



### Silk Flags and Cold Steel: The Civil War in North Carolina: The Piedmont

William R. Trotter

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Silk Flags and Cold Steel: The Civil War in North Carolina: The Piedmont William R. Trotter Silk Flags and Cold Steel recalls the events that took place in the Piedmont region of North Carolina between late 1860 and mid-1865. Though the skirmishes in the Piedmont were more strategic than tactical, they were important to the health of the Southern cause. As long as the railways of North Carolina were operating freely and the state's farms were producing to capacity, Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia could move, eat, fight, and replenish itself.

North Carolina's relations with the Confederate government of Jefferson Davis were complex, touchy, and often antagonistic, for the state had been reluctant to secede and there was strong Unionist sentiment throughout the state. President Davis never particularly trusted North Carolina, a fact that blinded him to the state's strategic value. Paradoxically, no state contributed more to the Confederate cause in terms of manpower and resources than did North Carolina.

From the time he took office in 1862, Zebulon Vance proved a strong and popular wartime governor of North Carolina. Silk Flags and Cold Steel deals with his tenuous relationship with the Confederate government in Richmond. It also covers Vance's management of the war in his own state in great detail.

Along with discussion of the political climate, the book presents accounts of the Salisbury prison, Sherman's march through the Carolinas, confrontations at Bentonville, Raleigh, and Greensboro, and Joe Johnston's surrender at Bennett's Farm.

The war in the North Carolina Piedmont caused profound disturbances in the old order of things—changes that led to new attitudes. Those changes created a new environment that eventually made North Carolina a leader in the "New South" that arose from the ashes of the war.



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