

# Southern economy post civil war



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**A Wrecked Southern Economy** After the Civil War, American life changed drastically socially, politically, and economically. The South's economy took an extreme turn for the worst when their virtually one-crop economy failed. Cotton was no longer king. At the Civil War's close, the wrecked Southern economy helped influence the growth of the North's economy, and made ways for laws and Amendments to help former slaves during Reconstruction. After the Civil War, the South's economy was hopelessly crippled.

Southern banks and businesses had closed, factories were empty and unproductive, the railroad transportation system was broken, former cotton fields no longer bore cotton, and the slave-labor system was no more (Kennedy, Cohan, Baily 514). Meanwhile, the North was making adaptations to reduced dependence of Southern cotton. New factories that produced wartime goods and laborsaving machinery helped expand it's economy (478). The South's wrecked economy made way for increased manufacturing and industrialization in the North.

The pre-Civil War cotton capitalism had began to be replaced by industrial capitalism (479). The 13th Amendment declared " Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude... shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction" (U. S Const. Thirteenth Amendment). Since slavery was outlawed, one of the biggest economic issues for Southerners during Reconstruction was finding a new labor source. After rejecting President Johnson's Reconstruction plan, Congress passed various laws and Constitutional Amendments like the thirteenth and fourteenth ammdements to protect former slaves' rights.

As the Civil War came to a close, Southern life showed extreme changes. Economically, the South had definitely been defeated. The South's wrecked economy helped grow the North's and made way for laws to protect former slaves. This defeat influenced the industrialization and manufacturing period the United States was beginning to see after Reconstruction. Works Cited:  
Secondary: David Kennedy, Elizabeth Cohen, and Thomas Bailey. The American Pageant. Boston: Wadsworth, 2010. Print.