

Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States from 1861 to 1865. A strong opponent of slavery, he led the country during the American Civil War.

Shortly before Lincoln's election, southern secessionists left the *Union of States* and formed the Confederate States of America (The Confederacy).

The American Civil War

When Lincoln took office **The Confederacy** was already established but he refused to declare war against the South unless the North was attacked first. This finally happened in April 1861.

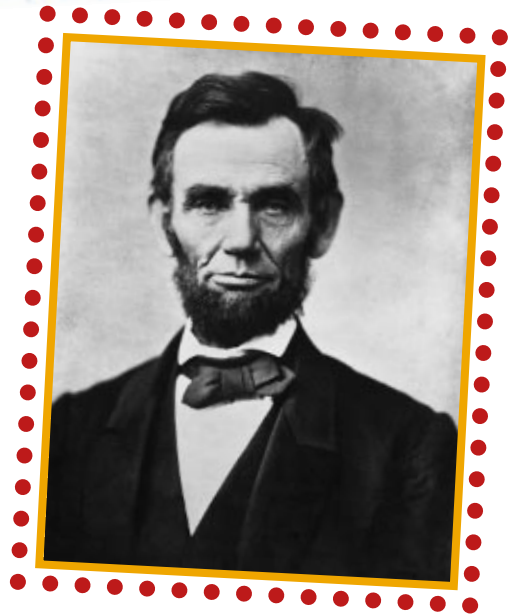
The **American Civil War** was the first modern war. New methods of warfare were used, such as mines and rifles, armoured vessels and even submarines. It was also the first war where railroads played a major role.

The Civil War was also a great turning point in history because it led to the **abolition of slavery** in the United States.

The House Divided

In 1860 the USA was a divided nation composed of 18 free and 15 slave states. Between the North and the South there were deep economic, social, and political differences.

Slaves were a cheap labour force in the South, while **the North** didn't need them, as most of its



factory workers were European immigrants. Northerners wanted free public education, rights for women, and better salaries and working conditions, while **the South** felt that these things were not so important.

War is over!

On April 9th 1865 General Lee and The Confederacy surrendered and the war was effectively over. Lincoln declared that the Union was ready to "re-unite the Divided House", but was killed in a theatre by a Confederate spy three days later.

This was the first presidential assassination in US history and made Lincoln a martyr to the ideal of national unity.

Speaking about himself:

"As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy."

"I don't know who my grandfather was; I am much more concerned to know what his grandson will be."

1 Now answer these questions.

- 1 Who was the 16th American President and what was he strongly against?
- 2 How long did Lincoln live in the White House?
- 3 What were 'The Union' and 'The Confederacy'?
- 4 Which side won the Civil War?
- 5 Why did the War start and why is it considered the first modern war?
- 6 What were the main differences between North and South?
- 7 Where did the North and the South get workers from?
- 8 What happened on April 9th, 1865?