

American civil war : Effects

In September 1862 Lincoln called on the seceded states to return to the Union or have their slaves declared free. When no state returned, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. The edict provided moral inspiration for the North and discouraged European countries from supporting the South. It also had the practical effect of permitting recruitment of African Americans for the Union army.

Despite a string of early Confederate victories, the Union forces ultimately prevailed in the war. The triumph of the North, above and beyond its superior forces and industrial and financial resources, was partly due to the statesmanship of Lincoln. By 1864 he had become a masterful political and war leader.

The enormous casualties suffered on both sides during the American Civil War have never ceased to astound scholars and military historians. Roughly 2 percent of the 1860 population of the United States died in the war. The war remains the bloodiest conflict in American history.

The South was devastated by the war, but the Union was preserved, and the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1865, officially abolished slavery in

the entire country.

After the war the defeated states were gradually allowed back into the United States. The period after the war in which attempts were made to solve the political, social, and economic problems arising from the readmission to the Union of the former Confederate states is known as Reconstruction (1865–77).

Key Facts of the American Civil War

By 1860, decades of friction over slavery had deeply divided the nation. In the 1840s and '50s, Northern opposition to the extension of slavery in the western territories increasingly caused the Southern states to fear that existing slaveholdings, which formed the economic base of the South, were also in danger.

The Southern states organized as the Confederate States of America. Jefferson Davis was named president of the Confederacy. The Northern states of the federal Union, under Lincoln, commanded more than twice the population of the Confederacy and held greater advantages in manufacturing and transportation capacity.

The war began in Charleston, South Carolina, when Confederate artillery fired on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861. Within weeks, four more Southern states (Virginia,

Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina) left the Union to join the Confederacy.

On July 21, 1861, the Confederates routed overconfident Union forces in the First Battle of Bull Run, near Manassas in northern Virginia. The defeat shocked the Union and provided an early indication that the conflict would last a long time.

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