

How Sherman Sacked The South:  
The Victorious Failure of the March to the Sea

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In some unique cases, making a war easier, can make the peace far more difficult.

Sherman's March, the famed Civil War campaign led by General William Tecumseh Sherman had a huge psychological and physical impact on both the Civil War and the South. Sherman's March was incredibly effective militarily, and contributed greatly to the end of the war, but was, in fact, detrimental to the Union's war aim of uniting the country. This was because it so disgraced and alienated the South that they resented the North and Sherman even more, and made Reconstruction far more difficult than it would have otherwise been.

The backdrop to Sherman's March began with the pivotal Battle of Gettysburg, as the North gained the upper hand in the War. After General Robert E. Lee's loss at Gettysburg, the Confederacy's strategy in the war became to defend its capital, Richmond, and its major city of Atlanta. The Confederates were in no position to attack the North, after Lee's failed foray into Union territory, so they had hoped for Lincoln to lose his re-election. If a War Democrat won the election, then he would most likely agree to a treaty with the Confederacy to end the war, and the Confederacy would have achieved its goal of becoming a separate nation. The Confederacy's president, Jefferson Davis, wanted to outlast the North, and was determined to either win the war, or to be destroyed trying.<sup>1</sup> For, if the South lost the war, then it would be reinstated to the Union, and the Confederacy would be destroyed regardless. After the Battle of Gettysburg, the South became far more defensive, as they had lost a string of battles, and were having domestic problems as well; the Confederacy was under economic duress due to inflation, and Davis had instated substantial taxes, angering Southerners. He also increased the size of the army, which was not as helpful as it could have been, for they were woefully under-equipped and rationed.<sup>2</sup>

The South was at a disadvantage at this point in the war, and the North hoped to use this to take control.

However, the war went back and forth, and at the time of Sherman's March (late 1864), the North had lost a series of battles, and the Democrats favoring peace in the North were gaining traction on Lincoln, and Lincoln himself expected to lose his election. However, Sherman's Atlanta campaign helped change the momentum of the war, in the Union's favor. The march through Georgia culminated in the capture of Atlanta, a major Confederate stronghold. Along with the Union victory at Gettysburg, this campaign helped to turn the tide of the election. Lincoln won, and ordered Sherman to deliver the knockout punch.<sup>3</sup> Once Lincoln won his election, he knew that, in order for the Union to prevail, he needed to strike the South quickly, before it could regroup.<sup>4</sup> Lincoln ordered General William Tecumseh Sherman, the head of the Military Division of the Mississippi, to command a march through Georgia. This would be known as the famous March to the Sea.

General Sherman was a rough-looking man, the embodiment of the hard-working, blue collar Union spirit. An extremely intelligent and informal man, this was perhaps why he was so effective, and alienating to the South. Sherman was a gruff, unkempt man who served as the Northern counterpart to the South's chivalrous, gallant, military aristocrats.<sup>5</sup> Prior to leading the Atlanta campaign and the March, however, he had quite a checkered past. Sherman was a failure of a general from 1861-63, being defeated in several battles, and his public image was tainted by accusations in the media of insanity.<sup>6</sup> However, he became friends with Ulysses S. Grant, and was appointed 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant by him.<sup>7</sup> He was a brilliant general, and his combined genius with Grant most likely won the war for the North.<sup>8</sup>

Sherman was often called the first modern general, because of how his shrewd leadership and tactics resembled those of modern day combat, in the use of total war. Sherman

was not an overly violent man, and his view on warfare is expressed through his famous quote, in response to a critic of his soldiers' destructive ways, "War is cruelty. There is no use trying to reform it, the crueller it is, the sooner it will be over".<sup>9</sup> Sherman's March may have been ruthless, but it was also the most efficient way to end the war.

Sherman's March to the Sea was an extremely destructive and successful campaign. It began in November of 1864, after General Sherman had just completed a five month siege of Atlanta. Sherman had fought a sequence of battles against armies led by the Confederates Joseph E. Johnston, and then John Bell Hood, whom he had been able to outmaneuver in order to capture Atlanta. By contrast, the actual March to the Sea was an easy campaign, and was actually enjoyed by soldiers. Food was plentiful throughout Georgia, so troops were never underfed, and the army was never really opposed by any Confederate troops, save being occasionally harassed by Wheeler's Cavalry (a cavalry regiment led by Joseph Wheeler). Union troops began to loot Southern property, as well as burn buildings, both as an insult to Southerners, and to hurt their infrastructure.

The psychological and physical impact of Sherman's March was tangible in the Southerners' anger and resentment for the Union. The physical damage is the more obvious of the two, as Union soldiers looted, burned, and tore down buildings habitually as they marched through Georgia. Sherman's army continued through Georgia, destroying railroads in particular, because of their importance to the South.<sup>10</sup> The railroad system was far less extensive than it was in the North, so the destruction of it was extremely damaging to the Confederacy's war effort, infrastructure, and economy in general. By destroying important buildings, railroads, farms, and property in general the soldiers hurt Georgia's economy and

infrastructure, and therefore hurt those of the Confederacy as well.

Sherman's strategy did not stop at simply destruction of physical infrastructure, however. He took aim at not only the Confederate *ability* to fight, but also the South's *will* to fight. As John Chipman Grey, a Union soldier, stated in a letter, Sherman “evidently purposes to make the South feel the horrors of war as much as he legitimately can”.<sup>11</sup> He knew that exposing them to ruthless, destructive campaign through their own land would ruin their appetite for war, as well as their means to fight. At the same time, however, it angered the Southerners, and enraged them at the misdeeds, or the perceived misdeeds of the Northerners. In her journal, a girl from Georgia named Eliza Frances Andrews wrote of a rebel soldier describing Sherman's soldiers: “He told awful tales about the things Sherman's robbers had done; it made my blood boil to hear them”.<sup>12</sup> Reports of personal crimes (rapes, murders), were over-reported and greatly exaggerated.<sup>13</sup> Though there was much property damage, there was actually far less than was reported by Southerners. In fact, Wheeler's Cavalry was sometimes as destructive as Sherman's army, in pillaging and destroying property.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, stories such as these relayed the image of a ruthless, murdering, raping army carving its way through Georgia, which was enough to both intimidate many Southerners, but also to infuriate and estrange them as well.

These perceived barbarians, for whom no act was too low, inspired fear, but also helped to ingrain the hate Southerners felt for Northerners, because of their perceived brutishness. Sherman himself was both a target and a reason for Southern hatred; by stoically marching through Georgia, Sherman had defeated and embarrassed a culture predicated on slavery.<sup>15</sup> In folklore, he was often described as single-handedly wreaking havoc in the South.<sup>16</sup> As author Lee B. Kennett describes in his book *Marching Through Georgia*, “In

folklore . . . the general took a hand in applying the torch. In 1875 a Georgia newspaper said he had set fire to a factory in Eatonton . . . At Sandersville he had ordered the burning of the entire town . . . At Ringgold he ordered the destruction of the Catoosa County courthouse”.<sup>17</sup> He was seen to have broken the rules of civilized conflict, and was therefore reviled in the Confederacy.<sup>18</sup> By marching through their land, and looting and destroying their property, the Union soldiers humiliated the Confederates' in a way they would not soon forget.<sup>19</sup> Sherman's total war tactic was perfectly executed to tear down the will of the Southerners, but it also humiliated them, and planted the seed of resentment.

A war that had already seemed to turn against the Southerners, had now become a direct attack on their land and property, and that was extremely scary for many of them. Most of the men were in the war, or at least not at home, so only women, children, and the elderly were left to defend their houses from General Sherman's soldiers. Thus, there was no real resistance, and the Union troops marched freely through Georgia.<sup>20</sup> Sue Sample, a South Carolinian woman staying with her sister-in-law in Georgia, declared that “I never was so frightened in all my life”, when Northern soldiers approached the plantation.<sup>21</sup> Alone, with only the slaves, Sample and her sister-in-law were at the mercy of the Union soldiers, which was the very nightmare of all Southern women, after hearing of the barbarism of the soldiers. By the time that Sherman reached Savannah, it had already been evacuated, as its citizens knew that any resistance would have been utterly ineffective.<sup>22</sup>

The psychological toll of the March was helpful to the war, but it also humiliated the Southerners. After being utterly destroyed by the Union soldiers, Confederates were even more estranged from the North than they had been before the March. This was for several reasons, the first of which being General Sherman himself. In Professors Paul Ashdown and Edward

Caudill's book, they write that "Sherman's tactics exacerbated Southern bitterness, as he denuded numerous myths at the center of the Old South fantasy, including the superiority of the Southern warrior, the romantic ideal of war, and the contented slave".<sup>23</sup> He killed fewer men than Grant did, but was hated far more than him, because of this March.

One of Sherman's worst offenses towards the South was his de-romanticizing of war. The Southern ideal of war, in which their cavalier, aristocrat, leaders vanquished the opponent in the traditional style of battle, was shattered by Sherman and his army. By conducting his battles with efficiency, craftiness, and his business-like manner, Sherman stripped war down from the dressed up, dramatic affair that the Confederacy had enjoyed. Additionally, everything that the South detested Sherman for, the North celebrated him for.<sup>24</sup> For example, a captured Union soldier named Samuel H. M. Byers wrote a poem glorifying Sherman's March with lines such as "When Sherman said, 'Boys, you are weary, But today fair Savannah is ours!'". This poem, which "prisoners enjoyed singing to mock their guards", became immensely popular among Union soldiers, and only increased Sherman's popularity and fame.<sup>25</sup> General Sherman became a symbol of the North for Confederates to hate.

Southerners viewed themselves as fighting a "Noble Cause", and thus as heroes, fighting for their rights against Northern oppressors. This was, of course, a romanticized (and fallacious) version of events which would be swept away by General Sherman, but this idea would persist in the South.<sup>26</sup> What was in reality a battle to protect slavery would afterwards be seen by Southerners as a stand against oppressors, and Confederate leaders would be (and some still are) revered by Southerners. The Union soldiers, marching through Georgia unimpeded, while happily singing songs, would have greatly offended these Confederates. "Hurray! Hurrah! We bring the jubilee! Hurrah! Hurrah! The flag that makes you free!" (Clay

Work).<sup>27</sup> This song, *Marching Through Georgia*, is a good example of how the Southerners were embarrassed by the Northerners. This clearly infuriated Southerners, and no doubt further alienated them from the Northern Union and cause.

Though Sherman's total war strategy worked all too well during the war, it undermined post-war efforts to unite the country. Reconstruction (1865-1877), the period after the Civil War in which the Union attempted to both punish the South for its secession, and reunite with it in order to keep the Union alive, was problematic, to say the least. The North tried to assimilate freedmen (former slaves) into society, which the South was quite unreceptive to, and the South was forced to change their entire culture, which had previously been based on slavery.<sup>28</sup> The Southern economy was devastated, and American leaders had to find a solution that both punished the South for its rebellion, which caused upwards of 600,000 American deaths, but also did not render the South completely powerless and submissive to the North, for this would only foster even more resentment from Southerners. Reconstruction was a very difficult period, and was made much more difficult by the alienation of the Southerners.

In his second inaugural address, President Abraham Lincoln wished for “malice toward none; with charity for all” in the March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1864 speech, but this was not entirely possible.<sup>29</sup> Not all Northerners were completely accepting of the job competition that freedmen provided, and many Southerners refused to accept blacks, even when they were elected to public office. Lincoln's statement was fruitless when followed by Jefferson Davis' post-war declaration that, “the Confederate Cause is not lost, it is only sleeping”.<sup>30</sup> This played into the idea of the Noble Cause, as, though the South had lost the war, it was not to be soon forgotten. Ashdown and Caudill address this when they write that “Ahead of the state, and the South, lay the Sturm und



Drang of Reconstruction. The war was over, but it would not recede quickly and quietly into the past".<sup>31</sup> The war had thrown the South into chaos, and its impact would be felt for years to come. Many Southerners still viewed themselves as fighting against the North, only now on the battlefield of Reconstruction politics.

Abraham Lincoln and his fellow Northern leaders had tried to make a plan that would provide for a smooth Reconstruction. Lincoln's Ten Percent plan, in which states were reinstated once ten percent of their voters signed an oath of loyalty, was part of the plan in order to smooth the transition from the enemy Confederacy to part of the Union (though it was not accepted by many of the radical Republicans). The 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments were also passed, abolishing slavery, and then providing citizenship and voting rights to freedmen.<sup>32</sup> These amendments were not accepted immediately by the Southern states, and it took much Northern intervention and persuasion in order for the states to ratify them. Part of the plan for Reconstruction was for blacks to be heavily involved in the South's politics.<sup>33</sup> If they were able to vote in the Southern elections, and even be elected to office, then the Southerners would be forced to accept them as part of their society, and it would be very difficult to legally discriminate against them because of the large amount of freedmen living in the South. Unfortunately, the Northern plan for Reconstruction unraveled quite quickly, and Southerners were able to resist it easily.

Lincoln's assassination was just the beginning of the problems for the North. His successor, Andrew Johnson, pardoned many of the Southern aristocrats, and some were even reelected to their posts in Congress. The Southern economic system, which had been based on slavery and plantations, was replaced by the share-cropping system, which was very similar to

slavery.<sup>34</sup> Blacks were once again oppressed, as white terrorist groups such as the KKK oppressed them, and prevented them from voting, holding office, and other liberties deemed to be above blacks.<sup>35</sup> Many Southerners, still resentful from the war, were simply intolerant of Northern policies, and did not wish to re-enter the Union, especially not on the terms that the North wished.

Southern resistance to the idea of Reconstruction can be directly tied to Sherman's systematic destruction of the Southern culture. Prior to his March, the South was not winning the war, but was surviving. Their aristocratic society, based on slavery and the upper class dominating the economy, was torn down by his March. Sherman's purpose for his March was simple: "freeing the unfree and humiliating the arrogant".<sup>36</sup> With his troops, Sherman sliced through Georgia, freeing the numerous slaves captive on the plantations there, and destroyed public buildings, railroads, factories, and plantations. In one fell swoop Sherman devastated an already economically troubled place, and destroyed the very fabric of their society.

After the Civil War, the South was absolutely devastated, which was helpful towards the North during the war, but was a major problem once the South rejoined the Union. Many of the upper class were reduced to poor, lower class citizens. In her account of the devastation in Georgia, Myrta Lockett Avery described how generals and colonels from the Confederate army were forced to sell goods to Sherman's soldiers in order to sustain themselves and their families. "Men of high attainments, . . . did whatever they could find to do and made merry over it", she wrote.<sup>37</sup> The effects of Sherman's March such as these demoralized many Southerners, during the war.<sup>38</sup> This demoralization was a benefit during the war, but whatever psychological advantages that the North gained from Sherman's March soon festered into resentment, bitterness, and animosity in the South.

By the time Reconstruction had started, these feelings were at the forefront of Southerners minds. No doubt they provided motivation for rejecting the North's attempts at Reconstruction, and its attempts to usher in tolerance into the South. In 1865, disgusted by Sherman's March and the Northern victories, Florida governor John Tyler swore that, "The Yankees have developed a character so odious that death would be preferable to reunion with them." He then subsequently returned to his home, and committed suicide.<sup>39</sup> While this was a far more dramatic reaction than those of most Southerners, it does help illustrate the revulsion upon which the South regarded the North with. Sherman's March was blatantly offensive to them. After being utterly demolished, thoroughly embarrassed, having all of their slaves freed, and having their culture torn apart by Sherman's troops, it is impossible not to draw the conclusion that Sherman's March enlarged the rift between the North and the South.

Sherman's March was devastatingly effective as an exercise in total war. The damage he caused in doing this was significant, and would prove to be very hard to fix: "In many Southern states the infrastructure was annihilated and to make matters worse the states were bankrupt. These harsh conditions were greatly exacerbated in the South, since crops and livestock were now scarce".<sup>40</sup> Southern Reconstruction was, in large part, rebuilding the damage done in the South, much of which had been done by Sherman's army. Rebuilding was also a large task because of how dependent the Southern economy was on plantations and farming, thus multiplying the impact of the destruction. The physical damage Sherman caused was a blow from which the South could not recover, as was the intimidation and demoralization that it caused. The humiliation inflicted at the hands of the Union soldiers was not easily forgettable, and Southerners became bitter at this "scorched earth" tactic that Sherman employed so easily on his own former countrymen. Ashdown and Caudill determined that

“[Sherman] had conducted a psychological war against the Confederacy, succeeding in that he humbled the would-be aristocrats as the rhetorical warriors fled before him. It was this humiliation that struck the soul of the Southern myth”.<sup>41</sup> Over time, this shame at being so thoroughly embarrassed combined with the pain of losing the war, and it became a malice towards the North in many Southerners that would later manifest itself in resistance to Reconstruction.

To an extent, this hatred was responsible for the re-election of Confederate leaders to Congress posts, the obstruction of the the North's attempts to pass the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> amendments, and the overt racism that would take place for many years in the South. The Civil War was seen by Southerners as an honorable battle. Even after the war, the Confederate leaders were revered, with monuments being made to them, streets named after them, and celebrated for their achievements.<sup>42</sup> That Sherman and his men would employ a strategy that seemed, to them, barbaric, and against the rules of their glamorized version of war, would be an affront like no other to the South. And the ease with which he delivered the knockout blow of the War, right in the heart of the Confederacy, with no outside support, was blasphemous to a society so built on its aristocratic, wealthy, military leaders.

The North's entire purpose for the Civil War was to prevent secession, and to remain a united nation. The very reason for starting the war (by provoking it, not by attacking first) was to prevent the North and the South from being divided, because otherwise both sides would fail. In this sense, Sherman's March was an extremely successful failure. General Sherman aimed to break the will and independence of the Southern people, which he did with ease, but his plan worked far too well. The March served as a wedge between the North and the South,

driving into Reconstruction and amplifying the divide between the two sides.

It is true that the sides would have been at odds even without Sherman's March. But did Sherman's March, just one small part of a long and bloody war, actually tangibly worsen the divide? Would not the South have resisted Northern attempts at reconciliation regardless? Both of these are legitimate points, but are easily disproved. Though the March was just one part of the war, the nature of it turned it into a symbolic campaign, which earned the hatred of the Confederates. Sherman, too, earned this wrath, write Ashdown and Caudill.

[Southerners] remembered not just destruction, but humiliation. He became a scapegoat of Southern wrath, the one to blame for what became of the Confederacy – from Reconstruction's failures, a regional malaise in an era of progress, to the simplistic stereotypes of lynch mobs and Klansmen, of sharecropper shacks built on plantation ashes.<sup>43</sup>

Because the March was such a controversial chapter in the War, it (along with Sherman) gained infamy in the South, and thus absorbed much of the blame. Without it the South would have been far less damaged, far less bitter, and potentially far more conciliatory.

Had Sherman employed different strategies, or had the March been led by someone different, then the humiliation, and anger would not have been as prevalent in the South as it was. In fact, it is entirely possible that another general could have done a better job than Sherman. “Had Thomas' [George Henry Thomas, a Union general] personal relationship with Grant permitted him to command Georgia in 1864, almost surely the Union victory would have been easier, quicker, and more complete”.<sup>44</sup> Another general would almost certainly not have shared Sherman's radical ideas about warfare, and thus would have employed entirely different strategies. If the South had been beaten by a Union army in their traditional fashion of two armies firing point blank at each other, then they would have been far more likely to respect the Union's strength, as opposed to being humiliated. Simply losing a series of battles to the Union

would have just been losses, not the utter devastation and humiliation that the March caused. The Southern military culture would not have been threatened, and the upper class' property would not have been destroyed, meaning that many of them would have remained wealthy. There would have been far less destruction, pillaging, and looting, as the Union army would not have been looking to destroy infrastructure, railroads, or other establishments. Had none of that happened, then there most likely would have been less resistance than there would have been otherwise. Though Sherman was a brilliant general, and his March was very effective, it is entirely possible that another tactic would have been more successful towards the North's goal of an undivided Union.

General Sherman, who led the famous and infamous March to the Sea, was an inflammatory figure, who aggravated the South, and exacerbated the divide between the North and the South. To be sure, Sherman's March was devastatingly effective in the Civil War, and was the death knell for the South, as it was catastrophic for the infrastructure and economy of parts of the Confederacy. The psychological havoc it wreaked, while effective, also worked negatively towards the North after the war. The campaign so devastated the people of the South that it was actually adverse towards the Northerners' goal of a united nation. Reconstruction was ineffective, and the North-South rift remained. Even today, it manifests itself in mutual disdain, and the Democrat-Republican conflict, which is virtually a North-South battle.

Word Count: 4,996 words

### Annotated Bibliography

Andrews, Eliza F. ""The War-Time Journal of a GeorgiaGirl, 1864-1865"" *DocSouth*. UNC-Chapel Hill, 1997. Web. 12 Feb. 2014.

This was the journal of a teenage girl (exact age not mentioned) who lived in Georgia during the time of Sherman's March. The girl, Eliza Frances Andrews, details hearing stories about Sherman and his army, seeing the damage he had done, and the other effects of the Civil War on the South. This journal was found on the website *DocSouth*, which stood for Documenting the American South, and is a part of University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Burns, Ken. "War Is All Hell." *The Civil War*. PBS. 27 Sept. 1990. Television.

This was extremely informative, very interesting, and in TV show format. Very well done, and had excellent, haunting music to go along with the informative show. This detailed the affect that Sherman's March had on the South, and focuses more on the people, and the damage that it caused, rather than the actual March. It seemed a little bit one-sided, as it appeared to sympathize with the Southerners, but was otherwise a solid and entertaining work.

Campbell, Jacqueline Glass. *When Sherman marched north from the sea: resistance on the Confederate home front*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003. Print.

This book helped to explain the Southern reception to Union troops invading their land, and helped show how women and slaves dealt with the soldiers. With many of the men off taking part in the war, only women and slaves were left at home, to meet Sherman's men. Though this book particularly focuses on after the March to the Sea, and when Sherman marched North to the Carolinas, it still provided a helpful look at soldier-civilian interactions.

Castel, Albert E.. *Decision in the West: the Atlanta Campaign of 1864*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1992. Print.

This was a very long, but very informative book. It detailed the Atlanta Campaign, which took place directly before the March to the Sea, and helped set the scene for the March. It also provided excellent background on Sherman in general, and was very informative in terms of the environment, and the other goings-on during the March.

Caudill, Edward, and Paul Ashdown. *Sherman's march in myth and memory*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008. Print.

This book, helps to go deeper into the March and explain and analyze many aspects of it. While parts of it were unhelpful, as they delved into how Sherman was later depicted in literature, and other such unhelpful topics. However, its introduction was actually incredibly helpful, and several other sections helped to analyze Sherman's image, and the less tangible aspects of the March. Ashdown and Caudill, both professors of journalism, are also fantastic writers, which was probably partially why I included several quotes from this book. It also, surprisingly, contained pieces of, and different viewpoints from some of my other books, which was helpful.

War Reconstruction and Aftermath." *Thomas' Legion*. N.p., n.d. Web. 14 Feb. 2005.  
<<http://thomaslegion.net/aftermath.html>>.

This website, though it seemed amateur and unbelievable, is actually a website designed specifically for "nonprofit educational purposes only", and is actually a massive website devoted to the Civil War. Its section on Reconstruction and Civil War aftermath was especially helpful, as it provided a clear synthesis of it and excellent examples to go along with it.

Clay Work, Henry. "Marching Through Georgia." 1865

This is a song, written by Clay Work to celebrate the March to the Sea. It became very famous, and was played so often that Sherman himself came to hate it, as it became synonymous with his name. It was useful to have, as the lyrics were very interesting to try to interpret and analyze.



Commager, Henry Steele. *The Blue and the Gray: the story of the Civil War as told by participants*. [1st ed. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1950. Print.

Primary source from *The Blue and the Gray* used:

John Chipman Gray, "Letter of John Chipman Gray to John Ropes, December 14, 1864"

This is an old book which covers the entire Civil War, but does it through the diaries and other writings of people who were there at the time. Needless to say, it was very interesting, and chock full of primary sources. Chipman Gray's letter was interesting, as he was a young, educated soldier, whose perspective on Sherman made for an interesting source.

Dickerson, Donna Lee. *The Reconstruction era: primary documents on events from 1865 to 1877*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2003. Print.

This was a good overview of Reconstruction, punctuated by primary documents from many different years to help tell the story. The beginning was the most useful part, as it had several important quotes from both Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln, and it helped to explain Reconstruction immediately after the Civil War.

"General Sherman Burns Atlanta: 1864." *Global Events: Milestone Events Throughout History*. Vol. 6: North America. Detroit: Gale, 2013. *U.S. History in Context*. Web. 11 Dec. 2013.

This was just a good overall source to help explain the environment, details, and aftermath of the march. It described the burning of Atlanta, and also the specifics of Sherman's army, and of the other important details.

Hanson, Victor Davis. "A Class War: How the Civil War Squashed Aristocracy in America." *The American Enterprise* 1 Mar. 2003: 32+. Print.

This source showed how Sherman in particular attacked the Southern aristocratic culture, and tore it down with his bare hands. It described his soldiers active desire to tear down Southern culture, and detailed how and why they were able to do it. It also showed the Southern aristocratic culture (pre-destruction, of course), and why it was able to be destroyed so easily by Sherman.

Kennett, Lee B. *Marching through Georgia: The Story of Soldiers and Civilians during Sherman's Campaign*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1995. Print.

This book was a full story of Sherman's time in Georgia, from the Atlanta Campaign, all the way through the March to the Sea. It was a helpful mix of analytical writing and quotes from Southerners and Union soldiers to help drive home all of its points.

McPherson, James M.. *Battle cry of freedom: the Civil War era*. New York: Oxford

University Press, 1988. Print.

This is the famous *Battle Cry of Freedom*, and was actually less dry than I thought it was going to be. While not a particularly gripping read, James McPherson is obviously extremely knowledgeable, and is one of, if not the best Civil War historians out there. It was a quite lengthy book, and its section on the March to the Sea was very thorough and detailed.

"Myrta Lockett Avary's Account of the Devastation of the South after the Civil War." *Gale U.S. History in Context*. Detroit: Gale, 2014. *U.S. History in Context*. Web. 22 Jan. 2014.

This primary source helped to show really how bad the situation was in the South after the Civil War, both economically and culturally. It showed the extent to which Sherman and his army destroyed the South, and how much damage they actually caused. Avary was a Southern woman, and she described her experiences with Southern high-ranking military officers being forced to sell food for a living, and other such drastic measures, as a result of the March to the Sea.

"The President's Plan for Reconstruction." *Reconstruction Era Reference Library*. Ed. Lawrence W. Baker, et al. Vol. 1: Almanac. Detroit: UXL, 2005. 73-96. *U.S. History in Context*. Web. 10 Jan. 2014.

This article detailed what was supposed to become of Reconstruction, and Lincoln's original plan for it. However, Lincoln was assassinated, so his plan was not used, and Andrew Johnson took power, which would prove to be a bad move for all parties involved, including America.

Sherman, William Tecumseh. "The March to the Sea." *The Civil War*. Woodbridge, CT: Primary Source Media, 1999. American Journey. *U.S. History in Context*. Web. 12 Dec. 2013.

Sherman was such an interesting man, that a primary source from him was extremely interesting, and the point of view it gave helped to give another view of the Northern troops. A blunt and to the point writer, he helped with concrete facts, and described the March very well.

"Reconstruction." *Gale Encyclopedia of U.S. Economic History*. Ed. Thomas Carson and Mary Bonk. Detroit: Gale, 1999. *U.S. History in Context*. Web. 22 Jan. 2014.

This was a simple overview of Reconstruction, which helped with the general background of it. It started with the end of the Civil War, and detailed all of Reconstruction. Though it was not flashy or incredibly interesting, it was very helpful due to its detail and general background information.

Trudeau, Noah Andre. *Southern Storm: Sherman's March to the Sea*. New York: Harper, 2008. Print.

Another book describing Sherman's March, this one was interesting because it had a great deal

of quotes from civilians, and their feelings on confederates. It was also, in parts, a fairly dry military novel, but was, for the most part, an excellent source which helped shape the picture of Sherman and his troops.

### Bibliographic Essay

I chose Sherman's March as a topic for my junior thesis because I have always enjoyed the Civil War. When I was younger, I visited Gettysburg and was fascinated by it, so that Sherman became my topic was not too surprising. My father was actually how I first heard of Sherman's March, as he recommended it to me as an interesting topic, and as a study in both warfare, but also in the North-South dynamic. I enjoyed doing some of the research, as some of the information was interesting to learn, and I am glad I know it. However, other parts of the research were incredibly boring, and I did not have as much fun. I am very glad I had my father to help me, as he was a helpful editor, even when it was late at night and both of us should

have been in bed.

This whole process has been interesting, but I am very glad that it is over. The dreaded **Junior Thesis** that everyone talks about and obsesses about is finally finished, and that is an awesome feeling to have. I have been hearing about it for years now, and to have it finished makes me feel free, especially with vacation just two days away. The process was, for the most part, as painless as it could have been, though there was plenty of self-inflicted pain through procrastination. Also, interestingly enough, though many other people did, and you are supposed to, I did not use my notecards or thesis nearly as much as I should have, or as would have been helpful to me. However, I'm kind of glad I did not use them, but I'm not sure why because they probably would have made this easier. I'm glad this project also made me go to the library, because I forgot how much I enjoy the Newton Free Library, even when I'm crawling around on my knees trying to find section 973.737 to find books on General Sherman. This was how I found a good amount of my sources, just by looking in the library, and I had a few good sources at my house, because my parents have plenty of old, boring books that mentioned Sherman and his March. Otherwise, the school's sources, such as Questia, were wonderful to use.

Writing the thesis was not that bad, even when I chose not to adhere strictly to my outline. If I really concentrated, it would come to me, and I seemed to be able to work well in blocks of time, and just crank out a good amount of work. The outline, on the other hand, I did not enjoy writing. For some reason, maybe because I could not get into the flow of it, because of its stop and start nature, I was not able to really attack the outline like I was the actual paper. I paid dearly for it, but now that I have a paper that I am actually kind of proud of, it all worked out in the end. I do wish all of the APUSH classes did the junior thesis at the same time,

however, because it was fun to compare theses (is that a word?), and to work together with students from other classes. It was also aggravating to be slaving away on my rough draft, while a friend of mine in another APUSH class was just finishing up his 20 notecards.

Writing this also made me regret some things. I wish I had a library card, Microsoft Word, and better self-control and time management skills (not in that order). All three of those things would have helped immensely: Open Office has formatting issues and is quite annoying, borrowing my parents' library cards was also not ideal, and it is currently 2:11 in the morning, so there's definitely some room for improvement in the time management department (although I am probably in better shape than some of my classmates).

It's very weird to think that I am done with my junior thesis. After all, it is the big paper of High School that everyone dreads, and now I am done with it. I would say I am definitely glad that I met with you three times (or it might have been four, I am not completely sure), but it was definitely very helpful. The difference between my final draft, and the paper that my outline would have turned into is startling. I'm also glad I took time to space out the work, so I wasn't doing everything in one night (my brother pulled an all-nighter for his thesis, so after seeing that I made sure to avoid over-procrastination). Doing a big paper like this was probably a good experience, but I'm glad it's over.