



Summary

TELESCOPING THE TIMES *The Union in Peril*

CHAPTER OVERVIEW *Slavery becomes an issue that divides the nation. North and South enter a long and destructive civil war that ends slavery. African Americans briefly enjoy full civil rights, but new laws discriminate against them.*

1 The Divisive Politics of Slavery

MAIN IDEA *Disagreements over slavery heightened regional tensions and led to the break up of the Union.*

North and South increasingly disagreed over slavery. The debate focused on slavery in territories that wanted to become states. When California applied for statehood as a free state, Southerners were angry because much of the state was south of the Missouri Compromise line of 36° 30'. Henry Clay drew up the Compromise of 1850 in an attempt to satisfy both North and South. After much debate, Congress approved the compromise, which allowed California to enter the Union as a free state.

The compromise also included the Fugitive Slave Act, which allowed harsh steps to be taken against slaves who ran away. Many Northerners disliked the law. Some helped slaves to escape on a route called the Underground Railroad. Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* showed slavery's evils. The book sold well, but Southerners resented it.

Slavery in the territories became an issue again. Senator Stephen Douglas proposed a bill that would allow the people in Nebraska and Kansas territories to decide whether they wanted slavery. Congress eventually approved the bill and the Kansas-Nebraska Act became law in 1854. As a result, proslavery and antislavery forces began fighting for possession of Kansas.

The Whig party broke up over the issue of slavery. Antislavery factions formed the Republican Party. In 1856, the first Republican candidate for president, John C. Frémont, won many votes but finished second.

A Supreme Court decision in 1857 worsened the situation. In the *Dred Scott* case, the Court defined slaves as property, protected by the Constitution. Southerners celebrated the decision.

In 1858, Stephen Douglas, the Democratic Senator from Illinois, ran for re-election against Republican Abraham Lincoln. In a series of debates, Lincoln drew national attention with his

attacks on slavery as a moral evil. Douglas won the election, but by not defending slavery strongly, he lost Southern support.

In the 1860 election, four candidates ran for president. Republican Lincoln won with no support in the South. Convinced they had lost their political voice, seven Southern states seceded (left the Union) and formed the Confederate States of America.

2 The Civil War Begins

MAIN IDEA *Shortly after the nation's Southern states seceded from the Union, war began between the North and South.*

The Civil War began in April 1861, when Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter, a Union fort in Charleston, South Carolina. Lincoln issued a call for troops to fight to restore the Union. Four more Southern states seceded.

The North had more people, more factories, and more railroad tracks, and could grow more food. The South's advantages included the demand for cotton, excellent generals, and soldiers eager to defend their way of life.

The North planned to blockade the South. The Union also hoped to capture the Mississippi River, split the Confederacy in two, and capture their capital at Richmond, Virginia. The Confederate strategy was to defend themselves from Northern attack and to attack the North if the opportunity arose.

A Confederate victory at Bull Run resulted in stepped-up enlistments in the North. In 1862 the Union won some early victories in the West. The Union navy captured the port of New Orleans. Both sides clashed in a bloody battle for the capitals near a creek called Antietam in Maryland.

In response to the demands of abolitionists, in 1863 Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed the slaves in Confederate states and gave the war a high moral purpose.

As the war continued, casualties mounted. Both sides began to draft civilians into the army. After the Emancipation Proclamation, large numbers of African Americans joined the Union army. They fought bravely but suffered discrimination. As the

war continued, Northern troops pushed deeper into the South.

3 The North Takes Charge

MAIN IDEA *After four years of bloody fighting, the Union wore down the Confederacy and won the war.*

South and North fought decisive battles in 1863. General Robert E. Lee and the Confederates lost a three-day battle at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Lee was forced to retreat, and he never invaded the North again. Meanwhile, General Ulysses S. Grant captured Vicksburg, Mississippi. With this victory, the North won control of the Mississippi River. At a ceremony held to dedicate a cemetery at Gettysburg, Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address.

With the losses at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, Southern morale dropped. Lincoln made Grant the commander of all Union armies. Grant led many attacks against Lee's army. Meanwhile, Grant named General William Tecumseh Sherman as commander of the military division of the Mississippi. Sherman and his troops invaded Georgia, destroying property as they advanced. Sherman's success helped President Lincoln win re-election in 1864.

In April 1865, Lee and the Confederacy surrendered at Appomattox. The war ended.

The Civil War changed the United States. The federal government was larger and stronger. The economic gap between North and South widened. The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery.

President Lincoln never got to implement his plans for reunifying the nation. Just five days after Lee had surrendered, Lincoln was shot and killed by John Wilkes Booth.

4 Reconstruction and Its Effects

MAIN IDEA *After the Civil War, the nation embarked on a period known as Reconstruction, during which attempts were made to readmit the South to the Union.*

During the war, Lincoln devised a plan for Reconstruction—a period of rebuilding the nation and readmitting Southern states to the nation. Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln as president, had a similar plan. Some Republicans thought it was too easy on the South. As a result, many Republicans worked together to shift control of Reconstruction from the executive branch to the legislature.

Congress created the Freedmen's Bureau to help former slaves. It passed the Civil Rights Act of

1866, which guaranteed the civil rights of African Americans. Congress also passed the Fourteenth Amendment, which made African Americans citizens. In 1867, Congress enacted new Reconstruction legislation. According to the legislation, Congress would readmit a state after the state approved the Fourteenth Amendment and gave African-American men the right to vote.

The fight with Johnson led Congress to find grounds to impeach the president. Johnson avoided conviction and removal from office by just one vote. In 1868, Grant was elected president with the help of the African-American vote. In 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified. It banned states from denying the right to vote to African Americans.

Republican-dominated state governments were elected in the South. Severe economic problems in the South made their task difficult. Conflicting goals within the Republican Party also made progress difficult. In the South, former slaves worked hard to establish new lives. Many blacks won election to political office.

Many whites, however, resisted the idea that African Americans should be treated equally. African Americans hoped to work their own land. Instead, plantation owners created a system called sharecropping that allowed them to control the land and the labor of African Americans. As a result, most African Americans lived in poverty. Some whites formed the Ku Klux Klan. This secret group terrorized and killed blacks across the South. Congress passed laws to end Klan violence. However, new laws allowed Southern Democrats to regain political power.

Political corruption and scandals diverted attention in the North away from conditions in the South. The Supreme Court also began to undo some of the social and political changes brought about during Reconstruction. After the inauguration of Rutherford B. Hayes as president in 1877, federal troops were removed from the South. White Democrats regained power there. Reconstruction was over.

Review

1. What events from 1856 to 1860 led to the Civil War?
2. How did the North plan to win the Civil War?
3. What impact did the Emancipation Proclamation have on the Civil War?
4. What were the results of the Civil War?
5. What role did Congress play during Reconstruction?