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James L. Roark

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MASTERS WITHOUT SLAVES

*Southern Planters
in the Civil War and
Reconstruction*

JAMES L. ROARK

Winner of the Allan Nevins Award of
the Society of American Historians

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3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Just amazingBy Percy DovetonsilsAs a long time amateur student of

the Civil War, having visited at least once all major battlefields and read a great many CW books since 1957 when my interest began. I have been searching to expand my reading to Reconstruction and beyond in the Olde Confederacy. This book filled my desire. Far from the romantic version of post Civil War South as in *Gone With The Wind*, the author has researched and compiled actual data as well as stories of how former masters coped with the loss of their slaves. Few handled the situation well, they had no training on how to operate a business in a free labor market. Some fled the South to other parts of America or Europe. Some fled to countries where they could legally buy slaves at that time, some committed suicide. Planters lost sons to the battlefield as the Grim Reaper harvested from all social classes. Planters lost crops, lost farms, lost the market. It was a very heavy price to pay for their attempt to keep slavery intact. In this book you will feel their despair and anguish. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *Masters without Slaves* By Mary Collins Landin This book is very interesting, a much overlooked aspect of the end of the War and its legacy. What to do with freed slaves, since the federal government who freed them would not care for them. It is how Southerners coped with the problem in the immediate years after the War and reconstruction. Came on time in good condition. 4 of 8 people found the following review helpful. *Making freed people slaves* By Tony Thomas To one degree or another, the slaveholders shared rule in the USA with the commercial capitalists until they were defeated in the Civil War. This book discusses their ideological and economic transformation at the end of the civil war and the beginning of Reconstruction. They believed that slavery was absolutely necessary to govern African Americans and to produce cotton and the other crops that underlied their wealth. They believed in the inferiority of African Americans and had no taste for free or freed labor. As a class they were destroyed. Many left the United States for Brazil and Cuba where African slavery still persisted. Others retreated into middle class and working class occupations, bereft of their former power. A significant minority adjusted to the new order and attempted to recast Southern agriculture on a basis that was formally free labor, but sought to achieve the same power as slavery. What comes through in this book was that the fundamental problem of Southern agriculture under American capitalism until mechanization came after World War II was labor shortage and the demands of first the slave owners and later the capitalist plantation owners to keep the workers and farmers who tilled the land, Black and white, from reaping the wealth. By the end of the 19th century, when most of the former slave owners had either been eliminated or amalgamated with North Industrial capital, the "New South" arose with Jim Crow violence, apartheid, and denial of democracy, the create a permanent Black labor force for Southern Agriculture without the rights and power of free men.

Winner of the Allan Nevins Award of the Society of American Historians. In 1865, the Confederacy passed into history, but its ideological cornerstone survived. War had ended slavery, but war had not ended Southern planters' attachment to it. This is a history of that moment when planters became masters without slaves.