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History: American Civil War

These nonfiction books are all about the American Civil War, the historical figures involved, analyses on the cultural and political climate of the time, and the aftermath of the war. To order any of these titles, contact the library by email, phone, mail, in person, or order through our [online catalog](#). Select titles can be [downloaded from BARD](#).

How the South Could Have Won the Civil War the Fatal Errors that Led to Confederate Defeat By Bevin Alexander

Read by Bill Wallace

Reading time 13 hours, 28 minutes

Military historian posits that the South would have been victorious had Confederate president Jefferson Davis and General Robert E. Lee followed General Stonewall Jackson's advice and attacked factories, railroads, and farms in the North rather than engaging in frontal assaults. Details crucial battles that support this theory. 2007.

[Download from BARD: How the South Could Have Won the Civil War...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB066971

America's War Talking about the Civil War and Emancipation on their 150th Anniversaries By Edward L. Ayers

Read by Various Narrators

Reading time 10 hours, 47 minutes

Anthology of readings about the Civil War and its aftermath, copublished by the American Library Association and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Offers both historical documents and contemporary perspectives, including an 1862 journal by Louisa May Alcott and a 2008 analysis of the conflict's legacy by historian Drew Gilpin Faust. 2012.

[Download from BARD: America's War Talking about the Civil War...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074156

Stealing the General the Great Locomotive Chase and the First Medal of Honor by Russell S. Bonds

Read by Jake Williams

Reading time 20 hours, 21 minutes

Recalls the April 1862 raid by Union soldiers in Georgia to steal a locomotive called the General from the Confederates to damage their supply line. Spy James J. Andrews and nineteen volunteers captured the steam engine only to be chased by conductor William A. Fuller by foot, handcar, and train. 2007.

Download from BARD: [Stealing the General the Great Locomotive...](#)

[Also available on digital cartridge DB066030](#)

Also available on cassette RC066030

Bloody Shirt Terror After Appomattox By Stephen Budiansky

Read by Phil Gigante

Reading time 9 hours, 47 minutes

Military historian uses primary documents to detail the violence that occurred in the South following the Civil War. Describes the suffering of thousands as the integrated state governments of Reconstruction were replaced by Jim Crow laws and the Ku Klux Klan gained power. Violence and strong language. Commercial audiobook. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Bloody Shirt Terror After Appomattox](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073311

Mr. Lincoln's Army By Bruce Catton

Read by David Hilder

Reading time 13 hours, 29 minutes

The first book in a trilogy about Lincoln's famous Army of the Potomac. Based on diaries, letters, and published reports of soldiers, this volume tells of the early days of the Civil War under the command of General George B. McClellan. Prequel to Glory Road (RC 40520).

[Download from BARD: Mr. Lincoln's Army](#)

Also available on cassette RC040519

The Battle of New Market By William C. Davis

Read by Ted Stoddard

Reading time 8 hours, 28 minutes

Civil War historian recounts the 1864 battle for Virginia's strategically vital Shenandoah Valley. Details the conflict between Union forces under General Franz Sigel and Confederates commanded by former U.S. vice president John C. Breckinridge, who, far outnumbered, recruited Virginia Military Institute cadets to bring victory--and renewed hope--to the South. 1975.

[Download from BARD: The Battle of New Market](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068051

Also available on cassette RC009670 (older edition)

A Government of Our Own the Making of the Confederacy By William C.

Davis

Read by Robert Sams

Reading time 22 hours, 16 minutes

Historian describes the delegation of leaders of Southern states that convened in 1861 in Montgomery, Alabama, to modify the U.S. Constitution for the Confederate government. Recounts the issues surrounding the South's secession from the Union and discusses the personalities involved. Provides a brief history of Montgomery. 1994.

[Download from BARD: A Government of Our Own the Making of the...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB075942

A Disease in the Public Mind a New Understanding of Why We Fought the Civil War By Thomas J. Fleming

Read by William Hughes

Reading time 11 hours, 45 minutes

Historian posits that longtime rivalries between the North and South, inflamed by radical abolitionists such as John Brown, led to the dissolution of the union. Discusses the history of slavery in the United States and why--unlike in other countries--efforts to end it peacefully failed. Commercial audiobook. 2013.

[Download from BARD: A Disease in the Public Mind a New...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB076792

Prelude to Civil War the Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816-1836 By William W. Freehling

Read by Bill Wallace

Reading time 15 hours, 32 minutes

Study of the role of the Nullification Controversy in South Carolina in 1832-1833 that almost led to the state's secession from the union. Discusses the tariffs that caused economic ruin, the fear of abolitionists, the conflict between Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun, and slave conspiracies. Bancroft Prize. 1965.

[Download from BARD: Prelude to Civil War the Nullification Controversy...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB066962

The Road to Disunion. Volume 1, Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1854 By

William W. Freehling

Read by Jake Williams

Reading time 35 hours

Historian analyzes the southern traditions, politics, diversity, and events that led to the American Civil War. Highlights the differences between the Deep South and the more northern states on issues that created national crises, including slavery, Jacksonian democracy, federal laws, and nullification and secession. 1990.

[Download from BARD: The Road to Disunion. Volume 1, Secessionists...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB066230

The Road to Disunion. Volume 2, Secessionists Triumphant, 1854-1861 By

William W. Freehling

Read by Jake Williams

Reading time 31 hours, 56 minutes

Following *Secessionists at Bay* (RC 66230), historian Freehling continues his examination of antebellum politics, proslavery ideology, and the South's efforts to forge a "single civilization." Highlights differences among the southern states and discusses the Deep South's fear that Abraham Lincoln's Republicans would convince border states to abolish slavery. 2007.

[Download from BARD: The Road to Disunion: Volume 2, Secessionists...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB066449

1861 the Civil War Awakening By Adam Goodheart

Read by Jonathan Davis

Reading time 18 hours, 57 minutes

Cultural history of America in the year the Civil War began examines the lives and deeds of ordinary people and their responses to the challenges of a fractured nation. Discusses marching clubs, drill teams, fugitive slaves, and the surge of patriotism before the reality of war set in. Commercial audiobook. 2011.

[Download from BARD: 1861 the Civil War Awakening](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073672

This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War By Drew

Gilpin Faust

Read by Bill Wallace

Reading time 11 hours, 34 minutes

President of Harvard University interprets the significance of the U.S. Civil War's death toll. States that two percent of the country's population was killed and many died without proper burials. Analyzes the way those losses transformed American society, culture, and politics through the experience of shared suffering. Violence. Bestseller. 2008.

[Download from BARD: This Republic of Suffering: Death and the...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB065912

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR17708](#)

Also available in braille BR017708

Shiloh 1862 the First Great and Terrible Battle of the Civil War By Winston

Groom

Read by Eric G. Dove

Reading time 10 hours, 51 minutes

Describes the Battle of Shiloh, fought in the Tennessee wilderness April 6-7, 1862. Details the tactics of the two armies--the Confederates led by Albert Sidney Johnson and the surprised Union defenders under Ulysses S. Grant. Explores the what-ifs that might have changed the outcome. Violence. Commercial audiobook. 2012.

[Download from BARD: Shiloh 1862 the First Great and Terrible Battle...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074383

Vicksburg, 1863 By Winston Groom

Read by Butch Hoover

Reading time 21 hours, 8 minutes

Author of Shrouds of Glory (RC 41009) and Forrest Gump (RC 38876)

highlights the military personalities who conducted the crucial Civil War western campaign that culminated with the Confederate defeat at Vicksburg, Mississippi, in July 1863. Describes the land and sea battles and the civilian population under siege. Violence. 2009.

[Download from BARD: Vicksburg, 1863](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068947

Also available on cassette RC068947

Fateful Lightning a New History of the Civil War & Reconstruction By Allen C. Guelzo

Read by Peter Johnson

Reading time 27 hours, 36 minutes

Lincoln Prize-winning author reassesses the causes and aftermath of the U.S. Civil War. Discusses nineteenth-century policies, government, and economics; slavery and abolitionists; the common soldier; and the conflict's ramifications on society. Describes the changes that led to the Gilded Age. Some violence. 2012.

[Download from BARD: Fateful Lightning a New History of the Civil...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074945

Born to Battle Grant and Forrest : Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga : the Campaigns that Doomed the Confederacy By Jack Hurst

Read by Joe Barrett

Reading time 15 hours, 25 minutes

Dual biography of Union general Ulysses S. Grant and Confederate general Nathan Bedford Forrest details their similar backgrounds and suggests that differences in the way their contemporaries viewed social class affected their careers. Chronicles their battles in the West from 1862 to 1864 and their postwar fates. Commercial audiobook. 2012.

[Download from BARD: Born to Battle Grant and Forrest: Shiloh...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB075777

The State of Jones: the Small Southern County that Seceded from the Confederacy by Sally Jenkins

Read by Mark Ashby

Reading time 12 hours, 21 minutes

Award-winning journalist Jenkins and history professor Stauffer profile farmer Newton Knight, who, from 1863 to 1865, led residents of Jones County, Mississippi, in an insurrection against the Confederacy. Describes Knight's desertion of the Southern army to fight for the Union, including his role in the Battle of Vicksburg. 2009.

[Download from BARD: The State of Jones: the Small Southern County...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB071030

Confederate Heroines: 120 Southern Women Convicted by Union Military Justice By Thomas P. Lowry

Read by Erin Jones

Reading time 7 hours, 33 minutes

Author uses federal court documents from military trials to profile women sympathizers of the Confederate cause. The defendants, who ranged from wealthy plantation owners to city prostitutes, served as spies, bushwhackers, and smugglers. Includes the case of eighteen-year-old Sarah Jane Smith, who was sentenced to hang in Missouri. 2006.

[Download from BARD: Confederate Heroines: 120 Southern Women...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB072057

What this Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War By Chandra Manning

Read by Bill Quinn

Reading time 13 hours, 47 minutes

Georgetown professor posits that "ordinary Union and Confederate soldiers recognized slavery as the reason for the war." Uses letters, diaries, and regimental newspapers written during the conflict to document the social history of common soldiers--including immigrants, westerners, and African Americans--and the question of emancipation. Some strong language. 2007.

[Download from BARD: What this Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068426

Throes of Democracy the American Civil War Era, 1829-1877 By Walter A. McDougall

Read by Margaret Strom

Reading time 40 hours, 42 minutes

Sequel to the Pulitzer Prize-winning volume *Freedom Just around the Corner* (RC 63042) chronicles American history from the election of Andrew Jackson through Reconstruction. Examines the country's political, economic, social, and spiritual spheres. Recounts the westward expansion, the Civil War, and the industrial age of robber barons. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Throes of Democracy the American Civil War...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB066667

Tried by War Abraham Lincoln as Commander in Chief By James M.

McPherson

Read by Butch Hoover

Reading time 9 hours, 57 minutes

Pulitzer Prize-winning historian highlights the role President Abraham Lincoln played as the head of the U.S. military during the Civil War. Stresses Lincoln's study and application of war strategies and his development of a political and national policy that focused on preserving the union. Bestseller. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Tried by War Abraham Lincoln as Commander...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067863

War on the Waters the Union and Confederate Navies, 1861-1865 By James

M. McPherson

Read by Joe Barrett

Reading time 8 hours, 57 minutes

Pulitzer Prize-winning historian chronicles the contribution of naval power during the U.S. Civil War. Describes the Union blockade of Southern coastal ports and its strategic victories on inland riverfronts. Profiles Union admirals such as David Farragut. Highlights the technical innovations of the Confederacy, including ironclads and mines. Commercial audiobook. 2012.

[Download from BARD: War on the Waters the Union and Confederate...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB075314

President Lincoln the Duty of a Statesman By William Lee Miller

Read by Butch Hoover

Reading time 21 hours, 24 minutes

The author of Lincoln's Virtues (RC 57259) continues his examination of the sixteenth president's moral and intellectual life--this time covering Lincoln's term in the White House. Discusses his determination to preserve the union and to avoid armed conflict. Describes the ethical challenge of slavery. 2008.

[Download from BARD: President Lincoln the Duty of a Statesman](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB066880

Killing Lincoln the Shocking Assassination that Changed America Forever

By Bill O'Reilly

Read by Mike Stefanelli

Reading time 9 hours, 46 minutes

Political commentator O'Reilly and historian Dugard recount the last weeks of the Civil War in the spring of 1865. The authors follow actor John Wilkes Booth and his coconspirators as they plotted revenge for the South and assassinated President Abraham Lincoln on April 14. Bestseller. 2011.

[Download from BARD: Killing Lincoln the Shocking Assassination that...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073850

The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861 by David Morris Potter

Read by Sam Gray

Reading time 21 hours, 8 minutes

An examination of the complex problems of slavery, expansion, and sectionalism in the United States between 1848 and 1861. This study analyzes these factors as causes for the Civil War, frequently challenging traditional interpretations. Pulitzer Prize.

[Download from BARD: The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861](#)

Also available on cassette RC012593

Reading the Man: a Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through his Private Letters

By Elizabeth Brown Pryor

Read by Robert Sams

Reading time 28 hours, 39 minutes

Historian uses personal letters of Robert E. Lee (1807-1870) to recap the life of the Confederate general. Traces Lee's troubled Virginia childhood, days at West Point, army career, and leadership of the Southern forces. Explains the importance of correspondence during the nineteenth century. Lincoln Prize. 2007.

[Download from BARD: Reading the Man: a Portrait of Robert E. Lee...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB072572

The Destructive War William Tecumseh Sherman, Stonewall Jackson, and the Americans By Charles Royster

Read by Art Metzler

Reading time 20 hours, 46 minutes

Examines how Americans became involved in civil war, what they expected to gain from it, and their understanding about what they had done. The author contends that generals on both sides envisioned the total destruction of their opponent from the beginning, contrary to the limited-conflict version sometimes advanced by historians. Winner of the Bancroft Prize.

[Download from BARD: The Destructive War: William Tecumseh...](#)

Also available on cassette RC037219

Landscape Turned Red the Battle of Antietam By Stephen W. Sears

Read by Christopher Hurt

Reading time 16 hours, 11 minutes

Detailed account of the bloodiest day of the Civil War. Describes the political situation and tension-filled days leading up to the battle, the battle itself, and the aftermath of the engagement.

[Download from BARD: Landscape Turned Red the Battle of Antietam](#)

Also available on cassette RC021669

Reconstructing Appalachia: The Civil War's Aftermath By Andrew L. Slap

Read by Butch Hoover

Reading time 15 hours, 52 minutes

Thirteen essays detail the impact of the Civil War on the Appalachia Mountain people from Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. Discusses the war's repercussions, including racial issues, hostility between Unionists and Confederates, political confrontations, and economic depression. 2010.

[Download from BARD: Reconstructing Appalachia: The Civil War's...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB072670

The Long Road to Antietam How the Civil War Became a Revolution By

Richard Slotkin

Read by Jake Williams

Reading time 20 hours, 43 minutes

Historian analyzes the political and military conspiracies that occurred during the months preceding the September 1862 Maryland battle. Details the conflicting strategies of president Abraham Lincoln and Union general George McClellan. Includes day-by-day fighting accounts and chronicles the events that led to the Emancipation Proclamation. 2012.

[Download from BARD: The Long Road to Antietam How the Civil War...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB075422

No Quarter, the Battle of the Crater 1864 By Richard Slotkin

Read by Jake Williams

Reading time 17 hours, 46 minutes

Details the Union army's attempt in Petersburg, Virginia, to dig a tunnel to Confederate trench lines, create an explosion, and breach the fortifications. Describes the resulting eighty-yard-wide crater and the melee during which African American troops were slain by both sides. Violence and strong language. 2009.

[Download from BARD: No Quarter, the Battle of the Crater 1864](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB070872

Upon the Altar of the Nation: a Moral History of the American Civil War By

Harry S. Stout

Read by Jake Williams

Reading time 22 hours, 51 minutes

Using primary sources, Yale religious history professor documents the belief held by both the North and the South that God was on their side during the Civil War. Analyzes the moral rhetoric behind the battles. Asserts that patriotic ideology created a bloodbath that set the tone for future conflicts. 2006.

[Download from BARD: Upon the Altar of the Nation: a Moral History...](#)

Also available on cassette RC063597

Gettysburg a Testing of Courage By Noah Andre Trudeau

Read by Bill Wallace

Reading time 26 hours, 34 minutes

Chronicle of crucial three-day Civil War battle in which Robert E. Lee's plan to destroy the Federal army was thwarted. Begins in mid-May 1863 at Chancellorsville and follows the Army of Northern Virginia through Lee's retreat from Gettysburg. Uses primary sources to present the viewpoints of officers, enlisted men, and civilians. 2002.

[Download from BARD: Gettysburg a Testing of Courage](#)

Also available on cassette RC054927

Southern Storm Sherman's March to the Sea By Noah Andre Trudeau

Read by Jake Williams

Reading time 26 hours, 32 minutes

The author of Gettysburg (RC 54927) uses primary documents to analyze William T. Sherman's march through Confederate Georgia in the autumn of 1864. Disputes the notion of total war and argues that Sherman's main objective was to convince Southerners to rejoin the Union. Some violence and some strong language. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Southern Storm Sherman's March to the Sea](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067744

The Slaves' War the Civil War in the Words of Former Slaves By Andrew Ward

Read by Erin Jones

Reading time 15 hours, 26 minutes

Author selects former slaves' interviews taken during the 1920s and 1930s, as well as letters, memoirs, and diaries, to illustrate the thoughts and experiences of freed blacks about the Civil War. Includes reactions to the Union army's invasion of the South. Some violence and some strong language. 2008.

[Download from BARD: The Slaves' War the Civil War in the Words of...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073293

Cavalryman of the Lost Cause a Biography of J.E.B. Stuart By Jeffry D. Wert

Read by Robert Sams

Reading time 17 hours, 15 minutes

The author of *The Sword of Lincoln* (RC 60605) pens a biography about Confederate general James Ewell Brown "J.E.B." Stuart (1833-1864). Uses archives and first-person accounts to trace Stuart's family history. Discusses Stuart's education, pre-Civil War military service, battle tactics, comrades-in-arms, and controversial decision during the Battle of Gettysburg. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Cavalryman of the Lost Cause a Biography of...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068313

Libby Prison Breakout: The Daring Escape from the Notorious Civil War Prison by Joseph Wheelan

Read by Jon Huffman

Reading time 10 hours, 59 minutes

Recounts the February 1864 escape of 109 Union officers from Libby Prison, a Confederate jail in Richmond, Virginia. Describes the conditions in the facility, the atmosphere in the city, the personalities involved, and the prisoner-exchange policies of the Civil War. Some violence. 2010.

[Download from BARD: Libby Prison Breakout: the Daring Escape from...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB071711

A. Lincoln a Biography By Ronald C. White

Read by Jake Williams

Reading time 30 hours, 31 minutes

Chronological narrative of President Abraham Lincoln's life describing the influence of his stepmother Sarah, his political rise in Illinois, and his election campaigns. White, a fellow at the Huntington Library, uses primary sources to offer insight into Lincoln's moral and intellectual thinking. Bestseller. 2009.

[Download from BARD: A. Lincoln a Biography](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069003

Bitterly Divided the South's Inner Civil War By David Williams

Read by Barry Bernson

Reading time 11 hours, 8 minutes

Professor uses letters and journals to document the deep societal divisions within the Confederacy during the Civil War. Relates internal massacres, guerilla warfare, vigilante justice, lynching, food riots, and desertion. Highlights economic inequities and the condition of slaves, Native Americans, and poor whites. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Bitterly Divided the South's Inner Civil War](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074366

The Bonfire: the Siege and Burning of Atlanta By Marc Wortman

Read by Butch Hoover

Reading time 16 hours, 36 minutes

Award-winning writer examines the Civil War battle for Atlanta, Georgia. Details events leading up to the 1864 campaign during which Union general William Tecumseh Sherman and an army of eighty-five thousand men partially surrounded the city. Profiles soldiers, civilians, and politicians on both sides of the conflict. Some violence. 2009.

[Download from BARD: The Bonfire: the Siege and Burning of Atlanta](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB070747