

*Those who lived through the Civil War experienced many challenges and hardships.*

## A Different Way of Life

SS.8.A.5.6, LA.8.1.6.2

***How did life change during the Civil War?***

### Changes at Home

When the Civil War began, many teenagers left home to serve in the military. This meant leaving family, friends, and school.

Almost everyone who stayed home was touched in some way by the war. Only about half of the school-age children attended school because many had to stay home to help their families. Schools closed during the war in some areas, especially those near battles and skirmishes. Many schools and churches served instead as hospitals for the wounded.

### Hardships in the South

Although the war affected everyone, life in the South changed most dramatically. Both armies spent the majority of their time on Southern soil. Because the fighting took place there, the South suffered the most destruction. Southerners who lived in the paths of marching armies lost their crops and homes. Thousands became refugees—people displaced by war.

Even those who lived outside the war zones suffered. As the war dragged on, many areas faced shortages of food and everyday supplies. Common household items became scarce. As one observer noted, the South depended on the outside world "for everything from a hairpin to a toothpick, and from a cradle to a coffin." Most people had to learn to do without.

### New Roles for Women

In both the North and the South, women kept the farms and factories going. They ran offices, taught school, and kept government records. Women also suffered the stress of having the men in their lives away at war—and the pain of losing family members. They scrimped and saved to make do without many things they were used to, and they struggled to keep their families together during trying times.

In the Civil War, thousands of women on both sides served as nurses. The idea of women nurses on the battlefield was relatively new. Many doctors did not welcome women into the medical field. They said women were too delicate for the bloody work of wartime hospitals. Some men also felt it was improper for women to tend the bodies of men they did not know.

Strong-minded women disregarded these objections. Dorothea Dix convinced officials to let women work as nurses and recruited large numbers of women to serve. Another Northerner, Clara Barton, became famous for her work with wounded soldiers. In the South, Sally Tompkins established a hospital for soldiers in Richmond, Virginia.

Women on both sides served as spies. For example, Rose O'Neal Greenhow entertained Union leaders in Washington, D.C. She gathered information about Union plans and passed it to Confederate officials. Eventually, Greenhow was caught. She was convicted of treason and exiled, or forced to leave the country. Harriet Tubman, an important "conductor" on the Underground Railroad, also served as a spy and scout for the Union. In 1863 Tubman led a mission that freed many enslaved people and disrupted Southern supply lines.

Women were not allowed to enlist in the army. As many as 400 women disguised themselves as men to serve as Union or Confederate soldiers. Many were following brothers or husbands to war, but some fought because they believed in the cause.

**Summarizing** Why did many children stay home from school during the Civil War?

## Floridians and the War

SS.8.A.5.6, SS.8.A.5.7

***How did Florida participate in the Civil War?***

When the Civil War began, neither Union leaders nor Confederate leaders regarded Florida as important to their war strategy. Florida had been a state of the United States for only 15 years. With just 140,000 residents, it was the smallest of the 11 Confederate states. Florida also had little industry and few links with the other states of the Confederacy.

### Supplying the Confederacy

As the war went on, Florida became one of the Confederacy's important suppliers. Florida supplied beef to the Confederate army. The Confederate Cow Cavalry drove as many as 15,000 head of cattle from South Florida to help feed Rebel troops. Florida's farms and plantations raised cotton, pork, and vegetables. Saltwork plants at Apalachee Bay and St. Andrews and at other sites along the coast produced much-needed salt. Salt served the key job of keeping meat from spoiling in the days before refrigeration.

The Union controlled Jacksonville during much of the war. Union troops also held some other coastal towns and several forts, including Fort Taylor in Key West, Fort Pickens in Pensacola, and Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas. Confederates, however, controlled Florida's interior. Tallahassee was the only Confederate capital east of the Mississippi River that did not fall into Union hands during the Civil War.

**Explaining** Why was Florida's contribution important to the Confederacy?

## Soldiers After Battle

SS.8.A.5.6, LA.8.1.6.3

***What were the conditions of hospitals and prison camps during the Civil War?***

For many soldiers, battle could be a terrifying experience. For those with wounds or for those taken prisoner, the misery was just beginning.

### Prisoners of War

Each side treated its enemy soldiers with a mixture of sympathy and hostility. At first, the two sides exchanged prisoners. After this system broke down over issues such as Confederate treatment of African American prisoners, each side set up prison camps. A prisoner typically kept his blanket and a cup or canteen. These possessions were all he had during his imprisonment. Food shortages made the suffering worse. Volunteers **distributed** bread and soup to the wounded. In the prisons, though, there was little or nothing to eat.

Andersonville prison opened in Georgia in early 1864. It was built to hold 10,000 prisoners. By August, 33,000 crammed its grounds. The men slept in shallow holes dug in the ground. All they received to eat each day was a teaspoon of salt, three tablespoons of beans, and eight ounces of cornmeal. They drank and cooked with water from a stream that also served as a sewer. Almost 13,000 Union prisoners died there, mostly from disease.

The Union prison in Elmira, New York, was no better. Captured soldiers from the South suffered through the winter months without blankets and warm clothes. The hospital was in a flooded basement. A pond within the compound served as both toilet and garbage dump. Almost one quarter of all prisoners at Elmira died.

### Field Hospitals

Surgeons set up hospitals near battlefields. There, with bullets and cannonballs flying by, they bandaged wounds and amputated limbs. Nurse Kate Cumming recalled:

"We have to walk, and when we give the men anything kneel, in blood and water; but we think nothing of it."

—from *Kate: The Journal of a Confederate Nurse*

Disease was another medical threat. Crowded together in camps and drinking unclean water, many soldiers got sick. Disease spread quickly—and could be deadly. Some regiments lost half their men to illness before they ever went into battle.

**Explaining** Why were prison camps set up?

## Political and Economic Change

SS.8.A.1.2, SS.8.A.5.6, LA.8.1.6.1, MA.8.A.1.6

***What political and economic changes occurred during the Civil War?***

In the South, many people opposed the war. The fighting was costly not just in terms of lives lost or damaged, but also in food, material, and money. Everywhere, people suffered from shortages. Bread riots broke out throughout the South as hungry people took to the streets. In Richmond, a group of mostly women and children gathered peacefully to protest but soon started smashing shop windows and stealing food.

In the North, the Democratic Party split down the middle. War Democrats supported the war itself while criticizing Lincoln's handling of it. Peace Democrats argued for an immediate end to fighting and a reunion of the states through negotiation. Most Peace Democrats came from the Midwestern states of Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana. Critics of the Peace Democrats called them Copperheads. A copperhead is a type of deadly snake. Rather than take offense, the Copperheads proudly embraced this label. They wore copper pennies as badges on their clothing.

As in the South, some Northerners who opposed the war discouraged people from enlisting. A few even helped Confederate prisoners of war escape. Opponents claimed that the Peace Democrats encouraged the South. They said that the war dragged on because

Confederates believed the Peace Democrats would finally prevail in the North.

### Jail Without Trial

As a way of dealing with war opponents in the North, President Lincoln suspended **habeas corpus** (HAY • bee • uhs KAWR • puhs)—a legal process that helps ensure the government has a legal right to keep someone in jail. The Constitution says government can suspend habeas corpus, but only "when in cases of rebellion or invasion, the public safety may require it." With this act, Lincoln's government was able to jail thousands of Northerners without putting them on trial. Some of these people were likely traitors to the Union. Others did nothing more than use their right of free speech to criticize the government.

In the South, President Davis also suspended habeas corpus. He, too, believed he needed to deal harshly with opponents of the war. Still, Davis's action upset many loyal supporters.

### Draft Laws

Both the North and the South had trouble getting troops to sign up. In 1862 the Confederate Congress passed a **draft**, which required able-bodied white men between ages 18 and 35 to serve for three years. Later the requirement included men from ages 17 to 50. There were several exceptions. A man with enough money could hire a **substitute** to serve for him. Later, a man with 20 or more enslaved people did not have to serve.

At first, the North offered a **bounty** (BAUN • tee), or a sum of money, to encourage volunteers. In March 1863, it also passed a draft. Men aged 20 to 45 had to register. As in the South, a man could avoid the draft by hiring a substitute or paying \$300. Many workers earned less than \$500 a year and could not afford these options. In both the North and the South, people complained it was "a rich man's war and a poor man's fight."

People rioted to protest the draft in several Northern cities. The New York City draft riots in July 1863 were the worst. As the first names were drawn, rioters attacked government and military buildings. Then mobs turned their attacks against African Americans. Many white workers had opposed the Emancipation Proclamation, fearing freed African Americans would take their jobs. After four days, more than 100 people were dead. Federal troops finally stopped the riots.

### War and the Economy

The war strained the economies of the North and the South. However, the North, with its greater resources, was better able to cope with the costs of the war.

The two sides had three ways of paying for the war. First, they borrowed money. Second, they passed new taxes, including income taxes. Third, they printed money. Northern bills became known as **greenbacks** because of their color.

In the North, industry profited from the war effort. It made guns, ammunition, shoes, and uniforms. Farmers prospered, too. They sold their crops to feed the troops. Because goods were in high demand, prices went up—faster than workers' wages. This inflation caused hardship for working people.

The South felt the economic strain even more sharply than the North. Many of the battles of the Civil War took place on Confederate soil, destroying farmland and railroad lines. The Union naval blockade prevented the shipping of trade goods. Vital materials could not reach the Confederacy. Salt was in such short supply that women scraped the floors of smokehouses to recover it. Food shortages led to riots in Atlanta, Richmond, and other cities.

The South also suffered much worse inflation. As early as 1862, citizens begged Confederate leaders for help.

**Comparing** How did the war affect the economy in the North and South?

#### Thinking Like a HISTORIAN

##### Analyzing and Interpreting Information

Inflation, a rise in prices, hurts people by reducing the buying power of money. The graph shows that with just 3.5 percent in ation, the buying power of \$1,000 drops sharply. In 20 years, the \$1,000 will have about half its original buying power. To learn more about analyzing and interpreting information, review *Thinking Like a Historian*. [MA.8.A.1.6](#)

## LESSON 3 REVIEW

### Review Vocabulary

1. Use each of these terms in a complete sentence that explains its meaning.

- a. habeas corpus
- b. draft
- c. bounty

LA.8.1.6.1

## Answer the Guiding Questions

**2. Explaining** How did the roles of women change during the Civil War?

SS.8.A.5.6

**3. Evaluating** What was Florida's contribution to the Civil War?

SS.8.A.5.7

**4. Comparing** What challenges and threats did prisoners and wounded soldiers both face?

SS.8.A.5.6

**5. Summarizing** Who were the Copperheads? What was their position on fighting the war?

SS.8.A.5.6

**6. PERSUASIVE WRITING** President Lincoln and President Davis suspended habeas corpus to deal with opponents of the war. Do you think suspending civil liberties is justified in some situations? Write a short essay in which you state and defend your position.

SS.8.A.5.6