

U.S. HISTORY 1 - SCAVENGER HUNT

UNIT 1: EXPLORATION & CONTACT

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS



Columbus was an Italian explorer who believed he could reach Asia by sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean. After securing financial support from Spain, Columbus sailed with about 90 men aboard three ships, the Niña, Pinta, and Santa María. In October 1492, his expedition reached islands in the Bahamas. Believing he had reached islands near Asia, Columbus called the Native people he encountered “Indians.”

Many popular stories about Columbus are myths. He did *not* prove that the Earth was round. Educated Europeans already knew that. He never set foot on the mainland of North America, and Queen Isabella did not sell her jewels to finance his voyage. We don't even know exactly what Columbus looked like because he never sat for a known portrait during his lifetime.

Columbus was later made a governor in the New World, although his rule was troubled and he was eventually arrested and removed from power. Nor was Columbus the first human, or even necessarily the first European, to reach the Americas. His enormous historical significance is that his voyages made the route widely known and helped inspire the European exploration and colonization that followed. In that sense, Columbus didn't simply “discover America.” His voyages helped permanently connect two worlds that had developed largely apart.

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CONQUISTADORS



During the 1500s, Spanish soldiers and explorers known as conquistadors, Spanish for “conquerors,” claimed vast territories in the Americas for Spain. They sought wealth, land, status, and the expansion of Spanish power and Christianity. Two of the most famous were Hernán Cortés, whose expedition helped overthrow the Aztec Empire in Mexico, and Francisco Pizarro, whose forces conquered the Inca Empire in South America. Both encounters brought enormous wealth and territory under Spanish control.

The conquistadors succeeded despite being vastly outnumbered. Steel weapons and armor, horses, and firearms gave them military advantages, but those alone did not conquer the Aztec and Inca empires. Spaniards also formed alliances with Indigenous peoples who were enemies or subjects of those empires. Disease was even more devastating. Smallpox and other diseases brought from Europe killed millions of Native Americans who had no previous exposure or immunity, badly weakening societies throughout the Americas.

Spanish conquest came at an enormous human cost. Warfare, disease, enslavement, forced labor, and the destruction or suppression of Native governments and cultures transformed much of the Americas. The conquistadors helped make Spain one of the world's wealthiest and most powerful empires, but that wealth came largely from lands, resources, and labor taken from Indigenous peoples. Their story is therefore both one of extraordinary exploration and military conquest, and one of the devastating consequences European colonization had for the people who were already here.

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SPANISH MISSIONARIES



As Spain claimed territory throughout the Americas, soldiers and conquistadors were followed by missionaries, people sent by the Catholic Church to spread Christianity. Unlike many early explorers who came and left, missionaries often stayed, establishing permanent missions and communities throughout Spanish-controlled territory. Many went so far as to call missionaries the first European “explorers” to stay in the New World.

Spanish missions served both religious and political purposes. Priests, especially Franciscans and other Catholic orders, sought to convert Indigenous peoples to Christianity, while missions also helped Spain establish permanent control over its enormous empire. Missions eventually stretched from Mexico into areas that are now Florida, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. They introduced European languages, religion, agriculture, livestock, architecture, and other customs, leaving influences that remain visible in the American Southwest today.

But mission life also came at a tremendous cost to Native peoples. Indigenous communities were often pressured or forced to relocate to missions, abandon traditional religious and cultural practices, and provide labor. European diseases caused devastating population losses. Some Native peoples adapted elements of Spanish culture to their own traditions, while others resisted Spanish control, sometimes violently. Spanish missions therefore left a complicated legacy: they created settlements and cultural influences that helped shape the future United States, while also participating in a colonial system that disrupted, exploited, and sometimes destroyed Indigenous communities.

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NATIVE AMERICA BEFORE & AFTER EUROPEAN CONTACT



Long before Columbus or other European explorers arrived, the Americas were home to millions of Indigenous people belonging to hundreds of distinct nations and cultures. They spoke different languages, practiced different religions, developed different governments, and adapted to environments ranging from deserts and forests to plains and coastal regions. Some built large cities and extensive trade networks, while others lived in smaller agricultural or hunting communities. There was no single “Native American culture” any more than there was a single European one.

European arrival dramatically changed life on both sides of the Atlantic. Native peoples traded with newcomers and sometimes formed alliances with European powers or with other Native nations. These relationships could provide new goods, weapons, or military partners, but Europeans also competed for Native land and resources, and treaties and alliances were frequently broken. Europeans often made alliances with Native peoples and subsequently failed to honor them.

The most devastating consequence of contact was disease. Smallpox, measles, influenza, and other illnesses brought from Europe spread through populations that had never previously encountered them, causing catastrophic deaths in many communities. Warfare, forced labor, enslavement, displacement, and European settlement caused additional destruction. Native peoples nevertheless survived, resisted, adapted, and continued shaping American history. European contact did not make Indigenous history disappear. It changed it, often violently, while beginning centuries of interaction between Native nations and the newcomers occupying their lands.

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UNIT 1: EXPLORATION & CONTACT

THE COLUMBIAN EXCHANGE



After Columbus's voyages, sustained contact between Europe, Africa, and the Americas created an enormous transfer of plants, animals, foods, people, diseases, and ideas known as the Columbian Exchange. For thousands of years, the Eastern and Western Hemispheres had developed largely apart. Beginning in the late 1400s, that separation ended, permanently changing diets, economies, environments, and populations around the world.

Europeans brought horses, cattle, pigs, wheat, sugar, and coffee to the Americas. Horses transformed life for many Native peoples, particularly on the Great Plains. From the Americas came foods including corn, potatoes, tomatoes, cacao, and tobacco. American crops eventually became staples around the world. The potato, for example, provided an inexpensive and calorie-rich food source that contributed to population growth in parts of Europe.

Not everything exchanged was beneficial. Europeans unintentionally brought diseases such as smallpox, measles, and influenza, which devastated Indigenous populations. Europeans also deliberately transported millions of enslaved Africans across the Atlantic, making the forced movement of human beings one of the darkest parts of this new interconnected world. The Columbian Exchange therefore wasn't a single trade or event. It was a massive biological and cultural transformation that helped create the interconnected Atlantic world and permanently changed both sides of the ocean.

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UNIT 1: EXPLORATION & CONTACT

MERCANTILISM, TRADE, & EUROPEAN EMPIRES



European exploration was driven by curiosity, religion, and fame, but also by something considerably less romantic: money. European nations competed to acquire colonies because colonies could provide valuable land, resources, and new markets. Under an economic system called mercantilism, nations attempted to increase their own wealth and power by controlling territory and trade. Colonies supplied valuable raw materials and were expected to trade primarily for the benefit of the country that controlled them.

European powers including Spain, France, England, Portugal, and the Netherlands competed for territory throughout the Americas. Colonies produced valuable exports, goods sent elsewhere to be sold, including sugar, tobacco, cocoa, timber, and other raw materials. European nations could then manufacture goods, sell products, collect taxes, and accumulate wealth. This competition also encouraged countries to claim more territory and sometimes form alliances with Native nations against rival European empires.

The enormous profits of the colonial economy came with an enormous human cost. Producing labor-intensive crops, particularly sugar and tobacco, created a huge demand for workers. Europeans increasingly turned to the enslavement and forced transportation of Africans to meet that demand. Millions of enslaved people would eventually be carried across the Atlantic and forced to work without pay. Exploration therefore grew into something much larger than adventurous voyages across an ocean: it created competing empires and an Atlantic economy whose pursuit of wealth would profoundly shape the Americas for centuries.

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UNIT II: COLONIAL AMERICA

JAMESTOWN & THE SOUTHERN COLONIES



England's first attempt at establishing a colony at Roanoke mysteriously disappeared, but in 1607 English settlers founded Jamestown, Virginia, the first permanent English settlement in what became the United States. Unlike later Pilgrims seeking religious freedom, Jamestown was primarily a business venture. The Virginia Company and its settlers hoped to find valuable resources and make money. Instead, early colonists faced disease, hunger, poor drinking water, conflict with the Powhatan peoples, and the inconvenient discovery that searching for gold does not actually grow food.

Captain John Smith became one of Jamestown's most important early leaders and pushed settlers to work for their survival. The colony eventually found its economic salvation in tobacco, particularly after John Rolfe developed a profitable crop for export. Tobacco created enormous demand for land and labor and helped produce the plantation economy that became characteristic of the Southern Colonies. Early plantations relied heavily on indentured servants, but over time wealthy landowners increasingly turned to the permanent enslavement of Africans and their descendants.

Jamestown also helped establish an important American political tradition. In 1619, Virginia created the House of Burgesses, the first representative legislative assembly in English North America. That same year, the arrival of Africans in Virginia marked an early chapter in the complicated development of racial slavery in the English colonies. Jamestown therefore represents several themes that would shape American history for centuries: the pursuit of profit, conflict and interaction with Native peoples, representative government, plantation agriculture, and the growth of slavery.

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UNIT II: COLONIAL AMERICA

PILGRIMS, PURITANS, & THE MAYFLOWER



Not everyone who came to the English colonies was searching for gold or profit. Some came because of religion. In 1620, a group now known as the Pilgrims crossed the Atlantic aboard the Mayflower and established Plymouth Colony in present-day Massachusetts. The Pilgrims were Separatists who had broken away from the Church of England and sought the ability to build a religious community according to their own beliefs. A larger group of Puritans later established Massachusetts Bay Colony, hoping to “purify” or reform the Church of England and create a deeply religious society.

Before leaving the Mayflower, 41 adult male passengers signed the Mayflower Compact. Because they had landed outside the area where they originally had permission to settle, they needed rules for governing themselves. The Compact created a “civil body politic” and promised that the colonists would make laws for the general good and obey those laws. It was not a modern democracy and did not give everyone equal political rights, but it became an important early example of self-government and majority rule in the English colonies.

There is also an important irony in the story of religious freedom. Many Puritans wanted freedom to practice their own religion, but that did not necessarily mean freedom for everyone else's. Massachusetts authorities punished or expelled religious dissenters, including people such as Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson. Colonial America therefore became an early laboratory for a question Americans would continue debating for centuries: Does religious liberty mean freedom for my beliefs, or freedom for everybody's?

THE SALEM WITCH TRIALS



In early 1692, fear swept through the Puritan communities around Salem, Massachusetts, after several young girls began experiencing strange fits and accused others of practicing witchcraft. Among the accusers was Abigail Williams, an 11-year-old girl. Some of the first accused were already outsiders in their community, including Sarah Good, a poor and socially marginalized woman. Accusations soon spread as fear, religious tension, personal grudges, and existing prejudices turned neighbor against neighbor.

The trials became a famous example of mass hysteria, when fear spreads through a group and people begin reacting to a perceived threat without reliable evidence. Courts even accepted spectral evidence, testimony claiming that a person's spirit or ghost had attacked someone in a dream or vision. More than 150 people were accused or arrested, and 19 people were executed by hanging. Another man, Giles Corey, was pressed to death with heavy stones after refusing to enter a plea. Contrary to popular legend, no accused witches were burned at the stake in Salem. We can easily see how quickly accusations and prejudice produce deadly consequences.

Eventually, public support for the trials collapsed, Massachusetts's governor intervened, and the proceedings ended in 1693. The Salem Witch Trials endure as a warning about what can happen when fear becomes evidence, accusation becomes proof, and prejudice replaces reason. The victims were not convicted because witchcraft had been demonstrated scientifically. They suffered because a frightened community became willing to believe accusations it could not prove.

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UNIT II: COLONIAL AMERICA

TRIANGULAR TRADE & THE ATLANTIC ECONOMY



By the 1600s and 1700s, Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, and the American colonies had become connected through a vast system of Atlantic trade. One simplified model of this system is called Triangular Trade because goods and people moved among three major regions: Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Individual ships did not always travel the entire triangle, but together these routes created an interconnected Atlantic economy.

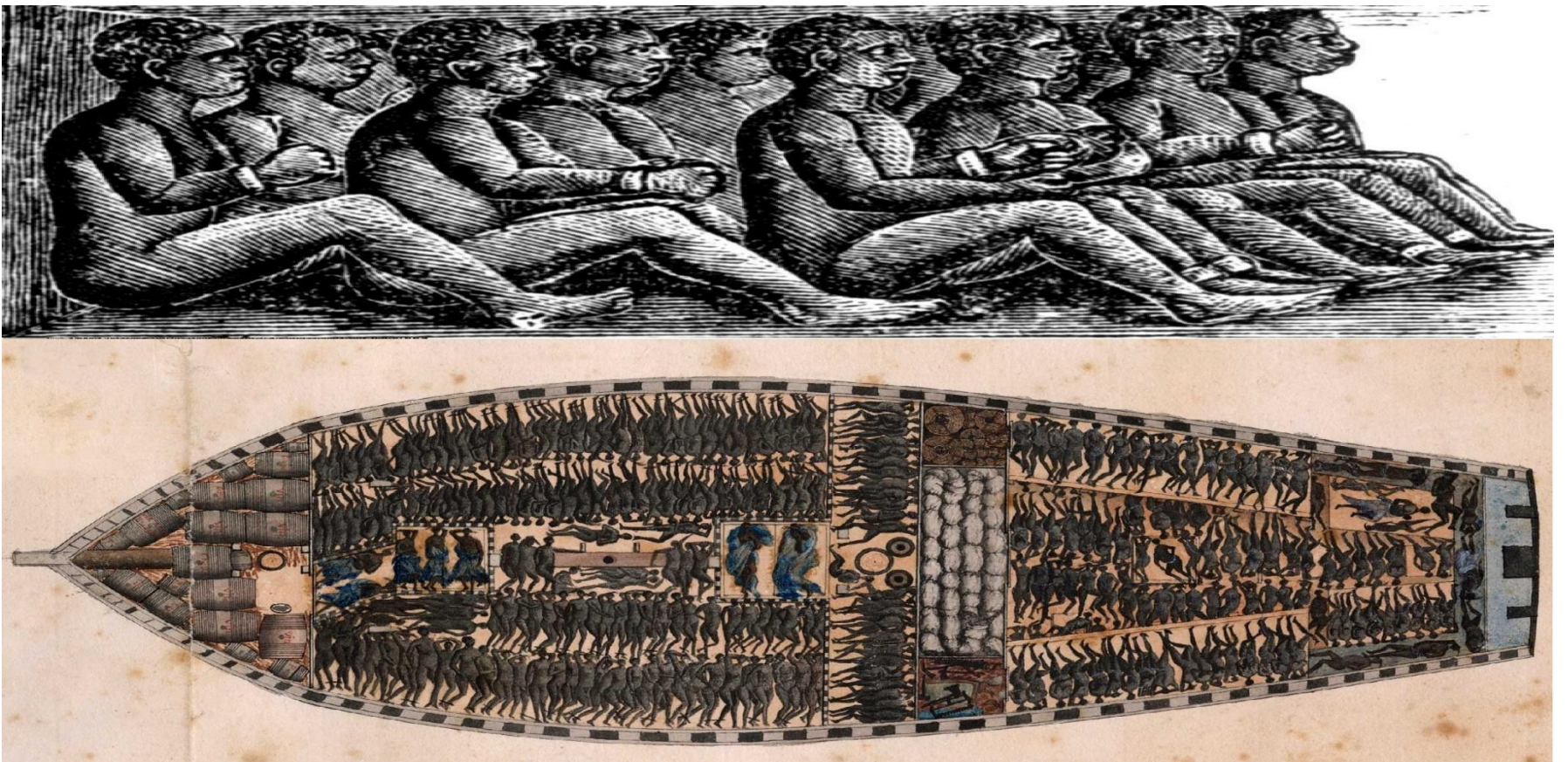
European merchants traded manufactured goods, including textiles, metal goods, and weapons. Enslaved Africans were forcibly transported across the Atlantic to the Americas, where their labor produced valuable raw materials and cash crops such as sugar, tobacco, cotton, and cocoa. Those materials could then be shipped to Europe and turned into manufactured products, which could be sold for additional profit. America was “built” on this relationship between raw materials, manufactured goods, and enslaved labor.

This system generated enormous wealth for merchants, plantation owners, and European empires, but much of that prosperity depended upon human exploitation. Enslaved Africans were treated as commodities within the trading system rather than as human beings with freedom and rights. Triangular Trade therefore demonstrates an uncomfortable but essential truth about colonial America: the growth of the Atlantic economy and the prosperity of the colonies were deeply connected to slavery and forced labor.

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UNIT II: COLONIAL AMERICA

THE MIDDLE PASSAGE



The Middle Passage was the forced voyage across the Atlantic that carried enslaved Africans to the Americas as part of the transatlantic slave trade. From the 1500s through the 1800s, approximately 12.5 million Africans were forced aboard slave ships, with about 10.7 million surviving the Atlantic crossing. They were not voluntary immigrants. People were kidnapped, captured through warfare or slave raids, sold to European traders, separated from families and communities, and transported thousands of miles from their homes.

Conditions aboard slave ships were horrific. Captives were often chained together and packed tightly below deck with little room to move, poor sanitation, inadequate food and water, and limited fresh air. Disease spread rapidly, and abuse was common. The diagram shows hundreds of human beings arranged shoulder-to-shoulder throughout the decks of a slave ship, illustrating how deliberately ships were designed to carry the greatest possible number of captives. Many died during the voyage from disease, starvation, violence, or suicide.

One survivor was Olaudah Equiano, who wrote a famous firsthand account describing enslavement and the Atlantic crossing. Equiano eventually purchased his freedom, became an author and abolitionist, and used his experiences to expose the cruelty of the slave trade. The Middle Passage forcibly displaced millions of people and helped create an institution of racial slavery whose consequences would shape American society long after the slave ships stopped crossing the Atlantic.

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UNIT II: COLONIAL AMERICA

DIVERSITY, RELIGION, AND TOLERANCE IN THE COLONIES



The thirteen English colonies were never one uniform society. New England was heavily influenced by Puritan religion and developed around towns, small farms, fishing, and commerce. The Southern Colonies developed large plantations producing cash crops and became increasingly dependent upon enslaved labor. Between them were the Middle Colonies, including New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, where shipping, farming, and trade helped create some of the most culturally and religiously diverse communities in British North America.

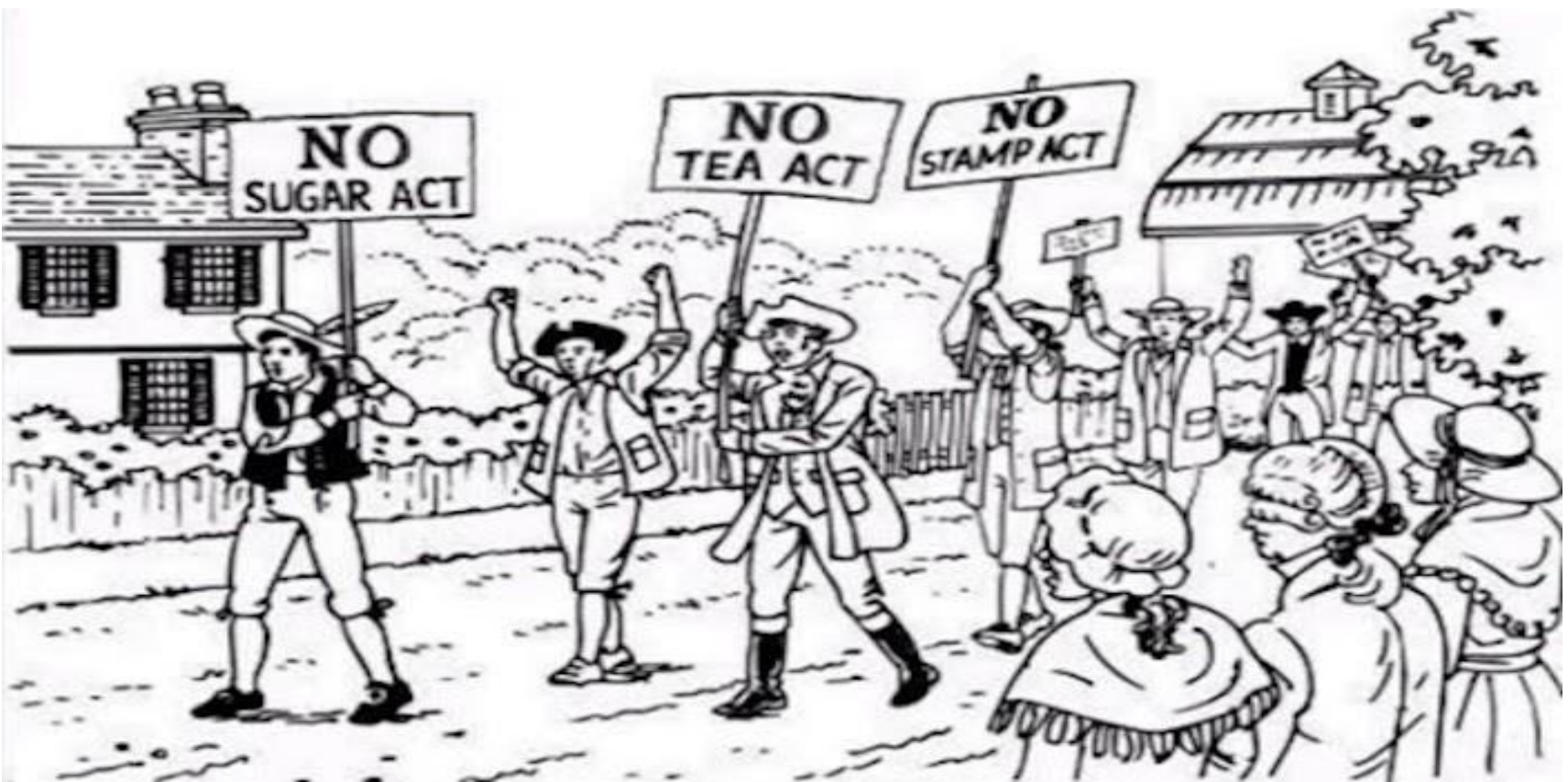
One of the strongest advocates for religious tolerance was William Penn, an English Quaker who founded Pennsylvania in 1681. Penn envisioned the colony as a “Holy Experiment” where people of different religious beliefs could live peacefully together. Pennsylvania welcomed Quakers and other groups who faced persecution elsewhere. Penn's government promised that people would not be punished or forced into worship because of their religious beliefs, an unusually tolerant policy for its time.

Colonial religious freedom was still far from universal, and prejudice based on religion, race, gender, and social class remained widespread. Yet the sheer diversity of colonial America made complete religious uniformity increasingly difficult. The experiences of colonies such as Pennsylvania helped develop ideas about tolerance and separation of church and state that would later influence the new United States and its constitutional protection of religious freedom.

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UNIT III: REVOLUTION AND REPUBLIC

ROAD TO REVOLUTION



For more than a century, Britain's American colonies had grown accustomed to managing many of their own affairs. That began changing after the French and Indian War (1754–1763). Britain had defeated France and gained enormous territory in North America, but the war left the British government deeply in debt. British leaders believed the colonists should help pay the cost of defending the empire, so Parliament imposed new taxes and regulations.

Acts such as the Stamp Act taxed printed materials, while the Townshend Acts placed duties on imported goods. Colonists protested, boycotted British goods, organized groups such as the Sons of Liberty, and sometimes intimidated tax collectors. Britain repealed some unpopular taxes, but continued insisting that Parliament had the authority to govern and tax the colonies. The Intolerable Acts showed, over and over, this escalating cycle: Britain imposed rules, colonists protested, and new restrictions followed.

At the center of the dispute was the colonial rallying cry “No taxation without representation.” Most colonists were not initially demanding independence. They argued that as British subjects they possessed rights and should not be taxed by a legislature in which they had no elected representatives. Britain countered that Parliament represented the entire empire. What began as an argument over taxes therefore became a larger argument over who had the right to govern the colonies, until disagreement eventually became revolution.

THE BOSTON MASSACRE AND THE BOSTON TEA PARTY



As tensions with Britain increased, Boston became a center of colonial resistance. British troops were stationed there to enforce laws and maintain order, creating frequent confrontations with angry colonists. On March 5, 1770, an argument between colonists and British soldiers escalated until soldiers fired into the crowd, killing five people. Colonial leaders called the event the Boston Massacre, and Patriots such as Paul Revere used dramatic images and newspaper accounts to portray it as evidence of British tyranny. The event became powerful propaganda for the growing resistance movement.

Tensions continued over British taxation, especially taxes on tea. On December 16, 1773, colonists boarded British ships in Boston Harbor and dumped hundreds of chests of tea into the water. Some participants disguised themselves as Native Americans. The Boston Tea Party was deliberately destructive and illegal, but protesters viewed it as an act of resistance against a government taxing them without representation. History can call this *both* vandalism and an expression of colonial frustration.

Britain responded by passing harsh laws colonists called the Intolerable Acts, including closing Boston Harbor until the destroyed tea was paid for and restricting Massachusetts government. Rather than isolating Boston, the punishment helped unite the colonies against Britain. What had begun as protests over taxation was becoming something much larger. Increasing numbers of colonists began wondering whether reconciliation with Britain was even possible.

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UNIT III: REVOLUTION AND REPUBLIC

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE



By 1776, fighting between Britain and the colonies had already begun, and increasing numbers of colonists believed reconciliation was impossible. The Second Continental Congress, meeting in Philadelphia, appointed a five-man committee to prepare a declaration explaining why the colonies should become independent. Thomas Jefferson wrote the principal draft, with contributions and revisions from others including John Adams and Benjamin Franklin. On July 4, 1776, Congress formally adopted the Declaration of Independence.

The Declaration did more than announce that the colonies were leaving Britain. Drawing heavily upon Enlightenment ideas, Jefferson argued that “all men are created equal” and possess unalienable rights, including “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Governments exist to protect those rights and receive their legitimate power from the consent of the governed. If a government consistently violates those rights, the people have the right to change or replace it. The Declaration then listed grievances against King George III to justify why the colonies believed independence had become necessary.

Those ideals were revolutionary, but America did not yet live up to them. Slavery remained legal, women lacked equal political rights, and Native Americans were excluded from the Declaration's promises in practice. Nevertheless, its language created a standard that later generations would repeatedly use to demand greater equality and freedom. The Declaration was therefore both America's announcement of independence and a promise whose meaning Americans would continue debating for generations.

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UNIT III: REVOLUTION AND REPUBLIC

GEORGE WASHINGTON



George Washington occupied an extraordinary number of leadership roles during America's founding. He gained military experience during the French and Indian War and was later selected by the Continental Congress as Commander in Chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolution. Washington was not a flawless general and lost several battles, but he kept the army together through years of shortages, defeats, and miserable conditions until American independence was secured. After the war, he did something remarkable: he surrendered his military command and returned home rather than using his popularity and army to seize political power.

Washington later presided over the Constitutional Convention and in 1789 became the first President of the United States. With no previous American president to copy, nearly everything he did established a precedent, an example future presidents might follow. He created a cabinet of advisers, emphasized civilian control of the military, and demonstrated that even the nation's most powerful leader was subject to law. After two terms, Washington voluntarily left office, establishing a tradition followed by presidents for more than a century.

And then there are the legends. Washington probably never chopped down a cherry tree and confessed, "I cannot tell a lie." His dentures were not made of wood, but included materials such as ivory, metal, and human and animal teeth. He also did not normally wear a white wig; portraits generally show his own powdered hair. Washington's greatest legacy isn't found in those myths anyway. It was his understanding that in a republic, great leadership sometimes means willingly giving power away.

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UNIT III: REVOLUTION AND REPUBLIC

WINNING INDEPENDENCE



The American Revolution began in April 1775 at Lexington and Concord, when fighting broke out between British troops and colonial militia in Massachusetts. The newly created Continental Army, led by George Washington, faced one of the world's most powerful militaries. American forces frequently lacked food, clothing, weapons, training, and pay. Yet they had important advantages: they were fighting on familiar territory, could replace losses more easily than Britain could transport troops across the Atlantic, and did not necessarily need to conquer Britain. They simply had to survive long enough to make Britain give up the war.

The winter of 1777–1778 at Valley Forge became a symbol of that endurance. Soldiers suffered from shortages and disease, while the Prussian officer Baron Friedrich von Steuben helped transform the Continental Army through standardized military training. Meanwhile, the American victory at the Battle of Saratoga in 1777 proved especially important because it helped convince France to openly enter the war as an American ally. French money, weapons, soldiers, and especially naval power dramatically improved America's chances of victory.

That assistance became crucial at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1781. American and French forces trapped British General Charles Cornwallis's army while the French navy prevented escape or reinforcement by sea. Cornwallis surrendered, effectively ending major fighting in the Revolution. The Treaty of Paris of 1783 formally recognized the United States as an independent nation. America had not defeated Britain alone. Victory came through endurance, improved military organization, foreign assistance, and Britain's eventual inability to justify the enormous cost of continuing the war.

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UNIT III: REVOLUTION AND REPUBLIC

CONFEDERATION TO CONSTITUTION

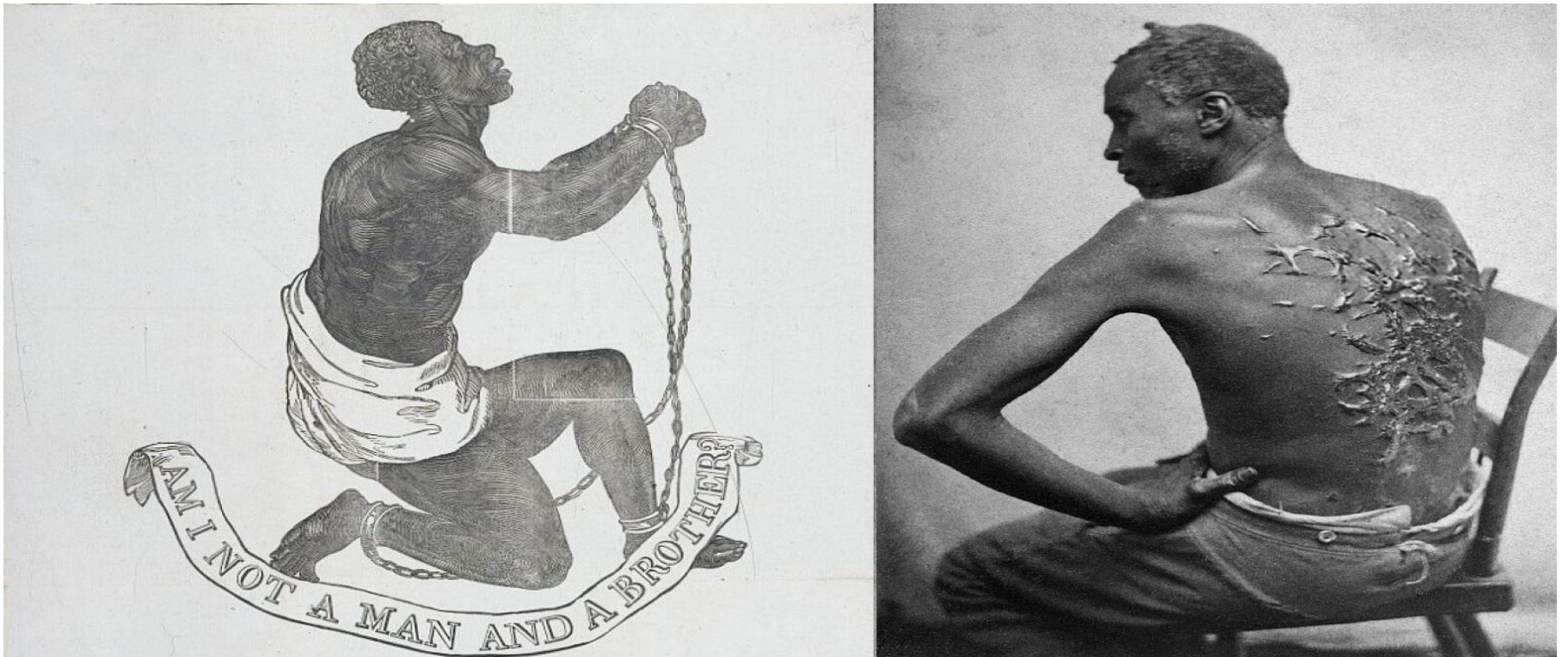


After declaring independence, Americans were understandably suspicious of powerful central government. Their first national government, created under the Articles of Confederation, therefore gave most power to the states. Congress could conduct foreign affairs and declare war, but it could *not* levy federal taxes, regulate interstate commerce, or effectively enforce its own laws. There was no separate president or national court system. These weaknesses became increasingly obvious after the Revolution, especially when Shays' Rebellion in Massachusetts demonstrated how difficult it was for the national government to respond to unrest.

In 1787, delegates met in Philadelphia intending to revise the Articles but instead created an entirely new Constitution. They established a stronger federal government divided into three branches, legislative, executive, and judicial, with checks and balances designed to prevent any one branch from becoming too powerful. Delegates also made major compromises, including the Great Compromise, which created a two-house Congress with representation based on population in the House and equal representation in the Senate. Other compromises protected slavery, revealing a contradiction the new nation failed to resolve.

Some Americans still feared the Constitution gave the federal government too much power. To help secure ratification, supporters promised protections for individual liberties. The first ten amendments, known as the Bill of Rights, were ratified in 1791 and protected freedoms including religion, speech, press, assembly, and due process. The Constitution created a stronger national government, while the Bill of Rights established important limits on what that government could do to its people.

SLAVERY AND THE CAUSES OF THE CIVIL WAR



Slavery existed in North America long before the Civil War, but as the United States expanded westward, one question became increasingly impossible to avoid: Would slavery expand into new states and territories? By the mid-1800s, slavery had become deeply embedded in the Southern economy, particularly in cotton production. Millions of enslaved Black Americans were legally treated as property, denied freedom, separated from families, and forced to labor for the benefit of others. Meanwhile, a growing abolitionist movement demanded that slavery be ended.

Political arguments increasingly divided the country into sectional interests. Northerners and Southerners disagreed over economics, political power, federal authority, and states' rights, but slavery was at the center of the crisis. Every new state threatened to change the balance of power between free and slave states. Compromises repeatedly postponed the conflict, but they could not resolve the fundamental question of whether a nation founded on liberty would continue protecting human slavery.

After Abraham Lincoln, who opposed the expansion of slavery, won the presidential election of 1860, Southern states began leaving the Union. Their own declarations and political leaders repeatedly identified the protection of slavery as a central reason for secession. The Civil War therefore was not simply caused by vague disagreements over "states' rights." The most important right Confederate leaders sought to protect was the right to own enslaved people. Other political and economic disagreements mattered, but slavery was the primary cause of the Civil War.

THE ROAD TO THE CIVIL WAR



For decades before the Civil War, political leaders tried to prevent conflict by compromising over the expansion of slavery. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state while restricting slavery in much of the remaining Louisiana Territory. The Compromise of 1850 temporarily settled another dispute over western territories, but included a stronger Fugitive Slave Act, requiring escaped enslaved people to be returned and forcing even free states to participate in enforcing slavery.

Tensions grew even worse after the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 allowed settlers to vote on whether slavery would be permitted in their territories, effectively overturning the Missouri Compromise. Proslavery and antislavery settlers flooded into Kansas, where fraud, intimidation, and violence earned the territory the nickname “Bleeding Kansas.” Meanwhile, abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass spoke against slavery, while Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* helped expose its brutality to a wider Northern audience.

In 1857, the Supreme Court's *Dred Scott* decision ruled that Black Americans could not be U.S. citizens and that Congress could not prohibit slavery in federal territories. Each attempted solution seemed to deepen the division instead. By the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860, decades of compromise had failed. Southern states increasingly believed slavery's future was threatened, while many Northerners opposed its expansion. The country was running out of compromises and rapidly running out of time.

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UNIT IV: CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

ABRAHAM LINCOLN



Abraham Lincoln rose from humble beginnings in Kentucky and Illinois to become the 16th President of the United States. He opposed the expansion of slavery into western territories, though at the beginning of the Civil War his primary goal was preserving the Union, not immediately abolishing slavery everywhere. His election in 1860 convinced many Southern leaders that slavery's future was threatened, and Southern states began seceding before Lincoln even took office.

As the war continued, Lincoln increasingly connected saving the Union with ending slavery. On January 1, 1863, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring enslaved people in areas still rebelling against the United States to be free. It did not immediately free every enslaved person, but it transformed the meaning of the war, discouraged foreign governments from supporting the Confederacy, and allowed Black men to serve officially in the Union armed forces. Lincoln later strongly supported the 13th Amendment, which permanently abolished slavery throughout the United States.

Lincoln won reelection in 1864 and lived to see the Confederacy collapse, but not the nation's reconstruction. On April 14, 1865, Confederate sympathizer and actor John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. Lincoln died the following morning, only days after Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox. His assassination made him the first U.S. president to be assassinated and left the enormous task of rebuilding the nation to others.

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UNIT IV: CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

SECESSION, FORT SUMTER, & THE UNION VS. CONFEDERACY



After Abraham Lincoln's election in 1860, South Carolina became the first state to secede, or formally leave the United States. Ten more Southern states eventually followed, creating the Confederate States of America and choosing Jefferson Davis as their president. Eleven states ultimately joined the Confederacy, while the states remaining loyal to the United States became known as the Union. Several slaveholding border states, including Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, and Delaware, remained in the Union, making the division more complicated than simply "North versus South."

The crisis became war at Fort Sumter, a U.S. military fort in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. Confederate forces demanded that the federal troops inside surrender. When they refused, Confederate artillery opened fire on April 12, 1861. After more than a day of bombardment, the fort surrendered. Remarkably, no soldiers were killed by enemy fire during the bombardment itself, but the attack marked the beginning of the Civil War. Lincoln then called for troops to suppress the rebellion, prompting additional Southern states to secede.

The Union possessed major advantages, including a larger population, greater industrial capacity, more railroads, and a powerful navy. The Confederacy, however, fought largely on familiar territory, had experienced military commanders, and initially needed mainly to survive long enough for Northern support for the war to collapse. What many Americans expected to be a short conflict instead became four years of devastating warfare and the deadliest military conflict in U.S. history.

GETTYSBURG & THE ADDRESS



The Battle of Gettysburg, fought July 1–3, 1863, in Pennsylvania, became the bloodiest battle of the Civil War in total casualties. Confederate General Robert E. Lee had invaded the North, hoping a major victory on Union territory might weaken Northern support for the war. Instead, Union forces stopped Lee's army at Gettysburg. On the final day, thousands of Confederate soldiers crossed open ground in the disastrous assault known as Pickett's Charge and were driven back. Lee retreated to Virginia, and the Confederacy would never again launch an invasion of the North on that scale.

Gettysburg was enormously costly. Roughly 51,000 soldiers were killed, wounded, captured, or missing during three days of fighting. The Union victory, combined with the Union capture of Vicksburg in Mississippi the following day, made July 1863 a major turning point in the Civil War. Lee's army remained dangerous, and the war continued for nearly two more years, but the Confederacy increasingly found itself fighting a defensive war with shrinking resources.

Four months later, a cemetery was dedicated for Union soldiers killed at Gettysburg. The featured speaker, Edward Everett, spoke for around two hours. President Lincoln then delivered the Gettysburg Address in only about two minutes. Beginning with “Four score and seven years ago,” Lincoln connected the war to the Declaration of Independence and its promise of equality. He argued that the dead had sacrificed so the nation could experience “a new birth of freedom” and so “government of the people, by the people, for the people” would survive.

EMANCIPATION AND THE END OF SLAVERY



As the Civil War continued, destroying slavery became increasingly connected to saving the Union. On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring enslaved people in areas still in rebellion against the United States to be free. This meant it did not apply to enslaved people in the loyal border states or areas of the Confederacy already controlled by Union forces. And because the Confederate government did not recognize Lincoln's authority, freedom often depended upon the advance of Union armies.

Even with those limitations, the Proclamation transformed the war. It officially made emancipation a Union war aim and made foreign support for the slaveholding Confederacy more politically difficult. It also authorized Black men to serve in the U.S. armed forces. By the war's end, roughly 180,000 Black soldiers had served in the Union Army, with thousands more serving in the Navy, fighting for a country that had denied them citizenship and equal rights.

The Emancipation Proclamation did not permanently abolish slavery throughout the United States. That required a constitutional amendment. Ratified in December 1865, the 13th Amendment abolished slavery and involuntary servitude throughout the nation, except as punishment for a crime. The distinction matters: the Emancipation Proclamation was a wartime presidential action aimed at areas in rebellion; the 13th Amendment ended legal slavery nationwide.

U.S. HISTORY 1 - SCAVENGER HUNT

UNIT IV: CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

RECONSTRUCTION: A REVOLUTION UNFINISHED



When the Civil War ended in 1865, the United States faced an enormous question: How do you rebuild a country after four years of civil war and centuries of slavery? The period from 1865 to 1877 became known as Reconstruction. Congress and the federal government attempted to restore the former Confederate states to the Union while defining freedom and citizenship for approximately four million formerly enslaved Americans. The 13th Amendment abolished slavery, the 14th Amendment established birthright citizenship and equal protection under the law, and the 15th Amendment prohibited denying voting rights because of race.

Reconstruction dramatically changed Southern politics. Black men voted, held public office, established schools and churches, and participated in government. Northerners who moved South during Reconstruction were insultingly called “carpetbaggers,” while white Southerners who cooperated with Reconstruction and the Republican Party were called “scalawags.” Opponents used those labels to portray supporters of Reconstruction as traitors or opportunists, although their actual motives varied considerably.

Reconstruction also faced violent resistance. White supremacist organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan used terrorism and murder to intimidate Black voters and their allies. When federal enforcement of Reconstruction declined and federal troops withdrew from the South in 1877, white Southern governments regained control and increasingly restricted Black rights through segregation, voter suppression, and discriminatory laws. Reconstruction permanently changed the Constitution, but it did not create lasting equality. The Civil War ended slavery; Reconstruction began the unfinished struggle over what freedom would actually mean.