

In reviewing the motives that led to the Civil War, one should read the letters soldiers wrote home to their loved ones. Historian John Perry, who studied the soldier's correspondence, says in his three years of research, he failed to find one letter that referred to slavery from Confederate or Union soldiers.

Perry says that Yankees tended to write about preserving the Union and Confederates wrote about protecting their rights from a too-powerful federal government. The numerous letters failed to specifically say soldiers were fighting either to destroy or protect the institution of slavery. Shelby Foote, in his three-volume Civil War history, recounts an incident in which a Union soldier asks a Confederate prisoner captured in Tennessee why he was fighting. The rebel responded, "Because you're down here."