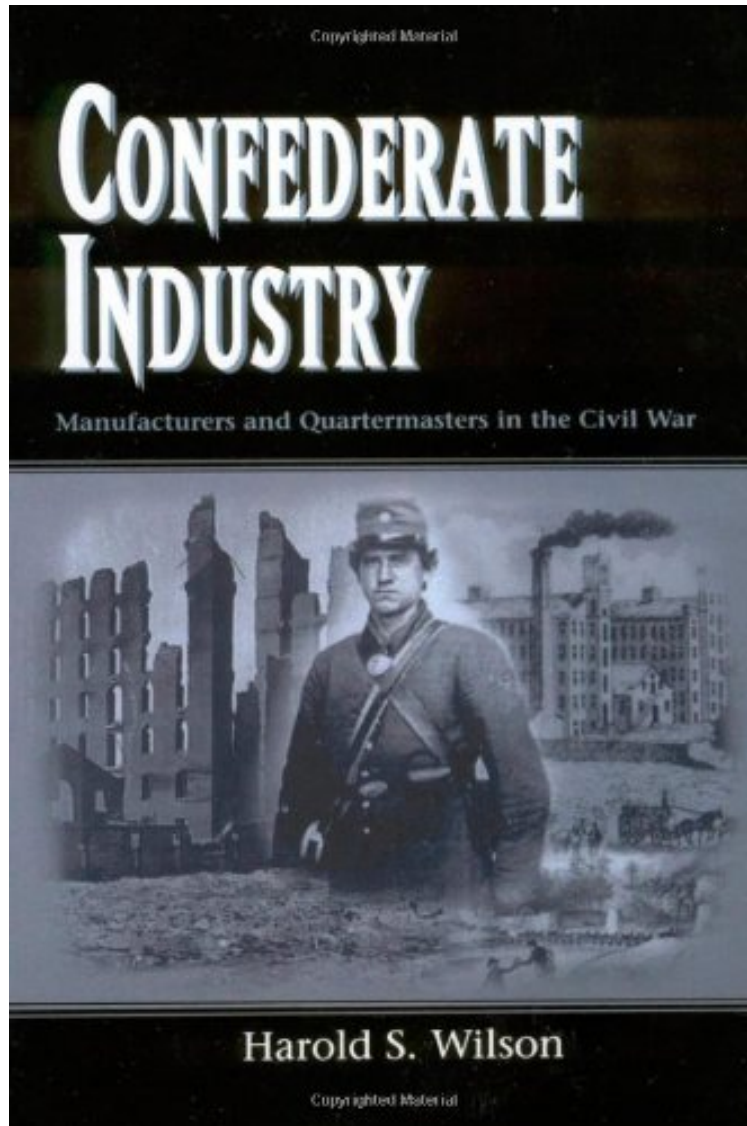


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Confederate Industry: Manufacturers and Quartermasters in the Civil War

Harold S. Wilson

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11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Useful addition to a limited bibliography on CS war machineBy A. FonteyneAlthough living in Belgium and being Belgian, I have always being fascinated by the logistical aspects of

the American Civil War, especially on the Southern side, because they had to fight this war with such limited resources. There are only a few books on the subject. "Ploughshares into swords" by Frank Vandiver (published in 1940's), that I recently found on (ten years ago I had vainly tried to order it through more traditional means) which is a biography of the Chief of Ordnance of the CS Army. Another book is called "Confederate Supply" by Richard Goff (published in the 60s) and is nowadays out of print (my copy is a xerox). It deals with the whole supply problem, not least that of feeding the army. This book is focused on confederate textile industry as it was before the war, as it went through the war and how it successfully recovered from the War. Covering the war period, it basically describes three phases in the mobilization of these resources to clothe the army: the reign of improvisation at the level of the confederate authorities (Quartermaster department) until 1863, the reorganization of their efforts along more rational lines and the increased use of imports from Europe and thirdly the destruction of most of the southern mills by the Union army. This book is well researched, goes deeply into primary sources and adds real value. I really enjoyed it too because it is well written. Being a trained historian myself it is not difficult to see how much time and effort has been put into it. Not an easy task but a task well done!

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent study on a neglected area
By W. Wadford
Excellent study on a neglected area
0 of 1 people found the following review helpful.
Five Stars
By John D. Knox
Good book

By 1860 the South ranked high among the developed countries of the world in per capita income and life expectancy and in the number of railroad miles, telegraph lines, and institutions of higher learning. Only the major European powers and the North had more cotton and woolen spindles. This book examines the Confederate military's program to govern this prosperous industrial base by a quartermaster system. By commandeering more than half the South's produced goods for the military, the quartermaster general, in a drift toward socialism, appropriated hundreds of mills and controlled the flow of southern factory commodities. The most controversial of the quartermasters general was Colonel Abraham Charles Myers. His iron hand set the controls of southern manufacturing throughout the war. His capable successor, Brigadier General Alexander R. Lawton, conducted the first census of Confederate resources, established the plan of production and distribution, and organized the Bureau of Foreign Supplies in a strategy for importing parts, machinery, goods, and military uniforms. While the Confederacy mobilized its mills for military purposes, the Union systematically planned their destruction. The Union blockade ended the effectiveness of importing goods, and under the Union army's General Order 100 Confederate industry was crushed. The great antebellum manufacturing boom was over. Scarcity and impoverishment in the postbellum South brought manufacturers to the forefront of southern political and ideological leadership. Allied for the cause of southern development were former Confederate generals, newspaper editors, educators, and President Andrew Johnson himself, an investor in a southern cotton mill. Against this postwar mania to rebuild, this book tests old assumptions about southern industrial re-emergence. It discloses, even before the beginnings of Radical Reconstruction, that plans for a New South with an urban, industrialized society had been established on the old foundations and on an ideology asserting that only science, technology, and engineering could restore the region. Within this philosophical mold, Henry Grady, one of the New South's great reformers, led the way for southern manufacturing. By the beginning of the First World War half the nation's spindles lay within the former Confederacy, home of a new boom in manufacturing and the land of America's staple crop, cotton.

About the Author
Harold S. Wilson is an associate professor of history at Old Dominion University. He is the author of McClure's Magazine and the Muckrakers and of articles published in African American Studies, The Historian, the Journal of Confederate History, and Alabama. Learn more about the author at <http://members.cox.net/haroldwilson/>.