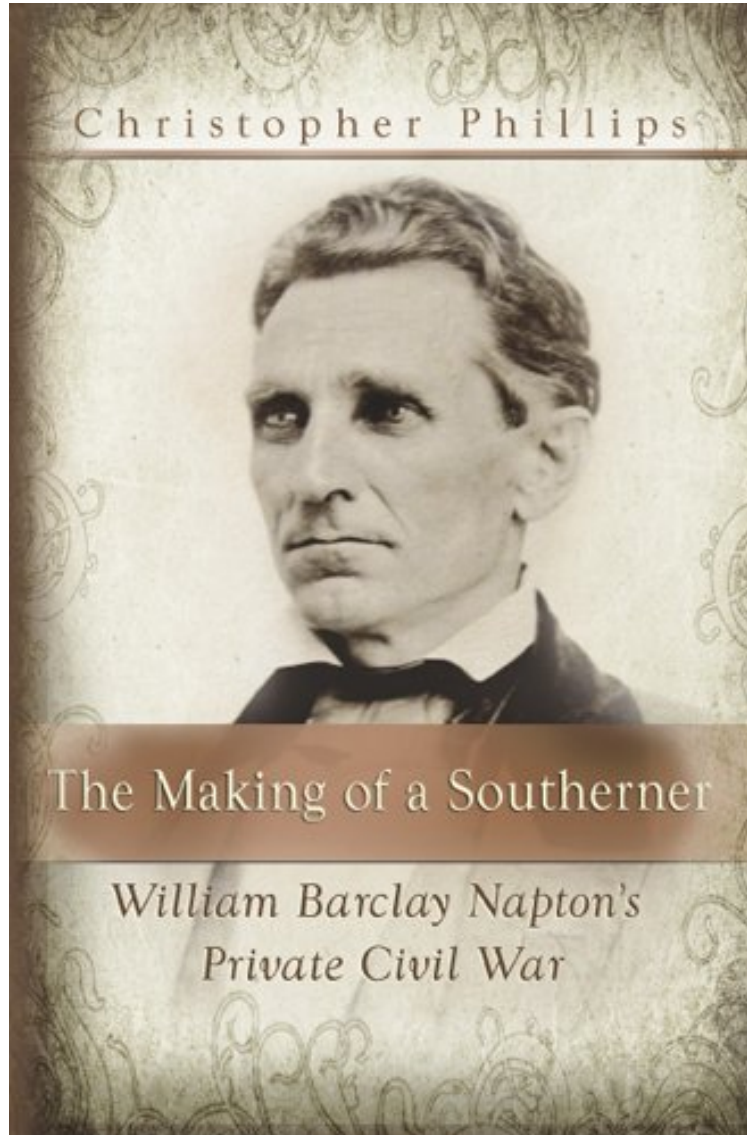


(Free pdf) The Making of a Southerner: William Barclay Napton's Private Civil War

The Making of a Southerner: William Barclay Napton's Private Civil War

Christopher Phillips

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Christopher Phillips : The Making of a Southerner: William Barclay Napton's Private Civil War before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Making of a Southerner: William Barclay Napton's Private Civil War:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A fascinating true story of complete cultural realignmentBy Midwest Book ReviewThe Making of a Southerner: William Barclay Napton's Private Civil War is the biography of William

Barclay Napton (1808-1883), an editor, lawyer, and state supreme court justice who lived in Missouri. A former resident of New Jersey who became the owner or trustee of nearly fifty slaves, and one of the most articulate pro-slavery ideologues of the nation, Napton's transition makes for an intriguing case study of the process of "southernization". During the Civil War, Napton lost family and property in defense of Southern ideals. Notes, a bibliography, and an index round out this fascinating true story of complete cultural realignment.

Christopher Phillips has brought to life a man, a story, and a voice lost in the din of competing post-Civil War narratives that each claim a timeless divide between North and South. William Barclay Napton (1808-1883) was an editor, lawyer, and state supreme court justice who lived in Missouri during the tumultuous American nineteenth century. He was a keen observer of the nation's sectional politics just as he was a participant in those of his border state, the most divided of any in the nation, in the decades surrounding the Civil War. This book tells the story of one man's civil war, lived and waged within the broader conflict, and the long shadows both cast. But Napton's story moves beyond the Civil War just as it transcends the formal political realm. His is a fascinating tale of identity politics and their shifting currents, by which the highly educated former New Jerseyite became the owner or trustee of nearly fifty slaves and one of the most committed and thoughtful of the nation's pro-slavery ideologues. That a northerner could make such a life transition in the Border West suggests more than the powerful nature of slavery in antebellum American society. Napton's story offers provocative insights into the process of southernization, one driven more by sectional ideology and politics than by elements of a distinctive southern culture. Although Napton's tragic Civil War experience was a watershed in his southern evolution, that evolution was completed only after he had constructed a politicized memory of the bitter conflict, one that was suffered nowhere worse than in Missouri. This war-driven transformation ultimately defined him and his family, just as it would his border state and region for decades to come. By suffering for the South, losing family and property in his defense of its ideals and principles, he claimed by right what he could not by birth. Napton became a southerner by choice. Drawn from incomparable personal journals kept for more than fifty years and from voluminous professional and family correspondence, Napton's life story offers a thoughtful and important perspective on the key issues and events that turned this northerner first into an avowed pro-slavery ideologue and then into a full southerner. As a prominent jurist who sat on Missouri's high bench for more than a quarter century, he used his politicized position to give birth to the New South in the Old West. Students, teachers, and general readers of southern history, western history, and Civil War history will find this book of particular interest.

About the Author Christopher Phillips is Professor of History at the University of Cincinnati. He is the author of four previous books, including *Missouri's Confederate: Claiborne Fox Jackson and the Creation of Southern Identity in the Border West*, and coeditor of *The Union on Trial: The Political Journals of Judge William Barclay Napton, 1829-1883*, both available from the University of Missouri Press.