



THE WAR OF SECESSION (1861-1865)



What causes contributed to the outbreak of the American Civil War, and how did these factors shape the conflicts and divisions within American society?

D) THE SEVERAL DIVISIONS THAT LED TO THE WAR

A) Economic differences

- **Dynamic and modern North :**
 - industrialised states with manufactures, industries allowing urbanisation and innovations (canals, roads, steamboats and railroads, telegraph, newspapers.)
 - 22 million of people
- **Rural and conservative South:**
 - economy relied on slaves' workforce in plantations. Crops, tobacco, cotton were exported to Europe
 - 9 million of people: more than 1/3 of slaves



B) Political and social differences : the slavery matter

North: already abolished + appearance of the **Republican Party (1854)** that fought **against slavery's extension**

South: wealthy white masters feared that **limiting slavery would negatively affect their economy**

Divergences on the interpretation of the Constitution and the independence Declaration :

- North: **equality** among men to create **1 country ruled by 1 central government**
- South: **right to property** to be **more independent** of the federal government

November 1860: election of Abraham Lincoln who were republican and antislavery

December 1860-January 1861: secession of 7 southern states because of the threat on their rights as slave states

2 starting points:

- Lincoln's investiture
- Attack and victory at Fort Sumter (federal held) by the Confederate forces

→ 4 states refused to send troops to the Union
→ 3 border states gave their sympathy to the 7 slave states

II PROCEEDINGS AND KEY EVENTS

A) Deadly battles and victories on both sides

- **June 1st 1861 :** first major chaotic battle "First Battle of Bull Run".
→ total casualties = 22 000 / a Confederacy victory
- **1862 . Eastern front :** Robert E. Lee southern general 's attempt to threat Washington D
→ fail
- **Western front :** northern general Ulysses S. Grant's victories in Central Kentucky and Tennessee
→ capture railway hub in northern Mississippi.
- **September 17th 1862 :** Bloodiest day in the US military history : Antietam battle.
→ total casualties = 23 000/ a Union Victory
- Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation -> **January 1st 1863**

B) The turning point : the year of 1863

- **Emancipation Proclamation** changed the main purpose of the war : avoid secession -> abolition of slavery
- **July :** decisive Battle of Gettysburg, General E. Lee attempted a new capture of Washington D.C. →total casualties = 51 000 / Union Victory
- **Siege of Vicksburg/** Union victory, Mississippi river under general S. Grant's control, Confederacy split.
- **November :** Soldiers National Cemetery dedicated, "Gettysburg adress"

Repercussions of the conflict:

- 13th Amendment: abolition of slavery
- Assassination of Lincoln by a Southern sympathizer
- Appearance of racist and supremacist white societies
- Great efforts of reconstruction
- **SHAPE US IDENTITY** by reunifying the North and the South and freeing slaves

Nostalgia and The Lost Cause:

→ negationist ideology that defends the cause of the Confederate states was fair and heroic and legitimate slavery

- white domination justified by good treatment of slaves
- monuments of Southern generals, history books, Jim Crow Laws, KKK
- invasion of the Capitol (Jan 2021) where appearance of the Confederate flag

C) The end of the war

- **1864 :** S. Grant appointed general in chief of the union army
- **Attack on all fronts :** siege of Atlanta by general W.Sherman.
- **East :** S. Grant vs E. Lee = series of battles.
→ casualties : 80 000.
- Lincoln reelected, Sherman took over Georgia & South Carolina
- **April 9th 1865 :** General E Lee surrendered ♣ Appomattox.
→ Victory of the Union
- Final casualties
 - 620 000 victims
 - 1 million injured