

Chapter 20

Girding for War: The North and the South

1861-1865

The Menace of Secession

President Abraham Lincoln declared that secession was impractical because the North and South were not geographically divided. He also stated that with secession, new controversies would arise, including the national debt, federal territories, and the fugitive-slave issue.

South Carolina Assails Fort Sumter

When President Lincoln was elected, there were only two significant forts in the South that flew the Union's flag. **Fort Sumter**, in the Charleston harbor, needed supplies in order to support its men. Therefore, Lincoln adopted a **middle-of-the-road solution**. He told the South that the North was sending provisions to the fort, not supplies for reinforcement. Taking the move by Lincoln as an act of aggression, the South Carolinians fired upon Fort Sumter on **April 12, 1861**.

Virginia, Arkansas, and Tennessee all seceded after the attack on Fort Sumter. The 11 seceded states were known as the "**submissionists**."

Lincoln now had a reason for an armed response. He called upon the Union states to supply militiamen.

Brothers' Blood and Border Blood

Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, Delaware, and West Virginia were the **Border States**. They were the only slave states that hadn't seceded from the Union. The Border States contained the Ohio River, a vital necessity for both the North and South.

Lincoln's official reason for the war was to **preserve the Union**, not to end slavery. Supporting an end to slavery would likely have caused the pro-slavery Border States to also secede.

The **Five Civilized Tribes** (Native American) (Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles) sided with the Confederacy. These tribes were allowed to send delegates to the Confederate congress. Most of the Plains Indians sided with the Union.

The Balance of Forces

The **South** had the advantage of fighting defensively on its own land and it did not have to win in order to preserve the Confederacy; it just had to fight to a draw.

Abraham Lincoln offered Robert E. Lee to command the Northern army, but Lee turned down the job after his home state of **Virginia** seceded. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson was Lee's chief lieutenant.

There were not a lot of factories in the South, but the South was able to seize federal weapons from the Union.

The **North** held $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nation's wealth and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nation's railroad system. It also had nearly twice as large of a population as the South, partly because more European immigrants arrived in the North.

Dethroning King Cotton

The South counted on foreign intervention to help win the war.

The common people of Britain & France supported the North, hoping to end slavery. Because of this, these countries refrained from breaking the Union naval blockades.

The British manufacturers depended on cotton from the South, but before the war, a surplus of cotton had developed in Britain, allowing it to function without purchasing cotton from the South. In **1861**, this cotton supply ran out and many British factory workers were laid off. As Union armies penetrated the South, they sent cotton to Britain. **King Wheat** and **King Corn**, which were produced in great quantities in the North, proved to be more powerful than **King Cotton**. Therefore, Britain couldn't afford to break the

Union blockade to access cotton. If it had done this, then it would have lost the wheat and corn from the North.

The Decisiveness of Diplomacy

The **Trent affair** occurred in late **1861**. A Union warship stopped a British mail steamer, the **Trent**, and removed 2 Confederate diplomats who were heading to Europe. Britain started to send troops to Canada in retaliation, but the situation was resolved when President Lincoln freed the Confederate prisoners. British shipyards were surreptitiously producing Confederate commerce-raiders. The British ships left their ports unarmed, picked up arms elsewhere, and captured Union ships. One notable ship was the **Alabama**. The British attempted to end this practice in 1863.

Foreign Flare-Ups

In **1863**, two Confederate warships were being built by a British shipyard. These ships had large iron rams would have destroyed the Union blockade. To avoid infuriating the North and potentially starting a war, the London government bought the ships for the Royal Navy.

The British established the **Dominion of Canada** in **1867**. It was partly designed to strengthen the Canadians against the possible vengeance of the United States.

Emperor Napoleon III of France installed a French government in **Mexico City** in **1863**. Maximilian was the French emperor of Mexico City. These actions were in direct violation of the Monroe Doctrine. Napoleon hoped that the Union would not retaliate due to its weakness from fighting the Civil War. When the Civil War ended in 1865, though, America threatened to invade Mexico. Napoleon was forced to abandon Maximilian and Mexico City.

President Davis versus President Lincoln

The **one defect of the South's constitution** was that its own states could secede. Some state troops refused to serve outside their borders.

President Jefferson Davis of the Confederacy often had disputes with his own congress. Davis's task as President proved to be beyond his powers. Lincoln and the North enjoyed a long-established government that was financially stable and fully recognized at home and abroad.

Limitations on Wartime Liberties

Because **Congress was not in session** when the war started, President Lincoln took several actions that normally had to be approved by Congress. He initiated a blockade, increased the size of the Federal army, directed the secretary of the Treasury to advance \$2 million without appropriation or security to 3 private citizens for military purposes, and suspended the **writ of habeas corpus** (stated that a citizen could not be held without a trial).

Volunteers and Draftees: North and South

Due to lack of volunteers, Congress passed a federal draft law in **1863**. Men who were called in the draft could pay \$300 to buy a replacement. The Confederacy also passed a draft law.

The Economic Stresses of War

The North increased tariffs and excise taxes to financially support the war. It also created the first income tax.

In early **1861**, after enough anti-tariff Southern members had seceded, Congress passed the **Morrill Tariff Act**. It was a high protective tariff that increased duties by 5%-10%. This was designed to raise additional revenue and provide more protection for the Northern manufacturers. A **protective tariff** became identified with the **Republican Party**.

The Washington Treasury issued paper money. The **greenback** currency was not backed by gold; it was backed by the Union's perceived credit. Because of this, the value of the greenback was constantly changing.

In **1863**, Congress authorized the **National Banking System**. It was designed to stimulate the sale of government bonds and to establish a standard currency. Banks who joined the National Banking System could buy government bonds and issue paper money that was backed by the bonds.

The Confederate government also issued bonds and raised taxes. It was forced to print **blue-backed** paper money that was subject to **runaway inflation**.

The North's Economic Boom

Newly invented, labor-saving machinery enabled the North to expand economically. **Mechanical reapers** (farm machines used to harvest grain) allowed men to leave the farms for the war, while increasing harvesting capacity.

Petroleum was discovered in Pennsylvania in **1859** and it led to a rush of people known as the "**Fifty-Niners**." The **Homestead Act** of 1862 provided free land to many people.

The Civil War opened up many jobs for women that were originally occupied by men. The **U.S. Sanitary Commission** was organized by women to provide medical support to Union armies in the field.

A Crashed Cotton Kingdom

The North's blockade severely hampered the South's economy. Transportation in the South collapsed during the Civil War. **Cotton capitalism** had lost out to **industrial capitalism**.