

 SECTION
5

The Legacy of the War

MAIN IDEA

The Civil War settled long-standing disputes over states' rights and slavery.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

The federal government established supreme authority, and no state has threatened secession since.

Terms & Names

- National Bank Act
- Thirteenth Amendment
- Red Cross
- John Wilkes Booth

One American's Story

Garland H. White, a former slave from Virginia, marched with other Yankee soldiers into the Confederate capital of Richmond after it fell. Now chaplain of the 28th United States Colored troops, White was returning to the state where he had once served in bondage. As the soldiers marched along the city streets, thousands of African Americans cheered. A large crowd of soldiers and civilians gathered in the neighborhood where the slave market had been. Garland White remembered the scene.

A PERSONAL VOICE GARLAND H. WHITE

“I marched at the head of the column, and soon I found myself called upon by the officers and men of my regiment to make a speech, with which, of course, I readily complied. A vast multitude assembled on Broad Street, and I was aroused amid the shouts of 10,000 voices, and proclaimed for the first time in that city freedom to all [humankind].”

—quoted in *Been in the Storm So Long*

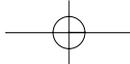


▲ Union troops in the South sometimes came upon slave markets like this one.

Freedom for slaves was not the only legacy of the Civil War. The struggle transformed the nation's economy, its government, the conduct of warfare, and the future careers of many of its participants.

The War Changes the Nation

In 1869 Professor George Ticknor of Harvard commented that since the Civil War, “It does not seem to me as if I were living in the country in which I was born.” The Civil War caused tremendous political, economic, technological, and social change in the United States. It also exacted a high price in the cost of human life.



POLITICAL CHANGES Decades before the war, Southern states had threatened secession when federal policies angered them. After the war, the federal government assumed supreme national authority and no state has ever seceded again. The states' rights issue did not go away; it simply led in a different direction from secession. Today, arguments about states' rights versus federal control focus on such issues as whether the state or national government should determine how to use local funds.

In addition to ending the threat of secession, the war greatly increased the federal government's power. Before the Civil War, the federal government had little impact on most people's daily lives. Most citizens dealt only with their county governments. During the war, however, the federal government reached into people's pockets, taxing private incomes. It also required everyone to accept its new paper currency (even those who had previously contracted to be repaid in coins). Most dramatically, the federal government tore reluctant men from their families to fight in the war. After the war, U.S. citizens could no longer assume that the national government in Washington was too far away to bother them. **A**

MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Effects

A How did the power of the federal government increase during the war?

ECONOMIC CHANGES The Civil War had a profound impact on the nation's economy. Between 1861 and 1865, the federal government did much to help business, in part through subsidizing construction of a national railroad system. The government also passed the **National Bank Act** of 1863, which set up a system of federally chartered banks, set requirements for loans, and provided for banks to be inspected. These measures helped make banking safer for investors.

The economy of the Northern states boomed. Northern entrepreneurs had grown rich selling war supplies to the government and thus had money to invest in new businesses after the war. As army recruitment created a labor shortage in the North, the sale of labor-saving agricultural tools such as the reaper increased dramatically. By war's end, large-scale commercial agriculture had taken hold.

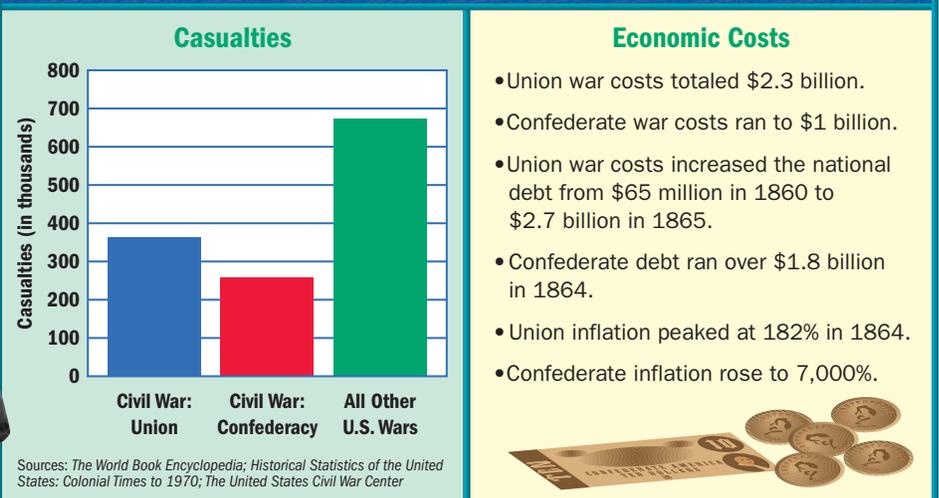
The war devastated the South economically. It took away the South's source of cheap labor—slavery—and also wrecked most of the region's industry. It wiped out 40 percent of the livestock, destroyed much of the South's farm machinery and railroads, and left thousands of acres of land uncultivated.

The economic gap between North and South had widened drastically. Before the war, Southern states held 30 percent of the national wealth; in 1870 they held

Though both Union and Confederate soldiers were lucky to escape the war with their lives, thousands—like this young amputee—faced an uncertain future.



The Costs of the Civil War



SKILLBUILDER Interpreting Data

1. Based on the bar graph, how did the combined Union and Confederate losses compare with those of other wars?
2. Why was inflation worse in the Confederacy than in the Union?



only 12 percent. In 1860, Southerners earned about 70 percent of the Northern average; in 1870, they earned less than 40 percent. This economic disparity between the regions would not diminish until the 20th century.

COSTS OF THE WAR The human costs of the Civil War were staggering. They affected almost every American family. Approximately 360,000 Union soldiers and 260,000 Confederates died, nearly as many as in all other American wars combined. Another 275,000 Union soldiers and 225,000 Confederates were wounded. Veterans with missing limbs became a common sight nation wide. In addition, military service had occupied some 2,400,000 men—nearly 10 percent of the nation’s population of approximately 31,000,000—for four long years. It disrupted their education, their careers, and their families.

The Civil War’s economic costs were just as extensive. Historians estimate that the Union and the Confederate governments spent a combined total of about \$3.3 billion during the four years of war, or more than twice what the government had spent in the previous 80 years! The costs did not stop when the war ended. Twenty years later, interest payments on the war debt plus veterans’ pensions still accounted for almost two-thirds of the federal budget.

The War Changes Lives

The war not only impacted the nation’s economy and politics, it also changed individual lives. Perhaps the biggest change came for African Americans.

NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM The Emancipation Proclamation, which Lincoln had issued under his war powers, freed only those slaves who lived in the states that were behind Confederate lines and not yet under Union control. The government had to decide what to do about the border states, where slavery was still legal.

The president believed that the only solution would be a constitutional amendment abolishing slavery. The Republican-controlled Senate approved an amendment in the summer of 1864, but the House, with its large Democratic membership, did not. After Lincoln’s reelection, the amendment was reintroduced in the House in January of 1865. This time the administration convinced

a few Democrats to vote in its favor with promises of government jobs after they left office. The amendment passed with two votes to spare. Spectators—many of them African Americans who were now allowed to sit in the congressional galleries—burst into cheers, while Republicans on the floor shouted in triumph.

By year’s end 27 states, including 8 from the South, had ratified the **Thirteenth Amendment**. The U.S. Constitution now stated that “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States.”

A store in Richmond, Virginia, decorated in celebration of Liberation Day, the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation





History Through *Photojournalism*

MATHEW BRADY'S PHOTOGRAPHS

The Civil War marked the first time in United States history that photography, a resource since 1839, played a major role in a military conflict. Hundreds of photographers traveled with the troops, working both privately and for the military. The most famous Civil War photographer was Mathew Brady, who employed about 20 photographers to meet the public demand for pictures from the battlefield. This was the beginning of American news photography, or photojournalism.

Many of Brady's photographs are a mix of realism and artificiality. Due to the primitive level of photographic technology, subjects had to be carefully posed and remain still during the long exposure times.

In this 1864 photograph Brady posed a kneeling soldier, offering a canteen of water, beside a wounded soldier with his arm in a sling. Images like this, showing the wounded or the dead, brought home the harsh reality of war to the civilian population.



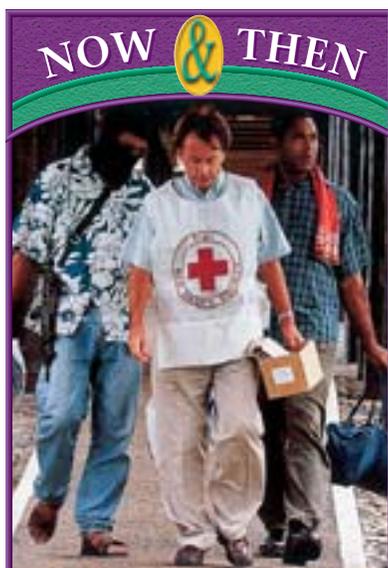
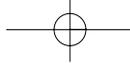
▲ **“Encampment of the Army of the Potomac” (May 1862).** Few photographs of the Civil War are as convincing in their naturalism as this view over a Union encampment. Simply by positioning the camera behind the soldiers, the photographer draws the viewer into the composition. Although we cannot see the soldiers' faces, we are compelled to see through their eyes.

SKILLBUILDER Interpreting Visual Sources

1. What elements in the smaller photograph seem posed or contrived? What elements are more realistic?
2. How do these photographs compare with more heroic imagery of traditional history painting?



SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R23.



THE RED CROSS

Civil War nurse Clara Barton led the American branch of the Red Cross for 23 years. Today's International Red Cross can be found wherever human suffering occurs, not just in conventional armed conflicts. In Fiji in June 2000, rebels took the country's prime minister and 30 members of parliament hostage. The Red Cross employee above was given safe passage to give hostages medical attention, mattresses, and blankets.

Swiss businessman Henri Dunant first had the idea for the Red Cross when, in 1859, he saw injured soldiers abandoned on the battlefield in Italy. Horrified, he organized local people to provide aid to the wounded. Back in Switzerland, Dunant, and a group of lawyers and doctors, founded an international committee for the relief of wounded soldiers.

CIVILIANS FOLLOW NEW PATHS After the war ended, those who had served—Northerners and Southerners alike—had to find new directions for their lives.

Some war leaders continued their military careers, while others returned to civilian life. William Tecumseh Sherman remained in the army and spent most of his time fighting Native Americans in the West. Robert E. Lee lost Arlington, his plantation, which the Secretary of War of the Union had turned into a cemetery for Union dead. Lee became president of Washington College in Virginia, now known as Washington and Lee University. Lee swore renewed allegiance to the United States, but Congress accidentally neglected to restore his citizenship (until 1975). Still, Lee never spoke bitterly of Northerners or the Union.

Many veterans returned to their small towns and farms after the war. Others, as Grant noted, “found they were not satisfied with the farm, the store, or the workshop of the villages, but wanted larger fields.” Many moved to the burgeoning cities or went west in search of opportunity.

Others tried to turn their wartime experience to good. The horrors that Union nurse Clara Barton witnessed during the war inspired her to spend her life helping others. In 1869, Barton went to Europe to rest and recuperate from her work during the war. She became involved in the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross during the Franco-Prussian War. Returning to the United States, Barton helped found the American **Red Cross** in 1881. **B**

THE ASSASSINATION OF LINCOLN Whatever plans Lincoln had to reunify the nation after the war, he never got to implement them. On April 14, 1865, five days after Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Court House, Lincoln and his wife went to Ford's Theatre in Washington to see a British comedy, *Our American Cousin*. During the play's third act, a man silently opened the unguarded doors to the presidential box. He crept up behind Lincoln, raised a pistol, and fired, hitting the president in the back of the head.

The assassin, **John Wilkes Booth**—a 26-year-old actor and Southern sympathizer—then leaped down to the stage. In doing so, he caught his spur on one of the flags draped across the front of the box. Booth landed hard on his left leg and broke it. He rose and said something that the audience had trouble understanding. Some thought it was the state motto

of Virginia, “*Sic semper tyrannis*”—in English “Thus be it ever to tyrants.” Others thought he said, “The South is avenged!” Then he limped offstage into the wings.

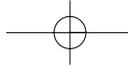
Despite a broken leg, Booth managed to escape. Twelve days later, Union cavalry trapped him in a Virginia tobacco barn, and set the building on fire. When Booth still refused to surrender, a shot was fired. He may have been shot by cavalry or by himself, but the cavalry dragged him out. Booth is said to have whispered, “Tell my mother I died for my country. I did what I thought was best.” His last words were “Useless, useless.”

After Lincoln was shot, he remained unconscious through the night. He died at 7:22 A.M. the following morning, April 15. It was the first time a president of the United States had been assassinated. Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles recorded the public's immediate reactions in his diary.

MAIN IDEA

Summarizing

B What were some effects that the war had on individuals?



A PERSONAL VOICE

GIDEON WELLES

“It was a dark and gloomy morning, and rain set in. . . . On the Avenue in front of the White House were several hundred colored people, mostly women and children, weeping and wailing their loss. This crowd did not appear to diminish through the whole of that cold, wet day; they seemed not to know what was to be their fate since their great benefactor was dead, and their hopeless grief affected me more than almost anything else, though strong and brave men wept when I met them.”

—quoted in *Voices from the Civil War*

The funeral train that carried Lincoln’s body from Washington to his hometown of Springfield, Illinois, took 14 days for its journey. Approximately 7 million Americans, or almost one-third of the entire Union population, turned out to publicly mourn the martyred leader.

The Civil War had ended. Slavery and secession were no more. Now the country faced two different problems: how to restore the Southern states to the Union and how to integrate approximately 4 million newly freed African Americans into national life.



▲ Lincoln’s body lies in state.



ASSESSMENT

1. TERMS & NAMES For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

•National Bank Act

•Thirteenth Amendment

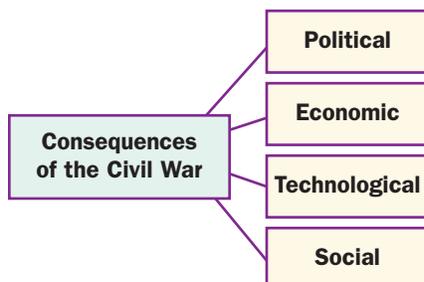
•Red Cross

•John Wilkes Booth

MAIN IDEA

2. TAKING NOTES

Copy the multiple-effects chart below on your paper and fill it in with consequences of the Civil War.



CRITICAL THINKING

3. HYPOTHESIZING

Imagine that you are a member of a group of Southern leaders who must rebuild the South after the war. What would you recommend that the government do to help the South?

Think About:

- the economic devastation of the South
- the human costs of the war
- the numbers of newly freed slaves

4. ANALYZING ISSUES

What political and social issues from the Civil War era do you think are still issues today? Use details from the text to support your answer.

5. SYNTHESIZING

Write three questions that you have about the lives of African Americans after the Civil War.