

**Module 5: The Civil War and Reconstruction - 1860 to 1877**  
**Topic 3 Content: Major Military and Political Events of the Civil War Notes**

**Introduction**

**Major Military and Political Events of the Civil War**

Click the numbers on the timeline to learn about the major military and political events of the Civil War. You may revisit any event once it is unlocked.

The image shows a horizontal timeline with 13 numbered points. The first point, labeled '1', is unlocked and highlighted in green. The remaining 12 points are locked, indicated by a padlock icon on a colored circle. The points are connected by a line that changes color at each point: green, orange, blue, purple, red, blue, green, orange, purple, red, blue, purple, orange.

The civil war had more than 8,000 incidents of conflict during a four-year span. This interactivity will only cover some of the major military and political events that occurred from 1861 until 1865. Click the numbers on the timeline to learn about the major military and political events of the Civil War. You may revisit any event once it is unlocked.


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**Battle of Bull Run**

**Battle of Bull Run**

- The Union Army and Confederate Army met around 100 miles north of Richmond, Virginia.
- General Thomas J. Jackson earned the nickname “Stonewall Jackson” and inspired the Confederate troops.
- Confederate re-reinforcements arrived and the Union Army retreated.

**July, 1861**  
**21**



*Union soldiers at the Battle of Bull Run*

**Timeline**

Three months after Fort Sumter was taken over by the Confederacy, the Battle of Bull Run took place. The Union Army marched 30,000 inexperienced soldiers to the confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia. Around 100 miles from Richmond, the Union soldiers were confronted by an equally inexperienced group of Confederate soldiers.

The battle went back and forth, but the Confederate Army held firm. During this battle, the Confederate troops were inspired by their General, Thomas J. Jackson. He stood on the battle field like a “stone wall.” This earned him the nickname Stonewall Jackson. The battle ended when Confederate reinforcements arrived and overwhelmed the Union Army. The Union Army retreated to their capital, Washington, D.C. The Confederate troops were too unorganized to follow the Union troops and attack Washington, D.C., but the victory caused Southern morale to soar.

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**Capture of Forts**

**Capture of Forts**

- Union General Ulysses S. Grant led the Union forces into Western Tennessee.
- Grant captured two forts located in Tennessee and Kentucky.

**February, 1862**

**16**

Fort Henry  
Fort Donleson

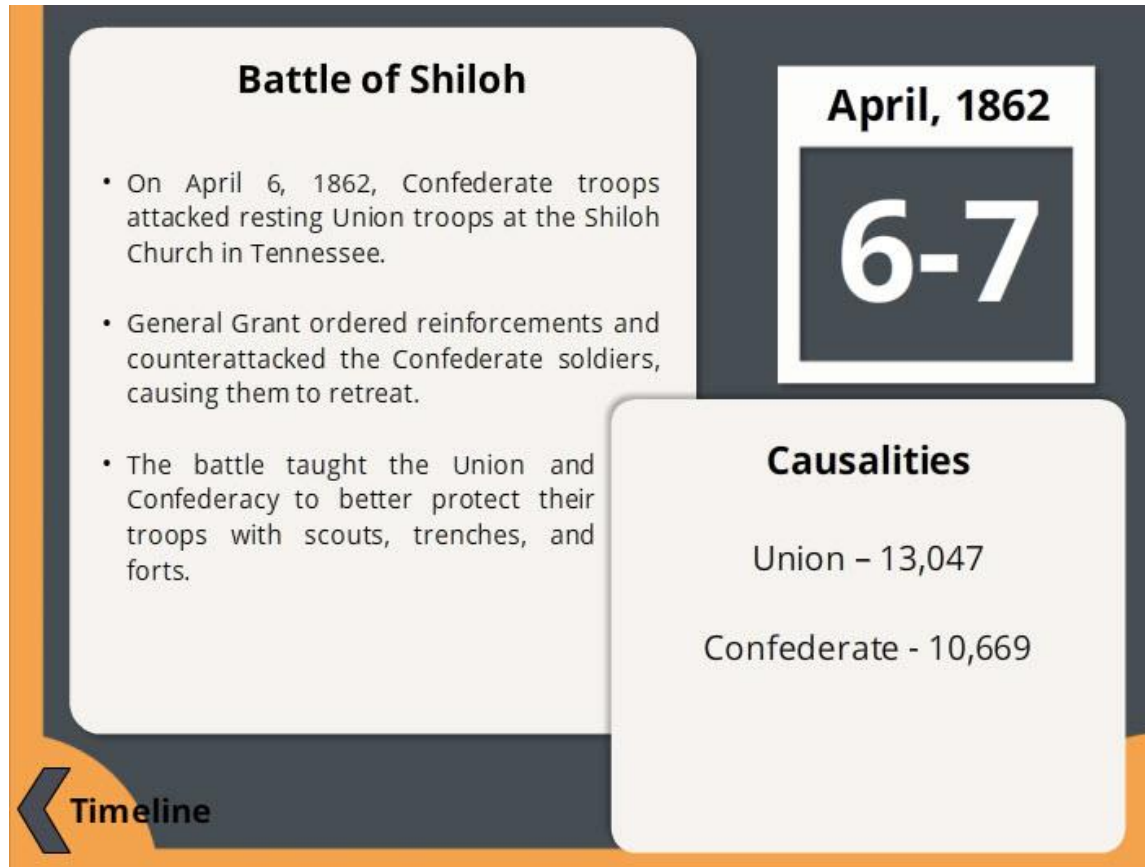
*Location of the two Forts*

**Timeline**

In February 1862, the Union Army moved into Western Tennessee. The Union General Ulysses S. Grant was the leader of the Union forces. Grant was a decisive military leader who captured two Confederate forts in a matter of eleven days. Fort Henry was captured on February 6, 1862, and Fort Donleson was captured on February 16, 1862. Both of these forts held important positions along rivers in Tennessee and Kentucky.

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**Battle of Shiloh**



The infographic is set against a dark blue background with orange accents on the left and bottom. It features three main white boxes. The top-left box is titled 'Battle of Shiloh' and contains three bullet points. The top-right box is titled 'April, 1862' and contains a large '6-7' in a dark blue square. The bottom-right box is titled 'Casualties' and lists the number of soldiers for the Union and Confederate sides. In the bottom-left corner, there is a grey arrow pointing left with the word 'Timeline' next to it.

**Battle of Shiloh**

- On April 6, 1862, Confederate troops attacked resting Union troops at the Shiloh Church in Tennessee.
- General Grant ordered reinforcements and counterattacked the Confederate soldiers, causing them to retreat.
- The battle taught the Union and Confederacy to better protect their troops with scouts, trenches, and forts.

**April, 1862**

**6-7**

**Casualties**

Union - 13,047

Confederate - 10,669

**Timeline**

In late March of 1862, General Grant organized his troops near a small church named Shiloh in Tennessee, close to the Mississippi border. On April 6, a group of Confederate soldiers sprang a surprise attack on the resting Union troops. Many troops were killed in their sleep or while going about their morning routines. After the attack, General Grant reorganized his troops, ordered reinforcements, and counterattacked the Confederate troops the very next day. The Confederates retreated.

The Battle of Shiloh claimed 13,000 Union troops and 11,000 Confederate troops. This large loss of soldiers on each side proved how bloody the war might become. The Battle of Shiloh taught the Union and Confederacy to better protect their troops by using warning scouts, digging trenches to fight behind, and building fortification.

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**Battle of Hampton Roads**

**Battle of Hampton Roads**

- Ironclad ships were introduced during the Civil War.
- The Union's *Monitor* and the Confederacy's *Virginia* fought for four hours and neither boat took significant damage.

**March, 1862**

**9**



*Illustration of the Battle of Hampton Roads*

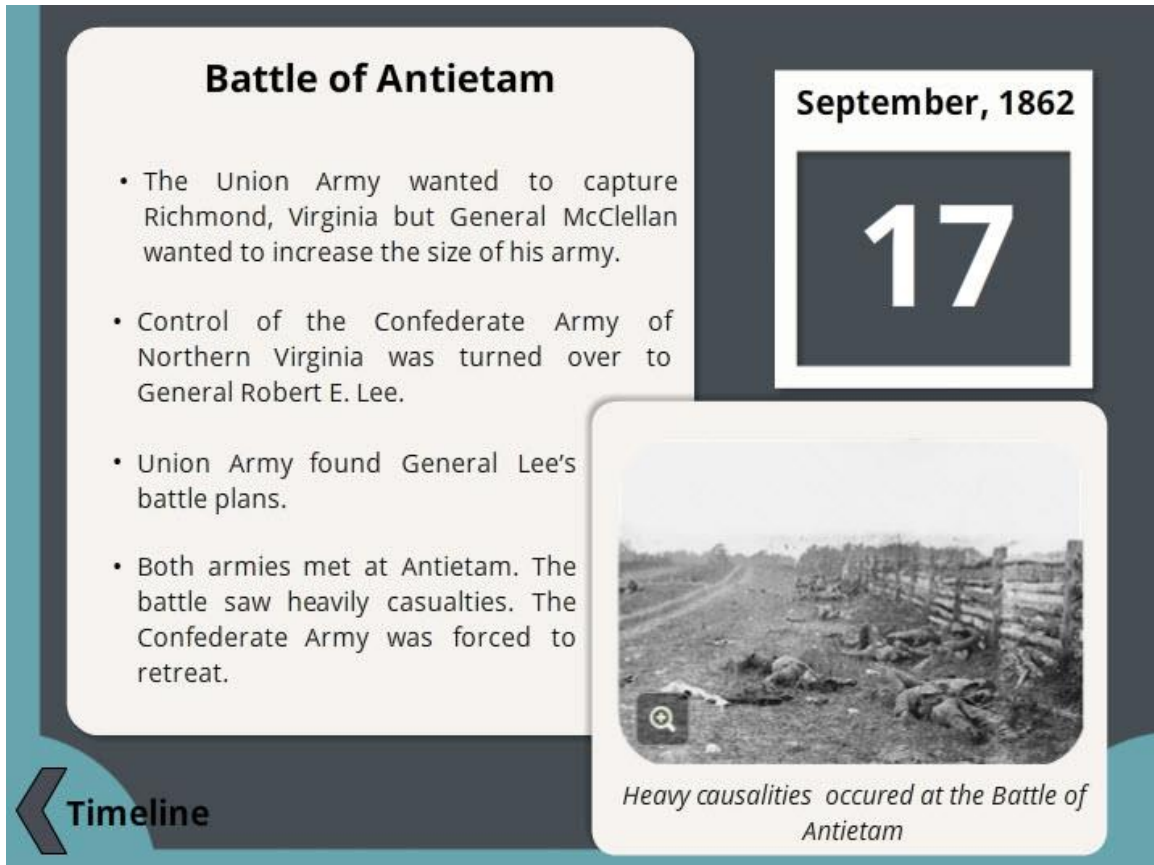
**Timeline**

Both the Confederate and Union armies introduced a new type of war machine during the Civil War. Ironclad ships were steam-propelled and had protective iron and steel plates. These warships were slow to move and fire, but could tear apart a wooden ship while withstanding cannon fire.

On March 9, 1862, two ironclads duelled in the waters of Hampton Roads. The Union Army's *Monitor* battled the Confederate Army's *Virginia*. After four hours of fighting, both ironclad ships retreated to their ports. The battle was a victory for neither the Union nor the Confederacy.

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**Battle of Antietam**




The infographic features a dark blue background with a light blue border. On the left, a white box titled "Battle of Antietam" contains a bulleted list of four points. To the right, a white box displays "September, 1862" above a large "17" on a dark blue square. Below this is a black and white photograph of a battlefield with a wooden fence and a search icon in the bottom left corner. A caption below the photo reads "Heavy casualties occurred at the Battle of Antietam". At the bottom left, a grey arrow points left with the word "Timeline" next to it.

### Battle of Antietam

- The Union Army wanted to capture Richmond, Virginia but General McClellan wanted to increase the size of his army.
- Control of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia was turned over to General Robert E. Lee.
- Union Army found General Lee's battle plans.
- Both armies met at Antietam. The battle saw heavy casualties. The Confederate Army was forced to retreat.

September, 1862

17



Heavy casualties occurred at the Battle of Antietam

Timeline

Part of the Union's strategy was to capture the Confederate capital, Richmond Virginia. In charge of leading the Union troops into Richmond was General George McClellan. McClellan stalled his attack, hoping to build his army of troops to 270,000.

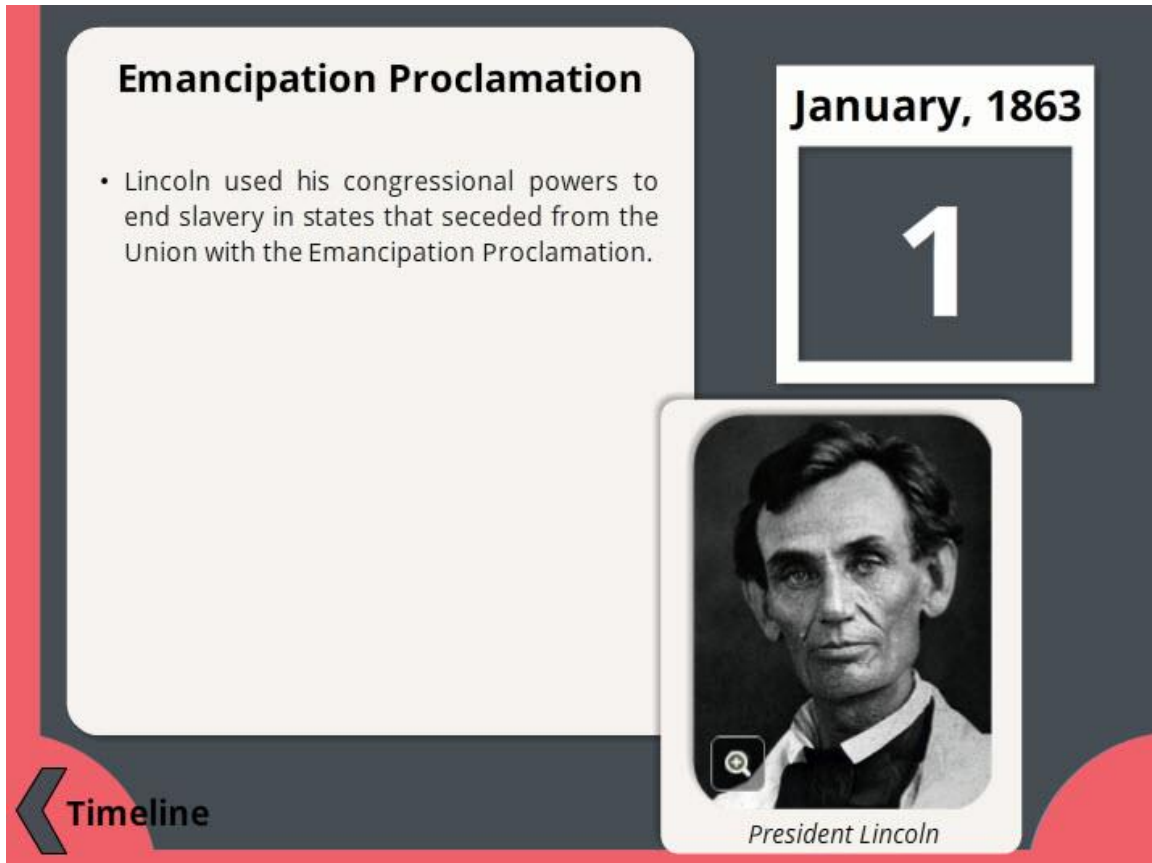
In the spring of 1862, McClellan's troops moved slowly toward the Confederate capital. During their travels, McClellan's troops met the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, commanded by Joseph E. Johnston. Johnston was injured and control of the troops passed to Virginian Robert E. Lee. Lee was rather unorthodox as a military leader. His tactics held the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia together during the confrontations with the Union Army. The two armies fought a series of battles from June 25, 1862 until July 1, 1862.

In August of 1862, Lee and his army crossed into Maryland on their way to attack the Union capital. McClellan's army was still in pursuit of Lee after their series of battles. A scout, exploring an area where the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia had camped, found the actual battle plans of Lee's army. General Lee must have dropped the plans.

McClellan's army quickly went into pursuit of General Lee. On September 17, 1862, the two armies met at a creek named Antietam in Maryland. Neither side was victorious in the battle. The battle ended when the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia retreated. The battle saw heavy casualties on each side. General McClellan could have followed the Confederate Army and possibly ended the Civil War. McClellan did not pursue the Confederate Army, and as a result President Lincoln fired McClellan.

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**Emancipation Proclamation**



The infographic features a dark grey background with red accents. On the left, a white rounded rectangle contains the title 'Emancipation Proclamation' and a bullet point: 'Lincoln used his congressional powers to end slavery in states that seceded from the Union with the Emancipation Proclamation.' To the right, a white box contains the date 'January, 1863' and a large white number '1' on a dark square. Below this is a portrait of President Lincoln in a white frame, with a magnifying glass icon in the bottom left corner and the caption 'President Lincoln' below it. In the bottom left corner, a grey arrow points left with the word 'Timeline' next to it.

**Emancipation Proclamation**

- Lincoln used his congressional powers to end slavery in states that seceded from the Union with the Emancipation Proclamation.

**January, 1863**

**1**

*President Lincoln*

**Timeline**

As the war progressed, Lincoln found a way to use his congressional powers to end slavery in states that had seceded from the Union. On January 1, 1863, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed all slaves in any state that had seceded.

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**Topic 3 Content: Major Military and Political Events of the Civil War Notes**

**Battle of Gettysburg**

**Battle of Gettysburg**

- The Battle of Gettysburg lasted three days and served as the turning point of the war.
- The Confederate Army was unsuccessful and retreated.
- Gettysburg was the deadliest battle on North American soil, with over 50,000 casualties.

**July, 1863**  
**1-3**



*Confederate casualties at Gettysburg*

**Timeline**

The most decisive battle of the war was fought near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The battle lasted for three days. In July of 1863, General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia met the Union Army. Lee was unsuccessful in defeating the Union Army at Gettysburg and retreated to Virginia. The Battle of Gettysburg was the deadliest battle to ever occur on North American soil, and was the turning point of the Civil War. More than 50,000 troops from the Union and Confederacy died during the Battle of Gettysburg.




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**Battle of Vicksburg**

**Battle of Vicksburg**

- The Union Army captured Jackson and Vicksburg, Mississippi.
- The Union Army took control of the Mississippi River with a victory at Port Hudson.

**May, 1863**  
**22**



*Union soldiers prepare for the Battle of Port Hudson*

**Timeline**

Vicksburg was one of the only Confederate forts preventing the Union from taking control of the Mississippi River. On May 14, 1863, Grant's troops took Jackson, Mississippi, and continued on to Vicksburg. Grant's army surrounded Vicksburg and shelled the city. On July 1863, the Confederate forces at Vicksburg surrendered. On May 22, 1863, the Union Army took control of the Mississippi River with a victory at Port Hudson, Louisiana, which split the Confederacy in two.

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**Gettysburg Address**

**The Gettysburg Address**

- Edward Everett gave a two hour oration.
- President Lincoln gave the opening address at a ceremony held at Gettysburg for the dedication of a Union cemetery.
- Lincoln described the Civil War as a struggle to preserve the United States.

**November, 1863**

**19**



*One of the only photos capturing Lincoln during his Gettysburg Address*

**Timeline**

On November 19 1863, a ceremony was held to dedicate a Union cemetery for soldiers in Gettysburg. Edward Everett, a famous speaker at the time, started the dedication by giving a two hour oration. President Lincoln was also invited to speak at the ceremony. Lincoln offered a brief but powerful, two hundred sixty-nine words in his Gettysburg Address. In this address, Lincoln described the Civil War as a struggle to preserve the United States.

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**Sherman's March**

**Sherman's March**

- Ulysses S. Grant was promoted to commander of the entire Union Army.
- Grant and Lee continually battled with heavy casualties on both sides.
- Grant promoted William Sherman to commander of the Mississippi division. William Sherman marched across Georgia and turned northward, traveling through South and North Carolina.
- Sherman's troops destroyed everything in their path.

**June, 1864**  
**18**

Map of Sherman's March

Timeline

In March of 1864, President Lincoln promoted Ulysses S. Grant to the commander of the entire Union Army. Grant continually threw his troops in battles against Lee. Most of these battles occurred in Virginia from May 4 until June 18, 1864. During this campaign, the Union lost 60,000 men, compared to 32,000 Confederate casualties.

Grant promoted William Sherman as commander of the Mississippi division of the Union Army. Grant's plan was to stop Lee's army in Virginia, while Sherman raided Georgia. Sherman's army had taken control of the railway center in Atlanta. The Confederate Army tried to surround Sherman's troops, and in response Sherman did something the Confederate Army was not expecting. Sherman marched his troops southeast through Georgia, destroying everything in his path. His goal was to make Southerners "sick of the war." By November, Sherman had burned most of Atlanta, and continued to Savannah. After taking Savannah, Sherman marched northward to confront General Lee. Sherman was now joined by more than 25,000 freed slaves, and the destruction in South Carolina was worse than Georgia. Sherman never met General Lee's forces. By the time Sherman reached North Carolina, the end of the war was imminent.

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**Surrender at Appomattox**

**Surrender at Appomattox**

- Major victories help Lincoln secure a second term as President in the 1864 election.
- Realizing that the war was coming to an end, Confederate President Davis destroyed the capital.
- General Lee and General Grant met at the Appomattox Court House and the Confederate Army surrendered.

**April, 1865**

**9**



*Union soldiers at Appomattox Courthouse*

**Timeline**

In the election of 1864, President Lincoln faced opposition. Many Democrats were upset with the length of the war. As the election approached, the Union Army had taken the cities of Mobile Bay, Alabama and Atlanta, Georgia. These major Union victories helped Lincoln win a second term as president of the United States.

In March of 1865, the Confederate forces realized that they were not going to be able to win the war. The Union army was approaching General Lee's forces from both the west and south. When Lee was defeated in Petersburg, Virginia, President Jefferson Davis set the capital on fire and abandoned the cause. Generals Lee and Grant met on April 9, 1865 at the Appomattox Court House in Virginia. The Confederate Army surrendered. After four years, the Civil War ended.