

# A Quick Reference to the Civil War and Reconstruction As a Foundation for What America Becomes in the Gilded Age and After

**What Is This Quick Reference For?** This quick reference does not try to cover everything, but to provide a way to help you understand the essentials and to see how **those essentials fit together**. If you have a question, ask. Glad to help you.

**Common Question about Dates and This History Class:** Does having these dates in here mean students are expected to memorize them? The answer is “**no**.” To understand how things happened, you want to notice the **order** of events. Think of it this way: if you were watching two people fight, how you interpreted things would probably depend on who did what first.

## Two Ways to Find What You Want

If you are looking for specific information, use Find (available in different ways on different systems). For example, if you missed a question (such as Emancipation Proclamation) on the quiz, you could press Ctrl-F, type a few letters (such as Procl), and follow the screen prompts to move through all uses of the word in this resource.

You can also click on the links below to go directly to something you want to use.

Civil War Between Brothers (and Sisters): Comparison of Strengths

Civil War Between Brothers: Comparison of Enlistments, the Wounded, and the Dead

South’s Assumptions About Their Success and the Reality of Each Assumption

Timeline: Civil War – April 1861 to April 1865

What Set the Direction for the Republican Party and for the Post-Civil War Era

What’s the Gilded Age and What Does Its Name Mean?

Timeline: Phases of Reconstruction to the Beginning of the Gilded Age – April 1865 to 1877

## Civil War Between Brothers (and Sisters): Comparison of Strengths

**Tip:** Compare the column for the North and the South. Who might win in a short war? Who probably cannot win in a long war?

Issues	The Union (the North)	The Confederacy (the South)
Basics	23 states (4 slave <sup>1</sup> ); 22M people.	11 states; 9M people (5.5M white; 3.5M slave)
Goal of war	Stop the secession (only later is slavery an official objective of the war)	Secede
Infrastructure, banking	Money in place (2X banking)	—
Infrastructure, communication	Communication in place (telegraph lines)	—
Infrastructure, government – people	Central bureaucracy in place	Bureaucracy to build
Infrastructure, government – system itself	Constitutional system of government	Government equivalent to Articles of Confederation
Infrastructure, manufacturing technology	Technology to manufacture; 6X South	— (and only 3% of firearm manufacture)
Infrastructure, transportation – land	Railroad network in place (some varied gauges)	Inadequate railroads (varied gauges)
Infrastructure, transportation – sea	Navy in place to block ports	Dependent on imports
Infrastructure, transportation – sea – protection for	Navy in place	Navy on order from British and French
Leadership	Abraham Lincoln	Jefferson Davis
Population, for manufacture	People to manufacture (quantity & consolidation)	—
Population, for military	400,000 soldiers = immigrants	20 slave/1 white exemption
Population, for military—the negatives	(But NY draft riots in 1863)	(But 1865 law to conscript 300,000 slaves)
Raw materials for manufacturing	Raw materials	Raw materials

## Civil War Between Brothers: Comparison of Enlistments, the Wounded, and the Dead

The % numbers are from McPherson’s *What They Fought For*. Numbers do not include losses from prisons (*Encyclopedia of American History*).

Issues	The Union (the North)	The Confederacy (the South)
Enlistments	1,557,000	1,082,000
Wounded	275,000	100,000 minimum
Dead, #	365,000	200,000
Dead, %	5%	11-12%

<sup>1</sup> Delaware, Missouri, Maryland, Kentucky

## South's Assumptions About Their Success and the Reality of Each Assumption

Assumption	Reality
Britain and France need our cotton. "King Cotton diplomacy" will win.	Could get Egyptian cotton Also needed Northern wheat
Britain and France need our orders for a navy—ironclads/rams.	Union threat of war with them, plus South's failure to win at Gettysburg (1863)
Northwest needs our rivers to get to market.	Unaware of the Northeast-Northwest connection by canal and railroad grid Rivers opened South to Union forces (US Grant in 1862)
We're fighting a defensive war just like the Patriots.	War on the homeland—disruption of food supplies and civilian losses, as shown in Sherman's March.
We're experienced fighters.	North had Singer sewing machine, Borden milk, immigrant soldiers.
We have experienced generals.	North had, when he was sober, U.S. Grant; North had William Sherman.
We're fighting for a higher cause of liberty.	Abraham Lincoln, Radical Congress, Radical officers, and the Emancipation Proclamation—Slavery became the cause and liberty became the cause.

## Timeline: Civil War – April 1861 to April 1865

**Tip on the History:** Look at the map provided in the course with this resource. It has instructor's notes.

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The date column in the timeline shows the year followed by the number of the month. For example:  
1861-04 means 1861 in April

Date	Details
1861-04	<b>Fort Sumter (harbor of Charleston, SC)</b> —Union intent to "hold, occupy, and possess" federal property in the South. Provisions in short supply, unarmed supply ship. 2 days firing by the South and surrender of fort. South became the aggressor.
1861-07	<b>Bull Run (near Manassas, VA)</b> Officially a Southern victory
1862-04	<b>Shiloh Church (near Pittsburgh Landing, TN)</b> A mixed outcome with each side having a claim to success, but the South is unable to stop the Union's moves (led by U.S. Grant) into the Mississippi.
1862-09	<b>Antietam (creek near Sharpsburg, MD)</b> – Lee attacks. 2,100 Union deaths and 2,700 Confederate; wounded 18,500. Stalemate, but Lee retreated—Official victory Lincoln needed.
1863-01	<b>Emancipation Proclamation</b> - freed slaves in <b>rebellious territory</b> only, not in the border states still in the Union—a beautiful chess move. His action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Did nothing that could be stopped</li> <li>▪ Did not offend the slave-holding Union states</li> <li>▪ Blocked Radical Republicans—pressing Lincoln for more hostile actions to South</li> <li>▪ Blocked the radical press—arguing for emancipation</li> <li>▪ Blocked the Radical military—freeing slaves they found</li> <li>▪ Blocked British ruling class sentiment toward South (The British public was increasingly anti-slavery as were the textile workers, who remained supportive of the North even as they lost jobs.)</li> </ul>
1863-07	<b>Gettysburg (PA)—Eastern part of the war</b> – Lee attacked.  <b>Why?</b> Hopes for France and Great Britain as allies – for an equivalent to Saratoga in the American Revolution. 165,000 troops; Southern charge (George Pickett's charge), 14,000-15,000 soldiers made it to engage the Union forces. Later, Confederate retreat. Consequence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Union had clout to threaten to Britain and France. (The South had <b>no</b> Saratoga.)</li> <li>▪ British blocked delivery of ironclads/rams</li> <li>▪ French blocked delivery of 6 vessels. (FYI: French in June had occupied Mexico City, placed Maximilian of Austria as Emperor of Mexico.)</li> </ul> <b>Vicksburg (MS)—Western part of the war</b> –Defeat of the South by Ulysses S. Grant – Confederacy now divided at the Mississippi; Mississippi now controlled by North so has access to the Gulf from the West  <b>Tip on the History:</b> Look at the map of the war. Notice that the North has divided the South vertically at the Mississippi River. The North can now use the Mississippi to get to the Gulf of Mexico from the west.
1863-12	<b>Lincoln Plan</b> —Proclamation of Amnesty and <b>Reconstruction</b>

Date	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Premise—The states never left the Union.</li> <li>▪ Presidential control</li> <li>▪ 10 % legal voters taking oath of allegiance accepting end of slavery</li> <li>▪ Amnesty with the oath</li> <li>▪ Legitimate state government, representatives and senators to Congress</li> </ul> <p>1864 Per this plan, Arkansas, Tennessee reconstructed, but Congress not admit.</p> <p><b>Tip on the History:</b> Notice the offer to the South and the 10%. Do the math on the years: how long has this war lasted?</p>
1864-05 – 09	<p><b>Sherman’s March through Georgia to the Sea</b>—William T. Sherman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 60,000 Union soldiers - Their Orders: To “forage liberally on the country”</li> <li>▪ 300 miles long</li> <li>▪ 60 miles wide.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tip on the History:</b> Why would Sherman do this and at this time. Look at the map of the war. Notice that the North has now marched across the South diagonally from the West in Tennessee down to the East through Georgia.</p>
1864-11	<b>Re-election of Lincoln</b>
1865-01	<p>13<sup>th</sup> amendment—<b>passed</b></p> <p><b>Tip on the History:</b> What’s the difference between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An amendment and a law?</li> <li>▪ Passing an amendment and ratifying it? If you do not know, then ask. Glad to help you.</li> </ul>
1865-02	<p><b>Sherman’s March to the Carolinas</b></p> <p><b>Tip on the History:</b> Look at the map of the war. Notice that the North has now marched across the South from Georgia through North and South Carolina.</p>
1865-02	<p><b>Meeting: Hampton Roads (VA)</b> Lincoln and Secretary of State Seward with Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens Lincoln offered compensation for lost slaves. Confederate President Jefferson Davis rejected the offer because he wanted independence</p> <p><b>Tip on the History:</b> How realistic was the rejection? Do the math:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On the years: how long has this war lasted?</li> <li>▪ On the geography: how much has the North conquered?</li> <li>▪ On the number of population for a war: how many did each side have and how many at the end of the war?</li> </ul>
1865-04	<b>Surrender at Appomattox Courthouse (VA)</b> – Previously at 165,000 before Gettysburg in 1863, Lee’s army to 25,000, rations short.
1865-04	<b>Lincoln assassinated</b>

## What Set the Direction for the Republican Party and for the Post-Civil War Era

The Republican Party’s predecessor parties led it to have many of the issues previously associated with the Whigs, such as favoring internal improvements. They also countered the Whigs; for example, the Whigs were becoming nativist and the countermove was being pro-immigration. The X’s in the table are based on specific lists of platform issues in the *Encyclopedia of American History*. Other issues may also have been in the parties’ platforms.

Issues in the Campaigns of the Varied Anti-Slavery Parties	Liberty		Free Soil		Republican	
	1840, 1844	1848	1852	1856	1860	
Free soil (including specifics such as supporting the Wilmot Proviso)	X	X	X	X	X	
Pro-internal improvements in general and/or a transcontinental railroad		X		X	X	
Homestead provision so people could get land		X	X			X
Pro-immigration			X			X
Pro (somewhat) protective tariff						X

### Republican – Democrat Votes in House and Senate

Once the 11 Confederate states left the Union, those remaining in the Senate and House of Representatives could vote for what they wanted **without having to negotiate** with those favoring Southern issues.

The change in party balance shows the results of secession: the Northern Senators and Congressmen can get the laws they want—and you’ll see them on the next page.

	1857	1861
Senators, Democratic	36	10
Senators, Republican	20	31
Representatives, Democratic	118	43
Representatives, Republican	92	105

## What Republican Legislation from 1861 to 1864 Set the Direction of the Post-Civil War Era?

The issues passed by these Senators and Representatives included:

- 1861—Increased **protective tariff** with subsequent additions through 1869 raising tariffs to the rate of just under 50% (Protective tariffs became a Republican principle.)
- 1862 +—**Transcontinental railroad** established—land grants for a Northern route
- 1862—**Homestead Act**—160 acres of public land to heads of families for residence for five years, a small fee (In 1866 there was an equivalent act for Southern blacks, but its implementation was blocked by landowners short of labor in the South.)
- 1862—**Land grant colleges (Morrill Act)**—30,000 acres to states in the Union for each Congressional office held (Senator or Representative) to establish agriculture colleges (70 established)
- 1864—**National banking system**—uniform currency, with a tax on state bank notes driving them out of circulation (greenbacks again backed by gold in mid-1870s)

## What's the Gilded Age and What Does Its Name Mean?

This period that follows the Civil War and Reconstruction is frequently called the Gilded Age. A quiz question from Quiz B covers this term specifically. The period was named by Mark Twain, best known for such books as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. He named the age and your textbook describes why.

This background may help. Historians have mixed feelings about this name for the period but—thus far—it seems the best name for it. This term comes from this difference.

- The traditional term for the highest period of a civilization is its *golden age*—when people looking back on the history of their world viewed it as the best it ever was. A lesser period of a civilization is sometimes called it *silver age*.  
Why use the words *gold* and *silver*? Gold is a valuable metal; silver, a lesser value.
- Instead, Mark Twain titled his book about this period *The Gilded Age*.  
Why use the word *gilded*? **Gild is a thin, fake metal layer over cheap metal. It shines like gold, but it's fake.**

## Timeline: Phases of Reconstruction to the Beginning of the Gilded Age – April 1865 to 1877

Date	Details
1864-0	<b>Reminder:</b> Lee surrendered at Appomattox Courthouse (VA)
1865-05	<p><b>Andrew Johnson Plan—Restoration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Premise—The states never left the Union; punish individuals</li> <li>Presidential control like Lincoln's with the addition of ratifying the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, repudiating war debt, and those \$20,000 property holders had to personally petition to Johnson for amnesty</li> </ul> <p>1865-12 Per this plan, 10 states ready for restoration.</p>
1865-11	<p><b>Black Codes</b>—New state legislatures started passing. Vagrancy laws forced employment with private individuals to pay fines; forbidden to rent or own land, could not change jobs, could not do work other than as farm or domestic labor.</p> <p><b>Tip on the History:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where have you heard the name black codes or a similar name?</li> <li>Ask yourself how you would feel when you heard this if you'd had a son or brother die for the Northern cause or if you were a Congressman?</li> </ul>
1865-12	<b>13<sup>th</sup> amendment</b> —ratified
1866	<p><b>Ku Klux Klan started</b> Intent white supremacy; used violence, continued past 1869, when officially disbanded.</p>
1866 +	<p>Congressional Reconstruction <b>had been:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Congressional control</li> <li>50 % legal voters took oath of allegiance accepting end of slavery</li> </ul> <p><b>Tip on the History:</b> Notice the percentage (It's not the 10% as with Lincoln's offer or Johnson's offer.) Do the math on the years: how long has it been since the Lee's surrender at Appomattox Courthouse? How are the North and South acting thus far?</p>
1866-03	<p><b>Actions by the national government in the South using the Freedman's Bureau</b>—freedmen and abandoned lands— included education program</p> <p><b>Actions by individual and groups of African Americans in the South:</b> formation of churches and schools.</p>
1866-04	<b>Civil Rights Act</b> —Congress overrode Johnson veto
1866-06	<p><b>14<sup>th</sup> amendment</b> started and became a condition—Tennessee ratified and was readmitted to Union.</p> <p><b>Question: What's the Southern expectation? Why not join in?</b> Because other Southern states thought Radical Republicans would be defeated with the Congressional elections; they were wrong.</p>
1866-07	<p><b>Race riots against blacks, New Orleans and Memphis</b></p> <p><b>Tip on the History:</b> What is a riot?</p>
1866-fall	Congressional Elections

Date	Details
	<b>Tip on the History:</b> <i>What had the voters been reading in the newspapers in the North about the events in the South? So what kind of Congressman do you think the voters in the North vote for?</i>
1867 +	Congressional Reconstruction <b>becomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First Reconstruction Act</li> <li>▪ Military Reconstruction (5 districts)</li> <li>▪ Expansion of Freedman’s Bureau</li> </ul>
1868	<b>Fifteenth Amendment</b> proposed - Consequences on women’s suffrage and women’s organizations
1868-02 to 05	<b>Impeachment of Johnson</b> —Viewed as impediment to Radical Republicanism. Method used: Tenure of Office Act—In brief, those Senate approved must be Senate removed. 1 vote saved Johnson.
1868	U.S. Grant v. Horatio Seymour                      Bloody shirt v. white supremacy
1869	Promontory, Utah - Union Pacific & Central Pacific;  Grant’s so-called “Peace Policy” with the Native Americans
1870	Revival of the KKK  Ku Klux Klan Acts to try to stop KKK—and the North’s actions work;13 volumes of Congressional testimony taken on the KKK.
1871	Department of Justice established; head=Attorney General
1872	U. S. Grant v. Horace Greeley (Democrat & Liberal Republican) Issues of the Liberal Republicans – end Reconstruction, end protective tariff (thus <i>liberal</i> , meaning supporting free trade), begin merit system  <b>Tip on the History:</b> <i>If you do not understand the difference between a protective and revenue tariff, the meaning of the word tariff, and the meaning of the word merit system, ask. These are key concepts</i>  General traits of the era: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Corruption and abuse of power (many scandals) – If you want to see how much corruption, you can see a link in the course</li> <li>▪ Boss-ism (New York city government and Boss Tweed)</li> <li>▪ Unemployment with workers desperate for jobs (Tompkins Square)</li> <li>▪ Labor unrest (Molly Maguires)</li> <li>▪ Farmer unrest</li> </ul>
1873	“Crime of 73”- United States goes on the gold standard.  <b>Tip on the History:</b> <i>What’s a gold standard? If you do not know, ask.</i>  Panic of 1873
1874	Women’s Christian Temperance Union – Frances Willard  <b>Tip on the History:</b> <i>What’s the organization for and what is the gender of Frances Willard?</i>
1876	Rutherford B. Hayes (Ohio Gov.) v. Sam Tilden (NY Gov.)
1877	Electoral Commission Compromise of 1877

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