Southern accounts of the aftermath of the war

*North Carolina was the site of some of the last battles in the Civil War. In January 1865 Union troops landed along the coast, and in March they were joined by General William T. Sherman’s army, which marched into the state after having lain waste to South Carolina in January and February.*

Belmont, Monday, June 12, 1865. I must confess to you my journal that I do most heartily despise Yankees, Negroes and everything connected with them. The theme has been sung in my hearing until it is a perfect abomination—I positively instinctively shut my ears when I hear the hated subject mentioned and right gladly would I be willing never to place my eyes upon another as long as I live. Everything is entirely reversed. I feel no interest in them whatever and hope I never will... -Journal Excerpt of Gertrude Thomas (North Carolina)

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*After having captured Savannah, Georgia, in late December, General William T. Sherman’s Union army turned north and entered South Carolina in January 1865. By this time the Confederate forces opposing him had been virtually shattered, capable of conducting little more than delaying actions. When Sherman’s army marched into Columbia, South Carolina’s capital, his men were prepared to take vengeance against the state that had been first to secede from the Union in 1860.*

When will these Yankees go that we may breathe freely again! The past three days are more like three weeks. And yet when they are gone we may be worse off with the whole country laid waste and the railroads out in every direction. Starvation seems to stare us in the face. Our two families have between them a few bushels of corn and a little musty flour. We have no meat, but the negroes give us a little bacon every day.” . . . –Diary excerpt of Emma LeConte (South Carolina)