

Confederate Money

Paul Varnes



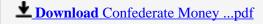
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In 1861, as this story opens with the Yankee raid on the salt works at Cedar Key, Florida, a Confederate dollar is worth 90 cents in gold or silver. The Yankee soldiers, in their zeal to destroy the important Confederate salt works, kill young Henry Fern's step-pa, who has brought Henry to the Gulf Coast town on his first train ride. From that moment on, Henry's mind is locked on revenge. His goal to find the Yankee killers leads him throughout the South and much of the North as the war spreads. He studies medicine and offers aid to whichever side he needs to move through at the time. Through shrewd dealings he manages to amass \$40,000 in Confederate paper money. Henry realizes that the Yankees are going to win the war or, at best, the South will end it a draw. In either case, the Confederate Money will not be worth as much as silver or gold, so he sets out to change it into specie. Henery's adventures take him into both sides of the Battles of Shiloh Church, Chickamauga, and Olustee. With his charismatic personality and keen judgment, Henry manages to thrive even as the war rages, persisting in changing his paper fortune into silver and gold. He is as generous with his family, friends, and those he perceives to be in need as he is ruthless with those he knows to be his enemies. By the time Sherman marches through Atlanta in late 1864, the Confederate dollar has declined to 28 for one in silver or gold. When Sherman reaches Savannah, its worth is 45 to one. When Lee surrenders the next April, its worth is 80 to one. One month later it has fallen to 1,000 to one. Shortly after this, Henry undertakes a daring raid on the hidden Confederate treasury to bring him to his financial goal.



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