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Actual Outlines

The Planting of English America, 1500-1733

1. England’s Imperial Stirrings

   1. After Columbus’s landfall, the Native American peoples had nearly been extinguished mostly from disease (only about 10% survived)

   2. From Florida and New Mexico southward, most of the southern half of the New World lay firmly within the grip of imperial Spain

   3. In 1600, North America remained mostly unexplored and unclaimed

       1. Three European powers planted three primitive outposts in three distant corners of the continent within three years of one another

       2. The Spanish at Santa Fe in 1610, the French at Quebec in 1608, and the English at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607

   4. England had taken little interest in establishing its own overseas colonies during the early 16th century because of religious conflict when King Henry VIII launched the English Protestant Reformation

       1. Catholics battled Protestants for years and balance of power shifted

       2. After the Protestant Elizabeth ascended to the English throne in 1558, Protestantism became dominant in England and a rivalry with Catholic Spain intensified (Ireland became early scene of rivalry)
5. The Catholic Irish sought help from Catholic Spain to overthrow the new Protestant English queen but the Spanish aid never really helped.

6. Elizabeth’s troops crushed the Irish and the English crown confiscated Catholic Irish lands and planted them with new Protestant landlords.

2. Elizabeth Energizes England

1. English buccaneers sought to promote the twin goals of Protestantism and plunder by seizing Spanish treasure ships and raiding Spanish settlements, even though England and Spain were at peace (the most famous was Francis Drake who was knighted by Queen Elizabeth).

2. The coast of Newfoundland was the site of the first English attempt at colonization but collapsed when promoter Sir Humphrey Gilbert lost his life at sea in 1583—the dream inspired his gallant half brother.

   1. Sir Walter Raleigh organized a group of settlers who landed in 1585 on North Carolina’s Roanoke Island, off the coast of Virginia, a region named by the Virgin Queen Elizabeth in honor of herself.

   2. With Raleigh busy at home, the Roanoke colony suddenly vanished.

3. The English failures at colonization contrasted embarrassingly with the glories of the Spanish Empire, whose profits were enriching Spain beyond its ambitious dreams; Philip II of Spain, foe of the Protestant Reformation used his imperial gains to amass an Invincible Armada.

   1. Preparing to invade England, in 1588, the lumbering Spanish flotilla arrived at the English Channel and using swifter, more maneuverable, and more able manned ships, they inflicted heavy damage on the cumbersome overladen Spanish ships.

   2. The defeat of the Spanish Armada marked the beginning of the end of Spanish imperial dreams but the New World empire would last.
4. When the Spanish Netherlands secured their independence, much of the Spanish Caribbean slipped from Spain’s grasp to Holland; it was obvious that Spain had overreached itself, seeds of its own decline.

5. England’s victory over the Spanish Armada marked a red-letter day in American history; it dampened Spain’s spirit and helped ensure England’s naval dominance in the North Atlantic (master of oceans).

6. England now displayed many characteristics that Spain displayed on the eve of its colonizing adventure a century earlier:
   1. A strong, unified national state under a popular monarch
   2. A measure of religious unity after a protracted struggle
   3. A vibrant sense of nationalism existing in the state

7. A flowering of the English national spirit bloomed in the wake of the Spanish Armada’s defeat; a golden age of literature dawned.

8. The English were seized with restlessness with curiosity about the unknown and everywhere a new spirit of self-confidence, of vibrant patriotism, and of boundless faith in the future.

9. When England and Spain finally signed a treaty of peace in 1604, the English people were poised to plunge headlong into the planting of their own colonial empire in the New World.

3. England on the Eve of Empire
   1. England’s population rose from some 3 million people in 1550 to about 4 million in 1600 and in the English countryside, landlords were “enclosing” croplands for sheep grazing, forcing many farmers to leave.
   2. It was no accident that the woolen districts of eastern and western England supplied many of the earliest immigrants to America.
1. The economic depression hit the woolen trade in the late 1500s and as a result, thousands of footloose farmers took to the road

2. The farmers were unemployed and drifted about England; the remarkably mobile population alarmed many contemporaries whom concluded that England was burdened with a surplus population

3. At the same time, laws of primogeniture decreed that only eldest sons were eligible to inherit landed estates and younger sons were forced to seek their fortunes elsewhere; bad luck plagued their early enterprises

4. In the early 1600s the joint-stock company forerunner of the modern corporation was perfected and allowed a number of investors, called adventurers to pool their capital together for adventures

5. Peace with Spain provided the opportunity for English colonization; population growth provided workers, and unemployment, with a thirst for adventure, for markets, and for religious freedom, provided motives

6. Joint-stock companies provided the financial means

4. England Plants the Jamestown Seedling

1. In 1606, a joint-stock company, the Virginia Company of London, received a charter form King James I for a settlement in the New World

   1. The main attraction was the promise of gold, combined with a strong desire to find a passage through America to the Indies

   2. Like most joint-stock companies, it was intended to last for only a few years, after which its owners hoped to liquidate it for profit

   3. The arrangement put severe pressure on the colonists, who were threatened with abandonment if they did not quickly strike it rich on the company’s behalf; few investors touch in terms of long-term
2. The charter of the Virginia Company is a significant document in American history because it guaranteed to the settlers the same rights of Englishmen that they would have enjoyed if they had stayed home.

3. Setting sail in late 1606, the Virginia Company’s three ships landed near the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, where Indians attacked them.

   1. Pushing on up the bay, the colonists eventually chose a location on the banks of the James River, named in honor of King James I.

   2. The site was easy to defend, but mosquito-infested and severely unhealthy; on May 24, 1607, about a hundred English settlers, all of them men, landed and called the place Jamestown.

4. The early years of Jamestown were not encouraging, colonists perished during voyages, expeditions were shipwrecked, and once ashore in Virginia, the settlers died from disease, malnutrition, and starvation.

5. Instead of collecting food many spent time looking for nonexistent gold.

6. Virginia was saved from collapse by the leadership and resourcefulness of a young adventurer, Captain John Smith who took over in 1608.

   1. He whipped the gold-hungry colonists into line with the rule.

   2. He had been kidnapped in December 1607 and subjected to a mock execution by the Indian chieftain Powhatan whose daughter, Pocahontas, “saved” him but the symbolism of this ritual was intended to show Smith Powhatan’s power and peaceful intentions.

   3. Pocahontas became an intermediary between the Indians and the settlers helping to preserve a shaky peace and to provide supplies.

7. Of the four hundred settlers who managed to make it to Virginia, by 1609, only sixty survived the “Starving time” winter of 1609-1610.

8. Diseased and despairing, the colonists dragged themselves on homeward-bound ships only to be met on the James River by the relief party headed by
a new governor, Lord De La Warr; he ordered the settlers back to Jamestown and imposed a harsh military regime

9. By 1625 Virginia contained only some twelve hundred survivors of the nearly 8,000 adventurers who had tried to start life anew in the colony

5. Cultural Clash in the Chesapeake

1. In 1607, the chieftain Powhatan dominated the James River area
   1. Powhatan asserted supremacy over a few dozen small tribes loosely affiliated in what came to be called Powhatan’s Confederacy
   2. The English colonists dubbed all the local Indians Powhatans
   3. Powhatan considered the English potential allies at first in extending his power over the other Indians but relations between the Indians and the English remained tense, especially as the starving colonists took to raiding Indian food supplies

2. After Lord De La Warr arrived in 1610, he carried orders from the Virginia Company that amounted to a declaration of war against the Indians in the Jamestown region (De La Warr introduced Irish tactics)
   1. His troops raided Indian villages, burned houses, confiscated provisions, and torched cornfields; a peace settlement ended this First Anglo-Powhatan War in 1614 sealed by the marriage of Pocahontas to the colonist John Rolfe—the first interracial union
   2. A fragile peace followed, which endured eight years but the Indians pressed by the whites an ravaged by European diseases, stuck back
   3. In 1622, a series of Indian attacks left 347 settlers dead, including John Rolfe and in response the Virginia Company issued new orders calling for a perpetual war without peace or truce
4. In the Second Anglo-Powhatan War in 1644, the Indians were once again defeated and the peace treaty of 1646 banished the Chesapeake Indians from their ancestral lands and separated lands.

5. By 1669 an official census revealed that only about two thousand Indian remained in Virginia (about 10 percent of original settlers) and by 1685, the English considered the Powhatan peoples extinct.

3. It had been the Powhatan people’s tragic misfortune to fall victim to the three Ds: disease, disorganization, and disposability.

1. The native peoples were extremely susceptible to European-imported maladies (epidemics of smallpox and measles spread).

2. The Powhatans lacked the unity to make effective opposition to the relatively well-organized and militarily disciplined whites.

3. The Powhatans served no economic function for the Virginia colonists; they provided no reliable labor source and had no valuable commodities to offer in commerce (agriculture).

4. The Indians presence frustrated the colonists’ desire for a local commodity the Europeans desperately wanted: land.

6. Virginia: Child of Tobacco

1. John Rolfe became father of the tobacco industry and an economic savior of the Virginia colony; by 1616 he had perfected methods of raising and curing the pungent weed, eliminating much bitter taste.

2. Soon the European demand for tobacco was nearly insatiable.

1. A tobacco rush swept Virginia as colonists who had once hungered for food now hungered for land on which to plant more tobacco.

2. Relentlessly they pressed the frontier of settlement up the river valleys to the west, further crowding the Indians.
3. Virginia’s prosperity was finally built on tobacco smoke

1. This weed played a vital role in putting the colony on firm foundations and in setting an example for other successful experiments

2. “King Nicotine” was ruinous to the soil when greedily planted in successive years and it enchained the prosperity of Virginia to the fluctuating price of a single crop; tobacco also promoted broad-acred plantation system and with it a brisk demand for fresh labor

4. In 1619, a Dutch warship appeared off Jamestown and sold some twenty black Africans but blacks were too costly for most of the white colonists to acquire and for decades, few were brought to Virginia

5. In 1650 Virginia counted three hundred blacks; by 1700, blacks, most of them enslaved, made up approximately 14 percent of the population

6. Representative self-government was also born in primitive Virginia, the same cradle with slavery and in the same year—1619

1. The London Company authorized the settlers to summon an assembly known as the House of Burgesses; this assemblage was the first of many miniature parliaments to begin in America

2. James I grew increasingly hostile to Virginia because he detested tobacco and he distrusted the representative House of Burgesses

3. In 1624, he revoked the charter of the bankrupt and beleaguered Virginia Company, thus making Virginia a royal colony under him

7. Maryland: Catholic Haven

1. Maryland, the second plantation but fourth English colony was founded in 1634 by Lord Baltimore, of a prominent English Catholic family; at this time, Protestant England was still persecuting Roman Catholics
2. Absentee proprietor Lord Baltimore hoped that the two hundred settlers who founded Maryland at St. Marys would be the front line of a vast new feudal domain; huge estates were to be awarded to his relatives

1. The haughty land barons, mostly Catholic, were surrounded by resentful country planters (people were willing to come for land)

2. Resentment flared into open rebellion near the end of the century, and the Baltimore family for a time lost its proprietary rights

3. Maryland prospered despite these tensions and like Virginia, it blossomed forth in acres of tobacco and also like Virginia, it depended for labor on white indentured servants; penniless persons who bound themselves to work for a number of years to pay their passage

4. In both colonies it was only in the later years of the seventeenth century that black slaves began to be imported in large numbers to the colonies

5. Lord Baltimore permitted unusual freedom of worship at the outset

1. The heavy tide of Protestants threatened to submerge the Catholics and place severe restrictions on them, as what happened in England

2. The Catholics of Maryland threw their support behind the famed Act of Toleration, which was passed in 1649 by the local representative assembly; it guaranteed toleration to all Christians

3. But, it decreed the death penalty for those who denied the divinity of Jesus; the law thus sanctioned less toleration than previously

4. One result was that when the colonial era ended, Maryland probably sheltered more Roman Catholics than any other English speaking colony in the New World

8. The West Indies: Way Station to Mainland America

1. Spain, weakened by military overextensions and distracted by its rebellious Dutch provinces, relaxed its grip on much of the Caribbean in the early
1600s; by the mid-seventeenth century, England had claimed several West Indian islands, including Jamaica in 1655.

2. Sugar formed the foundation of the West Indian economy
   1. Tobacco was a poor man’s crop because it could be planted easily, it produced commercially marketable leaves within a year, and required only simple processing; sugarcane was a rich man’s crop.
   2. Sugarcane had to be planted extensively to yield commercially viable quantities of sugar; extensive planting required extensive and arduous land clearing and canestalks yielded sugar only after an elaborate process of refining in sugar mill (capital-intense business).

3. The sugar lords extended their dominion over the West Indies
   1. To work their sprawling plantations, they imported enormous numbers of African slaves (more than a quarter million in 50 years).
   2. By 1700, black slaves outnumbered white settlers in the English West Indies by nearly four to one—West Indians were among the children of the African Diaspora, the vast scattering of African people throughout the New World follow Columbus’s discovery.

4. To control this large population of slaves, English authorities devised formal “codes” that defined the slaves’ legal status and masters’ rights; the Barbados slave code of 1661 denied even the most fundamental rights to slaves and gave masters virtually complete control over them, including the right to inflict vicious punishments for slight infractions.

5. The sugar-plantation system soon crowded out Caribbean agriculture
   1. The West Indies increasingly depended on the North American mainland for foodstuffs and other basic supplies.
   2. Smaller English farmers began to migrate to the newly founded southern mainland colonies; a group of displaced English settlers from Barbados.
arrived in Carolina in 1670 and brought the slave code with them, which inspired statutes governing slavery

3. The mainland colonies would soon take up this slave code and in 1696, Carolina officially adopted a version of the Barbados code

9. Colonizing the Carolinas

1. Civil wars convulsed England in the 1640s as the King Charles I dismissed Parliament in 1629, Oliver Cromwell had Charles beheaded in 1649 and after Cromwell had ruled England for nearly a decade, Charles II, son of the king, was restored to the throne in 1660

2. Colonization had been interrupted during this period of bloody unrest and now in the Restoration period, empire building resumed

   1. Carolina, named in honor of the restored king, was formally created in 1670, after Charles II granted to eight of his court favorites, the Lords Proprietors, an expanse of wilderness ribboning across the continent to the Pacific; they hoped to grow food for Barbados and to export non-English products like wine, silk, and olive oil

   2. Carolina prospered by developing close economic ties with the flourishing sugar islands of the English West Indies; many Carolina settlers had emigrated from Barbados and established a slave trade

   3. Enlisting the aid of the coastal Savannah Indians, they ventured in search of captives; although the Lords Proprietors protested, manacled Indians soon were among the young colony’s major exports (as many as ten thousand Indians were dispatched)

3. In 1707 the Savannah Indian decided to end their alliance with the Carolinians and to migrate to the backcountry of Maryland and Pennsylvania, where a new colony founded by Quakers under William Penn promised better relations between whites and Indians
4. After a series of bloody raids, by 1710 the Indian tribes of coastal Carolina were all but extinct after the Carolinians turned against them.

5. After much experimentation, rice emerged as the principal export crop in Carolina; rice was then an exotic food in England, but rice was grown in Africa and the Carolinians were paying premium prices for West African slaves experienced in rice cultivation.
   1. The Africans’ agricultural skill and relative immunity to malaria made them ideal laborers on the hot and swampy rice plantations.
   2. By 1710 they constituted a majority of Carolinians.

6. Charlestown rapidly became the busiest seaport in the South; many high-spirited sons of English landed families came to the Charleston area and gave it a rich aristocratic flavor (diverse community, to which French Protestant refuges were attracted by religious toleration).

7. In Florida, the Catholic Spaniards bitterly resented the intrusion of these Protestant heretics and Carolina’s frontier was often aflame of Spanish-incited Indians and armor-clad warriors of Spain brandished their weapons during the successive Anglo-Spanish wars.

10. The Emergence of North Carolina

   1. The wild northern expanse of the huge Carolina grant bordered on Virginia where a group of outcasts and religious dissenters drifted.
      1. Many of them had been repelled by the rarefied atmosphere of Virginia dominated as it was by big-plantation aristocrats belonging to the Church of England (quintessence of Virginia’s discontent).
      2. The newcomers, “squatters” without legal right to the soil, raised their tobacco and other crops on small farms, without slaves.

   2. Distinctive traits developed rapidly in North Carolina.
1. The poor but sturdy inhabitants earned a reputation for being irreligious and hospitable to pirates; isolated from neighbors by raw wilderness and Cape Hatteras, “graveyard of Atlantic,” the North Carolinians developed a strong spirit of resistance to authority

2. Following much friction with governors, North Carolina was officially separated from South Carolina in 1712 (royal colonies)

3. North Carolina shares with Rhode Island several distinctions; these two outposts were the most democratic, the most independent-minded, and the least aristocratic of the original thirteen English colonies

4. Although northern Carolina did not at first import large numbers of African slaves, both regions shared in the ongoing tragedy of bloody relations between Indians and Europeans

   1. The North Carolinians aided by the south, retaliated by crushing the Tuscaroras in battle in 1711 after they fell upon Newbern, selling hundreds into slavery and leaving the survivors to wander northward to seek the protection of the Iroquois natives

   2. The Tuscaroras became Sixth Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy

   3. In another encounter four years later, the South Carolinians defeated and scattered the Yamasee Indians; virtually all the coastal Indian tribes in the South had been utterly devastated by about 1720

5. But in the interior of the Appalachian Mountains, the powerful Cherokees, Creeks, and Iroquois remained; stronger and more numerous, they managed for 50 years more to contain British settlement to the coastal plain east of the mountains

11. Late-Coming Georgia: The Buffer Colony

   1. Georgia, with the harbor of Savannah nourishing its chief settlement, was formally founded in 1733 (it long after most of the other colonies)
2. Georgia was valued by the English crown chiefly as a buffer

   1. It would serve to protect the more valuable Carolinas from vengeful Spaniards from Florida and by the hostile French from Louisiana

   2. Georgia suffered much buffeting, especially when wars broke out between Spain and England; a vital link in imperial defense, the exposed colony received monetary subsidies from the British government at the outset (the only one of the original thirteen)

3. Named in honor of George II of England, Georgia was launched by a high-minded group of philanthropists; aside from producing silk and wine and strengthening the empire, they were determined to create a haven for wretched souls imprisoned for debt

4. The ablest of the founders was the dynamic James Oglethorpe, who was interested in prison reform, as the leader, repelled Spanish attacks; as an imperialist and a philanthropist, he saved “the Charity Colony” by his energetic leadership and by heavily mortgaging his personal fortune

5. The hamlet of Savannah was a melting pot community; German Lutherans and Scots Highlanders added color to the pattern

6. All Christian worshipers except Catholics enjoyed religious toleration (many Bible-toting missionaries arrived in Savannah to work among debtors and Indians, including John Wesley of the later Methodists)

7. Georgia grew with painful slowness and at the end of the colonial era was perhaps the least populous of the colonies; prosperity through a large plantation economy was thwarted by an unhealthful climate, by early restrictions on black slavery, and by demoralizing Spanish attacks

12. The Plantation Colonies

   1. Certain distinctive features were shared by England’s southern mainland colonies: Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia
1. Board-aced, this outposts were dominated by a plantation economy

2. Profitable staple crops were the rule, notably tobacco and rice

3. Slavery was found in all the plantation colonies, though only after 1750 in reform-minded Georgia (strong aristocratic atmosphere was wide, except in North Carolina and to some extent in Georgia)

4. The wide scattering of plantations and farms, made the establishment of churches and schools both difficult and expensive

5. All the plantation colonies permitted some religious toleration; the tax-supported Church of England became the dominant faith though weakest of all in nonconformist North Carolina

2. The colonies were in some degree expansionary; “soil butchery” by excessive tobacco growing drove settlers westward and the long, lazy rivers invited penetration of the continent—and the continuing confrontation with Native Americans
Settling the Northern Colonies, 1619-1700

1. The Protestant Reformation Produces Puritanism

   1. Denouncing the authority of priests and popes, Martin Luther, in 1517, ignited a fire of religious reform (the Protestant Reformation) that spread throughout Europe for more than a century, kindling the spiritual fervor of millions—some of whom helped to found America.

   2. John Calvin of Geneva elaborated Luther's ideas in ways that profoundly affected thought and character of generations of Americans.

      1. Calvinism became the dominant theological credo not only of New England Puritans but of other American settlers including Scottish Presbyterians, French Huguenots, and the Dutch Reformed church.

      2. Calvin spelled out his basic doctrine in 1536 in Institutes of Christian Religion in which he argued that God was all-powerful and all-good; humans were weak and wicked because of sin.

      3. Since the first moment of creation, some souls—the elect—had been destined for eternal bliss and others for eternal torment.

      4. Good works could not save those whom predestination was hell.

      5. But neither could the elect count on their predetermined salvation and lead lives of wild, immoral abandon and thus, gnawing doubts about their eternal fate plagued Calvinists (signs of conversion).

      6. Conversion was thought to be an intense, identifiable personal experience in which God revealed to elect their heavenly destiny.

   3. The Calvinists doctrines swept into England just as King Henry VIII was breaking his ties with the Roman Catholic church in the 1530s, making himself the head of the Church of England.

   4. Henry's action stimulated some English religious reformers to undertake a total purification of English Christianity (“Puritans”).

      1. Many Puritans came from the commercially depressed woolen districts and Calvinism with its message of reassuring order in the divine plan, fed on this social unrest and provided spiritual comfort.

      2. As time went on, Puritans grew increasingly unhappy over the slow progress of the Protestant Reformation in England; they burned with zeal to see the Church of England wholly de-Catholicized.

      3. All Puritans agreed that only “visible saints” should be admitted to church membership but the Church of England enrolled all subjects.

      4. This meant that the “saints” had to share pews with the “damned” and a tiny group of extreme Puritans, known as Separatists, vowed to break away entirely from the Church of England.
5. King James I, a shrewd Scotsman, was head of both the state and the church in England from 1603 to 1625 and he quickly perceived that if his subjects could defy him as their spiritual leader they might one day defy him as political leader (in fact they beheaded his son, Charles I).

6. James therefore threatened to harass the Separatists out of the land.

2. The Pilgrims End Their Pilgrimage at Plymouth

1. The most famous congregation of Separatists, fleeing royal wrath, departed for Holland in 1608; they longed to find a haven where they could live and die as English men and women as purified Protestants.
   
   1. America was the logical refuge, despite the early ordeals of Jamestown, and despite tales of New World cannibals.
   
   2. A group of the Separatists in Holland, after negotiating with the Virginia Company, at length secured rights to settle under its rule.

2. The crowded Mayflower, sixty-five days at sea, missed its destination and arrived off the rocky coast of New England in 1620 with a total of 102 people; one had died en route and one had been born (Oceanus).

   1. Fewer than half of the entire party were Separatists; prominent among the nonbelongers was Captain Myles Standish who later rendered indispensable service as an Indian fighter and negotiator.

   2. The Pilgrims did not make their initial landing at Plymouth Rock, as commonly supposed, but undertook a number of surveys.

   3. They finally chose for their site the shore of inhospitable Plymouth Bay; this area was outside the domain of the Virginia Company, and consequently, the settlers became squatters because they were without legal right to the land and without specific authority.

3. Before landing the Pilgrim leaders signed the brief Mayflower Compact.

   1. Although setting an invaluable precedent for later written constitutions, this document was not a constitution at all.

   2. It was a simple agreement to form a crude government and to submit to the will of the majority under the regulations agreed upon.

   3. The compact was signed by 41 adult males, eleven of them with the exalted rank of “mister” though not by the servants and two seamen.

   4. The pact was a promising step toward genuine self-government, for soon the males were assembling to make their own laws in the open-discussion town meetings—a great laboratory of liberty.

4. The Pilgrims’ first winter of 1620-1621 was harsh and only 44 out of the 102 survived but when the Mayflower sailed back to England in the spring, not a single one of the band of Separatists left to go back.

5. God made his children prosperous so the Pilgrims believed; the next fall brought bountiful harvests and with them the first Thanksgiving Day in New England; in time the colony found its economy in fur, fish, and lumber—the beaver and the Bible were the early mainstays.
6. Plymouth proved that the English could maintain themselves in this uninviting region; the Pilgrims were extremely fortunate in their leaders

   1. Prominent among them was the cultured William Bradford who was chosen governor thirty times in the annual elections; among his worries was his fear that independent, non-Puritan settlers might corrupt his godly experiment in the wilderness

   2. Bustling fishing villages and other settlements did sprout to the north of Plymouth on the storm-lashed shores of Massachusetts Bay

7. Quiet and quaint, the little colony of Plymouth was never important economically or numerically; its population numbered only seven thousand by 1691—Plymouth would merge in 1691 still unimportant

3. The Bay Colony Bible Commonwealth

   1. The Separatist Pilgrims were dedicated extremists—the purest Puritans

      1. More moderate Puritans sought to reform the Church of England from within; though resented by bishops and monarchs, they slowly gathered support, especially in the Parliament

      2. When Charles I dismissed Parliament in 1629 and sanctioned the anti-Puritan persecutions of the reactionary Archbishop William Laud, many Puritans saw catastrophe in the making

   2. In 1629 a group of non-Separatist Puritans fearing for the faith and the future, secured a royal charter to form the Massachusetts Bay Company

      1. They proposed to establish a sizable settlement in the infertile Massachusetts area and the newcomers brought their charter along

      2. For many years, they used it as a kind of constitution, out of reach of royal authority and they denied that they wanted to separate from the Church of England, only from its impurities (Bay Colonists)

   3. The Massachusetts Bay enterprise was singularly blessed

      1. The expedition of 1630, with eleven vessels carrying nearly a thousand immigrants, started the colony off on a larger scale than any of the other English settlements; continuing turmoil in England tossed up additional enriching waves of Puritans in the next decade

      2. During the Great Migration of the 1630s, about 75,000 refugees left England; not all of them were Puritans and only about 14,000 came to Massachusetts—many were attracted to the warm and fertile West Indies, especially the sugar-rich island of Barbados

   4. Many prosperous, educated people immigrated to the Bay Colony, including John Winthrop, who became the colony's first governor

      1. Winthrop accepted the offer to become governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, believing that he had a “calling”
2. He served as governor or deputy governor for 19 years and the resources and skills of talented settlers like Winthrop helped Massachusetts prosper, as fur trading, fishing, and shipbuilding blossomed into important industries, especially fish and ships.

3. Massachusetts Bay Colony shot to the fore as both the biggest and the most influential of the New England outposts.

5. Massachusetts benefited from a shared sense of purpose among most of the first settlers; the Puritan bay colonists believed that they had a covenant with God, an agreement to build a holy society.

4. Building the Bay Colony

1. After arrival the franchise was extended to all “freemen”—adult males who belonged to the Puritan congregations (Congregational church)

   1. Unchurched men remained voteless in provincial elections as did women; on this basis about two-fifths of adult males enjoyed the franchise in provincial affairs far larger proportions than in England.

   2. Town governments, which conducted much important business were even more inclusive; there all male property holders and some cases other residents, enjoyed the benefit of publicly discussing local issues often with much heat and of voting by majority-rule.

   3. The provincial government, somewhat liberal, was not a democracy

   4. Governor Winthrop feared and distrusted commons and democracy.

2. Although freemen annually elected the governor and assistants, as well as a representative assembly called the General Court, only Puritans who alone were eligible for church membership could be freedmen.

3. The purpose of government was believed to enforce God’s laws; still, nonbelievers as well as believers paid taxes for the supported church.

4. Religious leaders wielded enormous influence in the Massachusetts “Bible Commonwealth” as part of the government-supported church.

   1. Religious leaders influenced admission to church membership, by conducting public interrogations of people claiming to have gone through conversion; John Cotton was a prominent clergy member.

   2. Educated at Cambridge University, a Puritan citadel, he emigrated to Massachusetts to avoid persecution for his criticism of the Church of England (he defended the government’s religious duty).

5. A congregation had the right to hire and fire its minister and to set his salary; clergymen were also barred from holding formal political office.

6. In a limited way, the bay colonists thus endorsed the idea of separation of church and state (from the experience of Puritans of England).

7. The Puritans were a worldly group, despite their spiritual intensity.
1. Puritans believed in the doctrine of a “calling” to do God’s work on earth and shared what was later called the “Protestant ethic,” which involved serious commitment to work and engagement in pursuits.

2. They also enjoyed simple pleasures; like other people, they passed laws aimed at making sure these pleasures stayed simple by repressing certain human instincts (Connecticut—Blue Law State).

3. Yet life was serious business and hellfire was real—a hell where sinners shriveled and shrieked in vain for divine mercy (a very popular poem in New England was Wigglesworth’s Day of Doom).

5. Trouble in the Bible Commonwealth

1. The Bay Colony enjoyed a high degree of social harmony, stemming from common beliefs in the early years, but dissension soon appeared.

   1. The Quakers who flouted the authority of the Puritan clergy were persecuted with fines, floggings, and banishment (even hangings).

   2. A sharp challenge to Puritan orthodoxy came from Anne Hutchison who was swift and sharp in theological argument and carried to logical extremes the Puritan doctrine of predestination.

   3. She claimed that a holy life was no sure sign of salvation and that the truly saved need not bother to obey the law of either God or man (assertion known as antinomianism was high heresy).

   4. Brought to trial in 1638, Hutchinson deceived her clerical inquisitors for days until she boasted that she had come by her beliefs through a direct revelation from God (higher heresy).

   5. The Puritan magistrates had little choice but to banish her, lest she pollute the entire Puritan experiment; She finally moved to New York where she and all but one of her household were killed by Indians; back in the Bay Colony, Winthrop saw “God’s hand”.

2. More threatening to the Puritan leaders was a personable and popular Salem minister, Roger Williams—a young man with radical ideas.

   1. An extreme Separatist, he hounded his fellow clergymen to make a clean break with the corrupt Church of England and also challenged the legality of the Bay Colony’s charter, which he condemned for expropriating the land from the Indians without fair compensation.

   2. Williams would go on to deny the authority of civil government to regulate religious behavior—a seditious blow at the Puritan idea of government’s very purpose, patience exhausted by 1635.

   3. The Bay Colony authorities found Williams guilty of disseminating new and dangerous opinions and ordered him banished; the outraged magistrates fearing that he might organize a rival colony of malcontents, made plans to exile him to England (plans foiled).

6. The Rhode Island “Sewer”
1. Aided by Indians, Roger Williams fled to the Rhode Island area in 1636
   1. At Providence Williams built a Baptists church, probably the first in America and established complete freedom of religion, even for Jews and Catholics (he went far ahead of his age in this respect)
   2. He demanded no oaths regarding one's religious beliefs, no compulsory attendance at worship, no taxes to support a state church, and sheltered the abused Quakers (disagreed with views)

2. Those outcasts who clustered about Roger Williams enjoyed additional blessings; they exercised simple manhood suffrage from the start (but this would later be modified by a property qualification)

3. Other scattered settlements soon dotted Rhode Island; they consisted largely of malcontents and exiles, some whom could not bear the stifling theological atmosphere of the Massachusetts Bay Colony
   1. Many of these restless souls in Rogues' Island had little in common with Roger Williams—except banishment and the Puritan clergy back in Boston sneered at Rhode Island as "that sewer" in which the "Lord's debris" had collected and rotted
   2. Planted by dissenters and exiles, Rhode Island became strongly individualistic and stubbornly independent
   3. "Little Rhody" was later known as "the traditional home of the otherwise minded"; beginning as a squatter colony in 1636 without legal standing, it finally established rights to the soil when it secured a charter from Parliament in 1644 (Independent statue)

7. New England Spreads Out
   1. The valley of the Connecticut River, one of the few fertile expanses of land in New England, had attracted some Dutch and English settlers
      1. Hartford was founded in 1635 and in 1636 a spectacular beginning of the centuries-long westward movement across the continent
      2. An energetic group of Boston Puritans, led by the Reverend Thomas Hooker, swarmed as a body into the Hartford area
   2. In 1639, the settlers of the new Connecticut River colony drafted in open meeting a document known as the Fundamental Orders; it was in effect a modern constitution, which established a regime democratically controlled by the "substantial" citizens (features borrowed for charter)
   3. Another flourishing Connecticut settlement began to spring up at New Haven in 1638; it was a prosperous community founded by Puritans who contrived to set up an even closer church-government alliance
      1. Although they were without a charter, the colonists dreamed of making New Haven a flourishing seaport but fell into disfavor with Charles II as a result of having sheltered two of the judges who had condemned his father, King Charles I of England, to death
      2. In 1662, the crown granted a charter that merged New Haven with the more democratic settlements in the Connecticut Valley
4. Far to the north, fishermen and fur traders had been active on the coast of Maine for a dozen years before the founding of Plymouth

5. After attempts at colonization in 1623 by Sir Ferdinando Gorges, the land was absorbed by Massachusetts Bay after a purchase in 1677 from the Gorges Heirs (remained part of Massachusetts for 150 years)

6. Granite-ribbed New Hampshire also sprang from the fishing and trading activities along its narrow coast; it was absorbed in 1641 by the grasping Bay Colony, under a strained interpretation of the Massachusetts charter; the king annoyed by this greed, separated New Hampshire from Massachusetts in 1670 making it a royal colony

8. Puritans Versus Indians

1. The spread of English settlements inevitably led to clashes with the Indians, who were particularly weak in New England

   1. Before the Pilgrims had arrived at Plymouth in 1620, an epidemic probably triggered by contact with English fishermen, had swept through the coastal tribes and killed more than 75% of the natives

   2. Deserted Indian fields, ready for tillage, as well as bones greeted the Plymouth settlers and provided grim evidence of the disease

2. In no position to resist the English incursion, the local Wampanoag Indians at first befriended the settlers; cultural accommodation was facilitated by Squanto, a Wampanoag who had learned English

3. The Wampanoag chieftain Massasoit signed a treaty with the Plymouth Pilgrims in 1621 and helped celebrate the first Thanksgiving in 1621

4. As more English settlers arrived and pushed inland into the Connecticut River valley, confrontation between Indians and whites ruptured peace

   1. Hostilities exploded in 1637 between the English settlers and the powerful Pequot tribe; besieging a Pequot village on the Mystic River, English militiamen and their Narragansett Indian allies set fire to the Indian homes and shot the fleeing survivors

   2. The slaughter wrote a brutal finish to the Pequot War, virtually annihilated the Pequot tribe, and brought four decades of uneasy peace between the Puritans and the Indians

5. Lashed by critics in England, the Puritans made feeble efforts at converting the remaining Indians to Christianity (only a few joined)

6. The Indians’ only hope for resisting English encroachment lay in intertribal unity—a pan-Indian alliance against the swiftly spreading English settlements; in 1675 Massasoit’s son, Metacom, called King Philip by the English, forged an alliance and mounted attacks

   1. During a series of coordinated assaults on English villages throughout New England; frontier settlements were especially hard hit and refugees fell back toward the relative safety of Boston
2. When the war ended in 1676, 52 Puritan towns had been attacked and twelve destroyed entirely; hundreds of colonists and many more Indians lay dead (Metacom’s wife and son sold into slavery)

3. Metacom was captured, beheaded, and drawn and quartered, and his head was carried on a pike back to Plymouth (it was displayed)

7. King Philip’s War slowed the westward march of English settlement in New England for several decades but the war inflected a lasting defeat on New England’s Indians; drastically reduced in numbers, dispirited, and disbanded, they never again seriously threatened New England

9. Seeds of Colonial Unity and Independence

1. A new experiment in union was launched in 1643, when four colonies banded together to form the New England Confederation

1. Because Old England was in civil war, the colonials used their own resources; the primary purpose of the confederation was defense against potential foes—the Indians, the French, and the Dutch

2. Intercolonal problems, such as runaway servants and criminals who had fled from one colony to another, also came within the jurisdiction of the confederation; each member colony wielded two votes—an arrangement highly displeasing the Massachusetts Bay

2. The confederation was essentially an exclusive Puritan club and consisted of the two Massachusetts colonies (the Bay Colony and Plymouth) and the two Connecticut colonies (New Haven and valley)

1. The Puritan leaders left out Rhode Island as well as the Maine outposts as these places, as decided, harbored too many heretics

2. One of the Maine towns had made a tailor its mayor and had even sheltered an excommunicated minister of the gospel

3. The Confederation was the first notable milestone on the long and rocky road toward colonial unity; the delegates took tottering but urgently needed steps toward acting together on matters of importance

1. Rank-and-file colonists received valuable experience in delegating their votes to properly chosen representatives

2. Back in England, the king had paid little attention to the American colonies during the early years of their planting

3. They were allowed to become semiautonomous commonwealths

4. This era of neglect was prolonged when the crown, struggling to retain its power, became enmeshed during the 1640s in civil wars

4. But when Charles II was restored to the English throne in 1660, the royalists and their Church of England allies were once more in control

1. Puritan hopes of eventually purifying the old English church withered and worse, Charles II was determined to take an active, aggressive hand in the management of the colonies
2. His plans ran headlong against the habits that decades of relative independence had bred in the colonists.

5. Deepening colonial defiance was nowhere more glaringly revealed than in Massachusetts; royal orders had no more effect than a newspaper.

6. As a slap at Massachusetts, Charles II gave rival Connecticut in 1662 a sea-to-sea charter grant, which legalized the squatter settlements.

7. The very next year the outcasts in Rhode Island received a new charter, which gave kingly sanction to the most religiously tolerant government yet devised in America (a final crushing blow fell on the stiff-necked Bay Colony in 1684 when its charter was revoked by the authorities).

10. Andros Promotes the First American Revolution

1. Massachusetts suffered further humiliation in 1686 when the Dominion of New England was created by royal authority (imposed from London).

   1. It was expanded two years later to include New York, East and West Jersey; the dominion also aimed at bolstering colonial defense in the event of war with Indians (statesmen like view from England).

   2. More importantly it was designed to promote urgently needed efficiency in the administration of the English Navigation Laws, the laws reflecting the intensifying colonial rivalries of the 17th century and sought to stitch England’s overseas possessions more tightly.

   3. The Navigation Laws also blocked American trade with countries not ruled by the English crown (Americans chafed at confinements and smuggling became an increasingly common occupation).

2. At the head of the new dominion stood autocratic Sir Edmund Andros.

   1. An able English military man, he established headquarters in Puritanical Boston and generated much hostility by his open affiliation with the despised Church of England.

   2. The colonials were also outraged by his noisy and Sabbath-profaning soldiers, who were accused of teaching people to sin.

   3. Andros was prompt to use force and ruthlessly curbed the cherished town meetings, laid heavy restrictions on the courts, the press, the schools, and revoked all land titles (he taxed people without the consent of their duly elected representatives).

   4. Andros strove to enforce the unpopular Navigation Laws and stop smuggling; liberty-loving colonials were on the verge of revolt.


4. Dethroning the despotic and unpopular Catholic James II, they enthroned the Protestant rulers of the Netherlands, the Dutch-born William III and his English wife, Mary, daughter of James II.
5. When the news of the Glorious Revolution reached America, the Dominion of New England collapsed like a house of cards and a Boston mob rose against the existing regime sending Andros back to England.

6. Massachusetts, though rid of the despotic Andros, did not gain as much from the upheaval as it had hoped; it was arbitrarily made a royal colony with a new charter and a new royal governor in 1691.

   1. The permanent loss of the ancient charter was a staggering blow to the proud Puritans who never really fully recovered.

   2. Worst of all, the privilege of voting, once only of church members, was now to be enjoyed by all qualified male property owners.

7. England's Glorious Revolution had an impact for unrest erupted from New England to the Carolinas—the upheaval resulted in a permanent abandonment of many of the objectionable features of the Andros system as well as a temporary breakdown of the Navigation Laws.

8. Residues remained of Charles II's effort to assert tighter administrative control over his empire; more English officials now staffed the courts and strolled the wharves of English America (corrupt hacks).

9. Appointed by influential patrons in England, they blocked by their presence the rise of local leaders to positions of political power; aggrieved Americans viewed them with mounting contempt and resentment as the eighteenth century wore on.

11. Old Netherlanders at New Netherland

   1. Late in the sixteenth century, the oppressed people of the Netherlands rebelled against Ferdinand of Catholic Spain and they finally succeeded with the aid of Protestant England in winning independence.

   2. The seventeenth century was a golden age in Dutch history.
      
      1. The lowland nation emerged as a major commercial and naval power and then ungratefully challenged the supremacy of England.

      2. Three great Anglo-Dutch naval wars were fought in the seventeenth century and the sturdy Dutch and English dealt heavy blows.

      3. The Dutch Republic also became a leading colonial power, with by far its greatest activity in the East Indies where it is maintained an enormous and profitable empire for over three hundred years.

      4. The Dutch East India Company was virtually a state within a state.

   3. Seeking greater riches, the company employed an English explorer, Henry Hudson who, disregarding orders to sail northeast, ventured into Delaware Bay and New York Bay in 1609 and then ascended the Hudson River (he merely filed a Dutch claim to the magnificent area).

   4. Much less powerful than the Dutch East India Company was the Dutch West India Company, which maintained profitable enterprises in the Caribbean (at times it was less interested in trading than in raiding).
5. Dutch West India Company also established outposts in Africa and a flourishing sugar industry in Brazil (principal center of activity)

6. New Netherland, in the Hudson River area was planted in 1623-1624 on a permanent basis; established by the Dutch West India Company for its quick-profit fur trade, it was never more than a secondary interest

   1. The company's most brilliant stroke was to buy Manhattan Island from the Indians for virtually worthless trinkets (22,000 acres)

   2. New Amsterdam—New York City—was a company town and was run by the Dutch company in the interests of the stockholders

   3. The investors had no enthusiasm for religious toleration, free speech, or democratic practices, and the governors were despotic

   4. In response to repeated protests by the colonists, the semi-representative body was reluctantly granted; religious dissenters who opposed the official Dutch Reformed church were looked upon with suspicion and Quakers were abused for a while

7. The Dutch colony took on a strongly aristocratic tinge and retained it for generations; feudal estates fronting the Hudson River, patroonships, were granted to promoters who would settle fifty people on them

8. Colorful little New Amsterdam attracted a cosmopolitan population

12. Friction with English and Swedish Neighbors

   1. Annoyances beset the Dutch company-colony from the beginning

      1. Company shareholders demanded their dividends and payments even at the expense of the colony's overall welfare

      2. The Indians, infuriated by Dutch cruelties, retaliated with horrible massacres and as a defense measure, the settlers on Manhattan Island erected a stout wall from which Wall Street derives its name

      3. New England was hostile to the growth of its Dutch neighbor and the people of Connecticut finally ejected intruding Hollanders from their verdant valley; in fact, three of the four member colonies of the New England Confederation were eager to wipe out New Netherland with military force but Massachusetts vetoed

   2. The Swedes in turn trespassed on Dutch preserves, from 1638 to 1655 by planting the anemic colony of New Sweden on the Delaware River

   3. This was the golden age of Sweden, during and following the Thirty Years' War in which its brilliant King Gustavus Adolphus had carried the torch for Protestantism; the outburst of energy in Sweden caused it to enter the costly colonial game in America

   4. Resenting the Swedish intrusion on the Delaware, the Dutch dispatched a small military expedition in 1655 led by the ablest of the directors-general, Peter Stuyvesant, who was dubbed Father Wooden Leg by the Indians, and the main fort fell after a bloodless siege, whereupon Swedish rule came to an abrupt end (absorbed by colony)
5. New Sweden was never important and it faded leaving behind in later Delaware a sprinkling of Swedish place names and Swedish log cabins, as well as an admixture of Swedish blood.

13. Dutch Residues in New York

1. The neglected stepchild of a trading company, New Netherland was destined from the beginning to be English; lacking vitality and representing only a secondary commercial interest of the Dutch, it lay under the shadow of the vigorous English colonies to the north (about one-half of New Netherland’s people were New England immigrants).

2. The Days of the Dutch on the Hudson were numbered for the English regarded them as intruders; in 1664 after Charles II had granted the area to his brother, the Duke of York, a strong English squadron appeared on off the decrepit defenses of New Amsterdam.

   1. A fuming Peter Stuyvesant, short of all munitions except courage was forced to surrender without firing a single shot.

   2. New Amsterdam was thereupon renamed New York; England won a splendid harbor, strategically located in the middle of the mainland colonies and a stately Hudson River penetrating inward.

   3. The English banner now waved with the removal of this foreign wedge, over a stretch of territory from Maine to the Carolinas.

3. The conquered Dutch province tenaciously retained many of the illiberal features of earlier days; an autocratic spirit survived and the aristocratic element gained strength when certain corrupt English governors granted immense acreage to their favorites (influence).

4. These monopolistic land policies combined with the lordly atmosphere discouraged many European immigrants from coming and the physical growth of New York was correspondingly diminished severely.

5. The Dutch peppered place names over the land and likewise left their imprint on the gambrel-roofed architecture; as for social customs, no other foreign group of comparable size made such a contribution.

6. Noteworthy were Easter eggs, Santa Claus, waffles, sauerkraut, bowling, sleighing, skating, and golf (forbidden in settled areas).

14. Penn’s Holy Experiment in Pennsylvania

1. A remarkable group of dissenters, commonly known as Quakers, arose in England during the mid-1600s; their name derived from the report that they “quaked” when under deep religious emotion.

   1. Officially they were known as the Religious Society of Friends.

   2. Quakers were especially offensive to the authorities, both religious and civil; they refused to support the established Church of England with taxes and built simple meetingshouses, without a paid clergy, and “spoke up” themselves in meetings when moved.
3. Believing that they were all children in the sight of God, they kept their broad-brimmed hats on in the presence of their betters and addressed others with a simple “thee’s” and “thou’s”

4. They would take no oaths, because Jesus had said, “swear not at all” and this peculiarity often embroiled them with government officials for “test oaths” were still required to establish the fact that a person was not a Roman Catholic (people of deep conviction)

5. They abhorred strife and warfare and refused military service

2. As advocates of passive resistance, the Quakers would turn the other cheek and rebuild their meetinghouse on the site where their enemies had torn it down and their courage and devotion to principle finally triumphed (they were a simple, devoted, democratic people)

3. William Penn was attracted to the Quaker faith in 1660 when only sixteen years old and his father disapproved, administering a flogging; after various adventures in the army, the youth firmly embraced the despised faith and suffered much persecution (“saucy and impertinent”)  

1. Several hundred of the less fortunate fellow Quakers died of cruel treatment and thousands were fined, flogged, or cast into prison

2. Penn’s thoughts naturally turned to the New World where a sprinkling of Quakers had already fled, notably to Rhode Island, North Carolina, and New Jersey (asylum for his people)

3. Penn hoped to experiment with liberal ideas in government and at the same time make a profit and in 1681, he managed to secure from the king an immense grant of fertile land, in consideration of a monetary debt owed to his deceased father by the crown

4. The king called the area Pennsylvannia in honor of the sire but the modest son, fearing that critics would accuse him of naming it after himself, sought unsuccessfully to change the name of the area

4. Pennsylvania was by far the best advertised of all the colonies; its founder sent out paid agents and distributed countless pamphlets

5. Unlike the lures of many other American real estate promoters, Penn’s inducements were generally truthful and he especially welcomed forward-looking spirits and substantial citizens including industrious carpenters, masons, shoemakers, and other manual workers

6. His liberal land policy was instrumental in attracting many immigrants

15. Quaker Pennsylvania and Its Neighbors

1. Penn formally launched his colony in 1681 and his task was simplified by the presence of several thousand “squatters”—Dutch, Swedes, English, Welsh—who were already scattered along the Delaware River

2. Philadelphia was more carefully planned than most colonial cities and consequently enjoyed wide and attractive streets

3. Penn farsightedly bought land from the Indians, including Chief Tammany; his treatment of the native peoples was so fair that the Quakers went among them unarmed and even employed them
1. For a brief period, Pennsylvania seemed the promised land of amicable Indian-white relations; some southern tribes migrated

2. But ironically, Quaker tolerance proved the undoing of Quaker Indian policy; as non-Quaker European immigrants flooded into the province, they undermined the Quakers’ own benevolent policy toward the Indians (feisty Scots-Irish were particularly undermined)

4. Penn’s new proprietary regime was unusually liberal and included a representative assembly elected by the landowners; there was no tax supported state church and freedom of worship was guaranteed to all residents, although Penn, under pressure from London, was forced to deny Catholics and Jews the privilege of voting or holding office

1. The death penalty was imposed only for treason and murder

2. No prevision was made by the peace-loving Quakers of Pennsylvania for a military defense

3. No restrictions were placed on immigration, and naturalization was made easy; the Quakers also developed a strong dislike of black slavery and some progress was made toward social reform

5. With its many liberal features, it attracted a rich mix of ethnic groups

1. The people included numerous religious misfits who were repelled by the harsh practices of the neighboring colonies

2. This Quaker haven boasted a surprisingly modern atmosphere in an unmodern age and to a degree afforded economic opportunity, civil liberty, and religious freedom (however, “blue laws” existed)

6. The Quakers were shrewd businesspeople and in a short time the settlers were exporting grain and other foodstuffs; within two years Philadelphia had twenty-five hundred people; within nineteen years (which was by 1700) the colony was surpassed in population and wealth only by the long-established Virginia and Massachusetts

7. William Penn, who altogether spent about four years in Pennsylvania, was never fully appreciated by his colonists

1. His governors, some of them incompetent and tactless, quarreled bitterly with the people, who were constantly demanding greater political control (Penn became too friendly with James II, the disposed Catholic king and he died full of sorrows)

2. His enduring monument was not only a noble experiment in government but also a new commonwealth; based no civil and religious liberty and dedicated to freedom of conscience and worship, it held aloft a hopeful torch in a world of darkness

8. Small Quaker settlements flourished next door to Pennsylvania

1. New Jersey was started in 1664, when two noble proprietors received the area from the Duke of York
2. A substantial number of New Englanders, including many whose weary soil had dried up flocked to the new colony and one of the proprietors sold West New Jersey in 1674 to a group of Quakers who here setup a sanctuary even before Pennsylvania was launched

3. East New Jersey was also acquired in later years by the Quakers, whose wings were clipped in 1702 when the crown combined the two Jerseys in a royal colony

4. Swedish-tinged Delaware consisted of only three counties and was named after Lord De La Warr, the harsh military governor who had arrived in Virginia in 1610 (Delaware was granted its own assembly in 1703—it still remained under the governor of Penn)

16. The Middle Way in the Middle Colonies

1. The middle colonies—New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania—enjoyed certain features in common among the states

   1. In general, the soil was fertile and the expanse of land was broad, unlike New England; Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey came to be known as the “bread colonies” (heavy exports of grain)
   
   2. Rivers played a vital role; broad streams (Susquehanna, Delaware, and Hudson) tapped the fur trade of the interior and beckoned adventuresome spirits into the backcountry
   
   3. The rivers had few cascading waterfalls, unlike New England’s, and hence presented little inducement to manufacturing water power
   
   4. A surprising amount of industry flourished in the middle colonies; virginal forests abounded for lumbering/shipbuilding; the presence of deep river estuaries and landlocked harbors stimulated both commerce and the growth of seaports (New York and Philadelphia)

2. The middle colonies were in many respects midway between New England and the southern plantation group; the landholdings were generally intermediate in size, except in aristocratic New York

3. Local government lay somewhere between the personalized town meeting of New England and the diffused county government of the South; it was the same case with the intermediate industries

4. Yet the middle colonies, which in some ways were the most American

   1. Generally speaking, the population was more ethnically mixed than that of other settlements; the people were blessed with an unusual degree of religious toleration and democratic control
   
   2. Quakers, in particular, made a contribution to human freedom out of all proportion to their numbers; desirable land was more easily acquired in the middle colonies than in New England or the South
   
   3. One result that was a considerable amount of economic and social democracy prevailed, though less so in aristocratic New York
5. Modern-minded Benjamin Franklin entered Philadelphia at seventeen; although it is true that Franklin was born a Yankee in Puritanical Boston, one boasted, “He came to life at seventeen, in Philadelphia”

6. By the mid-eighteenth century, the thirteen colonies as a group revealed striking similarities; even though they had developed wide differences

   1. They were all basically English
   2. They all exercised certain priceless Anglo-Saxon freedoms
   3. They all possessed some degree of self-government (not complete)
   4. They all enjoyed some degree of religious toleration and educational opportunity in the Americas
   5. They all had advantages for economic and social self-development
   6. They were all separated from home authority by a vast ocean moat three thousand miles away (4,800 kilometers)
American Life in the Seventeenth Century, 1607-1692

1. The Unhealthy Chesapeake

1. Life in the American wilderness was nasty, brutish, and short for the earliest Chesapeake settlers; malaria, dysentery, and typhoid took a cruel toll, cutting ten years off the life expectancy of newcomers (half of people born in early Virginia/Maryland did not survive to twenty)

2. The disease-ravaged settlements of the Chesapeake grew only slowly in the seventeenth century, mostly through fresh immigration from England; the majority of immigrants were single men in their late teens and early twenties, and most perished soon after arrival

   1. Surviving males competed for the affections of the extremely scarce women, whom they outnumbered nearly six to one in 1650

   2. Although they were still outnumbered by three to two at the end of the century, eligible women did not remain single for long

   3. Families were both few and fragile in this ferocious environment; most men could not find mates and most marriages were destroyed by the death of a partner within seven years

   4. Weak family ties showed in many pregnancies among unmarried young girls (in one area, a third of the wedded were pregnant)

3. Yet despite these hardships, the Chesapeake colonies struggled on; the native-born inhabitants eventually acquired immunity to the killer diseases that had ravaged the original immigrants

4. The presence of more women allowed more families to form and by the end of the seventeenth century, the white population of the Chesapeake was growing on the basis of its own birthrate
5. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Virginia, with some 59,000 people was the most populous colony and Maryland, with about 30,000 people was the third largest colony (after the Massachusetts colony)

2. The Tobacco Economy

1. Although unhealthy for human life, the Chesapeake was immensely hospitable to tobacco cultivation; profit-hungry settlers often planted tobacco before they planted corn; seeking fields to plant tobacco, these new immigrants plunged farther up the river valley (Indian attacks)

   1. Leaf-leaden ships annually hauled some 1.5 million pounds of tobacco out of Chesapeake Bay by the 1630s and almost 40 million pounds a year by the end of the century (18 million kilograms)

   2. This enormous production depressed prices, but colonial Chesapeake tobacco growers responded to falling in the familiar way of farmers: by planting still more acres of tobacco

   3. More tobacco meant more labor; families formed too slowly to provide it by natural population increase and Indians died too quickly on contact with whites to be a reliable labor force

   4. African slaves cost too much money; but England still had a “surplus” of displaced farmers, desperate for employment; many of them, as “indentured servants” lent their bodies for several years

   5. In exchange they received transatlantic passage and eventual “freedom dues,” including good, clothes, and perhaps a bit of land

2. Both Virginia and Maryland employed the “headright” system to encourage the importation of servant workers; under its terms, whoever paid the passage of a laborer received the right to acquire fifty acres of land; masters thus reaped the benefits of landownership from the system

   1. Some masters soon parlayed their investments and servants into huge fortunes in real estate (great merchant planters)
2. These lords of vast riverfront estates that came to dominate the agriculture and commerce of the southern colonies

3. Hungary for both labor and land, Chesapeake planters brought some 100,000 indentured servants to the region by 1700; these “white slaves” represented more than 75% of all European immigrants to Virginia and Maryland in the seventeenth century

3. Indentured servants led a hard but hopeful life in the early days of the Chesapeake settlements; they looked forward to becoming free and acquiring land of their own after completing their term of servitude

4. But as prime land became scarcer, masters became increasingly resistant to including land grants in “freedom dues”

5. Misbehaving servants might be punished with an extended term of service and even after formal freedom was granted, penniless freed workers often had little choice but to hire themselves to their masters

3. Frustrated Freemen and Bacon’s Rebellion

1. An accumulating mass of footloose, impoverished freemen was drifting discontentedly about the Chesapeake region by the late 17th century

   1. Mostly single young men, they were frustrated by their broken hopes of acquiring land, as well as by their gnawing failure to find single women to marry in the Chesapeake region

   2. The swelling numbers of these wretched bachelors rattled the established planters; the Virginia assembly in 1670 disenfranchised most of the landless knockabouts accusing them of “having little interest in the country” and causing “tumults at elections”

2. Virginia’s Governor Berkeley lamented his lot as ruler of this rabble and Berkeley’s misery soon increased in the later years
1. About a thousand Virginians broke out of control in 1676, led by a planter, Nathaniel Bacon; many of the rebels were frontiersmen who had been forced into untamed backcountry in search of land.

2. They resented Berkeley's friendly policies toward the Indians, whose thriving fur trade the governor monopolized.

3. When Berkeley refused to retaliate for a series of savage Indian attacks on frontier settlements, Bacon and his followers took matters into their own hands and fell murderously upon the Indians, chased Berkeley from Jamestown, and put the torch to the capital.

4. Chaos swept the raw colony, as frustrated freemen and resentful servants sent on a rampage of plundering and pilfering.

3. As this civil war in Virginia ground on, Bacon suddenly died of disease and Berkeley rushed the uprising with brutal cruelty, hanging more than twenty rebels; back in England Charles II complained.

4. The distant English king could scarcely imagine the depths of passion and fear that Bacon’s Rebellion excited in Virginia; Bacon had ignited the unhappiness of landless former servants and he had pitted the backcountry frontiersmen against the haughty gentry of the plantations.

5. The rebellion was now suppressed, but these tensions remained; lordly planters, surrounded by a still-seething sea of malcontents, looked about for less troublesome laborers to toil in the restless tobacco kingdom and their eyes soon lit on Africa.

4. Colonial Slavery

1. Perhaps 10 million Africans were carried in chains to the New World in the three centuries or so following Columbus’s landing.

1. Only about 400,000 of them ended up in North America, the great majority arriving after 1700; most of the early human cargoes were hauled to Spanish and Portuguese South America or West Indies.
2. Africans had been brought to Jamestown as early as 1619, but as late as 1670, they numbered only about 2,000 in Virginia and about 7 percent of the 50,000 people in the southern plantation colonies.

3. Hard-pinched white colonists, struggling to stay alive and to hack crude clearings out of the forests, could not afford to pay high prices for slaves who might die soon after arrival (white servants).

2. Drastic change came in the 1680s, rising wages in England shrank the pool of penniless folk willing to gamble on a new life or an early death as indentured servants in America (large planters were growing more fearful of the multitudes of potentially mutinous former servants).

1. By the mid-1680s, for the first time, black slaves outnumbered white servants among the plantation colonies’ new arrivals.

2. In 1698 the Royal African Company lost its crown-granted monopoly on carrying slaves to the colonies and enterprising Americans, especially Rhode Islanders, rushed to cash in on the lucrative slave trade and the supply of slaves increased steeply.

3. More than 10,000 Africans were pushed ashore in America in the decade after 1700, and even more in the next half-century; blacks accounted for nearly half the population of Virginia by 1750.

4. In South Carolina they outnumbered whites two to one.

3. Most of the slaves who reached North America came from the west coast of Africa, including the area from present-day Senegal to Angola.

4. They were originally captured by African coastal tribes, who traded them in crude markets on the shimmering tropical beaches to European and American flesh merchants; usually branded and bound, the captives were herded aboard sweltering ships for the “middle passage.”
5. On the gruesome journey, death rates ran as high as 20 percent and terrified survivors were virtually shoved onto auction blocks in New World ports where a giant slave market flourished for than 100 years.

6. A few of the earliest African immigrants gained their freedom

1. But as the number of Africans in their midst increased dramatically toward the end of the seventeenth century, white colonists reacted remorselessly to this supposed racial threat.

2. Earlier in the century, the legal difference between a slave and a servant was unclear; but now the law began to make sharp distinctions between the two—largely on the basis of race.

3. Statutes appeared that formally decreed the iron conditions of slavery for blacks; these earliest “slave codes” make blacks and their children the property for life of their white masters.

4. Some colonies made it a crime to teach a slave to read or write; no even conversion to Christianity could qualify a slave for freedom.

5. Slavery might have begun in America for economic reasons, but by the end of the seventeenth century, it was clear that racial discrimination also powerfully molded the American slave system.

5. Africans in America

1. In the deepest South, slave life was especially harsh; the climate was hostile to health and the labor was life-draining; the widely scattered South Carolina rice and indigo plantations were lonely hells on earth where gangs of mostly male Africans toiled and perished.

2. Blacks in the tobacco Chesapeake region had it somewhat easier

1. Tobacco was a less physically demanding crop than those of the deeper South; tobacco plantations were larger and closer to one another than rice plantations (more frequent contact with friends).
2. By about 1720 the proportion of females in the Chesapeake slave population had begun to rise, making family life possible.

3. The captive black population of the Chesapeake area soon began to grow not only through new imports but also through its own births; one of the few slave societies to perpetuate itself by natural means.

Native-born African-Americans contributed to the growth of a stable and distinctive slave cultures, a mixture of African and American elements of speech, religious, and folkways.

1. On the islands off South Carolina’s coast, blacks evolved a unique language, Gullah (probably from Angola); it blended English with several African languages, including Yoruba, Ibo, and Hausa.

2. Through it many African words have passed into American speech—such as goober (peanut), gumbo (okra), and voodoo.

3. The ringshout, a West African religious dance, performed by shuffling in a circle while answering a preacher’s shouts, was brought to colonial American by slaves and developed into jazz.

4. Slaves also helped powerfully to build the country with their labor.

1. A few became skilled artisans—carpenters, bricklayers, and tanners.

2. But chiefly they performed the toil of clearing swamps, grubbing out trees, and other menial tasks; slaves naturally pined for freedom.

3. A slave revolt erupted in New York City in 1712 that cost the lives of a dozen whites and caused the execution of 21 blacks.

4. More than fifty resentful South Carolina blacks exploded in revolt in 1739 and tried to march to Spanish Florida, only to be stopped.

5. But in the end, the slaves in the South proved to be a more manageable labor force than the white indentured servants they replaced; no slave rebellion in American history matched the scale of Bacon’s Rebellion.
6. Southern Society

1. As slavery spread, the gaps in the South’s social structure widened
   1. The rough equality of poverty and disease of the early days was giving way to a defined hierarchy of wealth and status in the 1700s
   2. At the top of this southern social ladder perched a small but powerful covey of great planters; owning gangs of slaves and vast domains of land, the planters ruled the region’s economy (politics)
   3. A clutch of clans possessed among them gigantic tracts of Virginia real estate, and together they dominated the house of Burgesses

2. Yet, these great seventeenth-century merchant planters were not silk-swathed cavaliers gallantly imitating the ways of English gentlemen
   1. They did build stately riverfront manors, occasionally rode to the hounds, and some of them even cultivated the arts, and accumulated distinguished libraries (most were a hardworking businesslike lot)
   2. Few problems were more vexations than the unruly, surly servants

3. Beneath the planters—far beneath them in wealth, prestige, and political power—were the small farmers, the largest social group
   1. They tilled their modest plots and might own one or two slaves
   2. Still lower on the social scale were the landless whites, most of them luckless former indentured servants; and beneath them were those persons still serving out the term of their indenture
   3. Their numbers gradually diminished as black slaves increasingly replaced white indentured servants toward the end of the seventeenth century; the oppressed black slaves, remained enchained in society’s basement under the indentured servants
4. Few cities sprouted in the colonial South, and consequently an urban professional class, including lawyers and financiers, was slow to start.

5. Southern life revolved around the great plantations, distantly isolated from one another; waterways provided the principal means of trans-portionation and roads were so wretched—unlike anything in other areas.

7. The New England Family

1. Nature smiled more benignly on pioneer New Englanders than on their disease-plagued fellow colonists to the south; clean water and cool temperature retarded the spread of killer microbes and in contrast to the Chesapeake, settlers in New England added ten years to their life spans.

   1. The first generations of Puritan colonists enjoyed, on average, about seventy years on this earth—not too different from today’s rates.

   2. New Englanders tended to migrate not as single individuals but as families and the family remained at the center of New England life.

   3. Almost from the outset, New England’s population grew from natural reproductive increase; the people were remarkable fertile.

2. Early marriage encouraged the booming birthrate; women typically wed by their early twenties and produced babies about every two years.

   1. Ceaseless childbearing drained the vitality of many pioneer women; though claims about the frequency of death in childbirth have probably been exaggerated but it still haunted many women.

   2. A married woman could expect to experience up to ten pregnancies and rear as many as eight surviving children; a New England woman might well have children from the start of marriage to death.

3. The longevity of the New Englanders contributed to family stability.

   1. Children grew up in nurturing environments where they received love and guidance not only from their parents but also from family.
2. This novel intergenerational continuity has inspired the observation that New England “invented” grandparents

3. Family stability was reflected in low premarital pregnancy rates and in the generally strong, tranquil social structure of New England

4. Still other contrasts emerged between the southern and New England

   1. The fragility of southern families advanced the economic security of southern women, especially of women’s property rights

   2. Because southern men frequently died young, leaving widows with small children to support, the southern colonies generally allowed married women to retain separate title to their property

   3. But in New England, Puritan lawmakers worried that recognizing women’s separate property rights would undercut the unity of married persons by acknowledging conflicting interests between husband and wife; New England women usually gave up property rights when they married; women were denied rights of inheritance

8. Life in the New England Towns

   1. New Englanders evolved a tightly knit society, the basis of which was small villages and farms; this development was natural in a people anchored by geography and hemmed in by Indians, the French, and the Dutch. Puritanism likewise made for unity of purpose and for concern about the moral health of the whole community (opposition to slavery)

   2. In the Chesapeake region, the expansion of settlement was somewhat random and was usually undertaken by planters on their own initiative

      1. But, New England society grew in a more orderly fashion

      2. New towns were legally chartered by the colonial authorities and the distribution of land was entrusted to the hands of proprietors
3. After receiving a grant of land from the colonial legislature, the proprietors moved themselves and their families to the designated place and laid out their town, usually consisted of a meeting house, a place of worship, and the town hall surrounded by houses.

4. Also marked out was a village free, where the militia could drill.

5. Each family received several parcels of land, including a woodlot for fuel, a tract suitable for growing crops, and a pasture for animals.

3. Towns of more than fifty families were required to provide elementary education and a majority of the adults knew how to read and write.

1. In 1636, just eight years after the colony’s founding, the Massachusetts Puritans established Harvard College to train local boys for the ministry; only in 1693, 86 years after the founding of Jamestown did Virginians establish their first college, William and Mary.

2. Puritans ran their own churches, and democracy in Congregational church government led logically to democracy in political government; the town meeting in which the freemen met together and each man voted, exhibited democracy in its purest form.

3. New England villagers from the outset gathered regularly in their meetinghouses to elect their officials, appoint schoolmasters, and discuss such mundane matters as road repairs (political democracy).


1. Worries plagued the God-fearing pioneers of New England settlements.

1. The pressure of a growing population was gradually dispersing the Puritans onto outlying farms, far from the control of church.

2. Although the core of Puritan belief still burned brightly, the passage of time was dampening the first generation’s flaming religious zeal.
3. About the middle of the 17th century a new form of sermon began to be heard from Puritan pulpits—the “jeremiad”

4. Taking their cue from the doom-saying Old Testament prophet Jeremiah, preachers scolded parishioners for their waning piety

5. Especially alarming was the apparent decline in conversions—testimonials by individuals that they had received God’s grace and deserved to be admitted to the church as members of the elect

2. Troubled ministers in 1662 announced a new formula for church membership, the “Half-Way Covenant” that offered partial membership rights to people not yet converted; it dramatized the difficulty of maintaining the religious devotion of the founding generation

1. Jeremiads continued to thunder from the pulpits, but as time went on, the doors of the Puritan churches swung fully open to all

2. This widening of church membership gradually erased the distinction between the “elect” and other members of society

3. In effect, strict religious purity was sacrificed somewhat to the cause of wider religious participation (more and more women)

3. Women also played a prominent role in one of New England’s most frightening religious episodes to ever occur in the area

1. A group of adolescent girls in Salem, Massachusetts, claimed to have been bewitched by certain women and a hysterical “witch hunt” ensued, leading to the lynching in 1692 of twenty individuals, nineteen of whom were hanged and one whom was pressed to death

2. Larger-scale witchcraft persecutions were then common in Europe and several outbreaks had already flared forth in the colonies but the reign of horror in Salem grew not only from the superstitions of the age but also from the unsettled social and religious conditions
3. Most of the accused witches were associated with Salem’s prosperous merchant elite; their accusers came largely form the ranks of the poorer families in Salem’s agricultural hinterland.

4. This episode reflected the widening social stratification of New England, as well as the anxieties of many religious traditionalists that Puritan heritage was being eclipsed by Yankee commercialism.

5. The witchcraft hysteria eventually ended in 1693 when the governor, alarmed by an accusation against his own wife and supported by the more responsible members of the clergy, prohibited any further trials and pardoned those already convicted.

4. The Salem witchcraft delusion marked an all-time high in American experience of population passions that had run wild.

5. Witch hunting” passed into the American vocabulary as a metaphor for the dangerously irrational urge to find a scapegoat for resentment.

10. The New England Way of Life

1. Oddly enough, the story of New England was largely written by rocks.

1. The heavily glaciated soil was strewn with countless stones, many of which were forced to the surface after a winter freeze.

2. In a sense the Puritans did not possess the soil; it possessed them by shaping their character and scratching a living from the protesting earth. Was an early American success story; back-bending toil put a premium on industry and penny-pinching frugality (famous for).

3. Traditionally sharp Yankee traders, some of them palming off wooden nutmegs, made their mark; Connecticut came in time to be called “the Nutmeg State;” cynics said many people were dishonest.
2. The grudging land also left colonial New England less ethnically mixed than its southern neighbors; European immigrants were not attracted in great numbers to a site where the soil was stony (religion sulfurous).

3. Climate likewise molded New England, where the summers were often uncomfortably hot and winters were cruelly cold.
   
   1. Yet the soil and climate of New England eventually encouraged a diversified agriculture and industry; staple products like tobacco did not flourish, as in the South; black slavery could not exist profitably on small farms, especially where the surest crop was stones.

   2. No broad, fertile hinterland, comparable to that of the South, beckoned people inland; the mountains ran fairly close to the shore, and the rivers were generally short and rapid waters.

4. And just as the land shaped New Englanders, so they shaped the land.
   
   1. The Native Americans had left an early imprint on the New England earth; they traditionally beat trails through the woods as they migrated seasonally for hunting and fishing.

   2. They periodically burned the woodlands to restore leafy first-growth forests that would sustain the deer population.

   3. The Indians recognized the right to use the land, but the concept of exclusive, individual ownership of the land was not known to them.

5. The English settlers had a different philosophy; they condemned the Indians for “wasting” the earth by underutilizing its bounty and used this logic to justify their own expropriation of the land from the natives.

6. Some greatest changes resulted from the introduction of livestock.
   
   1. The English brought pigs, horses, sheep, and cattle from Europe to settlements and because the growing herds need more pastures, the colonists were continually clearing forests.
2. The animal’s appetites and heavy hooves compacted the soil, speeding erosion and flooding causing changes in microclimate

7. Repelled by the rocks, the hardy New Englanders turned instinctively to their fine natural harbors; hacking timber from their dense forests they became experts in shipbuilding and commerce; they also ceaselessly exploited the self-perpetuating codfish lode off the coast

8. The combination of Calvinism, soil, and climate in New England made for purposefulness, stubbornness, self-reliance and resourcefulness; New England’s impact on the whole nation has been incalculable

11. The Early Settlers’ Days and Ways

1. The cycles of the seasons and the sun set the schedules of all the earliest American colonists, men as well as women, blacks and whites

   1. The overwhelming majority of colonists were farmers; they planted in the spring, tended their crops in the summer, harvested in the fall, and prepared in the winter to begin the cycle all over again

   2. They usually rose at dawn and went to bed at dusk; chores might be performed after nightfall if they were “worth the candle”

   3. Women, slave or free, on southern plantations or northern farms, wove, cooked, cleaned, and care for children; men cleared land, fenced, planted, and cropped it, cut firewood, and butchered livestock; children helped with all these task (sometimes schooled)

2. Life was humble but comfortable by contemporary standards; compared to most seventeenth-century Europeans, Americans lived in affluent abundance; land was relatively cheap and more money for jobs

3. The poorest members of a society may not possess even the modest means needed to pull up stakes and seek a fresh start in life; accordingly most white migrants to early colonial America came from the middle; not aristocracy nor the dregs of European society
4. Crude frontier life did not in any case permit the flagrant display of class distinctions, and seventeenth-century society in all the colonies had a certain simple sameness to it, especially in the middle colonies.

1. Yet many settlers, tried to re-create on a modified scale the social structure they had known in the Old World.

2. Resentment against the upper-class pretensions helped to spark outbursts like Bacon's Rebellion of 1676 in Virginia and the uprising of Maryland's Protestants toward the end of the 1600s.

3. In New York, animosity between lordly landholders and aspiring merchants fueled Leisler's Rebellion, an ill-starred and blood insurgency that rocked New York City from 1689 to 1691.

5. For their part, would-be American blue bloods resented the pretensions of the "meaner sort" and passed laws to try to keep them in their place but these efforts to reproduce the finely stratified societies of Europe proved feeble in the early American wilderness where equality and democracy found fertile soil—at least for white people.
Colonial Society on the Eve of Revolution, 1700-1775

1. Conquest by the Cradle

1. The common term thirteen original colonies is misleading as Britain ruled thirty-two colonies in North America, including the Caribbean Islands by 1775 but only thirteen of them staked a rebellion.

2. Among the distinguishing characteristics that the eventually rebellious settlements shared was lusty population growth; in 1700 they contained fewer than 300,000 people; by 1775, there were about 2.5 million people.

   1. Of the 2.5 million people, about half a million were black and white immigrants made up nearly 400,000 of the increased number, and black “forced immigrants” accounted for almost as many again.

   2. But most of the spurt stemmed from the remarkable natural fertility of all Americans, white and black; to the amazement and dismay of Europeans, the colonists were doubling every twenty-five years.

3. The population boom had political consequences; in 1700 there were twenty English subjects for each American colonist but by 1775 the English advantage in numbers had fallen to three to one—setting the stage for a momentous shift in the balance of power.

4. The bulk of the population was up east of the Alleghenies, although by 1775 groups of pioneers were in the clearings of Tennessee and Kentucky (the most populous colonies in 1775 were Virginia, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Maryland).

3. Only four communities could properly be called cities: Philadelphia (34,000 residents), trailed by New York, Boston, and Charleston; still, 90 percent of the people lived in rural areas in the country.
2. A Mingling of the Races

1. Colonial America was a melting pot and had been from the outset; the population was picturesquely mottled with numerous foreign groups

   1. Germans constituted about 6 percent of the total population, or 150,000, by 1775; fleeing religious persecution, economic oppression, and war, they had flocked to America in early 1700s and settled chiefly in Pennsylvania (carious Protestant sects)

   2. Known popularly but erroneously as the Pennsylvania Dutch, they total about one-third of the Pennsylvania’s population

   3. These German newcomers moved into the backcountry of Pennsylvania, had no deep-rooted loyalty to the British crown, and clung tenaciously to their German language and customs

2. The Scots-Irish who in 1775 numbered about 175,000 or 7% of the population, were an important non-English group (Scots Lowlanders)

   1. Over many years, they had been transplanted to Northern Ireland, where they had not prospered; the Irish Catholics already there, hating Scottish Presbyterianism, resented the intruders

   2. The economic life of the Scots-Irish was severely hampered, especially when the English government placed burdensome restrictions on their production of linens and woolens

   3. Early in the 1700s, tens of thousands of embittered Scots-Irish finally abandoned Ireland and came to America, chiefly to tolerant and deep soiled Pennsylvania—finding the best acres already taken, they pushed out onto the frontier (many of them illegally)

   4. When the westward-flowing Scots-Irish tide lapped up against the Allegheny barrier, it was deflected southward into the backcountry of Maryland, down Virginia and into the western Carolinas
5. Already experience colonizers and agitators in Ireland, the Scots-Irish proved to be superb frontiersmen, though their readiness to visit violence on the Indians repeatedly inflamed western districts.

3. By the mid-eighteenth century, a chain of Scots-Irish settlements lay scattered along the “great wagon road,” which hugged the eastern Appalachian foothills from Pennsylvania to Georgia.

1. It was said that the Scots-Irish kept the Sabbath—and all else they could lay their hands on; pugnacious, lawless, and individualistic, they brought with them the Scottish secrets of whiskey distilling.

2. They cherished no love for the British government that had uprooted them and still lorded over them (or any government).

3. They led the armed march of the Paxton Boys on Philadelphia in 1764, protesting the oligarchy’s lenient policy toward the Indians and years later, headed the Regulator movement in North Carolina, an insurrection against eastern domination of the colony’s affairs.

4. Many of these hotheads including the young Andrew Jackson eventually joined the embattled American revolutionists and about a dozen future presidents were of Scots-Irish descent.

4. Approximately 5 percent of the multicolored colonial population consisted of other European groups; these embraced French Huguenots, Welsh, Dutch, Swedes, Jews, Irish, Swiss, and Scots Highlanders.

5. By far the largest single non-English group was African, accounting for nearly 20 percent of the colonial population in 1775 (mostly South).

6. The population of the thirteen colonies, though mainly Anglo-Saxon, was perhaps the most mixed to be found anywhere in the world.

1. The South, holding about 90 percent of the slaves, already displayed its historic black-and-white racial composition.
2. New England, mostly staked out by the original Puritan migrants, showed the least ethnic diversity but the middle colonies, especially Pennsylvania, received the bulk of later white immigrants and boasted an astonishing variety of peoples; outside of New England about one-half the population was non-English in 1775.

7. As these various immigrant groups mingled and intermarried, they laid the foundations for a new multicultural American national identity:

1. Nor were white colonists alone in creating new societies out of diverse ethnic groups; the African slave trade long had mixed peoples from many different tribal backgrounds.

2. These people gave birth to an African-American community far more variegated in its cultural origins than anything to be found.

3. Similarly, in the New England “praying towns” where Indians were gathered to be Christianized, and in Great Lakes villages, polyglot Native American communities emerged (blurring differences).

3. The Structure of Colonial Society

1. In contrast with contemporary Europe, eighteenth century America was a shining land of equality and opportunity—exception of slavery:

1. No titled nobility dominated society from on high and no pauperized underclass threatened it from below; most Americans were small farmers who owned modest holdings and did work.

2. The cities contained a small class of skilled artisans as well as a few shopkeepers and trades-people and a handful of unskilled laborers.

3. The most remarkable feature of the social ladder was the rags-to-riches ease with which an ambitious colonist might rise from a lower rung to a higher one, a rare step in old England.
2. Yet in contrast with seventeenth-century America, colonial society on the eve of the Revolution was beginning to show signs of stratification and barriers to mobility that raised worries about the “Europeanization”

1. The gods of war contributed to these developments as armed conflicts of the 1690s and early 1700s had enriched a number of merchant princes in the New England and middle colonies; they laid the foundations of their fortunes with profits made as suppliers

2. Roosting regally atop the social ladder, these elites now had money and they sported imported clothing and dined at tables laid with English china and gleaming silverware; prominent individuals came to be seated in churches and schools according to their social rank

3. The plague of war also created a class of widows and orphans, who became dependent for their survival on charity (almshouses); yet the numbers of poor people remained tiny compared to the numbers in England, where about a third of the population lived impoverished

4. In New England countryside, the descendants of the original settlers faced more limited prospects than had their pioneering forbearers

   1. As the supply of unclaimed soil dwindled and families grew, existing landholdings were repeatedly subdivided among children

   2. The average size of farms shrank drastically and younger children were forced to hire out as wage laborers, or eventually to seek virgin tracts of land beyond the Alleghenies (lots of homeless)

5. In the South the power of great planters continued to be bolstered by their disproportionate ownership of slaves (not even distribution)

   1. Wealth was concentrated in the hands of the largest slaveowners, widening the gap between the prosperous gentry and the “poor whites,” who were more and more likely to become tenant farmers
2. In all the colonies, the ranks of the lower classes were further swelled by the continuing stream of indentured servants; many who were prosperous—two even signed Declaration of Independence

6. Far less fortunate than the voluntary indentured servants were the paupers and convicts involuntarily shipped to America; although about fifty thousand “jayle birds” were dumped on the colonies by London

1. This crowd—including robbers, rapists, and murderers—were generally sullen and undesirable, and not bubbling over with goodwill for the king’s government

2. Many convicts were the unfortunate victims of circumstances and of a viciously unfair English penal code that included about two hundred capital crimes; some deportees came to be respectable

7. Least fortunate of all were the black slaves who enjoyed no equality with whites and dared not even dream of ascending or approaching the ladder of opportunity (were the closest to Europe’s lower classes)

8. Fears of black rebellion plagued the white colonists in America

1. Some colonial legislatures, notably South Carolina’s in 1760, sensed the dangers present in a heavy concentration of resentful slaves and attempted to restrict or half their importation

2. But the British authorities seeking to preserve the supply of cheap labor for the colonies, especially the West Indies plantations always vetoed all efforts to stem the transatlantic traffic in slaves

3. Many North American colonists condemned these vetoes as morally cruel, although New England slaves traders benefited handsomely from the British policy; the complexity of the slavery issue was further revealed when Thomas Jefferson, a slaveholder, assailed the British vetoes in an early draft of the Declaration but was forced to withdraw by a torrent of protest from southerners
4. Clerics, Physicians, and Jurists

1. Most honored of the professions was the Christian ministry; in 1775, the clergy wielded less influence than in the early days of Massachusetts; they still occupied a position of high prestige

2. Although, most physicians were poorly trained and not highly esteemed
   1. Not until 1765 was the first medical school established, although European centers attracted some students; aspiring young doctors served for a while as apprentices to older practitioners
   2. Bleeding was a favorite and frequently fatal remedy; when the physician was not available, a barber was often summoned

3. Epidemics were a constant nightmare; especially dreaded was smallpox, which afflicted one out of five persons; a crude form of inoculation was introduced in 1721, despite the objections of many physicians and some of the clergy, who opposed tampering with God
   1. Powdered dried toad was a favorite prescription for smallpox
   2. Diphtheria was also a deadly killer, especially of young people; one epidemic in the 1730s took the lives of thousands
   3. This grim reminder of their mortality may have helped to prepare many colonists in their hearts and minds for the religious revival

4. At first the law profession was not favorably regarded; in this pioneering society, which required much honest manual labor, the parties to a dispute often presented their own cases in court

5. Lawyers were commonly regarded as noisy windbags or troublemaking rogues; early Connecticut law classed them with drunkards and brothel keepers (John Adams, a lawyer, was frowned upon by his future wife)

5. Workaday America
1. Agriculture was the leading industry, involving about 90% of people

   1. Tobacco continued to be the staple crop in Maryland and Virginia, though wheat cultivation also spread through the Chesapeake

   2. The fertile middle ("bread") colonies produced large quantities of grain, and by 1759 New York alone was exporting eighty thousand barrels of flour a year (higher standard of living for Americans)

2. Fishing, though ranking far below agriculture, was rewarding; pursued in all the American colonies, this harvesting of the sea was a major industry in New England (cod) and the fishing fleet also stimulated shipbuilding and served as a nursery for the seamen of the marines

3. A bustling commerce, both coastwise and overseas, enriched all the colonies, especially New England, New York, and Pennsylvania

   1. Commercial ventures and land speculation were the surest avenues to speedy wealth; Yankee seamen were famous in many climes not only as skilled mariners but as tightfisted traders

   2. They provisioned the Caribbean sugar islands with food and forest products, hauled Spanish and Portuguese gold, wine, and oranges to London to be exchanged for industrial goods and sold for profit

   3. This triangular trade was infamously profitable, though small relation to total colonial commerce (handsome profit each trip)

4. Manufacturing the colonies was of only secondary importance, although there was a surprising variety of small enterprises

   1. As a rule, workers could get ahead faster in soil-rich America by tilling the land; huge quantities of rum were distilled in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, and even some of the "elect of the Lord" developed an overfondness for the "kill devil" rum
2. Handsome beaver hats were manufactured in quantity, despite British restrictions; smoking iron forges dotted the land and in fact were more numerous in 1775 (but smaller) than those of England.

3. In addition, household manufacturing, including spinning and weaving by women, added up to an impressive output.

4. As in all pioneering countries, strong-backed laborers and skilled craftspeople were scarce and highly prized (skills were needed).

5. Lumbering was one of the most important single manufacturing activities.
   1. Countless cartloads of new timber were consumed by shipbuilders, at first chiefly in New England and ten elsewhere in the colonies.
   2. By 1770 about four hundred vessels of assorted sizes were splashing down the ways each year (1/3 of British merchant marine were American-built); colonial naval stores were highly valued.
   3. London offered generous bounties to stimulate production of products such as tar, pitch, rosin, and turpentine, as Britain was anxious to gain and retain a mastery of the seas (Baltic areas).
   4. Even though there were countless unreserved trees and the blazed ones were being saved for the common defense, this shackle on free enterprise engendered considerable bitterness (king reserved).

6. Americans held an important flank of a thriving, many-sided Atlantic economy by the dawn of the eighteenth century (appeared in 1730s).
   1. Fast-breeding Americans demanded more and more British products but the British population reached the saturation point for absorbing imports from America; this trade imbalance raised a question—how could colonists sell the goods to make the money to buy what they wanted in Britain: by seeking foreign markets.
2. By the eve of the Revolution, the bulk of Chesapeake tobacco was filling pipes in France and in other European countries.

3. More important was the trade with the West Indies, especially the French islands; West Indian purchases of North American timber and foodstuffs provided the crucial cash for the colonists for trade.

7. But in 1733, bowing to pressure from influential British West Indian planters, Parliament passed the Molasses Act, aimed at squelching North American trade with the French West Indies; this would have been a crippling blow to the American international trade and living.

8. American merchants responded to the act by bribing and smuggling their way around the law; thus was foreshadowed the impending imperial crisis, when the Americans would revolt rather than submit.

6. Horsepower and Sailpower

1. All sprawling and sparsely populated pioneer communities are cured with oppressive problems of transportation; America with a scarcity of both money and workers, was no exception to the rule.

1. Not until the 1700s did roads connect even the major cities, and these dirt thoroughfares were treacherously deficient; a wayfarer could have rumbled along more rapidly over the Roman roadways.


3. Roads were often clouds of dust in the summer and quagmires of mud in the winter; stagecoach travelers braved such additional dangers as tree-strewn roads, rickety bridges, and carriage overturns.

2. Where man-made roads were retched, heavy reliance was placed on God-grooved waterways; population tended to cluster along the banks of navigable rivers; there was also much coastwise traffic, and although it was slow and undependable, it was relatively cheap and pleasant.
3. Taverns sprang up along the main routes of travel, as well as in cities

1. Their attractions customarily included such amusements as bowling alleys, pool tables, bars, and gambling equipment (all social classes would mingled and the tavern was yet another cradle of democracy)

2. Gossips also gathered at the taverns, which were clearinghouses of information, misinformation, and rumor—alcohol and politics

3. A successful politician was often a man who had a large alehouse fraternity in places like Boston’s Green Dragon Tavern

4. Taverns were important in crystallizing public opinion and proved to be hotbeds of agitation as the Revolutionary movement gathered

4. An intercolonial postal system was established by the mid-1700s, although private couriers remained; some mail was handled on credit—service was slow and infrequent, and secrecy was problematic

5. Mail carriers, serving long routes, would sometimes pass the time by reading the letters entrusted to their care

7. Dominant Denominations

1. Two “established” or tax-supported churches were conspicuous in 1775: the Anglican church and the Congregational church

1. A considerable segment of the population did not worship in any church; and in those colonies that maintained an “established” religion, only a minority of the people belonged to it

2. The Church of England, whose members were commonly called Anglicans, became the official faith in Georgia, North and South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and a part of New York

3. Established also in England, it served in America as a major prop of kingly authority; British officials naturally made vigorous attempts to impose it on additional colonies (ran into wall of opposition)
4. In America the Anglican Church fell distressingly short of its promise; secure and self-satisfied, like its parent in England, it clung to a faith that was less fierce and more worldly than the religion of Puritanical New England (sermons were shorter; hell less scorching; and amusements, like hunting, were less scorned)

5. So dismal was the reputation of the Anglican clergy in seventeenth-century Virginia that the College of William and Mary was founded in 1693 to train a better class of clerics for the church

2. The influential Congregational Church, which had grown out of the Puritan Church, was formally established in all the New England colonies, except independent-minded Rhode Island

1. At first Massachusetts taxed residents to support Congregationalism but later relented and exempted members of other denominations

2. Presbyterianism, though closely associated, was never made official

3. Ministers of the gospel, from the Bible to world, grappled burning political issues; as the start revolution against the British crown could be heard, sedition flowed free from pulpits; Presbyterianism, Congregationalism, and rebellion became a neo-trinity

4. Many leading Anglican clergymen, aware of which side their tax-provided bread was buttered on, naturally supported their king

3. Anglicans in the New World were seriously handicapped by not having a resident bishop, whose presence would be convenient for the ordination of young ministers (had to travel to England to be ordained)

4. On the eve of the Revolution there was serious talk of creating an American bishopric, but the scheme was violently opposed by many non-Anglicans, who feared a tightening of the royal reins

5. Religious toleration had indeed made enormous strides in America
1. Roman Catholics were still generally discriminated against, as in England, even in office-holding; but there were fewer Catholics in America, and hence the anti-papist laws were less severe.

2. The anti-papist laws were also less strictly enforced; and in general, people could worship, or not worship, as they pleased.

8. The Great Awakening

1. In all the colonial churches, religion was less fervid in the early eighteenth century than it had been a century earlier, in the beginning.

    1. The Puritan churches in particular sagged under the weight of two burdens: their elaborate theological doctrines and their compromising efforts to liberalize membership requirements.

    2. Churchgoers increasingly complained about the “dead dogs” who droned out tedious, overerudite sermons from Puritan pulpits.

    3. Some ministers, on the other hand, worried that many of their parishioners had gone soft and that their souls were no longer kindled by the hellfire of orthodox Calvinism; liberal ideas began to challenge the old-time religious beliefs of churchgoers.

    4. Some worshipers now proclaimed that human beings were not necessarily predestined to damnation and might save themselves by good works; even more threatening were the doctrines of the Arminians, followers of Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius, who preached that individual free will determined a person’s eternal fate.

    5. Pressured by these “heresies,” a few churches grudgingly conceded that spiritual conversion was not necessary for church membership; together these twin trends toward clerical intellectualism and lay liberalism were sapping the spiritual vitality from denominations.

2. The stage was thus set for a rousing religious revival.
1. Known as the Great Awakening, it exploded in the 1730s and 1740s and swept through the colonies like a fire through prairie grass.

2. The Awakening was first ignited in Northampton, Massachusetts by an intellectual pastor, Jonathan Edwards; perhaps the deepest theological mind in America, Edwards proclaimed with burning righteousness the folly of believing in salvation through good works and affirmed need for complete dependence on God’s grace.

3. Warming to his subject, he painted in lurid detail the landscape of hell and the eternal torments of the damned—“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” was the title of one of his most famous sermons.

3. Edwards’s preaching style was learned and closely reasoned, but his stark doctrines sparked a warmly sympathetic reaction among his parishioners in 1734; four years later English parson George Whitefield loosed a different style of preaching on America and touched off a conflagration of religious ardor that revolutionized spiritual life.

1. A former alehouse attendant, Whitefield was an orator of rare gifts.

2. His magnificent voice boomed sonorously over thousands of enthralled listeners in an open field (many were envious of him).

3. Triumphantly touring the colonies, Whitefield trumpeted his message of human helplessness of divine omnipotence; during those roaring revival meetings, many sinners professed conversion.

4. Whitefield soon inspired American imitators (style of preaching).

4. Orthodox clergymen, known as “old lights,” were deeply skeptical of the emotionalism and the theatrical antics of the revivalists; “new light” ministers, defended the Awakening for its role in revitalizing religion.

5. Congregationalists and Presbyterians split over this issue, and many of the believers in religious conversion went over to the Baptists and other sects more prepared to make room for emotion in religion.
6. The Awakening left many lasting effects; its emphasis on direct, emotive spirituality seriously undermined the older clergy, whose authority had derived from their education and erudition

1. The schisms it set off in many denominations greatly increased the numbers and the competitiveness of American churches

2. It encouraged a fresh wave of missionary work among the Indians and even among black slaves, many of whom had to attend revivals

3. It led to the founding of “new light” centers of higher learning such as Princeton, Brown, Rutgers, and Dartmouth

4. Perhaps most significant, the Great Awakening was the first spontaneous mass movement of the American people; it tended to break down sectional boundaries as well as denominational lines and contributed to the growing sense that Americans had of themselves as a single people, united by a common history

9. Schools and Colleges

1. A time-honored English idea regarded education as a blessing reserved for the aristocratic few, not for the unwashed many; education should be for leadership, not citizenship, and primarily for males; only slowly and painfully did the colonists break the chains of these restrictions

2. Puritan New England, largely for religious reasons, was more zealously interested in education than any other section of the colonies

   1. Dominated by the Congregational Church, it stressed the need for Bible reading by the individual worshiper; the primary goal of the clergy was to make good Christians rather than good citizens

   2. Education, principally for boys, flourished almost from the outset in New England; this densely populated region boasted an impressive number of graduates from the English universities, especially Cambridge, the intellectual center of England’s Puritanism
3. New Englanders, relatively early, established primary and secondary schools, which varied widely in the quality of instruction and in the length of time that their doors remained open each year.

4. Back-straining farm labor drained much of youths’ time and energy.

3. Fairly adequate elementary schools were also hammering knowledge into the heads of reluctant “scholars” in the middle colonies and South.

1. Some of these institutions were tax-supported; others were privately operated; the South, with its white and black population diffused over wide areas, was severely handicapped logically in attempting to establish an effective school system (wealth families had tutors).

2. The general atmosphere in the colonial schools and colleges continued grim and gloomy; most emphasis was placed on religion and on the classical languages, Latin and Greek.

3. The focus was not on experiment and reason, but on doctrine and dogma; the age of one of orthodoxy, and independence of thinking was discouraged—discipline was quite severe (whipping occurred).

4. College education was regarded—at least at first in New England—as more important that instruction in the ABCs; churches would wither if a new crop of ministers was not trained to lead the spiritual flocks.

5. Many well-to-do families, especially in the South, sent their boys abroad to English institutions in order to receive a college education.

6. For purposes of convenience and economy, nine local colleges were established during the colonial era—Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, Princeton, Pennsylvania, Columbia, Brown, Rutgers, and Dartmouth.

1. Student enrollments were small, numbering about 200 boys; at one time, a few lads as young as eleven were admitted to Harvard.
2. Instruction was poor by present-day standards and the curriculum was still heavily loaded with theology and the “dead” languages.

3. A significant contribution was made by Benjamin Franklin, who played a major role in launching what became the University of Pennsylvania, the first college free from denominational control.

10. A Provincial Culture

1. When it came to art and culture, colonial Americans were still in thrall to European tastes, especially British; the simplicity of pioneering life had not yet bred many homespun patrons of the arts.

2. Like so many of his talented artistic contemporaries, Trumbull was forced to travel to London to pursue his ambitions.


4. Gifted Benjamin West and John Singleton Copley succeeded in their ambition to become famous painters, but like Trumbull they had to go to England to complete their training.

5. Only abroad could they find subjects who had the leisure to sit for their portraits and the money to pay handsomely for them.

6. Copley was regarded as a Loyalist during the Revolutionary War, and West, a close friend of George II and official court painter, was buried in London’s St. Paul’s Cathedral following his death.

2. Architecture was largely imported from the Old World and modified to meet the peculiar climatic and religious conditions of the New World.

1. Even the lowly log cabin was apparently borrowed from Sweden.

2. The red-bricked Georgian style, so common in the pre-Revolutionary decades, was introduced about 1720 and is best exemplified by the beauty of now-restored Williamsburg, Virginia.
3. Colonial literature, like art, was generally undistinguished, and for much the same reasons; one noteworthy exception was the poet Phillis Wheatley, a slave girl in Boston at eight and never formally educated

   1. Taken to England when she was twenty, she published a verse book and subsequently wrote polished poems that revealed the influence of Alexander Pope; her verse were one of the best of the period

   2. The remarkable fact is that she could overcome her severely disadvantaged background and write poetry at all

4. Versatile Benjamin Franklin, often called “the first civilized American,” also shone as a literary light among other things

   1. Although his autobiography is a classic, he was best known to his contemporaries for Poor Richard’s Almanack (edited 1732 to 1758)

   2. This publication, containing many pithy sayings culled from the thinkers of the ages, emphasized such virtues as thrift, industry, morality, and common sense—Honesty is the best policy, plough deep while sluggards sleep, and fish and visitors stink in three days

   3. Poor Richard’s was well known in Europe and was more widely read in America than anything except the Bible (teacher of old and young, Franklin had influence in shaping the American character)

5. Science, rising above the shackles of superstition, was making some progress, though lagging behind the Old World’s progress

   1. A few botanists, mathematicians, and astronomers had won some repute, but Benjamin Franklin was perhaps the only first-rank scientists produced in the American colonies

   2. Franklin’s spectacular but dangerous experiments, including the famous kite-flying episode proving that lightning was a form of electricity, won him numerous honors in Europe
3. But his mind also had a practical turn, and among his numerous inventions were bifocal spectacles and the highly efficient stove.

4. His lightning rod, not surprisingly was condemned by some stodgy clergymen who felt it was “presuming on God” by attempting to control the “artillery of the heavens” (the lightning).

11. Pioneer Presses

1. Americans were generally too poor to buy quantities of books and too busy to read them; however a few private libraries of fair size could be found, especially among the clergy and rich families in the colonies.

   1. The Byrd family of Virginia enjoyed perhaps the largest collection in the colonies, consisting of about four thousand volumes.

   2. Bustling Benjamin Franklin established in Philadelphia the first privately supported circulating library in America; and by 1776 there were about fifty public libraries and collections available.

2. Hand-operated printing presses cranked out pamphlets, leaflets, and journals; on the eve of the Revolution, there were about forty colonial newspapers, chiefly weeklies that consisted of a single large sheet.

   1. Columns ran heavily to somber essays, frequently signed with pseudonyms and the “news” often lagged many weekends behind the event especially in the case of oversea happenings.

   2. Newspapers proved to be a powerful agency for airing colonial grievances an rallying oppositions to the British crown’s control.

3. A celebrated legal case, in 1734-1735, involved John Peter Zenger, a newspaper printer; significantly, the case arose in New York, reflecting the tumultuous give-and-take of politics in the middle colonies.
1. Zenger’s newspaper had assailed the corrupt royal governor; charged with seditious libel, the accused was hauled to court where he was defended by a former indentured servant, Andrew Hamilton.

2. Zenger argued that he had printed the truth but the royal chief justice instructed the jury not to consider the truth or falsity; the fact of printing, irrespective of the truth, was enough to convict.

3. Hamilton countered that “the very liberty of both exposing and opposing arbitrary power” was at stake; swayed by his eloquence, the jurors defied the judges and returned a verdict of not guilty.

4. The Zenger decision was a banner achievement for freedom of the press and for the health of democracy; it pointed the way to the kind of open public discussion required by the diverse society that colonial New York already was and that all America was to become.

5. Although contrary to existing law and not immediately accepted by other judges and juries, in time it helped establish the doctrine that true statements about public officials could not be prosecuted as libel.

6. Newspapers were thus eventually free to print responsible criticism of powerful officials though full freedom of press was unknown for a time.

The Great Game of Politics

1. American colonists were making noteworthy contributions to politics.

   1. The thirteen colonial governments took a variety of forms; by 1775, eight colonies had royal governors, who were appointed by the king.

   2. Three—Maryland, Pennsylvinia, and Delaware—were under proprietors who themselves chose the governors; two, Connecticut and Rhode Island, elected their governors under self-governing rule.

   2. Practically every colony utilized a two-house legislative body.
1. The upper house, or council, was normally appointed by the crown in the royal colonies and by the proprietor in the proprietary colonies; it was chosen by the voters in the self-governing colonies.

2. The lower house, as the popular branch, was elected by the people—or rather by those who owned enough property to qualify as voters.

3. In several of the colonies, the backcountry elements were seriously underrepresented, and they hated the ruling colonial group.

4. Legislatures, in which the people enjoyed direct representation, voted such taxes as they chose for the necessary expenses of colonial government—self-taxation through representation was a precious privilege that Americans had come to cherish above others.

3. Governors appointed by the king were generally able men, sometimes outstanding figures; some, unfortunately, were incompetent or corrupt—broken-down politicians badly in need of jobs.

   1. The worst of the group was probably impoverished Lord Cornbury, first cousin of Queen Anne, who was made governor of New York and New Jersey in 1702—he was a drunkard, a spendthrift, a grafter, an embezzler, a religious bigot, and a vain fool.

   2. Even the best appointees had trouble with the colonial legislatures, basically because the royal governor embodied a bothersome transatlantic authority some three thousand miles away.

4. The colonial assemblies found various ways to assert their authority and independence; some of them employed the trick of withholding the governor’s salary unless he yielded to their wishes (he was normally in need of money so the power of the purse usually forced him to terms).

5. The London government, in leaving the colonial governor to the tender mercies of the legislature, was guilty of poor administration.
1. In the interests of simple efficiency, the British authorities should have arranged to pay him from independent sources; as events turned out, control over the purse by the colonial legislatures led to prolonged bickering, which proved to be one of the irritants that generated a spirit of revolt (Parliament’s Townshend taxes of 1767)

2. Administration at the local level was varied; county government remained the rule of the plantation South; townmeeting government predominated in New England; and a modification of the two developed in the middle colonies—in the town meetings, with its open discussion and opening voting, direct democracy functioned

6. Yet the ballot was by no means a birthright; religious or property qualifications for voting, even stiffer qualifications for office holding, existed in all the colonies at the time in the late 18th century

1. The privileged upper classes, fearful of democratic excesses, were unwilling to grant the ballot to every person in the colony

2. Perhaps half of the adults whites males were thus disfranchised but because of the ease of acquiring land and thus satisfying property requirements, the right to vote was not beyond the reach of most

3. Yet somewhat surprisingly, eligible voters did not exercise this precious privilege and frequently acquiesced in the leadership of their betters who ran colonial affairs (able to vote people out office)

7. By 1775 America was not yet a true democracy—socially, economically, or politically; but it was far more democratic than England and the European continent; colonial institutions were giving freer rein to the democratic ideals of tolerance, educational advantages, equality of economic opportunity, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and representative government

13. Colonial Folkways
1. Everyday life in the colonies was drab and tedious; for most people the labor was heavy and constant—from “can see” to “can’t see”

2. Food was plentiful, though the diet could be coarse and monotonous; Americans probably ate more bountifully, especially of meat, than any people in the Old World—Lazy/sickly was the person that was hungry

3. Basic comforts now taken for granted were lacking; churches were not heated at all; drafty homes were poorly heated, chiefly by fireplaces

   1. There was no running water in the houses, no plumbing, and probably not a single bathtub in all colonial America

   2. Candles and whale-oil lamps provided faint and flickering illumination; garbage disposal was so primitive that hogs ranged the streets and buzzards, protected by law, flapped over waste

4. Amusement was eagerly pursued where time and custom permitted

   1. The militia assembled periodically for “musters”, which consisted of several days of drilling, liberally interspersed with merry-making

   2. On the frontier, pleasure was often combined with work at house-raising, quilting bees, husking bees, and apple parings

   3. Funerals and weddings everywhere afforded opportunities for social gathering, which customarily involved the swilling of much liquor

5. Winter sports were common in the North, whereas in the South card playing, horse racing, cockfighting, dancing and fox hunting

6. Over diversions beckoned; lotteries were universally approved, even by the clergy, and were used to raise money for churches and colleges

7. Stage plays became popular in the South but were frowned upon in Quaker and Puritan colonies and in some places forbidden by law; many of the New England clergy saw playacting as time-consuming and immoral—they preferred religious lectures (spiritual satisfaction)
8. Holidays were everywhere celebrated in the American colonies, but Christmas was frowned upon in New England as an offensive reminder.

9. Thanksgiving Day came to be an American festival for it combined thanks to God with an opportunity for jollification, gorging, and guzzling.

10. By the mid-eighteenth century, Britain’s several North American colonies, despite their differences, revealed some striking similarities:

1. All were basically English in language and customs, and Protestant in religion, while the widespread presence of other peoples and faiths compelled every colony to cede at least some degree of ethnic and religious toleration (as compared to contemporary Europe).

2. They all afforded to enterprising individuals unusual opportunities for social mobility; they all possessed some measure of self-government, though by no means complete democracy.

3. Communication and transportation among the colonies were improving; British North America by 1775 looked like a patchwork quilt—each part slightly different, but stitched together by common origins, common ways of life, and common beliefs in toleration, economic development and above all, were somewhat self-ruled.

4. Fatefully, all the colonies were also separated from the seat of imperial authority by a vast ocean some three thousand miles wide; these simple facts of shared history, culture, and geography set the stage for the colonists’ struggle to unite as an independent people.
The Road to Revolution, 1763-1775

1. Introduction

   1. Victory in the Seven Years’ War made Britain the master of an enlarged imperial domain

   2. But victory was painfully costly; the London government therefore struggled after 1763 to compel the American colonists to shoulder some of the financial costs of empire

   3. This change in British colonial policy reinforced an emerging sense of American political identity and helped to precipitate the American Revolution

   4. What began as a squabble about economic policies soon exposed irreconcilable differences between Americans and Britons over cherished political principles

   5. The ensuing clash between the Americans and the Britons gave birth to a new nation

2. The Deep Roots of Revolution

   1. The New World nurtured new ideas about the nature of society, citizen, and government

      1. In the Old World, few people born into such changeless surroundings dared to question their lowly social status but European immigrants weren’t easily subdued

      2. In the American wilderness, they encountered a world that was theirs to make

   2. Two ideas in particular had taken root in American colonists by the mid-18th century
1. One was called republicanism; models of the ancient Greek and Roman republics defined a just society as one in which all citizens willingly subordinated their private, selfish interests to the common good (stability of society & authority of government)

2. By its very natures, republicanism was opposed to hierarchical and authoritarian institutions such as aristocracy and monarchy

3. A second idea that fundamentally shaped American political through derived from a group of British political commentators known as “radical Whigs”

4. The Whigs feared the threat to liberty posed by the arbitrary power of the monarchy and his ministers relative to elected representatives in Parliament (mounted attacks on the use of patronage and bribes by the king’s ministers)

5. The Whigs warned citizens to be on guard against corruption and to be eternally vigilant against possible conspiracies to denude them of their hard-won liberties

3. The circumstances of colonial life had done much to bolster alert attitudes

4. The Americans grew accustomed to running their own affairs; distance weakens authority and it came as a shock when Britain after 1763 tried to strengthen grip on the colonists

3. Mercantilism and Colonial Grievances

1. Not one of the original thirteen colonies except Georgia was formally planted by the British government (trading companies, religious groups, or land speculators)

2. The British authorities nevertheless embraced a theory, called mercantilism, that justified their control over the colonies (mercantilists believed that wealth was power)
1. Mercantilists believed that wealth was power and that a country’s economic wealth (military and political power) could be measured by the amount of gold or silver in its treasury—to amount gold/silver, a country needed to export more than it imported.

2. Possessing colonies thus conferred distinct advantages, since the colonies could both supply raw materials to the mother country and provide a market for exports.

3. The London government looked on the American colonists more or less as tenants.

   1. They were expected to furnish products such as tobacco, sugar, and ships’ masts; to refrain from making for export certain products such as woolen cloth or beaver hats; to buy imported manufactured goods exclusively from Britain; and not to indulge in bothersome dreams of economic self-sufficiency or, worse, self-government.

   2. Parliament passed laws to regulate the mercantilist system; the first of these, the Navigation Law of 1650 was aimed at rival Dutch shippers trying to elbow their way into the American carrying trade (thereafter all commerce flowing to and from the colonies could be transported only in British vessels).

   3. Subsequent laws required that European goods destined for American first had to be landed in Britain, where tariff duties could be collected and profit be made.

   4. Other laws stipulated that American merchants must ship certain “enumerated” products, notably tobacco, to Britain, even though prices might be better elsewhere.

4. British policy also inflicted a currency shortage on the colonies.

   1. Since the colonists bought more from Britain than they sold there, the difference had to made up in hard cash; every year, gold and silver coins,
mostly earned in illicit trade with the West Indies, drained out the colonies, creating an acute money shortage

2. To facilitate everyday purchases, the colonists resorted to butter, nails, pitch, and feathers for purposes of exchange (colonies issued paper money, which depreciated)

3. Parliament prohibited colonial legislatures from printing paper currency and from passing indulgent bankruptcy laws—Americans thought welfare was being sacrificed

5. The British crown also reserved the right to nullify any legislation passed by the colonial assemblies; although the veto was used sparingly, colonists fiercely resented its existence

4. The Merits and Menace of Mercantilism

1. Until 1763, various Navigation Laws imposed no intolerable burden (loosely enforced)

2. Enterprising colonial merchants learned early to disregard or evade restrictions; some of the first American fortunes, like John Hancock’s, were amassed by wholesale smuggling

3. Americans also reaped direct benefits from the mercantile system

   1. London paid liberal bounties to colonial producers of ship parts, over the protests of British competitors; Virginia tobacco planters enjoyed a monopoly in the market

   2. The colonists also benefited from the protection of the world’s mightiest navy and a strong, seasoned army of redcoats, all without a penny of cost

4. Mercantilism stifled economic initiative and imposed a rankling dependency on British agents and creditors; most grievously, many Americans simply found the mercantilist system debasing (Americans felt that the economy was never allowed to come of age)
5. Revolution broke out because Britain failed to recognize an emerging nation when it saw

5. The Stamp Tax Uproar

1. Victory-flushed Britain emerged from the Seven Years’ War holding one of the biggest empires in the world and the biggest debt, some 140 million pounds, about half of which had been incurred defending the American colonies (moved to redefine relationship)

2. Prime Minister George Grenville first aroused the resentment of the colonists in 1763 by ordering the British navy to begin strictly enforcing the Navigations Laws

   1. He also secured from Parliament the so-called Sugar Act of 1764, the first law ever passed by that body for raising tax revenue in the colonies for the crown

   2. It increased the duty on foreign sugar imported from the West Indies

   3. After bitter protests, the duties were lowered substantially, and the agitation died down but resentment was kept burning by the Quartering Act of 1765, a measure that required certain colonies to provide food and quarters for British troops

3. In the same year, 1765, Grenville imposed the most odious measure of all: a stamp tax, to raise revenues to support the new military force; the Stamp Act mandated the use of stamped paper or the affixing the stamps, certifying payment of tax

   1. Stamps were required on bills of sale for about fifty trade items as well as on certain types of commercial and legal documents, including playing cards, pamphlets, newspapers, diplomas, bills of lading, and marriage licenses
2. Grenville was simply asking the Americans to pay a fair share of the costs for their own defense, through taxes that were already familiar in Britain.

3. The Americans were angrily aroused at what they regarded as Grenville’s fiscal aggression; Grenville not only pinch their pocketbooks, he seemed to be striking at the local liberties they had come to assume as a matter of right.

4. Grenville’s noxious legislation seemed to jeopardize the basic rights of the colonists as Englishmen; both the Sugar Act and the Stamp Act provided for trying offenders in the hated admiralty courts, where juries were not allowed.

5. Trial by jury and the precept of “innocent until proved guilty” were ancient privileges that British people everywhere, including the American colonists, held dear.

6. And why was a British army needed at all in the colonies, now that the French were expelled from the continent and Pontiac’s warriors crushed?

7. Many Americans began to sniff the strong scent of a conspiracy to strip them of their historic liberties; they lashed back and Stamp Act became the target that drew more fire.

1. Angry throats raised the cry, “No taxation without representation,” and the Americans made a distinction between “legislation” and “taxation.”

2. They conceded the right of Parliament to legislate about matters that affected the entire empire, including the regulation of trade but denied the right of Parliament to impose taxes on Americans because no Americans were seated in Parliament.

3. Only their elected colonial legislatures, the Americans insisted, could legally tax.
8. Grenville dismissed these American protests as hairsplitting absurdities and asserted that the power of Parliament was supreme and undivided ("virtual representation" claimed that every member of Parliament represented all British subjects)

9. The Americans scoffed at the notion of virtual representation

10. The principle of no taxation without representation was supremely important, and the colonists clung to it with tenacious consistency; the British forced the Americans to deny the authority of Parliament and to begin to consider their own political independence

6. Parliament Forced to Repeal the Stamp Act

1. The most conspicuous assembled against he hated stamp tax was the Stamp Act Congress of 1765, which brought together in NYC 27 distinguished delegates from nine colonies

   1. The members drew up a statement of their rights and grievances and beseeched the king and Parliament to repeal the repugnant legislation

   2. The Stamp Act Congress, which was largely ignored in England, made little splash at the time in America but its ripples began to erode sectional suspicions because it brought together the same table leaders from the different and rival colonies (unity)

2. More effective than the congress was the widespread adoption of nonimportation agreements against British goods; nonimportation agreements were in fact a promising stride toward union; they united the American people for the first time in common action

3. Mobilizing in support of nonimportation gave ordinary American men and women new opportunities to participate in colonial protests; such public defiance helped spread revolutionary fervor throughout American colonial society
4. Sometimes violence accompanied colonial protests; Groups such as the Sons of Liberty and Daughters of Liberty, took the law into their own hands; they enforced the nonim-portation agreements against violators (ransacked houses of unpopular officials)

5. Shaken by colonial commotion, the machinery for collecting the tax broke down

1. On that day in 1765 when the new act was to go into effect, the stamp agents had all been forced to resign, and there was no one to sell the stamps; the law defied

2. England was hard hit; America had bought about 25% of all British exports, and about 50% of British shipping was devoted to the American trade

3. Many merchants, manufacturers, and shippers suffered and loud demands converged on Parliament for repeal of the Stamp Act but many Britons didn’t understand why they paid heavy taxes while in the colonies, they refused to pay 1/3 the amount

6. After a stormy debate, Parliament in 1766 grudgingly repealed the Stamp Act

1. Having withdrawn the Stamp Act, Parliament in virtually the same breath provocatively passed the Declaratory Act, reaffirming Parliament’s right “to bind” the colonies “in all cases whatsoever”; the British drew its line in the sand

2. It defined the constitutional principle it would not yield absolute and unqualified sovereignty over its North American colonies (the stage was set for confrontation)

7. The Townshend Tea Tax and the Boston “Massacre”

1. Control of the British ministry was now seized by the gifted “Champagne Charley” Townshend, a man who could deliver brilliant speeches in Parliament while drunk
1. He persuaded Parliament in 1767 to pass the Townshend Acts; the most important of these new regulations was a light import duty on glass, lead, paper, paint, and tea.

2. Townshend made this tax, unlike the Stamp Act, an indirect customs duty payable at American ports (the colonists still saw taxes without representation).

3. The impost on tea was especially irksome, for an estimated 1 million people drank the refreshing brew twice a day (colonists were in a rebellious mood).

2. The new Townshend revenues were to be earmarked to pay the salaries of the royal governors and judges in America but the Americans regarded Townshend’s tax as another attempt to enchain them; their fears were confirmed when the London government suspended the legislature of New York in 1767 for not complying.

3. Nonimportation agreements were quickly revived against the Townshend Acts but they proved less effective than those devised against the Stamp Act.

4. The colonists took the new tax less seriously largely because it was light and indirect and found that they could secure smuggled tea at a cheap price (especially in Massachusetts).

5. British officials, faced with a breakdown of law and order, landed two regiments of troops in Boston in 1768 and a clash was inevitable (presence of the red-coated ruffians).

6. The Boston Massacre occurred on the evening of March 5, 1770 a crowd of some sixty townspeople set upon a squad of about ten redcoats, one of whom was hit by a club and another of whom was knocked down; under provocation the troops opened fire and killed or wounded eleven “innocent” citizens (one of the first to die was Crispus Attucks).

8. The Seditious Committees of Correspondence.
1. By 1770 King George III, then only thirty-two years old, was strenuously attempting to assert the power of the British monarchy; he proved to be a bad ruler and surrounded himself with cooperative “yes-men” notably his prime minister, Lord North

2. The ill-timed Townshend Acts had failed to produce revenue, though they did produce near-rebellion (net proceeds form the tax in one year were a paltry 295 pounds while the annual military costs to Britain in the colonies had mounted to 170,000 pounds)

3. The government of Lord North, bowing to various pressures, finally persuaded Parliament to repeal the Townshend revenue duties but the tax on tea was kept

4. Flames of discontent in America continued to be fanned by numerous incidents, including the redoubled efforts of the British officials to enforce the Navigations Laws

   1. Resistance was further kindled by a master propagandist and engineer of rebellion, Samuel Adams of Boston, a cousin of John Adams

   2. Samuel Adams’s signal contribution was to organize in Massachusetts the local committees of correspondence; after he had formed the first one in Boston during 1772, some eighty towns in the colony speedily set up similar organizations

   3. Their chief function was to spread the spirit of resistance by interchanging letters and thus keep alive opposition to British policy; intercolonial committees of correspondence were the next logical step; Virginia led the way in 1773

   4. Virginia created such a body as a standing committee of the House of Burgesses; within a short time, every colony had established a central committee through which it would exchange ideas and information with other colonies
5. These intercolonial groups were significant in stimulating and disseminating sentiment in favor of unity; they evolved directly into the first American congresses

9. Tea Parties at Boston and Elsewhere

1. By 1773 nothing had happened to make rebellion inevitable; nonimportation was weakening, increasing numbers of colonists were reluctantly paying the tea tax, because the legal tea was now cheaper than the smuggled tea, even cheaper than in England

2. In 1773, the British East India Company, overburdened with 17 million pounds of tea, was facing bankruptcy; if it collapsed, the London government would lose in revenue

   1. The ministry therefore decided to assist the company by awarding it a complete monopoly of the American tea business; the giant corporation would now be able to sell the coveted leaves more cheaply than ever before, even with the tax

   2. But many American tea drinkers, rather than rejoicing at the lower prices, cried foul; they saw this British move as a shabby attempt to trick the Americans, with the bait of cheaper tea, into swallowing the principle of the detested tax

   3. Fatefully, the British colonial authorities decided to enforce the law; once more, the colonists rose up in wrath to defy it

   4. In Philadelphia and New York, mass demonstrations forced the tea-bearing ships to return to England with their cargo holds still full

3. Only in Boston did a British official stubbornly refuse to be cowed

4. Massachusetts governor Thomas Hutchinson had already felt the fury of the mob and this time he was determined not to budge; he ordered the ships to be emptied
5. Provoked beyond restraint, a band of Bostonians, clumsily disguised as Indians, boarded the docked tea ships on December 16, 1773 and smashed open 342 chests and dumped the contents into Boston harbor (thus appropriately named the Boston Tea Party)

6. Reactions varied; radicals exulted in the people’s zeal for liberty while conservatives complained that the destruction of private property violated the fundamental norms

7. The granting of some home rule to the Americans might at this stage still have prevented rebellion, but few Britons of that era were blessed with that wisdom (Edmund Burke)


1. An irate Parliament responded speedily to the Boston Tea Party with measures that brewed a revolution; in 1774, it passed a series of acts designed to chastise Boston in particular Massachusetts in general (branded as the “massacre of American Liberty”)

   1. Most drastic of all was the Boston Port Act; it closed the tea-stained harbor until damages were paid and order could be ensured

   2. By other “Intolerable Acts” were accompanied in 1774 by the Quebec Act

3. It was erroneously regarded in English-speaking America as part of the British reaction to the turbulence in Boston; for many years the British government had debated how it should administer the sixty thousand conquered Canadian French

   4. The French were guaranteed their Catholic religion; they were permitted to retain many of their old customs and institutions; the old boundaries of the province of Quebec were now extended southward all the way to the Ohio River

2. The Quebec Act, from the viewpoint of the French-Canadians was a shrewd and conciliatory measure but from the viewpoint of the American colonists,
the Quebec Act was especially noxious; it seemed to set a dangerous precedent in American against jury trials and popular assemblies; it alarmed land speculators; it aroused anti-Catholics

3. Anti-Catholics were shocked by the extension of Roman Catholic jurisdiction southward into a huge region that had once been earmarked for Protestantism

11. The Continental Congress and Bloodshed

1. American dissenters responded sympathetically to the plight of Massachusetts; flags were flown at half-mast throughout the colonies on the day that the Boston Port Act went into effect and sister colonies rallied to send food to the stricken city

2. Most memorable of the responses to the “Intolerable Acts” was the summoning of a Continental Congress in 1774 (it was to meet in Philadelphia to consider ways)

   1. Twelve of the thirteen colonies, with Georgia missing, sent fifty-five distinguished men, among them Sam Adams, John Adams, George Washington, and Patrick Henry

   2. Intercolonial frictions were partially melted away by social activity after work hours

   3. The First Continental Congress deliberated for seven weeks, from September 5 to October 26, 1774; it was not a legislative but a consultative body—a convention rather than a congress (John Adams played a stellar role)

   4. After prolonged argument the Congress drew up several dignified papers; these included a ringing Declaration of Rights, as well as solemn appeals to other British American colonies, to the king, and to the British people
5. The most significant action of the Congress was the creation of The Association; it was a complete boycott of British goods: nonimportation, nonexportation, and nonconsumption—the delegates sought merely to repeal the offensive legislation and return to the days before parliamentary taxation (Congress met again May 1775)

3. But the fatal drift toward war continued; Parliament rejected the Congress’s petitions

4. In April 1775 the British commander in Boston sent a detachment of troops to nearby Lexington and Concord; they were to seize stores of colonial gunpowder and also to bag the “rebel” ringleaders, Samuel Adams and John Hancock

5. At Lexington the colonial “Minute Men” refused to disperse rapidly enough and shots were fired that killed eight Americans and wounded several more; the affair was more the “Lexington Massacre” than a battle; the redcoats pushed on to Concord whence they were forced to retreat by the rough and ready Americans

6. The bewildered British, fighting off murderous fire from militiamen crouched behind tick stone walls; they could count about three hundred casualties, including some seventy killed; Britain finally had a war on its hands with the Americans

12. Imperial Strength and Weakness

1. Aroused Americans had brashly rebelled against a mighty empire; the population odds were about three to one against the rebels (some 7.5 Britons to 2.5 million colonists)

1. Britain then boasted a professional army of some fifty thousand men, as compared with the numerous but wretchedly trained American militia

2. George III had the treasury to hire foreign soldiers and some thirty thousand Germans (Hessians) were ultimately employed; the British
enrolled about fifty thousand American Loyalists and enlisted the services of many Indians

2. Yet Britain was weaker than it seemed at first glance; oppressed Ireland was a smoking volcano, and British troops had to be detached; France, bitter from defeat, was awaiting an opportunity to stab Britain in the back; London government was confused and inept

3. Many earnest and God-fearing Britons had no desire to kill their American cousins; the English Whig factions, opposed to Lord North's Tory wing, openly cheered American victories; Whigs believed that the battle for British freedom was being fought in America

4. Britain's army in America had to operate under endless difficulties; the generals were second-rate; the soldiers, were cruelly treated; Britain was operating some 3,000 miles from its home base and distance added greatly to the delays and uncertainties arising from storms and other mishaps when crossing the Atlantic Ocean

5. America's geographical expanse was enormous: roughly 1,000 by 600 miles; the Americans wisely traded space for time (captured cities did little to affect the country)

13. American Pluses and Minuses

1. The revolutionists were blessed with outstanding leadership; George Washington was a giant among men; Benjamin Franklin was a master among diplomats

1. Open foreign aid eventually came from France; numerous European officers many of them unemployed and impoverished, volunteered their swords for pay

2. In a class by himself was a wealthy young French nobleman, the Marquis de Lafayette; fleeing from boredom, loving glory and ultimately liberty, at age nineteen, was made a major-general in the colonial army; his
commission was largely a recognition of his family influence and political connections (his services invaluable)

2. Other conditions aided the Americans; they were fighting defensively, with the odds, all things considered, favoring the defender; in agriculture, the colonies were self-sustaining

3. The Americans also enjoyed the moral advantage that came from belief in a just cause

4. Yet the American rebels were badly organized for war; from they earliest days, they had been almost fatally lacking in unity and the new nation lurched forward uncertainly

5. Even the Continental Congress, which directed the conflict, was hardly more than a debating society; the disorganized colonists fought almost he entire war before adopting a written constitution—the Articles of Confederation—in 1781

6. Jealous was conspicuous and individual states, proudly regarding themselves as sovereign, resented the attempts of congress to exercise its flimsy powers; sectional jealousy boiled up over the appointment of military leaders

7. Economic difficulties were nearly insuperable; metallic money had already been heavily drained away and the Continental Congress was forced to print “continental” paper money in great amounts—it depreciated to worth little more than nothing

8. Inflation of the currency inevitably skyrocketed prices; families of the soldier at the fighting front were hard hit; debtors easily acquired handfuls of the quasi-worthless money and gleefully paid their debts “without mercy”

14. A Thin Line of Heroes

1. Basic military supplies in the colonies were dangerously scanty, especially firearms
Colonial Americans were not a well-armed people; firearms were to be found in only a small minority of households and many of those guns were property of the militia.

One reason for the eventual alliance with France was the need for a source of firearms.

Food was in short supply; manufactured goods also were generally in short supply in agricultural America and clothing and shoes were appallingly scarce.

American militiamen were numerous but also highly unreliable; able-bodied American males had received rudimentary training, and many of these recruits served for short terms in the rebel armies but poorly trained militiamen could not stand up in the open field against professional British troops advancing with bare bayonets.

A few thousand regulars—perhaps seven or eight thousand at the war’s end—were finally whipped into shape by stern drillmasters (German Baron von Stueben).

As they gained experience, these soldiers of the Continental line more than held their own against crack British troops (Stuben taught soldiers the use of the bayonet).

Blacks also fought and died for the American cause; although many states initially barred them from militia service, by war’s end more than five thousand blacks had enlisted in the American armed forces (many blacks came from the northern states).

African-Americans also served on the British side; in November 1775 Lord Dunmore, royal governor of Virginia, issued a proclamation promising freedom for any enslaved black in Virginia who joined the British army (“Black Loyalists”).
4. Morale in the Revolutionary army was badly undermined by American profiteers; putting profits before patriotism, they sold to the British because the invader could pay in gold.

5. Speculators forced prices sky-high and some Bostonians made profits of 50 to 200%.

6. Washington never had as many as twenty thousand effective troops in one place at one time, despite bounties of land and other inducements; the brutal truth is that only a select minority of the American colonists attached themselves to the cause of independence with a spirit of selfless devotion; freedom-loving Patriots.
America Secedes from the Empire,
1775-1783

1. Introduction

1. Bloodshed at Lexington and Concord in April of 1775 was a clarion call to arms and about twenty thousand minutemen swarmed around Boston to coop up the British

2. The Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia the next month, on May 10, 1775, and this time the full slate of thirteen colonies was represented

1. There was still no well-defined sentiment for independence—merely a desire to continue fighting in the hope that the king and Parliament would consent to a redress of grievances; Congress hopefully drafted new appeals to the British people and king

2. Anticipating a possible rebuff, the delegates also adopted measures to raise money and to create an army and a navy (the appeals were, as they expected, spurned)

2. Congress Drafts George Washington

1. Perhaps the most important single action of the Congress was to select George Washington to head the hastily improvised army besieging Boston

1. The tall, dignified Virginia planter had never risen above the rank of a colonel in the militia and his largest command had numbered only 1200 men (20 years earlier)

2. Although he lost more pitched battles than he won, the distinguished Virginian was gifted with outstanding powers of leadership and immense strength of character
3. He radiated patience, courage, self-discipline, and a sense of justice; he was a great moral force rather than a great military mind—he insisted on serving without pay, though he kept a careful expense account amounting to more than $100,000.

2. The Continental Congress, though dimly perceiving Washington's qualities of leadership, chose more widely than it knew—his selection, in truth, was largely political.

3. Americans in other sections, already jealous, were beginning to distrust the large New England army being collected around Boston; prudence suggested a commander from Virginia, the largest and most populous of the colonies; as a man of wealth, both by inheritance and by marriage, Washington could not be accused of being a fortune seeker.

3. Bunker Hill and Hessian Hirelings

1. On the one hand, the Americans were affirming their loyalty to the king and earnestly voicing their desire to patch up difficulties and on the other hand, they were raising armies and shooting down His Majesty's soldiers; this curious war of inconsistency was fought from April 1775 to July 1776 before they plunged into independence.

2. Gradually the tempo of warfare increased; in May 1775 a tiny American force under Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold surprised and captured the British garrisons at Ticonderoga and Crown Point, on the scenic lakes of upper New York; a priceless store of gunpowder and artillery for the siege of Boston was thus secured.

3. In June 1775 the colonists seized a hill, now known as Bunker Hill (actually Breed's Hill) from which they menaced the British soldiers that were in Boston at the time.
1. The British, instead of cutting off the retreat of their foes by flanking them, blundered bloodily when they launched a frontal attack with three thousand men.

2. Sharpshooting Americans, numbering fifteen hundred and strongly entrenched, mowed down the advancing redcoats with frightful slaughter; but the colonists’ scanty store of gunpowder finally gave out and they were forced to retreat.

4. Even at this late date, in July 1775, the Continental Congress adopted the “Olive Branch Petition,” professing American loyalty to the crown and begging the king to prevent further hostilities; after Bunker Hill, King George III slammed the door on reconciliation.

1. In August 1775, he formally proclaimed the colonies in rebellion; the skirmished were now out and out treason, a hanging crime; the next month he widened the chasm when he sealed arrangements for hiring thousands of German troops to help crush his rebellious subjects (six German princes needed money and George II needed men).

2. Because most of these soldiers-for-hire came from the German principality of Hesse, the Americans called all the European mercenaries Hessians.

5. News of the Hessian deal shocked the colonists; they felt that the quarrel was within the family and why bring in outside mercenaries, especially foreigners who had reputations.

6. Hessian hirelings proved to be good soldiers in a mechanical sense, but many of them were more interested in booty than in duty; they were dubbed Hessian flies as they were seduced by American promises of land, hundreds of them finally deserted and remained in America to become respected citizens.

In October 1775 before a cruel winter, the British burned Falmouth (Portland), Maine and in that same autumn, the rebels daringly undertook a two-pronged invasion of Canada

1. American leaders believed, erroneously, that the conquered French were explosively restive under the British yoke and a successful assault on Canada would add a 14th colony, while depriving Britain of a valuable base for striking at the colonies in revolt

2. But this large-scale attack, involving some two thousand American troops, contradicted the claim of the colonists that they were merely fighting defensively for a redress of grievances; invasion northward was undisguised offensive warfare

3. The bold stroke for Canada narrowly missed success; one invading column under the Irish-born General Richard Montgomery, formerly of the British army, pushed up the Lake Champlain route and captured Montreal and he was joined at Quebec by the army of General Benedict Arnold, whose men had suffered on the march through Maine woods

4. An assault on Quebec, launched on the last day of 1775, was beaten off; the able Montgomery was killed; the dashing Arnold was wounded in one leg and scattered remnants under his command retreated up the St. Lawrence River

5. French-Canadian leaders, who had been generously treated by the British in the Quebec Act of 1774, showed no real desire to welcome the plundering anti-Catholic invaders

5. Bitter fighting persisted in the colonies, though the Americans continued to disclaim all desire for independence; in January 1776 the British set fire to the Virginia town of Norfolk and in March they were finally forced to evacuate Boston (Evacuation Day)
6. In the south the rebellious colonists won two victories in 1776—one in February against some fifteen hundred Loyalists at Moore’s Creek Bridge in North Carolina, and the other in June against an invading British fleet in Charleston harbor

5. Thomas Paine Preaches Common Sense

1. Why did Americans continue to deny any intention of independence?

   1. Loyalty to the empire was deeply ingrained; many Americans continued to consider themselves part of a transatlantic community in which the mother country of Britain played a leading role; colonial unity was poor; and open rebellion was dangerous

   2. Irish rebels of that day were customarily hanged, drawn, and quartered; American rebels might have fared no better—as late as January 1776, five months before independence was declared, the king’s health was being toasted by officers

   2. Gradually the Americans were shocked into an awareness of their inconsistency; their eyes were jolted open by harsh British acts like the burning of Falmouth and Norfolk, and especially by the hiring of the Hessians to help fight against the Americans

3. In 1776 came the publication of *Common Sense*, one of the most influential pamphlets ever written; its author was the radical Thomas Paine who had come over from Britain

4. Paine flatly branded the actions of the colonists as contrary to “common sense”; why not throw off the cloak of inconsistency—no where in the physical universe did the smaller heavenly body control the larger one—then why should the island of Britain control the vast continent of America? (King was nothing buy the Royal Brute of Great Britain)

6. Paine and the Idea of “Republicanism”

1. Paine’s passionate protest was as compelling as it was eloquent and radical
1. It called not simply for independence, but for the creation of a new kind of political society, a republic, where power flowed from the people themselves, not from a corrupt and despotic monarch (he used language familiar to common folk).

2. He argued that all government officials—governors, senators, and judges—not just representative in a house of commons, should derive their authority from people.

2. Paine was hardly the first person to champion a republican form of government.

1. Political philosophers had advanced the idea since the days of Greece and Rome; revived in the Renaissance and 1600s in England, republican ideals had survived within the British “mixed government” with balance of king, nobility, and commons.

2. Republicanism particularly appealed to British politicians critical of excessive power in the hands of the king and his advisers; their writings found a responsive audience among the American colonists, who interpreted the vengeful royal acts of the previous decade as part of a monarchical conspiracy to strip them of their liberties.

3. Paine’s radical prescription for the colonies—to reject the monarchy and empire and embrace an independent republic—fell on receptive ears of Americans.

3. Many settlers, particularly New Englanders, had practiced a kind of republicanism in their democratic town meetings and annual elections (popularly elected committees).

4. The absence of a hereditary aristocracy and the relative equality of condition enjoyed by landowning farmers meshed well with the republican repudiation of a hierarchy of power.
5. Most Americans considered citizen “virtue” fundamental to any successful republican government; because political power no longer rested with the central, all-powerful authority of the king, individuals in the republic needed to sacrifice their personal self-interest to the public good (the collective good of “the people”)

6. Yet not all Patriots agreed with Paine’s ultrademocratic approach to republicanism

   1. Some favored a republic ruled by a “natural aristocracy” of talent; republicanism for them meant an end to hereditary aristocracy, but not an end to all social hierarchy

   2. These more conservative republicans feared that the fervor for liberty would overwhelm the stability of the social order (feared radical “leveling”)

7. Jefferson’s Explanation of Independence

   1. Members of the Philadelphia Congress, instructed by their respective colonies, gradually edged toward a clean break; on June 7, 1776, fiery Richard Henry Lee of Virginia moved that “these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states...” after considerable debate, the motion was adopted nearly a month later, on July 2, 1776

   1. The passing of Lee’s resolution was the formal “declaration” of independence by the American colonies and technically this was all that was needed to cut the British tie

   2. An important rupture of this kind called for some formal explanation and an inspirational appeal was also needed to enlist other British colonies in the Americas, to invite assistance from foreign nations, and to rally resistance at home

   3. Shortly after Lee made his memorable motion on June 7, Congress appointed a committee to prepare an appropriate statement and the task
of drafting it fell to Thomas Jefferson, a Virginia lawyer; despite his youth (33) he was already recognized as a brilliant writer and he measured up splendidly to the assignment

2. After some debate and amendment, the Declaration of Independence was formally approved by the Congress on July 4, 1776 (the “Explanation of Independence”)

   1. Jefferson’s pronouncement was magnificent in that he gave his appeal universality by invoking the “natural rights” of humankind—not just British rights

   2. He argued persuasively that because the king had flouted these rights, the colonists were justified in cutting their connection; he then set forth a long list of the presumably tyrannous misdeeds of George II of Britain

   3. The overdrawn bill of indictment included imposing taxes without consent, dispensing with trial by jury, abolishing valued laws, establishing a military dictator-ship, maintaining standing armies in peace, cutting off trade, burning towns, hiring mercenaries, and inciting hostility among the Indians

   3. The formal Declaration of Independence cleared the air; foreign aid could be solicited with greater hope of success; those patriots who defied the king were now rebels

4. Jefferson’s defiant Declaration of Independence had a universal impact unmatched by any other American document (“shout heard round the world” has been a source of inspiration to countless revolutionary movements against arbitrary authority)

8. Patriots and Loyalists

   1. The War of Independence was a war within a war

      1. Colonials loyal to the king (Loyalists) fought the American rebels (Patriots), while the rebels also fought the British redcoats; Loyalists
were derisively called “Tories,” after the dominant political faction in Britain, whereas Patriots were called “Whigs”

2. A popular definition of a Tory among the bitter Patriots: “A Tory is a thing whose head is in England, and its body in America, and its neck ought to be stretched

2. Like many revolutions, the American Revolution was a minority movement; many colonists were apathetic or neutral; the opposing forces contended not only against each other but also for the allegiance and support of the civilian population

1. The British military proved able to control only those areas where it could maintain a massive military presence; often lacking bayonets but loaded with political zeal, the ragtag militia units served as remarkably effective agents of Revolutionary ideas

2. They convinced many colonists, even those indifferent to independence, that the British army was an unreliable friend and that they had better help the Patriot cause

3. They also mercilessly harassed small British detachments and occupation forces

3. Loyalists, number perhaps 16 percent of the American people, remained true to their king; families often split over the issue of independence including Ben Franklin and son)

4. Loyalists were tragic figures; for generations the British in the New World had been taught fidelity to the crown; loyalty is ordinarily regarded as a major virtue—loyalty to one’s family, one’s friends, one’s country (if the king had triumphed, the Loyalists would have been acclaimed patriots and defeated rebels would be disgraced and punished)

5. Many people of education and wealth, of culture and caution, remained loyal; these wary souls were satisfied with their lot and believed that any violent
change would only be for the worse; Loyalists were also more numerous among the older generation

6. Young people make revolutions, and from the outset energetic, purposeful, and militant young people surged forward; loyalists also included the king’s officers and other beneficiaries of the crown—people who knew which side their daily bread came from; the same was generally true of the Anglican clergy and a large portion of their congregations, all of whom had long been taught submission to the king

7. Usually the Loyalists were most numerous where the Anglican church was strongest; a notable exception was Virginia, where the debt-burdened Anglican aristocrats flocked

8. The king’s followers were in aristocratic New York City, Charleston and Pennsylvania and New Jersey (Pennsylvania farmers didn’t feed Washington’s troops in winter)

9. Loyalists were least numerous in New England, where self-government was especially strong and mercantilism was especially weak; rebels were most numerous where Presbyterian and Congregationalism flourished, notably in New England

9. The Loyalist Exodus

1. Before the Declaration of Independence in 1776, persecution of the Loyalists was relatively mild yet they were subjected to some brutality, including tarring and feathering

2. After the Declaration of Independence, which sharply separated Loyalists from Patriots, harsher methods prevailed; the rebels naturally desired a united front

1. Putting loyalty to the colonies first, they regarded their opponents as traitors
2. Loyalists were roughly handled, hundreds were imprisoned, and a few hanged

3. But there was no reign of terror comparable to that which later bloodied both France and Russia during their revolutions (the leading Loyalists fled to British lines)

4. About eighty thousand loyal supporters of George III were driven out or fled, but several hundred thousand or so of the mild Loyalists were permitted to stay; the estates of many of the fugitives were confiscated and sold (financed the war)

5. Some fifty thousand Loyalist volunteers at one time or another bore arms for the British; they also helped the king’s cause by serving as spies, by inciting the Indians, and by keeping Patriot soldiers at home to protect their families; ardent Loyalists had their hearts in their cause and a major blunder of the British was not to make full use

10. General Washington at Bay

1. With Boston evacuated in March 1776, the British concentrated on New York as a base of operations, which was a splendid seaport, centrally located, where the king could count on cooperation from the numerous Loyalists which called New York home

   1. An awe-inspiring British fleet appeared off New York in July 1776; it consisted of some five hundred ships and thirty-five thousand men—the largest armed force yet

   2. General Washington, dangerously outnumbered, could muster only eighteen thousand ill-trained troops with which to meet the crack army of the invader

   3. Disaster befell the Americans in the summer and fall of 1776; outgeneraled and out-maneuvered, they were routed at the Battle of
Long Island, where panic seized the raw recruits—but the narrowest of margins, Washington escaped to Manhattan Island

4. Retreating northward, he crossed the Hudson River to New Jersey and finally reached the Delaware River with the British close at his heels; the Patriot cause was at low ebb when the rebel remnants fled across the river after collected all available boats

2. The wonder is that Washington’s adversary, General William Howe, did not speedily crush the demoralized American forces; but he was no military genius and he well remembered the horrible slaughter at Bunker Hill, where he had commanded

3. Howe did not relish the rigors of winter campaigning and he evidently found more agreeable the bedtime company of his mistress, the wife of one of his subordinates

4. Washington, who was now almost counted out, stealthily recrossed the ice-clogged Delaware River and at Trenton, on December 26, 1776, he surprised and captured a thousand Hessians who were sleeping off the effects of their Christmas celebration

5. A week later, he slipped away and inflicted a sharp defeat on a smaller British detachment at Princeton; this brilliant New Jersey campaign, crowned by these two lifesaving victories, revealed “Old Fox” Washington at his military best

11. Burgoyne’s Blundering Invasion

1. London officials adopted an intricate scheme for capturing the vital Hudson River valley in 1777; if successful, the British would sever New England from the rest of the states

   1. The main invading force, under General Burgoyne, would push down the Lake Champlain route from Canada and General Howe’s troops in New
York, if needed, could advance up the Hudson River to meet Burgoyne near Albany

2. A third and much smaller British force, commanded by Colonel Barry St. Leger, would come in from the west by way of Lake Ontario and the Mohawk Valley

2. British planners did not reckon with General Benedict Arnold; after his repulse at Quebec in 1775, he had retreated slowly along the St. Lawrence River back to the Lake Champlain area, by heroic efforts keeping an army in the field

3. The British had pursued his tattered force to Lake Champlain in 1776 but they could not move farther south until they had won control of the lake (carrying supplies)

1. While the British stopped to construct a sizeable fleet, tireless Arnold assembled and fitted out every floatable vessel; his tiny flotilla was finally destroyed after desperate fighting, but time, if not the battle, had been won (winter forced British to retire)

2. General Burgoyne had to start anew from this base the following year; if Arnold had not contributed his daring and skill, the British invaders of 1776 almost certainly would have recaptured Fort Ticonderoga (instead, Burgoyne started from Montreal)

4. General Burgoyne began his fateful invasion with seven thousand regular troops; progress was painfully slow, for axmen had to chop a path through the forest while American militiamen began to gather like hornets around Burgoyne’s flanks

5. General Howe was causing astonished eyebrows to rise because at a time when it seemed obvious that he should be starting up the Hudson River from New York to join his slowly advancing colleague, he deliberately embarked with the main British army for an attack on Philadelphia, the rebel capital
(he wanted to force a general engagement with Washington’s army, destroy it, and leave the path wide open for Burgoyne’s thrust)

6. General Washington, keeping a wary eye on the British in New York, hastily transferred his army to the vicinity of Philadelphia; in late 1777, he was defeated in two pitched battles, at Brandywine Creek and Germantown—then General Howe settled down

1. Benjamin Franklin, truthfully jested that Howe had not captured Philadelphia but that Philadelphia had captured Howe; Washington finally retired to winter quarters at Valley Forge and there his frostbitten and hungry men were short of everything

2. Nevertheless, Washington’s army was whipped into a professional army by Prussian drillmaster, the profane but patient Baron von Steuben during that winter and spring

7. Burgoyne meanwhile had begun to goy down north of Albany, while a host of American militiamen swarmed about him; in a series of engagements, General Arnold trapped the British army and the Americans had also driven back St. Leger’s force at Oriskany

8. Unable to advance or retreat, Burgoyne was forced to surrender his entire command at Saratoga on October 17, 1777, to the American general Horatio Gates

9. Saratoga ranks high among the decisive battles of both American and world history; the victory immensely revived the faltering colonial cause and it made possible the urgently needed foreign aide from France, which in turn helped ensure American independence

12. Strange French Bedfellows

1. thirsting for revenge against Britain, was eager to inflame the quarrel that had broken out in America; the New World colonies were Britain's most
valuable overseas possession and it they could be taken from them, it would cease to be a front-rank power

2. might then regain its former position and prestige (lost of the Seven Years’ War)

3. cause rapidly became something of a fad in France

   1. The bored aristocracy, which had developed some interest in the writings of liberal French thinkers like Rousseau, was rather intrigued by the ideal of American liberty

   2. French officials were prompted by a realistic concern for France’s interests

   3. French agents secretly provided the Americans with lifesaving supplies of firearms and gunpowder, chiefly through a sham company rigged up for that purpose

   4. About 90 percent of all the gunpowder used by the Americans in the first two and a half years of the war came from the French arsenals and companies

4. Secrecy enshrouded all these French schemes; open aid to the American rebels might provoke Britain into a declaration of war, and France was not ready to fight war

   1. France feared that the American rebellion might fade out, for the colonies were proclaiming their desire to patch up differences but the Declaration of Independence in 1776 showed that the Americans really meant business (victory at Saratoga)

   2. After the humiliation at Saratoga in 1777, the British Parliament belatedly passed a measure that in effect offered the Americans home rule within the empire
3. If the French were going to break up the British Empire, they would have to bestir themselves and Benjamin Franklin played skillfully on French fears of reconciliation.

5. The French king, Louis XVI, was reluctant to intervene; he was alert enough to see grave dangers in aiding the Americans openly and incurring war with Britain.

1. But his ministers at length won him over by arguing that hostilities were inevitable to undo the victor's peace of 1763 and if Britain should regain its colonies, it might join with them to seize the sugar-rich French West Indies to compensate for rebellion.

2. The French had better fight while they could have an American ally rather than wait and fight both Britain and its reunited colonies in the future.

6. So France, in 1778, offered the Americans a treaty of alliance, which promised everything that Britain was offering—plus independence; both allies bound themselves to wage war until the United States had won its freedom and until both agreed with the foe.

7. This was the first entangling military alliance in the experience of the Republic and one that later cause prolonged trouble; they were painfully aware that it bound them to a hereditary foe that was also a Roman Catholic power (accepted with distaste).

13. The Colonial War Becomes a World War.

1. England and France thus came to blows in 1778 and Spain entered the fray against Britain in 1779, as did Holland; combined Spanish and French fleets outnumbered British.

2. The weak maritime neutrals of Europe, who had suffered from Britain's dominance over the seas, now began to demand more respect for their rights.
1. In 1780 Catherine the Great of Russia took the lead in organizing the Armed Neutrality, which she later sneeringly called the “Armed Nullity”

2. It lined up almost all the remaining European neutrals in an attitude of passive hostility toward Britain; the war was now being fought not only in Europe and North America, but also in South America, the Caribbean, and Asia

3. To Britain, struggling for its very life, the scuffle in the New World became secondary; Americans deserve credit for having kept the war going until 1778, with secret French aid

1. From 1778 to 1783, France provided the rebels with guns, money, immense amounts of equipment, about one-half of America’s regular forces, and naval strength

2. France’s entrance into the conflict forced the British to change their basic strategy in America; before they could count on blockading ports but not anymore now that the French had powerful fleets in American waters to protect their own West Indies

3. The British decided to evacuate Philadelphia and concentrate forces in NY City

4. In June 1778 the withdrawing redcoats were attacked by General Washington at Monmouth, New Jersey but the battle was indecisive and the British escaped to New York, although about one-third of their Hessians deserted (Washington remained in NY)

14. Blow and Counterblow

1. In the summer of 1780, a powerful French army of six thousand regular troops, commanded by Comte de Rochambeau, arrived in Newport, Rhode Island; no real military advantage came immediately from this French reinforcement, although preparations were made for a Franco-American attack on New York (distrust)
2. Improving American morale was staggered late in 1780, when General Benedict Arnold turned traitor; a leader of dash and brilliance, he was suffering from a well-grounded but petulant feeling that his valuable services were not fully appreciated.

3. Arnold plotted with the British to sell out the key stronghold of West Point, which commanded the Hudson River for money and an officer's commission but the plot was detected in the nick of time and Arnold fled to the British side.

4. The British meanwhile had devised a plan to roll up the colonies, begging with the South, where the Loyalists were numerous; Georgia was overrun in 1778-1779; Charleston, South Carolina, fell in 1780 (capture of five thousand men and four hundred cannons).

5. Warfare now intensified in the Carolinas, where Patriots bitterly fought their Loyalists neighbors; the tide turned later in 1780 and 1781 when American riflemen wiped out a British detachment at King's Mountain and then defeated a smaller force at Cowpens.

6. In the Carolina campaign of 1781, General Nathanael Greene, a Quaker-reared tactician, distinguished himself by his strategy of delay; standing and then retreating, he exhausted his foe, General Charles Cornwallis—by losing battles but winning campaigns, the “Fighting Quaker” succeeded in clearing Georgia and South Carolina of British troops.

15. The Land Frontier and the Sea Frontier

1. The West was ablaze during much of the war; Indian allies of George III, hoping to protect their land, were busy with torch and tomahawk.

1. Fateful 1777 was known as “the bloody year” on the frontier; although two nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, the Oneideas and the Tuscaroras, sided with the Americans, the Senecas, Mohawks, Cayugas, and Onondagas joined the British.
2. Mohawk chief Joseph Brant, a convert to Anglicanism who believed, not with reason, that a victorious Britain would restrain American expansion into the West.

3. Brant and the British ravaged large areas of backcountry Pennsylvania and New York until checked by an American force in 1779; in 1784 the pro-British Iroquois were forced to sign the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, the first treaty between the United States and an Indian nation—under its terms the Indians ceded most of their land.

2. Yet even in wartime, the human tide of westward-moving pioneers did not halt its flow.

3. In the wild Illinois country, the British were especially vulnerable to attack, for they held only scattered posts they had captured from the French previously.

   1. An audacious frontiersman, George Rogers Clark, conceived the idea of seizing these forts by surprise; in 1778-1779 he floated down the Ohio River with about 175 men and captured in quick succession the forts Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Vincennes.

   2. Clark’s admirers have argued that his success forced the British to cede the region north of the Ohio River to the United States at the peace table in Paris.

4. America’s infant navy had been laying the foundations of a brilliant tradition.

   1. The naval establishment consisted of only a handful of nondescript ships, commanded by daring officers, the most famous of whom was a hard-fighting young Scotsman, John Paul Jones (its chief contribution was destroying British merchant shipping).

   2. More numerous and damaging than ships of the regular American navy were swift privateers; these craft were privately owned armed ships specially authorized by Congress to prey on enemy shipping; altogether...
over a thousand American privateers responding to the call of patriotism sallied forth with seventy thousand men

3. They captured some six hundred British prizes, while the British warships captured about as many American merchantmen and privateers

5. Privateering was not an unalloyed asset; it had the unfortunate effect of diverting manpower from the main war effort and involving Americans in speculation and graft

6. British shipping was so badly riddled by privateers and by the regular American navy that insurance rates skyrocketed; merchant ships were compelled to sail in convoy, and British shippers/manufacturers pressured Parliament to end the war on honorable terms

16. Yorktown and the Final Curtain

1. One of the darkest periods of the war was 1780-1781, before the last decisive victory

1. Inflation of the currency continued at full gallop and the government, virtually bankrupt, declared that it would repay many of its debts at the rate of only 2.5 cents to the dollar; the sense of unity withered and mutinous sentiments infected the army

2. Meanwhile the British general Cornwallis was blundering into a trap; after futile operations in Virginia, he had fallen back to Chesapeake Bay at Yorktown to await seaborne supplies/reinforcements (assumed British would continue control of seas)

3. The French were now prepared to cooperate energetically in a brilliant stroke

2. Admiral de Grasse, operating with a powerful fleet in the West Indies, advised the Americans that he was free to join with them in an assault on Cornwallis at Yorktown
3. Quick to seize this opportunity, General Washington made a swift march of more than three hundred miles to the Chesapeake from the New York area accompanied by Rochambeau’s French army; Washington beset the British by land, while de Grasse blockaded them by sea after beating off the British fleet from reaching Cornwallis.

4. Completely cornered, Cornwallis surrendered his entire force of seven thousand men on October 19, 1781; the triumph was no less French than America (sea and land).

5. George III stubbornly planned to continue the struggle, for the Britain was far from being crushed; it still had 55,000 troops in North America including 32,000 in the United States.

6. Fighting actually continued for more than a year after Yorktown with Patriot-Loyalist warfare in the South especially savage; one of Washington’s most valuable contributions was to keep the languishing cause alive, the army in the field, and the states together.

17. Peace at Paris

1. After Yorktown, despite George III’s obstinate eagerness to continue fighting, many Britons were weary of war and increasingly ready to come to terms.

   1. They had suffered heavy reverse in India and in the West Indies; the island of Minorca in the Mediterranean had fallen; the Rock of Gibraltar was tottering.

   2. Lord North’s ministry collapsed in March 1782 temporarily ending the personal rule of George II and a Whig ministry, rather favorable to the Americans, replaced them.

2. Three American peace negotiators had meanwhile gathered at Paris: the aging but astute Benjamin Franklin; the flinty John Adams, vigilant for New England interests; and the impulsive John Jay of New York, deeply suspicious of Old World intrigue.
1. The three envoys had explicit instructions from Congress to make no separate peace and to consult with their French allies at all stages of negotiations.

2. France was in a painful position; it had induced Spain to enter the war on its side, in part by promising to deliver British-held Gibraltar but the rock was not falling to French and Spanish troops and Spain also coveted the immense trans-Allegheny area.

3. France, ever eager to smash Britain’s empire, desired an independent United States and therefore schemed to keep the new republic cooped up east of the Allegheny Mountains.

4. France as paying a heavy price in men and treasure to win America’s independence and it wanted to get its money’s worth (promote French interests and policies).

5. But John Jay was unwilling to play France’s game and he perceived that the French could not satisfy the conflicting ambitions of both Americans and Spaniards.

   1. He saw signs indicating that the Paris Foreign Office was about to betray America’s trans-Allegheny interests to satisfy those of Spain and therefore secretly made separate overtures to London, contrary to shi instructions from Congress.

   2. The hard-pressed British, eager to entice one of their enemies from the alliance, speedily came to terms with the Americans; a preliminary treaty of peace was signed in 1782 and the final peace treaty was signed the next year in 1783.

6. By the Treaty of Paris of 1783, the British formally recognized the independence of the United States; in addition, they granted generous boundaries, stretching majestically to the Mississippi on the west, to the Great Lakes on the north, and to Spanish Florida.
7. In Americans, on their part, had to yield important concessions; loyalists were not to be further persecuted, and Congress was to recommend to the state legislatures that confiscated Loyalists property be restored; as for the debts long owed to British creditors, the states vowed to put no lawful obstacles in the way of their collection.

8. Unhappily for the future harmony, the assurances regarding both Loyalists and debts were not carried out in the manner hoped for by London.

A New Nation Legitimized

1. Britain’s terms were liberal almost beyond belief; the enormous trans-Allegheny area was thrown in as a virtual gift but the key to the riddle could be found in the Old World.
   1. Britain was trying to seduce America from its French alliance, so it made terms as alluring as possible; the shaky Whig ministry was determined, by a policy of liberality, to slave recent wounds, reopen old trade channels, and prevent future wars over the coveted trans-Allegheny region (not followed by successors of the Whigs).

   2. In spirit, the Americans made a separate peace; the Paris Foreign Office formally approved the terms of peace and France was immensely relieved by the prospect of bringing the costly conflict to an end and of freeing itself from its embarrassing promises to the Spanish crown (America alone gained from the “world” war).

   2. Snatching their independence from the furnace of world conflict, they began their national career with a splendid territorial birthright and a priceless heritage of freedom.
The Confederation and the Constitution, 1776-1790

1. Introduction

1. The American Revolution was not a revolution in the sense of a radical or total change; what happened was accelerated evolution rather than outright revolution.

2. Some striking changes were ushered in, affecting social customs, political institutions, and ideas about society, government, and even gender roles in the Americas.

3. The weakening of the aristocratic upper crust (exodus of Loyalists), with all its culture and elegance, paved the way for new, Patriot elites to emerge—more democratic ideas.

2. The Pursuit of Equality

1. Most states reduced property-holding requirements for voting; most Americans ridiculed the lordly pretensions of Continental Army officers who formed an exclusive hereditary order, the Society of Cincinnati, and citizens parted with primogeniture (eldest son).

2. A protracted fight for separation of church and state resulted in notable gains.

   1. Although the Congregational Church continued to be legally established in some New England states, the Anglican Church, tainted by association with the British crown, was humbled; de-anglicized, it reformed as the Protestant Episcopal Church.

   2. The struggle for divorce was hardest in Virginia; it was prolonged to 1786 when Thomas Jefferson, his co-reformers and the Baptists, won a
complete victory with the passage of the Virginia Statue of Religious Freedom

3. The democratic sentiments unleashed by the war challenged the institution of slavery

1. Philadelphia Quakers in 1775 founded the world’s first antislavery society; the Continental Congress in 1774 called for the complete abolition of the slave trade, a summons to which most of the states responded positively

2. Several northern states went further and either abolished slavery outright or provided for the gradual emancipation of blacks; few idealistic master freed their humans

3. This revolution of sentiments was sadly incomplete; no states south of Pennsylvania abolished slavery, and in both North and south, the law discriminated harshly against freed blacks and slaves alike; emancipated African-Americans could be barred from purchasing property, holding certain jobs, and educating their children

4. Laws against interracial marriage also sprang up at this time

4. The sorry truth is that the fledgling idealism of the Founding Fathers was sacrificed to political practicality; a fight over slavery would have fractured the fragile national unity

5. Likewise incomplete was the extension of the doctrine of equality to women

1. Some women did serve (disguised) in the military, and New Jersey’s new constitution in 1776 even for a time, enabled women to vote but most did traditional women work

2. Yet women did not go untouched by Revolutionary ideals; central to republican ideology was the concept of “civic virtue”—the notion that democracy depended on the unselfish commitment of each citizen to the public good
3. The idea of “republican motherhood” thus took root, elevating women to a newly prestigious role as the special keepers of the nation’s conscience (educational opportunities for women expanded, in the expectation that educated wives and mothers could better cultivate the virtues demanded by the Republic in citizens)

3. Constitution Making in the States

1. The Continental Congress in 1776 called upon the colonies to draft new constitutions

   1. The Continental Congress was actually asking the colonies to summon themselves into being as new states; the sovereignty of these new states, according to the theory of republicanism, would rest on the authority of the people

   2. Massachusetts contributed one especially noteworthy innovation when it called a special convention to draft its constitution and then submitted the final draft directly to the people for ratification; once adopted in 1780, the Massachusetts constitution could be changed only by another specially called constitutional convention

2. The newly penned state constitutions had many features in common with one another

   1. Their similarity made easier the drafting of a workable federal charter later in time

   2. In British tradition, a “constitution” was not a written document but rather an accumulation of laws, customs, and precedents; Americans invented something else

   3. The documents they drafted were contracts that defined the powers of government, as did the old colonial charters, but they drew their authority from the people
4. As written documents the state constitutions were intended to represent a fundamental law, superior to the transient whims of ordinary legislation (bills of rights)

5. All of them deliberately created weak executive and judicial branches; there was a deep distrust of despotic governors and arbitrary judges (His Majesty’s officials)

3. In all the new state governments, the legislatures, most democratic branch of government, were given sweeping powers; the democratic character of the new state legislatures was vividly reflected by the presence of enfranchised members of the poorer western districts

4. Their influence was powerfully felt in their several successful movements to relocated state capitals from the haughty eastern seaports into the less pretentious interior

5. In the Revolutionary era, the capitals of New Hampshire, New York, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia were all moved westward; these shifts portended political shifts that deeply discomfited many more conservative Americans

4. Economic Crosscurrents

1. Economic changes begotten by the war were noteworthy, but not overwhelming

   1. States seized control of former crown lands, and although rich speculators had their day, many of the large Loyalist holdings were confiscated and cut up into small farms

   2. The frightful excesses of the French Revolution were avoided, partly because cheap land was easily available; it is highly significant that in the United States, economic democracy, broadly speaking, preceded political democracy
2. A sharp stimulus was given to manufacturing by the prewar nonimportation agreements and later by war itself; goods that had formerly been imported from Britain were mostly cut off and the ingenious Yankees were forced to make their own (mainly soil-tillers)

3. Economically speaking, independence had drawbacks; much of the coveted commerce of Britain was still reserved for the loyal parts to the empire; American ships were now barred from British and British West Indies harbors—hated British Navigation Laws

4. New commercial outlets compensate partially for the loss of old ones
   1. Americans could now trade freely with foreign nations, subject to local restrictions
   2. Enterprising Yankee shippers ventured boldly and profitably into the Baltic and China Seas; war had spawned demoralizing extravagance, speculation, and profiteering, with profits for some as indecently high as 300 percent
   3. Runaway inflation had been ruinous to many citizens, and Congress had failed in its feeble attempts to curb economic laws; the average citizen was probably worse off financially at the end of the shooting than at the start of the war with Britain

5. The whole economic and social atmosphere was unhealthy; a newly rich class of profiteers was noisily conspicuous; the controversy leading to the Revolutionary War had bred keen distaste for taxes and encouraged disrespect for the majesty of the law generally

5. A Shaky Start Toward Union
   1. The Revolution had dumped the responsibility of creating and operating a new central government into their laps; prospects for erecting a lasting regime were not bright
1. It is always difficult to set up a new government and doubly difficult to set up a new type of government; the picture was further clouded in America by leaders preaching natural rights” and looking suspiciously at all persons clothed with authority.

2. Disruptive forces stalked the land; the departure of the conservative Tory element left the political system inclined toward experimentation and innovation.

3. Hard times, the bane of all regimes, set in shortly after the war and hit bottom in 1786.

4. British manufacturers, with dammed-up surpluses, began flooding the American market with cut-rate goods; American industries suffered from such competition.

2. Yet hopeful signs could be discerned; the thirteen sovereign states were basically alike in governmental structure and functioned under similar constitutions.

3. Americans enjoyed a rich political inheritance, derived partly from Britain and partly from their own homegrown devices for self-government (blessed with political leaders).

6. Creating a Confederation

1. The Second Continental Congress of Revolutionary days was little more than a conference of ambassadors from the thirteen states—it was totally without constitutional authority though it asserted some control over military affairs and foreign policy.

2. In nearly all respects, the thirteen original states were sovereign, for they all coined money, all raised armies and navies, and all erected tariff barriers to protect economy.
Before declaring independence in 1776, the Congress appointed a committee to draft a written constitution for the nation; the finished product was the Articles of Confederation.

1. Adopted by Congress in 1777, it was translated into French after the Battle of Saratoga so as to convince France that America had a genuine government in the making; the Articles were not ratified by all thirteen states until 1781.

2. The chief apple of discord was western lands; six of the jealous states, including Pennsylvania and Maryland, had no holdings beyond the Allegheny Mountains and seven, notably New York and Virginia, were favored with enormous acreage, in most cases on the basis of earlier charter grants (six land-hungry states argued for cause).

3. A major complaint was that the land-blessed states could sell their trans-Allegheny tracts and thus pay off pensions and other debts incurred in the common cause.

4. States without such holdings would have to tax themselves to defray these obligations.

5. Why not turn the whole western area over to the central government?

4. Unanimous approval of the Articles of Confederation by the thirteen states was required, and land-starved Maryland stubbornly held out until March 1, 1781; Maryland at length gave in when New York surrendered its western claims and Virginia seemed about to.

5. Congress pledged itself to dispose of these vast areas for the “common benefit” and further agreed to carve from the public domain not colonies, but a number of republican states, which in time would be admitted to the Union on terms of complete equality.
6. This amazing commitment faithfully reflected the anticolonial spirit of the Revolution, and the pledge was later fully redeemed in the famed Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

7. Fertile public lands thus transferred to the central government proved to be an invaluable bond of union; a uniform national land policy was finally made possible.

7. The Articles of Confederation: America’s First Constitution

1. The Articles of Confederation provided loose confederation—“firm league of friendship”

   1. Thirteen independent states were thus linked together for joint action in dealing with common problems; a clumsy Congress was to be the chief agency of government; there was no executive branch and judicial arm was left almost exclusively to states.

   2. Congress, though dominant, was securely hobbled; each state had a single vote and all bills dealing with subjects of importance required the support of nine states.

   3. Any amendment of the Articles themselves required unanimous ratification; this was almost impossible and this meant that the amending process was unworkable.

2. The shackled Congress was weak—and was purposely designed to be weak; suspicious states, having just won control over taxation and commerce from Britain, had no desire to yield their newly acquired privileges to an American parliament—even their own making.

3. Two handicaps of the Congress were crippling to the confederation of states.

   1. The Congress had no power to regulate commerce, and this loophole left the states free to establish conflictingly different laws regarding tariffs and navigation.
2. The Congress could not enforce its tax-collection program; it established a tax quota for each of the states and them asked them please to contribute their “government by supplication”—was lucky if in any year it received one-fourth of its requests

4. The feeble national government in Philadelphia could advise and advocate and appeal but in dealing with independent states, it could not command or coerce or control

1. It could not act directly upon the individual citizens of a sovereign state

2. In 1783, a dangerous threat came from a group of mutinous Pennsylvania soldiers who demanded back pay; after Congress had appealed in vain to the state for protection, the members were forced to move in disgrace to Princeton College

3. The new Congress, with all its paper powers, was even less effective than the old Continental Congress, which wielded no constitutional powers at all

5. Yet the Articles of Confederation, though weak, proved to be a landmark in government

1. They were for those days a model of what a loose confederation ought to be; still the troubled times demanded not a loosely woven confederation but a tightly knit one

2. This involved the yielding by the states of their sovereignty to a complete recast federal government, which in turn would leave them free to control their affairs

6. The anemic Articles of Confederation were a significant stepping-stone toward the present Constitution; they clearly outlined the general powers that were to be exercised by the central government, such as making treaties and establishing a postal service
7. The Articles kept alive the flickering ideal of union and held the states together until such time as they were ripe for the establishment of a strong constitution by peaceful, evolutionary methods (leap from old boycott Association of 1774 to the Constitution)

8. Landmarks in Land Laws

1. The Congress of the Confederation succeeded in passing supremely farsighted pieces of legislation; these related to an immense part of the public domain recently acquired from the states and commonly known as the Old Northwest (land northwest of the Ohio River, east of the Mississippi River, and south of the Great Lakes of the United States)

   1. The Land Ordinance of 1785 provided that the acreage of the Old Northwest should be sold and that the proceeds should be used to help pay off the national debt; after much forestalling, it was to be divided into townships six miles square, each of which in turn was to be split into thirty-six sections of one square mile each

   2. The sixteenth section of each township was set aside to be sold for the benefit of the public schools—a priceless gift to education in the Northwest

   3. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 related to the governing of the Old Northwest and came to grips with the problem of how a nation should deal with its colonies

   4. The solution provided was a judicious compromise: temporary support then equality

   5. There would be two evolutionary territorial states, during which the area would be subordinate to the federal government and when the territory had 60,000 inhabitants, it might be admitted by Congress as a state, with all the privileges of all the states
2. The Northwest Ordinance also forbade slavery in the Northwest—a path breaking gain

3. The wisdom of Congress in handling this explosive problem deserves praise; if it had attempted to chain the new territories in permanent subordination, a second American Revolution almost certainly would have erupted in later years (East vs. West)

4. The scheme worked so well that its basic principles were ultimately carried over from the Old Northwest to other frontier areas (Congress neatly solved the problem of empire)

9. The World’s Ugly Duckling

1. Foreign relations remained troubled during these anxious years of the Confederation

   1. Britain refused for eight years to send a minister to America’s capital

   2. Britain flatly declined to make a commercial treaty or to repeal its ancient Navigation Laws; Lord Sheffield argued persuasively in a widely sold pamphlet that Britain would win back America’s trade anyhow as commerce would naturally follow

   3. The British also officially shut off their profitable West Indies trade form the United States, though the Yankees, with their time-tested skill in smuggling, continued

2. Scheming British agents were also active along the far-flung northern frontier

   1. They intrigued with the Allen brothers of Vermont and sought to annex the rebellious area to Britain and along the northern border, the redcoats continued to hold a chain of trading posts on U.S. soil and maintained their fur trade with the Indians
2. An excuse for remaining was the failure of the American states to honor the treaty of peace was debts and Loyalists (barrier against future American attacks on Canada)

3. All these grievances against Britain were maddening to patriotic Americans; some citizens demanded that the United States force the British into line by imposing restrictions on their imports to America; but Congress could not control commerce, and the states refused to adopt a uniform tariff policy (“easy states” attracted more trade)

4. Spain, though recently an enemy of Britain, was openly unfriendly to the new Republic

   1. Spain controlled the mouth of the all-important Mississippi, down which the pioneers of Tennessee and Kentucky were forced to float their produce

   2. In 1784 Spain closed the river to American commerce, threatening the West with strangulation and Spain claimed a large area north of the Gulf of Mexico, including Florida, which had been granted to the United States by the British in 1783

   3. At Natchez, on disputed soil, Spain held an important fort and also schemed with the neighboring Indians, grievously antagonized by the rapacious land policies of Georgia and North Carolina, to hem in the Americans east of the Alleghenies

   4. Spain and Britain together, radiating their influence out among resentful Indian tribes prevented American from exercising effective control over about half of its territory

5. Even France, America’s ally, cooled off now that it had humbled Britain; the French demanded the repayment of money loaned during the war & restricted trade to W.I. ports
6. Pirates of the North African states were ravaging America’s Mediterranean commerce and enslaving Yankee sailors; the British had purchased protection for their own subjects but the colonists in the Americans no longer enjoyed this shield from the pirates.

10. The Horrid Specter of Anarchy

1. Economic storm clouds continued to loom in the mid-1780s; the requisition system of raising money was breaking down; some states refused to pay, while complaining bitterly about the tyranny of “King Congress” and the nation’s credit was evaporating abroad.

2. Individual states were getting out of hand; quarrels over boundaries generated numerous minor pitched battles; some states were levying duties on goods from their neighbors; and a number of states were again starting to grind out depreciated paper currency.

3. An alarming uprising, known as Shays’s Rebellion, flared up in western Massachusetts in 1786; impoverished backcountry farmers were losing their farms through mortgage foreclosures and tax delinquencies; led by Captain Daniel Shays these desperate debtors demanded cheap paper money, lighter taxes, and a suspension of property takeovers.

1. Massachusetts authorities responded with drastic action; supported partly by contributions from wealthy citizens, they raised a small army; several skirmishes occurred and the movement collapsed after three were killed and one was wounded.

2. Daniel Shays, who believed that he was fighting anew against tyranny, was condemned to death but was later pardoned by authorities.

3. Shays’s followers were crushed and the outbursts of these and other distressed debtors struck fear in the hearts of the propertied class, who began the suspect that the Revolution had created a “mobocracy” which threatened their best interests.
4. Unbridled republicanism, it seemed to many of the elite, had fed an insatiable appetite for liberty that was fast becoming license; civic virtue was no longer sufficient to rein in self-interest and greed; if republicanism was too shaky a ground upon to construct a new nation, a stronger central government would provide the needed foundation

1. Friends and critics of the Confederation agreed that it need some strengthening; the chief differences arose over how this goal should be attained and how a maximum degree of states’ right could be reconciled with a strong central government

2. The adoption of a completely new constitution certainly spared the Republic much costly indecision, uncertainty, and turmoil on its own part

5. The nationwide picture was actually brightening before the Constitution was drafted; nearly half the states had not issued paper currency, and prosperity was beginning to emerge from the fog of depression; overseas shipping had regained its place in 1789

11. A Convention of “Demigods”

1. Control of commerce touched off the chain reaction that led to constitutional convention

   1. Interstate squabbling over the issue had become so alarming by 1786 that Virginia, taking the lead, issued a call for a convention at Annapolis, Maryland

   2. Nine states appointed delegates, but only five were finally represented; with so laughable a showing, nothing could be done about the ticklish question of commerce

   3. A charismatic New York, Alexander Hamilton, brilliantly saved the convention from complete failure by engineering the adoption of his report; it called upon Congress to summon a convention to meet in
Philadelphia the next year, not to deal with commerce alone, but to bolster the entire fabric of the Articles of Confederation

2. Congress, though slowly and certainly dying in New York City, was reluctant to take a step that might hasten its day of reckoning but after six of the states had seized the bit in their teeth and appointed delegates, Congress belatedly issued the call for a convention “for the sole and express purpose of revising” the Articles of Confederation

1. Every state chose representatives, except for independent-minded Rhode Island; these leaders were all appointed by the state legislatures, whose members had been elected by voters who could qualify as property holders—this brought together a select group

2. 55 emissaries from twelve states finally convened at Philadelphia on May 25, 1787 and smallness of the assemblage facilitated intimate acquaintance and compromise

3. Sessions were held in complete secrecy, with armed sentinels posted at the doors; delegates knew that they would generate heated differences and they did not want to advertise their own dissensions or put the ammunition of arguments into opposition

3. The caliber of the participants was extraordinarily high—“demigods,” called by Jefferson

4. The crisis was such as to induce the ablest men to drop their personal pursuits and come to the aid of their country including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, James Madison (“Father of Constitution), Alexander Hamilton among others

5. Most of the fiery Revolutionary leaders of 1776 were absent; Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Thomas Paine were in Europe; Samuel Adams and John Hancock were not elected by Massachusetts and Patrick Henry declined to attend on the behalf of Virginia
6. It was perhaps well that these architects of revolution were absent; the time had come to yield the stage to leaders interested in fashioning solid political systems

12. Patriots in Philadelphia

1. The fifty-five delegates were a conservative body: lawyers, merchants, shippers, land speculators, and moneylenders; not a single spokesperson was present from the poorer debtor groups; nineteen owned slaves; and they were young but experienced

2. Above all they were nationalists, more interested in preserving and strengthening the young Republic than in further stirring the roiling cauldron of popular democracy

3. The delegates hoped to crystallize the last evaporating pools of revolutionary idealism into a stable political structure that would endure; they strongly desired a firm, dignified, and respected government—they believed in republicanism but sought to protect America

4. In a board sense, the piratical Dey of Algiers, who drove the delegates to their work, was a Founding Father; they aimed to clothe the central authority with genuine power, especially in controlling tariffs, so that the United States could wrest helpful commercial treaties from foreign nations (Lord Sheffield can also be considered a Founding Father)

5. Delegates were determined to preserve the union, forestall anarchy, and ensure security of life and property against dangerous uprisings by the “mobocracy”; above all they sought to curb the unrestrained democracy rampant in the various states (grinding necessity extorted the Constitution from a reluctant nation)

13. Hammering Out a Bundle of Compromises
1. Some of the travel-stained delegates when they first reached Philadelphia, decided upon a daring step—they would complete scrap the old Articles of Confederation inside of revise

1. A scheme proposed by populous Virginia, and known as “the large-state plan” was first pushed forward as the framework of the Constitution; its essence was the representation in both houses of a bicameral Congress should be based on population

2. Tiny New Jersey, suspicious of Virginia, countered with “the small-state plan” which provided for equal representation in a unicameral Congress bys states, regardless of size and population, as under the existing Articles of Confederation

3. The weaker states feared that under the Virginia scheme, the stronger states would band together and lord it over the rest (danger loomed over the convention)

2. After bitter and prolonged debate, the “Great Compromise” of the convention was hammered out and agreed upon; the larger states were conceded representation by population in the House of Representatives and the smaller states were appeased by equal representation in the Senate in which each state would have two senators

3. As the big states obviously yielded more, the delegates agreed that every tax bill or revenue measure must originate in the House, where population counted more heavily

4. In a significant reversal of the arrangement most state constitutions had embodied, the new Constitution provided for a strong, independent executive in the presidency; the framers were here partly inspired by the example of Massachusetts and Shays’s Rebellion
5. The president was to be military commander in chief and to have wide powers of appointment to domestic offices including judgeships and veto power over legislation.

6. The Constitution as drafted was a bundle of compromises: they stand out in every section.

1. A vital compromise was the method of electing the president indirectly by the Electoral College, rather than by direct means; while the large states would have the advantage in the first round of popular voting, as a state’s share of electors was based on the total of its senators and representatives in Congress, the small states would gain a larger voice if no candidate got a majority of electoral votes and the election was thrown to the house of Representatives, where each state had only one vote.

2. Sectional jealousy also intruded; the South thought that the voteless slave populations counted as people but the North replied no arguing that slaves were not citizens.

3. As a compromise between total representation and none at all, it was decided that a slave might count as three-fifths of a person; memorable “three-fifths compromise”.

7. Most of the states wanted to shut off the African slave trade but South Carolina and Georgia, requiring slave labor in their rich paddies and malarial swamps, raised protests.

8. By way of compromise the convention stipulated that the slave trade might continue until the end of 1807 at which time Congress could turn off the spigot (no slave trade in states).

14. Safeguards for Conservatism

1. The area of agreement was large or otherwise the convention would have disbanded.
1. Economically, the members of the Constitutional Convention generally saw eye to eye; they demanded sound money and the protection of private property.

2. Politically, they were in basic agreement; they favored a stronger government, with three branches and with checks and balances among them.

3. Finally, the convention was virtually unanimous in believing that manhood-suffrage democracy—government—was something to be feared and fought.

2. Daniel Shays still frightened the conservative-minded delegates; they deliberately erected safeguards against the excesses of the “mob,” and they made these barriers quite strong.

   1. The awesome federal judges were to be elected indirectly by the Electoral College; the lordly senators were to be chosen indirectly by state legislatures.

   2. Only in the case of one-half of one of the three great branches—the House of Representatives—were qualified citizens permitted to choose their officials by vote.

3. Yet the new charter also contained democratic elements; above all, it stood foursquare on the two great principles of republicanism: that the only legitimate government was one based on the consent of the governed, and that the powers of government should be limited—in this case specifically limited by a written constitution.

4. The virtue of the people, not the authority of the state, was to be the ultimate guarantor of liberty, justice, and order (“We the people” began the preamble to the Constitution).
5. At the end of seventeen muggy weeks May 25 to September 17, 1787—only 42 of the original 55 members remained to sign the Constitution; three of the forty-two refused.

15. The Clash of Federalists and Antifederalists

1. The Founding Fathers early foresaw that nationwide acceptance of the Constitution would not be easy to obtain; a formidable barrier was unanimous ratification by all thirteen states, as required for amendment by the still-standing Articles of Confederation.

2. But since Rhode Island was certain to veto the Constitution, the delegates stipulated that when nine states had registered their approval through specially elected conventions, the Constitution would become the supreme law of the land in those states ratifying.

3. It was in effect an appeal over the heads of the Congress that had called the convention, and over the heads of the legislatures that had chosen its members, to the voters.

4. The American people were astonished, so well had the secrets of the convention been concealed; the public had expected the Articles of Confederation to be patched up but now the precious jewel of state sovereignty was swallowed up; the antifederalists who opposed the stronger federal government were arrayed against the federalists.

1. A crew gathered in the antifederalist camp behind prominent revolutionaries like Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, and Richard Henry Lee; their followers included the poorest classes and were joined by paper-moneyites and debtors (forced to pay debts).

2. Silver-buckled federalists had power and influence on their side; they enjoyed the support of such commanding figures as George Washington and Benjamin Franklin.
3. Most of them lived in the settled areas along the seaboard and overall, they were wealthier than the antifederalists, more educated, and better organized (press control)

5. Antifederalists voiced vehement objections to the “gilded trap” known as the Constitution

1. They cried that it had been drawn up by aristocratic elements and was antidemocratic; they likewise charged that the sovereignty of the states was being submerged and that the freedoms of the individual were jeopardized by the absence of a bill of rights

2. They decried the dropping of annual elections for congressional representatives, the erecting of a federal stronghold, the creation of a standing army, the omission of any reference to God, and the questionable procedure of ratifying with only nine states

16. The Great Debate in the States

1. Special elections were held in the various states for members of the ratifying conventions

1. The candidates federalist of antifederalist were elected on the basis of their pledges for or against the Constitution; four small states quickly accepted the Constitution

2. Pennsylvania, number two on the list of ratifiers, was the first large state to act, but not until high-handed irregularities had been employed by the federalist legislature in calling a convention (this was still forced as antifederalist members were forced)

3. Massachusetts, the second most populous state, provided an acid test; if the Constitution had failed in Massachusetts, the entire movement might easily have bogged down; the Boston ratifying convention at first contained an antifederalist majority which included grudging Shaysites, and the aging Samuel Adams
4. The assembly buzzed with dismaying talk of summoning another constitutional convention; the absence of a bill of rights alarmed the anti-federalists but the federalists gave them solemn assurance that the first congress would add such a safeguard by amendment and ratification was then secured in Massachusetts (close)

2. Three more states fell into line; New Hampshire, whose convention at first had contained a strong antifederalist majority; the federalists cleverly arranged a prompt adjournment and then won over enough waverers to secure ratification

3. Nine states—but Virginia, New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island—were under the “new federal roof” and the document was officially adopted on June 21, 1788

17. The Four Laggard States

1. Proud Virginia, the biggest and most populous state, provided fierce antifederalist opposition; Patrick Henry professed to see the document the death warrant of liberty

   1. George Washington, James Madison, and John Marshall, on the federalist side, lent influential support; with New Hampshire about to ratify, the new Union was formed

   2. After exciting debate in the state convention, ratification carried, 89 to 79

2. New York also experience an uphill struggle, burdened as it was with its own heavily antifederalist state convention; Alexander Hamilton contributed his sparking personality and persuasive eloquence to shipping up support for federalism as framed

   1. Joined by John Jay and James Madison in penning a masterly series of articles for the NY newspapers (the Federalist papers were designed as propaganda)
2. New York finally yielded; realizing that the state could not prosper apart from the Union, the convention ratified the document by the close count of 30 to 27 and it approved thirty-two proposed amendments and issued a call for yet another convention to modify the Constitution in the following months and years.

3. Last-ditch dissent developed in only two states; a hostile convention met in North Carolina, then adjourned without taking a vote; Rhode Island did not even summon a ratifying convention, rejecting the Constitution by popular referendum.

4. The two most ruggedly individualist centers of the colonial era thus ran true to form and there were to change their course, albeit unwillingly, only after the new government had been in operation for some several months (race for ratification was close and bitter).

5. The four states ratified, not because they wanted to but because they had to.

18. A Conservative Triumph

1. The minority had triumphed—twice; a militant minority of American radicals had engineered the military Revolution that cast off the unwritten British constitution.

2. Eleven states, in effect, had seceded from the Confederation, leaving two still in.

3. A majority had not spoken; only about one-fourth of the adult white males in the country, chiefly the propertied people, had voted for delegates to the ratifying conventions.

4. Conservatism was victorious; safeguards had been erected against mob-rule excesses, while the republican gains of the Revolution were conserved.

5. The federalists were convinced that by setting the drifting ship of state on a steady course, they could restore economic and political stability.
6. If the architects of the Constitution were conservative, it is worth emphasizing that they conserved principle of republican government through redefinition of popular sovereign

7. Unlike the antifederalists, who believed that the sovereignty of the people resided in a single branch of government—the legislature—the federalists contended that every branch—executive, judiciary, and legislature—effectively represented the people

8. By ingeniously embedding the doctrine of self-rule in a self-limiting system of checks and balances among these branches, the Constitution reconciled the potentially conflicting principles of liberty and order
Launching the New Ship of State, 1789-1800

1. Introduction

1. Within twelve troubled years, the American people had risen up and thrown overboard both the British yoke and the Articles of Confederation (not best training for government)

2. Finances of the infant government were likewise precarious; the revenue had declined to a trickle, whereas the public debt, with interest heavily in arrears, was mountainous

3. Worthless paper money, state and national, was plentiful as metallic money was scarce

4. Nonetheless, the Americans were brashly trying to erect a republic on an immense scale

5. The eyes of a skeptical world were on the upstart United States of America

2. Growing Pains

1. When the Constitution was launched in 1789, the population was doubling about every twenty-five years, and the first official census of 1790 recorded almost 4 million people

   1. The most populous cites were Philadelphia, numbering 42,000, New York 33,000, Boston 18,000, Charleston 16,000, and Baltimore numbering 13,000

   2. America’s population was still about 90 percent rural, despite the flourishing cities

   3. All but 5 percent of the people lived east of the Appalachian Mountains; the trans-Appalachian overflow was concentrated chiefly in Kentucky,
Tennessee, and Ohio, all of which were welcomed as states within fourteen years (Vermont a state in 1791)

2. People of the western waters—in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio—were particularly restive and dubiously loyal; the mouth of the Mississippi lay in the hands of Spaniards

3. Slippery Spanish and British agents moved freely among the settlers and held out seductive promises of independence (United States appeared disjointed)

3. Washington for President

1. General Washington was unanimously drafted as president by the Electoral College in 1789—the only presidential nominee ever to be honored by unanimity

2. His presence was imposing; balanced rather than brilliant, he commanded his followers by strength of character rather than by the arts of the politician

3. Washington solemnly took the oath of office on April 30, 1789, on Wall Street

4. Washington soon put his stamp on the new government, especially by establishing the cabinet; the Constitution merely provides that the president “may require” written opinions of the heads of the executive-branch departments (cabinet meetings evolved)

5. Three department heads served under the president: Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, and Secretary of War Henry Knox

4. The Bills of Rights

1. Many Antifederalists had sharply criticized the Constitution drafted at Philadelphia for its failure to provide guarantees of individual rights such as freedom of religion, trial by jury
2. Many states had ratified the federal Constitution on the understanding that it would soon be amended to include such guarantees; drawing up a bill of rights headed importance

3. Amendments to the Constitution could be proposed in either of two ways—by a new constitutional convention requested by two-thirds of the states or by a two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress; fearing that a new convention might unravel the narrow federalist victory, James Madison determined to draft the amendments himself

4. Madison then guided them through Congress, where his intellectual and political skills were quickly making him the leading figure in the Congress of the United States

5. Adopted by the states in 1791, the first ten amendments to the Constitution, popularly known as the Bill of rights, safeguard some of the most precious American principles

   1. Among these protections for freedom of religion, speech, and the press; the right to bear arms and to be tried by a jury; and the right to assemble and petition government for redress of grievances; the Bill of Rights also prohibits cruel and unusual punishments and arbitrary government seizure of private property of the citizens

   2. To guard against the danger that enumerating such rights might lead to the conclusion that they were the ones protected, Madison inserted the crucial Ninth Amendment

   3. The Ninth Amendment of the Constitution declares that specifying certain rights “shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people”

   4. In a gesture of reassurance to the states’ righters, he included the equally significant Tenth Amendment, which reserves all rights not explicitly
delegated or prohibited by the federal Constitution “to the States, respectively, or to the people”

5. By preserving a strong central government while specifying protections for minority and individual liberties, Madison’s amendments included antifederalist thought

6. The first Congress also nailed other newly sawed government planks into place

1. It created effective federal courts under the Judiciary Act of 1789; the act organized the Supreme Court, with a chief justice and five associates, as well as federal district and circuit courts, and established the office of attorney general

2. New York John Jay, Madison’s collaborator on The Federalist papers and one of the young Republic’s most seasoned diplomats, became the first chief justice of the US

5. Hamilton Revives the Corpse of Public Credit

1. The key figure in the new government was still Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton, a native of the British West Indies (critics claimed he loved his adopted country)

   1. Doubts about his character and his loyalty to the republican experiment swirled

   2. Hamilton regarded himself as a kind of prime minister in Washington’s cabinet and on occasion, thrust his hands into the affairs of other departments, including that of his archrival Thomas Jefferson, who served as secretary of state

2. A financial wizard, Hamilton set out immediately to correct the economic vexations that had crippled the Articles of Confederation; his plan was to shape the fiscal policies of the administration in such a way as to favor the wealthier groups
1. The wealthier groups then would lend the government monetary and political support

2. The youthful financier’s first objective was to bolster the national credit; without public confidence in the government, Hamilton couldn’t secure the funds to take risks

3. Hamilton therefore boldly urged Congress to “fund” the entire national debt “at par” and to assume completely the debts incurred by the states during the recent war

4. Funding at par” meant that the federal government would pay off its debts at face value, plus accumulated interest—a then-enormous total of more than $54 million

5. So many people believed that the Treasury was incapable of meeting those obligations that government bonds had depreciated to ten or fifteen cents on the dollar

6. Yet speculators held fistfuls of them, and when Congress passed Hamilton’s measure in 1790, they grabbed for more; Hamilton was willing to have the new government shoulder additional obligations and urged Congress to assume the debts of the states

3. The secretary made a convincing case for “assumption”; the state debts, totaling some $21.5 million, could be regarded as a proper national obligation (war of independence)

4. But foremost in Hamilton’s thinking was the belief that assumption would chain the states more tightly to the “federal chariot”; the secretary’s maneuver would thus shift the attachment of wealthy creditors from the states to the federal government

5. The support of the rich for the national administration was a crucial link in Hamilton’s political strategy of strengthening the central government
6. States burdened with heavy debts like Massachusetts, were delighted by Hamilton’s proposal; states with small debts, like Virginia, were less charmed—Virginia did not want the state debts assumed, but it did want the forthcoming federal district, the District of Columbia, to be located on the Potomac River as it would gain commerce and prestige.

7. Hamilton persuaded a reluctant Jefferson to lineup enough votes in Congress for assumption and in return, Virginia would have the federal district on the Potomac (1790).

6. Customs Duties and Excise Taxes

1. The national debt had swelled to $75 million owing to Hamilton's insistence on honoring the outstanding federal and state obligation alike; Hamilton, "Father of the National Debt," was not greatly worried—his objectives were as much political as economic.

   1. He believed that within limits, a national debt was a "national blessing"—a kind of union adhesive; the more creditors to whom the government owed money, the more people there would be with a personal stake in the success of his ambitious enterprise.

   2. His unique contribution was to make a debt an asset for vitalizing the financial system.

2. Where was the money to come from to pay interest on this huge debt and run the govt.?

   1. Customs duties, derived from a tariff; tariff revenues depended on a vigorous foreign trade, another crucial link in Hamilton’s overall economic strategy for the Republic.

   2. The first tariff law, imposing a low tariff of about 8 percent on the value of dutiable imports, was speedily passed by the first Congress in 1789, before Hamilton was in
3. Revenue was by far the main goal, but the measure was also designed to erect a low protective wall around infant industries, which bawled for more shelter.

4. Hamilton argued strongly in favor of more protection for the well-to-do, new manufacturing groups—another vital element in Hamilton’s economic program.

5. But Congress was still dominated by the agricultural and commercial interests, and it voted only two slight increases in the tariff during Washington’s presidency.

3. Hamilton sought additional internal revenue and in 1791 secured from Congress an excise tax on a few domestic items, notably whiskey; the new levy of seven cents a gallon was borne chiefly by the distillers who lived in the backcountry; Whiskey flowed so freely on the frontier in the form of distilled liquor that it was used for money.

7. Hamilton Battles Jefferson for a Bank

1. As a capstone for his financial system, Hamilton proposed a Bank of the United States; an enthusiastic admirer of the English, he took as his model the Bank of England.

   1. He proposed a powerful private institution, of which the government would be the major stockholder and in which the federal Treasury would deposit its surplus monies.

   2. The central government not only would have a convenient strongbox, but federal funds would stimulate business by remaining in circulation.

   3. The bank would also print urgently needed paper money and thus provide a sound and stable national currency (the bank was useful but was it constitutional?)

2. Jefferson, whose opinion Washington requested, argued vehemently against the bank.
1. He insisted, no specific authorization in the Constitution for such a financial octopus; he was convinced that all powers not granted to the central government were reserved to the states, as provided in the about-to-be-ratified Bill of Rights (Amendment X).

2. Jefferson concluded that the states, not Congress, had to power to charter banks; he believed that the constitution should be interpreted “literally” or “strictly”.

3. Hamilton prepared a brilliantly reasoned reply to Jefferson’s arguments:
   1. Hamilton believed that what the Constitution did not forbid it permitted; Jefferson, in contrast, generally believed that what it did not permit it forbade.
   2. Hamilton boldly invoked that the Constitution stipulates that Congress may pass any laws “necessary and proper” to carry out the powers vested in the various agencies.
   3. By virtue of “implied powers,” Hamilton contended for a “loose” or “broad” interpretation of the Constitution (he and his federalist followers evolved the theory of “loose construction” by invoking the “elastic clause” of the Constitution).

4. Hamilton’s eloquent and realistic arguments were accepted by Washington, who reluctantly signed the bank measure into law; the most enthusiastic support for the bank naturally came from the commercial and financial centers of the North, whereas the strongest opposition arose from the agricultural South.

5. The Bank of the United States, as created by Congress in 1791, was chartered for twenty years; located in Philadelphia, it was to have a capital of $10 million, one-fifth of it owned by the federal government—stock was thrown open to public sale.

1. The Whiskey Rebellion, which flared up in southwestern Pennsylvania in 1794, sharply challenged the new national government; Hamilton’s excise tax was harsh on pioneers

1. The pioneer folk regarded it not as a tax on a frivolous luxury but as a burden on an economic necessity and a medium of exchange; rye and corn crops distilled into alcohol were more cheaply transported to eastern markets than bales of grain

2. Defiant distillers finally erected whiskey poles and raised the cry “Liberty and No Excise”—boldly tarring/feathering revenue officers, they brought collections to a halt

2. President Washington, was alarmed by what he called these “self-created societies

1. With encouragement of Hamilton, he summoned the militia of several states; despite some opposition, an army of about thirteen thousand railed to the colors

2. When the troops reached the hills of western Pennsylvania, they found no insurrection as the “Whiskey Boys” were overawed, dispersed, or captured: Washington, with an eye to healing old sores, pardoned the two convicted culprits

3. The Whiskey Rebellion was minuscule—some three rebels were killed—but its consequences were might; George Washington’s government, now substantially strengthened, commanded a new respect (foes of the administration condemned force)

9. The Emergence of Political Parties

1. Almost overnight, Hamilton’s fiscal feats had established the government’s sound credit rating; the Treasury could now borrow needed funds in Netherlands on favorable terms
2. But Hamilton’s financial successes—funding, assumption, the excise tax, the bank, the suppression of the Whiskey Rebellion—created some political liabilities

1. All these schemes encroached sharply upon states’ rights

2. Now, out of resentment against Hamilton’s revenue-raising and centralizing policies, an organized opposition began to build; what once was a personal feud between Hamilton and Jefferson developed into a full-blown, bitter political rivalry

3. National political parties, in the modern sense, were unknown in America when George Washington took his inaugural other; there had been Whigs and Tories, federalists and antifederalists, but these groups were factions rather than parties (they later faded away)

4. The Founders at Philadelphia had not foresaw the existence of permanent political parties

1. Organized opposition to the government seemed tainted with disloyalty; the notion of a formal party apparatus was thus a novelty in the 1790s, and when Jefferson and Madison first organized their opposition to the Hamiltonian program, they confined their activities to Congress and did not anticipate creating a long-lived, popular party

2. As the widely read newspapers of the day spread their political message and Hamilton’s, primitive semblances of political parties began to emerge

5. The two-party system has existed in the United States since that time (1792); ironically, in light of early suspicions about the legitimacy of parties, their competition for power has actually proved to among the indispensable ingredients of a sound democracy
6. The party out of power—"the loyal opposition"—traditionally plays the invaluable role of the balance wheel on the machinery of government (checks and balances)

10. The Impact of the French Revolution

1. When Washington's first administration ended early in 1793, Hamilton's domestic policies had already stimulated the formation of two political camps—Jeffersonian Democratic-Republicans and Hamiltonian Federalists; as Washington's second term began, foreign-policy issues brought the differences between them to a fever pitch

   1. Only a few weeks after Washington's inauguration in 1789, the curtain had risen on the first act of the French Revolution; war lasted in Europe for twenty-six years

   2. Few non-American events have left a deeper scar on American political and social life; the French Revolution sent tremors through much of the civilized world

2. In its early stages, the upheaval was surprisingly peaceful, involving as it did a successful attempt to impose constitutional shackles on Louis XVI; the American people, loving liberty and deploring despotism, cheered; only a few ultraconservative Federalists, fearing change, reform and "leveling" principles, were hostile to the "mobocracy"

3. The French Revolution entered a more ominous phase in 1792, when France declared war on hostile Austria; powerful ideals and powerful armies alike were on the march

   1. Late in that year, the electrifying news reached America that French citizen armies had hurled back the invading foreigners and France had proclaimed itself a republic
2. However, the guillotine was set up, the king was beheaded in 1793, the church was attacked, and the head-rolling Reign of Terror was begun under Robespierre.

3. Back in America, God-fearing Federalist aristocrats nervously fingered their tender white necks and eyed the Jeffersonian masses apprehensively (change in attitude).

4. Sober-minded Jeffersonians regretted the bloodshed but felt that one could not expect to be carried from “despotism to liberty in a feather bed” and that a few thousand aristocratic heads were a cheap price to pay for human freedom.

4. Such approbation was shortsighted, for dire peril loomed ahead; the earlier battles of the French Revolution had not hurt America directly, but now Britain was sucked into contagious conflict—the conflagration speedily spread to the New World, where it vividly affected the expanding young American Republic (duel for control of Atlantic).

11. Washington’s Neutrality Proclamation

1. Ominously, the Franco-American alliance of 1778 was still on the books; by its own terms it was to last “forever” and it bound the United States to help the French defend their West Indies against future foes, and the booming British fleets were certain to attack.

2. Many Jeffersonian Democratic-Republicans favored honoring the alliance; aflame with the liberal ideals of the French Revolution, Jeffersonians were eager to enter the conflict against Britain, the recent foe, at the side of France, the recent friend; Jeffersonians argued that America owed France its freedom and now was the time to pay the debt back.

3. But President George Washington, was not swayed by the clamor of the crowd; backed by Hamilton, he believed that war had to be avoided at all costs.
1. The nation in 1793 was militarily weak, economically wobbly, and politically disunited; but solid foundations were being laid—Washington wisely reasoned that if America could avoid Europe for a generation or so, it would be populous enough and powerful enough to assert its maritime rights with strength and success.

2. The strategy of delay was a cardinal policy of the Founding Fathers; Hamilton and Jefferson, often poles apart on other issues, were in total agreement here.

4. Washington boldly issued his Neutrality Proclamation in 1793, shortly after the outbreak of war between Britain and France—it not only proclaimed the government's official neutrality in the widening conflict but warned American citizens to be impartial.

1. The pro-French Jeffersonians were enraged by the Neutrality Proclamation, especially by Washington’s method of announcing it unilaterally, with consulting Congress.

2. Debate intensified as a representative of the French Republic, Citizen Edmond Genet, had landed at Charleston and with unrestrained zeal he undertook to fit out privateers and other wise take advantage of the existing Franco-American alliance.

3. Genet was swept away by his enthusiastic reception by the Jeffersonian Republicans and he came to believe that the Neutrality Proclamation did not reflect the wishes of the American people and embarked upon activity not authorized by the alliance including recruitment of armies to invade Florida, Louisiana, and British Canada.

4. Even Madison and Jefferson were soon disillusioned by his conduct and after he threatened to appeal over the head of “Old Washington” to the sovereign voters, the president demanded Genet’s withdrawal and the Frenchman was replaced.
5. Washington’s Neutrality Proclamation clearly illustrates the truism that self-interest is the basic cement of alliances; Technically the Americans were not obligated because France never officially called upon them to honor it; American neutrality favored France

1. The French West Indies urgently needed Yankee foodstuffs and if the Americans had entered the war at France’s side, the British fleets would have blockaded the American coast and cut off those essential supplies (rather than a blockaded partner)

2. America was thus much more useful to France as a reliable neutral provided

12. Embroilments with Britain

1. President Washington far-visioned policy of neutrality was sorely tried by the British; for ten long years, they had been retaining the chain of northern frontier posts on US soil in defiance of the peace treaty of 1783—London government reluctant to abandon fur trade

   1. British agents openly sold firearms and firewater to the Indians of the Miami Confederacy, an alliance of eight Indian nations who terrorized Americans invading

   2. Little Turtle, war chief of the Miamis, gave notice that the confederacy regarded the Ohio River as the United States’ northwester, and their own southeaster, border

   3. In 1790 and 1791, Little Turtle’s braves defeated armies led by Generals Josiah Harmar and Arthur St. Clair, handing the US one of its worst defeats in the frontier

2. But in 1794, when a new army under General “Mad Anthony” Wayne routed the Miamis at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, the British refused to shelter Indians fleeing from the battle; abandoned, the Indians soon offered Wayne the peace pipe
3. In the Treaty of Greenville, signed in August 1795, the confederacy gave up vast tracts of the Old Northwest, including most of present-day Indiana and Ohio; in exchange the Indians received a lump-sum payment of $20,000, an annual annuity of $9,000, the right to hunt the lands they had ceded, and what they hoped was recognition of their status.

4. On the sea frontier, the British were eager to starve out the French West Indies and naturally expected the United States to defend them under the Franco-American alliance:

   1. Commanders of the Royal Navy, ignoring America’s rights as a neutral, struck hard.

   2. They seized about three hundred American merchant ships in the West Indies, impressed scores of seamen into service on British vessels and threw rest in dungeons.

5. These actions incensed patriotic Americas and a mighty outcry arose, chiefly from Jeffersonians, that America should once again fight George III in defense of its liberties.

6. At the very least, it should cut off all supplies to its oppressor through a nationwide embargo; but the Federalists stoutly resisted all demands for drastic action.

7. Hamilton’s high hopes for economic development depended on trade with Britain and war with the world’s mightiest commercial empire would harm the Hamiltonian system.

13. Jay’s Treaty and Washington’s Farewell:

   1. President Washington, in a last desperate gamble to avert war, decided to send Chief Justice John Jay to London in 1794; the Jeffersonians were actually unhappy over the choice, partly because they feared that so notorious a Federalist and Anglophile would sell out his country—at the presentational ceremony, Jay kissed the queen’s hand.
2. Unhappily, Jay entered the negotiations with weak cards, which were further sabotaged by Hamilton; the later, fearful of war with Britain, secretly supplied the British with the details of America’s bargaining strategy; Jay did win few concessions

1. The British did promise to evacuate the chain of posts on U.S. soil—a pledge that inspired little confidence, since it had been made before in Paris (to the same Jay)

2. In addition, Britain consented to pay damages for the recent seizures of American ships but the British stopped short of pledging anything about future maritime seizures and impressments or about supplying arms to Indians

3. The British forced Jay to give ground by binding the United States to pay the debts still owed to British merchants on pre-Revolutionary accounts

3. Jay’s unpopular pact, vitalized the newborn Democratic-Republican part of Jefferson

1. When the Jeffersonians learned of Jay’s concessions, their rage was fearful to behold; the treaty seemed like an abject surrender to Britain, as well as a betrayal of the Jeffersonian South; Southern planters would have to pay the major share of debts, which rich Federalist shippers were collecting damages for recent British seizures

2. Even George Washington’s huge popularity was compromised by the controversy

4. Jay’s Treaty had other unforeseen consequences; fearing that the treaty foreshadowed an Anglo-American alliance, Spain moved hastily to strike a deal with the United States

1. Pinckney’s Treaty of 1795 with Spain granted the Americans what they demanded, including free navigation of the Mississippi and the large territory north of Florida
2. Exhausted after the diplomatic and partisan battles of his second term, President Washington decided to retire; his choice contributed powerfully to establishing a two-term tradition for American presidents (advised the avoidance of permanent alliances)

3. Contrary to general misunderstanding, Washington did not oppose all alliance, but favored only “temporary alliances” for “extraordinary emergencies”

5. Washington's contributions as president were enormous even with Hamilton there

1. The central government was solidly established; the West was expanding; the merchant marine was plowing the seas; and above all, Washington had kept the nation our of both overseas entanglements and foreign wars with Europe

2. The experimental stage had passed, and the presidential chair could now be turned over to a less impressive figure; but republics are notoriously ungrateful

3. When Washington left office in 1797, he was showered with the brickbats of partisan abuse, quite in contrast with the bouquets that had greeted his arrival

14. John Adams Becomes President

1. Alexander Hamilton was the best-known member of the Federalist party, now that Washington had bowed out but his financial policies made him really unpopular

2. The Federalists were forced to turn to Washington's vice president, the experienced but ungracious John Adams; the Democratic-Republican naturally supported Jefferson

3. Political passions ran feverishly high in the presidential campaign of 1796
1. The issues of the campaign focused heavily on personalities, the Jeffersonians again assailed the too-forceful crushing of the Whiskey Rebellion, and Jay’s hated treaty

2. John Adams, with the most of his support in New England, squeezed through by the narrow margin of 71 votes to 68 in the Electoral College; Jefferson became vice pres.

3. John Adams was a man of stern principles who did his duty with stubborn devotion; he was tactless and prickly intellectual aristocrat with no appeal to the masses

4. The crusty New Engleander suffered from other handicaps; he had stepped into Washington’s shoes, which no successor could hope to fill; in addition, Adams was hated by Hamilton, who had resigned from the Treasury in 1795 and now headed the war faction of the Federalist part, known as the “High Federalists”

5. The famed financier even secretly plotted with certain members of the cabinet against the president, who had a conspiracy rather than a cabinet on his hands

6. Most ominous of all, Adams inherited a violent quarrel with France

15. Unofficial Fighting with France

1. The French were infuriated by Jay’s Treaty and condemned it a step toward an alliance with Britain; they assailed the pact as a violation of the Franco-American Treaty of 1778

   1. French warships, in retaliation, began to seize defenseless American merchant vessels

   2. The Paris regime haughtily refused to received America’s newly appointed envoy
3. True to Washington’s policy of steering clear of war at all costs, Adams
tired again to reach an agreement with the French and appointed a
diplomatic commission of three men, including John Marshall, the future
chief justice

2. Adam’s envoys, reaching Paris in 1797, hoped to meet Talleyrand, the crafty
French foreign minister but were secretly approached by three go-betweens,
later referred to as X, Y, and Z who demanded an unneutral loan of about
$250,000 to talk with Talleyrand

1. These terms were intolerable; the American trio knew that bribes were
standard diplomatic devices in Europe but they gagged at the price for
mere talk

2. Negotiations quickly broke down, and John Marshall was hailed as a
conquering hero

3. War hysteria swept through the United States, catching up even President
Adams

1. The Federalists were delighted at this unexpected turn of affairs,
whereas the Jeffersonians hung their heads in shame over the
misbehavior of their French friends

2. War preparations in the United States were pushed along at a feverish
pace, despite considerable Jeffersonian opposition in Congress—the
Navy Department was created; the three-ship navy was expanded, the
United States Marine Corps was re-established

4. Bloodshed was confined to the sea, and principally to the West Indies; in two
and a half years of undeclared hostilities (1798-1800), American privateers
and men-of-man of the new navy captured over eighty armed vessels flying
the French colors

5. Only a slight push might plunge both nations into a full-dress war

16. Adams Puts Patriotism Above Party
1. Embattled France, its hands full in Europe, wanted no war with America

   1. Talleyrand realized that to fight the United States would merely add on to his enemy roster; the British, who were lending the Americans cannon and other war supplies, were actually driven closer to their wayward cousins than they were to be again

   2. Talleyrand let it be known, through roundabout channels that if the Americans would send a new minister, he would be received with proper respect

2. This French furor brought Adams a degree of personal acclaim that he had never known

   1. Adams perceived that a full-fledged war, crowned by the conquest of the Florida's and Louisiana, would bring new plaudits to the Federalist party

   2. He realized full well that war must be avoided while the country was relatively weak

3. Adams, early in 1799, submitted to the Senate the new minister to France; though Hamilton and faction were enraged, public opinion was favorable to one last try for peace

4. America’s envoys found the political skies brightening when they reached Paris early in 1800; the ambitious “Little Corporal,” the Corsican Napoleon Bonaparte, had recently seized dictatorial power—he was eager to free his hands of the American squabble

5. The afflictions and ambitions of Old World were again working to America's advantage

6. After a great deal of haggling, a memorable treat known as the Convention of 1800 was signed in Paris—France agreed to annul the 22 year-old alliance but as a kind of alimony, the United States agreed to pay the damages claims of American shippers
7. John Adams deserves immense credit for his belated push for peace, even though he was moved in part by jealousy of Hamilton; Adams not only avoided the hazards of war, but also unwittingly smoothed the path for peaceful purchase of Louisiana three years later.

8. President Adams, the bubble of his popularity pricked by peace, was aware of his signal contribution to the nation—he knew that he helped preserve peace with France.

17. The Federalist Witch Hunt

1. Exulting Federalists had meanwhile capitalized on the anti-French frenzy to drive through Congress in 1798 laws designed to muffle or minimize their Jeffersonian foes.

   1. The first of these oppressive laws was aimed at supposedly pro-Jeffersonian “aliens”

   2. Most European immigrants, lacking wealth, were scorned by the aristocratic Federalist party but were welcomed as votes by the more democratic Jeffersonians.

   3. The Federalist Congress erected a disheartening barrier by raising the residence requirements for aliens who desired to become citizens from give years to fourteen; the new law violated the traditional American policy of hospitality and assimilation.

   4. Two additional Alien Laws struck heavily at undesirable immigrants; the president was empowered to deport dangerous foreigners in time of peace and to deport or imprison them in time of hostilities—an arbitrary grant of executive power.

   5. The “lockjaw” Sedition Law, the last measure of the Federalist clampdown, was a direct slap at two priceless freedoms guaranteed in the Constitution by the Bill of Rights—freedom of speech and freedom of the Press (First Amendment).
6. This law provided that anyone who impeded the policies of the government or falsely defamed its officials would be liable to a heavy fine and imprisonment (justified?)

2. Many outspoken Jeffersonian editors were indicted under the Sedition Act and ten were brought to trial; all of them were convicted, often by packed juries and prejudiced judges.

1. Some of the victims were harmless partisans, who should have been spared the notoriety of martyrdom and among them was Congressman Matthew Lyon who had earlier gained fame by spitting in the face of a Federalist, was sentenced to four months in jail for writing of President Adams's thirst for pomp, adulation, and avarice.

2. The Sedition Act seemed to be in conflict with the Constitution but the Supreme Court, dominated by Federalists, was of no mind to declare this law unconstitutional.

3. This attempt by the Federalists to crush free speech and silence the opposition party, high-handed as it was, made many converts for the Jeffersonians.

3. Yet the Alien and Sedition Acts, despite pained outcries from the Jeffersonians, commanded widespread popular support; anti-French hysteria played directly into the hands of witch-hunting conservatives; in the congressional elections of 1798-1799, the Federalists, riding a wave of popularity, scored one of the most sweeping victories.

18. The Virginia (Madison) and Kentucky (Jefferson) Resolutions

1. Resentful Jeffersonians naturally refused to take the Alien and Sedition Laws lying down.

1. Jefferson feared that if the Federalists managed to choke free speech and free press, they would then wipe out other precious constitutional
guarantees; his own fledgling political party might even be stamped out of existence (one-party dictatorship)

2. Fearing prosecution for sedition, Jefferson secretly penned a series of resolutions, which the Kentucky legislature approved in 1798 and 1799; his friend and fellow Virginian James Madison drafted a similar but less extreme statement of the resolutions, which was adopted by the legislature of Virginia in 1798

2. Both Jefferson and Madison stressed the compact theory; this concept meant that the thirteen sovereign states, in creating the federal government, had entered into a “compact” or contract, regarding its jurisdiction—the national government was consequently the agent or creation of the states (individual states were the final judges)

3. Invoking this logic, Jefferson’s Kentucky resolutions concluded that the federal regime had exceeded its constitutional powers and that with regard to the Alien and Sedition Acts, “nullification”—a refusal to accept them—was the “rightful remedy”

4. No other state legislatures, despite Jefferson’s hopes, fell into line; some flatly refused to endorse the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions; others added ringing condemnations

5. Many Federalists argued that the people, not the states, had made the original compact, and that it was up to the Supreme Court to nullify unconstitutional legislation; this practice, though not authorized by the Constitution, was finally adopted by SC in 1803

6. The Virginia and Kentucky resolutions were a brilliant formulation of the extreme states’ rights view regarding the Union indeed more sweeping in their implications than intended

7. They were later used by southerners to support nullification and ultimately secession; their resolutions were basically campaign documents designed to
crystallize opposition to the Federalist part and to unseat it in the upcoming presidential election of 1800

19. Federalists Versus Democratic-Republicans

1. As the presidential contest of 1800 approached, the differences between Federalists and Democratic Republicans were sharply etched

   1. Most federalists of the pre-Constitution period became Federalists in the 1790s; largely welded by Hamilton into an effective group by 1793, they openly advocated rule by the “best people”—“those who own the country ought to govern it”

   2. Hamiltonians distrusted full-blown democracy as the fountain of all mischiefs and feared the “swayability” of the untutored common folk of America

   3. Hamiltonian Federalists also advocated a strong central government with the power to crush democratic excesses like Shays’ Rebellion, protect the lives and estates of the wealthy, and subordinate the sovereignty-loving states of the United States

   4. They believed that government should support private enterprise and this attitude came naturally to the merchants, manufacturers, and shippers along the Atlantic seaboard, who made up the majority of Federalist support (fewer Hamiltonians)

   5. Federalists were also pro-British in foreign affairs; some of them still harbored mildly Loyalist sentiments from pre-Revolutionary days—all of them recognized that foreign trade, especially with Britain, was a key cog in Hamilton’s fiscal machinery

2. Leading the anti-Federalists, who came eventually to be known as Democratic-Republicans, was Thomas Jefferson; although he was unable to deliver a rabble-rousing speech, he became a master political organizer through his ability to lead people
3. His strongest appeal was to the middle class and to the underprivileged

4. Liberal-thinking Jefferson, with his aristocratic head set on a farmer’s frame was a bundle of inconsistencies; a so-called traitor to his upper class, Jefferson cherished uncommon sympathy for the common people, the downtrodden, the oppressed, and the persecuted

5. Jeffersonian Republicans demanded a weak central regime—the best government was the one that governed the least; the bulk of the power should be retained by the states

   1. There the people, in intimate contact with local affairs, could keep a more vigilant eye on their public; central authority was to be kept at a minimum through a strict interpretation of the Constitution; the national debt was to be paid off

   2. Jeffersonian Republicans insisted that there should be no special privileges for special classes, particularly manufacturers—agriculture was the favored branch of economy

   3. Above all, Jefferson advocated the rule of the people; he favored government for the people, but not by all the people—only by those men who were literate enough

   4. Universal education would have to precede universal suffrage and the ignorant were thus incapable of self-government; he had faith in the masses and collective wisdom

6. Landlessness among American citizens threatened popular democracy like illiteracy; he feared that the propertyless dependents would be political pawns in the hands of their landowning superiors; how could the emergence of a landless class of voters be avoided?

   1. The answer, in part, was by slavery—a system of black slave labor in the South ensured that white yeoman farmers could remained independent landowners
2. Without slavery, poor whites would have to provide the cheap labor so necessary for the cultivation of tobacco and rice, and their low wages would preclude their ever owning property; Jefferson thus tortuously reconciled slaveholding with democracy.

7. Jefferson's confidence that white, free men could become responsible and knowledgeable citizens was open-minded; he championed their freedom of speech, for without free speech, the misdeeds of tyranny could not be exposed.

8. Jeffersonian Republicans were basically pro-French; the earnestly believed that it was to America's advantage to support the liberal ideals of the French Revolution.

9. So as the young Republic's first full decade of nationhood came to a close, the Founders' hopes seemed already imperiled; conflicts over domestic politics and foreign policy undermined the unity of the Revolutionary era and called into question viability.

10. As the presidential election of 1800 approached, the danger loomed that the fragile and battered American ship of state would founder on the rocks of controversy.
The Second War for Independence and the Upsurge of Nationalism, 1812-1824

1. The So-Called Era of Good Feelings

1. James Monroe was nominated for presidency in 1816 by the Republicans; they undertook to continue the so-called Virginia dynasty of Washington, Jefferson, and Madison; the fading Federalists ran a candidate for the last time in their history and he was crushed by 183 electoral votes to 34—left the field to the triumphant Republicans and one-party rule

1. James Monroe straddled two generations: the bygone age of the Founding Fathers and the emergent age of nationalism; he was in intellect and personal force the least distinguished for the first eight presidents (times called for sober administration)

2. Monroe was an experienced, levelheaded executive with talent for interpreting people

2. Emerging nationalism was further cemented by a goodwill tour Monroe undertook early in 1817, ostensibly to inspect military defense (he received a heartwarming welcome)

3. A Boston newspaper was so far carried away as to announce that an “Era of Good Feelings” had been ushered in—term used to describe the administrations of Monroe

4. The Era of Good Feelings was something of a misnomer; the period was a troubled one

1. The acute issues of the tariff, the bank, internal improvements and, the sale of public lands was being hotly contested around the United States population
2. Sectionalism was crystallizing, and the conflict over slavery was beginning to rise

2. The Panic of 1819 and the Curse of Hard Times

1. Much of the goodness went out of the good feelings in 1819, when a paralyzing economic panic descended; it rough deflation, depression, bankruptcies, bank failures, unemployment, soup kitchens, and overcrowded pesthouses known as debtors’ prisons

2. This was the first national financial panic since President Washington took office

   1. Many factors contributed to the catastrophe of 1819, but looming large was overspeculation in frontier lands; the Bank of United States, through its western branches, had become deeply involved in this popular type of outdoor gambling

   2. Financial paralysis from the panic, which lasted in some degree for several years, gave a rude setback to the nationalistic ardor; the West was especially hard hit

   3. The Bank of the United States forced the speculative (“wildcat”) western banks to the wall and foreclosed mortgages on countless farms, which was legal but unwise

3. The panic of 1819 created backwashes in the political and social world; the poorer classes were severely strapped and in their troubles was sown the seed of Jacksonian democracy

4. Hard times also directed attention to the inhumanity of imprisoning debtors; in extreme cases, often overplayed, mothers were torn from their infants for owing a few dollars

5. Mounting agitation against imprisonment for debt started in remedial legislation in states
3. Growing Pains of the West

1. The onward march of the West continued; nine frontier states had joined the original thirteen between 1791 and 1819; with an eye to preserving the North-South sectional balance, most of these commonwealths had been admitted alternately, free of slave

   1. In part, it was a continuation of the generations-old westward movement, which had been going on since the colonial days—special appeal to European immigrants

   2. Eager newcomers from abroad were beginning to stream down in impressive numbers, especially after the war of boycotts and bullets; land exhaustion in the older tobacco states, where the soil was “mined,” likewise drove people westward

   3. Acute economic distress during the embargo years turned many pinched faces toward the setting sun; the crushing of the Indians in the Northwest and South by Generals Harrison and Jackson pacified the frontier and opened up vast virgin tracts of land

   4. The building of highways improved the land routes to the Ohio Valley, noteworthy was Cumberland Road, begun in 1811 from Maryland to Illinois; the use of the first steamboat on western waters, in 1811, heralded a new era of upstream navigation

2. But the West, despite the inflow of settlers, was still weak in population and influence; not potent enough politically, it was forced to ally itself with other sections

3. The West demanded cheap acreage and partially achieved its goal in the Land Act of 1820, which authorized a buyer to purchase 80 acres at a minimum of $1.25 an acre
4. The West also demanded cheap transportation and slowly got the transportation, despite the constitutional qualms of the presidents and the hostility of easterners.

5. Finally, the West demanded cheap money, issued by its own “wildcat” banks and fought the powerful Bank of the United States to attain its goal.

4. Slavery and the Sectional Balance

   1. Sectional tensions, involving rivalry between the slave South and the free North over control of the virgin West, were stunningly revealed in 1819 concerning Missouri.

      1. The territory of Missouri in 1819 knocked on the doors of Congress for admission as a slave state; the fertile and watered area contained sufficient population for statehood.

      2. But the House of Representative stymied the plans of Missourians by passing the incendiary Tallmadge amendment which stipulated that no more slave should be brought into Missouri and provided for the gradual emancipation of children born.

2. A roar of anger burst from slave-holding southerners; they were joined by many depression-cursed pioneers who favored unhampered expansion of the West and by many northerners, especially diehard Federalists, who were eager to use the issue to break the back of the “Virginia dynasty”—that concerning the long reign of Virginian presidents.

3. Southerners saw in the Tallmadge amendment, which they eventually managed to defeat in the Senate, an ominous threat to sectional balance; with every passing decade, the North was becoming wealthier and also more thickly settled—an advantage reflected in an increasing northern majority in the House of Representatives.

4. In the Senate, each state had two votes, regardless of size and with eleven states free and eleven slave, the southerners had maintained equality; there
were therefore in a good position to thwart any northern effort to interfere with the expansion of slavery

5. The future of the slave system caused southerners profound concern; Missouri was the first state entirely west of the Mississippi River to be carved out of the Louisiana Purchases, and the Missouri emancipation amendment set a damaging precedent

6. If Congress could abolish the “peculiar institution” in Missouri, might it not attempt to do in the states of the South—he wounds of the Constitutional Convention were opened

7. Burning moral questions also protruded, even though the main issue was political and economic balance; a small but growing group of antislavery agitators in the North seized the occasion to raise an outcry against evils of slavery (determined not for it to spread)

5. The Uneasy Missouri Compromise

1. The deadlock in Washington was at length broken in 1820 by the time-honored American solution of compromise—actually a bundle of three compromises

   1. Henry Clay of Kentucky, gifted conciliator, played a leading role; Congress, despite abolitionist please, agreed to admit Missouri as a slave state but at the same time, free-soil Maine, which until then had been part of Massachusetts, was also admitted

   2. The balance between North and South was thus kept at twelve state each and remained there for fifteen years; although Missouri was permitted to retain slaves, all future bondage was prohibited in the remainder of the Louisiana Purchase north of the line of 36° 30’—the southern boundary of Missouri

2. Though denounced as a “dirty bargain” both North and South yielded and gained
1. The South won the prize of Missouri as an unrestricted slave state and the North won the concession that Congress could forbid slavery in the remaining territories.

2. More gratifying to many northerners was the fact that the immense area north of 36º 30, except Missouri, was forever closed to the blight of slavery.

3. Although the restriction on future slavery in the territories was not that offensive to slaveowners, because the northern prairie land did not seem suited to slave labor, a majority of southern congressmen still voted against the compromise.

3. Neither North nor South was acutely displeased, although neither was completely happy.

   1. The Missouri Compromise lasted thirty-four years—a vital formative period in the life of the Republic—and during that time it preserved the shaky compact of the states.

   2. Yet the embittered dispute over slavery heralded the future breakup of the Union; ever after, the morality of the South’s “peculiar institution” was an issue that could not be swept under the rug—The Missouri Compromise only ducked the question.

4. The Missouri Compromise and the concurrent panic of 1819 should have dimmed the political start; certainly both unhappy events had a dampening effect on the Era of Good Feelings but James Monroe was so popular and the Federalist opposition was so weak.

5. In the presidential election of 1820, he received every electoral vote except one; unanimity was reserved for George Washington; Monroe, on the other hand, was the only president in American history to be reelected after which a major financial panic began.

1. The upsurging nationalism of the post-Ghent years, despite the ominous setbacks concerning slavery, was further reflected and reinforced by the Supreme Court

1. The high tribunal continued to be dominated by Chief Justice John Marshall

2. One group of his decisions bolstered the power of the federal government at the expense of the states; a notable case in this category was *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) which involved an attempt by the state of Maryland to destroy a branch of the Bank of the United States by imposing a tax on its notes

3. John Marshall declared the bank constitutional by invoking the Hamiltonian doctrine of implied powers; at the same time, he strengthened federal authority and slapped at state infringements when he denied the right of Maryland to tax the bank

4. Chief Justice John Marshall affirmed “that the power to ax involves the power to destroy” and “That a power to create implies a power to preserve”

2. Two years later (1821) the case of *Cohens v. Virginia* gave Marshall one of this greatest opportunities to defend the federal power; the Cohens, found guilty by the Virginia courts of illegally selling lottery tickets, appealed to the highest tribunal

1. Virginia “won,” in the sense that the conviction of the Cohens was upheld

2. In fact Virginia and all the individual states lost, because Marshall asserted the right of the Supreme Court to review the decisions of the state supreme courts in questions involving powers of the federal governments (states’ rights proponents were aghast)

3. Hardly less significant was the celebrated “steamboat case,” *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824)
1. The suit grew out of an attempt by the states of New York to grant to a private concern a monopoly of water-borne commerce between New York and New Jersey.

2. Marshall sternly reminded the upstart state that the Constitution conferred on Congress alone the control of interstate commerce and thus struck with one hand another blow at states’ rights, while upholding with the other sovereign powers of the federal government; interstate streams were cleared of this judicial snag.

7. Judicial Dikes Against Democratic Excesses

1. Another Marshall’s decision bolstered judicial barriers against democratic or demagogic attacks on property rights; the notorious case of Fletcher v. Peck (1810) arose when a Georgia legislature, swayed by bribery, granted 35 million acres in the Yazoo River country (Mississippi) to private speculators; the next legislature canceled the transaction.

   1. But the Supreme Court, with Marshall presiding, decreed that the legislative grant was a contract and that the Constitution forbids state laws “impairing” contracts.

   2. The decision was perhaps most noteworthy as further protecting property rights against popular pressures; it was also one of the earliest clear assertions of the right of the Supreme Court to invalidate state laws conflicting with the federal Constitution.

2. A similar principle was upheld in the case of Dartmouth College v. Woodward (1819).

   1. Perhaps Marshall’s most remembered decision, the college had been granted a charter by King George III in 1769, but the democratic New Hampshire state legislature had seen fit to change it; Dartmouth appealed the case under alumnus Daniel Webster.
2. The “Godlike Daniel” reportedly pulled out all the stops of his tear-inducing eloquence when he declaimed, “It is, sir, as I have said, a small college. And yet there are those who love it.”—Marshall needed no dramatics in the *Dartmouth* case

3. Marshall put the states firmly in their place when he ruled that the original charter must stand; it was a contract—and the Constitution protected contracts against state encroachments; the *Dartmouth* decision had the fortunate effect of safeguarding business enterprise from domination by states’ government (escape public control)

3. If John Marshall was a Molding Father of the Constitution, Daniel Webster was an Expounding Father; time and again he left his seat in the Senate and explained his Federalistic and nationalistic philosophy before the supreme bench

1. The two men dovetailed strikingly with each other; Webster’s classic speeches in the Senate, challenging states’ rights and nullification, was largely repetitious of the arguments that he had earlier presented before a sympathetic Supreme Court

2. Marshall’s decisions and his national were the most tenaciously enduring of that era

3. He buttressed the federal Union and helped to create a stable, nationally uniform environment for business and checked the excesses of popularly elected state legislatures (shaped the Constitution along conservative, centralizing lines)

8. Sharing Oregon and Acquiring Florida

1. The robust nationalism of the years after the War of 1812 was likewise reflected in the shaping of foreign policy; to this end, the nationalistic
President Monroe teamed with his nationalistic secretary of state, John Quincy Adams, the son of the ex-president.

1. To its credit, the Monroe administration negotiated the much-underrated Treaty of 1818 with Britain which permitted Americans to share the coveted Newfoundland fisheries with their Canadian cousins; the agreement also fixed the vague northern limits of Louisiana along the forty-ninth parallel from the Lake of Woods to Rockies.

2. The treaty further provided for a ten-year joint occupation of the untamed Oregon Country, without a surrender of the rights or claims of either America or Britain.

2. To the south lay semitropical Spanish Florida, which many Americans believed geography and providence had destined to become part of the United States.

1. Americans already claimed West Florida, where uninvited American settlers had torn down the Spanish flag in 1810 and Congress ratified this grab in 1812, and during the War of 1812 against Spain’s ally, Britain, a small army seized the Mobile region.

2. When an epidemic of revolutions broke out in South America, notably in Argentina (1816), Venezuela (1817), and Chile (1818), Spain was forced to denude Florida of troops to fight the rebels and General Andrew Jackson saw an opportunity.

3. On the pretext that hostile Seminole Indians and fugitive slaves were using Florida as a refuge, Jackson secured a commission to enter Spanish territory, punish the Indians, and recapture the runaways—but he was to respect all posts under Spain.

4. Early in 1818 Jackson swept across the Florida border, hanged two Indian chiefs without ceremony and after hasty military trials, executed two British subjects for assisting the Indians and seized the two most
important Spanish posts in the area, St. Marks and then Pensacola, where he deposed the Spanish governor

3. Jackson had clearly exceeded his instructions from Washington and President Monroe, alarmed, consulted his cabinet who were for disavowing or disciplining the overzealous Jackson—all except John Quincy Adams who demanded huge concessions from Spain

4. In the mislabeled Florida Purchase Treaty of 1819, Spain ceded Florida, as well as shadowy Spanish claims to Oregon, in exchange for America’s abandonment of equally murky claims to Texas, soon to become part of independent Mexico (western boundary)

9. The Menace of Monarchy in America

1. After the Napoleonic nightmare, the rethroned autocrats of Europe banded together in a kind of monarchical protective association and undertook to stamp out the democratic tendencies that had sprouted from soil they considered richly manured by the ideals of the French Revolution—the world must be made safe from democracy

   1. With complete ruthlessness they smothered the embers of rebellion in Italy (1821) and in Spain (1823); it was rumored that they were gazing across the Atlantic

   2. Many Americans were alarmed that the European countries would send powerful fleets and armies to restore the colonies of Spanish America; still they cheered when the Latin American republics rose from the ruins of monarchy

2. The southward push of the Russian bear, from the chill region now known as Alaska had already publicized the menace of monarchy to North America; in 1821 the tsar of Russia issued a decree extending Russian jurisdiction down to the line of 51°
3. The fear prevailed that they were planning to cut the Republic off from California, its prospective window on the Pacific (as Russians had reached as far south as now-SF)

4. Great Britain, still Mistress of the Seas, was now beginning to play a lone-hand role on the complicated international stage; it recoiled from joining hands with the continental European powers in crushing the newly won liberties of the Spanish-Americans

5. These revolutionists had thrown open their monopoly-bound ports to outside trade, and British shippers, as well as Americans, had found the profits sweet

6. Accordingly, in August 1823, George Canning, the haughty British foreign secretary, approached the American minister in London with a startling proposition; would not the United States combine with Britain in a joint declaration renouncing any interest in acquiring Latin America territory and specifically warning the European despots

10. Monroe and His Doctrine

1. The tenacious nationalist, Secretary Adams, asked why should the lordly British, with the mightiest navy afloat, need America as an ally—an America that had neither naval nor military strength—such a union, argued Adams, was undignified

2. Adams ever alert, thought that he detected the joker in the Canning proposal; the British feared that the aggressive Yankees would one day seize Spanish territory in the Americas which would jeopardize Britain’s possessions in the Caribbean—If Canning could seduce the United States into joining him, America’s own hand would be morally tied

3. A self-denying alliance with Britain would not only hamper American expansion, concluded Adams, but it was unnecessary—he suspected that the European powers had not hatched any definite plans for invading the
Americas and in any event the British navy would prevent the approach of hostile fleets because of the South American markets

4. The Monroe Doctrine was born late in 1823, when the nationalistic Adams won the nationalistic Monroe over to his way of thinking and the president in his annual message to Congress on December 2, 1823, incorporated a stern warning to the European powers

1. Its two basic features were noncolonization and nonintervention

2. Monroe first directed his verbal volley primarily at the lumbering Russian bear in the Northwest; he proclaimed that the era of colonization in America had ended

3. Monroe trumpeted a warning against foreign intervention; he was clearly concerned with regions to the south, where fears were felt for the fledgling Spanish-American republics—Monroe directed the crowned heads of Europe to keep their hated monarchical systems out of this hemisphere (US would not intervene in Greece)

11. Monroe’s Doctrine Appraised

1. The monarchs of Europe were angered at Monroe’s doctrine; having resented the incendiary American experiment from the beginning, they were now deeply offended by Monroe’s high-flown pronouncement—all the more so because of the gulf between America’s loud pretensions and its soft military strength (British fleet blocked America)

2. Monroe’s solemn warning, made little splash in the newborn republics to the south; anyone could see that they were only secondarily concerned about his neighbors, because he was primarily concerned by defending himself against future invasion

3. Americas applauded it and then forgot it; not under 1845 did President Polk revive it
4. Even before Monroe’s stiff message, the tsar had decided to retreat; this he formally did in the Russo-American Treaty of 1824, which fixed his southern-most limits at the line of 54° 40’—the present southern tip of the Alaska panhandle.

5. The Monroe Doctrine might more accurately have been called the Self-defense Doctrine; President Monroe was concerned basically with the security of his own country—not of Latin America (the doctrine was just as big as the nation’s armed forces and no bigger).

6. The Monroe Doctrine has had a long career of ups and downs; it was never law—domestic or international and it was not a pledge or an agreement but rather merely a simple, personalized statement of the policy of President Monroe.

7. But the Monroe Doctrine in 1823 was largely an expression of the post-1812 nationalism energizing the United States; the doctrine proved to be the most famous of all the long-lived offspring of that nationalism (deepened the illusion of that nationalism).
The Rise of a Mass Democracy, 1824-1840

1. The “Corrupt Bargain” of 1824

   1. As James Monroe, the last of the Virginia dynasty, complete his second term; four candidates towered above the others: John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts, Henry Clay of Kentucky, William H. Crawford of Georgia, and Andrew Jackson of Tennessee

   2. All four rivals professed to be “Republicans” but well-organized parties had not yet emerged and John C. Calhoun was vice-presidential candidate to Adams and Jackson

   3. The results of the noisy campaign were interesting but confusing

      1. Jackson, the war hero, clearly had the strongest personal appeal, especially in the West, where his campaign against corruption and privilege in govt. resonated deeply

      2. Jackson polled as many popular votes as his next two rivals combined but he failed to win majority of electoral votes and in such a deadlock, the House of Representatives, as directed by the Twelfth Amendment, must choose among the top three candidates and Clay was thus eliminated but as Speaker, he presided over the House

   4. The influential Clay was in a position to throw the election to the candidate of his choice and he reached his decision by the process of elimination

      1. Crawford, recently felled by a paralytic stroke, was out of the picture

      2. Clay hated the “military chieftain” Jackson, his archrival for allegiance of the West and in turn, Jackson bitterly resented Clay’s public denunciation of his Florida attack

      3. The only candidate left was the puritanical Adams, with whom Clay had never established a cordial personal relations but the two men were
common politically because both were fervid nationalists and advocates of the American System

4. Shortly before the final balloting in the House, Clay met privately with Adams and assured him of his support and decision. Day came early in 1825 when on the first ballot, thanks largely to Clay’s influence, Adams was elected president.

5. A few days later, Adams announced that Henry Clay would be the new secretary of state.

6. The office of secretary of state was the coveted position as three of the four preceding secretaries had reached the presidency; by allegedly dangling the position as a bribe before Clay, Adams, the second choice of the people, apparently defeated Jackson.

7. Masses of angry Jacksonians raised a roar of protest against this “corrupt bargain” and Jackson condemned Clay as “Judas of the West” and John Randolph assailed the alliance.

2. A Yankee Misfit in the White House

1. A closeted thinker rather than a politician, John Quincy Adams was irritable, sarcastic, and tactless; a man of puritanical honor, Adams entered the White House under charges of “bargain,” “corruption,” and “usurpation”—he was the first “minority president.”

2. Adams achieved high office by commanding respect rather than by courting popularity.

3. While Adams’s enemies accused him of striking a corrupt bargain, his political allies wished that he would strike a few more but Adams resolutely declined to oust efficient officeholders in order to create vacancies for his supporters.
4. Adams’s nationalistic views gave him further woes; much of the nation was turning away from post-Ghent nationalism and toward states’ rights and sectionalism

1. Adams swam against the tide and Adams urged upon Congress in his first annual message the construction of roads and canals, renewed Washington’s proposal for a national university and advocated federal support for an astronomical observatory

2. The public reaction to these proposals was prompt and unfavorable and South, in particular was annoyed; if the federal government should take on such heavy financial burdens, it would have to continue the hated tariff duties to pay for its debt

3. Adams’s land policy antagonized the westerners who clamored for wide-open expansion and resented the president’s well-meaning attempts to curb feverish speculation in the public domain—fate of Cherokee Indians brought out bitterness

4. The Georgia governor, by threatening to resort to arms, resisted the efforts of the Washington government to interpose federal authority on behalf of the Cherokees

3. Going “Whole Hog” for Jackson in 1828

1. The presidential campaign for Andrew Jackson started early—on February 9, 1825, the day of John Quincy Adams’s controversial election and continued for four straight years

2. Even before the election of 1828, the temporarily united Republicans of the Era of Good Feelings had split into two camps: the National Republicans supporting Adams and the Democratic-Republicans supporting the fiery Jackson as their head
1. Rallying cries of the Jackson zealots were “Bargain and Corruption,” “Huzza for Jackson,” and “All Hail Old Hickory”—Jacksonites planted hickory poles for hero

2. Adamsites adopted the oak as the symbol for their oakenly independent candidate

3. Jackson’s followers presented their hero as a frontiersman and a stalwart champion of the common man and denounced Adams as a corrupt aristocrat and argued that the will of the people had been thwarted in 1825 by the backstairs “bargain” of Adams and Clay

4. Much of this talk was political hyperbole as Jackson was a wealthy planter and Adams though perhaps an aristocrat, was far from corrupt (puritanical models were too elevated)

5. Mudslinging reached new lows in 1828, and the electorate developed a taste for bare-knuckle politics; Adams would not stoop to gutter tactics but his backers did

6. Criticism of Adams was directed at the federal salaries Adams had received over time

7. On voting day the electorate split on largely sectional lines

   1. Jackson’s strongest support came from the West and South; the middle states and the Old Northwest were divided, while Adams won the backing of his own New England and the propertied “better elements” of the Northeast part of the United States

   2. Buy when the popular vote was converted to electoral votes, General Jackson’s triumph could not be denied as Adams was beaten by the electoral count of 178 to 83

   3. Although a considerable part of Jackson’s support was lined up particularly in New York and Pennsylvania, the political center of gravity
clearly had shifted away from the conservative eastern seaboard toward emerging states across the mountain

4. Old Hickory” as President

1. Old Hickory’s irritability and emaciated condition resulted in tuberculosis, and lead poisoning from two bullets that he carried in his body from near-fatal duels

2. Jackson’s upbringinh had its shortcomings as he grew up without parental restraints

3. The youthful Carolinian shrewdly moved “up West” to Tennessee, where fighting was prized above writing; there, through native intelligence, force of personality, and powers of leadership, he became a judge and a member of Congress (profound passions)

4. The first president from the West, the first nominated at a formal part convention in 1832, and only the second without a college education (Washington), Jackson was unique

   1. His university was adversity & he had risen from the masses, but was not one of them

   2. Essentially a frontier aristocrat, he owned many slaves, cultivated broad acres, and lived in one of the finest mansions in America (the Hermitage near Nashville)

   3. More westerner than easterner, more country gentlemen than common clay, more courtly than crude, he was hard to fit into a neat category

5. Jackson’s inauguration seemed to symbolize the ascendancy of the masses; nobodies mingled with notables as the White House, for the first time, was open to the multitude

6. To conservatives this orgy seemed like the end of the world; “King Mob” reigned triumphant as Jacksonian vulgarity replaced Jeffersonian simplicity;
faint-hearted traditionalists shuddered, drew their blinds, and recalled the French Revolution

5. The Spoils System

1. Under Jackson the spoils system—that is, rewarding political supporters with public office—was introduced into the federal government on a large scale; Senator William Marcy’s remark: “To the victor belong the spoils of the enemy”

2. Jackson defended the spoils system on democratic grounds and the routine of office was though to be simple enough for any upstanding American to learn quickly, why encourage the development of an aristocratic, bureaucratic, office-holding class?

3. Better to bring in new blood, he argued, each generation deserved its turn at the trough

4. Washington was due or a house-cleaning—no party overturn had occurred since the defeat of the Federalists in 1800 and even that was had not produced wholesale evictions

   1. The questions asked of each appointee were not “What can he do for the country?” but “What has he done for the party?” or “Is he loyal to President Jackson?”

   2. Scandal inevitably accompanied the new system and men who had openly bough their posts by campaign contributions were appointed to high office

   3. Samuel Swartwout, despite ample warnings of his untrustworthiness, was awarded the lucrative post of collector of the customs of the port of New York (stole money)

5. But despite its undeniable abuse, the spoils system was an important element of the emerging two-party order, cementing as it did loyalty to party
over competing claims based on economic class or geographic region (promise of patronage)

6. The Tricky “Tariff of Abominations”

1. The touchy tariff issue had been one of John Quincy Adams’s biggest headaches and now Andrew Jackson felt his predecessor’s pain; tariffs protected American industry against competition from European manufactured goods, but they also drove up prices for all Americans and incited retaliatory tariffs on American agricultural exports abroad

1. The middle states had long been supporters of protectionist tariffs; the wool and textile industries were booming, and forward-thinking Yankees came to believe that their future prosperity would flow from the factory rather than from the sea

2. In 1824 Congress had increased the general tariff significantly, but wool manufacturers bleated for still-higher barriers; Jacksonites promoted a high-tariff bill, expecting to be defeated, which would give a black eye to President Adams

3. To their surprise, the tariff passed in 1828 and Jackson received the tariff problem

2. Southerners, as heavy consumers of manufactured goods with little manufacturing industry of their own, were hostile to tariffs; they were outraged by the Tariff of 1828; hotheads branded it the “Black Tariff” or the “Tariff of Abominations”

3. Why did the South react so angrily against the tariff?

1. Southerners believed that the “Yankee tariff” discriminated against them

2. The bustling Northeast was experiencing a boom in manufacturing, the developing West was prospering from rising property values and a multiplying population, and the energetic Southwest was expanding into virgin cotton lands
3. But the Old South was falling on hard times and the tariff was a scapegoat;

4. Southerners sold their cotton and farm produce in a world market unprotected by tariffs but were forced to buy their manufactured goods in an American market heavily protected by tariffs (protectionism protected Yankee and middle-state manufacturers; the farmers and planters of the Old South felt they were stuck

4. But much deeper issues underlay the southern outcry—in particular, a growing anxiety about possible federal interference with the institution of slavery

1. The congressional debate on the Missouri Compromise had kindled those anxieties and they were further fanned by an aborted slave rebellion in Charleston in 1822, led by a free black named Denmark Vesey (South Carolina tied to British West Indies)

2. Abolitionism in America might similarly use the power of the government in Washington to suppress slavery in the South (the tariff was the issue, to take a strong stand on principle against all federal encroachment on states’ rights)

5. South Carolinians took the lead in protesting against the “Tariff of Abominations” and their legislation went so far as to publish in 1828 a pamphlet known as *The South Carolina Exposition*, which had been secretly written by John C. Calhoun

6. The Exposition denounced the recent tariff as unjust and unconstitutional; it bluntly and explicitly proposed that the states should nullify the tariff

7. Nullies” in South Carolina

1. Through Jackson’s first term, the nullifiers—“nullies,”—tried strenuously to muster the necessary two-thirds vote for nullification in the South Carolina
legislature; but they were blocked by a determined minority of Unionists, scorned as “submission men”

2. Back in Washington, Congress tipped the balance by passing the new Tariff of 1832; although it pared away the worst “abominations,” it was still frankly protective and fell far short of meeting southern demands—had disquieting air of permanence

3. South Carolina was new nerved for drastic action; Nullifiers and Unionists clashed head-on in the state election of 1832; the state legislature then called for a special convention; several weeks later, they solemnly declared the existing tariff to be null and void in SC

4. As a further act of defiance, the convention threatened to take South Carolina out of the Union if Washington attempted to collect the customs duties by force

   1. Andrew Jackson was the wrong president to stare down; although he was not a die-hard supporter of the tariff, but he would not permit defiance or disunion; Jackson privately threatened to invade the state and have the nullifiers hanged

   2. He dispatched naval and military reinforcements to the Palmetto State, which quietly preparing a sizable army; the lines were drawn and if civil war were to be avoided, one side would have to surrender, or both would have to compromise

5. Conciliatory Henry Clay of Kentucky stepped forward; although he supported the tariffs, he threw his influence behind a compromise bill that would gradually reduce the Tariff of 1832 by about 10 percent over a period of 8 years (rates would be back to 1816 in 1842)

6. The compromise Tariff of 1833 finally squeezed through Congress with most of the opposition naturally coming from protectionist New England and the middle states
Calhoun and the South favored the compromise, but at the same time, Congress passed the Force Bill, known among Carolinians as the “Bloody Bill” which authorized the president to sue the army and navy to collect federal tariff duties.

South Carolinians welcomed this opportunity to extricate themselves and no other southern states had sprung to their support; moreover, a Unionist minority within South Carolina was gathering guns, organizing militia, and criticizing separation.

Face with civil war within and invasion from without, the Columbia convention and met again and repealed the ordinance of nullification and nullified the Force Bill.

Neither Jackson nor the “nullies” won a clear-cut victory in 1833; Clay was the true hero.

The Trail of Tears

Jackson’s Democrats were committed to western expansion, but such expansion necessarily meant confrontation with the current inhabitants of the land.

More than 125,000 Native Americans lived east of the Mississippi in the 1820s and federal policy toward them varied; beginning in the 1790s the Washington government recognized the tribes as separate nations and agreed to acquire land from them only through formal treaties; the Indians were shrewd and stubborn negotiators.

Many white Americans felt respect and admiration for Indians and believed that the Native Americans could be assimilated into society (“civilizing/Christianizing”).

The Society for Propagating the Gospel Among Indians was founded in 1787 and many denominations sent missionaries into Indian villages; in
1793 Congress appropriated $20,000 for the promotion of literacy and instruction among Indians

2. Although many tribes violently resisted white encroachment, other followed the path of accommodation; the Cherokees of Georgia made especially remarkable efforts to learn the ways of the whites; they abandoned their semi-nomadic life and adopted a system of settled agriculture and a notion of private property (schools and Cherokee alphabet)

1. In 1808 the Cherokee National Council legislated a written legal code, and in 1827, it adopted a written constitution that provided for executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government; some Cherokees became cotton planters and slaveholders

2. For these efforts the Cherokees—along with the Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles—were numbered by whites among the “Five Civilized Tribes”

3. All this embrace of “civilization” apparently was not good enough for whites; in 1828 Georgia legislature declared the Cherokee tribal council illegal and asserted its own jurisdiction over Indian affairs and Indians lands; the Cherokees appealed this move to the Supreme Court, which thrice upheld the rights of the Indians

4. But President Jackson, who clearly wanted to open Indians lands to white settlement, refused to recognize the Court’s decisions (in a jibe at the Indians’ defender, Jackson reportedly snapped, “John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it”)

3. Feeling some obligation to rescue “this much injured race,” Jackson proposed a bodily removal of the remaining eastern tribes—chiefly Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles—beyond the Mississippi; emigration was supposed to be voluntary because it would be cruel/unjust to compel the aborigines to abandon their land
4. Jackson evidently consoled himself with the belief that Indians could preserve their native culture in the wide-open West; Jackson’s policy led to the forced uprooting of more than 100,000 Indians; in 1830, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act, providing for the transplanting of all Indians tribes then resident east of the Mississippi

1. Ironically, the heaviest blows fell on the Five Civilized Tribes

2. In the ensuing decade, countless Indians died on forced marches to the newly established Indian Territory where they were to be “permanently” free (15 years)

5. Suspicious of white intentions from the start, Sauk and Fox braves from Illinois and Wisconsin, ably led by Black Hawk, resisted eviction; they were bloodily crushed in 1832 by regular troops, including Lieutenant Jefferson Davis of Mississippi

6. In Florida the Seminole Indians, joined by run-away slaves, retreated to the swampy Everglades and for seven years, they waged a bitter guerrilla war that took the lives of some fifteen hundred soldiers; the spirit of the Seminoles was broken in 1837 when the American field commander seized their leader, Osceola, under a flag of truce

7. The war dragged on for give more years but the Seminoles were doomed and some fled deeper into the Everglades, but about four-fifths of them were moved to Oklahoma

9. The Bank War

1. President Jackson distrusted monopolistic banking and over-big businesses, as did his followers; he came to share the prejudices of his own West against the Bank of the US

   1. The national government minted gold and silver coins in the mid-19th century but did not issue paper money; paper notes were printed by private banks and their value fluctuated with the health of the bank and
the amount of money printed, giving private bankers considerable power over the nation’s economy

2. No bank in American had more power than the Bank of the United States; in ways the bank acted like a branch of government—it was the principal depository for the funds of the Washington government and controlled much of the nation’s gold/silver

3. A source of credit/stability, the bank was an important part of the expanding economy

2. But the Bank of the United States was a private institution, accountable not to the people, but to its elite circle of moneyed investors; its president Nicholas Biddle held immense—and to many unconstitutional—amount of power over the nation’s financial affairs

3. Enemies of the Bank dubbed him Czar Nicolas I and called bank a “hydra of corruption”

4. To some the bank’s very existence seemed to sin against the egalitarian credo of American democracy; the conviction formed the deepest source of Jackson’s opposition; the Bank also won no friends in the West by foreclosing on many western farms and draining “tribute” into eastern coffers—profit, not public service, was its first priority

5. The Bank War erupted in 1832 when Daniel Webster and Henry Clay presented Congress with a bill to renew the Bank of the United States’ charter (would not expire until 1836)

1. Clay pushed for renewal early to make it an election issue in 1832; Clay’s scheme was to ram a recharter bill through Congress and then send it on to the White House

2. If Jackson signed it, he would alienate his worshipful western followers
3. If he vetoed it, as seemed certain, he would presumably lose the presidency in the forthcoming election by alienating the wealthy and influential groups in the East.

6. The recharter bill slid through Congress but was killed by a scorching veto from Jackson; the “Old Hero” declared the monopolistic bank to be unconstitutional; of course the Supreme Court had declared it constitutional in the case of *McCulloch v. Maryland*.

7. Jackson’s veto message reverberated with constitutional consequences; it not only squashed the bank bill but vastly amplified the power of the presidencies; all previous vetoes had rested almost exclusively on questions of constitutionality but Jackson essentially argued that he was vetoing the bill because he found it harmful to the nation.

10. Old Hickory” Wallops Clay in 1832

1. Clay and Jackson were the chief gladiators in the looming electoral combat; the grizzled old general, who had earlier favored one term for a president and rotation in office, was easily persuaded by his cronies not to rotate himself out of office.

   1. The “Old Hero’s” adherents again raised the hickory pole and bellowed, “Jackson Forever: Go the Whole Hog”; Clay’s admirers shouted, “Freedom and Clay”.

   2. Novel features made the campaign of 1832 especially memorable; for the first time, a third-party entered the filed—the newborn Anti-Masonic party, which opposed the influence and fearsome secrecy of the Masonic Order (force in New York).

   3. The Anti-Masons appealed to long-standing American suspicions of secret societies, which they condemned as citadels of privilege and monopoly; but since Jackson himself was a Mason and gloried in his membership, it was an anti-Jackson party.
4. The Anti-Masons also attracted support from many evangelical Protestant groups seeking to use political power to effect moral and religious reforms

2. A further novelty of the presidential contest in 1832 was the calling of national nominating conventions to name candidates; the Anti-Masons and a group of National Republic added still another innovation when they adopted formal platforms, publicizing their positions on issues—Henry Clay and his National Republicans enjoyed advantages

1. Ample funds flowed into their campaign chest; most of the newspaper editors, some of them “bought” with Middle's bank loans, wrote badly about Jackson

2. Yet Jackson, idol of the masses, easily defeated the big-money Kentuckian; a Jacksonian wave again swept over the West and “South, surged into Pennsylvania and New York, and even washed into rock-ribbed New England (219 to 49)

11. Burying Biddle’s Bank

1. Its charter denied, the Bank of the United States was due to expire in 1836 but Jackson was not one to let the financial octopus die in peace; he was convinced that he now had a mandate from voters for its extermination and feared that Biddle might force a recharter

1. Jackson decided in 1833 to bury the bank for good by removing federal deposits from its vaults; he proposed depositing no more funds with Biddle and gradually shrinking existing deposits by using them to defray the day-to-day expenses of the government

2. Removing the deposits involved nasty complications; president’s closest advisers opposed this unnecessary, possibly unconstitutional, and certainly vindictive policy
3. Jackson was forced to reshuffle his cabinet twice before he could find a secretary of the Treasury who would bend to his iron will; a desperate Biddle called in his bank’s loans, hoping to illustrate the bank’s importance by producing a minor financial crisis.

4. A number of wobblier banks were driven to the wall by Biddle’s Panic, but Jackson’s resolution was firm; but the death of the Bank of the United States left a financial vacuum in the American economy and kicked off a lurching cycle of booms and busts.

2. Surplus federal funds were placed in several dozen state institutions—the so-called “pet banks,” chosen for their pro-Jackson sympathies; without a central bank in control, the pet banks and smaller “wildcat” banks flooded the country with paper money.

3. Jackson tried to rein in the runaway economy in 1836; “wildcat” currency had become so unreliable, especially in the West, that Jackson authorized the Treasury to issue a Specie Circular—a decree that required all public lands be purchased with “hard” money.

4. This drastic step slammed the brakes on the speculative boom, a neck-snapping change of direction that contributed to a financial panic and crash in 1837.

5. His successor would have to deal with the damage of the financial panic and crisis.

12. The Birth of the Whigs

1. New political parties were gelling in the 1830s lengthened; as early as 1828, the Democratic-Republicans of Jackson had adopted the once-tainted named Democrats.

2. Jackson’s opponents, fuming at his ironfisted exercise of presidential power began to coalesce as the Whigs—a new deliberately chosen to recollect
18th century British and Revolutionary American opposition to monarchy (King Andrew I)

3. The Whig party contained so many diverse elements that it was mocked as “an organized incompatibility”; hatred of Jackson and his “executive usurpation” was the only cement

1. The Whigs first emerged as an identifiable group in the Senate where Clay, Webster, and Calhoun joined forces in 1834 to pass a motion censuring Jackson for his single-handed removal of federal deposits from the Bank of the United States

2. After, the Whigs evolved into a potent national political force by attracting other groups alienated by Jackson: supporters of Clay’s American System, southern states’ righters offended by Jackson’s stand on nullification, northern industrialists and merchants, and many of evangelical Protestants associated with Anti-Masonic party

4. Whigs thought of themselves as conservatives, yet they were progressive in their support of active government programs and reforms; instead of boundless territorial acquisition, they called for internal improvements and supported institutions

5. The Whigs welcomed the market economy, drawing support from manufacturers in the North, planters in the South, and merchants and bankers in all sections

6. By absorbing the Anti-Masonic party, Whigs blunted much go the Democratic appeal to the common man; anti-Masons portrayed Jackson and Van Buren as imperious aristocrats

13. The Election of 1836

1. The secretary of state, Martin Van Buren of New York, was Jackson’s choice for “appointment” as his successor in 1836; leaving nothing to chance,
Jackson carefully rigged the nominating convention and rammed his favorite down the throats of delegates

2. Van Buren was supported by the Jacksonites without wild enthusiasm, even though he had promised “to tread generally” in the footsteps of his predecessor

3. As the election neared, the organization of the Whigs showed in their inability to nominate a single presidential candidate; their long-shot strategy was instead to run several prominent “favorite son,” each with a different regional appeal and hope to scatter the vote so that no candidate would win the majority (vote would belong to the House)

4. The “favorite son” was General William Henry Harrison, the hero of the Battle of Tippecanoe, the schemes of the Whigs availed to nothing, however

5. Van Buren, squired into office by the close popular vote but by the comfortable margin of 170 to 124 votes (for all the Whigs combined) in the Electoral College

14. Big Woes for the “Little Magician”

1. Martin Van Buren, eighth president, was the first to be born under the American flag

2. An accomplished strategist and spoils man—the “wizard of Albany”—he was also a statesman of wide experience in both legislative and administrative life

3. From the outset the new president labored under sever handicaps

   1. As a machine-made candidate, he incurred the resentment of many Democrats—those who objected to having a “bastard politician” smuggled into office behind Jackson
2. Mild-mannered Martin Van Buren seemed to rattle in the military boots of his testy predecessor; the people felt let down and Van Buren inherited the Jackson’s enemies.

3. Van Buren’s four years overflowed with toil and trouble; a rebellion in Canada in 1837 stirred up ugly incidents along the northern frontier and threatened to trigger war with Britain; the president attempted to play a neutral game.

4. The antislavery agitators in the North were in full cry; among other grievances, they were condemning the prospective annexation of Texas; worst of all, Jackson bequeathed to Van Buren the makings of a searing depression—hard times ordinarily blight the reputation of the president and Van Buren was no exception.

15. Depression Doldrums and the Independent Treasury

1. The panic of 1837 was a financial sickness of the times; its basic cause was rampant speculation prompted by a mania of get-rich-quickism—gamblers in western lands were doing a “land-office business” on borrowed capital, much of it the shaky currency of “wildcat banks”—the speculative craze spread to canal, roads, railroads, and slaves.

2. But speculation alone did not cause the crash; Jacksonian finance, including the Bank War and the Specie Circular, gave an additional jolt to an already teetering structure.

   1. Failures of wheat crops, ravaged by the Hessian fly, deepened the distress.

   2. Grain prices were forced so high that mobs in New York City Stormed warehouses and broke open flour barrels, three weeks before Van Buren took the oath.

   3. Financial stringency abroad likewise endangered America’s economic house of cards; late in 1836 the failure of two prominent British banks.
created tremors, and these in turn caused British investors to call in foreign loans—resulting pinch in the United States, combined with other setbacks, heralded the beginning of the panic.

4. Europe’s economic distresses have often become America’s distresses, for every major American financial panic has been affected by conditions overseas.

3. Hardship was acute and widespread; American banks collapsed by the hundreds, including some “pet banks,” which carried down with them several millions in gvt funds; commodity prices drooped, sales of public lands fell off, and customs revenues dried.

4. Factories closed their doors and unemployed workers milled in the streets.

5. The Whigs came forward with proposals for active government remedies for the economy’s ills; they called for the expansion of bank credit, higher tariffs, and subsidies for internal improvements but Van Buren spurned all such ideas (shackled by Jackson).

6. The beleaguered Van Buren tried to apply vintage Jacksonian medicine to the ailing economy through his controversial “Divorce Bill”; convinced that some of the financial fever was fed by the injection of federal funds into private banks, he championed the principle of “Divorcing” the government from banking altogether.

7. By establishing a so-called independent treasury, the government could lock its surplus money in vaults in several of the larger cities; government funds would thus be safe, but they would also be denied to the banking system as reserves (lest credit resources).

8. Van Buren’s “divorce” scheme was never highly popular; his fellow Democrats only supported it lukewarmly and the Whigs condemned it primarily because it squelched their hopes for a revived Bank of the United
State—after a prolonged struggle, Independent Treasury Bill passed Congress in 1840 but was repealed in the next year (reappeared)

16. Gone to Texas

1. Americans, greedy for land, continued to covet the vast expanse of Texas, which the United States had abandoned to Spain when acquiring Florida in 1819; the Spanish authorities wanted to populate this unpeopled area but Mexico won its independence

2. A new regime in Mexico City thereupon concluded arrangements in 1823 for granting a huge tract of land to Stephen Austin, with the understanding that he would bring into Texas three hundred American families—they were to be of Roman Catholic faith

   1. Two stipulations were largely ignored; hardy Texas pioneers remained Americans at heart (didn’t become Mexicanized) and resented the trammels imposed by a “foreign” government—they were especially annoyed by the presence of Mexican soldiers

   2. Energetic and prolific, Texan-Americans numbered about thirty thousand by 1835; most of them were law-abiding, God-fearing people, but some of them, had left the “States” only one or two jumps ahead of the sheriff (“G.T.T.” Gone to Texas)

3. Among the adventurers were Davy Crockett, the famous rifleman, and Jim Bowie, the presumed inventor of the murderous knife that bears his name; a distinguished latecomer and leader was an ex-governor of Tennessee, Sam Houston

4. The pioneer individualists who came to Texas were not easy to push around; friction rapidly increased between Mexicans and Texans over issues such as slavery, immigration, and local rights; slavery was a particularly touchy topic
5. Mexico emancipated its slaves in 1830 and prohibited the further importation of slaves into Texas, as well as further colonization by troublesome Americans

6. When Stephen Austin went to Mexico City in 1833 to negotiate these differences with the Mexican government, the dictator Santa Anna clapped him in jail and the explosion final came in 1835 when Santa Anna wiped out all local rights and started to raise an army

17. The Lone Star Rebellion

1. Early in 1836 the Texans declared their independence, unfurled their Lone Star flag, and named Sam Houston commander in chief; Santa Anna, swept ferociously into Texas

   1. Trapping a band of nearly two hundred Texans at the Alamo in San Antonio, he wiped them out to a man after a thirteen-day siege

   2. Colonel W. B. Travis had declared, “I shall never surrender nor retreat.... Victory or Death”; a short time later, a band of about 400 defeated the American volunteers, having thrown down their arms at Goliad, were butchered as “pirates”

   3. All these operations further delayed the Mexican advance and galvanized American opposition; slain heroes like Jim Bowie and Davy Crockett, well known in life, became legendary in death—Texan war cries swept up into the United States

2. General Sam Houston’s small army retreated to the east, luring Santa Anna To San Jacinto (near Houston); the Mexicans numbered about 1,300 while the Texans about 900

   1. Suddenly on April 21, 1836, Houston turned; taking full advantage of the Mexican siesta, the Texans wiped out the pursuing force and captured Santa Anna
2. The dictator was forced to sign two treaties; by their terms he agreed to withdraw Mexican troops and to recognize the Rio Grande as the extreme SW border of Texas; when released, the repudiated the agreement as illegal because it was extorted.

3. These events put the U.S. government in a sticky situation; the Texans could hardly have won their independence without the help in men and supplies from their American cousin.

1. The Washington government, as the Mexicans bitterly complained, had a solemn obligation under international law to enforce its leaky neutrality statutes.

2. But American public opinion, favorable to the Texans, openly nullified the existing legislation; the federal authorities were powerless to act and President Jackson (in 1837) extended the right hand of recognition to the Lone Star Republic.

4. Many Texans wanted not just recognition of their independence but outright union with the United States; the radiant Texas bride petitioned for annexation in 1837.

1. Uncle Sam was jerked back by the black hand of the slavery issue; antislavery crusaders in the North were opposing annexation with increasing vehemence; they contended that the whole scheme was merely a conspiracy of southern “slavocracy”.

2. At first glance, a “slavery plot” charge seemed plausible; most of the early settlers in Texas, as well as American volunteers during the revolution, had come from the states of the South and Southwest; but scholars have concluded that the settlement of Texas was merely the normal and inexorable march of the westward movement.

3. Most of the immigrants came from the South and Southwest cause they were closer.
5. Many Texans, still, were slaveholders and admitting Texas would mean enlarging slavery

18. Log Cabins and Hard Cider of 1840

1. Martin Van Buren was renominated by the Democrats in 1840 without enthusiasm; the party had no acceptable alternative to what the Whigs called “Martin Van Ruin”

2. The Whigs, hungering for the spoils of office, learned from their mistake in 1836 and the Whigs united behind one candidate, Ohio’s William Henry Harrison; he was not the ablest statesman (Webster or Clay) but he was believed to be their ablest vote-getter

   1. The aging hero, was known for his successes against Indians and the British at the Battles of Tippecanoe and the Thames; “Old Tippecanoe” was nominated primarily because he was issueless and enemy-less—a tested recipe for electoral success

   2. John Tyler of Virginia was selected as vice-presidential running mate (afterthought)

3. The Whigs published no official platform, hoping to sweep their hero into office with a frothy huzza-for-Harrison campaign reminiscent of Jackson’s triumph in 1828

   1. A Democratic editor played directly into Whig hands; stupidly insulting the West, he lampooned Harrison as an impoverished old farmer who should be content with a pension, a log cabin, and a barrel of hard cider (poor westerner’s champagne)

   2. Whigs adopted honest hard cider and sturdy log cabin as symbols of their campaign; Harrisonites portrayed him as the poor “Farmer of North Bend” who had been called from his cabin to drive corrupt Jackson spoilsmen from the “presidential palace”
3. They denounced Van Buren as a supercilious aristocrat; the Whig campaign was a master piece of inane hoopla; log cabins were dished up in every conceivable form

4. In truth Harrison was from one of the “First Families of Virginia,” he was not poverty-stricken, he did not live in a one-room log cabin, but rather in a mansion; he did not drink hard cider, he did not plow his fields, but the details didn’t matter

4. Harrison won by a surprising close margin in the popular vote but by an overwhelming electoral margin of 234 to 60; Van Buren was washed out of Washington (no real issues)

19. Politics for the People

1. The election of 1840 conclusively demonstrated two major changes in American politics since the Era of Good Feelings; the first was the triumph of a populist democratic style

   1. Democracy had been something of a taint in the days of the lordly Federalists

   2. But by the 1840s, aristocracy was the taint, and democracy was respectable; politicians were now forced to unbend and curry favor with the voting masses

   3. In truth, most high political offices continued to be filled by “leading citizens” but now these wealthy and prominent men had to forsake all social pretensions and cultivate the common touch if they hoped to win the presidential elections

2. The common man was at last moving to the center of the national political stage; instead of old divine right of kings, America was now bowing to the divine right of the people

20. The Two-Party System
1. The second dramatic change resulting from the 1840 election was the formation of a vigorous durable two-party system; the Jeffersonians had been so successful in absorbing the programs of their Federalist opponents that a full-blown two-party system had never truly emerged in the subsequent Era of Good Feelings.

2. The idea had prevailed that parties of any sort smacked of conspiracy and “faction” and were injurious to the health of the body politic in a virtuous republic; by 1840, political parties had fully come of age, a lasting legacy of Andrew Jackson’s tenaciousness.

3. Both national parties, the Democrats and the Whigs, grew out of the rich soil of Jeffersonian republicanism and each laid claim to different aspects of the republic inheritance.

   1. Jacksonian Democrats glorified the liberty of the individual and were fiercely on guard against the inroads of privilege into government.

   2. Whigs trumpeted the natural harmony of society and the value of community, and were willing to use government to realize their objectives.

   3. Whigs also berated those leaders—and they considered Jackson to be one—whose appeals to self-interest fostered conflict among individuals, classes, or sections.

   4. Democrats clung to states’ rights and federal restraint in social and economic affairs as their basic doctrines while the Whigs tended to favor a renewed national bank, protective tariffs, internal improvements, public schools, and increasingly, moral reforms such as the prohibition of liquor and eventually the abolition of slavery.

4. The two parties were thus separated by real differences of philosophy and policy; but they also had such in common; both were mass-based parties that tired deliberately to mobilize as many votes as possible for their cause;
although it is true that Democrats tended to be more humble folk and Whigs more prosperous, both parties commanded the loyalties of all kinds of Americas, from all social classes and in all sections

5. The social diversity of the two parties fostered horse-trading compromises within each part that prevented either from assuming extreme or radical positions; by the same token, the geographical diversity of the two parties slowed the emergence of purely sectional political parties—it temporarily suppressed, though compromise, the issue of slavery
Forging the National Economy, 1790-1860

1. The Westward Movement

1. The rise of Andrew Jackson, the first president from beyond the Appalachian Mountains, exemplified the inexorable westward march of the American people; the West, with its raw frontier, was the most typically American part of America.

2. The Republic and the people were so young—as late as 1850, half of Americans were under the age of thirty; By 1840 the “demographic center” of the American population map had crossed the Alleghenies; by the Civil War it had crossed the Ohio River.

3. Legend portraying men carving civilization out of the western woods were false as in reality, life was downright grim for most pioneer families in the West.

   1. Poorly fed, ill-clad, housed in hastily erected shanties, they were perpetual victims of disease, depression, and premature death; above all, unbearable loneliness haunted them, especially the women, who were often cut off from human contact.

   2. Frontier life could be tough and crude for men as well as no-holds-barred wrestling was a popular entertainment and pioneering Americans, marooned by geography, were often ill informed, superstitious, provincial, and fiercely individualistic.

   3. Popular literature of the period abounded with portraits of unique, isolated figures like Cooper’s heroic Natty Bumppo and Melville’s restless Captain Ahab.

   4. Even in the era of “rugged individualist” there were important exceptions; pioneers, in tasks beyond their resources would call upon
their neighbors for logrolling and barn raising and upon their government for help in building internal improvements

2. Shaping the Western Landscape

1. The westward movement also molded the physical environment
   1. Pioneers in a hurry often exhausted the land in the tobacco regions then pushed on
   2. In the Kentucky bottomlands, tall cane posed a barrier but settlers soon discovered that when the cane was burned off, European bluegrass thrived in the canefields
   3. Kentucky bluegrass” made ideal pasture for livestock—and lured thousands

2. The American West felt the pressure of civilization in additional ways
   1. By the 1820s American fur trappers were in the Rocky Mountain regions and the fur-trapping empire was based on the “rendezvous” system; each summer, traders ventured from St. Louis to the Rocky Mountain valley and waited for the trappers and Indians to arrive with beaver pelts to swap for manufactured goods from the East
   2. The trade thrived for two decades before the hats went out of style and fewer beavers
   3. Trade in buffalo robbers also flourished, leading eventually to the virtually total annihilation of the massive bison herds and still farther west, on the California coast, other traders bought up sea-otter pelts, driving otters to the point of near-extinction
   4. Aggressive, heedless exploitation of West natural bounty—“ecological imperialism”
3. Yet Americans in this period also revered nature and admired its beauty; the spirit of nationalism fed the growing appreciation of the uniqueness of the American wilderness

1. Searching for the United States’ distinctive characteristics, many observers found the wild, unspoiled character of the land, especially the West, to be defining

2. Other countries may have mountains or rivers, but none had the pristine, natural beauty of America, unspoiled by human hands and reminiscent of a time before the dawn of civilization—attitude became a kind of national mystique, inspiring literature and painting, and eventually kindling a powerful conservation movement

3. George Catlin was among the first to advocate for preservation of nature as deliberate national policy; he proposed the creation of a national park (Yellowstone, 1872)

3. The March of the Millions

1. As the American people moved west, they also multiplied at an amazing rate; by mid-century the population was still doubling approximately every twenty-five years

2. By 1860, the original thirteen states had more than doubled in number: thirty-three stars graced the American flag and the United States was the fourth most populous nation in the western world, exceed only by three European countries—Russia, France, and Austria

3. Urban growth continued explosively; in 1790 only two American cities (Philadelphia and New York) had populations of twenty thousand or more but by 1860, there were 43

4. Such over rapid urbanization unfortunately brought undesirable by-products; It intensified the problems of smelly slums, feeble street lighting,
inadequate policing, impure water, foul sewage, ravenous rats, and improper garbage disposal

5. A continuing high birthrate accounted for most of the increase in population, but by the 1840s the tides of immigration were adding hundreds of thousands more

1. Before this decade immigrants had been flowing in at a rate of sixth thousand a year, but suddenly the influx tripled in the 1840s and then quadrupled in the 1850s

2. During these two feverish decades, over a million and a half Irish, and nearly as many Germans, swarmed down the gangplanks—why did they come?

6. The immigrants came partly because Europe seemed to be running out of room; Europe grew and “surplus” people, who were displaced and footloose in their homelands before they felt the tug of the American magnet (nearly 60 million people abandoned Europe in the century after 1840, about 25 million went somewhere other than in the United States)

7. Yet American still beckoned most strongly to the struggling masses of Europe, and the majority of migrants headed for the “land of freedom and opportunity”

1. There was freedom from aristocratic caste and state church; there was abundant opportunity to secure broad acres and better one’s condition

2. Letters sent by immigrants—“America letters”—often described in glowing terms the richer life: low taxes, no compulsory military serve, and “three meat meals a day”

3. The introduction of transoceanic steamships also meant that the immigrants could come speedily, in a matter of ten or twelve days instead of ten or twelve weeks

4. The Emerald Isle Moves West
1. Ireland was drained in the mid-1840s; a terrible rot attacked the potato crop, on which the people had become dangerously dependent, and about one-fourth of them were swept away by disease and hunger; all told, about two million perished.

2. Tens of thousands of destitute souls, feeling the Land of Famine for the Land of Plenty, flocked to America in the “Black Forties”—Ireland’s great export has been population.

3. These uprooted newcomers—too poor to move west and buy the necessary land, livestock, and equipment—swarmed into the larger seaboard cities (Boston and NYC).

4. The luckless Irish immigrants received no red-carpet treatment.
   1. Forced to live in squalor, they were rudely crammed into the already-vile slums and were scorned by the older American stock, especially “proper” Protestant Bostonians, who regarded the scruffy Catholic arrivals as a social menace.
   2. As wage-depressing competitors for jobs (kitchen maids and railroads) the Irish were hated by native workers—“No Irish Need Apply” was a sign commonly posted.
   3. The Irish, for similar reasons, fiercely resented the blacks, with whom they shared society’s basement; race riots between black and Irish dockworkers flared up.

5. The friendless “famine Irish” were forced to fend for themselves; the Ancient Order of Hibernians, a semisecret society founded in Ireland to fight rapacious landlords, served in America as a benevolent society, aiding the downtrodden; it also helped spawn the “Molly Maguires,” a shadowy Irish miners’ union in the PA coal districts in 1860s-70s.
6. The Irish tended to remain in low-skill occupations but gradually improved their lot, usually by acquiring modest amounts of property (education of children usually cut short)

7. Politics quickly attracted these gregarious Gaelic newcomers and they soon began to gain control of powerful city machines—American politicians made hast to cultivate the Irish vote, especially in the politically potent state of New York and politicians usually found it politically profitable to fire verbal volleys at London (Irish hatred of the British)

5. The German Forty-Eighters

1. The influx of refugees from Germany between 1830 and 1860 was just as spectacular as that from Ireland; during these troubled years, over a million and a half Germans arrived

   1. The bulk of them were uprooted farmers, displaced by crop failures and other hardships; but a strong sprinkling were liberal political refugees

   2. Saddened by the collapse of the democratic revolutions of 1848, they had decided to leave the autocratic fatherland and flee to America—the brightest hope of democracy

2. Zealous German liberals like Carl Schurz, a relentless foe of slavery and public corruption, contributed richly to the elevation of American political life

3. Unlike the Irish, many Germanic newcomers possessed a modest amount of material goods; most of them pushed out to the lush lands of the Middle West, notably Wisconsin, where they settled and established model farms—like the Irish, they formed an influential body of voters, but they were less potent politically because they were more scattered

4. The hand of Germans in shaping American life was widely felt in still other ways
1. The Conestoga wagon, the Kentucky rifle, and the Christmas tree were all German.

2. Germans had fled from the militarism and wars of Europe and consequently came to be a safeguard of isolationist sentiment in the upper Mississippi valley.

3. Better educated on the whole than the stump-grubbing Americans, they warmly supported public schools, including their Kindergarten (children’s garden).

4. The Germans likewise did much to stimulate art and music; as outspoken champions of freedom, they became relentless enemies of slavery before the Civil War.

5. Yet the Germans—often dubbed “damned Dutchmen”—were regarded with suspicion by their old-stock American neighbors; seeking to preserve their language and culture, they sometimes settled in compact “colonies” and kept aloof from the surrounding community.

6. They were accustomed to the “Continental Sunday” and drank huge quantities of an amber beverage called bier (beer)—their Old World drinking habits, like the Irish, spurred advocates of temperance in the use of alcohol to redouble their reform efforts.

6. Flare-ups of Antiforeignism

1. The invasion by this so-called immigrant “rabble” in the 1840s and 1850s inflamed the prejudices of American “nativists”—they feared that these foreign hordes would outbreed, outvote, and overwhelm the old “native” people of America.

1. Not only did the newcomers take jobs from “native” Americans, but the bulk of the displaced Irish were Roman Catholics, as were a substantial minority of the Germans.
2. The Church of Rome was still widely regarded by many old-line Americans as a “foreign” church; convents were commonly referred to as “popish brothels”

2. Roman Catholics were now on the move; seeking to protect their children from Protestant indoctrination in the public schools, they began in the 1840s to construct a separate Catholic educational system (expensive but revealed the strength of its commitment)

3. With the enormous influx of the Irish and Germans in the 1840s and 1850s, the Catholics became a powerful religious group; in 1840 they ranked fifth behind the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists but by 1850, they bounded into first

4. Older-stock Americans were alarmed by these mounting figures; they professed to believe that in due time the immigrants would establish the Catholic Church at the expense of Protestantism and would introduce “popish idols”

1. The noisier American “nativists” rallied for political action; in 1849, they formed the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner, which soon developed into the formidable American, or “Know-Nothing,” party—a name derived from its secretiveness

2. Nativists” agitated for rigid restrictions on immigration and naturalization for laws authorizing the deportation of alien paupers; promoted a lurid literature of exposure

3. There was occasional mass violence and the most frightful flare-up occurred during 1844 in Philadelphia were the Irish Catholics fought back against the threats of “nativists”—two Catholic churches had been burned and over fifty wounded
5. Immigrants were making America a more pluralistic society and perhaps it was small wonder that cultural clashes would occur by why weren’t there more episodes?

1. The vigorous growth of the economy in these years both attracted immigrants in the first place and ensured that they could claim their share of the American wealth

2. They helped fuel economic expansion but without the newcomers, an agricultural United States might have just watched the Industrial Revolution in envy

7. The March of Mechanization

1. A group of gifted British inventors, beginning about 1750, perfected a series of machines for the mass production of textiles and this enslavement of steam multiplied the power of human muscles some ten-thousand fold and ushered in the modern factory system

   1. The Industrial Revolution was accompanied by a transformation in agricultural production and in the methods of transportation and communication

   2. The Factory system gradually spread from Britain to other lands and it took a generation or so to reach western Europe, and then the United States

2. The American Republic was slow to embrace the factory system because the virgin soil in America was cheap; labor was therefore generally scarce and enough nimble hands to operate machines were hard to fine—until immigrants began to pour ashore in the 1840s

3. Money for capital investment was not plentiful in pioneering America; raw materials lay undeveloped, undiscovered, or unsuspected—much of coal was imported from Britain
4. Just as labor was scarce, so were consumers—the young country at first lacked a domestic market large enough to make factory-scale manufacturing profitable.

5. Established British factories provided cutthroat competition and posed another problem.

6. The British also enjoyed a monopoly of the textile machinery, whose secrets they were anxious to hide from foreign competitors; parliament enacted laws to protect its economy.

7. Not until the middle of the 19th century did the factories exceed output of the farms.

8. Whitney Ends the Fiber Famine

   1. Samuel Slater has been acclaimed the “Father of the Factory System”.

      1. A skilled British mechanic, he was attracted by bounties being offered to British workers familiar with the textile machines; after memorizing the plans for the machinery, he escaped in disguise to America, where he won the back of Moses Brown, a Quaker capitalist in Rhode Island (he put into operation in 1791 the first efficient American machinery for spinning cotton thread).

      2. Although the mechanism was ready, where was the cotton fiber—process expensive.

   2. Another mechanical genius, Massachusetts-born Eli Whitney, now made his mark.

      1. After graduating from Yale and journeying to Georgia, in 1793, he built a crude machine called the cotton gin that was 50 times more effective than the hand process.

      2. Almost overnight the raising of cotton became highly profitable and the South was tied hand and foot to the throne of King Cotton; the insatiable
demand for cotton revived the chains on the limbs of the downtrodden southern blacks

3. South and North both prospered; slave-driving planters cleared more acres for cotton, pushing the Cotton Kingdom westward off the depleted ride-water plains

4. Factories at first flourished most actively in New England, though they branched out into the more populous areas of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; the South’s capital was bound up in slaves—its local consumers for the most part were desperately poor

5. New England was singularly favored as an industrial center for several reasons
   1. Dense population provided labor and accessible markets; shipping brought in capital; snug seaports made import of raw materials and export of finished products easy
   2. The Rapid rivers provided abundant water power to turn the cogs of the machines; by 1860 more than 400 million pounds of southern cotton poured annually into the gaping maws of over a thousand mills, mostly in the New England region

9. Marvels in Manufacturing
   1. America’s factories spread slowly until about 1807, when there began the fateful sequence of the embargo, nonintercourse, and the War of 1812
      1. Stern necessity dictated the manufacture of substitutes for normal imports, while the stoppage of European commerce was temporarily ruinous to Yankee shipping
      2. Generous bounties were offered by local authorities from home-grown goods
   2. The manufacturing boomlet broke abruptly with the peace of Ghent in 1815
1. British competitors unloaded their dammed-up surpluses at ruinously low prices

2. Responding to the pained out-cries, Congress provided some relief when it passed the mildly protective Tariff of 1816—attempts to control the shape of the economy

3. As the factory system flourished, it embraced numerous other industries besides textiles

   1. Prominent among them was the manufacturing of firearms and here the wizardly Eli Whitney again appeared with an extraordinary contribution

   2. About 1798, Whitney seized upon the idea of having machines make each part, so that muskets could be scrambled and reassembled—interchangeable parts

   3. The principle of interchangeable parts was widely adopted by 1850 and it ultimately became the basis of modern mass-production, assembly-line methods

4. The sewing machines, invented by Elias Howe in 1846 and perfected by Isaac Singer, gave another strong boost to northern industrialization; the sewing machine became the foundation of the ready-made clothing industry, which took root near the Civil War

5. Each momentous new invention seemed to stimulate sill more imaginative inventions, patents in 1800 numbered only 306 patents but by the end of 1860, it totaled 28,000

6. Technical advances spurred equally important changes in the form and legal status of business organizations—the principle of limited liability aided the concentration of capital by permitting the individual investor to risk no more than his own share of stock
7. One of the earliest investment capital companies, the Boston Associates, eventually dominated the textile, railroad, insurance, and banking business of Massachusetts.

8. Laws of “free incorporation,” first passed in New York in 1848, meant that businessmen could create corporations without applying for individual charters from legislatures.

9. Samuel F. B. Morse’s telegraph was among the inventions that tightened the sinews of an increasingly complex business world; by the eve of the Civil War, a web of singing wires spanned the continent, revolutionizing news gathering, diplomacy, and finance.

10. Workers and “Wage Slaves”

1. One bad outgrowth of the factory system was an acute labor problem; the industrial revolution submerged the personal association to the impersonal ownership of factories.

2. Clearly the early factory system did now shower its benefits evenly on all.

   1. While many owners waxed fat, working people often wasted away at their workbenches; hours were long, wages were low, and meals were skimpy.

   2. Workers were forced to toil in unsanitary buildings and were forbidden by law to form labor unions for such activities were regarded as criminal conspiracies.

   3. Vulnerable to exploitation were child workers; in 1820 half the nation’s industrial toilers were children under ten years of age; they were victims of factory labor.

3. By contrast, the lot of most adult wage workers improved markedly in the 1820s and 1830s; in flush of Jacksonian democracy, many of the states granted the laborers the vote.
4. As well as demanding the ten-hour day, higher wages, and tolerable working conditions, workers demanded public education for children and an end to imprisonment for debt.

1. Employers fought the ten-hour day to the last ditch and argued that reduced hours would lessen production, increase costs, and demoralize the workers—more free time.

2. A red-letter gain was at length registered for labor in 1840, when President Van Buren established the ten-hour day for federal employees on public works.

5. Day laborers at last learned that their strongest weapon was to lay down their tools.

1. Dozens of strikes erupted in the 1830s and 1840s, most of them for higher wages, some for the ten-hour day, and a few for such unusual goals as right to smoke on job.

2. The workers usually lost more strikes than they won for the employer could resort to importing strikebreakers, often fresh off the boat from the Old World.

3. Labor’s early and painful efforts at organization had netted some 300,000 trade unionists by 1830; but such gains were negated with the severe depression of 1837.

4. As unemployment spread, union membership shriveled; yet toilers won a promising legal victory in 1842 when the supreme court of Massachusetts ruled in the case of Commonwealth v. Hunt that labor unions were not illegal conspiracies.

5. The enlightened decision did not legalize the strike overnight but it was significant.

11. Women and the Economy
1. Women were also sucked into the clanging mechanism of factory production; farm women and girls had an important place in the preindustrial economy, spinning yarn, weaving cloth, and making candles, soap, butter, and cheese

1. New factories such as the textile mills undermined these activities, cranking out manufactured goods much faster than they could be made by hand at home

2. Yet these same factories offered employment to the very young women whose work they were displacing; factory jobs promised greater economic independence

3. Factory girls” typically toiled six days a week, earning work “from dark to dark”

4. The Boston Associates pointed to their textile mill at Lowell, MA as a showplace factory where most workers were farm girls who were carefully supervised on and off

2. Opportunities for women to be economically self-supporting were scarce and consisted mainly of nursing, domestic service, and especially teaching

1. Catharine Beecher tirelessly urged women to enter the teaching profession; she eventually succeeded beyond her dreams, as men left teaching for other lines of work and school teaching became a thoroughly “feminized” occupation

2. About 10% of white women were working for pay outside their own homes in 1850, and estimates are that about 20% of all women had been employed before marriage

3. The vast majority of workingwomen were single; upon marriage, they left their paying jobs and took up their new work as wives and mothers (they were enshrined in a “cult of domesticity” a widespread cultural creed that glorified functions of the homemaker)
4. From their pedestal, married women commanded immense moral power and they increasingly made decisions that altered the character of the family itself.

5. Women’s changing roles and the spreading Industrial Revolution brought some important changes in the life of the nineteenth-century changes in the life of the 19th century home.

6. Women’s changing roles and the spreading Industrial Revolution brought some important changes in the life of the nineteenth-century home—the tradition “women’s sphere”

1. Love, not parental “arrangement” more and more frequently determined the choice of a spouse—yet parents often retained the power of veto; families more closely knit.

2. Most striking, families grew smaller; the “fertility rate,” or number of births among women age fourteen to forty-five, dropped sharply among white women in the years after the Revolution and in the course of the 19th century as a whole, fell by half.

3. Women undoubtedly played a large part in decisions to have fewer children.

4. This newly assertive role for women has been called “domestic feminism” because it signified the growing power and independence of women (“cult of domesticity”).

7. Smaller families, in turn, meant child-centered families, since where children are fewer, parents can lavish more care on them individually; lessons were enforced by punishments other than the hickory stick (shaping the child instead of just breaking the child).

8. In the little republic of the family, good citizens were raised not to be meekly obedient to authority, but to be independent individuals who could make
their own decisions on the basis of internalized moral standards (small, affectionate, child-centered modern family)

12. Western Farmers Reap a Revolution in the Fields

1. The trans-Allegheny region—especially the Ohio-Indiana-Illinois tier—was becoming the nation’s breadbasket and before long it would become a granary to the world

1. Pioneer families first planted their painfully uneven fields to corn; the yellow grain was amazingly versatile and could be fed to hogs or distilled into liquor

2. Both these products could be transported more easily than the bulky grain and they became the early western farmer’s staple market items (trade of hogs)

2. Most western produce was at first floated down the Ohio-Mississippi River system, to feed the lusty appetite of the booming Cotton Kingdom but western farmers were as hungry for profits as southern slaves and planters were for food (cultivated more land)

3. Ingenious inventors came to the air of these western tillers

1. One of the first obstacles that frustrated the farmers was the thickly matted soil of the West, which snapped fragile wooden plows and John Deere of Illinois in 1827 finally produced a steel plow; sharp and effective, it was light enough to be pulled by horses

2. In the 1830s, Cyrus McCormick contributed the most wondrous contraption of all: a mechanical mower-reaper; the clattering cogs of his horse-drawn machine were to western farmers what the cotton gin was to southern planters

3. Seated on his reaper, a single man could do the work of five men with scythes
4. The mower-reaper made ambitious capitalists out of humble plowmen who now scrambled for more acres on which to plant more fields of billowing wheat.

5. Subsistence farming gave way to production for the market, as large-scale, specialized, cash-crop agriculture came to dominate the trans-Allegheny West; soon hustling farmer-businesspeople were annually harvesting a larger crop than the South could devour.

6. They began to dream of markets elsewhere but they were still largely land-locked; commerce moved north and south on the river systems; before it could begin to move east-west in bulk, a transportation revolution would have to occur.

13. Highways and Steamboats

1. In 1789, primitive methods of travel were still in use; waterborne commerce, whether along the coast or on the rivers, was slow, uncertain, and often dangerous.

2. Cheap and efficient carriers were imperative if raw materials were to be transported to factories and if finished products were to be delivered to consumers.

3. A promising improvement came in the 1790s, when a private company completed the Lancaster Turnpike in Pennsylvania; a broad hard-surfaced highway from Philly to Lancaster; as drivers approached the tollgate, they were confronted with a barrier of sharp pikes, which were turned aside when they paid their toll—hence the term turnpike.

1. The Lancaster Turnpike proved to be a highly successful venture, returning as high as 15 percent annual dividends to its stockholders; it attracted a rich trade to Philadelphia and touched off a turnpike-building boom that lasted about twenty years.
2. The turnpike also stimulated western development and beckoned to the canvas-covered Conestoga wagons, whose creakings herald a westward advance

4. Western road building, always expensive, encountered many obstacles
   
   1. One pesky roadblock was the noisy states’ righters, who opposed federal aid to local projects; Eastern states also protested against their populations moving westward

   2. Westerners scored a notable triumph in 1811 when the federal government began to construct the elongated National Road, or Cumberland Road

   3. This highway ultimately stretched from Cumberland, in western Maryland, to Vandalia, in Illinois, a distance of 591 miles; War of 1812 interrupted construction and states’ rights shackles on internal improvements hampered federal grants

   4. But the thoroughfare was finally, belatedly brought to its destination in 1852 by a combination of aid from the states and the federal government

5. The steamboat craze, which overlapped the turnpike craze, was touched off by an ambitious painter-engineer named Robert Fulton who installed a powerful steam engine in a vessel that posterity came to know as the Clermont but was dubbed “Fulton’s Folly”

6. On a historic day in 1807, the little ship churned steadily from New York City up the Hudson River toward Albany and made the run of 150 miles in 32 hours

7. The success of the steamboat was sensational; people could now in large degree defy wind, wave, tide, and downstream current (within years, carrying capacity doubled)

   1. As keelboats had been pushed up the Mississippi at less than one mile an hour, a process that was prohibitively expensive, now the steamboats
could churn rapidly against the current, ultimately attaining speeds in excess of ten miles an hour

2. By 1820 there were some sixty steamboats on the Mississippi and by 1860 about one thousand; keen rivalry among the swift and gaudy steamers led to memorable races

3. Chugging steamboats played a vital role in the opening of the West and South, both of which were richly endowed with navigable rivers (population clusters)


1. A canal-cutting craze paralleled the boom in turnpikes and steamboats

1. A few canals had been built around falls and elsewhere in the colonial days; resourceful New Yorkers, cut off from federal aid by states’ righters, themselves dug the Erie Canal, linking the Great Lakes with the Hudson River

2. They were blessed with the driving leadership of Governor DeWitt Clinton, whose grandiose project was called “Clinton’s Big Ditch” or “the Governor’s Gutter”

3. Begun in 1817, the canal eventually ribboned 363 miles and on its completion in 1825, a garlanded canal boat glided from Buffalo, on Lake Erie, to the Hudson River and on to New York harbor—water from Clinton’s keg baptized the Empire state

4. Mule-drawn passengers and bulky freight could now be handled with thrift and dispatch, at the dizzy speed of five miles an hour (cost of shipping fell drastically)

2. Ever-widening economic ripples followed the completion of the Erie Canal; the value of land along the route skyrocketed and new cities (Rochester, Syracuse) blossomed
1. Industry in the state boomed; the new profitability of farming in the Old Northwest attracted thousands of European immigrants to the unaxed and untaxed lands there

2. Other profound economic and political changes followed the canal’s completion

3. The price of potatoes in NYC was cut in half, and many dispirited New England farmers, no longer able to face the ruinous competition, abandoned their holdings

4. Some because mill hands, thus speeding the industrialization of America and others, finding it easy to go west over the Erie Canal, took up new farmland south of the Great Lakes; still others shifted to fruit, vegetable, and dairy farming

15. The Iron Horse

1. The most significant contribution to the development of such an economy proved to be the railroad; it was cheaper than canals to construct, and not frozen over in the winter

1. Able to go almost anywhere, even through the Allegheny barrier, it defied terrain and weather; the first railroad appeared in the United States in 1828 and by 1860, the United States boasted thirty thousand miles of railroad track; ¾ of it in the North

2. At first the railroad faced strong opposition from vested interests, especially canal backers; early railroads were also considered a dangerous public menace for flying sparks could set fire to nearby haystacks and houses and fear railway accidents

2. Railroad pioneers had to overcome other obstacles as well; brakes were so feeble that the engineer might miss the station twice, both arriving and back; distance between the rails meant frequent changes of trains for passengers;
but gauges soon became standardized, better brakes did brake, safety devices were adopted, and luxury trains introduced

16. Cables, Clippers, and Pony Riders

1. Other forms of transportation and communication were binding together the United States and the world; a crucial development came in 1858 when Cyrus Field finally stretched a cable under the deep North Atlantic waters from Newfoundland to Ireland

2. Although this initial cable went dead after three weeks of public rejoicing, a heavier cable laid in 1866 permanently linked the American and European continents

3. The United States merchant marine encountered rough sailing during much of the early nineteenth century; American vessels had been repeatedly laid up by the embargo, the War of 1812, and the panics of American in the years of 1819 and 1837

4. In the 1840s and 1850s, a golden age dawned for American shipping

   1. Yankee naval yards, notably Donald McKay’s at Boston, began to send down the ways sleek new craft called clipper ships—they glided across the sea under towering masts and clouds of canvas; in a fair breeze, they could outrun any steamer

   2. The stately clippers sacrificed cargo space for speed, and their captains made killings by hauling high-value cargoes in record times; they wrested much of the tea-carrying trade between the Far East and Britain from their slower-sailing British competitors

   3. The hour of glory for the clipper was relatively brief as on the eve of the Civil War, the British had clearly won the world race for maritime ascendancy with their iron tramp steamers; although slower and less romantic, they were more reliable/roomier
5. Rapid American communication would be complete by including the Far West

1. By 1858 horse-drawn overland stagecoaches were a familiar sight and their dusty tracks stretched from the bank of the Missouri River clear to California

2. Even more dramatic was the Pony Express, established in 1860 to carry mail speedily the two thousand lonely miles from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Sacramento, California

3. Daring lightweight riders, leaping onto wiry ponies saddled at stations approximately ten miles apart, could make the trip in an amazing ten days (folded after 1.5 years)

6. The express riders were unhorsed by Samuel Morse’s clacking keys, which began tapping messages to California in 1861—dying technology of wind and muscle

17. The Transport Web Binds the Union

1. The desire of the East to tap the West stimulated the “transportation revolution”

1. Until about 1830 the produce of the western region drained southward to the cotton belt but the steamboat vastly aided the reverse flow of finished goods up the watery western arteries and helped bind West and South together

2. But the truly revolutionary changes in commerce and communication came in the three decades before the Civil War, as canals and railroad tracks radiated out from the East, across the Alleghenies and into the blossoming heartland

3. They would offset the “natural” flow of trade by a grid of “internal improvements”
2. The builders succeeded beyond their wildest dreams; the Mississippi was increasingly robbed of its traffic; by the 1840s the city of Buffalo handled more western produce than New Orleans; New York City became the seaboard queen of the nation (huge port)

3. By the eve of the Civil War, the principle of division of labor, which spelled productivity and profits in the factory, applied on a national scale too (each region was specialized)
   1. The South raised cotton for export to livestock to feed factory workers in the East and in Europe; the East mad machines and textiles for the South and the West
   2. Many Southerners regarded the Mississippi as the chain linking the North and South

18. The Market Revolution
   1. The “market revolution” transformed a subsistence economy of scattered farms and tiny workshops into a national network of industry and commerce
      1. as more and more Americans linked their economic fate to the burgeoning market economy, the self-sufficient households of colonial days were transformed
      2. In growing numbers they now scattered to work for wages in the mills, or they planted just a few crops for sale at market and used the money to buy goods made by strangers in far-off factories (store-bought products replaced homemade products)
   2. A quiet revolution occurred in the household division of labor and status
      1. Traditional women’s work was rendered superfluous and devalued; the home itself, once a center of economic production in which all family members cooperated, grew into a place of refuge from the world of work—special and separate sphere of women
2. Revolutionary advances in manufacturing and transportation brought increased prosperity to all Americans, but they also widened the gulf between the rich and poor.

3. Cities bred the greatest extremes of economic inequality; unskilled workers fared worst and many of them came to make up a floating mass of “drifters,” buffeted from town to town by the shifting prospects for menial jobs—accounted for brawling industrial centers.

4. Although their numbers were large, they left little behind them; many myths about “social mobility” grew up over the buried memories of these unfortunate day laborers; rags-to-riches success stories were relatively few but there was not excessive mobility.

5. Yet America, with its dynamic society and wide-open spaces, undoubtedly provided more “opportunity” than the contemporary countries of the Old World; general prosperity helped defuse the potential class conflict that might otherwise have explode.
The Ferment of Reform and Culture, 1790-1860

1. Reviving Religion

1. Church attendance was still a regular ritual for about three-fourths of the 23 million Americans in 1850; religion of these years was not the old-time religion of colonial days

   1. The austere Calvinist rigor had long been seeping out of the American churches; the rationalist ideas of the French Revolutionary era had done much to soften orthodoxy

   2. Many of the Founding Fathers, including Jefferson and Franklin, embraced the liberal doctrines of Deism that Thomas Paine promoted in his book *The Age of Reason*

   3. Deists relied on reason rather than revelation, on science rather than the Bible; they rejected the concept of original sin and denied Christ’s divinity; yet deists believed in a Supreme Being who created a knowable universe (humans and moral behavior)

2. Deism helped to inspire an important spin-off from the severe Puritanism of the past—the Unitarian faith, which began to gather momentum in NE at the end of the 18th century

   1. Unitarians held that God existed in only one person and no in the orthodox Trinity

   2. Although denying the deity of Jesus, Unitarians stressed the essential goodness of human nature rather than its vileness (belief in free will and salvation through works)

   3. They pictured God not as a stern Creator but as a loving Father; the Unitarian movement appealed mostly to intellectuals whose rationalism
and optimism contrasted sharply with the hellfire doctrines of Calvinism (predestination, depravity)

3. A boiling reaction against the growing liberalism in religion set in about 1800

1. A fresh wave of roaring revivals, beginning on the southern frontier but soon rolling even into the cities of the Northeast, sent the Second Great Awakening surging

2. Sweeping up even more people than the First Great Awakening, the Second Awakening was one of the most momentous episodes in history of American religion

3. The tidal wave of spiritual fervor left converted souls, many shattered and reorganized churches, and numerous new sects; it also encouraged an effervescent evangelicalism that bubbled up into innumerable areas of American life—prison reform, temperance cause, women’s movement, and the crusade to abolish slavery

4. The Second Great Awakening was spread to the masses on the frontier by huge “camp meetings”; as many as 25,000 people would gather for an encampment of several days to drink the hellfire gospel as served by an itinerant preacher; revivals boosted church membership and stimulated a variety of humanitarian reforms (missionary work)

5. Methodists and Baptists reaped the most abundant harvest of souls from the fields fertilized by revivalism; both sects stressed personal conversion, a relatively democratic control of church affairs, and a rousing emotionalism; powerful Peter Cartwright was the best known of the Methodist “circuit riders” or traveling frontier preachers

6. Charles Grandison Finney was the greatest of the revival preachers; Finney abandoned being a lawyer to become an evangelist after a conversion experience as a young man
1. Finney held huge crowds spellbound with the power of his oratory and the pungency of his message; he led massive revivals in Rochester and NYC in 1830 and 1831.

2. He devised the “anxious bench,” where repentant sinners could sit in full view of the congregation, and he encouraged women to pray aloud in public.

7. A key feature of the Second Great Awakening was the feminization of religion, both in terms of church membership and theology; middle-class women were the first and most fervent enthusiasts of religious revivalism (majority of new church members).

8. Evangelicals preached a gospel of female spiritual worth and offered women an active role in bringing their husbands and families back to God; that accomplished, many women turned to saving the rest of society (epitomized the era’s ambitious reforms).

2. Denominational Diversity

1. Revivals also furthered the fragmentation of religious faiths; Western New York, where descendants of NE Puritans had settled, came to be known as the “Burned-Over District.”

2. Millerites, or Adventists, who had several hundred thousand adherents, rose from the super-heated soil of the Burned-Over region in the 1830s; named after William Miller, they interpreted the Bible to mean that Christ would return to earth on October 22, 1844.

3. The failure of Jesus to descend on schedule dampened but did not destroy the movement.

4. Like the First Great Awakening, the Second Great Awakening tended to widen the lines between classes and regions; more prosperous and conservative denominations in East were little touched by revivalism, and
Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Unitarians continued to rise mostly from wealthier, better-educated levels of society.

5. Methodists, Baptists, and other new sects spawned by swelling evangelistic fervor tended to come from less prosperous, less “learned” communities in the rural South and West.

6. Religious diversity further reflected social cleavages when the churches faced up to the slavery issue; by 1844-1845 both the southern Baptists and the southern Methodists had split with their northern brethren over human bondage (Presbyterians split).

7. The secession of the southern churches foreshadowed the secession of the southern states.

3. A Desert Zion in Utah

1. The smoldering spiritual embers of the Burned-Over District kindled Joseph Smith, a rugged visionary, who reported that he had received some golden plates from an angel.

   1. When deciphered, they constituted the Book of Mormon, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) was launched (American product).

   2. After establishing a religious oligarchy, Smith ran into serious opposition from his non-Mormon neighbors, first in Ohio and then in Missouri and Illinois.

   3. His cooperative sect rasped rank-and-file Americans, who were individualistic and dedicated to free enterprise; the Mormons aroused further antagonism by voting as a unit and by openly but understandably drilling their militia for defensive purposes.

   4. Accusations of polygamy likewise arose and increased in intensity (Smith).
Continuing hostility finally drove the Mormons to desperate measure; in 1844 Joseph Smith and his brother were murdered and mangled by a mob in Carthage, Illinois, and the movement seemed near collapse; the failing torch was seized by Brigham Young  

1. Brigham Young quickly proved to be an aggressive leader, an eloquent preacher, and a gifted administrator; determined to escape further persecution, Young in 1846-184 led his oppressed and despoiled Latter-Day Saints over the rolling plains to Utah  

2. Overcoming pioneer hardships, the Mormons soon made the desert bloom like a new Eden by means of ingenious and cooperative methods of irritation (gulls and crickets)  

3. Semiarid Utah grew remarkably; by the end of 1848, some five thousand settlers had arrived and other large bands were to follow them; many dedicated Mormons in the 1850s actually made the 1,300 miles trek across the plains pulling carts  

4. Under the rigidly disciplined management of Brigham Young, the community became a prosperous frontier theocracy and a cooperative commonwealth; Young married as many as twenty-seven women and populations were further swelled by thousands of immigrants from Europe, where the Mormons had established a missionary movement  

5. A crisis developed when the Washington government was unable to control the hierarchy of Brigham Young, who had been made territorial governor in 1850; a federal army marched in 1857 against the Mormons but the quarrel was finally adjusted without war  

4. Free Schools for a Free People  

1. Tax-supported primary schools were scarce in the early years of the Republic; they existed chiefly to educate the children of the poor—the so-called ragged schools
2. Advocates of “free” public education met stiff opposition; well-to-do conservative Americans gradually saw the light; if they did not pay the educate “other folks’ brats,” they children might brow up into a dangerous, ignorant rabble—armed with the vote

1. Taxation for education was an insurance premium that the wealthy paid for stability and democracy; tax-supported public education triumphed between 1825 and 1850

2. Although it lagged in the slavery-cursed South, laborers wielded increased influence and demanded instruction for children (a free vote cried aloud for free education)

3. The famed little red schoolhouse—with one room, one stove, one teacher, and often eight grades—became the shrine of American democracy; still early free schools stayed open only a few months of the year and schoolteachers, most of them men in this era, were too often ill trained, ill tempered, and ill paid

4. These knights of the blackboard often “boarded around” in the community and some knew scarcely more than their older pupils—they usually taught only the “three R’s”—“readin’, ‘ritin’, and ‘rithmetic” (rugged Americans thought this was enough)

3. Reform was urgently needed and into the breach stepped Horace Mann, a brilliant and idealistic graduate of Brown University; as secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, he campaigned effectively for more and better school houses, longer school terms, high pay for the teachers who worked in the schools, and an expanded curriculum

1. His influence radiated out to other states, and impressive improvements were chalked up but education still remained an expensive luxury for many communities
2. Black slaves in the South were legally forbidden to receive instruction in reading or writing, and free blacks, in the North as well were usually excluded from schools.

4. Educational advances were aided by improved textbooks, notably those of Noah Webster, a Yale-educated Connecticut Yankee who was known as the “Schoolmaster of the Republic”; his “reading lessons” used by millions of children in the 19th century were partly designed to promote patriotism (Webster devoted 20 years to his famous dictionary, published in 1828, which helped to standardize the American language).

5. Equally influential was Ohioan William H. McGuffey, a teacher-preacher of rare power; his grade-school readers sold 122 million copies in the following decades; McGuffey’s Readers hammered home lasting lessons in morality, patriotism, and idealism.

5. Higher Goals for Higher Learning

1. Higher education was likewise stirring; the religious zeal of the Second Great Awakening led to the planting of many small, denominational, liberal arts colleges (South and West).

   1. Too often they were academically anemic, established more to satisfy local pride than to advance the cause of learning; like their more venerable, ivy-draped brethren, the new colleges offered a narrow, tradition-bound curriculum of Latin, Greek, mathematics, and moral philosophy (little intellectual vitality and much boredom).

   2. The first state-supported universities sprang up in the South, beginning with North Carolina in 1795; federal land grants nourished the growth of state institutions of higher learning; conspicuous among the early group was the U of Virginia (1819).

   3. The University of Virginia was largely the brainchild of Thomas Jefferson, who designed its beautiful architecture and dedicated
university to freedom from religious or political shackles, and modern languages and the sciences received emphasis

2. Women’s higher education was frowned upon in the early decades of the 19th century

   1. A woman’s place was believed to be in the home, and training in needlecraft seemed more important than training in algebra; coeducation was regarded as frivolous

   2. Prejudices also prevailed that too much learning injured the feminine brain, undermined health, and rendered women unfit for marriage

3. Women’s schools at the secondary level began to attain some respectability in the 1820s, thanks in part to the educated work of Emma Willard; in 1821 she established the Troy Female Seminary; Oberlin College, in Ohio, jolted traditionalists in 1837 when it opened its doors to women as well as men (Oberlin had already admitted black students)

4. Adults who craved more learning satisfied their thirst for knowledge at private subscription libraries or, increasingly, at tax-supported libraries (traveling lecturers helped to carry learning to the masses through the lyceum lecture associations)

5. Magazines flourished in the pre-Civil War years, but most of them withered after a short life; the *North American Review*, founded in 1815, was the long-lived leader of intellectuals; *Godey’s Lad’s Book*, (1830) attained enormous circulation of 150,000

6. An Age of Reform

   1. As the young Republic grew, reform campaigns of all types flourished in sometimes bewildering abundance; most reformers were intelligent, inspired idealists

       1. The optimistic promises of the Second Great Awakening inspired people to battle earthly evils and modern idealists dreamed anew the old
Puritan vision of a perfected society: free from cruelty, war, intoxicating drink, discrimination, and slavery

2. Women were particularly prominent in these reform crusades, especially in their own struggles for suffrage; for many middle-class women, the reform campaigns provided a unique opportunity to escape the confines of the home and enter public affairs.

2. In part the practical, activist Christianity of reformers resulted from desire to reaffirm traditional values as they plunged into a world transformed by the market economy.

1. Mainly middle-class descendants of pioneer farmers, they were unaware that they were witnessing the dawn of the industrial era and either ignored the factory workers or blamed their problems on bad habits—naïve single-mindedness (virtue to order).

2. Imprisonment for debt continued as the poorer working classes were especially hard hit by this merciless practice—state legislatures gradually abolished debtors’ prisons.

3. Criminal codes in the states were softened, in accord with more enlightened European practices; the number of capital offenses was being reduced and brutal punishments were being slowly eliminated; new view that prisons should reform as well as punish.

3. Sufferers from so-called insanity were still being treated with incredible cruelty; medievalists had believed that the insane were cursed with unclean spirits and the 19th century idea was that there were willfully perverse and depraved (many chained).

4. In this dismal picture stepped a New England teacher-author Dorothea Dix; she traveled and assembled reports on insanity and asylums and in her petition of 1843 to the Massachusetts legislature, turned legislative stomachs and hearts (foul conditions).
5. Agitation for peace also gained momentum in the pre-Civil War years

1. In 1828 the American Peace Society was formed, with a ringing declaration of war on war; a leading spirit was William Ladd who advocated for collective security

2. The American peace crusade, linked with a European counterpart, was making promising progress by mid-century, but it was set back by the bloodshed of the Crimean War in Europe and the Civil War that occurred in America

7. Demon Rum—The “Old Deluder”

1. The ever-present drink problem attracted dedicated reformers; custom led to excessive drinking of hard liquor, even among women, clergymen, and members of Congress

   1. Heavy drinking decreased the efficiency of labor, and poorly safeguarded machinery operated under the influence of alcohol increased the danger of accidents at work

   2. Drunkenness also fouled the sanctity of the family, threatening the spiritual welfare and physical safety of women and children; drinking hurt the entire family

2. The American Temperance Society was formed at Boston in 1826; within a few years, a thousand local groups sprang into existence and implored drinkers to sign the temperance pledge and organized children’s clubs, known as the “Cold Water Army”

3. Temperance crusaders also made effective use of pictures, pamphlets, and lurid lecturers

4. The most popular anti-alcohol tract was T.S. Arthur’s melodramatic novel, *Ten Nights in a Barroom and What I Saw There* (1854—described a village destroyed by the tavern); the book was second only to Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin as a bestseller in the 1850s
5. Early foes of Demon Drink adopted two major lines of attack

1. One was to stiffen the individual’s will to resist the wiles of the little brown jug; the moderate reformers thus stressed “temperance” rather than “teetotalism,” or the total elimination of intoxicants; zealots believed that temptation be removed by legislation

2. Prominent among this group was Neal S. Dow of Maine, a blue-nosed reformer who, as a mayor of Portland and employer of labor, had often witnessed effects of alcohol

3. Dow—the “Father of Prohibition”—sponsored the so-called Maine Law of 1851 which hailed as “the law of Heaven Americanized,” prohibited the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor; other states in the North followed Maine’s example and by 1857 about a dozen had passed various prohibitory laws against alcohol

4. But still within a decade some of statues were repealed or declared unconstitutional

6. It was clearly impossible to legislate thirst for alcohol out of existence yet on the eve of the Civil War, the prohibitionists had registered inspiring gains (less drinking among women and probably much less per capita consumption of hard liquor)

8. Women in Revolt

1. At the beginning of the 19th century, it was still a man’s world, both in America and in Europe; a wife was supposed to immerse herself in her home and subordinate herself to her lord and master (her husband); like black slaves, she could not vote and could be legally beaten and when she married, she could not retain title to her property (husband)

1. Yet American women, fared better than their European cousins; in France, rape was punished only lightly whereas in America it was one of the few capital crimes
2. Women were still “the submerged sex” in America in the early part of the century and in contrast to women in colonial times, many women now avoided marriage (10%)

2. Gender differences were strongly emphasized in 19th century America—largely because the market economy was separating women and men into sharply distinct economic roles

1. Women were thought to be physically and emotionally weak, but also artistic and refine; endowed with finely tuned moral sensibilities, they were the keepers of society’s conscience, with special responsibility to teach the young how to be good

2. Men were considered strong but crude, always in danger of slipping into some savage or beastly way of life if not guided by the gentle hands of their loving ladies

3. The home was a woman’s special sphere, the centerpiece of the “cult of domesticity” but some women more felt that the glorified sanctuary of the home was in fact a gilded cage

4. Clamorous female reformers began to gather strength as the century neared its halfway point; most were broad-gauge battlers, while demanding rights for women, they joined in the reform movement of the age, fighting for temperance and the abolition of slavery

1. The women’s rights movement was mothered by a few women including Lucretia Mott, a sprightly Quaker whose ire had been aroused when she and her fellow female delegates to the London antislavery convention of 1840 were not recognized

2. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who had insisted on leaving “obey” out of her marriage ceremony, shocked fellow feminists by going far as to advocate suffrage for women
3. Quaker-reared Susan B. Anthony, a militant lecturer for women's rights, became such conspicuous advocate of female rights that progressive women were called “Suzy Bs”

5. Other feminists challenged the men such as Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, the first female graduate of a medical college, precocious Margaret Fuller who edited a transcendentalist journal (The Dial) and took part to bring unity and republican government to Italy

6. The talented Grimke sisters, Sarah and Angelina, championed antislavery; Lucy Stone retained her maiden name after marriage and Amelia Bloomer revolted against current “street sweeping” female attire by donning a semi-masculine short skirt with “bloomers”

7. Fighting feminists met at Seneca Falls, New York, in a memorable Woman’s Rights Convention; the defiant Stanton read a “Declaration of Sentiment,” which in the spirit of the Declaration of Independence declared that “all men and women are created equal”

8. One resolution formally demanded the ballot for females; amid denunciation from press and pulpit, the Seneca Falls meeting launched the modern women's rights movement

9. In the decade before the Civil War, any white male over the age of 21 could vote; women were gradually being admitted to colleges and some states, beginning with Mississippi in 1839, were even permitting wives to won property after marriage

9. Wilderness Utopias

1. Bolstered by the utopian spirit of the age, various reformers set up more than forty communities of a cooperative, communistic, or “communitarian” nature

   1. Seeking human betterment, a wealthy and idealistic Scottish textile manufacturer, Robert Owen, founded in 1825 a communal society of
about a thousand people at New Harmony, Indiana; little harmony prevailed in the colony, which attracted visionaries, radicals, theorists, and scoundrels, and the colony sank into confusion

2. Brook Farm in Massachusetts, comprising two hundred acres of grudging soil, was started in 1841 with cooperation of about twenty intellectuals committed to the philosophy of transcendentalism; the venture collapsed in debt after a building burned

3. A more radical experiment was the Oneida Community, founded in New York in 1848; it practiced free love ("complex marriage"), birth control (coitus reservatus) and the eugenic selection of parents to produce superior offspring—this enterprise flourished for about 30 years because they made superior steel traps and plates

2. Various communistic experiments, mostly small in scale, have been attempted since Jamestown but in competition with democratic free enterprise and free land, virtually all of them failed or changed their methods (among the longest lasting were the Shakers)

3. Led by Mother Ann Lee, they began in the 1770s to set up a religious communities; the Shakers attained a membership of about six thousand in 1840, but since their monastic customs prohibited both marriage and sexual relations they were extinct by 1940

10. The Dawn of Scientific Achievement

1. Early Americans, confronted with pioneering problems, were more interested in practical gadgets than in pure science; Jefferson was a gifted amateur inventor and noteworthy were the writings of mathematician Nathaniel Bowditch on practical navigation and of oceanographer Matthew F. Maury on ocean winds and currents (safety, speed, economy)
2. But as far as basic science was concerned, Americans were best known for borrowing and adapting the findings of Europeans, yet the Republic was not without scientific talent

1. The most influential American scientist of the first half of the 19th century was Professor Benjamin Silliman, pioneer chemist and geologist who taught/wrote at Yale

2. Professor Louis Agassiz, a distinguished French-Swiss immigrant, served for a quarter of a century at Harvard College as a path-breaking student of biology

3. Professor Asa Gray of Harvard College published 350 books, monographs and papers

3. Lovers of American bird lore owed much to the French-descended naturalist John J. Audubon, who painted wild fowl in their natural habitat (Birds of America)

4. Medicine in America, despite a steady growth of medical schools, was still primitive by modern standards; bleeding remained a common cure, and a curse as well

1. Smallpox plagues were still dreaded, and the yellow fever epidemic of 1793 in Philadelphia took several thousand lives (daily cries of corpse-wagon drivers)

2. People everywhere complained of ill health—malaria, the “rheumatic,” the “miseries,” and the chills; illness often resulted from improper diet, hurried eating, perspiring and cooling off too rapidly, and ignorance of germs and sanitation

3. Life expectancy was still dismayingly short—about forty years for a white person born in 1850, and less for blacks; suffering from decayed teeth was enormous
5. Self-prescribed patent medicines were common, fad diets proved popular, among home remedies was the rubbing of tumors with dead toads, and the use of medicine by regular doctors was often harmful (victims of surgical operations were ordinarily tied down)

6. Medical progress came in the early 1840s, when several American doctors and dentists, working independently, successfully employed laughing gas and ether as anesthetics

11. Artistic Achievements

1. Architecturally, America contributed little of note in the first half of the century

   1. The rustic Republic continued to imitate European models; public buildings and other important structures followed Greek and Roman lines, which seemed out of place

   2. A remarkable Greek revival came between 1820 and 1850, partly stimulated by the heroic efforts of the Greeks in the 1820s to wrest independence from the “Turks”; about mid-century strong interest developed in a revival of Gothic forms

   3. Talented Thomas Jefferson, architect of revolution, was probably the ablest American architect of his generation (he brought a classical design to his Monticello home)

2. The art of painting continued to be handicapped; it suffered from the dollar-grabbing of a raw civilization, from the hustle, bustle, and absence of leisure; from the lack of a wealthy class to sit for portraits—and then pay for them; some of the earliest painters were forced to go to England, where they found both training and patrons

3. Painting, like the theater, also suffered from the Puritan prejudice that art was a sinful waste of time—and often obscene; competent painters nevertheless emerged
1. Gilbert Stuart, a spendthrift Rhode Islander and one of the most gifted of the early group, wielded his brush in Britain in competition with the best artists

2. Charles Willson Peale painted some sixty portraits of Washington and John Trumbull, recaptured its scenes and spirit on scores of striking canvases

4. During the nationalistic upsurge after the War of 1812, American painters of portraits turned increasingly from human landscapes to romantic mirrorings of local landscapes

   1. The Hudson River school excelled in this type of art

   2. At the same time, portrait painters gradually encountered some unwelcome competition from the invention of a crude photograph known as the daguerreotype

5. Music was slowly shaking off the restraints of colonial days, when the prim Puritans had frowned upon nonreligious singing; rhythmic and nostalgic “daky” tunes, popularized by whites, were becoming immense hits by mid-century

6. The most famous black songs came from a white Pennsylvanian, Stephen C. Foster who made valuable contribution to American folk music by capturing plaintive spirit of slaves

12. The Blossoming of a National Literature

   1. The painful truth was that the nation’s rough-hewn, pioneering civilization gave little encouragement to “polite” literature; much of the reading matter was imported

   2. Busy conquering a continent, the Americans poured most of their creative efforts into practical outlets; praiseworthy were political essays like The Federalist of Hamilton, Jay, and Madison; pamphlets, like Thomas Paine’s
Common Sense; and political orations, like masterpieces of Daniel Webster; Ben Franklin’s Autobiography was distinguished

3. A genuinely American literature received a strong boost from the wave of nationalism that followed the War of Independence and especially the War of 1812

4. Washington Irving was the first American to win international recognition as a literary figure; he published in 1809 his *Knockerbocker’s History of New York*

   1. In 1819-1820 he published *The Sketch Book*, which brought him immediate fame at home and abroad; combing a pleasing style with delicate charm and quiet humor, he used English as well as American themes and included such immortal Dutch-American tales as “Rip Van Winkle” and “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”

   2. Europe was amazed at an American with a feather in his hand; turning to Spanish locales and biography, Irving interpreted America to Europe and Europe to America

5. James Fenimore Cooper was the first American novelist, as Washington Irving was the first general writer, to gain world fame and to make New World themes respectable

   1. Cooper launched out upon an illustrious career in 1821 with his second novel, *The Spy*—an absorbing tale of the American Revolution; his stories of the sea were meritorious and popular, but his fame rests mostly on the *Leatherstocking Tales*

   2. James Fenimore Cooper’s novels had a wide sale among Europeans, some of whom came to think of all American people as born with tomahawk in hand

   3. Actually Cooper was exploring the viability and destiny of America’s republican experiment, by contrasting the undefiled values of “natural
men,” children of the wooded wilderness, with the artificiality of modern civilization

6. A third member of the Knickerbocker group in New York was the belated Puritan William Cullen Bryant; at 16, he wrote the meditative and melancholy “Thanatopsis,” which was one of the first high-quality poems produced in the United States

13. Trumpeters of Transcendentalism

1. A golden age in American literature dawned in the second quarter of the 19th century, when an amazing outburst shook New England; one of the mainsprings of this literary flowering was transcendentalism, especially around Boston (“the Athens of America”)  

2. The transcendentalist movement of the 1830s resulted in part from a liberalizing of the straight-jacket Puritan theology; it also owed much to foreign influences, including the German romantic philosophers and the religions of Asia

   1. The transcendentalists rejected the prevailing theory, derived from John Locke, that all knowledge comes to the mind through senses; truth, rather, “transcends” the sense: it cannot be found by observations alone—each person possesses an inner light that can illuminate highest truth and put him in direct touch with God, or the “Oversoul”

   2. These mystical doctrines of transcendentalism had underlying concrete beliefs

   3. Foremost was a stiff-backed individualism in matters religious as well as social

   4. Closely associated was a commitment to self-reliance, self-culture, and self-discipline

   5. These traits naturally bred hostility to authority and to formal institutions of any kind, as well as to all conventional wisdom; finally
came exaltation of the dignity of the individual—the mainspring of a whole array of humanitarian reforms

3. Best known of the transcendentalists Boston-born Ralph Waldo Emerson
   1. Trained as a Unitarian minister, he early forsook his pulpit and ultimately reached a wider audience by pen and platform (he was a favorite as a lyceum lecturer)
   2. His most thrilling public effort was a Phi Beta Kappa address, “The American Scholar,” which was an appeal that urged American writers to throw off European traditions and delve into the riches of their own backyards
   3. Hailed as both a poet and a philosopher, Emerson was more influential as a practical philosopher and though his essays enriched countless thousands of humdrum lives
   4. Catching the individualistic mood of the Republic, he stressed self-reliance, self-improvement, optimism, and freedom (ideals reflected expanding America)

4. Henry David Thoreau was Emerson’s close associate—a poet, a mystic, a transcendentalist, and a nonconformist; condemning a government that supported slavery, he refused to pay his Massachusetts poll tax and was jailed for a night
   1. A gifted prose writer, he is well known for *Walden: On Life in the Woods*; the book is a record of Thoreau’s two years of simple existence in a hut that he built on the edge of Walden Pond, near Concord, Massachusetts; he believed that he should reduce his bodily wants so as to gain time for a pursuit of truth through study and meditation
   2. Thoreau’s *Walden* and his essay *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience* exercised a strong influence in furthering idealistic though, both in America and abroad
5. Bold, brassy, and swaggering was the open-collared figure of Brooklyn's Walt Whitman; in his famous collection of poems Leaves of Grass, he gave free rein to his genius.

6. Highly romantic, emotional, and unconventional, he dispensed with titles, stanzas, rhymes, and at times even regular meter; he handled sex with shocking frankness, although he laundered his verses in later editions and his book was banned in Boston.

7. Whitman's Leaves of Grass was at first a financial failure; Leaves of Grass gained for Whitman the informal title “Poet Laureate of Democracy”; singing with transcendental abandon of his love for the masses, he caught the exuberant enthusiasm of an expanding America that had turned its back on the Old World.

14. Glowing Literary Lights

1. Professor Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was one of the most popular poets in America.

   1. Longfellow, who for many years taught modern languages at Harvard College, lived a generally serene life except for the tragic deaths of two wives (he saw the 2\textsuperscript{nd} one die).

   2. Writing for the genteel classes, he was adopted by the less cultured masses; his wide knowledge of European literature supplied him with many themes, but some of his most admired poems—“Evangeline,” “The Song of Hiawatha” and “The Courtship of Miles Standish”—were based on American traditions.

   3. Immensely popular in Europe, Longfellow was the only American ever to be honored with a bust in the Poets’ Corner of Westminster Abby.

2. A fighting Quaker, John Greenleaf Whittier was the uncrowned poet laureate of the antislavery crusade; he was vastly more important in influencing social action.
1. His poems cried aloud against inhumanity, injustice and intolerance against “the outworn rite, the old abuse, the pious fraud transparent grown”

2. Undeterred by insults and the stoning of mobs, Whittier helped arouse a calloused America on the slavery issue; Whittier was one of the moving forces of his generation, whether moral, humanitarian, or spiritual (poet of human freedom)

3. Many-sided Professor James Russell Lowell, who succeeded Longfellow at Harvard, ranks as one of America’s better poets; he was also a distinguished essayist, literary critic, editor, and diplomat—a diffusion of talents that hampered his poetical output

4. Lowell is remembered as a political satirist in his Biglow Papers, especially those of 1846 dealing with the Mexican War; the Biglow Papers condemned the terms of the alleged slavery-expansion designs of the Polk administration

5. The scholarly Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, who taught anatomy at Harvard Medical School, was a prominent poet, essayist, novelist, lecturer, and wit; a nonconformist and a conversationalist, he shone among a group of literary lights in Boston (“The Last Leaf”)

6. Two women writers whose work remain popular today were New England literary world

   1. Louisa May Alcott grew up in Concord, Massachusetts, where transcendentalism existed, alongside neighbors Emerson, Thoreau, and Fuller; her philosopher father left her to write Little Women and other books to support her mother and sisters

   2. In Amherst, Massachusetts, poet Emily Dickinson lived as a recluse but created her own world through precious poetry; in deceptively spare language and simple rhyme schemes, she explored universal themes of nature, love, death, and immortality
3. Although she refused during her lifetime to publish any of her poems, when she sided, nearly two thousand of them were found among her papers and printed.

7. The most noteworthy literary figure produced by the South before the Civil War, unless Edgar Allan Poe is regarded as a southerner, was novelist William Gilmore Simms.

8. Quantitatively, he was great and he produced eighty-two books winning for him the title “the Cooper of the South”; his themes dealt with the southern frontier in colonial days and with the south during the Revolutionary War (neglected by own section).

15. Literary Individualists and Dissenters

1. Not all writers in these years believed so keenly in human goodness and social progress.

1. Edgar Allen Poe, orphaned at an early age in Virginia, cursed with ill health, and married to a child-wife of thirteen who fell fatally ill of tuberculosis.

2. He suffered hunger, cold, poverty, and debt; failure at suicide, he took refuge in the bottle and dissipated his talent early; Poe was gifted lyric poet (“The Raven”).

3. A master stylist, he also excelled in the short story, especially of the horror type.

4. Poe was fascinated by the ghostly and ghastly, as in “The Fall of the House of Usher” and other stories; he reflected a morbid sensibility distinctly at odds with optimistic tone of American culture—for this reason, Poe was more prized by Europeans.

5. His brilliant career was cut when he was found drink in a Baltimore gutter and died.
2. Two other writers in America reflected the continuing Calvinist obsession with original sin and with the never-ending struggle better good and evil

1. In somber Salem, Massachusetts, writer Nathaniel Hawthorne grew up in an atmosphere heavy with the memories of his Puritan forebears and the tragedy of his father’s premature death on an ocean voyage; his masterpiece was *The Scarlet Letter*, which chronicles the psychological effects of sin on the guilty heroine and her secret lover, the father of her baby, a minister of the gospel in Puritan Boston

2. In *The Marble Faun*, Hawthorne explored the concepts of the omnipresence of evil and the dead hand of the past weighing upon the present

3. Herman Melville went to sea as a youth and served eighteen months on a whaler and his fresh and charming tales of the South Seas were immediately popular, but his masterpiece, *Moby Dick*, was not—a complex allegory of good and evil, the book was ignored because people were accustomed to more straightforward and upbeat prose

16. Portrayers of the Past

1. A distinguished group of American historians was emerging at the same time that other writers were winning distinction; George Bancroft, who as secretary of the navy helped found the Naval Academy at Annapolis in 1845, has deservedly received the title “Father of American History”—he published a history of the United States to 1789 in 6 volumes

2. Two other historians are read with greater pleasure and profit today

1. William H. Prescott published classic accounts of the conquest of Mexico and Peru

2. Francis Parkman, penned a brilliant series of volumes beginning in 1851; in epic style he chronicled the struggles between France and Britain for mastery of North America
3. Early American historians of prominence were almost without exception New Englanders, largely because the Boston area provided well-stocked libraries and a stimulating literary tradition (many abolitionists among them)
The South and the Slavery Controversy, 1793-1860

1. “Cotton Is King!”

1. As time passed, the Cotton Kingdom developed into a huge agricultural factory, pouring out avalanches of fiber; quick profits drew planters to the virgin bottomlands of the Gulf states; as long as the soil was still vigorous, the yield was bountiful and rewards high

1. Caught up in an economic spiral, the planters in the South bought more slaves and land to grow more cotton, so as to buy still more slaves and land

2. Northern shippers reaped a large part of the profits from the cotton trade; they would load bales of cotton at southern ports, transport them to England, sell their cargo for pounds, and buy needed manufactured goods for sale in the United States

3. The prosperity of both North and South rested on the backs of southern slaves

2. Cotton accounted for half the value of all American exports after 1840—the South produced more than half of the world’s supply of cotton—a fact that held foreign nations in partial bondage; Britain was then the leading industrial power, whose most important single manufacture in the 1850s was cotton cloth, from which 20% received work

3. Southern leaders were fully aware that Britain was tied to them by cotton threads and this dependence gave them a heady sense of power; in their eyes “Cotton was King,” the gin was his throne and the black bondsmen were his henchmen (cotton was a powerful monarch as if war ever broke out, the South could cut off its outflow of cotton)

2. The Plant “Aristocracy”
1. Before the Civil War, the South was in some respects not so much a democracy as an oligarchy—or government by the few—heavily influenced by a planter aristocracy

   1. In 1850 only 1,733 families owned more than 100 slaves each, and this select group provided the cream of the political and social leadership of the section and nation

   2. In the tall-columned and white painted plantation mansion, dwelt the “cottonocracy”

2. The planter aristocrats enjoyed a lion’s share of southern wealth

   1. They could educate their children in the finest schools, often in the North or aboard

   2. Their money provided the leisure for study, reflection, and statecraft, as was notably true of men like John C. Calhoun and Jefferson Davis

   3. They felt a keen sense of obligation to serve the public; it was no accident that Virginia and the other southern states produced a higher proportion of front-rank statesmen before 1860 than the “dollar-grubbing” North

3. But even in its best light, dominance by a favored aristocracy was basically undemocratic

   1. The gap between rich and poor widened and hampered tax-supported public education, because rich planters could send their children to private institutions

   2. A favorite author of elite southerners was Sir Walter Scott, whose manors and castles, helped them idealize a feudal society, though their economic activities were capitalistic

   3. Southern aristocrats, who sometime staged jousting tournaments, strove to perpetuate a type of medievalism that he died out in Europe; Mark
Twain accused the British novelist of arousing the southerners to fight for a decaying social structure ("sham")

4. The plantation system also shaped the lives of southern women; the mistress of a great plantation commanded a sizable household staff of mostly female slaves

   1. She gave daily orders to cooks, maids, seamstresses, laundresses, and body servants

   2. Relationships between mistresses and slaves ranged from affectionate to atrocious; some mistresses showed tender regard for their bondswomen and some slave women took pride in their status as "members of the household" but slavery strained women

   3. Virtually no slaveholding women believed in abolition and relatively few protested when the husbands and children of their slaves were sold (whipping was common)

3. Slaves of the Slave System

   1. Plantation agriculture was wasteful, largely because King Cotton and his money-hungry subjects despoiled the good earth; quick profits led to excessive cultivation, or "land butchery," which in turn caused a heavy leakage of population to the West and NW

   2. The economic structure of the South became increasingly monopolistic; as the land wore thin, many small farmers sold their holdings to the prosperous and went north or west; essentially, in the South the big plantations got bigger and the small got smaller

   3. Another cancer in the bosom of the South was the financial instability of the plantation system; the temptation to overspeculate in land and slaves cause many planters to plunge in beyond their depth; slaves represented a heavy investment of capital (perhaps $1,200 each in the case of prime field hands and they might injure themselves or run away)
4. An entire slave quarter might be wiped out by disease or even by lightening.

5. Dominance by King Cotton led to a dangerous dependence on a one-crap economy, whose price level depended on world conditions—system discouraged diversification.

6. Southern planters resented watching the North grow fat at their expense; they were pained by the heavy outward flow of commissions and interest to northern middlemen, banks, agents, and shippers (South spent their life in servitude to Yankee manufacturing).

7. The Cotton Kingdom also repelled large-scale European immigration, which added so richly to the manpower and wealth of the North; in 1860 only 4.4% of the southern population was foreign born, as compared with 18.7% for the North.

8. German and Irish immigration to the South was generally discouraged by competition of slave labor, by the high cost of fertile land, and by European ignorance of cotton growing.

9. The diverting of non-British immigration to the North caused the white South to become the most Anglo-Saxon section of the United States nation.

4. The White Majority

1. Few southern whites lived in mansions (1,733 families out of 345,000 families owned a hundred or more slaves and over two-thirds of the families owned fewer than ten slaves); even so, only about one-fourth of white southerners owned slaves or were in the family.

2. Smaller slave owners did not own a majority of the slaves, but they made up a majority of the masters; these lesser masters were typically small farmers except with a few slaves.

   1. The style of their lives probably resembled that of small farmers in the North more than it did that of the southern aristocracy; they lived in
modest farmhouses and sweated beside their bondsmen in the cotton fields working just as hard as slaves

2. Beneath the slave-owners on the pyramid was the great body of whites who owned no slaves at all; by 1860 their numbers had swelled to 6,120,825—75% of all whites

3. Shouldered off the richest bottomlands by the mighty planters, they scratched a simple living from the thinner soils of the backcountry and the mountain valleys

4. To them, the riches of the Cotton Kingdom were a distant dream and they often sneered at the lordly pretensions of the cotton “snobocracy”; these red-necked farmers participated in the market economy scarcely at all—subsistence farmers who raised corn and hogs, not cotton, and often lived isolated lives (occasional meeting)

3. Some of the least prosperous non-slaveholding whites were scorned even as “poor white trash”; known also as “hillbillies,” they were often described as listless, shiftless, and misshapen—many were not lazy but sick and suffered from malnutrition and parasites

4. All these whites without slaves had no direct stake in the preservation of slavery, yet they were among the stoutest defenders of the slave system that existed in the South

1. There was the hope of buying a slave or two and parlaying their paltry holdings into riches—all in accord with the “American dream” of upward social mobility

2. They took pride in their presumed racial superiority, which would be watered if the slavers were freed; many of the poorer whites were not economically much better off

5. Among white southerners were mountain whites who were marooned in the valleys of the Appalachian range that stretched from western Virginia to
northern Georgia and Alabama; they were a kind of living ancestry as they did keep some Elizabethan habits

1. As independent small farmers, distant from the Cotton Kingdom and rarely if ever in sight of a slave, these mountain whites had little in common with the whites of the flatlands—many of them hated both the haughty planters and their gangs of blacks

2. They looked up on the impending strife between North and South as “a rich man’s war but a poor man’s fight” (included future president Andrew Johnson of TN)

3. When the war came, the mountain whites constituted a vitally important peninsula of Unionism jutting down into the secessionist Southern sea; they played a significant role in crippling the Confederacy (only Republican strength in the solid South)

5. Free Blacks: Slaves Without Masters

1. The South’s free blacks numbered about 250,000 by 1860; precarious in standing

   1. In the upper South, the free black population traced its origins to emancipation inspired by the idealism of Revolutionary days; in the deeper South, many free blacks were mulattoes, usually children of a white planter and his black mistress

   2. Throughout the South were some free blacks who had purchased their freedom with earners from labor after hours; many free blacks owned property, especially in NO

2. The free blacks in the South were a kind of “third race”; these people were prohibited from working in certain occupations and forbidden from testifying against whites in court

   1. They were always vulnerable to being high-jacked back into slavery by unscrupulous slave traders; as free men and women, they were walking
examples of what might be achieved by emancipation and hence were resented and detested by slave supporters

2. Free blacks were also unpopular in the North, where about another 250,000 of them lived; several states forbade their entrance, most denied them from the right to vote, and some barred blacks from public schools—Northern blacks were especially hated by the pick-and-shovel Irish immigrants, with whom they competed for menial jobs

3. Much of the agitation in the North against the spread of slavery into the new territories in the 1840s and 1850s grew out of race prejudice, not humanitarianism

3. Anti-black feeling was in fact frequently stronger in the North than in the South; it was sometimes observed that white southerners, who were often suckled and reared by black nurses, like the black as an individual but despised the race (the white northerner however often professed to like the race but disliked individual blacks)

6. Plantation Slavery

1. In society’s basement in the South of 1860 were nearly 4 million black human chattels; their numbers had quadrupled since the dawn of the century, as the booming cotton economy created a seemingly unquenchable demand for the slave labor

1. Legal importation of African slaves into America ended in 1808 when Congress outlaws slave imports; but the price of “black ivory” was so high in the years before the Civil War that uncounted thousands blacks were smuggled into the South

2. Despite the death penalty for slavers, only one slave trader was ever executed, N.P. Gordon, whose death took place in New York in 1862, the 2nd year of the Civil War
3. The huge bulk of the increase in the slave population came not from imports but instead from natural reproduction—a fact that distinguished slavery in America from other New World societies and implied much about the tenor of the slave regime

2. Above all, the planters regarded the slaves as investments, into which they had sunk nearly $2 billion of their capital by 1860; slaves were the primary form of wealth in the South and as such they were cared for as any asset is cared for by a prudent capitalist

1. Accordingly, they were sometimes spared dangerous work and if a neck was going to be broken, the master preferred it to be that of a wage-earning Irish laborer rather than that of a prime field hand, worth $1,800 by 1860 (price had quintupled since 1800)

2. Tunnel blasting and swamp draining were often consigned to itinerant gangs of expendable Irishmen because those perilous tasks were “death on blacks and mules”

3. Slavery was profitable for the great planters, though it hobbled economic development of the region as a whole; the profits of the cotton boom sucked ever more slaves from the upper to the lower South; by 1860, Deep South states of SC, FL, MI, ALA, and LA each had a majority of blacks and accounted for half of all slaves in the South

4. Breeding slaves in a way that cattle are bred was not openly encouraged

1. But thousands of blacks from the soil-exhausted slave states of the Old South were “sold down the river” to toil as field-gang laborers on the cotton frontier

2. Women who bore ten plus babies were prized as “rattlin’ good breeders” and some of these fecund females were promised their freedom when they had produced ten
3. White masters all too frequently would force their attentions on female slaves, fathering a sizable mulatto population, most of which remained enchained.

5. Slave auctions were brutal sights; the open selling of slaves under hammer, was among the most revolting aspects of slavery; on auction block, families were separated with frequency, usually for economic reason such as bankruptcy or division of property.

6. Abolitionists decried the practice, and Harriet Beecher Stowe seized on the emotional power of this theme by putting it at the heart of the plot of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

7. Life Under the Lash

   1. White southerners often romanticized about the happy life of their singing, dancing, banjo-strumming, joyful “darkies” but conditions carried greatly from region to region, from large plantation to small farm, and from master to master in the South.

   1. Everywhere slavery meant hard work, ignorance, and oppression; the slaves usually toiled from dawn to dusk in the fields, under the watchful eyes and ready whip-hand of a white overseer or black “driver”—they had no civil or political rights.

   2. They only had minimal protection from arbitrary murder or unusually cruel punishment; some states banned the sale of a child under the age of ten from his mother but all such laws were difficult to enforce, since slaves were forbidden to testify in court or even to have their marriages legally recognized.

   2. Floggings were common, for the whip was the substitute for the wage-incentive system and the most visible symbol of the planter’s mastery; strong-willed slaves were sometimes sent to “breakers,” whose technique consisted in lavish laying on the lash.
3. But savage beatings made sullen laborers, and lash marks hurt resale values; the typical planter had too much of his own prosperity riding on the backs of his slaves to beat them.

4. By 1860 most slaves were concentrated in the “black belt” of the Deep South that stretched from SC and GA into the new southwest states of ALA, MI, and LA.

1. This was the region of the southern frontier, into which the explosively growing Cotton Kingdom had burst in a few short decades; as on all frontiers, life was often rough and raw and in general the lot of the slave was harder there than in other areas.

2. A majority of blacks lived on larger plantations that harbored communities of twenty or more slaves; in some counties of the Deep South, especially along the lower Mississippi River, blacks accounted for more than 75 percent of the population.

3. There the family life of slaves tended to be relatively stable, and a distinctive African-American slave culture developed—forced separations of families were evidently more common on smaller plantations and in the upper South (slave marriages).

5. With impressive resilience, blacks managed to sustain family life in slavery and most slaves were raised in stable two-parent households; continuity of family identity evident.

6. African-Americans also displayed African cultural roots when they avoided marriage between first cousins, in contrast to the frequent intermarriage in the planter aristocracy.

7. African roots were also visible in the slaves’ religious practices; though heavily Christianized by the itinerant evangelists of the Second Great Awakening, blacks in slavery molded their own distinctive religious forms from a mixture of Christian and African elements—African practices also...
persisted the “responsorial” style of preaching, in which the congregation punctuates the minister’s remarks with assents and amens

8. The Burdens of Bondage

1. Slavery was intolerably degrading to the victims; they were deprived of the dignity and sense of responsibility that come from independence and the right to make choices

   1. They were denied an education, because reading brought ideas, which brought discontent; many states passed laws forbidding their instruction and about 90% of adult slaves at the beginning of the Civil War was totally illiterate

   2. For all slaves, virtually all blacks, the “American dream” of bettering one’s lot through study and hard work was a cruel and empty mockery

2. Slaves often slowed the pace of their labor to the barest minimum that would spare them the lash, thus fostering the myth of black “laziness” in the minds of whites; they filched food from the “big house” and pilfered other goods that had been produced or purchased

   1. Slaves sabotaged expensive equipment, stopping the work routine altogether until repairs were accomplished; occasionally they even poisoned their master’s food

   2. The slaves also universally pined for freedom; many took to their heels as runaways, frequently in search of separated family members; others rebelled but not successfully

3. In 1800 an armed insurrection led by a slave named Gabriel in Richmond, Virginia, was foiled by informers, and its leaders were hanged; Denmark Vesey, a free black, led another ill-fated rebellion in Charleston in 1822 (hanged with followers)
4. In 1831 the semiliterate Nat Turner, a visionary black preacher, led an uprising that slaughtered about sixty Virginians, mostly women and children; reprisals swift

3. The taint of slavery also lefts its mark on the whites; it fostered the brutality of the whip, the bloodhound, and the branding iron; whit southerners increasingly lived in a state of imagined siege, surrounded by potentially rebellious blacks inflamed by abolitionist propaganda from the North; fears bolstered a theory of biological racial superiority

4. The south was turned into a reactionary backwater in an era of progress; one of the last bastions of slavery were forced to degrade themselves, along with their victims

9. Early Abolitionism

1. The inhumanity of the “peculiar institution” gradually caused antislavery societies to sprout forth; abolitionists sentiment first stirred at the time of the Revolution, especially among Quakers; because of the widespread loathing of blacks, some of the earliest abolitionist efforts focused on transporting the blacks bodily back to Africa

1. The American Colonization Society was founded for the purpose in 1817 and in 1822 the Republic of Liberia, on the fever-stricken West African coast, was established for former slaves; its capital Monrovia, was named after President Monroe

2. Some fifteen thousand freed blacks were transported there over the next four decades but most blacks had no wish to be transplanted into a strange civilization

3. By 1860 virtually all southern slaves were no longer Africans, but native-born African-Americans, with their own distinctive history and culture; yet the colonization idea appeal to some antislaveryites until the time of the Civil War
2. In the 1830s the abolitionist movement took on new energy and momentum, mounting to the proportions of a crusade; American abolitionists gained fervor in 1833 when their British counterparts unchained the slaves in the West Indies.

3. Most important, religious spirit of the Second Great Awakening now inflamed many abolitionists against the sin of slavery; prominent among them was Theodore Dwight Weld, who had been in New York’s Burned-Over District in 1820s; Weld appealed with special power and directness to his rural audiences of untutored farmers.

4. Spiritually inspired by Finney, Weld was materially aided by two wealthy and devout New York merchants, the brothers Arthur and Lewis Tappan; in 1832, they paid his way to Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati which was presided over by the formidable Lyman Beecher, father of a remarkable brood (family of Beechers).

5. Expelled in 1834 for organizing an eighteen-day debate on slavery, Weld and his fellow “Lane Rebels” fanned out across the Old Northwest preaching the antislavery gospel; Weld assembled a potent propaganda pamphlet, *American Slavery As It Is*.

6. *Its compelling arguments made it among the most effective abolitionist tracts and greatly influenced Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

10. Radical Abolitionism

1. On New Year’s Day, 1831, a shattering abolitionist blast came from the bugle of William Lloyd Garrison, a mild-looking reformer of twenty-six; he was an emotionally high-strung son of a drunken father and a spiritual child of the Second Great Awakening.

   1. Garrison published in Boston the first issue of his militantly antislavery newspaper *The Liberator*; with this mighty paper broadside, Garrison
triggered a thirty-year war of words and in a sense fired one of the opening barrages of the Civil War

2. Garrison proclaimed in strident tones that under no circumstances would he tolerate the poisonous weed of slavery but would stamp it out at once, root, and branch

3. Other dedicated abolitionists rallied to Garrison’s standard and in 1833, they founded that American Anti-Slavery Society; prominent among them was Wendell Phillips, a Boston patrician known as “abolition’s golden trumpet”—he would eat no cane sugar and wear no cotton cloth, since both were produced by southern slaves

2. Black abolitionists distinguished themselves as living monuments to the cause of African-American freedom; their ranks included David Walk, whose *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* (1829) advocated a bloody end to white supremacy

3. Also noteworthy was Sojourner Truth, a freed black woman in New York who fought tirelessly for black emancipation and women’s rights and Martin Delaney, one of the few black leaders to take seriously the notion of mass recolonization of Africa (he visited)

4. The greatest of the black abolitionists was Frederick Douglass; escaping from bondage in 1838, he was “discovered” by the abolitionists in 1841 when he gave a stunning impromptu speech at an antislavery meeting in Massachusetts; he lectured widely for the cause, despite frequent beatings and threats against his life (classic autobiography 1845)

   1. Douglass was as flexibly practical as Garrison was stubbornly principled; Garrison often appeared to be more interested in his own righteousness than in the substance of the slavery evil itself; he repeatedly demanded that the North secede from the South
2. Yet he did not explain how the creation of an independent slave republic would bring an end to the “damning crime” of slavery; renouncing politics, on July 4, 1854, he publicly burned a copy of the Constitution as “a covenant with death and hell”

3. Critics, including some of his former supporters, charged that Garrison was cruelly probing the moral wound in America’s underbelly but offering no acceptable balm

5. Douglass along with other abolitionists, increasingly looked to politics to end the blight of slavery; these political abolitionists backed the Liberty party in 1840, the Free Soil Party in 1848, and eventually the Republican party in the 1850s

6. In the end, most abolitionists, including even the pacifistic Garrison himself, followed out the logic of their beliefs and supported a costly war as the price of emancipation

11. The South Lashes Back

1. Antislavery sentiment was not unknown in the South, and in the 1820s antislavery societies were more numerous south of the Mason-Dixon line than north of it; but after about 1830, the voice of white southern abolitionism was silenced (last gasp attempt—Virginia legislature debated and defeated emancipation proposals in 1831-1832)

1. The debate marked a turning point; thereafter all the slave states tightened their slave codes and moved to prohibit emancipation of any kind, voluntary or compensated

2. Nat Turner’s rebellion in 1831 sent a wave of hysteria sweeping over the snowy cotton fields, and planters in growing numbers slept with pistols by their pillows

3. Although Garrison had no connection with the Turner conspiracy, his Liberator appeared at about the same time, and he was bitterly
condemned as a terrorist and an inciter of murder; the state of Georgia offered $5,000 for his arrest and conviction

2. The nullification crisis of 1832 further implanted haunting fears in white southern minds, conjuring up nightmares of black incendiaries and abolitionist devils; jailing, whipping, and lynching now greeted rational efforts to discuss the slavery problem in the South

3. Proslavery whites responded by launching a massive defense of slavery as positive good

1. They forgot their own section’s previous doubts about the morality of the “peculiar institution”—slavery, they claimed, was supported by the authority of the Bible, and the wisdom of Aristotle; it was good for the Africans who were now “civilized”

2. Slave masters did encourage religion in the slave quarters and white apologists also pointed out that master-slave relationships really resembled those of a family

3. Southern whites were quick to contrast the “happy” lot of “servants” with that of the overworked northern wage slaves, including sweated women and stunted children

4. Blacks mostly toiled in the fresh air and sunlight, not in dark and stuffy factories; they did not have to worry about slack times or unemployment, as did the “hired hands”

5. Provided with a form of Social Security, they were cared for in sickness and old age, unlike the northern workers, who were set adrift when they outlived their usefulness

4. Curious proslavery arguments only widened the chasm between a backward-looking South and a forward-looking North and indeed much of the rest of the Western world
1. The southerners reacted defensively to the pressure of their own fears and bristled before the merciless nagging of the northern abolitionists.

2. Increasingly the white South turned in upon itself and grew hotly intolerant of any embarrassing questions about the status of slavery in the Southern United States.

5. Regrettably, the controversy over free people endangered free speech in the country.

1. Piles of petitions poured in upon Congress from the antislavery reformers and in 1836 sensitive southerners drove through the House the so-called Gag Resolution, which required all such antislavery appeals to be tabled without debate.

2. This attack on the right of petition aroused the sleeping lion in the aged ex-president John Quincy Adams, and he waged a successful eight-year fight for its repeal.

6. Southern whites likewise resented the flooding of their mails with incendiary abolitionist literature; even if the blacks could not read, they could interpret the inflammatory drawings, such as those that showed masters knocking out slaves’ teeth with clubs.

7. In 1835 a mob in Charleston, South Carolina, looted the post office and burned a pile of abolitionist propaganda; capitulating to southern pressures, the Washington government in 1835 ordered southern postmasters to destroy abolitionist material and called on southern state officials to arrest federal postmasters who did not comply.

12. The Abolitionist Impact in the North

1. Abolitionists were for a long time unpopular in many parts of the North; Northerners had been brought up to revere the Constitution and to regard the clauses on slavery as a lasting bargain; the ideal of Union had taken deep root (eloquence of Daniel Webster).
2. The North also had a heavy economic stake in Dixieland; by the late 1850s, the southern planters owed northern bankers and other creditors about $300 million, and much of this immense sum would be lost should the Union dissolve.

3. New England textile mills were fed with cotton raised by the slaves and a disrupted labor system might cut off this vital supply and bring unemployment to the North.

4. The Union during these critical years was partly bound together with cotton threads, tied by lords of the lash; it was not surprising that the strong hostility developed in the North against the boast-rocking tactics of the radical antislaveryites.

5. Repeated tongue-lashings by the extreme abolitionists provoked many mob outbursts in the North; a gang of young toughs broke until Lewis Tappan’s NY house in 1834 and demolished its interior, while a crowd in the street cheered.

   1. In 1835 Garrison, with a rope tied around him, was dragged through the streets of Boston by the so-called Broadcloth Mob but escaped almost miraculously.

   2. Reverend Elijah P. Lovejoy, of Alton, Illinois, not content to assail slavery, impugned the chastity of Catholic women; his printing press was destroyed four times and in 1837 he was killed by a mob and became “the martyr (victim) abolitionist.”

   3. So unpopular were the antislavery zealots that ambitious politicians, like Lincoln, usually avoided the taint of Garrisonian abolition like the plague.

   4. Yet by the 1850s the abolitionist outcry had made a deep dent in the northern mind; many citizens had come to see the South as the land of the unfree and the home of a hateful institution; few northerners were
prepared to abolish slavery outright, but a growing number, including Lincoln, opposed extending it to the western territories.

5. People of this stamp (”free-soilers”) swelled their ranks as the Civil War approached.
Manifest Destiny and Its Legacy, 1841-1848

1. The Accession of “Tyler Too”

1. A horde descended upon Washington early in 1841, clamoring for the spoils of office; newly elected President Harrison was almost hounded to death by Whig spoilsmen

   1. The real leaders of the Whig party regarded “Old Tippecanoe” as just an impressive figurehead; Daniel Webster, as secretary of state, and Henry Clay, the uncrowned king of the Whigs and ablest spokesman in the Senate, would grasp the helm

   2. The aging general was finally forced to rebuke the overzealous Clay and pointedly remind him that he, William Henry Harrison, was president of the United States

   3. Unluckily for Clay and Webster, the new term had barely started, Harrison contracted pneumonia; wearied by official functions and plagued by office seekers, the old warrior died after only four weeks in the White House (longest inaugural address)

2. The “Tyler too” part of the Whig ticket, hitherto only a rhyme, now claimed the spotlight

   1. John Tyler was a Virginia gentleman of the old school—gracious and kindly, yet stubbornly attached to principle; he had earlier resigned from the Senate, quite unnecessarily, rather than accept distasteful instructions from the Virginia legislature

   2. He had forsaken the Jacksonian Democratic fold for that of the Whigs, largely because he could not stomach the dictatorial tactics of Andrew Jackson
3. Tyler’s enemies accused him of being a hidden Democrat, but this charge was only half true; the Whig party, like the Democratic part, was a catchall, and the accidental president belonged to the minority wing, which embraced Jeffersonian states’ righters.

4. Tyler had in fact been put on the ticket partly to attract the vote of this fringe group, many of these people were part of the influential southern gentry.

5. Yet Tyler should never have consented to run; although the dominant Clay-Webster group had published no platform, an alert politician knew what the unpublished platform contained; on virtually every major issue, the Virginian was at odds with the majority of his Whig party, which was pro-bank, pro-protective tariff, and pro-internal improvements.

6. Tyler too” rhymed with “Tippecanoe,” but there the harmony ended.

2. John Tyler: A President Without a Party

1. After their hard-won, hard-cider victory, the Whigs brought their not-so-secret platform out of Clay’s pocket; to the surprise of no one, it outlined a strongly nationalistic program.

   1. Financial reform came first; the Whig Congress hastened to pass a law ending the independent treasury system, and President Tyler, disarmingly agreeable, signed it.

   2. Clay next drove through Congress a bill for a “Fiscal Bank,” which would established a new Bank of the United States, an institution that the Jacksonians had fought before.

   3. Tyler’s hostility to a centralized bank was notorious and Clay would have done well to conciliate him but the Kentuckian, robbed of the presidency once again, was in an imperious mood and riding for a fall; when the bill reached the presidential desk, Tyler flatly vetoed it on both practical and constitutional grounds (mob gathered).
4. Striving to pacify Tyler’s objections to a “Fiscal Bank,” they passed another bill providing for a “Fiscal Corporation”; but the present vetoed the offensive substitute.

5. The Democrats had been saved from a financial “monster” only by Harrison’s death.

2. Whig extremists condemned Tyler as “His Accidency” and he received letters threatening him; a wave of influenza then sweeping the country was called the “Tyler grippe.”

3. To the delight of Democrats, the stiff-necked Virginian was formally expelled from his party by a caucus of Whig congressman and a serious attempt to impeach him was broached in the House of Representatives; his entire cabinet resigned in a body, except Secretary of State Webster, who was in the midst of delicate negotiations with England.

4. The proposed Whig tariff also felt the prick of the president’s well-inked pen.

1. Tyler appreciated necessity of additional revenue to the Treasury; but the Democrat looked with a frosty eye on the major tariff scheme of the Whigs because it provided for a distribution among the states revenue from the sale of public lands in the West.

2. Tyler could see no point in squandering federal money when the federal Treasury was not overflowing, and he again wielded an emphatic veto.

5. Chastened Clayites redrafted their tariff bill; they chopped out the offensive dollar-distribution scheme and pushed down the rates to about the moderately protective level of 1832, roughly 32 percent on dutiable goods; Tyler had no fondness for a protective tariff, but realizing the need for additional revenue, he reluctantly signed the law of 1842.

6. In subsequent months the pressure for higher customs duties slackened as the country gradually edged its way out of the depression; Democrats were unhappy about the law.
3. A War of Words with Britain

1. Hatred of Britain during the 19th century came to a head periodically and had to be lanced by treaty settlement or by war; the poison had festered ominously by 1842

   1. Anti-British passions were composed of many ingredients; at bottom lay the bitter memories of the two Anglo-American wars; in addition, the pro-British Federalists had died out, eventually yielding to the boisterous Jacksonian Democrats

   2. British travelers, sniffing with aristocratic noses at the crude scene, wrote of American tobacco spitting, slave auctioneering, lynching, eye gouging, and other unsavory features of the rustic Republic (travel books stirred up outbursts in America)

2. But the literary fireworks did not end; British magazines added fuel to the flames when, enlarging on the travel books, they launched sneering attacks on Yankee shortcomings

   1. American journals struck back with "you're another" arguments, thus touching off the "Third War with England"; fortunately this British-American was fought with paper broadsides, and only ink was spilled; British authors entered the fray for they were being denied rich royalties by the absence of an American copyright law

   2. Not until 1891 did Congress extend copyright privileges to foreign authors

3. Sprawling America, with expensive canals to dig and railroads to build, was a borrowing nation in the 19th century; imperial Britain, with its flowing treasury, was a lending nation

4. The When the panic of 1837 broke and several states defaulted on their bonds or repudiated them openly, honest Englishmen assailed Yankee trickery
5. More dangerous troubles came closer to home in 1837, when a short-lived insurrection erupted in Canada; it was supported by such a small minority of Canadians that it never had a chance of success; hundreds of Americans, hoping to strike a blow for freedom against the hereditary enemy, furnished military supplies/volunteered for armed service

1. The Washington regime tried to uphold its weak neutrality regulations; but in the case of Texas, it simply could not enforce unpopular laws in the face of popular opposition

2. A provocative incident on the Canadian frontier brought passions to a boil in 1837; an American steamer, the *Caroline*, was carrying supplies to the insurgents across the swift Niagara River; it was finally attacked on the New York shore by British force

3. Lurid American illustrators showed the flaming ship plummeting over Niagara Falls but in fact the craft in fact sank short of the plunge, and only one American was killed

6. This unlawful invasion of American soil—a counterviolation of neutrality—had alarmed aftermaths; Washington officials lodged vigorous but ineffective protests

7. Three years later, in 1840, the incident was dramatically revived in the state of New York

1. A Canadian named McLeod, after allegedly boasting in a tavern of his part in the *Caroline* raid, was arrested and indicted for murder; the London Foreign Office, which regarded the *Caroline* raiders as members of a sanctioned armed force and not as criminals, made clear that this execution would mean war

2. Fortunately, McLeod was freed after establishing an alibi; it must have been airtight for it was good enough to convince a New York jury; the tension forthwith eased, but it snapped taut again in 1841, when British
officials in the Bahamas offered asylum to 130 Virginia slaves who had rebelled and captured the American ship Creole

4. Manipulating the Maine Maps

1. An explosive controversy of the early 1840s involved the Maine boundary dispute

   1. The St. Lawrence River is icebound several months of the year, as the British, remembering the War of 1812, well knew; they were determined, as a defensive precaution against the Yankees, to build a road westward from Halifax to Quebec

   2. But the proposed route ran through disputed territory—claimed also by Maine under the misleading peace treaty of 1783; lumberjacks from both Maine and Canada entered the disputed no-man’s-land of the tall-timbered Aroostook River Valley

   3. Ugly fights flared up, and both sides summoned the local militia; the small-scale lumberjack clash, which was dubbed the “Aroostook War,” threatened war

2. As the crisis deepened in 1842, the London Foreign Office took an unusual step; it sent to Washington a nonprofessional diplomat, the conciliatory finance Lord Ashburton

   1. He established relations with Secretary Webster, who had recently been lionized during a visit to Britain; the two statesmen, nerves frayed by protracted negotiations in the head of a Washington summer, agreed to compromise on the Maine boundary

   2. On the basis of a split-the-difference arrangement, the Americans were to retain some 7,000 square miles of the 12,000 square miles of wilderness in dispute; the British got less land but won desired Halifax-Quebec route (diplomacy helped patch relations)
3. An overlooked bonus sneaked by in the small print of the same treaty: the British, in adjusting the U.S.-Canadian boundary farther west, surrendered 6,500 square miles; the area was later found to contain the priceless Mesabi iron ore of Minnesota.

5. The Lone Star of Texas Shines Alone

1. During the uncertain eight years since 1836, Texas had led a precarious existence.

   1. Mexico, refusing to recognize Texas’s independence, regarded the Lone Star Republic as a province in revolt, to be reconquered in the future; Mexican officials loudly threatened war if the America should annex the fledging republic.

   2. The Texans were forced to maintain a costly military establishment; vastly outnumbered by their Mexican foe, they could not tell when he would strike again; Mexico actually did make two half-hearted raids that, through ineffectual, foreshadowed more fearsome efforts; confronted with such perils, Texas was driven to open negotiations with Britain and France in search of a protectorate.

   3. In 1839 and 1840, the Texans concluded treaties with France, Holland, and Belgium.

2. Britain was interested in an independent Texas and such a republic would check the southward surge of the American colossus, whose bulging biceps posed a constant threat to nearby British possessions in the New World (Texas could be turned upon Yankees).

   1. Subsequent clashes would create a smoke-screen diversion, behind which foreign powers could move into the Americas and challenge the insolent Monroe Doctrine.
2. French schemers were likewise attracted by the hoary game of divide and conquer; these actions would result in the fragmentation and militarization of America.

3. Dangers threatened from other foreign quarters; British abolitionists were busily intriguing for a foothold in Texas; if successful in freeing the few blacks there, they presumably would inflame the nearby slaves of the Southern regions of America.

4. In addition, British merchants regarded Texas as a potentially important free-trade area—an offset to the tariff-walled United States; British manufacturers like perceived that those vast Texas plains constituted one of the great cotton-producing areas of the future.

5. An independent Texas would relieve British looms of their chronic dependence on America fiber—a supply that might be cut off in time of crisis by embargo or war.

6. The Belated Texas Nuptials

1. Partly because of the fears aroused by British schemers concerning territories, Texas, became a leading issue in the presidential campaign of 1844; the foes of expansion assailed annexation, while the southern hotheads cried, “Texas or Disunion”.

   1. The pro-expansion Democrats under James K. Polk, finally triumphed over the Whigs under Henry Clay; president Tyler thereupon interpreted the narrow Democratic victory, with dubious accuracy, as a “mandate” to acquire Texas.

   2. Eager to crown his troubled administration with this prize, Tyler deserves credit.

   3. Many Whigs feared that Texas in the Union would help the “slave power” and aware of their opposition, Tyler despaired of securing the needed
two-thirds vote for a treaty in the Senate; he there arranged for annexation by a joint resolution

4. The solution required only a simple majority in both houses of Congress and the resolution was passed early in 1845 and Texas was invited to become the 28th state

2. Mexico angrily charged that the Americans had despoiled it of Texas but in 1845, the area of was longer Mexico’s and as the years passed, it was clear; Mexico left the Texans dangling by denying their right to dispose of themselves as they chose

3. By 1845 the Lone Star Republic had become a danger spot, inviting foreign intrigue that menaced the American people; the continued existence of Texas as an independent nation threatened to involve the United States in a series of wars, both in America and in Europe

4. What other power would have spurned the imperial domain of Texas?

5. What the peculiar circumstances of the Texas revolution, the United States can hardly be accused of unseemly haste in achieving annexation (nine long years)

7. Oregon Fever Populates Oregon

1. The Oregon Country was an enormous wilderness that sprawled west magnificently west of the Rockies to the Pacific Ocean, and north of California to the line of 54° 40’; part of this area was claimed at one time or another by Spain, Russia, Britain, and the US

    1. Two claimants dropped out of the scramble; Spain, though the first to raise its banner in Oregon, bartered away its claims to the United States in the Florida Treaty of 1819

    2. Russia retreated to the line of 54° 40’ by the treaties of 1824 and 1825 with America and Britain; these two remaining rivals how had the field to themselves
2. British claims to Oregon were strong—at least to that portion north of the Columbia River; they were based squarely on prior discovery and exploration, on treat rights, and on actual occupation—the most important colonizing agency was the Hudson's Bay Company, which was trading profitably with the Indians of the Pacific Northwest for furs.

3. Americans, could also point to exploration and occupation; Captain Robert Gray in 1792 had stumbled upon the majestic Columbia River, and the famed Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804-1806 had ranged overland through the Oregon Country to the Pacific.

   1. This shaky American toehold was ultimately strengthened by the presence of missionaries and other settlers of whom reached the Willamette River valley (1830s).

   2. The men and women of God, in saving the soul of the Indians, were instrumental in saving the soil of Oregon for the United States—stimulated interest in a faraway domain that countless Americans had assumed would not be settled for centuries.

4. Scattered American and British pioneers in Oregon continued to live peacefully side by side; at the time of negotiating the Treaty of 1818, the United States had sought to divide the vast domain at the forty-ninth parallel; British unwilling to give up Columbia River; a scheme for peaceful “joint occupation” was thereupon adopted, pending future settlement.

5. The handful of Americans in the Willamette Valley when “Oregon fever” seized hundreds of restless pioneers; in increasing numbers, their creaking covered wages jolted over the two-thousand mile Oregon Trail as the human rivulet widened into a stream.

   1. The average rate of progress in covered wagons was one to two miles an hour and this amounted to about 100 miles a week or about five months for the entire journey.
2. Thousands of humans, horses, and oxen died en route and there is one estimate that for every mile there were seventeen deaths for men, women, and children

3. By 1846, about five thousand Americans had settled south of the Columbia River, some of them tough “border ruffians,” expert with bowie knife and “revolving pistol”

6. The British in the face of this rising humanity, could muster only seven hundred or so subjects north of the Columbia; losing in the population race, they were beginning to see the wisdom of arriving at a peaceful settlement before being engulfed by their neighbors

7. Only a relatively small segment of the Oregon Country was in actual controversy by 1845; the area in dispute consisted of the rough quadrangle between the Columbia River on the south and east, the forty-ninth parallel on the north, and the Pacific Ocean on west

8. Britain had repeatedly offered the line of the Columbia; America had repeatedly offered the forty-ninth parallel; the issue was now tossed into the presidential election of 1844, where it was largely overshadowed by the question of annexing Texas or not

8. A Mandate (?) for Manifest Destiny

1. The two major parties nominated their presidential standard-bearers in May 1844

1. Ambitious Henry Clay, easily the most popular man in the country, was enthusiastically chosen by the Whigs at Baltimore and the Democrats

2. The Democrats, meeting in Baltimore later, seemed hopelessly deadlocked; expansionists, dominated by pro-Texas southerners, nominated James K. Polk of Tennessee, America’s first “dark-horse” or “surprise” presidential candidate
2. Polk may have been a dark horse but he was hardly an unknown or decrepit nag; speak of the House of Representatives for four years and governor of Tennessee for two terms, he was a determined, industrious, ruthless, and intelligent public servant

1. Sponsored by Andrew Jackson, Polk was rather implausibly touted by Democrats as yet another “Young Hickory”; Whigs attempted to jeer him into oblivion

2. The campaign of 1844 was an expression of emotional upsurge known as Manifest Destiny; citizens in the 1840s and 1850s, feeling a sense of mission, believed that God had “manifestly” destined the American people for a hemispheric career

3. They would spread their uplifting and ennobling democratic institutions over at least the entire continent and possibly over South America as well; land greed and ideals—“empire” and “liberty”—were thus conveniently conjoined in the Manifest Destiny

3. Expansionist Democrats were strongly swayed by the intoxicating spell of Manifest Destiny and came out in their platform for the “Re-annexation of Texas” and the “Reoccupation of Oregon,” all the way to 54º 40’; outbellowing the Whig log-cabinites, they shouted “All of Oregon or None” and condemned Clay as a “corrupt bargainer”

4. The Whigs countered with such slogans as “Hooray for Clay” and “Polk, Slavery, and Texas, or Clay, Union, and Liberty”—spread rumor that Tennessee slaves were branded

5. On the crucial issue of Texas, Clay appeared to have compromised away the presidency when he wrote a series of confusing letters; they seemed to say that while he personally favored annexing slaveholding Texas, he also favored postponement (it was both an appeal to the South and the North but he alienated the more ardent antislaveryites)
6. Dark Horse Polk beat Henry Clay 170 to 105 votes in Electoral College (PV very close)

1. Clay would have won if he had not lost New York by 5,000 votes and the antislavery Liberty party absorbed nearly 16,000 votes, which would have all gone to Clay

2. The anti-Texas Liberty party, by spoiling Clay’s chances and helping the ensure the election of pro-Texas Polk, hastened the annexation of Texas; land-hungry Democrats flushed with victory proclaimed that they had received a mandate to take Texas

3. However, it was not a clear-cut mandate but this unclear “mandate” was interpreted by President Tyler as a crystal-clear charge to annex Texas (signed joint resolution three days before leaving the White House after he had completed his term

9. Polk the Purposeful

1. “Young Hickory” Polk, unlike “Old Hickory” Jackson was not an impressive figure and he took life seriously and drove himself mercilessly into a premature grave

   1. His burdens were increased by an unwillingness to delegate authority; “What he went for he fetched,” wrote a contemporary—he developed a positive four-point program and with remarkable success achieved it completely in less than four years

   2. One of Polk’s goals was a lowered tariff; his secretary of the Treasury, Robert J. Walker, devised a tariff-for-revenue bill that reduced the average rates of the Tariff of 1842 from about 32% to 25%; with strong support of low-tariff southern people, Walker lobbied the measure through Congress, not without complaints from Clayites
3. The Walker Tariff of 1846 proved to be an excellent revenue producer, largely because it was followed by boom times and heavy imports to the United States.

2. A second objective of Polk was restoration of the independent treasury, unceremoniously dropped by the Whigs in 1841; Pro-bank Whigs in Congress raised a storm of opposition, but victory at last rewarded the president’s efforts in 1846; the third and fourth points on Polk’s “must list” were the acquisition of California and settlement of the Oregon dispute.

1. Reoccupation” of the “whole” of Oregon had been promised northern Democrats in the campaign of 1844; but southern Democrats, once they had annexed Texas, rapidly cooled off; Polk had no intention of insisting on the 54º 40’ pledge on his platform.

2. But feeling bound by the three offers of his predecessors to London, he again proposed the compromise line of 49º; the British minister in Washington, spurned it.

3. The next move on the Oregon chessboard was up to Britain; fortunately for peace, the ministry began to experience a change of heart—British anti-expansionists were now persuaded that the Columbia River was not after all the St. Lawrence of the West and that the turbulent American hordes might one day seize the Oregon Country.

4. Early in 1846 the British came around and themselves proposed the line of 49º.

1. President Polk threw the decision squarely into the lap of the Senate; the senators speedily accepted the offer and approved the subsequent treaty (few diehards).

2. The US was then a month deep in a war with Mexico doubtless influenced the vote.
5. Satisfaction with the Oregon settlement among Americans was not unanimous; the northwestern states joined the antislavery forces in condemning what they regarded as a base betrayal by the South; why all of Texas but not all of Oregon?

6. So Polk, despite all the campaign bluster, got neither “fifty-four forty” nor a fight but he did get something that in the long run was better (reasonable compromise without war)

10. Misunderstandings with Mexico

1. Polk and other disciples of Manifest Destiny had long coveted California’s verdant valleys and especially the spacious bay of San Francisco (future gateway to Pacific)

2. The population of California in 1845 was curiously mixed; it consisted of perhaps thirteen thousand Spanish-Mexicans and as many as seventy-five thousand dispirited Indians; there were fewer than a thousand “foreigners” mostly Americans

3. Polk was eager to buy California from Mexico but relations with Mexico City were dangerously embittered; the United States had claims against the Mexicans for some $3 million in damages to American citizens and their property (agreed to assume debt)

4. A more serious bone of contention was Texas; the Mexican government, after threatening war if the United States should acquire the Lone Star Republic, had recalled its minister from Washington following annexation—diplomatic relations were completely severed

1. Deadlock with Mexico over Texas was further tightened by a question of boundaries

2. During the long era of Spanish-Mexican occupation, the south-western boundary of Texas had been the Nueces River but the expansive Texans
were claiming the more southerly Rio Grande instead (Polk felt obligation to defend Texas in its claim)

5. In Mexicans’ eyes all of Texas was still theirs, although temporarily in revolt, and a dispute over the two rivers seemed pointless; yet Polk was careful to keep American troops out of the explosive no-man’s-land between the Nueces and the Rio Grande

6. The golden prize of California continued to cause Polk much anxiety; disquieting rumors were circulating that Britain was about to buy or seize California—a grab that Americans could not tolerate under the Monroe Doctrine (Polk dispatched John Slidell to Mexico City as minister late in 1845 and was instructed to offer a maximum of $25 million for California and territory to the east but the proud Mexican people didn’t even accept him

11. American Blood On American (?) Soil

1. A frustrated Polk was now prepared to force a show-down; on January 13, 1846 he ordered four thousand men, under General Zachary Taylor, to march from the Nueces River to the Rio Grande, provocatively near Mexican forces

   1. Polk expected at any moment ot hear of a clash but when non occurred after an anxious wait, he informed his cabinet on May 9, 1846, that he proposed to ask Congress to declare war on the basis of unpaid claims and Slidell’s rejection

   2. That very evening, news of bloodshed arrived; on April 25, 1846, Mexican troops had crossed the Rio Grande and attacked General Taylor’s commanded (loss of sixteen)

   3. Polk sent a vigorous war message to Congress declaring that despite “all our efforts” to avoid a clash, hostilities had been forced upon the country by the shedding of “American blood upon American soil”—a patriotic
Congress voted overwhelmingly voted for war, and antislavery Whig bastions melted and joined the rest of the nation

2. In his message to Congress, Polk was making history; a Whig congressman from Illinois, Abraham Lincoln, requested information as to the precise “spot” on American soil where American blood had been shed—it could have been considered Mexican soil

3. The more extreme antislavery agitators of the North, many of them Whigs, branded the president a liar—“Polk the Mendacious” but did Polk provoke war?

1. California was an imperative point in his program and Mexico would not sell it at any price; the only way to get it was to use force or wait for an internal American revolt

2. Delay seemed dangerous as the British might have seized California and grievances against Mexico were annoying yet tolerable (American endured worse later)

3. By in 1846 patience had ceased to be a virtue, as far as Polk was concerned; but on grasping California by fair or foul means, he pushed the quarrel to bloody showdown

4. Both sides were spoiling for a fight; feisty Americans, especially southwestern expansionists, were eager to teach the Mexicans a lesson and the Mexicans, in turn, were burning to humiliate the ”Bullies of the North,” in other words, the United States

5. Possessing a considerable standing army, heavily overstaffed with generals, they boasted of invading the United States, freeing the black slaves, and lassoing whole regiments of Americans—they were hoping that the quarrel with Britain over Oregon would mean war

6. A conquest of Mexico’s vast and arid expanses seemed fantastic, especially in view of the bungling American invasion of Canada in 1812; both sides were
fired by moral indignation; Mexican people and Americans thought they could fight with righteousness

12. The Mastering of Mexico

1. Polk wanted California—not war; but when war came, he hoped to fight it on a limited scale then pull out when he had captured the prize; the dethroned Mexican dictator Santa Anna, then exiled to Cuba, let it be known that if the blockading squadron would permit him to slip into Mexico, he would sell out his country; Polk agreed to this intrigue

2. Once Santa Anna returned to Mexico, he proceeded to rally his countrymen to a defense

3. American operations in the Southwest and in California were completely successful

   1. In 1846 General Stephen W. Kearny led a detachment of seventeen hundred troops over the Santa Fe Trail from Fort Leavenworth and captured Santa Fe

   2. When war broke out, Captain John C. Fremont just happened to be there with several dozen well-armed men and in helping to overthrow Mexican rule in 1846, he collaborated with American naval officers with the local Americans

   3. General Zachary Taylor had been spearheading the main thrust; known as “Old Rough and Ready” because of his iron constitution and incredibly unsolder-like appearance, he fought his way across the Rio Grande into Mexico

   4. After several gratifying victories, he reached Buena Vista where on February 22-23, 1847, his weakened force of five thousand men was attacked by some twenty thousand march-weary troops under Santa Anna; the Mexicans were finally repulsed and overnight Zachary Taylor became the “Hero of Buena Vista” (president)
4. Sound American strategy now called for a crushing blow at the enemy’s vitals—Mexico City; General Taylor could not win decisively in the semi-deserts of northern Mexico and the command of the main expedition, which pushed inland from Vera Cruz early in 1847, was entrusted to general Winfield Scott, a hero from the War of 1812 (strict discipline)

5. General Winfield Scott was severely handicapped in the Mexican campaign by inadequate numbers of troops, by expiring enlistments, by a more numerous enemy, by mountainous terrain, by disease, and by political backbiting at home

6. Yet he succeeded in battling his way up the Mexico City by September 1847 in one of the most brilliant campaigns in American military annals (most distinguished general)

13. Fighting Mexico for Peace

1. Polk was anxious to end shooting after securing his territorial goals; he sent along with Scott’s invading army the chief clerk of the State Department, Nicholas P. Trist

   1. Trist and Scott arranged for an armistice with Santa Anna, at a cost of $10,000; the wily dictator pocketed the bribe and then used the time to bolster his defenses

   2. Negotiating a treat with a sword in one hand and a pen in the other was ticklish business; Polk disgusted with his blundering envoy, abruptly recalled Trist but the wordy diplomat dashed off a 65-page letter explaining why he was not coming back

2. Grasping a fleeting opportunity to negotiate, Trist signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848, and forwarded it to Washington

   1. The terms of the treaty confirmed the American title to Texas and yielded the enormous area stretching westward to Oregon and the ocean
and embracing coveted California; this total expanse, including Texas, was about one-half of Mexico

2. The United States agreed to pay $15 million for the land and to assume the claims of its citizens against Mexico in the amount of $3,250,000

3. Polk submitted the treaty to the Senate and Trist had succeeded—speed was imperative

1. The antislavery Whigs (“Mexican Whigs”) in Congress were denouncing this “damnable war” with increasing heat; having secure control of the House in 1847, they were even threatening to vote down supplies for the armies in the field

2. They had done so, Scott would have been forced to retreat

3. A swelling group of expansionists, intoxicated by Manifest Destiny, was clamoring for all of Mexico; if America had seized it the nation would have been saddled with an expensive and vexatious policing problem—South should not be too greedy

4. The treaty was finally approved by the Senate, 38 to 14 and it was condemned both by those opponents who wanted all of Mexico and by opponents who wanted none

4. Victors rarely pay an indemnity, especially a costly conflict that had been “forced”

5. Yet, Polk arranged to pay over $18 million and cynics have charged that the Americans were pricked by guilty conscience; apologist shad pointed to “spirit of fair play”

6. A decisive factor was the need for haste, while there was still a responsible Mexican government to carry out the treaty and before political foes in the United States, notably the antislavery zealots, sabotaged Polk’s expansionist program
14. Profit and Loss in Mexico

1. The Mexican War was a small one that cost some thirteen thousand American lives, most of them taken by disease but the fruits of the fighting were enormous.

   1. America’s total expanse was increased by about one-third an addition even greater than that of the Louisiana Purchase; a sharp stimulus was given to the spirit of Manifest Destiny, for as the proverb has it, the appetite comes with eating.

2. The Mexican War was the blood-spattered schoolroom of the Civil War.

3. The campaigns provided field experience for most of the officers destined to become leading generals in the forthcoming conflict, including Robert Lee and Ulysses Grant.

4. The Military Academy at West Point, founded in 1802, fully justified its existence through the well-trained officers; useful also was the navy which did valuable work in throwing a crippling blockade around Mexican ports (Marine Corps).

2. The army waged war without defeat and without a major blunder, despite formidable obstacles and a half-dozen or so achingly long marches (Yankee military prowess).

3. Opposing armies emerged with increased respect for each other as the Mexicans, though poorly led, fought heroically—Mexicans have never forgotten that their northern enemy tore away about half of their country; they had been paid something for the land.

4. The war also marked an ugly turning in the relations between the United States and Latin America as a whole; he was increasingly feared as the “Colossus of the North”.

5. The war re-awoke the slavery issues; abolitionists assailed the Mexican conflict as one provoked by the southern “slavocracy” for its evil purposes;
bulk of American volunteers were admittedly from the South and the Southwest (proximity not conspiracy)

6. Quarreling over slavery extension also erupted on the floors of Congress

1. In 1846, Polk had requested an appropriation of $2 million with which to buy a peace;

2. Representative David Wilmot of Pennsylvania, fearful of the southern “slavocracy” introduced an amendment which stipulated that slavery should never exist in any of territory to be wrested from Mexico (amendment twice passed in House not Senate)

3. Southern members, unwilling to be robbed of prospective slave states fought restriction and antislavery men battled no less bitterly for the exclusion of slaves

4. The “Wilmot Proviso” eventually endorsed by the legislatures of all but one of the free states soon came to symbolize the burning issue of slavery in the territories

7. The opening shots of the Mexican War were effectively the opening shot of the Civil War

1. President Polk left the nation the splendid physical heritage of California and the Southwest but also the ugly moral heritage of an embittered slavery dispute

2. Mexicans could later take some satisfaction in knowing that the territory had proved to be a venomous apple of discord that could well be called Santa Anna’s revenge
Renewing the Sectional Struggle, 1848-1854

1. The Popular Sovereignty Panacea

1. Each of the two great political parties was a vital bond of national unity, for each enjoyed powerful support in both North and South; to politicians, the wisest strategy seemed to be to sit on the lid of the slavery issue and ignore it; the cover bobbed up and down in response to the agitation of northern abolitionists and impassioned southern “fire-eaters”

2. Anxious Democrats were forced to seek a new stand-bearer in 1848; President Polk, broken in health by overwork, had pledged himself to a single term as president

1. The Democratic National Convention at Baltimore turned to an aging leader, General Lewis Cass, a veteran of the War of 1812; although a senator and diplomat, he was sour-visaged and somewhat pompous—silent about issue of slavery in the territories

2. Although the Democratic party was silent, Cass was not silent; his views on the extension of slavery were well known because he was the reputed father of “popular sovereignty”—doctrine that stated that the principles of the Constitution, should themselves determine the status of slavery in their separate state

3. Popular sovereignty had a persuasive appeal; the public liked it because it accorded with the democratic tradition of self-determination; politicians liked it because it seemed a comfortable compromise between the abolitionist bid for a band on slavery in the territories and southern demands that Congress protect slavery in the territories

1. Popular sovereignty tossed the slavery problem into the laps of the people in the various territories; advocates of the principle thus hoped
to dissolve the most stubborn national issue of the day into a series of local issues (spread issue out)

2. Popular sovereignty had one fatal defect: it might serve to spread the blight of slavery

2. Political Triumphs for General Taylor

1. The Whigs, meeting in Philadelphia, cashed in on the “Taylor fever”

   1. They nominated the honest Zachary Taylor, the “Hero of Buena Vista,” who had never held civil office or even voted for president; Henry Clay should logically have been nominated but Clay had made too many speeches—and too many enemies

   2. The Whigs eager to win at any cost, dodged troublesome issues and merely extolled homespun virtues of their candidate—the frontier fighter had not committed himself on the issue of slavery extension but he did own slaves on his sugar plantation

   3. Ardent antislavery men in the North, distrusting both Cass and Taylor, organized the Free Soil party—a aroused by the conspiracy of silence in the Democratic and Whig platforms, the Free-Soilers made no bones about their own stand—they came out for the Wilmot Proviso and against slavery in the territories

   4. Going beyond other antislavery groups, they broadened appeal by advocating federal aid for internal improvements and by urging free government homesteads for settlers

2. The new party assembled a strange assortment of new fellows in the same political bed

   1. It attracted industrialists miffed at Polk’s reduction of protective tariffs; it appealed to Democrats resentful of Polk’s settling for a part of Oregon while insisting on all of Texas—a disparity that suggested a menacing southern dominance among Democrats
2. It harbored many northerners who hatred was directed not so much at slavery as at blacks and who gagged at the prospect of sharing the newly acquired western territories with African Americans—it also contained a large element of “conscience Whigs,” heavily influenced by the abolitionist crusade, who condemned slavery

3. The Free-Soilers trotted out wizened former president Van Buren and marched into the fray, shouting, “Free soil, free speech, free labor, and free men”

4. Free-Soilers condemned slavery not so much for enslaving blacks but for destroying the chances of free white workers to rise up from wage-earning dependence to the esteemed status of self-employment (only could be accomplished with free soil)

5. As the first inclusive party organized around issue of slavery and confined to a single section, the Free Soil party foreshadowed the emergence of the Republican party

3. With the slavery issue officially shoved under the rug by the two major parties, the politicians on both sides opened fire on personalities; the amateurish Taylor had to be carefully watched, lest his pen puncture the reputation won by his sword

1. His admirers puffed him up as a gallant knight and sloganized his remark, allegedly uttered during the Battle of Buena Vista, “General Taylor never surrenders”

2. Taylor’s wartime popularity pulled him though and Free-Soiler Van Buren diverted enough Democratic strength from Cass in New York to throw the election to Taylor

3. Californy Gold”

1. President Taylor was a military square peg in a political round hole; he would have been spared much turmoil if could have continued to sit on the
lid; but the discovery of gold in California, early in the year of 1848, blew the cover off

1. A horde of adventurers poured into the valleys of California singing “O Susannah!” and shouting “Gold! Gold! Gold!” began tearing at the yellow-gravelled streams and hills; a fortunate few of the bearded miners “struck it rich” at the “diggings”

2. But the luckless many probably would have been money well ahead if they had stayed at home unaffected by the “gold fever” which was often followed by more deadly fevers—the most reliable profits were made by those who mined the miners, notably by charging outrageous rates for laundry and other personal services

2. The overnight inpouring of tens of thousands of people into the future Golden State completely overwhelmed the one-horse government of California—a distressingly high proportion of the newcomers were lawless men, accompanied by virtue-less women

3. An outburst of crime inevitably resulted from the presence of so many miscreants and outcasts; robbery, claim jumping, and murder were commonplace and such violence was only partly discouraged by rough vigilante justice (few hangings in San Francisco)

4. A majority of Californians, as decent and law-abiding citizens needing protection, grappled earnestly with the problem of erecting an adequate state government

   1. Privately encouraged by President Taylor, they drafted a constitution in 1849 that excluded slavery and then boldly applied to Congress for admission

   2. California would thus bypass the usual territorial stage, thwarting southern congressmen seeking to block free soil—southern politicians arose in opposition
5. Would California prove to by the golden straw the broke the back of the Union?

4. Sectional Balance and the Underground Railroad

1. The South of 1850 was relatively well-off; it then enjoyed more than its share of the nation’s leadership and it had seated the war Hero Zachary Taylor, from Louisiana

   1. It boasted a majority in the cabinet and on the Supreme Court; if outnumbered in the House, the South had equality in the Senate, where it could at least neutralize

   2. Its cotton fields were expanding and cotton prices were profitably high; few people believed that slavery was seriously threatened where it already existed below the Mason-Dixon line—fifteen slave states could veto any constitutional amendment

2. Yet the South was deeply worried, as it had been for several decades, by ever-tipping political balance; there were then fifteen slave states and fifteen free states; the admission of California would destroy the delicate equilibrium in the Senate, perhaps forever

   1. Potential slave territory under the American flab was running short, if it had not in fact disappeared; agitation had already developed in the territories of New Mexico and Utah for admission as non-slave states—the fate of California might well set a precedent for the rest of the Mexican Cession territory (purchased with Southerners)

   2. Texas claimed a huge area east of the Rio Grande and north to the forty-second parallel, embracing in part about half the territory of present-day New Mexico

   3. The federal government was proposing to detach this prize while Texans were threatening to descend upon Santa Fe and seize what they regarded as rightfully theirs
4. Many southerners were also angered by the nagging agitation in the North for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia (prospect of free soil in between)

3. Even more disagreeable to the South was the loss of runaway slaves, many of whom were assisted north by the Underground Railroad—virtual freedom train consisted of an informal chain of “stations” through which scores of runaway slaves were spirited by conductors usually white and black abolitionists from the slave states to free-soil Canada

4. The most amazing of these “conductors” was an illiterate runaway slave from Maryland, fearless Harriet Tubman; during nineteen forays into the South, she rescued more than three hundred slaves and deservedly earn the title of “Moses”

5. By 1850 southerners were demanding a new and more stringent fugitive-slave law; the old one passed Congress in 1793 had proved inadequate to cope with runaways, especially since unfriendly state authorities failed to provide needed cooperation

1. The abolitionists who ran the Underground Railroad did not gain personally from their lawlessness but to the slaveowners the loss was infuriating, whatever the motive

2. Estimates indicate that the South in 1850 was losing perhaps 1,000 runaways a year out of its some 4 million slaves; in fact, more blacks probably gain their freedom by self-purchase or voluntary emancipation than ever escaped

3. But the slavemasters rested their argument on the Constitution which protected slavery, and on the laws of Congress, who provided for slave-catching

5. Twilight of the Senatorial Giants
1. Southern fears were such that Congress was confronted with catastrophe in 1850

   1. Free-soil California was banging on the door for admission, and “fire-eaters” in the South were voicing ominous threats of secession; the crisis brought into the congressional forum the most distinguished assembled of statesmen since the Constitutional Convention of 1787—Clay, Calhoun, and Webster (last time together)

   2. Henry Clay played a crucial role; the “Great Pacificator” had come to the Senate from Kentucky to engineer his third great compromise—he was still eloquent and lively

   3. He proposed and defended a series of compromises; he was ably seconded by Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois (“Little Grant”) whose role was more important

   4. Clay urged with all his persuasiveness that North and South both make concessions and that the North partially tiled by enacting a more feasible fugitive-slave law

2. Senator John C. Calhoun, “Great Nullifier” championed South in his last formal speech

   1. Although approving the purpose of Clay’s proposed concessions, Calhoun rejected them as not providing adequate safeguards

   2. His impassioned plea was to slave slavery alone, return runaway slaves, give the South its rights as a minority, and restore the political balance; he had an utterly unworkable scheme of electing two presidents, one from the North and the South

   3. Calhoun died in 1850, before the debate was over; Calhoun had labored to preserve the Union and had taken his stand on the Constitution
3. Daniel Webster next took the Senate spotlight to uphold Clay’s compromise measures in his last great speech; he urged all reasonable concessions to the South, including the FSL

1. To legislate on the subject was an act of sacrilege for the Almighty God had already passed the Wilmot Proviso; the good Lord had decreed that a plantation economy and hence a slave economy could not profitably exist in the Mexican Cession territory (compromise, concession, and reasonableness were solutions)

2. Webster’s famed Seventh of March speech, 1850, was his finest; it helped turn the tide in the North toward compromise (strengthened Union sentiment)

3. It was especially pleasing to the banking and commercial centers of the North, which stood to lose millions of dollars by secession; but abolitionists, who had assumed Webster was one of them, upbraided him as a traitor

4. Webster had long regarded slavery as evil but disunion as worse, had, in fact, always despised the abolitionists and never joined their ranks

6. Deadlock and Danger on Capitol Hill

1. The stormy congressional debate of 1850 was not finished, for the Young Guard from the North were yet to have their say; this was a group of newer leaders who, unlike the aging Old Guard, had not grown up with the Union (interested in purging and purifying)

1. William H. Seward, freshman senator from New York, was the able spokesman for many of the younger northern radicals; a strong antislaveryite, he came out clearly against concession (he did not realize that compromise brought Union together)

2. Seward argued that Christian legislators must obey God’s moral law as well as man’s mundane law; he therefore appealed with reference to
excluding slavery in the territories to an even high law than the Constitution (cost him presidency)

2. As the great debate in congress ran its heated course, deadlock seemed certain; President Taylor who had allegedly fallen under the influence of men like “Higher Law” Seward, seemed bent on vetoing any compromise passed by Congress

1. His military ire was aroused by the threats of Texas to seize Santa Fe; he appeared to be doggedly determined to “Jacksonize” dissenters, by leading an army against them

2. If troops had begun to march, the South probably would have rallied to the defense of Texas, and the Civil War might have erupted in 1850, earlier that its actual date

7. Breaking the Congressional Logjam

1. At the height of the controversy in 1850, President Taylor unknowingly helped the cause of concession by dying suddenly, probably of an acute intestinal disorder

   1. Vice President Millard Fillmore, a conciliatory New York lawyer-politician took over

   2. As presiding officer of the Senate, he had been impressed with the arguments for conciliation, and he gladly signed the series of compromise measures that passed Congress after seven long months of stormy debate (balancing of interests)

   3. The struggle to get these measures accepted by the country was hardly less heated than in Congress; in the northern states, “Union savers” like Senators Clay, Webster, and Douglas orated on behalf of the compromise (acceptance crystallized in North)
4. It was strengthened by a growing spirit of goodwill, which sprang partly from a feeling of relief and partly from an upsurge of prosperity enriched by California gold.

2. The “fire-eaters” of the south were still violently opposed to concession; a movement in the South to boycott northern goods gained some headway, but in the end the southern Unionists, assisted by the warm glow of prosperity, prevailed.

3. In mid-1850 an assemblage of southern extremists had met in Nashville, Tennessee and not only took a strong position in favor of slavery but condemned the compromise measures then being hammered out in Congress (meeting again after the bills passed, the convention proved to be a dud—southern opinion had accepted the verdict of Congress).

4. Like the calm after a storm, a second Era of Good Feelings dawned; disquieting talk of secession subsided and peace-loving people were determined that the compromises should be a “finality” and that the explosive issue of slavery should be buried.

8. Balancing the Compromise Scales

1. The North clearly got the better deal in the Compromise of 1850

   1. California, as a free state, tipped the Senate balance permanently against the South.

   2. The territories of New Mexico and Utah were open to slavery on the basis of popular sovereignty; but the iron law of nature had loaded the dice in favor of free soil.

   3. The southerners urgently needed more slave territory to restore the “sacred balance” and if they could not carve new states out of the recent conquest from Mexico, where else might they get them? In the Caribbean was one answer.
2. Even the apparent gains of the South rang hollow; disgruntled Texas was to be paid $10 million toward discharging its indebtedness, but in the long run this was a modest sum.

3. The immense area in dispute had been torn from the side of slaveholding Texas and was almost certain to be free—the South had halted the drive towards abolition in the District of Columbia, by permitting the outlawing of the slave trade in the federal district.

4. Most alarming of all, the drastic new Fugitive Slave Law of 1850—“the Bloodhound Bill”—stirred up a storm of opposition in the North; the fleeing slaves could not testify in their own behalf and they were denied a jury trial; these harsh practices, some citizens feared, threatened to create dangerous precedents for white Americans.

   1. The federal commissioner who handled the case of a fugitive would receive five dollars if the runaway were freed and ten dollars if not—resembling a bribe.

   2. Freedom-loving northerners who aided the slave to escape were liable to heavy fines and jail sentences; they might even be ordered to join the slave-catchers.

5. So savage was this “Man-Stealing Law” that it touched off an explosive chain reaction in the North; many shocked moderates were driven into swelling ranks of the antislaveryites.

6. The Underground Railroad stepped up its timetable and infuriated northern mobs rescued slaves from their pursers; Massachusetts, in a move toward nullification made it a penal offense for any state official to enforce the new federal statute.

7. Other states passed “personal liberty laws,” which denied local jails to federal officials and otherwise hampered enforcement; the abolitionists protested against the statute.
8. The Fugitive Slave law was an appalling blunder on the part of the South

1. No single irritant of the 1850s was more persistently galling to both sides, and none did more to awaken in the North a spirit of antagonism against the South

2. The southerners in turn were embittered because the northerners would not in good faith execute the law—the one real and immediate southern “gain” from the Great Compromise; slave-catchers redoubled their efforts, with some success

3. Should the shooting showdown have come in 1850—from the standpoint of the secessionists, ye; from the standpoint of the Unionists, no (time fighting for North)

4. With every passing decade, this huge section was forging further ahead in population and wealth—in crops, factories, foundries, ships, and railroads

9. Delay also added immensely to the moral strength of the North—to its will to fight for the Union; in 1850 thousands of northern moderates were unwilling to pin the South; the inflammatory events of the 1850s did much to bolster the Yankee will to resist secession

10. This one feverish decade gave the North time to accumulate the material and moral strength that provided the margin of victory—Compromise of 1850 helped the Union win

9. Defeat and Doom for the Whigs

1. Meeting in Baltimore, the Democratic nominating convention of 1852 startled the nation; hopelessly deadlocked, it finally stampeded to the second “dark horse” candidate in American history, an unrenowned lawyer-politician, Franklin Pierce (from NH)
1. Pierce was a weak and indecisive figure; he served without real distinction in the Mexican War; he was known as the “Fainting General” (fondness of alcohol)

2. He was enemyless because he had been inconspicuous and as a prosouthern northerner, he was acceptable to the slavery wing of the Democratic party

3. His platform came out emphatically for the finality of the Compromise of 1850

2. The Whigs, also convening in Baltimore, missed a splendid opportunity to capitalize on their record in statecraft; able to boast of a praiseworthy achievement in the Compromise of 1850, they might have logically nominated President Fillmore or Senator Webster

3. But having won in the past only with military heroes, they turned to another, “Old Fuss and Feathers” Winfield Scott, perhaps the ablest American general of his generation

1. Although he was a huge and impressive figure, his manner bordered on haughtiness

2. His personality not only repelled the masses but eclipsed his genuinely statesmanlike achievements; the Whig platform praised the Compromise of 1850 as a lasting arrangement, though less enthusiastically than the Democrats

4. With slavery and sectionalism to some extent soft-pedaled, the campaign again degenerate into a dull and childish attack on personalities—Democrats ridiculed Scott’s pomposity and Whigs charged that Pierce was the hero of “many a well-fought bottle”

5. Luckily for Democrats, the Whig party was split; antislavery Northern Whigs swallowed Scott as their nominee but deplored his platform, which endorsed the hated Fugitive Slave Law; Southern Whigs, who doubted Scott’s loyalty to
the Compromise of 1850 and especially the Fugitive Slave Law, accepted the platform but spat on the candidate.

6. General Scott, victorious on the battlefield, met defeat at the ballot box; he was stabbed in the back by his fellow Whigs, notably in the South (Pierce won in a landslide)

7. The election of 1852 was fraught with frightening significance, though it may have seemed tame at the time; it marked the effective end of the disorganized Whig party.

1. The Whigs’ demise augured the eclipse of national parties and the worrisome rise of purely sectional political alignments; the Whigs were governed at times by the crassest opportunism, and they won only two presidential elections (both war heroes)

2. They finally choked to death trying to swallow the distasteful Fugitive Slave Law

3. Their great contribution was to help uphold the ideal of the Union through their electoral strength in the South and through the eloquence of leaders like Henry Clay and Daniel Webster—both contributed powerfully to preservation of a United States

10. President Pierce the Expansionist

1. At the outset the Pierce administration displayed vigor; his cabinet contained aggressive southerners, including as secretary of war one Jefferson Davis, future president of the Confederacy—people of Dixie were determined to acquire more slave territory

2. The intoxicating victories of the Mexican War stimulated the spirit of Manifest Destiny

1. The conquest of a Pacific frontage, and discovery of gold on it, aroused lively interest in the transisthmian land routes of Central America, chiefly in Panama and Nicaragua
2. Many Americans were looking even further ahead to potential canal routes and to the islands flanking them, notably Spain’s Cuba (visions fired ambitions)

3. They lusted for new territory after the Compromise of 1850 seemingly closed most of the lands of the Mexican Cession to the “peculiar institution”

3. Southerners took a special interest in Nicaragua; a brazen American adventurer, William Walker, tried repeatedly to grab control of this Central American country in the 1850s

1. Backed by an armed force recruited largely in the South, he installed himself as president in July 1856 and promptly legalized slavery (offering Nicaragua)

2. But a coalition of Central American nations formed an alliance to overthrow him; President Pierce withdrew diplomatic recognition and he died in 1860

4. Nicaragua was also of vital concern to Great Britain, the world’s leading maritime and commercial power; fearing that the grasping Yankees would monopolize the trade arteries there, the British made hast to secure a solid foothold at Greytown (in Nicaragua)

5. This challenge to the Monroe Doctrine raised the ugly possibility of an armed clash

6. The crisis was surmounted in 1850 by the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, which stipulated that neither America nor Britain would fortify or secure exclusive control over any future isthmian waterway—the agreement seemed necessary to halt the British

7. America had become a Pacific power with the acquisition of California and Oregon, both of which faced Asia—the prospects of a rich trade with the Far East now seemed possible
1. Americans had already established contacts with China and shippers were urging Washington to push for commercial intercourse with Japan.

2. The mikado’s empire had withdrawn into isolationism and had remained there for over two hundred years; the Japanese were so protective that they prohibited shipwrecked foreign sailors from leaving and refused to readmit Japan their own sailors who had been washed up on the West Coast of North America.

3. But by 1853, as events proved, Japan was ready to emerge from reclusion (Russia).

8. The Washington government dispatched a fleet of awesome, smoke-belching warships, commanded by Commodore Matthew C. Perry, brother of the hero of Battle of Lake Erie.

9. By judicious display of force and tact, he persuaded the Japanese in 1854 to sign a memorable treaty; it provided for only a commercial foot in the door.

10. But it was the beginning of an epochal relationship between the Land of the Rising Sun and the Western world; this achievement attracted little notice at the time (no slogan).

11. Coveted Cuba: Pearl of the Antilles

   1. Sugar-rich Cuba, lying off the nation’s southern doorstep was the prime objective of Manifest Destiny in the 1850s; supporting a large population of enslaved blacks, it was coveted by the South as the most desirable slave territory available (restore balance?)

   2. Cuba was a kind of heirloom—the most important remnant of Spain’s once-mighty New World empire; Polk, the expansionist, had taken steps to offer $100 million for it, but the sensitive Spaniards had replied that they wouldn’t sell it to the Americans at any price.

      1. With purchase completely out of the question, seizure was apparently the only way to pluck the ripening fruit; private adventurers form the
South now undertook to shake the tree of Manifest Destiny—1850-1851, two “filibustering” expeditions set out

2. Each numbering several hundred armed men, they descended upon Cuba

3. Both feeble efforts were repelled and latter ended in tragedy when the leader and fifty followers were summarily shot or strangled (many from best families of South)

4. An angry mob of southerners sacked Spain’s consulate in New Orleans

3. Spanish officials in Cuba rashly forced a showdown in 1854 when they seized an American steamer, Black Warrior, on a technicality; now was the time for President Pierce, dominated as he was by the South, to provoke a war with Spain and seize Cuba

4. The major powers of Europe (England, France, and Russia) were about to become bogged down in the Crimean War and hence were unable to aid Spain

5. A cloak-and-dagger episode followed; the secretary of state instructed the American ministers in Spain, England and France to prepare confidential recommendations for the acquisition of Cuba; meet at Ostend, Belgium, the three envoys drew up a top-secret dispatch, soon known as Ostend Manifesto (urged administration to offer $120 million)

1. If Spain refused, and if its continued ownership endangered American interests, the United States would “be justified in wresting” the island from the Spanish

2. The secret Ostend Manifesto quickly leaked out and northern free-soilers, already angered by Fugitive Slave Law, rose in an outburst against the manifesto of brigands”

3. Confronted with disruption, the Pierce administration was forced to drop its schemes
6. Clearly the slavery issue deadlocked territorial expansion in the 1850s; the North was developing a renewed appetite for Canada and the South coveted Cuba (Crimean War)

7. Neither section would permit the other to get the apple of its eye, so neither got either

12. Pacific Railroad Promoters and the Gadsden Purchase

1. Acute transportation problems were another legacy of the Mexican War; the newly acquired prizes of California and Oregon might just as well been remote islands

   1. The sea routes to and form the Isthmus of Panama were too long; covered wagon travel past bleaching animal bones was possible but slow and dangerous

   2. Feasible land transportation was imperative or the newly won possessions on the Pacific Coast might break away; camels were even proposed as the answer—they were imported from the Near East but Americans could not adjust to them

   3. A transcontinental railroad was clearly the only real solution to the problem

2. Railroad promoters, both North and South, had projected many drawing-board routes to the Pacific Coast but the estimated cost in all cases was so great that for many years there could obviously be only one line—should its terminus be in the North or the South?

3. The favored section would reap rich rewards in wealth, population, and influence; the South, losing the economic race to the North, was eager to extend a railroad through adjacent southwestern territory all the way to California
4. Another chunk of Mexico now seemed desirable, because the campaigns of the recent war had shown that the best railway route ran slightly south of the Mexican border

1. Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, a Mississippian, arranged to have James Gadsden, a prominent South Carolina railroad man, appointed minister to Mexico

2. Finding Santa Anna in power for the sixth and last time, and as usually in need of money, Gadsden made gratifying headway—he negotiated a treaty in 1853

3. The Gadsden Purchase area was ceded to the US in 1853 for $10 million

4. The transaction aroused much criticism among northerners, who objected to paying a huge sum for a cactus-strewn desert nearly the size of Gadsden’s South Carolina

5. The coveted railroad enabled the South to claim the coveted railroad with even great insistence; a southern track would be easier to build because the mountains were less high and because the route would not pass through unorganized territory (Texas and NM)

6. Any northern or central railroad would have to be thrust through the unorganized territory of Nebraska, where the buffalo and Indians roamed; northern railroad boosters quickly replied that if organized territory were the test, then Nebraska should be organized

7. Such a move was not premature, because thousands of land-hungry pioneers were already poised on the Nebraska border; but all schemes proposed in Congress for organizing the territory were greeted with apathy or hostility by many southerners

13. Douglas’s Kansas-Nebraska Scheme
1. In 1854, Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois delivered a counterstroke to offset the Gadsden thrust for southern expansion westward in the United States.

   1. "Little Giant" radiated the energy and breezy optimism of the self-made man; an ardent booster for the West, he longed to break the North-South deadlock over westward expansion and stretch a line of settlements across the continent.

   2. A “steam engine in breeches,” Douglas threw himself behind a legislative scheme that would enlist the support of a reluctant South; the proposed Territory of Nebraska would be sliced into two territories, Kansas and Nebraska.

   3. Their status regarding slavery would be settled by popular sovereignty—a democratic concept to which Douglas and his western constituents were deeply attached.

   4. Kansas, west of slaveholding Missouri, would presumably choose to become a slave state but Nebraska, west of free-soil Iowa, would presumably become a free state.

2. Douglas’s Kansas-Nebraska scheme ran into a formidable political obstacle; the Missouri Compromise of 1820 had forbidden slavery in proposed Nebraska Territory, which lay north of the sacred 36 30’ line and the only way to open the region would be to repeal it.

3. This bold step Douglas was prepared to take, even at the risk of shattering the uneasy truce patched together by the Compromise of 1850.

   1. Many southerners, who had not conceived of Kansas as slave soil, rose to the bait; here was the chance to gain one more slave state—President Pierce supported it.

   2. But the Missouri Compromise, could not be brushed aside lightly; whatever Congress passes it can repeal, but by this time the North had
come to regard the sectional pact as almost as sacred as the Constitution itself (Free-soilers members struck back)

3. Free-soilers met their match in Douglas, who was the ablest rough-and-tumble debater of his generation; he rammed the bill through Congress, with strong support from many southerners—political passions were so heated that there was bloodshed

4. Douglas’s motive sin prodding anew the snarling dog of slavery have puzzled historians

1. His foes accused him of angling for presidency in 1856; yet his admirers have argued plausibly in his defense that if he had not championed the bill, someone would have

2. Douglas acted somewhat impulsively and recklessly; he declared repeatedly that he did not care whether it was voted up or down in the territories; what he failed to perceive was that hundreds of thousands of his fellow citizens in the North did feel deeply on this moral issue (repeal of Missouri Compromise a breach of faith)

5. Genuine leaders must foresee the possible effects of their moves; Douglas predicted a “hell of a storm,” but he grossly underestimated its proportions; though he had critics in the North, he still enjoyed a high degree of popularity among his following in the Democratic party, especially in Illinois, a strong hold of popular sovereignty

14. Congress Legislates a Civil War

1. The Kansas-Nebraska Act was one of the most momentous measures ever to pass Congress; by one way of reckoning, it greased the slippery slope to Civil War

2. Antislavery northerners were angered by what they condemned as an act of bad faith; all future compromise with the South would be immeasurably more difficult (conflict)
3. The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, preciously enforced in the North only halfheartedly was a dead letter; Kansas-Nebraska Act wrecked two compromises: that of 1820, which it repealed specifically and that of 1850, which northern opinion repealed indirectly.

4. The growing legion of antislaveryites gained numerous recruits, who resented the grasping move by the “slavocracy” for Kansas (free-soilers tried to control Kansas).

5. The proud Democrats were shattered by the Kansas-Nebraska Act; they did elect a president in 1856 but he was the last they were to boost into the White House for 28 years.

6. The most durable offspring of the Kansas-Nebraska blunder was the new Republican party; it sprang up spontaneously in the Middle West, notably in Wisconsin and Michigan, as a mighty moral protest against the gains of slavery (included Whigs).

1. It soon included disgruntled Whigs, Democrats, Free-Soilers, Know-Nothings, and other foes of the Kansas-Nebraska Act; the hodgepodge party spread eastward with the swiftness of a prairie fire and with the zeal of a religious crusade.

2. At the beginning of 1854, it elected a Republican Speak of the House of Representatives within two years; never really a third-party movement, it erupted with such force as to become overnight the second major political party (sectional).

3. The new Republican party would not be allowed south of the Mason-Dixon line.
Drifting Toward Disunion, 1854-1861

1. Stowe and Helper: Literary Incendiaries

1. Sectional tensions were further strained in 1852, and later, by an inky phenomenon

1. Harriet Beecher Stowe, a wisp of a woman and the mother of a half-dozen children, published her heartrending novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in 1852

2. Dismayed by the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, she was determined to awaken the North to the wickedness of slavery by laying bare its terrible inhumanity, especially the cruel splitting of families of slaves for selling

3. Her wildly popular book (success of the novel at home and abroad was sensational) relied on powerful imagery and touching pathos; the deeper sources of her antislavery sentiments lay in the evangelical religious crusades of the Second Great Awakening

4. Totals soon ran into the millions as the tale was translated into many languages and no other novel in American history can be compared with it as a political force

2. To millions of people, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* made slavery appear almost as evil as it really was and the truth is that it did help start the Civil War—and win the Civil War too

3. Southerners criticized her “unfair” indictment as Mrs. Stowe had never witnessed slavery at first hand in the Deep South, but she had seen it briefly during a visit to Kentucky and she had lived for many years in Ohio, a center of Underground Railroad activity

4. Uncle Tom left a profound impression on the North; readers swore to have nothing to do with the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law and the tale
was devoured by millions of impressionable youths in the 1850s—some who fought in the Civil War (Boys in Blue)

5. The novel was immensely popular abroad, especially in Britain and France; when the Civil War started, the people of England sensed that the triumph of the North would spell the end of the black curse; government in London and Paris considered intervening for the South, but they realized that many of their own people would not support them

6. Another trouble-brewing book appeared in 1857, five years after the debut of Uncle Tom

1. The Impending Crisis of the South, written by Hinton R. Helper, a non-aristocratic white from North Carolina, attempted to prove by statistics that indirectly the non-slaveholding whites were the ones who suffered most from the millstone of slavery

2. Helper’s influence was negligible among the poorer whites to whom he addressed his message; his book was banned in the South, where book-burning parties were held

3. But in the North, thousands of copies, many in condensed form were distributed as campaign literature by the Republicans—Southerners were further embittered

2. The North-South Contest for Kansas

1. The rolling plains of Kansas had provided an example of the worse possible workings of popular sovereignty; newcomers who ventured into Kansas were a motley lot

1. Most of the northerners were just ordinary westward-moving pioneers in search of richer lands beyond the sunset; but a small part of the inflow was financed by groups of northern abolitionists or free-soilers—New England Emigration Aid Company
2. People were sent to the troubled area to forestall the South and to make a profit

3. Southern spokesmen raised furious cries of betrayal; they had supported the Kansas-Nebraska scheme of Douglas with the unspoken understanding that Kansas would become slave and Nebraska free—Nebraskans were trying to “abolitionize” Kansas

4. A few southern hotheads, quick to respond, attempted to “assist” small groups of well-armed slaveowners to Kansas; but planting blacks on Kansas was a losing game

5. Slaves were valuable and volatile property, and foolish indeed were owners who would take them were bullets were flying and where the soil might be free

2. Crisis conditions in Kansas rapidly worsened; when the day came in 1855 to elect members of the first territorial legislature, proslavery “border ruffians” poured in from Missouri to vote early and often; slavery supporters triumphed and set up their puppet government at Shawnee Mission and the free-soilers established a regime in Topeka

3. The confused Kansans thus had their choice between two governments—one based fraud, the other illegality; tensions mounted as settlers feuded over conflicting land claims

4. The breaking point came in 1856 when a gang of proslavery raiders, alleging provocation, shot up and burned a part of the free-soil town of Lawrence

5. This outrage was but the prelude to a bloodier tragedy

3. Kansas in Convulsion

1. The fanatical figure of John Brown now stalked upon the Kansas battlefield
1. He was obsessively dedicated to the abolitionist cause and becoming involved in dubious dealings, he moved to Kansas from Ohio with a part of his large family.

2. Brooding over the recent attack on Lawrence, “Old Brown” of Osawatomie led a band of his followers to Pottawatomie Creek in May 1856; there they literally hacked to pieces five surprised men, presumed to be proslaveryites and this butchery tainted the free-soil cause and brought vicious retaliation from the proslavery forces.

3. Civil war in Kansas, which thus flared forth in 1856, continued intermittently until it merged with the large-scale Civil War of 1861-1865 (paralyzed agriculture).

2. By 1857 Kansas had enough people, chiefly free-soilers, to apply for statehood on a popular-sovereignty basis; the proslavery forces devised the Lecompton Constitution.

1. The people were not allowed to vote for or against the constitution as a whole, but for the constitution “with slavery” or “with no slavery”; if they voted against slavery, one of the provisions of constitution would protect the owners of slaves already in Kansas.

2. So whatever the outcome, there would still be black bondage in Kansas.

3. Many free-soilers, infuriated by this play, boycotted the polls; left to themselves, the proslaveryites approved the constitution with slavery late in 1857.

3. The scene next shifted to Washington where President Pierce had been succeeded by James Buchanan, who was also strongly under the southern influence.

1. Blind to sharp divisions within his own Democratic party, Buchanan threw the weight of his administration behind the notorious Lecompton Constitution.
2. But Senator Douglas, who had championed true popular sovereignty, would have none of semi-popular fraudulence; he fought for fair play and democratic principles.

3. The outcome was a compromise that submitted the entire Lecompton Constitution to a popular vote; free-soil voters thronged to the polls and snowed it under.

4. Kansas remained a territory until 1861, when the southern secessionists left Congress.

4. President Buchanan, by antagonizing the numerous Douglas Democrats in the North, hopelessly divided the once-powerful Democratic party—it had been the only remaining national party for the Whigs were dead and the Republicans were sectional.

5. With the disruption of the Democrats came the snapping of one of the last important strands in the rope that was barely binding the Union together.

4. Bully" Brooks and His Bludgeon

1. "Bleeding Kansas" also spattered blood on the floor of the Senate in 1856.

   1. Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts was a leading abolitionist—he was highly educated but he had made himself one of the most disliked men in the Senate.

   2. Brooding the miscarriage of popular sovereignty, he deviled a blistering speech titled "The Crime Against Kansas"—he condemned the proslavery men and referred to South Carolina and to Senator Andrew Butler, one of the best-liked men in Senate.

   3. Hot-tempered Congressman Preston S. Brooks of South Carolina now took vengeance into his own hands and he resented the insults to his state and senator.
4. His code of honor called for a duel, but in the South one fought only with one’s social equal so the only alternative was to chastise the senator by beating an unruly dog.

5. On May 22, 1856, he approached Sumner and pounded the orator with an eleven-ounce cane until it broke and the victim fell bleeding and unconscious to the floor.

2. The House of Representatives could not muster enough votes to expel South Carolinian, but he resigned and was triumphantly reelected—southern admirers sent him canes.

3. The injuries to Sumner’s head and nervous system were serious; he was forced to leave his set for three and a half years and go to Europe for painful and costly treatment.

4. Meanwhile, Massachusetts defiantly reelected him, leaving his seat eloquently empty; bleeding Sumner was thus joined with bleeding Kansas as a political issue.

5. The free-soil North was mightily aroused against the “Bully” Brooks and copies of Sumner’s abusive speech were sold by the tens of thousands—earned Republican votes.

6. The South, although not unanimous in approving Brooks, was angered not only because Sumner had made such a speech but also because it had been so applauded in the North.

7. The Sumner-Brooks clash and the ensuing reactions revealed how dangerously inflamed passions were becoming in the US (arguably one of the first blows of the Civil War).

5. Old Buck” Versus “The Pathfinder”

1. The Democrats met in Cincinnati to nominate their presidential standard-bearer of 1856.
1. They shied away from both the weak-kneed President Pierce and the dynamic Douglas; each was too indelibly tainted by the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

2. The delegates finally chose James Buchanan, a well-to-do Pennsylvania lawyer who had been serving as minister to London during the recent Kansas-Nebraska uproar.

3. He was relatively enemyless but “Old Buck” was mediocre, irresolute, and confused.

2. Delegates of the fast-growing Republican party met in Philadelphia with effervescence.

1. Higher Law” Seward was their most conspicuous but their final choice was Captain John C. Fremont, the so-called Pathfinder of the West—an erratic explorer-soldier surveyor virtually without political experience, but he was not tarred from Kansas.

2. The Republican platform came out vigorously against the extension of slavery into the territories, while the Democrats declared no less for popular sovereignty.

3. A dose of Antiforeignism was injected into the campaign, even though extension loomed.

1. The recent influx of immigrants from Ireland and Germany had alarmed “nativists” (Protestants) and they organized the American party, known also as the Know-Nothing party because of its secretiveness and in 1856 nominated Millard Fillmore.

2. Antiforeign and anti-Catholic these super patriots adopted the slogan “Americans Must Rule American” and remnants of the dying Whig party endorsed Fillmore, and they and the Know-Nothings threatened to cut into Republican strength.
4. Republicans were behind Fremont with zeal but mudslinging bespattered both candidates

5. Buchanan was assailed because he was a bachelor: the fiancée of this youth had died after a lovers’ quarrel and Fremont was reviled because of his illegitimate birth (mother)

6. More harmful to Fremont was the allegation which alienated many bigoted Know-Nothings and other “nativists,” that he was a Roman Catholic in practice

6. The Electoral Fruits of 1856

1. A bland Buchanan, although polling less than a majority of the popular vote, won handily; his tally in the Electoral College was 174 to 114 for Fremont and 8 for Fillmore

2. Why did the rousing Republicans go down in defeat—Fremont lost much ground because of grave doubts as to his honesty, capacity, and sound judgment
   
   1. The violent threats of the southern “fire-eaters” that the election of a sectional “black Republican” would be a declaration of war on them, forcing them to secede

   2. Many northerners, anxious to save both the Union and their profitable business connections with the South, were thus intimidated into voting for Buchanan

   3. Innate conservatism triumphed, assisted by so-called southern bullyism

3. It was probably fortunate for the Union that secession and civil war did not come in 1856, following a Republican victory; Fremont was an ill-balanced and second-rate figure
4. Yet the Republicans in 1856 could rightfully claim a “victorious defeat”; the new party had made an astonishing showing against the well-oiled Democratic machine

5. The election of 1856 cast a shadow forward and North and South, peered toward 1860

7. The Dred Scott Bombshell

1. The Dred Scott decision, handed down by the Supreme Court on March 6, 1857, abruptly ended the two-day presidential honeymoon of the unlucky bachelor, James Buchanan; this pronouncement was one of the opening paper-gun blasts of the Civil War

2. Dred Scott, a black slave, had lived with his master for five years in Illinois and Wisconsin Territory; backed by abolitionists, he sued for freedom on the basis of his long residence on free soil—twist a simple legal case into a complex political issue

   1. It ruled, not surprisingly, that Dred Scott was a black slave and not a citizen; hence he could not sue—denying blacks their citizenship, menaced the position of free blacks

   2. The tribunal could then have thrown out the case on technical grounds but a majority decided to go further, under the leadership of emaciated Chief Justice Taney from the slave state Maryland—a sweeping judgment on the issue of slavery seemed desirable

3. Taney rocked the free-soilers back; a majority of the Court decreed that because a slave was private property, he could be taken into any territory and legally held there in slavery

   1. The reasoning was that the Fifth Amendment clearly forbade Congress to deprive people of their property without due process of law; the Court went further
2. The Missouri Compromise, banning slavery north of 36°30' had been repealed three years earlier by the Kansas-Nebraska Act but its spirit was still venerated in the North.

3. Now the Court ruled that the Compromise of 1820 had been unconstitutional all along: Congress had no power to ban slavery from the territories, regardless even of what the territorial legislatures themselves might want (Southerners were delighted).

4. Champions of popular sovereignty were aghast, including Senator Douglas and a host of northern and southern wings of the once-united Democratic party.

5. Foes of slavery extension, especially the Republicans, were infuriated by the Dred Scott setback; their chief rallying cry had been the banishing of bondage from the territories.

   1. They now insisted that the ruling of the Court was merely an opinion, not a decision, and no more binding than the views of the a “southern debating society”

   2. Republican defiance of the tribunal was intensified by an awareness that a majority of its members were southerners and by the conviction that it had debased itself.

   3. Southerners were inflamed by all this defiance; they began to wonder how much longer they could remain joined to a section that refused to honor the Supreme Court.

8. The Financial Crash of 1857

   1. Bitterness caused by the Dred Scott decision was deepened by hard times, which dampened a period of feverish prosperity; late in 1857 a panic burst under Buchanan.
1. The storm was not so bad economically as the panic of 1837 but psychologically it was probably the worst of the nineteenth century; what caused the crash?

2. Inpouring California gold played its part by helping to inflate the currency

3. The demands of the Crimean War had over-stimulated the growing of grain, while frenzied speculation in land and railroads had further ripped the economic fabric

4. When the collapse came, over five thousand businesses failed within a year and unemployment, accompanied by hunger meetings in urban areas, was widespread

2. The North, including the grain growers, was hardest hit; the South, enjoying favorable cotton prices abroad, rode out the storm—panic conditions seemed further proof that cotton was king and that its economic kingdom was stronger than that of the North

3. Financial distress in the North, especially in agriculture gave a new vigor to the demand for free farms of 160 acres from the public domain; for several decades interested groups had been urging the federal government to abandon its ancient policy of selling the land for revenue—instead, the argument was that acreage should be given outright to pioneers

4. A scheme to make outright gifts of homesteads encountered two-pronged opposition

1. Eastern industrialists had long been unfriendly to free land; some of them feared that their underpaid workers would be drained off to the land in the West

2. The south was even more bitterly opposed because gang-labor slavery could not flourish on a mere 160 acres; free farms would merely fill up
the territories more rapidly with free-soilers and further tip the political balance against the South

3. In 1860, after years of debate, Congress finally passed a homestead act—one that made public lands available at a nominal sum of twenty-five cents an acre; but the homestead act was tabbed to death by the veto pen of President Buchanan

5. The panic of 1857 also created a clamor for higher tariff rates; several months before the crash, Congress, embarrassed by a large Treasury surplus, had enacted the Tariff of 1857

1. The new law, responding to pressures from the South, reduced duties to about 20 percent on dutiable goods—the lowest point since the War of 1812—financial misery

2. Northern manufacturers, many of them Republicans, noisily blamed their misfortunes on the low tariff; as the surplus melted away in the Treasury, industrialists in the north pointed to the need for higher duties—desire for increased protection

3. The Panic of 1857 gave the Republicans two surefire economic issues for the election of 1860: protection for the unprotected and farms from the farm-less people

9. An Illinois Rail-Splitter Emerges

1. The Illinois senatorial election of 1858 now claimed the national spotlight

1. Senator Douglas’s term was about to expire, and the Republicans decided to run against him a rustic Springfield lawyer, one Abraham Lincoln (lanky figure)

2. Lincoln was born in 1809 in a Kentucky log cabin to impoverished parents and he was self-educated; he shone in his frontier community as a wrestler and weight lifter, and spent some time, among other pursuits, as a splitter of logs for fence rails
Lincoln’s private and professional life was not especially noteworthy; he married “above himself” socially and the temperamental outbursts of his high-strung wife (called the “she wolf” by enemies), helped to school him in patience and forbearance.

1. He gradually emerged as one of the dozen or so better-known trial lawyers in Illinois, although still accustomed to carrying important papers in his stovepipe hat.

2. He was widely referred to as “Honest Abe” partly because he would refused cases that he had to suspend his conscience to defend in the Illinois courts.

3. The rise of Lincoln as a political figure was not rocketlike; after making his mark in the Illinois legislature as a Whig politician, he served one undistinguished term in Congress, 1847-1849; until 1854, he had done nothing to establish a claim to statesmanship.

4. But the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in that year lighted within him fires.

5. After joining the Republican, Lincoln emerged as one of the foremost politicians and orators of the Northwest—Lincoln almost received vice-president nomination.

10. The Great Debate: Lincoln Versus Douglas

1. Lincoln, as Republican nominee for the Senate seat, boldly challenged Douglas to a series of joint debates; this was a rash act because the senator was probably the nation’s most devastating debater; Douglas promptly accepted Lincoln’s challenge (1858).

1. Seven meetings were arranged from August to October; at first glance the contestants seemed ill matched; the polished Douglas presented a striking contrast to the lanky Lincoln; moreover, “Old Abe” had a piercing, high-pitched voice and was often ill.
2. But as Lincoln threw himself into an argument, he seemed to grow in height, while his glowing eyes lighted up a rugged face; he relied on logic not just shouting.

2. The most famous debate came at Freeport, Illinois, where Lincoln nearly impaled his open on the horns of a dilemma; suppose, he queried, the people of a territory should vote slavery down—the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott division had decreed they could not.

3. Legend to the contrary, Douglas and some southerners had already publicly answered the Freeport question; his reply to Lincoln became known as the “Freeport Doctrine.”

4. No matter how the Supreme Court ruled, Douglas argued, slavery would stay down if the people voted; laws to protect slavery were to be passed by territorial legislatures.

5. The upshot was that Douglas defeated Lincoln for the Senate seat; the “Little Giant’s” loyalty to popular sovereignty, which still had a powerful appeal in Illinois, was decisive.

6. In the general election that followed the debates, more pro-Douglas members were elected than pro-Lincoln members but thanks to inequitable apportionment, the districts carried by Douglas supporters represented a smaller population than those carried by Lincoln supporters—“Honest Abe” thus had won a clear moral victory.

7. Lincoln possibly was playing for larger stakes than just the senatorship; newspapers in the East published detailed accounts of the debates, and Lincoln began to emerge as a potential Republican nominee for president; Douglas by winning, hurt splintered his party.

8. After Douglas’s opposition to the Lecompton Constitution for Kansas and his further defiance of the Supreme Court at Freeport, southern Democrats were
determined to break up the party and the Union rather than accept him
(prelim battlefields of the Civil War)

11. John Brown: Murderer or Martyr?

1. John Brown of bleeding Kansas now appeared again in an even more terrible
way; his scheme was to invade the South secretly with a handful of followers,
call upon the slaves to rise, furnish them with arms, and establish a kind of
black free states as a sanctuary

1. Brown secured several thousand dollars for firearms from northern
abolitionists and finally arrived in western Virginia with some twenty
men, including several blacks

2. At Harpers Ferry, he seized the federal arsenal in October 1859,
incidentally killing seven innocent people and injuring ten or so more
but the slaves largely ignorant of Brown’s strike, failed to rise, and the
wounded Brown and the remnants of his tiny band were quickly
captured by Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Lee

2. “Old Brown” was convicted of murder and treason after a hasty but legal trial

1. His presumed insanity was supported by friends and relatives who were
trying to save his neck but Grown—God’s angry man—was given
opportunity to enjoy martyrdom

2. He was clever enough to see that he was worth much more to the
abolitionist cause dangling from a rope than in any other way; he was
dignified and courageous on trial

3. His last words (“this is a beautiful country”) were to become legendary;
his conduct was so exemplary, his devotion to freedom so inflexible, that
he took on an exalted character, however deplorable his previous record
may have been

3. Brown plunged into world fame and the effects of Harpers Ferry were
shattering
1. In the eyes of the South, “Osawatomie Brown” was a wholesale murderer and an apostle of treason; many southerners asked how they could possibly remain in the Union while a “murderous gang of abolitionists” were financing armed bands

2. Moderate northerners, including Republicans, openly deplored this mad exploit but the South concluded that the violent abolitionist view was shared by the entire North

4. Abolitionists and other ardent free-soilers were infuriated by Brown’s execution; many of them were ignorant of his bloody past and they were outraged because the Virginians had handed so earnest a reformer who was working for so righteous a cause

5. On the day of his execution, free-soil centers in the North tolled bells, fired guns, lowered flags, and held rallies—the ghost of the martyred Brown would not be laid to rest

12. The Disruption of the Democrats

1. The presidential election of 1860 was determined by the issue of peace or civil war

2. Deeply divided, the Democrats met in Charleston with Douglas the leading candidate of the northern wing of the party; but the southern “fire-eaters” regarded him as a traitor, as a result of his unpopular stand on the Lecompton Constitution and Freeport Doctrine

1. The delegates from most of the cotton states walked out and the remainder could not scrape the necessary two-thirds vote for Douglas, the entire body dissolved; the first tragic secession were the southerners from the Democratic National Convention

2. The Democrats tried again in Baltimore; this time, the Douglas Democrats, chiefly from the North, were firmly in the saddle (cotton-state delegates again took the walk)
3. The platform came out squarely for popular sovereignty and as a sop to the South, against obstruction of the Fugitive Slave Law by the states

3. Angered southern Democrats promptly organized a rival convention in Baltimore, in which many of the northern states were unrepresented; they selected as their leader the vice president John C. Breckinridge, a man of moderate views from Kentucky

4. The platform favored extension of slavery into the territories and the annexation of Cuba

5. A middle-of-the-road group, fearing for the Union, hastily organized the Constitutional Union party, sneered at as the “Do Nothing” or “Old Gentleman’s” party which consisted mainly for former Whigs and Know-Nothings, a veritable “gathering of gray-beards”

6. Desperately anxious to elect a compromise candidate, they met in Baltimore and nominated for the presidency John Bell of Tennessee (Union, Constitution, Laws)

13. A Rail-Splitter Splits the Union

1. Elated Republicans were presented with a heaven-sent opportunity for victory

   1. They gathered in Chicago in a huge wooden structure called the Wigwam

   2. William H. Seward was by far the best known of the contenders but his radical utterances, including his “irrepressible conflict” (between slavery and freedom) speech at Rochester in 1858 had ruined his prospects

   3. Lincoln was a definitely a “Mr. Second Best,” but he was a stronger candidate because he had made fewer enemies (he was nominated on the third ballot)

2. The Republican platform had a seductive appeal for just about every important non-southern groups: for the free-soilers, non-extension of
slavery; for the northern manufacturers, a protective tariff; for the
immigrants, no abridgment of rights; for the Northwest, a Pacific railroad; for
the West, internal improvements at federal expense; for the farmers, free
homesteads from the public domain ("Land for the Landless")

3. Southern secessionists promptly served notice that the election of Lincoln—
the "abolitionist" rail-splitter—would split the Union but he was no outright
abolitionists

1. In 1865, he was inclined to favor cash compensation to the owners of
freed slaves but for the time, perhaps mistakenly, he issued no
statements to quiet southern fears

2. As the election campaign continued, Lincoln staged roaring rallies and
parades

3. Douglas himself waged a vigorous speaking campaign, even in the South,
and threatened to put the hemp with his own hands around the neck of
the first secessionist—the returns proclaimed a sweeping victory for
Lincoln

14. The Electoral Upheaval of 1860

1. To a greater degree than any other holder of the nation’s highest office,
Lincoln was a minority president; sixty percent of the voters preferred some
other candidate

1. He was also a sectional president, for in ten southern states, where he
was now allowed on the ballot, he polled no popular votes; the election
of 1860 was virtually two elections: one in the North, the other in the
South (rail-splitter)

2. Douglas made an impressive showing; boldly breaking with tradition, he
campaigned energetically for himself; he drew important strength from
all sections and ranked a fairly close second in the popular-vote column
of the entire 1860 election
2. A myth persists that if the Democrats had only united behind Douglas, they would have triumphed; even if Douglas had received all the electoral votes cast for all three of Lincoln’s opponents, the “rail-splitter” would have won 169 to 134 in the E.C.

3. Of the Democrats had not broken up, they could have entered the campaign with higher enthusiasm and better organization and might have actually won the election.

4. The verdict of the ballot box did not indicate a strong sentiment for secession; Breckinridge, while favoring the extension of slavery, was no disunionist.

5. Although a candidate of the “fire-eaters,” in the slave states he polled fewer votes than the combined strength of his opponents, Douglas & Bell; yet the South was not badly off.

6. The South still had a five-to-four majority on the Supreme Court and although the Republicans had elected Lincoln, they controlled neither the Senate nor the House.

7. The federal government could not touch slavery in those states where it existed expect by a constitutional amendment, and such an amendment could be defeated by one-fourth of the states—the fifteen slave states numbered nearly on-half of the total number of states.

15. The Secessionist Exodus

1. South Carolina, which had threatened to go out if the “sectional” Lincoln came in and four days after the election, its legislature voted unanimously to call a special convention.

   1. Meeting at Charleston in December 1860, South Carolina unanimously voted to secede and during the next six weeks, six other states of the lower South, followed the leader over the precipice: Alabama,
Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas; four more were to join them later, bringing the total states up to eleven

2. The seven seceders, formally meeting at Montgomery, Alabama, in February 1861, created a government known as the Confederate States of America

3. As their president, they chose Jefferson Davis, a dignified and austere recent member of the U.S. Senate from Mississippi (former cabinet member with wide military and administrative experience but he suffered from chronic ill-health)

2. The crisis, already enough, was deepened by the lame duck interlude; Lincoln, elected president in November 1860, could not take office until four months later; during this period of uncertainty, seven of the eleven deserting states pulled out of the Union

3. President Buchanan has been blamed for not holding the seceders in the Union by sheer force—for wringing his hands instead of secessionist necks; he was now nearly seventy, and although devoted to the Union, he was surrounded by pro-southern advisers

4. A proponent of the Constitution, he did not believe that the southern states could legally secede yet he could find no authority in the Constitution for stopping them with guns

5. Old Buck” was faced with a far more complex and serious problem

1. One important reason why he did not resort to force was that the tiny standing army of some fifteen thousand men, then widely scattered, was urgently needed to control the Indians in the West; public opinion in the North was not willing to fight

2. Fighting would merely shatter all prospects of adjustment and until the guns began to boom, there was still flickering hope of reconciliation rather than a contested divorce
3. When Lincoln became president, he continued Buchanan’s wait-and-see policy

16. The Collapse of Compromise

1. Impending bloodshed spurred final and frantic attempts at compromise—in the American tradition; the most promising of these efforts was sponsored by Senator James Henry Crittenden of Kentucky, on whose shoulders had fallen the mantle of fellow Henry Clay

   1. The proposed Crittenden amendments to the Constitution were designed to appease the South; slavery in the territories was to be prohibited north of 36º30’, but south of that line federal protection would be given in all territories existing or to be acquired

   2. Future states, north or south of 36º30, could come into the Union with or without slavery, as they should choose (slavery supporters were to be guaranteed rights in the southern territories, as long as they were territories regardless of popular sovereignty)

   2. Lincoln flatly rejected the Crittenden scheme which offered some slight prospect of success, and all hope of compromise evaporated; for this refusal he must bear a heavy responsibility but he had been elected on a platform that opposed the extension of slavery

   3. Buchanan probably could not have prevented the Civil War

17. Farewell to the Union

1. Secessionists left for a number of avowed reasons, mostly relating in some way to slavery; they were alarmed by the inexorable tipping of the political balance against them

   1. The “crime” of the North, was the census returns; Southerners were dismayed by the triumph of the sectional Republican party, which seemed to threaten slaveholding minority—weary of free-soil criticism, abolition nagging, and northern interference
2. Many southerners supported secession because they felt sure that their
departure would be unopposed; they were confident that the Yankee
would not, could not fight

3. They believed that northern manufacturers and bankers, so heavily
dependent on southern cotton and markets, would not dare to cut their
own economic throats

4. But should war come, the immense debt owed to northern creditors by
the South could be promptly repudiated, as it later was during the Civil
War

2. Southern leaders regarded secession as an opportunity to cast aside their
generations of “vassalage” to the North; an independent Dixieland could
develop its own banking and shipping and trade directly with Europe (the
low Tariff of 1857 was not menacing)

3. Worldwide impulses of nationalism were fermenting in the South; this huge
area, with its distinctive culture, was not so much a section as a sub-nation

4. The principles of self-determination seemed to many southerners to apply
perfectly to them; few if any of the seceders felt that they were doing
anything wrong or immoral

5. In 1860-1861, eleven American states, led by the rebel Jefferson Davis, were
seceding from the Union by throwing off the yoke of “King” Abraham Lincoln
Girding for War - The North and the South, 1861-1865

1. The Menace of Secession

1. Lincoln’s inaugural address was firm yet conciliatory; there would be no conflict unless South provoked it; secession was wholly impractical because couldn’t physically separate

1. The North and South were bound inseparably together (no sectional divorce)

2. Uncontested secession would create new controversies; what share of the national debt should the South be forced to take with it? What portion of the jointly held federal territories, if any, should the Confederate states be allotted?

3. How would the fugitive-slave issue be resolved—the Underground Railroad would certainly redouble its activity and it would have to transport its passengers only across the Ohio River, not all the way to Canada (conceivable to solve all such problems?)

2. A United States had been paramount republic in the Western Hemisphere; if this powerful democracy should break into two hostile parts, the European nations would be delighted; they could gleefully transplant to America their ancient concept of the balance of power

3. The colonies of the European powers in the New World, notably those of Britain would thus be made safer against the rapacious Yankees (defy Monroe Doctrine; seize territory)

2. South Carolina Assails Fort Sumter

1. The issue of the divided Union came to a head over the matter of federal forts in the South; as the seceding states left, they had seized the United States’
arsenals, mints, and other public property within their borders (Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor)

2. Ominously the choices presented to Lincoln by Fort Sumter were all bad
   1. This stronghold had provisions that would last only few weeks—until middle of April 1861 and if no supplies were forthcoming, its commander would have to surrender
   2. Lincoln did not feel that Fort Sumter was strong enough to take as his obligation to protect federal property—but if he sent reinforcements, the South Carolinians would undoubtedly fight back—could not tolerate federal fort blocking important sea port

3. After agonizing indecision, Lincoln adopted a middle-of-the-road solution
   1. He notified the South Carolinians that an expedition would be sent to provision the garrison, though not to reinforce it but Southern eyes saw otherwise
   2. A Union naval force was next started on its way to Fort Sumter—a move that the South regarded as an act of aggression and on April 12, 1861, the cannon of the Carolinians opened fire on the fort, while the crowds in Charleston applauded
   3. After a thirty-four-hour bombardment, the dazed garrison surrendered (no lives lost)

4. The shelling of the fort electrified the North, which at once responded the cries of “Remember Fort Sumter” and “Save the Union” (fort was lost, but the Union was saved)

5. Lincoln had turned a tactical defeat into a calculated victory; Southerners had fired upon the glorious Stars and Stripes and honor demanded an armed response
6. Lincoln promptly issued a call to the states for seventy-five thousand militiamen and volunteers sprang to the colors in such enthusiastic numbers that many were turned away; on April 19 and 27, the president proclaimed a leaky blockade of Southern seaports.

7. The call for troops, in turn, aroused the South much as the attack on Fort Sumter had aroused the North; Lincoln was now waging war (an aggressive war from Southern view).

8. Seven states became eleven as Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina reluctantly joined the states; Richmond, Virginia, replaced Montgomery, Alabama, as the Confederate capital—too near Washington for strategic comfort on either side.

3. Brothers’ Blood and Border Blood

1. The only slave states left were the crucial Border States; this group consisted of Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, Delaware, and later West Virginia ("mountain white" area).

   1. If the North had fired the first shot, some or all of these doubtful states probably would have seceded, and the South might well have succeeded.

   2. The border group actually contained a white population more than half that of the entire Confederacy; Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri would almost double the manufacturing capacity of the South and increase its supply of horses and mules.

   3. The strategic prize of the Ohio River flowed along the northern border of Kentucky and West Virginia; two of its navigable tributaries, penetrated deep into the heart of Dixie, much of the Confederacy’s grain, gunpowder, and iron was produced.

2. In dealing with the Border States, President Lincoln did not rely solely on morals but successfully used methods of dubious legality; in Maryland he
declared martial law were needed and sent troops because MD threatened to cut off Washington from the North

3. Lincoln also deployed Union soldiers in western Virginia and notably in Missouri where they fought beside Unionists in a local civil war within the larger Civil War

4. Any official statement of the North’s war aims was profoundly influenced by the teetering Border States; at the very outset, Lincoln was obliged to declare publicly that he was not fighting to free the blacks (antislavery declaration not a good political move)

5. An antislavery war was also extremely unpopular in the Butternut region of southern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois (area had been settled largely by Southerners who had carried their racial prejudices with them when they crossed the Ohio River)

6. Lincoln insisted repeatedly that his paramount purpose was to save the Union at all costs; thus the war began not as one between slave soil and free soil, but on for the Union

7. Slavery also colored the character of the war in the West; in Indian Territory, most of the Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles) sided with the Confederacy—some owned slaves and felt a common cause with the South

8. To secure their loyalty, the Confederate government agreed to take over federal payments to the tribes and invited Native Americans to send delegates to the Confederate congress; in return the tribes supplied troops to the Confederate army to fight in the war

9. Meanwhile, a rival faction of Cherokees and many Plains Indians sided with the Union

10. There were many Northern volunteers from the Southern states and many Southern volunteers from the Northern states; the mountain whites of the
South sent north some 50,000 men and the loyal slave states contributed some 300,000 soldiers to the Union.

4. The Balance of Forces

1. When war broke out, the South seemed to have great advantages to the North

   1. The Confederacy could fight defensively behind interior lines; the North had to invade the vast territory of the Confederacy, conquer it, and drag it back to the Union

   2. The south did not have to win the war in order to win its independence; fighting on their own soil for self-determination and preservation of their way of life, Southerners at first enjoyed an advantage in morale as well over the North

2. Militarily, the South from the opening volleys of the war had the most talented officers

   1. Most conspicuous among a dozen first-rate commanders was General Robert E. Lee, whose knightly bearing and chivalric sense of honor embodied the Southern ideal

   2. Lincoln had unofficially offered him command the Northern armies, but when Virginia seceded, Lee felt honor-bound to go with his native state

   3. Lee’s chief lieutenant for much of the war was Thomas J. (“Stonewall”) Jackson, a gifted tactical theorist and a master of speed and deception

3. Besides leaders, ordinary Southerners were also bred to fight; accustomed to managing horses and bearing arms from boyhood, they made excellent cavalrymen and foot soldiers

4. High-pitched “rebel yell” was designed to strike terror into the hearts of Yankee recruits
5. As one immense farm, the south seemed to be handicapped by the scarcity of factories; yet by seizing federal weapons, running Union blockades, and developing their own ironworks, Southerners managed to obtain sufficient weaponry.

6. As war dragged on, grave shortages of shoes, uniforms, and blankets disabled the South.

1. Even with immense stores of food on Southern farms, civilians and soldiers often went hungry because of supply problems; much of the hunger was caused by a breakdown of the South’s rickety transportation system (railroad tracks cut).

2. The economy was the greatest Southern weakness; it was the North’s strength.

3. The North was not only a huge farm but a sprawling factory as well; Yankees boasted about three-fourths of the nation’s wealth, including three-fours of the railroad miles.

4. The North controlled the sea with its vastly superior navy with which it established a blockade that although was a sieve at first, soon choked off Southern supplies and eventually shattered Southern morale; its sea power also enabled the north to exchange huge quantities of grain for munitions and supplies from Europe.

7. The Union enjoyed a much larger reserve of manpower; the loyal states had a population of some 22 million; the seceding states had 9 million people, including about 3.5 million slaves; adding to the North’s overwhelming supply of soldier were ever-more immigrants from Europe, who continued to pour into the North even during the war.

8. Over 800,000 newcomers arrived between 1861 and 1865, most of them British, Irish, and German; large numbers of them were induced to enlist in the Union army.
9. Whether immigrant or native, ordinary Northern boys were much less prepared than their Southern counterparts for military life (known for their discipline and determination)

10. The North was much less fortunate in its higher commanders; Lincoln was forced to use a costly trial-and-error method to sort out effective leaders from many incompetent political officers, until he finally uncovered general Ulysses S. Grant (way to victory)

11. In the long run, as the Northern strengths were brought to bear, they outweighed those of the south but when the war began, the chances for Southern independence were unusually favorable—a turn of a few events could easily have produced a different outcome

12. If the Border States had seceded, if uncertain states of the upper Mississippi Valley had turned against the Union, if a wave of Northern defeatism had demanded an armistice, and if Britain and/or France had broken the blockade, the south might well have won

5. Dethroning King Cotton

1. Successful revolutions have generally succeeded because of foreign intervention; the South had counted on it, did not get the help from foreigners, and had lost

   1. Of all the Confederacy’s potential assets, none counted more weightily than the prospect of foreign intervention; Europe’s ruling classes were openly sympathetic to the Confederate cause (abhorred the American democratic experiment and they cherished a fellow-feeling for the South’s semi-feudal, aristocratic social order)

   2. In contrast, the masses of working people in Britain, and to some extent in France, were pulling and praying for the North—many had read *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and sensed that the war might extinguish slavery if the North emerged victorious
3. Their certain hostility to any official intervention on behalf of the South evidently had a sobering effect on the British government (Uncle Tom helped Uncle Sam by restraining the British and French ironclads from piercing the Union blockade)

2. Why did King Cotton fail when British textile mills depended on the American South for 75 percent of their cotton supplies? (Would silent loom force London to speak?)

1. He failed in part because he had been so lavishly productive in the immediate prewar years of 1857-1860; enormous exports of cotton in those years had piled up surpluses in British warehouses and British manufacturers had a hefty oversupply of fiber

2. The real pinch did not come until about a year and a half later, when work was lost

3. By that time, Lincoln had announced his slave-emancipation policy, and the “wage slaves” of Britain were not going to demand a war to defend the slaveowners

3. The direst effects of the “cotton famine” in Britain were relieved in several ways; hunger among unemployed workers was partially eased when certain kindhearted Americans sent over several cargoes of foodstuffs (Union armies captured or bought considerably supplies of cotton and shipped them to Britain and Confederates ran a bit by blockade)

4. In addition, the cotton growers of Egypt and Indian, responding to high prices, increased their output; finally booming war industries in England, which supplied both the North and the South, relived unemployment that was throughout Britain

5. King Wheat and King Corn—monarchs of Northern agriculture—proved to be more potent potentates than King Cotton; during these war years, the
North blessed with ideal weather produced bountiful crops of grain and harvested them with the mechanical reaper

6. At the same period, the British suffered a series of bad harvests and were forced to import huge quantities of grain from America, which happened to have the cheapest and most abundant supply; if Britain had broken the blockade to gain cotton, they would have provoked the North to war and would have lost this precious granary

6. The Decisiveness of Diplomacy

1. America’s diplomatic front has seldom been so critical as during the Civil War; the South never wholly abandoned its dream of foreign intervention (European rules schemed)

2. The first major crisis with Britain came over the Trent affair, late in 1861

   1. A Union warship cruising on high seas north of Cuba stopped a British mail steamer, the Trent, and forcibly removed two Confederate diplomats bound for Europe

   2. Britons were outraged: upstart Yankees could not so boldly offend the Mistress of the Seas; war preparations buzzed and red-coated troops embarked for Canada

   3. The London Foreign Office prepared an ultimatum demanding surrender of the prisoners and an apology; but luckily slow communications gave passions on both sides a chance to cool; Lincoln came to see the Trent prisoners as “white elephants,” and reluctantly released them—“One war at a time,” he reportedly said

3. Another major crisis in Anglo-American relations arose over the un-neutral building in Britain of Confederate commerce-raiders, notably the Alabama; they were not warships in British law because they left their shipyards unarmed and picked up arms elsewhere
1. The Alabama escaped in 1862 to the Portuguese Azores and took weapons and crew from two British ships that followed; although flying confederate flag and officered by Confederates, it was manned by Britons and never entered Confederate port.

2. Britain was thus the chief naval base of the Confederacy.

3. The Alabama lighted the skies from Europe to the Far East with the burning hulks of Yankee merchantmen; all told, this “British pirate” captured over sixty vessels.

4. Competing British shippers were delighted and an angered North had to divert naval strength from its blockade for wild-goose chases (defeated off coast of France, 1864).

4. The Alabama was beneath the waves, but issue of British-built Confederate raiders stayed afloat; American minister Charles Francis Adams persuaded the British that allowing such ships to be built was a dangerous precedent that might be used against them.

5. In 1863 London openly violated its own leaky laws and seized another raider being built for the South; though efforts were made to stay neutral, the destroyers captured more than 250 Yankee ships, severely crippling the American merchant marine (never recovered).

7. Foreign Flare-ups

1. A final Anglo-American crisis was touched off in 1863 by the Laird rams—two Confederate warships being constructed in the shipyard of John Laird and Sons in GB.

   1. Designed to destroy the wooden ships of the Union navy with their iron rams and large-caliber guns, they were far more dangerous than the swift but lightly armed Alabama; if delivered to the south they were probably have sunk blockading ships.
2. In retaliation the North doubtless would have invaded Canada, and a full-dress war with Britain would have erupted; but American Minister Adams took the hard line, warning that “this is war” if the rams were released from Great Britain.

3. At the last minute the London government relented and bought the two ships for the Royal Navy; everyone seemed satisfied except the disappointed Confederates.

4. Britain also repented its sorry role in the Alabama business; it agreed in 1871 to submit the Alabama dispute to arbitration and in 1872 paid $15.5 million.

2. American resentment was also directed at Canada, where despite the vigilance of British authorities, Southern agents plotted to burn Northern cities (Confederate raids).

1. Hatred of England burned especially fiercely among Irish-Americans and they unleashed their fury on Canada; they raised several tiny “armies” of a few hundred and launched invasions of Canada, notably in 1866 and 1870.

2. The Canadians condemned the Washington government for permitting violations of neutrality, but administration was hampered by the presence of Irish-American voters.

3. Two great nations emerged from the fiery furnace of the American Civil War; one was a reunited United States, and the other was a united Canada; the British Parliament established the Dominion of Canada in 1867; it was partly designed to bolster the Canadians, both politically and spiritually, against the possible vengeance of the US.

4. Emperor Napoleon III of France, taking advantage of America’s preoccupation with its own internal problems, dispatched a French army to occupy Mexico City in 1863.
1. In 1864, he installed on the ruins of the crushed republic his puppet, Austrian archduke Maximilian, as emperor of Mexico (violation of Monroe Doctrine)

2. Napoleon III had sent an army and enthroned Maximilian; he was gambling that the Union would collapse and thus American would be too weak to enforce its “hands-off” policy in the Western Hemisphere (North was cautious toward France)

5. When the shooting stopped in 1865, Secretary of State Seward prepared to march south and Napoleon realized that his costly gamble was doomed (Napoleon took “French leave” in 1867 and Maximilian soon crumpled before a Mexican firing squad)

8. President Davis Versus President Lincoln

1. The Confederate government, like King Cotton, harbored fatal weaknesses

   1. Its constitution, borrowing liberally from that of the Union, contained one deadly defect; created by secession, it could not logically deny future secession to its constituent states—Jefferson Davis had in view a well-knit central government

   2. Determined states’ rights supporters fought him bitterly to the end; the Richmond regime encountered difficulty persuading certain state troops to serve outside borders

   3. States’ rights were no less damaging to the Confederacy than Yankee sabers

2. President Davis was repeatedly in hot water; he at one time enjoyed real personal popularity—at times there was serious talk of impeachment (unlike Lincoln)

   1. Davis was somewhat imperious and inclined to defy rather than lead public opinion and suffering acutely from nervous disorders, he
overworked himself with the details of both civil government and military operations (task beyond his powers)

2. Lincoln also had his troubles but the North enjoyed the prestige of a long-established government, financially stable and fully recognized both at home and abroad

3. Lincoln proved superior to the more experienced by less flexible Davis; he developed a genius for interpreting and leading a fickly public opinion but still demonstrated charitableness toward the South and tolerance toward infighting colleagues

9. Limitations on Wartime Liberties

1. Congress, in crisis, generally accepted or confirmed the president’s questionable acts (Lincoln did not believe that his ironhanded authority would continue after war)

2. Congress was not in session when war erupted, so Lincoln gathered the reins; brushing aside legal objections, he proclaimed a blockade (actions later upheld by Supreme Court)

1. He arbitrarily increased the size of the Federal army—something that only Congress can do under the Constitution (Congress would later approve)

2. He directed the secretary of the Treasury to advance $2 million without appropriation or security to three private citizens for military purposes—a grave irregularity contrary to the Constitution; he suspended the precious privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, so that anti-Unionists might be summarily arrested

3. He defied a dubious ruling by the chief justice that the safeguards of habeas corpus could be set aside only by authorization of Congress

3. Lincoln’s regime was guilt of many other high-handed acts; there was “supervised” voting in the Border States, federal officials also ordered the
suspension of certain newspapers and the arrest of their editors on grounds of obstructing the war

4. Jefferson Davis was less able than Lincoln to exercise arbitrary power, mainly because of confirmed states’ righters who fanned an intense spirit of localism

5. To the very end, owners of horse-drawn vans in Petersburg, Virginia prevented the sensible joining of the incoming and outgoing tracks of a militarily vital railroad

10. Volunteers and Draftees: North and South

1. Northern armies were at first manned solely by volunteers, with each state assigned a quota based on population; but in 1863, after volunteering had slackened off, Congress passed a federal conscription law for the first time on a nationwide scale in the US

   1. The provisions were grossly unfair to the poor; rich boys could hire substitutes to go in their places or purchase exemption outright by paying $300; “three-hundred-dollar men” was the scornful epithet applied to these slackers and draftees complained (life)

   2. The draft was especially damned in the Democratic strong holds of the North, notably in New York City; a frightful riot broke out in 1863, touched off largely by underprivileged and anti-black Irish-Americans, who shouted, “Down with Lincoln”

   3. For several days the city was at the mercy of the pillaging mob; scores of lives were lost, and the victims included many lynched blacks (elsewhere in the North, conscription met with resentment and an occasional minor riot)

2. More than 90 percent of the Union troops were volunteers, since social and patriotic pressures to enlist were strong; as able-bodied men became
scarcer, generous bounties for enlistment were offered by federal, state, and local authorities (as much as $1,000)

3. With money flowing freely, a crew of “bounty brokers” and “substitute brokers” sprang up, at home and abroad—combed poor houses of the British Isles and western Europe

4. Sometimes the “bounty boys” deserted, volunteered elsewhere and netted another haul and these “bounty jumpers” sometimes repeated this profitable operation

5. The rolls of the Union army recorded about 200,000 deserters of all classes, and the Confederate authorities were plagued with a runaway problem of similar dimensions

6. Like the North, the South at first relied mainly on volunteers but since the Confederacy was much less populous, it scraped the bottom of its manpower barrel much more quickly

1. The Richmond regime was forced to resort to conscription as early as April 1862, nearly a year earlier than the Union (“cradle and grave”—ages 17 to 50)

2. Confederation draft regulations also worked serious injustices; as in the North, a rich man could hire a substitute or purchase exemption (slaveowners as well too)

3. These special privileges made for bad feelings among the less prosperous, many of whom complained that this was “a rich man’s war but a poor man’s fight”

4. No large-scale draft riots broke out in the South but Confederate conscription agents avoided those areas inhabited by sharpshooting mountain whites (“Yankee-lovers”)

11. The Economic Stresses of War
1. Blessed with a large share of the wealth, the North rode through the financial breakers much more smoothly than the South; excise taxes on tobacco and alcohol were substantially increased by Congress (an income tax was levied for the first time—low)

2. Customs receipts likewise proved to be important revenue-raisers; early in 1861, after enough anti-protection Southern members had seceded, Congress passed the Morrill Tariff Act, superseding the low Tariff of 1857 (increased existing duties 5 to 10 percent)

3. These modest rates were soon pushed sharply upward by the necessities of war; the increases were designed partly to raise additional revenue and partly to provide more protection for the prosperous manufacturers (protective tariff became identified with the Republican party, as American industrialists mostly Republicans had welcoming benefits)

4. The Washington Treasury also issued green-backed paper money, totaling nearly $450 million, at face value; the printing-press currency was inadequately supported by gold and hence its value was determined by the nation’s credit (fluctuated with war)

5. The holders of notes, victims of creeping inflation, were indirectly taxed as the value of the currency slowly withered in their hands yet borrowing far outstripped paper and taxes

6. The federal Treasury netted 2.6 billion through the sale of bonds, which bore interest and which were payable at a later date; the modern technique of selling these issues to the people directly through “drives” and payroll deductions had not yet been devised

   1. Accordingly the Treasury was forced to market its bonds through the private banking house of Jay Cooke and Company, which received a commission of three-eighths of 1 percent on all sales (bankers succeeded in making effective appeals to citizens)
2. A financial landmark of the war was the National Banking System, authorized by Congress in 1863—launched partly as a stimulant to the sale of government bonds, it was also designed to establish a standard bank-note currency.

3. Banks that joined the National Banking System could buy government bonds and issue sound paper money backed by them; the war-born National Banking Act thus turned out to be the first significant step taken toward a united banking network.

4. The system continued to function until it was replaced by the Federal Reserve System.

7. An impoverished South was beset by different financial woes; customs duties were choked off as the coils of the Union blockade tightened (large issues of Confederate bonds were sold at home and abroad, amounting to nearly $400 million).

1. The Richmond regime increased taxes sharply and imposed a 10 percent levy on farm produce but in general the states’ rights southerners were opposed to heavy direct taxation by the central authority (only 1 percent of total income produced this way).

2. The Confederate government was forced to print blue-backed paper money with complete abandon; “runaway inflation” occurred as Southern presses continued to grind out the poorly backed treasury notes (overall the war inflicted a 9,000 percent inflation rate on the Confederacy, contrasted with 80 percent for the Union).

12. The North’s Economic Boom

1. Wartime prosperity in the North was miraculous; the marvel is that a divided nation could fight a costly conflict for four years and emerge seemingly more prosperous than ever.

    1. New factories, sheltered by the new protective tariffs sprang forth.
2. Soaring prices, resulting from inflation, unfortunately pinched the day laborer and the white-collar worker to some extent but manufacturers and businesspeople gained

2. The Civil War bred a millionaire class for the first time in American history

1. Many of these newly rich were noisy, gaudy, brassy, and given to extravagant living; their emergence merely illustrates the truth that some gluttony and greed mar the devotion and self-sacrifice called forth by a war such as the Civil War

2. Yankee “sharpness” appeared at its worst; dishonest agents, putting profits above patriotism palmed off aged and blind horses on government purchasers; unscrupulous Northern manufacturers supplied shoes with cardboard soles and fast-disintegrating uniforms of reprocessed or “shoddy” wool rather than virgin wool

3. Newly invented laborsaving machinery enabled the North to expand economically and the sewing machine wrought wonders in fabricating uniforms and military footwear

4. The marriage of military need and innovative machinery largely ended the production of custom-tailored clothing; graduated standard measurements were introduced (sizes)

5. Clattering mechanical reapers proved hardly less potent than thundering guns; they not only released tens of thousand of farms boys fro the army but fed them their field rations

6. Producing vast surpluses of grain that when sent aboard helped dethrone king Cotton, they provided profits with which the North was able to buy munitions and supplies from abroad—contributed to the feverish prosperity of the North and Union

7. The discovery of petroleum gushers in 1859 had led to a rush of “Fifty-Niners” to PA
1. The result was the birth of a new industry and pioneers continued to push westward during the war, altogether an estimated 300,000 people (major magnets were free gold nuggets and free land under the Homestead Act of 1862; strong propellants were the federal draft agents (ocean-carrying trade suffered a crippling setback)

2. The Civil War was a women’s war, too; the protracted conflict opened new opportunities for women; when men departed, women often took jobs (in govt.)

3. The booming military demand for shoes and clothing, combined with technological marvels like the sewing machine, likewise drew countless women into industrial employment (ratio rose from one in four to one in three industrial worker women)

8. Other women stepped up to the fighting front or close behind it; some women accompanied their husbands, others took on dangerous spy missions; others nurses

9. Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, America’s first female physician, helped organize the U. S., Sanitary Commission to assist the Union armies in the field (trained nurses, collected medical supplies and equipped hospitals—women’s movement that followed)

10. Clara Barton and Dorothea Dix, superintendent of nurses for the Union army helped transform nursing from a lowly service into a respected profession (Sally Tompkins)

13. A Crushed Cotton Kingdom

1. The South fought to the point of exhaustion; the suffocation caused by the blockade together with the destruction wrought by invaders, took a terrible toll

1. The South claimed only 12 percent of the national wealth in 1870 (30% in 1860)
2. The Civil War squeezed the average southern income to two-fifths of the North (2/3)

2. Transportation collapsed; the South was driven to pulling up rails from the less-used lines to repair the main ones—to the brutal end the South mustered remarkable resourcefulness

1. Women buoyed up their men folk; the self-sacrificing women took pride in denying themselves the silks and satins of their Northern sisters (“The Southern Girl”)

2. At war’s end the Northern Captains of Industry had conquered the Southern Lords of the Manor; a crippled South left the capitalistic North free to work its own way, with high tariffs and other benefits (Northern manufacturers and Industrial Revolution)

3. The south of 1865 was to be rich in little but amputees, war heroes, ruins, and memories
The Furnace of Civil War, 1861-1865

1. Bull Run Ends the “Ninety-Day War”

1. North newspapers shared Lincoln’s expectation of a quick victory (“On to Richmond!”) Union army of some 30,000 men drilled near Washington in the summer of 1861

The army was ill prepared for battle, but the press and the public clamored for action; Lincoln eventually concluded that an attack on a smaller Confederate force at Bull Run, some thirty miles southwest of Washington, might be worth a try

2. If successful, it would demonstrate the superiority of Union arms and might even lead to the capture of the Confederate capital at Richmond (100 miles to the south)

2. Raw Yankee recruits swaggered out of Washington toward Bull Run on July 21, 1861

Congressmen and spectators trailed along to witness the fun; at first, the battle went well for the Yankees but “Stonewall” Jackson’s gray-clad warriors stood like a stone wall and Confederate reinforcements arrived unexpectedly

Panic seized the Union troops many of whom fled in shameful confusion; the “military picnic” at Bull Run, though not decisive militarily, bore significant psychological and political consequences, many of them paradoxical

3. Victory was worse than defeat for the South, because it inflated an already dangerous overconfidence (many Southern soldiers promptly deserted, some boastfully to display their trophies, others feeling that the war was now surely over
3. Southern enlistments fell off sharply, and preparations for a protracted conflict slackened; defeat was better than victory for the Union, because it dispelled all illusions of a one-punch war and caused the Northerners to buckle down to the staggering task at hand

2. Tardy George" McClellan and the Peninsula Campaign

1. Northern hopes brightened late in 1861, when General George B. McClellan was given command of the Army of the Potomac, the Union force near Washington

   1. As a student of warfare who was dubbed “Young Napoleon,” he had seen plenty of fighting, first in the Mexican War and then as an observer of the Crimean War

   2. Cocky George McClellan was a superb organizer and drillmaster, and he injected splendid morale into the Army of the Potomac (perfectionist)

   3. He was overcautious (did not take many risks) and he addressed the president in an arrogant tone that a less forgiving person would never have tolerated

2. As McClellan doggedly continued to drill his army without moving it toward Richmond; after threatening to “borrow” the army if it was not going to be used, Lincoln finally issued firm orders to advance (McClellan decided upon a waterborne approach)

   1. McClellan chose to approach Richmond, which lay at the base of a narrow peninsula formed by the James and York Rivers—hence the name Peninsula Campaign

   2. McClellan inched toward the Confederate capital in the spring of 1862 with about 100,000 men; after taking a month to capture Yorktown, he finally reached Richmond

   3. At this crucial juncture, Lincoln diverted McClellan’s anticipated reinforcements to chase “Stonewall” Jackson, whose lightning feints in
the Shenandoah Valley seemed to put Washington, D.C. in jeopardy (McClellan stalled in front of Richmond)

4. McClellan was further frustrated when “Jeb” Stuart’s Confederate cavalry rode completely around his army on reconnaissance; then General Robert E. Lee launched a devastating counterattack—the Seven Days’ Battles—June 26-July 2, 1862

5. The Confederates drove McClellan back to the sea; the Union forces abandoned the Peninsula Campaign as a costly failure and Lincoln temporarily abandoned McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac (Lee lost more lives)

3. Lee had achieved a brilliant triumph yet the ironies of his accomplishment are striking

1. If McClellan had succeeded in taking Richmond and ending the war in mid-1862, the Union would probably have restored with minimal disruption to “peculiar institution”

2. Slavery would have survived but his defense of Richmond and defeat of McClellan, Lee had in effect ensured that the war would endure until Old South was destroyed

4. Lincoln who had earlier professed his unwillingness to tamper with slavery where it already existed—he began to draft an emancipation proclamation

5. Union strategy now turned toward total war; Northern military plan had six components

6. First, slowly suffocate the South by blockading its coasts; second, liberate the slaves and hence undermine the very economic foundations of the Old South

7. Third, cut the Confederacy in half by seizing control of the Mississippi River backbone; fourth, chop the Confederacy to pieces by sending troops through Georgia and Carolinas
8. Fifth, decapitate it by capturing its capital at Richmond; and sixth (Ulysses Grant’s idea) try everywhere to engage the enemy’s main strength and to grind it into submission

3. The War at Sea

1. The blockade started leakily; it was not clamped down all at once but was extended
   
   1. A watertight patrol of some thirty-five hundred miles of coast was impossible for the hastily improvised Northern navy, which had converted yachts and ferryboats in fleet
   
   2. But blockading was simplified by concentrating on the principal ports and inlets where dock facilities were available for loading bulky bales of cotton

2. How was the blockade regarded by the naval powers of the world?

   1. Ordinarily, they probably would have defied it, for it was never completely effective and was especially sieve-like at the outset but Britain, the greatest maritime nation, recognized it as binding and warned its shippers that they ignored it at their peril
   
   2. Blockade happened to be the chief offensive weapon of Britain, which was still Mistress of the Seas and Britain plainly did not want to tie its hands in a future war by insisting that Lincoln maintain impossibly high blockading standards

3. Blockading-running soon became riskily profitable, as the growing scarcity of Southern goods drove prices skyward (the most successful blockade runners were swift, gray steamers, scores of which were specially built in Scotland and used by shippers)

4. A leading rendezvous was the West Indies port of Nassau, in the British Bahamas; the low-lying craft would take on cargoes of arms brought in from
Britain, leave with fraudulent papers for “Halifax” (Canada) and return in later with a cargo of cotton

5. The risks were great but the profits would mount to 700 percent and more; the lush days of blockade-running finally passed as the Union gradually pinched off the leading Southern ports, from New Orleans with high-handed practices

   1. Yankee captains would seize British freighters on the high seas, if laden with war supplies for the tiny port of Nassau and other halfway stations

   2. The justification was that obviously these shipments were “ultimately” destined, by devious routes for the Confederacy and London acquiesced in this disagreeable doctrine of “ultimate destination” or “continuous voyage”

6. The most alarming Confederate threat to the blockade came in 1862; resourceful Southerners raised and reconditioned a former wooden U.S. warship, the Merrimack, and plated its sides with iron railroad rails (it was renamed the Virginia)

   1. This clumsy but powerful monster easily destroyed two wooden ships of the Union navy in Virginia waters and threatened catastrophe to entire Yankee blockading fleet

   2. A tiny Union ironclad, the Monitor, built in about one hundred days, arrived on the scene and for four hours, on March 9m 1862, the little “Yankee cheesebox on a raft” fought the wheezy Merrimack (Britain and France had built several ironclads)

   3. The new craft herald the doom of wooden warships and after the historic battle, the Confederates destroyed the Merrimack to keep it from the grasp of advancing troops

4. The Pivotal Point: Antietam
1. Robert E. Lee, broken the McClellan’s assault on Richmond, next moved northward

   1. At the Second Battle of Bull run (August 29-30, 1862), Lee encountered a Federal force under General John Pope—Lee quickly gave him a front view, furiously attacking Pope’s troops and inflicting a crushing defeat to the bragging Pope

   2. Emboldened by this success, Lee daringly thrust into Maryland in which he had hoped to strike a blow that would not only encourage foreign intervention but also seduce the still-wavering Border State and its sisters from the Union

   3. But the Marylanders did not respond as the presence among the invaders of so many blanket-less, hatless, and shoeless soldiers dampened the state’s ardor

2. Events finally converged toward a critical battle at Antietam Creek, Maryland

   1. Lincoln, yielding to popular pressure, restored McClellan; two Union soldiers found a copy of Lee’s battle plans wrapped around a packet of three cigars drooped by a careless Confederate officer and had this crucial piece of intelligence in the battle

   2. McClellan succeeded in halting Lee at Antietam on September 17, 1862, in one of the bitterest and bloodiest days of the war; finding his thrust parried, Lee retired across the Potomac (McClellan was removed from his filed command—didn’t gain much)

   3. His numerous critics condemned him for not having boldly pursued Lee

3. The landmark Battle of Antietam was one of the decisive engagements of world history; Jefferson Davis was perhaps never again so near victory as on that fateful day

4. The British and French governments were on the verge of diplomatic mediation; an almost certain rebuff by Washington might well have spurred
Paris and London into armed collusion with Richmond but both capitals cooled off after Union’s display

5. Bloody Antietam provided Lincoln with the long-awaited opportunity to launch his Emancipation Proclamation; the abolitionists were increasingly impatient

1. Congress had already decreed in 1861 that rebel property used in the war effort, including slaves, could be confiscated; a second Confiscation Act in 1862 punished “traitors” by declaring their slaves “captives of war” who “shall be forever free”

2. Lincoln hesitated to go further while the loyalty of the border states was in doubt, and while the North’s military fortunes seemed so uncertain against the South

3. By summer of 1862, he was ready; the wavering states had come safely into the Union fold and he needed a solid victory of arms, so he could proclaim emancipation from a position of military strength (he awaited the outcome of Lee’s invasion)

6. Antietam served as the needed emancipation springboard and on September 23, 1862, the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation was issued by Lincoln and this document announced that on January 1, 1863, the president would issue a final proclamation

7. On the scheduled date, he fully redeemed his promise and the Civil War became more of a moral crusade as the fate of slavery and the South it has sustained was sealed

8. The war now became more of what Lincoln called a “remorseless revolutionary struggle”

5. A Proclamation Without Emancipation

1. Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 declared “Forever free” the slave sin those Confederate states still in rebellion; bondsmen in the loyal
Border States were not affected, nor were those in specific conquered areas in the South—about 800,000

1. Proclamation was “an act of justice” and calling for “the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God”

2. The presidential pen did not formally strike the shackles from a single slave

3. Where Lincoln could presumably free the slaves—that is, in the loyal Border States—he refused to do so, lest he spur disunion; where he could not, he tried

4. The Emancipation Proclamation was stronger on proclamation than emancipation

2. Yet much unofficial do-it-yourself liberation did take place

1. Thousands of jubilant slaves, learning of the proclamation, flocked to the invading Union armies, stripping already rundown plantations of their work force

2. In this sense the Emancipation Proclamation was heralded by the drumbeat of running feet; but many fugitives would have come anyhow, as they had from war’s outset

3. Lincoln’s immediate goal was not only to liberate the slaves but also to strengthen the moral cause of the Union at home and abroad—this he succeeded in doing

4. At the same time, Lincoln’s proclamation clearly foreshadowed the ultimate doom of slavery; this was legally achieved by the action of individual states and by ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865, eight months after the Civil War ended
3. The Emancipation Proclamation also fundamentally changed the nature of the war because it effectively removed any chance of a negotiated settlement (fight to finish)

4. Public reactions to the long-awaited proclamation of 1863 were varied

   1. Many ardent abolitionists complained that Lincoln had not gone far enough; on the other hand, formidable numbers of Northerners, especially in the “Butternut” regions of the old Northwest and the Border States, felt that he had gone too far

   2. Opposition mounted in the North against supporting an “abolition war”

   3. Many Boys in Blue, especially from the Border States, had volunteered to fight for the Union, not against slavery (desertions increased sharply)

   4. The crucial congressional elections in the autumn of 1862 went heavily against the administration, particularly in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio

5. The Emancipation Proclamation caused an outcry to rise from the South that “Lincoln the fiend” was trying to stir up the “hellish passions” of a slave insurrection

   1. Aristocrats of Europe, noting that the proclamation applied only to rebel slaveholders, were inclined to sympathize with Southern protests; but the Old World working classes, especially in Britain reacted (diplomatic position of Union improved)

   2. They sensed that the proclamation spelled the ultimate doom of slavery, and many laborers were more determined than ever to oppose intervention

6. The North now had much the stronger moral cause; in addition to preserving the Union, it had committed itself to freeing the slaves (South’s moral position diminished)
6. Blacks Battle Bondage

1. As Lincoln moved to emancipate the slaves, he also took steps to enlist blacks in the armed forces; the regular army contained no blacks at the war’s outset and the War Department refused to accept those free Northern blacks who tried to volunteer.

2. But as manpower ran low and emancipation was proclaimed, black enlistees were accepted, sometimes over ferocious protests from Northern as well as Southern whites.

   1. By war’s end some 180,000 blacks served in the Union armies, most of them from the slave states, but many from the free-soil North (10% of enlistments in the Union forces on land and sea and included two Massachusetts regiments—Douglass).

   2. Black fighting men had their hearts in the war against slavery that the Civil War had become after Lincoln proclaimed emancipation.

   3. Black fighters earned twenty-two Congressional Medals of Honor—the highest military award and their casualties were extremely heavy—more than 38,000 died.

   4. Many were captured, put to death as slaves in revolt, for not until 1864 did the South recognize them as prisoners of war (Fort Pillow, Tennessee surrender and massacre).

3. For reasons of pride, prejudice, and principle, the Confederacy could not bring itself to enlist slaves until a month before the war ended and then it was too late.

4. Meanwhile, tens of thousands were forced into labor battalions, the building of fortifications, the supplying of armies, and other war-connected activities.

5. Slaves were “the stomach of the Confederacy,” kept the farms while white men fought.
6. Ironically, the great mass of Southern slaves did little to help their Northern liberators; through the “grapevine,” the blacks learned of Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation.

7. The bulk of them, whether because of fear, loyalty, lack of leadership, or strict policing, did not cast off their chains but tens of thousand revolted when they abandoned their plantations upon the approach or arrival of Union armies (emancipation proclamations).

7. Lee’s Last Lunge at Gettysburg

1. After Antietam, Lincoln replace McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac with General A. E., Burnside; protesting his unfitness for this responsibility, Burnside proved it when he launched a rash frontal attack on Lee’s strong position at Fredericksburg, Virginia, on December 13, 1862 (10,000 Northern soldiers k/w).

2. A new slaughter pen was prepared when General Burnside yielded his command to “Fighting Joe” Hooker, an aggressive officer but a headstrong subordinate.

   1. At Chancellorsville, Virginia, May 2-4, 1863, Lee daringly divided his numerically inferior force and sent “Stonewall “ Jackson to attack the Union flank—the strategy worked and Hooker was badly beaten but not crushed (Lee’s most brilliant victory).

   2. Jackson was mistakenly shot by his own men in the gathering dusk and died a few days later—“I have lost my right arm,” lamented Lee.

3. Lee now prepared to follow up his stunning victory by invading the North again, this time through Pennsylvania; a decisive blow would add strength to the noisy peace prodders in the North and would encourage foreign intervention—still a Southern hope.
4. Three days before the battle was joined, Union general George G. Meade was aroused from his sleep with the unwelcome news that he would replace Hooker

1. Meade took his stand atop a low ridge flanking a shallow valley near Gettysburg, PA

2. There his 92,000 men in blue locked in furious combat with Lee’s 76,000 gray-clad warriors; the battle seesawed across the rolling green slopes for three agonizing days, July 1-3, 1863, and the outcome was in doubt until the very end

3. The failure of General George Pickett’s magnificent but futile charge finally broke the back of the Confederate attack—and broke the hearty of the Confederate cause

4. Pickett’s charge has been called the “hide tide of the Confederacy”; it defined both the northernmost point reached by any significant Southern force and the last real chance for the Confederates to win the war (as the Battle of Gettysburg raged, a Confederate peace delegation was moving under a flag of truce toward the Union)

5. Jefferson Davis hoped his negotiators would arrive in Washington just as Lee’s triumphant army marched on it from Gettysburg to the north

5. But the victory at Gettysburg belonged to Lincoln, who refused to allow the Confederate peace mission to pass through Union lines—from now, the Southern cause was doomed

6. Yet the men of Dixie fought on for nearly two years longer, through weariness of spirit

7. Late that autumn of 1863, Lincoln journeyed to Gettysburg to dedicate the cemetery and read a two-minute address (president speaking for the ages, not listened to at the time)

8. The War in the West
1. Events in the western theater of the war at last provided Lincoln with an able general: Ulysses S. Grant who had fought creditably in the Mexican War (resigned for drinking)

   1. Grant was not cut much of a figure but his military experience combined with his boldness, resourcefulness and tenacity catapulted him on a meteoric rise

   2. Grant’s first signal success came in northern Tennessee; after heavy fighting, he captured Fort Henry and Fort Donelson on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers

   3. Grant’s triumph in Tennessee in early 1862 was crucial; it not only riveted Kentucky more securely to the Union but also opened the gateway to the important region of Tennessee, as well as to Georgia and the heart of Dixie

2. Grant next attempted to exploit his victory by capturing the junction of the main Confederate north-south and east-west railroads in the Mississippi Valley but a Confederate force foiled his plans in a gory battle at Shiloh, just over the Tennessee border from Corinth, on April 6-7, 1862 (no quick end to the war in the West)

3. Lincoln resisted all demands for the removal of “Unconditional Surrender” Grant

4. Other Union thrusts in the West were in the making

   1. In the spring of 1862, a flotilla commanded by David G. Farragut joined with a Northern army to strike the south a blow by seizing New Orleans

   2. With Union gunboats both ascending and descending the Mississippi, the eastern part of the Confederacy was left with a jeopardized back door

   3. The fortress of Vicksburg, located on a hairpin turn of the Mississippi, was the South’s sentinel protecting the lifeline to the western sources of supply
5. General Grant was now given command of the Union forces attacking Vicksburg and the siege of Vicksburg was his best-fought campaign of the war; the beleaguered city at length surrendered, on July 4, 1863; five days later came the fall of Port Hudson (the last Southern bastion on the Mississippi; spinal cord of the Confederacy was now severed)

6. The Union victory at Vicksburg came the day after the Confederate defeat at Gettysburg; the political significance of these back-to-back military successes was monumental

   1. Reopening the Mississippi helped to quell the Northern peace agitation in “Butternut” area of the Ohio River valley (Confederate had controlled the Mississippi)

   2. The victories also conclusively tipped the diplomatic scales in favor of the North, as Britain stopped delivery of the Laird rams to the Confederates and as France killed a deal for the sale of six naval vessels to the Richmond government (no foreign help)

9. Sherman Scorches Georgia

   1. General Grant was transferred to east Tennessee, where Confederates had driven Union forces from the battlefield at Chickamauga into Chattanooga, to which they aid siege

      1. Grant won a series of desperate engagements in November 1863 in the vicinity of besieged Chattanooga, including Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain

      2. Chattanooga was liberated, the state was cleared of Confederates, and the way was thus opened for an invasion of Georgia (Grant was made general in chief as reward)

   2. Georgia’s conquest was entrusted to General William Tecumseh Sherman; he captured Atlanta in September 1864 was burned the city in November of that year
1. He then daringly left his supply base, lived off the country and emerged at Savannah

2. But Sherman’s hate “Blue Bellies,” sixty thousand strong, cut a sixty-mile swath of destruction through Georgia—they burned buildings and tore up railroad rails

3. One of the major purposes was to destroy supplies destined for the Confederate army and to weaken the morale of the men at the front by waging war on their homes

3. Sherman was a pioneer practitioner of “total war”—his success in the South was attested by increasing numbers of Confederate desertions; although his methods were brutal, he probably shortened the struggled and hence saved lives (orgy of pillaging)

4. After sizing Savannah as a Christmas present for Lincoln; Sherman’s army veered north into South Carolina, where the destruction was even more vicious

5. The capital city, Columbia, burst into flames (Sherman’s conquering army had rolled deep into North Carolina by the time the war ended—crunching northward)

10. The Politics of War

1. The election of 1864 fell most inopportune in the midst of war; political infighting in the North added greatly to Lincoln’s woe; factions within his own party, distrusting his ability or doubting his commitment to abolition, sought to remove him from office, among his critics was a group led by secretary of the Treasury, Salmon Chase

1. The creation of the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War, formed in late 1861, was dominated by “radical” Republicans who resented the expansion of presidential power in wartime and who pressed Lincoln zealously on emancipation
2. Most dangerous of all to the Union cause were the Northern Democrats; those Democrats remaining in the North were left with taint of association with the seceders.

3. Tragedy befell the Democrats and the Union when their gifted leader, Stephen A. Douglas, died of typhoid fever seven weeks after the war began; unshakably devoted to the Union, he probably could have kept much of his following on path of loyalty.

2. Lacking a leader, the Democrats divided; a large group of “War Democrats” patriotically supported the Lincoln administration, but tens of thousands of “Peace Democrats” did not.

3. At the extreme were the so-called Copperheads, named for the poisonous snake, which strikes without a warning rattle; Copperheads openly obstructed the war through attacks against the draft, against Lincoln, and especially after 1863, against emancipation.

1. They commanded considerable political strength in the southern parts of OH, IN, IL.

2. Notorious among the Copperheads was a congressman from Ohio, Clement V. Vallandigham; a Southern partisan, he publicly demanded an end to the “wicked and cruel” war; he should have been tried for sedition in the civil courts of Ohio.

3. By he was convicted by a military tribunal in 1863 for treasonable utterances and was then sentenced to prison (Lincoln choose to banish Vallandigham to the South).

4. Vallandigham as not so easily silenced; working his way to Canada, he ran for governorship of Ohio on foreign soil and polled a substantial but insufficient vote.
5. He returned to his own state before the war ended, and although he defied “King Lincoln” and spat upon a military decree, he was not further prosecuted.

6. The strange case of Vallandigham inspired Edward Everett Hale to write his fictional story of Philip Nolan, the *Man Without a Country*, which was immensely popular in the North and which helped stimulate devotion to the Union.

11. The Election of 1864

1. As the election of 1864 approached, Lincoln’s authority depended on this retaining Republican support while spiking the threat from the Peace Democrats and Copperheads.

   1. Fearing defeat, the Republican party joined with the War Democrats and proclaimed itself to be the Union party (Republican party passed out of existence temporarily).

   2. Lincoln’s renomination at first encountered surprising strong opposition; hostile factions whipped up considerable agitation to shelve “Old Abe” in favor of his nemesis, Secretary of the Treasury Chase; Lincoln was accused of lacking force, being over-ready to compromise, not having won the war, and of shocking people.

   3. But the “ditch Lincoln” move collapsed and he was nominated by the Union party.

2. Lincoln’s running mate was Andrew Johnson, a loyal War Democrat from Tennessee who had been a small slaveowner when the conflict began (attracting War Democrats).

3. Embattled Democrats nominated deposed and overcautious war hero, General McClellan; the Copperheads managed to force into the Democratic platform a plank denouncing the prosecution of the war as a failure but McClellan, repudiated this defeatist declaration.
1. The Democrats cried, “Old Abe removed McClellan. We’ll now remove Old Abe” (Union supporters shouted “Don’t swap horses in the middle of the river”)

2. Lincoln’s reelection was at first gravely in doubt; the war was going badly and Lincoln gave way to despondency, fearing that political defeat was imminent

3. But the atmosphere of gloom was changed electrically, as balloting day neared, by a succession of Northern victories; Admiral Farragut captured Mobile, AL; General Sherman seized Atlanta; General Sheridan laid waste the Shenandoah Valley of VA

4. The president pulled through, but nothing more than necessary was left to chance; at election time many Northern soldiers were furloughed home to support Lincoln at polls

5. Other Northern soldiers were permitted to cast their ballots at the front; Lincoln, bolstered by the “bayonet vote,” vanquished McClellan by 212 electoral votes to 21, losing only Kentucky, Delaware, and New Jersey but “Little Mac” netted 45% of PV

6. One of the most crushing losses suffered by the South was the defeat of the Northern Democrats in 1864; the removal of Lincoln was the last ghost of a hope for a Confederate victory and after triumph, desertions from the sinking Southern ship increased sharply

12. Grant Outlasts Lee

1. After Gettysburg, Brant was brought in from the West over Meade, who was blamed for failing to pursue the defeated but always dangerous Lee

1. Lincoln needed a general who, employing the superior resources of the North, would have the intestinal stamina to drive ever forward, regardless of casualties
2. A soldier of bulldog tenacity, Grant was the man for this meat-grinder type of warfare; his overall basic strategy was to assail the enemy’s armies simultaneously, so that they could not assist one another and hence could be destroyed piecemeal

2. A grimly determined Grant, with more than 100,000 men, struck toward Richmond

1. He engaged Lee in a series of furious battles in the Wilderness of Virginia, during May and June of 1864, notably in the leaden hurricane of the “Bloody Angle” and “Hell’s Half Acre”—in this Wilderness Campaign, Grant suffered about fifty thousand casualties, or as many men as Lee commanded at the start (Lee lost half)

2. In a ghastly gamble, on June 3, 1864, Grant ordered a frontal assault on the impregnable position of Cold Harbor and Union soldiers advanced to certain death

3. Public opinion in the North was appalled by this “blood and guts” type of fighting; critics cried that “Grant the Butcher” had gone insane but his basic strategy of hammering head seemed brutally necessary—he could trade two men for one and still beat the enemy

4. In February 1865 the Confederates, tasting defeat, tried desperately to negotiate for peace between the “two countries”; Lincoln met with Confederate representatives to discuss peace terms but Lincoln could accept nothing short of Union and emancipation

5. The end came with dramatic suddenness; rapidly advancing Northern troops captured Richmond and cornered Lee at Appomattox Courthouse in Virginia, in April 1865

1. Grant met with Lee on the ninth of April and granted generous terms of surrender
2. Tattered southern veterans wept as they took leave of their beloved commander; the elated Union soldiers cheered but they were silenced by Grant’s stern admonition, “The War is over; the rebels are out countrymen again”

6. Lincoln traveled to conquered Richmond and with a small escort of sailors, he walked the blasted streets of the city—freed slaves began to recognize him and crowds gathered to see and touch “Father Abraham” (“thank Him for the liberty you will enjoy hereafter”)

13. The Martyrdom of Lincoln

1. On the night of April 14, 1865, only five days after Lee’s surrender, Ford’s Theater in Washington witnessed its most sensational drama; John Wilkes Booth, a fanatically pro-Southern actor, slipped behind Lincoln as he say in his box and shot him in the head

   1. After lying unconscious all night, the Great Emancipator died the following morning

   2. Lincoln expired in the arms of victory, at the very pinnacle of his fame—a large number of his countrymen had not suspected his greatness and many others had even doubted his ability but his dramatic death helped to erase the memory of his short-comings and caused his nobler qualities to stand out in clearer relief

   3. The full impact of Lincoln’s death was not at once apparent to the South; hundreds of ex-Confederation soldiers cheered when they learned of the assassination

   2. As time wore on, increasing numbers of Southerners perceived that Lincoln’s death was a calamity for them; belatedly they recognized that his kindliness and moderation would have been the most effective shields between them and vindictive treatment by the victors
3. The assassination unfortunately increased the bitterness in the North; president-by-bull Andrew Johnson was impeached by the embittered members of his own party who demanded harshness, not forbearance toward the South.

4. Crucifixion thesis does not stand scrutiny (Lincoln would have clashed with Congress)
   1. The legislative branch normally struggles to win back power that has been wrested from it by the executive in time of crisis but Lincoln was the victorious president.
   2. In addition to his powers of leadership refined in the war crucible, Lincoln possessed in full measure tact, sweet reasonableness, and an uncommon amount of common sense but Andrew Johnson lacked (Johnson was not crucified in Lincoln’s stead).

5. Ford’s Theater set the stage for the wrenching ordeal of Reconstruction.

14. The Aftermath of the Nightmare
   1. The civil War took a toll in gore, about as much as all of America’s subsequent wars combined; over 600,000 men died in action or of disease, and in all over a million were killed or seriously wounded (nation lost the cream of its young manhood and leaders).
   2. Direct monetary costs of the conflict totaled about $15 billion; but this figure does not include continuing expenses, such as pensions and interest on the national debt.
   3. The greatest constitutional decision of the century was written in blood and handed down at Appomattox Courthouse, near which Lee surrendered.
      1. The extreme states’ righters were cursed; the national government emerged unbroken and nullification and secession were laid to rest; the Civil War was the supreme test.
2. Tested American democracy, it answered the question whether a nation dedicated to such principles could endure long; preservation of democratic ideals, though not an announced war aim, was subconsciously one of the major objectives of the North.

4. Victory for Union arms also provided inspiration to the champions of democracy and liberalism the world over; the great English Reform Bill of 1867, under which Britain became a true political democracy, was passed two years after the Civil War ended.

5. The “Lost Cause” of the south was lost, but few Americans today would argue that the result was not for the best (cancer of slavery was sliced away by the sword).

6. The African-Americans were at last in a position to claim their rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (the nation was again united politically).

7. But emancipation laid the necessary groundwork and a united and democratic United States was free to fulfill its destiny as the dominant republic of the hemisphere.
The Ordeal of Reconstruction, 
1865-1877

1. The Problems of Peace

1. What should be done with the captured Confederate ringleaders (all liable of treason)?

1. Davis was temporarily clapped into irons during the early days of his two-year imprisonment but he and his “conspirators” were finally release, partly because the odds were that no Virginia jury would convict them of the charge of treason

2. All rebel leaders were finally pardoned by President Johnson as sort of a Christmas present in 1868 but Congress did not remove all remaining civil disabilities until thirty years later and only restored Davis’s citizenship more than a century later

2. In the South, not only had an age perished, but a civilization had collapsed, in both its economic and its social structure (Old South had forever gone with the wind)

1. Charleston and Richmond were rubble-strewn and weed-chocked

2. Economic life had creaked to a half; banks and business houses had locked their doors, ruined by runaway inflation; factories were smokeless, silent, dismantled

3. The transportation system had broken down completely; agriculture—the economic lifeblood of the South—was almost hopelessly crippled

4. The cotton fields now yielded a lush harvest of nothing, the slave-labor system had collapsed, seed was scarce, and livestock had been driven off by plundering Yankees
3. Beaten but unbent, many high-spirited white Southerners remained dangerously defiant; they cursed the “damnyankees” and spoke of “your government” in Washington; conscious of no crime, these former Confederates continued to believe that their view of secession was correct and that the “lost cause” was still a just war (provided problems)

2. Freedmen Define Freedom

1. Confusion abounded in the South about the precise meaning of “freedom” for blacks

1. Emancipation took effect haltingly and unevenly in different parts of the conquered Confederacy; as Union armies marched in and out of various localities, many blacks found themselves emancipated and then re-enslaved (process of freedom slow)

2. The variety of responses to emancipation, by whites as well as blacks, illustrated the sometimes startling complexity of the master-slave relationship

3. Loyalty to masters prompted some slaves to resist the liberating Union armies, while other slaves’ pent-up bitterness burst forth violently on the day of liberation; many newly emancipated slaves joined Union troops in pillaging their master’s possessions

4. Prodded by Yankee armies of occupation, all masters were eventually forced to recognize their slaves’ permanent freedom; though some blacks initially responded to news of their emancipation with suspicion and uncertainty, they soon celebrated

2. Many freed slaves took new names; though many whites perceived such behavior as insubordinate, they were forced to recognize the realities of emancipation

3. Tens of thousands of emancipated blacks took to the roads, some to test their freedom, others to search for long-lost spouses, parents, and children
1. Emancipation thus strengthened the black family, and many newly freed men and women formalized “Slave marriages” for personal and pragmatic reasons, including the desire to make their children legal heirs to plots of land they now owned.

2. Other blacks left former masters to work in towns and cities, where existing black communities provided protection and mutual assistance (whole communities moved).

3. The westward flood of these “Exodusters” was stemmed only when steamboat captains refused to transport more black migrants across the Mississippi River.

4. The church became focus of black community life in the years following emancipation.
   1. As slaves, blacks had worshiped alongside whites, but now they formed their own churches pastured by their own ministers (Baptist, Methodist Episcopal Church).
   2. These churches formed the bedrock of black community life, and they soon gave rise to other benevolent, fraternal and mutual aid societies (protected newly won freedom).

5. Emancipation also meant education for many blacks; learning to read and write had been a privilege generally denied to them under slavery; freedmen wasted no time establishing societies for self-improvement, which undertook to raise funds to purchase land, build schoolhouses, and hire teachers (Southern blacks found out that demand stripped supply).

6. They accepted the aid of Northern white women sent by the American Missionary Association, who volunteered their services as teachers (federal government for help).

3. The Freedmen’s Bureau.
Abolitionists had long preached that slavery was a degrading institution; now the emancipators were faced with the brutal reality that the freedmen were overwhelmingly unskilled, unlettered, without property or money, and with scant knowledge.

To cope with the problem throughout the conquered South, Congress created the Freedmen’s Bureau on March 3, 1865 (intended to be a primitive welfare agency). It was to provide food, clothing, medical care, and education both to freedmen and to white refugees; heading the bureau was a warmly sympathetic friend of the blacks, Union general Oliver O. Howard (founded and president of Howard University).

The bureau helped education the most; it taught 200,000 blacks how to read—many former slaves had a passion for learning, partly because they wanted to close the gap between themselves and whites and partly because they longed to read the Word of God.

But in other areas, the bureau’s accomplishments were meager—or even mischievous.

Although the bureau was authorized to settled former slaves on forty-acre tracts confiscated from the Confederates, little land actually made it into blacks’ hands.

Instead local administrators often collaborated with planters in expelling blacks from towns and cajoling them into signing labor contracts to work for their former masters.

Still the white South resented the bureau as a meddlesome federal interloper that threatened to upset white racial dominance (it eventually expired in 1872).

Johnson: The Tailor President
1. Few presidents have faced with a more perplexing sea of troubles than that confronting Andrew Johnson; no citizen has ever reached the White House from humbler beginnings.

1. Born to impoverished parents in North Carolina and early orphaned, Johnson never attended school but was apprenticed at age ten to a tailor in North Carolina—like many self-made man, he was inclined to over-praise his maker.

2. John became active in politics in Tennessee, where he had moved to and shone as an impassioned champion of the poor whites against the planter aristocrats.

3. Elected to Congress, he attracted much favorable attention in the North but no the South when he refused to secede with his won state (appointed war governor of TN).

2. Political exigency next thrust Johnson into the vice presidency; Lincoln’s Union party in 1864 needed to attract the support from the War Democrats and other pro-Southern elements, and Johnson, a Democrat, seemed to be the ideal man (typhoid fever//whiskey).

3. Johnson was a man of parts; he was intelligent, able, forceful, and gifted with honesty; he was also steadfastly devoted to duty and to the people, he was a dogmatic champion of states’ rights and the Constitution (he often presented a copy of the document to visitors).

4. Yet the man was a misfit; a Southerner who did not understand the North, a Tennessean who had earned the distrust of the South, a Democrat who had never been accepted by the Republicans, a president who had never been elected to the office, he was not at home.

5. Hotheaded, contentious, and stubborn, he was the wrong man in the wrong place at the wrong time; a reconstruction policy devised by angels may have failed in his hands.
5. Presidential Reconstruction

1. Even before the shooting war had ended, the political war over Reconstruction had begun

   1. Abraham Lincoln believed that the Southern states had never legally withdrawn from the Union; their formal restoration to the Union would therefore be relatively simple

   2. Accordingly, Lincoln in 1863 proclaimed his “10 percent” Reconstruction plan; it decreed that a state could be reintegrated into the Union when 10 percent of its voters in the presidential election of 1860 had taken an oath of allegiance to the United States and pledged to abide by emancipation (formal erection of state government)

2. Lincoln’s proclamation provoked a sharp reaction in Congress; Republicans feared the restoration of the planter aristocracy to power and the possible re-enslavement of blacks

   1. Republicans there rammed through Congress in 1864 the Wade-Davis Bill which required that 50 percent of a state’s voters take the oath of allegiance and demanded stronger safeguards for emancipation than Lincoln’s as the price of readmission

   2. Lincoln “pocket-vetoed” this bill by refusing to sign it after Congress had adjourned; Republicans were outraged and refused Louisiana (who had followed Lincoln’s 10%)

3. Controversy surrounding the Wade-Davis bill had revealed deep differences between the president and Congress; unlike Lincoln, many in Congress insisted that the seceders had indeed left the Union and had therefore forfeited all their rights (“committed suicide”)

4. They could be readmitted only as “conquered provinces” (Congress decreed conditions)

5. This episode further revealed differences among the Republican party
1. Two factions were emerging; the majority moderate group tended to agree with Lincoln that the seceded states should be restored to the Union as simply and swiftly as reasonable—though on Congress’s terms, not the president’s.

2. Minority radical group believed that the South should atone more painfully for sins.

3. Before the South should be restored the radicals wanted its social structure uprooted, the planters punished and the newly emancipated blacks protected by federal power.

6. Some of the radicals were secretly pleased when the assassin’s bullet felled Lincoln, for the martyred president had shown tenderness toward the South; spiteful “Andy” Johnson, who shared their hatred for the planter aristocrats, would presumably also share their desire to reconstruct the South with a rod of iron (radical groups of Republicans).

1. Johnson disillusioned them; he agreed with Lincoln that the seceded states had never legally been outside the Union; thus he recognized several of Lincoln’s 10 percent governments and on May 29, 1865, issues his own Reconstruction proclamation.

2. It disenfranchised certain leading Confederates, including those with taxable property worth more than $20,000 though they might petition him for personal pardons.

3. It called for special state conventions (required to repeal the ordinances of secession, repudiate all Confederate debts, and ratify the slave-freeing 13th Amendment).

4. States that complied with these conditions would be swiftly readmitted to the Union.

7. Johnson, savoring his dominance over the high-toned aristocrats who now begged his favor, granted pardons in abundance (bolstered by political
resurrection of the planter elite, the recently rebellious states moved rapidly in 1865 to organize governments

6. The Baleful Black Codes

1. Among the first acts of the new Southern regimes sanctioned by Johnson was the passage of the iron-toothed Black Codes (these laws were designed to regulate the affairs of the emancipated blacks, much as the slave statues had done in pre-Civil War days

   1. Mississippi passed the first such law in November 1865, and other southern states soon followed suit; the Blacks codes carried in severity from state to state (MI > GA)

   2. The Black Codes aimed, first of all, to ensure a stable and subservient labor force; the crushed Cotton Kingdom could not rise until the fields were once again put under hoe and plow—and many whites wanted to make sure that they retained tight control

   3. Dire penalties were therefore imposed by the codes on blacks who "jumped" their labor contracts, which usually committed them to work for one year (pittance wages)

   4. Violators could be made to forfeit back wages or could be forcibly dragged back to work by paid “Negro-catchers” (captured freedmen could be fined and then hired out)

   5. The codes also sought to restore as nearly as possible the pre-emancipation system of race relations; freedom was legally recognized, as were some other privileges, such as the right to marry; all codes forbade a black so serve on a jury, some even barred blacks from renting or leasing land and nowhere were blacks allowed to vote

2. These oppressive laws mocked the ideal of freedom, so recently purchased by buckets of blood; the Black Codes imposed terrible burdens on unfettered
blacks, struggling against mistreatment and poverty to make their way as free people (economic dependence)

3. Lacking capital, and with little to offer but their labor, thousands of impoverished former slaves slipped into the status of sharecropper farmers, as did many landless whites

   1. Luckless sharecroppers gradually sank into a morass of virtual peonage and remained there for generations; countless blacks as well as poorer whites in effect became slaves to the soil and to creditors (some thought it conceded too much to freedom)

   2. Black Codes made an ugly impression in the North (Had the North won the war?)

7. Congressional Reconstruction

   1. Congressional delegations from the newly reconstituted Southern states presented themselves in the Capitol in December 1865—to the shock and disgust of the Republicans, many former Confederate leaders were on hand to claim their seats

   1. The appearance of these ex-rebels was a natural but costly blunder; voters of the South, seeking able representatives, had turned to their experienced statesmen

   2. But most of the Southern leaders were tainted by active association with the “lost cause”—among them were four former Confederate generals, five colonels, and arious members of the Richmond cabinet and Congress (Stephens ex-vice pres)

   2. The presence of these “whitewashed rebels” infuriated the Republicans in Congress

   1. The Republicans were in no hurry to embrace their former enemies—virtually all of them Democrats—in the chambers of the Capitol; when
the South had been out, the Republicans in Congress had enjoyed a relatively free hand.

2. They had passed much legislation that favored the North, such as the Morrill Tariff, the Pacific Railroad Act, and the Homestead Act; on the first day of the congressional session, December 4, 1865, they shut out the newly elected Southern delegates.

3. The Republicans were alarmed to realize that a restored South would be stronger than ever in national politics; before the war a black slave had counted as three-fifths of a person in apportioning congressional representation; now the slave was a full person.

4. Now, owing to full counting of free blacks, the rebel states were entitled to twelve more votes in Congress, twelve more presidential electoral votes, than they had had.

3. Republicans had good reason to fear that ultimately they might be elbowed aside.

1. Southerners might join hands with Democrats in the North and win control of Congress or maybe even the White House (they could perpetuate the Black Codes).

2. They could dismantle economic program—lower tariffs, reroute transcontinental railroad, repeal the Homestead Act, or even possibly repudiate the national debt.

3. President Johnson thus deeply disturbed the congressional Republicans when he announced on December 6, 1865, that the recently rebellious states had satisfied his conditions and that in his view the Union was now restored.

8. Johnson Clashes with Congress
1. A clash between the president and Congress exploded open in February 1866, when the president vetoed a bill extending the life of the controversial Freedmen’s Bureau

1. The Republicans swiftly struck back in March 1866 with the Civil Rights Bill, which conferred on blacks the privilege of American citizenship—struck at the Black Codes

2. President Johnson resolutely vetoed this forward-looking measure on constitutional grounds, but in April congressmen steamrollered it over his veto—repeatedly done

3. The hapless president (“Sir Veto,” “Andy Veto”) had his presidential wings clipped, as Congress increasingly assumed the dominant role in running the government

2. The Republicans now undertook the rivet the principles of the civil Right Bill into the Constitution as the Fourteenth Amendment; they feared that the Southerners might one day win control of Congress and repeal the hated law; the proposed amendment, as approved by Congress and sent to the states in June 1866, was sweeping

1. It conferred civil rights, including citizenship but excluding the franchise, on the freedmen; reduced proportionately the representation of a state in Congress and in the Electoral College if the state government denied blacks the ballot

2. It disqualified from federal and state office former Confederates who as federal office-holders had once sworn “to support the Constitution of the United States”

3. It guaranteed the federal debt, while repudiating all Confederate debts (14th)

3. The radical faction was disappointed that the Fourteenth Amendment did not grant the right to vote, but all Republicans were agreed that no state
should be welcomed back into the Union fold without first ratifying the Fourteenth Amendment (All of the “sinful eleven,” except Tennessee, defiantly spurned the amendment

9. Swinging ‘Round the Circle with Johnson

1. The battle grew between the Congress and the president as 1866 lengthened

   1. The root of the controversy was Johnson’s “10 percent” governments that had passed the most stringent Black Codes (Congress had tried to temper the worst features of the coeds by extending the life of the Freedmen’s Bureau and the Civil Rights Bill)

   2. Both measures Johnson had vetoed and now the issue was whether Reconstruction was to be carried on with or without the Fourteenth Amendment (Republicans)

2. The crucial congressional elections of 1866 were fast approaching; Johnson was naturally eager to escape from the clutch of Congress by securing a majority favorable to his soft-on-the-South policy—he undertook to speak at various cities in support of his views

3. Johnson’s famous “swing ‘round the circle,” (invited to dedicate a Chicago monument to Stephen Douglas) beginning in the late summer of 1866, was a serious comedy of errors

   1. The president delivered a series of “give ‘em hell” speeches, in which he accused the radicals in Congress of having planned large-scale anti-black riots and murder in the South—as he spoke, hecklers hurled insults at him (he shouted back angry retorts)

   2. As a vote-getter, Johnson was highly successful for the opposition; his inept speechmaking heightened the cry of “Stand by Congress”; when the ballots were counted, the Republicans had rolled up more than two-thirds majority in both houses

10. Republican Principles and Programs
The Republicans now had a veto-proof Congress and unlimited control of Reconstruction policy—but moderates and radicals still disagreed over how to pursue with South:

1. The radicals in the Senate were led by the principled idealist Charles Sumner, who had tirelessly labored not only for black freedom but for racial equality.

2. In the House, the most powerful radical was Thaddeus Stevens, a congressman from Pennsylvania; though seventy-four years old in 1866, he was an unswerving friend of blacks who had defended runaway slaves in court without fee.

3. His affectionate devotion to blacks was matched by his vitriolic hatred of rebellious white Southerners—was a leading figure on the Joint Committee on Reconstruction.

Still opposed to rapid restoration of the southern states, the radicals wanted to keep them out as long as possible and apply federal power to bring about a drastic social and economic transformation in the South; moderate Republicans, recoiled from full implications of the radical program (attuned to principles of states’ rights and self-govt):

1. They preferred policies that restrained the states from abridging citizens’ rights, rather than policies that directly involved the federal government in individual lives.

2. The actual policies adopted by Congress showed the influence of both these schools of thought, though the moderates, as the majority, faction, had the upper hand.

3. One thing both groups had come to agree on by 1867 was the necessity to enfranchise black voters even if it took federal troops to enforce the action.

11. Reconstruction by the Sword
1. Against a backdrop of vicious and bloody race riots that had erupted in several Southern cities, Congress passed the Reconstruction Act on March 2, 1867.

1. This drastic legislation divided the South into five military districts, each commanded by a Union general and policed by blue-clad soldiers (about 20,000 in total).

2. The act also temporarily disfranchised tens of thousands of former Confederates.

2. Congress additionally laid down stringent conditions for the readmission of the seceded states; the wayward states were required to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment.

1. The bitterest pill of all to white Southerners was the stipulation that they guarantee in their state constitutions full suffrage for their former adult male slaves.

2. Yet the act stopped short of giving the freedmen land or education at federal expense; overriding purpose of the moderates was to create an electorate in the Southern states that would vote those states back into the Union on acceptable terms and thus free the federal government from direct responsibility for the protection of black rights.

3. This approach proved woefully inadequate to the cause of justice for blacks.

3. The radical Republicans were still worried; the danger loomed that once the unrepentant states were readmitted, they would amend their constitutions so as to withdraw the ballot from the blacks—the only ironclad was to incorporate black suffrage into Constitution.

4. This goal was finally achieved by the Fifteenth Amendment, passed by Congress in 1869 and ratified by the required number of states in 1870 (black suffrage).
5. Military Reconstruction of the south not only usurped certain functions of the president as commander in chief but set up a martial regime of dubious legality

1. The Supreme Court had already ruled in the case *Ex parte Milligan*, that military tribunals could not try civilians, even during the wartime (in civil courts)

2. The circumstances were extraordinary in the Republic’s history, and for the time being the Supreme Court avoided offending the Republican Congress

6. Prodded by federal bayonets, the Southern states got on with the task of constitution making; by 1870 all of them had reorganized their governments and had been accorded full rights (the last federal guns were removed from state politics in 1877)

12. No Women Voters

1. The passage of the three Reconstruction-era Amendments—the 13th, 14th, and 15th—delighted former abolitionists but deeply disappointed advocates of women’s rights

   1. Women had played a prominent part in the prewar abolitionist movement and had often pointed out that both women and blacks lacked basic civil rights (right to vote)

   2. The struggle for black freedom and the crusade for women’s rights were one and the same in the eyes of many women; yet during the war, feminist leaders such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony had temporarily suspended their own demands and worked wholeheartedly for the cause of black emancipation

   3. The Women’s Loyal League had gathered nearly 400,000 signatures on petitions
2. Now with the war ended and the Thirteenth amendment passed, feminist leaders believed that their time had come; they reeled with shock when the wording of the Fourteenth Amendment, which defined equal national citizenship, for the first time inserted the word male into the Constitution in referring to a citizen’s right to vote.

3. Both Stanton and Anthony campaigned actively against the 14th amendment despite the pleas of Frederick Douglass, who had long supported woman suffrage but believed that his was the Negro’s hour—women lost the battle with the Fifteenth Amendment as well.

13. The Realities of Radical Reconstruction in the South

1. The blacks now had freedom; their friends in Congress had only haltingly and somewhat belatedly secured the franchise for them; both Presidents Lincoln and Johnson had proposed to give the ballot gradually to selected blacks who qualified for suffrage.

2. Moderate Republicans and even many radicals at first hesitated to bestow suffrage on the freedmen; the Fourteenth Amendment had fallen short of guaranteeing the right to vote but by 1867 hesitation had given way to hard determination to enfranchise former slaves.

3. By glaring contrast, most of the Northern states, before ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870, withheld the ballot from their tiny black minorities; Whites southerners naturally concluded the Republicans were hypocritical (black suffrage).

4. Having gained their right to suffrage, Southern black men seized the initiative and began to organize politically—their primary vehicle became the Union League (originally a pro-Union organization based in the North—assisted by Northern blacks).

   1. The League was turned into a network of political clubs that educated members in their civic duties and campaigned for Republican...
candidates—the league’s mission soon expanded to include building black churches and schools, recruiting militias)

2. African-American women attended the parades and rallies common in black communities during the early years of Reconstruction and helped assemble mass meetings in the newly constructed black churches (constitutional conventions)

5. But black men elected as delegates to the state constitutional conventions held the greater political authority; they formed the backbone of the black political community

1. At the conventions, they sat down with whites to hammer out new state constitutions, which most importantly provided for universal male suffrage

2. Between 1868 and 1876, fourteen black congressmen and two black senators, Hiram Revels and Blanche K. Bruce of Mississippi, served in Washington D.C.

3. Blacks also served in state governments as lieutenant governors and representatives, and in local governments as mayors, magistrates, sheriffs, and justices of the peace

6. The sight of former slaves holding office deeply offended their onetime masters, who lashed out with particular fury at the freedmen’s white allies (former Unionists/Whigs)

1. Former Confederates accused them of plundering the treasuries of the southern states through their political influence in the radical governments (“scalawags”)

2. The “carpet baggers” were supposedly sleazy Northerners who had packed all their worldly goods into a carpetbag suitcase at war’s end and come South to seek personal power and profit (most were former Union soldiers and Northern businessmen)
7. The radical legislatures passed much desirable legislation and introduced many badly needed reforms; for the first time in the South, steps were taken toward public schools.

8. Tax systems were streamlined, public works were launched, property rights were guaranteed to women; many welcome reforms were retained by the all-white “Redeemer” governments that later returned to power — splits still ran rampant in many governments.

   1. This was especially true in South Carolina and Louisiana, where promoters and pocket-paddlers used politically inexperienced blacks as pawns (money fraud).

   2. This sort of corruption was by no means confined to the South in these postwar years.

14. The Ku Klux Klan

   1. Embittered, some Southern whites resorted to savage measures against “radical” rule.

      1. Many whites resented the success and ability of black legislators as much as they resented alleged “corruption”; a number of secret organizations sprang up, the most notorious of was the “Invisible Empire of the South, or Ku Klux Klan (TN, 1866).

      2. Be-sheeted nightriders, their horses’ hoofs muffled, would approach the cabin of an “upstart” black and hammer on the door — scared the blacks from the polls.

      3. Such foolery and terror proved partially effective; many ex-bondsmen and white “carpet-baggers,” quick to take a hint, shunned the polls; those stubborn souls who persisted in their “upstart” ways were flogged, mutilated, or even murdered.

   4. The Klan became a refuge for numerous bandits and cutthroats (any scoundrel).
2. Congress, outraged by this night-riding lawlessness, passed the harsh Force Acts of 1870 and 1871; Federal troops were able to stamp out much of the “lash law,” but by this time the Invisible Empire had already done its work of intimidation on the voters.

3. White resistance undermined attempts to empower the blacks politically; the white south, openly flouted the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments for many decades.

   1. Wholesale disfranchisement of the blacks, starting conspicuously about 1890, was achieved by intimidation, fraud, and trickery (literacy tests with advantage to whites).

   2. Goal of white supremacy fully justified these dishonorable devices.

15. Johnson Walks the Impeachment Plank

   1. Radicals meanwhile had been sharpening their hatchets for President Johnson.

      1. Not content with curbing his authority, they decided to remove him altogether by constitutional processes; under existing law the president pro tempore of the Senate, the corrupt and rabidly radical “Bluff Ben” Wade would then become president.

      2. As the initial step, Congress in 1867 passed the Tenure of Office Act; contrary to precedent, the new law required the president to secure the consent of the Senate before he could remove his appointees once they had been approved by that body.

      3. One purpose was to freeze into the cabinet the secretary of war, Edwin M. Stanton, although outwardly loyal, he was secretly serving as a spy and informer for radicals.

   2. Johnson provided the radicals with a pretext to begin impeachment proceedings when he abruptly dismissed Stanton early in 1868; the House of Representatives immediately voted to impeach Johnson for “high crimes and
misdemeanors” as required by the Constitution, charging him with the 
various violations of the Tenure of Office Act

16. A Not-Guilty Verdict for Johnson

1. With evident zeal the radical-led Senate now sat as a court to try Johnson on 
the dubious impeachment charges; the House of Representatives conducted 
the prosecution

1. The trial aroused intense public interest and a thousand tickets for a 
show in 1868

2. Johnson kept his dignity and sobriety and maintained a discreet silence; 
his battery attorney argued that the president, convinced that the 
Tenure of Office Act was unconstitutional, had fired Stanton merely to 
put a test case before the Supreme Court

3. House prosecutors, had a harder time building a compelling case for 
impeachment

2. On May 16, 1868, the day for the first voting in the Senate, the tension was 
electric; by a margin of only one vote, the radicals failed to muster the two-
thirds majority for Johnson’s removal (seven independent-minded 
Republican senators voted “not guilty”)

3. Several factors shaped the outcome; fears of creating a destabilizing 
precedent played a role, as did opposition to abusing the constitutional 
mechanism of checks and balances

1. As the vice presidency remained vacant under Johnson, his successor 
would have been radical Republican Ben Wade, the president pro 
tempore of the Senate

2. Wade was disliked by many members of the business community for his 
high-tariff, pro-labor views, and distrusted by many moderate 
Republicans
4. Die-hard radicals were infuriated by their failure to muster a two-thirds majority for Johnson's removal; but the nation accepted the verdict with a good temper that did credit to its political maturity; in a less stable republic, it might have been an armed uprising.

5. The nation thus narrowly avoided a dangerous precedent that would have gravely weakened one of the three branches of the federal government (he was not guilty).

The Purchase of Alaska

1. Johnson's administration achieved its most enduring success in foreign relations.

2. The Russians by 1867 were in a mood to sell the vast and chilly expanse of land known as Alaska; they had already overextended themselves in North America and saw that in another war with Britain they would probably lose their defenseless northern province.

   1. Alaska had been ruthlessly "furred" out and was a growing economic liability; the Russians were therefore quite eager to unload their "frozen asset" on the Americans.

   2. They preferred the United States to any other purchaser, primarily because they wanted to strengthen further the Republic as a barrier against their enemy, Britain.

3. In 1867 Secretary of State William Seward, an ardent expansionist, signed a treaty with Russia that transferred Alaska to the United States for the bargain price of $7.2 million but Seward's enthusiasm for these frigid wastes were not shared by his countrymen.

4. The American people, still preoccupied with Reconstruction and other internal vexations, were economy-minded and anti-expansionists ("Seward's Folly, "Seward's Icebox")

5. Then why did Congress and the American public sanction the purchase?
1. Russia had been conspicuously friendly to the North during the recent Civil War, Americans did not feel that they could offend their great and good friend, the tsar.

2. The territory was rumored to be teeming with furs, fish, and gold, (profitable)

3. So Congress and the country accepted Alaska somewhat derisively but hopefully

18. The Heritage of Reconstruction

1. Many white Southerners regarded Reconstruction as a more grievous wound than the war

1. They resented the upending of their social and racial system, political empowerment of blacks, and the insult of federal intervention in their local affairs

2. Given the explosiveness of the issues that had caused the war, and the bitterness of the fighting, the wonder is that Reconstruction was not far harsher than it was

3. The Republicans acted from a mixture of idealism and political expediency; they wanted both to protect the freed slaves to promote fortunes of the Republican party

4. Reconstruction conferred only fleeting benefits on the blacks and virtually extinguished the Republican party in the South for nearly one hundred years

2. Moderate Republicans never fully appreciated the extensive effort necessary to make the freed slaves completely independent citizens, nor the lengths to which Southern whites would go to preserve their system of racial dominance
3. Deep-seated racism, ingrained American resistance to tampering with property rights, and rigid loyalty to the principle of local self-government, combined with spreading indifference in the North to the plight of the blacks, formed a formidable obstacle; the Old South was in many ways more resurrected than reconstructed
Industry Comes of Age, 1865-1900

1. The Iron Colt Becomes an Iron Horse
   1. The government-business entanglements also undermined the industrial development
      1. The unparalleled outburst of railroad construction was a crucial case; by 1900, the miles of railroad had spurted up to 192,556, much of which was west of MI river
      2. Transcontinental railroad building was so costly and risky as to require government subsidies; the extension of rails into thinly populated regions was unprofitable
      3. Private promoters were unwilling to suffer heavy initial losses; Congress thus began to advance liberal money loads to favored cross-continent companies in 1862
      4. Land grant to railroads were made in broad belts along the proposed route; within these belts the railroads were allowed to choose alternate mile-square sections in checkerboard fashion (the railroads withheld all the land from other users)
   2. Noisy criticism was leveled at the “giveaway” of so valuable a birthright to greedy corporations; but the government did receive beneficial returns (rates for service)
   3. Granting land was also a “cheap” way to subsidize a much-desired transportation, because it avoided new taxes for direct cash grants; critics overlooked the railroad’s ability to give land a modest value after the railroads had ribboned it with steel
   4. Frontier villages touched by the magic wand of the iron rail became flourishing cities
5. Those that were bypassed often withered away and became “ghost towns”; little wonder that communities fought one another for the privilege of playing host to the railroads

2. Spanning the Continent with Rails

1. Deadlock in the 18650s over the proposed transcontinental railroad was broken when the South seceded, leaving the field to the North (in 1862, Congress made provisions)

   1. One weighty argument for the action was the urgency of bolstering the Union, by binding the Pacific Coast more securely to the rest of the Republic

   2. The Union Pacific Railroad was thus commissioned by Congress to thrust westward from Omaha, Nebraska; for each mile of track constructed, the company was granted 20 square miles of land and a generous federal loan ranging from $16,000 to $48,000

   3. The laying of rails began in earnest after the Civil War ended in 1865 and with juicy loans and land grant available, the promoters made all possible haste (gain of $23 M)

2. Construction gangs, containing many Irish “Paddies” who had fought in the Union armies, worked at a frantic pace; when hostile Indians attacked in futile efforts to protect what once rightfully had been their land, the laborers would drop picks and seize guns

   1. Scores of men—railroad workers and Indians—lost their lives as the rails stretched

   2. At rail’s end, workers tried their best to fine relaxation and conviviality in their tented towns, known as “hells on wheels,” often teeming with as many as ten thousand men and a sprinkling of painted prostitutes and performers for the men
3. Rail laying at the California end was undertaken by the Central Pacific Railroad; this line pushed boldly eastward from Sacramento, over and through the Sierra Nevada

1. Four farseeing men—the so-called Big Four—were the chief financial backers of the enterprise; the quartet include the ex-governor Leland Stanford of California, who had useful political connections, and the burly Collis P. Huntington, an adept lobbyist

2. The Big Four operated through two construction companies, they kept their hands relatively clean by not becoming involved in the bribery of congressmen

4. The Central Pacific, which was granted the same subsidies as the Union Pacific, had the same incentive to haste; some ten thousand Chinese laborers, proved to cheap, efficient, and expendable (the towering Sierra Nevada presented a formidable barrier)

5. A “wedding of the rails” was finally consummated near Ogden, Utah, in 1869, as two locomotives met (the Union built 1,086 miles and the Central Pacific 689 miles)

6. Completion of the transcontinental line was one of the America's most impressive peacetime undertakings; it welded the West Coast more firmly to the Union and facilitated a flourishing trade with Asia (phenomenal growth of the Great West)

3. Binding the Country with Railroad Ties

1. With the westward trail now blazed, four other transcontinental lines were completed before the century’s end; none of them secure monetary loans from the federal government but all of them except the Great Northern received generous grants of land

2. The Northern Pacific Railroad, stretching from Lake Superior to Puget Sound, reached its terminus in 1883; the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe, stretching
through the southwestern deserts to California was completed in 1884, and the Southern Pacific ribboned from New Orleans to San Francisco and was consolidated in the 1884 as well.

3. The last spike of the last of the five transcontinental railroads of the 19th century was hammered home in 1893; the Great Northern, which ran from Duluth to Seattle, was the creation of a far-visioned Canadian-America, James J. Hill (greatest railroad builder?)

   1. He perceived that the prosperity of his railroad depended on the prosperity of the area that it served; his enterprise was soundly organized and had no major problems

   2. Too often, pioneer builders pushed into areas that lacked enough potential population to support a railroad and sometimes laid rails that led “from nowhere to nothing”

   3. Many of the large railroads in the post-Civil War decades passed through seemingly endless bankruptcies, mergers, or reorganizations (trusting investors let down)

4. Railroad Consolidation and Mechanization

   1. The success of the western lines was facilitated by welding together and expanding the older eastern networks, notably the New York Central; the genius in this enterprise was “Commodore” Cornelius Vanderbilt—he shifted from steamboating to railroading

   2. Offering superior railway service at lower rates, he amassed a fortune of $100 million; his name is perhaps remembered through his contribution to the Vanderbilt University

   3. Two significant new improvements proved a boon to the railroads

      1. One was the steel raid, which Vanderbilt helped popularize when he replaced the old iron tracks of the New York Central with the tougher
metal; steel was safer and more economical because it could bear a heavier load

2. A standard gauge of track width came into wide use, thus eliminating the expense and inconvenience of numerous changes from one line to another

4. refinements played a vital role in railroading; the Westinghouse air brake was a marvelous contribution to efficiency and safety; the Pullman Palace Cars, advertised as “gorgeous traveling hotels,” were introduced on a considerable scale in the 1860s

5. condemned them as “wheeled torture chambers” and potential funeral pyres, for the wooden cars were equipped with swaying kerosene lamps; appalling accidents continued to be almost daily tragedies, despite safety devices like the telegraph

5. Revolution by Railways

1. For the first time, a sprawling nation became united in a physical sense, bounds with ribs of iron and steel; by stitching North America together from ocean to ocean, the trans-continental lines created an enormous domestic market for American raw materials and manufactured goods—probably the largest integrated national market area in the world

   1. The huge empire of commerce beckoned to foreign and domestic investors alike

   2. The railroad network spurred the amazing industrialization of the post-Civil War years; the locomotives opened up fresh markets for manufactured goods and sped raw materials to factories (single largest order for the fawning steel industry)

   3. The screeching iron horse stimulated mining and agriculture, especially in the West; it took farmers to their land, carried their products to the market, and brought items
2. Railways were a boon for cities and played a leading role in the great cityward movement of the last decades of the century (food, raw materials, and markets)

3. Railroad companies also stimulated the mighty stream of immigration; seeking settlers advertised seductively in Europe and sometimes offered to transport the newcomers

4. The land also felt the impact of the railroad (especially the midsection of the continent)
   1. Settlers following the railroads in Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, and Nebraska and planted well drained, rectangular cornfields (shortgrass prairies in Dakotas, and Montana)
   2. The white pine forests of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota disappeared into lumber that was rushed by rail to prairie farmers to build houses and fences

5. Time itself was bent to the railroads’ needs (until the 1880s every town in the United States had its own local time, dictated by the sun’s position—even in same time zones)
   1. For railroad operators worried about keeping schedules and avoiding wrecks, this patchwork of local times was a nightmare (on November 18, 1883, the major rail lines decreed that the continent would henceforth be divided into four “time zones”)
   2. The railroad was the maker of millionaires; a raw new aristocracy, consisting of “lords of the rail,” replaced the other southern “lords of the lash” and colossal wealth was amassed by stock speculators and railroad wreckers

6. Wrongdoing in Railroading
   1. Corruption lurks nearby when fabulous fortunes can materialize overnight
1. The fleecing administered by the railroad construction companies, such as the Credit Mobilier, were but the first of the games that the railroad promoters learned to play

2. Methods soon became more refined; Jay Gould was the most adept at rapacity

3. For nearly thirty years, he boomed and busted the stocks of the Erie, the Kansas Pacific, the Union Pacific, and the Taxes and Pacific in an incredible circus

2. One of the favorite devices of the moguls of manipulation was “stock watering”

1. Railroad stock promoters grossly inflated their claims about a given line’s assets and profitability and sold stocks and bonds far in excess of the railroad’s actual value

2. Promoters’ profits” were often the tail that wagged the iron horse itself; railroad managers were forced to charge huge rates and wage ruthless competitive battles in order to pay off the exaggerated financial obligations with which they were saddled

3. The public interest was frequently trampled underfoot; Cornelius Vanderbilt did not care about the law and his son, William H. Vanderbilt, when asked in 1883 about the discontinuance of a fast mail train, reportedly snorted, “The public be damned!”

4. While abusing the public, the railroaders blandly bought and sold people in public life; they bribed judges and legislatures, employed lobbyists and elected their own into office

5. Railroad kings were for a time virtual industrial monarchs; they exercised more direct control over the lives of more people that did the president of the United States; they began to cooperate with one another to rule the railroad dominion
6. The earliest form of combination was the “pool”—an agreement to divide the business in a given area and share the profits; other rail barons granted secret rebates or kickbacks to powerful shippers; often they slashed their rates on competing lines, but they more than mad up the different on non-competing ones (change a little more money)

7. Government Bridles the Iron Horse

1. Impoverished farmers, especially in the Midwest, began to wonder if the nation had not escaped from the slavery power only to fall into the hands of the money power

   1. The American people were slow to combat economic injustice; dedicated to free enterprise and believing competition is the soul of trade, they cherished progress

   2. The depression of the 1870s finally goaded the farmers into protesting against being “railroaded” into bankruptcy; under pressure from organized agrarian groups like the Grange (Patrons of Husbandry), many midwestern legislatures tried to regulate the railroad monopoly (scattered state efforts screeched to a halt in 1886)

   3. Supreme Court, in the famed Wabash case, decreed individual states had no power to regulate interstate commerce; the federal government would have to do the job

2. President Cleveland did not look kindly on effective regulation but Congress passed the epochal Interstate Commerce Act in 1887, which prohibited rebates and pools and required the railroads to publish their rates openly; it forbade unfair discrimination against shippers, and outlawed charging more for a short haul than a long one (same line)

3. Most important, it set up the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to administer
1. The Interstate Commerce Act did not represent a popular victory over corporate wealth; what the new legislation did do was to provide an orderly forum where competing business interests could resolve their conflicts in peaceful ways.

2. The country could not avoid ruinous rate wars among the railroads and outraged “confiscatory” attacks on the lines by pitchfork-prodded state legislation.

3. The Interstate Commerce Act tended to stabilize, not revolutionize, the system.

4. It was the first large-scale attempt by Washington to regulate business in the interest of society at large; it heralded the arrival of a series of independent regulatory commissions in the next century, which would irrevocable commit the government to the daunting task of monitoring and guiding the private economy.

8. Miracles of Mechanization

1. Postwar industrial expansion, partly a result of the railroad network, rapidly began to assume mammoth proportions; by 1984, the US was the largest manufacturing nation.

1. Liquid capital was now becoming abundant; the word millionaire had not been coined until the 1840s and in 1861 only a handful of individuals were eligible for this class.

2. The amazing natural resources of the nation were now about to be fully exploited, including coal, oil, and iron (Mesabi Range providing iron ore by the 1890s).

3. Massive immigration helped make unskilled labor cheap and plentiful; steel, the keystone industry, built its strength largely on the sweat of low-priced immigrant labor from eastern and southern Europe (working in twelve-hour shifts every week).
2. American ingenuity at the same time played a vital role in the second American industrial revolution; techniques of mass production, pioneered by Eli Whitney, were being perfected by the captains of industry (440,000 patents between 1860 and 1890)

1. Such machines as the cash register, the stock ticker, and the typewriter, which attracted women from the home to industry, facilitated business operations

2. Urbanization was speeded by the refrigerator car, the electric dynamo, and the electric railway, which displaced animal-drawn cars (usually horses had been used)

3. One of the most ingenious inventions was the telephone, introduced by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876; gigantic communication network was built on his invention

4. The social impact of this instrument was further revealed with an additional army of “number please” women was attracted from the stove to the switchboard

3. The most versatile inventor of all was Thomas Alva Edison—his severe deafness enabled him to concentrate without distraction; Edison was a gifted tinkerer and a tireless worker

1. Wondrous devices poured out of his “invention factory”—the phonograph, the mimeograph, the Dictaphone, and the moving picture

2. He is probably best known for his perfection in 1879 of the electric light bulb; the electric light turned night into day and transformed ancient human habits as well

9. The Trust Titan Emerges

1. Tycoons like Andrew Carnegie, the steel king; Kohn D. Rockefeller, the oil baron; and J. Pierpont Morgan, the bankers’ banker, exercised genius to circumvent competition

2. Carnegie thus pioneered the creative entrepreneurial tactic of “vertical integration,” combining into one organization all phases of manufacturing from mining to market.

3. His goal was to improve efficiency by making supplies more reliable, controlling the quality of the product at all stages of production, and eliminating middlemen fees.

2. Less efficient was the technique of “horizontal integration,” which meant allying with competitors to monopolize a given market; Rockefeller was a master of this stratagem.

1. He perfected a device for controlling bothersome rivals—the “trust.”

2. Stockholders in various smaller oil companies assigned their stock to the board of directors of his Standard Oil Company, formed in 1870.

3. It then consolidated and concerted the operations of the previously competing enterprises (Standard Oil soon cornered virtually the entire world petroleum market).

3. The imperial Morgan devised still other schemes for eliminating “wasteful” competition.

1. The depression of the 1890s drove into his welcoming arms many bleeding businesspeople, wounded by the cutthroat competition in America.

2. His prescribed remedy was to consolidate rival enterprises and to ensure future harmony by placing officers of his own banking syndicate on their various boards of directors (these came to be known as “interlocking directorates”).
10. The Supremacy of Steel

1. Steel ultimately held together the new steel civilization, from skyscrapers to coal scuttles, while providing it with food, shelter, and transportation (rails for railroads)

   1. Steel making typified the dominance of “heavy industry,” concentrated on making “capital goods,” which was entirely different from “consumer goods”

   2. In the age of Lincoln, considerable iron went into railroad rails and bridges, but steel was expensive; when in the 1870s “Commodore” Vanderbilt of the New York Central began to use steel rails, he was forced to import them from Britain

2. Within twenty years, the United States had outdistanced all foreign competitors and was pouring out more than one-third of the world’s supply of steel (Britain and Germany)

3. What brought the transformation was the invention in the 1850s of a method of making cheap steel—the Bessemer process (it was named after a derided British inventor)

   1. An American had stumbled on it a few years earlier; William Kelly, a Kentucky manufacturer of iron kettles, discovered that cold air blown on red-hot iron caused the metal to become white-hot by igniting the carbon and eliminating impurities

   2. He tried to apply this new “air boiling” technique to his own product but business declined—gradually the Bessemer-Kelly process won acceptance and created steel

4. American was one of the few places in the world where one could find relatively close, abundant coal for fuel, rich iron ore for smelting, and other ingredients for making steel

5. The nation also boasted an abundant labor supply, guided by the high order
11. Carnegie and Other Sultans of Steel

1. Kingpin among steelmasters was Andrew Carnegie; he was brought to America from Scotland in 1848 mounting the ladder so fast that he was said to have scorched the rungs

   1. He forged ahead by working hard, doing the extra chore, cheerfully assuming responsibility, and smoothly cultivating influential people into his business

   2. After accumulating some capital, Carnegie entered the steel business in the Pittsburgh area; he succeeded by picking high-class associate and eliminating many middlemen

   3. His remarkable organization was a partnership that involved, at its maximum, about forty men—by 1900 he was producing one-fourth of the nations’ Bessemer steel

2. The financial giant of the age, J. Pierpont Morgan made a legendary reputation for himself and his Wall Street banking house by financing the reorganization of railroads, insurance companies, and banks (he had established an enviable reputation for integrity)

3. The force of circumstances brought Morgan and Carnegie into collision; by 1900 Carnegie, weary of turning steel into gold, was eager to sell his holdings while Morgan had plunged heavily into the manufacture of steel pipe and tubing

   1. Carnegie, cleverly threatening to invade the same business, was ready to ruin his rival if he did not receive his price; Morgan finally agreed to buy out Carnegie for over $400 million—Carnegie then dedicated his remaining years to giving away money

   2. Morgan moved rapidly to expand his new industrial empire; he took the Carnegie holdings, added others, “watered” the stock liberally, and in 1901 launched the enlarged United States Steel Corporation (capitalized
at $1.4 billion, it was America’s first billion-dollar corporation—the Industrial Revolution had come into its own)

12. Rockefeller Grows an American Beauty Rose

1. The sudden emergence of the oil industry was one of the most striking developments

   1. Traces of oil found on streams had been collected but not until 1859 did the first well in Pennsylvania—“Drake’s Folly”—pour out its liquid “black gold”

   2. Almost overnight an industry was born that was to take more wealth from the earth

   3. Kerosene, derived from petroleum, was the first major product of the infant oil industry (it produced a much brighter flame than whale oil)

   4. The kerosene lamp signaled the decline of the whaling industry just as the new electrical industry rendered the kerosene obsolete (Thomas Edison’s invention)

2. Oil might thus have remained a modest industry but for yet another turn of the technological tide—the invention of the automobile; by 1900, the gasoline-burning internal combustion engine had clearly bested its rivals, steam and electricity for the car

3. John D. Rockefeller came to dominate the oil industry; he was a successful businessman at nineteen and one upward stride led to another, and in 1870, he organized the Standard Oil Company of Ohio, nucleus of the great trust formed in 1882

   1. Pious and parsimonious, Rockefeller flourished in an era of completely free enterprise; Rockefeller pursued a policy of rule or ruin (corsairs of finance)

   2. By 1877, he controlled 95% of all the oil refineries in the country
4. Rockefeller showed little mercy in employing spies and extorting secret rebates from the railroads, he forced the lines to pay him rebates on the freight bills of his competitors.

5. Rockefeller though he was obeying a law a nature and reflected that “the time was ripe” for aggressive consolidation, but on the other side of the ledger, Rockefeller’s oil monopoly did turn out a superior product at a relatively cheap price.

1. He achieved important economies, both at home and abroad, by its large-scale methods of production and distribution—the efficient use of expensive machinery called for bigness and consolidation proved more profitable than price wars.

2. Other trusts blossomed along with the American Beauty of oil; these included the sugar trust, the tobacco trust, the leather trust, and the harvester trust (wealth).

3. The meat industry arose on the backs of bawling western herds and meat kings like Gustavus F. Swift and Philip Armour took their place among the new royalty.

6. These untrustworthy trusts and the pirates who captained them were disturbingly new.

1. They eclipsed an older American aristocracy of modestly successful merchants and professionals; an arrogant class of new rich was now elbowing aside the patricians.

2. The ranks of the antitrust crusaders were frequently spearheaded by the “best men”—genteel gold-family do-gooders who were not radicals but conservatives who tried desperately to defend their own vanishing influence among society’s best.

13. The Gospel of Wealth
1. Monarchs of yore invoked the divine right of kings, and America’s industrial autocrats took a somewhat similar stance; Rockefeller piously acknowledged the Lord

1. Steel baron Andrew Carnegie agreed that the wealthy, entrusted with society’s riches, had to prove themselves morally responsible according to a “Gospel of Wealth”

2. But most defenders of wide-open capitalism relied more heavily on the survival-of-the-fittest theories of Charles Darwin; captains of industry provided material progress

2. Self-justification by the wealthy inevitably involved contempt for the poor; many of the rich had pulled themselves up and hence they concluded that those who stayed poor must be lazy and lacking in enterprise (formidable roadblock to social reform)

3. Plutocracy, like the earlier slavocracy, took its strand firmly on the Constitution; the clause that gave Congress sole jurisdiction over interstate commerce was a godsend to the monopolists—their lawyers used it time and again to thwart controls by state legislatures

1. Giant trusts likewise sought refuge behind the Fourteenth Amendment; the courts ingeniously interpreted a corporation to be a legal “person” and decreed that, as such, it could not be deprived of its property by a state without “due process of law”

2. Great industrialists sought to incorporate in “easy states,” like New Jersey, where the restrictions on big business were mild or nonexistent

14. Government Tackles the Trust Evil

1. At long last the masses of the people began to mobilize against monopoly; they first tried to control the trusts through state legislation, as they had earlier (curb railroads)
1. They were forced to appeal to Congress and after prolonged pulling and hauling, the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890 was finally signed into law

2. It flatly forbade combinations in restraint of trade, without any distinction between “good” trusts and “bad” trusts; bigness, not badness, was the sin

3. The law proved ineffective because of legal loopholes and contrary to its original intent, it was used to curb labor unions or labor combinations (restraining trade)

2. Early prosecution of the trusts by the Justice Department under the Sherman Act of 1890 was neither vigorous nor successful—more new trusts were formed in the 1890s

3. The iron grip of monopolistic corporations was being threatened; a revolutionary new principle had been written into the law; private greed must be subordinated to public need

15. The South in the Age of Industry

1. The industrial wave that washed over the North after the Civil War caused only feeble ripples in the backwater of the South; as late as 1900, the South still produced a smaller percentage of the nation’s manufactured goods that it had before the Civil War

2. The plantation system had degenerated into a pattern of absentee land ownership; white and black sharecroppers now tilled the soil for a share of the crop and became tenants, in bondage to their landlords, who controlled needed credit and supplies

3. Southern agriculture received a welcome boost in the 1880s, when machine-made cigarettes replaced the roll-your-own variety and tobacco consumption shot up
4. James Duke took full advantage of the new technology to mass-produce and in 1890 he absorbed his main competitors into the American Tobacco Company (Duke University)

5. Industrialists tried to coax the agricultural South out of the fields and into the factories, but with only modest success; the region remained overwhelmingly rural

1. Prominent among the boosters of a “new South” was Henry W. Grady, editor of the Atlanta Constitution; he exhorted the ex-Confederates to outplay the North at the commercial and industrial game (obstacles lay in path of southern industrialization)

2. One was the paper barrier of regional rate-setting systems imposed by the northern-dominated railroad interests; railroads gave preferential rates to northern goods

3. They discriminated in favor of southern raw materials; the net effect was to keep the south in a kind of “Third World” servitude to the Northeast—as a supplier of raw materials to the manufacturing metropolis, unable to develop an industrial base

6. A bitter example of this economic discrimination against the South was the “Pittsburgh plus” pricing system in the steel industry (rich deposits of coal and iron ore near Birmingham, Alabama, should have given steel manufacturers the competitive edge

7. But the steel lords of Pittsburgh brought pressure to bear on the compliant railroads; this stunted the South’s natural economic advantages throttled the growth of the steel industry

8. In manufacturing cotton textiles, the South fare considerably better; beginning about 1880, northern capital began to erect cotton mills in the South, largely in response to tax benefits and the prospect of cheap and non-unionized labor
1. The textile mills proved a mixed blessing to the economically blighted South; they slowly wove an industrial thread into the fabric of southern life (human cost)

2. Cheap labor was the South’s major attraction for potential investors and keeping labor cheap became a “religion” among southern industrialists (denominated communities)

3. Rural southerners (most white) poured out of the hills and hollows to seek employment in the hastily erected company mill towns; entire families worked from dawn to dusk amid the whirling spindles (paid half the rate of northern counterparts)

4. By despite depressed working conditions and poor pay, many southerners saw employment in the mills as a salvation, the first steady jobs and wages they had ever known—mill work offered farm-fugitive families their chance to remain together

16. The Impact of New Industrial Revolution in America

1. Economic miracles wrought during the decades after the Civil War enormously increased the wealth of the Republic; the standard of living rose sharply, and well-fed American workers enjoyed more physical comforts than counterparts in any other nation

   1. Urban centers mushroomed as the insatiable factories demanded more American labor and immigrants swarmed in like honeybees to the new jobs

   2. As agriculture declined in relation to manufacturing, America could no longer aspire to be a nation of small free-hold farms (Jefferson’s concepts of free enterprise out)

   3. Rural American migrants and peasant European immigrants, used to living by the languid clock of nature, now had to regiment their lives by the factory whistle
2. Probably no single group was more profoundly affected by the new industrial age than women; propelled into industry by recent inventions, chiefly the typewriter and the telephone switchboards, millions discovered new economic and social opportunities.

1. For middle-class women, careers often meant delayed marriages and smaller families; most women workers, toiled neither for independence nor for glamour, but out of economic necessity—women earned less than men in the workplace.

2. The clattering machine age accentuated class division; “industrial buccaneers” flaunted bloated fortunes and such extravagances evoked bitter criticism; some of it was envious but much of it rose from group of socialists and other radicals.

3. A nation of farmers and independent producers was becoming a nation of wage earners; in 1860 half of all workers were self-employed; by the century end, 2/3 were on wages.

4. Real wages were rising and times were good for workers who were working; but with dependence on wages came vulnerability to the swings of the economy and employer.

5. Nothing more sharply defined the growing difference between working-class and middle-class conditions of life than the precariousness of the laborer’s lot (reformers struggled to introduce a measure of security—job and unemployment—into the working class).

6. Strong pressures for foreign trade developed as the industrial machine threatened to saturate the domestic market (American products radiated out all over the world).

17. In Unions There is Strength
1. Sweat of the laborer lubricated the vast new industrial machine; individual originality and creativity were being stifled, and less value was being placed on manual skills

1. The factory hand was employed by a corporation—depersonalized, bodiless, soulless, and often conscienceless; the directors knew the worker not and in fairness to their stockholders they were inclined to engage in private philanthropy

2. New machines displaced employees, and though in the long run more jobs were created than destroyed, in the short run the manual worker was often hard hit

3. A glutted labor market severely handicapped wage earners; employers could bring in unemployed workers from the four corners of the country and beyond to beat down high wage levels using the new railroad network in the United States

4. During the 1880s and 1890s, several hundred thousand unskilled workers a year poured into the country from Europe, creating a labor market more favorable

2. Individual workers were powerless to battle single-handedly against giant industry; forced to organize and fight for basic rights, they found the odds stacked up against them

1. The corporation could dispense with the individual worker much more easily than the worker could dispense with the corporation; they could pool vast wealth through stockholders, have lawyers, buy up the local press, and pressure the politicians

2. They could import strikebreakers (“scabs”) and employ thugs to beat labor organizers

3. They could call upon the federal courts to issue injunctions ordering strikers to cease striking—if defiance and disorders ensued, the
company could request the state and federal authorities to bring in troops (rebellious workers locked out by employers)

4. They could compel them to sign “ironclad oaths” or “yellow-dog contracts” both of which were solemn agreements not to join a labor union; a corporation might even own the “company town,” with its high-priced grocery stores and “easy” credit

5. Often the worker sank into perpetual debt—resembled that of serfdom

3. The middle-class public, annoyed by recurrent strikes, grew deaf to the outcry of the worker; American wages were perhaps the highest in the world; yet somehow the strike seemed like a foreign importation—socialistic and hence unpatriotic (raise prices)

18. Labor Limps Along

1. Labor unions were given a strong boost by the Civil War, which put more of a premium on labor and the mounting cost of living provided an urgent incentive to unionization

1. By 1872 there were several hundred thousand organized workers and thirty-two national unions, representing such crafts as bricklayer, typesetters, and shoemakers

2. The National Labor Union represented a giant boot stride by workers; the union lasted six years attracting 600,000 members, including skilled, unskilled and farmers

3. But it kept with the times, it excluded the Chinese and made only nominal efforts to include women and blacks; black workers organized their Colored National Labor Union but their support for Republican party and racism of whites prevented union

4. The National Labor Union agitated for the arbitration of industrial disputes and the eight-hour workday, and won the latter for government workers
But the devastating depression of the 1870s dealt it a knockout blow; labor was rocked back on its heels during the years of the depression; wage reductions in 1877 touched off such disruptive strikes on the railroads that only troops could restore

A new organization—the Knights of Labor—seized the torch drooped by the defunct National Labor Union; it began inauspiciously in 1869 as a secret society, with a private ritual, passwords, and a special handshake Secrecy (continued until 1881)

The Knights of Labor sought to include all workers in “one big union”

A welcome mat was rolled out for the skilled and unskilled, for men and women, for whites and underprivileged blacks, some 900,000 of whom joined (the Knights barred only “nonproducers”—liquor dealers, gamblers, lawyers, bankers, and stockbrokers)

The embattled Knights refused to thrust their lance into politics; instead they campaigned for economic and social reform, including producers' cooperatives and codes for safety and health (they frowned upon industrial warfare)

Fostering industrial arbitration—the Knights waged a determined campaign for an eight-hour workday—under the leadership of Powderly, they won a number of strikes

When the Knights staged a successful strike against Jay Gould’s Wabash Railroad in 1885, membership mushroomed to about three-quarters of a million workers

Unhorsing the Knights of Labor

The Knights were riding for a fall; they became involved in a number of May Day strikes in 1886, about half of which failed; a focal point was Chicago, home to 80,000
1. Chicago was also home to a few hundred anarchists, many of them foreign-born, who were advocating a violent overthrow of the American government.

2. Tensions built up in the bloody Haymarket Square episode; labor disorders had broken out, and on May 4, 1886, the Chicago police advanced on a meeting.

3. Suddenly a dynamite bomb was thrown that killed/injured several dozen people.

2. Hysteria swept the Windy City; eight anarchists were rounded up five of whom were sentenced to death, one who committed suicide, and the other three given prison terms.

3. In 1892, John Altgeld was elected governor of Illinois and after studying the Haymarket case, he pardoned the three survivors—he was criticized and lost in the reelection.

4. The Haymarket Square bomb helped blow the props from under the Knights of Labor.

1. They were associated in the public mind, though mistakenly, with the anarchists—the eight-hour movement suffered correspondingly and strikes became ineffective.

2. Another fatal handicap of the Knights was their inclusion of both skilled and unskilled workers; unskilled labor could easily be replaced by strike-breaking “scabs.”

3. They finally wearied of sacrificing this advantage on the altar of solidarity with their unskilled coworkers and sought refuge in a federation of exclusively skilled craft unions—the American Federation of Labor (desertion of skilled unionists was bad).

5. By 1890s the Holy Order of the Knights of Labor had melted away to 100,000 members, and these gradually fused with other protest groups of that decade.
The AF of L to the Fore

1. The elitist American Federation of Labor (1886) was the brainchild of Samuel Gompers

   1. A Jewish cigar maker, he rose spectacularly in the labor ranks and was elected president of the American Federation of Labor every year (from 1886 to 1924)

2. The American Federation of Labor was a federation—it consisted of an association of self-governing national unions, each of which kept its own independence

3. Gompers shunned politics for economic strategies and goals—he demanded a fairer share for labor—promoting what he called a “pure and simple” unionism, he sought better wages, hours, and working conditions (bitter here and now)

2. A major goal of Gompers was the “trade agreement” authorizing the “closed shop”—or all-union labor—his chief weapons were the walkout and the boycott (prolonged strikes)

3. The AF of L established itself on solid by narrow foundations; composed of skilled craftsmen, the federation was still basically nonpolitical (punish foes at the polls)

4. By 1900 it could boast a membership of 500,000; labor disorders continued (only 3%)

5. The public was beginning to concede the right of workers to organize, to bargain collectively, and to strike (Congress made Labor Day a legal holiday in 1894)

Discovery and Settlement of the New World
Pre-Columbian Era

The first Americans came from Asia, beginning as early as thirty thousand years ago, over a land bridge that formed at the Bering Strait during the Ice Age. The new immigrants were hunters and gatherers, and over a period of fifteen thousand years various groups spread over the American continents. By the time of the European “discovery” of the New World, there were perhaps as many as 100 million Native Americans, the vast majority living in Central and South America.

The development of agriculture by Native Americans more than five thousand years ago sparked new cultures and innovations. Hunters who previously roamed the land like nomads established permanent villages. Corn, sun, and water became focal points for many societies and played strong roles in religious ceremonies. In some cultures, control of the corn surplus was directly linked to power and authority.

Some of the first sedentary societies of North America were created by groups known as the Mound Builders, believed to be the ancestors of the Creeks, Choctaws, and Natchez. The mound building societies formed enormous earthworks into various shapes and sizes. Some mounds featured multiple terrace levels on which hundreds of houses were built. The largest known mound had a base that covered nearly fifteen acres and rose to a height of one hundred feet. While circles, squares, and octagons were the most common mound shapes, some patterns resembled creatures such as hawks, panthers, or snakes. Many believe that the different shapes were religious signs or territorial markers for different tribes.

The Mississippian culture flourished after the Mound Builders and expanded their settlements and trading network. They also built massive mounds that served as burial and ceremonial sites. As these peoples became more proficient at farming and fishing, they remained longer in one location and developed
substantial dwellings. Clusters of mound builders settled in the Ohio Valley, along the Mississippi River, and as far west as present-day Oklahoma.

In the Rio Grande valley, the Pueblo people created complex irrigation systems to water their cornfields. The Anasazi, or “Ancient Ones” in the Navajo language, carved into the sandstone cliffs complete cities with baked mud structures that towered four or five stories high. They developed row upon row of terraced gardens that they used for planting crops.

In what is now the northeastern United States, the Iroquois Confederacy—comprised of five Indian nations, the Seneca, the Oneida, the Onondaga, the Cayuga, and the Mohawk—also relied on agriculture to multiply and prosper. Farming allowed the people to accumulate large quantities of food that could be stored for long periods. This helped to decrease the threat of starvation, especially during the winter, and ultimately led to population growth since more food was available and more hands were needed to cultivate and harvest the crops.

Many Native American groups developed sophisticated planting techniques that allowed them to take full advantage of the land and make the most out of the time and effort they put into their agricultural work. One of the more unique procedures, called “three-sister” farming, involved a high-yielding strain of bean that grew on the corn stalks while squash grew at the base of the plant to help retain moisture in the soil. This procedure allowed farmers, who were usually the females of the tribe, to harvest three different crops from the same field. These crops became an important commodity as farmers traded portions of their harvest to hunters for animal furs, bones, and meat.

The Iroquois League of Five Nations was the largest political and military organization east of the Mississippi River. However, even as North American civilizations grew in population, sophistication, and power, they did not compare to the complex societies of the Aztecs and Incas in Central and South America.
These vast empires included paved roadways and canals that linked smaller cities, aqueducts that carried fresh water to urban pools and fountains, and giant pyramids that rivaled in grandeur those found in Egypt.

The Aztecs settled on the site of present-day Mexico City in the early 14th century. Although they might be considered latecomers to the area, their political skills and military strength enabled them to expand beyond their capital city of Tenochtitlan very quickly. While they used their military might to conquer several regions, Aztec leaders also formed alliances with many groups already established in the area. They convinced them to serve the empire rather than risk bloodshed and war. Food, baskets, household goods, precious metals, and even prisoners for human sacrifices were given to the rulers in Tenochtitlan. The empire grew rapidly as more and more subjects paid tribute to the Aztecs.

In South America, where the climate varies from cold mountain peaks to steamy rain forests, the Incas ruled much of the western coast. Perhaps more than 12 million people contributed to the creation of sprawling cities, terraced farmlands, extended roadways, and golden palaces. The Inca empire covered nearly 2,500 miles and included regions of present-day Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, and Argentina. Although, like other native peoples throughout the Americas, they did not have their own written language or the use of the wheel, the Incas were extremely intelligent engineers. They built huge stone structures without mortar and designed suspension bridges that crossed deep mountain valleys.

Their well organized political structure and close-knit hierarchical society enabled the Incas to become the largest civilization in South America by 1500. Like that of the Aztec empire, the Inca empire was essentially a coalition of tribes. However, unlike the strong-handed rule of the Central American culture, the Incas allowed local groups to govern regions independently. Each tribe gave its allegiance to the ruler, the Sapa Inca, whom they believed was the descendent of the sun-god. In return for their cooperation, the people were treated well and accepted into the paternalistic Incan society.
The majority of the Native Americans that inhabited South and North America respected their land and often paid tribute to gods to bring them bountiful harvests and protection. However, little did they know that their way of life would change drastically once European explorers set foot on the American continents.

Christopher Columbus

During the Middle Ages, Europeans knew little, if anything, about the existence of the Americas. Scandinavian voyagers explored present-day Newfoundland around 1000 A.D., and made several attempts at colonization. Without dependable backing from strong nation-states, and in the face of a determined and violent opposition from native inhabitants, however, their fragile villages were ultimately abandoned and forgotten.

In Europe, territorial battles between Christians and Muslims dominated much of the period between the 11th and 14th centuries. By the middle of the 15th century, Europeans had grown accustomed to a variety of exotic Asian goods including silk, drugs, perfume, and spices. However, Muslim forces controlled key passageways to the east and forced European tradesmen to pay huge sums for their ways. European consumers tired of the increasing prices and demanded faster, less expensive routes to Asia. During this era, as city-states and emerging nations fostered a new-found enthusiasm for expansion and exploration, Christopher Columbus was born in the Italian port of Genoa. The son of a wool-comber, Columbus spent his youth learning his father’s trade. By his teenage years, he became a seaman and took part in voyages to England and Ireland with Portuguese mariners.

The invention of the printing press around this time made information sharing much easier. Journals described the experiences of many explorers, including the travels of Marco Polo to Asia almost three hundred years earlier. Europeans were captivated by his descriptions of incredible wealth and golden pagodas.
Columbus, too, became caught up in the excitement and read many books on navigation and geography. He eventually devised a plan to find a westward route to Asia. In 1484, he presented his plan to King John II of Portugal but was denied financial support. He spent years asking the rulers of various countries, including France and England, for assistance before Spain’s Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand finally agreed to help. The monarchs wanted desperately to spread Christianity throughout the world and increase the Spanish presence over that of Portugal. Of course, the opportunity to acquire gold and riches greatly influenced their decision as well.

Once Columbus received the support he had been seeking so long, he surprised many by making a series of demands. Should he succeed on his voyage, he wanted to be knighted, appointed Admiral of the Ocean Sea and viceroy (governor) of any new lands he discovered, and awarded ten percent of any profits generated by his expedition. The Spanish monarchs reluctantly agreed to his stipulations and provided Columbus with three small ships and a crew of about ninety sailors.

On August 3, 1492, the Niña, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria set sail from Palos in southern Spain. The fleet spent almost a month in the Canary Islands to make repairs and gather supplies. With the maintenance chores complete, Columbus continued his voyage west. Much like many sailors of the 15th century, Columbus’s men were superstitious and wary of venturing too far from land. The weather remained fair for most of the journey but crew members often pleaded with their leader to turn around and return home. Columbus refused. Then, on October 12, 1492, as the exhausted sailors grew closer to mutiny, lookout Roderigo de Triana spied land from his perch atop the mast of the Pinta. His cries of “Tierra! Tierra!” echoed across the water to the crews on the other ships.

Columbus led a party ashore, drove a flag into the ground, and called the new land San Salvador (Holy Savior). Although he was standing on an island in the Bahamas, Columbus was so positive that he had found the East Indies that he
named the natives “Indians.” He then ventured on to Cuba, which he thought was China, and mistook Haiti (Hispaniola) for Japan. Thinking that he had retraced Marco Polo’s footsteps, Columbus took what gold and natural resources he could carry aboard his ships back to Spain. The king and queen were impressed with his findings and agreed to fund more excursions to the New World. Although Columbus repeated his journey three more times, he refused to accept the evidence that the people, animals, and plants of the New World were nothing like those found in Europe or Asia. He remained convinced that he had discovered a new westward route to the Indies.

**Cortés Defeats the Aztecs**

Christopher Columbus’s initial voyage to America whetted the appetites of many European countries. Power-hungry leaders sponsored many expeditions to the New World in the hopes that they would get a share of the riches. As travel between Europe and America became more frequent, small settlements and trading posts were established along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, including present-day Florida through Central America. Explorers discovered great amounts of precious metals and natural resources, but it was not enough the quench their growing thirst for more wealth.

In 1519, Hernan Cortés was commissioned by the governor of Cuba to expand the Spanish empire into Mexico. Cortés, an aspiring *conquistador* (conqueror), gathered an army of about six hundred soldiers who shared his dreams of military glory and riches.

During his journey to Mexico, Cortés encountered an Indian slave named Malinche. She was fluent in several languages, including Nahuatl, the language spoken by the Aztecs. Through Malinche’s conversations with many people ruled by the Aztecs, Cortés learned that the capital, Tenochtitlan, was overflowing with gold and silver and other riches. He also discovered that the empire was riddled
with conflict and turmoil, and he formed military alliances with local people who resented the Aztecs for their human sacrifices and forced tribute.

As Cortés approached Tenochtitlan, emperor Montezuma II sent diplomats to meet the Spaniards with gifts. Cortés accepted the small tokens but boldly told the Aztec ruler that he and his men had a disease of the heart that only gold could cure. Though apprehensive, Montezuma welcomed Cortés into the capital because he believed that he was the legendary god Quetzalcoatl, whose return was predicted to signal final days of Tenochtitlan. Cortés and his men held Montezuma as a virtual prisoner, and plundered the vast wealth of the region. Cortés, for example, forced Montezuma to provide Indian laborers to mine more gold. Although Cortés and his small army were greatly outnumbered, they could do most anything they desired because they ruled the empire through Montezuma. They also continued to enjoy the allegiance of non-Aztecs and controlled the more powerful military weapons. Guns, swords, knives, and even horses amazed and frightened the Aztecs.

In 1520, the Aztec people, weary of their servile status and angry at Montezuma for his failure to protect them, attacked the Spaniards and drove them out of the city. Montezuma was killed, probably by his own people, during this uprising. Cortés, however, eventually regrouped and staged a bloody assault on the capital that lasted through much of 1521. The violent battles, combined with a smallpox epidemic that same year, killed many Aztec warriors and caused the once powerful Aztec empire to crumble. The great temples in Tenochtitlan were destroyed and Christian churches were constructed in their places.

The Spanish empire grew rapidly after the fall of the Aztecs. Between 1522 and 1528, Spanish forces overpowered groups in Yucatan and Guatemala. In the 1530s, Francisco Pizarro led a group of Spanish soldiers through Panama and into Peru where they battled the Incas. The conquistador decimated the Incan Empire quickly and with relatively little effort because he and his warriors focused their fighting on the heart of the empire, the ruling family. Once the
people realized that the Inca, to whom they pledged their allegiance, was no longer in control, they retreated and the empire collapsed. The Spaniards successfully carried out their plan to rule much of the New World. However, their greed and shortsightedness regarding the future of the Americas eventually took its toll.

Europe and the Impulse for Exploration

Commerce
Europe experienced radical economic and social changes between the 11th and 14th centuries. The medieval world was based on feudalism, a highly regulated and hierarchical form of society in which everyone had their place and responsibilities. The manorial system, in which lords owned the land worked by their vassals, or serfs, started to wane in the late Middle Ages with the development of nation-states. Medieval cities, dominated by the guilds that brought economic stability, became the centers of commerce.

Many people moved from the country to the city where they found more opportunities to make a living. This demographic shift diluted the power of the feudal lords and forced them to make several compromises. For example, many people who remained in the country negotiated long-term leases for their own plots of land on which they could grow crops to sell or to feed their families. Medieval farmers also increased their crop yields—and their profits—by adapting the horse collar, an improved iron plow, and the three-field system of agriculture. Although many former feudal lords continued to receive a percentage of the harvest, an emerging cash economy undermined feudalism in the countryside and helped support a growing population throughout Europe.

Economic changes further stimulated the growth of commerce. The emergence of capitalism created a largely urban middle class committed to expanding markets. National and international trade interests grew as more people looked to buy products and goods.

Uniform printed documents, including sales receipts and licenses, also advanced the growth of commerce in Europe. Bills of exchange, which served as an early form of credit based on promissory notes, took the place of oral agreements in the purchase of products or services. The widespread use of printed documents increased the importance of reading and writing skills and allowed shoppers to compare the value of goods different tradesmen offered. The printing of mercantile newspapers also promoted literacy. By learning about commercial laws and regulations and the dealings of other merchants, the middle class
became more business savvy in their transactions and added to the economic burst. As the members of the middle class attained more wealth, their influence over government leaders increased. More importantly from the perspective of American history, the emergence of capitalism and the growth of commerce gave impetus to voyages of trade and discovery.

The founding of the colonies in the New World coincided with the rise of mercantilism. Many European rulers during the 16th and 17th centuries embraced the precepts of mercantilism, an economic system that sought to increase national wealth through a strictly regulated economy and a favorable balance of trade. In short, a nation’s strength was directly linked to its ability to be self-sufficient and accumulate capital. Colonies were acquired to supply raw materials to the “mother country” and serve as exclusive markets for domestic manufactured goods.

One of the first countries to embrace mercantilism in America was Spain, whose colonies existed primarily to increase national wealth and power. Commodities such as sugar and tobacco, as well as precious metals and jewels plundered from the Indians, were sent directly to the mother country and Spain’s economy prospered. However, since most of the riches were used to create great displays of wealth for the nation’s elite, and no new trade opportunities were developed, Spain remained a reasonably poor country.

The English also embraced mercantilism as they entered the race for American colonies. Since the Dutch controlled a majority of the merchant vessels used to ship products from the New World, the English Parliament enacted the first of a series of Navigation Acts that permitted only English ships to carry American goods. The Navigation Act of 1660 enumerated specific commodities, including tobacco, sugar, and cotton, that could be shipped only within the English empire.
This protective navigation system employed by Parliament was an immediate success. Merchant shipping increased dramatically at the expense of the Dutch, who ceded their colony of New Netherland to the English. Ironically, the Navigation Acts, which ultimately drove a wedge between the American colonists and the mother country, increased smuggling and hastened the march toward independence.

**Technological Factors**

The explosion of trade opportunities in Europe and the discovery of riches in the New World prompted the development of better navigational tools. For years mariners determined their latitudinal direction by following the east to west advancement of the sun and by tracking the movement of the stars at night. When land was out of sight, navigators could only refer to the speed of the ship and the time it took to reach a particular destination to estimate how far east or west they had traveled. As the voyagers traveled farther distances, they relied on a variety of both new and existing navigational tools to help them reach their destinations safely.

The most popular equipment used by seafaring explorers of the Middle Ages included:

- **Compass** – The compass had been used for centuries to determine direction. Early versions were crude and not always reliable. Mariners typically used the compass only when it was cloudy because they did not get consistent readings.

- **Astrolabe** – The astrolabe was also a common instrument used for many years. It was used to measure the position of the sun, moon, planets, and stars. Navigators measured the angle of a celestial body above the horizon to determine their latitude positioning.
Cross staff – Mariners used the cross staff to measuring the height of objects above the horizon. This information helped them to determine how far north or south of the Equator they were.

The most popular equipment used by seafaring explorers of the Middle Ages included:

- Quadrant – The quadrant was also used to determine positioning north or south of the equator. Gathering accurate readings on a moving ship was difficult so many navigators waited until they reached land before using the quadrant.

- Chip board – The chip board measured the speed of the ship. The small board, tied to the end of several hundred feet of rope with knots at specific intervals, was thrown overboard. Sailors counted the number of knots to determine their speed.

- Hourglass – The hourglass was one of the most commonly used navigational instruments. Depending on its size, the hourglass could be made to measure any amount of time. Sailors used it to track how far they had traveled or how long they had been on duty.

The age of exploration and lengthy sea voyages also triggered innovations in shipbuilding during the Middle Ages. One of the more popular vessels for open sea travel was the caravel. Used by navigators from Spain, Portugal, and England, the caravel was a small but fast merchant ship that typically carried few weapons. An improved version, the caravela redonda, was rigged with both square and lenteen sails that increased its speed and maneuverability. Columbus’s Pinta and Niña were these types of caravels and Magellan had one in his fleet that circumnavigated the world.

Another popular type of ship, the carrack, had sails similar to those of the caravel. However, the carracks were much larger and slower than caravels and typically carried supplies. A poor design on early models caused the ships to tip
over in strong winds. Columbus first sailed to the New World aboard the carrack *Santa Maria*, which ran aground on a reef on Christmas Eve, 1492.

The most heavily armed merchant ship of the period was the Spanish galleon. Filled with enough guns and crew members to offer sufficient protection should it stray from the fleet, the Spanish galleon was often used to carry gold, silver and other riches from the Americas to Spain.

**Rise of Nation-States**

The spread of capitalism and the social and economic chaos that accompanied the decline of feudalism helped transform medieval Europe into unified nation-states, whose people typically shared common histories, cultures, and languages. As the populace became more organized and less dependent upon feudal ties, the growing urban middle class sought civil and financial order and stability.

To assure the safety of their families and livelihoods, citizens paid taxes in exchange for the services of professional armies raised by the new monarchs. In return, the national governments fostered commerce and trade that benefited the growing middle class and mercantile community. Combined with the other changes Europe was experiencing during the latter Middle Ages, strong central governments also contributed to the age of exploration and discovery.

Portugal became Europe’s first nation-state when John I began the rule of the House of Avis around the year 1400. The Portuguese sense of nationalism was bolstered by a homogenous population that shared a common language and culture, as well as a geographic isolation from the rest of Europe. The common language and shared cultural beliefs unified the Portuguese people. Although much of the kingdom’s population was devoted to agriculture, it had a long maritime tradition and vibrant commercial class.
Although not the largest or wealthiest European country, a stable monarchy, an expanded navy, and a steadfast dedication to exploration, helped Portugal create a trading network that encompassed several continents. Prince Henry the Navigator, as King John’s younger son was known, led the way in the exploration of sea routes to Africa and Asia. In large measure because of Portugal’s dominance along the African coast in the late-15th century, other European nations—including Spain—turned to the west for economic expansion.

After the unification of Portugal, the rest of the Iberian Peninsula was politically consolidated following the marriage of cousins, Isabella of Castile, and Ferdinand of Aragon. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, who ruled jointly, invested heavily in exploration and military endeavors and led the Spanish empire to unparalleled wealth and power. In 1492, a truly watershed year in history, they supported Christopher Columbus’s historic voyage to the New World and their military forces conquered Granada, the last Islamic stronghold in western Europe.

Ferdinand and Isabella were so dedicated to enforcing orthodox Roman Catholicism throughout Spain that they established the ruthless Inquisition, which expelled or executed thousands of Jews and Muslims. After Columbus’s discovery, the Spanish monarchs were equally driven to convert Indians to Catholicism. Therefore, the Spanish explorers and conquistadores were motivated by religious and secular impulses in carving out an extensive empire in America.

Elsewhere in medieval Europe, Henry VII established the Tudor dynasty in England in 1485, imposing a unified central government on the new nation-state. His son, Henry VIII, broke with the Catholic church; and following his death, religious conflict between the English Protestants and Catholics raged for decades. When the Protestant Queen Elizabeth I assumed power in 1558, England’s hostility toward Catholic Spain intensified. Elizabeth secretly financed buccaneers who raided Spanish settlements and treasure ships. Both the English privateers and the monarchy grew wealthy from Spanish booty. England’s power
was based on a strong and loyal navy and a diversified economy. The free flow of commerce and trade with other countries provided the stability England needed to found colonies in the New World.

A succession of power struggles dominated and often hindered the political evolution of France as a nation-state. During the Hundred Years War, England controlled much of France. Encouraged by the bravery of Joan of Arc, who claimed to be inspired by holy visions, French soldiers eventually overpowered the English. The end of the painful war, in 1453, sparked a new sense of nationalism. In the years that followed, Louis XI centralized the national government and France became one of the most populous and wealthy countries in Europe. However, it was not until the civil war ended between Protestants and Catholics around the year 1600 that France joined in the exploration of the New World.

Exchanges

Columbus’s famed voyage in 1492 joined two very different worlds. For thousands of years, Europeans and Native Americans lived completely separate lives, unaware of the others’ existence. When Columbus stepped onto the rocky soil of San Salvador, he started a historic chain of events that affected the lives of millions of people on both sides of the Atlantic.

Columbus and later explorers discovered a land unlike anything they had experienced. They encountered neatly patterned park-like settings in the middle of massive forests, caused by Native Americans burning and clearing out large areas of the forest to enhance their hunting efforts. The Spanish explorers saw strange creatures, including turkeys, llamas, iguanas, and rattlesnakes—which they colorfully described as “snakes with castanets.” Although they recognized the dog, they never imagined that anacondas, vampire bats, electric eels, or armadillos existed. The Old World explorers
also enjoyed **new plants and foods, including tobacco, tomatoes, potatoes, corn, squash, beans, peanuts, pineapples, and chocolate.**

In return, Columbus and subsequent European travelers introduced the Americas to many Old World foods and animals. Ships filled with cattle, sheep, pigs, and horses were dispatched to the Caribbean Islands and settlers planted wheat, sugar cane, peaches, bananas, and coffee. These crops thrived in the warm, sunny climate of the Spanish colonies. Other vegetation, including dandelions, clover, and Kentucky bluegrass were also brought to the New World, most likely mixed in with different seeds.

The exchange of plants and animals was generally well received by people of both worlds. The **Indians of western North America, for example, quickly incorporated the horse into their culture**, which enhanced their proficiency as buffalo hunters and warriors. Many of the new crops became staples in the diets of the people of the New World and eventually provided a dependable source of income for the European settlers. In the Old World, **new foods—especially potatoes—helped feed a rapidly growing population.** The European explorers also took advantage of several **Native American creations, including canoes, snowshoes, moccasins, and hammocks. And new words, among them teepee, skunk, moose, tomahawk, and chipmunk** were adopted into European languages.

Naturally, not all of the exchanges between the two worlds were positive. European voyagers brought with them pathogens that caused smallpox, measles, whooping cough, influenza, scarlet fever, and diphtheria. Outbreaks of smallpox and measles, in particular, often wiped out entire villages since Native Americans did not have the antibodies to fight the deadly germs. **Frequently, the diseases killed or incapacitated so many Indians, they could not adequately defend their lands when the European invaders arrived.** It is estimated that half the Aztec population died of smallpox during the Spanish conquest of Mexico.
Ultimately, perhaps close to 90 percent of Native Americans died after becoming infected with Old World diseases. Entire civilizations were eradicated with no descendants to carry on their unique cultures or philosophies. Although the Indians suffered more fatalities, European citizens did not entirely escape the threat of new disease. Many travelers who crossed the Atlantic contacted syphilis from the Native Americans and spread it throughout the European population. The exchange of animals, plants, and diseases thereby transformed both American and European cultures with distinctly mixed results.
Spanish and French Exploration

Spanish Explorers

Columbus’s return from the New World created an abundance of activity throughout Europe. Old World monarchs dispatched explorers and small armies to the newly discovered continent to establish outposts, spread religious beliefs, and seek treasure. The advanced Indian civilizations of South and Central America were prime targets for invasion because of their abundance of gold and silver.

As Spain and Portugal battled for legal rights to the New World, Pope Alexander VI, a Spaniard, mediated a compromise that divided the non-Christian world between the two powers. The Treaty of Tordesillas drew an imaginary line from the arctic pole to the Antarctic pole, 100 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands, which are located west of the African coastline. The decision gave Spain the rights to anything west of the line and the opportunity to explore and settle the known New World. Brazil, however, though part of the New World, was settled by the Portuguese because it was on the eastern side of the treaty line.

Within a decade after Columbus’s landfall, thousands of Spanish conquistadores, explorers, and settlers ventured across the southern portion of the present-day United States, through Mexico, and southward into Peru. The conquistadores were typically professional soldiers and sailors recruited to fight for church and crown. However, many nobles, peasants, and members of the middle class also joined the excursions in search of adventure and wealth.

The lust for gold was a common motivator that sometimes drove the explorers to perform heinous acts against the Native Americans. Military conquest, diseases, slavery, and deceit broke the Indians’ resistance, while Indian allies, superior
weapons, and horses, provided conquistadores the strength and mobility to control vast populations.

The first known European explorer to set foot on what became the United States was Juan Ponce de León. In 1493, the Spanish explorer accompanied Christopher Columbus on his second voyage to America. As a reward for his assistance in suppressing Indian revolts, Ponce de León was named governor of present-day Puerto Rico. After subjugating the Indians on Puerto Rico and amassing a fortune in gold and slaves, he was replaced as governor.

Free to dedicate his attention to exploration, Ponce de León set out to find the fabled island of Bimini. He was driven to discover new lands, gold, slaves, and possibly the legendary Fountain of Youth. Many believed that those who drank from the fountain would be cured of all illnesses and their youthful appearance would be restored. Ponce de León sailed northwest from Puerto Rico until he reached Florida. He followed the coastline south, rounded the peninsula, and explored much of Florida’s west coast.

The king of Spain honored Ponce de León with a knighthood and named him governor of Florida. He was unable to mount a second expedition until 1521, when an attempt was made to colonize Florida. However, the natives no longer passively accepted Spanish domination, and Ponce de León was mortally wounded during an Indian attack. He discovered neither great wealth nor the Fountain of Youth, and failed to establish a permanent settlement in Florida.

In 1540, another Spanish explorer, Francisco Vásquez de Coronado, began a trek through what is now the southwestern United States in search of the fabled treasures of the Seven Cities of Cibola. The expedition consisted of several hundred Spaniards, some African slaves, and about a thousand Indian allies. They discovered the Grand Canyon and the adobe pueblos of the Zuñi in New Mexico, which were later determined to be the source of the Cibola legend. Coronado pushed as far north as the plains of Kansas where vast herds of buffalo roamed,
but he never found gold, silver, or other riches, and returned to Mexico City. Although his journeys familiarized the Spanish with the Pueblo people and the geography of the American southwest, Coronado was considered a failure because he did not bring back the fabled riches of Cibola.

During the same period that Coronado ventured through the Southwest, Hernando de Soto landed in Florida and explored the southeastern portion of the present-day United States. His party included more than six hundred soldiers with armor, about half of them mounted on horseback, and was considered to be the best-equipped expedition yet in the New World. De Soto traveled through Florida, into the Carolinas, and westward toward the Mississippi River where he became the first European to view the “Father of Waters.” Disappointed by the lack of riches in the small Indian villages they encountered, the Spanish typically attacked the natives and burned their villages.

In May 1542, de Soto was stricken with a fever and died near Natchez. About half of the expedition ultimately returned to Mexico, empty-handed and dressed in rags and skins, after a four-year ordeal. In 1542, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo led an expedition to explore the western coast of California. As a young conquistador, he served in the Spanish army and helped Hernan Cortés conquer the Aztecs. Cabrillo’s experience as an explorer prompted the viceroy of New Spain to select him to lead the exploration of the Pacific coastline, as far north as San Francisco bay. Although he died during the journey, Cabrillo established the Spanish claim to California.

The Spanish explorations opened the New World to European settlers. Hundreds of new villages were established throughout the United States, primarily in the south from Florida through Texas and into California. Some Spaniards took control of existing Indian villages as encomenderos. Through the Spanish system called encomienda, favored officers were given land and ownership of one or more Indian villages. As encomenderos, they served as protectors, but also used the natives as laborers.
As Spain’s control of the New World spread across the land, so did the rumors of the conquistador’s cruel behavior toward the Indians. In an effort to protect the natives and change the actions of the Spanish explorers, Bartolomé de las Casas, a Dominican priest, documented the questionable behavior in *A Brief Relation of the Destruction of the Indies*. Although the literature prompted Spanish leaders to make some reforms, it also started the Black Legend of Spanish cruelty that labeled the Spaniards as vicious, inhumane beings who slaughtered thousands of Indians and enslaved the survivors.

Although the Black Legend damaged Spain’s reputation, the Spanish empire in America continued to grow. Spanish culture, laws, religion, and language gradually blended with those of the Indians and African slaves to form new communities and traditions. Spain had most of the New World to itself for about a century before other European nations began serious efforts to establish their own American colonies.

**French Explorers**

Stories of the New World intrigued French rulers. Although they wanted a share of the American gold and silver, they were more interested in finding a westward route to Asia. In 1524, the French king commissioned Italian explorer Giovanni da Verrazano to search for a passageway through the New World. Verrazano spotted the coast of South Carolina and sailed north as far as Nova Scotia, but found no such water route or valuable treasure.

A decade later, French navigator Jacque Cartier led the first European expedition into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. During his second voyage in 1535, Cartier traveled as far as present-day Montreal, wintering at the site of Quebec. The Huron Indians were friendly, but when disease broke out among them, Cartier isolated his men who then developed scurvy. Later attempts in the 1540s by Cartier to establish a colony in North America failed, and France was soon engulfed in a
religious civil war that pitted Catholics against Huguenots—as French Protestants were called.

Faced with severe persecution, French Huguenots moved to the New World and established villages in South Carolina and Florida. In the 1560s, the French settlers built a fort and colony on the St. John’s River in Florida. The presence of the fort threatened Spain’s search for treasure, and the French Protestants were a dual affront to the Catholic nation. On August 28, 1565, the Feast Day of St. Augustine, a Spanish army overpowered the Huguenots and renamed the town St. Augustine.

In 1603, King Henry IV brought an end to the French wars of religion, and in 1608 Samuel de Champlain founded Quebec, France’s first sustained settlement in the New World. The region became known as New France and the city was used as a base from which Champlain and other Frenchmen explored the area. Champlain used the friendships he forged with the Indians to start a profitable fur trading business. The French established a lucrative economic network with the Huron and Algonquin Indians, which soon developed into a military alliance against the English settlers to the south.

To take advantage of the popularity of fur, particularly beaver pelts which were prominently displayed on hats, clothing, and accessories, the French government turned its attention to fur trading in the New World. Trappers covered vast territory, from the Great Lakes and present-day Saskatchewan to trails along the Arkansas and Missouri rivers, and even into Texas. The French trappers shipped so many pelts back to France that they nearly extinguished the beaver population in North America.

French missionaries also played a key role in the New World exploration. Catholic missionaries, primarily Jesuits, ventured through remote areas of America to convert Indians to Christianity. Many tribes were wary of the Europeans and reluctantly allowed the missionaries, whom they called the “black
robes,” into their villages. While some natives befriended the missionaries, many refused to convert to Christianity.

Nevertheless, the first European contact many of the Indians experienced was with Catholic missionaries. The fur traders generally followed, and they frequently cemented their ties with the Indians by marrying into the tribe.

**Mission System**

As the Spanish empire spread over the southern portion of the present-day United States, the mission system was developed to facilitate colonial expansion and to pacify the Indians. Catholic priests and friars ventured into remote areas to build missions where they worked side-by-side with the Indians planting crops, hunting game, and preaching Christianity. The missionaries also taught the Indians about Spanish culture, including language, arts and crafts, and politics.

Each mission typically included a chapel for religious services; housing for the Indians, missionaries, and guests; merchant shops; and storage buildings. Protective walls were constructed around the premises to guard against attacks. Outside the walls, the mission owned thousands of acres of land for farming or pasturing herds of cattle and sheep.

The mission system also included a *presidio*, or fort, to protect those associated with the mission from hostile Indians or European rivals. Soldiers stationed at the presidios recovered runaways, served as a policing force within the community, and taught the resident Indians a variety of military skills.

After five or ten years, the mission land typically was given to the converted Indians and the mission chapel became the parish church. The Indians were given full Spanish citizenship, including the right to pay taxes. The sizeable mission system also helped the Spanish protect their empire. Once the Indians were Christianized and accepted into Spanish culture, they were trained in
European warfare. The network of missions allowed the Spanish to quickly extend their presence in the New World.

As the mission system grew, the Spanish priests sought more control over the Indians and their culture. The missionaries destroyed objects deemed sacred by the Indians and suppressed their ancient spiritual rituals and ceremonial dances. After several decades in the mission system, many Indians resented the treatment they received by the Spanish missionaries and soldiers and revolted.

In 1680, a native leader named Popé organized a massive rebellion that included more than 17,000 Indians from many villages across hundreds of miles. The Indians drove the Spanish out of New Mexico, killing missionaries, burning churches, and destroying relics of Christianity. It took the Spanish military fourteen years to reestablish control over the region. Except for a few sporadic Indian raids, the mission system continued to grow and prosper throughout Florida, Texas and California.
The First English Settlements

The Jamestown Colony

Before the arrival of the English, the Spanish influence in the New World extended from the Chesapeake Bay to the tip of South America. Spanish possessions included the developing cities of Mexico, Peru, and Cuba. Along the northern edge of Spain’s land were small missions and “presidios” or fortresses that stretched from the Atlantic coast, ran along the Gulf of Mexico and extended into the plains of Texas and the Rio Grande River valley. In 1585, Sir Walter Raleigh took on one of the first English settlement attempts. He set up a colony of about 100 men on the east coast of North America, on land he named Virginia after Queen Elizabeth I, who being unmarried, was known as the “Virgin Queen.” These settlers only lasted for a year before returning home. Then, in 1587, Raleigh made a second attempt at settling a colony at Roanoke, Virginia. The supply ships sent to the colony never arrived and in 1590 when help did come, evidence of the existence of the entire colony had disappeared except for the word “Croatan” inscribed on a post.

Soon after England’s first colonization efforts, several changes took place that strengthened their ability to colonize America in the early 1600s: the Protestant Reformation, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and the changes in the English economy.

In the early 1500s, England and Spain had a strong connection based on their dedication to the Roman Catholic Church and the marriage between Henry VIII of England and Catherine of Aragon. Then, in the 1530s when Henry VIII broke from the Roman Catholic Church so he could divorce Catherine, the efforts of English Protestant reformers gained official support and the once close relations between England and Spain broke down.
Henry VIII wanted to annul his marriage of 20 years to Catherine of Aragon because she had only provided him with female heirs. However, Catherine was the aunt to the King of Spain, Charles V, whose support was vital to the Holy Roman Empire, so the pope refused the annulment. In a political move, Henry severed the connection with Rome, declared himself head of the Church of England, named a new archbishop who granted his annulment, and remarried. Ironically, his new wife did not present him with the male heir he wanted, but instead a daughter named Elizabeth who later reigned from 1558 to 1603.

Mary Tudor, the daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, came to the throne after her father’s death and attempted to bring England back into the Catholic fold. Following the unpopular reign of Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth I came to power and embodied both an ambition in world affairs and a strong but pragmatic Protestantism that renewed the tensions between England and Spain. The English, quietly backed by Queen Elizabeth, began to plunder Spanish merchant ships. The most famous “sea dog” was Captain Francis Drake. He captured a Spanish treasure ship and netted profits of about 4,600 percent for his financial backers.

King Philip II of Spain was angered by the English raids on his ships and began to assemble an Armada of ships to invade England. One of his goals was to bring England back into the Catholic fold once and for all. In 1588, the Spanish Armada consisting of some 130 ships and 30,000 men sailed to the English Channel. The Dutch, who were themselves resisting Spanish rule, helped the English disrupt the Armada’s plans. The English fleet fought back with ships that were faster and more maneuverable and crushed the Armada. Then a series of storms scattered the remainder of the Spanish flotilla as it attempted to circle the British Isles, completing the destruction. This historically significant win for England ensured their naval dominance in the North Atlantic and built their confidence and their ambition to secure settlements in the New World.
Although Elizabeth produced no heirs to the throne, the influence of her reign continued in 1603, when James VI of Scotland became James I of Great Britain, uniting Scotland and England under one monarchy. This was an era of great social, economic, and political development for England. William Shakespeare produced plays for London’s Globe Theatre. The Crown’s patronage of scholars resulted in the King James translation of the Bible in 1611. Investors and companies such as the Muscovy Company and the East India Company tapped into the world’s developing trade networks. Where networks were established, the English built ties to local merchants and set up new trade routes and port facilities with the goal of building wealth for England.

Colonial expansion was fueled by a number of factors. England’s population was growing at a rapid rate. Economic recession left many without work, even skilled artisans could earn little more than enough to live. Poor crop yields added to the distress. In addition, the Industrial Revolution had created a growing textile industry, which demanded an ever-increasing supply of wool. Landlords enclosed farmlands for sheep grazing, which left the farmers without anywhere to live. The law of primogeniture (first born) stated that only the eldest son inherited an estate, which left many entrepreneurial younger sons to seek their fortunes elsewhere. Colonial expansion became an outlet for these displaced populations.

The development of joint-stock companies encouraged commercial expansion and provided the financial backing. The joint-stock company allowed several investors to pool their capital and share the risks and profits, becoming the predecessor of the modern corporation. All such activity had to take place with the approval of the monarch, who granted a charter that outlined the basic terms of the venture. When overseas, the charter reinforced the idea that those involved were extensions of England and English customs. The charter later became an important document in American history because it guaranteed the settlers the same rights as the people of England.
In 1606, King James I granted a charter to colonize Virginia, the whole area claimed by England in the New World, to a joint-stock company called the Virginia Company of London. The charter revealed the primary motivation for colonization of both King James and the company: the promise of gold. Secondary motivations included finding a sea passage through the New World to Asia and the Indies, establishing colonies and outposts to demonstrate English power and influence, and spreading Christianity and a European definition of civilization to the native people. The English assumed that the riches and native populations that the Spanish found in Mexico and Peru existed throughout the Americas.

In late 1606, the Virginia Company set sail with about 100 male settlers aboard. On May 24, 1607, their three ships landed near the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay area on the banks of the James River. Here they founded Jamestown, the first permanent English colony in the New World.

The English had been planting similar settlements in Ireland since the 1500s and so used a familiar model in the New World. As settlers, their goal was to transplant their way of life as much as possible. This made the early years of Jamestown difficult for the settlers. The land was hot, humid, and mosquito-infested, and the settlers were mostly aristocrats and artisans who did not know how to farm, fish, or hunt. Instead, they spent much of their time searching for nonexistent gold. Many of those who did not die on the trip to the New World died once they arrived from disease, malnutrition, and starvation.

The local Indians helped the colonists with food during their first hard winters and taught them how to farm and live off the land. The Powhatan leader for numerous Algonquian-speaking Indian tribes in the region took a position of cautious assistance and patient observation of the colonists. The Indians had experienced small parties of Spanish explorers and missionaries in the 1500s
and wondered what these newcomers would bring. Europeans came to call these Indians the Powhatan Indians.

The directors of the Virginia Company of London failed to provide the colony with effective guidance and they continued to struggle. One colonist, John Smith, came to Jamestown after a career as a soldier and provided much-needed leadership to the settlers. Smith was a fantastic soldier in Eastern Europe before he went to Jamestown. He fought many battles and triumphed in a variety of adventures, including freeing himself from his Turkish captors by killing his overseer to escape imprisonment.

The Virginia Company was impressed with Smith’s military experience and thus appointed him a member of the resident council to manage the colony in America. This proved to be a wise decision when Smith implemented a rule that “he that will not work shall not eat.” His rule kept the colonists from starving to death.

Smith bargained with the Indians so that he could explore and map the Chesapeake area. He had no reservations about taking advantage of the Indians in order to benefit the colonists. His leadership and resourcefulness saved the colonists from extinction. In 1607 Smith was kidnapped by the Powhatan Native Americans, and according to legend, rescued from death by appeal of the Indian Chief’s daughter, Pocahontas. This act of mercy enabled Pocahontas, who was only about ten years old, to preserve wavering peace and become a liaison between the Indians and the settlers.

Despite the Indian’s help and Smith’s leadership, the colony was failing. The winter of 1609-1610 was called the “starving time” when most of the settlers died of hunger and pestilence, leaving alive only 60 of the 400 who had come to Virginia by 1609. When spring arrived, the remaining colonists decided to head home to England. As they made their way down the James River they were met by a new Governor, Lord De La Warr, who sent them back to Jamestown.
The hardships continued for the colonists and the cultural clashes with the Indians increased. De La Warr’s troops raided Indian villages and took what they wanted. In 1614, a peace settlement ended the First Anglo-Powhatan War, and like many settlements of the time in Europe, was sealed with a marriage, in this case between a settler named John Rolfe and Pocahontas, who had converted to Christianity. In 1616, Pocahontas and Rolfe went to England to visit James I and John Smith, and during their trip, in 1617, Pocahontas died of disease and was buried in Gravesend, England.

The treaty with the Indians is not what saved the settlers, rather it was John Rolfe’s realization that tobacco could be sold profitably in England. This was a critical turning point for Jamestown. John Rolfe became the economic savior of the Virginia colony by importing tobacco seeds that were much smoother and milder than the local tobacco. As the profits from the cultivation of tobacco increased, the colonists no longer cared about looking for gold. Instead, they wanted to acquire large plots of land so they could grow more of the yellow leaf. By 1616, despite King James’ protests regarding his perception that tobacco could not be anything but a health risk, tobacco had become an export staple for Jamestown and finally put the colony on firm economic ground. However, these profits did not go to the London Company, because by the time tobacco became profitable most of the original colonists had served their seven years with the company. So the profits went to the planters who owned the farms, not the shareholders of the London Company.

The newly-developed tobacco plantation economy became the first commodity to save the south and provide wealth for the colonists, but it also had some negative consequences. It was the only source of fortune, and so the success of the Virginians was tied directly to the fluctuating price of tobacco. It was very hard on the soil and the vast plantation system required a large labor force. In 1619 a Dutch ship stopped in Jamestown and dropped off 20 Africans, establishing the beginning of the North American slave system. However, there were a limited number of slaves in all of the Southern
colonies in the early 1600s, with only 300 blacks in Virginia by 1650. Instead, the planters had to rely on a white labor force of indentured servants.

**By 1619, the London Company’s venture in Virginia had enough people to merit a form of self-government called the House of Burgesses. This allowed the settlers to choose delegates to advise the governor, and from these beginnings sprang a new pattern of representative self-government in America.**

That same year, a ship arrived with 90 women aboard. These women were to be sold to likely husbands of their own choice for the cost of transportation, which was the equivalent of about 125 pounds of tobacco. The arrival of women to the colony sent a powerful message that Jamestown was there to stay.

The land-hungry settlers continued to push inland creating conflict with the Indians. The peace settlement from the First Anglo-Powhatan War had lasted only eight years. In 1622, the Indians attacked and left 347 settlers dead, including John Rolfe. The London Company embarked on a charge to decimate the Indians, spawning the Second Anglo-Powhatan War in 1644. The Indians were once again defeated. The peace treaty of 1646 banished the Chesapeake Indians from Virginia, sparking a chain reaction of westward movement of tribes, each group displacing the existing peoples, who then moved and displaced others.

In 1624, King James had appointed a commission to investigate the London Company and their management of Jamestown. The committee recommended the court dissolve the company, so the King revoked the charter, making Virginia a royal colony directly under his control. As a financial investment the London Company had been a disaster—the shareholders lost everything they invested. Although there were major financial losses, as the King took over, Virginia was firmly established and beginning to prosper in the New World.
The Plymouth Colony

The Anglican Church became England’s official church during Queen Elizabeth’s reign from 1558 to 1603. At this time there was growing tension between Catholics and Protestants dating back to when Queen Elizabeth’s father, King Henry VII, broke from the Catholic Church in the 1530s. English Catholics wanted the Church of England to stress traditional Catholic practices while English Protestants following Calvinist ideals wanted to return to the “pure” Christianity of the New Testament and remove the Catholic additions. The church under Queen Elizabeth tried to balance between the Anglo-Catholic factions and the Protestant groups. The solution was a compromise between the Catholic and the Protestant extremes allowing for some latitude as long as the monarch was accepted as the head of the church.

However, the more radical Protestants felt that the Anglican Church was still too much like the Church of Rome. This group wanted to “purify” Anglicanism, so they were called Puritans. As a guide for what they felt Christianity should be, they embraced the ideas of the sixteenth century French religious leader, John Calvin, who felt God was all-powerful and all-good and that humans were naturally weak and wicked. Calvinism also proposed that from the beginning of time everyone was either predestined for eternal bliss or eternal torment. Calvin advocated a society of the “elect” of God who chose their own leaders and who did not need the elaborate rituals of Catholic and Anglican worship.

The Puritans wanted the Church of England completely de-Catholicized. Puritans believed that only “visible saints,” or those who could demonstrate the grace of God to fellow Puritans, should be church members. Since the Church of England continued to accept all of the royal subjects, the Puritans had to share their churches with the “damned.” Puritans were not satisfied with the slow progress of the Protestant Reformation in England and what they felt was a
corrupt and worldly Church of England. A small group of extreme Puritans called Separatists broke away from the Church of England completely.

In 1603, when King James I succeeded Queen Elizabeth I, the Puritans feared that England might slide farther back to its Catholic roots. At the same time, King James began to feel that if the Puritans did not see him as their spiritual leader, they might defy him as their political leader. So James began pressuring the Puritan Separatists to conform.

Finally, in 1606, the Separatists severed all ties to the Church of England. In an age when church and state were united, dissenting from the practices of the official Church of England was seen as treason. The Separatists went into exile departing for Holland in 1608 so that they did not have to conform to the beliefs set out by the Church of England. As fellow Calvinists, the Dutch tolerated the Separatists—and many others. After living with the Dutch customs and liberal ways for 12 years, the Separatist longed for their English lifestyle. Since they could not go back to England, they decided the next best option was to transplant their customs in the New World.

These “Pilgrims” negotiated with the Virginia Company of London and secured rights to establish a settlement near the mouth of the Hudson River. King James did not promise toleration, but he agreed to leave them alone if they went to Virginia. In 1620, about 100 people boarded the Mayflower for the New World, and less than half of them were Separatists. A storm made the group miss their destination, pushing them north of the Virginia Company where they settled off the coast of New England in Plymouth Bay. Rather than brave the stormy seas and try to make it south to the Virginia Company location, they stayed where they were.

The Pilgrims believed that Plymouth Bay was outside the jurisdiction of the Virginia Company. Although they did not have the monarch’s authority to establish a government, they drew up a formal agreement called the
Mayflower Compact before going ashore. This compact established the first standard in the New World for written laws and was signed by forty-one adult men on the Mayflower.

The Pilgrims who signed the compact met as the General Court in open-discussion town meetings and chose John Carver as their first governor. They also chose his council of assistants and eventually others were admitted as members, or “freemen,” but only if they were church members. In April 1621, John Carver died and William Bradford was elected governor. Bradford served many terms as governor and was largely responsible for the infant colony’s success through great hardships.

Having landed on the Massachusetts shore in the middle of winter, the Pilgrims’ first months spent trying to build the settlement were very difficult. About half of the settlers died during the first winter, but when the Mayflower returned to England in the spring all of the remaining Separatists stayed in Plymouth.

That spring, the Separatists met an Indian named Squanto who spoke English. Squanto introduced the Pilgrims to Massasoit, the leader of the Wampanoag tribe. The two groups formed an alliance to help protect one another from other Indian tribes. Squanto and his fellow Indians showed the Pilgrims where to fish and how to farm. The settlers worked hard and had a bountiful harvest in the fall of 1621. To celebrate their good fortune they prepared the first Thanksgiving feast for themselves and their Indian friends.

While the Pilgrims developed an economy based on fur, fish, and lumber, the colony never grew to be very large. In 1650 there were still fewer than one thousand settlers at Plymouth, and in 1691 it merged with the Massachusetts Bay Colony because the Crown refused to grant the Plymouth Plantation a legal charter.
The New England Colonies

Massachusetts Bay Colony

In the early seventeenth century, the Puritan community was divided into two groups: Separatist Puritans and non-Separatist Puritans. Separatist Puritans saw themselves as different from the corrupt English society around them. Disillusioned with the Anglican Church and by the King’s challenge to their beliefs, they fled to the New World in the beginning of the seventeenth century. They established what they felt were ideal Christian communities at Plymouth, Salem, Dover, and Portsmouth.

By contrast, moderate, non-Separatist Puritans remained in England because they believed that they could still reform the church from the inside. In 1603, moderate Puritans in England hoped the new monarch, James I, would be sympathetic to their views, since he had been raised in Calvinist Scotland. Although this did not prove to be the case, the Puritans still tried to work within the religious system while he was king.

In 1629, James’ son, King Charles I, dismissed Parliament and allowed the anti-Puritan Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, to tighten royal control over the church. He removed ministers with Puritan tendencies and threatened church elders who harbored such ministers. With these increasing pressures from the crown, the non-Separatist Puritans no longer felt they could remain in England within the Anglican fold and decided to migrate to the New World. They remained committed to reforming the Church of England and claimed that they did not want to separate from the church, only from its impurities.

A group of non-Separatist Puritans secured a royal charter from King Charles I to form the Massachusetts Bay Company in 1629. The Massachusetts Bay Company
was primarily intended to be a business venture, but the colony was also used as a refuge for Puritans. In 1630, nearly 1,000 settlers in 11 ships arrived on the rocky Massachusetts coast, becoming the largest group to immigrate to the New World at one time. In the decade that followed, between 16,000 and 20,000 settlers came to the New England region due to turmoil in Britain, a movement that came to be called “The Great Migration.”

The Massachusetts colonists did not face nearly as many hardships as the Jamestown and Plymouth settlers before them did. The colonists had taken careful steps to prepare for their venture, and they also received a constant flow of new settlers, which helped replenish supplies and helped the colony grow. Many of the immigrants were well educated and their skills helped the Bay Company succeed in various industries. **Since the soil in the northeast was not favorable to farming, the Bay Company made the most of the forests and water resources by establishing mills for grain and lumber, developing the fishing industry, using the local timber for shipbuilding, and using the harbors to promote trade. The Bay Colony quickly became the largest and most influential of all of the New England colonies.** The British New England colonies included Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. While there were several large communities within the Bay Colony, the city of Boston became the capital for the group.

A typical Puritan New England town was centered around a “commons,” or a central pasture for all to use. The meeting house, which was the main religious and community building, overlooked the commons. Nearby was a tavern, which was the main social institution for the community. Although drunkenness was frowned upon, drinking itself was acceptable because beer was often safer to drink than water. Thus, early New England towns mandated that taverns be as close to the meeting house as possible so that congregants could take a break from long Sunday services to warm up before returning to worship. There were some residences in town for the artisans, such as the blacksmiths, cobblers, and those connected to shipping. The farmer’s residences extended out from the
commons, with the wealthy and prosperous having more and better land than poorer families.

For several years, the Massachusetts Bay charter was used as a constitution for the Company. Governmental power in the Bay Company rested with the General Court, or the shareholders, who then elected the governor and his assistants. The right to vote and hold office was limited to male church members, called “freemen.” It was not considered democratic in the modern sense, but the system was considered a practical democracy based on the relationship between the Clergymen and the freemen who voted. At least in local affairs, the General Court developed powers and a structure similar to England’s Parliament. It had two houses: the House of Assistants, which was similar to the House of Lords, and the House of Deputies, which was similar to the House of Commons. Meanwhile, each community held town hall meetings made up of qualified male residents that managed local affairs, usually electing a moderator to officiate over meetings.

Before leaving England, the Massachusetts Bay Colony elected their first governor, John Winthrop, who was a well-off English lawyer. Winthrop believed that their venture was divinely inspired and that he had been called by God to lead the new experiment. He served as governor of the Bay Colony for over a decade. During the trip to the New World, Winthrop gave a sermon called “A Model of Christian Charity,” during which he outlined God’s purpose for the Bay Colony. "We shall be a city set on a hill," Winthrop said of Boston, where the church was the center of life. His goal was to build a holy society that would be a model for humankind. He described a harmonious Christian community whose laws and government would logically proceed from a godly and purposeful arrangement. Winthrop clearly set out the purposes of God and warned that their success or failure would depend on their dedication to the ideal of a selfless community. These common convictions did much to shape the Bay Colony community in its early years of existence.
The Puritan Religion

As the Puritans migrated from England to the New World, they had a clear vision of what their churches should be like. Membership was restricted to those who could present evidence that they had experienced “saving grace.” This most often included a compelling description of some extraordinary experience that indicated intimate contact with God. Only those who could submit this proof were considered “visible saints” and allowed full membership in the church. In the early seventeenth century, however, few were denied membership since leaving England was considered sufficient proof of spiritual purity.

Puritans led their lives based on a group of strong beliefs, one of which was predestination. They felt that all events are foreknown and foreordained by God and that God chose who was saved and who was damned. They enjoyed life but they also had a clear picture of the fate of the damned and believed that hellfire was very real.

As was evident by their migration to the New World, Puritans also wished to purge their churches of every remnant of Roman Catholic ritual and practice, retaining only those customs and practices that the New Testament described for the early Christian church. They felt that this was their chance to build a completely new community with new institutions. Accordingly, the Bay Company congregational churches were self-governing bodies, answerable to no higher authority. The central community meeting house was dominated inside by the pulpit. This meeting house, however, was not a church in the modern sense. The Puritans believed that the whole community, when gathered, was the church. Their worship services were simple and dominated by long sermons in which their clergy expounded passages from the Bible. As in the Old Testament, the Puritans believed that if they honored God’s covenant by being faithful servants, God would in turn preserve and enrich their community.
The religious leaders of the time had a great deal of influence on society as a whole. Religious leaders were actively involved while the colony struggled to develop a form of government compatible with Puritan beliefs. **Political and religious authority were often combined and voting was restricted to church members.** This reinforced the Puritan belief that God sent them to cleanse the culture of what they regarded as corrupt, sinful practices. They felt that the government should strictly enforce public morality by prohibiting vices like drunkenness, gambling, and swearing. Even family life and the conduct of the home were subject to public scrutiny. **There was no concept of individual “rights” to things such as privacy or freedom of thought and expression. The individual was expected to conform to the beliefs and practices of the community as defined by the elders.**

Puritans felt that the beliefs and practices of the elect would carry over into their conduct of everyday life. They embraced the “Protestant work ethic,” which meant they were decidedly committed to working hard and to developing the community, in both material and spiritual ways. They enjoyed “worldly” pleasures like eating heartily, drinking, and singing, but they passed laws to make sure these pleasures did not get out of hand.

The Puritan way of life contributed greatly to the forming of American ideals. Some of the basic Puritan tenets that carried forward as society developed were those of self-government, community responsibility, the importance of education, a belief in moral excellence, and a focus on hard work and thrift. Eventually, the Puritan churches grew collectively into the Congregational Church.

**Dissention in the Bay Colony**

In the Puritan world view, everything worked according to a plan set by God, and an orderly society of people worked and lived out that plan. The Massachusetts Bay Colony was a tight-knit group, founded on the ideal of being a harmonious
community of people who agreed to work together and abide by the wishes of the larger community.

Puritan theology gave weight to the idea that if people allowed God’s will to rule and guide the community, peace, harmony and prosperity would follow. If the community did not live up to that ideal, however, God’s wrath would come down and destroy the community. **The Puritan elders, therefore, felt obligated to make sure that people conformed to the ideals of the community. To not conform suggested that a person was an “impostor” who was not predestined to be saved and did not really belong in the community.**

As with any group, there were differences of opinion, but the leaders of the colony made sure that such differences did not stray too far from established ideals. **Harmony and faith, not tolerance, were the guiding principles.** When forced to choose between the harmony of the colony and banishing or executing dissenters, Governor Winthrop and the ministers did not hesitate to act against nonconformists to preserve what they felt were the best interests of the larger community.

One dissenter, Roger Williams, was a highly educated man who held a strong belief in an individual’s freedom of worship. He arrived in Massachusetts in 1631, after a short stay in Plymouth. Even by Plymouth’s standards, Williams was a radical Separatist, who came to be known as the purest of Puritans. He was troubled by the idea that the Puritans had not made a clean break from the corrupt Church of England.

Williams was elected minister of a church in Salem in 1635, where he found a forum for advocating his ideas. **One of his more extreme ideas was that the English should respect the land rights of the Native Americans, and that it was a sin to take possession of any land without first buying it from the Indians. This notion was in direct conflict with the Bay Colony’s charter and the general opinion of many Englishmen.**
Another idea that Williams held was that religious groups should be supported by voluntary tithes, not taxes as demanded by the Bay Colony leaders. When Williams went on to claim that magistrates should have no voice in spiritual matters, he went too far. He wanted a complete separation of church and state, asserting that “forced religion stinks in God’s nostrils.” His views proved to be too extreme for the radical church of Salem, which finally removed him. The Bay Colony General Court found Williams guilty of disseminating dangerous opinions and banished him from the colony.

Fleeing the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1636, Williams headed southwest where he settled at Narragansett Bay and established a Baptist church. He acquired land from the Narragansett Indian Chiefs and named his settlement Providence, in thanks to God.

In 1644, Williams secured a Charter from Parliament to oversee a colony made up of Providence and the other communities of Rhode Island. Williams was ready to practice what he preached, establishing a government based on the consent of the people, tolerating all religions, and rigidly separating church and state.

His endorsement of religious tolerance made Rhode Island most liberal settlement of its time. This colony served as a refuge where all could come to worship as their conscience dictated without interference from the state. Rhode Island provided a tolerant home for Quakers and was also home to the first Jewish community. The Puritan clergy in Massachusetts viewed Rhode Island as the “sink” of New England where the “Lord’s debris” rotted.

Williams was not the only one whose views challenged the authority of the Bay Colony elders. Anne Hutchinson was one of the more famous dissenters from Massachusetts. She was an articulate, strong-willed woman whose views developed out of the Puritan tradition but soon clashed with that same tradition and the authorities who preserved Puritanism.
Hutchinson challenged the Puritan views on salvation. She believed that all one needed to be admitted into Heaven was faith and God’s saving grace and that leading a holy life was not a guarantee of salvation. This simplified view of salvation raised questions about the status of who was “elect,” which raised awkward questions about the role of the community and its leaders. The Bay Colony’s leaders accused Hutchinson of “antinomianism,” or the idea that if you were saved you did not need to obey the laws of God or man. To most Christian groups, Puritan and non-Puritan alike, this idea was a rejection of the very institutions that God put in place and implied the equally uncomfortable idea that people could question civil and religious authority.

Hutchinson began hosting meetings in her home to review the weekly sermons and discuss the Scriptures. These discussions rapidly turned into forums for Hutchinson to assert her own interpretations of religious matters, specifically the idea that there was no direct relationship between moral conduct and salvation. She firmly asserted that good behavior was not a sign of being saved or one of the “elect.” Her meetings generated a good deal of interest and a larger number of colonists came to hear her speak each week.

Hutchinson’s increasing leadership began to worry Governor John Winthrop. He felt she was a threat to the authority of the Puritan leaders. Additionally, a woman leading a religious discussion struck the Puritan leadership as a rejection of what they viewed as the natural order of things. They believed that women should be content to be submissive to their husbands and the community. Hutchinson’s subversive gatherings led Winthrop and the Puritan leaders to take action against her. She was arrested and brought to trial in 1638 for challenging the clergy and asserting her view of the "Covenant of Grace," or the belief that moral conduct and piety should not be the primary qualifications for "visible sanctification."

The General Court quoted the Bible to make their case against Hutchinson, and she responded that she had come by her beliefs through direct revelations from
God. The Puritan ministers felt this was blasphemy and banished her from the Bay Colony. **Hutchinson, her children, and a few followers left Massachusetts for Roger Williams’ more tolerant Rhode Island and settled south of Providence.** After her husband’s death in 1643, she moved to New York where she and all but one of her children were killed by Indians. Governor Winthrop and several other leaders in the Massachusetts Bay community saw this as God’s final judgement of a sinful and unsaved person. They felt the colony had escaped being contaminated by such an evil influence.

An expanding population and increasing levels of Puritan intolerance in Massachusetts led to the founding of several new colonies throughout New England. A group led by **Reverend Thomas Hooker** founded Hartford, along the Connecticut River, in 1635. Hooker helped to draft the **Fundamental Orders of Connecticut**, a type of constitution created for the settlement in 1639. The Fundamental Orders were unique because they did not reference the King or any other government or power outside of Connecticut. They also established democratic control by all citizens and did not limit voting rights to members of the Puritan church. Connecticut was granted a royal charter in 1662.

North of the Massachusetts Bay Colony lay communities that emerged from the fishing and trading activities along the coast and eventually became Maine, New Hampshire, and Nova Scotia. The relationship between these areas and Massachusetts changed periodically during the seventeenth century. By the middle of the century Maine and New Hampshire had been absorbed into the Bay Colony. Then in 1679, the King separated New Hampshire from Massachusetts, making New Hampshire a royal colony.

Initially, the coastal Indians helped the English develop their economy in the new colonies, but as the settlers continued to spread inland it inevitably led to conflict with the natives. In 1637, the Pequot War erupted when a Massachusetts colonist accused a Pequot Indian of murdering a settler, and conflict erupted between the
two groups. The English set fire to a Pequot village and as the Indians fled their huts the Puritans shot and killed them. During the war, hundreds of Pequots were indiscriminately killed, virtually eliminating the tribe.

The remaining Indians forged an alliance in hopes of resisting English encroachment on their land. Metacom, a Wampanoag Indian called King Philip by the English, led the coalition. In 1675 they attacked several English villages throughout New England, and within a year they were threatening Boston. In total, King Philip’s group attacked 52 Puritan towns and destroyed 12 of them completely. After about a year of fighting the Indians’ resistance wore down. Philip’s wife and son were sold into slavery and Philip himself was captured and beheaded. It is estimated that nearly 20,000 people were killed in this bloody war.

Those Indians who remained were drastically reduced in numbers. Many either fled to the west or were forced to settle in villages supervised by the English so they no longer posed a threat to the colonists. However, King Philip’s War did slow the westward movement of English settlers for several decades.

For a brief time in the late 1600s, the English government developed the “Dominion of New England,” which sought to bolster colonial defense in the event of war and bring the colonies under tighter royal control. King James II was becoming apprehensive about the New England colonies’ increasingly independent ways, so the Dominion of New England was also designed to promote closer relations between England and its colonies. The Dominion of New England sought to stop American trade with anyone not ruled by England through Navigation Laws, therefore bringing England’s overseas possessions closer to the motherland. King James II felt that out of all of the colonies, Massachusetts was in particular need of supervision because of its expanding power in the New World.
Sir Edmund Andros, the president of the new Dominion, arrived in Boston with orders to stop the northern colonies from behaving like sovereign powers. He proceeded to abolish popular assemblies, institute new taxes, suppress smuggling, and enforce religious toleration. Then, in the late 1680s England experienced their “Glorious Revolution” and enthroned a new King, William III, which led to the collapse of the Dominion. When news of these events reached Boston, a mob rose up against Andros and shipped him back to England. Although Massachusetts was rid of Andros, they did not gain as much individuality from this change as they hoped. In 1691, the King made Massachusetts a royal colony and instituted a royal governor.

Many British officials' attitudes toward the American colonies were temporarily changed when the Dominion of New England failed and the Navigation Laws were no longer enforceable. Some officials believed England would gain more from encouraging mercantilism with the colonies than from meddling in their governmental affairs. This period of disregard in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries fostered the growth of self-government in America.

The New England colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island were founded as a part utopian experiment and part commercial venture. The Puritans felt it was their opportunity to start over, to build a new society according to Calvinist ideals, and to live freely from dissention and worldly influence. Over time, the prosperous small towns, farms, and seaports brought wealth to the region. The tradition of the village meeting enabled commoners to have an unusual amount of participation in local affairs, in spite of the firm control of Puritan elders.

As the colonies developed, a number of flaws in the plan were exposed. Although the colonies were set up by people looking for religious freedom they ended up punishing those who did not conform to their beliefs. Refugees from New England ended up establishing colonies in the middle Atlantic whose reputation
for relative tolerance stood in sharp contrast to New England's theocracy. The passion of the founders of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay was hard to maintain in younger generations. By the 1700s, younger colonists maintained many of the structures of the seventeenth century society but were disillusioned with the rigidity of the old Puritan orthodoxy and with England's attempt to control a growing assortment of colonies.
The Middle, Chesapeake, and Southern Colonies

New York and New Jersey

The primary motive for establishing the middle, or mid-Atlantic colonies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware was to develop profitable trading centers. The Dutch were some of the first to settle in this area. In the late sixteenth century, with the help of Protestant England, the people of the Netherlands won their independence from Spain. The Netherlands evolved into a major commercial and naval power and challenged its former benefactor, England, on several occasions during the seventeenth century.

With this newfound power, the Dutch became a leading colonial presence, especially in the East Indies. Like the English, the Dutch developed colonies by authorizing joint-stock companies to go forth and establish trading outposts and commerce. The Dutch East India Company established a trading empire that was profitable for over three hundred years. Seeking greater riches and a passageway around America to China, the Dutch East India Company hired Henry Hudson, an English explorer. Hudson sailed along the upper coast of North America, and in 1609 he encountered Delaware Bay and the river named for him, the Hudson River. He filed a claim to all of this land for the Dutch.

The Dutch West India Company was also influential, but operated primarily in the Caribbean, where it was more interested in raiding than trading. By 1624, based on Hudson’s earlier claim to the Hudson Valley, the Dutch West India Company permanently settled New Netherland, in the Hudson River area, as a fur trading port. In 1626, the Dutch bought Manhattan Island from the Indians for
pennies an acre, and they started trading posts at New Amsterdam, later called New York, and upriver at Fort Orange, later called Albany.

The New Netherland colony was highly aristocratic, with large feudal estates along the Hudson River. These grand estates, called patroonships, were granted to stockholders who promised to have fifty adults living on the estate within four years. This approach to colonization met with little luck because volunteers for serfdom were hard to find.

New Netherland experienced difficulties from the outset. The shareholders demanded dividends even at the expense of the colony’s welfare. The New England colonies to the north regarded them as intruders. Although not as strict as the Puritans, the Dutch Company ran the colony in the interests of the stockholders and with little tolerance for free speech, religion, or democratic government. Peter Stuyvesant, the governor sent by the Dutch West India Company, was in absolute control of the colony’s government. However, the inhabitants showed nearly total indifference to his leadership.

The relationship between Holland and England alternated from alliance against nations such as Spain, to conflict as they both sought to become the dominant trading empire. During a time when the two countries were experiencing hostilities, James, the Duke of York and brother to King Charles II, felt that the New Netherland colony could easily be conquered. Precipitating a conflict, King Charles II granted his brother a charter for the region between Maryland and Connecticut, which included New Netherland.

As was the case for the New Netherland area, many of the original thirteen colonies were settled as proprietorships. The crown granted individuals or a group of partners a charter to develop these proprietary colonies. In contrast, Virginia and the New England colonies were essentially corporate ventures, sponsored by joint-stock companies that funded the settlements as investments.
An English fleet soon set sail to seize the Dutch colony, and in 1664, they threatened to take over New Netherland. Governor Stuyvesant could not get anyone to defend the colony and the Dutch surrendered without firing a shot. New Netherland was now an English possession, but the Dutch continued to exercise an important social and economic influence on the land and language, contributing such words as cookie, crib, and Santa Claus. Their merchants also gave Manhattan much of its original bustling, commercial atmosphere having developed such places as Wall Street and Broadway.

New Amsterdam was renamed New York in honor of the Duke of York. The English now ruled a stretch of land that ran from Maine to the Carolinas. Out of all of the English colonies, the settlers in the middle colonies came from the most varied backgrounds. By 1664, the city of New York best illustrated these varied backgrounds with inhabitants that included Scots, French, Dutch, Swedes, Germans, Norwegians, Irish, Poles, Portuguese, and Italians who were the forerunners of millions to come.

Soon after the Duke of York conquered New Netherland, he granted the land between the Hudson and the Delaware Rivers to two of his friends, Sir George Carteret and Lord John Berkeley. The new territory was named New Jersey in honor of Carteret’s native island of Jersey. To attract settlers the two men offered land on easy terms and established freedom of religion and a relatively democratic government. The new colony grew rapidly. Several of the migrants were New England colonists who were leaving the already overworked soil of their own colonies.

The two proprietors split New Jersey with a diagonal line into East and West New Jersey—Carteret taking the east side. In 1674, Berkeley sold West New Jersey to a group of Quakers who were trying to escape persecution. The Quakers, a group formally known as the Religious Society of Friends, were a religious movement founded by George Fox. Dismayed by the struggles among Calvinists, Anglicans, and Catholics in England, Fox preached that spirituality was
rooted in an individual’s personal relationship with God. This religious view left little room for clergy, liturgy, or hierarchy, and rejected doctrines such as predestination. Fox’s followers were called “Quakers,” which was originally meant as an insult, because they “trembled at the name of the Lord.”

Quakers were deeply devoted to their beliefs. They opposed warfare and resorted to passive resistance whenever confronted. English authorities felt the Quakers were especially insulting dissenters because they believed that they could communicate directly with God. They also refused to pay taxes to support the Church of England, were unwilling to bow before any person of higher authority, and refused to surrender their right to worship as they pleased. These practices appeared treasonous and heretical to most English officials.

**Quakers in England were being persecuted, killed, and imprisoned for their beliefs.** As with the Puritans, however, the English government was willing to put up with colonies of Quakers in the Americas so long as they expanded the English presence on the Atlantic Coast. The Quakers eventually acquired East New Jersey in 1680 when Carteret died. The acquisition of New Jersey gave the Quakers a place where they could practice their religion in peace. Then in 1702, the crown reclaimed and combined East and West New Jersey into a single royal colony.

**Pennsylvania and Delaware**

The Quaker effort to colonize in the Americas continued west of New Jersey in a fertile area called Pennsylvania. This land belonged to William Penn, an athletic young gentleman who was the son of the wealthy English admiral. While a student at Oxford, Penn was attracted to the Quaker faith. **He supported the belief that religion should involve a personal relationship with God and that there was no need for an established church.** He also
rejected the ideas of rank and hierarchy, along with the trappings of those things such as fancy dress for the wealthy or tipping the hat in deference to superiors.

When his father died, Penn inherited a large estate, including a claim for £16,000 his father had loaned the King. In 1681, King Charles II settled the claim with Penn by granting him proprietary rights to a region north of Maryland and west of the Delaware River. The King named the land Pennsylvania, meaning Penn’s Woods, in honor of Penn’s father. Penn was eager to establish a refuge for fellow Quakers in Pennsylvania.

When he assumed control of the area there were already several thousand Dutch, Swedish, and English “squatters” on the land, making it easier to populate the area. However, Penn energetically marketed the new colony so he could attract a heavy flow of immigrants. He published glowing descriptions of the colony in various languages and encouraged forward-looking individuals to come with him. Penn promised substantial land holdings and by the end of 1681 he had encouraged about 1,000 immigrants to settle in Pennsylvania, and in October he arrived himself with 100 more. Pennsylvania grew rapidly because it was the best advertised of all the colonies and no restrictions were placed on immigration to the colony.

The relationship between the Quakers and the Indians was amiable because of the Quakers’ friendliness and Penn’s policy of purchasing land from the Indians. Penn tried to protect the Indians in their dealings with settlers and traders. The relationship was so peaceful that the Quakers often used the Indians as babysitters. Penn even went so far as to learn the language of the Delaware Indians, and for nearly fifty years the two groups lived in relative harmony. However, Penn’s acceptance of all people was a double-edged sword for the Indians, because as many non-Quaker settlers came to the colony they undermined Penn’s benevolent policy.
Philadelphia, meaning the City of Brotherly Love, grew up at the junction of the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers. It was a carefully planned city, organized on a strict grid pattern with wide tree-shaded streets, substantial brick and stone houses, and busy docks. Soon after the settlement of Philadelphia, the first migration of Germans to North America took place, creating the city of Germantown. These were the Pennsylvania “Dutch,” from the word “Deutsch,” which means “German” in the German language.

**Penn’s new colony was decidedly liberal and included a representative assembly elected by the freemen, or all of the landowners of the colony.** Penn guaranteed freedom of worship to all residents and there was no tax-supported church in Pennsylvania. Penn hoped to show that a government could run in harmony with Quaker principles and still maintain peace and order and that freedom of religion could thrive without an established church. Because of the Quaker’s pacifist beliefs, Penn’s government made no provisions for military defense.

A few key factors contributed to Pennsylvania’s prosperous beginnings. Penn’s combination of good salesmanship, firmness, and tolerance helped the colony succeed. The Quakers’ business skills and the rich soil enabled the colony to export grain and other foodstuffs after just a sort time. Cottage industries such as weaving, shoemaking, and cabinetmaking also helped the colony thrive. Within just a few years the colony had over 2,500 people. By 1700, only the well established colonies of Virginia and Massachusetts were larger.

In 1682, the Duke of York granted Penn the colony of Delaware, which was the area between Maryland and the Delaware River. The colony was named after Lord De La Warr, a harsh military governor who came to Virginia in 1610. Delaware was closely associated with Pennsylvania for many years, and in 1703 it was granted its own assembly. From then until the American Revolution it had its own assembly but remained under the governor of Pennsylvania.
The English middle colonies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware shared several common features. The middle colonies tended to be urban and were linked by trade and commerce early on. Unlike Puritan New England or the Anglican South, there was no dominant religious group, resulting in relative tolerance among groups from Quakers to Lutherans, to Dutch Reformed and Catholics. The area became a refuge for a variety of dissenters and religious misfits. The English authorities were willing to tolerate the religious dissention in return for the development of profitable trading centers. The cities along the coast of the middle colonies were maritime centers with ships that brought supplies from Europe and returned to Europe filled with grains, furs, and lumber for shipbuilding.

Culturally, the settlers in the middle colonies thought of themselves as Europeans and tried as much as possible to replicate the lifestyles, social relations, and cultural traditions of their homeland. Like many first-generation migrants, they saw themselves as “expatriates” who happened to live outside of their mother country, rather than immigrants who were intent on making something different.

Colonists experienced many benefits living in the middle colonies. A great deal of social and economic democracy prevailed, desirable land was easily acquired, and there was a large degree of religious and ethnic tolerance in the middle colonies.

Maryland, Carolina, and Georgia

The British colonies in the American south were divided into two regions: the Chesapeake colonies, which included Maryland and Virginia, and the Southern colonies, which included Georgia and the Carolinas.

One of the first proprietary colonies, or colonies owned by an individual instead of a joint-stock company, was the Chesapeake colony of Maryland, granted by
Charles I to Sir George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore. Upon his death, the land was left to his son Cecilius Calvert, the second Lord Baltimore, who actually founded the colony. **Lord Baltimore’s purpose for founding Maryland was similar to the religious motives that drove the Puritans and Quakers to settle in the New World. He sought the colony as a refuge for English Catholics who were subjected to discrimination in England.**

In 1634, Baltimore planted the first settlement at St. Mary’s, just north of the Potomac on Chesapeake Bay. The charter empowered Baltimore with almost regal authority. He was able to grant huge feudal manors, hold people in serfdom, make laws, and develop his own courts.

In the beginning, the estate owners were primarily Catholic gentlemen, with Protestants working as the servants. Baltimore soon discovered that to draw more settlers he also had to offer small farms and give the colonists a say in the government. In 1635, the first legislative assembly met, and in 1650 it divided into two houses with the governor and his council sitting separately from the lower house.

In contrast to the northern and middle colonies, the southern and Chesapeake colonies, including Maryland, were predominantly rural settlements. Maryland quickly prospered because, like its neighbor, Virginia, its economy was based on tobacco.

Lord Baltimore would have preferred an exclusively Catholic colony. However, from the outset there was a mixture of Catholic and Protestant settlers in Maryland. As the colony grew the Protestant settlers began to outnumber the Catholic colonists, and the Protestant majority threatened to restrict the rights of Catholics. In 1649, Lord Baltimore agreed to the Act of Toleration, which guaranteed freedom of religion to anyone “professing to believe in Jesus Christ.” This act helped to ensure Catholic safety in Maryland. When the colonial era
ended, Maryland sheltered more Roman Catholics than any other English-speaking colony.

In 1642, the English Civil War between the Calvinists and Anglican royalists broke out when the English Parliament, led by a Puritan named Oliver Cromwell, rebelled against King Charles I. They ultimately executed Charles, and Cromwell assumed control of the government until his death in 1660. After years of civil war, royalists restored the monarchy and Charles II became King. These events had major consequences for the colonies. Colonization had been interrupted during this unrest and during the reign of Charles II, called the Restoration period, the government sought to bring the colonies under tighter royal control.

Unlike the investors in the joint-stock companies who established Virginia and New England, Charles II preferred using individual “proprietors,” such as the Duke of York and Lord Calvert to establish and run colonies. These settlements eventually became Royal Colonies functioning under official governors appointed by the crown. For example, Charles II granted Carolina to eight of his allies who became Lord Proprietors of the region. The proprietors set out from London with about 100 English settlers. On their way to Carolina they stopped at the English colonies of Bermuda and Barbados to pick up more experienced settlers.

British settlements in the Caribbean, called the "West Indies," included island colonies such as Barbados, Antigua, and Jamaica that dated back to the early 1600s. The settlers’ background caused the Carolinas to develop strong economic and cultural ties to the Caribbean until the time of the American Revolution. By the 1640s, 20,000 people lived on plantations in the British Caribbean colonies, where they initially produced tobacco and later raised sugar cane.

The first settlers arrived in Carolina in 1670 with hopes of growing sugarcane and exporting non-English products like wine, silk, and olive oil. None of these plans were successful, and it was two decades before the
settlers found a staple crop. Rice emerged as the principle export crop for the colony in the 1690s. Carolinian colonists began paying a premium price for West African slaves who had experience in rice cultivation. By 1710, the Africans made up a large majority of the population in Carolina.

**Dense forests also brought revenue with the lumber, tar, and resin from the pine trees providing some of the best shipbuilding materials in the world. North and South Carolina also produced and exported indigo, a blue dye obtained from native plants, which was used in coloring fabric.**

Charles Town, now Charleston, was founded in 1680 and became the leading port and trading center of the south. The city had a diverse cosmopolitan feel with various cultures settling there including French Protestant refugees, called Huguenots, and sons of English aristocrats.

The northern region of Carolina was neglected from the outset because the English Aristocrat proprietors tolerated the region as a refuge for the outcasts of Virginia. The Virginians created a remote center called the Albemarle district just south of the Virginia border. In contrast to the sophistication of Charleston, with its English propriety and ties to Caribbean plantations, North Carolina developed distinctive traits such as a strong resistance to authority, being hospitable to pirates, and impious behavior. Due to friction between the governors, North and South Carolina were officially separated into two colonies in 1712. Subsequently, each settlement became a royal colony.

Just south of the Carolinas, Georgia was founded in 1733 by a group of London philanthropists. This was 126 years after the first colony, Virginia, was founded and 52 years after the twelfth colony, Pennsylvania, was founded.

**Georgia was set up for two primary reasons: as a military buffer against the Spaniards in Florida and as a social experiment. A group of London philanthropists were concerned with the plight of honest persons who**
were imprisoned for debt. Their leader, James Oglethorpe, became interested in prison reform after a friend died in debtors’ jail.

Oglethorpe had a military background and was able to successfully repel Spanish attacks. As a buffer against Florida, the colony was considered a success. However, as a philanthropic endeavor, the colony was not as successful. The founders’ goal was to populate the colony with upstanding, industrious farmers. To perpetuate this goal, land grants were limited to small plots, rum and other spirits were banned, and slavery was prohibited. However, the settlers quickly found ways to circumvent these restrictions, and Georgia developed an economy much like South Carolina’s. In 1752, the philanthropists, disillusioned, abandoned their responsibilities and the settlement became a royal colony. Georgia continued to grow very slowly and at the end of the colonial era was the least populous of the colonies.

The British southern colonies of Georgia and the Carolinas, and the Chesapeake colonies of Maryland and Virginia, shared several distinct features that also tied them to the developing British colonies of the Caribbean. The plantation lifestyle they created, in which wealthy planters owned large amounts of land with slaves or servants as labor, helped the colonies survive in the New World. The colonists developed large estates and exported agricultural products, primarily tobacco and rice. Slaves could be found throughout all of the southern colonies during this time. In contrast to the small towns of New England and the cities of the middle-Atlantic, the character of the South was rural from the outset. Outside of Charleston and a few cities on the coast, there were few urban settlements. Official business, worship, and trade often took place at isolated courthouses or churches located at the intersection of roads.

The plantation economy was the south’s greatest asset and greatest weakness. Disparities of wealth and intolerance occurred in all of the southern colonies. In the south, the plantation system created a society divided by class and race. The decentralized rural pattern allowed individual landowners to have
great autonomy and influence but also hampered the region’s ability to come together in times of crisis. The agricultural crops brought great wealth but at the expense of being dependent on international markets and reliant on the import of manufactured goods. Additionally, the settlers’ over planting of tobacco resulted in a need for more land. As the colonies expanded, the settlers had to confront Native Americans, the settlements of other nations, and each other.
Colonial Life

Origins of Slavery

The origins of slavery can be traced back much further than the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century plantations in the southern United States. By the time the English had begun to settle permanent colonies in North America, the Spanish and Portuguese had developed a model of slavery to provide labor for commercial agriculture. This model was critical for the development of slavery in Anglo-America.

The development of the slave trade began with the Portuguese exploration of West Africa, primarily from Senegal to Angola, in the fifteenth century. With funding from Prince Henry, a patron of sciences who devoted his life to sponsoring innovation, the Portuguese sent expeditions to West Africa in hopes of finding gold and, later, an eastern water passage to facilitate trade with Asia. In 1441, captains Antão Gonçalves and Nuno Tristão led a voyage to Cabo Branco (on the Atlantic “bulge” of Africa), returning with gold, ostrich eggs, and twenty slaves, beginning a four-century traffic in Africans across the Atlantic world.

Slavery had existed in Africa prior to the arrival of Europeans, although it did not take the form it would assume in the Western Hemisphere. There, it would become integrally connected to commercial agriculture and result in defining the slave as chattel, or personal property. In the African system, slavery was not generational; a child did not become a slave to his mother’s owner. Furthermore, under the African system, slaves were not defined as property and they could rise to positions of influence. Under this system, slavery was not racially prescribed.

To facilitate and increase their African trade, the Portuguese built several fortified outposts along the African coast. One of these posts was Elmina, “the
mine," founded in 1482, which became the first exchange point for slaves on the West African mainland. Coastal tribes captured slaves from the African interior and shipped them to these coastal outposts. These journeys were difficult, and it is estimated that 40% of the captured slaves perished before reaching the coast.

Under Portuguese, and later Dutch, control Elmina served as a major trading post for shipping slaves to the Americas. Africans brought people captured in raids and wars to Elmina and other such posts, exchanging them for European goods such as mirrors, knives, cloth, beads, iron, guns, and gunpowder. By the early 1500s, the slave trade was well established. It would grow exponentially, with an estimated 50 million Africans either becoming slaves or dying en route to slave outposts during the 17th and 18th centuries. Of this 50 million, 10-15 million were sent to the New World, primarily South America and the West Indies. However, 400,000 of those slaves landed in North America, primarily at auction blocks in Newport, Rhode Island, and Charleston, South Carolina.

When the Spanish and Portuguese established their own colonies in the Western Hemisphere, they tried to recreate the system of bound labor that had emerged on their Atlantic islands. The most obvious source of such labor was the indigenous peoples. But using native labor was problematic, especially as Indian populations decreased in size in the face of European-borne diseases like smallpox, diphtheria, and tuberculosis, for which the natives had little immunity. In some areas, including various Caribbean islands, the native population vanished entirely.

As a result, planters searching for labor had to find alternatives, which they found in the African slave trade. When the English began to colonize America, they had no experience with slavery. However, as they discovered a marketable crop and realized there was relative unavailability of European-born servants, they turned to slavery. Such a process occurred on the English colony of Barbados, where planters struggled to find a viable export. They eventually
found it in sugar cane introduced by Dutch merchants eager to add the crop to their cargos.

The rise of sugar cane cultivation initiated major changes on the island: planters cut down the jungles and turned virtually every inch of land into sugar cultivation. The most successful formed an elite that amassed increasing amounts of land, labor, and wealth. As demand for labor increased, such men first turned to indentured servants—men and some women who were willing to bind their labor for typically four to seven years in return for their passage.

These indentured servants contracted with a merchant or shipmaster for passage to the New World. The merchant or shipmaster then sold the indenture to a buyer in America or the West Indies. During their servitude, individuals received food, shelter, and clothing. Upon completing their terms of service, they were issued "freedom dues," which could include seeds for planting, new clothes, or even land, although this was rare. Newly released indentured servants were free to make their own living in the New World.

Planters were willing enough to use servants, but the sheer brutality of sugar cultivation and the urge to squeeze as much labor out of a servant’s relatively short term of indenture eventually soured the English on indenturing themselves to Barbadian landowners. Moreover, freed servants found it virtually impossible to buy land, since the island’s small surface had been taken over by the large sugar planters. As the supply of servants dwindled, planters looked to slaves. Dutch traders—and later English ones—were happy to oblige. In turn, Barbados and other English West Indies colonies would eventually provide the first regular source of slaves for American mainland planters.

However, horrific conditions on slave voyages limited the number of slaves that arrived on the mainland. These “middle voyage” treks each carried hundreds of African slaves chained by their neck and extremities on the cargo deck. In most cases, the slaves were so crowded in that they had to lay on their back for the
entire trip. Some captains allowed the slaves to be washed regularly, but harsher ones kept the slaves captive, laying in their own excrement, for the three-to-six month voyage. These conditions were a breeding ground for disease, and between one and two million slaves died en route to America.

Slavery took a far longer time to develop in England’s first permanent colony, Virginia, than it had in the West Indies. John Smith had hoped to integrate natives into the Jamestown settlement, but his strong-arm tactics caused the natives to regard the infant colony with attitudes ranging from wariness to hostility. Unwilling to enter into any kind of long-term cooperative relationship with the English, the natives certainly did not allow themselves to become English chattel.

Furthermore, these natives of the Eastern Woodlands would prove poor subjects for slavery: their numbers declined in the face of disease; their values of individual autonomy and their agricultural methods did not translate easily into the kinds of collectivized agriculture slavery fostered; they knew the area and could easily escape into the forests; and their extended family networks led to trouble for anyone who might enslave a clan member.

However, by the early 1620s, the tobacco boon made it apparent that a reliable labor source for the back-breaking cultivation was absolutely necessary. Since Indians were unsuitable, and Virginia’s high mortality rates and a skewed sex ratio (males outnumbered females by almost 3:1) meant that finding a major source of labor in one’s children was out of the question, the planters turned to indentured servants from England.

In the earlier part of the seventeenth century, nearly half of England’s population lived at subsistence level, and the island was overpopulated. Some of the nation’s poor were willing to chance life in America, since their prospects at home were so bleak. Virginia’s planters, in turn, were only too happy to buy servants to cultivate their tobacco fields. Indentured servants provided the major source of the colony’s bound labor during the seventeenth century.
Yet servants were not a completely ideal labor source. For one thing, since servants provided labor for only a fixed period, their turnover rate was high. More importantly, their availability became more problematic as the century wore on. After about 1660, England’s population began to level off, and its economy, in the throes of the industrial revolution, proved better able to supply jobs. There was thus less reason for poor, single men and women to hazard their fortunes in America. In addition, the settlement of other American colonies meant that Virginia had to compete in an expanding labor market. Virginians began to have to pay more for the servants they employed. The number of freed servants was proving to be a political and social problem.

People indentured themselves with the hopes of gaining their own land, but by 1676, the opportunities for freed servants to obtain their own title had greatly diminished as wealthier colonists bought up vast amounts of undeveloped land for speculative purposes. In that year, the freedmen’s frustrations boiled over when a series of Indian attacks ravaged Virginia’s western counties.

Nathaniel Bacon, a member of Governor Sir William Berkeley’s council but also a planter whose foreman had been killed in a raid, demanded that the governor commission him to lead a volunteer army against the Indians. Berkeley refused, declared Bacon an outlaw, and started to recruit an army against him. As a result, a civil war broke out. In the end, Berkeley suppressed the rebellion but not before the colony had been thrown into turmoil and a hoard of complaints about how Virginia’s leaders ruled the colony had been given to a royal investigative commission. Bacon’s Rebellion reinforced how dangerous a mass of freed indentured servants might prove.

Meanwhile, a second form of bound labor was slowly taking shape. Since the first few African slaves arrived in Jamestown in 1619, a handful of black servants labored alongside whites. Indeed, small communities of free blacks—some of whom themselves held black slaves—appeared on the Eastern Shore in the mid-seventeenth century, living on seeming equal terms with their white neighbors.
English law did not recognize the status of slave, and for decades Virginia’s planters struggled to define the legal status of people who were something other than indentured servants.

Some important court cases in the 1660s pointed toward the future; the results of these cases influenced laws known as the “slave codes” that were designed to control the population of slaves. One of them declared that a slave could not sue for his or her freedom just because he was a Christian (longtime convention had held that Christians could not enslave other Christians). Another decreed that the status of a child followed the status of the mother, since children of mixed lineage usually had a free white father and an enslaved black mother. Furthermore, these slaves and their children were pronounced to be slaves for life. Another important slave code made it illegal to teach slaves to read. With these slave codes, legal racial bias became part of the law in the American colonies.

The colonists were creating a category of people deemed subordinate to others on account not only of their race, but also because they were viewed as heathen and physically brutish by English canons of beauty and culture. Those same characteristics also argued against incorporating a mass of such people into Chesapeake society. The English preferred laborers of their own sort, and during the 1680s Virginia’s slaves constituted only some seven percent of the colony’s population.

Importation of slaves did not reach its height until the eighteenth century, between 1690 and 1720. During most of this period a softness in the international tobacco market forced numbers of planters out of tobacco and into wheat cultivation. Meanwhile, those who managed to prosper gained a comparative advantage by buying slaves, whose labor could be exploited for their entire lifetime. In addition, the average life expectancy was increasing, which meant that the number of workable years a slave could offer was also increasing, thereby reducing the overall cost of slavery.
The West Indies could no longer supply the number of slaves Virginians wanted, but slaves imported straight from Africa were expensive and hard to come by. In 1698, however, Parliament dispensed with the Royal African Company’s monopoly and opened the slave trade to any English merchant. Slave imports soared. By 1720, 20 percent of Virginia’s population consisted of black slaves, and by mid-century, that figure had climbed to over 50 percent. Likewise, in South Carolina, black slaves outnumbered whites 2 to 1. From this southern majority, a miniscule number of former black slaves became landowners and even owned slaves themselves.

Slavery provided planters with a long-term labor supply. Small planters, themselves tobacco farmers and, in many cases, slave owners, had the same interests in maintaining their labor force as the large planters. The “Old Dominion” had transformed from a society with slaves to a slave society.

Diversity

As the colonies along the Atlantic coast took shape in the mid-eighteenth century, they became grouped by region: New England, middle, Chesapeake, and southern colonies. Among these regions there were some general similarities, including temperate climates and more than adequate average rainfall, which are critical factors for maximizing agricultural production.

Surplus crops provided the most important exports in all regions except in New England, although what colonists grew depended on a variety of factors such as climate, topography, and soil types. All of the regions depended heavily on Britain for manufactured goods. Most colonies enjoyed easy access to the Atlantic Ocean both along their coasts and via river systems navigable for miles inland. However, provinces like North Carolina, whose Outer Banks blocked the passage of larger ocean-going vessels, and New Jersey, which had no major river system, became dependent on their neighbors for transporting their products. Despite these similarities, the colonies displayed regional differences.
The area known as New England was comprised of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. This region was highly English, with scatterings of Scotch-Irish population. With its proximity to the ocean, this area’s major commodity was fish. Other major exports included whale products and timber. Major imports included sugar from the West Indies, wheat from the Chesapeake region, and manufactured items from Britain.

The middle, or mid-Atlantic, colonies included New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. This region was known for being the most ethnically diverse during the colonial period. Large concentrations of Dutch, Scots, and Scotch-Irish settled in New York, along with some Germans and a few Huguenots, or French Protestants. New York also had the largest concentration of Africans in the middle colonies. New Jersey had a similar ethnic makeup, with a handful of Swedes in the Delaware River Valley. Delaware was heavily English, while Pennsylvania was predominantly German and Scotch-Irish.

The middle colonies had a greater population of slaves than New England. These slaves were necessary for the wheat harvests of New York. As a result of their bountiful harvests, New York’s major exports were wheat and wheat products. Like New England, the middle region relied upon Britain for manufactured goods and upon the West Indies for sugar imports.

The Chesapeake region of Maryland and Virginia, also known as the Upper South, was the wealthiest of the eastern regions. A heavily English region, this area was also populous with Germans and Scotch-Irish. The Chesapeake also had a great deal of racial diversity, with a population of 60 percent white, 40 percent black. Not surprisingly, then, slaves were common on both large and small farms. Tobacco served as the major crop of this region, although wheat also became a popular crop. The Chesapeake exported both tobacco and wheat, along with some food to the West Indies, and imported manufactured goods from Britain and slaves from the West Indies and Africa.
The final region along the eastern coast was the southern colonies, or Lower South, which included North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. This region was the most racially diverse, with South Carolina being the only colony with a black majority. In addition to the multitude of Africans, this region was populated mainly by the English, with Scots, Scotch-Irish, Germans, and Huegenots figuring into the mix.

Like the Chesapeake, the Africans were necessary in the Lower South as a labor source for the plantations, and were commonly seen on smaller family farms as well. In addition to tobacco, major exports included rice and indigo. Cultivation practices for rice and indigo were extremely brutal and labor-intensive, and many slaves died from the brutal conditions. As a result, slaves from the West Indies and Africa were a major import to the area to replenish the supply and sustain productivity. Other major imports included manufactured goods from Britain and sugar and rum from the West Indies.

**Family and Social Life**

Family and social life for all Anglo-American colonists was colored by certain common conditions: a pre-industrial economy that put a premium on owning land, primitive knowledge of medicine by modern standards, and a social hierarchy shaped by the notion that God had ordained some to be rich and others poor. While these characteristics shaped life throughout the colonies, there were regional differences, especially between the two most ethnically English regions, the Chesapeake and New England.

The Chesapeake colonies were typically considered to have a more challenging environment, both physically and emotionally. Mortality rates in the Chesapeake were high, and most children had lost one or both parents before adolescence.

In the Chesapeake region, all white men and women were expected to marry. Women were expected to give birth, rear children, and manage the household.
Respectively, it was the husband’s responsibility to participate in public life, including taking leadership roles in the church and government.

Many seventeenth-century men in the Chesapeake region found the expectation of marriage and family difficult to meet. Males outnumbered females, although this ratio became more balanced by the eighteenth century. Those who did marry entered into a permanent union; divorce was unimaginable and separations were rare. Chesapeake’s gentry, or upper-class men, married at an average age of 27, women at 22. Parents chose their children’s spouses, usually putting an emphasis on power and property. This emphasis eased somewhat during the latter part of the eighteenth century, and marriage for love became more common, particularly among the non-elite.

Throughout the colonies, wives suffered a “civil death,” the extinguishing of their property rights in marriage. Virtually alone among the eighteenth-century colonies, Virginia and Maryland continued the practice of granting a woman whose husband died without a will one-third of his personal property and life interest in one-third of his estate, but many husbands actually willed their wives far less.

Necessity and availability of materials dictated housing in the Chesapeake region. Homes in this area were generally built of wood. A typical eighteenth-century Chesapeake home was 16’ by 20’, one or one-and-a-half stories high, and with a steeply pitched roof. Homes on elite Southern plantations were larger, usually two stories, and made from brick. Although servants on small family farms would sleep in lofts under the homeowner’s roof, plantation slaves shared small wooden huts segregated from the planter’s home.

In the south, food was considered a pleasure rather than just a means of sustenance. Herbs and spices were used liberally, particularly among the elite. Fowl, meat, and game were standards, with the gentry occasionally enjoying shellfish as well. The southern climate was conducive to a variety of vegetables,
and the residents of the Chesapeake region made these vegetables a staple of their diet. Slaves subsisted on a diet made primarily of corn, often served as a thick gruel.

Education was emphasized by the Chesapeake’s gentry. They were to a great extent self-educated, studying classical literature, history, philosophy, and science. They hired tutors for their children and sent their sons to England to learn dancing and other arts of gentility. For the rest of the Chesapeake population, schools were few and far between; some planters hired a schoolmaster to teach in the field, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts built charity schools. William and Mary, the only institution of higher learning in the colonial South, was chartered as a grammar school in 1693 and did not function fully as a college until the 1720s. It was designed primarily to develop ministers, but did offer non-theological subjects, too. Religious instruction was limited for younger students, with children learning primarily from catechisms.

Chesapeake families tended to live on isolated farmsteads or plantations, so the church was the primary outlet for socialization. Recreational activities, including dancing, card games and gambling, took place in people’s homes. Feasting was important, both as part of the church calendar and as a purely social affair. But the premier event was the horse race, which everyone could view, but on which only the gentry might bet.

Another major form of diversion for the Chesapeake settlers involved the pursuit, capture, and slaughter of wild animals. The gentry hunted deer and, less desirably, foxes. The middle-class southerners coursed, which is the act of hunting small game such as rabbits on foot. Farmers and laborers—the low end of the social ladder—engaged in ganderpulling (pulling off the neck of a goose hung from a tree while riding by it), cockshailing (throwing objects at a tethered fowl to torture or kill it), and “mizzling the sparrow” (placing a small bird’s wing in one’s mouth and trying to bite off the bird’s head without using one’s hands).
Life for New Englanders bore more differences than similarities to life in the Chesapeake region. The basic family structure was the same—adult men and women were expected to marry and reproduce. However, seventeenth-century New England offered a much lower mortality rate, with estimated life spans of nearly seventy for men and over sixty for women, with death in childbirth accounting for the gender difference. The average number of births in a family was eight, with six children surviving to adulthood.

Although the expectation of marriage existed in both the Chesapeake and New England, the reasons for marriage and the methods for attaining it were very different. New England’s Puritans considered marriage to be a civil covenant rather than a religious sacrament, and that love should occur prior to marriage, so arranged marriages were highly uncommon. Elite families in New England did still try to arrange marriage based on financial and political considerations, but most marriages required the consent of both parents, as well as the children. Unlike the Chesapeake, where divorce was unheard of, New England allowed divorce for such things as adultery, excessive cruelty, or desertion.

Believing that a companionate marriage was a woman’s best security, New Englanders frowned on trusts and other devices meant to secure a woman’s property in marriage. However, they did allow a jointure, or marriage settlement, in which the bride’s family contributed money or property to a dowry, and the groom’s family set aside an equivalent amount in real estate in the bride’s name.

Family connections were equally important among African slaves in New England. With slave owners living in closer proximity to one another than in the south, slaves could better maintain family and friendship bonds. The slave population in this area began to sustain itself as a higher number of female slaves resulted in a higher slave birth rate. This made America one of the few slave societies in history to grow by natural reproduction.
New Englanders typically made their houses of hardwoods, switching to softwoods in the eighteenth century as deforestation claimed oaks and cedars. Even the upper classes relied primarily on wood, facing their houses with brick only late in the eighteenth century. Two common designs for middle-class families were the “salt box”—two stories in front, one in back, with two large chambers on the first floor and smaller rooms on the second—and the “Cape Cod,” one and one-half stories with bedding areas above the first floor. Common New England houses were built to accommodate large, nuclear families without servants. They often contained a hall with the great fireplace, a parlor where husband, wife, and perhaps the new baby slept, and a full kitchen, placed in the rear under the slanted roof. New Englanders also had underground cellars for storage, salting, and dairying. Like people in the Chesapeake, eighteenth-century New Englanders could increasingly purchase utensils, furniture, and other such items from Britain.

Puritan tendencies toward minimalism carried over into food choices and preparation. The usual fare included fish, especially cod, porridge, baked beans, and brown bread. More than other colonists, New Englanders boiled their food, without spices, and including all the items within a single pot. Baked goods were quite important to the diet, and baking in general was a very common method of preparing food. New Englanders became famous for their pies. Because of the wheat blast (a fungus that affected crops after 1660), New Englanders used cornmeal and rye, reserving wheat for special occasions. They also consumed vegetables in season. The diet was quite nutritious but aesthetically very plain, and there was little difference among classes.

Education was particularly highly valued in New England, especially as a way to promote piety. New England made a greater commitment to public education and to the creation of colleges than any other region, a commitment reflected by the fact that New England had the highest literacy rates throughout the colonies.
In New England, as in the Chesapeake, learning took place first in the home, where children learned basic skills such as reading and writing. Learning also occurred in the church, where the sermon was the principal device for teaching religious lessons, though children were also catechized. In 1647, Massachusetts decreed that towns with 50 families had to support a petty school, where young girls and boys would learn reading and ciphering, and towns with 100 families a grammar school, which might teach Latin, Greek, and even Hebrew. Other New England colonies soon followed suit.

Massachusetts chartered Harvard College in 1636, just seven years after the colony itself was chartered, primarily to educate ministers, though by the end of the seventeenth century half of the graduates were taking other occupations. Connecticut chartered Yale in 1701 to fight off Harvard’s perceived theological liberalism. The late colonial period witnessed the founding of The College of Rhode Island, renamed Brown, and Dartmouth, which was originally an Indian school.

Recreation in New England differed greatly from recreation in the Chesapeake. Whereas the Chesapeake peoples loved competitions that demonstrated individual skills, New Englanders focused on team events. One, the “Boston game,” involved kicking a ball from one end of a town, field, or beach, to the other, preceding football. The other, the “New England game,” also known as bittle-battle, or town ball, involved players hitting a ball and running bases, the antecedent of baseball. Due to New England’s strict religious principles, Sunday sports were forbidden, and games of chance, racing, and activities involving drinking were strongly discouraged.

Certainly, New England’s piety affected every aspect of its population’s lives, prevailing in a kind of cultural austerity, while Chesapeake life took on a more festive, less inhibited cast. However, the festivity of the Chesapeake was tempered by the high mortality rates and expectations of loss, whereas New Englanders grew to expect a longer, healthier life.
Scientific and Religious Transformation

The Enlightenment

The first Puritans who settled in New England brought with them a passion and conviction in their religious beliefs. Many also believed in the reality and efficacy of magic. Especially in New England, the culture of wonders was rooted in providentialism, a belief that God governs the world at each moment through His will and that all events occur as part of His ordained plan. Providentialism provides that one can best understand the natural world as the organic expression of God’s desire.

Subsequent generations of settlers remained tied to the church, but their piety weakened over time. As settlers turned their focus to the profitability and day-to-day management of their settlements, the number of conversions, or testimonials of God’s grace which gave them the right to join the church’s elite, decreased.

In an effort to reverse this trend, Puritan ministers developed the Half-Way Covenant in 1662. This declaration allowed for a new category of members who were converted but did not have full communion rights. In addition, this covenant allowed children of the converted to have church membership even if they had not been baptized. This partial church membership led to greater religious participation, but at the same time weakened the purity of religion. As members of the church’s elite grew increasingly frustrated and concerned about the effects of the Half-Way Covenant, these tensions spilled over into the events that would come to be known as the Salem Witch Trials.

As concerns about religious purity were at their pinnacle, members of struggling rural families began to accuse their more successful counterparts of witchcraft. Although primarily women were accused, some men also fell under the shadow of suspicion. Some of the accused received trials in 1691 and 1692, many others...
did not, and suspected witches were often burned at the stake, hanged, or drowned. The hysteria finally ended in 1693 when the governor’s wife was accused of witchcraft. The governor intervened, prohibiting further trials and pardoning those who had already been convicted, even pardoning some people posthumously. Facilitating the governor’s declarations was a changing mindset among the New England population that encouraged more rational thinking, as the Enlightenment spread from Europe to America.

The Enlightenment, also called The Age of Reason, is described by scholars as an epistemology (a method of thinking and knowing) based on the presumption that the natural world is best understood through the use of close observation by the human faculties coupled with a reliance on reason. Intellectuals began to see the universe as an ordered creation, a place of balance and order, which promoted the mathematical revolution found in poetry, music, art, and architecture from this period. Observation and reason began to supplant revelation, reliance on tradition or traditional authority, and inward illumination as the dominant means of acquiring knowledge.

The Enlightenment in Anglo-America was greatly influenced by two revolutionary English thinkers: John Locke and Sir Isaac Newton. Locke, an English philosopher, argued in 1690 the “tabula rasa” theory of human development. In his *Essay on Human Understanding* he proposes that the mind is a blank slate, formed and shaped by its environment and experiences. Newton published his theories on gravity in *Principia* in 1697, and defined a set of laws that govern nature. Few colonists read Locke and Newton directly, but popularized versions of their theories had a great impact. Colonists followed European developments with great interest in an effort to emulate and adapt them to the American environment.

The Enlightenment had a profound effect on religion. Many Christians found the enlightened view of the world consistent with Christian beliefs, and used this rational thinking as support for the existence and benevolence of God. Preachers
incorporated the vocabulary of reason and natural law into their sermons to explain how God works through natural causes without giving up their postulates that He is the first cause of everything.

However, the Enlightenment led other Protestants in a very different direction. More liberal Congregationalists as well as Anglicans denounced traditional doctrines about the nature of God, arguing that He was a benevolent, rather than arbitrary, deity. They also disputed the divinity of Christ (some began to think he was entirely human) and the process of salvation, arguing that God saves sinners not because he predestines them to grace but because he foresees the good works they will perform through their own volition. These positions fostered Anglicans' complacency that the world was ordered in the best possible way, and generated liberals' distaste for the spiritual frenzies of religious enthusiasm.

Another outcome of the Enlightenment was deism, a belief held by some intellectuals that God functioned as a clock-maker, creating the universe and then stepping back to watch his creation function. Over time, this theory came to be known as the “Ghost in the Machine.” Rejecting most commonly accepted beliefs of Christianity, great thinkers of the Enlightenment, including Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and Thomas Paine adopted deistic beliefs.

In the colonies, the Enlightenment was embraced by influential colonials who were intent on keeping up with the Europeans' advancements. Among those responsible for spread of the Enlightenment in America was Professor John Winthrop, the long-time governor of Connecticut and a member of the Royal Society of London. His cousin, also of the same name and also a professor, brought calculus to the colonies. In Philadelphia, self-taught scientist David Rittenhouse built the first telescope in America, while fellow Philadelphian John Bartram made a lifetime study of American plant life.
Both Americans and Europeans identified Benjamin Franklin as exemplary of the age of Enlightenment. In the course of his life, Franklin owned a printing press, published *Poor Richard’s Almanac* which he filled with his colorful maxims, founded a fire company and a library, and helped start a debating club. As a self-made scientist, Franklin published valuable theories on electricity, medicine, physics, and astronomy. He is also credited with several inventions, including the lightning rod, a glass harmonica, and the Franklin stove.

The Enlightenment also had an impact on education. Franklin helped found the College of Philadelphia, which later became the University of Pennsylvania. At the same time, a spate of other learning institutions arose, including the College of New Jersey, College of Philadelphia, Kings, Queens, Brown, and Dartmouth. Though these colleges’ primary focus remained to train ministers, the Enlightenment opened up education beyond that single purpose. The focus on education led to the establishment of public libraries and an increasing amount of social activism.

The Enlightenment’s influence on eighteenth-century America was profound. Advances in science and the arts, along with increased religious freedom, carried over into modern society. Furthermore, the focus on balance and order set the groundwork for an American governing system that included a balance of power.

**The Great Awakening**

The Enlightenment brought logic and reason into the way colonists thought about the natural world. However, religion remained a critical aspect of each colonist’s daily life. The biggest issue the church faced at the beginning of the eighteenth century was the fact that many settlers lived outside the reach of organized churches.

Isolated from their seaboard peers, the pioneers were often too far away to attend churches and religious gatherings. They, too, were caught up in the
pursuit of wealth, defending their land holdings, and exploiting labor. It was a common opinion in the eastern settlements that the westerners had become as "savage" as their Native American neighbors. Churches still used traditional means of gaining new members, including building new churches and teaching children the articles and liturgies, but ministers were inching toward the discovery of a new mechanism—the revival—that would recruit not just an individual or a family but hundreds of people at once. The stage was set for a series of religious revivals, which would collectively become known as The Great Awakening.

As American thinking grew more scientific and settlers grew more prosperous, the colonists began to desire a more relaxed way of life. As a result, the dependency on strict religious tenets eased. Harsh Calvinist beliefs began to fall by the wayside as preachers such as Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield began taking over the pulpits.

Jonathan Edwards, besides being a superb preacher in his own right, became his generation’s greatest theorist of revivalism. His most famous speech, Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God, preached at Enfield, Connecticut in 1741, is arguably the most famous American sermon of all time. But the model Edwards perfected—the traditional New England revival in which a pastor awakens a spiritual outpouring in his own congregation—did not become the American standard.

That honor fell to George Whitefield’s technique of “field preaching” that gathered hundreds, even thousands of people into a public space and subjected them to highly emotional, dramatic sermons. When performed by someone with Whitefield’s charisma and theatrical flair, dozens of people at a time were excited to experience conversion. Even logic-ruled Benjamin Franklin could not resist emptying his pockets into the offering plates at a Whitefield sermon.
Whitefield’s practice fit even better with conditions south of New England, where religious pluralism was greater, ecclesiastical organizations often weaker, and a greater percentage of the population were not church members. Reaching all thirteen colonies in 1739-41 and returning to many of them a few years later, Whitefield captivated audiences, who followed his movements through newspaper articles and journals that he wittingly published in order to advertise his journeys and their accomplishments. This was the first time a religious leader had done such a thing.

In the short run, the Great Awakening accelerated church membership, dropping the age of conversion and temporarily increasing the percentage of converts who were male. It also increased competitiveness among American churches for the new converts brought in by preachers like Edwards and Whitefield. In the long run, it had the effect of recruiting people who would likely have joined churches anyway, though more gradually. It also represented the first concerted effort to convert African Americans and native peoples living within the boundaries of colonial settlement, which brought about a new emphasis on missionary work by these people. Revivalists’ appeal for all to take Christ crossed ecclesiastical lines and reinforced the evangelical position that salvation could not be obtained without conversion.

The Awakening also spurred enormous controversy. Many ministers were influenced by the Enlightenment to distrust spiritual claims based solely on personal revelation. Thus, they doubted the authenticity of conversions, shuddered at traveling preachers luring people out of their own congregations, and disliked the self-righteousness displayed by converts who claimed to be able to determine whether their ministers and other church members enjoyed grace or not. As a result, many Congregationalists and Presbyterians split off from their churches and joined the Baptists, Methodists, and other moderate sects. The need for ministers of these new and emergent sects spurred the growth of colleges and universities throughout the colonies.
Some traditionalists rejected the teachings of Whitefield, Edwards, and other preachers of the Great Awakening as too radical, which divided their churches into two distinct groups. The traditionalists became known as “Old Lights” in the Congregational Churches and “Old Sides” in the Presbyterian Churches. Their counterparts who were accepting of the new doctrines became known as “New Lights” and “New Sides.” Both sides agreed on the need for living a life that glorified God, but the New Lights and New Sides took the view that salvation was man’s responsibility, rather than God’s. The New Light influence during this time brought about the foundation of several colleges, including Dartmouth, Brown, Rutgers, and Princeton.

The Great Awakening was the first true “American” event. Even as those with differing beliefs developed new religious organizations, the shared experiences of the revivals encouraged settlers to begin identifying themselves as Americans. The Awakening established revivalism as a major recruitment tool for many American Protestants.

The Awakening and the Enlightenment interacted in complex ways. The Enlightenment had its greatest impact among colonial elites, who in years to come would write a national constitution that balanced power among agencies of the government, protected religious liberty, and prevented the establishment of a national church. Most colonists, however, continued to subscribe to Protestant views of grace and salvation.

Both the Enlightenment and the Awakening fostered religious liberty, albeit in different ways. The Enlightenment underlined an individual’s natural rights to choose one’s faith. The Awakening contributed by setting dissenting churches against establishments and trumpeting the right of dissenters to worship as they pleased without state interference. During the Great Awakening, a coalition of enlightened liberals and evangelicals would write religious liberty into the law of the land.
French and Indian War

North American Alliances

By the mid-eighteenth century, the face of North America was changing. The British soldiers, officials, and colonists were moving west from the Atlantic coast and starting to cross into the Ohio River Valley. The Spanish occupied a vast region extending from the Gulf of California, across the desert, and along the Gulf Coast to Florida. The French settled primarily in New France, the area that would later become Canada.

The changes in North America were dramatic for the Native Americans. European expansion displaced many indigenous peoples. European diseases decimated whole tribes. Changing trade relations and the arrival of firearms allowed some tribes to become more powerful and expand their influence at the expense of rival tribes. The Native American tribes often struggled against each other as much as against the whites.

Both Europeans and Native Americans took advantage of shifting alliances within and between factions to expand territory, gain prestige, and settle grudges. In the 1600s, Native Americans were seen as obstacles to European advancement. By the 1700s, a new collection of allies and rivals developed as the political battles of Europe merged with the existing tensions among the Native American tribes of the New World.

One system of alliances pitted the French and the Huron Indians against the English and the Iroquois Indians. France and the Huron Indians had allied themselves as early as the 1600s in Quebec. The relationship between the French and the Huron dated back to the early 1600s when French fur-traders and explorer Samuel de Champlain established a friendly relationship between the Quebec settlers and the Huron. The Huron asked for, and received, assistance
from the French in overcoming their primary rival, the Iroquois tribe of upper New York. Meanwhile, the British developed a trade relationship with the Iroquois. As a result of this relationship, the Iroquois aligned themselves with the colonists and became extensions of British authority just as the Huron became an important tool for French ambitions.

Tensions mounted as the settlers of New France wanted to increase their land holdings to build up the fur trade. Their primary focus was the lush Ohio River Valley and the Great Lakes. Meanwhile, the British also started moving into the Ohio River Valley, with the Crown granting lands to companies such as the Ohio Company to encourage settlement.

The conflict between the British and the French in North America played into power struggles in Europe. In the 1740s war broke out between George II of England and his allies in northern Germany against France and Austria who had connections to the Hapsburg rulers of Spain. As part of this struggle for power, in 1745, the British captured the French city of Louisbourg, in what is now Nova Scotia. The French tried to retake the area but were unsuccessful. With the French on the St. Lawrence threatening British holdings on the Atlantic coast, colonists in New England began contemplating an invasion of Canada to prevent the French from gaining any strongholds in North America.

A peace treaty in 1748 was only a temporary lull in the hostilities. By the 1750s, tensions in North America were again on the rise. The French, under New France’s leader Marquis Duquesne, established new settlements in the North American interior and unsuccessfully tried to persuade the Iroquois to break their ties to Britain. As the French prepared to mount an attack, the British were making plans for an attack of their own.

In 1754, the Virginia government dispatched 22-year-old Lieutenant Colonel George Washington with 150 men to an area near the forks of the Ohio River in modern-day Pennsylvania, where the French were building a fortified post
named Fort Duquesne. Washington hoped to prevent the French from completing the fort, and to develop the fort for the British. However, before Washington and his troops reached the Fort, they came into contact with a small contingent of French and Huron Indians in the woods. After a bloody battle, the French and Indians emerged as victors. They allowed Washington to retreat with what was left of his troops. This battle marked the beginning of the French and Indian War.

In that same year, colonists called for an intercolonial congress—a meeting of representatives of all British colonies and six allied Native American nations to develop a plan to defend their land from the French. The congress took place in Albany, New York, where Benjamin Franklin, one of the congress organizers, proposed the Albany Plan of Union. The plan focused on two issues: developing a colonial force of defense, and self-imposed taxation to pay for that defense.

However, the distance and harsh traveling conditions kept representatives of six colonies from attending. Furthermore, although colonists agreed that unification was their goal, they could not agree on the terms. Colonists were not happy with the prospect of taxation, just as the British government was unhappy with the prospect of more colonial self-control. Even though the representatives returned home with no consensus having been reached, they had laid the groundwork for the republic that would eventually become the United States of America.

By 1756, the tensions in North America developed into a global conflict. Previous global conflicts had started in Europe and spread to the colonies, but this was the first example of aggression that started in the colonies and spread to Europe. Battles between Britain, France, Spain, and other European powers erupted in the West Indies, the Philippines, Africa, and Europe. This conflict, which started in North America as the French and Indian War, came to be known as the Seven Years’ War in Europe.
Britain emerged as the eventual victor in this war, but the triumph did not come easily. The British and colonial forces were notoriously disorganized and lost several battles along the way. In 1755, British General Edward Braddock lost an important battle, as well as his own life, when he set out to capture Fort Duquesne. Prior to arriving at the fort, he met a small contingent of French and Indian troops, which, despite being outnumbered, quickly dispatched Braddock's troops. Among the routed British troops was Braddock's second-in-command, George Washington, a veteran of the battle near Fort Duquesne in 1754.

To the British, the true hero of the war was William Pitt, who became prime minister of England in 1756. His administration orchestrated a British offensive under the command of Lord Loudon that finally succeeded in toppling Fort Duquesne in 1758. It was promptly renamed Pittsburgh in honor of the prime minister.

Pitt then set out to conquer the heart of French holdings in North America: the Montreal-Quebec area of New France (Canada). Pitt put James Wolfe in charge of a sneak attack on Quebec. Although Wolfe and his French counterpart, Marquis de Montcalm, were killed in the battle, the French surrendered, and the Battle of Quebec became the defining battle in the French and Indian War. With this victory in 1759, and a victory over Montreal a year later, France was removed from power in Canada. The Paris Peace Settlement of 1763 confirmed that France no longer held control over any part of North America, except for two small islands near Newfoundland.

**Proclamation of 1763**

The British victory opened new territory for exploration and expansion, but it also brought the responsibility for overseeing three troublesome groups. The first were thousands of resentful former French subjects. French settlements remained in Canada and even today the French are a prominent minority in Quebec and Montreal. To keep the settlements under control, the British
maintained a close watch and employed harsh tactics to quell rebellion. One tactic was mass deportation of former French colonists. One group, the Acadians, left New France and settled in Louisiana, particularly around New Orleans. Over time, the name Acadian was condensed to the now familiar “Cajun.”

France’s Native American allies were Britain’s second problem. With Britain’s victory in the French and Indian War, the Indian supporters of the French were now in a precarious position. The French were no longer able to back their Indian allies, which left tribes such as the Huron out of an increasingly British-dominated power and trade network. While the French tended to develop trade and mission connections with local tribes, the British colonial authorities were much more inclined to remove indigenous peoples altogether and clear the land for white settlement. Some tribes feared that the influx of British colonists would result in their eventual removal from their lands.

With the colonists marching forward onto his people’s land, Chief Pontiac of the Algonquian-speaking Ottawa tribe led a bloody rebellion that resulted in the death of thousands of soldiers and settlers. The Ottawa besieged all but three of the British forts west of the Appalachians.

The British countered by giving smallpox-infected blankets and handkerchiefs to the Indians. This disease swept through the Indian tribes and decimated their forces. The British regained the upper hand, but nonetheless realized the need to cohabitate peacefully with the Indians to prevent further turmoil.

The third troublesome group was, ironically, the British colonists, who were beginning to test the boundaries of Britain’s rule and were becoming increasingly aggressive toward the natives. In an attempt to maintain the situation until a peaceful resolution could be reached, London’s government issued the Proclamation of 1763, which called for a halt to westward expansion beyond the Appalachians. The desired effect of this proclamation was two-fold. First, the Britons hoped to keep the colonists tied more closely to English colonial
authorities by confining them to the coast. Second, the Seven Years’ War had put England in dire financial straits, and keeping colonists east of the Appalachians would facilitate the collection of taxes and allow England to refill its coffers.

However, the Proclamation incensed the colonists, who felt they had earned the right to expansion by risking their lives in the new country. They openly defied British rule and rushed westward, creating new settlements, facing new challenges, and becoming more self-reliant.

The Proclamation of 1763 surfaced some resentments harbored by the colonists as a result of the French and Indian War. The colonists who fought alongside their British counterparts viewed the Brits as overly and unnecessarily formal. The colonists preferred Indian-style guerrilla tactics, while the British favored organized entry into battle. Colonists in New England also resented having to quarter British troops in their homes during the war. And Britain’s attempts to tax the colonists to pay for Britain’s wartime support angered the colonists.

In addition, Britain’s authoritarian rule over Canada brought deep concerns to the settlers. The loss of liberties in Canada, such as the right to trial by jury, raised fears among colonists that the Crown might impose a similar rule in New England. To the British, the end of the French and Indian War was a costly victory but one that opened the North American continent to their total control and development.

To the colonists the war was one of the first signs that they were not just transplanted Englishmen. They were a society with their own traditions, customs, and identity that was increasingly distinct from the mother country. They also had realized they had the resources to handle some of their own affairs without looking to Britain for support.

At one time, the British government was an important source of support and protection for the colonies. Increasingly, the British government was perceived
as a nuisance whose demands for taxes became symbolic of an increasingly irrelevant colonial authority.
Imperial Reorganization

Stamp Act

The peace treaty that ended the French and Indian War in 1763 eliminated New France as a military threat to the British colonists, and marked the start of the march toward American independence. The war effort, and British Prime Minister William Pitt’s decision to retain large numbers of troops in the American colonies after the conflict, doubled Great Britain’s national debt.

In an effort to raise revenues, Parliament enforced the Navigation Acts, which listed specific commodities that could be shipped only within the English empire. However, Britain’s attempt to make the colonists abide by the shipping regulations generated little revenue due to an increase in smuggling. Pitt’s successor, George Grenville, took a different route to force the colonists to pay what he believed was their fair share for the services of the British army stationed in America.

In 1764, Grenville pressed Parliament to pass the Sugar Act—also known as the Revenue Act—that placed tariffs on sugar, wine, coffee, and other items imported by the colonies. The law angered Americans who claimed that Britain had no right to tax them because they had no representation in Parliament. Grenville countered that every member of Parliament represented every member of the British Empire, but the colonists refused to pay the tax, and continued to smuggle goods.

The inadequate funds generated by the Sugar Act forced Grenville and Parliament to enact a Stamp Act that placed taxes on all printed materials, including legal papers, playing cards, and newspapers. No one could sell pamphlets or newspapers or distribute diplomas or licenses without first purchasing special stamps and placing them on the printed material.
Grenville believed that the colonists would accept the tax with little objection since similar taxes were commonplace in England. But Americans considered the Stamp Act to be a direct tax—paid directly to England rather than to their own legislatures—and again challenged Parliament’s authority to tax without representation.

The colonists also grew suspicious of the build up of British troops in America, since the colonies finally seemed to be safe. The Proclamation of 1763, which Parliament enacted to prohibit white settlement west of the crest of the Appalachian Mountains, reinforced the fear that the British troops were not stationed in America to protect the colonists. Many Patriots believed that the British government planned to use the soldiers against Americans and suppress their freedom by enforcing the Navigation Acts and collecting taxes.

In October 1765, the Stamp Act Congress, comprised of delegates from nine colonies, petitioned Parliament to repeal the act. Grenville ignored the pleas of the colonists and ordered the tax to be implemented. Resistance to England’s attempts to tighten control over the colonies grew violent when organizations, such as the Sons of Liberty, staged riots and vandalized the homes of the stamp distributors. The mobs threatened the safety of the stamp agents and their families and intimidated them into resigning their posts. By the time the new law went into effect, it was unenforceable because there were no stamp distributors left in the colonies to sell the stamps.

Many Americans formed non-importation pacts that drastically cut the amount of goods purchased from England. British merchants, manufacturers, and shippers suffered from the reduced trade and pressured Parliament into repealing the Stamp Act. The colonists lifted their boycott on British goods and celebrated their victory against the Crown. Their jubilation, however, was short-lived.

On the same day Parliament repealed the Stamp Act, it passed the Declaratory Act, which reaffirmed England’s authority to pass any law it desired to bind the
colonies and people of America. The colonists remained subordinates and the British government pronounced its complete and unqualified sovereignty over its North American colonies.

The Townshend Duties

The repeal of the Stamp Act did not end Britain’s plan to tax the colonies. In 1767, Chancellor of the Exchequer Charles Townshend proposed enacting new customs duties on the most popular items imported by the colonies. Parliament approved The Townshend duties (also referred to as the Townshend Revenue Act), which taxed a wide variety of imports, including glass, lead, paints, paper, silk, and tea. Unlike the Stamp Act, the new levy was an indirect tax payable at American ports.

During this period, Parliament also implemented several administrative measures. It created a Board of Customs Commissioners to enforce trade regulations and established vice-admiralty courts to deal with colonists who violated the law. The British government paid the salaries of colonial governors with money collected from the Americans so the wages could not be withheld by colonial assemblies. Parliament decreased the number of British troops in North America and placed the financial responsibility for maintaining the presence of the remaining soldiers solely on the colonists.

Patriot leaders responded to the Townshend duties just as they did when the Stamp Act was announced—they boycotted British goods. This time, however, their efforts to disrupt the British economy did not produce the same results. Many colonists were not concerned with the new tax because it was small and indirect and, through the growing network of smugglers, they were able to find other avenues to get their goods. Samuel Adams, one of the most outspoken proponents of the non-importation pact, encouraged street mobs to involve merchants in the boycott, including those loyal to the Crown.
As conflict in the colonies intensified, Britain transferred two regiments of troops to Boston. The presence of the red-clad British soldiers patrolling the city streets convinced colonists that their liberties were being destroyed and resentment toward England escalated. Fistfights occurred regularly as Americans taunted the redcoats and dared them to fight back. Leaders of both groups realized that one incident could start a devastating riot.

On March 5, 1770, tension between the two forces peaked when a small group of colonists threw snowballs at a British soldier guarding the Custom House. The crowd grew in size as the participants’ jeers turned malicious. When the intimidating mob moved closer to the building, the British soldiers panicked and fired into the crowd. Five Bostonians were killed and several more injured. Among the dead was Crispus Attucks, a runaway mulatto slave and one of the primary instigators of the incident.

Colonists referred to the violent confrontation as the “Boston Massacre” and demanded justice. Future president John Adams offered his services as the British soldiers’ defense attorney to make sure they received a fair trial. All of the soldiers subsequently were acquitted except for two, who were convicted of manslaughter.

On the very day the Boston Massacre took place, Parliament at the urging of the new prime minister, Lord North, repealed all of the Townshend duties except that on tea. During the next two years, colonists’ attempts to enforce the boycott against British goods weakened, and an uneasy truce prevailed between the American Patriots and the British government.

The Boston Tea Party

In 1773, the British East India Tea Company faced bankruptcy. More than 17 million pounds of tea sat idle in warehouses, in part because American boycotts and smuggling damaged the English tea industry. The British government, set to
lose a large amount of tax revenue if the company failed, ratified a Tea Act that allowed the company to bypass English and American wholesalers and sell directly to American merchants at reduced prices.

The act undercut American smugglers and angered other colonists who believed the British were using the low prices to trick them into paying the tea duty. Business owners worried that if Parliament could grant the East India Tea Company a monopoly on the colonial market, it could control all American commerce.

The Tea Act renewed the colonists’ resentment toward Parliament and prompted them to protest the British regulations. Mobs lined the ports in New York and Philadelphia and refused to allow the crews of the British ships to unload their tea cargo. The governor of New York declared that the tea could be unloaded only “under the protection of the point of the bayonet and muzzle of the cannon.”

The citizens of Boston took a different approach to prevent the British ships from landing their cargoes. Massachusetts governor Thomas Hutchinson was determined to force the issue in an effort to exert royal authority over the “rebels.” He ordered the three tea ships to remain docked in Boston harbor until their cargoes were unloaded. During the night of December 16, 1773, Samuel Adams and about fifty members of the Sons of Liberty disguised themselves as Indians and boarded the three ships. Onlookers huddled in groups on the dock and watched the band of colonists dump several hundred chests filled with tea into Boston harbor.

Colonists expressed mixed reactions to their countrymen’s defiant actions. Many citizens, such as Boston’s own John Adams, cheered the bold gesture; others, including Benjamin Franklin, were shocked at the destruction of private property. The people who condemned the rebellious action in Boston harbor believed that it threatened the existence of a civil society. They also feared that the outburst would bring severe repercussions from Parliament.
British authorities became furious when news of the Boston Tea Party reached London. King George III told Lord North it was time for the colonists to either submit to the Crown or triumph and be left alone. The prime minister was equally determined to test the Americans’ mettle and pressed Parliament to pass a series of measures to discipline the “haughty” colonists. The Boston Tea Party effectively stifled any public support in Great Britain for the American position.

In 1774, Parliament enacted four laws, collectively known as the “Coercive Acts,” designed to tighten Britain's control over the colonies:

- The Boston Port Act closed the city’s harbor to all commercial traffic until the East India Company was paid for the destroyed tea.
- The Administration of Justice Act, dubbed the “Murder Act” in Massachusetts, transferred legal cases involving royal officials charged with capital crimes to Great Britain, where many colonists believed they would be set free.
- The Massachusetts Government Act increased the governor’s powers, decreased the authority of the local town meetings, and made elective offices subject to royal appointment.
- The Quartering Act, which was applied to all American colonies, required citizens to house British soldiers when other living quarters proved inadequate.

Although not considered part of the Coercive Acts, Parliament at the same time passed the Quebec Act that extended the Canadian border south to include the Ohio River Valley, land that was previously claimed by Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Virginia. Many colonists were convinced that the five laws, which they labeled the Intolerable Acts, directly threatened their liberty.

Lord North considered the colonies separate from each other and directed the Coercive Acts at Massachusetts as punishment for the Boston Tea Party. He assumed that the Americans generally were content to live under British rule and would not object to the restrictions that focused on just one colony. However, he did not realize that many Americans detested Britain’s claim to complete
authority over the colonies. The Intolerable Acts served to stiffen American Patriot resistance toward Great Britain.
Philosophy of American Revolution

Political

The Revolution generated radical changes in the principles, opinions, and sentiments of the American people. New ideas and issues affected social customs, political ideals, and gender and racial roles as the thirteen colonies evolved into the United States. Debate and conflict over government authority, diverse state economies, federal control of western territories, and the new republic’s relationship with other nations transformed America’s political culture.

The desire to form a democratic government with balanced powers can be traced, in part, to the Enlightenment and its profound impact on colonial thinking. Many eighteenth-century intellectuals believed that progress was related to human reason unlocking the secrets of the natural world. Believing that the discoveries of Isaac Newton would enable them to understand the workings of the universe, enlightened thinkers reasoned that they would be able to perfect human society.

Many leading colonists, most notably Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, followed the doctrines of deism, a religious outgrowth of the Enlightenment. Deists relied on the reasoning power of science rather than on faith. Skeptical about the divinity of Jesus and the Bible, they believed in an impersonal God who, once the universe was created, no longer intervened in human affairs. The best way to improve society, deists argued, was to rely on reason. The Enlightenment embraced the concept of natural rights as a rational ideology, which fostered the Patriots’ yearning for liberty and a democratic government that protected their freedoms.

During a self-imposed exile in Holland, a country that tolerated the free expression of religion and thought, British philosopher John Locke wrote Two
Treatises of Government. In that work, which was published in 1690, Locke rejected the claim that kings and queens had a “divine right” to rule others. Instead, governments were created among naturally free people as social compacts or contracts. Civil rulers derived their authority from the consent of the governed, and held their power as a public trust. Locke argued that rebellion against such a government was acceptable if it failed to protect certain “self-evident” natural rights, including life, liberty, and property. This “right of rebellion” theory, based upon natural law, subsequently influenced the American Patriots.

Locke believed that a government with great power would be tempted to use its authority to control individuals. The government, he contended, should be divided into different branches with each branch possessing only the power necessary to fulfill its function.

“The natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of Nature for his rule. The liberty of man in society is to be under no other legislative power but that established by consent in the commonwealth, nor under the dominion of any will, or restraint of any law, but what that legislative shall enact according to the trust put in it.” – John Locke, Second Treatise of Government

More than eighty years after Locke published his political views on government, Thomas Jefferson incorporated many of the philosopher’s principles into the Declaration of Independence. Locke’s ideas regarding limited, democratic government; the right to rebel against an inept government; and the opportunity to pursue the natural rights enjoyed by all mankind; clearly influenced Jefferson:

“Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, -- That whenever any Form of Government becomes
destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.” –Thomas Jefferson, the Declaration of Independence

Following the French and Indian War, many of Parliament’s decisions to control the colonists through taxes and trade regulations produced waves of discontent in America. However, after England repealed the Townshend duties and support for the non-importation agreements weakened, trade between America and Great Britain increased. By 1771, colonial merchants enjoyed an improved business climate and the Patriots’ message for freedom lost its urgency.

To recharge the opposition to England, Samuel Adams created a committee of correspondence in Massachusetts to publicize colonial complaints against the British. Within a short period, most of the other colonies established similar organizations to spread the spirit of resistance and exchange information and ideas about the latest British policies. The network effectively shaped public opinion, generated strong inter-colonial cooperation, and created a unified front that invigorated the patriotic cause.

As late as January 1776, months before independence was declared, many colonists continued to proclaim their loyalty to the Crown. Large portions of the population, including people in leadership roles, considered the colonies an extension of Great Britain and generally discarded the notion of becoming a self-governing country.

To the loyalists, the thought of severing economic and political relations with Great Britain, the “mother country”—a nation with intimate cultural and ancestral ties—was unthinkable. Furthermore, the penalties for treason, which often included hanging, were severe. Parliament’s prior reactions to rebellious acts, including the Boston Tea Party, loomed heavy on the colonists’ minds. Eventually, however, the numerous taxes, strict regulations, and decision to hire
foreign soldiers to suppress colonial uprisings weakened the loyalists’ allegiance to the Crown.

One person credited with influencing the colonists’ decision to seek independence from British rule was Thomas Paine, a one-time corset maker who left England for a better life in Philadelphia. The impoverished entrepreneur, who tried his hand at several vocations including writing, penned the pamphlet *Common Sense* in January 1776, about a year after his arrival in America.

Paine unleashed his anger directly at King George III. He argued that the cause of American hostility toward the British government was not Parliament, but rather the monarchy, which he claimed was the true source of malice toward the colonists. Paine declared that King George was a “Royal Brute” who did not deserve the colonists’ respect and claimed that the authority of all government officials, from governors to senators to judges, should originate from popular consent. Paine further argued that the concept of an island ruling a continent defied natural law.

*Common Sense* called for an end to the colonists’ political wavering over British rule and promoted the concept of an American republic where free citizens, not a monarch, were in control. America, Paine concluded, had an obligation to the world to become an independent and democratic society.

Within months of its release, 150,000 copies of *Common Sense* circulated throughout the colonies. Paine’s vision of a new American political system without direction from Great Britain, considered radical by many colonists, inspired Patriots to break from tradition and embrace independence. *Common Sense* became one of the most influential political diatribes ever written.
Social

Although the concept of forming an autonomous American nation was not new, Thomas Paine’s call to create a democratic republic resonated with a growing number of colonists. By the late eighteenth century, many towns, particularly in Massachusetts, experienced republicanism firsthand in the form of town meetings and elections. Terminating the British monarch’s arbitrary authority and limiting the governing power to elected officials appealed to people of different classes throughout the colonies. However, not everyone in America was interested in a complete overhaul of the existing political system.

Many colonists, primarily those in higher classes, wanted to end hereditary aristocracy without dismantling the social hierarchy. They did not favor a new government that considered everyone—from wealthy landlords and business owners, to poor tenants and farmers—as equals. Conservative citizens believed that equality for the social classes would lead to unlawful outbursts, much like those witnessed during the Stamp Act crisis and the Boston Tea Party.

As the leaders of the American colonies fought for independence from Great Britain, the focus of attention broadened to include social reforms. Political representatives tackled several key issues, including voting rights, slavery, religion, and women’s rights.

The Declaration of Independence stated that all men were created equal, but the new state legislatures frequently fell short of supporting this sentiment. The franchise—the right to vote in public election—typically was restricted to white males who owned a certain amount of property. Lawmakers generally assumed that those who did not have property lacked a stake in the government, the proper work ethic, and the moral prerequisites to vote intelligently.

Americans often highlighted the moral wrong of slavery by complaining of Parliament’s attempts to make “slaves” of them, although many founding fathers,
notably George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, were slaveholders themselves. Southerners were particularly outraged in 1775 when Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, announced that all slaves willing to bear arms against their “rebel” masters would be given their freedom. Nonetheless, the institution of slavery came under increased attack during the enlightened Revolutionary era.

By the early 1800s, all the northern states barred slavery, and the federal government prohibited the further importation of slaves. Slavery played only a negligible role in the economy of the northern states by then. The plantation owners of the southern states, in contrast, maintained and expanded the institution of slavery because it was indispensable to their economic success and way of life.

Racism was prevalent throughout America during this period, and many states—North and South—enacted laws restricting the rights of African-Americans, whether they were free men and women or slaves. Although the Revolution did not settle the slavery debate, it challenged Americans to consider the concept of equality for all people.

The American Revolution also presented the opportunity for lawmakers to protect religious freedom, and augment the separation of church and state. The majority of the thirteen colonies supported an official religion, called the “established church,” but the Enlightenment and the Great Awakening diminished interest in established religions. Following the Revolution, most states decreased their support for religious institutions and placed the burden of church maintenance on voluntary contributions from individual members.

In Virginia, Thomas Jefferson led the fight to expand the separation of church and state. His Statute of Religious Liberty, enacted by the legislature in 1786, delineated the boundary between religious belief and the right to participate in government:
“Our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, any more than our opinions in physics or geometry...; All men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.” — Thomas Jefferson, Statute of Religious Freedom

The Revolution also shed light on the nascent movement to improve women’s legal rights. The debate over female equality began years before America severed its ties with Great Britain. John Locke, for instance, believed that since women had the ability to reason, they should be entitled to an equal voice. Most colonial-era Americans, including the enlightened New Englander John Adams, contended that most women lacked the necessary intellect or emotional make up to deal with complex and often sordid political issues.

Abigail Adams did not agree with her husband. She considered the Revolution to be the perfect catalyst to win political freedom from England and equal rights for American women. She implored Adams to “Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors,” as the founding fathers debated forming a new nation. Although she light-heartedly threatened to “forment a Rebellion” among women if their voices were not heard, Adams gently rejected “the Despotism of the Peticoat.”

The social status of women, however, did not remain static. The concept of civic virtue became a focal point during the early national era. Americans believed that democracy was based on the integrity of each citizen. Mothers who oversaw the ethical instruction of society’s youth represented appropriate republican models for behavior. Women were elevated to the role of guardians for America’s moral values.

The important “republican motherhood” responsibility created more educational opportunities for women and undercut the male-dominated perception that
women did not deserve higher profiles in society. Abigail Adams set the foundation for future generations of feminists willing to fight for equal rights.
Declaration of Independence

The Continental Congress

In response to the Patriot’s defiant outburst and the destruction of British goods during the Boston Tea Party, Parliament enacted several laws to tighten its control over the colonies. The Coercive Acts, called the Intolerable Acts by Americans, punished primarily Bostonians but affected people in all thirteen colonies.

The legislation increased Americans’ resentment toward Britain and galvanized the Patriot resistance. In September 1774, delegates from twelve colonies—the governor of Georgia refused to send a representative—met at Carpenter’s Hall in Philadelphia to fashion a common response to the Intolerable Acts. John Adams, George Washington, Samuel Adams, and Patrick Henry were among the fifty-five members of the First Continental Congress who discussed various ideas and drafted resolutions to address colonial grievances.

One proposal, the Plan of Union, presented by Pennsylvanian Joseph Galloway, called for an American government consisting of a president appointed by the king and a council selected by the colonies. The American officials would regulate internal colonial affairs and possess the power to veto parliamentary acts affecting the colonies, but remain subordinate to Parliament and the Crown. Galloway’s moderate proposal was defeated by a vote of six colonies to five.

Paul Revere then submitted the Suffolk County Resolves that rejected the Intolerable Acts and called upon Americans to prepare for a British attack. After endorsing the resolutions, the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Rights and Resolves, drafted by John Adams. Drawing upon the “immutable laws of nature” and rights of Englishmen, the declaration argued that Americans were
entitled to legislate for themselves “in all cases of taxation and internal polity,” conceding to Parliament only the power to regulate “our external commerce.”

During the course of nearly two months, the First Continental Congress endorsed many documents and open letters to the people of Great Britain and Canada explaining their actions. In an appeal to the king, edited by John Dickinson of Pennsylvania, the delegates blamed the crisis on Parliament and Lord North’s administration. Americans were not yet demanding independence, but sought the right to participate in a free government that protected their liberties within the British Empire. Before adjourning, the delegates organized the Continental Association that called for a complete boycott of British goods. The delegates agreed to meet again in May 1775 to discuss Britain’s response to their decisions.

Tension between the colonies and Great Britain escalated following Parliamentary elections that gave Lord North’s government a majority for the next seven years. King George declared the New England colonies to be in a state of rebellion, and Parliament supported his decision to coerce the colonies. Resistance was also stiffening in America. Colonists increased their efforts to enforce the British boycott by appointing association committees to monitor compliance and expose all violators. People caught breaching the boycott were often tarred and feathered. The failed attempts to negotiate a resolution with Britain prompted many colonists to secure weapons and conduct military drills to prepare for the possibility of war.

In January 1775, orders went out from London to prohibit the meeting of the Second Continental Congress. The following month, Parliament declared that Massachusetts was in a state of rebellion and military reinforcements were dispatched to America under the command of three senior generals—William Howe, Henry Clinton, and John Burgoyne. On the night of April 18, General Thomas Gage sent British troops marching from Boston toward Concord. The soldiers were ordered to seize colonial weapons and gunpowder and arrest John
Hancock and Samuel Adams, whom the British considered to be the leaders of the Patriots.

As the redcoats entered Lexington, they encountered a band of colonial militia called "Minute Men" who were trained to fight on a minute’s notice. The two groups exchanged heated words and, as the Americans slowly dispersed, a shot was fired. The British continued their march after a brief skirmish, leaving behind eight dead Americans. At the North Bridge in Concord, the redcoats met a sharper fight, and casualties were sustained by both sides. American essayist and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson later immortalized the event as “the shot heard round the world.” The Revolutionary War had begun.

On May 10, 1775, representatives from all thirteen colonies met at the State House in Philadelphia for the Second Continental Congress. Joining many members from the First Congress were Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, and Thomas Jefferson, a young Virginia planter who had recently written essays criticizing the British monarchy and supporting the rights and liberties of Americans. Also representing Virginia was George Washington, a veteran of the French and Indian War, who attended sessions dressed in his colonel’s uniform.

Many cautious representatives from the middle colonies feared that radical New England delegates were pushing the colonists into open rebellion. After much debate, the fighting in Massachusetts finally convinced a majority of the delegations that a military defense plan was necessary. Washington’s experience in battle and his willingness to defend America influenced congressional members to appoint him commander-in-chief of the newly formed Continental Army. The selection of Washington to lead the army appeased many conservatives who distrusted the boisterous Bostonians. Washington’s wealth, and his refusal to accept pay for his position, quashed suspicions that he was a fortune seeker.
While the battles at Lexington and Concord pressed many colonists into joining the military forces gathering near Boston, members of the Second Continental Congress believed they could still persuade the king and Parliament to resolve the colonists’ grievances without more bloodshed. In June 1775, Congress approved John Dickinson’s "Olive Branch Petition," which was aptly named because of its suppliant tone. It professed American loyalty to the king and begged him to intercede for the Patriots against his controlling Parliament and ministers.

The following day, the delegates endorsed the Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms, written by Dickinson and Jefferson. It proclaimed: “Our cause is just. Our union is perfect.” American Patriots were prepared to fight to preserve their liberties as British citizens. In November, however, word arrived that King George III refused to receive the Olive Branch Petition and officially proclaimed the colonies to be in “open and avowed rebellion.”

As the fighting between the Patriots and the redcoats intensified, the Second Continental Congress assumed the functions of a national government. It appointed commissioners to negotiate with Indian tribes and foreign governments in an effort to form military and diplomatic alliances. It also authorized the creation of a navy and several battalions of marines, and organized a postal system headed by Benjamin Franklin.

The Great Declaration

By the end of 1775, the military conflicts with Great Britain increased the eagerness of many Patriots to declare their independence, but many other colonists, including influential members of the Second Continental Congress, were wary about breaking completely from the Crown. The ties to England remained strong for many Americans and the thought of losing their political and commercial connections to one of the world’s most powerful nations seemed irrational to them.
Many colonists believed that a rebellion would change their lives for the worse. They were familiar with the living conditions under British rule and feared the unknown. The upper class in America did not want to lose their status in society and grew concerned about how average Americans would react to independence. In addition, many colonists wondered if common people could actually govern themselves.

In early 1776, two significant events propelled the colonies toward severing relations with Britain. First, the pamphlet *Common Sense* was published in January. Thomas Paine wrote the political piece criticizing King George III. While colonial leaders crafted gracious and humble petitions to persuade the king to ease Britain’s control over the colonies, Paine bluntly called George III a “Royal Brute” who was unworthy of Americans’ respect. The pamphlet encouraged colonists to break free from England and start a new independent and democratic society. Paine argued that the concept of an island ruling a continent defied natural law. “We have it in our power to begin the world again,” he insisted.

Reaction to *Common Sense* was overwhelming. Paine’s diatribe put into words the thoughts of many Americans. Even members of the Continental Congress accepted Paine’s call to action by urging states to form governments and write their own statements of independence.

The following month, Congress learned of the Prohibitory Act, closing all colonial ports and defining resistance to the Crown as treason. Congress responded by authorizing privateers to operate against British shipping. Additionally, Americans discovered that the British government was hiring foreign mercenaries to crush the colonies. Ultimately, nearly thirty thousand German-speaking soldiers, collectively called “Hessians” because the majority hailed from Hesse-Kassel, fought in the Revolutionary War. Many colonists associated mercenaries with radical and illicit behavior including looting and torture. The potential for such cruelty toward Americans, many colonists concluded, doomed
the possibility of a peaceful reconciliation. In April, Congress opened American ports to international trade. By that time, several revolutionary state governments were committed to independence from Great Britain.

On June 7, 1776, Virginia delegate Richard Henry Lee introduced to the Continental Congress a resolution: “That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States.” He further called “for forming foreign Alliances and preparing a plan of confederation.” Lee’s resolution announced America’s break from England, but members of Congress believed a more formal explanation was needed to unify the colonies, secure foreign assistance, and justify their actions to the world. Delegates from the middle colonies, however, were reluctant to support the separation from the mother country and postponed a vote on Lee’s resolution.

In the meantime, Congress appointed a committee consisting of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston, and Thomas Jefferson to prepare a formal declaration. The committee selected Jefferson, the youngest member of the Continental Congress and the delegate who received the most votes in the selection process, to write the first draft. Jefferson spent the next two weeks writing. The committee refined and edited the manuscript before submitting a final version to the Congress on June 28.

Several ideas Jefferson included in the Declaration of Independence to justify the American Revolution were not new. John Adams, in particular, claimed that Congress frequently discussed the concepts outlined in the document. Additionally, many of the terms incorporated by Jefferson derived from proclamations of independence previously issued by several colonial governments. Jefferson admitted that it was not his task to invent new principles or arguments, but rather the Declaration was intended be an expression of the American mind.
In the preamble, Jefferson referred to the “natural rights” of humankind popularized by Enlightenment thinkers, including philosopher John Locke’s call for “the right to life, liberty, and property”—the last of which Jefferson changed to “the pursuit of happiness.” He also incorporated Locke’s contention that people have the right to overthrow their government when it abuses their fundamental rights.

In a direct attack on George III, Jefferson provided a lengthy list of the king’s violations of American rights. He accused King George of imposing taxes on colonists without their consent, and blamed him for the existence of slavery in America—although Congress deleted that allegation from the final document.

On July 2, 1776, the Continental Congress unanimously passed Lee’s resolution to declare American independence from British rule. The delegation from New York, which represented a large population of loyalists who did not want to break all ties with England, abstained from voting. The Continental Congress spent the next two days debating and amending the Declaration of Independence. The delegates focused primarily on the list of grievances, cutting Jefferson’s harsh assault on the British people for backing the king and eliminating about one-fourth of the original wording. The Declaration, the delegates believed, should explain and justify American independence in a gentlemanly manner.

On the Fourth of July, the delegates adopted the Declaration of Independence. By defying the king and declaring their independence, the Patriots became rebels subject to the penalties for treason. The American revolutionaries realized that unity was imperative to their success. “We mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor,” vowed Benjamin Franklin. “We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately.”

The Declaration of Independence did not immediately garner a great deal of attention from people outside the British Empire. Within a few years, however,
the document profoundly influenced citizens from other countries hoping to escape the oppressive tyranny of their rulers. The “French Declaration of the Rights of Man,” most notably, drew upon Jefferson’s ideas and words. The Declaration of Independence remains an inspiration for freedom-loving peoples.
The Revolutionary War

Major Battles

In 1774, as a response to the Boston Tea Party, the British Parliament passed a series of acts, called the Coercive Acts. These acts crushed many of the chartered rights of colonial Massachusetts and infringed on the rights of the other colonies. Americans reacted with trade boycotts, and they also began to slowly unite and take political power into their own hands. Americans were not yet calling for independence, but formation of the First Continental Congress, combined with the colonists’ reactions to the Coercive Acts, led King George III to believe the colonies were in a state of rebellion.

In April 1775 on orders from the Crown, British soldiers, or redcoats as Americans referred to them, marched west from their station in Boston to Lexington and Concord. They were to confiscate colonial weapons and gunpowder and capture John Hancock and Sam Adams, the leaders of the “rebel militia.” When local Patriots heard the purpose of the British troops, they sent Paul Revere and William Dawes on their famous rides to alert the countryside and warn Hancock and Adams that the British were coming.

The Massachusetts Patriots, as they were calling themselves, had been accumulating arms and training “Minute Men,” so named because they were said to be ready to fight in a minute. When the redcoats arrived at Lexington, about 70 Minute Men refused the British soldiers’ orders to disperse, and a shot was fired. No one knows which side fired the shot, but it was, in the often quoted phrase of Ralph Waldo Emerson, “the shot heard 'round the world.”

A flurry of gunfire ensued, leaving several Minute Men dead and wounded. The British troops pushed on to Concord, destroyed whatever supplies the Patriots had not removed, and were forced to retreat by a growing number of American
militiamen. At the end of what many consider the first day of the Revolutionary War, the British troops had suffered over 250 casualties, while the Americans had fewer than 100 casualties. A British General reported to London that the rebels had earned their respect.

The Second Continental Congress met the next month, on May 10, 1775, in Philadelphia, with representatives from all 13 colonies in attendance. Congress first dealt with the disorganized military. The assembly organized the troops who had gathered around Boston into the Continental Army, appointing George Washington Commander-in-Chief.

Although Washington had never commanded more than twelve hundred men, his participation in the French and Indian War made him one of the most experienced officers in America. The choice of Washington as Commander-in-Chief was also a shrewd political compromise. Many representatives were wary of the rebellious spirit coming from the northeastern colonies. Washington had great leadership skills, was wealthy, aristocratic, and from Virginia, which appeased everyone.

Once the Continental Congress dealt with the military crisis, the delegates drafted an appeal to King George and Parliament hoping to reach a compromise settlement. In July 1775, the Continental Congress issued two major documents. The first was the “Olive Branch Petition” professing American loyalty and advancing one last plea to the King to prevent further hostilities. The second, the “Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms,” traced the history of the controversy, condemned the British for everything they had done since 1763, and rejected independence but affirmed the colonists’ purpose to fight for their rights. King George III refused to even look at the Olive Branch Petition, and in August 1775 declared the colonies to be in open rebellion. The King ended all hopes of reconciliation when he hired thousands of German troops, called Hessians, to help defeat the rebellious Americans. The colonists felt the king was
going “outside the family” by hiring Hessians mercenaries, which only increased the hostilities and pushed them further from British rule.

Meanwhile, both British and colonial forces around Boston had been building. The Patriots seized Breed’s Hill on the high ground of Charlestown peninsula, overlooking Boston. Breed’s Hill has erroneously been called Bunker Hill and was actually closer to Boston than Bunker Hill—the source of the battle’s name. British General Thomas Gage launched a frontal attack on June 17, 1775, with over 2,000 soldiers. Twice the redcoats marched up Breed’s Hill toward the strongly entrenched, sharp shooting Americans, only to be driven back after suffering heavy losses. On the redcoats’ third attempt, the colonists ran out of gunpowder and were forced to abandon the hill. More than 1,000 redcoats had fallen, with colonial losses around 400, making it a morale-boosting experience for the newly formed Continental Army.

The Battle of Bunker Hill greatly affected both the British and American forces. After the excessive losses the British suffered, they entered subsequent battles with greater caution. On the other hand, the American Congress realized that they needed more support and encouraged all able-bodied men to enlist in the militia.

Tensions between the Loyalists and Patriots continued to build. In the fall of 1775, the rebels planned an attack on British troops in Quebec, thinking a successful assault would add a fourteenth colony to their cause. This was in direct conflict with the idea that they were fighting a defensive war, which is what most Americans felt to this point. Troops under command of Richard Montgomery advanced by way of the St. Lawrence River to Lake Champlain, while troops under Benedict Arnold struggled northward through the Maine woods. Their attack was unsuccessful, Montgomery was killed, and Arnold was wounded and retreated with the remainder of his army down the St. Lawrence River.
Fighting persisted throughout the thirteen colonies. Virginia’s governor raised British Loyalist forces who set fire to the town of Norfolk in January 1776. In March, the British were finally forced to evacuate Boston and move their base of operation to New York as they felt they needed to be more centrally located in the colonies for a sustained war effort. In the south, redcoats attacked Charleston harbor, but the Patriot militia built a fort to protect them from British fire. They inflicted over 200 redcoat casualties and forced the British fleet to retire. While these small battles continued throughout the colonies, Americans drew closer to declaring their independence.

In 1776, Thomas Paine published his pamphlet *Common Sense*, in which he discussed the wavering American loyalty to the crown as contrary to “common sense.” One key idea in Paine’s pamphlet was that an island should not rule a continent. Paine’s pamphlet, coupled with the desire of more and more colonists to make a clean break from England, led to the creation of the Declaration of Independence, which was formally approved by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.

Meanwhile, British soldiers led by General William Howe landed on the undefended Staten Island. By mid-August 1776, over 30,000 men had gathered there—the largest single force assembled by the British in the eighteenth century. In response, General Washington led his forces out of Boston south toward New York, but still could only gather about 18,000 Continentals and militiamen.

General Howe crossed from Staten Island to Brooklyn, and in the Battle of Long Island he inflicted heavy losses and forced Washington to evacuate. At that point, General Howe could have crushed the American forces, but he did not move quickly enough. A timely rainstorm enabled Washington’s troops to escape Manhattan Island northward across the Hudson River and they then marched south through New Jersey to the Delaware River.
General Howe established outposts at Trenton, Princeton and other strategic points and settled in at New York to wait out the winter. Washington seized the initiative, and on Christmas night 1776, he crossed the ice-clogged Delaware River and surprised and captured nearly 1,000 Hessian soldiers at the British Trenton garrison who were sleeping off the effects of too much Christmas rum. A few days later, Washington defeated a smaller British detachment led by General Cornwallis at Princeton. The campaigns of 1776 left the British with a central stronghold at New York. The Battles of Trenton and Princeton, however, revealed Washington at his military best. This boosted American morale and convinced many men whose enlistments were up at the end of the year to continue fighting with the Continental Army.

In the spring of 1777, the British devised an intricate scheme for capturing the Hudson River Valley and cutting off New England from the rest of the colonies, crushing the rebellion. General Burgoyne was to lead his army from Canada down Lake Champlain toward Albany. General Howe’s troops in New York were to advance up the Hudson River to meet Burgoyne near Albany. A third force was to come in from the west by way of Lake Ontario down the Mohawk River Valley and meet up with Howe and Burgoyne.

General Burgoyne began his invasion with over 7,000 troops. Accompanied by a huge baggage train full of his personal belongings and the wives and children of many of his men, his troops quickly became bogged down in the dense woods north of Saratoga.

Meanwhile, General Howe disregarded the plan for capturing the Hudson River Valley and instead took the bulk of his army south to attack Philadelphia, the Patriot capital. Washington, sensing Howe’s purpose, took his army from New Jersey to meet the new threat. In September 1777, Howe pushed Washington’s forces back in two battles at Brandywine Creek and Germantown, and proceeded to occupy Philadelphia. General Howe and his troops settled into the comfort of Philadelphia for the winter, thinking that capturing the capital would surely
crush the colonial spirit. Benjamin Franklin jested that General Howe had not taken Philadelphia, but Philadelphia took him. Washington’s Continental Army retreated into winter quarters at Valley Forge.

In the meantime, disaster was about to befall General Burgoyne who had finally made it just North of Albany. The American militia forces under Horatio Gates and Benedict Arnold began to build up around Albany. The militia struck two serious blows against the British, one west of Albany at Oriskany, New York and another east at Bennington, Vermont. American reinforcements continued to gather, and soon militia in every direction pinned down Burgoyne. On October 17, 1777, Burgoyne surrendered to General Gates at Saratoga, and over 5,000 British prisoners were marched off to Virginia.

The Patriot triumph at Saratoga changed the course of the war. It revived the faltering colonial cause, and it also convinced France to give the colonists urgently needed foreign aid.

The War Continues with French Allies

As early as 1776, the Comte de Vergennes, France’s foreign minister, convinced King Louis XVI to send munitions to America. They secretly sent military supplies not out of sympathy for the Revolution, but for reprisal against Britain for France’s defeat in the French and Indian War. Most of the Continental soldiers’ arms in the first year came from France through a fake supply company, in order to keep their support confidential. The Spanish government also added a donation and eventually established its own supply company.

When news of the victory at Saratoga reached France, it was celebrated as if it were a French victory. The Americans’ causes of freedom and liberty rang familiar with many in France who had been influenced by the Enlightenment ideas of Jean Jaqcues Rousseau and Baron de Montesquieu, two of the most forward-thinking leaders during the Enlightenment in France. In early 1778, the
French and Americans signed two treaties. The first was a Treaty of Amity and Commerce that strengthened trade between France and America. The second, a Treaty of Alliance, contained several stipulations. First, if France entered the war, neither country would stop fighting until America won its independence. Second, neither France nor America could conclude peace with Britain without the consent of the other. And finally, both were responsible for guaranteeing the other’s possessions in America against all other powers.

The American people did not accept the French alliance with open arms. They were aware that they were allying themselves to a historical foe that was also a Roman Catholic power. Since some of the colonists had settled in America to escape religious persecution, this was a concern. However, while the Americans felt good about holding together the colonial forces to this point, they also clearly understood that in order to win the war, they were going to need some help.

In March 1778, the British Parliament passed a measure that granted all of the American demands prior to 1775. Both the Coercive Acts and the Tea Act would be repealed and Parliament would never tax the colonies, but these offers came too late. By summer 1778, the colonial war became a world war when British ships fired on French vessels. Also wanting to step out of the British shadow looming over Europe, Spain and Holland both entered the war against Britain in 1779, and the fighting continued to spread to the Mediterranean, Africa, Asia, South America, and the Caribbean.

As the scope of the battle changed, British and American colonial forces regrouped. To this point, England blockaded the colonial coast, but now that the French had a powerful fleet in American waters the British decided to evacuate Philadelphia and concentrate their efforts in New York City.

Washington’s Continental Army spent the winter at Valley Forge. The army’s supply system began to collapse, and the men suffered through a winter of unrelenting cold, hunger, and disease. Many wanted to make Washington the
scapegoat for the Patriots’ dilemma, but there was never a serious effort to replace him. As the winter wore on, Washington sent two of his generals on foraging expeditions. They confiscated cattle and livestock, telling the colonists they would be repaid by the Continental Congress. The troops gradually regained their strength, and Washington began a military training program, since very few had ever been part of a formal military unit. The soldiers who remained became a strong, professional fighting force.

In June 1778, Washington followed the British General Clinton as he evacuated the troops from Philadelphia. The Americans attacked the British at Monmouth, New Jersey. The battle was inconclusive, and the British escaped to New York, while Washington’s troops remained in the area. From that point forward, the British strategy changed. They concentrated their efforts in the south, where they felt they would gain the support of many Loyalists who only needed encouragement from their British brethren.

In 1779, the British forces overran Georgia. Then in the spring of 1780, they led a massive campaign against Charleston, South Carolina. When the city surrendered, more than 5,000 defenders were captured, the greatest single American loss of the war. Warfare intensified in the Carolinas, with guerrilla-style civil conflicts between Patriots and their Loyalist neighbors.

British General Cornwallis was close to having South Carolina under control, when two of his subordinates overreached themselves in an effort to subdue the Patriots. A band of militiamen trapped this group of redcoats at King’s Mountain and forced their surrender. Additionally, General Nathanael Greene, newly appointed by the Continental Congress to the southern theatre, distinguished himself in the Carolina campaign of 1781. He was a man of infinite patience and used a strategy of delay. By fighting and retreating, he allowed the British to follow his army, which both exhausted General Cornwallis’ troops and slowed the war. He lost some battles but won the campaign, eventually clearing most of Georgia and South Carolina of British troops. This was the turning point of the
war in the south as colonial forces prolonged the British campaign and generated more support among the local populous as they retreated northward.

General Cornwallis retreated with his troops into Virginia awaiting supplies and reinforcements at Chesapeake Bay. There he joined forces with British General Benedict Arnold, who in 1780 had sold out to the British. Arnold had a grudge against General Washington over an official reprimand he received as commander of reoccupied Philadelphia. Arnold intended to tell the British the location of American’s West Point garrison, but the scheme was foiled when the British spy carrying the information was captured. Arnold fled and joined the British troops.

General Cornwallis established a base at Yorktown. He was not concerned about the possibility of a siege, since he thought the British navy controlled American waters and Washington’s troops were preoccupied with the British in New York. What Cornwallis did not know was that a French fleet in the West Indies under the command of Admiral de Grasse was on its way to join with American forces in a strike at Yorktown. In the summer of 1781, General Washington’s troops marched more than 300 miles south to Chesapeake from New York and met up with the French land forces commanded by Comte de Rochambeau. Washington and Rochambeau surrounded Cornwallis on land, while de Grasse battled the British fleet and won control of the Chesapeake, thus successfully blockading the British troops.

Cornwallis held out until October 19, 1781, when he surrendered his entire army of nearly 7,000 men. The surrender at Yorktown was as much a French conquest over the British as it was an American victory. Whatever small hopes of winning the war the British military still held were gone when Cornwallis surrendered. Still, King George III planned to continue the war, and fighting lasted for nearly a year after Yorktown.
Peace of Paris (1783)

After Yorktown, the citizens of Britain tired of the war in the American colonies. They were also greatly in debt and had suffered immense losses in India, the West Indies, Asia, and Africa. In February 1782, the House of Commons voted against continuing the war, and in March 1782 Lord North resigned, ending the rule of King George III. The new ministry included old friends of the Americans and was headed by Lord Rockingham who was prepared to negotiate a peace settlement with America. Three American peace negotiators appointed by the Continental Congress gathered at Paris: Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and John Jay. The representatives had explicit instructions from the Continental Congress to consult with their French allies before finalizing any peace negotiations.

Peacemaking was complicated since America and France had pledged only to make peace together, and France was allied with Spain but America was not. The French were bound to help the Spanish who were still fighting to recover Gibraltar from England, and America was bound by its alliance to fight until the French made peace. The American peacemakers were concerned that since France seemingly could not help Spain win back Gibraltar, France might try to bargain off American land west of the Appalachians instead. This option was attractive to the French, because while they wanted to crush Britain’s empire by creating an independent United States, they also did not want the new country to become too powerful. Spain also wanted to limit American expansion beyond the Appalachians because they had plans of their own for the eastern half of the Mississippi valley. Americans feared that the land bordering the colonies was up for grabs by the ambitious European powers.

John Jay did not feel that the French could satisfy the conflicting needs of both America and Spain. In November 1782, Jay and Franklin agreed to separate peace talks with the British, which produced a preliminary treaty with Great Britain. The Americans insisted on recognition of independence as the precondition for
any negotiations. The treaty was in line with American hopes and objectives. The boundaries for the new nation were set as the Great Lakes to the north, the Mississippi River to the West, and roughly the northern boundary of Florida to the south. Florida was given back to Spain and Britain retained Canada. However, Britain would allow the Americans to fish off of Newfoundland and dry their catches on the unsettled beaches of the Canadian Atlantic coast. The British agreed to withdraw their troops from America as quickly as possible.

The Americans promised the British that their merchants should “meet with no legal impediment” in seeking to collect debts. The Americans also agreed that the Continental Congress would “earnestly recommend” to the states that all property that had been confiscated from Loyalists be restored. They also promised to prevent further property confiscation and persecution of Loyalists. Britain agreed to these treaty terms because the American representatives shrewdly played on existing rivalries among the European powers. While many of the terms in the treaty were clear, there were others that were vague and set the stage for new problems between Britain and America.

Early in 1783, France and Spain gave up on recovering Gibraltar and reached a peace agreement with Britain. The final signing of the Peace of Paris treaty occurred on September 3, 1783. In November and December that same year the last British troops left New York City, Staten Island, and Long Island. The positive terms of the Peace of Paris left America with a priceless heritage of freedom and great amounts of land on which to build their new nation. With the land finally secured, Americans now turned within to determine what kind of government they should have. The United States’ future remained uncertain.
Articles of Confederation

Forming a Confederation

The thirteen American colonies had finally become "free and independent states," but the task of knitting together a nation still remained. The Revolutionary War had served as the catalyst for the American debate over the form of government that would best serve an independent republic. The colonists posed a range of questions about their new nation’s government. They tried to determine who ‘the people’ were in the Declaration of Independence, and how their definition would affect slaves, women, those without property, and Native Americans, among others.

While the war was still being waged, notions of what republicanism meant were being formed on a state by state basis. Many, like Thomas Paine, felt that republicanism was a moral code of behavior, as well as a system of government in which the supreme power of the country is vested in an electorate. Citing England’s history, he believed that when citizens became selfish or corrupt the republic would give way to tyranny. Fewer supported the opposing point of view that the importance of individual self-interest was the basis of a republic's strength.

In 1776, the Continental Congress called the colonies to draft new state constitutions. As the states formed their constitutions, colonists considered the balance of power between the state governments and the government at the national level. Using their colonial charters as a basis, the states implemented their own ideas for the role of government in society.

All of the new constitutions were built on the foundation of colonial experience combined with English practice and showed the impact of republican ideas. Some state constitutions reflected the approach that the sovereignty of the states
would rest on the authority of the people, while others allowed the government to wield more power. This debate helped to frame each of the state constitutions.

Connecticut and Rhode Island created their constitutions by simply removing any language that referenced colonial ties. In contrast, most of the other colonies reworked their constitutions in great detail, trying to capture the spirit of republicanism, an ideal that had long been praised by Enlightenment philosophers.

The Massachusetts assembly contributed an important procedure to American constitution-making when they called a special convention to draft their constitution. Once the document was created it was then submitted directly to the people at town meetings for ratification, with the provision that two-thirds would have to approve it, which they did. The procedures used by the Massachusetts convention were later imitated during drafting and ratification of the federal Constitution. Massachusetts also had a much stronger executive branch than the other states did.

The new state constitutions varied mainly in detail. All of them combined the best of the British government, including its respect for status, fairness, and due process, with unique American inclusions of individualism and control over excess governmental authority.

Each constitution began with a bill of rights, which protected people’s civil liberties against all branches of the government. Virginia’s bill of rights served as a model for all the others, and included a declaration of principles, such as popular sovereignty, rotation in office, freedom of elections, and a list of fundamental rights such as humane punishment, speedy trial by jury, freedom of the press and of conscience, and the right of the majority to reform or alter the government. Other states added to this list of rights, including guaranteed freedom of speech, of assembly, and of petition. State constitutions frequently
included the right to bear arms, to a writ of habeas corpus, and to equal protection under the law.

Generally the states incorporated a separation of powers to safeguard against abuses. Many limited the powers of the executive and judicial branches, while increasing the power of the annually elected legislative branch to ensure that much of the authority rested with the people.

The state constitutions had some obvious limitations. The constitutions were established to guarantee people their natural rights, but they did not secure equality for everyone. Women were not allowed to participate in politics, many southern colonies excluded slaves from their inalienable rights as human beings, and no state permitted universal male suffrage.

The Revolution also left the colonists with the responsibility of creating a new national government. Even before the Peace of Paris, the delegates of the Continental Congress recognized that they were essentially a legislative body exercising governmental powers without any constitutional authority. Plans to frame a permanent government were started as early as July 1776 when a committee headed by John Dickinson prepared to draft a national constitution. Congress debated the “Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union” for more than a year before submitting them to the states for ratification.

All of the states were required to approve the Articles before they would go into effect. They were promptly ratified by every state except Maryland who insisted that the seven states who claimed lands west of the Appalachians — New York, Virginia, Massachusetts, Connecticut, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia — should cede them to Congress.

Maryland cited several reasons for this requirement. The claims in the west were overlapping and vaguely defined. The six states without western lands felt those who did have land holdings would not have retained them if it had not been for
the unified efforts of all the states in the Revolution. Colonies claiming western lands had an unfair advantage because they could sell the property off to pay war debts, while those colonies without western lands would have to rely heavily on tax receipts to recoup war costs.

Maryland finally gave in when New York surrendered its western claims, and Virginia finally relinquished a large region north of the Ohio River in early 1781. Thus, the transfer of public land from the states to the central government helped to solidify the union. Congress promised to use these western lands for the “common benefit” by creating a number of new states.

The Articles of Confederation were put into effect in March of 1781, just a few months before the victory at Yorktown. The Articles linked the 13 states together to deal with common problems, but in practice they did little more than provide a legal basis for the limited authority that the Continental Congress was already exercising. The Congress still had no courts, no power to levy taxes, no power to regulate commerce, and no power to enforce its resolutions upon the states or individuals. Each state had a single vote regardless of population. A vote from nine states was required to approve bills dealing with war, treaties, coinage, finances, or the military, while amendments to the Articles themselves required unanimous ratification. In whatever areas Congress held authority, it had no way of enforcing the powers it did have.

Despite their weaknesses, the Articles were the most practical form of government for the new nation. The establishment of a more formal and powerful central government would have caused dissention and prolonged debates between the colonies at a time when the focus needed to be on the Revolution that had yet to be won. The Articles also provided a clear stepping-stone to America’s present Constitution by promoting the formation of a union and clearly outlining the powers the central government could exercise.

Social Revolution
The political revolution in the late eighteenth century that resulted in the Articles of Confederation also caused a social revolution. Riots and social conflict marked the Revolutionary era in America. The Revolution brought the concept of equality into mainstream American thought. Many colonists seized the opportunity to introduce social reform as they created their state constitutions.

The spirit of equality was represented in many ways. Property qualifications for voting were lowered, admitting the overwhelming majority of white males. However, governmental officeholders often had to meet a higher landholding requirement. In Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina seats in the state legislature were reapportioned so the backcountry western districts were given fair representation.

Social democracy was stimulated by the formation of trade organizations for commoners, like artisans and laborers. Inheritance laws were abolished, including primogeniture, which awarded all of a father’s property to the eldest son, and entail, which gave the property owner the right to prevent his heirs from ever disposing of the land.

As approximately 80,000 Tories, or British Loyalists, departed from America they left behind many large estates that were confiscated by the state legislatures. The land was then broken up and sold as small farms or passed out as compensation to war veterans.

During this time of social revolution, steps were taken toward greater religious freedom and the separation of church and state. The Anglican Church was disestablished because of its association with the British crown, and it re-formed as the Protestant Episcopal Church.

As religious freedom expanded, new faiths emerged and some of the first national church bodies were formed. The Methodists came together in a general conference in 1784. The newly formed Episcopal Church gathered in 1789 to
unite the various dioceses. The Presbyterians also held their first national assembly in 1789. In 1790 the Catholic Church placed its first bishop in America.

All but Virginia had removed tax support for the church before the end of the Revolution. Finally, in 1786 the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom, written by Thomas Jefferson, enforced the separation of church and state in Virginia. The statute stated that “no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry...nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief...but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion.”

The principles of liberty and equality had clear implications for slavery. The Revolutionary War opened paths to freedom for some slaves. Lord Dunmore, Virginia’s governor, promised freedom to any slave who fought on the British side. Far more blacks joined the British army than the American army. After the war, many of these former slaves ended up in the British colonies in the West Indies, while some were evacuated to Canada and liberated.

In response to Lord Dunmore’s promise, General Washington and Congress reversed the policy of excluding blacks from American forces in 1775. About 5,000 blacks served in the Patriot army and navy, but most of these were free men from the northern states. There were black soldiers in every major battle from Lexington to Yorktown, and the slaves who fought for American independence won their freedom.

In 1774, the Continental Congress called for complete abolition of the slave trade, and many of the states responded positively. Beginning with Pennsylvania in 1780, the northern states all abolished slavery outright or provided for the gradual emancipation of blacks. In most of these states slaves born after a certain date were to be freed once they reached a stated age, generally 18 or 21 years old.
In contrast, no states south of Pennsylvania abolished slavery. Many of the southern states did go as far as relaxing manumission laws, which removed restrictions on the right of individual owners to free their slaves. Because of these laws, between 1782 and 1790 individual Virginian slave owners freed as many as 10,000 slaves.

During that period many slaves ran away, especially those in the upper south. The runaways would take refuge in the growing number of African-American communities in the north. Due to the emancipation laws in the north, there were several free black neighborhoods in which the runaways could begin new lives. Still runaways and freed blacks often had to contend with harsh discrimination. In many areas they could not purchase property or hold certain jobs, and they were not allowed to educate their children.

While many opponents of slavery continued to hope that the institution would soon disappear, it was only expunged from areas where it was not economically important. Ironically, with the dawn of a new age of equality, the complete abolition of slavery was still not possible. Though most of America’s Founding Fathers wanted to abolish slavery, their idealism was forfeited for political unity. A fight over slavery would have taken too long to resolve and would have divided the fragile national unity that was desperately needed to establish the republic.

As Americans continued to consider the rights of the individual, subtle changes to the legal rights of women transpired. In the eighteenth century women had remained confined to the domestic sphere. They could not vote, preach, hold office, or obtain a divorce. In many colonies they had no legal rights over their children and could not legally own personal property.

Wartime experiences gave women a new sense of independence and responsibility. During the Revolution, women were forced to take on many roles that were previously considered masculine. Women plowed fields, managed shops and businesses, and supported the armies by handling supplies, serving as
couriers, and performing more traditional roles like cooking and nursing. Women even occasionally took their husband’s places in the line when they could no longer fight.

In 1776, Abigail Adams, an independent woman of the time advised her husband, John Adams, “In the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the Ladies...Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands.” She felt that men were “naturally tyrannical” and told her husband that if they did not remember the ladies, the women would “foment a Rebellion” of their own. John Adams treated her remarks as a joke and responded that the men knew better than to repeal their masculine systems.

The legal status of women improved marginally as a result of the Revolution. In some northern states divorces were easier to obtain. The most significant change for women was expanded educational opportunity, which was brought about by the egalitarian rhetoric of the Revolution. Some reformers argued that only educated and independent mothers could raise children fit for republican citizenship. Many felt that mothers were given the responsibility to cultivate habits of virtuous citizenry in their children and that once educated, they could better cultivate in their families the virtues demanded by American society. The idea of female education caught on and female literacy gradually rose.

Still, the Revolution did not change the basic circumstances for women and most continued to do what was considered traditional women’s work. Women gained no permanent political rights, and married women still lost control of any property they owned to their husbands.

The Revolution permanently changed the tone of American society. In the middle of the eighteenth century the colonists began to think of themselves as a separate society, distinct from Britain and greater Europe. The Revolution led to the growth of American nationalism and the beginning of a national tradition.
The break from Britain fueled the national desire to create an American culture. In the early eighteenth century, Americans witnessed a sudden flourishing of the arts and education. The Revolution provided inspirational and patriotic subjects for artists to capture. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences was founded at Boston during the Revolution. The artist John Trumbull fought in several of the Revolutionary battles and produced such patriotic works as The Battle of Bunker Hill, The Declaration of Independence, and The Surrender of Lord Cornwallis.

The influence of Revolutionary nationalism on American education was reflected in the success of textbooks written by authors such as Noah Webster, later famous for his dictionary. In 1787 the first American history textbook was created.

Postwar nationalism also had a sustained effect on education. Before the Revolution, there were nine colleges in the colonies. In the 1780s eight more were added, and in the 1790s six more opened their doors. Several of these new colleges were state universities that had been provided for in the state constitutions. For example, Georgia chartered its University in 1785 and the University of North Carolina was chartered in 1789 and opened in 1795. Public education became increasingly important to the colonists as they attempted to achieve universal private and civic virtue.

As the Revolution drew to a close, Americans were increasingly aware of their common interests and proud of their common heritage. The growth of American nationalism was critical to the new nation’s survival.
The Confederation Faces Challenges

International Relations

During the years following the American Revolution, foreign relations remained contentious. The Revolution freed American trade from the restrictions of British mercantilism. Americans could now trade directly with foreign powers, and a valuable Far Eastern trade developed where none had existed before. The *Empress of China* sailed from New York to Canton, China, carrying furs, cotton, and the spice ginseng and returning with silk, tea, and other luxury goods of East Asia. Exclusion from the British imperial trade union also resulted in great losses for the Confederation.

Immediately after the Revolution, Parliament debated the issue of trade with the former colonies. Some argued that restricting trade with America was wasteful, and that if trade were restricted neither party would benefit. Others, still angry about the Revolution, argued against a commercial treaty with the former colonists. Lord Sheffield, a member of the British Parliament, in his 1783 pamphlet entitled *Observations on the Commerce of the American States*, argued that Britain could trade with America without signing a treaty and making any concessions. Parliament voted to increase exports to America, while at the same time holding American imports to a minimum.

Parliament also refused to repeal Britain’s Navigation Laws, which prohibited American commerce with the British West Indies. The effect was devastating to American trade in wheat, fish, and lumber. West Indian demand for American goods remained strong, so shippers resorted to smuggling products to the islands on a much smaller scale.

British merchants began to ship low-priced goods of all kinds to the Confederate States. Americans eagerly purchased British products that they were deprived of
during the Revolution. The influx of cheap foreign goods further aggravated the already bleak economic situation for American merchants. Some demanded that the Confederation impose restrictions on Britain’s imports, but the Continental Congress did not have the power to regulate commerce, and the states could not agree on a uniform tariff policy.

America and Britain were also involved in a dispute over post-war borders. Britain promised to withdraw all of its troops from America after the Revolution, and they did from the settled portions of the 13 states. In the northern frontier, however, the British refused to surrender several military posts on American soil that ran from the northern end of Lake Champlain down to the tip of the Michigan peninsula.

The British justified their position by citing America’s failure to honor the terms of the peace treaty. Specifically, America did not allow British creditors to collect pre-war debt and also did not restore confiscated Loyalist property as promised. The British soldiers remained in their positions to gain the favor of the local Indian tribes and deter America from future attacks on British-held Canada.

Although Spain had also recently been at war against Britain, it quickly became clear that they were not an American ally. During the peace negotiations Spain had won back Florida and the Gulf Coast region east of New Orleans. Spain also controlled the mouth of the Mississippi River, which the growing American settlements in Kentucky and Tennessee used to transport their farm products to eastern and European markets. In 1784, Spain closed the river to American commerce. Eventually, the Spanish governor reopened the river but required Americans to pay a tariff to use the passageway.

Spain captured Fort Natchez during the war, and although it was far north of Spanish holdings and well into American territory, they refused to relinquish it. Like the British, the Spanish made alliances with local Indians in order to dissuade Americans from spreading west of the Appalachians.
Post-war economic issues even strained America’s relationship with their ally, France. The French demanded repayment for war debts and restricted American trade at some of their busiest ports. A stronger central government in America may have resolved these foreign policy and commerce issues, but the Continental Congress did not have the power to intervene.

**Land Ordinances in the Old Northwest**

Throughout the Revolutionary War era, America did not have an effective centralized government to address a growing financial crisis. The British Navigation Acts once benefited the colonists, but now that they were a new country the Navigation laws restricted trade with the West Indies and other British ports. Manufacturing had been stimulated by pre-war non-importation agreements and by the war itself, and now there was nothing sustaining America’s manufacturing industry. Individual states were levying duties on goods from their neighboring states causing financial strife. In addition, several states were again printing depreciated paper currency. America experienced a severe economic contraction between 1770 and 1790.

Key revolutionary figures suggested assisting the individual states with war funding to relieve the economic depression. George Washington proposed a national taxation system as a possible remedy for the struggling state governments, but the Continental Congress did not adopt his recommendation. At the conclusion of the war, economic troubles persisted and a depression continued through 1786.

The economic downturn affected all classes. Farmers who sold primarily to local markets found themselves facing depressed crop prices and mounting debts and struggled to maintain their livelihood.

Commercial agriculture, which was more dependent on trade with foreign markets, also suffered a severe downturn. The once thriving commerce in
tobacco, wheat, timber, and indigo declined greatly as European powers barred American exports to the West Indies and other European ports.

The end of the war brought problems for merchants, as well. Businesses that supplied armies on both sides during the war could no longer participate in the British mercantile system and were forced to sell their goods at home. Although the states developed tariff policies that gave preference to American goods, the tariff rates were inconsistent among the states. The British ships would land and sell their goods in the states with the lowest duties and at prices that local merchants could not meet.

The economic depression left the Continental Congress without means to pay off the nation’s war debts. Individual states, with their own economic problems, were not supplying the monetary requisitions made by Congress. The Continental Congress could not pay many of the individuals who had lent them money during the war, nor could they pay many veterans who fought in the war.

By early 1783, with a formal peace almost secured, the Continental Army, headquartered at Newburgh, New York, had grown bored and restless. The soldiers at Newburgh had gone without pay for a long time, and by March of 1783, many men and their families were in desperate straits.

An anonymous letter began to circulate among the officers at Newburgh, condemning the Continental Congress for failure to honor its promises to the army. The letter encouraged the soldiers to defy Congress in a military uprising if the accounts were not promptly settled and hinted that it was time to employ swords, not words. A revolt was brewing that threatened to destroy the new and fragile republic.

In March of 1783, Washington addressed a regular meeting of the officers at Newburgh. Washington asked the soldiers to abandon their talk of rebellion. He advised patience and promised expeditious congressional action on the salary
and pension demands of the soldiers. But the soldiers held deep dissatisfaction, and were unconvinced by Washington's promises.

In a final effort to secure the soldiers' loyalty, Washington pulled a crumpled note from a Congressman out of his pocket to read to the assembly. Washington then spoke a few powerful words: "Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown gray but almost blind in the service of my country." This humble act and statement by their commander, who had done so much, made the soldiers feel shameful and brought tears to their eyes. The threat to revolt at Newburgh collapsed.

During the war the Continental Congress and the individual states issued large amounts of paper money, resulting in high inflation throughout the Confederation. Directly following the war, some states imposed heavy taxes and limited the printing of new money in hopes of restoring their credit. However, the unfavorable balance of trade and a shortage of cash resulted in sharply lower prices and wages, which in turn increased pressure to print paper money and to pass laws to postpone debt payment.

Between 1785 and 1786, more than half of the states yielded to the economic pressures and put more money in circulation. Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, South Carolina and Rhode Island loaned the newly issued money to farmers to cover their mortgages. It was also used to pay off state debt and veterans’ claims.

In some states they printed so much money that it rapidly depreciated. Rhode Island, where the government issued the most paper money in proportion to the size of the population, experienced the worst depreciation. Creditors left the state and merchants closed their doors to avoid being paid in worthless paper. The Rhode Island government passed a law fining anyone who refused to take the money at face value. Eventually the law was ruled unconstitutional and repealed in 1789.
The one source that the Continental Congress could generate income from was the sale of the western lands. Thomas Jefferson’s Ordinance of 1784 called Congress to grant full statehood and self-government to a western territory only when the population equaled that of the smallest of the existing 13 states.

In the mid-1780s, the Continental Congress planned to sell the area commonly known as the Old Northwest, situated north of the Ohio River, east of the Mississippi River, and south of the Great Lakes. Congress passed the Land Ordinance of 1785, in which the delegates outlined a plan for surveying western territories into 36 square mile townships along east-west and north-south lines. Each township was subdivided into 36 lots or sections that were exactly one mile square, or 640 acres, in size. This plan eventually stamped a rectangular pattern on much of western America’s surface that is still visible from the air in many parts of the country today. The one mile square lots were then sold at auction for no less than $1 per acre, or $640 per lot.

The sale of land was aimed at private individuals; however the terms favored land-development companies because very few citizens had that much money or could work that much land. In later years Congress made smaller plots available at lower prices, but in 1785 America needed money to pay off the national debt.

The sixteenth section of each township was set aside to be sold for the maintenance of public schools—a farsighted decision on the Continental Congress’ part. In earlier colonial times, the Puritans established education laws to help disseminate their religious beliefs. Their laws stated that a village with 50 families had to have a teacher, and a village with 100 families had to have a teacher and a schoolhouse. The Continental Congress perpetuated the notion of public education in the Old Northwest. In contrast to the Puritan model, the new schools were not designed for religious purposes but to educate citizens of the new republic.
The methodical division and sale of the Old Northwest served as a nationalizing force because once the land had been ceded to the national government citizens realized what a priceless national asset the land was. The systematic division also simplified the task of defending America’s frontier. The Land Ordinance of 1785 set a precedent for American expansion all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

In 1787, the Continental Congress passed an even more important ordinance for the Old Northwest that established a specific frame of government for the area. The new plan, The Northwest Ordinance of 1787, receded Jefferson's recommendation of self-government. Congress instead devised stages of evolution for governing the Old Northwest.

First, the Continental Congress stated that until the adult male population reached 5,000, the territories would be subject to a governor and three judges chosen by Congress. Congress planned that the territory would be divided into no less than three and no more than five states. When any one territory had 5,000 voting age males they could elect a legislature and send a nonvoting delegate to Congress. Finally, once any territory’s population reached 60,000 settlers it would be granted statehood with all the rights and privileges of the 13 original states. The Ordinance outlined one clear divergence from the original states—it excluded slavery permanently from the Northwest.

The Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 validated property rights in America, and the Old Northwest eventually became the states of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin. The methods used to settle the Old Northwest worked so well that the principles were carried over to other frontier areas, forming the basis for America’s public land policy.

**Shays’s Rebellion**

The Economic difficulties that continued to plague Americans throughout the 1780s were the source of growing social unrest. All through the summer of 1786,
popular conventions and informal gatherings in several states demanded reform of the state administrations. That same summer, an uprising known as Shays’s Rebellion took place in western Massachusetts. The leaders of Massachusetts were rigidly conservative, and rather than print currency to pay off the state’s debts, they increased taxes that fell most heavily on farmers and the poor. Several Massachusetts farmers, many of them war veterans, were losing their farms through mortgage foreclosures and tax delinquencies.

When the Massachusetts legislature adjourned in 1786 without providing the citizens with relief from high tax rates and debt, the western counties revolted. An armed mob began to stop foreclosures by forcibly preventing the courts from holding their sessions. Under the leadership of Daniel Shays, a farmer and former army captain, a group of nearly 1,200 disgruntled farmers marched to the federal arsenal at Springfield, Massachusetts. Shays’s followers sought a more flexible money policy, suspension of property confiscations, and the right to postpone paying taxes until the depression lifted.

The Massachusetts authorities summoned troops and quickly put an end to the uprising. Daniel Shays was condemned to death, but was later pardoned. When the next legislature came into session, the majority sympathized with the rebels and met some of their demands for debt relief.

Thomas Jefferson commented from Paris, where he was serving as minister to France, that this was just a small uprising and that it was good for the health of the government. However, most did not agree with Jefferson’s position and instead were of the same mind as the usually unexcitable George Washington, who felt that the country was on the verge of anarchy.

The conditions of the new nation, including diplomatic problems, a strong concern for property rights, economic depression, lack of commercial control, and Shays’s Rebellion, were troubling and led to discussions about the need for a
stronger central government. Advocates of a stronger central government began to demand a convention to revise the Articles of Confederation.

The first steps toward reform were taken when a dispute between Maryland and Virginia over navigation on the Potomac River, and thus control of commerce, occurred. The argument led to a conference of representatives at Annapolis, Maryland, in 1786. However, since the Annapolis Convention represented only five of the thirteen states, Alexander Hamilton convinced his colleagues to call all the states to appoint representatives for a meeting to discuss general commercial problems. The meeting was to be held the following spring in Philadelphia.

The Annapolis group approved Hamilton’s recommendation for a conference to discuss governmental reform and trade between the states. The Continental Congress reluctantly endorsed the meeting when they found out that Virginia had elected George Washington as their delegate. On May 25, 1787, what came to be called the Constitutional Convention opened its proceedings at the state house in Philadelphia, unanimously electing George Washington as its president.
Philadelphia Convention

Organizing the Convention

By 1786, it was clear that the Articles of Confederation presented an ineffectual
government for the union. Under the Articles, the Continental Congress had no
courts, no power to levy taxes, no power to regulate commerce, and no power to
enforce its resolutions upon individuals or the 13 states. In the areas where
Congress did have authority, the members had no way of enforcing their powers.
Further complicating matters, the Congress did not have the respect of the
people it set out to serve. Individual states continued to make their own laws,
particularly where taxation and commerce were concerned. Differing tariffs and
trade laws made for a disorganized union, and some states even continued
making their own money. The Articles of Confederation had purposely left the
Congress weak, which resulted in a government that could not enforce a unified
set of laws.

With strong encouragement from six of the states, Congress called a convention
to revise the Articles of Confederation into a more powerful document. Each
state appointed delegates to attend a meeting in Philadelphia to develop a more
effective and unified constitution. In total, 55 delegates from 12 states were
present when the Philadelphia Convention began in May of 1787. These
delegates were professional men, with over half of them lawyers, and as such
they carried an aura of wealth and power.

The men who attended this convention were considered youthful, with an
average age of 42. Benjamin Franklin, at the age of 81, was respected as the
convention’s patriarch. Many delegates had served in the Continental Congress,
so they brought with them some experience regarding governmental issues. Half
of the delegates had served as officers in the Continental Army and had firsthand
knowledge of the Continental Congress’s financial tribulations as well as a
mindset to avoid and overcome them in the new constitution.
Each of the delegates came to Philadelphia with personal perspectives that influenced their actions during the convention. To some delegates, the economic aspect of the constitution was the utmost priority. For example, wealthy landowners who served as delegates to the Philadelphia Convention wanted to shape and protect property rights for themselves and other elite statesmen. Other delegates came with the idealistic notion of creating a perfect Union, while still others focused on concerns relating to sovereignty and trade relationships among states and internationally.

Notably absent from the Philadelphia Convention were Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry, who had led the states to independence just eleven years prior. Some of the heroes of the war had either left the states or were not chosen as delegates by a public who understood that the need for revolution had been replaced by the need for unification. Patrick Henry agreed with the need for unity, and was in fact elected as a delegate, but he boycotted the convention believing that the outcome would not be positive.

Most of the Philadelphia Convention participants were veterans of the Revolutionary War. George Washington, highly respected for his success in the war, was unanimously elected president of the convention by his peers. And James Madison, with an acute knowledge of government systems, came to be known as the “Father of the Constitution” due to his promotion of two key concepts: officials elected by the people and a preference for a large republican government. Madison’s copious notes have served historians as the most accurate and complete record of this gathering.

The Philadelphia Convention got underway with a radical decision to throw out the Articles of Confederation and start fresh developing a framework for strengthening the power of the United States’ federal government. This decision was in direct opposition to the Continental Congress’s orders to revise the Articles. However, it allowed the delegates to shift the powers away from the existing government and begin drafting the United States Constitution.
States’ Plans

Since the delegates at the Philadelphia Convention decided to throw out the Articles of Confederation, the floor was opened to suggestions for the basic structure of the new government. Edmund Randolph, representing Virginia, proposed a plan largely devised by James Madison. Madison, who felt that Randolph was a more powerful speaker and would be better able to gain support for the plan, suggested a bicameral, or two-house, legislature. This legislature would be charged with selecting a president of the United States as well as court officials for a federal judicial system.

Under Virginia’s plan, population would drive representation, which would give larger states, such as Virginia, a distinct advantage over smaller states. Not surprisingly, delegates from smaller states resisted this plan. They feared that larger states, with their increased representation, would render the smaller states voiceless and ultimately meaningless. Representatives from the smaller states feared a loss of identity along with a loss of power if the Virginia Plan, or Large States Plan, was adopted.

William Paterson, a delegate from New Jersey, developed an alternate plan which would prevent the inequities of populous representation. The New Jersey Plan offered a unicameral Congress with each state having one vote. Under this plan, Congress would sit atop the governmental hierarchy with the most power, including the powers to tax and regulate trade. The executive and judicial branches would be separate from Congress and would not be as powerful. This plan closely resembled the unicameral government described in the Articles of Confederation.

Just as representatives from smaller states fought against Virginia’s proposal, the delegates from larger states resented the restriction of power created by New Jersey’s suggestion. Delegates from the larger states felt that they should receive some acknowledgement of power based on their size. With the battle lines
dividing the delegates based on state size, the Philadelphia Convention came to a standstill.

The summer of 1787, Philadelphia was experiencing both a literal and a figurative heat wave, and the rising temperatures outside caused tempers to flare inside the Convention. Unproductive anger and debate created conflict that ironically only eased as the heat broke. As the weather became more comfortable, the delegates began to set aside their differences and consider compromises.

**Compromise Reigns**

The discord among the states’ delegates regarding the plans submitted by Virginia and New Jersey eventually subsided, and a negotiation—called the Great Compromise—for the new governmental structure was reached. This compromise was heavily promoted by Connecticut’s Roger Sherman, and the terms “Great Compromise” and “Connecticut Compromise” are used interchangeably. Under Sherman’s compromise, a bicameral legislature would combine elements of both Virginia’s and New Jersey’s plans to appease both the small and large states. With this plan, there would be two houses, initially called the “lower house” and the “upper house” due to their location in the two-story building that would house them.

The lower house, which would become the House of Representatives, would be made up of a number of delegates based on each state’s population. These representatives were to be elected directly by the people. The upper house, which would become known as the Senate, would be limited to two delegates from each state. The election of senators would be carried out by the legislatures of each state. As a further compromise, it was agreed that all bills concerned with taxation and revenue would begin in the lower house.
The Great Compromise also led to other important decisions about the government’s framework. In contrast to the long-standing fear of granting power to one sovereign authority figure, the Constitution gave the President a substantial amount of power. The President was granted the power to appoint officials, including judges, the power to veto legislation, and the role of Commander-In-Chief of the military.

Defining the structure of the United States government was certainly a “Great Compromise,” but it was not the only compromise that made its way into the Constitution. Commerce regulations were also hotly debated. Northern industrial states wanted federal tariffs to keep out cheaper European products. By forcing the purchase of domestic goods, the Northern delegates hoped to raise revenues for the federal government through taxation.

Those opposed to this idea included delegates from cotton and tobacco producing states, who relied heavily on trade with Europe and who resisted the idea of tariffs for exports. Furthermore, fearing unreasonable changes to trade regulations, these mostly Southern delegates asked for a two-thirds majority rule on all commerce bills in Congress. After much debate, a Commerce Compromise was reached that required no tax on exports, and only a simple majority needed to pass commerce bills through Congress.

A third long-standing debate and eventual area of compromise at the Philadelphia Convention, questioned whether slaves should be counted as people or property. Although there was no intention of allowing slaves the same rights as free men, some argued that they should be counted as people to increase their states’ population count and thus the number of delegates in the lower house. Supporters of this school of thought were primarily Southerners who were eager for the power that their states would gain if the large number of slaves in the south were counted as people.
Conversely, Northerners feared an increase in power by the south that might result from counting slaves as people. These delegates argued that slaves should be counted as property, and therefore taxed as such, since doing so could bring much-needed revenue to the federal government.

Eventually, the delegates compromised on the slavery issue as well. Slaves were declared to count as three-fifths of a person for the purpose of population counts. However, neither the word slavery nor slave was used in the Constitution. Rather, it refers to the Three-Fifths Compromise as applying to “all other persons.”

Still, it was apparent whom the Three-Fifths Compromise targeted, since it went a step further and addressed the issue of the African slave trade. Northerners expected the African slave trade to dwindle and eventually become unnecessary, and they wanted the Constitution to reflect that expectation. Southerners only knew that they had an immediate and ongoing need for slave labor in their fields and paddies, so they resisted slave trade restrictions.

In addition to addressing the issues of population counts, the Three-Fifths Compromise stated that Congress would not restrict overseas slave trade for a period of twenty years, but following 1807 Congress was free to readdress the issue. In 1808, Congress did revisit the issue and decided to disallow overseas slave trade. By that point it was nearly moot since every state except Georgia had included an embargo on overseas slaves in their state constitutions.

With the Great Compromise, Commerce Compromise, and the Three-Fifths Compromise in place, the proposed Constitution was ready to go to the states for ratification.
Federalists versus Antifederalists

Ratification of the Constitution

Leaders of the Philadelphia Convention had completed the Constitution for the United States of America, but many of the convention members had lingering doubts as to whether the states would approve it. According to the Articles of Confederations, unanimous approval was needed to ratify the Constitution, and convention leaders feared that this was unachievable.

The fears of the Philadelphia Convention’s members were well founded. Rhode Island so staunchly resisted the idea of a strong central government it earned the nickname “Rogue Island.” The diminutive state, fearful of being overwhelmed by a central authority, refused to send delegates to Philadelphia or participate in the development of the Constitution. Although Rhode Island was the state that most vehemently opposed ratification of the Constitution, other states, including New York, Massachusetts, and Virginia all expressed concern over a federal union.

Since the framers had already decided to discard the Articles of Confederation when drafting the Constitution, they no longer felt bound by its requirement of a unanimous vote for ratification. The delegates agreed that approval from only 9 of the 13 states would be adequate to ratify the United States Constitution.

Even with the lower ratification requirements, the framers knew the process would not be easy. In an effort to combat the fear of a large, powerful government, convention leaders decided to set up conventions within each state where the people would approve or reject the Constitution. The Philadelphia Convention members finalized the Constitution and submitted it to the states for ratification on September 28, 1787.
The public, expecting a revised version of the Articles of Confederation, was shocked by this new document. The Philadelphia Convention had been a very private affair, and only the individuals inside the meeting room were aware of the drastic changes that were taking place. At times during the convention, the windows were boarded over to ensure the framers’ privacy. As a result, the public, assuming that the convention’s purpose was to revise the existing Articles of Confederation, was taken aback by the innovative Constitution.

Public opinion about the Constitution quickly became separated into two camps, the Federalists and the Antifederalists. Most Federalists were wealthy, well-educated, and unified by the desire for a powerful, centralized government. Their leaders were usually influential men such as George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. They were proponents of an orderly, efficient government that could protect their economic status. The Federalists were well organized and in many states they often controlled the elections of ratifying conventions with their power and influence.

Their opponents, the Antifederalists, were generally farmers, debtors, and other lower class people who were loyal to their state governments. Antifederalist leaders, including Samuel Adams and Patrick Henry, typically enjoyed more wealth and power than the people they led. Henry was notorious for fighting for individual liberties, and one of the primary objections the Antifederalists had to the Constitution was the lack of a Bill of Rights, which would have afforded basic liberties to the public. They also feared the powers that would be assigned to a large central government, especially powers of taxation. Many Antifederalists believed a republican government could not rule a nation as large as America, since previously republics had only been successful in small regions like Switzerland and the Netherlands.

Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay stepped forward with a series of essays designed to alleviate the Antifederalists’ fears. These essays came to be known as the Federalists Papers, and they were the most influential political
writings of the time. Hamilton, Madison, and Jay argued that limitations on governmental power were built into the Constitution with a series of checks and balances. In these essays they also explained the need for centralized government so the United States could earn the respect of other countries.

With the assistance of the Federalist Papers, the Federalists were able to break down resistance and gain enough support to ratify the Constitution. Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey became the first states to ratify, with all three taking action in December of 1787. Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, and South Carolina all ratified between January and May of 1788. The pivotal vote came in June of 1788 when New Hampshire became the ninth state to ratify, meeting the criteria required to adopt the Constitution.

With this vote, the Constitution went into effect, and the Continental Congress respectfully bowed out. The City of New York was selected as the location for the new Congress, and March 4, 1789, was chosen as the date the new Congress would initially convene.

However, even with the ratification of the Constitution, the framers understood that all 13 states needed to accept the laws and boundaries of the Constitution. The Federalists continued to lobby and eventually earned the ratification of Virginia and New York in the summer of 1788. However, North Carolina, and Rhode Island held out until the new Congress had begun its work and had fulfilled its promise to draft a Bill of Rights. North Carolina ratified on November 21, 1789, and Rhode Island finally yielded—albeit by the closest vote of any state—on May 29, 1790.

**Washington is Elected President**

Once the Constitution received approval from the minimum nine states, the framers forged ahead with structuring a new government. March 4, 1789 was selected as the date for the new Congress of the United States to convene, but it
was another month before there were enough delegates present to count the ballots cast for President of the United States.

On April 30, 1789, the final tally of votes showed that George Washington had won the popular vote and unanimously won the electoral college votes to become the first President of the United States. Washington is the only president ever to claim unanimous success in a presidential election. John Adams had the second highest total of the popular vote, and with that count he was elected as the first Vice President of the United States.

Washington had not campaigned for the office of president, and he did not accept the position with excitement. He feared the strain and embarrassments which might weigh heavily on a person charged with leading a government through its infancy. However, his mediation skills, spirit of community, and role as a leader through the Revolutionary War made him a popular choice for president, and he felt a sense of duty to serve in this role.

Washington wisely surrounded himself with a knowledgeable, experienced staff. He chose Thomas Jefferson to head the Department of State and Alexander Hamilton to serve as Treasury Secretary. Vice-President Adams and Attorney General Edmond Randolph, Hamilton, and Jefferson were all indispensable to Washington’s administration. Washington's collaboration with his trusted staff brought the Presidential Cabinet into existence and laid the foundation for the modern, more extensive Cabinet.

Congress established the judicial branch of government with a six-member Supreme Court, three circuit courts, and 13 district courts. However, it was Washington’s responsibility to select a Supreme Court Chief Justice, the head of the Supreme Court, to oversee the five associate justices. Washington selected John Jay, previously known for his work on the Federalist Papers. With this selection, President Washington’s administration was in place and ready to meet the challenge of guiding the new country.
Bill of Rights

Several of the states were hesitant to ratify the Constitution. New York in particular feared that ratification of the Constitution as it was written would transfer many civil liberties away from the people to a large, authoritarian government. Promises made by the Federalists that a Bill of Rights would be the first priority of the new Congress paved the way for ratification.

The new Congress, guided by James Madison, was determined to follow through on that promise. Madison realized that a Bill of Rights was potentially dangerous if written incorrectly. He also understood that amendments to the Constitution could only be passed either by a new Constitutional Convention or by a two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress. Calling a new Constitutional Convention was impractical given the tenuous grip the Federalists had held on the first round of ratification. Madison took it upon himself to draft amendments addressing specific individual freedoms and obtain approval from both the House and Senate.

The issues addressed in the Bill of Rights include freedom of religion, press, speech, and assembly; the right to keep and bear firearms; the right to refuse to house soldiers on private property; the right to trial by jury and due process of law; protection against unreasonable searches and seizures; and protection against cruel and unusual punishment. These subjects would be covered in the first eight of ten amendments known as the Bill of Rights. Madison used the Virginia Declaration of Rights, written by George Mason in 1776, as he led the development of the national Bill of Rights.

Madison originally drafted additional amendments; in all, seventeen proposed amendments were adopted by the House, with the Senate adopting twelve. The vote on those twelve then went to the states, which voted on each amendment separately. When the votes were tallied, the states had approved eight of Madison’s amendments dealing with personal liberties, and two amendments that gave authority back to the states and individuals on any rights and powers
that were not expressly addressed by the Constitution. By returning the power to
the states and the people, Madison hoped to alleviate fears that the federal
government would be too powerful and oppressive. The Bill of Rights, which
went into effect on December 15, 1791, assured liberties for all free white men.
Development of the Two-party System

Hamiltonians vs. Jeffersonians

After the new United States Congress completed its first task of creating a Bill of Rights, it turned its attention to the issue of financing the new government. President George Washington appointed Alexander Hamilton as the Treasury Secretary, and Hamilton took it upon himself to develop an economic structure for the United States that would give the public confidence in the government’s financial affairs.

As he formulated his plan, Hamilton used a loose interpretation of the Constitution, believing that what the Constitution did not specifically forbid, it allowed. He also believed that a strong central government was critical to encourage commerce and industry and to prevent chaos within America’s borders. This perspective shaped his fiscal plan.

Hamilton’s proposal, titled “The First Report on the Public Credit,” declared that the federal government would assume the debts of the individual states. Each of the thirteen states had amassed significant debt as they fought for freedom from Britain. Hamilton believed that assuming these debts would not only give the public confidence in the federal government, but would also emotionally bind them to the government out of a sense of loyalty and gratitude. Adopting the states’ debts would cost the federal government around $21.5 million, an awesome sum at that time. Several southern states had already paid off their debts and would receive no direct benefit from the assumption of debts, so Hamilton’s plan offered to put a new national capital in the south. This capital would eventually become Washington, D.C.

The second element of Hamilton’s plan was to assume the Confederation’s debts at par, which meant that interest would be included when the debt was paid—a
monstrous sum of more than $54 million. Hamilton wanted to assume the states’ and the Confederation’s debts because he felt a national debt would give the citizens unity and a sense of respect for the government.

A third key element in Hamilton’s financial strategy was to establish a national bank. Hamilton modeled his national bank after the Bank of England, which provided a strong federal institution that printed and circulated paper money, while giving the government a repository for excess funds. Hamilton believed that a national bank was necessary to implement the Constitution’s decree that the government collect taxes, pay debts, and regulate trade. Hamilton felt that this need fulfilled the Constitutional clause that stated what was “necessary and proper” could be accomplished by the government. This clause was also known as the “elastic clause.”

Although Hamilton was considered a financial wizard and many trusted him to finance the new government, he was not without opposition. His most outspoken critic was Thomas Jefferson, who was serving in President Washington’s Cabinet as Secretary of State. Jefferson strictly interpreted the Constitution and believed in a decentralized government that should exist primarily to protect man’s natural rights to life, liberty, and property.

In contrast to Hamilton’s proposal, Jefferson felt that the states should hold greater authority than the federal government, since the states were closer to the people and were less likely to abuse their authority. Furthermore, his strict interpretation of the Constitution—believing that what was not specifically written was forbidden—led him to believe that Hamilton’s proposal of a national bank exceeded federal authority.

Both Jefferson’s and Hamilton’s political views represented public opinion. What began as a personal dispute between the two men evolved into the formation of primitive political parties. Jeffersonians shared the belief in a strict
interpretation of the Constitution, while Hamiltonians accepted a broad interpretation.

President George Washington, however, remained safely neutral in the dispute between his two staff members. He asked Hamilton and Jefferson to prepare arguments regarding Hamilton’s proposed U.S. bank based on their differing interpretations of the Constitution. After hearing both arguments, Congress and Washington favored Hamilton’s plan, and the Bank of the United States became a reality in 1791.

By this time, Hamilton had already developed several duties and excise taxes that the new national bank could collect. Congress had passed a Hamilton-recommended tariff of around eight percent on dutiable imports in 1789 and a domestic excise tax—a tax levied on the manufacture, sale, or consumption of goods—in 1791. An unforeseen result of this tax was the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794. Hamilton included whiskey, a commodity produced primarily by western farmers, in his tax. The plan levied a seven cent per gallon tax on whiskey, much to the dismay of distillers. For people in the backcountry, whiskey was not a luxury but a trade necessity and a form of currency; even preachers were paid with distilled whiskey.

Seeing their livelihood threatened by Hamilton’s excise tax, the whiskey producers rebelled. Peaceful protests eventually turned violent with the distillers tarring and feathering revenue collectors. When President Washington heard about the rebellion, Hamilton urged him to take action and he sent an army of over thirteen thousand men to end the uprising.

When the soldiers arrived in the backcountry of Western Pennsylvania, they were surprised to learn that the “rebellion” had been drastically blown out of proportion. The angry distillers were overwhelmed and quickly dispersed, and only three lives were lost in this battle. Public perception of this event was divided, and this division strengthened the emerging political parties.
Hamiltonians—known also as Federalists—supported Hamilton’s financial plans and Washington’s actions to stop the Whiskey Rebellion, while Jeffersonians, who were becoming known as the Democratic-Republicans, argued that the government had used excessive and unnecessary force.

**Federalists and Democratic-Republicans**

With the two-party system of government in its founding stages in the United States, a continent away events were taking place that would further the evolution of the Federalist and the Democratic-Republican parties. The people of France were taking their cues from the American Revolution and rebelling against the authoritarian leadership of King Louis XVI. As war ensued between France and Great Britain in 1793, conflict arose in America as the Federalists and Democratic-Republicans disagreed on where to place their loyalties.

According to the Franco-American Alliance of 1778, the United States was bound to aid France whenever called upon. But at the time of the Alliance, no one could foresee that France would become embroiled in conflict against Britain and that the United States might be called upon to repel British forces from French lands. The emerging American political parties took opposite sides on the issue. The Democratic-Republicans wanted to demonstrate loyalty to the French, who had helped them claim their own liberty, although Jefferson only wanted to lend moral support. He did not believe that the French would call upon the United States to uphold their end of the treaty. Conversely, the Federalists, under Hamilton’s leadership, implored President Washington to declare the 1778 treaty suspended. Hamilton’s primary goal was to maintain a peaceful relationship with Britain to ensure continued trade to support the American economy.

George Washington’s response was an action of inaction. He issued the Neutrality Proclamation in 1793, which declared the United States neutral between Britain and France and strongly urged people to avoid any alliance with either camp. The
Democratic-Republicans were outraged, not only by the declaration itself, but by Washington’s failure to consult Congress before issuing the proclamation. The Federalists, for the most part, were pleased.

Citizen Edmond Genêt, a French representative to the United States, set out to take advantage of the conflict. Upon meeting with Democratic-Republicans, he came to believe that the Neutrality Proclamation was more a governmental display of excess authority than a reflection of the public’s desire. He began to recruit unauthorized American armies to overtake Spanish Florida and Louisiana, along with parts of British Canada, in support of the Franco-American Alliance. Genêt even threatened to overthrow Washington himself. However, Washington prevailed by demanding and receiving Genêt’s withdrawal from the United States and replacement with a more rational French representative.

The Democratic-Republicans perpetually found themselves at odds with the Federalists as the British continued to battle with France. Britain ignored Washington’s Proclamation of Neutrality, assumed America was allied with France, and seized ships in the West Indies and captured many American sailors. Although both the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans were outraged, they had very different opinions about how America should respond. Under Hamilton’s leadership, the Federalists were most concerned with the economy and wanted to avoid war at all costs. In contrast, the Democratic-Republicans following Jefferson’s leadership felt America was obligated to again fight Britain for its liberty.

Washington stepped in to contain the situation. He sent Federalist Chief Justice John Jay to London in 1794 to negotiate a treaty with Britain to maintain trade relations and avoid war. Yet again the Democratic-Republicans were unhappy with Washington’s actions, fearing that Jay, who was notoriously pro-British, would betray his own country.
Meanwhile Hamilton, fearful of war and ensuing economic disaster, sabotaged Jay’s negotiations by sharing U.S. negotiation tactics with the British. Not surprisingly, Jay’s negotiations were ineffective, garnering only minor victories for the United States. Jay’s Treaty gave the British 18 months to withdraw from the western forts, although they were given the right to continue fur trade with the Indians. The treaty also called for America to repay debts incurred to England during the Revolutionary War. Although there was public outcry over this treaty, the Senate passed the treaty in 1795.

The Democratic-Republicans raged, while the effects of Jay’s Treaty rippled across the United States and beyond. Spain, fearing that the treaty indicated burgeoning loyalties between the U.S. and England, moved to gain a foothold by establishing its own alliance with America. In Pinckney’s Treaty of 1795, the Spanish granted almost all the United States’ requests, including ownership of the previously disputed territory north of Florida. This treaty also gave American western farmers and traders the right of deposit at New Orleans.

**Washington’s Farewell Address**

By 1796, President George Washington had served two consecutive four-year terms in office. The ongoing battle between Federalists and Democratic-Republicans contributed to his decision to retire following his second term.

Washington delivered his Farewell Address via newspapers. In this communication, he conveyed his concerns regarding alliances—both international and domestic. Washington felt that no alliance should be permanent, but rather limited to “extraordinary emergencies” and then only temporary.

He encouraged citizens to examine their loyalty to the United States, rather than to individual political parties, believing that the divisive nature of political parties would bring more harm than good to the union. He even warned against a
general spirit of innovation which he felt could weaken the foundation set forth in the Constitution.

Washington's text was met in much the same way as many of his proclamations while in office: with partisan conflict. His supporters lauded his service and dedication to building a solid, strong government, while his detractors picked apart his shortcomings and inequities. However, both sides agreed that Washington had served the purpose of being a prominent figurehead for a union struggling to find its footing, and that his successor could be chosen with more focus on political prowess than prestige.
John Adams

XYZ Affair

The signing of Jay’s Treaty, which settled violations of the Treaty of Paris and averted the threat of war with England, induced angry reactions from both American and European politicians. Democratic-Republicans believed the treaty was a humiliating surrender to the British. French leaders, meanwhile, viewed it as a step toward forming a union with their enemy, a flagrant breach of the Franco-American Treaty of 1778. However, an unexpected consequence of the pro-Federalist, Pro-British treaty was that it motivated Spain to negotiate with the United States and cede the panhandle of Florida to the Americans. The treaty also permitted free navigation of the Mississippi River—a boon to westerners, a growing component of the Democratic-Republican constituency.

When John Adams took the presidential oath in 1797, he inherited several problems from George Washington’s administration, including strained relations with France. In retaliation for John Jay’s agreement with England, French forces plundered more than 300 American ships. To attempt to negotiate a settlement with France and stop the attacks on American shipping, Adams appointed three commissioners: Charles Pinckney, United States minister to France; John Marshall, a Virginia lawyer; and Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts.

The trio experienced a hostile environment when they arrived in France. Instead of speaking directly with Foreign Minister Talleyrand, they communicated through three French agents, whom the commissioners labeled X, Y, and Z in their report to Congress. The agents insisted that before negotiations could begin, the Americans were to pay a $250,000 bribe and a $12 million loan. While bribery was commonplace in eighteenth-century politics, Talleyrand’s demand was too high for merely a pledge to negotiate. Pinckney rejected the terms and told the French agents "no, no, not a sixpence." The incident became known as “The XYZ Affair.”
When the commissioners’ report to Congress was made public, citizens were furious about the French misbehavior. Even the most loyal Democratic-Republicans, who had nurtured and supported a strong relationship with France, felt a sense of betrayal, and many joined a call for war. Pinckney’s response to Talleyrand’s demands sparked a rallying cry that spread throughout the colonies: "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute."

Fueled by Federalist politicians eager for a fight, the war campaign garnered more support. Adams refused to declare war but advocated the build up of American armed forces. Congress stopped commercial trade with France, renounced the alliance of 1778, tripled the size of the army, and created a Navy Department with an order for the construction of 40 warships. Adams lured George Washington out of retirement to lead the military and, at the insistence of the general, named Alexander Hamilton as second in command. For the next two and one-half years, American privateers teamed with the newly re-enforced Navy to attack French shipping and capture nearly ninety French vessels.

Hamilton led the Federalist charge for war, but Adams remained steadfast in his refusal to sign a formal declaration of war. He believed that war with France would divide the colonies and lead to a civil war. The XYZ Affair may have been Adams’s finest hour because of his decision to put the interests of his nation ahead of those of his party.

In 1799, Talleyrand, who did not want to deplete the French military with a fight outside of Europe, let it be known that he was willing to talk. Adams sent another delegation to negotiate a peaceful end to the quasi-war with France. But by the time the envoy arrived in Paris, Napoleon Bonaparte was in power and looking to cut ties with America. The two sides finally produced an agreement, called “The Convention of 1800,” that annulled the 1778 treaty of alliance and excused the French from damage claims of American shippers. Had Adams chosen war, it may have jeopardized the American purchase of Louisiana in 1803. The threat of war
with France was eliminated, but the battle of political leaders at home had just begun.

**Alien and Sedition Acts**

The feud with France created bad blood between the political parties in America. Democratic-Republicans and Federalists took advantage of every opportunity to undermine each other. In 1798, the Federalist-controlled Congress exploited the anti-French sentiment sweeping through the colonies to pass a series of laws that, on the surface, promoted American safety but actually were designed to quiet their Democratic-Republican counterparts. The Alien and Sedition Acts were comprised of four laws:

- The Naturalization Act lengthened from five to fourteen years the residency requirement for citizenship. Since many poor European immigrants favored the more inviting Democratic-Republican Party, the wealthier aristocratic Federalists intended to use the act to delay their voting privileges.

- The Alien Enemies Act allowed the president to expel aliens in wartime. Federalists created this law because they believed a war with France was imminent. However, since war was never officially declared, it served no feasible purpose.

- The Alien Act authorized the president to deport or imprison all aliens whom he considered dangerous to the safety of the United States. Although the law was never enforced, many immigrants feared the subjective power the president wielded and fled the country.

- The Sedition Act prohibited antigovernment activity. It was illegal to publish or even speak any false, scandalous, and malicious criticism of government officials. This law directly targeted Democratic-Republican newspapers. Twenty-five editors were indicted under the act, and ten were convicted by Federalist judges.
who did not attempt to hide their prejudice. Vermont Congressman Mathew Lyon, one of the first convicted, was fined and jailed for opposing the policies of the Adams administration. To avoid having the Sedition Act used against them, Federalists inserted into the law an expiration date of 1801 in case they lost the next election.

The Alien and Sedition Acts effectively muzzled the Democratic-Republicans; however, their ultimate effect worked against the Federalists. Many colonists, angry at the Federalist abuse of authority, shifted their political support to Thomas Jefferson and his Democratic-Republican Party. Adams also lost many followers because he agreed to sign the bills into law and ordered their enforcement. The political tide in the colonies was turning, and Jefferson was poised to take a leadership role.

In 1798, Jefferson and James Madison penned resolutions disputing the constitutionality of the Alien and Sedition Acts. Since the Congress and Supreme Court were dominated by Federalists, the duo took their fight to the Democratic-Republican legislatures of Kentucky and Virginia. Jefferson presented his draft to the Kentucky legislature, and Madison offered his version to the legislature of Virginia.

The resolutions asserted that each state enter into a compact, or contract, with the national government and delegate power to the centralized entity for the common good of all states. If a state decided that the national government overstepped its constitutional authority, it could intervene to protect its citizens from tyrannical law. Jefferson argued that the Federal government had exceeded its authority with the establishment of the Alien and Sedition Acts and concluded that each state had the right to nullify the laws because they deemed them unconstitutional.
Jefferson and Madison hoped that the approval of their Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions would inspire other states to follow their lead to weaken the Federalist stronghold on government. They anticipated a swell in the membership of the Democratic-Republican Party as voters uncovered the truth about the Federalists’ actions. However, no other states approved the resolutions. Although the compact theory touting the power of individual states did not garner much support in the post-Revolutionary era, it would prove to play a substantial role in the political events leading up to the Civil War.

**Election of 1800**

As the presidential election of 1800 drew near, political maneuvering grew increasingly aggressive. The election was the first to feature the Federalists and Republicans as two national political parties. Federalists endured the wrath of angry Americans who viewed the Federalists as power-hungry bureaucrats with anti-liberty agendas. The Alien and Sedition Acts, coupled with large tax increases—which required a small army of administrators to enforce—cast a dark cloud over the party. Fear grew throughout the states as Federal soldiers pursued private citizens for opposing government policies and protesting high taxes. Many Republicans, mostly from southern states, secretly planned to resist Federalist tyranny by force or secede from the union if the Federalists remained in power.

Federalists defended their political strategy and attempted to deflect the voters’ ire onto the Republican Party. They portrayed Jefferson as a godless extremist who would destroy religion, introduce immorality to society, and institute radical social reforms similar to those found in France. Federalist Alexander Hamilton thought the country should be ruled by the best people, not by the masses as Republicans believed. Hamilton worried that a full democracy would let inexperienced, easy-to-influence commoners run the country.
Those who shared most of Hamilton’s political opinions, called Hamiltonian Federalists, promoted a strong central government and limited rights for states. They supported private enterprise and believed government should protect the lives and wealth of affluent citizens. The pro-British Federalists, many of whom continued to embrace Loyalist sentiments, favored trade agreements with England. Hamilton and his followers also counted on a Federalist presidential victory because of the impending war with France. Citizens of America, he reasoned, would get swept up in waves of patriotism and support the Federalist candidates. However, President Adams was still the most visible Federalist, and his political opinions clashed with those of Hamilton. Adams broke from his party’s platform to negotiate with France. His decision to bypass war and seek peace divided the Federalist Party and most likely cost him the chance of re-election.

Members of both parties used newspapers, pamphlets, and town hall meetings to deride their opponents, although only Republicans were convicted under the Sedition Act. The behavior was standard for eighteenth-century politics, but Thomas Jefferson refused to participate in the mudslinging. Jefferson instead took his campaign to the farmers, laborers, and shopkeepers. He appealed to the common people because he sympathized with those who were oppressed and persecuted. In 1800 he wrote, “I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man.”

The “commoners” Jefferson spoke of were educated white males who owned property. The illiterate and landless, he believed, could not self-govern. Many of the Virginian’s followers lived in the southern states where agriculture was the principal means of support. He championed their pleas to maintain slaveholding because he understood the importance of the black slave system to the success of the tobacco and rice farmers. Although he faced a moral issue with slavery, Jefferson realized his presidential campaign needed the support of the farmers, and it was in his best interest to help them prosper.
Jefferson also garnered support from those seeking relief from an overbearing government. The Republican Party advocated a weak central government with individual states holding the most power. By placing authority on the local level, Jefferson argued, citizens could keep a watchful eye on their representatives and avoid the potential creation of a dictatorship.

The election of 1800 included Republicans Jefferson and Aaron Burr and Federalists Adams and Charles C. Pinckney as candidates for president and vice president, respectively. The Republican effort to motivate voters paid off, as more than twice the number of people turned out for the 1800 election than for earlier elections. Jefferson collected 73 electoral votes to Adams’s 65; however, the presidency was not yet won. Burr also received 73 votes, tying him with Jefferson. At the time, candidates for president and vice president did not run on the same ticket. Rather, the person who received the most votes was named president.

The Federalists agreed to have an elector offer one vote for John Jay so that Adams would have more votes than Pinckney. Republicans, however, made no such plan and wound up with their candidates finishing in a dead heat. Since Burr refused to step aside, the decision to elect the next president was to be made by the House of Representatives, which was controlled by the Federalists.

Burr became the favorite because many Federalists believed Jefferson would dismantle Hamilton’s fiscal system and change the Washington-Adams foreign policy. The debates stretched into 1801 before Hamilton, who detested Burr, persuaded enough of his fellow party members to give Jefferson the victory. Burr was named vice president. Jefferson, who compared his victory to the historic events of 1776, called the election the “Revolution of 1800.” He may have been right in this respect since this election produced the first orderly transfer of power from one party to another.
Soon after the election, the Twelfth Amendment was created to guarantee that a voting deadlock would never occur again. It required separate balloting in the Electoral College for president and vice president. The amendment was ratified in 1804 before the next election.

The Republican victory of 1800 was the beginning of the end of the Federalist Party. For more than a decade, Federalists had held the most powerful positions in the United States government. With the defeat, John Adams became the last Federalist president. The party slowly lost its political clout and dissolved by 1830.
Jefferson as President
The Louisiana Purchase

After the malicious campaigning of the election of 1800, Thomas Jefferson focused on reconciling the colonies and restoring the principles of the Revolution of 1776. “We have called by different names brethren of the same principle,” he declared in his first inaugural address. “We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists.” The tall and lanky politician was, in many ways, the opposite of his short and rotund predecessor.

Unlike Federalist leaders who supported big business, big cities, and big government, Jefferson believed in an agrarian society with strong local governments. Farming, he believed, was a noble profession because it kept men away from the temptation of the cities and required an honest day’s work. He also favored a more informal style of government than the pomp and ceremony so conspicuous in the Washington and Adams administrations.

While Jefferson formulated his strategy to downsize the federal government and stimulate the country’s economy, Napoleon Bonaparte set in motion his plan to revive French imperialism in the New World. Spain’s agreement to give Louisiana back to France jeopardized Pinckney’s Treaty, which provided Americans free navigation of the Mississippi River. Jefferson feared that the power-hungry Napoleon had designs on controlling the American frontier and would forbid Americans access to New Orleans, the most important shipping port in the south. The prospect of losing rights to the Mississippi River and New Orleans endangered plans for western expansion and threatened the American economy.

In 1802, Jefferson ordered Robert Livingston, minister to France, and later James Monroe to visit Paris to negotiate the purchase of New Orleans and Florida. Jefferson did not know if Spain had also relinquished control of Florida to France,
but he realized that the two territories were crucial to America’s success. The president, a pacifist who reduced the size of the American military, aggressively warned that if France took possession of New Orleans, the United States citizens would be forced to rely on the British military to help them win access to the waterway.

However, by 1803, the French army had suffered a humiliating defeat during a slave revolt in Saint Domingue—present day Haiti—and Napoleon’s plans to conquer Europe demanded more men, money, and weaponry than anticipated. These events forced the French ruler to alter plans to expand the French empire into America. Napoleon was no longer concerned with developing sugar plantations in the New World—he needed troops for European battles and money to support his conquest. Napoleon withdrew his soldiers from America and the surrounding islands and ordered Talleyrand to offer all of Louisiana to the Americans.

Livingston and Monroe were authorized to buy New Orleans and Florida for no more than $10 million, but they never dreamed they would have the opportunity to purchase more than 800,000 square miles. Since Napoleon demanded an immediate response, there was no time to send for Jefferson’s approval. The men negotiated with the French representatives and, in the spring of 1803, the United States government agreed to buy all of the Louisiana Territory for $15 million. The purchase more than doubled the size of the United States, but neither party knew the exact size of the territory or what it contained. “I can give you no direction,” said Talleyrand. “You have made a noble bargain for yourselves and, I suppose you will make the most of it.”

The deal garnered support from many Americans who were excited over the prospect of further westward expansion. Critics of the agreement, however, refused to remain silent. Many Federalists attacked Jefferson for undermining the Constitution, which did not mention the purchase of territory. Even Jefferson questioned whether the government had the power under the Constitution to
add territory and grant American citizenship to the approximately 50,000 people living in the Louisiana Territory. Jefferson and Congress finally agreed to overlook the constitutional difficulties for the good sense of the country. The president had compromised his belief of a strict interpretation of the Constitution.

Although several prominent Federalists—including John Adams and John Marshall—favored the purchase, others in the party viewed the new land as a threat to their future. Some Federalists feared that an expanded United States would dilute their New England-based political power. They reasoned that the Louisiana inhabitants, including Indians, blacks, and commoners, would be more attracted to the Republican Party values that promoted class equality and extolled the virtues of agrarian life.

**Lewis and Clark**

The Louisiana Purchase offered the United States much needed room to grow and access to an abundance of natural resources, waterways, and fertile farmland. Countless opportunities awaited the Americans, but they would first have to locate them. The Louisiana Territory was so large that France could not accurately define its contents or borders. Jefferson took advantage of the ambiguous agreement and asserted that it included the Missouri River, western Florida, New Orleans, and all of present-day Texas.

To evaluate the purchase, Jefferson planned an expedition. As a scientist, he wanted to know about the plants, animals, geographical layout, and inhabitants of the region. More importantly, however, the president was hoping to find a water route to connect the Mississippi River with the Pacific Ocean, and he expanded the expedition to investigate regions beyond Louisiana.

In 1803, Jefferson secured $2,500 from Congress to fund the journey. He then appointed his personal secretary, Meriwether Lewis, to lead the expedition. To
serve as joint commander, Lewis selected William Clark, a veteran army officer with considerable experience as a surveyor, mapmaker, frontiersman, and Indian negotiator. The duo assembled a team of 48 qualified men, called the “Corps of Discovery,” to accompany them on the trip. The members were chosen for their expertise, strength, and character. During the spring of 1804, the group departed from St. Louis and traveled northwest along the Missouri River toward the Pacific Ocean.

Along the way, Lewis and Clark recruited additional help. Among those added were a French trapper named Toussaint Charbonneau and his 16-year-old Shoshone wife Sacajawea who served as guides and interpreters for the journey. Clark believed that having an Indian woman as a member of their party would show that their intentions were peaceful. Just weeks before the group departed from the upper Missouri, Sacajawea gave birth to her first son. The new Indian mother carried her baby boy on a cradleboard as the group continued its trek.

Four months later, the Corps of Discovery encountered a Shoshone band. When Sacajawea advanced to negotiate the purchase of horses for their leg over the Rocky Mountains, she discovered that it was her brother who led the Shoshone tribe. Sacajawea had been kidnapped at the age of ten and lost touch with her people. Although the reunion with her family was emotional, she remained loyal to the expedition.

Lewis and Clark valued Sacajawea as a guide. Clark wrote in his journal how she remembered Shoshone trails from her childhood and led them along an important trail that passed through a gap in the mountains to the Yellowstone River. The expedition leaders respected Sacajawea for the courage and strength she displayed and formed a strong bond with her son.

In the fall of 1805, the Corps of Discovery crossed the Continental Divide and descended the Snake and Columbia Rivers to the Pacific Ocean. The group marveled at the scenery they believed marked their western destination.
"Great joy in camp we are in View of the Ocian, this great Pacific Octean which we been So long anxious to See. And the roreing or noise made by the waves brakeing on the rockey Shores (as I Suppose) may be heard distictly."--William Clark, November 7, 1805

However, Clark’s journal entry was premature: The group was actually at the Columbia estuary. It would be another two weeks before they would reach Cape Disappointment and look out over the Pacific Ocean. The group constructed Fort Clatsop and suffered through a cold, wet winter. In March, they started their trek home and separated into two parties to explore more land. The two groups rejoined each other at the juncture of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers and arrived back in St. Louis in September of 1806.

The Corps of Discovery finally completed the mission that Thomas Jefferson assigned to them nearly three years earlier. The group recorded more than 100 animals and nearly 200 plants new to American science. They traveled thousands of miles over various terrains and created approximately 150 maps. The expedition established friendly relations with Indians and identified strategic locations for trading posts. However, the group did not find the item Jefferson most wanted—a water passage connecting the Mississippi River with the Pacific Ocean.

Between 1806 and 1807, Jefferson continued to gather information about the territory west of the Mississippi River. He sent Lieutenant Zebulon Pike to find the source of the Mississippi and to explore the Colorado region. Although he did not keep detailed notes like Lewis and Clark, Pike’s excursion offered Americans valuable information regarding the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains.

The Aaron Burr Conspiracy

Jefferson had feelings of both triumph and trepidation over the purchase of Louisiana. On the one hand, he had doubled the size of the United States and
presented to Americans access to some of the richest land in North America. On the other hand, the government he directed was not designed to regulate the huge territory. Fears of foreign occupation and secession dominated his thoughts.

One man who challenged the president’s authority was Aaron Burr, Jefferson's first-term vice president. When he was dropped from Jefferson’s administration, Burr collaborated with a group of radical Federalists to organize the secession of New England and New York. Alexander Hamilton, who detested Burr and previously opposed his attempt to become governor of New York, uncovered the plan and blocked the conspiracy. An irate Burr then challenged Hamilton to a duel. Although dueling was banned in several states and Hamilton despised the practice, he reluctantly accepted the challenge to defend his honor. The two men walked the agreed number of paces but Hamilton refused to fire. With one shot, Burr killed Hamilton and eliminated one of the leaders of the Federalist Party.

Burr then set his sights on the new American territory. The desire to create his own empire again pushed him to plot breaking up the nation. This time he planned to separate the western portion of the United States from the eastern section. He formed a partnership with General James Wilkinson, the corrupt governor of the Louisiana Territory who also served as a spy for Spain. Burr and about sixty followers rafted down the Mississippi River toward New Orleans. They were to meet up with Wilkinson’s army along the way. Wilkinson, however, changed his mind and sent Jefferson a letter warning him of Burr’s scheme.

In 1807, Burr was arrested and taken to Richmond, Virginia where he was to stand trial for treason. Jefferson desperately wanted Burr convicted and played a key role in the prosecution. He published affidavits and offered pardons to conspirators who would help convict Burr. Chief Justice John Marshall presided over the hearing and displayed a bias in favor of Burr. Marshall followed a strict reading of the Constitution and insisted that two witnesses were required to verify the overt acts of treason. Since the prosecution could not produce the witnesses, the jury acquitted Burr. Marshall’s narrow interpretation of the
Constitution placed a high burden of proof on the prosecution and established an important legal precedent that defended the rights of the accused.
War of 1812

Jefferson’s Embargo

Thomas Jefferson envisioned a peaceful, agrarian society that used diplomacy, rather than military might, to execute America’s foreign policy. Jefferson believed that a large standing army was an invitation to dictatorship, and he drastically reduced the size of both the American Army and Navy. However, events in the Mediterranean quickly challenged Jefferson’s decision and forced him to re-evaluate his philosophy about the use of force.

On the Barbary Coast of North Africa, rulers of Algiers, Morocco, Tunis, and Tripoli extorted money from countries wishing to send cargo ships through their waters. For years, American shipping was safe because Britain regularly paid the pirates. However, after the Revolution, American vessels were no longer protected by British payments of tribute, and the leaders of the new American government agreed to take over payment of the protection money. Ironically, it was during this same time that the French demanded a bribe from America to meet with Foreign Minister Talleyrand. Colonists, angry at the attempted extortion, cried “millions for defense but not one cent for tribute.”

In 1801, the pasha of Tripoli increased the tribute demanded for safe passage. When Jefferson refused to pay, Tripoli declared war on the United States, and the president reluctantly sent warships to Tripoli. The American frigate *Philadelphia* was eventually captured and its men held hostage. After four years of sporadic fighting, Jefferson finally negotiated a treaty with Tripoli. For $60,000, the captured Americans were released. To make sure that the weapons on the *Philadelphia* could not be used against Americans, Lieutenant Stephen Decatur slipped on board the ship and set it ablaze.

Jefferson reassessed his decision to scale back the military and ordered several small gunboats that critics nicknamed “Jeffs” or the “mosquito fleet.” The
undersized boats were fast but featured just one gun. Jefferson believed that the boats could effectively guard the American coastline but were not intimidating enough to lure the country into international incidents on the high seas.

In 1803, American shipping became entangled in European hostilities when Napoleon revived his war with England. The American Navy, which was no match for the heavily armed English and French, could offer only limited protection for American merchants. While both England and France captured American ships, it was the English who forced the detained American sailors to fight for the Royal Navy. For the next several years, England impressed more than one thousand Americans each year. The actions of the British angered United States citizens, and calls for retaliation intensified.

In the summer of 1807 off the coast of Virginia, the crew of the British frigate *Leopard* stopped the American ship *Chesapeake* and demanded to search it. When the captain refused to obey the orders, the British warship opened fire, killing three Americans and injuring several more. When Jefferson learned of the incident, he ordered all British ships to leave U.S. territorial waters. The British, however, responded with even more aggressive searches.

Jefferson set in motion his idea of “peaceable coercion” by encouraging Congress to pass the Embargo Act of 1807, which stopped all exports of American goods. Jefferson reasoned that both England and France relied heavily on American products and would be forced to work with the United States. Lax enforcement of the act along with alternate sources of products provided by Latin America ruined Jefferson’s plan. The embargo actually did more harm than good because American farmers and manufacturers had no outlets to sell their goods.

Jefferson’s popularity plunged and the Federalist Party began to make a resurgence as voters eyed the upcoming election. Critics shouted that Jefferson’s decisions damaged the economy and left America unprotected. The president finally conceded defeat and repealed the embargo during his last days in office.
Congress then passed the Non-Intercourse Act, which reopened trade with all countries except France and England.

**Election of Madison**

Jefferson tired of the rigorous demands of America's highest office and left the presidency after two terms. During the election of 1808, he supported the nomination of Secretary of State James Madison. The two Virginians shared many characteristics and ideals. Both men relied more on their intellect and writing skills than on their speaking abilities, and both favored negotiating techniques over military supremacy. Although the embargo was unpopular with Americans, Madison and the Republican Party still captured an overwhelming number of votes, finishing strong in the South and West to win the election.

The new president inherited a government that was operating at a deficit and strained by tense foreign relations. The war between France and Britain saddled Americans with a number of restrictions. The British, acting under the “Orders in Council,” punished Americans who traded directly with France, and the French punished Americans who traded with Britain under orders referred to as the “Milan Decree.”

To revive the sluggish economy, Congress passed a bill introduced by Representative Nathaniel Macon of North Carolina. Labeled “Macon's Bill No. 2,” the measure eliminated all restrictions on commerce with France and England. It also stated that if either France or England revoked its sanctions against the U.S., America would re-establish its embargo against the other nation. Napoleon agreed to lift the French sanctions, and Madison restored the embargo against England. However, the French ruler never intended to follow through on his promise. He wanted to make America create a blockade against England so he could avoid involving his own forces. Madison realized that the embargo ended America’s neutrality, and war with Britain was now a distinct possibility.
Relations with England continued to deteriorate when many Americans, mostly those located in the western territory, accused the British of inciting Indian resistance. Settlers encountered hostile Indians intent on recovering land they believed was stolen. The leaders behind the latest revolt were Shawnee chief Tecumseh and his brother Tenskwatawa, known as “The Prophet” because he claimed to have religious visions. The two worked to unify the tribes east of the Mississippi against the white "invaders."

In late 1811, William Henry Harrison, governor of Indiana Territory, assembled a small army and advanced on Prophet Town, a settlement located at the junction of the Wabash and Tippecanoe Rivers that served as headquarters for the Indians. While Tecumseh traveled to recruit followers, Tenskwatawa and a few braves attacked Harrison and his men. Although the Indians were overpowered, the Battle of Tippecanoe pushed Tecumseh to join forces with Britain against the United States. In the end, it was the Americans who actually helped the British-Indian alliance become reality. Britain's constant attempts to challenge U.S. authority and destabilize the unity of the states angered Americans and pushed the United States closer to war.

Support for Jefferson's strategy of peaceful coercion to manage international affairs began to weaken. War, Madison believed, was necessary to defend the future of the republican experiment and to prove to the world the viability of democracy as a form of government. On June 1, 1812, Madison asked Congress to declare war on England. After two weeks of debate, Congress narrowly approved his request.

The vote divided the House and the Senate. Republicans in the south and west backed their president's decision to use force, while Federalists in New England questioned the judgment to engage the largest navy in the world in battle. Many Federalists, intent on making sure that Madison's plan failed, secretly provided British troops with food, supplies, and money. New England governors even
refused to allow their militia to serve outside their own states. The president was feeling pressure from both the enemy and his own countrymen.

In Europe, Napoleon's control of commercial outlets left England's economy in dire straights. Manufacturers pleaded for the repeal of the Orders in Council so they would once again have access to the American market. Lord Castlereagh, England's new foreign secretary, finally agreed to suspend the Orders. However, the decision came five days after Congress voted for war.

The War

While Republicans, for the most part, still backed Jefferson's foreign policies, new elections were transforming the party. Older politicians who molded the Republican Party policy and put Jefferson and Madison in power were replaced by daring young go-getters, such as Henry Clay of Kentucky, who were intent on defending America's honor. These new leaders, called "War Hawks" by their Federalist opponents, were the primary force behind Madison's decision to call for war with Britain.

The War Hawks, who were interested in expansion westward and into Canada, were angry at British leaders for closing trade channels with America and considered Britain's treatment of American sailors illegal. They believed retaliation was necessary to gain respect from European leaders. In 1812, the United States entered into war with only a fraction of the manpower and weapons that Britain claimed.

To lead the Americans into battle, Madison relied on several veterans who served in the Revolution. However, these soldiers were now much older and far removed from battlefield experience. They lacked the training and discipline necessary to undertake a military campaign. An attempt to invade Canada failed when a large number of British troops, and a group led by Indian chief Tecumseh, overwhelmed American forces that were spread too thin.
As the war waged on, the American military became hardened by the experience of battle. In the fall of 1813, a fleet led by Captain Oliver Hazard Perry defeated British forces that controlled Lake Erie. As English troops retreated from Detroit, William Henry Harrison gave chase and defeated them at the Thames River. The battle was a turning point for the Americans because among the dead was Chief Tecumseh. Without their powerful leader, the Indians lost their will to fight, and the British military was forced to reconsider its strategy.

During the spring of 1814, British leaders launched a plan to end the war once and for all. An army of 11,000 men marched southward from Montreal while another group sailed from Jamaica to New Orleans to control the waterways. When the British troops reached Washington, they encountered little resistance and set the Capitol and the White House on fire. President Madison watched helplessly as Redcoats took souvenirs before the blaze grew out of control.

The group then moved on to Fort McHenry, where they fired more than 1,800 shells in just over 24 hours. Witnessing the continuous bombing was Francis Scott Key. Just before the attack, Key had sneaked on board a British ship in search of a captured doctor. Key kept his eyes on Fort McHenry, and on the American flag that flew over the fort, as rockets lit up the night sky. When daylight arrived, Key peeked out from his cover to see the Stars and Stripes still waving. The Americans had successfully defended their ground. Moved by the scene, Key scribbled his thoughts on the back of an old letter. Eventually, the notes became "The Star Spangled Banner," a song the United States would adopt as its national anthem.

Later that year, the British planned another attempt to overtake New Orleans. An armada of 60 ships and 11,000 men, led by Major General Sir Edward Pakenham, set out from Jamaica to the mouth of the Mississippi. As the fleet sailed through swamps and bayous before approaching the city from the east, American farmers saw the ships and raced to inform General Andrew Jackson, who was in charge of defending the Gulf Coast. Jackson quickly rallied his troops and ambushed the
British fleet. The battle raged for weeks before Pakenham ordered his soldiers to advance on the Americans who had dug in just outside New Orleans. The American army, which consisted of soldiers, sailors, pirates, militiamen, and freed slaves, used a strategy of revolving firing lines to make sure that guns were always firing at the Redcoats. The British army was forced to retreat after it suffered more than 300 fatalities, including Major General Pakenham. The Battle of New Orleans was an overwhelming success for the Americans and made General Andrew Jackson a hero.

While fighting occurred across the United States, many defiant Federalists continued to protest against the war. Some extremists participated in illegal trade with British troops stationed in Canada; others went even further. The Hartford Convention was the meeting of radical New England Federalists who considered seceding from the Union. Some members proposed the creation of a New England Confederacy that would establish peace with England so trading could be reinstated. As the group planned its strategy to strike against the Republican-led Union, the leaders received news about a peaceful resolution to the war. Rumors about the plan to secede from the Union spread throughout the states, and Federalist support declined drastically.

In 1814, during the same time that England carried out its plan to defeat General Jackson and take control of New Orleans, an American delegation met with English representatives in the small Belgian city of Ghent to discuss the possibility for peace. Members of the American group included former secretary of the treasury Albert Gallatin; Speaker of the House of Representatives Henry Clay; former senator James Bayard; Jonathan Russell, minister to Sweden; and John Quincy Adams, son of John Adams and minister to Russia.

Confident that their army would be victorious, the British made several heavy-handed demands. For example, Britain wanted the United States to give nearly all of the Northwest Territory to the Indians and relinquish control of the Great Lakes and portions of Maine, but the Americans refused. After several days of
negotiating, the British envoys received word of several defeats the English army had suffered in the United States and reconsidered their bargaining position.

The Treaty of Ghent, signed on Christmas Eve in 1814, was essentially a draw. It called for both the British and Americans to quit fighting and return conquered territory. It made no reference to the complaints that prompted the United States to declare war on Britain. Search and seizures, Orders in Council, and the impressment of American sailors were basically ignored, and both parties were content to agree to a truce. After the treaty was signed, ships were free to sail to any port, goods could be traded with any customer, and Royal Navy warships no longer patrolled the American coastline.

The War of 1812 began and ended on an ironic note. It began while American and British diplomats were on the verge of reaching accord, and its peace treaty was signed before America’s great victory at New Orleans had been fought. Even more ironic was the fact that the most meaningful consequence of this divisive conflict was an upsurge of nationalism that united Americans and led to the development of a national identity and agenda in the postwar years.
James Monroe

The Era of Good Feelings

As James Madison approached the end of his presidency in 1816, a fellow Virginian and Republican—James Monroe—was elected as his successor. Monroe’s presidency was a continuation of the so-called “Virginia Dynasty,” since all of the presidents between 1801 and 1825 were from Virginia. The fading Federalist Party ran a candidate in the 1816 election for the last time, securing only 34 electoral votes compared to Monroe’s 183 votes. Monroe came to the presidency with a solid political background; he had served as a U.S. senator, he was twice the governor of Virginia, he was President Madison’s Secretary of State, and he had also served a short time as President Madison’s Secretary of War. He fought in the Battle of Trenton during the Revolutionary War at the age of 18.

Monroe was not considered a president with outstanding intellect, nor was he considered a strong leader, but he was regarded as extremely dedicated, levelheaded, and sincere. Jefferson once said that if you turned Monroe’s soul inside out, it would be found spotless. Whatever his limitations, he surrounded himself with promising Republican leaders, including John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State and son of former Federalist President John Adams; William Crawford, Secretary of Treasury; and John C. Calhoun, Secretary of War.

Monroe’s presidency spanned the end of the Revolutionary generation and the emergent age of nationalism. The country was at peace and the economy was thriving when Monroe embarked on a goodwill tour of New England shortly after his inauguration in 1817. He was warmly welcomed everywhere he went—even Boston, which had become a center of wartime dissent for the Federalists during the War of 1812. The Columbian Centinel, a Federalist newspaper in Boston, went so far as to announce that an “Era of Good Feelings” had been ushered in.
This phrase has often been used to describe Monroe’s presidency, but it is, unfortunately, somewhat misleading. The first few years of Monroe's presidency were blessed with peace, liberty, and progress. However, the prosperity following the War of 1812 collapsed, the Panic of 1819 took hold, and a resurgence of sectionalism erupted.

The Panic of 1819 marked the end of the economic expansion that followed the War of 1812. It featured deflation, depression, bank failures, foreclosures, unemployment, a slump in agriculture and manufacturing, and overcrowded debtors’ prisons. It was the first national economic panic since Washington took office.

Many factors contributed to the Panic of 1819, including a downturn in exports and strong price competition from foreign goods. The falling prices impaired agriculture and manufacturing, triggering widespread unemployment. Another major cause was the risky lending practiced by banks in the west. The Second Bank of the United States tightened their credit lending policies and eventually forced these “wildcat” frontier banks to foreclose mortgages on countless farms and similar high-risk debtors, which resulted in bankruptcies and prisons full of debtors. The Panic of 1819 affected the entire country.

Although the country experienced hard times, little of the blame fell on President Monroe. He was easily elected for a second term in 1820, winning all of the electoral votes but one. Monroe was the only U.S. president to be re-elected after presiding over such a major financial crisis.

Sectional concerns over tariff issues, banking policy, sale of public land, and slavery began to divide the United States into three distinct regions: north, south, and west. While the lines of sectionalism were being drawn, Henry Clay came up with a plan called the “American System” that drew upon the nationalism Americans were still feeling after the War of 1812. Clay’s plan for developing profitable American markets had three main parts: a strong banking system to
provide abundant credit, a protective tariff to ensure successful eastern manufacturing, and internal improvements, such as a network of roads and canals. Clay’s American System was meant to build the national economy and bind the country together both economically and politically.

Two parts of Clay’s System were implemented—protective tariffs and the Second Bank of the United States. The third provision, internal improvements such as roads, faced fierce opposition from many within the Republican Party, especially Monroe. They objected on the grounds that the Constitution did not explicitly provide for federal government spending on national developments. President Monroe vetoed any bill that provided funds for roadway- or canal-building projects (the National Road or Cumberland Road being the major exception), leaving it up to the states to provide their own infrastructures.

Before the War of 1812, duties averaged about 12.5 percent, and during the war, Congress doubled all tariffs. In 1816, when the additional revenue from high tariffs was no longer needed to fund the war, a new act kept duties at the same wartime levels. The tariff was a protective measure because the British began dumping cheap goods in the United States, often at a cost far below that of American manufacturers. This protective tariff was the first in United States history—the first of many to come. The British were strangling American industry with their cut-rate goods, and to protect the fledgling industrial sector, Congress kept the tariff rates high.

The tariff issue created clear sectional divisions. Eastern manufacturers, represented by Henry Clay, favored high tariffs that would protect them from foreign competition. Northern constituents, represented by Daniel Webster from New Hampshire, were against the tariff because they feared it would affect their shipping trade and cripple their newly developing manufacturing businesses.

Southerners resented the high prices they had to pay for imports because of the high tariff, and they felt the tariff limited the foreign market for southern goods
by inhibiting international exchange. They began a long campaign against the duties, hoping that freer trade would revive the cotton economy. Southerners were represented by John C. Calhoun, who originally supported the tariff but turned against it, claiming that it was enriching New England manufacturers at the cost of the South.

Westerners were split on the tariff issue. The Northwest favored high duties in order to protect its agricultural production, while the Southwest favored low duties for the same reason the Southerners did—they produced cotton.

The national banking policy was another important political issue, although the regional lines were less sharply drawn on this subject than they were on the tariff issue. Northerners voted against a re-charter of the Bank of the United States, while Southerners favored the institution.

Westerners favored the new Bank before the Panic of 1819, which created open opposition to the institution. The Second Bank of the United States stopped allowing payment of debts in paper and instead demanded payment in specie—metallic gold and silver coins—which were in short supply after the War of 1812 due to a large trade deficit with Britain. The hardest hit sector was Western farmers who could not pay their loans to the Bank because they could not obtain the specie that was demanded. The Second Bank of the United States then forced western branches to foreclose on farms with outstanding loans. Westerners began to call for reform and the end of the Bank of the United States.

Land policy in the early nineteenth century was another reason for sectional differences. In 1818, the government sold nearly 3.5 million acres of public land due to a lenient credit policy, which in turn led to falling land prices. Sectional attitudes were clear—the West wanted cheap land, while the North and South felt the public land should be sold for as much as possible. Northerners were afraid that cheap land in the west would draw laborers, leaving the north with a shortage of workers that would force an increase in wages. Southerners were
afraid of the competition that might develop when the western lands were settled and planted.

Slavery was the most problematic sectional issue the young nation faced. The leaders of the Constitutional Convention had made many compromises over what politicians at the time called the “peculiar institution”—slavery—in order to get the United States Constitution passed. In 1808, Congress abolished African slave trade without major incident, and by 1819, there were 11 free states and 11 slave states, maintaining a balance in the Union. Most Northerners opposed the institution. In contrast, Southerners wholeheartedly supported and defended slavery, as did most of the West, since many Westerners came from Virginia, Kentucky, and other southern slave states.

While the lines of sectionalism were beginning to be drawn nationally, there remained a few foreign policy issues for the United States to straighten out with Britain and Spain. From 1817 to 1819, the Monroe administration negotiated various foreign policy issues with these two countries. In the Rush-Bagot Agreement of 1817, the United States and Britain agreed to a limited naval presence on the Great Lakes, eventually resulting in the demilitarization of the entire border. The spirit of this agreement gave rise to the tradition of an unfortified border between the United States and Canada.

At the Convention of 1818, the United States and Britain negotiated three important points. The vague northern limit of the Louisiana Purchase was settled along the 49th parallel, from the Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains. The United States was also granted the right to share the Newfoundland and Labrador fisheries. And the third point of agreement was that the Oregon Country would be open to joint occupation by both the British and Americans for 10 years.

During that same year, the Monroe administration recognized increasing problems with Spanish Florida. Seminole Indians frequently came from Florida
into American territory to raid border towns, and American criminals and slaves who escaped across the border into Florida could not be recovered. Secretary of War Calhoun authorized General Andrew Jackson to clear the raiding Seminoles from American soil. His order allowed him to pursue the Indians into Spanish territory but did not authorize him to attack any Spanish posts. Jackson, clearly exceeding his instructions, proceeded to push his way through Florida, destroying Seminole settlements, hanging two Indian chiefs, and capturing two Spanish forts.

Spain demanded the return of its territory, reparations, and punishment of Jackson, but did not have the military might to back up their demands. Much of Monroe’s administration believed that Jackson had gone too far, but Secretary of State John Quincy Adams instead took the offensive in the Adams-Onís Treaty. In 1819, during negotiations with the Spanish Minister to Washington, Luis de Onís, Adams bargained for Spain to cede all of Florida for $5 million—which the United States actually paid to Americans who held claims against Spain—in exchange for America’s abandonment of claims to Texas, thus setting the western boundary of the Louisiana Purchase.

The Missouri Compromise

During the early nineteenth century, the sectional lines between the free north and the slave south were being gradually drawn. Slavery began to gain prominence as a national issue, and the South became solidly united behind the institution of slavery as it became more critical to their economic success. By 1819, the United States was comprised of an equal number of free and slave states—11 of each.

In 1812, Louisiana had entered the Union, and the balance of the Louisiana Purchase was organized into the Missouri Territory. As the population trickled westward, many Southerners and their slaves settled the region north and west of St. Louis. In 1819, the settlers petitioned the House of Representatives for
admission of the state of Missouri as a slave state, since the population exceeded the required 60,000. Missouri was the first area west of the Mississippi to apply for statehood that was entirely part of the Louisiana Purchase.

Missouri’s petition became another sectional issue and led to the end of the “Era of Good Feelings.” Northerners opposed adding Missouri as a slave state because it would upset the current balance of free and slave states. During the debate over Missouri’s admission, Congressman James Tallmadge of New York introduced an amendment stating that no more slaves could be brought into Missouri and that all slaves born in Missouri after the territory became a state would be freed at the age of 25.

Southerners were extremely concerned about the Missouri emancipation amendment and felt the future of the slave system might depend on it being vetoed. They were aware that the amendment could set a damaging precedent for all of the Louisiana Purchase and any land west of the Mississippi. They also held concerns that if Congress abolished slavery in Missouri, they could attempt to do likewise in all of the southern states.

Population growth in the north had led to a majority for the northern states in the House of Representatives. However, because the Senate had equal representation from each state and there was an equal number of free and slave states, the Senate was split on the issue. The House of Representatives passed the Tallmadge Amendment on a strictly sectional vote, but the Senate rejected it, with some Northern Federalists joining the South to spite the Republicans.

Congress was deadlocked for some time over admission of Missouri as a slave state. The primary issues were political and economic balance. Northerners were concerned that Missouri—and any other new slave states—would be over-represented in Congress based on the Three-Fifths Compromise, which said 60 percent of slaves were counted in determining a state’s delegation to the House of Representatives. A secondary issue that was voiced by Northerner
abolitionists was the moral question of slavery. However, the morality of slavery did not influence the solution to the problem at hand.

Henry Clay of Kentucky played a leading role in developing what would be called the “Missouri Compromise.” Missouri was admitted as a slave state, and Maine was separated from Massachusetts and admitted as a free state. This compromise preserved the balance between northern and southern states, as well as free and slave states. In addition, Congress prohibited slavery in all other parts of the Louisianan Purchase north of the line of 36° 30’—the southern boundary of Missouri. This second part of the Compromise was rather ironic, considering Missouri was north of the designated no slavery line.

The Missouri Compromise lasted for 34 years. Both sides had yielded something in the compromise, but both felt they had gained something as well. Northerners were satisfied with the compromise because it kept the balance in the Senate between free and slave states. Southerners felt they won a victory with the Missouri Compromise because at that time most Americans felt it was unlikely that the area north and west of Missouri would ever be settled.

While the controversy had subsided for the time, many Americans were beginning to see the South’s “peculiar institution” as an issue that would eventually have to be confronted. The Missouri Compromise avoided the slavery question, but it did not resolve it.

John Marshall

Despite the growing division over the issue of slavery in America, Chief Justice John Marshall and the Supreme Court worked to reinforce the feelings of nationalism that developed after the War of 1812. Marshall was a Revolutionary War survivor, and his experience led to strong feelings of national loyalty. Although he had six colleagues on the Supreme Court, Marshall’s position as Chief Justice—along with his personality, logic, and forcefulness—resulted in
many rulings that reflected his personal view of the Constitution and his belief in a powerful central government.

During Marshall’s 34 years on the bench, many important cases were considered by the Court. Several of the most famous cases involved three major principles: contract rights protection, the supremacy of federal legislation over the laws of the states, and regulation of interstate commerce.

In 1810, the contract rights case of *Fletcher v. Peck* came before the Supreme Court. Members of the Georgia legislature were bribed in 1795 to sell 35 million acres in Mississippi for a small amount to private speculators. The following year, a new Georgia legislature rescinded the sale. The case was taken to the Supreme Court, and Marshall, speaking for the Court, ruled that the original sale was a legal contract—regardless of whether or not it was fraudulent—and therefore protected by the Constitution. The ruling was historically significant because it protected property rights against popular pressures, and it also clearly asserted the Supreme Court’s right to invalidate state laws that conflicted with the Constitution.

In the case of *Dartmouth College v. Woodward* (1819), the state of New Hampshire tried to alter the college’s charter, which had been granted in 1769 by King George III. A New Hampshire court ruled that Dartmouth was to be changed from a private to a public institution. Dartmouth appealed the case to the Supreme Court, where Marshall ruled that the original charter must stand because it was a contract and could not be altered or canceled without consent of both parties.

The Marshall Court ruled that the Constitution protected contracts against state encroachments. The significance of Marshall’s ruling was far reaching because it effectively safeguarded private corporations from domination by the states’ governments. Unfortunately, the case also set the precedent for giving corporations the ability to skirt governmental controls. Once the states became
aware of this dilemma, they generally wrote into charters the ability to make changes so that it was part of the contract.

A case in which the Marshall court upheld the power of the federal court over that of the states was the 1816 case of *Martin v. Hunter's Lessee*. The state of Virginia confiscated land owned by a British Loyalist named Denny Martin Fairfax. Virginia granted David Hunter 800 acres of the confiscated lands, and Fairfax brought suit against Hunter for return of the land. The Treaty of Paris (1794) and Jay’s Treaty (1795) seemed to make it clear that Fairfax was the rightful owner of the property, but the Virginia court upheld the grant to Hunter.

The Supreme Court and Justice Marshall overruled the Virginia court, declaring that the land belonged to Fairfax and voided the grant to Hunter. The Court’s ruling rejected “compact theory,” the idea that the states were equally sovereign to the federal government. This ruling was significant because it enforced the rights of the Supreme Court, which held appellate jurisdiction over state courts. Thus, Marshall’s ruling upheld the Supremacy Clause of the Constitution.

*McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) is often considered John Marshall’s single most important interpretation of the Constitution, because it dealt with the division of power between the federal government and the states. The state of Maryland, in order to protect its local banks, placed an annual tax on the Bank of the United States and other “foreign” banks. The Maryland branch of the Bank of the United States refused to pay, and Maryland brought suit against the chief bank employee, called the “head cashier,” John W. McCulloch.

Marshall upheld the constitutionality of the Bank of the United States, using Hamilton’s bank message of 1791 to support his position. He argued that the Bank’s legality was implied in many of the powers specifically granted to Congress. Since the bank was legal, the Maryland tax was unconstitutional, for “the power to tax involves the power to destroy,” which was exactly what many states had in mind with respect to the Bank. The Marshall Court’s ruling in favor
of McCulloch used a “loose” interpretation of the Constitution and, with the ruling, strengthened federal authority and the implied powers of Congress.

Two years later in the case of *Cohens v. Virginia* (1821), Marshall once again defended the power of the federal government. The Cohen brothers were illegally selling lottery tickets in the state of Virginia, and the state authorities tried and convicted them. The brothers appealed to the Supreme Court, and Marshall upheld Virginia’s right to forbid the sale of lottery tickets. The case reaffirmed the Supreme Court’s right to review all state court judgements in cases involving the Constitution or powers of the federal government.

In 1824, Marshall handed down his last great decision in *Gibbons v. Ogden*, the “steamboat case,” which involved the regulation of interstate commerce. In 1808, Robert Fulton and Robert Livingston pioneered commercial use of the steamboat and held a monopoly of steamboat navigation on the Hudson in New York. In 1815, Aaron Ogden purchased exclusive rights to operate a ferry between New York and New Jersey. When Thomas Gibbons, who held a federal trade license, set up a competing line, Ogden sued him.

The case was presented to the Supreme Court, where Marshall decided in favor of Gibbons, destroying Fulton’s and Livingston’s monopoly and reminding New York that Congress alone controlled interstate commerce. Marshall’s decision once again checked the power of the states and upheld the sovereign power of the federal government.

Many of Marshall’s decisions while on the bench aided the economic development of the United States and created a nationally uniform environment for business. Marshall’s landmark decisions also confirmed the Supreme Court’s power of judicial review and firmly established the Judiciary as the most powerful branch of the federal government. In a broader sense, his decisions acknowledged the idea of judicial limitation on legislative powers and made the Supreme Court a vital part of America’s system of government.
The Monroe Doctrine

At the great European conference, the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815), the monarchs of Europe gathered to return the continent to its status before the French Revolution. The European powers banded together to eradicate democratic movements that threatened their thrones. In 1821, the Holy Alliance—Russia, Austria, Prussia, and France—quashed liberal movements in Italy. Then in 1822, at the Congress of Verona, the alliance decided to put down Spanish rebels, and in 1823, France crossed the Spanish border and restored the Spanish king to absolute authority. Rumors spread quickly that the autocratic alliance would next send armies to the revolted colonies of Spanish South America and restore the king to power there as well.

Britain had profited from the breakup of the Spanish monarchy in South America by developing a thriving commerce with the Spanish republics. In 1823, the British foreign minister, George Canning, sought to join with the United States and renounce any interest in acquiring any South American territory and declare opposition to any French interference with the South American colonies. Secretary of State Adams recognized that while the proposal was flattering, it was not in the best interest of the United States. He pointed out that the alliance with Britain would mean abandoning the possibility of someday adding part of South America to the United States. He felt the U.S. should proclaim a unilateral policy against the restoration of Spain’s colonies. Adams told Monroe, “It would be more candid, as well as more dignified, to avow our principles explicitly to Russia and France, than to come in as a cockboat in the wake of the British man-of-war.”

Monroe agreed with the arguments Adams made and decided to include a statement of American policy that reflected those arguments in his seventh annual message to Congress in December of 1823. The “Monroe Doctrine,” as it was later called, had two main points. First, Monroe proclaimed that the era of colonization in the Americas had ended: "The American continents, by the free
and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers." Europe’s political system was different than that of the New World, and he felt the two should not be mixed. He stated that any attempts by European powers to extend their political system to the Western Hemisphere would be seen as a threat to the nation’s “peace and safety.” The second point Monroe made in his policy statement was that the United States would not interfere with existing European colonies in North or South American and would avoid involvement in European affairs.

At the time, since the Monroe Doctrine was not a treaty or a law, it drew little attention either in the United States or abroad. In reality, the U.S. didn’t have the power to enforce this unilateral announcement. However, Monroe and his staff knew that the British Navy, the most powerful in the world, would protect South America so that their markets remained open to British trade. Monroe’s Doctrine gave voice to a spirit of patriotism in the United States and did eventually become one of the cherished principles of American foreign policy.
A Growing National Economy

The Growth of America

Between 1790 and 1820, the population of the United States more than doubled to nearly 10 million people. Remarkably, this growth was almost entirely the result of reproduction, as the immigration rate during that period had slowed to a trickle. Fewer than 250,000 immigrants entered the United States due to doubts about the viability of the new republic and travel restrictions in Europe during the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars.

Soon after Napoleon’s final defeat in 1815, immigration to the United States began to increase. Competing shippers who needed westbound payloads kept transatlantic fares low enough to make immigration affordable, and migrants were interested in the prospect of abundant land, high wages, and what they saw as endless economic opportunities. Many also migrated to America because Europe seemed to be running out of room, and numerous people were displaced from their homelands. For the next several decades, the number of immigrants continued to rise. In the 1820s, nearly 150,000 European immigrants arrived; in the 1830s, nearly 600,000; by the 1840s, nearly 1.7 million; and during the 1850s, the greatest influx of immigrants in American history—approximately 2.6 million—came to the United States.

During the 1800s, most European immigrants entered the United States through New York. Ships would discharge their passengers, and the immigrants would immediately have to fend for themselves in a foreign land. It did not take long for thieves and con-men to take advantage of the newcomers. Some of the immigrants brought infectious diseases with them to the States. In 1855, the New York legislature, hoping to curb some of these problems, turned the southern tip of Manhattan into an immigration receiving center. The immigration center recorded their names, nationalities, and destinations; gave them cursory physical examinations; and sometimes assisted them with finding jobs.
By 1860, the number of states had more than doubled to 33 from the original 13. Russia, France, and Austria were the only other countries in the western world that were more populous than the United States. Forty-three cities in the United States boasted populations of more than 20,000 people.

Most of the immigrants coming to the United States came from Ireland and Germany, but some also came from China, Britain, and the Scandinavian countries. In the 1840s, Ireland experienced a potato blight when a rot attacked the potato crop, and nearly two million people died of disease and hunger. Tens of thousands of Irish fled the country during the “Black Forties,” many of them coming to America. By the end of the century, more Irish lived in American than in Ireland, with nearly 2 million arriving between 1830 and 1860. As they arrived in the United States, they were too poor to move west and buy land, so they congregated in large cities along the eastern coast. By 1850, the Irish made up over half the populations of Boston and New York City.

The Irish accepted whatever wages employers offered them, working in steel mills, warehouses, and shipyards or with construction gangs building canals and railways. As they competed for jobs, they were often confronted with “No Irish Need Apply” signs. Race riots were common between the Irish and the free African Americans who competed for the same low-status jobs.

As a rule, Irish immigrants lived in crowded, dirty tenement buildings that were plagued by high crime rates, infectious disease, prostitution, and alcoholism. They were stereotyped as being ignorant, lazy, and dirty. They also faced severe anti-Catholic prejudices. Partially due to the hostility they faced, the Irish cultivated a strong cultural identity in America, developing neighborhood newspapers, strong Catholic churches, political groups, and societies.

Although most Irish had a rough start in America, many eventually improved their position by acquiring small amounts of property. The Irish eventually
controlled the police department in New York City, driving around in police vans called “paddy wagons.”

In the 1820s and 1830s, state constitutions were revised to permit universal white-male suffrage, and as a group, the Irish found their way into American politics and were able to exert a remarkable political influence. They primarily followed the Democrats and Andrew Jackson, who was the son of an Irish colonist. Irish votes enabled Jackson to defeat John Quincy Adams in the election of 1828. By the turn of the twentieth century, the Irish had established political machines such as New York’s “Tammany Hall” and virtually ran the municipal government in and around New York.

During the eighteenth century, many Germans moved to America in response to William Penn’s offer of free religious expression and cheap land in Pennsylvania. Consequently, when a new wave of Germans immigrated to America starting in the 1830s, there were already enclaves of Germans in the United States. Between 1830 and 1860, more than 1.5 million Germans migrated to American soil. Many of them were farmers, but many were also cultured, educated, professional people who were displaced by the failed democratic revolution in Germany in 1848.

In contrast to the Irish, the Germans possessed modest amounts of material things and, as a result, were able to afford to settle in rural areas in the Midwest, such as Ohio and Wisconsin. They often migrated in families or groups, enabling them to sustain the German language and culture in their new environments. The German communities preserved traditions of abundant food, beer, and music consumption. Their culture contributed to the American way of life with such things as the Christmas tree and Kindergarten (children’s garden), but their cultural differences often garnered suspicion from their “native” American neighbors.
America had always been a land of immigrants, but for many American “natives,” the large influx of immigrants in the 1840s and 1850s posed a threat of unknown languages and customs. Some Americans feared that foreigners would outnumber them and eventually overrun the country. The natives saw the mass settlements of Irish and German Catholics as a threat to their hard-won religious and political liberties. This hostility rekindled the spirit of European religious wars, resulting in several armed clashes between Protestants and Catholics.

In 1849, nativists formed a group in New York called the “Order of the Star Spangled Banner,” which developed into a political party called the “American Party.” When asked about the organization, members refused to identify themselves saying, “I know nothing,” which eventually led the group to be labeled the “Know-Nothing” Party. The anti-Catholic group won many elections up until the 1850s, when the anti-Catholic movement subsided and slavery became the focal issue of the time. Throughout this critical growth period in America, immigrants were helping to form the United States into one of the most ethnically and racially diverse societies in the history of the world.

The Growth of Industry

In the eighteenth century, British inventors perfected a series of machines for mass production of textiles, which initiated the European Industrial Revolution and gave Britain a head start in industrial production. For many years, the British carefully guarded their industrial secrets, forbidding the export of machines or even descriptions of them and restricting the departure of informed mechanics.

The British could not keep its secrets forever, and in 1789, Samuel Slater left Britain in disguise and arrived in America with the plans in his head for a textile machine that would spin cotton. He contracted with a merchant-manufacturer in Rhode Island to build the machine, and in 1791, he created the first efficient American machinery for spinning cotton thread. By 1815, there were 130,000
cotton spindles turning in 213 factories. Slater is often called the “Father of the Factory System” in America.

Slater’s cotton thread machine was a fabulous invention, but there was a shortage of cotton fiber to spin since it took an entire day for one slave to pick one pound of fiber and separate it from the seeds. In 1793, another mechanical entrepreneur, Eli Whitney, graduated from Yale and spent some time as a tutor on a cotton plantation in Georgia. While there, Whitney devised a mechanism for removing the seeds from the cotton fiber that was 50 times more effective than the handpicking process, thus inventing the cotton “gin” (short for “engine”). Whitney hoped to improve the life of slaves with his cotton gin by making the tedious process of removing seeds less burdensome and to perhaps even eliminate the need for slaves altogether.

The machine was fairly simple to create, and by the time Whitney secured a patent in 1794, a number of copies had already been created. Although he did not see much profit from the cotton gin, Whitney had unintentionally begun a revolution. Cotton production soared, the South became tied to King Cotton, and planters cleared more and more land for cotton growth. The North prospered from the fiber as it was shipped to the New England factories and processed in Slater’s cotton thread machine. The Industrial Revolution had arrived in America.

Up to this point in American history, manufacturing occurred in the household or in small local shops. Growth of the textile production industry was slow until Jefferson’s embargo in 1807 and import restrictions during the War of 1812—both actions stimulated domestic production. As the Industrial Revolution took hold in America, it created the factory system and transformed agricultural production, communication, and transportation across the United States.

New innovations advanced the Industrial Revolution. One of the most basic inventions of the time was adopted from Europe—the preservation of food by
Canning. By 1820, several major canneries were in full production in Boston and New York.

In 1798, Eli Whitney developed another innovation that spurred continued industrial growth in the north. Whitney won a government contract to manufacture muskets. He developed machine tools to make the parts of the musket so they were virtually identical, allowing them to be interchangeable. Based on Whitney’s invention, factories for the mass production of firearms were built in the northern states. By the 1850s, Whitney’s method for making muskets led to widespread adoption of the idea of interchangeable parts and eventually became the basis of modern assembly-line production methods.

It has been said that Eli Whitney both started and ended the Civil War. He started it by inventing the cotton gin, which made raising cotton more profitable and led to an increase in slavery. He ended it by developing a manufacturing process based on interchangeable parts that the North used in its factories, enabling the North to produce far more war goods than the South.

The 1840s brought a host of inventions. In 1844, Charles Goodyear patented the process for vulcanizing rubber, making it stronger and more elastic. Also in 1844, Samuel Morse transmitted the first intercity telegraph message 40 miles from Baltimore to Washington. The message itself was borrowed from the Bible by the daughter of the Commissioner of Patents and said, "What hath God wrought?" It took a while for Morse’s invention to catch on, but by 1861, the connections between cities spanned all the way to San Francisco, putting distant people in almost instant communication with one another.

In 1846, Elias Howe invented the sewing machine, which was then perfected by Isaac Singer. This invention gave another boost to northern industrialization, specifically the ready-made clothing industry. Machine-made clothes fit better and were less expensive than homespun clothes. The sewing machine also
opened up a new line of employment for women, who began working in the clothing factories.

The many technical advances shaped all aspects of Americans’ lives—social, cultural, political, and economic. Living conditions were improved with luxuries such as central heat, indoor plumbing, underground water lines, sewer systems, and improved lighting. Technological advances spurred laws of “free incorporation,” allowing corporations to be created without applying for individual charters from the legislature. Various regions of the north began to specialize in specific industries based on their locations and the availability of natural resources. For example, New England became the center for textile mills, while Pennsylvania led in production of iron.

As these innovations and technical advances were taking place, the Boston Associates, a group of merchants headed by Francis Cabot Lowell, added a new dimension to factory production. Many of the early factories used Samuel Slater’s cotton spinning machines and set up hand looms, but the weavers could not keep up with the machines. In 1813, in Waltham, Massachusetts, Lowell combined the spinning machines with power weaving machines at the Boston Manufacturing Company plant. Lowell focused on mechanization of the entire process for mass-producing standardized cloth. The cloth was plain and rather coarse, but durable and cheap.

The Boston Associates used the Boston Manufacturing Company as a model for new factories. In 1823, they harnessed the power of the Merrimack River at East Chelmsford, Massachusetts to develop a new plant. The town was appropriately renamed Lowell and within three years had over 2,000 inhabitants. By 1850, factories based on the Waltham model produced one-fifth of the nation’s total output of cotton cloth.

In the new Lowell textile factories, the Boston Associates developed a labor system that employed young, unmarried women. By the 1820s, young women
came to the factory towns from farms all over New England. The women lived in boardinghouses that were strictly supervised, and they earned between $2.50 and $3.25 per week, about half of which went for room and board. Often, the young women were not working to support themselves, but sending most of the money they made back home. Many worked simply for the excitement of meeting new people and to escape the confines of the farm for a few years before they married. A variety of educational and cultural opportunities offset, to some degree, unsafe and unhealthy conditions during the twelve-hour days and six-day workweeks.

As the Lowell factories experienced booming growth, the conditions for the workers changed. The cities in which the textile factories operated became dirty, bleak industrial cities. Wage cuts and deteriorating working conditions became the norm. As the demand for cheap labor grew, child workers also became vulnerable to exploitation in the factories. Over half of the nation’s industrial workers in 1820 were children under the age of 10 who were both physically and mentally abused. Factory owners increasingly turned to Irish and German immigrants to operate their machines.

During the 1830s and 1840s, textile prices and mill wages dropped. Workers organized strikes where they “turned out” to protest 12-hour work days, wage cuts, and increasing costs for room and board. Although the protests were well attended, they did not force a reversal of management policy.

Skilled artisans and craftsmen could no longer compete with the low prices and high volume of factory goods, and many were forced to take factory jobs. The influx of these skilled workers into the workforce renewed the demand for better working conditions and a shorter workday. Prompted by the moniker, “Northern wage slave,” many laborers undertook efforts to establish unions and create political organizations dedicated to advancing the interests of workers. In a landmark decision by the Massachusetts Supreme Court in the case of Commonwealth v. Hunt (1842), the court ruled that forming a trade union was
not illegal. While on the surface this ruling looked to be significant for organized labor, it soon proved to be more of a symbolic gesture. Trade unions provided only marginal benefits for the workers of this time, and it would be nearly a century before they could meet management on even terms.

By 1850, Samuel Slater’s factory system had been fine-tuned, and industry was booming in the east. The New England and the mid-Atlantic states had become the main centers of manufacturing and commerce. The primary products coming from the industrial centers in the north and mid-Atlantic at the time were textiles, lumber, clothing, machinery, and woolen goods.

The Effects of Industry

Early American factories were usually owned by individuals, families, or partners. As mechanization became more widespread and the scale and complexity of businesses increased, a substantial capital investment was required to open a factory. Although it was a slow process, these factors led more and more firms to “incorporate” ownership.

Prior to the 1860s, most manufacturing was conducted by unincorporated companies. Organizing a corporation required a special act of a state legislature. Many people believed that only projects that were in the public interest, such as roads, railways, and canals, were entitled to the privilege of incorporation. Businessmen also often viewed corporations as monopolistic and corrupt and as a threat to the individual enterprise. It took years for corporations to be regarded as agencies of free enterprise.

Between the 1820s and the 1850s, the northeast became the premier region for industry. Along the Hudson and Delaware Rivers, the concentration of factories and mills rivaled that of the most industrialized areas of Britain. By 1860, American industry employed over one million workers in 140,000 companies, with an output amounting to $1.9 billion.
Not only did the growth of industry encourage the formation of corporations, but it also shaped American society in a variety of other ways. It reduced the need for foreign products and moved the country closer and closer to self-sufficiency. During the War of 1812, Americans sunk a large amount of capital into manufacturing, and that trend continued after the war as profits and the prestige associated with the business increased.

The rapid growth of industry prompted a rapid growth of cities. Prior to 1840, commerce dominated the activities and location of major cities in America. The growth of industry required new concentrations of people at places convenient to waterpower or raw materials.

The four Atlantic seaports of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Boston were the largest American cities due to their strategic locations. By 1860, New York was the first American city to boast a population of more than one million. Urbanization was both a consequence of economic growth and a positive force in its promotion.

As American society became more concentrated and urban due to the effects of industrialization, people had more time for recreation. People of all classes went to theatres to watch a wide range of performances, such as Shakespeare’s tragedies, minstrels, operas, magic shows, and acrobatic troupes. The theatres encouraged a boisterous atmosphere, so most “respectable” women did not attend.

Blood sports were another popular form of entertainment. Dog fighting, cockfighting, and prizefighting were all fashionable and encouraged frenzied betting. Racing was also a popular leisure activity of the time. Foot races, boat races, and horse races attracted thousands of spectators, with nearly 100,000 attending a horse race at Union Track on Long Island in 1845.
The Transportation Revolution

Westward Movement

By the mid-nineteenth century, the American economy that had been based on local commerce and small-scale farming was maturing into a dynamic, wide-reaching capitalist marketplace. As the industrial revolution in the northeast altered the economy and intensified the process of urbanization, an agricultural empire began to emerge in the west.

By 1860, more than one-half of the American population was located west of the Appalachian Mountains. Conditions along the entire Atlantic seaboard stimulated migration to the western regions. The soil in New England was incapable of producing agricultural crops beyond a subsistence level, resulting in a steady stream of men and women moving west to take advantage of the rich land in the interior of the continent. Many people in the Carolinas, Virginia, and the Deep South also moved westward because they had exhausted the soil. A lot of them moved near the Mississippi River because it provided a means for getting their products to coastal markets.

In the early nineteenth century, life was grim for the first pioneer families, who were poorly fed, ill-clad, and housed in hastily built dwellings. Many trudged on foot over hundreds of miles, dragging crude carts loaded with their scanty possessions. More fortunate pioneers traveled on horseback or in wagons—the best known was the canvas-topped Conestoga “covered wagons,” pulled by horses or oxen. These wagons were waterproof, enabled pioneers to travel farther, and allowed families to travel together and bring more of their possessions.

As the nineteenth century wore on and more and more settlers moved west, conditions improved. Many became farmers as well as hunters, and flourishing settlements began to change the face of the west. Land speculators bought large
tracts of the cheap land, sold their holdings for a profit, and moved still farther west, making way for new settlers. Artisans and merchants soon followed the farmers west. Rapid growth in the west was the norm. Chicago, Illinois in 1830 was simply a trading village with a fort, but long before some of its original settlers died, it had become one of the largest and richest cities in the nation.

Farmland in the west was easy to acquire. A new land law in 1820 reduced the minimum price of government land from $1.64 to $1.25 per acre and the minimum plot size from 160 to 80 acres. Westerners continued to push for greater relaxation of land laws, and under the Preemption Act of 1830, squatters were allowed to stake out claims ahead of the governmental land surveys and later get 160 acres at the minimum price of $1.25 per acre. Then, after the 1862 Homestead Act, land could be claimed by merely occupying and improving it.

Pioneer families first had to clear the trees and grub out the stumps and underbrush, but then they could grow their own grain, vegetables, and fruit. They also ranged the woods for wild game, fished the nearby streams, and raised livestock. They usually planted their first crop in a natural glade, and then year by year they pushed back the trees until the land was cleared. They discovered corn was very versatile—it could be fed to livestock or distilled into liquor—and it rapidly became the Western farmers’ staple market item. Much of the Westerner’s harvest was sent down the Ohio-Mississippi River system to the booming Cotton Kingdom in the south. The Mississippi River and its tributaries provided a natural highway for western commerce.

Westerners were continually finding ways to bring more land into cultivation. Unfortunately, when they reached the sticky black soil of the treeless prairies, their wooden plows would break, making it nearly impossible to plant. The innovators of the time helped the farmers overcome the challenges they faced. In 1837, John Deere invented a steel plow that could break the soil and was light enough to be pulled by horses.
In 1834, Cyrus McCormick invented a mechanical mower-reaper that transformed the scale of American agriculture. Farmers using hand-operated sickles and scythes could only harvest half an acre of wheat a day, while McCormick’s reaper and two men could work twelve acres a day. McCormick’s success attracted other inventors, and soon there were mechanical seeders that replaced the need to sow seed by hand and mechanical threshers to separate the grains of wheat from straw.

With all of the technological advances and continual movement to the west, farming had become a major commercial activity by the 1850s. Large-scale, specialized, cash-crop agriculture dominated the trans-Allegheny west. Soon, the volume of agricultural products became more than the South could consume. However, before the farming community could do more than ship their produce downriver, a transportation revolution would have to occur that would enable them to send foodstuffs east and west.

**Innovative Transportation**

In the late eighteenth century, primitive methods of travel were still in use in America. Waterborne travel was uncertain and often dangerous, covered-wagon and stagecoach travel over rutted trails was uncomfortable, and all types of travel were very slow. Americans were aware that a transportation network would increase land values, stimulate domestic and foreign trade, and strengthen the American economy.

In 1794, a private company completed the Philadelphia-Lancaster Turnpike, a broad, paved highway that was similar to the good European highways at that time. It was called a “turnpike” because as drivers approached the tollgate they were confronted with a barrier of sharp spikes that was turned aside when they paid their toll. The completion of the Lancaster Turnpike resulted in a turnpike-building boom that lasted nearly 20 years. By 1821, nearly 4,000 miles of turnpikes had been completed, mostly connecting eastern cities. Money needed
to build the new turnpikes was coming primarily from state governments and in some cases from individuals.

Constructing decent roads over the Appalachians and in the west was a more difficult task than building those in the east. Although states’ rights proponents regularly blocked spending federal funds for internal improvements, one notable exception was the Cumberland Road. In 1811, the federal government began to construct a turnpike—Cumberland Road, also called the “National Road”—which stretched 591 miles from Cumberland, in western Maryland, to Vandalia, in Illinois. The project was completed in 1852 with a combination of federal and state aid, with different states receiving ownership of segments of the highway.

Americans benefited from the new turnpikes; however, it was not yet economical to ship bulky goods by land across the great distances in America. Businessmen and inventors began concentrating on improving water transportation. In 1807, Robert Fulton sent the first commercially successful steamboat, the Clermont, from New York City up the Hudson River to Albany. Skeptics initially thought the project would never work and nicknamed the boat “Fulton’s Folly.” The Clermont made the run of 150 miles at about five miles an hour, proving that it was an efficient vessel. Thereafter, use of the steamboat spread rapidly, with steamers making the run from New Orleans as far north as Ohio. By 1830, there were more than 200 steamers on the Mississippi.

As early as the 1820s, the successes of the steamboat were clear. Steamboats played a vital role in opening the west and south to further settlement. They stimulated the agricultural economy of the west by providing better access to markets at a lower cost. Farmers quickly bought land near navigable rivers, because they could now easily ship their produce out. Villages at strategic points along the waterways evolved into centers of commerce and urban life. In the 1830s and 1840s, the port of New Orleans grew to lead all others in exports.
Steamboats were also much more comfortable than other forms of land transportation at the time. The *General Pike*, launched in 1819, set the standard for luxurious steamers with marble columns, thick carpets, ornate mirrors, and plush curtains. Luxury steamers evolved into floating palaces where passengers could dine, drink, dance, and gamble as they traveled to their destinations.

While steamboats were conquering western rivers, canals were under construction in the northeast to further improve the transportation network. In 1817, the New York legislature endorsed Governor DeWitt Clinton’s plan for connecting the Hudson River with Lake Erie—the Erie Canal. Completed in 1825, the canal ran 363 miles from Albany to Buffalo. The completion of the canal reduced travel time from New York City to Buffalo from 20 days to six, reduced the cost of moving a ton of freight from $100 to $5, and moved the country a step closer to linking the Mississippi Valley and the Atlantic Ocean. The canal also provided a water route from New York to Chicago, via the Great Lakes, and marked the beginning of Chicago’s rapid growth.

The Erie Canal was immediately a financial success, paying for itself within seven years. The success of the “Big Ditch” sparked a canal-building mania that lasted for more than a decade and resulted in around 3,000 miles of waterways by 1840. Ohio built the Ohio and Erie Canal, running from the Ohio River to Cleveland, and Indiana built the Wabash and Erie Canal. Both were feeders that supplied farmers west of the Appalachians with water connections to the east.

The Erie Canal had broad economic implications. The value of land along the route increased, new cities in New York such as Rochester and Syracuse sprang up, industry in New York boomed, and farming in the Old Northwest attracted thousands of newcomers who could now easily ship their goods to market on the east coast.

Both the turnpike and the canal contributed to the emerging national economy, but the most significant development was the railroad. Railroads were faster and
cheaper than canals to construct, and they did not freeze over in the winter. Since many states had overextended by borrowing heavily to finance their canals, much of the early railroad growth was developed by private investors.

In 1828, development of the first railroad began in Baltimore, and four years later the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad reached 73 miles. By 1833, the Charleston and Hamburg Railroad extended 136 miles west of Charleston. The Panic of 1837 slowed railroad construction, but by 1840 the United States had over 3,000 miles of tracks, nearly double the mileage in all of Europe. And by 1860, the U.S. saw development of over 30,000 miles of railroad tracks, three-fourths of which were in the industrializing north. There were several southern railway lines, but no one single southern railway system.

Early railroad pioneers faced several challenges: Tracks with steep grades and sharp curves required more powerful locomotives, sparks from wood-burning engines caused fires, brakes were ineffective, and wooden rails topped with iron straps wore out quickly and broke loose, causing dangerous crashes. The intent of most early railroad builders had been to monopolize the trade of certain districts, not to establish connections with competing centers, so few of the tracks were coordinated into railroad systems. Frequently, railroads went so far as to use tracks of different widths to prevent other lines from using their tracks.

Eventually, all of these railway obstacles were overcome. Modifications in locomotive design enabled trains to negotiate sharp curves, engines that could burn hard coal appeared, better brakes were developed, and the iron T-rail combined with crossties increased durability of the tracks. Rail gauges also gradually became standardized, linking the various rail lines together.

Water travel was generally more comfortable than the train, but railway travel became the most popular from of transport because it was economical, reliable, and fast. Trains traveled more than twice as fast as a stagecoach and four times as fast as a steamboat.
The development of so many railroads changed American society. The railroad provided indirect benefits by encouraging settlement and expansion of farming, thus transforming agriculture. Much more of the fertile prairie could be developed because the farmers now had access to national markets via the train. American cities were also influenced by railway development. Eastern seaports, along with other intermediate centers like Cincinnati, benefited from an increase in exportable goods.

Other forms of transportation were also working to bind the United States together and to the rest of the world. In 1845, the first clipper ship, the Rainbow, was launched. Clipper ships were long, narrow, and built for speed. With their taller masts and numerous sails, they could outrun a steamer if there was a good breeze. While in operation, clippers carried highly demanded tea from China to America and transported goods to the prospectors in California. Clippers lasted less than two decades because, although they were fast, they did not have much cargo space.

In 1860 in the far west, the Pony Express was established as a form of transportation for carrying mail. Daring pony riders carried mail from Missouri to California in ten days—an amazing feat for the times. The riders changed horses at stations every 10 miles, and rode summer or winter, day or night, good weather and bad. The Pony Express only lasted 18 months, succumbing to Samuel Morse’s telegraph machine.

The transportation revolution in the United States had been spurred by the desire of the Easterners to tap into all that the west had to offer. Turnpike, canals, steamboats, and railways forged a truly continental economy. Transportation innovations cut the cost and increased the speed of moving goods, helping to create a national market and provide a stimulus for regional specialization. Westerners, with their boundless prairies and swiftly growing population, became important producers of commercial agriculture, supplying both the North and the South with food. Northerners supplied the West and the South
with textiles and other manufactured goods. Southerners supplied the North with cotton, the raw material they needed to produce their textiles.

The movement of goods over long distances to the various regions required a supporting infrastructure, which stimulated the growth of market towns where merchants, bankers, warehousemen, retailers, and other middlemen provided the services needed to move the goods from producers to consumers. More extensive markets increased competition, pushing manufacturers to produce better and cheaper products in order to capture a larger share of the market.

Transportation innovations encouraged a new sense of connectedness among Americans, encouraging a deeper sense of nationalism. The transportation revolution pushed nineteenth-century America through the process of integrating an entire continent into a single cultural and economic entity.
King Cotton

Cotton is King

In the late eighteenth century, a recent Yale graduate named Eli Whitney had aspirations of practicing law. However, like many modern college graduates, Whitney had a debt to repay for his education. To that end, Whitney left his home in Massachusetts to take a tutoring position on a Georgia plantation.

Whitney found himself in the midst of an active agricultural economy. Tobacco, rice, and sugar were vital crops, and cotton cultivation was showing great promise. A stable slave culture was in place in the south, providing labor for southern plantations. However, the time-consuming process for harvesting cotton limited the prosperity of plantation owners.

Whitney’s employer, Catherine Greene, asked the educated Whitney if he could devise a solution. He set aside his aspirations to practice law and began tinkering with plans for a hand-crank machine that would separate the sticky cotton from its seeds. Whitney successfully created such a machine in 1793, along with a larger version that could be powered by horses or water.

With the development of the cotton “gin” (short for engine), cotton rapidly surpassed tobacco, rice, and sugar as the number one southern crop. Cotton production increased 800% over the next ten years with assistance from Whitney’s invention. The cotton gin brought Southerners unprecedented prosperity.

With the ability to process cotton at a faster rate, southern plantation owners needed to increase their labor force. The already large slave system in the south became larger as slaves were smuggled into the country (slave importation had been deemed illegal from 1808 on). Slave women were encouraged, and in some cases enticed with promises of freedom, to have children and build up the slave
owner’s labor force, all to increase the cotton harvest. Already prosperous southern plantation owners grew even wealthier with the bounties brought by Whitney’s cotton gin. Ironically, Whitney had hoped his invention would reduce the need for slave labor, but its effect was just the opposite.

This thriving cotton industry led to the rise of large-scale commercial agriculture. Not only did increased cotton milling result in an increased numbers of slaves, but planters also worked to augment their land ownership to make more money. Some land was taken from the Indians, who were being removed from the southeast during this period. Also, large plantation owners were buying out smaller plantations to increase their land holdings, and those planters who were bought out moved westward. The motto of Southerners became “Cotton is King,” and they were happy to serve a ruler who provided such prosperity.

Southerners were not the only ones benefiting from the cotton boom. Eighty percent of the south’s cotton went to England by way of northern shippers. These shippers were able to buy cotton wholesale and sell it at a premium, since England’s most important manufactured good was cotton cloth. One-fifth of the population in England earned a living from the manufacture of this cloth, and 75 percent of the cotton used in England’s production came from the United States. Since England was so dependent on the south’s cotton and the north’s transportation of it, both the north and the south were able to benefit heavily from this export.

The many people who gained wealth from cotton were willing to disregard the indications that a one-crop economy could not be sustained. Planters ignored the fact that King Cotton was hard on the soil, especially with the frenzied harvesting that was taking place during this era.

There were other drawbacks to the cotton industry, as well. The cotton gin made production potential greater, but it also made the labor source more unstable. The slaves required to operate the cotton gins could get sick or injured in great
numbers, rendering plantation owners unable to harvest the crops growing on their land. The cotton-based economy also promoted a decidedly unequal socio-economic structure. An excess of poor whites and slaves lived in the south, while a few wealthy plantation owners monopolized the industry. At a time when democracy was being celebrated, the majority of the south was under the control of a minority of prosperous plantation owners.

Southern Culture

By the mid nineteenth century, the south had developed into an aristocracy, with wealthy plantation owners at the top of the social ladder. In 1850, only a small minority—approximately 1,750 families—owned more than 100 slaves each. This small group of people carried significant political and social power.

Southern aristocrats used their wealth to send their children to the finest schools, which were often in the north or overseas. Many of their young men returned home feeling called to public service, and the south produced a high proportion of statesmen. Southern women ran the households, including managing female slaves who cooked, cleaned, and performed nearly all the household chores. Although there were abolitionist rumblings among white men at this time, virtually none of their wives supported the abolition effort.

While democracy was the goal throughout the entire United States, the aristocracy of the south weakened the foundation of a democratic society. Since wealth bought southern aristocrats the opportunities for education at private institutions, efforts for state-supported public education were hindered. The gap between the rich and the poor continued to widen.

Even as the rich were controlling the south, it was the smaller plantation owner who truly represented the southern lifestyle. Only one-fourth of white Southerners owned slaves, and of that number, many had small cotton farms and most owned fewer than ten slaves each. In fact, over six million residents in the south owned no slaves at all.
In addition to the large and small plantation owners, residents in the south included poor white families. These families were often called “white trash” by other Southerners, who believed they were lazy. Rather, most poor whites were unable to work efficiently due to malnutrition and parasitic illness caused by a poor understanding of safe and healthy food preparation.

Poor whites were classified by location. The term “lowland whites” identified mechanics, tradesmen, and small cotton farmers who lived among the southern population. Hoping to someday achieve the American Dream of prosperity, they staunchly supported the slave system. Many lowland whites worked their entire lives with the hope of one day owning at least one slave—someone to whom they could feel superior.

Due to their interaction with the public, lowland whites were more civilized than their mountain brethren. Mountain whites also suffered from poverty and malnutrition, but their location in the semi-isolated backcountry and Appalachian Mountains from western Virginia to northern Georgia and Alabama meant they often went unnoticed by other Southerners. Their isolation required the mountain whites to be subsistence farmers, raising their own corn and hogs for survival.

Another class of people competed with the underprivileged whites on the social ladder—the free blacks. By 1860, approximately 250,000 free black men and women lived in the south. Many had been freed during the Revolution, while others were emancipated mulattoes, the offspring of white planters and their black slave mistresses. Although they had their freedom, most states had laws limiting blacks’ rights. In some cases, free blacks were captured by unscrupulous slave traders and resold into slavery, so emancipation was no guarantee of a prosperous life.

Another 250,000 free blacks lived in the north, where they were also denied basic rights, including the right to vote and, in some cases, the right to a public
education. Irish immigrants often threatened or caused harm to free blacks out of resentment, since the two groups often competed for the same menial jobs.

The bottom rung of the southern aristocracy was not surprisingly held by slaves. By 1860, nearly four million slaves inhabited the southern region of the United States. Although slave importation had been deemed illegal from 1808 on, many slave traders continued to smuggle slaves in and were rarely prosecuted for these violations.

Abolitionists were gearing up for battles which they hoped would result in freedom for all slaves, but at the same time arguments were being made for maintaining the slave system. Supporters of slavery argued that the U.S. slave system provided slaves with a much better lifestyle than they would have in other countries. They pointed to the self-sustaining slave population as evidence, using the argument that slaves were voluntarily cohabitating and reproducing with one another, a luxury not afforded slaves in other countries. Proslavery rhetoric also argued that the typical slave was better off than the typical northern worker and that slavery civilized blacks and allowed them to learn about Christianity.

However, the primary argument for slavery was always economical. Slaves were no doubt an economic necessity for both the north and the south. Slave owners lived in fear of a slave revolt, which could destroy their profitability, but they saw the risk as a necessary evil to maintain the prosperity brought by King Cotton.

**Conditions of Slaves**

The conditions in which slaves existed in the nineteenth century varied from region to region—and even from house to house. Wise slave owners recognized the value of slaves as human capital, since by 1860 slaves were worth approximately $1,800 each. As such, while most slaves travailed in the fields
cultivating crops, dangerous work, such as roof repair, was often hired out to more expendable labor sources.

Most slaves resided in the Deep South, an area stretching from South Carolina and Georgia to Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. This region became known as the “black belt” for its abundance of slaves.

Hard work was a mainstay of the slave lifestyle. Since slaves did not earn wages like other workers, their source of motivation was an overseer—often another slave who had been given increased responsibility—who wielded a whip to flog the unproductive or inefficient laborers. Physically, emotionally, and legally, slaves were reduced to property, given no civil or political rights.

Slaves did not even have the right to legally enter into marriage, although many slave owners allowed their slaves to participate in unionizing ceremonies and to live as married couples. Most slaves practiced some form of religion, usually a hybrid faith mixed from Christian and African elements. They often incorporated the African “responsorial” system of punctuating sermons with verbal agreement. Most slave children in the Deep South lived in two-parent households, where forced separations did not happen very often.

Forced separations typically occurred when a slave owner died or encountered financial difficulties. In these situations his slaves were often sent to auction. Most auctions were multi-purpose events, selling humans alongside cattle and horses. No regard was given to keeping families together at these auctions. In fact, it was rare that families who came to auction together stayed together.

These terrible auctions, along with the appalling conditions most slaves dealt with daily, fed the growing abolitionist movement. The dispute over slavery would eventually be resolved, but not before the country turned on itself in civil warfare.
Democracy and the “Common Man”

Election of 1824

As James Monroe’s second presidential term was coming to an end in 1824, a heated battle ensued to select his replacement. With the Federalist Party losing steam, all four presidential candidate front-runners were self-declared Republicans.

Three of the candidates were well-known because of their current political roles. William Crawford and John Quincy Adams were serving in Monroe’s administration as Secretary of the Treasury and Secretary of State, respectively. Speaker of the House Henry Clay also threw his hat in the ring. The fourth contender was General Andrew Jackson, a senator from Tennessee known for his success in defeating the British at New Orleans in 1815.

Jackson and Adams, who emerged as the front-runners, were a study in contradiction. Adams, a staunch nationalist and a typical New Englander, was reserved and aloof, while Jackson, the westerner and war hero, glad-handed his way to political popularity. Jackson avoided taking a firm position on most issues, preferring instead to be vague and not offend any voters.

Jackson’s plan to be everything to every voter worked. When the popular votes were counted, he carried 42 percent to Adams’ 31 percent. Clay and Crawford each took around 12 percent of the popular vote. However, the electoral system complicated what was an otherwise simple voting process.

At this time, states differed on how electoral votes were assigned. Some states assigned electoral votes to reflect the popular vote, while other states assigned electoral votes according to the votes of their legislature. When the electoral votes were counted in 1824, no one candidate held the required majority to be
named president. Jackson had 99 electoral votes, Adams held 84, Crawford earned 41, and Clay garnered 37 electoral votes.

According to the Twelfth Amendment to the Constitution, the decision now went to the House of Representatives, who would select a winner from the top three electoral vote-earners—in this case, Jackson, Adams, and Crawford. Although Clay could not be chosen as President, he held a great deal of power in the selection process through his role as Speaker of the House.

Secretary of Treasury William Crawford was not seriously considered in the selection process due to health problems that left him partially paralyzed and with limited sight. Again, the choice came down to Adams and Jackson.

Henry Clay was the polar opposite of John Quincy Adams—Adams a puritanical, moral man and Clay a hard-living gambler with an urge to duel—however, Clay did not feel the animosity toward him that he felt toward Jackson. Clay had championed his “American System,” which promoted tariffs to support American manufacturers, a national bank, and domestic improvements at the federal government’s expense, all in the name of country unity. Jackson did not support Clay’s American System, so Clay gave his endorsement to John Quincy Adams, who was selected as the sixth President of the United States.

Clay’s support did not go unrewarded. Days after Adams was selected as President, he chose Clay as his Secretary of State, a coveted position because frequently the individual in this role went on to be president. Clay’s appointment caused an uproar among Jackson’s supporters, who believed that Clay and Adams had conspired to get Adams into office—Clay scratching Adams’ back by giving him the presidential nod, and Adams returning the favor with a prime position in his cabinet. This tumult was labeled the “Corrupt Bargain” of 1824.

Since Adams was such a moral man, it is unlikely that the accusations of corruptness were accurate. However, Jackson’s supporters took the idea and ran
with it, using it to launch their campaign for Jackson as president in the 1828 election, even as Adams was taking office in 1824. The Jacksonians’ efforts to derail Adams’ presidency were the primary cause of Adams serving only one presidential term.

Election of 1828

As Andrew Jackson’s supporters worked to put him first in line for the 1828 election, the public began to learn more about him. Labeled “Old Hickory” by supporters who drew parallels between the war hero and a sturdy hickory tree, Jackson represented the New West as a land of hardiness and stamina.

A plantation and slave owner, Jackson’s political beliefs were not easily labeled as either federalist or antifederalist, although Jackson did support states’ rights and initiatives and did not believe in a supreme central government. This was a bone of contention between Jackson and Henry Clay, whose influence resulted in Jackson losing the 1824 presidential election. Jackson also strongly believed that government should be run “by the people,” with individuals accepting limited terms in office and then returning to the private sector to avoid the corruption that tended to follow career politicians.

During the early nineteenth century, a wave of suffrage efforts was sweeping the nation to guarantee voting rights for all white men, regardless of property ownership or taxes paid. Between 1812 and 1821, six new western states granted universal white manhood suffrage. During the same period, four eastern states significantly reduced land ownership voting requirements for white males.

As these efforts gained momentum and the constituency grew to include less wealthy voters, more emphasis was placed on the “common man.” Politicians, including Jackson, had to rethink their campaign strategies to maximize their appeal. Jackson had already earned respect as a war hero, and with his strategy to identify himself as a common man just like the people he would represent, he
was able to garner the necessary votes to beat Adams and earn the presidency in 1828. As in the election of 1824, Jackson again beat Adams in the popular vote, but this time he gained 178 electoral votes to Adams’ 83. He accepted his office, the first president from the west, clothed in black in honor of his recently deceased wife, Rachel.

As Jackson took office, his theory of limiting staffers’ terms stirred both positive and negative emotions. His predecessor, John Quincy Adams, had resisted replacing the previous administration’s staff with his own as long as the staffers remained productive. However, this caused Adams to lose support of those who expected a political post in exchange for their efforts. Conversely, Jackson believed in appointing his own staff comprised of his supporters, which also allowed him to eliminate the Adams and Clay supporters from his administration. This system of political back-scratching came to be known as the Spoils System, and was present on a wide-scale at all levels of government.

The Spoils System had several negative consequences. Often, the individuals who were appointed were unskilled at best, and incapable at worst, of fulfilling the responsibilities of their posts. Furthermore, the Spoils System could be abused. Occasionally, corrupt individuals were placed in offices that they ultimately abused, stealing millions of dollars from the government. This system also created scandals as politically motivated supporters of one candidate worked hard to uncover—or in some cases, fabricate—offensive stories about the opposition. Although Jackson did not employ the Spoils System on the grand scale as some who followed him as chief executive, he certainly had a hand in developing its practice.

New Political Parties

The political revolution stirred up by Jackson’s alternative staffing methods also resulted in the shift from a one-party political system to a two-party system. Although both Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams called themselves
Republicans in the 1824 election, it was apparent that their political beliefs were not aligned. Between 1824 and 1828, the supporters of each candidate polarized into two political parties—the National-Republicans, those who supported Adams and would later become known as the Whig Party, and the Democratic-Republicans, who worked to get Jackson elected and who would later shorten their name to the Democratic Party.

Along with new political parties came new attitudes. The suffrage movement brought power to the common man, and the common men responded by turning out in droves to vote.

Additionally, with the new attitudes reflecting the demise of aristocracy, the common man now expected politicians to cater to them. It was during this time that modern methods of politicking, including banners, parades, parties, and incentives began to be employed. Although not nearly on the national scale of later elections, this was the premier era of baby-kissing and hand-shaking as a means to election. In an effort to be more organized, nominating conventions were held to select candidates, and the caucus system was eliminated.

The Democratic Party was picking up steam with Jackson’s election in 1828. In accordance with the “common man” ideals, Democrats denounced Henry Clay’s “American System” and supported states’ rights. Democrats also defended the Spoils System as a necessary element of an efficient government.

The Whig Party, although out of power in the executive branch, was also further defining itself. Its roots were firmly entrenched in Alexander Hamilton’s Federalist ideals, including supporting a national bank and a strong central government that would finance improvements within United States borders. Northern industrialists and merchants flocked to the Whig Party because it emphasized protecting their industries through high tariffs. Both Northern and Southern opponents to Andrew Jackson were drawn to the Whig Party.
The Whig Party, which served as the backbone for the modern Republican Party, toyed with moral reform early on. It believed that a strong federal government could—and should—use its power to resolve society’s concerns. These social welfare efforts were, and continue to be, a strong barrier between political parties.
Nullification Crisis

Tariff of 1828

Andrew Jackson was elected as President of the United States because the American people saw him as the “everyman.” His leadership during the Battle of New Orleans in 1815 gave him the respect of wealthy businessmen, and his simple roots resonated with those who were struggling to carve their own niche. However, his popularity did not ensure that he would avoid scandal and resentment during his presidency.

Jackson’s supporters, angry over John Quincy Adams’ win in the 1824 election, strategized to sabotage his presidency. They pushed a proposal through Congress that would raise tariffs significantly on manufactured items such as wool and textiles. Since Adams was a New Englander and any hike in tariff duties would be enthusiastically supported there, Jacksonians hoped to portray Adams as favoring his home region over the south and west.

The Jacksonians expected a backlash from their somewhat outrageous tariff proposal, which was exactly their purpose. They hoped to push this tariff through to embarrass Adams and his administration and to assist Jackson in getting elected in 1828.

As it turned out, Jackson did not need the tariff to be elected; his popularity got him elected in 1828. However, the proposal was still on the table. It finally passed in 1828, and instead of being an embarrassment to Adams, it wreaked havoc during Jackson’s presidency and came to be called the “Tariff of Abominations.”

When the tariff went into effect, Southerners complained long and loudly. While other parts of the country were experiencing a boom, the economy in the south was stalling. Manufacturing interests, especially in the north, could gain
assistance from a “protective tariff,” but Southerners felt the financial strain of the tariffs due to their reliance on northern commodities. Residents of the south felt they were being treated unfairly, and they rallied against the Tariff of 1828 and against Jackson himself.

South Carolina

South Carolina, in particular, acted out against the Tariff of 1828. South Carolinians campaigned heavily against the tariff, justifying their arguments with the principles set out in the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions written in the previous century by Jefferson and Madison to support states’ rights. They also supported their case by arguing that the U.S. Constitution allowed states to individually nullify federal laws for the whole union.

The South Carolina legislature published a pamphlet titled “The South Carolina Exposition,” which offered persuasive arguments for nullifying the Tariff of 1828, stating that it was unjust and unconstitutional. South Carolina eventually revealed that the author of “The South Carolina Exposition” was none other than John C. Calhoun, Vice President of the United States. Calhoun was raised in South Carolina and supported the efforts to nullify the Tariff of 1828.

Supporters of nullification, who came to be known as the “nullies,” attempted to pass nullification through the South Carolina state legislature, but their efforts were impeded by the Unionists, a small but determined group of men who believed that states did not hold nullification rights. Although other states made rumblings about joining South Carolina’s cause, none ever actually did, and South Carolina fought the tariff battle alone.

The nullification cause benefited from Calhoun’s leadership. Calhoun was serving as Jackson’s Vice President, but he had fallen out of Jackson’s favor as his successor thanks in part to Martin Van Buren’s efforts. Van Buren, who was
Secretary of State, delighted in any situation that widened the divide between Jackson and Calhoun.

One infamous situation that caused a rift between Jackson and Calhoun, and helped confirm Van Buren as Jackson’s favorite, was the Peggy Eaton affair. Peggy, the wife of Secretary of War John Eaton, had been accused of adultery prior to her marriage to John. The gossip mill speculated that Peggy had cheated on her first husband with John, causing her first husband to commit suicide. Even though John married Peggy, the shroud of dishonor stayed with her.

Jackson had lived through similar scandals surrounding his wife, Rachel. He and Rachel had married, erroneously believing that her divorce from her first husband had been finalized. When the mistake was discovered, Jackson had the divorce finalized and he and Rachel remarried, this time legally. Still, Jackson’s detractors accused Rachel of being an adulteress, and Jackson blamed those accusers for her illness and eventual death.

Not wanting Peggy Eaton and her husband to suffer the same fate, Jackson demanded that his cabinet and their wives treat Peggy as their social equal. However, Calhoun’s wife, Floride, continued to snub Eaton and directed her friends to do the same. Calhoun, hoping to keep domestic harmony, followed Floride’s lead, much to Jackson’s dismay. However Van Buren, a widower who had no worries about marital discord, was free to lavish Eaton with attention, putting him in the President’s favor.

Van Buren also took every opportunity to point out where Calhoun’s opinions differed from Jackson’s, particularly where federal aid to local projects was concerned. One major project that sought federal aid was the national road-building effort. In 1830, Congress passed a proposal for a road in Kentucky to run from Maysville to Lexington. Calhoun supported this effort and championed the use of federal dollars for the Maysville Road construction, since it would eventually be linked to a national road.
However, Jackson exercised his veto power. He acted partially out of his continued animosity for Henry Clay (whose home state would benefit entirely from the Maysville Road), and partly out of his belief that providing federal aid for a single state project was unconstitutional. Supporters of the Maysville Road project were quite angry, and they began calling Jackson “King Andrew” because they believed he had abused his power as President.

Calhoun was dismayed at Jackson’s rejection of both the Maysville Road proposal and of him as Jackson’s political successor. Jackson made his feeling clear about Calhoun on April 13, 1830, during an annual event honoring the birthday of ex-President Thomas Jefferson. During the party, at which both Jackson and Calhoun were present, every toast given extolled states’ rights—until Jackson’s turn, that is. His toast, “Our Union—It must be preserved!” left no doubt about his position, or about his opposition to Calhoun.

Calhoun immediately followed Jackson’s toast with one of his own extolling states’ rights, but for Calhoun, it was apparent that his differences with Jackson would limit his political aspirations. Still, he was determined to fight for his home state, and having lost his hopes for ascending the political ladder, Calhoun switched his focus to championing the south.

Calhoun was not the only prominent figure fighting for South Carolina’s rights. Senator Robert Y. Hayne followed Calhoun’s example of leadership during an event that would come to be known as the Hayne-Webster debate.

Hayne was serving in the Senate when a fellow senator, Samuel A. Foot of Connecticut, proposed a restriction on the sale of western lands still owned by the federal government. Believing that this proposal was an attempt to restrict western expansion and the inevitable political influence of a strong western region, Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton appealed to the South to join forces with him to defeat the proposal. Governor Hayne recognized the potential benefits of an alliance with the emerging west and he quickly stepped forward.
Hayne was soon drawn into a debate to justify his position. The proposal to restrict western expansion was originated by Samuel Foot, but it was the eloquent and dynamic orator Daniel Webster, a senator from Massachusetts, who engaged in verbal sparring with Hayne. Although Hayne was an able speaker in his own right, he was no match for the awe-inspiring Webster.

During the debate, Daniel Webster was able to steer Hayne toward another sensitive issue—nullification. Webster underscored nationalism and the destruction which could befall a nation that allows one state to nullify a federal law, making himself out to be a unifier and Hayne a divider. Hayne made attempts to steer the debate back to the interpretation of the Constitution regarding the sale of federal lands, but the damage was done. Daniel Webster won the debate with his argument for nationalism, and Hayne lost public support for his interpretation of the Constitution.

**Tariff of 1832 and Clay’s Compromise**

South Carolina stood firm against the Tariff of 1828 with such acts of defiance as lowering the flags to half-mast. These displays made President Jackson realize that intervention was necessary. John C. Calhoun still carried some influence with the president, who at Calhoun’s urging encouraged Congress to enact the Tariff of 1832. This new tariff reduced the rate of the Tariff of 1828. However, producers in the south remained distraught over the high tariffs and resisted this compromise, as well.

Again, the nullies asked the South Carolina legislature to nullify the tariff, which would affect the entire union. This time, the legislature agreed. In fact, the legislature went further by choosing Robert Y. Hayne as the new South Carolina governor, selecting Calhoun to fulfill Hayne’s spot in the Senate, and threatening to secede from the Union if the tariffs were not reduced.
However, President Jackson was tired of threats from the nullies, and disgusted by the idea that one state could nullify a federal law and secede from the union. His response was firm. He met their challenge by raising an army and sending it to South Carolina. Shortly after his re-election, in his annual message on December 4, 1832, Jackson stated his intention to enforce the tariff, although he too encouraged Congress to reduce the burdensome tariff rates.

Jackson followed his speech six days later with the Nullification Proclamation, which further denounced South Carolina’s action. With his army standing ready to enforce the tariff, Jackson called South Carolina’s bluff. He called upon Congress to develop a “Force Bill” to authorize his use of army personnel to enforce the tariff. Existing legislation already granted him that power, but Jackson felt that a new and specific bill would strengthen his case against South Carolina.

With South Carolina painted into a corner, Calhoun, who had resigned his vice presidency to lead the nullification cause, pleaded with his old friend Henry Clay to help him draft a solution. Clay, who had been embroiled in the scandals surrounding the 1824 presidential election, responded with a compromise proposal. Under Clay’s plan, the high tariffs that burdened the South would be reduced by ten percent over an eight-year period. The Compromise Tariff of 1833 was passed by a small minority in Congress, but it finally brought about significant tariff change.

The new rates were not as low as the Southerners would have liked, but they were more pleased with the compromise than they were with the Force Bill, which they called the “Bloody Bill.” In response, although the South Carolina legislature voted to rescind its nullification of the tariff acts, it also nullified Jackson’s Force Bill. By then the nullification of the Force Bill was a moot point, but it allowed South Carolina to feel a small taste of victory. However, the issues of nullification and secession had stirred the first rumblings that would eventually lead to the Civil War.
The Bank of the United States

Nineteenth Century Banking

In the early 1800s, the United States government did not print paper money but instead minted gold and silver coins called specie. The value of these coins was determined by the value of the metal in the coins themselves. People wanted a safe place to keep their savings of gold and silver coins, so they stored them in banks, which had strong vaults and other measures of security. The bank would give the depositor a receipt, or banknote, as a claim against the gold or silver that had been deposited. When depositors wanted to withdraw money, they would take the banknote to the bank and exchange it for coins. People did not always have to withdraw their money to make purchases, because often sellers would accept the banknotes as payment. Thus banknotes circulated from hand to hand while the gold and silver that backed them, or guaranteed their value, remained in the bank.

Banks often accumulated very large deposits of gold and silver from many individual depositors. Since most of this gold and silver never left the vault, banks would loan out a portion of it for a fee in interest, defraying their costs for operating the bank, while making a profit for themselves. When a bank made a loan it generally issued banknotes, again redeemable for coin, to the borrower. Consequently, a bank would have not only the original depositor’s receipts circulating as money but also the banknotes it had loaned, resulting in more banknotes circulating than it had coins to cover them. Of course, the bank would be holding valuable interest-bearing debts in the form of loans and mortgages, but these were payable in the future, often over many years, while the bank was obligated to redeem its banknotes for coin money on demand.

If the slow and steady income from loans and mortgages no longer satisfied those holding notes, then the bank could become bankrupt. In the ensuing legal
troubles many people might lose their savings and the bank’s notes would become worthless, which could be a serious economic blow to both individuals and communities. Therefore, it was very important for banks to keep the public confidence in order to avoid a “run” on the bank where many worried holders of the bank’s notes might try to withdraw their coins all at once.

A conservative loan policy was the best long-range tool not only to keep the public confidence, but also to foster safe development of the economy. There were many pressures on a bank to loan more than it should, however. The biggest pressure was the potential for profit. In theory, the more a bank loaned, the more interest it was owed and the more money it made. But again, this depended on people not removing their coins from the bank. An additional pressure on banks in the early nineteenth century was the great need for capital to expand industry, develop the frontier, and improve such infrastructure as roads and canals. As a source for the large sums of money needed, banks played a vital role in development activities that could not have been financed by individual lenders. Loaning investment capital was a public benefit, but bankers were often pressured to make loans for the civic good that were neither wise for the bank, nor in the long run wise for the public.

For example, one banking practice that was detrimental to the economy could occur when there was a strong market for agricultural products one year. The following year, farmers would pressure banks for loans to expand their operations. In light of the previous year’s record, this would look like a good investment to a bank, which would be inclined to lend more than it normally would to farmers. If the farmers produced a heavy crop due to their improvements, their produce might exceed the demand on the open market, causing prices to drop. Farmers’ net revenue might then be no more than before the bank financed their expansion. Unfortunately, they still would have loan payments to make. This additional burden might cause them to reduce their spending and perhaps contract their operations. Some farmers could even be
forced into defaulting on their loans and lose their farms, causing the bank to lose the money it loaned as well as the interest it would have made.

After several years of this process, agricultural products might become scarce and prices for them would rise. Farmers would want to cash in on the new boom with a loan for expansion, and the cycle would begin again. This same process could take place in any area of production or manufacturing. While investment capital is a good thing, excessive speculative lending has the effect of producing a roller coaster, boom-and-bust economy that is less productive for everyone than a more even-growth economy fostered by cautious lending habits.

Following the War of 1812, the United States entered an era of strong economic growth. Trade and industry flourished and grew, while at the same time the western frontier expanded with settlement and farming. These activities often required large sums for investment, a safe place to store earnings, and a regulated means to transfer money or credit from bank to bank or region to region. Banks provided all of these services.

State and federal governments also needed repositories for their funds. States, therefore, chartered banks within their territory to handle their government’s financial transactions. These state-chartered banks were not owned by the state but were privately held. Their state charter gave them certain advantages over ordinary banks but also subjected them to additional oversight by the state. They were therefore generally well-regulated, responsibly managed institutions that also provided banking services for individuals and businesses. Additionally, there were many smaller, local banks, most of which were responsible, though some were inclined to overextend credit and put their depositors’ funds at risk.

State banks regulated the credit practices of smaller banks by redeeming for gold any of the smaller banks’ notes that were passed to the state bank as a loan or mortgage payment. This practice required the smaller banks to be prepared to pay out from their deposits. They were consequently less likely to allow an
excessive number of their banknotes to be in circulation. A state bank could also loan money to smaller banks to help them through a crisis if the smaller bank was financially sound, which encouraged responsible lending practices in smaller banks.

The Bank

One area of particular concern among bankers, businessmen, and government leaders was banking on the frontier. Frontier land was cheap, and speculators would buy large tracts expecting the price to go up as settlers entered the region. In order to finance their investments, speculators borrowed as much as they could from “wildcat” banks that sprang up to cater to this demand. These banks were themselves often speculative in nature, being more interested in making a fast dollar than building a secure banking business. Their excessive loan practices caused many more banknotes to be in circulation in the United States than there were deposits to cover them. Hard-pressed banks were sometimes forced to suspend specie payments to depositors and noteholders wanting to withdraw coins. Confidence in banknotes dropped, causing them to lose value, and more of them were needed to purchase the same amount of goods.

A similar situation of unstable currency had existed after the Revolutionary War. Alexander Hamilton as Secretary of Treasury proposed a national bank that would issue banknotes of stable value. Among other benefits, Hamilton felt such a bank would tie the interests of the wealthy to the interests of the government and, therefore, to Americans in general. The federal government would supply one-fifth of the new bank’s initial capital, much of it in government bonds. Private investors would supply the other four-fifths. After much debate, Congress created the First Bank of the United States, and President Washington signed it into law amid grave misgivings in 1791. Thomas Jefferson had opposed the bank saying it vastly exceeded what was specified in the Constitution and that it opened “a boundless field of power, no longer susceptible of any definition.” Hamilton countered that the power to charter corporations was inherent in
government and that the Constitution authorized Congress to pass any laws “necessary and proper for carrying into execution ... powers vested by the Constitution in the government of the United States.” (Art. I, Sec. VIII, para.18) This provision came to be known as the “elastic clause” for its opening to a broad interpretation or “loose construction” of the powers granted to the government by the Constitution. The Bank’s charter ran out in 1811 and was allowed to lapse because of a turn of the political tide in favor of strict construction as well as deep concerns over the large proportion of British ownership in the Bank. Absence of a central bank hurt trade and hampered the war effort in 1812.

Inflation and the risk-taking behavior of frontier banks threatened the nation’s financial stability. Frontier banks were beyond the regulatory reach of the state banks, however, because the state banks had no means to compel banks outside their state to exchange their notes for specie. In addition, on the frontier there was no cooperative network of banks to ensure sound practices as there was from one state to another. This situation prompted the federal government to charter the Second Bank of the United States in 1816. Like state banks and the First Bank of the United State, the Second Bank of the United States was privately owned. All federal funds were deposited in the Bank making it a powerful source of investment capital, and its federal charter extended its reach throughout the states and into the frontier. The government intended that the Bank’s size and consistent practices would help regulate the speculative frontier banks.

Unfortunately, the first managers of the Second Bank of the United States did not understand its role in the economy. Almost immediately, the Bank fell into practices of overextending credit, especially among its western branches, which loaned ten times more banknotes than it had gold and silver on deposit. For several years a boom in frontier land values masked the danger to the country, but in 1819 land values declined and many frontier borrowers were unable to make their loan and mortgage payments. Wildcat banks were unable to meet their obligations, which created financial difficulties for their creditors and depositors, and so on throughout the economy. Foreclosures and bankruptcies
were a painful reality to many in this era when the debtor’s prison was still a legal institution. The Panic of 1819 caused many business failures and was a general hardship for great numbers of people for the three years it continued.

The Second Bank of the United States had badly overextended credit, and many of its loans had defaulted in the panic, nearly causing it to fail. Only by taking the severest measures did it remain solvent. To save itself, the Bank refused to extend credit to smaller banks that were also financially in trouble. These banks, in turn, were forced to implement drastic measures such as calling in loans and foreclosing on mortgages in order to stay afloat. Though these steps saved the financial structures and institutions that supported the economy, they were hard on many individuals and businesses and even caused failures among banks. Consequently, public opinion was critical of the Second Bank of the United States in the aftermath of the panic.

In addition, many state banks felt that their authority to regulate credit within their state was threatened by a national bank such as the Second Bank of the United States. The State Bank of Maryland persuaded the Maryland Legislature to impose a tax on out-of-state banks, including the Second Bank of the United States. The federal government refused to pay the tax, whereupon Maryland sued the head cashier at the Maryland branch of the Bank of the United States, John W. McCulloch.

The case of McCulloch v. Maryland went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which was led by Chief Justice John Marshall. The Court ruled in favor of McCulloch. In writing the majority opinion, Marshall stated that “a power to create implies a power to preserve.” By this he meant that the government has the right to exercise its power and authority to protect an entity that it has legally created. Marshall went on to say, “the power to tax involves the power to destroy,” by which he conveyed the court’s opinion that a state government has no authority to exercise destructive power over a legitimate and constitutional entity chartered by the federal government.
Another significant aspect of the *McCulloch* case was Marshall’s defining the doctrine of “loose construction” of the Constitution. Loose construction allows the government to act outside what is specifically stated in the Constitution. Previously many people, particularly Jefferson and the Republicans, had insisted on “strict construction,” whereby the federal government is confined to do exactly what is expressly stated in the Constitution, no more and no less. Marshall argued, however, that the Constitution was derived from the consent of the people and this allowed the government to act for the people’s benefit. He also stated that the tenets of the Constitution were not strictly set but were adaptable to circumstances and that whatever means were appropriate to achieve a desirable end, so long as they were not prohibited or morally wrong, were within the bounds of the intent of the Constitution. Often using Hamilton’s exact words, Marshall’s argument for a broad interpretation of the Constitution expanded the powers of the federal government. In particular, Marshall upheld the legality and appropriateness of the creation of the Second Bank of the United States by the federal government.

**Jackson and the Bank War**

In its first years, the Second Bank of the United States weathered an economic panic and an important court case. These were not, however, to be the last of its troubles. Other forces were at work that would oppose and eventually destroy the Second Bank of the United States.

Early in the 1820s, Henry Clay, a representative from Kentucky and political rival of Jackson, advocated and helped implement what became known as the American System for developing a strong national economy. This system had three parts: tariffs to generate income and protect U.S. businesses, a transportation system of roads and canals, and a strong banking system that could make loans for large projects. Clay felt that the Second Bank of the United States was an indispensable part of this plan, and he approved the Bank’s now-cautious approach to credit and banking.
Following the Panic of 1819, the Second Bank of the United States functioned to stabilize the economy. It prevented the worst of the cycles of boom and bust that characterized this volatile period, by restraining unsound lending practices of smaller banks, especially the frontier wildcat banks. Since the Federal government deposited its substantial revenues of gold and silver in the Bank of the United States, the notes that the Bank issued were more uniform and stable in value than the notes of other banks.

The Second Bank of the United States was not a government-owned bank, but a privately chartered institution headed at that time by Nicholas Biddle. Through his policies, Biddle was able to force smaller banks to refrain from excessive printing of banknotes, which was a major contributor to inflation. Requiring other smaller banks to maintain adequate reserves prevented bank failures that were ruinous to businesses and individuals alike. Though restrained from potentially making larger profits, the banking industry was healthier overall, which helped to insure public confidence in the financial system and uninterrupted growth of the economy.

Some people, however, felt that the Bank, and in particular its president Nicholas Biddle, had too much power to restrict the speculative and potentially profitable business dealings of smaller banks. Westerners were especially critical of the Bank because they felt it suppressed their opportunities while it bolstered the economy of the manufacturing East. Many people also believed that the Bank had the potential to be abused since a private bank is not accountable to the people. Its size and its favored status as the repository of Federal funds enabled the Bank to reap substantial profits for itself through loans to large businesses. The idea of the citizens’ money going into a private bank to be lent out for a profit for the bank’s owners seemed undemocratic and contrary to the ideals of the new Republic. Resentment was also high that the federal deposits that made the Bank so much money did not earn the public coffers any interest.
Many people also disapproved of the fact that the Bank’s stockholders included a substantial number of foreign owners. The idea that foreign nationals could wield political and economic power in the United States due to their influence over the Bank, and consequently over the U.S. economy, was a powerful argument against the Bank. The fact that the Bank had made loans and provided other advantages to politicians who supported it added to public worries over the wisdom of such a national bank.

In 1828, Andrew Jackson was elected president on the Democratic Party ticket. He was a war hero and, though he began life in poverty, by the time he moved to Washington he was a wealthy plantation owner in Tennessee. Jackson was often portrayed as a rude backwoodsman, but in fact he was neither ignorant nor crude. His sympathies were with those who lived in the south and the west, in diametric opposition to those in the north and the east.

New Englanders were suspicious of Jackson because their livelihood and future lay in manufacturing, which benefited from high tariffs and financial coordination through central authority. The South, where there was little manufacturing, suffered high prices on account of import tariffs, and the West chafed under the regulatory thumb of the Second Bank of the United States. To frontier businessmen, the Bank was stealing their financial resources by demanding specie payments for the banknotes of frontier banks. They also resented what they considered to be the Bank’s stifling of opportunity. If they engaged in speculation that might be highly profitable but also included risk, they felt this was their business and they should be free to do as they wished.

Frontiersmen felt a government that was so far away and had so little to do with their lives should not be able to dictate business practices to them. They found the idea of loose interpretation of the Constitution as defined by Chief Justice John Marshall to be repellent and dangerous. Westerners felt they were on the losing side of loose construction and heartily believed the government should stick to exactly what was enumerated in the Constitution and no more. Jackson
agreed with the Westerners that the lives and fortunes of Americans should not be dictated by government let alone a bank, and especially one that was not even a public entity.

Americans’ strong and opposing opinions over the Bank of the United States made for an ideal political rallying point. Years before, Henry Clay had endorsed the Bank as one of the pillars of the American System of economic growth and nation building. He now had aspirations for the presidency in 1832 on the Whig ticket, and the Second Bank of the United States became a pawn in the game of election politics.

Predictably, for both philosophical and political reasons, Jackson came down against the Bank, calling it “the moneyed monster.” He claimed the Bank was an illegal monopoly, and vowed that if he were re-elected he would not renew the Bank’s charter when it ran out in 1836. The stage was set for a political battle, called the Bank War, over the Bank of the United States.

Though the Bank’s 20-year charter would not end for more than four years, Daniel Webster and Henry Clay sent a bill through Congress in 1832 to renew the Bank’s charter immediately. Clay felt that this would hurt Jackson’s chances for re-election because if Jackson signed the bill and renewed the charter, he would anger his powerful western constituency, which felt economically restrained by the Bank. But if Jackson refused to sign the bill, he would lose the support of wealthy eastern businessmen. Jackson bitterly commented, “The Bank is trying to kill me, but I will kill it!”

The bill to renew the Bank’s charter passed Congress, but Jackson refused to sign it, calling the Bank unconstitutional even though the Supreme Court had upheld the Bank’s constitutionality thirteen years before in *McCulloch v. Maryland*. Until this time, U.S. presidents had made a point to defer to the intent of the Founding Fathers for equality among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. By vetoing the recharter bill, and thus dooming the Bank, Jackson rejected the
decision of the Supreme Court and overrode the will of the Congress. In this way he exercised the innately greater power of the executive branch of government over the other two branches and coincidentally earned himself the nickname of King Andrew I. Ironically, Nicholas Biddle, president of the Bank, had earlier been labeled Czar Nicholas I. Thus the two presidents, one of government and one of business, were metaphorically criticized for their arrogance in wielding power.

Andrew Jackson’s presidential victory over Henry Clay in 1832 led him to believe that the people had given him a mandate concerning immediate destruction of the Bank. Though its charter would not run out until 1836, in 1833 Jackson ordered Secretary of Treasury Roger B. Taney to methodically remove all federal funds from the Bank by using them as the government’s operating capital. In addition, no new government funds were to be deposited with the Bank. Instead, new funds were to be deposited in various state banks, which came to be known as “pet banks.”

Within just a few months, federal deposits in the Second Bank of the United States dropped by half. Fearful that the Bank now had more notes circulating than could be supported by its deposits and desperate to save the Bank, Biddle called in many of the Bank's loans, especially those to other banks. This unexpected demand placed a hardship on smaller banks and businesses, driving some to bankruptcy and causing a minor financial downturn called “Biddle’s Panic.” Biddle was criticized for the severity of his actions, but even so the Bank was nearly failing by the time its federal charter ran out in 1836. It was then rechartered as the State Bank of Philadelphia.

With the stabilizing influence of the Second Bank of the United States gone, many banks resumed their old habits of overextending credit and printing too many banknotes. This caused paper currency to become unreliable, and speculative loaning, especially in the West, mushroomed to dangerous levels. In order to rein in this printing and lending spree, Jackson had the Treasury issue a Specie
Circular—an order to other banks that only specie (metallic gold or silver money) might be used to purchase public land on the frontier. The Specie Circular had such a negative effect on land sales that it triggered a recession in 1837.

Jackson’s presidential term ended in 1836. Popular with the people to the end, his immediate economic legacy was fiscal instability for the country, which resulted in the Panic of 1837 during his successor, Martin Van Buren’s, presidency. His unshakable opinion remained, however, that over the long term an immensely powerful national bank held in private hands was a danger to democracy.

After the Panic of 1837, Van Buren separated government from banking by creating a government treasury to safeguard federal money. This move was generally unpopular since it removed federal funds from the state banks and reduced the pool of capital available for lending. Nevertheless, the Independent Treasury Bill passed Congress in 1840, and the institution continued until the twentieth century when it became part of the Federal Reserve System.
Indian Removal
Native Americans and the New Republic

From the time the first colonies were settled in America, relations between the Native American Indians and white settlers ranged from respected friends to hated enemies. Into the 1800s, Americans who were still in competition with the Indians for land and resources considered them to be uncivilized and barbaric. But many Americans admired the Indians and valued their contributions to American history and culture. These people hoped that with time the Indians could be peaceably assimilated into American society. Even before the Revolution, churches and religious organizations sent missionaries among the Indians to try to convert them to Christianity. In 1787, the Society for Propagating the Gospel among Indians was founded for that purpose. The federal government joined the effort to “civilize” Native Americans that had first been undertaken by the colonies and the churches. In 1793, Congress designated $20,000, a substantial sum for the time, to provide literacy, farming, and vocational assistance to Native Americans.

The United States recognized Indian tribes as separate nations of people entitled to their own lands that could only be obtained from them through treaties. Due to inexorable pressures of expansion, settlement, and commerce, however, treaties made with good intentions where often perceived as unsustainable within just a few years. The Indians felt betrayed and frequently reacted with violence when land promised to them forever was taken away. For the most part, however, they directed their energies toward maintaining their tribal identity while living in the new order.

By 1830, most of the territories east of the Mississippi River had become states. The Democratic Party, led by President Andrew Jackson, was committed to economic progress in the states and to settlement and development of the western frontier. These goals put the government in conflict with the more than
125,000 Native Americans who still lived east of the Mississippi. By this time, many Indians had given up nomadic hunting and had adopted a more settled way of life. In particular, the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles tried to live in harmony with their white neighbors who called them the Five Civilized Tribes. The real conflict between the government and the Indians was the land held by the Indians through legal treaties. White pioneers, frustrated by the lack of opportunity in the settled areas, pushed hard for new lands to purchase and farm, while states containing Indian territories resented the existence of lands within their borders over which they had no authority and from which they collected no revenue.

The Treaty of 1791 recognized the Cherokees’ right to a substantial portion of northeastern Georgia. The Cherokees were very successful at adapting to a new way of life, farming the land, raising cattle, growing cotton, and even owning slaves to work their plantations. Missionaries established schools and helped the Cherokees in their new lives. One Cherokee, Sequoyah, devised the Cherokee syllabic alphabet of 85 characters so that his people could write down and preserve their thoughts. With a written language, the Cherokee were able to publish their own newspaper, *The Cherokee Phoenix*.

The Cherokees established their own governing body called the Cherokee National Council. In 1808, the Cherokee National Council developed a legal system, and in 1827 wrote a constitution enacting a system of tribal government to regulate affairs within the borders of their lands. Their government included an electoral system and a legislative, judicial, and executive branch. One tenet of the constitution was that on their own lands the Cherokee were not subject to the laws of Georgia. Treaties with the U.S. government recognized the Cherokee Nation, but the State of Georgia objected to having an independent Indian nation within its boundaries. Believing that the laws of Georgia should be sovereign throughout their state, Georgians passed legislation claiming jurisdiction over the Cherokee Nation in 1828.
These political actions coincided with increasing economic pressures to open this area to white settlement and development. The Cherokee land was coveted for agricultural production at a time when the population of the state was increasing and demand for farmland was high. In addition, gold was discovered in the region and many whites were eager to mine it.

The Indian Removal Act

In the face of mounting opposition to federal protection for autonomous Indian nations in Georgia and other states—opposition that threatened to become violent—President Jackson decided to move the Indians to lands west of the Mississippi River. He felt this offered the best hope to preserve peace and protect the Indians from being scattered and destroyed. Opening new land to white settlement would also increase economic progress. Jackson insisted that the Indians receive a fair price for their lands and that the government pay all expenses of resettlement.

In 1830 at the request of Jackson, a bill went before Congress authorizing moving the Indians across the Mississippi. Daniel Webster and Henry Clay opposed the Indian Removal Bill, but its most bitterly outspoken opponent was Davy Crockett. Having served in the army under Jackson, Crockett was a Jacksonian Democrat until he and the president parted ways over treatment of the Indians. In the next Tennessee congressional election, the Democrats threw their support to another candidate, and Crockett was defeated. Disgusted with partisanship, Crockett left the arena of national politics and went to Texas, delivering, as was the custom, a resounding rendition of his farewell speech at every stop along the way. Within a year he perished defending the Alamo.

Congress passed the Indian Removal Act, which provided for the resettlement of all Native Americans then residing east of the Mississippi to a newly defined Indian Territory in what is now Oklahoma. There the Indians were to be free to pursue their lives without interference. This removal was intended to be
voluntary, but groups of Indians were strongly pressured to go. The legislation affected not only the Indians in Georgia, but over 100,000 Native Americans in other states, including all of the Five Civilized Tribes.

Little recognition was given to the fact that the Indians of the east were not familiar with how to subsist in the harsh conditions of the Great Plains or that the remuneration they received for their lands would benefit them little there. In addition, many tribes harbored ancient hostilities for other tribes. The Indian Removal Act made little provision for separation of groups. Once in the territory, Indians were left to get along however they might.

Nevertheless, many Indian groups, already surrounded by white settlements, accepted the government decree and moved west. The Choctaws of Mississippi made the trek from 1831 through 1833, and the Creeks of Alabama in 1836. Only nominally voluntary, these migrations often turned into forced marches during which many perished. The Choctaws lost one-fourth of their people before arriving in Oklahoma, while the Creeks lost 3,500 of the 15,000 who began the journey.

The Cherokees were not happy with the relocation plan and resisted being forced to move. In 1831, the Cherokees turned to the courts for defense against the Indian Removal Act and against the Georgia Legislature’s nullification of Cherokee laws. Three times their cases went to the Supreme Court. In Cherokee Nation v. Georgia, Chief Justice John Marshall ruled that the Cherokee had “an unquestionable right” to their lands, but that they were "not a foreign state, in the sense of the Constitution" but rather a “domestic, dependent nation” and so could not sue in a United States court over Georgia’s voiding their right to self-rule. Although this was a blow to the Cherokee case against Georgia, it cast doubt on the constitutionality of the Indian Removal Act.

In Worcester v. Georgia in 1832, the Court reversed itself and ruled that the State of Georgia could not control the Cherokee within their territory. The case
revolved around two missionaries, Samuel Austin Worcester and Elizur Butler, who were welcomed by the Cherokee but who had not obtained a license under Georgia law to live on Cherokee lands. Worcester and Butler were ordered by Georgia to take an oath of allegiance to the state or leave Cherokee land. They refused and were arrested. The missionaries were consigned to hard labor on a chain gang for 16 months while the case was being decided. Later they would accompany the Cherokees on their long trek to Oklahoma. In 1992, the Georgia legislature formally pardoned Worcester and Butler.

In a third case, the Court agreed that crimes committed in Cherokee Territory were beyond the jurisdiction of the State of Georgia. This case involved a Cherokee named Corn Tassel who had been convicted in a Georgia court of murdering another Indian. Corn Tassel’s attorney appealed the conviction on the grounds that the killing had taken place in Cherokee territory, so Georgia had no right to try him. The Supreme Court sided with the Cherokees and found that the Georgia ruling was unconstitutional. President Jackson, however, made it clear that he would tolerate no independent nation within the borders of the United States. When he publicly backed Georgia, Corn Tassel was hanged. The Cherokees then understood that even the Supreme Court could not save their cause.

In backing Georgia against the Supreme Court, President Jackson was responding to pressures in several different areas. Political pressure to open Indian lands to white settlement had been mounting for some time. With increasing conflicts of interest between settlers and Indians came an ever-greater likelihood of violence not only for the Cherokees but for all Native Americans living east of the Mississippi. In addition, Jackson believed in states’ rights and wanted to limit federal power, including the power of the Supreme Court. He was also understandably concerned with the dangers inherent in granting political autonomy to groups of people wanting to establish separate laws and governments that could supersede the laws and government of a state. For these reasons he was at odds with Marshall’s Court, which felt obligated to uphold the provisions of the treaties that had already been made with the Indians. Jackson
made no effort to obscure the fact that while the Court might rule whatever it pleased, the executive branch was not constrained to follow the ruling.

The Sac (Sauk), and Fox tribes of Illinois and Wisconsin were also affected by the Indian Removal Act. One Sac chief signed a treaty abandoning Indian lands east of the Mississippi, and he moved the tribes to Iowa. Chief Black Hawk, however, along with a faction from the tribes, revolted against forced removal from the land of their ancestors. In 1832, they returned to their Illinois lands and conducted a campaign of raids and ambushes. The United States Army responded and violently suppressed what the government considered an Indian insurrection. Black Hawk was captured and imprisoned in St. Louis in 1833. Among the regular army troops involved in this action was Lieutenant Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, while Captain Abraham Lincoln served with the Illinois volunteers. Thirty years later these two men would head the Confederate and Union governments during the Civil War.

In the case of the Seminoles in Florida, callous and misguided decisions by the government contributed to the bloodiest Indian conflict in U.S. history. The Seminole Indians were ordered to merge with their ancestral enemy, the Creeks, for relocation. The Creeks were slaveowners, and many of the Seminoles had escaped from Creek slavery. The Seminoles were justifiably outraged and several hundred, joined by runaway black slaves, refused to leave Florida and move west. They retreated to the swamps of the Everglades, where they fought a bitter and protracted war with the United States Army. Over seven years (1835-1842), this conflict claimed the lives of 1,500 U.S. soldiers. In 1837, Chief Osceola was captured by treachery under a flag of truce and sent to a prison where he soon perished. Three thousand Seminoles were then forced to relocate to Oklahoma in a bitter forced march. Another 1,000 hid in the Everglades, however, and continued to fight for five more years. Some were never captured, and the Seminole tribe became divided by this struggle.

Jackson and Van Buren
Historians are divided on President Andrew Jackson’s feelings toward Indians. Some claim he was a virulent Indian hater and cite as evidence the fact that he commanded the American troops that killed nearly 900 Creeks in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814. On the other hand, Jackson led an invasion of Florida in 1818 to capture runaway slaves and punish those who aided them. There he ordered Indians, Spanish, and British alike hanged or otherwise killed. Rather than claim simply that Jackson was an Indian hater, it might be more accurate to say that he was a man of his times, and the times were violent. Jackson was a practical, action-oriented person, who felt it was clear that the time of the Indian nations within the states was over. That being the case, he saw no reason to prolong their inevitable departure. On the contrary, in light of the political and economic advantages to Indian removal, he insisted it be accomplished as quickly as possible.

Having served two terms, Jackson chose Martin Van Buren, his Secretary of State, to run as the Democratic candidate in 1836. Van Buren won against the newly organized, conservative Whig Party and continued the Jacksonian political tradition of championing the rights of individual citizens to prosper in America. Primarily this had been achieved by restraining monopolistic and oppressive business, as Jackson had considered the Bank of the United States to be. Making sure that new land was available for settlement had been another important part of Jackson’s political strategy.

Unlike Jackson, Van Buren was sociable, diplomatic, and not given to making strong partisan statements. His presidency was mostly concerned with countering the recession that followed the demise of the Bank of the United States and the Jacksonian policy of insisting that western lands be paid for in gold or silver. Speculation had grown out of control, banks went under, and the banknotes that served as paper currency became worthless or highly unstable in value. In addition, instabilities in the British economy and the failure of two major British banks had negative repercussions in the United States.
Unemployment in the U.S. reached 30% as wages dropped precipitously, often by half. Public relief was not considered a province of the government at that time, so hundreds of thousands of destitute people had no other assistance than what was provided by charities and volunteer organizations.

The Van Buren years suffered other difficulties, as well. A wheat crop failure forced grain prices to intolerable levels, triggering food riots in New York just as he was taking office. Later that year, Antonio López de Santa Anna wiped out the legendary force at the Alamo, and the American Sam Houston led an army that captured the Mexican general and forced him to relinquish the portion of Texas north of the Rio Grande. The Mexican government complained, but Texas wanted to join the Union. This presented a serious problem to the United States because Texas would join as a slave state and upset the delicate political balance in the country.

The Jacksonian legacy was to remove the difficult Indian element in order to allow settlement and entrepreneurship to progress unrestrained by native resistance. Van Buren inherited this situation and the mechanisms that had been established to deal with it. Distracted by economic and political matters and pressured by his mentor Jackson, Van Buren allowed the issue of the Cherokees of Georgia to be resolved by their removal to the Indian Territory in the manner conceived by the administration before him.

In 1836, the Bureau of Indian Affairs was created to handle relations with the Indians. It had no control, however, over white expansion westward. The Bureau was unable to honor many of the agreements made with the Indians. The frontier that the Bureau had claimed as a permanent settlement location for the Indians turned out to last only into the 1850s as Americans continued to push westward.

In the fall of 1838, the U.S. government, now under Van Buren, ordered the forcible removal of the Cherokees from Georgia to the Indian Territory in present-day Oklahoma. Of the 18,000 that began the 1,000 mile, 116-day trek,
4,000 perished on the way of illness, cold, starvation, and exhaustion. The U.S. Army oversaw the march and forced a continuous pace at rifle and bayonet point disregarding the terrible hardship of the travelers. For this reason, the journey is known as the Trail of Tears. Some historians partially blame the Cherokee leaders for failing to make preparations to leave during the time they were given. Regardless of who was responsible, however, the circumstances of suffering and death remain a tragic chapter in American history. In all, between 1831 and 1839 about 46,000 Indian people were relocated across the Mississippi River.
Transcendentalism, Religion, and Utopian Movements

Transcendentalism

In his 1794 book *The Age of Reason*, Thomas Paine advanced a religious philosophy called Deism that struck at the tenets of organized religions, particularly Calvinism as it was practiced by the Puritans. Paine claimed that churches were “set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit.” These thoughts were shocking to Americans who were imbued with a strong religious tradition. At the same time, Paine’s ideas appealed to many Americans who were likewise steeped in the rationality of the Enlightenment period and who had difficulty aligning Calvinist doctrine with reason.

Calvinism held that the essential nature of infants was evil. This belief was called “infant damnation.” Calvinism also subscribed to a belief that there were only a certain few who were “elect” by God from the beginning to be saved. All others were doomed after death regardless of their beliefs or actions in life. Many people objected to the ideas of infant damnation and the powerlessness of the individual to achieve salvation.

Paine’s Deism, by contrast, claimed that human nature was essentially good and that salvation was within reach of every person through faith and good works. Deists believed in a “clockwork” universe. They felt that God had created the world and all the laws that governed it, and then He allowed events to play themselves out as they would without further divine intervention. Deists believed that the laws of the world are knowable to humanity by the application of logic and reason. This contrasted with the Calvinist idea that true knowledge is only obtained by divine revelation as expressed in the Bible. A number of the Founding Fathers, including Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, became Deists.
A new Protestant sect, the Unitarians, formally expressed the philosophy of Deism. Unitarians believed in a single divine deity, the Supreme Being, as opposed to the Holy Trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit worshipped by most Christians. They also believed in free will, salvation through good works, and the intrinsically moral nature of human beings, including infants and children. The Unitarian creed was rational, optimistic, and non-dogmatic. Unitarianism appealed to many intellectuals and free thinkers of the day.

Others who were unhappy with the Puritan religion chose to return to the Episcopal faith, which was associated with the Anglican Church of England. The Irish and Scots in the United States were already largely Presbyterian. A similar religious group, the Congregationalists, often merged with the Presbyterians in small communities since they differed little in creed. In these ways the religious landscape was changing in the early 1800s, especially among the established, educated people of New England. But the pace of change across the country was soon to quicken.

The Romantic Movement at the turn of the nineteenth century gave expression to a growing conviction throughout Europe and America that there was more to experiencing the world than could be inferred by logic and more to living than could be satisfied by the acquisition of material things. People felt a need to balance reason and calculation with emotion and spirit. The German philosopher Immanuel Kant first framed doubts over rationality as a cure-all for human problems and needs in his Critique of Pure Reason, published in 1781. Sympathetic poets and authors transmuted his ideas into literary works that were meant to be as much apprehended by the soul as understood by the intellect. In England, writers such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, and Tennyson, to name a few, breathed life into Romanticism through their poetry. The Romantics revered nature and felt that contemplation of natural scenes would lead to realization of fundamental truths.
In America, Emerson and Thoreau helped formalize the Romantic Movement into Transcendentalism, a philosophy that reads almost like a faith. The Transcendentalists infused the Romantic impulse with mysticism, a belief in the possibility of direct communion with God and knowledge of ultimate reality through spiritual insight. In part, this was fueled by newly translated Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic texts, which contained elements of mysticism. A thread of the mystic also ran through American Puritanism and in the Quaker faith even more so. Quaker doctrine subscribed to a belief in an Inner Light, which was a gift of God’s grace. The Inner Light expressed itself as divine intuition or knowledge unaccountable by ordinary derivations of thought.

For Transcendentalists, truth is beyond, or transcends, what can be discovered using evidence acquired by the senses. Like the Quakers, Transcendentalists believed that every person possesses an Inner Light that can illuminate the highest truth and put a person in touch with God, whom they called the Oversoul. Since this sort of knowledge of truth is a personal matter, Transcendentalism was committed to development of the self and had little regard for dogma or authority.

Ralph Waldo Emerson took up the Transcendentalist banner after studying at Harvard to be a Unitarian minister. He left what he called the “cold and cheerless” Unitarian pulpit to travel in Europe and talk to Romantic writers and philosophers, including Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Thomas Carlyle. Returning to America, he lived in Concord, Massachusetts, near Boston, where he composed poetry and wrote essays. He supported himself through annual lecture tours and was a very popular speaker.

In 1837 at Harvard, Emerson delivered his influential “American Scholar” lecture that exhorted Americans in the arts to stop turning to Europe for inspiration and instruction and begin developing an American literary and artistic tradition. Emerson preached the philosophy of the Oversoul and the organic, ever-changing nature of the universe, stressing self-reliance, individualism, optimism,
and freedom. Though not inclined toward political activism, by the eve of the Civil War, Emerson became an ardent abolitionist.

Another Transcendentalist, Henry David Thoreau, wrote essays that have had a profound effect on modern thought. His philosophy of individualism and conscious nonconformism is expressed in his book *Walden: Or Life in the Woods* (1854) where he describes living a full emotional and intellectual life for two years while residing in a tiny cabin he made himself and existing in every other way at a barely subsistence level. His other work of note is the essay *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*. Thoreau was against Texas joining the Union because it would be a slave state. He felt that the United States had involved itself in the Mexican War on behalf of Texas and, therefore, he refused to pay a tax that he felt would support the war effort. For this he was briefly jailed. Thoreau’s tactic of passive resistance was later emulated by Mahatma Gandhi in India in his resistance to British rule and by Martin Luther King, Jr. in his non-violent approach to gaining civil rights.

Romanticism encouraged writing literature of remarkable emotional effects. In the early nineteenth century, Washington Irving (*Legend of Sleepy Hollow*), James Fenimore Cooper (*Last of the Mohicans*), and Edgar Allen Poe (*The Pit and the Pendulum*) made their marks as gifted authors. In the early 1850s, however, in addition to Thoreau’s *Walden*, American writers produced a dazzling set of classic works inaugurating a golden age in American literature. In this time frame, Nathaniel Hawthorne published *The Scarlet Letter* and the *House of the Seven Gables*, Herman Melville produced *Moby-Dick*, and Walt Whitman composed *Leaves of Grass*. These were a new breed of distinctly American authors, writing on American subjects and from a uniquely American perspective steeped in native Transcendentalism. Until this time American literature was considered second rate if it was considered at all. In the wake of these contributions, Europe began to look to America for thought and inspiration of true quality.
The Second Great Awakening

At the turn of the nineteenth century, America was still a devotedly church-going nation. Most Americans felt a traditional religious faith to be the foundation of moral character, and many worried that over time the religious imperative would wane into token gestures and empty social structures. These concerns increased with news of the cruelties and excesses of the French Revolution done in the name of reason.

In 1795, Timothy Dwight became president of Yale College, described as a “hotbed of infidelity.” Determined to counter the secular trend in American thinking, Dwight sponsored a series of religious revivals that fired the collective soul of the Yale student body and spread across New England, igniting a religious movement called the Second Great Awakening. The sermons preached from the pulpits of this great revival did not attempt like the old-time Puritans to pressure a captive congregation with dire predictions of a vengeful God’s omniscient power and arbitrary judgments. Rather, they spoke of a benevolent Father whose most passionate desire was the salvation of every one of His children down to the most lost sinner.

At a religious assembly, a person could be saved by faith alone during a conversion experience. Unusual behaviors such as “speaking in tongues” or convulsive fits of religious ecstasy sometimes accompanied these experiences. The only absolute requisite to salvation, however, was an acceptance of Christ’s sacrifice as atonement for one’s sins. All people were free to accept this gift or not. But the fires of everlasting hell, described in lush and vivid imagery, awaited those who turned their backs.

The Second Great Awakening soon spread to the frontier. Beginning in the South and moving northward along the frontier to the Old Northwest, a new institution, the camp meeting, ignited a spiritual fervor that converted thousands and altered the religious landscape of America forever. Many traditional churches were
swept away in this new awakening. Others reformed to counter the firestorm of the evangelical preacher.

Camp meetings were generally held in the fall after harvest but before the rigors of winter. For the participants who often traveled considerable distances, religious revivals probably combined the attractions of a retreat, a camp-out, and a much-earned vacation. As many as 25,000 people gathered at revival meetings to hear the gospel preached by charismatic orators who “rode the circuit” from camp to camp.

Besides the spiritual message, revival meetings offered entertainment in an age when other diversions for the average person were either of the homegrown variety or of a quiet, literary nature. A free-wheeling, fire-and-brimstone revival provided an acceptable emotional and social outlet for people of the frontier who were mostly engaged in farming and other rural, labor-intensive agricultural pursuits. Of particular importance, women could attend and participate in religious revivals at a time when many social outlets available to men, such as taverns and fraternal organizations, were neither considered appropriate nor allowed for women. This offered revival preachers a natural female constituency that contributed immeasurably to their success.

In the south, black slaves and freed men and women could also attend segregated, companion revivals. The emotional, spiritual, and social opportunity of such a gathering can scarcely be appreciated in the modern age for its intensity. These meetings gave rise to a rich and remarkable tradition of black preachers who provided not merely social and spiritual but political cohesion to much-beleaguered black communities in the difficult times to come.

Western New York hosted so many revival meetings patronized by the hellfire-and-brimstone variety of preacher that it came to be known as the “burned-over district.” With the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825, commerce and industry boomed, particularly around Utica in Oneida County. This attracted great
numbers of people seeking a fresh start in life. Such seekers were prime subjects for conversion by revivalists because of the social nature of a revival. At a camp meeting, a person joined hundreds, perhaps thousands, of others on an essentially egalitarian basis. Though many were drawn to the meetings for the social aspect, they were easily caught up in the event and followed through with conversion.

The women of Utica were particularly concerned with the spiritual health of their community, and since women did not generally work outside the home they had the time to organize community activities. The Oneida County Female Missionary Society raised sufficient money to support the revival movement in the area for a number of years. The role of women in the Second Great Awakening can scarcely be over-emphasized. Women were converted in equal numbers with men, but once converted tended to be even more solid adherents to their church than their male counterparts. Viewed as the moral center of the family, a woman was responsible for her husband’s and children’s spiritual well being. Women took this responsibility seriously and sought to fulfill it through church participation and, later in the century, through organizing charitable and benevolent associations aimed at social reform.

Evangelists were aware that their power to make converts rested substantially in their influence with women. The new gospels emphasized the importance of the role of women in bringing their families to Christian life. They placed an equal value on the spiritual worth of men and women, in contrast to earlier religions that tended to minimize women’s importance in the spiritual as well as secular spheres. This gender egalitarianism in religious matters marked a break with the past and offered women the opportunity to acquire standing in the community without treading on the secular prerogatives of their husbands. Once this door was opened to them, women continued to play a crucial role in religious life and went on to become pioneers and crusaders in nineteenth century social reform.
Many prominent preachers frequented the pulpits of the burned-over-district. Among them, William Miller gained a following of around 100,000 with a Biblical interpretation of the Second Coming of Christ on October 22, 1844. Failure of the prophecy to materialize did not wholly quench the Millerite movement, which became known as Seventh Day Adventist.

Perhaps the greatest evangelist was the former lawyer Charles Grandison Finney, who conducted an intense, sustained revival in the burned-over-district from 1826 to 1831. Beginning in Utica, he made his way in stages to Rochester and New York City. Church membership grew by tens of thousands wherever he held revivals. A spellbinding orator, Finney preached a theology in pointed contrast to Puritan Calvinism. Salvation could be had by anyone through faith and good works, which he felt flowed from one another. People were the captains of their own fate, and since Judgment Day could come at any time, his hearers should take immediate action to ensure the redemption of themselves and their loved ones.

Finney was a master of showmanship and participatory psychology. His revival agenda included hymn singing and solicitation of personal testimonials from the congregation. He placed an “anxious bench” in the front of the assembly for those teetering on the brink of commitment to Christ. The moment of holy redemption for a bench-sitter became a dramatic event. Finney encouraged women to pray aloud and denounced alcohol and slavery from the pulpit. He felt that mass, public conversions were more effective than the old-style, solitary communion because they emphasized the fraternal nature of church membership. Finney later became president of Oberlin College in Ohio, the first U.S. college to admit women and blacks and a hotbed of abolitionism and evangelical zeal.

The crusading spirit of religious evangelism carried over into secular life and expressed itself in a number of reform movements. Temperance, suffrage, prison reform, and abolition all received an infusion of energy from evangelical vigor. In addition, the traveling preacher expanded the horizons of imagination beyond
the local sphere and even beyond the borders of the nation. Supporting a mission in a foreign country or among Native Americans in the West became a binding cause for many churches. Reports from missionaries in such exotic places as Africa, India, or Hawaii were awaited with breathless expectation. As an enticement to listen to their religious message, missionaries often provided medical, technical, and educational benefits to the people in the locale of their mission. In these ways, the Second Great Awakening contributed to changing not just the nation, but the world.

Revivalism did not affect the wealthier, better-educated parts of society that gravitated to Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and Unitarian churches as much as it did rural and frontier communities that tended to be Baptist or Methodist. The Baptist faith proved ideal for conditions on the frontier. Baptists believed in a literal reading of the Bible that required no authoritarian interpretation. They also subscribed to the concept of the possibility of any person obtaining salvation through his or her own free will. Above all, however, they believed that a church was its own highest authority and thus avoided the difficulties and delays of petitions to and approvals from a distant hierarchical organization.

A group of Baptists could form their own church on the spot and choose a preacher from among themselves. The Baptists were egalitarian in their creed, believing that all people were equal before God regardless of their economic, social, or educational standing. The simplest farmer in Kentucky was on par in native dignity with every other person in the Republic. These beliefs and the Baptists’ uncomplicated organization were highly appealing to small communities of self-sufficient, independent-minded people.

The Methodists, however, were most successful at reaping the benefits of religious revivalism of the early 1800s by establishing a system of itinerant preachers on horseback, or circuit riders. Francis Asbury began the practice when the frontier was scarcely west of the Appalachian Mountains. Hardy and
fearless, Asbury rode the rugged backwoods trails and preached thousands of sermons to farmers, pioneers, and backwoodsmen and their families.

Peter Cartwright, the most famous of the Methodist frontier preachers, delivered his highly charged sermons for 50 years in the frontier region bordering the Ohio River. Uneducated himself, he along with other Methodist evangelists considered education a hindrance to converting souls since conversion is not a matter of the mind but of the spirit. Energy, sincerity, and a powerful message of faith and redemption were the necessary requisites for a Methodist circuit rider. Their approach seems justified since by 1850 the Methodist Church had more members than any other Protestant sect in the country.

Churches came to reflect deep divisions that paralleled sectional interests in the country far beyond issues of religious doctrine or socio-economic stratification. By 1845, both the Baptist and Methodist Churches split over slavery. Presbyterians suffered a similar schism in 1857. The Northern churches of these denominations believed in abolishing slavery while Southern congregations felt their economic well-being was bound to a slaveholding system. The conflict over human bondage thus broke first in the communities of religion, which served as heralds to the South’s secession from the Union and, ultimately, to the American Civil War.

Utopian Movements

A number of cooperative communities were launched in the 1800s as experiments in alternative social organizations and Christian living according to scriptural interpretations. This was not a new phenomenon in the New World. The Jamestown colonists, the Puritans, the Quakers, and others had all made the difficult and dangerous voyage across the sea in order to live by their own beliefs.
Reformers in the aftermath of the Second Great Awakening sought to get away from authoritarian power structures but still provide for all members of the group. Brook Farm, New Harmony, the Shaker and Amana communities, and Oneida Colony were typical trials of utopian communes. Generally socialistic, these communities failed to thrive in America’s capitalistic culture once the vision and dedication of the original founders was gone. Their histories as alternative patterns of living are valuable, however, for their insight into human relationships and social structures.

New Harmony, founded in 1825 in Indiana by wealthy Scottish textile manufacturer Robert Owen, ironically perished early from lack of harmony among its participants. The Amana communities in New York and Iowa were also short-lived, fading away by the end of the 1850s.

Brook Farm in Massachusetts, noted as a transcendental literary and intellectual haven, suffered from indebtedness, in part from a disastrous fire and in part from lack of incentive for the members to be productive, since the fruits of the labor of all were shared equally by all, regardless of contribution. Lasting only five years, the experiment in “plain living and high thinking” was forever memorialized as the basis for Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel *The Blithedale Romance*.

The Shaker communities, founded by an Englishwoman, Ann Lee, who came to America in 1774, practiced strict sexual abstinence since they believed the Christian millennium was imminent and therefore saw no reason to perpetuate the human race. Ann Lee died in 1784, but the sect continued to prosper on the strength of its fervent and joyful religious life. The Shakers admired simplicity and made an art of designing buildings and furniture of distinctive, harmonious beauty. By the 1830s, there were 20 Shaker communities, and by 1840 the Shakers had a membership of some six thousand. Shaker communities existed for another 100 years, though dwindling slowly. Their rule of celibacy and communal holding of property discouraged new converts. Because of their high
ideals and lack of controversial practices, the Shaker communities lived in harmony with their neighbors.

By contrast, the Oneida colony practiced free love, birth control, and eugenic selection of parents. These life-style anomalies proved unpalatable to most Americans and caused ongoing problems with the surrounding community. Founded in 1847 in Vermont by John Humphrey Noyes, the colony soon had to relocate to more-tolerant New York. Noyes’s doctrine of “Bible Communism” insisted selfishness was the root of unhappiness. Owning property and maintaining exclusive relationships encouraged selfishness and destructive covetousness of what others have. Therefore, the keys to happiness were communal ownership of property and what Noyes termed “complex marriage” where every woman was married to every man in the group.

The Oneidans shared work equally and supported their enterprise by manufacturing such things as steel traps, silk thread, and silverplate tableware. Yielding to external pressure, the Oneida colony gave up complex marriage in 1879, and communal ownership of property soon followed. The group eventually transformed itself into a joint-stock company manufacturing stainless steel knives and tableware. Thus Noyes’s communistic utopia ended as a capitalist corporation.

In New York in the 1820s, Joseph Smith was visited with a vision and claimed to have received golden plates that detailed a new religion he called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Mormonism. In 1831 Smith founded a small community in Ohio. The Mormon faith was cooperative in nature, which rankled the individualistic temper of the times. But the colony was efficient and successful, which attracted converts. Strife with the local inhabitants caused the colony to relocate to Missouri and then to Illinois, where in 1839 they founded the town of Nauvoo. Five years later Nauvoo was the largest town in the state. Rumors of polygamy and other social irregularities incensed the moral rectitude
of neighboring non-Mormons. Smith and his brother Hyrum were arrested, and while in jail they were attacked by a mob and killed.

Leadership of the Mormons was taken up by Brigham Young who led the sect to the site of what is now Salt Lake City. The Mormons were highly successful in Utah, but so staunchly independent that they raised the ire of the United States government, which sent troops against them in 1857. The issue of polygamy delayed statehood for Utah until 1896. Though no longer communal in nature, Mormonism remains a dynamic influence in the state of Utah, and the Mormon faith is recognized as a major religion in the United States.

Subordination of the individual to the group seems to be the one common thread among the utopian experimental communities. Beyond that, their doctrines, practices, and fates make each group uniquely individual. They reflected the idealistic, reform-minded spirit of their age, and remain as monuments to human courage to live differently on the basis of principle and religious conviction.

Reform might be labeled the touchstone of the nineteenth century. The movements begun then often did not bear fruit until the twentieth century, and some are still in the process of becoming fully realized. Reforms such as prison reform, corporate reform, sanitation, and child labor were mostly accomplished through court cases. Women’s rights, the universal right to vote, and temperance from alcohol relied on grass-roots movements, consciousness raising in the form of parades, petitions, and lectures, and ultimately, legislation. But the test of the nation came over reform from the practice of slavery, which sparked a terrible war. The first reforms of the era were of religion and philosophy. When the hearts and minds of the people changed, social and political reform became an unstoppable force.
Reform Crusades

Humanitarian Reforms

The Age of Reform--the decades prior to the Civil War--was a period of tremendous economic and political change. Many Americans believed that traditional values were undercut by the emerging industrial and market economy and they supported humanitarian and social reforms in an effort to create a new moral order. Some reformers, including those who embraced transcendentalism, promoted the divinity of the individual and sought to perfect human society. A number of experimental communal "utopias" were formed to further this effort.

Other reformers were driven by more traditional religious impulses, such as the Protestant revivalism known as the Second Great Awakening. Charles Grandison Finney, the greatest of the revival preachers, denounced both alcohol and slavery. The Shaker, Amana, and Mormon communities were among those that blended religion and secular institutions to further human perfectibility. Many middle-class women took the opportunity to broaden their experiences beyond the domestic sphere by participating in various reform movements. A defining characteristic of this era was that women played public, leading roles in many of the crusades to reform American society.

The emphasis on human perfectibility led some reformers to provide care for the physically and mentally afflicted. Thomas H. Gallaudet, a graduate of Yale who studied the education of deaf-mutes in Paris, opened the first American school for the deaf at Hartford, Connecticut, in 1817. His son, Edward, founded the Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, which is now known as Gallaudet University. Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe did similar work with the sightless in Boston. He founded in 1832 the Perkins Institution and the Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind. Howe received international acclaim by teaching a blind, deaf, and mute, twelve-year-old girl to communicate through sign language.
As part of the humanitarian reforms sweeping America, asylums were also funded for social deviants and the mentally ill. Criminals of all kinds—including debtors—and the indigent insane were confined together indiscriminately in crowded, filthy prisons during the early decades of the nineteenth century. In Pennsylvania and New York, the idea that criminals should be reformed led to experiments in solitary confinement. Strict rules of silence were imposed, in an attempt to provide prisoners with the opportunity to contemplate their mistakes and become penitent. Therefore, prisons literally became "penitentiaries," or "reformatories." In 1821, Kentucky became the first state to abolish imprisonment for debt. As working-class men won the right to vote, debtors' prisons eventually disappeared from the American scene.

Dorothea Dix, a remarkably selfless woman, abandoned a successful teaching career in 1841 to begin a life-long crusade to improve conditions for the mentally impaired. After touring asylums and poorhouses in Massachusetts, she reported to the legislature that the indigent insane were treated as violent criminals: "Chained, naked, beaten with rods, and lashed into obedience." Dix traveled extensively and ultimately persuaded 20 state legislatures and the federal government to establish mental health asylums, including St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C. At her urging, Congress passed a bill granting public lands to the states to fund hospitals for the mentally and physically impaired. President Franklin Pierce, however, did not want the federal government involved in charity work and vetoed it. Despite that singular setback, Dorothea Dix clearly influenced governmental policy during the Age of Reform.

Social Reforms

Educational reform was another effort Americans pursued to perfect society during this period. In the early nineteenth century, Americans had the highest literacy rate in the western world, and yet there was no statewide system of free elementary schools anywhere in the United States. Reformers were influenced by Thomas Jefferson's vision of an educated electorate, and the desire to inculcate
students—including increasing numbers of non-English and non-Protestant immigrants—with traditional American values. Public education, they argued, would foster equal opportunity and social stability.

The leading figure in the public school movement was Horace Mann. He served as the secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education from its creation in 1837 until 1848, when he was elected to the Congress. Mann was the driving force behind better school buildings, expanded curricula, and improved teacher training and higher salaries. Boston set the pace with free public high schools in the 1820s, for both boys and girls. By the Civil War, most northern states had tax-supported public schools at the elementary and high school levels. Public education lagged, however, in the western frontier regions and throughout most of the South.

Women played an increasing role in public education during the reform era. Catharine Beecher, a sister of Harriet Beecher Stowe, encouraged women to enter the teaching profession because their "natural" role suited them to the care and nurturing of children. Thus, Beecher combined the "cult of domesticity" with educational reform. By 1850, most elementary school teachers were women, although some were hired because they could be paid considerably less than men. At the secondary level, Emma Willard in 1821 established the Troy Female Seminary in New York. Oberlin College in Ohio became the first institution of higher learning to admit African Americans and female students—four women enrolled in 1837. That same year, Mary Lyon founded Mount Holyoke Seminary, which later became the first women's college. During the Age of Reform, educational opportunities for women expanded, although most were not encouraged to pursue higher education.

The temperance movement, the greatest of the evangelically inspired reforms, also attracted those who believed in human perfectibility. During the early 1800s, Americans consumed two to three times the amount of alcohol per capita than today. Alcohol abuse was rampant among men and women from every walk
of life. Drunkenness, the reformers claimed, lay at the root of nearly every social problem—including crime, poverty, labor absenteeism, and domestic violence. Advocates of temperance had been active since the publication of Dr. Benjamin Rush's *An Inquiry into the Effects of Spirituous Liquors upon the Human Mind and Body* in 1784, but the campaign against alcohol during the reform era was imbued with an unprecedented moralistic fervor. This was, in large measure, because women dominated the rank-and-file membership roles of many local temperance societies. The temperance movement attracted the largest numbers of female reformers, and served to introduce them to other crusades—especially women's rights and abolitionism.

In 1826, the assault upon "demon rum" became a national movement with a confederation of local societies called the American Temperance Union. Within a decade, the A.T.U. boasted a membership of 1.5 million, and an additional five hundred thousand Americans had taken the "cold water pledge" and vowed to forsake all alcohol. In 1840, a group of reformed alcoholics led by John B. Gough, known as the "poet of the d.t.'s," organized the Washington Temperance Society and began touring the country, giving impassioned speeches to audiences of "drowned drunkards." Temperance songs, such as "Dear Father, Drink No More," and melodramatic fiction also were employed in the fight against liquor. *The Glass*, for instance, told the story of a young boy who was locked in a closet by his drunken mother and forced to gnaw off one of his arms to prevent starvation. The most popular temperance novel was Timothy Shay Arthur's *Ten Nights in a Bar-Room, and What I Saw There*, a tragic tale of a family destroyed by drink. Only copies of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* sold in greater numbers during the 1850s.

Maine became the first state to prohibit the sale of alcohol, in 1851. The leader of the prohibition campaign was Neal Dow, a Quaker businessman who served as the mayor of Portland. A dozen other states passed similar "Maine laws," although in most cases they were not rigorously enforced or were soon repealed. This shift in objectives from temperance to prohibition was generally led by well-to-do reformers and industrialists. Employers were particularly interested in
imposing discipline among their laborers, many of them Irish or German immigrants who resented legislative attempts to curb their social drinking. The phenomenal success of the temperance movement in reducing alcohol consumption during this period was due not to legal coercion, but moral suasion and self-improvement.

**Women's Rights**

The spirit of reform was prevalent in the field of women's rights. Many women played a central role in a wide range of antebellum moral crusades—especially in support of temperance and the abolition of slavery—and their experiences in a male-dominated culture led to the first American feminist movement. This era witnessed the beginning of the quest for equality between the sexes, but the chief strides were made decades later.

Following the Revolutionary War, women were encouraged to become models of "Republican Motherhood," in an effort to nurture and shape succeeding generations of American citizens. The emerging market economy during the early nineteenth century widened the gulf between the workplace and the home, and had a tremendous impact on the social roles of middle-class men and women. The result was an increasing emphasis on the "separate spheres" concept. That is, men were the "bread-winners" and political leaders; women were expected to be the guardians of morality and benevolence. The family home was now a refuge from the harsh realities of the office or factory, and the special province of the wife and mother.

Some women enthusiastically embraced the "cult of domesticity," reveling in their increased influence and leadership within the home. Catharine Beecher, for example, in 1841 wrote *Treatise on Domestic Economy for the Use of Young Ladies*, a best-selling guidebook for wives and mothers in which she instructed them on their myriad household duties. Sarah J. Hale, editor of the popular *Godey's Lady's Book*, explained that her magazine scrupulously avoided
political topics because "other subjects are more important for our sex and more proper for our sphere." Working-class women did not have the opportunity to stay home and cultivate the "domestic virtues," but for many middle-class women their growing independence within the family justified a life revolving around their husband and children.

Some women naturally found the domestic sphere to be confining. Americans were also marrying later and bearing fewer children. This meant that many women had the inclination and the time to participate in the women's rights movement. During the Age of Reform, women faced legal discrimination in virtually every aspect of their lives. They were prohibited from voting or holding public office, and forfeited their property rights when they married. A wife could not sign a contact, draft a will, or sue in court, without her husband's permission. Most professions were closed to women, with the notable exceptions of teaching and writing, and females had less access to higher education. The legal status of women was essentially that of a white child or black slave. Margaret Fuller, a prominent transcendentalist and the editor of The Dial, wrote in Woman in the Nineteenth Century: "Many women are considering within themselves what they need and what they have not."

Some female abolitionists turned their attention also to the women's crusade. Sarah and Angelina Grimké, daughters of a southern slaveholder, railed against "domestic slavery" as well as black bondage, and defiantly declared, "Whatever is right for man to do is right for woman." Angelina married the western abolitionist Theodore Dwight Weld, in 1838, but chose to retain her maiden name. Sojourner Truth, a former slave, divided her time between addressing abolitionist audiences and women's rights groups.

Most famously, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were two female delegates to the World Anti-Slavery Convention held at London in 1840. When they were denied full participation because of their gender, they returned to America determined to campaign for equal rights. They organized the first
women's rights convention held at Seneca Falls, New York, in July 1848. The three hundred delegates adopted a "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions," drafted primarily by Stanton, that was patterned on the Declaration of Independence. "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal." The document listed the "repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman," and called for a redress of grievances.

Among the resolutions adopted by the convention, only one was not ratified unanimously--the demand that women be granted the right to vote. One hundred delegates, including thirty-four men (among them Frederick Douglass) signed the declaration, although some later requested the removal of their names due to the public outcry and scorn heaped upon the "amazons" of Seneca Falls. Thus was launched the modern women's rights movement in America.

The first truly national women's rights convention was held in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1850. Susan B. Anthony, an unmarried Quaker who had been active in the temperance movement, shortly thereafter assumed the leadership role in the drive for legal equality and the right to vote. Progress was limited in these years, however. More than a dozen states, led by Mississippi in 1839, granted some property rights to married women. Additionally, some extraordinary women hurdled the barriers to career advancement.

Elizabeth Blackwell, in 1849, became the first female to graduate from a medical college. Her sister-in-law, Antoinette Brown Blackwell, was the first ordained female minister in the United States. Progress was also made in the field of higher education for women. Lucy Stone, yet another of Elizabeth Blackwell's sisters-in-law and a graduate of Oberlin College, married Henry Blackwell in 1855. She popularized the feminist practice of retaining her maiden name after marriage; those who did so were called "Lucy Stoners." A final feminist symbol, named for Amelia Bloomer, was a style of dress that combined a short skirt over full-length pantalets. "Bloomers," introduced by the well-known actress Frances Kemble, were a practical outfit that afforded women freedom of movement without a loss of modesty. Typically, however, bloomers were ridiculed as too
radical and unfeminine. Although some progress was made during these years, the entire women’s rights crusade took a back seat to other reform movements—most especially to abolitionism.
Manifest Destiny

The Oregon Country

The spirit of "Manifest Destiny" pervaded the United States during the Age of Reform—the decades prior to the Civil War. John L. O'Sullivan, editor of the influential *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, gave the expansionist movement its name in 1845, when he wrote that it is "the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions." Manifest Destiny was stimulated by nationalism and an idealistic vision of human perfectibility. It was America's duty to extend liberty and democratic institutions across the continent. Underlying this divine American mission was a feeling of cultural—even racial—superiority. Anglo-Saxon Americans believed that they had a natural right to move west, bringing with them the blessings of self-government and Protestantism. Americans gradually had been moving westward for two centuries, but in the 1830s and 1840s they pushed across the continent.

By the early nineteenth century, Spain, Russia, Great Britain, and the United States claimed sovereignty to the Oregon country. Oregon was a sprawling region of half a million square miles west of the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific, between what is now the northern boundary of California and the southern tip of Alaska. Spain ceded its claims with the Transcontinental Treaty, negotiated in 1819 by John Quincy Adams, by which the United States acquired Florida and relinquished any nebulous claims to Texas under the Louisiana Purchase. In the mid-1820s, Russia acknowledged that Alaska extended only to the present-day southern boundary of 54o 40' north latitude, and ultimately sold its holdings north of San Francisco at Fort Ross to settlers.

The withdrawal of Spain and Russia left Oregon to the United States and Great Britain. Both had strong claims to the region based on discovery and occupation. George Vancouver, a British naval officer following up on the voyages of Captain
James Cook, explored the coastline in 1792, and the Hudson Bay Company subsequently established fur-trading posts. Also in 1792, Robert Gray, an American fur merchant sailing out of Boston aboard the *Columbia*, discovered the majestic river named for his ship. Lewis and Clark wintered on the Oregon coast during their famous expedition, and John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company built Astoria in 1811.

The United States and Britain agreed to the "joint occupation" of Oregon in 1818, when Spain and Russia still had claims to the region, allowing the citizens of each nation equal access to the territory. Merchant mariners and "mountain men" who worked for the various fur companies shared Oregon with the Indians, but there were few white settlers. Then, in 1829, Hall J. Kelley renewed interest in the region with the American Society for Encouraging the Settlement of the Oregon Country.

The Reverend Jason Lee, and several other Protestant missionaries sent to convert the Flathead Indians, settled in the Willamette River valley, south of the Columbia, by the 1830s. Dr. Marcus Whitman and his wife Narcissa, who was among the first group of white women to cross the Rockies, built their mission east of the Cascade Mountains among the Cayuse Indians. The Whitmans, who never learned to appreciate the natives’ culture or social customs, were killed by the Cayuses after a measles epidemic decimated the tribe. Other missionaries also faced resistance from the Indians who wished to maintain their traditional ways, and began encouraging white emigration to extend "civilization" to the territory. There were about 500 Americans living in the region by the end of the decade, sending back reports on the temperate climate, abundant forests, and fertile soil.

Motivated by the spirit of Manifest Destiny, "Oregon Fever" seized thousands of western Americans hard hit by the economic depression—known as the Panic of 1837—triggered largely by an over-speculation in federal lands. Independence, Missouri, was the starting point of the 2,000 mile Overland Trail, blazed by
Jedediah Smith, Jim Bridger, and other mountain men. Commonly referred to as the "Oregon Trail," the route ran along the Missouri and Platte Rivers, across the Great Plains, and through the South Pass of the Rocky Mountains. West of the continental divide, in present-day Idaho, wagon trains either moved into Oregon down the Snake and Columbia Rivers or turned southward along the California Trail.

In the years prior to the Civil War, more than 300,000 Americans traveled west, typically with all their belongings in "prairie schooners," canvas-covered wagons typically pulled by oxen. Most of the Oregon pioneers were young farm families from the middle west, who completed the difficult journey in five or six months. A high percentage of the California gold-seekers were young, unmarried men, who expected to return to their families as wealthy men. Many overland pioneers died on the trail—17 per mile, according to one estimate—but fewer than 400 were killed by hostile Indians. The various Indian tribes frequently developed a flourishing trade with the whites passing through their lands, and occasionally served as scouts for the wagon trains.

It was clear that the joint occupation of Oregon could not continue indefinitely. About 5,000 Americans had made the trek to Oregon by the mid-1840s, most of them settling south of the Columbia River. There were perhaps 700 British citizens living near Fort Vancouver on the north bank of the Columbia. Daniel Webster and Lord Ashburton discussed the Oregon issue during their negotiations in 1842, but did not reach an agreement. President John Tyler suggested that the boundary line be extended from the Rocky Mountains along the forty-ninth parallel, but the British refused to relinquish their claims to the Columbia. The spirit of Manifest Destiny could not be held in check for long, however, and the presidential election of 1844 ultimately determined the extent of American territorial expansion.

The Annexation of Texas
When Mexico gained its independence from Spain, Texas was a sparsely settled frontier province bordering the United States. Texas, explored by the Spanish as early as the 1500s, was largely neglected in the centuries that followed. Only a few thousand Mexicans—known as Tejanos—lived in the province by the early 1820s, most of them clustered around the mission at San Antonio. The Mexican government encouraged Americans to emigrate to Texas in an effort to create a military buffer between marauding Indians and the more southern provinces. The Americans were required to give up their citizenship, convert to Roman Catholicism, and become Mexican citizens. In return, they were granted huge tracts of land in the region bordering Louisiana, along the Sabine, Colorado, and Brazos Rivers.

The first American empresario was Moses Austin, a former New Englander who had traded with the Spanish for decades. Austin was granted 18,000 square miles, with the understanding that he would settle 300 American families on his lands. His son, Stephen F. Austin, had the grant confirmed by Mexican authorities after his father’s death, and by the mid-1830s there were about 30,000 Americans ranching and growing cotton with the aid of several thousand black slaves. Despite the fact that the Mexican government had abolished slavery, Americans continued to emigrate with their “lifetime indentured servants.” The Americans in Texas greatly outnumbered the native Mexicans, and they sought full statehood for the province in order to gain home rule.

The American-born Texans supported Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna for the presidency of Mexico in 1833, because they believed he would support statehood. But after his election, Santa Anna proclaimed a unified central government that eliminated states’ rights. The Texans, with some Tejano allies, revolted against Santa Anna’s dictatorship. The revolutionaries declared their independence on March 2, 1836, and adopted a constitution legalizing slavery. David G. Burnet, a native of New Jersey who had lived with the Comanches for two years, was chosen president of the new republic. Sam Houston, a former
Tennessee congressman and governor who fought under Andrew Jackson during the War of 1812, was selected as Commander-in-Chief of the army.

The Mexican government responded swiftly to put down the Texas rebellion. Santa Anna raised a force of about 6,000 troops, and marched north to besiege the nearly 200 rebels under the command of Colonel William B. Travis at the Alamo, the abandoned mission at San Antonio. The final assault was made on March 6, and the entire garrison was annihilated, including the wounded. Among the dead were frontier legends Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie. A few weeks later at Goliad, Santa Anna ordered the slaughter of 300 Texas rebels after they surrendered.

The Texas Revolution struck a sympathetic chord in America. Hundreds of southwestern adventurers responded to the romanticized heroism of the Alamo and promises of bounty lands. Ignoring American neutrality laws, they rushed to join the Texas army. With fewer than 900 men—about half the size of Santa Anna’s force—General Houston surprised the Mexicans at the San Jacinto River, near the site of the city that bears his name. “Remember the Alamo!” and “Goliad!” were the rallying cries of the Texans as they overwhelmed the veteran Mexican army.

Santa Anna was captured after the Battle of San Jacinto and forced to sign a treaty recognizing Texas as an independent republic, with the Rio Grande River as its southwestern boundary. Upon his return to Mexico City, Santa Anna repudiated the peace treaty. The Mexican Congress likewise refused to acknowledge the independence of Texas, and continued to claim the Nueces River as the boundary of its “rebellious province.” Mexico warned of war should the United States attempt to annex Texas.

Following the revolution, Sam Houston was elected president of Texas, and diplomatic envoys were sent to Washington seeking admission to the Union. President Andrew Jackson, concerned that the annexation of Texas might mean
war with Mexico and knowing it would upset the sectional balance between free and slave states, merely extended diplomatic recognition to the new republic on March 3, 1837. His immediate successor in the White House, Martin Van Buren, also managed to sidestep the question of annexation.

President Van Buren was defeated for re-election by William Henry Harrison in the famous “Tippecanoe and Tyler Too” campaign of 1840. Tyler was a former Democratic senator from Virginia who resigned his seat rather than vote to expunge a resolution of censure directed against Jackson. This made him an attractive running-mate for Harrison, but it did not make him a Whig in principle. Harrison became the first president to die in office (only a month after his inauguration) and President Tyler soon broke with the Whigs over two key issues—the constitutionality of a national bank and the annexation of Texas.

Tyler selected South Carolinian John C. Calhoun as secretary of state, and instructed him to negotiate a treaty of annexation with the Texas envoys in Washington. Expansionists feared that an independent Texas would blunt America’s march into the southwest. Calhoun subsequently submitted a treaty to the Senate, but also made public his correspondence with the British minister, Richard Pakenham. In his letter, Calhoun chastised British officials for pressuring the Texans to abolish slavery in return for Mexican recognition of their independence. The Republic of Texas had established close diplomatic ties with several European nations, including Britain and France, in an effort to protect itself from Mexico. After defending slavery as a benign institution, Calhoun claimed that the preservation of the Union required the annexation of Texas. By linking the expansion of slavery with the admission of Texas, Calhoun doomed the annexation treaty.

The annexation of Texas and the Oregon boundary dispute were major issues during the election of 1844. While President Tyler was plotting to annex Texas, the leading contenders for the presidential nominations of the Democratic and Whig Parties did their best to defuse the explosive controversy. Former
president Martin Van Buren and Henry Clay published letters expressing their opposition to the immediate annexation of Texas. Their anti-expansionist views cost Van Buren the Democratic nomination, and Clay the presidency.

Manifest Destiny was so strong among northwestern and southern Democrats, that the party’s national convention nominated James Knox Polk of Tennessee for president. “Young Hickory” ran on a platform calling for the “re-annexation of Texas” and the “re-occupation of Oregon.” Clay received the Whig nomination by acclamation, but westerners remembered his Texas letter and some northeasterners refused to support a slaveholder. James G. Birney, the candidate of the Liberty Party, polled enough Whig support in New York to swing that state’s electoral vote to Polk, who was elected president.

President Tyler viewed the Democratic victory as a mandate to annex Texas. Recognizing the difficulty of securing the two-thirds Senate vote necessary to ratify a treaty, Tyler hit upon an ingenious ploy. He sought a joint resolution of annexation from Congress that required a simple majority in each house. This was accomplished shortly before Tyler left office. After a state convention agreed to annexation on the Fourth of July, Texas was formally admitted to the Union in December 1845. President Polk, meanwhile, ordered General Zachary Taylor and about half of the United States army—some 3,500 men—to take up a defensive position on the Nueces River.

The Mexican-American War

The process of admitting Texas as a slave state was well under way by the time Polk became president on March 4, 1845. One plank of the Democratic platform was thus resolved. In his first annual message to Congress, Polk asserted that the American claim to the entire Oregon country was “clear and unquestionable.” The British, who had refused on several occasions to relinquish any territory north of the Columbia River, now had a change of heart. Their chief fur-trading post had been moved to Vancouver Island, and British Minister Pakenham
suggested extending the boundary line from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific along the forty-ninth parallel. Polk, focusing on settling the Texas controversy and acquiring California, agreed to submit the British proposal to the Senate. On June 18, 1846, over the protests of expansionist Democratic senators demanding all of Oregon to the southern border of Alaska—“Fifty-four forty or fight”—the Oregon boundary settlement was ratified. Polk was especially pleased with the timing of the compromise, because the United States was already at war with Mexico.

Mexico broke diplomatic relations with Washington following the annexation of Texas, and continued to claim the Nueces River as the southwestern border of its rebellious province. Exacerbating the situation were millions of dollars in inflated claims that Americans had lodged against the Mexican government, and the driving desire of President Polk to acquire the valuable Pacific ports of California. Polk appointed John Slidell of Louisiana as minister to Mexico, and instructed him to offer up to 30 million dollars to settle the disputed claims and purchase California and New Mexico—the territory between Texas and California. Secretary of War William Marcy suggested to Thomas Larkin, the American consul in Monterey, that the Californios might follow the Texas example and declare their independence from Mexico. John Charles Frémont led an ostensible “exploring expedition” to support such a revolt.

The Polk administration failed in its initial efforts to acquire California and settle the Texas controversy. Californians did not rise in revolt, and Mexico rejected Slidell as an American minister. Polk then ordered General Taylor to move his troops across the Nueces to the Rio Grande, but the stalemate continued. On Saturday, May 9, 1846, the president informed his cabinet that the U.S. “had ample cause of war,” based upon the rejection of Slidell as minister and the claims issue. Only Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft, the preeminent historian of the age, opposed seeking an immediate declaration of war from Congress. That very evening, however, word was received that fighting had commenced along the Rio Grande. The following Monday, Polk declared that
Mexico “invaded our territory, and shed American blood upon American soil.” Congress responded with a war resolution and an authorization for 50,000 volunteers.

The war with Mexico was popular in the Mississippi Valley, but was derided as “Mr. Polk’s War” in the northeast. Whigs generally opposed the war, but party members in Congress voted to support the American soldiers and marines during the fighting. Abraham Lincoln, a Whig congressman from Illinois, believed Polk rushed the country into war over the disputed territory between the Nueces and the Rio Grande. He demanded to know the exact “spot” the war started, but his views were not popular back home and he chose not to run for reelection.

Antislavery men naturally viewed the conflict as a brazen conspiracy to extend the boundaries of the "peculiar institution." James Russell Lowell, an abolitionist poet, castigated the Mexican War in the Biglow Papers:

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Henry Davis Thoreau symbolically protested the war by refusing to pay his Massachusetts poll tax. He spent one night in the Concord jail, before his aunt paid his fine and he returned to Walden Pond to write a classic essay, “Civil Disobedience.” Thoreau rhetorically inquired: “How does it become a man to behave toward this American government today? I answer, that he cannot without disgrace be associated with it.”

Despite the opposition of Whigs and antislavery men, the war with Mexico was an unparalleled military success. After the first clash in late April, General Taylor crossed the Rio Grande and defeated numerically superior Mexican forces at the Battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. Advancing on Monterrey, a town in northern Mexico, "Old Rough and Ready" and his men faced fierce house-to-house fighting against a valiant Mexican army led by General Pedro de Ampudia. Taylor agreed to a negotiated surrender, allowing the Mexican troops to retreat
with their arms. President Polk countermanded the armistice, and ordered Taylor to take a defensive position and detach most of his veteran troops to bolster a planned attack against Mexico City. General Santa Anna tried to exploit Taylor’s weakened position, but the Battle of Buena Vista in February 1847 was a stunning American victory. It was also Taylor’s last fight—he returned home a military hero destined for the White House.

Polk’s main objective—California—was not the scene of major military action. Americans living near Sonoma raised the “Bear Flag Revolt” in June 1846, aided by Frémont’s small force. After his sailors and marines seized Monterey, Commodore John D. Sloat proclaimed the annexation of California and instituted a military government. Some Mexican loyalists resisted the American occupation, and sporadic fighting continued. Meanwhile, Colonel Stephen Kearney’s small army garrisoned Santa Fe, New Mexico, before resuming their march. En route, Kearney encountered Kit Carson, who incorrectly reported that California had been pacified. Sending all but one hundred men back east, Kearney joined forces at San Diego with Commodore Robert Stockton and helped put down the loyalist revolt. The American forces entered Los Angeles in January 1847, ending the fighting in California.

The decisive campaign of the war was the expedition against Mexico City. Winfield Scott, the commanding general of the United States Army, landed his men on the beaches near Vera Cruz, and commenced a march that traced the route taken 300 years before by Cortés. Scott brushed aside Santa Anna’s army at Cerro Gordo, a battle in which Captains Robert E. Lee and George B. McClellan distinguished themselves. Santa Anna hastily recruited a Mexican army of about 20,000 troops, but many of them were ill-trained and equipped. In a series of sharp battles near the capital city, General Scott’s army of nearly 14,000 men overwhelmed the Mexican forces. The fortified hill of Chapultepec was stormed despite the desperate resistance of the defenders, who included young military cadets known as “los niños.” Mexico City fell on September 14, as American soldiers and marines entered the “halls of the Montezuma.”
Nicholas P. Trist, the chief clerk of the State Department, was sent by Polk to negotiate a peace treaty with the Mexican government. It was signed on February 2, 1848, at Guadalupe-Hidalgo. Mexico acknowledged the annexation of Texas (with the Rio Grande as its border), and ceded New Mexico and California to the United States. In return, the United States paid $15,000,000 for the Mexican Cession, and assumed up to $3,250,000 of the disputed claims. The war’s human toll included about 13,000 American dead—the vast majority due to diseases. In terms of the percentage of combatants, this remains the nation's costliest military conflict. It also reopened the slavery expansion controversy settled by the Missouri Compromise of 1820.

Ralph Waldo Emerson prophetically warned, “The United States will conquer Mexico, but it will be as the man swallows the arsenic, which brings him down in turn. Mexico will poison us.” Indeed, the Mexican Cession became a political battleground between the North and the South. The issue was raised early in the war by David Wilmot, a Democratic congressman from Pennsylvania. Employing the language of the Northwest Ordinance, Wilmot proposed that slavery be prohibited in any territory acquired from Mexico. The “Wilmot Proviso” passed the House frequently in the next several years, but it was always defeated in the Senate. It never became law, but represented the extreme Northern position regarding the extension of slavery.

Senator John C. Calhoun presented the extreme Southern position on slavery expansion in February 1847. Calhoun argued that Congress had no power to prohibit slavery in any American territory, and Southerners subsequently demanded that federal slave codes protect slavery in the Mexican Cession. Two compromise proposals were also advanced prior to the election of 1848. James Buchanan urged that the Missouri Compromise line of 36o 30’ be extended to the Pacific. President Polk agreed; but it was becoming more difficult for politicians to concede any territory in the fight over slavery. The other compromise proposal, known as “popular sovereignty,” was introduced in December 1847 by Lewis Cass, a moderate Democratic senator from Michigan. Cass adroitly proposed that the explosive slavery question be removed from the halls of
Congress by letting the people of the territories decide the matter. As it turned out, a decision would have to be reached soon because of the California gold rush.
Decade of Crisis

Slave Resistance

During the 1850s, Americans witnessed a decade of sectional crises that threatened the very existence of the Union. Ralph Waldo Emerson was right in predicting that the Mexican Cession would reignite the explosive issue of slavery expansion. The newly acquired territory lay beyond the Louisiana Purchase and therefore was not part of the Missouri Compromise of 1820. Californians were clamoring for statehood, the residents of Utah and New Mexico deserved territorial governments, abolitionists wanted to prohibit slavery in Washington, and Southerners demanded a more effective fugitive slave law. The sectional battle lines were forming. Southerners took an increasingly aggressive stance in defending their “peculiar institution,” while criticism of slavery intensified in the north. The debate was sharpened by the refusal of African-Americans to passively accept their bondage.

Most slaves led harsh and brutal lives. They were frequently whipped and sometimes branded or mutilated. On the larger plantations the majority of slaves worked in the fields, generally from daybreak until sundown, under the supervision of an overseer and his drivers. Domestic slaves might wear fine clothes and be trusted with the raising of their master’s children, but they were under constant white supervision and subject to the whims of their owners. Slave families could be heartlessly separated, and free blacks—in the north and south—were in danger of being kidnapped and sold into slavery.

Black resistance to enslavement took many forms, and played an important role in fashioning a compromise to the sectional controversy in 1850. Armed rebellion by the slaves was extremely rare, but a few potentially violent plots were uncovered during the early nineteenth century. The first was organized in 1800 by Gabriel Prosser, and involved about 50 slaves living near Richmond, Virginia. Hundreds of slaves learned about the planned uprising, and two of them
informed the white authorities. Governor James Monroe called out the militia and Prosser and 25 of his followers were executed, although their owners received compensation. Denmark Vesey, a literate carpenter who purchased his freedom from lottery winnings, spent five years devising an elaborate scheme to seize control of Charleston, South Carolina. Vesey also was betrayed by slaves and hanged along with 35 fellow conspirators, in the summer of 1822.

The only significant slave insurrection during the antebellum period was Nat Turner’s Rebellion. A literate slave, Turner believed that it was his divine mission to “slay my enemies with their own weapons.” In 1831, he led about 30 slaves on a murderous rampage through tidewater Virginia, killing close to 60 men, women, and children. A wholesale slaughter of blacks took place before the uprising was put down. Turner eluded his pursuers for two months before being captured, tried, and executed. In response to the revolt, southern states strictly enforced laws prohibiting the education of slaves, and increased surveillance of free African-Americans. Northern black sailors were sometimes incarcerated while their ships were anchored in southern ports, and throughout the countryside mounted “slave patrols” were increased to prevent blacks from meeting without whites present and to catch runaway slaves.

African-Americans usually took less desperate measures than armed rebellion in their struggle against the “peculiar institution.” White Southerners frequently complained of slaves refusing to work hard, breaking their tools, stealing food, and committing petty acts of sabotage or arson. Many slaves ran away, sometimes in an effort to avoid punishment or to visit nearby family members. Most were soon caught or returned voluntarily after a few days. On average, about 1,000 slaves succeeded in fleeing to free states each year, using their skills and cunning to outwit their owners and pursuers. Henry “Box” Brown managed to be shipped in a crate from Richmond to Philadelphia. Ellen Craft disguised herself as a sickly male slaveholder and escaped to the North with her husband, who posed as her slave.
Some fugitive slaves were aided by the Underground Railroad once they reached the free states. Although its effectiveness and scope were exaggerated after the Civil War, the “railroad” was a loosely organized group of abolitionist “conductors” who operated safe-house “stations” in northern states and transported their “passengers” to freedom in Canada, beyond the reach of slave catchers. Harriett Tubman, dubbed “the Moses of her people,” was the most famous Underground Railroad conductor. She escaped from Maryland in 1849, and risked her freedom by returning from Canada 19 times to rescue some 300 slaves—including her parents. During the Civil War, she served as a Union spy.

It is likely that more slaves were emancipated by their owners or purchased their freedom than ever escaped, but fugitive slaves increased sectional tensions. In 1842, the Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Prigg v. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* that Congress had the sole power to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793. This led to the passage of “personal liberty laws” in several northern states, designed to protect the rights of alleged fugitive slaves by prohibiting state officials from assisting in their capture. Southerners complained that these laws made it impossible to return their escaped property, and demanded a more stringent fugitive slave act. Adding further fuel to an already explosive issue, some Northerners called upon Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia and ban it from the Mexican Cession. Clearly, a political compromise was needed to settle the sectional controversy.

**The Compromise of 1850**

When California residents applied for statehood after the Gold Rush swelled the population, Congress faced a dilemma. Northerners were a solid majority in the House of Representatives, but the Senate was equally divided between 15 free and 15 slave states. Southerners dominated the Supreme Court and Zachary Taylor, who owned plantations and slaves in Louisiana and Mississippi, was in the White House. California sought admission as a free state, and this threatened to upset the delicate sectional balance. Northerners also expected Utah and New
Mexico, in need of territorial governments, to eventually join the Union as free states.

It was Senator Henry Clay, the “Great Pacifier,” who attempted to settle the sectional crisis in a sweeping political compromise. In January 1850, the 72 year-old Kentucky Whig introduced a series of resolutions that called for the admission of California as a free state; the organization of territorial governments for Utah and New Mexico, without “any restriction or condition on the subject of slavery”; the abolition of the slave trade (but not slavery) in the District of Columbia; a more stringent fugitive slave act, to circumvent the various personal liberty laws; and the scaling back of the Texas boundary claims in return for the federal assumption of the state’s debts. Clay implicitly supported the popular sovereignty principle regarding the Mexican Cession, rejecting both the Wilmot Proviso and a federal slave code for the western territory.

Clay defended his proposals in a lengthy two-day speech delivered to the Senate in February, but not everyone in the audience was prepared to compromise. John C. Calhoun was too feeble to speak as scheduled on March 4, so his defiant final thoughts on the sectional crisis were read to the Senate by James M. Mason of Virginia. Calhoun argued that Southerners had “no compromise to offer,” because the North had been chipping away at the political equality of slaveholders since the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Northerners must concede to the South the right to carry slaves into the Mexican Cession, return all fugitive slaves, and “cease the agitation of the slave question.” Calhoun died before the month ended, but his unyielding opposition to compromise was espoused by Jefferson Davis and a younger generation of southern “fire-eaters”—the most aggressive supporters of slavery and, ultimately, secession.

Daniel Webster, along with Clay and Calhoun part of the “Great Triumvirate,” rose in the Senate for his last significant address on March 7. “I speak to-day for the preservation of the Union,” he began, “Hear me for my cause.” The
Massachusetts Whig eloquently upheld Clay’s resolutions, claiming that the Wilmot Proviso was unnecessary because the “laws of nature” prevented slavery from flourishing in the inhospitable western climate and soil. He failed to convince New England abolitionists, however, who denounced Webster for also supporting a stronger fugitive slave law. John Greenleaf Whittier dismissed the once “God-like Daniel” in a vitriolic poem, “Ichabod”:

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William Henry Seward, a 48 year-old New York Whig and an implacable foe of compromise, spoke on March 11. He demanded the immediate admission of California as a free state, without any concessions to the South. Seward argued, “There is a higher law than the Constitution, which regulates our authority over the domain.” This extra-Constitutional “higher law” idea was frightening to Unionists, and came back to haunt Seward when he sought the Republican presidential nomination in 1860. Lewis Cass, “The Father of Popular Sovereignty,” joined the Senate debate and echoed Webster’s support for Clay’s proposals in an effort “to calm this agitation.”

On April 18, the Senate chose Henry Clay to chair a Committee of Thirteen, formed to draft compromise legislation. The other 12 members, including Webster and Cass, were equally divided between Northerners and Southerners, and Whigs and Democrats. In May, the committee reported three bills to the Senate. The first, dubbed the “Omnibus bill,” called for the admission of a free California, settled the Texas boundary, and established territorial governments for Utah and New Mexico. The other bills strengthened the fugitive slave law and abolished the slave trade in the District of Columbia.

As the debate continued through the hot summer months, it became clear that Clay’s strategy was failing because senators who opposed any section of the Omnibus bill were prepared to vote against it. President Taylor, for his part, saw no reason why California’s admission to the Union should be linked to a larger
compromise. On the Fourth of July, the president endured hours of oratory under a broiling sun. Upon returning to the White House, he attempted to cool off by consuming excessive amounts of cucumbers, cherries, and iced milk. He died five days later of a violent stomach disorder. Millard Fillmore, who was sworn in as the thirteenth president, was pledged to support a legislative compromise. Nevertheless, a majority of the Senate still opposed the Omnibus bill in its entirety and, on August 1, only the provision establishing the Utah territorial government was passed.

Bitterly disappointed, Clay gave up the struggle and left Washington for the more healthful climate of the Rhode Island seashore. But the victory of those opposed to a comprehensive accord was short-lived. Stephen A. Douglas, a young Democratic senator from Illinois, assumed the task of dividing Clay’s remaining proposals into individual bills and steering them through Congress. By late September, the legislation collectively known as the Compromise of 1850 was signed into law by President Fillmore. California was admitted as a free state, Utah and New Mexico were created as territories, Texas was compensated with ten million dollars for accepting its present-day borders, the slave trade was abolished in the District of Columbia, and a more stringent fugitive slave law was enacted. Stephen Douglas, nicknamed the “Little Giant,” proudly declared that “the whole country” accepted the Compromise as the “final settlement” to the sectional controversy.

Americans generally supported the Compromise of 1850, with the exception of political extremists in both the north and the south. The Fugitive Slave Act was particularly galling to many Northerners. Alleged runaways were not permitted a jury trial or allowed to testify at their hearing, and the commissioners who decided the cases were paid ten dollars if they returned accused fugitives to slavery but only five dollars if they released them. In addition, “all good citizens” were “commanded to aid and assist in the prompt execution of this law.” Anyone obstructing the return of a fugitive slave or participating in a rescue was liable to a maximum fine of 1,000 dollars and a six-month term of imprisonment.
Ralph Waldo Emerson reflected the feelings of many Northerners when he wrote, “This filthy enactment was made in the nineteenth century, by people who could read and write.” He asserted that no one could obey the Fugitive Slave Act without the “loss of self-respect.” A fellow New Englander put it even more bluntly—the law he reckoned placed the value of an escaped slave at 1,000 dollars, and the price of a Yankee soul at five.

Northern opposition to the law flared when slave catchers attempted to return fugitives to their owners. One of the first arrests took place in October 1850 at Detroit. Giles Rose, employed as a laborer by a former governor of Michigan, was accused of escaping from Tennessee and placed in the custody of the federal marshal. Armed blacks, including several hundred that crossed over from Canada, surrounded the jail and threatened to free Rose. Before blood was shed in a rescue attempt, a town meeting was held and 500 dollars was swiftly raised to purchase his freedom.

More spectacular rescues took place in the year following passage of the Fugitive Slave Act. Ellen and William Craft were rushed to safety by Boston abolitionists before a Georgia slave catcher could claim them. Frederick “Shadrach” Minkins (variously known as Wilkins or Jenkins), working as a waiter in a Boston coffeehouse, was arrested as a fugitive but freed by a band of African-American citizens. In Syracuse, New York, the Liberty Party was holding its state convention when William “Jerry” Henry, a known fugitive from Missouri, was arrested. An angry crowd marched on the building where he was held. Led by Gerrit Smith, one of the wealthiest men in the state, and Jermain Loguen, a conductor on the Underground Railroad and himself a fugitive, the rescuers broke down the door with a battering ram. Henry was taken in a wagon to Oswego, where he crossed Lake Ontario to freedom in Canada.

Despite some successes by antislavery Northerners, more than 200 runaways were returned to the south under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. When an abolitionist newspaper editor in Wisconsin, Sherman Booth, was jailed in 1854
for assisting in the rescue of an escaped slave, the state legislature declared the federal law to be “void, and of no force.” The slavery issue transcended Constitutional theory—even northern states were willing to embrace Calhoun’s doctrine of nullification in the sectional struggle. Several other northern states also passed new “personal liberty laws,” making it difficult for federal authorities to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act. In 1859 the Supreme Court ruled in *Abelman v. Booth* that the law was constitutional, and Booth returned to jail. Nonetheless, the Fugitive Slave Act was essentially unenforceable in many parts of the North by the mid-1850s.

**Uncle Tom’s Cabin**

The most significant response to the Fugitive Slave Act came from the pen of novelist Harriet Beecher Stowe. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* ran serially for nearly a year in an abolitionist newspaper, before it was published as a book in early 1852. It was an immediate and phenomenal success—selling 10,000 copies its first week in print, and 300,000 within a year. By the time of the Civil War, several million copies were in circulation, and many Union soldiers received their first lessons in the “peculiar institution” from the pages of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. More than anything else, Stowe’s novel released pent-up feelings of guilt and revulsion toward slavery among Northerners who previously had not given much thought to the sectional controversy. What was once primarily a political or constitutional issue, took on the trappings of a moral crusade.

The visceral impact of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was due largely to the enchanting characters that seemingly leaped to life from its pages. Tom was vividly described as a long-suffering saintly slave; Eva, an angelic daughter of white slave owners; and Simon Legree, a native of Vermont, was the brutal slave driver who whipped Tom to death. A melodramatic plot captured the imaginations of readers and moved many to tears. In one memorable scene a mulatto slave, Eliza Harris, heroically fled across the ice floes of the Ohio River with her son clutched in her arms and the slave catchers’ bloodhounds baying at her heels. Stowe
championed domestic and family values, and graphically depicted how the institution of slavery corrupted the Christian virtues of both whites and blacks. She later remarked that God wrote *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, and certainly she was profoundly influenced by the Second Great Awakening. Her father, brother, and husband were all evangelical ministers who embraced abolitionism. Stowe was denounced in the south as that “vile wretch in petticoats,” but her novel was a propaganda victory for the antislavery cause.

Southern writers attempted futilely in the ensuing “cabin wars” to portray slavery as a benign institution. *Aunt Phyllis’s Cabin*, for example, described Christian masters who neither whipped their slaves nor broke up families. Literary defenders of the “peculiar institution” contended that the slaves themselves were more satisfied with their lot than the desperate “wage slaves” of the northern factories. Such efforts did little, however, to change Northern sentiments toward slavery. Instead, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* inflamed public opinion in both the north and the south during the 1850s. For millions of Americans, Stowe imbued the slavery issue with an emotional fervor that hastened the Civil War.

The Ostend Manifesto

Manifest Destiny remained a driving force in the years following the war with Mexico. Throughout the nation Democrats, especially, flocked to the “Young America” movement, which championed the European revolutionaries of 1848 and the spread of democratic ideals around the globe. Expansionists also sought new markets and further territorial acquisitions. Southerners particularly coveted Cuba, the final remnant of Spain’s once grand empire in the Western Hemisphere, and they had an ally in the White House. Franklin Pierce, a Democrat from New Hampshire, defeated General Winfield Scott for the presidency in 1852, despite being derided by abolitionists as “a northern man with southern principles.” The Pierce administration actively sought to annex Cuba, lying 90 miles off the Florida Keys, even though President James K. Polk’s
previous offer of 100 million dollars for the island had been scornfully rejected by the Spanish government.

On February 28, 1854, an incident took place in Havana, Cuba, that heightened the tensions between the United States and Spain. An American merchant ship, the *Black Warrior*, was seized by Spanish authorities and its owners subsequently fined six thousand dollars for violating customs regulations. Southerners were willing to use this affront to national honor as a pretext for war with Spain, expecting to gain Cuba in the process. Spanish officials, however, realized the gravity of the situation and soon released the *Black Warrior*. This temporarily defused the diplomatic crisis, but the Pierce administration responded with a secret plan to acquire Cuba.

Secretary of State William L. Marcy, a New Yorker, instructed several American diplomats in Europe to devise a solution to the Cuba question. Two of the ministers were aggressively in favor of extending slavery—Pierre Soulé of Louisiana, who represented the U.S. in Madrid; and James M. Mason of Virginia, ambassador to France. The third was James Buchanan of Pennsylvania, minister to Great Britain, who joined many northern Democrats who supported territorial expansion, be it slave or free. The American ministers first met in Ostend, Belgium, before concluding their talks at Aix-la-Chapelle in Prussia. They drafted a truly remarkable document, known as the Ostend Manifesto, on October 18, 1854.

Soulé, Mason, and Buchanan claimed that Cuba was “an unceasing danger, and a permanent cause of anxiety and alarm” to the United States. They urged the Pierce administration to “purchase Cuba from Spain at any price for which it can be obtained.” If the Spanish refused to sell the island, however, Americans, “By every law, human and divine, . . . shall be justified in wresting it from Spain if we possess the power.” The Ostend Manifesto was leaked to the *New York Herald*, and it created a furor in the north. The Pierce administration appeared ready to go to war with Spain to acquire more slave territory. Secretary of State Marcy publicly disavowed the “buccaneering document,” and Soulé resigned in protest.
The Ostend Manifesto, coupled with *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, drove a wedge between the North and the South and undermined the effectiveness of the Compromise of 1850 as the final solution to the sectional controversy.
The Approaching War

Kansas-Nebraska Act

Many Americans believed that a transcontinental railroad would unify the United States by linking eastern and western points of the rapidly expanding nation. Not everyone, however, agreed where the railroad should be built. U.S. minister to Mexico James Gadsden, a Southerner, wanted the route to go through Texas and the New Mexico Territory to the Pacific Ocean. Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois, meanwhile, supported a plan to wind the railroad through Chicago and the Nebraska Territory, where he owned a sizable amount of land. Douglas’s proposal, though, faced substantial obstacles—the U.S. government had designated the region as Indian Territory and banned white settlers.

Douglas refused to let anything block his plan. He supported the decision by the federal government to revoke earlier land grant promises and force the Indians to move. The senator then developed a political scheme to win the support of Southerners, the primary backers of Gadsden’s plan. In 1854, Douglas introduced the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, which split the territory into two sections, slave state Kansas and free state Nebraska. He believed in popular sovereignty and pushed to let the residents of each territory decide whether their state would permit slavery. Douglas called for the repeal of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 that prohibited slavery north of the 36° 30’ line because both Nebraska and Kansas were located north of the line.

The senator realized that the opportunity to create another slave state would entice Southerners to support his plan, which they did with enthusiasm. He drove the bill through Congress and, in the process, angered a majority of his fellow Northerners. Douglas knew that Southerners would whole-heartedly support his plan; however, he seriously miscalculated reaction from Northerners. Outraged protesters declared the compromise repeal “a gross violation of a sacred pledge.” The decision to reopen the slavery issue to allow more slave
states re-ignited decades-old conflict between Northerners and Southerners and set the foundation for the coming Civil War.

Kansas’ fertile farm land and its location next to Missouri, a slave state, made it the most likely of the new territories to support slavery. However, since popular sovereignty gave the citizens of the territory the right to decide the issue, both abolitionists and “proslavery-ites” recruited settlers to establish a majority there. One organization, the New England Emigrant Aid Company, sent thousands of people to Kansas. The company armed the pioneers with rifles nicknamed “Beecher’s Bibles,” after the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher who raised money to purchase the weapons. The group traveled to the new territory singing a marching song penned by Quaker poet Whittier.

Southerners who supported Douglas’s Kansas-Nebraska Act became irate when abolitionists attempted to make both Nebraska and Kansas free states. Leading Southerners refused to lose both territories to the “Negro-loving free-soilers,” and encouraged many settlers, including several slave-owners, to claim Kansas land. The proslavery-ites, who like their Northern counterparts were also well-armed, shouted their own rallying cry.

As the two groups convinced more and more followers to move to Kansas, their anger and hostility toward each other swelled. Skirmishes took place throughout the territory and conflicts over land claims often grew violent. In 1855, residents went to the polls to elect members of the territory’s first legislature. However, armed slavery supporters from Missouri, angry that “foreigners” from New England were trying to “steal” Kansas, poured across the border to vote repeatedly. Although a census recorded almost 3,000 eligible voters, more than 6,000 votes were cast. The Missourian’s strong-arm tactics vaulted slavery
supporters to victory and established Kansas as a slave state. Abolitionists considered the government fraudulent and arranged their own regime based in the town of Topeka. Both groups claimed authority over the territory but neither had secured the right legally.

President Pierce fanned the flames of controversy by denouncing the free state government. In 1856, the crisis reached its boiling point when a mob of proslavery-ites raided the free-soil town of Lawrence. They looted stores, burned buildings, and destroyed the town’s printing press. The violent attack was just the first of many to come and prompted journalists to call the escalating conflict “Bleeding Kansas.”

The controversy in Kansas reflected a growing crisis that was consuming the entire nation. Tension between American-born citizens and immigrants, Catholics and Protestants, Christians and Jews altered the political landscape. New political parties emerged to support the various religious and ethnic causes. The Know-Nothings maintained an anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic platform, but bigotry was not an effective base for a national party and they soon disbanded. Many northern Know-Nothings, Whigs, and Democrats angry at President Pierce for his Kansas policy joined forces in the summer of 1854 to form the Republican Party.

The new party, comprised of mostly Northerners, clashed with Southerners over many federally funded programs, including harbor and river improvements and the trans-continental railroad. Although many abolitionists voted Republican, not all Republicans were strictly antislavery. Many of the party members simply did not want blacks—free or slave—in the territory. The Republican Party grew quickly throughout the northern states and soon became a prominent player in American politics.

Dred Scott Decision
The controversy surrounding the Kansas-Nebraska Act affected the 1856 Democratic presidential nomination. Party members vetoed the selection of two prominent figures involved with the act—Stephen Douglas and Franklin Pierce. Rather, delegates elected James Buchanan, a Pennsylvania lawyer not connected with the Kansas-Nebraska affair. Therefore, Democratic leaders believed he was safe from Republican scrutiny.

Buchanan sailed to an easy victory over Republican candidate John Frémont and ex-president Millard Fillmore, who represented the Know-Nothings. At the core of the Buchanan victory was a group of southern ruffians who violently threatened war and secession should the “slave-loving” Frémont take office. The threats worried Northerners, who made up the majority of the Republican Party. Since the Republicans were primarily businessmen, and the possibility of losing their profitable business connections with the South would be a financial disaster. Therefore, many Republicans begrudgingly voted for Buchanan.

Two days after Buchanan took the oath of office, the Supreme Court handed down a decision that would push the nation one step closer to Civil War. The case involved Dred Scott, a Missouri slave who frequently traveled with his owner through Illinois and the Wisconsin Territory. In 1846, Scott sued his owner’s widow for his freedom. He claimed that his residence in free state Illinois, and in the Wisconsin Territory, where the Missouri Compromise outlawed slavery, made him a free man.

After several years in litigation, the case made it to the United States Supreme Court. On March 6, 1857, Chief Justice Roger Taney announced the dismissal of Scott’s case. The Supreme Court—with five of its nine members from slave states—ruled that black people were not citizens of the United States. Since Scott was not a U.S. citizen, he could not sue for his liberty. Taney also announced that even if Scott had been considered a citizen, his residence in the Wisconsin Territory did not qualify him to be free. Taney argued that, in his opinion, the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional because it deprived citizens of their
property—slaves in this case—without the due process of the law outlined in the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Taney’s ruling declared that since slave owners could take their “property” anywhere, Congress could not ban slavery from the territories.

The Supreme Court’s decision shocked and angered blacks, abolitionists, and popular sovereignty supporters who had fought to end—or at least limit—the expansion of slavery. Republicans responded by declaring that the Court’s ruling was an opinion and, therefore, was not enforceable. Southerners were outraged at the Northerners’ blatant defiance of the Supreme Court’s verdict and promptly revisited their secession discussions. With these actions, the nation crept closer to war.

**Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858**

The Dred Scott case played a pivotal role in the 1858 Illinois senate race and in the 1860 presidential election. Eyeing Stephen Douglas’s seat in the Senate, Abraham Lincoln challenged the incumbent to a series of debates. The two politicians differed in almost every respect. Lincoln, a tall and lanky Republican with a high-pitched voice, relied on his wit and integrity to provide a comforting sense of sincerity. Douglas, meanwhile, was a short, barrel-chested Democrat whose sweeping gestures and booming voice consistently captured the attention of his audiences. Many historians call Douglas the best speaker of his time, which emphasizes the boldness of Lincoln’s challenge.

The seven debates took place in cities throughout Illinois but garnered national attention. The topics discussed on the plains of the Midwest mirrored the issues that concerned all Americans. The viewpoints and ideas presented by both Lincoln and Douglas set the tone for political discussions for years to come.

Perhaps the most famous Lincoln-Douglas debate took place in Freeport, Illinois. Referring to the Dred Scott case, Lincoln asked his opponent if the residents of a
territory could exclude slavery before the territory became a state. The Republican, who, like the majority of his party, believed slavery to be a moral issue, hoped to back Douglas into a corner by forcing him to comment on popular sovereignty and slavery. If Douglas continued to support popular sovereignty, his views would contradict the Supreme Court’s ruling that seemed to prohibit a territorial legislature from excluding slavery before statehood. Douglas replied that in order for slavery to exist, laws were necessary to protect it. If no such laws were established, slave-owners would not reside there and the territory would be free. He concluded that if the residents did nothing, slavery would essentially be excluded from the territory. Douglas effectively answered the question without offending pro or antislavery supporters. His famous response became known as the Freeport Doctrine.

Although Lincoln proved to be a formidable challenger, Douglas employed his superior debating skills to maintain his position in the Senate. Lincoln, however, was by no means a loser. He showed his strengths as a leader not just to the citizens of Illinois, but to the people of America. The modest, Kentucky-born lawyer placed Republican ideals before a national audience and influenced the fledgling party’s strong showing in the 1858 congressional elections.

During the next several months leading up to the 1860 presidential election, Douglas’s Freeport Doctrine would resurface and cost him the Democratic nomination. Many Southerners, primarily boisterous Democrats who influenced many party members, focused on the senator’s statement that the Supreme Court’s Dred Scott decision could be circumvented. They refused to support a candidate who did not completely back their views on slavery.

Lincoln, on the other hand, catapulted to the top of the Republican Party and received its nomination for president. The emergence of the Republican Party in the north put southern Democrats on the defensive. Although neither party actually campaigned for or against slavery, antislavery supporters began to associate themselves with Republicans while proslavery backers tended to
support Democrats. A wall of hostility and bitterness soon separated Northerners from Southerners. As the election of 1860 approached, and Abraham Lincoln’s popularity soared, southern radicals openly discussed secession should the Republican win the White House.

John Brown’s Raid

Tension between the North and South over the slavery issue grew more intense as the election of 1860 drew near. Violent reaction to the Kansas-Nebraska Act spread rapidly throughout the nation. The Supreme Court’s Dred Scott decision deepened the divide between Northerners and Southerners—antislavery supporters and proslavery-ites. In 1859, fifty-nine-year-old John Brown devised a plan to provoke a slave revolt to answer the “sacking” of Lawrence, Kansas by radical slavery backers three years earlier.

The Bible-toting abolitionist believed that he was appointed by God to rid the nation of slavery. He turned his home in Ohio into a station on the Underground Railroad, and for a brief period lived in North Elba, a free black community in New York. While Brown planned his retaliatory strike in Virginia, he was a wanted man for several violent raids in Kansas and Missouri. In 1856, two days after Missouri marauders attacked Lawrence, Brown gathered a group of volunteers and raided Pottawatomie Creek. The group savagely murdered five proslavery supporters, mutilating the bodies beyond recognition. Brown and his band moved from town to town, raising havoc in the name of God and antislavery supporters.

The fight over slavery in Kansas pressed President Buchanan to establish a legitimate government there. He appointed Robert Walker as territorial governor to oversee the election of a constitutional convention in 1857. However, those wanting a free state feared that proslavery forces would use intimidation and violence to garner fraudulent votes and boycotted the election, which was held in Lecompton. Consequently, slavery supporters dominated the convention and
eventually drafted a proslavery constitution called the Lecompton Constitution. As Buchanan pushed Congress to approve the constitution, Northerners and antislavery supporters, including Brown, became irate.

During the next year, Brown formulated a plan to start a slave rebellion and form a free state for blacks. The heart of the plan involved attacking the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia. He rented a farmhouse a few miles from the armory and studied the site’s layout. With each passing month, more volunteers, including Brown’s sons, arrived at the farmhouse to join the operation. Brown also secured financial backing for his plan from several wealthy Northerners, commonly referred to as The Secret Six. He shared his strategy with approximately 20 volunteers, but he left most of the plan’s details to divine guidance. Brown believed that that God would intervene to provide exactly what the group needed to succeed.

On a crisp fall night in 1859, Brown and his gang advanced toward Harpers Ferry and cut the telegraph lines. The men overpowered the few night watchmen assigned to guard the armory and took several townspeople hostage. Brown then sent his men to look for more hostages. They particularly wanted to find Lewis Washington, a local slaveholder and the great-grandnephew of George Washington. Brown believed that a hostage of his stature would attract additional attention to his cause. The group returned with a handful of hostages, including Washington. Brown explained his mission to the hostages and anyone else within earshot.

“I came here from Kansas, and this is a slave State. I want to free all the negroes in this State; I have possession now of the United States armory, and if the citizens interfere with me I must only burn the town and have blood.”

Word of Brown’s scheme quickly spread throughout the town. The abolitionist figured it was only a matter of time before droves of runaway slaves and sympathetic whites arrived at the armory to pick up their weapons and fight for
freedom for all slaves. He and his men shuffled the hostages into the compound’s engine house and waited for the next phase of the plan. However, the slaves never showed up. Ironically, the area Brown selected for his slave uprising had very few slaves, and the ones living there were well off and in no hurry to cause trouble.

Early the next morning, Brown’s men shot a railroad employee. The townspeople heard the shots and sent for help. Before long, Brown and his gang were surrounded by local militiamen and a company of United States Marines, commanded by Colonel Robert E. Lee. President Buchanan, who had been told that the uprising involved more than 700 blacks and whites, ordered three artillery companies and Lee’s unit to respond. Since the Marines were based nearby, they were the first soldiers to arrive.

Brown repeatedly tried to negotiate freedom for his surviving followers, but a cease fire never happened. Lee and his Marines eventually rushed the building and captured Brown and four of his men. The fight left Brown beaten, bleeding, and unconscious. Inside the engine house and the home that Brown and his group rented, federal forces found crates filled with weapons intended to arm the defiant slaves.

Brown and the surviving members of his gang were charged with murder, conspiracy, and treason against the state of Virginia. Brown’s lawyer planned to enter an insanity plea, but the accused refused to go along because he wanted to become a martyr in death. The trial lasted four days, and the jury deliberated for less than one hour before finding Brown guilty and sentencing him to death. The devout abolitionist, lying on a cot in the court room because he was still weak from the wounds he suffered during his capture, was granted an opportunity to address the people. Brown spoke slowly so reporters could capture every word for the following day’s newspapers.
“I believe that to have interfered as I have done in behalf of His despised poor, is not wrong, but right. Now, it is deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice, and mingle my blood with the blood of millions in this slave country whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel, and unjust enactments, I say let it be done.”

Although Brown’s actions were backed by a small group of wealthy New Yorkers, Southerners linked the violence to all Northerners. Additionally, since Northerners comprised a majority of the Republican Party, Democrats used the incident to claim that “the raid was the result of the teachings of the Republican Party.” To many Southerners, Civil War now seemed inevitable.
The Civil War

Military Strategy

When the Civil War began, there were fewer than 20,000 soldiers in the national army, and thousands of those troops soon moved south to fight for the Confederacy. The secession of Virginia also prompted a large exodus of some of the military’s most experienced officers. President Lincoln quickly called for northern states to send volunteers, totaling 75,000, to join the Union army. The Confederacy did not have an established army or navy and also turned to militia groups from the southern states to supply soldiers.

As leaders for both sides mobilized their troops, strategic plans began to take shape. It became obvious that politics would play a major role in military tactics. Southerners sought their independence and prepared for a defensive battle while Northerners developed offensive campaigns to preserve the Union. Lincoln believed that the time to negotiate had passed and Northerners would have to physically overpower the Confederates to win control of the southern states.

The Union’s attention focused directly on Richmond, Virginia, the new capital of the Confederacy. During the spring of 1861, the Confederate government voted to move its capital from Montgomery, Alabama to the larger city in Virginia where railroad transportation was more readily available. The move also underscored the Confederacy’s dedication to defend the Upper South. The new location placed the Northern and Southern capitals within 100 miles of each other. As events unfolded, the area became one of the war’s most active theaters of operation.

When Lincoln announced the call for troops, he requested that the men sign three-month service agreements. Neither side figured the war would last that long. Southerners hoped that Northerners would tire of the war and give in to the Confederacy’s demands. However, Southerners misjudged the Union’s
commitment to reunite the nation, and Northerners failed to realize the difficulty of subduing the Confederate army.

When Southerners attacked Fort Sumter, many northern politicians rallied around Lincoln. Democrat Stephen Douglas, whom Lincoln defeated for the presidency, offered the Republican leader his support. "There can be no neutrals in this war," said Douglas, "only patriots or traitors."

After a few failed attempts by Northerners to advance into enemy territory in Virginia, Lincoln gathered his advisors to discuss their options. The president then decided to initiate a blockade on all southern ports and gain control of the Mississippi River. Referred to as the Anaconda Plan, Lincoln intended to cut off all routes to the south, essentially placing a stranglehold on imports and exports. If the Union could stop weapons, food, and clothing from entering the southern states, and prevent cotton and tobacco sales, Lincoln rationalized that he could starve the Southerners into surrendering.

The fighting was not always limited to the battlefield. In Congress, Republicans and Democrats clashed over legislation to support the war, and not everyone agreed on how to finance the campaign. A group of Democrats, called the "Copperheads," opposed any effort to support the fighting. Some say they got their name from the copper pennies they wore around their necks; others claim their enemies named them after the poisonous snake. The group planned to get enough followers elected to win control of Congress and force peace negotiations. Although they were not considered disloyal to the Union, they did not generate much support from Northerners who had friends and family members in the military.

Many Southerners theorized that European nations would support their independence. They believed that England would like to see the United States split to eliminate the threat to their economic and territorial ambitions. However, a wholesale endorsement never materialized because the majority of Britons
detested slavery. England and France did declare themselves neutral and allowed merchants from the two countries to trade with both Southern and Northern forces. The Confederacy, however, never received exclusive support from foreign nations.

The high-level military strategies for the North and South continued to be attack and defend. Union soldiers attempted to advance on southern soil to capture Confederate land, while Southerners entrenched themselves in key locations to defend their territory.

The Battles

With the beginning of the war still fresh in their minds, and expectations that fighting would be intense but short, Union troops were eager for action. Cries of “On to Richmond” echoed across the hills surrounding Washington as the troops advanced on Confederate forces near Bull Run, approximately 30 miles southwest of the northern capital. President Lincoln believed an attack on a smaller Confederate unit would boost morale and clear a path to Richmond, where he hoped to capture the Confederate capital. A quick end to the war would save the Union and avoid severe damage to the economy.

The inexperienced Union troops, however, encountered determined Confederate soldiers who refused to give up their ground. On July 21, 1861, a Virginia brigade led by Thomas J. Jackson blocked the Yankee advance like a stone wall. Jackson became a southern war hero and the nickname “Stonewall” Jackson stuck. The counterattack by the Southerners effectively pushed back the Union troops. Many Yankee soldiers even dropped their guns and supplies in their hasty retreat.

The impressive win at Bull Run greatly boosted the Confederates soldiers’ confidence—and egos. Southerners bragged about their victory and believed they had proven their military superiority. A feeling of pride swept through the
south and many thought the war was over. Southern enlistment numbers dropped sharply, and plans to advance through northern territory to capture Washington were slow to materialize. Although the victory over the Union army at Bull Run was a mighty success, it would later be discovered that it actually harmed the cause of the Confederacy.

The humbling defeat at Bull Run required the Union army to regroup. The Yankees made plans for a longer and more difficult struggle. Congress authorized the enlistment of 500,000 troops. This time, however, they were signed to three year agreements to make sure there was enough manpower to survive an extended war.

In late 1861, Lincoln appointed General George McClellan to lead a major Union force called the Army of the Potomac. Lincoln believed that McClellan, a well-liked and passionate leader, would be able to drill the Union troops into battle-ready shape. McClellan worked on raising the morale of his troops and preparing them for war. But the red-haired general was overly cautious and believed that the Confederate army heavily outnumbered him. He expanded the training for the Yankee troops for several more months. The Union army’s inactivity worried Lincoln. The Commander-in-Chief wanted to engage the enemy and move ahead with his plans to capture Richmond and divide the Confederacy by marching through Georgia and the Carolinas.

Lincoln finally ordered McClellan to advance. The general formulated a plan to bypass the difficult terrain of Virginia and use a water route to approach Richmond. The capital city rested on the western portion of a narrow peninsula formed by the James and York Rivers. The Peninsula Campaign called for McClellan and about 100,000 troops to slowly work their way up the James River toward Richmond. In the spring of 1862, as the Union soldiers moved along the eastern coastline toward the peninsula, fighting in the area moved to the water. The USS Monitor and the Confederate Merrimack participated in history’s first
fight between armored ships. The powerful ironclads battled to a standstill when the *Merrimack* began taking on water and returned to Norfolk.

The Union’s naval technology and perseverance secured the waterway for the North and helped the Yankees capture Yorktown. McClellan proceeded up the river where he was scheduled to meet up with reinforcements before attacking the capital. Lincoln, however, diverted the reinforcements to attack Stonewall Jackson’s regiment that was raising havoc in the Shenandoah Valley and threatening the security of Washington, D.C.

With the unexpected change in plans, McClellan’s group stalled near Richmond. The delay gave Robert E. Lee time to launch an attack on the Union troops. The Seven Days’ battles took place between June 26 and July 2, 1862 and eventually forced McClellan back to the coast. More than 10,000 Union soldiers died and nearly 20,000 Southerners lost their lives in the week-long fighting. Once again, the Confederacy pinned an embarrassing loss on the North and forced Union leaders to re-evaluate their plans.

Lincoln grew tired of McClellan’s leisurely pace and intense focus on capturing Richmond without demolishing the army protecting it. The president realized that to win the war, enemy forces had to be dismantled. McClellan’s vision of war as a chess game featuring more strategy than fighting, did not appeal to Lincoln or Congress. Consequently, the president relieved the general of his authority and placed him under General Henry Halleck.

Many historians believe that if McClellan had not surrendered his position outside Richmond and had captured the city when he had the chance, the war might have ended, the Union might have been saved, and slavery might have remained as it was before fighting began. Up to that point, Northerners were still fighting to save the Union, not to eliminate slavery. However, by losing another battle to the South, the war was prolonged. Lincoln, who was determined to make the Confederacy pay for the damage it had caused to the Union, focused
more attention on freeing the slaves and began work on the Emancipation Proclamation.

Now in charge of Union troops in Virginia, General Halleck decided to pull back his forces. Robert E. Lee took advantage of the Yankee regrouping to quickly advance his men north. The group overpowered General John Pope's regiment and forced them to retreat from Bull Run, the same site where 13 months earlier Union forces suffered their first Civil War defeat.

Reeling from the incompetence of his military leaders, Lincoln again turned to McClellan to get the Union army back on track. As Lee boldly moved his Confederate forces northward, McClellan gained information from captured Confederate communications that provided details of Lee’s position. In the fall of 1862, McClellan revised his strategy and eventually cornered Lee and approximately 40,000 Confederate troops between the Potomac and Antietam Creek. McClellan maneuvered his men to end the battle and capture Lee. He still had reserves available and Union troops arrived by the hour to lend their support. But darkness fell and McClellan held his positions. When morning broke, Lee anticipated an aggressive attack from the Northerners but none ever came. An entire day passed and McClellan still refused to order his men to advance on the trapped Southerners. As night fell, the Confederate soldiers scampered across the Potomac and back into Virginia.

McClellan had successfully prevented the Confederates from carrying out their mission, but again the general failed to claim a victory on the battlefield. And, even worse, he allowed Lee to escape to rebuild his army for another day. Lincoln angrily dismissed McClellan from his command for a second and final time. Although he was furious that the Union army did not destroy the Confederate regiments, Lincoln played up the fact that the Southerners were forced to retreat. He took the opportunity to announce to the public the Emancipation Proclamation.
Southern forces continued to tally victories. But during a battle at Chancellorsville, Virginia, in 1863, the Confederate army suffered a severe blow—Stonewall Jackson was mistakenly shot by his own men when he returned from a reconnaissance mission. The loss of Jackson’s exceptional leadership and battlefield experience forced the Confederate army to re-evaluate its strategy.

After Antietam, Lincoln appointed a series of generals to lead the Army of the Potomac, and each commander was just as successful in failure as his predecessor. In late June, 1863, General George Meade was handed the reins of the army. He and Lee were friends and served together during the Mexican War. When Lee heard of Meade’s promotion, he knew he was up against a formidable opponent. Meade took command of nearly 100,000 men at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania where the soldiers were battling 76,000 Confederate troops. For three days, between July 1 and July 3, momentum shifted from the South to the North and back to the South.

On July 3, when Union guns went silent and Confederate soldiers thought they had the upper hand, Southern General George Pickett led a charge against Union lines. However, as the Confederates marched closer and closer, Union forces sprang back to life and annihilated the advancing divisions. The Union suffered more than 23,000 casualties, the South 28,000. The Battle of Gettysburg became the bloodiest battle of the Civil War.

Later that year on a cold autumn day, President Lincoln visited the site where so many men lost their lives. He was scheduled to dedicate the cemetery and offer a short speech. Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address was quickly branded as “ludicrous” and “silly” by critics, but it would become one of the most famous speeches ever spoken.

In battles taking place in the west, Lincoln finally found a general he could rely on. General Ulysses S. Grant was a hard drinking West Point graduate who was commonly stationed at remote frontier posts. Grant’s first success in the Civil
War happened in February, 1862, when he led the capture of Fort Henry and Fort Donaldson on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers.

After northern forces seized New Orleans, Grant led his army to attack Vicksburg, Mississippi. The Confederacy used an area between Vicksburg and Port Hudson, Louisiana to transport cattle and other supplies from the west to southern cities. After intense fighting, Grant seized Vicksburg on July 4, 1863. Less than a week later, he dealt the Confederates a significant blow with the capture of Port Hudson. Grant’s victories coupled with the Confederate defeat at Gettysburg shifted the tide of momentum in the Union’s favor. The change of events forced England and France to cancel major contracts to supply weapons and ships to the South.

By the summer of 1864, the North had General Lee on the ropes several times but they could never deliver the knockout punch. As Union forces continued to chase Lee and his company throughout the Upper South, General William Tecumseh Sherman marched his troops through Georgia to the sea. In his wake he left Confederate cities and towns in ruins so Southerners would not have anything left to use against the Union troops.

Sherman told Grant that if a regiment of Northern soldiers could march through the south, Confederates would realize that the Union could do whatever it wanted. Sherman’s march marked the beginning of the end for the Confederacy. The South’s resistance began to weaken as Confederate soldiers grew weary of being outnumbered. On December 22, 1864, Sherman captured Savannah, Georgia, and in February overpowered southern troops in Columbia, South Carolina.

Southern forces continued to deteriorate as Union troops conquered more Confederate cities. Then, on April 3, 1865, Grant ordered more than 100,000 troops to surrounded Lee and his 30,000 men outside Richmond. The decorated Confederate leader realized the end was near and resistance was futile. On April
9, 1865, Lee and Grant met at Appomattox Court House to agree to the terms of surrender. Per Lincoln’s orders, the Union’s only requirement was to have the Confederate soldiers lay down their arms.

After four years of fighting and 600,000 soldiers killed—totaling nearly as many lives lost than all American wars combined—the Civil War finally ended. One out of every four Confederate soldiers died or suffered debilitating injuries while one in ten Union troops lost their lives. The year following the surrender, Mississippi allocated one-fifth of its budget to buy artificial limbs for its veterans. The South, which lost one-fourth of its white male population between the ages of 20 and 40, vowed to rebuild its land and remember its heroes.

The Economy During the Civil War

The Civil War affected northern and southern economies differently. When the war began, the north, with its large factories and well-established companies, generated a great deal of the country’s business. After the first volleys of battle, the north experienced a slight depression due to the uncertainty of the war and the loss of southern business associations. However, after the initial shock passed, the northern economy flourished. The federal government moved quickly to plan for its financial future. Congress increased excise taxes on tobacco and alcohol, tariffs were created to protect manufactures from foreign competition, and an income tax was introduced for the first time in the history of the nation.

Congress also passed a series of measures that were long desired by the north but consistently killed by southern opposition. In 1862, the Homestead Act provided 160 acres to settlers who agreed to farm the land for five years. Also passed was the Morrill Land Grant Act which offered states land, approximately 30,000 acres for each Congressman, to support agricultural colleges.
In 1863, the National Banking Act was authorized by Congress to stimulate the sale of government bonds and to establish a uniform currency. Banks that joined the National Banking System could issue reliable paper money and buy government bonds. The system functioned until 1913 when it was replaced by the Federal Reserve System.

As Northerners prospered, Southerners experienced an abundance of financial difficulties. The blockades ordered by Lincoln cut off money generated from the import and export goods. Since the South relied heavily on revenue from the sale of cotton and tobacco, the backbone of their financial system collapsed. In many instances, Southerners were forced to recycle goods because they had no way to receive new products. For example, as the condition of railroad tracks declined, Southerners were forced to pull rails from one line to repair another. Metal items, like the weights from windows, were melted down to create bullets for the troops.

The harsh times did not deter citizens from trying to improve the conditions. When hundreds of thousands of men were called to duty, women in the north and south stepped up to take their places in the farms and factories. Many women also trained as nurses to tend to the growing number of injured soldiers.

The huge armies created a massive demand for clothing, shoes, and blankets. Companies raced to keep up with production orders and turned to machines to lend support. Since most of the manufacturing industry was located in the north, and tight blockades choked Southern trade, Yankee businessmen grew wealthy while Confederate farmers grew hungry. With each passing day, the war slowly squeezed the life from the once proud southern states.
Abolition of Slavery

Lincoln and Civil Liberties

President Abraham Lincoln was a minority president, having been elected in 1860 with only 40 percent of the popular vote. He inherited a country divided by secession and at the brink of war, and an opposing foe in Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Lincoln had many challenges to overcome to make his mark in history.

Lincoln had never accepted the legality of secession, and during his inauguration he vowed to preserve the Union and uphold the Constitution. However, his initial acts as President reflected his belief that, at least temporarily, one vow must be broken to uphold the other. Lincoln believed that bending the Constitution was necessary to preserve the Union—and even the Constitution itself.

The Constitution states in Article I, Section VIII, paragraph 12 that only Congress can increase the size of the Federal Army, but with a declaration Lincoln did just that. Several of the nation’s military institutions were located in the south, giving them a significant military advantage with better trained and organized forces. Lincoln felt his only chance would be to overwhelm the forces of the south by outnumbering them. Unfortunately, Congress was not in session, so Lincoln took it upon himself to enlarge the army by 75,000 men. Congress later approved the measure in a display of solidarity, but a few feathers had been ruffled over the expropriation of power.

Lincoln also revoked some civil liberties during his tenure without the prior approval of Congress. The writ of habeas corpus was, and is, one of the basic tenets of American’s civil liberties. It allows the examination of the circumstances of a person’s arrest and imprisonment to determine if that individual should be detained. The purpose of habeas corpus is to prevent unjust or illegal imprisonment.
Lincoln negated the writ for the purpose of summarily arresting anti-Unionists. This act was in open defiance of the Supreme Court and Chief Justice Roger B. Taney's ruling in the 1861 case of *Ex Parte Merryman*, which stated that the suspension of habeas corpus was unconstitutional without an act of Congress.

In addition, Lincoln violated other constitutional liberties during his Presidency. These violations include the suspension of several newspapers and the arrest of their editors on grounds that they were obstructing the war effort. He also instituted supervised voting in the border states, making voters march between two lines of armed troops. Many voters were intimidated by this process, especially since it was the norm to provide ballots on paper colored to identify a voter's party affiliation, but Lincoln believed these actions were necessary for the good of the Union.

**Emancipation Proclamation**

Although President Lincoln had a reputation for being an abolitionist, his political record indicated this label was not completely accurate. Lincoln focused his political stance regarding slavery on the prevention of its spread into the territories. After becoming president he initially resisted laws by the federal government called the Confiscation Acts that pushed the Union toward abolition. The first of these acts, the Confiscation Act of 1861, approved on August 6, 1861, granted freedom for all slaves who had served in the Confederate military. It also allowed for Union seizure of all rebel property. This act was only enforced in areas where the Union Army had a presence.

President Lincoln resisted this act because he feared the effect it would have on the political climate. He worried this act might influence the border states—so critical to the Northern cause—toward secession to protect their slavery system. In an attempt to curb the emancipation, he ordered Union commanders to refuse escaped and liberated slaves admittance to their military units.
However, Congress pushed forward toward emancipation with a second Confiscation Act on July 17, 1862. This act was more direct, declaring freedom for the slaves of civilian and military Confederate officials. Although a vital step toward complete emancipation, this act also was only enforced in areas with a Union military presence.

Lincoln continued to refrain from offering full-fledged support of abolition, believing that the political climate was not ready to support it. The abolitionists grew impatient, but Lincoln believed that such a revolutionary change should only follow a significant victory on the battlefield. His opportunity came following the battle of Antietam.

Antietam Creek, Maryland, was the site of a showdown between the Confederate General Robert E. Lee and the Union General George McClellan on September 17, 1862. It proved to be the bloodiest single day of fighting of the entire Civil War. The battle had no clear winner, but the Union demonstrated surprising strength, giving Lincoln the positive political climate he sought for his proclamation.

The preliminary proclamation came on September 23, 1862, immediately following Antietam. In this address, Lincoln outlined the terms of freedom for slaves in states that were still in rebellion. It also indicated that Lincoln’s final Emancipation Proclamation would be issued January 1, 1863. Despite its title, the Emancipation Proclamation did not immediately free any slaves since it could not be enforced in those states it targeted. Although the Proclamation foreshadowed the end of slavery, those expecting an immediate effect were sorely disappointed.

Lincoln’s purpose for the Proclamation was not the immediate freedom of all slaves. Rather, he hoped the declaration would weaken the moral cause of the South, while strengthening the Union’s moral cause. He felt that with the Proclamation the Civil War now had a “higher purpose,” which Lincoln sought to leverage for the Union.
Reaction to the Proclamation was varied. Some questioned the constitutionality of the decree, while others ignored it completely. Border states were not affected by the Proclamation but they continued to watch Lincoln’s actions with a wary eye. Northerners—particularly those in the northwest—took a harsher view, believing that Lincoln had again acted with too-heavy a hand, while abolitionists approved of the measure and sought stricter enforcement. Meanwhile, Southerners continued to fear an insurrection by their slaves.

Since most slaves were illiterate, news of the Emancipation Proclamation reached them largely by word of mouth. About 800,000 slaves should have been freed by the declaration, but none gained immediate freedom. Slave owners did not voluntarily free their slaves, but many blacks took advantage of the declaration to leave their owners and join the Union Army to support those who had upheld their freedom.

Nearly 200,000 black soldiers played an important role in the Civil War, with 16 eventually earning Medals of Honor, the nation’s highest honor for valor. However, they faced great challenges throughout the war, even from the people who were employing them to fight. Black Union soldiers received a net monthly pay of $7, while their white counterparts received almost double that amount.

Black soldiers also faced the threat of torture and death if they were captured by the Confederacy. President Lincoln declared that the Union would retaliate if black Union Prisoners of War were tortured by their Confederate captors, but this declaration was largely ignored. In light of these threats, it is noteworthy that former slaves accepted the risks of military service over slavery and the risks of trying to integrate into civilian society.

These former slaves filled a void created by increasing desertions of Union soldiers. The deserters were unhappy with the shift in the purpose of the war. Many men felt that the only true purpose should be the fight for unity of the
North and the South, and they were unhappy that the cause had shifted to include abolitionism.

The Emancipation Proclamation also had a profound effect on the congressional election of 1862. Northerners spoke with their votes, letting the administration know that they were not happy with the current political tide. Although it was not a presidential election year, Congressional elections saw several changes from the previous election. Republicans faired poorly in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and even Republican President Lincoln’s home state of Illinois, although the Democrats still did not have the numbers to take control of Congress.

Another important political effect of the Proclamation was the changing sentiment in Europe. During the Battle of Antietam, the British and French governments had been on the verge of rushing in to provide mediation, but that urgency cooled with General Lee’s retreat across the Potomac. When the Emancipation Proclamation was declared, European working classes sympathized with the measure and the Union won its favor. With this action, Europe no longer felt intervention was necessary.

**Thirteenth Amendment**

The effect of the Emancipation Proclamation on slaves was more emotional than physical. Many slaves were free in theory but had been convinced to remain working for their former owners out of loyalty or a lack of alternatives. Many simply did not believe that the Emancipation Proclamation guaranteed their freedom, and those who did understand the Proclamation realized that it did not guarantee their safety if they left their masters.

Those doubts would finally be laid to rest after the war’s conclusion with the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution. With these words, “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the U.S. or any place subject to
their jurisdiction,” Congress completely and finally abolished slavery. The Amendment was approved in December of 1865 with a two-thirds vote in Congress, and went in effect fully when three-fourths of the states ratified it.

Although Lincoln’s proclamation had put abolition in motion, he was not able to see it through to completion. Attending Ford’s Theater in Washington on Good Friday, April 14, 1865, less than a week after General Lee’s surrender, he was shot in the head by John Wilkes Booth, a radical pro-Southern actor.

Lincoln’s assassination actually served to improve his reputation as a powerful historical figure. Despite his numerous positive attributes, Lincoln, a product of the most divisive period in U.S. history, made many political enemies and garnered limited popular support. However, his sudden and dramatic death blurred the edges of his shortcomings from the memories of his detractors and promoted him to legendary status. He is remembered for his vision of a nation where all people “are created equal,” as he stated in his Gettysburg Address delivered during the Civil War near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on November 19, 1863.

Lincoln’s Vice President, Andrew Johnson, was never quite comfortable filling Lincoln’s shoes. Nonetheless, Johnson attempted to follow Lincoln’s plan for abolition and urged the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment. Undoubtedly, both men had a hand in ending slavery but ultimately, victory on the battlefield was the true emancipator.
Ramifications of the Civil War

Election of 1864

The presidential election of 1864 transpired at a time when the country was divided, both geographically and politically, by war. The outcome of the election would ultimately be decided by swiftly changing political tides.

The majority of Republicans backed the current president, Abraham Lincoln; but Lincoln had a significant number of detractors even within his own party. They accused Lincoln of being too eager to compromise, lacking conviction, and of offering up ill-timed jokes, putting Lincoln’s renomination at first in doubt.

However, his Republican supporters had a plan. Dissent within the Democratic Party, due in part to the recent death of their leader, Stephen A. Douglas, divided the northern Democrats into three factions: War Democrats, Peace Democrats, and Copperheads. War Democrats put patriotism above party loyalty and supported Lincoln, and the Republicans sought an alliance with them. A partnership with the War Democrats brought a temporary end to the Republican Party, as the new alliance named themselves the Union Party.

Lincoln won the nomination of the Union Party, and selected Andrew Johnson as the Vice Presidential candidate on his ticket. Johnson, a War Democrat and slave owner from Tennessee, had never attended school but taught himself to read. Apprenticed to a tailor at the age of ten, he became active in politics as a teenager and stood out as a powerful orator. Johnson rose through the political ranks to become a congressman, governor of Tennessee, and a United States senator. He campaigned for the rights of impoverished white planters, but refused to secede from the Union with his home state. Lincoln believed that choosing Johnson as his Vice-Presidential running mate would give him the widespread appeal necessary to achieve re-election.
The Peace Democrats were party loyalists, and they withheld their support of Lincoln but did not take any radical action against him. The Copperheads, however, openly demonstrated their disdain for the Lincoln administration with physical and political attacks against Lincoln, the draft, and emancipation.

The Copperheads, aptly named after the snake that strikes without warning, were led by a notorious man named Clement L. Vallandingham. Venomously outspoken against the war, he was eventually brought before a military tribunal on the charge of making treasonable utterances. Convicted in 1863, he served a prison term and was banished from the Union.

However, Vallandingham did not quietly go away. He eventually resurfaced in Canada, and ran for the governorship of his home state of Ohio from foreign soil. He was not victorious in that election but did garner a significant number of votes. He eventually made his way back to Ohio, but was never prosecuted for violating his exile.

After the War Democrats joined forces with the Republicans, the Copperheads and the Peace Democrats comprised what was left of the Democratic Party. They nominated General George B. McClellan as their candidate for president in 1864. Known affectionately as “Little Mac” by his soldiers, McClellan was a stern perfectionist who demanded precision from his troops. However, his methodical practices had earned him the nickname “Tardy George” from his critics, including President Lincoln, who in 1862 had grown weary of McClellan’s reluctance to move forward on the battlefield. Lincoln finally issued a direct order for McClellan to approach and fight at the Peninsula Campaign, where the Seven Days Battles occurred. Although McClellan was defeated at the Peninsula, he had managed to garner enough popular support to earn the Democratic nomination for President in 1864.

Throughout the presidential campaign the country was at war, and the campaign itself was no different. The Union Party hurled insults at the Democrats and the
Democrats responded in kind. Lincoln began to grow despondent, believing that he had lost the campaign even before the first vote was cast. But the face of the war was constantly changing, and the political tide rolled back in Lincoln’s favor.

The catalyst for this change was a series of Northern victories in Mobile, Alabama; Atlanta, Georgia; and the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. With these victories, Lincoln had the faith of the people, particularly the soldiers. Leaving nothing to chance, many Northern soldiers were furloughed during the election to improve Lincoln’s vote count. Other Northern soldiers were allowed to vote multiple times to log the votes of their counterparts who were still on the battlefields. When the results were tallied, Lincoln carried the popular vote by only about 400,000 votes out of four million cast, but he garnered 212 Electoral College votes to McClellan’s 21.

**Effects of the War on the South**

Lincoln interpreted his re-election as a validation of his war policy—battling against the South for unity and emancipation. He charged General Ulysses S. Grant with the responsibility of surging forward toward Richmond, the Confederate capitol. Grant’s troops were finally successful in April of 1865, when Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Courthouse.

While the North savored the victory, the South took account of the costs of the war. The physical destruction in the South was profound. Major cities, such as Richmond, Charleston, and Atlanta had been burned to the ground, and many smaller towns had suffered the same fate. The physical destruction extended to individual homes, including many impressive mansions that were reduced to shambles.
The bountiful cotton fields were badly scarred, as well. Entire crops had been burned by Northern soldiers, and those that had escaped intentional destruction had fallen into an unproductive disarray of weeds.

Livestock on the southern plantations had suffered a similar fate. When Northern soldiers invaded the south, many livestock were killed or left to fend for themselves after their shelters and food sources were burned.

Southerners who returned to what was left of their homes not only had to endure this overwhelming physical destruction, but also the economic effects of the war. The Southerners had to abandon their wartime currency and return to Union currency, which had undergone wartime changes itself. Banks and businesses in the south had been shut down during the war. Planters had no source of capital with which to rebuild their homes or their livelihoods. Crops could not be restored without seed, and no seed was available for purchase.

It is estimated that Southern planters had lost over $2 million in human chattel when their slaves were emancipated. Any crops that might be salvaged lay idle because planters had lost their labor source. Southerners who had once lived the high life were now poverty-stricken, struggling to get by. It would be ten years before the South’s agricultural output would return to pre-Civil War numbers, and even then the most productive region would be the burgeoning southwest.

Reconstruction Begins

While Southerners were mourning the loss of their financially lucrative labor source, more than four million former slaves were trying to find their way as freedmen. The majority of the emancipated blacks were illiterate, with limited skills and financial resources.

The one factor that connected most former slaves was a thirst for religion. Many masters had allowed their slaves to worship beside them, but with the
Emancipation Proclamation former slaves began developing their own churches. Between 1850 and 1870, the black Baptist Church had grown by 350,000 members, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church quadrupled its membership. Many blacks were driven toward literacy largely out of their desire to read the Bible.

In response to the desire for literacy, black schools were established—some with black teachers and others with white teachers, primarily female missionaries from the American Missionary Association. It was not uncommon to see grandmothers attend school alongside their grandchildren. However, there were not enough teachers to meet the demands, and eventually the federal government stepped in to help.

At President Lincoln’s encouragement, along with pressure from influential Northern abolitionists, Congress developed the Freedmen’s Bureau on March 8, 1865. This early social welfare program was dedicated to educating, training, and providing financial and moral support for former slaves. One strong supporter of the Bureau was Union general Oliver O. Howard, the eventual founder and president of Howard University in Washington, D.C.

With Howard’s support, over 200,000 blacks learned to read through the programs offered by the Freedmen’s Bureau. Unfortunately, the system became corrupt and it was never able to achieve its potential. The catch-phrase of the day was “40 acres and a mule,” as that was what was promised to the emancipated slaves, with the plan to settle them on land confiscated from the Confederates. However, corrupt officials usually kept the land for themselves and manipulated many former slaves into signing labor contracts that essentially placed them back in a slave-like environment.

White Southerners campaigned against the Freedmen’s Bureau. Many felt that although they had lost the right to own slaves, they still possessed racial superiority. The Freedmen’s Bureau threatened that presumption. When
President Lincoln was assassinated in April of 1865, and Andrew Johnson stepped into office, the Freedman’s Bureau lost an ally in the White House. Johnson, a Southerner, had been raised with the same racial biases as those who opposed the Freedmen’s Bureau, and he allowed the program to expire in 1872.

Despite its flaws, the Freedmen’s Bureau had helped a majority of former slaves achieve some degree of success. Freed slaves began to develop a political unity and refused to be discouraged. Their primary political vehicle was the northern-based Union League, which educated freedmen on civil responsibility and campaigned for Republican leaders who supported the freedmen’s cause.

Blacks themselves also began to assume political roles. Sixteen black men served in the Senate and the House of Representatives between 1868 and 1876, and numerous others took on roles in state and local government. This was much to the dismay of their former masters, who scorned the white allies of these black political leaders.

The whites who allied themselves with blacks became known as either “scalawags” or “carpetbaggers.” Scalawags were Southerners who opposed secession and were accused of harming the South by helping the blacks and stealing from their state treasuries. Carpetbaggers were Northerners who were accused of putting all their worldly belongings into a carpetbag suitcase and coming to the south at war’s end to gain personal profit and power. The name-calling on occasion erupted into violence, suggesting that Southerners believed that they were superior not only to blacks, but to black-friendly whites, as well. This disharmony was typical of the early stages of Reconstruction.
Presidential and Congressional Reconstruction Plans

Presidential Reconstruction

In the spring of 1865, the Civil War came to an end, leaving over 620,000 dead and a devastating path of destruction throughout the south. The North now faced the task of reconstructing the ravaged and indignant Confederate states. There were many important questions that needed to be answered as the nation faced the challenges of peace:

- Who would direct the process of Reconstruction? The South itself, Congress, or the President?
- Should the Confederate leaders be tried for treason?
- How would the south, both physically and economically devastated, be rebuilt? And at whose expense?
- How would the south be readmitted and reintegrated into the Union?
- What should be done with over four million freed slaves? Were they to be given land, social equality, education, and voting rights?

On April 11, 1865, two days after Confederate General Robert E. Lee’s surrender, President Abraham Lincoln delivered his last public address, during which he described a generous Reconstruction policy and urged compassion and open-mindedness throughout the process. He pronounced that the Confederate states had never left the Union, which was in direct opposition to the views of Radical Republican Congressmen who felt the Confederate states had seceded from the Union and should be treated like “conquered provinces.”
On April 14, Lincoln held a Cabinet meeting to discuss post-war rebuilding in detail. President Lincoln wanted to get southern state governments in operation before Congress met in December in order to avoid the persecution of the vindictive Radical Republicans. That same night, while Lincoln was watching a play at Ford's Theatre, a fanatical Southern actor, John Wilkes Booth, crept up behind Lincoln and shot him in the head. Lincoln died the following day, leaving the South with little hope for a non-vindictive Reconstruction.

The absence of any provisions in the Constitution that could be applied to Reconstruction led to a disagreement over who held the authority to direct Reconstruction and how it would take place. Lincoln felt the president had authority based on the constitutional obligation of the federal government to guarantee each state a republican government.

Even before the war had ended, Lincoln issued the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction in 1863, his compassionate policy for dealing with the South. The Proclamation stated that all Southerners could be pardoned and reinstated as U.S. citizens if they took an oath of allegiance to the Constitution and the Union and pledged to abide by emancipation. High Confederate officials, Army and Navy officers, and U.S. judges and congressmen who left their posts to aid the southern rebellion were excluded from this pardon. Lincoln's Proclamation was called the "10 percent plan": Once 10 percent of the voting population in any state had taken the oath, a state government could be put in place and the state could be reintegrated into the Union.

Two congressional factions formed over the subject of Reconstruction. A majority group of moderate Republicans in Congress supported Lincoln's position that the Confederate states should be reintegrated as quickly as possible. A minority group of Radical Republicans--led by Thaddeus Stevens in the House and Ben Wade and Charles Sumner in the Senate--sharply rejected Lincoln's plan, claiming it would result in restoration of the southern aristocracy and re-enslavement of blacks. They wanted to effect sweeping changes in the
south and grant the freed slaves full citizenship before the states were restored. The influential group of Radicals also felt that Congress, not the president, should direct Reconstruction.

In July 1864, the Radical Republicans passed the Wade-Davis Bill in response to Lincoln’s 10 percent plan. This bill required that more than 50 percent of white males take an “ironclad” oath of allegiance before the state could call a constitutional convention. The bill also required that the state constitutional conventions abolish slavery. Confederate officials or anyone who had “voluntarily borne arms against the United States” were banned from serving at the conventions. Lincoln pocket-vetoed, or refused to sign, the proposal, keeping the Wade-Davis bill from becoming law. This is where the issue of Reconstruction stood on the night of Lincoln’s assassination, when Andrew Johnson became president.

In the 1864 election, Lincoln chose Andrew Johnson as his vice presidential running mate as a gesture of unity. Johnson was a War Democrat from Tennessee, a state on the border of the north-south division in the United States. Johnson was a good political choice as a running mate because he helped garner votes from the War Democrats and other pro-Southern groups.

Johnson was born to impoverished parents in North Carolina, orphaned at an early age, and moved to Tennessee. Self-educated, he rose through the political ranks to be a congressman, a governor of Tennessee, and a United States senator. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Johnson was the only senator from a seceding state who remained loyal to the Union. Johnson’s political career was built on his defense of small farmers and poor white southerners against the aristocratic classes. He was heard saying during the war, “Damn the Negroes, I am fighting those traitorous aristocrats, their masters.”

Unfortunately, Johnson was unprepared for the presidency thrust upon him with Lincoln’s assassination. The Radical Republicans believed at first that Johnson,
unlike Lincoln, wanted to punish the South for seceding. However, on May 29, 1865, Johnson issued his own reconstruction proclamation that was largely in agreement with Lincoln’s plan. Johnson, like Lincoln, held that the southern states had never legally left the Union, and he retained most of Lincoln’s 10 percent plan.

Johnson’s plan went further than Lincoln’s and excluded those Confederates who owned taxable property in excess of $20,000 from the pardon. These wealthy Southerners were the ones Johnson believed led the South into secession. However, these Confederates were allowed to petition him for personal pardons. Before the year was over, Johnson, who seemed to savor power over the aristocrats who begged for his favor, had issued some 13,000 such pardons. These pardons allowed many of the planter aristocrats the power to exercise control over Reconstruction of their states. The Radical Republicans were outraged that the planter elite once again controlled many areas of the south.

Johnson also called for special state conventions to repeal the ordinances of secession, abolish slavery, repudiate all debts incurred to aid the Confederacy, and ratify the Thirteenth Amendment. Suggestions of black suffrage were scarcely raised at these state conventions and promptly quashed when they were. By the time Congress convened in December 1865, the southern state conventions for the most part had met Johnson’s requirements.

On December 6, 1865, Johnson announced that the southern states had met his conditions for Reconstruction and that in his opinion the Union was now restored. As it became clear that the design of the new southern state governments was remarkably like the old governments, both moderate Republicans and the Radical Republicans grew increasingly angry.

The Black Codes
When Congress convened in December 1865, the legislative members from the newly reconstituted southern states presented themselves at the Capitol. Among them were Alexander H. Stephens--who was the ex-vice-president of the Confederacy--four Confederate generals, five colonels, and several other rebels. After four bloody years of war, the presence of these Confederates infuriated the Congressional Republicans, who immediately denied seats to all members from the eleven former Confederate states.

Adding to the controversy, the new southern legislatures began passing repressive “Black Codes.” Mississippi passed the first of these laws designed to restrict the freedom of the emancipated blacks in November 1865. The South intended to preserve slavery as nearly as possible in order to guarantee a stable labor supply.

While life under the Black Codes was an improvement over slavery, the codes identified blacks as a separate class with fewer liberties and more restrictions than white citizens. The details of the Codes varied from state to state, but some universal policies applied. Existing black marriages were recognized, blacks could testify in court cases involving other blacks, and blacks could own certain kinds of property.

In contrast, blacks could not serve on a jury and were not allowed to vote. They were barred from renting and leasing land and in many states could not carry firearms without a license. The Codes also had strict labor provisions. Blacks were required to enter into annual labor contracts and could be punished, required to forfeit back pay, or forced to work by paid “Negro catchers” if they violated the contract. Vagrants, drunkards, and beggars were given stiff fines, and if they could not pay them, they were sentenced to work on a chain gang.

Most former slaves lacked capital and marketable skills and had only manual labor as a means of support. The black activist Frederick Douglass explained: "A former slave was free from the individual master, but the slave of society. He had
neither money, property, nor friends. He was free from the old plantation, but he had nothing but the dusty road under his feet."

Thousands of freedmen became sharecropper farmers, which led them to becoming indentured servants, indebted to the plantation owner and resulting in generations of people working the same plot of land.

The situation in the south left Northerners wondering what they had gone to war for, since blacks were essentially being re-enslaved. Even moderate Republicans started to adopt the views of the more radical party members. Johnson’s lenient Reconstruction plan, along with the South’s aggressive tactics, led Congress to reject Johnsonian Reconstruction and create the Joint Committee on Reconstruction.

**Congressional Reconstruction**

A clash between President Johnson and Congress over Reconstruction was now inevitable. By the end of 1865, Radical Republican views had gained a majority in Congress, and the decisive year of 1866 saw a gradual diminishing of President Johnson’s power.

In June of 1866, the Joint Committee on Reconstruction determined that, by seceding, the southern states had forfeited “all civil and political rights under the Constitution.” The Committee rejected President Johnson’s Reconstruction plan, denied seating of southern legislators, and maintained that only Congress could determine if, when, and how Reconstruction would take place. Part of the Reconstruction plan devised by the Joint Committee to replace Johnson’s Reconstruction proclamation is demonstrated in the Fourteenth Amendment.

Northern Republicans did not want to give up the political advantage they held, especially by allowing former Confederate leaders to reclaim their seats in Congress. Since the South did not participate in Congress from 1861 to 1865,
Republicans were able to pass legislation that favored the North, such as the Morrill Tariff, the Pacific Railroad Act, and the Homestead Act. Republicans were also concerned that the South’s congressional representation would increase since slaves were no longer considered only three-fifths of a person. This population increase would tip the congressional leadership to the South, enabling them to perpetuate the Black Codes and virtually re-enslave blacks.

The strained relations between Congress and the president became increasingly apparent in February 1866 when President Johnson vetoed a bill to extend the life of the Freedmen’s Bureau. The Freedmen’s Bureau had been established in 1865 to care for refugees, and now Congress wanted to amend it to include protection for the black population. Although the bill had broad support, President Johnson claimed that it was an unconstitutional extension of military authority since wartime conditions no longer existed. Congress did override Johnson’s veto of the Freedmen’s Bureau, helping it last until the early 1870s.

Striking back, Congress passed the Civil Rights Bill in March 1866. This Bill granted American citizenship to blacks and denied the states the power to restrict their rights to hold property, testify in court, and make contracts for their labor. Congress aimed to destroy the Black Codes and justified the legislation as implementing freedom under the Thirteenth Amendment. Johnson vetoed the Civil Rights Bill, which prompted most Republicans to believe there was no chance of future cooperation with him. On April 9, 1866, Congress overrode the presidential veto, and from that point forward, Congress frequently overturned Johnson’s vetoes.

The Republicans wanted to ensure the principles of the Civil Rights Act by adding a new amendment to the Constitution. Doing so would keep the Southerners from repealing the laws if they ever won control of Congress. In June 1866, Congress sent the proposed Fourteenth Amendment, which in the context of the times was a radical measure, to the states for ratification:
• It acknowledged state and federal citizenship for persons born or naturalized in the United States.

• It forbade any state to diminish the “privileges and immunities” of citizenship, which was the section that struck at the Black Codes.

• It prohibited any state to deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without “due process of law.”

• It forbade any state to deny any person “the equal protection of the laws.”

• It disqualified former Confederates from holding federal and state office.

• It reduced the representation of a state in Congress and the Electoral College if it denied blacks voting rights.

• It guaranteed the federal debt, while rejecting all Confederate debts.

All Republicans agreed that no state would be welcomed back to the Union without ratifying the Fourteenth Amendment. In contrast, President Johnson recommended that the states reject it. Johnson’s home state of Tennessee was the first to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment, while the other 10 seceded states rejected it. During this same time, bloody race riots erupted in several southern cities, adding fuel to the Reconstruction battle. Radical Republicans blamed the indiscriminate massacre of blacks on Johnson’s policies.

The congressional election of 1866 widened the divide between President Johnson and Congress. President Johnson embarked on a “swing around the circle” tour where he gave speeches at various Midwestern cities to rally the public around his policy of lenient Union recognition for the southern states. His tour was a complete failure as he exchanged hot-tempered insults with the critics in the crowd. To counter Johnson’s rhetoric, Congressional Republicans took to “waving the bloody shirt”—appealing to voters by reminding them of the sacrifices the Union made during the Civil War. When the congressional election
was complete, the Republicans won more than the two-thirds majority in the House and the Senate that they needed to override any presidential vetoes.

If the southern states had been willing to adopt the Fourteenth Amendment, coercive measures might have been avoided. On March 2, 1867, Congress passed the Military Reconstruction Act, which became the final plan for Reconstruction and identified the new conditions under which the southern governments would be formed. Tennessee was exempt from the Act because it had ratified the Fourteenth Amendment.

This legislation divided the former Confederacy into five military districts, each occupied by a Union general and his troops, whom Southerners contemptuously called “bluebellies.” The officers had the power to maintain order and protect the civil rights of all persons. The southern states were required to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment and adopt new state constitutions guaranteeing blacks the right to vote in order for their representatives to be admitted to Congress and military rule to end (which paved the way for easy ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment later). However, the Act did not go as far as giving freedmen land or education at federal expense.

Although peacetime military rule seemed contrary to the spirit of the Constitution, the Supreme Court allowed it. The hated “bluebellies” remained until the new Republican regimes were firmly established in each state. It was not until 1877 that the last federal troops left the south.

Radical Republicans were still concerned that once the states were re-admitted to the Union, they would amend their constitutions and withdraw black suffrage. They moved to safeguard their legislation by adding it to the federal Constitution with the Fifteenth Amendment. The amendment prohibited the states from denying anyone the right to vote “on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” In 1870, the required number of states had ratified the amendment, and it became part of the Constitution.
The Fifteenth Amendment did not guarantee the right to vote regardless of sex, which outraged feminists like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Equally disappointing to feminists was the fact that the Fourteenth Amendment marked the first appearance of the word “male” in the Constitution. Efforts to include female suffrage in the Fifteenth Amendment were defeated, and 50 years passed before an amendment to the Constitution granted women the right to vote.

While most of the southern states had quickly ratified the Fifteenth Amendment under pressure from the federal government, Democratic Party dominance in those states assured the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments were largely ignored. Literacy tests and poll taxes were often used to keep blacks from voting. Intimidation and lynching were also common means to keep blacks from the polls. Full suffrage for blacks was not realized until 1965.

The Civil Rights Act of 1875 was the last congressional Reconstruction measure. It prohibited racial discrimination in jury selection, transportation, restaurants, and "inns, public conveyances on land or water, theaters, and other places of public amusement." It did not guarantee equality in schools, churches, and cemeteries. Unfortunately, the Act lacked a strong enforcement mechanism, and dismayed Northerners did not attempt another civil rights act for 90 years.
The End of Reconstruction

Impeachment of Johnson

In 1867, the political battle between President Johnson and Congress over southern Reconstruction came to a confrontation. The Radical Republicans in Congress were not content with curbing Johnson’s authority by overriding his vetoes—they wanted to remove him altogether. Under the laws of the time, removing Johnson meant that Ben Wade, the president pro tempore of the Senate, would become president.

While many considered Johnson to be an inadequate president, he had done nothing to merit removal from office. Johnson believed that everything he did was in the interest of preserving a constitutional government. When Congress passed laws retracting powers granted to the president by the Constitution, Johnson refused to accept them.

For example, Congress passed the Tenure of Office Act in 1867, which prohibited the president from removing senate-approved officials without first gaining the consent of the Senate. The Senate’s goal was to keep Johnson from firing Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, who had been appointed by President Lincoln. Stanton was a staunch supporter of the Congress and did not agree with President Johnson’s Reconstruction policies.

Johnson believed the Tenure of Office Act was unconstitutional and challenged it head-on by dismissing Stanton in early 1868. In response, the House voted 126 to 47 to impeach Johnson for “high crimes and misdemeanors,” and they started the procedures set up in the Constitution for removing the president. They charged him with eleven articles of impeachment, eight of which focused on the unlawful removal of Stanton.
Johnson faced a Senate tribunal, presided over by Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase. Johnson's lawyers set out to prove that the Tenure of Office Act did not protect Stanton because it gave Cabinet members tenure “during the term of the President by whom they may have been appointed,” and it was President Lincoln who had appointed Stanton.

On May 16, 1868, the Senate voted and the Radical Republicans were a mere one vote short of the two-thirds majority needed to remove Johnson from office. If Johnson had been forced from office on such weak charges, it may have set a destructive precedent and permanently undermined the executive branch of the United States government.

To appease the Radical Republicans, Johnson agreed to stop obstructing the process of Reconstruction. He named a Secretary of War who was committed to enforcing the new laws, and Reconstruction began in earnest. Ironically, in 1926 the Supreme Court found the Tenure of Office Act to be unconstitutional.

The Reconstructed South

The postwar South, where most of the fighting had occurred, faced many challenges. In the war’s aftermath, Southerners experienced collapsed property values, damaged railroads, and agricultural hardships. The elite planters were faced with overwhelming economic adversity perpetuated by a lack of laborers for their fields. However, it was the newly freed slaves in the former Confederate states that faced the greatest challenge: what to do with their newfound freedom.

Blacks acquired new rights and opportunities, such as equality before the law and the rights to own property, be married, attend schools, enter professions, and learn to read and write. One of the first opportunities the former slaves took advantage of was the chance to educate themselves and their children. The new Radical Republican state governments took steps to provide adequate public schools for the first time in the south.
Nearly 600,000 black students, from children to the elderly, were in southern schools by 1877. Although State Reconstruction officials tried to prohibit discrimination, the new schools practiced racial segregation, and the black schools generally received less funding than white schools. Black churches, recognizing the importance of the education initiatives, helped raise money to build schools and pay teachers, and many northern missionaries moved south to serve as teachers.

Another opportunity the former slaves pursued was involvement in politics. When the Fifteenth Amendment offered the chance for suffrage, black men seized the opportunity and began to organize politically. The freedmen affiliated themselves with the Republican Party, and hundreds of black delegates participated in statewide political conventions. Blacks used the Union Leagues to organize into a network of political clubs, provide political education, and campaign for Republican candidates. Black women did not have the right to vote at the time, but they aided the political movement with rallies and meetings that supported the Republican candidates.

In the new state governments of the south, black participation was a novelty. As their political involvement grew, several freedmen were elected to office. Those who were elected generally had some education, had served in the Union Army during the Civil War, had been free before the 1860s, or had some prior experience in public service.

Nearly 600 blacks served as state legislators, and many participated in the local governments as mayors, judges, and sheriffs. Between 1868 and 1876 at the federal level, 14 black men served in the House of Representatives and two black men served in the Senate—Hiram Revels and Blanche K. Bruce, both born in Mississippi and educated in the north. The freedmen’s involvement in politics caused a great deal of controversy in the south, where the idea of former slaves holding office was not widely supported.
While several black men held political offices, the top positions with the most power in southern state governments were held by the freedmen’s white Republican allies. The Confederate-minded whites soon came to call them “carpetbaggers” and “scalawags,” depending on their place of birth.

The Confederates described “carpetbaggers” as Northerners who packed all their belongings in carpetbag suitcases and rushed south in hopes of finding economic opportunity and personal power, which was true in some instances. Many of these Northerners were actually businessmen, professionals, teachers, and preachers who either wanted to “modernize” the south or were driven by a missionary impulse.

The “scalawags” were native Southerners and Unionists who had opposed secession. The former Confederates accused them of cooperating with the Republicans because they wanted to advance their personal interests. Many of the “scalawags” became Republicans because they had originally supported the Whig Party before secession and they saw the Republicans as the logical successors to the defunct Whig Party.

Some Southern whites resorted to savage tactics against the new freedom and political influence blacks held. Several secret vigilante organizations developed. The most prominent terrorist group was the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), first organized in Pulaski, Tennessee in 1866. Members of the KKK, called “Klansmen,” rode around the south, hiding under white masks and robes, terrorizing Republicans and intimidating black voters. They went so far as to flog, mutilate, and even lynch blacks.

Congress, outraged by the brutality of the vigilantes and the lack of local efforts to protect blacks and persecute their tormentors, struck back with three Enforcement Acts (1870-1871) designed to stop the terrorism and protect black voters. The Acts allowed the federal government to intervene when state authorities failed to protect citizens from the vigilantes. Aided by the military, the
program of federal enforcement eventually undercut the power of the Ku Klux Klan. However, the Klan’s actions had already weakened black and Republican morale throughout the south.

As the Radical Republican influence diminished in the south, other interests occupied the attention of Northerners. Western expansion, Indian wars, corruption at all levels of government, and the growth of industry all diverted attention from the civil rights and well-being of ex-slaves. By 1876, Radical Republican regimes had collapsed in all but two of the former Confederate states, with the Democratic Party taking over. Despite the Republicans’ efforts, the planter elite were regaining control of the south. This group came to be known as the “Redeemers,” a coalition of prewar Democrats and Union Whigs who sought to undo the changes brought about in the south by the Civil War. Many were plantation owners called “Bourbons” whose policies affected blacks and poor whites, leading to an increase in class division and racial violence in the post-war south.

Reconstruction Ends

In the election of 1868, General Ulysses S. Grant, the most popular northern hero to emerge from the Civil War, became president. Grant ran on the Republican ticket with the slogan, “Let us have peace” against the Democratic candidate Horatio Seymour. The Republican platform endorsed the Reconstruction policy of Congress, payment of the national debt with gold, and cautious defense of black suffrage.

Grant swept the Electoral College with 214 votes, compared to Seymour’s 80. However, Grant only had about 300,000 more popular votes than Seymour, with the more than 500,000 black voters accounting for his margin of victory.

Unfortunately, the qualities that had made Grant a fine military leader did not serve him well as president. Grant had a dislike of politics and passively followed
the lead of Congress in the formulation of policy. He was honest to the point of being the victim of unscrupulous friends and schemers. All of this left him ineffective and caused others to question his leadership abilities.

Financial problems plagued Grant’s presidency. With the end of the war, the Treasury assumed that the nearly $450 million worth of greenbacks issued during the conflict would be retired and the nation would return to using gold coins. Numerous agrarian and debtor groups resisted doing so, believing it would negatively affect the economy, cause deflation, and make it harder to pay long-term debts. In President Grant’s inaugural address, he encouraged the payment of the national debt with gold. In March 1869, he signed his first act—the Public Credit Act—which endorsed that principle.

The first major scandal of Grant’s presidency came in 1869, when two millionaire partners, Jay Gould and Jim Fisk, connived with Grant’s brother-in-law to corner the gold market. They convinced Grant that the federal Treasury should refrain from selling gold because the rise in gold prices would raise farm prices. Fisk and Gould bid the price of gold up from $132 to $163 per ounce. On September 24, 1869, the Treasury was ordered to sell large quantities of gold, causing the bubble to burst.

Another scandal that rocked the Grant administration was the Crédit Mobilier scandal. It came to light during the 1872 election that the Union Pacific Railroad had formed the Crédit Mobilier construction company and then hired themselves at inflated prices to build the railroad line. The company then “bought” several prominent Republican congressmen with shares of its valuable stock. A congressional investigation led to the formal censure of only two of the corrupt congressmen.

The Whiskey Ring affair was also revealed during the 1872 election. The Whiskey Ring bribed tax collectors to rob the Treasury of millions in excise-tax revenues. Grant was adamant that no guilty man involved in the scheme should
escape prosecution, but when he discovered his private secretary was involved, he helped exonerate him. Grant’s Secretary of War was also discovered to be involved in accepting bribes from suppliers to the Indian reservations.

The scandals and incompetence surrounding Grant’s administration, along with disagreement among party members, led a group of Republicans to break off and start the reform-minded Liberal Republican Party. Unlike the other Republicans, the Liberal Republicans favored gold to redeem greenbacks, low tariffs, an end to military Reconstruction, and restoration of the rights of former Confederates. The Liberal Republicans were generally well educated and socially prominent, and most had initially supported Reconstruction. They nominated Horace Greeley, the editor of the New York Tribune, for president in 1872. The Democrats also endorsed Greeley’s candidacy, even though he had always been hostile toward them. Grant, as expected, won the Republican Party’s nomination for a second term.

In 1872, voters had to choose between two presidential candidates who were not politicians and who had questionable qualifications. In the end, the regular Republicans were able to sway votes by once again “waving the bloody shirt”-- appealing to the hatred of northern voters and reminding them of the trials of war. Grant won with a popular majority of nearly 800,000 votes and with 286 Electoral College votes to Greeley’s 66. After Grant’s victory, the Republicans did clean house with some civil-service reform and reduction of high Civil War tariffs.

An economic crisis in America followed shortly after the presidential election of 1872. Unbridled expansion of factories, railroads, and farms and contraction of the money supply through the withdrawal of greenbacks helped trigger the Panic of 1873. This was the longest and most severe depression the country had experienced, with over 15,000 businesses filing bankruptcy, widespread unemployment, and a slowdown in railroad and factory building.
The split of the Republican Party helped the Democrats gain seats in the Senate and carry the House of Representatives in the 1874 congressional elections. With control of the House, the Democrats immediately launched more investigations into the presidential scandals and discovered further evidence of corruption.

The Panic put the issues surrounding greenback currency back into public focus. Greenbacks were valued less than gold, so people tended to spend them first and save their gold or use it to pay foreign accounts, which drained gold out of the country. The Treasury had been slowly removing the greenbacks from circulation in order to combat inflation following the Civil War.

“Hard money” people—primarily creditors who did not want the money they loaned repaid with depreciated dollars—looked forward to the complete withdrawal of greenbacks. In contrast, “cheap money” people—agrarian and debtor groups—pushed for the Treasury to reissue greenbacks that had been withdrawn in hopes that doing so would stimulate the economy. In 1874, President Grant vetoed a bill to issue more greenbacks. Congress then passed the Resumption Act of 1875, which called for the gradual redemption of greenbacks for gold starting in 1879, making the value of paper money equal to that of gold.

The Resumption Act infuriated the “cheap money” people and resulted in the formation of the Greenback Labor Party, which elected fourteen congressmen in 1878. The Act brought the greenbacks up to their full face value and helped restore the government’s credit. However, the contest over monetary policy persisted as one of the most divisive issues in American politics.

Although President Grant’s terms in office were tainted with corruption, his supporters urged him to run for a third term in 1876. Some believe he did not run due to the many scandals that emerged during his terms. Others believe it was because the House passed a resolution to limit presidents to two terms in office. Either way, Grant was out of the running, and the Republicans turned to a compromise candidate: Rutherford B. Hayes from Ohio. Hayes was a three-time
governor of Ohio, and his chief virtue was that no one knew much about him, so both Radicals and reformers accepted him.

The Democratic Party nominated Samuel J. Tilden, a famous lawyer from New York who had overthrown the notorious Boss Tweed. Both Hayes and Tilden favored conservative rule in the south and civil service reform. Since the campaign did not generate any substantive issues, the two parties turned to mud-slinging, with Republicans claiming Democrats were Confederates and Democrats pointing to the corruption of the past Republican presidency.

On Election Day, Tilden garnered 184 electoral votes--only one short of the majority needed--and nearly 300,000 more popular votes than Hayes. However, there were 20 disputed electoral votes due to irregular returns from Oregon, Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina. In the three disputed southern states, rival canvassing boards submitted different returns to Congress: one supporting a Democratic win and the other supporting a Republican win. Unfortunately, the Constitution had no provisions outlined for such a situation, so in January 1877, Congress set up a special electoral commission consisting of 15 men from the Senate, House, and Supreme Court.

The electoral commission reviewed the votes for Oregon, Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina and, by partisan result of eight Republicans to seven Democrats, gave the Republicans the electoral votes. The House voted to accept the commission’s decision, declaring Hayes President by an electoral vote of 185 to 184. Congressional Democrats threatened to filibuster and prevent the recording of the electoral vote.

Many southern Democrats began to make informal agreements with the Republicans behind closed doors. In the Compromise of 1877, Republican Congressman James Garfield met with powerful southern Democrats at the Wormley Hotel in Washington. The Republicans promised that if Hayes was elected he would withdraw the last of the federal troops from the south, allowing
the only remaining Republican Reconstruction governments to collapse. Another
concession the Republicans made was to promise support for a bill that would
subsidize construction of the southern transcontinental railroad line. Finally, the
Republicans also consented to giving the position of Postmaster-General to a
southern white.

The Compromise came at a price: It gave the Democrats justification to desert
Tilden, since it would allow them to regain political rule in the south. With the
compromise, the Republicans had quietly given up their fight for racial equality
and blacks’ rights in the south. In 1877, Hayes withdrew the last federal troops
from the south, and the bayonet-backed Republican governments collapsed,
thereby ending Reconstruction.

Over the next three decades, the civil rights that blacks had been promised
during Reconstruction crumbled under white rule in the south. The plight of
southern Blacks was forgotten in the north as they were segregated and
condemned to live in poverty with little hope. Radical Reconstruction had never
offered more than an uncertain commitment to equality, but it had left an
enduring legacy with the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments
waiting to be enforced.
The New South

Economic Diversification

King Cotton was once the heralded “ruler” of the South, but following the Civil War this King shouldered the blame for the South’s losses. Many southern leaders believed that their reliance on one crop had made them vulnerable to the Union’s advances, and they pledged to diversify what they called the “New South.”

Henry W. Grady, the editor of the Atlanta Constitution, promoted the vision for the New South at a meeting of the New England Society of New York. Grady shared an optimistic view of the New South’s potential—a strong core, economic diversity, and healthy growth over time. Grady, and other intellects of his time, foresaw an agricultural society based around the growth of several crops. They also saw the importance of following the North’s example and turning toward industrialization.

Proponents of the New South first turned to secondary crops that could thrive in southern soil. Tobacco was the second most vital crop after cotton to the pre-war South. Several factors led to a resurgence in tobacco production following the Civil War. Two new varieties, bright leaf and burley were identified, and a new method for curing tobacco so that it had less “bite” was discovered. As the Union troops came south during the war, they were introduced to this tobacco, which opened up a new export market for southern tobacco production.

In addition, rice and Louisiana cane sugar became critical elements of the South’s agricultural identity. This boom was due in large part to an agriculturalist named Seaman A. Knapp. He moved to Louisiana and used the demonstration method of agriculture education to show farmers how to select the most appropriate crops for their soil and how to care for those crops. His educational exhibitions led way
to the development of a network of local and regional extension offices that supported agriculture education and production.

However, Southerners were not willing to turn their backs on King Cotton completely, and that proved to be a wise move. With the textile industry beginning to boom and industrialization in full force, the number of cotton mills in the south increased from 161 to 400 after the Civil War. Partly as a cause of this boom and partly as a result, cotton consumption increased from 182,000 bales to 1,479,000 per year in the late nineteenth century.

Cotton and other crops benefited from the ever-growing rail service. With additional railroad lines crossing the country, both the North and the South were able to profit from the other’s productivity. Additionally, the advent of refrigerated rail cars allowed other southern produce to reach northern markets, which further diversified the southern economy.

Field crops were not the only industry to take advantage of improved transportation. The area around Birmingham, Alabama became known for its iron, limestone, and coal production. Coal was especially important as an energy source for the trains that transported it. Between 1875 and 1900, southern coal production increased by 44 million tons per year, from 5 million to 49 million tons.

Another important energy source revitalized the South. Hydroelectricity, or electricity generated by water, was a growing force in the southeast region of the United States. This power source provided another important step in the industrialization process.

The South also offered Southern Pine trees, which were in demand for their soft, multi-use lumber—which was used in great quantities to restore homes damaged during the war. Lumber camps grew exponentially in the south after 1870, and tree cutting rose to new heights. If not for the warm climate and quick
renewal of the Southern Pines, the mass destruction of these trees might have rendered the south an ecological wasteland. Fortunately, scientific forestry grew alongside the lumber camps, and the first forestry school opened in Asheville, North Carolina, in 1898.

A host of other industries also developed in the south. The lumber industry carved the way for a bustling paper commerce. Clay, glass, and stone products were in high demand. Vegetables that were not sold fresh and transported on refrigerated railway cars were canned at one of several canneries in the south. And of course, the mint julep and moonshine reputation of the South perpetuated a thriving beverage industry.

Political Changes

Along with a changing economic profile, the political atmosphere was also being transformed in the New South. With the loss of the Confederate government, southern residents turned to leaders within their community. These local leaders came to be known collectively as “Redeemers,” both for their efforts to redeem the South from being dominated by Yankees, as well as their redemption of the South from a one-crop society.

Republicans, Independents, and Populists alike called the Redeemers “Bourbons,” a derogatory label meant to imply that the Redeemers were not proactive but reactive. These critics believed that the Bourbons had learned nothing from the Civil War. As most Bourbons were Democrats, this label became entrenched in the Southern vocabulary to signify a leader of the Democratic Party.

Furthermore, the Redeemers’ detractors pointed out a major truth about this group—their true purpose was to undue the “progress” achieved by the Civil War and to reassert their dominance over blacks. Although as a group they did not participate in or advocate violence against blacks as did the KKK, the
Redeemers benefited from those kinds of aggression. Their main goals were to repress blacks at the expense of whites and to increase their political power.

To that end, the Redeemers brought about a mini political revolution in the south. They believed strongly that a laissez-faire federal government would be more productive than the militarily enforced Reconstruction. This ideology was influenced by their desire to regain local control. The Redeemers also believed that education was important, but the cost should be borne by private benefactors rather than state governments. Most southern states did not have government funds for public education prior to the Civil War, and after the war the Redeemers felt that there were more pressing needs in the Reconstruction effort, such as business and industry.

Several philanthropists did come through with the funds to keep southern education afloat. London banker George Peabody was a major supporter of education through his Peabody Fund, which provided over $3 million to public schools in the south. Another philanthropist, John F. Slater, donated another $1 million, which was designated for the development and maintenance of black schools.

J.L.M. Curry, a former soldier, preacher, and educator, served as the manager of both these funds and developed many programs that are still in effect today, including teacher’s associations and summer schools. With the help of Curry’s programs, literacy increased to 88 percent for the native white population and 50 percent for the southern black population. In addition, the Redeemers’ influence led to teacher education schools, agricultural and mechanical colleges, and even black colleges.

Democrats campaigned for Congressional seats during the election of 1874 on the strength of programs such as the public education initiative and other Redeemer programs such as boards of agriculture and public health. The public bought into the platform of the Redeemers, and with their votes they gave the
Democrats a majority in the House of Representatives as well as several prime seats in the Senate.

The changing mindset of the South allowed for several black politicians to emerge as leaders, if only of other blacks. South Carolina and Georgia both had black representatives in Congress throughout the late nineteenth century, although they always represented areas with a high density of black residents.

Most white people, although claiming racial superiority, wished no ill-will upon their black counterparts because they did not see them as threats to their social structure. Even as the white Redeemers were preaching racial superiority, they were practicing tolerance. For a brief period in the 1880s and 1890s, the black population was able to coexist with the white population in relative peace in the south.

Race Relations in the New South

There was a tentative peace in the south between blacks and whites, but it had severe limitations. White Southerners expected blacks to keep to themselves, to socialize and worship in separate venues, to work for white people in menial jobs and for meager wages, and to never request or demand anything, including equal rights.

When slaves were emancipated, the white South lost its labor supply and the slaves lost their shelter. Instead of owning the slaves, white men became landlords, charging high rent to slave families who often could not pay with cash. These slaves effectively became indentured servants to their former owners as they tried to pay off their debts through service—an impossible task, with the interest tacked on by the landlords.

Freedmen also encountered the difficulties of sharecropping. With little land available to purchase and few skills other than knowing how to work in the
fields, former slaves participated in the sharecropping system that provided a share of the crop for the worker’s service. A similar practice was known as crop liens, in which the owner of the land—usually a freedman or a poor white man—would offer a lien on his crop to a merchant in exchange for cash or supplies. Sharecropping and crop liens were idealistic plans used by crooked bookkeepers and white land owners who kept black men in perpetual debt.

Blacks did have some allies, albeit self-serving ones. The Populist Party of the 1890s needed numbers to gain power, and blacks were numerous. Populists brought blacks en masse into their folds, even giving them prominent leadership positions. Not surprisingly, these actions stirred up the Redeemers who wanted to repress the northern influence of equality for former slaves. They also did not want to lose elections to the growing Populist Party.

Since the Fifteenth Amendment ensured that the Redeemers could not outright disenfranchise blacks, they had to be crafty. Redeemers developed voting rules for their states that were known as “literacy tests,” although they were impossible tests meant solely to weed out black voters. In addition, the Redeemers implemented poll taxes that they knew many blacks could not afford to pay. While this did eliminate most of the black vote, it also kept many poor, uneducated whites from voicing their opinions at the polls. Still, the narrow-minded Redeemers considered this a victory for the South.

The Redeemers felt further justified when Mississippi took their actions a few steps further. In 1890, at a state constitutional convention, harsher voting requirements were enacted. The first of these requirements was a residency rule, which stated that all voters had to have lived in the state’s borders for a minimum of two years. Furthermore, each voter had to prove residency within their election district for a minimum of one year. Since many blacks were transient, moving to follow jobs throughout the south, few met the strict residency requirements and lost their voting privileges under the Mississippi Plan.
Those who had maintained a proper residence in Mississippi also had to meet other requirements. All taxes had to be paid by February 1st of the voting year. Even those who met this requirement were sometimes not allowed to vote when election officials “lost” the receipt in the months prior to the election. Under Mississippi’s rules, voters also had to pass a literacy test and not have been convicted of certain crimes. Again, these rules prohibited some poor white voters from participating in elections, although the rules were sometimes not enforced for the white constituency. Regardless, it was apparent to all that the harsh rules targeted blacks.

The Mississippi Plan was adopted by seven additional states over the next 20 years. Many of these states added their own exceptions that would qualify white voters who were kept from voting under Mississippi’s rules. For example, South Carolina’s literacy requirement had a loophole that exempted voters from this requirement if they owned $300 worth of property. Likewise, Louisiana invented the “grandfather clause” in 1898, which allowed illiterates to vote if their fathers or grandfathers had been eligible to vote on January 1, 1867. This excluded blacks since blacks did not have voting rights at that time. Exceptions like this were the norm as governments attempted to exclude only black voters without violating the Fifteenth Amendment.

This exclusionary attitude infused the South. A series of seven cases before the Supreme Court ruled that discrimination against blacks by corporations or individuals was in violation of federal Civil Rights laws. However, their rulings did not prohibit states from enacting segregation laws.

Proponents of the New South took up the “Separate but Equal” battle cry. Under this agenda, segregation of blacks and whites became common as long as each had “equal” facilities. However, although blacks and whites might both have facilities that served the same purpose, such as public restrooms, railroad cars, and theater seats, the facilities were rarely equal. The railroad cars for white patrons would typically be cleaner and more comfortable than the car for blacks.
The state laws legalizing this practice were known as “Jim Crow laws,” named after a black character in old minstrel shows.

These segregation laws were first tested in a case known as Plessy v. Ferguson, which went before the Supreme Court in 1896. Homer Plessy was a man with one-eighth black ancestry who was ordered to leave the whites-only railroad car. He refused the order and was arrested and later convicted of this crime. He appealed the case all the way to the highest court, but the Supreme Court validated Plessy’s conviction, and the southern states took that as a green light to enact segregation laws on a wide scale.

One Supreme Court Justice, John Marshall Harlan of Kentucky, dissented in the Plessy verdict. He believed that validating Plessy’s conviction would promote aggressive attitudes toward blacks. Such attitudes were already firmly entrenched in Southern society, and as Harlan predicted, the ruling increased the violence. Lynchings, already a common practice, hit record highs in the late 1800s, with nearly 90% of the victims being black.

Two black men, Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois, risked their lives to stand up against the violence and lead their fellow blacks, albeit in opposite directions. Washington, a former slave, had overcome the odds to receive an education at Hampton Institution, and he later built the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Washington encouraged blacks to keep to themselves and focus on the daily tasks of survival, rather than leading a grand uprising. He believed that building a strong economic base was more critical at that time than planning an uprising or fighting for equal rights. Washington also stated in his famous “Atlanta Compromise” speech in 1895 that blacks had to accept segregation in the short term as they focused on economic gain to achieve political equality in the future.

W.E.B. Du Bois, born after the Civil War and the first African American to earn a Harvard PhD, was one of Washington’s harshest critics. He believed that
Washington’s pacifist plan would only perpetuate the second-class-citizen mindset. Du Bois felt that immediate “ceaseless agitation” was the only appropriate method for attaining equal rights, especially for those he dubbed the “talented tenth” of African Americans who deserved total equality immediately. As editor of the black publication “The Crisis,” Du Bois publicized his disdain for Washington and was instrumental in the creation of the “Niagara Movement,” which later evolved into the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). Eventually, Du Bois grew weary of the slow pace of racial equality in the United States. He renounced his citizenship and moved to Ghana in 1961, where he died two years later.

Both Washington and Du Bois had loyal followers and both are legendary black leaders for the progress they made—even on different paths—toward equality. Each served as important role models for later leaders of the civil rights movement.
Focus on the West

Migration Westward

Prior to the Civil War, most English settlers and their descendents chose to live along the Atlantic Coast. However, the Pacific Coast was also being settled, which would lead to the development of the Great Plains as the two coasts spread toward the middle of America.

Atlantic settlers referred to the Great Plains and the Pacific Coast as the “Great West.” A less-optimistic name for this region was the “Great American Desert,” so-named because of a lack of available water sources and soil that did not respond to Atlantic farming methods.

Those who traversed the Great Plains found large settlements of Indians, along with scatterings of Mexicans, Asians, and Anglo-Americans, many of whom were Mormons who had settled in the Utah region. White pioneers who had moved westward were often trappers or miners who were seeking new and fertile sources of their commodities.

Mexican settlers were populous particularly in the southwest. Indians, pushed west by white settlements along the Atlantic coast, were scattered across the Great West. Sioux and Comanche Indians were populous throughout the Great Plains, while Apache and Navajo migrated to the southwest. The Nez Perce and Shoshone Indians settled across the northwest.

An act passed by Congress in the midst of the Civil War, the Homestead Act of 1862, further shaped the western landscape during the nineteenth century. Under this act, farmers could claim as much as 160 acres in the Great Plains by staking a claim to a parcel of land and living on the property for five years. After those five years the settler would be awarded the free and clear title to his claim.
The settler would also have the opportunity to purchase the land outright after six months for $1.25 per acre.

The Homestead Act drew many west who wanted to escape the carnage of the Civil War. More Indians were pushed out of their land by this act as farmers sought the promise of land ownership and profitability. However, these farmers did not take into account that much of the land in the Great Plains was suited only to cattle ranching, rather than crop farming, at least using the farming methods that these east coast farmers were familiar with. Many of those seeking fortune under the Homestead Act were largely disappointed.

The Great Plains saw another influx of new residents following the Civil War, as southern blacks sought new opportunities as freedmen. At the urging of former slave Benjamin “Pap” Singleton, a self-proclaimed rescuer of blacks from the hardships of sharecropping and tenant farming, many former slaves boarded boats to cross the Mississippi River for a final destination of Kansas. Singleton distributed literature touting Kansas, a free state since its inception, as salvation for freedmen trying to eke out a living in the South.

However, blacks who reached Kansas faced a different set of hardships. The unyielding soil and lack of resources led many blacks to hire themselves out to other farmers in order to make a living. Thus, their quality of life was no better than it had been in the south as slaves or sharecroppers. In addition, the exodus of blacks to the Plains was hampered by southern leaders who resented the loss of black labor resources. Mississippians blocked access to the river and the boats that would transport blacks to the Great Plains in 1879. Still, Singleton and his allies spurred the migration of over a half-million blacks west of the Mississippi River by 1890.

Mining
Westward expansion was fueled by the prospect of fortune. Mining was a new frontier that everyone was interested in. Freedmen, ranchers, and farmers toiled alongside prospectors and commercial miners in search of a mother lode that would make them instantaneously rich.

The mining boom got underway with the 1848 discovery of gold in California, which sparked the 1849 California gold rush. The resulting population boom led to California statehood through the Compromise of 1850. This surge west at the hint of gold or other precious metals would repeat itself time and again over the next several decades. In 1858, gold was discovered near Pike’s Peak in Colorado territory, along the South Platte River. The excitement spread and would-be miners came from near and far over the next year with hopes of becoming wealthy. Of course, very few of the approximately 100,000 emigrants were successful at mining, but many of these “Fifty-niners” settled in the area as farmers and ranchers.

Some of those who were successful in Colorado were the prospectors at Central City in 1859 and at Leadville in the 1870s. As in California, this influx of residents and a healthy mining industry led to Colorado’s statehood in 1876, making it the “Centennial State.” The final major strike of gold and silver in Colorado happened in the early 1890s at Cripple Creek.

Colorado was not the only territory that built its statehood on the mining industry. Prospectors targeted the mountains of Nevada as another potential site for precious metals. H.T.P. Comstock, a fur-trader turned gold prospector, had drifted south from Canada in 1856. Eventually landing in Gold Hill, Nevada, Comstock aligned himself with two prospectors who had made an amazing discovery of gold and “blue earth,” which would later be determined to contain silver. Comstock named the discovered site after himself, and the Comstock Lode would come to be known as one of the most famous strikes in history.
Around the same time, a prospector named James Finney discovered a vein of his own. Finney’s nickname, “Old Virginia,” became the namesake of Virginia City, Nevada. Both Finney and Comstock had the opportunity to develop their discoveries into great personal wealth, but both sold their rights to mining companies shortly after their discoveries, missing out on hundreds of millions of dollars in gold and silver. However, their legacies live on in the state that their finds helped develop, as Nevada (“The Silver State”) was awarded statehood in 1864.

Although gold and silver brought high prices, it would be lead, tin, quartz, zinc, and especially copper that brought more consistent prices and would be more profitable in the long run. Advancing technology required copper for telegraph, telephone, and electrical wires. Montana and Arizona would prove to be fertile lands for the highly demanded copper, even though these regions were not otherwise sought-after as settlements.

During the height of the mining boom, towns sprang up near veins of ore. Miners needed homes, food, and mining supplies, and smart businessmen stepped forth to supply those needs. Storefronts went up and settlers moved in. However, when the vein was exhausted, the boom towns became ghost towns as the miners moved on to the next prospect.

In traditional business fashion, the individual miners who were successful were usually bought out by commercial miners. These conglomerates increased their wealth by buying miners’ rights to veins and harvesting the ore themselves. The commercialization of the mining industry also contributed to the ghost town effect, since there was no profit in leaving their laborers in tapped-out areas.

The surge of the mining industry in the western frontier affected the entire nation. The encroachment on Indian lands intensified the conflict between whites and Indians and would eventually lead to bloody battles. Financially, the mining industry helped fund the Civil War. The mining industry led to great
American folklore, as writers such as Bret Harte and Mark Twain glorified the gold rush. And perhaps most importantly, the mining industry strengthened the case for a transcontinental railroad.

Building and Influence of the Railroads

The mining industry facilitated expansion of the railroad industry by creating a need for quick and easy transport between mining and production sites. Entrepreneurs responded with the first transcontinental railroad.

Prior to the Civil War, railroads had been in use east of the Missouri River. The country’s leaders hoped to span the void of the Great American Desert with a railway that would connect the populous areas and truly unite the states.

The challenge of a transcontinental railroad was too overwhelming for any one company to undertake without government support. The western portion of the railroad would need to cross mountainous terrain and span hundreds of miles of prairie with no nearby water source. In addition, the workers who would create this line would need to do so under the constant threat of Indian warfare.

Since the risk was too great for any one company to assume, the federal government stepped in and awarded charters to two railway companies in 1862 to complete connecting sections of the track. The Union Pacific was awarded the charter for the section of track from the Missouri River, across the Great Plains, and through the Rocky Mountains. The Central Pacific’s charter directed them to begin working in Sacramento, California, and work eastward through the Sierra Nevada mountains.

A federal assistance package, signed by President Lincoln, awarded generous loans and land grants to the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific. When the project started, the companies were each awarded $16,000 for each mile of level track laid, $32,000 for each mile of track through the plateaus, and $48,000 for
each mile through the mountains. Those figures doubled at the encouragement of lobbyists within a year of the project’s start. In addition, each company was awarded 6,400 acres of federal land for each mile of track laid.

Both companies raced to complete the most miles of track to receive the most money and land. These incentives often led to shoddy work that would need to be repaired or replaced soon after the railway was put in use, but company officials pushed their employees toward quick completion rather than quality work. These questionable business practices earned them the nickname “robber barons.”

Both Union Pacific and Central Pacific had a very diverse labor supply. Union Pacific laborers were primarily ex-soldiers and Irish immigrants. Central Pacific’s workforce consisted mainly of Chinese men who had followed the dream of wealth to the United States. Many of these men arrived without their families, intending to stay only long enough to amass their fortunes and then return to their homeland. However, building railroads was grueling work, made even more challenging by the bigotry of their white bosses, as well as constant threat by Indians, and many Chinese died on the job.

Still, the companies pushed forward, each hoping to build more track—and reap more profit—than the other. The two lines finally met at Promontory, Utah, on May 10, 1869. The Union Pacific had built 1,086 miles of track, far more than Central Pacific’s 689 miles. The meeting was a ceremony, one which is often called the “wedding of the rails.” California governor Leland Stanford was on hand for the ceremony, and he drove a final golden spike into the railway to signify the completion of the first transcontinental railroad. The vision of Stephen Douglas as stated in his Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 had finally been realized.

Soon, there were several lines of transcontinental railroad crossing the nation. Track ran through nearly every state and territory west of the Mississippi, with
lines going north as well as south. As farms, ranches, and towns cropped up along the railway lines, the rail companies continued to profit as they sold the land that had been granted to them by the government.

The transcontinental railroads benefited the mining industry by carrying people westward and carrying ore to production sites. However, the railroads also revolutionized other industries, particularly agriculture. Prior to the transcontinental railroad, cattle going to slaughter had to be herded from the range to the market by cowboys on horseback. By the time the cattle reached their destination, they were thin and in poor condition, making them less valuable. The use of railroad transportation for cattle to market allowed for quicker, less stressful trips and higher market prices.

In addition, as progress was being made on the railroads, an important improvement to the trains themselves was being invented. The refrigerator car was developed to transport dressed meat from the slaughterhouse to markets across the country. Although it took some time for consumers to accept dressed meat over fresh meat at their local markets, its availability and cheaper prices eventually made it the standard.

In all, the transcontinental railroad benefited Americans in many ways. In addition to the transport of cattle and meat, it allowed speedier mail delivery, eventually replacing the Pony Express. It also allowed for easier transport of military aid to areas of conflict, which was a constant concern as American settlers encroached upon land possessed by Indians.
TIMELINES

1650 and earlier

- 1430: Portuguese start voyages down the west coast of Africa
- 1492: Columbus arrives in Western Hemisphere
- 1509-1547
  - Henry VII rules England
  - Protestant reformation begins in England
- 1558-1603
  - Reign of Queen Elizabeth I
  - Ireland conquered by England
- 1607: Jamestown founded
- 1612: Tobacco made a profitable crop by John Rolfe
- 1619
  - First group of blacks brought to Virginia
  - First legislative assembly meets in Virginia
- 1620: First Pilgrims in Plymouth
- 1622: Indian attacks in Virginia end hopes of becoming a bi-racial society
- 1629: Great Puritan migration to Massachusetts Bay
- 1636: Harvard founded
1650-1750

- 1676: Bacon's Rebellion
- 1686: Creation of Dominion of New England
- 1688: Glorious Revolution in England
- 1700: 250,000 settlers in English colonies
- 1704: First colonial newspaper
- 1720s: Colonial economic life quickens
- 1739-1744: Great Awakening
- 1756-1763: French and Indian War

1750-1775

- 1763: Proclamation Line established
- 1763-1764: Pontiac's Rebellion
- 1764-1765: Sugar Act and Stamp Act Controversies
- 1766: Declaratory Act
- 1767: Townshend Act, New York Assembly suspended
- 1770: Boston Massacre
- 1772: Committees of Correspondence formed
- 1773: Boston Tea Party
- 1774: Coercive Acts, First Continental Congress convenes
- 1775: Revolution begins with fighting at Lexington and Concord
1775-1800

- 1776: Declaration of Independence
- 1777: British defeated at Saratoga
- 1778: French join the war against the British
- 1781
  - Battle of Yorktown
  - Articles of Confederation ratified
- 1783: Peace signed in Paris
- 1784-1787: Northwest Ordinance of 1784, 1785, and 1787
- 1786: Annapolis Convention
- 1787
  - Shays' Rebellion
  - Constitutional Convention
- 1788
  - Federalist Papers written
  - Constitution ratified
- 1789
  - George Washington inaugurated as President of the United States
  - French Revolution begins
- 1790: Capital placed on the Potomac River
- 1793: Citizen Genet
- 1794
  - Whiskey Rebellion
  - Indians defeated at Fallen Timbers
- 1795: Jay Treaty, Pinckney Treaty
- 1798
  - Declared war with France
  - Alien and Sedition Acts
  - Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions
- 1800: Jefferson elected

### 1800-1825
- 1803: Louisiana Purchase
- 1807-1809: Embargo in effect
- 1808: Slave trade ended
- 1809: Non-intercourse Act
- 1812: War with England
- 1814: Treaty of Ghent
- 1820: Missouri Compromise
- 1820s
  - First labor unions formed
- Romanticism flourished in America

- 1823: Monroe Doctrine

1825-1850

- 1828: Andrew Jackson elected
- 1830s: Railroad era begins
- 1831
  - Nat Turner’s rebellion
  - Liberator founded
- 1832: Nullification crisis
- 1834: Whig party formed
- 1835: Texas Revolution, Republic of Texas established
- 1840s
  - Manifest Destiny
    - Telegraph and railroads create a communications revolution
- 1846: Mexican War begins
- 1848
  - Treaty of Guadeloupe Hidalgo ended Mexican War
    - U.S. acquires California and territory of New Mexico which includes present-day Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and part of Colorado
- 1849: Gold discovered in California
• 1850
  o Compromise of 1850
  o California admitted to the union
  o Fugitive Slave Law strengthened

1850-1875

• 1853: Gadsden Purchase

• 1854
  o Kansas-Nebraska Act
  o Republican Party formed

• 1856
  o Violence in Kansas
  o Senator Sumner attacked in the Senate

• 1858: Lincoln-Douglas Debates

• 1859: John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry

• 1860
  o Democratic Party splits apart
  o Abraham Lincoln elected 16th President of the United States
  o Lower South secedes

• 1861
o Confederate States of America formed
o Civil War begins at Fort Sumter
o Upper South secedes
o North is defeated at the first battle of Bull Run

• 1862
  o Battle of Antietam
  o Morill Tariff, Homestead Act
  o Emancipation Proclamation issued (effective January 1, 1863)

• 1864
  o Grant's wilderness campaign
  o Sherman takes Atlanta
  o Sherman's "March to the Sea"

• 1865
  o Sherman takes South and North Carolina
  o Lee surrenders at Appomattox Court House
  o Thirteenth Amendment abolishes slavery
  o Lincoln assassinated
  o Andrew Johnson becomes President
  o KKK formed

• 1867
  o First Reconstruction Act launches Radical Reconstruction
  o Alaska purchased
• 1868
  o Fourteenth Amendment guarantees Civil Rights
  o Johnson impeached
• 1870: Fifteenth Amendment forbids denial of vote on racial grounds
• 1870s: Terrorism against blacks in South, flourishing of Darwinism and ideas of racial inferiority

1875-1900

• 1876
  o End of Reconstruction
  o Battle of Little Big Horn
• 1877: Munn v. Illinois: Court rules states may regulate warehouse rates
• 1879: Stand Oil Trust formed
• 1880s: Big Business emerge
• 1883
  o Railroad companies divide nation into four time zones
  o Pendleton Civil Service Act
• 1886: Haymarket Riots
• 1887
  o Interstate Commerce Commission
  o Davies Act
- 1890
  - Sherman Anti-Trust Act
  - Massacre at Wounded Knee
  - Sherman Silver Purchase Act
- 1890-1920: Fifteen million "new" immigrants
- 1893: Repeal of Sherman Silver Purchase Act
- 1895
  - Pollock v Farmers
  - Court strikes down income tax
- 1898
  - War with Spain
  - Hawaii annexed
- 1899: Peace with Spain, U. S. receives Philippines, Samoa, Guam, and Puerto Rico
- 1900: Gold Standard
AP U.S. History Supreme Court Cases

- **Marbury v. Madison (1803, Marshall).** The court established its role as the arbiter of the constitutionality of federal laws, the principle is known as judicial review.

- **Fletcher v. Peck (1810, Marshall).** The decision stems from the Yazoo land cases, 1803, and upholds the sanctity of contracts.

- **McCulloch v. Maryland (1819, Marshall).** The Court ruled that states cannot tax the federal government, i.e. the Bank of the United States; the phrase "the power to tax is the power to destroy"; confirmed the constitutionality of the Bank of the United States.

- **Dartmouth College v. Woodward (1819, Marshall).** New Hampshire had attempted to take over Dartmouth College by revising its colonial charter. The Court ruled that the charter was protected under the contract clause of the U. S. Constitution; upholds the sanctity of contracts.

- **Gibbons v. Ogden (1824, Marshall).** Clarified the commerce clause and affirmed Congressional power over interstate commerce.

- **Johnson v. McIntosh (1823, Marshall).** Established that Indian tribes had rights to tribal lands that preceded all other American law; only the federal government could take land from the tribes.

- **Cherokee Nation v. Georgia (1831, Marshall).** "The conditions of the Indians in relation to the United States is perhaps unlike that of any two people in existence," Chief Justice John Marshall wrote, "their relation to the United States resembles that of a ward to his guardian... (they were a) domestic dependent nation." Established a "trust relationship" with the tribes directly under federal authority.
- **Worcester v. Georgia (1832, Marshall).** Established tribal autonomy within their boundaries, i.e. the tribes were "distinct political communities, having territorial boundaries within which their authority is exclusive."

- **Charles River Bridge v. Warren Bridge (1837, Taney).** The interests of the community are more important than the interests of business; the supremacy of society's interest over private interest.

- **Commonwealth v. Hunt (1842).** Declared that labor unions were lawful organizations and that the strike was a lawful weapon.

- **Scott v. Sanford (1857, Taney).** Speaking for a widely divided court, Chief Justice Taney ruled that Dred Scott was not a citizen and had no standing in court; Scott's residence in a free state and territory had not made him free since he returned to Missouri; Congress had no power to prohibit slavery in a territory (based on the 5th Amendment right of a person to be secure from seizure of property), thus voiding the Missouri Compromise of 1820.

- **Ex parte Milligan (1866).** Ruled that a civilian cannot be tried in military courts while civil courts are available.

- **Civil Rights Cases of 1883. (A single decision on a group of cases with similar legal problems).** Legalized segregation with regard to private property.
Vocabulary

New World Beginnings, 33,000 B.C. - A.D. 1768

**nation-state** - The modern form of political society that combines centralized government with a high degree of ethnic and cultural unity. "No dense concentrations of population or complex nation-states...existed in North America...."

**matrilinear** - the form of society in which family line, power, and wealth are passed primarily through the female side. "...many North American native peoples, including the Iroquois. developed matrilinear cultures...."

**confederacy** - An alliance or league of nations or peoples looser than a federation. "The Iroquois Confederacy developed the political and organizational skills...."

**primeval** - Concerning the earliest origin of things. "...the whispering, primeval forests...."

**saga** - A lengthy story or poem recounting the great deeds and adventures of a people and their heroes. "...their discovery was forgotten, except in Scandinavian saga song."

**middlemen** - In trading systems, those dealers who operate between the original buyers and the retail merchants who sell to consumers. "Muslim middlemen exacted a heavy toll en route."

**caravel** - A small vessel with a high deck and three triangular sails. "...they developed
**plantation** - A large-scale agricultural enterprise growing commercial crop and usually employing coerced or slave labor. "They build up their own systematic traffic in slaves to work the sugar plantations...."

**ecosystem** - A naturally evolved network of relations among organisms in a stable environment. "Two ecosystems...commingled and clashed when Columbus waded ashore."

**demographic** - Concerning the general characteristic of a given population, including such factors as numbers, age, gender, birth and death rates, and so on. "... a demographic catastrophe without parallel in human history."

**conquistador** - A Spanish conqueror or adventurer in the Americas. "Spanish conquistadors (conquerors) fanned out across...American continents."

**capitalism** - An economic system characterized by private property, generally free trade, and open and accessible markets. "...the fuel that fed the growth of the economic system known as capitalism."

**encomienda** - The Spanish labor system in which persons were help to unpaid service under the permanent control of their masters, though not legally owned by them. "...the institution known as encomienda."

**mestizo** - A person of mixed Native American and European ancestry. "He intermarried with the surviving Indians, creating a distinctive culture of mestizo...."

**province** - A medium sized subunit of territory and governmental administration within a larger nation or empire. "The proclaimed the area to be the province of New Mexico...."
Vocabulary
The Planting of English America, 1500-1733

**nationalism** - Fervent belief and loyalty given to the political unit of the nation-state. "Indeed England now had . . . a vibrant sense of nationalism . . ."

**primogeniture** - The legal principle that the oldest son inherits all family property or land. " . . . laws of primogeniture decreed that only eldest sons were eligible to inherit landed estates."

**joint-stock companies** - An economic arrangement by which a number of investors pool their capital for investment. "Joint-stock companies provided the financial means."

**charter** - A legal document granted by a government to some group or agency to implement a stated purpose, and spelling out the attending rights and obligations. "...the Virginia Company of London received a charter from King James I of England...."

**census** - An official count of population, often also describing other information about the population. "...an official census revealed that only about two thousand Indians remained in Virginia...."

**feudal** - Concerning the decentralized medieval social system of personal obligations between rulers and ruled. "Absentee proprietor Lord Baltimore hoped that...Maryland... would be the vanguard of a vast feudal domain."

**indentured servant** - A poor person obligated to a fixed term of labor. "...it depended for labor in its early years mainly on white indentured servants...."
toleration - Originally, religious freedom granted by an established church to a religious minority. "Maryland's new religious statue guaranteed toleration to all Christians."

squatter - A frontier farmer who illegally occupied land owned by others or not yet officially opened for settlement. "The newcomers, who frequently were 'squatters' without legal right to the soil..."

matriarch - A respected, usually elderly, female head of a household or extended clan. "A single long-house might shelter a woman's family...with the oldest woman being the honored matriarch."

melting pot - Popular term for an ethnically diverse population that is presumed to be "melting" towards some eventual commonality. "The hamlet of Savannah, like Charleston, was a melting-pot community."
Vocabulary
Settling the Northern Colonies, 1619-1700

**predestination** - The Calvinist doctrine that God has foreordained some people to be saved and some to be damned. "Good works could not save those whom 'predestination' had marked for the infernal fires."

**elect** - In Calvinist doctrine, those who have been chosen by God for salvation. "But neither could the elect count on their predetermined salvation...."

**conversion** - A religious turn to God, thought by Calvinists to involve an intense, identifiable person experience. "They constantly sought, in themselves and others, signs of 'conversion.'"

**visible saints** - In Calvinism, those who publicly proclaimed their experience of conversion and were expected to lead godly lives. "all Puritans agreed that only 'visible saints' should be admitted to church membership."

**calling** - In Protestantism, the belief that saved individuals have a religious obligation to engage in worldly work. "Like John Winthrop, the [the Puritans] believed in the doctrine of a 'calling' to do God's work on this Earth."

**heresy** - Departure from correct or officially defined belief. "... she eventually boasted that she had come by her beliefs through a direct revelation from God. This was even higher heresy."

**seditious** - Concerning resistance to or rebellion against the government. "[His was] a seditious blow at the Puritan idea of government's very purpose."
**commonwealth** - An organized civil government or social order. "They were allowed, in effect, to become semiautonomous commonwealths."

**autocratic** - Absolute or dictatorial rule. "An autocratic spirit survived, and the aristocratic element gained strength...."

**passive resistance** - Nonviolent action or opposition to authority in accord with religious or moral beliefs. "As advocated of passive resistance, [the Quakers] would ... rebuild their meetinghouse on the site where their enemies had torn it down."

**asylum** - A place of refuge and security, especially for the persecuted or unfortunate. "Eager to establish an asylum for his people...."

**proprietary** - Concerning exclusive legal ownership, as of colonies granted to individuals by the monarch. "Penn's new proprietary regime was unusually liberal...."

**naturalization** - The granting of citizenship to foreigners or immigrants. "No restrictions were placed on immigration, and naturalization was made easy."

**blue laws** - Laws designed to restrict personal behavior in accord with a strict code of morality. "Even so, there were some 'blue laws' aimed at 'ungodly revelers.'...."

**ethnic** - Concerning diverse peoples or cultures, specifically those of non-Anglo-Saxon background. "...Pennsylvania attracted a rich mix of ethnic groups."
Vocabulary
American Life in Seventeenth Century, 1607-1692

**headright** - The right to acquire a certain amount of land granted to the person who finances the passage of a laborer. "Masters-not servants themselves- thus reaped the benefits of landownership from the headright system."

**disenfranchise** - To take away the right to vote. "The Virginia Assembly in 1670 disenfranchised most of the landless knockabouts...."

**civil war** - A conflict between the citizens of inhabitants of the same country. "... this civil war in Virginia ground on...."

**tidewater** - The territory adjoining water affected by tides-this is, near the seacoast or coastal rivers. "Bacon... had pitted the hard scrabble backcountry frontiersmen against the haughty gentry of the tidewater plantations."

**middle passage** - That portion of a slave ship’s journey in which slaves were carried from Africa to the Americas. "... the captives were herded aboard sweltering ships for the gruesome ‘middle passage.' "

**fertility** - The ability to mate and produce abundant young. "The captive black population of the Chesapeake area soon began to grow not only through new imports but also through its own fertility...."

**menial** - Fit for servants; humble or low. "... they performed the sweaty toil of clearing swamps, grubbing out for trees, and other menial tasks."

**militia** - An armed force of citizens called out only in emergencies. "[They] tried to march to Spanish Florida, only to be stopped by the local militia."
**hierarchy** - a social group arranged in ranks or classes. "... rough equality... was giving way to a hierarchy or wealth and status...."

**corporation** - A group or institution granted legal rights to carry on certain specified activities. "...the Massachusetts Puritans established Harvard College, today the oldest corporation in America...."

**jeremiad** - A sermon or prophecy warning of doom and calling for repentance. "Jeremiads continued to thunder from the pulpits...."

**lynching** - The illegal killing of an accused person by mob action without due process. "A hysterical ‘witch-hunt’ ensued, leading to the legal lynching in 1692 of twenty individuals...."

**hinterland** - Inland region back from a port, river, or the seacoast. "No broad, fertile hinterland... beckoned people inland."

**social structure** - The basic pattern of the distribution of status and wealth in a society. "... many settlers... tried to re-create on a modified scale the social structure they had known in the Old World."

**blue blood** - Of noble or upper-class descent. "... would-be American blue bloods resented the pretensions of the ‘meager sort.’..."
Vocabulary

Colonial Society on the Eve of Revolution, 1700-1775

**melting pot** - The mingling of diverse ethnic groups in America, including the idea that these groups are or should be "melting" into a single culture or people. "Colonial America was a melting pot and has been from the outset."

**sect** - A small religious group that has broken away from some larger mainstream church. "They belonged to several different Protestant sects...."

**agitators** - Those who seek to excite or persuade the public on some issue. "Already experienced colonizers and agitators in Ireland, the Scots-Irish proved to be superb frontiersmen...."

**stratification** - The visible arrangement of society into a hierarchical pattern, with distinct social groups layered one on top of the other. "...colonial society...was beginning to show signs of stratification...."

**mobility** - The capacity to pass readily from one social or economic condition to another. "...barriers to mobility...raised worries about the 'Europeanization' of America."

**elite** - The smaller group at the top of a society or institution, usually possessing wealth, power, or special privileges. "...these elites now feathered their nests more finely."

**almshouse** - A home for the poor, supported by charity or public funds. "Both Philadelphia and New York built almshouses in the 1730s...."

**gentry** - Landowners of substantial property, social standing, and leisure, but not titled nobility. "Wealth was concentrated in the hands of the largest slave-
owners, widening the gap between the prosperous gentry and the 'poor whites'...

**tenant farmer** - One who rents rather than owns land. "...the 'poor whites'...were increasingly forced to become tenant farmers."

**penal code** - The body of criminal laws specifying offenses and prescribing punishments. "But many convicts were the unfortunate victims...of a viciously unfair English penal code...."

**veto** - The executive power to prevent acts passed by the legislature from becoming law. "Thomas Jefferson...assailed such vetoes...."

**apprentice** - A person who works under a master to acquire instruction in a trade or profession. "Aspiring young doctors served for a while as apprentices to older practitioners...."

**speculation** - Buying land or anything else in the hope of profiting by an expected rise in price. "Commercial ventures and land speculation...were the surest avenues to speed wealth."

**revival** - In religion, a movement of renewed enthusiasm and commitment, often accompanied by special meetings or evangelical activity. "The stage was thus set for a rousing religious revival."

**secular** - Belonging to the worldly sphere rather than to the specifically sacred or churchly. "A more secular approach was evident late in the eighteenth century..."
Vocabulary

The Duel for North America, 1608-1763

domestic - Concerning the internal affairs of a country. "It was convulsed...by foreign wars and domestic strife..."

minister - In politics, a person appointed by the head of the state to take charge of some department agency of government. "Leadership of a high order was provided by a series of brilliant ministers..."

magistrate - a civil official charged with upholding the law, often exercising both judicial and executive power. "...there was no trial by jury-merely the decision of the magistrate.

peasant - A farmer of agricultural laborer, sometime legally tied to the land. "Landowning French peasants...had little economic motive to move."

coureurs des bois - French-Canadian fur trappers; literally, "runners of the wood." "These colorful coureurs des bois...were also runners of risk..."

voyageurs - French-Canadian fur traders and adventurers. "Singing, paddle-swimming French voyageurs also recruited Indians..."

ecological - Concerning the relations between the biological organisms of their environment. "...they extinguished the beaver population..., inflicting incalculable ecological damage."

mutinous - Concerning revolt by subordinate soldiers or seamen against their commanding officers. "...he...was murdered by his mutinous men."

strategic - Concerning the placement and planned movement of large-scale military forces so as to gain advantage, usually prior to actual engagement with
the enemy. "Commanding the mouth of the Mississippi River, this strategic semitropical outpost also tapped the fur trade..."

guerilla warfare - Unconventional combat wagged by smaller military units using hit-and-run tactics. "...so a kind of primitive guerilla war prevailed."

buffer - "A territory between two hostile states, designed to soften an attack from one or the other side. "It was confined... to the much-buffeted colony of Georgia..."

siege - A military operation surrounding and attacking a fortified place, often over a sustained period. "After a ten-hour siege he was forced to surrender..."

flotilla - A fleet of boats, usually smaller vessels. "The Indian fur flotilla...numbered four hundred canoes."

Regulars Trained professional soldiers, as distinct from militia or conscripts. "...they had fought bravely beside the crack British regulars..."

commissions - An official certification granting a commanding rank in the armed forces. "...the British refused to recognize any American militia commission..."
Vocabulary
The Road to Revolution, 1763-1775

**insurrection** - Rebellion against political authority. “Insurrection of thought usually precedes insurrection of deed.”

**mercantilism** - The economic theory that all parts of an economy should be coordinated for the good of the whole state; hence, that colonial economics should be subordinated for the benefit of an empire. “That theory was called mercantilism.”

**depreciate** - To decrease in value, as in the decline of the purchasing power of money. “…dire need finally forced many of the colonies to issue paper money, which unfortunately depreciated.”

**protective tariffs** - Taxes placed on imported goods, often to raise prices and thus protect domestic producers. “Manufacturers, workers, and farmers seek to ensure their prosperity through protective tariffs….”

**mortgage** - To pledge property to a creditor as security for a loan or debt. “Virginia planters … were forced to buy their necessities in England by mortgaging future crops.”

**admiralty courts** - In British law, special administrative courts designed to handle maritime cases without a jury. “Both [acts] provided for trying offenders in the hated admiralty courts….”

**virtual representation** - The political theory that a class of persons is represented in a lawmaking body without direct vote. “Elaborating the theory of ‘virtual representation.’ Grenville claimed that every member of Parliament represented all British subjects, even…Americans….”
**nonimportation agreement** - Pledges to boycott, or decline to purchase, certain goods from abroad. “More effective than the congress was the widespread adoption of nonimportation agreements....”

**mulatto** - A person of mixed African and European ancestry. “...Crispus Attucks [was] described...as a powerfully built runaway ‘mulatto’....”

**duty** - A customs tax on the export or import of goods. “...Parliament...repeal[ed] the Townshend revenue duties.”

**propaganda** - A systematic program or particular materials designed to spread certain ideas; sometimes but not always the term implies the use of manipulative or deceptive means. “Their chief function was to spread propaganda....”

**boycott** - An organized refusal to deal with some person, organization, or product. “...this one called for a complete boycott of British goods....”

**inflation** - An increase in the supply of currency relative to the goods available, leading to a decline in the purchasing power of money. “Inflation of the currency inevitably skyrocketed prices.”

**desert** - To leave official or military service without permission. “...hundreds of anxious husbands and fathers deserted.”
Vocabulary
America Secedes from the Empire, 1775-1783

mercenary - A professional soldier who serves in a foreign army for pay. “Why bring in outside mercenaries . . .?”

indictment - A formal written accusation charging someone with a crime. “The overdrawn bill of indictment included imposing taxes without consent . . .”

dictatorship - A form of government characterized by absolute state power and the unlimited authority of the ruler. “The [charges] included . . . establishing a military dictatorship. . . .”

neutral - A nation or person not taking sides in a war. “Many colonists were apathetic or neutral . . .”

civilian - A citizen not in military service. “The opposing forces contended . . . for the allegiance . . . of the civilian population.”

traitor One who betrays a country by aiding an enemy. “. . . they regarded their opponents, not themselves, as traitors.”

confiscate - To seize private property for public use, often as a penalty. “The estates of many of the fugitives were confiscated. . . .”

envoy - A messenger or agent sent by a government on official business. “Benjamin Franklin, recently sent to Paris as an envoy, jested [about] Howe. . . .”

rabble - A mass of disorderly and crude common people. “This rabble was nevertheless whipped into a professional army. . . .”

arsenal A place for making or storing weapons and ammunition. “About 90 percent of all the gunpowder . . . came from French arsenals.”
**isolationist** - Concerning the belief that a country should take little or no part in foreign affairs, especially through alliances or wars. “The American people, with ingrained isolationist tendencies, accepted the French entanglement with distaste.”

**hereditary** - Passed down from generation to generation. “[The alliance] involved a hereditary foe. . . .”

**blockade** - The isolation of a place by hostile ships or troops. “Now the French had powerful fleets. . . . in a position to jeopardize Britain’s blockade. . . .”

**privateer** - A private vessel temporarily authorized to capture or plunder enemy ships in wartime. “More numerous and damaging than ships of the regular American navy were swift privateers.”

**graft** - Taking advantage of one’s official position to gain money or property by illegal means. “It had the unfortunate effect of . . . involving Americans . . . in speculation and graft.”
Vocabulary

The Confederation and the Constitution, 1776-1790

disestablish - To separate an official state church from its connection with the government.

Emancipation - setting free from servitude or slavery

Chattel - an article of personal or movable property; hence a term applied to slaves, since they were considered the personal property of their owners.

abolitionist - favoring the end of slavery

ratification - The confirmation or validation of an act (such as the constitution) by authoritative approval.

bill of rights - A list of fundamental freedoms assumed to be central to society.

aliens - Foreigners; also, persons resident in but not citizens of a country.

township - in America, a surveyed territory six miles square; the term also refers to a unit of social government, smaller than a country that is often based on these survey units.

Territory - In American, government an organized political entity not yet enjoying full equal terms of a state.

Annex - To make a smaller territory or political unit part of a larger one.

Requisition - a demand for something issued on the basis of public authority.
Foreclosure - depriving someone of the right to redeem mortgaged property because the legal payments on the loan have not been kept up.

Quorum - the minimum number of persons who must be present in a group before it can conduct valid business.

Anarchy - the theory that formal government is unnecessary and wrong in principle; the term is also used generally for lawlessness or anti-governmental disorder.

Bicameral, unicameral - referring to a legislative body with two houses (bicameral) or one (unicameral). “…representation in both houses of a bicameral congress should be based on population…”
Vocabulary

Launching the New Ship of State, 1789-1800

census - An official count of population; in the United States, the federal census occurs every ten years. “...the first official census of 1790 recorded almost 4 million people.”

public debt - The debt of a government or nation to individual creditors, also called the national debt. “...the public debt...was mountainous.”

cabinet - The body of official advisers to the head of a government; in the United States, it consists of the heads of the major executive departments. “The Constitution does not mention a cabinet...”

circuit court - A court that hears cases in several designated locations rather than a single place. “The act organized...federal district and circuit courts...”

fiscal - Concerning public finances—expenditures and revenues. “His plan was to shape the fiscal policies of the administration...”

assumption - The appropriation or taking on of obligations not originally one’s own. “The secretary made a convincing case for ‘assumption.’”

excise - A tax on the manufacture, sale, or consumption of certain products. “Hamilton...secured from Congress an excise tax on a few domestic items, notably whiskey.”

stock - The shares of capital ownership gained from investing in a corporate enterprise; the term also refers to the certificates representing such shares. “Stock was thrown open to public sale.”
**medium of exchange** - Any item, paper or otherwise, used as money. “They regarded [whiskey] as a ...medium of exchange.”

**despotism** - Arbitrary or tyrannical rule. “The American people, loving liberty and deploring despotism, were pleased.”

**impress** - To force people or property into public service without choice. “They...impressed scored of seamen into service on English vessels...”

**assimilation** - The merging of diverse cultures or peoples into one. “The drastic new law violated the traditional American policy...speedy assimilation.”

**witch-hunt** - An investigation carried on with much publicity, supposedly to uncover dangerous activity but actually intended to weaken the political opposition. “Anti-French hysteria played directly into the hands of witch-hunting conservatives.”

**compact** - An agreement or covenant between states to perform some legal act. “Both Jefferson and Madison stressed the compact theory...”

**nullification** - In American politics, the assertion that a state may legally invalidate a federal act deemed inconsistent with its rights or sovereignty. “[The] resolutions concluded that...‘nullification’ was the ‘rightful remedy.’”
Vocabulary

The Triumphs and Travails of Jeffersonian Democracy, 1800-1812

**patronage** - "Denied the power to dispense patronage, the Democratic-Republicans could not build loyal political following."

**writ** - A formal legal document ordering or prohibiting some act. "...His Jeffersonian arrivals...would hardly enforce a writ to deliver commission...."

**tribunal** - A court of justice of the place where it renders judgment. "...the black-robed tribunal of the Supreme Court had the last word on the question of constitutionality."

**impeachment** - "Jefferson urged the impeachment of an arrogant and tart-tongued Supreme Court justice...."

**pacifist** - Characterized by principle opposition to all war and belief in non interventionist, the pacifist...."

**frigate** - A fast, heavily armed warship, usually with two decks and high rigging. "The money could have been much more wisely invested in a few frigates of the Constitution class."

**cede** - To yield or grant something, often upon request or under pressure. (Anything ceded is a cession.) "Napoleon Bonaparte included the king of Spain to cede to France...the immense trans-Mississippi region...."

**precedent** - In law and government, a decision or action that establishes a sanctioned rule for determining similar cases in the future."...the transfer established a precedent that was to be followed repeatedly...."
sectionalist - Person devoted to the cause of a particular section of the country, as opposed to the nation as a whole. "Once-proud Federalists, now mere sectionalist, sank even lower in public esteem..."

conscription - Compulsory enrollment of men and women into the armed forces. "Impressments...were crude from conscription...."

broadside - The simultaneous firing of all guns on one side of a ship. "The British warship there upon fired three devastating broadside...."

embargo - A government order prohibiting commerce in or out of a port. "...enacting the embargo was like cutting off one's toes to cure one's corns."
Vocabulary

The Second War for Independence and the Upsurge of Nationalism, 1812-1824

**hodgepodge** - Composed of a mixed mass of diverse elements or groups. "His hodgepodge force consisted of seven thousand sailors, regulars, pirates, and Frenchmen. ..." (Also the nickname of my AP U.S. History teacher, Mr. Hodgins)

**mediation** - A friendly intervention, usually by consent, to settle differences between groups or nations. "Tsar Alexander I of Russia...proposed mediation. ..."

**armistice** - A temporary stopping of warfare by mutual agreement, usually in preparation for an actual peace negotiation between the parties. "The Treaty of Ghent...was essentially an armistice."

**nationalism** - A strong devotion to the nation as the central political entity, often in a narrow or aggressive fashion. "Canadian patriotism and nationalism also received a powerful stimulus from the clash."

**reaction (reactionary)** - In politics, extreme conservatism, looking to restore the conditions of an earlier time. "...the Old World took the rutted road back to conservatism, illiberalism, and reaction."

**protection (protective)** - In economics, the policy of stimulating or preserving domestic producers by placing barriers against imported goods, often through high tariffs. "The infant industries bawled lustily for protection."

**raw materials** - Products in their natural, unmanufactured state. "Through these new arteries of transportation would flow foodstuffs and raw materials."
**internal improvements** - The basic public works, such as roads and canals, that create the structure for economic development. "Congress voted. ..for internal improvements."

**intrastate** - Existing wholly within a state of the United States. "Jeffersonian Republicans. .. choked on the idea of direct federal support of intrastate internal improvements."

**depression** - In economics, a severe and often prolonged period of declining economic activity, rising unemployment, and falling wages and prices. "It brought deflation, depression, [and] bankruptcies. ..."

**boom** - In economics, period of sudden, spectacular expansion of business activity or prices. "The western boom was stimulated by additional developments."

**wildcat bank** - An uncontrolled, speculative bank that issues notes without sufficient capital to back them. "Finally, the West demanded cheap money, issued by its own 'wildcat' banks. ..."

**peculiar institution** - The institution of American black slavery. "If Congress could abolish the 'peculiar institution' in Missouri, might it not attempt to do likewise in the older states of the South?"

**demagogic (demagogue)** - Concerning a leader who stirs up the common people by appeals to emotion and prejudice, often for selfish or irrational ends. ". ..Marshall's decisions bolstered judicial barriers against democratic or demagogic attacks on property rights."

**contract** - In law, an agreement in which each of two or more parties agrees to perform some act in exchange for what the other party promises to do. "It was a contract-and the Constitution protected contracts against state encroachments."
Vocabulary

The Rise of Jacksonian Democracy, 1824-1830

constituents - The body of voters or supporters in a district, regarded as a group. “... his Tennessee constituents began to talk of running him for the presidency.”

divine right - The belief that government or rulers are directly established by God. “... America was now witnessing the divine right of the people.”

hard money - Gold and Silver coins, as distinguished from paper money. “They sought ... to substitute hard money for bank notes...”

deference - The yielding of opinion to the judgment of someone else. “The deference, apathy, and virtually nonexistent party organizations... gave way to... boisterous democracy...”

subversive - Tending to corrupt, overthrow, or destroy something established. “This procedure was now condemned as... subversive of democracy.”

clique - A small, exclusive, and snobbish circle of people. “... the voters... turned against the candidate... who had been selected by the congressional clique.”

puritanical - Extremely or excessively strict in matters of morals or religion. “The only candidate left was the puritanical Adams...”

usurpation - The act of seizing, occupying, or enjoying the place, power, or functions of someone without right. “... Adams [was]... smarting under charges of... ‘usurpation.’”

political plums - Choice, desirable offices of favors. “If the president would not reward party workers with political plums, why should they labor...?”
mudslinging - Malicious, unscrupulous attacks against an opponent. “Mudslinging reached a disgraceful level…”

bare-knuckle - Hard, unrestrained, brutal. “… the new mass electorate [had a taste] for bare-knuckle politics.”

machine - A political organization, often controlled through patronage or spoils. “… [in] New York and Pennsylvania, … well-greased machines were operating.”

spoils - Public offices given as a reward for political support. “The emphasis was more on spoils than on responsibilities.”

henchmen - Political supporters or followers. “… Jackson believed that the swiftest road to reform was to... bring in his own trusted henchmen.”

incumbent - The person currently holding an office. “The open break with the incumbent… blighted his hopes.”
Vocabulary

Jacksonian Democracy at Flood Tide, 1830-1840

**impost** - A tax, particularly a tariff or duty on imported goods. “... it did lower the imposts...”

**appeasement** - The policy of giving in to demands of a hostile of dangerous power in hoped of avoiding conflict. “Later generations... have condemned the ‘appeasement’ of South Carolina in 1833 as sheer folly.”

**plutocratic** - Concerning an extremely wealthy ruling class. “The 'Old Hero' assailed the plutocratic and monopolistic bank as unconstitutional.”

**prejudice** - Unreasonable suspicion, bias, or hatred directed at members of a group. “Jackson succeeded in mobilizing the prejudices of the West against the East.”

**ritual** - A set form or system of ceremonies, often but not necessarily religious. “... a New Yorker... was threatening to expose the secret rituals of the Masons...”

**evangelical** - Concerning religious belief, commonly Protestant, that emphasizes personal salvation, individual and voluntary religious commitment, and the authority of Scripture. “The Anti-Masons attracted support from many evangelical Protestant groups...”

**anathema** - Something or someone cursed or expelled from a group. “This moral busybodies was anathema to the Jacksonian...”

**platform** - A statement of the principles or positions of a political party. “... National Republicans added still another innovation when they adopted formal platforms...”
mandate - Something authoritatively commanded or required. “He was convinced that he now had a ‘mandate’ from the voters...”

denominations - In American religion, the major branches of Christianity, organized into separate national churches structures, e.g., Presbyterians, Baptists, Disciples of Christ. “... many denominations sent missionaries into Indian villages.”

trammel - Something that confines, restrains, or shackles. “Hardy Texan pioneers...resent[ed] the trammels imposed by a ‘foreign’ government.”

prolific - Producing abundant young. “Energetic and prolific, Texas-Americans numbered about thirty thousand in 1835”

temperance - Moderation, or sometimes total abstinence, as regards drinking liquor. “He subsequently took the pledge of temperance.”

crusader - A person who pursues a cause, religious or otherwise, with extreme enthusiasm and earnestness. “Antislavery crusaders in the North were opposing annexation...”

favorite sons - In American politics, presidential candidates who are nominated by their own state, primarily out of local loyalty. “Their long-shot strategy was instead to run several prominent ‘favorite sons’ who would... scatter the vote....”
Vocabulary

Forging the National Economy, 1790-1860

caste - An exclusive or rigid social distinction based on birth, wealth, occupation, and so forth. “There was freedom from aristocratic caste and state church...”

nativist - One who advocates favoring native-born citizens over aliens or immigrants. “The invasion of this so-called immigrant ‘rabble’...inflamed the prejudices of American ‘nativists.’”

factory - An establishment for the manufacturing of goods, including buildings and substantial machinery. “The factory system gradually spread from England—‘the world’s workshop’—to other lands.”

trademark - A distinguishing symbol or word used by a manufacturer on its goods, usually registered by law to protect against imitators. “...unscrupulous Yankee manufacturers... learned to stamp their own products with faked English trademarks.”

distaff - The staff from which thread is drawn in spinning; hence, a symbol of spinning or, sometimes, of work usually done by women or considered appropriate for them. “...New England...exchanged the trident for the distaff.”

liability - Legal responsibility for loss or damage. “The principle of limited liability aided the concentration of capital....”

incorporation - The formation of individuals into a legally organized group. “...businessmen could create corporations....”

labor union - An organization of workers—usually wage-earning workers—to promote the interests and welfare of its members, often by collective bargaining with employers. “They were forbidden by law to form labor unions....”
strike - An organized work stoppage by employees in order to obtain better wages, working conditions, and so on. “Not surprisingly, only twenty-four recorded strikes occurred before 1835.”

capitalist - An individual or group who uses private property to produce goods for profit in an open market. “It made ambitious capitalists out of humble plowmen....”

turnpike - A toll road. “The turnpikes beckoned to the canvas-covered Conestoga wagons....”

posterity - Later descendants or subsequent generations. “He installed a powerful steam engine in a vessel that posterity came to know as the Clermont....”

productivity - In economics, the relative capacity to produce goods and services, measured in terms of the number of workers and machines needed to create goods in a certain length of time. “The principle of division of labor...spelled productivity and profits....”

transient - Referring to a person without a fixed or long-term home or job; a migrant. “…they left little behind them but the homely fruits of their transient labor.”
Vocabulary

The Ferment of Reform and Culture, 1790-1860

**polygamy** - The practice or condition of having two or more spouses at one time. “Accusations of polygamy likewise arose and increased in intensity...”

**theocracy** - Literally, rule by God, the term is often applied to a state where religious leaders exercise direct or indirect political authority. “… the community became a prosperous frontier theocracy and a cooperative commonwealth.”

**utopian** - Referring to any place or plan that aims at an ideal social order. “Bolstered by the utopian spirit of the age, various reformers ... set up more than forty [cooperative] communities...”

**zealot** - one who is carried away by a cause to an extreme or excessive degree.

**communistic** - Referring to the theory or practice in which the means of production are owned by the community as a whole. “… various reformers ... set up more than forty communities of a ... communistic nature.”

**communitarian** - Referring to the belief in or practice of the superiority of community life or values over individual life, but not necessarily the common ownership of material goods. “... various reformers ... set up more that forty communities of a ... ‘communitarian’ nature.”

**free love** - The principle or practice of sexual relations unrestricted by law, marriage, or religious constraints. “It practiced free love (‘complex marriage)’....”

**eugenic** - Concerning the improvement of the human species through selective breeding or genetic control. “It practiced ... the eugenic selection of parents to produce superior offspring...”
**monogamy** - The belief in or practice of marrying only one spouse at a time. “In 1979-1880 the group embraced monogamy and abandoned communism.”

**classical** - Concerning the culture of ancient Greece or Rome, or any artistic or cultural values presumed to be based on those enduring principles. “He brought a classical design to his Virginia hilltop home, Monticello...”

**mystical** - Referring to the belief in the direct apprehension of God or divine mystery, without reliance on reason or human comprehension. “These mystical doctrines of transcendentalism defined precise definition...”

**nonconformist** - One who refuses to follow established or conventional ideas or habits. “Henry David Thoreau ... was ... a poet, a mystic, a transcendentalist, and a nonconformist.”

**nonviolence** - The principle of resolving or engaging in conflict without resort to physical force. “His writings ... inspired the development of American civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr’s. thinking about nonviolence.”

**providential** - Under the care and direction of God or other benevolent natural or supernatural forces. “... he lived among cannibals, from whom he providentially escaped uneaten.”
The South and the Slavery Controversy, 1793-1860

**oligarchy** - Rule by a small elite. “...the South was...not so much a democracy as an oligarchy....”

**medievalism** - Devotion to the social values, customs, or beliefs thought to be characteristic of the European Middle Ages. “Southern aristocrats...strove to perpetuate a type of medievalism that had died out in Europe....”

**commission** - Fee paid to an agent in a transaction, usually as a percentage of the sale. “They were pained by the heavy outward flow of commissions....”

**middlemen** - In commerce, those who stand between the producer and the retailer or consumer. “[Southern planters] were pained by the heavy outward flow...to northern middlemen, bankers, agents, and shippers.”

**racism** - Belief in the superiority of one race over another or behavior reflecting such a belief. “Thus did the logic of economics join with the illogic of racism in buttressing the slave system.”

**fecund** - Fruitful in the bearing numerous children. “...some of these fecund females were promised their freedom....”

**overseer** - Someone who governs or directs the work of another. “...under the watchful eyes and ready whip-hand of a white overseer or black ‘diver.’”

**sabotage** - Intentional destruction or damage of goods, machines, or productive processes. “They sabotaged expensive equipment....”
**fratricidal** - Literally, concerning the killing of brothers; often applied to the killing of relatives or countrymen. “...supported a frightfully costly fratricidal war as the price of emancipation.”

**incendiary** - A person who willfully stirs up riot of rebellion. “The nullification crisis...conjur[ed] up nightmares of black incendiaries and abolitionist devils.”
Vocabulary

Manifest Destiny and Its Legacy, 1841-1848

genteel - Excessively or pretentiously refined and polite."... the genteel pro-British Federalists had died out..."

royalty - The share of the proceeds from work paid to an inventor, author, composer, and so on. "... they were being denied rich royalties by the absence of an American copyright law."

default - To fail to pay a loan or interest due. "... several states defaulted on their bonds..."

repudiate - To refuse to accept responsibility for paying a bill or debt. "When... several states ... repudiated [their bonds] openly, honest English citizens assailed Yankee trickery."

protectorate - The relation of a strong nation to a weak one under its control and protection. "... Texas was driven to open negotiations ... in the hope of securing the defensive shield of a protectorate."

colossus - Anything of extraordinary size and power. "Such a republic would check the southward surge of the American colossus..."

resolution - In government, a formal statement of policy or judgment by a legislature, but requiring no statute. "... annexation by a joint resolution."

intrigue - A plot or scheme formed by secret, underhanded means."... the Lone Star Republic had become a danger spot, inviting foreign intrigue that menaced the American people."
barter - To exchange goods or services without money. "Spain ... bartered away its claims the United States. . .

deadlock - To completely block or stop action as a consequence of the mutual pressure of equal and opposed forces. "The Democrats, meeting later in the same city, seemed hopelessly deadlocked."

dark horse - In politics, a candidate with little apparent support who unexpectedly wins a nomination or election. "Polk may have been a dark horse, but he was hardly an unknown or decrepit nag."

predecessor - The person who held an office before its present occupant. "But [he felt] bound by the three offers of his predecessors to London.

quibble - A petty evasion of a disputed point by sharp argument or legal maneuver. "The Mexicans were far less concerned about this boundary quibble than the United States."

no-man's-land - A territory to which neither of two disputing parties has clear claim and where they may meet as combatants. "... Polk was careful to keep American troops out of virtually all of the explosive no-man's-land between the Nueces and the Rio Grande. . .

indemnity - A repayment for loss or damage inflicted. "Victors rarely pay an indemnity..."
Vocabulary

Renewing the Sectional Struggle, 1848-1854

**self-determination** - In politics, the right of a people to assert its own national identity or form of government without outside influence. “The public liked it because it accorded with the democratic tradition of self-determination.”

**homestead** - A family home or farm with buildings and land sufficient for survival. “...they broadened their appeal...by urging free government homesteads for settlers.

**vigilante** - Concerning groups that claim to punish crime and maintain order without legal authority to do so. “...violence was only partly discouraged by rough vigilante justice.”

**sanctuary** - A place of refuge or protection, where people are safe from punishment by the law. “...scores of...runaway slaves...were spirited...to the free-soil sanctuary of Canada.”

**fugitive** - A person who flees from danger or prosecution. “...southerners were demanding a new and more stringent fugitive-slave law.”

**topography** - The precise surface features and details of a place – for example, rivers, bridges, hills – in relation to one another. “The good Lord had decreed – through climate, topography, and geography – that a plantation economy...could not profitably exist in the Mexican Cession territory....”

**mundane** - Belonging to this world, as opposed to the spiritual world. “...Christian legislators must obey God’s moral law as well as mundane human law.”
statecraft - The art of government leadership. “The Whigs...missed a splendid opportunity to capitalize on their record in statecraft.”

isthmian - Concerning a narrow strip of land connecting two larger bodies of land. “...neither America nor Britain would fortify or secure exclusive control over any future isthmian waterway.”

filibustering - Referring to adventurers who conduct a private war against a foreign country. “During 1850 – 1851 two ‘filibustering’ expeditions descended upon Cuba.”

consulate - The office of a foreign official, usually not the ambassador, appointed to look after his or her country’s interests or citizens in a particular place. “...an angry mob sacked Spain’s consulate in New Orleans.”

cloak-and-dagger - Concerning the activities of spies or undercover agents, especially involving elaborate deceptions. “And incredible cloak-and-dagger episode followed.”

leak - To accidentally or deliberately disclose information supposed to be kept secret. “The secret Ostend Manifesto quickly leaked out.”

booster - One who promotes a person or enterprise, especially in a highly enthusiastic way. “An ardent booster for the West, he longed to...stretch a line of settlements across the continent.”

truce - A temporary suspension of warfare by agreement of the hostile parties. “This bold step Douglas was prepared to take, even at the risk of shattering the uneasy truce patched up by the Great Compromise of 1850.”
Vocabulary
The Furnace of Civil War, 1861-1865

**mediation** - The attempt to resolve a dispute through the intervention or counsel of a third

**party** - "The British and French governments were on the verge of diplomatic mediation...

**proclamation** - An official announcement or publicly declared order. "Thus, the Emancipation Proclamation was stronger on proclamation than emancipation."

**grapevine** - The informal network by which information, rumors, gossip, and so on are spread. "Through the “grapevine,” the blacks learned of Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation."

**flank** - The side of an army, where it is vulnerable to attack. "Lee... sent “Stonewall” Jackson to attack the Union flank."

**court-martial** - A military court or a trial held in such a court under military law. "Resigning from the army to avoid a court-martial for drunkenness, he failed at various business ventures....

**garrison** - A military fortress, or the troops stationed at such a fortress, usually designed for defense or occupation of a territory. "Vicksburg at length surrendered ... with the garrison reduced to eating mules and rats."

**morale** - The condition of courage, confidence, and willingness to endure hardship. "One of his major purposes was ... to weaken the morale of the men at the front by waging war on their homes."
**riffraff** - The segment of society regarded as worthless or undisciplined. "... roving riffraff (Sherman's 'bummers') engaged in an orgy of pillaging."

**pillaging** - Plundering, looting, destroying property by violence. "... his army... engaged in an orgy of pillaging."

**running mate** - In politics, the candidate for the lesser of two offices when they are decided together—for example, the U.S. vice presidency. "Lincoln's running mate was ex-tailor Andrew Johnson...."
Vocabulary

The Ordeal of Reconstruction, 1865-1877

**ringleader** - A person who leads others, especially in unlawful acts or opposition to authority. “What should be done with the captured Confederate ringleaders?...”

**civil disabilities** - Legally imposed restrictions of a person’s civil rights or liberties. “But Congress did not remove all remaining civil disabilities until thirty years later....”

**posthumously** - After death. “But Congress...only posthumously restored Davis’s citizenship more than a century later.”

**mutual aid societies** - Nonprofit organizations designed to provide their members with financial and social benefits, often including medical aid, life insurance, funeral costs, and disaster relief. “This gave rise to other benevolent, fraternal, and mutual aid societies.”

**confiscation [confiscated]** - Legal government seizure of private property without compensation. “...the bureau was authorized to settle former slaves on forty-acre tracts confiscated from the Confederates....”

**dogmatic** - Holding to strong ideas or opinions without evidence or proof. “...he was a dogmatic champion of states’ rights....”

**lease** To enter into a contract by which one party gives another use of land, buildings, or other property for a fixed time and fee. “...some [codes] even barred blacks from renting or leasing land.”

**chain gang** - A group of prisoners chained together while working. “A black could be punished for ‘idleness’ by being sentenced to work on a chain gang.”
sharecrop - An agricultural system in which a tenant receives land, tools, and seed on credit and pledges in return a share of the crop to the creditor. “...former slaves slipped into the status of sharecropper farmers....”

peonage - A system in which debtors are held in servitude, to labor for their creditors. “Luck-less sharecroppers gradually sank into a morass of virtual peonage....”

scalawag - A white Southerner who supported Republican Reconstruction after the Civil War. “The ‘scalawags’ were Southerners, often former Unionists or Whigs.”
Vocabulary

Politics in the Gilded Age, 1869-1889

**Coalition** - a temporary alliance of political factions or partiers for some specific purpose. “The Republicans now freed from the Union party coalition of war days, enthusiastically nominated Grant...”

**Corner** - to gain exclusive control of a commodity in order to fix its price. “The crafty pair concocted a plot in 1869

**Eccentric** - deviating from the norm; peculiar, unconventional. “…the eccentric editor had long blasted them as traitors…”

**Amnesty** - a general pardon for offenses or crimes against a government. “The Republican Congress IN 1872 passed a general amnesty act....”

**Hard money** - scarce money with high purchase value. “…‘Hard money’ people everywhere looked forward to the complete disappearance of greenbacks.”

**Sound money** - money adequately backed by capital assets or reserves. “Grant’s name continued to be associated with sound money....”

**Contraction** - in finance, reducing the available supply of money, thus tending to raise interest rates and lower prices. “Coupled with the reduction of greenbacks, this policy was called ‘contraction.’”

**Soft money** - plentiful or inflated money. “Soft money advocates continued to clamor for the unlimited coinage of all silver mined....”

**Fraternal organization** - a society of men drawn together for social purposes and sometimes to pursue other common goals. “....the Grand Army of the
Republic was a politically potent fraternal organization of several hundred thousand Union veterans of the Civil War."

**Consensus** - common or unanimous opinion. "How can this apparent paradox of political consensus and partisan fervor be explained?"

**Kickback** - the return of a portion of the money received in a sale or contract, often secretly or illegally, in exchange for favors. "The lifeblood of both parties was patronage-disbursing jobs by the bucketful in return for cotes, kickbacks and party service."

**Stock dividends** - a portion of the profits of a corporation distributed to owners of a company's stock. "...Garfield’s alleged receipt of $329 in stock dividends in the Credit Mobilier scandal."

**Pull** - political influence or special advantage. "it established a merit system of making appointment to office on the basis of aptitude rather than a 'pull.'"

**Laissez-faire** - the doctrine of noninterference, especially by the government, in matters of economics or business. "The new president was a staunch apostle of the hands off creed of laissez-faire..."

**Pork barrel** - in American politics, government appropriations for political purposes, especially projects designed to please legislators lock constituency. "One way to reduce the surplus was to squander it on pensions and 'pork-barrel' bills..."
Vocabulary

Industry Comes of Age, 1865-1900

**pool** - In business, an agreement to divide a given market in order to avoid competition. “The earliest form of combination was the ‘pool.’...”

**rebate** - A return of a portion of the amount paid for goods or services. “Other rail barons granted secret rebates....”

**free enterprise** - An economic system that permits unrestricted entrepreneurial business activity; capitalism. “Dedicated to free enterprise..., they cherished a traditionally keen pride in progress.”

**regulatory commission** - In American government, any of the agencies established to control a special sphere of business or other activity; members are usually appointed by the president and confirmed by Congress. “It heralded the arrival of a series of independent regulatory commissions in the next century....”

**trust** - A combination of corporations, usually in the same industry, in which stockholders trade their stock to a central board in exchange for trust certificates. “He perfected a device for controlling bothersome rivals—the ‘trust.’”

**syndicate** - An association of financiers organized to carry out projects requiring very large amounts of capital. “His prescribed remedy was to... ensure future harmony by placing officers of his own banking syndicate on their various boards of directors.”

**patrician** - Characterized by noble or high social standing. “An arrogant class of ‘new rich’ was now elbowing aside the patrician families...”

**plutocracy** - Government by the wealthy. “Plutocracy... took its stand firmly on the Constitution.”
third world - The noncommunist and non-Western nations of the world, most of them formerly under colonial rule and still economically poor and dependent. “The net effect was to keep the South in a kind of ‘third world’ servitude to the Northeast....”

socialist - One who believes in the ownership and control of the major means of production by the whole community rather than by individuals or corporations. “…much of [this criticism] rose from the small and increasingly vocal group of Socialists....”

radical - One who believes in fundamental change in the political, economic, or social system. “....much of [this criticism] rose from...socialists and other radicals, many of whom were recent European immigrants.”

lockout - The refusal by an employer to allow employees to work unless they agree to his or her terms. “Employers could lock their doors against rebellious workers– a process called the ‘lockout.’”

yellow dog contract - A labor contract in which an employee must agree not to join a union as a condition of holding the job. “[Employers] could compel them to sign ‘ironclad oaths’ or ‘yellow dog contracts.’”

cooperative - An organization for producing, marketing, or consuming goods in which the members share the benefits. “...they campaigned for...producers’ cooperatives...”

anarchist - One who believes that formal, coercive government is wrong in principle. “Eight anarchists were rounded up....”