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Confederados - Part III

Lead: After the Civil War many Southern diehards, instead of submitting to federal occupation, migrated to Brazil.

Tag: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: In the spring of 1972, then Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter made an official visit to Brazil. One of the most interesting parts of his tour was the City of Americana, with a modern population of 160,000. There Mr. Carter was greeted by descendants of the town founders, Confederates who came south after the

U.S. Civil War. He gave a speech at a cemetery where American, Brazilian, and Confederate flags were displayed prominently.

The original immigration came during 1867-1868. They settled on large tracts of land provided cheaply by the Brazilian government, aware that their success might provoke an even larger wave of Southerners, perhaps as much as 100,000. By 1870 it was clear that no such mass movement would occur. Most of those remaining in the South, like Robert E. Lee, were fitfully accommodating themselves to the changes in the New South and denounced any suggestion of departure.

Approximately 20,000 Confederadoes migrated to Brazil during the early years and many of them prospered through hard work, innovation, and the use of modern agricultural techniques. Some bought slaves but particularly after Emancipation in 1888, most took advantage of cheap Brazilian labor and produced on their farms and plantations at competitive prices a wide variety of crops: cotton, coffee, rubber, and a new particular treat to the Brazilian palette, Georgia rattlesnake watermelon.

When the expected second wave of immigration failed to materialize, the Confederadoes gradually blended into the racial and cultural melting pot of

Brazil. They were allowed to establish and spread their faith and many Protestant denominations in Brazil today look back to this influx of Southerners as their beginning. Probably because of its gentle Portuguese roots, Brazilian society was far more accommodating on matters of race and the Confederates, who left America determined not to be forced into change by the so-called "Yankeetocracy," saw their children and grandchildren gradually merge into the racially mixed culture of their new homeland. Today their many of their descendants combine distinctive Scot-Irish facial features with the rich skin color and tone of Southern Europe and Africa.

**At the University of Richmond, this
is Dan Roberts.**

Resources

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