

CIVIL WAR GLOSSARY

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

A

abolition: the formal end of something, such as slavery

abolitionist: a person who opposed slavery and wanted the practice outlawed, or abolished

artillery: a division of the army that handled cannons and other large weapons used to support the infantry and defend fixed positions; or the cannon themselves

B

battery: a group of military cannons, guns, and other weapons used together, or a military unit that fires such weapons

blockade: the practice of positioning naval ships in front of an enemy's harbors and river openings to prevent vessels loaded with commerce from entering and departing

border states: the slave states located between the North and the South that stayed in the Union during the Civil War

brigade: an organized military unit that was generally composed of five regiments and led by a brigadier general

C

camp: ground on which an army pitches its tents

casualty: a soldier injured, killed, captured, or missing in action

cavalry: a group of soldiers trained to fight on horseback, used mostly for scouting, raids, and protecting the flanks of the army

Confederacy: the government established by the southern states that withdrew from the Union in 1860 and 1861, called the Confederate States of America

Confederate: having to do with the government established by the southern states that seceded from the union in 1860 and 1861, called the Confederate States of America

Confederate States of America: the country formed by the states that withdrew from the United States of America

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corps: a large military unit composed of three divisions led by a lieutenant general (Confederacy) or a major general (Union)

D

Davis, Jefferson: president of the Confederate States of America

division: a military unit composed of three or four brigades led by a major general

dysentery: an infection of the lower intestinal tract producing pain, fever, and severe diarrhea; the number one killer in the Civil War

E

Emancipation Proclamation: the agreement that freed slaves in the Confederacy as of January 1, 1863

F

Federal: a member of the Union army, or having to do with the northern United States and those loyal to the Union during the Civil War

free state: a state that did not allow slavery

front: the area where armies are fighting

fugitive slave: a slave who runs away from his master

G

Grant, Ulysses S.: general in command of the Army of the Tennessee during the Vicksburg Campaign, later commander of all of the Union armies, later president of the United States (1869-1877)

I

infantry: a group of soldiers trained to fight on foot

L

Lee, Robert Edward: Confederate commander, known for his excellent war strategies and great leadership skills

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Lincoln, Abraham: the U.S. president who was in office during the Civil War; the 16th president of the United States

M

Mason-Dixon Line: the line used to determine the boundary between Pennsylvania and Maryland; traditionally, seen as the boundary line between the North and the South

N

North, The: Union states

O

officer: in the armed forces, a commander of soldiers

R

ration: the food allowance of one soldier

rebel: someone who breaks away from authority or tradition; during the Civil War, a member of the Confederate army

rebellion: the act of rebelling, or breaking away from authority or tradition; during the Civil War, the act of breaking away from the Union

rebellious: during the Civil War, having to do with rebels (Confederates) or the Confederacy

reinforcement: an additional supply of soldiers

S

scurvy: a disease caused by a lack of vitamin C; common among soldiers during the Civil War because of low supplies of fruits and vegetables at camps

secede: to withdraw from; pull out; the southern states that became known as “Confederate” states had seceded from the Union

secession: the act of seceding, or withdrawing from

segregation: the separation of groups of people based on race

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siege: a military blockade of a town or other place to force its surrender by cutting communications and supply lines; a military operation in which the enemy surrounds or pins down an army

slave state: a state where slavery was permitted

South, the: Confederate states

sympathizer: someone who tends to favor a particular cause

T

theater: a large area where military campaigns took place

Typhoid fever: an acute, highly infectious disease caused by the typhoid bacillus; one of the main diseases responsible for the death of soldiers during the Civil War

U

Union: the United States of America, or the northern states during the Civil War

Y

Yankee: a slang term for a member of the Union army