

## The Civil War: 1861-1865

*Note: Military history is not emphasized on the AP exam, although the impact of major battles and the issue of grand strategy may show up occasionally on the multiple-choice portion of the exam. Military history rarely, if ever shows up on the essay portion of the exam. Ask your teacher how much military history you will need to know for your class.*

Use space below for notes

### I. Union War Strategy

- A. Initial attempts to win the war in Virginia failed miserably (Bull Run, Peninsula Campaign, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville)
- B. Later, the war developed into four phases: strategy was geared more toward attrition
  1. Strangle the South by blockading its coasts – Anaconda Plan
  2. Control the Mississippi River to cut the Confederacy in half.
    - Achieved with the Battle of Vicksburg in July, 1863
  3. Devastate the South by cutting a swath through Georgia and then sending troops North through the Carolinas.
    - Achieved through Sherman’s “March to the Sea”
  4. Capture Richmond by annihilating the remaining Confederate armies.
    - Finally achieved in April, 1865 by General Ulysses S. Grant

### II. The Civil War begins, 1861

- A. **Battle of Bull Run** (Manassas): July 21, 1861 (30 miles southwest of Washington, D.C.)
  1. First major land battle of the Civil War
    - By the summer 1861, Northern public pressure demanded a quick decisive victory.
  2. During battle, Union forces were near victory until reinforcements from the Shenandoah Valley led by "**Stonewall**" **Jackson** surprised fatigued Union forces.
  3. By mid-afternoon, Union forces were in full retreat back towards Washington, D.C.
  4. Casualties: Union lost 2,896 men; Confederates lost 1,982
  5. Psychological impact:
    - a. The North realized it was in for a long and bloody war.
    - b. The South grew complacent; many soldiers deserted believing the war to be over.
      - Southern enlistments fell off sharply and preparations for a long war relaxed somewhat.

B. General **George B. McClellan** and the Army of the Potomac

1. Lincoln gave McClellan command of the Army of the Potomac in late 1861.
2. He was overcautious and frequently believed he was outnumbered when, in fact, he always possessed numerical advantages; Lincoln eventually became exasperated with him.

III. The Union blockade – the "**Anaconda Plan**"

- A. Initially ineffective; 3,500 miles of coastline was too much for the undeveloped Union navy to police
- B. The blockade concentrated on principal ports and inlets where bulk materials were loaded.
  - Eventually, became more effective against southern blockade-runners, although there is still debate about how important the blockade really was.
- C. The blockade was respected by Britain as she did not want a future war with the North.
- D. Battle of the Ironclads (Hampton Roads, VA, March 1862)
  1. A Confederate ironclad, *CSS Virginia*, threatened to destroy the entire Union fleet blockading southern ports
    - a. *Merrimack* (C.S.S. *Virginia*) -- former U.S. warship plated on sides with old railroad rails; (not really seaworthy); first of the ironclads
    - b. Destroyed two wooden ships of the Union Navy in Chesapeake Bay, VA
  2. *Monitor* -- Union counterpart to *Merrimack*; built in 100 days
  3. The 4-hour battle ended in a stalemate; the *Monitor* withdrew after the captain was wounded; both sides claimed victory.

IV. The War in the Eastern Theater: 1862

- A. The **Peninsula Campaign** (April 5-June 16, 1862)
  1. McClellan abandoned a direct frontal assault on Richmond by land for a flanking approach to Richmond by moving up the peninsula between James and York Rivers.
    - After a month's fighting, the campaign appeared to be working as McClellan pushed within a few miles of Richmond.
  2. Seven Day's Battles (June 25-July 1, 1862)
    - a. Robert E. Lee took command of the Confederate army in Virginia.
    - b. After an unsuccessful battle, McClellan withdrew and later retreated completely.
    - c. Represented the first of Robert E. Lee's first of many victories over the Union army.
  3. The Peninsula campaign was abandoned by Lincoln.
    - McClellan was demoted as commander of the Army of the Potomac and replaced by Gen. John Pope.

4. Casualties: Confederates 20,141; Union 15,849

B. Second Battle of Bull Run (14 July to 30 August)

1. Pope was put in charge of the Union army near Washington.
2. Combined forces of Lee, Jackson, and James Longstreet forced the Union army to retreat again.
  - Some blamed McClellan for not coming quickly to Pope's aid.
3. Casualties: Union 16,054; Confederates 9,197
4. Lincoln once again gave McClellan command of the Army of the Potomac; Pope was removed.

C. Antietam (September 17, 1862): perhaps the most important battle of the war.

1. Lee invaded Maryland hoping to take it from the Union and encourage foreign intervention on behalf of the Confederacy.
2. Antietam was the bloodiest day of the war (23,000 casualties)
  - a. Ended in a stalemate; Lee withdrew having failed his objective.
  - b. McClellan should have destroyed Lee's army with his numerical advantage but let him slip away.
  - c. Lincoln thus removed McClellan from command for the second time and replaced him with Gen. Ambrose Burnside.
3. Antietam was a major turning point in the war
  - a. Foreign powers decided not to intervene in support of the South whose military capacity was now questioned in the face of an unexpectedly powerful Northern army.
  - b. Lincoln got the "victory" he needed to issue the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on Sept. 22, 1862.
    - Hitherto, he had not issued the proclamation because the war was going poorly and issuing the document without a military victory would have made it impotent.
  - c. The South was never again so near victory.

V. **The Emancipation Proclamation**

A. In 1862, Congress had passed the Confiscation Act.

1. The Union Army could confiscate slaves as they invaded the South on the basis that they were "contraband" of war.
2. Slaves that escaped would not be returned to their owners.

B. The Emancipation Proclamation became effective Jan. 1, 1863

1. The Civil War now became more of a moral crusade: a "higher purpose."
  - The moral cause of the South was conversely weakened.
2. Lincoln's immediate goal was not so much to free slaves as to strengthen the moral cause of the Union at home and abroad.
3. The Emancipation Proclamation didn't go as far as the Confiscation Acts for freeing enemy-owned slaves.

4. Constitutionally, the proclamation was somewhat questionable.
  - Later became constitutional with the 13th Amendment in 1865.

#### C. Provisions

1. All slaves in southern areas in rebellion were declared now and forever free.
  - a. It's justification lay with removing valuable slave labor from the Southern war cause.
  - b. Lincoln thus claimed it was a military necessity.
2. Slaves in the border states were not included in the Emancipation Proclamation nor those in specific areas of the conquered South (e.g. Louisiana).
  - Constituted about 800,000 slaves in all.
3. In effect, the Proclamation did little immediately to change the plight of the slaves.
  - a. It did not free slaves in areas where the Union had power.
  - b. It freed slaves in areas where the Union had no power.

#### D. Reaction to the Emancipation Proclamation

1. Many Northerners, especially from the border states and Ohio valley felt Lincoln went too far and were opposed to fighting an "abolitionist war."
  - a. Desertions increased sharply, especially from the border states.
  - b. Republicans suffered losses in the mid-term 1862 elections.
    - Lost congressional seats from NY, PA, OH and Lincoln's home state of Illinois
    - Still remained the majority in Congress, however
2. Many abolitionists complained that Lincoln did not go far enough regarding the Border South.
3. Moderates and some abolitionists were pleased including Horace Greeley and Frederick Douglass.
4. The South accused Lincoln of trying to stir up a slave insurrection.
5. The European working classes sympathized with the proclamation.
  - As a result, the diplomatic condition of the Union regarding Europe improved as the Confederacy was never formally recognized

#### VI. War in the West, 1862: Battle for control of the Mississippi River

- A. **Gen. Ulysses S. Grant** became Lincoln's most able general
  - Won numerous victories in the West and would later be promoted to commander of all the Union's armies.

**B. Grant captured Fort Henry and Fort Donelson in northern Tennessee in February 1862.**

1. Significance: Kentucky was more secure while a gateway opened to the rest of Tennessee and Georgia.
2. Boosted northern morale in the face of humiliating losses in Virginia.

**C. Shiloh (April 6-7, 1862)**

1. The Union moved down through western Tennessee to take the Confederacy's only east-west railroad linking the lower South to cities on the Confederacy's eastern coast.
2. Grant was victorious but the casualties were shocking: 23,746 killed, wounded, or missing.
3. Shiloh brought a shocking realization to both sides that the war would not end quickly and would be exceedingly bloody.

**D. New Orleans was taken by the Union Navy in the spring of 1862.**

1. Campaign led by Admiral David G. Farragut
2. It represented a devastating loss to the Confederates of one of their most vital ports.

**VII. War in the East: Lee's last victories and the Battle of Gettysburg**

**A. Lee defeated General Burnside at Fredericksburg, Virginia, on December 13, 1862.**

1. Burnside launched a foolish frontal assault on the Rebels who were dug in behind a stone wall.
  - More than 10,000 Federals were killed or wounded in "Burnside's slaughter pen"
2. Burnside was thus removed from command and replaced by Joseph "Fighting Joe" Hooker.

**B. Chancellorsville (May 2-4, 1863)**

1. Lee's smaller force split Hooker's army in two.
  - "Stonewall" Jackson made a daring move around Union's flank
2. Union was defeated again by a smaller force only half its size
3. Hooker was thus removed and replaced by General George Meade.
4. "Stonewall" Jackson was killed accidentally by one of his own men.
  - General Lee in response: "I have lost my right arm."
5. Casualties: Confederates lost 13,000 men (22% of Lee's army)

**C. **Battle of Gettysburg** (July 1-3, 1863)**

1. Lee decided to invade the North again, this time through Pennsylvania in hopes of strengthening the peace movement in the North and getting direct foreign support.

2. General George Meade shadowed Lee's move into Pennsylvania.
3. 3-day battle was the bloodiest of the Civil War: 57,000 casualties.
  - a. Day 1: Confederates took the town of Gettysburg but the Union took the more valuable high ground overlooking the town.
  - b. Day 2: July 2
    - i. Major engagements occurred on the Union right and left; Lee hoped to flank the Union army and destroy it but failed.
    - ii. Little Round Top held on the extreme left; prevented flank from caving in.
  - c. Day 3: July 3
    - i. Lee ordered Gen. George Pickett's division to attack the Union center at Cemetery Ridge; Pickett's division was annihilated
      - "High tide of the Confederacy": Rebels were never again so close to victory.
    - ii. Lee retreated while taking full responsibility for the Confederate defeat.
4. Meade neglected to pursue Lee and finish off his army
  - Lincoln after Meade's report that Lee had been repelled: "My God, is that all"
5. Significance: The South was doomed after Gettysburg and Vicksburg; they would never again invade the North and would remain on the defensive until war's end.
6. **Gettysburg Address** (November, 1863)
  - a. Lincoln philosophically established the *Declaration of Independence* as the document of founding law.
  - b. *Equality* became the supreme commitment of the federal government.
  - c. He established the idea of *nation over union*.
    - The United States *is* a free country; NOT the United States *are* a free country.
  - d. Most Americans today accept Lincoln's vision of America.
  - e. It attracted relatively little attention at the time but became one of the most important speeches in world history.
    - The Union's victory proved that men were capable of governing themselves in a free society.

#### VIII. The End of the War in the West

- A. **Vicksburg** campaign lasted seven months (Dec. 1862-July 4, 1863)
  1. Vicksburg was the last Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi River.
  2. July 4, (a day after the Union victory at Gettysburg) the Confederate army surrendered to Grant; 29,500 men.
  3. Significance: Split the Confederacy in two; Union controlled the Mississippi.

## B. Sherman's march through Georgia

1. William Tecumseh Sherman led the Union army through northern Georgia and captured Atlanta in September, 1864.
  - Represented another huge morale boost for the Union
2. **"March to the Sea":** After taking Atlanta, Sherman's army cut a 60-mile-wide swath through the heart of Georgia before arriving at Savannah on the Georgia coast in December, 1864.
  - a. Sherman (and Lincoln) were now determined to inflict the horrors of war on the South to break its will.
    - Sherman coined the term, "War is hell"
  - b. He aimed to destroy supplies destined for the Confederate army and weaken the morale of the Rebels at the front by waging war on their homes.
  - c. Sherman thus became a pioneer of "total war."
    - Despite the campaign's brutality, it probably shortened the war and therefore, saved lives.
    - Sherman did not wantonly kill civilians but rather destroyed their property, took their slaves, and raided their farms.
3. He turned northward into South Carolina where the destruction by the Union army was even worse than in Georgia.
  - a. Union forces burned the capital city of Columbia.
  - b. Sherman's army reached deep into North Carolina by war's end.

## IX. The **Election of 1864**

### A. Critics of Lincoln

1. Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War
  - a. Formed by anti-Lincoln Republicans; secretly led by Salmon P. Chase
  - b. Many distrusted his ability and wanted to keep him in check.
2. Abolitionists (such as Wendell Phillips and Horace Greeley) demanded total emancipation.

### B. Northern Democrats were deeply divided as they lacked a leader.

1. **War Democrats** supported Lincoln (e.g., Sec. of War Stanton)
2. **Peace Democrats** (represented the majority of northern Democrats) did not support Lincoln.
  - Many favored a Union through a negotiated peace, not war.
3. **Copperheads** were the most radical: "peace at any price"
  - a. Many were arrested by Union officials without a warrant and held without a trial.
  - b. Some wished the Confederacy victorious; hated Lincoln
  - c. Strong in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois which contained many Southerners.
    - Governors struggled to keep their states cooperating with the federal gov't.

### C. Presidential Candidates

1. **Union Party**: coalition of the Republican party and War Democrats.
  - a. Republicans feared defeat from anti-Lincoln, anti-Republican sentiment.
  - b. Lincoln was nominated without serious dissent despite an early push for Chase.
  - c. **Andrew Johnson** was Lincoln's running mate; loyal War Democrat from Tennessee who had been a small slave owner when the war began.
    - He was put on the ticket to attract War Democrats and the Border States.
  - d. Slogan: "Don't swap horses in the middle of the river."
2. Democratic Party nominated George McClellan
  - a. Copperheads forced a platform denouncing the war as a failure
  - b. McClellan repudiated this portion of the platform

### D. The course of the war affected the election.

1. During the primaries and during much of the fall, the Union forces were not making apparent progress.
  - a. Lincoln therefore believed that he would not be reelected.
  - b. Some anti-Lincoln Republicans sought to remove Lincoln in favor of another candidate.
2. Northern victories boosted Lincoln politically.
  - a. Admiral Farragut captured Mobile, Alabama on August 5, 1864; "Damn the torpedoes! Go ahead!"
  - b. General Sherman took Atlanta on September 2, 1864.
  - c. General Phillip Sheridan destroyed the Confederates in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia by October, 1864.
3. Northern soldiers were sent home to vote for Lincoln; others voted at the front.

### E. Result

1. Lincoln defeated McClellan 212 to 21; Lincoln only lost KY, DE, and NJ.
  - McClellan received a surprising 45% of the popular vote.
2. Lincoln's electoral victory represented one of the most crushing defeats for the South.
  - a. Lincoln's election assured the continued policy of "total war."
  - b. This was the last real hope for a Confederate victory.
  - c. Confederate desertions increased sharply.

### F. **Lincoln's Second Inaugural speech** became a classic of political oratory

1. Emphasized that the wounds of the war must be healed once the war was over.



2. Sought reconciliation rather than retribution
  - **"With malice toward none, with charity for all"**

#### X. End of the War in the East: Grant's Virginia Campaign

- A. Grant was promoted to lead all Union armies after Lincoln's dismay with Meade after Gettysburg.
  1. Meade still remained head of the Army of the Potomac.
  2. Grant's strategy: attack Rebel armies simultaneously thus not allowing them to assist one another; destroy Confederate Army.
  3. Campaign would result in 50,000 Union casualties.
- B. Wilderness (May 5-7, 1864): beginning of Grant's campaign
  - Nearly 28,000 casualties combined on both sides.
- C. Spotsylvania Courthouse (May 8-19): 24,000 casualties
- D. Cold Harbor (June 3, 1864)
  1. Grant ordered frontal assault at a huge cost.
  2. 7,000 Federals killed in a half-hour; Confederates less than 1,500.
  3. Northern public opinion was appalled at the losses.
    - Critics: "Grant the Butcher"
  4. Grant was determined to continue the grind, unlike his predecessors who retreated or surrendered.
    - Lincoln supported him.
- E. Siege of Petersburg (June 1864-March 1865)
  1. Petersburg contained all the railroads that served Lee's army and the Richmond government from the south.
  2. Lee rushed in time in June to defend Petersburg, the gateway to Richmond
  3. Grant lay siege to the city for 9 months and eventually broke through in March 1865.
- F. Capture of Richmond (April 1865)
  1. Grant hoped to divert Confederate forces from Petersburg.
  2. Lee sacrificed several detachments in his rear guard to evacuate both Richmond and Petersburg successfully.
- G. Early 1865, Confederates tried to negotiate peace between the "two countries."
  - Lincoln was not willing to accept anything short of unconditional surrender.
- H. Lee's surrender
  1. Confederate army was surrounded near **Appomattox Court House** in Virginia.
  2. April 9, 1865 -- Lee surrendered his Army of Northern Virginia.
    - a. The war in Virginia was officially over.
    - b. Remaining Confederate armies surrendered within a few weeks.
  3. The terms of the surrender were generous.
    - a. The 30,000 captured Confederates were paroled and allowed to go home so long as they vowed never to take up arms against

the Union again.

b. Confederates were allowed to keep their own horses for spring plowing.

- Officers could keep their side arms.

4. Grant: "The war is over; the rebels are our countrymen again."

#### XI. Lincoln was assassinated on April 14, 1865 (Good Friday)

A. Only five days after Lee's surrender, Lincoln was assassinated at Ford's theater by **John Wilkes Booth**, a famous actor and Confederate sympathizer.

B. Lincoln died at the height of his popularity, thus becoming a martyr.

C. The South cheered initially, but eventually saw it as a disaster for them.

1. Lincoln's reconstruction policies were far more moderate compared to the later Congressional Reconstruction.

2. The assassination increased bitterness in the North against the South especially with rumors that Jefferson Davis plotted it.

#### XII. Prisoner of War Camps

A. The North treated POWs better than the South as it had more resources

B. Southern prisons could not provide for POWs since Confederate soldiers often lacked basic necessities.

- Andersonville was the most notorious POW camp; more than 13,000 died there.

#### XIII. Results and costs of the Civil War

A. 620,000 soldiers dead (2% of population!); over 1 million total casualties

- Visual impact of the war was chronicled in the photographs of **Mathew Brady** and other war-time photographers

B. Slavery was abolished.

C. The Union/Nation was preserved.

1. Nullification and secession died with the Confederacy.

2. The ideals of Union and *nation* were triumphant.

- Dangers of two nations and balance of power politics averted

D. Total cost of war: \$15 billion (over \$2 trillion in today's dollars)

- Does not include pensions and interest on the national debt.

E. The war economy laid the foundation for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Industrial Revolution after the war.

F. The Monroe Doctrine became more effective as the U.S. had demonstrated its military power.

- The U.S. would now look to the western hemisphere and beyond to expand its influence.

## Terms to Know

|                           |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Anaconda Plan             | "March to the Sea"        |
| Battle of Bull Run        | election of 1864          |
| "Stonewall" Jackson       | War Democrats             |
| George McClellan          | Peace Democrats           |
| Peninsula Campaign        | "Copperheads"             |
| Battle of Antietam        | National Union Party      |
| Emancipation Proclamation | Andrew Johnson            |
| Confiscation Acts         | Second Inaugural speech   |
| Ulysses S. Grant          | Grant's Virginia Campaign |
| Battle of Gettysburg      | Appomattox Court House    |
| Gettysburg Address        | John Wilkes Booth         |
| Vicksburg                 | Mathew Brady              |
| William T. Sherman        |                           |

## **Essay Questions**

*Note: This sub-unit is a medium-low probability area for the AP exam. In the past 10 years, 2 questions have come in part from the material in this chapter. You are more likely to get an essay question dealing with Unit 5.3 than 5.4. Below is a question that will help you study the topics that have appeared on previous exams.*

1. Analyze the political, economic, and military factors that led to the Union's victory during the Civil War.

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