

The Home Front ^[1]

For North Carolinians, life at home during the Civil War was often little better than life in the army. With men gone to war, women and children kept farms going as best they could, but the army needed tremendous supplies, and by 1863, food was growing scarce. Runaway inflation, fueled by the printing of far too much paper money to pay for the war, made what food there was almost impossible to afford. In the east, enslaved people escaped to Union lines, where they would be free, but many whites found life under Union occupation unbearable. In the west, Unionists and supporters of the Confederacy fought their own civil war. In this chapter, we'll consider these events and experiences, and we'll analyze how North Carolina's economy and society began to break down under the strains of war.

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North Carolina's paper money showed images of progress and prosperity, but by 1864 it was nearly worthless.

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