# Civil War

### Regional Armies

The North had a lot of advantages: it was bigger, more populous, and more industrial than the South. Plus, it had all sorts of transportation networks that made it way easier to send soldiers anywhere it wanted.

The South, on the other hand, hardly even had any cities. Its soldiers were constantly badly dressed and armed, because it didn't have the factories to supply them. They had thoughtthat they would have foreign support (since so many relied on their cotton), but Europe had finally begun to take America seriously and didn't want to anger the North by an alliance.

So, stuff looked bad for the South. But, amazingly, they started to winmost of the battles. The thing is, while volunteers flooded to both sides at the beginning, the North didn't have as much popular support as the South. The South was literally fighting for its survival and its way of life. The North was confused—were they fighting for slaves? The Union? Was the Union so important? Many refused to fight: in New York, the **Draft Riots**sparked such a dangerous mob reaction to the draft that people fled the city fearing Revolution.

Plus, the South had the best leadership from the beginning: **"Stonewall" Jackson**and **Robert E. Lee.**Time and time again, Union Generals proved incompetent—that is, until **Ulysses Grant**(who, funnily enough, had failed at everything else he had ever done in life) became head general.

Grant kept forces pushing in the West for control of the Mississippi River and the port of New Orleans. Then, when Lee and Jackson tried to stage an invasion of the North, he successfully fought back, winning at**Gettysburg.**That was the beginning of the end for the South, whose back had been broken.

To ensure they were laid low, General **William Sherman**led his troops through a destructive march through the South, from Atlanta to Savannah. All along the way, he employed the **scorched-earth tactic**(fun fact: actually first tried by Russian peasants against Napoleon's advancing army.), burning everything in their trail.

Plus, in 1863, Lincoln had issued the **Emancipation Proclamation.**Careful—it did notend slavery in all the U.S. "Border states" like Maryland and Delaware still had slaves, but fought for the North. Lincoln only announced that all the slaves in the Confederacy were free.

Obviously, this didn't make southern slave-owners say "Oops. We should probably release them now, President says so." However, it did make slaves themselves bold enough to run away, and many to join the Union Army. At the beginning of the war, neither side wanted blacks to fight—but by the end, they needed the manpower, so bothsides allowed them

By 1865, Lee saw that the southern cause was lost. He surrendered at **Appomattox.**Tragically, Lincoln was only able to enjoy victory for about a week: he was assassinated in the theater by **John Wilkes Booth,**an actor who secretly entered the President’s box, shot him in the head, and then leapt onto the stage. Some say he he shouted “"Sic semper tyrannis," or “death to all tyrants” in Latin, and others claim he added “"I have done it, the South is avenged.”

Before his assassination, Lincoln had pushed for the passage of the **Thirteenth Amendment**to free all slaves in the Union. It passed after his death, and "Radical Republicans" would take on Lincoln's cause and try to improve the lot of free blacks all over the South.

However, the nation couldn't immediately be healed. The Civil War was such a massive, transforming force that historians use it as a kind of punctuation mark. That also marked the end of the antebellum era, the period ever since the ratification of the constitution. A whole new era of American history dawned, with all sorts of political, economic, and social changes.

### A Nation Transformed

Lincoln had demonstrated the power of the executive branch. You think Andrew Jackson wielded the light-saber of presidential power? Lincoln gave the president such huge wartime power that he actually suspended the writ ofhabeas corpus.The government was allowed to jail someone without giving him or her a trial. This ended after the war, but it still set an important precedent: in war, the president becomes a force to be reckoned with.

Plus, ideology changed. People talked less about "states' rights" and more about the union. In fact, people started using the terms "nation" and "national" more. They also started re-defining democracy, since a whole new group—African Americans—were with the **14th Amendment**given citizenship and the right to vote.

It had also created lots of changes for women. They had fought, bled, and toiled for the war as well. Southern women had held down and run plantations while their men were away. Northern women had worked in factories and organized drives to help run the war engines. Women in all regions had also worked in the front lines as nurses, and many had also been spies. They had proven themselves courageous, bold, and instilled with a real fighting spirit. This was the stuff to inspire the confidence for a new battle: women's rights.

Finally, the war had literally broken the southern backbone. The southern slave economy had totally dissolved, and the south had to be rebuilt from the ground up. Many Northerners looked at the smoking ruins and burned fields of the South and saw opportunity.It was time, they thought, to build the South in the shape of the North: to create railroads, factories, and cities, and industrialize it.

Jefferson's "agrarian republic" ideal sputtered, gasped, breathed its last, and expired in a heap. Northern "**carpetbaggers**," sneeringly given this name by Southerners because of their carpetbag luggage, swarmed down to attempt to stimulate new business in the South. Other men and women came down to join the **Freedman's Bureau,**which aimed to help newly freed slaves by creating schools, helping them to reunite families, securing the vote, and protecting them against whites.

For about a decade, everyone had a different idea about how to rebuild the South: a period known as **Reconstruction.**