



# Clyde Built: The Blockade Runners and Cruisers of the American Civil War

*Eric Graham*

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The Civil War of 1861-65 was one of the defining moments in the history of America. The Blockade of the US Southern ports during the war is well known. Less well known, however, is the role that Scotland played in this aspect of the conflict - almost 40 per cent of the ships were Scottish. This should not be surprising, however: at the time the fastest ships in the world were Clydebuilt, so it was natural that the Confederacy should turn to Scotland in their desperate bid to beat the tightening Northern Blockade. The ideological conflict unfolding between American anti-slavery supporters and anti-abolitionists also spread to the other side of the Atlantic and forced the Scots to examine their own values, polarising opinions and forcing the individual to reassess their position concerning basic human rights. Using contemporary accounts and individual case studies, combined, *Clydebuilt* presents a full and fascinating account of Scotland's involvement in the American Civil War Blockade, an involvement which almost certainly prolonged the conflict by several years.

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