

The Family Heritage Series

A weekly discussion of Americanist truths and traditions for those "heirs of all the ages" who will have to preserve that most important inheritance of all — freedom. Produced by the Movement To Restore Decency.



Volume II

Lesson Sixty-Six

The War Between The States

LESSON IDEA

To describe the more important battles of the War Between the States.

PREPARATION

Obtain a pictorial history of the war from your local library and follow the battles with the aid of maps and photographs.

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ABRAMHAM LINCOLN once remarked that if our nation were ever to fall, it would be destroyed not by an external enemy, but by ourselves. The War Between the States almost proved him right.

The first shot of the war was fired from a hidden gun emplacement on the shore of Charleston Harbor, to prevent a supply ship from reaching the Union troops stationed at Fort Sumter, a small fortress located on a man-made island in the harbor.

Major Anderson was the Union officer in command of the fortress and his adversary was Brigadier General G.T. Beauregard of the Confederate States of America. Ironically, the two men were long-time friends, having attended West Point together. There was no personal hostility between them; each man was simply doing his duty as he saw it.

Before the opening shot was fired on Fort Sumter, Anderson received a note from General Beauregard's headquarters, asking for his surrender. It read: "By authority of Brigadier General Beauregard, Commanding the Provisional Forces of the Confederate States, we have the honor to notify

you that he will open fire of his batteries on Fort Sumter in one hour from this time. We have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servants." It was signed by his aides-de-camp.

Anderson refused to surrender, but after a barrage of cannon fire from the shore, he changed his mind and ran up a white flag. He and his men were allowed to sail to New York City.

With the surrender of Fort Sumter, the War Between the States was a reality, but no one imagined it would last as long as it did. Certainly not President Abraham Lincoln, who called for 75,000 recruits to serve three months — in the mistaken belief that the secession would be quickly settled. In fact, when the Confederate forces marched toward Washington, D.C., in July of 1861 to challenge the Northern Army, many residents of Washington packed picnic baskets and followed the Union soldiers to the battle site. No one took the war seriously then; it was going to be fun sitting under a shady tree, eating sandwiches, watching the Union troops send the Southern "Rebels" fleeing in fear.

At the stream known as Bull Run the untrained recruits of both the North and the South got their first taste of battle; and men on both sides recoiled in horror. The Union troops were finally routed and hurried frantically toward Washington, along with the tearful spectators and their picnic baskets. War was not the "fun" they had imagined it would be. Many Confederate troops also fled the battlefield in fright; and in a desperate last-minute attempt to rally them, an officer pointed to Thomas J. Jackson's well-trained brigade, and

