

# Military Research – Civil War 1861-1865

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## The Seeds of War

The Civil War was inevitable as the collision between the Northern and Southern States philosophies and beliefs were out of sync to each other. Slavery was abolished as an institution in the Northern States since 1804. Although abolition was not immediate in most states, it did evolve through local laws over the years. [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org) Toward the end of the 1840s, the Abolitionists wanted the outright ban on Slavery. Southern plantations needed the cheap labor to meet the demand for cotton. Congress had tried for a long time to balance the issue of slavery as territories petitioned for state hood. One result was the Mason-Dixon Line. States above this demarcation were to be free while the states below would retain slavery. California's petition for state hood threw a monkey wrench into the works.

## Compromise of 1850

The Compromise of 1850 consists of five laws passed in September of 1850 that dealt with the issue of slavery. In 1849 California requested permission to enter the Union as a free state, potentially upsetting the balance between the free and slave states in the U.S. Senate. Senator Henry Clay introduced a series of resolutions on January 29, 1850, in an attempt to seek a compromise and avert a crisis between North and South. As part of the Compromise of 1850, the [Fugitive Slave Act was amended](#) and the [slave trade in Washington, D.C.](#), was abolished.

Furthermore, [California entered the Union](#) as a free state and a territorial government was created in [Utah](#). In addition, an act was passed settling a [boundary dispute between Texas and New Mexico](#) that also established a territorial government in New Mexico. [The Library of Congress](#)

More information on Slavery can be found here.  
<https://www.nps.gov/fosu/learn/historyculture/upload/slavery-brochure.pdf>

## The Presidential Election of 1860

The 1860 Presidential Election is the straw that broke the camel's back and leading to the outbreak of the Civil War.

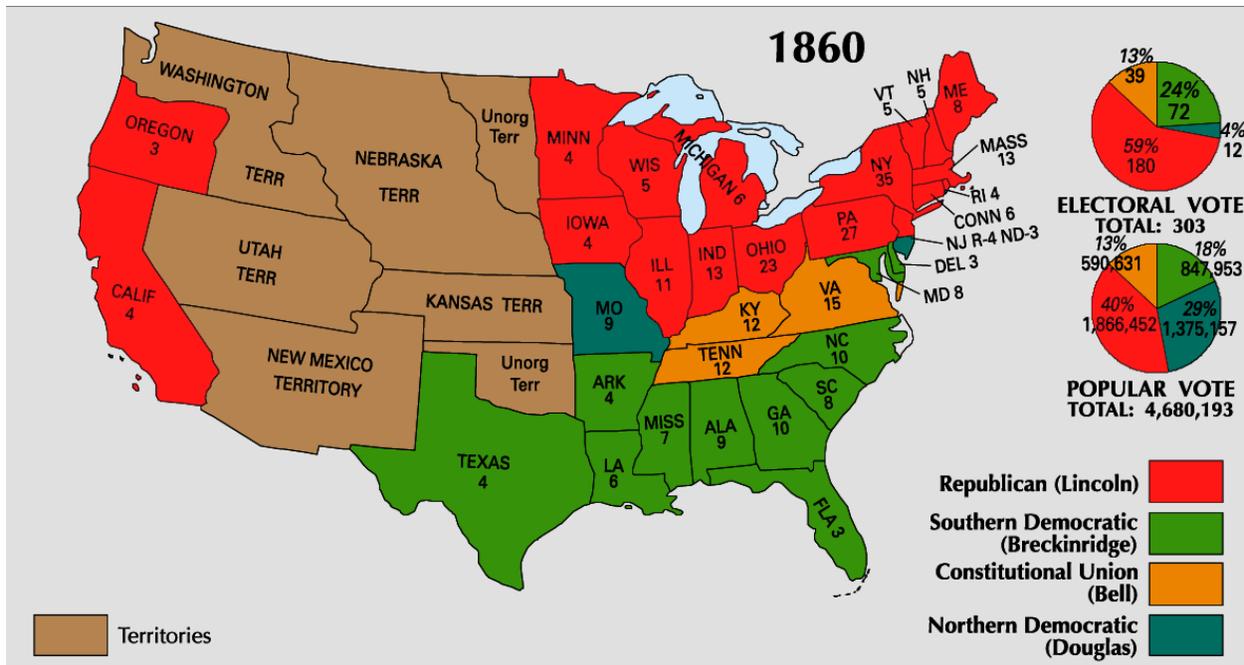
There were not just two Presidential Candidates, but four. The candidates were Abraham Lincoln (Republican Party), John C Breckinridge (Southern Democratic Party), John Bell (Constitutional



[The United States Senate, A.D. 1850.](#) Drawn by P. F. Rothermel; engraved by R. Whitechurch. c1855.  
[Prints and Photographs Division.](#)

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Union Party), and Stephen A Douglas (Northern Democratic Party). The outcome as we know from history is Abraham Lincoln won the election of 1860, but with only 39.8% of the popular vote and 180 of the 303 electoral votes (152 electoral votes to win). Obviously, the southern states needed a pro-slavery candidate to remain viable. The South up to the 1860s had produced two-thirds of the US Presidents. However, the Republican plank had promised not to interfere with slavery in the states, but suggested an opposition to slavery in the territories. The platform promised tariffs protecting industry and workers, a [Homestead Act](#) granting free farmland in the West to settlers, and the funding of a [transcontinental railroad](#). There was no mention of Mormonism (which had been condemned in the Party's 1856 platform), the [Fugitive Slave Act](#), personal liberty laws, or the [Dred Scott decision](#).<sup>[7]</sup> While the Seward forces were disappointed at the nomination of a little-known western upstart, they rallied behind Lincoln. Abolitionists, however, were angry at the selection of a moderate and had little faith in Lincoln.



(Source: [Wikipedia](#), United States Presidential Election of 1860)

Now the state is set. The North saw slavery as the main issue. The South believed the war was over the reach of the Federal Government into the rights of the individual States. Either way, Slavery and economics are so tightly woven you could not separate the issues to say one over the other drove the nation to war.

“The reality is there were many factors that contributed to the failure of diplomacy resulting in bloodshed and hardship on a scale never before seen by this nation as a percentage of the population. The North fought for preservation of the Union (primary) as well as to free the slaves (secondary). Likewise, the reality is the majority of the "State's Rights" fought for by the South revolved around the "peculiar institution" of Slavery, especially as property. In this section are documents and resources providing

insight into the various topics which led to the political disagreements, disagreements which the bounds of compromise failed to contain.

Beginning with the protection of slavery as an institution provided for in the United States Constitution, the debate ranged back and forth from the right of an individual to be free once outside the boundary of a slave holding state, the definition of a person as property, the right to take said "property" to territories of the United States not yet formed as States, etc. Involved in these debates were economic policy, legislative representation as voting power, religion, State's Rights, sectionalism, etc." [civilwar.com](http://civilwar.com)

## Civil War

South Carolina secedes from the Union December 20, 1861 after the election of Abraham Lincoln. Six more states (Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas) would follow within 2 months. Lincoln is sworn in March 4, 1861 as the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. Opening shots are fired at Fort Sumter by the Confederate Army, April 12, 1861. Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, and North Carolina secede to form the eleven state Confederate States of America. See the following timeline for the Civil War.  
<http://www.historyplace.com/civilwar/>

The outcome would be 620,000 to 750,000 soldiers dead out of 3.2 million (both sides), the collapse of the Confederacy, 4 million slaves freed, the southern economy shattered, and the southern infrastructure destroyed.

New technology would be deployed including:

- Communications and Transport.
- Telegraph.
- Aerial reconnaissance. (hot air balloons)
- Railroads.
- Army ambulance corps.
- Weapons and Ships. (USS Monitor, CSS Virginia, CSS Hunley)
- Long-Range Weapons and the Minie Bullet.
- The Gatling gun.
- <http://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/feature/civil-war-innovations/>

## Military Leaders

Union Generals	Confederate Generals
Ulysses S. Grant	Robert E Lee
George McClellan	Stonewall Jackson
William Tecumseh Sherman	J.E.B. Stuart
George Meade (Gettysburg)	Nathan Bedford Forest

Robert Anderson (Fort Sumter)	James Longstreet
George Custer	Braxton Bragg
Winfield Scott Hancock	George Pickett

Civil War Generals: <http://www.historynet.com/civil-war-generals>

## Civil War Battles

The Civil War locations and battles are too numerous to be listed. The North typically named battles after landmarks where the South named their battles after towns. One example is the “Battle of Antietam and Second Battle of Bull Run” referred to by the North. The South called them “Battles of Sharpsburg and Manassas”.

List of American Civil War Battles (Wikipedia):

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_American\\_Civil\\_War\\_battles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_American_Civil_War_battles)

The National Park Service - CWSAC Battle Summaries (The American Battlefield Protection Program): <https://www.nps.gov/abpp/battles/bystate.htm>

Key Battles (Clemson University):

<http://www.clemson.edu/agcom/dale/aged480/jennifer/keybat.htm>

National Archives: <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/civil-war>

## Civil War Prison Camps

Being a prisoner was not for the faint of heart. Typically poor living conditions and poor food meant a lot of suffering. The prison exchange system called for equal exchanges of all soldiers captured, and not to take up arms until they were formally exchanged. However, with the enlistment of black soldiers, the South refused to acknowledge the equal treatment of black soldiers and said black soldiers were not subject to the prisoner exchange. By 1863, President Lincoln suspended the prisoner exchange until the Confederacy agreed to treat black soldiers the same as white soldiers. (Prisoner Exchange:

<https://www.nps.gov/ande/learn/historyculture/grant-and-the-prisoner-exchange.htm>)

### *Prison Camps*

American Civil War prison camps:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American\\_Civil\\_War\\_prison\\_camps](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War_prison_camps)

Civil War Trust: <http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/warfare-and-logistics/pow-camps/prison-camps.html>

### Civil War Prisoner Records:

National Park Service database (Fort McHenry, Baltimore and Andersonville, George):

<https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-prisoners.htm>

Confederate Prisoner of War Records (FamilySearch Wiki):

[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Confederate\\_Prisoner\\_of\\_War\\_Records](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Confederate_Prisoner_of_War_Records)

Ancestry.com (Subscription or Library): <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1124>

Civil War Prisons (Andersonville database search):

<http://www.civilwarprisoners.com/search.php?database=andersonville>

## Where are they?

**Confederate Pension Records** – National Archive’s State List of where to find them.

<https://www.archives.gov/research/military/civil-war/confederate/pension.html>

**Sons of Confederate Veterans** – A list of resources <http://www.scv.org/>

**National Park Service – Civil War** <http://www.nps.gov/civilwar/index.htm> NPS Soldiers and Sailors Database. Search our database of more than 6.3 million records to find your family member. Look under “People” on the left side menu for a list of resources. (**Both Confederate and Union Forces**)

**The VA web site** - [http://www.cem.va.gov/burial\\_benefits/](http://www.cem.va.gov/burial_benefits/)

The Nationwide Grave Locator (National Cemeteries like Santa Fe, etc.) is on the left side menu plus other information for veterans.

The National Archives does not hold state militia records. For these records, you will need to contact the appropriate **State Archives**. <https://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/state-archives.html>

Fold3 (Free with ABQ Library Card) - <https://www.fold3.com/>

Search for “Civil War Records” on Cyndi’s List - <http://www.cyndislist.com/>

## Slavery

Heinonline (Registration Required) – Slavery in America

<http://heinonline.org/HOL/Index?collection=slavery>

The Freedman Bureau Online - <http://www.freedmensbureau.com/>

Family Search Wiki - African American Freedmen's Bureau Records

[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/African\\_American\\_Freedmen%27s\\_Bureau\\_Records](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/African_American_Freedmen%27s_Bureau_Records)

Other Free Sites:

- [FamilySearch](#) Free access to largest non-profit database of genealogical records from all over the world. Sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

- [US GenWeb Project \(all states\)](#) Free genealogy and family history online made possible by the USGenWeb Project volunteers. Search free genealogy websites for your ancestors
- [US GenWeb Project - New Mexico](#) Compiles research on New Mexico genealogy, and also provides an opportunity to post questions and exchange information with fellow researchers.
- [Cyndi's List](#) A comprehensive, categorized & cross-referenced list of links that point you to genealogical research sites online.
- [US National Archives](#)
- [Rootsweb](#) Free genealogy site affiliated with Ancestry.com. Primary purpose of RootsWeb.com is to connect people so they can help each other and share genealogical research.

## **New Mexico – Civil War Records**

- Family Search Wiki:  
[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/New Mexico, Civil War Service Records of Union Soldiers \(FamilySearch Historical Records\)](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/New_Mexico,_Civil_War_Service_Records_of_Union_Soldiers_(FamilySearch_Historical_Records))
- Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness Website: <https://www.raogk.org/newmexico-genealogy/nm-military-records/>
- Research Online – Search the New Mexico Soldiers Index:  
<http://www.researchonline.net/nmcw/search/searchnm.php>