

Encyclopedia of the
AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

A Political, Social, and Military History

Volume I

David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler

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October 1862, Caldwell and his men scouted the area between Harper's Ferry and Charles Town and skirmished heavily with Confederate forces there. The following month, Caldwell led his men in the Army of the Potomac's move toward the Rappahannock River.

In the battle of Fredericksburg, Caldwell led his brigade against the heavily defended Confederate position on Marye's Heights. Very early in the advance, the brigade came under heavy fire, and Caldwell had difficulty rallying his men for the offensive. While in the midst of trying to turn a fleeing regiment, he was struck in the side by a Confederate bullet. He remained in command, however, and continued to urge his men on. As they pushed forward, he was hit again, this time in the left shoulder, and was forced to leave the field. Hancock commended Caldwell for his bravery in the battle.

Returning to duty in February 1863, Caldwell commanded his brigade in the battle of Chancellorsville, after which he was given command of the division when Hancock was elevated to II Corps commander. In the battle of Gettysburg, although Hancock had been sent ahead by George Gordon Meade to assess the situation in Gettysburg, the remainder of the corps, including Caldwell and his division, did not arrive on the field until early on 2 July. When Hancock was wounded the next day, Caldwell temporarily assumed command of the corps. He returned to his division when Gouverneur K. Warren assumed command of the corps. Periodically for the remainder of the year, Caldwell would assume command of the corps when Warren was away from headquarters.

In October 1863, Warren commended Caldwell for the thankless job he had done in guarding the corps' advance at Bristoe Station and then guarding the corps' retreat. Late in the year, Caldwell commanded his men in the Mine Run campaign. In early 1864, he led his men in demonstrations along the Rapidan River.

In March 1864, during the reorganization of the Army of the Potomac in anticipation of Ulysses S. Grant's campaign against Robert E. Lee, Caldwell was unceremoniously relieved of his divisional command and sent to Washington to serve on military boards. He engaged in that type of duty for the remainder of the war. In April 1865 he was selected as one of the officers to escort Abraham Lincoln's body back to Springfield, Illinois. Caldwell remained in the army until being mustered out of the volunteer service in 1866.

After the war, Caldwell returned to Maine, where he practiced law briefly. After serving as the adjutant general for the state, he embarked on a diplomatic career when he was appointed consul to Valparaiso, Chile. In 1874 he was appointed U.S. minister to Uruguay. He returned to the United States in 1882. He lived in Kansas for more than a decade before accepting another diplomatic post in 1897 as consul to Costa Rica. He

remained there for twelve years before retiring in 1909. He died on 31 August 1912 in Calais, Maine.

—David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler

See also Antietam, Battle of; Bristoe Station, Battle of; Fredericksburg, Battle of.

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CALHOUN, JOHN CALDWELL (1782–1850)

*U.S. senator, cabinet member,
presidential candidate*

John Caldwell Calhoun was born in 1782 near Abbeville, South Carolina. Calhoun's educational opportunities were limited, although they were advanced by the occasional tutelage offered by his brother-in-law, Reverend Moses Waddel. After his parents' death and a period of self-education, Calhoun entered Yale College, studying under the arch-Federalist Dr. Timothy Dwight. He proceeded to study law for two years under Judge Tapping Reeve at the Litchfield Law School, the most prominent institution devoted to legal training during this period. Returning to his native South Carolina to practice law, a pursuit he considered "both dry and laborious," Calhoun was married and served two terms in the South Carolina legislature before being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1811. As a congressman, Calhoun continued to embody republican principles and acquired a reputation as a moral statesman who regarded republicanism and patriotism as synonymous: he supported the War of 1812; he revised James Madison's original national bank proposal and backed limited internal improvements; and he continued to praise a free economy and a regime founded on "reason and equity" that was surrounded by a world of "fraud, violence or accident."

As many have noted, Calhoun supported "national" legislation during his early career, encouraging scholars to inappropriately divide his life into stages based on his perceived degree of attachment to a centralized political order. The rising protectionist spirit in America would also affirm Calhoun's wisdom in supporting the 1816 tariff, even though he held subsequent tariffs in disdain. In 1817, President Monroe asked Calhoun to assume the helm at the War Department, where he served until 1825.

Calhoun was generally considered too philosophical for such a practical post, but he accepted the appointment out of a republican sense of duty. In the course of two terms in office, Calhoun completely reorganized and



revitalized the War Department and its staff, resolved its financial problems resulting from the War of 1812, and demonstrated a new, more compassionate approach to Native American affairs. Calhoun also began reforming West Point through a new spirit of openness in terms of admissions and administrative procedures. Calhoun has been described as the ablest war secretary the government had before Jefferson Davis in 1853.

A broad spectrum of supporters encouraged Calhoun's candidacy for president in 1824 against his fellow cabinet members William H. Crawford and John Quincy Adams, Speaker of the House Henry Clay, and war hero and newly elected senator Andrew Jackson. Initially entering the presidential field, Calhoun realized he lacked adequate support and withdrew after Pennsylvania nominated Andrew Jackson. Accepting the vice-presidential nomination, Calhoun was elected by a large majority. The results in the presidential contest between Jackson and Adams were inconclusive in terms of the electoral and popular vote, and the election was thrown into the House of Representatives, where Jackson's nemesis Clay served as speaker. In an unusual series of events, Clay came to Adams's aid, with the House vote securing the election for Adams. The president-elect proceeded to appoint Clay secretary of state. Many Americans considered the supposed arrangement between Clay and Adams a "corrupt bargain." Calhoun believed the "corrupt bargain" had disrupted the balance between preserving liberty and assuming power explicitly reserved to the people; "improperly acquired" power would doubtless be "improperly used," he opined. Calhoun and either Adams or his representative engaged in a pseudonymous debate about the sources of political power. Calhoun began to separate himself from what he considered to be Adams's abuses of office, and he supported General Andrew Jackson in 1828. It was as part of this ticket, later known as the Democratic Party, that Calhoun was elected vice president in 1828.

The falling apart of the political union between Calhoun and Jackson is one of the most remarkable events in American politics. Calhoun had hoped Jackson would assume the republican political mantle, but his expectations were not fulfilled. Several controversies were ignited that raised questions about the corruptibility of the administration. The most important of these concerned Mrs. Margaret Eaton, wife of Jackson's dear friend and secretary of war, John H. Eaton. Out of a sense of propriety, Mrs. Calhoun and most ladies in Washington refused to receive her into their homes. After John Eaton made the controversy public, Calhoun was forced to respond; he stated that his wife's actions amounted to a moral stance and not an act of snobbery, as it had been called.

As a result of the dispute with Jackson over the

protective tariff, Calhoun resigned as vice president and was elected to the Senate. In an attempt to moderate the crisis posed by tariff-related concerns and the "Force Bill" in 1832, Calhoun questioned the prospect of preserving the union by force, and not relying on the "harmonious aggregate of the States." Up to this point in his career as a statesman, Calhoun had made few statements regarding slavery. Troubled by the increasing influence of abolitionism and the rise of sectional conflict, Calhoun would devote the remainder of his life to defending the South and attempting to avoid conflict. Retiring from the Senate in 1843, he unsuccessfully pursued the presidency for the last time. In 1844, Calhoun was appointed secretary of state.

Returning to the Senate in 1845, Calhoun served as a thoughtful critic of the war with Mexico, and he suggested that the conflict would encourage disharmony between the North and South. In 1844, Calhoun had helped contain the truly revolutionary Bluffton movement, composed of his fellow South Carolinians. Many leading South Carolina politicians threatened drastic responses to a troublesome new tariff and the questionable status of Texas. Calhoun's success at moderating the conflict demonstrated both his restraint in a crisis situation and his lack of control over the politicians often described as "Calhounites" due to their intimate ties to the statesman.

Published after his death, Calhoun's two treatises on political theory and American constitutionalism, *Disquisition* and *Discourse*, demonstrate his hope that America could avoid the pending conflict. Calhoun's persistent concern about the unequal treatment of the South would, he feared, lead to increased regional tensions and to civil war. His last years were spent attempting to unify the South and avoid strife. On 31 March 1850, Calhoun died in Washington, D.C. In death, Calhoun became a source of inspiration for the Confederate government, its leaders, and the South. Calhoun's understanding, albeit imperfect, of restraint within political order remains one of the most important characteristics of his political thought and his achievement as a statesman. In Calhoun's interpretation, the interposing and amending power of the states implicit in the Constitution could only augment authentic popular rule by allowing for a greater diffusion of authority. Calhoun's purpose was the preservation of the original balance of authority and the fortification of the American political system against the obstacles it faced.

—H. Lee Cheek, Jr.

See also South Carolina.

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campaign. Canby reorganized the division, and also was instrumental in planning and implementing the Union assault on Mobile, Alabama, in April 1865, which led to the fall of the city on 12 April and also the capture of Montgomery on 27 April. Following Mobile, Canby was again promoted, this time to the command of the Departments of the Gulf and Arkansas, although his successes in Alabama did not garner the public praise they might have, had they not come on the heels of Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House on 9 April. Despite the overshadowing of his accomplishments, as well as his being severely wounded by Confederate guerrilla forces during the Mobile campaign, Canby continued at his post for the remainder of 1865, and eventually accepted the surrender of the last remaining Confederate field armies under Generals Edmund Kirby Smith and Richard Taylor.

Following the war, Canby continued his military career with the permanent rank of brigadier general in the regular service. He served on an advisory staff in Washington and on Reconstruction duty in the South before returning to the west in 1870. Canby finished out his career in the Pacific Northwest as commander of the Department of the Columbia and later the Division of the Pacific. It was while serving in this capacity that Canby was attacked and killed by a group of Modoc Indians under the leadership of the northern California war chief Captain Jack during a meeting to renew peace negotiations on 11 April 1873.

—Daniel P. Barr

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CANE HILL, BATTLE OF (28 November 1862)

In the fall of 1862, Union brigadier general James G. Blunt's division of the Army of the Frontier was camped near Maysville in the extreme northwestern corner of Arkansas. Seventy miles to the south at Fort Smith on the Arkansas River was Confederate major general Thomas C. Hindman and a sizable army. Hindman ordered Brigadier General John S. Marmaduke to take his cavalry division over the Boston Mountains and harass Blunt. If Marmaduke succeeded in fixing Blunt in place, Hindman intended to move north with the remainder of his army and attack Blunt's isolated division. The nearest Union reinforcements were seventy miles away near Springfield, Missouri.

Blunt refused to cooperate by remaining inert. When

he learned that a Confederate force was slowly winding through the mountains in his direction, he advanced thirty-five miles in two days and struck the vanguard of Marmaduke's column near the village of Boonsboro, later known as Cane Hill. Surprised and outnumbered about 5,000 to 2,000, Marmaduke retreated. Brigadier General Joseph O. Shelby's cavalry brigade formed the rear guard and fought a series of delaying actions that allowed the rest of the division and its train to withdraw into the Boston Mountains. The battle was actually a nine-hour running fight that swirled steadily southward across twelve miles of rolling terrain. The fighting ended when the Confederates reached the safety of the narrow mountain passes. As was generally the case in mounted engagements, losses were comparatively light for the numbers involved: there were at least forty-one Union and forty-five Confederate casualties.

The next day Marmaduke rejoined Hindman on the Arkansas River. Blunt returned to Cane Hill and remained there, despite being more than one hundred miles south of the nearest supporting force and only thirty miles north of Hindman's army. Shrugging off Marmaduke's tactical defeat at Cane Hill, Hindman believed that Blunt had played into his hands by moving deeper into Arkansas. He set in motion a second operation to destroy Blunt that resulted in the battle of Prairie Grove on 7 December 1862.

—William L. Shea

See also Blunt, James G.; Hindman, Thomas C.; Shelby, Joseph O.

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CANNON, WILLIAM (1809–1865)

Unionist, Delaware governor

Born in Bridgeville, Delaware, to Josiah and Nancy Cannon on 15 March 1809, William Cannon received an elementary-school education but never attended high school. Cannon entered into a career in business and demonstrated considerable ability for commercial ventures. Cannon became wealthy as a merchant and landowner and maintained a special interest in the production of fruit. Within a few years, he married Margaret N. B. Laws.

As part of a family devoted to the Democratic Party, Cannon retained an keen interest in politics. Cannon was active in promoting the welfare of his native Sussex County, and he encouraged the construction of the Delaware Railroad into the area.



As a Democrat, he was won sequential elections to the Delaware house of representatives in 1844 and 1846 and served as state treasurer in 1851. Within a decade, Cannon had established himself as a prominent politician in Delaware. In 1861, he was selected as one of his state's five delegates to the Peace Conference in Washington. He supported the Crittenden Compromise as well as other measures to ameliorate tensions between regions. When all measures dedicated to preserving the Union appeared to fail, Cannon began to support the Republican Party. It is possible that in addition to his defense of union, he was also disappointed with the Democratic Party's inability to facilitate his ambition to become governor.

In November 1862, he was the Union Party's candidate for governor. While the Democrats won a majority in the state legislature, Cannon was elected by a small majority and was inaugurated in January 1863. His opponent protested the presence of Federal troops at polling booths during the election and suggested the Lincoln administration's decree to send troops was an attempt to help Cannon. Upon taking office, Cannon appointed Nathaniel B. Smithers as secretary of state. Smithers was a confidant who would have a great influence on Cannon and perhaps serve as his chief political advisor and speech writer during the remainder of his life. From the earliest moments of his governorship, Cannon was an ardent supporter of preserving the federal union. In his inaugural address he urged more federal control and proclaimed his steadfast support for the union.

Throughout his governorship, Cannon was at odds with the legislature, which was under the control of the Democratic Party. At one point, the legislature passed a law intended to outlaw federal arrests within the confines of Delaware. Cannon responded by failing to recognize the act. He suggested that following the order would weaken the state's devotion to the union. On 1 March 1865, Cannon died in office, having served just over two years. He was succeeded by Gove Saulsbury, the presiding officer of the Delaware Senate and a Democratic stalwart.

—Lee Cheek

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CAREY, HENRY CHARLES

(1793-1879)

Publisher, writer, and political economist

Henry C. Carey emerged as the leading advocate of the American free laborer in the years immediately preceding the Civil War. Through his texts on political economy, numerous pamphlets, and newspaper articles, Carey promoted the policies of high

tariffs and an abundant money supply as the means for "elevating and equalizing the condition of man throughout the world." The oldest son of Irish political refugee and protectionist Mathew Carey, Carey inherited his father's deep disdain for the British rigid class system and free trade policies.

Born and raised in Philadelphia, Carey began working in his father's publishing house at the age of nine. He eschewed formal education, preferring to read and work. By the age of twenty-four he became a partner in Carey, Lea & Carey, one of the leading publishing houses in the country. In 1835, he wrote his first treatise, *Essay on the Rate of Wages*, in which he celebrated U.S. exceptionalism and advocated free trade.

After his first book, Carey left the publishing business and became a full-time political economist. He published his three-volume *Principles of Political Economy* in 1837. He countered the primary theses of the two pillars of economic theory of this period, David Ricardo and Thomas R. Malthus. Carey rejected Ricardo's belief that land lost value and productive capacity over time; instead, Carey posited that the labor expended to make land arable and fecund increased its value and, ultimately, the wealth of the nation. Similarly, Carey countered Malthus's dark predictions that population increases led to a decrease in the quality of life. Instead, Carey believed that the economy of the United States was boundless and would continue to grow. Carey's optimism for continued U.S. prosperity was based on his faith in democratic government, the guaranteed right of private ownership of property, low taxes, and the high U.S. wages, contrasted with those in Europe.

The economic downturn of 1837 forced Carey to reappraise many of his tenets. Over the next several years he examined the tariff history of the United States and concluded that high tariffs correlated with periods of prosperity. In 1848, he published his revised views on tariffs in *Past, Present, and Future*, and renounced his free trade stance. He collaborated with *New York Tribune* editor Horace Greeley, writing a plethora of articles and editorials on the virtues of protective tariffs. Carey proclaimed high tariffs as the best means for protecting the wages of U.S. employees by decreasing the competition that they faced from goods produced abroad by lower paid workers. Carey revealed his distrust for merchants and financiers, instead extolling the virtues of producers, including farmers, laborers, and manufacturers. He believed that producers, working together "in harmony" in small towns throughout the country, formed the basis for future prosperity.

Carey's conversion to protectionism came at an inopportune moment. The positive effects of the Walker Tariff of 1846, the discovery of gold deposits in California, and the beginnings of the industrial boom combined to create a decade of prosperity. Carey



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In January 1865 Kentucky Radical Republicans endorsed Rousseau in the race for a seat in the United States Senate, but James Guthrie defeated him. Rousseau won a seat in the United States House of Representatives and resigned from the army in November 1865. His congressional tenure was controversial as he ignored his radical supporters, supported Andrew Johnson, became more conservative, and protested the Freedmen's Bureau Bill and other legislation he considered too extreme. He served on the Committee on Military Affairs and skillfully debated how Reconstruction should be pursued in the South, criticizing Radical Republicans for their harsh plans and severing ties with them. Rousseau was enraged by congressmen who had not fought in the war, but nevertheless vowed vengeance against the South. When he beat Iowa congressman Josiah B. Grinnell in the face with a cane, the House censured him. Although his colleague Thaddeus Stevens encouraged him to continue his work, Rousseau chose to resign on 21 July 1866. After explaining his behavior to his constituents, Rousseau was reelected to fill his empty seat and remained in the Senate through 3 March 1867. President Johnson rewarded Rousseau for his war service with a regular army commission as brigadier general with the brevet rank of major general. He was placed in charge of occupation troops in the department of Louisiana, where he was known for his empathy toward citizens. Rousseau died in New Orleans, on 7 January 1869. Buried in Arlington National Cemetery, he is also memorialized with a monument in Louisville's Cave Hill Cemetery.

—Elizabeth D. Schafer

See also Buell, Don Carlos; Kentucky; Perryville, Battle of.

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RUFFIN, EDMUND

(1794–1865)

Southern nationalist and agriculturist

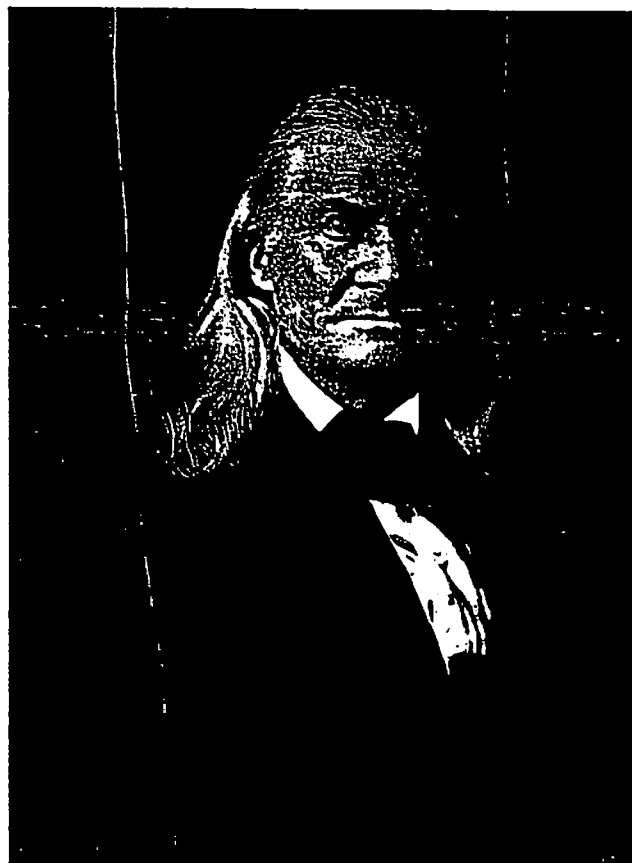
The son of George Ruffin and Jane Lucas, Ruffin was born into the antebellum Southern planter class. His early years were spent in Prince George's County, Virginia, where he was educated by a private tutor. After the death of Edmund's mother, Ruffin's father married Rebecca Cocke. While isolated for long periods during his youth, Ruffin became an avid reader and mastered numerous great works of literature before reaching his teens.

At sixteen Ruffin entered the College of William and Mary. In less than a year he withdrew from the College, as he was more attracted to romance than academic

pursuits. While in Williamsburg he met Susan Travis, the daughter of a well-established local family, and they were married in 1812. Answering the call to military service in the War of 1812, Ruffin enlisted but never engaged in combat. Stationed in Norfolk, he complained of constant military drills and procedures. After six months Ruffin was allowed to return home and he assumed control over his ancestral plantation, Coggin's Point.

Confronting health afflictions on a personal level and soil infertility on a professional level, Ruffin began to ponder the means of revitalizing his mind and his plantation. As a lover of literary pursuits, he combined his writing and agricultural interests, as well as his experimental bent, in an effort to resolve the dilemma over soil infertility. Following years of experimentation, he published an account of his successes and became the publisher of the *Farmers Register*, a respected farm publication. In his successful transitions from agricultural pursuits to journalism and back to farming, Ruffin established himself as a leading student of soil science and American agriculture.

Ruffin's interests eventually turned from agriculture to politics. Although elected to the Virginia state senate in 1823, he did not complete his term of office. Ruffin apparently recognized that he was better suited as a



Edmund Ruffin (Library of Congress)



writer and speaker than as a public servant. Earlier in life he had asserted that slavery was an evil, but one that could be eliminated over time. As the years and regional tensions progressed, Ruffin came to endorse the necessity of slavery. As a critic of all tariff measures, he claimed such efforts were a "monstrous anomaly in free government." Ruffin accepted the position of South Carolina in the Nullification Crisis, which affirmed his devotion to state authority. He argued that a state was allowed to assume such a course of action only if the goal was to protect the state's citizens and the Constitution. Recovering this necessary responsibility of the states in relation to the central government might make decision making less efficient, but would allow it to gain vastly in moral power. In Ruffin's assessment, the interposing and amending power of the states implicit in the Constitution could only augment authentic popular rule by allowing for a greater diffusion of authority.

As tensions increased, Ruffin published many articles endorsing the Southern position on slavery, abolitionism, and other disputed concerns. Disgruntled with the inactivity of his native Virginia, Ruffin moved to Charleston in 1861, where on 12 April 1861 the sixty-seven-year-old Ruffin was allowed to fire the first shot, a 64-pound Columbiad, against Fort Sumter. Although the controversy over who actually fired the initial shot remains, Ruffin was received as a patron of the secessionist cause. After Virginia seceded, he returned to his native state and was a tireless defender of the South until the surrender at Appomattox. Ruffin became increasingly despondent, wishing that he could be "buried as usually were our brave soldiers who were slain in battle." On 17 June 1865 Ruffin committed suicide by shooting himself.

—H. Lee Cheek, Jr.

See also *Fire-eaters*.

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RUGER, THOMAS HOWARD

(1833–1907)

Union general

Born in Lima, New York, to Jefferson Ruger and Maria Hutchins Ruger, Thomas Howard Ruger moved with his family to Janesville, Wisconsin, when he was an adolescent. In 1850 he accepted an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy. He graduated third of forty-six in the class of 1854. Ruger remained in the army only one year before resigning to study law. For the five years after his admission to the bar before the outbreak of the Civil War, Ruger practiced law in Janesville. With the commencement of hostili-

ties, he accepted a commission as the lieutenant colonel of the 3d Wisconsin Infantry.

He was promoted to colonel of the regiment in September 1861. At the time the regiment was stationed in Maryland, and in the fall of 1861, Ruger spent much of his time suppressing Confederate activity around Frederick. Later in the year, Ruger and his regiment came under the command of Nathaniel P. Banks and the Department of the Shenandoah. In the spring of 1862 they fought under Banks in the Shenandoah campaign against Stonewall Jackson. They continued to serve under Banks at Cedar Mountain in August 1862.

At Antietam, Ruger commanded a brigade and was wounded in the battle fighting on the Union right in the cornfield. He was unable to participate in the Fredericksburg campaign because of his injuries. In the spring of 1863 he was promoted to brigadier general with a date of rank of 29 November 1862. In April 1863 he was given command of a brigade of Alpheus Williams's division in XII Corps. He fought at Chancellorsville and led his brigade in pursuit of Robert E. Lee in June 1863. On the morning of 2 July, Ruger assumed command of the division when Williams became corps commander. Positioned on the barb of the fishhook, Ruger so effectively led his men through the battle that he received a brevet promotion to brigadier general in the regular army.

In August 1863 Ruger and his brigade were sent to New York City to restore calm in the wake of the draft riots there. The city was about to resume drawing names for the draft, and the government had learned its lesson from July and wanted plenty of troops visible on the streets of the city. In the fall Ruger was sent from New York to the Army of the Cumberland in Tennessee, where he was headquartered at Tullahoma dealing with Confederate guerrilla raids. In the Atlanta campaign he commanded a brigade in Alpheus Williams's division, XX Corps. He fought in all the major engagements of that campaign, and after the fall of the city, he was sent back to Tennessee to serve under John M. Schofield in the Army of the Ohio. He distinguished himself at the battle of Franklin, where he commanded a division of XXIII Corps. Schofield commended him for bravery in that battle and recommended that he receive a brevet promotion to major general.

In December 1864, Ruger was sent to Murfreesboro, Tennessee, where he patrolled from the town looking for Confederate guerrilla groups. In February 1865, Ruger and his division accompanied Schofield and XXIII Corps to Alexandria, Virginia, where they embarked for the North Carolina coast to aid William T. Sherman in his Carolina campaign. Ruger was present at the surrender of Joseph E. Johnston's army in April 1865.

After the surrender, Ruger remained in North Carolina and temporarily commanded XXIII Corps in June 1865.



however, urged patience, and he devised a plan that he believed would create an overpowering advantage for the North while limiting the loss of life. It also reflected the realization that in 1861 the North lacked the troops necessary to mount multiple land offensives to conquer thousands of square miles of enemy territory. Though initially rejected, the North eventually enacted the major components of the Anaconda Plan.

In the summer of 1861, with growing pressure from the administration to act, Scott reluctantly approved an advance in northern Virginia that led to the battle of First Bull Run. A proponent of thorough training and preparation, Scott saw his fears realized when the inexperienced Union troops were defeated and sent running back to Washington. His caution along with his old age gradually caused administration officials to look elsewhere for military counsel. George McClellan, the new commander of the Army of the Potomac, soon began to replace Scott as the administration's chief adviser. By autumn the rigors of the job were more than Scott could manage. At over 300 pounds he suffered from gout, dropsy, and rheumatism; he was unable to mount a horse or to climb stairs unassisted. Because of his failing health, Scott resigned on 31 October.

Although he left public life, Scott's influence on Civil War generalship remained. Many of his subordinates, now commanding their own armies, executed turning movements at places like Chancellorsville, Pea Ridge, and the Wilderness that were reminiscent of those carried out at Cerro Gordo, Contreras, and other battlefields of the Mexican-American War. And McClellan's Peninsula campaign (1862) was remarkably similar to the Mexico City campaign. Scott published his *Memoirs* in 1864, and he died at West Point in 1866.

—Timothy D. Johnson

See also Anaconda Plan; Lee, Robert Edward; McClellan, George Brinton.

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SECESSION

The verb "to secede" is derived from the Latin *secedere*, meaning "to withdraw" and referring to any act of withdrawal. Originally introduced in the seventeenth century as a concept of political theory, secession assumed the existence of the modern state, as well as the possibility of dismemberment of that state. In an American context, secession has been understood as the withdrawal by the Southern states from the Federal Union following the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency in November 1860.

The structure of the political system, the original

intentions of some framers of the Constitution, and the citizenry's prevailing understanding of the political order during the early Republic encouraged a diversity of opinions regarding the fundamental nature of the Union. Concerns arose in many quarters during the Constitutional Convention and ratification process, especially among the anti-Federalists, who feared that an overbearing national government would assume the authority of the states. Article Two of the Articles of Confederation had contained explicit provisions for protecting states, initiating a system whereby "each state retains its sovereignty." Various early state constitutions included provisions outlining the primacy of states in the confederal arrangement, often at the expense of a unified political order. The most popular form of amendment requested during the state ratification conventions for the Federal Constitution and proposed to the First Congress concerned a reserved powers clause. The defenders of the Constitution argued that such a provision was unnecessary. James Madison suggested in *The Federalist* No. 39 that each state was "a sovereign body" only "bound by its voluntary act" of ratification. Other Federalists, including James Wilson, Alexander Hamilton, and John Marshall at the Virginia ratifying convention, held that such a proposal was already present in the Constitution and that the new government would only have the powers delegated to it. Opposition to, and suspicion of, the proposed Constitution on the grounds that it would infringe upon the privileged status of the states was widespread. The defenders of state authority viewed the states as the repository of reserved power, and many believed that states were invested with an equal, and perhaps superior, capacity to judge infractions against the federal government. The most significant assurances to this effect came in the Virginia ratifying convention from George Nicholas and Edmund Randolph. As the spokesmen for the committee that reported the instrument of ratification, they noted that the Constitution would only have the powers "expressly" delegated to it. If Federalists disagreed with the stress on state authority, they generally viewed a reserved power clause as innocuous, and Madison included such a provision among the amendments he introduced in 1789.

In the first Congress, Elbridge Gerry, a founder and anti-Federalist elected to the House of Representatives, introduced a proposal reminiscent of the Articles of Confederation, leaving to the states all powers "not expressly delegated" to the federal government. Gerry's proposal was defeated, in part due to concerns about the similarity between the language of his amendment and the Articles. Others who took a states' rights or strict constructionist view of the Constitution, including Thomas Jefferson, persisted in defending state power. Before ratification of the Tenth Amendment, Jefferson



advised President Washington that incorporating a national bank was unconstitutional, basing his opinion on the Tenth Amendment. Jefferson would later compose the Kentucky Resolutions, which defended the states as the sovereign building blocks of the American nation and noted that the states retained a means of protection when threatened. To describe the process of state action, Jefferson supplied a new term, *nullification*, to note the immediacy and severity of the "remedy" necessary to prohibit the federal government from absorbing state authority.

Defenders of the federal government, sometimes described as nationalists or loose constructionists, argued that the Congress must assume more power if the needs of the country were to be met. Most prominent among the advocates of increased federal authority was Alexander Hamilton. For Hamilton, the explicit protection of state prerogatives, or providing a mechanism against secession, was unnecessary, as the political order already protected states. The Constitution, according to the nationalists, already contained provisions for the exercise of federal power, including the "necessary and proper" and "supremacy" clauses.

The Supreme Court addressed the controversy in its *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) decision. The high Court upheld the constitutionality of a national bank, even though such an institution was not specified in the Constitution. In dismissing a strict delineation of state and federal authority, the Court under the leadership of John Marshall extended the powers of Congress at the expense of the states. On the other hand, the Marshall Court affirmed the excepted notion that police powers belonged exclusively to the states. Under Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney (1836–1864), the Court assumed more of a strict constructionist posture.

The emerging defense of state authority, and ultimately the secession of the South, was an interpretation of the American political experience, with an emphasis upon the perceived original dispersion of authority, sovereignty, and restraint within the Constitution of 1787. According to this interpretation, offered by John C. Calhoun and Robert Y. Hayne among others, the original system was predicated upon reserving the states' sphere of authority, while delegating sufficient authority for particular and limited responsibility to the general government. For Calhoun, this original diffusion, buttressed by a prudent mode of popular rule, was the primary achievement of American politics. A necessary corollary to his understanding of the regime's historical evolution was the need to perpetuate the original vision of the Union for posterity's sake: "The Union: Next to our liberty, the most dear; may we all remember that it can only be preserved by respecting the rights of the states and distributing equally the benefit and the burden of Union," urged Calhoun. If, as Calhoun

suggested, America had "departed" from its "original character and structure," a recovery of the older design was necessary.

For the defenders of states' rights and secession, the Declaration of Independence initiated the legitimate delineation of state and federal authority and a properly constituted mode of popular rule through first articulating the primary nature of the Union. According to this view, which was shared by many Southerners, the Declaration illuminated and explained the foundations of the American republic as also resting upon a political compact. In contradistinction to a social compact, a political compact did not unite individuals or governments. Instead, such an agreement formed a republic with the same equality of rights among the states composing the union, as among the citizens composing the states themselves. The Declaration encouraged a political compact that had developed with "time and experience" into a model of political and social stability. The Declaration preserved the locus of authority within each individual state, and allowed for secession when government "becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it." For many Americans, the Declaration of Independence expressed the foundation for popular rule and a territorial republic that came to fruition in the Constitution. While the Declaration appropriately described the status of "Free and Independent States" as intrinsic to the republic, the document also confirmed the conceptional thesis of secessionist political theory: the states "ordained" or created the Republic. If the Declaration of Independence supplied the prologue to the original design for the Republic, it was the Articles of Confederation, the first American embodiment of the design, that incorporated this insight into the fundamental law of the regime. For Southerners, the provisions and language of the Articles served as an authentic precursor to the American Constitution. The Constitution of 1787 was incomprehensible without first assimilating the defense of states' rights contained in the Articles. Drafted in stages from 1776 to 1777, the Articles extended and revised the Declaration's ennobling of diffused authority and the delineation of state autonomy, while establishing popular rule based upon the deliberative, decentralized, community-centered participation of the citizenry. As in the case of the Declaration, the Articles perpetuated the original design for the territorial division of the country, into independent and sovereign states, on which the secessionist argument would later rest.

By strengthening the foundations laid by the Articles, the Constitution provided the final and most profound manifestation of the secessionist view's defense of popular rule and the diffusion of political authority. While the Declaration and Articles contributed to this



evolving discernment, the Constitution presented the definitive maturation from a confederacy to a federal government, resting upon the authentic, organic, and delineatory manifestations of the states, although the citizenry retained final and complete political authority. Such a constitution, in Calhoun's view, was most appropriately identified as a concurrent constitution because it served primarily as an exemplification of the states' role in preserving the regime. The Constitution also provided a careful "enumeration" and "specification" of power consigned to the general government. In other words, by forming a concurrent foundation for the political order, it was argued that in times of crisis the states should exert their concurrent prerogative and repossess certain delegated power from the federal government if needed and in accord with the Constitution—especially in situations in which the federal government had usurped power from the states. Through the adoption of the Constitution, the American people accepted a "joint supplemental government" that retained the states as the primary voice of the people.

In situations in which the general government and the states were in conflict, each possessed a "mutual negative" on the other's actions, according to the secessionist argument. Defenders of secession often cited the record of the Virginia ratifying convention and the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution as primary evidence of the doctrine. The Virginia convention provided, along with its New York counterpart, the most erudite and complete commentary on the interpretation of the fundamental law besides the records of the Constitutional Convention itself. In situations of disputed authority, the states possessed the right of self-protection, with secession serving as the ultimate manifestation of such a response.

Struggles over the basis of the Union arose after the ratification of the Constitution, including Jefferson's and Madison's response to President John Adams and the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. Defenders of state and national supremacy often changed positions depending on their political needs. In an effort to reduce the hardships incurred by the War of 1812, some New Englanders held a convention in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1814, as New England states were threatening secession. The first debate over secession in America took place in New England, not in the South.

The ensuing crises over Missouri statehood (1819–1820) and nullification (1832–1833) increased secessionist tensions, but these problems were resolved by compromise. The problem of slavery, compounded by the rise of abolitionism, would intensify the conflict. After Southerners were able to defeat the Wilmot Proviso, the Compromise of 1850 made resolution of the slavery problem more problematic. In 1854 Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, attempting to garner

support from Southern congressmen for his legislation that would organize the territories of Kansas and Nebraska, reopened the issue of extending slavery into new areas. The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act unified resistance to slavery in the North, and by 1854 the Republican Party was dominant in the region. The election of James Buchanan to the presidency in 1856 and the ill-fated ruling of the Supreme Court in the *Dred Scott* case in 1857, widened the sectional divide.

Lincoln's election in 1860 galvanized Southern attitudes in favor of secession. In Lincoln the South saw a threat to its established way of life and fundamental rights. The success of a minority political party, the Republicans, in electing a president was a source of some disdain as well. Agitated by the more radical advocates of secession, known as "fire-eaters," and the failure of other efforts to ameliorate the tension, South Carolina withdrew from the Union, having passed a secession ordinance on 20 December 1860. South Carolina was followed in quick succession by Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas. After the incident at Fort Sumter in April 1861, and Lincoln's call for troops, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina adopted secession ordinances and eventually joined the Confederacy.

—H. Lee Cheek, Jr.

See also Calhoun, John Caldwell; Election of 1860; Fire-eaters; Taney, Roger Brooke; Wilmot Proviso.

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SECESSIONVILLE, BATTLE OF (16 June 1862)

Federal plans to occupy Charleston, South Carolina, in June 1862 faltered after Union troops landed on James Island. About 9,000 Federals managed to take up positions along the Stono River on the southwestern part of the island, but delays allowed Confederate reinforcements to construct such strong fortifications that Major General David Hunter ordered no general engagement be mounted until he explicitly authorized it. Aside from the Confederate defenses, the Southern commander on James Island was Brigadier General Nathan "Shanks" Evans, a veteran of Bull Run and Ball's Bluff—and he was not to be trifled with.

Evans's Union counterpart on the island was



lieutenant on 6 June 1848, as well as two earlier brevets for gallantry. Serving at various posts in California, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Kansas during the next thirteen years, he made captain in 1855.

The outbreak of the Civil War found Captain Steele at Fort Leavenworth on the troubled Kansas-Missouri border. He received a promotion to major and led a composite battalion of regulars at Wilson's Creek, 10 August 1861. On 23 September, Steele joined the volunteer service as colonel of the 8th Iowa Volunteer Infantry, and he was upgraded to brigadier general on 29 January 1862. He headed the District of Southeast Missouri for several months until being transferred to Major General Samuel R. Curtis's Army of the Southwest. Steele commanded a division in Curtis's second invasion of Arkansas, assisting in the capture of Helena on 12 July 1862.

During a brief stint as commander of the Army of the Southwest beginning in September 1862, Steele reversed Curtis's policy of humane treatment for the thousands of runaway slaves who took refuge at Helena. He also turned a blind eye to the excesses of dishonest Northern cotton traders who flocked to the occupied river port.

Steele reported to the Army of the Tennessee in December 1862 and took charge of another division. He served under Major General William T. Sherman at Chickasaw Bluffs and Arkansas Post. On 17 March 1863, he was promoted to major general and proceeded to lead a division of the XV Army Corps through the Vicksburg campaign.

After Vicksburg's surrender, Steele returned to Helena on 31 July 1863 and assumed command of Union forces in Arkansas. In August, he set out with a 12,000-man army to capture Little Rock. Despite stifling heat and rampant sickness in his ranks, Steele maneuvered his foes into abandoning Little Rock on 10 September. The ease of his victory convinced him that he had virtually broken Confederate resistance in Arkansas. A conservative Democrat with little enthusiasm for the Lincoln administration's racial policies, Steele treated Confederate civilians with such laxity that many of his officers and men branded him a Copperhead.

In late March 1864, Steele, now the commander of the VII Army Corps and Department of Arkansas, marched into southwest Arkansas with 14,000 men to support Major General Nathaniel Banks's ill-fated thrust up the Red River toward Texas. Steele's campaign went well at first, as he outsmarted his outnumbered opponents and took the fortified city of Camden without undue difficulty on 15 April. In the next ten days, however, Confederate cavalry captured Union supply trains at Poison Spring and Marks' Mills, throwing Steele's logistics into disarray. The approach of three

enemy infantry divisions from Louisiana forced Steele to abandon Camden on 26 April, and he herded his battered army back to the safety of Little Rock only after his subordinates fought a stubborn rear-guard action at Jenkins' Ferry on 30 April.

During the next few months, Steele seemed to stagnate while many of his soldiers debauched themselves in the bars and brothels of Little Rock. Relieved as departmental commander by Major General Joseph J. Reynolds on 29 November 1864, Steele transferred to the Department of the Gulf. He commanded the "Column from Pensacola" during the Mobile campaign in March and April 1865. Ironically, Steele's best unit was a division of black troops, which gave him a final taste of glory by precipitating the capture of Fort Blakely on 9 April. He finished the war as commander of the District of West Florida.

Steele resumed his career in the regular army, securing the colonelcy of the 20th U.S. Infantry on 28 July 1866. He was stationed on the West Coast and given command of the Department of the Columbia. While on leave in San Mateo, California, Steele suffered an apoplectic fit as he was driving a carriage and took a bad fall. He died as a result of his injuries on 12 January 1868.

—Gregory J. W. Urwin

See also Arkansas; Blakely, Alabama, Battle of; Helena, Battle of; Jenkins' Ferry, Battle of; Marks' Mills, Battle of; Poison Spring, Battle of; Red River Campaign.

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STEPHENS, ALEXANDER HAMILTON

(1812-1883)

Confederate vice president

Stephens was named for his grandfather, Alexander Stephens, a native of Scotland and veteran of the Revolutionary War who settled in Georgia in the early 1790s. Andrew Stephens, the only son of the elder Alexander to remain in Georgia, was a successful farmer and educator. He married Margaret Grier in 1806. Within months of young Alexander's birth in 1812, his mother died as the result of pneumonia. His father quickly remarried Matilda Lindsey, the daughter of a local war hero. Matilda had great influence upon her stepson's life, but the greatest inspiration to the young





Alexander Stephens (*Library of Congress*)

"Aleck" was his father. While not exhibiting any initial fondness for academic study, by 1824 Alexander was consumed with an interest in biblical narrative and history and he began to read widely. In 1826 Andrew Stephens died from pneumonia, and Alexander's stepmother soon followed from the same affliction. Alexander was overcome by grief. He became disconsolate and fell into a state of melancholy. Alexander and his brother Aaron were then taken in by their uncle, Aaron Grier. While living with his uncle, Alexander was befriended by two Presbyterian ministers, the Reverends Williams and Alexander Hamilton Webster. These men greatly aided Alexander's personal and intellectual development. Out of his respect and devotion to Reverend Webster, Stephens eventually changed his middle name to Hamilton. As the result of the encouragement offered by these clerics and others, the young Alexander Stephens entered Franklin College, which later became the University of Georgia. At Franklin, Stephens was guided in his studies by the eminent educator, Reverend Moses Waddel, the brother-in-law and teacher of John C. Calhoun and many of the emerging leaders of South Carolina.

Graduating first in his class at Franklin in 1832, Stephens had distinguished himself as a scholar and

capable debater. He accepted a position as a tutor and began an independent study of the law. After passing the bar examination, Stephens was elected to the state legislature, spending six years in the statehouse and senate. It was becoming apparent that Stephens possessed the qualities necessary for political success.

When his political coalition merged with the Whig Party, Stephens decided to run for the U.S. Congress in 1843. As a candidate, he defended the Whig Party's positions on the national bank and tariffs. Stephens was elected, but within a short time he received news that his brother Aaron had died. Stephens was again stricken with a profound sense of loss. After arriving in Washington to assume his congressional seat, he was so sick that he was unable to attend legislative sessions. On 9 February 1844, in his first speech as a member of Congress, he challenged his own election! Stephens eventually became a Whig stalwart, campaigning for various Whig candidates and related causes, including Henry Clay's unsuccessful presidential bid in 1844. The major issue before Congress at that time was the annexation of Texas. In opposition to many Southern congressmen, who viewed the annexation of Texas as essential to the preservation of a political equilibrium that protected slavery, Stephens opposed expansion. Eventually, though, Stephens was forced to see the benefits of annexation for the South and the Whig Party, but he opposed the measure if based solely on the extension of slavery.

Troubled by what he believed to be President Polk's bad management, including exacerbating tensions with England regarding Oregon and the situation in Mexico, Stephens became an outspoken critic of the administration. Polk ordered General Zachary Taylor to the Rio Grande and a conflict transpired, prompting Polk to state that a war had been initiated. While Congress provided a declaration of war, Stephens agreed with Calhoun that the war could escalate into a greater conflict. In conjunction with other Whigs, Stephens tried to limit his support of the war and to prevent Congress from acquiring territory as the spoils of the contest. He introduced legislation aimed at limiting the aggrandizing policies of the Polk administration. By 1847 Stephens had become a central figure in the Young Indians Club, a group of congressmen supporting the presidential candidacy of General Zachary Taylor, who they believed shared the worldview of Southern Whigs.

After Taylor's election, Stephens was forced to reconsider his support of "Old Zack." Stephens supported the doctrine of popular sovereignty because he believed it to be a countervailing force against the Northern Whigs who wanted to admit California and New Mexico as free states. Working with his fellow Georgian and friend Robert Toombs, Stephens challenged his Whig colleagues to adopt resolutions forbidding Congress from



ending the slave trade in the territories, but the effort failed. Within a short period of time, Stephens had moved from being a valued supporter of the administration to a critic and congressional opponent. He was forced to leave the Whig Party, but he maintained his legislative base of support in Georgia. In joining forces against the Whigs during a period of electoral realignment, he assisted in the formation of the Constitutional Union Party in Georgia.

In the midst of the turmoil, Stephens eventually joined the Democratic Party. He supported the Compromise of 1850 and was instrumental in the adoption of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. Stephens thought the acceptance of the Kansas-Nebraska Act was the "mission" of his life, and that "his cup of ambition was full." After unsuccessfully supporting various measures designed to secure the position of the South, Stephens announced that he was retiring from Congress. He was weary and tired of confronting "restless, captious, and fault-finding people." He did not support extremist measures offered by his colleagues from the South, but remained an advocate of states' rights nevertheless. Even as Southern radicals encouraged secession after the election of Lincoln in 1860, Stephens urged restraint, pleading with his fellow Georgians to evince "good judgment," and arguing that the ascendancy of Lincoln did not merit secession. In a celebrated exchange with the new president, he reminded Lincoln that "Independent, sovereign states" had formed the Union and that these states could reassert their sovereignty. When Georgia convened a convention in January 1861 Stephens voted against secession, but when secession was approved by a vote of 166 to 130, he was part of the committee that drafted the secession ordinance.

As the Confederacy evolved, Stephens was selected as a delegate and to many he appeared to be a good candidate for the vice presidency. He assumed an important role in the drafting of the Confederate constitution and in other affairs, eventually accepting the vice presidency. Early in his tenure as vice president, on 21 March 1861, he gave his politically damaging "Cornerstone" address in Savannah, extolling the superiority of whites. President Jefferson Davis was greatly disturbed, as Stephens had shifted the basis of the political debate from states' rights to slavery. Stephens was convinced that slavery was a necessity. The estrangement between Davis and Stephens increased, and by early 1862 the vice president was not intimately involved in the affairs of state. Accordingly, he returned to his home in Crawfordville. Pursuing actions he thought might assist in the denouement of the conflict, Stephens attempted several assignments, including a diplomatic sojourn to Washington. In July 1863 President Abraham Lincoln refused Stephens permission to come to the federal capital. In February 1865

Stephens participated in the failed Hampton Roads Peace Conference.

At the conclusion of the war, Stephens was arrested and imprisoned at Fort Warren, Massachusetts. After his release, he devoted the remainder of his life to composing *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States*, a two-volume defense of Southern constitutionalism, which appeared in 1868 and 1870. According to Stephens, the foremost theoretical and practical distillation of authority and liberty was found within the American political tradition. The original system was predicated upon reserving the states' sphere of authority. For Stephens, this original diffusion, buttressed by a prudent mode of popular rule, was the primary achievement of American politics.

—H. Lee Cheek, Jr.

See also Davis, Jefferson; Georgia; Hampton Roads Peace Conference; Toombs, Robert Augustus.

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STEUART, GEORGE HUME

(1828–1903)

Confederate general

Born the son of George Hume Stuart in Baltimore, Maryland, the younger Stuart was educated locally before receiving an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy in 1844. He graduated thirty-seventh of thirty-eight in the class of 1848 and was commissioned into the dragoons. Upon graduation he was sent to Texas, where he served for seven years. As a captain of cavalry after 1855 he served at a variety of frontier posts in Kansas and Nebraska. He fought in several Indian conflicts before being detailed to participate in Albert Sidney Johnston's Utah expedition. In 1860 he returned to Texas, where he fought in campaigns against the Comanche.

During the secession crisis of early 1861, Stuart returned to Maryland to await his state's decision regarding disunion. After the firing on Fort Sumter and Abraham Lincoln's call for volunteers, he assumed that Maryland would follow its neighbor Virginia out of the Union. In anticipation of that event, he resigned his commission and accepted the position of major general of the Maryland volunteers who supported secession. He worked through the remaining days of April into May procuring weapons from Virginia to arm these troops so that they would be prepared to defend the state once



agreement with the Confederacy. Believing that Britain would enlist France to break the Northern blockade of Southern ports, Webb traveled to Brazil by way of Paris at the urging of American minister William Dayton, who persuaded him to speak with his many friends in the French government. Webb persuaded Napoleon and Lord John Russell that such a move would not give Europe a supply of Southern cotton. Before leaving for Rio de Janeiro, he wrote Seward a twenty-five-page memorandum with suggestions for prosecuting what he predicted would be a short war, including the immediate execution of all Southern leaders.

In Brazil Webb was forced to deal with a nation that, save for the Confederacy, was the only large nation where slavery was both legal and an integral economic factor. His predecessor as minister, R. K. Meade, was a Southern sympathizer who had stressed the two nations' common interest in perpetuating slavery. Webb's goal was to correct those sentiments and to ensure that Brazil would launch no interference in American affairs. His insistence on criticizing Meade in his presentation speech was vetoed by the Brazilians and led to tense relations with the nation's leaders. Webb's efforts to stop the use of Brazilian ports as refueling points by Confederate privateers were similarly disapproved. Webb labeled this a blatant "breach of neutrality."

Webb won a significant victory, however, in the summer of 1862, when he successfully blocked the sale of four Confederate ships to a British firm, which was planning to sail them in safety under the Union Jack to England and there resell them to the South. But tensions over private Southern ships—which undercut U.S. commercial interests in South America—continued until the end of the war.

Another of Webb's eventual successes almost never happened because of his efforts to profit personally from the scheme. He persuaded Lincoln and Seward to press Congress to set up a route of mail steamers between the United States and Brazil as a way to break Britain's commercial monopoly in South America that required even the United States to buy goods through London. But the president blocked the plan when he learned that Webb, claiming that only he could win Brazil's approval, insisted that he be given the lucrative concession. Further, Webb claimed that Brazil would only accept the plan if he were given long-term involvement. Lincoln and Seward agreed that this was "entirely indefensible" and a flagrant violation of U.S. law. Eventually, Webb relented: the plan was approved, but without his involvement.

Webb's other ambitious proposal was to colonize emancipated American slaves in Brazil, a move he predicted would simultaneously solve Brazil's labor problem and rid the United States "of a curse which has well nigh destroyed her." Lincoln and Seward, who favored colonization, were receptive, but the plan came

to naught on two counts: First, Brazilian law banned the entry of free blacks; and second, Seward soon realized that under Webb's proposal, the ex-slaves would not be true freedmen but rather indentured servants.

Webb at first tried to push Seward as the Republican presidential candidate in 1864, but eventually he supported Lincoln. After the election, he pressed for a post in Europe but was flatly rejected and spent four more years in Brazil. His heavy-handed efforts to mediate a settlement in the Paraguayan War almost disrupted U.S.-Brazilian relations and tarnished America's diplomatic reputation in South America. His biographer, James Crouthamel, wrote that Webb's "conduct in Brazil would comprise a handy 'How not to do' manual for American diplomats today," noting that "the United States was decidedly less popular there when Webb left Brazil in 1869 than it had been when he arrived."

—Eric Fetzmann

See also *Diplomacy, U.S.A.*; *Great Britain*; *Newspapers*; *Webb, Alexander Stewart*.

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WEBSTER, DANIEL

(1782–1852)

Nationalist and American statesman

Born on 18 January 1782 in Salisbury, New Hampshire, in the hill country of the upper Merrimack River, to Ebenezer Webster and his second wife, Abigail Eastman, Daniel was the youngest son in a family of ten children. Although raised in a farming environment, the young Daniel preferred working in his father's tavern and conversing with the establishment's visitors. The integrity, devotion to union, and political acumen of Ebenezer Webster would soon be evident in his son. As the boy became well known among the tavern patrons, he was given the nickname "Black Dan," owing to his dark hair and skin complexion.

Following his early education at local schools and through his voracious reading of great works, Webster was able to attend Phillips Exeter Academy and Dartmouth College. At Dartmouth, he was an active student who was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Webster proceeded to study law under Federalist teachers and to practice law in his native New Hampshire. After marrying Grace Fletcher in 1808, Webster became more interested in politics. After several unsuccessful campaigns, Webster was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1812. Establishing himself as a critic of the Madison administration, he believed the country



should practice self-restraint while maintaining national integrity. In approving the Hartford Convention's listing of complaints against the Federal government, he did not endorse the secessionist elements within the gathering.

After moving to Boston and acquiring the reputation as an orator and defender of the nationalist tradition, Webster spent a great deal of time practicing law and presenting cases before the Supreme Court, including *McCulloch v. Maryland* and *Gibbons v. Ogden*. He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1827. In 1828 he supported the prevailing tariff proposal, and this endorsement led to a famous debate with Senator Robert Y. Hayne of South Carolina. In the course of the debate, Webster declared: "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!" These sentiments would embody his devotion to the importance of union for the remainder of his political career.

In 1836 and 1840 Webster unsuccessfully attempted to obtain the Whig Party's presidential nomination; he nevertheless served as secretary of state under presidents Harrison, Tyler, and Fillmore. Webster returned to the Senate from 1844 until 1850. He supported the Compromise of 1850 in a famous speech on 7 March 1850, criticizing secessionists and abolitionists as not possessing enough devotion to the Union. It was a remarkable performance that had the effect of moderating sectional discord, even as it inflamed Massachusetts abolitionists. Webster remained unforgiven by them when he died two years later on 24 October 1852.

—H. Lee Cheek, Jr.

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WEED, THURLOW

(1797–1882)

Journalist and political advisor

Few subjects present a more apt personification of the era in American history when mass-based political parties developed and matured than Thurlow Weed. His political career spanned six decades; he was running election campaigns throughout the rise and the fall of the second party system and still exercising his mastery of the "black arts" of political fixing after the Civil War. The grandfather of modern "spin-doctors," Weed was so successful at controlling the party machine, through bribery and blatant cronyism if necessary, that he was known as "the Dictator."

Weed was born in Greene County, New York, the son of a farmer and failed carter, and received little formal schooling. At the age of eighteen he had his first taste of

politics while working for two printers in Albany during the legislative session. The young Weed soon demonstrated an unusual aptitude for deal making and partisanship, finding ways of mobilizing coalitions of support behind particular projects. He edited the *Albany Evening Journal* for over thirty years, making it a leading advocate for business interests and the state's promotion of economic development. It was also famous for attacks on "licentiousness": drinking, gambling, and prostitution. Weed had always disliked slavery and, when sectional conflict exploded into the political arena in the 1850s, he saw the partisan advantages of tarring Democrats by associating them with the "Slavepower."

Although he was instantly recognizable to his contemporaries—in the form of caricatures in the weekly press, and because of the attention paid by his fellow newspaper editors to his political pronouncements—Weed never held or sought elected public office for himself. Much of his public influence was due to his close connection with William H. Seward. The two became close allies in the 1830s when Seward first entered anti-Masonic, then Whig, party politics. The partnership of Seward and Weed was a gift to satirists: with his beaked nose, short spindly legs, and puffed chest, Seward resembled a well-fed parrot, while the spidery Weed was tall with a protruding nose. Weed advised Seward against seeking the Republican nomination in 1856, but he energetically promoted his candidacy in 1860 and was deeply frustrated by the outcome at the nominating convention.

During the secession crisis Weed was among those Republicans who advocated compromise, at least in order to prevent the secession of the upper South. He travelled to Springfield after the election to discuss the policy and composition of the new cabinet with Lincoln, acting as a spokesman for Seward, who remained in Washington expecting to be the controlling figure in the new administration. Weed was deeply concerned about Lincoln's enthusiastic embrace of old Democrats in his new cabinet—especially the appointment of Salmon P. Chase and Montgomery Blair to head the two departments that dispensed the bulk of federal government patronage, the Treasury and the Post Office. Once war broke out, however, Weed was an advocate of a "prompt and stringent blockade," and he fully supported the administration throughout the first year of the war. Weed persuaded James Gordon Bennett, editor of the *New York Herald*, to dampen down his opposition to the administration, and in November 1861 Weed embarked on a trip to England to encourage support for the Union cause. From London, he warned Seward that the British government was prepared to go to war with the United States over the *Trent* crisis, advising his friend that it would be best to "turn the other cheek" and release the two Confederate emissaries who had been illegally seized by the United States from a British ship.

