

Lesson on Secession

South Carolina seceded from the Union in December 1860. Harry Macarthy wrote "The Bonnie Blue Flag" in honor of the new "rebel" flag adopted by South Carolina. The song became popular throughout the Confederacy. Read the lyrics of the song and answer the questions below.

We are a band of brothers, and native to the soil,
Fighting for the property we gained by honest toil;
And when our rights were threatened, the cry rose near and far:
Hurrah! for the bonnie blue flag that bears a single star.

CHORUS:

Hurrah! hurrah! For Southern rights! hurrah!
Hurrah! for the bonnie blue flag that bears a single star.

As long as the Union was faithful to her trust,
Like friends and like brothers, kind were we and just;
But now, when Northern treachery attempts our rights mar,
We hoist, on high, the bonnie blue flag that bears a single star.

First gallant South Carolina nobly made the stand,
Then came Alabama who took her by the hand;
Next, quickly Mississippi, Georgia and Florida,
All raised, on high, the bonnie blue flag that bears a single star.

Ye men of valor, gather 'round the banner of the right,
Texas and fair Louisiana join us in the fight;
Davis, our loved President, and Stephens, statesman rare,
Now rally 'round the bonnie blue flag that bears a single star.

And here's to brave Virginia, the old Dominion State,
With the young Confederacy, at length, has linked her fate;
Impelled by her example now other States prepare
To hoist, on high, the bonnie blue flag that bears a single star.

Then cheer, boys, cheer, raise the joyous shout--
For Arkansas and North Carolina now have both gone out;
And let another rousing cheer for Tennessee be given--
The single star of the bonnie blue flag has grown to be eleven.

Then here's to our Confederacy--strong we are and brave,
Like patriots of old, we'll fight our heritage to save;
And rather than submit to shame, to die we would prefer--
So cheer for the bonnie blue flag that bears a single star.

From Diane Ravitch, ed., *The American Reader-Words That Moved A Nation*, pp. 143-144.

1. Define "secede."

2. According to the lyrics, how did these Southern states justify secession?

3. On the "Civil War Map," locate and write the name of the eleven states that seceded. Also write in the dates of each secession. Color these eleven states one color and add a key to the map.