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# The American Civil War

Course Guidebook

Professor Gary W. Gallagher  
University of Virginia



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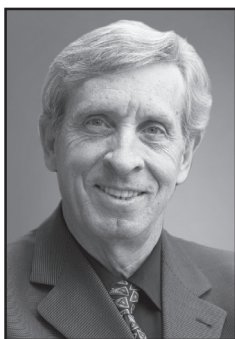
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## Gary W. Gallagher, Ph.D.

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Recognized as one of the top historians of the Civil War, Dr. Gallagher is a prolific author. His books include *The Confederate War, Lee and His Generals in War and Memory*, and *Stephen Dodson Ramseur: Lee's Gallant General*. He has also coauthored and edited numerous works on individual battles and campaigns, including Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and the 1864 Shenandoah Valley campaign, and published over eight dozen articles in scholarly journals and popular historical magazines. Virtually all his books have been History Book Club selections.

He has received numerous awards for his research and writing, including, most recently, the Laney Prize for the best book on the Civil War (1998), The William Woods Hassler Award for contributions to Civil War studies (1998), the Lincoln Prize (1998—shared with three other authors), and the Fletcher Pratt Award for the best nonfiction book on the Civil War (1999).

Additionally, Professor Gallagher serves as editor of two book series for the University of North Carolina Press (“Civil War America” and “Military Campaigns of the Civil War”). He has appeared regularly on the Arts and Entertainment Network's series *Civil War Journal* and has participated in other television projects. Active in historic preservation, Professor Gallagher was president of the Association for Preservation of Civil War Sites (APCWS)

from 1987 through mid-1994, has served on the Board of Directors of the Civil War Trust, and has testified before Congress on battlefield preservation on numerous occasions. ■

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# The American Civil War

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## Scope:

This course examines the era of the American Civil War with emphasis on the period from 1861 to 1865, four years during which the United States endured its greatest national trauma. The lectures address such questions as why the war came, why the North won (or the Confederacy lost), how military campaigns unfolded, and how the war affected various elements of American society. The principal goal is to convey an understanding of the scope and consequences of the bloodiest war in our nation's history—a struggle that claimed more than 600,000 lives, freed nearly 4,000,000 enslaved African Americans, and settled definitively the question of whether states had the right to withdraw from the Union. The course also will address issues left unresolved at the end of the conflict, most notably the question of where former slaves would fit into the social and political structure of the nation.

Leading participants on both sides will receive extensive attention. Interspersed among discussions of military and nonmilitary aspects of the war will be biographical sketches of Abraham Lincoln, Robert E. Lee, Ulysses S. Grant, Frederick Douglass, “Stonewall” Jackson, William Tecumseh Sherman, Thaddeus Stevens, and several dozen other prominent figures. Although this is not a course on Civil War battles and generals per se, approximately half of the lectures will be devoted to the strategic and tactical dimensions of military campaigns. It is impossible to understand the broad impact of the war without a grasp of how military events shaped attitudes and actions on the home front, and there will be a special effort to tie events on the battlefield to life behind the lines.

Part I traces the prelude to the war by discussing the key issues of the antebellum period, starting with the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and continuing for 40 years to the election of 1860. The secession crisis that election precipitated turned into armed conflict in early 1861. Early lectures size up the two opposing sides of the military conflict, including a consideration of the men who manned the armies. The final five lectures

of Part I trace the early fortunes of war from the Battle of Bull Run (First Manassas) through the Peninsula and Shenandoah Valley campaigns of early 1862, when first one side, then the other seemed to be in ascendancy.

Part II picks up the military narrative with the pivotal Seven Days' Battles before Richmond, when the Union advance in the East was halted by the newly appointed General Robert E. Lee, and continues up to the crucial Battle of Antietam in September. Lectures on the issue of emancipation, military conscription, and financing of the war provide a look at political and social issues that came to the fore in this period. Part II concludes with more discussion of major campaigns and battles, including Gettysburg and Chickamauga, bringing the narration up to the fall of 1863.

Part III begins with the campaign for Chattanooga that saw the ascendancy of Ulysses S. Grant as the top Union general. The emphasis shifts to the diplomatic front, as both sides vied to present their case before the world (i.e., European) audience. The war from the African American perspective comes next, followed by a discussion of Northern wartime "reconstruction" policies. We devote two lectures to the naval war, both that conducted on the high seas involving the Northern blockade and Southern commerce raiding, as well as that which took place on the "brown water" of rivers and bays. Two lectures cover the experience of women in the war, on the home front, as medical workers on the field, and even (in a few cases) as soldiers. The focus then shifts back to the military events of 1864, moving the narrative forward to the Overland campaign up to the battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania in the spring of 1864.

Part IV brings us to the finale of the Overland campaign and the siege of Petersburg and Richmond. This offers an excellent opportunity to discuss the home front, in both the North and the South, and consider the differences in the wartime experience between the two sections. After one lecture on the issue of prisoners of war, we turn back to the military front to investigate how Grant's strategy to envelope the South and eliminate its ability to fight militarily played out in Sherman's Atlanta campaign and his inexorable pressure on Lee at Richmond. With the conclusion of the war in April 1865 came the chance for peace and reconciliation, but the assassination of Abraham Lincoln dominated the immediate period after the cessation

of hostilities. A final lecture sums up the lessons and legacies of this great national trauma and reminds us that, in a larger context, the issues that divided the nation during the era of the Civil War continue to resonate in modern America. This course will attempt to make those issues clear while providing a sense of the drama and tragedy of this tumultuous period in the life of the nation. ■

# Prelude to War

## Lecture 1

**In this lecture we'll first look at the ways in which the North and South developed along different paths in the four decades before the conflict erupted. Then we'll see how the issue of territorial expansion into the Federal lands in the West proved especially poisonous. And finally we will look very briefly at some of the mileposts along the road to sectional disruption.**

**B**etween 1788 and 1860, the North developed into a society that embraced the idea of modern capitalism. The population grew rapidly and was more urban, with more immigrants than the South. The economy was diversified: It was about 40 percent small-farm agricultural, with strong industrial and merchant sectors. Religion helped to encourage economic growth. Yankee Protestantism was dominant; the political and economic leadership largely came from this segment. A Catholic minority stood somewhat out of the mainstream.

Reform movements also thrived in the North during this period. Temperance stood among the more important movements. Public education received widespread support. Abolitionism was the most important reform movement, with its roots in the “free labor” idea. And many people in the North held negative perceptions about the South: They thought it was holding the nation back.

The South between 1788 and 1860 offered many contrasts to the North. The population grew less rapidly. The South was not as urban, and public works were not as extensive. The biggest city in 1861 was New Orleans, with 160,000 people. Because of its smaller population, the South was falling behind in the House of Representatives.

About 80 percent of the economy in the South was focused on agriculture, and slavery exerted a major influence on economic development. Leaders were large, wealthy landowners and slaveholders. Only 25 percent of the

population held slaves, and only about 12 percent had twelve or more slaves. However, all Southern whites had a stake in slavery, because it gave them status, regardless of their economic position. Agrarian dominance was based on cash crops, and “King Cotton” was the most important.

Southern religion differed from that in the North in important ways. It was more personal. It was less interested in societal reform and more interested in personal salvation. And education and reform movements did not thrive in the South. Many people in the South held negative perceptions about the North. They viewed Northerners as cold, grasping people. They thought Northerners were more interested in money than anything else.

The issue of territorial expansion poisoned national politics. Expansion helped to determine national political representation. The South saw the North gaining seats in the House of Representatives because of the increase in its population. The South wanted to protect its social system by keeping parity in the Senate and allowing expansion of slavery into the territories, but the Northern “Free Soil” movement opposed this expansion of slavery.

In 1831, two major events occurred. The first was the most important slave rebellion in the United States’s history: Nat Turner’s insurrection in Southside, Virginia. Nat Turner, a black preacher, and a handful of followers rose up and killed several dozen white people—some by hacking. The insurrection sent an enormous shock across the white South. This is, of course, a great Southern nightmare, slaves rising up and slaughtering masters.

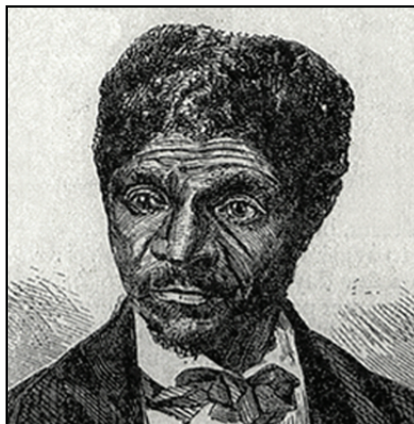
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**[B]y 1859, a great many people, both North and South, had worked themselves into such a state that compromise would be very difficult if another great crisis did arise.**

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The same year, William Lloyd Garrison began publication of *The Liberator*, an abolitionist newspaper. And nullification in South Carolina, ostensibly over tariffs, caused a national crisis. The admission of Texas to the Union in 1845, and then the Mexican War in 1846 to 1847, brought vast new Western lands into the nation that fanned the sectional tensions.

Crisis followed crisis fairly rapidly after 1848, a year in which the Free-Soil Party ran a presidential candidate. The Free-Soil Party was for keeping slavery out of the territories. The Wilmot Proviso, although voted down in the Senate, alienated slaveholders by barring slavery from any territory acquired as a result of the Mexican War. Land acquired from Mexico—now California, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, and parts of Colorado and Nevada—thus became the focus of hot debate. The Compromise of 1850 helped to avert a crisis but satisfied neither the North nor the South. It allowed California to enter the Union as a free state, breaking parity in the Senate. However, it contained tough Fugitive Slave laws.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

**Dred Scott, the slave whose Supreme Court case denied slaves the rights of citizens and helped propel the country toward civil war.**

Two years later, Harriet Beecher Stowe published *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Hundreds of thousands of people in the United States and abroad quickly bought the controversial book, which deepened national divisions. Many Northerners who really hadn't cared before became empathetic about the awful situation of black people living under slavery.

Two years after *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was published, the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 deepened national divisions even further. The doctrine of "popular sovereignty" appealed to some as a solution to the slavery expansion problem: It would allow residents of the territories to decide the issue of slavery.

Many Northerners said that this doctrine violated the Missouri Compromise because it would potentially open up to slavery some of the territories that the Missouri Compromise had said would be closed to slavery forever. The compromise went beyond the stage of mere debate. There was tremendous



violence associated with the Kansas-Nebraska Act, as pro-slavery people and antislavery people fought and killed each other in Kansas and along the Kansas-Missouri border. There was virtually a minor civil war that broke out to win control of the area.

In 1856, one of the more dramatic things that have ever happened on the floor of the House or the Senate occurred. Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, after giving a powerful speech condemning what he called the “Crime against Kansas” (that is, perhaps allowing slavery into Kansas), was caned by Preston Brooks of South Carolina, confirming negative perceptions on both sides.

In 1857, The *Dred Scott* decision seemed to guarantee slavery’s spread throughout the United States and alienated a large part of the North. It declared that slaves were not citizens. It found that the Missouri Compromise violated the Fifth Amendment prohibition against governmental “taking.” Congress had a responsibility to protect slaves as “property.”

National institutions failed to perform as stabilizing forces during this period. Several churches divided into Northern and Southern branches (e.g., Southern Baptists). The Whig and Democratic parties also split along sectional lines. The Whig Party died out altogether in 1852. And the Democratic Party became a Southern party. Then, in 1856, the Republican Party was founded and became a sectional (Northern) party. The national parties were no longer influential in holding things together, just as the churches were not.

Many people looked to the Supreme Court as the last hope for an institution that really would be above the sectional controversy. But *Dred Scott* showed that that was not the case either. The Supreme Court seemed to favor the slaveholding South. Even major Northern politicians, such as Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan, seemed to favor the South in their policies and actions; for this, they and their ilk were derisively termed “dough faces” by their political opponents. These are Northern men doing the bidding of their Southern masters, said many who opposed them. Many in the North worried that they were almost hopeless in the face of the powerful slaveholding influence.

So many Northerners and Southerners had developed such strong antithetical views of the other by 1859 that any sort of compromise would be nearly impossible should another great crisis arise—which it did when the election of 1860 brought to power the Republican Party, which had called for closing off the territories to slavery. An important thing to keep in mind when reviewing this period is that perception was more important than reality in the sectional crisis. ■

### Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 1–5.

Potter, *The Impending Crisis, 1848–1861*, chapters 1–12.

### Supplementary Reading

Cooper, *The South and the Politics of Slavery, 1828–1856*.

Donald, *Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Did the North and South have good reasons to fear each other's influence over the course of national affairs?
2. Would a serious crisis have been possible in the absence of slavery?

# The Election of 1860

## Lecture 2

Today we're going to shift forward and look at the presidential election of 1860, really the most momentous presidential election in United States history, an election around which more was at stake than at any other time in our national past.

The presidential canvass of 1860 and Abraham Lincoln's election as the first Republican to occupy the White House precipitated the secession crisis of 1860–1861. Against a backdrop of sectional antagonism fueled by John Brown's raid on the Federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia), on October 16, 1859, voters mobilized to decide which party would hold power in Washington. There was a mixed response in the North: The majority did not approve of Brown's action, but there was some praise for it. Most white Southerners, recalling Nat Turner's earlier revolt, reacted to the raid with horror as a failed attempt to foment a slave uprising. In particular, the mixed praise in the North was perceived in the South as broader than it really was. Then a series of unexplained fires in Texas in the summer of 1860 further rocked the white South. They were attributed to slaves, which fed the fear among white Southerners.

The initial convention at Charleston, South Carolina, was divided between the pro-slavery, pro-Southern Yancey platform and the pro-Northern Douglas platform that favored popular sovereignty in the territories. The convention failed to agree on a candidate, as 49 Southern delegates walked out. A second convention in Baltimore saw the final breakup of the Democratic Party: The majority of delegates nominated Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois and Hershel V. Johnson, while the Southern minority nominated John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky and Joseph Lane in mid-May 1860.

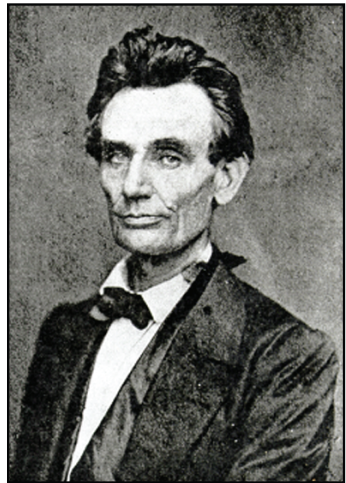
**[In the 1860 election],  
there was a clear choice.  
If you vote for the  
Republicans, there will  
be no more slavery in  
the territories. ... If you  
vote for Breckinridge,  
there will be an absolute  
guarantee for slavery.**

The Republican Party, aware of the disarray in the Democratic Party, selected a moderate candidate. Several principal contenders failed in early ballots: William Henry Seward (too radical), Salmon P. Chase (too radical), and Edward Bates (ex-Whig; too conservative).

Supporters of Abraham Lincoln of Illinois crafted a winning strategy to secure his nomination. Their platform accepted slavery where it existed but called for barring it from the Federal territories. It deplored John Brown's raid and called for a Homestead Act, internal public improvements, and protective tariffs. This platform represented a Northern, progressive, mercantile philosophy.

The Constitutional Union Party, growing out of the earlier American Party and "Know-Nothing" movement, attempted to avoid the issue of slavery. John Bell and Edward Everett won the nomination. The platform ignored slavery and called for support of the Constitution and the Union.

The campaign offered the spectacle of a nation in trauma. All four candidates professed devotion to the Union. The canvass took on the character of two contests: Lincoln and Douglas contended for Northern votes; Douglas, Breckinridge, and Bell contended for Southern votes. Lincoln was not even on the ballot in several Southern states. Many Southerners, especially in the lower tier of states, threatened secession should the Republicans win; they associated Republicans with abolitionists and John Brown. Slavery, race, and economics were the principal campaign issues but were not equally important in every section of the nation. Abolitionists were not satisfied with the Republican platform, but they generally supported



**Abraham Lincoln, president of the United States from 1861 to 1865.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

the Republican Party. Lincoln did not campaign; Douglas did, even in the South.

The campaign of 1860 ranks as the most important and one of the most complex in United States history. The election yielded a divided result. Lincoln lost the popular vote by a wide margin (2.8 million votes to 1.9 million), but he won the Electoral College by an even wider margin (an absolute majority of 180-123).

A united Democratic Party would not have won the election. Douglas polled 1.35 million popular votes and 12 Electoral votes. Breckinridge received 675,000 popular votes and 72 Electoral votes, mostly in the South. Bell won 600,000 popular votes and 39 Electoral votes, in the upper South and border states.

Lincoln's support was not evenly distributed across the North. The Upper North (strongly antislavery in sentiment) provided the strongest Republican turnout. Antislavery Northerners viewed the election as a major step toward throwing off the "slaveocracy" of the South.

The year of 1860 was a momentous one in American political history. Voters had a clear choice on the issues of slavery and the economy. In only their second national campaign, the Republicans elected their candidate as president. ■

### Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 6–7.

Potter, *The Impending Crisis, 1848–1861*, chapters 14–16.

### Supplementary Reading

Donald, *Lincoln*, chapters 8–9.

## Questions to Consider

1. What does the election of 1860 tell us about whether the American people believed there were true differences between the North and South?
2. Can you imagine a modern election in which the candidate of either the Democratic or Republican Party did not appear on the ballot in several states (as was the case with the Republicans in 1860)?

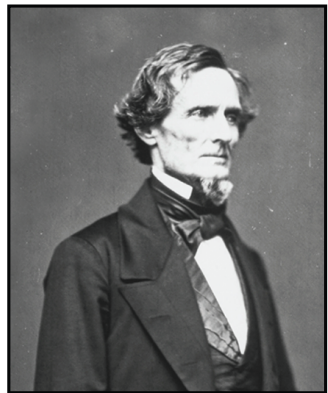
# The Lower South Secedes

## Lecture 3

**[W]ith Abraham Lincoln and the Republicans triumphant in the presidential canvas of 1860, the great question facing the United States in mid-November 1860 and the topic that we'll take up in this lecture is how the South would react to the verdict at the polls.**

**M**any white Southerners considered the Republican victory in 1860 a triumph for those in the North who hoped to kill the institution of slavery. This was especially true in the seven states of the Deep (or Lower) South (South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Georgia, Texas, and Florida), where pro-secessionist forces quickly organized. Beginning with South Carolina in December 1860, all the Lower South states passed ordinances of secession by the first week of February 1861. They sent delegates to a convention in Montgomery, Alabama, where they wrote a constitution and established a government for a new nation called the Confederate States of America.

Self-consciously modeling themselves on their revolutionary forebears and claiming to be their successors, the founders of the Confederacy chose moderate leaders and sought to entice the eight slaveholding states still in the Union (Arkansas, Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia) to join them. This first phase of the secession movement represented a risky effort on the part of the Lower South to protect the institution of slavery—this in the face of a defeat at the polls that promised, by their reading of events, to undermine the economic and social bases of their society.



**Jefferson Davis was named president of the Confederacy in 1861.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

The Montgomery Convention in early February 1861 established the Confederacy. The Confederate and United States constitutions offer an interesting comparison:

- There were many similarities of thought and language.
- There were key differences regarding slavery and Federal versus state power.
- The Confederate Constitution outlawed congressional outlays for internal improvements and prohibited protective tariffs.
- Ironically, the Confederate Constitution also prohibited secession.

The Convention produced essentially moderate work. William L. Yancey and other radical secessionists were absent. Moderates Jefferson Davis (Mississippi) and Alexander H. Stephens (Georgia) were chosen as provisional President and Vice President, respectively, pending general elections. Both Davis and Stephens were “reluctant” secessionists. The Convention avoided radical actions in an attempt to appeal to the eight slave states of the Upper South and refused to allow the re-introduction of the African slave trade. This represented the sentiment in the Lower South.

Immediate secessionists (e.g., Breckinridge supporters) wanted each state to act at once. Cooperationists (e.g., Bell and some Douglas supporters) favored joint action regarding secession. Unionists (typically in the Upper South and border states) favored working out a compromise with the North. Many Northerners—including Lincoln—thought the Cooperationists were against secession and expected a backlash in the South against secessionist sentiment.

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**It will not come as a surprise that one thing the Confederate Constitution did was explicitly protect the institution of slavery.**

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Southerners took different stances about whether Montgomery represented a revolutionary or legal response to Lincoln's election. Initially, secession was compared to the American Revolution of 1776 as an exercise in throwing off the yoke of an onerous central power. Although the hope was for peaceful separation, the Confederate States of America took several military actions during this period. They seized Federal forts and arsenals, activated the militia, and authorized an army of 100,000 men. Later arguments insisted that the Lower South had acted legally under the United States Constitution by asserting state sovereignty.

Secession cannot be disentangled from the institution of slavery. The Lower South embraced secession as a means to stave off Northern efforts to strike at slavery. White Southerners feared that their social and economic fabric would be destroyed by a dominant North, and the Republican Party's victory in 1860 focused their fears. Postwar Southern arguments tried to shift focus away from slavery. One argument revolved around constitutional issues, and both Davis and Stephens wrote lengthy tomes on this issue. In studying this era and this question, we need to note what people said at the time to properly evaluate retrospective comments. ■

### Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 8.

Potter, *The Impending Crisis, 1848–1861*, chapters 17–18.

### Supplementary Reading

Davis, “*A Government of Our Own*”: *The Making of the Confederacy*.

Thomas, *The Confederate Nation, 1861–1865*, chapter 3.

## Questions to Consider

1. Did the secessionists of the Lower South make a good case that they were the heirs of the American revolutionary generation? Support your answer.
2. Would secession have been likely in 1860–61 without the presence of slavery?

# The Crisis at Fort Sumter

## Lecture 4

**Between December 1860 and April 1861, James Buchanan and Abraham Lincoln, in turn, had to try to deal with the greatest crisis that the United States had ever faced, a crisis utterly unprecedented in American history. ... That crisis came to center on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, which assumed enormous psychological importance to people in both the North and the South.**

The period between the secession of the Lower South and the outbreak of war saw the United States and the Confederacy eye each other warily and contend for the support of eight slave states that remained in the Union. Lame-duck President James Buchanan and other Democrats sought to appeal to slaveholders with a range of compromises relating to slavery in the territories, but the Republicans stood firm in their demand for a total ban. Buchanan did not recognize the secession and stated that he would enforce the laws; however, he refused to coerce the seceding states. He proposed a constitutional amendment protecting slavery in the territories and the repeal of “personal liberty” laws in the North (these laws reflected a Northern states rights response to slavery and were given headlines by the Anthony Burns affair). Buchanan even proposed a movement to acquire Cuba and turn it into a slave state or states.

Senator John J. Crittenden of Kentucky offered the most famous compromise regarding the territories. Crittenden’s constitutional amendment proposal favored the slaveholding South. For example, he proposed the extension of slavery in all territories below 36°30’. Republicans in the Senate defeated the bill twice. But because each side had a minimum demand on which it would not yield, there was no real hope for a compromise.

Lincoln pursued a careful path regarding the crisis before and after taking office. He remained quiet before succeeding Buchanan in March of 1861. He initially believed that Unionist sentiment in the South would assert itself. His inaugural address sought to place responsibility for the start of any hostilities on the Confederates. He stated that the Federal government would hold,

occupy, and protect its installations in the South and continue to carry out governmental functions, such as the collection of customs tariffs. And he said that he would not use force but would enforce the laws.

The fate of Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor came to be the focal point of the crisis, with many in the North insisting that it be retained as a United States installation and many Confederates arguing that it stood on South Carolina soil and should be seized. Abraham Lincoln's decision in April 1861 to resupply the fort triggered an aggressive response from Jefferson Davis's government. The resultant shelling and capture of the fort caused Lincoln to call for 75,000 volunteers to suppress the rebellion and that, in turn, prompted Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, and Tennessee to join the Confederacy.

The Fort Sumter crisis unfolded as follows: Lincoln decided to resupply the fort with an unarmed vessel. An earlier attempt by Buchanan to do this had failed. The fort became a symbol for both sides. On March 5, 1861, the commanding officer of the fort sent a message saying that he was running out of provisions. In deciding to resupply the fort, Lincoln went against many of his advisers, including William Seward (secretary of war) and General Winfield Scott. Lincoln believed that Northern public opinion favored holding the fort.

The Davis Administration reacted by firing on the fort. Davis faced a range of poor options. He didn't want to appear to be the aggressor, so he asked the fort to surrender. Public opinion in the Confederacy supported seizing the fort; on April 15, gun batteries opened fire and bombarded the fort for 36 hours. News of the firing on Fort Sumter ignited passions across both



**James Buchanan, president of the United States from 1857 to 1861.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

the North and the South. The next day, President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to put down the rebellion.

The Upper South seceded in reaction to Lincoln's call for volunteers. Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, and Tennessee decided that they must secede rather than supply troops to be used against the Confederacy. Public opinion in each state had been divided about secession. Lincoln's call convinced a majority in each state to support secession.

The loss of the Upper South greatly complicated the task of restoring the Union. There were now eleven states in secession. The Upper South (especially North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee) supplied most of the Confederacy's soldiers. The Upper South contained vital industrial and agricultural resources for the Confederacy. The capital of the Confederate States was moved from Montgomery, Alabama, to Richmond, Virginia (which had 40 percent of the South's manufacturing capacity), in recognition of Virginia's importance. ■

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**The war is imminent at this point. It's imminent, and there's no way to get around it in the view of most quite reasonable people on both sides.**

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### Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 8–9.

Potter, *The Impending Crisis, 1848–1861*, chapters 19–20.

### Supplementary Reading

Current, *Lincoln and the First Shot*.

Potter, *Lincoln and His Party in the Secession Crisis*.

Stampp, *And the War Came: The North and the Secession Crisis, 1860–61*.

For more insight into President Lincoln and his political development, as well as a close look at his First Inaugural Address, we recommend the Great Course *Abraham Lincoln: In His Own Words* by Professor David Zarefsky of Northwestern University.

### Questions to Consider

1. Were there any possible grounds for compromise between Republicans and Democrats that might have averted the crisis of 1861?
2. To whom would you assign primary responsibility for the outbreak of war in mid-April 1861?

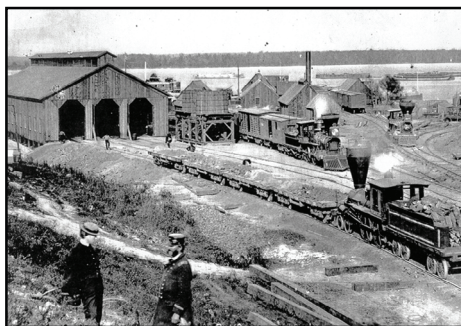
# The Opposing Sides, I

## Lecture 5

Now we'll turn our attention to a consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of each side as military action approached in the spring and early summer of 1861. In this lecture, we'll examine areas in which one side or the other seemed to have a clear advantage.

At first glance, it might seem that the North had such decisive advantages in almost every measurable category as to guarantee victory. Much of the literature of the “Lost Cause,” which flourished in the South in the late nineteenth century and continues to influence writing about the conflict, argued that the Confederacy waged a gallant but doomed struggle for independence. In reality, important factors favored each side as fighting began. We will take a close look at these factors to underscore the importance of the fact that the outcome of the war was not predetermined. Either side could have won, and the Confederacy more than once came close to persuading the Northern people that the contest was too costly in lives and treasure. The first of the two lectures on this subject will focus on areas in which one side or the other possessed a significant edge; the next lecture will address elements of the balance sheet that favored neither of the combatants.

The North had an edge of about five to two in manpower; its population of approximately 22.5 million far outstripped that of the South, which had 9.1 million—of which 3.5 million were blacks, including only 130,000 free blacks. The North drew on its much larger population, as well as a significant portion of the Confederacy's white and black male



Courtesy National Archives.

**One advantage of the North over the South was its 22,000-mile railroad network.**

populations that never supported the Southern cause. But the presence of slave labor allowed the Confederacy to muster a higher percentage of its military-age white males (about 75 to 80 percent, as opposed to about 50 percent in the North). A total of between 2.1 and 2.2 million men served in the military in the Civil War; between 750,000 and 850,000 served in the Confederate Army.

The Northern economy, boasting approximately 110,000 businesses involving 1.3 million workers, dwarfed that of the Confederacy (with 18,000 business employing 110,000 workers). The North had as many manufacturing

**Overall, geography favored the Confederacy ... as did the size of the South, the coastline, and the nature of the transportation infrastructure. Only the rivers might be reckoned at least a partial Union advantage.**

establishments as the Confederacy had factory workers. The Northern railroad network was more extensive and modern, with 22,000 miles of track, compared to only 9,000 in the Confederacy. And the Northern production of iron, ships, textiles, weapons, draft animals, and other crucial items far outstripped that in the South.

The North began the war with a professional army and navy, although this advantage was less important than might be assumed. The United States Army was only 15,000 strong and was spread across

the continent; most units were west of the Mississippi. The United States Navy had only 42 vessels in commission, and most of these were patrolling far from the South. It was a deep-water cruising navy not skilled in coastal or riverine warfare.

However, the Confederacy also possessed significant advantages. War aims favored the Confederacy, which only had to defend itself to win independence. The American Revolution offered an example of a weaker power winning over a stronger power: The Confederacy could win just by demoralizing the Northern people.



Defending home ground conveyed advantages to the Confederacy. The side defending its homes often exhibits greater motivation than an invader. Geography often favored the Confederacy as well. The sheer size of the Confederacy (more than 750,000 square miles with 3,500 miles of coastline) posed a daunting obstacle to the North. And Confederates generally knew the terrain and roads better than Northerners. Access for commerce was provided by more than 200 mouths of rivers and bays. The Appalachian Mountains presented an obstacle, and the Shenandoah Valley provided a protected corridor for military action against the North. Rivers were a mixed bag—they sometimes served as avenues of advance for the Federals (as in the Western Theater along the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers) and at other times posed barriers to Northern armies (as in Virginia).

The poor Southern transportation network would also complicate Northern logistics. The Vicksburg campaign of 1863 is one example, and the infamous “mud march” in Virginia (January 1863) is another. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapters 1–2.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 10.

### Supplementary Reading

Nevins, *The War for the Union: The Improvised War, 1861–1862*, chapters 4–5.

### Questions to Consider

1. Considering the factors covered in this lecture, how would you assess each side’s chances for victory?
2. Is it possible to gauge accurately the possible impact of intangibles, such as fighting to defend home and hearth?

# The Opposing Sides, II

## Lecture 6

This lecture continues the discussion begun with our last lecture. The analysis shifts to the topics of pools of trained officers available to each side, political leadership, and the wild card of foreign intervention. Although it remains a common idea that the Confederacy had better generals, we will see that each side drew from a pool that essentially mirrored the other's. Officers trained at West Point held the top positions in both armies.

In terms of political leadership, I will argue that Jefferson Davis provided capable direction to the Confederate war effort, although his performance inevitably suffers in comparison to Lincoln's deft leadership. Unknown at the time hostilities began—and a subject of intense Union and Confederate interest for at least two years thereafter—were the attitudes abroad. England and France represented a potentially significant element in any reckoning of strengths and weaknesses. Should the Confederacy win the kind of support the colonies received from France during the Revolution, the entire balance sheet of the war would be upset.

Absent major intervention from abroad, the victory would go to the side that mustered its resources and exploited its advantages most effectively to maintain national morale and purpose while convincing the opposing population that the war was not worth the cost.

There were 824 officers on the active list at the outbreak of the war. Of this total, 640 stayed with the North and only 184 went with the Confederacy. Of the approximately 900 professional officers then in private life, 114 served the North while 99 served the South. Several factors largely offset



**Southern schools like the Military College of South Carolina (a.k.a. the Citadel) supplied the Confederacy with many trained officers.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

the fact that roughly three-quarters of all West Pointers and other pre-war professional officers fought for the North. Larger Union armies required more officers. Professional officers were kept in Regular United States units rather than being spread out among volunteer regiments for the first part of the war.

Southern state schools, such as the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) and the Citadel (Charleston, South Carolina), sent a large number of trained officers into the Confederacy's armies. A total of 2,000 men had trained at VMI, and about 1,700 served in the Confederate States Army (CSA), especially in the Army of Northern Virginia.

Professional officers on both sides shared a common heritage. Drawn from this pool of professionals, there were 583 general officers in the Union Army during the war and 425 general officers in the CSA. These officers learned from the same professors at West Point, and they learned the same lessons during the Mexican War under Generals Scott and Taylor. The officers tended to subscribe to the same strategic and tactical ideas concerning the power of rifled muskets and cannons in giving advantages to the defender; the need to avoid frontal assaults; the desirability of trying to turn an enemy's flank, if possible; and the advantage of exploiting interior lines of movement, both strategically and tactically. The officers also had similar ideas about communication, supply, and the use of field fortifications as a defensive tactical measure.

Political realities forced both sides to use politicians as generals. Lincoln appointed these "political generals" based on party affiliation and nationality. There were many famous, albeit not overly capable, political generals during the Civil War.

However, Lincoln and Davis both did well as war leaders. Lincoln began the conflict with little military knowledge (he was a company grade officer during the Black Hawk War in the 1830s), but he learned quickly. He grasped

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**The North had some very considerable advantages, but the South was by no means facing a hopeless struggle for independence.**

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strategic ideas well, listened to his military advisers, and read about strategy. He was willing to grant wide authority to generals if necessary to win, and he was willing to grow and change his ideas about what kind of war needed to be fought.

Davis, on the other hand, had considerable military experience, and he put it to good use. He was a West Point graduate (class of 1828), he had been a colonel in the Mexican War, and he had been secretary of war under President Franklin Pierce. But he never found a second able army commander to do in the Western Theater what Lee did in the Eastern Theater. Davis sometimes was reluctant to step aside and allow Lee to have wider authority.

The possibility of foreign intervention constituted a wild card. The eventual decisions of England and France were crucial; the example of the American Revolution impressed both sides. Military events would largely determine the decisions of European powers. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapters 1–2.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 10.

### Supplementary Reading

Boritt, ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost*, Essays One and Three (by James M. McPherson and Gary W. Gallagher, respectively).

### Questions to Consider

1. Which factors favoring one side or the other likely would change as the war developed? Which would remain relatively constant?
2. Do you think human or material factors loomed larger in the balance sheet of strengths and weaknesses?

# The Common Soldier

## Lecture 7

**Now we're going to shift our focus to the most important resource that each side had at hand, and that was the men who would fight the war.**

**T**his lecture examines several elements of the common soldier's experience. Approximately 3 million men served in the Union and Confederate military forces, and they mirrored their respective societies in terms of occupation, class, and other demographic categories. They served in units with strong regional identification—often in companies raised from the same town or area and regiments from the same part of a state—and frequently shared tents with relatives or friends. Approximately 2.1 million served in the North (roughly 50 percent of the military-age pool). A total of 750,000 to 850,000 served in the Confederacy (roughly 75 to 85 percent of the white military-age pool).

### About the Soldiers

- The “average” soldier was a native-born, white, Protestant farmer between the ages of 18 and 29.
- About 25 percent of the North's soldiers were foreign born, with Germans and Irish predominating (more than 30 percent of the military-age white males in the North were foreign born).
- About 9 to 10 percent of the Confederate soldiers were foreign born (7.5 percent of the military-age white males were foreign born).
- A few Native Americans fought on each side (more fought for the Confederacy).
- Approximately 180,000 blacks served in the United States Army; some blacks served in the CSA but in noncombatant roles.
- African American soldiers, who made up almost 10 percent of the Union army, will be discussed in a later lecture.

Soldiers left a mass of letters, diaries, and other evidence that enables us to reconstruct their lives in the army and gain at least some understanding of their motivations and attitudes. A number of factors prompted them to enlist and remain in the ranks; ideology and patriotism ranked highest among men who volunteered in 1861 and 1862. Quite understandably, men who enlisted because they feared being conscripted and those drafted directly into the army often exhibited less enthusiasm and willingness to fight hard and make sacrifices than the early volunteers did.

The breakdown of soldiers by class reflected that in society at large:

- Farmers were the largest group in each army.
- Skilled laborers were the next largest group.
- Professional men and white-collar workers combined were slightly underrepresented in the armies.

It was not a “rich man’s war but a poor man’s fight.”

Various factors motivated soldiers to enlist and remain in the ranks. Those who volunteered in 1861–62 were more likely to be motivated by ideology and patriotism (Professor James McPherson is a leading advocate of this assertion). Other factors included peer or community pressure, a search for adventure, masculine identity, the desire to be a hero, hatred of the enemy, and the lure of money (e.g., enlistment bounties in the North). This was the general view of the pioneering Civil War historian Bell Wiley.

How did slavery factor in? Slavery was a part of Southern society, even though most soldiers did not own slaves. On the Union side, probably only a very small percentage of soldiers fought for emancipation. The key reason for fighting for the most part was to restore the Union. Most soldiers probably combined several of these factors in their decisions to serve.

Soldiers spent most of their time in camp. They contended with a number of problems and unpleasant duties in this environment:

- Boredom was a common phenomenon.
- They drilled frequently.
- They resisted strict military discipline.
- They suffered from homesickness.

Soldiers engaged in various amusements to dispel camp boredom:

- They gambled and played cards.
- They read and wrote letters.
- They played a variety of games (chess, checkers, and so on).
- They sang and played music (sentimental songs were the favorites).
- They chased animals.
- They engaged in enormous snowball fights.

Soldiers complained most often about the food:

- Confederates often lacked enough to eat.
- Hardtack (Union), cornbread (Confederate), and problematical meat were staples.
- Fresh vegetables and fruit were often in short supply.

Soldiers suffered terribly from disease and poor medical care. Disease killed two soldiers for each man killed or mortally wounded in battle. Childhood diseases, such as measles, chickenpox, and mumps, were great problems (especially among rural men and early in the war). Also, poor food and contaminated water complicated health issues. Latrines were often poorly situated, and soldiers drank from rivers, creeks, and ponds. Dysentery, diarrhea, and malaria were scourges. Yet another difficulty soldiers faced was inadequate clothing, which caused poor health in winter.

Medicine could not treat many battlefield injuries effectively. Physicians were most successful in treating wounds to the limbs through amputation but could not do much for torso wounds. Soldiers often waited many hours (or even days) to receive treatment for wounds.

Although desertion plagued both armies (rates were nearly the same on each side—12 to 14 percent), most soldiers served competently in camp and in battle. ■

### Essential Reading

McPherson and Cooper (eds.), *Writing the Civil War: The Quest to Understand*, Mitchell essay.

### Supplementary Reading

McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*.

Mitchell, *Civil War Soldiers*.

Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union*.

———, *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy*.



## Questions to Consider

1. To what extent did Union and Confederate soldiers share a common experience? To what extent did their wartime service differ?
2. What do you think it would take to motivate modern Americans to undertake the type of service rendered by Civil War soldiers?

# First Manassas or Bull Run

## Lecture 8

**This lecture will examine Union planning in the late spring and early summer of 1861. We will then move on to consider the background and the conduct and the consequences of the Battle of First Manassas or Bull Run, the first major military engagement of the war.**

**A**fter the Upper South's secession and the transfer of the Confederate seat of government from Montgomery, Alabama, to Richmond, Virginia, both sides sought to mobilize men and resources and plot military strategies. The North had to mount an active campaign to force the Confederate states back into the Union; the Confederacy had the easier task of countering the North's moves. If the Lincoln government did nothing, the Confederacy would win by default.

The crucial figure in the North was General Winfield Scott. Scott was a distinguished military man whose career went all the way back to the War of 1812 and included brilliant service in the Mexican War. Old and infirm by the time of the Civil War, he still had a good strategic grasp. This brilliant soldier formulated a long-range strategy that came to be called the "Anaconda Plan," which called for blockading the Confederate coast; seizing control of the Mississippi River; and if necessary, invading the South with a large army.

Scott argued for pressure on the coasts, along the Mississippi River, and possibly against the Confederate hinterlands. He argued that the North would have to be patient while the military built and trained a large force, perhaps as large as 300,000 men. But the Northern public clamored for an immediate march against Richmond, the Confederate capital, which is the first example of how important politics and public opinion would be in shaping Civil War military affairs. Lincoln believed that a battle could be won immediately, and he prodded General Irvin McDowell into action. To avoid any confusion, I should mention that the battle has two names because the North named battles after terrain features—Bull Run Creek—while the South used the nearest town or railroad junction—Manassas Junction.

The disposition of forces is important to understand. Confederate commander Joseph E. Johnston (with 12,000 men) faced Union General Robert Patterson (with 18,000 men) in the lower (northern) end of the Shenandoah Valley. Confederate General P. G. T. Beauregard (with 20,000 men) faced Union General Irvin McDowell (with 35,000 men) near Washington, D.C.

Union success depended on keeping the Confederate forces divided. A railroad connection gave the Confederates the advantage of interior lines. Patterson's goal was to tie Johnston down in the valley while McDowell struck Beauregard. McDowell wanted to avoid a direct assault and planned to turn the Confederate flank. McDowell marched from Washington, D.C., on 16 July 1861. By 20 July, the Confederates had concentrated near Manassas Junction.

The result was the campaign of First Manassas or Bull Run, which climaxed on July 21, 1861, in the war's first major clash. The Confederates won the battle, a fumbling affair that saw commanders on each side trying to apply lessons they had learned about flank attacks and interior lines. Although relatively modest by the standards of later battles of the war, First Manassas had a major impact on civilian morale and persuaded people on both sides that the war would not

be won or lost in a matter of a few months. The Battle of First Manassas or Bull Run on 21 July 1861 yielded a major Confederate triumph.

The initial Union moves promised victory. But a strong Confederate defense under General Thomas J. Jackson on Henry House Hill bought time. Also, Johnston's troops eluded Patterson and joined Beauregard's force in time to turn the tide of battle.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

**Winfield Scott, general-in-chief of the U.S. armies.**

The battle demonstrated the similarity between generalship on both sides. McDowell and Beauregard both planned to strike the other's flank rather than mount direct attacks. Both sides were well aware of the Confederacy's interior lines. The Federal retreat turned into a rout hampered by civilians who had come out to watch the battle; however, the Federal army showed resiliency after the initial rout, a pattern that would be repeated (e.g., after Chancellorsville and Chickamauga).

**So 2,000 were lost on the Confederate side; 2,700 were lost on the Federal side. Later in the war, as I said, this would be considered a midsize battle or even a modest size battle, but here in July of 1861 it's an enormous battle, the biggest battle in United States history.**

The battle may have had long-term influence on expectations of success in the Union and Confederate armies in Virginia. As the largest battle in American history to that point, it made people on both sides think in terms of a bloodier contest. The North suffered 2,700 casualties; the South, about 2,000 (casualties included men killed,

wounded, missing, and captured). The Northern public suffered a major disappointment and no longer expected a quick resolution to the war. The Confederate public took heart and expected to win independence. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 2.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 10–11.

### Supplementary Reading

Adams, *Our Masters the Rebels*, chapter 4.

Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What lessons should each side have learned from the First Manassas campaign?
2. What factors are crucial to a proper evaluation of the importance of a military campaign?

# Contending for the Border States

## Lecture 9

**At the time that [the 1861] battle was fought ... both sides wondered how the four slaveholding border states would react to events both on the battlefield and to political events during this period. Would they decide to cast their lot with the Confederacy—all four of them or some of them—or would they remain loyal to the Union?**

**W**e know now that the four slaveholding border states (Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, and Delaware) remained in the Union, but in the summer and autumn of 1861, no one could predict this with certainty. As we've already seen, the firing on Fort Sumter had sent the four Upper South states into the Confederacy. Both the Lincoln and Davis Administrations devoted considerable attention to the border states, all of which witnessed internal debates of varying intensity about the question of secession. Rich in manpower and material resources, the border states stood as prizes of enormous strategic value. The loss to the Union of Missouri and Kentucky would dramatically alter the strategic situation west of the Appalachians; the loss of Maryland would place Washington, D.C., inside Confederate territory.

A key Northern goal was to keep the four border states loyal to the Union, so they would not follow the four states of the Upper South into the Confederacy. Kentucky suffered severe internal strife before electing to remain in the Union. It had strong economic and social ties with both the North and the South, and it was the birthplace of both Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis. It did permit slavery, and it had a history of working for compromise during sectional crises. It was, after all, the home state of the "Great Compromiser" Henry Clay and of John J. Crittenden.

Kentucky sought to maintain a neutral stance for the first months of the war. It sent soldiers into both side's armies and traded with both the North and the South. This was especially hard on Kentucky, and its statesmen over the years had worked to achieve compromise. But Confederate military incursions under Leonidas Polk in September 1861 decided the issue in favor

of the North. Kentuckian pro-secessionists created a shadow Confederate government and sent representatives to the Confederate Congress.

Missouri, meanwhile, experienced some of the worst violence of the war. Antebellum “border war” strife carried over into the Civil War. Military clashes between pro-Union and pro-Confederate Missourians marked the first months of the conflict.

A captain named Nathaniel Lyon, a very aggressive anti-Southern man, led Unionist troops against pro-Southern militia men at Camp Jackson near St. Louis and compelled them to surrender. As the prisoners were being marched through the city, a pro-Southern mob gathered and harassed the column, and shots were exchanged. By the end of the day more than 25 people had been killed.

Lyon’s actions sent many conditional Unionists over to the Confederacy: People who’d been on the fence didn’t like what Lyon had done, and they decided perhaps they’d better support the Confederacy. Military events came to a head in Missouri on August 10 in the Battle of Wilson’s Creek. It’s the second big battle of the Civil War. Confederates under Sterling Price won a victory there. Brigadier General Lyons (Union) was killed in this battle, and John C. Frémont was sent to take overall command of the Union forces.



**John C. Frémont, who took command of Union forces in 1861.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

In addition to the 90,000 men Missouri sent into the Union forces and the 30,000 it sent into the Confederate army, the state had about 3,000 or so more Missourians who fought as guerrillas in what was the most vicious guerrilla war of the entire conflict.

Maryland posed a special problem to Lincoln because of its location. Baltimore and parts of eastern Maryland favored the Confederacy; the Union 6<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Regiment was attacked in Baltimore in April, and pro-Confederates isolated Washington by destroying bridges and cutting

telegraph wires. Lincoln acted decisively after the Maryland state legislature voted to recognize the Confederacy. He sent troops to Baltimore, suspended the *writ of habeas corpus* in part of the state, watched as Federals arrested pro-Confederate Marylanders, and took strong measures to ensure a Unionist victory in the 1861 governor's race. Maryland remained in the Union but sent troops to both side's armies, 40,000 to the North and 20,000 to the South.

Meanwhile, Delaware's loyalty to the Union was never in doubt. There were very few slaveholders in the state, and its economic orientation was toward the North. Only a handful of Delaware men joined the Confederate army. Western Virginia counties broke with the rest of the state and formed West Virginia. This part of the state had few slaves and strong economic ties to the North.

Trans-Allegheny counties met in convention following Virginia's secession on 17 April 1861. Union military successes in the area during June and July strengthened their hand. The delegates declared themselves the legitimate government of Virginia on 2 August 1861. They drew boundaries of the proposed new state of Kanawah. They set up a mechanism for approving their work that left pro-Confederates unrepresented. The new state of West Virginia was created in May 1862 and accepted by Congress in 1863.

Retention of the border states proved invaluable to the Union. The North controlled strategic access to important rivers, such as the Tennessee, the Cumberland, and the Mississippi itself. The Confederacy was denied control of vital military resources, such as animals, minerals, food, and manpower. Retention of the border states was a key strategic victory for the North.

In the end, a combination of effective Northern policy (including heavy-handed interference with Maryland's internal political affairs), Southern blunders, and strong Unionist sentiment prevented any of the border states from embracing the Confederacy. Union military success and a strong internal movement to break away from Virginia and the Confederacy created, in effect, a fifth border state when West Virginia was formed. ■



## Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 9.

Nevins, *The War for the Union: The Improvised War, 1861–1862*, chapters 6–7.

## Supplementary Reading

Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri during the American Civil War*.

## Questions to Consider

1. How important was it for the Lincoln Administration to keep the border states in the Union?
2. Why did the border states react differently to Fort Sumter and Lincoln's call for 75,000 troops than the four states of the Upper South?

# Early Union Triumphs in the West

## Lecture 10

We return to the military front with this lecture, training our lens on events west of the Appalachian Mountains in 1861 and 1862. We'll look at the shakeup in the Union high command in the autumn of 1861 that saw Winfield Scott step aside and George B. McClellan take his place. We'll then examine four more topics.

The battle of First Manassas captured the imagination of citizens in both the United States and the Confederacy, and most people almost certainly still looked to Virginia as the critical military arena. But a number of generals on both sides believed that the war would be decided in the vast Trans-Appalachian Theater, a view Abraham Lincoln quickly came to share. The first important battles of 1862 would be fought in the West, and the Union would develop a group of officers there who would eventually win the war.

The next two lectures will address the Western Theater between the autumn of 1861 and the summer of 1862, describing a remarkable series of Union victories and introducing major military figures, such as Henry W. Halleck, Ulysses S. Grant, Albert Sidney Johnston, and Don Carlos Buell.

The Union shuffled its high command in the autumn of 1861. Thirty-four-year old George B. McClellan replaced the aged Winfield Scott as general-in-chief. McClellan also took field command of the Army of the Potomac. Generals Henry W. Halleck and Don Carlos Buell took command in the West. Halleck (known as "Old Brains") was to pacify Missouri and seize control of the upper Mississippi



**Ulysses S. Grant, who commanded Union forces in the West in autumn 1861 with marked success.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

west of the Cumberland River. Buell, in command east of the Cumberland, was to liberate eastern Tennessee and sever rail connections between Virginia and Tennessee.

The Confederacy faced a difficult situation in the West. Albert Sidney Johnston held overall command of a vast theater that stretched from the Appalachians to the Mississippi River. He had been trained at West Point and had served in the United States Army. He had also fought in the Texas Revolution and had risen to be the commander-in-chief of the Army of the Republic of Texas. He was the ranking field general of the Confederacy. Johnston's theater was vulnerable along four avenues of advance available to the Union:

- The Mississippi River flowed through the Confederate heartland.
- The Tennessee River sliced through Tennessee into northern Mississippi.
- The Cumberland River flowed to Nashville.
- The Louisville and Nashville Railroad ran through Kentucky and Tennessee to Nashville.

Johnston placed his forces to cover all four lines of advance. Troops stationed at Columbus, Kentucky, under General (and Episcopal bishop) Leonidas Polk blocked the upper Mississippi on Johnston's left. Troops at Bowling Green, Kentucky, blocked the L&N Railroad and anchored Johnston's right. Weaker positions in the center were at Fort Henry (blocking the Tennessee River) and Fort Donelson (blocking the Cumberland River). Other smaller forces were also available to Johnston in the theater.

Each side held two advantages in the Western Theater: Johnston had interior lines with a good rail connection from Memphis, Tennessee, to Bowling Green, Kentucky, and a unified command. Halleck and Buell had superior numbers and four good avenues of advance.

The North mounted a generally effective offensive in early 1862 to attack Johnston where he was the weakest, in the center. Buell achieved mixed success. Some of his troops under George Thomas won the Battle of Mill Springs (or Logan's Crossroads) in January 1862 and compelled the Confederate forces to abandon eastern Kentucky. However, Buell proved unable to liberate eastern Tennessee. Halleck's forces, on the other hand, achieved excellent results. All major Confederate influence in Missouri was eliminated. In February, General Ulysses S. Grant captured Fort Henry (on the Tennessee River). He cooperated successfully with Flag Officer Foote and his gunboat flotilla. Grant then broke the Confederates' railroad connection and attacked Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River. General Floyd, the Confederate commanding officer, was not competent to defend against a concerted attack. In fact, he and his second-in-command, General Pillow, fled the fort, and command devolved on S. B. Buckner, who surrendered the fort unconditionally to Grant. During this campaign, the Confederates abandoned Columbus and Bowling Green. Nashville and much of middle Tennessee fell to the Union. Johnston's entire line was gone, and he lost over one-quarter of his forces. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 3.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 13.

### Supplementary Reading

Connelly, *Army of the Heartland: The Army of Tennessee, 1861–1862*, chapters 1–7.

Cooling, *Forts Henry and Donelson: The Key to the Confederate Heartland*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What does campaigning in the Western Theater in early 1862 tell us about communications and logistics during the Civil War?
2. Could the Confederates have mounted a more effective defense of the region or were numbers and terrain too strongly against them?

# Shiloh and Corinth

## Lecture 11

**[In this lecture, we'll] look at the follow-up Northern successes at New Orleans and Corinth, Mississippi, and Memphis after Shiloh. We'll finish by offering a summary of the effects of five months of hard campaigning in the West during the first half of 1862.**

Union and Confederate planning set the stage for a major confrontation at Shiloh (Tennessee). Union forces under Grant and Buell were ordered by Halleck to unite on the Tennessee River, just north of the Mississippi border. But before describing the campaign, we should look at Ulysses S. (“Sam”) Grant, the person and the general.

Up to the start of the war, Grant had an unremarkable record at West Point, in Mexico, and in the regular army. He left the army in 1854 after a posting to the West Coast (Fort Humboldt in northern California). He was successful in a variety of civilian jobs. His early successes in the Civil War earned him advancements.

Southern leaders orchestrated an impressive concentration of troops drawn from many parts of the Confederacy at the vital railroad junction of Corinth. The use of railroads and interior lines helped this concentration. The Confederate plan was to strike Grant before he united with Buell’s forces.

Each side had ambitious goals. Halleck hoped to push the Confederates entirely out of Tennessee and into central Mississippi. The Confederates hoped to defeat Grant’s force at Pittsburg Landing, then turn against Buell’s army approaching from Nashville.

Shiloh (or Pittsburg Landing) unfolded as a chaotic battle that set a new standard for slaughter and ended in Union victory. The Confederate advance from Corinth was slow and poorly masked, and the timetable for the attack was too optimistic, so General Beauregard counseled Johnston to call off the attack.

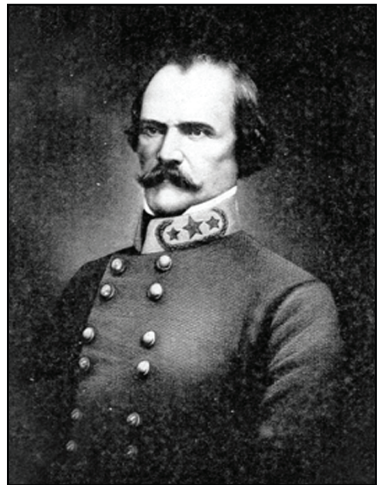
Grant's army was surprised by the Confederate attacks on April 6, 1862. The Confederates drove Grant's army back to the banks of the Tennessee River in the morning fighting. The fighting was savage; the center of the Union line managed to hold out in a spot that came to be known as "the Hornet's Nest." The delay in the Confederate advance enabled Buell to come up to supporting distance across the Tennessee. Thousands of green soldiers on each side failed to fight well.

Grant, William Tecumseh Sherman, A. S. Johnston, and other senior officers also made a number of mistakes: Grant and Sherman were sloppy in taking precautions against a Confederate attack. Johnston mismanaged the Confederate attacks on April 6 and failed to seize Pittsburg Landing.

Johnston was wounded while on the Confederate right and died at about 2:30 p.m. Command devolved on Beauregard, who called off the attacks in the evening.

Grant's resolve and Buell's reinforcements eventually won the day for the Union. On 7 April, Beauregard, unsupported and with no reinforcements from General Van Dorn, was unable to stop Union counterattacks. Grant's forces regained the ground lost the day before, and Beauregard abandoned the field. Casualties at Shiloh exceeded those suffered by Americans in all previous wars combined. Confederate casualties numbered 11,000, and Union casualties, 13,000. This carnage shocked people in both the North and the South.

The momentum of Union success in the West continued after Shiloh. New Orleans fell to Admiral Farragut on 25 April 1862. Corinth capitulated to



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**Confederate general Albert Sidney Johnston died in the Battle of Shiloh.**

Halleck in late May, giving Halleck a good base for operations. And Memphis fell after a naval battle in early June.

Five months of campaigning had witnessed substantial Union progress in the West and fulfilled part of the Anaconda Plan. The North held the upper and lower reaches of the Mississippi. Four important Southern cities were in Union hands:

- New Orleans—the largest city and biggest port.
- Nashville—a center of communications and industry.
- Memphis—a major port on the Mississippi.
- Corinth—a major rail center.

Additionally, large parts of Tennessee were in Union hands, and 100,000 Federals at Corinth stood ready for further movements. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 7.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 13.

### Supplementary Reading

Connelly, *Army of the Heartland: The Army of Tennessee, 1861–1862*, chapters 8–9.

Daniel, *Shiloh: The Battle That Changed the Civil War*.



## Questions to Consider

1. As a Confederate leader, would you worry more about the civilian or military repercussions of events in Tennessee during the first six months of 1862?
2. What does the Confederacy's ability to maintain a defense after the loss of such crucial cities as New Orleans, Nashville, and Memphis suggest about the magnitude of the North's problem in subduing the rebellion?

# The Peninsula Campaign

## Lecture 12

**In this lecture we're going to continue our look at the military side of the war in 1861 and 1862, but we're going to leave the Western Theater behind us and change our focus to the Eastern Theater.**

**T**he advent of George B. McClellan was a major development in the war. He was general-in-chief—he was commanding all of the Union armies across the entire strategic map of the war. But most people think of him in terms of what went on in the Eastern Theater because not only was he general-in-chief, he was also the commander in the field of the Army of the Potomac. It was the events associated with the Army of the Potomac that made or broke his reputation, as we will see.

General McClellan wielded immense influence over the conduct of the war in late 1861 and early 1862. He became general-in-chief because of his victories in 1861 and his reputation as a gifted soldier. He was a West Pointer (class of 1846) who had fought in the Mexican War and traveled to Europe as a military observer. He had effective command presence and charisma. He came to think of himself as more knowledgeable than either Scott or Lincoln and essentially forced Scott into retirement in November of 1861.

General McClellan was a master organizer, and by the end of September 1861, he'd built the Army of the Potomac into a formidable force of more than 100,000 well-equipped and well-trained men. He motivated his men and made them feel like soldiers; for this, he was the best-loved Union commander in the war, inspiring his men with the kind of devotion that the Army of Northern Virginia gave to General Robert E. Lee. But he was not quick to move them into battle.

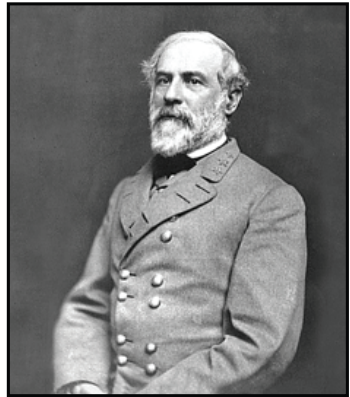
McClellan and Lincoln clashed repeatedly over the army's inaction. Lincoln wanted an offensive in 1861 and the early spring of 1862. However, McClellan refused to move against Joseph E. Johnston's forces in northern Virginia. He exaggerated the Confederate strength and asked

for reinforcements. He showed contempt for Lincoln's military views, often ignoring him completely. He also expressed disdain for Republicans who sought to add emancipation to the cause of restoring the Union as a war aim of the North.

The Battle of Ball's Bluff (21 October 1861) underscored the political nature of the war. A small Federal force suffered a humiliating defeat near Leesburg, Virginia, near Washington, D.C. Lincoln's friend Colonel Edward D. Baker (a U.S. Senator from Oregon) was killed in the battle, and nearly 1,000 Union soldiers were casualties. Republicans blamed Baker's superior, Charles P. Stone (a Democrat), for the defeat.

Republicans in Congress created the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War. Congress began a pattern of examining Federal officers in the wake of military campaigns, often targeting Democrats, such as George B. McClellan and, later, George G. Meade. This sensitized senior officers to the possibility that they might be removed from command for political reasons. General Stone was kept in prison for six months without any charges being brought and without being sent to a court-martial. His career and reputation were ruined.

In April–May of 1862, the Federals mounted a major threat in Virginia. McClellan moved his army to the peninsula between the James and York Rivers after extensive delays. He was secretive with Lincoln about his plans. Lincoln finally ordered him to move but still got no immediate action. He removed McClellan as general-in-chief but left him in command of the Army of the Potomac. Joseph Johnston fell back from northern Virginia to protect Richmond, negating McClellan's initial plan for an attack via the Rappahannock. Irvin McDowell commanded another substantial Union force at Fredericksburg, and there were smaller



**Confederate general Robert E. Lee would later assume command of all Southern armies.**

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forces under Generals John C. Frémont and Banks in the Shenandoah Valley and western Virginia.

The Confederates responded on two fronts to Union movements in Virginia, using their advantage of interior lines. Johnston withdrew to the peninsula from Fredericksburg and joined other forces already there. Stonewall Jackson launched his Shenandoah Valley campaign with a very small force. General Robert E. Lee (chief military adviser to President Jefferson Davis) gave Jackson broad instructions and goals, and Jackson conducted a brilliant campaign that tied down Banks and Frémont and inspired the Confederate people. Jackson took the initiative, moved fast, struck hard, and effectively tied down superior Union forces. By early April, McClellan had 70,000 men before Yorktown, Virginia, against only 20,000 Confederates under John B. Magruder. Magruder bluffed McClellan into thinking that he had a much larger force. McClellan laid siege to Yorktown for a month. The Confederates finally abandoned their positions and fell back toward Richmond; McClellan followed them up the peninsula. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 7.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 13, 15.

### Supplementary Reading

Catton, *Mr. Lincoln's Army*, parts 2–3.

Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*, vol. 1, chapters 10–16, 21–29.

Sears, *To the Gates of Richmond: The Peninsula Campaign*, chapters 1–5.

Tanner, *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862*.

Tap, *Over Lincoln's Shoulder: The Committee on the Conduct of the War*, chapter 2.

## Questions to Consider

1. Should the Republicans have allowed McClellan to plan and execute his strategy without interference?
2. Is it possible to achieve true balance between military and political imperatives in a war waged by a democratic people?

# The Seven Days' Battles

## Lecture 13

[In this lecture, we are] going to examine the Battle of Seven Pines or Fair Oaks, which took place on May 31 and June 1, 1862, and had far-reaching consequences. We'll then look at the elevation of Robert E. Lee to command the Confederate army defending Richmond, and then we'll look at the Confederate offensive in the Seven Days' Battles in late June and early July.

The Battle of Fair Oaks or Seven Pines (31 May–1 June 1862) set the stage for the Seven Days' Battles. General Joseph Johnston ended a pattern of Confederate retreat up the peninsula with a poorly executed attack against McClellan's divided forces on May 31. The battle ended as a tactical draw but had long-range consequences:

- McClellan was upset by the scale of the carnage and became more timid.
- Johnston was wounded during the battle and was replaced by Robert E. Lee.

Lee took command under difficult circumstances. Robert E. Lee was the scion of one of the greatest families in Virginia—indeed, in the United States. He attended West Point and graduated with distinction in 1829, and he had a dazzling record in the Mexican War, with three brevet promotions. He served as Superintendent of West Point from 1852 to 1855. He was offered command of the Union army in 1861, but he cast his lot with Virginia and the Confederacy. Lee's early military experience serving the South was not too successful.

When Lee assumed command, Confederate civilian morale was at a low point because of defeats in the West and McClellan's proximity to Richmond. The Confederate army required considerable reorganization before it would be ready to assume the offensive, which was Lee's preferred mode of fighting. Reinforcements had to be integrated into the army, which grew to 100,000

men, the largest Confederate army ever fielded. Lee had to coordinate with Jackson's troops that would be marching toward Richmond from the Shenandoah Valley in mid-June.

The Seven Days' Battles reversed the strategic picture in Virginia by placing McClellan on the defensive. Lee was never comfortable reacting to an enemy, and he believed he could counter the North's greater numbers by seizing and holding the initiative.



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**The United States Military Academy at West Point.**

The Seven Days' Battles consisted of five significant engagements in which the Confederates were the aggressors. McClellan's forces were still divided by the Chickahominy River, and Lee chose to hit his exposed right flank under Fitz John Porter. Following are brief descriptions of these five engagements:

- Mechanicsville (June 26)—Jackson's failure to arrive on time upset the Confederate plan.
- Gaines's Mill (June 27)—the largest battle of the Seven Days. Again Jackson was late to deploy. Lee launched 50,000 men in the largest single attack of the war against Porter's position.

- Savage Station (June 29)—Porter was reunited with McClellan's main body south of the Chickahominy, and McClellan changed his base of operations.
- Glendale or Frayser's Farm (June 30)—marked by uncoordinated attacks by Lee's forces.
- Malvern Hill (July 1)—McClellan occupied an easily defensible position. Lee's attack was poorly coordinated. Frontal assaults took a high toll on the Confederates. McClellan failed to take the opportunity to counterattack against Lee.

The Seven Days had enormous consequences. War arrived in the Eastern Theater on a much bloodier scale than ever before, with 20,000 Confederate and 16,000 Union casualties. The strategic initiative passed to Lee and his army. Confederate morale rebounded after a dark period of reversals in the West. European nations interpreted the Seven Days as evidence that the South was winning the war. Lee's replacement of Joseph Johnston placed in command the soldier who would do the most to drive the Confederacy toward independence over the next three years. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 7.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 15.

### Supplementary Reading

Catton, *Mr. Lincoln's Army*, part 3.

Dowdey, *The Seven Days: The Emergence of Lee*.

Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, vol. 1, chapters 30–43.

Sears, *To the Gates of Richmond: The Peninsula Campaign*, chapters 6–13.



## Questions to Consider

1. Contingency often looms large in warfare. Speculate about how the conflict might have been different if Joseph E. Johnston had not been wounded at Seven Pines and replaced by Robert E. Lee.
2. Should the Seven Days' Battles be interpreted as a major missed opportunity for McClellan?

# The Kentucky Campaign of 1862

## Lecture 14

Let's begin by looking at the strategic situation that the Confederates saw in front of them in the wake of the Seven Days and the fall of Corinth, Mississippi—two key events. Corinth is gone. The Confederates are going to have to deal with that and decide what to do in the West.

The Confederacy faced a difficult strategic situation in July 1862. Union armies posed threats against several crucial parts of the Confederacy. McClellan's 100,000-man Army of the Potomac remained just a few miles southeast of Richmond. John Pope's new Army of Virginia (comprised of Frémont's, Banks's, and McDowell's old commands) was prepared to move along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad into central Virginia. Union forces menaced Chattanooga and the railroad that connected it to Atlanta and the interior of Georgia. Henry W. Halleck had been made general-in-chief of the Union armies on 11 July (replacing McClellan in this role) and would henceforth coordinate all Northern efforts.

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**Bragg's and Kirby Smith's retreat from Kentucky ended the western dimension of this great Confederate counteroffensive in the late summer and fall of 1862.**

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Nonmilitary factors also loomed large as these campaigns began. England and France were watching closely to see how the next round of campaigns unfolded, following the Confederate success in the Seven Days' Battles. Meanwhile, Abraham Lincoln was looking for a battlefield victory that would permit him to announce his Emancipation Proclamation. The Confederacy responded to these threats by invading Kentucky and Maryland.

Two Confederate armies marched into Kentucky in August and September. Braxton Bragg commanded the larger of the two forces. Bragg was a West Pointer and a decorated artilleryman in the Mexican War. Loyal to Jefferson Davis, he rose rapidly from brigadier to full general after Shiloh. Bragg

replaced Beauregard in command of the Army of Mississippi (later the Army of Tennessee) after the fall of Corinth and trained his army near Tupelo, Mississippi. A strict disciplinarian, Bragg had a number of physical ailments. He was argumentative and often short-tempered. His plan called for taking half the army to Chattanooga for a movement northward and leaving the other half under Earl Van Dorn and Sterling Price to defend Mississippi. Bragg was helped when Don Carlos Buell abandoned plans to strike at Chattanooga, because Confederate cavalry disrupted Federal supply lines.

Edmund Kirby Smith commanded the smaller of the Confederate armies and would lead the march into Kentucky. The Confederates hoped to accomplish several things by this campaign:

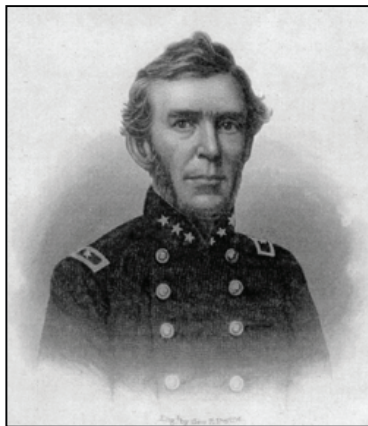
- Gather food and fodder in Kentucky.
- Recruit among Kentuckians assumed to be friendly to the South.
- Remove Federal forces from parts of Tennessee.
- Create problems for the Republicans during the elections of the fall of 1862.

The campaign began on a successful note for the Confederates. Smith marched into Kentucky in August and captured a Federal garrison at Richmond, Kentucky, on August 30. He then moved deeper into the bluegrass region. Bragg followed Smith northward and also enjoyed success; he captured a Federal force at Munfordville on September 17.

Smith drew Buell out of Nashville, but the campaign unraveled in late September and early October. Bragg marched into the bluegrass region after waiting at Munfordville for Buell to attack him. Buell moved on to Louisville. He hoped that Van Dorn and Price would march north from Mississippi and capture Nashville (vacated by Buell). The Confederates took time to inaugurate a Confederate governor of Kentucky at Frankfort on 2 October. This move was designed to give legitimacy to Kentucky's

place in the Confederacy. The Confederates also hoped to boost enlistment in Kentucky.

Van Dorn and Price were defeated at the Battle of Corinth (Mississippi) on October 3–4, ending hope that Nashville would be liberated. The campaign climaxed at Perryville, in Kentucky's largest Civil War battle. A reinforced Buell moved lethargically from Louisville toward Bragg starting on 1 October. The armies made contact about 35 miles southeast of Louisville on October 7, engaged in combat into the night, and fought a major battle the next day. Neither army commander understood what was happening or had a clear picture of the other force's strength. Each side enjoyed some tactical success before night ended the fighting on October 8, with the Confederates gaining momentum.



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**Confederate General Braxton Bragg.**

Bragg decided to abandon the field, reunite with Smith, and abandon Kentucky. He failed to achieve any of his goals for this campaign, including the recapture of Nashville and the liberation of Tennessee. Possible explanations for his decision include the following:

- He lacked a good grasp of how the Battle of Perryville had actually gone.
- The Confederates lacked a safe supply line.
- Kentuckians had failed to flock to the Confederate colors.
- The campaign did not affect the Northern elections as hoped. ■

## Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 8.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 17.

## Supplementary Reading

Connelly, *Army of the Heartland: The Army of Tennessee, 1861–1862*, chapters 10–14.

Cozzens, *The Darkest Days of the War: The Battles of Iuka and Corinth*.

McDonough, *War in Kentucky: From Shiloh to Perryville*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Do you think better military leadership would have yielded a more positive result for the Confederates in Kentucky? Or was the negative result a failure of political leadership in misreading the state of public opinion in Kentucky and supporting an invasion in the first place?
2. Did the fact that Bragg's army withdrew only into Tennessee after the Battle of Perryville justify a sense of some Confederate accomplishment?

# Antietam

## Lecture 15

**In August and September 1862, while Braxton Bragg and Kirby Smith marched their armies into Kentucky, major military events also were transpiring in Virginia and Maryland. This lecture will assess the movements and battles in the Eastern Theater during the late summer and early autumn of 1862.**

**T**his lecture shifts the spotlight from Kentucky to Virginia to complete our consideration of the great Confederate counteroffensive in the autumn of 1862. However important the campaign in Kentucky might have been militarily, the Virginia theater continued to command greater attention. This gave special urgency to the events that followed McClellan's retreat from Richmond after the Seven Days.

The initial confrontation pitted Lee against John Pope. Pope was born into an important family and was related by marriage to Mary Todd Lincoln. He was a graduate of West Point and had enjoyed some success in the Western Theater under Halleck. Pope held center stage in Virginia after the Seven Days; he was also arrogant and a braggart. As a Republican, he was attuned to congressional feelings.

Pope brought a harsher type of war to Virginia. He threatened to execute guerrillas, arrest citizens who harbored irregulars, and drive from their homes civilians in Union lines who refused to take the oath of allegiance. He also vowed to take whatever his army needed from civilians, thus earning the enmity of white Southerners in Virginia. Pope planned a campaign toward the rail junction at Gordonsville that would sever Lee's rail connections to the Shenandoah Valley via the Orange and Alexandria and the Virginia Central Railroads.

Lee reacted to Pope's movements by first reorganizing his army, then dividing and then reuniting it. Longstreet's wing kept an eye on McClellan below Richmond. Jackson's wing marched to meet Pope along the Rappahannock.

Jackson defeated part of Pope's army (under Banks's command) at Cedar Mountain on August 9, 1862. He probed along the Rappahannock after Pope's troops withdrew. Lee and Longstreet joined Jackson along the Rappahannock after McClellan was recalled to Washington.

The reunited Army of Northern Virginia defeated Pope's army at Second Manassas (August 28–30). Jackson's wing flanked the Federals, destroyed their main supply base at Manassas Junction, and engaged them on the old Manassas (Bull Run) battlefield. Longstreet's wing arrived on the battlefield opposite Pope's left flank. Pope didn't realize that these CSA forces had arrived to face him. The Confederates delivered a decisive attack on August 30 that drove the Federals from the field. The Union troops withdrew in good order back to the defenses of Washington, D.C. This battle resulted in approximately 9,000 Confederate and 16,000 Union casualties. Pope was removed from command and posted to Minnesota to fight the Sioux; McClellan was reinstated by Lincoln as the field commander.

Lee retained the strategic initiative by moving across the Potomac into Maryland. He had a range of goals:

- He wanted to dictate the action and not react to Northern moves.
- He planned to gather food and fodder in Maryland and perhaps Pennsylvania.
- This move would give northern Virginia a respite from the presence of the armies and allow farmers to get their crops in.
- Lee hoped to recruit Marylanders to the Confederate cause.
- He wanted to influence the North's fall elections (cf., Bragg's objective in Kentucky in this same general time frame).
- He thought that success would perhaps gain foreign support for the Confederacy.

Lee counted on a slow response from McClellan, so Lee divided his forces by dispatching Jackson with more than half of the army to capture the Union garrison at Harpers Ferry, a key strategic point. However, the campaign quickly turned against Lee. His army suffered from large-scale straggling and desertion after crossing the Potomac because many of the men were reluctant to leave their homes in Virginia. Furthermore, many were sick and all were tired from the heavy campaigning. A copy of his Special Orders 191 for the campaign fell into McClellan's hands on 13 September. He moved more rapidly than anticipated and took control of the gaps in South Mountain on September 14. Jackson took longer than expected to capture Harpers Ferry, which finally fell on 15 September.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

**The Battle of Second Bull Run (or Second Manassas), August 28–30, 1862.**

The campaign reached a climax at Antietam on September 17. Lee recalled Jackson and concentrated his nearly 35,000-man army near Sharpsburg, Maryland (along Antietam Creek, a tributary of the Potomac River). One



division (A. P. Hill's) remained in Harpers Ferry to guard the 12,000 Union prisoners. McClellan, with nearly 70,000 men, launched heavy assaults in three sectors of the battlefield. His goal was to grind Lee down and cut him off from the Potomac River, his line of retreat. The Union assaults were not coordinated, however. A. P. Hill's Light Division made a forced march from Harpers Ferry and arrived in time to turn the tide of the battle.

Lee barely held his position on the 17<sup>th</sup> but remained on the field for another day before retreating across the Potomac. The battle resulted in over 23,000 casualties (10,500 Confederate and 12,500 Union), making this the bloodiest single day in U.S. history. Photographs from the battlefield caused a sensation.

Few campaigns matched the impact of Antietam. The military consequences of this tactical draw were mixed. Lee retreated but held his ground just south of the Potomac for some time. McClellan elected not to press the retreating Confederate forces and was removed from command the day after the fall 1862 elections. England and France decided to await further military results before attempting some type of intervention in the American war.

Lincoln used the battle as a pretext to issue his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. This move forestalled foreign intervention. The proclamation also marked a change in Northern war aims. The war for the Union had become a war for union and freedom because, wherever Union forces marched now, they would be taking the possibility of freedom with them. The stakes were much higher now: The whole social fabric of the South was on the table. If the Confederacy lost the war, they would lose slavery, and their whole social system would be turned topsy-turvy. ■

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## Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapters 8–9.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 17.

## Supplementary Reading

Catton, *Mr. Lincoln's Army*, parts 4–6.

Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, vol. 2., chapters 1–15.

Gallagher, ed., *The Antietam Campaign*.

Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run: The Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas*.

Jones, *Union in Peril: The Crisis over British Intervention in the Civil War*.

Sears, *Landscape Turned Red: The Battle of Antietam*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Was Lee too aggressive in invading Maryland and remaining north of the Potomac after September 14?
2. How would you handicap the Confederacy's chances for independence in the aftermath of the Maryland campaign?

# The Background to Emancipation

## Lecture 16

**In this lecture, we will look at the Democratic Party's very negative view of emancipation. We'll look at the idea of black colonization and why it appealed to Abraham Lincoln and many other white people in the North.**

**T**his lecture will examine the debate over emancipation from the beginning of the war through the spring of 1862. Slavery was at the heart of sectional tensions that eventually brought on the Civil War. The South seceded in large measure to protect its slave-based society from a perceived threat posed by the Republican Party, but for at least the first year of the conflict, the issues of slavery and emancipation remained in the background.

The North actually went to war to preserve the Union rather than to destroy slavery. The Republican platform of 1860 explicitly stated that slavery would be protected where it already existed, and this position was repeated in Lincoln's First Inaugural Address. Lincoln reiterated the position in his July 4<sup>th</sup> message to Congress. A Congressional Resolution offered by John Crittenden reaffirmed the position in 1861. This effort was made to help maintain the border states in the Union. It was passed almost unanimously.

Lincoln also declined to call for emancipation. He stated that the Constitution protected slavery and that only the states controlled it. He worried about the loyalty of the border states and feared antislavery rhetoric might lead them to join the Confederacy. He knew the North was divided about emancipation and knew he would alienate Democrats if he called for emancipation.

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**I think that whatever the merits of the different historians' arguments, there's absolutely no doubt that runaway slaves weakened slavery in the Confederacy.**

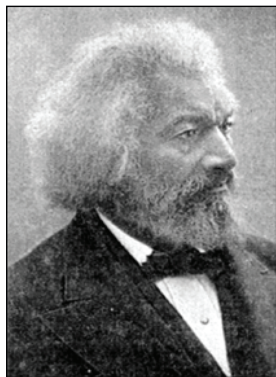
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The Republican Party was divided over how best to address emancipation. The conservatives wanted slavery to end but insisted on a gradual process controlled by the states and supported colonization of freed slaves. The moderates (including Lincoln) sought an earlier end to slavery, accepted a cautious approach in the beginning, and supported colonization but moved closer to the radicals as the war grew increasingly bitter and costly.

The radicals favored outright emancipation as a war aim from the outset. They pointed to the “war powers” clause of the Constitution as giving the North the right to free slaves, arguing that the Southern states did not enjoy constitutional protection while in secession. The radicals were a minority of the party but held disproportionate power in Congress. Such senators as Charles Sumner (MA—Foreign Affairs), Henry Wilson (MA—Military Affairs), John P. Hall (NH—Naval), Benjamin Wade (OH—Territories and the Committee on the Conduct of the War), Zacharia Chandler (MI), and others held key committee posts. Members of the House of Representatives, such as arch-radicals Galusha Grove and Thaddeus Stevens, both of Pennsylvania, also had great influence in their chamber. The radicals used the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War to press their agenda of punishing slaveholders. They gradually persuaded many moderates to support their views.

Most Democrats supported a war for the Union but violently opposed emancipation. They feared black competition for jobs and the specter of racial intermarriage. Many Union soldiers held similar views. The idea of black colonization appealed to many Northerners. This idea went back to the early part of the nineteenth century; proponents said it would avoid a race war and would protect white laborers from black competition.

Lincoln met with a group of free black men in 1862 to urge them to support colonization. He argued that they would never be equal in the United States. They refused to support the idea. Lincoln supported a trial expedition to



**Abolitionist Frederick Douglass.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

an island off the coast of Haiti; conditions proved to be terrible, and the expedition failed miserably.

Slaves furthered the process of emancipation by escaping to Union lines. Historians have argued about the impact of this phenomenon. Those who support the concept of self-emancipation insist that slaves were the crucial actors in bringing about emancipation. Others insist that the Union Army, Congress, and Lincoln played greater roles. Whatever the merits of the different historians' arguments, there is no doubt that runaway slaves weakened slavery in the Confederacy and forced Union military and political leaders to consider their status. ■

### Essential Reading

Berlin et al., eds., *Free at Last: A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom, and the Civil War*, chapter 1.

### Supplementary Reading

Cox, *Lincoln and Black Freedom: A Study in Presidential Leadership*, chapter 1.

McPherson, ed., *The Negro's Civil War: How American Negroes Felt and Acted during the War for the Union*, chapters 1–2.

McPherson and Cooper, eds., *Writing the Civil War: The Quest to Understand*, Gallagher essay.

### Questions to Consider

1. If slavery lay at the heart of sectional tensions, why did the North choose not to pursue emancipation from the beginning of the war?
2. Would the Confederacy have benefited from stronger efforts to place emancipation on the North's political agenda before the summer of 1862?

# Emancipation Completed

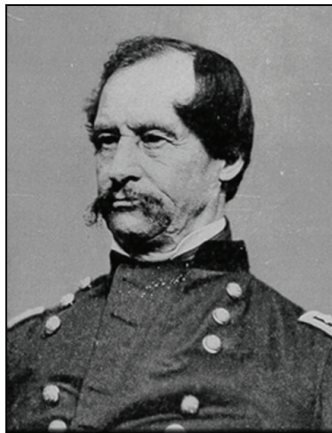
## Lecture 17

This lecture will continue our examination of the process by which emancipation became an integral part of the North's national strategy. Within a chronological framework extending from the outbreak of the war through January 1, 1863, we'll look at the actions and attitudes of various players in this drama.

**E**mancipation moved forward on several fronts simultaneously. Abolitionists pressed for emancipation from the outset of the war. They acknowledged that the Constitution protected slavery in the loyal states and argued that slavery was a military necessity to the South and should be attacked on that basis. Several Union generals attempted to strike at slavery in 1861–1862.

Benjamin F. Butler, a so-called “political general,” refused to return runaway slaves to their masters on the Virginia peninsula in May 1861, declaring them to be “contraband of war” and, thus, liable to seizure under international law. This action meant that the conflict was a war between two nations, not just a rebellion or civil war. Butler set a precedent followed by many other commanders. For example, John C. Frémont declared slaves of all rebels in Missouri free in August 1861.

Abolitionists hailed Frémont as a hero, but Lincoln forced him to amend the order to bring it into line with congressional legislation regarding rebel property (and to keep the border states in the Union).



**Union general David Hunter, who attempted to strike at slavery in 1861–1862.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

David Hunter ordered all slaves to be freed along the South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida Atlantic coasts in May 1862. Lincoln likewise ordered him to revoke the order, because it overstepped Hunter's authority. Abolitionists roundly condemned Lincoln's action.

Congress passed several antislavery measures in 1861–1862. The first Confiscation Act (6 August 1861) stipulated that owners of slaves engaged in Confederate military service forfeited ownership of those slaves. In March 1862, Congress prohibited the use of military power to return escaped slaves to rebel masters. In April 1862, Congress abolished slavery in the District of Columbia, with compensation to the owners.

On 19 June 1862, Congress emancipated all slaves in the territories without compensation to the owners, thus fulfilling a plank of the 1860 Republican platform. In July 1862, Congress passed the second Confiscation Act, which freed all slaves who escaped from rebel owners to Union lines.

Lincoln decided by the spring of 1862 that the war would bring emancipation, which he had clearly mapped out:

- As a “domestic institution,” slavery would have to be abolished by the states.
- Owners should be compensated for the loss of property, and the Federal government should help pay for the cost.
- The process should be gradual to avoid social dislocation, and freed slaves should be urged to colonize abroad.

In March and May 1862, Lincoln pressed the border states to adopt a plan along these lines, first by arguing that they would be compensated and later, in July, by warning that they would lose everything if they dragged their feet. By 22 July 1862, Lincoln announced to his Cabinet that he had decided to issue his proclamation but held off making a public announcement until he had a military victory (this was right after the reverses of the Seven Days' Battles).

He issued the preliminary proclamation on September 22, 1862, after the Battle of Antietam, explaining his reasons to his Cabinet:

- The border states would never take the initiative, as the events of March through July had shown.
- Increasing numbers of black people in Union lines demanded attention on their status.
- Great Britain and France would be favorably impressed.
- Most of the Northern people were ready to wage a harsher kind of war against the Confederacy.
- Northern Democrats would oppose whatever course he took and, thus, could be ignored.

The final Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, was offered as a measure of military necessity. It freed only slaves in rebel territory not

controlled by U.S. troops. Lincoln lacked the constitutional power to free slaves in loyal states. He interpreted any area under Union military control (e.g., northern Virginia) as a loyal part of the United States. He had the Constitutional power to strike at rebel slaves as a war measure.

**The Emancipation Proclamation meant that, if the North eventually did triumph over the Confederacy, there would be a new type of Union, not a slightly modified version of the old Union.**

Lincoln's announcement was criticized by a variety of people as an empty gesture. Abolitionists and many foreign observers said it did not go far enough.

Democrats said it went too far and that Lincoln was being hypocritical. Confederates said it was designed to incite servile insurrection.



The Emancipation Proclamation's real importance lay in the fact that it marked the addition of emancipation to the Union's war strategy and meant that Union armies would carry freedom with them as they penetrated into the Confederate heartland. Even if the men in the armies weren't that concerned about freeing slaves, the fact that the Emancipation Proclamation was in place meant that, as they marched southward, freedom marched with them. ■

### Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 16.

### Supplementary Reading

Franklin, *The Emancipation Proclamation*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Does Lincoln deserve his reputation as the "Great Emancipator"?
2. Were Union armies the practical agents for emancipation?

# Filling the Ranks

## Lecture 18

As the war dragged on and increased in fury, both sides sought to cope with a seemingly insatiable demand for more soldiers, ever larger numbers of soldiers, to keep the ranks in the armies filled. This lecture will examine that search for manpower in the Confederacy and in the Union, and we'll start with the Confederacy.

**R**oughly three million men served during the war, more than two million in Northern forces and 750,000 to 900,000 in Confederate forces. A huge number of men volunteered during the first year of the conflict, after which both sides used a combination of incentives and the threat of compulsory service to keep the ranks filled. Facing a disadvantage in manpower of five to two, the Confederacy resorted to extreme measures sooner than the North.

The Confederate Congress passed a national conscription act in April 1862 that extended the service of all men then in uniform and made all other military-age white males between the ages of 18 and 35 eligible to be drafted for three years of service. Subsequent legislation expanded the pool to include all men between the ages of 17 and 50. The Confederate draft allowed individuals to avoid service by purchasing a substitute until the end of 1863; various occupations were also exempt. The conscription act passed in April 1862 was the first in U.S. history and providing for the following:

- All white males between the ages of 18 and 35 were conscripted for three years.
- All original twelve-month enlistees were retained in the service. This led to a rise in the number of desertions.
- Men in war production industries, the civil service, and the clergy and teachers were exempted from service.
- Men were allowed to hire substitutes.

The North instituted its national draft in March 1863, creating a pool of men between the ages of 20 and 45. The North allowed men to hire substitutes or pay a commutation fee. The Federal government, states, and localities in the North also offered bounties to attract volunteers. Both drafts were designed to spur enlistment rather than compel service, and they operated quite effectively in that relatively few men were conscripted on either side.

Although complaints about a “rich man’s war but a poor man’s fight” arose in both the North and South and the drafts triggered significant opposition (the New York City draft riots being the most extreme example), all classes were well represented in Union and Confederate armies. Overall, the Confederacy mobilized about 80 percent of its available manpower (only the presence of slaves to keep the economy going allowed this impressive mobilization), and the North mobilized about 50 percent of its military-age men.

The South fought the war without a regular army, per se. For one thing, the South had no professional military in place when the war began, although some professional former United States Army officers served the Confederacy. The South relied on volunteers for national service who would return to private life at the end of the war.

Volunteers were plentiful early in the war, but less so within a year. Hundreds of thousands volunteered in 1861—about half for three years and half for twelve months. These twelve-month men were eligible to get out of the army as the second spring’s campaign approached in 1862. Incentives (e.g., \$50 bonuses, one month’s leave, and transfers to other units) passed by the Confederate Congress in December 1861 failed to inspire reenlistment.

The Confederate Conscription Act of 1862 was controversial but necessary for the Southern war effort. As noted, it retained in service for three years all those who had volunteered for twelve months in 1861, thus averting a potential military problem in early 1862. Revisions of the 1862 Act extended the age limits to 17 to 50, added new categories of exemptions (e.g., blacksmiths, tanners, and salt workers), ended substitution, and extended service of all men in uniform to the duration of the war.

Opponents attacked conscription as contrary to individual and state rights and unduly favorable to wealthy people. A provision exempting one white male on any plantation with twenty or more slaves was especially unpopular. Groups of draft resisters and deserters found refuge in remote parts of the Confederacy. Some governors appointed hundreds of their friends to the civil service to help them avoid the draft.

The draft spurred enlistment and helped keep the Confederate armies strong. Approximately 80 percent of the Confederacy's soldiers volunteered for service. The continuance of slavery behind the lines was one factor that enabled this figure to be reached.

Although far richer in manpower, the North, too, experienced difficulty keeping its ranks filled. Hundreds of thousands of men volunteered in 1861, after which the number declined markedly. The first call to arms was for 75,000 men for three months. Subsequent calls sought many more men for much longer terms of service.

In July and August 1862, the Lincoln Administration sought more volunteers. It issued a call for states to supply 300,000 three-year men. In August, the Administration ordered states to supply 300,000 nine-month militiamen or face the prospect of a militia draft. States used bounties and other means to meet the July–August quotas. These measures did yield a large number of voluntary enlistments.

The North resorted to a national draft in 1863 that proved as controversial as the Confederate version. The Enrollment Act of March 1863 cast a wide net but allowed many men to avoid service. All males between 18 and 45 were eligible. States were given a grace period before each draft call in which to meet their quotas. Men could purchase a substitute and be released from all obligations or pay a \$300 commutation fee to avoid any one draft call (this provision was abolished in 1864).

Bounties also played a prominent role in the operation of the Northern draft. Federal, state, and local bounties were offered. Bounty brokers acted as middlemen, and bounty jumpers collected their money, then deserted. Draft

resistance broke out across the North. Thousands of men fled to Canada, and riots occurred in New York City and elsewhere.

Despite problems, the draft operated largely as intended. Nearly one million men volunteered during the period of the draft. Only 162,000 were conscripted or purchased substitutes.

It is instructive to investigate some differences between the Northern and Southern experiences with manning their armies. Confederates had proportionally more veterans in their ranks, because the North had, over time, more manpower flooding in. The Confederates, as attrition occurred, usually filled up their original regiments, mingling recruits with veterans. The North usually created new regiments with new recruits. This practice often led to high casualties when new regiments encountered veteran regiments on the battlefield. ■

### Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 14, 20.

### Supplementary Reading

Cook, *The Armies of the Streets: The New York City Draft Riots of 1863*.

Geary, *We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War*.

Moore, *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Do you find it ironic that the Confederacy, with its rhetoric about the sanctity of state rights, would embrace a national draft to help maintain its independence?
2. Can you imagine a crisis that would allow the modern United States to mobilize its citizenry in a way comparable to Civil War mobilization?

# Sinews of War—Finance and Supply

## Lecture 19

We'll now look at how the two sides raised the money necessary to maintain those armies in the field through a long and grueling war. We'll also assess the relative quality and abundance of the weapons, clothing, and food supplied to soldiers in the opposing armies.

The conflict forced both contestants to undertake spending on an unprecedented scale. The Federal budget in 1860 was less than \$65,000,000; in 1865 the North's budget alone totaled more than \$1,250,000,000. Both sides resorted to selling bonds, taxing their citizens, and printing paper money to meet financial obligations; however, the Confederacy proved far less able than the North to do so without suffering economic hardship. Lacking a well-developed prewar financial infrastructure and without substantial reserves of hard money, the Confederacy relied too heavily on paper currency and experienced spiraling inflation that eventually reached more than 9,000 percent.

The Confederacy struggled to finance its war effort. Its antebellum economy had not been geared to support a modern technological war. Most Southern capital was invested in land and slaves, and the South lacked a substantial financial infrastructure.

The Confederacy resorted to three methods of financing the war:

- A series of property, income, consumer, and profits taxes contributed about 5 percent of the needed funds. Christopher Memminger, CSA secretary of the treasury, supported this option, but the Confederate Congress resisted it early in the war.
- Various bond issues brought in another 35 percent.
- Paper Treasury notes constituted the final 60 percent and proved disastrous.

Several factors contributed to soaring inflation, including over-reliance on paper currency, shortages of goods caused by the Union blockade, the presence of invading armies, and disruption of the transportation network. By the end of the war, it took \$92 to buy what \$1 had purchased at the outset in 1861.

The North, by contrast, easily met the test of financing the war and producing all necessary goods. During the war, the Federal budget grew from 2 percent to approximately 15 percent of the GNP. The North used the same three methods of financing the war as the Confederacy did, but with far more success. Various types of government bonds (many sold to individuals rather than to banks) raised 66 percent of needed funds and tied investors to the national effort. The bond most widely used was the “5/20” bond at 6 percent interest. Over one million people bought Northern bonds.

Treasury notes, known as “greenbacks” and guaranteed as legal tender by the Legal Tender Act passed on February 25, 1862, accounted for another 13 percent.

This money did not devalue like the money in the Confederacy. It was initially issued when the Union Army was doing well in the Western Theater. Income, excise, and other taxes made up the final 21 percent of revenue.

The Republican Congress enacted legislation designed to help foster a modern capitalist system. The aforementioned Legal Tender Act of 1862 created a stable paper currency. The National Bank Act of 1863 sought to drive state bank notes (of which there were over 7,000 different ones) out of circulation and replace them with more stable national bank notes. Northern inflation during the war was only 80 percent, compared to the 9,000 percent experienced in the South.

The Confederacy fought at a disadvantage in most areas of supply but managed to keep its armies adequately armed, clothed, and provisioned.

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**So overall, Union soldiers were a bit better armed, often a bit better fed—sometimes much more than a bit better—and also better clothed than their Southern counterparts.**

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Neither side had a decisive edge in shoulder weapons. Most Union and Confederate soldiers had rifled muskets by 1863 (the South produced some of its own and obtained others by capture or import). The North produced 160,000 breech-loading and 175,000 repeating weapons for a small percentage of its troops, an amount that the Confederacy could not match.

The North enjoyed a wider edge in ordnance. Confederate production was sufficient, but its quality was not (this was especially true for artillery ammunition). Josiah Gorgas was in charge of Southern ordnance, and his major factories were in Augusta, Georgia; Selma, Alabama; Richmond, Virginia; and Charleston, South Carolina. Union ordnance was almost always abundant and of much higher quality.

The North also enjoyed distinct advantages in clothing and feeding its soldiers. Breakdowns in transportation infrastructure hurt the Confederacy, as did damage to its agricultural areas as Union forces pushed into the interior of the Southern states. Union armies began an American pattern of overwhelming opponents through massive production. Confederate soldiers sometimes found themselves poorly clad and with skimpy rations. ■



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

**The capitol building at Richmond, Virginia.**

### Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 14.

### Supplementary Reading

Goff, *Confederate Supply*.

Nevins, *The War for the Union: The Organized War, 1863–1864*, chapter 1.

Paludan, “A People’s Contest”: *The Union and the Civil War, 1861–1865*, part 2.



## Questions to Consider

1. Do you believe the disparity in resources or a smaller pool of manpower was more damaging to the Confederacy?
2. Given its advantages, should the North have won the war more quickly? Or did compensating factors offset some of the material superiority?

# The War in the West, Winter 1862–63

## Lecture 20

As we move into the winter of 1862, the North would enter a period of minimal good news from the battlefield that would test Union resolve, both civilian resolve and military resolve.

We left the armies in the wake of Perryville and Antietam, a period that seemed to hold great promise for Union forces and that could harry retreating Confederates. But weeks passed with no decisive movements in the West or in Virginia, which bred dissatisfaction in the North. While McClellan remained immobile north of the Potomac in Maryland, Don Carlos Buell engaged in a most tepid pursuit of Braxton Bragg's army as it left Kentucky and marched into Tennessee. Lincoln understood the importance of positive news from the battlefield and implored his generals to act. Eventually, he replaced both McClellan and Buell, promoting Ambrose E. Burnside to command the Army of the Potomac and William S. Rosecrans to oversee the effort against Bragg. Lincoln made it clear that he expected action before the year ended.

Rosecrans and Bragg fought one of the biggest battles of the war near Murfreesboro (Stone's River) in middle Tennessee

on December 31, 1862, and January 2, 1863. In late December, just after Christmas, Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland marched toward Bragg's Army of Tennessee, which lay a short distance southeast of Nashville near Murfreesboro. The Confederate cavalry harassed his advance. Rosecrans nevertheless made rapid progress in this unusual (for the Civil War) winter campaign.



General Philip Sheridan.

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

The armies made contact on December 30. Both commanders planned to hit the other's right flank. Fighting on December 31 favored the Confederates. Bragg launched his attacks first and drove Rosecrans's army back. Rosecrans exhibited great courage and steadiness in putting together a defensive line, and one of his subordinates, Philip Sheridan, held his division together to stabilize the line. Bragg notified Richmond that he had won a victory.

After a day of tense inaction, fighting on January 2 favored the Union. Bragg ordered desperate frontal assaults that were easily repulsed. Bragg decided to retreat deeper into southeast Tennessee on January 3–4, 1863.

Stones River or Murfreesboro was a bloody, but essentially indecisive, military contest. Casualties for the Union (13,000, or 31 percent) and Confederacy (12,000, or 33 percent) made up the highest combined percentage for any major battle of the war. The two armies settled into winter quarters and left the strategic situation in middle Tennessee similar to what it was before the battle. Lincoln praised Rosecrans because this was the best news from any major Union commander during the winter of 1862.

Ulysses S. Grant attempted without success to mount a major offensive against Vicksburg in December 1862. He planned for a two-pronged approach. He would move overland from Tennessee through northern Mississippi. William Tecumseh Sherman would move down the Mississippi River against Vicksburg from the north.

Confederates frustrated both prongs of the offensive. Cavalry raids under Nathan Bedford Forrest disrupted Grant's supply lines and forced his retreat back into Tennessee; Grant learned a lesson on this retreat about subsisting off the land. General Earl Van Dorn destroyed a major Union supply base at Holly Springs on 20 December. Confederates easily repulsed Sherman's assaults north of Vicksburg at Chickasaw Bayou on 29 December 1862.

Grant spent the remainder of the winter mounting a series of failed attempts to get at Vicksburg from the south and east. He tried unsuccessfully to dig canals to bypass the city's four miles of gun batteries that commanded the river and to maneuver through tributaries of the Mississippi River to attain

the same end. He also mounted a failed attempt to approach Vicksburg via Yazoo Pass.

Finally, he decided to run his naval forces past the batteries of Vicksburg and shift his infantry across to the west bank of the Mississippi beyond the range of Confederate guns and troops. His subordinates opposed the plan as too risky. Success in the maneuver would allow Grant to shift his army back to the east bank of the Mississippi below Vicksburg, where he could live off the land. On 16 April, David Dixon Porter ran his gunboats past the defenses of Vicksburg, despite suffering hits on all thirteen vessels and having one sunk. Troop transports ran the batteries a few nights later. Grant now had the capability to get his forces back across the Mississippi. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapters 11–12.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 19.

### Supplementary Reading

Bearss, *The Campaign for Vicksburg: Vicksburg Is the Key*.

Cozzens, *No Better Place to Die: The Battle of Stones River*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Try to imagine the state of Union civilian morale after the high hopes raised by Antietam and Perryville dissolved in the disappointments of the winter of 1862–1863. What would you have done as Commander-in-Chief to turn this situation around? What if these battles had occurred before the elections?
2. What does the first phase of the Vicksburg campaign tell us about Grant as a general?

# The War in Virginia, Winter and Spring 1862–63

## Lecture 21

This lecture will continue our examination of military events in the late autumn and winter of 1862 and the spring of 1863. Our topics will be two major campaigns in the Eastern Theater that unfolded while William S. Rosecrans and Ulysses S. Grant were campaigning in Tennessee and along the Mississippi River out west.

Our last lecture examined the Union's frustrating campaigning in the winter of 1862 and spring of 1863 along the Mississippi River and in middle Tennessee. Now we turn our attention to Virginia, where Northern arms suffered two devastating setbacks along the Rappahannock River that sent tremors of doubt and anger through the North. Ambrose E. Burnside, whom Lincoln had selected to replace McClellan in early November 1862, understood that he was expected to move against Lee.

On 11 December, Union engineers began to push pontoon bridges across the river. Union artillery largely destroyed the old city of Fredericksburg, but the Battle of Fredericksburg on December 13 was a Union disaster. Burnside's hopes to get around Lee's right flank (held by Stonewall Jackson) came to nothing because of poor execution, although the Union forces very nearly broke through.

The Federal commander resorted to unimaginative frontal assaults against a very strong Confederate position on Marye's Heights. The Union lost heavily (12,000 casualties) and gained nothing tactically or strategically as the result of this battle. The army returned to its pre-battle lines, and the Northern public expressed great indignation about the battle and the Republican direction of the war. The series of seemingly pointless frontal assaults against well-positioned Confederates made the defeat at Fredericksburg all the more bitter, and the infamous "Mud March"

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**On the Confederate side, perhaps the greatest result of the campaign was that it sealed Lee's position as the great military idol of the Confederacy.**

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in January ended Burnside's brief tenure at army headquarters. The aftermath of Fredericksburg marked a low point for the Army of the Potomac.

Some of Burnside's subordinates, including Joseph Hooker, lobbied with Congress for a change of command. Lincoln replaced Burnside with "Fighting Joe" Hooker. Hooker initially showed great promise as commander of the Army of the Potomac. He brought a combination of talent and extreme ambition to his post. He displayed formidable organizational skills, reinvanized the Army of the Potomac, and planned a brilliant offensive that got off to a promising start in late April. Correcting Burnside's shortcomings in many areas, Hook improved delivery of supplies and medical care.

He also developed a strategic plan that shifted the bulk of his army to an advantageous position behind the Confederate lines at Fredericksburg by the end of April. Lincoln wanted him to focus on Lee's army, not on Richmond. Hook planned a cavalry raid toward Richmond, demonstrating with a large force in Lee's front and swinging the bulk of his army around Lee's left flank and in behind his positions.

But Lee and "Stonewall" Jackson countered Hooker's moves with a dazzling response that seemed to drain all energy and daring from the Federal commander. Having seized the initiative, the badly outnumbered Confederates won a remarkable victory that sent the Union army reeling back across the Rappahannock River in early May.

Hooker's planning and splendid early movements reach a shattering climax in the Battle of Chancellorsville on May 1–4. Hooker abandoned his offensive intentions when Lee (after dividing his forces) attacked on May 1 instead of retreating toward Richmond. On May 2, Lee split his army again



**General Joseph "Fighting Joe" Hooker.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

as “Stonewall” Jackson marched around Hooker’s right flank and delivered a crushing attack against the XI Corps (commanded by O. O. Howard). Jackson was wounded by his own men while returning from nighttime reconnaissance. On May 3–4, Confederate attacks against two parts of Hooker’s army persuaded the Union commander to retreat back across the Rappahannock.

The Battle of Chancellorsville, with 17,000 Union and 13,000 Confederate casualties, had significant short- and long-term consequences:

- It depressed Northern civilian morale and gave impetus to critics of the Lincoln Administration.
- Jackson’s death on May 10 dealt a blow to the Confederacy.
- The manner in which Lee won the victory made him and his Army of Northern Virginia the focus of Confederate national morale. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapters 11–13.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 19, 21.

### Supplementary Reading

Catton, *Glory Road*, parts 1–4.

Freeman, *Lee’s Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, vol. 2, chapters 20–23.

Gallagher, ed., *The Fredericksburg Campaign: Decision on the Rappahannock*.

Sears, *Chancellorsville*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Lee expressed disappointment with the battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, because he did not inflict crippling damage on the Army of the Potomac. Was this a reasonable evaluation? Or did Lee overlook the positive nonmilitary effects of his victories?
2. How do you think you would have reacted to events in Virginia during the winter of 1862 and the spring of 1863 as a Union soldier? As a Northern civilian?



# Gettysburg

## Lecture 22

**We'll look at the Gettysburg campaign and then consider the impact of Gettysburg at the time. How did people view it at the time as opposed to how we do now? We'll finish by considering the question of whether Gettysburg should be seen as the great turning point of the Civil War.**

**T**he Gettysburg campaign took place against a background of uncertainty and unrest in the North prompted by defeats at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville in the Eastern Theater, stalemate in Tennessee, and failure along the Mississippi River. Antiwar sentiment among civilians was growing, and the antiwar Democrats (“Copperheads”) became more vociferous. The new Union draft law of 1863 (see Lecture 18) alienated many Northerners. And Lincoln had little faith in Hooker after Chancellorsville.

As Lincoln looked for good news from some theater, Jefferson Davis and his advisers discussed how best to allocate precious Southern military resources. Many Confederates argued for weakening Lee’s army to reinforce commands west of the Appalachians, but Lee successfully lobbied for a second invasion across the Potomac. Many politicians and generals favored stripping troops from Lee to reinforce Braxton Bragg in Tennessee or John C. Pemberton at Vicksburg. But Lee argued for concentration of troops in Virginia for an invasion of the North.

Lee won the debate and promised a range of possible benefits: The invasion would relieve pressure against Richmond, strengthen antiwar sentiment in the North, and allow the army to provision itself in the rich Pennsylvania countryside and take pressure off Southern agriculture. It also might compel the Federals to shift troops from the West to deal with Lee’s army. The campaign carried

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**Union success,  
Confederate disaster  
[in the Gettysburg  
campaign]—it simply  
wasn’t that simple at  
the time. It did not mark  
the decisive turning  
point of the war.**

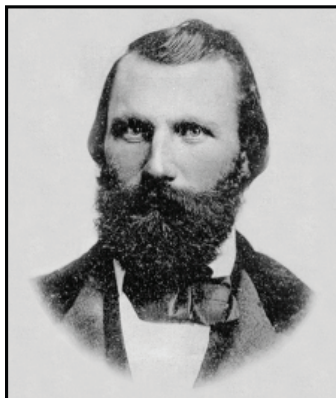
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out in June and July 1863 resulted in a clash at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, that turned out to be the war's largest battle and the last major engagement fought on Northern soil.

The initial phase of the campaign generally went well for the Confederates. Lee reorganized the army after Stonewall Jackson's death in May. There were now three corps: the First, under Longstreet; the Second, under Ewell; and the Third, under A. P. Hill. A huge cavalry battle at Brandy Station on June 9 caused a short delay in Lee's advance. This battle was the first time that the Union cavalry had fought on even terms with the Confederate cavalry. Southern papers criticized the cavalry commander, J. E. B. Stuart, after this battle.

Lee's infantry marched quickly northward after Brandy Station. The Confederates won a small victory at Second Winchester en route to the Potomac. By the third week of June, the Army of Northern Virginia was spread out across southern Pennsylvania, almost as far north as Harrisburg. Lee was moving without firm intelligence because "Jeb" Stuart and much of his cavalry lost contact with the army. Meanwhile, Lincoln replaced Hooker with George G. Meade on 27 June 1863. He was the fourth commander in seven months for the Army of the Potomac. He was an engineer and a capable, but not brilliant, professional officer.

The armies made contact near Gettysburg on June 30 and fought the largest battle of the war on July 1–3, 1863. The first day was a striking Confederate success, despite the fact that Lee's forces were not concentrated or coordinated. Two Union infantry corps were badly mauled. The Federals just managed to hang on to high ground south of Gettysburg. Meade himself arrived on the field that night; more troops from both sides also arrived.



**Confederate cavalry commander  
General J. E. B. Stuart.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

Lee continued the tactical offensive on the second day (July 2). He has been much criticized for this decision. Despite poor execution, Lee's attacks pushed the Union defenders to the limit on both ends of Meade's line. Lee mounted a last major tactical offensive known as Pickett's Charge on the third day. But this charge against the Union center was not his first plan. It failed completely, and nearly one-half of the attackers became casualties.

Overall, casualties in the battle were enormous. At least 25,000 Confederates fell, representing nearly one-third of the army. One-third (12 out of 53) of Lee's generals were killed, wounded, or captured. More than 20,000 Federals fell; Meade's subordinate command also suffered heavy losses.

Lee retreated on July 4 and crossed the Potomac into Virginia a few days later. Meade drew criticism for not pressing Lee's beaten army. The Confederates hoped Meade would counterattack near the Potomac.

At the time, Gettysburg was seen as an important, but not necessarily decisive, battle. The North expressed a mixture of happiness and disappointment. Lee undoubtedly had been beaten and driven from Union soil. Lincoln and many others believed Meade should have hounded the Confederates after July 3.

Most Confederates did not consider the battle an unequivocal disaster. Confederates maintained faith in Lee and saw Gettysburg as a big and bloody battle that represented a temporary setback at worst. Some Confederates did express disappointment in Lee, but overall his reputation did not suffer.

Gettysburg was not the great turning point of the conflict, but it did represent a setback to the Confederacy and stop the momentum in the Eastern Theater generated by Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. Lee's losses could not be replaced easily. The campaign probably killed any hope that European powers would intervene in the war. It gave the Army of the Potomac a badly needed victory over Lee's army, which nonetheless remained strong and helped carry the Confederacy to the brink of success a year later during the Overland campaign (see Lecture 36).

A number of factors combined to make Gettysburg seem more important in retrospect: It turned out to be the bloodiest battle of the war, and it represented the last major Confederate invasion of the North. Lincoln's benediction over the Union dead in November 1863 gave Gettysburg a special status. The battlefield is now the most visited Civil War site in America. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 13.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 21.

### Supplementary Reading

Catton, *Glory Road*, parts 5–6.

Coddington, *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command*.

Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, vol. 3, chapters 1–10.

### Questions to Consider

1. How did your previous understanding of Gettysburg compare to what you have heard in this lecture?
2. Do you think it is important for Americans to have one Civil War event that is considered to be the watershed of the conflict?

# Vicksburg, Port Hudson, and Tullahoma

## Lecture 23

**We continue our military focus on the summer of 1863 with this lecture on campaigning along the Mississippi River and in Tennessee. We'll begin with a survey of the strategic situation in the West in the spring of 1863, and then we'll move on to examine Grant's successful campaign against Vicksburg. ... Then we'll look at the Port Hudson campaign.**

**A**s spring approached in 1863, Grant continued his efforts to capture the Confederate stronghold at Vicksburg, and Rosecrans and Bragg faced each other in middle Tennessee (they had engaged in no major action since the battle of Stones River). A third Union force, under Nathaniel P. Banks, was closing in on Port Hudson, Louisiana, the Confederacy's other remaining strong point on the Mississippi River. Lincoln and Union planners believed the Mississippi, which figured prominently in the Anaconda strategy laid out by Winfield Scott two years earlier, along with middle Tennessee, would witness the crucial action that summer.

Undaunted by his previous lack of success against Vicksburg, Grant put together one of the war's most impressive military campaigns between mid-April and early July. His two main opponents would be John C. Pemberton, who had about 32,000 men, the principal army defending Vicksburg, and Joseph E. Johnston, who had recovered from the terrible wound that he received in the Battle of Seven Pines back in May of 1862.

Against the advice of many subordinates, Grant ordered supporting naval vessels to run past the powerful Vicksburg batteries; mustered his troops south of the city; marched inland to seize Jackson, Mississippi; and advanced against Vicksburg from the east. Part of Grant's greatness lay in his willingness to take chances. The Navy passed the batteries with minimal losses.

Grant then crossed to the eastern bank and marched inland toward Jackson before moving against Vicksburg from the east. Confederates failed to unite their forces, while Grant and Sherman did hook up successfully. Grant cast

off from his base and won victories over various parts of Johnston's force of 16,000 and Pemberton's army of 32,000 at Port Gibson (May 1), Raymond (May 12), Jackson (May 14), Champion Hill (May 16), and the Big Black River (May 17) before pinning Pemberton inside the defenses of Vicksburg. (Pemberton was a Pennsylvanian who had married a Virginian and cast his lot with the South. He was not a particularly capable general officer.)



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

**The siege of Vicksburg.**

Federal assaults against Vicksburg failed on May 19 and 22, after which Grant laid siege to the city. Grant thoroughly defeated Pemberton in this battle. There were nearly 4,000 Confederate casualties and about 2,500 Federal casualties, but the key thing is that Pemberton was pushed westward, back toward Vicksburg. Grant had Pemberton back on his heels. The next day, the two forces fought again at the Big Black River, 10 miles east of Vicksburg. Again, Grant won the battle. A six-week siege ended in Pemberton's surrender of the city and his entire army on July 4, 1863. Grant thoroughly defeated Pemberton in this battle.

Shortly after the six-week siege, Banks captured Port Hudson, which together with Grant's success fulfilled a major part of the Anaconda Plan by establishing Northern control of the entire Mississippi River. Rosecrans's Tullahoma campaign in late June added to the roster of Union successes. In a series of deft maneuvers carried out with minimal losses, Rosecrans forced Bragg's army into Chattanooga and set the stage for a strike against that city and into Georgia. A dismal winter and spring for the North had given way to a splendid summer.

The Northern populace took heart from events in the West, which together with Meade's victory at Gettysburg seemed to promise a successful end to the war. Grant's campaign ranks among the most brilliant in American history. He abandoned his supply lines in moving toward Jackson. He marched quickly and defeated the enemy in detail (first Johnston, then Pemberton), capturing a 30,000-man army and vast Confederate military material. His victory achieved one of the North's major strategic goals.

On the Confederate side, there was backbiting and recrimination. President Jefferson Davis blamed General Joseph Johnston, while most others blamed Pemberton. Confederate morale sank after this complete defeat of their arms in the West. ■

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**These three campaigns together—Vicksburg and Port Hudson and Tullahoma—gave the North a splendid boost in national morale and conveyed enormous strategic advantage to the North.**

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### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 13.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 21.

## Supplementary Reading

Bearss, *The Campaign for Vicksburg: Grant Strikes a Fatal Blow*.

———, *The Campaign for Vicksburg: Unvexed to the Sea*.

Connelly, *Autumn of Glory: The Army of Tennessee, 1862–1865*, chapters 4–6.

Hewitt, *Port Hudson: Confederate Bastion on the Mississippi*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Ulysses S. Grant is often referred to as a straight-ahead slugging general who overwhelmed his opponents with superior resources. How does this image square with his conduct of the campaign against Vicksburg?
2. If you were asked to project the outcome of the war based on an accurate understanding of the military and political situations in late July 1863, what would you predict? Support your answer.



# A Season of Uncertainty, Summer and Fall 1863

## Lecture 24

**This lecture will continue our look at military events in 1863. We'll examine the relatively quiescent fronts along the Mississippi River and in Virginia as well as the Battle of Chickamauga, which took place in north Georgia and ranks as the largest battle of the entire war in the Western Theater.**

Union victories at Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and Port Hudson and in the Tullahoma campaign seemingly had prepared the way for knockout blows in both Virginia and the West. Lincoln and Union war planners labored diligently to achieve this result, only to see their efforts end in stalemate in Virginia and a major defeat at Chickamauga in the Western Theater.

Lee's and Meade's armies settled into positions along the Rappahannock River, testing each other on several occasions but avoiding a full-blown battle. Well before the end of the year, Lincoln had given up on Meade's accomplishing anything noteworthy and hoped merely that the Army of the Potomac would keep Lee pinned down. Far to the west, Grant found himself without a major goal after the fall of Vicksburg. Union leaders debated their next move in Grant's theater. Halleck wanted to concentrate on the Trans-Mississippi region, which embraces Arkansas, Texas, and parts of Louisiana. Lincoln also favored the Trans-Mississippi for a combination of political, diplomatic, and military reasons. Grant and Banks unsuccessfully argued for the capture of Mobile, Alabama, the last major Confederate port on the Gulf of Mexico. Grant eventually busied himself with an expedition against Jackson, Mississippi (commanded by William Tecumseh Sherman) and a number of small operations.

The principal military action that autumn developed near Chattanooga. Rosecrans maneuvered Bragg out of that city and marched into northern Georgia in early September (a smaller Union force under Ambrose Burnside captured Knoxville on September 3, thus "liberating" heavily Unionist East Tennessee). Given reinforcements from Joseph Johnston's forces in Mississippi and from Lee's army in Virginia, Bragg responded with a

counteroffensive that resulted in the Battle of Chickamauga on September 19–20. The two days of heavy fighting gave Bragg the Confederacy's only tactical victory on an important western battlefield. Slow to realize what his soldiers had accomplished, Bragg allowed Rosecrans's army to regroup in Chattanooga. Chickamauga temporarily slowed the Union momentum generated by the summer's earlier triumphs, but the final fate of Chattanooga remained uncertain.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

Union officer William Tecumseh Sherman.

The Davis Administration had decided to reinforce Bragg in preparation for a counteroffensive. Two divisions from Joseph Johnston's army joined Bragg. Two divisions (Hood's and McLaw's) from the Army of Northern Virginia were ordered to north Georgia by rail. Rosecrans entered north Georgia after the capture of Chattanooga on 9 September and placed his army in a somewhat scattered and vulnerable position.

The Battle of Chickamauga gave Bragg a striking tactical victory. Rosecrans concentrated his army just south of Chattanooga in the valley of Chickamauga Creek by 18 September. Bragg's reinforced Army of Tennessee, which with its almost 70,000 men outnumbered Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland, attacked on September 19 and 20. Bragg wanted to cut Rosecrans off from Chattanooga. Then Bragg planned to trap and envelop Rosecrans. Fighting started on the 19<sup>th</sup> as it had at Gettysburg, with a cavalry and infantry skirmish that escalated into a general engagement. There was no decisive result after the first day.

Confederate assaults on the 20<sup>th</sup>, although not developing as planned, shattered part of the Union line; the breakthrough was spearheaded by Longstreet's forces. After Rosecrans and about one-third of the Union army fled the field, George H.

Thomas conducted a tenacious defense on Snodgrass Hill on the Union left and withdrew in good order. Bragg was not certain of his victory. Casualties numbered 18,500 CSA and 16,000 Federal.

Although it was a tactical victory, Chickamauga failed to convey any long-term advantage to the Confederates. Bragg allowed the Union army to reach Chattanooga and begin to dig in. Confederate civilian morale experienced only a momentary rise. The ultimate fate of Chattanooga remained uncertain. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 14.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 22.

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**Chickamauga, as I said, was the largest battle fought in the West during the war. There were enormous casualties—staggering—18,500 for the Confederates; 16,000 for the Federals.**

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## Supplementary Reading

Catton, *Grant Takes Command*, chapters 1–2.

Connelly, *Autumn of Glory: The Army of Tennessee, 1862–1865*, chapters 8–9.

Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound: The Battle of Chickamauga*.

Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, vol. 3, chapters 11–15.

## Questions to Consider

1. In Jefferson Davis's position, would you have elected to weaken Lee's army to reinforce Bragg's in late summer 1863?
2. Can the battle of Chickamauga be used as support for an argument that Civil War military engagements often had little real impact on the course of the war? Would shifting the lens to include all major battles between April and September 1863 change your answer?

# Grant at Chattanooga

## Lecture 25

**This lecture will conclude our coverage of military events in 1863. We left off last time with the retreat of William S. Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland into Chattanooga after the Battle of Chickamauga. Now we'll follow that story to its conclusion.**

**B**oth sides looked to Chattanooga as the crucial point on the strategic map after Chickamauga, and both armies involved in the campaign experienced problems of command. The Confederate High Command became embroiled in internal bickering. While Bragg criticized the performance of some of his subordinates, several of them (including corps commanders, such as James Longstreet, and others, like Nathan Bedford Forrest) called for his removal. Longstreet recommended Joseph Johnston. Jefferson Davis heard their complaints but decided to retain Bragg and reassign several of the unhappy subordinates.

Rosecrans similarly came under heavy criticism, and his army suffered a loss of morale. Considering Lincoln's lack of confidence in Rosecrans, Grant assumed overall command in the West on October 17, 1863, and replaced Rosecrans with George Thomas.

Part of Grant's personal command of Union forces at Chattanooga included Thomas's Army of the Cumberland, major reinforcements from Mississippi commanded by William Tecumseh Sherman, and reinforcements from Virginia led by Joseph Hooker.

The Confederates besieged Chattanooga, and Grant assumed center stage. By late November, while Bragg's siege became increasingly ineffective, Grant

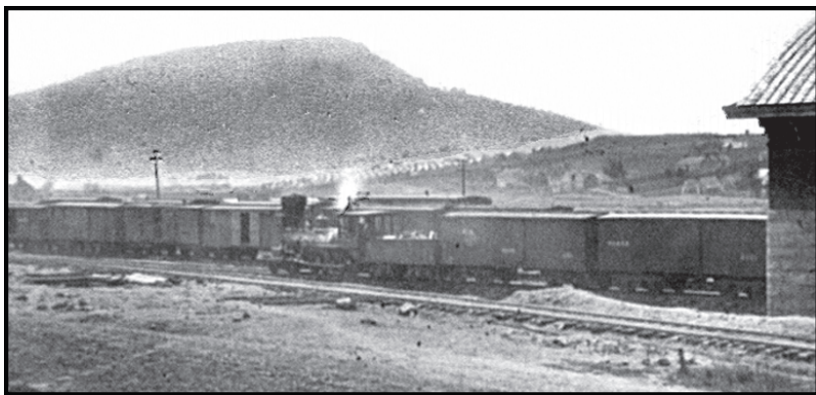
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**These four men, Grant and Sherman and Sheridan and Thomas, will be, as I've mentioned once before, the great quartet of Union war heroes at the end of the war.**

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had completed preparations for an aggressive movement to drive Bragg's troops off high ground on Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge.

In the battle of Chattanooga, fought on November 24–25, Grant's soldiers routed Bragg's army to win one of the more dramatic victories of the war. The consequences were significant: another key southern city had fallen; another success had been added to the string of Union triumphs begun at Gettysburg and Vicksburg; Bragg was removed from command; and Grant was confirmed as the preeminent northern soldier. The North reviewed the year with a sense of immense accomplishment and looked toward 1864 with considerable optimism. The Confederacy, in contrast, contemplated even greater sacrifice if it were to reverse the recent tide and win its independence.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

**U.S. military train at depot with Lookout Mountain in background.**

The Battle of Chattanooga ranked among the more important military engagements of the war. Chattanooga, a major center of communications and transportation and gateway to Atlanta and central Georgia, was irretrievably lost to the Confederates for the rest of the war. Knoxville was also gone, because Longstreet was unable to retake it. The string of Union victories in 1863 was completed. Chattanooga completely canceled the effects of Chickamauga, and the Confederates had now suffered a major setback in each of the three main theaters. Bragg was relieved of command and reassigned to

a desk job in Richmond as Davis's military advisor; Davis appointed Joseph Johnston to replace him. Grant was confirmed as the premier Union general; he would shortly be made general-in-chief of the Union armies as a result of his victories at Vicksburg and Chattanooga. Sherman, Thomas, and Philip H. Sheridan were promoted along with Grant—these four men would win the war for the Union in 1864–1865. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 14.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 22.

### Supplementary Reading

Catton, *Grant Takes Command*, chapters 3–5.

Connelly, *Autumn of Glory: The Army of Tennessee, 1862–1865*, chapter 10.

Cozzens, *The Shipwreck of Their Hopes: The Battles for Chattanooga*.

### Questions to Consider

1. What do you think kept Confederate civilians and soldiers going after the military reverses of 1863?
2. Had the two sides been tested equally by this point in the war?

# The Diplomatic Front

## Lecture 26

**We turn away from the battlefield with this lecture, moving to look at the world of Civil War diplomacy. As I've said before, both sides knew that foreign policy might prove crucial in deciding the outcome of the war.**

In assessing Confederate prospects for success, the question of European recognition or intervention represented an unknown factor that might wield immense influence. Union and Confederate political leaders looked toward Europe with considerable concern, often with the example of decisive French aid to the colonies during the American Revolution in mind. The Confederacy directed its diplomatic efforts toward gaining recognition, while the Union worked hard to persuade London and Paris to remain aloof from the struggle.

The Confederacy banked on “King Cotton” diplomacy and initially hoped that Europe’s (and especially Great Britain’s) need for cotton would bring diplomatic recognition. The South withheld cotton to increase demand rather than counting on the Union blockade to cut off supplies. This was not an official, but an understood, embargo. Much of the 1861 cotton crop was actually burned.

Several factors worked against the Confederacy. First, Britain had a surplus of cotton from large crops in the years before the war, enough, in fact, to carry the country well into mid-1862. Britain developed alternative sources in Egypt and India to offset the loss of southern cotton. Workers in textile industries suffered some hardship, but the American war boosted employment in other segments of the British economy, such as shipbuilding, iron manufacturing, and munitions. Wool and linen production increased and took up some of the slack in cotton production. The Confederacy eventually abandoned its “King Cotton” policy, but by then it was too late.



Meanwhile, several issues and crises threatened the Lincoln Administration's relations with England and France, including the *Trent* affair of late 1861, disputes arising from the North's naval blockade of the Confederacy, northern anger over British construction of warships for the Confederacy, and French imperialism in Mexico. In the end, however, several factors allowed the North to prevail in the diplomatic arena: the skill of its diplomats (especially Charles Francis Adams); the strong antislavery sentiment in England and France; fears in London and Paris about the economic consequences of a war with the United States; and most important, the Confederacy's inability to string together enough military victories to persuade Europe that it could sustain its independence.



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**African Americans preparing cotton for the gin in Port Royal, South Carolina.**

The northern blockade of the Confederacy caused considerable tension between the United States and Europe. The blockade raised political and legal questions that were especially important during the first year of the war. European nations issued proclamations of neutrality in 1861, thus recognizing the belligerent status of the Confederacy. The Confederacy could contract for loans and purchase supplies in neutral nations and exercise belligerent rights at sea (such as the use of privateers). Recognition of belligerency was often a prelude to recognition under international law. The North was actually the winner here, because these proclamations gave legitimacy to the blockade.

Britain decided to honor the blockade for selfish reasons. International law required that a blockade had to be effective in order to be legal. The British knew that the Union blockade was not effective but honored it, because to do otherwise might come back to haunt them if and when they might institute a blockade.

Britain also accepted the North's application of the doctrine of "continuous voyage"; that is, they recognized the right of U.S. warships to intercept merchant vessels sailing between neutral harbors if there was evidence that the cargo was eventually destined for the CSA. British merchants complained about this, but the policy was not changed. As with the blockade, British leaders wanted to avoid setting a precedent that could hurt them later.

The *Trent* affair caused a major disruption of relations between the United States and Britain in late 1861. An American vessel (the U.S.S. *San Jacinto*, Captain Charles Wilkes, commanding) removed two Confederate diplomats (James Mason and John Slidell) from the *Trent*, a British merchant vessel carrying them to England; the commissioners were eventually imprisoned in Boston. Britain reacted strongly, complaining that the U.S. had violated British neutrality. The British deployed some military forces to Canada and reinforced the North American Squadron. Britain also demanded the release of the diplomats and an apology. The Lincoln Administration defused the crisis by releasing the diplomats on 1 January 1862 and acknowledging that their seizure had been improper.

Military events in the Eastern Theater between June and September 1862 created a potential diplomatic crisis for the North. Confederate victories at the Seven Days' Battles and Second Manassas convinced key British leaders that the Confederacy was winning the war. The Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary agreed that some type of mediation would be proper if the Confederates won one more victory. On July 18, Parliament debated the question of recognition; there were further moves to mediate a settlement and to recognize the CSA. Emperor Louis-Napoleon of France was ready to recognize the CSA, as well.

The Battle of Antietam (on September 17) caused the British to decide to wait before making a major diplomatic move. Lee's retreat to Virginia seemed to indicate that the Union might be rebounding militarily. Lincoln used Antietam as a pretext to issue his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, which made it far more difficult for the British to side with the Confederacy.

The summer of 1863 brought a less serious crisis regarding British construction of commerce raiders and rams for the Confederacy. The Lincoln Administration was unhappy about British construction of commerce raiders, such as the C.S.S. *Alabama* and C.S.S. *Florida*, earlier in the war.

The North learned in 1863 that two 1,400-ton ironclads (to be named C.S.S. *North Carolina* and C.S.S. *Mississippi*) destined for Confederate service were under construction at the Laird shipyards. Such vessels would pose a danger to the Union blockade. The North made it clear that delivery of these vessels would strain relations. The British government decided to seize the vessels, even before the United States Ambassador strongly protested. The South retaliated by expelling British diplomats over this move.

French intervention in Mexico also strained relations with the United States. Napoleon III of France sent 35,000 troops to Mexico and overthrew the government of Benito Juarez in 1863. Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand Maximilian was installed as emperor of Mexico by Napoleon III. The Confederacy offered to recognize this government if France would recognize the Confederacy. Napoleon III proved unwilling to extend recognition unless the British did so.

The United States sent an army to the Texas-Mexico border at the end of the war. Napoleon III recalled his troops. Maximilian remained in Mexico and was executed in 1867.

Two major factors kept the European powers from recognizing the Confederacy:

- The failure of the CSA to win significant victories from late 1862.
- The issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. ■

## Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 12, 18, 22.  
Thomas, *The Confederate Nation, 1861–1865*, chapter 8.

## Supplementary Reading

Case and Spencer, *The United States and France: Civil War Diplomacy*.  
Crook, *The North, the South, and the Powers, 1861–1865*.  
Jones, *Union in Peril: The Crisis over British Intervention in the Civil War*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Can you imagine any circumstances under which Britain or France would have sent the type of aid to the Confederacy that France had given the colonies during the American Revolution?
2. Short of intervention on a scale similar to France's during the Revolution, would any actions on the part of European powers played a significant role in the Civil War?

# African Americans in Wartime, I

## Lecture 27

**In this lecture ... we'll look at the experience of contrabands; that is, slaves who ran away from their owners to Union lines and tried to make a new life for themselves there. And secondly, we'll look at the experience of black soldiers in the United States Army.**

**T**his lecture examines the experience of African Americans who fled to the protection of northern military forces and those who became Union soldiers (the United States Colored Troops). The phenomenon of slaves going to Union lines began when a handful of men sought protection with Benjamin F. Butler's troops on the Virginia peninsula during the first weeks of the conflict. From that point forward, thousands of slaves made their way to Union armies in all parts of the Confederacy.

Emancipation came gradually to slaves in the Confederacy as thousands made their way to Union lines or found themselves in Union-controlled areas. Approximately 500,000, roughly one in seven of the enslaved black people in the Confederacy, passed from Confederate to Union control. Their lives often were difficult. Able-bodied men typically were put to work for the Union army; thousands of men, women, and children lived in camps, where they were subject to overcrowding and disease.

At first their status was uncertain, but the presence of thousands of black people behind Union lines forced the North to address the question of whether they should be declared free. Congressional action and the Emancipation Proclamation conveyed freedom well before the end of the war. A major debate arose in the North over whether to settle freed people on abandoned and confiscated lands in the South. Thousands of black people took up residence on such lands, but permanent ownership remained uncertain.

The black contribution to northern military operations was undeniable. Nearly 180,000 black men, most of them former slaves, served in the Union army. The vast majority of these individuals entered service in 1863 or later. They faced a range of problems, including lower pay, relegation to work

details rather than combat duty, and hostility from many white soldiers. In the end, however, regiments of United States Colored Troops, as they were designated in the segregated army, rendered solid service on a number of battlefields. These veterans had risked their lives alongside white comrades and, thus, staked an unimpeachable claim to full citizenship.

The military played the most direct role in dealing with contrabands. The Treasury Department also became involved because of its responsibility for confiscated Rebel property. Various freedmen's and missionary aid societies also played a role. The army's primary goal was to ensure that the contrabands did not interfere with military operations against the Confederacy.

**“You have no idea how my prejudices with regard to Negro troops have been dispelled by the battle the other day.”**

**—A white officer after watching the black troops in combat at Port Hudson**

The contrabands were placed in camps, which were often overcrowded and ridden with disease. Many of the men were used as laborers to support military operations. Eventually, able-bodied men were taken into military service.

Freed people employed in nonmilitary situations often found themselves with a type of quasi-freedom. Northern speculators and southern planters who took the oath of allegiance often showed

little concern for the welfare of black workers. Military commanders (most notably General Nathaniel P. Banks) often forced black laborers to sign long-term contracts that bound them to public projects or plantations, often for just room and board. Skilled laborers stood a much better chance of making a decent living. Laborers on government-run plantations typically fared better than those on privately run plantations.

Contraband camps, largely populated by women, children, and the aged, were overcrowded, unhealthy places where the average mortality rate was 25 percent (by way of contrast, Confederate soldiers suffered a mortality rate of nearly 20 percent).

The North debated whether to give land to freed people to enable them to support themselves. Abolitionists and others argued in favor of placing freed people on abandoned or confiscated land in the South. Freed people themselves said it would make them truly free and economically independent.

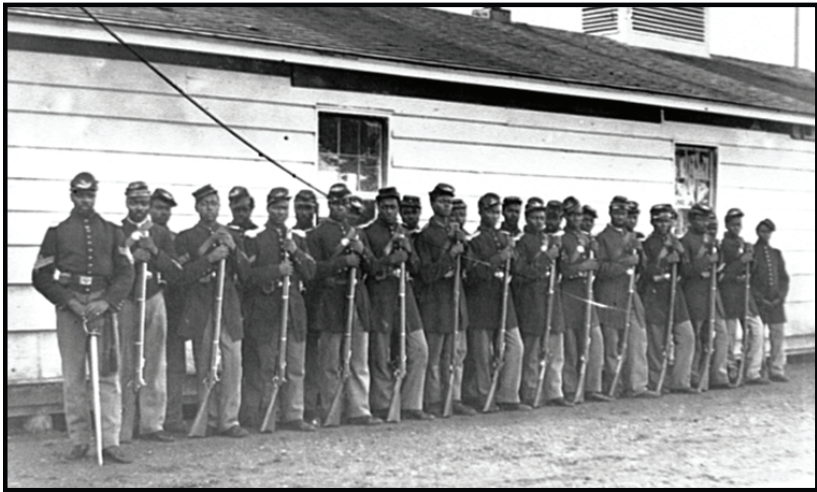
Speculators opposed giving away the land, because they hoped to exploit it themselves, and they were often successful (as in the coastal islands of Georgia and the Carolinas). Lincoln muddied the water on this issue. In 1862, he stated that land would be confiscated from Rebels only for the lifetime of the owner. In late 1863, he stated that any Confederate who took the oath of allegiance could recover all his property except slaves.

Radical Republicans and their allies in Congress tried to give land to freed people. In 1864, George W. Julian proposed making the Homestead Act apply to abandoned and confiscated lands. The Freedmen's Bureau legislation of 1865 included provisions relating to confiscated lands.

William Tecumseh Sherman settled thousands of freed people on lands near the South Carolina coast. His action did not convey permanent title but only "possessory title," pending congressional legislation. He acted out of concern for his military operations.

The war ended without a clear resolution of the question of settling freed people on lands in the South. The North compiled a mixed record concerning freed people who came under its control. Freed people suffered many abuses. But remember that the North faced an enormous refugee problem in the midst of a gigantic war. No government agencies existed to address this type of issue and there was no precedent for freeing so many slaves in the midst of war.

The North debated whether to arm black men early in the war. Radical Republicans and black and white abolitionists favored doing so. Lincoln recognized the necessity by early 1863; active recruiting began in 1863 and, by the end of the war, more than 180,000 black soldiers served.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

**District of Columbia Company E, 4<sup>th</sup> U.S. Colored Infantry, at Fort Lincoln.**

Black soldiers were not treated the same as white soldiers were. Their segregated units had virtually no black officers (there were 166 black regiments and only 100 black officers). This made sense at first because few black men had experience as soldiers, but even after many demonstrated aptitude for command, they were not made officers. Black soldiers were paid less (\$10 per month) than white soldiers (\$13 per month plus a clothing allowance) until 1864. They were given more menial duties. They were considered better suited to perform heavy manual labor in the southern heat. Some white people believed black men would not make good combat soldiers. Confederate policy regarding black prisoners made it problematical to place them in situations where they might be captured, because the South said that black soldiers would not be treated as prisoners of war.

Black units eventually compiled a solid record in combat. Most white soldiers expressed at least a grudging respect for them. Despite some very good fighting (e.g., at Port Hudson in Louisiana, Battery Wagner in South Carolina, and the Crater in Petersburg, Virginia), black soldiers on balance saw far less combat duty than most white soldiers. They suffered a 1.5 percent killed-in-action rate compared to 6 percent for white soldiers. They suffered more deaths from disease than from battle. After the war, many



blacks remained in the army. Military service was crucial for black men, because it established their claim to citizenship and gave them an active role in killing slavery. ■

### Essential Reading

Berlin et al., eds., *Free at Last: A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom, and the Civil War*, chapters 3–4, 6.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 26.

### Supplementary Reading

Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers*.

McPherson, ed., *The Negro's Civil War*, chapters 8–16, 20.

Powell, *New Masters: Northern Planters during the Civil War and Reconstruction*.

Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment*.

### Questions to Consider

1. How do you believe most freed people viewed the United States government?
2. As a northern military officer in an active campaign, how do you think you would have reacted to the presence of large numbers of freed people in the vicinity of your troops?

# African Americans in Wartime, II

## Lecture 28

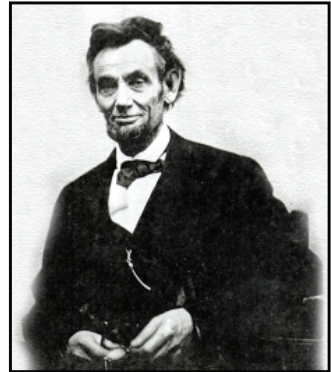
**In this lecture, we'll continue our look at African Americans during the war, but we will change our focus to those gains that black people made in the North in the course of the war, and two, the ways in which the war affected the lives of black people who remained slaves in the Confederacy.**

**I**n the North, as we have seen, black people were at the center of a debate over Union war aims. Would the conflict remain a struggle simply to restore the Union, or would black freedom be added to the national agenda as a second great goal? As African Americans in the North watched and participated in this debate, they often suffered persecution from groups who cared nothing for emancipation and preferred to keep all black people in an inferior economic and social position. Yet African Americans did register legal and symbolic gains during the war. The most important was passage by the House of Representatives, on January 31, 1865, of a 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment that would free all slaves (ratification was completed in December 1865).

Radical Republicans and black and white abolitionists were in the forefront of the effort to achieve positive change. Legislation that would eventually be the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment was defeated in the initial effort in the House of Representatives in June 1864. The 1864 elections brought a Republican majority to both houses of Congress, but the new Congress would not take office until well into 1865. The legislation passed by a narrow margin in January 1865 because of the efforts of the Lincoln Administration. The process of ratification by the states was completed in December 1865. Southern states had to agree to the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment as a condition of their readmission to the Union.

Various local, state, and national measures indicated additional progress. New state constitutions in Maryland (1 November 1864) and Missouri (11 January 1865) abolished slavery. Another border state, Kentucky, didn't follow suit until the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment was actually ratified. On 3 March 1865,

Congress freed the wives and children of black soldiers serving in the U.S. Army. Black people gained the right to testify in federal courts. Between 1863 and 1866, several northern states repealed “black laws” that discriminated against African Americans. John Rock was admitted as a lawyer before the United States Supreme Court on 1 February 1865 (eight years earlier, the *Dred Scott* decision had stated that black people could not be citizens). Despite these advances and legal changes, black people still faced a range of discriminatory legislation and intensely racist attitudes.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

**President Abraham Lincoln.**

In the South, slave labor allowed the mobilization of a huge percentage of military-age white manpower and kept the economy running. No major slave revolts took place in the Confederacy, but the institution of slavery underwent change as black and white southerners adjusted their social and economic relations amid the dislocation of war.

Slavery was essential to the Confederate war effort, because it freed white men to go into the military and provided labor to keep the economy running, especially in the agricultural sector. But the Civil War changed the institution of slavery in the South. Early in the conflict, white southerners tightened control over slaves, because they feared insurrection and because the absence of so many men in the army left those on the home front feeling vulnerable.

This situation changed as the war progressed. No major slave revolts took place, and controls over slaves relaxed somewhat. Practical factors loosened the bonds of slavery. Masters were away in the army, limiting their day-to-day control over slaves. White refugees found it difficult to maintain strict control over their slaves. And large numbers of slaves moved to urban areas, where they enjoyed relatively more freedom. They were given more authority on plantations and farms to get crops in and keep the establishments running in the absence of white men.

The Confederacy debated the issue of arming slaves, putting them in the army, and possibly freeing all who would fight. This issue arose during the first years of the war. Robert E. Lee recommended it to Jefferson Davis in 1861, and Richard Ewell suggested the use of black troops in July 1862. Members of the Alabama legislature called for enlistment of slaves in 1863. General Patrick R. Cleburne suggested it in January 1864 to leaders of the Army of Tennessee.

**[S]lavery changed significantly during the war. The institution was not the same, and the war as a whole brought the profoundest change of all—the freedom of three and a half million black Southerners, a “sea of change.”**

The major debate occurred in the winter of 1864–1865. Some, like Howell Cobb of Georgia, argued that arming and freeing slaves who fought would undermine the founding principles of the Confederacy. Lee and others argued that independence was more important than maintaining

slavery as then constituted. The CSA Congress decided in March 1865 to place slaves in the army but not to guarantee their freedom in return for service. The debate occurred too late to have any impact on the course of military events. ■

### Essential Reading

Berlin et al., eds., *Free At Last: A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom, and the Civil War*, chapter 5.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 26–28.

## Supplementary Reading

Durden, *The Gray and the Black: The Confederate Debate on Emancipation*.

McPherson, ed., *The Negro's Civil War: How American Negroes Felt and Acted during the War for the Union*, chapters 5–6, 17–19.

Mohr, *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in Civil War Georgia*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Some historians have commented that slaves gained “nothing but freedom” from the war. How would you judge the importance of the conflict in the lives of African Americans of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century?
2. What does the Confederate debate over emancipation and arming of slaves suggest about the impact of the war on southern society?

# Wartime Reconstruction

## Lecture 29

**The end of the war, of course, did not bring an end to the bitterness and division that had racked the country for the four previous years and, in fact, for part of the period in the late antebellum era as well. In many ways, the decade plus a couple of years of Reconstruction spawned even more bitter memories.**

**T**his lecture examines the wartime beginnings of Reconstruction. This issue spawned a lively debate between Abraham Lincoln and members of Congress over who would control the process and what conditions for readmission to the Union would be imposed on the Confederate states. Lincoln and Congress engaged in a wartime debate over Reconstruction. Lincoln wanted to control the process through presidential proclamations, pardons, and Executive Orders, whereas Congress wanted to control the process through legislation.

At stake was were several important issues:

- What would southern society look like?
- Would severe political disabilities be imposed for ex-Confederates?
- Would black men be given political rights?
- What constitutional and political steps would the Confederate states have to take to gain readmission to the Union?

Lincoln offered his “10 Per Cent Plan” in December 1863. He issued a proclamation of amnesty that offered full pardons and restored all but slave property to virtually all Confederates. Confederates must take the oath of allegiance to the United States. They must agree to abide by the Emancipation Proclamation and all other laws and proclamations concerning slavery. Certain classes of Confederates, such as civil and military figures, were exempted from the offer.

When 10 percent of the 1860 voting population in any Rebel state had taken the oath, they could organize a loyal state government that Lincoln would recognize. That government would have to accept the Emancipation Proclamation. Lincoln accepted a “temporary arrangement” under which black people would remain an essentially landless laboring class. This “arrangement” would cushion the shock of a sudden change in labor and social relations. The plan applied immediately to areas under Union military control in December 1863. Large parts of Louisiana and Arkansas, key areas of Virginia and Mississippi, as well as most of Tennessee, qualified.

The Radical Republicans in Congress criticized Lincoln’s plan heavily. They said it provided too few safeguards for black freedom, because it did not provide land for economic independence and it left open the door for continued economic exploitation of black labor. Radical Republicans also said that the political terms were far too lenient. They believed that 10 percent was far too small a percentage of the 1860 voter pool to warrant a popular government loyal to the United States. The white South was guilty of treason and should be punished severely in the areas of property holdings and political rights. The South should be recast in the image of the free-labor North.

The Republican Party debated the topic of Reconstruction for the rest of the war, focusing on whether the executive or the legislative branch of government would control the process. Lincoln insisted that the Confederate states had not really left the Union, because the Union was indissoluble. They were temporarily under the control of bad leaders. Reconstruction meant merely allowing loyal white southerners to reassert control.

Most Republicans in Congress opposed Lincoln’s wish to allow Rebels back into the Union by taking the oath. Only men who had been Unionists all along should have leadership in the South. The seceding states had forfeited their constitutional rights. Thaddeus Stevens felt that they should be treated like conquered provinces, while Charles Sumner thought they were now Federal territories. The southern states should be made to guarantee civil and political rights for freed people—they were the most loyal segment of the southern populace. Lincoln appointed military governors in four occupied

states: Louisiana, Arkansas, Virginia, and Tennessee (Andrew Johnson was the governor there).

The two sides clashed in 1864 over policy in Louisiana. Lincoln accepted a state government and constitution that abolished slavery but failed to provide strong guarantees for freed people's rights. Radicals damned the results in Louisiana as typical of what Lincoln's conciliatory approach would yield, particularly because no radical Unionists had a voice in the government. Congress refused to seat representatives from Louisiana and Arkansas. Congress answered with the Wade-Davis Bill of July 1864. It required that 50 percent of the citizens enrolled as voters in a state seeking to form a new loyal government take the oath of allegiance (an "ironclad" oath of past loyalty). It mandated that the states write new constitutions before setting up a loyal state government. It provided stronger safeguards for freed people's rights but did not grant the franchise to black men. It provided for political liability for anyone who had borne arms against the United States.



Prints and Photographs Division, U. S. Library of Congress.

**General Nathaniel P. Banks.**

The framers hoped the 50 percent provision would delay the process until after the war when the North might be willing to press for harsher measures against the South. Lincoln killed the bill with a pocket veto. Radical Republicans issued the "Wade-Davis Manifesto" on 11 August 1864, calling Lincoln's action an "outrage." The Radicals maneuvered unsuccessfully to deny Lincoln the Republican nomination for the presidency in 1864.

Lincoln and Congress enjoyed better relations on this issue toward the end of the war. Lincoln's 10 percent governments were functioning in two states. He promised to accept legislation similar to the Wade-Davis Bill for future states if Congress would accept the two 10 percent plan governments. A short-lived compromise broke down when Congress proved unable to agree on



new legislation. On April 11, 1865 (only three days before his assassination), Lincoln made a speech in which he mentioned that he would soon make a new announcement regarding Reconstruction. ■

### Essential Reading

Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877*, chapter 2.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 23.

Paludan, “A People’s Contest”: *The Union and the Civil War, 1861–1865*, chapter 10.

### Supplementary Reading

Harris, *With Charity for All: Lincoln and the Restoration of the Union*.

Simpson, *The Reconstruction Presidents*, Part 1.

### Questions to Consider

1. In light of the scale of human and material cost during the war, do you find it reasonable to argue that most Confederates should have been restored to full citizenship simply by taking the oath of allegiance to the United States?
2. Does the wartime debate over Reconstruction suggest that the North felt confident that it would defeat the Confederacy?

# The Naval War

## Lecture 30

**In this lecture, we'll look at the naval resources that each side had going into the war and how they tried to make the most of those resources. We'll look at strategic planning in a naval sense on both sides, and then we will have a consideration of the blockade, which was one of the key features of the naval side of the conflict.**

Often overlooked or slighted in treatments of the conflict, the United States Navy played a major role in defeating the Confederacy. For its part, the Confederacy used technology and a small group of ironclads and commerce raiders in an impressive attempt to offset northern numbers and power. The North began with just 42 commissioned vessels manned by fewer than 10,000 officers and seamen.

Four years later the United States Navy rivaled Britain's Royal Navy with nearly 60,000 men and 700 vessels, about a third of which were steam warships constructed during the war and 70 of which were ironclads. Manpower increased from fewer than 10,000 to about 60,000. Expenditures also rose between 1861 and 1865 from about \$12,000,000 to \$123,000,000.

Congress and Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles mandated several organizational changes as follows:

- They created a new roster of ranks (including admiral).
- They provided for mandatory retirement at age 62 after 45 years of service.
- They created a system of bureaus (including one for steam engineering).

Northern industrial might made this remarkable transformation possible and guaranteed that the Confederacy would steadily lose ground in naval power. Northern strategy employed naval strength in three important ways: as a blockading force designed to cut off southern commerce with Europe,

thus fulfilling part of the Anaconda Plan; in joint army-navy efforts along the Mississippi and other rivers; and as an important element in operations against key points along the Confederate coast.

Northern strategy used naval strength in several ways. The Navy blockaded the Confederate coast as part of the “Anaconda Plan.” The South’s 3,500 miles of coastline, with hundreds of bays, rivers, and estuaries, posed a daunting challenge. Union operations closed southern ports one after another.

The Navy supported important military operations along southern rivers. It worked with Grant at Forts Henry and Donelson, Shiloh, and Vicksburg. It worked with McClellan on the James River and the Virginia peninsula in 1862. And it Navy guarded Union lines of communication and supply along rivers and the Confederate coast.

The Confederacy built a navy from scratch but could never compete with Union power at sea, on the rivers, or along the coast. The South placed resources in a program that built or began construction of 37 ironclads. The C.S.S. *Virginia* (formerly the U.S.S. *Merrimack*) and other ironclads threatened the northern blockading squadrons. All the ironclads were underpowered, because the South could not build large enough engines. A total of 237 officers resigned from the U.S. Navy to serve the South. The South had no real naval tradition, nor a shipbuilding industry. The South captured some naval bases and stores early in the war.

Confederate naval strategy sought to use innovation and technology to overcome a disadvantage in resources. Confederates hoped ironclads would help cancel superior numbers of northern wooden vessels. They used naval mines (called “torpedoes” in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) to protect harbors and river mouths. Mines sank 43 Union ships during the war. They built small rams and torpedo boats to harass Union blockading vessels. They built the *Hunley*,

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**The Union Navy didn’t defeat the Confederacy with its blockade, but the blockade was certainly a factor in helping to wear away the ability of the Confederacy to resist.**

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the world's first successful submarine, which sank the U.S.S. *Housatonic* off Charleston, South Carolina, on 17 February 1864.

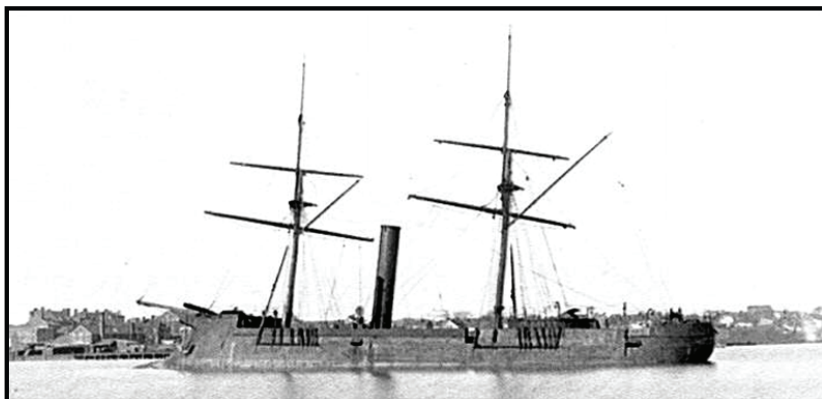
The South commissioned several commerce raiders that preyed on northern commercial shipping. Commerce raiders had been used in the American Revolution, the quasi-war with France, and the War of 1812. The South hoped to divert blockading ships with these commerce raiders engaged.

The blockade, imposed on 19 April 1861, was the most important naval dimension of the war. On 11 May 1861, the first blockade runner was captured. The North seized key points along the southern coast to use as bases for blockading vessels. Hatteras Inlet, North Carolina, fell in August 1861. Ship Island off Biloxi, Mississippi, fell in September 1861. Port Royal, South Carolina, fell in November 1861 to a major Union effort.

The North systematically closed important southern ports and inlets:

- Savannah Harbor was closed to blockade runners in April 1862.
- Roanoke Island fell in February 1862, closing 150 miles of the North Carolina Sounds.
- The Virginia failed to break the Union blockade of Norfolk in March 1862 in the first battle of ironclads in history, fought with the U.S.S. Monitor.
- New Orleans fell in April 1862 to David Glasgow Farragut's fleet.
- Mobile Bay was closed in August 1864.
- Wilmington, North Carolina, was closed in January 1865.
- The one city that resisted naval attack for the entire war was Charleston, South Carolina.

The blockade never sealed the entire Confederate coast, but it proved effective as a component of Union strategy. Overall, nine of ten blockade runners got through in 1861 and one of two in 1865. The South was able to import material throughout the war. A total of 8,500 ships got through, but 1,500 were captured.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

The ex-Confederate iron-clad ram *Stonewall* at anchor in Washington, D.C.

About 20,000 vessels had cleared southern ports in the four years before the war and just 8,500 did so during the conflict. Fewer ships tried to get in because of the blockade. The ships that got through were smaller on average than the prewar vessels.

The net result was a two-thirds reduction in southern maritime trade during the war. This hurt the war effort, because the Confederacy could not produce all the military goods it needed to fight the war. This also hurt civilian morale, because nonmilitary goods became scarce. ■

### Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 10, 12–13.

## Supplementary Reading

Davis, *Duel between the First Ironclads*.

Jones, *The Civil War at Sea*, vols. 1, 3.

Luraghi, *A History of the Confederate Navy*, chapters 1–3.

Perry, *Infernal Machines: The Story of Confederate Submarine and Mine Warfare*.

Still, *Iron Afloat: The Story of the Confederate Armorclads*, chapters 1–2.

Time-Life Books, *The Civil War: The Blockade, Runners and Raiders*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Can you imagine Union victory during the Civil War without the superiority of its Navy?
2. Think about Union naval wartime record. What conclusions can you draw (and support with facts) about the overall power of the northern economy and its ability to achieve astonishing military production while producing enormous amounts of consumer goods? Do the same kind of analysis with respect to the Confederate States Navy. What conclusions can you draw from the results of the two comparisons?

# The River War and Confederate Commerce Raiders

## Lecture 31

Now we'll move inland to see how the United States Navy performed as it supported military operations along the Southern rivers, and then we'll turn to the Confederacy's use of privateers and commerce raiders in an attempt to disrupt Northern maritime trade and force the North to shift vessels from blockading duty to an effort to capture these Southern raiders.

The campaigning in the Western Theater afforded opportunities for the North's navy to play a major role, contributing to the attempt to seize control of the Mississippi River and fulfill part of the Anaconda Plan.

The North created a flotilla to support Union armies along the western rivers. Side-wheelers were converted into timberclad warships. James B. Eads and Samuel Pook designed and built seven ironclads (dubbed "Pook's turtles") intended specifically for service on the narrow, shallow rivers. These vessels were 175 feet long, mounted 13 guns, and could go 9 knots downstream. By early 1862, all were afloat.

A flotilla under Andrew H. Foote supported Grant's operations against Fort Henry on the Tennessee River and Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River in February 1862. The Navy took Fort Henry virtually without the army's help. The Navy suffered considerable losses at Fort Donelson, but the Cumberland River was opened by the Union victory.

In March and April, a flotilla under Foote cooperated in driving Confederates from their stronghold at Island No. 10 near New Madrid, Missouri. Foote's flotilla (commanded by Charles H. Davis) defeated Confederate vessels in the Battle of Memphis on June 6, 1862.

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**All in all, commerce raiders destroyed 257 Northern merchant ships and caused another 700 to transfer to Northern flags.**

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A flotilla under David Dixon Porter assisted Grant in the campaign against Vicksburg in December 1862–July 1863. Naval forces assisted in the unsuccessful maneuvering in the winter of 1862. Under David Dixon Porter, vessels ran past the Vicksburg batteries in April 1863, setting up Grant’s final movements toward Jackson and Vicksburg, which fell on 4 July 1863. Without the Navy, the North would have faced a much sterner task in winning control of the western rivers and the hinterlands they drained.

The Confederacy resorted to privateering and commerce raiding as part of a strategy designed to overcome Union naval advantages. The Confederacy lacked the shipyards to build commerce raiders and the ports to sustain them; therefore, it decided to attack indirectly. It turned to Britain as a source of seagoing vessels. It purchased several commerce raiders, both steam and sail, that were fast and heavily armed. It tried (unsuccessfully) to purchase powerful ironclad rams (the so-called “Laird rams,” after the shipyard in which they were built).

The South hoped attacks on northern commerce would accomplish a range of goals, including forcing the North to divert blockading vessels to deal with privateers and raiders, posing a threat to northern coastal areas, and depressing northern morale.

Privateering was a traditional tool used by weaker naval powers that proved unsuccessful for the Confederacy. Jefferson Davis offered commissions to privateers in April 1861. Lincoln announced that privateers would be treated as pirates and hanged. Davis countered that Union prisoners of war would be hanged if crews of privateers were executed. The crew of the *Jeff Davis* was convicted and sentenced to death, but Lincoln backed down in 1862 when Davis ordered Union prisoners to draw lots to see who would be executed.



General David Dixon Porter.

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.



Neutral ports responded to pressure from the United States and refused to admit prizes taken by Confederate privateers. The Union blockade made it difficult for privateers to take prizes into southern ports. Without places to dispose of prizes, interest in privateering declined and the focus of the assault on the northern merchant marine shifted to commerce raiders.

Commerce raiders numbered only 20 vessels but cut a wide swath through the Union merchant marine. Raphael Semmes was the most famous and successful captain of Confederate raiders. He captured 18 northern vessels with the steamer C.S.S. *Sumter* in 1862. He captured 65 northern vessels with the steam sloop C.S.S. *Alabama* (with a largely British crew) in 1862–1864 before losing a storied duel with the better-armed U.S.S. *Kearsarge* off Cherbourg, France, on June 19, 1864. Semmes escaped to England.

Two other cruisers compiled dazzling records. The C.S.S. *Florida* captured 55 northern vessels and the C.S.S. *Shenandoah* captured 38 merchantmen and whalers before surrendering several months after the end of the war (November 1865).

Commerce raiders did considerable damage to the United States merchant marine fleet:

- They captured a total of 257 vessels.
- They caused owners to transfer at least 700 vessels to foreign flags.
- They forced insurance rates to such heights that most remaining vessels flying the United States flag remained in port.

Nonetheless, Confederate commerce raiders had little impact on the northern war effort or American commerce. The North did not weaken the blockade to deal with raiders. Raiders did not threaten coastal areas. And Northern commerce continued at full stride, because shippers and northern companies simply used foreign bottoms to carry their goods. ■

## Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 13, 18, 22.

## Supplementary Reading

Jones, *The Civil War at Sea*, vols. 2–3.

Luraghi, *A History of the Confederate Navy*, chapters 5, 12, 18.

Marvel, *The Alabama and the Kearsarge: The Sailor's Civil War*.

Robinson, *The Confederate Privateers*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Try to envision the war along the western rivers without northern naval superiority. How would this have complicated the Union task?
2. Would the Confederacy have been better served to ignore its Navy and pour all its resources into its armies? Would this have been feasible?

# Women at War, I

## Lecture 32

**With this lecture, we will begin a two-part examination of women during the war: how the war affected women and how women affected the war. Women made up more than 15 million of the roughly 31 million Americans in 1860, and, of course, they represented a great range of people.**

**W**omen ran the gamut of all categories of the population at that time. It is hard to generalize about them. Women on both sides took on the work of men at home, although northern women were not as directly touched by occupation and destruction of property as southern women were. Most women supported their respective causes, but many on both sides also faltered in their support.

Both the North and the South in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century idealized upper- and middle-class white women. The “cult of domesticity” offered an ideal for the North. This ideal placed men and women in separate spheres—men outside the home in a public sphere of politics and business and women in a domestic sphere at home, where they nurtured children and provided moral guidance for the family. Publications, lecturers, and ministers emphasized that women had a special moral gift to preserve society. In this concept, men were weak and easily tempted. Women provided a pure home, a shelter to which they (the men) could return each evening.

The ideal of “the lady” held sway in the South. Manners and “purity” made a lady (Melanie Wilkes in *Gone With the Wind* is a slightly exaggerated version of this ideal). These ladies would be educated enough to converse in polite company and be engaging and uplifting. The ladies would also manage domestic production in households that were sometimes complex, but they never performed manual labor, such as cooking, cleaning, and washing. Manners and customs were important throughout the United States but more so in the South.

Most women's lives were at least partly removed from these ideals, and they experienced inequalities. Women could not vote. Education was limited for girls and women. Divorce was difficult (only 1 in 21 marriages ended in divorce). Women in the North held one-fourth of the manufacturing jobs and two-thirds of the textile industry jobs but made only one-half the wages that men did. These workers were mostly young, single women, working to build a dowry before marriage. Many of these jobs went to immigrants (especially those from Ireland) as the war approached.

**Women's wages increased at a rate less than half that of male workers' wages, yet women filled a quarter of all manufacturing jobs.**

Many northern women operated outside the home before the war. They worked as teachers and in charity, both of which were considered "womanly" work. They participated in reform movements, such as temperance, education and prison reform, and antislavery. The "women's movement" itself, which pressed for equal rights beginning in 1848, was solely a northern phenomenon.

Only the wealthiest slaveholding women in the South fully met the ideal of the lady. Most slaveholding women were busy managing plantations or farms. They oversaw dairy and egg production, spinning and weaving, and cultivation of vegetable gardens. They also managed the sick room and nursery.

Northern and southern white women also has much in common. Daily life on small to middling farms was similar in labor demands. Women in both sections generally agreed on who should rear children (women) or run for political office and manage businesses (men).

The war brought change to the lives of many women in the North. Some became active in benevolent associations (such as the U.S. Sanitary Commission), which raised money to purchase goods to improve soldiers' lives at the front. No women held top positions of authority in these

organizations. Women joined Ladies and Soldiers Aid Societies and sewing circles. They worked with the New York Central Association of Relief, formed in 1861. They gained practical political and organizational experience in these activities that would be useful in the suffrage movement.

Roughly 8,000 women worked as nurses, fundamentally changing the profession from one dominated by men to one dominated by women. Among them were Louisa May Alcott, who volunteered as a nurse in Georgetown; Clara Barton, who played a conspicuous role in forming the American Red Cross; and Dorothea Dix, who served as Superintendent of Nursing. Women also filled secretarial and clerks positions for the government, job categories previously dominated by men.

Working class women's and black women's lives are harder to sketch. Industrial real wages declined during the war and women's wages lagged far behind men's. Piece rates declined more than 50 percent between 1861 and 1864 for women. Widows of poorer husbands faced enormous difficulties and not infrequently served time in prison rather than live on the streets. How permanent were the changes that occurred? When men returned from the war, they resumed their old jobs. Some women were probably not so happy to give up the new horizons they had discovered. ■

### Essential Reading

Clinton and Silber, eds., *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War*.

### Supplementary Reading

Attie, *Patriotic Toil: Northern Women and the American Civil War*.

Massey, *Bonnet Brigades*.

McPherson and Cooper, eds., *Writing the Civil War: The Quest to Understand*, Faust essay.

## Questions to Consider

1. Do you believe the Civil War served as a central event in the lives of northern women to the same degree that it did in the lives of northern soldiers?
2. Do you see parallels between debates about women's proper wartime roles in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and debates about women's proper roles today?

## Women at War, II

### Lecture 33

**This lecture continues our discussion of women during the war, turning the spotlight on two major topics. The first is women's experiences behind the lines in the Confederacy; the second is northern and southern women's work at the front.**

**W**omen on both sides of the conflict shared common feelings of separation from male loved ones and a sense of loss when soldiers died or were killed. Poorer farm women suffered similar hardships and assumed greater burdens in the absence of their husbands.

Southern women took on many of the same roles as northern women. They worked in Soldiers' Aid Societies in communities or states, although these societies in the South never enjoyed the same level of organization as they did in the North. In the South, the societies were community based, as opposed to national in scope.

Southern women entered the nursing profession. About 1,000 became professional nurses. Far more served on an ad hoc basis (as Scarlett O'Hara did in *Gone With the Wind*). They often did not have to leave home to find the war as northern women usually did. Some women worked for the Confederate government, although fewer did so in the South than in the North. This type of labor became more common as more men were drafted starting in 1862–1863.

The most important part of the Confederate women's story took place on farms. They filled in for husbands in the army as either managers or field laborers. The presence of slavery added a dimension missing in most of the North (the border states were an exception). Mistresses on plantations and large farms often had to rely on slaves for help.

Hardship and fear prompted southern women to react in ways uncommon or unknown in the North. They expressed discontent because of shortages of food and goods. There were bread riots in various places (Richmond, 1863,

is a major example). Women wrote to the national government. They begged husbands in the army to come home and help out.

They defended their homes and property from Federal soldiers and marauding Confederate irregulars. Crops, farm animals, and household goods were often targeted by soldiers. Homes were used for headquarters or field hospitals. Women also feared physical violation.

Thousands of southern women became refugees. Many went to cities because they considered them safer than the countryside. Richmond's population, for example, grew significantly during the war. Others removed to distant parts of the Confederacy considered unlikely targets of northern military campaigns.

The war exacted a higher toll on southern families. A far higher percentage of Confederate men (25 percent) were killed or died in service, leaving a higher proportion of widows. Women found themselves as heads of families. They outnumbered men by wide margins in most southern states after the war and had slim prospects for remarrying. These changes affected work and patterns of authority in the post-war South.

Black women also experienced hardship and dislocation but nonetheless derived major benefits from the war. Freedom came at different times in different parts of the Confederacy. Freed women and men could try to consolidate their families. They could formalize and legalize their marriages. They escaped the stultifying tyranny of slavery. And black women were able to construct their own ideas about womanhood. They often tried to devote more attention to their households and sought to quit laboring in the fields.

Women were surprisingly numerous at the front. They worked in the medical profession, which before the war had been almost entirely male. They often had to fight for the right to work in hospitals, because such work went against Victorian norms of propriety. They faced backbreaking labor and the possibility of infection. They fought the debilitating effects of a routine made up of long stretches of boredom punctuated by periods of gruesome labor. Most in the North were middle-class women inspired by Florence Nightingale's example in the Crimean War (1853–1856).



A few women (at least 400 in the North) disguised themselves and served as soldiers for various reasons (wounds or pregnancies unmasked some of these women soldiers):

- Some wanted to be near husbands or lovers.
- Some were unmarried and patriotic.
- Some were prostitutes.

Other women served as spies or camp followers. The efforts of women spies (such as Rose Greenhow and Belle Boyd) typically have been grossly exaggerated, but some rendered solid service. Camp followers included laundresses, teamsters, runaway slaves, and other mostly lower-class women. Some wealthier women (especially wives of southern officers) accompanied husbands to the front and lived nearby. Unlike the popular image of camp followers as prostitutes, many of these women added to a sense of family and community by organizing religious activities and helping with hygiene.

The war had a great impact on women and women had an impact on the war. Some women gained experience that they later used in reform movements. In the North, the war opened more long-term opportunities in the health care field and perhaps other areas, such as secretarial work and teaching. In the South, more white women had to perform field work, while similar work became somewhat less common for black women.

The long-term impact on marriage and family roles is unclear. “Spinsters” had less of a stigma after the war. Marriage remained the ideal, but war widows made people more sympathetic to single women. More women remained single heads of households. Most women, northern and southern, supported their respective war efforts. The war may also have had a subtle



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**Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross.**

“hardening” effect on some women similar to that experienced by men in combat. ■

### Essential Reading

Clinton and Silber, *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War*.

### Supplementary Reading

Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War*.

Massey, *Bonnet Brigades*.

Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism*.

### Questions to Consider

1. How does the experience of white women in the Confederacy deviate from that of most other white women in American history?
2. Is it useful to speak of a “women’s” Civil War? Or are the experiences of various groups of women so different as to make generalizations impossible?

## Stalemate in 1864

### Lecture 34

**In this lecture, we'll look at [Ulysses S. Grant's] strategic planning for the Western Theater just before he was promoted to general-in-chief. Then we'll come east with him to Washington and Virginia, where he planned for the entire Union military effort across the board in the spring of 1864.**

**T**his lecture returns to military events with an examination of Union planning in the winter and spring of 1864 and attention to some early failures in executing northern strategy. As chief of Union forces west of the Appalachians, Grant initially formulated a strategy for that arena. When he was promoted to general-in-chief of the Union armies in March 1864, Grant broadened his thinking to encompass the entire military landscape.

Grant plotted a “strategy of exhaustion” designed to strike at the enemy’s logistical and industrial capacity. This strategy would destroy the food and other material goods necessary to maintain Confederate armies in the field. The plan was different than a “strategy of attrition,” which seeks to reduce the enemy’s manpower by inflicting casualties in battle.

Grant envisioned two main campaigns in the spring of 1864.

- Sherman would march from Chattanooga toward Atlanta.
- Banks would strike from Louisiana against Mobile, Alabama.

Union forces would live off the land whenever possible, which would free up soldiers usually assigned to protecting long supply lines and deny food and fodder to the Confederacy. Sherman carried out a small-scale trial in the Meridian campaign of February 1864.

Grant expanded his strategic thinking after his promotion to general-in-chief in March 1864 with the rank of Lieutenant General (previously worn only by George Washington). He formulated a strategy that combined elements

of exhaustion and attrition. He retained his plans for the Western Theater, even while moving his headquarters to the East. In Virginia, Meade's Army of the Potomac would engage Lee's Army of Northern Virginia with the goal of tying it down and inflicting the greatest possible number of casualties. Butler's small Army of the James would advance against Richmond from the south. Sigel's small force would move from West Virginia to the Shenandoah Valley and attack Confederate logistics in that great granary.

Grant would accompany the Army of the Potomac. He preferred to remain in the West. Northern public opinion demanded that he face Lee in Virginia. The five advances under Banks, Sherman, Meade (Grant), Butler, and Sigel would begin simultaneously in the first week in May 1864. Grant hoped simultaneous pressure on so many fronts would stretch limited Confederate resources to the breaking point. Meade's (Grant's) and Sherman's parts of the strategy were most important. The northern public had high expectations because of Grant's previous record of success.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

**General Franz Sigel.**

Early execution of Grant's strategy was deeply flawed on all the secondary fronts. Banks never advanced against Mobile. He became bogged down in the Red River campaign in the Trans-Mississippi, starting in March 1864. He barely extricated his army from a badly managed operation after the Battles of Mansfield/Sabine Crossroads and Pleasant Hill in early May.

General Benjamin Butler made a promising start, but retreated before reaching Richmond. His army was just 7 miles from Richmond by mid-May. He retreated after the Battle of Drewry's Bluff on May 16. He hunkered down in Bermuda Hundred and played no active role for several weeks. Beauregard was able to send troops to reinforce Lee.

Sigel marched southward into the Shenandoah Valley. His goal was Staunton, a vital rail center. He retreated northward after the Battle of New Market on 15 May. In this battle, cadets from the Virginia Military Institute made a famous charge against veteran Union troops. The failures of Banks, Butler, and Sigel left Meade (Grant) and Sherman bearing the entire burden of Union success in the spring of 1864. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapters 15–16.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 24.

### Supplementary Reading

Davis, *The Battle of New Market*.

Johnson, *Red River Campaign: Politics and Cotton in the Civil War*.

Robertson, *Back Door to Richmond: The Bermuda Hundred Campaign, April–June 1864*.

### Questions to Consider

1. How did Union strategic planning in early 1864 reflect the ways in which politics and military affairs intersected?
2. Try to imagine yourself a civilian in the North in April 1864. How optimistic would you be about Union prospects for victory?

# Sherman versus Johnston in Georgia

## Lecture 35

**Now we're going to switch to Grant's close friend, William Tecumseh Sherman, who will be at the heart of our lecture today. We'll look at Sherman's relationship with Grant, which I believe was the critical military relationship, certainly on the Northern side, during the war.**

**T**hese two Union generals, Grant and Sherman, shared a rare bond that was of great value to the Union. Grant always gave full credit to Sherman (the same was not true of all his subordinates). Because of the failures of Banks, Sigel, and Butler, the onus for strategic success fell squarely on Sherman. Sherman's success is arguably the result of the fact that Grant was his commanding general. Grant had inspiring confidence in eventual victory, but Sherman was not as consistent in his own outlook.

Sherman was a West Pointer but did not serve in the Mexican War as so many of his contemporaries had. He was very intelligent and an excellent speaker and writer. He considered himself a failure in 1858 but, in 1859, took a post at a military school in Louisiana. He fought at First Manassas, then went west to Kentucky, where he did not perform well. He served under Grant at Shiloh and thereafter. Sherman and Grant came to share the same hard vision of how the war was to be waged.

The first phase of the Atlanta campaign pitted major armies commanded by veteran commanders against one another.

- Sherman led a 100,000-man force made up of three armies.
- George H. Thomas's Army of the Cumberland numbered 60,000.
- James B. McPherson's Army of the Tennessee numbered 25,000.
- John M. Schofield's Army of the Ohio numbered 15,000.

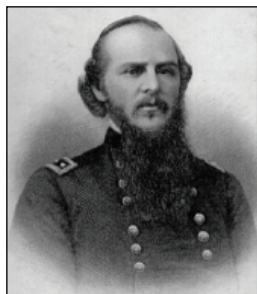
Sherman had a record of success as Grant's subordinate but had suffered failure when commanding in Kentucky early in the war.

Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee mustered 65,000 men at the outset but would grow as the campaign developed to be the second largest army ever fielded by the Confederate States of America. Johnston had a reputation in some quarters as a general who retreated too often. His soldiers were delighted to serve under him instead of Braxton Bragg. His corps commanders were Hardee, Hood, and Polk.

Grant expected Sherman's campaign to unfold in two stages to maneuver Johnston out of position on the approach to Atlanta. The first stage would follow the railroad from Chattanooga to Atlanta. After Atlanta fell, Sherman would implement the strategy of exhaustion by striking into the Georgia interior and living off the land.

Sherman progressed steadily toward Atlanta with relatively little fighting. Johnston exposed his army at Resaca on May 12–13, but the Federals (notably McPherson) failed to exploit the opportunity to cut Johnston off from Atlanta. Heavy skirmishing occurred near New Hope Church 30 miles northwest of Atlanta in late May.

The armies were near Marietta, Georgia, by the second week of June, and Johnston anchored his flank on Kennesaw Mountain. Sherman decided to attack at Kennesaw Mountain on 27 June 1864, partly because he feared his men had lost the offensive edge. Johnston's troops easily repulsed the Federals, who lost 3,000 men, but Sherman resumed his advance and maneuvering. By July 9–10, Johnston had retreated across the Chattahoochee River and occupied the Atlanta defensive works.



**General John Schofield.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

Confederate reaction to the campaign was negative. Many newspapers criticized Johnston's retreating without an aggressive battle. The Confederate Cabinet voted to remove Johnston. Corps commanders Hardee and Hood also wanted him removed and an unhappy Jefferson Davis asked Johnston how

he planned to save Atlanta. Johnston gave a vague and evasive reply (as was his practice), and Davis reached the end of his patience with Johnston, which extended back to Vicksburg and, perhaps, before. On July 17, Davis replaced Johnston with John Bell Hood in hopes of saving the psychologically important city of Atlanta. This change met with a mixed reaction in the army, but Johnston had given Davis little choice. His phased withdrawal had cost up to 20,000 men and had not stopped Sherman. Sherman was pleased at the change, because he knew that Hood would be under pressure to attack.

The first phase of the ten-week campaign ended without a clear resolution. High northern expectations had suffered because of Sherman's failure to capture Atlanta. Confederates expressed concern about a Union army's reaching the important city without having to fight hard to get there. No one knew how long the siege might last or what the result would be. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapters 17–18.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 24–25.

### Supplementary Reading

Castel, *Decision in the West: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864*, chapters 1–7.

Kennett, *Marching through Georgia: The Story of Soldiers and Civilians during Sherman's Campaign*, chapters 1–7.



## Questions to Consider

1. Joseph Johnston's removal came at a time when his actions between May and early July inspired heated public debate. How much influence do you believe public expectations and opinion should exert on military affairs in a democracy at war?
2. How do you think you would have viewed the campaigning in Georgia as a northern civilian? As a Confederate civilian?

# The Wilderness to Spotsylvania

## Lecture 36

The fifth component of Grant's plan, of course, was the one that would involve Grant himself most actively, the one that would be played out over the old battlegrounds in central Virginia. This would be the showpiece confrontation of the spring of 1864, and in many ways the showpiece confrontation of the war because it brought together the two greatest soldiers developed during the war, in Grant and Lee.

The confrontation between Grant and Lee in May 1864 dominated headlines and greatly influenced civilian morale. The North looked to Grant as the man who finally would defeat Lee. This desire compelled Grant to accompany the Army of the Potomac rather than direct the war from the west. Northern civilian morale in March and April reached a point that would be satisfied only with unequivocal victory in Virginia.

Southerners looked to Lee as their chief national rallying point. They expected success from him and his Army of Northern Virginia. Lee's campaigns offset bad news from other parts of the Confederacy. Because of these high expectations for Grant and Lee, their campaign would be the most important of May 1864.

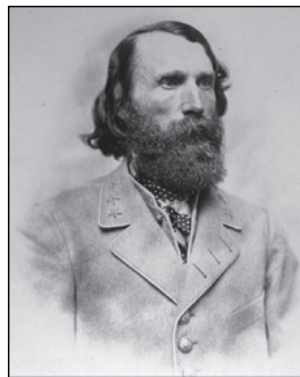
Grant had three goals in mind for his 120,000-man army as the campaign opened. He would tie Lee down so the Confederates could not send reinforcements to Johnston's army in northern Georgia. He would cripple Lee's army by applying constant pressure. Lincoln had been trying to get his generals to do this for three years. This marked a departure for Grant, who had suffered relatively few casualties in most of his earlier campaigns (Shiloh was an exception). He would take Richmond following any sound defeat of the Army of Northern Virginia, if General Benjamin Butler did not take it first.

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**The volume of fire was so great [at "Mule Shoe"] that a grove of trees was literally shot to pieces behind this little arc of the Confederate works.**

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Lee also had a range of goals for his army of 64,000. He hoped to hold off the Federals and punish them enough to influence northern morale. He hoped to parry Grant's offensive and find an opening to counterattack. He hated to act solely on the defensive and believed aggressiveness could partially nullify northern numbers. He hoped to protect his supply routes to the Shenandoah Valley. His greatest fear was that Grant would push him into the defenses of Richmond, which would end all hope of strategic maneuvering and lead to a siege that would almost certainly end in northern victory.



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**General Ambrose Hill.**

The campaign opened with the Battle of the Wilderness. Lee attacked Grant on May 5 as the Union army marched south through the area of scrub forest known as the Wilderness of Spotsylvania. Grant counterattacked along the Plank Road and Turnpike. There was a gap between the two wings of Lee's army. James Longstreet's First Corps had not reached the battlefield. The first day ended with Lee's army in a vulnerable position.

Grant resumed heavy assaults on May 6. Lee's army almost broke on A. P. Hill's end of the line and Lee risked his life to rally his troops. Longstreet arrived just in time to repair the line. Confederate flank attacks gained success on both ends of Grant's line, but Longstreet was badly wounded, accidentally shot by his own troops. This was a great loss to the Army of Northern Virginia. The second day's fighting ended with the lines essentially where they had been at dawn. Fires in the woods killed many of the wounded men, who couldn't be rescued by their comrades.

Grant pressed southward rather than retreating. Union troops cheered him when they realized they would continue the campaign; the Confederates were surprised by Grant's move to their right flank. The armies collided again in the Battles at Spotsylvania Court House on May 8–21. Poor Union movement allowed Lee's army to set up a defense at Spotsylvania just in time to block Grant's advance.

The Confederates erected field breastworks; part of their line was an exposed salient dubbed the “Mule Shoe.” Grant mounted assaults on May 8–9 that Lee’s troops easily repulsed, but a Union attack under Emory Upton broke through the west face of the “Mule Shoe” salient on May 10. Lack of reinforcements and coordination limited Union success; Grant determined to launch an assault against the “Mule Shoe.”

Grant attacked the “Mule Shoe” with 20,000 troops on May 12. The Federals enjoyed initial success, but the Confederates counterattacked and stabilized the line. Hideous fighting ensued for twenty hours at the northwest arc of the “Mule Shoe,” later called the “Bloody Angle.” Lee constructed a new line at the base of the salient and occupied it on the morning of May 13. Various engagements between May 13 and May 21 yielded no decisive result, and the armies proceeded south after Spotsylvania, having reached no clear decision. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 17.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 24.

### Supplementary Reading

Catton, *A Stillness at Appomattox*, chapters 1–2.

Freeman, *Lee’s Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, vol. 3, chapters 17–22.

Gallagher, ed., *The Wilderness Campaign*.

Rhea, *The Battles for Spotsylvania Court House and the Road to Yellow Tavern, May 7–12, 1864*.

———, *The Battle of the Wilderness, May 5–6, 1864*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Which side did the type of fighting at the Wilderness and Spotsylvania favor militarily?
2. Which home front do you believe could cope most easily with news about heavy casualties without clear resolution in May 1864?

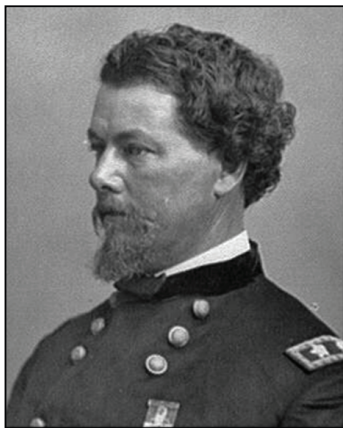
# Cold Harbor to Petersburg

## Lecture 37

In our last lecture, we left the Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of the Potomac in the aftermath of their contest at Spotsylvania. Now we'll pick up the Overland campaign as Ulysses S. Grant continued to press southward toward Richmond.

This lecture completes our examination of military events in the first half of 1864 by following Grant's and Lee's campaigns from Cold Harbor through the beginning of the siege of Petersburg. Grant continued his relentless movement southward after the battles of Spotsylvania. The armies clashed at the North Anna River in late May. Lee secured Hanover Junction, a key rail center, and entrenched behind the river. Grant placed his army in a difficult position with three pieces divided by the North Anna. Illness caused Lee to miss an opportunity to strike Grant's vulnerable army. The armies shifted to Cold Harbor near Richmond (and the 1862 Gaines Mill battlefield), engaging in inconclusive action on June 1–2.

Grant launched famously futile assaults on June 3 at Cold Harbor against well-entrenched Confederate positions. Several factors may have influenced his decision. He hoped to hold Lee's attention while other Federal forces under General Hunter operated in the Shenandoah Valley, carrying out a strategy of exhaustion, and under General Sheridan nearer to Richmond. He may have been frustrated by Lee's ability to counter previous moves and persuaded to try brute force. Or he may have believed that Lee's army was reeling and could be defeated by headlong attacks. In either case, he knew the Northern people were anxious for an unequivocal



General Horatio Wright.

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

battlefield victory. Fifty thousand Union attackers failed to dislodge 30,000 defenders and suffered heavy casualties in trying.

The Union endured 7,500 casualties in this attack alone. Grant resumed maneuvering on June 12 with the intention of capturing Petersburg, south of Richmond. He slipped away from Lee and crossed the James River with most of his army. His advance units (the XVIII and II Corps) reached Petersburg, a key rail and water juncture that lay 25 miles south of Richmond and was essential to the Southern capital, while it was lightly defended.

P. G. T. Beauregard put up a good defense and called for help from Lee. Lee, thinking that Grant was merely maneuvering as before in this campaign, realized belatedly that Grant had left his front. Reinforcements from the Army of Northern Virginia stabilized the Petersburg defensive line by 19 June.

The Union lost a major opportunity at Petersburg on June 15–18. Grant's troops far outnumbered the Confederates. Union attacks failed miserably for a number of reasons: veteran corps commanders failed to coordinate well and many Northern troops refused to attack breastworks.

The Overland campaign had taken a terrible toll on both armies and on the Northern home front. The armies together averaged more than 2,500 casualties a day from May 5 through June 18. In other words, they suffered the equivalent of a First Manassas every day for a month and a half. The armies had few respites from fighting and skirmishing, unlike in earlier campaigns. Huge numbers of officers were killed or maimed on both sides. Eighteen thousand “three-year men” went home at this time. Despite the bloodshed, there were no decisive results on the battlefield.

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**Grant's strategy of attacking Lee and trying to defeat him in the field had been in part dictated as we saw earlier by Northern desires for real victories.**

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Northern civilians suffered a serious decline in morale. The high expectations of April and May made the absence of victories and the high casualties all the

more damaging. No good news came from any other front (e.g., the Valley, the Red River, Atlanta) to offset news from Virginia. As a result, Northern home front morale dropped to its lowest point in the war. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapters 17–18.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 24.

### Supplementary Reading

Catton, *A Stillness at Appomattox*, chapter 3.

Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, vol. 3, chapters 23–25.

Trudeau, *Bloody Roads South: The Wilderness to Cold Harbor, May–June 1864*, pp. 220–318.

### Questions to Consider

1. What do you think Americans in mid-July 1864 would think of the modern idea that the Confederacy was doomed after Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg the preceding summer?
2. What does the campaigning of May–July 1864 tell us about the importance of individual victories as determinants of popular morale?



# The Confederate Home Front, I

## Lecture 38

As the Confederate people struggled to keep their armies in the field, they struggled with their economic and political structures, which began to crack and threatened to come apart. As the war went on, efforts to provide food and clothing and other necessities of life, and to keep their homes safe, proved very difficult, and in many cases impossible, for Confederates.

Consciously choosing to avoid party politics in establishing their new nation, the founders of the Confederacy hoped to return to a revolutionary-era ideal. Confederates saw themselves as true heirs of the revolutionary tradition. Seeming agreement about goals and methods during the secession crisis and early months of the war suggested a unanimity of outlook.

But the war quickly brought strains that exposed weaknesses and rivalries. The CSA Congress proved to be a mediocre body, lacking any real vision or leadership. The Congress was reluctant to make hard decisions, held lengthy private debates about minor questions (no public records of deliberations were kept), and witnessed considerable violence, absenteeism, even public drunkenness from its members. Several factors may help explain the inadequacy of the CSA Congress: the tradition of Southern political obstructionism during the late-antebellum years may have continued; many able leaders went into the army (Howell Cobb and Robert Toombs of Georgia are two notable examples); and the war naturally enhanced the power of the executive at the expense of Congress.



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**Bread riots marked civil unrest in the South.**

Jefferson Davis and his policies became the focus for intense and often vitriolic political debate. Davis had strengths and weaknesses as a chief executive:

- He was a meticulous thinker, a hard worker, and completely dedicated to the Confederacy.
- He had wide experience as a politician, administrator, and soldier.
- He could be too loyal to friends (e.g., Braxton Bragg), too attentive to small details, and unbending when he thought he was right (which was most of the time).
- He tried to combine military and political leadership rather than concentrating on politics and giving his best commanders wide latitude.

Two factors helped end a brief period of broad support for Davis (despite the official absence of political parties in the Confederacy). First, the defeats in the Western Theater in the spring of 1862 prompted criticism. And second, the growing power of a central government that conscripted men, taxed citizens in various ways, and suspended the writ of *habeas corpus* alienated many Confederates devoted to state and individual rights.

Davis was a realist who saw the need for extreme measures if the Confederacy were to win. Lee agreed with him, but Vice President Alexander H. Stephens and many others did not. Some Southern governors strongly opposed Davis, but we need to be careful in assessing the historical record on this point.

The Southern economy suffered immense dislocation during the war. Four factors played crucial roles in this process:

- An over-reliance on paper money fueled inflation.
- The loss of productive industrial and agricultural areas to invading Northern armies created shortages.
- The tightening blockade also created shortages.

- Military campaigns and shortages of repair materials disrupted the transportation network and frustrated distribution of goods.

Every class but debtors and speculators suffered from inflation, which eventually reached 9,000 percent in some areas. Economic hardship created social tension. Women rioted for food in several cities. Poorer women urged soldiers to desert to help feed their families. Real wages declined by about one-third and caused labor unrest. Soldiers' pay was poor and inflation eroded virtually all of its buying power.

Inflation caused citizens and the government to adjust. Many citizens pursued an economy based on bartering and simply did without many goods. Congress passed a tax-in-kind that required producers to give 10 percent of their production of various crops to the government. The Impressment Act also imposed hardships, and such legislation alienated many people. Economic hardship caused some (but not most) Confederates to lose heart for the war. ■

### Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 14, 20.

Thomas, *The Confederate Nation, 1861–1865*, chapters 5–6, 9.

### Supplementary Reading

Gallagher, *The Confederate War*, chapters 1–2.

Rable, *The Confederate Republic: A Revolution against Politics*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Do you see any advantages to a democratic political system without political parties? Was this a misguided goal for the Confederacy?
2. Do you believe defeat made some of the flaws in the Confederate system seem larger than they really were?

# The Confederate Home Front, II

## Lecture 39

We'll continue with our look at the Confederate home front in this lecture, taking up three topics. We'll look at white refugees in the South, we'll look at disaffection with the war among the Confederate citizenry, and we'll finish by considering the degree to which that disaffection can help explain the failure of the Confederacy in the end.

The war created two kinds of refugees in the South—slaves who went to Union lines and white people who were displaced by Northern armies. We have discussed black refugees in an earlier lecture, and the focus here will be on the thousands of white people who abandoned their homes in the hope of protecting their families and salvaging at least some of their property. This phenomenon appeared almost as soon as the war began (Mrs. Robert E. Lee was among the earliest refugees), as people moved to cities or remote areas where they believed they would be safe from Union armies. Although they could not know it at the time, most refugees lost more than if they had remained in their homes.

Refugees often moved several times, often in reaction to military operations. They initially tried to stay as close to their homes as possible. They ended up moving to cities that were better protected, such as Richmond, or to remote areas that were seemingly safe from Union incursions. The refugee experience was often harrowing. Leaving home was traumatic. Some people had time to plan, but others (such as General Polk's wife) had only a few hours' notice. Trains were often packed beyond capacity. The initial escape marked the beginning of the ordeal; Federal troops and Confederate deserters and

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**Historians have looked at various factors that seemed to indicate widespread alienation among the people: unhappiness with conscription, desertion from the armies, concealment of goods from government impressment agents, and hoarding and profiteering.**

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“bushwhackers” often preyed on refugees. People in safer areas often resented newcomers who placed additional stress on local resources. Most refugees experienced a decline in standard of living once they resettled. Texas became a haven for refugees, many of them from Louisiana. Few refugees recouped their losses and, as a result, constituted one of the groups most severely affected by the war.

Among those who did not become refugees, increasing hardship and an intrusive central government undoubtedly caused distress and anger as the war progressed. Historians have looked at various factors that seemed to indicate widespread alienation among the people: unhappiness with conscription, desertion from the armies, concealment of goods from government impressment agents, and hoarding and profiteering.

About 100,000 Confederate soldiers (or 13 percent) deserted. An unknown proportion of these men left service because they had lost faith in the Confederacy. Others left the ranks to help at home, then returned to the army. Some formed guerrilla bands, but most stayed at home and worked.

Some citizens concealed goods from government impressment agents. Much of this activity represented an effort to keep food and other goods necessary for a family’s survival. Some of this activity represented deep unhappiness with the Confederacy. Other citizens hoarded goods or engaged in profiteering. Many Confederates unfairly blamed Jewish merchants for high prices. Blockade runners often helped profiteers by bringing in luxury items rather than war-related goods.

Disaffection, however, has been exaggerated by many historians and blamed for the defeat of the Confederacy. Most white Southerners remained loyal Confederates who might oppose some measures but retained their willingness to struggle for independence. The level of loss and sacrifice attests to Southerners’ devotion to the Confederacy. Southerners lost a far higher percentage of their military-age males than any other segment of white society in American history (including the North during the Civil War). They similarly suffered far higher property losses. They maintained their resistance despite massive dislocation of population and increasing physical hardship. ■

## Essential Reading

Gallagher, *The Confederate War*, chapters 1–2.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 20.

## Supplementary Reading

Berenger, Hattaway, Jones, and Still, *Why the South Lost the Civil War*.

Massey, *Refugee Life in the Confederacy*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Was military defeat or disaffection behind the lines more important in bringing Confederate defeat?
2. What comparative standard should we use in trying to estimate the degree of Confederate devotion to the cause?

# The Northern Home Front, I

## Lecture 40

**This lecture begins our two-part look at Northern life behind the lines, what's going on in the North while those United States armies are campaigning across the Confederacy.**

**A**lthough the war did not bring the type of dislocation to the North that was characteristic of the Confederate experience, it did produce great political change. The Democrats saw their power erode dramatically, whereas for six decades before the war, only Democratic presidents had been reelected to a second term. Democrats had controlled Congress for most of the antebellum period; in the seven decades after 1860, only two Democrats were elected president. The Republican Party solidified its win in 1860 during the course of the war.

The Democratic Party had split into factions during the war. The “War” Democrats joined Republicans in pressing for a vigorous prosecution of the war against the Confederates. Some joined Lincoln’s cabinet and, in 1864, they united with Republicans under the banner of the Union Party. The “regular” or “Peace” Democrats (some popularly known as “Copperheads”) opposed the Lincoln Administration. They preferred to retain their party organization and take power from the Republicans. They initially supported the war while seeking to overthrow the Republicans.

As Republicans pressed for emancipation and Lincoln approved arbitrary arrests and other policies, the Copperheads began to oppose the war and seek restoration of the Union through compromise and negotiation. These Democrats were never pro-Confederate, though Republicans tried to paint them as such. The Copperheads were strongest in the Southern Midwest and among the Irish in eastern cities. They opposed wartime financial measures and hated the “reforming” tendencies of the Radical Republican leadership. The South

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**I think the message of the election was clear to all: that the war would now be pressed forward to a finish.**

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made some efforts to exploit the Copperhead opposition to the Lincoln Administration.

Policies and military events influenced Republican fortunes. The off-year elections of 1862 gave Lincoln and his party a scare. The Republicans lost five states (including Lincoln's home state of Illinois) that they had carried in 1860 but retained control of Congress, where the edge in the House came from the border states. Many voters were unhappy with arbitrary arrests, the Second Confiscation Act of July, the move toward emancipation, and Union failures on the battlefield in 1862, especially in the East.

Copperheads gained strength in the spring of 1863. Ohio politician Clement Vallandigham was especially vocal in his opposition. They attacked emancipation and called the war a bloody failure after Fredericksburg and the infamous "mud march." They argued for a negotiated settlement to the war. They accused Lincoln and the Republicans of trampling on individual rights and freedoms. They even hinted at a Midwestern Confederacy.

Soldiers arrested Vallandigham in May 1863, after General Burnside issued a proclamation against "treason." Morale was down, and Vallandigham actively exploited the crisis. He was tried by a military commission and convicted. This action prompted an outcry. However, the Republicans rebounded in the summer of 1863. Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg were crucial. Lincoln deftly handled the Vallandigham crisis by commuting his prison term to a sentence of banishment to the Confederacy.

The election of 1864 marked a final wartime political crisis for the Republicans. Lack of decisive success in Grant's and Sherman's campaigns created widespread war weariness and opposition to the Republicans. In addition, General Jubal Early's Confederate army had marched to the gates of Washington, D.C., in the summer of 1864.

The Democrats nominated George B McClellan for president. Their platform appealed the Peace Democrats, calling for an armistice followed by peace negotiations, denouncing emancipation, and criticizing Lincoln's arbitrary arrests. McClellan refused to embrace the emphasis on peace, insisting that



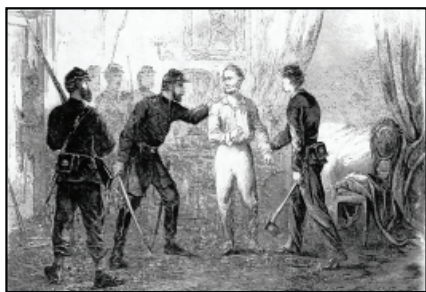
the Union be preserved before peace could come, but he agreed to head the ticket.

The Republicans re-nominated Lincoln and ran under the banner of the Union Party to broaden their appeal. They insisted on restoration of the Union and emancipation. Radical Republicans and abolitionists reluctantly supported Lincoln as preferable to McClellan.

The campaign offered a clear choice and a decisive result. A Republican win would continue the war toward unequivocal victory, with restoration of the Union and emancipation as the goals. Democratic victory promised a more muddled result: a possible peace, a possible independent Confederacy, a possible Union with slavery.

It stands to reason, the Republicans won because of successes on the battlefield, especially when Sherman captured Atlanta in early September, causing tremendous excitement and rejoicing in the North. General Phil Sheridan won three major victories in the Shenandoah Valley in September and October: 3<sup>rd</sup> Winchester, Fisher's Hill, and Cedar Creek. Actions by Confederate agents in Vermont and New York City also helped to swing support to Lincoln and away from the Copperheads.

The returns from this first wartime election in U.S. history were decisive. The electoral count was 212–21; McClellan carried only New Jersey, Kentucky, and Delaware. Lincoln carried 55 percent of the popular vote. The Republicans took control of all the state legislatures lost in 1862. The Republicans would control the Senate 42–10 and the House 145–40. Of note, hundreds of thousands of soldiers voted in the field and approximately 80 percent went with the Republicans. The message from this election, arguably the most important in U.S. history, was clear: the war would be pressed to a conclusion. ■



**The arrest of Congressman Clement Vallandigham, May 5, 1863.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

## Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 18, 23, 26.

## Supplementary Reading

Klement, *The Limits of Dissent: Clement L. Vallandigham and the Civil War*.

Long, *The Jewel of Liberty: Abraham Lincoln's Re-election and the End of Slavery*.

Paludan, "A People's Contest": *The Union and the Civil War, 1861–1865*, chapters 4, 10.

Silbey, *A Respectable Minority: The Democratic Party in the Civil War Era, 1860–1868*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What is the role of the "loyal opposition" during a war? Did elements of the Democratic Party go too far in opposing Lincoln and Republican policies?
2. What might the United States have looked like in the late nineteenth century if the Republicans had not won the election of 1864?

# The Northern Home Front, II

## Lecture 41

We continue our look at the Northern home front with this lecture, and we'll focus on two principal topics. The first was the performance of the Northern economy during the war, its ability to produce both military and nonmilitary materials; and [the second was] the Republican legislative agenda that helped shape the direction the United States would take politically and economically through the remaining decades of the nineteenth century.

Unlike the Confederacy, the North proved able to outfit and provision its armies while producing ample consumer goods. It accomplished this with only modest inflation and minimal government interference. Labor-saving machines allowed agricultural production to soar despite the absence of hundreds of thousands of men. Agricultural production actually increased significantly during the war. Wheat, corn, and meat production were impressive (the North grew more wheat in 1862 and 1863 than the entire nation had grown in the previous record year of 1859). Production of canned foods also expanded greatly to meet the military market.

The transportation system in the North carried more traffic and was more modernized than in the South. Water-borne trade on the Great Lakes and canals increased dramatically, offsetting the loss of the Mississippi River as a reliable route until the summer of 1863 and the fall of Vicksburg. Railroads also increased their volume of traffic while standardizing gauges and improving rolling stock. And the United States military railroad that ran in the occupied South became the largest railroad in the world, with over 2,000 miles of track, 400 locomotives, and 6,000 cars.

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**The ability of the North to fight a major war and pursue economic development engendered a feeling of great optimism across the Northern states.**

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The war affected various industries in different ways:

- Cotton textiles suffered from the loss of Southern cotton.
- Woolen production increased.
- Shoe production initially dipped but recovered as a result of military demand.
- Iron and coal exceeded prewar outputs after an early slump.
- Military-related industries, such as firearms, leather (for horse and mule harnesses), and copper (for percussion caps), experienced booms.
- Mechanization spread in such industries as firearms and ready-made clothing.
- The experience of labor was mixed. Jobs were available, but wages didn't keep up with inflation, which resulted in strikes.

However, the war did not cause economic growth in the later nineteenth century. The technological groundwork was already laid by 1860. The war did accelerate the concentration of wealth in the North, while it left the Southern economy in shambles. This disparity continued for many decades, even into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Republicans passed a series of acts designed to make the United States a great economic power, a capitalistic country with a national banking system. The absence of Southern members of Congress helped make this possible.

The National Bank Act of 1863 helped create a stable currency. It helped drive state banks and their plethora of currencies out of business. It encouraged the spread of national banks that issued uniform national bank notes (known as “greenbacks”).



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

**Federal supplies deposited on the landing at City Point, Virginia.**

The Homestead Act of 1862 made cheap land available. Southern members of Congress had opposed this before the war. This legislation made 160 acres of government land available to anyone (i.e., free white farmers) who lived on it for five years. Three million acres of land were given out during the war.

The Land Grant College Act of 1862 (Morrill Act) encouraged the growth of schools devoted to teaching mechanical arts and agriculture. The states received government land grants keyed to their number of U.S. Senators and Congressmen to establish at least one college. This legislation sought to make education more relevant to the lives of most Americans and prepare them to be productive members of the economy.

The Pacific Railroad Bill of 1862 began a series of grants that helped fund the transcontinental railroads. The route went from Omaha to San Francisco. A total of 120,000,000 acres was eventually provided for railroads. The Union Pacific, Central Pacific, Southern Pacific, and Northern Pacific railroad companies grew from this Act. ■

## Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 14.

Paludan, “A People’s Contest”: *The Union and the Civil War, 1861–1865*, chapters 5–7.

## Supplementary Reading

Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859–1877*.

Curry, *Blueprint for Modern America: Nonmilitary Legislation of the First Civil War Congress*.

Richardson, *The Greatest Nation of the Earth: Republican Economic Policies during the Civil War*.

## Questions to Consider

1. In terms of their handling of the respective economies, do you think the Union or Confederate government more closely fit a “modern” model?
2. Where would you place the Northern economy on a roster of factors that contributed to Union victory?

# Prisoners of War

## Lecture 42

**In this lecture we're going to look at prisons and prisoners of war in both the Union and the Confederacy during the conflict. There are very few aspects of the war that were as emotionally charged as the question of care for prisoners taken by both sides.**

**B**oth sides accused the other of atrocities and failure to provide adequate care, but much of the literature on the topic—especially the memoirs of men held as prisoners—is so overtly political as to be virtually worthless as historical evidence. More than 400,000 men were captured, many of whom were not imprisoned early in the war.

The North captured at least 215,000 Confederates, while the Confederacy captured at least 195,000 Federals. Both sides established a number of camps for prisoners. The most prominent Northern camps included Camp Douglas near Chicago, Johnson's Island in Lake Erie, Point Lookout in Maryland, and Elmira in upstate New York. The most prominent Confederate camps included Andersonville in Georgia, Salisbury in North Carolina (which had a mortality rate of about 33 percent among its 10,000 prisoners—the highest of any camp on either side), Libby Prison in Richmond, and Belle Isle in the James River. Five basic types of camps existed:

- Previously constructed fortifications (e.g., Fort Warren, Castle Pinckney).
- Old buildings converted to prisons.
- Tents in a guarded area (e.g., Point Lookout, Belle Isle).
- Stockades (e.g., Andersonville, Salisbury).
- Enclosed barracks (e.g., Elmira).

Conditions at camps in the North and the South were quite similar. Poor sanitation, bad water, and disease were nearly universal, and the quality of guards was often poor. Food and shelter, however, were somewhat better in the North. But Northern prisoners suffered from some of the same shortages that plagued Confederate civilians and soldiers. In May 1864, Union Secretary of War Stanton ordered rations for Southern POWs in Northern camps reduced to the same level as rations in Confederate armies.

Medical care was about the same and mortality rates were similar. Thirty thousand Federal prisoners died (a rate of 15.4 percent, of whom 13,000 were

at Andersonville). Twenty-six thousand Confederate prisoners died (a rate of 12.1 percent). Under a compact signed in July 1862, the two sides agreed to exchange equal numbers of prisoners, with the surplus on one side to be paroled until officially exchanged. This system broke down 1863–64 for several reasons.

After the Emancipation Proclamation, the Confederacy said that it would not treat captured black soldiers and their white officers as prisoners of war (it would return the black men to slavery and execute the officers). U.S. Secretary of War Stanton ordered reprisals if this were to happen. Some Confederates captured at Vicksburg and Port Hudson in July 1863 violated their paroles. Some 40,000 prisoners were held at the end of 1863.

With the exchange system no longer in effect prisons filled by 1864. Huge numbers of men were captured in the Overland campaign and other operations. U. S. Grant decided in 1864 that exchanges favored the Confederacy, because the South needed the manpower more desperately.



**Libby Prison, Richmond, Virginia.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.



Exchanges, however, did resum in late 1864 and early 1865. Some sailors were exchanged regardless of color in late 1864. Thousands of sick and wounded were exchanged in the winter of 1864–65. In January 1865, the Confederacy agreed to exchange all prisoners.

Conditions were quite similar in Northern and Southern prisons, although a few, such as the South's Andersonville (in Georgia) and the North's Elmira (in New York State), stood out as especially hellish. Poor sanitation, bad water, rampant disease, and brutal guards were common on both sides. Andersonville came to symbolize the horrors faced by prisoners of war. Nearly 30 percent of the Federals held at Andersonville died (25 percent of the Confederates held at Elmira, the worst of the Northern camps, perished), and Henry Wirz, the camp's Swiss-born commandant, was the only Confederate executed for war crimes.

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**I think each knew  
that they hadn't  
done a good job  
and tried to push  
the spotlight onto  
the other side and  
show how awful the  
enemy had been.**

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Andersonville was built in early 1864 to hold 15,000 prisoners. The camp was an open stockade encompassing 16 ½ acres. The first captives arrived in February 1864 and, by August 1864, about 33,000 men were held. By November, it was emptied (during Sherman's "March to the Sea"), then filled again in early 1865. The death total at Andersonville was the worst of any camp, North or South. At the peak, more than 100 men died each day and the total reached 13,000, for a 29 percent mortality rate. An almost complete absence of acceptable sanitary conditions contributed to the high death toll. Although Andersonville indisputably was the worst of the camps, ample brutality and blame could be apportioned to both sides.

The North's most notorious camp was Elmira, New York, originally a rendezvous camp for the Union. It covered 30 acres and was designed for 10,000 men. Its barracks were thrown up quickly and, on 6 July 1864, the first prisoners arrived. The death rate among the more than 12,000 prisoners was 25 percent.

Neither side compiled a good overall record for handling prisoners. The Union blamed the Confederacy for the thousands of dead at Andersonville and elsewhere. And the Confederacy blamed the Union for starving prisoners in the midst of plenty and attacked Grant for ending the exchange system. ■

### Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 26.

### Supplementary Reading

Hesseltine, *Civil War Prisons: A Study in War Psychology*.

Hesseltine, ed., *Civil War Prisons*.

Marvel, *Andersonville: The Last Depot*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Do you think it would have been possible for the two sides to handle huge numbers of prisoners in the course of a long and bitter war without acrimony and accusations?
2. How do you think the modern American press would treat a topic such as this one?

# Mobile Bay and Atlanta

## Lecture 43

**We're coming into the summer and autumn of 1864. We'll begin with an overview of the strategic situation at that stage of the conflict, reiterating some themes that we've raised before about how critical a time this was for the Union.**

**T**his lecture covers crucial Union victories in August and September 1864. The military situation in the summer and early autumn of 1864 had enormous implications for Northern elections in November. Civilian morale in the North had been severely tested by the perceived failures of Grant's five-pronged offensive of May and June. Republicans grew increasingly nervous as summer weeks went by without a major battlefield success. The North needed victories if Lincoln and the Republicans were to retain power. On the Confederate side, many believed that keeping the Federals at bay in Richmond and Atlanta beyond the November elections might result in a Democratic victory that would open the door to a negotiated peace with Confederate independence (this was a misreading of Democratic sentiment).

Emancipation and a vigorous prosecution of the war might be in jeopardy if the Democrats won.

Northern morale was tested between May and mid-July on numerous fronts:

- High casualty lists in Virginia generated concern and criticism.
- Grant and Sherman remained stalled outside Richmond and Atlanta, respectively.
- Butler was inert at Bermuda Hundred.
- Banks was discredited and immobile in Louisiana.
- The Confederate port of Mobile, Alabama, remained open.

But in August, David G. Farragut's fleet won a major victory at Mobile Bay. Mobile was a prize Grant had sought to capture since the end of the

**Atlanta had become such a symbol that its fall alone probably would have secured Lincoln's reelection. The South recognized this and was as depressed as the North was happy.**

Vicksburg campaign. Its defenses posed a major obstacle to the North. Three strong forts (Fort Morgan, Fort Gaines, and Fort Powell) and a minefield protected the bay, keeping blockading vessels out and allowing blockade runners in. Gunboats and the ironclad *Tennessee* added additional power to the Confederate defense.

Farragut mounted his offensive on 5 August. He pushed his fleet of fourteen wooden vessels and four ironclad monitors forward, despite the sinking of one ironclad (U.S.S. *Tecumseh*) by a mine (torpedo). His ships

battered the small Confederate fleet (including the C.S.S. *Tennessee*) and took control of the bay. The forts all fell within the next 18 days. The city of Mobile itself remained in Confederate hands, but it no longer functioned as a port. News from Mobile cheered the North.

Then in August–September Sherman besieged and captured Atlanta. John Bell Hood's Confederate army had tried to drive Sherman away from the city in three aggressive actions in July. The Battle of Peachtree Creek was fought on July 20. Union General Thomas's Army of the Cumberland fought well, the Confederates didn't coordinate their attacks, and the Confederate initiative failed. The Battle of Atlanta (to attack the Union right) was fought on July 22. Again, the Union forces fought well and the Confederates were unable to coordinate, leading to the failure of the attack and 8,000 Confederate casualties. The battle of Ezra Church was fought on July 28. The Army of the Tennessee under General O. O. Howard shifted to the west and blocked Hood's attacks.



Admiral David Farragut.

Sherman tightened his siege lines after Hood's three failed tactical offensives. He bombarded the city and attacked the rail lines linking Atlanta to the rest of the Confederacy. Confederate attacks at Jonesboro on August 31 failed to dislodge the Federals from a key rail line. Hood abandoned the city on September 1–2, burning remaining military stores.

The capture of Atlanta had enormous impact in the North and South. It provided the military victory necessary to restore Northern civilian morale, even though Hood's army escaped destruction. It dramatically improved Republican prospects in the November elections. It correspondingly depressed morale in the Confederacy. Sherman was now ready to carry the great raid into central Georgia as part of Grant's strategy of exhaustion. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 18.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 24–26.

### Supplementary Reading

Bergeron, *Confederate Mobile*, chapters 11–12.

Castel, *Decision in the West: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864*, chapters 7–10.

Kennett, *Marching through Georgia: The Story of Soldiers and Civilians during Sherman's Campaign*, chapters 6–10.

### Questions to Consider

1. Do you believe the Northern people should have been so pessimistic in July and August?
2. Should the Atlanta campaign outrank Gettysburg in terms of its influence on the course of the war?

# Petersburg, the Crater, and the Valley

## Lecture 44

This lecture continues our treatment of military campaigns in the summer and autumn of 1864. Now our focus will be on Virginia, where we'll begin by looking at Grant and Lee in the siege lines at Petersburg.

While events unfolded at Atlanta, Grant and Lee confronted each other along a front from Petersburg to Richmond. The armies prepared elaborate fortifications that eventually extended for dozens of miles. Grant sought to pressure Lee's supply lines with cavalry raids. He constantly extended his lines to the south and west and contemplated swinging around Lee's right flank to approach Petersburg from the northwest. Lee countered by extending his lines.

However, the Federals bungled a major opportunity to break the stalemate at Petersburg at the Battle of the Crater on July 30. The 48<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania, a regiment from the coal regions of that state, tunneled more than 500 feet in about a month to get under the Confederate lines. The Union soldiers placed 8,000 pounds of black powder under the Confederate works. They detonated the powder and opened a gap 400 yards wide in the Confederate lines.

However, the Union failed to make the best use of black troops specifically trained to spearhead the assault. Poorly led attackers crowded into the crater formed by the explosion and were slaughtered by counterattacking Confederates. Many of the black soldiers were killed when they tried to surrender. The Confederates fully restored their lines and inflicted 4,000 casualties on the Union forces. After the Crater battle, the situation returned to the previous mode of probe and defend, and a stalemate ensued.

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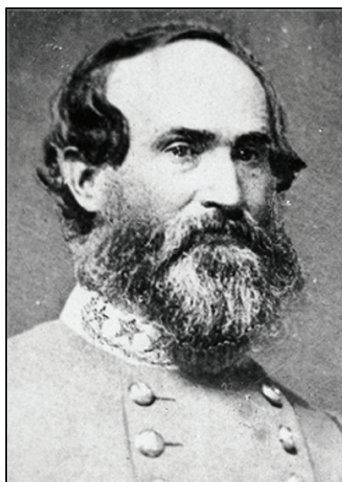
**The fighting in '64 dwarfed that of '62. There were about 15,000 Union casualties, 10,000 Confederate. The Valley was never again a major granary for the Confederacy.**

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Lee detached Jubal Early and the Second Corps for independent operations in mid-June. Early, a capable officer with an excellent record, carried out a successful month-long campaign to counter Hunter's move south up the Valley, next to clear the Valley, then to menace Washington, D.C. He defeated a small Union army under Hunter at Lynchburg on June 18–19, driving Union forces back into West Virginia. He marched his 14,000 men north down the Shenandoah Valley and crossed the Potomac River. He won the Battle of the Monocacy near Frederick, Maryland, on July 9, but his advance was slowed. Early reached the outskirts of Washington, D.C., on July 11, before withdrawing into the lower Shenandoah Valley in mid-July in the face of the VI Corps, which had been withdrawn from the Petersburg siege and rushed north by train. President Lincoln observed some of the fighting from Fort Stevens on the capital's outskirts.

Northern morale dropped because of this unexpected evidence of Confederate offensive prowess, and Grant determined to put an end to Early's diversion and destroy the logistical capacity of the Valley. Grant named Philip H. Sheridan commander of a large force in the Valley. He ordered Sheridan to attack Early and lay waste to the agricultural economy of the Valley, fulfilling the strategy of exhaustion.

Sheridan's 1864 Valley campaign ended Early's threat and gave the Union another important success. Sheridan won important victories at Third Winchester (September 19), Fisher's Hill (September 22), and Cedar Creek (October 19). Sheridan carried out "the burning" of a large swath of the lower Valley as far as Harrisonburg in early October and eliminated it as the granary of the Confederacy.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

**General Jubal Early.**

Sheridan's operations had significant political and military impact. Republican prospects in the November elections were strengthened. Lee's army lost access to the logistical bounty of the Valley. Northern morale climbed higher, while Confederate morale absorbed yet another major blow. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 18.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapters 24–26.

### Supplementary Reading

Catton, *A Stillness at Appomattox*, chapters 4–5.

Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, vol. 3, chapters 26–31.

Trudeau, *The Last Citadel: Petersburg, Virginia, June 1864–April 1865*, chapters 1–11.

Wert, *From Winchester to Cedar Creek: The Shenandoah Campaign of 1864*.

### Questions to Consider

1. If you were a Confederate soldier or civilian in November 1864, where would you have looked to find some prospect for success in your war for independence?
2. As a Northern soldier or civilian, do you believe you would consider the war to be won after Union success at Atlanta and in the Shenandoah Valley?



# The Final Campaigns

## Lecture 45

**What we call the Western Theater shifted south and east as the war progressed, and those armies that began in Tennessee and Kentucky found themselves in North Carolina in March and April 1865.**

**T**his lecture examines the final campaigns waged by the armies in the Western Theater. After the fall of Atlanta, John Bell Hood attempted to draw Sherman northward by threatening the Union supply line to Chattanooga. Hood envisioned moving the war out of Georgia into Tennessee, where he hoped to reclaim territory long lost to the Confederacy. Jefferson Davis approved of his strategy. But Sherman declined to follow Hood's script. He followed Hood for a short time before turning back to Atlanta. He detached Thomas and the Army of the Cumberland to deal with Hood. He planned to march across Georgia, living off the countryside and terrorizing Confederate civilians.

Hood's Tennessee campaign ended in complete Confederate defeat. Hood fought an ill-considered aggressive battle against the Army of the Ohio under John M. Schofield at Franklin, Tennessee, on November 30, 1864. He was upset at having missed what he considered an opportunity to trap a Union force at Spring Hill on 29 September. He believed frontal assaults would build spirit in his army. He lost more than 6,000 men, 12 generals, and 54 regimental commanders in the attacks against well-prepared positions. Schofield moved on to Nashville with minimal losses.

Hood suffered a shattering defeat at Nashville on December 15–16. He placed his army in position near the city and simply awaited Thomas's moves. Thomas took so much time getting ready to attack that Grant almost removed him from command for ignoring an order to attack immediately.

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**The greatest crime committed by Sherman, said many Southerners, was the burning of Columbia, South Carolina, the state capital.**

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Thomas's attacks on December 15–16 swept Hood's army from the field and essentially ended the war in Tennessee. Hood's force was reduced to only 15,000 men under arms after this battle.

Sherman's "March to the Sea" was a grand Union success. He had two major goals for his 62,000-man army of hardened veterans:

- He would strike at the Confederacy's logistical capacity.
- He would strike at Confederate civilian morale by marching at will more than 300 miles across Georgia.

Leaving Atlanta on 16 November, he met little resistance and reached Savannah before Christmas, averaging over 10 miles a day. His campaign showed Grant's strategy of exhaustion in full operation. The army consumed or destroyed millions of dollars worth of agricultural and industrial products and tore up railroads. Foragers beyond the control of officers (called "bummers") inflicted considerable damage to private property. The North rejoiced in, and the Confederacy mourned the results of, Sherman's operation.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

**General Sherman's troops removing ammunition from Fort McAllister in wheelbarrows.**

Sherman's march through the Carolinas was equally successful. His men laid an even heavier hand on South Carolina, the "cradle of secession." Fort Fisher fell in January 1865, followed by Charleston (18 February), then Columbia, parts of which were burned. The Confederates could offer only token resistance. Joseph E. Johnston commanded a small army drawn from many quarters, including remnants of Hood's destroyed Army of Tennessee. The one significant battle of the campaign took place at Bentonville, North Carolina, on March 19–20, but this Confederate stand failed to slow Sherman's army. By April 1865, the war in the Carolinas had effectively drawn to a close, with the armies in position near Raleigh.

The war in the Western Theater, now also basically drawn to a close, had covered an immense amount of territory. It began along the Kentucky–Tennessee border and the upper Mississippi River in 1861. It ended in North Carolina in the spring of 1865. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 19.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 27.

### Supplementary Reading

Glatthaar, *The March to the Sea and Beyond: Sherman's Troops in the Savannah and Carolinas Campaigns*.

Hughes, *Bentonville: The Final Battle of Sherman and Johnston*.

Kennett, *Marching through Georgia: The Story of Soldiers and Civilians during Sherman's Campaign*, chapters 11–15.

Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind. The Confederacy's Last Hurrah: Spring Hill, Franklin, and Nashville*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Historians disagree about whether the Civil War was a “total” war. How do you think a Georgian or South Carolinian who experienced Sherman’s campaigns would have answered this question? How about one of Sherman’s soldiers?
2. Do you believe there is merit in the argument that until late 1862 or mid-1863, the conflict was a traditional war but thereafter became a modern war?

# Petersburg to Appomattox

## Lecture 46

With this lecture, we will complete our coverage of the military side of the conflict. We'll look at the last stage of the Petersburg campaign, move then to Lee's retreat from Richmond toward Appomattox and his surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia to Ulysses S. Grant and the Army of the Potomac at that southwestern Virginia village in early April 1865.

While Sherman and Hood maneuvered and fought across four states, Grant and Lee remained largely immobile outside Petersburg and Richmond. Grant tightened his grip on Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia during the spring of 1865. The Army of Northern Virginia was the last sizeable Confederate force in the field. He choked Lee's supply lines and extended the siege lines westward, forcing Lee to stretch his weaker army. Desertions started to rise in Lee's army. It appeared that Lee would have to try for a breakout, perhaps to link up with Johnston's forces in North Carolina.

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**Davis and a few others served some time in prison, but no one more than two years. Lee and the principal military leaders were allowed simply to go home.**

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Lee tried to break Grant's grip in the Battle of Fort Stedman on 25 March 1865. This was the final offensive spasm of the Army of Northern Virginia. A temporary success gave way to complete Union victory, costing Lee nearly 5,000 men. Grant exploited the Confederate failure by sending Sheridan against Lee's far right flank. Preliminary fighting at White Oak Road and Dinwiddie Court House on March 31 was inconclusive. Sheridan crushed Lee's flank in the Battle of Five Forks on April 1, inflicting another 5,000 casualties. Lee abandoned Richmond and Petersburg on April 2–3 as Grant attacked along the entire line. The retreating Confederates burned military stores. President Lincoln arrived on 4 April to see the captured city.



Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

**Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox, April 9, 1865.**

Grant pursued Lee's 35,000 men and brought him to bay during the Appomattox campaign. Lee hoped to march west and turn south to join Joseph E. Johnston in North Carolina. But Grant inflicted serious damage to the retreating Confederates at the Battle of Saylor's Creek on April 6. Union forces captured 7,000 Confederates. Federals got in front of Lee's army and forced him to ask for terms. Lee refused to consider disbanding his army with the idea of pursuing a guerrilla war. Lee and Grant met to sign surrender documents on April 9. Grant extended generous terms that allowed soldiers to sign paroles and return home (men who owned their horses were allowed to keep them). He provided rations for Lee's troops (but not fodder for the horses). The Confederates formally stacked arms at Appomattox Court House on April 12 (Lee and Grant had left by that time).

This surrender marked the end of the war for most Americans. Lee and his army had become synonymous with the Confederacy in the minds of most Northerners and European observers. Confederates had looked to Lee as their principal rallying point for more than two years.

Other major Confederate forces surrendered over the next six weeks. Joseph Johnston surrendered 30,000 men to Sherman at Durham Station, North Carolina, on April 26. Johnston had been waiting to see what Lee did before he acted. Sherman extended even more generous terms than Grant had (e.g., complete amnesty and recognition of the existing state governments), but was forced by the Administration to withdraw them and follow Grant's example. General Richard Taylor surrendered 10,000–12,000 troops at Citronelle, Alabama, on May 4. Jefferson Davis was captured at Irwinville, Georgia, on May 10. He was imprisoned at Fortress Monroe for two years but never tried for treason.

Confederates in the Trans-Mississippi Theater were surrendered on May 26. Some Confederates in the far West did not officially surrender. The last land battle of the war was fought at Palmito Ranch, near Brownsville, Texas, on May 13, 1865. On 3 June 1865, the commerce raider C.S.S. *Shenandoah* captured eleven whalers. ■

### Essential Reading

Hattaway and Jones, *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*, chapter 19.

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 28.

### Supplementary Reading

Catton, *A Stillness at Appomattox*, chapter 6.

Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, vol. 3, chapters 31–37.

Trudeau, *Out of the Storm: The End of the Civil War, April–June 1865*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Can you think of another example of a bitter civil war that did not end in massive punishment for the losers? How do you account for the North's leniency?
2. Did the Confederacy have military alternatives it could have pursued rather than surrendering its armies?

# Closing Scenes and Reckonings

## Lecture 47

**In this lecture, we're going to touch on a disparate range of topics. ...  
But let's begin with the assassination of Lincoln.**

**A**fter first examining the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, this lecture then moves on to assess the cost of the war and offer some thoughts about why the North won (or the Confederacy lost). Lincoln had just a few days to savor news of Lee's surrender before John Wilkes Booth mortally wounded him in Ford's Theater on April 14, 1865. The assassination has inspired an enormous speculative literature that advances various conspiracy theories, some of which implicate Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton and other prominent Northern leaders. The best evidence suggests that Booth decided on his own to kill the president, although he might have had earlier ties to the Confederate secret service establishment.

Booth probably had worked with Confederate agents on an earlier plan to kidnap Lincoln. But Booth's intention was to kill Lincoln, Vice President Andrew Johnson, and Secretary of State William H. Seward. Seward was wounded by a co-conspirator, but Johnson was unharmed.

Many Northerners believed that the Confederate government was involved in the assassination. This intensified sectional hatred for a brief time. It led to harsh sentences for some of those who worked with Booth. Four people were hanged and four received life sentences. Booth himself was killed by Union cavalry some days after the assassination.

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**The Confederacy needed another great general somewhere else in the war who could provide some victories, apply some pressure on the North. They never came up with that other leader, and I think that that was a major failing.**

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Assassination literature has put forward various conspiracy theories. These often implicate Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton and other Northern leaders who supposedly believed Lincoln would be too easy on the South after the war. No sound evidence exists to support the idea that Northern leaders worked to kill Lincoln. Conspiracy theories persist to this day, even inspiring TV shows and movies.

The human and material cost of the war was enormous. The number of dead soldiers exceeded the total for all other American wars combined from the seventeenth century through the mid-point of Vietnam (including World Wars I and II). The North suffered about 650,000 casualties out of 2.1–2.2 million soldiers (360,000 dead—two-thirds of them from disease—and 275,000 wounded in action). The Confederacy suffered about 450,000 casualties out of 750,000–850,000 (260,000 dead—two-thirds from disease—and 200,000 wounded). Between 75–85 percent of Confederate military-aged males served in the armed forces of the CSA. The North had 65 general officers killed in action compared to 92 for the Confederacy. There is no way to know accurately how many civilians died because of privation and other factors caused by the war.



**John Wilkes Booth.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

The economic cost reached a level unparalleled in previous United States history. One estimate placed the cost to the North at \$6.1 billion as of 1879. The Confederacy also spent billions. Costs continued for decades after the end of the war in the form of pensions (Federal for Northern veterans and state for Confederate veterans), lost productivity, and other expenses.

The South suffered much greater damage than the North. A much higher percentage of its soldiers was killed or maimed (see above). It lost two-thirds of its assessed wealth (much in the form of slaves). Forty percent of all Southern livestock was dead. Fifty percent of all farm machinery was destroyed. Railroads, levees, bridges, and other parts of the transportation and economic infrastructure were in ruins. The war decisively tipped the economic balance in favor of the North. Northern wealth increased by 50 percent between 1860 and 1870. Southern wealth decreased by 60 percent between 1860 and 1870.

Historians have offered various explanations for why the North won (or the South lost). Some have insisted that state rights sentiment made it impossible for the Confederacy to carry out an effective national mobilization. In fact, the South went farther down the road to a strong central government than the North did. The leaders, including Davis and Lee, called for this approach.

Others have argued that internal divisions along class, racial, and gender lines doomed the Confederacy before Southern armies had been truly beaten. Some of the arguments include the following:

- Yeomen believed it was a “rich man’s war and a poor man’s fight.”
- Non-slaveholders resented slaveholders.
- Women lost heart well before the military balance had shifted decisively to the North.

The most persuasive explanation emphasizes the North’s advantages and willingness to use them. Northern manpower and material wealth were enormously important. The North developed political and military leaders who were willing to use these advantages to the fullest. Despite some serious setbacks, a majority of the Northern people remained committed to winning the war. A majority of Confederates fought hard and supported the war but ultimately proved unable to match Northern power and will. ■

## Essential Reading

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, chapter 28 and Epilogue.

## Supplementary Reading

Gallagher, *The Confederate War*, chapters 1, 4.

Hanchett, *The Lincoln Murder Conspiracies*.

Tidwell, *April '65: Confederate Covert Action in the American Civil War*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What echoes from the Civil War can you detect in the modern United States?
2. Why do you think so many Americans are drawn to study the Civil War?

# Remembering the War

## Lecture 48

**We'll move from description and analysis of people and events during the war to a consideration of how those who experienced the conflict chose to remember it.**

**T**his lecture begins by examining the ways in which participants chose to remember and interpret the conflict in the decades after Appomattox and closes with some observations about how modern Americans should try to understand the people and events of 1861–1865. The North remained focused on war-related issues for some time. During the twelve years of Reconstruction, Republicans followed through on emancipation by adding the fourteenth and fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution and trying to build their party in the former Confederate states using black voters and white allies.

Republicans waved the “bloody shirt” in labeling the Democrats a party of treason responsible for the suffering of the war. Republican military leaders and other veterans often ran successfully for office (four former generals—Grant, Hayes, Garfield, and Benjamin Harrison—won the presidency between 1868 and 1888). The Democrats struggled to regain their position as the majority party in national politics. They did elect Grover Cleveland twice, followed by then Woodrow Wilson in 1912. They had somewhat more success in Congress and statehouse elections after the war.

The North erected monuments and wrote accounts of the war but gradually turned away from the conflict and focused on other issues. The Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) was the first huge veterans’ organization in U.S. history. It was a powerful political lobby in the late nineteenth century.

The white South devoted considerable effort to making sense of its profound defeat. White Southerners had suffered relatively far more than Northerners. A higher percentage of their soldiers had been killed or maimed. Their social system had been radically altered through emancipation. Their economy had

been disrupted. And they lived for several years with occupying troops that reminded them of their defeat.

The “Myth of the Lost Cause” was an attempt to find something positive in the failed struggle for independence. General Jubal Early was one of the leaders of the “Lost Cause.” The myth held that General Robert E. Lee was the perfect product of the antebellum social system. Lee towered above all other generals in ability and nobility. The myth blamed Northern resources and manpower and fallible Confederates, such as James Longstreet (partly in light of Longstreet’s postwar activities and writings), for Southern defeat. Southerners who held this perspective insisted that honor was not forfeited in losing to a vastly superior foe. The myth also played down the importance of slavery as a factor in secession, instead stressing constitutional issues.

Bitterness toward the North lingered for many years in the white South. Confederate monuments were erected throughout the South. Birthdays of great leaders, such as Lee and Jackson, were celebrated as state holidays well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

A reconciliation movement in the late nineteenth century attracted support in the North and, to a lesser degree, in the white South. The movement emphasized the common heritage and characteristics of both sides. It stated that soldiers on both sides were brave and a credit to America. And it held that soldiers on both sides fought for what they believed was right and left moral judgements about slavery out of the matter. The war was a watershed, because it confirmed the Union and prepared the nation for international greatness.



**President James Garfield.**

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

Slavery and emancipation largely disappeared from the white memory of the conflict. This fit in with the wartime reality that the Union was far more important than emancipation for most white Northerners. Black leaders and veterans protested that their war was being forgotten. A famous example of this reconciliation sentiment is C. F. Adams's address at the College of Washington and Lee in 1907, the centennial of Robert E. Lee's birth.

**I think that the war offers unlimited avenues of exploration that yield fascinating insights into the events of the period, the people who participated in them, and the ways in which the great issues of that time continue to resonate now.**

Modern Americans study the Civil War for different reasons. Some hope to find lessons and information applicable to current issues. Questions and problems related to race remain a major factor in the United States. Debate over the relative powers of national, state, and local governments continues.

Others examine the war in an effort to understand the motivations and experiences of the people who lived through it. Why would so many

Northerners risk so much for the Union? Why did the Confederates fight so long and hard, especially the non-slaveholding segment of the population? Where did freedom stand as a Northern war aim? These different approaches yield different types of understanding. ■

### Essential Reading

Gallagher, *Lee and His Soldiers in War and Memory*, chapters 12–13.

McPherson, *Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War*, chapters 4, 15.

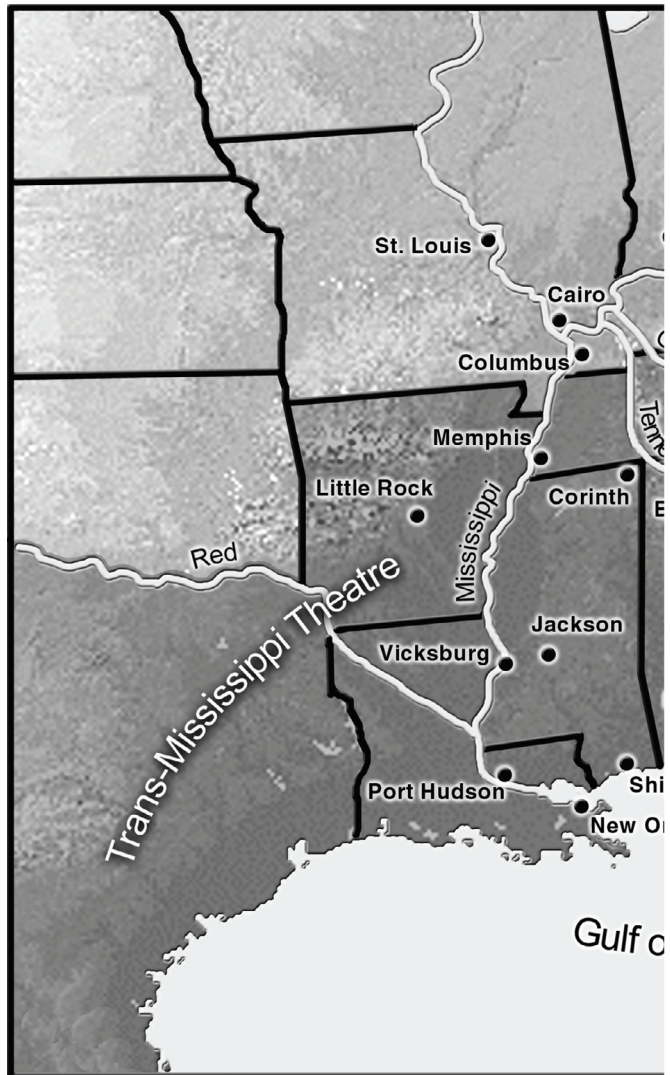
## Supplementary Reading

Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865–1913*.

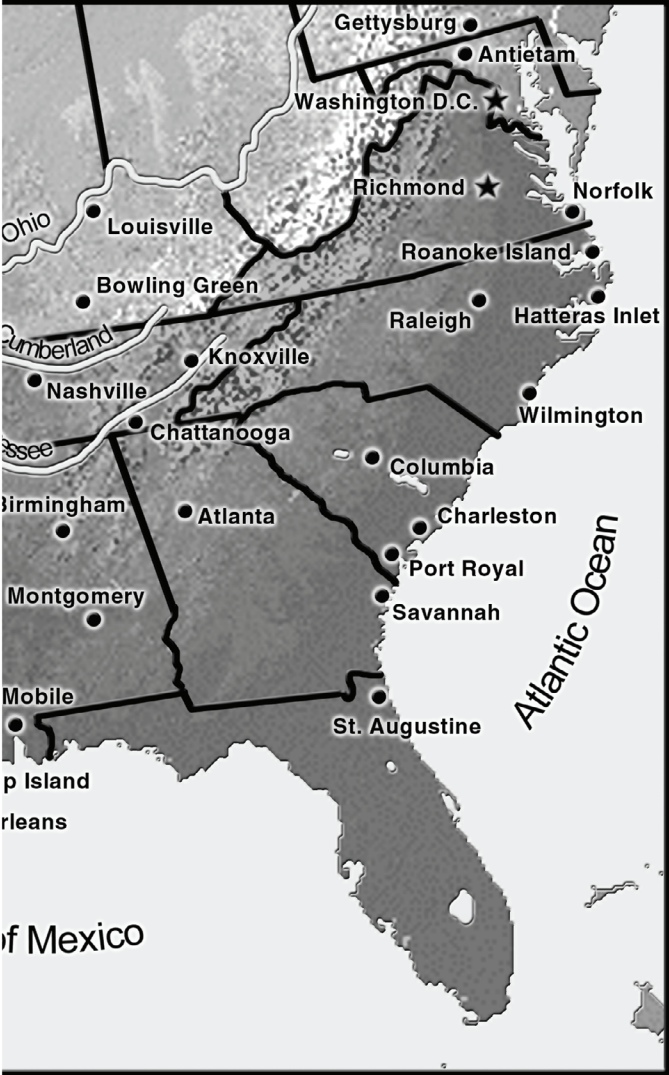
## Questions to Consider

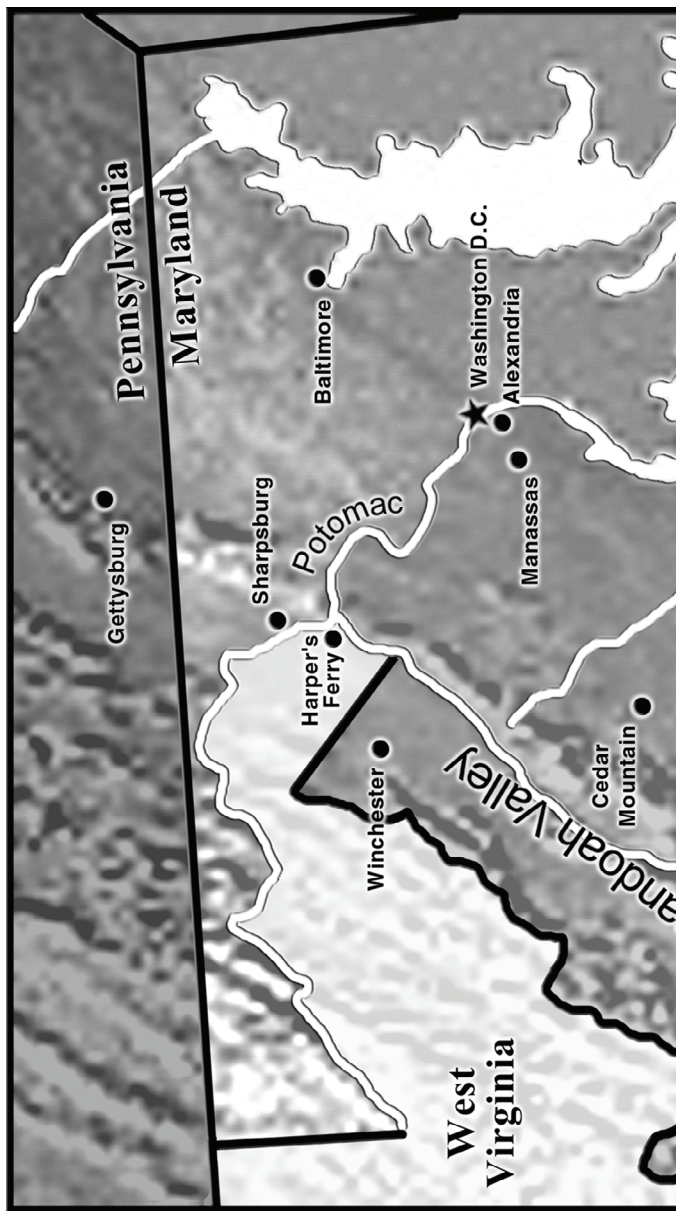
1. How do you think most modern Americans think of the Civil War? Do they have a view similar to that of the reconciliationists?
2. Could it be said that ex-Confederates won the battle for public memory of the war?

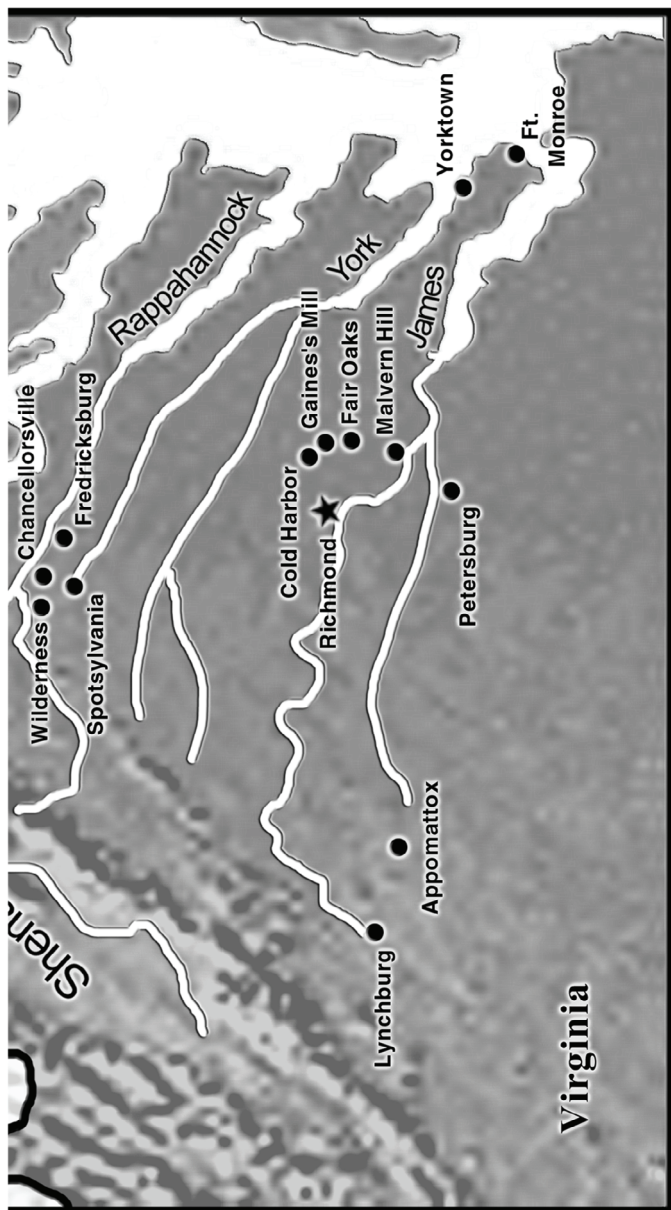
## Maps











## Timeline

### General

- 1787..... Framers of the Constitution compromise on issues related to slavery.
- 1820..... Missouri Compromise admits Missouri as a slave state but prohibits slavery elsewhere in the Louisiana Purchase territory above 36°36' north latitude.
- 1831..... Nat Turner's rebellion in Virginia sends shockwaves through the South.
- 1831..... William Lloyd Garrison founds his abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator*.
- 1840..... Liberty Party fields a presidential candidate.
- 1845..... Texas admitted to the Union.
- 1846–48..... War between the United States and Mexico.
- 1846..... Wilmot Proviso calls for barring slavery from lands acquired from Mexico.
- 1848..... Free Soil Party fields a presidential candidate.
- 1850..... Compromise of 1850 includes admission of California as a free state (giving free states a permanent majority in the United States Senate) and enactment of a tough Fugitive Slave Law.

- 1852..... Whig Party fields its last serious presidential candidate, signaling breakdown of the second-party system.
- 1852..... Publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* makes many previously unengaged Northerners sensitive to the issue of slavery.
- 1854..... Kansas-Nebraska Act inflames sectional tensions.
- 1856..... Abolitionist Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts is caned by Preston Brooks of South Carolina on the floor of the Senate after delivering his “Crime against Kansas” speech.
- 1857..... The Supreme Court’s *Dred Scott* decision opens federal territories to slavery and outrages many people in the North.
- 1859..... John Brown’s raid on Harpers Ferry, Virginia, intensifies sectional tensions.
- 1860..... A series of fires in Texas during the summer spreads rumors of slave insurrection across the South.
- Nov. 1860..... Abraham Lincoln elected as the first Republican president.
- Dec. 20, 1860..... South Carolina secedes from the Union.

**1861**

- Jan. 9–Feb. 1 ..... The remaining six states of the Lower South secede (Mississippi, Jan. 9; Florida, Jan. 10; Alabama, Jan. 11; Georgia, Jan. 19, Louisiana, Jan. 26; Texas, Feb. 1).
- Feb. 4–March 11 ..... A convention of delegates from the seven seceded states, meeting in Montgomery, Alabama, writes a constitution and selects Jefferson Davis and Alexander H. Stephens as provisional President and Vice President of a new slaveholding republic called the Confederate States of America.
- March 4 ..... Lincoln’s First Inaugural Address declares that the “momentous issue of civil war” lay in the hands of secessionists.
- April 12–13 ..... Confederate bombardment results in the surrender of Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina.
- April 15 ..... Lincoln calls for 75,000 volunteers to suppress the rebellion.
- April 17–June 8 ..... Four states of the Upper South secede in response to Lincoln’s call for volunteers (Virginia, April 17; Arkansas, May 6; North Carolina, May 20; Tennessee, June 8).
- April 19 ..... The Sixth Massachusetts Infantry is attacked by a mob in Baltimore.
- Early May ..... General Winfield Scott briefs President Lincoln and others about a strategy that came to be known as the “Anaconda Plan.”

May 20 .....	Confederate Congress votes to move the national government from Montgomery to Richmond.
May 24 .....	Benjamin F. Butler declares fugitive slaves at Fort Monroe, Virginia, “contraband of war” and refuses to return them to their Confederate owners.
June 11 .....	Unionist delegates from 26 counties convene in Wheeling, Virginia, to begin a process that eventually results in the creation of the state of West Virginia.
July 21 .....	Battle of First Manassas or Bull Run yields a flashy Confederate victory that builds confidence in the South and convinces many Northerners that the war will be longer and harder than first thought.
Aug. 6.....	U.S. Congress passes the first Confiscation Act, which frees fugitive slaves who have been employed in the Confederate war effort.
Aug. 10.....	Battle of Wilson’s Creek, Missouri, delivers a blow to anti-secessionists in the state.
Aug. 30.....	John C. Frémont declares free the slaves of pro-Confederate owners in Missouri; Lincoln instructs him to modify the order to make it conform with existing congressional legislation.
Sept. 3 .....	Confederate military forces enter Kentucky to occupy the strong position at Columbus, an act that spurs Kentucky to stand firmly with the Union.

- Oct. 21..... Union forces suffer a debacle at Ball’s Bluff, near Leesburg, Virginia, that helps prompt creation of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War.
- Nov. 1..... George B. McClellan replaces Winfield Scott as general-in-chief of the U.S. Army.
- Nov. 8..... Confederate diplomats James M. Mason and John Slidell are removed from the British vessel *Trent*, precipitating a diplomatic crisis between the United States and Great Britain.

**1862**

- Feb. 6..... U. S. Grant captures Fort Henry on the Tennessee River.
- Feb. 16..... U. S. Grant captures Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River.
- Feb. 25..... Union forces occupy Nashville, Tennessee.
- Feb. 25..... President Lincoln signs the Legal Tender Act, which creates national treasury notes, soon dubbed “greenbacks.”
- March 6–7..... Union victory at Pea Ridge, Arkansas, helps solidify Missouri’s status as a loyal state.
- March 9..... U.S.S. *Monitor* and C.S.S. *Virginia* fight the first naval engagement between ironclad vessels.



March 16 .....	U.S. Congress abolishes slavery in the District of Columbia, offering compensation to loyal owners.
April 5 .....	George B. McClellan begins a month-long siege of Yorktown, Virginia, marking the first important event in his Peninsula campaign.
April 6–7 .....	U. S. Grant wins the Battle of Shiloh (Pittsburg Landing), completing a series of Union triumphs that denies the Confederacy control of major sections of Tennessee.
April 16 .....	C.S. Congress passes the first national conscription act in American history; acts passed on Sept. 27, 1862, and Feb. 17, 1864, supplement the original legislation.
April 25 .....	New Orleans falls to Union forces under David G. Farragut, giving the United States control of the lower Mississippi River.
May 8 .....	“Stonewall” Jackson wins the Battle of McDowell, the first of several victories in his Shenandoah Valley campaign; triumphs at Front Royal (May 23), First Winchester (May 25), Cross Keys (June 8), and Port Republic (June 9) follow.
May 9 .....	General David Hunter declares free all slaves in South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida; President Lincoln nullifies Hunter’s proclamation ten days later.
May 15 .....	U.S. Congress passes the Homestead Bill.

May 30 .....	Confederates abandon the key railroad center of Corinth, Mississippi.
May 31–June 1 .....	The Battle of Seven Pines or Fair Oaks is fought near Richmond; Joseph E. Johnston is wounded on the first day of action, and command of the Confederate army defending Richmond against George B. McClellan’s Army of the Potomac passes to Robert E. Lee.
June 6 .....	Memphis, Tennessee, falls to Union military forces.
June 17 .....	U.S. Congress passes the Land Grant College Bill (Morrill Act).
June 19 .....	U.S. Congress prohibits slavery in the territories.
June 25–July 1 .....	The Seven B reverses a tide of Union military success as Robert E. Lee drives George B. McClellan away from Richmond in action at Mechanicsville (June 26), Gaines’s Mill (June 27), Savage Station (June 29), Glendale or Frayser’s Farm (June 30), and Malvern Hill (July 1).
July 12 .....	Lincoln appeals to the border state congressmen to support gradual, compensated emancipation, warning that the war may destroy slavery without compensation if they do not act; two days later, they reject his proposal.
July 17 .....	U.S. Congress passes the Second Confiscation Act, which frees all slaves of owners who support the Confederacy.

July 22.....	Lincoln tells his cabinet that he intends to issue an emancipation proclamation.
July 22.....	The Union and the Confederacy agree to a cartel providing for the exchange of prisoners of war and the parole of excess captives held by either side.
Aug. 28–30.....	Robert E. Lee wins a victory over John Pope’s Army of Virginia at the Battle of Second Manassas or Bull Run.
Sept. 17.....	Union victory at the Battle of Antietam or Sharpsburg ends Robert E. Lee’s first invasion of the North.
Sept. 22.....	Lincoln issues his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation.
Oct. 8.....	The Battle of Perryville marks the climax of a Confederate invasion into Kentucky by armies under Braxton Bragg and E. Kirby Smith; the Confederates withdraw from the state after the battle.
Oct. 11.....	C.S. Congress exempts from conscription one white male on each plantation that has twenty or more slaves; this alienates many non-slaveholding white Southerners.
Nov. 4.....	Democrats score gains in the Northern off-year elections.
Nov. 5.....	Lincoln replaces George B. McClellan with Ambrose E. Burnside as Commander of the Army of the Potomac.
Dec. 13.....	Robert E. Lee defeats Burnside at the Battle of Fredericksburg.

Dec. 20–30 .....	Destruction of U. S. Grant’s supply base at Holly Springs, Mississippi, and William Tecumseh Sherman’s repulse in the Battle of Chickasaw Bayou frustrate an initial attempt to capture the Confederate stronghold at Vicksburg.
Dec. 31–Jan. 2, 1863 .....	Battle of Stones River, or Murfreesboro, fought in middle Tennessee, results in the retreat of Braxton Bragg’s Confederate army and the beginning of six months of inactivity on this front.
<b>1863</b>	
Jan. 1 .....	Lincoln issues his Emancipation Proclamation.
Feb. 25 .....	U.S. Congress passes the National Banking Act.
March 3 .....	U.S. Congress passes the Enrollment Act, which institutes a national draft; the Union will issue four calls under this legislation, in July 1863 and March, July, and December 1864.
April 2 .....	Women take to the streets in the Richmond “bread riot” to protest food shortages.
April 24 .....	C.S. Congress enacts the tax-in-kind law, a highly unpopular measure requiring agricultural producers to give a portion of the annual production of various crops to the national government.

- May 1–4 ..... Robert E. Lee defeats Joseph Hooker (who had replaced Ambrose E. Burnside as commander of the Army of the Potomac in late January 1863) in the Battle of Chancellorsville.
- May 1–17 ..... U. S. Grant wins battles at Port Gibson (May 1), Raymond (May 12), Jackson (May 14), Champion Hill (May 16), and the Big Black River (May 17) en route to bottling up John C. Pemberton’s army in the Vicksburg defenses.
- May 26 ..... Anti-war Democrat Clement L. Vallandigham of Ohio is banished to Confederate lines near Murfreesboro, Tennessee.
- June 20 ..... West Virginia joins the Union as a new state.
- June 23–July 3 ..... William S. Rosecrans’s Tullahoma campaign compels Braxton Bragg’s Army of Tennessee to withdraw from middle Tennessee.
- July 1–3 ..... George G. Meade’s victory in the Battle of Gettysburg ends Robert E. Lee’s second invasion of the North.
- July 4 ..... The Confederate army at Vicksburg surrenders to U. S. Grant.
- July 8 ..... The Confederate garrison at Port Hudson, Louisiana, surrenders, opening the Mississippi River to full Union control.
- July 13 ..... Anti-draft riots begin in New York City and rage for several days.

- Sept. 2 ..... Union forces under Ambrose E. Burnside occupy Knoxville, Tennessee.
- Sept. 5 ..... The British government decides to detain the Laird rams being built for the Confederacy, thus averting a diplomatic crisis with the United States.
- Sept. 9 ..... Union forces under William S. Rosecrans occupy Chattanooga, Tennessee.
- Sept. 19–20 ..... The Battle of Chickamauga, just south of Chattanooga, gives the Confederacy its greatest tactical victory in the Western Theater and compels William S. Rosecrans’s Army of the Cumberland to retreat to Chattanooga.
- Nov. 23–25 ..... Union victory at the Battle of Chattanooga lifts the Confederate siege and opens the way for a campaign against Atlanta.
- Dec. 8 ..... Lincoln issues his Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction as a blueprint for restoring the Union; this first presented the President’s “10 percent plan” for reconstruction.

## 1864

- Jan. 2 ..... Confederate General Patrick R. Cleburne circulates a proposal that would free large numbers of slaves and enroll thousands of them in the Confederate Army; his proposal meets with staunch opposition.

- March 12 ..... U. S. Grant named general-in-chief of Union forces; he plans simultaneous offensives designed to pressure Confederate military forces on a broad front.
- April 8–9 ..... Battles of Mansfield, or Sabine Crossroads, and Pleasant Hill, fought near Shreveport, Louisiana, mark the climax of Nathaniel P. Banks’s unsuccessful Red River campaign.
- April 12 ..... Confederates under Nathan Bedford Forrest capture Fort Pillow, Tennessee, killing a number of black and white Union troops who try to surrender.
- April 17 ..... U. S. Grant ends the prisoner exchange agreement.
- May 5–6 ..... Battle of the Wilderness opens the “Overland campaign” between U. S. Grant and Robert E. Lee; Grant’s goal is the destruction of the Army of Northern Virginia.
- May 7 ..... William Tecumseh Sherman begins his Atlanta campaign against Joseph E. Johnston’s Army of Tennessee.
- May 8–20 ..... Battles around Spotsylvania Court House, Virginia, continue the struggle between Grant and Lee; heaviest fighting occurs on May 12 in the Confederate salient known as the “Mule Shoe.”

- May 15 ..... Battle of New Market blunts Franz Sigel's Union campaign in the Shenandoah Valley; this battle included the famous charge of the cadets from the Virginia Military Academy.
- May 16 ..... Battle of Drewry's Bluff stops progress toward Richmond of Benjamin F. Butler's Union Army of the James; Butler retreats to Bermuda Hundred and is effectively bottled up.
- June 1–3 ..... Battles at Cold Harbor between Grant and Lee include massive and unsuccessful Union assaults (the heaviest attacks occurred on June 3).
- June 12–18 ..... Grant orchestrates a brilliant crossing of the James River but fails to capture Petersburg; his troops begin what will become a nine-month siege.
- June 15 ..... U.S. Congress makes pay for black and white soldiers equal.
- June 19 ..... U.S.S. *Kearsarge* sinks C.S.S. *Alabama* off Cherbourg, France, ending the career of the most successful Confederate commerce raider.
- June 27 ..... Bloody repulse of Union attacks at Kennesaw Mountain, Georgia, after which Sherman resumes his campaign of maneuver against Johnston as he closes in on Atlanta.



- July 2 ..... The Wade-Davis Bill passes the U.S. Senate, presenting an alternative to President Lincoln’s “10 per-cent Plan” for reconstruction; Lincoln kills it with a pocket veto on July 4, and supporters of the bill answer with the “Wade-Davis Manifesto,” criticizing the President’s actions.
- July 17 ..... Jefferson Davis replaces Joseph E. Johnston with John Bell Hood as commander of the Confederate army defending Atlanta; Hood launches unsuccessful offensives against Sherman’s investing forces in the battles of Peachtree Creek (July 20), Atlanta (July 22), and Ezra Church (July 28), before the two armies settle into a siege.
- July 30 ..... The Union loses a good opportunity at the Battle of the Crater to break the stalemate at Petersburg.
- Aug. 5 ..... David G. Farragut’s Union fleet wins the Battle of Mobile Bay, closing the last major Confederate port on the Gulf of Mexico.
- Sept. 2 ..... Sherman’s Union forces enter Atlanta, providing a critical Union victory that virtually guarantees President Lincoln’s reelection in November.

- Sept. 19–Oct. 19 ..... Climactic phase of the 1864 Shenandoah Valley campaign, during which Philip H. Sheridan wins decisive victories over Jubal A. Early’s Confederate army in the battles of Third Winchester (Sept. 19), Fisher’s Hill (Sept. 22), and Cedar Creek (Oct. 19).
- Nov. 1 ..... A new Maryland state constitution abolishing slavery takes effect.
- Nov. 7 ..... Jefferson Davis proposes enrolling slaves in the Confederate military and freeing all who served faithfully; this touches off an acrimonious debate that continues for several months.
- Nov. 8 ..... Abraham Lincoln reelected; Republicans gain large majorities in both houses of Congress and do well in Northern state races.
- Nov. 16–Dec. 21 ..... Sherman’s army makes its famous “March to the Sea” from Atlanta to Savannah, leaving a wide path of destruction in its wake.
- Nov. 30 ..... John M. Schofield wins a Union victory over John Bell Hood’s Army of Tennessee at the Battle of Franklin, a short distance south of Nashville.
- Dec. 15–16 ..... George H. Thomas routs Hood’s Army of Tennessee in the Battle of Nashville, the final significant engagement in Tennessee.

## 1865

- Jan. 11 ..... The Missouri state constitutional convention abolishes slavery.
- Jan. 19 ..... William Tecumseh Sherman begins his march from Savannah into the Carolinas.
- Jan. 31 ..... U.S. House of Representatives approves a constitutional amendment abolishing slavery.
- Feb. 17..... Columbia, South Carolina, falls to Sherman's army; fires sweep through the city.
- Feb. 17..... Charleston, South Carolina, evacuated by Confederate military forces.
- Feb. 22..... Amendment to Tennessee's state constitution abolishes slavery.
- March 13 ..... C.S. Congress authorizes President Davis to recruit slaves as soldiers (but not to offer them freedom if they serve).
- March 19–21 ..... Battle of Bentonville near Raleigh, North Carolina, marks the end of significant fighting on Sherman's front.
- April 1 ..... Union victory in the Battle of Five Forks sets the stage for the Union capture of Richmond and Petersburg.
- April 2 ..... Confederate government abandons Richmond; Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia evacuates Richmond-Petersburg lines and begins its retreat westward.

April 9 .....	Lee surrenders the Army of Northern Virginia to U. S. Grant at Appomattox Court House.
April 14 .....	President Lincoln is shot in Ford's Theater; he dies the next morning.
April 26 .....	Joseph E. Johnston surrenders his army to Sherman at Durham Station, North Carolina.
May 4 .....	Richard Taylor surrenders Confederate forces in Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana to E. R. S. Canby at Citronelle, Alabama.
May 10 .....	Jefferson Davis is captured near Irwinville, Georgia.
May 12–13 .....	The final land battle of the war takes place at Palmito Ranch, near Brownsville, Texas.
May 26 .....	Confederate forces in the Trans-Mississippi Theater are surrendered in an agreement signed in New Orleans.
Dec. 18 .....	The Thirteenth Amendment is ratified; it abolishes slavery throughout the United States.

## Glossary

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**abatis:** A tangle of felled trees or brush in front of an entrenched position, with branches facing the enemy's lines to retard an attacking force.

**blockade:** A force of naval vessels placed to intercept shipping into or out of an enemy's ports.

**bounty:** A cash payment by the national, state, or local government designed to attract volunteers to the armed forces.

**breastworks:** A barricade of dirt, logs, sandbags, or other materials designed to protect soldiers fighting on the defensive.

**breechloader:** A shoulder weapon that is loaded at the breech, or rear of the barrel.

**brevet rank:** An honorary promotion of a military officer to a rank above his regular rank, given to reward exceptional service but conveying no increase in authority.

**bummer:** A soldier in William Tecumseh Sherman's army during the Georgia and Carolinas campaigns who operated beyond the effective control of superiors, often confiscating civilian property without regard to its possible military value.

**cavalry screen:** A body of cavalymen charged with protecting the front and flanks of an army from probes by the enemy's cavalry.

**commissary:** The military department dealing with the supply of food.

**company-grade officers:** Those who hold the commissioned ranks of captain or lower.

**contraband:** Material belonging to an enemy subject to seizure by a belligerent power in time of war. During the Civil War, the term most often applied to slaves in the Confederacy who made their way to Union lines.

**demonstration:** A military term for a maneuver intended to hold the enemy's attention while a major assault or movement is made elsewhere.

**earthworks:** Fortifications constructed of dirt, sand, and other materials (a term often used interchangeably with breastworks or field works).

**enfilade:** To fire against an enemy's position from the side or flank. Such fire is especially effective, because the defenders are unable to bring a large volume of counterfire to bear.

**entrenchments:** Defensive works prepared either in the field or as part of more permanent fortifications around cities or other crucial positions (also often called, simply, trenches).

**envelop:** To move around an enemy's flank, placing troops in position to render a defensive posture untenable.

**feint:** A movement intended to hold the enemy's attention while a larger attack or maneuver is carried out on another part of the field (a term often used interchangeably with "demonstration").

**field-grade officers:** Those who hold the commissioned ranks of colonel, lieutenant colonel, or major.

**fire-eaters:** Outspoken advocates of Southern rights who took extreme positions regarding the protection of slavery. Many of them, such as Edmund Ruffin, played a prominent role in the secession movement.

**flank:** The end of a line of troops on the field of battle or in a fortified position. To "flank" an enemy's position involves placing troops on its side or rear. A "flanking march" is a maneuver designed to give the troops in motion either a tactical or a strategic advantage.

**fleet:** A group of naval warships and support vessels operating as a unified force.

**flotilla:** Similar to a fleet but usually consisting of a smaller number of vessels.

**forage:** The feed for horses and mules. As a verb, “to forage” means to procure hay, grains, or grass necessary to feed an army’s animals. The verb also applied to soldiers’ search for food to feed themselves.

**forced march:** A movement made at a rapid pace to meet a dire threat (either real or perceived).

**guerrilla:** A combatant who operates in small units or bands beyond the control of major organized military forces. These men often carried out raids and small attacks behind enemy lines.

**logistics:** Military activity dealing with the physical support, maintenance, and supply of an army.

**martial law:** Temporary government of civilians by military authorities, typically involving the suspension of some civil liberties.

**minié ball:** More properly called a minié bullet, this hollow-base lead projectile of cylindro-conoidal shape was the standard round for infantrymen on both sides who were armed with rifle shoulder weapons.

**mortar:** An artillery piece designed to fire projectiles in a high arc that could strike targets behind fortifications. Mortar boats deployed this type of artillery piece in naval actions.

**muzzleloader:** A shoulder weapon that is loaded at the muzzle, or front of the barrel. \*

**non-commissioned officers:** Those who hold the ranks of sergeant and corporal.

**ordnance:** The military department responsible for the supply of arms and ammunition.

**parole:** An oath taken by a captured soldier not to bear arms again until formally exchanged for one of the captor's soldiers; given in return for release from captivity. As a verb, "to parole" means to obtain such an oath from a prisoner as a condition of releasing him.

**partisan:** A combatant operating in small groups beyond the control of major military forces. Sometimes used interchangeably with "guerrilla" but during the Civil War, partisans often were viewed as better disciplined and less likely to commit outrages against civilians or enemy soldiers.

**picket:** A soldier assigned to the perimeter of an army camp or position to give warning of enemy movements.

**popular sovereignty:** The doctrine that provided for the voters in a federal territory to decide whether they would accept slavery (rather than having Congress decide for them). An attempt to find a middle ground between those who wanted to exclude slavery from all territories and those who wanted it protected by Congress, the doctrine figured prominently in the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

**prisoner cartel:** An agreement between warring governments to exchange captured soldiers rather than sending them to prisoner-of-war camps. If one side had a surplus of prisoners, those men would typically be paroled until a sufficient number of the enemy's troops was captured to make an exchange.

**prize:** An enemy vessel or neutral ship carrying contraband captured by a privateer or naval vessel. Prizes were taken to a port controlled by the captor.

**quartermaster:** The military department responsible for the supply of clothing, shoes, and other equipment.

**reconnaissance-in-force:** A probing movement by a large body of troops intended to reveal the enemy's position and likely intentions.



**repeating firearm:** A weapon that can be fired more than once without reloading.

**salient:** A portion of a defensive line that protrudes toward the enemy and is thus potentially vulnerable on three sides.

**specie:** Coined money, usually gold or silver. Specie payments are payments in coin, or the redemption of paper money on demand with coin equivalent.

**strategy:** The branch of warfare involving the movement of armies to (1) bring about combat with an enemy under favorable circumstances or (2) force the retreat of an enemy.

**tactics:** The branch of warfare involving actual combat between attackers and defenders.

**trains:** The wagons accompanying armies that carried food, forage, ammunition, and other supplies (not to be confused with railroad rolling stock).

**transport:** An unarmed vessel carrying troops or supplies.

**trooper:** A cavalryman.

**volley:** The simultaneous firing of their weapons by a number of soldiers in one unit.

**works:** A generic term applied to defensive fortifications of all types.

\* One of the most common muzzleloaders used by both sides in the Civil War was the Enfield rifled musket. The replica .58 calibre Enfield (“three-bander”) visible on the set in the video version of the course was graciously provided by Mrs. Mary Ritenour of Fairfax, VA in memory of her late husband, Corporal Ken Ritenour of the 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. Infantry, Inc., a major re-enacting group.

## Biographical Notes

**Baker, Edward Dickinson** (1811–1861). Republican senator from Oregon and friend of Abraham Lincoln, he was killed at the battle of Ball’s Bluff in October 1861. His death helped spur creation of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, which spent much of the conflict investigating Democratic generals.

**Banks, Nathaniel Prentice** (1816–1894). One of the most prominent Union political generals, he served throughout the war without achieving any distinction on the battlefield. No match for Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley in 1862, he similarly came to grief during the 1864 Red River campaign.

**Barton, Clara** (1821–1912). The most famous Northern nurse, her excellent work at Antietam and elsewhere earned her the nickname “Angel of the Battlefield.” Appointed head nurse of Benjamin F. Butler’s Army of the James in 1864, she later helped identify and mark the graves of Union dead at Andersonville. She is most famous as the founder of the American Red Cross.

**Beauregard, Pierre Gustave Toutant** (1818–1893). One of the ranking officers in the Confederacy, he presided over the bombardment of Fort Sumter in April 1861, led the Southern army at the opening of the battle of First Bull Run or Manassas, and later held various commands in the Western and Eastern Theaters.

**Bell, John** (1797–1869). Tennessean who ran as the presidential candidate of the Constitutional Union Party in 1860. A former Whig with moderate views, he gave lukewarm support to the Confederacy after Lincoln’s call for 75,000 volunteers to suppress the rebellion.

**Booth, John Wilkes** (1838–1865). Member of the most celebrated family of actors in the United States and a staunch Southern sympathizer. He first planned to kidnap Abraham Lincoln, subsequently deciding to assassinate

him. He mortally wounded the president on April 14, 1865, and was himself killed shortly thereafter by pursuing Union cavalry.

**Bragg, Braxton** (1817–1876). A controversial military figure who led the Confederate Army of Tennessee at Stones River, Chickamauga, and Chattanooga. Intensely unpopular with many of his soldiers and subordinates, he finished the war as an adviser to Jefferson Davis in Richmond.

**Breckinridge, John Cabell** (1821–1875). Vice President of the United States under James Buchanan and the Southern Democratic candidate for president in 1860, he served the Confederacy as a general and Secretary of War. He fought in the Eastern and Western Theaters, winning the battle of New Market in May 1864.

**Brown, John** (1800–1859). Abolitionist whose violent activities during the mid-1850s in Kansas Territory and raid on Harpers Ferry in October 1859 gained him wide notoriety. He was hanged after his capture at Harpers Ferry, becoming a martyr to many in the North.

**Buchanan, James** (1791–1868). Long-time Democratic politician who was elected president in 1856 and watched helplessly as the nation broke up during the winter of 1860–1861. During the last months of his presidency, he sought without success to find a way to entice the seceded states back into the Union.

**Buell, Don Carlos** (1818–1898). Union army commander in the Western Theater in 1861–1862 who fought at Shiloh and led the Northern forces at Perryville. Reluctant to conduct vigorous campaigns against the Confederates, he was relieved of command in the autumn of 1862.

**Burnside, Ambrose Everett** (1824–1881). Union general best known for commanding the Army of the Potomac at the battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862. His wartime career also included early service along the North Carolina coast and later action with Grant's army during the Overland campaign. After the war he served Rhode Island as governor and United States senator.

**Butler, Benjamin Franklin** (1818–1893). Union general who coined the term “contraband” for runaway slaves in 1861 and commanded the army that approached Richmond by moving up the James River during U. S. Grant’s grand offensive of May 1864. A prewar Democrat who supported John C. Breckinridge in 1860, he became a Radical Republican during the war.

**Cleburne, Patrick Ronayne** (1828–1864). Confederate general who compiled a sterling record as a division commander in the Western Theater before his death at the battle of Franklin in November 1864. He caused a major controversy in 1864 with his famous circular recommending that slaves be armed and placed in Confederate service.

**Cooke, Jay** (1821–1905). A brilliant financier who raised hundreds of millions of dollars for the Union war effort through the sale of government bonds. Sometimes accused of receiving special treatment from the Lincoln Administration, he had powerful defenders who insisted that his actions helped keep Northern armies in the field.

**Crittenden, John Jordan** (1787–1863). Politician from Kentucky who worked hard to avoid the break-up of the Union in 1860–1861. He proposed reinstating the Missouri Compromise line, called for a national convention to discuss the secession crisis, and later worked hard to keep Kentucky in the Union.

**Davis, Jefferson** (1808–1889). Colonel during the war with Mexico, Secretary of War under Franklin Pierce, and prominent senator from Mississippi in the 1840s and 1850s, he served as the Confederacy’s only president. He and his nationalist policies triggered great political debate among Confederates.

**Dix, Dorothea Lynde** (1802–1887). An antebellum advocate of improved care for the mentally ill, she served as superintendent of Union army nurses during the war. She rendered solid service, despite a personality that often placed her at odds with both subordinates and superiors.

**Douglas, Stephen Arnold** (1812–1861). Prominent senator from Illinois in the 1850s who favored the doctrine of popular sovereignty and ran unsuccessfully as the regular Democratic candidate for president in 1860.

**Douglass, Frederick** (1817 or 1818–1895). Born a slave, he escaped to freedom in 1838, became an abolitionist and newspaper editor, and by 1860 was the most prominent African American leader in the United States. He pressed tirelessly to add freedom as a war aim in the North.

**Early, Jubal Anderson** (1816–1894). Confederate general who compiled a solid record as an officer in the Army of Northern Virginia. He ended the war a disgraced figure in the Confederacy because of his defeats in the 1864 Shenandoah Valley campaign. After the war, he became one of the leading architects of the Lost Cause interpretation of the conflict.

**Farragut, David Glasgow** (1801–1870). The most famous Union naval figure of the war, he was promoted to rear admiral in 1862 (the first officer to hold that rank). He led naval forces in successful operations against New Orleans in 1862, Port Hudson in 1863, and Mobile Bay in 1864.

**Forrest, Nathan Bedford** (1821–1877). Although completely without formal military training, he became one of the best Confederate cavalry generals and proved to be a major thorn in the side of numerous Union commanders in the Western Theater. After the war, he became the first grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan.

**Frémont, John Charles** (1813–1890). Famous as an antebellum western explorer, he ran as the first Republican candidate for president in 1856 and served as a Union general in Missouri and Virginia during the war. While commanding in Missouri in 1861, he attempted to free the state's slaves by issuing a proclamation that abolitionists applauded but Lincoln ordered him to rescind.

**Grant, Ulysses S.** (1822–1885). The most successful Union military commander, serving as general-in-chief for the last fourteen months of the war and twice winning election as president during the postwar years.

**Greenhow, Rose O'Neal** (1815–1864). A well-known resident of Washington, D.C., who became a Confederate spy. She supplied useful information to the Confederates before the battle of First Manassas, was later jailed in Washington, and eventually was released and sent to the Confederacy. She published an account of her imprisonment in 1863 and died when the vessel on which she was a passenger ran aground off North Carolina.

**Halleck, Henry W.** (1815–1872). An important Union military figure who presided over striking successes in the Western Theater in 1862, served as general-in-chief of the Union army in 1862–1864, and was demoted to chief of staff when Grant assumed the top military position in March 1864. His administrative skills outstripped his abilities as a field commander.

**Hood, John Bell** (1831–1879). Confederate commander who fought effectively in the Army of Northern Virginia in 1862–1863 but is best known for his unsuccessful defense of Atlanta against Sherman's army and the disastrous campaign in Tennessee that culminated in the battle of Nashville in mid-December 1864.

**Hooker, Joseph** (1814–1879). Union general nicknamed "Fighting Joe" who commanded the Army of the Potomac at the battle of Chancellorsville. Replaced by George G. Meade during the Gettysburg campaign, he later fought at Chattanooga and in the opening phase of the 1864 Atlanta campaign.

**Hunter, David** (1802–1886). A Union general who, as commander along the south Atlantic coast, tried to free all slaves in his department in May 1862, only to see Lincoln revoke his order. He later led an army in the Shenandoah Valley in 1864.

**Jackson, Thomas Jonathan** (1824–1863). Nicknamed "Stonewall" and second only to Lee as a popular Confederate hero, he was celebrated for his 1862 Shenandoah Valley campaign and his achievements as Lee's trusted subordinate. He died at the peak of his fame, succumbing to pneumonia after being wounded at the battle of Chancellorsville.

**Johnston, Albert Sidney** (1803–1862). A prominent antebellum military figure from whom much was expected as a Confederate general. He compiled a mixed record in the Western Theater before being mortally wounded on April 6, 1862, at the battle of Shiloh.

**Johnston, Joseph Eggleston** (1807–1891). A Confederate army commander who served in both Virginia and the Western Theater. Notoriously prickly about rank and privileges, he feuded with Jefferson Davis and compiled a record that demonstrated his preference for defensive over offensive operations. His wound at the battle of Seven Pines in May 1862 opened the way for R. E. Lee to assume field command. (He and A. S. Johnston were not related.)

**Lee, Robert Edward** (1807–1870). Southern military officer who commanded the Army of Northern Virginia for most of the war and became the most admired figure in the Confederacy.

**Lincoln, Abraham** (1809–1865). Elected in 1860 as the first Republican to hold the presidency, he provided superior leadership for the Northern war effort and was reelected in 1864 before being assassinated at Ford's Theater on the eve of complete Union victory.

**Longstreet, James** (1821–1904). Lee's senior subordinate from 1862 until the end of the war, he compiled a generally excellent record while under Lee's eye but proved unequal to the demands of independent command during the East Tennessee campaign of 1863–1864. He became a controversial figure in the South after the war, because he refused to embrace Lost Cause ideas.

**McClellan, George Brinton** (1826–1885). One of the most important military figures of the war, he built the Army of the Potomac into a formidable force and led it during the Peninsula campaign, during the Seven Days battles, and at Antietam. Often at odds with Lincoln because of his unwillingness to press the enemy, he was relieved of command in November 1862 and ran as the Democratic candidate for president in 1864.

**McDowell, Irvin** (1818–1885). Military officer who commanded the Union army at the battle of First Bull Run or Manassas. The remainder of his wartime career was anticlimactic.

**Meade, George Gordon** (1815–1872). Union general who fought throughout the war in the Eastern Theater, commanding the Army of the Potomac at Gettysburg and for the rest of the war. U. S. Grant's presence with the army after April 1864 placed Meade in a difficult position.

**Pope, John** (1822–1892). Union general who won several small successes in the Western Theater before being transferred to the Eastern Theater to command the Army of Virginia. His defeat at the battle of Second Bull Run or Manassas in August 1862 ended his important service during the war.

**Porter, David Dixon** (1813–1891). Union naval officer who commanded the Mississippi River Squadron during 1862–1863 in support of various army operations, including the campaign against Vicksburg. He later served along the Atlantic coast and on the James and York Rivers in Virginia.

**Rosecrans, William Starke** (1819–1898). Union military commander who fought in the Western Theater and led the Army of the Cumberland at the battle of Chickamauga and during the early phase of the siege of Chattanooga. His removal from command at Chattanooga by Grant in mid-October 1863 ended his important wartime service.

**Schofield, John McAllister** (1831–1906). Union general who fought in the Western Theater, commanding the Army of Ohio during the Atlanta campaign and winning the battle of Franklin on November 30, 1864.

**Scott, Dred** (1795 [?]-1858). Slave who stood at the center of legal proceedings that culminated in 1857 in the Supreme Court's landmark *Dred Scott v. Sandford* decision. The Court declared that, as an African American, Scott was not a citizen and, therefore, could not institute a suit. The Court also declared the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional and seemingly opened all federal territories to slavery.



**Scott, Winfield** (1786–1866). One of the great soldiers in United States history, he performed brilliantly in the war with Mexico and remained the ranking officer in the army at the outbreak of the Civil War. He devised the “Anaconda Plan” in the spring of 1861, a strategy that anticipated the way the North would win the conflict.

**Semmes, Raphael** (1809–1877). The most celebrated Confederate naval officer, he captained the commerce raiders *Sumter* and *Alabama*, the two of which captured more than 70 Northern ships, and later commanded the James River Naval Squadron.

**Sheridan, Philip Henry** (1831–1888). Ranked behind only Grant and Sherman as a Union war hero, Sheridan fought in both the Western and Eastern Theaters. His most famous victories came in the 1864 Shenandoah Valley campaign; at the battle of Five Forks on April 1, 1865; and during the Appomattox campaign.

**Sherman, William Tecumseh** (1820–1891). Union military officer who overcame difficulties early in the war to become Grant’s primary subordinate. An advocate of “hard” war, he is best known for his capture of Atlanta and the “March to the Sea” in 1864.

**Sigel, Franz** (1824–1902). German-born Union general who was popular among German-speaking troops but ineffective as a field commander. His most famous service came in the Shenandoah Valley in 1864, ending in defeat at the battle of New Market on May 15.

**Smith, Edmund Kirby** (1824–1893). A Confederate general who participated in the 1862 Kentucky campaign and later commanded Southern forces in the vast Trans-Mississippi Theater.

**Stephens, Alexander Hamilton** (1812–1883). A moderate Democrat from Georgia who supported Stephen A. Douglas in the 1860 presidential campaign and embraced secession reluctantly, he served throughout the war as Vice President of the Confederacy. Increasingly at odds with Jefferson Davis over issues related to growing central power, he became an embittered public critic of the President and his policies.

**Stevens, Thaddeus** (1792–1868). Radical Republican congressman from Pennsylvania who chaired the House Ways and Means Committee. He favored harsh penalties for slaveholding Confederates and pushed to make emancipation a major focus of the Union war effort.

**Stuart, James Ewell Brown** (1833–1864). Known as “Jeb,” he commanded the cavalry in the Army of Northern Virginia from June 1862 until his death at the battle of Yellow Tavern in May 1864. His role in the Gettysburg campaign generated a great deal of controversy, but overall he compiled a superb record as the “eyes and ears” of Lee’s army.

**Sumner, Charles** (1811–1874). Radical Republican senator from Massachusetts who was caned on the floor of the Senate by Congressman Preston Brooks of South Carolina after delivering his famous “Crime against Kansas” speech in 1856. During the war, he chaired the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and consistently pressed for emancipation.

**Taney, Roger Brooke** (1777–1864). Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 1835–1864, he antagonized abolitionists with the *Dred Scott* decision in 1857. During the war, he sought to curb Abraham Lincoln’s power to suspend the *writ of habeas corpus*, opposed Northern conscription, and argued that governmental assaults on civil liberties posed a greater threat to the nation than secession of the Southern states.

**Thomas, George Henry** (1816–1870). A leading Union military officer who spent his entire Civil War career in the Western Theater. Earning the nickname “Rock of Chickamauga” for exceptional service on that battlefield, he later commanded the Army of the Cumberland during the siege of Chattanooga and decisively defeated John Bell Hood’s Army of Tennessee at the battle of Nashville. A Virginian outside Grant’s inner circle, he never received his full measure of credit for superior accomplishments.

**Tompkins, Sally L.** (1833–1916). Established Robertson Hospital in Richmond, Virginia, in July 1861 and supervised it for the duration of the war. Commissioned a captain in the Confederate army when all private hospitals were placed under military control, she was the only woman to hold

official rank in the Southern armed forces. Her hospital earned the distinction of returning the highest percentage of its patients to active service.

**Vallandigham, Clement Laird** (1820–1871). Congressman from Ohio and a leading Copperhead who staunchly opposed emancipation and most of the rest of the Republican legislative agenda. Exiled to the Confederacy by Lincoln in 1863, he returned to the United States and helped draft the peace platform at the 1864 Democratic national convention.

**Wade, Benjamin Franklin** (1800–1878). Radical Republican senator from Ohio who chaired the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, urged Abraham Lincoln to dismiss George B. McClellan, and called for the emancipation of all slaves. In 1864, he co-authored the Wade-Davis Bill and the Wade-Davis Manifesto that attacked Lincoln's actions relating to Reconstruction.

**Yancey, William Lowndes** (1814–1863). Prominent Alabama fire-eater whose “Yancey Platform,” calling for the protection of slavery in all federal territories, helped break up the Democratic Party in 1860.

## Bibliography

### Essential Reading:

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Clinton, Catherine, and Silber, Nina, eds. *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992. Reprinted in paperback. Includes essays by eighteen scholars on various facets of women's wartime experience, conceptions of manhood, and other aspects of gender history.

Foner, Eric. *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Journey, 1863–1877*. New York: Harper & Row, 1988. Reprinted in paperback. This standard survey includes material on wartime reconstruction.

Gallagher, Gary W. *The Confederate War*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997. Reprinted in paperback. A concise treatment that focuses on popular will, nationalism, and military strategy in the Confederacy.

———. *Lee and His Generals in War and Memory*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998. Includes essays on the ways in which modern Americans have tried to understand the meaning of the war.

Hattaway, Herman, and Jones, Archer. *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983. Reprinted in paperback. The best one-volume military history of the Civil War, this study pays rigorous attention to all theaters and places campaigns and battles in a broad political context.

McPherson, James M. *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988. Reprinted in paperback. Equally well written and researched, this Pulitzer Prize-winning analytical narrative is the best one-volume treatment of the subject. It gives full attention to the background of the conflict, as well as to the military and nonmilitary aspects of the war.

———. *Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. Includes excellent essays on the continuing popularity of the Civil War as a topic for study by modern Americans.

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Nevins, Allan. *The War for the Union: The Improvised War, 1861–1862*. New York: Scribner's, 1959. The first of Nevins's four volumes on the history of the Civil War. Nevins interpreted the conflict as a transforming event that helped make the United States a powerful modern state.

Paludan, Philip Shaw. *"A People's Contest": The Union and the Civil War, 1861–1865*. New York: Harper & Row, 1988. The best one-volume treatment of the nonmilitary side of the Northern war experience, this volume emphasizes how the conflict pushed the North toward modern nationhood.

Potter, David M. *The Impending Crisis, 1848–1861*. New York: Harper & Row, 1976. Reprinted in paperback. A fine analytical narrative of the political events and sectional controversies that preceded the Civil War.

Thomas, Emory M. *The Confederate Nation, 1861–1865*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979. Reprinted in paperback. A superior one-volume history of the subject, well researched and well written.

## Supplementary Reading:

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Attie, Jeanie. *Patriotic Toil: Northern Women and the American Civil War*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998. A rigorous scholarly treatment of the impact of the war on Northern women.

Bearss, Edwin Cole. *The Campaign for Vicksburg*. 3 vols. Dayton, Ohio: Morningside, 1985–86. A massively detailed narrative of the protracted campaign that resulted in the Union capture of Vicksburg in July 1863.

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Joseph T. Glatthaar that highlight the role of military events in explaining Confederate defeat.

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Dowdey, Clifford, *The Seven Days: The Emergence of Lee*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1964. An immensely readable narrative only somewhat weakened by the author's obvious pro-Southern sympathies.

Durden, Robert F. *The Gray and the Black: The Confederate Debate on Emancipation*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972. Quotes extensively from wartime testimony in examining the bitter debate over whether to enroll slaves in the Confederate army.

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Freeman, Douglas Southall. *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*. 3 vols. New York: Scribner's, 1942–45. Reprinted in paperback. These compellingly written volumes are the classic treatment of the Army of Northern Virginia's high command. Few studies have exerted as much influence on the military history of the Civil War.

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Glatthaar, Joseph T. *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers*. New York: The Free Press, 1989. Reprinted in paperback. An excellent scholarly examination of the military experiences and battlefield record of the black soldiers who made up almost 10 percent of the Union army.

———. *The March to the Sea and Beyond: Sherman's Troops in the Savannah and Carolinas Campaigns*. New York: New York University Press, 1985. Reprinted in paperback. A social history of Sherman's army that emphasizes its veteran character and success in wreaking havoc in the Southern hinterlands.

Goff, Richard D. *Confederate Supply*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1969. The best study of the Confederacy's efforts to clothe and feed its armies.

Hanchett, William. *The Lincoln Murder Conspiracies*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983. This important study exposes as baseless the many conspiracy theories about Lincoln's murder.

Harris, William C. *With Charity for All: Lincoln and the Restoration of the Union*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998. The fullest modern treatment of wartime reconstruction, this study argues that Lincoln would have allowed Southern states a significant voice in the process, even after the end of the war.

Hennessy, John J. *Return to Bull Run: The Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993. Reprinted in paperback. A model campaign study that combines exhaustive research and literary flair.

Hesseltine, William Best. *Civil War Prisons: A Study in War Psychology*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1930. Remains the best general treatment of a subject badly in need of new scholarly attention.

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Hewitt, Lawrence Lee. *Port Hudson: Confederate Bastion on the Mississippi*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987. Reprinted in paperback. A solid scholarly study of the campaign that resulted in the loss of the last major Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi River.

Hughes, Nathaniel Cheairs, Jr. *Bentonville: The Final Battle of Sherman and Johnston*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. This well-researched narrative covers the last major military action in Sherman's 1865 campaign through the Carolinas.

Johnson, Ludwell H. *The Red River Campaign: Politics and Cotton in the Civil War*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1958. Reprinted in paperback. This standard study of the 1864 campaign successfully places military events in a broader political and economic context.

Jones, Howard. *Union in Peril: The Crisis over British Intervention in the Civil War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992. This excellent treatment of Anglo-American diplomatic affairs during the first twenty months of the conflict highlights the degree to which military operations influenced British leaders.

Jones, Virgil Carrington. *The Civil War at Sea*. 3 vols. New York: Henry Holt, 1960–62. An engaging, popularly written narrative of the naval war that gives attention to the struggle on Southern rivers, the blockade, and commerce raiders.

Kennett, Lee. *Marching through Georgia: The Story of Soldiers and Civilians during Sherman's Campaign*. New York: HarperCollins, 1995. Reprinted in paperback. A well-written and impressively researched study that accords full attention to the experience of soldiers and the civilians their military maneuvering and fighting affected.

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Long, David E. *The Jewel of Liberty: Abraham Lincoln's Re-election and the End of Slavery*. Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole, 1994. A detailed account that emphasizes the importance of the slavery issue and takes the Copperheads to task for behavior that might be labeled treasonous.

Luraghi, Raimondo. *A History of the Confederate Navy*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1996. The best scholarly treatment of the topic, impressively researched and sound in its judgments.

McDonough, James Lee. *War in Kentucky: From Shiloh to Perryville*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994. A serviceable narrative of the strategic counteroffensive of the western portion of the Confederacy in the summer and autumn of 1862.

McPherson, James M. *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. Reprinted in paperback. An important study that emphasizes the role of ideology as a factor in motivating men on both sides to enlist and fight.

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———. *Refugee Life in the Confederacy*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964. The most detailed examination of white refugees in the Confederacy.

Mitchell, Reid. *Civil War Soldiers*. New York: Viking, 1988. Reprinted in paperback. A major study that explores the motivations, expectations, and experiences of Union and Confederate soldiers.

Mohr, Clarence L. *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in Civil War Georgia*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986. Reprinted in paperback. The best study of slavery in a Confederate state, this work emphasizes the ways in which the war weakened the hold of master over slave.

Moore, Albert Burton. *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy*. New York: Macmillan, 1924. Reprinted in paperback. Although more than 60 years old, this remains the only full-scale examination of the legislative background and overall effect of the Southern draft.

Nevins, Allan. *The War for the Union: The Organized War, 1863–1864*. The third of Nevins's Civil War quartet, this volume stresses the degree to which Northern organizational skills and accomplishments furthered the Union war effort.

Perry, Milton F. *Infernal Machines: The Story of Confederate Submarine and Mine Warfare*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965. Reprinted in paperback. The standard account of Confederate efforts to use technology to overcome Northern numbers and material advantages.

Potter, David M. *Lincoln and His Party in the Secession Crisis*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1942. Reprinted in paperback with a new preface in 1962. A durable examination of the way in which Lincoln and his party reacted to the South's actions following the 1860 presidential election.

Powell, Lawrence N. *New Masters: Northern Planters during the Civil War and Reconstruction*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1980. Reprinted in paperback. A careful examination of the wartime interaction between Northerners and freedmen in the context of Southern plantation agriculture.

Rable, George C. *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989. Reprinted in paperback. Impressive research and clear writing are two of this important book's many strengths.

———. *The Confederate Republic: A Revolution against Politics*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994. The best study of politics in the Confederacy, this book analyzes the debate between those who favored and opposed granting strong war-related powers to the central government.

Rhea, Gordon C. *The Battle of the Wilderness, May 5–6, 1864*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994. The quality of research and writing are equally impressive in this detailed narrative.

———. *The Battles for Spotsylvania Court House and the Road to Yellow Tavern, May 7–12, 1864*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997. Displays the same strengths as Rhea's fine study of the battle of the Wilderness.

Richardson, Heather Cox. *The Greatest Nation of the Earth: Republican Economic Policies during the Civil War*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997. A good study of the Republican Party's economic ideology and the process by which much of it was translated into wartime legislation.

Robertson, William Glenn. *Back Door to Richmond: The Bermuda Hundred Campaign, April–June 1864*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987. A solid treatment of a failed element in U. S. Grant's 1864 strategy of simultaneous advances.

Robinson, William Morrison. *The Confederate Privateers*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1928. The standard title on an interesting facet of Confederate naval history.

Rose, Willie Lee. *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964. Reprinted in paperback. A classic



treatment of the transition from slavery to freedom for black people on the South Carolina Sea Islands.

Sears, Stephen W. *Chancellorsville*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1996. Reprinted in paperback. A fine treatment of a complex campaign. As with all of Sears's titles, this volume is very well written and researched.

———. *Landscape Turned Red: The Battle of Antietam*. New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1983. Reprinted in paperback. The best analytical narrative of the 1862 Maryland campaign.

———. *To the Gates of Richmond: The Peninsula Campaign*. New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1992. Reprinted in paperback. The best study of George B. McClellan's Peninsula campaign and the Seven Days battles.

Silbey, Joel H. *A Respectable Minority: The Democratic Party in the Civil War Era, 1860–1868*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1977. Reprinted in paperback. A good short treatment that portrays the Democratic Party as mounting an effective opposition to Lincoln's Administration and the Republican majority in Congress.

Simpson, Brooks D. *The Reconstruction Presidents*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998. This well-researched and provocatively argued book includes two chapters on Lincoln and wartime reconstruction.

Stampp, Kenneth M. *And the War Came: The North and the Secession Crisis, 1860–1861*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950. Reprinted in paperback. An influential study of the shifting attitudes toward the South among Northerners during the period between Lincoln's election and the firing on Fort Sumter.

Still, William N., Jr. *Iron Afloat: The Story of the Confederate Armorclads*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971. The standard scholarly study of the construction, deployment, and battle performance of Confederate ironclad naval vessels.

Sword, Wiley. *Embrace an Angry Wind—The Confederacy's Last Hurrah: Spring Hill, Franklin, and Nashville*. New York: HarperCollins, 1992. Reprinted in paperback. A detailed narrative of John Bell Hood's operations in Tennessee during the last three months of 1864.

Tanner, Robert G. *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign, Spring 1862*. Revised and expanded edition. Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole, 1996. The best overall narrative of Jackson's famous campaign, this volume accords the Federals relatively little attention.

Tap, Bruce. *Over Lincoln's Shoulder: The Committee on the Conduct of the War*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998. The only book-length study of the important, highly partisan congressional committee that took an active role in investigating Union military commanders and their operations.

Tidwell, William A. *April '65: Confederate Covert Action in the American Civil War*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1995. A study of Confederate clandestine operations that makes a plausible case for ties between Southern agents and John Wilkes Booth in a plan to kidnap Lincoln.

Trudeau, Noah Andre. *Bloody Roads South: The Wilderness to Cold Harbor, May–June 1864*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1989. An engaging narrative that includes numerous excerpts from participants' accounts.

———. *The Last Citadel: Petersburg, Virginia, June 1864–April 1865*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1991. Reprinted in paperback. Continues the treatment begun in the author's *Bloody Roads South*.

———. *Out of the Storm: The End of the Civil War, April–June 1865*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1994. Reprinted in paperback. The final volume of Trudeau's trilogy on the last year of the war expands its coverage to embrace not only Virginia but also late-war clashes and major Confederate surrenders elsewhere.

Wert, Jeffrey D. *From Winchester to Cedar Creek: The Shenandoah Campaign of 1864*. Carlisle, Pa.: South Mountain Press, 1987. Reprinted in paperback. The best narrative of the operations pitting Philip H. Sheridan against Jubal A. Early.

Wiley, Bell I. *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1943. Reprinted in paperback. A pioneering study of the Confederacy's common soldiers that retains considerable value after more than half a century.

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