

## CHAPTER 16

### THE CIVIL WAR: PART I, 1860-1865

- A. Introduction. Lincoln's election, while fully expected, caused a mixed reaction of excitement and fear in South Carolina. The Radicals were excited because this was the moment for which they had worked for decades. Other, more cautious Carolinians, were fearful of what secession might bring.
- \*B. The Secession Convention**
- \*1. The General Assembly called for a special election for delegates to a convention to determine the future of the relationship of South Carolina and the Union.**
  - \*2. The Convention, acting in behalf of the people of South Carolina, unanimously resolved to secede from the United States – the only Southern state that was unanimous in its decision.**
- C. The Mood of the People
- 1. Many believed agreed with Senator James Henry Hammond's assertion that "Cotton was King!" and that without the South, the North would collapse.
  - 2. Free black kinfolk of the Ellisons in Charleston, seeing the revelry around them, decided that they needed to flee for their safety.
  - 3. With the exception of outspoken Unionists like James Lewis Petigru, white South Carolinians rallied behind the decision of the Convention.
- \*D. An Unsettled Time (December 1860-April 1861)**
- \*1. Within 6 weeks after South Carolina's secession, five other states followed her lead.**
  - \*2. South Carolina sent a delegation to Washington to negotiate the transfer of all federal property, including forts.**
  - \*3. President Buchanan did not transfer the forts and attempted to resupply the beleaguered garrison at Fort Sumter.**
  - \*4. In February 1861, the seceded states formed the Confederate States of America.**
  - \*5. Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter, 14 April 1861.**

**\*E. The War (1861-1862)**

- \*1. Governor William H. Gist said that the South would be victorious and the war would be over after only two battles.**
- \*2. Union naval forces captured Port Royal in November 1861.**
  - \*a. Beaufort/Port Royal became a major naval base for the Union fleet blockading Charleston and Savannah.**
  - \*b. Raiding parties harassed the interior of the state throughout the war.**

**\*F. The Charleston Theater of Operations (1863-1865)**

- \*1. A Union fleet was repulsed in April 1863.**
- \*2. Union forces were defeated at Battery Wagner at the mouth of Charleston Harbor in July 1863.**
- \*3. The Union Army and navy controlled enough territory near Charleston to begin a regular bombardment of the city until it surrendered in February 1865.**
- \*4. The Hunley, the Confederacy's submarine sank one of the Union ships blockading Charleston in February 1864.**

**G. The Home Front**

- 1. The Union blockade and the war created shortages of everything from coffee to needles.
- 2. Scarcity led to profiteering and speculation by storeowners and merchants.
- 3. Inflation was so bad that Carolinians joked about going to the store with a wheelbarrow full of money in order to purchase a small sack of groceries.
- 4. Shortages and high prices called forth a great deal of ingenuity from the folks at home.
  - a. Clothes were patched until worn completely out.
  - b. As foods disappeared from store shelves or into the wagons of the Confederate Quartermaster Corps, South Carolina housewives and cooks made do with what they had.

5. Fund raising events in Charleston and Columbia angered citizens in smaller towns who thought that folks shouldn't be partying in wartime.
6. The Confederacy resorted to a draft to fill its ranks and by 1864, sixteen year-olds were being drafted.
7. Slaves were drafted to build fortifications along the coast.
8. By 1864, the mood of the populace was one of resignation and despair.

**\*H. William Tecumseh Sherman**

- \*1. In January 1865, Sherman and his army of seasoned veterans left Savannah and marched into South Carolina.**
- \*2. All along the route of his march, Union forces looted and burned farms, plantations, and towns.**
- \*3. Confederate forces were not even able to slow the Union Army's relentless march toward Columbia.**
- \*4. On the night of February 17-18, 1865, more than one-third of Columbia was destroyed by fire.**
- \*5. Sherman continued his march through South Carolina and more towns and homes disappeared in smoke.**

**\*I. Summary. The war that had begun in Charleston with such high hopes for Southern Independence in 1861 ended in bitter defeat. Sherman made his phrase "war is hell" a searing experience for thousands of South Carolinians. Officially, the war would continue on for a few more months. For South Carolina, however, with the passage of Sherman, the war, for all practical purposes, was over.**

**J. Readings**

1. Edgar, South Carolina: A History, Chapter 16
1. Blum, Catton, The National Experience, pp. 334-338, 341-345, 368-369
2. Cauthen, South Carolina Goes to War
2. Edmunds, Francis W. Pickens, pp. 150-181
3. Ford, Origins of Southern Radicalism, pp. 338-374
4. Horne, South Carolina, pp. 298-323
5. Jones, South Carolina, pp. 472-501
6. LeConte, When the World Ended
7. Lucas, Sherman and the Burning of Columbia
8. Massey, Ersatz in the Confederacy

9. McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, pp. 646, 686-687, 807-830
10. Tindall, America, pp. 608-616, 618-623, 660-664