

## CIVIL WAR PERIOD

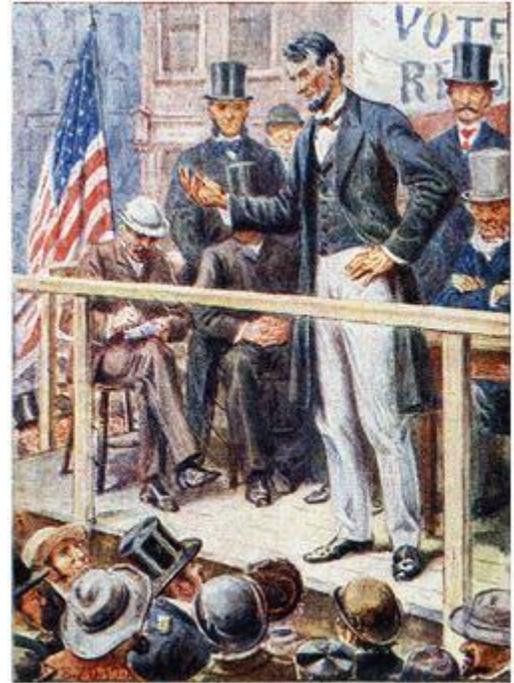
1850 TO 1877

### COMPROMISE OF 1850 TO END OF RECONSTRUCTION

#### ERA SUMMARY – CIVIL WAR PERIOD

**Rising Tensions**—The issue of slavery was a controversial subject from the beginning of American history. By the mid-19th century, all of the northern states had outlawed slavery, as had almost all European countries. Spain abolished slavery in the 16th century, but did not enforce the ban in its colonies. France abolished slavery in 1818, England in 1833, and even Mexico outlawed slavery as soon as it established its independence. By the mid-1800s, the American south was one of the last bastions of slavery in the New World.

During the early 19th century the political interests of the north and south diverged sharply on other issues besides slavery. The north had industrialized while the south remained largely dependent on cotton, and the states differed on tariffs, states' rights, and foreign policy. As more states were admitted to the union, southern politicians became fearful that the critical balance of power between free and slave states would be in jeopardy. In 1820 the **Missouri Compromise** was passed, an act which attempted to force the balance of power.



LINCOLN CAMPAIGNING.

The issue arose again in 1850, when California sought to be admitted as a free state, and this time, the dispute was papered over with the **Kansas-Nebraska act** and **Fugitive Slave Law**. Both of these acts, however, were controversial and created more problems than they solved. At the same time, opposition to slavery in the north was becoming more strident and in 1854 the Republican Party was formed. Led by anti-slavery activists, it quickly became the dominant political party in the North. When Abraham Lincoln, an outspoken opponent of slavery was elected president, the southern states realized they could not maintain their institutions under a Republican government and voted to secede. By the time Abraham Lincoln took office, in March 1861, seven states had voted to leave the Union, and the country was on the brink of war.

**Early Battles: 1861-1863**—Abraham Lincoln was scarcely sworn in as president when the first shots of the [American Civil War](#) were fired. Although he opposed slavery he was not impatient and advocated a gradual approach to dealing with the problem. He did not lead the country



JACKSON AT CHANCELLORVILLE.

into war to "free the slaves" but rather to "preserve the union", for he did not believe that a house divided against itself could stand.

The war got off to a rough start in the north. Union forays into central Virginia during the first two years of the war resulted in a series of defeats and inconclusive battles. The southern states were well-drilled and led by [Robert E. Lee](#), an exceptional commander. Lincoln struggled to find a general for the Union troops with comparable skill and replaced the commander-in-chief several times in the first few years.

In spite of battlefield losses in Virginia, the North made excellent progress on several important fronts. It used its navy to good effect by taking several key southern ports and blockading most ships provisioning the south. In 1862, the Union navy under [Admiral Farragut](#) took New Orleans and closed off access to the Mississippi River from the south. The navy then worked its way up the river, cutting off Confederate

access to supplies from their western allies.

On the western front, the union also had much success. The border states of Kentucky and Missouri were slave states that did not secede but had divided loyalties. The Union army managed to drive the Confederates out of these key regions and moved south with the object of controlling critical waterways. By the summer of 1863, Vicksburg was the last confederate stronghold on the Mississippi and it was under siege by [U. S. Grant](#). Vicksburg fell on the same day as the famous Battle of Gettysburg, and the two critical Union victories, taken together, were the turning point of the war.

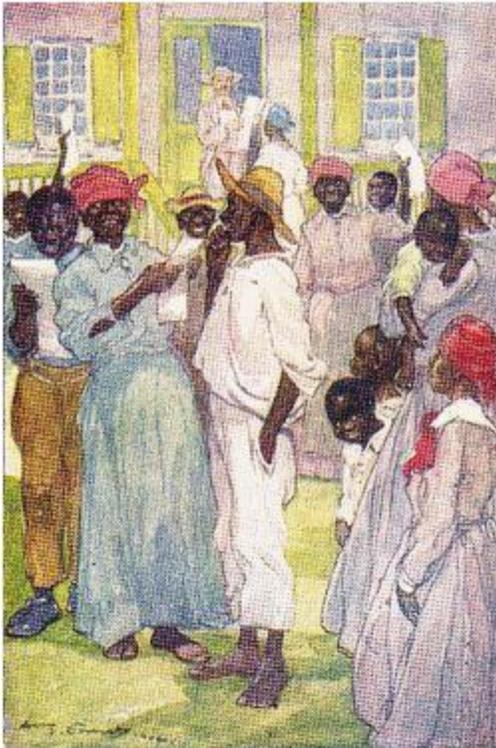
**Late Battles: 1863-1865**—By the summer of 1863 the Confederacy was surrounded and cut off from outside provisions, but the Union still had not taken significant Confederate territory. However, Grant's success in the west convinced Lincoln that he was the man to lead the Union armies, and from the time he was appointed commander-in-chief, the Union took a much more aggressive stand.

Under Grant's direction, General [W. T. Sherman](#) took command in the west and conducted his famous "March to the Sea" across Georgia, destroying everything in his path. This further weakened the Confederacy and isolated Lee's army, who were still resisting Union forces in Virginia. Grant understood that the North could survive a war of attrition much better than the South, so he forced Lee to fight continuous battles on all sides. The Confederates were irrepressible, but Grant did not retreat even after suffering losses. Unable to get adequate

provisions or replace men lost in battle, Lee understood he had no other option and surrendered at Appomattox in April 1865.

Five days after Lee's surrender, President Lincoln was assassinated and the leader who could have been most effective in healing the wounds of war was lost to history.

**Reconstruction**—Immediately after the war, congress passed the 13th Amendment outlawing slavery and forced the Confederate states to accept this as a condition of re-entry into the Union. Unfortunately, many of the freed slaves had neither the skills nor family structures necessary to survive independently and to make things worse, the economy of the south was in tatters. Lincoln established a Freedman's Bureau to help ease the transition, but did not live to see the project through.



SLAVES ARE FREED.

There was no easy way forward for the south after the war, but vicious partisan politics managed to make things worse. Both Lincoln and Johnson favored a gradual reconciliation with the south and did not want to impose harsh terms on ex-confederates. The Radical Republicans in congress, however, sought to force the south to change their economic structure, grant equal rights to freedmen immediately, and backed a military occupation of the region to enforce their agenda. They first dis-enfranchised all men who had taken arms against the Union and then worked with former slaves to elect their Republican allies to Congress.

The intentions of many of the Republican reformers were good, but the southerners could not be coerced. Many southern states willingly passed the 13th amendment, which abolished slavery, but balked at the 14th amendment, which guarantees "equal protection" to all citizens. Southerners who had been stripped of their ability to govern themselves legally felt justified in forming secret societies and militias to

oppose the northern schemes. The Klu Klux Klan was the most famous of these groups, but it was only one of many ways that southerners conspired to frustrate unwelcome interference.

While some progress was made in favor of the freed slaves, the effects of Reconstruction were mostly negative. After the election of Rutherford B. Hayes, in 1877, Congress agreed to remove the federal troops who were propping up Republican governments in the southern states. Left to their own devices, southern whites elected Democrats and passed laws permitting segregation of races.

## CHARACTERS – CIVIL WAR PERIOD

### STATESMEN

<b>William Lloyd Garrison</b>	1805–1879	Prominent abolitionist, well-known as the publisher of the <i>Liberator</i> , an abolitionist newspaper.
<b>Jefferson Davis</b>	1808–1889	President of the Confederacy during the Civil War.
<b>Abraham Lincoln</b>	1809–1865	President of the United States during the American Civil War.
<b>Charles Sumner</b>	1811–1874	Anti-slavery Senator from Massachusetts who was an important ally of Lincoln, and influential during the Reconstruction era.

### MILITARY HEROES

<b>Robert E. Lee</b>	1807–1870	General of the Confederate Army during the American Civil War.
<b>Admiral Farragut</b>	1801–1870	American Naval hero of the Civil War. At the <i>Battle of Mobile Bay</i> , he famously said 'Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!'
<b>P.G.T. Beauregard</b>	1818–1893	Confederate general who was influential in the early years of the civil war.
<b>U. S. Grant</b>	1822–1885	Commander and Chief of the Union forces in the Civil War, and President of the United States.
<b>W. T. Sherman</b>	1822–1885	American Civil War General. Marched "From Atlanta to the Sea."
<b>Stonewall Jackson</b>	1824–1863	Leading Confederate General of the American Civil War, especially notable at Bull Run. Died at Chancellorsville.
<b>Commodore Perry</b>	1794–1858	Force Japan to open its ports to the west through very skillful and forceful diplomacy.

### ABOLITIONISTS AND ADVOCATES

<b>John Brown</b>	1800–1859	Radical abolitionist who condoned violence in order to abolish slavery. Led a raid on the armory in Harper's Ferry.
<b>Frederick Douglas</b>	1817–1895	American Negro orator who spoke eloquently against slavery.
<b>Harriet Beecher Stowe</b>	1811–1896	Influential author of the book <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> . Abolitionist in the pre-war era.
<b>Dorothea Dix</b>	1802–1887	Reformer who sought to better the conditions of the mentally ill.
<b>Horace Greeley</b>	1811–1872	Publisher of the <i>New York Tribune</i> , one of the most influential newspapers of his era.
<b>Clara Barton</b>	1821–1912	Civil War Nurse and Humanitarian. Founder of the American Red Cross.
<b>Oliver Otis Howard</b>	1830–1909	Civil war General who later oversaw the Freedman's bureau, founded Howard University, and was involved in the Indian Wars.

### INDUSTRY AND INVENTION

<b>John Ericsson</b>	1803–1889	Swedish-American engineer who designed the <i>Monitor</i> , the first iron-clad in the United States Navy.
<b>Elias Howe</b>	1819–1867	American inventor of the sewing machine. His great innovation was the "lock stitch".
<b>Cyrus Field</b>	1819–1892	Led the effort by the Atlantic Telegraph Company to lay the first transatlantic Cable.

### ART AND LITERATURE

<b>Henry Wadsworth Longfellow</b>	1807–1882	American Poet whose works were very popular. Wrote <i>Paul Revere's Ride</i> and other works.
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# TIMELINE – CIVIL WAR PERIOD

## ANTEBELLUM PERIOD

- 1850** The Compromise of 1850 establishes California as a free State and strengthens Fugitive Slave law.
- 1850** Harriet Tubman makes her first trip back to the south on the "Underground Railroad".
- 1852** Uncle Tom's Cabin is published by [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#) and inflamed anti-slavery sentiment in the North.
- 1854** Kansas-Nebraska Act opens new territories to Settlement.
- 1856-61** "Bleeding Kansas" violence between slave-owners and abolitionists.
- 1857** Dred Scott decision ruled that slaves were not citizens and had no rights, even in free territories.
- 1859** Abolitionist [John Brown](#) makes a raid on the armory at Harper's Ferry, Virginia.
- 1860 Nov** [Abraham Lincoln](#), a vocal opponent of slavery, is elected President.
- 1860 Dec** South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, and Louisiana secede from the Union.
- 1861 Feb** [Jefferson Davis](#) elected president of the Confederacy.

## AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

- Apr 1861** First Shots of [American Civil War](#) fired at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor.
- Sep 1862** Battle of Antietam, deadliest one-day battle of the Civil War
- Mar 1863** [John Ericsson](#) introduces the ironclad *Monitor* in time to defeat the Confederates' *Merrimac*.
- Apr 1863** [Stonewall Jackson](#) is killed at the Battle of Chancellorsville
- Jul 1863** [Robert E. Lee's](#) advance into northern territory is stopped at the Battle of Gettysburg.
- Jul 1863** [U. S. Grant](#) takes the last confederate stronghold on the Mississippi at the Battle of Vicksburg
- Jan 1864** Emancipation Proclamation: Lincoln declares all slaves in U.S. Territory free.
- Nov 1864** [Sherman](#) Marches from Atlanta to the Charleston, cutting supplies to Lee's army in Virginia.
- Apr 1865** Lee surrenders to Grant at Appomattox Court House
- Apr 1865** [Abraham Lincoln](#) is assassinated at the Ford Theatre, by a confederate sympathizer.

## RECONSTRUCTION ERA

- 1865** Beginning of "Reconstruction". Union troops occupy the south.
- 1865** Thirteenth Amendment, outlawing slavery in the United States, is enacted
- 1866** Radical Republicans are swept into office; establish harsh terms for "reconstruction" of south.
- 1868** President Andrew Johnson is impeached by Republicans favoring harsher measures on the south.
- 1868** Fourteenth Amendment guarantees rights of former slaves, but disenfranchises many southerners.
- 1869** [Ulysses Grant](#), a proponent of reconstruction, elected president.
- 1872** Freedman's Bureau, tasked with helping ex-slaves adjust, defunded and closed.
- 1877** Last federal troops are recalled from the south.

## RECOMMENDED READING – CIVIL WAR PERIOD

### CORE READING ASSIGNMENTS \*

Guerber - [Story of the Great Republic](#)      [The Slavery Quarrel](#) to [Hard Times in the South](#) (32)  
Marshall - [This Country of Ours](#)      [Union or Disunion](#) to [The End of the War](#) (14)

### SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Evans - [America First](#)      [Rescue of Jerry](#) to [Surrender of Lee](#) (10)  
Pratt - [American History Stories - IV](#)      *entire book*  
Marshall - [Stories from Uncle Tom's Cabin](#)      *entire book*  
Hamilton - [The Story of Abraham Lincoln](#)      *entire book*  
Morris - [True Stories of Our Presidents](#)      [Millard Fillmore](#) to [Andrew Johnson](#) (5)  
Morris - [Historical Tales - American I](#)      [The Monitor and Merrimac](#) to [Sinking of the Albemarle](#) (4)  
Morris - [Historical Tales - American II](#)      [The Raccoon Roughs](#) to [Homecoming of Lee's Veterans](#) (9)  
Merriam - [The Negro and the Nation](#)      *entire book*

### SPECIAL INTEREST – MILITARY

Fraser - [Boys' Book of Sea Fights](#)      [Monitor and Merrimac](#) to [Admiral David Farragut](#) (2)  
Wood - [Boy's Book of Battles](#)      [Gettysburg](#) (1)  
Fraser - [Boys' Book of Battles](#)      [Gettysburg](#) (1)  
Hill - [On the Trail of Grant and Lee](#)      *entire book*  
Barnes - [Midshipman Farragut](#)      *entire book*  
Barnes - [Son of Light Horse Harry](#)      *entire book*  
McSpadden - [Book of Famous Soldiers](#)      [Grant](#) to [Lee](#) (2)

### ALSO RECOMMENDED

Southworth - [Builders of Our Country - II](#)      [Abraham Lincoln](#) to [David Glasgow Farragut](#) (5)  
Nye - [Comic History of the U.S.A.](#)      [Befo' the Wah](#) to [Reconstruction Without Pain](#) (7)  
MacArthur - [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#)      *entire book*

\* *Level I and Level II Study Questions are based on Core Reading Assignments*