

# Abraham Lincoln

Lincoln warned the South in his Inaugural Address: "In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you.... You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to preserve, protect and defend it."

Lincoln thought secession illegal, and was willing to use force to defend Federal law and the Union. When Confederate batteries fired on Fort Sumter and forced its surrender, he called on the states for 75,000 volunteers. Four more slave states joined the Confederacy but four remained within the Union. The Civil War had begun.

The son of a Kentucky frontiersman, Lincoln had to struggle for a living and for learning. Five months before receiving his party's nomination for President, he sketched his life:

"I was born Feb. 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families--second families, perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks.... My father ... removed from Kentucky to ... Indiana, in my eighth year.... It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up.... Of course when I came of age I did not know much. Still somehow, I could read, write, and cipher ... but that was all."

Lincoln made extraordinary efforts to attain knowledge while working on a farm, splitting rails for fences, and keeping store at New Salem, Illinois. He was a captain in the Black Hawk War, spent eight years in the Illinois legislature, and rode the circuit of courts for many years. His law partner said of him, "His ambition was a little engine that knew no rest."

He married Mary Todd, and they had four boys, only one of whom lived to maturity. In 1858 Lincoln ran against Stephen A. Douglas for Senator. He lost the election, but in debating with Douglas he gained a national reputation that won him the Republican nomination for President in 1860.

As President, he built the Republican Party into a strong national organization. Further, he rallied most of the northern Democrats to the Union cause. On January 1, 1863, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation that declared forever free those slaves within the Confederacy.

Lincoln never let the world forget that the Civil War involved an even larger issue. This he stated most movingly in dedicating the military cemetery at Gettysburg: "that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain--that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom--and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Lincoln won re-election in 1864, as Union military triumphs heralded an end to the war. In his planning for peace, the President was flexible and generous, encouraging Southerners to lay down their arms and join speedily in reunion.

The spirit that guided him was clearly that of his Second Inaugural Address, now inscribed on one wall of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D. C.: "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds.... "

On Good Friday, April 14, 1865, Lincoln was assassinated at Ford's Theatre in Washington by John Wilkes Booth, an actor, who somehow thought he was helping the South. The opposite was the result, for with Lincoln's death, the possibility of peace with magnanimity died.

# Jefferson Davis

Jefferson Davis (1808-1889) was born, like Abraham Lincoln, in Kentucky. His family seems to have been of modest circumstances, and soon moved to the newly opened southern frontier in Mississippi. Possessing great intelligence and imagination, Davis was educated at a number of institutions, including Transylvania University before entering West Point, from which he was graduated. Robert E. Lee was a fellow cadet.

Davis then served in the army at a number of posts in Wisconsin and Illinois, and he (like Lincoln) served in the Black Hawk War in 1832. He resigned from the army in 1835, married the daughter of Colonel Zachary Taylor, who was the commandant of Davis's post at the time, and returned to Mississippi as a planter. Davis's marriage was cut short by his wife's sudden death three months later of malaria. For ten years, Davis tended to his plantation, "Brierfield," read extensively, and made only infrequent excursions outside his community.

In 1845, Davis strengthened his ties to the Mississippi planter class by marrying a woman from a socially prominent family. At the same time, his career became more public when he was elected to Congress as a Democrat. With the outbreak of the Mexican War, however, Davis resigned his seat in order to command a Mississippi regiment. His bravery at the battles of Monterrey and Buena Vista won him acclaim.

Davis was then elected to the United States Senate where he became a leading spokesman for southern rights. Although willing to accept the extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific, Davis argued the right of slavery to go into the territories, and he adamantly opposed the admission of California as a free state. Davis's stand proved too extreme for Mississippi in the aftermath of the Compromise of 1850. In 1851, in a complicated political maneuver, Davis stepped down as senator to run against a pro-compromise "Union" candidate for governor, and lost.

Davis's return to the life of a planter proved only temporary. In 1853 he became secretary of war in the cabinet of President Franklin Pierce, where he demonstrated his southern expansionist leanings. With the close of the Pierce administration, he returned to the Senate and became a leader of the southern Democratic defense of slavery and its constitutional right to protection in the territories. More controversially, he advocated the revival of the slave trade.

Although he did not advocate immediate secession following Lincoln's election, Davis accepted his state's decision to leave the Union. With the formation of the Confederacy, he hoped for a high military position, and when news arrived at Brierfield of his selection as provisional President, his wife described him as "so grieved that I feared some evil had befallen our family." Davis, nevertheless, accepted the position, and on February 18, 1862 was inaugurated President.

Davis was described by a contemporary as "a gentleman," having a "slight, light figure, little exceeding middle height, and holds himself erect and straight." He had high, prominent cheek-bones, thin lips, and deep-set eyes, one of which was nearly blind from an illness. To all but a few intimates, Davis was reserved and severe in manner. Both indecisive and stubborn, his inflexibility, moral rectitude, and lack of humor did not help him in dealing with opponents.

Davis was passionately committed to the cause of the Confederacy, and his labors on its behalf took a heavy personal toll. While contemporaries and, later, historians have found much to criticize about his leadership, most scholars consider that he guided the Confederacy as ably as one could expect, given its situation.

# The Confederate States of America

Its ideology far more conservative than revolutionary, the nation of seceded Southern states faced a paradox in maintaining a centralized government comprised of entities whose very motivation for departing the Union was their objection to federal authority. On February 4, 1861, representatives from the seven states Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas-that had already seceded from the United States met in Montgomery, Alabama, to form a new republic. On February 8, the convention announced the establishment of the Confederate States of America and declared itself the provisional Congress.

The following day, Jefferson Davis and Alexander Stephens were unanimously chosen provisional president and vice president, two men moderate enough, it was hoped, to convince the eight other reluctant slave states to join the Confederacy. A committee spent the next five weeks composing a national constitution, which was approved on March 11. The document closely followed the U.S. Constitution-including its Bill of Rights-with a few notable differences. Language promoting "the general welfare" was omitted, while the right to own slaves was explicitly guaranteed although foreign slave trade was forbidden).

The president, serving a single six-year term, was given line-item veto power over the budget, and his cabinet awarded nonvoting seats in Congress. To guarantee Southerners their much-desired states' rights, the federal government had no authority to levy protective tariffs, make internal improvements, or overrule state court decisions, while states had the right to sustain their own armies and enter into separate agreements with one another, and were given greater power in amending the constitution. Although there was a provision for a federal Supreme Court, Southern legislators could never agree on its configuration or even the wisdom of its establishment, and so the Confederacy lacked a high court throughout its existence. The provisional Congress sent three envoys to Washington to try to negotiate a final, peaceful split from the United States, although at the same time preparing for combat by establishing an army.

Hopes for a nonviolent settlement died after the April 12 attack on Fort Sumter, and four more Southern states-Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, and Tennessee-joined the Confederacy once the war started. Secessionist governments were established in Missouri and Kentucky, two border states that officially remained in the Union, while the western counties of Virginia rejoined the North. The Confederacy's capital was moved from Montgomery to Richmond, Virginia, in May 1861, and regular presidential and congressional elections were held in November.

Running unopposed, Davis and Stephens were formally reinaugurated, quite pointedly, on George Washington's birthday, February 22, 1862. Although there were no established parties, Confederate politics soon divided along pro- and anti-administration lines, and the lack of designated factions only caused confusion and disorganization. Among the opposition, some merely objected to Davis' policies-or his personality-while supporting the war effort; others urged negotiations for peace with the North. Still others, the most ardent states' rights proponents, claimed that the president sought dictatorial powers and denied Davis had anything but the most cursory executive authority.

Some even advocated that their states secede from the Confederacy and form separate countries. After the next congressional elections, held over a nearly six-month period in 1863 due to the logistical problems of the Union military presence across the South, nearly two-fifths of the Confederate House and one half of the Senate were openly anti-administration. Besides the actual waging of the war and futile attempts to win formal recognition from European nations, the Confederate government's main concern was raising money for the costly military effort.

When Richmond fell to Union forces on April 2, 1865, the Confederate government effectively collapsed. Davis and most of his cabinet, taking the remnants of the country's treasury, fled south by train. Against the advice of most, the president intended to reestablish a seat of government west of the Mississippi River and continue the struggle. But Davis' capture outside Irwinville, Georgia, on May 10 ended the pretense, and there was no longer any question that the Confederate nation-established little more than four years earlier ceased to exist.

# General Robert E. Lee

The idol of the South to this day, Virginian Robert E. Lee had some difficulty in adjusting to the new form of warfare that unfolded with the Civil war, but this did not prevent him from keeping the Union armies in Virginia at bay for almost three years. The son of Revolutionary War hero "Light Horse" Harry Lee-who fell into disrepute in his later years attended West Point and graduated second in his class. During his four years at the military academy he did not earn a single demerit and served as the cadet corps' adjutant. Upon his 1829 graduation he was posted to the engineers. Before the Mexican War he served on engineering projects in Georgia, Virginia, and New York. During the war he served on the staffs of John Wool and Winfield Scott. Particularly distinguishing himself scouting for and guiding troops, he won three brevets and was slightly wounded at Chapultepec.

Following a stint in Baltimore Harbor he became superintendent of the military academy in 1852. When the mounted arm was expanded in 1855, Lee accepted the lieutenant colonelcy of the 2nd Cavalry in order to escape from the painfully slow promotion in the engineers. Ordered to western Texas, he served with his regiment until the 1857 death of his father-in-law forced him to ask for a series of leaves to settle the estate.

In 1859 he was called upon to lead a force of marines, to join with the militia on the scene, to put an end to John Brown's Harper's Ferry Raid. Thereafter he served again in Texas until summoned to Washington in 1861 by Winfield Scott who tried to retain Lee in the U. S. service. But the Virginian rejected the command of the Union's field forces on the day after Virginia seceded. He then accepted an invitation to visit Governor John Letcher in Virginia. His resignation as colonel, 1st Cavalry-to which he had recently been promoted-was accepted on April 25, 1861.

In charge of Virginia's fledgling military might, he was mainly involved in organizational matters. As a Confederate brigadier general, and later full general, he was in charge of supervising all Southern forces in Virginia. In the first summer of the war he was given his first field command in western Virginia. His Cheat Mountain Campaign was a disappointing fizzle largely due to the failings of his superiors. His entire tenure in the region was unpleasant, dealing with the bickering of his subordinates-William W. Loring, John B. Floyd, and Henry A. Wise. After this he became known throughout the South as "Granny Lee." His debut in field command had not been promising, but Jefferson Davis appointed him to command along the Southern Coast.

Early in 1862 he was recalled to Richmond and made an advisor to the president. From this position he had some influence over military operations, especially those of Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley. When Joseph E. Johnston launched his attack at Seven Pines, Davis and Lee were taken by surprise and rode out to the field. In the confusion of the fight Johnston was badly wounded, and that night Davis instructed Lee to take command of what he renamed the Army of Northern Virginia. He fought the second day of the battle but the initiative had already been lost the previous day. Later in the month, in a daring move, he left a small force in front of Richmond and crossed the Chickahominy to strike the one Union corps north of the river. In what was to be called the Seven Days Battles the individual fights-Beaver Dam Creek, Gaines' Mill, Savage Station, Glendale, White Oak Swamp, and Malvern Hill-were all tactical defeats for the Confederates. But Lee had achieved the strategic goal of removing McClellan's army from the very gates of Richmond.

This created a new opinion of Lee in the South. He gradually became "Uncle Robert" and "Marse Robert." With McClellan neutralized, a new threat developed under John Pope in northern Virginia. At first Lee detached Jackson and then followed with Longstreet's command. Winning at 2nd Bull Run, he moved on into Maryland but suffered the misfortune of having a copy of his orders detailing the disposition of his divided forces fall into the hands of the enemy. McClellan moved with unusual speed and Lee was forced to fight a delaying action along South Mountain while waiting for Jackson to complete the capture of Harpers Ferry and rejoin him. He masterfully fought McClellan to a stand still at Antietam and two days later recrossed the Potomac.

Lee returned to Richmond as a paroled prisoner of war, and submitted with the utmost composure to an altered destiny. He devoted the rest of his life to setting an example of conduct for other thousands of ex-Confederates. He refused a number of offers which would have secured substantial means for his family. Instead, he assumed the presidency of Washington College (now Washington and Lee University) in Lexington, Virginia, and his reputation revitalized the school after the war. Lee's enormous wartime prestige, both in the North and South, and the devotion inspired by his unconscious symbolism of the "Lost Cause" made him a legendary figure even before his death. He died on October 12 1870, of heart disease which had plagued him since the spring of 1863, at Lexington, Va. and is buried there. Somehow, his application for restoration of citizenship was mislaid, and it was not until the 1970's that it was found and granted.

# Ulysses S. Grant

Late in the administration of Andrew Johnson, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant quarreled with the President and aligned himself with the Radical Republicans. He was, as the symbol of Union victory during the Civil War, their logical candidate for President in 1868.

When he was elected, the American people hoped for an end to turmoil. Grant provided neither vigor nor reform. Looking to Congress for direction, he seemed bewildered. One visitor to the White House noted "a puzzled pathos, as of a man with a problem before him of which he does not understand the terms."

Born in 1822, Grant was the son of an Ohio tanner. He went to West Point rather against his will and graduated in the middle of his class. In the Mexican War he fought under Gen. Zachary Taylor.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Grant was working in his father's leather store in Galena, Illinois. He was appointed by the Governor to command an unruly volunteer regiment. Grant whipped it into shape and by September 1861 he had risen to the rank of brigadier general of volunteers.

He sought to win control of the Mississippi Valley. In February 1862 he took Fort Henry and attacked Fort Donelson. When the Confederate commander asked for terms, Grant replied, "No terms except an unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted." The Confederates surrendered, and President Lincoln promoted Grant to major general of volunteers.

At Shiloh in April, Grant fought one of the bloodiest battles in the West and came out less well. President Lincoln fended off demands for his removal by saying, "I can't spare this man--he fights."

For his next major objective, Grant maneuvered and fought skillfully to win Vicksburg, the key city on the Mississippi, and thus cut the Confederacy in two. Then he broke the Confederate hold on Chattanooga.

Lincoln appointed him General-in-Chief in March 1864. Grant directed Sherman to drive through the South while he himself, with the Army of the Potomac, pinned down Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

Finally, on April 9, 1865, at Appomattox Court House, Lee surrendered. Grant wrote out magnanimous terms of surrender that would prevent treason trials.

As President, Grant presided over the Government much as he had run the Army. Indeed he brought part of his Army staff to the White House.

Although a man of scrupulous honesty, Grant as President accepted handsome presents from admirers. Worse, he allowed himself to be seen with two speculators, Jay Gould and James Fisk. When Grant realized their scheme to corner the market in gold, he authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to sell enough gold to wreck their plans, but the speculation had already wrought havoc with business. During his campaign for re-election in 1872, Grant was attacked by Liberal Republican reformers. He called them "narrow-headed men," their eyes so close together that "they can look out of the same gimlet hole without winking." The General's friends in the Republican Party came to be known proudly as "the Old Guard." Grant allowed Radical Reconstruction to run its course in the South, bolstering it at times with military force. After retiring from the Presidency, Grant became a partner in a financial firm, which went bankrupt.

About that time he learned that he had cancer of the throat. He started writing his recollections to pay off his debts and provide for his family, racing against death to produce a memoir that ultimately earned nearly \$450,000. Soon after completing the last page, in 1885, he died.

Key Battle	Date	Fact
Fort Sumter	April 12-13 <sup>th</sup> , 1861	Attack which starts the war
1 <sup>st</sup> Bull Run	July 21 <sup>st</sup> , 1861	1 <sup>st</sup> battle of war, ended any hope of politically ending the war
Monitor vs. Merrimack	March 9 <sup>th</sup> , 1862	1 <sup>st</sup> battle between ironclad ships
Shiloh	April 6-7 <sup>th</sup> , 1862	Union victory that introduces "total war"
Antietam	September 17 <sup>th</sup> , 1862	Single bloodiest day in American history
Fredericksburg	December 11-15 <sup>th</sup> , 1862	CSA's most lopsided victory
2 <sup>nd</sup> Bull Run	August 28-30 <sup>th</sup> , 1862	CSA almost captures Washington DC
Chancellorsville	April 30-May 6 <sup>th</sup> , 1863	Huge CSA victory, Jackson is killed by his own troops
Vicksburg	July 4 <sup>th</sup> , 1863	Gives the USA control of the Mississippi River
Gettysburg	July 1 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 1863	Turning point of war, single bloodiest battle in American history
Chickamauga	September 18 – 20 <sup>th</sup> , 1863	CSA victory as an answer to Gettysburg, drives USA out of TN
Chattanooga	Oct – Nov 1863	Grant given control of army, last CSA control of TN
Wilderness Campaign	May 5-7 <sup>th</sup> , 1864	Considered the beginning of the end of Lee's army
Spotsylvania Courthouse	May 8-21 <sup>st</sup> , 1864	Key CSA deaths leaves Lee without his most trusted generals
Cold Harbor	May 31 – June 12 <sup>th</sup> , 1864	Last major CSA Victory
Petersburg/Richmond	1864 - 1865	Trench Warfare used
Sherman's March To The Sea	1864	Gives Savannah to Lincoln as a Christmas gift, war to the people
Appomattox Courthouse	April 9 <sup>th</sup> , 1865	Battle where Lee surrenders
Bentonville	March 19-21 <sup>st</sup> , 1865	Army of NC surrenders, last major battle fought in NC

## Key Battles and People of the Civil War

<p>United States of America:</p> <p>Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware*, Maryland*, Ohio, West Virginia, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, California, Oregon, Nevada, Iowa, Kentucky*, Missouri*, Colorado**, Nebraska**, New Mexico**, Utah**, Washington**</p> <p>*Border states who allowed slavery  **Territories who fought for USA</p>	<p>Confederate States of America:</p> <p>Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina</p>
<p>President:</p> <p>Abraham Lincoln</p>	<p>President:</p> <p>Jefferson Davis</p>
<p>Generals:</p> <p>Ulysses S. Grant  Ambrose Burnside  Joshua Chamberlain  George Custer  Winfield Scott Hancock  Joseph Hooker  George McClellan  Irwin McDowell  George Meade  Phillip Sheridan  William Tecumseh Sherman</p>	<p>Generals:</p> <p>Robert E. Lee  Lewis Armistead  PGT Beauregard  Braxton Bragg  Nathan Bedford Forrest  AP Hill  Thomas Stonewall Jackson  Joseph Johnston  James Longstreet  George Pickett  Jeb Stuart</p>