LANDS OF HOPE AND PROMISE

A History of North America

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Produced and developed by:
Catholic Textbook Project

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Catching Copperheads

On December 31—New Years Eve, 1862—abolitionists, both white and black, gathered in Music Hall in Boston to await the turning of the year and the dawn of what they hoped would be a new age of freedom. None of the "states in rebellion" had laid down their arms; and so, as Lincoln warned in his Emancipation Proclamation, they must pay the price. Their slaves, come January 1, 1863, should be "forever free." The tolling of midnight was for Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and for all those in Music Hall, the long-awaited moment, the culmination of all their labors. Douglass greeted the new year with tears of joy.

Throughout the South, however, little changed, though Federal officers read Lincoln's proclamation to joy-befuddled fugitive slaves in the "contraband camps." They were free! As before the proclamation, many slaves sought the union lines, while others remained on their masters' plantations and farms. No slave insurrections troubled the South; and though the economy suffered, it was on account of the ever-tightening Federal blockade rather than escaping slaves.

Though abolitionists could bask in the joy of emancipation, others in the North were growing weary of a war that seemed no nearer its stated objective—preserving the union. The Midwestern states in particular were rife with opposition to the war. Fathers advised their sons to desert the army and come home; newspapers publicly called for military desertion. Let the South go their own way, many midwesterners thought; they did not want to fight a war for "niggers" or for New England merchants and industrialists whose interests, they thought, the war chiefly benefited. Some of these "Southern sympathizers," called "Copperheads" by their Yankee compatriots, spoke openly in favor of the Midwest joining the South in a struggle against the Northeast.

Lincoln thought such opposition required stern measures. On the same day (January 1) that he issued the final Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln ordered the suspension of *habeas corpus* throughout the North. All who openly encouraged resistance to enlistment or were "guilty of any disloyal practice affording aid and comfort to

A southern cartoon by Adalbert J. Volck, 1864, depicting Abraham Lincoln as a devil, with demons around him, writing the Emancipation Proclamation and trampling on the Constitution

Freed slaves escape to Union lines shortly after the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation

the rebels" were to be subject to martial law. Lincoln was extending what he had done in Maryland to the entire North, and his military authorities throughout the North acted with zeal. Throughout the course of the war, 13,000 northerners would be imprisoned and have their right of *habeas corpus* denied them.

Lincoln now exercised a power that even many kings had failed to achieve. "Copperheads" and Democrats denounced the president as a despot and tyrant. Clement Vallandingham, an Ohio Democrat, led the opposition to Lincoln in his state. As a member of Congress in 1861, Vallandingham had delivered a speech against Lincoln's suspension of *habeas corpus* in Maryland (Congress had been debating, and finally voted to support, the suspension); now Vallandingham was running for governor of Ohio on a peace platform that called for an immediate armistice with the South.

The military governor of Ohio ordered Vallandingham arrested—an act Governor Horatio Seymour of New York called "cowardly, brutal, infamous. It is not merely a step," Seymour said, "toward Revolution, it is revolution . . . our liberties are overthrown." A military court tried and convicted Vallandingham of treason; but instead of having him killed (and made a martyr), Lincoln ordered Vallandingham banished to the South. Eventually Vallandingham took ship to Canada, where he continued his run for governor of Ohio, publishing manifestos from Windsor, Ontario.

Homespun and Chicory

Southerners, too, had their own quarrels with *their* president, Jefferson Davis. The conscription act was but one example of his "tyranny," as was his failure to delegate authority and his attempt to manage the war and his generals down to the smallest details. Eventually Davis, too, would think it necessary to ask Congress to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus* in Richmond and other areas of the South. Congress suspended the writ in 1864; and though arbitrary imprisonments occurred, as in the North, Davis was not as vigorous in exercising martial law as Lincoln.

On the whole, the southern government was less vigorous than its northern counterpart, but not for lack of zeal. The Confederate Congress held all their sessions behind closed doors—and this was a good thing. They were a cantankerous lot, riddled with factions, and frequently opposed to President Davis. Being "southern gentlemen," congressmen were quick to take offense, and fighting with umbrellas, knives, and revolvers marred many a legislative session.

The Confederate Congress voted taxes that weighed heavily on the people of the South. All landowners were required to pay one-tenth of their produce to the government in return for valueless Confederate paper money. Military agents who requisitioned cattle and crops left impoverished farmers in their wake; for this reason, many farmers hid their grain or drove their cattle into the woods. Rich landowners objected not only to giving a tenth of their cotton or other crops, but to government impressment of their slaves.

With the scarcity of food and other necessities in the cities, merchants hiked prices to exorbitant levels. In Richmond, a barrel of flour that sold for $70 in the fall was going

for $250 in January. Not only merchants, but some rich planters continued to trade with Northern merchants, thus "aiding and abetting the enemy."

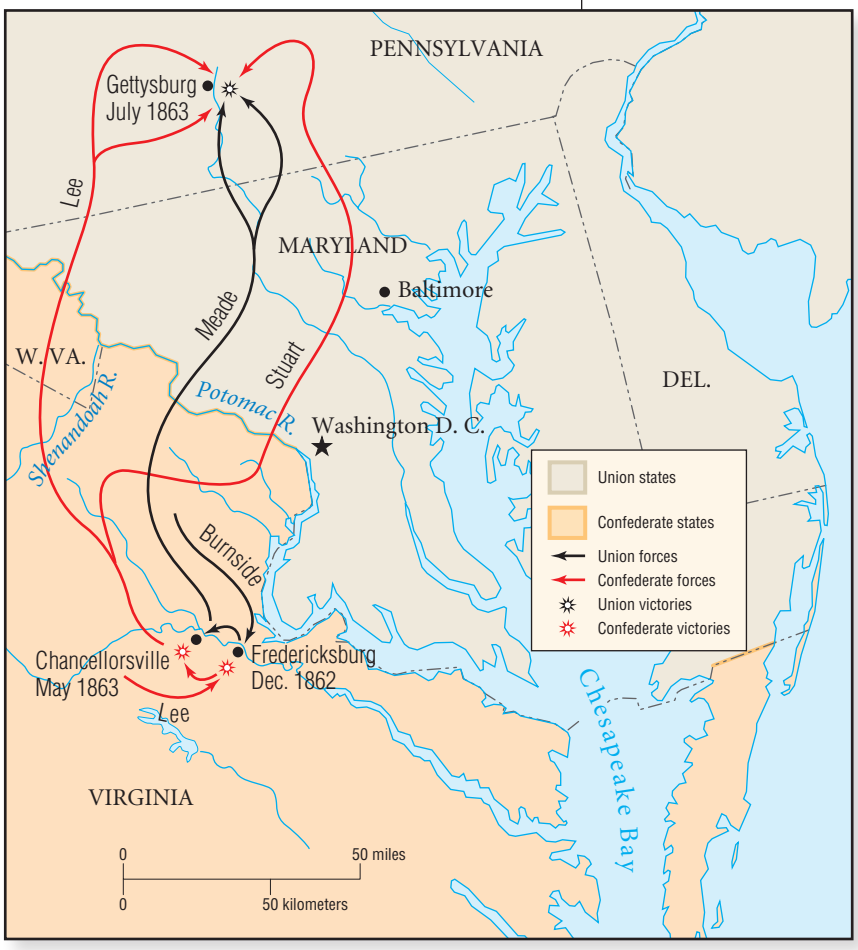
To supply its army with arms and its people with food, the South used a small fleet of blockade runners that sneaked through the Federal blockade to carry cotton to the British islands of Bermuda and Nassau and returned laden with manufactured goods, luxury items, and, most importantly, rifles. (Blockade runners brought 600,000 rifles into the South during the course of the war.) The arrival of a blockade runner into port was an occasion of joy to citizens weighed down as they were by want and fear.

Southern women bravely embraced deprivation for a cause they thought not only just, but holy. Women spun and weaved their own cloth to make "homespun" dresses for themselves and "homespun" uniforms for the army. Women collected the family's urine to make nitre for gunpowder. They gathered raspberry leaves for tea and ground chicory for coffee. Southern women ardently embraced the Southern cause, at times inspiring their men with their own courage. At times, a Southern girl would steal away from home, clothe herself as a man, and join the army.

"Let us Cross Over the River"

The turn of the year 1863 found the Army of the Potomac mired in Virginia clay at Falmouth, on the left bank of the Rappahannock, opposite Fredericksburg. The morale of the men was low—they had not been paid in months, the camps were rife with sickness, the food was bad, and Burnside was still in command. At least a quarter of the men were absent without leave, and the rest, who stayed, waited sullenly for an end to the rain, snow—and mud.

The road to Gettysburg, December 1862–July 1863



The Army of Northern Virginia still stared defiance from the hills above Fredericksburg. Their case however was more desperate than the Federals'. In ragged clothes and without shoes, with even less food and pay than their Northern brothers, rebel soldiers were in a miserable state. Many (about 40 percent) were absent without leave, some answering desperate appeals from hungry family at home, others just sick of the blood, cold, and mud.

Prospects brightened for the Army of the Potomac in the spring when Lincoln replaced Burnside with General Joseph Hooker. Called "Fighting Joe," Hooker boasted that his "plans" were "perfect." "May God have mercy on General Lee, for I will have none," he boasted. Hooker boosted his men's morale, not only with fighting words but by cleaning up the camps and, more importantly, by supplying them with food and pay.

Hooker had a good plan to destroy the Army of Northern Virginia, once and for all. He would divide his enormous force—185,000 men—and while a large

General Joseph Hooker

contingent under General Sedgwick pretended to make a frontal attack on Lee at Fredericksburg, Hooker would secretly lead another, larger force northwest, cross the Rappahannock farther upstream, and attack Lee from the rear. In this way, Hooker thought he and Sedgwick, like a hammer and anvil, could between them crush the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia.

General Robert E. Lee, however, was not fooled. He had an uncanny ability to read the character of his opponent and guess what he might do. After Hooker began his march up the river on April 27, Lee did a daring act—he divided his small force of 60,000, leaving 10,000 to face Sedgwick at Fredericksburg, while he led the remainder west to face Hooker. Military strategists thought dividing a smaller force in the face of a larger one the height of foolishness, but Lee was not governed by textbook strategy. He was in a desperate situation that called for desperate measures.

By May 1, Hooker had crossed the Rappahannock and had led his force through what locals called the "Wilderness"—a thick, dark, and tangled forest. Hooker made his headquarters at Chancellorsville—not a town, but a large house that stood amid a clearing in the Wilderness—and began to move on Confederate lines. Then, inexplicably, he ordered his men back to Chancellorsville. Why? Years later he explained: "I just lost confidence in Joe Hooker."

Meanwhile, Lee was moving against Hooker. Stonewall Jackson, scrapping for a fight, convinced Lee to divide his army yet again—Jackson leading 26,000 to attack Hooker's right flank. Lee agreed, and on May 2 Jackson moved his army 14 miles until it stood poised to attack Hooker's flank. Hooker ignored reports of rebel movements. That evening, about 5.30 p.m., while the Federals were relaxing around their fires, deer leaped from the woods into the camps. Behind the deer, with wild cries banishing peace, came Jackson's rebels. Overwhelmed, the Yankess fell back in confusion. By nightfall, Jackson had pushed the Federal right flank two miles back to Chancellorsville.

Success only whetted Jackson's appetite. He would not rest. He was determined to make a night attack. In the waning twilight, Jackson and several of his officers rode out to reconnoiter the Yankee lines. But within the Confederate lines, Jackson's men were skittish, and when Jackson and the officers were returning, they mistook them for a Yankee patrol. Shots rang out. Jackson fell from his horse, shot once through the right hand and twice in the left arm. He was taken to a field hospital, where the surgeon decided that he would have to amputate the general's left arm.

A photograph of Stonewall Jackson, taken seven days before he was wounded at the Battle of Chancellorsville

When Lee heard of Jackson's misfortune, he said, "he has lost his left arm, but I have lost my right." Yet, with or without Jackson, Lee had a battle to fight. On May 3, Sedgwick crossed the Rappahannock and pushed the small Confederate force from Marye's Heights. The Confederates kept falling back but held the Federals at Salem Church. At the same time, Hooker was making blunder after blunder. He still had 70,000 troops; he could have rallied them and beaten the outnumbered rebels. But Hooker was scared; Lee had whipped his spirit. The Rebels pushed the Yankees back; they retreated, abandoning the Chancellorsville clearing. Confederate artillery shelled the house, setting it ablaze. Other shells ignited the woods. The fires consumed the helpless wounded.

The next day, May 4, Lee again divided his army, sending the greater number to the aid of the Confederates at Salem Church. The reinforced Confederates drove Sedgwick back over Marye's Heights, through Fredericksburg, and across the Rappahannock. Lee now reunited his entire force for a final blow, but Hooker wouldn't give him the chance. On May 6, Hooker moved his army back across the river and took up quarters again at Falmouth.

"My God! My God! What will the country say?" exclaimed Lincoln when he heard the news of Hooker's defeat. Hooker's casualties were high—17,000 men lost. Lee's were less, though they were a greater blow to him—13,000 men, one-quarter of his army.

Another blow to Lee was the news that Stonewall Jackson had come down with pneumonia. He lay at a nearby farmhouse; his wife, Anna, by his bedside. When he was conscious, Old Blue Flame was confident he would survive—"the Almighty has yet a work for me to perform," he said to Anna. Yet, on Sunday, May 10, when Anna told him that the surgeon said he would not last the day, Jackson merely said, "Very good, very good. It is all right. It is the Lord's day; my wish is fulfilled. I have always desired to die on Sunday."

Throughout the day, Jackson dozed on and off. A little after three, he awoke in a delirium: "Order A.P. Hill to prepare for action!" he said. "Pass the infantry to the front . . . Tell Major Hawks—" He fell silent, smiled, and closed his eyes. "Let us cross over the river," he murmured, "and rest under the shade of the trees." And Stonewall Jackson died.

Vicksburg

Set atop its high bluff overlooking the Mississippi, the town of Vicksburg seemed to rear its head in derision at the many failed Federal attempts to take it. But failure did not discourage General Ulysses Grant. In the autumn of 1862, he set off south with 45,000 men to take this last Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi. With him marched William Tecumseh Sherman, his inseparable companion and ally.

Joe Johnston now commanded Confederate forces in the West, and a hard time he had of it. He simply did not have enough men to protect this vast territory (stretching between the Appalachians and the Mississippi), much less to drive the invader Federals out of it. Johnston had put General John C. Pemberton with 31,000 men at Vicksburg. Pemberton was a Pennsylvanian who had embraced the southern cause; yet, southerners did not trust him—he was still a Yankee, for all his southern sentiments. So, even though he was an able general, Pemberton couldn't inspire his skeptical men with confidence.

View and map of Vicksburg, 1863

By the end of January 1863, Grant and Sherman had reached Young's Point, 20 miles upriver from Vicksburg. The land between the Federal army and Vicksburg was cut by the Yazoo River and was swampy. Grant attempted to dig canals so that Admiral David Porter's boats could ferry the army over to the bluffs that could command Vicksburg, but the attempt failed. Finally, after several months of failure, Grant hit upon a desperate plan. He would march his army down the west bank of the Mississippi while David Porter's gunboats shot their way past Vicksburg. South of the town, Grant would meet Porter, who would ferry the army across the river. Grant would then move his army around Vicksburg and attack it from the east. The plan, however, posed a big problem; for in moving his army to the east of Vicksburg, Grant would cut off himself off from all communication with Sherman and the North, and his line of retreat would be severed.

Everything worked as planned, and on April 30, while Sherman pretended to assault Vicksburg from the north, Porter's boats blasted past Vicksburg and then ferried Grant's army onto the east bank of the river. Over the next three weeks, Grant fought five battles, each time defeating his enemy. Marching eastward, Grant captured Jackson, the capital of Mississippi (that Johnston had abandoned), and then moved westward against Vicksburg. In late May, Grant invested Vicksburg; but when he tried to take the city by force, its defenders beat him back. Two more times Grant tried assaulted Vicksburg, but failed to take it. Finally, he lay siege to the city. Now Pemberton and his men were trapped. Federal artillery daily lobbed bombs into the besieged town.

Jefferson Davis was worried—losing Vicksburg, the Confederacy would be split in two. He urged Lee to send General Longstreet west to relieve Vicksburg, but Lee had what he thought was a better idea. He would lead the Army of Northern Virginia once again in an invasion of the North. Crossing the Potomac, he would carry the war from the blood-soaked soil of Virginia into Pennsylvania. Harrisburg would be Lee's target and then Philadelphia, and then, maybe, Washington itself. With the capital threatened, Lee was certain Lincoln would call Grant east, thus breaking off the siege of Vicksburg. Davis approved Lee's plan, and in late May, the Army of Northern Virginia, now 70,000 strong, commenced its invasion of the North.

"Help Me Fight These People"

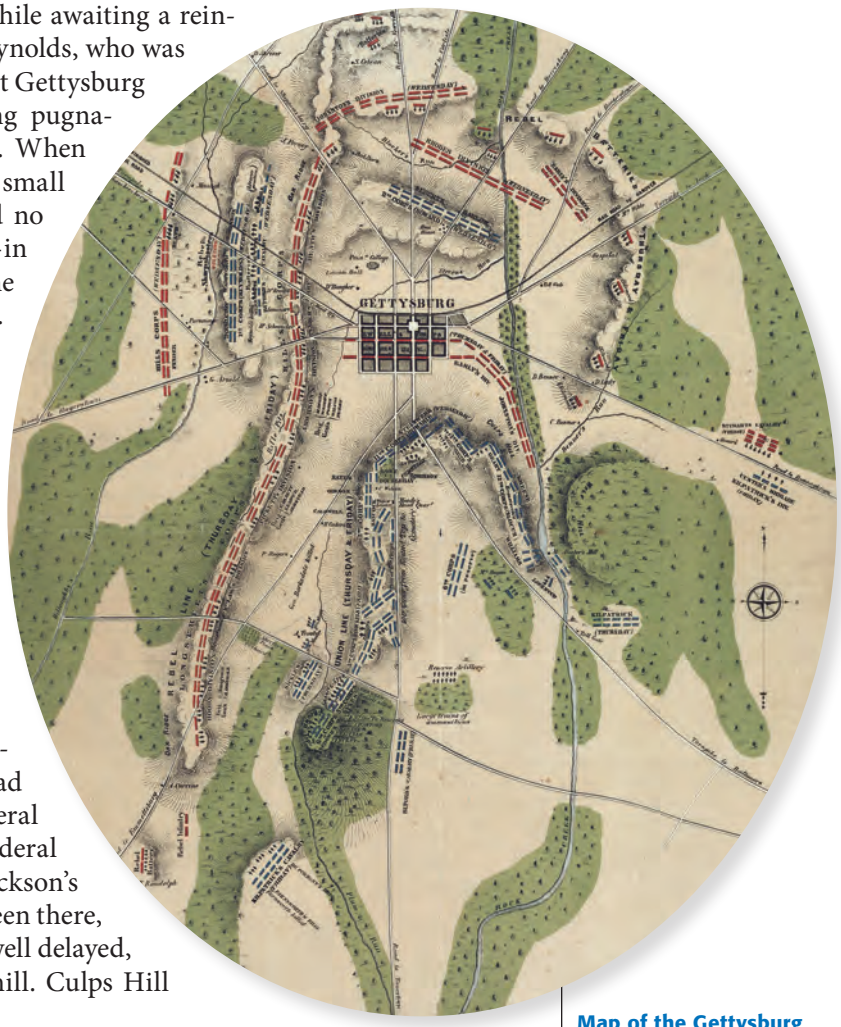
Lincoln did not want Hooker to think of attacking Richmond. "Your proper target," said the president, "is not the Confederate capital, but the Confederate army—Robert E. Lee's army." So, while Lee moved northward from the Rappahannock, the Army of the Potomac under Hooker moved north too, keeping always between Lee and Washington. In June, Lee's army crossed the Potomac, capturing York, Pennsylvania on June 28.

Meanwhile, Hooker had quarreled with General Halleck, the Federal general-in-chief, and had asked to be relieved of his command. Lincoln accepted Hooker's resignation, and on June 28 replaced him with Maj. General George Meade, who took command of the Army of the Potomac, now encamped around Frederick, Maryland.

Lee had left war-torn and ravaged Virginia in part because his army was in desperate need of food. Southern Pennsylvania was ripe with produce and wore the aspect of contented prosperity. The weary and hungry Confederates saw it as a garden of delights. Lee allowed his men to commandeer animals, food, and wagons, but strictly forbade them to pillage and loot. They had to pay for everything they took, said Lee—albeit with worthless Confederate scrip. Some Confederates ignored Lee' orders, for they wanted to take vengeance on the North for what the Yankees had done in Virginia. Soldiers seized free blacks—men, women, and children—to drive them back again into slavery. For the most part, however, Lee's men obeyed his orders.

Lee was marching into Pennsylvania blind—for he had not heard from his cavalry general, Jeb Stuart, for several days, and Stuart was (as Lee called him) the "eyes" of the army. Without Stuart, Lee did not know that Meade had moved his army to Emmitsburg, Maryland, just across the Pennsylvania border. Lee would soon learn the disposition of Meade, but by accident.

An infantry commander in A.P. Hill's division had moved into the town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, because Hill heard he could find a supply of boots there. It was July 1, 1863. There, too, came General John Buford with Federal cavalry sent north by Meade to feel out Lee's position. Finding the Confederates at Gettysburg, Buford decided he would contest their advance into the town while awaiting a reinforcement of infantry under General John Reynolds, who was not far away. A.P. Hill had no reason to fight at Gettysburg except that the enemy was there; and being pugnacious, Hill too was determined to do battle. When Reynolds arrived in Gettysburg he found a small but brisk battle going on. Reynolds also had no reason to engage the enemy at Gettysburg—in fact, his orders from Meade indicated that he should perhaps fall back if he met the enemy. Reynolds, though, was also a fighter, and he was determined he would hold the town. But he was killed by a stray bullet early in the battle, and Hill pushed Buford's men back through Gettysburg.



Map of the Gettysburg battlefield, 1863

Matters might have gone ill for the Federals had not General Winfield Scott Hancock arrived and rallied the retreating soldiers on the high ground south of Gettysburg—Culp's Hill and Cemetery Ridge. When Lee, who had heard the distant sounds of battle, arrived, he ordered his entire army to converge on Gettysburg. Having surveyed the lay of the country, Lee saw that he had to take the high ground and ordered General Richard S. Ewell to seize Culp's Hill on the Federal right, "if practicable." Ewell commanded Jackson's old division, and if "Stonewall Jackson" had been there, he might have made the attack at once. But Ewell delayed, not certain it was "practicable" to take the hill. Culps Hill thus remained in Federal hands.

General James "Old Pete" Longstreet, whom Lee called "my old warhorse," wanted to march his division around the union left and get between the Federals and Washington. He thought it advisable to take a strong defensive position away from Gettysburg and await a Federal attack. But without Stuart to tell him the lay of Meade's army, Lee was unwilling to do this. "No," said Lee, "I am going to whip them [here], or they are going to whip me."

Throughout the evening and into the night of July 1 the combined Federal and Confederate armies converged at Gettysburg. By the next day, 65,000 Confederates faced a Federal host, numbering 85,000. When Longstreet arrived, Lee ordered him to advance on the Federal left and to take two hills that commanded Cemetery Ridge—Little Roundtop and Big Roundtop. Lee's plan was for Longstreet to attack the Federal left, while A.P. Hill

assaulted its center on Cemetery Ridge, and Ewell moved on Culp's Hill. Longstreet's advance, which was to be secret, was however somewhat roundabout, and it wasn't until 2:30 in the afternoon that he was in position. Still, he delayed.

Meanwhile, Stuart had returned to greet an angry Lee. "I have not heard from you for days," said Lee, "and you are the eyes and ears of my army."

Chastened by the general's anger, Stuart defended himself. "I have brought you 125 wagons and their teams, general."

"Yes," replied Lee, "and they are an impediment to me now." Noticing Stuart's surprise and shame, Lee softened. "Let me ask your help," he said to Stuart. "We will not discuss this matter further. Help me fight these people."

At 4 o'clock, Longstreet at last advanced. His division commander, John Hood, sent two Alabama regiments against Little Round Top, which was held by only 350 men, the 20th Maine, under Colonel Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain—in civilian life a college professor. Chamberlain took his orders to hold Little Round Top "at all hazards" with the utmost seriousness. Some 3,500 Confederates assailed the 20th Maine; the fighting surged back and forth, and to save his left flank, Chamberlain formed his men at right angles in a "V" formation. Finally, when his men were nearly out of ammunition, Chamberlain ordered them to fix bayonets, and charge the Confederates. Taken by surprise, the Confederates broke and fled. Chamberlain had held Little Round Top, but with a loss of nearly one-third of his men.

Elsewhere—in the "Wheat Field," "Devil's Den," and the "Valley of Death"—the fighting was bitter. Minie balls flew thick like a shower of hail. Yet, by the close of day, the Federal flanks held. Ewell had been driven back from Culp's Hill; Jeb Stuart had been checked from reconnoitering the Federal right by a young Federal cavalry commander named George Armstrong Custer. Little Round Top had been reinforced.

After this day of failures, Longstreet urged Lee to retreat, but Lee would not. You will attack the Federal center on Cemetery Ridge tomorrow, he told "Old Pete." Though only a low rise, Cemetery Hill was nevertheless a strong position; to attack it, the Confederates would have to march without cover across a large open field in the face of the powerful Federal artillery. Federal troops lay behind a stone wall that ran the length of the ridge. It was almost as strong a position as Marye's Heights was in the Battle of Fredericksburg.

Longstreet tried to dissuade Lee. "General Lee," he said, "there never was a body of 15,000 men who could make that attack successfully." But Lee's fighting spirit was up. "The enemy is there, General Longstreet," he said, "and I am going to strike him."

Pickett's Charge, by Thure de Thulstrup

Longstreet and Lee chose General George E. Pickett of Virginia to lead the assault. The 38-year-old general, though something of a dandy (he wore his hair in ringlets, richly perfumed) rejoiced that the glory of the assault would be his and eagerly awaited the commencement of the attack. He would lead his own division, and two others—13,000 men in all.

First, though, the union center had to be "softened," and at one in the afternoon Confederate artillery began a savage barrage on Federal lines. Though the guns fired high, Confederate fire wreaked havoc and death within the Federal lines. General Hancock, who commanded the Federal center, rode on horseback in the front of his lines to calm his

men. One of his lieutenants told him not to expose himself so, but Hancock replied, "There are times when a corps commander's life does not count."

Federal artillery answered the Confederate barrage. After about two hours, though, the union commander silenced his guns to conserve ammunition for the assault he knew would come. Longstreet could delay no longer, though he was loath to order the attack. When Pickett eagerly inquired whether now was the time, Longstreet merely nodded. Pickett penned a hasty note to his fiancée—"If Old Peter's nod means death, then good-bye and God bless you, little one."

Many a southern schoolboy would come to relive this moment in his mind—the high-water mark of Southern chivalry. Pickett's words would echo down the years: "Up men and to your posts! Don't forget today that you are from old Virginia!"

Battle dead at Gettysburg

And in silence they marched from the cover of the woods along Seminary Ridge where Lee's headquarters lay. In well ordered ranks they advanced, a mile in length, red battle-flags waving, arms glistening in the sun, across the wide-open field, toward the stone wall. "It was the most beautiful thing I ever saw," wrote one union officer. They marched "with the step of men who believed themselves invincible," a union private recalled. Their lines contracted from a mile to a half-mile in length. After crossing the Emmitsburg Pike, they regrouped and continued marching on and on.

Union artillery opened fire, punching large holes in the Confederate line. But still they came on. Seeing the destruction the cannons caused, union soldiers taunted their enemy with cries of "Fredericksburg! Fredericksburg!" But still, in ordered ranks, they came on. The invincible Army of Northern Virginia! Bobby Lee's men! Two-hundred yards from the wall, all hell-fire was loosed on them—11 cannon, 1,700 muskets—cutting down men like grain at harvest. Most never reached the wall, but Brigadier General Lewis A. Armistead did. The North Carolinian and his men engaged the enemy in hand-to-hand combat, broke the union lines. But Armistead was shot as he tried to turn the union artillery, and his men were captured or killed.

The Confederates broke and fled. Over half of them, 6,500 men, had fallen or been taken prisoner. As Lee watched in horror the shattered remnant of his army return, he cried out, "All this has been my fault—it is I who have lost this fight." He feared a union counterattack, and finding Pickett, ordered him to rally his division for defense. Pickett, his exaltation turned to despair, looked in dazed wonder on Lee: "General Lee," he said, "I have no division now."

The next day, July 4, came in a shower of rain, as if to wash away the memory of the Battle of Gettysburg. Combined Federal and Confederate casualties numbered 51,000. That afternoon, Lee retreated, and Meade, fearful of Lee's remaining strength, let him go. Late that night an exhausted, defeated Lee recalled Pickett's Charge. Never had men fought so bravely, he said. If only they had had better support, they might have, they just might have . . . He paused, then loudly cried out his sorrow, "Too bad! Too bad! Oh—too bad!"

The Confederacy Cut in Half

Gettysburg was not the only bad news Jefferson Davis had received. On July 4, the very day the Army of Northern Virginia began its retreat across the Potomac, Vicksburg fell to Grant.

It had been a long siege. Daily, for over a month, Federal artillery, 200 guns, had battered the city by land, while gunboats fired at it from the river. To escape that rain of fiery death,

Confederate prisoners at Gettysburg

civilians dug into the yellow chalk hillsides—lived in caves—while their houses above them were blasted to timber. Though wild reports spread throughout the South of women and children maimed and killed by falling shells, only 12 civilians were killed during the course of bombardment; 30 were wounded. As food supplies ran low, civilians and soldiers ate mules, horses, dogs, and even rats. Sickness spread among the troops defending Vicksburg. By late June, one-half of the Confederates were listed as sick.

Yet, Grant could not take the city, and the defenders vaunted their defiance from its battlements. On July 2, the *Vicksburg Citizen* boasted that the "Great Ulysses—the Yankee Generalissimo surnamed Grant—has expressed his intention of dining in Vicksburg on the Fourth of July. . . . Ulysses must get into the city before he dines in it. The way to cook a rabbit is 'first catch the rabbit.'"

But the *Citizen's* confidence was misplaced. By early July, Confederate General John Pemberton had received a note signed, "Many Soldiers." "The army is now ripe for mutiny, unless it can be fed," said the note. "If you can't feed us, you'd better surrender us, horrible as the idea is, than suffer this noble army to disgrace themselves by desertion." Pemberton decided that it was indeed time to surrender. He would hand over Vicksburg on July 4, Independence Day, for he thought that then he could hope for the best terms from the Yankees

Though the North rejoiced at the fall of Vicksburg, the union soldiers who had invested it did not—at least not much. As one Southern minister said, "they knew that we surrendered to famine, not to them." Over the courthouse now flew the Stars and Stripes instead of the Stars and Bars. Vicksburg had been taken, the Mississippi now belonged to Lincoln, and the Confederacy was cut in half.

In the Wake of Gettysburg

Before the fall of Vicksburg and Lee's retreat from Gettysburg, the southern armies had seemed to be advancing in the East and holding their own in the West. With continued successes, perhaps Great Britain or France would recognize the Confederacy; and Lincoln then would have to agree to peace or face war with European powers. Gettysburg and Vicksburg changed all that. Lee was back in Virginia, and the Mississippi River was a Federal highway. The blockade grew more and more efficient, and the hope of European intervention grew dim. Lincoln needed another supreme effort, it seemed, to topple the Confederacy. The problem was, he needed more troops.

In March, Congress had passed a conscription act that allowed the president to draft into service men between the ages of 20 and 45. With enlistments way down, Lincoln enacted the conscription act, and in July called for 300,000 men to serve for three-year stints. One provision of Lincoln's draft, however, drew the opposition of Radical Republicans in Congress: if a man could come up with a $300 "commutation fee" or could find someone to serve in his place, he could avoid the draft. This law, declared Pennsylvania congressman Thaddeus Stevens, "is a rich man's bill made for him who can raise his $300 and against him who cannot raise that sum."

The draft gave an occasion for all sorts of corruption. Brokers for substitutes set up shop, taking a fee to find substitutes for men with means. Some doctors, for a hefty fee, diagnosed non-existent diseases. It seemed the poor working class man alone would fill the ranks of the army and become cannon fodder for the Union. The Irish in the cities, who resented the

Nuns and the Civil War

Taking no sides in the conflict between the North and South, thousands of Catholic nuns tended the sick and wounded during the war. There were no official records kept of such volunteers, and so it is impossible to know just how many women made up the "Sisters of Mercy," as all nuns—whatever their order—were commonly called. The record of their service is to be found in convent archives, soldiers' personal letters, private diaries, and letters to newspapers of the time. It is known, however, that thousands of sisters volunteered, freely and without pay, for nursing duty in many locations on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line: New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Washington, Philadelphia, Charleston, Richmond, Nashville, Vicksburg, Memphis, Atlanta, New Orleans, and Gettysburg.

Tending Confederates and Yankees, Catholics and non-Catholics, black and white, the sisters worked in field hospitals, on hospital boats, in prisons, and in larger military hospitals. They tended the wounded, even on the battlefields. Universally, it was noted that the sister-staffed hospitals were clean and orderly.

Detail from the Nuns of the Battlefield Monument, Washington, D.C.

The training the sisters had received to work in Catholic schools, orphanages, and hospitals put them in an elite—the small group of nurses prepared for rigorous duty. And their unwavering self-discipline and religious devotion gave them the mental and emotional strength to cope with the horrors they saw. The sisters normally arrived at their posts with complete corps of expert executives, medical and surgical nurses, trained dieticians, and insanity experts.

Indeed, death rates at military hospitals typically dropped dramatically after sisters arrived to assume nursing duties. More than once, through tender and persistent care, the sisters were credited with saving the lives of men whom doctors had given up for dead. In some instances, overworked surgeons refused to treat men they felt had no hope of surviving. Some soldiers believed, as a letter in a Baltimore newspaper stated, "that had the Sisters been here from the beginning, not a man would have died."

Daughters of Charity from Emmitsburg, Maryland, were on the Gettysburg battlefield on July 4, the day after the fighting ended, and remained in the area for months at various hospitals. Sixteen sisters and a priest left Emmitsburg for Gettysburg, taking refreshments, bandages, sponges, and clothing. Their journey by wagon brought them up the Emmitsburg Road, which Pickett's Charge had crossed on July 3. The dead of both armies lay so thick that the wagon driver could hardly avoid driving over bodies.

In Gettysburg, the sisters paired off and scattered throughout the battlefield and among the many hospitals set up in public buildings. "The White Cornette of the Sisters of Charity fluttered like Angels' wings," wrote a witness. One Sister Petronilla Breen was seen seated on a shattered tree stump, "hurriedly preparing the compresses necessary to staunch the flow of bullet-spilt blood." So many men needed attention that the sisters contacted their convents in Emmitsburg and Baltimore to ask that more nuns be sent north to Gettysburg. One of the Sisters of Charity from Emmitsburg, Sister Camilla O'Keefe, was assisting a surgeon in the Methodist church. The surgeon sent Sister Camilla to a Sanitary Commission facility for more bandages. "But the Methodist church doesn't have nuns," the Sanitary Commission representative protested. "It does today," Sister Camilla replied.

There is a Civil War monument in Washington, D.C., that depicts 12 women in various religious habits. These twelve represent the 12 religious orders that were known to have sent sisters to nurse and tend the soldiers of both the Union and the Confederacy. Above the plaque is inscribed: "They comforted the dying, nursed the wounded, carried hope to the imprisoned, gave in His Name a drink of water to the thirsty."

(Credits: Michael F. Fitzpatrick, a photo collector in Annapolis, Maryland, became interested in researching the contributions of the sister nurses when he acquired some pictures of nuns from the Civil War period. His extensive and fascinating article on the topic appeared in the *Civil War Times*, Volume XXXVI, #5, October, 1997. Part of Michael Fitzpatrick's article and photographs was reprinted in *Canticle* Magazine, Volume 7; reprinted with permission of *Canticle* Magazine, *Civil War Times* and the author)

Draft riots in New York City, 1863

blacks because they competed for their jobs and who felt generally kicked around, especially resented the draft.

On July 11, the first names of draftees were drawn in New York City. It was the same day that names of casualties at Gettysburg were posted. Festering resentment now found an occasion for expression. Irish mobs attacked the draft office, destroyed files, and finished the job by razing the building. For the next three days, the mobs wandered the streets, rioting, breaking into stores and businesses, and looting. Black neighborhoods were their special target; mobs set fire to black boarding houses, a black orphanage, and a black church. Archbishop John Hughes of New York, who had supported the draft, intervened on July 17, appealing to his flock to stop the rioting. Finally troops, veterans of Gettysburg, restored order. The killed numbered 105.

Jayhawkers and Bushwackers

Bloody guerrilla struggles raged along the border of Missouri and Kansas. Brigadier General James H. Lane, formerly a United States Senator from Kansas, thought Missourians were "wolves, snakes, devils." "Damn their souls," he said, "I want to see them cast into a burning hell." Lane and his band of pro-union *banditti* called "Jayhawkers" did their best to see that this happened. Crossing the border into Missouri, the Jayhawkers raided and set fire to settlers' houses, burnt and plundered towns.

Missourians thirsted for vengeance. Forming themselves into bands called "Bushwackers," they did unto Kansans what Lane had done unto them. The most formidable and bloody Bushwacker band was led by Confederate Captain William Clarke Quantrill, whose Bushwack Raiders took and sacked Lawrence, Kansas on August 21, 1863. While Quantrill ate a hearty breakfast at a local hotel, his men pillaged the town and murdered 150 men and boys. The Raiders escaped back into Missouri, leaving Lawrence in flames.

Jesse James

General Thomas Ewing, Jr., who commanded Federal forces in Missouri, wanted to put an end to Quantrill. To keep Missouri settlers from supplying the Bushwackers (as some did), Ewing issued General Order 11, commanding the inhabitants of three Missouri counties driven from their homes. Federal troops forced 10,000 men, women, and children from their homes, which Jayhawkers then plundered and burnt. As groups of refugees crossed the open prairies, Jayhawkers attacked them and looted their wagons. The three Missouri counties were soon called the "Burnt District."

General Sterling Price, leading 12,000 Confederate regulars, thought the Missourians' desire to revenge such outrages gave him an opportunity to win the state back for the Confederacy. Though unable to gain significant support from General Edmund Kirby Smith in Arkansas, Price invaded Missouri in September, pushing as far as the northwestern part of the state. At Westport on October 23 he met a powerful Federal army under General Samuel Curtis and was routed. Fleeing through eastern Kansas, Price and his men made a 1,400 mile march into Texas.

The battle of Westport was the last major Confederate action west of the Mississippi, for Quantrill had fled with Price to Texas. Some of Quantrill's men returned and made sporadic guerrilla raids into Kansas, but these were more the actions of bandits than of armies. After the war was over, Quantrill's legacy haunted Kansans in the persons of two former Raiders—the outlaw brothers, Frank and Jesse James.

The Black Soldier

Frederick Douglass thought that if a black man could serve in the Federal army there would be "no power on earth which can deny he has earned the right to citizenship in the United States." Like other abolitionists, both white and black, Douglass hoped that the United States government would enlist black soldiers into the Federal army. In September 1861, he asked:

> Why does the government reject the Negro? Is he not a man? Can he not wield a sword, fire a gun, march and countermarch and obey orders like any other?

In the same article, Douglas made the surprising claim that "there are at the present moment many Colored men in the Confederate Army doing duty not only as cooks, servants and laborers, but real soldiers, having muskets on their shoulders, and bullets in their pockets, ready to shoot down any loyal troops and do all that soldiers may do to destroy the Federal government and build up that of the traitors and rebels." Douglass based this claim on reports he had received after First Manasses or Bull Run—and he used it as propaganda to pressure the federal government to induct blacks into its service

The Confederate Congress did not officially allow blacks to serve as soldiers, though thousands of blacks, free and slave, served in the Confederate ranks throughout the war. Most of these, however, were servants and laborers, used to relieve the white soldiers from drudgery and free them to fight; and most blacks, it appears, were pressed into service. But some of them may have served as soldiers bearing arms.

After Gettysburg and Vicksburg, some prominent Confederate leaders proposed an official recruitment of blacks into the Confederate army. General Patrick Ronayne Cleburne wrote that the Confederacy "immediately commence training a large reserve of the most courageous of our slaves and further that we guarantee freedom within a reasonable time to every slave in the South who shall remain true to the Confederacy in this war." Other southerners, though, agreed with Howell Cobb of Georgia, who insisted that "you cannot make soldiers of slaves, or slaves of soldiers! The day you make a soldier of them is the beginning of the end of the revolution. And if slaves seem good soldiers, then our whole theory of slavery is wrong." So great was the opposition to recruiting slaves into the army that Jefferson Davis shelved the idea—at least for a time.

Lincoln supported recruiting blacks into the Federal army, but many Federal generals opposed it. The battle of Milliken's Bend, Louisiana, on June 7, 1863, however changed their minds. In this fight, Federal soldiers, both black and white, fought bravely against a superior force of Confederates. By the end of the war, free blacks from the North, along with escaped slaves from the border states and the Confederacy, had joined the Federal army to the number of 185,000. But though they had proven their worth in battle, these black soldiers still did not receive equal pay to the whites and were not given the same clothing allowances. White doctors, too, were loath to operate on black patients, and many black soldiers died for lack of attention. The Confederate government, too, did not recognize blacks who served in the union army as soldiers and so refused to include them in prisoner exchanges. Instead, the Confederate government ordered that black Federals captured in battle were to be shot.

Twelve illustrated cards narrating the journey of a slave from plantation life to the struggle for liberty, for which he gives his life, as a Union soldier, and for which he is crowned with laurels by Columbia, ca. 1863

The Battle for Central Tennessee

In the six months following a battle fought at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, on December 30, 1862, the Federal and Confederate armies had reached a stand-off in central Tennessee. Murfreesboro had been indecisive. Neither Federal general William Rosecrans, nor Confederate general Braxton Bragg had won an advantage. Afterwards, except for occasional skirmishes, the two armies did nothing but stare each other down.

Lincoln wanted Rosecrans to do something, but "Old Rosy" (as his men called him) said he needed more men and supplies. Finally, in June, threatened with removal from command if he stayed inactive any longer, Rosecrans began a series of bloodless flanking maneuvers in which he drove Bragg south, 80 miles, to Tullahoma, and then to Chattanooga, near the Georgia border.

Rosecrans' movements threatened to drive a wedge between the eastern tier of Confederate states and those west of the Appalachians, and President Davis was worried. After conferring with General Lee, Davis withdrew Longstreet and 12,000 men from the Army of Northern Virginia and sent them west. Since Ambrose Burnside had taken Knoxville, Tennessee, Longstreet could not take the more direct rail route through East Tennessee, and so his men had to be transported through the Carolinas and Georgia, and north toward Chattanooga. Bragg, however, had been reinforced by other Confederate regiments so that his force now equaled that of Rosecrans.

In September, to draw Rosecrans out of Chattanooga, Bragg began to move his army south into Georgia along the Chickamauga Creek. The plan worked. Rosecrans, thinking Bragg was retreating, began to pursue the Confederate army. On September 20, 1863, Bragg struck Rosecrans hard, though he was unable to destroy the Federal army as he had hoped. The next day, reinforced by Longstreet and 6,000 men from the Army of Northern Virginia, Bragg again attacked Rosecrans. Taking advantage of a break in Federal lines, Longstreet routed two Federal corps, and the entire northern army began a confused retreat towards Chattanooga. Had it not been for General George Henry "Pap" Thomas' stubborn withdrawal, the Confederates might have wrought worse damage on the Federal ranks. For his steadfastness, Thomas earned the title, the "Rock of Chickamauga."

But Bragg did not follow up his victory with another attack, and a disgusted Longstreet called for his removal. "I am convinced," declared Old Pete, "that nothing but the hand of God can help as long as we have our present commander." Jefferson Davis traveled to Chattanooga to settle the dispute that now developed between his generals. But though all the generals voiced their disapproval of Bragg, Davis decided to keep him. Better Bragg then, say, Beauregard or Joe Johnston, thought the president. And, besides, Davis liked Bragg.

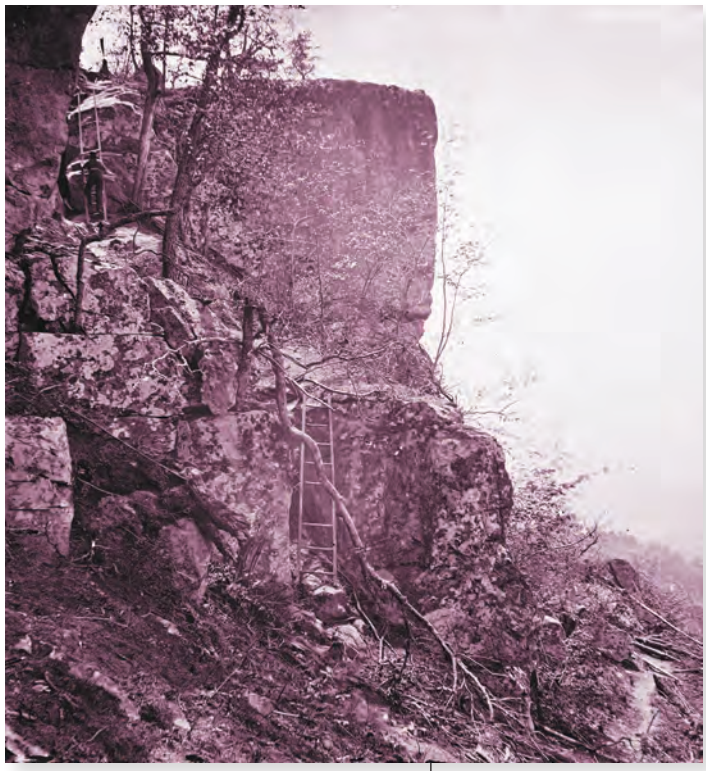
Battle of Chickamauga

Lincoln, too, was not pleased with his general, Rosecrans. In October, he appointed Ulysses Grant as the commander of all Federal armies between the Mississippi and the Appalachians, and Grant decided to replace Rosecrans with Pap Thomas. Grant infused a new spirit into the defeated Federals at Chattanooga—by filling their bellies. Since the battle, they had lived in filth and without sufficient food. Grant opened up supply lines and fed his army.

Though the Confederates were as hungry as the Federals had been, they still provided Grant a formidable challenge. Bragg occupied a strong position east of Chattanooga—the

six-mile-long Missionary Ridge, anchored to the south at the 2,000-foot high Lookout Mountain. Bragg had placed artillery on Lookout Mountain, dug in rifle pits along the slopes and trenches along the base of Missionary Ridge. Altogether, it looked as though the Confederates held an impregnable position.

Despite the appearances, Grant and Pap Thomas decided to attack. After Sherman arrived in mid November with four divisions, Grant began his assault on Missionary Ridge. On November 24, Sherman attacked the left flank of the rebel line while General Hooker struck at the right. While Sherman was turned back, Hooker led his men stealthily up the slopes of Lookout Mountain, swathed in dense fog that rose from the Tennessee River. In this "Battle Above the Clouds," Hooker's men forced the Confederates from the mountain. By day's end, the Stars and Stripes flew from the peak of Lookout Mountain.



Summit of Lookout Mountain, ca. 1864

The next day, Grant ordered Thomas' men to capture the first line of Confederate trenches skirting the base of Missionary Ridge. Thomas overran the trenches and then stopped, waiting for further orders. During the lull, one of Thomas' generals, Philip Sheridan, the son of an Irish immigrant, pulled a flask from his pocket and toasted the Confederate gunners on the ridge with, "Here's at you." The rebels didn't appreciate the compliment and returned Sheridan's toast with artillery fire, spattering Sheridan and his officers with dirt. Sheridan was furious. "That was ungenerous!" he cried out. "Ill take your guns for that!"

Without orders, Sheridan led his men up the steep slope of Missionary Ridge. Shouting "Chickamauga!" Sheridan's men climbed like furies, sometimes on hands and knees, sometimes pulling themselves upward with sticks and bayonets, always in the face of heavy fire. They seemed unstoppable. Grant watched with wonder—"who ordered those men up the hill?" he asked. "No one," answered an aide. "They started without orders. When those fellows get started, all hell can't stop them."

Some of the Confederates broke and fled; then it turned into a major route. Sheridan's men took Missionary Ridge, and 4,000 prisoners. The Confederates thus lost Chattanooga, and the way stood open for a Federal advance into Georgia.

Address at Gettysburg

Five days before the battle of Missionary Ridge, Abraham Lincoln came to Gettysburg to dedicate a cemetery to the union dead there. Yet, president though he was, he was not to be the principle speaker. Edward Everett, the 70-year old former governor of Massachusetts, was to deliver the principle address while Lincoln was to add only some "appropriate remarks."

Everett, a florid orator, spoke for nearly two hours. When at last Lincoln rose to speak, he offered only a short speech he had penned on the back of an envelope, probably while Everett spoke.

"Fourscore and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." These famous words encapsulated Lincoln's—and, indeed, many Americans'—vision of the federal union. Other nations had been founded on a common culture or race; they were in many ways like an extended family; but the United States had been founded on a proposition—an idea demanding a response: human equality. Not culture, not race;

Lincoln at Gettysburg. Lincoln can be seen center left, just to the left of at tall man in a top hat.

not soil or blood, but a belief defined America. For Lincoln, as for many Americans, this idea had been set forth in a kind of creed, the Declaration of Independence.

"Now we are engaged in a great civil, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure." For Lincoln, the war then being waged was significant not just for America, but for the world. It had universal significance. Could a nation, dedicated to the creed of equality, survive? The fate of the United States, the Union, (which Lincoln elsewhere called the "last best hope of earth") would be the test.

The men who died at Gettysburg, said Lincoln, "gave their lives that that nation"—the hope of mankind, a sort of secular version of Winthrop's "citty upon a hill"—"might live." Their deaths, not any consecration or dedication, said Lincoln, hallowed the ground. Their sacrifice would be remembered:

> The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

U.S. Grant, by Mathew B. Brady

The Twilight of the War

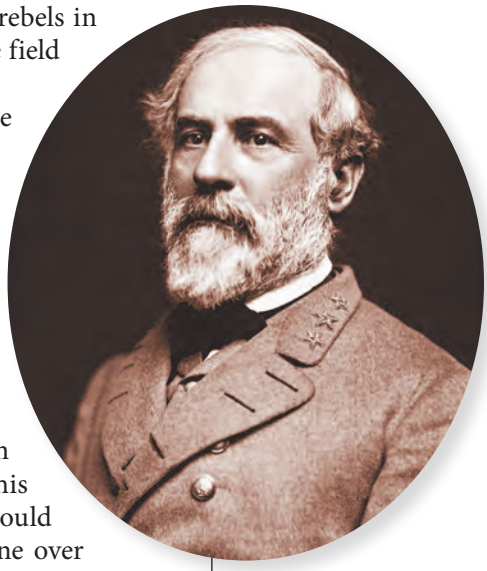
When he was young, U.S. Grant had been thought a failure. His father, Jesse Grant, a tanner by trade, thought his boy, who withdrew from others and was a might too sensitive, so impractical that he sent him to West Point to train for a military career. "A military life had no charms for me," Grant later wrote, and he was an indifferent student, graduating at the middle of his class. Though he thought it wicked, Grant fought in the Mexican War; for he held it his supreme duty to serve his flag.

In 1848, Grant married Julia Dent, to whom he was deeply devoted. When the army transferred him to a Pacific post without his wife and children, he was lonely, began drinking too much, and contemplated leaving the army. In 1854, he did just that—resigned his commission and returned to Missouri and his Julia. He tried his hand at several occupations—farming, bill collecting, real estate—and failed at them all. Finally he ended up clerking in his brother's leather store in Galena, Illinois. There the war found him, and Grant went from failure to the victories of Donelson, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga.

It was (on the outside, at least) a very different Grant that entered Washington in March 1864 to take up a commission that no one had held since George Washington. Grant was to be Liet. General, having command over the entire U.S. army. Grant was the toast of the capital; everyone wanted to see and

shake hands with the small, shy general who had so soundly whipped the rebels in the West. But Grant was uneasy in Washington. He longed to be out on the field of battle, not in drawing rooms.

Grant's nemesis was a man whom his classmates at West Point called "The Marble Model" because he had never earned a single demerit there. While Grant had arisen from very humble beginnings, Robert E. Lee was a scion of one of the first families of Virginia. His father was "Light Horse" Harry Lee, one of George Washington's most trusted officers, who had married Mary Custis, Martha Washington's granddaughter. "Light Horse" Harry had squandered much of the family fortune and then skipped off to the West Indies, but Robert's mother brought him up to be a gentleman, teaching him "to practice self-denial and self-control" and to love honor.



Robert E. Lee

Lee did not love secession or slavery (he had freed his father's-in-law slaves and never owned any of his own), but his sense of honor induced him to follow Virginia out of the union. His obligation, he believed, was first to his people and his state. He later said, "I did only what my duty demanded. I could have taken no other course without dishonor. And if it were all to be done over again, I should act in precisely the same manner." Lee, however, was more than a marble man; he enjoyed music, dancing, and fine food. Though always faithful to his wife, Lee took pleasure in the attentions of ladies, who thought him handsome and dignified. His chief defect was a terrible temper, which he took great pains to control; even so, once roused, Lee withered offenders with the cold, white intensity of his furious, silent stare.

Lee knew he was up against something new in Grant—that at last he faced a relentless, vigorous campaigner. Outnumbered, Lee would try to hold fortified positions against which Grant must hurl and break his army. Lee hoped by this strategy to make the price of war so high in northern blood that the North would tire of the war and call for peace. Lincoln was up for election in November 1864; perhaps enough war tragedy would bring a new, more peace-minded president into office.

Grant had his own strategy. He thought the Federal armies had operated independently of one another for too long. He intended to coordinate all the armies, east and west, in a combined assault on the Confederacy. Grant would send General Franz Sigel to capture the Shenandoah Valley, the breadbasket for Lee's army, while Benjamin Butler moved up the James River toward Richmond. Grant himself, with General Meade and 110,000 men of the Grand Army of the Republic (as Grant's army was now called), would pursue the Army of Northern Virginia, 60,000 strong, while, in the west, Sherman advanced from Chattanooga to Atlanta, Georgia.

Grant's plan was a good one, and the new general could boast of triumphs in the West. Still, some veterans of the Army of the Potomac were not convinced Grant could carry it off. Grant may have been victorious against other Confederates, they said, but he had "never met Bobbie Lee and his boys."

Into the Wilderness

In early May 1864, the Grand Army of the Republic broke camp at Brandy Station, near Culpeper, Virginia, and began its march south. Lee and his army were encamped in the Wilderness outside of Chancellorsville where, almost a year and half earlier, they had beaten Hooker and lost Stonewall Jackson. Grisly reminders of that battle greeted the advance guard of the Federal army as it marched onto Chancellorsville battleground; a heavy rain had fallen, washing away the soil from the shallow, hastily dug graves, uncovering the skeletons of the fallen. In the firelight, "the dead were all around us," remembered a Federal private; "their eyeless skulls seemed to stare steadily at us."

The fighting that erupted at noon the next day, May 5, swelled the hosts of the dead. The dense forest, the thickets, snared the smoke of rifles and artillery and threw both

Confederates and Federals into confusion. Friends fired on friends in the smoky darkness, and the lines were very close. "It was a blind and bloody hunt to the death, in bewildering thickets, rather than a battle," wrote one soldier.

The second day of the battle, Federals under General James Wadsworth broke through the Confederate center. Lee, seeing the danger, was worried; but General John Gregg's Texans, part of Longstreet's command, rushed in to plug up the hole. "Attention, Texas Brigade," shouted Gregg to his men, "the eyes of General Lee are upon you, forward march." Lee, hearing Gregg's command, raised himself up in his stirrups, took off his hat, and earnestly exclaimed, "Texans always move them." "When Lee pronounced these words," remembered one of the Texans, "a yell rent the air that must have been heard for miles around. . . . A courier riding by my side, with tears coursing down his cheeks, exclaimed, 'I would charge hell itself for that old man.'" Gregg's men stoutly contended with Wadsworth's men. Of the 673 Texans that went into the fight, only 223 survived.

Grant showed no emotion during the battle. Even when Confederate John B. Gordon smashed the Federal right, he said nothing, but quietly whittled a stick with a small knife. That night, though, as brush fires raged through the Wilderness and the death screams of the wounded filled the air; as the realization that, with 17,000 dead and wounded, he had lost the battle to Lee—that night, in his tent, Grant, all alone, wept. But the next morning, he was the same, impassive general. "Whatever happens," he had told Lincoln, "we will not retreat." He would continue to push south, toward Richmond.

A Dance of Death

Lee predicted that Grant would continue to push south, and where he would go next. So it was, when Grant's army arrived at Spotsylvania Courthouse, the Army of Northern Virginia was there to meet it. In the early dawn of May 12, Winfield Scott Hancock attacked the Confederate center at a "U" shaped redoubt that would soon be called the "Bloody Angle." Hancock's assault pushed the Confederates back. Lee, seeing the danger, rode forward to lead the counterattack himself. When General Gordon saw Lee imperiling himself, he called to his men, who rushed forward, forcibly turned Lee's horse, Traveller, and brought him back within the lines. Then they rushed against the redoubt, forcing the Yankees back. For hours, until midnight, the Confederates and Yankees fought over the Bloody Angle until a multitude lay dead, some piled on top of each other, four deep. Days afterwards, as the fighting at Spotsylvania continued, these bodies, decaying, filled the air with a horrid stench.

Grant again withdrew. His strategy was to push toward Richmond, always moving south and east to get around Lee's flank. Lee, guessing Grant's strategy, always kept ahead of him; but he knew more had to be done. "We must destroy this army of Grant's before he gets to the James [River]," said Lee. "If he gets there, it will become a siege, and then it will be a mere question of time."

On June 3, Grant attacked Lee's position at Cold Harbor on the Chickahominy River. "It was not war; it was murder," remembered a rebel general afterwards. Sixty-thousand Federals smashed into the Confederates, who, well entrenched, beat off their assailants. Five to seven thousand Federals were butchered, most within the first eight minutes of battle. Many of the dead were unrecognizable; only little slips of paper they had affixed to their uniforms could identify them. Grant admitted that the attack at Cold Harbor was a mistake. Some in the North agreed and began to think his whole campaign was a mistake. In just 30 days of fighting, Grant had lost 50,000 men. Of course, these were easily replaced, for the North seemed able to supply almost an unlimited number of soldiers. Still, Grant was not as popular as he had been. But Lincoln, despite the criticisms, stood by his general. For Grant fought.

Because Grant was only a few miles from Richmond, Lee assumed that city would he his next target. Lee, for once, was wrong. Grant feinted towards Richmond, but his real target

Collecting the Dead, Cold Harbor

was Petersburg, a major rail and communications center. If he took Petersburg, Grant could isolate Richmond and starve it into submission.

Lee's misjudgment almost proved fatal. On June 15, the advance guard of Grant's army, 16,000 men under General W.F. Smith, reached Petersburg, which was guarded by a mere 3,000 men under General Beauregard. But Smith moved too slowly; by the time he began his assault, Lee had reinforced Beauregard. The Confederates beat back the Federal attack.

Both armies converged on Petersburg, which was soon ringed with trenches. For the next ten months the Confederates and Petersburg were besieged, and Grant's campaign stalled. Once again, Northerners thought the war was a failure. Newspapers called Grant a butcher.

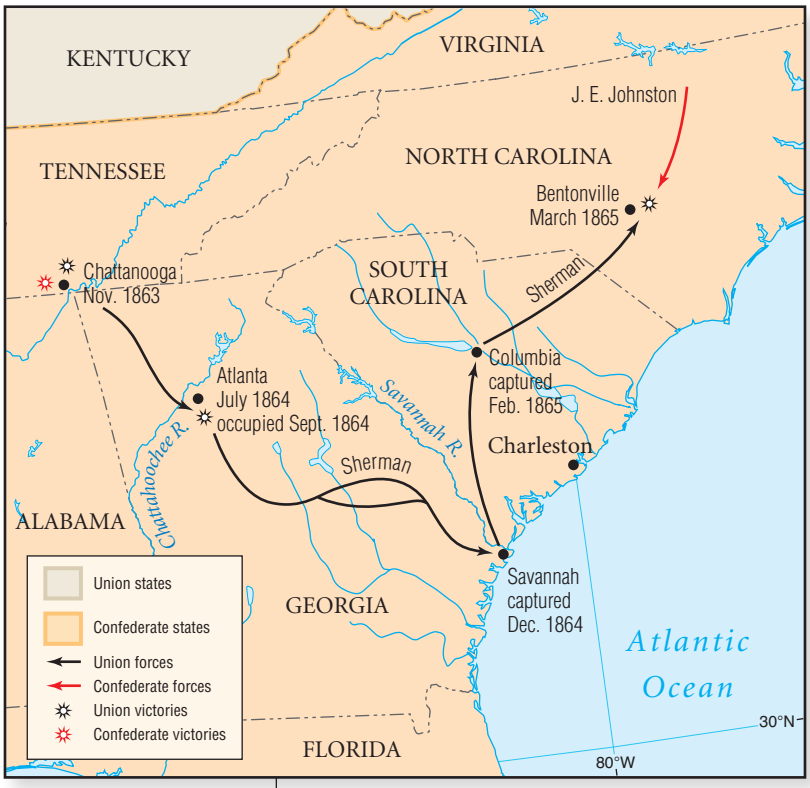
The presence of Jubal Early in the lower Shenandoah Valley didn't help matters, either. Lee had sent Early north to push Federal troops out of the Shenandoah Valley, to invade Pennsylvania, extracting tribute from towns there, and to harass Washington. Jubal Early routed General Sigel in the Shenandoah. On July 11, he attacked Fort Stevens in the Washington suburbs but was beaten back by the Second Rhode Island. On July 30, he took Chambersburg, Pennsylvania and demanded a $500,000 ransom. When the city refused to pay it, Early burned the city's business district to the ground.

William Tecumseh Sherman

On to Atlanta

General William Tecumseh Sherman, commanding the 98,000-strong Grand Army of the West, had set out on May 6, 1864 from Chattanooga, Tennessee into Georgia. His goal was to capture Atlanta, the second most important manufacturing center of the Confederacy. In pursuit of this goal, Sherman was relentless: "War is the remedy our enemies have chosen," he said, "and I say let us give them all they want; not a word of argument, not a sign of let-up, no cave in till we are whipped—or they are."

Opposing Sherman, with only half the number of Sherman's men, was Joe Johnston. Johnston hoped to coax Sherman to attack where he hoped he could score a significant defeat, or, at least, slow Sherman's advance. To hamper the Federal supply line, Johnston sent Bedford Forrest and his cavalry into Sherman's rear to wreak havoc on railroads, bridges, and tunnels. Yet, despite the thoroughness of Forrest's



Sherman's march

work, Sherman's efficiency and his army's manpower triumphed—railroads, bridges, even tunnels, were quickly repaired.

Sherman's progress was slow. Instead of risking frontal attacks on Johnston's army, Sherman sent the Army of the Tennessee, under General James McPherson, to flank the rebel army, thus forcing it to retreat deeper into Georgia. Sherman's progress was slow—too slow for him. He was eager to strike the enemy. When, in mid June, the Confederates dug in on Kennesaw Mountain (only 20 miles from Atlanta). Sherman ordered 13,000 men to attack the Confederate position. On the June 27, the Federals stormed the fortified mountain, only to be beaten back with heavy casualties. Sherman saw, and admitted, his mistake, and swore he'd never repeat it—and he didn't. Returning to his flanking strategy, Sherman pushed Johnston closer and closer to Atlanta.

Jefferson Davis, who had never liked Johnston, thought his general was not fighting hard enough to save Atlanta. On July 17, Davis replaced Johnston with John Bell Hood of Kentucky, a soldier who had lost a leg and the use of his arm in battle. Johnston's men loved him, and so it was only with reluctance that they received Hood. Not everyone shared Davis' confidence in Hood. "Hood is a bold fighter," said Lee. "I am doubtful as to other qualities necessary."

Hood was, indeed, "a bold fighter." On July 20, he led a daring attack on Sherman at Peachtree Creek outside of Atlanta. But the Confederates were driven back. Two days later, when Hood heard that Sherman had sent McPherson to Decatur (a town east of Atlanta) and that McPherson was moving on Atlanta from that position, he moved south to counter him. Hood met McPherson in what became known as the Battle of Atlanta, on July 22. For hours the fierce fighting was inconclusive. Then McPherson rode by mistake into a knot of Confederates. They ordered him to surrender, but tipping his hat to them, he turned his horse and galloped toward Federal lines. Shots rang out, and McPherson fell, dead.

With McPherson gone, General John "Black Jack" Logan took command. Riding up and down the Federal lines, he shouted, "McPherson and revenge, boys, McPherson and revenge!" instilling a renewed spirit, as of their fallen leader, in the men. They charged, and within a half hour, drove Hood's men from the field.

After failing again to defeat Sherman at Ezra Church, Hood withdrew within the fortifications of Atlanta. He had lost 20,000 men in one week. So stout were Atlanta's defenses, that Sherman did not dare a frontal attack. Instead, he lay siege to the city, shelling the Confederate trenches and the houses and buildings beyond. Atlanta was entirely cut off from supplies and, if they were to be had, reinforcements.

The siege lasted one month. On August 31, Sherman attacked Atlanta from the south along the Macon and Western Railroad. The next day, Hood, deeming he could not save Atlanta and his army both, evacuated the city. Sherman had taken Atlanta.

To Remain A Barren Waste

The taking of Atlanta was not the only good news to reach Lincoln and Grant. General Phil Sheridan, whom Grant had sent into the Shenandoah Valley with 45,000 men to hunt down

Jubal Early, finally met the rebel commander in battle at Winchester on September 19. Early had not only been threatening Pennsylvania towns, railroad supply lines, and Washington; but, his presence in the lower Shenandoah Valley, near the Potomac, had dampened the spirits of the North. At Winchester, though Early, with about 15,000 men, fought doggedly, he was finally forced to withdraw.

But Winchester was not the end of Early. Almost a month later, he attacked Sheridan's forces encamped at Cedar Creek, while Sheridan himself was 20 miles away. The battle became a rout as Early drove the Yankees from their camps. When Sheridan, who had heard of the attack, finally arrived, he rode amongst his disorganized men, urging them to reform their ranks and counterattack. The presence of their commander emboldened the Yankees. They began to cheer, but Sheridan cried out, "God damn you! Don't cheer me! If you love your country, come up to the front! There's lots of fight in you men yet! Come up, God damn you! Come up! We will lick them out of their boots!"

And lick them they did, driving Early and his outnumbered men from the field. Early's force was utterly routed and broken. This was his last fight in the Shenandoah Valley. That Virginia garden now belonged to the Yankees.

Maj. General Philip Sheridan, by Mathew Brady

But it would not remain a garden for long. In late August, Grant had told Sheridan, "if the war is to last another year, we want the Shenandoah Valley to remain a barren waste." The lieutenant general did not want the valley supplying the Confederate capital or its armies. Sheridan obeyed Grant with earnest thoroughness; he destroyed over 2,000 barns filled with wheat, hay and farming implements, drove off 4,000 head of cattle, and killed about 3,000 head of sheep. In retaliation for the "murder" of a Federal lieutenant, John R. Meigs, Sheridan declared that all houses in a five-mile radius were to be destroyed. "Tomorrow I will continue the destruction," he declared. "When this is completed, the Valley . . . will have but little in it for man or beast."

A McClellan campaign poster

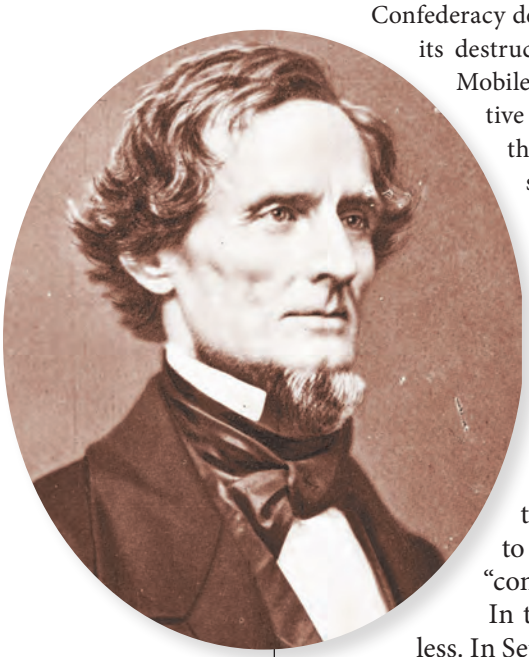
A Lincoln-Johnson campaign poster

These victories—the capture of Atlanta, the routing of Early—sealed the presidential election of 1864. Only two months before, Lincoln had thought his chances for reelection dim. The Democratic candidate was General George McClellan, who criticized Lincoln's policies. A McClellan victory would have heartened the South; for, War Democrat though he was, McClellan was running on a platform that called for peace. By November, however, it had become clear that the Confederacy was in the final stages of dissolution—that Lincoln's war policies were succeeding. In the election, Lincoln, thus, took every state, except Delaware, Kentucky and New Jersey, and won 54 percent of the popular vote. Receiving the election results by telegraph, Lincoln exulted. "I give thanks to the Almighty for this evidence of the people's resolution to stand by free government and the rights of humanity," he said.

March to the Sea

On November 7, 1864, the day before the northern elections, Jefferson Davis addressed the Confederate Congress:

> There are no vital points on the preservation of which the continued existence of the Confederacy depends. There is no military success of the enemy which can accomplish its destruction. Not the fall of Richmond, nor Wilmington, nor Savannah, nor Mobile, nor of all combined, can save the enemy from the constant and exhaustive drain of blood and treasure which must continue until he shall discover that no peace is attainable unless based on the recognition of our indefeasible rights.



Jefferson Davis

These were brave words, but they betrayed desperation. They hinted at irregular, guerrilla warfare continuing until the North grew so tired of blood that it would concede southern independence. The regular channels of government in the South were fast falling apart. Even in the face of Sherman and Grant, some Southern governors obstructed the Confederate draft; the governor of Georgia said it violated states rights. The armies were in desperate need of soldiers, and records showed that from 100,000 to 200,000 men were absent. Davis had gone to Macon, Georgia in September to appeal to men to return to duty, but to no avail. As one Confederate senator from Texas noted, the people's "confidence was gone, and hope was almost extinguished."

In this the twilight of the war, Federal generals were proving more relentless. In September, Sherman ordered all civilians to evacuate Atlanta and arranged a ten-day truce with Hood to allow them to pass through Confederate lines. Both the mayor of Atlanta and Hood protested; such an evacuation, they said, would bring heavy suffering to civilians, especially to the infirm and the old. "The unprecedented measure you propose transcends, in studied and ingenious cruelty, all acts ever before brought to my attention in the dark history of war," wrote Hood to Sherman. The Yankee general, however, was unmoved by appeals to antique chivalry. "Gentlemen," he replied, "You cannot qualify war in harsher terms than I will. War is cruelty and you cannot refine it . . . You might as well appeal against the thunderstorm as against these terrible hardships of war."

When the civilians had evacuated the city, Sherman ordered one-third of Atlanta burned. Then, on November 16, Sherman left Atlanta behind, and with 60,000 of his men, began a march, eastward, to the sea. This was a daring act, for Sherman was cutting himself off from his supply base and from all communication with the North. He had conferred with both Grant and Lincoln before commencing this march, and both, though doubtful, had approved it. Sherman explained that his great army would live off Georgia's rich farmlands. His goal was the seacoast town of Savannah, where he could reestablish contact with the North.

Ruins of railroad roundhouse at Atlanta, after its capture by Sherman

Hood did not follow Sherman. Hood assumed that if he threatened Tennessee, Sherman would follow him. Hood planned to march through Tennessee, into Kentucky, and go all the way to the Ohio. On November 30, at Franklin, Tennessee, Hood led 13 charges against Federals under Pap Thomas and suffered a bloody repulse, losing one-fourth of his army. On December 5, Thomas attacked Hood at Nashville and routed the Confederates. Hood's army was splintered and destroyed, and a central railway hub fell to the Federals. The Confederate army of the West was no more. Only scattered cavalry units and militias were left to contend with the victorious Federal army.

Meanwhile, Sherman's advancing columns were laying waste the countryside, plowing a furrow, 40 miles wide, of destruction. Sherman had ordered that his troops respect private property, but nobody (not even he himself) took his order seriously. Sherman had said he wanted to "make Georgia howl." "We cannot change the hearts of these people of the South," he wrote, "but we can make war so terrible . . . and make them so sick of war that generations [will] pass away before they again appeal to it."

Sherman's was a war of vengeance, rapine, and cruelty. What was not stolen was wantonly destroyed. "As far as the eye could reach," remembered one woman, "the lurid flames of burning [houses] lit up the heavens. . . . I could stand out on the verandah and for two or three miles watch as they came on. I could mark when they reached the residence of each and every friend on the road." Yankee soldiers stole from white and black alike. They killed so many cattle that "the whole region stunk with putrefying death carcasses." Soldiers frightened white women, sometimes molesting them; black women were treated less kindly. "The cruelties practiced on this campaign toward the citizens have been enough to blast a more sacred cause than ours," wrote a Federal corporal. "We hardly deserve success."

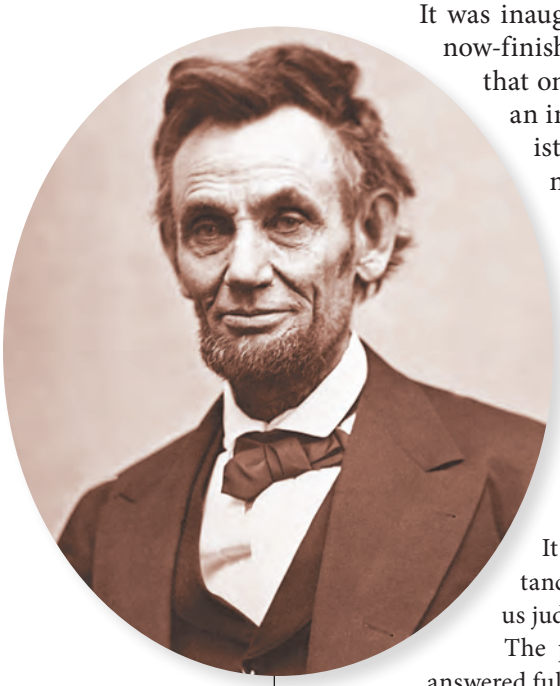
Thousands of escaping slaves followed in the wake of Sherman's army. They hardly dared venture too far from the Federal army for fear of roving Confederate militia and cavalry units who might return them to slavery or simply kill them. Within Federal lines things were not easy for slaves, either. Many Federal officers and men had no sympathy with freeing slaves. Disease, starvation, and exposure took their toll on hundreds of blacks.

For the duration of the march, neither Lincoln nor Grant had heard anything from Sherman. Finally, on December 22, Lincoln received a telegram. It was from Sherman: "I beg to present you as a Christmas present the city of Savannah, with 150 heavy guns and plenty of ammunition; also, about 25,000 bales of cotton."

With Hood's army destroyed and Georgia devastated from Atlanta to the sea, only Lee's army now stood between Lincoln and complete victory.

"With Malice Toward None"

"Fellow-Countrymen: At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first."



Abraham Lincoln, by Alexander Gardner

It was inauguration day, March 4, 1865. Abraham Lincoln, standing before the now-finished capitol, spoke of the encouraging progress of the war. He recalled that on this day, four years earlier, "all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it, all sought to avert it." Both unionists and secessionists, he said, "deprecated war, but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish, and the war came."

What caused the war? "All knew," said Lincoln, "that this interest"—the slave interest—"was somehow the cause of the war." Though his government had sought nothing more than to limit the "territorial enlargement" of slavery, "the insurgents [for the strengthening and enlargement of that institution] would rend the Union even by war." No one, said Lincoln, thought the war would be so great or so long, nor did they think the end of slavery would be its fruit. Each side prayed to "the same God" for success:

> It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces, but let us judge not, that we be not judged.
>
> The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him?

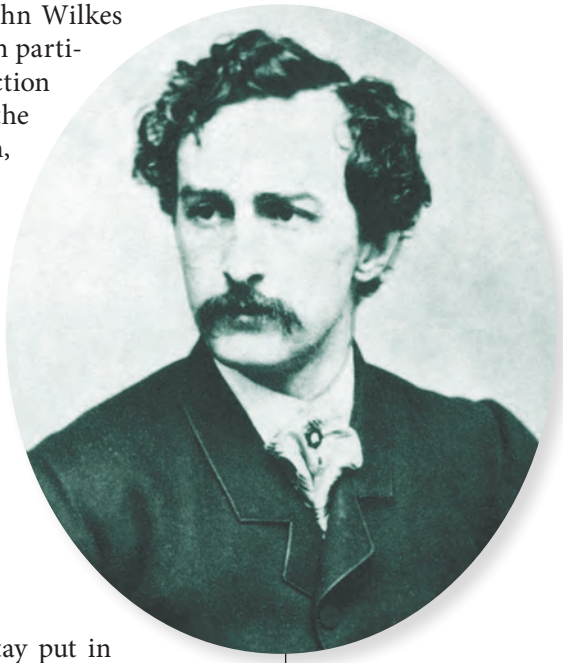
Lincoln thus suggested that the fault of slavery rested not on the South alone; but North and South had to atone for it. The president closed his address with a promise of reconciliation:

> With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

Among those listening to Lincoln's address was a young actor, John Wilkes Booth. A renowned Shakespearian actor as well as an ardent southern partisan, Booth thought Lincoln a tyrant and had warned that re-election would make him a king. Booth, it seems, had worked as a spy in the southern interest but had never entered the southern army, for which, as he confessed to his diary, he deemed himself a coward. Booth wanted to strike a blow for his country—a blow directed against the president himself.

Booth gathered a band of conspirators at a boarding house in Washington. He had concocted a plan; he and his companions would kidnap Lincoln and exchange him for southern prisoners of war. It was known that the president and his wife sometimes slept at the Soldiers Home on the outskirts of Washington. One March night, Booth and his accomplices, all with masks, rode out to the Soldiers Home, thinking to seize Lincoln. To their chagrin, the president was not there. A discouraged Booth returned to his plotting.

"So goes the world," he lamented. "Might makes right."

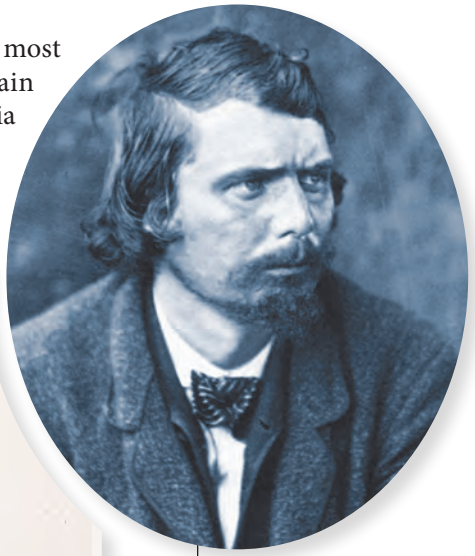


John Wilkes Booth

Stamping Out the Sparks of Rebellion

The Confederates had been certain that Sherman would have to stay put in Savannah. In Georgia, winter rains turned the dirt roads to mud; he could not possibly bring an army over them. But the relentless general disappointed them. Sherman ordered his men to hew down forests of timber with which they built cordon roads that crossed muddy and swampy land. Nothing, it seemed, could stop Sherman as he turned his army north to invade the heart of "Secessia"—South Carolina.

"When I go through South Carolina," said Sherman, "it will be one of the most horrible things in the history of the world. The devil himself couldn't restrain my men in that state." The same determination that had devastated Georgia now laid waste to South Carolina; the Federal soldiers had punished secession in its branch, now they would kill it at the root. On February 17, Sherman presented another prize of war to Abraham Lincoln; he had captured



George A. Atzerolt, a Lincoln assassination conspirator

Ruins of Charleston, South Carolina

Columbia, the capital of South Carolina. Like Atlanta, Columbia was set ablaze, though it is unknown by whom. Sherman blamed retreating Confederates, while Columbia citizens said it was Sherman's drunken soldiers that started the fires.

On the very day Sherman took Columbia, Fort Sumter fell to the Federal navy.

In the Carolinas, only 20,000 Confederates now opposed Sherman's army. Joe Johnston commanded this small body of rebels, keeping just ahead of Sherman as the Federal army advanced into North Carolina. At Bentonville, North Carolina, on March 19, Johnston decided he would attack Sherman's army before the forces of General John Schofield, who was advancing from the sea, reinforced it. Johnston smashed into Sherman's right wing, but, after three days, was forced to withdraw. Now, with only 18,000 men, Johnston withdrew to Raleigh, the capital of North Carolina, to await further developments.

Fall of Richmond

The Confederacy was fast dissolving. Still proclaiming his devotion to states' rights, the governor of Georgia was threatening to secede from the Confederacy and to seek a separate peace with the United States. The governor of North Carolina, too, was unyielding; he had tens of thousands of uniforms which he refused to give up to the Confederate government. Davis was near despair. "If the Confederacy falls," he said, "there should be written on its tombstone: Died of a Theory"—the right to secession.

The military situation was grim. In front of Petersburg, Grant kept extending his trenches to the left, and Lee, to keep from being flanked, was forced to extend to the right. But while Grant had 125,000 men, Lee's force had dwindled to a mere 35,000. Daily, men were deserting the Confederate lines. Some left because hunger and want threatened their families back home; others, because hunger and want had reduced them to desperation or despair. Those that remained had to man trench works spanning 53 miles. By late March 1865, these men formed a skeleton force.

Lee asked the Confederate government for more men and supplies, but there was none it could give. Lee next asked Congress to reconsider a plan it had rejected the year before—to recruit black slaves into the Confederate army. Grant them their freedom, if they will serve, said Lee, and see if they will fight for us instead of our enemies. Moved by Lee's appeal, on March 13 the congress approved a call for the enlistment of 300,000 black soldiers. Soon, black recruits were training with white soldiers in the streets of Richmond.

It was, however, too little, too late. Lee knew he couldn't hold out at Petersburg much longer. His one hope to save his army would be to join Joe Johnston in the hills of North Carolina. To do that, Lee had to punch a hole through Grant's lines, and on March 25, he ordered General John Gordon to do just that. Gordon was at first successful, but then he was driven back. On April 1, Federal cavalry and infantry under Phil Sheridan, rounding Lee's flank, met and routed a Confederate division led by George Pickett. Grant now understood the weakness of Lee's army and ordered a general assault on the Confederate trenches for the next day at 4:30 a.m.

Though they doggedly defended their lines, the Confederates could not withstand the Federal assault that Sunday morning, April 2. Grant's men overran the Confederate trenches, killing the defenders, some of whom were old men and boys as young as 14. A.P. Hill, one of Lee's trusted generals, died in this assault, shot through the heart.

That morning, while he attended service at St. Paul's Episcopal church in Richmond, Jefferson Davis received a note from the parish sexton. As he read, the president's face grew pale. It was from General Lee: "My lines are broken in three places. Richmond must be evacuated this evening."

Davis ordered the records of the Confederate government collected and placed in rail cars; the government would remove to Danville, 140 miles south, from where it would continue the struggle. That evening, as the last train pulled out of Richmond with the president and his cabinet on board, retreating Confederates set fire to the city while mobs plundered

A stereo photograph of two women in black in ruined Richmond, April 1865

and ransacked buildings. Confederate Admiral Raphael Semmes destroyed the Confederate fleet on the James River, while, in the city, fire consumed the Confederate States' arsenal, setting off rounds of explosions.

The next day, April 3, Federal troops marched into a ruined, smoking Richmond. Blacks swarmed into the streets, jubilantly greeting their deliverers. That day, President Lincoln with his son, Tad, arrived by steamer. As Lincoln walked through the streets of the former Confederate capital, blacks surrounded him, weeping, dancing, crying out in joyful shouts, straining to touch him. "I know I am free for I have seen Father Abraham and felt him," cried one man. The president seeing some of the men kneeling before him, said, "Don't kneel to me. You must kneel to God only, and thank Him for your freedom."

Retreat to Appomattox

Having abandoned Petersburg, Lee's army was moving southwestward, along the Appomattox River. On April 3, they reached Amelia Courthouse, where Lee had expected to find supplies and the Richmond troops waiting for him; but nothing and no one were there. He spent a day there, combing the neighborhood for food. The next day, assailed by Federals (for Grant's infantry and cavalry under Meade and Sheridan followed him), Lee continued on, now moving further westward to round Grant's flank. Everyday, discouraged soldiers, tired of hunger and the threat of death, threw down their arms and deserted. Some, unarmed, continued to follow Lee; others the Yankees captured, too tired and dispirited to resist.

At Sayler's Creek, on April 6, Sheridan and Meade attacked Lee's ranks, overwhelming the rear guard. Lee lost 8,000 men, nearly a third of his army. The next day, Grant sent a message to Lee, telling him that the fall of Petersburg "must convince you of the hopelessness of further resistance." To save himself from the "responsibility of any further effusion of blood," Grant asked Lee to surrender his army. Lee wondered what "the country" would think if he surrendered, to which his aide replied, "Country be damned! There is no country. There has been no country, for a year or more. You're the country to these men." Though his numbers were dwindling, Lee replied to Grant that it was not yet time to surrender.

Marching west as he was, toward Lynchburg, Lee had little hope of ever joining Johnston. His path merely led to the mountains where, if he desired, he and his men could continue the struggle as guerrilla warriors. There, for long years, they could harry Federal cavalry, who would ravage the land in search of them. Such a prospect did not appeal to Lee. Still, as long

as there was hope, he would continue. At Appomattox Courthouse, he knew, supplies from Lynchburg awaited his starving troops. If only he could get there before Grant.

It was Sheridan who spoiled this last hope. The hard-fighting general, astride his horse Rienzi, arrived at Appomattox Courthouse before Lee and captured the supplies. With Sheridan now before him, and Meade advancing behind him, Lee was trapped. But, still, he would not give up without one last fight. He sent General Gordon to break through Sheridan's lines. On April 9, Gordon struck, pushing union cavalry from their position; but then, mounting a hilltop, Gordon saw despair. Before him, line upon line, stretched a sea of unconquerable blue. There was no escape that way but death.

Lee would not needlessly sacrifice his men. "There is nothing left for me to do but go and see General Grant," said Lee to his aide, "and I would rather die a thousand deaths." His aide replied, "What would history say?" To which, Lee: "But that is not the question, Colonel; the question is, is it right to surrender this army? If it is right, then I will take all the responsibility."

A white towel on a stick preceded the Confederate messenger across the Yankee lines. A horseman, waving his hat, delivered a note to General Grant. He opened it and asked an aide to read it. He read the note: Lee would surrender, it said. "No one looked his comrade in the face," noted an eyewitness of the scene. "Finally, Colonel Duff, chief of Artillery, sprang upon a log [proposing three cheers]. A feeble hurrah came from a few throats, when all broke down in tears."

Lee and Grant met at the house of Wilmer McClean at Appomattox Courthouse. McLean had moved from his house in Northern Virginia when it had become the center of a great battle, the First Battle of Manasses. Now, in McClean's parlor, the war would end. At two separate tables sat Grant and Lee, two very different men. Lee, dressed in his pressed dress uniform, gloves and with ceremonial sword, looked as if he would attend a ball; Grant, in mud-spattered pants and boots, and wearing a private's dirty shirt, looked as if he had just ridden through the night, as indeed he had. Lee showed no emotion, noted Grant, but sat, "a man of much dignity" and "impassible face."

Even though he could demand harsh terms, Grant was kind and generous. He reminded Lee that they had met once before during the Mexican war. (Legend has it that Lee had

Surrender and capitulation of Lee at Appomattox

upbraided Grant for his slovenly appearance.) Lee noted that he could not remember Grant's face. "Our conversation grew so pleasant," said Grant, "that I almost forgot the object of our meeting . . . General Lee called my attention to the object."

Grant's terms were generous. No unconditional surrender. Lee's men, he said, could keep their side arms, their personal possessions, and their horses, for it was the time for spring planting. "Each officer and man will be allowed to return to his home, not to be disturbed by the United States authorities," as long as they were peaceful and kept the laws. Grant said he would provide rations for Lee's men, and the two commanders signed the terms of capitulation. Then standing, they shook hands. Lee mounted Traveller and returned to his men. When Federal soldiers began to cheer, Grant angrily checked them: these men are again "our countrymen," he said. "We do not want to exult over their downfall."

Lee rode back to his camp, his head sunk upon his breast. But hearing his men cheer, "he raised his head," said one observer, "and hat in hand he passed by, his face flushed, his eye ablaze." As he rode by, some gently stroked the sides of Traveller, and all cheers turned to weeping in his wake. One old man, a veteran of battles, cried out, "I love you just as well as ever, General."

Lee passed into his tent; the Army of Northern Virginia, into legend.

Assassination

In Washington, fireworks displays punctuated the news of Lee's surrender. Lights shone in the windows of the White House and of government buildings, and the dome of the illumined capitol flamed in triumph over the city. Crowds gathered around the White House, hoping to hear a speech from the president; but when Lincoln came out on the balcony, he asked only that the band play "Dixie." "We fairly captured [the song] yesterday," said Lincoln. "It is our lawful prize."

The last photograph of Abraham Lincoln, by Abraham Gardner, April 9, 1865

Lincoln promised the crowd that he would deliver a speech the following evening.

But, if the crowds that gathered the next evening in the White House grounds came to hear the president give a rousing victory speech, they were disappointed. Lincoln spoke, instead, on the reconstruction of the southern states after the war, their reintegration in the union. In 1863, he had enacted a reconstruction program for the conquered areas of Louisiana—a program, he thought, that might prove a model for the other states once the "rebellion" was over. This plan specified that if 10 percent of the people of Louisiana swore allegiance to the union, they could establish a state government and constitution. In Louisiana, Lincoln said, 12,000 people had done this. They had adopted a new state government and a new constitution; they had approved emancipation; they had established public schools for both whites and blacks; and they had empowered their legislature to grant the franchise to blacks. What's more, the Louisiana legislature had approved the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. In January 1865, Congress had approved the amendment, which would abolish slavery throughout the United States.

Lincoln admitted he had hoped for more. He had hoped that reconstructed Louisianans would simply give the franchise to the blacks, not merely authorize the legislature to do so. Yet, he was satisfied enough with the results. "These twelve thousand persons," he said, "are . . . fully committed to the Union, and to perpetual freedom in the state—committed to the very things, and nearly all the things, the nation wants—and they ask the nation's recognition and its assistance to make good their committal."

If only Congress would recognize them—if only Congress would agree to sit representatives from Louisiana, the country might be well on the way to reconciliation. Yet, Lincoln lamented, there were those in Congress, of his own party, who favored extreme measures and desired to punish the southern states more. Lincoln said he could not approve of their

spirit of vengeance, though he did agree with their goal—the union of the country and the full inclusion of blacks as citizens.

Lincoln had wanted a full reconciliation, without malice. He had even proposed that Congress appropriate $400 million to compensate slave holders for their loss in "property." His cabinet had rejected this proposal, and in their meeting, held Good Friday, April 14, 1865, Secretary Stanton was proposing his own plan for reconstruction: military governments in all the states, with self-government to follow, and the delay of black suffrage. Lincoln gave his tentative approval to Stanton's plan, saying that he hoped self-government might be reestablished in the southern states by December. Until the next cabinet meeting, which would be the following Tuesday, Lincoln said cabinet members should study the matter.

Meanwhile, John Wilkes Booth, deeply depressed over the news of Lee's surrender, heard that that Good Friday evening, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln, with General and Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant, were to attend a performance of the English comedy, *Our American Cousin*, at Ford's Theater. Booth reflected that, as an actor, he had access to the backstage of the theater. Kidnapping had failed; but, there was assassination. Lincoln and Grant taken down together, and Booth the hero-avenger of his country's honor!

That evening, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln arrived late to the play. The Grants had not come but instead had taken a train to Philadelphia. When the president and the first lady entered the presidential box, the play stopped long enough for the orchestra to play, "Hail to the Chief." Then the play resumed. Mrs. Lincoln, her hand in her husband's, noticed that he seemed to enjoy the comedy well.

Booth was in a local bar, drinking brandy. He had gathered his conspirators; while he struck at the president, they would take care of the vice-president, Andrew Johnson, and Secretary Stanton. As he contemplated the fearful act he planned, Booth poured himself some more brandy.

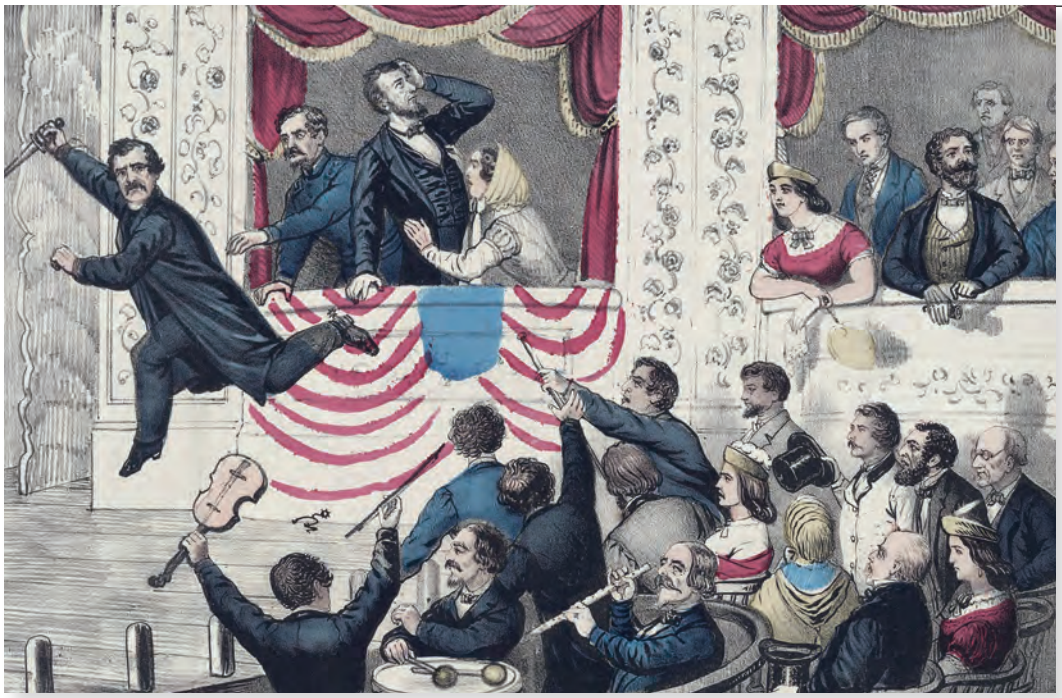
When he arrived at the theater, Booth asked a scene-shifter to hold his horse. He climbed the steps to the presidential box, a derringer in his right hand, and a dagger in his left. On the stage, a woman had accused the "American Cousin," Asa Trenchard, of being ignorant of the manners of good society. "Don't know the manners of good society, eh?" said the coarse Trenchard, "Well, I guess I know enough to turn you inside out, you sockdoligizing old man-trap . . ."

A roar of laughter rose. It was Booth's signal. Leaping into the box, he fired his derringer, point-blank, into the back of Lincoln's head, slashed at one of the president's party with his dagger, and jumped to the stage below, breaking his left leg in his fall. Waving his dagger, Booth shouted to the astonished audience the motto of Old Virginia, *Sic semper tyrannis*! ("Thus always to tyrants!") Then, stumbling off, he mounted his horse and rode away.

Soldiers carried Lincoln to a nearby boarding house. There he lay, unconscious, the bullet lodged behind his right eye. At the head of the bed stood his son, Robert, bearing himself well but occasionally breaking down into sobs. The end was not long delayed. The next morning, April 15, 1865, at 7:22 a.m., Abraham Lincoln passed from this life.

Final Surrender

The war was not yet over. Scattered bands of Confederates still held on in Tennessee and along the Gulf and in the West, across the Mississippi. Near Raleigh, North Carolina, Joe Johnston was contemplating how he might surrender his 18,000 infantry. When he met President Davis at Greensboro, Johnston said that "it would be the greatest of human crimes for us to continue the war." He told Davis he should "exercise at once the only function of government still in his possession and open negotiations for peace." Davis told Johnston that



John Wilkes Booth leaps from the presidential box with knife in hand. The print inaccurately depicts Lincoln standing.

the Federals would not recognize his authority. He told Johnston to treat with Sherman for an honorable peace.

Davis would not surrender. He was fleeing south by rail, hoping to be able to reach Texas where he and his cabinet could form an effective center of resistance. But he was not naïve. As his train steamed southward toward Georgia, a fellow traveler remarked that the Confederate cause was lost. "It appears so," replied the weary but resolute Davis. "But the principle for which we contended is bound to reassert itself, though it may be at another time and in another form."

That time was not then. On April 17, two days after Lincoln's death, Johnston and Sherman met at a little log cabin outside Durham, North Carolina. Implacable in war, Sherman proved magnanimous in peace. Both he and Johnston worried that the war might degenerate into a guerrilla struggle. The next day, Confederate secretary of war, John C. Breckenridge joined the two generals, and they signed a treaty that called for a generous reconciliation between the warring sections.

Sherman's treaty allowed Confederate soldiers, from the Atlantic to beyond the Mississippi, to return home with their weapons, which they would deposit at their state capitals. There the weapons might remain so the states could defend themselves against rebel guerrilla insurgents. State governments should be reorganized, said the treaty, once state officers then holding office should swear allegiance to the Constitution of the United States. The treaty also guaranteed southerners "their political rights and franchises, as well as the rights of person and property as defined by the Constitution of the United States and of the states respectively." Andrew Johnson, who had succeeded Lincoln as president, rejected this treaty, which was more conciliatory even than Lincoln's proposals for reconstruction. The new president told Grant that Johnston must surrender under the same terms given to Lee. On April 26, Sherman met with Johnston again, and the Confederate general signed the new terms of surrender.

West of the Appalachians, Pap Thomas' army was stamping out the last sparks of Confederate resistance. His cavalry corps under James H. Wilson had defeated Bedford Forrest and then had swung into Georgia. At Irwindale, Georgia, on May 10, Wilson cap-

tured Jefferson Davis. The Confederate president was sent, a prisoner, to Fortress Monroe in Virginia.

West of the Mississippi, in Shreveport, Louisiana, Confederate General Edmund Kirby Smith had determined on continued resistance. For some weeks, citizens meetings in Texas called for the enlistment of all males, black and white, and the arming of women. On May 13, about 100 Federals, blacks and whites, clashed with a small force of Confederates at Palmito Ranch, near Brownsville, Texas. It was the last Confederate victory—and the last battle of the war. Thirteen days later, Edmund Kirby Smith surrendered the Confederate Trans-Mississippi army to General Canby at Baton Rouge.

A desolate silence now reigned from Texas to Virginia. The bloody fratricidal war was done.

Chapter 18 Review

Summary

- Northerners were growing weary of the war and wanted to let the South go its own way. Fathers and newspapers encouraged soldiers to desert. Lincoln thought such opposition required stern measures, and on January 1, 1862, he ordered suspension of *habeas corpus* throughout the North. All who openly encouraged resistance to enlistment or disloyalty were subject to martial law.
- Southerners had quarrels with their own president, Jefferson Davis, who, apart from the conscription act, attempted to manage the war down to the last detail. In 1864, Davis asked Congress to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus*. The Confederate congress voted heavy taxes on the people of the South. The military requisitioned crops and impressed slaves; and prices went up in the cities.
- In May 1863, Lee defeated Hooker at Chancellorsville and lost Stonewall Jackson.
- Grant attempted to capture Vicksburg but was beaten back. Davis was worried and urged Lee to send General Longstreet to relieve Vicksburg. Lee had what he thought was a better idea: he would invade the North.
- In late May 1863, the Army of Northern Virginia commenced its invasion of the North. At Gettysburg, Lee was defeated by the Federal army under General Meade.
- On July 4, 1863, Vicksburg fell to Grant after a long siege. The Federals now controlled the Mississippi River, and the South was divided in half.
- In March 1864, General Grant took on the rank of Lieut. General of all the Federal forces. In May, he commenced his campaign against Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia. The campaign ended in Grant laying siege to Petersburg, Virginia, a siege that lasted ten months.
- William Tecumseh Sherman took Atlanta on August 31, 1864. General Sheridan drove the Confederates out of the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia and laid waste to it. Because of these victories, Lincoln was reelected in 1864.
- After burning one-third of Atlanta, Sherman marched towards the sea and the seacoast town of Savannah, where he could reestablish contact with the North. Along the way he laid waste to the countryside. He captured Savannah on December 22, 1864.
- From Savannah, Sherman marched into South Carolina, devastating it as he had Georgia. He captured Columbia, the capital of South Carolina, on February 17, 1865. The same day Fort Sumter fell to the Federal navy.
- With only a skeleton of his army left, Lee asked the Confederate government to induct black slaves. On March 13 the congress approved a call for the enlistment of 300,000 black soldiers.
- On April 2, 1865, Grant's forces overran Lee's trenches before Petersburg. As the Confederate government removed to Danville, Grant's army captured Richmond.
- On April 6, 1865, after a battle at Sayler's Creek in which Lee lost nearly a third of his army, Grant sent him a message asking him to surrender his army. Lee refused. Enroute to Appomattox Court House, Lee, cut off by Sheridan in front and Meade behind,

Chapter 18 Review (continued)

decided to meet with Grant. On April 9, Lee and Grant met at Appomattox Courthouse, and Lee surrendered his army.

- John Wilkes Booth, a southern partisan, was determined to assassinate both Lincoln and Grant. While the president was enjoying a play at Ford's Theater in Washington, Booth shot him in the back of the head. Lincoln died the next morning, April 15, 1865.
- On April 17, 1865, Johnston and Sherman, joined by Confederate secretary of war, John C. Breckenridge, signed a peace treaty that called for a generous reconciliation between the North and the South.

Key Concepts

Copperheads: the name given to northerners who favored letting the southern states go their own way and who were said to sympathize with the cause of the South

Jayhawkers: irregular troops who terrorized southern sympathizers in Missouri

Bushwackers: irregular troops who terrorized northern sympathizers in Kansas

Dates to Remember

1863: the Emancipation Proclamation goes into effect (January 1).

The battle of Gettysburg (July)

Lincoln delivers the Gettysburg Address (November 19).

1864: Grant begins his campaign against Lee in Virginia.

Sherman captures Atlanta (September 1).

Lincoln is reelected.

Sherman captures Savannah (December).

1865: Sherman captures Columbia, the capital of South Carolina (February).

Grant captures Richmond (April).

Lee surrenders his army to Grant (April 9).

John Wilkes Booth assassinates Lincoln (April 14).

Johnston and Sherman sign a peace treaty (April 17).

1865: Last battle of the Civil War at Palmito Ranch, Texas (May 13)

Central Characters

George Meade (1815–1872): American army officer who defeated Lee's army at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

George Edward Pickett (1825–1875): Confederate army officer who led "Pickett's Charge" at the Battle of Gettysburg

William Tecumseh Sherman (1820–1891): the Federal general who captured Atlanta and Savannah in Georgia and Columbia, in South Carolina

Ulysses S. Grant (1822–1885): Lieut. General in command over the entire U.S. army

John Wilkes Booth (1838–1865): American actor who assassinated President Abraham Lincoln

Questions for Review

1. Why were people in the North growing weary of the war and encouraging soldiers to desert?
2. What hardships did the Confederate government and army place on the people of the South during the course of the war? How did these hardships affect the course of the war?
3. What was Lee's objective in his invasion of the North?
4. Explain the significance of the battle of Gettysburg to the war.
5. Explain the significance of the capture of Vicksburg to the Confederate war effort.
6. Briefly summarize the ideas Lincoln presented in his Gettysburg Address. Have they been influential?
7. Considering that Lee was against slavery and secession, why did he fight for the Confederacy?
8. Why was Sherman so ruthless in his campaigns in Georgia and South Carolina?
9. Describe the main ideas of Lincoln's proposed reconstruction of the South.
10. What was Booth's motivation for assassinating Lincoln?

Chapter 18 Review (continued)

Ideas in Action

1. Listen to the songs and music of both the North and the South created during the war. Discuss how these songs embody the spirit and the ideas of each side.
2. Read and discuss the Gettysburg Address. How do Lincoln's ideas of America and the union reflect those expressed by Daniel Webster in his speeches? Do Lincoln's ideas of America influence Americans in our own day?

Highways and Byways

The Bank Note of the South

The dollar currency of the Confederate States of American was issued just before the start of the American Civil War by the newly formed Confederate government. Unlike the United States dollar, the Confederate denomination was not backed by hard assets but by a promise to pay the bearer after the war. This promise of course banked on the prospect of southern victory and independence. This worked for a while, until the war began to go against the Confederates. When that happened, confidence in Confederate currency waned, producing inflation. By the end of the war, the currency was practically worthless.

The Confederate dollar, or "Greyback," is now a prized collector's item. There are many versions of the Greyback, due to the lack of skilled engravers, printers, and secure printing facilities. Some bills portray engravings of leading Confederates, historical figures, or images of slaves, while others depict images of gods and goddesses. Since there were many different types of Confederate notes, and since banks could issue their own notes, counterfeiting became a problem in the Confederate states. These counterfeits, however, are just as valuable to a collector today as a genuine Confederate bank note.