



# HARDSCRABBLE

Civil War Round Table of the Mid-Ohio Valley Newsletter

November 2020 – Vol 4

Experimenting here as we go to produce an easier read for you ....

Nancy Arthur is providing the “Virtual Experience”

For those of you interested in furthering your knowledge of all things Civil War, please find the following:

<https://www.youtube.com/americanbattlefieldtrust>

Discover an Unknown Burial Site at Antietam

Antietam leading to the Battle of Shepherdstown

Antietam 158<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

John Burns and Civilians at Gettysburg

And so many other videos featuring Antietam!

Plus one to skip to the Revolutionary War titled Benedict Arnold: The revolutionary War in 4 minutes

<http://www.cwrtcongress.org/lectures.html>

Fridays with Grant - registration required

Bob Zeller, President of The Center for Civil War Photography will be interviewed October 28 @ 7:00  
Registration required

<facebook.com/civilwarmed/live>

National Museum of Civil War Medicine – view a variety of videos

<https://civilwar.vt.edu/>

Both of these require registration:

Tuesday 10/27 @ 7:00 America's Original Opioid Crisis: Civil War Veterans and Opiate Addiction

Monday November 30 @ 7:00 The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory

<https://www.timesreporter.com/story/news/2020/10/26/tuscarawas-valley-civil-war-round-table-meet/6040342002/>

Last minute addition as we go to print. Our fellow traveler John Fazio is in a virtual debate on Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> over the removal of Southern Monuments. I look forward to seeing the fur fly in that contest. Registration required.

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# The Role of Cotton in the Civil War

BY BRITA VORIS

In the 1800s, the relationship between the American South and [cotton](#) was a strong and profitable one. Leading up to the Civil War, the cotton industry was the greatest contributor to the Southern economy. Because the world largely depended on the South for its supply of cotton, the country was able to borrow money around the world. The cotton industry grew steadily over a 60-year period to meet the needs of the British textile industry and was aided by the invention of the [cotton gin](#). The state responsible for the most production of cotton was Mississippi. To meet the growing demand, cotton plantations increased the number of slaves used to harvest it; by 1860, the number of slaves had increased to 4 million. Cotton would help to fund the government and military that formed the [Confederate States of America](#) when the [South seceded](#) from the U.S. Additionally, the money from cotton sales provided the financial foundation for the Confederacy's diplomatic strategy.

- [Why Was Cotton King?](#)
- [How Slavery Helped Build a World Economy](#)
- [How the Cotton Gin Started the Civil War](#)
- [Industry and Economy During the Civil War](#)

## King Cotton Diplomacy

In the South, the phrase “[cotton is king](#)” referred to the overall importance and political power of cotton. Because the world, particularly England, depended on the South for much of its cotton, the Southern government believed that this could be used as a way to garner allies. The strategy to do this, which Confederate president [Jefferson Davis](#) supported, was called King Cotton Diplomacy.

At the time, Union forces had begun blocking Southern exports and imports in a move called the [Anaconda Plan](#). This was in 1861, and although the effort was successful to a degree, it did not entirely prevent blockade-running. King Cotton Diplomacy was meant to put an end to the blockade and gain support and diplomatic intervention from Britain, which had declared itself neutral. The strategy used cotton as leverage by torching as much as 2.5 million bales of cotton and deliberately creating a shortage. If successful, this strategy would hurt foreign textile companies, which would then demand that Great Britain and other countries support the Confederacy.

But the Confederacy did not know that Britain had stockpiled cotton bales in fear of a war in the United States. While this surplus did not prevent a [cotton famine](#), it did delay it by a year. But the resulting shortage did not force European nations to support the Confederacy as planned. The price of cotton increased globally, and British textile companies sought cotton from other producers around the world, such as India and [Egypt](#).

- [King Cotton and the Economy of the Old South](#)
- [The South's Mighty Gamble With King Cotton](#)
- [Great Britain and King Cotton: The Lancashire Cotton Famine and the American Civil War](#)
- [The Crowning of King Cotton](#)
- [Impact on the British Cotton Trade](#)

## Weapons, Ammunition, and Ships

Although the King Cotton strategy was not effective in gaining England's support, it was effective in helping the Confederacy in other ways. The South had made a tactical error with King Cotton Diplomacy, but the value of cotton did serve as a way of gaining weapons, ammunition, and even ships. This was highlighted in 1863 with the arrival of the [Erlanger Loan](#), which was named after Emile Erlanger and Company, a French banking house. The arrangement used bonds backed by cotton to raise money for the Confederacy. As the cash value of the bonds fell, Confederates promised repayment even if the South lost. They could not honor this promise, however, and the Erlanger bond is known as one of the most famous junk bonds as a result.

Cotton was also used to barter for goods from manufacturers in Britain. This was good business for blockade-runners, who would sell armaments in exchange for cotton on the British islands of the Bahamas and Bermuda. [Blockade-running](#) was dangerous but lucrative, with runners making 300 to 500 percent profit per trip. Using cotton as a means of payment furnished the Confederate military with materials from the British including rifles used during the Siege of Vicksburg. Warship construction was also financed courtesy of cotton. The trade of cotton for armaments only slowed after the Union captured the southern ports.

- [Blockade-Running in the Bahamas During the Civil War](#) (PDF)
- [British Involvement in the American Civil War](#)

- [How British Businesses Helped the Confederacy Fight the American Civil War](#)
- [Historians Reveal Secrets of U.K. Gun-Running That Lengthened the American Civil War by Two Years](#)

## **The Lure of Cotton**

The Union didn't just need to prevent the South from using cotton as a source of currency; it was also in need of cotton for its own textile mills. The importance of this was not lost on the North, and as a result, the Union imposed federal regulations that made Treasury-issued permits necessary to purchase Confederate cotton. This created a corrupt system in which people were able to make a fortune off of cotton from the south, buying it cheaply and inflating the price for resale. Military officers often profited from the cotton trade by partnering or making deals with cotton sources. Confiscated Confederate cotton, which could not be distinguished from traded cotton, was also being sold for profit. Civilians and Union soldiers alike were lured by the promise of cotton wealth and were inspired to go South both during wartime and after the war ended.

Abandoned cotton plantations were a source of profit as well, though they required skilled labor to run. The Northern government, which was looking for an answer to the problem of an influx of escaped slaves, saw cotton as a partial solution. Refugees from the South could be sent to take paid jobs on cotton plantations that had been abandoned. This was yet another way for the North to profit from cotton. The idea, which was a type of containment policy, was devised by Union Army Adjutant-General Lorenzo Thomas in the Mississippi Valley in 1863. This policy saw former slaves either recruited or working under contract on these plantations for 10-hour shifts per day while receiving a wage of \$10 a month. These guidelines were very strict and were devised to make the plantation lessees the most amount of money. Workers were unable to leave

the plantation without permission and a pass, nor could they miss more than two hours without having their pay slashed by half for the day.

- [Traders or Traitors: Northern Cotton Trading During the Civil War](#) (PDF)
- [Abraham Lincoln and Cotton](#)
- [Starving the South: How the North Won the Civil War](#)
- [Contraband Camps of Northern Virginia](#)
- [Trading With the Enemy](#)
- [The Generals and Admirals: Lorenzo Thomas](#)

## World's Leading Cotton Exporter

At the end of the Civil War, the federal government was burdened with a significant amount of debt, and cotton exports were a key resource by which they could pay it off. Furthermore, the United States needed money in order to grow and strengthen its economy by investing in major projects like the railroad industry. For these and other reasons, the Reconstruction era that started in 1865 was marked by the push to restore the cotton industry. Republican capitalists in the North stood against taking cotton-producing lands from plantation owners in the former Confederate South, instead favoring a policy of helping them immediately restart the production of cotton on their lands.

The strategy ultimately proved successful. By 1870, the United States was successful in retaking its place as the global leader in cotton production. Exports in 1880 surpassed levels seen in 1860, and America remained the top exporter of cotton until 1937.

- [A Map of U.S. Cotton Production in 1880](#)
- [Historical Timeline: Agricultural Trade and Development](#)

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Books by [Bill Teegarden](#) has a different look this month. Previously I listed titles and authors. What I am looking for in a book is a [review](#), so I opened my listing to include the source with review.....

[Biography: A Civil War general who deserves to be better known](#)

Virginian-Pilot

He was one of four former Confederate generals to serve at high rank in the U.S. Army during the Spanish-American War, when, as a U.S. brigadier, he ..

[Hendersonville writer's novel explores ways the Civil War could have gone differently](#)

BlueRidgeNow.com

Everything that transpires in “Audacious: The Plan to Prevent the American **Civil War**” could have occurred, he says. “All of this could have happened — ...

[The Cause of All Nations: An International History of the American Civil War book jacket](#)

H-Net

Don H. Doyle. The Cause of All Nations: An International History of the **American Civil War**. New York : Basic Books, 2015. Categories: Image.

[Marblehead Museum to host Civil War virtual talk](#)

Wicked Local Swampscott

Marblehead residents fought to preserve and protect the Union during the **Civil War** when President Lincoln called for volunteers. What role did ...

[A Different Civil War in the Southwest](#)

lareviewofbooks

MOST OF THE consequential battles of the American **Civil War** were fought in the 95-mile sphere that separated the Confederate capital of Richmond, .

[It's time to put Civil War statues to rest \(Reader viewpoint\)](#)

masslive.com

Years ago the great **civil war** historian Shelby Foote was asked what was the cause of the **Civil War**? He replied “It was because we failed to do the ...

Local history: "Where It All Began" by Allen McKain the story of the people and the places where the oil and gas industry began – right here in Parkersburg/Marietta.

I found it fascinating.....especially the names. Oh, the names such as the Rathbone's (my esteemed neighbor) who lent me the book and had so much

family in it. Including: Karns, Shuttuck, Neal, Camden, Jackson, Cook, Blair, Boreman, Van Winkle, Thompson, and Stiles to name a few.

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And what have You read that you would care to share with the group? You can do so and give your own review or ask that it be kept anonymous.....

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## Notable's

### \* Veterans Day Luminary Tribute at Mound Cemetery

Please join us on Veterans Day for a special luminary event at the historic Mound Cemetery where we will shine a light on our country's first veterans, Patriots of the American Revolution.

Take a stroll into the cemetery on a walkway lined with luminaries and visit the graves of those who answered the alarm of Lexington and Concord, crossed the Delaware with Washington, suffered at Valley Forge, fought the British on the seas, and fulfilled their dreams of independence at Yorktown. Distinct luminaries will signify Patriots' graves throughout the cemetery.

This self-guided tour is a FREE event that will be held on Wednesday, November 11, 2020 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Mound Cemetery in Marietta, Ohio.

Please bring a flashlight and dress appropriately for the weather. COVID-19 guidelines will be followed. Donations are welcome.

\* Kudo's passed on from a "casual visitor" to our website A student I'm tutoring, Ellie, really wanted to reach out to thank you because you've been such a massive help with her research project on the Civil War for school. We came across your page - <https://www.cwrtmov.org/related-links> while doing some distance learning and found it to be super useful. We really found the Emerging Civil War and the Civil War Website resources to be especially helpful!



To take our thanks one step further, Ellie wanted to suggest another page to you she thought might complement your page!

It's <https://www.lulus.com/blog/resources/the-role-of-cotton-in-the-civil-war/> and it's a great article on the role cotton played in the Civil War. It gave us some great information and sites so she thought it could do the same for other students using your page!

Please let us know what you think if you get a chance! I would love to show Ellie over our next Zoom call that her suggestion was added to help others out. She would be so excited and proud to know she's made a positive contribution. :)

Thanks again and best wishes,  
Ellie and Jennifer Nelson

**I think it so good that I used it as our story for November – Thank you Ellie!**

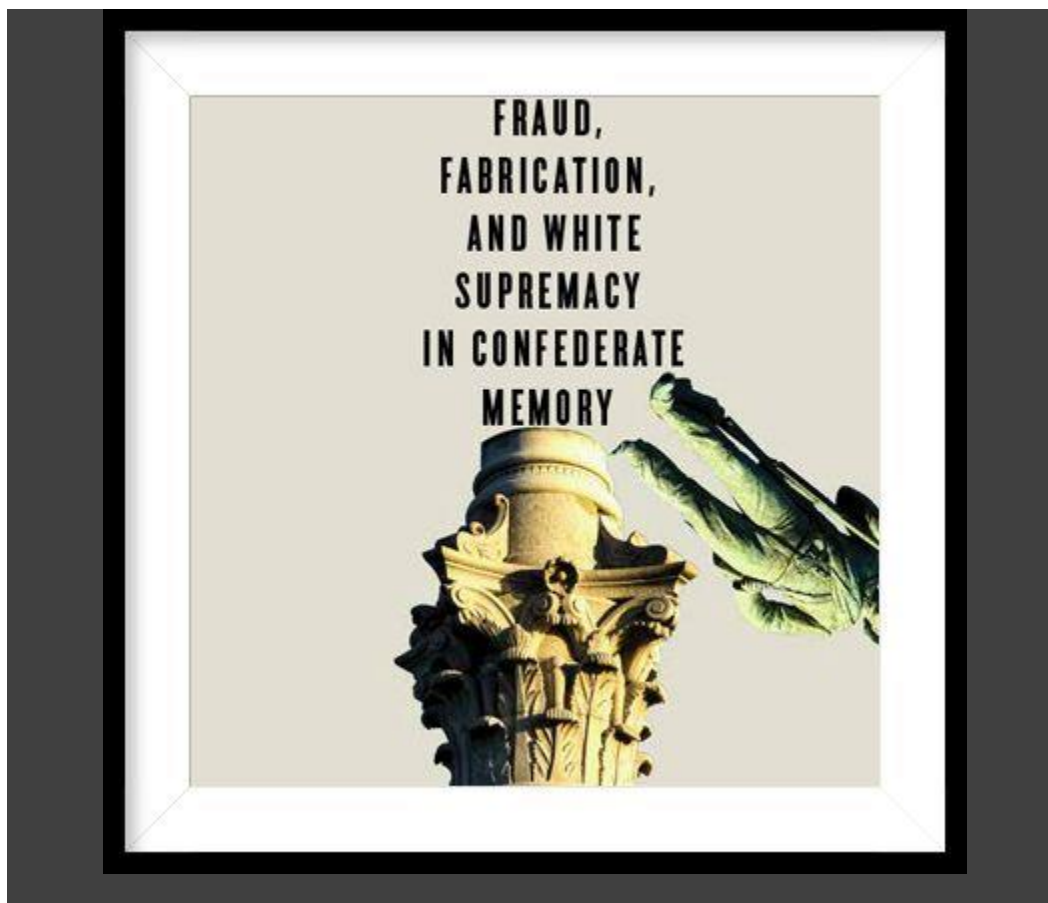
\* We pass along this news item about the ongoing efforts in Flushing Ohio to continue the work that was started there by the museum's founder, Dr. Mattox. Dr. Mattox was scheduled to be our presenter last November but died following a massive stroke he suffered in July 2019.

*Was your home a stop on the Underground Railroad, or your neighbor's or your third cousin removed? We need your assistance to make this vision a possibility! Plans are in motion to map the stops of the Underground Railroad in our county. To preserve and pass on this knowledge to future generations, the Underground Railroad Museum, located in Flushing, Ohio, will be conducting extensive research to create an interactive map with families' stories, with pictures and videos of stations to be accessible to the public. Please email Director Kristina Estle at [kristinaestle@gmail.com](mailto:kristinaestle@gmail.com)*

## "New Perspectives on the Civil War Era" online speaker series

It's not your granddaddy's Civil War history. This academic year, we're showcasing emerging voices in the field, highlighting the work of up-and-coming scholars who explore new topics with fresh ideas and research methods. We started out in September with Dr. Caroline Newhall's talk on Black POWs (now available on [C-SPAN](#)), and we have lots more in store in the coming months.

Hope to see you online soon!



**Monday November 30, 7:00 p.m. (ET) “The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory.”** A free lecture and discussion with Dr. Adam H. Domby, assistant professor of history at the College of Charleston. Dr. Domby will discuss Lost Cause myths, legends, and falsehoods as well as the creation of Confederate monuments. In examining tall tales, Dr. Domby will expose how white supremacy has long been connected to narratives about the past. **Online webinar; [click here to register \(for free\) in advance.](#)**