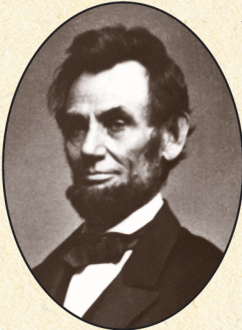


Money of the U.S. Civil War

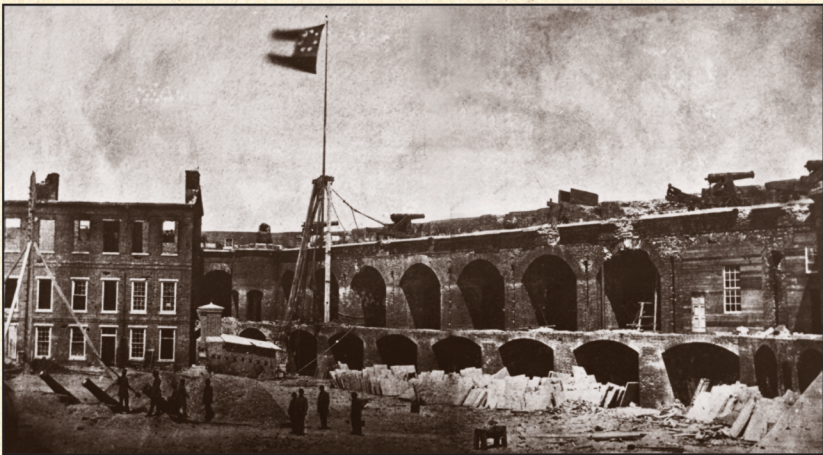
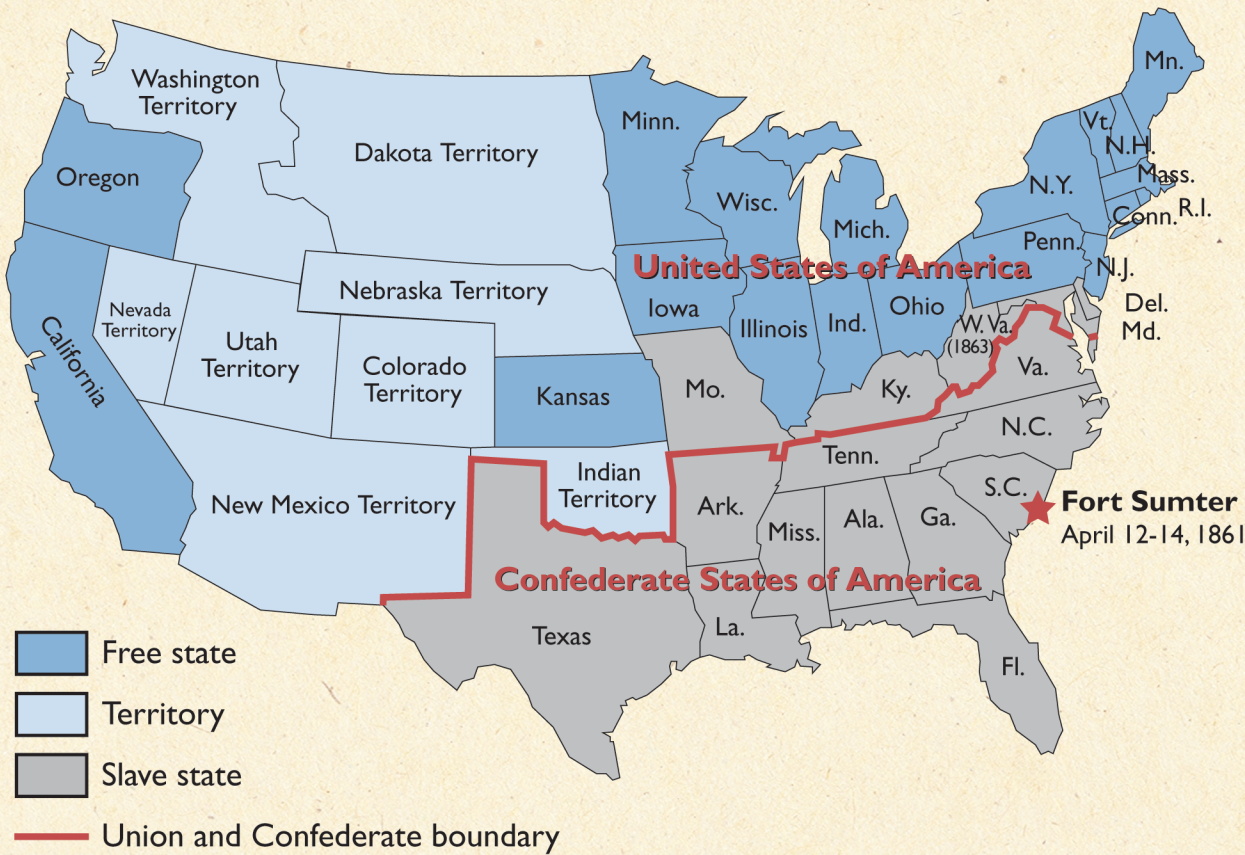
LINCOLN’S ELECTED, AND THE SOUTH SECEDES



Abraham Lincoln

As the fledgling United States struggled to establish itself, conflicts between the North and South nearly prevented the passage of the Constitution. Peaceful relationships relied upon a series of compromises, which, as the powerful “King Cotton” industry expanded, became increasingly difficult to maintain. This grew into a federal issue as the expansion of the cotton economy brought more slave states into the Union. As sectional strife turned violent, Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860 without the electoral votes of any Southern state. As a result, seven Southern states voted to secede and together they formed the Confederate States of America (CSA).

On April 12, 1861, Confederate soldiers fired upon Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina, thus sparking the worst crisis in American history: the Civil War.



Interior view of Fort Sumter (Charleston, South Carolina) on April 14, 1861, after its evacuation.



THE MONEY AT THE START OF THE WAR

At the start of the war, a wide variety of coin denominations were in circulation: cents, silver trimes (three-cent pieces), half dimes, dimes, quarters, half dollars, dollars and gold \$1, \$2.50, \$3, \$5, \$10 and \$20 coins. Five U.S. Mints struck coins in Philadelphia, New Orleans, San Francisco, Charlotte (North Carolina) and Dahlonega (Georgia). Unlike today, the government didn’t print paper money. That task was left to banks, which were allowed to issue bank notes in exchange for coins. As the war progressed, America’s currency evolved to better meet the demands of the divided nation.