

The discovery of gold brought thousands of prospectors to California. The territory's population grew from 10,000 in 1848 to 100,000 in 1849.

**Taylor and the Crisis** On taking office, President Taylor tried to prevent further sectional conflicts. He hoped that the territories of California and New Mexico would write their state constitutions and be admitted to the Union quickly, thus avoiding prolonged discussion and controversy over the slavery issue. But the finding of gold at Sutter's Mill in California in 1848 greatly complicated the problem of the admission of California and New Mexico.

The discovery of gold in California quickly swelled the territory's population as thousands joined the mad rush for riches. Very few became rich, but the stories of wealth continued to draw emigrants by the thousands. Soon California's civil government was unable to keep law and order.

To resolve this problem, Taylor decided to encourage the people of California to write their constitution and apply for admission to statehood. Within a few months, California had drafted a constitution that prohibited slavery. Taylor was satisfied with the constitution, and recommended that California be admitted to the Union as a free state.

Unfortunately, Taylor had misunderstood the situation. Southerners were not prepared to admit any new state if slavery was outlawed. This would have broken the balance of 15 free and 15 slave states in the Senate and would have placed the South in a subordinate position. The South would have been outvoted in the Senate. So southern in-

terests could have been ignored. Moderate politicians, recognizing the danger of southern states seceding over this issue, searched for a compromise that both the North and the South would accept.

**Continuing Differences** The United States Congress met in December 1849, and proceeded into stormy session. The first conflict between the North and the South happened over the election of the Speaker of the House. It took 17 days and 63 ballots to choose Howell Cobb of Georgia over Robert Winthrop of Massachusetts.

The conflict continued as Congress tried to deal with a number of controversial issues. Texas was involved in a dispute over its western boundary with New Mexico. The slave trade in the District of Columbia embarrassed most Americans. Many wanted the slave trade eliminated from the country's capital. Runaway slaves had been escaping to the North and present laws were ineffective in returning them to their owners. California wanted to join the Union as a free state and would not accept any provisions legalizing slavery. However, the precarious balance in the Senate between free and slave states would be broken if California was admitted on these terms. Finally, some people wanted the New Mexico and Utah areas to be admitted as territories without any restriction on slavery.

**Efforts at Compromise** Sectional differences would almost certainly mark any debate on these issues. For many people, the only way to resolve such issues would be through compromise. The major effort to draw up a compromise was made by Henry Clay, the moderate Whig leader from Kentucky.

Clay made a long and eloquent speech before packed Senate galleries on February 5 and 6, 1850. He argued for a comprehensive settlement of the outstanding issues. The elements of Clay's compromise were that California must be admitted as a free state since it had held a convention and decided to seek admittance as a free state. The territorial governments of New Mexico and Utah should be set up without any regard for slavery. They should be allowed to make their own decisions on slavery and then seek admittance as states. The slave trade in the District of Columbia had to be ended. However, slavery in the District of Columbia should continue. Texas deserved payment for an adjustment of its land area and boundary. A new Fugitive Slave Law with more powerful means of enforcement was needed. Clay stressed how important northern cooperation was in returning runaway slaves. If the North would not cooperate, he said, "I will go with the furthest Senator from the South to impose the heaviest sanctions upon the recovery of fugitive slaves, and the restoration of them to their owners." At the end of his remarks he pleaded for cooperation and forbearance, without which, he said, the Union could not hold together.

**The Great Debate** In the following weeks, Clay's compromise was debated by all of the major leaders of Congress. John C. Calhoun, the senator from South Carolina and foremost spokesman for southern ideas, was too ill to attend the debate. However, he wrote a speech that was delivered by Senator James Mason of Virginia. Calhoun was against the compromise and urged that the causes of southern discontent be removed or disunion would prevail. In Calhoun's view, further compromises would be fruitless unless the territories were opened up to slavery.

Daniel Webster, senator from Massachusetts and a strong defender of the Union, spoke for the compromise. Webster deplored the agitation of some members of Congress and counseled peace. In

**CAUTION!!**  
**COLORED PEOPLE**  
**OF BOSTON, ONE & ALL,**  
 You are hereby respectfully CAUTIONED and advised, to avoid conversing with the **Watchmen and Police Officers of Boston,**  
 For since the recent ORDER OF THE MAYOR & ALDERMEN, they are empowered to act as **KIDNAPPERS**  
 AND **Slave Catchers,**  
 And they have already been actually employed in **KIDNAPPING, CATCHING, AND KEEPING SLAVES.** Therefore, if you value your **LIBERTY,** and the **Welfare of the Fugitives** among you, **SAVE** them in every possible manner, as so many **HOUNDS** on the track of the most unfortunate of your race.  
**Keep a Sharp Look Out for KIDNAPPERS, and have TOP EYE open.**

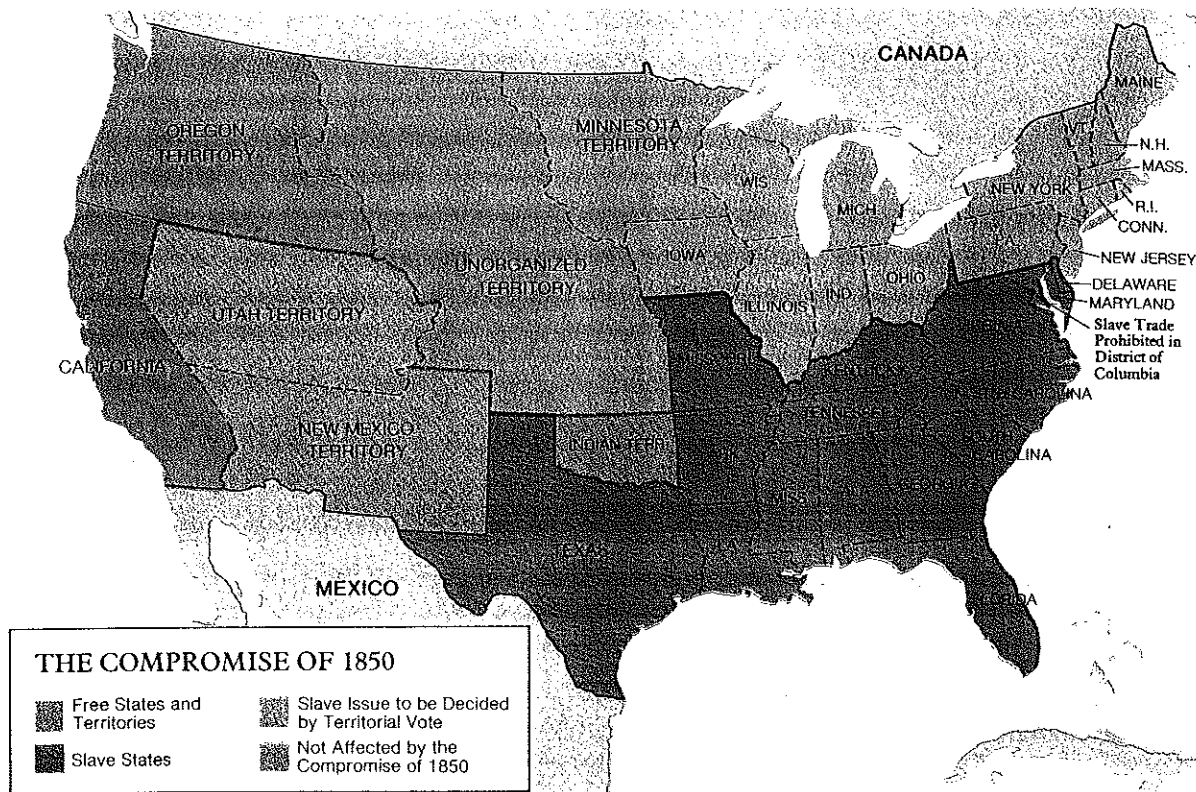
**APRIL 24, 1851.**

The amendment of the Fugitive Slave Act in 1850 did not stop the efforts of northern abolitionists to prevent the return of fugitive slaves to the South.

Webster's view, slavery would not spread to the Southwest territories since it would not be profitable. Therefore, it need not be legally excluded. Senator Jefferson Davis of Mississippi spoke gloomily of the future if the balance of power between the North and South were destroyed. Without this balance of power, Davis said, disunion would be inevitable.

**The Compromise of 1850** Efforts to pass Clay's *Omnibus bill*—all of the measures in one bill—failed. So the measures had to be passed separately. Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois became a key figure in Congress as he successfully engineered the passage of each measure.

It was a slow process. But by early August 1850, Douglas felt confident that California's statehood would be approved. After some difficulty, the Texas boundary and debt problem was resolved.



Neither the North nor the South was completely satisfied with the Compromise of 1850. However, the compromise did ease sectional tensions for a short time.

Ten million dollars was paid to Texas for its compromise with New Mexico. A bill outlawing the slave trade in the District of Columbia was also passed. Finally, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 was amended. This amendment doubled the fines against those who rescued slaves, required all citizens to help in the apprehension of fugitive slaves, and provided for the appointment of commissioners to enforce the act. By the middle of September 1850, Congress had passed all the measures and sent them to the President to sign.

The credit for the acceptance of the compromise belonged to a number of politicians. Henry Clay contributed important arguments in his speech. Daniel Webster was still a powerful figure in the nation. His support for the compromise was essen-

tial. Stephen A. Douglas did most of the work in steering the measures through the Senate. The death of John C. Calhoun in March of 1850 made the passage of the compromise easier. Also, President Taylor, who did not agree with all parts of the compromise, died in July 1850. His successor, Millard Fillmore, signed the final bills.

The compromise, as a whole, supplied solutions to many of the problems of 1848 and 1849. California was admitted as a free state. The territories of New Mexico and Utah were carved from the Mexican cession with no restrictions on slavery, and the Texas boundary was fixed at its present-day line. But the danger of disruption of the Union had only been delayed. The differences between sections had not been settled.

### ■ Section Analysis

1. How did the Free-Soil party affect the outcome of the presidential election of 1848?
2. How would the admittance of California to the Union as a free state have affected the balance of power in the Senate?
3. Who were the major figures involved in the passage of the Compromise of 1850?

## 2 The Decade of Conflict

During the 1850's, sectionalism based on the issue of slavery continued to be the key factor in American politics. Virtually every political decision or event of the 1850's concerned slavery or was influenced by slavery. The differences over the question of slavery soon led to violence. Between 1854 and 1856, about 200 people lost their lives in violent incidents in the Kansas territory. This sectional violence reached its peak in 1859 with John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry. The North and the South had grown so far apart that open war appeared to be a real possibility.

**Sectional Differences Remain** The 1850's were, by and large, prosperous years for the United States. The production levels of American industry and agriculture were raised, and business profits showed an increase. Railroads were being built at a rapid pace. Gold mining continued to grow in importance. Both the railroads and gold helped to encourage migration to and settlement in the West. Life in the 1850's was, in many ways, more settled, and it appeared that the United States was entering a period of peace and prosperity.

Many people in the South responded angrily to the publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. One southern critic referred to Mrs. Stowe as a "coarse, ugly, long-tongued woman."

Sectional differences, however, continued to characterize relations between the North and the South. One issue that occupied northern attention was the return of fugitive slaves. Many northerners refused to obey the amended Fugitive Slave Act. Fugitive slaves sometimes were hidden in private homes. On other occasions, northerners joined together to liberate fugitive slaves who were being sent back to the South. Many slaves also escaped because of the help of the *Underground Railroad*—the name given to a number of abolitionists who helped slaves to escape to the North. Numerous individuals serving as "conductors" led slaves to the North. The best known of these "conductors" was Harriet Tubman, a fugitive slave, who conducted more than 300 slaves to freedom in the North. Many people in the South had believed that the North would honor the Compromise of 1850, and they were angered with the unwillingness of the northerners to obey the law.

**Uncle Tom's Cabin** The appearance in 1852 of the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe gave dramatic form to the passions aroused  
(Text continues on page 373.)



New York Historical Society

## Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad

During the first half of the 1800's, many southern slaves escaped to the North and Canada on the Underground Railroad. The Underground Railroad was a loosely knit group of people who helped the fleeing slaves on their way north. This system of helping slaves to flee the South started as early as the 1780's and 1790's. However, the term *Underground Railroad* was not used until the 1830's, when the building of railroads began in the United States. There is no real certainty as to how the term came to be used. The most common explanation involves a slave named Tice Davids. In 1831, Davids escaped from a plantation in Kentucky and, closely pursued by his owner, made for Ohio. Davids reached the town of Ripley, Ohio, where he was sheltered by an abolitionist family. When the slaveholder reached the town, he could find no trace of Davids. The slaveholder later told friends that Davids "must have gone off on an underground road."

The Underground Railroad involved large numbers of people; both black

and white, throughout the North and the South. These people used railroad terms to describe the work they did. The slaves they helped to escape were called *passengers*. The safe houses where the slaves were sheltered on their journey to freedom were known as *stations*. The owners of these houses were called *station-masters*. The most dangerous job on the Underground Railroad was that of *conductor*—guiding the slaves through the hostile South to freedom. Perhaps the most famous conductor on the Underground Railroad was Harriet Tubman.

Harriet Tubman was born a slave, probably in 1820, in eastern Maryland. In 1849, she escaped to freedom. Traveling only at night and avoiding towns and farms, Harriet eventually reached Pennsylvania. Harriet then decided to bring her family and friends to the North to share her freedom with her.

To finance her scheme for freedom, Harriet found work as a domestic servant. She then began conducting members of her family

and other slaves out of the South. This was very dangerous, as specially trained and heavily armed bands of slave-hunters roamed the South looking for runaway slaves. Because she was a fugitive slave, she knew she would be shown little mercy if she was caught. Even so, she continued her work and her reputation among abolitionists in the North began to grow. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, an abolitionist and Unitarian minister, wrote of Harriet:

"[She] has been back eight times secretly & brought out in all sixty slaves with her, including all her own family, besides aiding many more in other ways to escape. The slaves call her Moses. She will probably be burned alive whenever she is caught, and she probably will be, . . . as she is going again."

Her reputation among slave owners also grew. At one point rewards of \$40,000 were offered for her arrest.

It has been estimated that Harriet made 19 trips on the Underground Railroad, freeing more than 300 slaves. She was very proud of her work, noting that "I never ran my train off the track, and I never lost a passenger."

After the Civil War, when her work on the Underground Railroad was no longer needed, Harriet settled in Auburn, New York. Until her death in 1913, she continued to work for the rights of black Americans.

Sophia Smith Collection



Harriet Tubman—on the left—with some of her "passengers."

in the North. The portrayals of the brutality of slave driver Simon Legree, of Uncle Tom as a Christian martyr, of the great sufferings of slaves, and of the dramatic escape to the North were accepted as factual by people in the North. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* personalized slavery and made it an emotional issue. About 300,000 copies of the book were sold within a year, and it became the most popular book of the 1850's. In the South, however, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* brought an angry response. Many southerners insisted that the picture of slavery offered by the book was false and misrepresented the social system of the South. Since Harriet Beecher Stowe had never been to the South, southerners asked, how could she know what slavery was like? Some southerners began to talk of increasing the power of the South in Congress to protect themselves against abolitionists like Mrs. Stowe.

**The Election of 1852** At a time when the Union was deeply troubled by sectional conflicts, two of the Union's staunchest defenders died. In June of 1852, Henry Clay died. Then, in October of the same year, Daniel Webster also died. Without the leadership of Clay and Webster, the Whigs looked to Winfield Scott for the presidential election. He was a colorless, safe candidate with a good war record.

The Democratic party approached the presidential election of 1852 with some optimism. The Democrats had a number of good candidates. Sam Houston of Texas was one. Lewis Cass, former presidential candidate from Michigan, was another. Stephen Douglas, the senator from Illinois who had pushed through the Compromise of 1850, and James Buchanan, a statesman and lawyer from Pennsylvania, were also Democratic candidates. The first few ballots at the nominating convention resulted in a tie. Finally a compromise candidate,

Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire, won the nomination. He was accepted by most members of the convention and quickly won the nomination.

The election campaign was dispirited and lifeless, but near the end there was mudslinging. Pierce was called a drunkard and anti-Catholic; Scott was accused of being one of the most dishonest men in the world. In the election Pierce won by an overwhelming margin—254 electoral votes to Scott's 42. Pierce received 1,601,117

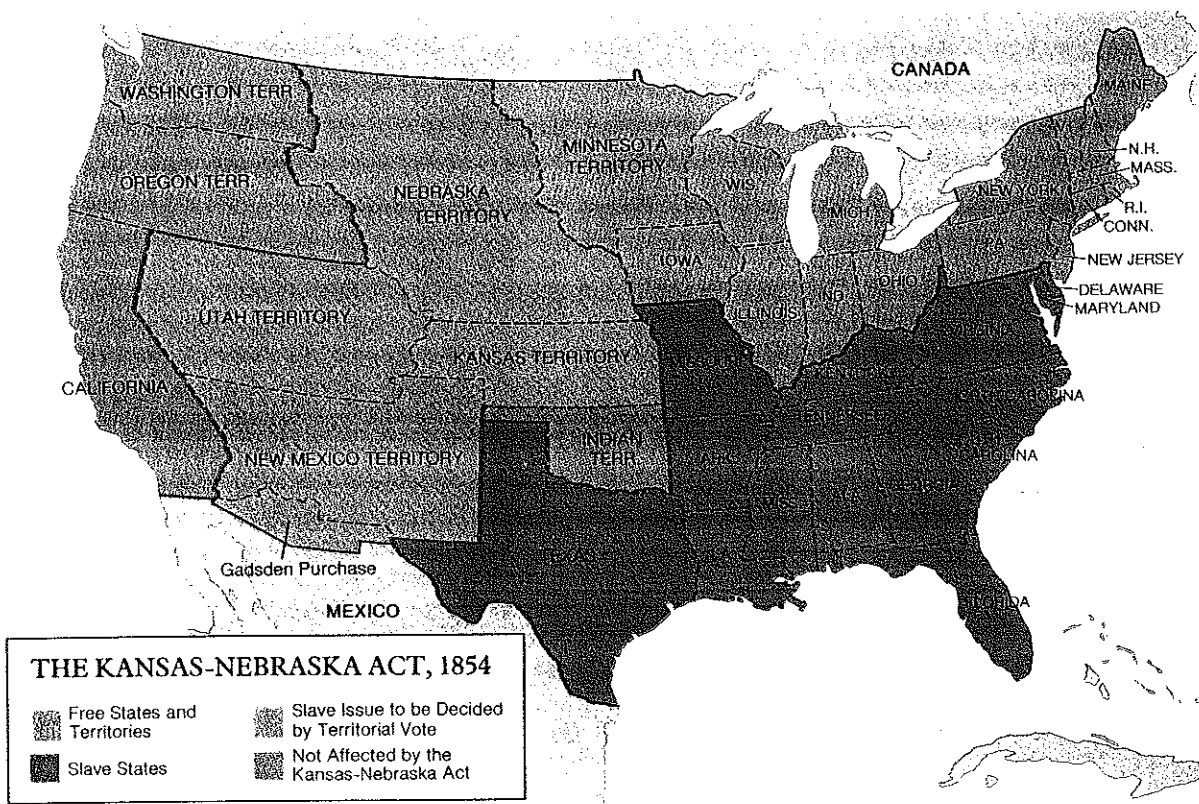
popular votes to Scott's 1,385,453. The Whig party was shattered by the election results and soon ceased to exist as a national party.

**The Ostend Manifesto** Franklin Pierce, the new President, was a happy but weak man who allowed his advisers to make his decisions. He appointed a cabinet of southerners or pro-southerners, including Jefferson Davis of Mississippi as secretary of war, and Caleb Cushing of Massachusetts, an opponent of the Free-Soil party, as attorney general. Pierce also appointed a number of southerners to important diplomatic positions. For the first nine months of his administration, however, Pierce had few serious problems.

In 1854, slavery and sectional conflict again became the major issues in American politics. President Pierce was interested in expanding the territories of the United States. To this end, Pierce ordered minister to Spain, Pierre Soulé, to offer Spain \$130 million for the island of Cuba. Soule met in Ostend, Belgium, with John Mason, minister to France, and James Buchanan, minister to Great Britain, to talk about Cuba. They made a statement—which became known as the *Ostend Manifesto*. It recommended that Spain be offered money for Cuba. If the offer was refused, the statement continued, the United States would be justified in seizing the island.

The Ostend Manifesto aroused much anger in the North. Slavery was well established in Cuba. If Cuba became a part of the United States, this would add to the power of the southern slave states. Even though President Pierce repudiated the manifesto, his efforts to aid southern expansion alienated many people in the North.

**The Kansas-Nebraska Act** The relative peace that followed the Compromise of 1850 did not last. In 1854, Senator Stephen A. Douglas again addressed the slavery question when he presented a bill to organize the Kansas and Nebraska territories. This bill allowed the people who lived in these territories to decide the slavery question by *popular sovereignty*—the people of each territory could decide by popular vote to accept or forbid slavery. In effect, the bill repealed the Missouri Compromise. This compromise had outlawed slavery north of the 36°30' line of latitude.



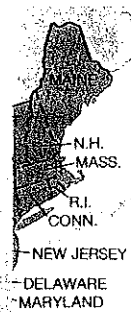
Stephen Douglas was able to persuade his colleagues in the Senate to pass the Kansas-Nebraska bill by a vote of 37 to 14. However, in the House of Representatives, where there was a majority of northern members, the vote was much closer—113 to 100. Almost immediately after the passage of the bill, a struggle for control of the Kansas Territory began between antislavery and proslavery groups.

The reasons why Douglas chose to reopen the question of slavery in the territories are not clear. Some people said that one reason was Douglas's desire to become President. For this he would need southern backing. Repealing the Missouri Compromise opened up the possibility of either Kansas or Nebraska, or both, entering the Union as slave states. Both were north of the 36°30' line. This would increase the power of the South.

Other people have said that Douglas was motivated by his desire to see the building of a transcontinental railroad. Steady expansion west made clear the need for a railroad that would connect the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. People in the South hoped that the transcontinental railroad would go through Memphis or New Orleans. A number of people in the North, Douglas among them, wanted the railroad to run through Chicago. Government

money would be needed to build a transcontinental railroad. But government funds could be spent only on building in states or territories. This proposed northern route, however, crossed lands that had not yet been organized. Therefore, Douglas proposed the organization of the Kansas and Nebraska territories.

Whatever the reasons, Douglas's actions destroyed the hopes for sectional peace. Many northern politicians, especially antislavery Whigs, did not want slavery to spread to the territories. They vigorously opposed the measure. In order for the measure to pass, strong southern support would be needed. Douglas had gained the support of southern Whigs and Democrats by including the provision repealing the Missouri Compromise. With the added help of a number of northern Democrats, this Kansas-Nebraska bill was passed.



**A New Party Is Formed** The Kansas-Nebraska Act destroyed what remained of the Whig party. But out of this destruction came a new party—the Republican party. For years the Whigs had tried to sidestep the slavery issue, but after the Kansas-Nebraska Act the party was divided down the middle. Most southern Whigs defended the act as just and fair, whereas most northern Whigs denounced any spread of slavery. Whig politicians like Salmon P. Chase, a senator from Ohio; John P. Hale, an antislavery congressman from New Hampshire; and Charles Sumner, a strong critic of the South from Massachusetts, searched for new alignments outside the old Whig party.

Within a few months, an anti-Nebraska party emerged. This new party became known as the Republican party. It stood for the exclusion of slavery from the territories. Most of its members were former Whigs, but some were free-soil Democrats from the North. Other Republicans were former members of the Know-Nothing, or American, party. Many Know-Nothings wanted limitations on immigration and were against alcohol. Many Know-Nothings were also against slavery. The antislavery faction of the Know-Nothings was absorbed into the Republican party in the late 1850's.

**Free Labor and Slave Labor** The old traditions of freedom and individualism were accepted by most Americans. In addition, people in the continental North had developed an ideology of "Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men." Perhaps the most important element of this ideology was free labor. This meant that anyone who was willing to work the land could work it, hard and gain the economic rewards that would make him or her independent. For people in the North then it was important that free labor be protected and allowed to extend into the new territories.

People in the South, on the other hand, saw the world in a different fashion. They saw slavery as central to their way of life. To support this, they noted that the Bible accepted the institution of slavery. Also, the vast majority of people in the South agreed that blacks were inferior to whites. Southerners believed that slavery should be extended into the territories and that this expansion was essential to the prosperity of the

South. This southern ideology appeared to be on a collision course with that of the North. Politicians did not seem able to find a peaceful answer.

**Bleeding Kansas** The collision between the ideologies of the North and the South was not long in taking place. The Kansas-Nebraska Act left the decision on slavery to the settlers in the territories. Kansas soon became the focal point of a fierce and violent rivalry. Southerners wanted to make Kansas a slave state, while northerners wanted to make it a free state.

Settlers from the North and the South moved into Kansas. They hoped to influence the decision on slavery. Many northern settlers were financed by the New England Emigrant Aid Society. This society had been established under the leadership of Eli Thayer, a wealthy cotton manufacturer, to give financial aid to those willing to undertake the trip to Kansas. These settlers carried with them new breech-loading rifles, which were known as "Beecher's Bibles." The guns were named after Henry Ward Beecher, a northern minister who felt that guns were more important than Bibles in the struggle against slavery. Many southerners also moved into Kansas. Also, large numbers of proslavery Missourians often crossed over into Kansas and caused problems. On March 30, 1855, elections for the territorial legislature were won by the proslavery forces largely because of the illegal Missouri crossovers. More than 6,000 people voted, though only 2,000 were legally registered to vote. In response, antislavery settlers held their own elections and formed a free-state government.

With the question of slavery still undecided, many settlers turned to violence. In 1856, a group of proslavery settlers sacked the antislavery town of Lawrence. To avenge this attack, a group of free-soil settlers—led by John Brown, a fervent abolitionist—brutally murdered 5 people at a proslavery settlement on Pottawatomie Creek. By the end of 1856, about 200 settlers had lost their lives in the violence in "Bleeding Kansas."

The continued violence was the subject of considerable discussion in Congress. During the debate, Charles Sumner, a senator from Massachusetts, presented a speech entitled "The Crime Against Kansas." His speech attacked the state of South Carolina and South Carolina's senator, Andrew Butler. Preston Brooks, Butler's nephew and



a congressman from South Carolina, took offense at the remarks. A few days after the speech, Brooks walked up to Sumner in the Senate and hit him again and again over the head with a cane. Sumner was badly hurt and did not fully recover for three years. Brooks' action won applause in the South. However, it was viewed with anger and concern in the North. For many Americans, it appeared that the normal rules of courtesy no longer existed. Even elected officials were resorting to violence.

**The Election of 1856** In the election of 1856, the Republican party chose a presidential candidate for the first time. They had several strong candidates. One was William Seward, former Whig senator from New York. He was one of the best-known politicians in the country. Others were Salmon P. Chase, senator and head of the political party in Ohio, and John C. Fremont, army hero and western explorer. The Republicans passed over Seward and Chase, and chose the less controversial Frémont. He was popular, glamorous, and his adventures had captured the imagination of many Americans. Also, the Republicans adopted a strong free-soil platform. They were against the spread of slavery into the territories and urged the containment of slavery to its present borders.

The Democrats chose James Buchanan, an experienced conservative politician from Pennsylvania, as their presidential candidate. Buchanan had been abroad as minister to Great Britain during the past four years and had not taken strong positions on slavery or the territorial questions. He was able to sidestep discussions of slavery throughout the campaign. A third candidate, ex-President Millard Fillmore, was nominated by the southern wing of the Know-Nothing party.

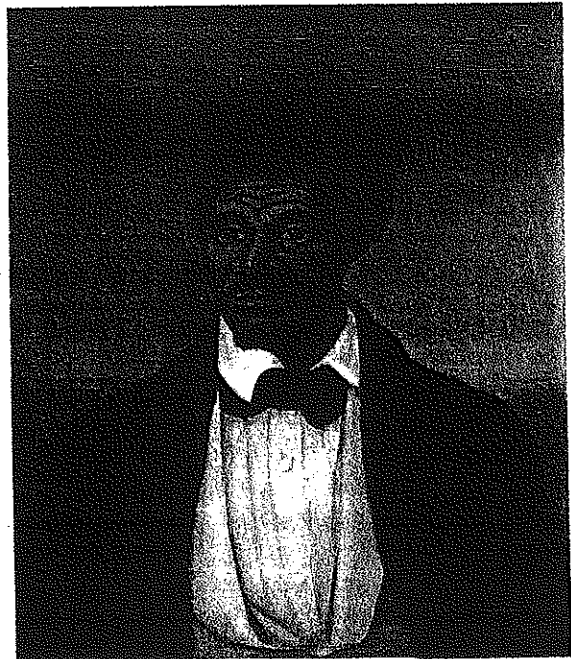
The election became a battle between Buchanan and Frémont, with Fillmore having little impact. Buchanan received many votes from those who feared that Frémont's election would anger the South and result in the secession of some southern states. Many voters who were worried about the expansion of slavery, however, voted for Frémont. Buchanan won all the slave states except Maryland. He also carried 5 free states—California, Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Frémont carried 11 free states. Buchanan won only a minority of the popular vote, but carried the electoral vote by 174 to Frémont's 114. The

presidential election of 1856 made it apparent that sectionalism had become the dominant factor in American politics.

**The Dred Scott Decision** Early in the Buchanan administration, the Supreme Court made a decision that led to increased sectional tensions. The decision concerned Dred Scott, a slave who had sued for his freedom. Scott was the slave of Dr. John Emerson, an army surgeon from Missouri. Emerson had been stationed in Illinois and Wisconsin and had taken Scott to live with him. Scott contended that since he had lived in a free territory, he must be freed even though he now lived in Missouri.

The case dragged on in the lower courts from 1846 to 1855. Eventually, the case was argued before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1856 and a decision was returned in 1857. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, speaking for the majority of the Court, stated that as a black, Scott could not be a citizen and so could not bring suit in the federal courts. Also, Chief Justice Taney said that Congress had no power to take property from a citizen, whether

The Supreme Court decision did not affect Dred Scott personally. Scott's new owner—John Sanford—was an abolitionist, and he set Scott free.



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apparent that in a state or a territory. Slaves could not be separated from the other forms of property, the ownership of which was protected by the Fifth Amendment. So, Congress could not give governments in territories powers that were greater than those of the federal government. This decision undermined popular sovereignty. It also affirmed the southern view that people in a territory could not outlaw slavery until statehood had been reached. It also challenged the basis of the Republican party, which was the containment of slavery to its present boundaries. In essence, the decision stated that it was unconstitutional to outlaw slavery in any part of the nation since neither Congress nor territorial governments could deny the property rights of citizens.

**Impact of the Dred Scott Decision** Many people in the North were upset by the Dred Scott decision. Republicans thought it was part of a "slave conspiracy." Abraham Lincoln, an Illinois Republican, said it was a mistake that would be reversed and he promised to do whatever was needed to change the decision. William Seward agreed, saying that the Court "can reverse its spurious judgment" and once again obey the Constitution. Senator Stephen Douglas stated that only local laws and regulations could protect slavery and without these protections no one would take slaves into any territory. Douglas continued to urge that the question of slavery in the territories be decided by popular sovereignty.

Southerners were delighted with the decision and felt for the first time in many years that slavery was now protected. Since the efforts to pass the Wilmot Proviso, they had been disturbed by the drift of events. The Kansas-Nebraska Act had partly reversed this drift. Now with this Supreme Court decision, southerners hoped that the issue of slavery had finally been settled.

**The Lecompton Constitution** The issue of slavery, however, had not been settled. In 1857, Kansas was once again the scene of trouble concerning slavery. A convention met in November of 1857 at the small town of Lecompton to draw up a constitution. This was the first step toward the admittance of Kansas to the Union. As most of the convention delegates were proslavery, they drew up a proslavery constitution. The document

was submitted to the voters. However, they were allowed only to vote on whether it should be adopted "with slavery" or "without slavery." Even if the voters decided against slavery, the slaves already in Kansas would remain as slaves. Opponents of slavery were unhappy with this proposition. So they did not go to the polls to vote. As a result, the constitution with the slavery provision was adopted. Several months later, however, the people were allowed to vote on the complete Lecompton constitution and it was rejected. Most citizens of Kansas did not want slavery and favored the freeing of slaves already in Kansas.

In spite of the second vote, President Buchanan attempted to force Congress to admit Kansas to the Union under the Lecompton constitution. Despite considerable pressure from Buchanan, Douglas objected and was able, with the help of many Republicans, to defeat the measure. Douglas believed in popular sovereignty and wanted a new constitution that all could vote on. His conflict with Buchanan badly split the Democratic party. For the next few years Kansas remained a territory. It finally was admitted to the Union as a free state on January 19, 1861.

**Douglas Seeks Reelection** In 1858, Douglas had to run for reelection to the Senate. Douglas accepted that this would not be an easy matter, as he was under considerable pressure from President Buchanan and Buchanan's Democratic supporters on the one hand, and the growing success of the new Republican party on the other. In addition, Douglas knew that his leadership was no longer accepted by many Democrats. Therefore, in order to be reelected Senator, and perhaps to become President in 1860, he felt the need to reassert his ideas.

Abraham Lincoln was the Republican senatorial candidate. As a Whig, Lincoln had been elected to the Illinois state House of Representatives four times and the national House for one term. His service at the national level as a member of Congress had not been very outstanding. During the early 1850's he had practiced law and had not been active in the Whig party. But the Kansas-Nebraska Act aroused Lincoln's fear that slavery would be spread into the territories. So he joined the new Republican party. Although he was not an abolitionist, Lincoln had stated, "I have always hated

slavery." He hoped that once it was clear that slavery would not be allowed to expand, it would begin to decline and ultimately disappear.

Lincoln challenged Douglas to a series of debates. They had debated each other in earlier years, but this formal series of seven debates caught the imagination of the public. The debates carried the two candidates from one end of Illinois to the other. Thousands gathered to cheer them. Douglas traveled in style, riding a special train with a flat car carrying a cannon that was fired to announce his coming. Lincoln traveled somewhat more modestly.

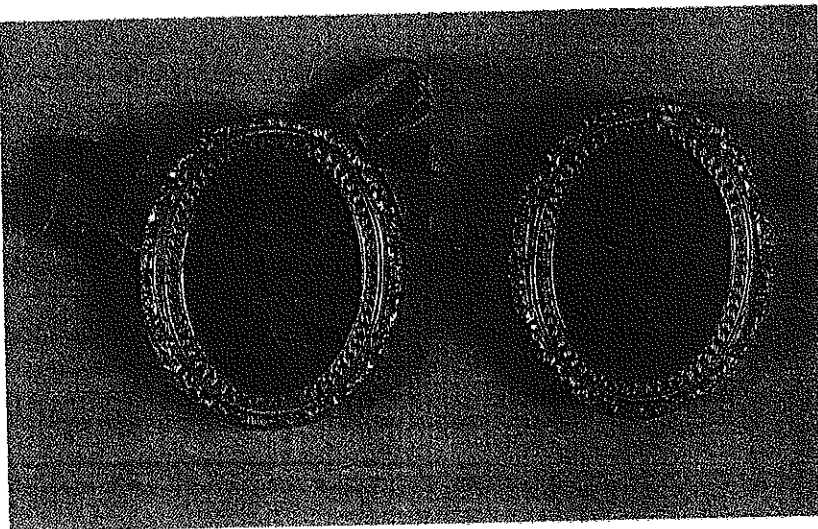
**The Lincoln-Douglas Debates** In the debates, each candidate tried to pin responsibility for the present trouble over slavery on the other. Douglas attacked Lincoln, accusing him of promoting sectionalism and of wanting to "abolitionize" the whole country. This charge was in reference to Lincoln's "House Divided" speech, made when he accepted the Republican party nomination. This speech stated that the country could not last half-slave and half-free. Douglas went on to defend his doctrine of popular sovereignty. He stated that it was the only possible answer to the growing conflict. Lincoln denounced the Dred Scott decision but added that he did not favor black citizenship. Lincoln stated, however, that slavery was a moral, social, and political wrong that needed to be done away with peacefully.

On one question posed by Lincoln, Douglas was forced to decide something that would cost him southern backing in the presidential election of 1860. Lincoln asked if the people in a territory could outlaw slavery before a state constitution was formed. His question forced Douglas to state his position publicly. If Douglas answered yes, he would lose southern support in any future effort for the presidency since southerners would not accept limiting the spread of slavery. If he answered no, he would lose the senatorship of Illinois since he would be saying that slavery could not be stopped. His answer, which became known as the *Freeport Doctrine*, was that territorial legislatures could refuse to pass the legislation that slavery needed: "Slavery," Douglas said, "cannot exist a day or an hour anywhere unless it is supported by local police regulations."

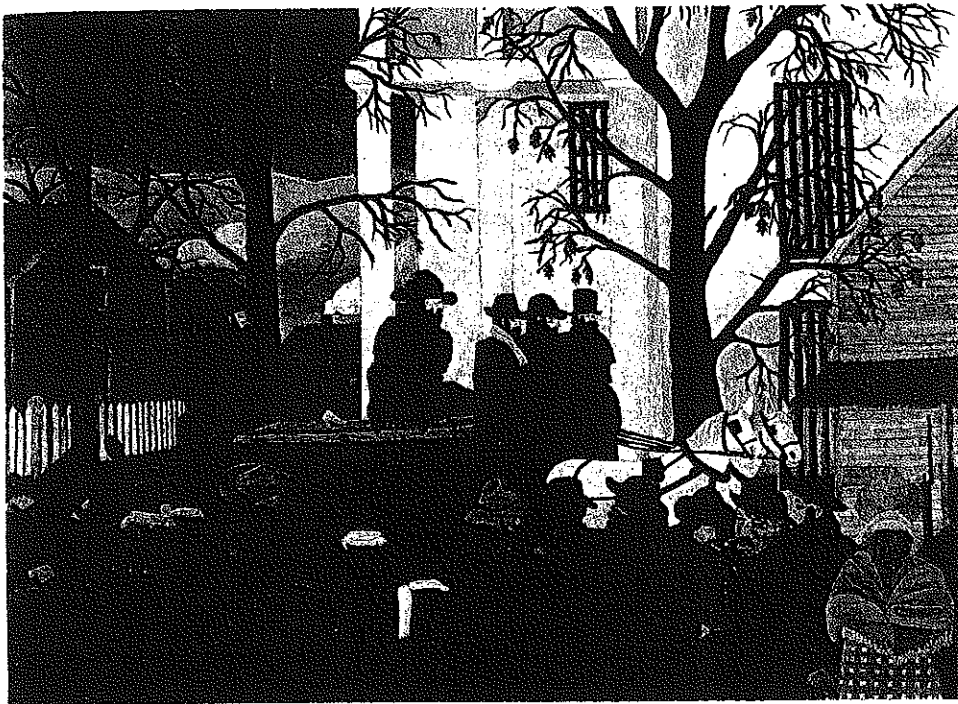
In the election in Illinois, the Republicans made great gains but were not able to win control of the state legislature. Since senators were chosen by the state legislature, the Democratic majority returned Douglas to his seat in the Senate. Douglas had won the race for reelection. However, he still had enemies inside and outside the Democratic party. Lincoln, though he lost the election, had gained much. He had shown himself to be the equal of Douglas in the debates, and by doing so, Lincoln had become a national figure.

**John Brown's Raid** Throughout the 1850's, incidents involving the issue of slavery had rapidly

University of Hartford. J. Doyle De Witt Collection



These framed pictures of Abraham Lincoln—on the left—and Stephen Douglas—on the right—were distributed during the 1860 presidential election campaign. In 1858, these two men had taken part in a series of debates during the Illinois senatorial election campaign.



Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts

John Brown went to his execution unrepentant. In a letter written just before his death he said, "I . . . am quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood."

increased. Each incident seemed to build on the next, separating the fabric of the Union one thread at a time. Politicians did not help matters by making extreme statements. For example, in October 1858, William Seward of New York, referring to the conflict and instability, said:

It is an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slave holding nation, or entirely a free-labor nation.

Seward's words were put into action by John Brown, an intense and unstable man. This was the same John Brown who had been part of the violence in Kansas, planning and carrying out the murder of five proslavery settlers in 1856. He believed that he was doing God's work.

Brown wanted to free the slaves and set up an abolitionist republic. To this end, he raised money for a full-scale attack on the South. On Sunday, October 16, 1859, Brown assembled 16 whites and

5 blacks and marched to Harpers Ferry, Virginia. The town was easily taken and the federal armory and arsenal were secured. Brown planned to arm the slaves with guns from the arsenal. However, few slaves joined the rebellion.

By morning, every town within 30 miles had been mobilized and farmers and militia rushed to defend Harpers Ferry. The next day a detachment of United States Marines commanded by Colonel Robert E. Lee arrived, and Brown and his followers were captured. The raid, in which 17 lives were lost, was over in less than 36 hours.

In the next few weeks, Brown was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death for murdering five people, conspiring with slaves to rebel, and committing treason against Virginia. He said that he was not afraid to die, and continued to proclaim the evils of slavery and the need to end it. He was calm as a hood was placed over his head in preparation for his execution. He appeared unafraid, saying, "I have suffered a thousand times more from bashfulness than fear." On December

2, 1859, as the words "So perish the enemies of Virginia" rang out, John Brown died. His death transformed defeat into a kind of victory. Overnight he became a hero in the North.

Southern reaction was immediate and hostile. The blame for the outrage was placed on the Republican party. Brown's raid seemed the logical result of the statements of Republicans, such as William Seward. Senator Jefferson Davis of

Mississippi was certain that the Republicans wanted to make war upon the South. Many southerners became fearful other northerners might decide to invade the South. Some southerners thought that unless greater protection against attack could be assured, it might be better to leave the Union. The sections had grown further apart and open warfare seemed more and more likely. There was little middle ground left.

#### ■ *Section Analysis*

1. What was the impact of the Dred Scott decision on people in the North?
2. In what ways did Lincoln and Douglas disagree on the extension of slavery?
3. Why did people in the South blame the Republican party for John Brown's raid?

### 3 *The Election of 1860 and Secession*

As the 1860 presidential election drew near, the trouble in American politics continued. The Democratic party divided along regional lines and nominated two presidential candidates. During the campaign, few of the major questions of the day were discussed by the candidates. After the election was won by Abraham Lincoln, South Carolina voted to leave the Union. Other southern states soon followed. Attempts to bring the seceded states back into the Union failed. When President Lincoln tried to resupply Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, the Civil War began.

**Selecting Presidential Candidates** As 1860 began, it was evident that a struggle was likely, not only between parties, but within parties. When the Democratic party met in Charleston, South Carolina, to nominate its presidential candidate, the southern Democrats were in a fighting mood. They wanted the Democratic party to protect slavery. They were unwilling to compromise.

The first struggle of the convention was over the party platform. After some argument, a pro-slavery platform was reported to the convention floor. It was, however, voted down by the full convention. Southern delegates began to leave. The convention continued, but efforts to choose a presidential candidate failed. The remaining delegates decided to adjourn the convention for six weeks.

When the convention reassembled, the southern delegates again walked out. The Democratic party was irretrievably divided. The remaining delegates chose Stephen Douglas as their presidential candidate. Later, the Southern Democrats met and chose John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky as their candidate.

The Republican party met in Chicago to write a platform and to choose a candidate. A platform favoring business interests was written. The platform called for a transcontinental railway, protective tariffs, a homestead law, and some internal improvements. The platform also stated that each state should control its own institutions, which included slavery. This platform was easily passed.

William Seward's ideas had helped form the party and he had become its spokesperson. So he was the choice of most delegates for the presidency. Abraham Lincoln had the support of most delegates as a second choice since he was a moderate and could carry key western states. The nomination of the presidential candidate took three ballots. Seward led on the first two ballots but could not get more than half of the votes. Lincoln gained votes after each ballot, and on the third ballot he was nominated. When Lincoln received the nomination, hundreds of guns were fired in salute, and delegates carried fence rails in honor of Lincoln, who, because of his humble beginnings, was known as "the Railsplitter."

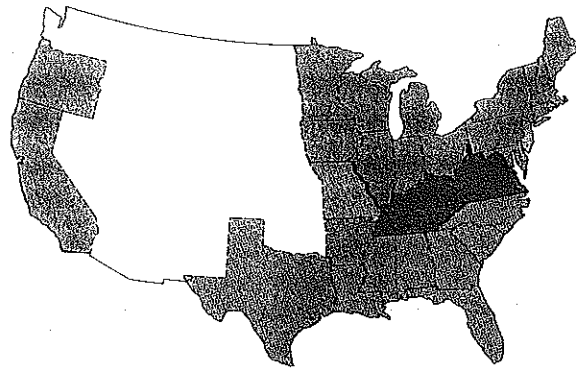
A fourth party, the Constitutional Union party, met in Baltimore and nominated John Bell of Tennessee for President and Edward Everett of Massachusetts for Vice-President. In their campaign, they ignored the controversial issues of slavery and its extension, preferring to speak in generalities. They affirmed the Constitution, the Union, and obedience to present laws.





**The Election of 1860** The most active candidate in the campaign was Stephen Douglas. He traveled throughout the country, tirelessly urging the preservation of the Union. In Virginia he said, "I desire no man to vote for me unless he hopes and desires the Union maintained and preserved intact." Lincoln, however, stayed at home and avoided any discussion of slavery. He said his views were well known. Also, he knew he had a good chance to win if he did not make any mistakes. Breckinridge was even more careful, asserting his love of the Constitution but saying little else. John Bell appeared to want to return to the happy days of the past. Regardless of the approach of the candidates, the campaign failed to bring the nation to an awareness of the critical issues or lay the basis for a settlement of the problems.

The outcome of the election was in serious doubt. In the end, Lincoln was elected President with a majority of the electoral votes and just under 40 percent of the popular vote. He carried all the free states except New Jersey, which he divided with Douglas. Though Douglas received 29 percent of the popular vote, he won only 12 electoral votes. Breckinridge carried the lower South and Bell won Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

It was a sectional election. Lincoln received no electoral votes in the South and Breckinridge none in the North. The election of a Republican who continued to support the exclusion of slavery seemed a definite threat to southern interests. For the first time in American history, the South genuinely felt threatened by a new President. Southerners seriously began to consider the possibility of leaving the Union.

**Secession** Immediately after the election of Lincoln, South Carolina moved to secede from the Union. A convention was called to meet in



		VOTES	
		Popular	Electoral
	Abraham Lincoln (Republican)	1,865,593	180
	Stephen A. Douglas (Northern Democrat)	1,382,713	12
	John C. Breckinridge (Southern Democrat)	848,356	72
	John Bell (Constitutional Union)	592,906	39

Abraham Lincoln won the 1860 presidential election by carrying the large, populous states of the Northeast and the Midwest.

Charleston on December 20, 1860. After some discussion, an ordinance was passed declaring, "the Union now hitherto existing between South Carolina and other states under the name of the United States of America is hereby dissolved." Convention delegates said that this act was not rebellion, but separation. South Carolina had agreed to come into the Union in 1788; it had now decided to leave.

Other southern states held conventions and debated the question of secession. In every state there was a large group of people that did not want to secede immediately. These people tried to persuade their colleagues that Lincoln should be allowed to take office. If his acts as President threatened the South, then the state should secede. These arguments were ignored. Other states followed South Carolina's lead. Mississippi seceded on January 9, 1861; Florida on January 10; Alabama on January 11; Georgia on January 19; Louisiana on January 26, and Texas on February 1.

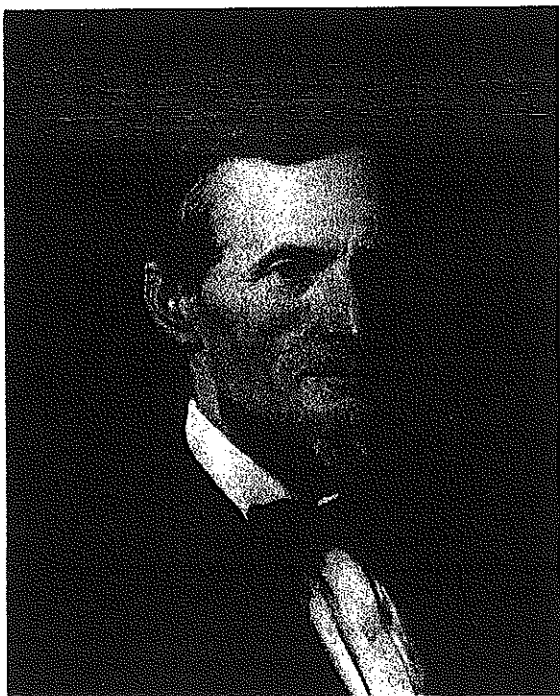
Later in February 1861, representatives from the seceded states met in Montgomery, Alabama. The

representatives decided to join together to form a new country. The Confederate States of America was formed, with a President—Jefferson Davis—a Congress, and a court system. All of this was done before Lincoln took office. Buchanan, a weak and ineffective President, had not tried to stop secession. He left the problem for his successor, Abraham Lincoln.

**Efforts at Compromise** However, Congress did try to stop secession. Congress met in the first week of December 1860. Committees were set up to consider proposals for a compromise. The Senate Committee of 13 included members from the southern, the border, and the northern states. John J. Crittenden, the tireless Kentucky Whig, offered a proposal which seemed to have a chance of success. The proposal listed a number of unamendable amendments to the Constitution that would protect the institution of slavery in the South. Perhaps the two most notable of these amendments were that all territories south of the 36°30' line were to be open to slavery and that

Jefferson Davis served in both the House and the Senate and was secretary of war in President Franklin Pierce's administration.

Confederate Museum, Richmond



Congress was to be prohibited from interfering with slavery within the states. The proposal was voted on in committee in late December. All Democrats voted for the proposal, all Republicans against, and it failed by a vote of 7 to 6.

Crittenden then presented the proposal to the full Senate, asking that it be sent to the people for a vote. But, the Republicans voted this idea down. The Republicans wanted to stop any effort to spread or protect slavery. They feared that a compromise on slavery would destroy their party. After all, such a compromise had destroyed the Whig party a number of years before.

The Committee of 33 in the House of Representatives also tried to find a compromise. Moderate Democrats introduced a number of resolutions. However, none was passed because the committee was too large and too divided in its feelings. Also, the combination of Republicans and southern Democrats who were against any compromise effort made sure it would be defeated.

A final effort to avoid secession was made in Washington, D.C., in February 1861, at what became known as the Peace Convention. More than 100 representatives met. Former President John Tyler presided over the sessions. A committee made up of one representative from each state was set up. This committee was given responsibility for considering all resolutions and reporting the best ones back to the convention. After 11 days, a report, which was to be the basis for a proposed constitutional amendment, was presented. The proposal was like the one offered by Senator John Crittenden in December of 1860.

The convention passed the proposal and instructed Tyler to present it to Congress. He was not enthusiastic about it. He referred to it "as the result of our mission, a poor, rickety, and disconnected affair, not worthy of your acceptance." Congress agreed with the former President and rejected the proposals. The efforts of both Houses and the Peace Convention to find a compromise had failed. A wide range of proposals had been considered. However, none were accepted by both northern Republicans and radical southern Democrats. Neither side was ready or willing to compromise. The dark reality of war was even closer.

**Lincoln Takes Office** Upon becoming President of the United States on March 4, 1861, Lin-

coln was determined to hold the Union together. An immediate problem was what to do with Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor. This was one of the forts in the Confederacy still in federal hands. People in the North were against further concessions to the Confederacy. It would have been political suicide for Lincoln to try to compromise. In earlier months, Lincoln had thought about retaking the forts that had been captured by the Confederates. But by inauguration day, he saw the difficulties involved in this course of action. So he decided only to keep those forts presently under federal control.

A message from Major Robert Anderson, the commander at Fort Sumter, expressed doubts about his ability to hold Sumter. Supplies were running low and would soon be gone. Also, the message said that 20,000 troops would be needed to hold the fort. After considerable cabinet discussion, Lincoln decided to send a number of ships to provision Fort Sumter. Advance notice of the provision expedition was sent to Governor Pickens of South Carolina. The letter to Pickens stated that provisions were being delivered, but no armaments were being sent. The boats were unarmed and the men were "performing an act of duty and humanity."

**Fort Sumter** The expedition left on April 8, 1861. Information was leaked by government officials to a number of newspapers that ships were on the way to Fort Sumter. If the Confederates fired on the ships, the newspapers were told, the responsibility for the consequences rested with the Confederacy. The public now had been informed and prepared for the future.

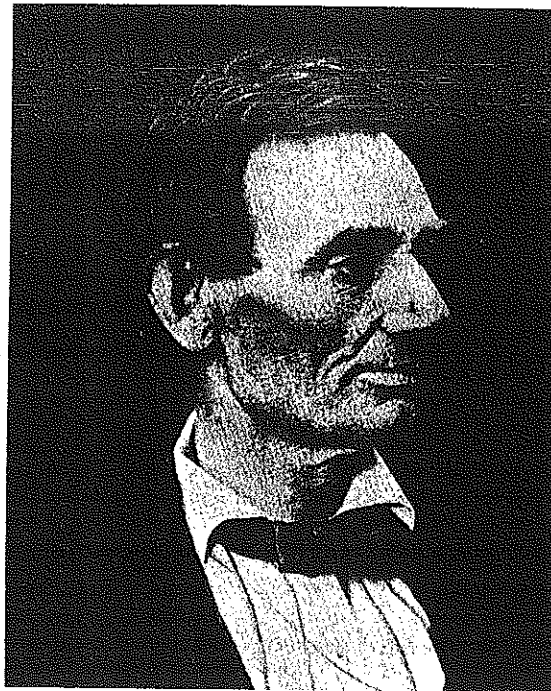
Lincoln was uncertain about the response of northern Democrats to his actions. It appeared likely that many northern Democrats might join the Confederacy's cause. But he felt that Fort Sumter could not be let go, for, as President he had taken an oath to preserve and protect the nation. A message was sent to Major Anderson asking him to hold the fort until April 11 or until the expedition arrived. Reluctantly, Anderson obeyed, and Fort Sumter was immediately placed on a war footing.

The Confederate president, Jefferson Davis, had to decide what action he would take. If he allowed Fort Sumter to be provisioned, it would be seen

as weakness on his part. However, Davis saw the provisioning of the fort as an act of aggression by the North. He authorized General P.G.T. Beauregard, the commander of the Confederate forces in the Charleston area, to take Fort Sumter before it could be resupplied.

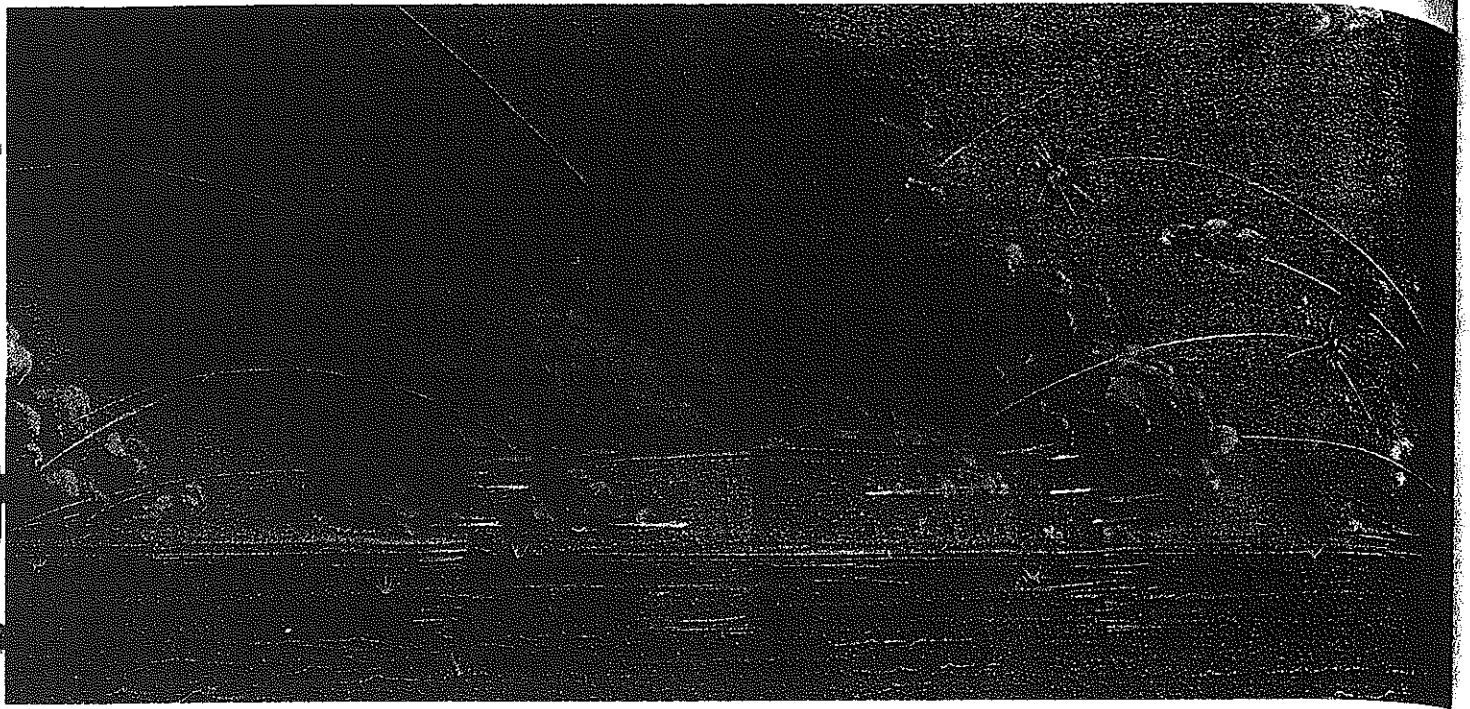
On April 11, Colonel James Chesnut, a Confederate messenger, was sent to ask Major Anderson to leave the fort. Anderson answered that he could not give up Sumter. But, Anderson added, supplies were so low that he would be starved out in a few days. Chesnut reported Anderson's lack of provisions to General Beauregard. Again, Beauregard sent Chesnut to Anderson, with the request that the fort be evacuated. Anderson said he could last until April 15, and would evacuate the fort on that date unless other instructions arrived from Washington, D.C. But Chesnut replied that as there were too many conditions in Anderson's reply, "We have the honor to notify you that [Beauregard] will open the fire of his batteries on Fort Sumter in one hour from this time."

Although Abraham Lincoln had little experience in national politics—only one term as a U.S. representative—in his first few months as President he showed that he was a shrewd and able politician.



Library of Congress





Robert Toombs, the Confederate secretary of state, said of the attack on Fort Sumter: "The firing upon that fort will inaugurate a civil war greater than any the world has yet seen."

The negotiations were over and the fighting commenced. At 4:30 A.M. on April 12, 1861, the Confederate bombardment began. The northern fleet had arrived, but the fleet was not able to help. The soldiers who were in the fort were given strict orders by Anderson: "Be careful of your

lives. Make no imprudent exposure of your persons to the enemy fire. Do your duty coolly, determinedly and cautiously. Indiscretion is not valor." The firing continued for a day and a half, and on April 13 at 1:30 P.M., Anderson surrendered.

#### ■ *Section Analysis*

1. What event directly led to the secession of South Carolina from the Union?
2. How did Senator John J. Crittenden of Kentucky propose to prevent the secession of southern states from the Union?
3. Why, according to President Lincoln, could he not let Fort Sumter go?

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#### **SUMMARY**

American politics in the 1850's was marked by sectional differences. The old sectional questions of the tariff, banks, and internal improvements gave way to the major sectional question of the spread of slavery. Throughout the 1850's, the spread of slavery became linked with almost every political decision and event. A number of efforts were made to find some form of compromise between the two sections. However, these efforts failed and the growing sectionalism led to

violence. As the violence got worse, it appeared that open warfare was possible.

As the 1860 presidential election neared, the political turmoil continued. With the election of Republican Abraham Lincoln as President, a number of southern states seceded from the Union. They formed the Confederate States of America. When President Lincoln tried to resupply Fort Sumter, which was in Confederate territory, shots were fired and the Civil War began.

# 1 Preparations for War

After the surrender of Fort Sumter, the time for compromise had passed. People in the North and in the South began to prepare for an all-out war. Both sides mobilized all their resources in an effort to gain victory. When this victory was won, either the South would be independent or the Union would be preserved. The final settlement of the dispute between the North and the South would be reached on the battlefield.

**An All-Out War** The Civil War differed from previous American wars. Earlier wars had been fought for limited objectives, and when waging war became too expensive, the two sides met and worked out a compromise settlement. Maneuvers, both on and off the battlefield, often resembled a chess game. One general went so far as to suggest that it ought to be possible to conduct an entire campaign without fighting a single battle. If one army did not move until everything was ready, the opposing army might be persuaded that it was beaten and withdraw from the field. The Civil War, however, was settled on the battlefield. In addition, this war was not fought with limited objectives in mind. Each side was determined to reach its goals. The South wanted independence. The North wanted preservation of the Union, with little regard for the cost.

In many ways, the Civil War was the first modern war. Each side tried to mobilize all of its resources in order to defeat the enemy. The rifle, heavy artillery, ironclad ships, and railroads were used by both sides in their push for victory. In the last year of the war the North adopted a different plan, trying to undermine the South's will to win through campaigns of devastation.

## **The Struggle for the Uncommitted States**

On April 15, 1861, after the fall of Fort Sumter, President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to put down the rebellion in the South. The response of the remaining slaveholding states to this call would be important. If all of these states seceded, it would be very difficult for the Lincoln administration to save the Union.

During the weeks following Fort Sumter, these uncommitted states held conventions to vote on secession. Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and

North Carolina voted to secede. Despite considerable pressure from people in the South, the remaining four states—the border states—did not secede. Delaware had many citizens who favored the South, but it remained in the Union. Maryland also wavered, but was held in the Union by its pro-Union governor, Thomas Hicks. Had Maryland seceded, Washington, D.C., would have been difficult to defend against Confederate attacks. Many people in Missouri decided to support the Confederacy. Even so, Missouri remained part of the Union. Kentucky also was deeply divided over the war; for several months, Kentucky remained neutral but by the end of 1861 Kentucky was actively supporting the Union war effort.

In the struggle for the uncommitted states, neither the North nor the South gained all the support it wanted. However, the South had won the loyalty of the important state of Virginia, and the North had gained the support of the key states of Missouri and Kentucky.

**North and South Prepare for War** In April 1861, the Union was unprepared for war. The Union Army numbered less than 16,000 troops, and was spread all over the country. One third of its officers had resigned to fight for the Confederacy, military supplies were scarce, and military maps were inaccurate. Also, the state militias were ill-prepared for war. The Union Navy had less than half of its 90 ships in commission. Most of these were oceangoing ships, and had not been used in coastal or shallow waters. Even so, the Union was in a stronger position than the Confederacy, which had no army or navy as such and had to rely upon state militias for its fighting forces.

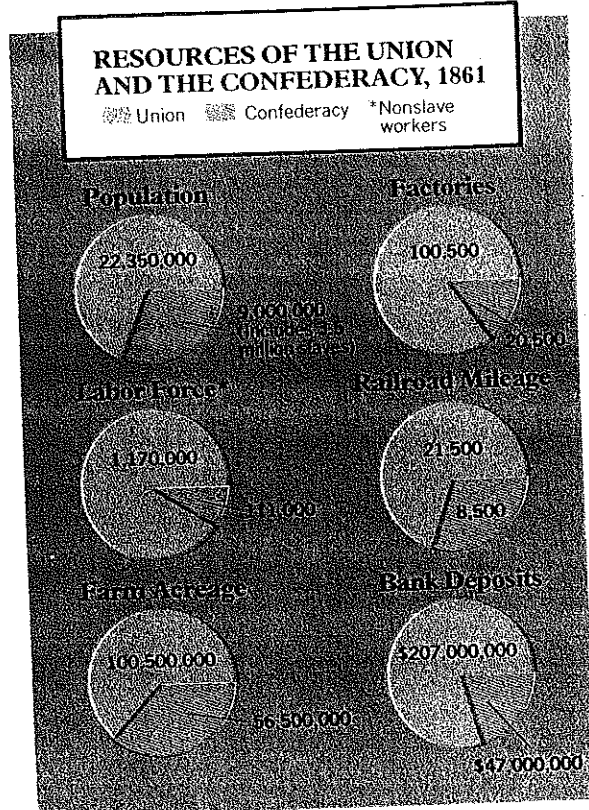
Many Americans believed the war would last only a few months. The most recent war in which the United States had been involved, the Mexican War, had lasted 16 months, and few people expected the Civil War to last as long. Many southerners believed that northerners would not fight, and the South would be allowed to leave the Union. If there was a fight, most southerners believed the South would win easily. Most southerners believed that when it came to a fight they were superior to the people in the North.

Few knew what war was really like. There were many Americans, in both the North and the South, who were enthusiastic about the war. They saw it as a chance to win glory for themselves and their families. Many people quickly enlisted, fearing the war would be over before they could get to the battlefield. But their romantic views began to change as the war dragged on and became more violent.

**Northern and Southern Resources** In terms of resources, the Union had the advantage in successfully fighting a war. The Union had more states, a larger population, and more manufacturing establishments than the Confederacy. In addition, the Union had a larger army, navy, and merchant marine. In almost every area, the Union had a substantial margin of superiority over the Confederacy.

Still, the Confederacy believed that it had several advantages that would result in victory. It had a long military tradition, and most of the country's highest ranking officers were southerners. The

The Union's superiority in economic resources was, perhaps, the crucial factor in the outcome of the Civil War.



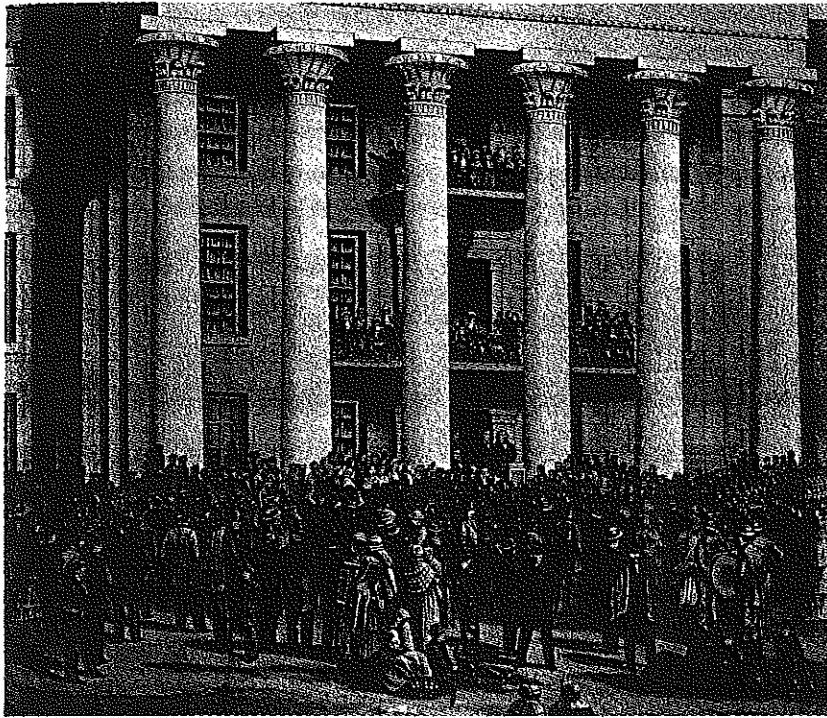
Confederacy also was the major supplier of cotton to the European garment-making industries. Because of this, Confederate leaders hoped that a number of European countries would be forced to intervene in behalf of the Confederacy in order to protect European economic interests. Finally, many southerners believed that they were fighting for their independence and for their own way of life. Since their cause was more just, they expected to win.

Many southerners felt that in a short war the advantages held by the Union would not necessarily mean victory. But they feared that if the war continued for a very long time, the larger numbers and resources of the Union might be decisive. A Confederate victory would have to come quickly.

**The Confederate Government** Even before the clash at Fort Sumter, the southern states had taken steps to organize a government. Delegates from the seceding southern states met in Montgomery, Alabama, in February 1861 to set up a new Confederate government. The delegates drew up a constitution that was similar to the United States Constitution. However, there were some important differences. The new government was to be a confederation of sovereign states, not a federation of states. The central government was not given power to impose tariffs, to tax for internal improvements, or to interfere with any acts of the individual states. Also, the central government could not interfere with slavery in the states of the Confederacy.

The legislative power was placed in the hands of a new Confederate congress. The judicial power was given to a supreme court and lower courts. The president was to serve six years and could not be reelected. Jefferson Davis of Mississippi and Alexander Stephens of Georgia were chosen as provisional president and vice-president, respectively. In the fall of 1861, they were confirmed by the Confederate voters and served throughout the war.

**Davis as President** Jefferson Davis was a southern slave owner and a graduate of West Point. Davis was, by and large, a moderate. He backed southern secession only when war became inevitable. He was an industrious leader who spent



Jefferson Davis was inaugurated as President of the Confederate States of America outside the state capitol, Montgomery, Alabama, on February 18, 1861. Davis was accompanied by Vice-President Alexander Stephens; Howell Cobb, president of the Confederate Senate; and William Yancey, leader of the Secession party.

long hours on the details of civil and military policy.

The Confederacy was made up of states that disliked any use of power by the central government. Also, the Confederate congress was careful to preserve its own power. Davis faced many difficult political problems during his administration. In addition, Davis did not delegate authority well and was not always effective in political matters. He quarreled with state governors and sometimes played favorites in political and military appointments. Many times he did not agree with his vice-president and his cabinet. But Davis worked hard to make the Confederate government work. If the government failed, it was not because he did not try his best.

**Lincoln and the War** Abraham Lincoln was a more effective leader than Davis. Lincoln understood that the country needed to be mobilized. To do this, he would need the cooperation of all parts of the North, so he made a number of appointments to his cabinet that balanced political groups and bound important northern leaders to his policies.

Lincoln was not reluctant to use the power of the presidency in order to win the war. Acting boldly, he stretched the powers of the presidency further than any other president before him. Lincoln was willing to set aside certain constitutional protections in order to win the war against the South. Many of his acts, such as the imposition of martial law, the opening of mail, the arrest of those people who were against the war, and the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, were criticized. Some people began to call Lincoln a "dictator" and a "despot."

As the war progressed, a number of politicians in the North began to criticize Lincoln's handling of the war. Most Democrats supported the war, but many opposed the methods used by Lincoln. However, one group within the party was sympathetic to the South. This group, known as *Copperheads*—after the snake—or Peace Democrats, opposed the war and wanted a peace settlement. They encouraged people in the North to resist the war. The best known Copperhead was Clement Vallandigham, a member of Congress from Ohio. His opposition to the war led to his expulsion from the Union.

There also were divisions in the Republican party. Most Republicans supported Lincoln's policies and wanted only to end the insurrection in the South and restore the Union. However, one group—called "radical" by its opponents—wanted to press the war more vigorously and use the war

as a means to end slavery. Radical Republicans, such as Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts and Representative Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, wanted the South to be remade in the image of the North. They continued to press Lincoln for a more radical prosecution of the war.

### ■ Section Analysis

1. In what ways was the Civil War different from previous wars?
2. Why did people in the South consider that the South had the advantage in fighting the Civil War?
3. Why was President Lincoln a more effective leader than President Davis?

## 2 *Fighting the War, 1861-1862*

In the early months of the war, both the North and the South developed strategies for fighting. The Union Army had some successes in the West, but the Confederacy soon began to gain an advantage. In an effort to win a victory on northern soil, the Confederates attacked the Union Army at Antietam Creek. The Confederates were driven back, and the Union victory at Antietam allowed President Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. This broadened the Union's war aims to include the abolition of slavery.

**Northern and Southern Strategy** Both the Union and the Confederacy needed a strategy by which to fight the war. The Union strategy, which was known as the *Anaconda Plan*, was developed by Winfield Scott, the commanding general of the Union Army. The navy was to blockade the southern ports. The army and the navy were to gain control of the Mississippi River and separate Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas from the rest of the Confederacy. At the same time, the army was to invade the Confederacy in the east. Slowly the Union would squeeze the Confederacy into submission, just as the anaconda snake squeezed its victims. However, Scott's plan was not readily accepted since many northerners wanted an early victory in the war. When it became obvious that a quick victory was not likely, Scott's plan was implemented.

Confederate leaders had two choices. They could fight a defensive war and wait for Lincoln to give

up his plans to bring the Confederacy back into the Union. Or they could conduct an offensive war by invading the Union to secure a quick victory. President Davis decided to pursue the defensive plan. He believed that European nations would soon help by recognizing the Confederacy and by breaking the Union's blockade of the southern ports. Davis believed that the Union eventually would recognize the right of the Confederacy to secede. Unfortunately for the Confederacy, the defensive plan gave the Union time to train its army and mobilize its economy for the long struggle.

**The Early Battles** In April 1861, President Lincoln ordered a blockade of all southern ports. At first, the Union Navy was unable to fully enforce the blockade. Within a year, however, more ships were available for the blockade and the Union tightened its grip on the southern ports. As the blockade became increasingly difficult to break, the Confederacy began to suffer from lack of supplies.

Even as the blockade was being put into effect, President Lincoln was hoping for a quick victory over the Confederate Army. Lincoln was under great pressure from the Congress and the newspapers for some type of military action. In addition, many of the Union troops had enlisted for only three months, and their terms were due to end in late July. This forced Lincoln to order General Irvin McDowell, commander of the Army



Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia

General Bernard Bee—on horseback in the foreground—was the Confederate officer who gave General Thomas Jackson the name Stonewall. Bee was killed shortly after he uttered his famous statement.

of the Potomac, to advance toward Richmond, the Confederate capital.

As the Union forces moved southward, the Confederate forces, under the command of General P.G.T. Beauregard, moved north to meet them. On July 21, 1861, 35,000 inexperienced Union soldiers met 32,000 equally inexperienced Confederate troops at Manassas Junction, an important railroad junction in northern Virginia. This battle is often called Bull Run. Many Civil War battles have two names. This is because the Union Army usually named battles after the nearest body of water—for example, Bull Run and Antietam Creek—whereas the Confederate Army usually named battles after the nearest town—for example, Manassas Junction and Sharpsburg.

In the Battle of Bull Run, the Union Army attacked the Confederate left flank and broke through the Confederate lines. But Confederate troops under the command of General Thomas J. Jackson held firm and did not retreat. A Confederate general pointed toward Jackson's troops and shouted, "There is Jackson standing like a stone wall! Rally behind the Virginians!" After Bull Run, Jackson was known as *Stonewall*. When

the Confederates did not fall back, the Union attack collapsed and the Union Army retreated in disarray toward Washington, D.C.

Although they had been ordered to pursue the retreating Union Army, the Confederate generals balked, arguing that pursuit was impossible because the Confederate troops were tired. To some people in the Confederacy, it appeared that this failure to drive home the advantage destroyed the opportunity to end the war quickly.

**A New Commander** The defeat at Bull Run sent shock waves through the Union. Many people now realized that the war would not be over in a few months. The Union began to prepare for a longer war. As a first move, Lincoln replaced General McDowell with General George B. McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac. General McClellan had been successful in a few minor engagements in West Virginia early in the war. He was very cautious and was reluctant to fight unless certain of victory. However, McClellan's handsome, soldierly presence and his deep concern for his troops made him a popular leader.

In the Confederacy, some people believed that the war was almost over. Southern newspapers pictured the Union as divided and near defeat. A few more thrashings would teach the Union a lesson, the Louisville *Courier-Journal* suggested. However, Jefferson Davis and his military advisers realized the Union would not give up so easily.

For the next 6 months there were no major battles. Both sides began to look more carefully at the difficult task ahead and used the time to train soldiers and stockpile materials. In the North, General McClellan put together an army of 150,000 troops. But because of McClellan's cautious approach and the difficulties of moving troops and military equipment in winter weather, a Union attack on the South was delayed.

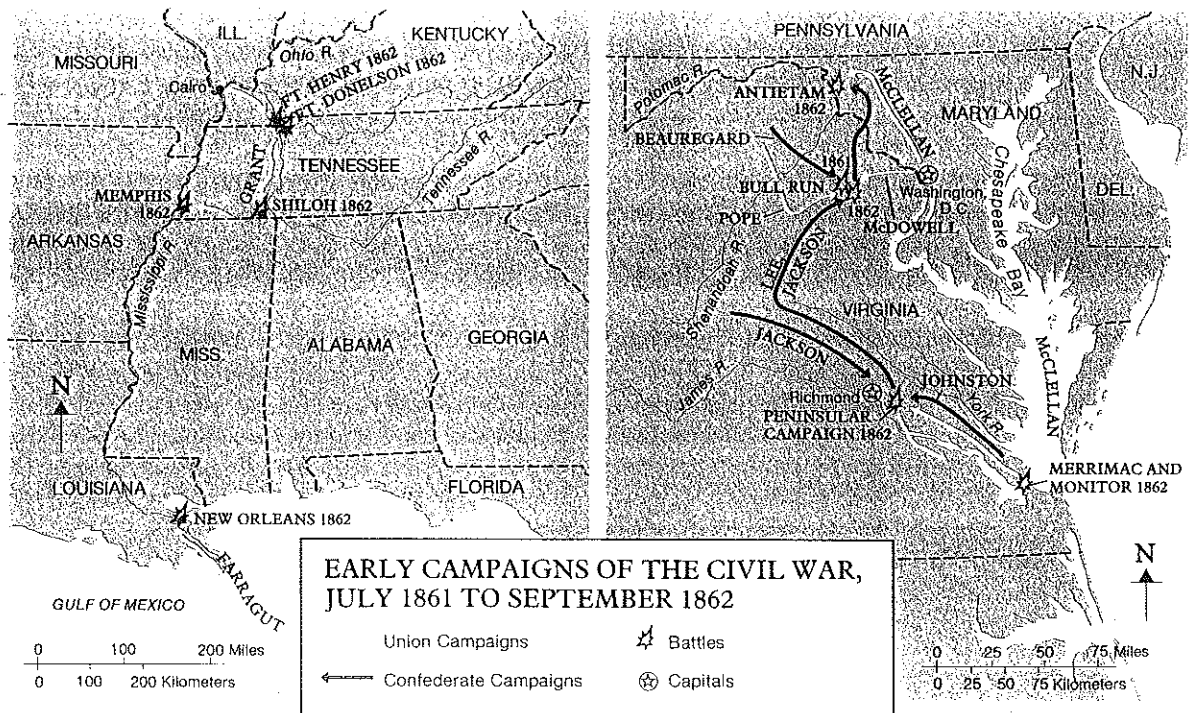
**Battles in the West** In the West, however, a number of military actions brought the Union some success. During February 1862, General Ulysses S. Grant attacked Forts Henry and Donelson that guarded the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers close to the Kentucky-Tennessee boundary. These forts were poorly defended by the Confederate forces, and large quantities of arms and equipment were captured by Grant's forces.

Grant's victories destroyed the center of the Confederate defense in the West. In order to maintain a defensive line the Confederate forces fell back, abandoning a large part of Tennessee and much of the upper Mississippi River.

Farther west at Pea Ridge in Arkansas, Confederate General Earl Van Dorn, commanding a force that included three Cherokee Indian regiments, made an attack on Union forces commanded by General Samuel Curtis. Union scouts had warned Curtis of the imminent danger, and he withstood the attack and drove the Confederates from the field. With this victory, the Union forces stopped the Confederate advance toward Missouri and gained control of northern Arkansas.

President Lincoln hoped that the Union troops would take advantage of their successes and attack the weakened Confederate forces. However, General Henry Halleck, the commander of the Union's western forces, delayed for more than a month. Finally, General Grant began to move the Union forces south. On April 6, 1862, Confederate troops under the command of Generals P.G.T. Beauregard and Albert S. Johnston made a surprise attack on Grant's army at Shiloh, Tennessee. In fierce fighting, Grant was driven from his posi-

The Union strategy in the early years of the war was to gain control of the Mississippi River and to capture the Confederate capital—Richmond, Virginia. By and large, the strategy of the Confederacy in these years was to defend its territory.



tion. The next day, however, Grant counterattacked and caused the Confederates to retreat from the field. It was an important victory for Grant. He had turned what looked like certain defeat into victory. People in the North began to take notice of this general who continued to fight and win. The Battle of Shiloh was a blow to the Confederates. They had failed to stop Grant's southward advance and one of their best generals, Albert S. Johnston, was killed in the fighting.

**Naval Activity** Later in April 1862, Union Admiral David Farragut, in a brilliantly conceived naval attack, took New Orleans, Louisiana. Steaming through fire rafts, forts, and ships, Farragut pushed up the Mississippi toward New Orleans. Suddenly the southern defense collapsed and New Orleans, the doorway to the Mississippi, was in Union hands. The Union now held the largest city and port in the Confederacy.

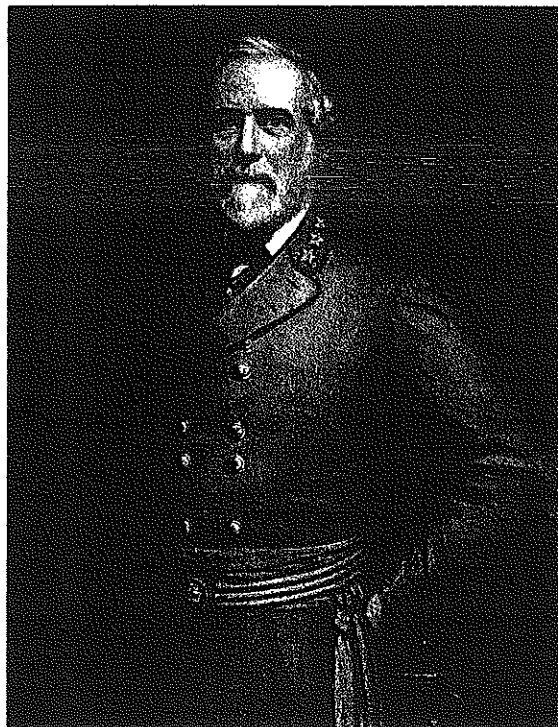
In this early period of the Civil War, a new type of ship—the ironclad—brought about a revolution in naval warfare. On March 8, 1862, the *Merrimac*, a 40-gun Confederate warship armed with 4-inch (10-centimeter) iron plates and a cast-iron ram, appeared at Hampton Roads, Virginia. The *Merrimac* quickly destroyed the U.S.S. *Cumberland* and severely damaged the U.S.S. *Congress*. These wooden ships were helpless against this "iron master." The next day, the *Merrimac* prepared to destroy the rest of the Union fleet in the Hampton Roads area, but it was challenged by a Union ironclad, the *Monitor*. The *Monitor* was very mobile, and it had a low hull and a revolving gun turret. The battle between the *Monitor* and *Merrimac* lasted several hours, but neither vessel could do much damage to the other. Eventually, the *Merrimac* withdrew. For a while, it had appeared that the Confederate Navy might destroy much of the Union fleet, but the *Monitor* stopped the destruction and preserved Union naval supremacy. However, this duel between ironclad ships signaled the end of the era of wooden fighting ships.

**The Peninsular Campaign** While Grant and Farragut were winning in the West, General McClellan prepared to make a move against Richmond, Virginia. McClellan planned to transport his army by water down the Chesapeake Bay and

attack Richmond from the east. McClellan advanced cautiously, and by late May 1862, he had moved to within a few miles of Richmond. While attempting to cross the flooded Chickahominy River at Fair Oaks, Virginia, the Union forces were attacked by Confederate troops commanded by General Joseph E. Johnston. A bloody battle followed, but the results were inconclusive. However, General Johnston was severely wounded and he was replaced by General Robert E. Lee of Virginia.

Lee, the son of the Revolutionary War hero, "Light Horse Harry" Lee, was a West Point graduate and had served as an engineer in the United States Army. He fought in the Mexican War, served as the superintendent of West Point, and commanded the marines who captured John Brown at Harpers Ferry. When Virginia seceded from the Union, he was torn between love of the Union and love of Virginia. Lee eventually chose loyalty to Virginia. On June 1, 1862, he assumed command of the Army of Northern Virginia. He

Robert E. Lee was offered the command of the Union Army in 1861. Lee rejected the offer, saying that he could not fight against his relatives, his children, and his home.



Washington and Lee University, Virginia



immediately had success and his army came to symbolize the Confederacy. As the war went on, Lee became the most loved and admired man in the Confederacy.

Soon after taking command, Lee decided to go on the offensive. He sent Stonewall Jackson into the Shenandoah Valley to confuse and distract the Union Army. General J.E.B. (Jeb) Stuart, Lee's cavalry commander, rode around the Union Army, further confusing the northern generals. Stuart was able to gather important information that helped Lee decide how to attack the Union troops. Late in June 1862, Lee attacked McClellan's troops in what was called the Seven Days Battle. The Union Army was forced to retreat, thus freeing Richmond from the danger of attack.

**The Advantage Shifts** By July 1862, the momentum of the war had shifted in favor of the Confederacy. The Union invasion of Virginia had failed, the victory in the West at Shiloh had not been built upon, and Farragut's efforts to control the Mississippi above New Orleans had proved unsuccessful. The Confederacy had withstood the best efforts of the Union forces, and now was beginning to counterattack.

Lee decided to take advantage of his victory at the Seven Days Battle and carry the war to the Union forces. In August 1862, he sent Stonewall Jackson to attack the Union supply depot at Manassas Junction. The efforts of the Union forces to fight off Jackson's attack were unsuccessful, and Jackson was able to destroy the depot. Then, Confederate forces commanded by General James Longstreet attacked and drove the Union Army from the field. The Confederate victory at this second Battle of Bull Run was a smashing blow to the Union's war effort.

**Antietam** In three months, the team of Generals Lee and Jackson had driven the Union Army away from Richmond and forced it back to Washington, D.C. Lee decided to continue this drive and marched north to deliver a dramatic blow that he hoped would end the war. If Lee's move proved successful, it might mean European recognition and final success for the Confederacy. Lee divided his army into three separate corps and sent them north by three different routes. However, a copy of Lee's plans describing his offensive

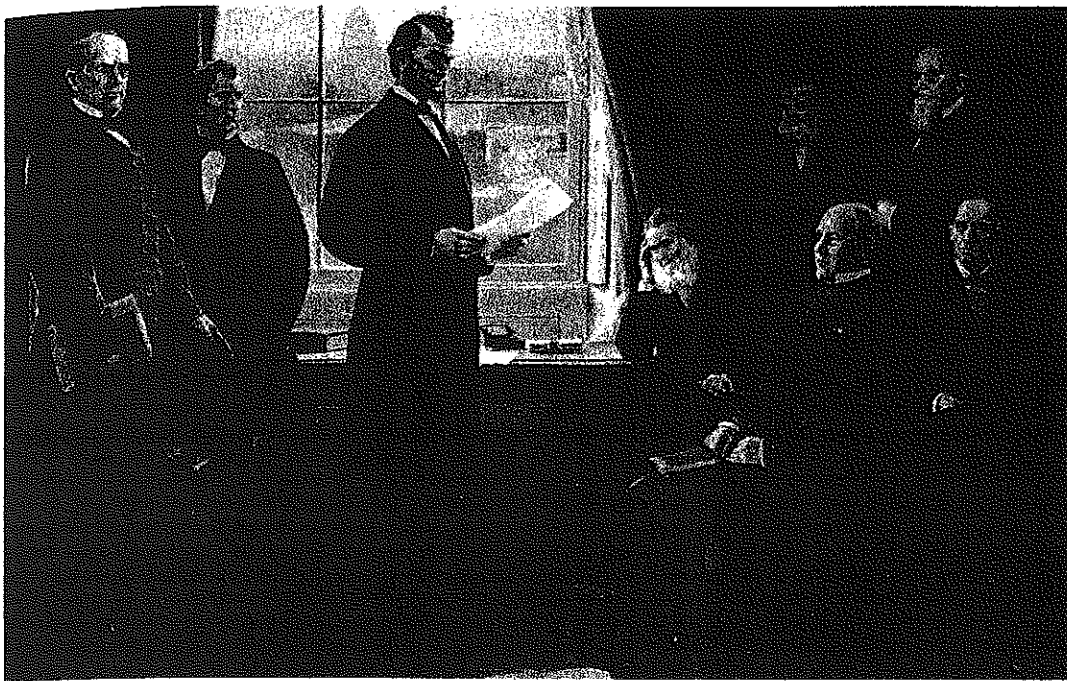
and detailing the positions of the three corps fell into Union hands. General McClellan received these plans in mid-September and immediately marched toward the Confederate forces.

The 2 armies met at Antietam Creek near Sharpsburg, Maryland, on September 17. By nightfall over 23,000 soldiers lay dead or wounded. McClellan had gained the military advantage, but he failed to follow up his success and Lee was able to slip away to Richmond. McClellan's delay in attacking the Confederates led to his dismissal from command of the army.

**The Emancipation Proclamation** For months, President Lincoln had been considering a change in his policy toward slavery. From the early days of the war he had resisted efforts to broaden the war's aims to include the abolition of slavery. However, certain factors, especially the pressure from the radical wing of the Republican party, forced him to reconsider. His cabinet officers asked him to wait for a military victory before announcing this policy change. The victory at the Battle of Antietam provided him with that opportunity.

On September 22, 1862, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. It stated that after January 1, 1863, all slaves in those areas in a state of rebellion "shall be then, thence forward, and forever free." No slaves were freed in the border states and none would be free in the South until the Union Army defeated the Confederate Army. But this emancipation statement broadened the purposes of the war and made it possible for northern blacks to serve in the military. In the last 2 years of the war almost 200,000 blacks fought for the Union and made a significant contribution to the Union victory. More than 38,000 black soldiers died in the war. Black soldiers and sailors became an essential element in the northern military success.

**The Election of 1862** As the war dragged on, there was growing hostility and anger felt by northern citizens over the conduct of the war. Lincoln's policies, especially the imposition of martial law and the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, were highly unpopular. Many northerners were tired of the long war and wanted changes in war policy.



Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. and M. Karolik Collection

President Lincoln first presented the Emancipation Proclamation to his cabinet in July 1862. However, Lincoln did not issue the proclamation until late in September, after the Union victory at Antietam.

The November election results served as a warning for the Republicans. They lost their lower house majorities in state legislatures in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. In several of the New England states and in Kansas, Michigan, and California, few Republicans were

elected. Nevertheless, the Republicans were able to keep control of both houses of Congress. The election gave the Lincoln administration a clear message that if the conduct of the war did not improve, Lincoln might be voted out of office and a Democratic President elected in 1864.

#### ■ Section Analysis

1. What was the military strategy of the Union in the first two years of the Civil War?
2. Why did General Robert E. Lee choose to make an attack on the North in 1862?
3. How did the Emancipation Proclamation change the Union's war aims?

### 3 The Home Front

While the Civil War continued, changes took place on the home front. Both the Union and the Confederacy started a draft to provide the soldiers for their armies. As more men were called away to fight, women played a greater role in factories and on farms. The Union and the Confederacy made adjustments in their individual and agricultural systems in order to fight the war more effectively. Also, both sides used similar ways to raise the money needed to finance the war effort—borrowing, taxing, and printing paper money.

**Changes in the North** As 1862 came to an end, important changes were taking place in the North. Under the pressure of war, the North began to be changed into a well-organized and directed society. A large network of government agencies grew up to supply every need of the Union Army. Banks, businesses, and factories worked closely together to meet the demands of these agencies. The many new opportunities for war contracts and profits stimulated growth in the North.



Union troops who had fought at Gettysburg were brought in to put down the New York draft riots.

An important part of this transformation in the North was the passage of the Enrollment Act of 1863. With this act, the federal government took charge of drafting troops for the war effort. Earlier efforts to raise troops by voluntary enlistments, state by state, had been unsuccessful. Under the new law, each congressional district had to fill a set quota in a 50-day period. Able-bodied males between the ages of 20 and 45 were eligible for the draft. People who had wealth could hire someone to take their place in the draft. Or the wealthy could pay \$300 to be exempted from the present but not future drafts. The poor could not pay for substitutes or exemptions. For many people the Civil War appeared to be "a rich man's war, and a poor man's fight."

In many cities in the North, protests against the Enrollment Act arose. Frequently, these protests turned into riots. The worst riot took place in New York City. A speech made by Horatio Seymour, the governor of New York, at an antidraft rally in July 1863, led to a three-day riot. Most of the rioters were poorly paid immigrant workers. The

targets of the riot were, for the most part, black citizens. A number of blacks were hung, and many more were seriously hurt. Also, many buildings were looted and destroyed. Eventually, the army had to be called in to put down the riots. This was one of the worst riots in American history and it showed vividly the tensions brought on by the war.

During the war, changes in the work force also took place. For the first time, many women began to work for pay. Despite resistance and discrimination, women soon became an important source of support for the Union war effort. Some women became nurses under Dorothea Dix, the superintendent of nurses for the Union. In addition, as new jobs opened up in government services, women were hired as clerks and copyists at good salaries. For example, almost 500 women were hired to work in the Treasury Department for the then unusually high salary of \$600 per year. Other women found jobs in factories, but at very low wages.

**Changes in the South** The Confederacy also underwent changes as a result of its efforts to win the war. Slowly, the prewar way of life gave way and changed under the pressures of war. Early in 1862, a law was passed drafting all able-bodied white males aged 18 to 35 for 3 years of service in the military. By the end of the war, over 120,000 draftees had served in the army. However, wealthier citizens paid as much as \$6,000 each for substitutes in order to avoid the draft. As in the North, many people complained that the rich were able to avoid fighting whereas the poor were not.

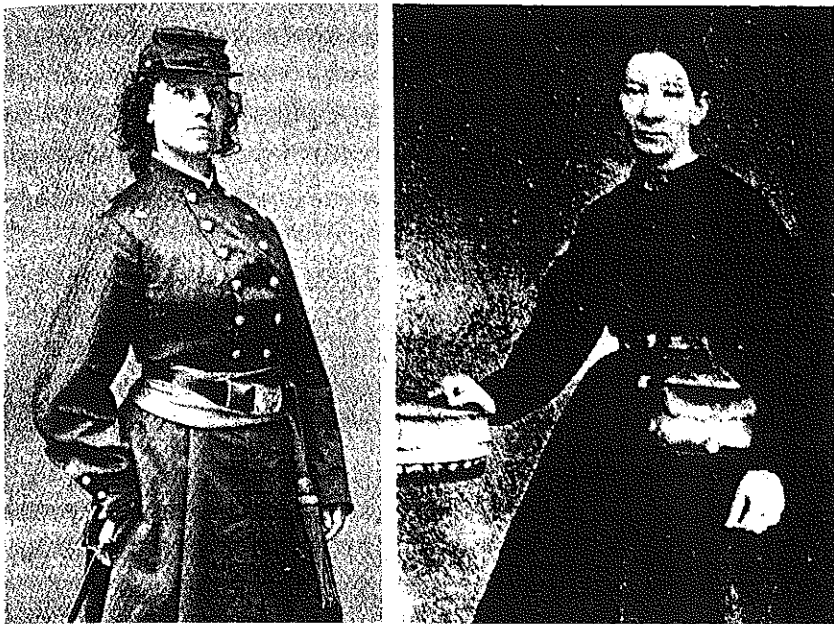
The institution of slavery changed somewhat during the war years. Those slaves who lived in cities often were allowed to arrange for their own employment and, in some cases, even were allowed to live by themselves. On the plantation, discipline became more lax as many owners were away in the army. In addition, some owners feared that strict discipline might encourage slaves to run away. As the war progressed, southerners began to think about using slaves in the army. By the end of the war, the Confederacy took steps to draft slaves into the military.

The role of women in the South also underwent changes. As men went to war, the everyday work was left to women. Almost overnight, women had

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Women played an important role in the Civil War both in the North and in the South. Paulina Cushman—on the left—served as a spy for the Union, and Sally Tompkins—on the right—was made a captain in the Confederate Army in recognition of her work in nursing the wounded.

Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia

to learn how to manage the farm, plantation, or factory. Many women became self-reliant as they learned to cope with a multitude of difficult problems.

**The Union and Foreign Relations** In many ways, the Civil War influenced the ties both the Union and the Confederacy had with other countries. From the early days of the war, the Union had tried to blockade the Confederacy. To make the blockade more effective, the Union claimed the right to search or to seize any ships that were headed for the Confederacy. A number of European countries, most notably Great Britain, objected to this. However, they took no action. For most of these countries, the key question was self-interest. If their own interests were not adversely affected, they would not act.

In the middle of 1861, the British government had said that it would follow a strict and impartial neutrality until either the North or the South won. During 1862, it looked as if the Confederacy might be victorious. In the fall of 1862, the British government was near to recognizing the Confederacy as an independent nation. However, the northern victory at the Battle of Antietam made the outcome of the war uncertain. This lessened the chance of Great Britain recognizing the Con-

federacy. Also, the chance of British recognition of the South was reduced even further when President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. Great Britain had abolished slavery in its colonies many years before, and it was unlikely that it would take sides against the Union, which was now committed to ending slavery.

**Confederate Foreign Relations** Confederate foreign policy was based on "King Cotton" diplomacy. About 80 percent of the cotton used by Europe came from the southern states. This led the Confederacy to believe that cotton could be used as a weapon to secure recognition or intervention by Britain or France. In 1861, the Confederacy imposed an embargo on the export of cotton to force European countries to intervene in the Civil War. By 1862, however, the embargo had to be relaxed and cotton once again was used to trade for goods from Europe. By 1864 it became clear that "King Cotton" policy had failed. By that time, Britain and France had turned to other countries, such as Egypt, for cotton.

The Confederacy used other diplomatic approaches during the Civil War. A number of Confederate ministers were sent to different European countries to seek aid in the war. James Mason, a senator from Virginia, was sent as an

ambassador to England. John Slidell of Louisiana was sent as an ambassador to France. In November 1861, the British ship *Trent*, which was transporting the Confederate ministers to Europe, was stopped by a Union ship and the ministers were taken into custody. The British government protested this act. Secretary of State Seward and President Lincoln decided to let the ministers go in order to keep good relations with Britain and France.

Efforts by the Confederacy to secure European recognition ultimately failed because the Confederacy would not abolish slavery and because southern forces were not able to win many major military victories. Most Europeans viewed the conflict as a civil war. Therefore, any recognition of the Confederacy might mean that European nations would have to go to war with the Union. No European country was ready to risk antagonizing the Union until the Confederacy was able to win the war and establish itself as a sovereign nation.

**The Northern Economy** In the early months of the war, northern business was still recovering from the economic recession of the late 1850's. The loss of southern markets, the loss of southern debts, and the closing of the Mississippi River caused great alarm in the North and further slowed the northern economy. A number of banks and many cotton mills were closed. By early 1862, however, the economy had improved as government contracts opened up new opportunities for making money. A number of bad harvests in Europe increased the demand for American farm crops. Wheat quickly took the place of cotton as the leading export of the United States.

Northern industry was marked by some waste and a considerable amount of wartime profiteering. However, its main characteristics were energy and enterprise. As the 1860's progressed, the North gained confidence that it could find answers to any wartime industrial problem. The North kept gaining industrial strength throughout the war. There were similar developments with northern transportation and communication. A system of railroads began to develop with the standardization of track gauges—the distance between rails—and the use of double tracks on many lines. To sidestep trouble between states over interstate railroads, the

federal government passed a law in January 1862 to control the railroads. Later in the war, military railroads were built that greatly helped the war effort. By the end of the war, the railroads had helped to make northern resources into a real military advantage.

**Raising Money for the War** The Union was able to pay for the war through borrowing, taxing, and the printing of paper money. The Union went deep into debt to finance the war. Jay Cooke, a leading northern financier, was made a special agent of the Treasury Department to sell government bonds. Using high-pressure advertising, Cook was able to convince many Americans to buy these bonds. The money raised in this way was a major factor in the eventual Union success.

The Union also raised money by imposing new taxes and increasing those taxes and duties already in place. The tariffs on most imported goods were increased and business profits were heavily taxed. In addition, a personal income tax was introduced. However, only about 20 percent of the cost of the northern war effort was covered by taxes.

Loans and taxation alone could not produce the money required to finance the war. Therefore, Congress authorized the printing of legal-tender paper money. Unlike the usual dollar bills, these *greenbacks*—as the new paper money was called—were not backed by the gold and silver held by the Treasury. The value of the greenbacks rose or fell with the public confidence in them.

The heavy government borrowing and the issuing of cheap paper money helped to cause *inflation*—a general rise in the level of prices—in the North. For example, between the years of 1861 and 1865 the general price level in the North rose by 92 percent. Although wage levels also rose during this period, they did not match price increases, and many northern workers faced economic hardships.

**The Southern Economy** The Confederacy was less successful than the Union in meeting the severe economic pressures caused by the war. Although the Confederacy had a broad agricultural base, many of its crops were useless in carrying on war. Tobacco was of little value. Cotton was only important for bargaining purposes in the Confederacy's diplomatic efforts. There was a

desperate need for a change in the Confederacy's farm system and an expansion of the Confederacy's industrial base.

The change from cotton and tobacco to food crops began soon after the war started. The cotton crop was cut drastically between 1860 and 1862. Much of this decrease in the planting of cotton was voluntary. However, by 1863 President Davis felt the need to issue a proclamation urging a continuation of the cotton restriction and an increase in the food crops. This proclamation was needed because some southerners expected an early end to the war and wanted to plant more cotton despite the growing shortage of food.

The South's industrial expansion began early in the war. The Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, Virginia, was the Confederacy's greatest asset. It produced large amounts of bullets, tools, machinery for government arsenals, iron plates for warships, and materials for the railroads. Other important economic developments were the building of an iron foundry in Selma, Alabama; a powder mill in Augusta, Georgia; and a chemical plant in Macon, Georgia. To encourage more industry, the government offered money and incentives to manufacturers. Though there was considerable industrialization, it could not keep pace with the rate of industrialization in the North.

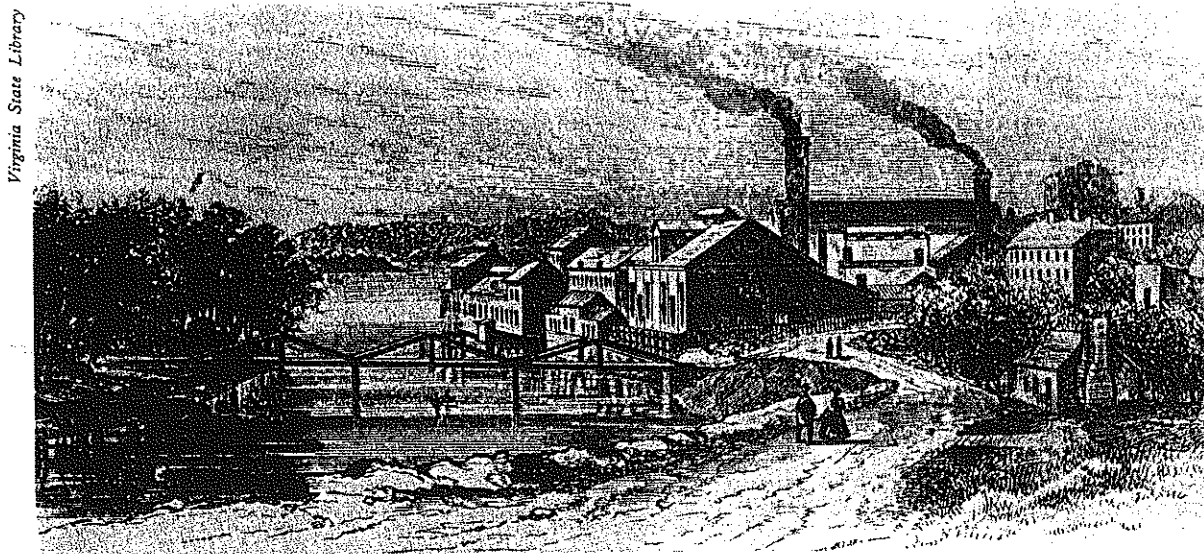
Transportation was a major problem for the Confederacy. The roads in the Confederacy were

never organized into an effective network. Much of the railroad system was lightly constructed, inadequately kept up, and short of engines and rolling stock. Also, different railroad companies often had different gauges. So they could not always link up with one another. The Confederacy never gave the building of railroads the highest priority. The result was an ineffective and uneven system. In the last year of the war, President Davis tried to correct the problem by taking complete control of the railroads. However, this action came too late.

#### **Southern Difficulties in Raising Money**

To pay for the war, the Confederacy used many of the same methods as the Union—taxes, loans, and the printing of paper money. Efforts at taxation were largely unsuccessful. This was due to opposition from the public and Congress. As a result, less than 1 percent of the money needed for the southern war effort was raised through taxes. Loans, however, were more successful. A \$50-million bond issue was authorized by the Confederate congress in May 1861. A further issue of \$100 million was authorized in August of that year. Southerners were encouraged to buy bonds to support the war effort. Many planters did not have the cash, but promised to use the income from their crops to buy bonds. As the war proceeded, however, more money was needed. The only avenue open was the printing of paper money. Money began to pour from the printing

The Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, Virginia, grew rapidly to meet Confederate military needs. The labor force at the Tredegar works grew from 700 workers in 1861 to more than 2,500 workers in 1863.



Virginia State Library

presses, and by late 1863 there were \$700 million of currency notes in circulation in the Confederacy. But each of these dollars was worth only 4 cents in gold. Of the total cost of the southern war effort, 66 percent was paid for by currency notes, 33 percent by loans, and 1 percent by taxation.

The inability of the Confederacy to solve its

economic problems caused runaway inflation. Prices rose an average of 10 percent a month for the first 30 months of the war. By April 1865, prices had increased 9,200 percent over what they had been in 1861. Almost all goods—salt, meat, leather, clothing, soap, and so on—were in short supply. The longer the war went on, the worse the economic conditions in the South became.

### ■ *Section Analysis*

1. In what ways did the North and the South change during the Civil War?
2. How did the Confederacy hope to persuade Britain or France to intervene in the Civil War?
3. Why was the South less successful than the North in meeting the severe economic pressures brought about by the Civil War?

## 4 *The War Comes to an End, 1863–1865*

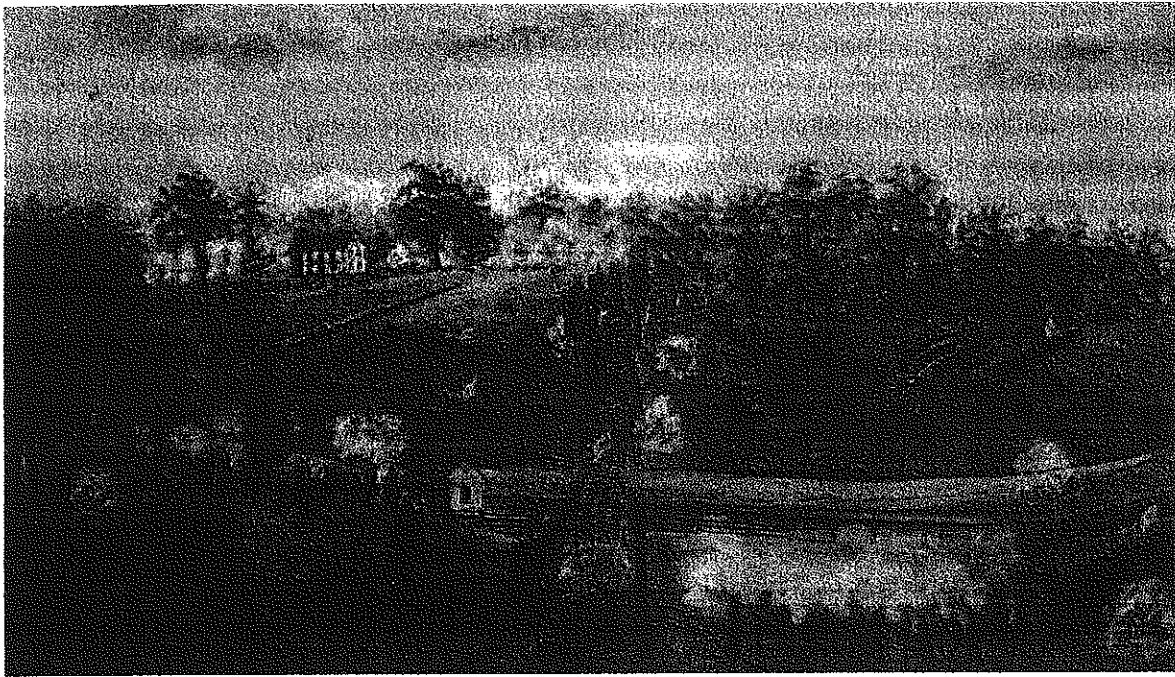
In the last years of the war, Union strategy was to attack the Confederacy on every occasion in an attempt to wear it down. The Confederacy, in contrast, planned to continue to fight a defensive war, hoping that people in the Union eventually would cease to support a long, drawn-out war. Neither side was willing to negotiate a settlement since each believed that a total victory was possible. Many soldiers would die before the final settlement was reached at Appomattox Court House in April 1865.

**The Union Suffers Defeats** After the Union victory at Antietam, Lincoln appointed General Ambrose E. Burnside to take McClellan's place as head of the Union troops. Burnside reluctantly accepted the position and obeyed Lincoln's orders to take the offensive immediately. He attacked Lee's army at Fredericksburg, Virginia, in December 1862. About 12,000 Union troops were wounded or killed in a number of attacks on Marye's Heights, a Confederate stronghold outside Fredericksburg. The tremendous number of casualties led one observer to call Fredericksburg "one of the most distressing [battles] I ever witnessed."

After this loss, Burnside was replaced by General Joseph "Fighting Joe" Hooker, who came fresh from several victories in the West. However,

Hooker met with little success in the East. In early May 1863, he was badly defeated by the Confederates at the Battle of Chancellorsville in Virginia. In a classic maneuver, Stonewall Jackson moved around the Union Army's right flank and then attacked. The Union Army was surprised and retreated to Washington, D.C. In this battle, each army lost about 11,000 troops. But the Confederate Army lost one of its best generals when Stonewall Jackson was accidentally shot by his own men.

**The Confederates March Northward** After Chancellorsville, Lee decided to invade Pennsylvania in the hope of achieving a substantial military victory, perhaps even the destruction of the Union Army. With 75,000 soldiers, Lee began to move north on June 3, 1863. By the end of June, the entire Army of Northern Virginia was on Pennsylvania soil. On June 30, a detachment of Confederate troops looking for supplies met a Union cavalry unit outside Gettysburg, and shots were exchanged. Very soon troops from both armies began to arrive. Union General George G. Meade, lately appointed to replace Joseph Hooker, ordered his troops to occupy Cemetery Ridge, the highest ground in the area. Lee chose to put his troops on Seminary Ridge about 1 mile (1.6 kilo-



General George Pickett's attack on the Union positions on Cemetery Ridge was the culmination of the 3-day battle at Gettysburg. The breaking of the Union line by about 300 Confederate troops is often called the Confederate high-water mark.

meters) away. On this field, from July 1 to July 3, 1863, the bloodiest battle of the Civil War was fought.

**The Battle of Gettysburg** On July 1, Lee tried unsuccessfully to turn the Union right flank on Cemetery Ridge. The Confederate forces achieved partial success, but they were unable to hold the high ground. The next day Lee tried to turn the Union left flank, which held a strong position on two small hills called the Round Tops. General James Longstreet, Lee's second-in-command, objected vigorously to this effort, but reluctantly ordered his troops to attack. Again the Confederates almost reached their goal, but the Union troops were able to drive them back. If the Confederates had gained control of the Round Tops, they would have had a commanding view of the whole Union line.

On July 3, Lee again decided to attack, aiming the blow this time at the center of the Union line. Longstreet again objected, but he was unable to change Lee's mind. So Longstreet ordered General George Pickett to lead the charge.

Pickett began his advance from Seminary Ridge with his 15,000 troops in perfect order. They did not break line as they marched across the nearly 1 mile (1.6 kilometers) of open ground. Firing at point blank range, the Union guns blew gaping holes in the Confederate ranks. The Confederates wavered, but kept advancing. A handful of Pickett's troops made it over a stone wall that was the Union's first line of defense, but they were immediately engulfed by Union troops. The surviving Confederates stumbled back toward their lines, leaving thousands of dead and wounded behind.

Lee prepared his army for a Union counter-attack, but it never came. Meade was unwilling to risk his troops in further fighting. Lee had lost his best chance to deliver a fatal blow to the Union Army and to end the war. The following day, July 4, he moved his army south toward Virginia. The Union had won an important victory, but Meade had failed to capitalize on his advantage at Gettysburg.

Later a national cemetery was built at Gettysburg to honor the dead. When the cemetery was



dedicated in November 1863, President Lincoln delivered a speech in which he stated that

these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is now recognized as one of the finest speeches ever made.

**Vicksburg** In July 1863, the Union also won a major victory in the West when General Ulysses S. Grant captured Vicksburg, Mississippi. This city was built on a bluff 200 feet (60 meters) above the Mississippi River. Essentially, it controlled all traffic on the river.

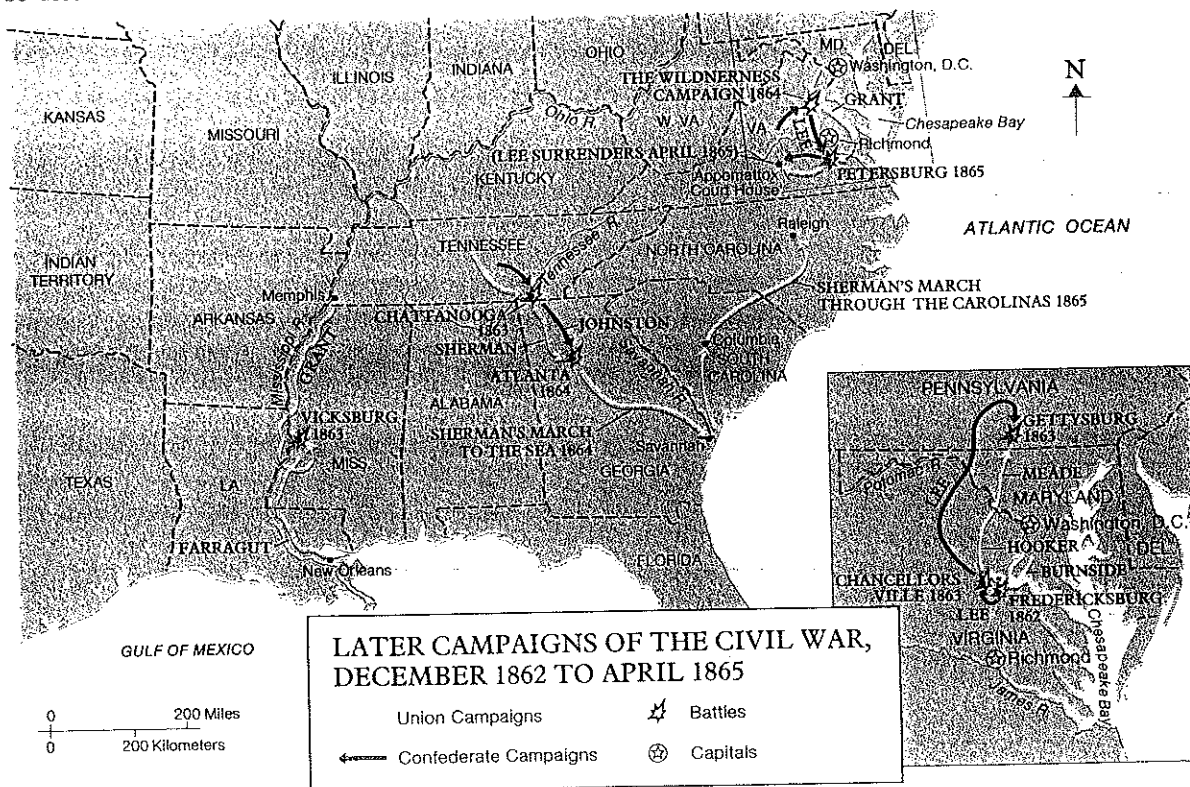
Early in 1863, Grant found that Vicksburg was unassailable by frontal attack. Therefore, in late April 1863, he decided to cut loose from his supply base in Memphis and move his troops across the Mississippi River to the rear of Vicksburg. In 19 days, he marched 180 miles (288 kilometers) through difficult country, fought and won 5 battles against superior numbers, inflicted greater losses

on the enemy, and captured Jackson, the capital of Mississippi. On arriving at Vicksburg, Grant twice tried to storm the city but was unsuccessful. Grant then put the city under siege. After 6 weeks, on July 4, 1863, the Confederate commander at Vicksburg, General John C. Pemberton, was forced to surrender.

With the simultaneous victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg, the Union gained confidence that it could win the war. The whole of the Mississippi River was now in Union hands and the stage was set for further invasions of the Confederacy in the months ahead.

**The Tennessee Campaign** After the fall of Vicksburg, Grant was given command of all Union troops in the West, and he ordered General William Rosecrans to move against the Confederate forces of General Braxton Bragg. However, Rosecrans was outmaneuvered and defeated by Bragg at the Battle of Chickamauga on September 20, 1863, but the Union troops were able to retreat to Chattanooga, Tennessee, where they reorganized and were reinforced. In late November 1863, the Union Army was able to win a decisive

In the final years of the Civil War, the Union *scorched earth* strategy—destroying everything that could be used in the Confederate war effort—devastated much of the South.



victory at the Battle of Chattanooga. The Union now controlled all of Tennessee.

By the end of 1863, the Confederacy was badly fragmented. The Union controlled the Mississippi River and the Union Army was ready to invade the lower South. Slowly, but surely, the Anaconda Plan was beginning to work.

**Grant Takes Command** Early in 1864, the Union Army was reorganized and Grant was made general in chief. General Henry Halleck was appointed chief of staff, and acted as a channel of communication between Grant and the President. General Meade remained as commander of the Army of the Potomac, and General William T. Sherman was put in command of the Union Army in the West. Grant was unwilling to remain in Washington, D.C., with its political pressures and intrigues. Rather, he preferred to travel with the Army of the Potomac in the field.

Grant and President Lincoln had decided upon a final strategy to win the war. The Army of the Potomac was to hunt down Lee and destroy his army. General Sherman was to move into northern

General Ulysses S. Grant's strategy was to fight a war of attrition, for he felt that the North's superiority in resources would be the deciding factor in the Civil War.

Library of Congress



Georgia, destroying the enemy army and resources. Grant planned to have the armies work toward a common center, pulverizing the Confederacy with a series of blows.

**The Wilderness Campaign** In early May 1864, Grant moved across the Rapidan River toward Richmond, Virginia. He hoped to get through the Wilderness area of Virginia with a minimum of fighting, but his progress was checked by Lee in the Battle of the Wilderness between May 5 and 7. Heavy losses—about 17,000 casualties—did not deter Grant, and he continued his advance. Again, his progress was checked by Lee at Cold Harbor, Virginia. Union losses again were heavy, as Grant ordered a frontal attack across open ground against entrenched Confederate positions. Knowing they were marching to a certain death, many Union soldiers pinned their names and addresses on their coats so their dead bodies would be identified.

The first month of Grant's campaign had cost the Union Army about 60,000 casualties, but Confederate losses, although fewer in number, were proportionally heavier, and their troops could not be replaced. General Lee's chances of victory were fading.

In mid-June, Grant reconsidered his strategy. He transferred his army south of the James River to strike against Petersburg and then moved north to attack Richmond from the rear. But Lee was able to shift his troops to stop Grant's advance on Petersburg. Grant had hoped to take Petersburg easily. Instead, he had to put the city under siege.

President Lincoln was under intense pressure from some cabinet officers and members of Congress to replace Grant. Heavy loss of life and the failure to defeat Lee had aroused much criticism of Grant in the North. But Lincoln had finally found a general who would fight. Lincoln refused to replace Grant. Throughout the summer of 1864, as Grant laid siege to Petersburg, northern morale sagged. Lincoln despaired of winning reelection, but he was determined to continue his present strategy.

**Sherman Takes Atlanta** As Grant was moving toward Richmond, General Sherman began his drive into the interior of the Confederacy, attempting to damage its ability to make war. Sherman was opposed by General Joseph Johnston, a wily

and skillful fighter. When Sherman moved forward, Johnston retreated. From May until July 1864, Sherman pursued Johnston. On one occasion, at Kennesaw Mountain, Sherman attacked Johnston's army, but Sherman lost 3,000 troops in 2 hours. After this, Sherman decided to return to his indirect methods.

As Johnston reached the outskirts of Atlanta, Georgia, President Davis replaced him with General John B. Hood. Davis had been disappointed with Johnston's constant retreating and wanted a military victory. Hood was willing to fight and attacked Sherman three times during July. All three battles were inconclusive, but Hood's army was badly weakened. Throughout August, Sherman tightened his grip around Atlanta. On September 2, 1864, Hood abandoned his positions and Atlanta was finally in Union hands.

**The Election of 1864** The capture of Atlanta was a priceless gift to Lincoln. The war had dragged on so long that by the summer of 1864, it appeared that unless there was a dramatic change the Democratic candidate, George B. McClellan, would win the presidential election. The fall of Atlanta provided that dramatic change. In the November election, the National Union ticket of Lincoln and Vice-President Andrew Johnson, a Democrat from Tennessee, received 400,000 more votes than the Democratic ticket—2,206,938 to 1,803,787. Lincoln's electoral college majority was quite large—212 to 21.

The outcome of the election assured a continuation of the effort to preserve the Union. Lincoln's election guaranteed that Grant and Sherman would have support to continue their efforts. It also brought closer the end of slavery. The Thirteenth Amendment—which ended slavery—had been introduced in Congress. It would become law six months after the Civil War ended.

**The War Ends** After the capture of Atlanta, Sherman decided to march across Georgia and carry the war deep into the South. With a force of about 60,000 troops, Sherman began his "March to the Sea" in mid-November 1864. Sherman's troops advanced about 15 miles (24 kilometers) a day, demolishing railroads and bridges, burning trains, and taking possession of horses and livestock. A corridor, 50 miles (80 kilometers) wide

and 250 miles (400 kilometers) long, from Atlanta to Savannah was cleared of everything that might benefit the Confederate war effort, and union troops reached Savannah on December 21, 1864. He offered the city to Lincoln as a Christmas present.

As the new year began, the war drew to a close. Sherman began to march northward through the Carolinas, and Grant tightened his grip on the Confederate lines at Petersburg. On April 2, 1865, Lee evacuated Petersburg; Grant was relentless in his pursuit of Lee and finally, on April 8, Grant's trap around Lee was closed. Some of Lee's officers suggested that the army take to the hills and continue fighting, using guerrilla tactics, but Lee chose to sue for peace. Even so, as he went to Grant to ask the terms of surrender, he said, "There is nothing left for me to do but to go and see General Grant, and I would rather die a thousand deaths."

On April 9, at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, Lee surrendered his army to Grant. The terms of surrender were not harsh. The Confederate troops were to lay down their guns and return home. Grant permitted them to keep their horses, as he thought that the horses would be useful for farm work. As Lee left the court house, both he and Grant raised their hats in salute. Lee then rode off in silence. There would be no fanfare to celebrate the end of a war that had set family member against family member and friend against friend.

**The Impact of the War** The long war was finally over and the country could return to its peacetime pursuits. But it was not the same nation that had begun the war. The North had changed dramatically under the intense demands of the war. It was moving into a period of rapid industrial expansion. The South was devastated. Its economy was shattered, and Sherman had done untold damage to roads, railroads, farms, and factories on his march through Georgia and the Carolinas. In addition, the basis of southern society—slavery—had been destroyed.

The total economic cost of the war, for both the North and the South, will never be known, but a reasonable estimate would be about \$20 billion. The human cost was staggering—over 1

*(Text continues on page 406.)*

## Sherman's March to the Sea

In the last months of the Civil War, the North adopted a strategy of *total war*. An important part of this strategy was General William T. Sherman's March to the Sea from Atlanta to Savannah, Georgia, on which his army destroyed everything that might be used to support the Confederate war effort. The march was viewed somewhat differently by the soldiers who made it and by the southern civilians who lived through it. Below are two excerpts that illustrate these differing views. The first excerpt is from the diary of Lieutenant Edwin Weller, a member of Sherman's army.

"... [O]ur army left Atlanta Ga. under command of Maj. Gen'l William T. Sherman Nov. 15th 1864 cutting loose from all communications and marching down through the country. Tearing up railroads, capturing horses and mules and taking all the provisions forage etc. needed to supply the army. [The city of Atlanta was destroyed before evacuating it.]

"Our army met no opposition, except for a few guerrillas along our flanks, until we arrived near Savannah, Ga. We moved in four columns about ten miles distant from each other, foraging the country between the columns. Passed through all the principal towns in Southern Georgia

"We came up to the enemy's works near Savannah on the tenth of December . . . The remainder of the time up to the 23rd Dec. was occupied in skirmishing, taking advantage of the enemy at their weak points . . . and getting ready for a general assault on the works. The Rebs,

learning of our plans, evacuated the City of Savannah on the night of the 23rd of December 1864."

Lieutenant Weller viewed the march as an everyday operation. This was not the view taken by Mary Chesnut—the wife of Colonel James Chesnut, who had delivered the request for the surrender of Fort Sumter. At her home in Columbia, South Carolina, Mary Chesnut received regular reports of the advance of Sherman's "bummers." Below are a number of extracts from her diary.

"November 17th.—Although Sherman took Atlanta, he does not mean to stay there, be it heaven or hell. Fire and the sword are for us here; that is the word.

"November 25th.—Sherman is thundering at Augusta's [Georgia] very doors. There is nothing but distraction and confusion. All things tend to the preparation for the departure of the troops. It rains all the time . . . These men come in and out in the

red mud and slush of Columbia streets. Things seem dismal and wretched to me to the last degree

"December 1st.—Our troops . . . are raw militia, old men and boys never under fire before; some college cadets, in all a mere handful. The cradle and the grave have been robbed by us, they say. Sherman goes to Savannah and not to Augusta.

"December 14th.—So Fort McAlister has fallen! Goodby, Savannah!

"December 19th.—The deep waters are closing over us and we are in the house, like the outsiders at the time of the flood. We care for none of these things. We eat, drink, laugh, dance, in lightness of heart.

"January 7th.—[Henry Percy] Brewster was here and stayed till midnight. . . . He described Sherman's march of destruction and desolation. 'Sherman leaves a track fifty miles wide, upon which there is no living thing to be seen.'"

Mary Chesnut—on the left—whose husband was an aide to President Jefferson Davis, was a prominent member of southern society. Before joining the Union Army, Edwin Weller—on the right—was a clerk in a dry-goods store in Havana, New York.



National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, on loan from Serena Williams Miles Van Ransellaer

Courtesy of William Walton  
A CIVIL WAR FRIENDSHIP



The document of surrender that ended the Civil War was signed by General Ulysses S. Grant—seated on the left—and by General Robert E. Lee—seated on the right. Grant was assisted in drafting the terms of surrender by his military secretary, Colonel Ely Parker—standing immediately to the left of Grant—a full-blooded Seneca Indian.

million casualties of the 3 million who fought. About 60 percent of these casualties died. An entire generation was scarred both physically and mentally.

The results of the war were clear. Slavery was dead, secession forever ended, and the nation

would no longer be divided. A basis had been established for a modern, integrated society. But there were still the tasks of binding up the old, sectional wounds and the building of a new society. Neither of these tasks would be easy ones.

#### ■ Section Analysis

1. What did General Lee hope to achieve by attacking Pennsylvania in 1863?
2. Why was the capture of Atlanta in 1864 so important to President Lincoln?
3. How did the war affect the North and the South?

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#### SUMMARY

After the Union surrender at Fort Sumter, both the North and the South prepared for war. Most Americans believed that the war would be over in a matter of months. But as 1861 progressed, it became clear that the war would be a long one. Although the Union held the advantage in terms of resources, the Confederacy gained the upper hand in the early months of the war. A Union victory at Antietam in 1862 changed the face of the war. This victory allowed President Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, which made the abolition of slavery an important Union war aim.

As the war dragged on, both the North and the South were plagued by internal dissension over how the fighting was being handled. Both sides also experienced problems in raising money to finance the war. In an effort to end the war quickly and gain European recognition, the Confederates invaded the North. But the attack was beaten back at Gettysburg. After this defeat, Confederate fortunes began to decline. The Union relentlessly began to wear down the Confederates. Finally in April 1865, the Confederates surrendered at Appomattox Court House and the Civil War was ended.