Research Report: Henry Malcolm Withers Hall  
July 10, 2020

Scope and Contents
Below is an outline of research into Henry Malcolm Withers and the history of how his name was added to the law school building at the University of Virginia School of Law. Two appendices follow this report. The first includes primary documents that are cited in this report, and the second contains secondary readings.

Henry Malcolm Withers, 1845-1908
Henry Malcolm Withers was born in Culpeper, Virginia, in 1845. In 1863, he enlisted in the Confederate Army and served for the remainder of the Civil War in the 43rd Battalion, Virginia Cavalry, under John Mosby, a unit known as Mosby’s Rangers. After the war, Withers studied law at the University of Virginia from 1868 to 1870. He left for Kansas City, Missouri, in 1870, where he became a prominent member of the city bar, the Democratic party, and the Missouri Division of the United Confederate Veterans (UCV). As an orator at UCV events, Withers spoke about the pure Anglo-Saxon blood of Southern people, the importance of teaching pro-Confederacy histories in schools, and his belief that black Americans were inferior to whites and should be deported to save white civilization. He died in Kansas City in 1908.

Culpeper County, Virginia
Henry Malcolm Withers was both in 1845 in Culpeper County, Virginia. His father, Pickett Withers (b. 1793 d. 25 Jan 1865), served as a colonel in the Virginia Militia and owned a 761.5-acre farm in Culpeper County in an area known as Jeffersonton. Henry was the youngest of six children:

- Mary Wigginton Withers, b. 1826 – d. 1865
- Benjamin Wigginton Withers, b. 1829 – d. 1896
- Julia Mannering Withers, b. 1832 – d. 1919
- Lyttleton Withers, b. 1834 – d. 1894
- Sarah Pickett Withers, b. 1837 – d. 1929
- Henry M. Withers, b. 1845 – d. 1908

The 1860 Federal Census listed Henry Withers living in Culpeper with his parents, siblings, and uncle, Martin Withers. The Federal Slave Schedule for 1860 listed twenty enslaved individuals at the property, ranging in age from 60 years to 9 months.¹

¹ United States Census of 1860, Schedule 1 – Free Inhabitants in the County of Culpeper, Virginia, July 26, 1860; United States Census of 1860, Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants in the County of Culpeper, Virginia, July 26, 1860; Franz V. Recum, Withers – America (New York, 1949), 37, 88-89.
Pickett Withers died on January 25, 1865, and his children inherited his land jointly. In December 1889, Henry Withers and his wife, along with Henry Withers’s three surviving siblings, sold their interest in the land to Cave W. English, who was the husband of Henry’s youngest sister Sarah and Henry’s first cousin.²

Service in the Confederate Army During the American Civil War

On June 10, 1863, Henry M. Withers enlisted in the Confederate Army as a private in Company A, 43rd Battalion, Virginia Cavalry, led by Captain John Singleton Mosby and known as Mosby’s Rangers.³ Withers was 18 at the time. In a 1908 interview with the Kansas City Journal about his experiences as a Mosby Ranger, which was reprinted or summarized in other newspapers, Withers recalled participating in skirmishes with Union troops, capturing Union officers during night raids, and participating in the unit’s lucrative ambush of a passenger train carrying Union paymasters, known as the Greenback Raid of 1864.⁴

Organized under the Partisan Ranger Act of 1862 of the Confederate States of America, Mosby’s Rangers were a unit for irregular warfare. The Rangers were subject to the same terms of service, pay, and quarter as soldiers in the regular army, but they acted independently of the army with the goals of gathering intelligence about Union troop movements and disrupting Union supply lines. Under the Partisan Ranger Act, individual Rangers could keep the value of what they captured from Union troops: “That for any arms and munitions of war captured from the enemy by any body of Partisan Rangers and delivered to any Quartermaster at such place or places as may be designated by a Commanding General, the Rangers shall be paid their full value in such manner as the Secretary of War may prescribe.”⁵

In October 1863, Withers transferred to the newly created Company B of Mosby’s Rangers. From 1863 to the unit’s dispersal in 1865, Mosby’s 43rd cavalry Battalion operated in northwest Virginia and West Virginia along the Blue Ridge Mountains, from Harper’s Ferry down to Manassas.⁶

In his 1908 interview, Withers recalled of the Rangers: “We were permitted to keep everything we found and for a long time were under the black flag.” He continued:

² Deed, Henry M. Withers et al to Cave W. English, December 14, 1889, Deed Book Volume 24, pgs. 75-76, Culpeper County Clerk of Court Office, Culpeper, Virginia.
⁴ “Was One of Mosby’s Raiders,” Cincinnati Enquirer, June 6, 1908; “Reminiscences of a Mosby’ Raider,” The Pacific Commercial Advertiser (Honolulu, HI), July 12, 1908; “Was One of Mosby’s Raiders,” The Washington Post, June 7, 1908. Reprinted from the Kansas City Journal, which is not available in digital form online or through the UVA Library System.
⁵ CHAP. LXIII.--An Act to organize bands of Partisan Rangers, April 21, 1862, The Statutes at Large of the Confederate States of America, Commencing with the First Session of the First Congress; 1862 (Richmond: R. M. Smith, Printer to Congress, 1862), 48.
“I went in to the regiment on a mule but the third day after my first fight, had a real good horse and an excellent pair of boots. We took everything in sight. Hoops were worn by the fashionable women in those days. I recollect coming back from one raid with the neck of every horse in the command wearing at least one set of hoops.”

On October 14, 1864, Wither participated in the Rangers’ lucrative “Greenback Raid,” an ambush of a commercial train that happened to be carrying two Union paymasters. Mosby’s men removed a section of commercial railroad track at Kearneysville, West Virginia, causing an approaching eight-car Baltimore & Ohio passenger train on route from Baltimore to Wheeling to derail and overturn. The Rangers entered the train and robbed the 200 passengers of their valuables. The lot also included $173,000 greenbacks from two Union paymasters aboard the train. The Rangers ordered all passengers to disembark and then burned the cars. Withers and other Mosby Rangers recalled that they divided the Union dollars among those who had participated in the raid, leaving Withers and each participant with a haul of $1,800.

Withers was paroled on May 8, 1865, in Winchester, Virginia.

The University of Virginia: Student and Alumnus
Withers attended the University of Virginia for two sessions from 1868 to 1870 as a student in the Department of Law. In June 1870, by vote of the faculty, Withers received a certificate of distinction in his classes for both of the Law Department “Schools,” which meant that his exam scores put him in the top Division of his classes. The Schools in the Law Department at the time were the School of Common and Statute Law, and the School of Equity, Mercantile, and International Law. Withers did not receive a Bachelor of Law degree from UVA, which was

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7 “Reminisces of a Mosby’ Raider,” The Pacific Commercial Advertiser (Honolulu, HI), July 12, 1908.
10 For Withers listed as a law student: Catalogue of the University of Virginia, Forty-Fifth Session 1868-1869 (Baltimore: The Sun Book and Job Printing Establishment, 1869) and Catalogue of the University of Virginia, Forty-Sixth Session 1869-1870 (Richmond: James E. Goode’s Steam Presses, 1870). Withers’s listing in UVA’s online archive Jefferson’s University the Early Life confirms that Withers attended UVA from 1868-1870: http://juel.iath.virginia.edu/public_person?person=33820.
11 Beverly Chew Smith to Lacy Armour, March 4, 1971, Box 29, RG 100-78 Papers of the Dean, University of Virginia Law Library Special Collections. This research was conducted at UVA in 1971 to answer Lacy Armour’s questions about her father as she considered setting up a gift to UVA in his honor. The information on his certificates of distinction came from the UVA faculty minutes, which are housed at UVA’s Small Special Collections Library but are currently unavailable to researchers as of July 10, 2020.
common at the time since that degree was not required to practice as a lawyer in Virginia or other states.

While at UVA, Withers was a member of the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity. He continued to be active in this fraternity as an alumnus and served for a time as Treasurer of the Zeta graduate chapter in Kansas City, Missouri.12

In 1889, Withers served as second vice-president of the Kansas City alumni of the University of Virginia at the first meeting of this alumni organization in March 1889.13

Kansas City, Missouri

In 1870, Withers moved to Kansas City, Missouri, where he became a prominent lawyer and member of the city’s Democratic Party.14 With the completion of the city’s Hannibal Railroad Bridge in 1869, Kansas City was a burgeoning metropolis. In the sixty years after the Civil War, the city grew as a hub of transportation, a center for agricultural trade and processing, particularly for livestock, and a landscape of ever-expanding streets and city infrastructure.

Family

In 1889, Withers married Mary F. Pierce, the daughter of wealthy Texas cattleman Abel Head Pierce. They had four children:

- Lacy Withers, b. 1890
- Mary Withers, b. 1892
- Pierce Withers, b. 1895
- Pickett Withers, b. 1899

Henry and Mary lived in Kansas City for the rest of their marriage. They were members of the exclusive Kansas City Country Club and regulars at the city’s most prominent social events.15 In 1911, Lacy Withers married Laurance H. Armour, whose father had led the Armour Packing Company in Kansas City. The Armour meat-packing company was one of the largest packing companies in the U.S. at the time. Laurance later became a director of Armour and Company.16 In 1921, Mary Withers married Clive Runnells of Chicago, son of John Sumner Runnells, president of the Pullman Company.17

12 The Kansas City Times, June 15, 1888. When the Kansas City group revived itself in 1906, Withers spoke at a fraternity dinner of students and graduates. “Kansas City Club,” The Phi Gamma Delta Vol. 30 No. 7 (1906), 626.
13 “City News Condensed,” Kansas City Star, March 12, 1889. For Withers in attendance at the group’s first banquet, see The Kansas City Times, April 16, 1889.
14 The 1870 Federal Census lists him as a lawyer living in Kansas City. United States Census of 1870, Schedule 1 – Inhabitants of Kansas City 1st Ward, Jackson County, Missouri, September 20, 1870.
15 For examples of social events, see The Kansas City Times, October 6, 1893, The Kansas City Times, October 6, 1898. Withers’s obituary mentioned that he was a member of the city Country Club.
On September 26, 1902, the Withers family posted wanted advertisements in the *Kansas City Times* and the *Kansas City Star* for “an experienced and reliable white cook.”

**Law and Business**

Withers spent most of his legal career in private practice. He was a member of the Kansas City Bar and the Missouri State Bar Association. In the 1880s and 1890s, he practiced law with Albert Strother. The firm’s 1892 listing in Hubbell’s Legal Directory stated that they practiced in state and federal court with specialties in “corporation, commercial, real estate, and insurance litigation,” as well as title searches, mortgages, deeds, and powers of attorney. In 1892, Withers was admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1895, he served as an attorney for A.H. Pierce, his father-in-law, in a case before the district court of Noble County in the Oklahoma Territory involving a contract for the sale of cattle.

Withers also won election to various municipal posts during his legal career. In 1873 he served as City Attorney for Kansas City. Withers later served as Prosecuting Attorney for Jackson County, Missouri, in 1884 and 1889-1890, first by the Governor’s appointment and then by popular election. In 1887, he was elected to serve as one of thirteen city freeholders to draft a new charter for Kansas City.

In addition to law, Withers was active in city business circles. In 1876, he was a founding director of The Kansas City and San Juan Gold and Silver Mining Company, which was established to develop gold and silver mines in the San Juan country of Colorado. In 1893, Withers traveled to the Missouri State Capitol to represent the commercial and business interests of Kansas City. In April 1907, he purchased a mining patent in the Gold Field Mining District of Nevada. At the time of his death, he held interest in capital stock in the Red Butte

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18 *The Kansas City Times*, September 26, 1902; *Kansas City Star*, September 26, 1902.
19 *The Kansas City Times*, February 16, 1876; *Report of the First Annual Meeting of the Missouri Bar Association* (St. Louis: Little & Becker, 1882), 30.
21 *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, November 1, 1892.
22 The case was ultimately decided in the U.S. Supreme Court in February 1899. *Central Loan & Trust Co. v. Campbell Commission Co.*, 173 U.S. 84 (1899).
24 “Mr. Withers Appointed,” *The Kansas City Times*, May 23, 1884; *Kansas City Star*, January 2, 1889; “The New Marshal,” *The Evening Times* (Kansas City, MO), November 24, 1890.
26 *The Kansas City Times*, December 19, 1876; “A New Mining Company,” *The Kansas City Times*, December 21, 1876.
27 *Kansas City Star*, February 20, 1893.
Mining Company.29 Starting around 1902, Withers and his wife made “considerable” investments in real estate with H. H. Kirkpatrick in South McAlester, Oklahoma, a rapidly developing hub for the surrounding coal mining industry.30

Politics
Although Withers spent much of his legal career in private practice, he made a name for himself in Kansas City through city politics. Quickly upon arriving in Kansas City, Withers became involved in the city’s Democratic Party, which was the political home for most of the city’s ex-Confederates locally, and which nationally sought to beat Ulysses S. Grant, gain amnesty for former Confederates, and support free trade.31 In 1872, Withers announced his candidacy for the position of City Attorney for Kansas City, an elected and political position that he eventually won. A letter to the editor of the Kansas City Times in favor of Withers’s candidacy in March 1872 claimed that Withers “thoroughly identified with the progressive spirit of our city,” and the letter assured readers that “the Democracy could not, in the opinion of many of our best citizens, elect a more fit representative or a better officer.”32 That same year, Withers was a founding member of the city’s Young Men’s Democratic Club and served on the club’s committee to drafts bylaws and a constitution. The club formed with stated goals to rally the party, “shout the thrilling slogan of Pure Democracy,” and promote the interest of the National Democracy.”33

Withers identified with the Gold Democrats, particularly as the party began to splinter in the 1890s and early 1900s. Known as an eloquent and fiery public speaker, Withers was constantly stumping for the city’s Democracy. Until his death in 1908, Kansas City newspapers noted Withers giving multiple speeches every year —sometimes multiple speeches a week during election season — at Democratic events ranging from city ward meetings to the state Democratic Congressional Convention. City politics and business matters often constituted the focus of his speeches. In 1881 he spoke at a party meeting about how the election of Democratic nominees was “a matter of public business policy.”34

In the first decade of the twentieth century, racial segregation and disenfranchisement became increasingly entrenched in Kansas City law and residential patterns. In her work on the racial landscape of Kansas City in this period, historian Sherry Schirmer argues that in 1904, Kansas

29 Inventory of the Estate of Henry M. Withers, No. 9456, Probate Court of Jackson County, Missouri. Online at Ancestry.
32 The Kansas City Times, March 3, 1872.
33 The Kansas City Times, September 5, 1872; The Kansas City Times, September 6, 1872; Withers was appointed to the Club’s Committee on Finance at the meeting on September 20, 1872. See The Kansas City Times, September 21, 1872.
City “made a perceptible shift toward Jim Crow.”³⁵ In local politics, the southern Democratic wing of Withers’s party pushed to make racial segregation and black disenfranchisement core issues of party campaigns. Even as Withers appears to have splintered off from that wing of the local party in 1904 and identified with the reformer, pro-business Democrats, his wing of the party still supported racial segregation and ideas about black inferiority. In 1904, Withers lobbied for the election of James Folk to the Missouri governorship along with a group of Kansas City Democrats who supported the gold standard and had rejected William Jennings Bryan’s Democratic presidential nomination in 1896.³⁶ Although Folk chose to make government reform the core issue of his public platform, early in his candidacy he voiced support for segregation in schools.³⁷

Withers ran for Congress in 1906 and 1908 in Democratic primaries for Missouri’s 5th Congressional District. Both campaigns were unsuccessful.³⁸

Confederate Veteran Organizations
Withers took on a leadership role in Missouri’s Confederate veteran organizations, which were closely linked with the state’s Democratic party.³⁹ In the 1890s, Withers was active in the Missouri Ex-Confederate Association, a group that formed in 1881 with the goals of honoring Confederate history, commemorating the Lost Cause, and fundraising for a Missouri veterans home.⁴⁰ In 1891, Withers served on the reception committee for the group’s annual reunion, and from 1894-1895, he served on the association’s Executive Committee.⁴¹ In 1896, Withers attended a reunion of Mosby’s Rangers in Richmond, Virginia, during the Grand Reunion of the United Confederate Veterans.⁴²

As the Ex-Confederate Association transitioned into the Missouri Division of the United Confederate Veterans (UCV) in the 1890s, Withers became of prominent leader within this organization. He joined Camp 80, Western Brigade of the Missouri Division, based in Kansas City. In 1905, Withers was selected to serve as the Adjutant-General and Chief of Staff for the

³⁶ *Moberly Evening Democrat* (Moberly, MO), December 30, 1903; Lexington Intelligencer, 12 March 1904.
³⁷ Larry H. Grothaus, “The Negro in Missouri Politics, 1890-1941” (Ph.D. diss., University of Missouri, 1970), 37. For an extended discussion of the 1880-1910 period of Missouri and Kansas City politics, see Chapter 2. Folk stated in his campaign speech: “Instead of throwing the races together in mixed schools, Missouri educates the colored youth better than Republican states and does it without mingling the races.” *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, September 2, 1904.
³⁸ *Kansas City Star*, August 17, 1906; *Kansas City Gazette*, December 31, 1908.
⁴⁰ Fluker, *Commonwealth of Compromise*, 104.
⁴² Withers is pictured as No. 57 in a photograph of the third reunion of Mosby’s Rangers, taken by L.C. Handy in 1896 and included in a blog post by the Scottsville Museum. Bruce Boynton, “A Scottsville Teen in Mosby’s Rangers: Henry G. Harris, [https://scottsvillemuseum.com/war/harris/home.html](https://scottsvillemuseum.com/war/harris/home.html).
Western Brigade of the Missouri Division.43 On April 25, 1906, he was appointed to lead the Western Brigade of the Missouri Division during the Division’s reunion that summer and was given the temporary rank of Brigadier-General. The announcement of his promotion stated: “He will be obeyed and respected accordingly.”44

Withers was a regular speaker at UCV events in Missouri, where he glorified the Lost Cause and spoke about his belief in the inferiority of the black Americans. On August 31, 1905, Withers was a “principal speaker” at the annual reunion of the Nevada Camp 662 of the United Confederate Veterans in Nevada, Missouri.45 The Weekly Post in Nevada, Missouri, reported that between 3,000 and 4,000 people attended this gathering and described Withers as “the orator of the day” who “made many happy hits in his talk to his old comrades.”46

On October 3, 1905, Withers welcomed attendees “on behalf of the state” to the state reunion of the Missouri Division of the United Confederate Veterans, which was held in Kansas City. A Kansas City Times account of his speech reported that Withers earned repeated cheers when he “declared that there are textbooks in the public school today that give only one side of the Civil war question.” The same newspaper account quoted Withers as saying, “There are no greater people on earth than those who live South of the Mason Dixon line. The only pure Anglo-Saxon blood in this country to-day is there.”47

On October 1, 1908, Withers attended and was a principal speaker at the 12th annual State Encampment of the Missouri UCV in Nevada, Missouri. The gathering took place in Lake Park Springs, which was adorned with Confederate flags. The program opened with “Dixie,” followed by welcoming remarks and additional musical performances, including “Old Black Joe” and “Marsa’s in the Cold, Cold Ground.” Withers spoke on behalf of the Division. He discussed teaching the Civil War in American schools, his dedication to the cause of the South when he decided to join the Confederate Army, and his belief that Black Americans should be deported to save the white race. The Weekly Post published part of Withers’s speech, which included this excerpt:

“When I was 14 [sic] I ran off from home to join the Boys in gray. I was enthused. I believed in their cause. I believed their cause was right. I have no regrets for what I did for my Southland. The south had the right to take the course it did. We had a right to secede. The question of slavery had to be solved and it had to be solved with the sword. If war had not come, I believe the South would have solved the problem, by taking the

43 “Confederate Veterans’ Staff,” The Kansas City Star, February 23, 1905.
45 King City Chronicle (King City, MO), September 8, 1905; The Southwest Mail (Nevada, MO), August 11, 1905; Announcement of picnic and Withers speech, see The Weekly Post (Nevada, MO), August 18, 1905.
46 “A Great Reunion,” The Weekly Post (Nevada, MO), September 1, 1905. Newspaper is printed with incorrect date of August 1, 1905 on the newspaper, and in pencil it is again mis-dated as August 25, 1905.
47 “War Incidents Recalled,” The Kansas City Times, October 4, 1905; Account of Withers’s speech was reprinted in St. Louis Post Dispatch on October 4, 1905 under article title “Bias on Civil War in School Books.”
negro and shipping him out of the country. Today I am in favor of shipping him out of the borders of our domain. He can’t compete with the white race, and for that reason the negro is a criminal today. Slavery would have subsided on its own weight even if there hadn’t been a war. If the negro is not deported, he will some day break down our civilization.”

Withers died of heart disease at his Kansas City home on December 25, 1908. His obituary in the Kansas City Times mentioned his service in the Confederate Army, his membership in the Masons, and his membership at the Kansas City County Club. In the Kansas City Star, Withers’s obituary carried the headline “He Served With Col. Mosby” and included an interview about Withers’s service as a Mosby’s Ranger with Judge J.B. Stone, Withers’s commander in the UCV. Notice of Withers’s death in the Confederate Veteran journal stated: “Another, a true, brave soldier, whose cause for which he battled sleeps at Appomattox, has crossed over the river and is now, let us pray, united again with Lee, Jackson, and all the valiant host who have gone before ‘beneath the shade of the trees’ to rest evermore.”

Henry Malcolm Withers Hall
In 1984, the University of Virginia School of Law named its “Phase I” law school building on North Grounds Henry Malcolm Withers Hall in recognition of a $2.8 million gift to the University from the estate of Withers’s daughter.

Since the law school’s move to North Grounds in 1974, the main law building with classrooms and the library had gone unnamed. In 1979, the law school constructed a “Phase II” addition on the east side of the main law building and named this addition for alumnus Walter L. Brown.

In 1981, Henry M. Withers’s daughter, Lacy Withers Armour passed away and left stipulations in her will that a gift be made from her estate to the University of Virginia in honor of her father. In the early 1970s, Lacy Withers Armour had made plans with UVA President Edgar Shannon and law school Dean Monrad Paulsen to include such a gift to the law school in her will so that the new law building or a law center would be named after her father, Henry Withers. In 1973, Lacy Armour decided not to sign a legal document that would obligate her to

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48 “The Confederates Are Here,” The Weekly Post (Nevada, MO), October 2, 1908. A much shorter description of the event in Southwest Mail said that Withers discussed “states rights and the negro question.” Southwest Mail, October 2, 1908. According to census records and information on Withers’s gravesite, he would have been 18 at the time he enlisted in the 43rd Battalion.
49 “Death of Henry Withers,” The Kansas City Times, December 26, 1908. See also “He Served with Mosby,” Kansas City Star, December 27, 1908.
50 Kansas City Star, December 27, 1908.
51 Confederate Veterans Vol 17 (1909), 88. A short obituary for Withers that circulated in papers throughout the U.S. mentioned that Withers came from a seventeenth-century Virginia family and mistakenly identified his father as a Confederate veteran. Example, Leavenworth Times, 26 December 1908.
52 Philip Herrington, The Law School of the University of Virginia: Architectural Expansion in the Realm of Thomas Jefferson (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2017), 148-149, 162.
make the gift, citing the uncertainties of the market, but she informed Shannon that she still planned to make such a gift to the University in her will in honor of her father.\textsuperscript{53}

According to \textit{Virginia Law Weekly} coverage of the Armour gift in 1983 and 1984, the estate of Lucy Armour donated 2.8 million dollars to the law school to fund Armour Scholarships for students at UVA Law. The trustees of Lucy Armour’s estate also gave $200,000 to the UVA College of Arts and Sciences for undergraduate scholarships. The $2.8 million gift to the law school was paid in $280,000 increments over a period of ten years to the University's general foundation. The law school received five percent annual interest on the gift for use as scholarships. Members of the law school class of 1986 were the first students to receive Armour Scholarships.\textsuperscript{54}

In recognition of the Armour Scholarship gift, the University named its Phase I law school building Henry Malcolm Withers Hall. At a 1984 naming ceremony, Laurance H. Armour, III, great-grandson of Henry Malcolm Withers, spoke about how the family hoped the new Armour Scholarships would encourage exceptional students in need of financial assistance to attend law school and work to solve issues in society. Armour also stated that Henry M. Withers had paid for his legal education at the University of Virginia with money he obtained from a train robbery while serving under John Mosby during the Civil War.\textsuperscript{55}

\textbf{Response to Withers Hall Naming}

Honoring a veteran of the Confederacy with the christening of Withers Hall in 1984 did not go unnoticed at the time of the hall’s naming. In February 1985, members of the law school’s Black Law Student Association used letters to the editors of the \textit{Virginia Law Weekly} to discuss problems that they faced at UVA Law. In the first letter, second-year law student Donald McEachin discussed Withers Hall:

“\textbf{The final insult to black law students is the Administration's decision to name the Law School building "Henry Malcolm Withers Hall". Withers was a soldier and supporter of the Confederate Army. Naming the Law School building after a Confederate soldier shows an appalling lack of sensitivity on the part of the Administration. There is nothing glorious or romantic about the Confederacy. The Confederacy represents a society that raped our great-grandmothers and emasculated our great-grandfathers. To pay tribute to a man such as Withers is to glorify a society that violated all the laws of human decency. Since the Law School has seen fit to recognize Withers in this manner, BLSA demands the Law School name the Moot Court Room after a black American in recognition of the financial, cultural, and jurisprudential contributions we have made to this school, this state, and this country.”}\textsuperscript{56}
On March 1, 1985, law student Connie Clay wrote an article in the Virginia Law Weekly in which she recounted warning a black friend who had recently been admitted to UVA Law about racism at the law school. Clay cited the recent naming of Withers Hall:

“They then explained to her that she really should not be surprised by any of the blatantly racist practices perpetrated by the Law School. After all, the edifice is named after a Confederate soldier, Henry Malcolm Withers.”

Not everyone at the time agreed that the naming was problematic. The University’s Board of Visitors approved the naming of Withers Hall in recognition of Lacy Armour’s gift at their meeting on January 27, 1984.

Remembrances of Henry Malcolm Withers

Henry M. Withers is remembered today on genealogical sites and for his service in the Confederate army under John Mosby.

A PowerPoint presentation posted online from a 2018 talk given by author Eric Buckland to the Bull Run Civil War Roundtable on Buckland’s book They Rode With Mosby lists the law school’s Henry Malcolm Withers Hall as an example of both the accomplishment of Mosby’s Rangers and their commemoration:

In this talk (at 15:05), which is available online, Buckland mentioned that Withers may have used his money from the Greenback raid to pay for his law education. Buckland also mentioned

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57 Connie Clay, “So you’re black and you want to come to law school in Virginia?” Virginia Law Weekly, March 1, 1865.
seeing concerns posted on Facebook that Withers Halls was named after a Confederate. He suggested that people who have such a concern should return their diplomas.59

Buckland also uploaded to his public Facebook page a fully transcribed and annotated version of Withers’s 1908 newspaper interview with the *Kansas City Journal* regarding Withers’s experience as a Mosby Ranger, which he titled “Henry M. Withers – A Fortunate Man.”60

George Langford included Henry M. Withers and his family in his genealogy site, specifically his online “Withers Data Bank.” The archive includes correspondence of Henry Withers about tracing his family genealogy.61

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