## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I would like to thank my committee members, Fred Baumgartner, Steve Soper, and Michael Alexander for all of their help, support, and encouragement. I appreciate the time they took to read my thesis and for the wonderful suggestions they each had. In particular, Professor Baumgartner was instrumental in guiding me through the entire process from choosing a topic to the research and writing of this thesis. I am also grateful to the Virginia Tech History Department for granting me the opportunity to continue my education.

I am especially grateful to my parents Howard and Pat Stallard and to my husband Bryan Beavers who have helped support me in every way as I completed my Master's degree. They have endured stacks of books and papers scattered about their homes for months on end, and have shared in many of the joys and hardships associated with graduate life. Without my family, none of this would have been possible.

I would also like to thank the faculty and staff at Bluefield College who have been so encouraging both before and during my time as a graduate student at Virginia Tech. I am grateful for all of my family and friends who listened to my problems throughout and who shared in my joy at the conclusion. Finally, I acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ from whom I draw my strength.