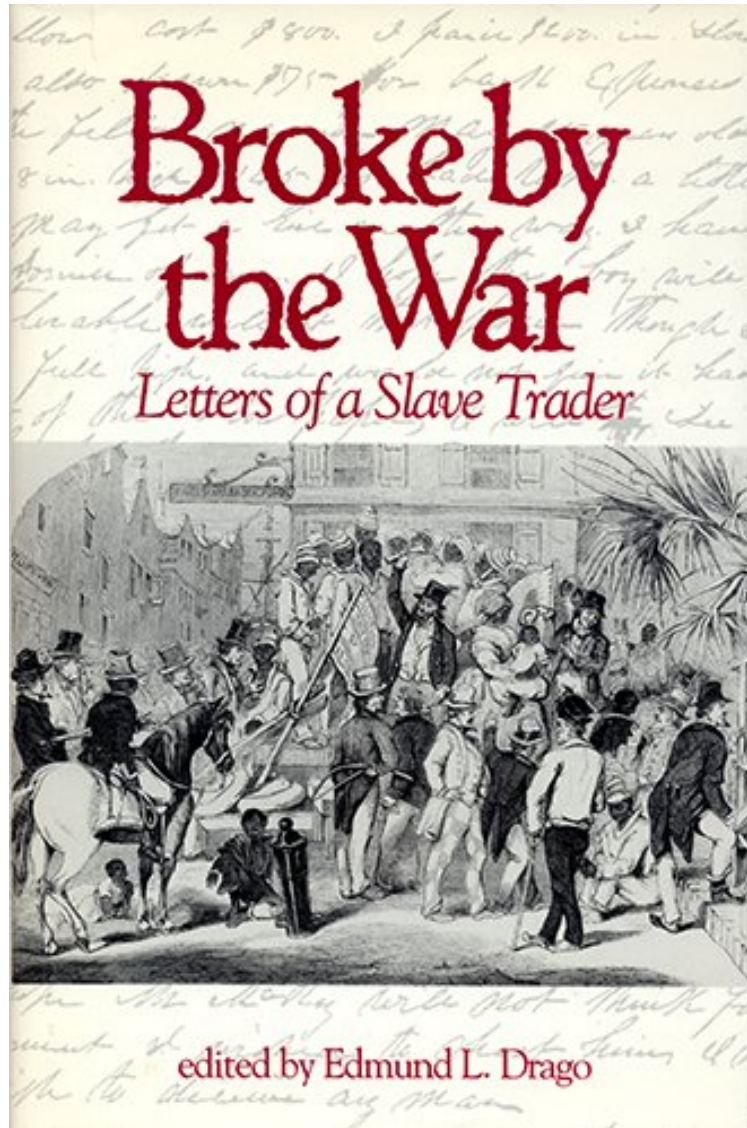


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## Broke by the War: Letters of a Slave Trader

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**From Brand: University of South Carolina Press : Broke by the War: Letters of a Slave Trader** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Broke by the War: Letters of a Slave Trader:

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return letters back to McElveen. by it was a useful in my genealogy research as well as the mental process of some in the trade business.

Broke by the War is a collection of more than 140 letters written between 1852 and 1857 by South Carolina slave trader A. J. McElveen to his employer Z. B. Oakes, a prosperous Charleston broker. The correspondence provides an intimate look into the world of slave trading, from the economic aspects of prices, shipping, supply sources, and financing to the impact on those involved, including the breakup of slave families, the pursuit of runaways, and the various roles played by doctors, lawyers, bankers, and planters in this abominable business. Edited and introduced by Edmund L. Drago, McElveen's letters give the modern reader an opportunity to view Old South slave trading through the eyes of a representative participant. As Drago recounts, the Civil War decimated McElveen's finances and left him, as described years later by a credit investigator, simply as "broke by the war--old man."

From Library Journal  
Broke by the War is a collection of letters written by slave trader McElveen to Z.B. Oakes, a slave broker. The letters, written between 1852 and 1857, were taken as souvenirs in 1865 by a journalist who presented them to William Lloyd Garrison. Subsequently, the Garrison family donated them to the Boston Public Library. They provide insight into the economic side of the domestic slave trade, discussing prices, shipping, supply sources, and financing. Since this is only one side of the correspondence, much is excluded. McElveen's complaints, apologies, and requests for advice make for tedious reading, but the editor's introduction and notes are useful. For libraries with strong collections on slavery/the old South.- Melvin L. Grotberg, Hobbs P.L., N.M. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. "A fascinating collection of letters. . . . Admirably edited, Drago's slim volume sheds much light on the trials and tribulations of an Old South would-be, the insidious world in which he operated, and the victims of his business activities. This is a must-read for anyone interested in the history of slavery or slave trading in the antebellum South."--Journal of Southern History"Drago has done an excellent job editing these letters and has written a lucid introduction. He provides background information on the letters, the two traders, the Charleston market, and the South Carolina countryside where McElveen conducted his business. . . . One is struck by McElveen's impersonal approach toward the buying and selling of slaves. The statements and questions raised in his letters are exactly those one might expect of any entrepreneur seeking to buy low and sell high."--Journal of Economic History"Broke by the War provides a numbing glimpse into the world of slave trading in the Old South of the 1850s. The book is a useful teaching tool and the source of important information on the slave trade in the twilight of the antebellum South."--Journal of American History  
From the Inside Flap  
The revealing correspondence of a South Carolina slave trader from years just before the Civil War