



# The Civil War: An Illustrated History

*Geoffrey C. Ward, Ric Burns, Ken Burns*

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**The companion volume to the celebrated PBS television series, with a new preface to mark its twenty-fifth anniversary**

**With more than 500 illustrations: rare Civil War photographs—many never before published—as well as paintings, lithographs, and maps reproduced in full color**

It was the greatest war in American history. It was waged in 10,000 places—from Valverde, New Mexico, and Tullahoma, Tennessee, to St. Albans, Vermont, and Fernandina on the Florida coast. More than 3 million Americans fought in it and more than 600,000 men died in it. Not only the immensity of the cataclysm but the new weapons, the new standards of generalship, and the new strategies of destruction—together with the birth of photography—were to make the Civil War an event present ever since in the American consciousness. Thousands of books have been written about it. Yet there has never been a history of the Civil War quite like this one.

A wealth of documentary illustrations and a narrative alive with original and energetic scholarship combine to present both the grand sweep of events and the minutest of human details. Here are the crucial events of the war: the firing of the first shots at Fort Sumter; the battles of Shiloh, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg; the siege of Vicksburg; Sherman's dramatic march to the sea; the surrender at Appomattox. Here are the superb portraits of the key figures: Abraham Lincoln, claiming for the presidency almost autocratic power in order to preserve the Union; the austere Jefferson Davis, whose government disappeared almost before it could be formed; Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant, seasoned generals of fierce brilliance and reckless determination. Here is the America in which the war was fought: *The Civil War* is not simply the story of great battles and great generals; it is also an elaborate portrait of the American people—individuals and families, northerners and southerners, soldiers and civilians, slaves and slaveowners, rich and poor, urban and rural—caught up in the turbulence of the times.

An additional resonance is provided by four essays, the work of prominent Civil War historians. Don E. Fehrenbacher discusses the causes of the war; Barbara J. Fields writes about emancipation; James M. McPherson looks at the politics of the 1864 election; C. Vann Woodward speculates on how the war has affected the American identity. And Shelby Foote talks to filmmaker Ken Burns about wartime life on the battlefield and at home.

A magnificent book. In its visual power, its meticulous research, its textual brilliance, and the humanity of its narrative, *The Civil War* will stand among the most illuminating and memorable portrayals of the American past.

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