

Lesson B

The Civil War

Delaware Social Studies Benchmarks

History One 9-12a: Students will analyze historical materials to trace the development of an idea or trend across space or over a prolonged period of time in order to explain patterns of historical continuity and change.

Essential for Grade 11

History Two 9-12b: Students will examine and analyze primary and secondary sources in order to differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations. **Essential for Grade 11**

Lesson Essential Question

How can we use historical materials to analyze change over time?

Documents

1. *Census Facts of 1860 Chart* (Included)
2. *A Timeline of the Civil War* (Included)
3. *United States Before the Civil War Map* (Included)
- 4) *Lesson B, Delaware Public Archives, Virginia Repeal, RG 1300*
[back to back with]
Lesson B, Delaware Public Archives, New Hampshire Statement, RG 1300
- 5) *Lesson B, Delaware Public Archives, 1790 – 1860 Beers Atlas Population Tables*
[back to back with]
Lesson B, Delaware Public Archives, Governor Burton Letter, RG 1300

Instructional Strategies

Strategy One: Gathering Information

Pattern Recognition

Distribute *A Timeline of the Civil War* and *United States before the Civil War* maps. Ask students to identify the pattern of states admitted to the Union.

Review with students the compromises that were made to facilitate this process: The Compromise of 1850, the Missouri Compromise, and the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

Strategy Two: Gathering Information

Reading a Map

Distribute the *Beers Atlas Population Tables* and the *Census Facts of 1860*. Have students answer the following questions:

- What is the trend of slave population in Delaware, 1790-1860?
- What were the major agricultural products of Delaware in 1860?
- What is the relationship between these two sets of data?
- What does this information tell us about life in Delaware in the early 19th century?

Strategy Three: Extending and Refining

Graphic Organizer

Distribute the *Governor Burton Letter*. Ask students to complete the [Primary Document Analysis Chart](#). Pose the following questions for discussion:

- What are Governor Burton's concerns for Delaware?
- Why would Governor Burton write to the governor of Maryland about these concerns?

Strategy Four: Extending and Refining

Making Comparisons

Distribute the *Virginia Repeal* and the *New Hampshire Statement*. Have students complete the [Primary Document Analysis Chart](#) for each document.

Ask students to compare the two documents. How do their positions differ?

Strategy Five: Application

Citing Evidence

Now that students have a better understanding of the issues surrounding secession, they will be able to analyze the choice facing Delaware.

Have students create a graphic organizer that identifies reasons for Delaware to secede and reasons for Delaware to stay in the Union. Students should cite specific evidence from the documents on both sides of this issue.

Based on the evidence, what should Delaware do?

Check for Understanding

- How was Delaware's decision whether to secede affected by the historical trends to 1860? Support your answer with specific historical evidence.

Primary Document Analysis Chart

Title and Author:	Date:
Intended Audience:	Purpose:
Facts included in document:	Interpretations in document:
Summary of Document:	An Important Quote from the Document:

Primary Document Analysis Chart

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Rubric

2 – This response gives a valid explanation with accurate and relevant historical evidence.

1 – This response gives a valid explanation with inaccurate, irrelevant, or no historical evidence.

A Timeline of the Civil War

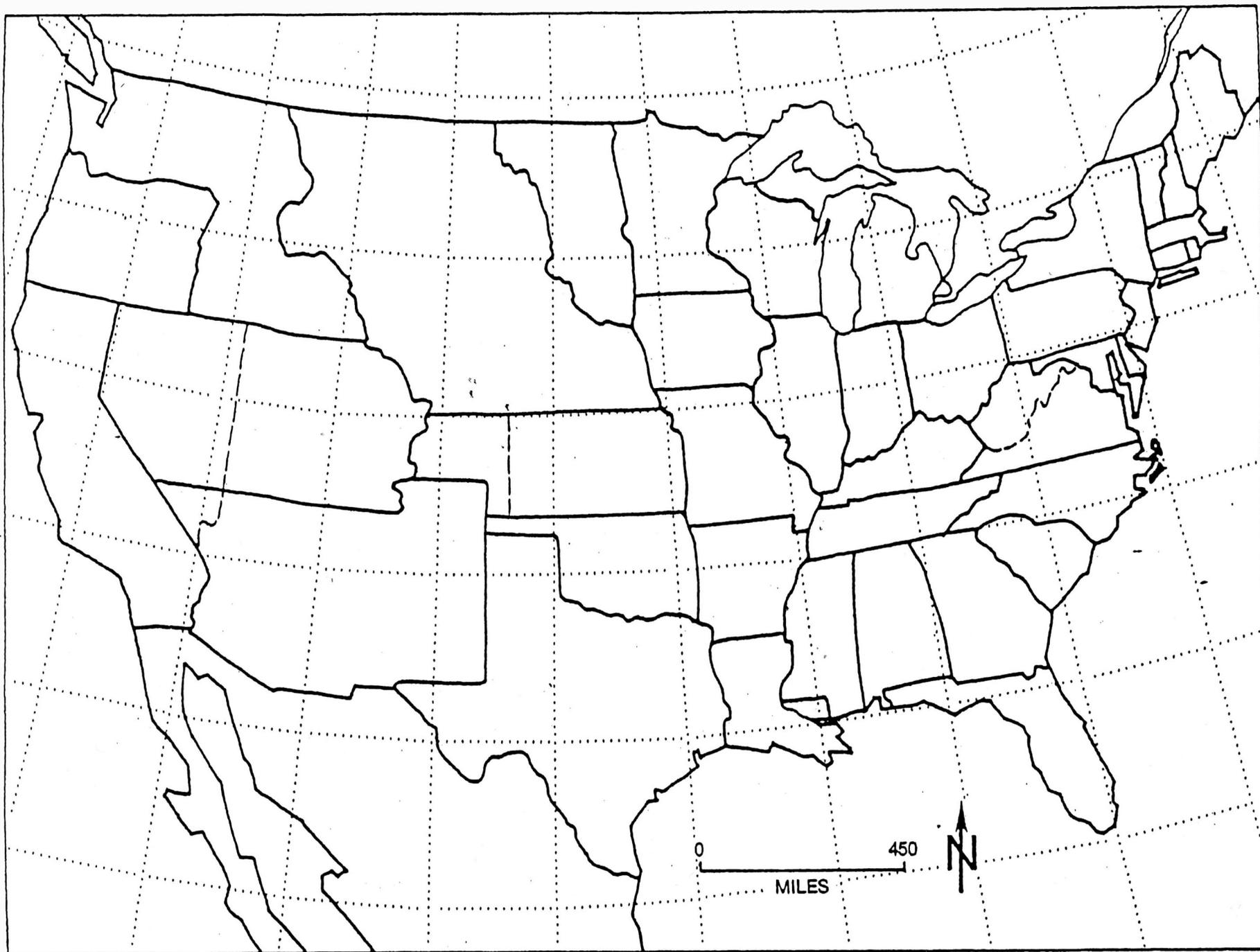
- 1776:** Americans declare their independence from England
- 1777:** Vermont, though not yet a state, abolishes slavery. It will be the 14th state and the first free state.
- 1783:** The Supreme Court of Massachusetts abolishes slavery
The importation of all slaves is banned by all the northern states
- 1787:** The Constitution is drafted
- 1789:** The Constitution is ratified
- 1791:** Denmark is the first nation to abolish the slave trade
Kentucky becomes the 15th state, a slave state.
- 1796:** Tennessee becomes the 16th state, a slave state
- 1803:** Ohio admitted as the 17th state, a free state
Louisiana Purchase doubles the size of the US and intensifies the debate over slavery
- 1812:** Louisiana becomes the 18th state, a slave state
- 1816:** Indiana becomes the 19th state, a free state
- 1817:** Mississippi becomes the 20th state, a slave state
- 1818:** Illinois becomes the 21st state, a free state
- 1819:** Alabama is 22nd, slave
- 1820:** Maine is 23rd, free and Missouri is 24th and slave. The Missouri Compromise excludes slavery from Louisiana Purchase territory north of Missouri's southern border.
- 1835:** American settlers in Texas – still a part of Mexico announce they will secede from Mexico if Mexican President Santa Ana tries to outlaw slavery.
- 1836:** Texans defeat Santa Ana, ratify their own constitution and elect Sam Houston as their president. He requests annexation by the US. Slavery will be at the center of this debate
Arkansas, 25th state, slave
- 1837:** Michigan, 26th state, free
- 1845:** Florida, 27th state, slave
Polk offers to buy Texas, New Mexico and California from Mexico.
Texas is admitted as the 28th state, slave.
- 1846:** War with Mexico
Iowa, 29th state, free
- 1848:** Mexican War ends. US “wins” territory that will become California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, most of New Mexico, and parts of Wyoming and Colorado. Texas is also conceded to the US.
Wisconsin, 30th state, free.
- 1850:** California, 31st state, free
- 1858:** Minnesota, 32nd state, free
- 1859:** Oregon, 33rd state, free
- 1860:** November 6, Lincoln elected President
South Carolina votes to secede from the Union
- 1861:** Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and Louisiana secede from the Union (January) and form the Confederate States of America. Jefferson Davis is elected President.
Kansas, 34th state, free
Texas secedes (February)
Virginia secedes (April) and Richmond becomes the capital of the Confederacy
Arkansas, Tennessee and North Carolina secede (May)
Robert E. Lee becomes commander of the Confederate armies
Ulysses S. Grant becomes commander of the Union armies (not until 1864)
- 1861 – 1865:** Civil War primarily fought on southern soil
360,000 dead Union soldiers, 275,000 wounded
258,000 Confederate dead, 100,000 wounded.
(If the same proportion of Americans were killed in a war today, the number would exceed 5 million)
For comparison sake, 58,000 Americans died in Vietnam.
- 1865:** The House passes the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, abolishing slavery (January)
April 9: Lee formally surrenders to Grant

April 14: Lincoln is assassinated in Ford's Theater by John Wilkes Booth, a southern sympathizer.

November 24: Mississippi establishes the first "Black Codes" which restore many prewar rules, sharply limiting the rights and freedoms of freed blacks with respect to voting, holding property, and education, virtually re-enslaving them.

December 24: Six former Confederate officers form a secret society that will become the Ku Klux Klan.

UNITED STATES BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR



Census Facts of 1860

Census of 1860 facts	The North	The South	Border States
# of States	23	11	Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Delaware
Population	18.5 million	9 million (including 3.5 million slaves)	3 million
Factories	100,000 - employing 1.1 million	20,000 - employing 100,000	9,000 - employing 70,000 workers
Railroads	More than 20,000 miles of track	9,000 miles of track (not all the same grade)	1,700 miles
Bank Deposits	\$189 million	\$47 million	\$18 million
Economy	Banks, factories, railroads, canals, steamship lines; population booming with influx of immigrants.	An agricultural, slave-based economy. Chief product = cotton.	Mostly agricultural

Document Background

Published in 1868, the Beers Atlas was the first statewide map showing individual houses and property owners. Along with the maps of the state, this atlas includes Delaware history, census information, and agricultural and manufacturing production statistics. The *United States Before the Civil War* map is reproduced here with the permission of J. Weston Walch, Publisher. Although this map is taken from the 1987 edition of *U.S. History Map Activities*, the company has issued a more recent edition of this publication.

The three other documents used in this lesson are located in the Executive Papers Collection. This collection includes the papers, correspondence, and other materials that chronicled the activities of the state's chief executive and appointed cabinet officials. These three documents can be found in Record Group 1300, Box 319140, Folder 1861, Correspondence Out of State.

Document Transcriptions

Governor Burton Letter

January 8, 1861

His Excellency

Governor Hicks

Sir

Yours of the 2nd instant

was duly received in which you state that you had written to me before upon the same subject. Your former letter never came to hand.

I herewith transmit to you a copy of my biennial message to our Legislature which convened on the 1st instant in which you will see my views in relation to the present condition of our Country.

With us it is a matter of necessity that the Union should be preserved; but how to do it is a problem which I cannot solve. Our territorial limits are so constricted that, should this Union be dissolved, it is impossible for Delaware to exist as an independent Sovereignty.

I do not know the feelings of the People of this State whether in the event of a dissolution, it would be better to go to the North or to the South: most of not all our trade is with the North.

A majority of our citizens if not in all three of our counties at least in the two lower ones sympathize with South.

It is probable that a Convention of our people will be called by the Legislature to determine as to the proper course the State of Delaware should pursue, but in relation to this I give you only my individual opinion. Whether interest or sympathy would govern the actions of the People in a State Convention should one be called

by our Legislature I am unable to say.
As to a Central Confederacy it has never been discussed
to any extent in our State and I know not the feelings
of our Citizens in relation thereto.
I beg of you to excuse my delay in not having
before answered and the haste in which I have replied
to your letter; but pressing Official Engagements
are my excuse -

I am Sir

With great respect

Your obedient servant

William Burton

Virginia Repeal of United States Constitution

An ordinance to repeal the Ratification of the Constitution
of the United States of America, by the State of Virginia, and
to resume all the rights and powers granted under said Con
stitution.

The people of Virginia in their ratification of the Con
stitution of the United States of America adopted by them
in Convention on the twenty fifth day of June in the year of
our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and eighty eight, having
declared that the powers granted under the said Constitu
tion were derived from the people of the United States, and
might be resumed whensoever the same should be perverted
to their injury and oppression, and the Federal Government
having perverted said powers, not only to the injury of the
people of Virginia, but to the oppression of the Southern Slave
holding States.

Now, therefore, we, the people of Virginia do declare
and ordain that the ordinance adopted by the people of
this state, in Convention, on the twenty fifth day of
June, in the year of our Lord, one thousand, seven hundred
and eighty eight, whereby the constitution of the United
States of America was ratified, and all acts of the General
Assembly of this state ratifying or adopting amendments to
said constitution, are hereby repealed and abrogated;
that the union between the state of Virginia and the
other States, under the constitution aforesaid is hereby
dissolved, and that the State of Virginia is in the full
possession and exercise of all the rights of sovereignty,
which belong and appertain to a free and independent
state. And they do further declare that said con

stitution of the United States of America is no longer binding on any of the citizens of this state.

This ordinance shall take effect and be an act of this day when ratified by a majority of the votes of the people of this state cast at a pole to be taken thereon, on the fourth Thursday in May next, in pursuance of a schedule hereafter to be enacted.

Done in convention, in the city of Richmond, on the seventeenth day of April in the year of our Lord, One thousand, eight hundred and sixty one, and in the eighty fifth year of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

John L. Eubank
Secretary of Convention

Background Information

The story of Delaware's involvement in the War of Rebellion, or Civil War, is one of the most interesting chapters in the state's history. The second smallest state in the Union and a border state between the North and South, Delaware was courted by each side before its legislators ultimately decided upon Union allegiance. Historically a slave state, by 1860, according to census data, only 1,798 slaves remained in Delaware. Fully 75% of the remaining slaves lived in Sussex County.ⁱ On the whole, the majority of Delawareans believed in going to great lengths to avoid entering any conflict, which would pit them against fellow Americans. Many advocated allowing southern states to secede and form another nation within the bounds of this country. It was the physical geography of the state that contributed to the population, economic, and industrial differences between the more urban New Castle County and the rural Kent and Sussex Counties, and these differences played extremely emotional roles in the final decision to remain in the Union. Delaware "represented a microcosm of the country as a whole,"ⁱⁱ and strong tensions existed both before and during the war as the state and individual families divided their loyalties between the Yanks and the Rebels. Wilmington's proximity to cities like Philadelphia as well as its increasing industrialization moved it in ideas and actions much closer to the northern cities with their increasing wealth and population diversity. The lower two counties remained agricultural, much more like the Southern states, and maintained a rural pace of life.

The most graphic representation of the division is the actual decision-making process that led to Delaware's continuance as a member of the Union. The political atmosphere in the state revealed that Union support was anything but a certainty. Lincoln had finished fourth in the Presidential election in Delaware, a state dominated by the Democrats. The Governor, William Burton of Milford, was an adamant anti-abolitionist. The Delaware

Senate was under the control of the Democrats. The House was in control of “The People’s Party” but only by one vote. The entire Congressional delegation was sympathetic to the secessionist movement occurring in the south and believed that a state convention should be held to decide the fate of the state. However, the legislature voted against the proposal, deciding, instead, to listen to Henry Dickinson, special envoy from Mississippi, address the legislature. After the presentation and long ensuing discussions and debates, Delaware decided not to cast its vote with the south unless Maryland and Virginia did so. The debate over a decision on secession continued to cause alarm and dissension within the state.

Some important figures within the state believed that the secession decision was a sovereign right of the individual states. James A. Bayard, United States Senator, was a Republican by party but believed that war should be avoided at all costs, including allowing secession. An ardent states’ rights supporter, he was decidedly against any anti-slavery action proposed or taken because of legislation as they were against the rights of the individual and the individual states.ⁱⁱⁱ In 1860 Willard Saulsbury, Delaware’s other United States Senator, proposed that the central states, both slave and non slave holding, should form a separate confederation, distinct from both South Carolina and New England. While Bayard did not agree with the proposal, this is another proposal that demonstrates the belief that Delawareans in Congress advocated against entering into a war against fellow countrymen.^{iv} After the fall of Fort Sumter in 1861, the Georgetown Messenger reported on the June 27th Peace Convention held in Dover and chaired by former congressman William Whiteley, Secretary of State Edward Ridgely, and Thomas F. Bayard, son of Senator James Bayard. The Peace Convention called for an end to the actions of the Lincoln administration, and while they “did not advocate secession as a practical course for Delaware, they urged that the Southern states be allowed to go their way in peace, calling for an end to what they deemed an unconstitutional, as well as fratricidal, war.”^v

No formal resolution advocating Union departure was ever presented in the General Assembly. Since Maryland decided against leaving the Union, Delaware, ever the pragmatic state, also decided that it was in their best interests to remain within the United States. However, that did not mean that all Delawareans favored participation in the Union cause. Many people in the southern end of the state, especially in the Seaford area, left Delaware and joined the Confederacy or stayed and worked secretly to assist the Confederacy from within the state. These people were known as Copperheads, or Peace Democrats, because they were considered to be as deadly as their “name-snakes.” They gave the South all the help they could and lobbied to bring all of Delaware to that belief.^{vi} Munroe in his *History of Delaware* notes that James Vallandigham, son of the Newark minister, was the brother of famous Ohio copperhead congressman, Clement Vallandigham. The New York Times, August 30, 1861, discusses the general aim of the Order of the Golden Circle, to which most Copperheads belonged. The Order was a secret society whose aim was to raise an army of 16,000, seize Mexico and establish “in that vast Territory ... a strongly organized monarchy, resting on a basis of slave institutions.” Members had to be American born, Protestants, and slaveholders or produce that he is “imbued with Southern sentiments.”^{vii} In Delaware those with pro

Confederacy sentiments “ surreptitiously opened a route to the South for both men and supplies, frequently utilizing the Delaware Railroad to Seaford and then the Nanticoke River to the Chesapeake Bay.^{viii}

With the onset of battle, President Lincoln called for 75,000 men to quell the rebellion. In 1829 state legislation had ended mandatory and universal militia service as a means of protecting the state and its citizens. Recognizing the importance of defensive preparedness, the state legislature passed an act, the Volunteer Company Act, and, by 1860, many volunteer units were already in existence. Delaware’s commitment of 780 men did respond to President Lincoln’s first call and served in the First Regiment Delaware Volunteers, a unit not well equipped and fully functioning but eager to serve the Union. When it became obvious that the battle would be a protracted affair, President Lincoln issued another call for 300,000 troops. Delaware reconstituted its Volunteer Militia units and also established special Wartime Units. Over the course of the war, Delaware supplied a large number of soldiers to the Union relative to the size of the state: 12,284 Delawareans fought for the Union out of total state population (male and female) of about 110,000 total according to the 1860 census.^{ix} 90,500 were white, and 19,000 were white males between the ages of 15-39. Delaware raised 9 infantry regiments, 1 cavalry regiment, one heavy artillery battery, and one light artillery battery. No major military actions took place in Delaware. 383 men from Delaware were killed or mortally wounded and another 499 died from diseases and other causes, for a total death count of 882.^x

During the War of Rebellion, Delaware played significant roles albeit in different arenas. First, the northern section of the state supplied from one third to one half of gun- powder used by Union troops from the Du Pont mills as well as various other products produced in Wilmington’s factories from leather to railroad cars to naval vessels. Second, Delaware housed Southern prisoners of war at Fort Delaware, which was also used to provide “guarded access to the ports and shipyards of Wilmington and Philadelphia. Over 2,400 prisoners died at the notorious Fort Delaware. Third, federal troops were called in to safeguard the voting during several elections held during the War since the loyalty of Delaware’s volunteer regiments was sometimes called into question. Fourth, Delaware was the scene of President Lincoln’s test of a “compensated emancipation plan” that, if it was successful in Delaware, he was going to propose to all other slave states as a means of ending the war quickly. Under the plan, slave owners would be compensated for freeing their slaves. Compensation would be funded by the federal government and based on the “value” of each slave as determined by a board of local assessors, with payments averaging \$500.00. The proposal failed to pass in both houses of the General Assembly and Lincoln’s plan of “the cheapest and most humane way of ending this war and saving lives” became moot.^{xi}

Finally, some interesting Delaware statistics: 12,284 men fought for the Union. 954 former slaves and free blacks joined the United States Colored Regiments. At least 882, or over 7%, perished during the war. 383 men were either killed in action or mortally wounded in action. 356 died due to disease. 75 more died while prisoners of war and 21 died of accidental causes.^{xii}

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- ⁱ Newton, James E. *Lesson Plan 1: Black Americans in Delaware from 1639 to the Present, An Overview*. [Online: <http://www.udel.edu/BlackHistory/lesson1.html>] May 13, 2003.
- ii "Delaware in Wartime," *Special Collections Department, University of Delaware*. Exhibition at the Hugh M. Morris Library, August 25 - December 17, 1993. [Online: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/exhibits/wartime.html#civil_war] May 13, 2003.
- iii Ibid.
- ^{iv} Munroe, John. "The Civil War," *History of Delaware*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1979. p. 133.
- v Dodd, D. "Editorial," *Georgetown Messenger*, July 3, 1861. [Online: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/exhibits/wartime.html#civil_war] May 13, 2003.
- vi "Local War History," *Sigourney, Iowa*. [Online: <http://www.sigourney.com/history/local.html>] May 13, 2003.
- vii "The Knights of the Golden Circle," *New York Times (1857-Current file)*; New York, N.Y.; Aug 30, 1861. [Online: Proquest Database: <http://hn.umi.com/pqdweb>] May 13, 2003.
- viii Munroe, *ibid*.
- ^{ix} Pickett, John E. III. "Delaware's Manpower Contribution to the Union in the Civil War," *First State Regiments*. [Online: <http://www.state.de.us/gic/facts/history/delreg.htm>] May 13, 2003.
- x "Delaware," *ehistory Features: Civil War Units*. [Online: <http://www.ehistory.com/uscw/features/regimental/delaware/union/index.cfm>] May 14, 2003.
- xi Munroe, pp. 137-140. Direct quote on p. 140.
- xii Harvey, Don. *Deaths of Union Forces by State*. [Online: <http://users.aol.com/dlharvey/stat.htm>] May 13, 2003. Statistics were also taken from John Pickett's First State Regiment page.
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