

**TWO PRESIDENTS:  
ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
& JEFFERSON DAVIS**

The Origin, Cause,  
and Conduct of the  
War Between the States

by  
C. E. Gilbert

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Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis  
by C.E. Gilbert

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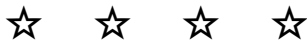
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To the memory and honor of the  
Statesmen and Soldiers of the Southern  
Confederacy and their Heroic Ancestors  
of 1776, 1836, 1898, 1917, who also  
fought for Liberty and Home Rule, the  
Great American Principal, “Government  
Only By Consent of the Governed.”



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# INTRODUCTION



## The Need to Refute False Propaganda

There is a reason and need for this book. In my work for several years through the South, in the interest of the life and object of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, I have had occasion to observe and lament the lack of historical information among young men of the present generation, even among grown-ups, and the extent of alleged history which, through misrepresentation, serves to discredit our fathers and deprive them of the honors justly due them. There is some reason for this condition:

The cause which impoverished the South in the '60s enriched the North; and while the men of the South must return home in the spring of '65 and devote years of hard work to rehabilitate the Southland, men of the North had money and leisure to write, print and misrepresent the cause

and conduct of that terrible conflict.

There is reason in everything which has any basis at all. There is a reason why it is just to assert that President Abraham Lincoln's fame is far beyond the man's deserts; his abilities exaggerated; his virtues magnified; his statesmanship over-estimated; his one achievement misrepresented and misunderstood, conflictive in declaration, purpose and effect.

All this would be immaterial but for the propaganda of misrepresentation of issues and policies, having tendency and purpose to deceive those who thoughtlessly accept them. If those policies and actions which forced that war upon the South were false and wrong, then, certainly, Southern people insult the memory of their fathers in permitting the circulation in their homes and schools of such literature.

Southern people are not concerned about the exaggerated adulation of Lincoln in the North, or the hero-worship by the negroes of the South as long as they wish to be deluded; but it is against the wrongful use of their publishing advantage – the circulation of misrepresentations and calumnies at our own doors – that merits our indignant protest. What would be the reception accorded a proposal to name a Southern Female College for Harriet Beecher Stowe after her gross misrepresentation of Southern life? Or if it were

proposed to name a high school for John Brown or Wendell Phillips, both of whom were early proponents to destroy the Federal Constitution in order to create negro insurrection and bring about negro equality – only in the South? Well, Lincoln claimed the power, and *did* what these fanatics had suggested. Is there a school in Massachusetts or Ohio named in honor of Jefferson Davis or Robert E. Lee? Has not Northern sentiment kept out of the Hall of Fame the statute of Jefferson Davis – out of the niche set apart for Mississippi?

### The Victors Wrote the History

While the men of the South displayed their characteristic courage and fortitude, in the one field as in the other, and were remarkably successful in restoring their homes and industries to their former glory and productiveness, it required many years, and there was little time for literature; the conquerors went marching on writing and printing versions of events which should have been recorded with something of the impartiality of a magnanimous victor, but instead were prejudiced, unjust and untrue. The saddest phase of this period so akin to the destructive political “reconstruction” is that during these crippled years of the South such books in

innumerable numbers found their way almost alone into the homes and schools of the South with their venomous influences. It may be our fault – certainly our misfortune – that so many of our young men are unfamiliar with the official record of either of the war Presidents, or the heroic parts their ancestors played in that eventful period of our country’s history; and consequently are unable to form correct judgment. But they are entitled to know the truth, and we owe it to our fathers that their descendants shall know the truth – all the truth.

There is ample and valid reason for disbelieving and repudiating hundreds of the books written (for gain and hate) the years following President Lincoln’s tragic and lamentable assassination. Lincoln was the new Republican party’s first President. Lincoln, dead and discredited (as had been for a year), would mean the death of the new Republican party; but Lincoln, famous and reputed great in achievement, would mean extended life to the party. So, the President’s administration must be extolled, his every act exalted, his personality magnified to the greatest extent; the South must be charged with Lincoln’s death; the Southern States must be ground down and “reconstructed”; Jefferson Davis must be charged with complicity in Lincoln’s death, and with responsibility for the death rate at Ander-

sonville; there must be victims; Mrs. Surratt dragged from her home and hanged with men charged with Lincoln's death, and Superintendent Wirz of Andersonville hanged by military court; Jefferson Davis placed in a cell and in irons; – thus carrying out the plan of Wendell Phillips' Republican party's "organization against the South" to "trample the Constitution under foot."

Hundreds of books were written voicing the most extravagant adulation of the dead President, and those which dared tell some of the truth were bought up and suppressed; particularly those of W. H. Herndon and Ward Lamon, who, though Republicans and former law partners and intimate friends of Lincoln, "could not tell the truth," because they did not participate in the apotheosis of a man dead who had been so recently denounced by his associates while living. Even Mr. Chase, Lincoln's appointee from the Cabinet to Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, who admitted his Republican party devotion was not for love of the negro so much as hate for his master, said he: "Could never see any greatness in Lincoln."

These are the reasons for the presentation of this volume, that it may be an humble but helpful means of disseminating some of the much hidden truths. In offering it, I beg to call attention to one feature of it: Ninety per cent of the author-

ities quoted to show the gross inaccuracy and injustice of the mass of so-called history in circulation, are from Northern historians, and newspapers and public men of the Northern States, before, during and since the war, and also from that other invaluable collection of war records authorized by act of Congress in the name of *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*. We can pardon the name for the truth it tells.

### The Sacred Duty of Southerners

It was Macaulay who said: “A people who are not proud of the deeds of a noble ancestry will never do anything worthy to be remembered by posterity.”

It is the sacred duty of Southerners, and should be their blessed privilege to contribute whatever is within their means or power for the preservation of the truth of history to the honor and memory of the Confederate Soldiers and Statesmen. Our fathers of '61 fought valiantly to preserve and perpetuate the principles won by our heroic ancestors of '76 and true Americans should delight to honor the one no less than the other. The truth of history – of the striking events of that period – the simple truth – is all the sons and daughters of the Confederacy desire, and that we should insist be taught in our schools and in

the homes throughout the Southland. Failure to do so, neglect to do our full part, would be a shame which should lose us the respect even of descendants of the men who wore the blue.

Even fair-minded men of the Northern States would no doubt gladly welcome suggestions which would lead to the full truth on that important epoch in the history of our country – not for any material advantage, or fear of any false sentiment, but for the sake of Truth itself.

In this presentation of the record of the two central figures in the War Between the States, I make no pretense at either “literature” or eloquence, but endeavor to present truths of history in an effort to show fairly and truly the efforts and influence of the one to preserve the Union and avoid war by a strict adherence to the Constitution, and statutes, and to adjust existing and perplexing problems by peaceful means; and of the other to override law and Constitution to bring on war, for what Seward termed “the higher law,” which was revolution reversed, *official rebellion* against the people.

C.E. Gilbert  
Houston, Texas.





**PART ONE:**  
**Abraham Lincoln**  
**and the North**



# CHAPTER ONE



## When the Strife Was Begun

What was the cause of the War Between the States? The Northern writers generally say, *slavery*. But the origin and the cause dates back to a period when slavery was in existence North and South.

There was rivalry and jealousy and growing enmity between the Puritan and the Cavalier, starting probably when New England failed in reciprocation to come to the aid of Virginia in her Indian Wars, or perhaps to the inherent and inharmonious characteristics of Puritan and Cavalier.

In 1775, this feeling between the two sections was recognized by General Washington, when, at Boston, he issued a stern order for the summary punishment of any man guilty of arousing that sectional animosity.

In 1776, John Jay, as Secretary of Foreign Affairs, recommended to Congress in the treaty with Spain there should be no American shipping on the Mississippi River below the mouth of the Yazoo, which brought forth strong protests from Virginia and other Southern States.

In 1803, the North protested against President Jefferson's purchase of Louisiana, and yet strongly contended for the control of the Northwest territory thereby admitted to the Union.

In 1812, the Northern section protested and criticized the Southern States for the War with England, which by the way, was won almost altogether by Southern men.

In 1814, New England representatives in the Hartford Convention threatened secession because of the war with England.

In 1820, Congress, on motion of Thomas Jefferson, and by the vote of Southern members, passed an act prohibiting the slave traffic, which stopped a very profitable trade in New England ship-building and kidnapping Africans. It was then the Abolition sentiment received its first impetus.

In 1828, Congress, the Northern section again in control, raised tariff taxes on imports for the protection of New England mills to an extent which brought forth vigorous protest from the South that Congress had exceeded the pow-

ers delegated by the States, which brought forth the Nullification Act of South Carolina in 1832. Though President Jackson threatened, under the leadership of Clay, Congress modified the tariff, and South Carolina repealed the Nullification Act in 1833. In 1846-7, Massachusetts took the lead in protest against the Mexican War and threatened to withdraw from the Union, if Texas was admitted; and sought to control the new territory won by Southern valour while they were protesting.

In 1859, the Northern States annulled extradition laws, and not only refused to surrender fugitive slaves, but Ohio and Iowa openly refused to honor the requisition of the Governor of Virginia for two of John Brown's raiders who were indicted with Brown for murder in Virginia.

In 1860, there came another national victory for the Northern States (on account of three democratic presidential tickets) in the election of Abraham Lincoln and both houses of Congress. With Wendell Phillips, one of the founders of the new Republican party declaring the party was "a sectional party organized against the South," to "trample the Constitution under foot," and S. P. Chase to be in Lincoln's cabinet and his spokesman in the Peace Conference declaring there would be no compromise, and that Lin-

coln's election "authorized him to enforce his theories, regardless of Constitution, laws, State Rights or Supreme Court" – we have a culmination of the long-growing enmity for the South, an open hostility menacing the peace of the South.

What was left for the Southern States, except to do what New England had often threatened to do – withdraw from the Union?

### Bledsoe's View of the Causes of the War

Albert Taylor Bledsoe in his review of George Lunt's *Origin of the Late War* says:

"The causes of the late war had their roots in the passions of the human heart. Thus the new government worked, not according to physical analogies, but according to the principles of human nature. The weak looked to the Constitution as the great charter of their rights; the powerful looked to their own power. The minority held up the shield of State Rights; the majority laid its hand on the sword of the Union. The only difference is, that in thus passing from the creed (State Rights) and the attitude (threatening secession) of the minority, to those of the majority and back again, according to her change of position and power in the Union, New England has been more bold and unblushing than any other portion

of the United States; and at the same time more lofty in her pretensions to a purely disinterested patriotism and loyalty.”<sup>1</sup>

After discussing at length the efforts at provision for a balance of power between small and large States by equal representation in one house and proportionate representation in the other, and a balance of power between the two houses, and the legislative, executive and judicial departments, with the Supreme Court as final arbiter, Bledsoe said:

“The failure to adjust or settle on any solid basis the balance of power between the North and South was the great defect of the Constitution of 1787. Hence, if we are not greatly mistaken, the antagonism between the North and South so imperfectly adjusted by the labors of 1787, is the true standpoint from which to contemplate the origin of the late war (’61.)”<sup>2</sup>

Thus, it should be clearly understood that the antagonism was before strife over the tariff, and was growing in intensity before division over slavery. The North could not afford to make the tariff a war issue for that would have incurred the displeasure and opposition of Great

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1. *The Southern Review*, Volume I, Number 2 (April, 1867), pages 263-264.

2. *Ibid.*, page 267.

Britain; so slavery was made their pretext for war, and even that had to be handled very cautiously, for an open issue would have antagonized the Northwest. Lincoln had failed in such an issue with Stephen A. Douglass over State Sovereignty (indirectly involving slavery), and General Grant had said even after the war was on, that "If this war is for emancipation I will resign, and go take my sword to the other side." So, the movement for war must be secretly and very diplomatically conducted.