



TOPICAL TIDBITS

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Volume 4 Issue 2

The American Civil War

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a civil war is *a war between groups of people in the same country*. The American Civil War was fought between the northern half of the United States and the southern half from 1861-1865. The Southern slave states seceded, or left, the country in January of 1861, and were officially called the “Confederate States of America.” The states that remained were known as the “Union.” Many families had relatives fighting on both sides, sometimes father against son or brother against brother.

This issue of *Topical Tidbits* will explore a few aspects of the Civil War— the music, famous people, important locations and battles. There is so much more that can be learned about this period of history. Please visit your local library for more information. If you are lucky enough to live near a Civil War site, ask your parents to take you there. It is an awesome experience you won’t soon forget.

Have an adult look on YouTube for a video called, “The Civil War Depicted on Stamps.” It is a slide show of postage stamps and images from the Civil War set to music. Hope you enjoy it!



This cover commemorates the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. The soldier on the left is dressed in blue and fought for the Union. “Old Glory,” the flag, is behind him. The Confederate soldier on the right stands in front of the Confederate battle flag.

Music of the Civil War



Top Ten Civil War Songs:

1. "Dixie"
2. "Battle Hymn of the Republic"
3. "Home Sweet Home"
4. "Battle Cry of Freedom"
5. "Bonnie Blue Flag"
6. "Maryland, My Maryland"
7. "Lorena"
8. "We Are Coming, Father Abraham"
9. "Tenting on the Old Camp Ground"
10. "All Quiet Along the Potomac Tonight"

This hand painted cover by Fred Collins has the first line of the song, "The Battle Cry of Freedom."

The story of the Civil War could be told entirely through the music that was written then. Both sides sang songs about every aspect of the conflict. Music has always been important to people, and the soldiers and civilians during this time period were no exception. The average soldier had a lot of time on his hands, so a favorite pastime was singing. Music gave soldiers a way to express their emotions and experiences. They sang in camp and on marches. There were songs for entertainment, to lift morale, to give courage and to remind them of their loved ones at home. Many songs were shared by both sides.

One of the most popular songs was "Battle Cry of Freedom," by George F. Root. Originally written for the Union, the song was so well-liked by Southern soldiers that additional lyrics were created for them. Because of its popularity, the music publisher had 14 printing presses going at one time and still could not keep up with demand. It is estimated that over 700,000 copies of this song were put in circulation.

Below are the two versions of the song. Read through the lyrics and notice the words that are different. Which version will you sing? If you'd like to hear the tune, have an adult search online for you.

Northern Version

Yes we'll rally round the flag, boys, we'll rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom,
We will rally from the hillside, we'll gather from the plain,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom!

(Chorus)

**The Union forever! Hurrah, boys, hurrah!
Down with the traitors, up with the stars;
While we rally round the flag, boys, we rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom!**

We are springing to the call of our brothers gone before,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom!
And we'll fill our vacant ranks with a million freemen more,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom!

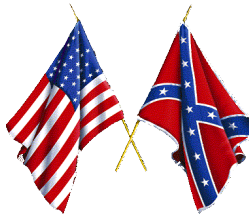
(Chorus)

We will welcome to our numbers the loyal, true and brave,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom!
And although they may be poor, not a man shall be a slave,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom!

(Chorus)

So we're springing to the call from the East and from the West,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom;
And we'll hurl the rebel crew from the land we love best,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom.

(Chorus)



Southern Version

Our flag is proudly floating on the land and on the main,
Shout, shout the battle cry of freedom!
Beneath it oft we've conquered, and we'll conquer oft again!
Shout, shout the battle cry of freedom!

(Chorus)

**Our Dixie forever! She's never at a loss!
Down with the eagle and up with the cross
We'll rally 'round the bonny flag, we'll rally once again,
Shout, shout the battle cry of Freedom!**

Our gallant boys have marched to the rolling of the drums.
Shout, shout the battle cry of freedom!
And the leaders in charge cry out, "Come, boys, come!"
Shout, shout the battle cry of freedom!

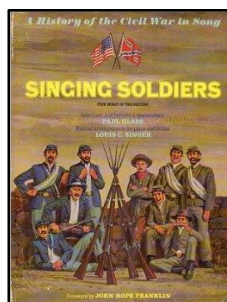
(Chorus)

They have laid down their lives on the bloody battle field.
Shout, shout the battle cry of freedom!
Their motto is resistance – "To the tyrants never yield!"
Shout, shout the battle cry of freedom!

(Chorus)

While our boys have responded and to the fields have gone.
Shout, shout the battle cry of freedom!
Our noble women also have aided them at home.
Shout, shout the battle cry of freedom!

(Chorus)



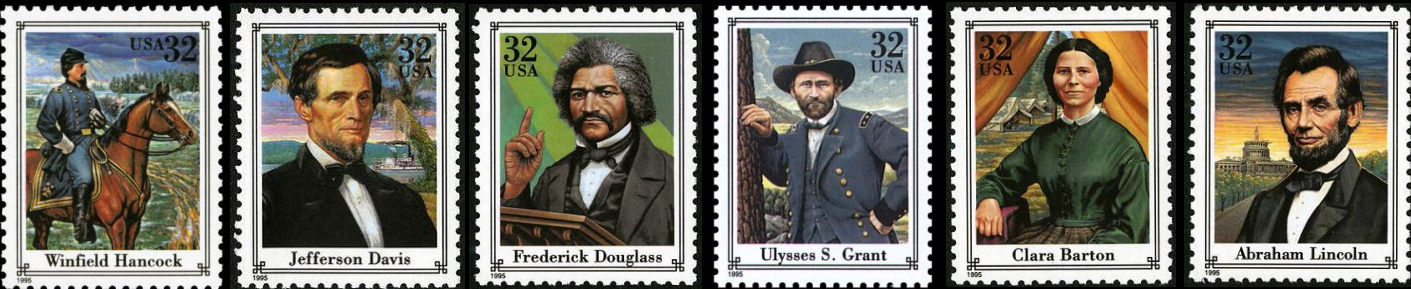
If you would like to learn more about the songs of the Civil War, the book, **Singing Soldiers** by Paul Glass, is an excellent resource. It is available on Amazon, eBay, or check your local library.

Civil War Who Am I?

There were so many important people involved in the Civil War. These stamps issued by the USPS in 1994 show just a few of them. Read the description of each person and match it to the stamp that shows his or her picture. Answers are on page 5.



Four empty rectangular boxes for matching the descriptions to the stamps above.



Six empty rectangular boxes for matching the descriptions to the stamps above.



Six empty rectangular boxes for matching the descriptions to the stamps above.

- I was a Confederate general and commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. My horse's name was Traveller.
- I was an ex-slave who became a journalist and speaker and campaigned for the rights of Blacks and women.
- I was a Union vice admiral and led naval assaults that captured New Orleans and Mobile Bay.
- I was a Union nurse, called the "Angel of the Battlefield." I founded the American Red Cross.
- I was a Confederate lieutenant general and was fatally wounded by my own men at Chancellorsville.
- I was a Confederate wife to an aide of Jefferson Davis. My diary about the war was published after I died.
- I was the only Confederate Indian general and raised a Cherokee regiment. I was the last general to surrender.
- I was the Union general known for "unconditional surrender." I forced Lee's surrender.
- I was a Confederate general who was a master defensive strategist, but I bickered often with Jefferson Davis.
- I was a Confederate nurse who took care of over 10,000 soldiers. My specialty was chicken soup.
- I was the Union's major general who distinguished himself at Shiloh and Vicksburg. I also captured Atlanta.
- I was a senator from Mississippi who became president of the Confederacy.
- I was a fugitive slave and led over 200 Blacks north via the Underground Railroad.
- I was the Union major general who played a major role in the victory at Gettysburg, but was severely injured.
- I was president during the Civil War, but was shot five days after Lee's surrender.
- I was a Confederate rear admiral who plagued Union shipping by capturing or destroying more than 90 vessels.

Civil War Detective Work

Beginning in 2011 and ending in 2015, the USPS issued five sheets of stamps commemorating the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War. Each sheet contained two different designs and showed defining moments of the war. Use an encyclopedia or other reference and find the state where each event happened. A magnifying glass will help you see the details on each stamp. Answers are on page 5.

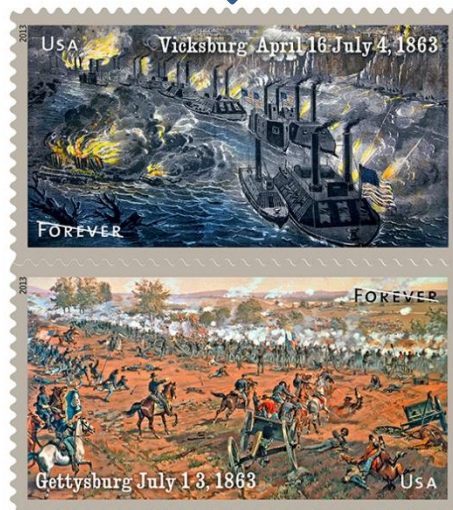
1.



2.



3.



4.

5.

6.

7.



8.

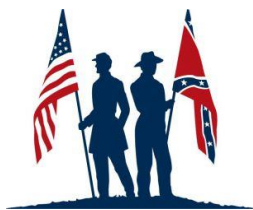


9.

10.

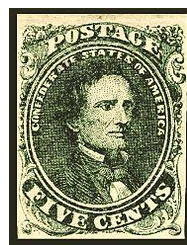
Civil War Battles Book

Over 350 battles were fought in the Civil War. They took place all over the country, but the majority of the fighting was in the states of Virginia and Tennessee. Some battles, like the Battle of Mobile Bay, were even fought on water. The USPS has issued various battle stamps over the years. Using some of these stamps, make a booklet about these battles. The booklet is on pages 6- 12. A blank page has been included in case you find more battle stamps.



Civil War Facts

1. The Civil War was the bloodiest war ever fought on American soil. During an average day during the war, approximately 600 people were killed. By the end of the war, over 618,000 people had died. This is more Americans than WWI, WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War combined.
2. The most common operation performed on soldiers during the Civil War was amputation.
3. Daniel Emmett, the composer of “Dixie” was not only from the North, but was also a loyal Unionist. He was disgusted by the song’s popularity in the South. Lincoln claimed that it was one of “the best tunes I ever heard.”
4. The last Southern troops surrendered on May 26, 1865. Afterward, survivors began decorating the graves of those who had died. They repeated the ritual each year on “The Decoration Day”—which is now known as Memorial Day.
5. Three future presidents fought in the Civil War: Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, and William McKinley.
6. The average Civil War soldier was 5’8” tall and weighed 143 pounds. He was 23 years old.
7. Most Civil War soldiers marched 15 to 20 miles a day.
8. The Union uniform was blue and the Confederate uniform was gray. But because clothes were scarce during the war, it was common for soldiers to wear “enemy” colors and mistakenly be fired upon by their own men.
9. During the war, the Union confiscated Robert E. Lee’s estate and turned it into a cemetery. It later became Arlington National Cemetery.
10. During the war, the Confederacy had its own postal system and issued its own stamps. The one pictured to the right is the first stamp issued and shows Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederate States of America.



From *The History Buff’s Guide to the Civil War*, by Thomas R. Flagel

Answers:

Civil War Detective Work (From page 4)

1. Fort Sumter- South Carolina
2. Antietam- Maryland
3. Vicksburg- Mississippi
4. First Bull Run- Virginia
5. New Orleans- Louisiana
6. Gettysburg- Pennsylvania
7. Mobile Bay- Alabama
8. Five Forks- Virginia
9. Petersburg- Virginia
10. Appomattox Court House- Virginia

Civil War Who Am I? (Page 3)



AMERICAN CIVIL WAR BATTLES

PICTURED ON STAMPS



Shiloh



North

South

Leaders/Important People:

Leaders/Important People:

Number of Casualties:

Number of Casualties:

Where this battle took place:

Date of the battle:

Interesting facts:

Outcome of the battle:

Fort Sumter



North

South

Leaders/Important People:

Leaders/Important People:

Number of Casualties:

Number of Casualties:

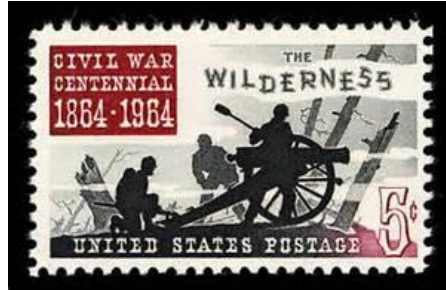
Where this battle took place:

Date/s of the battle:

Interesting facts:

Outcome of the battle:

The Wilderness



North

South

Leaders/Important People:

Leaders/Important People:

Number of Casualties:

Number of Casualties:

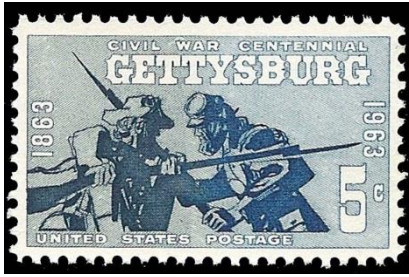
Where this battle took place:

Date of the battle:

Interesting facts:

Outcome of the battle:

Gettysburg



North

South

Leaders/Important People:

Leaders/Important People:

Number of Casualties:

Number of Casualties:

Where this battle took place:

Date of the battle:

Interesting facts:

Outcome of the battle:

Appomattox



North

South

Leaders/Important People:

Leaders/Important People:

Number of Casualties:

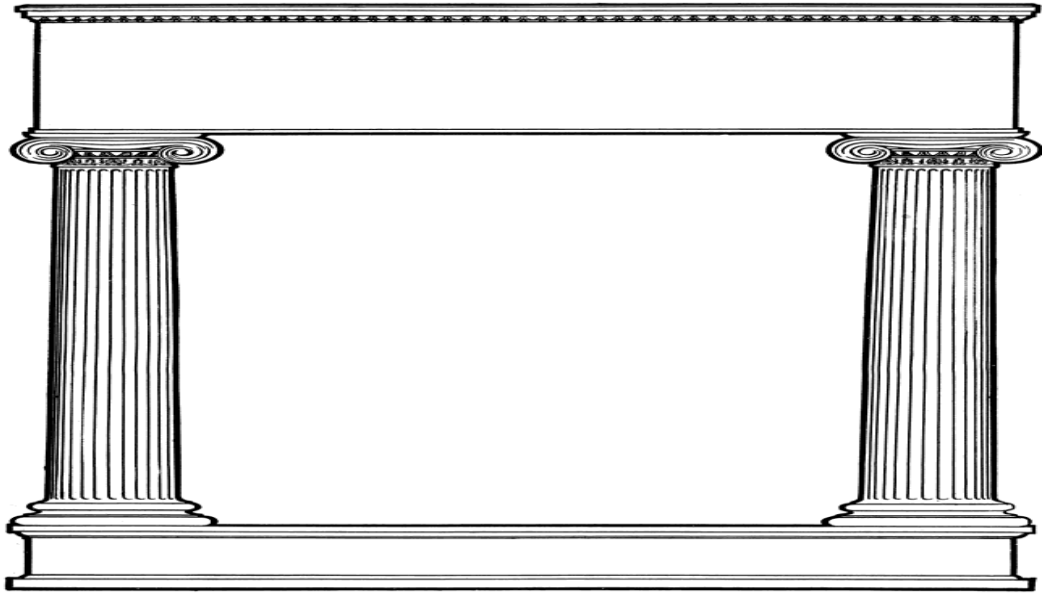
Number of Casualties:

Where this battle took place:

Date of the battle:

Interesting facts:

Outcome of the battle:



North

South

Leaders/Important People:

Leaders/Important People:

Number of Casualties:

Number of Casualties:

Where this battle took place:

Date of the battle:

Interesting facts:

Outcome of the battle:

The American Civil War

