

CHAPTER
11

Summary

TELESCOPING THE TIMES *The Civil War*

CHAPTER OVERVIEW For four bloody years, North and South struggle in the Civil War as the North tries to restore the Union and to end slavery. Finally, Northern advantages in population, industry, and resources ensure victory.

1 The Civil War Begins

KEY IDEA Secession forces the North and the South to take up arms in a war that no one expects to last long.

The Confederate states seized federal property in the South. When Southern forces fired on Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor, in April of 1861, war began. After Lincoln called for volunteers, Virginia and three other states joined the Confederacy. Four border states that included slaves stayed in the Union.

The Union had more people, more industry, more food, and more railroads and a skilled leader in Lincoln. The Confederacy had able military leaders and armies motivated by defending their homes. Southerners hoped to use the British demand for cotton to their advantage, too. But the Confederate government was weak.

The Union planned to blockade the South to prevent sale of cotton and the arrival of supplies. It also hoped to seize the Mississippi River to split the South and to capture Richmond.

In July, Northern and Southern troops met in the battle of Bull Run near Washington, D.C. A Confederate rally late in the day turned into a stunning victory as the Union troops retreated.

Northern forces achieved victories in the West. General Ulysses S. Grant captured two river forts and defended Shiloh, Tennessee. Admiral David Farragut captured New Orleans. But, in the East, General George McClellan failed to capture Richmond. His opponent, Robert E. Lee, then launched an invasion into Maryland in late 1862. The ensuing battle at Antietam was the largest single-day loss of life in American history. When McClellan did not pursue the retreating Confederate army, Lincoln fired him.

2 The Politics of War

KEY IDEA President Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation making slavery the focus of the war, which affects U.S. domestic and international politics.

The South sought Great Britain's support. Lincoln was equally determined to prevent

that support. He extended war aims to include the end to slavery. On January 1, 1863, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation. While the document was not able to free slaves in Confederate areas, the action was symbolically important.

Many in the North were pleased by the proclamation. Free blacks liked the fact that they could now enlist in the army. Northern Democrats said it would prolong the war by angering the South. Southerners did indeed become more determined to fight to victory. The British, who did not wish to be seen supporting slavery, decided not to recognize the South.

Lincoln and Davis both suspended the right of habeas corpus, thus allowing police to arrest and hold dissenters without trial. Both sides also drafted people into the army. Northern workers who opposed the draft started several riots. The worst, in New York, lasted four days. Many African Americans were attacked and some were killed.

3 Life During Wartime

KEY IDEA The turmoil of war creates social and economic changes as people struggle with death, destruction, inflation, and the impending end of slavery.

African Americans began joining the Northern Army; by war's end, they numbered about 10 percent of the North's soldiers. They suffered discrimination, but in 1864 Congress made their pay equal to that of white soldiers.

Slaves in the South resisted control. Some refused to work or destroyed property. Others ran away, seeking out Union armies. By 1864, the plantation system and slavery were doomed.

The Confederacy faced food shortages, and prices rose sharply. Some Southerners secretly sold cotton to the North to gain the cash to buy food. The war stimulated an economic boom in the North. Industrial production rose. Farmers in the West produced more food. Many women joined the workforce. Business owners made huge profits, sometimes by cheating the government.

Life for soldiers in both armies was difficult.

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Camps were unsanitary and unhealthful. Food was unappealing, and rations were meager for Southern soldiers. Life for prisoners was even worse as they lacked adequate shelter and food.

To help care for the soldiers' health, a group of Northern women and doctors created the Sanitary Commission. Commission members taught soldiers how to make camps more healthful. They recruited nurses to care for the sick and wounded. Many Southern women worked as nurses as well.

④ The North Takes Charge

KEY IDEA *After a victory in the bloody battle at Gettysburg, Union forces wear down the South and Robert E. Lee surrenders to Grant at Appomattox.*

After two more victories, Robert E. Lee invaded the North again. At Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, the North won a major victory, though both sides had heavy losses. In the West, Grant captured Vicksburg, Mississippi and the Mississippi River fell completely into Union hands.

In the fall of 1863, the government held a ceremony to dedicate a cemetery at Gettysburg. Lincoln delivered a short address that helped establish in people's minds that the United States was not a collection of states but a single nation.

Lincoln named Grant as commander of all Northern armies. Grant planned to fight Lee's army while General William Tecumseh Sherman, now in command in the West, invaded Georgia. The fighting between Grant and Lee was fierce, and the North lost tens of thousands of men. After Sherman captured Atlanta, his army began a march to the sea, living off the land and destroying much property in the South.

Lincoln faced the 1864 election challenged on two sides. Democrats nominated former General McClellan as a peace candidate. Radicals in the Republican Party charged Lincoln with not being hard enough on the South. Sherman's victory in Atlanta helped ensure the election for Lincoln. In the spring of 1865, the South collapsed. Lee surrendered his army, as did other commanders. The war was over.

⑤ The Legacy of the War

KEY IDEA *The Civil War settles long-standing issues of national sovereignty and slavery and sets the nation on the path to industrialization and racial equality.*

The Civil War had profound political effects. It ended the threat of states seceding from the Union. It also led to increased federal power.

The war produced major economic changes. The North instituted pro-business policies, including the creation of a new national banking system. Many industries thrived, and the economy of the North boomed. In the South, though, industry was destroyed, almost half the livestock died, and farmland was ruined. The South would remain poor for many decades.

The human cost of the war was huge. More than 600,000 soldiers died and more than 500,000 more had been wounded. The conflict also transformed the way future wars were fought. Rifled guns made shooting more accurate, and soldiers adopted trench warfare to protect themselves. New weapons—land mines, grenades, and ironclad warships—appeared.

The biggest change came for African Americans, since approval of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 ended slavery. Shortly after Lee's surrender, John Wilkes Booth, an actor who sympathized with the South, shot and killed Abraham Lincoln.

Review

1. How did the relative strengths of the North and the South contribute to a long war?
2. What political divisions existed within both the North and South?
3. What social changes took place in the North and the South during the war?
4. What late strategy led to the Northern victory?
5. Why is the Civil War a historic turning point?