

Civil War, First of Modern Conflicts, Soon Will Be 100 Years Old

Life Never To Again Be Same In Any Household

By MERTON T. AKERS

Editor's note: The following story introduces a Civil War centennial series which will be carried weekly in The Mail Tribune beginning Nov. 1. The writer is Merton T. Akers, author of the book "The Civil War: A History of the War Between the States and the Reconstruction of the Nation."

Soon the Civil War will be a century old.

At once the first of the modern wars and the last of the old-fashioned wars, the Civil War marked the greatest emotional experience of the American people.

It was a war of brother against brother, literally in many cases. Families split down the middle, half going south to fight under the Stars and Bars, half turning their faces north at the call of Abraham Lincoln. Fathers disowned sons, sisters turned brothers' pictures to the wall, all in the name of patriotism.

\$8.4 Million Channeled Into Speech Tuition

Washington - (UPI) - The U. S. Office of Education has reported that in the past two years it has channeled \$8.4 million into projects to improve foreign language teaching in the United States.

This was disclosed in the office's first comprehensive report on what it has done to carry out the modern language program set up under the national defense act of 1958.

Lawrence G. Derthick, U.S. commissioner of education, said the program is "the largest of its kind ever attempted in American education." He predicted it "will accomplish in four years what would normally have taken half a century."

It involves research and training projects with educational institutions and scholars all over the country to improve the teaching of 83 languages and dialects.

About \$2.6 million has been committed for development of basic materials to teach rarely taught languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese, Russian and the numerous African and Asian tongues.

Twelve projects costing \$195,000 are being undertaken in African languages, which number more than 800. But Derthick said this program necessarily is limited because "the United States has only about a dozen scholars competent to work on these important African languages."

French, Spanish, German and Italian, languages commonly taught in American schools and colleges, are receiving equal attention, according to the report. A one million dollar project in the Glastonbury, Conn., public school system is designed to develop systematic, up-to-date methods for teaching languages from the seventh through 12th grades. Most language courses are limited to two years in most U. S. high schools.

Another project being conducted by the educational testing service at Princeton, N. J., is aimed at setting uniform standards and proficiency tests for foreign language teachers.

This program "promises to lead to major changes in the college preparation of language teachers and to have an important impact on certification established by the states," Derthick said.

Thief Didn't Go Far With Loot

Rawlins, Wyo. - Rawlins police didn't have to chase their suspect very far after a burglar fled with more than \$1,000 worth of radios, watches, clothing and small items from the "Last Chance" pawnshop.

Officers picked up a man trying to sell some of the stolen goods in a bar next door to the pawnshop.

No man now living fought in the Civil War. But about 4 million men did fight in it, first and last. About half a million of them were killed in it. No one knows how many of the 4 million carried their scars to death before their appointed time. What happened to the 4 million from Bull Run through Shiloh and Gettysburg to Appomattox affected every one of the nation's 31 million inhabitants, North and South. Never again would life be the same in any household in these United States for any one then living or born since.

For with the Civil War, the United States turned the corner. From then on it would be a nation, not a confederation which any displeased state might threaten to disrupt by leaving. From then on Americans would place their allegiance in the United States, not in Virginia or South Carolina. The boundary of patriotism would be the oceans, not the Mason-Dixon Line.

Stripped of extraneous issues, the causes of the Civil War were secession and the extension of slavery, or the extension of slavery and secession, the one being part and parcel of the other.

Slavery was an old controversy by the time of the Civil War. The founding fathers evaded the issue referring to slaves in the Constitution as "other persons" in counting them as three-fifths of a human being for purposes of fixing representation in Congress. Washington, Jefferson, Madison and others responsible for the Constitution were opposed to slavery without having any answer for it. There were slaves in New England and New York as well as the South but it was counted as a dying institution. So the Constitutional Convention contented itself with naming 1808 as the date when the importation of slaves must end. Slavery seemed to be doomed to an economic death.

Picture Changes But the statesmen reckoned without Eli Whitney, a New England linker who whiled away a vacation in the South by inventing the cotton gin and thereby riveting slavery to the cotton states. Money could be made by working slave gangs on the new land of the South. Whitney gave slavery a shot in the arm and gradually southerners began calling it "our peculiar institution."

As keen as southerners were on their "peculiar institution," a hard core of northerners, with a sprinkling of members at first in the South, began to agitate against slavery, calling themselves Abolitionists. Even in the late 1850s, the movement was small but noisy. Small as it was, it generated enough political power to form a vocal part of the new Republican party and make itself felt to the point that in 1860 the party saw fit to adopt a platform plank calling for a halt to the extension of slavery.

The South met the Abolitionists, man for man and charge for charge. Abolitionists called slavery immoral; southerners read their Bibles and found sanction for it. Abolitionists prompted "Uncle Tom's Cabin"; southerners countered that factory workers in the North were treated worse than slaves. Abolitionists sent their propaganda into the South through the mails; southern postmasters refused to deliver it; the postmasters general looked the other way.

Must Debate By Civil War times, secession was a long debated but never settled issue. From the birth of the Republic statesmen had differed over it. An associate justice of the Supreme Court argued before 1800 that the right of secession was implicit. New Englanders, gathered in the Hartford Convention at the time of the War of 1812, threatened to secede. South Carolina also threatened in 1832 but President Jackson nipped that. In 1860 a Constitutional amendment might have solved the question but by that time the South was in no mood for any such loose process.

One school holds the cause of the Civil War to be economic. The South was agricultural, the North becoming industrialized. The central money power was in the North, making the North a creditor, the South a debtor. Division was inevitable. So

the arguments ran without taking into consideration that more of the North was agricultural than industrialized and that the North owed more to New York money lenders than the South.

But over the century a truer picture of the conflict has emerged, breaking through the mists of legend and bitterness which burgeoned in the decades after the war and Reconstruction. Many historians have concluded that while the war might have been averted by sober and thoughtful men working quietly and without pressure, emotions had raced beyond control of man and the only settlement possible was bloodletting - a bloodletting without parallel in American history, greater

even than World War II.

Neither the North nor the South was ready for war. The South at the start was unorganized, without money or credit, without governmental services, without arms or the means of manufacturing them. The North was not much better off. The U. S. Treasury was nearly strangled. The Army numbered 16,000 men with nearly half its officers going to the South.

Emotionally the South was better prepared. The war spirit which had been smoldering for years was fanned by the extremists to a crackling blaze. The southern army seemed to spring out of the ground, unarmed but enthusiastic.

Emotions were slow to spark

in the North. Not until Fort Sumter was bombarded, did the North show signs of fighting. President Lincoln's call on the state for 75,000 militiamen for three months to put down insurrection was enthusiastically met and more by the northern states. The northern war spirit was born then. It would wax with victory and wane with defeat but never would die in the war years, even if at times its leaders, Lincoln included, despaired of it.

Inevitably the first battles were between armed mobs in uniforms gaudy enough to please the hearts of Murat and Goering. Both armies were made up of men and boys who regarded the war as a lark, soon to be over and with glory enough for all.

"On to Richmond," the North urged its raw soldiers around Washington. "On to Washington" was the battle-cry of the equally new Confederate Army.

Met at Bull Run

These shiny new armies met first at Bull Run (the Confederates called it Manassas) in a battle that both wanted and neither knew how to fight with results any seasoned campaigner could have forecast. No officer on either side ever had led a unit larger than a brigade. The only officer in the country who ever had commanded an army was gouty old Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott, who remained flat on his lounge in Washington, not because the spirit was not willing but because the flesh was weak.

Washington politicians packed picnic lunches and drove their ladies into the Virginia countryside to see the fun.

Jefferson Davis, new Confederate president, rode up from Richmond on a special train to keep tabs on his generals.

The battle was everything it shouldn't have been on that hot Sunday, July 21, 1861. First the Confederates broke, then stood. Then the Federals broke and never stopped until they came under the fortifications around the capital.

The first bloodletting proved only that neither side was ready. It did have a long term effect. For then it began to dawn on the leaders that this was no summertime war, that it must be fought on many a bloody battlefield before victory came to rest on one of the standards, that officers as well as men must be trained in the art of modern war, and that industry must be mobilized, too.

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