

American Civil War [Revision Cascade]

Causes of the Civil War: Underlying Factors	Sectionalism	Massive difference, economically, political and culturally between the North (growing dynamically) & the South (which felt threatened).
	Tariffs, Nullification & States Rights	South Carolina objected to the 1828 'Tariff of Abominations', claimed the right to nullify it, and to secede if necessary.
	Expansion into the West	Conflict over whether the new states were to be 'slave' or 'free' (especially in 'Beeding Kansas' 1854-59) and who would get the railroads.
	Power and Politics	Until the 1840s, the South had controlled the Senate, and 'dough-faced' Presidents. They lost this, and Abraham Lincoln (elected 1860) was an abolitionist.
	Slavery	A moral issue for the North; the whole basis of their (cotton) economy, and white supremacy for the South. It also came into all the above arguments.
Causes of the Civil War: Key events	1820: Missouri Compromise	An agreement to split the Senate equally into 'slave' & 'free' states, disturbed by the admission of California, but re-affirmed by the 1850 Compromise.
	1854: Kansas-Nebraska Act	As part of the plans for the transcontinental railroad, Congress voted to let new states decide for themselves whether they were 'slave' or 'free'. This overturned the 1850 Compromise and led to 'Bleeding Kansas', 1854-59.
	1959: John Brown	Brown raided a federal armoury at Harper's Ferry in Virginia, and tried to start a slave rebellion. Though he was quickly defeated and executed, this reminded Southerners of Nat Turner's 1831 Revolt.
	1860: Lincoln elected President	Although he had promised to support continued slavery in the South, he was an abolitionist, and 7 Southern states immediately seceded ('the Confederacy').
	1861: Fort Sumter	South Caroline demanded the Federal Fort at Fort Sumter. When Lincoln sent a ship to resupply it, it was bombarded and captured. Lincoln issued an order for 75,000 troops – whereupon four more states seceded.
Causes of the Civil War: Historiography	Lost Cause theory	Although at the time, all Southern politicians said they were seceding to protect slavery, after the war Southern politicians and historians depicted it as a brave attempt to defend states' rights.
	Inevitability Thesis	Northern historians James Ford Rhodes depicted the war as a moral issue against slavery, and that a North v South conflict on this issue was inevitable.
	Economic interests	In 1927, Charles & Mary Beard argued that the war was a conflict about who was going to gain the huge financial benefits of colonising the West.
	A Crusade against the South	In 1941, Southern historian Frank Owsley argued that constant social and economic encroachment from the North had created a 'war psychosis' in the South.
	Slavery	After the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, most historians now agree that slavery was the issue, though modern historians see 'slavery' as a shorthand for the whole socio-economic system of the South.
Civil War: Course	War in Virginia, 1861-3	At first, the South held off Union attempts to invade Virginia (eg the battles of Bull Run, Antietam), but a Southern invasion of the North by General Lee was defeated in the Battle of Gettysburg.
	Anaconda Strategy, 1862-3	le to strangle the South; the Union Navy blockaded Southern ports, killing their trade, General Grant conquered the Mississippi Valley after the long siege of Vicksburg – the South was surrounded.
	Emancipation Proclamation, 1863	Lincoln made the war about slavery. 215,000 Black soldiers and sailors fought for the Union.
	March to the Sea, 1864	The North declared 'total war', destroying towns, farms and railroads as it advanced. General Sherman's 'March to the Sea' split the South in two.
	Appomattox, 1865	Lee's army was surrounded and surrendered; the Southern States surrendered.

Civil War: Impact on the South	Economic disaster	The Anaconda Plan ruined the Cotton Industry and prevented the import of food and manufactured goods. 9,000% inflation.
	Destruction of property	Sherman's 'Total War' destroyed whole towns, homes, farms and infrastructure/railroads
	Shortages	Sever shortage of food, esp. wheat and coffee – people lived off rice crackers. Bread Riots in Richmond in 1863.
	Tax and Impressment	In 1863 the Confederate Govt. imposed a 10% tax-in-kind and an Impressment Act giving it the right to buy supplies at half their value.
	Sieges, Occupation & Refugees	The war took place in the South. Starvation & disease and living in caves during the siege of Vicksburg (1862). Occupation and depredation. Thousands of refugees fled with nothing.
Civil War: Impact on Southern Women	Enlisting and conscription	80% of Southern men signed up indefinitely, leaving the women to run the farm/business/plantation/enslaved workers etc. Thousands sent
	Poverty	Confederate soldiers were paid \$11 a month – a chicken cost \$15 = starvation ... and letters begging husbands to desert.
	Rich women	Rich women, who had been 'southern belles' and done NOTHING but be pretty, now found they had to do the housework/ work the farm.
	Nursing	Many women went to help as nurses, or joined the local Soldiers' Aid Society rolling bandages, making cartridges and preparing sandbags.
	Women soldiers	Some women (eg Loretta Velasquez) dressed as men to serve as soldiers
Civil War: Impact on the North	Economic boom	The needs of the Union Army stimulated a 'Second Industrial Revolution': transcontinental railroads/ Morrill Tariff 1861/ Morrill Colleges Act 1862/ Homestead Act 1862/ Banking Act 1863.
	Curtailment of freedom	Lincoln suspended <i>habeas corpus</i> (1861); he was accused of becoming a dictator. The 1861 Conscription Act, by giving rich men the chance to buy exemption, led to the New York City Riots of 1863.
	Racial & social tensions	The Emancipation Proclamation led to racial tensions – the 1863 Riots attacked the Black community. There were anti-immigrant riots in Cincinnati (1862) and Philadelphia (1863). Strikes and Union activity.
	Women	Perhaps 500 women fought as men in the Army; others worked as spies. Women served in field hospitals; in 1864, the Army appointed Clara Barton as 'lady in charge' of the front-line hospitals in Virginia.
	Veterans & widows	Half a million widows wearing black, and veterans returning home with physical and psychological scars; the Grand Army of the Republic (1866) was formed to support veterans.
Civil War: Results	Balance of power	Congress became stronger; the President and the States lost power.
	Civil Rights for Black Americans	The 13th Amendment (1865) ended slavery. The 14th Amendment (Civil Rights Act) guaranteed citizenship The 15th Amendment granted African American men the right to vote
	Military Rule in the South	Overruling President Johnson, the Reconstruction Act (1867) appointed military governors with Union troops to rule in the southern states until they had rewritten their constitution.
	Reconstruction	Some apparent immediate successes (eg voting, school, Freedmen's Bureau) ... but ultimately failure – see below
	Compromise of 1877	Ended reconstruction and restored States' autonomy = Jim Crow Laws, segregation, KKK, and white political & social supremacy – see below
Reconstruction: Successes	Black voters	80% of Black males registered to vote;
	Black politicians	In 1870 Hiram Revels became the first Black Senator; Joseph Rainey the first of seven Black Congressmen. 2,000 formerly enslaved Black Americans served at every level of government.
	Black families	Black families, divided by sale, were re-united/ thousands of Black Americans married.
	Freedmen's Bureau	The government's Freedmen's Bureau provided food, clothing, shelter, medical facilities, schools and teachers.
	Black Rights	Reconstruction administrations in the southern states built public schools, strengthened labourers' rights, and outlawed racial discrimination in public transportation. More than 1,000 Black Schools and hundreds of Churches were built.

The Compromise of 1877: failure of Reconstruction	Carpetbaggers & scalawags	Northerners were hated as 'Carpetbaggers' (because they carried their possessions in a cheap bag made from carpet), as were 'Scallawags' (southerners who supported the Union).
	Complaints	There were complaints (some justified) about corruption & speculation.
	Terror	Beatings, lynchings, assassinations – against Black people and white Republican officials by the KKK, White League and the Red Shirts.
	Freedman's Bureau	In 1872 the government stopped funding the Freedmen's Bureau after criticism and a wave of violence towards Bureau schools and teachers.
	Compromise of 1877	The Democrats took advantage of a disputed Presidential election to make the Compromise of 1877, which secured the withdrawal of federal troops and gave 'Redeemer Democrats' political licence in the South.
Economic & Social Results in the South	E conomic ruin	The Cotton Industry was damaged/ plantation-owners ruined (= changed to sharecropping)/ Confederate bonds worthless/ White incomes fell by 40%/ sharecroppers trapped by debt.
	S egregation	Jim Crow laws overrode the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments; Segregation was legally upheld by the Plessy v Ferguson (1896).
	M otherhood	After the war, a conservative ideal of the 'Southern Belle' reemerged, emphasizing motherhood, family honour, subservience to her husband.
	I dentify	The 'Lost Cause' cultural movement romanticized the war and created hatred and a sense of victimhood among white Southerners.
	E ducation	To keep Black Americans illiterate (and unable to vote) Black schools were underfunded, overcrowded and second rate. Power consolidated on a white elite, which maintained racial inequalities.
Slavery: key facts	Numbers	3.5 million people in the USA in 1860 were enslaved Black people. Not all Black people in the South were enslaved; some 400,000 'free Blacks'
	Slavocracy	Three quarters of Southerners did not hold any enslaved people. Only 3% of southerners (the 'slavocracy' owned more than 20).
	Cotton	The cash crops produced by enslaved labour (especially cotton) was vital for the South and one-eighth of the national GDP.
	White Supremacy	Slavery was the cornerstone of white society and supremacy in the South and an essential element of the South's antebellum identity.
	Abolition	With the growth of the abolition movement in the North, slavery became a political controversy and a major cause of the Civil War
The Experience of Slavery	Work	In the 25% of homes which held enslaved people, they did most/all the work – men in the form/plantation, women as maids.
	Treatment	Not all slave-holders were cruel, but enslaved people had no redress for punishment, violence, sexual exploitation or sale.
	Rights	No civil rights – could not strike a white person; make contracts, buy or sell goods; own a gun; leave the plantation without permission.
	Health	The health of enslaved people was poor. On rice plantations, malaria was rampant and child mortality was generally around 66%
	Violence	White paranoia about slave rebellion resulted in vigilante militias. The killing of a slave was not murder, and the rape of an enslaved women was treated as trespass.
Black Americans: during the Civil War	'Contrabands'	1-in-7 enslaved people ran away to the Union Army: put in camps with 25% mortality and commandeered to do non-fighting tasks. Freedmen and Missionary Societies brought some relief.
	Freedmen's Bureau	Created 1865: gave freed enslaved people the right to lease 40 acres of confiscated land, with an option to buy it after 3 years.
	USCT	First Black regiment: South Carolina Volunteers (1862). Lincoln allowed enlistment in 1863. 180,000 served ... but segregated, lower pay, white officer, non-combat duties (except Fort Wagner). Captured Black Union soldiers shot as runaways.
	Confederate Army	Also used Black people as labourers, and right at the end of the war enlisted some Black soldiers.
	Civil Rights	Some progress: 13 th Amendment/ Segregation on public transport and 'Black laws' abolished in the North/ John Rock was the first Black lawyer to act before the Supreme Court (but Northern attitudes remained racist – eg New York Draft Riots/ discrimination in housing & jobs)

Black Americans: after Reconstruction	Equality?	Jim Crow, segregation, restriction of movement, second rate schools (though States required to provide public schools).
	Rights?	United States v. Cruikshank (1876) negated the 14th Amendment/ Plessy v Ferguson (1896) declared segregation legal (though nb Black Churches)
	Land?	The 1877 Compromise Federal restored the former slaveocracy and federal soldiers displaced freed Black people (though nb Exodusters & cowboys)
	Freedom?	13 th , 14 th & 15 th Amendments overridden by poll taxes, property requirements and literacy tests/ sharecroppers debt-obliged to the landowners (though nb the right to have a family)
	Terror?	When troops were withdrawn in 1877, white supremacist groups terrorized Black communities.