The Emancipation Proclamation 2: Lincoln’s Proclamation

The Emancipation Proclamation, in which Lincoln delivers a death blow to slavery, becomes the most important document of the Civil War. Lincoln has learned to be firm. The Presidential decree makes compromise with the south impossible; fanning the flames of the Civil War. New battalions are drawn up. The promise of freedom for all blacks has won Lincoln the support of urgently needed fresh troops on the battlefields. 180,000 black men fight in their own segregated regiments for the cause of the Union and for their own fate. The railroad allows the north to assert its technological superiority. Soldiers and cannons can be transported quickly throughout the country. New railway lines are built across America. Battlefields are often located strategically close to the tracks. Newly built towns sprang up along these highly trafficked routes. The railroad is critical in determining the outcome of the war. Gradually the north gains the upper hand. The southern states are forced on the defensive. Their troops lose more and more ground. In a risky military strategy, they attempt to close in on the troops in the north by using enormous military deployments. But sabotaging the railway lines is often more effective. Horrific battles take place. In the summer of 1863 the two sides square off near the small town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. 8000 men die in three days. 30,000 are wounded. The Battle of Gettysburg is the turning point of the war. A bloody symbol of the sacrifice President Lincoln demands for the unity of the nation and the liberation of the slaves.