Devotedly, Miss Nellie* (Atlanta: Emory University, 1982) 60.

<sup>26</sup> Freedgood, 109.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. George Lawson, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 28 November 1989, transcript, Allen Papers.

<sup>28</sup> Kennedy, *Devotedly*, 40-41, 140. Photographs, Real Estate Files, RWW Papers. Telephone message, Ralph McGill to RWW, 18 February 1947, dictated to Ina Goode, secretary to RWW, 3:50 p.m., RWW Papers. "Robert Woodruff Plans to Buy \$200,000 Charles King Home," *Atlanta Journal*, 18 February 1949, in RWW Papers. Author's observations during visit to Windcrofte, the former Woodruff mansion on Tuxedo Road, 4 April 2006. The home is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Guy Milner, and the living room in the home is much as the Woodruffs left it. Joseph W. Jones, interview with Frederick L. Allen, 31 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers.

<sup>29</sup> Kennedy, *Devotedly*, 59-61, 63. Note on driving directions to the TE Ranch in RWW Papers. Joseph W. Jones, interview with Frederick L. Allen, 31 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers.

<sup>30</sup> Thomas E. Norton and Jerry E. Patterson, *Living It Up: A Guide to the Named Apartment Houses of New York* (New York: Atheneum, 1984), 284-285. The address for the River House is 435 East 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, the last building on that street before the FDR Drive and the East River. Kennedy, *Devotedly*, 69.

<sup>31</sup> Floor plan for Tower Apartments Duplex, River House, from Braislin, Porter, and Baldwin, Inc., Managing Agents (New York), in RWW Papers. Joseph W. Jones, interview with Frederick L. Allen, 6 February 1990, transcript, Allen Papers. Hobby, a friend of Nell Woodruff's (who, by Joe Jones' account, stayed at River House only when Nell was there also), even had her own phone line in the Woodruffs' duplex. Kennedy, *Devotedly*, 71, 76. "Library Inventory, Mr. Woodruff's River House Apartment," unsigned inventory memorandum, 3 April 1972, RWW Papers. Ralph S. Whitworth interview.

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<sup>32</sup> Bob Izlar to author, 17 April 2007. *Boss Emeritus* (Atlanta: The Coca-Cola Company, 1985). Allen, *Secret Formula*, 279-280.

<sup>33</sup> Steve Jack, interview with the author, Ichauway (Newton, Georgia), 24 March 2007, notes in author's files.

<sup>34</sup> Ivan Allen, Jr., to RWW, 11 December 1961, RWW Papers. Allen, *Secret Formula*, 283. Gary M. Pomerantz, *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn: A Saga of Race and Family* (New York: Penguin, 1996) (hereafter cited as Pomerantz) 300-302. Steve Jack interview.

<sup>35</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, photograph 58, from RWW Papers, taken by Reeves Studios, Atlanta. Steve Jack interview. Ozzie Garrett, interview with Frederick L. Allen, 1990, transcript, Allen Papers.

<sup>36</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 282-283.

<sup>37</sup> Steve Jack interview. Author's observations during visit to Ichauway, 24 March 2007.

<sup>38</sup> Charles Elliott, "Mr. Anonymous": *Robert W. Woodruff of Coca-Cola* (Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Company, 1982) 38. My interest in Robert Woodruff and the impacts he had on Atlanta are over fifteen years old and stem from a night drive through downtown. My father was at the wheel, and we were traveling on the downtown connector, heading north near Georgia Tech, when I spotted the Coca-Cola building's giant red letters glowing in the dark sky to my left. I made a precocious remark – something on the order of, "Oh, there's the Coca-Cola building. That's the Candler's money." Having read a few children's books on Coca-Cola, I suppose I presumed that I was an authority on the subject. My father, ever the calm gentleman, replied, "Well, son, I don't know about the Candler's, but Robert Woodruff surely had a lot to do with Coke's success." I asked who this Robert Woodruff was, and my father told me the story to which this endnote is a reference. That story was my introduction to Woodruff, and his story still captivates me.

<sup>39</sup> Ivan Allen, Jr., with Paul Hemphill, *Mayor: Notes on the Sixties* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971) (hereafter cited as Allen, *Mayor*) 47-49. Footnote: Photograph, Pomerantz, *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn*, taken from the files of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

<sup>40</sup> Harold H. Martin, *William Berry Hartsfield* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1978) 147-151. Eugene Patterson, Editorial, *Atlanta Journal*, 8 June 1961. Allen, *Atlanta Rising*, 108.

<sup>41</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 289. Photograph, *Atlanta Rising*, photograph 23, taken from the files of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. Martin, *William Berry Hartsfield*, 8.

<sup>42</sup> Franklin M. Garrett to RWW, 17 May 1961, in RWW Papers. Garrett at that time was both Director of Coca-Cola's Office of Information and also president of the Atlanta Historical Society. Ever the shrewd office politician, Garrett continued in this letter to say, "The other day, while talking to our mutual friend, Henry Troutman, Sr., [sic] he

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said: 'Bill Hartsfield has done more for Atlanta than anyone, except Bob Woodruff.' I subscribe to those sentiments."

<sup>43</sup> *Atlanta Journal*, 7 June 1961, quoted in Martin, *William Berry Hartsfield*, 150.

<sup>44</sup> Eugene Patterson, Editorial, *Atlanta Journal*, 8 June 1961.

<sup>45</sup> Pomerantz, 62, 96, 209-210.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 209-210, 325-327.

<sup>47</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 13-14.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* Pomerantz, *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn*, 275.

<sup>49</sup> Pomerantz, 292.

<sup>50</sup> RWW to Ralph Hayes, 22 November 1960, John A. Sibley Papers; Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library; Emory University (hereafter Sibley Papers), quoted in Mark Pendergrast, *For God, Country, and Coca-Cola* (New York: Basic Books, 2000 (second edition)), 267.

<sup>51</sup> Martha Ellis to RWW, undated but c. 1972, RWW Papers. Joseph W. Jones, interview with Frederick L. Allen, 11 October 1989, transcript, Allen Papers. "Liquor Inventory," RWW Papers.

<sup>52</sup> William B. Hartsfield to RWW, no date but most certainly 1962, RWW Papers.

<sup>53</sup> Author's observations of letters, Ivan Allen, Jr., to RWW, RWW Papers. Ivan Allen, Jr., interview with Frederick L. Allen, 24 October 1989, transcript, Allen Papers.

<sup>54</sup> Allen, *Atlanta Rising*, 113.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>56</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 291.

<sup>57</sup> Kennedy, *Devotedly*, 41-42.

<sup>58</sup> Herbert T. Jenkins to RWW, 3 September 1966, RWW Papers.

<sup>59</sup> Herbert T. Jenkins to RWW, 30 August 1967, RWW Papers. Herbert T. Jenkins to RWW, 16 November 1966, RWW Papers. Allen, *Secret Formula*, 289.

<sup>60</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 301.

<sup>61</sup> Elliott, 184.

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<sup>62</sup> Pomerantz, *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn*, 301.

<sup>63</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 35.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 34-36.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 31-32.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 32-34.

<sup>67</sup> Ronald H. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996) 66-68. Allen, *Atlanta Rising*, 121-122.

<sup>68</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 73. *The Day Atlanta Stood Still* (Atlanta: Georgia Public Television / Public Broadcasting Corporation, 2003).

<sup>69</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 78.

<sup>70</sup> *The Day Atlanta Stood Still*.

<sup>71</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 74-76.

<sup>72</sup> *The Day Atlanta Stood Still*. Allen, *Mayor*, 76-80.

#### NOTES for CHAPTER THREE

<sup>73</sup> Phillip Weltner to RWW, 21 June 1963, RWW Papers. In the letter, Weltner also said that "...Jimmy [Carmichael] is dead set to do his arts school and is stone deaf to a total perspective embracing all the arts." Woodruff would soon change that.

<sup>74</sup> James Carmichael to RWW, 25 June 1963, RWW Papers.

<sup>75</sup> "Anonymous Donor: Atlanta Art Memorial Gets \$2.5 Million," *Dayton (Ohio) News*, 18 March 1966. Charles E. Glassick, Ph.D., "The Story of the Robert W. Woodruff Arts Center: Centering on the Arts" (address delivered at the 1993 Georgia Meeting of the Newcomen Society, Atlanta, 8 November 1993).

<sup>76</sup> Howard Taubman, "Business is Behind Atlanta's Culture Drive," *Atlanta Constitution*, 11 April 1966.

<sup>77</sup> "Presidents of The Coca-Cola Company," undated listing (but circa 1971), RWW Papers, Series 16, Box 11.

<sup>78</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 295, 305, 317.

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<sup>79</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 102. Allen, *Secret Formula*, 289.

<sup>80</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 104-106.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 104-105, 109.

<sup>82</sup> Author's observations of photographs, RWW Papers. Author's observations of Woodruff's office suite during visit to Coca-Cola headquarters, 17 October 2005. Allen, *Mayor*, 108-110.

<sup>83</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 108-110.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 110, 113. Robert A. Caro, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson: Master of the Senate* (New York: Vintage, 2003) 853.

<sup>87</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 113.

<sup>88</sup> Bayor, 37. Allen, *Mayor*, 113-114. "Statement of Governor Carl E. Sanders, Appearance Before Senate Commerce Committee, Tuesday, July 30, 1963," copy of testimony, RWW Papers.

<sup>89</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 85-86.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 86-87.

<sup>92</sup> Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006) 101. Allen, *Mayor*, 114-115.

<sup>93</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 337. Allen, *Mayor*, 115-116.

<sup>94</sup> Hughes Spalding to RWW, 26 April 1963, RWW Papers.

<sup>95</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 326.

<sup>96</sup> Charles W. Adams to Executives, interoffice memorandum, 12 July 1963, RWW Papers. Footnote: Receipt, State Finance Committee for the Re-Election of Governor Reagan (Paul D. Yager, Treasurer) to RWW, 22 June 1970.

<sup>97</sup> Lyndon B. Johnson to RWW, undated but c. 1964, RWW Papers. RWW to Lyndon B. Johnson, 18 August 1966, RWW Papers. This letter included the paragraph "Thank you for my Special No. 1 pass and for the pocket knife. Here's the penny." The latter

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sentence likely is a reference to the myth of acquiring bad luck by not “paying” someone who gives one a knife some trifling amount of money – usually the change in one’s pocket. As Woodruff seldom carried cash or change, he probably sought to repel any residual bad luck with an enclosure of a penny for Johnson. Johnson sought to cultivate Woodruff’s friendship in other ways, also. Knowing of his involvement with the arts in Atlanta and his power as a fund-raiser and lead donor, Johnson in the fall of 1964 appointed Woodruff to the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, which was then being planned. Woodruff’s name is prominently inscribed on a stone wall in the entranceway to the Kennedy Center now, which likely would have pleased him not at all, but as a trustee Woodruff was surrounded by varied and interesting people, which would have been gratifying to him. (See “John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts – Washington, D.C.,” appointments listing, 15 September 1964, RWW Papers.) (Also based on author’s observations of Kennedy Center.) Footnote: RWW Scrapbook (Green Series), Volume 19, 929.

<sup>98</sup> George McMillan, “Integration with Dignity: The Inside Story of How South Carolina Kept the Peace,” *The Saturday Evening Post* (March 1963). William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980). Derrick Henry, “Kate Heaton, 89, Eased Desegregation of School,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (7 May 2006). Also, an excellent source of insight from the highest levels of government on the crises of this period is the compilation of interviews various historians conducted in the 1960s with former Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, brother of the slain president. That volume is *Robert F. Kennedy: In His Own Words* (New York: Bantam, 1988). Edwin O. Guthman and Jeffrey Shulman edited the work.

<sup>99</sup> Joseph W. Jones, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 11 October 1989, transcript, Allen Papers. Allen, *Secret Formula*, 231, 239.

<sup>100</sup> Memorandum for the Record, RWW to file, 26 August 1964, RWW Papers.

<sup>101</sup> “Only 2 in Billionaire Club; Woodruff \$150 Million Up,” *Atlanta Constitution*, 29 April 1968. Financial Statements and Statements of Securities Owned, RWW Papers. Each year, and sometimes semi-annually, Woodruff apparently directed his aides to compile a list and valuation of all of his securities. Sometimes these listings were accompanied by an income statement. Allen, *Secret Formula*, 330-331.

<sup>102</sup> William A. Coolidge to RWW, 25 August 1964, RWW Papers.

<sup>103</sup> Grenville Clark, “Mississippi Workers Hailed,” letter to the editor, *New York Times*, 16 August 1964.

<sup>104</sup> Memorandum for the Record, RWW to file, 26 August 1964.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>106</sup> RWW to William A. Coolidge, draft (not sent), 27 August 1964, RWW Papers. RWW to William A. Coolidge, draft (not sent) by J. Paul Austin, 27 August 1964, RWW Papers.

<sup>107</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 330. RWW to William A. Coolidge, 7 September 1964, RWW Papers.

<sup>108</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 330, 337.

<sup>109</sup> RWW to Lyndon B. Johnson, Western Union telegram, 4 November 1964, RWW Papers. Footnote: Pomerantz, 335.

<sup>110</sup> Archbishop Paul J. Halinan, Rabbi Jacob Rothschild, Dr. Benjamin Mays, and Ralph McGill to RWW, 16 December 1964, RWW Papers.

<sup>111</sup> RWW to Halinan, Rothschild, Mays, and McGill, draft of letter, undated but late December 1964, RWW Papers. RWW to Bekker, a Coca-Cola executive in South America, 7 April 1965, RWW Papers.

<sup>112</sup> "Banquet for Dr. King Meets Obstacles Here," *Atlanta Journal*, 29 December 1964. "Banquet to Honor Dr. King Sets Off Quiet Dispute Here," *New York Times* (reprinted in the *Atlanta Constitution*), 29 December 1964.

<sup>113</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 337-338. "A Brief History: Gentlemen's Driving Club and Piedmont Driving Club," unsigned (Atlanta: Piedmont Driving Club, 1987) 1-2. Author's observations during visit to the Piedmont Driving Club, 21 March 2006. Gary W. Lanneau, Jr., CCM (General Manager, Piedmont Driving Club), interview with author, Piedmont Driving Club, Atlanta, 21 March 2006. Allen, *Mayor*, 97-98.

<sup>114</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 97.

<sup>115</sup> "1,000 to Attend Nobel Dinner For Rev. King," *Atlanta Constitution*, 13 January 1965. *Atlanta Constitution*, 28 January 1965. Interestingly, the report on the King dinner was not on the front page. In addition to the ticket sales increase, there ended up being 134 sponsors instead of the original 100, another testament to the power of a Woodruff endorsement. Allen, *Mayor*, 98.

<sup>116</sup> Howell Raines, *My Soul is Rested: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement in the Deep South* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1977 (citations are taken from the 1983 Penguin edition)) 411-412. Helen Bullard, a longtime Atlanta political advisor (principally to Mayors Bill Hartsfield and Ivan Allen), remembered how the idea of a Steuben bowl arose: "The King dinner was a funny thing...I was the one who said, 'We've got to do sumpin', or somebody's gonna pick it up that here we've got a Nobel Prize winner and we've never even so much as acknowledged him [sic]...[The dinner] began to come together and part of it – now I sure have never told anybody this. I said something as a joke, and it's the last time I've ever said anything as a joke, because if there's one thing I've learned, people take you seriously. I said, 'Well, what we gonna do about a present? We have to give him a scroll or something.'...Finally somebody said, 'What do you think

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we oughta get?’ And I said, just being completely smart ass, I said, ‘Why don’t we give him a Steuben bowl. That’s what heads of state give each other and that’s what Truman sent to Princess Margaret.’ I said it as a joke, just being smart ass, you know. Well, Miss Priss!...[and] Janice Rothschild [wife of Rabbi Jacob Rothschild, the principal organizer of the dinner] was there, and she said, ‘Well, I think that’s wonderful...Now, we cain’t [sic] get it from Rich’s because Rich’s once had him arrested [for trespassing], and somebody would pick that up.’ So she just called New York, and she said, ‘I’m Janice Rothschild in Atlanta, and we are planning a dinner for Martin Luther King, Jr., and we’d like to have a bowl.’ And you know what the man said? ‘Well, of course, and how lovely of you to have thought of us.’ The president [of Steuben]! She didn’t even know his name; she just said, ‘I want the president.’ So she said, ‘Now, we don’t want one of those little finger-bowl things. We want a good-size bowl.’ He said, ‘What do you wanna put on it?’ And she said, ‘We’ll have to call you back on that.’ So he said, ‘Well, yes, and don’t worry about the time because we’ll drop everything and do this, and if the question of delivery time comes, we’ll fly it down on our private plane.’ She came back and announced it...[and] I thought, ‘Well, there’s nothing you can do now. It’s already started.’ The bowl, he was letting her have at wholesale, was eight hundred dollars. Sixteen-hundred-dollar bowl. And there we sat. We didn’t [yet] even have money for postage, and she had just obligated us. Okay?’”

<sup>117</sup> *Atlanta Times*, 28 January 1965. *Atlanta Times*, 30 January 1965. Footnote: Photograph, courtesy of the Associated Press, in Allen, *Mayor*, photographs section. Footnote: Pomerantz, 331-332.

<sup>118</sup> “In Doing Honor to Dr. King, Atlanta Did Honor to Itself Before the World,” *Atlanta Constitution*, 29 January 1965. See also Ben Chester, “Atlantans Pay King Tribute,” *Atlanta Times*, 28 January 1965; and “Dr. King – and Atlanta – Honored,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 29 January 1965. Letter, Ivan Allen, Jr., to RWW, 3 February 1965, RWW Papers.

<sup>119</sup> *Time*, 5 February 1965.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> Martin, *William Berry Hartsfield*, 159-161. Harold H. Martin, *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of its People and Events: Volume 3: Years of Change and Challenge, 1940-1976* (Atlanta: The Atlanta Historical Society, under the auspices of University of Georgia Press (Athens, Georgia), 1987) 324-325.

<sup>122</sup> W. R. Wofford, Inspector of Buildings, to Ivan Allen, Jr., 27 October 1966, RWW Papers. Ivan Allen, Jr., to RWW, 7 July 1966, RWW Papers, with the enclosure “Proposed New Buildings,” undated but summer 1966, RWW Papers. Lewis Grizzard, “1965: The Power and the Progress,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (23 March 1975). Martin, *Atlanta and Environs*, Vol. 3, 324-325.

<sup>123</sup> Pomerantz, 344.

<sup>124</sup> Richard C. Eldredge, “Back to the Future,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (27 July 2005).

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<sup>125</sup> John C. Portman, Jr., and Jonathan Barnett, *The Architect as Developer* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 9-10, 14-15, 21, 23, 26, 29-30, 32. David Rockefeller, *Memoirs* (New York: Random House, 2002 (citations are from the 2003 trade paperback edition)) 490-491. Pomerantz, 330.

<sup>126</sup> "The Coca-Cola Company: How Can a Formula and a Trademark be Worth \$3 Billion?," *Forbes* (1 August 1967) 26. "In RE: Mr. R. W. Woodruff's 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of Leadership," unsigned memorandum, RWW Papers, Series 16, Box 11.

<sup>127</sup> Pomerantz, 13.

<sup>128</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 94-95.

<sup>129</sup> Pomerantz, 333-334.

<sup>130</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 346-348.

<sup>131</sup> Photograph by Kirk Wooster, Atlanta Newspapers, Inc., in Allen, *Mayor*, photographs section.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> Martin, *Atlanta and Environs*, 457, 465.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 465. Pomerantz, 345-347. Allen, *Mayor*, 179-183.

<sup>135</sup> Pomerantz, 346-347. Martin, *Atlanta and Environs*, 465-466.

<sup>136</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 184-185.

<sup>137</sup> Pomerantz, 346-347. Martin, *Atlanta and Environs*, 465-466.

<sup>138</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 185-186.

<sup>139</sup> Martin, *Atlanta and Environs*, 466.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 466.

<sup>141</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 189.

<sup>142</sup> Pomerantz, 348. Martin, *Atlanta and Environs*, Vol. 3, 466-467.

<sup>143</sup> Martin, *Atlanta and Environs*, Vol. 3, 467. Pomerantz, 349.

<sup>144</sup> Martin, *Atlanta and Environs*, Vol. 3, 467. Pomerantz, 349-350.

<sup>145</sup> Pomerantz, 349.

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 342, 350.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 350.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 351.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

#### NOTES for CHAPTER FOUR

<sup>151</sup> Bill Emerson, untitled column, *Newsweek* (c. 1957), quoted in Martin, *Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of its People and Events: Volume 3: Years of Change and Challenge, 1940-1976*, 325.

<sup>152</sup> Joseph W. Jones, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 31 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers. Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005) 27.

<sup>153</sup> Pendergrast, 247-248.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 248.

<sup>155</sup> Joseph W. Jones, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 8 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers.

<sup>156</sup> Pomerantz, 356.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 352. Nick Kotz, *Judgment Days: Lyndon Baines Johnson, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Laws that Changed America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005) 414-415.

<sup>158</sup> Pomerantz, 352. Kotz, 415.

<sup>159</sup> Pomerantz, 352.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 352-353.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 352-354.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 354.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

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- <sup>165</sup> Ibid., 354-355.
- <sup>166</sup> Pomerantz, 355. Kotz, 415.
- <sup>167</sup> Pomerantz, 355.
- <sup>168</sup> Photograph of Ivan Allen and Coretta Scott King, by Associated Press / Wide World Photos, in Pomerantz. Pomerantz, 355.
- <sup>169</sup> Pomerantz, 354-355.
- <sup>170</sup> Ivan Allen interview. Pomerantz, 355.
- <sup>171</sup> Ivan Allen interview. Kruse, 233.
- <sup>172</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 204. Pomerantz, 355-356.
- <sup>173</sup> Pomerantz, 356. Allen, *Mayor*, 204.
- <sup>174</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 354, 466. Carl E. Sanders, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 16 November 1989, transcript, Allen Papers. For years afterward, Sanders would keep a copy of the teletype paper with news of the King shooting in his safe. Lyndon Johnson had written, "Sorry you had to be with me on this occasion," on it, and Sanders kept it as a memento of that day.
- <sup>175</sup> Ivan Allen interview.
- <sup>176</sup> Ibid. Joseph W. Jones, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 23 February 1990, transcript, Allen Papers.
- <sup>177</sup> Pomerantz, 357.
- <sup>178</sup> Ibid., 357-358. Allen, *Mayor*, 205-207.
- <sup>179</sup> Martin, *Atlanta and Environs*, Vol. 3, 516. Pomerantz, 358-362. Allen, *Mayor*, 213.
- <sup>180</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 216. Pomerantz, 359.
- <sup>181</sup> Pomerantz, 358-362.
- <sup>182</sup> Ibid., 362.
- <sup>183</sup> Ibid., 359, 363.
- <sup>184</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 354. Allen, *Mayor*, 216.
- <sup>185</sup> Alex Coffin, "Allen Tops in Meeting the Crises," *Atlanta Constitution*, 15 April 1968.

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<sup>186</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 354.

<sup>187</sup> Woodruff's secretaries would periodically compile a list for him that began, "Since (date), the following people you know have died." At times the list filled much of a page of stationery. Author's observation of interoffice memoranda, RWW Papers. Allen, *Secret Formula*, 365.

<sup>188</sup> RWW to Lyndon B. Johnson, 20 May 1968, RWW Papers.

<sup>189</sup> Joseph W. Jones, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 23 February 1990, transcript, Allen Papers. Joseph W. Jones to File, Memorandum for the Record, 23 January 1968, RWW Papers.

<sup>190</sup> "Nell Hodgson Woodruff," unsigned article, *The Refresher* (Atlanta: The Coca-Cola Company, January-February 1968. Joseph W. Jones to File, Memorandum for the Record, 23 January 1968, RWW Papers.

<sup>191</sup> "Nell Hodgson Woodruff," unsigned article, *The Refresher*. "Nell Hodgson Woodruff," unsigned editorial, *Atlanta Constitution*, 24 January 1968.

<sup>192</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 353. Joseph W. Jones to Frederick O. Branch, 17 October 1980, RWW Papers. Author's observations of notes, Lucille Huffman to RWW, throughout RWW Papers.

<sup>193</sup> Lucille Huffman to RWW, 6 December 1967, RWW Papers.

<sup>194</sup> Joseph W. Jones, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 8 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers. Woodruff's files contain a number of poems, aphorisms, philosophies, and jokes. Several of these are on the subject of drinking. One, which seems (by the number of copies in the file) to have been a favorite of Woodruff's, is "The Morning After – Wife Speaking," an uproariously hilarious poem. Isabelle Scarborough, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 30 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers. Author's observations of elevator and staircase at Windcrote, the former Woodruff residence, in Buckhead, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Guy Milner, April 2006. Delightfully, the original operating permit for the elevator is still framed on one of the walls of the cab. Charles Elliott, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 9 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers.

<sup>195</sup> "Bank Cites Coke Bonanza and Removes Interest Ceiling," *Atlanta Constitution*, 13 March 1968.

<sup>196</sup> "Only 2 in Billionaire Club; Woodruff \$150 Million Up," *Atlanta Constitution*, 29 April 1968. Jim Montgomery, "3<sup>rd</sup> Richest Georgian Doesn't Get a Tumble," Georgia Business column, *Atlanta Constitution*, 30 April 1968. *Forbes*, 1 August 1967, n.p. Jim Thomasson, "Austin – Hot Salesman and Cool Boss at Coke," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 30 June 1968. Kenneth G. Slocum, "Austin, Man Behind Coca-Cola Co.'s 'Rough' Competitive Hustle, Named Chief Officer," *Wall Street Journal*, 6 May 1966, copy in RWW Papers

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(with handwritten note by Hughes Spalding). Allen, *Secret Formula*, 356, 358, 371-372, 382.

<sup>197</sup> Bill Emerson, "From the Editor," *Saturday Evening Post*, 18 May 1968. Joseph W. Jones, interview with Frederick L. Allen, 23 February 1990, transcript, Allen Papers.

<sup>198</sup> Joseph W. Jones, interview with Frederick L. Allen, 23 February 1990, transcript, Allen Papers.

<sup>199</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 218-219.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, 222-223, 234. See also Kevin M. Kruse's *White Flight*, which, although not used for this note, provides excellent background.

<sup>201</sup> William Glenn Robertson, interview with the author, 6 April 2007, notes in author's files. Allen, *Mayor*, 233-234.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, 234-235.

<sup>203</sup> Telegram, Adjutant General, Department of the Army, to RWW, 29 March 1969, RWW Papers. Funeral program and seating card for Dwight D. Eisenhower's funeral, RWW Papers.

<sup>204</sup> William S. Howland, "Unforgettable Ralph McGill," *Reader's Digest* (August 1969) 63-64. Dick Williams, "'No Place to Hide' a Focused Look at McGill's Views on Race Relations," *The Atlanta Constitution*, 23 May 1985.

<sup>205</sup> Howland, 63.

<sup>206</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 337.

<sup>207</sup> John Toigo to RWW, 13 February 1969, RWW Papers.

<sup>208</sup> RWW to John Toigo, 18 February 1969, RWW Papers.

#### NOTES for CHAPTER FIVE

<sup>209</sup> Allen, *Mayor*, 91-92.

<sup>210</sup> Charles H. "Pete" McTier (President, The Woodruff Foundation), interview with the author, Woodruff Foundation offices, Hurt Building, Atlanta, 18 March 2005, notes in author's files.

<sup>211</sup> Allen, *Secret Formula*, 337.

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- <sup>212</sup> Phillip Mooney (Director of Archives, the Coca-Cola Company), telephone interview with author, 21 April 2005, notes in author's files.
- <sup>213</sup> Ivan Allen, Jr., interview by Frederick L. Allen, 24 October 1989, transcript, Allen Papers.
- <sup>214</sup> Carl E. Sanders, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 16 November 1989, transcript, Allen Papers.
- <sup>215</sup> Glenn T. Eskew, *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997) 13-14.
- <sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 13. Allen, *Mayor*, 103.
- <sup>217</sup> David Griesing, *I'd Like the World to Buy a Coke: The Life and Leadership of Roberto Goizueta* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1998) 302. The Woodruff Suite, available for use only after clearance from Coca-Cola, is accessed by a private, keyed elevator, and the suite is wood-paneled. From it, a patient has a magnificent view of the Emory quadrangle and, significantly, the Robert W. Woodruff Library, a hulking, ten-story edifice. Author's observations of Emory University Hospital, multiple occasions, spring 2006. Certificate of Death, State of Georgia, for Robert Winship Woodruff, filed in DeKalb County 12 March 1985, in RWW Papers.
- <sup>218</sup> Joseph W. Jones to John A. Sibley, 10 December 1984, RWW Papers. Joseph W. Jones, interviews by Frederick L. Allen, 8 January 1990 and 23 February 1990, transcripts, Allen Papers. Allen, *Secret Formula*, 408.
- <sup>219</sup> Photograph, c. 1975, RWW Papers.
- <sup>220</sup> Joseph W. Jones, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 8 January 1990, transcript, Allen Papers.
- <sup>221</sup> Mooney interview. Joseph W. Jones, interview by Frederick L. Allen, 11 October 1989, transcript, Allen Papers. Malcolm S. Forbes, "Fact and Comment" column, *Forbes*, 16 July 1984. Footnote: Louise Allen to RWW, 4 September 1975, RWW Papers.
- <sup>222</sup> T. A. Jackson to RWW, 9 July 1980, RWW Papers. Woodruff received \$650 per month in Social Security benefits. Allen, *Secret Formula*, 375. "Woodruff as Country Gentleman," *Atlanta Journal*, 9 January 1981. John Huey, "Bob Woodruff at 91: The Old Salesman as Country Squire," *Wall Street Journal*, 9 January 1981.
- <sup>223</sup> DuBose Murray, M.D., to RWW, undated but from mid-June 1980, RWW Papers.
- <sup>224</sup> Robert R. Richardson to RWW, 25 January 1965, RWW Papers. RWW to Carl Sanders, 1 February 1965, RWW Papers.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Refresher* was a Coca-Cola Company in-house publication.

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