

Virginia Studies VS.7

Civil War - (new 2023 standards)

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By the **mid-1800s**, **North America** consisted of the United States, Mexico and Canada.

The **United States** had grown to **33 states**.

But there were big **differences** between the North and the South—especially about **slavery**.

These differences in laws, culture, and economy caused a **deep divide** that would lead to the **Civil War**.

Virginia was right in the middle of the conflict and played a **major role** in the war's events.

VS.7A – JOHN BROWN AND HARPERS FERRY

a) explain the role of John Brown and the impact of the raid at Harpers Ferry



John Brown



U.S. Marines end the raid and capture John Brown

Who was John Brown?

John Brown was a **white abolitionist** (someone who wanted to end slavery). He believed slavery was wrong and should be ended immediately.

What happened at Harpers Ferry?

- In 1859, Brown led a **raid** on the U.S. armory (weapons storage) in **Harpers Ferry**, Virginia (now West Virginia).
- He wanted to give weapons to enslaved people so they could **fight for their freedom**.

Why it mattered: The raid **failed**, and Brown was captured and later executed. But it **scared** many Southerners and made **tensions** between the North and South **worse**.

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The raid on Harpers Ferry became a key event that **heightened tensions** leading up to the **Civil War**.

VS.7B – SLAVERY AND OTHER CAUSES OF THE CIVIL WAR

b) describe how the institution of slavery was the cause of the Civil War, and secondary factors that contributed to the secession of the southern states

Main cause: Slavery was the biggest reason for the war. The **South** wanted to keep slavery because their **farms depended on enslaved**



Southern farms depended on slave labor

labor.

The **North** wanted to stop slavery from **spreading**.

Other causes:

- Different **economies** (**North**: factories and industry; **South**: farming and plantations).
- Different laws and beliefs about **states' rights**.

- The election of **Abraham Lincoln** in 1860—Southern states feared he would **end slavery**.

Secession: Because of these issues, **11 Southern states left the Union** and formed the **Confederate States of America**.

VS.7C – THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD AND HARRIET TUBMAN

c) explain the significance of the Underground Railroad and the contributions of Harriet Tubman

What was the Underground Railroad? It wasn't a real railroad



—it was a **secret network** of people and safe houses that helped **enslaved people escape** to free states or Canada.

Harriet Tubman:

- An **escaped enslaved woman** who became one of the best-known “**conductors**” on the Underground Railroad.
- She led **many people to freedom** and never lost a passenger.

VS.7D – VIRGINIA DIVIDED AND THE CREATION OF WEST VIRGINIA

d) explain major events and issues that divided Virginians and led to secession, war, and the creation of West Virginia

- **Virginians disagreed about secession:** Some wanted to **join** the Confederacy, others wanted to **stay** in the Union.



- **A new state:** In 1863, 50 **western counties** that opposed slavery **broke away** from Virginia to form a new state - **West Virginia**.
- **Why:** People in the west had **fewer enslaved people**, and they didn't agree with the eastern part of Virginia about leaving the Union.

VS.7E – MAJOR BATTLES IN VIRGINIA

e) identify major battles that took place in Virginia



Virginia became a **major battleground** between Union and Confederate troops during the Civil War.

The **capitals** of the United States (**Washington, D.C.**) and the Confederate States of America (**Richmond**) were near one another.

Virginia was the site of more **Civil War battles** than any other state. Important battles included:

First Battle of Bull Run (Manassas) – First big battle of the war.

- Confederate General Thomas “**Stonewall**” **Jackson** became famous here.

- This battle showed the war would be **long and difficult**.

Monitor v. Merrimack

- Due to the **blockade** of southern ports
- An **important sea battle** between two **ironclad ships**, the **Monitor (Union)** and the USS Virginia, previously known as the **Merrimack (Confederacy)**
- Took place in the waters near Norfolk and Hampton.

Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, fell to General Ulysses S. Grant

- **Burned** by the Confederacy near the end of the war. –
- Fires were set by retreating Confederate forces to keep war supplies from approaching Union forces.
- Many other battles took place near **Richmond** and throughout Virginia.

Appomattox Court House,

- The **Civil War ended** in the town of **Appomattox Court House**, Virginia
- **Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered** his army to **Union General Ulysses S. Grant** there in **April 1865**.

VS.7F – IMPORTANT VIRGINIA LEADERS

f) identify and explain the leadership roles of Virginians including, but not limited to Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, Robert E. Lee, William Harvey Carney, Winfield Scott, and Powhatan Beaty



Robert E. Lee Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson Winfield Scott Powhatan Beaty William Harvey Carney

Robert E. Lee – Leader of the **Confederate Army** of Northern Virginia.

- Famous for his military skill.
- Lee resigned his commission in the United States Army in 1861 and later became the **commander of the Army of Northern Virginia**.

- He led Confederate troops in a number of battles and served much of the war as the general-in-chief for the Confederate army.

Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson

- **Confederate general** known for his bravery at Bull Run.

Winfield Scott –

- **Union general** from Virginia who planned the “**Anaconda Plan**” to **blockade Southern ports** and control the Mississippi River.
- His **military strategies** ultimately contributed to the **Union’s victory** in the Civil War.

Powhatan Beaty –

- a formerly enslaved **African American Union soldier** who escaped to freedom and joined the **Union Army’s United States Colored Troops**.
- He was awarded the **Medal of Honor** for his bravery in battle.

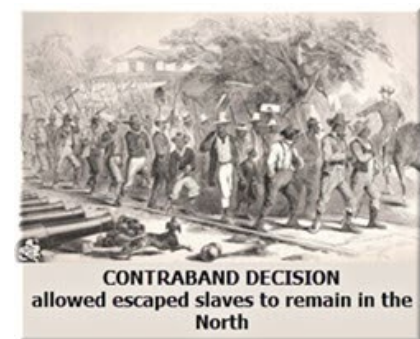
William Harvey Carney –

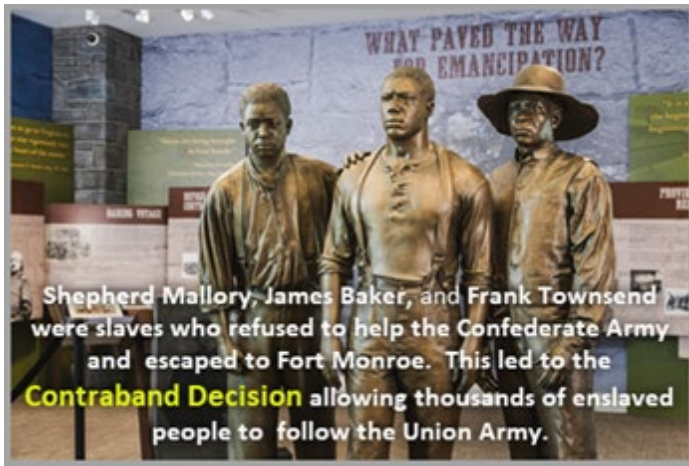
- Born enslaved in Norfolk, Virginia. Fought for the Union
- He was the **first African American to earn the Medal of Honor** for protecting the **U.S. flag**.

VS.7G – CONTRIBUTIONS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, ENSLAVED AND FREE BLACKS, AND ALLIES

g) evaluate the experiences and contributions of Indigenous people and enslaved and free Blacks and their allies during the war including, but not limited to Elizabeth Van Lew and Mary Bowser

The **Confederacy** used **enslaved individuals** to help them in the war effort. Three men (**Shepard Mallory, James Townsend, and Frank Baker**) refused and **escaped to Fort Monroe**.





This led to the **Contraband Decision**, which in turn led to tens of thousands **escaped slaves** to seek refuge with the **Union Army**.

The "**Confiscation Acts**" - Congress authorized the federal government to **seize property** belonging to Confederates and **declare enslaved people** who supported the rebellion as **free**.

Contributions of others to war effort

- **Enslaved People** – Worked for the Confederacy but many **escaped** to Union lines after the “**Contraband Decision**” at Fort Monroe allowed them to **stay and be protected**.
- **Free Blacks** – Served as soldiers, sailors, scouts, and spies for the Union.

- **Indigenous People** – Served as scouts, trackers, fighters, and sometimes nurses or messengers for both sides.
- **Elizabeth Van Lew** – A Richmond abolitionist who helped Union soldiers as a **spy**, passing secret messages and information to the Union Army.

- **Mary Bowser** – An **African American spy** who worked inside the Confederate White House, passing secret information to the Union.



Van Lew and Bowser, both spied for the Union

Key Ideas to Remember

- **Slavery** was the main cause of the Civil War, but there were **other disagreements** between the North and South.
- Virginia was deeply **divided**, which led to the creation of **West Virginia**.
- Many important **leaders** and **key battles** came from Virginia.
- People from **all backgrounds**—enslaved, free, Indigenous, men, and women—played important roles in the war.