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American Civilization

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The Inventions and Innovations of the Civil War

When the civil war first broke out, fighting had not really changed much since the war for our independence. the generals just took thousands of men together and marched them toward fortified positions over and over again until either they ran out of men or they took the position, in essence it was a line up and charge tactic. due to the bloodiness of the war and the constant fighting many inventions and innovations came out of that blood shed as brother fought brother as it is said.

The classic tactics that the generals used were becoming outdated, a brute force approach that caused a lot of casualties on both sides, was made ineffective by the advancement of technology, so the soldiers began to change up the tactics during battles and eventually these changes would catch on and prove their effectiveness. tactics like trench warfare began to surface amongst soldiers, where they would burrow down and create a tactical advantage over the standard line up and charge routine.

The Rifled musket helped push the trench warfare because instead of bullet flying in a might as well be random direction, you had percision, now when soldiers aim it was effective, so a need for trench warfare came. All of a sudden you had both armies “digging in” making them much harder to hit. Which pushed the discontinuation of calvary. Before this cavalry were consider the hammer of a good offense, but with the advancements in cannons and rifling just made them good targets to the dug in soldiers so there use came to a slow stop as their use just ran out.

The transcontinental Railroad was underway during the civil war, the union began to utilize these to move troops effectively. This was a big advancement, whole companies of troops could be

move at a single time where quickly offering a clear tactical advantage in just response alone. Hot air balloons which did exist before the civil were being used scout enemy positions by the union army. The union army had an advantage of just resources began to mess around with iron in their navy building the first ironclad warship. eventually the south got ahold of one of these ironclad warships, but should not produce these where the north could. The use of iron as a building material made it effectively impossible to sink with the cannons at the time.

The confederate army was experimenting a little where they could, with the first submarine used to sink an enemy ship, although the submarine was not widely used as it was prone to problems but it is still considered a success. As the war pressed on both sides began to run low of resources and support and the armies began to starve, they became desperate and that desperation gave way to total warfare. Generale Sherman of the union army and 60,000 soliders destroyed cities as they went along to dissuade the southern states from the confederate cause.it started to become all out warfare on the south.

The civil war pushed us as a country to a particular dark place. From a United country to a arms race trying to kill the most the get the other side to back off. These advancements did serve to push the economy to boom right after the war and although the war was certainly bloody on both sides did reunite the union under again as well as remains as a dark and looming lesson from the past. Even with all the advancements the men were still essentially cannon fodder. I just get the impression through the lectures that the generals were just so bent on victory, the amount of soldiers lost did not matter to them, with casualties averaging 1000 a day with no sign to letting up.

Part of me thinks that the state of the union mattered more to the generales then did the lives of any man in their army, but the other part of me thinks that the civil war forced good men to become something they hadn't been before. Either way it leaves me with a somber and respectful nod to the men who fought in that war to preserve the union.

