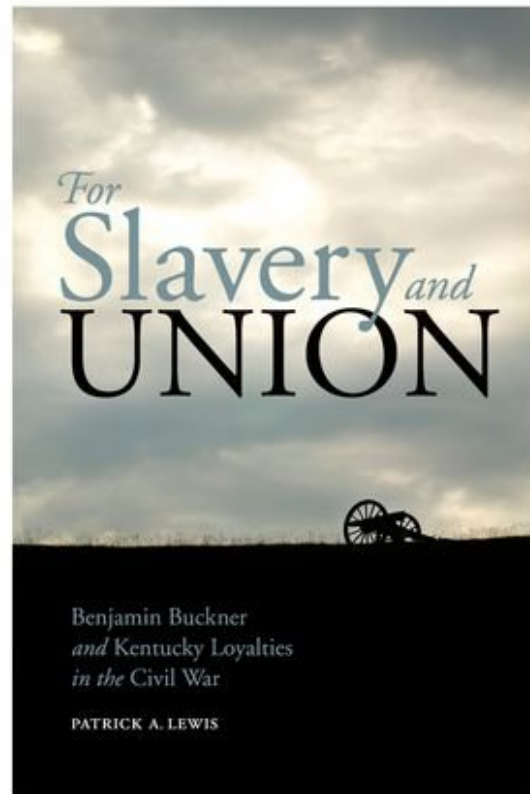


(Free and download) For Slavery and Union: Benjamin Buckner and Kentucky Loyalties in the Civil War

For Slavery and Union: Benjamin Buckner and Kentucky Loyalties in the Civil War

Patrick A. Lewis

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Patrick A. Lewis : For Slavery and Union: Benjamin Buckner and Kentucky Loyalties in the Civil War before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised For Slavery and Union: Benjamin Buckner and Kentucky Loyalties in the Civil War:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Must Read for any Serious Historian of the Civil War-era!By Anthony P. CurtisIn a masterfully crafted narrative, Patrick Lewis weaves together, at first glance, two diametrically opposed forces: slavery and Union. Using the life of Kentuckian Benjamin F. Buckner, a conservative proslavery unionist, Lewis irrefutably argues that a majority of loyal, white Kentuckians were both proslavery and pro-Union. Lewis gives the reader great insight into the complexities of Civil War-era Kentucky, placing race and slavery at the heart of the narrative. The author explores the institution of slavery in Kentucky (particularly in the central bluegrass region) making the most compelling argument yet against the border state myth of mild slavery. His contribution

further shows how Kentucky complicates the national narrative for future Civil War scholars, and how Kentuckians both Union and Confederate reunited after the war to further perpetuate a system of racial discrimination on the heels of slavery's crumbling foundation. This is an engaging, readable book for all levels and a must read for any serious historian of the Civil War. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Joe R. Excellent. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By MCH An important part of an equally important movement to re-understand the Civil War by shifting attention to its borderlands.

Benjamin Forsythe Buckner (1836-1901) faced a dire choice as the flames of Civil War threatened his native Kentucky. As an ambitious Bluegrass aristocrat, he was sympathetic to fellow slave owners, but was also convinced that the Peculiar Institution could not survive a war for Southern independence. Defying the wishes of his Rebel fiancée and her powerful family yet still hoping to impress them with his resolve, independence, and courage Buckner joined the Twentieth Kentucky Volunteer Infantry in 1861 as a Union soldier. President Abraham Lincoln's issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 ultimately destroyed Buckner's faith in his cause, however, and he resigned his commission. In *For Slavery and Union*, Patrick A. Lewis uses Benjamin Buckner's story to illuminate the origins and perspectives of Kentucky's conservative proslavery Unionists, and explain why this group eventually became a key force in repressing social and political change during the Reconstruction era and beyond. Free from the constraints and restrictions imposed on the former Confederate states, men like Buckner joined with other proslavery forces to work in the interest of the New South's brand of economic growth and racial control. Other studies have explored how Kentucky cultivated a Confederate identity after the Civil War, but *For Slavery and Union* is the first major work to personify this transformation. Lewis's important book transcends biography to provide a deeply nuanced look at the history of the commonwealth in the nineteenth century and the development of the New South.

"Benjamin Forsythe Buckner was a conservative proslavery Unionist who was for the Union because he thought slavery would be safest in the Union, and who never accepted emancipation as a Union war aim. This insightful book positions Patrick Lewis among the cutting-edge scholars who have punctured the mythology about Kentucky's benign slave system, harmonious social order, and enlightened political leadership." Daniel W. Crofts, author of *Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis*. "Patrick Lewis paints a splendid picture of pro-slavery Unionism in the form of Major Benjamin Buckner. His portrayal of the Kentucky planter gives texture, depth and nuance to an ideological position that has confounded historians for many years. This may be the first biography we have seen to capture the cultural and political center of Civil War-era Kentucky, including the state's embrace of a conservative Union in 1861 and its rejection of a transformed Union in 1865." Aaron Astor, Maryville College, author of *Rebels on the Border: Civil War, Emancipation and the Reconstruction of Kentucky and Missouri*. "Patrick Lewis's splendid *For Slavery and Union* is a most welcome contribution to Civil War, Kentucky, and border state historical scholarship. Deeply researched and gracefully crafted, Lewis's book provides the best insights available into the conflicted ideological and social worlds of Benjamin Forsythe Buckner and like-minded proslavery unionists during the Civil War era. Better than any previous scholar, Lewis untangles the conundrum conservative and upwardly mobile white southerners confronted as the nation dissolved. They believed not only that unionism and slavery went hand and hand, but envisioned that secession signaled the death knell not only of the 'peculiar institution' but also of white southerners' much-boasted 'way of life,' a *Weltanschauung* predicated on white supremacy. Lewis's mature, richly interpretive study places Buckner's postwar life in the whirligig world of Jim Crow/New South Kentucky, a world he quietly embraced." John David Smith, author of *Lincoln and the U.S. Colored Troops*. "On a fellow historian's tip, as part of a recent book project, I researched the letters of Benjamin Forsythe Buckner written to his fiancée. This revealing collection of Civil War documents offers the perspective of a Kentucky Union officer who resigned his military commission in 1863 specifically to protest the Emancipation Proclamation, long before his home state saw its slaves freed by wartime realities. Patrick A. Lewis has turned this small set of letters into a larger, more troubling story: the postwar transformation of the former loyal Bluegrass State into an unreconstructed southern state, accomplished by the defiant politics of racial hatred, war allegiance, and fictive memory." Christopher Phillips, University of Cincinnati, author of *The Civil War in the Border South*. "Well-researched, well-argued, and well-written, *For Slavery and Union* is an exemplary study. Benjamin Buckner of Kentucky personifies the dilemma of the Upper South proslavery unionist, during and after the Civil War. Author Patrick Lewis ably portrays the trials, contradictions, and struggles of those who favored the union, but who also saw it as the best way to protect slavery. Once the conflict became one to end slavery, Buckner zealously joined blue and gray allies in protecting whiteness. By placing Buckner fully in the context of his times, Dr. Lewis reveals that the old unionist did not change, but rather the circumstances in the world around him did. To Benjamin Buckner, the best way to protect slavery was to keep the union together. He thus joined the Union cause as the Civil War began. But his opposition to emancipation brought about his resignation. Soon he joined his former enemies in trying to shape a postwar world that would replicate the prewar racial one. All this is well-told in a wonderful case study by Patrick Lewis. His well-researched and well-written work personifies the dilemmas faced by Upper South proslavery unionists, in war and in the fights that followed the peace." James C.

Klotter, State Historian of Kentucky and professor of history at Georgetown College"Patrick Lewis has written an engaging and insightful portrait of a man who embodied the struggle many loyal whites in the Upper South endured during the Civil War era. His nuanced examination of Benjamin Buckner's outlook and choices elucidate the phenomenon of pro-slavery Unionism shared by many white Southerners. This is a biography that will deepen our understanding of an important but understudied wartime faction."Anne Marshall, Mississippi State University"Deeply researched and narrated with elegance and verve, *For Slavery and Union* is the story of a fascinating Kentuckian whose life mirrored the larger ordeal of the state in the era of the Civil War and Reconstruction. In Lewis' skillful hands, Benjamin F. Buckner's life becomes an account of loyalties divided but never fully reconciled, and of a proslavery Unionism that foundered in the face of emancipation. The result is essential reading for anyone wanting to understand why Kentucky sided with the Union in the Civil War and then turned south to align with the former Confederate states in the decades beyond. A sobering but thoroughly enjoyable read."Amy Murrell Taylor, University of Kentucky"White Unionists in Kentucky, argues Patrick Lewis, fought with the Union for the benefit of slavery, not despite slavery. That one insight is the basis of a gracefully written, beautifully argued reinterpretation of Kentucky's experience in the Civil War era that also speaks to American political culture more generally. Even as the Civil War divided the nation, support for slavery and racial inequality flourished in both the Union and the Confederacy, suggesting how difficult it would be to find a resolution to the conflicts that led the nation to war."Laura Edwards, author of *A Legal History of the Civil War and Reconstruction: A Nation of Rights*"This is the first major work to personify how Kentucky cultivated a Confederate identity after the Civil War."Kentucky Alumni"With this first book Lewis, an assistant editor of publications at the Kentucky Historical Society, emerges as a preeminent student of the Civil War and subsequent decades of "adjustment" in the Bluegrass State. [. . .] Thoroughly researched, persuasively argued, and elegantly written, *For Slavery and Union* merits careful reading and rereading."Civil War Book "[M]ost readers will find *For Slavery and Union* both enjoyable and informative."Journal of American History"An admirable job [...] of explaining the complexities of Kentucky's competing political factions as they existed before, during, and after the war.Civil War scholars and those who focus on border state issues will find the volume informative.Civil War enthusiasts and generalists with a penchant for American history will enjoy this Overall, the book is well written, engaging, and adequately documented."Tommy Brown, *Civil War Monitor*"[W]ell-written [. . .] improve[s] our understanding of Kentucky before, during, and after the Civil War. [M]ay serve as [a] solid introduction to the history of the Bluegrass State. [It] also add[s] depth and complexity to the story of the border states, the debate over slavery, and the sectional conflict that ensued."West Virginia History"This well-written account personifies the situation and reaction of pro-slavery Unionists after the war, and examines the lengths to which they went to maintain the status quo."Kentucky Library Association"*For Slavery and Union* offers an engagingly written chronological narrative with a single person as its focus and a crystal-clear thesis that speaks to the meaning of the Civil War generally, not just in Kentucky, and as such should appeal to anyone with an interest in the era."Ohio Valley History"Thoroughly researched, well-written book. Anyone interested in Kentucky history will find Lewis' *For Slavery and Union* an imaginative, delightful read they will not forget."Bowling Green Daily News"Lewis presents a clear, engaging, and persuasive narrative about Buckner, divided Kentucky loyalties, and the results of Buckner's choices to resist changes in race relations."Civil War History"Patrick A. Lewis [presents a] very well-researched, well-written, and significant case study [. . .]"Register of the Kentucky Historical SocietyAbout the AuthorPatrick A. Lewis is assistant editor of the Register of the Kentucky Historical Society and the Civil War Governors of Kentucky Digital Documentary Edition.