Victor Eugène Macarty: From Art to Activism in Reconstruction-Era New Orleans

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On the evening of 19 January 1869, Victor Eugène Macarty, a Paris-educated musician and teacher, was forcibly removed from a performance of *The Barber of Seville* at the New Orleans Opera House. According to an account of the incident in the race-baiting *New Orleans Crescent*, Macarty was "very polished and

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elegant in his style of dress," albeit "somewhat pompous in his manners." At issue for the opera house manager, a Mr. Normandin, who had him ejected, was the complaint of several patrons that Macarty was "a colored man." Macarty had apparently visited the opera house repeatedly in late 1868 and early 1869, often in the company of Eugene Staes, a Confederate veteran of Shiloh turned Radical Republican. Following Macarty's expulsion, a conflict erupted between Staes and Michael George, a Confederate amputee, who engaged in a shouting match over the disgrace implied by sitting with "a colored man."[1] In a statement to the *Crescent* on 21 January, Staes claimed that he "severely rebuked" George to an extent that onlookers could not doubt that he considered his actions justified.[2] This double performance at *The Barber of Seville*, one in the seats and the other on stage, was dubbed "the Macarty affair" by the press and embodied the social and political turmoil of Reconstruction Louisiana.[3]

This essay examines postwar politics, race, and resistance through the lens of Macarty's life and experiences. As a highly accomplished and engaged person of color, he illustrates the outer limits of equality following emancipation. In this respect, this account builds on an impressive and growing body of literature on New Orleans Afro-Creoles. Pioneers in this literature are Rodolphe Desdunes, A. P. Tureaud, and Marcus Christian, who worked to preserve and promote the intellectual work of New Orleans's Afro-Creoles and emphasized that culture, rather than class, led to divisions that American observers failed to fully comprehend. More recent works have done this effort justice, illuminating the variety of Afro-Creole experiences and occupations overlooked by prior generations in favor of a fixation on wealthy people of color. Joseph Logsdon and Caryn Cossé Bell give an impressive account of the Americanizing forces that impoverished and constrained Afro-Creoles like Macarty, especially in the 1850s, a process that accelerated after 1868 and affected Macarty profoundly. Bell also locates Afro-Creoles within a long-overlooked world of French Atlantic republican ideals, lost to an overemphasis on class-based de-

1. "Social Equality: Excitement at the Opera, Vilarso McCarthy Ousted," *New Orleans Crescent*, 20 January 1869, 1.

2. "Local Intelligence: Correction," *New Orleans Crescent*, 21 January 1869, 1.

3. Most contemporary evidence suggests that Victor Eugène spelled his last name "Macarty," although census records and newspapers sometimes feature variations in spelling. To avoid confusion, I have adopted the spelling "Macarty" and occasionally changed the spelling in the text, even in quotes. His mistress Rosalie and her children apparently adopted the "Macarthy" spelling, which I use exclusively to refer to them. In the same vein, I have chosen to represent him as Victor Eugène consistently throughout the text, settling on the spelling offered most consistently in the *Tribune* and the *Republican*. I believe the prevalence of Victor Eugène and its abbreviation, V. E., combined with his signature of "V. E. Macarty" on an affidavit in 1860, justifies the decision (see fig. 1).

pictions of Afro-Creoles. Mary Niall Mitchell's fascinating scholarship explores both possibilities—that Afro-Creoles of New Orleans were at once protective of their social status and devoted to the French revolutionary ideals of equality. Macarty certainly fits the mold in this regard as elite but not elitist, at once privileged in terms of his opportunities but radical in his politics and, by the mid-1870s, severely financially constrained. His resistance to segregationist structures complicates top-down political and military narratives of Reconstruction such as Joseph G. Dawson's *Army Generals and Reconstruction*, James Hogue's *Uncivil War*, and Frank Wetta's *Louisiana Scalawags*. Macarty also illustrates the value of Justin Nystrom's invocation to "understand the Civil War generation on its own terms" by looking at the imprint of governance through the lens of biography.[4] Examining Macarty's life reveals the ways that postwar policy debates over segregated schools, railroads, and theaters—organized around the demands of white supremacists—affected the lives of residents, inspiring threats, beatings, and expulsions with disturbing regularity.[5]

Macarty's experiences following emancipation help us understand the nature of postwar white supremacy and the racialized constraints binding even the most accomplished New Orleanians of color. In many respects, Macarty was more successful, and certainly less physically vulnerable, prior to emancipation. His eventual lawsuit against the opera house reveals the extent to which conservative Louisianans, initially unable to wield a postwar electoral

4. Justin Nystrom, *New Orleans after the Civil War: Race, Politics, and a New Birth of Freedom* (Baltimore, MD, 2010), 3.

5. Arnold R. Hirsch gives an excellent overview of the historiography in "Simply a Matter of Black and White: The Transformation of Race and Politics in Twentieth-Century New Orleans," in *Creole New Orleans: Race and Americanization*, ed. Arnold R. Hirsch and Joseph Logsdon (Baton Rouge, LA, 1992), esp. 263–72; Joseph Logsdon and Caryn Cossé Bell, "The Americanization of Black New Orleans, 1850–1900," in Hirsch and Logsdon, *Creole New Orleans*, 208–9, 248–50; Bell, *Revolution, Romanticism, and the Afro-Creole Protest Tradition in Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1997), 4–7, 222–25; Rodolphe Lucien Desdunes, *Our People and Our History: Fifty Creole Portraits*, trans. Charles O'Neil, S.J. (1911; Baton Rouge, LA, 1973), originally published in French; Mary Niall Mitchell, *Raising Freedom's Child: Black Children and Visions of the Future after Slavery* (New York, 2008), 3–6, 20–21, 29–33, 42–43; Joseph G. Dawson III, *Army Generals and Reconstrucion Louisiana, 1862–1877* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1982); James Hogue, *Uncivil War: Five New Orleans Street Battles and the Rise and Fall of Radical Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge, LA, 2006); Frank Wetta, *The Louisiana Scalawags: Politics, Race, and Terrorism during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge, LA, 2012); Nystrom, *New Orleans*, 16–20, 69–74, 144–49. See also Charles Vincent, *Black Legislators in Louisiana during Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1976), 2, 48–59; Ted Tunnell, *Crucible of Reconstruction: War, Radicalism, and Race in Louisiana, 1862–1877* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1984), 66–91, esp. 71, 75, 86–87; Sibyl Kein, *Creole: The History and Legacy of Louisiana's Free People of Color* (Baton Rouge, LA, 2000); Rebecca Scott, *Degrees of Freedom: Louisiana and Cuba after Slavery* (Cambridge, MA, 2005), 38–40, 86–92, 154–62; Sara M. Picard, "Racing Jules Lion," *Louisiana History* 58 (Winter 2017): 5–37.

majority, would rely on their wealth and whiteness to rationalize segregation and social hierarchy. The *Crescent* even boasted that "civil equality bills will never seat Macarty or any of his color in place under the control of white men." White supremacists' ability to regulate capital and space became the primary means through which they sought to control African Americans after 1868. As a highly visible and accomplished person of color, Macarty was an important target for segregationists, though his persistent desegregationist activism indicates he was hardly an easy one.[6]

EARLY LIFE AND CAREER

Macarty's trouble at the opera house was rooted in his career as a prominent musician and performer. He studied piano in New Orleans under Professor J. Norres, according to early biographer James M. Trotter, who published an overview of musicians of color in the final year of Macarty's life and gives the only account of his education. In Trotter's telling, Macarty enrolled in the prestigious Imperial Conservatory of Paris in 1840, having been accepted despite being "over the age prescribed for admission," which required the intervention of the wealthy lawyer and prominent radical Pierre Soulé on his behalf. At the conservatory, Trotter wrote that Macarty "studied vocal music, harmony, and composition" before returning to New Orleans for a career as a composer and performer.[7] His name does not appear on the register of enrolled students in the conservatory, so Macarty's admission may have been unofficial, likely as an *auditeur*. However, he was abroad during the early 1840s and appeared on the passenger list of the schooner *Virginia Antoinette* in 1843, which aligns with Trotter's oral history. According to his only surviving manuscript, "Fleurs de Salon: Two Favorite Polkas," Macarty was a "pianist for the fashionable soirées of New Orleans," whose music was "Sold at the principal Mu-

6. "City Topics," *New Orleans Crescent*, 21 January 1869, 2. See also *New Orleans Republican*, 21 January 1869, 2; "The McCarthy Ejection Case," *New Orleans Crescent*, 28 January 1869, 1. For more on Macarty, see Marcus Christian, "Victor-Eugène Macarty," in *Dictionary of American Negro Biography*, ed. Rayford W. Logan and Michael R. Winston (New York, 1982), 409–10, and "Let Freedom Ring," 15, 81, 95, in "The Negro in Louisiana," Marcus Christian Collection, Louisiana and Special Collections Department, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans (LSCD); Rodolphe Lucien Desdunes, *Our People and Our History: Fifty Creole Portraits* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1973), 83–84; David Rankin, "The Origins of Black Leadership in New Orleans during Reconstruction," *Journal of Southern History* 40 (August, 1974): 438; Edward Larocque Tinker, *Les écrits de langue française en Louisiane au XIXe siècle: Essais biographiques et bibliographiques* (Paris, France, 1933), 294–95.

7. James Trotter, *Music and Some Highly Musical People* (Boston, MA, 1880), 343–44. Trotter's account was published when Macarty was still living and is the most important source on Macarty's antebellum career.

sic Stores."[8] He was also one of the first persons of color to headline his own performances at the Orleans Theater and performed regularly in that capacity as early as the spring and summer of 1865.[9]

A complex family history undergirded these professional accomplishments. Macarty's father, Eugène Theodore Macarty, was a powerful New Orleans financier who had several long-term romantic relationships with women of color in the city. This included one with Héloise Croy, an émigré born around 1795 in Le Cap, on the northern coast of Saint-Domingue. Although no immigration records remain, Croy probably left the island as a child following the revolution that ousted the French colonizers from the Saint-Domingue. There is no record of her having been enslaved, and in fact, all three of Eugène Theodore's long-term mistresses were free women of color. The most famous of the three, Eulalie Mandeville de Marigny, was perhaps more powerful than her lover and even helped finance his business ventures. Héloise gave birth to Victor Eugène in New Orleans sometime between 1817 and 1823 and, on 29 June 1826, his brother Jean François Pierre Croy, who apparently died shortly thereafter. She was fairly well off and appeared with some consistency in the *New Orleans City Directory*, first in 1822, living at 62 St. Louis Street as "Miss Heloise Croy."[10] She was listed in the 1832 directory living at 50 Victoire and again in 1843, the year Victor Eugène returned from

8. V[or.] Eugene Macarthy, "Fleurs de Salon: 2 Favorite Polkas," New Orleans: Wehrmann, 1854, box 34, folder 2, William Ransom Hogan Jazz Archive, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University.

9. Though we cannot be certain, it is likely that Macarty attended the conservatory unofficially as an *auditeur*. Writing in 1878, Gustave Chouquet mentions *auditeurs* as a significant portion of the conservatory's attendance, representing as much as one fifth of each class. Chouquet details the rigorous competition for official admission in detail. If, as Trotter suggests, Macarty was admitted at Soulé's request, he would not have gone through this process and would likely have been ineligible for full admittance; see "Conservatoire de Musique," in *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. George Grove (London, 1879), 393; "Contrôles des Élèves," Conservatoire Nationale de la Musique, AJ/37/352–353, Archives Nationales in Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, France; List of Passengers Taken on Board the Schooner *Virginia Antoinette*, 30 October 1843, Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New Orleans, Louisiana, 1820–1902, NAI no. 2824927, RG 85, Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, National Archives at Washington, DC (accessed via Ancestry.com). For Macarty's musical accomplishments, see Lester Sullivan, "Composers of Color of Nineteenth-Century New Orleans: The History behind the Music," in Kein, *Creole*, 83–84, 87–90; Lucius R. Wyatt, "Six Composers of Nineteenth-Century New Orleans," *Black Music Research Journal* 19 (Spring 1990): 125, 129–30. For Pierre Soulé, see Sullivan, "Composers of Color," 83; Bell, *Revolution, Romanticism*, 160–62, 265; David Potter, *The Impending Crisis: America before the Civil War, 1848–1861* (New York, 1976), 190–92.

10. Héloise Croy, *New Orleans City Directory*, 1822, 9, Louisiana Division, City Archives, New Orleans Public Library (hereafter NOPL).

Paris, as "Mrs. Heloise Croix" at 158 St. Peter Street.[11] There is no record of her having been married, but she lived near the center of town through 1843 and likely had an occupation that merited her consistent inclusion in the directory. If her will is any indication, she was also at least partially literate.[12]

Croy was not only an émigré who left St. Domingue in the wake of the slave revolt but also a slaveholder who purchased and sold at least six women and two children over the course of Victor Eugène's early life. In 1827, she bought an eleven-year-old enslaved girl named Harriet from John Woolfork for $327. Harriet, the first woman Croy purchased, would remain enslaved to her for a dozen years. Crucially for Victor Eugène, his mother sold the bulk of the women she enslaved in 1839, just before he traveled to Paris. Though we cannot know the reason behind Croy's need for liquidity in 1839 with certainty, the nearly three thousand dollars she secured from this burst of sales came at the precise moment Victor Eugène was lobbying for entry to the conservatory and may have been intended to fund his studies in France. What is clear is that Victor Eugène grew up in a wealthy household in which enslaved women likely performed the bulk of the domestic labor until he left for Paris. His subsequent success as a musician, actor, and politician grew from the opportunities that Harriet and her enslaved coworkers provided through their labor for his mother. Though an outspoken postwar advocate for racial equality, Victor Eugène's early life was firmly rooted in slavery.[13]

11. Héloise Croy, *New Orleans City Directory*, 1843, 90, NOPL.

12. As with Victor Eugène, there are several versions of Croy's name. I have adopted the spelling from her signature on her will, Héloise Croy. Héloise Croy, *New Orleans City Directory*, 1822, 9; 1832, 30; 1843, 90, NOPL; Baptism of Jean François Pierre Croy, 7 September 1826, Sacramental Records, vol. 17, 94, New Orleans Archdiocesan Archives (hereafter NOAA); Héloise Croy, Last Will and Testament, Octave de Armas, Notary, New Orleans, Louisiana, 30 May 1873, Act no. 92, vol. 94, Notorial Archives Research Center, New Orleans, Louisiana (hereafter NARC). For Eugène Theodore's relationships, see Carolyn Long, *Madame Lalaurie: Mistress of the Haunted House* (Gainesville, FL, 2012), 19–25, 84, 152–54, 199 n. 35; Penny Johnson, "Eulalie de Mandeville: An Ethnohistorical Investigation Challenging Notions of Placage in New Orleans as Revealed through the Lived Experiences of a Free Woman of Color" (master's thesis, University of New Orleans, 2010), 1–2, 13–16.

13. Given that Croy enslaved only women, almost all of them relatively young, and that she asked such high prices for them—often more than twice the market rate—it is conceivable that she was involved in some kind of sex work and might have managed a small brothel. I have yet to find a smoking gun on this front, but I think the possibility is substantial enough that it is worth noting. For taverns and sex work, see Rashuana Johnson, *Slavery's Metropolis: Unfree Labor in New Orleans during the Age of Revolutions* (New York, 2016), 108–10; Sale of a Slave, John Woolfork to Heloise Croy, William Boswell, Notary, New Orleans, 12 June 1827, vol. 3, 389, NARC; Release, Payment of Heloise Croy to Estate of Antoine Abat, Carlile Pollock, Notary, New Orleans, 1 May 1832, vol. 38A, 273, NARC; Vente d'esclave, Heloise Croy to Madame Honorine Saint Clair, Carlile Pollock, Notary, New Orleans, 27 April 1832, vol. 40, 291, NARC; Vente d'esclave, Héloïse

The Macartys were counted among the city's elites to such an extent that the *Crescent* quipped just days before the incident at the opera that "we would bet our last dollar that a Macarty . . . would no sooner admit the equality of [formerly enslaved people] . . . than Wade Hampton or Peyton Randolph would."[14] Indeed, two of his half brothers from his father's other relationships, Pierre Villarceaux and Eugène Macarty, as well as a cousin, Drauzin Barthélémy Macarty, achieved postwar prominence that stemmed from their antebellum wealth and education. Eugène was elected justice of the peace for Algiers in 1868 and served as a speaker for the Radical ticket during the state campaign. Drauzin Barthélémy, listed as a money broker in the 1860 census, was involved in a high-profile effort to finance an extension of the street car line in 1868. Pierre Villarceaux was one of the original petitioners to the Confederate governor of Louisiana in 1861 to create the famous Louisiana Native Guard and served as a vice president at the Grand Mass Ratification Meeting in Congo Square on 3 April 1868. He was even mistakenly identified as the colored patron in the opera house by the *Crescent*, indicating the extent to which the Macartys were synonymous with New Orleans's Afro-Creole elite. Despite their similar status and ambitions, however, Victor Eugène was the only member of his extended family to thoroughly devote himself to radical politics following emancipation. Perhaps his more radical stance was tied to his studies in Paris or his experiences during the war, of which little or no record remains. Nonetheless, strands of his egalitarianism appeared in several antebellum incidents and foreshadowed his postwar militancy.[15]

Some legal and public difficulties involving Victor Eugène further indicate his family's prominence, along with his personal desire to be treated respectfully. On 28 November 1854, Eugene Ducatel, a wealthy New Orleans financier, took out an advertisement in the *Crescent* to complain about Macarty.

Croix to Charles Becquet, Louis T. Caire, Notary, New Orleans, 15 January 1839, act 25, vol. 69, 56, NARC; Vente d'esclave, Heloise Croy to Jean Carella, Amadee Ducatel, Notary, New Orleans, 28 February 1839, vol. 10, 74, NARC; Vente d'esclave, Heloise Croy to Mr. Manuel Andry, Amedee Ducatel, Notary, New Orleans, 22 April 1839, vol. 11, 178, NARC; Vente d'esclave, Heloise Croix to Eugenie Macarty, Louis Caire, Notary, New Orleans, 20 April 1843, vol. 89, 182, NARC.

14. "City Topics," *New Orleans Crescent*, 14 January 1869, 2.

15. Eugène Macarty, "Radical Republican State Campaign," *New Orleans Republican*, 11 April 1868, 1; "An Algiers Legal Luminary Snuffed," *New Orleans Republican*, 18 August 1870, 5; Eugène Macarty, *New Orleans City Directory*, 1871, 393; Eugène McCarthy, *New Orleans City Directory*, 1872, 260; D. B. Macarty, 1860 Census, Ward 5, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, dwelling 1455, household 1403; "City Council—Official," *New Orleans Republican*, 1 May 1868, 4; "Free Colored Warriors in the Field," *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, 22 April 1861, 1; "Grand Mass Ratification Meeting in Congo Square," *New Orleans Republican*, 4 April 1868, 1; "Grand Unification Mass Meeting," *New Orleans Republican*, 15 July 1873, 1; "Local Intelligence," *New Orleans Crescent*, 21 January 1869, 1; Long, *Madame Lalaurie*, 19–25, 84, 152–54, 199 n. 35.

Ducatel expressed frustration with the "insolent way in which [Macarty] has addressed me" and claimed to have filed a suit against him. Though there is no court record substantiating his claim, Ducatel had apparently been humiliated by Macarty and titled his ad "To the Public" to rectify what he considered damage to his reputation.[16] In a second instance, Macarty caught John Doherty trying to steal his coat, worth thirty dollars, from his home at 169 Tremé Street at around noon on 9 July 1860. Macarty had Doherty arrested and, after serving "nearly four months in Jail," Doherty vowed in a note to the judge hearing the case that the experience "has taught me a lesson, I therefore throw myself on [your] mercy."[17] In his affidavit, Macarty asked that the court refuse lenience and that Doherty "be dealt with according to law." Doherty was eventually sentenced to an additional month in the parish jail and was required to cover the court costs of his prosecution. Here, the notoriously racialized courts protected the property of the fair-skinned, elite Macarty and penalized his poorer, Irish-surnamed assailant. Taken together, the two instances demonstrate Macarty's concern with being treated respectfully and his willingness to challenge what he considered unjust treatment (see fig. 1).[18]

Macarty ran into legal trouble again in 1860, this time with Alton Dain, a white man. According to Dain's testimony, on 18 September 1860, he was "in a house situated on Tremé between St. Ann and Main Streets," the present-day location of the Mahalia Jackson Theater for the Performing Arts, when Macarty attacked him. Dain claimed that Macarty "struck him in the face with his hand" and asked "that he be arrested and dealt with according to Law."[19] Macarty was indeed arrested, charged with assault, and released on a three-hundred-dollar bond. Dain apparently intended for the case to go to trial, but it was instead "dismissed by nolle prosequi" on 21 November 1860, according to the *Crescent*.[20] With the charges dropped, Macarty returned to his home at 169 Tremé where, just next door, his mother held her only known occupation on the eve of the war—leasing furnished rooms. Having apparently sold the final woman she enslaved, the seventy-year-old Marie Louise in 1843 for

16. Eugene Ducatel, "To the Public," 28 November 1854, *New Orleans Crescent*, 3; Eugene Emmanuel Ducatel, 1850 Census, New Orleans, Ward 4, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, dwelling 360, household 562.

17. Petition of John Dougherty, 19 October 1860, Sentence, 26 October 1860, C. M. Bradford, District Attorney, State v. John Dougherty, Case 14627, First District Court, NOPL. I have adopted Doherty's spelling of his name, though the state spelled it *Dougherty*.

18. Affidavit of V. E. Macarty, 11 July 1860, sworn before Acting Recorder Joseph Magioni, Recorder's Office, Second District; Sentence, 26 October 1860, C. M. Bradford, District Attorney, State v. John Dougherty, Case 14627, First District Court, NOPL.

19. Testimony of A. Dain, Sworn 19 Sept 1860; Bond of Eugène Macarty, 5 October 1860, State of Louisiana v. Eugène Macarty, f.m.c., First District Court, case 14708, NOPL.

20. "First District Court," *New Orleans Crescent*, 22 November 1860, 1.

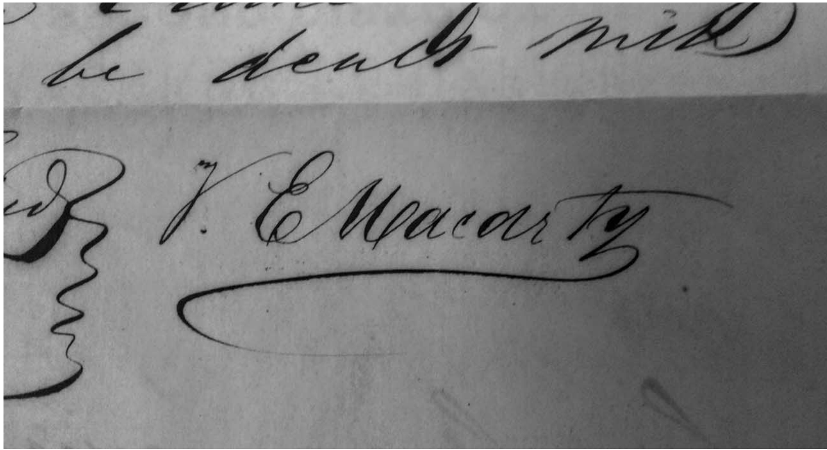

Figure 1. Macarty's signature on his 1860 affidavit against John Doherty. Color version available as an online enhancement.

one hundred dollars, Croy may have taken on boarders to supplement her income. That she lived separately from her son indicates that, whatever the case, they were still living comfortably on the eve of secession.[21]

Macarty's experiences during the Civil War remain something of a mystery, but in its aftermath, he emerged as a prominent actor and musician. His concert schedule during 1865 gives a good indication of the types of performances he gave and the extent to which his renown as an artist gave him a platform as an activist. The *Tribune* wrote glowingly of his concert on 18 July: "M. Macarty, dont le mérite universel lui permet de passer avec une égale facilité de la musique à la comédie, s'est admirablement acquitté de toutes les parties du programme." His performance of *Les tribulations d'un Anglais* was apparently so compelling that it "a fait rire de bon coeur tout l'auditoire."[22] The English-language edition of the paper identified the social implications of his talent in a review of a similar performance the month before. The editor wrote that Macarty was "one of the talented men who are an honor to our population" whose "literary acquirements and his enlightened taste secure him a place of distinction" in the African American community. This "place of distinction" made him a natural leader in postwar New Orleans (see fig. 2).[23]

21. Héloise Croy, *New Orleans City Directory*, 1861, 119, NOPL; Vente d'esclave, Heloise Croix to Eugenie Macarty, Louis Caire, Notary, New Orleans, 20 April 1843, vol. 89, 182, NARC.

22. "Mr. Macarty, whose universal merit enables him to pass with equal ease from music to comedy, has admirably acquitted himself of all parts of the program"; "made all the audience laugh heartily" ("Theatre d'Orleans," *New Orleans Tribune*, 19 July 1865, 1).

23. "News of the Day," *New Orleans Tribune*, 20 June 1865, 2.

Figure 2. Victor Eugène Macarty, undated. Macarty was consistently described as having very light complexion and refined tastes. Courtesy of his great-granddaughter Sonja McCarthy. Color version available as an online enhancement.

Macarty used his performances to make political statements and raise money to benefit black New Orleanians in the spring and summer of 1865. The first of these concerts, performed on behalf of an orphanage for freedpeople on 10 May, featured Macarty's vocal performance of "Quasimodo," an ode to Victor Hugo's famous character from *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*. Macarty sang: "Je suis laid? que m'importe! / Vils humains méprisés!" This final stanza

continued: "Saluez Notre Dame! / Accourez à sa voix! / Mes cloches en sont l'âme."[24] In the wake of slavery, these words carried a double meaning for his audience, among whom were Radical Republican dignitaries Nathaniel Banks, Thomas J. Durant, and others. Hugo was revered by New Orleans radicals for his racial egalitarianism and support of John Brown. Further, singing as a racialized Roma outsider whose labor brought music from the cathedral's bells surely accentuated Macarty's status as a politically engaged musician of color. "Quasimodo" would have had another special meaning to New Orleans musicians and theatergoers of color. Its composer, Edmond Dédé, who in the words of the *Tribune* was as "black as any one can be," was "dragged from his country by the stubbornness of prejudice, went to France, and is now leader of [an] orchestra in . . . Bordeaux."[25] The piece doubtless reminded listeners of the perils of racism and the potential for black achievement in its absence.[26]

During his next major concert on 19 June, which raised money for amateur musicians of color, Macarty sang the radical "Le Marseillais à Paris." His rendition of the militant lyrics of the French anthem, with its call "Aux armes, citoyens!" on behalf of "Liberté, Liberté chérie," surely reminded listeners in the immediate wake of the war of the violent struggle for emancipation. Perhaps more importantly, Macarty announced, "C'est nous qu'on ose méditer / De rendre à l'antique esclavage!"[27] New Orleanians of color, even those who had been free before secession, would not return to the antebellum order. Perhaps his most significant political act as a performer came in his role as Antony in Alexandre Dumas's play of the same name. The *Tribune* advertised that "un quart du produit de la représentation sera destiné au Comité Central du Suffrage Universel."[28] Ex-Confederates' political activity revolved around preventing universal suffrage immediately after the Civil War, a goal that ultimately

24. "I am ugly? What does it matter to me? / Nasty despised humans!"; "Hail Notre Dame! / Hasten unto her voice! / My bells are her soul" (Edmond Dédé, Célestin Nanteuil, and E. Duval, "Quasimodo!" [Bordeaux, France: E. Philibert, 1865], Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, France).

25. "The Lecture and Soiree Musicale at the Orleans Theater," *New Orleans Tribune*, 11 May 1865, 2.

26. "Lecture Patriotique et Litteraire," *New Orleans Tribune*, 9 May 1865, 1; *Black Republican*, 13 May 1865, 3; for Hugo's status among New Orleans radicals, see Bell, *Revolution, Romanticism*, 222–25. For Hugo's fraught relationship to egalitarianism and colonialism, see Edward Ousselin, "Victor Hugo's European Utopia," *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 34 (Fall–Winter 2005–6): 39–41. For Dédé, see Sullivan, "Composers of Color," 74, 78–79; Sally McKee *The Exile's Song: Edmond Dédé and the Unfinished Revolutions of the Atlantic World* (New Haven, CT, 2017), 5–10.

27. "La Marseillaise," arranged by H. S. Saroni (New York, 1848), Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

28. "A fourth of the profits from this performance is destined for the Central Committee for Universal Suffrage" ("Theatre d'Orleans," *New Orleans Tribune*, 27 October 1865, 1).

inspired the infamous Mechanics Institute Massacre of 30 July 1866, which fundamentally altered southern Reconstruction. His association with the movement would almost certainly have made Macarty a target of the city's white conservatives. And as with performing Dédé's work, performing Dumas, whose accomplishments and politics under the archetype of the "inspired mulatto" would not have been lost on the audience, delivered an additional, underlying message: New Orleans Afro-Creoles, like Dumas, would not be held back by racism.[29]

THE BIRTH OF A POLITICIAN

Victor Macarty's involvement in the postwar voting rights movement went well beyond headlining concerts to raise funds for the activity. On 16 August 1866, during testimony before a military board of inquiry into the Mechanics Institute Massacre, Macarty revealed that he had been in the main hall where delegates had gathered to lobby for black enfranchisement when fighting erupted just outside the building. He recalled that he "heard pistols shooting, and after the pistols shooting I heard the roll of a drum." After discovering the rapidly escalating conflict in front of the institute, he ran and implored his friends to leave because "we were not armed, and it was not prudent to stay there." He witnessed the main assault on the convention shortly after leaving: "When the police came and assaulted the hall I was under one of the porticoes of the hall. As the police rushed upon the men (they were rebels) there were a great many pistol-shots fired by the police; they were armed with pistols, and had clubs in their hands, and I saw one man killed positively on that pile of brickbats by a club. He was struck by a policeman."[30] The experience must have been deeply shocking and transformative, since, in the year after the massacre, Macarty transitioned away from musical performance and became much more outspoken and militant in his demand for equal rights. He gave a high-profile speech on the first anniversary of the event honoring the victims

29. "Theatre d'Orleans," *New Orleans Tribune*, 15 June 1865, 3. On Dumas and the trope of the "inspired mulatto," see Marlene L. Daut, "Haiti and the Black Romantics: Enlightenment and Color Prejudice after the Haitian Revolution in Alexandre Dumas's *Georges* (1843)," *Studies in Romanticism* (Spring 2017): 73–91, esp. 74–77, 83–84, 87–88; on his importance in the Afro-French Atlantic, Eric Martone, "Creating a Local Black Identity in a Global Context: The French Writer Alexandre Dumas as an African American Lieu De Mémoire," *Journal of Global History* 5 (November 2010): 395–422, esp. 396–400, 404–5, 411–12.

30. Testimony of Eugene Macarty, 16 August 1866, New Orleans Riots, Message from the President of the United States, in Answer to a Resolution of the House of the 12th Ultimo, Transmitting All Papers Relative to the New Orleans riots, 39th Congress, 2d Session, House of Representatives, Ex. Doc. no. 68, 271–72, found in *Executive Documents Printed by Order of the House of Representatives, During the Second Session of the Thirty-Ninth Congress* (Washington, DC, 1867).

of the massacre on 30 July 1867. His oration followed a requiem mass sung at the Mechanics Institute organized by the "Numerous Friends of the Martyrs." Though he was already a member of the city's Republican Central Executive Committee, to which he was elected on 13 December 1866, the speech marked one of his earliest and most substantial political acts and likely helped launch his political career.[31]

Following the massacre at the Mechanics Institute, Macarty became more militant and politically engaged. After he was elected a member of the Central Committee of the Louisiana Republican Party in December 1866, he served on the Orleans Parish Board of Police Commissioners during 1867 and traveled throughout Louisiana campaigning for the Republican ticket during both the gubernatorial and presidential elections of 1868. These campaign events occasionally erupted in violence, especially during the presidential election, and Macarty likely understood that speaking for the radicals' ticket carried significant risk. On 20 September 1868, for example, he wrote a frenzied message to Republican Governor Henry Warmoth from St. Martinsville pleading for help after his campaign rally was "disturbed by the Democrats, numbering two hundred, all armed with guns and revolvers."[32] Despite the dangers, Macarty helped organize the Fifth Ward Republican Club with Eugene Staes, his frequent companion at the New Orleans Opera House, and ran on the Republican ticket in Orleans Parish for third justice of the peace, a position he narrowly lost by only eighty-four votes out of 6,615 cast. This experience, combined with his suit against the opera house, likely contributed to his election to the state legislature from the Sixth District in 1870. Macarty won a district with a 15 percent majority of white voters in one of the city's fairest Reconstruction-era elections. He would serve a single term in the legislature, where, among other things, he would help investigate the election irregularities that plagued the state. Thus, by the time Victor Eugène shouted, in the midst of his removal from the opera, that it was "an indignity that . . . a colored man, should thus be treated in a civilized community," he was among the most prominent persons of color in the city upon whom a new strategy of white supremacy was being tested.[33]

31. "Great Funeral Ceremony," *New Orleans Tribune*, 25 July 1867, 3. For Macarty's election to the Central Executive Committee, see "Central Executive Committee," *New Orleans Tribune*, 13 December 1866, 4. For the Mechanics Institute Massacre, see Bell, *Revolution, Romanticism*, 261–64; Nystrom, *New Orleans*, 66–69.

32. V. E. Macarty to Gov. Henry Warmoth, 20 September 1868, St. Martinsville, La., in *Report of the Joint Committee of the General Assembly of Louisiana on the Conduct of the Late Elections, and the Condition of Peace and Order in the State* (New Orleans, LA, 1868), 34.

33. "Social Equality: Excitement at the Opera, Vilarso McCarthy Ousted," *New Orleans Crescent*, 20 January 1869, 1; "Another Outrage," *New Orleans Tribune*, 21 January 1869, 4. For Macarty as a legislator, see Vincent, *Black Legislators*, 118, 230. For circumstances of his election, see

Conservative New Orleanians, to be sure, argued that their ejection and subsequent abuse of Macarty for breaching the color line was nothing new. Their repeated attacks on "social equality" and their willingness to use violence to enforce segregation during the presidential election of 1868, however, indicated that a more complicated and contested process was under way.[34] Prior to 1868, state laws had codified and enforced a social hierarchy with white Louisianans at the top. The ratification of the Louisiana Constitution of 1868 overturned the black codes that had been designed to entrap African Americans as a permanent underclass. Of particular importance for Macarty was Article 13, which granted "equal rights and privileges" in "all places of business, or of public resort" that required a public license "without distinction or discrimination on account of race or color."[35] The measure effectively transformed the state from an institution that policed and maintained racial hierarchy to one that mandated equal treatment, requiring white conservatives to adopt new tactics to maintain racial exclusivity. They were aided in this endeavor by Governor Warmoth, who on 26 September 1868 vetoed a bill that would have made it a criminal offense to violate Article 13. It was in this environment that Macarty, a high-profile artist and politician of color, was ejected from the opera house. Macarty's case became the touchstone for this discriminatory practice and his lawsuit, in the words of the *Crescent*, a "test case" for Afro-Creoles hoping to overturn white supremacy. More accurately, though, Macarty's treatment represented a conservative test of the limits of equality under the new constitution, requiring updated tactics to maintain the new racial order.[36]

Francis A. Walker, *A Compendium of the Ninth Census* (Washington, DC, 1872), 466; "Votes for Representatives, *New Orleans Republican*, 12 November 1870, 1; Dawson, *Army Generals and Reconstruction*, 106–7; Hogue, *Uncivil War*, 76; Tunnell, *Crucible of Reconstruction*, 160–65. For committee, see "Political Notices," *New Orleans Republican*, 23 November 1872, 5. For Macarty's political activity beyond the legislature, see "Central Executive Committee," *New Orleans Tribune*, 14 December 1866, 4; "Board of Police Commissioners," *New Orleans Tribune*, 7 November 1867, 3; "Parish Nominations," *New Orleans Republican*, 15 March 1868, 1; "Fifth Ward Republican Club," *New Orleans Republican*, 23 August 1868, 5; "The Election: Ratification of the Constitution," *New Orleans Republican*, 24 April 1868, 1.

34. The *New Orleans Bee* published an article on the "Social Equality Question" the day after the Crescent broke the "Macarty affair." Though it didn't mention Macarty by name, his expulsion from the opera formed the clear subtext for the article. "Social Equality Question," *New Orleans Bee*, 21 January 1869, English edition, 1; "Social Equality: Excitement at the Opera, Vilarso McCarthy Ousted," *New Orleans Crescent*, 20 January 1869, 1.

35. *Constitution Adopted by the State Constitutional Convention of the State of Louisiana, 7 March 1868* (New Orleans, LA, 1868), 4.

36. "City Topics," *New Orleans Crescent*, 21 January 1869, 2. For further discussion of the Constitution, especially Article 13, see Scott, *Degrees of Freedom*, 42–44; Tunnell, *Crucible of Reconstruction*, 117–19, 125, 167. For Warmoth's veto message, see "Veto of the Civil Rights Bill," *New Orleans Republican*, 26 September 1868, 1.

Macarty was a frequent participant in Republican marches and rallies throughout 1867 and 1868 and was often listed as a speaker and party dignitary at Republican rallies in New Orleans and the surrounding parishes. His speeches in 1867 included a stop in Opelousas, Louisiana, where he reportedly declared "votez, votez pour qui vous voudrez, ne regardez pas à la couleur." According to Macarty, it mattered not whether "des hommes soient blancs, noirs, ou rouges," so long as they were dignified men devoted to "la cause républicaine."[37] He communicated a similar, if less overt, vision in his poetry, published under the pseudonym Antony. Historians have largely overlooked this work, likely due to the difficulty of accessing it in the scattered issues of the *Tribune* and the pseudonymous attribution. Nonetheless, Antony's writing follows the emergence of Macarty in the role of Antony in Dumas's play of the same name in October 1865, a part he played intermittently through at least December 1867, making it his longest-running and most recognizable role. Although scholars have tended to treat Macarty and Antony as two distinct authors, the poem ascribed to Macarty by early biographers, "La fleur indiscrète," was written as Antony. Furthermore, one of his poems was addressed to Armand Lanusse, who served with Macarty in the *bureau de police* in 1867. Lanusse was a teacher and outspoken Republican whose exchange with Antony over the nature of God formed a stirring critique of white supremacy. His five surviving poems, "La fleur indiscrète," "Il est," "Combat de l'aigle républicain et du copperhead," "À Théodule Delassize," and "Les trois perles," provide an important window into Macarty's worldview and early activism.[38]

In verse, Macarty voiced frustration with racialized exclusion founded in the belief that African American accomplishment and virtue could be discounted simply because of race. The lone work cited by his biographers, "La fleur indiscrète," carried with it an implicit reminder that free persons of color had helped save New Orleans from the British invasion in 1815 through an expression of admiration for Nathalie Formento. Formento was the granddaugh-

37. "Vote, vote for whom you would like to vote, regardless of the[ir] color" ("Lettre des Opelouses," *New Orleans Tribune*, 21 May 1867, 1).

38. "Grand Republican Rally," *New Orleans Republican*, 1 April 1868, 2; "Radical Republican State Campaign," *New Orleans Republican*, 2 April 1868, 1; "La fleur indiscrète," *New Orleans Tribune*, 22 July 1866, 1; "Il est," *New Orleans Tribune*, 25 August 1866, 1; "Combat de l'aigle républicain et du copperhead," *New Orleans Tribune*, 23 September 1866, 1; "À Théodule Delassize," *New Orleans Tribune*, 6 December 1866, 1; "Les trois perles," *New Orleans Tribune*, 26 May 1867, 1; Michel Fabre, "The New Orleans Press and French-Language Literature by Creoles of Color," in *Multilingual America*, ed. Werner Sollors (New York, 1998), 42–43; Tinker, *Les écrits*, 294–95. For Antony performances, see Christian, "Victor-Eugène Macarty," 409; "Theatre d'Orleans," *New Orleans Tribune*, 27 October 1865, 1; "Theatre des Arts et Metiers," *New Orleans Tribune*, 8 December 1867, 1. For Lanusse connection, see "Bureau de Police," *New Orleans Tribune*, 31 October 1867, 2. Many thanks to Clint Bruce for sharing the text and attribution of "La fleur indiscrète."

ter of Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Savary, a Haitian Creole who helped organize a militia of New Orleans Afro-Creoles that defended the city alongside Andrew Jackson during the Battle of New Orleans. Antony's poetry used the imagery of pearls and swans to describe the tension between being unrecognized and monitored that characterized elements of Afro-Creole life in New Orleans. In "Les trois perles," he wondered, "Quand pourrai-je arracher à leur obscurité / La perle dont le flot connaît seul la beauté." For Antony, the "vaste cité" wasted those whose refinement it refused to acknowledge.[39]

Much of Macarty's poetry carried social and political overtones based on his race, status, and the context. As with his performances, however, he occasionally made more overt statements as in "Combat de l'aigle républicain et du copperhead." Macarty alluded to the term for pro-Union Democrats—*Copperheads*—and identified white conservatives more broadly as traitorous serpents. In his telling, the "grand aigle" was overcome and bloodied by a hideous, creeping "dragon." He wrote:

> Il faut que l'ennemi, convulsif et sifflant,
> Expire sans combattre ou combatte en vollant
> Il faut, tout éperdu, qu'il prolonge la guerre,
> Sans gonfler ses poisons des fanges de la terre.

Macarty found that white conservatives had to "prolonge la guerre" without being poisoned by the theft engendered in slavery, the cause for which they fought. In fact, Macarty derived the entire poem from Alexandre Soumet's *Jeanne d'Arc*, which had originally run as a play while he was studying in Paris. For Macarty, who reframed the passage from Soumet's work, the conflict between Radical Republicans and conservative Copperheads was a struggle for the survival of the nation that mirrored Jeanne's heroism on behalf of France. It was a struggle for the soul of the Republic that finally excised the poison of slavery.[40]

39. "When can I pluck from obscurity / The pearl of only water-known beauty" ("Les trois perles," *New Orleans Tribune*, 26 May 1867, 1); and see also "La fleur indiscrète," *New Orleans Tribune*, 22 July 1866, 1. For Joseph Savary, see Jean-Marc Allard Duplantier, "Creole Louisiana's Haitian Exile(s)," *Southern Quarterly* 44, no. 3 (2007): 73; Vanessa Mongey, "A Tale of Two Brothers: Haiti's Other Revolutions," *The Americas* 69, no. 1 (2012): 49.

40. "The enemy, convulsive and hissing, / Expires without fighting or fighting while stealing / It is necessary, however distraught, that he prolong the war, / Without swelling his poisons out of the mud of the earth" ("Combat de l'aigle républicain et du copperhead," *New Orleans Tribune*, 23 September 1866, 1); Alexandre Soumet and Gabrielle Soumet d'Altenheym, *Jeanne d'Arc, Trilogie Nationale* (Paris, France, 1846), 137–38. Fabre includes "Combat de l'aigle républicain et du copperhead" among Antony's works despite the poem's attribution only to "A." However, it fits several patterns of Antony, and thus Macarty, so I have chosen to include it. First, he quotes from popular literature, just as Antony opened "Les trois perles" with a quote from Virgil's

LAWSUIT AGAINST THE NEW ORLEANS OPERA HOUSE

Macarty built upon this career of artistic and political activism when, on 26 January 1869, he filed a suit against E. Calabresi and Paul Alhaiza. Macarty complained that these proprietors of the New Orleans Opera caused "great damage to the character and reputation of your petitioner" by publicizing the affair, which "greatly outraged his feelings," for which he demanded $1,500 in compensation. According to Macarty's petition, he had been "quietly enjoying the performances, and properly and orderly demeaning himself" in the parterre section of the house but was nonetheless removed "without cause or justification."[41] Macarty had apparently been accustomed to viewing performances from the parterre. Mr. Laffrandrie, Mr. Jollisiant, and O. Bertin each testified on the first day of the trial to having seen him seated there on several occasions in December 1868 and January 1869. Bertin also claimed to have seen Macarty purchase his ticket on the night he was ejected from the house, an assertion the opera's management vehemently denied as impossible. Indeed, the ticket seller, Mr. Cassard, said that he was unaware of having ever sold Macarty a ticket and would not have done so intentionally given that Macarty was a person of color. Nonetheless, the available testimony suggests that even well-known persons of color might purchase tickets and sit in exclusively white sections of the opera without incident, despite the segregationist arguments to the contrary echoed by Calabresi and Alhaiza. Indeed, Macarty was simply too well known as a performer and orator to have repeatedly obtained a ticket and entry to the parterre without the employees or patrons having noticed. Thus, he appears to have been removed, not merely on account of his race, but as part of a white Democratic initiative to create a spectacle challenging the Constitution of 1868 by drawing the color line more narrowly.[42]

The only surviving accounts of the defense offered by former Supreme Court Justice Archibald Campbell and his firm—Campbell, Spofford, and Campbell—

Aeneid: "Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbras." The tendency aligns with Macarty's reputation for "literary acquirements" from "News of the Day," *New Orleans Tribune*, 20 June 1865, 2. Second, the quote from *Jeanne d'Arc*, which Soumet had originally penned as a play, nods to Macarty's theater career and his time studying in Paris during the early 1840s. Third, the dualist imagery of light versus dark and good versus evil are consistent in all of Antony's works, even the more romantic "La fleur indiscrète," in which a confession of love leads to gossip and humiliation. Finally, "Combat" is more political than Antony's poems, which could easily explain the more covert attribution, especially in the wake of the Mechanics Institute Massacre. For background on Soumet's epic poem *Jeanne d'Arc* and its relationship to the play, see S. Irving Stone, "Rachel and Soumet's *Jeanne d'Arc*," *Modern Language Association* (December 1932): 1141–42.

41. "The McCarthy Ejection Case," *New Orleans Crescent*, 28 January 1869, 1.

42. "An Important Suit," *New Orleans Tribune*, 29 January 1869, 4; "The Macarty Suit," *New Orleans Republican*, 9 May 1869, 1; "The Civil Rights Bill," *Daily Picayune*, 16 May 1869, 12.

on behalf of the defendants merged economic motives with notions of racial hierarchy. They called several witnesses, subscribers to the opera house, each of whom argued that offering integrated seating would leave the theater "ruined financially." These witnesses spoke extensively about the depth of their own racism, with one, Mr. Hinks, testifying that he "does not know whether black people go to the same Heaven as white persons do," a bizarre point of concern given his admission that he "seldom attends church." Michael George, the ex-Confederate amputee who engaged in a shouting match with Eugene Staes the night Macarty was removed from the opera, claimed "a natural prejudice" against all persons of color and an "intuitive" ability to identify them. William C. Tompkins, a Boston native, recounted how he "rode once in the [train] cars in the North with a colored man" and remained in the car only because he felt he was seated a sufficient distance away. The litany of racisms that formed the defense illuminate the tactics of white elites following the extra-political turn of the vanquished Louisiana Democrats, who emphasized the convergence of white racism and wealth as the rationale for maintaining a system of racial hierarchy locally. This required using whiteness as the means for maintaining power and thus excluding prominent Afro-Creoles like Macarty. White conservatives transformed their wealth into *white* wealth and the opera into a *white* opera, ensuring that black patrons were not placed on equal footing despite the altered postwar political and legal landscape.[43]

The execution of the trial exhibited some of the differences over racial hierarchy and its relationship to legitimate authority. There were conflicting reports, for example, about the racial composition of the jury, with the *Republican* reporting a jury "consisting of nine colored men and three white men," while the conservative *Picayune* wrote that "seven [jurors] . . . are colored and five white."[44] Thus, in a case hinging on whether Macarty's race should limit his ability to purchase tickets for and sit in the whites-only portion of the opera house, the racial composition of the jury was itself unclear. The issue of legal jurisdiction, as in the opera house itself, further complicated the devel-

43. "The Opera House Ejectment, Mr. Macarty's Suit for Damages, Testimony for the Defense," *New Orleans Republican*, 23 May 1869, 1. See also "Local Intelligence," *New Orleans Crescent*, 7 February 1869, 1; "The Civil Rights Bill," *Daily Picayune*, 16 May 1869, 12; "The Courts," *Daily Picayune*, 23 May 1869, 2; "Opera House Suit," *New Orleans Bee*, 23 May 1869, English edition, 1; Scott, *Degrees of Freedom*, 86–92, 154–62. While historian Robert Saunders distances Judge Campbell from the White League, they were clear ideological allies and Campbell worked vigorously to support their efforts, eventually pitting him against Durell in 1872; see Robert Saunders Jr., *John Archibald Campbell, Southern Moderate, 1811–1889* (Tuscaloosa, AL, 1997), x–xi, 186, 195–201, 215–20.

44. "The Civil Rights Bill," *Daily Picayune*, 16 May 1869, 12; "The Macarty Suit," *New Orleans Republican*, 9 May 1869, 1.

opment of the case. Macarty claimed in his petition to the US District Court that "being a person of color, and advocating the principles of the Republican Party and the equal rights of all persons, strong prejudice exists against him in the community that he cannot enforce his rights and recover for the injury committed, in the courts of the parish of Orleans."[45] In tacit agreement, the *Daily Picayune* reported that "all the judges of the District Courts have been summoned on the part of the defence," save those of the First and Second Courts.[46]

These procedural forces contributed more to the outcome of the case than Macarty's claim that the ticket entitled him to a seat in the parterre or Calabresi and Alhaiza's assertion that his race precluded him from holding tickets for any part of the house. The *Bee* reported on 6 June 1869 that further testimony had been delayed "on account of the sickness of a juror."[47] The *Picayune* published a week later that "Judge Durell has left for Pass Christian," a popular vacation spot for New Orleans elites, meaning that "the Macarty Opera House Case will go over until the next term of the court, as a new jury will have to be empanelled."[48] There is reason to doubt this account, however, as Durell wrote his sisters on 24 June from New Orleans that he intended to remain in the city until mid-July, when he planned to visit New York for his health. His surviving letters make no mention of the case, so it is difficult to get a sense of why he apparently let it expire without a verdict. Nonetheless, the failure of subsequent suits against segregated seating in the opera house suggests that, if Republican devotees like Durell supported African American political rights, they failed to imagine a world where they might be seated next to persons of color. Meanwhile, white conservatives continued to pursue the segregationist vision that inspired the case, which would again ensnare Macarty through his involvement in the public school system.[49]

Macarty somehow found time amid all of this activism and campaigning for family. In fact, according to the 1870 census, he had not one family, but two. He married his second wife, Elizabeth Lucie Lee, a Kentucky native, on 2 May 1866, roughly eleven years after his first wife, Louise Galland, died. He had three children with Elizabeth—Albert, Gustave, and Corilla—who lived in his primary residence at 235 St. Philip Street in 1870. Victor Eugène was also listed as the head of household at a second residence in 1870 with Rosalie Hugon "Macarthy," with whom he also had three children—Rose, Emile, and

45. "The McCarthy Ejection Case," *New Orleans Crescent*, 28 January 1869, 1.

46. *Daily Picayune*, 11 May 1869, 12.

47. "The Opera House Suit," *New Orleans Bee*, English edition, 6 June 1869, 1.

48. *Daily Picayune*, 11 June 1869, 3.

49. Edward Henry Durell to My Dear Sisters, 24 June 1869, New Orleans, Edward H. Durell Papers, 1794–1887, New-York Historical Society, New York City; Charles Lane, "Edward Henry Durell: A Study in Reputation," *Green Bag* 13 (Winter 2010): 153–68.

Henry. His oldest child with Rosalie, Rose, was ten years old when the census taker visited in 1870, meaning Macarty's relationship with her mother began no later than 1860, the year Elizabeth bore their third child, Corilla. He and Rosalie never married, but, tellingly, his mother Héloise chose to live with his mistress rather than his wife Elizabeth. She left all of her belongings "à mon amie Rosalie Hugon" in her will, suggesting a long-standing, committed relationship between Victor Eugène and Rosalie.[50]

Long-term, extramarital relationships like the one between Rosalie and Victor Eugène were fairly common among elite men in the city during Macarty's lifetime. He apparently spent significant time with both families, likely giving piano lessons to Corilla, his daughter with Elizabeth, while commissioning the photos of Rosalie and his son Henry (figs. 3–4). Rosalie was a New Orleans native and had been a free woman of color before the war. She was at least ten years younger than Macarty but, in many respects, seemed a more natural partner than Elizabeth. Rosalie likely spoke French and apparently became good friends with Héloise. Kentucky-born Elizabeth probably grew up in a vastly different environment than Victor Eugène and may have struggled to relate to his family and culture. Whatever the case, Macarty's relationships with both women appear to have been between relative equals. Although Rosalie and Victor Eugène never married, she referred to herself as the "widow of Eugene McCarthy" until the end of her life more than twenty years after his death.[51] Thus, if Macarty's artistry and activism formed a significant portion of

50. Eugine Macarthy with Rosalie, 1870 Census, Ward 6, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, dwelling 678, household 913; Eug. V. Macarthy with Elizabeth, 1870 Census, Ward 5, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, dwelling 1406, household 1943; Victor Eugène Macarty and Louise Galland, Certificate of Marriage, 28 October 1846, St. Mary's Church, Chartres Street, NOAA; Victor Eugène Macarty and Lucie Elizabeth Lee, Certificate of Marriage, 2 May 1866, Immaculate Conception Church, NOAA; Héloise Croy, Last Will and Testament, Octave de Armas, Notary, New Orleans, Louisiana, 30 May 1873, Act Number 92, vol. 94, NARC; Nystrom, *New Orleans*, 57–60; Alecia Long, *The Great Southern Babylon: Sex, Race, and Respectability in New Orleans, 1865–1920* (Baton Rouge, LA, 2004), 5–7, 11–13, 20–21, 28–30.

51. Fides Jean Bart v. Rosalie Hugont, Widow Macarty, 13 December 1910, Case 95443, Docket 3, Orleans Parish Civil District Court, Suit Records, 1880–1927, NOPL. (As with many of the names of her contemporaries, Rosalie had several versions of her last name. Hugon appears more frequently than Hugont, though based on her legal records, Rosalie preferred to go by Macarthy.) Though Rosalie's relationship with Macarty might have fallen under the umbrella of concubinage, she defined it as a marital one. I have chosen to treat it delicately and, as much as possible, respect her designation of their union. For long-term extramarital sexual relationships, see Long, *The Great Southern Babylon*, 5–7, 11–13; Brenda E. Stevenson, "What's Love Got to Do with It? Concubinage and Enslaved Black Women and Girls in the Antebellum South," *Journal of African American History* 98 (Winter 2013): 99–125.

Figure 3. Henry Macarthy, circa 1875. Macarthy's dress and posture suggest the elite status of his family. Courtesy of his granddaughter Sonja McCarthy. Color version available as an online enhancement.

Figure 4. Tintype of Rosalie Hugon, whose relationship with Victor Eugène spanned twenty years. Courtesy of her great-granddaughter Sonja McCarthy. Color version available as an online enhancement.

his legacy, his large, relatively well-off family formed the crucial backdrop for both. He appeared to be a committed father whose dedication to equal rights likely had an intensely personal dimension: his devotion to his wife, long-term partner, and six children.[52]

Macarty's activist and family lives occasionally intertwined. In 1871, his wife Elizabeth was "forcibly ejected" from her first-class seat during their vacation to Bay St. Louis, roughly seven miles from Judge Durell's reported destination two years prior. Macarty's testimony to the Louisiana House of Representatives Committee on Railroads, of which he was a member, claimed that he was not ejected from first class because the conductor knew "full well that Mr. Macarty would not stay in the car after his wife had been ejected." The available evidence, however, suggests that they may simply have been unaware that Macarty was a person of color—which had also been at issue during the opera suit.[53] Contemporary descriptions of Macarty emphasized his "very light complexion," a description confirmed in his only surviving photograph (fig. 2).[54] The 1870 census recorded Elizabeth as "black," suggesting a much darker skin tone. Thus, segregation not only limited the spaces and opportunities available to the Macartys but may even have divided them from one another. Testifying before Macarty on the Committee on Railroads about his wife's removal from her first-class seat, the railroad directors pleaded ignorance, claiming that "no distinction was made on the cars at the present time." After Macarty's failed suit against the opera house, white proprietors increasingly relied on a double performance of their own, enacting de facto segregation even as they pleaded ignorance of the practice to Republican officials.[55]

The success of this double performance of white supremacy solidified in the convergence of white Democratic vigilantism with declining federal funding for Reconstruction in the wake of the presidential election of 1868. The apparent unwillingness of Congress to support and enforce Reconstruction's most significant gains emboldened Louisiana's Democrats to expand their

52. Rosalie Hugon, 1850 Census, Ward 5, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, dwelling 1523, household 2197; Coroner's Report, Death of Lucie Macarthy, John Grayer, Coroner, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1 October 1874, vol. 24, 86, Record of Inquests and Views, 1844–1904, NOPL. Long, *Great Southern Babylon*, 5–7, 11–13.

53. "Report of Committee on Railroads," *Weekly Louisianian*, 29 February 1872, 2. See also "Forty-fifth Day's Proceedings," *New Orleans Republican*, 27 February 1872, 7.

54. "Social Equality: Excitement at the Opera, Vilarso McCarthy Ousted," *New Orleans Crescent*, 20 January 1869, 1.

55. Report of Committee on Railroads," *Weekly Louisianian*, 29 February 1872, 2. See also "Forty-fifth Day's Proceedings," *New Orleans Republican*, 27 February 1872, 7; Eug. V. Macarthy with Elizabeth, 1870 Census, Ward 5, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, dwelling 1406, household 1943. Photo of Emile Macarthy courtesy of Sonja McCarthy.

extra-political strategy, culminating in the so-called Battle of Liberty Place on 14 September 1874. After the contested election of 1872, white supremacists refused to recognize the new Republican governor William Pitt Kellogg and began organizing in earnest under the banner of the "White League," headed by Frederick Ogden. Under Ogden's leadership, the racist paramilitaries defeated the integrated Metropolitan Police and the Louisiana State Militia, offering amnesty to those who surrendered. They hoped to win recognition from the Grant administration as the legitimate state government. Instead, the US Army reinstalled the existing administration of Governor Kellogg on 17 September. In the chaotic months after the short-lived white-supremacist coup, Macarty joined a group of African American legislators calling themselves the "Executive Committee," who jointly declared that "voting us down in a fair election is impossible" given the demographic environment. This realization, they argued, led Democrats to rely on "frauds, massacres, and armed resistance" to subvert equal rights. According to the Executive Committee, these acts of "revolution can not be tolerated by our Government," and neither would be "the personal antipathies of many of the white Republicans" toward Louisianans of color. For committee members like Macarty, the only solution to the problem of white supremacy in Louisiana politics was a "union of the two races," the very outcome white supremacists sought to prevent.[56]

SURVIVING THE SCHOOL SEGREGATION MOVEMENT

Macarty again fell victim to racist attacks by conservative newspaper editors in the fall of 1875, particularly those at the *New Orleans Bulletin*, a white supremacist paper for whom Macarty's role as a member of the city's school board represented "an affront to decency." In an article titled "A Model (?) School Board," the *Bulletin* argued that all nine black members of the school board were innately unqualified and singled out Macarty as a particularly "immoral rascal" with "vile propensities." The author felt that Macarty was "a lecherous, ignorant and brutal [N]egro," doubtless a reference to his accusation that Macarty had taken bribes and insulted a white, female schoolteacher, charges he denied at a public meeting of the school board.[57] Waving a copy of the pa-

56. "Address of Colored Men to the People of Louisiana," *Weekly Louisianian*, 3 October 1874, 5; Nystrom, *New Orleans*, 171–79; Ted Tunnell, *Crucible of Reconstruction*, 202–5, 212–14.

57. "A Model (?) School Board," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 21 September 1875, 4. The *Bulletin*'s charges of bribery against Macarty first appeared in "The Public School Shame," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 15 September 1875, 4. As James Hogue points out, the *Bulletin* was the "quasi-official newspaper of the Crescent City White League" that opposed African Americans holding office in general and repeatedly made outlandish accusations like those against Macarty throughout 1874 and 1875; see Hogue, *Uncivil War*, 146.

per over his head at the 15 September meeting of the school board to emphasize his objection to the allegations, Macarty declared that "every statement is false. The lady never did pay me any money; but I did treat her in a contemptuous manner. That part is true and she deserved it."[58] He refused to give her name publicly or explain what she had done to merit his contempt, but he did ask that a committee examine the propriety of his actions.[59]

It is impossible to know if Macarty was extorting money from the woman in exchange for her teaching position, as the *Bulletin* alleged in "The Public School Shame." Macarty did accept at least one gift from the teachers at the Barracks Street School. According to the *Republican*, the teachers "called upon their respected director . . . bringing with them greeting in their pleasant faces and a silver ice pitcher." Upon realizing their generosity, Macarty found that "the present," as the *Republican* told it, "was too elegant and the words spoken were too kindly to be declined at all." Though the paper reported that Macarty was "justly proud of this testimonial" and would "keep the pitcher all the days of his life," the gift met a different end.[60] Macarty was heavily in debt and unable to pay his taxes or creditors as early as 1871. A silver pitcher, perhaps the very one given by the Barracks Street School teachers, was eventually sold, along with Macarty's house on 235 St. Philip Street, just several doors down from his colleague and frequent companion Eugene Staes, as part of his wife Elizabeth's succession in 1877 to settle these debts. That the *Bulletin's* charges inspired a vicious assault on Macarty on 16 September 1875 as he left the Second Municipal Police Court, where he clerked for Staes, reveals the extent to which official legal processes had broken down. Indeed, the *Bulletin* even boasted in the wake of the assault that other members of the board might "rememb[er] the fate of Macarty" when conducting future business.[61]

58. "The School Board: Speeches by Pinchback and McCarthy," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 16 September 1875, 1.

59. For the *Bulletin*'s relentless coverage of Macarty and its impact, see "The Vote," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 15 September 1875, 1; "The School Board Illegal," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 28 September 1875, 4; "V. E. McCarthy," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 20 November 1875, 1; "City Board," *Weekly Louisianian*, 18 September 1875, 2; School Board Minutes, 15 September 1875, 76, Orleans Parish School Board Minutes, 9 January 1875–7 February 1877, mss. 147, Orleans Parish School Board Collection, LSCD.

60. "A Pleasant Surprise," *New Orleans Republican*, 4 January 1874, 5. For the charges and subsequent investigation, see "The Public School Shame," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 15 September 1875, 4; "That Investigating Committee," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 23 September 1875, 4.

61. "That Investigating Committee," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 23 September 1875, 4. See also "Notice: Delinquent State Tax Payers," *New Orleans Republican*, 16 August 1873, 4; Eugene Staes, 265 St. Philip St., 1870 Census, 6th Ward, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, dwelling, 73, household 110; Inventory, 21 September 1877, Succession of Elizabeth Lucie Lee, Case 39759, Orleans Parish Successions, Second District Court, NOPL.

According to the *Republican*, Macarty's "most intimate acquaintance" would not have recognized him following the attack that left him motionless in a "filthy gutter."[62] The *Weekly Louisianian* described him as "miserably bruised and mangled," beaten senseless with "clubs and cane over the head and body," after which he was pulled from the gutter and "carried home by friends."[63] The *Republican* identified Macarty's speech responding to the *Bulletin's* allegations as the inspiration for the assault, though they listed the suspects as unknown in their initial report. Court documents, however, reveal that Macarty identified two of his attackers, James and Stephen Chalaron, in an affidavit sworn before Judge Staes on the night of the attack. Macarty testified that the two men, along with an unknown accomplice, had "beaten and struck [him] with braded [*sic*] sticks and moreover assaulted [him] with a revolver with intent to commit murder."[64] James, a cashier at the Union National Bank, and Stephen, a clerk at the New Orleans Insurance Company, appeared before Staes at the Second Municipal Police Court, where they each posted a bond of one thousand dollars. The Chalarons initially pleaded not guilty but changed their pleas to guilty when the case was moved to the First District Criminal Court. On 7 January 1876, they were "sentenced to each pay a fine of Ten Cents or one minute in the Parish Prison" and apparently never revealed why they attacked Macarty.[65]

Though they failed to unveil their motive for the attack, both Chalarons lived with their sister Amelie, who had been a teacher as early as 1870 at the Barracks Street School and by 1873 taught at the St. Philip School, where she was employed in 1875, according to the *New Orleans City Directory*. Subsequent census records and directories, however, give no occupation for the woman after 1875, the year that Macarty dismissed the unnamed female instructor. Although there is not enough documentation to conclude decisively, the available circumstantial evidence indicates that Amelie Chalaron may have been the teacher terminated by Macarty. Neither Macarty nor his accusers gave a reason for the argument with the female instructor, but school board minutes and contemporary newspapers reveal that the board declined to renew the contracts of around one hundred teachers at their 11 September

62. "V. E. McCarthy Violently Assaulted," *New Orleans Republican*, 17 September 1875, 3.

63. "Persons and Things," *Weekly Louisianian*, 25 September 1875, 2.

64. Affidavit of V. E. Macarthy, 16 September 1875, sworn before Eugene Staes, Second Municipal Police Court, in State v. James and Steven Chalaron, Case 8486, First District Court, NOPL.

65. "Local Items," *New Orleans Republican*, 18 September 1875, 3; "Court Record," *New Orleans Republican*, 23 December 1875, 1; "Court Notes," *New Orleans Times*, 23 December 1875, 8; "Court Records," *New Orleans Republican*, 8 January 1876, 5; James Chalaron, First District Court Bond, 6 October 1875; Stephen Chalaron, First District Court Bond, 6 October 1875; Sentence, 7 January 1875, George Herbert, clerk, State v. James and Steven Chalaron, Case 8486, First District Court, NOPL.

1875 meeting. According to the *Picayune*, the reason for this massive lay-off was that the board wished to remove instructors who had supported the White League coup and the subsequent violent attacks against the schools. The consistent participation of scores of students in the white supremacist violence targeting schools in late 1874 likely helped inspire the board's restructuring of the teaching corps. Furthermore, Chalaron's background would have made her a likely supporter of the White League and might have contributed to the incident. Census reports reveal that she was from a wealthy slave-owning family. It is certainly conceivable that Amelie Chalaron resented being in a subordinate position to Macarty, a person of color, which might explain why Macarty declared that the female teacher deserved his contempt, as reported in the *Bulletin* the morning of the assault. Whatever its cause, the attack aligned precisely with the *Bulletin's* anti-black rhetoric rooted in the conviction that "colored men . . . are ignorant of the first requirements of an education."[66]

On 20 November 1875, just over two months after Macarty was brutally beaten by the Chalarons, the *Bulletin* published a front-page article titled "V. E. Macarty" declaring that he had "made himself extremely offensive to the white people of this city." The author expressed surprise that "Judge Staes should retain the fellow [Macarty] in his employ after what has transpired, and when he must know the man's history." Indeed, Macarty's public history demonstrated a vision of black political activism antithetical to the white supremacist ideal expressed in the conservative press of his era. Moreover, his history revealed the bodily and economic danger that came with advocating for equal rights among ardent white supremacists. It was because of Macarty's

66. "A Model (?) School Board," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 21 September 1875, 4. For the growing tensions over the teachers, see "The School Board," *Daily Picayune*, 12 September 1875, 4; "Now Remove the School Board," *New Orleans Times*, 12 September 1875, 2; "Public School Teachers," *Daily Picayune*, 11 September 1875, 1; St. Philip Boys School, School Board Minutes, 4 July 1875, 56; 11 September 1875, 65, Orleans Parish School Board Minutes, 9 January 1875–7 February 1877, Orleans Parish School Board Collection, LSCD. For segregationist violence against schools, see "More of the School Trouble," *New Orleans Times*, 12 December 1874, 1; "Forcible Reasoning: School Superintendent Boothby Meets with Severe Setback," *New Orleans Times*, 16 December 1874, 1; "Youthful Knights," *New Orleans Times*, 17 December 1874, 2; "A Word to the Scholars and Teachers of our Public Schools," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 18 December 1874, 4. For White League coup, see Nystrom, *New Orleans*, 171–79; Tunnell, *Crucible*, 202–5, 212–14. For the Chalarons, see Chalaron, Slave Schedules, 1860 Census, Ward 6, Orleans Parish, 9; G. Chalaron, 1860 Census, Ward 6, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, dwelling 682, household 1152; Stephen Chalaron, 1870 Census, Ward 6, Orleans Parish, Louisiana dwelling 1113, household 1645; Stephen Chalaron, 1880 Census, Enumeration District 49, Orleans Parish, dwelling 314, household 391; Amelie Chalaron, 1900 Census, Ward 7, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, dwelling 419, household 542; Amelie, James, and Stephen Chalaron, *New Orleans City Directory*, 1870, 126; 1873, 99; 1874, 210; 1875, 193; 1876, 190; 1877, 187; 1878, 190 (accessed via Ancestry.com).

persistent commitment to racial equality that the *Bulletin* celebrated the suffering it brought him, basking in "the late terrible chastisement which he received and so richly merited." For the *Bulletin*, no doubt, maintaining racial inequality justified the means.[67]

LEGACY: AN EVANGELIST FOR EQUALITY

Though Macarty was unable to successfully navigate the postwar legal system, he helped pioneer an extra-political turn of his own. His activism was part of a wave of postwar African American engagement that helped guarantee black political rights and worked to ensure the well-being of New Orleans's community of color. There is also circumstantial evidence that he helped launch a boycott that shuttered the opera house for its racially exclusive seating policies in 1875. According to the *Louisianian*, after the White League coup in 1874, the opera management resumed its strict segregationist policies, denying patrons of color "equal accommodation with other portions of the public."[68] As a result, New Orleans's Afro-Creole community organized to deny the opera their patronage. The boycott started in December 1874 after an ejection and lawsuit echoing Macarty's own. It began just two months after Macarty signed the statement from the Executive Committee, along with fifteen other African American politicians. We cannot know for sure what role he played, but as a prominent politician and musician of color with personal and legal experience challenging the opera house, he was likely involved in the boycott. Perhaps as a nod to his work, the *Louisianian* mentioned Macarty in its coverage of a benefit concert organized by musicians of color for the unpaid performers of the then-dissolved opera. The paper reported "a musical reunion" during which "the leading singers of the French Opera" performed alongside Macarty and a handful of other musicians of color as part of the effort to raise money to help the unemployed opera performers return to France.[69] Macarty failed in his quest for redress against the opera, but in the end, his most public and prominent foe lay vanquished.[70]

The African American activism that Macarty helped pioneer, especially within New Orleans's music and theater communities, facilitated the greater success of his daughter Corilla Macarthy. He and Corilla occasionally performed to-

67. "V. E. McCarthy," *New Orleans Bulletin*, November 20, 1875, 1.

68. "The French Opera at the Economy Hall," *Weekly Louisianian*, 15 May 1875, 2.

69. Ibid.

70. For the lawsuit, see *Weekly Louisianian*, 5 December 1874, 2; "Civil Rights: The Attempt of Colored Persons to Legally Invade the Opera House," *New Orleans Bulletin*, 20 December 1874, 3; Sullivan, "Composers of Color," 90–92.

gether, including a rendition of "La muette de Portici" at the Athenaeum Literary Club for the Afro-Creole elite and collaborated at parlor concerts for wealthy New Orleanians of color in 1875.[71] In 1877, Corilla successfully filed for emancipation from the legal supervision of her father, giving her the "power to do and perform all acts as fully as if she had attained the age of twenty one years."[72] Corilla went on to have an impressive career despite the race and gender constraints against which she struggled. According to Trotter, Corilla was "quite studious and render[ed] difficult and classical compositions for the piano in a most creditable manner."[73] She taught at Southern University, gave piano lessons to the famous performer Jesse Covington Dent, and directed the Ladies Symphony Orchestra in early twentieth-century Houston, Texas. Corilla's accomplishments should be understood, at least in part, as signifying her father's success in resisting white supremacy and making space for performers of color.[74]

Yet Macarty's triumphs came at a heavy cost. He apparently lost his job clerking in the Second Municipal Police Court sometime in 1877 and had no job listed in the *New Orleans City Directory* in 1878. By 1880, he had moved to rural West Baton Rouge and was living as a "boarder" while employed as a "school teacher."[75] He apparently returned to New Orleans in poor health in early 1881 and died of a stroke at his son Gustave's home at 286 St. Ann Street.[76] According to his obituary published in the *Louisianian*, Macarty had "dedicated his time exclusively in educating our youth at Baton Rouge" following the "overthrow" of the Republican Party in the state.[77] Most of his family still lived in New Orleans, and although we cannot know why he chose to relocate to Baton Rouge sometime after 1878, he probably felt unsafe in the city after the "overthrow" given his extensive career advocating for black civil rights. Though we might view Macarty's retreat to Baton Rouge as a defeat, this would do a disservice his continued work as an educator. He could have sought

71. *Weekly Louisianian*, 22 May 1875, 2. See also *Weekly Louisianian*, 15 May 1875, 2.

72. Corilla Marie Macarthy, Emancipation, 7 September 1877, case number 39756, Second District Court, NOPL.

73. Trotter, *Music*, 346.

74. "A Few Things about Southern University," *Weekly Pelican*, 1 October 1887, 1; Columbia University Notes, *Weekly Pelican*, 19 November 1887, 1; "Educating the Negro," *Daily Picayune*, 25 June 1887, 2; D. Antionette Handy, *Black Women in American Bands and Orchestras* (Lanham, MD, 1998), 38–39, 168, 273; Ruthe Winegarten, *Black Texas Women: A Sourcebook* (Austin, TX, 1996), 117.

75. Victor Macarty, *New Orleans City Directory*, 1877, 432; V. E. McCarthy, 1880 Census, 4th Ward, West Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, Enumeration District 61, West Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, dwelling 23, household 30.

76. Victor Macarty, *New Orleans City Directory*, 1876, 461; 1877, 432; 1878, 452 (accessed via Ancestry.com); Victor Eugene McCarthy, 25 June 1881, *Orleans Parish Death Certificates*, vol. 79, 7, Louisiana State Archives, Baton Rouge, LA.

77. "Obituary," *Weekly Louisianian*, 2 July 1881, 3.

work as a performer but chose instead to help train the minds of future generations of African Americans. Nor did his labor in Baton Rouge prevent him from returning to New Orleans to spend his final days with his family, for whom he had struggled mightily. Though his efforts to combat segregation proved unsuccessful in the short term, they laid an important foundation for future generations of African American activists. Perhaps the *Louisianian* framed it best: "Mr. Macarty was one of our prominent creoles whose name will go down in history as one of the geniuses of his race."[78]

78. "Obituary," *Weekly Louisianian*, 2 July 1881, 3. For contemporary African American discussions of emigration in 1878, see Nell Irvin Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction* (New York, 1976), 82–95.