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It Hastened What We All Fought For, the End of the War: General Sherman's Campaigns through Atlanta, Georgia, and the Carolinas and How They Impacted the Civil War

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The Civil War was in the midst of its fourth year and no end in sight. The Union had failed to put the Confederacy to rest despite major victories in Gettysburg and Vicksburg. The South, which seemed like a bleeding horse, was still able to fight at every turn. Robert E. Lee was gaining fame as he brilliantly danced around Richmond leading Grant to run thousands of Union soldiers to the ground. Even President Lincoln had doubts about his re-election. A new strategy was needed. The traditional battles of the past years did not produce an overall victory. In 1864, Sherman perfected this strategy to help bring the North an ultimate victory.

Sherman had many successful campaigns earlier in the war, but none compared in importance or fame as his Atlanta, Georgia and Carolina campaigns. The fall of Atlanta was crucial to the Union as it was the industrial center of the South. Prior to Sherman's destruction of this transportation hub, every railroad ran through this city. Sherman made an unprecedented and controversial decision to force the Atlanta citizens into exile before leaving the city. Atlanta was declared a military installation and all civilians were pushed out. Most of them were forced to travel with the wounded and dead Confederate soldiers. Sherman's actions seemed only to get worse to the South as he campaigned throughout Georgia and South Carolina. Sherman's campaign through Georgia struck fear into the lives and homes of civilians. This march not only used up food and supplies that were greatly needed by the Confederacy, but also broke the morale of Southern soldiers and supporters as far as the newspapers could reach. This terror through Georgia could only be exceeded by Sherman's march through the Carolinas. He made no exception in his destructive path through North and South Carolina.

After Sherman defeated General Hood around Atlanta, he knew there was no one left standing in his way and he disciplined the South until they ended the war. Even Georgia knew there was no Confederate force large enough to stop Sherman. Governor Brown begged and

pleaded with Jefferson Davis for more troops but was denied at every instance. No soldiers could be spared from the entrenched Richmond. As General Grant was busy with Lee, Sherman's campaigns through Atlanta, Georgia, and the Carolinas punished the South into submission. With one Confederate force remaining, defending Richmond, war materials and supplies destroyed, and the morale of soldiers and civilians failing, Lee had no choice but to surrender April 9, 1865. Through Atlanta, Georgia and the Carolinas, General Sherman was a devastating and imperative force that helped bring the end of the war.

The year 1864 followed a very successful year for the Union. Northern morale was at an all time high after the large victories of Gettysburg and Vicksburg.¹ However; the dream of peace did not last long. The year dragged on without any signs of an ultimate victory. Citizens and soldiers alike became disheartened as the war showed no end in sight. A Union soldier wrote to his family "you spoke of its being 2 yrs and ever since we started for the field that's whats the matter. We surely hoped it would be crushed out by this time."² The sentiment was similar throughout the North. The Union was in need of a victory, one that would tip the scales in their favor. Sherman did not disappoint.

The sentiment to keep fighting was so low that even Abraham Lincoln was concerned for his re-election. The South's unrelenting ability to keep the war going inspired the anti-war Democrats' platform: "four years of failures to restore the Union by the experiment of war."³ George McClellan, who had led the Union Army at the beginning of the war, ran against Lincoln as the Democratic nominee. With no major victory for the year, the morale was fading fast and

¹ Robert Bonner, *The Soldier's Pen*. (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), 129.

² Robert Bonner, *The Soldier's Pen*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), 142.

³ Robert Bonner, *The Soldier's Pen*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), 143.

the pro-peace, pro-slavery Democrats were gaining support.⁴ McClellan as president meant peace, but recognition of the Confederacy's independence and continuation of slavery in the South, everything Abraham Lincoln and the Union fought against. The Democrats wanted peace and would grant the Confederacy their wishes in response.

Grant's campaign around Richmond struck up severe controversy as it kept Lee's forces at bay, but the death rate of Union soldiers was extreme. The Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, wrote in his journal: "There is intense anxiety in relation to the Army of the Potomac. Great confidence is felt in Grant, but the immense slaughter of our brave men chills and sickens us all."⁵ Nicknamed "the Butcher," the death toll of Confederate soldiers was thirty thousand while the toll on Union soldiers was sixty-four thousand.⁶ On May 5, 1864 Grant suffered seventeen thousand casualties at the Battle of the Wilderness alone. This terrible loss mimicked a similar costly battle at Chancellorsville a year prior.⁷ Welles wrote later in his journal that General Grant has no regard for human life.⁸ Nothing Grant did could outwit General Lee and the thousands of Union soldiers left dead were felt by every American at home.

A Confederate force poured salt in the Northerners' wounds as they made an attack on Washington D.C. early July of 1864. "The Rebels are upon us" was announced throughout the

⁴ Allan R. Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States*, (New York: The Three Press, 1994), 234.

⁵ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of Gideon Welles: June 2, 1864*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

⁶ Allan R. Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States*, (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 232.

⁷ Allan R. Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States*, (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 231.

⁸ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of Gideon Welles: June 4, 1864*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

city. As Grant was fighting around Richmond, Lee was able to defend the city and send a legitimate force to tease Washington.⁹ The Confederate force was eventually pushed back, but the Northern fears were not comforted. The South was not beaten and was very much alive and ready to fight. The war was to drag on until an overwhelming presence was felt by the Confederacy. The attack on Washington combined with unsuccessful Northern sieges pushed many Northerners towards the Democratic party's peace and independence¹⁰

Although not as famous as the "March to the Sea," the battle of Atlanta was strategically and militarily as important if not more so than the march itself. Atlanta was the industrial center of the Confederate States and arguably second only to Richmond in importance. It was the primary manufacturer of military hardware. Factories produced bits, spurs, artillery projectiles, ammunition and even hand grenades.¹¹ Major George Ward Nichols, an aide-de-camp to Sherman, described Atlanta as this "These are the machine shops where have been forged and cast the Rebel cannon, shot and shell that have carried death to many a brave defender of our nation's honor. These warehouses have been the receptacle of munitions of war; stored to be used for out destruction."¹² Capturing Atlanta ensured the loss of supplies and materials to Confederate forces in the South and had a significant impact on morale of Southern soldiers and supporters.

⁹ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of Gideon Welles: July 11, 1864*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

¹⁰ Allan R. Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States*, (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 234.

¹¹ Lee Kennett, *Marching Through Georgia*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 114.

¹² Richard Wheeler, *Sherman's March*, (New York: HarperPerennial, 1978), 59.

Atlanta was the center of the Confederacy's railroad system. Twelve hundred miles of railroad held Georgia and the Confederacy together with Atlanta as its hub.¹³ Although not near as adequate as the Northern systems, the Confederacy depended on its railroad systems to move troops and materials throughout the South. As Sherman's soldiers approached Atlanta, however, they destroyed all railways for miles, a tradition repeated over and over after Atlanta throughout the Georgia campaign.¹⁴ The Southern war effort was greatly hindered by the destruction of railroads. No troops or supplies could travel into or out of Atlanta after Sherman was done. The railroads were a great asset that the Confederacy could not afford to lose, and with the fall of Atlanta it could not afford to replace. The physical damage caused by Sherman was just as important as the psychological damage he inflicted. Sherman helped bring the war to an end by causing both.

Atlanta was extremely important and none knew it more than Joseph E. Brown, governor of Georgia. Early in Sherman's Atlanta campaign, Governor Brown wrote a letter to Jefferson Davis requesting more troops. "I need to call your attention to the fact that this place is to the Confederacy almost as important as the heart is to the human body. We must hold it."¹⁵ As Sherman kept a constant barrage against Atlanta and the Confederate forces, Governor Brown received letters from Jefferson Davis refusing to send reinforcements. Brown's response was: "If your mistake should result in loss of Atlanta, and the occupation of other strong points in this State by the enemy, the blow may be fatal to our cause and remote posterity may have reason to

¹³ Lee Kennett, *Marching Through Georgia*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 112.

¹⁴ Gabor S. Boritt, ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 71.

¹⁵ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *A Letter from Joseph Emerson Brown to Jefferson Finis Davis: June 28, 1864*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

mourn over the error.”¹⁶ After seeing the destruction of the railways and landscape of Georgia above Atlanta, Governor Brown knew what laid ahead for Georgia and the Confederacy if Sherman’s men broke through. As the campaign for Atlanta was becoming bleak for the Confederate defense, a Southern paper concluded the worst: “Its fall would open the way for the Federal army to the Gulf on one hand, and to Charleston on the other, and close up those rich granaries from which Lee’s armies are supplied. It would give them control of our network of railways and thus paralyze our efforts.”¹⁷

After four months of battles around the city, General Hood surrendered the city and on September 2, 1864 Sherman and his men marched in. Walter P. Reed, an Atlanta writer, commented on Sherman’s trespass: “In the dread silence of that memorable morning, ten thousand helpless people looked into each other’s faces for some faint sign of hope and encouragement, but found none.”¹⁸ Georgia had been relatively untouched by the Civil War before this point. The fall of Atlanta brought home the brutal realities of war as the skirmishes around the city brought artillery shells and gunfire into the city and houses. Governor Brown asserted correctly; this was the beginning of the end for the Confederacy. The citizens were bewildered as they tried to accustom themselves to the new flag and mercy of an unmerciful commander. Atlanta was made an example by Sherman’s force and foreshadowed any resistance hereafter.

¹⁶ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *Letter from Joseph Emerson Brown to Jefferson Finis Davis: July 5, 1864*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

¹⁷ Richard Wheeler, *Sherman’s March*, (New York: HarperPerennial, 1978), 26.

¹⁸ Richard Wheeler, *Sherman’s March*, (New York: HarperPerennial, 1978), 35.

The fall of Atlanta renewed the spark that the Northern citizens had been missing. Sherman gave the North the victory they had been waiting for since the beginning of the year. A New York paper published: “An excellent feeling prevails here now, and renewed confidence in the success of the cause is felt and unreservedly expressed.”¹⁹ This victory symbolized the end of the war was near. With this renewed vigor to fight the war to the finish, McClellan supporters faded as Lincoln’s increased immensely. After four years of war, Sherman’s campaign seemed to provide a light at the end of the tunnel. Hope of a final victory had finally arrived. Atlanta was a key victory for the North and both sides knew it.

After a month under martial law, the residents of Atlanta awoke to a harsh reality. General Sherman ordered the removal of all civilians be it man, woman, child, sick, or elderly. They were all cast out from the city to fend for themselves. Sherman made history with this bold action. The mayor of Atlanta, James M. Calhoun, protested but Sherman responded with this cold statement.

Now that war comes home to you, you feel very different—you deprecate its horrors, but did not feel them when you sent car-loads of soldiers and ammunition, and moulded shells and shot, to carry war into Kentucky and Tennessee, and desolate the homes of hundreds and thousands of good people, who only asked to live in peace at their old homes, and under the Government of their inheritance... I want peace, and believe it only can be reached through Union and war, and I will ever conduct war purely with a view to perfect and early success.²⁰

¹⁹ America’s Historical Newspaper, “Celebration of Sherman’s Victories,” *New York Herald: September 5, 1864*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MToxNDoxMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_reprod=EANX& (accessed Mar 31, 2010).

²⁰ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *A Letter from William Tecumseh Sherman to James M. Calhoun, E.E. Rawson and S.C. Wells: September 12, 1864*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

Sherman believed bringing the war to an end required his drastic actions. He told Mayor Calhoun that he will do whatever is necessary to end the war and forcing the civilians out of Atlanta was necessary.

Horror stories of civilian exile made their way through diaries and newspapers. One refugee, Mary Gay, wrote in her diary: “Aged grandmothers tottering upon the verge of the grave, and tender maidens...and little babes not three days old in the arms of sick mothers, driven from their homes, were all out upon the cold charity of the world...”²¹ Confederate general, Hood, was requested to aid the inhabitants travelling south. Sherman and Hood exchanged letters working out the details. Hood also protested in his letters, but met the same hard feelings from Sherman that Mayor Calhoun did.²² Many civilians rode alongside the sick, wounded, and dying soldiers. A daughter of a Confederate Senator who was forced out exclaimed: “I never imagined what a hideous, cruel thing war was until I was brought into direct contact with these poor victims.”²³ Newspapers all over the South were mortified at what Sherman had done. A reprint from the Richmond Sentinel read: “an event unparalleled in the American War, and without an example in modern times. It calls Gen. Sherman the chief among savages, the captain among pirates, the leader of highwaymen, the prince among scoundrels and brutes, and the foremost villain of the world.”²⁴ However those stories fell on deaf ears.

Expecting the criticism, Sherman concluded a letter to General Halleck with this message: “If

²¹ Richard Wheeler, *Sherman's March*, (New York: HarperPerennial, 1978), 48.

²² Mills Lane, ed., *Marching Through Georgia*, (New York: Arno Press, 1978), 106.

²³ Richard Wheeler, *Sherman's March*, (New York: HarperPerennial, 1978), 28.

²⁴ America's Historical Newspaper, “Richmond Sentinel on Sherman,” *Daily Constitutional Union: September 16, 1864*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Mar 25, 2010).

the people raise a howl against my barbarity and cruelty, I will answer that war is war, and not popularity-seeking. If they want peace, they and their relatives must stop the war.”²⁵ The Southern cries did not receive sympathy from the North. As General Lee was engaged with Grant around Richmond, the physical and psychological impact of Sherman’s presence could not be denied. To many, the end was near.²⁶

Fire and brimstone became the symbol of Sherman’s presence as he ordered the destruction of the city as he marched out. David Conyngham, a *New York Herald* correspondent who accompanied Sherman throughout the campaign, commented how the buildings of Atlanta “fed the fiery element.”²⁷ Foundries, factories, stores, courthouses, refineries, and many more all fell under the torch. Fire was a quick and meaningful message to any and all Confederate forces and supporters: the destruction and burning continued until the war ended. Many more cities and villages suffered the same fate; Atlanta was the precursor to the Georgia and Carolina campaigns. As the men marched out from the ashes of Atlanta, Major Ward commented: “The city which, next to Richmond, has furnished more material for prosecuting the war than any other in the South, exists no more as a means for injury to be used by the enemies of the Union.”²⁸ Sherman’s presence was felt in every city, town, village, and home. General Hood tried to draw Sherman out of Atlanta by leading him into Tennessee. After a month of cat and mouse, Sherman sent General George Thomas to contend with him. With General Hood a good distance away, Sherman made his mark throughout Georgia and the entire confederacy.

²⁵ Mills Lane, ed., *Marching Through Georgia*, (New York: Arno Press, 1978), 105.

²⁶ Neil Kagan, ed., *Eyewitness to the Civil War*, (Washington: National Geographic Society, 2006), 329.

²⁷ Richard Wheeler, *Sherman’s March*, (New York, HarperPerennial, 1978), 58.

²⁸ Richard Wheeler, *Sherman’s March*, (New York: HarperPerennial, 1978), 59.

The fall of Atlanta was a crushing blow to the Confederacy. Their industrial and railroad center had been taken over and demolished. In addition to the military victory, Sherman set an unprecedented example of the citizens of Atlanta by forcing them out of the city. For the first time, civilians were used as an instrument of war. After three years of traditional warfare, the North had not achieved a supreme victory. Sherman invoked a new strategy. The severe fate of Atlanta would only be masked by Sherman's following campaigns through Georgia and South Carolina. A Union soldier wrote in his diary after the conquest of Atlanta: "We have already stunned hir [the Confederacy] and brought hir to hir knees. Another heavy stroke and she will give up the ghost. The Rebel Army is in a state of demoralization, brocken [broken] up and scattered in all directions."²⁹ After the fall of Atlanta, a renewed vigor found itself in the Union Army. Jefferson Davis, preoccupied with the defenses around Richmond, failed to see the importance of Atlanta and what was to come of Georgia and the Confederacy.

This heavy stroke was Sherman's infamous "March to the Sea." After Sherman forced the removal of all citizens out of Atlanta, in two marching columns he brought the war to all the inhabitants of Georgia. In a letter to Grant, Sherman stated "I can make this march and make Georgia howl!"³⁰ General Sherman was intent on making an example of Georgia to the entire Confederacy. If Atlanta was not a sufficient demonstration of the power of Sherman and the Union Army, then Georgia would be. Sherman stated in letters: "If we can march a well-appointed army right through this territory, it is a demonstration to the world, foreign and domestic, that we have a power which Davis cannot resist."³¹ Newspapers both Northern and

²⁹ John Hill Ferguson, ed. Janet Correll Ellison and Mark A. Weitz, *On To Atlanta*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 84.

³⁰ Neil Kagan, ed., *Eyewitness to the Civil War*, (Washington: National Geographic Society, 2006), 334.

Southern printed every bit of information found on Sherman's whereabouts and intentions. The Southern papers filled their columns with ideas of strength and Southern victory to the people. The *Macon Daily Telegraph* reported: "Thus far Hood has out-generaled Sherman. Whatever turn the campaign may take, hereafter its progress up to its present status has passed through a series of mortifying disappointments and defeats to the federal arms... Hood has used Sherman up mentally, scientifically, strategically. We trust he may destroy him physically..."³² Another article in the *Macon Daily Telegraph* printed: "With his own soldiery convinced of his rashness, and his own people distrustful of his wisdom, if it has not already taken place, we expect soon to learn of his ignominious retreat."³³ The Southern papers hoped these statements would increase spirit and rebellion among the Georgians that would encounter Sherman in his march. These articles were all in vain though as Sherman defied all their predictions, forcing the papers to print the truth of the destruction and chaos he had created in the state of Georgia.

Railroads, the transportation and supply lines of any industrialized nation, were a primary target for Sherman's men. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* received reports from Judson Kilpatrick, one of Sherman's generals: "Every railroad in the State of Georgia is either entirely burned up or damaged to such an extent as to be perfectly useless to the Confederacy..."³⁴ Sherman's men

³¹ Neil Kagan, ed., *Eyewitness to the Civil War*, (Washington: National Geographic Society, 2006), 334.

³² America's Historical Newspaper, "The Campaign in Front," *Macon Daily Telegraph and Confederate: October 25, 1864*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2ODE5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Mar 25, 2010).

³³ America's Historical Newspaper, "The Situation in Georgia," *Macon Daily Telegraph and Confederate: October 23, 1864*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2ODE5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Mar 25, 2010).

made quick work of every railroad they found, twisting irons and burning ties. These iron rails were found wrapped around trees; commonly called “Sherman’s neckties” amongst the soldiers.”³⁵ Train stations and depots were immediately burned. The loss of railroads to the war effort could not be underestimated. The South’s already limited railway system was destroyed at every opportunity. When Sherman arrived in Savannah, Georgia was completely cut off from the Confederacy especially Richmond. This is especially important because any communication and aid would have come from the Confederate capital. One newspaper estimated that Sherman destroyed almost three hundred miles of railroad between Atlanta and Savannah.³⁶ The Ohio Daily Statesman reported the Gulf Railroad was of particular importance to Lee and Davis in Richmond: “The post has seen a private letter from a citizen of Savannah, which states, on authority of an officer of that road, that it supplied Lee’s army up to the time it was broke, with 11,500 head of cattle per week.”³⁷

More devastating than the railroad destruction were the raids on civilians’ homes during the march. Without the use of the railroads, Sherman’s men relied on the land to survive.

Foraging was common practice and teams were usually formed to scavenge for crops and

³⁴ America’s Historical Newspaper, “Kilpatrick: The Ride Through Georgia,” *Philadelphia Inquirer: January 2, 1865*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Jan 27, 2010).

³⁵ Richard Wheeler, *Sherman’s March*, (New York: HarperPerennial, 1978), 57.

³⁶ America’s Historical Newspaper, “Destruction of Property by Gen. Sherman,” *New Hampshire Patriot and Gazette: January 4, 1865*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Jan 27, 2010).

³⁷ America’s Historical Newspaper, “Sherman’s Rule in Savannah—Destruction of the Gulf Railroad,” *Daily Ohio Statesman: January 7, 1865*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Mar 25, 2010).

livestock. “To my smoke-house, my dairy, pantry, Kitchen, and cellar, like famished wolves they came, breaking locks and whatever is in their way...My eighteen fat turkeys, my hens, chickens, and fowls, my young pigs, are shot down in my yard and hunted as if they were rebels themselves,”³⁸ an anonymous woman exclaimed. This was especially disheartening to the citizens who were left to starve as their homes were ravished. One Union soldier’s diary stated: “The question, I think, is never asked how much the farmer needs for his subsistence, but all is taken—literally everything.”³⁹ No food, crop or animal, was left for the Georgians to eat. In many cases, the Confederate Army had gone through previously taking rations and Sherman’s Army took whatever was left or hidden.⁴⁰

General Sherman issued an order defining the rules of foraging: “The army will forage liberally on the country during the march.”⁴¹ Soldiers used the term “liberally” as permission to raid homes for more than sustenance. “Bummers” became the commonplace name for the foragers who came back to camp or column with their pockets full. “These active and unscrupulous fellows generally started out every morning mounted on very mean horseflesh, and as a general rule they always came back very well mounted. The horses they had ridden in the morning were now pack animals, laden with all the good things of this world.”⁴² No material

³⁸ Neil Kagan, ed., *Eyewitness to the Civil War*, (Washington: National Geographic Society, 2006), 334.

³⁹ American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of George S. Bradley: November 1864*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Mar 25, 2010).

⁴⁰ Lee Kennett, *Marching Through Georgia*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 236.

⁴¹ America’s Historical Newspaper, “Kilpatrick: The Ride Through Georgia,” *Philadelphia Inquirer: January 2, 1865*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Jan 27, 2010).

good was safe from the “bummers.” Silverware, jewelry, wine, liquor all found themselves collected in the soldiers’ tents at night. Citizens, mostly women and children, lived in fear of forage parties coming through their homes. One Southern woman exclaimed in her diary “Oh, dear! Are we to be always living in fear and dread! Oh, the horrors, the horrors of war!”⁴³ at the sound of the Yankees approaching. The psychological impact on the Southern citizens may be greater than the physical, military impact. The foragers and bummers left many citizens with absolute nothing to eat or of value. For the Union soldiers, foraging became an event of sport and excitement; for the Southerners, it was absolute horror.

Sherman’s men promoted Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation throughout Georgia. Slaves were set free at any home or plantation, forcing them if need be. One woman explained that her plantation, full of slaves when she went to bed, was found empty when she awoke the next morning.⁴⁴ Freeing the slaves was a blow to the Southerners, but recruiting them was even more so. Many recently freed slaves joined the march performing physical labor and in rare cases fighting. One source estimated ten thousand fugitive slaves joined with Sherman’s unit. The population of freed slaves became so great that they were a hindrance to the march. One commander destroyed a bridge after his troops to keep the former slaves from following.⁴⁵ Some former slaves even participated in foraging. One account stated: “The freed negroes from the neighboring plantations seem worse than the Yankees, are destroying and burning everything

⁴² J.G. Lewin and P.J. Huff, *Witness to the Civil War*, ed. Stuart A.P. Murray, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2006), 201.

⁴³ American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of Dolly Sumner Burge: November 1864*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

⁴⁴ Lee Kennett, *Marching Through Georgia*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 292.

⁴⁵ Neil Kagan, ed., *Eyewitness to the Civil War*, (Washington: National Geographic Society, 2006), 335.

around the village.”⁴⁶ With the slaves freed and the men at war, Georgia had no one left to tend the fields or livestock. Sherman’s march was nothing less than devastating to the people of Georgia.

As Sherman marched through the Georgia, Confederate newspapers demanded the citizens to burn bridges, knock down trees into the roads, anything that would impede the Union force from laying waste to the rest of the state. In response, Sherman’s field order stated this:

In districts and neighborhoods where the army is unmolested, no destruction of such property should be permitted, but should guerrillas or bushwackers molest our march or should inhabitants burn bridges, obstruct roads, or otherwise manifest hostilities, the Army Corps Commander should order and enforce a devastation more or less relentless, according to the manner of such hostilities.⁴⁷

In summary, citizens who acted against the Union forces had their homes burned. When the local militia would burn bridges, the local citizens had their homes burned. When faced with this dilemma Sherman was quoted: “In war everything is right which prevents anything. If bridges are burned I have a right to burn all houses near it.” After deliberating with a junior officer he stated: “Well, let him look to his own people if they find that their burning bridges only destroys their own citizens’ houses, they’ll stop it.”⁴⁸

A thin line separated homes that required demolition and ones that didn’t. According to the Union chaplain, “the impression among officers and men is that we are to pass through the

⁴⁶ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of Susan Ravenel Jervey: March 4, 1865*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Feb 1, 2010)

⁴⁷ America’s Historical Newspaper, “Kilpatrick: The Ride Through Georgia,” *Philadelphia Inquirer: January 2, 1865*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Jan 27, 2010).

⁴⁸ Lee Kennett, *Marching Through Georgia*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 275.

country burning as we go,”⁴⁹ and burning they did. This tradition started in Atlanta and found its way into most every town in Georgia. Macon; Milledgeville, the capital; Rome; and many homes and plantations fell under the match. “For miles around, as far as the eye could reach, great blazing fires lit up the heavens with a glow of magnificence. The work of destruction was going on.”⁵⁰ Every structure with a military use was burned to the ground and many homes found the same fate. Sherman’s wrath reached far and wide. Georgia was the example that Sherman would follow into his Carolina campaign.

The horrors of Sherman’s raid through Georgia reached the Confederate men fighting around Richmond through letters and newspapers. Desertion became a large problem for the Confederate Army. As soldiers feared for their homes and families, they walked out. One historian estimated almost forty percent deserted in the winter of 1864-1865.⁵¹ Sherman’s impact on the war reached outside of Georgia and touched the entire Confederacy. His destruction throughout Georgia was felt all the way in Richmond where rebel soldiers were fleeing home. His destruction impeded Confederate operations to reinforce and supply. He gave the North victories and showed the South defeat when it was needed most. The Northern spirit was rising and the Southern spirit falling. Sherman showed both military and civilian that the rebel cause was gone.

⁴⁹ Lee Kennett, *Marching Through Georgia*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 274.

⁵⁰ America’s Historical Newspaper, “Kilpatrick: The Ride Through Georgia,” *Philadelphia Inquirer: January 2, 1865*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Jan 27, 2010).

⁵¹ Gabor S. Boritt, ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 74.

Sherman's famous "March to the Sea" ended with the successful capture of Savannah. This was proof enough that the Union Army had the force and determination to do whatever was needed to end the war. General Kilpatrick was quoted in a Philadelphia newspaper: "The very moment that Sherman reached the sea, demonstrating the fact that a well-organized army, ably led, could raid the South at pleasure; there was not a man in all the land but knew the war was virtually over; and the rebellion ended."⁵² The Union force believed the war had been shortened. Three hundred miles the men marched with relatively no resistance. Georgia was whipped. Union spirits soared. One Georgian reported: Savannah was of little use to us for a year past... but the moral effect of its fall is dreadful. The enemy are encouraged, and our people depressed. I never saw them more so."⁵³ The Union soldiers and even Georgians could see the writing on the wall. The Confederacy would not last.

After this courageous march, citizens in the North were celebrating, while citizens in the South were mourning. An article in the *New York Herald* on January 1, 1865 read: "The best way to conciliate rebels is to defeat them. The people of Savannah were very rampant a month ago and indulged in fire-eating to an unlimited extent."⁵⁴ During the march, the Southern papers were filled with stories and reasons of Sherman's demise. Georgia was shocked and dismayed at every instance. The *Herald* finished with: "But as soon as Sherman captured their city, they

⁵² Noah Trudeau, *Southern Storm*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008), 526.

⁵³ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of Judith White Brockenbrough McGuire: December 24, 1864*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Feb 1, 2010).

⁵⁴ America's Historical Newspaper, "Conciliating the South," *New York Herald: January 1, 1865*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

became very “quiet and orderly,” and appealed to “the sympathy of a magnanimous foe.”⁵⁵ His march produced disastrous effects on Southern morale. Sherman’s victory in Savannah was the icing on the cake of his march through Georgia. He successfully marched an army through the heart of Georgia to the coast causing wide-spread destruction. His domination over Georgia broke the will of many Confederate supporters. Sherman continued this tradition into South Carolina.

After a successful campaign of destruction and the capture of a key port, the war still had not ended. Sherman left Savannah and headed north through South Carolina. In a letter to General Grant, Sherman made his intention known: “I do sincerely believe that the whole United States, North and South, would rejoice to have this army turned loose on South Carolina, to devastate in the manner we have done in Georgia, and it would have a direct and immediate bearing on your campaign in Virginia.”⁵⁶ The devastation caused in Georgia was minute compared to South Carolina. A Union soldier wrote that “the army was burning with insatiable desire to wreak vengeance on South Carolina.”⁵⁷ South Carolina and especially Charleston was held accountable for initiating the Civil War and it was now time to punish them for their transgressions. The soldier further noted a message from General Halleck to Sherman stating: “Should you capture Charleston, I hope that by accident the place may be destroyed and if a little salt be sown on its site, it may prevent the growth of future crops of nullification and

⁵⁵ America’s Historical Newspaper, “Conciliating the South,” *New York Herald: January 1, 1865*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

⁵⁶ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *A Letter from William Tecumseh Sherman to Ulysses S. Grant: December 18, 1864*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

⁵⁷ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of William Bircher: February 8, 1865*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

secession.”⁵⁸ The retribution truly came out in the march north from the sea. Sherman’s men burned and destroyed as they marched with no regard for humanity. No houses or villages were spared as they passed. Smoke could be seen for miles behind Sherman. An account in one Southerner’s diary stated: “There will be no aftermath. They say no living thing is found in Sherman’s track, only chimneys, like telegraph poles, to carry the news of Sherman’s army backward.”⁵⁹ Newspapers never knew where he was going, but always knew where he had been. Both Northern and Southern papers could only speculate on Sherman’s intentions. The trail of smoke was the only assurance of his presence.

One of Sherman’s generals, Judson Kilpatrick, issued five thousand dollars worth of matches to his men as they crossed into South Carolina.⁶⁰ The Carolina campaign had two missions; to strike fear into the remaining Southern population and to punish South Carolina for secession and nullification. One Union soldier described in his diary that General Kilpatrick’s brigade destroyed most of the city of Barnwell. When this soldier’s unit arrived on scene they destroyed the remaining portion.⁶¹ The flames crept so high in Barnwell that the soldiers nicknamed the town “Burnwell.”⁶²

By the time of arrival at Columbia, Sherman’s reputation preceded him. Columbia was given up without a fight. The *New York Herald* published the account:

⁵⁸ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of William Bircher: February 1865*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

⁵⁹ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of Mary Boykin Chesnut: February 26, 1865*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 27, 2010).

⁶⁰ Neil Kagan, ed., *Eyewitness to the Civil War*, (Washington DC: National Geographic, 2006), 356.

⁶¹ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of William Bircher: February, 1865*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

⁶² Neil Kagan, ed., *Eyewitness to the Civil War*, (Washington DC: National Geographic, 2006), 356.

The rebel troops under Beauregard evacuated Columbia and Sherman soon after quietly took possession. We had supposed that the Palmetto chivalry, after all their terrible threatening of wraith and destruction against the “hated Yankees,” would fight to the death in every swamp, every cross road, and at every river bridge, ford or ferry; or would at all events, dispute every inch of ground in defence of their State capital till overwhelmed, like the ancient Carthaginians, in a roaring conflagration. But Beauregard tells a different story. Without firing a shot he leaves the city to its fate, on the approach of Sherman’s travelers, and heads to the northward.⁶³

Many Northerners took this as a clear sign the Confederacy had given up. The Southern force retreated before any shots were fired. Lee continued to fight Grant around Richmond. The war was not quite over, but Sherman’s presence loomed over the Confederacy.

The fear of Sherman extended to the citizens of Columbia as they were trying to catch the last train out. One woman wrote of the experience. “We catch, now and again, peculiar whizzing sounds—shells, they say. Sherman has come; he is knocking at the gate. Oh, God! Turn him back! Fight on our side, and turn him back!”⁶⁴ The train station was burned only hours later, followed by the rest of the town. Even though Columbia was given up without a fight, Sherman punished it like it had. Many of the victims fled to neighboring towns and cities only to flee again. The citizens of South Carolina were filled with horror anywhere Sherman went. One refugee wrote about the conditions in her diary: “I am bodily comfortable, if somewhat dingily lodged, and I daily part with my raiment for food. We find no one who will exchange eatables for Confederate money; so we are devouring our clothes.”⁶⁵ Like in Georgia, the citizens were

⁶³ America’s Historical Newspaper, “The Great News from South Carolina the capture of Columbia and the fall of Charleston,” *New York Herald, February 20, 1865*, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MToxNDoxMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_reprod=EANX& (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

⁶⁴ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of Malvina Sarah Black Waring: February 15, 1865*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

drove from their homes with little food and clothing. Sherman's campaigns caused more harm against the citizens than the armies.

In fright, Charleston was evacuated at the sound of Sherman in the capital. Newspapers all over the North headlined "Charleston Evacuated!" One paper read: "Two words which caused every loyal lip to thank God that the prayers of the past four years had been heard. Charleston Evacuated!"⁶⁶ The city that led the rebellion had now fallen in disgrace to the Union without so much of a shot fired. This was a huge victory for the Northern cause and a huge embarrassment for the South. With South Carolina defeated and ravaged, it appeared that no hope was left for the Confederacy.

In the winter of 1865, morale was at an all-time low amongst the Confederacy. One Confederate soldier stated "I think the people is beginning to feel the effects of this war here in S.C. as well as in Va and other states."⁶⁷ He was right. The South as a whole was finally getting the hint. The atrocities in Georgia were not from luck, but from Sherman's strength, strategy, and desire to wreak havoc. Citizens of Georgia and South Carolina were displaced, cities were burned, and desertion rates were high. The Southern papers tried to keep morale up, but they could not deny their situation. Their praises of high spirits also contained messages like these: "We have met with serious disasters. It is idle to deny, and worse than folly to attempt to

⁶⁵ The American Civil war: Letters and Diaries, *The Diary of Mary Boykin Chesnut: February 26, 1865*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Jan 24, 2010).

⁶⁶ America's Historical Newspaper, "Charleston Evacuated," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 21, 1865, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2ODE5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Jan 27, 2010).

⁶⁷ Robert E. Bonner, *The Soldier's Pen*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), 218.

conceal it”⁶⁸ and “the grand roll of armsbearing men has been exhausted—not by casualties of war—but by dispersion and straggling—our armies mournfully depleted, and what is worse, the morale of ablebodied men seriously impaired.”⁶⁹ Despite their words of encouragement, they spoke of the worst. Without specific facts of Southern achievements, there was little hope to raise the Southern spirit. Even the Georgia papers were a little spiteful to their Carolina neighbor. “When Sherman was marching through Georgia, we remember to have read many boasting paragraphs in Carolina papers as to the difference of the reception awaiting him, when he invaded their state.” South Carolina had nothing to boast about when Columbia was surrendered without a fight and Charleston evacuated out of fear. Like Georgia, South Carolina found itself at Sherman’s mercy. To further indicate the dire straits the Confederacy was in, the paper read on “We really hope things are better than they seem, and men more patriotic then they are made to appear.”⁷⁰ Like the North, the South felt the war coming to an end. There was not much good news to the Confederacy as Sherman had swept through two Confederate states and a few major cities.

⁶⁸ America’s Historical Newspaper, “Our Present Condition and Future Prospects,” *Macon Daily Telegraph and Confederate*, January 10, 1865, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Mar 25, 2010).

⁶⁹ America’s Historical Newspaper, “The Congressional Differ,” *Macon Daily Telegraph and Confederate*, January 1, 1865, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Mar 25, 2010).

⁷⁰ America’s Historical Newspaper, “South Carolina Items,” *Macon Daily Telegraph and Confederate*, February 15, 1865, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbid=U60V5AAWMTI2OD E5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Jan 27, 2010).

While the Southern papers attempted to hold the rebellion together, the North fueled the fire by predicting the end of the war. In February 1865, the *New York Herald* crowed: “By these operations the railroad communications between Virginia and the South is entirely cut off, and rebel authority over the Southern States cannot longer be enforced.”⁷¹ Without officially stating, the Northern papers could see the light at the end of the tunnel. To the North, Sherman’s victories in South Carolina felt like the overwhelming presence needed to decide the war.

With the war not over, Sherman continued his army into North Carolina. Robert E. Lee reinstated General Joseph Johnston to ward off Sherman. Lee’s letter read: “Assume command of the Army of Tennessee and all troops in the Department of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida... Concentrate all available forces and drive back Sherman.”⁷² Johnston obeyed orders but felt the war was at the end. He responded with this: “It is too late to expect me to concentrate troops capable of driving back Sherman.”⁷³ After minor skirmishes in Aversborough and Kenton, a major battle took place in Bentonville. Johnston was repulsed time after time until Sherman’s men flanked him and took control of the battle. General Johnston was quoted “Sherman’s course cannot be hindered by the small force that I have. I can do no more than

⁷¹ America’s Historical Newspaper, “Sherman: Rebel Accounts of his Progress in South Carolina, *New York Herald*, February 15, 1865, http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/iw-search/we/HistArchive?p_product=EANX&p_action=timeframes&p_theme=ahnp&p_nbld=U60V5AAWMTI2ODE5NTgyMS44NzczMTM6MT0xND0xMzEuMjE2LjE2Mi40MA&p_clear_search=yes&d_refprod=EANX& (accessed Jan 27, 2010).

⁷² The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *A Letter from Robert Edward Lee to Joseph Eggleston Johnston: February 22, 1865*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Mar 25, 2010).

⁷³ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *A Letter from Joseph Eggleston Johnston to Robert Edward Lee: February 23, 1865*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Mar 25, 2010).

annoy him.”⁷⁴ Johnston and Lee contained the only two major forces remaining for the Confederacy.

General Sherman made his march through South and North Carolina with relative ease. Fighting still continued in the days after Lee’s surrender. Jefferson Davis requested General Johnston to keep fighting for the Confederacy and he responded with: “Our people are tired of war, feel themselves whipped, and will not fight.” Johnston officially surrendered to Sherman Apr 19th, 1865.⁷⁵

Some contemporary historians believe that the breakdown of morale due to psychological factors was a major reason for the fall of the Confederacy.”⁷⁶ General William Tecumseh Sherman used this strategy famously to what he knew would bring the end of the war. He brought the war into the homes of Georgians and Carolinians. He would have brought his tactics into Virginia, if Lee had not surrendered before his army arrived. Sherman wrote “My aim, then, was to whip the rebels, to humble their pride, to follow them to their inmost recesses, and make them fear and dread us.”⁷⁷ The Southern people had been crushed. They were pushed out of their homes and cities. After hearing the horror stories, Confederate soldiers felt compelled leave and see the damage themselves. Desertion was at an alarming rate. Sherman’s campaigns in Atlanta, Georgia, and the Carolinas played a key role in bringing the war to an end. As one

⁷⁴ Neil Kagan, ed., *Eyewitness to the Civil War*, (Washington DC: National Geographic Society, 2006), 359.

⁷⁵ Neil Kagan, ed., *Eyewitness to the Civil War*, (Washington DC: National Geographic Society, 2006), 374.

⁷⁶ David Herbert Donald, ed., *Why the North Won the Civil War*, (New York: Simon & Shuster Paperbacks, 1996), 24.

⁷⁷ Allan R. Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States*, (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 230.

historian stated: “Lee merely recognized the facts when in the spring of 1865 he conceded that the Confederacy had become morally and physically unable to maintain the contest.”⁷⁸

Along with the mental disruption, the physical damage to the Confederacy’s war effort was irreparable. “Hundreds of miles of her railroads have for the present been rendered useless. A broad belt of her territory, nearly four hundred miles in length, has been devastated.”⁷⁹

Sherman’s rampage through the South hastened the end of the war. “The city of Atlanta, with several of the villages of the State, have been burnt, the Capital has been occupied and desecrated b the enemy, and Savannah, the seaport of the State, is now in his possession.”⁸⁰

Sherman’s force marched through Georgia uncontested and living off the land then repeated the process in the Carolinas. From Atlanta to South Carolina, Sherman demonstrated the power and effectiveness of the Union Army striking fear into the Southerners lives. Cities were evacuated and Confederate armies retreated in preparation for him. Sherman was not the only Union presence in the Civil War, but none other compared in audacity and effectiveness as General Sherman. After the war General Sherman was quoted “Though I never ordered it and never wished it, I have never shed any tears over this event, because I believed that it hastened what we all fought for, the end of the war.”⁸¹ General Sherman believed that the war could not be won by traditional warfare alone. He brought the war to the heart of the Confederacy, its people; and

⁷⁸ Gabor S. Boritt, ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 11.

⁷⁹ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *A Letter from Joseph Emerson Brown to James Alexander Seddon: January 6, 1865*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Feb 7, 2010).

⁸⁰ The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries, *A Letter from Joseph Emerson Brown to James Alexander Seddon: January 6, 1865*, <http://solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/> (accessed Feb 7, 2010).

⁸¹ Neil Kagan, ed., *Eyewitness to the Civil War*, (Washington DC: National Geographic Society, 2006), 358.

although his actions are still controversial to this day, his campaigns were essential for the Union to achieve victory.

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