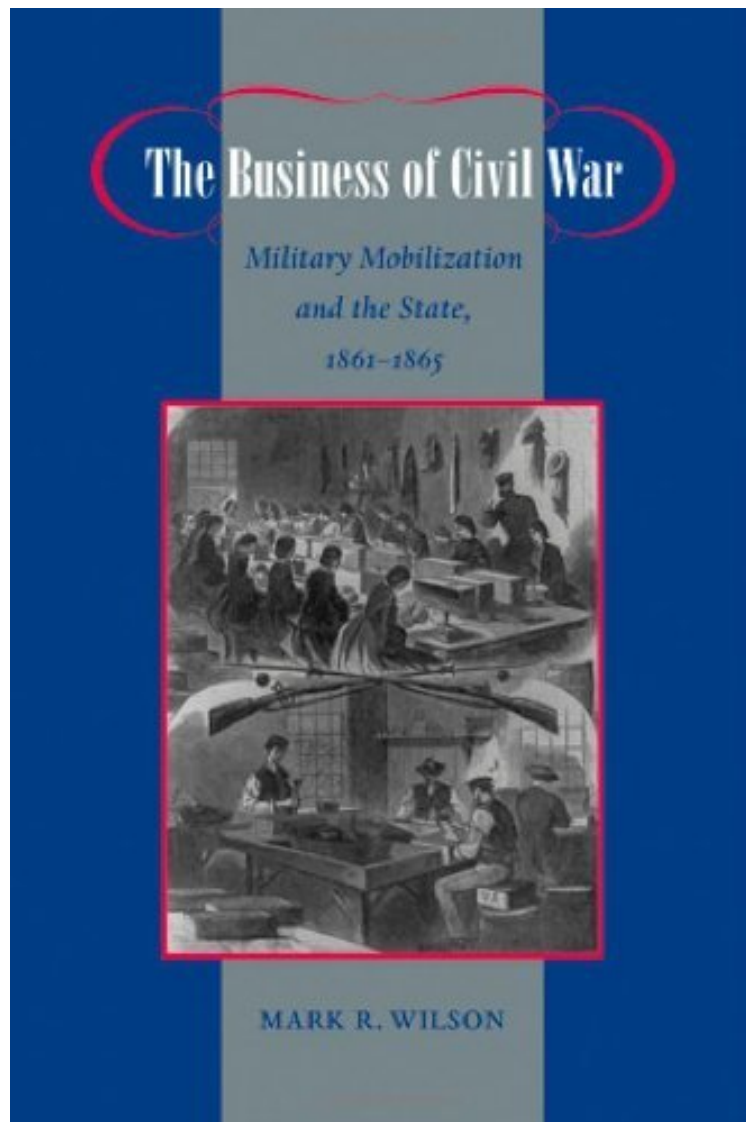


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The Business of Civil War: Military Mobilization and the State, 1861-1865 (Johns Hopkins Studies in the History of Technology)

Mark R. Wilson

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Mark R. Wilson : The Business of Civil War: Military Mobilization and the State, 1861-1865 (Johns Hopkins Studies in the History of Technology) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Business of Civil War: Military Mobilization and the State, 1861-1865 (Johns Hopkins Studies in the History of Technology):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Business of Civil WarBy James E. JacobsenThe American

military, while less dominating as an arm of our government historically than it is today, has always proved to be a stalwart supporting institution of our democracy. This work treats the crucial manner in which pre-Civil War quartermasters took great pains to prevent the monopolization of war contracts. As such, these crusty old administrators were masters at balancing democracy with capitalism and its tendency towards making off with all the inflated profits! The issue of equal pay for female munitions workers is also nicely addressed. This is a fundamentally useful study of some of the undercurrents that influenced the federalization of our national government during a period of total war. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Who says there is nothing new to write about on the Civil War? By leftyjmp I stumbled across an enthusiastic endorsement of this book by James Schmidt, (See Mr. Schmidt's May 25, 2007 review as well.), and I thought that I would take a chance on it. This book is one of the most original pieces of research on the Civil War that I have read. Previous reviewers have done an excellent job of describing this book but I enjoyed this book so much that I wanted to add my voice to the chorus. You can hear echoes of the book's discussion on the merits of public vs. private manufacturing of war materials in our current debate over the inclusion of public option in health care. When the quartermaster general warns that a strict construction of government contracting rules would lead to a procurement system that "prevailed in some monarchical governments, where great contractors, commanding millions of capital, make general contracts to furnish all supplies for the government under periodical lettings.", you can almost hear the criticism of our government's early contracts with Halliburton in the second Iraq war. The book's discussion of the government's lack of cash which resulted in the issuance of quartermaster vouchers two to three months after final delivery of goods which could then only be exchanged for certificate of indebtedness, one year notes with a 6 percent interest rate, was a revelation to me. Only individuals and businesses with lots of capital can afford to wait that long to be paid. Anyone that is interested in the Civil War should read this book. It is a very interesting and original read. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By double d Excellent resource of information.

This wide-ranging, original account of the politics and economics of the giant military supply project in the North reconstructs an important but little-known part of Civil War history. Drawing on new and extensive research in army and business archives, Mark R. Wilson offers a fresh view of the wartime North and the ways in which its economy worked when the Lincoln administration, with unprecedented military effort, moved to suppress the rebellion. This task of equipping and sustaining Union forces fell to career army procurement officers. Largely free from political partisanship or any formal free-market ideology, they created a mixed military economy with a complex contracting system that they pieced together to meet the experience of civil war. Wilson argues that the North owed its victory to these professional military men and their finely tuned relationships with contractors, public officials, and war workers. Wilson also examines the obstacles military bureaucrats faced, many of which illuminated basic problems of modern political economy: the balance between efficiency and equity, the promotion of competition, and the protection of workers' welfare. The struggle over these problems determined the flow of hundreds of millions of dollars; it also redirected American political and economic development by forcing citizens to grapple with difficult questions about the proper relationships among government, business, and labor. Students of the American Civil War will welcome this fresh study of military-industrial production and procurement on the home front? long an obscure topic.