NEW

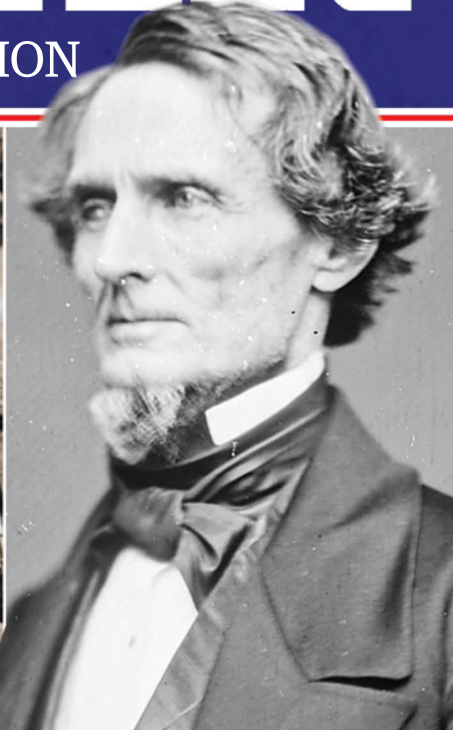
HISTORY of WAR

Book of the

AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

1861 to 1865

DISCOVER THE ICONIC CONFLICT THAT SHAPED A NATION



ORIGINS & IMPACT ★ EVERY MAJOR BATTLE ★ EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS

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AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

History is littered with battles between sovereign states, but often it is the wars within nations that are the most bitterly fought. Such conflicts mark turning points for all parties involved, whether they're fought over land, resources, or in the name of deeply held ideals. More than 150 years after the end of the American Civil War, the story of America's bloodiest conflict remains a potent one – a defining period in the formation of the United States as we know it today. In this bookazine we will explore the American Civil War through investigating its key events, significant battles and its most influential figures. Through expert analysis, a wealth of authentic artefacts, spectacular photography, and eyewitness accounts, we'll deliver a fascinating insight into a conflict that continues to profoundly impact the world we live in.

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The Sick Soldier
The Smithsonian holds many Civil War-era photographs by noted cameramen Timothy O'Sullivan, George Barnard, George Cook, Alexander Gardner, and Mathew Brady, whose studio in the field recorded this image *c.* 1863.

Foreword

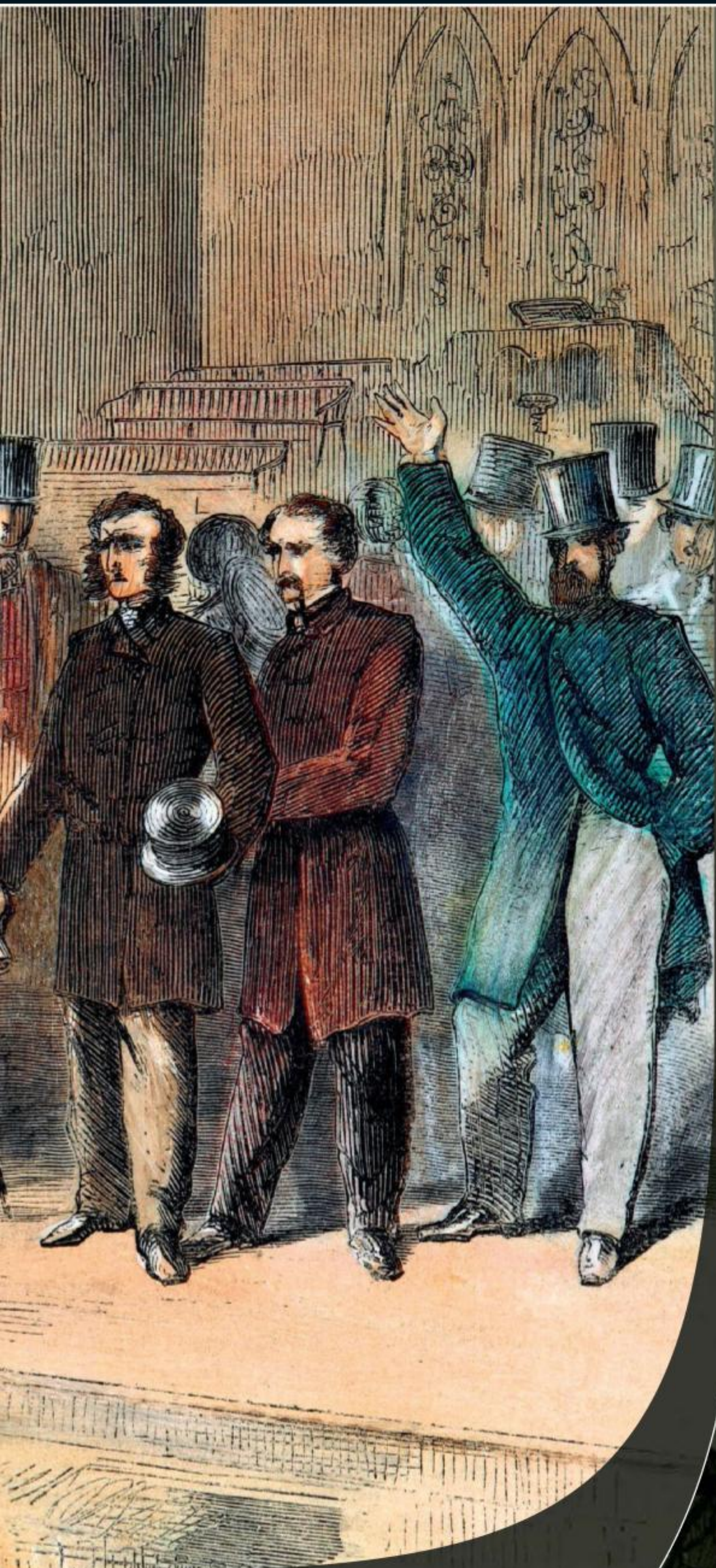
A unifying thread woven indelibly throughout the fabric of America is our compelling need to remember the Civil War. In the summer of 1961, as a boy of nine, I witnessed an event that some people were calling Third Bull Run. The Civil War Centennial was beginning in earnest with this much-hyped battlefield reenactment. The day of "battle" dawned hot, and when it turned sultry, heat exhaustion began taking a toll on spectators and reenactors alike. To my surprise, the event as choreographed proved to be largely underwhelming; too few soldiers charged with fixed bayonets and too few cannons spewed plumes of white smoke that billowed over the rolling fields broad enough to dwarf the entire spectacle. It was never clear in my mind which side was winning or losing the war.

Try as we might it is nearly impossible to recreate history, even well documented history like the Civil War, America's first national experience to be recorded visually on a grand scale. Understanding fully the nuances of that era of discord is in itself a challenge. Robert E. Lee would have freed "every slave in the South" to avoid going to war—words Abraham Lincoln could have endorsed heartily. Both men prayed to the same God, and each followed his own conscience. Ultimately, their exemplary humility and charity—and that of a third party, Ulysses S. Grant—prevailed at Appomattox, changing the nation forever.

The sacrifices Americans made long ago are truly gifts for Americans now. So too are the effects they left behind. This visual survey draws from collections throughout the country, and most especially from the Smithsonian Institution. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian has been collecting and preserving Civil War memorabilia of every description since the war itself. Within these covers you will experience a rare look into the museum's rich and unique coffers. Many of the daguerreotypes and painted portraits herein are much more than mere book illustrations, but in reality are family heirlooms which have been generously handed down to the American people. Such is the case with dozens of personal items like Jeb Stuart's English-made Tranter revolver, William T. Sherman's campaign hat and sword, and George B. McClellan's chess set. Two Lincoln relics are national treasures: the black top hat he last wore to Ford's Theatre and the presentation Henry repeating rifle—gold mounted and engraved with the president's name—which is a prize of the Smithsonian's smallarms collection.

In the genre of Civil War art, battlefield sketches and "photographs by Brady" are as close as we can be visually to experiencing the conflict firsthand. Yet selected postwar illustrations have been added to examine the sectional sentiments which influenced how Americans, Northerners and Southerners, wanted to remember their war. Included are illustrated timelines, colorful maps, eyewitness narratives, and gallery spreads filled with vintage military trappings. Every page offers a virtual tour worth revisiting again and again.

JAMES G. BARBER
EDITORIAL CONSULTANT



1

AN IMPERFECT UNION

1815–1860

As America expanded across the West, the future of slavery split churches, political parties, and eventually the nation itself. It took a Civil War and more than 625,000 dead to decide the fundamental proposition that all men are created equal.

« Mob attack
A contemporary engraving shows protestors and the police breaking up an abolitionist meeting at Boston's Tremont Temple Baptist Church on December 3, 1860—a year after the execution of abolitionist John Brown. Although Northerners were widely opposed to the extension of slavery, many regarded those in favor of outright abolition as troublesome fanatics.

AN IMPERFECT UNION

The Mason-Dixon Line
The line is the symbolic divide between North and South. It dates back to the 1760s, when surveyors Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon resolved disputes between Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware and established their borders.

The 1850 Compromise
In Washington, Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky helps persuade Congress to accept a political compromise. It prevents an open split between North and South, but hardliners in both sections are unhappy with its measures. The Fugitive Slave Law will soon prove especially contentious.

John Brown on the way to the scaffold
In the hope of acquiring arms for a slave uprising, abolitionist John Brown raids the Federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry in 1859. The raid is a failure, but Brown is tried and executed. His death divides North and South even further.

California gold rush
The 1849 gold rush causes a vast increase in the territory's population. California adopts an anti-slavery constitution and seeks admission to the Union, bringing to the fore the issue of the free or slave status of territories gained from Mexico. California is granted statehood in 1850.

When the South Carolina state convention voted unanimously on December 20, 1860, to secede from the Union, it was the culmination of a long process by which, in Abraham Lincoln's words, the nation had become a "house divided." Though victory in the Revolutionary War and the ratification of the U.S. Constitution had created a common sense of nationhood, many political differences had never been resolved. In particular, a growing number of Americans disagreed over the place of slavery in the nation's future and the Federal government's role in upholding it.

The period up to 1860 had seen great material changes for the nation and its people. The extent of the national territory multiplied with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 and victory over Mexico in 1848. While most Americans still farmed or lived in small towns, technological developments and mass immigration were increasing

1860

Bleeding Kansas
Violence between pro and anti-slavery factions dominates Kansas in the mid-1850s. This cartoon ridicules President Pierce's pro-slavery stance.

unorganized territory
MINNESOTA
WISCONSIN
MICHIGAN
VERMONT
MAINE
NEW HAMPSHIRE
Concord
NEW YORK
Buffalo
Boston
MASSACHUSETTS
RHODE ISLAND
CONNECTICUT
IOWA
Missouri River
Des Moines
Chicago
PENNSYLVANIA
New York City
NEW JERSEY
Philadelphia
INDIANA
OHIO
ILLINOIS
Indianapolis
Cincinnati
Washington, D.C.
DELAWARE
MARYLAND
Kansas City
VIRGINIA
Richmond
KANSAS TERRITORY
St. Louis
Mississippi River
Ohio River
Louisville
Norfolk
MISSOURI
KENTUCKY
Cumberland River
Inset map area
Nashville
Tennessee River
NORTH CAROLINA
Arkansas River
Memphis
TENNESSEE
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Indian Territory
Chattanooga
SOUTH CAROLINA
ARKANSAS
Corinth
Atlanta
ALABAMA
Red River
MISSISSIPPI
GEORGIA
Charleston
Vicksburg
Meridian
Montgomery
Savannah
TEXAS
LOUISIANA
Mobile
Jacksonville
Austin
FLORIDA
New Orleans
Rio Grande
Galveston
GULF OF MEXICO

The voice of abolition
The Liberator newspaper, founded in Boston in 1831 by William Lloyd Garrison, is published weekly until the last issue on December 29, 1865. It is uncompromising in its call for the complete and immediate abolition of slavery.

A county election
In this 1852 painting of a Missouri county election by George Caleb Bingham, the voters, all of them white and male, cast their votes orally. Bingham, himself a member of the Missouri legislature, illustrated many aspects of American politics in his work.

the population and the national wealth. Southern cotton planters and Northern merchants prospered from sales of cotton, from the growth of Northern factories, and from financial institutions that linked the interests of North and South.

Yet despite these links, by 1860, tensions ran high between North and South. Most white Americans remained indifferent or hostile to the aspirations of blacks, but many in the North feared that Southern domination of the Federal government could lead to the spread of slavery as new states entered the Union. Southerners saw critiques of slavery as deeply threatening and a denial of the nation's historic acceptance of slaves as property.

Since the 1820 Missouri Compromise, a series of political deals had kept disunion at bay, but the election in 1860 of a president seen as hostile by many in the South brought matters to a head.

BEFORE

Victory in the American Revolution did not finally settle the new republic's borders. It remained surrounded by the colonial territories of Britain, France, and Spain.

THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

In 1803, in order to ensure access to the mouth of the Mississippi River, **Thomas Jefferson** sent a delegation to the French Emperor Napoleon I to negotiate the **purchase of New Orleans**. To the surprise of the U.S. representatives, Napoleon offered to sell the **entire Louisiana Territory** for $15 million to finance his European wars. Overnight, the nation nearly **doubled in size**.

EXPANSION TO THE WEST

Jefferson announced the purchase on July 4, 1803, and the very next day the 28-year-old Army Captain **Meriwether Lewis**, a personal friend and aide to the president, set out from Washington to begin his and **William Clark's exploration of the West**. Their epic journey, which lasted until September 1806, revealed a vast expanse of territory inhabited by indigenous peoples, and ripe for **settlement by future generations of Americans**.

A COMPASS FROM THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

The **State** of the **Nation**

In the four decades after the War of 1812, the United States experienced profound changes in its population, economy, boundaries, and social relations. New states joined the union at a rate of almost one every three years. By 1855, the country had more cities with at least 150,000 residents than any other nation on Earth.

In 1800, most Americans still farmed, and lived in small communities poorly connected by rough roads. When Thomas Jefferson entered the White House in March 1801, the nation had around 5.3 million people living between the Atlantic seaboard and the Mississippi River—most within 50 miles (80km) of the eastern coastline. If more western territory could be added, Jefferson envisaged a nation mighty enough to compete economically with and to defend itself against the great European powers. Skeptics pointed to transportation difficulties, the presence of Native Americans, and foreign claims to North American territory as barriers to expansion.

In the early 19th century, a letter mailed in Maine took 20 days to arrive in Charleston, South Carolina, because of the scarcity and roughness of the roads. The War of 1812—which lasted until 1815—encouraged people to build better roads and connections among the various states for the purpose of defense. After the war, growing markets, westward migration, and military concerns continued to drive communities and private investors to construct roads, bridges, and canals, which speeded up the exchange of goods and tied people together. One of the most ambitious of these projects, the Erie Canal, eventually connected New York City to Lake Erie and the Upper Midwest states and territories. New York state and private investors funded the canal, which was started in 1817 and completed in 1825. It would pay for itself in seven years.

In the 1830s, railroads began to supplant canals as a faster, cheaper mode of carrying passengers and freight. Popular demand and congressional policy encouraged the creation of post offices along the frontiers, and soon the nation had more postal clerks than soldiers. The telegraph appeared in the 1840s following alongside the railroads, as cities, hoping to exchange business and political intelligence, clamored to join the network. Advances in paper and printing technology made newspapers cheaper, and the advent of the Associated Press in 1846 created rapid standardized reporting from around the nation.

31,443,321 **The U.S. population in 1860. This represented an increase of over 35 percent in the 10 years since 1850, and over 270 percent since 1815, when the population stood at 8.4 million.**

Northern transformations

Most Northern farming families focused on self-reliance and subsistence, raising their own food and bartering locally to maintain their independence. As transportation improved, people farming near cities planted more specialized crops for sale in regional markets. Farmers in New England and the states of the Mid-Atlantic seaboard used cash from these market sales to buy improved equipment, which reduced their labor costs and increased their yields. Steel cutting blades, threshers, iron plows,

TECHNOLOGY

THE COTTON GIN

In 1793, Eli Whitney traveled south to take up a tutoring post on a plantation. Intrigued by the time-consuming manual labor of separating the sticky seeds from the fibers of short-staple cotton, he designed a simple hand-cranked machine. His cotton engine, or "gin," used rollers to comb the seeds from the fiber, enabling one slave to clean 50lb (23kg) of cotton fiber per day instead of just 1lb (0.5kg) processed by hand. The gin opened the interior of the South to cotton production, giving a financial incentive for expanding the hold of slavery on Southern society.

COTTON GIN

Voting in a rural community
George Bingham's painting *The County Election 1852* shows the democratic system in operation, as residents from many walks of life come together to cast their vote. In the 1800s, voting was still very much a white, male domain.

and horse-drawn rakes enabled one farmer to do the work that formerly needed six men. In the Northeast, the growing populations in mill towns and urban centers required increasing quantities of meat, corn, wheat, wool, fruit, vegetables, and dairy produce.

There was a steady drift of people to the expanding cities. Seven out of eight immigrants who arrived in the United States before 1860 settled in cities such as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Rochester, and Chicago—all north of the Mason-Dixon Line. This historic geographic line was surveyed in the 1760s by the astronomer Charles Mason and the surveyor Jeremiah Dixon to resolve a border dispute between Pennsylvania and Maryland.

4 MILLION **The number of bales of cotton produced annually in the United States by 1860. Each bale weighed 450lb (204kg).**

Industry takes off

Between 1815 and 1860, the people of the United States transformed the country's economy. Following his development of the cotton gin, Eli Whitney devised a system of interchangeable parts for weapons manufacture that was soon used to produce other goods, such as clocks, sewing machines, and farm equipment. This simplification of the manufacturing process, known as the "American system," greatly reduced the costs of production and finished goods. New Englanders pioneered the first large, water-powered factories, employing local women to produce cotton textiles.

By the 1830s, U.S. industry had gained unstoppable momentum. In 1807, there were fewer than 20 cotton mills with around 8,000 spindles for making thread; by 1831, a greater number of mills had nearly 1.2 million spindles. Steam engines transformed mining and iron production, powered mills and workshops, and moved goods by rail and water. Factories replaced craftsmen and household production of daily items. A "market revolution" stimulated far-reaching changes in American society and the economy.

> "The **greatness of America** lies not in being **more enlightened** than any other nation, but rather in her ability to **repair her faults**."
>
> ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE, FRENCH HISTORIAN, IN *DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA*, 1835

A slave economy
While the North grew rich through industrial processes developed in Europe, the sources of wealth in the South were raw materials—chiefly cotton—grown and picked by slaves.

North and South diverge

In 1808, a ban on the importation of slaves—which had been prohibited by the Constitution until that date—became the law. Many Americans hoped slavery would gradually decline. North of the Mason-Dixon Line, individual states had already passed laws banning or slowly abolishing slavery. The free African-American population grew rapidly in the North, particularly in urban areas, where African Americans founded their own churches and schools. Many also sheltered runaways from enslavement. Although free, Northern African Americans faced racism and legal barriers, preventing full participation in society.

Life in the South was a very different matter. Between 1800 and 1861, the southern United States became the world's largest and richest slave society. Plantations in the South generated vast wealth, while the numbers of those enslaved rose, as did their monetary value. New states such as Texas, as well as new lands that had been seized from Native Americans drew thousands of white men seeking to make quick profits on virgin soil. Tens of thousands of slaves were separated from their families in the older seaboard states and sold to the new ones in the Southwest. The slave population grew from 700,000 in 1790 to four million in 1860.

Cotton-based economy

On the Southern plantations, slaves cultivated sugar, rice, and tobacco and many acquired the skills necessary to keep a plantation operating. It was cotton, however, that dominated, and as production soared, slaves worked ever longer hours in the cotton fields. Cotton was the key American export, accounting for more than half of all goods exported through 1850. In 1860, Britain took the bulk of American cotton exports—nearly 75 percent of the cotton Britain used came from the United States. But the labor of slaves and production of cotton were not merely matters for the South. The entire domestic economy was bound up in them. Western food fed the slave population, which grew and tended the cotton, while early Northeastern textile and shoe factories sold their output to the South for masters to provide for their slaves. Firms in New York City and New England benefited by providing financial backing and insurance for the burgeoning cotton and slave trades.

Boom town
With the Erie Canal providing vital transportation links, Utica grew from a small settlement into a thriving city. Its population exploded during the 1820s, with many workers staying on after the canal's completion.

AFTER

At the start of the Civil War, about a quarter of U.S. factory workers were women. Five years later, the proportion had risen to a third.

MODEL WORKING CONDITIONS
By 1860, the **United States' largest industrial complex was Lowell**, Massachusetts, whose textile mills were famous for their "Mill Girls."

The Lowell mills had been **set up as a social experiment to avoid the harsh conditions** of British mill towns. Young, single women from farms and small towns as far away as Maine made up the bulk of the workers. **Employers promised parents that each girl would be provided with room and board** in a supervised dormitory and that church attendance on the one day off was mandatory. The women published their own periodical, *The Lowell Offering*, and had **access to circulating libraries, musical instruments, and traveling lecturers**.

After the war, the Lowell mills became more dependent on French Canadian and European immigrants, until by 1900 nearly half the city's population was foreign-born.

WOMEN TAKING CHARGE
In the South, there were fewer factories, but outside the wealthy planter class, **most white women were accustomed to hard work** on smaller farms, which had few if any slaves. The chief difference the war made was that many women had to **take on the running of farms** or plantations in the absence of their menfolk.

A Question of Union

As America's population grew and people moved west, the driving forces in politics were domestic issues and personal rivalry, complicated by conflicts between federal power and the rights of individual states. The War with Mexico increased political divisions along sectional lines.

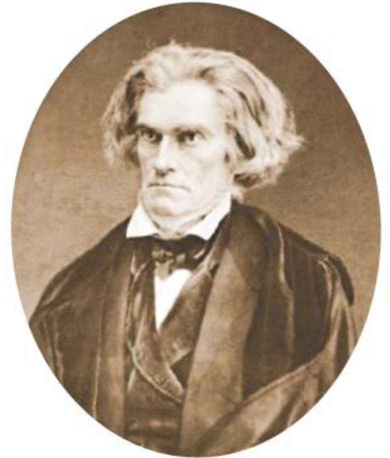
The nature and practice of American politics changed fundamentally in the decades following 1820. The Federal Constitution and state laws originally restricted voting and office-holding to those who met property and residency requirements. By the 1830s, however, most states had rewritten their laws to expand suffrage and office-holding to nearly all white male citizens. Fewer people shared the Founders' ideals of political service by the best educated and wealthy. Politics became a profession, as men sought office, wealth, and status by service to a political party. The Democratic Party, in particular, pioneered a system of party discipline that dispensed jobs at the local, state, and national level.

Andrew Jackson's supporters came from every state for his inaugural celebration in 1829, horrifying many by surging into the White House and climbing onto tables until bowls of punch were carried onto the lawn.

The Jacksonian age

One man who mastered the new politics of personality and orchestrated campaigns was Andrew Jackson of Tennessee. Voters admired his record as the victor of New Orleans—the last major battle of the War of 1812—and as an Indian fighter. Jackson's rise to wealth and influence from rural poverty made him a symbol of the "age of the common man." As a contestant in a bitterly contested presidential election in 1824, he narrowly lost to John Quincy Adams. But his turn for the White House came after the 1828 election, which he won on the Democratic ticket.

Like many frontier men, Jackson resented the dominance of the East. He was the first president to translate his national appeal into a vision of a strong executive that defended the people against abuse by both local and state governments and private interests. In this he was opposed by the Whig Party, dominated by a redoubtable trio, the "Great Triumvirate," comprising Senators John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, Henry Clay of Kentucky, and Daniel Webster of Massachusetts. The Whigs firmly asserted the supremacy of Congress over the president. Jackson easily won a second term in 1832, growing in his conviction that the president represented the popular will. His belief was displayed in a series of crises, triggered by the inconsistent ways that the sections of the



John C. Calhoun
One of the "Great Triumvirate," Calhoun was a brilliant defender of Southern slaveholding interests. Unusually, he served as vice president under two presidents: John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson.

BEFORE

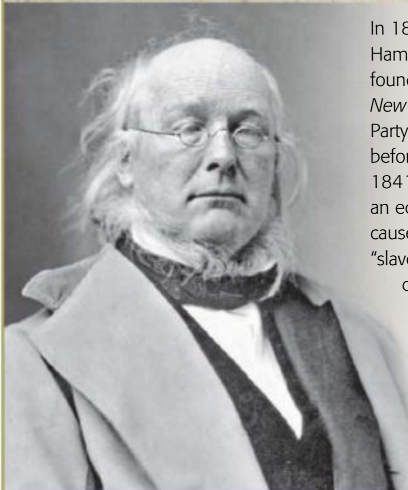
When slave-owning Missouri petitioned for statehood in 1819, the more populous North dominated the House of Representatives. In the Senate, 11 free states to 11 slave states kept the balance.

THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE
Missouri's petition provoked mixed responses. A **debate in the Senate about the future of slavery** saw the first attempt to block admission of a new slave state. To restore calm, Henry Clay of Kentucky arranged a series of measures known as the **Missouri Compromise**. In 1820, Missouri entered the Union as a slave state and Maine as a free one. Slavery was barred from the Louisiana Purchase north of Missouri's southern border.

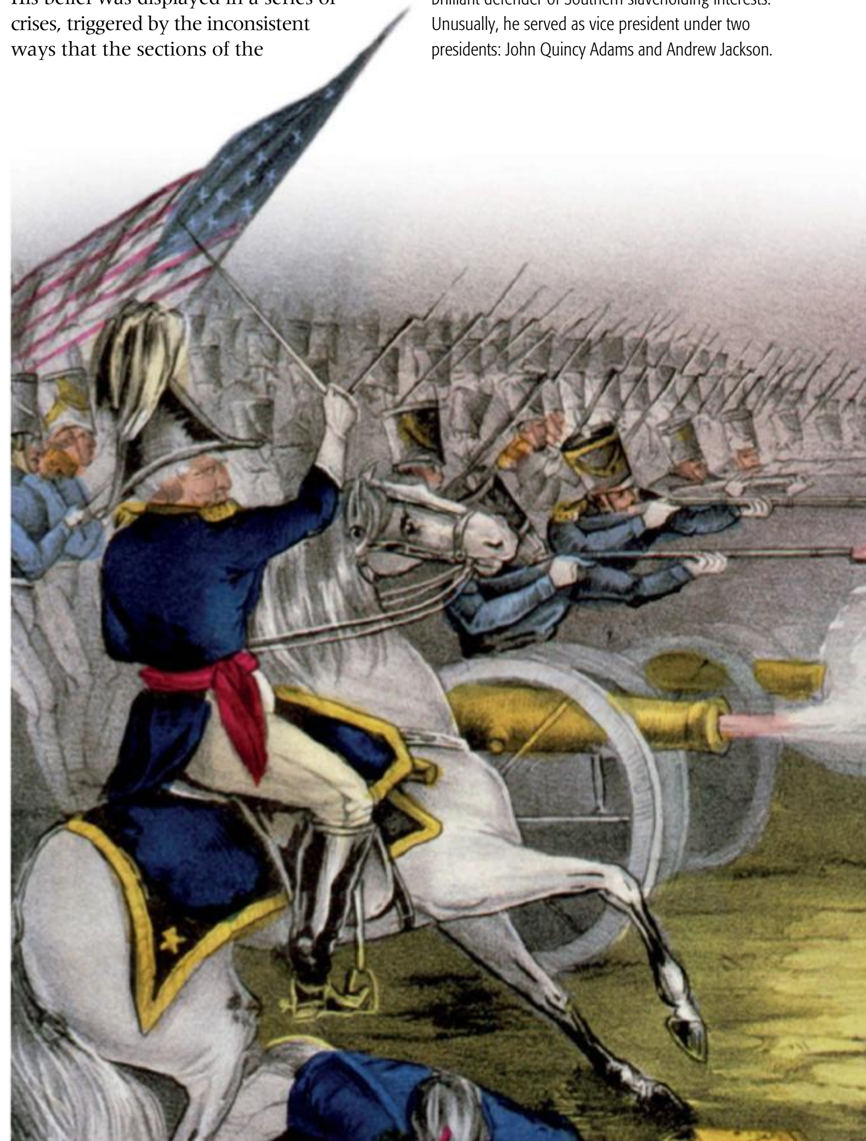
END OF AN ERA
The departure of James Monroe from the White House in 1825 marked **the passing of the Revolutionary generation**. Virginians and slaveholders had held the presidency for 32 of the United States' first 36 years, due to the 3/5 clause that overrepresented Southern whites.

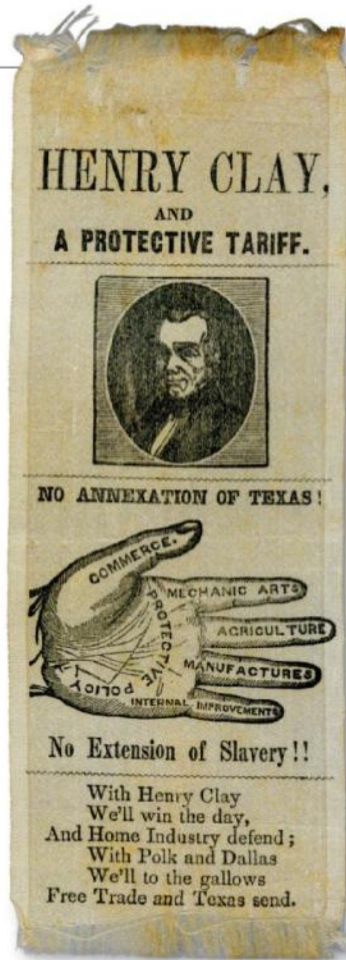
NEWSPAPER EDITOR AND REFORMER 1811–72

HORACE GREELEY



In 1831, Horace Greeley moved from New Hampshire to New York City where he founded the news and literary journal, the *New Yorker*. He went on to edit the Whig Party's campaign paper, *The Log Cabin*, before setting up the New York *Tribune* in 1841. For the next 30 years he advocated an eclectic array of political and social causes and used his paper to oppose the "slave power" that ruled the nation. An early convert to the Republican Party, he offered his printing presses to the party to mass-produce campaign material. After the Civil War, Greeley tried to challenge President Ulysses S. Grant in the 1872 campaign. Ridiculed and soundly defeated, he died soon after the election.





Henry Clay Campaign ribbon
A social lion with great charisma, Senator Henry Clay received the Whig Party's presidential nomination in 1832 and 1844, but was unsuccessful both times. He advocated protective tariffs to aid Western development.

nation responded to the rival claims of federal power and states' rights. Southern states had long coveted Indian lands east of the Mississippi. Although federal treaties and the U.S. Supreme Court denied these states the right to steal Indian territory, Jackson chose to support the state of Georgia's right to seize Indian land. He sent in the army to ensure the removal of Cherokee and other tribes that resisted. Thousands died on this "Trail of Tears" as the refugees trekked west.

Nullification Crisis

Disputes also arose over federal tariffs, or taxes, intended to protect industry in the North. The South resented the tariff because it made European imports into the region more costly. In 1830, South Carolina considered refusing to enforce a tariff passed by Congress in 1828. When another tariff was passed in 1832, South Carolina declared that this and the 1828 tariff were null and void within the borders of the state. Congress denied South Carolina's right to opt out and authorized Jackson to do whatever was necessary to enforce federal law. The Nullification Crisis came to an end in 1833 when South Carolina, finding itself isolated and its claims rejected by other Southern states, backed down.

War with Mexico

As Jackson's term ended, his approach to another crisis was more cautious. In the 1820s, many Americans had emigrated to the territory of Texas, and by 1835 were seeking its independence. After trying to negotiate with Mexican leader Antonio López de Santa Anna, the Texans took to arms. In the ensuing hostilities, they rallied from defeat at the Alamo in March 1836 to capture Santa Anna at San Jacinto a few months later. They then established their own republic and inquired about joining the Union. Jackson and his successor, Martin Van Buren, demurred for fear of precipitating war with Mexico.

The Battle of Buena Vista
At Buena Vista in February 1847, General Zachary Taylor used his artillery to such good effect that he defeated a larger force under the Mexican leader, Santa Anna. The victory helped propel him into the presidency in 1849.

TARIFFS Customs duties that are levied on certain imported goods. These taxes are usually designed to protect domestic producers of similar goods.

Later presidents were more supportive, however, and in 1845 Texas joined the United States. Mexico rejected the annexation, and hostilities began when American dragoons engaged Mexican cavalry along the disputed Rio Grande border. On May 10, 1846, President James K. Polk declared, "American blood has been shed on American soil." Despite the opposition of influential figures such as New York *Tribune* editor Horace Greeley, Congress declared war three days later.

In September, an army under General Zachary Taylor captured the Mexican city of Monterey. Santa Anna, whose career had taken several twists since his capture in 1836, returned to Mexico from exile and declared himself president once more. In February 1847, Taylor defeated him at the Battle of Buena Vista. In March, General Winfield Scott launched the largest amphibious landing ever, when his 12,000 troops disembarked near Veracruz. Scott's army finally entered Mexico City on September 14.

"Our federal Union—it must and **shall be preserved**."
ANDREW JACKSON, 1830

AFTER

The War with Mexico 1846–48 was generally popular in the South, but split the North and reopened discussions on slavery. The philosopher and writer Henry David Thoreau went to jail rather than pay taxes during the war. Others saw it as part of the nation's Manifest Destiny to occupy the entire continent.

SCHOOL OF WAR
This war served as the training ground for **future Civil War commanders**, including Winfield Scott, Ulysses S. Grant, and Robert E. Lee. They learned to wage war far from supply lines, command and train soldiers, and participate in operations with the Navy. **Scott was rewarded with a gold medal** from Congress, after his troops occupied Mexico City in September 1847.

SCOTT'S MEDAL

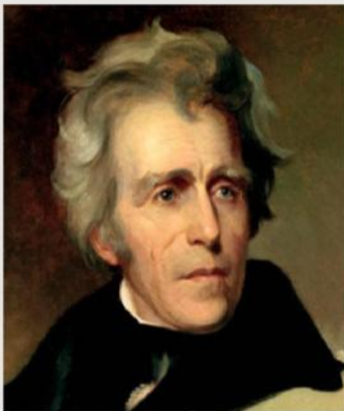
NEW BORDERS
In the Treaty of **Guadalupe Hidalgo**, which ended the war on February 2, 1848, the **Americans gained land** including the modern states of Arizona, New Mexico, California, and parts of Colorado, Utah, and Nevada. Apart from some minor issues, **the treaty finalized the borders** of the United States.

Slavery Divides the Country

In the 30 years prior to the Civil War, churches, political parties, and families split on the nature of the American republic and the status of slavery. Victory over Mexico fixed the national boundaries, but the question of how new lands would be organized—free or slave—fractured national institutions.

Even before the War with Mexico ended, the debate about the future of slavery in the newly conquered territories divided Congress. In 1846, Pennsylvania Democratic Congressman David Wilmot introduced a proviso, or amendment, to an Army finance bill that would ban slavery from all territories acquired from Mexico. In the House, 52 out of 56 Northern Democrats and all Northern Whigs voted for the Wilmot Proviso—a unity across party lines that foreshadowed future Northern opposition to the extension of slavery to the West. In the Senate, however, the proviso met defeat. Southerners condemned it as an attempt to block their right to take their property to the territories.

BEFORE


ANDREW JACKSON

In the 1820s and 1830s, sectional divisions over slavery were always an issue, but never dominated politics in the way they would after the War with Mexico.

THE NULLIFICATION CRISIS
Men like **President Andrew Jackson** « 16–17 were passionate supporters of the Union and strongly resisted the demands of individual states whenever they threatened national unity. One such moment was the **Nullification Crisis** of 1832 « 17 when, in an assertion of states' rights, South Carolina refused to implement the **import tariffs** imposed by the federal government.

SLAVERY AND THE WEST
As cotton production spread into the new lands of Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas, the **soil of the Eastern states' plantations was becoming exhausted**. The expansion of cotton production meant the **spread of slavery to the West**.

Slave ownership

The South by this time was a socially and economically diverse region. In the mountainous areas of northern Alabama, eastern Kentucky, Tennessee, and western Virginia, there were few plantations. Most whites farmed to support their families and traded locally. The majority of these yeomen farmers owned no slaves, although they still supported the institution.

350,000 The number of Southerners who owned slaves in 1850—less than 25 percent of the white population. Half of slaveowners had five slaves or fewer; only one percent owned a hundred or more.

It was on the cotton and tobacco plantations where most slaves toiled. Other slaves were house servants, and a growing number worked as skilled artisans or were hired out in urban areas. The price of a slave quadrupled between 1800 and 1860, indicating a growing demand for black labor even as the number of slaves increased.

Sutter's gold
In 1848, John Sutter found gold on his land in Calfornia, sparking off the Gold Rush. The free-or-slave status of the new territory proved controversial. Pro-slavery advocates pointed out that slaves could work in gold mining.

Congressman David Wilmot
Wilmot himself proposed his proviso on essentially racist grounds. He intended to preserve Western lands for white men free of "the disgrace" of mixing slavery and free labor.

During this same period, more than 800,000 slaves from the Eastern states were sold or moved to work on the new cotton lands of the Southwest, breaking the ties of slave families in the process.

Southerners started to see their society as distinctive and threatened. Politicians and intellectuals began to defend slavery as a "positive good." Paternalism on the plantation was compared with the situation of Northern workers desperately seeking employment, which created class tension.

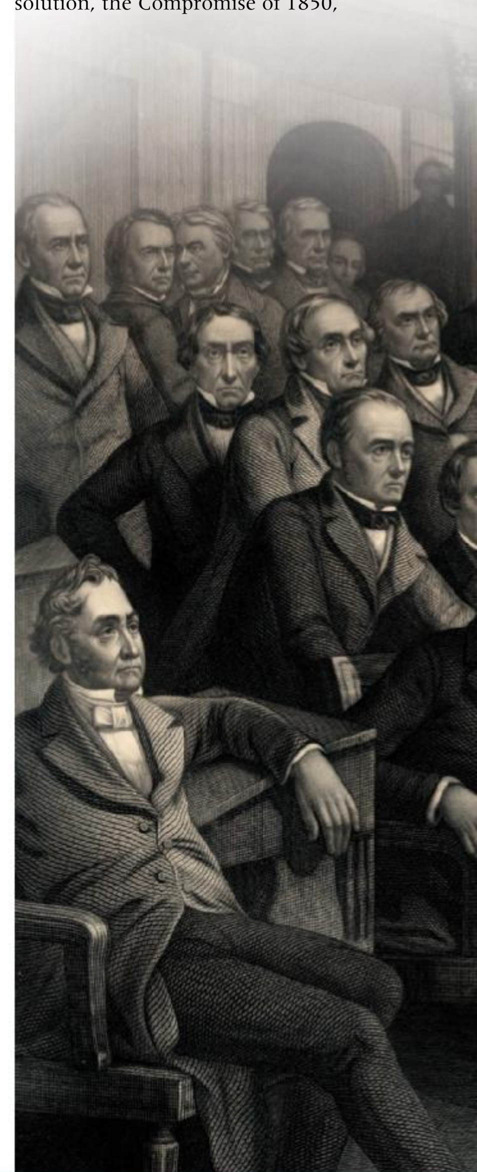
Splits emerge

Church ministers and congregations were divided. Well before the rise of sectional political parties, the three largest Protestant groups—Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists—formally split their national denominations into sectional factions. The Presbyterians were first to split in 1837, followed by the Baptists in 1844. In the Methodist Church, the largest denomination, a lengthy debate over the right of a slaveholder to serve as a presiding bishop triggered the formation of the breakaway Methodist Episcopal Church South in 1846. For the vast majority of Southerners, slavery was not a sin—slaveowners provided their slaves with Christian instruction and "rescued" them from barbarism and heathenism.

Northerners, meanwhile, were fearful of this new militant defense of slavery. As West and East grew closer through railroads, telegraph, and print, the South was aggressively seeking to send slavery into new territories and states where it had been outlawed for decades. One response to this trend was the Free-Soil Party, established in 1848 under the slogan, "Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor, and Free Men." Free-Soilers contended that a society where free men worked free soil was not only morally superior to a slave society, but also more efficient economically. By 1849, they had won 14 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and two in the Senate.

At the same time, Northern workers feared economic competition from black labor. As tens of thousands of European immigrants arrived in the North, urban crowding and a scarcity of work increased pressures on the free black community there, with riots and mob actions from New England through the Midwest.

It was against this background that the federal government had to decide the future of the territory acquired after the War with Mexico. The solution, the Compromise of 1850,



consisted of five bills designed to balance the interests of North and South. These bills admitted California to the Union as a free state, thus ending the balance in the Senate between slave states and free states that had lasted since the Missouri Compromise of 1820—senators from the free states would now outnumber those from the slave ones. As a concession to the South, the territories of Utah and New Mexico were to choose slavery or freedom according to the principle of "popular sovereignty." The Fugitive Slave Act, which had been federal law since 1793, was given new teeth. It became an offense, punishable by a large fine, for any citizen to resist or refuse to assist in the recapture of suspected runaways, even in states that opposed slavery.

Compromise and growth

In the decade following the Compromise, Southern economic development surged. Railroad mileage quadrupled, with much of the track laid by slaves. By 1860, an independent South would have been the fourth wealthiest nation on Earth. The number of slaveholders decreased; by 1860, the percentage of whites with slaves had fallen to less than a quarter. But slavery was not dying or unprofitable.

> "Our slaves are black, of **another and an inferior race.** The status in which we have placed them is **an elevation** ..."
>
> SOUTH CAROLINA U.S. SENATOR JAMES HENRY HAMMOND, MARCH 4, 1858

AFTER

Writers on both sides of the argument grew steadily more impassioned in their defense or condemnation of slavery.

FIGURINE OF UNCLE TOM

LEGITIMIZING SLAVERY

Religious leaders across the South marshaled arguments such as **the existence of slavery in the Bible** and St. Paul's injunction to slaves to obey their masters as justification.

Most presidents, Supreme Court justices, and Congressional leaders had been slaveholders. The Constitution **sanctioned slavery** and promised to **protect private property**. A man's property—his slaves—should be protected wherever he went in the United States.

THE CASE FOR ABOLITION

In the face of these biblical and historical justifications of slavery, **abolitionists in the North** also appealed to **Christian doctrine** and preached ever more vociferously against the **inhumanity of the system** **20–21 ››**. One surprisingly powerful ally in their cause was the novel ***Uncle Tom's Cabin***, by **Harriet Beecher Stowe** **20 ››**, published in 1852. The book was serialized in newspapers and tens of thousands of copies sold across the nation, reaching a far larger sympathetic audience than earlier abolitionist appeals.

VIOLENCE ERUPTS

The Compromise of 1850 averted conflict for the time being. But in 1854, the act that established the **territories of Kansas and Nebraska** provoked violent clashes between opponents and supporters of slavery. One prominent abolitionist involved in the fighting in Kansas was **John Brown**, who was subsequently hanged after gaining lasting noteriety for leading the **Raid at Harpers Ferry** **24–25 ››**.

Debating the Compromise of 1850
Henry Clay urges the Senate to accept a package of bills designed to appease Northerners and Southerners. Eventually, the measures he proposed were all passed, but as separate acts.

The **Fury** of **Abolition**

The great majority of prominent abolitionists were white, many of them pastors who were loath to preach a doctrine of violent insurrection. With their personal experience and hatred of slavery, black abolitionists challenged these white abolitionists who preached pacifism and patience.

BEFORE

Opposition to slavery began in the colonial era, but in the 30 years prior to the Civil War, abolitionist organizations formed to promote freedom at the local and national level.

RELIGIOUS INSPIRATION
Few white Americans actively opposed slavery before 1830, but the **abolition of slavery** in many **Northern states**, by the **British Empire**, and in most of the **new nations of Latin America** marked its **continuation in the American South** as an **anomaly**.

Numerous **religious revivalist movements**, particularly across the North, stimulated newly energized evangelicals to seek the perfection of American society by **eliminating shameful social and political evils**, such as slavery.

DIFFERING APPROACHES
White abolitionists attacked slavery as a **moral and political evil** even as they disagreed among themselves. One faction demanded **immediate emancipation** and complete political equality for blacks. They would tolerate **no compromises with slaveholders** and offered no compensation. **Gradualists** hoped to **minimize social and economic upheaval** by emancipating slaves slowly and providing owners with some kind of compensation.

David Walker, a free black, wrote his *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* in 1829, demanding the immediate abolition of slavery. Echoing the Declaration of Independence, he asserted that blacks were Americans and entitled to the rights of citizens. He denounced moderate anti-slavery leaders who advocated sending free blacks to the struggling colony of Liberia, and accused the United States of hypocrisy as a Christian nation.

Shortly after its publication, copies of Walker's *Appeal* were discovered in South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, and Louisiana, carried South by free black sailors. White Southerners feared that free blacks and sympathetic Northerners were inciting slaves to rebellion. To prevent such insurrections, most Southern states banned teaching all blacks—slave or free—to read.

Rebellion in Virginia

In 1831, Southerners' worst fears were realized when the slave Nat Turner led an insurrection in Southampton County, Virginia. Turner and his allies swiftly moved between isolated farms, killing all the whites they encountered, some 70 people in all. Terrified Virginians killed anyone believed associated with the revolt and finally captured Turner two months later and executed him. The revolt underscored the lie of contented slaves who harbored no ambitions for freedom or vengeance. After the revolt, the Virginia legislature debated the future of slavery in the state. Some recognized the evils of slavery; others feared that it slowed economic development and discouraged immigration. Yet others defended slavery as a financial necessity and as a part of God's plan to Christianize and civilize Africans. The possibility of gradual emancipation was discussed, but in the end, by a close vote, it was decided to end public discussion of the issue and to regulate the slave community more tightly.

Am I not a Man and a Brother?
London abolitionists campaigning for the end of slavery in the British Empire produced this copper medallion, designed by the firm of Josiah Wedgwood, in the 1790s. U.S. abolitionists adopted its motif of the kneeling slave.

1,350 **The number of chapters in the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1838—a more than threefold increase in three years. With 150,000 members, the society was a small but vociferous proportion of the population.**

William Lloyd Garrison

That same year, 1831, William Lloyd Garrison printed the first copy of his abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*. He saw slavery as a grave national sin and demanded its immediate abolition. Two years later, he helped form the American Anti-Slavery Society (AAS) with many members drawn from evangelical churches in New England and western New York. Many of these religiously inspired activists saw blacks and whites as one family created by God, although many remained paternalistic toward blacks and were reluctant to accept the notion of full social equality. Garrison and his followers also alienated more traditional abolitionists by supporting women's rights. Some Southerners saw a link between *The Liberator* and Nat Turner's insurrection and demanded that Garrison's paper be shut down.

The postal campaign of 1835

The abolitionists were a tiny minority, but they used newspapers and the postal system to spread their message—even to the South. In 1835, members of the AAS gathered the names and addresses of politicians, clergymen, businessmen, and prominent citizens to create a national mailing list. They then mailed abolitionist papers, pamphlets, tracts, children's books, and sheet music across the nation, including the South.

Southerners were outraged. Many Southern states had already banned the circulation of abolitionist literature, and President Andrew Jackson authorized postmasters in each community to censor the mails as they saw fit. Mail bags were opened and literature deemed inflammatory or dangerous was seized and frequently burned. Even Northerners opposed to these tactics by abolitionists were troubled by this restriction on the free speech of fellow white citizens.

Southern politicians demanded that public "agitation" about slavery cease as a matter of safety and sectional peace. Southern Democrats and Whigs agreed that the right of citizens to petition Congress on the subject of slavery must also stop. A "gag rule" was devised that blocked presentation of citizen petitions in Congress between 1836 and 1844.

Violence against abolitionists

In a nation where slavery was legal and its products the core of the export economy, abolitionists often met a

ABOLITIONIST AND AUTHOR 1811–96

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin* at the peak of Northern resentment against the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. First appearing in 40 installments in the anti-slavery newspaper, the *National Era*, it was published as a book by a Boston company in 1852. It would outsell all others, except the Bible, throughout the 19th century. Southerners resented its portrayal of slavery and the audacity of a Northern woman who dared condemn it. Among Northerners, many responded with tears and pity for the fictional slaves—a sympathy that many had rarely felt for those actually enslaved. The book created an emotional climate that made more Northerners receptive to anti-slavery appeals and sectional claims of the moral superiority of the free states.

"**Strike** for your **lives and liberties** … Rather **die freemen** than **live to be slaves**."

HENRY HIGHLAND GARNET, IN A SPEECH DELIVERED IN BUFFALO, AUGUST 21, 1843

A cover for *The Liberator* newspaper
William Lloyd Garrison's weekly newspaper campaigned for the abolition of slavery from 1831 right through the Civil War. The last issue appeared in 1865.

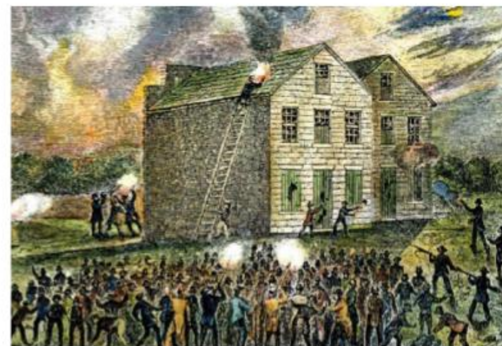
hostile response. Many people resented their attacks on the political system and critiques of America, while an even larger number rejected the idea of political and civic equality for blacks.

Occasionally, Northerners showed their hostility toward abolitionists by attacking them physically. Between 1834 and 1838, approximately 30 such attacks occurred. Buildings were torched, newspaper presses destroyed, and abolitionist speakers were shouted down and roughed up. Many of the attacks were organized by political and business leaders trying to prove to Southerners that abolitionists were just a deluded minority. However, in Alton, Illinois, one attack proved fatal. Elijah Lovejoy moved to St. Louis in 1834 to serve as a Presbyterian minister and publisher of a religious newspaper in whose pages he advocated abolition. After witnessing a slave burned alive at the stake, Lovejoy condemned slavery, the legal system, and the thousands who had joined the mob. His press was destroyed in 1836 and he moved across the river to Alton where he set up the *Alton Observer*. His anti-slavery editorials angered many of Alton's citizens, who attacked his office three times and destroyed his presses. In November, 1837, Lovejoy and about 20 men were gathered to hide and protect a new press from a mob when shots were exchanged and Lovejoy was killed.

Yet mob violence, Southern condemnation, and Federal acceptance of censorship of the mail and right of petition failed to halt the growing spread of anti-slavery and abolition societies. Attacks and attempts to limit freedom of speech troubled a Northern public that had so far been indifferent or opposed to abolitionists' goals. Issues about the expansion of slavery and a growing sectional rift over the place of slavery in the West and in the nation made hostile Northerners listen again to abolitionist critiques of the South.

Political anti-slavery

Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, many Northerners grew increasingly opposed to the spread of slavery. These anti-slavery supporters did not necessarily advocate emancipation. Often hostile to Southern interests, many were simply opposed to the existence of more slave states. Some used anti-slavery as a way of playing the political system, running candidates, and seeking office. Garrison and his followers rejected any political activity as corrupt, while others such as Frederick Douglass were suspicious of the absence of concern for black rights. Events of the 1850s would move radical ideas about slavery into the political mainstream in the North, a gradual shift observed by Southerners with anger and alarm.



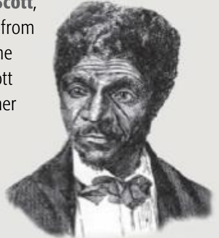
Mob rule in Illinois
A contemporary engraving shows the attack on the warehouse in Alton where abolitionist Elijah Lovejoy had hidden his printing press. In the riot, Lovejoy was fatally wounded by five bullets and the press destroyed.

AFTER

Even as Northern views on abolition changed in the 1850s, an 11-year lawsuit came to fruition and fueled the abolitionist cause.

THE DRED SCOTT CASE

Since the mid-1840s a lawsuit brought by a slave, **Dred Scott**, had slowly worked its way from the courts of Missouri to the **U.S. Supreme Court**. Scott claimed that when his owner had moved to the free territories in the upper Midwest, he and his family were **entitled to their freedom**.



DRED SCOTT

In January 1857, **Chief Justice Roger Taney**, a Democrat, delivered a decision that shocked the North. He ruled that Scott's case had no legal standing, since **blacks could never become citizens** and were "unfit to associate with the white race." He declared that **Congress had no right to restrict slavery in the territories**. As Southerners celebrated, Republicans seized on the decision as more evidence of a Slave Power conspiracy and warned that it would lead to the legalizing of slavery across the nation.

The decision in fact **aided the anti-slavery cause** and swelled the new Republican party, leading to its election victory in 1860.

The **Rise** of the **Republican Party**

Founded to oppose the extension of slavery, the Republican Party in 1855 had organized members in fewer than half the Northern states, most of which often ran third to the Democrats in elections. Less than a year later, the Republicans had transformed themselves from a disorganized coalition into a powerful sectional party.

In May 1856, three violent events—two in Washington, D.C., and one in Kansas—convinced many white Northerners that the South really did constitute a threat to their rights and liberties. The unconnected events inspired Northern enthusiasm for the Republican Party—founded just two years earlier by a coalition that included abolitionists, former anti-slavery Whigs, and former Free-Soilers—and led to a sudden surge in support for the party.

On May 8, Alabama-born Congressman Philemon Herbert, furious when he was refused service at the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C., attacked waiter Thomas Keating, triggering a dining room melee that ended with Herbert shooting the waiter dead. The Republicans printed handbills, speeches, and pamphlets stressing slaveholders' disdain for "menials" and portraying the attack as a blow against white workers and farmers. Party editors quoted inflammatory items from the Southern press as proof of the tyrannical nature of slaveholders.

Two weeks later, on May 22, Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts was brutally beaten on the floor of the Senate by a Southern congressman, Preston Brooks. Republicans, joined by a number of former Democrats, organized "indignation meetings" that drew thousands of Northern men and women into public condemnation of the assault.

BEFORE

In the 1850s, anti-Catholicism and concerns about both slavery and immigration drew Americans to new political parties.

NEW POLITICAL PARTIES
As the Whig party faded, local nativist groups organized into the anti-immigration **"Know Nothing" Party**. At the same time, many Northerners who advocated **"Free Soil"** in the West joined anti-Southern and anti-slavery coalitions that became the **Republican Party**.

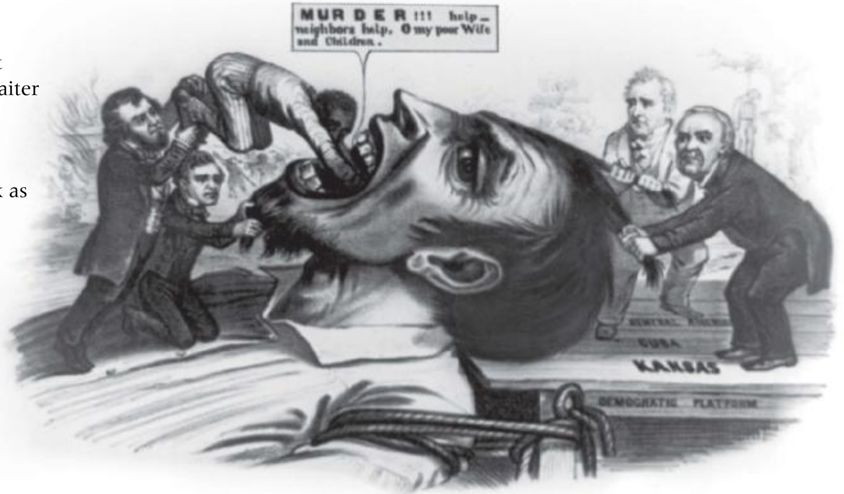
SLAVE POWER
Many Northerners feared the expansion of slavery into the West. Southern political power was frequently characterized as a conspiracy or **"Slave Power."** These perceived threats to white liberties in the North mobilized popular support for the Republicans more than any moral commitment to the **abolition of slavery and justice for African Americans** « 20–21.

A climate of fear

That same evening, reports arrived that Lawrence, Kansas, the center of free-state settlers, had been sacked and burned by pro-slavery militia from Missouri. Stories circulated of murder, pillage, and rape, but in fact the only casualty was a Missouri raider, killed by a brick falling from a burning hotel. Confrontations over slavery in Kansas suddenly became part of a larger pattern of violence. Previously skeptical opponents of the Republicans now accepted that "The Slave Power is the same in Missouri as it is in Washington." These violent acts seemed to prove Republican assertions of Southern "Slave Power" and its threat to white men, whether they were laborers, settlers, or senators.

1,342,345 The number of popular votes for the Republican candidate John C. Frémont in the presidential election of 1856: 33.1 percent of the votes cast.

The failure of the president, the Congress, and the courts to render justice as demanded by an enraged Northern public added indignity to a sense of imminent danger. The Republican Party took advantage of this and used an extensive network of editors, ministers, and party workers to print and distribute a vast amount of political propaganda. The Southern press retaliated. In May 1856, the *Enquirer* in Richmond, Virginia, urged that "vulgar abolitionists ... must be lashed into submission." Later that year, an Alabama editor fumed, "Free society, we sicken at the name ... a conglomeration of greasy mechanics, filthy operatives, small-fisted farmers, and moonstruck theorists ... hardly fit for association with a Southern gentleman's body servant." Such provocative statements only served to remind Northerners that Republicans stood ready to defend their interests against the South.



Forcing slavery down the throat of a Free-Soiler
The Free-Soil Party opposed the spread of slavery in the West. This cartoon refers to the divisive Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, after which many Free-Soilers chose to join the emerging Republican Party.

Rapidly growing support

Heated debates and political violence erupted over what party was fit to rule. The rapid spread of anger at Southern attitudes about slavery enabled the Republican Party to attract both abolitionists and moderates willing to vote against Southern institutions and culture.

The aim of stopping the expansion of slavery unified the Republican Party. Slave holders cringed at this political dogma, given the increase of populations in the North and West. Southerners feared losing the political balance in Congress, which protected their interests. They knew that slavery ultimately would be subjected to the will of the majority.

For a party that had been founded as recently as 1854, the Republicans achieved a remarkable result in their first presidential election. Their candidate John C. Frémont carried 11 states to Democratic candidate James Buchanan's 19. The 1856 election was seen by them as a "victorious defeat."

KEY MOMENT

THE CANING OF MASSACHUSETTS SENATOR CHARLES SUMNER

THE SUMNER CANING, A PROVOCATIVE EXAMPLE OF SOUTHERN CHIVALRY

On May 19–20, 1856, Charles Sumner delivered a two-day speech in the Senate attacking slavery and its sexual abuses. Two days later Congressman Preston Brooks of South Carolina, having read the text of the speech, was so enraged that he marched into the Senate and attacked Sumner at his desk, beating him unconscious with his cane, which shattered as a result of the violent blows. Brooks believed that Sumner's speech had slandered his uncle, Senator Andrew Butler.

This unprecedented attack on the Senate floor shocked Northerners, who considered it an assault on free speech. Republicans used the attack to create effective campaign rhetoric "proving" the threat to Northern liberties posed by Southern slaveholders.

> “The **question** to be decided is **who shall rule this nation**—the **Slave States** or the **Free States**.”
>
> *THE FREMONTER*, AUGUST 22, 1856

Republican running mates in the 1856 election
The presidential candidate was John C. Frémont, senator for California in 1850–51. His vice presidential candidate, William L. Dayton, won the nomination over Abraham Lincoln. They campaigned under the slogan “Free soil, free labor, free speech, free men.”

AFTER

The Republican Party exercised increasing power in Congress, but it prepared for the election of 1860 by seeking candidates who could carry the more moderately anti-slavery states it lost in 1856.

A NORTH IS BORN

Republicans tapped into the resentment of Northerners who knew, based on the 1850 census, that they had the majority of the nation’s population, wealth, and industry. They used **corruption in Kansas** and the **Dred Scott decision by the U.S. Supreme Court** **« 20–21** to raise fears of the spread of slavery throughout the Union.

THE 1860 ELECTION

Four groups competed in the election: the Republican Party, the Constitutional Union Party (which also advocated Union), and the Northern and Southern factions of a now split Democratic Party. The Republicans selected a moderate candidate in **Abraham Lincoln**, who won without a single electoral vote from the South and without a popular majority.

REPUBLICAN RIBBON

Inside the engine house
This engraving in a contemporary newspaper imagines the scene inside the engine house just before the Marines broke down the door. The hostages taken by Brown are standing on the left.

The Raid at Harpers Ferry

On October 16, 1859, abolitionist John Brown and 21 men, including five free blacks and three of Brown's sons, crossed the Potomac River and marched to Harpers Ferry, Virginia, in the rain. They cut telegraph lines, rounded up hostages, and seized parts of the federal arsenal.

« BEFORE

In 1858, the year the ruling Democratic Party lost control of Congress, many Republicans made powerful speeches on how the issue of slavery divided the nation.

HALF SLAVE AND HALF FREE

Most famous of these speeches was **Abraham Lincoln's "House Divided" speech** delivered in Springfield, Illinois, in May 1858, in which he declared, "I believe this government cannot endure, permanently **half slave and half free**." The speech went on to refer to the situation in **Kansas** and the upholding of the **Dred Scott decision** « 20–21.

IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT

Even more inflammatory was a speech delivered by New York **Senator William Seward** in October 1858 in Rochester. He argued that an "**irrepressible conflict**" existed within the country. The nation "must and will ... become **either entirely a slave-holding nation or a free-labor nation**." Democrats condemned the speech as dangerous agitation and when, a year later, John Brown led the attack on Harpers Ferry, **Northern Democratic and Southern newspapers blamed Seward's theory** of an "irrepressible conflict" for Brown's actions.

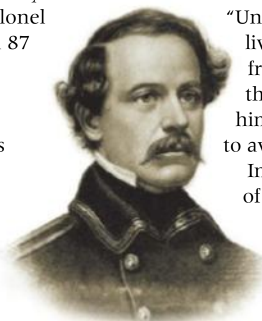
Within 12 hours of Brown's raid, militia and locals trapped him and his men in the federal armory's fire engine house. By midnight the next day, Colonel Robert E. Lee arrived with 87 Marines to rescue the hostages and subdue the raiders. Brown refused to surrender and the Marines rushed the engine house, battering down the door, killing or wounding many of the remaining raiders, and collecting the hostages unharmed.

Abolitionist roots

Born in Connecticut in 1800, Brown as a youth and adult moved regularly, usually after one of his many business failures. His deeply religious parents instilled in him a hatred of slavery that led to an early involvement in abolition.

He served as a member of the "Underground Railroad" and lived for two years in a freedman's community. By the age of 50, Brown saw himself as ordained by God to avenge the evils of slavery.

In August 1855, he joined five of his sons in Kansas to fight against the pro-slavery faction there. Following the reports of the "sack" of Lawrence, Kansas, Brown sought vengeance. He led six men, including four of his sons, to the homes of pro-slavery families living near Pottawatomie Creek and hacked the men and older boys to death with broadswords. In another incident at Osawatomie, he and his men killed a large number of pro-slavery raiders from Missouri. These exploits gained Brown an infamous reputation and the nickname "Old Osawatomie Brown."



Robert E. Lee
By a curious quirk of fate, the man who would subsequently command the armies of the Confederacy led the Federal troops that foiled the Harpers Ferry raid.

Funding the raid

Brown now seized upon the idea of inciting slave insurrection. He believed that if slaves rose up in great numbers, the economy of the South would collapse. In spite of his actions in Kansas, he traveled openly in New England, routinely appearing at abolitionist meetings and private parties. His exploits and appearance—simple clothing and an intensity of expression—attracted those tired of simply talking about slavery. One by one, Brown gathered a small group of radical abolitionists, six in all, who would support and fund his fight

Confiscated pike
This pike was confiscated at the time of John Brown's capture at Harpers Ferry. Brown commissioned 1,000 such weapons with a view to arming insurgent slaves.

"I, **John Brown**, am now quite certain that the **crimes of this guilty land** will never be **purged** away, but **with blood**."

A NOTE FROM BROWN TO HIS JAILER BEFORE HIS EXECUTION, DECEMBER 2, 1859

against slavery. The "Secret Six" were Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a minister and future Civil War officer; Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, a Boston physician; Reverend Theodore Parker, a renowned speaker and Unitarian minister; Franklin Sanborn, a friend of Thoreau and Emerson; Gerrit Smith, a wealthy reformer and philanthropist who had previously given Brown land in the Adirondacks; and George Luther Stearns, a key financier of the Emigrant Aid Company, which funded settlement of Kansas by anti-slavery homesteaders.

Planning the raid

By the summer of 1859, Brown had switched his focus to Virginia. His target was the federal armory at Harpers Ferry, which would provide arms for some 18,000 slaves living in the surrounding counties. He already had a large quantity of weapons. The Massachusetts-Kansas Committee provided him with 200 Sharps rifles in 1857 and he paid a Connecticut blacksmith to craft 1,000 pikes with 10-in (25-cm) blades. He shipped 198 rifles and 950 of the pikes to the Maryland farm near Harpers Ferry, where his men were to gather. At a secret meeting in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, Brown tried to persuade prominent abolitionist Frederick Douglass to participate in the raid. He refused, warning Brown that the enterprise seemed doomed.

Brown's raid and death inspired an unknown writer or writers to compose the marching song, "John Brown's Body." By the outbreak of the Civil War, it was already a favorite with Union troops.

Sentenced to death

Douglass's misgivings proved correct. The attackers failed to remove any of the arsenal's weapons and only five escaped capture and death. Brown's own trial was swift. He had been wounded in the raid, but was declared fit to stand to trial at Charles Town, Virginia, on October 27. Found guilty of treason against Virginia, he was sentenced to hang on December 2.

Americans generally condemned Brown's violence, but a clear division characterized views on his goals and personal courage. Abolitionist Lydia Maria Child wrote to Virginia Governor Henry Wise and offered to nurse Brown as he awaited execution. Republican newspapers noted Brown's extremism, but reminded readers that it resulted from the presence of slavery—a moral and political evil. Southern editors pointed out that no slaves had joined Brown's attack. On October 26, 1859, a North Carolina paper, the Wilmington *Daily Herald*, wrote that this proved that "slaves love, honor, and obey their masters." Those who wanted an independent Southern government warned that only independence could protect Southern slavery from future attacks by emboldened abolitionists.

Reactions to the execution

Public sentiment was polarized between those who celebrated Brown's execution and those who publicly mourned him. Southerners deeply resented Northern expressions of support for Brown. Especially galling was that national figures, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, compared Brown to Christ and his gallows to the cross. A Richmond editor remarked that the raid and public responses to it "advanced the cause of disunion more than any event … since the formation of the government."

John Brown
This daguerreotype was taken in 1846–47 by African-American photographer Augustus Washington in Hartford, Connecticut. The pose recalls Brown's oath to dedicate his life to the destruction of slavery.

John Brown's last moments
As his legend grew, Brown's "martyrdom" was wildly romanticized by writers and artists. This apocryphal scene of Brown kissing a black baby on his way to the scaffold was painted in 1882–84 by Thomas Hovenden.

AFTER »

While many labeled Brown a fanatic or a lunatic, others—both in the North and the South—cherished his memory, albeit for widely differing motives.

FREE BLACKS PREPARE

After decades of ineffectual talk, a white abolitionist had finally joined hands with black men to **attack slavery on its home soil**. In the North, free blacks organized military companies in cities such as Philadelphia, Boston, New York, and Pittsburgh. **Brown was lionized**, becoming a potent symbol and subject of a popular song on the lips of **black soldiers** when they **joined the Union army** in 1863 92-93 ».

BOOST TO THE CAUSE OF SECESSION

Fears of slave revolts wracked the South throughout 1860. Those intent on secession used Brown's raid as a warning of the horrors of insurrection. One such advocate, Edmund Ruffin of Virginia, went to great lengths to keep the memory of the raid alive. He asked officials at Harpers Ferry to send him the pikes seized after the raid, labeled them "**Samples of the favors designed for us by our Northern Brethren**," and sent one to each Southern governor.

2

SECESSION TRIGGERS WAR

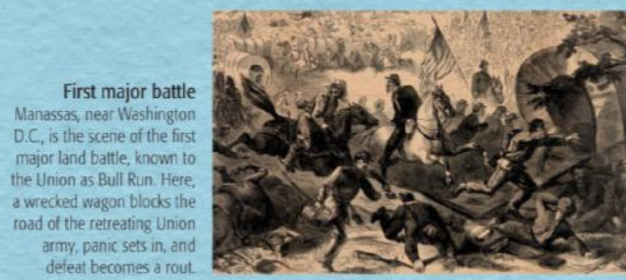
1861

When Republicans won the 1860 presidential election, many white Southerners envisaged a threat to slavery, and some Southern states seceded from the Union. Most Northerners saw secession as treason and refused to accept peaceful disunion—a rift that ended in civil war.

« Opening shots of the Civil War
The garrison at Fort Sumter replies to Confederate shelling on April 12, 1861. Located in Charleston harbor, South Carolina, the Union fort was seen as an insult to the new Confederacy. The commander of the fort, Major Robert Anderson (far left), agreed to withdraw the garrison the next day.

SECESSION TRIGGERS WAR

Union troops attacked in Baltimore
Pro-secession feeling in Baltimore, Maryland, leads to clashes with troops passing through from New York to Washington on April 19. In Maryland and Delaware, slavery is permitted. Lincoln's firm response to the event persuades the two states to remain within the Union.



First major battle
Manassas, near Washington D.C., is the scene of the first major land battle, known to the Union as Bull Run. Here, a wrecked wagon blocks the road of the retreating Union army, panic sets in, and defeat becomes a rout.

Call to arms in the South
This Confederate poster of May 1861 calls for local volunteers in Tennessee to fight in the "Yankee War." It proposes to raise "an infantry company to be offered to the Government as part of the defense of the state and of the Confederate States."

Despite last-ditch attempts to work out a political compromise, the first months of 1861 saw a steady disintegration of relations between North and South and between the political leaders of the two sections. By early February, seven states had seceded from the Union and taken steps toward establishing the Confederacy. President Abraham Lincoln continued to maintain that conflict was unnecessary, but the reality was that positions were hardening every day. Across the South, the seceded states started taking over Federal outposts. Not surprisingly, one of these confrontations between Southern forces and troops loyal to the Union erupted in violence—at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, on April 12.

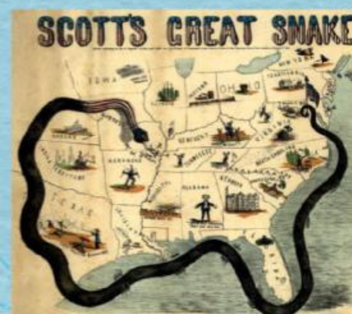
With the nation's small prewar armed forces divided between the two sections, neither at first had the means to fight the other on any significant scale. Both sides began assembling volunteer armies

1861

Confederate victory in Missouri
The Battle of Wilson's Creek, fought in Missouri on August 10, gives the South a victory in the Western Theater. Although the Union army is heavily outnumbered and forced to retreat, casualties in the fighting are roughly equal.

Volunteers in New York
The streets of New York City are lined with large, enthusiastic crowds on April 19 as the 7th New York Infantry Regiment parades through the metropolis. On April 25, the regiment arrives in Washington, D.C., where its men bolster the capital's defenses.

The war starts
Fort Sumter, Charleston, comes under Confederate attack on April 12. Earlier Major Robert Anderson, the commander of the Union garrison, transferred men from Fort Moultrie to the more easily defensible Fort Sumter.

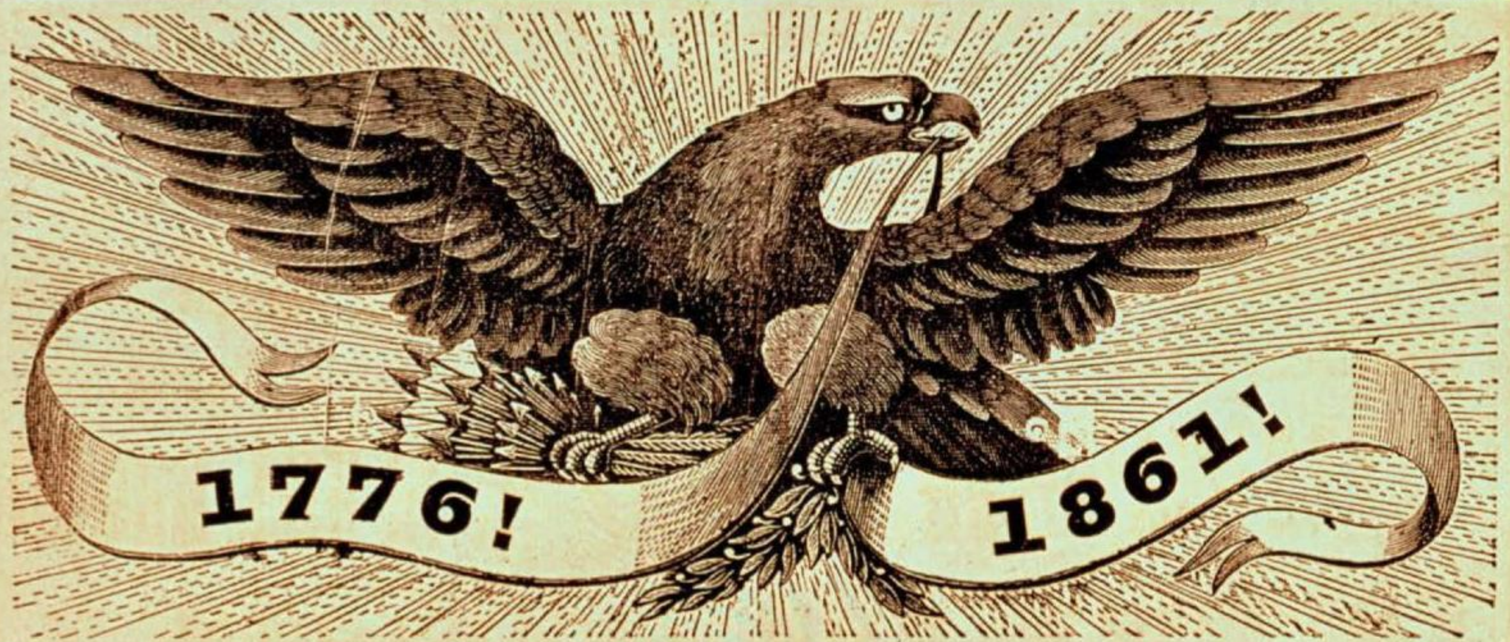


Union Strategy
Command of the coast and the Mississippi are key to the strategy outlined in May by General Winfield Scott, Union general-in-chief. Intended to throttle the life out of the Confederacy, it is dubbed the Anaconda Plan.

and based their recruitment on calls that emphasized principled outrage over the perceived iniquity of their opponents, a process that could only deepen the divide.

From the start, it was an asymmetrical struggle. In one respect, the South had the advantage. To win, the North needed to defeat its enemies and bring secession to an end; the South needed only to survive. In other respects, the North's superiority was massive—a much larger population accompanied by an overwhelming advantage in industrial power and financial resources. These strategic realities meant that the war was unlikely to be decided quickly, whatever the results of the early battles. At the start, the South was better served by its generals than the North, and the Confederacy was made safe for the moment on land. On the Confederacy's coast and its rivers, however, the Union's superior resources promised greater success.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!



AN ATTACK UPON WASHINGTON ANTICIPATED!!

THE COUNTRY TO THE RESCUE!

A REGIMENT FOR SERVICE

UNDER THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

IS BEING FORMED IN JEFFERSON COUNTY.

NOW IS THE TIME TO BE ENROLLED!

Patriotism and love of Country alike demand a ready response from every man capable of bearing arms in this trying hour, to sustain not merely the existence of the Government, but to vindicate the honor of that Flag so ruthlessly torn by traitor hands from the walls of Sumter.

RECRUITING RENDEZVOUS

The **Call** to **Arms**

As the attack on Fort Sumter unified Northern public opinion, Lincoln issued a call for volunteers. Crucial Upper South states, including Virginia, joined the Confederacy. The Union held West Virginia and Maryland; Missouri and Kentucky teetered on the brink.

Occupying Fort Sumter
On December 26, 1860, Anderson's command at Fort Moultrie, Charleston, moved secretly to the more defensible Fort Sumter.

At 4:30 a.m. on April 12, 1861, Confederate batteries around the harbor at Charleston, South Carolina, opened fire on Fort Sumter, a Federal fortification built on a small island at the harbor's mouth. The fort's commander, Major Robert Anderson, began surrender negotiations the next afternoon. Anderson had staunchly maintained the Union position at Fort Sumter since South Carolina's secession the previous December, but the approach of a Union naval squadron with fresh supplies for the fort had provoked a definitive confrontation.

Local Confederate commander P. G. T. Beauregard had been given orders to demand the immediate evacuation of the fort. When Anderson refused, hostilities began, and were concluded without any combat fatalities on either side. While the Confederacy believed the attack to be a necessary and reasonable defense of its sovereignty, most Northerners saw it as an immoral assault on American troops.

The Republican Party had swept the North in the presidential election of 1860, but the Democrats remained a potent political force, with much weaker anti-slavery instincts. However, most Democrats remained loyal Unionists, and the Confederate attack on "Old Glory" (the national flag) at Sumter outraged their nationalist sensibilities, which led to an outpouring of public support for a military campaign to crush secession.

A plea to the nation
The government lured new recruits into the army with promises of bonuses and well-equipped units. Patriotic posters, such as this 1861 example, demanded "a ready response" from those men capable of bearing arms.

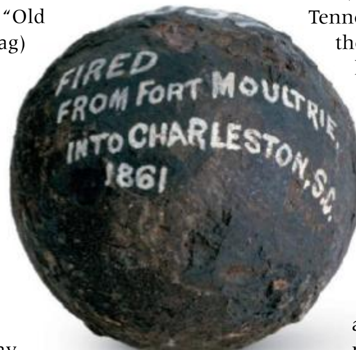
Lincoln's response

On April 15, Lincoln issued a proclamation calling for 75,000 90-day volunteers. The Northern response overwhelmed the capacity of both Federal and state governments to organize, train, and equip the soldiers. This outpouring of popular support vindicated Lincoln's cautious approach during the secession winter. His attempts to placate Southern opinion by providing only nonmilitary supplies to Anderson's command had caused even Northern Democrats to view the Confederacy as the unprovoked aggressor at Fort Sumter.

Major Robert Anderson was a Kentuckian and former slaveowner, with a stellar record as a leading artillery reformer and in combat in the War with Mexico.

The Confederacy expands

In the crucial Upper South states of Arkansas, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, the calling out of a large Federal army meant war. When forced to take sides, these four states chose the Confederacy. Southern views were summed up by the *Staunton Spectator*, until now a Unionist Virginia newspaper. A day after the president's call for volunteers it declared that "After all his declarations in favor of peace, President Lincoln has taken a course calculated inevitably to provoke a collision, and to unite the whole South in armed resistance."



Charleston cannonball
Thousands of rounds of artillery fire showered cannonballs like this on Fort Sumter before Major Anderson and his garrison surrendered.

While strategically important Virginia seceded on April 17, along with Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee in the following month, Maryland remained with the Union. Moreover, even in Virginia, the poorest and mostly nonslaveholding farmers of the state's western counties held out for the Union cause—leading eventually to the founding of the state of West Virginia.

Virginia and Tennessee made the Confederacy a viable nation, but there still remained the prize of Kentucky, with its large population and a northern border on the Ohio River that could serve as a defensive barrier against Union invasion. Slavery had a weaker status in the Bluegrass state than in the Old Dominion, and the state did not immediately secede in response to Lincoln's call for many volunteers. Instead, Kentucky acted in the tradition of Henry Clay, the great sectional compromiser, and hoped to adopt a neutral stance toward both the U.S. and Confederate governments.

The fate of Missouri, the origin of so many of the troubles in "Bleeding Kansas" also hung in the balance, although the state did not have the strategic significance of Kentucky.

« BEFORE

Lincoln's election on a sectional basis and on a party platform that aimed to limit slavery, combined with the swift secession of the Lower South, made war nearly inevitable.

SOWING THE SEEDS
The Republicans did not even try to contest elections in ten Southern states, and the Lower South saw any legal restriction on slavery by the Federal government as paving the way for more serious attacks on the institution.

THE LIMITS OF COMPROMISE
A native of Kentucky and admirer of Henry Clay, Lincoln had conciliatory instincts, but he also remained true to the Free-Soil principles of the Republican Party « 22–23. This, combined with Confederate intransigence, made some kind of violent clash all but unavoidable.

AFTER »

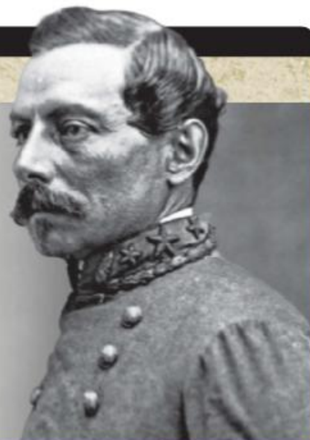
The first fatalities of the Civil War occurred in Baltimore, Maryland, on April 19, a week after the fall of Fort Sumter.

LEXINGTON OF 1861
Although Maryland stayed in the Union, sentiment in Baltimore was strongly pro-Confederate. When the Massachusetts 6th Regiment passed through on its way to Washington, D.C., a riot erupted, leaving four soldiers and 12 civilians killed in the ensuing melee. The incident is often called the "Lexington of 1861"—after the first skirmish of the American Revolution, at Lexington, Massachusetts.

THE BALTIMORE RIOT

CONFEDERATE GENERAL (1818–93)

P. G. T. BEAUREGARD



Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, born on a plantation in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana, had a distinguished record in the prewar army, including combat service in Mexico. While he had significant talents, he likened himself too much to Napoleon, and his fame after the fall of Fort Sumter further inflated his ego. Beauregard's performance was mixed at the battles of First Bull Run (First Manassas) and Shiloh, but during the summer of 1864, he served the Confederacy well at Bermuda Hundred and Petersburg.

BEFORE

The Southern economy relied heavily on cotton exports, mostly to Britain. Before the war, these had earned large amounts of hard currency. However, the dominance of cotton-growing **« 18–19** **suppressed the South's industrial capacity.**

RISING PRODUCTION

Boosted by Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin for separating the fibers from the seeds « 14–15, Southern **cotton production soared** during the 19th century. From 720,000 bales in 1830, it rose to 2.85 million bales in 1850 and was still rising at the outbreak of the Civil War. By then, the slave plantations of the South were the source of **75 percent** of the world's commercially grown cotton.

FAILED DIPLOMACY

The Confederates hoped that **"King Cotton" diplomacy** would force Britain to intervene on their behalf because, without Southern cotton, British textile mills would be idle. They underestimated the strength of **British anti-slavery sentiment** and the ability of British industrialists to find alternative sources of cotton in India, Egypt, and Argentina. Hopes of French intervention were similarly dashed.

The South's Challenge

The Confederacy's vast geographic expanse made it difficult for the enemy to occupy and conquer. At the same time, the South's straightforward war goal of independence gave it greater domestic unity than the North, which wrestled internally with the question of emancipation's proper place in the war.

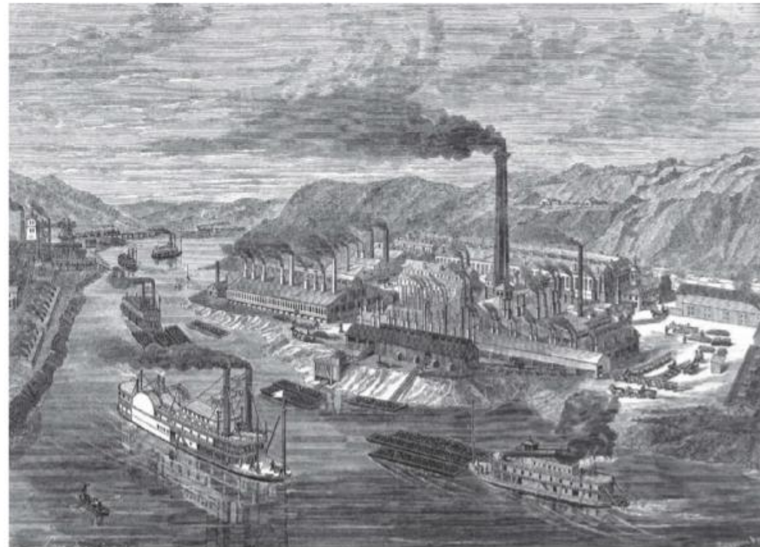
The long and destructive nature of the Civil War, combined with the immense stakes involved—the fate of the old Federal Union, the existence of the Confederate nation, and the status of slavery—made it a war of mass mobilization in both sections. Both sides had to find the human, material, and technological resources for waging a war at a time of rapid industrialization, with its railroads, mass-produced weapons and equipment, and comparatively new technologies. Although the North possessed more of all of these things, the Confederate cause was by no means hopeless and doomed.

A well-resourced enemy

During the 19th century, the new era of rail and steam that marked the Industrial Revolution was centered in the Northern states, and a summary of economic and human resources shows their advantages. In 1860, the North possessed most of the country's manufacturing capacity, including 97 percent of firearms production. Altogether it had 110,000 manufacturing enterprises and 1.3 million industrial workers. The future Confederacy could count only 18,000 factories employing 110,000 individuals. These Southern factories, however, did include the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, Virginia, one of the few places capable of providing the Confederacy with heavy ordnance. During the war, the task of trying to make up for this industrial imbalance fell to the Confederacy's ever-resourceful ordnance chief, General Josiah Gorgas. The Union also had twice the density of railroads per square mile; the future Confederate states produced only 19 of 470 locomotives manufactured that year. In terms of population, the Union had 20.7 million people, against the Confederacy's

General Josiah Gorgas
At the start of hostilities, Gorgas was commander of the U.S. Army arsenal at Frankford, near Philadelphia. He resigned to join the Confederates.

Southern charm
For many, life in the prewar South was secure and prosperous—a quality captured by German artist Edward Beyer in his view of Salem, Virginia, painted in 1855.



Manufacturing might
Smoke belches from the chimneys of the Jones and Laughlin iron mills, on the Monongahela River south of Pittsburgh. Enterprises like this gave the North an industrial edge over the South.

population of just over 9.1 million, of whom more than 3.6 million were African Americans—most of them slaves and holding dubious loyalty to their white masters. In the financial sector, Southern banking before the war had been based not in any major Southern city, such as New Orleans or Richmond, but in New York.

The South's advantages

Counterbalancing the North's larger pool of material resources was the Confederacy's immense size. This offered important geographical advantages. The South occupied about the same amount of territory as Western Europe, which gave it what military historians call "strategic depth." This allows an army defending its territory to retreat in the face of a stronger force, obliging the invader to disperse its strength in garrisons and outposts over an ever-increasing area in order to defend vulnerable lines of communication against guerrillas and small detachments of organized forces. In addition, the South's rudimentary road and rail network made logistics a nightmare for any invading army.

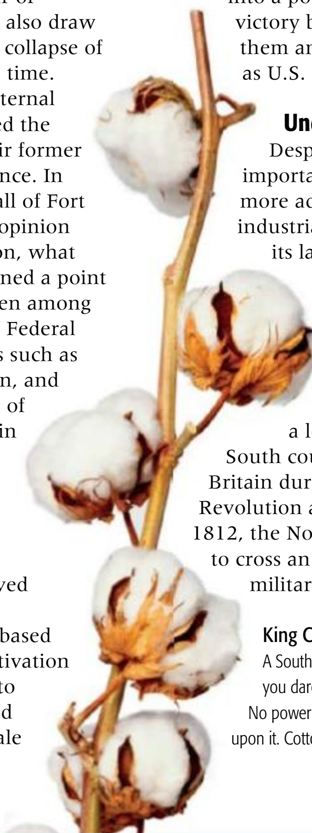
While the Confederates could see British struggles against the sweep of American geography during the American Revolution as a heartening example for their own war of independence, they could also draw lessons from the eventual collapse of British political will at the time. During the Revolution, internal divisions in Britain allowed the Americans to exhaust their former rulers and win independence. In the Civil War, while the fall of Fort Sumter unified Northern opinion behind a struggle for Union, what Union really meant remained a point of political contention, even among Republicans. Questions of Federal authority, involving issues such as emancipation, conscription, and the draft, would be points of partisan controversy within the North. For their part, the Confederates were united behind the more straightforward goal of sovereign independence.

Even the South's enslaved population gave it certain advantages. An economy based on slavery and cotton-cultivation allowed the Confederacy to mobilize an unprecedented percentage of its white male population. Because fewer white men of military age were needed to keep the basic domestic economy running, around three out of four of them became soldiers—and one in five would die during the war. Eventually, however, the Union turned African Americans living in the Confederacy into a potent resource for victory by arming many of them and enlisting them as U.S. soldiers.

> "The Army … has been **compelled to yield** to **overwhelming numbers** and resources."
>
> **ROBERT E. LEE, FAREWELL ADDRESS TO THE ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,** 1865

Underlying weakness

Despite the Confederacy's important advantages, the more advanced state of industrialization in the North, its larger supply of natural resources such as iron and coal, and its greater economic strength, enabled it to sustain war for a longer time than the South could. And, unlike Britain during the American Revolution and the War of 1812, the North did not have to cross an ocean to bring its military power to bear.



King Cotton?
A Southern senator once declared: "No, you dare not to make war on cotton. No power on the earth dares to make war upon it. Cotton is King." He was wrong.

AFTER

The key Confederate strategists and commanders were well aware of the Union's material advantages.

PUSH FOR VICTORY
When **General Robert E. Lee** assumed command of the Army of Northern Virginia in June 1862, one of his chief goals was to win **swift battlefield victories**. These, he hoped, would shatter enemy morale before the Confederacy collapsed under the weight of Northern industrial superiority.

31,246 MILES
of railroad crisscrossed the North. In the South, by contrast, there were just 9,283 miles of railroad, less than 30 percent of the Northern total.

GUERRILLA WARFARE
The wide expanse of Confederate territory, especially in the West, made it perfect for guerrilla activity **122–123 »**. This successfully **hampered Federal operations** by tying down large numbers of Union troops in occupation and garrison duties. But the guerrillas were not above preying on Southern civilians as well as Northern soldiers, which made them a **problematic military tool**.

Raising Armies

Military enthusiasm gripped both sides and volunteers rushed to join up, all believing their camp would achieve a swift victory. They hoped their moral excellence as citizen soldiers fighting a righteous cause would crush their opponent almost by itself, making training and discipline unnecessary.

BEFORE

The unavoidable disorganization and confusion in forming both the Northern and Southern armies masked the North's overwhelming material superiority.

SOUTHERN OPPORTUNITY

The North had vastly **greater resources than the South** **« 32–33**. But its impressive industrial and economic capacity had to be organized and mobilized before it became militarily useful—and this gave the Confederacy a timely **opportunity to win independence**.

AN IDENTICAL MILITARY MODEL

Both sections used the prewar U.S. Army as a common administrative and tactical model for creating **new field armies**. Veterans such as Josiah Gorgas utilized their expertise to help the Confederacy **mobilize its limited resources**.

CENTRAL AUTHORITY

Given the South's strong **attachment to states' rights**, it was difficult for President Jefferson Davis to impose the centralized organization **essential to military efficiency**.

1st Virginia Infantry

Within weeks of secession, the 1st Virginia Infantry was raised as a volunteer unit. It fought at the Battle of Gettysburg, where more than half were killed or wounded.

By the time of the Civil War, the American Revolution was a distant memory, and few citizens had served in the more recent War with Mexico (1846–47), in which General Winfield Scott had conquered Mexico City with an army of only 11,000 men. Attitudes to war tended to romanticize it, drawing on a variety of cultural influences: tributes to the Founding Fathers and the American Revolution; images of overseas wars in exotic settings, such as French Algeria or the Halls of Montezuma in Mexico; and the long-standing militia tradition whereby common people banded together to defeat their enemies, returning home after a short but sharp war.

25 **The percentage of U.S. Army officers who resigned to join the Confederate army.**

A nation's differences

Sectionalism added potently to this collection of ideas. Southerners saw themselves as a martial people more familiar with horses and weapons than shopkeeping Yankees. Northerners believed they were a free people defending the Constitution. They were fighting against a society ruled by abusive slaveholders who had been corrupted by the illegitimate power they held over fellow human beings. While notions of war could be both romantic and ridiculous, a genuine undercurrent of fierce patriotism motivated many volunteers. One Union soldier explained in a letter that he enlisted because "I performed but a simple duty—a duty to my country and myself … to give up life if need be … in this battle for freedom and right, opposed to slavery and wrong." A Southern volunteer reflected many others' views when he said, "I would give all I have got just to be in the front rank of the first brigade that marches against the invading foe who now pollute the sacred soil of my native state [Virginia] with their unholy tread." This patriotism would help sustain both armies' fighting abilities through a long and difficult war, but it also tended to denigrate the importance of professional competence and discipline. Both armies paid too little attention to the warnings of prewar professional soldiers that troops needed training and discipline to be effective, and that the coming conflict might be long and grueling.

Romantic ideas

Many who claimed to possess military expertise had a notion of war far more romantic than realistic. Volunteer officers, such as Unionist Colonel Elmer Ellsworth, had more military knowledge than the average volunteer, and his interpretation of the tactics used by France's Zouave (North African) light infantry regiments—who were renowned as elite and disciplined fighters—reflected current and future military developments in infantry tactics. These included formations of troops trained to move quickly, spread out, and fire accurately. Nevertheless, Ellsworth did not fully understand these tactical evolutions.

Lack of trained officers

While the small number of military-age men with formal training at either West Point or various state military academies (the most important being the Virginia Military Institute) rose to instant prominence during the

UNION VOLUNTEER OFFICER (1837–61)

ELMER EPHRAIM ELLSWORTH

Born in Malta, New York, Ellsworth hoped to attend West Point but failed to obtain an appointment. He moved to Chicago in 1859, where he became a prominent militia officer, leading a unit attired in the flamboyant style of French Zouaves. In 1860, he entered the law office of Abraham Lincoln and campaigned for the future president in the election that year.

When war broke out, Ellsworth raised a regiment recruited from the firefighters of New York, the "Fire Zouaves." He led them into Alexandria, Virginia, in May 1861, where he was killed by an innkeeper for pulling down a Confederate flag flying from his hotel. In the North, Ellsworth's youth and his connection with Lincoln magnified the importance of his death; he came to be seen as one of the first heroes of the war.

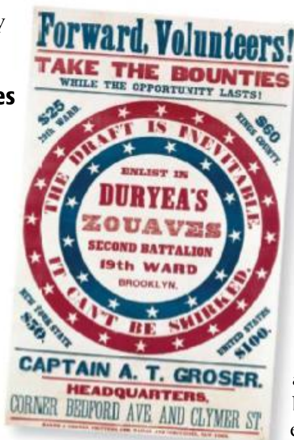
Departing for war—April 19, 1861
Thomas Nast's huge painting of the 7th New York Regiment being cheered on by their fellow citizens includes the hero of Fort Sumter, Major Robert Anderson, above the entrance of Ball, Black & Co. on the left.

organization of the new armies, the sheer size of the forces and their democratic organization required most officers to come from civilian life.

In this phase of the war, before the rise of conscription, local leaders raised companies and regiments by personal influence (and sometimes even using their own money). In keeping with democratic practice, regiments also elected their officers. These volunteers thus tended to hold their roles by virtue of a whole range of factors unrelated to military competence, such as political influence, wealth, social standing, and simple popularity. As early as September 1861, one officer, Wilder Dwight of the 2nd Massachusetts, grumbled that "Today our army is crippled by the ideas of equality and independence which have covered the whole life of our people. Men elect their officers, and then expect them to behave themselves!" Such opinions were rare among his peers during the early part of the war.

Equipment shortages

Not only would the armies struggle with training and discipline, they also had to cope with shortages of equipment and supplies. Even after factoring in militia arsenals and other small depositories of military supplies, both armies had difficulty acquiring the most basic materials. They also needed to create the logistical and administrative machinery necessary for sustaining lengthy active operations in the field.



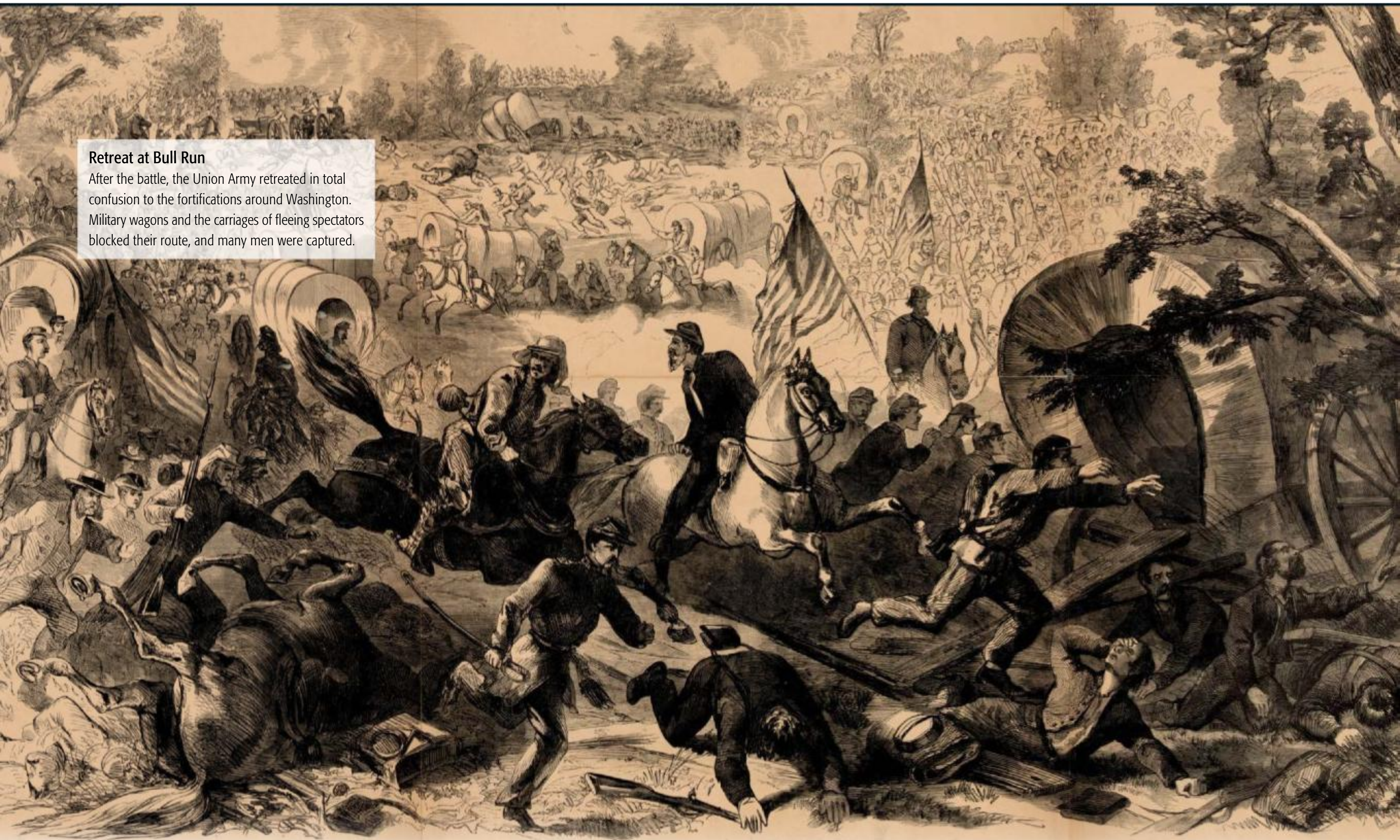
Zouave recruiting poster
Colonel Abram Duryea's Zouaves (the 5th New York Volunteers) was one of the most celebrated Zouave units, noted for its defensive role at Second Bull Run (Manassas).

Despite all of these challenges, both armies also had the important advantage of drawing from a patriotic and highly motivated citizenry that believed their causes to be just. With training and battlefield seasoning, this raw material could and would become the bedrock of powerful and effective forces.

AFTER

Romantic enthusiasm for war placed pressure on Northern leaders to seek a swift military decision. But their haste led to a Northern defeat.

VICTORIOUS SOUTH
This rush to battle helped lead to **Union defeat at First Bull Run (First Manassas)** **36–37 ››**, a battle and campaign waged in part against the better judgment of General-in-Chief Winfield Scott. This first major battle of the war showed both the strengths and the weakness of the early Union and Confederate armies. The volunteers on both sides displayed **admirable fighting spirit**, but even the victorious Confederates revealed flaws in discipline, training, and organization. Their victory did, however, **enhance the South's credibility** in the eyes of foreign powers.



Retreat at Bull Run
After the battle, the Union Army retreated in total confusion to the fortifications around Washington. Military wagons and the carriages of fleeing spectators blocked their route, and many men were captured.

The **First Battle** of **Bull Run**

Pre-Civil War America had seen little real military action and knew nothing of war beyond fantastic portrayals in books—the First Battle of Bull Run (known as Manassas by the Confederates) of July 21, 1861, represented a grim beginning to the Civil War and a portent of things to come.

BEFORE

First Bull Run dwarfed any other clashes that the U.S. Army had hitherto fought. Its use of new technology helped the Confederacy gain advantage.

SMALL ARMIES
Washington had fewer than 17,000 men at Yorktown, the decisive battle of the American Revolution, and General Winfield Scott had taken Mexico City in 1847 with an army of only about 11,000 men. At First Bull Run, Union general McDowell led 35,000 to his opponents' 30,000.

DEVELOPMENT OF RAILROADS
When the British invaded the American colonies, they could not benefit from industrialized forms of transportation, such as the railroad. This **new form of technology** could be used for defensive purposes by both sides in the Civil War.

GEORGE B. McCLELLAN
Shortly before First Bull Run, Union commander George B. McClellan won a few skirmishes in western Virginia, which helped secure the important Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, laying the groundwork for the formation of West Virginia. McClellan's success before the disaster of First Bull Run made him the **natural replacement for McDowell**.

The First Battle of Bull Run took place at the important railroad intersection of Manassas Junction, Virginia. In the wide expanses of the Confederacy, where the primitive road network and the highly dispersed population made it difficult for an army to live off the countryside, railroads were indispensable. They carried much-needed supplies and became strategic assets. The crossing at Manassas Junction, where the Orange and Alexandria Railroad met the Manassas Gap Railroad, was a vital line of communication—leading south into the heart of Virginia, and west to the agriculturally fertile Shenandoah Valley.

The Confederacy posted two field armies to cover these possible lines of advance—General Joseph E. Johnston's force in the northern Shenandoah Valley, numbering a little less than 10,000, and 18,000 men under General P. G. T. Beauregard at Manassas. The Confederate leaders hoped that the railroad in between the two armies would allow them to move reinforcements between both positions more swiftly than the Union army, which did not have access to a direct rail connection.

Line advantage

Military thinkers from the Civil War era and modern historians call this Confederate geographic advantage "interior lines." For example, if a straight line is drawn, connecting two points on an arc, the line is much shorter than the arc. The Confederacy, as the country defending the arc, had the advantage of "interior lines" across its territory, while the Union had to operate on "exterior lines" outside of it. First Bull Run was the first example of a larger Confederate advantage in terms of defensive positioning.

Eventually, the Union would find that the best way to overcome the Confederate advantage of interior lines was to use its superior resources to coordinate multiple and simultaneous attacks along the entire "arc" of the Confederacy's defensive perimeter. This goal would be achieved to some extent by the Union offensives of 1864, which eventually brought the war to an end. However, as early as First Bull Run, General Winfield Scott attempted such a coordinated strategy on exterior lines when he ordered Major General Robert Patterson in the Shenandoah Valley to advance and try to prevent Johnston from moving his troops eastward from the valley to reinforce

2,000 Approximate number of Confederate casualties.
3,000 Approximate number of Union casualties.

> "Let us **determine** to die here, and **we will conquer**. **Rally** behind the Virginians."
>
> ATTRIBUTED TO BRIGADIER GENERAL BARNARD E. BEE, CONFEDERATE ARMY

General's epaulets
Beauregard shared command responsibilities with General Johnston at Bull Run. After the battle, at the recommendation of Johnston, Beauregard was promoted to full (four-star) general.

Beauregard's units. Unfortunately for the Union side, Patterson proved to be too timid a commander for even this relatively modest objective. The Confederates made good use of the railroads to concentrate their forces at Bull Run in opposition to Brigadier General Irwin McDowell's advance on Manassas Junction.

Union plans—and weaknesses

McDowell conducted his attack on Beauregard's position partly in response to the heavy political pressure exerted by overconfident and overeager Northern politicians. The Union commander fretted that "for the most part our regiments are exceedingly raw and the best of them, with few exceptions, not over steady in line." Although the Confederate army was smaller (McDowell commanded 35,000 men), it fought on the defensive—a potent advantage when considering two ill-disciplined, indifferently trained, and inexperienced armies. Nevertheless, McDowell's battle plan also had merit, as he hoped to turn the Confederate left flank by ordering two divisions to cross Bull Run Creek at points upstream from the bulk of Confederate strength near Blackburn's Ford.

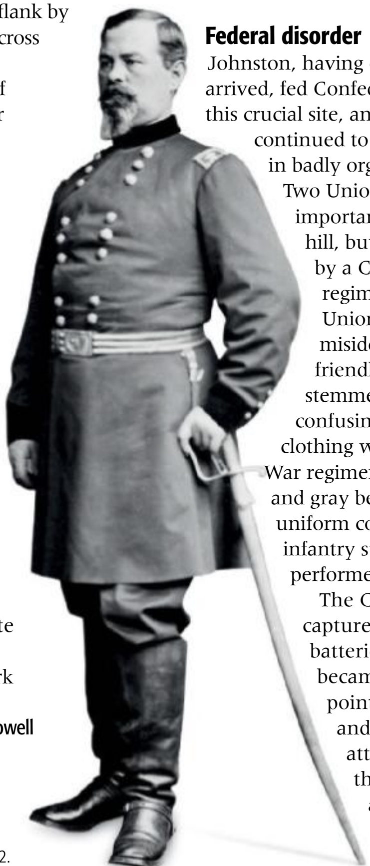
First clashes

The battle itself was a close-run affair. McDowell's flanking movements were delayed by defective staffwork and inexperience, while an aggressive defense by Confederate units on the left flank bought the Confederates crucial time to ward off the Union commander's attempt to turn them.

Beauregard at first dreamed of a Confederate offensive, but confusing orders and poor staffwork resulted more in bewilderment than anything else. Foreshadowing problems that would persist throughout much of the war, Union forces struggled to coordinate their assaults, and instead of amassing their strength to take a position, the individual units (in this case, single regiments) made their attacks piecemeal. Even so, the battle went well for the Union forces in the early part of the day, as they pushed past Matthews Hill down toward Henry Hill, threatening to turn the Confederate left.

In the end, however, all the delays and lack of coordination allowed the Confederates to man a powerful defensive position on Henry Hill, where the battle finally reached its climax. It was here that Brigadier General Thomas J. Jackson earned his nickname, "Stonewall," for his well-handled and vital defense of the position.

> **Most regiments elected their own officers, reflecting Jacksonian America's traditional suspicion of hierarchy and technical proficiency. Nevertheless, the volunteers' enthusiasm showed the ensuing conflict to be truly a "people's contest."**



Union Brigadier General McDowell
McDowell was an able military administrator who was less suited to senior combat command. He served in more junior roles after Bull Run but was dismissed in 1862.

Federal disorder

Johnston, having only recently arrived, fed Confederate troops into this crucial site, and the Union side continued to waste its strength in badly organized assaults. Two Union batteries held important positions on the hill, but one was mauled by a Confederate regiment that a senior Union officer had misidentified as friendly. This problem stemmed from the confusing variety of clothing worn by early Civil War regiments, before blue and gray became standard uniform colors. The Union infantry supports had also performed poorly.

The Confederate capture of the two Union batteries on Henry Hill became the turning point of the battle, and one last Federal attempt to turn the Confederates at Chinn Ridge, west of Henry Hill, failed. When Confederate forces counter-attacked at the ridge, strengthened by two brigades newly arrived from the Shenandoah Valley, the Federals panicked and retreated in disarray. They were joined in their retreat by fleeing Union civilians from Washington—spectators who had attended the battle expecting it to be an outdoor stage where treason would be justly chastised.

While the Northern volunteers had in many ways fought well, their lack of experience and discipline showed. However, chaos also reigned among the victorious Confederates—likewise a product of their inexperience—and this would allow Union troops to return to the safety of the fortifications surrounding Washington, despite the frantic disorder accompanying their retreat.

The battle served as a fitting herald for the start of the war, and Confederate President Jefferson Davis himself traveled to the site before the combat ended. He afterward wrote the telegram reporting the victory to the Confederate War Department in Richmond. The Confederacy had survived, and the battle would ensure that the new nation would not be crushed in one demoralizing blow at the beginning of the war.

Confederate credibility

The new nation gained instant credibility both at home and abroad. Nevertheless, the inability of the secessionists to force the Union to concede defeat after the first battle, or to mount an effective military pursuit of the broken Union army, foretold the long and grinding nature of the larger conflict.

Both armies needed time to recover, and the Union would redouble its efforts in the wake of its crushing defeat. Meanwhile, the Confederacy would become rather complacent and too easily saw the battle as a vindication of its belief that the average white Southerner was more warriorlike than any money-grubbing Yankee.

AFTER

Defeat chastened the North, while the Confederates anticipated that further successes would soon follow—a dangerous assumption, as it turned out.

NORTHERN PLANS
Northerners had expected a swift win, and they found themselves rudely disabused of the idea that their **moral superiority** would lead to an easy victory. Many recognized the necessity of **improved discipline** and organization.

A WASTED WINTER
While the North began to mobilize its substantial material resources, the Confederacy rested on its laurels. This nearly led to the disastrous defeats in the spring of 1862 with Johnston's early setbacks in the **Peninsula Campaign** **66–67 ❯❯**, and much of Tennessee lost.

GENERAL JOSEPH E. JOHNSTON

TECHNOLOGY

OBSERVATION BALLOONS

The Union Army's Balloon Corps was formed in the summer of 1861 at the request of Lincoln who, after a demonstration by aeronaut Thaddeus S. C. Lowe, hoped to be able to use balloons both to conduct surveillance and to communicate with the commanders on the battlefield. The technology was used by McClellan during the Peninsula Campaign for observations and mapping, where balloons were connected to a military telegraph.

BEFORE

During the War with Mexico, the American military attached civilian volunteer units to a core of permanent army professionals.

PERMANENT FORCE
Zachary Taylor commanded an army in northern Mexico in 1846 composed of regulars, while Winfield Scott relied on a permanent veteran core in the force he used to conquer Mexico City.

165 **The number of steps per minute soldiers would march at "double quick time," the swiftest pace used by American infantry tactics.**

For the North, the 16,000-man U.S. Army of 1860 could not serve as the bedrock of a new field army, because the force still needed to guard the frontier. About one-quarter of its officer strength resigned and traveled South. **The Confederacy, in contrast, had to build a new army from scratch** « 34–35.

MEXICAN TRAINING GROUND
While Scott was now too old to take the field, many Civil War commanders (including Grant and Lee) had **earned valuable combat experience** during the War with Mexico.

Organizing for the Fight

After Bull Run, both the Union and the Confederacy realized that the war would not end in one single climactic battle. As they mobilized, both struggled with problems of scale and shortages of trained personnel. McClellan's talents as a trainer helped stamp his personality on the Army of the Potomac.

After Bull Run, Union forces had to face the deficiencies of their organization. General James B. Ricketts argued that at Bull Run, "The men were of as good material as any in the world, and they fought well until they became confused on account of their officers not knowing what to do." Perceptions of officer incompetence led to officer examination boards for weeding out the worst leaders, and by March 1862 the boards had expelled 310 officers from the Army.

While the Confederate armies also used the winter after Bull Run to cull weak officers, and train and organize others, overly romantic views of warfare persisted. Shortly after the battle, the Richmond *Examiner* declared that "Ohio and Pennsylvania ought to feel … the terrors which agitate the cowardly and guilty when retributive vengeance is at hand … In four weeks our generals should be levying contributions in money and property from their own towns and villages."

Unfortunately for the Confederacy, overheated rhetoric could not by itself produce armies capable of offensive operations in the North. The South should have used the winter to mobilize its national resources through measures such as conscription, but instead waited until the spring, when Confederate fortunes began to slide.

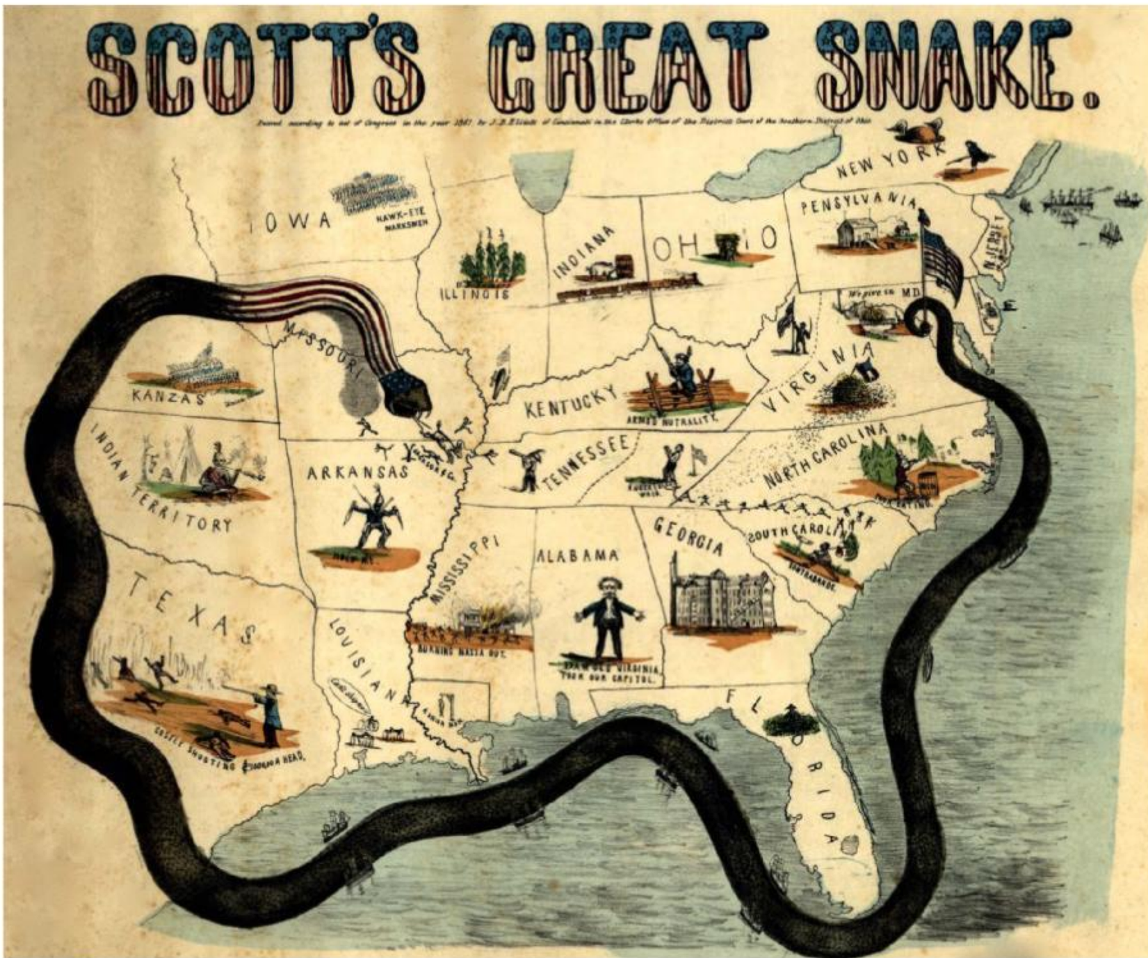
In the North, meanwhile, the veteran, 75-year-old General in Chief Winfield Scott, before his retirement in November 1861, had helped formulate a war strategy, dubbed the Anaconda Plan, that included a naval blockade and the capture of the Mississippi River. This would result in signficant Federal victories during the spring of 1862, when the port of New Orleans and much of Tennessee fell to the Union.

Training programs

In all theaters of the war and on both sides, soldiers drilled and organized, with varying degrees of effectiveness. In the primary Federal army in the Eastern Theater, General George B.

> "We shall … **organize and discipline** an army … and go on to victory or sustain defeat."
>
> DIARY ENTRY OF JOSIAH MARSHALL FAVILL, 71ST NEW YORK, AFTER BULL RUN

Cannon squad during drill
Aiming accurately, and rapidly firing and reloading artillery weapons demanded a high standard of teamwork from the crew, all the more so in difficult battle conditions under enemy fire.



AFTER

Winfield Scott's retirement in late 1861 helped trigger unprecedented changes in the size and scale of American warfare—and a new man eager to take his place.

FLAWED SUCCESSOR

The **new general-in-chief was George B. McClellan**, who had been unashamedly scheming to replace his elderly but still clear-minded predecessor. McClellan would prove to be a **flawed choice for the command**, combining a deficit in moral courage with arrogance. Yet he remained a talented organizer, and his background in railroad management matched his talent for **logistical organization**. His strategic concept for besieging the Confederate army was also fundamentally sound, even if he failed to execute it properly.

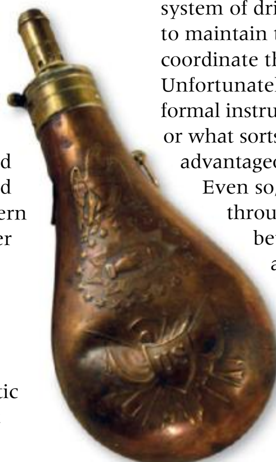
GIANT ARMIES

Scott's retirement pointed the way forward to **armies of unparalleled size** that would now wage war across the continent. Future battles would be giant confrontations where, for example, a total of more than 113,000 men clashed at Antietam **74–75 »** and more than 111,000 at Gettysburg **102–103 »**.

Winfield Scott's "Anaconda Plan"
Scott advocated winning the war by a gradual strategy, likened to the crushing attack of a snake, based on blockading the South's ports and then cutting it in two with offensives up and down the Mississippi River.

McClellan put his army through a reasonably coherent training program; he also benefited from the North's relative abundance of equipment. Despite his hesitancy in committing troops in battle, McClellan had a real talent for organizing an army. He also played a major role in choosing the senior leaders of his force. The officers he selected for command would remain influential long after his departure. While the western Federal armies did not have the same spit and polish as McClellan's eastern showpiece, they had better organization and greater resources than their Confederate opponents.

The Confederate army facing McClellan did not receive the same systematic training, but it did benefit from a large number of Virginia Military Institute graduates who supplemented the cadre of regular officers. What later became the Army of Northern Virginia also had a disproportionate share of officers from West Point Military Academy compared to the western Confederate armies.



Union powder flask
Older flintlock weapons primed by loose powder were still used in the early part of the Civil War.

For Civil War armies, training centered on close order drill, which provided the methods they used to move from one position to another on the battlefield. The intensely regimented system of drill evolutions allowed units to maintain their organization and coordinate the firing of their weapons. Unfortunately, officers received little formal instruction in how to use terrain or what sorts of movements were most advantageous in which circumstances. Even so, rudimentary training through parade-ground drill was better than no training at all, and McClellan's program also included some target practice, mock battles, and training marches.

Mixed results

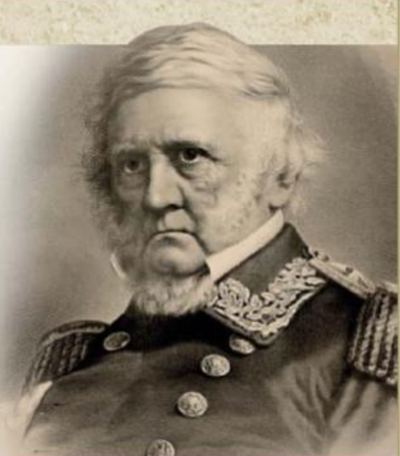
The Union Army of the Potomac's mixed performance on the battlefield proved that excellence on the parade ground did not necessarily translate into victory. Indeed, McClellan's cautious temperament had a stronger influence on the Army of the Potomac's command culture than did his training program. As Lieutenant Colonel Alexander S. Webb put it after the Battle of Chancellorsville, his hesitancy helped to create an army in which most of the leaders were "cautious, stupid and without any dash." They "delay 20,000 men ... in order to skirmish with 20 or 30 cav[alr]y and one piece of art[iller]y. They all think the enemy wiser and braver and quicker than themselves and such men should not command."

Webb would not have attributed this failing to McClellan's temperament, but the Army of the Potomac did have an overly defensive mindset, which would remain a problem even after General Ulysses S. Grant took over command during the Overland Campaign in summer 1864.

UNION GENERAL (1786–1866)

WINFIELD SCOTT

Commissioned in 1808, Winfield Scott led a division in the Anglo-American War of 1812, helped professionalize the army after the end of that war, and conquered Mexico City in 1847 with his brilliant Veracruz Campaign. This victory made possible the acquisition of Mexican territories, such as California and New Mexico, in the American Southwest, leading to political disputes about slavery's status in these areas. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Scott was general-in-chief. Rheumatic, gout-ridden, and weighing more than 300lbs (136kg), he was no longer able to take battlefield command. He resigned on November 1, 1861.



BEFORE

While Missouri had helped inflame sectional tensions before the war, the state of Kentucky had been a source of moderation and compromise.

CLAY THE COMPROMISER

Kentucky produced the greatest prewar compromiser, **Senator Henry Clay**, while Senator John J. Crittenden from the same state tried to broker another compromise in 1861. If Clay had won the presidency in 1844 he would have rejected the annexation of Texas and **probably prevented the War with Mexico**. Without the problem over slavery in the new territories « **18–19**, the Civil War might well have been averted.

MISSOURI AND "BLEEDING KANSAS"

Not only had Missouri been the **center of the controversy over slavery** that led to the Missouri Compromise of 1820, pro-slavery settlers there had caused much sectional violence in the 1850s across the border in "Bleeding Kansas", where they clashed with Free-Soilers—some of whom had emigrated from New England. During the Civil War, Free-Soil Kansans served in Missouri, and Missouri guerrillas engaged in cross-border raids.

AID COMPANY SIGN FOR NEW ENGLANDERS

Missouri and Kentucky

While Missouri remained in the Union, it was beset by the war's worst violence on both sides. The more strategically important state of Kentucky tried to maintain a neutral stance early on, but eventually fell into the Union camp due to Confederate missteps and Lincoln's political dexterity.

Missouri was no stranger to sectional violence. The state's role in the problems of "Bleeding Kansas" across the border in the 1850s, where its pro-slavery settlers battled Free-Soilers, had become a prologue to the Civil War. Nevertheless, Union sentiment in the territory had great strength, and nearly three-quarters of the white Missourians who served as Civil War soldiers fought for the Union.

Unfortunately for Missouri, a complex tangle of personalities and politics stirred up a hornet's nest. The state's governor, Claiborne F. Jackson, was a staunch secessionist and did everything in his power to deliver the state for the Confederacy. Opposing him were Francis P. Blair, Jr., of the politically important Blair family, and Captain Nathaniel Lyon, U.S. Army, who commanded the U.S. arsenal at St. Louis. Lyon was vigorous and aggressive, warning Jackson, "Rather than concede to the State of Missouri … the right to dictate to my Government … I would see … every man, woman, and child in the State, dead and buried." Anti-immigrant

Crittenden of Kentucky
Senator John Crittenden expended huge efforts in trying to avert war by a compromise over the extension of slave states—but he did help to prevent his own state from seceding.

Anger in St. Louis
Riots broke out in St. Louis after Captain Lyon took the secessionist Fort Jackson. Southern sympathizers targeted Lyon's hurriedly recruited German militia army for their anti-slavery sentiments.

feeling among some Missourians worsened matters, as German settlers formed the bedrock of Republican and Unionist support in St. Louis.

Lyon effectively ended Jackson's schemes to support secession and chose to go on the offensive in May 1861 by capturing a secessionist militia camp called Fort Jackson near St. Louis. The militiamen surrendered peacefully, but violence broke out afterwards in the city itself, and it quickly took on ethnic overtones. Lyon's measures outraged some moderate Unionists and pushed them into the secessionist camp. While Lyon swiftly crushed Jackson and his allies in the state legislature, small groups of Confederate guerrillas, or "bushwhackers," would plague the state for the rest of the war.

Lyon, who was promoted to general in July 1861, was killed during the Confederate victory at the Battle of Wilson's Creek the following month, and meaningful Southern defiance would be crushed at Pea Ridge in March 1862. This made the resistance of Confederate guerrillas strategically insignificant, but it was cold comfort for the civilians who had to cope with the chaos of a fierce and brutal civil war, triggered in part by overly aggressive reactions by Missouri's Union leaders in 1861.

Anti-Confederate satire

The Union blasts away at the monster of secession in a cartoon of 1861. Demons represent secessionist states —divided Kentucky is depicted as a creature with two torsos just above the monster's head.

> "**This means war** … One of my officers will call for you and conduct you out of my lines."
>
> **CAPTAIN LYON TO GOVERNOR JACKSON,** JUNE 12, 1861

The Kentucky divide

Kentucky was in many ways the quintessential border state. Birthplace of both Lincoln and Davis, its northern border on the Ohio River had always been a symbolic and powerful dividing line between the Free-Soil North and the slaveholding South. In Harriet Beecher Stowe's famous *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, one character makes a daring escape to freedom with her son across the Ohio River in order to save him from an unscrupulous slave-trader. Unionist sympathies were qualified, however. Only 1,364 Kentuckians voted for Lincoln in the election of 1860, while 91,000 chose the conservative Unionists, Douglas and Bell.

The Ohio River also formed a useful natural military boundary for the newly formed Confederacy. If Kentucky did not ally itself with the Confederacy, Tennessee would be vulnerable to Federal invasion, because both the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers provided avenues of invasion into central Tennessee. Both ran north to south in the border area, and thus could serve as convenient supply routes for Federal armies attempting to penetrate the Confederate border, as Grant did in the campaign of forts Henry and Donelson in February 1862.

Kentucky's Northern location tied it economically to the Union, and many Kentuckians lived in Northern states, including 100,000 in Missouri, 60,000 in Illinois, 68,000 in Indiana, 15,000 in Ohio, and 13,000 in Iowa. While slavery played an important role in Kentucky's economy, as in Unionist Maryland, the state had little enthusiasm for the "King Cotton" nationalism of the Lower South. After all, its most famous son, Senator Henry Clay, was the man who saved the Union three times with compromises in 1820, 1833, and 1850.

> **The ferocious guerrilla war in Missouri produced the notorious James brothers (Jesse and Frank), Confederate "bushwhackers" from Clay County.**

On an individual level, Kentuckians would remain profoundly divided until the end of the war. At least two-fifths of Kentuckian soldiers fought for the Confederacy, including four brothers of Lincoln's own Kentucky-born wife. Four grandsons of Lincoln's old political hero, Henry Clay, fought for the South, another three for the Union. Political compromiser Senator Crittenden saw one son become a Union general and another a Confederate general.

Strategic state

With its people so finely divided, Kentucky tried to remain neutral after the attack on Fort Sumter. But this was an inherently untenable position, and by September 1861 it had collapsed. The governor, Beriah Magoffin, sympathized with the Confederacy but was only willing to go as far as a secret agreement that permitted its recruiters to enter the territory.

Unionist and pro-Confederate Kentuckians began to arm themselves during the state's tense period of neutrality. Lincoln, who knew this region well, bided his time, initially humoring his home state's desire to stay out of the war, and even allowing the Confederacy to purchase supplies there. In Congressional and legislative elections that summer, Unionists scored crushing victories, and Kentucky finally declared itself for the Union after Confederate forces crossed the border from Tennessee and entered Columbus, Kentucky, on September 3, 1861.

Death of a general

Missouri's Nathaniel Lyon was a bold and aggressive political leader, and he conducted his final battle, at Wilson's Creek in August 1861, in the same manner. He was the first Union general to be killed in combat.

AFTER

Kentucky's Unionism was a strategic blow to the Confederacy, but its Unionists became increasingly unhappy with the Federal war effort.

FORTS HENRY AND DONELSON

The Tennessee and Cumberland rivers provided convenient lines of advance for Federal forces. On February 6, 1862, Ulysses S. Grant led the **capture of Fort Henry** and received the **surrender of Fort Donelson** **60–61 ››** on February 16. These captures were the **first substantial Union military successes** of the war.

KENTUCKY'S DISSATISFACTION

Despite their importance to the early Union war effort, many Kentuckians became ever more disenchanted with the Lincoln administration as it moved in an increasingly anti-slavery direction. In the 1864 election **128 – 129 ››**, McClellan received **61,000 civilian votes** from Kentucky, **compared to 26,000 for Lincoln**, the state's native son.

QUANTRILL'S RAIDS

William Quantrill was the **most controversial of the guerrilla "bushwhackers"** who operated in Missouri and Kansas during the war. His exploits included attacks on Independence, Missouri, and Lawrence, Kansas **122–123 ››**.

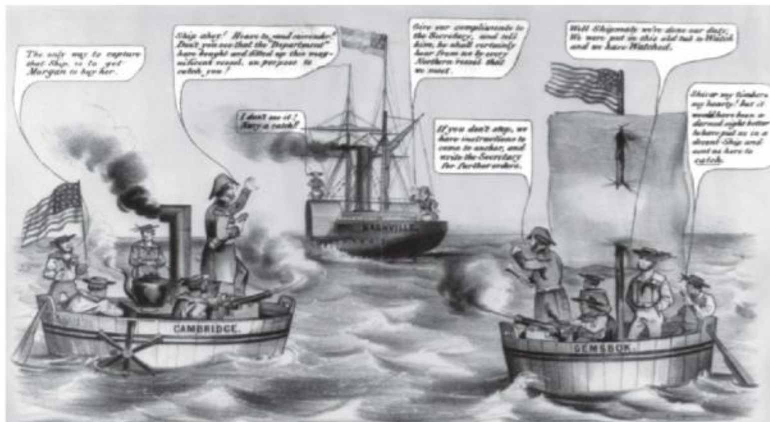
Blockading the South

The Union government considered the naval blockade of the Southern coastline to be an important part of the strategy to defeat the Confederacy, and it became increasingly effective over the course of the war. However, while it undoubtedly weakened the South, the blockade could not by itself end the war.

The blockade played an important part in Union general-in-chief Winfield Scott's Anaconda Plan. Scott hoped to isolate and divide the Confederacy by blockading its ports and reestablishing Federal control over the Mississippi River. He hoped this strategy would bring the South back into the Union, using gradual pressure but avoiding great bloodshed. Although this approach was superseded by events, increasing the effectiveness of the blockade remained an important Union objective for the rest of the war.

Naval obstacles

A blockade was likely to harm the Confederate war effort by restricting the flow of imported military supplies. But it also presented two huge challenges: the sheer length of the Southern coastline, on the one hand, and the small size of the Union navy, on the other. The new nation in the South had 3,549 miles (5,712km) of coastline, including 180 inlets, and when President Lincoln ordered the blockade to begin just after the fall of Fort Sumter, the Union navy had only 14 ships available.



The Union navy belittled
Two Union vessels—essentially washtubs—try to block a Confederate steamer's path in this cartoon, mocking the government's attempt to update the Union fleet.

At the start of the Civil War, while the blockade did little to stop ships engaged in blockade-running—an activity that became a major industry during the war—it did help to isolate the South diplomatically. The British government ultimately declared itself neutral, but it also respected the Union's right to enforce a blockade in wartime. This acknowledgment of the Union navy's right to inspect shipping entering Confederate ports and seize contraband property became significant as the Union navy increased in size, thus becoming more and more able to enforce the blockade. As the world's preeminent naval power, and one that wished to set legal precedents for its own imposition of blockades in future wars as in the past, the British government had good reason to recognize the legality of this Union war measure, and little reason to risk a war with Lincoln's government over this issue.

In order to enforce this blockade, the Union rapidly expanded its navy. By the end of the war, the Department of the Navy under Gideon Welles's leadership had purchased some 418 additional ships and built another 208. Most were in the service of tightening the blockade. The Union navy also increased in numbers from about 1,500 officers and men to 58,000. Although the maritime force very much remained the junior service to the

1,149 **The number of ships that were captured by the Union navy while attempting to run the North's blockade of the South.**

Impact on exports
A Union man-of-war (far right) pursues a Confederate blockade-runner (right). Built for speed, the blockade-runners could outsail the larger Union ships, but their small holds limited their carrying capacity and Southern cotton exports fell markedly.

« BEFORE

The U.S. navy had greater experience in trying to elude blockades than in attempting to enforce them.

PREVIOUS BLOCKADES
During the War with Mexico, the United States had **enforced a blockade** against Mexico, but the last two wars with Britain—the American Revolution and the Anglo-American War of 1812—had seen the United States on the receiving end of actions by a superior naval power trying to enforce restrictions on commerce.

ANGLO-AMERICAN WAR OF 1812
Most **diplomatic tensions** between America and Europe during the Napoleonic Wars involved the question of how the United States could trade with countries that were at war with one another. The issues that led to the War of 1812 were caused, in large part, by British attempts to enforce their blockade of French-controlled Europe. In 1812, despite various successes by individual U.S. navy ships, **Britain brought American trade to a standstill** and almost bankrupted the country.

Union Flag Officer Samuel du Pont
Du Pont scored an important victory in November 1861 by capturing Port Royal, South Carolina, which was the best natural harbor on the south Atlantic coast and provided an important base for Union blockaders.

hugely expanded Union army, this still represented an unprecedented increase in U.S. naval power.

While the increase in ships clearly tightened the blockade, only the capture of the South's ports could provide a foolproof way of restricting Confederate shipping. Swift steamers traveling at night often eluded Union patrol ships, and even in 1865, when the siege was at its tightest, about half of all Confederate blockade-runners completed their voyages.

Taking the ports

Joint army-navy operations to close down various Confederate ports became an important part of the war effort, and the first Federal military successes post-Bull Run involved the capture of ports in North Carolina and South Carolina. Not only did these amphibious operations close coastal entry points into the Confederacy, but they also provided bases at which Union ships could fuel and draw supplies near their assigned duty stations, instead of making the long journey to their posts from their Northern bases. The Union navy would capture Wilmington, North Carolina—the last Confederate port—in January 1865.

The effectiveness of the blockade remains uncertain. Some historians have argued that it "won" the war for the Union, while others see its effects as negligible. The answer probably lies somewhere in between.

By itself, the Union blockade could not have ensured a Federal victory, but the siege played an important role in the eventual exhaustion of Southern resources. Its increasing effectiveness prevented the Confederacy from easily importing military supplies (including those related to railroads), and the closing of coastal shipping in the Southern territories put extra strain on the under-repaired railroad network.

"**We propose a powerful movement** down the Mississippi to the ocean."

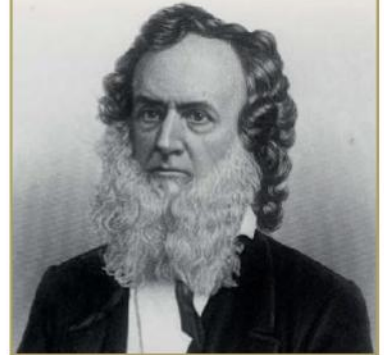
GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT, IN A LETTER TO GEORGE B. McCLELLAN, MAY 3,1861

UNION POLITICIAN (1802–78)

GIDEON WELLES

An important prewar newspaper editor and politician in Connecticut, Welles worked in the Navy Department during the War with Mexico. He developed anti-slavery views and opposed the Compromise of 1850's controversial Fugitive Slave Law. He joined the Republican Party after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854.

As navy secretary during the Civil War, he and his chief deputy, Gustavus Vasa Fox, proved to be energetic and effective administrators. Not only did they supervise the rapid expansion of the Union navy, but they also exercised good judgment in selecting senior officers.

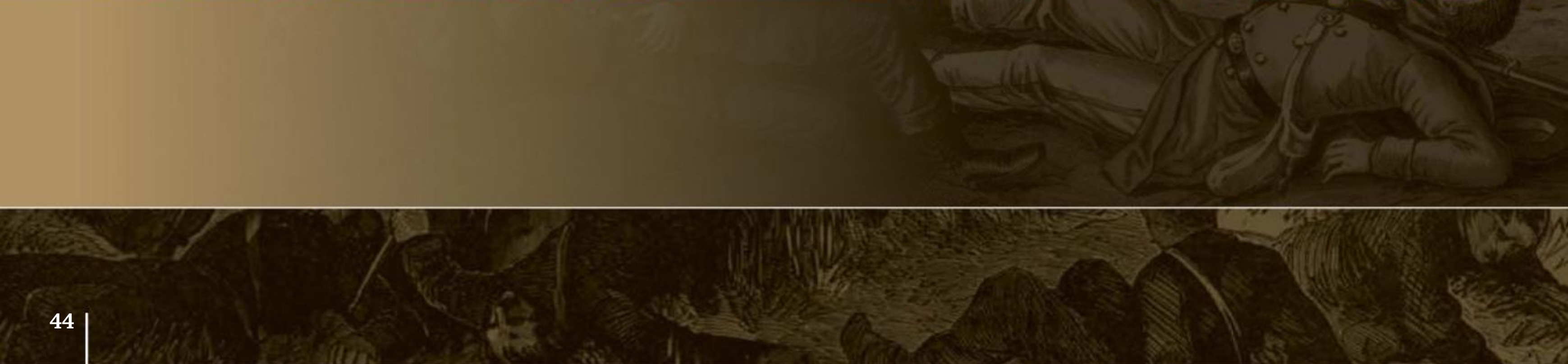


AFTER

Blockade duty briefly made the United States an important naval power. But despite its modern ships, it remained inferior to Britain's Royal Navy.

BRITAIN'S SUPERIOR FLEET
The Union navy's **vast expansion increased its fighting power**, but the sheer number of its ships still did not make it a match for the British Royal Navy, accustomed to patrolling the seas of the entire globe. Most Union navy ships were designed for the relatively simple purpose of enforcing the blockade near the Southern coast. They were **only lightly armed**, since their targets, the Confederate blockade-runners, carried few if any weapons.

POSTWAR DEMOBILIZATION
Before the Civil War, the United States had looked toward its vast land frontier, as opposed to trading overseas. This put limits on how much it was willing to invest in naval power. The need to blockade the Confederacy provided a temporary **surge in the navy's resources**, but after the Civil War the **Union navy was swiftly demobilized**. The United States would not become a major naval power or fight a naval war until the **Spanish-American War** in the last decade of the 19th century.



3

CLASH OF ARMIES

1862

In Virginia, the Confederates resisted a campaign against their capital, Richmond, and took the offensive themselves, briefly invading Maryland. In the Western Theater, they suffered a series of disasters, from the loss of New Orleans to a failed invasion of Kentucky.

« Battle of Williamsburg
One of a set of 36 Civil War prints made nearly 30 years after the war, this scene shows fighting at the Battle of Williamsburg. Here, on May 5, 1862 a large army under Union general George B. McClellan met the retreating army of General Joseph E. Johnston in a rearguard action, which the Union lost.

CLASH OF ARMIES

Second Bull Run
At the end of August 1862, Manassas is the site of a major Union defeat, for the second time in the war. The victory of the Army of Northern Virginia at Second Bull Run opens the way for Lee's Confederate troops to invade Maryland.

Union failure
The Battle of Antietam, fought at Sharpsburg on September 17, is the costliest single day's fighting in the history of the United States. Union general George McClellan—here consulting with Lincoln—fails to prevent Lee's Confederates from withdrawing from Maryland.

Stalemate at sea
Hampton Roads sees the world's first engagement between ironclad warships. In the duel between USS *Monitor* and CSS *Virginia* on March 9, 1862, neither ship inflicts sufficient damage to defeat her opponent.

Carnage in Virginia
In a series of battles to the east of Richmond, Lee drives the Union Army of the Potomac back from the Confederate capital. Known as the Seven Days Battles, the campaign puts an end to the Peninsula Campaign, although at the cost of over 20,000 killed and wounded.

In the early months of 1862, the Confederacy faced imminent defeat. The Union's naval blockade tightened, enabling the North to ship the Army of the Potomac to the Virginia Peninsula in March. The army's commander, General George B. McClellan, was slow and over-cautious, but his troop strength gave him a numerical advantage to take Richmond. Meanwhile, in the Western Theater, the Union at last found a fighting general in Ulysses S. Grant, whose victories at Fort Donelson and Shiloh laid open the defenses of Tennessee. To the south, New Orleans fell to a naval attack in April; by June most of the Mississippi was in Union hands.

But as spring turned to summer, the Confederates fought back. A spirited campaign by Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley drew Union forces away from the drive on Richmond. Then Lee took command of the Army of Northern Virginia and seized the initiative. He forced

1862

The Union battered yet triumphant
This panel from the Travis Panorama shows the Confederate forces under Braxton Bragg retreating to Tennessee after hard fighting at Perryville on October 8. Unable to sustain their campaign, they leave Kentucky in Union hands.

Ironclads in action on the Tennessee River
Union ironclads and timberclads provide the first vital step in taking Confederate-held forts Henry and Donelson in February. Fort Henry on the Tennessee River is given up after naval bombardment; Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River after a grim winter battle.

Union win at Shiloh
The Battle of Shiloh, fought amid woods and swamps alongside the Tennessee River, is a savage two-day encounter. The Union forces under General Ulysses S. Grant comes close to defeat on April 6, but wins the battle the following day.

New Orleans taken
The river defenses of New Orleans are breached by a Union naval squadron under Admiral David Farragut on April 24–25, 1862. The city reluctantly surrenders under threat of a naval bombardment. Here, Union sailors are met by a hostile crowd of locals as they try to come ashore.

McClellan to retreat in the Seven Days Battles, won a major victory at the Second Battle of Bull Run (Manassas), and invaded Maryland. At the same time, farther west, General Braxton Bragg invaded Kentucky. The war hung in the balance. In both Kentucky and Maryland, however, the Confederates failed to get the popular support they expected and had to withdraw, Lee extricating himself from potential disaster in a fight against the odds at Antietam (Sharpsburg). Lincoln felt sufficiently empowered to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, and any prospect of European support for the South faded. The Confederates, however, were still able to defy the Union armies. Another attempted advance on Richmond ended in defeat at Fredericksburg in December. On the Mississippi, Vicksburg held out against the Union. The year ended in carnage at Stones River (Murfreesboro), Tennessee, with heavy losses on both sides producing no clear victor.

Portrait of a Confederate

A Confederate soldier poses for a photograph before leaving for the war. The average soldier was in his mid-20s, came from a rural background, and had probably not been away from home before.

Soldiers in Gray

Outnumbered and poorly supplied, the soldiers of the Confederate army nevertheless succeeded in sustaining war with the Union through four grueling years. In the words of General Robert E. Lee: "Their courage in battle entitles them to rank with the soldiers of any army and of any time."

BEFORE

At the start of the Civil War, only a few men on the Confederate side had military training. Recruits were volunteers, often led by amateur military enthusiasts.

FORMING AN ARMY

At first the Confederacy based its army on **state militias**, preexisting **volunteer companies**, and a rush of one-year volunteers at the **outbreak of war** **« 34–35**. The army's dependence on **one-year enlistment** from spring 1861 held **the prospect of a crisis** when the volunteers' term of service expired. In December 1861, the Confederate Congress **offered inducements to tempt men into reenlisting**. They were offered a 60-day furlough (or break), a cash bounty, and the right to join a new regiment and to elect new officers.

INTRODUCTION OF CONSCRIPTION

Generals, however, feared that these measures would disrupt the war effort. On April 16, 1862, the Confederacy decided to **introduce conscription**, known as the "draft." **White males aged 18–35** were subject to **compulsory military service** and one-year service men had to stay for three years. In September, the **upper age limit was raised to 45**. Initially, planters with 20 or more slaves were exempt. In addition, the wealthy could pay someone to fight on their behalf. Many men **volunteered rather than be conscripted**: of around 200,000 enrolments in 1862, the majority were volunteers.

The majority of Confederate troops—more than 60 percent of the total—were farmers and farm laborers, a proportion that broadly reflected the social makeup of the Southern states. Some were just boys—normally serving as buglers or drummers—but most were between 18 and 29 years of age. In contrast to the Union forces, the Confederates were ethnically homogeneous, their ranks including relatively few recent immigrants and no African Americans.

The Confederate soldier was as committed to his cause as was the Northerner—perhaps more so. He saw the war as a defense of his home and home state, his freedom, and his way of life. And while only a third of Confederate soldiers owned slaves or came from slave-owning families, almost all believed that the preservation of slavery was essential to their status and security. Southerners tended to believe the myth that they were natural fighters compared to the decadent urban Yankees from the North, and cultivated a self-conscious sense of personal honor that impelled them into combat. This self-image also sustained their commitment to the war.

FURLOUGH An enlisted man's leave was called a furlough. A soldier on leave left his weapons in camp and carried papers describing his appearance and giving his unit and his departure and return dates.

As the Confederate soldiers' initial enthusiasm waned, many came to feel that they were poor men fighting a rich man's war. The exemption from the draft (military service) for planters who owned 20 or more slaves—motivated by Confederate fears that slaves would revolt or escape if unsupervised—caused great resentment. The ability of the wealthy to pay substitutes to perform their military service for them was seen as unfair and resulted in draft evasion; it was eventually abandoned. Yet the Confederates fielded a more egalitarian army than that of the North, with conscription applied more consistently across society, and the mercenary motives that drew so many of the poor into the Union Army ranks were less common.

Confederate officer's kepi

The gray woolen kepi was standard headgear for the Confederate soldier, although it offered little protection against the elements. The broad-brimmed slouch hat was also in common use among troops.

Army life

The concentration of thousands of newly recruited farm boys in military camps led to outbreaks of disease, initially spread by poor sanitary practices. Disease was just one of the disagreeable aspects of army life. The profanity, drunkenness, gambling, and general immorality were a shock to those who came from orderly homes. Many men who had signed up to defend an ill-defined freedom resented finding themselves subjected to the rigors of a military discipline that denied them liberty of speech and action. But over time, most adapted successfully to the rhythms of military life. A man's regiment became his home, within which he would bond with a buddy and the men he lived and fought alongside. This male bonding was the cement that held the army together and sustained each individual soldier in hardship and combat. Drill and training, capped by the experience of battle itself, completed the transformation of a civilian into a soldier.

Sewing kit

Soldiers carried a mending kit known as a "housewife," which included needles, thread, and buttons. Men who were used to being looked after by womenfolk had to learn essential skills, such as sewing and cooking, when they entered the army.

Lack of necessities

Shortages of almost everything were a Confederate soldier's lot. He could expect a weapon and ammunition, plus a water canteen and tin cup, but most other items, from food to blankets and boots, were in short supply. Although officially clad in gray, Confederate troops often had to make do with homespun uniforms dyed with solutions of walnut shells and copper. Men marched barefoot, drawing a perverse pride from their evident raggedness. Soldiers dug rifle pits with tin cups for lack of shovels. Much of a soldier's time was devoted to scavenging for the basics of sustenance and kit. Overcoats, blankets, and boots were plundered from captured Union stores or stolen from the Union dead and prisoners of war. Foraging

Identity badges
Neither army issued identity tags, so troops inscribed their names or units onto pieces of bone, like these Confederate ones, metal, paper, or even acorns, so that their bodies could be identified if they were killed in battle.

Confederate soldiers pillaged farms in search of food or firewood, even though the people they robbed were civilians on their own side. This quest for necessities easily slipped into straightforward crime, with the theft of money and valuables.

Desertions and casualties

Discipline was seen by senior Confederate commanders as a serious and persistent problem. The Southern soldier was a tough fighter but had an ingrained resistance to authority. Officers below the rank of brigadier general were elected by the men, and this no doubt led to a tolerance of minor infringements. But larger issues, such as straggling on the march and shirking combat, had to be addressed. Tough commanders imposed severe punishments, including hanging and branding, for the gravest offenses. Yet desertion rates remained high: around one in seven soldiers deserted from the Army of Northern Virginia. The causes included disillusion with the rigors of army life and concern for the welfare of their families back home, who were seen as needing the man's aid and protection in the face of increasing hardship and danger. The rarity of leave led to frequent shorter episodes of absence without permission, and troops stationed near home accepted a mild punishment for taking an unauthorized break to visit loved ones.

At its height, the Confederate army numbered some 460,000 men, and more than a million soldiers served in its ranks during the course of the war. Of these, around 250,000 were killed in combat or died from disease or hardship. Many more were wounded, only one in four coming through unscathed. Later in the war, as pessimism and casualties mounted, religious revivals swept through the Confederate camps and desertion grew to epidemic proportions. Yet thousands of hardened veterans fought on to the last, with the courage of despair and pride in their regiments.

Confederates were often viewed as unkempt and undisciplined. One of their own commanders, Brigadier General Cadmus Wilcox, even described Confederate troops as "little better than an armed mob." But the feats of hard marching, general endurance, and fighting against the odds achieved by the Confederate soldiers of the Civil War have been equaled by few other armies.

"We are a **dirty, ragged set** … but **courage and heroism** find many a **true disciple** among us."

THEODORE T. FOGLE OF THE 2ND GEORGIA INFANTRY, LETTER TO HIS PARENTS, OCTOBER 13, 1862

AFTER

At the end of the war, 174,223 Confederate soldiers surrendered to the Union, but some former soldiers resisted Northern control of the South for years to come.

RETURNING HOME
The **surrender agreement** made by **Grant and Lee** at **Appomattox in 1865** allowed Southern troops to return home **without being prosecuted for treason**. They had to **surrender their weapons**, except for officers' sidearms, but were allowed to keep their own horses. Most soldiers returned home on foot, **dressed in little more than rags**, and begged for food along the way.

KU KLUX KLAN
Many Confederate **war veterans** were reluctant to accept **Northern domination** and the according of **civil rights to freed slaves**. Groups of loosely associated vigilantes formed the **Ku Klux Klan**, which resisted U.S. rule in the South and terrorized African Americans. Although the Klan was suppressed, other **armed vigilante groups**, such as **the White League**, continued the fight **against black rights and Republicanism** into the 1870s.

Confederate campsite
A Confederate army camp in summer could be pleasant enough, with soldiers engaged in cooking, playing cards, and reading. African-Americans were present as servants, cooks, and laborers.

Soldiers in Blue

The Union army enjoyed numerical superiority in the Civil War, but this did not make its soldiers' experiences, in and out of combat, any less harsh. Whether they fought for principle or for pay, Union troops served with an endurance and tenacity that ultimately prevailed.

BEFORE

Although the Northern states had a large pool of manpower to draw on, they had difficulty in fulfilling the demand for soldiers in a long war.

A VOLUNTEER ARMY

The Union army was initially a wholly volunteer force. A commitment to 90 days' service quickly proving inadequate, recruits were mostly required to **sign up for three years**, although some two-year volunteers were enrolled in certain states. The **attractions of army service declined** sharply as the risks and hardships of military life became more widely understood, and an **economic boom**—stimulated by the war—made **well-paid civilian work** readily available.

CONSCRIPTION

In 1863, **conscription was introduced for men aged 20–45**. However, those selected could pay for **substitutes to take their place**. Many were also **exempted** for various reasons and large numbers disappeared to **evade conscription**. Only 51,000 conscripts served in the Union army during the war, compared with 118,000 substitutes.

To avert a crisis in 1864, when the initial three-year volunteers reached the end of their term, the government offered **bonus payments and a furlough** (leave) to men who agreed to reenlist. Some **200,000 veteran volunteers stayed in the army**. Cash bonuses were also routinely paid to attract fresh volunteers.

Shaving equipment
Soldiers usually carried a straight razor and soap, although few would have had a shaving kit as elegant as this. Army rules, often ignored, prescribed a face wash every day and a full bath once a week.

The Union army was as diverse as the society of the states from which the soldiers were drawn. By civilian occupation, farmers and farm laborers were the largest group, making up almost a half of the troops, while skilled workers—carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers, machinists, printers—constituted about a quarter of the army. Although, as the war dragged on, recruits were increasingly drawn from the poorer layers of society, only one in seven of the Union soldiers were unskilled laborers. It was a slightly younger army than that of the South, with two out of every five soldiers under 21 years of age. Although the lower age for conscription was 20, many of the substitutes, paid to take the place of unwilling conscripts, were adventurous youths of 18 or 19. Much younger boys served as drummers or buglers, although in 1864 the engagement of children under 16 was officially banned.

Union officer's kepi
The blue kepi-style cap with black visor was standard wear for Union soldiers. The horn insignia on the front was that of the infantry.

Makeup of the Union army

Most striking was the ethnic diversity of the Union forces. About a quarter of those who served in the Union armies were foreign-born, reflecting the high level of immigration into the Northern states starting in the 1840s. The largest contingent were Germans, of whom some 200,000 served the Union during the war. The second-largest immigrant group in the ranks were the Irish, with around 150,000 men engaged. Both Germans and Irish often served in their own regiments—the 69th New York Infantry Regiment (dubbed "the Fighting 69th") was Irish, the 74th Pennsylvania Regiment was German. But members of these and other immigrant groups also served in regiments that were not ethnically defined. The same was not true of African Americans who became an important component of Union fighting forces from 1863—black troops made up 10 percent of the Union army by the war's end—but who fought in segregated units.

Reasons for fighting

The motivation of Union troops was mixed. Patriotism drove many into the ranks, outraged at the rebel threat to the integrity of the United States. An idealistic opposition to slavery was far less common. Abolitionism was supported in some Massachusetts regiments, but on the whole Union troops were indifferent to emancipation; some were even opposed to it.

The simple desire for adventure and the experience of war attracted many young men to enlist, but material considerations often predominated. The bounty money offered for volunteering and the money paid for substitutes were considerable sums to ordinary working men. Even without cheating the system—it was not too difficult to enlist several times for the bounty and evade the service—a man could feel well-off with the one-time payment. Late in the war immigrants arriving in the United States were often enlisted straight off the boat, some having embarked on the voyage specifically to sign up.

> "I **hope and trust** that **strength** will be given to me to **stand and do my duty**."
>
> PRIVATE EDWARD EDES, LETTER TO HIS FATHER, APRIL 1863

Improving morale

Loyalty to his colleagues and proud identification with his regiment, brigade, and corps were the bonds that held a man in place and, more than any other factor, made him ready to fight. Although obedience never came easily, the Union army developed into a reasonably well-drilled and disciplined force, with order enforced by harsh corporal punishments. From 1862 onward, Union troops were generally well supplied and equipped. Northern factories provided sufficient standard uniforms and footwear, even if sometimes of poor quality, and the official food ration was quite generous in its portions of bacon, beef, bread, and beans. But men easily became ragged and hungry during hard campaigning. Even when the supply system had not broken down, the temptation to pillage farms along the line of march, usually in Confederate territory, was rarely resisted. When marching, endurance was required—the pack was heavy, feet were sore—but even in a well supplied camp the military routines could be both boring and wearing. Disease was a serious threat, especially in the early period before sanitation improved. A Union soldier had a one-in-eight chance of dying of disease, compared with a one-in-18 chance of dying in battle.

281,881 **The estimated number of Union soldiers wounded in the course of the Civil War. One in every four Union soldiers who served in the conflict either died or was wounded.**

Disillusion and desertion

The quality of Union troops was diluted in the last years of the war. The proud if war-weary volunteers who had fought since 1861 were often contemptuous of the mercenary "bounty men" and substitutes raked in from 1863 onward—Private Frank Wilkeson dismissed them as "conscienceless and cowardly scoundrels." Desertion rates were always high, men slinking away, discouraged by army life or needing to cope with difficulties at home. But those who joined up for a lump sum payment were notorious for disappearing. Grant complained in September 1864 that: "The men we have been getting in this way almost all desert." Yet Union troops always proved tough fighters when it mattered. There was no questioning the courage and fighting spirit of the soldiers in blue.

Taking a break

This scene of soldiers playing cards was painted in 1881 by Civil War veteran Julian Scott, who had served as a musician in a Vermont regiment. It reflects the mix of uniforms worn early in the war.

Unknown Union soldier

This young recruit of the 8th New York Heavy Artillery has the Hardee hat of his full dress uniform alongside him and carries an infantry musket. Eighteen was considered the youngest age for a combat role, although many volunteers lied about their birth date.

AFTER

Some 2.5 million men served in the Union army in the course of the Civil War. Of these, around 360,000 died in battle or of hardship and disease.

DEMOBILIZATION

No thought was given during the war to the problem of **returning men to civilian life**. Soldiers whose terms of service ended and who chose not to reenlist simply returned to their homes. At the war's end public opinion demanded swift demobilization. **Union soldiers were gathered in camps** for discharge, but many deserted before the slow and tedious mustering out process was complete.

VETERANS' PENSIONS

By 1865, **a system of pensions** had been put in place **for disabled veterans and for the widows and orphans** of Union soldiers who had died in the war. In 1904, pensions were in effect extended to **all surviving Civil War veterans** in their old age. There were still individuals drawing Civil War pensions in the 1950s.

A CONTINUING ROLE

Rapidly depleted, the U.S. Army nonetheless was burdened with important tasks after the Civil War. **The South** came under **military rule** during the **Reconstruction period**, while the **Plains Indian Wars** kept the army actively employed into the 1880s, many Civil War veterans seeing action against the Native Americans.

BEFORE

In 1861, when the Civil War began, ironclad warships were novelties in naval ship design. Not surprisingly, both the Union and the Confederates sought to employ this new technology.

During the Crimean War, the French and British navies **attached iron plates** to the **wooden hulls** of some of their warships as armor. The experiment was considered a success and **in 1859 France launched the *Gloire***, an ironclad battleship. The British responded with their own armored battleship, *Warrior*, the following year.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES
The Confederacy saw the possibility of using an ironclad to challenge Union naval supremacy. In the first days of the war they **captured Norfolk Navy Yard** and with it the burned-out hull of the steam-and-sail frigate **USS *Merrimack***. The ship was salvaged and **rebuilt as the steam-driven "ironclad" CSS *Virginia***, encased to the waterline in **4in (10cm) iron plate armor**. Meanwhile, the Union raced to produce the far **more radical all-metal USS *Monitor*** in time to confront the *Virginia* on her first sortie.

10 **The guns carried by CSS *Virginia*—two 7-in rifled guns, fore and aft, six 9-in smoothbore Dahlgren guns in broadside, and two 6.4-in rifled guns.**

TECHNOLOGY

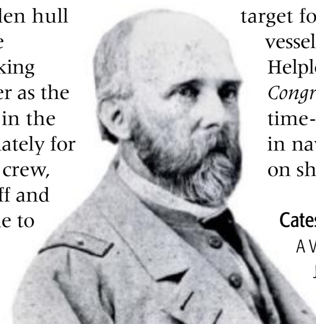
USS *MONITOR*

The design for USS *Monitor* was submitted to the U.S. Navy's Ironclad Board by Swedish-born engineer John Ericsson. This semi-submerged metal raft had an armored deck that supported a rotating gun turret and a small pilothouse. It was armed with two 11-in (280-mm) smoothbore Dahlgren guns (below). Their swollen shape allowed the use of larger amounts of explosive propellant without the risk of the gun bursting. The steam engine drove an innovative marine screw, also designed by Ericsson. The *Monitor*'s low profile in the water made it a tough target but rendered it barely seaworthy. Built in sections at different foundries, the vessel was launched on January 30, 1862.

The **Battle** of Hampton Roads

In March 1862, USS *Monitor* and CSS *Virginia* fought the world's first battle between steam-powered, ironclad warships. Their encounter was a stalemate that left the naval balance of power in the Civil War unchanged, but it marked an epoch-making advance in the technology of naval warfare.

The Confederacy was desperate to break the Union naval blockade that cut off Richmond's access to international trade through the James River. On March 8, 1862, the ironclad CSS *Virginia* steamed out of the Norfolk Navy Yard to challenge the Union blockade force in Hampton Roads, where the James River opens out into Chesapeake Bay. To the crews of the Union warships on blockade duty, the ungainly, slow-moving warship with her sloped ironplate armor was a sinister sight. The *Virginia*'s captain, 61-year-old Franklin Buchanan, had an array of guns at his disposal, but his intended principal weapon was an iron ram fitted to his ship's prow. As he steamed toward the sloop USS *Cumberland*, the Union ship's shells bounced off *Virginia*'s metal plates. The ram tore into the *Cumberland*'s wooden hull and sent her to the bottom—almost taking the *Virginia* with her as the ram stayed locked in the sloop's hull. Fortunately for Buchanan and his crew, the ram snapped off and the *Virginia* was able to turn her attention to the frigate USS *Congress*. Having witnessed the *Cumberland*'s fate, the captain of the *Congress* ran his ship aground to make it impossible for the Confederate ironclad to ram. This left the frigate a sitting target for the *Virginia*'s guns and other vessels of the Confederate squadron. Helpless under bombardment, the *Congress* "struck her colors," the time-honored gesture of surrender in naval warfare, but Union soldiers on shore were unaware of this



Catesby ap Roger Jones
A Virginian of Welsh ancestry, Catesby ap Roger Jones resigned from the U.S. Navy to join the Confederacy. He took over command of CSS *Virginia* at Hampton Roads.

AFTER

The Confederacy failed to break the blockade. Over the next two months the *Virginia* made occasional sorties into Hampton Roads, but the epic duel was not repeated.

The ***Virginia* was scuttled** in May when the advance of Union land forces left it exposed to capture. Never seaworthy, ***Monitor* sank** on December 31, 1862, while under tow in an Atlantic gale off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. However, the design spawned a **whole class of vessels**, designated **"monitors,"** for use in **inshore and river warfare**. Monitors were still in service up to the 1930s. **Rams and rotating gun turrets** were soon adopted as standard features of warships.

ARMORED VESSELS IN THE WAR
Ironclads and monitors played a major part in later naval actions, including the **struggle for control of the Mississippi** **54–57, 98–99 ››** and the **Battle of Mobile Bay** **134–135 ››**.

Battle of the ironclads
USS *Monitor* (far left) and CSS *Virginia* (left) exchange fire at close range. The *Virginia* suffered much superficial damage, but neither vessel carried powerful enough armament to have a decisive effect.

Solid shot
A memento of the Battle of Hampton Roads—a solid shot flattened on striking CSS *Virginia*'s sloping ironplate armor. The *Virginia* remained known to the Union side by its original name, *Merrimack*.

> "**My men** and myself were perfectly **black** with **smoke and powder**."
>
> UNION LIEUTENANT SAMUEL GREENE, ON BOARD USS *MONITOR*

convention. As the surrender was being organized, they opened fire, seriously wounding Buchanan in the leg. In retaliation he ordered red-hot shot to be fired at the *Congress*, setting her ablaze—the ship finally blew up in the early hours of the following morning. Another frigate, USS *Minnesota*, had also run aground and was marked as the next target for destruction, but with the approach of night the *Virginia* withdrew for repairs. The Union navy had lost two ships and the lives of more than 230 sailors.

USS Monitor enters the fray

The next morning, the *Virginia* reappeared, with Lieutenant Catesby ap Roger Jones commanding in place of the wounded Buchanan. Jones was puzzled to see a strange low-lying metal object between the *Virginia* and the stranded *Minnesota*. This was the Union ironclad USS *Monitor*. Towed south from New York in great haste, it had taken up position during the night. The *Monitor* had undergone a hair-raising voyage, nearly sinking in heavy seas. Its crew of 59 officers and men, commanded by John Worden, were exhausted and hungry. Nonetheless, Worden immediately set course to attack the *Virginia*.

The two vessels closed to point-blank range and opened fire. The *Monitor*'s armor warded off the hammer blows of the *Virginia*'s guns, but the *Monitor*'s fire had no more effect on the *Virginia*'s iron plates. In cramped, fume-ridden conditions, the *Monitor*'s gunners had problems with the innovative gun turret, which eventually had to be kept in permanent rotation, firing as the guns swept across their target. In the smoke, visibility was limited for both crews, and the two ships went almost blindly around one another as they blasted away. The *Monitor* was smaller and faster and her flat bottom was an advantage in the shallow waters. At one point, the *Virginia* ran aground on shoals, but she was freed and the battle continued.

Final clashes

The *Virginia* tried to crush the *Monitor* by ramming, but the *Monitor* moved into shallow water to escape. No resolution seemed in view when by chance a Confederate shell exploded in the eyeslit of the *Monitor*'s pilothouse. Worden suffered a facial wound that blinded him. There was some confusion before command passed to his first officer, Samuel Greene. In the interim, the *Virginia*'s Catesby ap Roger Jones assumed that the *Monitor* had given up the fight and withdrew, claiming victory. Greene, ready to resume the fight, saw the *Virginia* leave, and also claimed to have won.

Monitor's commander
John Worden was a lieutenant when he took command of USS *Monitor* in January 1861. He recovered from his wound at Hampton Roads, retiring from the navy as a rear admiral in 1886.

BEFORE

New Orleans had seen rapid expansion of trade and growing prosperity in the years leading up to the Civil War. It also occupied a vital strategic location on the Mississippi.

MULTIPLE UNION THREATS

Despite its importance to the Confederacy, **New Orleans had reduced its defenses** because of the Union threat to the north in Tennessee, where General Ulysses S. **Grant was advancing on forts Henry and Donelson** « **60–61**. Both land and naval forces had been dispatched northward, including eight ships of the River Defense Fleet.

SEABORNE LANDINGS

Union experience of amphibious warfare early in the war led it to believe that **New Orleans** could be taken by a **seaborne operation**. Both at Hatteras Inlet, North Carolina, in August 1861, and the following November at Port Royal, South Carolina, **Union warships** showed they could **subdue coastal forts** with naval gunfire. This suggested that the river forts defending access to New Orleans might be overcome with **a naval attack supported by troop landings**. Both these previous operations had strengthened the Union blockade of the South's ports « **42–43.**

The **Fall** of **New Orleans**

The Confederates suffered a major setback when New Orleans fell to Union forces in April 1862. It happened after a bold nighttime naval operation in which Union warships commanded by David Farragut forced a passage past the guns of Confederate forts Jackson and St. Philip.

Union plans for an attack on New Orleans began in the winter of 1861–62. Initial estimates called for up to 50,000 Union troops. However, by February 1862, the main role had passed to the Union navy's West Coast Blockading Squadron under Captain David Farragut.

Farragut chose to plan a purely naval operation to breach New Orleans' only serious defenses, forts Jackson and St. Philip. Sited on opposite sides of the Mississippi around 75 miles (120km) south of New Orleans, the forts held an estimated 126 guns. Conventional wisdom believed that warships trying to pass them would be blown out of the water. The Union squadron would also have to take on assorted ironclads and "cottonclads"—ships with cotton bales attached as a form of armor. In March, Farragut moved 17 ships past the initial obstacle: the sandbars that lay at the mouth of the Mississippi. Farragut's squadron included his flagship USS *Hartford*, and some mortar schooners for land bombardments. He then took a month to complete his preparations. The Confederate forts were scouted, as was the chain of sunken hulks, stretching from bank to bank, intended to block passage up the river.

168,675 **The population of New Orleans according to the 1850 census. This made the city the sixth largest in the United States and by far the largest in the Confederacy.**

The bombardment began on April 18. Thousands of shells rained down on the forts, but the effects were minimal. Return fire from the forts was equally ineffectual. Farragut, who had never placed much faith in the mortars, soon determined to proceed with his favored plan of forcing a passage upriver. A raid by his gunboats succeeded in opening up a navigable passage through the chain. At around 2 a.m. on April 24, the Union ships steamed upriver to the chain under cover of darkness. They were formed in three divisions, with Farragut commanding the center. Most had passed through the gap in the chain when, at 3:40 a.m., the moon rose, revealing them to the enemy, who unleashed a storm of fire from the forts' guns. As Farragut's ships fired back and the mortar schooners joined in, the

Before the engagement
En route to New Orleans, the crew of a Federal mortar schooner is pictured on deck with the ship's formidable 25,000lb (11,340kg) gun.

Mayhem on the Mississippi
The running of the forts under cover of darkness led to a chaotic moonlit river battle. Fort Jackson can be seen on the left of the picture firing on the Union ships as they round the bend in the river.

night was lit up like a fireworks display. Farragut's boldness paid off, for as he had anticipated, the land batteries fired wildly in their panic and confusion. Only three of the gunboats in the Union rear division failed to pass the forts. One was disabled by gunfire and the other two turned back, rather than attempt to push through the passage as dawn broke. Confederate warships beyond the barrier responded in piecemeal fashion. Their tugs pushed rafts heaped with burning wood toward Union ships, setting fire to Farragut's flagship, which was rescued by the efforts of its crew.

Battle rattle
This 10½-in (26-cm) wide wooden rattle was of the type used on small warships to summon all hands to their action stations at the moment of battle.

Cottonclad vs. gunboat

Meanwhile, CSS *Governor Moore*, a cottonclad converted from a civilian paddle steamer, attacked boldly under the command of Lieutenant Beverly Kennon. Finding USS *Varuna* isolated, he relentlessly pursued her, despite taking heavy casualties in a fierce exchange of fire. The *Governor Moore* twice rammed into the *Varuna* with her reinforced bow before CSS *Stonewall Jackson* sank the Union gunboat. The *Varuna* was the only Union loss of the battle. The *Governor Moore* was later shot up by several Union warships and, out of control, was sunk by her crew.

The strangest-looking vessel in the battle was CSS *Manassas*, a cigar-shaped ironclad with a ram and a single gun. Her curved armor performed excellently as she attempted a series of ramming attacks. The sidewheel steamer USS *Mississippi* and the sloop USS *Brooklyn* were both struck, and the *Brooklyn* suffered serious damage. The *Manassas* finally ran aground and was destroyed. The other Confederate ironclad, CSS *Louisiana*, was only able to fire a few shots—she was later scuttled to avoid capture. With the Southern naval force routed, Farragut had a clear path to New Orleans. He reached the city on April 25 and demanded its surrender. The garrison by then had been evacuated, leaving New Orleans defenseless, but the Confederate authorities refused to surrender, while Union officers and sailors who landed to take formal possession of the city were harassed. Farragut wisely waited, allowing feelings to cool down. After four days his marines were able to raise the Union flag over the major public buildings in New Orleans.

The forts, meanwhile, remained in Confederate hands, but shortly after the mortar bombardment was resumed on April 29, the Fort Jackson garrison mutinied. General Johnson Duncan, commander of the forts, decided that it was time to give in. As a result, when General Benjamin Butler's Union troops marched into New Orleans on May 1, they were unopposed. They had taken the city without seeing any fighting.

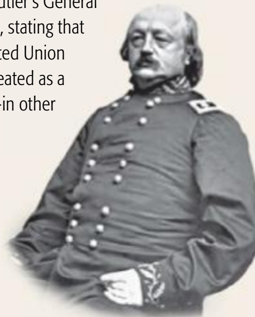
AFTER

New Orleans came under the military rule of Union General Benjamin Butler. His abrasive approach to controlling a hostile city provoked international controversy.

BRUTAL OCCUPATION

Butler **cracked down on demonstrations of support for the Confederacy** in the occupied city. Newspapers were censored and churchmen arrested for expressing Confederate sympathies in their services. When **William Mumford was hanged** for having torn down a Union flag at the time of the city's surrender, Jefferson Davis declared Butler himself a criminal worth hanging.

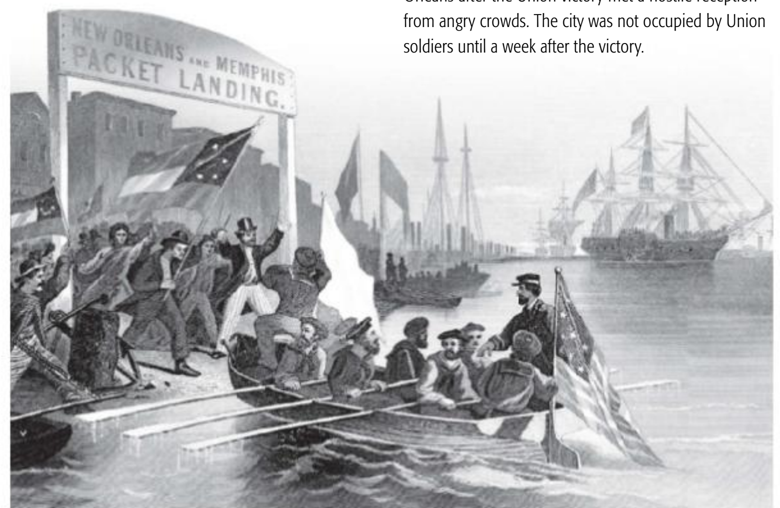
Moreover, from a Union point of view, **Butler outraged international opinion**. France's government denounced the arrest of champagne merchant Charles Heidsieck as a spy. Most damaging was Butler's General Order of May 15, 1862, stating that any woman who insulted Union soldiers "shall be … treated as a woman of the town"—in other words, as a prostitute. **Butler succeeded in keeping order** and improving public health, **but he was removed** from command of the Department of the Gulf in late 1862.



BENJAMIN BUTLER

"The passing [of the forts] was one of the **most awful sights and events I ever saw**."

LETTER OF DAVID FARRAGUT TO THE ASSISTANT NAVAL SECRETARY, APRIL 27, 1862

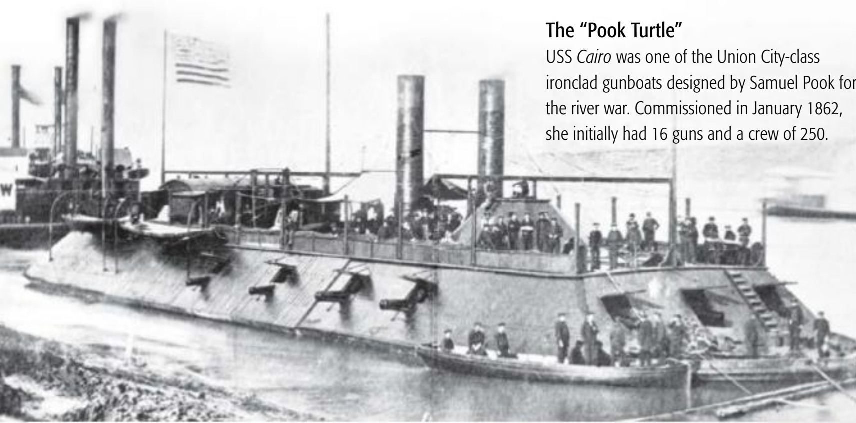


Unwelcome arrivals
Sailors sent ashore to take formal possession of New Orleans after the Union victory met a hostile reception from angry crowds. The city was not occupied by Union soldiers until a week after the victory.

Action on the **Mississippi River**

The struggle for control of the Mississippi in 1862 brought strange warships into conflict, from cottonclad rams to "Pook Turtles," in battles at Island Number Ten, Plum Point Bend, and Memphis. The campaign was a disaster for the Confederacy, but the Union side also fell short of its final objective.

At the outset of the Civil War, the Anaconda Plan proposed by Union general-in-chief Winfield Scott gave priority to an advance down the Mississippi to cut the Confederacy in two. Whether considered desirable or not, such an offensive was not immediately possible because it required the creation of a Union river fleet that could cooperate with the army to overcome the Confederate fortresses dominating the waterway. For the construction of a flotilla of ironclad river gunboats, the Union turned to engineer and industrialist James Eads. He built seven vessels from scratch to a design by Samuel Pook, a naval architect based in Cairo, Illinois. They were shallow-draft ships driven by a paddlewheel at the stern and enclosed in sloping iron armor. Officially called City-class gunboats, they were better known by their nickname: Pook Turtles. The seven ironclads formed the core of the Western Gunboat Flotilla, initially under U.S. Army control. The Confederates, in contrast, had to make do with adapting riverboats into ships of war, usually by adding cotton bales as armor—making them "cottonclads"—then reinforcing the prow with iron to make a ram, and by arming them with one or two guns.



The "Pook Turtle"
USS *Cairo* was one of the Union City-class ironclad gunboats designed by Samuel Pook for the river war. Commissioned in January 1862, she initially had 16 guns and a crew of 250.

Island Number Ten

The first strongpoint that Union forces needed to overcome as they pressed down the Mississippi was Island Number Ten, a fortified position at a turn in the river near the town of New Madrid. At the start of March 1862, Major General John Pope's newly formed Army of the Mississippi, advancing through Missouri, arrived outside New Madrid. Unable to resist Union siege guns, the Confederates quickly abandoned the town, but the island was a tougher obstacle. The Union

> "… they **struck terror** into every guilty soul as they **floated down the river**."
>
> CREW MEMBER OF A POOK TURTLE, 1862

BEFORE

Both sides in the Civil War recognized that control of the Mississippi River was a major strategic objective. The Union held Cairo, Illinois, at the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio, but the Confederates hoped to prevent them from advancing farther south.

CONFEDERATE MOVES

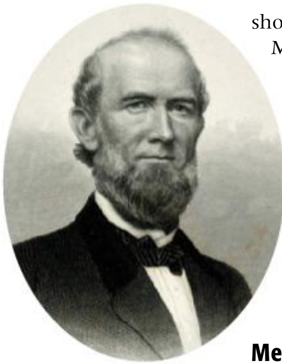
In September 1861, Confederate troops under General **Leonidas Polk seized Columbus on the Mississippi** in Kentucky. He turned it into a **fortress with 143 guns** trained on the river, which was blocked by a chain. This **"Gibraltar of the West"** presented a **formidable obstacle to any Union advance** down the Mississippi.

However, after the **fall of Fort Donelson in February 1862** **58–59 ››**, Columbus was abandoned without a fight, rendered untenable by the threat to its supply lines. Part of the garrison and many of its guns were relocated 50 miles (80km) south at **Island Number Ten**.

UNION STRATEGY

On February 23, 1862, the **Union commander in the Western theater, General Henry Halleck**, ordered the creation of the **Army of the Mississippi**. With 25,000 men under Major General John Pope, the army's task was to **advance down the Mississippi River** in cooperation **with the river fleet**.

The Battle of Memphis
The Confederate cottonclad CSS *General Beauregard* is rammed by USS *Monarch* off Memphis on June 6, 1862. The revival of the ancient naval tactic of ramming was an unexpected result of the use of armored steam ships.



James Buchanan Eads
An inventive civil engineer and businessman, Eads helped to think up the idea of a Union flotilla of ironclads in the Mississippi. The seven City-class ships were constructed at his shipyards.

river flotilla arrived with its seven ironclads plus a group of mortar schooners, but their guns failed to have a decisive impact on the island's defenses. Pope's solution was to work his way around the Confederate position and cut its supply line through Tennessee. He dug a canal to move troop transports downstream of the island and also had two ironclads slip past the island's batteries under cover of darkness. With this support, his troops were able to cross the river to the Tennessee shore. Surrounded and outnumbered, the island garrison surrendered on April 8.

Confederate success

The chief remaining obstacle between the Union gunboats and their destination Memphis was Fort Pillow, which the gunboats started to bombard in May. Desperate to defend Memphis, the Confederates sent eight cottonclad rams north, leaving New Orleans seriously short of naval defense. On May 10, the cottonclads, commanded by James Montgomery, inflicted a sharp reverse on the Union flotilla at Fort Pillow. They pressed through Union gunfire to ram the ironclads USS *Mound City* and USS *Cincinatti*, both of which sank.

Memphis falls

This action, often known as the Battle of Plum Point Bend, boosted Confederate morale, but did not reverse the tide of the war. Fort Pillow fell regardless, abandoned by the Confederates after the Union capture of the vital railroad junction at Corinth in late May left it exposed to land attack.

By June 1862, New Orleans had fallen to Farragut's fleet and Memphis was now indefensible in the face of Union armies pushing south from Tennessee. A climactic river battle was fought in sight of the city on June 6. Impressed by the effectiveness of the Confederate rams at Plum Point Bend, the Union flotilla had acquired its own squadron of nine rams—converted tugs rebuilt by Pennsylania engineer Charles Ellet and crewed by civilian riverboat men. When Montgomery's cottonclad rams steamed out to meet the Union flotilla, cheered on by crowds of spectators on the Memphis bluffs, they were crushed by Ellet's rams and the gunfire of the five remaining Union Pook Turtles. Only one Confederate ship escaped.

1 **The number of Union casualties recorded at the naval battle of Memphis. The victim was Charles Ellet, commander of the Union rams, who was fatally wounded. The Confederates lost about 180 men.**

Vicksburg stands firm

With the fall of Memphis, only the Confederate fortress at Vicksburg stood in the way of Union control of the Mississippi. In late June, Farragut's fleet steamed upriver to join the river flotilla in a combined attack on Vicksburg, but their guns made little impression on a determined garrison. On July 15, CSS *Arkansas*, a Confederate ironclad arrived at Vicksburg and sailed through the Union fleet, disabling the ironclad USS *Carondelet* and inflicting substantial casualties before taking refuge under the fortress's guns. This act of bravado was followed by the withdrawal of the Union ships in late July, conceding that for now Vicksburg could not be overcome.

AFTER

Confederate efforts to reverse Union gains on the Mississippi failed, but Union forces found it difficult to make further progress.

ASSAULT ON BATON ROUGE
In late July, Confederate troops under **John C. Breckinridge** were sent to **retake Baton Rouge** with support from the **ironclad CSS *Arkansas*** and a **river squadron**. Breckinridge attacked on August 5 with some success, but his **naval support never materialized**, as the *Arkansas* suffered engine failure. Exposed to fire from Union gunboats, the Confederates withdrew.

THE BATTLE OF BATON ROUGE

ATTEMPTS TO TAKE VICKSBURG
Through the second half of 1862, efforts by Union **General Grant** to mount a **land assault on Vicksburg** were equally **unsuccessful**. The **Confederate fortress** at Vicksburg was not **conquered** until **July 1863** **58–59 ❯❯**.

Grant Takes Forts Henry and **Donelson**

Ulysses S. Grant first came to prominence through the capture of these two Confederate forts on the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers in February 1862. The loss of the forts was a serious setback for the Confederacy, leading directly to the fall of the Tennessee state capital, Nashville, to the Union.

Bombarding Fort Henry
The ironclads and timberclads of Foote's Western Gunboat Flotilla overcame resistance from the shore batteries at Fort Henry on the Cumberland River by naval bombardment alone.

BEFORE

Based at Cairo, Illinois, Union land and naval forces were well placed to invade Confederate territory along three rivers—the Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland.

AMPHIBIOUS OFFENSIVE
The prelude to river operations was the **building of seven ironclads** **« 56–57**, completed in January 1862, to create the **Western Gunboat Flotilla**. Union General **Henry W. Halleck** still hesitated to take action, but his subordinate **Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant** was **more eager to fight**. Grant, who had made an **amphibious sortie** against **Belmont** on the Mississippi in November 1861, now proposed an **attack on Fort Henry** on the Tennessee.

The decision to attack Fort Henry was made at the end of January 1862. Built the previous year, the fort was poorly sited and unlikely to be able to withstand infantry assault or naval gunfire for very long. The attack was to be a joint operation by two army divisions under General Grant—some 15,000 men—and a flotilla under Commander Andrew H. Foote, comprising four of the new City-class ironclads and three timberclads (with timber, rather than iron, armor). The two commanders were contrasting characters, Grant a down-to-earth man with a reputation for drinking, Foote a high-minded teetotaler. But they formed a harmonious team, good relations aided by Grant's acceptance that reducing the fort would be a matter for the gunboats.

Fall of Fort Henry

Steaming down the Tennessee on February 5, the gunboats and troop transports encountered mines, but these caused no damage. The troops landed several miles from Fort Henry and were still struggling to reach their objective across difficult terrain when, on February 6, Foote opened the naval attack. Most of the Confederates swiftly left for Fort Donelson, 12 miles (19km) away on the Cumberland River. Artillerymen remained with their guns, but after two hours the defenders of the wrecked fort surrendered.

Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston, commander of the Western Military Department, now had to

> "No terms except an **unconditional and immediate surrender** can be accepted."
>
> ULYSSES S. GRANT'S REPLY TO GENERAL BUCKNER'S REQUEST FOR TERMS AT FORT DONELSON, FEBRUARY 16, 1862

decide whether to attempt a defense of Fort Donelson and with what strength. When Fort Henry fell, he withdrew his forces from Kentucky to Nashville, but instead of concentrating all his troops there, he sent 12,000 men to reinforce Fort Donelson. Command of the fort was placed in the hands of John Floyd, a controversial secretary of war in the Buchanan government before the war.

First attacks on Fort Donelson

General Halleck's intention after the fall of Fort Henry was to hold what had been gained. Grant had finally arrived at Fort Henry on February 14 after a difficult march, but set off for Fort Donelson as soon as he could. There he was reinforced by a further 10,000 troops sent by Halleck, giving him clear numerical superiority over the fort's defenders—25,000 Union soldiers faced 16,000 Confederates. The Confederate strongpoint was not a fort in the conventional sense. It was a 15-acre (6-hectare) encampment defended on the river side by batteries of heavy guns dug into the high cliffs and on the landward side by field fortifications that exploited the rugged terrain of wooded slopes and ravines.

The first attempt on the fort was made by Foote's flotilla, but the accurate fire from the high-placed shore batteries, directed downward to crash through the ships' decks, disabled the Union vessels one by one. There followed an attack on the landward side of the fort, led by one of Grant's divisional commanders, John McClernand, but this was also repulsed. Grant faced the uncomfortable prospect of a long siege in harsh winter weather. His men settled down opposite the Confederate trenches in conditions of considerable hardship, some without overcoats or blankets, sleeping on the bare ground in freezing rain and snow.

Grant looking over the battlefield
On horseback, Ulysses Grant surveys the scene at snowy Fort Donelson on February 15, 1862. Some 2,500 Union soldiers and around 1,500 Confederates were killed or wounded in the battle.

James Tuttle
Colonel James Tuttle led the 2nd Iowa Regiment in the final assault on Fort Donelson and planted the Union flag inside the Confederate earthworks.

Attempted breakout

The Confederate commanders, however, had already decided that their position was hopeless. Floyd decided to attempt a breakout that would enable his force to rejoin General Albert S. Johnston at Nashville. The bulk of the defenders, under Brigadier General Gideon Pillow, were concentrated in front of McClernand's division on the Union right, and at dawn on February 15 they attacked with their blood-chilling rebel yell. By chance, Grant had left to consult with Foote some way down river. With no one to coordinate a Union response, McClernand's troops were driven back, taking heavy casualties. The Confederate cavalry, under Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest, distinguished itself in a series of flanking attacks. For the Union side, Brigadier General Lew Wallace (future author of *Ben Hur*) reinforced the flank and held a vital hill line.

The opportunity was there for Pillow to complete the breakout, but, shocked by the condition of his troops, he withdrew back to the trenches. When Grant arrived at the battle, he pointed out to his badly shaken officers that if many of their own troops were demoralized, the Confederates, having fallen back, must be even more so. Grant ordered an assault on the center of the Confederate line, which he reasoned must have been weakened to provide troops for the flank breakout. Colonel James Tuttle's 2nd Iowa Regiment duly penetrated the Confederate defenses, while, on the right, Wallace regained all the ground lost earlier in the day. That night, in a rush to save their own troops, Floyd and Pillow slipped away under cover of darkness. Forrest escaped with 700 troopers by riding through the Union lines. Command devolved to Brigadier General Simon Bolivar Buckner. The next morning, Buckner's request for terms was met by Grant's demand for "immediate surrender." Buckner had no choice but to comply, passing into captivity along with more than 12,000 other Confederate soldiers.

AFTER

The loss of Fort Donelson undermined the Confederate strategic position in the Western theater, leading to the loss of all of Kentucky and most of Tennessee.

CONFEDERATE WITHDRAWALS
With Grant advancing down the Tennessee River and under pressure from Buell's Army of the Ohio, **Albert Johnston abandoned Nashville** on February 23, handing the Tennessee state capital to the Union without a fight. The Confederate stronghold at **Columbus on the Mississippi was abandoned** shortly after. The withdrawn Confederate forces **concentrated at Corinth, Mississippi**. From there a **counter-offensive was mounted** that led to the **Battle of Shiloh at Pittsburg Landing** **60–61 ››**.

UNION VICTORY AT PEA RIDGE
Shortly after Fort Donelson, the Confederacy suffered another defeat in the Western theater. At the **Battle of Pea Ridge**, fought in **northern Arkansas** on March 6–8, 1862, a Confederate army under Major General Earl Van Dorn was **decisively defeated** by a **smaller Union force** commanded by Brigadier General Samuel Curtis.

General Buckner's tunic
A few Confederate generals wore this style of pleated tunic rather than the usual double-breasted frock coat. The wealthy Buckner had been a friend of Grant's before the war and had helped him out of financial difficulties.

The Battle of Shiloh

The battle fought at Pittsburg Landing on April 6–7, 1862—and usually named for the nearby Shiloh Church—was by far the most bloody up to that point in the Civil War, leaving some 20,000 men dead or wounded. The Confederacy came close to a major victory, but instead suffered another crushing reverse.

BEFORE

After taking Fort Donelson, the Union Army of West Tennessee advanced toward Corinth, Mississippi, where the Confederates were planning to strike back.

THE ROAD TO SHILOH

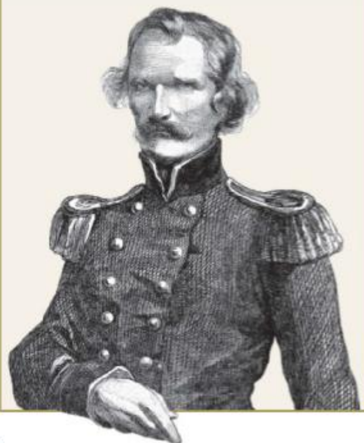
On March 4, 1862, the victor at **Fort Donelson** **« 58–59**, **Ulysses S. Grant**, was relieved of his command by Henry W. Halleck for alleged neglect and inefficiency, but the decision was **reversed** under **pressure from President Lincoln**. By early April, Grant was back in command at Pittsburg Landing on the west bank of the Tennessee. Halleck ordered Don Carlos Buell to march his Army of Ohio to join Grant's six divisions.

Confederate generals **Albert S. Johnston** and **P. G. T. Beauregard** concentrated their forces at Corinth. Reinforced by 15,000 troops under Braxton Bragg, they intended to **attack and destroy Grant before Buell arrived.**

CONFEDERATE GENERAL 1803–62

ALBERT S. JOHNSTON

Born in Kentucky, Johnston fought against Mexico as a general in the Texan Army and the U.S. Army. He was commander of the Pacific Department in California when the Civil War broke out, making a hazardous crossing of the southwest to join the Confederacy. Much admired by President Davis, he was appointed a full general and commander of the Western Department. Although the loss of forts Henry and Donelson had harmed his reputation, his death at Shiloh was still a blow to the Confederate cause.



In the run-up to the battle, Grant was culpably complacent. The Union encampment among creeks and swamps at Pittsburg Landing was not protected by field fortifications, one Union division under Lew Wallace was positioned 5 miles (8km) away from the rest, and Grant's headquarters were even farther away, at Savannah. The march of 42,000 Confederates from Corinth was slow and ill-conducted, but Union commanders failed to detect the threat of an imminent attack. The first of Buell's troops reached Savannah on April 5, but there was no rush to move them to Pittsburg Landing.

Dawn attack

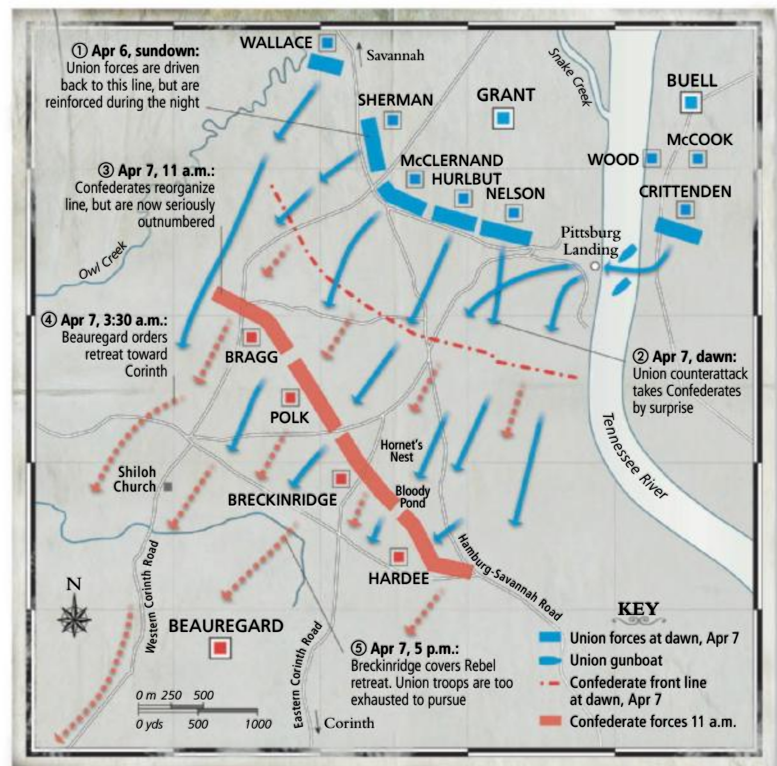
At first light on April 6 the Confederates attacked, achieving almost total surprise. The brunt of the onslaught was borne by two previously unblooded divisions under generals William T. Sherman and Benjamin M. Prentiss. Their hastily improvised response bought the Union forces time and averted a rout. Grant arrived from Savannah by steamboat around 8:30 a.m. and found the position on the 6-mile (10-km) wide battlefield desperate. Many raw troops had fled the battle, cowering along the riverbank. Leaving Sherman in control of the Union defense on the right flank, Grant ordered Prentiss to hold the line in the center in a position that would become known as the Hornet's Nest. By early afternoon the Union left flank was collapsing, some units having sustained in excess of 50 percent casualties. Confederate losses were also high, however. General Johnston was riding forward to urge his exhausted men to press for victory when he was wounded and bled to death. Beauregard took over command.

The Union onslaught

The defense of the Hornet's Nest ended around 5:30 p.m., when 62 Confederate field guns were trained upon the few thousand defenders. By then, Union reinforcements were arriving to help Grant hold a last-ditch line along a ridge overlooking a steep ravine. In gathering twilight, Beauregard soon abandoned an attempt to assault this strong defensive position in the face of a concentrated artillery barrage and fire from river gunboats.

The two exhausted armies endured a night of heavy rain and thunderstorms. Many shaken officers on the Union side felt beaten, but when Grant was asked if he intended to retreat he replied, "No! I propose to attack at daylight and whip them." Buell's and Wallace's fresh troops continued to arrive throughout the night. By the morning of April 7, the Union army had the superiority of numbers to launch a counteroffensive. This time it was Beauregard who was caught by surprise. Rebel troops fell back in disarray as Union forces advanced across the previous day's corpse-strewn battlefield. After hard fighting in the early afternoon, Beauregard, fearing a rout, ordered a general retreat.

Grant did not attempt a pursuit, but on the next day he sent Sherman on a reconnaissance mission to see whether the Confederates were regrouping for another attack. This led to a clash with Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest's cavalry at Fallen Timbers, in which Forrest was seriously wounded. This skirmish marked the end of the fighting.



The second day of the battle
After the first day, many Confederate troops moved back from the front line to sleep. The next morning, the Union onslaught caught them unawares, driving them back over the ground they had won the previous day.

AFTER

In the Battle of Shiloh, the Union army lost over 13,000 men—casualties and prisoners—while the Confederates had fewer than 11,000 losses. It took time for the reality of the Confederate defeat to be acknowledged.

AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE

Ulysses S. Grant came under severe **criticism in the Northern press**, with reports exaggerating the unpreparedness of Union troops. It was even **rumored that he had been drunk**. Lincoln continued to support him, however, stating, **"I can't spare this man, he fights."**

After the battle, Halleck, relegating Grant to second in command, led a cautious **advance on Corinth**. Rather than face a siege, Beauregard withdrew south to Tupelo, Mississippi, in late May. For this, **he was fired by President Davis**, who **appointed Bragg** in his place.

The Union fleet engaged in a series of actions on the Mississippi . On June 6, they took Memphis, where Grant, restored four days later as **commander of the Federal Army of the Tennessee**, made his headquarters.

Infantry clash
Confederate troops encounter fire from a close-packed Union infantry line during the Battle of Shiloh. In the absence of prepared defenses, the only cover was provided by trees and other natural features.

Jackson in the **Shenandoah Valley**

The Confederates' Shenandoah Valley Campaign was a diversionary operation that kept large bodies of Union troops occupied and unable to support McClellan's attack on Richmond. Taking enormous risks, General Jackson won victories through rapid movement, surprise, and the incompetence of his opponents.

BEFORE

By spring 1862, Confederate survival was threatened by a series of military setbacks. Jackson's campaign in the Shenandoah Valley looked set to be another.

POOR RELATIONS
General Stonewall Jackson was placed in command of the **Confederate Department of Northern Virginia** in October 1861, with responsibility for the defense of the 150-mile (240-km) long Shenandoah Valley. The following winter his insistence on campaigning in harsh weather **brought his troops close to mutiny**. Some of his officers complained to politicians and it was with some difficulty that he was **dissuaded from resigning**.

UNION VICTORIES
The Confederacy's **setbacks in the Western Theater** in the first months of 1862 included the **losses of New Orleans** **« 54–55** **and of forts Henry and Donelson** **« 58–59**. In Virginia, by May, Union General George B. McClellan's **Army of the Potomac** had landed on **the Virginia Peninsula** and had advanced to within **a few miles of Richmond** **64–65 »**.

Union forces made the first move in the campaign in March 1862. Their aim was to eliminate any offensive threat from General Jackson's small army in the Valley, thereby allowing Union troops to be switched from the defense of Washington to the attack on Richmond. Major General Nathaniel Banks led an army across the Potomac River, forcing Jackson, who was heavily outnumbered, to withdraw south from his base at Winchester.

Pursuing the Confederates for some 50 miles (80km), a Union division under Brigadier General James Shields lost contact and assumed Jackson had withdrawn. But as Shields returned toward Winchester, Jackson pursued him and counterattacked. Wounded, Shields ceded command to Colonel Nathan Kimball, who defeated the Confederates at Kernstown on March 23. Jackson retreated, having lost around a third of his force, yet the strategic effect of the battle was everything the Confederates could have desired. Startled by Jackson's aggression, Union commanders redoubled their efforts to crush him. As long as Jackson kept campaigning, Union troops would not be transferred from Washington to Richmond.

35,000 **The number of Union troops in the Valley in March 1862**

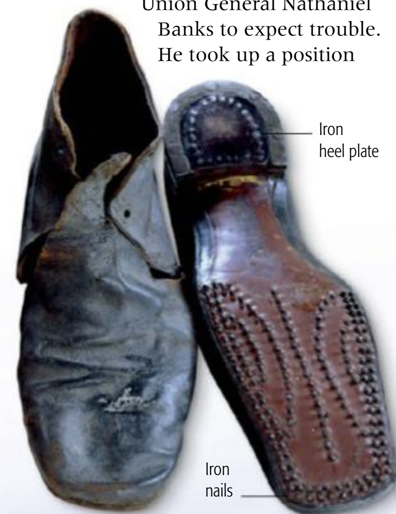
5,000 **The number of Confederate troops in the Valley in March 1862**

Jackson's success in the subsequent campaign would depend on two factors: speed of movement, achieved by driving his marching men so hard they became known as the "foot cavalry;" and superior intelligence. The latter derived both from cooperation on the part of the local population, who gave Jackson information about enemy movements, and from the work of staff cartographer Jedediah Hotchkiss, who made accurate maps of the Valley.

Confederate numbers bolstered

Backed by Robert E. Lee, then President Davis's military adviser, Jackson was reinforced by the dispatch of a division under Major General Richard S. Ewell. Jackson and Ewell proved effective partners, both thoroughly eccentric men but fierce fighting generals.

By mid-April, Jackson was on the move again. He utterly confused his enemy by crossing the Blue Ridge Mountains toward Richmond, only to return by train to Staunton at the southern end of the Valley. He then struck westward, where a Union army under Major General John C. Frémont was trying to push through the mountains of western Virginia into east Tennessee. Jackson's men defeated Frémont's advanced guard at the hamlet of McDowell on May 8, which alerted Union General Nathaniel Banks to expect trouble. He took up a position



Infantryman's boots
Hobnail boots were standard issue footwear for infantrymen. Known as brogans (from the Irish brogue) or Jefferson bootees, the nails gave the leather soles a better grip in the field.

KEY MOMENT

THE BATTLE OF WINCHESTER

On May 25, 1862, Jackson's 16,000 Confederates advanced on Winchester in hot pursuit of Banks's 7,000 retreating Union soldiers. Although exhausted by marches and firefights, the Confederate troops maintained their momentum, preventing Banks from consolidating a defensive line. Jackson's forces attacked the Union right, while Ewell's small force put pressure on their left. After serious fighting, in which General Richard Taylor's Louisiana Brigade played a key role, the Union troops withdrew through the town and on to the Potomac River. Jackson's weary men failed to mount a vigorous pursuit, but they had taken Winchester.

The Shenandoah Valley
The Valley was important to Confederate armies as it offered a strategic route to attack Washington, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. It also became an important source of food for the Confederacy.

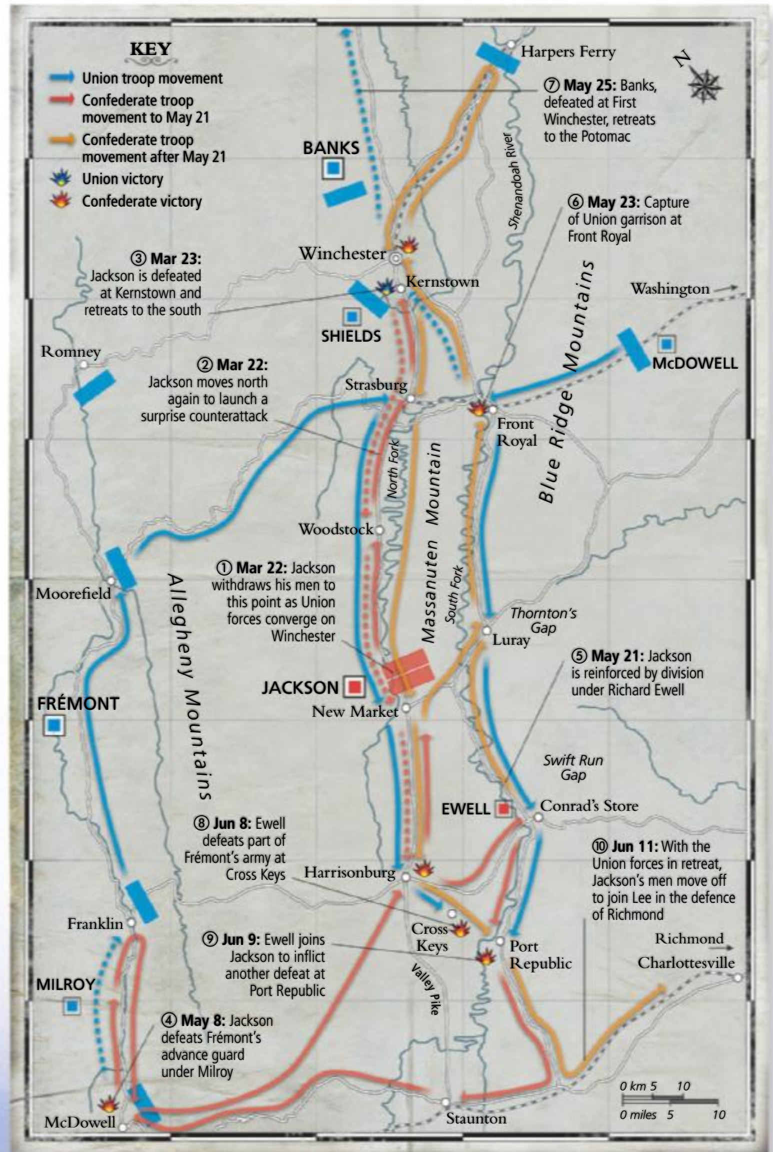
March to Cross Keys
Artist Edwin Forbes accompanied Union troops advancing to Cross Keys in June 1862. This sketch shows Frémont's troops pursuing Jackson through the woods.

across the main road at Strasburg, but Jackson and Ewell marched hard and fast around his flank. They defeated a small Union force at Front Royal on May 22 and threatened to cut Banks's line of communication. As his column raced to withdraw from Strasburg to Winchester, the Confederates attacked. With an extraordinary effort, Jackson's and Ewell's exhausted troops continued the fight until Winchester was taken.

Union forces diverted

President Lincoln was pushed into the aggressive response that Confederate strategy had desired. He diverted a corps under Brigadier General Irvin McDowell, previously bound for Richmond, into the Valley to join with Frémont and Banks in an operation to trap and destroy Jackson's army. Together they would have 60,000 men to Jackson's 17,000. Alert to the danger, Jackson drove his men by a series of forced marches from the environs of Harpers Ferry back through Strasburg—just before a Union pincer movement would have cut the road—to the only surviving bridge across the South Fork of the Shenandoah River at Port Republic. The Confederates had marched 140 miles (225km) in a week, losing hundreds of stragglers along the way. Now Jackson and Ewell turned their forces to face their pursuers.

Two Union columns, led respectively by Frémont and Shields, advanced on Port Republic. They were separated by the river, the Confederates controlling the only bridge. Ewell's division met Frémont's troops at Cross Keys on June 8 and repelled them, despite a Union numerical advantage of almost two to one. The following day two brigades of Shields's division reached Port Royal and narrowly failed to seize the bridge—almost capturing Jackson as well. Jackson's troops fought back, forcing the Union forces to quit the field after heavy losses on both sides. As neither Frémont nor Shields chose to renew the fighting, the Shenandoah Valley Campaign came to an end.



The Shenandoah Valley Campaign
The feats of marching achieved by Jackson's forces were prodigious. In seven weeks, they marched some 650 miles (1,050km), won several small battles, and, most importantly, kept Union troops that were needed for the Peninsula Campaign occupied in the Valley.

AFTER

Occurring against a backdrop of Confederate defeats elsewhere, Jackson's victories in the Shenandoah Valley were a major morale-booster for the Confederacy.

JACKSON IN DEMAND
In June 1862, under the command of Robert E. Lee, Jackson moved out of the Valley to lead **a surprise attack** on the right flank of the Union army in front of Richmond, in what would become the **Seven Days Battles** **66–67 ❯❯**.

REVERSAL OF FORTUNES
The Shenandoah Valley was the scene of heavy fighting in **two further campaigns in 1864** **128–129 ❯❯**. In the second, Union General Philip Sheridan used **scorched earth tactics** to render the Valley useless to the Confederates.

BEFORE

The armies confronting one another in Virginia at the start of 1862 were both commanded by generals who were regarded as too negative-minded by their presidents.

SOUTHERN ANTAGONISM

In March 1862, Confederate general **Joseph E. Johnston** withdrew his army from **Bull Run** « 36–37. This retreat, together with the destruction of many supplies, was initially carried out **without informing President Davis**. Johnston's obstinacy angered Davis, and on March 13, **General Lee assumed the role as his military adviser**.

22 **The number of pages in a letter sent by General McClellan to President Lincoln, rejecting the president's proposal for an overland offensive against Richmond in 1862.**

McCLELLAN'S DETERMINATION

Lincoln repeatedly urged an **offensive to break through** the Confederate line between Washington and Richmond. General **George B. McClellan**, commanding the Army of the Potomac, instituted his own plan to **outflank the Confederate defenses** and take Richmond.

The Peninsula Campaign

In the hands of an aggressive Union commander, a seaborne landing on the Virginia Peninsula might have been a bold and imaginative way to attack the Confederate capital, Richmond. But a hesitant, over-cautious execution made General George B. McClellan's Peninsula Campaign slow and unsuccessful.

Army of the Potomac

McClellan established a vast camp for his 120,000-strong army on the banks of the Pamunkey River near Richmond in May 1862. This panoramic view by James Hope shows McClellan riding in the foreground.

The Virginia Peninsula is a tongue of land stretching east from Richmond, between the York River to the north and the James River to the south. Eager to exploit Union command of the sea, General McClellan originally planned to transport his troops from Washington along the Potomac River into Chesapeake Bay for a landing at Urbanna on the Rappahannock River. Having bypassed the Confederate army at Manassas, south of Washington, he would then have a relatively clear run at the Confederate capital. Yet Southern General Joseph Johnston's retreat south of the Rappahannock in March 1862 forestalled him. Instead, the Union Army of the Potomac landed at Fort Monroe on the tip of the Virginia Peninsula. By April 4, McClellan had almost 60,000 troops with which to begin an advance up the Peninsula to Richmond, and thousands more were arriving. In front was a Confederate line on the Warwick River at Yorktown, lightly manned by 14,000 troops. In Washington, Lincoln, afraid that McClellan's move had left the capital exposed to a surprise attack, urged the general to make haste with an immediate assault on the Warwick River defenses, but McClellan dismissed this as military naïveté. Johnston later commented: "No one but McClellan would have hesitated to attack."

Artillery at Yorktown

The battle for Yorktown in April–May 1862 was largely an artillery duel. McClellan was confident his guns were superior to those of the enemy and was hesitant to attack Confederate fortifications without prior reconnaissance.

Johnston's reverse

Consistently overestimating Southern strength, McClellan was obsessed by the notion that his forces were insufficient. Lincoln's later decision to hold back troops to defend Washington and counteract Jackson's campaign in the Shenandoah Valley only fed McClellan's belief that he was being starved of resources. On the other side of the line, Confederate General Johnston was equally—but more rationally—convinced of the weakness of his army. In mid-April, Johnston took command at Yorktown, and planned to abandon the Peninsula and concentrate his forces in front of Richmond. On May 3, the Confederates abandoned Yorktown and the Warwick River defenses. Breaking contact with the enemy in a deftly executed maneuver, Johnston's troops, now numbering some 50,000, fell back toward Richmond. A part of the army was designated to fight a holding action on a defensive line at Williamsburg, and on May 5 this inflicted a reverse on pursuing Union troops. The fiercely fought encounter was almost as costly for both sides as the First Battle of Bull Run, despite the engagement of far smaller forces.

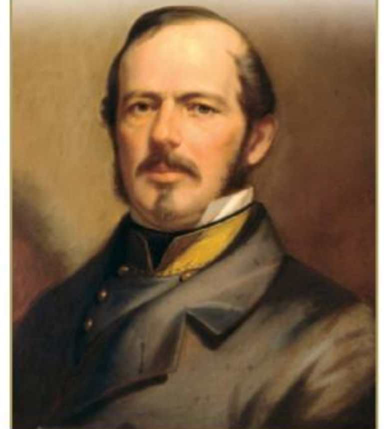
Cautious approach

McClellan advanced up the Peninsula at a snail's pace along muddy roads. His army took two weeks to march 50 miles (80km) from Williamsburg, before setting up camp near Richmond between the Pamunkey and Chickahominy rivers. McClellan called for reinforcements. Lincoln refused to send any by sea, but he did order a 40,000-strong corps under Irvin McDowell to advance overland from Fredericksburg to join the Army of the Potomac. Much to McClellan's anger, this move was canceled in response to Jackson's victory at Winchester in the

CONFEDERATE GENERAL 1807–91

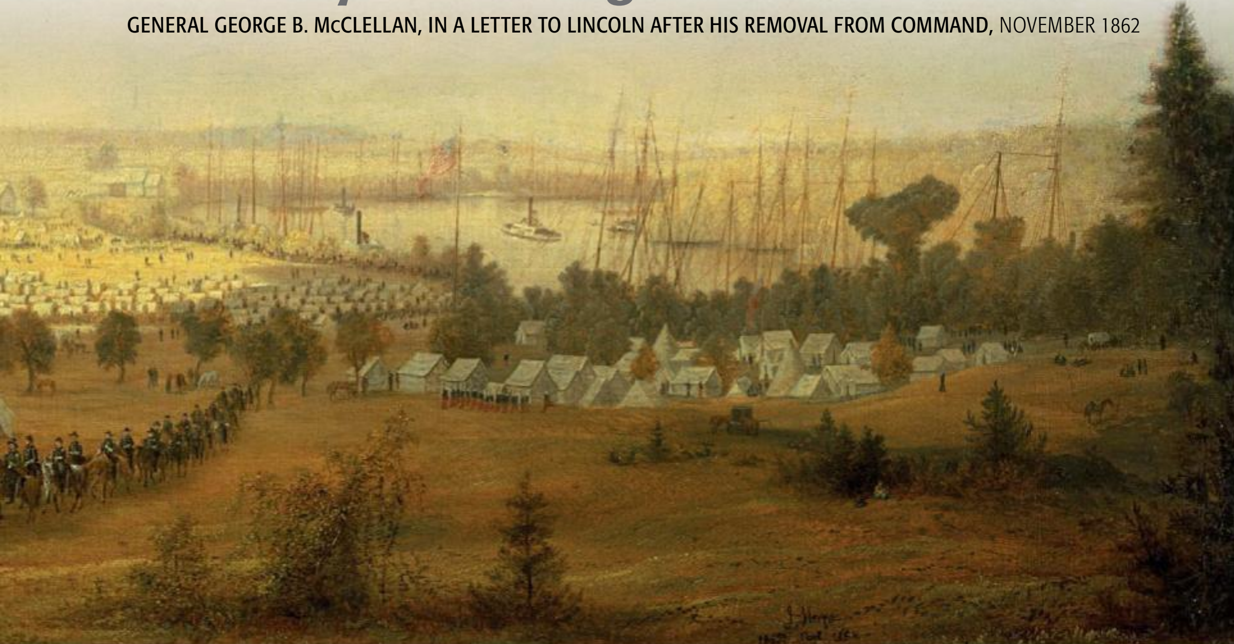
JOSEPH E. JOHNSTON

Virginian Joseph Eggleston Johnston was quartermaster general of the U.S. Army in April 1861 when he resigned to serve the Confederacy. Although made a full general by Davis, he developed a lasting feud with the Confederate president. When he was wounded at Seven Pines in May 1862, Davis replaced him with Robert E. Lee. After his recovery, Johnston held a series of commands in the Western Theater. His cautious attitude repeatedly enraged Davis, but his skill in conducting a retreat demanded respect. Surviving the war, he was elected for a term in Congress in 1878.



“You may find **those who will go faster than I**, Mr. President; but it is **very doubtful** if you will find **many who will go further**.”

GENERAL GEORGE B. McCLELLAN, IN A LETTER TO LINCOLN AFTER HIS REMOVAL FROM COMMAND, NOVEMBER 1862



AFTER

After the wounding of General Johnston at Seven Pines on May 31, General Lee was given command of forces that he renamed as the Army of Northern Virginia.

LEE’S STRATEGY

Despite heavy casualties on both sides—more than 4,000 Union and 5,500 Confederate troops killed or wounded—**Seven Pines** was an **indecisive battle** that left the **Army of the Potomac** in a position **threatening Richmond**. Lee’s first action on taking command was to **reinforce the earthwork fortifications** around the city—and many expected him to adopt a defensive stance. Instead, Lee ordered General **Stonewall Jackson’s army** to join him from the **Shenandoah Valley** « 62–63 and began planning an attack on the Union right flank, which would initiate the **Seven Days Battles** 66–67 ».

McCLELLAN DISCONCERTED

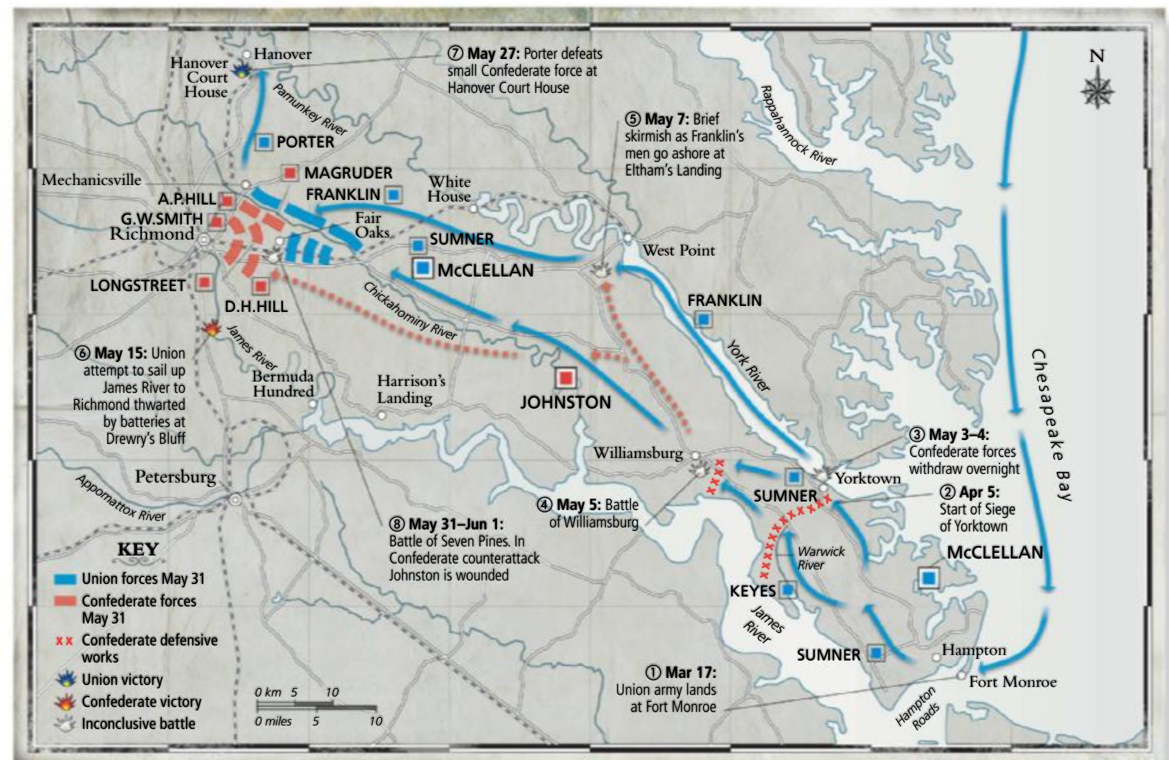
Struck down by malaria, McClellan had been out of action during the battle. Despite **claiming a victory**, he was **demoralized by the heavy casualties** his army had sustained, finding many reasons to **postpone his offensive** against Richmond. He was convinced, contrary to reality, that he faced “overwhelming numbers.”

Shenandoah Valley on May 25. The Confederates, meanwhile, viewed their situation with alarm, and the people of Richmond were thrown into a state of panic by the approach of a Union naval squadron, including two ironclads, up the James River on which the city stands.

Fight for the capital

Plans were made by the Confederates to abandon Richmond, but on May 15, a combination of shore batteries and underwater obstacles blocked the passage of the Union squadron at Drewry’s Bluff. Despite this reprieve, Richmond’s defenses could not be expected to hold out under prolonged bombardment by Union siege guns, which were now being brought up to the front. Offensive action was required to drive back McClellan’s army.

Union engineers had bridged the Chickahominy, and two corps, made up of about a third of McClellan’s 100,000 troops, had crossed the river. Johnston planned to isolate and overwhelm these corps while the rest of the Union army stayed north of the river. It was not a bad plan for an army with inferior numbers taking on a stronger enemy, for in principle the Confederates would gain local superiority. Heavy rain on the eve of the battle—known as Fair Oaks or Seven Pines—made the river a raging torrent. But the execution of the Southern attack on the morning of May 31 was chaotic. Confused and contradictory orders meant that units blocked one another in their advance. Union soldiers were driven back, but late in the afternoon reinforcements began to arrive from the other side of the swollen river across the rickety Grapevine Bridge. Going forward to watch the fighting, Johnston was seriously wounded and carried from the field, his command devolving briefly to Gustavus Smith. The next day, the battle resumed but, with Smith almost paralyzed with anxiety, the Confederates could make no further impact.



From the Union landings to Seven Pines
McClellan was held up for a month at Yorktown, then made slow progress as Johnston withdrew toward Richmond. Johnston was wounded at Seven Pines, after which Lee took command of the Confederate forces.

Malvern Hill
Frontal assaults on Malvern Hill, a position defended by powerful Union artillery, cost the Confederates dearly. General D. H. Hill later said of the battle: "It was not war—it was murder."

The Seven Days Battles

Between June 25 and July 1, 1862, Robert E. Lee led the Army of Northern Virginia in a seven-day offensive that drove the Army of the Potomac back from the gates of Richmond. Although costly and clumsily executed, the battles constituted a major strategic victory for the Confederacy.

BEFORE

In the spring of 1862, the Peninsula Campaign brought the Union Army of the Potomac to within striking distance of the Confederate capital, Richmond.

STUART'S RIDE
Appointed commander of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia in June, Lee suspected that the **Union right flank was open to attack** and ordered cavalry commander, **Jeb Stuart**, to carry out reconnaissance. Between June 12–16, Stuart rode with 1,200 men in a **100-mile (160-km) circuit** around the Union Army, returning with the news that the flank was indeed unprotected **north of the Chickahominy River**.

LEE SUMMONS JACKSON
Lee ordered General **"Stonewall" Jackson** to move toward Richmond from the **Shenandoah Valley**, where his army was resting after a **highly successful but exhausting campaign** **« 62–63**. Jackson arrived just in time to participate in Lee's offensive.

Lee's offensive began with a scare. With around 54,000 of his men committed to the attack, he had left minimal forces in the defensive lines in front of Richmond, counting on the cautious general, George McClellan, not to launch an assault. But on June 25, the day before the Confederate advance was scheduled to begin, Union forces probed the defenses at Oak Grove. To Lee's relief this turned out to be just a minor operation, although the skirmish it provoked has since been regarded as the first of the Seven Days Battles.

The Confederate offensive began on June 26, but neither on time nor as planned. Lee intended for the fighting to start in the morning, with General Jackson attacking the exposed corps on the Union right from the rear. Generals A. P. Hill, D. H. Hill, and James Longstreet would join in after Jackson. Inexplicably, however, Jackson did nothing, and in late afternoon, tired of waiting for him to make a move, A. P. Hill mounted an assault of his own against entrenched Northern troops at Beaver Dam Creek. The Confederates were repulsed with heavy casualties.

Private Edwin Francis Jemison
At only 17 years of age, Confederate Private Jemison was killed by cannon fire while serving with the 2nd Louisiana Infantry in the assault on Malvern Hill. His portrait is a poignant memento of the war.

"The **soul of the brave general** was fit to burst for the **awful and useless sacrifice**."

CAPTAIN MOXLEY SORREL OF MAJOR GENERAL RICHARD EWELL AFTER MALVERN HILL

McClellan's response to having won this tactical victory was to order his men to withdraw from the positions they had so determinedly held, to higher ground behind a swamp. Still convinced he would be assaulted by large numbers of Confederates, he also set about shifting his supply base to the James River. Lee, however, was determined to continue his offensive.

Lee's victory at Gaines' Mill

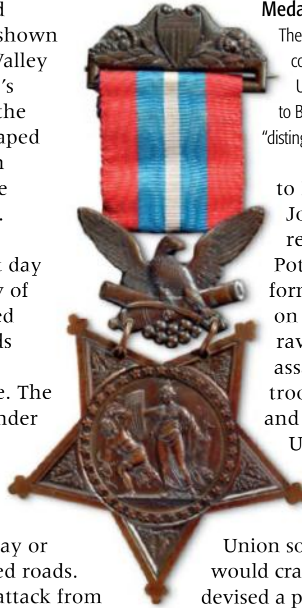
Pursuing the retreating enemy the next day, Lee came up against the Union army's new defensive line at Gaines' Mill. Once again, coordination between Lee's subordinates failed and A. P. Hill's division took heavy casualties, fighting alone for much of the afternoon. Late in the day Brigadier General John Bell Hood's tough Texan brigade pierced the Union center with a charge in which every officer but Hood himself was killed or wounded. The Union forces withdrew, leaving the Confederates victorious but at a heavy cost, losing around 9,000 men. While this brutal contest took place on its right flank, the majority of the Union army remained inactive, more than 60,000 men being kept out of the fight.

5,400 **The number of Southern casualties at the Battle of Malvern Hill on July 1, 1862. In total, the Confederacy lost 20,204 soldiers in the Seven Days Battles, compared with 15,855 losses for the Union Army.**

McClellan's rage

After Gaines' Mill, McClellan lost his nerve. Despite his superior forces, he retreated toward Harrison's Landing on the James River, convinced that he was saving his army from imminent destruction and firing off angry telegrams to Washington blaming the government for the debacle.

Lee pursued his adversary ruthlessly, seeking to land a decisive blow, but repeatedly failed. His ambitious orders for coordinated maneuvers to outflank and trap Union forces proved beyond the capacity of his subordinates. Jackson was unusually sluggish, singularly failing to master the speed and decisiveness he had shown in the Shenandoah Valley campaign. At Savage's Station on June 29, the Union rearguard escaped ruin because Jackson was slow crossing the Chickahominy River. Yet Lee saw a prime opportunity the next day as much of the Army of the Potomac struggled along congested roads between White Oak Swamp and Glendale. The Confederate commander was determined to bring all his forces to bear in a climactic battle, but divisions lost their way or were stuck on blocked roads. Jackson, ordered to attack from the north across White Oak Swamp, failed to join in, even when fighting broke out within earshot of his position. Only two divisions, under Longstreet and A. P. Hill, attacked the Yankees, who put up stiff resistance despite failing to form a proper defensive line. Casualties on both sides were heavy and the result indecisive.



Medal of Honor

The award of the Medal of Honor for conspicuous bravery was instituted for the Union Army in 1862. This one was awarded to Brigadier General Daniel Butterfield for his "distinguished gallantry" at Gaines' Mill.

Bloodshed at Malvern Hill

Meanwhile, McClellan withdrew to the safety of the ironclad USS *Galena* off shore, leaving effective command to Brigadier General Fitz John Porter. Most of the retreating Army of the Potomac concentrated in a formidable defensive position on Malvern Hill. Flanked by ravines, it could only be assaulted from the front by troops advancing up a slope and across an open plain. The Union artillery unlimbered its cannons and waited for the enemy to show.

Lee guessed that the Union soldiers were demoralized and would crack if put under pressure. He devised a plan for his artillery to open holes in the Union line for his infantry to exploit. But everything went wrong. The Confederate guns could not be moved forward in sufficient strength and faired poorly in the artillery duel. Next, Lee's infantry assaults began piecemeal as men stormed forward singly and were shot down by shrapnel, canister, and grapeshot. Those few units that reached the Union lines were driven back by counterattacks. The following day, McClellan again ordered a Union withdrawal, but Lee did not pursue and the fighting ended.

Union casualties

The Battle of Gaines' Mill on June 27 saw thousands of Union casualties. Many of the wounded were transferred by flatbed rail cars to a Northern field hospital at Savage's Station. When the Confederates attacked the site on June 29 the hospital was abandoned and the patients captured.

AFTER

The Seven Days Battles drove the Union army back 20 miles (32km), lifting the threat to Richmond and ensuring that McClellan's campaign ended in failure.

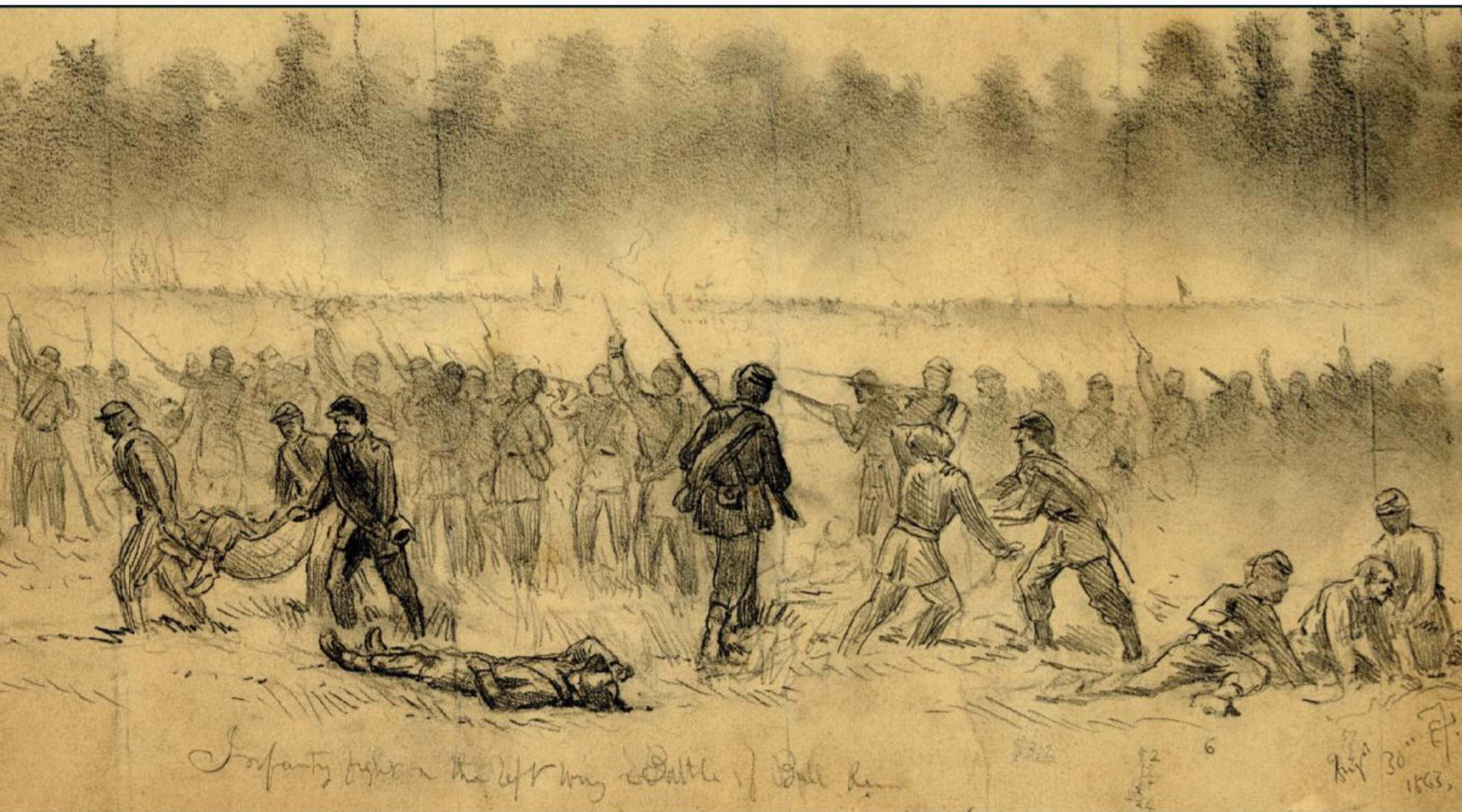
CONFEDERATE STRATEGY

Lee had not demonstrated masterly generalship in the Seven Days Battles. He admitted: "Our success has not been as great or as complete as we should have desired." But he had set up a **moral supremacy** over the Union army, aiming to **keep up the initiative**. As soon as his own army had recovered, he marched it north of Richmond.

Lee counted on **McClellan remaining inactive**, which he did. The Army of the Potomac dug in defensively at **Harrison's Landing** under the **protection of naval guns**. While continuing to demand reinforcements, McClellan did not **resume the offensive**. In August he reluctantly obeyed orders to **ship the Army of the Potomac back to Washington** to assist in the **fighting in northern Virginia** **68–69 »**.

9 MILES **The closest McClellan's Army of the Potomac came to Richmond during the Peninsula Campaign.**

HARRISON'S LANDING



Troops at Bull Run
Edwin Forbes's sketch shows the right wing of the Confederate army under Longstreet advancing through gunpowder smoke on General McDowell's corps. Forbes was the artist-correspondent for Frank Leslie's magazines.

The **Second Battle of Bull Run**

The campaigns of summer 1862 had seen the Army of Northern Virginia achieve supremacy over Union forces that seemed incapable of finding commanders to match Lee and Jackson. If a second clash near Manassas Junction brought the Confederates victory, they could threaten Washington again.

« BEFORE

After the defeat of General McClellan's Army of the Potomac in the Seven Days Battles, President Lincoln launched a new Union offensive in northern Virginia.

THE UNION ARMY OF VIRGINIA

While the **Seven Days Battles** « 66–67 were being fought in late June 1862, a **Union Army of Virginia** was formed. General John Pope, a commander with a **reputation for aggression**, was recalled from the Western Theater to **lead the new force** southward from Washington. In late July, McClellan was ordered to bring his army back from the Peninsula to **defend Washington** and reinforce Pope's army.

CONFEDERATE ACTIVITY

Confederate General Robert E. Lee rested and reorganized his **Army of Northern Virginia**, dividing it into two corps under **Stonewall Jackson** and **James Longstreet**.
Lee warily watched McClellan's army, camped **within striking distance** of Richmond, but dispatched Jackson to disrupt Pope's invasion of northern Virginia. On seeing that McClellan was to remain inactive, Lee contemplated **an offensive of his own**.

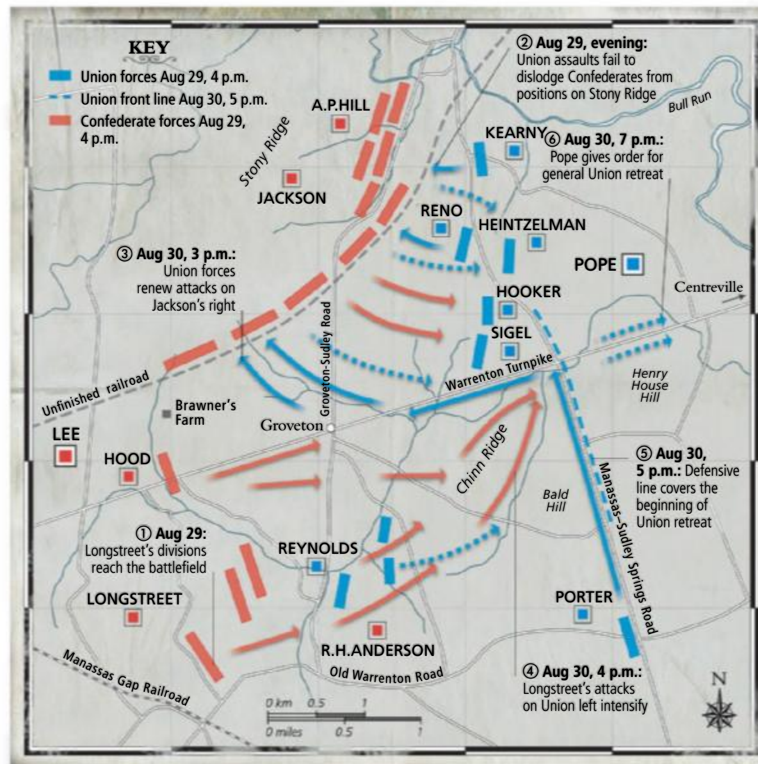
The campaign opened in mid-July 1862, with General Stonewall Jackson's advance to the railroad junction at Gordonsville, northwest of Richmond, which was threatened by the advance of General John Pope's Union Army of Virginia. Reinforced by a division under General A. P. Hill, Jackson set out to strike the center of the Union army, hoping to gain the upper hand by rapid maneuver.

Lee's audacious offensive

On August 9, Jackson's troops encountered Union forces under Major General Nathaniel Banks in a strong defensive position on a ridge near Cedar Mountain. The battle began with much of the Confederate column still marching well to the rear. A Union counterattack put some of Jackson's army to flight, but he rallied his troops in person and, aided by Hill's division, the Confederates carried the day. The blow was far from decisive, however, and the approach of stronger Union forces saw Jackson withdraw back to Gordonsville.

By mid-August, Lee had correctly assessed the strategic situation. Despite General George McClellan's reluctance to support his rival, General Pope, the Army of the Potomac was being withdrawn from the Peninsula to support the Union offensive in northern Virginia. The Confederates had a brief opportunity to seize the initiative before these reinforcements arrived. Leaving only a small force in front of Richmond, Lee moved most of his Army of Northern Virginia and joined Jackson at Gordonsville. After Pope's army fell back across the Rappahannock River, the Confederates embarked on a bold offensive. Facing a superior enemy—the Confederates were outnumbered by about 55,000 to 75,000—Lee divided his forces, gambling that Pope would not attack. On August 25, Jackson led his 24,000-strong corps on a march to the northwest and crossed the Rappahannock, swinging around the right flank of Pope's army. He then headed east through Thoroughfare Gap in the Bull Run Mountains, following the line of the railroad toward Manassas. His men marched 50 miles (80km) in two days. They captured Bristoe Station, wrecking trains and tearing up tracks, and then descended upon Manassas Junction, the main supply base for the Army of Virginia.

16,000 **The estimated Union casualties in five days' fighting from August 27 to September 1, 1862—almost double the number of casualties suffered by the Confederates.**



Jackson's defiance and Longstreet's attack
On the afternoon of August 29, Jackson held his defensive position on Stony Ridge against all the attacks the Union launched. The following day, the battle was turned by Longstreet's belated assault on the Union left.

The Confederates feasted on bacon and canned lobster, while Jackson resupplied his army with Union horses, artillery, and ammunition.

Seizing the advantage

Pope was startled to find the Confederates behind his front line, but their position was precarious, and he saw a chance for victory. With the Army of the Potomac arriving, Pope hoped to trap and annihilate Jackson's forces.

On August 27, Jackson withdrew from Manassas Junction, taking up a defensive position on a ridge at Groveton, near the 1861 Bull Run battlefield. If discovered, he knew he could not expect to hold out for long against Pope's reinforced army. Confederate support was arriving in the form of Longstreet's corps, with Lee in attendance, but Jackson was still alone when the fighting started in earnest.

Pope's scouts failed to locate Jackson's position. In the afternoon of August 28, a Union column marched unawares along the Warrenton Turnpike into sight of the Confederate guns on the ridge. Jackson could not resist the chance of a flank attack and opened fire. Soon the opposing infantry were engaged at close quarters around Brawner's Farm. Union Brigadier General John Gibbon's Black Hat Brigade distinguished itself in a fight that cost some regiments 70 percent in casualties. After nightfall the Union troops withdrew.

The next day, August 29, Pope raced to bring the weight of his army to bear on Jackson, assuming that the Confederate general intended to slip away, which he did not. As a result, Union columns were thrown piecemeal against Confederate defenders, who fiercely counterattacked. The most desperate fighting pitted Union Major General Philip Kearny's division against A. P. Hill, defending the railway cut on the Confederate left. Kearny came close to victory, but counterattacks drove the Union troops back.

> **"**The **men were brought down** from the field … till **they covered acres."**
>
> CLARA BARTON, WHO CARED FOR THE WOUNDED AFTER SECOND BULL RUN

Perhaps the day's most striking aspect, however, was the number of soldiers who did not fight. On the Union side, two corps under Pope's command failed to engage because of confused orders; and McClellan held back reserves of the Army of the Potomac. Longstreet's corps reached Jackson's right flank in the morning but, when ordered by Lee to join the battle, Longstreet demurred, and Lee did not insist.

Repeat battlefield
Henry House Hill was the scene of fighting both at the First and Second Battles of Bull Run. It is now part of the Manassas National Battlefield Park.

On the morning of August 30, the Union assaults resumed with redoubled fury. Pope believed he was attacking nearly defeated Rebel units. But Longstreet was ready to intervene. He had placed his artillery in a commanding position on the right flank and raked advancing Union troops with deadly fire. When the momentum of the enemy attacks faltered, Longstreet unleashed his five divisions upon Pope's army.

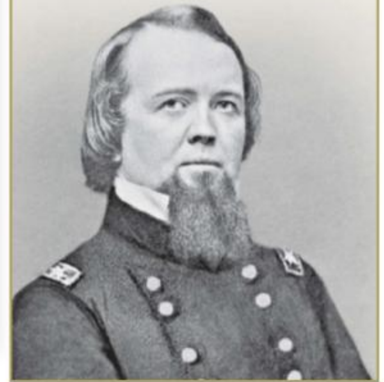
The final encounter

It seemed that Pope would be utterly routed, but as his men fell back in disarray, the general succeeded in organizing a defense that checked the Confederate surge and allowed an orderly withdrawal to Centreville after nightfall. The next day, Jackson was dispatched on another flanking march in an attempt to cut Pope off from Washington, but the Confederates were weary. After fighting the Union rearguard in a thunderstorm at Chantilly—an engagement in which Kearny was killed—the Confederates called off the pursuit. Pope's army was saved, although the battle had been lost.

UNION MAJOR GENERAL (1822–92)

JOHN POPE

Born in Kentucky, John Pope made a career in the Corps of Engineers. In the Civil War, he commanded an Illinois brigade before leading the Army of Mississippi to victory at New Madrid in spring 1862. Transferred to the Army of Virginia he offended his new troops by comparing them unfavorably to Union soldiers in the West. He was not missed when sent to fight the Sioux after defeat at Second Bull Run. Pope served with distinction in the postwar army.



AFTER

In the aftermath of his defeat at Second Bull Run, Pope retreated to the outer defenses of Washington. Recriminations began immediately as a scapegoat was sought.

McCLELLAN'S OBSTRUCTION
President Lincoln believed that **McClellan was the most culpable**: having wanted Pope to fail, McClellan had **intentionally delayed his troops** from coming to his rival's aid.

POPE'S ILL FORTUNE
Lincoln also reluctantly accepted that McClellan was the best man to take over the **defense of Washington** when morale was at its lowest. While Pope was **relegated to fighting Indians** in Minnesota, McClellan was allowed to integrate the Army of Virginia into his Army of the Potomac. His appointment was greeted with **relief and enthusiasm** by soldiers and civilians alike.

McCLELLAN PASSING THROUGH FREDERICK CITY

Lee Invades Maryland

The Confederate invasion of Maryland in September 1862 was a gamble based on a false estimate that the Union Army was unorganized and vulnerable. Desperate to strike an offensive blow against the North, Lee exposed his Army of Northern Virginia to potential disaster.

Lee astride Traveler
General Lee was deeply attached to his gray stallion Traveler, his mount from the fall of 1861. However, for much of the campaign in Maryland, Lee could not ride because he had broken a bone in his hand.

BEFORE

Success at the Second Battle of Bull Run « 68–69 left Confederate general Robert E. Lee facing an important decision: how to follow up his victory.

DRIVING FORWARD

The Union troops defeated by Lee had retreated into the defenses of Washington, D.C. Now Lee **chose to invade the North**. On every front, the Confederates were poised for action. In Arkansas, General Thomas Hindman was preparing to retake Missouri. In Mississippi, Earl van Dorn and Sterling Price were gathering forces for a possible offensive against Ulysses S. Grant's Army of the Tennessee. On September 3, 1862, just three days after Second Bull Run, Lee wrote to President Jefferson Davis: "The present seems to be the **most propitious time . . . for the Confederate Army to enter Maryland**."

Advanced units of General Robert E. Lee's army began fording the Potomac River on September 4. He was acutely aware that the physical state of his force was poor: "It lacks much of the material of war," he wrote to President Davis, "is feeble in transportation, the animals being much reduced, and the men are poorly provided with clothes and in thousands of instances are destitute of shoes." Lee believed that the Union forces around Washington were also "in a very demoralized and chaotic condition" after Second Bull Run, and that the cautious General George McClellan now commanding them would stay in his defensive positions for at least four weeks. Lee's presence in Maryland might tip opinion in the North against continuing the war; at the very least, it would keep the Union armies on the defensive. But if Lee thought the Union Army was dispirited, he also had concerns about his own.

Union signal officers
The Union Signal Corps played a vital role in tracking the enemy during the invasion. They collected intelligence, surveyed the battlefield, and sent messages.

A shrinking force

Many of the Confederate troops were euphoric as a result of their victories through the summer, and advanced into Maryland with enthusiasm. But others were tired of soldiering barefoot on an empty stomach and reluctant to venture beyond the limits of the Confederacy. While Lee called for stiff disciplinary action against "stragglers," troops deserted in the thousands. Hopes that Marylanders would flock to fill the ranks quickly evaporated. Those who wanted to fight for the Confederate cause had already gone South earlier in the war. Except by slaveholders, the invading army was not welcomed as liberators. Most civilians barred their doors against them. The locals observed the ragged condition of the army with shock and awe. Describing the "gaunt starvation" evident in their faces, one Maryland woman, Mary Mitchell, wrote: "That they could march or fight at all seemed incredible." Initially Lee had hoped Maryland's fertile land would provide food and fodder. The reality was that his troops ate green corn and suffered in consequence.

Battle of South Mountain
On September 14, Confederate troops defended the mountain passes against superior Union forces, buying valuable time for Lee to concentrate his army.

Union stand

Lee had assumed that garrisons threatened by his advance into Maryland would be withdrawn to avoid capture. But the Union army at Harpers Ferry was ordered by the commander-in-chief, General Henry Halleck, to hold its position, despite McClellan's protests.

On September 9, General Stonewall Jackson marched the bulk of the Confederate army back across the river to seize Harpers Ferry. General James Longstreet was sent to Boonsboro to defend Jackson against a possible Union assault through the passes across South Mountain. But he was diverted to Hagerstown after a false report of a Union column marching toward him. Defense of the passes was left primarily to a division under General D. H. Hill, aided by General Jeb Stuart's cavalry. By dividing his army, Lee exposed himself to "defeat in detail," but again he gambled on McClellan's inertia. With his forces scattered, Lee was to find he had miscalculated the state of the Union army.

DEFEAT IN DETAIL If a general has divided his army, in an adverse situation it can open up the possibility for his enemy to attack and crush each part separately or defeat it "in detail."

The merger of the Army of Virginia into McClellan's Army of the Potomac after Second Bull Run resulted in a remarkable revival of morale. Soldiers greeted McClellan as a savior.

> "The [soldiers] looked to me **not made of flesh** and blood **but stone and iron**."
>
> **MARYLAND'S ELIZABETH K. HOWARD DESCRIBING THE SOUTHERNERS,** SEPTEMBER 1862

Ordered by President Lincoln "to destroy the rebel army," McClellan led a revitalized 70,000-strong force out of Washington in pursuit of Lee.

Union luck

On September 13, McClellan's troops entered Frederick, recently vacated by the Army of Northern Virginia. McClellan then enjoyed a stroke of luck. A copy of Lee's Special Order 191, circulated to all the Confederate commanders on September 9, was found in a field outside the town and passed to McClellan's staff. It gave full details of the location of Lee's forces.

120,000 The number of soldiers that General McClellan estimated Lee had in his army during the Maryland campaign. The actual number of Confederate troops never exceeded around 55,000.

McClellan was exultant, declaring: "Here is a paper with which if I cannot whip Bobbie Lee, I will be willing to go home." On the night of September 13, Union forces moved toward South Mountain. Once through the passes they would be able to attack Lee's army before it could concentrate or escape. While Longstreet marched back from Hagerstown, the Confederate defenses at the mountain passes were lightly held. Fighting raged through September 14. Crampton's Gap fell after hours of resistance by a handful of Confederates faced with 12,000 Union troops, but this was exploited too late. Turner's Gap and Fox's Gap were held by D. H. Hill's division throughout the day. The delay that this imposed on McClellan's army was enough to allow Lee to escape. On September 15, McClellan ordered his troops to retreat to the town of Sharpsburg, between Antietam Creek and the Potomac.

Taking Harpers Ferry

Meanwhile, Jackson was threatening Harpers Ferry. The arsenal was guarded by 11,000 green Union troops under Colonel Dixon Miles. Holding the high ground, the Confederates sited their artillery and attacked at will. Harpers Ferry surrendered on September 15. Jackson seized military stores as well as 11,000 prisoners. Leaving Major General A. P. Hill's men in charge, Jackson joined Lee at Sharpsburg. He arrived on September 16 to find Lee facing McClellan's army across Antietam Creek. All day the opposing artillery batteries had been dueling. Darkness brought the additional rattle of heavy skirmishing up and down the lines, a prelude to impending battle.

Union loss at Harpers Ferry
The Confederate seizure of the Union armory at Harpers Ferry on September 15, 1862 left the railroad bridge in ruins and a valuable haul of war supplies in Confederate hands.

AFTER

Lee's decision to fight at Sharpsburg 72–73 », rather than withdraw across the Potomac into Virginia, showed a confidence in his troops' superior ability.

GEORGE BRINTON McCLELLAN

LEE RALLIES
Although Lee was buoyed by news of Jackson's success at Harpers Ferry, he was also unwilling to accept that his **Maryland campaign had failed**. McClellan, meanwhile, proceeded with his habitual caution. On September 15, his Army of the Potomac had begun arriving at Antietam Creek, but **left Lee undisturbed** on the opposite bank. The next day, McClellan had some 60,000 men facing 25,000 Confederates. By September 17 he was ready, but **Lee had amassed most of his men**, so the chance of a decisive Union victory was missed.

BEFORE

After defeat at the Second Battle of Bull Run, morale in the Union ranks was low. It was partially restored by the reappointment of George McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac.

THE CONFEDERATE POSITION

Robert E. Lee's Maryland Campaign began well with the **capture of the Union arsenal at Harpers Ferry by General Stonewall Jackson** « 70–71. But sooner or later he was going to have to face McClellan's **numerically superior Army of the Potomac**. The two forces met at Sharpsburg. Lee took up a **defensive position** overlooking Antietam Creek. With **scattered forces** still arriving, by nightfall on September 16 he had just 25,000 men. Lee gave command of the left of his line to **Jackson** and the right to **James Longstreet**, the two wings **meeting at Dunker Church**.

UNION STRATEGY

McClellan had some **75,000 troops** on the opposite side of Antietam Creek. On the evening of September 16, he started moving **Joseph Hooker's corps** across the creek to Lee's left. Initial skirmishes allowed the Confederates to **identify the direction of the main Union thrust** of the following morning.

The **Battle** of **Antietam**

September 17, 1862, was the costliest day of fighting in American history. A desperate Confederate defense against repeated assaults by determined Union troops resulted in 22,700 casualties. Despite superiority in numbers, however, Union general George B. McClellan failed to destroy the Rebel army.

At dawn on September 17, as Joseph Hooker's corps advanced up the Hagerstown Pike to slam into the left flank of General Robert E. Lee's army, the prospect for the Confederates was grim. Union troops advanced in daunting mass, well equipped and uniformed, in marked contrast to the ragged Rebels. There were no earthworks, so the soldiers fought in the open or were sheltered only by trees or terrain from the storm of artillery and infantry fire that erupted. Furious fighting raged in the Cornfield and the West Woods—locations lost and retaken time and again at an appalling cost in lives.

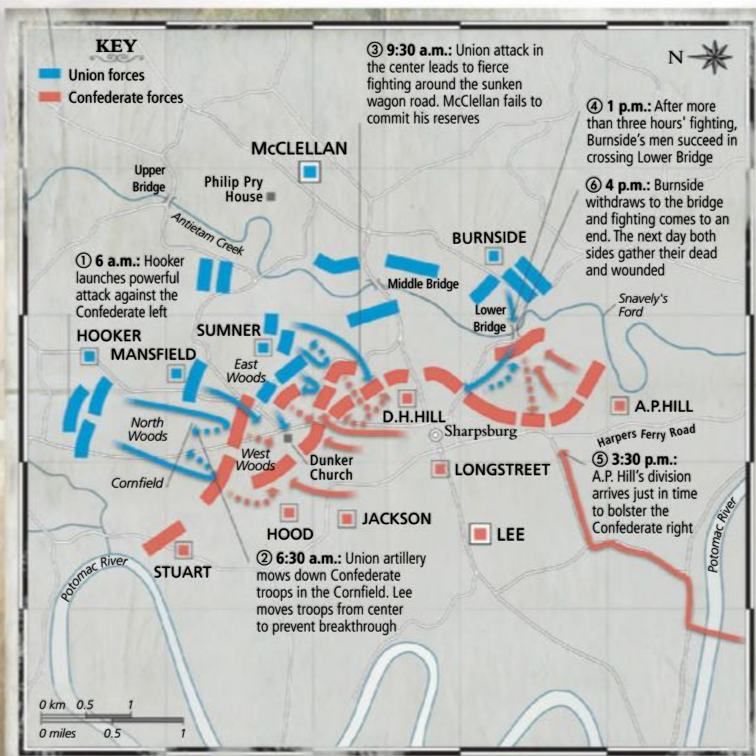
Battle for the West Woods

Brigadier General John Bell Hood's Texans, reportedly angered at having their breakfast interrupted, seized the West Woods back from the Union Iron Brigade at the expense of 64 percent casualties, with the 1st Texas Infantry Regiment sustaining losses of 82 percent. A Union division ordered forward by Major General Edwin Sumner counterattacked from the flank out of the West Woods, losing more than 2,000 men in half an hour.

Union general
Edwin Vose Sumner commanded a corps at Antietam. He was criticized for alleged blunders that saw a division cut to shreds at the West Woods.

Lee holds his ground

McClellan, in the safety of the Philip Pry House on the other side of Antietam Creek, well away from the savagery of the battlefield, failed to coordinate the action of his different corps. Thus, while the Confederates weathered storm after storm on their left—at one point even losing Dunker Church only to retake it later—there was no pressure on their right or center. Even when joined by two more divisions in the course of the morning, Lee still did not have half McClellan's strength. But he was able to maneuver troops across from his



A battle in three stages
The fighting began at dawn on the Union right, moved to the center, then in the afternoon to the Union left, when Burnside's men finally managed to cross Antietam Creek.

The battlefield looking north
Captain James Hope of the 2nd Vermont Infantry was unfit for action at Antietam, but made sketches of the battle, from which he later painted a series of panoramas. The burning farmhouse on the left was set alight on the orders of Confederate General D. H. Hill.

center and right to reinforce his left, and by midmorning he had fought the Union troops on that flank to a standstill.

Holding the sunken road

It was 9:30 a.m. before a Union division attacked the Confederate center, held by 2,500 men under Major General D. H. Hill. Holding a sunken wagon road that, with good reason, became known as Bloody Lane, Hill's outnumbered infantry repulsed a series of Union assaults, inflicting some 3,000 casualties on their enemy before being forced to withdraw when their exposed flank was caught in enfilading fire—sweeping the length of their line. Even then Union forces were unable to break through; two entire corps that could have been committed to the sector were standing idle across the creek.

McClellan's original battle plan had envisaged Major General Ambrose Burnside distracting the Confederate right, while the main Union attack went in on the left. But Burnside did not move until 10 a.m. and then chose to feed his divisions across the Lower Bridge, which would later come to bear his name. On the Confederate side, Burnside's Bridge was covered by the fire of Georgian sharpshooters and artillery under the command of Brigadier General Robert Toombs. Union forces took three hours to fight their way across and even then could not exploit their success.

The reality of war
A photograph taken after the battle by Alexander Gardner shows Confederate dead lying near Dunker Church. Such images were a shock to a public unused to war photography.

McClellan's folly

Union luck appeared to change in the afternoon, with Lee facing potential disaster. Federal troops belatedly found a crossing to Lee's right at Snavely's Ford. They threatened not only to stave in his right flank, but to cut off his only line of retreat to the Potomac River. Had McClellan committed all his forces at this moment he would surely have won the day but, ever cautious, he insisted on retaining his reserves—20,000 men who never fired a shot.

38,000 **The number of Confederate troops eventually engaged at Antietam. Lee had started his invasion of Maryland two weeks before with an army of 55,000.**

Lee was saved by the belated arrival of A. P. Hill's division, force-marched from Harpers Ferry. Its unexpected appearance on his flank led Burnside to withdraw prudently back across the creek. In the late afternoon, fighting ceased. There seemed every reason to expect that McClellan would resume his offensive the following day, but he did not. After some skirmishing, the Confederate forces were able to withdraw unmolested to the Potomac River and cross into Virginia.

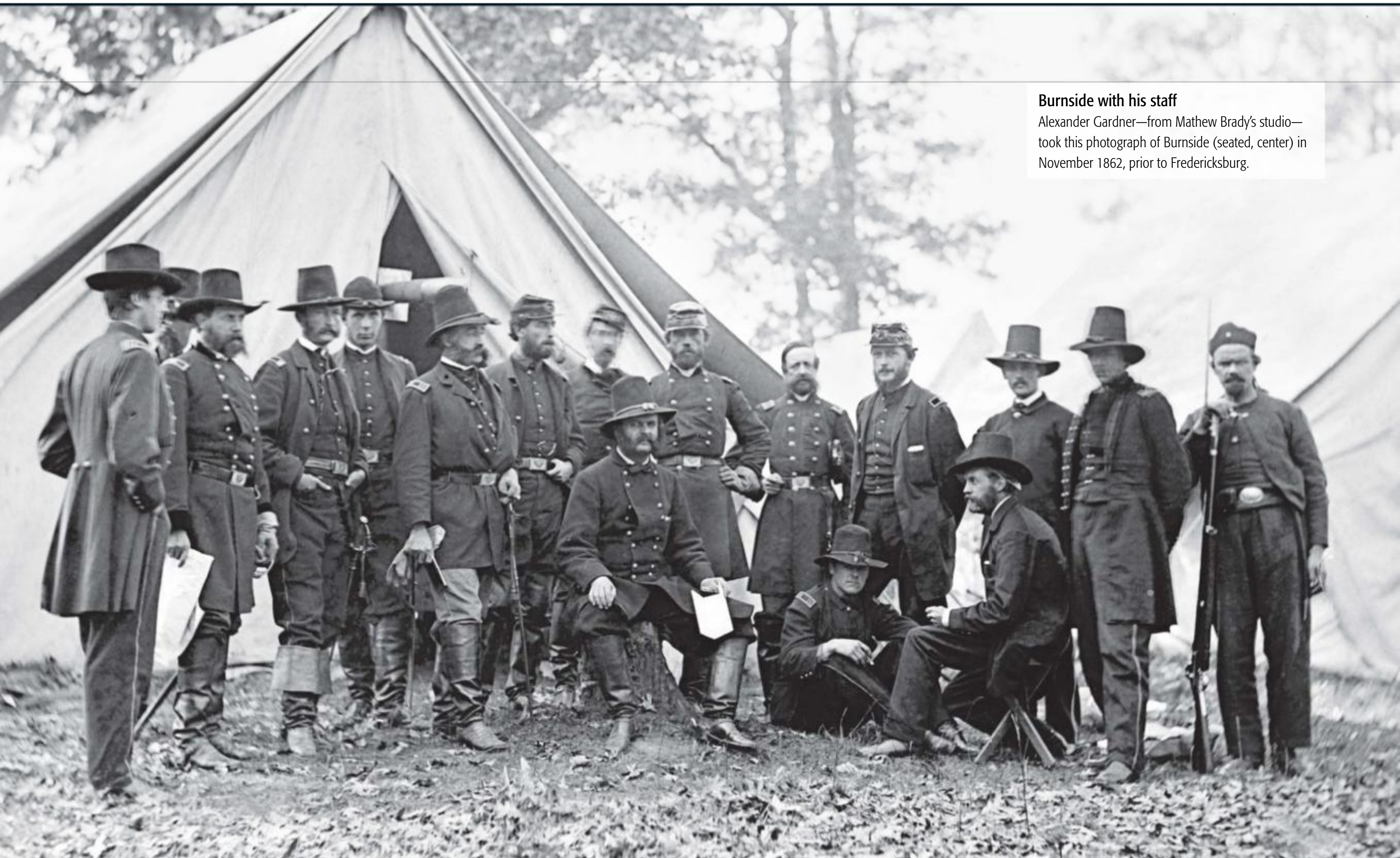
AFTER

Victory at Antietam strengthened President Lincoln's political position—he issued the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation just a few days later, on September 22.

LINCOLN'S TIMING
Lincoln had intended to proclaim **the freedom of Confederate slaves 84–85 >>** during the summer, but had been advised that to do so at a **time of military setbacks** might smack of desperation. Now he saw his opportunity.

McCLELLAN'S INACTIVITY
Visiting **McClellan's camp** in early October the president urged him to **pursue Lee** across the Potomac River. **McClellan's response** was to prove **too slow for Lincoln to tolerate**.

LINCOLN AND McCLELLAN AFTER ANTIETAM



Burnside with his staff
Alexander Gardner—from Mathew Brady's studio—took this photograph of Burnside (seated, center) in November 1862, prior to Fredericksburg.

Burnside Takes the Offensive

Given command of the Army of the Potomac, Union general Ambrose Burnside launched a swift offensive to seize Richmond that caught the Confederate forces off guard, but the operation ended in Union defeat at Fredericksburg in one of the most one-sided battles of the Civil War.

BEFORE

After the Battle of Antietam, Lincoln was determined that McClellan's Army of the Potomac should pursue the Confederates into Virginia and seek to inflict defeat.

NORTHERN ADVANCE

General Lee's first thought after Antietam was also to **return to the offensive** « 72–73. Only the poor condition of his Army of Northern Virginia persuaded him **to rest and refit**. Meanwhile General McClellan, goaded by Lincoln, began reluctantly moving his army across the Potomac in late October 1862.

Incensed by his delays and lack of offensive spirit, as well as his insubordinate attitude toward the government, **Lincoln fired McClellan** on November 7, **appointing Major General Ambrose Burnside** in his place.

Major General Ambrose Burnside was not eager to command the Army of the Potomac, feeling that he lacked the competence required of an army commander. Even so, within days of taking charge he responded to Lincoln's demand for offensive action with a plan to seize Richmond, the Confederate capital. He would shift his force rapidly and abruptly to cross the Rappahannock River at Fredericksburg, driving toward the town before General Robert E. Lee could react. Lincoln favored fighting Lee's army rather than sidestepping it, but approved the plan.

Burnside's maneuver was finely executed. On November 15, his army of 120,000 men, organized into three "Grand Divisions," set off on a march that caught the Confederates by surprise. Within two days, Union troops were streaming into Falmouth, on the opposite bank of the Rappahannock from Fredericksburg. Nothing stood between Burnside and Richmond except the 400-ft (122-m) wide river. Bridging this obstacle had been given high priority in the planning, with urgent orders for pontoons to be sent, but these floating bridges were delayed.

Giving Lee time

Burnside would not send troops across fords because he anticipated that rising water levels might render them impassable, and he did not want to find himself with part of his army cut off on the other side of the river. So he waited for the pontoons, which gave Lee the time to assemble his troops. When all the bridging equipment had arrived at the end of the month, the two halves of Lee's army—General James Longstreet's and General Stonewall Jackson's corps—were facing Burnside's soldiers across the river. Because of the long delay, both sides had plenty of time to prepare their positions. Burnside placed his artillery above Fredericksburg on Stafford Heights to the east—such a weight of firepower that not even Lee could contemplate taking the offensive.

On the other side of the river, Longstreet took up position on Marye's Heights behind the town, amassing a formidable concentration of artillery and infantry along the base of the ridge, while Jackson spread out his forces downstream to his right. Lee had a panoramic view of the battlefield from a nearby hilltop. In all, the Confederate troops ranged across 8 miles (13km) of ridges along the western side of the valley. A frontal assault on such prepared defenses, held by more than 70,000 men, many of whom had a clear view of the plain beneath them, was unlikely to succeed. But Burnside felt committed to the operation and would not call it off. On the morning of December 11, the bridging of the river began.

900 **The number of enemy that General Robert E. Lee reported he had taken prisoner following the Battle of Fredericksburg.**

Although the fire from the Union guns on Stafford Heights made it impossible for Confederate troops to advance in the open to the riverbank and contest the crossing, the buildings of Fredericksburg, now deserted by the civilians, made excellent cover for sharpshooters of the Mississippi brigade. Northern engineers struggled to complete the pontoons under their harassing fire. Union artillery reduced much of the town to rubble, but the sharpshooters were not driven out until a Union advance guard crossed by boat and flushed them out.

11 The percentage of Union troops killed, wounded, or captured.

7.4 The percentage of Confederates killed, wounded, or captured.

Burnside's advance

The bulk of the Union Army began marching over the pontoon bridges on December 12, many soldiers looting the abandoned Virginian homes. The battle was fought on December 13. Burnside's best hope rested on Major General William Franklin's Grand Division, which had crossed the river south of Fredericksburg. Burnside thought that the Confederate right flank in front of Franklin was weakly held, but Jackson had amassed his forces around the peak of Prospect Hill. When a Confederate officer expressed anxiety about their situation, Jackson put him firmly in his place. He was proved right, because the Union troops' frontal assaults on his well-placed infantry and cannon were systematically repulsed. Startled early on by an unexpected flank attack from Confederate horse artillery, Franklin cautiously held many of his soldiers back in defensive positions.

The breakthrough occurred when a rush through an undefended wooded valley by Major General George Meade's troops penetrated deep into the Confederate army's lines. But Franklin failed to reinforce Meade, and his men were soon driven back by counterattacks and suffered heavy losses as a result. Nothing on Jackson's flank, however, equaled the appalling slaughter inflicted by Longstreet's corps at Marye's Heights. Union brigades were thrown forward in frontal assaults uphill across open ground swept by Longstreet's artillery. They then faced a line of 2,000 North Carolina and Georgia infantry positioned in a sunken road behind a stone wall. Under General Thomas Cobb, the Confederate infantry maintained a rapid rate of fire. The advancing Union ranks were cut down, most of the men not even coming to within 300ft (90m) of the wall before they fell or fled. By nightfall, the Union Army had suffered 12,700 casualties to Confederate losses of 5,400. On December 15, Burnside withdrew back across the river.

TECHNOLOGY

PONTOONS

The military use of floating bridges dates back to ancient times, Persian ruler Xerxes famously building one to cross the Hellespont in 480 BCE. Originally, they were improvized by laying wooden planks over a line of moored boats. By the 19th century, however, army engineers had purpose-built flat-bottomed pontoons as part of their standard equipment. Mounted on wheels for ease of mobility, they were threaded together on a cable with wooden beams laid across them to form a roadway.

> "It is well that **war is so terrible**. We should grow too fond of it."
>
> ROBERT E. LEE TO JAMES LONGSTREET DURING THE BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG

Defending the sunken road
Confederate infantry take turns loading and shooting, maintaining a constant fire from behind the stone wall on Telegraph Road at the foot of Marye's Heights. Repeated Northern assaults over open ground failed to reach the sunken road.

AFTER

The slaughter at Fredericksburg was greeted with jubilation in the South and consternation in Washington. Lincoln came in for heavy criticism and anti-war sentiment flourished in the Union ranks.

BURNSIDE'S HOPES DASHED

Ambrose Burnside dreamed of redeeming his reputation with **another crossing of the Rappahannock River** that would outflank Lee. However, attempting this maneuver in January 1863 his army merely became bogged down on muddy roads. **After this "Mud March"** was called off, **Burnside was doomed**. On January 26, he was replaced by Major General "Fightin' Joe" Hooker.

SOLDIER'S BRAVERY

A story surfaced 17 years after the Battle of Fredericksburg, telling how Confederate soldier Richard Kirkland—**"the Angel of Marye's Heights"**— had risked his life to take water to wounded Union troops. **Kirkland's selfless act** is now commemorated by a monument in front of the stone wall at Fredericksburg.

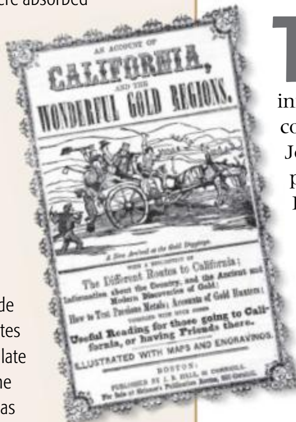
KIRKLAND MEMORIAL AT FREDERICKSBURG

BEFORE

The U.S. extended its lands westward after victory in the War with Mexico. This confirmed the annexation of Texas and added California, New Mexico, and Utah.

THE GOLD RUSH

California achieved statehood in 1850, while Utah and New Mexico were absorbed into the United States as territories. These thinly populated areas took on **economic importance after the discovery of their precious metals**. The **California Gold Rush** had begun in 1848. The discovery of silver and gold at the Comstock Lode in western Utah and at sites in western Kansas in the late 1850s was followed by the organization of these areas into the territories of **Nevada and Colorado** in early 1861.



CALIFORNIA ADVERTISEMENT

DIVIDING UP AMERICA

The creation of **new states and territories** was a fraught political issue, affecting the balance between "slave" and "free" states **« 18–19**. In 1861, **Texas was among the original states that formed the Confederacy**, while California, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, and Colorado all stayed within the Union.

The **Far West**

At the time of the Civil War, the U.S.'s western frontier was a wild place of isolated forts, gold prospectors, settler wagon trains, and often hostile Native Americans. The Confederates decided to extend the war westward, in the hope of wresting Colorado and California goldfields and silver mines from Union control.

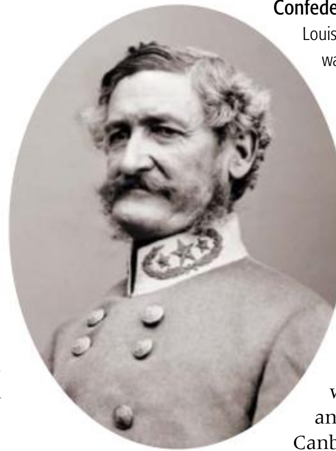
The first Confederate thrust westward from Texas took place early in the war on the initiative of an aggressive battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel John R. Baylor. A one-time politician and Indian fighter, Baylor was sent with a 250-strong detachment of mounted Texan volunteers to seize undefended forts along the state's western border with New Mexico. He interpreted his orders as license to enter New Mexico on the grounds of preempting a potential Union counterattack. Deciding that a U.S. Army garrison at Fort Fillmore constituted a threat, Baylor set out to attack it on July 23, 1861. The garrison commander, Major Isaac Lynde, left the fort with his troops to confront Baylor. On July 25 Baylor's Texans and their allies repulsed Union infantry and cavalry assaults, driving them back to Fort Fillmore. During the night the Union commander Lynde led a withdrawal from Fort Fillmore but was pursued to San Augustin Springs where he and his men all surrendered. Baylor declared the south of New Mexico the Confederate Arizona Territory.

Baylor had scant resources to fight hostile Apaches and resist a Northern counterattack. But when another Southern force was sent into Confederate Arizona in early 1862, it was dispatched with offensive rather than defensive intentions.

The Confederate push west

Brigadier General Henry H. Sibley had devised an ambitious plan to use Confederate Arizona as a launch pad for a drive into the gold- and silver-rich states of Colorado and California. With three regiments of cavalry from Texas, he advanced up the Rio Grande River as far as Fort Craig, absorbing most of Baylor's troops along the way. The fort, a Union stronghold, was under the command of Colonel Edward Canby, whose regulars were supported by New Mexican volunteers. Sibley's force was too weak to seize the fort and tried to bypass it, but Canby marched out to block his path at a ford near Valverde. The two forces joined battle on February 21. In the end, Canby and his men had to retreat back into the fort. Sibley continued to push northward, reaching Santa Fe on March 10.

Ahead of Sibley, Union forces from Colorado under Colonel John Slough joined a Northern garrison at Fort Union. The campaign's crucial battle occurred at Glorieta Pass in the Sangre



Confederate commander
Louisiana-born Henry Hopkins Sibley was a career officer in the U.S. Army who chose to join the Confederacy. After its failure, he never held another significant command.

"The men and teams **suffered severely** with the **intense heat** and want of water."
UNION MAJOR ISAAC LYNDE, REPORT ON THE SURRENDER AT SAN AUGUSTIN SPRINGS, AUGUST 7, 1861

Hostile environment
The Confederates underestimated the difficulty of campaigning across the wild, sparsely populated terrain of the southwestern territories, such as this mesa landscape near Santa Fe. The mountains and deserts made living off the land nearly impossible.

de Cristo Mountains. On March 26, forward units of Northern soldiers pushing south from Fort Union met the foremost contingent of Confederate cavalry advancing north from Santa Fe. After an initial skirmish, both sides moved up reinforcements and were ready to fight on March 28. Both moved to attack because each assumed the other would stand on the defensive. Despite suffering as many casualties as their enemies, the Confederates held the field after a fierce engagement. But a Union detachment dispatched to carry out a flanking attack found itself behind the Confederates, surprising their almost undefended supply train. The Southern wagons and supplies were destroyed, and their horses and mules driven off.

California retaliates

Unable to sustain an advance without supplies, Sibley pulled back first to Albuquerque and then began a grueling retreat to Texas in mid-April. By then another Union force was in play. Colonel James H. Carleton's California volunteers were marching eastward to intervene in the fighting in Arizona and New Mexico.

In March 1862, the Californians met the Confederates at Stanwix Station—a skirmish that impelled the much weaker Confederates to fall back to Tucson. The Californians then won a clash at Picacho Pass before driving the Rebels out of Tucson in May. They withdrew into Texas, and Carleton, now brigadier general, was put in charge of the Department of New Mexico. The Confederate Arizona Territory ceased to exist in all but name.

Military rations
Soldiers in the southwest would have received the standard rations issued by both sides, including sugar, tobacco, coffee, and a sewing kit called a housewife (or "hussif").

AFTER

Many Native American tribes took advantage of the war to try to reassert their freedom. In the southwest, the Apache Wars flared up once again.

APACHE LEADER GERONIMO (THIRD FROM RIGHT)

RESILIENT WARRIORS
In New Mexico Union general James H. Carleton found Native Americans tougher opponents than the Confederates. At the **Battle of Adobe Wells** in 1864, a Union force led by Colonel Kit Carson **narrowly avoided defeat** at the hands of the Plains Apache, Kiowa, and Comanche tribes. The legendary **Apache leader Geronimo** managed to maintain resistance until 1886, when he and a small group of followers finally surrendered.

INCORPORATING THE WEST
Much of the **West came under firm Union control** in the latter half of the war. Nevada **became a state** in October 1864. Later arrivals were Colorado in 1876, Utah in 1896, and Arizona and New Mexico in 1912.

Bragg Invades Kentucky

Throughout the second half of 1862, the Confederates tried to seize the initiative in the Western Theater, mounting a bold invasion of Kentucky. But the Confederate commander, Braxton Bragg, was first driven out of Kentucky and then forced to concede the field at the bloody Battle of Stones River (Murfreesboro).

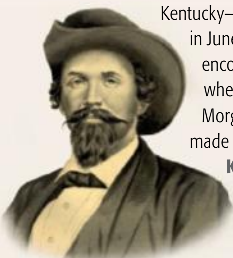
BEFORE

Its population split between Confederate and Union sympathizers, Kentucky initially opted for neutrality. Perhaps inevitably, it was soon drawn into the conflict.

BATTLE FOR KENTUCKY

On September 3, 1861, Confederate commander Leonidas Polk entered Kentucky, taking Columbus on the Mississippi. The Union then seized Paducah and Smithland. **The state's congress called for war** against the Southern invaders, while the pro-Confederates formed an **alternative government**, recognized by the Confederacy.

Union troops took over most of the state, with the Confederate army controlling the southwest. The two clashed at Fort Donelson « 58–59 and Shiloh « 60–61. Union victories at both forced a Confederate withdrawal from most of Kentucky—their last position lost in June 1862. They were encouraged, however, when General John H. Morgan's cavalry force made a **sweep through Kentucky** in July, raiding towns and attracting recruits.



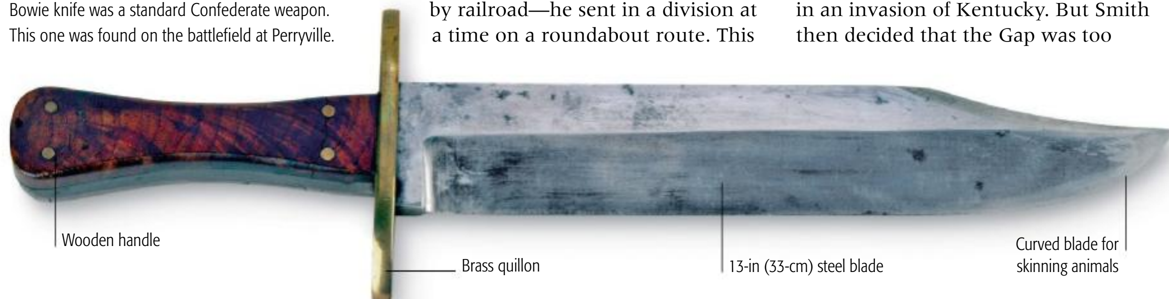
GENERAL JOHN H. MORGAN

In summer 1862, the Western Theater was a disaster for the Confederates. They had lost Nashville and western Tennessee, though they still held Vicksburg, which denied the Union control of the Mississippi. As a Union force under Major General Don Carlos Buell advanced slowly on Chattanooga, General Braxton Bragg was at Tupelo, Mississippi, trying to restore discipline and morale to his beaten men. In this grim picture, Confederate General John H. Morgan's cavalry raid on Kentucky in July shone out like a beacon of hope.

The raid prompted the idea that the Bluegrass state might be the Union's weak point, full of Southern sympathizers eager to join the Confederate ranks. In late July and early August, Bragg moved the Army of Mississippi to Chattanooga by railroad—he sent in a division at a time on a roundabout route. This maneuver contrasted with the difficulty Buell had in moving his men, his supply lines harassed by the Confederate cavalry of Morgan and Nathan Bedford Forrest.

Invading Kentucky

Installed at Chattanooga, Bragg devised a plan with Major General Edmund Kirby Smith, commander of the Army of East Tennessee. Moving north from Knoxville, Smith would retake the Cumberland Gap and join with Bragg in an invasion of Kentucky. But Smith then decided that the Gap was too



Confederate Bowie knife
Probably designed by Rezin Bowie (brother of Jim Bowie) for cowboys to catch and skin animals, the Bowie knife was a standard Confederate weapon. This one was found on the battlefield at Perryville.

Confederate retreat after Perryville
This section from William Travis's panorama shows the battered but triumphant Union forces in the foreground, Bragg in retreat in the distance. Travis shadowed the Army of the Cumberland, often sketching on site.

strongly defended to take by assault, so without consulting Bragg, he chose to bypass it. Smith took an unopposed route to Kentucky instead, routing Union forces at Richmond on August 30. Braxton Bragg, racing to catch up, left Chattanooga on August 28 and crossed into Kentucky. Advancing toward Louisville, Bragg's progress was delayed by a Union garrison at Munfordville, which held out for three days before surrendering. This gave Buell enough time to hurry back to defend Kentucky.

ORPHAN BRIGADE **The name given to the Confederate 1st Kentucky Brigade, possibly because of the brigade's forced exile from its home state.**

Like Lee's invasion of Maryland, the Confederate offensive had been based on the assumption that local people would greet the invaders as a liberation force. Bragg brought with him rifles to arm thousands of Kentucky volunteers. He also brought the state's Confederate governor, Richard Hawes, who was formally inaugurated in the state capital, Frankfort, on October 4. But it became obvious that the state's enthusiasm for the South had been exaggerated when the volunteers never materialized.

The Battle of Perryville

Meanwhile, goaded by Lincoln, Buell had advanced from Louisville on October 1. Hawes's inauguration ceremony at Frankfort was ruined as the town came under attack by the Union. By this time the South should have concentrated their forces, but Bragg's army was based at Bardstown while Smith's was some 60 miles (97km) away at Lexington. The campaign's key battle was fought before the two could unite.

While away at Frankfort for the inauguration, Bragg left his army at Bardstown under the command of General Leonidas Polk. Confronted by three columns of Buell's army advancing on him on October 7, Polk fell back to Perryville on the Chaplin River. A drought had struck Kentucky and the marching Union troops were desperate for drinking water—which the Confederates controlled. A Union division under Brigadier General Philip Sheridan seized control of a creek in fierce fighting early on October 8, the men strongly motivated by thirst. Bragg was slow to realize that a major battle was beginning, but returned to assume command in the late morning.

On the afternoon of October 8, a daring Confederate assault almost routed the Union left, but the Union right pushed into the streets of Perryville. When darkness fell, Bragg prudently withdrew his forces, which would have faced superior Union numbers if combat had resumed the following day.

The Slaughter Pen
The site of Sheridan's stiff four-hour resistance to the Confederates was dubbed "the Slaughter Pen" for its gory appearance on the first day of the Battle of Stones River.

Bragg, at last, joined up with Smith, and the two Confederate commanders hotly debated their next move. Neither Bragg's nor Smith's forces had the strength in numbers or the logistical organization to keep a hold on the state of Kentucky once a Northern counteroffensive got underway. Controversially, Bragg decided to abandon the invasion and pull back to Tennessee. With the almost simultaneous defeat of a Confederate army under Major General Earl Van Dorn at the Second Battle of Corinth, and Lee's withdrawal from Maryland after the Battle of Antietam, the picture for the Confederacy looked bleak.

In the Stones River Valley

Bragg faced criticism for his decision but he kept his job. Buell did not, and was replaced by Major General William S. Rosecrans as head of what would soon become known as the Army of the Cumberland. Bragg and Smith ended up at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, in the Stones River Valley, with their armies united to form the Army of Tennessee under Bragg's command.

On December 26, Rosecrans marched out of Nashville to engage Bragg, in response to Lincoln's continued pressure for offensive action. By December 30, he was facing the Confederates at Stones River. That evening, bands from both armies struck up to help raise their men's spirits. In the words of Sam Seay of the Confederates' 1st Tennessee Infantry, "The still winter night carried [the bands'] strains to great distance. At every pause on our side, far away could be heard the military bands of the other. Finally one of them struck up 'Home Sweet Home.' As if by common consent, all other airs ceased, and the bands of both armies as far as the ear could reach, joined in the refrain."

The next morning, real battle succeeded the previous night's dueling bands. The Confederates attacked at dawn, catching the Union troops still eating their breakfast. The panicked Union right wing was driven back 3 miles (4.8km) in what would have been a fatal rout, but for resistance organized by Sheridan, who held a position for four hours at great cost to his division. A Union defensive line was stabilized, hinging on woods known as the Round Forest. When nightfall brought combat to an end, Bragg felt he had won a great victory. But Union commanders resolved to fight on. Over the next two days Bragg could make no further progress, and by the afternoon of January 2, he had to order Major General John C. Breckinridge to lead his Kentucky Orphan Brigade in a near suicidal assault. Bragg resolved to withdraw the next day, conceding the field to Rosecrans. Union losses were 13,249 out of 43,400 engaged; the Confederates lost 10,266 out of 37,712.

AFTER

After the Battle of Stones River, General Braxton Bragg faced harsh criticism and an ugly internal dispute. The state of Kentucky became the scene of guerrilla fighting.

SUBORDINATE INSURRECTION
While Rosecrans was turning Murfreesboro into an **impregnable fortified base**, Bragg faced a revolt of his subordinate officers, orchestrated by Polk. President Jefferson Davis elevated General Joseph E. Johnston to theater commander, and **expected him to relieve Bragg**. But Johnston left Bragg in his command.

KENTUCKY UNDER THE HEEL
There was no further Confederate attempt to invade Kentucky, but it remained the **target of cavalry raids**—by John H. Morgan in December 1862 and July 1863, and by Nathan Bedford Forrest in spring 1864. **Guerrilla warfare** in the state was met in July 1864 by the **imposition of military rule** under Union **Major General Stephen Burbridge**. His harsh regime earned him the nickname "**the Butcher of Kentucky**."

"**To lose Kentucky** is nearly the same as to lose the whole **game**."
PRESIDENT LINCOLN, LETTER TO SENATOR ORVILLE BROWNING, SEPTEMBER 1861

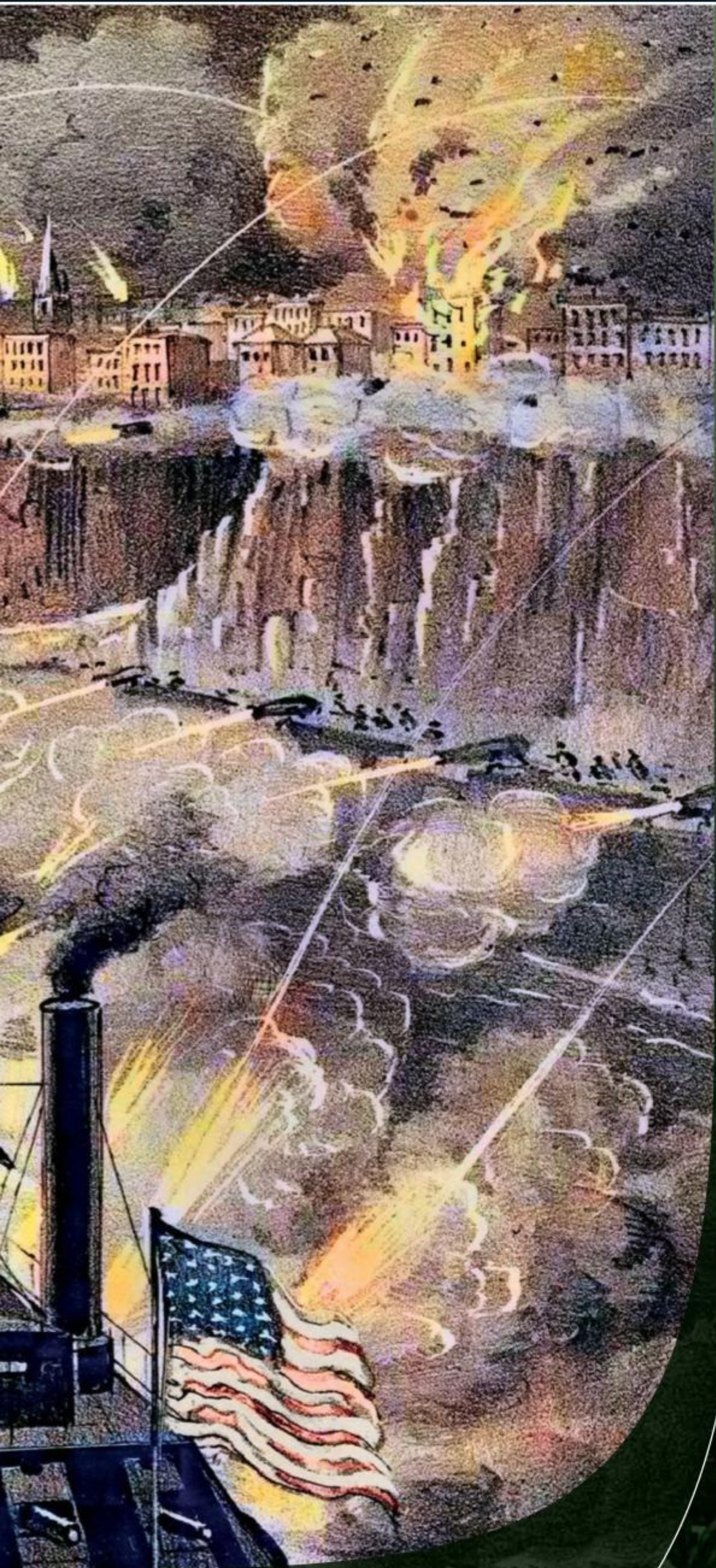
General William S. Rosecrans
As commander of the Army of the Cumberland, Rosecrans showed resolute leadership in the Battle of Stones River, rejecting the option of withdrawal after a disastrous first day's combat.

4

THE UNION TIGHTENS ITS GRIP

1863

Both sides wrestled with new realities that changed the nature of the war. As the Confederacy reached its military zenith, sound Northern political and military leadership won key victories on and off the battlefield, which set the stage for Union triumph.



« Under fire on the Mississippi
This Currier & Ives print, made shortly after the Battle of Vicksburg, shows Admiral David Porter's fleet under Confederate bombardment beneath the bluffs of Vicksburg—Porter's ship, USS *Benton*, is in the lead. Although Confederate guns fired for three hours, only one ship was lost and the fleet met Ulysses S. Grant below the city, as planned.

THE UNION TIGHTENS ITS GRIP

Invading the North
Lee's army crosses the Potomac to invade the North. With a presidential election to come in the fall, Lee and President Davis feel that a Confederate victory on Northern soil may pay untold political dividends.

Hancock at Gettysburg
On July 1, stiff Union resistance helps General Winfield Scott Hancock create a steady Federal line at the end of the first day of fighting. Hancock appears here in a vast mural of the battle painted by F. D. Briscoe in 1885.

Lee at Chancellorsville
This portrait of Robert E. Lee is by French-born artist L. M. D. Guillaume, who painted portraits of a number of Confederate leaders. Chancellorsville is considered one of Lee's greatest victories.

The death of Jackson
At the Battle of Chancellorsville, Confederate general Stonewall Jackson is shot by accident in growing darkness by his own troops. His death soon afterward leaves Lee without his most gifted lieutenant, an event recorded in history as a crucial moment in the Civil War.

The nature of the war changed decisively with President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation on the first day of 1863. The extent of slavery had been one of the war's principal causes, but from now a Union victory would mean its effective abolition. The mobilization of black troops would also bring an important addition to Union strength. After all the disappointments and command changes of the previous months, 1863 saw the Union begin to deploy its strength with real effectiveness, with Lincoln at last finding the commanders with the administrative competence and ruthless aggressiveness to bring this power to bear.

The Confederacy until now had had most of its successes in the Eastern Theater, but was clearly under pressure elsewhere. The Union blockade was growing ever tighter, and Union forces were advancing steadily up and down the Mississippi. By year's end, after

1863

Lincoln with his cabinet
In Washington, D.C., President Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1. This document specifies the states and areas in which it will apply. Here he presents the draft proclamation to his cabinet.

New York Draft Riots
The riots of July 1863 begin with protests over the exemptions allowed to the wealthy in the North's conscription law. However, the rioters, many of them Irish, also target blacks and abolitionists, fearing that black advancement threatens the jobs of poor whites.

Battle of Chickamauga
A Union offensive from Tennessee is halted at Chickamauga, Georgia. The battle is portrayed here in a Kurz and Allison print of the late 1800s, which captures the difficult wooded terrain and ferocious fighting that marked the battle.

Earthworks at Vicksburg
The siege of Vicksburg sees the besiegers and defenders both taking refuge in a system of trenches and dugouts little different from those of World War I half a century later. Starvation proves the Union army's strongest weapon.

the succession of great and by no means one-sided battles, the Union clearly held the initiative in both of the war's main theaters. The Deep South lay open to attack, and Lee's army in Virginia could only expect to fight yet more battles against heavy odds.

The nature of the fighting was also increasingly taking on the characteristics that would dominate the wars of the industrialized 20th century—strategic maneuvers and the movement of supplies of mass armies being made by rail, and the battles of these armies being centered around fighting for entrenchments under ferocious artillery bombardments.

The North still had weaknesses. Social and racial tensions were made plain by the Draft Riots, but the home front in the South was more vulnerable with galloping inflation and food shortages. Southern prospects for 1864 were turning bleak.

First Reading, July 22, 1862
This depiction of Lincoln's presentation of his momentous document to his cabinet is a copy of Francis Carpenter's *First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln* in the U.S. Capitol.

BEFORE

In June 1862, President Lincoln completed drafting a Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation to free slaves in the Rebel states. He presented it to his cabinet in July.

THE WRONG MOMENT
All members of the cabinet **approved the spirit of the document**. But **Secretary of State William H. Seward** claimed that issuing it now, in the wake of General George B. McClellan's withdrawal from the Virginia Peninsula, would appear as "our last shriek on the retreat." Lincoln decided to **postpone discussion** of the matter until the North achieved a decisive victory.

PRELIMINARY PROCLAMATION
The Battle of Antietam in September 1862 **offered the "victory" Lincoln needed**. Although a tactical draw, Confederate general Robert E. Lee was forced to abandon his offensive into Maryland and retreat to Virginia. On September 22, Lincoln released the **Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation**. The rebellious states were offered **100 days to return to the Union** and adopt some form of gradual or immediate emancipation; otherwise, slaves in the Confederacy would be "forever free."

The **Emancipation Proclamation**

The Emancipation Proclamation of New Year's Day, 1863, transformed the nature of the Civil War and the Union war effort. Until then, for the North, it had been a war to preserve the Union and to restore the rebellious states to their prewar status. Now it had also become a war for freedom.

Lincoln's Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation of September 1862 offered the Confederate states a chance to return to the Union and retain slavery at least for the time being. In spite of this enticement, none of the rebellious states came back into the Federal fold. Throughout the unconquered South, the Preliminary Proclamation was ignored as an empty measure that presented no real change in how the war would be fought.

Southerners were well aware that slaves, through their labor on farms and plantations and their work on entrenchments and fortifications, were vital to the Southern cause. In November 1861, the *Montgomery Advertiser* had asserted that "the institution of slavery in the South alone enables her to place in the field a force much larger in proportion to her white population than the North … The institution is a tower of strength to the South."

The need to act

Lincoln knew this as well, and after the Union's military setbacks in the East during the first year of the war, he was anxious to do something that would make significant and visible inroads against the Confederate effort. At this point, Northern public morale was faltering, pressure from the powerful abolitionist bloc in the Republican Party was growing, while across the Atlantic Britain and France were showing disturbing signs of moving toward a quick recognition of Confederate independence. All of these factors, along with Lincoln's own predisposition

ARTICLE II, SECTION 2 The clause in the U.S. Constitution, under which Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, using his authority as commander-in-chief of the U.S. Army and Navy.

Eckert's inkwells
Lincoln liked to work in the telegraph office of the War Department while waiting for news. Here he started drafting his Emancipation Proclamation, using the desk—and inkwells—of Major Thomas Eckert.

against slavery, obliged the president to act decisively—he had, after all, run for the White House in 1860 on a platform devoted to restricting the institution's spread into the territories.

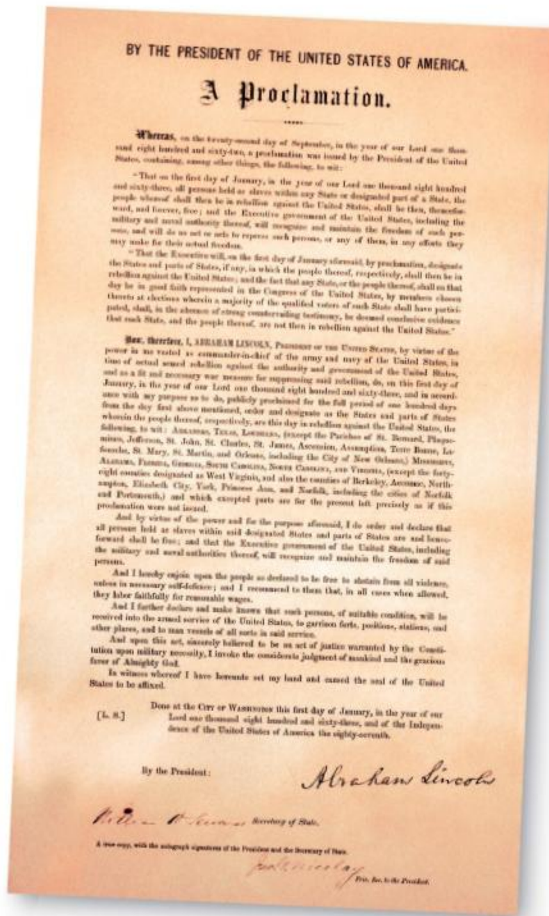
Federal generals had already flirted with emancipation in various different locations, which posed a threat to the political effect and long-term moral value of a presidentially issued policy. In August 1861, Union General John C. Frémont tried to emancipate all the slaves in Missouri by a simple military declaration. In May 1862, General David Hunter did the same for the slaves of Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina.

Careful preparation

Lincoln acknowledged the good intentions behind these military efforts at emancipation, but was forced to overrule both generals' edicts. Too few people in the North were ready to consider the freeing of slaves as an additional Federal war aim, and a premature or partial emancipation might force one or more of the border states into seceding. Missouri, especially, was still close to the tipping point. The Supreme Court, headed by pro-slavery Chief Justice Roger Taney, was another potential problem. Taney had the power to declare a rash emancipation proclamation as unconstitutional, thereby creating huge obstacles for the government.

Lincoln had much to consider before acting. His delays and apparent wavering enraged some members of the Republican Party in Congress, who claimed that if the president continued to prevaricate, they themselves would have to take action. They had already passed several Confiscation Acts that allowed Union generals to confiscate and use rebel property, including slaves.

Even as the pressure on him mounted, Lincoln remained determined to wait until the time was right to issue his formal policy. He believed that only he as president, through constitutionally sanctioned war powers, had the ability to enforce emancipation. He later explained, "I felt the measures, otherwise unconstitutional, might become lawful, by becoming indispensable to the preservation of the Constitution, through the preservation of the nation."



BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A Proclamation.

By the President:

Emancipation Proclamation
Declaring "that all persons held as slaves" within the rebel states "are, and henceforward shall be free," the Proclamation went on to "enjoin upon [the freed slaves] … to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and … labor faithfully for reasonable wages."

Carefully timing the release of the Preliminary Proclamation in September 1862 allowed Lincoln to prepare the way for the Final Emancipation Proclamation, which formally went into effect on January 1, 1863. Technically, the Final Proclamation only freed slaves in the rebellious states, leaving all those in the border states and in Union-held portions of the Confederate states still in bondage. Those deep behind Southern lines would have to await the arrival of Union armies to enforce their liberation. Indeed, in many areas of Texas and southern Georgia, slaves knew nothing about Lincoln's proclamation until well after the war was over.

Anywhere near Union lines, however, and even in locations at a considerable distance from Union forces, rumors quickly spread among slave communities that they were now free. To some degree, slaves had been taking matters into their own hands and slipping off to freedom since the war began, especially in Virginia, Tennessee, and Louisiana, where Union armies had occupied large swaths of former rebel territory. Now, in ones and twos and small groups, slaves left with a conviction, a feeling, or just an idea that the "day of Jubilo" (liberation) had come and that they were truly free to go. Many went straight to the Union armies, where they found work cooking, nursing wounded soldiers, and caring for horses.

Freedom at last

In the free black communities of the North, the response to the Emancipation Proclamation was electric. Henry Turner, pastor of an African Methodist Church in Washington, D.C., was present as the Proclamation was printed off in a local newspaper: "Down Pennsylvania [Avenue] I ran as for my life, and when the people saw me coming with the paper in my hand they raised a shouting cheer that was almost deafening." It was from such heartfelt enthusiasm that thousands of black volunteers for the Union army were raised. This Final Emancipation Proclamation included a provision for enlisting former slaves in the army and navy, and thus the seeds for the United States Colored Troops (USCT) were sown. Various states had already begun recruitment of free black citizens into segregated regiments, but now recently liberated slaves could join them as well.

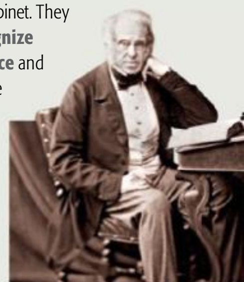
In Democratic parts of the North, especially in districts that had voted against Lincoln in 1860, many whites frowned upon the new war measure. Activities increased among Copperheads (Northern Democrats opposed to the war), and newspaper editors blasted the administration for abandoning the preservation of the Union and embracing emancipation instead. One Union regiment drawn from an area like this deserted almost to a man upon hearing the news. But in most sections of the loyal states, public opinion was cautiously optimistic that emancipation might hasten the end of the war.

Hiding out
In *Fugitive Slaves in the Dismal Swamp, Virginia* (1888), artist David Cronin depicts a favorite place of refuge on the border of Virginia and North Carolina, where hundreds of slaves managed to hide out.

AFTER

In Europe, the British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston and the French Emperor Napoleon III had been cautiously sympathetic toward the Confederates.

EUROPE BACKS AWAY
News of the Emancipation Proclamation, along with Southern general Robert E. Lee's retreat from Maryland, changed the minds of Lord Palmerston and the British cabinet. They **postponed plans to recognize Confederate independence** and offer mediation between the warring sections. The British Empire, which had freed its slaves in 1833, **could not morally support a slaveholding republic** against a nation that fought to make men free. France followed Britain's lead.



BRITISH PRIME MINISTER PALMERSTON

African-Americans in the War

The plight of African-Americans during the Civil War varied tremendously, depending on where they lived, their socio-economic status, and whether they were enslaved or free. Regardless, the war transformed their lives and set them on the path to equality with whites.

BEFORE

From its founding in 1818, the American Colonization Society strove to send freed slaves and free Northern blacks to foreign shores, in particular Liberia.

JOSEPH ROBERTS, FIRST PRESIDENT OF LIBERIA

COLONIZATION

It was believed, not only by slaveholders, but also by some abolitionists, that blacks and whites could not ultimately coexist in the United States. The only successful colony was **Liberia** in West Africa, which became an independent state in 1847. **Lincoln** himself was a known **proponent of colonization** before issuing the **Emancipation Proclamation** « 84–85 and supported several schemes during the war, most of which ended in tragedy for the emigrants.

RIGHTS FOR NORTHERN BLACKS

Before the war, only **Massachusetts** legally extended **full voting rights** to its **black citizens**. Some other **New England** states allowed **black male suffrage**, and in New York those with **$250 worth of property** could vote. To have a vote in Ohio, over half a citizen's ancestry had to be white. No other state allowed black people to vote.

During the war, some **gains were made in civil rights**. Blacks could ride alongside whites in Philadelphia and Washington streetcars and in 1864 they were allowed to appear as both **witnesses and lawyers in federal courts**, but further reforms would have to wait for the **14th Amendment**.

Union policy toward slaves and escaped slaves in the rebellious states wavered between decisive, proactive measures and lethargic inaction or neglect. Overall, the government was slow to implement a coherent policy. The Union army, U.S. Treasury Department, various philanthropic organizations, the president, and Congress all got involved and had different, often competing proposals and procedures on how to deal with the great number of freedmen (freed slaves) or soon-to-be freedmen. Power ultimately rested with the military officers in any given area, and as early as the summer of 1861, Union commanders were confronted with large numbers of escaped slaves who had run to safety within their lines.

Horrors of the "contraband" camps

These early refugees from slavery became known as "contraband of war," a phrase coined by Brigadier General Benjamin Butler, commander of Fortress Monroe in Virginia. It meant that the slaves did not have to be returned to their owners as fugitives under federal law. However, their fate varied considerably from one theater of war to another.

Many of the former slaves were rounded up and placed in special "contraband camps," where sanitation was poor and medical care even worse. Death rates were as high as 25 percent, and despite the presence of well-meaning missionaries, who provided spiritual and educational guidance, life in the camps was miserable.

In 1861–63, the camps followed the advances of the Union armies, and as time wore on, conditions improved slightly as Union officers found employment for large numbers of contrabands. The men worked as dockworkers, pioneers, trench-diggers, teamsters, and personal servants, and some of the women served as cooks and laundresses for the soldiers. In such capacities they performed the same functions as slaves did for the Confederate armies, but at least they earned a "wage," even though this could simply be room, board, and clothing. The families of the employed lived in the local camp or precariously hung around the margins of the Union picket lines.

Wage slavery under Unionists

Marginally more fortunate were former slaves on abandoned plantations that the Unionists confiscated and returned to working order. Early in the war, the Union army overran some of the South's best plantation districts: the sea islands off Charleston, southern Louisiana, and the fertile lands of the Mississippi River Valley. Owners ran to safety behind Confederate lines and simply left their land and slaves to their fate.

Realizing the potential profits to be had, Northern civilian entrepreneurs responded eagerly to the federal government's offers to manage these plantations. In theory, the government would receive the lion's share of the sale of cotton, sugar, or other staple crops, and the former slaves would be paid a fair wage. In reality, plantation managers and local Union army officers conspired to split most of the profits among themselves, and often paid the laborers just enough to keep them

Permanently scarred

However badly they were treated when they came North, nothing could compare with the brutality and cruelty slaves had suffered at the hands of their owners. This former slave was photographed after he escaped to the North and served in the Federal army.

Slave woman in the South
In this 1866 painting by Winslow Homer entitled *Near Andersonville* or *Captured Liberators*, a black woman looks on as captured Union troops, her potential liberators, are marched off to Andersonville Prison.

working. After "deductions" for food, housing, and clothing, most earned absolutely nothing, and therefore lived an existence akin to slavery. Local military laws that forbade blacks from being unemployed forced many of them back into the cotton or cane fields, or otherwise face imprisonment.

By the last 18 months of the war, under pressure from both Northern abolitionists and missionaries who were outraged at the "wage slavery" that existed in the Union-occupied South, both Congress and the Union army began to change their policies. Land was the key issue behind this new direction.

Through various pieces of legislation, or under the supervision of Yankee generals, almost 20 percent of the former Confederate territory captured by the Union was given to African-Americans. The prominent abolitionist Wendell Phillips wrote, "Let me confiscate the land of the South, and put it into the hands of Negroes and the white men who fought for it, and I have planted a Union sure to grow as an acorn to become an oak." However, the question remained whether the freedmen would be able to hold on to any land they had gained after the war was over.

180,000 **The number of African-Americans who fought for their freedom in the war. About one-third of them died.**

Black Confederates

The vast majority of blacks under Confederate control were slaves who, either by coercion or suggestion, remained on plantations or farms until liberated by invading Union forces. It is difficult to determine how many wished to stay with their masters, serving in the army as servants, teamsters, or laborers, or remain at home as fieldworkers and house servants. Few Confederate-enlisted men owned slaves and so never brought them along to war; a sizeable percentage of officers, especially early in the conflict, did bring a slave with them, but this declined significantly as the war dragged on. As an institution, slavery was irrevocably weakened after the Emancipation Proclamation, and by the last year of the war, many slaves—even those in unconquered areas of the South—refused to work, or had no incentive to do so, as the majority of white men had left home. White female or black overseers, increasingly common by 1864, could not maintain discipline, and as slavery began to die so, too, did the remaining economic power of the Confederacy.

AFTER

As the Confederate army lost more and more fighting men, the idea of enlisting slaves into the ranks was finally accepted by the Confederate Congress in Richmond.

FIRST PROPOSALS REJECTED
Certain Rebel generals, including **Richard Ewell**, **Patrick Cleburne**, and, ultimately, **Robert E. Lee**, proposed at different points in the war that the Richmond government grant **freedom in return for slaves' military service**. Even President Davis offered a bill in November 1864 extending emancipation to future enlisted slaves, but Congress refused to consider it.

CONGRESS ACCEPTS BLACK TROOPS
By February 1865, facing imminent defeat, and with the **powerful backing of both Lee and Davis**, the Congress grudgingly agreed to a limited form of emancipation for slaves who fought. Some **companies of black Confederate soldiers** were actually **drilling in the streets of Richmond** right before the **city fell** **152–153 >>**, but it was too little, too late.

Escaping to relative freedom
Escaped slaves were placed in camps which followed the Union army and both men and women found work helping the officers and soldiers. However, for many the reality of life away from the plantations was harsh.

The **Battle** of **Chancellorsville**

By early 1863 the Union Army of the Potomac was more than twice as strong as the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. By boldly dividing his army and maneuvering rapidly against the Union flank, General Robert E. Lee achieved an unlikely victory at Chancellorsville, but lost many men.

« BEFORE

The Eastern Theater had seen a series of bloody battles in 1862 in which, largely through poor generalship, the increasing Union strength had gained little advantage.

HOOKER REFORMS THE FEDERAL ARMY
Replacing the inept Burnside as commander of the Army of the Potomac after the **defeat at Fredericksburg** **«64–65**, Major General Joseph Hooker restored morale by revising uniforms and ensuring rations and pay were distributed on time. He also improved the army's organization, **creating a military intelligence service**, consolidating the cavalry under one command, and **decentralizing the artillery**.

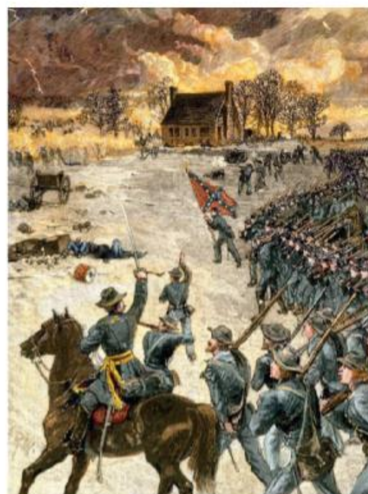
MAJOR GENERAL JOSEPH HOOKER

Major General Joseph Hooker drew up a grand operational plan for the Army of the Potomac in the spring of 1863. He would divide his 134,000-man force and lead three corps around General Lee's western flank, marching through the dense woods of the Virginia wilderness. At the same time, Major General John Sedgwick and the remaining three corps held Lee's attention at Fredericksburg.

Hooker's flanking force began its trek without incident in late April 1863 and succeeded in crossing both the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers with minimal resistance. Hooker then turned east, moving his 70,000 men through the wilderness, past a large estate locally known as Chancellorsville, and into the open country five miles to the west of Fredericksburg.

Battle is joined

Lee and his lieutenant, Stonewall Jackson, reacted quickly to the threat. On May 1, Lee left General Jubal Early and 12,000 men to watch Sedgwick at Fredericksburg, while Jackson and the rest of the army marched down the Orange Plank Road to meet Hooker.



A general's great march
Stonewall Jackson led 33,000 men on his flank march. The tired men traveled many miles to the strike the enemy. One rebel noted, "I reckon the Devil himself would have run with Jackson in his rear."

Near the Zoan Church, General Lafayette McLaws' Division ran head first into part of George Meade's Union Fifth Corps. For a while the Federals pushed McLaws back, but when the Confederate threw in his reserve, they retreated, calling for reinforcements.

Hooker was shocked at the resistance his advance had met. Losing his nerve, he ordered his two forward corps to withdraw to Chancellorsville. The mood among the Union commanders on the night of May 1 was incredulous. Lee and Jackson, on the other hand, could hardly believe their good luck.

Later that night, the Southern chieftains conferred. General J.E.B. Stuart's cavalry scouts had discovered the Union right wing was "hanging in the air" so Jackson and 33,000 troops of his corps would march off through the thick woods on the morning of May 2 to attack the unprotected Federal flank. Lee would keep only 14,000 men to confront all of Hooker's force at Chancellorsville, should he attack.

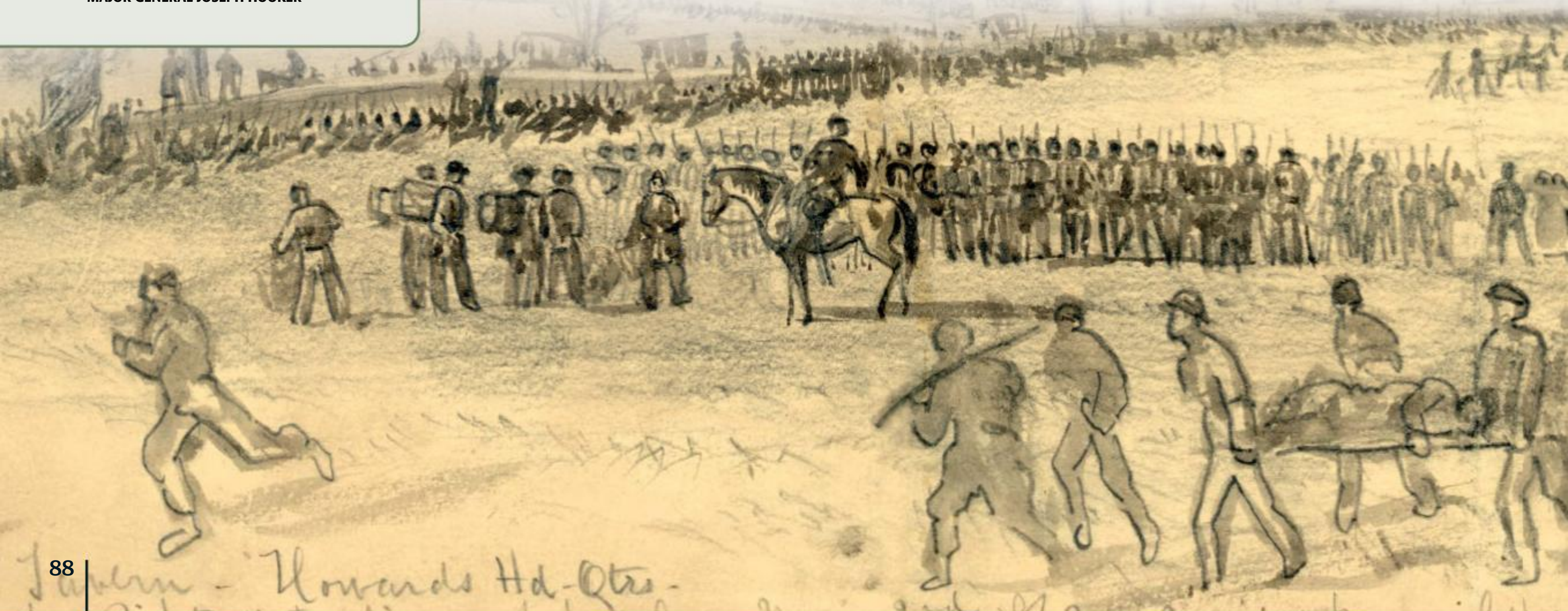
134,000 Strength of Hooker's Army of the Potomac at the start of the campaign.

62,000 Strength of the Confederate Army of North Virginia on the same date.

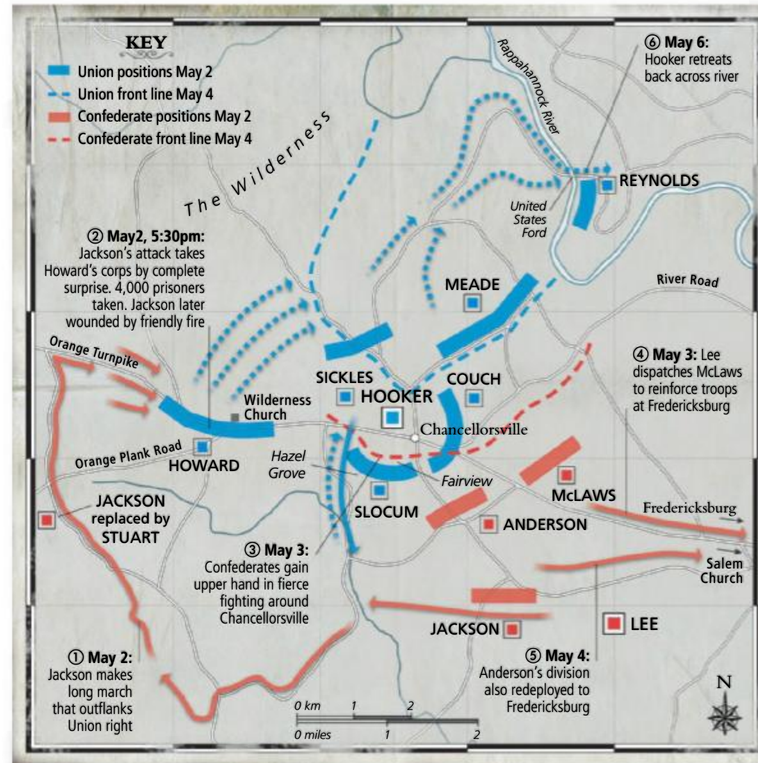
The "Flying Dutchmen"

Men of Major General Daniel Sickles' Third Corps, stationed on a cleared hill called Hazel Grove just to the west of Chancellorsville, discovered Jackson's flank march not long after it got started. Hooker and Sickles misinterpreted the movement as a Confederate retreat. Eleventh Corps commander, Oliver Otis Howard, stationed on the extreme right of the Union line—exactly where Jackson was headed—also believed the enemy was retreating. Scouts reported the enemy massing in the forest to the right, but Howard dismissed them.

About 5:30pm, with darkness falling, Jackson unleashed 26,000 Confederates, screaming the rebel yell, into the 8,500



Battle sketch
Civil War artist Alfred Waud made drawings of the conflict for the American press. Here, an injured soldier is stretchered off the Chancellorsville battlefield. General Howard's headquarters at Dowdall's Tavern is nearby.



Union failure at Chancellorsville
After Jackson's rapid march to outflank the Union right on May 2, the Union army was outfought in the fierce action of the following day. Union commander Joseph Hooker lost his nerve and retreated back across the Rappahannock.

men of the Eleventh Corps. There was no time for the Union regiments to realign and react; the only safety was in flight. But further along the Orange Turnpike, two stubborn holding actions delayed the Southern advance, including a stand made by Brigadier General Carl Schurz's totally German Third Division at the Wilderness Church. Unfairly labeled by nativistic Anglo-Americans as the "flying Dutchmen," these men had in fact bought time for the rest of the Federal Army to react.

Lee's greatest day

Frustrated by the failing momentum of his attack, and in the pitch black of the woods, Jackson reconnoitered in front of his lines to ascertain the positions of the Union forces and was accidentally shot by his own men. Stuart took over.

May 3 dawned a brilliant, crisp day, and by the time the sun was rising above the trees at Hazel Grove, this key terrain was in Confederate hands. Southern artillery swarmed the open ground, dominating the clearings of Fairview and Chancellorsville, and opened a murderous fire on Union infantry and artillery holding those positions. Waves of Southern infantry assaulted hastily prepared Federal brigades posted in the woods to the north and south of Fairview. Some of the most vicious fighting of the war occurred before Hooker ordered the abandonment of first Fairview, and then Chancellorsville.

Despite having two corps standing idly by that could have crashed into Stuart's northern flank, Hooker chose to retreat. Nearly all his subordinates agreed that Chancellorsville was one of the greatest Northern lost opportunities of the war. Against all odds, Lee had scored a tactical victory, inflicting 17,000 casualties on the enemy while suffering 13,000 of his own—though among these was the irreplaceable Jackson.

AFTER

The strategic initiative in the East passed to the Confederates. As the Union army reorganized, Lee's next major move would be the advance to Gettysburg.

SALEM CHURCH

Union Major General Sedgwick and his Sixth Corps attacked Jubal Early at Fredericksburg on the morning of May 3. They pushed him off Marye's Heights, and proceeded west down the Orange Turnpike toward Lee's rear. **A desperate stand by Brigadier General Cadmus Wilcox's Rebel brigade** at Salem Church stopped Sedgwick cold. The next day, the **Confederates launched a series of uncoordinated assaults** on Sedgwick, who beat each of them off in turn and escaped relatively unscathed back across the river. Confronting his tired and unsuccessful division commanders, Robert E. Lee reportedly lost his temper over this lost opportunity.

"WHAT WILL THE PEOPLE SAY?"

Upon hearing **news of Hooker's withdrawal** across the Rappahannock River, a horrified **President Lincoln** turned to a colleague and said, "My God, my God, what will the people say?" Yet another campaign in the East had come to nothing. **Northern morale plummeted**.

CASUALTIES AT MARYE'S HEIGHTS

"At that moment I believed my **commanding general** a **whipped man**."
DARIUS COUCH, COMMANDING THE UNION SECOND CORPS, ON HOOKER'S LOSS OF NERVE, MAY 1, 1863

Lee Advances North

The Confederate high command approved Lee's strategy of invading the North for a second time. In mid-June 1863, the Army of Northern Virginia began its advance toward Pennsylvania. The Union army was initially wrong-footed, engaging the Rebels unsuccessfully at Brandy Station and Winchester.

After the Battle of Chancellorsville, the South had the advantage. Now it was the turn of the Confederacy to decide where it would strike the Union army next rather than simply reacting to Northern advances. For the next few weeks, debates raged in the capital, Richmond, over what to do. On his way to rejoin General Robert E. Lee at Fredericksburg, General James Longstreet proposed to President Davis that he and two divisions travel by rail to Tennessee to assault Major General William Rosecrans. Longstreet would thereby relieve pressure on Vicksburg. Secretary of War James Seddon then countered with a wild proposal to send Longstreet directly to Mississippi to attack General Ulysses S. Grant's rear at Vicksburg, but Lee stepped in at this point, arguing convincingly for another thrust north. Lee proposed that now was the time to deal the Union a strategic death blow before conditions in the West deteriorated to a point of no return. He was also keen to advance while both the Northern peace movement and the Army of Northern Virginia were still strong.

Confederate general Ewell
Despite losing a leg at Second Bull Run, Ewell justified Lee's confidence in him at this point in the war by raiding the Union garrison at Winchester.

Commander's strategy

Lee was certain that a Confederate victory or series of victories in Pennsylvania or northern Maryland at this juncture would strengthen the Copperheads— Northern Democrats opposed to the Civil War who favored a peace agreement with the South. Thus, he reasoned, Lincoln would become a president without a party in the next election. Furthermore, farmers in Virginia would be relieved of the burdens of conflict for at least a season, and the Confederate army could live off the Northerners' land for a change. The chance of recognition by foreign powers might again come back on the table, not to mention an outright peace with the North should Lee and his forces destroy the Army of the Potomac and capture Washington or Baltimore.

The possibility of achieving Southern independence was finally within sight, and when the Confederate cabinet voted on Lee's proposal, only one member, Postmaster General John Reagan, a Texan, disagreed. Longstreet also retained some doubts about the wisdom of the decision, but loyally followed his commander's directives. Lee took off the earlier part of June to rest, resupply his Army of Northern Virginia, and receive reinforcements from the Carolinas and western Virginia. In mid-June, thousands of Confederate soldiers began the long march northward by swinging around to the west and advancing down the Shenandoah Valley.

Shock for Stuart

Just as the Army of Northern Virginia was beginning its final preparations for the movement North, the flamboyant Major General Jeb Stuart and his Confederate cavalry received a nasty shock from their Union counterparts. On June 9, at Brandy Station in Culpeper County, Virginia, a large Union cavalry force under the command of General Alfred Pleasonton surprised Stuart's troopers in their encampment. Following a hard day's fighting in which both sides gained the upper hand at different times, the Union cavalry finally yielded the battlefield to the Southerners and withdrew. Tactically, the engagement was the largest horse-mounted combat of the Civil War and a Confederate triumph—strategically, it assumed far greater proportions.

Union horsemen had gained confidence from it, believing that they could now stand toe-to-toe against the Southern cavaliers. Henceforth they would be more aggressive. Stuart emerged from the battle physically unscathed but with a bruised ego. He asked Lee for permission to ride around Major General Joseph Hooker's corps slowly advancing to the east—Stuart's goal was to gain better intelligence on Union movements, but in the process he hoped to salvage his reputation.

Testing times for Lee

Having extracted a promise from Stuart that he would quickly rejoin the main Confederate force, Lee agreed, and on June 25 he suddenly found himself without Stuart and his three best cavalry brigades. The cavalry chief had left Lee

Cavalry charge near Brandy Station
On June 9, 1863 more than 19,000 cavalry clashed for 12 hours along the Rappahannock River in a surprise encounter. It resulted in a Southern victory, but alerted the Union to Lee's unexpected advance northward.

« BEFORE

In the wake of Stonewall Jackson's death, Lee reorganized his army to prepare for an offensive thrust. The Union, meanwhile, was disheartened after repeated failures.

CONFEDERATE PROMOTIONS

Eager to reorganize the Army of Northern Virginia, **Lee abandoned the old system** of two wings led by two corps commanders. He recommended the **promotion of generals Richard Ewell and A. P. Hill** to corps command, with Ewell taking over most of Jackson's old force. Hill was to retain the rest, along with new troops gathered from other parts of Virginia and the Carolinas. Longstreet kept command of his corps, and became Lee's chief lieutenant.

NORTHERN DESPONDENCY

The North had little to celebrate in May and June of 1863. **Grant had yet to take Vicksburg**, and the first attempt to attack Charleston, South Carolina, ended in failure on April 7, when eight monitors were repulsed by Rebel guns at Fort Sumter. **Northern Copperheads lamented that Confederate independence was near** and the time had come for negotiations with the South.

DAMAGED MONITOR TURRET

“I shall **throw an overwhelming force** on their advance, crush it, follow up the success . . . and **virtually destroy** the [Army of the Potomac].”

GENERAL LEE IN A LETTER TO MAJOR GENERAL ISAAC TRIMBLE, 1863

Lee crosses the Potomac
In mid-June, Lee and his 75,000-strong army crossed the Potomac River into Maryland. This contemporary illustration shows Lee in three-quarter view in the foreground conferring with an officer.

with just enough horsemen to screen the Southern army from Union cavalry probes, but not enough to provide him with a rapid scouting force for his infantry. The timing could not have been worse—the Confederate infantry had just begun crossing the Pennsylvania state line as his cavalry commander departed. Lee would be operationally blinded until Stuart returned from reconnaissance. For his part, Joseph Hooker refused to believe that Lee's initial movements represented another great raid. Rather, he rationalized that the enemy was simply trying to get on his operational flank by moving to the west. To foil him, Hooker proposed to Lincoln a rapid descent on Richmond. The Confederates, he considered, would be forced to retreat to protect their capital.

"I think Lee's army, and not Richmond, is your true objective point," Lincoln responded curtly. He added that the Confederates had to be spread out as they headed west and north, and urged Hooker to attack and defeat the enemy posthaste, declaring: "The animal must be very slim somewhere. Could you not break him?"

The general chose to disobey Lincoln, however, and instead of attacking, he trailed Lee's advance cautiously, while keeping between the Confederates and Washington. As he did so, Confederate general Richard Stoddert Ewell's corps successfully attacked and destroyed the Union garrison at Winchester on June 13–15. During this raid, Ewell was able to capture many thousands of prisoners, artillery, horses, and supplies in a masterly manner, reminiscent of Stonewall Jackson's seizure of Harpers Ferry the year before. Hooker resigned on June 28, 1863, following continued arguments with Lincoln.

907 **The number of Union casualties during the cavalry battle at Brandy Station in Virginia, on June 9, 1863. Confederate casualties numbered 523, and it was the first time Jeb Stuart's leadership was criticized.**

The road to Gettysburg

Union attempts to determine the whereabouts of the Confederate army met with repeated failure. The president despaired as the telegraph wires grew increasingly hot with frantic appeals from Pennsylvania governor, Andrew Curtin, who reported that the Confederates had entered his state and were threatening the Pennsylvania capital, Harrisburg. Where was the Army of the Potomac?

Lincoln's patience was wearing thin, citizens in Pennsylvania's border counties girded themselves for occupation by the Confederates, and the North held its collective breath as all eyes turned to south-central Pennsylvania.

Stars and Bars
This example of the 11-starred version of the first Confederate national flag was said to have been captured by the 93rd Ohio Volunteers in Tennessee in 1863.

AFTER

Despite the approaching enemy, morale among the soldiers in the Northern encampments remained strong. But Lee's Confederates were also bolstered.

RENEWED NORTHERN MORALE

Within the Union army itself, most soldiers were regaining their morale as **reports of the enemy** in their "home" territory reached their encampments. Fighting and losing in Virginia because of inept commanders was one thing, but **engaging the Confederates on Northern soil** was another. Under a new commander—General George Meade—the Army of the Potomac was ready for the chance to defeat the Confederates. As one officer reported: "The **men are more determined** than I have ever before seen them."

INVINCIBLE SOUTHERNERS

As the Confederates moved northward, **optimism among the men in the ranks soared**. Southerners were eager to crush the Yankees once and for all. **An aura of invincibility** ran throughout the Rebel camps, a confidence bred of repeated battlefield success and **unwavering trust in their leader, Robert E. Lee**.

BEFORE

Robert E. Lee's invasion of the North began with an advance into Pennsylvania, which initially met little Union resistance.

ORDERS AND COUNTER-ORDERS

As advance elements of General Richard Ewell's Confederate corps **crossed the Mason-Dixon Line**, local residents either fled or tried to hide their possessions from **Southern foraging parties**. Lee now ordered Ewell to divide his corps. One division marched toward York, capturing that city in late June, but **could not cross the Susquehanna River** because Union militia burned the only bridge. Another column headed up the **Cumberland Valley toward Carlisle**, to strike Harrisburg from that direction. But before they could cross the river, Lee recalled his scattered army to **concentrate near Cashtown**. The Federal army was drawing near and Lee wanted to be ready.

LINCOLN RELIEVES HOOKER

Slow to react to Lee's initial movements north in June, **Union general Joseph Hooker**, in command of the Army of the Potomac, **lost his remaining credibility** with Abraham Lincoln. On June 28, Lincoln replaced him with **Major General George G. Meade**.

The **Battle** of **Gettysburg**

Neither side intended to fight a major battle at Gettysburg but both poured troops into the area after their initial clashes. In the first two days the Southern forces failed to capitalize on their initial numerical superiority. The ferocious combat of the third day would result in a disastrous defeat for the South.

A decision by Union cavalry commander Brigadier General John Buford precipitated the battle. At the end of June 1863, his division of the Army of the Potomac was near the town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, when he learned that the Confederates were coming quickly in his direction. At the same time, Union infantry corps were moving up from Maryland. Realizing the danger of the Confederates reaching Gettysburg first, Buford made a stand on the ridges west of Gettysburg in a bid to hold them off until the Federals could mass and hold the high ground (Cemetery Hill, Culp's Hill, and Cemetery Ridge) south of town. Lee had no intention of fighting at Gettysburg, but Buford's stand forced him to engage before he was ready.

Death of General Reynolds
Reynolds commanded the Army of the Potomac's left wing. The circumstances of his death are disputed: he may have been killed by a Southern sharpshooter or by "friendly fire" from his own side.

Early on July 1, Southern troops under Brigadier General Henry Heth blundered into Buford's men along the Chambersburg Pike and were forced to deploy. Although Buford's troopers had the edge in firepower with their breech-loading carbines, Heth's men began to push them back—but not fast enough. By mid-morning, Buford's tired command had received support from the First Corps under Major General John Reynolds. Intense fighting erupted between Reynolds's veteran troops and Confederate divisions under Heth and Major General Dorsey Pender. Reynolds was shot from his horse as he led his Iron Brigade into position. Yet despite

The retaking of East Cemetery Hill
On July 2, the "Louisiana Tigers" Brigade overran the Union position on East Cemetery Hill. Peter F. Rothermel's *The Repulse of the Louisiana Tigers* (1866) shows Union troops rushing the hill and driving the Tigers off again.

his death and savage casualties in the Iron Brigade, the Union forces pushed the Southerners back through McPherson's Woods and were poised to hold the ridges west of town.

Corps against corps

Word now arrived that gray-clad troops were moving down from the North. These were General Ewell's Second Corps, and they were headed precisely for the flank of the Union First Corps. Before they could get there, however, the Union Eleventh Corps, under Oliver O. Howard, had arrived dusty and thirsty after a rapid march from Emmitsburg and positioned itself to support the First Corps' right. Howard deployed his brigades too far forward and dangerously stretched an already tenuous defensive line. When Ewell's divisions came on the field, General Lee, riding forward from the west, grasped the opportunity presented to him. He ordered Ewell and General A. P. Hill, in command of Third Corps, to attack in force.

Four Confederate divisions swept forward in a semicircle from the west and north, driving in the Eleventh Corps, then the First Corps. By late afternoon, both corps were in retreat through the streets of Gettysburg, the victorious Confederates hot on their heels. Safety for the bluecoats beckoned on the high ground of Cemetery Hill, which was occupied by reserves that Howard had wisely left there.

Union drum
Drums were used for communication on the battlefield. Each regiment had several drummers who would beat out signals to the troops on the commanding officer's order.

Now those forces would serve as protection against the expected Confederate assault as the sun began to sink lower in the sky. But that assault never came. Lee knew that the rest of the Union army was on its way and that now was the time to strike the final blow. He turned to Ewell and ordered him to attack the heights "if practicable." Ewell, aware of his troops' exhaustion and worried by reports of Federals to his left, did not find an attack practicable. Most of the defeated Union Eleventh and First Corps escaped to Cemetery Hill where, shaken and hurt, they regrouped.

> "I think this the **strongest position** by nature upon which to **fight a battle** that I ever saw."
>
> **LIEUTENANT GENERAL WINFIELD S. HANCOCK, UNION ARMY,** JULY 1, 1863

The second day begins

General George G. Meade, commander of the Army of the Potomac, rode up before midnight. Conferring with Second Corps commander, Lieutenant General Winfield S. Hancock, he inspected the positions, and deemed them secure. By the early morning of July 2, three more Union corps had joined their comrades on Cemetery Hill.

Frustrated by the hollow victory of the previous day, Lee met his generals to consider options. Rejecting a proposal from Lieutenant General James Longstreet to move around the enemy and reposition between them and Washington, Lee decided on a double envelopment. Longstreet's First Corps would attack the Union southern (left) flank with two divisions and a third from Hill's corps, while Ewell would try to deceive the enemy with a show of force against Cemetery and Culp's hills.

Longstreet was slow in sending forward his two divisions, commanded by generals Lafayette McLaws and John Bell Hood, both tired from a forced march the night before. Federal signalers on Little Round Top at the end of the Northern line spotted their initial movements. Longstreet's infantry lost valuable time as it doubled back to take an unobserved route. By the time McLaws and Hood charged forward about 4 p.m., General Daniel Sickles' Union Third Corps had advanced to the Emmitsburg Road Ridge and blocked their way. Had Sickles not been there, Lee's plan to roll up Meade's left flank might well have worked.

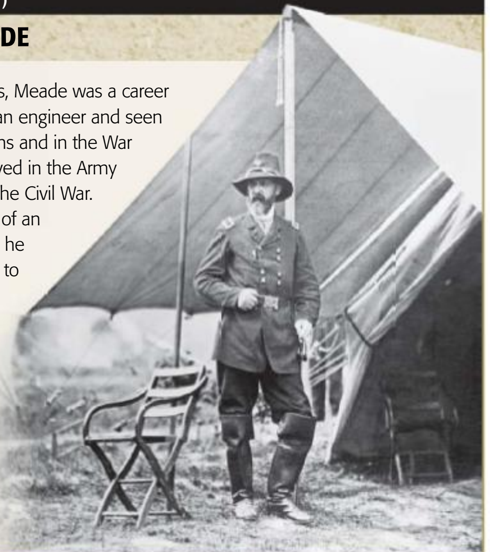
Fighting withdrawal

Through the rest of the afternoon and into early evening, Longstreet's troops attacked Sickles' corps. At the Peach Orchard, Devil's Den, and Wheatfield, Sickles' men, reinforced by brigades from the Fifth and Sixth Corps, retreated and counterattacked until finally forced to yield their positions. The climax on the southern end of the field occurred at Little Round Top, as Hood's tired and thirsty Alabamans and Texans assaulted—and almost captured—the anchor to Meade's position. Colonel Joshua L. Chamberlain and his 20th Maine would become famous for their defense of the hill's southern slope. Moreover, it is likely that Meade would have sent in the bulk of Sixth Corps to retake it. Union numbers and interior lines were starting to make a difference. »

UNION GENERAL (1815–72)

GEORGE GORDON MEADE

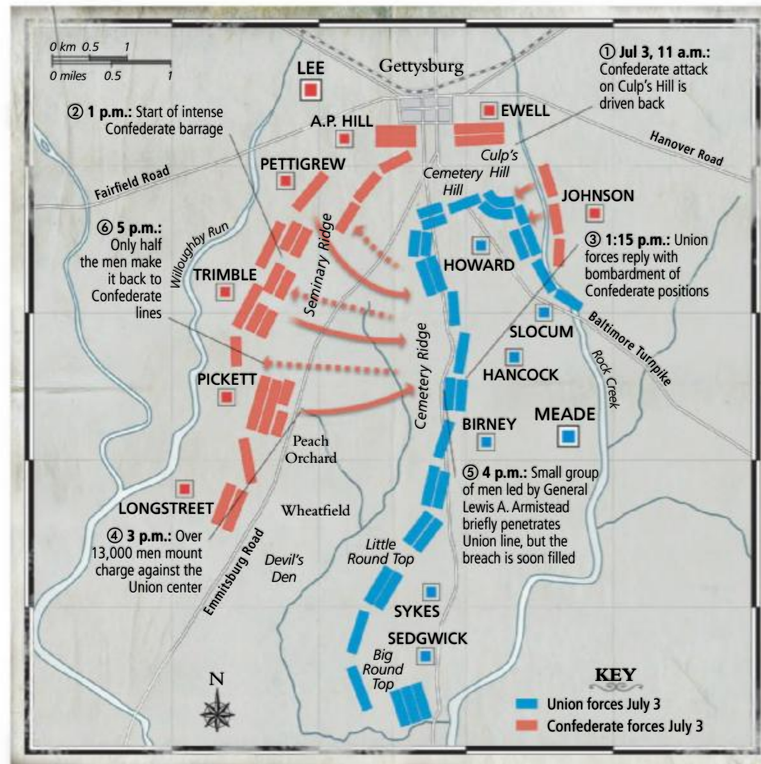
Born in Spain of American parents, Meade was a career army officer who had worked as an engineer and seen action against the Seminole Indians and in the War with Mexico of 1846–48. He served in the Army of the Potomac from the start of the Civil War. With the temper and appearance of an "old googly-eyed snapping turtle," he had the character and tactical skill to beat Lee at Gettysburg, but he was criticized for failing to follow up Lee's retreating army in the aftermath. Meade stayed in command of the Army of the Potomac until the end of the war, although in the final campaigns he fought under the close supervision of Ulysses S. Grant, the Union general-in-chief.



CONFEDERATE GENERAL (1825–75)

GEORGE EDWARD PICKETT

After graduating last in his West Point class, Pickett, a native Virginian, saw service on the Western frontier and in the War with Mexico. As a Confederate, he fought at Gaines' Mill and commanded a division at Fredericksburg. He led his Virginia troops in the fateful Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg on July 3, though he did not originate the plan. Pickett served until the end of the war with limited success. What he lacked in tactical knowledge he made up for with a dashing personality that made him a favorite with subordinates and superiors alike.



The third day at Gettysburg
The outcome of the battle was decided by Lee's decision to launch an all-out attack on the Union center in the afternoon. The assault on Cemetery Ridge resulted in unsustainable Confederate casualties.

» Robert E. Lee was discouraged by the events of July 2. When cavalry under General Jeb Stuart rejoined the Confederate army that evening, Stuart got only the tersest of greetings. He boasted he had brought 100 captured Union wagons. "What good are they to me now?" Lee replied.

A fatal mistake

Lee's decision to attack the Union center on the third day of Gettysburg has been long debated. His judgment may have been impaired—he was tired and suffering from diarrhea and a heart condition. He thought he had thinned Meade's line by obliging him to reinforce his flanks the previous day. He also believed his men could do anything he asked of them and was determined to win the decisive victory that had seemed so close the last two days. Longstreet again urged Lee to disengage and go around the Federal flank. Lee refused.

Meanwhile, General Meade held a council of war around midnight on July 2. He listened to his generals' opinions, and resolved to stay and fight it out. Both armies had suffered badly in the previous two days, but the Union army still held the high ground. Meade was determined to keep it.

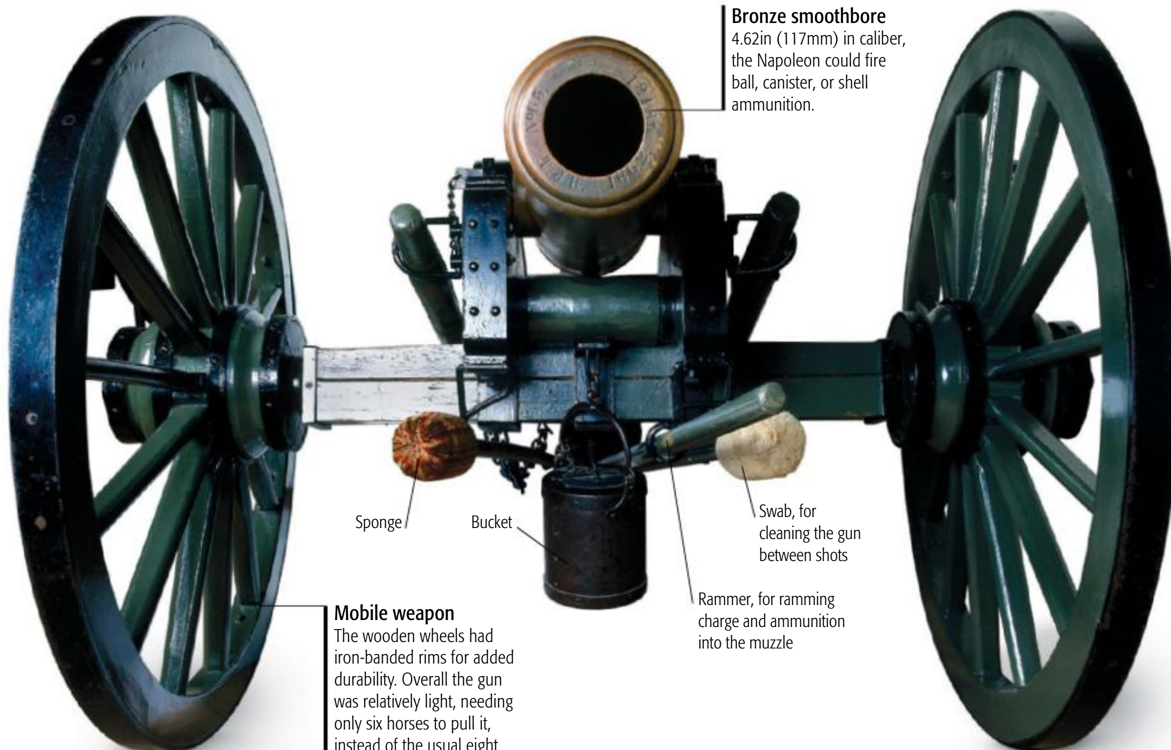
At 1 p.m. on July 3, 150 Confederate cannons opened fire from Seminary Ridge in the greatest Southern artillery barrage of the war. Federal guns answered, and for two hours the ground shook with the impact of exploding shells. The noise could be heard as far away as Pittsburgh. Meant to smash Union positions on Cemetery Ridge, the bulk of the Confederate shells fell on the rearward slope, disrupting only hospitals and reserve artillery. Then suddenly the Federal counter-battery fire fell silent as Union artillerists cooled their overheated guns. Thinking he had suppressed them, Longstreet's artillery chief recommended that the infantry attack should begin, following Lee's plan of battle.

Pickett's Charge

Longstreet could only nod dourly when General George Pickett, commanding a fresh division of Virginians, asked permission to advance. Two depleted divisions of A. P. Hill's corps, under General Johnston Pettigrew and General Isaac R. Trimble, also stepped out of the protection of the wood line and began a march of 1 mile (1.6km) to the Union center. With bands playing and banners snapping in the breeze, the Southern line moved forward. Union defenders in Winfield S. Hancock's Second Corps felt a sense of awe at the approach of this grand assault.

When their enemies were about a third of the way across the field, Union artillery opened up with a vengeance,

160,000 The number of men fielded by the two armies at Gettysburg, roughly 70,000 Confederate and 90,000 Union troops. About 51,000 became casualties —killed, wounded, or captured.



Napoleon gun-howitzer
U.S.-made versions of the French-designed 12-pounder (5.5kg) Model 1857 Napoleon gun-howitzer were the war's most widely used field artillery weapon, seeing service with both North and South.

ripping great holes in the advancing gray ranks. The gaps filled, and the Confederates kept coming. As they crossed the Emmitsburg Road, Union infantry joined in with devastating volleys. Some of the men in blue chanted "Fredericksburg, Fredericksburg!" in reference to the recent Union defeat in December the previous year. Now it was their turn to be victorious.

Repelled and defeated

Most of Pettigrew's and Trimble's shredded commands disintegrated before they reached Cemetery Ridge, but a few joined the remnants of Pickett's division as about 200 Southerners jumped over the stone wall, planted their flags on the Union position, and fought hand-to-hand using clubbed muskets and bayonets. A few of Hancock's regiments were overrun and started to turn for the rear, but timely reinforcements bolstered the Union line and prevented the breakthrough.

Brigadier General Lewis Armistead, one of Pickett's commanders, fell while leading his men with his hat on the tip of his sword, minutes after his old friend Hancock had been wounded. The men who followed him were killed, wounded, or captured. Pickett's charge had failed. Through the smoke, survivors trudged back to Seminary Ridge. Lee greeted some of them, and lamented, "All this has been my fault."

In the evening of July 4, the Army of Northern Virginia began its long retreat back to the safety of Virginia. Leaving in a downpour, it wound its way west across the South Mountain to Chambersburg, then turned south toward Hagerstown and the Shenandoah Valley, from which it had come. The line of ambulances filled with wounded stretched back for 17 miles (27km) along the road.

Visual record
Photographers visited the Gettysburg battlefield in the aftermath of the battle, documenting scenes like this of a dead Confederate sharpshooter. His body has been moved and posed among the rocks of Devil's Den.

Meade's army had also suffered badly, and he followed too cautiously, much to the exasperation of Lincoln, who saw another opportunity to crush Lee north of the Potomac River lost.

The human cost

Union losses at Gettysburg came to just over 23,000 men, the costliest battle yet for the North. Confederate losses were estimated at between 23,000 and 28,000. Such destruction of manpower meant that Lee could never again take the strategic offensive. The loss of experienced officers was especially devastating. Lee's gamble to crush the Army of the Potomac had only weakened the Confederacy.

AFTER

After Gettysburg, Confederate fortunes began an almost uninterrupted decline in all theaters of the war. Only minor inconclusive actions were fought in the East for the rest of 1863.

VICTORIES AND REVERSES

On July 4, the day Lee began his retreat from Gettysburg, Confederate forces **surrendered at Vicksburg 96–99 ››**. Union **prospects in the West** were matching the success in the East.

In Tennessee, Union armies **launched an offensive** in late June 1863. The Confederates, under General Braxton Bragg, **abandoned Chattanooga** in early September, but fought back with a **victory at Chickamauga 102–103››**. In the aftermath, the Union army was **besieged in Chattanooga 104–105››**.

GRANT PROMOTED

On October 17, 1863, in response to the reverses in Tennessee, Lincoln appointed Grant, hero of the capture of Vicksburg, to **overall command of the Western theater**.

Ambulance at Gettysburg
The Army of the Potomac's Ambulance Corps was the first medical organization on either side specifically established to ensure that wounded men were evacuated from the battlefield as soon as possible.

The Vicksburg Campaign

By late 1862, Vicksburg was the last significant Confederate bastion along the entire length of the Mississippi River. General Ulysses S. Grant resolved to capture the city, but faced a long initial struggle to get his army into position to attack. With control of the Mississippi at stake, this was a vital battle.

After consolidating his army at Memphis, Tennessee, in the fall of 1862, Grant decided on a two-pronged offensive downriver against the Confederate Mississippi bastion at Vicksburg.

A swift descent by 40,000 men of General William Tecumseh Sherman's wing of the army along the Mississippi would be followed by Grant himself taking an overland route. But Confederate cavalry raids by Earl Van Dorn and Nathan Bedford Forrest so badly disrupted Grant's logistical and supply lines, that the Union commander was compelled to call off his advance.

The telegram informing Sherman of this change never reached him, and so the Confederates at Vicksburg, under the command of General John C. Pemberton, mobilized to meet Sherman head-on. At Chickasaw Bayou on December 29, Sherman launched 20,000 of his troops against the steep bluffs and suffered 1,800 casualties to the Confederates' 200. Grant would never again attack from the north. He now considered the problem.

The terrain north and west of the city presented numerous obstacles to an army on the march. It was swampy, forested, streaked by bayous and streams, and offered very few usable roads. Vicksburg itself was defended by well-placed heavy cannon that could devastate any Union fleet floating downstream. Four times Grant tried to bypass the city to the west by cutting canals and using the bayous to get his army below, but torrential rains aggravated the already formidable logistical challenges, and he failed.

The port of Vicksburg
Steamboats had made Vicksburg a major trading center. A Confederate stronghold controlling traffic on the Mississippi River, the city was an essential strategic target of Union campaigns in the Western Theater.

Grant now resolved to march his army down the western bank of the river. David Porter's fleet would run past the Vicksburg batteries, rendezvous with the troops downstream, and ferry them to the eastern bank just south of the city.

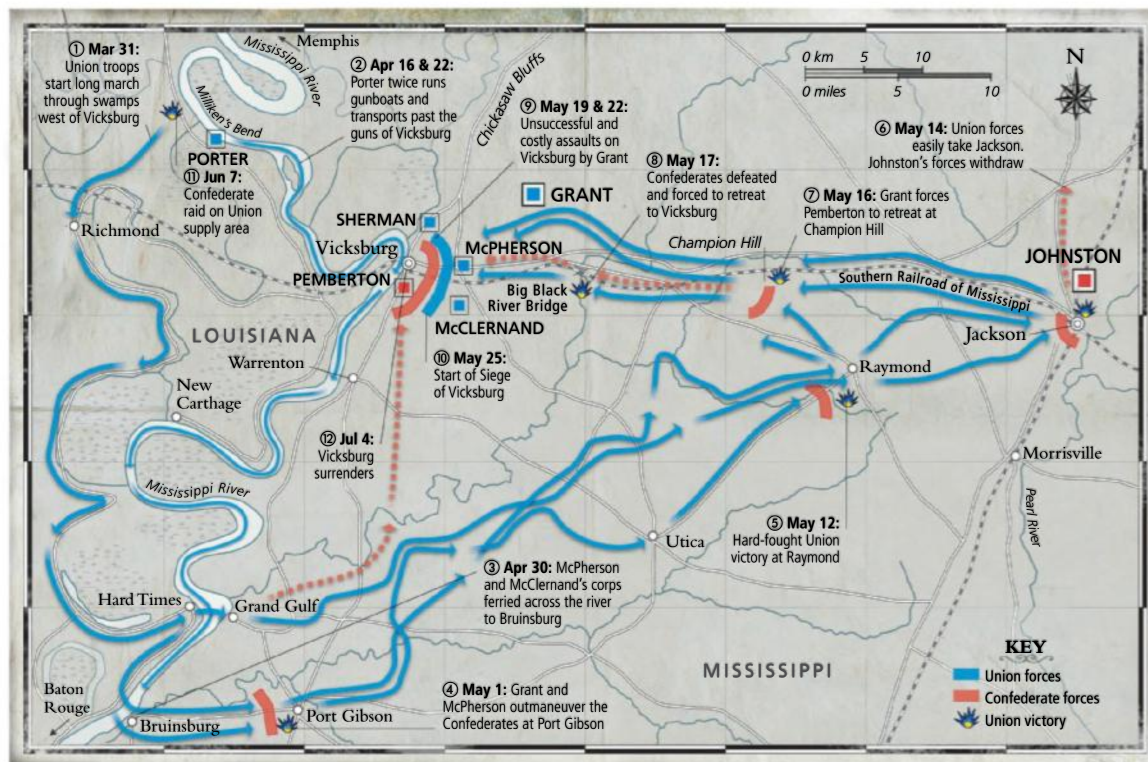
It was a bold plan, and Sherman and James Birdseye McPherson, Grant's chief lieutenants, both balked at it. They urged him instead to reconsolidate at Memphis, but Grant knew that both the Union and Lincoln needed a military success. It was now or never—so on March 31, the long march began.

Preliminary moves

On the night of April 16, 1863, Porter's gunboats made their bold dash past Vicksburg. One transport was sunk and the enemy scored 68 hits on the fleet overall, but the fast current and the element of surprise worked to Porter's favor. A few nights later, Porter got most of the rest of his fleet past. Meanwhile, Grant moved his army overland to the crossing point of Hard Times, and stood ready to transport his men across the river.

> **To effect his assault on Vicksburg, Grant had 70 miles (113km) of corduroy road (made from tree trunks laid across the route) built between his base and the river crossing-point at Hard Times.**

Theoretically, Pemberton could still contest the crossing, so Grant ordered a diversion. Brigadier General Benjamin Grierson, in command of a Union



Grant's routes to Vicksburg
The Vicksburg campaign was not straightforward. Grant had to march his men through the swampland west of the Mississippi River, then drive off Confederate forces east of the city before digging in for a long siege.

« BEFORE

During 1862, a series of Union successes on land in Tennessee and by river flotillas on the Mississippi cleared most of the Confederate positions along the river.

NORTH AND SOUTH

The **capture of New Orleans** **« 54–55** **opened the Mississippi** to Union warships coming up from the south. **Union river forces** also gained the upper hand in actions **on the Ohio** and attacked south from Missouri on the Mississippi itself. After defeating Southern vessels near **Memphis in June 1862**, they reached the Yazoo River above Vicksburg and were **joined there** by some of **Farragut's force** from New Orleans **« 56–57**

GRANT'S FIRST VICTORIES

In the spring of 1862, General Grant fought the successful **Henry and Donelson campaign** in northern Tennessee **« 58–59**, then narrowly avoided defeat at **Shiloh** **« 60–61** By fall 1862, further victories had confirmed the **Union hold on Memphis** and Corinth.

cavalry brigade, was sent south, deep into Mississippi, to destroy the railroads supplying Vicksburg, confuse Pemberton, and keep the Confederates off balance. The raiders rode southward to the east of Jackson, eventually swinging west to join up with Union troops at Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The ruse worked.

Pemberton sent most of his cavalry and an entire division on a wild goose chase after the elusive Grierson, while Grant ferried his army to the Mississippi shore of the river. Sherman's corps also covered this operation, threatening a new advance on Chickasaw Bluffs. Grant's force moved swiftly inland, cut off from their supply lines, and lived off the enemy's land. He defeated a small Confederate garrison at Port Gibson on May 1, then marched northeast toward the state capital at Jackson.

General John C. Pemberton
Pemberton was a Northerner but chose to fight for the South in 1861—he believed in states' rights, and his wife was from Virginia. His unsuccessful defense of Vicksburg was his only significant part in the war.

Confederate confusion

In a matter of days, Grant's boldness had shattered Pemberton's confidence. His titular theater commander, Joseph E. Johnston, was also surprised. Both had supposed that Johnston would have several months to assemble an army, which, combined with Pemberton's 35,000 men, would allow them to attack on numerically equal terms at a time and point of their choosing. Grant had deprived them of that opportunity and was moving to strike them in detail (systematically). Pemberton thought he was the likely first target, as Grant's easy option would have been to march due north, up the river, with his flank guarded by Porter's fleet. Instead, Grant moved to the east away from Vicksburg.

Union victories

The War Department in Richmond finally ordered Johnston to concentrate his growing command at Jackson, but Sherman's and McPherson's fast-moving corps beat him to the city. Defeating about 6,000 graycoats entrenched outside the city on May 14, the Union soldiers went to work burning railroad yards, factories, and arsenals. Civilian homes close to the fires also went up in flames. Looking on Jackson's smoking ruins, Union soldiers derisively dubbed them "Chimneyville." This destruction of the enemy's infrastructure and civilian property set a precedent for future Union operations in the Western Theater.

Undeterred, Johnston urged Pemberton to move quickly to join his own remaining 6,000 men. On May 16, Grant struck hard at Pemberton's advance force at Champion Hill, between Jackson and Vicksburg. The Confederates occupied high ground, but McPherson's corps relentlessly struck their left flank, stunning the defenders. Pemberton's poor tactical leadership made matters worse, and by the end of the day the Confederates were in full retreat. It was a superb tactical victory for Grant's army.

Steaming past Vicksburg
On the night of April 16–17, Admiral Porter led 12 Union gunboats and transports south past Vicksburg, to carry supplies to the position where Grant planned to cross the river. Only one Union vessel was lost.

UNION ADMIRAL (1813–91)

DAVID DIXON PORTER

Born into a distinguished naval family, Porter served in the U.S. Navy from 1829. In the Civil War his first notable tasks were, as Farragut's subordinate, in helping plan and carry out the capture of New Orleans and the later Mississippi operations. His achievements in these brought him command of the Mississippi River Squadron in October 1862. In this post he made a major contribution to Grant's capture of Vicksburg. He later commanded Union naval forces in the Red River expedition of 1864, organizing the retreat successfully after the land campaign went awry. Finally, in 1865, he led the successful assault on Fort Fisher, North Carolina.

The Big Black River was the last natural barrier before the eastern approaches to Vicksburg. If Grant's army could breach this obstacle, only the formidable Confederate entrenchments around the city would stand between Grant and victory.

On May 17, troops of John A. McClernand's corps, eager to prove their mettle, attacked a strong Confederate position along this last line of defense before the Vicksburg entrenchments. The assault might have failed, but John C. Pemberton left a bridge standing that should have been burned. The Confederates were routed, losing another 1,750 men. In the aftermath of the Battle of Big Black River, the Confederate army could only withdraw to Vicksburg. Civilians in the Southern stronghold were appalled at the condition of Pemberton's men as they dejectedly filed into their positions. One eyewitness summed up their condition as "humanity in the last throes of existence."

The start of the siege

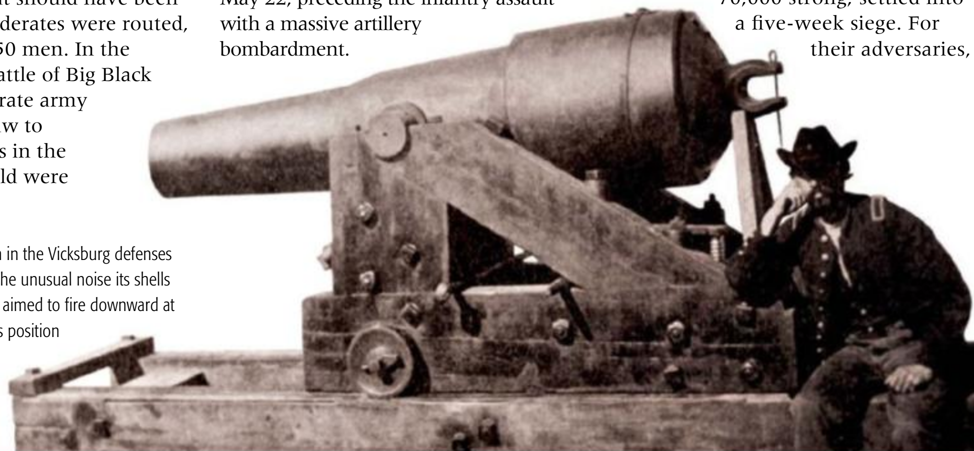
Believing correctly that his enemy was demoralized, Grant immediately ordered an attack in force on May 19. Union soldiers confidently charged forward but were greeted with walls of musketry fire from the well-protected Rebels. Nonplussed, Grant tried again on May 22, preceding the infantry assault with a massive artillery bombardment. The result: far worse Union casualties when lodgments initially secured by McClernand's corps went unexploited. Morale in Pemberton's army soared, but he failed to take the opportunity to evacuate the city before the Union encirclement was complete.

Although these failures were disheartening, Grant realized that if he had not allowed his men to try a direct assault against Vicksburg, they might not have accepted the drudgery of the ensuing siege. He and his bluecoats, now reinforced to 70,000 strong, settled into a five-week siege. For their adversaries, trapped within Vicksburg's defensive works, the constant artillery barrage strained their nerves, and the scarcity of food tested their physical stamina.

Pemberton's soldiers went on half and then quarter-rations as the balmy weeks of June progressed. Skinned rats and mulemeat became food. Civilians abandoned their homes and sought safety in dugouts excavated from the hillsides.

Despite these harsh conditions, Vicksburg's denizens remained defiant, confident that Joseph E. Johnston's relief army would soon lift the siege and attack Grant from the rear. "We may look at any hour for his approach," wrote the editor of the Vicksburg newspaper, now printed on the back of old wallpaper. "Hold out a few days longer, and our lines will be opened, the enemy driven away, the siege raised." Johnston's army, hovering to

The siege of Vicksburg
Union troops man their siege lines around impregnable Vicksburg. More than 200 Union guns pounded the city every day, while Porter's gunboats kept up a barrage from the river, until the inhabitants could take no more.



"Whistling Dick"
This 18-pounder (8kg) gun in the Vicksburg defenses gained its nickname from the unusual noise its shells made. The barrel could be aimed to fire downward at targets on the river from its position on the Vicksburg bluffs.

Union dugouts
The Union forces used siege tactics at Vicksburg, building trenches and dugouts and tunneling under the Southern lines. Here troops of Logan's Union division are seen near the "White House," northeast of the town.

the east of the city but blocked by seven Federal divisions under Sherman, had grown to 30,000 men in a matter of weeks, but many were inexperienced troops or untested conscripts. Worse, their commander was hesitant to attack the numerically superior Yankees.

The Confederates try to fight back

At the end of June, under immense pressure from a frantic Jefferson Davis, Johnston feebly probed with his five divisions against Sherman, but with no result. A more serious attempt had been made in early June by General Richard Taylor, in command of Louisiana's Confederate forces. However, Taylor had even fewer troops than Johnston and was stopped cold at Milliken's Bend, a fortified Federal supply depot north of Vicksburg.

Among the defenders at Milliken's Bend were several regiments of freshly trained black troops, who fought desperately against their attackers. Taylor's infuriated men shouted, "No quarter!" as they stormed forward. They succeeded in capturing several dozen of their enemy (some of whom were later sold into slavery), before being driven off.

Tightening the noose

Within Vicksburg, as the realization set in that Johnston and Taylor were not coming to their relief, the city's defenders lost the high morale they had in May, along with their physical strength. Grant wired Washington: "The fall of Vicksburg and the capture of most of the garrison can only be a question of time." Every day Pemberton's soldiers grew weaker; by the end of June, almost half were on regimental sick lists.

Consulting with his generals, the Confederate commander confirmed his suspicions that a breakout attack would certainly fail. He was determined to hold out, however, despite the long odds, confident that some event outside his entrenchments would either draw Grant away or force him to lift the siege. On June 28, Pemberton received a letter signed by a group of enlisted men declaring that, "If you can't feed us, you had better surrender us, horrible as the idea is …" He knew the game was up. The letter threatened mutiny and mass desertion if he failed to see General Grant to discuss terms.

On July 3, the same day that Pickett's Charge was repulsed at Gettysburg, John C. Pemberton, the Pennsylvania-born Southern general, met with Ulysses S. Grant, the former Illinois leather tanner, and agreed to surrender his army. Grant wanted to make the terms "unconditional surrender" as before, but soon realized that 30,000 Rebel prisoners headed north would swamp Union logistical capacity in the area. He therefore paroled every one of Pemberton's men, fully expecting to fight some of them again. Indeed, well over half of Vicksburg's captured defenders broke their parole. In fact, some were in action again with the Confederate army later in 1863.

> "**Grant is my man** and I am his for the **rest of the war.**"
>
> ABRAHAM LINCOLN, AFTER THE FALL OF VICKSBURG

Federal jubilation

On July 4, 1863, Union troops marched into the city. One soldier wrote, "This was the most glorious Fourth I ever spent." Despite the feelings of pride in their hearts, Grant's victors displayed compassion and restraint to their erstwhile foes, sharing provisions with starving soldiers and civilians alike. One woman, watching the victorious Union troops, observed these "stalwart, well-fed men" and contrasted them with the city's emaciated former defenders, who had been "blindly dashed" against them.

Refuge from the siege
Many of the civilian population of Vicksburg abandoned their homes because of the incessant bombardments from Union river gunboats, and took refuge in caves dug into the hillsides. Only a handful of Vicksburg civilians died from enemy action.

Confederate loss, Union gain

In Richmond, Jefferson Davis blamed the loss on Pemberton, and to a slightly lesser extent, Johnston. In Washington, a grateful Abraham Lincoln waxed, "The Father of Waters [the Mississippi] again goes unvexed to the sea."

The fall of Vicksburg split the Confederacy irrevocably into two and ensured that cattle, metals, and grains from the Trans-Mississippi region would rarely again find their way to the Rebel states east of the river. Grant captured precious heavy cannon that the Confederacy could no longer replace, and the surrender of almost 30,000 men was a heavy blow to a South running out of manpower. Most significantly, the Union forces could now concentrate their efforts, and their growing numerical strength, against the remaining Confederate strongholds farther east.

AFTER

The loss of Vicksburg and the simultaneous defeat at Gettysburg made the South's demise almost inevitable, but the rest of 1863 did not see constant Union success.

CLEAR PASSAGE
Port Hudson, the last Confederate outpost on the Mississippi, fell on July 9. Unarmed Union ships could now sail **from St. Louis to the sea**.

JOHNSTON SLIPS AWAY
Johnston hoped to lure Union forces into a frontal assault against his **prepared positions at Jackson**. Instead, Sherman **began encircling Johnston's army**. On July 16, Johnston **made a masterly withdrawal and escaped**.

CHICKAMAUGA AND CHATTANOOGA
Union forces next went on the offensive in **eastern Tennessee**. Though they **captured Chattanooga**, they were **defeated at Chickamauga** in September 1863 and then besieged **102–103 ❯❯**. They were relieved only after **Grant was appointed** to command.

ENDURING CONFEDERATE SYMPATHIES
So humiliating was the capture of Vicksburg that it was not until the 1930s that **its citizens** again formally **celebrated the 4th of July**.

29,495 **The number of Confederate troops who surrendered at Vicksburg. The two sides each lost about 10,000 killed and wounded in the campaign.**

<< BEFORE

Prewar partisanship carried over into the war years, especially in the North. Republicans were much more likely to support the Lincoln administration's war measures than Democrats.

PARTY LINES
Both parties were in turn divided into factions that waxed and waned as wartime events inspired or deflated political aspirations. The Northern Democrats were divided between **War Democrats**, who generally supported the war against the Confederacy, and the **Peace Democrats, also known as Copperheads**, who steadfastly resisted Republican war measures to the point of being declared traitorous. The **Republicans had "radicals" and "moderates,"** who frequently disagreed about how best to reconstruct occupied areas of the South, deal with the freedmen, and treat captured enemies. Prewar political affiliations thus dictated home-front support of the war, especially at the local level.

The **Home Front**

The Civil War was fought on two fronts: the battlefield and the home front. Although civilians far away from the fighting were not directly in harm's way, they were profoundly affected by the war, and in turn influenced the course of campaigns by giving or withholding their political, social, or economic support.

In the South, the demands of war exacerbated prewar class differences. It was in areas of the Confederacy where stratification among whites was most evident, such as in upcountry Alabama and western Virginia, that support for the war effort was most divided. Initially, nearly all classes were enthusiastic about fighting for independence, but as the Union army advanced deeper into the South and Confederate war measures became more demanding, prewar class distinctions became harmful to Southern national unity. The draft and tax-in-kind—tax paid in the form of goods, crops, or even impressed slaves taken into Confederate service—both struck the lower and middle classes the worst, leading to cries among yeoman and hardscrabble farmers that this was a "rich man's war and a poor man's fight."

Northern growth

Because of sound financial policies shepherded by Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase and his Wall Street mogul Jay Cooke, the Union's economic health began in critical condition and ended in robust prosperity. In 1862, the treasury was empty, and a solution had to be found—fast. Chase hired Cooke to market Federal war bonds, which were eagerly scooped up by investors. This was followed by the introduction of "greenbacks" (Federally issued paper money backed by gold), so pressure on the Northern economy lessened. Import duties, the traditional source of Federal income, continued to bring in revenue, but so did a graduated national income tax, the first in American history.

These financial measures, overseen by men who understood money, ensured that the capital existed not only to fund the war effort, but also to fuel a boom that assured American prosperity for the rest of the 19th century. Overall,

WAR BONDS Government-issued bonds (securities) used to finance a war. Members of the public are encouraged to buy them as a gesture of support.

Farewell to home and family
William D. T. Travis, staff artist with the Union Army of the Potomac, painted this glamorized depiction of an officer outside his mansion bidding farewell to his family as he leaves to fight for the North.

Five dollars' worth
Confederate banknotes were often beautifully designed, but inflation ate away constantly at their monetary value. This one shows Secretary of the Treasury, German-born Christopher Memminger, in the bottom right corner.

the Northern economy grew in all areas as a result of the war—agriculture, mining, transportation networks, the service sector, and manufacturing.

Southern inflation

The situation in the Confederacy was starkly different. Because the nation was starting from scratch, there was no initial balance of credit and few gold reserves with which to fund the war effort. Hence, in March 1861, Secretary of the Treasury Christopher Memminger asked the Confederate Congress to authorize the printing of a million dollars in paper notes. These bills were backed by nothing more than the population's faith in the government and almost immediately began to devalue. In late 1861, a Confederate dollar was worth 80 cents in gold; by 1865 it was worth 1.5 cents. Inflation plagued rebel currency all through the war, simultaneously strangling private and public trade, the collection of taxes, and the payment of debts.

“**I sell my eggs and butter** from home for $200 a month. Does it not sound well … But in what? **In Confederate money**. *Hélas*!”

MARY CHESNUT, *A DIARY FROM DIXIE*, SEPTEMBER 19, 1864

To help offset inflation, Memminger resorted to selling bonds as Chase did, but he had no financier to assist him and fewer investors willing to wager their funds. More paper money was printed, and direct taxation forced on an unwilling populace. But only seven percent of the Confederacy's income was generated in this way. Instead, the hated tax-in-kind, or “impressment,” initiated in March 1863, provided the bulk of the government's revenue. In many parts of the South, the economy sank into a barter system reminiscent of the European Middle Ages as officials and private citizens haggled over what constituted payment of taxes.

Volunteer aid societies

Within months of the firing on Fort Sumter, almost 20,000 local aid societies organized in both the Union and the Confederacy. Many, especially in the South, withered and died as wartime hardships disrupted their activities, but thousands persisted. The societies and their national counterparts supplied soldiers in the field with homeknit clothing, jams and preserves, writing supplies, newspapers, Bibles, and books.

Most of these organizations were run locally by wives and daughters of soldiers, and aimed at the physical and emotional comfort of their menfolk. Often they raised money through fairs and bazaars to purchase items to be sent to the soldiers. These philanthropic events were highlights on the social calendars of Northern and Southern communities, and in the larger cities thousands turned out to buy homemade goods produced by the societies' members. Raffles, benefit balls, and musical entertainment also were popular fundraising methods. Infused with patriotism, good will, and religious fervor, these activities kept the war at the forefront of peoples' minds, especially in the North, where the physical effects of the conflict were minimal and only the absence of military-age males showed that life had changed.

Ammunition workers
Engravings from *Harper's Weekly* show workers, including many women, filling cartridges at Watertown Arsenal, Massachusetts. The artist was the young Winslow Homer, later known for his landscape paintings.

AFTER

The Civil War was one of the most significant events in the movement toward female equality in the United States. As men marched off to war, women took their places in factories, fields, and stores.

WOMEN'S ROLES EXPAND

In North and South alike, women's activities in ladies' aid societies, and as nurses in national organizations, gained them recognition as integral contributors to the war effort. In so doing, they **expanded what was regarded as “respectable” women's work**.

Spared invasion and occupation, Northern women benefited the most from the war and **reignited the women's rights movement in the postwar decades**. Southern women, often devastated by the loss of property and deaths of family members, were less likely to profit socially but **became hardened to privations**. One woman in Warrenton, Virginia, wrote: “We keep true to the South amid all our sore trials—and at times are to be pitied.” Despite this, their experiences operating farms and plantations in their husbands' absence and witnessing war firsthand helped to **crack the gender barriers of the old South**.

Patched up
With the Union blockade biting ever deeper, the South, which produced most of the world's raw cotton, found itself starved of the finished fabric. Clothes, like this dress, had to be endlessly patched and repatched.

Crossing the Tennessee
Rosecrans's troops cross the Tennessee River west of Chattanooga, in early September 1863, as depicted in William Travis's epic panorama on the exploits of the Army of the Cumberland.

The **Chickamauga Campaign**

Spurred by Washington to duplicate the successes of Gettysburg and Vicksburg, Major General William S. Rosecrans and the Army of the Cumberland moved to drive the Rebels out of Tennessee and further divide the Confederacy.

Reactivated to command the Army of the Ohio, General Ambrose Burnside marched on Knoxville, the "capital" of East Tennessee. On September 3, 1863, he was greeted with joy by most of its citizens, who were Union sympathizers. Meanwhile, Rosecrans had been on the move since mid-August, advancing virtually unopposed the last few miles to Chattanooga, thanks to various feints and deceptions that fooled General Braxton Bragg about his final objective.

On September 8, the Confederates evacuated Chattanooga, to the great dismay of Jefferson Davis, who wrote, "We are now in the darkest hour of our political existence." But Davis had weathered similar military disappointments before and was determined to turn this one around. Bragg withdrew to northern Georgia, where he received two divisions from Joseph E. Johnston's inactive army, bringing the strength of the Army of Tennessee almost on par with Rosecrans's force. To provide Bragg with the numerical superiority that might bring victory, Davis also sent him the bulk of Longstreet's corps from the Army of Northern Virginia. Lee protested, claiming that he needed Longstreet and his divisions for a new offensive against General Meade, but Davis rightly understood that the decisive theater of war was, for now, in the West.

Tension mounts

On September 9, the first of Longstreet's seasoned troops boarded trains for a 550-mile (885-km) journey through Virginia, Carolina, and Georgia. The direct route from Virginia to Tennessee no longer existed because of the fall of Chattanooga to the Union. It would take nine days for these reinforcements—12,000 strong—to reach Bragg from the East, but they would arrive just in time.

In early September, Bragg made a series of attempts to bait Rosecrans into advancing his army corps. On three occasions the Union commander took the bait, and could have been badly mauled. But in each instance one or other of Bragg's subordinates failed to follow his orders sufficiently.

« BEFORE

After the near defeat at Stones River Rosecrans spent the spring and early summer of 1863 rebuilding his strength, much to Lincoln's exasperation.

THE TULLAHOMA CAMPAIGN

When Rosecrans finally moved in late June and early July, he succeeded in **driving Bragg out of south-central Tennessee**, leaving the major railroad junction of Chattanooga **vulnerable to capture**.

In one week, Union troops **pushed their foes back almost 80 miles** (129km) at the cost of only 570 casualties—an advance known as the Tullahoma Campaign. But then **Rosecrans stalled**, waiting for repairs to railroads and more supplies, before he moved forward again.

The Confederate advance
In Alfred Waud's drawing, the Confederate line is shown advancing uphill through forest toward the Union line on the second day of the Battle of Chickamauga. British-born Waud worked as an artist-correspondent for *Harper's Weekly* magazine.

34,000 **The estimated total number of casualties resulting from the Battle of Chickamauga. Bragg lost around 18,000 men to Rosecrans's 16,000—more than one-quarter of their combined forces.**

Rosecrans grew cautious, consolidating his army along the West Chickamauga Creek. Bragg was determined to flank him and to get between him and his base at Chattanooga. On September 18, the first of Longstreet's troops arrived, and after a day of desultory skirmishing, Bragg decided to wait to the morrow to hit the Union army in full force.

The Battle of Chickamauga

As the sun rose on September 19, the pickets of each side, after lying close to each other the night before, opened fire with a sharp exchange. The fire grew in intensity, especially on the Union left, where, despite the thick woods, Bragg attempted to outflank General George Thomas's corps. Brigade after brigade was sent in by both sides in an attempt to win the field, but by the end of the day neither side had gained the advantage.

That night Thomas ordered his men to dig entrenchments, while Rosecrans reinforced him. Meanwhile, the majority of Longstreet's two divisions joined Bragg's army. Bragg decided to renew the fight the next day with an army-wide attack *en echelon*, in a slightly staggered right-to-left sequence. Leonidas Polk's wing was to start the action on the right, which would progress to Longstreet, who controlled the left.

On the morning of September 20, Polk's divisions—which had started late—battered against Thomas's entrenched defenders to no avail. Bragg became frustrated with Polk and canceled the echelon attack, and ordered Longstreet to assault with everything he had. Unbeknownst to either Bragg or Rosecrans, Longstreet had prepared his troops for such an event. Perhaps remembering Pickett's Charge, where linear formations had failed to pierce the enemy line, he had arranged his brigades in columns.

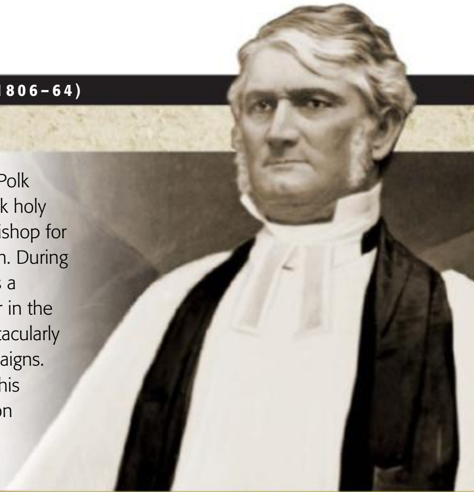
When Longstreet ordered the attack at about 11:30 a.m., it hit the enemy with tremendous power and, unfortunately for Rosecrans, precisely in a location that one of his divisions had just mistakenly vacated. Poor staff work was responsible for an error that now left a quarter-mile (402-m) gap in the Union lines, and as Longstreet's veterans poured through, they demolished the Federal right and sent one-third of Rosecrans's army running for their lives to Chattanooga. The Union commander joined the flight, abandoning his army to its fate.

Longstreet now smelled a victory of strategic proportions and ordered in his last reserves, at the same time begging Bragg to send him reinforcements. When none materialized, a nonplussed Longstreet pressed forward nonetheless, only to come up against Thomas's corps. The Union general had ordered them to make a rearguard stand on Horseshoe Ridge, in a bid to protect the retreat of the rest of the army. Longstreet responded by throwing assault after assault, but each time Thomas held firm, his valor and steadfast conduct later earning him the nickname "The Rock of Chickamauga."

As the sun set on the bloodsoaked field, Thomas finally withdrew his weary command and joined the rest of the Union army at Chattanooga.

CONFEDERATE GENERAL (1806–64)

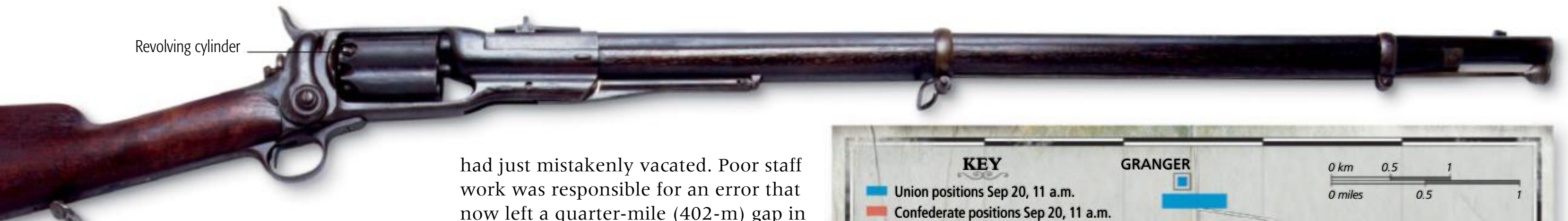
LEONIDAS POLK



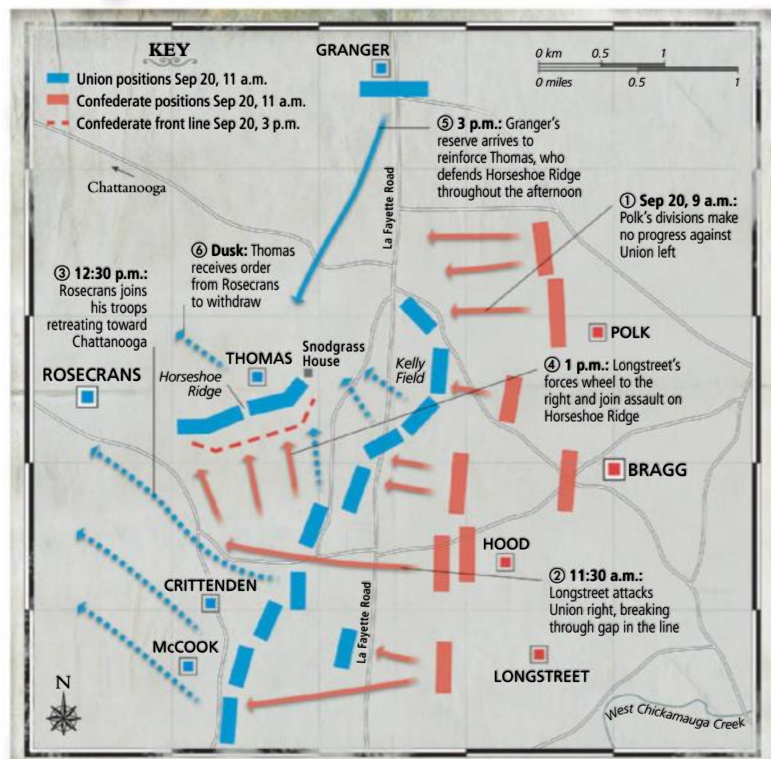
Born in North Carolina in 1806, Polk attended West Point but also took holy orders, and rose to the post of Bishop for Louisiana in the Episcopal Church. During the war "the fighting bishop" was a mediocre but high-ranking leader in the Western Theater, serving unspectacularly under Bragg in most of his campaigns. Beloved by his soldiers if not by his colleagues, he was killed by Union artillery while conferring with fellow officers at Pine Mountain.

"There is **not a man in the right wing** who has any **fight in him**."

BRAGG'S COMMENT TO LONGSTREET ON THE ECHELON ATTACK, SEPTEMBER 20, 1863



Colt 1853 revolving rifle
Developed by Samuel Colt, this rifle had a revolving cylinder that increased its rate of fire. It was used by the 21st Ohio Volunteers at Chickamauga.



The second day at Chickamauga
The course of the battle changed on September 20, when Longstreet's men broke through and routed the Union right. But George Thomas's men on Horseshoe Ridge held out bravely until dusk, when the battle ended.

AFTER

The Battle of Chickamauga proved to be a bloody Confederate tactical victory that temporarily shifted the course of the Civil War in the Western Theater.

BRAGG AND ROSECRANS STUNNED
Rosecrans **had escaped destruction** and now lay behind Chattanooga's fortifications. Both Longstreet and Nathan Bedford Forrest urged Bragg to move at once against the Union forces before they could recover, but the Confederate commander was **as stunned in victory as Rosecrans was in defeat**. Incredulous about his superior's inertia, Forrest asked, "What does he fight battles for?" In the weeks to come the **strategic fruits of Chickamauga** slipped away into an exhausting **siege of Chattanooga** **104–105»**, which the Confederates were ill-equipped to undertake. As for Rosecrans, Lincoln wrote that he behaved "**confused and stunned** like a duck hit on the head."

CHATTANOOGA UNDER SIEGE
Rosecrans found himself and his army in an unusual situation after Chickamauga: a Union army occupying a Southern city **besieged by a Confederate army**. By October, food was running out for the Union troops, and Bragg had cut off all but one **fragile supply line** across the Cumberland Mountains. If Rosecrans were to surrender, **Union momentum would have stalled considerably**.

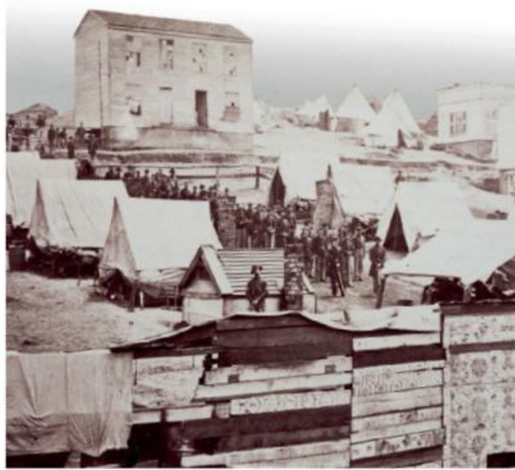
The summit of Lookout Mountain
Capturing Lookout Mountain from the Confederates was no mean feat for General Hooker's troops. Much of the ground that they covered was rough, steep, and rocky, while some areas were deeply wooded.

The Chattanooga Campaign

Union general William Rosecrans's army, besieged in the Southern town of Chattanooga, had to be relieved or the momentum gained earlier in the summer of 1863 was in danger of being lost. Ulysses S. Grant—in command of the new Division of the Mississippi—was sent to take care of the situation.

In mid-October, Lincoln reorganized the Union's Western geographic command structure. The new Division of the Mississippi, which included all of the territory between the Appalachians and the river, fell under the command of Ulysses S. Grant. With his new authority, Grant headed for Chattanooga, where he relieved Rosecrans and installed George Thomas as commander of the Army of the Cumberland.

One Federal officer wrote about Grant's arrival, "We began to see things move. We felt that everything came from a plan." By the end of October the crisis in the city had ended. New supply lines were in place, and 17,000 fresh troops had arrived under Sherman. Union morale was restored. Conversely, their Confederate foes, though still occupying the high ground that dominated the Federal positions, were again outnumbered and racked with command and morale problems.



Union camp in Chattanooga
Once inside the city, soldiers hastily knocked down many houses for firewood and shelters while making their camp. In the foreground, planks still covered in wallpaper form part of the fencing.

The Battle of Lookout Mountain

Grant's plan to push the Rebels off their positions overlooking the town and return to a war of maneuver was simple: attack both flanks and fix the enemy in the center. Major General Joseph Hooker, now reinstated to command the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps, would attack Bragg's southern flank, anchored on Lookout Mountain; Thomas and his Army of the Cumberland would keep Bragg's attention in front of Missionary Ridge; and Sherman would attack the northern flank at Tunnel Hill.

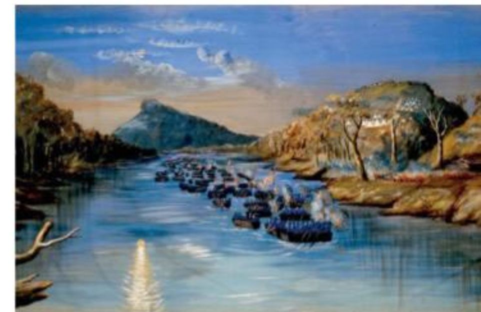
On November 24 Hooker and Sherman moved out. Hooker sent three divisions against Lookout Mountain, and with the help of some fog, drove off its Southern defenders at the cost of only 500 casualties. Next morning a huge Union flag could be seen waving from the summit, inspiring Federal troops in the valley below. Sherman's men initially made good progress toward their objective, but poor reconnaissance led them to the wrong position. Undeterred, on November 25 they fiercely attacked General Patrick C. Cleburne's Confederate division, but were repeatedly repulsed. Cleburne commanded the best division in Bragg's army, and his men had not been infected with low morale. They resolutely held their ground, inflicting heavy casualties on Sherman's troops. Meanwhile, Grant became increasingly frustrated. After storming Lookout Mountain, Hooker had been held up by poor roads and a destroyed bridge, and now Sherman was stalled.

CRACKER LINE The new supply line to Chattanooga established at the end of October, so called for the hardtack that was the staple of army rations.

Missionary Ridge

At 2 p.m., Grant ordered Thomas to probe the Confederate center at Missionary Ridge, to relieve some of the pressure on Sherman. Though Grant had intended a limited assault, Thomas sent four divisions—23,000 men—headlong against the heavily defended ridge. It could have been a repeat of Pickett's Charge, the ill-fated Confederate attack at Gettysburg, but instead, eager to redeem themselves from the stain of Chickamauga, the soldiers of the Army of the Cumberland surged over three Confederate trench lines, up the rugged slope of the imposing ridge, and over its summit. They captured much of Bragg's artillery and sent his defenders fleeing to northern Georgia. Watching the assault go forward from their command post, Grant and Thomas were astonished. An angry Grant asked who had ordered the men up the ridge, and Thomas denied that he had done so. Had the men failed, Thomas's career would have ended right there. His troops had prevailed, however, partly because of confusion among Southern soldiers in trenches at the base of the ridge about how many volleys to fire before retreating, and partly because of the poor placement of the Rebel artillery.

Low morale in Bragg's army also had much to do with their defeat. Bragg wrote to Davis after the battle, "The disaster admits of no palliation. I fear we both erred in the conclusion for me to retain command here." Casualties were relatively light for both armies at this point, but the results were clear: Grant had won the battle and opened a path to Atlanta and the Southern heartland.



Establishing the "Cracker Line"
Union troops floated downstream from Chattanooga in flatboats under cover of darkness to drive off Confederates guarding Brown's Ferry. They then built a pontoon bridge that became a crucial link in the new supply line.

Watching the action
Grant, Thomas, and their staffs watch the fighting on Missionary Ridge, as depicted in this lithograph from a painting by Swedish-born Thure de Thulstrup.

BEFORE

Despite their victory, the Confederates were in disarray after Chickamauga «102–103. Meanwhile, the Union leadership rallied to redeem what it could from defeat.

SITUATION AT CHATTANOOGA
Bragg's lethargy after **Chickamauga** caused his principal generals to turn against him, claiming he was **unfit for command**. But Longstreet did not wish to take command of the army himself, so Bragg was retained, **leaving morale low**.

Bragg's forces **controlled the high ground to the east of Chattanooga** and prevented supplies from reaching the town except by one circuitous route. This did not allow enough food to reach the besieged Union army. Lincoln knew something must be done. The man he chose to resolve the crisis was **Ulysses S. Grant**, fresh from **his triumph at Vicksburg** « 98–99.

AFTER

The Union victory at Chattanooga reinforced Northern resolve after the defeat at Chickamauga had tarnished the jubilation of Gettysburg and Vicksburg.

REACTIONS NORTH AND SOUTH
Copperhead politicians who appeared poised to win control of **key districts** in the lower North now doubted their chances. In the South the **optimism of September** was destroyed.

CONFEDERATE MORALE EBBS
The Confederates now faced the possibility of an **invasion into northern Georgia**, while Joseph E. Johnston replaced Bragg in command.

BEFORE

In previous wars, commanders had relied on messages being hand-delivered. By the outbreak of the Civil War, civilian telegraph services could send messages by wire.

THE PONY EXPRESS

PREWAR TELEGRAPHY

Using special codes to send messages over long distances, the telegraph was not a new technology in 1861, having existed since the 1840s. More than 50,000 miles (80,467km) of wire were already in place when war broke out, with 1,400 stations employing 10,000 people. The famous **Pony Express**, which was set up in April 1860 to provide a fast mail service between the East and West coasts, **was put out of business** by a transcontinental telegraph line that was completed in fall 1861.

Like the railroad, **nearly all telegraph infrastructure and investment was located in the Northern states**, with only about 10 percent delegated to the South. However, what did exist there was immediately put to use.

Repairs to the line

A telegraph company employee carries out the vital task of repairing the lines. This was dangerous work, often performed under fire from the enemy or in areas where enemy guerrilla fighters operated.

Communications

The telegraph system revolutionized command and control procedures during the Civil War. Both the Union and the Confederacy made increasing use of this new technology, but the North was able to harness it most effectively. A signaling system using flags and lamps was also used on the battlefield.

Following in the wake of the Union and Confederate armies were the telegraph services, putting up the poles and wires needed for sending messages to and from the front. The telegraph system allowed commanders-in-chief based far from the battlefield to exercise direct control over operational and even tactical events, and to keep abreast of important developments as they arose. Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis both used the telegraph extensively to keep in close communication with the commanders of their principal field armies, and their commanders, in turn, developed ciphers and codes to transmit and receive messages in secret. Both sides developed wiretapping and code-cracking capabilities during the war, but the information gleaned from these methods rarely created decisive military results. In October 1861, the Lincoln administration established the U.S. Military Telegraph Service (U.S.M.T.S).

The federal telegraph service

The U.S.M.T.S. was initially reliant on civilian companies, with the government placing it under the control of the Quartermaster Corps. The service was operated by civilian personnel, most of whom were employees of the major

Telegraph operator

Both sides in the war used telegraphy to send or "wire" messages over long distances. Most operators were civilians, and the messages relayed everything from train dispatches to battle plans.

Night lantern
A member of the Signal Corps uses a kerosene lantern on a long handle for wigwag signaling at night, moving the lantern back and forth to send messages. Beside him a man watches for the replies.

telegraph companies before the war, and included a significant percentage of women. Military supervision of an essentially civilian organization caused friction. Major General George Meade frequently complained about the cavalier attitude of telegraphers in the U.S.M.T.S., who occasionally left for home during critical moments of campaigns. By 1864, however, enough trained personnel were employed to maintain a continuous service. During the siege of Petersburg, General Ulysses S. Grant enjoyed almost uninterrupted telegraph communication with both Washington, D.C., and his subcommanders operating throughout the South.

15,000 **The number of miles (24,140km) of new telegraph lines that were constructed in the North during the Civil War, in addition to existing commercial systems.**

Confederate telegraph services

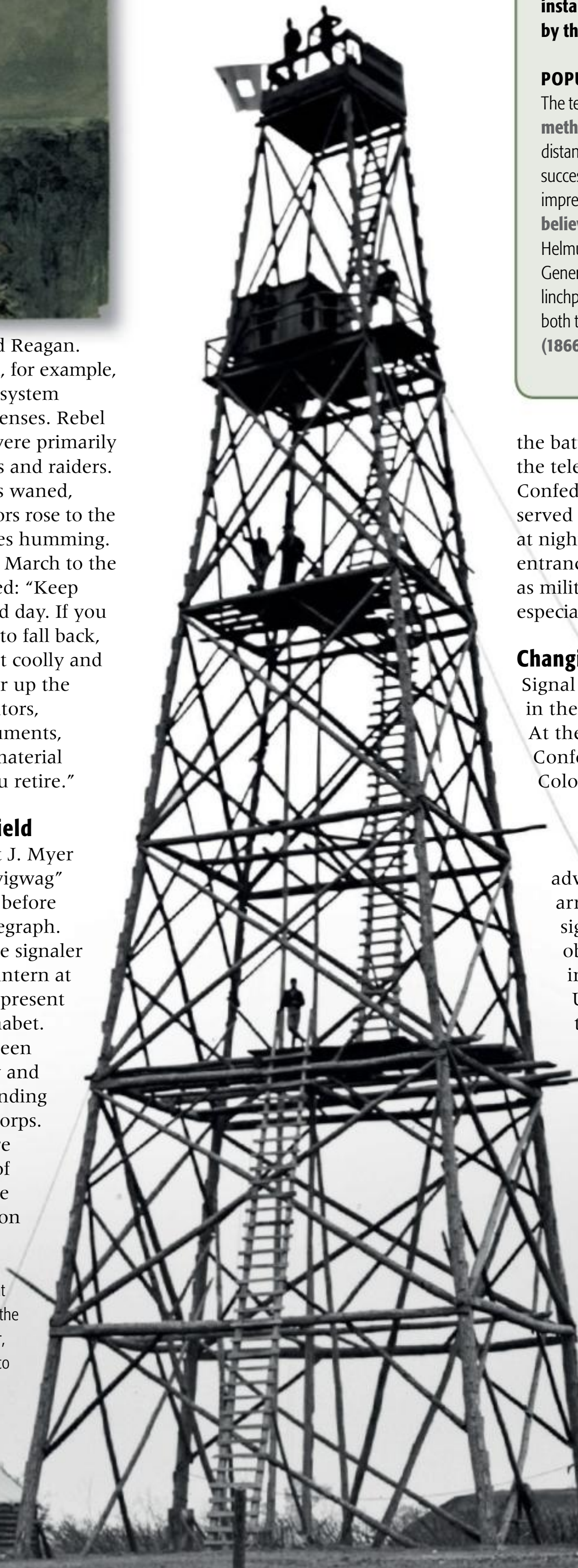
Two civilian companies operated in the South prior to the war, one of which was the American Telegraph Company. The director of its southern branch was Dr. William S. Morris. In 1862, Postmaster General John H. Reagan made Morris "agent of the Confederate States," responsible for managing all military telegraph lines in the South. Morris and Reagan shared the duties.

For the first three years of the war, the telegraph allowed Jefferson Davis to keep in close touch with his primary generals, although some of them disliked communicating under the watchful eye of Morris and Reagan. General P. G. T. Beauregard, for example, created his own telegraph system around the Charleston defenses. Rebel snags with the telegraph were primarily caused by supply shortages and raiders.

As Confederate fortunes waned, Southern telegraph operators rose to the challenge and kept the lines humming. During General Sherman's March to the Sea, Georgia's agent advised: "Keep your offices open night and day. If you have to fall back, take it coolly and gather up the operators, instruments, and material as you retire."

Signaling on the battlefield

In 1856, Lieutenant Albert J. Myer had created a system of "wigwag" signaling, which was used before the introduction of the telegraph. Standing on a platform, the signaler waved a single flag (or a lantern at night) back and forth to represent different letters of the alphabet. By 1861, the system had been accepted by the U.S. Army and Myers had been made founding officer of the U.S. Signal Corps. On both sides, officers were assigned at various levels of army command to facilitate communication primarily on the battlefield and on the march, where the telegraph was less useful. In the Confederacy, signal corpsmen also served as guides for blockade runners at night, lighting lanterns along entrances to the major ports, and as military intelligence gatherers, especially in Virginia.



Telegraph tower
Signalers man a tall telegraph tower at the Bermuda Hundred, on the left of the Union line near the Appomattox River, Virginia. These tall towers were used to send telegraphs over short distances.

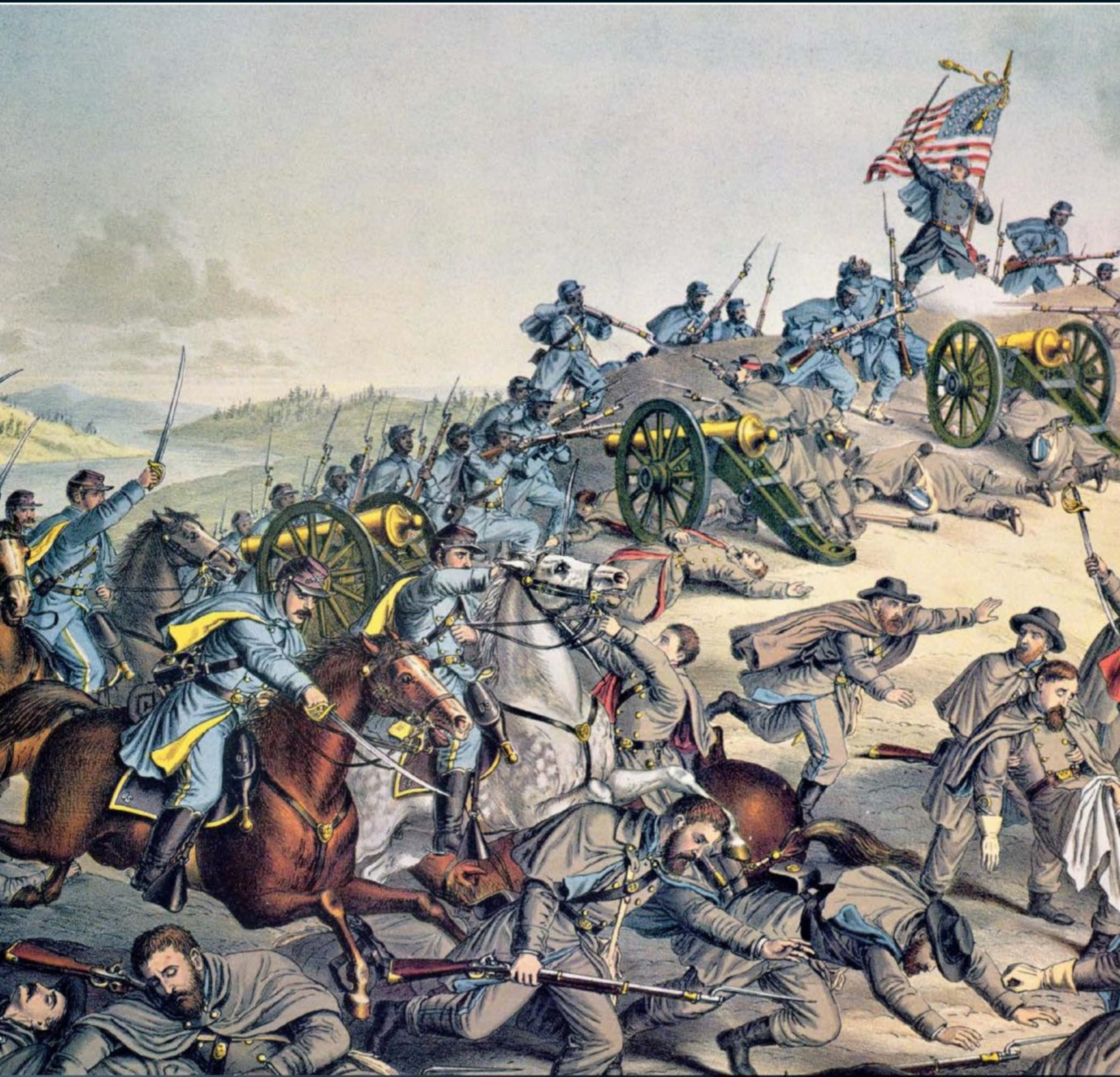
Changing the course of battle

Signal corpsmen proved decisive in the outcome of some key battles. At the First Battle of Bull Run, a Confederate wigwag team warned Colonel Nathan Evans that his command had been turned by the Union army, allowing the Confederates to delay the Union advance until reinforcements arrived. At Gettysburg, Union signalers on Little Round Top observed General Longstreet's initial movements toward the Union left on July 2, whereupon the Confederate general redirected his troops—using up most of the day and losing the element of surprise, which allowed General George Meade to deploy enough soldiers to meet the Southern attack. Often targeted by enemy snipers, signal corpsmen on both sides suffered disproportionately high losses but provided invaluable services throughout the Civil War.

AFTER

Future conflicts came to rely on the instantaneous communications provided by the telegraph.

POPULARITY OF THE TELEGRAPH
The telegraph continued to be the **preferred method of fast communication** over long distances in the postwar United States. Its successful use by both sides during the war also impressed European military observers, who **believed it would become indispensable**. Helmut von Moltke, future Chief of the Prussian General Staff, viewed the telegraph and railroad as linchpins for success in modern war, and used both to strategic effect in the **Austro-Prussian (1866) and Franco-Prussian (1870–71) wars**.



5

GRANT, SHERMAN, AND TOTAL WAR

1864

A cohesive strategy in place at last, the Union pressed the Confederacy so hard that by year's end great stretches of Virginia and Georgia lay in ruins, one major Confederate army was destroyed at Nashville, and the other caught in a death grip in the Petersburg trenches.

« A decisive battle
At the end of 1864, George H. Thomas's Union forces held Nashville while John Bell Hood's Army of Tennessee dug in on the heights to the south. Waiting for the right moment to attack, Thomas burst from the city's fortifications and in two days of battle—December 15–16—routed the Confederates, effectively ending the war in the Western Theater.

GRANT, SHERMAN, AND TOTAL WAR

The Wilderness Campaign
The woods, rivers, and farms of Northern Virginia are still the cockpit of the Eastern Theater, where the battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania are the scene of the first titanic clashes between Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee.

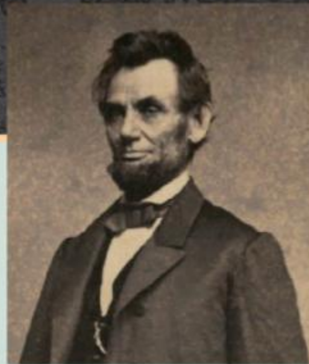
Battle of Cold Harbor
Union forces suffer huge losses at the Battle of Cold Harbor in June 1864. The bloody battle causes a surge of anti-war sentiment in the Northern states.

Bridging the James River
Unable to lure Lee into open battle, Grant changes his tactics. Stealthily shifting his forces away from Cold Harbor and across the James River, he now seeks to cut the Confederate supply lines to Petersburg and Richmond.

Siege of Petersburg
In June, Grant begins an assault on Petersburg, a city that is crucial to supplying Lee's troops and the Confederate capital, Richmond. The resulting siege lasts nine months before Lee abandons the city.

By 1864, the war had become a grinding, exhausting struggle, but once Ulysses S. Grant was elevated to overall command of the Union's field armies in March, a coordinated strategy to defeat the Confederacy was finally at hand. In early May, over a front extending from Virginia to Georgia, Union armies marched off nearly in unison to begin the spring campaign. The major effort was in Virginia, where Grant made his headquarters and came to grips with Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. For six weeks a series of terrible but inconclusive battles—the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor—raged across the woods and fields north of Richmond. At the same time, General William T. Sherman grappled with the Confederacy's other great army, General Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee. After three months of battle and maneuver, Sherman had the Rebels backed up against the gates of Atlanta. Though

1864



Lincoln is re-elected president
After victories for the Union at Atlanta and Mobile Bay, Abraham Lincoln convincingly defeats his Democratic opponent, George McClellan, in the presidential election. Lincoln wins 22 states to McClellan's three.

DAKOTA TERRITORY
MINNESOTA
WISCONSIN
MICHIGAN
IOWA
NEBRASKA TERRITORY
KANSAS
MISSOURI
ILLINOIS
INDIANA
OHIO
KENTUCKY
TENNESSEE
ARKANSAS
Indian Territory
TEXAS
LOUISIANA
MISSISSIPPI
ALABAMA
GEORGIA
FLORIDA
SOUTH CAROLINA
NORTH CAROLINA
VIRGINIA
WEST VIRGINIA
PENNSYLVANIA
NEW YORK
VERMONT
MAINE
NEW HAMPSHIRE
MASSACHUSETTS
RHODE ISLAND
CONNECTICUT
NEW JERSEY
DELAWARE
MARYLAND
Des Moines
Chicago
Buffalo
Concord
Boston
New York City
Philadelphia
Washington, D.C.
Richmond
Norfolk
Indianapolis
Cincinnati
Louisville
Kansas City
St. Louis
Nashville
Franklin
Memphis
Corinth
Chattanooga
Atlanta
Wilmington
Charleston
Savannah
Jacksonville
Vicksburg
Meridian
Montgomery
Mobile
Pensacola
Baton Rouge
New Orleans
Austin
Galveston
Missouri River
Mississippi River
Ohio River
Cumberland River
Tennessee River
Arkansas River
Red River
Rio Grande
Inset map area
ATLANTIC OCEAN
GULF OF MEXICO

The Battle of Cedar Creek
General Philip Sheridan reverses Union fortunes at the Battle of Cedar Creek after galloping 12 miles (19km) to rally his troops. "Sheridan's Ride" is later immortalized in verse and in this painting by poet-artist Thomas Buchanan Read.

The Fall of Atlanta
Atlanta, the railroad nerve center of the South, is captured by Sherman in September after a four-month campaign. He wrecks and burns the city so it can never be used again by the Confederacy.

Battle of Mobile Bay
Mobile's spacious bay, the Gulf Coast's last haven for Confederate blockade-runners and commerce raiders, is finally captured by Admiral David Farragut's fleet on August 5.

Johnston was soon replaced by the aggressive General John Bell Hood, Confederate attacks around the city's perimeter were repulsed, and Atlanta fell to Sherman on September 1. Before the year ended, Hood would bleed the remnants of the Army of Tennessee dry on the battlefields of Franklin and Nashville. As summer turned to fall, while Grant slowly crushed Lee's army in the trenches at Petersburg, the other components of his grand strategy were also falling into place. Admiral David Farragut had won the contest for Mobile Bay. General Philip Sheridan had cleared Rebel forces from the Shenandoah Valley, torching the "Breadbasket of the Confederacy" along the way. Sherman would soon undertake a scorched earth campaign across Georgia, intended to break the Southern will. When Lincoln won re-election in November it was due in no small part to these victories on the battlefield. The end of the war was in sight.

Lincoln Prevails

Since 1864 was an election year, President Abraham Lincoln needed to swing the balance of the war permanently in the Union's favor or face defeat at the polls. With the political parties splintering over the war, Lincoln sought salvation in a new general, Ulysses S. Grant.

On the evening of March 8, 1864, at a glittering White House reception, Abraham Lincoln had his first good look at its guest of honor, General Ulysses S. Grant. The short, slightly stooping figure was disappointing in appearance, except for his blue eyes, which to one army officer always suggested a man determined to drive his head through a brick wall. It was an expression that Lincoln welcomed.

Grant won battles. That was why Lincoln had now appointed him general-in-chief of all Union armies. Together they planned how to win the war that year. Grant advocated coordinated advances: south to Mobile; southeast to Atlanta, to cut off General Robert E. Lee's supplies; and a three-pronged advance on Lee himself—in his front, up through the Shenandoah Valley, and to his rear via a landing south of Richmond.

Lincoln's future in the balance

Much depended on the success of Grant's plans. Lincoln was facing a re-election battle, and his party had split over his policies. Hard-line Radical Republicans, convinced Lincoln had mismanaged the war and could not be re-elected, were decamping to the Radical Democracy Party or "Copperheads." This new party convened in late May in Cleveland, Ohio, and nominated the ever-popular soldier politician, John C. Frémont, for president. Republicans still loyal to Lincoln felt they could not win unless they joined with "War Democrats," who were crossing the party line to disassociate themselves from the Copperheads. The result was called the National Union Party, and it convened in Baltimore during early June. Lincoln was renominated, but Vice President Hannibal Hamlin, a Radical Republican, was dropped from the ticket. He was replaced by Andrew Johnson, military governor of Tennessee and a leading War Democrat. The National Unionists hoped the new ticket would underscore the national character of the war.

COPPERHEADS Those Northerners opposed to war with the Confederacy, named for a poisonous snake. They were most numerous in the Ohio River states, with traditional ties to the South.

Esteem for McClellan

Meanwhile, Lincoln sensed that defeat was imminent. Grant's strategy was failing. The death toll at the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and Cold Harbor had staggered the nation—and still Lee held Grant at bay at Petersburg. General Jubal Early, with but 10,000 Rebels, had threatened to walk into the White House. Widespread discouragement was starting to swell the ranks of the Copperheads. General George B. McClellan, fired by Lincoln in 1862, was riding high in public estimation; as the fatalities mounted he looked ever

Lincoln campaign button
Due to the constraints of war, the 1864 electoral campaign produced fewer embossed copper tokens, framed *cartes de visite* (card portraits), and brass pins than did the 1860 race.

« BEFORE

Abraham Lincoln was elected the 16th U.S. President in November 1860. He won his votes entirely in the North, not being on the ballot in ten Southern states.

FINDING A GENERAL
On November 5, 1862, Lincoln **dismissed General George McClellan** **« 38–39** as commander of the **Army of the Potomac**. Dissatisfied with many of his replacements, Lincoln's eye had finally fallen on **Ulysses S. Grant** of **Vicksburg fame**.

THE GREAT TASK REMAINING
On January 1, 1863, Lincoln issued the **Emancipation Proclamation** **« 88–89** freeing slaves in **ten Confederate states**. Despite growing casualty lists and **rising antiwar sentiment** in the North, he was steadfastly dedicated to the war, which he declared in his **Gettysburg Address** as "the great task remaining before us."

more attractive as the man to bring the fighting to an end in a manner that would satisfy both South and North.

In August, the Democrats held a convention in Chicago. They, too, were divided over the war. The more moderate Peace Democrats advocated a negotiated peace on terms favorable to the Union, while the Copperheads declared the war a fiasco that should be immediately terminated. The convention sought to bridge the divide by nominating McClellan, a pro-war moderate, while adopting a sweeping peace platform—which McClellan deplored.

An anti-McClellan broadside
To the left, Lincoln stands for "Union and Liberty," shaking hands with free labor. To the right, McClellan, personifies "Union and Slavery," shaking hands with Jefferson Davis, a slave auction in the background.

A two-horse race

Frémont saw the Democratic platform as tantamount to "Union with Slavery," and withdrew his candidacy. Winning the war was, to him, more important than winning the presidency. That left Lincoln and McClellan to battle it out. Across the North, campaign ribbons and bunting vied with fall leaves for color. People sported their candidates' badges; broadsides (newspaper bulletins) and cartoons endorsed one nominee and decried the other. In camps and trenches, troops of both North and South huddled around grimy newspapers. Depending on the camp or trench, the news of General William T. Sherman's taking of Atlanta or General Philip Sheridan's clearing of the Shenandoah Valley was met with either cheers or curses. As the tide of Union victories planned by Grant finally rolled in, it began crushing the hopes of the Confederacy. November 8 was Election Day. After the ballots were counted, Lincoln had won by over 400,000 votes, securing an overwhelming majority in the Electoral College. His soldiers had given him over 70 percent of their support. For the president and his commanding general, the scent of victory was in the fall air.

> "**God** gave us **Lincoln and Liberty**, let us fight for both."
>
> ULYSSES S. GRANT, IN A TOAST DURING THE VICKSBURG CAMPAIGN, FEBRUARY 22, 1863

Grant at the White House
Peter Rothermel's 1867 painting *The Republican Court in the Days of Lincoln* depicts the reception at which Lincoln welcomed Grant to Washington as the army's new general-in-chief. It still hangs in the White House.

AFTER

Lincoln's second inaugural address, on March 4, 1865, stressed that Reconstruction of the defeated Confederacy should be undertaken with national healing in mind.

LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION
President Lincoln **served only four months** of his second term. On April 14, just days after **Robert E. Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox Lincoln was assassinated** **170–171 ››**. Eight months later, on December 18, 1865, the **13th Amendment to the Constitution** **164–165 ››**, abolishing slavery in the United States, was officially enacted.

LINCOLN'S SECOND INAUGURATION

Fighting in the Wilderness
Winslow Homer's *Skirmish in the Wilderness* (1864) shows scattered fighting among the trees—what one soldier called "bushwhacking on a grand scale."

The **Wilderness Campaign**

The duel between generals Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant commenced with a battle in a tangled woodland called the Wilderness. Fighting resumed in the fields around Spotsylvania Court House, where deadly assaults reached a pitch of sustained ferocity seldom equaled in the war.

BEFORE

In March 1864, Lincoln put Ulysses S. Grant in charge of all Union armies in the field. Grant's plan called for simultaneous Union advances against Atlanta in the West and against Lee in the East.

LEE VERSUS GRANT

Grant changed the Union objective from the capture of Richmond to the **destruction of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia**, and established his headquarters with the **Army of the Potomac**, which, in early 1864, was encamped on the Rapidan River. Grant decided to **outflank the Confederate positions** across the river by slipping through the Wilderness on the Confederate right, where a year earlier, at the **Battle of Chancellorsville «88–89**, Lee had **nearly destroyed the Army of the Potomac**.

Before dawn on May 4, 1864, Ulysses S. Grant opened his advance against Robert E. Lee. The first of nearly 120,000 men, 4,300 supply wagons, and 850 ambulances making up the Army of the Potomac crossed the Rapidan River well downstream of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, nestling behind formidable defenses on the other side.

If Grant could get through the Wilderness, on the Confederate right, before Lee could react, he might lure the Southern general into the open and destroy him. So all day long the blue-clad divisions tramped down the road between walls of somber pines and oak thickets, dense with thorny, foot-entangling vines. It was a "region of gloom and the shadow of death," as one officer put it, and many veterans felt an ominous dread as they went into bivouac that night. Dismayed scouts had reported that Lee, who had been watching the Union army, was on the move, heading swiftly up the Orange Turnpike and Orange Plank Road, parallel tracks that led east into the Wilderness.

The Battle of the Wilderness

Until James Longstreet's First Corps, marching from a different direction, could join him, Lee would be attacking Grant with only one-third of his opponent's strength. Nevertheless, on the morning of May 5 he slammed into a Federal army that was still deploying to meet him. Union troops in Gouverneur Warren's Fifth Corps tried to stem Richard Ewell's Second Corps' onslaught on the Turnpike; 3 miles (4.8km) away, a single Union division held the Brock Road, running across Orange Plank Road, as A. P. Hill's

Micah Jenkins's sword
In the din and confusion of Longstreet's May 6 flank attack, South Carolina's General Micah Jenkins was mistakenly but mortally wounded by fellow Confederates.

> **“**The **incessant roar** of the rifles … men **cheering**, **groaning**, yelling, swearing, and **praying**!**”**
>
> PRIVATE THEODORE GERRISH, 20TH MAINE INFANTRY, IN *ARMY LIFE*, 1882

Third Corps bore down on them. Thousands of men on both sides were soon clawing their way through briars and stumbling across ravines, trying to form orderly battle lines. Formations and directions of advance rapidly went astray in the tangled maze of undergrowth.

The confused fighting continued all day. At Grant’s headquarters, the general ceaselessly whittled sticks and chain-smoked cigars as he waited for reports. In the woods, the volume of musketry was rapidly becoming a deafening cacophony as yelling men, groping blindly, shot point-blank at muzzle flashes in the gloom—”firing by earsight.” Storms of bullets tore through the woods and cut men down in droves. Brush fires became runaway infernos, burning to death many of the helpless wounded, whose hideous screams could be heard above the din. Smoke had turned the sun a lurid bloodred long before twilight finally descended and the battle subsided. Weary survivors literally fell to sleep, rifles in hand.

Early on May 6, the fighting resumed as Grant went on the attack. The Union right wing kept up the pressure, then W. S. Hancock’s Second Corps, at the Brock Road, smashed through the underbrush into A. P. Hill’s ragged lines, which broke and fled.

Lee himself rode into the bedlam, trying desperately to rally his troops before all was lost. With only his staff and a single artillery battery standing between his army and disaster, Lee saw that Longstreet’s divisions were finally arriving down the Plank Road. “Who are you, my boys?” Lee cried above the uproar. “Texas boys,” came the reply. “Texans always move them!” the general shouted, waving his hat, and with a strange light in his eyes began to lead them into battle. Grimy hands tugged at his bridle, as men yelled, “Go back, General Lee! Lee to the rear!”

> **3,750** **The approximate number of men in the two armies who were killed in action in the Battle of the Wilderness. Hundreds of others, recorded as “missing,” probably died in the brush fires ignited by the fighting.**

Escaping the flames
As flames swept the thickets, many wounded men, left behind by the ebb and flow of battle, were carried or crawled to safety. But many of those who were unable to move were burned to death.

Brigadier General John Gregg’s 800 Texans surged forward and stopped the onslaught, although at a fearful price. Fewer than 250 of the men who charged emerged unscathed.

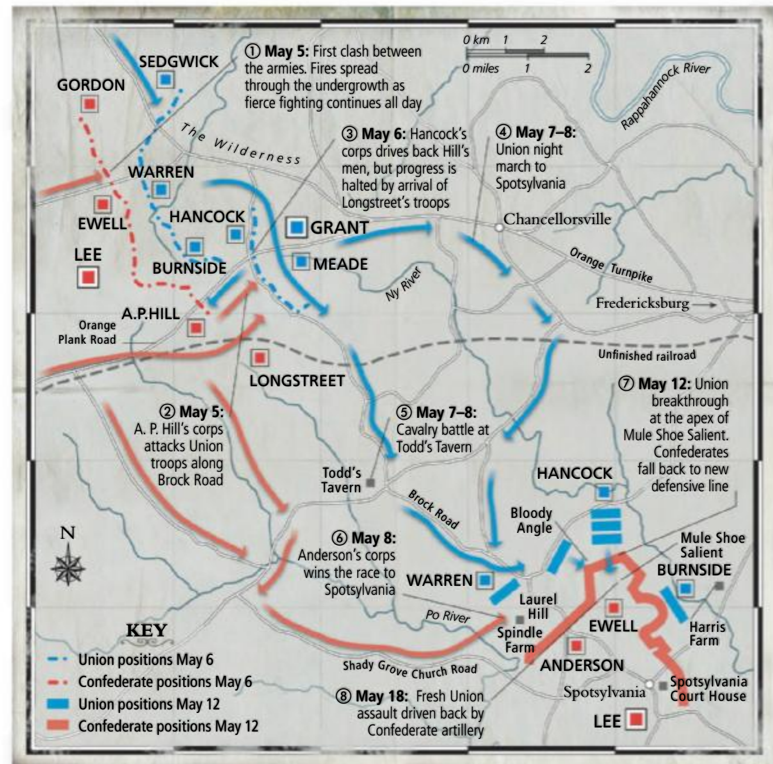
Confederate riposte

By mid-morning, some of Longstreet’s men had discovered an unfinished railroad cut to the south and, concealed from view, turned Hancock’s flank, rolling it up brigade by brigade until the Union troops were in mass retreat. In the din and confusion, some Confederates saw horses galloping toward them through the smoke and leveled a volley. Among the men and animals left sprawled on the ground were South Carolina’s General Micah Jenkins, shot in the head, and Lee’s “Old War Horse,” Longstreet himself, severely wounded in the neck.

With that the Southern attack faltered; when it was renewed in late afternoon it was decisively repulsed by Federal troops deployed behind breastworks along Brock Road. A roar of musketry to the north was that of John B. Gordon’s Georgians trying to outflank the Union right, but the shooting slackened with darkness, with neither side able to break through. A second horrid night descended on the burning, bullet-shredded Wilderness. Grant called off his attacks; Lee dug in.

By dawn on May 7, with both armies well entrenched and the fighting ended for the moment, Grant had made the decision not to retreat, as his predecessors had too often done when faced with a setback. Rather, he planned to slide left and south, ordering the Army of the Potomac’s high command to strike that evening for Spotsylvania Court House, a hamlet located some 10 miles (16km) to the southeast of the Wilderness battlefield. It stood at a crossroads that controlled the routes to Richmond.

Grant was determined to position his forces between Lee and the Confederate capital. He knew this was the only way he could compel the enemy to fight in the open, and he did not want to see Lee’s outnumbered veterans get behind breastworks. The task of prying them out would lead to further grueling and costly fighting.



Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House
The two armies first clashed on May 5 in the thickly wooded Wilderness area. Then, on the night of May 7, Grant ordered his army to march southeast to Spotsylvania Court House. The Confederates, however, managed to get there before him. They dug in and repelled a series of desperate Union attacks.

Skeletal remains
Alongside fragments of clothing, cartridge boxes, perforated canteens, rotting shoes, ruined breastworks, and shattered trees, the bones of hastily buried men littered the Wilderness for years.

Felled oak
Now in the American History Museum of the Smithsonian, this 22-in (56-cm) oak tree stump was felled by bullets—testimony to the fierceness of the fighting at the Bloody Angle, a once-peaceful meadow in Virginia.

» Grant hoped to begin his maneuver around Lee's right flank without being detected by his adversary. He slipped most of the army behind Hancock's Second Corps, still manning the Brock Road and thus masking the movement. The press of wagons and exhausted men made for slow going. As Grant and his staff rode through the logjams, thousands of begrimed soldiers, seeing his horse was trotting south, raised cheer after lusty cheer. Finally, they were not retreating before the Army of Northern Virginia.

Lee had not failed to spot the clouds of dust from Grant's wagons and felt certain they were heading toward the key point of Spotsylvania He ordered Richard Anderson, who had replaced Longstreet, to move the First Corps out at dawn. The fires that night, however, still lit up the Wilderness in a terrifying display few of the veterans ever forgot; so Anderson, unable to bivouac his soldiers there, got an early and, in the event, lucky start.

Lee's response

Throughout the day on May 8, Confederate cavalrymen fought fierce delaying actions, slowed the Union advance, and allowed Anderson's soldiers, hastening down a parallel route, to choose their ground. They arrived at the village minutes ahead of the Union vanguard, and General Jeb Stuart deployed them across the high ground to the west, where they were soon repulsing one piecemeal attack after another. As darkness fell, more and more units were fed into the ensuing fight, each stumbling into position along a lengthening front. As Grant had feared, Lee had his troops dig in.

By morning, a forbidding arc of Confederate earthworks, fronted by abatis (felled treetops) and sharpened stakes, was snaking through the woods and fields. At a 1-mile (1.6-km) bulge in the line, known as the Mule Shoe Salient by the Confederates, these works were dauntingly impressive—packed-earth breastworks framed by log revetments (retaining walls), rifle ports topped by shielding head logs, and stout traverses (intercepting embankments) jutting rearward to protect the defenders against flanking fire or crossfire. However, because the position had been hastily sited in the dark, for all its defenses it had a weakness: a breach by Grant could divide Lee's army.

30,000 **The casualty total of the two armies at Spotsylvania Court House. Although the Union losses (18,000 killed and wounded) were larger, Lee's much smaller force suffered more heavily in proportion.**

Attempted breakthroughs

Having failed to outmaneuver his opponent, Grant hammered away at Lee's defenses. Numerous attacks against the Rebels entrenched on Laurel Hill and the Spindle Farm were ill-coordinated and bloodily repulsed. Then, on the evening of May 10, in the woods across from the Mule Shoe Salient, Colonel Emory Upton quietly packed 12 Union regiments into one dense wedge. Bursting out of the woods, the column charged with such momentum that it actually breached the salient. Despite its eventual repulse (although the attackers carried with them a number of prisoners), this fleeting success convinced Grant, as a steady rain began falling, to plan a similar, only much bigger, assault, spearheaded by Hancock's Second Corps. The target would be the apex of the salient.

Confederate fieldworks
Abatis—obstructions made of felled treetops—and rows of sharpened stakes were erected by Lee's soldiers in front of their earth-and-log breastworks.

The Union assault

Dawn on May 12 brought more rain, along with a mist so thick that the Confederates manning the apex defenses barely heard the tramp and splash of innumerable feet until some 20,000 Union soldiers were upon them. If faulty intelligence had not persuaded Lee to remove 22 cannon from the salient, and if many of its defenders had not let their powder get dampened by the rain, the onslaught might have been repulsed.

The Northern attackers easily surmounted the works and were seemingly everywhere, killing or

General John Sedgwick
Union Sixth Corps commander General John Sedgwick famously chided troops scurrying for cover from snipers with the words: "They can't hit an elephant at this range." Moments later he was fatally wounded.

AFTER

While Grant struggled ferociously with Lee at Spotsylvania, subsidiary operations were unfolding elsewhere in Virginia.

DEATH OF STUART
On the evening of May 12, 1864, Lee's cavalry chief, Jeb Stuart, died in Richmond of a wound received **fighting Sheridan's troopers at Yellow Tavern 118–119 »**.

DEFEAT IN THE VALLEY
Four days later, on May 15, Franz Sigel's Union army was defeated by John C. Breckinridge's Confederates at the **Battle of New Market 120–121 »**, delaying Grant's hopes for a successful **Shenandoah Valley offensive**.

BUTLER BOTTLED UP
On May 5, 1864, General Benjamin Butler landed his **Army of the James** at Bermuda Hundred, but **P. G. T. Beauregard's forces were soon able to confine him there 120–121 »**.

Battle trophies
Hancock's May 12 assault on the Mule Shoe Salient was lauded in this 1864 portrayal as the "greatest victory of the war." The fighting was brutal, but Hancock's Second Corps succeeded in capturing thousands of prisoners, including two generals.

> "Nothing in history equals this contest. **Desperate, long, and deadly** it still goes on …"
>
> CORPORAL WELLES TAYLOR, 110TH PENNSYLVANIA REGIMENT, TO HIS WIFE, MAY 17, 1864

capturing thousands of Rebels. At this desperate hour, it was Lee himself who once more rode into the maelstrom. His hat swept from his head, his silver hair shining, he again tried rallying his broken soldiers. Again the cry rose, "Lee to the rear! Lee to the rear!" but their commander, his blood up, would have none of it until a sergeant firmly took his bridle, leaving General John B. Gordon to coordinate a series of ferocious counterattacks.

Yard by costly yard, the Confederates reclaimed every part of the salient, but the bluecoats only regrouped along the outside face of the breastworks, ready to renew their assault. Lee needed his weary veterans to hold the Northerners while a new defensive line was hastily constructed.

The "Bloody Angle"

The Confederates held their line, as the musketry roared for most of the day. Nowhere did the fighting rage as violently as it did along the 600-ft (183-m) stretch of works known as the West Angle. There the deafening roar reached a level of sustained frenzy seldom equaled in any conflict. The air, heavy with rain, exploded with shot and shell. Thousands of soldiers wallowed in the mud and blood, screaming and firing point-blank. A battle mania took hold. Fierce hand-to-hand struggles surged back and forth across the parapet.

The incessant shooting continued for 20 hours and more, each sputtering lull followed by a renewed brutal crescendo. Darkness brought no respite from the slaughter, the muzzle flashes becoming just a continuous sheet of flame. By midnight, nearby trees were crashing to the ground, chipped and sheared in half by the volume of flying lead.

By 4 a.m., the firing had eased. It soon ceased altogether, as the surviving Southerners escaped to Lee's newly completed defensive line, abandoning the salient. Dawn revealed a hideous scene. Before the splintered works the Union dead lay in heaps, so chewed and lacerated by bullets as to be unrecognizable. Among the traverses, Confederate bodies were churned many layers deep and in the mud writhed the wounded. Soon the West Angle would understandably be nicknamed the "Bloody Angle."

Exhausted stalemate

After the horrific events of May 12, the rain continued to fall while both exhausted armies marked time in the mud. Attempts at maneuver were completely bogged down until a fitful sun at last reappeared. Grant then launched another attack. At daybreak on May 18, after a thundering barrage, 12 Union brigades swept over the wrecked and abandoned salient, still littered with corpses, toward Lee's final defensive line, which was bristling with cannon. But the Confederate artillery alone was enough to shatter the onslaught, their infantry never even raising a rifle.

Failing to pry Lee out of his works, Grant began shifting his forces eastward, sidling them past Lee's entrenched right flank. On May 19, a large Rebel force did emerge to investigate what the Union Army was doing. The bloody but inconclusive fight at the Alsop and Harris farms was the final clash in the battles around Spotsylvania Court House. By May 21, Grant had his men hurrying south for the North Anna River, still aiming to get between Lee and Richmond.

Coehorn mortars
Some weighing only 296lb (134kg) apiece, these portable artillery pieces were ideally suited for trench warfare. Some Confederates called their arcing, unpredictably falling shells "demoralizers."

Maneuvering toward **Richmond**

In May 1864, on the muddy roads to Richmond, a massive Union cavalry raid was repulsed at the gates of the city, while General Robert E. Lee, matching General Ulysses S. Grant's offensive maneuvers, nearly managed to trap a divided Union army on the south bank of the North Anna River.

On May 8, 1864, as the opening battles at Spotsylvania were beginning, the 10,000 troopers of General Philip Sheridan's cavalry corps swung into their saddles and set off on a massive raid on Richmond, 50 miles (80km) to the south. Three days later they were nearly at the city's outer defenses when they learned that Confederate cavalry blocked their way.

General Jeb Stuart, with a third of Sheridan's numbers, had hastily deployed across a ridge just north of a tumbledown inn called Yellow Tavern. Stuart's men and mounts were exhausted, but they put up a spirited resistance for three hours. Then, just as a late afternoon thunderstorm broke, Sheridan's troopers charged up the ridge. Galloping along his lines, Stuart shouted encouragement. He had just reached the First Virginia Cavalry, when he was shot and seriously wounded. "Go back! Go back!" he yelled to his men, who were about to break under the force of the assault, "I had rather die than be whipped!" Still they could not hold their line, and were driven off the ridge a few minutes later.

The road to Richmond was open, but Sheridan shied away from the city's defenses and headed east. Rebel cavalry harried his flanks and rear, but eventually he made his way to the Army of the James at Bermuda Hundred. He had fulfilled his vow to "whip Jeb Stuart out of his boots." The seriously wounded Stuart was taken to Richmond, where he died of his wound on the evening of May 12, as fighting raged at Spotsylvania's "Bloody Angle."

Meeting at the North Anna River

Ten days later, Grant left Spotsylvania and sent his advance units once more on the roads toward Richmond.

Campaign chair Complete with a velvet seat, this sturdy piece of portable furniture—a typical 19th-century camp chair—was used by Grant during the Civil War.

The cat-and-mouse game began again, with Lee matching Grant's progress mile for mile, as rain lashed the slogging troops. Before darkness descended on May 22, Lee had concentrated his army behind the south bank of the North Anna River, 21 miles (34km) from the Confederate capital. Grant arrived on the opposite bank the next day. General Gouverneur K. Warren's Fifth Corps splashed across a shallow ford at Jericho Mill and was attacked that evening by a division from General A. P. Hill's corps. Warren drove Hill's troops off after a sharp and bloody fight.

Union failure

The following morning, General Winfield S. Hancock's Second Corps crossed the North Anna 5 miles (8km) downstream, meeting little resistance. Hopeful rumors began to circulate that Lee had retreated again. In mid-afternoon, however, one Union division encountered Confederates near Hanover Junction, dug in behind entrenchments. An hour later, General Ambrose Burnside's Ninth Corps tried crossing at Ox Ford, only to be stopped by the strong Rebel defenses.

By evening it was apparent that the Army of Northern Virginia had been lurking in the midst of Union forces and was shielded behind a formidable set of fortifications shaped like an inverted "V." The apex was on Ox Ford and the rear was protected by steep-banked streams.

In a masterstroke, Lee had divided the Union army, but was himself too ill to organize an attack. Grant could not unite the two wings of his army, which were already on the south bank. He therefore retreated from this most ingenious of defensive arrangements, withdrawing across the river. A day passed. Then, on the evening of May 26, Grant feinted to the west, and again pivoted his army to the southeast.

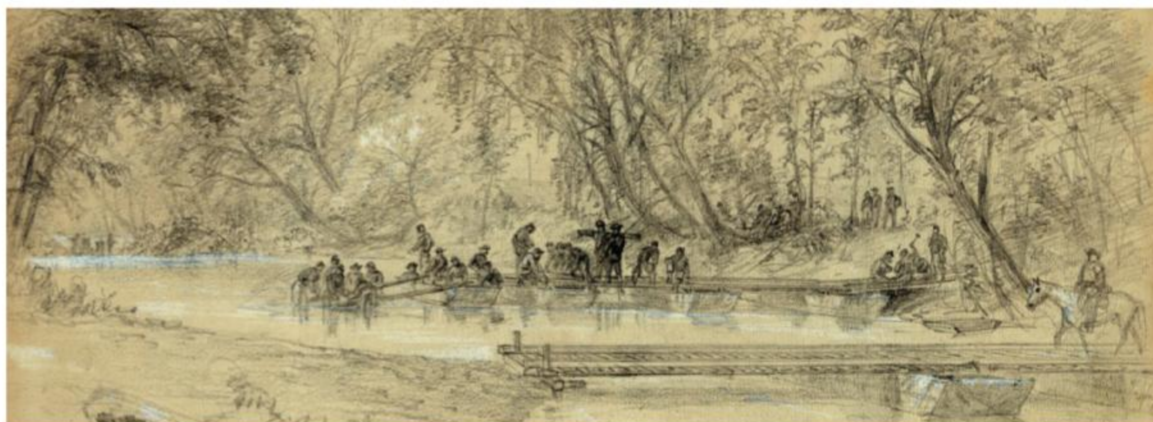
4,500 **The approximate number of Union and Confederate casualties at the North Anna River—where there was no major battle.**

BEFORE

While the armies of Grant and Lee lurched from the ferocious Battle of the Wilderness to the grim struggle at Spotsylvania, concurrent offensives started elsewhere.

SHERIDAN'S PLANS
On **April 5**, General **Philip Sheridan**, one of Grant's protégés from the Western Theater, arrived in Virginia to take command of the **Army of the Potomac**'s newly established cavalry corps, whereupon he devised a plan to **defeat Confederate cavalry chief Jeb Stuart**.

SHERMAN MOVES OUT
On **May 7**, General **William T. Sherman**, leading the **Union's second major strategic offensive**, commenced operations against General Joseph E. Johnston in northwestern Georgia. Within a week, Sherman's forces would **outmaneuver Johnston's army** at Rocky Face Ridge and force a retreat to Resaca.



Pontoons on the North Anna River
On May 24, 1864, Union engineers constructed pontoon bridges across a fordable section in the North Anna River, where the banks were less steep, as depicted in this pencil drawing by Alfred Waud.

AFTER

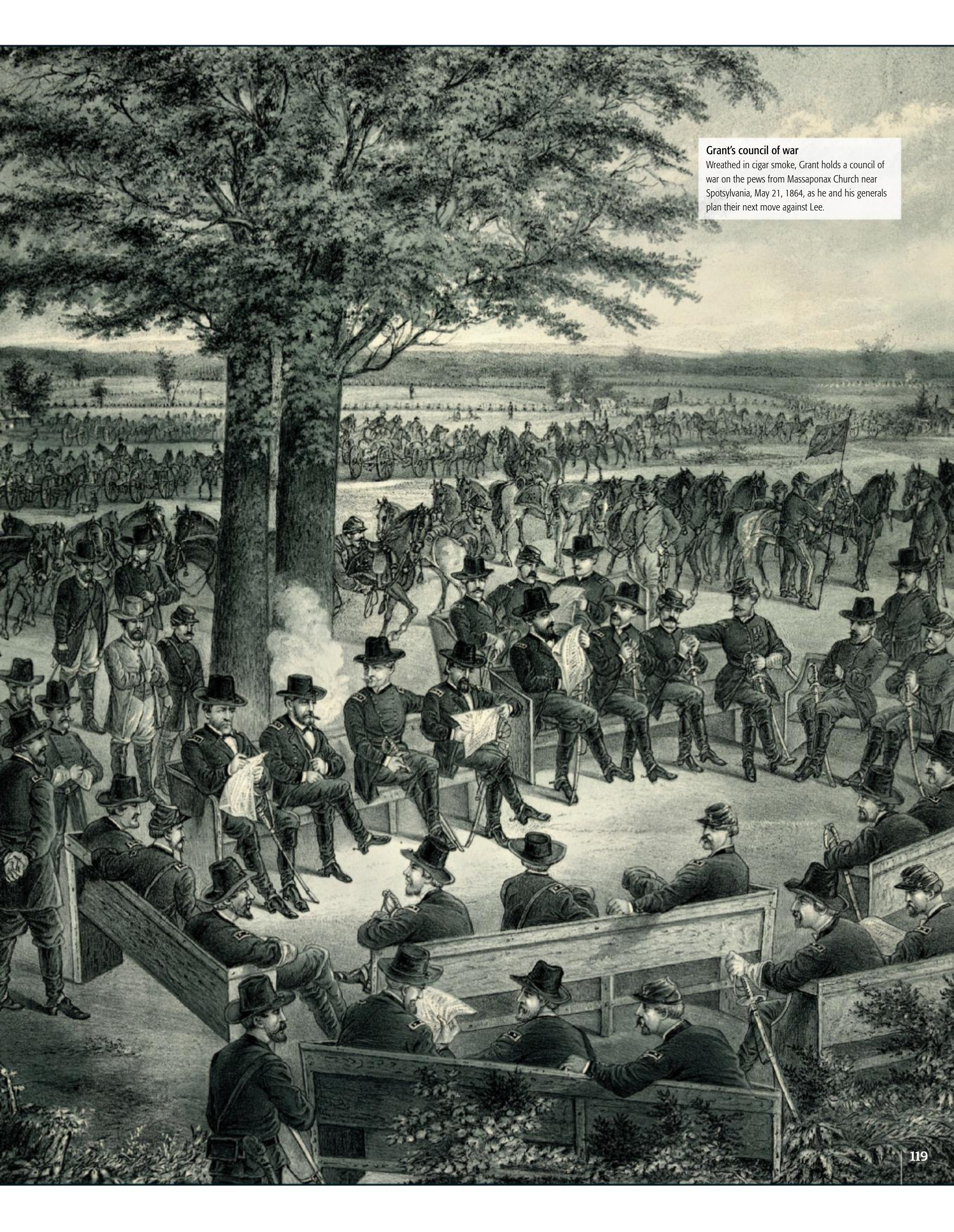
While Grant and Sherman attacked Rebel breastworks in Virginia and Georgia, Lee chose a new leader to be the "eyes and ears" of his army.

NEW COMMANDER
To replace Jeb Stuart, Lee chose General **Wade Hampton**, who would soon fight Sheridan to a draw at the June 11–12 Battle of **Trevilian Station**.

WADE HAMPTON

IN GEORGIA
Johnston was **repulsing Sherman's assaults** in the battles of New Hope Church and Pickett's Mill **138–139 ››**, while Grant faced Lee at the North Anna.

LEE'S DEFENSES
Grant concluded that **without ground protection**, Lee's army would **totter and fall** if given a strong push, which he now tried doing near a crossroads called Cold Harbor **124–125 ››**.



Grant's council of war
Wreathed in cigar smoke, Grant holds a council of war on the pews from Massaponax Church near Spotsylvania, May 21, 1864, as he and his generals plan their next move against Lee.

BEFORE

In May 1864, as Ulysses S. Grant began operations against Robert E. Lee, other Virginia campaigns were getting underway.

BUTLER'S ARMY OF THE JAMES
In April, a new army of over 30,000 soldiers was formed under Benjamin Butler. Its task was to sail up the James River, land south of Richmond, and **cut the Richmond–Petersburg railroad**.

SIGEL'S FORCES IN THE VALLEY
On May 2, General Franz Sigel began advancing up the **Shenandoah Valley**, where Stonewall Jackson had defeated him « 62–63 two years earlier. Sigel was to cut the railroad leading to Richmond, while also preventing **Confederate reinforcements from reaching Lee**.

CONFEDERATE OPPONENTS
In April, General **P .G. T. Beauregard** became commander of forces in **North Carolina and Virginia south of the James River**. Lee selected General **John C. Breckinridge** to confront Sigel in the **Shenandoah Valley**.

Rebel Victories

While Grant battled Lee in eastern Virginia, his strategy elsewhere broke down. The Confederates penned in General Butler on the Bermuda Hundred peninsula and sent General Sigel reeling at the Battle of New Market, a Rebel victory capped by the charge of the Virginia Military Institute cadets.

On the morning of May 5, when Union general Benjamin Butler landed on the Bermuda Hundred peninsula between the Appomattox and James rivers, he had a chance few generals are ever offered. His Army of the James was halfway between two key Confederate cities—15 miles (24km) from Richmond and 8 miles (13km) from Petersburg—which between them could muster a garrison of only 5,000 militiamen. What was more, the new commander of the garrison, General P. G. T. Beauregard, had still to arrive from Charleston.

Yet Butler missed his opportunity. Although he did send tentative probes out to the Richmond–Petersburg Railroad, he spent too much time and energy making sure that he was thoroughly entrenched at his new base. The Confederates, meanwhile, were using the time to pull in reinforcements from everywhere they could, and General Beauregard arrived to organize them.

When Butler did move ponderously against a target, Beauregard took him by surprise. On May 16, Butler attacked batteries at Drewry's Bluff, which commanded a bend in the James River and had long been the bane of Union gunboats. In a vicious battle in a tangled, swampy, foggy pinewood—a battle that saw bodies piled high outside makeshift breastworks—Beauregard nearly succeeded in cutting Butler off from his base. He further pummeled Butler near Ware Bottom Church on May 20. After that, the Union general was happy to regain the safety of his camp at Bermuda Hundred. With barely half Butler's numbers, Beauregard simply walled him in there, building a line of fortifications across the base of the peninsula. Beauregard had "corked" Butler up, Grant ruefully acknowledged, as if in a bottle.

Confederate General Breckinridge
Former U.S. vice president and the presidential candidate who in 1860 finished second only to Abraham Lincoln, John C. Breckinridge was a Kentuckian whose efforts to avert the war continued until September 1861, when he finally joined the South.

60 **The percentage of Fletcher H. Archer's Battalion of Virginia Reserves killed, wounded, or taken prisoner in the "Battle of Old Men and Young Boys," June 9, 1864.**

First Battle of Petersburg

In June, Butler blundered again. Having heard that Petersburg might be very lightly defended, because most of Beauregard's forces were in the Bermuda Hundred lines, Butler sought to win some long-overdue military laurels by raiding the city. On June 9, 3,400 infantrymen and 1,300 cavalrymen crossed the Appomattox River and approached the Dimmock Line, as Petersburg's encircling fortifications were called. While the tocsins (alarm bells) rang in the city, calling the militia to arms, the assaulting infantrymen were too intimidated by the frowning parapets and redoubts to mount an attack. Instead they pulled back to the safety of Bermuda Hundred.

A few miles away Butler's cavalry was in a severe fight. Storming the southern part of the Dimmock Line along the Jerusalem Plank Road, they came up against the Battalion of Virginia Reserves—125 "gray-haired sires and beardless youths," including city councilmen, shopkeepers, and teenagers—led by the retired Colonel Fletcher H. Archer, a veteran of the War with Mexico. In what became famous as the "Battle of Old Men and Young Boys," this scratch force, many armed only with ancient muskets, repulsed repeated assaults for nearly two hours. Even hospital patients helped fight the Union horsemen who finally also retreated to Bermuda Hundred.

Valley defeats

Grant's plans for a Shenandoah Valley offensive had been thwarted, too. In May, General Franz Sigel's army was first bogged down by rain, then saw action at New Market. This was one of the handsome towns through which the Valley Turnpike rolled, as did the road leading east across the Blue Ridge Mountains and down into the cockpit where Lee and Grant were slugging it out. Lee believed Sigel would use that route to attack his flank, and on Sunday, May 15, General John C. Breckinridge was trying to prevent that.

Cannonfire had driven many of New Market's residents into the cellars, but the noise was even more terrifying because thunderstorms continually vied with the artillery. To counter Sigel's 6,000 soldiers, Breckinridge had mustered a force of 4,000,

Bermuda Hundred operations
A hand-drawn map depicts the Bermuda Hundred peninsula, where Butler was confined by Beauregard. Petersburg is just off the map in the bottom left-hand corner, Richmond off the top left-hand corner.

> "A **blanket would have covered the three**. They were awfully **mangled** by the **canister**."
>
> CADET JOHN S. WISE, DESCRIBING HIS COMRADES KILLED AT NEW MARKET

including a reserve of 247 soaked and shivering cadets from the Virginia Military Institute, the "West Point of the South," who had arrived after marching 70 miles (112km) in four days from their Lexington school. Lee, accustomed to worse odds, had merely wished Breckinridge luck: "I trust you will drive the enemy back."

Sigel's failure

In the event, many of Sigel's men were still far down the Valley Turnpike, the only macadamized road in a sea of rain-churned muddy lanes. As the fighting surged back and forth over the pastures and knolls outside the town, the Union commander could only place what troops he did have along a ridge overlooking the fields and orchards of a farm belonging to the local Bushong family. There he also positioned 18 of his guns.

Breckinridge, who at Shiloh and Chickamauga had proved a remarkably fine soldier, led a Confederate assault that advanced up those boggy slopes. But as rain lashed the fields and the Union guns raked the attacking troops, a dangerous gap appeared in the Southern ranks. Before the Northern soldiers could seize the opportunity, Breckinridge called reluctantly for the cadets—"Put the boys in, and may God forgive me for the order"—to move up and plug the hole.

Dressed as if on parade, the lines of cadets crossed a plowed field that rain had made such a quagmire they lost their shoes in the mud. Passing through a field of green wheat, some of the youths were torn to pieces by canister (artillery shot used at close quarters). Continuing onward, their comrades wavered only when Union riflemen began piling volleys into them; many of them fell, but the remainder pressed forward and, sinking to their knees, reached their assigned place.

After a weak Union counterattack turned into a shambles, Sigel's artillerymen began limbering up their guns. The cadets then sprang to their feet and swept up the hill. A Union officer remembered it as the most "sublime" sight he ever witnessed in the war. The rest of the Confederate line rose in response and stormed the ridge, routing Sigel's men, who retreated pell-mell down the Valley Turnpike, not stopping for a day and a night. With them went Grant's hopes for a Shenandoah Valley offensive. Lee's flank was secured, and Breckinridge was able to march his small force east to reinforce the Army of Northern Virginia.

Nearly a quarter of the Southern cadets had been killed or wounded. The rest returned to Lexington as conquering heroes. "We were still young in the ghastly game," one would recall, "but we proved apt scholars."

Cadet's medal
After the war, Virginia presented bronze medals to each of the cadets who fought at New Market—or if killed or mortally wounded in action, to the cadet's next of kin.

Virginia Military Institute cadet
Benjamin A. Colonna was one of the cadets who fought at New Market. He is depicted on the field over which the cadets charged. Colonna survived the war as a captain in the Confederate Army.

AFTER »

The failures of Sigel and Butler not only allowed Breckinridge and Beauregard to reinforce Lee, they also gave the Confederates another military advantage.

PETERSBURG DEFENSES
As a result of Butler's abortive raid on Petersburg, Beauregard began strengthening that **city's defenses**, just in time to **parry General Grant's initial assaults** on it the following week **124–125 »**.

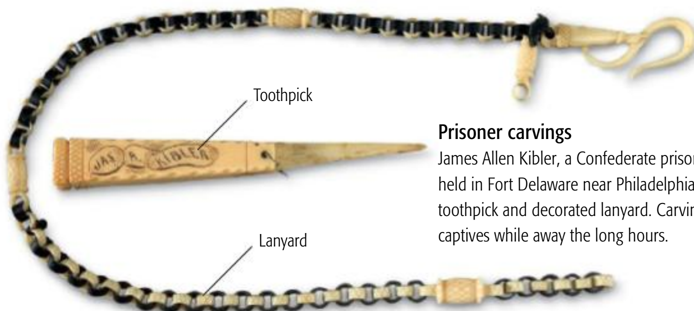
A NEW VALLEY CAMPAIGN
Another Shenandoah Valley campaign began in June after a raid by Union General **David Hunter**, in which he burned the Virginia Military Institute, the "hornet's nest," in retaliation for New Market. Lee sent General **Jubal Early** to confront Hunter, leading to a **summer of battles** culminating in **Sheridan's victory** over Early **128–129 »**.

Prisoners of War

Neither side was prepared to handle the large numbers of prisoners that, by 1864, were being marched into makeshift stockades. Overcrowding, starvation, lack of sanitation, and occasional cruelty stalked Northern prisons as much as they did those in the South.

When captured in battle in 1862, a Civil War soldier on either side might expect some rough handling, sometimes within sound and sight of the fighting, perhaps in a holding area in the rear. If he was lucky, he might quickly be paroled in exchange for an enemy soldier of the same rank or expect to be exchanged in the near future. By 1864, capture meant only one thing: a prison camp. The parole-and-exchange cartel that had existed in the early part of the war collapsed in 1863, and in April 1864, General Grant refused to exchange any more prisoners.

What awaited the captive now would be a fearsome ordeal at best. He might have had an equal, or better, chance of survival had he remained on the battlefield. There were more than 150 prisoner-of-war camps across the United States during the conflict. Every conceivable kind of facility had to be pressed into service. They included existing prisons and jails, converted warehouses, disused barracks, old fortifications, and stockades that were no better than cattle pens. What they all had in common, both in the North and the South, was not a policy of deliberate mistreatment, but rather bureaucratic fecklessness and a dire lack of resources: poor food, shelter, hygiene, and medical attention. Thousands of men died.



Prisoner carvings
James Allen Kibler, a Confederate prisoner of war held in Fort Delaware near Philadelphia, carved this toothpick and decorated lanyard. Carving helped captives while away the long hours.

« BEFORE

At the outbreak of war, neither side had the facilities or infrastructure to handle large numbers of prisoners.

INFORMAL ARRANGEMENTS
Lincoln opposed prisoner-of-war exchange agreements, feeling they lent **legitimacy to the Confederacy**. However, field commanders worked out informal exchanges, based on the **parole-and-exchange** system, to keep the numbers of prisoners at **manageable levels**.

DIX-HILL EXCHANGE CARTEL
In July 1862, both sides agreed to an official exchange system, called the **Dix-Hill Cartel** after the Union and Confederate officers who negotiated it. For prisoners who agreed to **refrain from military service when released**, this system allowed for the **exchange of prisoners of equal rank**. This worked well, and prisoner-of-war camps soon **began to empty**.

COLLAPSE OF THE CARTEL
The system began collapsing once the Union army began **recruiting black soldiers**. The Confederacy refused to exchange them, instead threatening to treat them as **runaway slaves**. In May 1863, the Federal government **suspended the cartel**. Soon the numbers of prisoners began swelling to **unmanageable levels**.

Mixed fortunes

Early in the war the best-known Confederate prisoner-of-war camp was Richmond's Libby Prison. Some 125,000 Union prisoners may have passed through this grim, three-story brick warehouse and former ship's chandlery, for Libby was a prisoner processing station, from which captives were sent on to other camps across the South. Within its dank, fetid walls it had room for about 1,000 inmates, but upwards of five times that number congregated in the rat-infested corridors. Almost all were officers, educated men who subsequently wrote many accounts of their experiences as prisoners of war. They were the lucky ones; they had only to look out their barred windows to see how the other half lived. Out there, Belle Isle "prison" could be glimpsed, a rocky outcropping in the midst of the James River rapids. This was the other extreme, a natural prison with few or no facilities on which congregated perhaps 8,000 enlisted men, scrambling for the shelter of only 3,000 tents and a handful of shacks. Conditions at Illinois' Rock Island, in the middle of the Mississippi River, were not much better. Although they had some shelter, its Confederate prisoners were too often exposed to the burning summer sun and harsh winters. In 1864, a fast-spreading smallpox epidemic virtually emptied the prison.

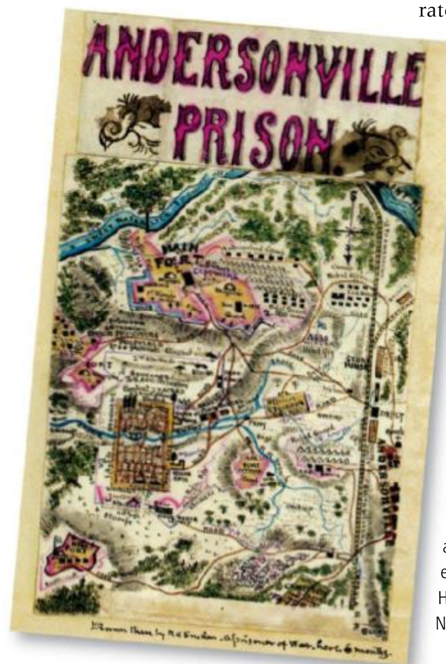
Point Lookout in Maryland was the Belle Isle of the North. Once a resort jutting out into the Chesapeake Bay, it provided only enough tents for 10,000 men, but the actual number of Southern captives rose much higher than that. As many as 3,500 of them may have died there, many of exposure, during the two years the prison was in operation.

High mortality rates

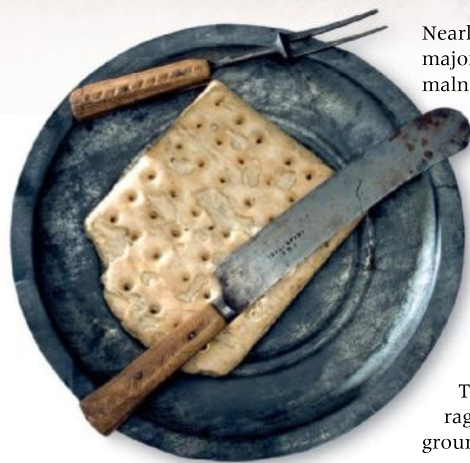
Some 26,000 captured Confederates were held at one time or another in Camp Douglas, built originally as a training barracks. The camp was sited on a damp, low-lying bit of prairie outside Chicago. It earned the grim reputation of having a higher percentage of deaths in a single month than any other prison camp in the war—387 out of 3,884 men in February 1863. Altogether more than 4,000 of its captives never saw their homes in the South again; many of them lie buried in one mass grave in Chicago's Oak Woods Cemetery.

Record death toll
Of the 150 prison camps operating during the Civil War, Camp Douglas in Chicago had the highest death rate for any one-month period, with some ten percent of its captives perishing in February 1863.

By far the highest overall mortality rate of any Union prisoner-of-war camp—reaching a staggering 24 percent—was recorded at Elmira. Located in western New York State, Elmira (or "Hellmira," as it was known to its inmates) first opened on July 6, 1864, when 400 Southern prisoners were marched into a former barracks that might have held 5,000. Although it was a large camp, Elmira was nowhere near big enough for the 9,500 men it held when the population was at its peak. Many of them had to sleep outdoors in New York's freezing winter, without blankets or any other provision for shelter.



Plan of Andersonville Prison
Memories of Andersonville lingered long, and after the war veterans groups were prominent in efforts to preserve the site. Today it is a National Historic Site, with a National Cemetery and the National Prisoner of War Museum.


Libby Prison mess kit
Although Libby Prison was severely overcrowded, Union captives held there were comparatively well treated. These items were issued to Colonel John S. Crocker of the 93rd New York Volunteers upon his arrival.

Nearly 3,000 men died there—the majority from exposure, disease, and malnutrition—in the 12 months that Elmira operated.

A living hell

Andersonville, or Camp Sumter, was all these camps writ large. Carved out of the pinewoods of southwestern Georgia in early 1864, it was a stockade built for 10,000 Union prisoners that soon held three times that number. It offered no shelter. The sweltering inmates stretched rags on sticks and burrowed into the ground to escape the relentless sun. Its one creek was both water source and camp sewer. Dysentery was rampant, medical attention nonexistent, and rations sparse. Nearly 13,000 men died there—30 percent of the prison's population. Andersonville became the most infamous of Civil War prison camps, but all of them shared, to an extent, its sins.

Over 400,000 men were at some point held as prisoners of war during the conflict, and more than 56,000 of them died in captivity. Ultimately the death rate for both North and South together was approximately 13 percent—more than twice the death rate on the battlefield.

> "The sight is **worse** than **any sight of battlefields** or any collections of the wounded, **even the bloodiest**."
>
> WALT WHITMAN, ON RELEASED UNION PRISONERS OF WAR, *SPECIMEN DAYS,* 1882

Mass grave at Andersonville
Prisoners lay one of their fellow inmates in one of the mass graves outside the stockade. This was a daily duty for the men held at Andersonville.

AFTER

In 1865, the Confederacy changed its policy on captured black soldiers and prisoner exchanges were resumed, but these never reached their earlier rates.

GOING HOME

After the war ended—sometimes months after—**Confederate prisoners** in northern camps took a **loyalty oath** and were given train passes to go back home.

LEGACY OF BITTERNESS

Images of **emaciated** Andersonville survivors, published in the North after the war, helped exacerbate **sectional hostility** during **Reconstruction**. **Health issues** dogged some of the survivors for the **rest of their lives**.

HENRY WIRZ

CRIMINAL OR SCAPEGOAT

Henry Wirz, **commander at Andersonville**, was tried by a U.S. military court and convicted of **"impairing the health and destroying the lives of prisoners."** He was hanged in November 1865, the **only prison official** on either side to be **executed for war crimes**.

The Battle of Cold Harbor

Grant's maneuvers were blocked once more by Lee's army, which constructed a 7-mile (11-km) line of fieldworks—the most daunting yet seen in the Overland Campaign—near the junction at Cold Harbor. The only way to break through that line—so Grant thought—was to launch one massive assault.

« BEFORE

In the wake of Ulysses S. Grant's masterly disengagement from the North Anna River **« 118–119****, both armies continued their running battle, sparring southeastward.**

HAW'S SHOP
General Robert E. Lee took up a strong position on the south bank of **Totopotomoy Creek**, with Pamunkey River to the north and Chickahominy River to the south. On May 28 he sent a cavalry **reconnaissance eastward** to test Grant's position. His men met Union horsemen near **Haw's Shop**, a local forge, and the resulting five-hour battle became one of the **bloodiest cavalry engagements** of the entire war.

BETHESDA CHURCH
On May 30 Grant pushed across Totopotomoy Creek, seeking Lee's right flank. The infantry of both armies **clashed at Bethesda Church**. Farther east, cavalry units fought at Old Church, but the Confederate horsemen fell back on a crossroads called **Cold Harbor**. Grant, believing Lee's lines unbreakable, was also casting an eye on Cold Harbor. A **major battle** was shaping up.

TECHNOLOGY

TRENCH WARFARE

Spending nearly two weeks—from June 1 to June 12, 1864—in flat open fields, swept by artillery and sniper fire, soldiers of both armies dug a complex maze of trenches around the road junction at Cold Harbor. Behind their parapets, troops constructed bombproof shelters to sleep in and excavated holes to build fires. They filled gabions (open-ended wickerwork cages) with dirt for shock absorption—a technique they would use again at Petersburg (pictured). Rain turned the trenches into rivers, and in the sun, blankets stretched between bayoneted rifles screened the men.

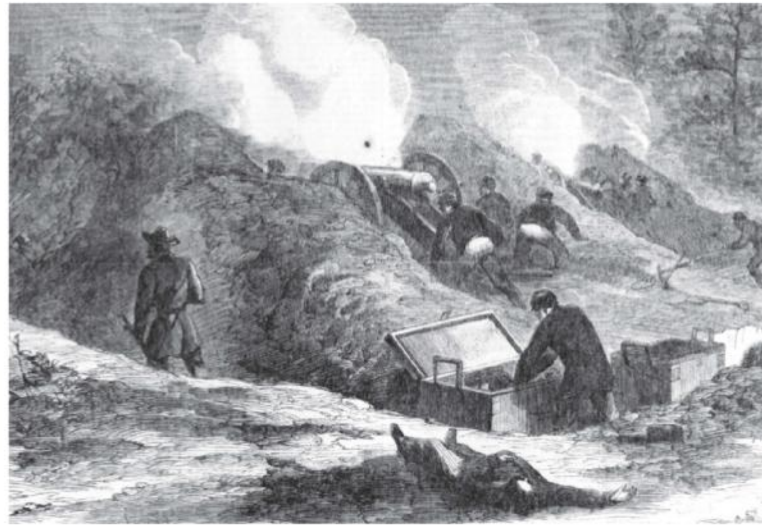
The dusty little hamlet of Cold Harbor sat in country so flat that only ravines cut by sluggish streams provided relief. Five roads radiated from the settlement like wheel spokes, including two to the southwest, which led over bridges across the Chickahominy River to Richmond, 8 miles (13km) away.

On June 1, 1864, this hamlet saw cavalry units fighting for its possession. As the afternoon wore on, infantry began arriving. Troopers in blue held the crossroads as Lee's divisions began approaching from the north. Grant's soldiers were marching along a parallel track, but some of them had become lost and were slow coming up. Although Lee's line stretched nearly 7 miles (11km), from Totopotomoy Creek in the north to the banks of the Chickahominy, the leading elements managed to block the road to Richmond. Lee's veterans dug in where they halted. Grant's men aligned opposite, and as evening fell the Union commander hurled them at the Southern line. "Aim low and aim well," one Confederate general advised his troops. For a few minutes, the Confederate lines blazed with rifle fire. Everywhere the Yankees fell back, except where one division nearly opened a breach, using a ravine for cover. This near-breakthrough impressed Grant, who thought one big push might divide the Army of Northern Virginia. He therefore ordered a huge attack for June 2, but not all the Union troops were in place, so he reluctantly postponed to the following morning.

6,500 **The estimated number of Union soldiers who fell within the first hour of the charge at Cold Harbor on June 3, 1864—over one-quarter of the 25,000 men sent to attack the Confederate fieldworks that morning.**

That night Lee's engineers strengthened their lines, shoring up weak spots and designing a broad zigzag pattern that created converging

The Battle of Cold Harbor
This postwar chromolithograph, issued by the firm Kurz and Allison, depicts the gruesome battle in the stylized, romantic vein popular in the 1880s.



Union battery at Cold Harbor
During the battle of June 1, these Union Sixth Corps gunners fought so close to the Confederate line that they were nicknamed "Battery Insult."

fields of fire, staked out with measured distances so that the artillery could better estimate range. The art of field fortification that the Confederates had been working on since Spotsylvania was now perfected in the flat fields around Cold Harbor. Though there was a steady patter of falling rain, the ominous noise of the Confederate soldiers strengthening their breastworks carried hundreds of yards to the ears of waiting Union soldiers. Grim premonitions swept through the ranks; many men pinned their names to their tunics so that burial parties would be better able to identify them.

Battle resumes

At 4:30 a.m. on June 3, the signal gun fired and some 25,000 Union soldiers emerged from their works and crossed the muddy fields. Few of them had time to study the Rebel breastworks. Across the nearly 7-mile (11-km) line, a mighty crash of Confederate cannon and rifle fire erupted that lit up the dawn sky and rattled the windows in Richmond.

Volley after murderous volley tore through the blue-clad ranks. Entire lines were cut down, and whole regiments disintegrated. In the midst of the pandemonium, General Francis Barlow's brigade briefly took a section of the Confederate earthworks, amidst a scene of sheer slaughter. In some places only minutes passed before survivors were pinned down by rifle fire as their officers urged them forward in vain.

Yet Grant and his staff remained unaware of the situation on the ground. Barlow's fleeting success only prompted more orders to attack. The result was near mutiny among the generals, and it was midday before Grant finally halted the debacle. By then the full extent of casualties was becoming known. While some Confederate divisions reported no casualties, the Union troops had been decimated. Of the 6,500 to 7,000 men felled during the first hour of battle that morning, most had been hit during the first fatal ten minutes.

BREASTWORK A rapidly constructed, temporary fortification, erected as a defense in battle. The name comes from its walls being breast height.

The wounded abandoned

Among the casualties were masses of wounded men strewn across the ravaged fields. Still the Confederate gunners kept firing. Survivors could only dig in where they lay, using bayonets and tin cups as entrenching tools. The following day, Grant conferred with Lee about collecting the wounded, who had lain exposed for over 24 hours. Grant refused to ask for a formal truce, and Lee distrusted Grant's motives. For three days, dead bodies lay on the fields. Under cover of darkness some soldiers tried slipping out to recover their moaning comrades. But with the battle lines sometimes only 150ft (45m) apart, sharpshooters dared any man who raised his head. Some tried digging trenches to reach the wounded instead. Finally, on the evening of June 7, Grant asked for a formal truce and Lee agreed. By that time there were few wounded still alive in the fields of festering corpses. Burial parties were given tots of whiskey to help brace them for their task.

News of the repulse at Cold Harbor came as a shattering blow to the North. After a month of bloody assaults, some of Grant's commanders were growing restive; far and wide he was being decried as a "butcher." Grant never responded to the criticism. Two decades later, however, when he was writing his memoirs, Grant, dying of throat cancer, revealed his true feelings: "I have always regretted that the last assault at Cold Harbor was ever made."

Berdan sharpshooter frock coat
Named for their commanding officer, Colonel Hiram Berdan, the 2nd U.S. Volunteer Sharpshooters were a crack Union regiment. They fought at Cold Harbor, but with less success than their Confederate counterparts.

"I had seen **nothing** to exceed this. It was not war; **it was murder**."
CONFEDERATE GENERAL EVANDER McIVOR LAW

AFTER

Continued bad news from the battlefields kept support for the war discouragingly low in the Northern states.

LINCOLN'S REELECTION IMPERILED

News of the **carnage at Cold Harbor** sapped spirits at the **Republican national convention**, meeting on June 7–8 in Baltimore to **nominate President Lincoln for a second term**.

SHERMAN IMPEDED

In Georgia, Joseph E. Johnston, withdrawing from one line of **forbidding entrenchments** to another, eluded Sherman's traps, stalling **Union progress toward Atlanta** **138–139 »**.

SHATTERED CONFIDENCE

Soldiers in the Army of the Potomac were so **unnerved by the slaughter** that, days later, they balked at attacking the thinly defended trenches outside **Petersburg** **126–127 »**.

DIGGING UP THE REMAINS OF THE FALLEN AT COLD HARBOR, ONE YEAR AFTER THE BATTLE

Bridging the James River
Between June 14 and June 17, 1864, Union engineers laid a pontoon bridge, employing 101 pontoons, to span a nearly half-mile (800-m) wide stretch of the James River.

BEFORE

The stalemate at Cold Harbor as the two armies faced each other from their trenches grew intolerable for both Grant and Lee.

GRANT LOOKS SOUTH
After **Cold Harbor «124–125**, Grant continued to refine his strategy. He ordered a detachment of Sheridan's cavalry to **destroy the railroads west and southwest of Richmond**, knowing that **Lee's cavalry would set off in pursuit**, leaving him temporarily blind. Grant was **planning an intricate move**, with an eye on the **railroad junction at Petersburg**, 20 miles (32km) south of Richmond and beyond the James River.

PETERSBURG'S DEFENSES
The city was partially protected by formidable fortifications, called the **Dimmock Line**, after military engineer Charles Dimmock, who had directed their construction in 1862. In May, General **P. G. T. Beauregard**, in charge of the city's defenses, had bottled up Butler's Army of the James at **Bermuda Hundred «120–131**. That allowed him to send many of his troops to reinforce Lee, but left him with **scant forces to defend Petersburg** against a surprise attack.

Grant Advances to Petersburg

Having brilliantly extricated his Union army from Cold Harbor, Grant soon had many of his troops and supplies crossing the James River over a 2,100-ft (640-m) pontoon bridge. But his field commanders failed to capture the key railroad junction of Petersburg before Lee and his army caught up with them.

First attack at Petersburg
On June 15, 1864 the Union Eighteenth Corps carried a significant portion of the Dimmock Line, as depicted in this illustration from Frank Leslie's *Illustrated Newspaper*. This initial success was not followed up.

As the night of June 12, 1864 fell on the ravaged fields around Cold Harbor, Union soldiers were quietly on the move. Once well to the rear, they assembled into regiments and then into corps. At dawn, Lee received the astonishing news that the Army of the Potomac had vanished with the night. Grant decided to move against the Confederate supply lines, especially the five railroads intersecting in Petersburg. To do this, however, he needed to steal a march south and cross the James River, which in places was several miles wide.

Feats of transportation

While Grant was "all-observant, silent, inscrutable," as one subordinate put it, the Eighteenth Corps under General William F. Smith marched northeast to board troop transports waiting on the York River. Most of the infantry marched south to the north shore of the James River, and were ferried to the opposite bank. The remainder—

one corps and one division, plus all the artillery—crossed the river on a pontoon bridge that had been erected in only seven hours. The troops were followed by 5,000 wagons, 56,000 horses and mules, and 2,800 head of cattle. For three days an unbroken cavalcade plodded over the bridge.

Initial attacks

Smith's Eighteenth Corps was the first to arrive, disembarking at City Point on June 15 and marching 10 miles (16km) toward Petersburg. Behind the Dimmock Line, General Beauregard's Confederate defenders waited nervously. The assault was launched that evening, and it was so overwhelming that the triumphant Union troops captured great stretches of the Dimmock Line, forcing Beauregard back to find another defensible position. For a moment, Smith held the key to Petersburg, but he let it slip from his grasp. Convinced that more Confederates opposed him than was actually the case, he failed to follow up his success. Beauregard hastily dug a second line of defense, his men frantically scraping the earth with bayonets and tin cups, while Grant pushed his generals to "carry Petersburg before the enemy could reinforce its garrison."

2,500 **The approximate number of troops at Beauregard's disposal to man the defenses of Petersburg on June 15, 1864. Many of them were old men and young boys of the militia.**

Lee was temporarily confused. "I do not know the position of Grant's army," he wrote to his superiors in Richmond the next day. But Beauregard, now fending off more than 40,000 enemy troops, identified the blue-clad soldiers confronting him as belonging to the Army of the Potomac. On receiving that news, Lee sent his veterans hastening down the road to Petersburg.

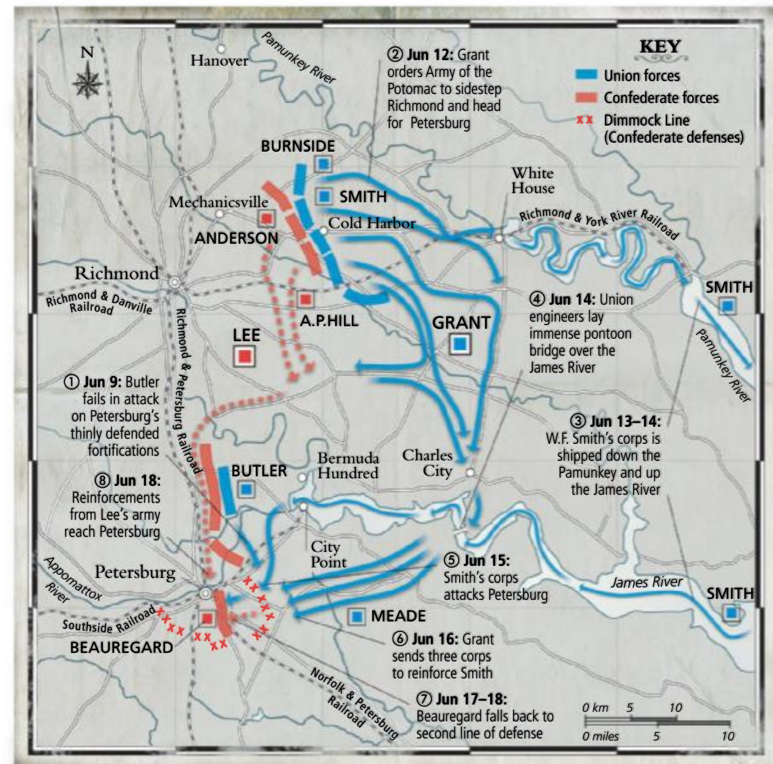
Beauregard's finest hour

Meanwhile, Grant had arrived in front of the beleaguered city and ordered another assault for that very evening. Beauregard still held out. It had not been much of an attack: "Our men are tired," General Meade admitted.

The following day, June 17, brought heavy fighting, but the attacks were fitful. Beauregard kept the Union assaults at bay, shifting his few troops from pressure point to pressure point as needed. By daybreak on June 18, the riflemen were firing with deadly accuracy, for they repulsed yet another dawn attack. That afternoon the lead elements of the Army of Northern Virginia began to arrive. Holding out for four days, Beauregard had inflicted as many casualties as he had men to command. The Union soldiers were stymied, and so they dug in. "Grant has pushed his Army to the extreme limit of human endurance," one staff officer complained privately.

An opportunity missed

Grant had maneuvered to Petersburg with great skill. But his exhausted troops and subordinate commanders had missed a great opportunity. Seemingly Grant had exchanged one labyrinth of trenches at Cold Harbor for another at Petersburg.



From Cold Harbor to Petersburg
Grant's advance to Petersburg was a triumph of logistics, but the men of the Army of the Potomac were too tired after the rigors of weeks of fighting and marching to break through the city's weak defenses.

Petersburg from Lee's headquarters
An artist for the *Illustrated London News* sketched a panorama of Petersburg and environs as seen by General Lee and his staff, while they were "watching the enemy's movements through a field-glass."

AFTER »

Grant had wanted to avoid a protracted siege at Petersburg, but his failure to take the city when the chance arose would prolong the war into another year.

NORTHERN DISILLUSION

Lee's war of attrition was wearing down the North's will to fight. **Copperheads, Peace Democrats, and other defeatist elements** were gaining support. If Lee could hold out long enough, the issue might be decided by the **presidential election « 112–113** in November. Meanwhile, Grant kept **extending his Petersburg lines 130–131 »** to the south and west, hoping to weaken Lee's own lines and capture his remaining railroads.

SOUTHERN VICTORIES

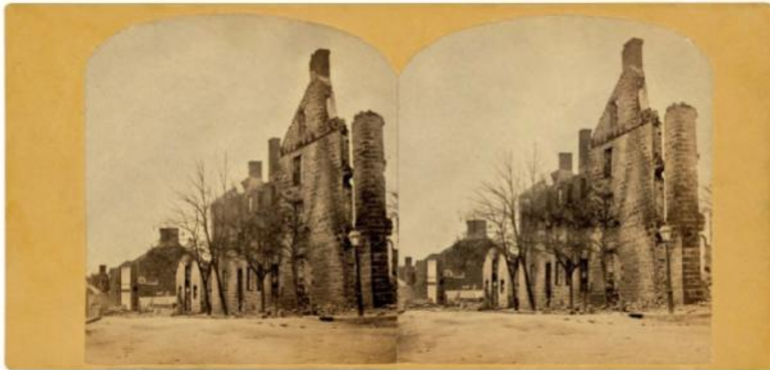
On June 10, **Nathan Bedford Forrest** routed a force twice the size of his own at **Brice's Crossroads, Mississippi 136–137 »**, while on June 11–12, Wade Hampton stopped Sheridan's troopers at **Trevilian Station, Virginia**. On June 27, **Sherman was defeated** at **Kennesaw Mountain outside Atlanta 138–139 »**, while Jubal Early was preparing to **march on Washington 128–129 »**. All in all, it was a summer of doubt for the Union.

The **Valley Campaign**

In the war's final duel for control of the strategic Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, Confederate General Jubal Early, whose soldiers briefly menaced Washington, D.C., was soundly defeated by General Philip Sheridan, who darkened the Valley's skies in what would become known as "The Burning."

Jubal Early was nothing if not audacious. In June 1864, having won control of the Shenandoah Valley, he planned to take his Army of the Valley—Stonewall Jackson's old Second Corps—on an invasion of the North.

Having scattered his enemies—some into the mountains of West Virginia—Early seized the opportunity to relieve pressure on Robert E. Lee, struggling with Ulysses S. Grant at Petersburg, Virginia. Early planned to threaten Washington, D.C., and perhaps draw off some of Grant's soldiers. Crossing the Potomac River, Early brushed aside Union forces on July 9 at the Battle of Monocacy. Three days later, his men marched down Rockville Pike toward Washington's defenses. Though the fortifications were manned by a force of militiamen twice the size of Early's army, the city itself was on the verge of hysteria. The Confederates were so close that they could see the Capitol dome from their bivouac. But with thousands of Union reinforcements arriving from Petersburg, Early turned and soon recrossed the Potomac. He had sown panic and depleted Grant's Petersburg lines, and had also destroyed railroads and telegraph stations.



Chambersburg in ruins
Hundreds of buildings were destroyed when, on July 30, 1864, much of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, was torched by Confederate cavalry in retaliation for Union depredations in Virginia and failure to pay a ransom.

Back in the Shenandoah Valley, Early continued defeating scattered Union incursions. On July 24, over the same fields and fences where Stonewall Jackson once fought, he vanquished Federal forces at the Second Battle of Kernstown. He then sent his cavalry, commanded by John A. McCausland, across the Potomac again. On the morning of July 30, the troopers rode into Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, demanding $100,000 in gold as compensation for General David Hunter's burning of Virginia homes the previous month. When the ransom could not be produced, McCausland torched the town.

The Union response

The North was incensed, as was General Grant, who summoned his pugnacious cavalry chief, Philip Sheridan. "I want Sheridan to be put in command of all the troops in the field," Grant declared, "with instructions to follow the enemy to the death."

It proved to be a pivotal decision. "Little Phil"—as the diminutive Sheridan was affectionately known—entered the Valley near Harpers Ferry in August at the head of the Army of the Shenandoah, nearly 40,000 soldiers strong. Encamped outside Winchester, Early marched and countermarched his heavily outnumbered troops, hoping the resulting dust clouds would create the impression of a much larger force. Sheridan bided his time, and struck on September 19.

The Third Battle of Winchester was a bloody, daylong fight that surged back and forth across rolling fields. Though they repulsed a number of Union assaults, the Confederates finally broke when cavalry attacked their flanks. Having suffered nearly 40 percent casualties, Early's troops streamed back through the streets of Winchester and entrenched on Fisher's Hill, 15 miles (24km) to the south.

Three days later, at sunset on September 22, Sheridan attacked at Fisher's Hill. The Union soldiers scrambled over rocks, walls, and felled trees with their commander urging them on: "Forward! Forward everything! Go on, don't stop, go on!" Outflanked again, Early's men abandoned their positions, losing more than 1,000, and were chased deep into the night by their relentless foe.

Utter devastation

Sheridan next turned his attention to the surrounding landscape, whose crops had been supplying the Confederate army. Grant had ordered him to "turn the valley into such a barren waste that even a crow flying over it would have to carry his own rations." As the torches were handed out, his soldiers began igniting the many fires that, taken together, would always be remembered by residents as "The Burning." Far and wide, immense pillars of smoke arose as every barn, stable, mill, haystack, and supply of forage went up in flames. Some 2,000 barns and 120 mills with their stocks of grain and flour were consumed by fire. Countless fences, wagons, and farming implements were destroyed. Livestock was run off. Hundreds of square miles of once-beautiful farmland were wrecked and scorched. There was little that the Confederacy could do about it. Partisan activities by cavalry commander John Mosby's group and others only brought reprisals. When Early's cavalry pressed too close, it was driven off at the Battle of Tom's Brook on October 9. George

"He just **moved around our flank**, **swept down** upon it, and **whipped us out of existence**."

CONFEDERATE GENERAL JOHN B. GORDON, ON SHERIDAN'S VICTORY AT CEDAR CREEK

« BEFORE

Once famous far and wide for its beauty, the Shenandoah Valley had been ravaged by two years of war.

A STRATEGIC PAWN
For the Union, the Valley had been a potential backdoor route to Richmond; to the South, it was the "**breadbasket of the Confederacy**" and the **natural invasion route to the North**.

CONFEDERATE CONTROL
In June, Union general David Hunter, who replaced Franz Sigel after the **Battle of New Market** « 120–121, advanced back up the Shenandoah Valley and **put many buildings and homes to the torch,** outraging Virginians. Approaching the Confederate supply depot at Lynchburg, he was defeated on June 17–18 by General Jubal Early, commander of the new Army of the Valley. Hunter retreated into West Virginia, **leaving the Valley to Early**.

Custer torching the Valley
War artist Alfred Waud sketched General George Custer's division retiring from the Mount Jackson area on October 7, 1864, burning agricultural resources along the way.

Armstrong Custer's jeering horsemen nicknamed the galloping stampede the "Woodstock Races" as the Confederates retreated for more than 20 miles (32km).

The Battle of Cedar Creek

Secure in his control of the lower valley, and believing Early's divisions to have withdrawn, Sheridan departed for Washington. But Early was closer than Sheridan realized, and had lost none of his audacity. Though outnumbered four to one, he still hoped to prevent Sheridan from reinforcing Grant, and planned a surprise attack on the Union army encamped behind Cedar Creek, 12 miles (19km) south of Winchester.

On the night of October 18, as Sheridan arrived back in Winchester, Early's men were hugging a precipitous mountain trail as they rounded the lightly picketed Union left flank. Dawn on the 19th opened with a Rebel yell and a thunder of guns. The Union soldiers were caught literally in their beds. Thousands fled to the rear in panic. Wagons, supplies, some 24 cannons, and 20 battle flags fell to Early's men; but barefoot, famished, and in rags, most of them turned aside to plunder, and Early called off the pursuit. "This is glory enough for one day!" he exulted.

Increasingly alarmed, Sheridan arrived at the scene to see the shambles of his army pouring rearward. Ordering up fresh troops from Winchester, Sheridan rode along the wagon-thronged Valley Pike, cursing, cajoling, coaxing, and cheering; waving his hat forward. "Come on back, boys! Give 'em hell, God damn 'em! We'll make coffee out of Cedar Creek tonight!" Increasing his pace almost to a gallop, he kept it up for nearly 12 miles (19km), roaring encouragements and waving his hat, until by some miracle of inspiration the army began to steady, then to reform its lines. By 4:30 p.m., the tide was turning. An overwhelming wave of bluecoats then rolled back into its former camps. In the chaos, the Confederates turned in flight. As Union cavalry slashed at their flanks, fleeing soldiers clogged the Valley Pike so thickly that at one place a small bridge collapsed. Everything the Confederates had captured, and more, they now lost, to the point where Early's army nearly ceased to exist. "When we left the field that evening," General John B. Gordon acknowledged, "the Confederacy had retired from the Shenandoah."

435,802 **The number of bushels of wheat that were destroyed or seized by Sheridan's troops in the valley, along with 77,176 bushels of corn, and 874 barrels of flour.**

The Battle of Fisher's Hill
A period Currier & Ives lithograph depicts the moment when Federal cavalry drove Confederates from their entrenchments during the Battle of Fisher's Hill, September 22, 1864.

AFTER

With Sheridan's triumph at Cedar Creek, the guns began to fall silent on one of the most significant battlegrounds of the war.

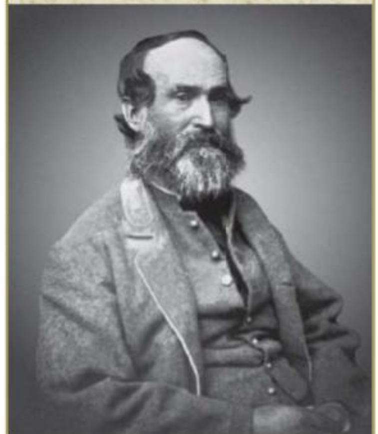
THE VALLEY REDEEMED
Having been disputed for nearly three years, the Shenandoah Valley, cleared of Confederate armies and ravaged agriculturally, **ceased to be of strategic importance**. Union military activity was largely relegated to chasing partisans and the ever-elusive Confederate guerilla leader, John Singleton Mosby, and his men.

CAMPAIGNS MILITARY AND POLITICAL
Sheridan's victories at Winchester, Fisher's Hill, and Cedar Creek, coming on the heels of Farragut's triumph at **Mobile Bay** **134–135 ››** and Sherman's capture of Atlanta **138–139 ››**, **bolstered President Lincoln's chances for re-election** **112–113 ››**.

TWILIGHT OF AN ARMY
After Cedar Creek, Early's demoralized divisions regrouped and lingered through the winter of 1864–65 near Staunton, at the headwaters of the Shenandoah River. On March 2, 1865, at the Battle of Waynesboro, **Sheridan defeated "Old Jube" for the last time**, capturing 1,600 men and 11 guns, almost all that was left of the Confederate Army of the Valley.

CONFEDERATE GENERAL 1816–94

JUBAL ANDERSON EARLY



Arrogant and acerbic, rumpled and careless of appearance, Early was a graduate of West Point who had quit the Army to become a country lawyer. With the outbreak of the Civil War, the native Virginian returned to uniform as an outstanding Confederate brigade and divisional commander, seeing action at First and Second Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, and other major battles. Lee called him "my bad old man" for his profanity, but prized his craftiness, resolve, and fearlessness.

BEFORE

Since May 1864 the Union Army of the Potomac and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia had been fighting each other north of the James River.

TRENCH WARFARE

Union troops assaulted Confederate forces that were firmly planted behind **cunningly contrived earthworks**. But as the soldiers settled into the Richmond-Petersburg lines, the Confederate **mastery of field fortifications was soon matched** by that of the Union armies. **Stalemate loomed**.

88,000 **The estimated number of total casualties—killed, wounded, captured, and missing—incurred by both armies during the six weeks' fighting from the Battle of the Wilderness to Cold Harbor.**

SUPPLY LINES

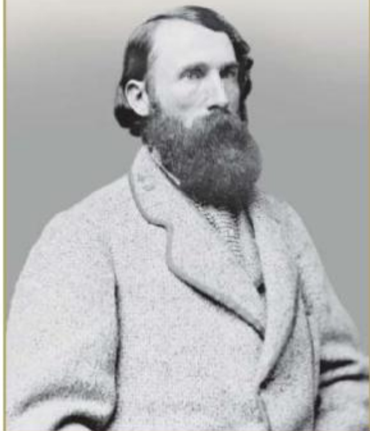
After failing to defeat Lee in open battle, Grant shifted his strategy, hoping to **sever the Confederate supply lines**—the railroads running to the south and west that kept the Army of Northern Virginia in the field.

During the siege of Vicksburg « 96–97 Grant had tightened a ring around the defending army so no supplies could get in and starved it into submission—a tactic that he would pursue again.

CONFEDERATE GENERAL 1825–65

AMBROSE POWELL HILL

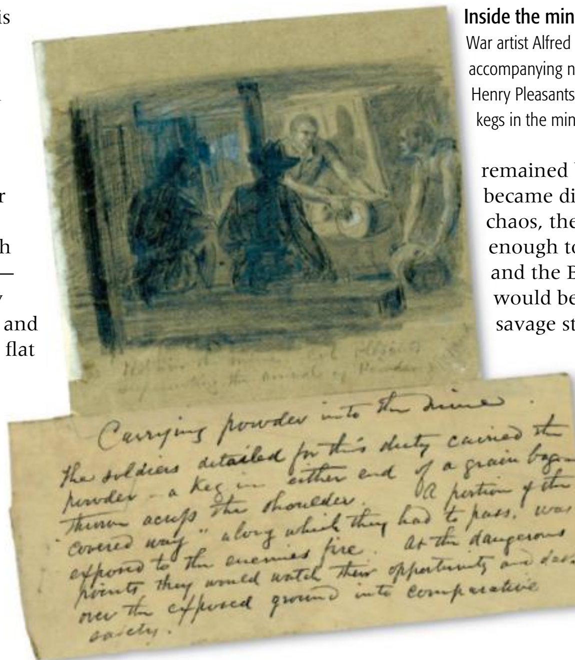
Hill's name was on both Robert E. Lee's and Stonewall Jackson's dying lips, such was the impression the slight, red-bearded "Little Powell" made as a fighter. The Virginian Hill and his Light Division saved the day in numerous closely fought battles, including the Seven Days Battles. As commander of the Third Corps, Hill was one of Lee's most trusted lieutenants before being killed in action outside Petersburg—barely a week before the Confederate surrender at Appomattox.



The **Siege** of **Petersburg**

The battle for Petersburg was fought over months of siege warfare. Union general Ulysses S. Grant and Confederate general Robert E. Lee matched each other earthwork for earthwork—over 100 miles (160km) altogether—though Grant continually tried to break the stalemate by stretching Lee's lines to breaking point.

In June 1864, Lee remarked to his staff that if Grant managed to cross the James River and arrive before Petersburg, "it will become a siege, and then it will be a mere question of time." By July the military situation had indeed taken on all the appearance of a siege. For 35 miles (56km), a curving line of entrenchments stretched from north of Richmond to west of Petersburg—a labyrinth of front lines, secondary lines, bombproof shelters, rifle pits, and small forts, or redoubts, scarred the flat landscape. Sharpshooters ruled this denuded world, picking off the unwary. Artillery always thundered somewhere. It was a life lived almost entirely underground. Dirt, mud, sun, rain, wind, and sky—and the occasional whizzing bullet—marked its boundaries.



Inside the mine
War artist Alfred Waud made this sketch with accompanying notes. It shows Lieutenant Colonel Henry Pleasants as he supervised the laying of powder kegs in the mine shaft that later became the Crater.

Mining the line

As the standoff settled into a lethal stalemate, members of the 48th Pennsylvania Volunteers, who had been coal miners in civilian life, persuaded their commander, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Pleasants, a mining engineer, that it was possible to dig a mine beneath a Confederate redoubt called Elliott's Salient, pack it with explosives, and blow a hole in the enemy lines. Though doubting its usefulness, Grant eventually approved the scheme.

Digging began on June 25 and by July 17 the miners had excavated a 510-ft (155-m) shaft, ending directly beneath Elliott's Salient, only 20ft (6m) above them. They had cleverly concealed their work, devising ingenious ways to provide ventilation. But the inevitable noise had alerted the Confederates who sank countermines in response. Those went wide of the mark, so the Pennsylvanians dug lateral tunnels—like the crossbar on a "T"—which they packed with 230 kegs of gunpowder, totaling four tons of charge, sandbagged to direct the force upward. The miners retraced their steps, unwinding a 98-ft (30-m) fuse. The plan was to break the enemy line in an instant, then exploit the breach with waves of assault troops who would pour through the punctured works and roll up the Confederate army.

At 4:45 a.m., on July 30, Elliott's Salient erupted in an earthshaking roar, a blast that carried skyward men, cannons, gun carriages, and tons of earth. When the dust had cleared, the Salient was gone, replaced by a 170-ft (52-m) long crater, nearly 80ft (24m) wide and 30ft (9m) deep. The assault troops clambered out of their trenches, reached the edge of the crater, then halted, stupefied at the sight of shattered men and guns strewn across its bottom. Other troops managed to get around it, but since their leaders had remained behind, they quickly became disorganized. In the ensuing chaos, the Confederates recovered enough to mount counterattacks, and the Battle of the Crater, as it would be called, degenerated into a savage struggle. Screaming men pounded each other, amid cries of "No quarter!" Black Union troops, trapped in the crater, were shot down even after surrendering. One Southerner later recalled with horror: "My heart sickened at the deeds I saw done." Those Union survivors who had not been captured fled back to their own lines. Grant admitted that it was "the saddest affair I witnessed in the war."

> "Hold on with a **bulldog grip**, and **chew and choke** as much as possible."
>
> **ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN A TELEGRAM TO ULYSSES S. GRANT,** AUGUST 17, 1864

Railroads and a cattle raid

Grant redoubled his efforts around the armies' edges, seeking to thin the Confederate lines until they broke. On August 18–21, Major General Gouverneur K. Warren's Fifth Corps seized another of Lee's arteries to the south. In the Battle of the Weldon Railroad, troops of General A. P. Hill's Third Corps slammed into Warren's, forcing them back into open fields. There the Union infantry held, despite Hill's repeated assaults—and held the railroad too.

38 **The number of black regiments at the siege of Petersburg. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton stated, "The hardest fighting was done by the black troops."**

Loss of the Weldon Railroad raised the specter of starvation for Lee's soldiers. In mid-September, General Wade Hampton and 4,000 troopers rode around the Army of the Potomac, almost as far as Grant's massive supply depot at City Point. They raided the Union cattle corral, rustling some 2,000 head and, driving the herd back the way they had come, managed to lose only 60 men.

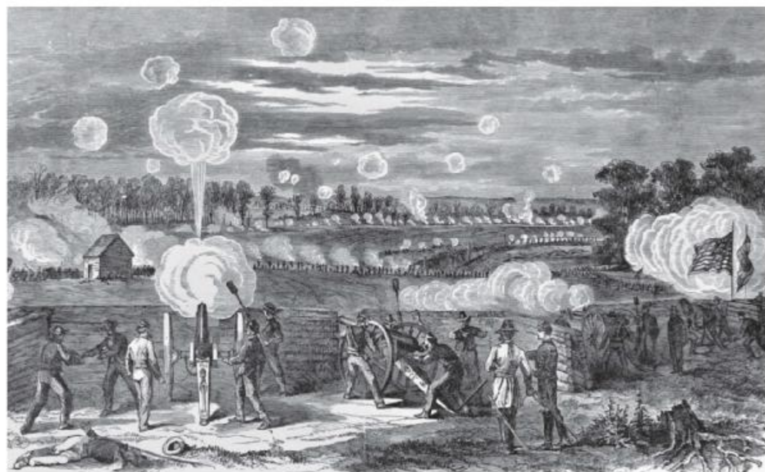
Taunting the enemy
Winslow Homer's *Defiance: Inviting a Shot Before Petersburg* (1864) shows a Confederate soldier standing on the earthworks taunting Union sharpshooters. On one such occasion the man was instantly shot.

That fall, Grant continued his war of maneuver. On September 29–30, Union forces took Fort Harrison, a key bastion in the Richmond defenses. At the same time, on the other end of the line, a Union reconnaissance force pushed 3 miles (5km) west of the Weldon Railroad, only to be beaten back by A. P. Hill and Wade Hampton in a brutal two-day fight at Peebles' Farm.

On October 27, Grant's Second Corps and part of his Fifth Corps, with a cavalry screen, reached out even farther west in an attempt to cut the Boydton Plank Road, an important link to the southwest. By exploiting a gap between the two corps, the Confederates succeeded in turning their enemies back, though several thousand more names were added to the casualty rolls. Lee desperately struggled to keep his remaining supply line, the South Side Railroad, from being severed.

Dark winter days

As winter set in, Lee faced another worry: desertion. Union pickets knew that "Johnnie Reb" (the archetypal Southerner) was waiting for the results of the presidential election in the North. After Lincoln prevailed, hope went out of the Army of Northern Virginia. Each day for months on end, the incessant shelling continued. Nerves were breaking. Self-inflicted gunshot wounds, and occasional suicides, were reported. At night, scores of men disappeared, some coming into the Union lines to surrender. A truce was called at Christmas, and soldiers emerged from the trenches without fear of snipers. Robert E. Lee's winter of discontent was upon him, and the prospects for spring looked bleak.



Union artillery shelling
The near-daily bombardment of Petersburg made most of its citizens refugees. More than 800 buildings were struck by shells, while many others were hit by fragments. In spite of this, probably fewer than half a dozen residents were killed.

AFTER

In the second half of 1864, while generals Grant and Lee were locked in the Richmond-Petersburg lines, events elsewhere were turning the tide for the Union.

A ROUND OF UNION VICTORIES
Union successes continued until late in the year. In December 1864, General George H. Thomas destroyed the remnants of the Confederate Army of Tennessee at **Franklin and Nashville** **142–143 ››**. General William T. Sherman captured not just Atlanta, but Savannah as well, at Christmas. This set the stage for him to **lead his victorious troops to the state where the war had started: South Carolina** **150–151 ››**. The destruction of the capital, Columbia, was another example of total war.

THE ROAD TO APPOMATTOX
The Petersburg stalemate continued until April 1865, when Grant, having outdug and outgunned Lee, **finally shattered the Confederate right flank** **152–153 ››**. This forced the beleaguered Army of Northern Virginia out of its entrenchments and onto **the road to Appomattox**.

The first cruise of the *Sumter*
This 19th-century lithograph shows the commerce raider CSS *Sumter* eluding USS *Brooklyn* to break through the Federal blockade at the mouth of the Mississippi River, on June 30, 1861.

Confederate Raiders

It was not enough for Southern blockade-runners to elude the U.S. Navy squadrons patrolling inshore waters around the ports of the Confederacy. Fast and graceful Confederate blockade-runners and raiders also took to the high seas to circumvent U.S. maritime commerce around the world.

BEFORE

Confederate secretary of the Navy, Stephen Mallory, believed that raids on U.S. maritime commerce might hurt Northern business interests, deprive the North of war material, and weaken the blockade.

THE PRIVATEERING TRADITION

Privateering was a time-honored if not-quite-honorable practice in use since at least the 16th century. With a **Letter of Marque and Reprisal** issued by a belligerent government, a privately owned ship could **raid enemy commercial shipping**. Captured ships became prizes, subject to adjudication by a recognized court.

In 1861, the Confederate government issued Letters of Marque to privateers daring enough to elude the **Federal blockade** « 42–43. Most neutral nations, however, refused to allow prizes to be brought into their ports. The Lincoln administration, moreover, **did not recognize the Confederacy as a legitimate nation** and threatened to **hang its privateers as pirates**. Those willing to run the risk soon discovered that more money was to be made in **blockade-running**, than in privateering.

COMMERCE RAIDERS

Confederate navy secretary Mallory had little confidence in privateers. The alternative was to entrust the task to fast naval **ships**. With no cruisers, Mallory **converted steamships**, like CSS *Sumter*, and **sent agents abroad to procure**, clandestinely, well-designed and **well-armed commerce raiders**.

When, in June 1861, Captain Raphael Semmes and CSS *Sumter* left the Mississippi River for the Gulf of Mexico, outrunning the ships of the Union blockade, he was following Stephen Mallory's instructions to "do the enemy's commerce the greatest injury in the shortest time."

Across the Atlantic in England, James D. Bulloch, a Confederate agent, had a similar brief: "Get cruising ships afloat," Mallory had told him, "with the quickest possible dispatch." While Semmes made his name in the *Sumter*, Bulloch managed to circumvent both British neutrality laws and U.S. diplomatic protests to procure 18 ships. Eleven became blockade-runners, seven commerce raiders. Three ships became legends.

The *Florida*

The first of the legends was built in Liverpool, England, as the *Oreto*, but off a deserted cay in the Bahamas the ship took on arms and, in August 1862, became CSS *Florida*. During the next 14 months, cruising mostly in the West Indies, *Florida* took 38 prizes. Her career ended one October night in 1864 when, anchored in the neutral port of Bahia, Brazil, she was commandeered by daring Union sailors—while most of her crew was ashore—and sailed to the United States.

Unrivaled success

Another legend began life in a Liverpool shipyard as *Hull 290* before sailing for the Azores in July 1864 as the *Enrica*. On August 24, her new captain, the redeployed Raphael Semmes, hoisted the Confederate ensign and commissioned her as CSS *Alabama*.

The *Alabama* was the epitome of the Confederate commerce raider—a three-masted, bark-rigged sloop-of-war, long, sleek, and very fast. She carried eight guns, and, while capable of 13 knots under both steam and sail, made most of her captures under sail alone. In the sea lanes between Newfoundland and Bermuda and through the West Indies into the Gulf of Mexico, the *Alabama* ravaged U.S. merchant shipping. She also hunted along the coasts of Brazil and Africa, and even sailed across the Indian Ocean to Java and Singapore.

A raider usually approached her target flying a British or Dutch ensign, or flag. Only at close range was the Confederate ensign run up. Semmes boarded nearly 450 ships in *Alabama*'s two years at sea, 65 of them U.S. merchantmen or whalers. He burned most of the ships, but not before removing their crews, whom he placed aboard neutral ships or ashore in neutral ports. At any given time, up to a dozen Union

Sailor's flat cap
The Civil War brought standardization to naval uniforms. Clothes became practical; fabrics repelled dirt and provided protection against the elements.

ships were hunting the *Alabama*. Huge crowds came to see the famous ship when she anchored in Cape Town in August 1863. But the days of this raider were doomed to be short. On June 11, 1864, the *Alabama* sought haven in Cherbourg, France. After 22 months, mostly spent at sea, both crew and ship were in need of rest and repair. Three days later, the sloop-of-war USS *Kearsarge* appeared outside the harbor. Her commander, Captain John Winslow, had been a shipmate of Semmes when they were both young.

The sinking of the Alabama

"My intention is to fight the *Kearsarge* as soon as I can make the necessary arrangements," Semmes wrote to a U.S. diplomat through an intermediary. "I beg she will not depart until I am ready to go out." On June 19, dressed in his finest uniform, Semmes sailed the *Alabama* out into the English Channel, where the *Kearsarge* was waiting just beyond the 3-mile (4.8-km) territorial limit. Thousands thronged the Normandy cliffs to watch the duel, which lasted little more than an hour. Maneuvering slowly around each other, the combatants were soon engulfed in smoke. The *Alabama* fired 370 rounds, but many were too high or failed to explode. The *Kearsarge* fired only 173 shots, but with her superior gunnery they had telling effect, first disabling the raider's steering mechanism and then tearing a gash in her side at the waterline. Water poured into the *Alabama*, and the ship struck her colors (lowered her flag as a sign of surrender) before sinking stern first. The *Kearsarge* recovered most of the survivors, but a number of the *Alabama*'s officers, including Semmes, were rescued by a British yacht and escaped to England.

Last of the raiders

James Bulloch, the Confederate agent, put one more famous raider to sea. Since tightened neutrality laws made it impossible to build another vessel in Britain, he converted one instead. The *Sea King* departed London in October 1864—ostensibly for Bombay and points east. Fitted with guns and munitions, she became CSS *Shenandoah*. Captained by James Waddell, the ship spent the next year cruising seas unexplored by former commerce raiders. Sailing south, she crossed from the Cape of Good Hope to Australia and then sailed far into the Pacific, where she preyed upon Yankee whalers venturing north to the Aleutian Islands and the Arctic Ocean. In June 1865, still taking prizes (some 37 in all), Waddell read in a newspaper about General Lee's surrender. On August 2, off the coast of California, he confirmed that the Confederacy had indeed collapsed. Disarming his ship, he avoided U.S. ports, where piracy charges awaited. Instead, he steered for Cape Horn, and on to Britain, a voyage of nearly 19,000 miles (30,000km).

On November 5, 1865, the battered *Shenandoah* steamed up the Mersey River into the English port of Liverpool. At 10 a.m. the following day, the ship's ensign was hauled down—the last Confederate flag to be struck, and the only one to have circumnavigated the globe. Waddell then surrendered his ship to British authorities.

After the war, the U.S. government took stock of the damage to its maritime commerce. Confederate raiders had taken 257 merchant ships and whalers, about five percent of the nation's merchant marine. Though the raiders did not wreak the havoc that Stephen Mallory had hoped for, they had driven insurance rates sky high and forced many vessels to adopt foreign registry. Nor did their activity draw many Union ships away from blockading the Southern waterways, much affect the blockade. At any one time, only a few score Union warships out of the hundreds on blockade duty were hunting for the raiders—barely a dozen—that embarked on the high seas.

Not a single U.S. merchant sailor lost his life as a result of the *Alabama*'s raids on commercial shipping.

CONFEDERATE SEA CAPTAIN 1809–77

RAPHAEL SEMMES

"Old Beeswax," as his sailors called Semmes after his waxed mustaches, was a native of the state of Maryland and a U.S. naval officer. At the outbreak of war, he followed his adopted state of Alabama into the Confederacy. He first won fame by taking 18 prizes as captain of CSS *Sumter*. After that ship was trapped in Gibraltar, the dashing Semmes escaped to England, where he took command of the fabled *Alabama*, the most successful commerce raider of the war. In 1865, back in Virginia, Semmes was given command of the James River Squadron; but its sailors were soon turned into makeshift infantry, and when he surrendered them in April, he was holding the rank of brigadier general.

Boarding ax
Boarders used this multipurpose ax to help them climb onto enemy vessels when dueling ships lay alongside each other. It was also a handy weapon and a tool for clearing decks of torn rigging and broken timbers.

Confederate navy frock coat
This typical Confederate officer's frock coat belonged to Lieutenant William F. Robinson of the Confederate States Navy, who served on various ships in the waters around New Orleans and Mobile.

AFTER

Most Confederate commerce raiders were lost during or soon after the war, but their legacy still lingers.

THE ALABAMA CLAIMS
After the war, the U.S. government claimed **war damages from Britain** for compromising her neutrality by knowingly permitting the *Alabama* and the *Florida* to be built in England. **The dispute escalated** to a dangerous level, with some senators demanding that Britain relinquish Canada as payment, before the **1871 Treaty of Washington** established an international tribunal to arbitrate the "*Alabama* Claims." In the end, the U.S. was **awarded $15.5 million**, and the case helped introduce **the principle of arbitration** in matters of international law.

FINAL RESTING PLACES
The ***Florida* sank** in 1864, after a collision off Newport News, Virginia—**possibly a deliberate act** to keep the ship from being returned to Brazil and re-entering Confederate service. The ***Shenandoah* was sold** by the U.S. government to the Sultan of Zanzibar, renamed *El Majidi*, and sank in the 1870s after a typhoon drove it onto an East African reef. And **in 1984, the French navy discovered the *Alabama*** lying beneath 200ft (60m) of water off Cherbourg.

BEFORE

Early on in the war, the Confederate government decided not to defend the entire coast but instead to concentrate its efforts on holding the major harbors.

VITAL PORT

After the **loss of New Orleans in April 1862** « 54–55, Mobile became the principal Confederate port on the Gulf Coast and the base for the **blockade-runners operating the important link with Cuba** that brought in much-needed supplies.

IRONCLAD BATTLE

The first clash between armored ships, or "ironclads," was the inconclusive **Battle of Hampton Roads in March 1862** « 52–53. In this famous engagement CSS *Virginia*, an iron-plated warship commanded by Admiral Franklin Buchanan, took on the newly designed, shallow-draft USS *Monitor*, but neither could inflict significant damage on the other. **Buchanan led the Southern force** at Mobile Bay.

The Battle of Mobile Bay

Union Admiral David Farragut's advance into Mobile Bay resulted in the destruction of a Confederate naval squadron and, more importantly, closed one of the last ports available to blockade-runners. Mobile itself remained in Confederate hands but it could no longer be used as a supply center.

The Battle of Mobile Bay was a significant defeat for the Confederacy. It was fought principally on August 5, 1864, though follow-up actions continued later into the month.

Mobile Bay is located where the Mobile and Tensaw rivers meet before they enter the Gulf of Mexico. Before the Civil War, as part of a plan to strengthen its coastal defenses, the United States government had erected three forts to shield Mobile from possible enemy fleets. Standing at the mouth of Mobile Bay was the massive Fort Morgan, a brick edifice completed in 1834 and defended by 46 guns and a garrison of 600. Pentagonal-shaped Fort Gaines was situated on Dauphin Island, directly opposite Fort Morgan. Fort Gaines mounted 26 guns and could also accommodate 600 troops. The smallest of the three was Fort Powell, with 18 guns and space for 140 troops. Although the forts were well positioned to repel any seaborne invasion, they were vulnerable to an assault from their rear.

Farragut's mission in 1864 was to destroy the Confederate fleet in Alabama, commanded by Admiral Franklin Buchanan. His small fleet included the formidable ironclad CSS *Tennessee*, with its heavy armor plating, and three smaller ships; Farragut commanded four monitors

Union Navy telescope
Alongside the compass and sextant, the portable folding telescope was an essential naval accoutrement. Most officers had two telescopes, a day and a night model.

Steaming into Mobile Bay
Julian Oliver Davidson's *Battle of Mobile Bay* (1886) shows Farragut's warships and ironclads exchanging fire with Fort Morgan on the left. The Union monitor *Tecumseh*, on the right, has hit a mine and is sinking.

KEY MOMENT

SURRENDER OF THE *TENNESSEE*

The CSS *Tennessee* was the pride of the Confederate fleet stationed at Mobile Bay. In the final conflict she went head to head with Admiral Farragut's flagship, USS *Hartford*, and came close to ramming her, but could only manage a glancing blow. Pounded from all sides by the *Hartford* and the other wooden Union ships, the *Tennessee* (in the foreground) had her funnel shot away, reducing engine power, and her rudder mechanism destroyed. Then the Union monitor *Chickasaw* began a relentless close-range fire. The *Tennessee*'s armor held but the crew was powerless to fight back. Admiral Buchanan himself was wounded and had no option but to surrender.

and 14 wooden vessels. In the light of dawn on August 5, Farragut concluded that conditions were ideal to attack.

The Confederates had deployed mines at the entrance to the bay. If an invading fleet were to avoid these "torpedoes," it would have to steer dangerously close to the forts. Though one of his monitors, the *Tecumseh*, struck a mine and quickly sank, Farragut ordered the rest of his ships to steam straight through the minefield at full speed. No other vessels were damaged, since many of the mines had corroded. As the ships passed the guns of Fort Morgan, they came under heavy fire. Admiral Buchanan, hoping to intercept the Union fleet, then steamed out in his flagship, CSS *Tennessee*. Believed to be unsinkable due to her heavy armor, the *Tennessee* was too slow to ram any invading ships. As the fleets battled in the waters of Mobile Bay, most of the Union vessels concentrated on disabling the *Tennessee*, pummeling it with heavy guns and making repeated attempts to ram her.

The *Tennessee* gave as good as she got. While Union cannonballs bounced off the iron plating, the *Tennessee*'s broadsides ravaged the wooden hulls of her adversaries. But the sheer volume of Union firepower soon began to tell. Buchanan's three other ships had either sunk, surrendered, or escaped to Mobile. Soon the *Tennessee*, rammed repeatedly and facing 157 Union guns, was too damaged to continue resisting. With her surrender, the fighting came to a halt. It was an overwhelming Union victory, but not without cost.

Farragut's service dress
This wool jacket and cap with a leather brim were worn by Farragut while directing the fire of the *Hartford* at Mobile Bay.

Final toll

By the end of the battle, 150 Union sailors were killed, many of them in the sinking of the *Tecumseh*, and 170 were wounded. Only 12 Confederate sailors were killed and 19 wounded.

> **"Damn the torpedoes!** Full speed **ahead."**
>
> ATTRIBUTED TO DAVID FARRAGUT, ON BEING TOLD THAT MOBILE BAY CONTAINED HIDDEN MINES ("TORPEDOES"), AUGUST 5, 1854

AFTER

The Union victory at Mobile Bay was one of a series of Southern defeats in the summer of 1864 that helped ensure Lincoln's victory in the upcoming election.

FORTS CAPTURED
Victorious at sea, the Union forces completed the **capture of Forts Morgan, Gaines, and Powell by the end of the month**. Together with Sherman's capture of Atlanta in late August and Union advances on other fronts, Farragut's success maintained the **crushing Union pressure on the South**.

SEALING THE BLOCKADE
The **last port on the Atlantic seaboard was Wilmington**, North Carolina, through which some supplies could reach Lee's embattled Army of Northern Virginia. After the powerful Confederate ship CSS *Albemarle* was sunk in October, **Union forces were able to close in** on Wilmington's outpost Fort Fisher. The first attacks in December were unsuccessful, but a **renewed assault in January 1865 brought Fort Fisher's surrender** **150–151 »**.

PETERSBURG CAMPAIGN
On the war's main land battlefront around Petersburg, Virginia, **Grant's relentless siege was supplemented by a series of attacks** around the perimeter of the Petersburg position. These failed to encircle Petersburg itself and were halted in late October as winter set in. Full-scale fighting was resumed in late March 1865, when the **Confederate forces were quickly defeated** **152–153 »**.

Mississippi Operations

Union control of the Mississippi River had split the South in half. But large Confederate forces under generals Richard Taylor and Sterling Price guarded the lands to the west of the river, while to the east cavalry leader Nathan Bedford Forrest posed a constant threat to Northern troops.

William T. "Bloody Bill" Anderson
The most notorious of the Missouri "bushwhackers" (Confederate guerrillas), Anderson led a gang that included Frank and Jesse James. His atrocities ranged from murder to scalping and even disemboweling his victims.

BEFORE

After the Union captures of New Orleans «54–55, Memphis « 56–57, and Vicksburg «98–99, the North controlled the Mississippi River, but the Confederates were still active in the river's hinterland.

CONFEDERATE COMMANDS
Southern forces held **most of Mississippi**—the state's black prairie region was an important granary, and **General Nathan Bedford Forrest's feared horsemen** roamed the pinewoods. West of the Mississippi River, Confederate General Kirby Smith was based in Shreveport, Louisiana. **General Sterling Price**, the victor at Wilson's Creek in 1861 «98–99, faced Union forces in southern Arkansas.

UNION STRATEGY
In his grand strategy for 1864, General Ulysses S. Grant planned for **General Sherman to advance on Atlanta**, leaving detachments in Tennessee to patrol his long supply lines against Forrest's raiders. Grant hoped that **General Nathaniel Banks** in New Orleans might advance on Mobile, Alabama. But President Lincoln wanted Banks, in conjunction with Admiral David D. Porter's river fleet, to attack **Shreveport via Louisiana's Red River**. He hoped to isolate Texas and thwart any Confederate alliance with the French in Mexico.

For Union general William T. Sherman, the Red River Campaign of March–May 1864 was one "damn blunder from beginning to end." General Nathaniel Banks's target was Shreveport, Louisiana, the Confederate headquarters of the Trans-Mississippi West, standing on the Red River, a tributary of the Mississippi. But he was routed by Richard Taylor at the Battle of Mansfield on April 8. Although Banks rallied the next day to fend off Taylor at Pleasant Hill, Union reinforcements from Arkansas were also defeated, spelling doom for the expedition. On the campaign's naval front, Admiral David D. Porter's gunboats were stranded upriver by low water. They only escaped after the herculean efforts of the 10,000 men who built wing dams, which stemmed the current enough to refloat the ships.

The "Wizard of the Saddle"

In Mississippi, meanwhile, the Union's woes could be summed up in three words: Nathan Bedford Forrest. The fearsome Confederate cavalryman—nicknamed the "Wizard of the Saddle"—had for years been wreaking havoc in Union-held Kentucky and Tennessee. He also triggered outrage across the North when, on April 12, 1864, while sacking Fort Pillow to the north of Memphis, he appeared to condone the massacre of many of its black soldiers.

As spring turned to summer, the Confederate forces in Mississippi, guarding the western approaches to the South's vital Selma Arsenal in Alabama, were increasingly needed in the campaign against Sherman, who had begun to move on Atlanta. Forrest spurred northward to raid Sherman's long supply line, which snaked back through the hills of Tennessee. Sherman dispatched General Samuel Sturgis from Union-held Memphis to stop Forrest.

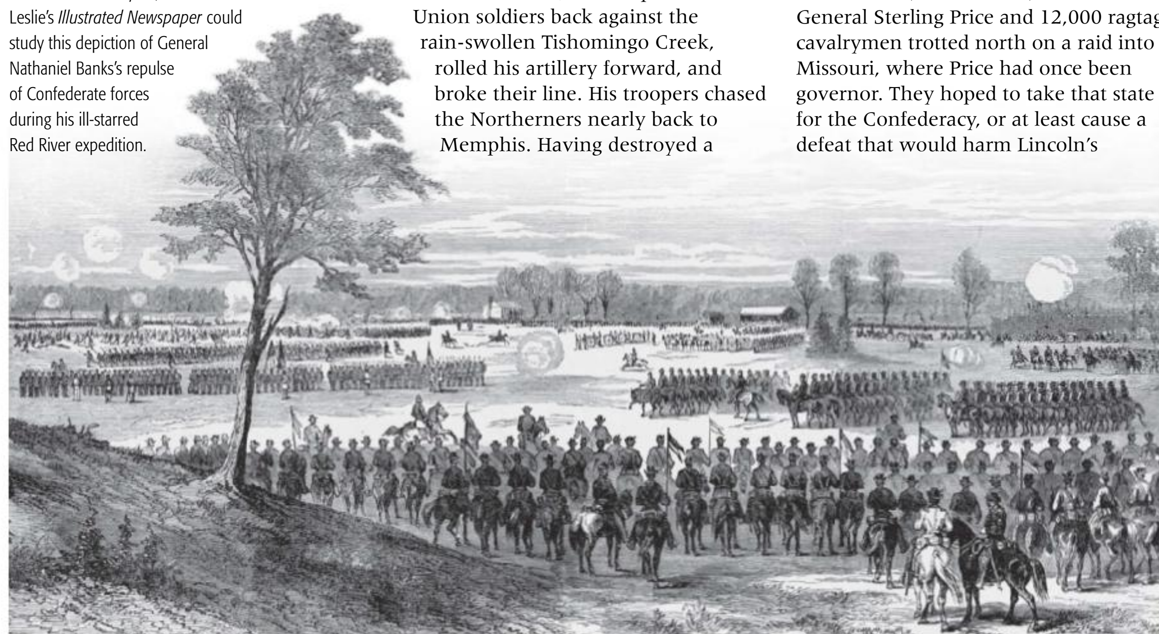
With only 4,800 troopers in his command, Forrest lured Sturgis and his 8,500 men ever deeper down the rutted Mississippi lanes. Then, on June 10, at Brice's Crossroads, Forrest sprang his trap. Sturgis's long columns, nearly prostrated by unseasonable heat, were bogged in mud and enclosed by thickets. In a series of masterful frontal and flank attacks, Forrest pushed the Union soldiers back against the rain-swollen Tishomingo Creek, rolled his artillery forward, and broke their line. His troopers chased the Northerners nearly back to Memphis. Having destroyed a force twice his size, Forrest captured wagons, cannons, ammunition cases, provisions, and prisoners.

Sherman then dispatched an entire corps under General Andrew J. Smith, who reached as far south as Tupelo, Mississippi, before deciding to dig in. On July 14–15, Forrest, reinforced with infantry, threw charge after charge against Smith's earthworks, but each was repulsed, and Smith managed to withdraw in good order. Forrest had been kept from attacking Sherman's supply line, and the Union commanders in Memphis, protected by 6,000 troops, could congratulate themselves on a victory. Yet on August 21, the "Wizard" materialized in their midst, with 1,500 troopers galloping through the Memphis streets seeking prisoners, supplies, and horses, and chasing the Union district commander, General Cadwallader Washburn, out of his bed clad only in a nightshirt. After that, more Union troops, who would have been better employed elsewhere, had to be pulled back into the city.

> "There will never be **peace in Tennessee** until **Forrest is dead**!"
>
> **GENERAL SHERMAN IN A LETTER TO WAR SECRETARY EDWIN STANTON,** JUNE 15, 1864

Raiding Missouri

A week later, in Arkansas, Confederate General Sterling Price and 12,000 ragtag cavalrymen trotted north on a raid into Missouri, where Price had once been governor. They hoped to take that state for the Confederacy, or at least cause a defeat that would harm Lincoln's



Battle of Pleasant Hill
Readers of the May 14, 1864 edition of Frank Leslie's *Illustrated Newspaper* could study this depiction of General Nathaniel Banks's repulse of Confederate forces during his ill-starred Red River expedition.

Prisoners of war illustration
Kansas militiaman Samuel J. Reader was among the prisoners taken by General Price's Confederate troops in their raid on Missouri. He kept a diary of the war, later publishing it with his own illustrations.

chances for re-election. Since St. Louis was too well garrisoned to chance an assault, they veered west along the Missouri River's south bank, and Price swept up whatever horses, mules, cattle, and supplies he could find. Price was, however, no Forrest. No doubt alarmed by the fresh scalps he saw hanging from the bridle of the bushwhacker leader "Bloody Bill" Anderson, he failed to deploy Missouri's hordes of Confederate bushwhackers in the Union rear. Above all, Price moved too slowly—after looting the state he was encumbered by a long train of cattle and wagons.

Inevitably, Union troops closed in—35,000 of them. In October, Price made a run west for Kansas and then south for Indian Territory (today's Oklahoma). Pitched battles occurred as he tried to ford swollen rivers. On October 23, at Westport near Kansas City, he repeatedly charged a Union line but failed to break it before enemy cavalry was at his rear.

Over the next few days, a running fight developed until Price abandoned his booty and fled south. The very day that he crossed the Arkansas River to safety—November 8—was Election Day in the North. Not only had Price's raid failed to capture Missouri for the South, but his ignominious retreat had actually helped Lincoln's victory—an ironic end to the Confederacy's final campaign west of the Mississippi.

AFTER

By the end of 1864, the war in the states that bordered the Mississippi River had mostly ended.

FINAL ENCOUNTERS

In August 1864, Admiral David G. **Farragut overcame Mobile's seaward defenses** « 134–135, while the city itself held out until war's end. In November, after continued raiding in Tennessee, Forrest and his command joined the Army of Tennessee on its fateful march to Franklin and Nashville 142–143 ». **Forrest's glory days were over**, however. In early 1865, a massive Union cavalry raid through Alabama and Georgia 150–151 », led by **General James H. Wilson**, defeated Forrest at each encounter.

PRICE'S EXILE

Rather than surrender in 1865, General **Price led many of his men into Mexico**, where they hoped to serve the Emperor Maximilian. They established a Confederate exile colony in Veracruz.

GENERAL JAMES H. WILSON

BEFORE

No part of Grant's 1864 grand strategy **«116–117****, besides the struggle against Lee in Virginia, was more important than that entrusted to General William T. Sherman.**

JOHNSTON OR ATLANTA

Just as Grant would seek to **destroy Lee's Army of Northern Virginia**, or failing that, **take Richmond**, Sherman was to destroy **Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee**, or failing that, **take the railroad junction of Atlanta**. As the campaign unfolded, the capture of Atlanta became Sherman's principal aim.

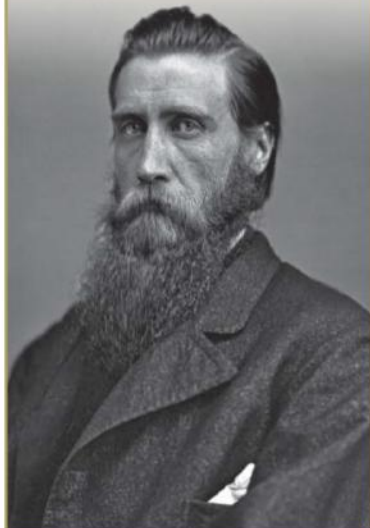
A SYMBOLIC PRIZE

Carved out of a pine forest in 1840, **Atlanta** was **a child of the railroads**, four of them intersecting in the city. In the two decades leading up to the war, it had grown into a small bustling city, **second only to Richmond** as a **Southern industrial base**. As Sherman prepared to fight his way there across the intervening **mountains and ridges of northwestern Georgia**, it gained symbolic value, as both North and South pinned their hopes on the **capture or defense of Atlanta**.

CONFEDERATE GENERAL (1831–79)

JOHN BELL HOOD

"All lion, none of the fox," tawny-maned John Bell Hood was a soldier of unbridled aggressive instincts. Though born in Kentucky, he was a Texan by choice, and "Hood's Texas Brigade" became Robert E. Lee's favorite shock troops. Hood also made a superb divisional commander, despite losing a leg at Chickamauga and the use of an arm at Gettysburg. When he succeeded Joe Johnston in July 1864, he became, at 33, the youngest man in the war to lead a major army—perhaps a factor in the rash way he bled the army to death at the battles of Atlanta and Franklin.



Sherman's Advance to Atlanta

In the summer of 1864, William Tecumseh Sherman maneuvered his army to the outskirts of Atlanta, outfought several Confederate commanders, and after four months and 50,000 casualties, conquered the "Gate City of the South."

From the outset, it was a campaign of maneuver. When Sherman and his 110,000 soldiers marched out of Ringgold, Georgia, on May 7, 1864, he faced a wily adversary in Joseph E. Johnston. With only half Sherman's troop strength, Johnston was a master of the military delaying game. He continually blocked the 80-mile (129-km) road to Atlanta with strong defensive works, inviting Sherman to attack. Sherman preferred to pin Johnston behind those breastworks with his Army of the Cumberland, and outflank him—first in one direction, then in another—with his more nimble Armies of the Tennessee and Ohio.

Confederate defenses
Fortifications, fronted by *chevaux-de-frise* (rows of wooden spikes) ringed Atlanta. Almost a ton of shot and shell tore through the white house in the background in the course of the siege.

Defensive strategy

Johnston always anticipated Sherman, withdrawing just far enough to settle into another defensive line. Sherman would again advance, and the deadly game would begin anew. There was, of course, plenty of fighting. Names like Resaca, Cassville, New Hope Church—the bloodiest battle in the region known as the "hell hole"—Pickett's Mill, Dallas, and Kennesaw Mountain, where the impatient Sherman tried a direct assault against Johnston's formidable earthworks, only to be thrown back with heavy losses, would be added to both armies' regimental standards.

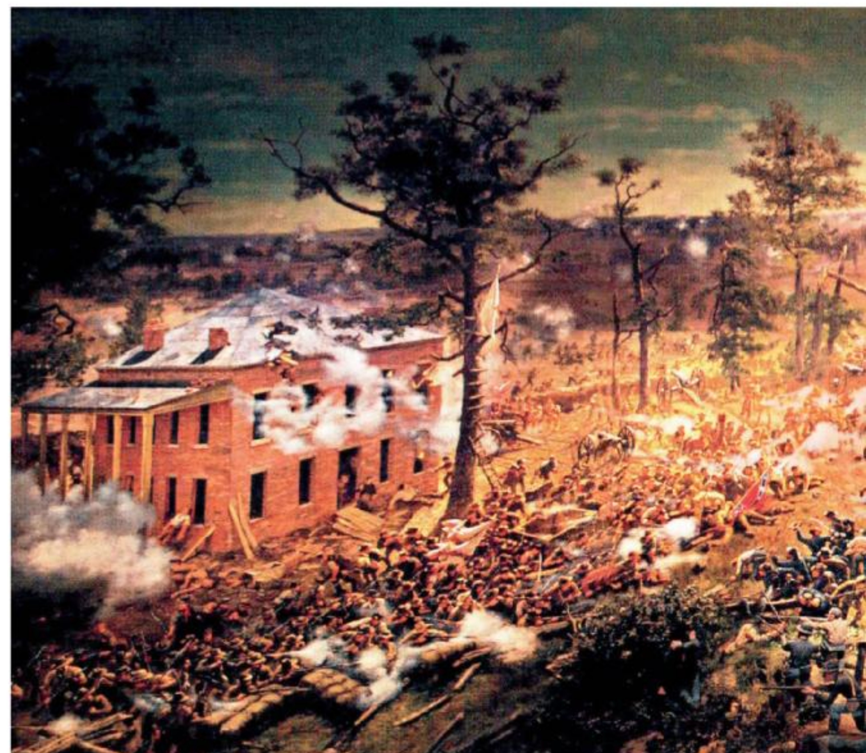
Nevertheless, Sherman was making a steady advance, and when he reached the northern edge of Atlanta's fortifications two months later, he was facing a new opponent. On July 17, Johnston was relieved of command and replaced by the more aggressive John Bell Hood.

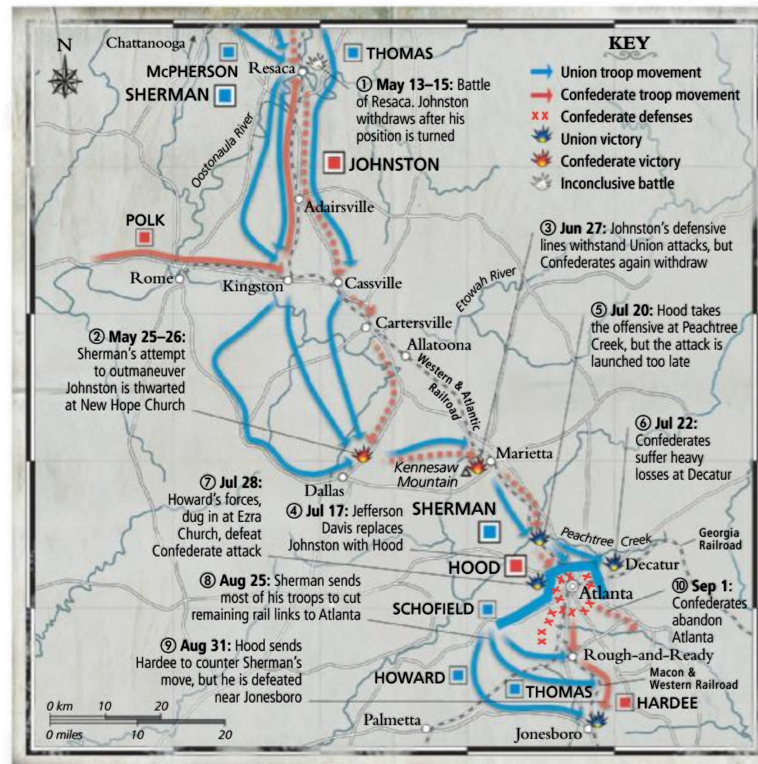
New leader, new tactics

Hood struck immediately. On July 20, he surged out from behind his defenses and hit a part of the Union army that was separated from the rest by steep-banked Peachtree Creek, 10 miles (16km) to the north. But the attacks were piecemeal, the onslaught costly. Union commanders reported hundreds of Confederate dead piled up before their defenses.

Undaunted, Hood wheeled to the east and two days later attacked the other half of Sherman's forces outside Decatur. Throughout the long evening of July 22, the Confederates again hurled a series of ferocious but disjointed assaults against the Union lines, and were repulsed with twice as many losses as their opponents. By the end of the night, at the Battle of Atlanta, as this engagement came to be called, a procession of wagons was rumbling into the city, carrying thousands of wounded men. On July 28, Sherman moved west around Atlanta's defenses, trying to reach the Macon & Western Railroad, the city's southern lifeline. Hood attacked at Ezra Church. One terrific charge followed another, all repulsed with fearful casualties.

Unable to reach around Atlanta to cut its southern lifeline, Sherman settled for a round-the-clock bombardment of the city. Houses were damaged and scores of citizens were injured or killed. Meanwhile, the entrenched armies





The Atlanta Campaign
It took the Union armies nearly three months to fight their way through northern Georgia to the heavily fortified city of Atlanta, where Sherman's advance was temporarily halted. The Union victory at Jonesboro sealed the city's fate as its rail links were severed.

engaged in a war of skirmishing. "The picket firing never ceased, day nor night," recalled one soldier.

The final act

In late August, the Union army slipped out of its trenches at night and seemingly disappeared. At first baffled, Hood then discovered that his enemy had marched around the city and was approaching the Macon & Western Railroad at Jonesboro, 15 miles (24km) to the south. Desperately, Hood sought to counter the movement, but two days of fruitless assaults only resulted in thousands more Confederates being killed or maimed. The railroad was cut, and Atlanta was doomed.

Throughout the night of September 1, 1864, as Hood's army evacuated the city, the sky glowed red as flames devoured the supplies and depots they left behind. Nearly 80 freight cars of ammunition were burned; the din of their detonation continued for five hours. Ashes still drifted over the city when Sherman, on September 3, wired the president, "Atlanta is ours, and fairly won!"

"… all the **thunders of the universe** seemed to be blazing and **roaring over Atlanta**."

WALLACE PUTNAM REED, NEWSPAPERMAN AND HISTORIAN, 1886

AFTER

While the fall of Atlanta led to despair in the South, it sparked elation in the North. But Sherman's campaign in Georgia was not over. His next goal was the port of Savannah on the Atlantic coast.

LINCOLN'S RE-ELECTION

Not the news of **Farragut's sealing of Mobile Bay** « 134–135, nor that of **Sheridan's conquest of the Shenandoah Valley** « 128–129, indeed none of the good tidings for the North from 1864's fall of Union victories eclipsed the news of Sherman's capture of Atlanta. It had an electrifying effect on the North, and though Grant and Lee were still **entrenched before Petersburg** « 130–131, Lincoln's chances for re-election « 112–113 soared.

MARCH TO THE SEA

When Sherman occupied Atlanta, he continued the devastation begun by the Confederates themselves. Throughout October he built up supplies, and when he rode out of the city in November he embarked on a **trail of destruction across Georgia** 140–141 », to prove to the Southerners the **futility of further resistance**.

GRAND CONFEDERATE PLANS

After evacuating Atlanta, Hood planned to take the Army of Tennessee **north into Tennessee, cut Sherman's communications**, and either **invade the North** or cross the mountains to **reinforce Lee at Petersburg**. But his grandiose plans foundered at the **disastrous battles of Franklin and Nashville** 142–143 ».

The Battle of Atlanta
Also called the Battle of Decatur, the pivotal July 22, 1864, engagement outside Atlanta was depicted in the 1880s, on one of the largest painted cycloramas in the world.

Sherman's March to the Sea

Leaving Atlanta in flames and a trail of destruction in their wake, General William T. Sherman and his 62,000 veterans marched 300 miles (480km) in less than a month to the coastal city of Savannah. Outraged at his devastation of Georgia, Southerners named Sherman the "Attila of the West."

On November 15, 1864, General Sherman's 62,000 soldiers filed out of their camps around Atlanta, many marching over the battlefields of the previous summer. From their high vantage point, they could look back over the debris of empty cartridge boxes and shredded breastworks, and observe a terrible sight—Atlanta, in the distance, engulfed in a vast sheet of flame and smoke. Sherman, having declared it a Union fortress and deported its citizens, was burning the city in the process of abandoning it. Atlanta would never be useful to another Confederatel army.

Before them more destruction awaited. Sherman's rule of never returning by the road he had come meant his veterans were leaving behind their old lifeline—the single-track railroad around which they had maneuvered their way to Atlanta. Having dispatched adequate forces to shadow General John Bell Hood's wounded Army of Tennessee in Alabama, Sherman was heading for the sea. He had persuaded Lincoln and Grant that a march to the Georgia coast was a good idea—putting his chosen 62,000 within easy reach of troop transports that could ferry them to Petersburg. The general had convinced himself that by cutting a path of destruction through the heart of the Confederacy, he might "make Georgia howl."

Sherman's orders

Heading generally southeast toward Savannah, the army advanced in two columns, staying 20–40 miles (32–64km) apart. They carried supplies with them but intended to live off the land. Each brigade was allotted its share of the army's 2,500 supply wagons along with its own party of foragers, or "bummers." Sherman had given his forces strict instructions in the form of his "Special Field Orders, No. 120." The order gave broad freedom in the requisitioning of horses, mules, forage, and provisions, but expressly forbade entering civilians' property or using "abusive or threatening language" to householders. If, passing through any given district, the army was unopposed, mills, cotton gins, and homesteads were not to be destroyed. If opposed, however, commanders should impose "a devastation more or less relentless." But the rules were not enforced. In fact, the two columns gauged each other's position by the pillars of smoke on the horizon: burnings marked their progress.

It might have been the war's most roguish march were it not for its punitive intent. In Milledgeville, Georgia's capital, the invading army held a mock session of the legislature in the abandoned chambers, repealing the ordinance of secession. Sherman slept that night in the Governor's pillared mansion, but in his own camp bed

Sherman's "bummers"
A name that once designated stragglers, "bummers" eventually included foragers as well. They roamed at some distance away from the main army, often plundering and ransacking at will.

« BEFORE

After the fall of Atlanta Sherman weighed up his next move, even as Confederate General John Bell Hood intended to maneuver him into battle.

A STRATEGIC SHIFT
Having left Atlanta, John Bell Hood and his Army of Tennessee still hoped to bring Sherman to battle. But after pushing Hood into northern Alabama, Sherman left him there, assigning George Thomas's **Army of the Cumberland** to protect the Union rear. He turned his back on Hood, having persuaded a reluctant Lincoln and Grant to approve instead a **march through Georgia** to the sea.

SHERMAN'S PLAN
Sheridan, in devastating the Shenandoah Valley, had **demonstrated the effectiveness of a scorched-earth policy** **« 128–129**. Sherman planned a similar campaign on a larger scale, torching everything that his army could not consume and **waging total war** on the South.

Campaign wagon
Wagons such as this one used on Sherman's march were essential pieces of equipment, with bummers "aiming at all times to keep in the wagons at least ten day's provisions for the command and three day's forage."

View from the press
"General Sherman's Grand March through Central Georgia," complete with plantation houses and distant pillars of smoke, was depicted in the December 10, 1864 issue of *Harper's Weekly*.

because all the furniture had been hidden. The soldiers destroyed railroads, ripping up tracks and twisting them into "Sherman neckties." They devoured all livestock in their path. They stripped farms of all their forage and root crops. They burned barns, corncribs, cotton gins, houses, and once an entire town. Coming across Camp Lawton, a prisoner-of-war stockade, the veterans were so enraged by the brutalities they found that Sherman ordered nearby Millen to be destroyed with "ten-fold" times the usual measure. As the Union army advanced over a front nearly 60 miles (97km) wide, all the South could do was narrow the zone of destruction.

Rebel resistance

The only formal resistance was met near Griswoldville, where Georgia militia tried to stem Sherman's advance. The militia were slaughtered—650 killed or injured, with only 62 Union casualties. Most of the fighting took the form of skirmishing against scattered militia and the few thousand Confederate cavalrymen led by General Joseph Wheeler, whose men took horses and valuables well before the army arrived. They even applied the torch themselves, using scorched-earth tactics to foil the bummers.

The devastation inevitably got out of control, and was further aggravated by marauding groups of deserters and renegades. Even the Confederate cavalry—now branded "Wheeler's robbers"—let discipline slip. And, to complicate matters, thousands of jubilant ex-slaves were swept up in the wake of the march.

$100 MILLION
Sherman's estimate of damages inflicted during the march. A fifth of this was militarily justified, the "remainder ... simple waste and destruction."

Savannah in sight

By early December, as the army skirted the low country swamps and marched beneath trees festooned with Spanish moss, Sherman's increasingly scruffy soldiers were being called the "Lost Army" by the North. The men emerged into view by December 11, "within sight of the spires of Savannah," one of them wrote, "if there were not so many trees in the way."

Savannah was garrisoned by 10,000 soldiers and was protected by a ring of defenses mounting over 100 siege guns. But the packed-earth Fort McAllister, 12 miles (19km) below the city, was Sherman's main concern. It had long defied Union warships; but on December 13, in an all-out assault, his infantrymen stormed through the circle of sharpened stakes and mounted the parapets. Its 230 defenders resisted bravely but futilely. Four days later, Sherman formally demanded the city's surrender. The garrison commander, General Hardee, chose to evacuate instead. After dark on December 20, lit only by distant fires as the navy yard was set alight, a line of men and wagons moved across the Savannah River to South Carolina on a vast pontoon bridge. The next night the ironclad CSS *Savannah* exploded, lighting up the sky for miles. "The concussion was fearful," one witness reported, "rocking the city."

Sherman's gift to Lincoln

When nervous city fathers gathered to surrender the city to the Union, they had to scramble to find carriages, most having been stolen by Wheeler's vacating cavalry. Many citizens were frantic that their city would go the same way as Atlanta. But when Sherman rode in on December 22, he found the same town of handsome squares and shade trees that he remembered so fondly. As his tattered legions marched down the grand avenues, he sent a telegram to President Lincoln: "Dear Sir," he began, "I beg to present you as a Christmas Gift, the City of Savannah ..."

Haul of ammunition
The capture of Fort McCallister outside Savannah, which had long been a menace to Union warships, brought with it a sizable haul of guns, shells, and cannonballs.

"Oh, just **burn a barn** or something. Make a smoke **like the Indians do**."

GENERAL WILLIAM T. SHERMAN, ON HIS METHOD FOR LOCATING HIS CAVALRY

AFTER

Sherman's March to the Sea had inflicted a devastating blow on Southern morale while making Sherman a hero in the North.

INTO THE CAROLINAS
Sherman did not burn Savannah like he did Atlanta and Columbia, South Carolina. Instead, he spent the winter there, putting his veterans on the road again a few weeks later—**this time headed north**. And rather than dispatching his men to Petersburg to reinforce Grant, he **plundered his way through the Carolinas** in the same way he had done through Georgia. General Joseph E. Johnston, brought back from retirement, would try to stop him with an **army of barely 30,000 men** **150–151 »**.

DESTROYING HOOD'S ARMY
Before Sherman departed Atlanta, he had quipped that if Hood would go "to the Ohio River, I'll give him rations ... **my business is down south**." Hood had tried doing just that, but he and his Army of Tennessee were virtually **destroyed by George Thomas at the Battle of Nashville** **142–143 »**.

BEFORE

After Atlanta's fall General John Bell Hood embarked on an invasion of Union-held Tennessee, but Union generals George H. Thomas and John M. Schofield were waiting.

THE ROAD TO FRANKLIN

Hood hoped he might cut Union supply lines or maybe **join General Lee at Petersburg** **«130–131**, but General Thomas, in the city of Nashville with 40,000 men, lay in his path. General Schofield and his army of 30,000 were near Pulaski. Hood hoped to defeat them before they could join Thomas, setting a trap for them on November 29, some 15 miles (24km) south of Franklin.

Franklin and Nashville

General John Bell Hood's daring but ultimately doomed Tennessee campaign in the fall of 1864, culminated in two battles, one at the town of Franklin and the other before the city of Nashville, which spelled the end for the once-proud Confederate Army of Tennessee.

On the afternoon of November 30, 1864 General Hood was still angry that the night before, through a series of blunders, his Army of Tennessee had somehow allowed 30,000 Union troops to slip past it. The Federals had dug in near the town of Franklin, Tennessee, which Hood's commanders could see 2 miles (3.2km) away from their temporary headquarters on the hilltop.

Although most of Hood's artillery and an infantry corps had still not arrived, the impetuous general had decided to attack the positions at Franklin anyway; his commanders were filled with foreboding. At 4 p.m., 18 brigades—nearly 20,000 men—moved out, lines dressed, flags flying, drums beating, and bands playing. Before them stretched those 2 miles (3.2km) of open, undulating fields browned by recent frosts. Rabbits bounded away as the tramping feet of this last great Confederate charge of the war approached.

Southern slaughter

General John Schofield's Union men watched spellbound as the Rebels approached. Crouched behind strong fieldworks fronted by felled trees, they shouldered impressive firepower; and massed artillery, some of it positioned to fire into the attacking columns from the flanks, backed them up. When the onslaught was within a hundred paces of the main line every Union trigger was squeezed. With a deafening roar a deadly hail of shot, shell, and canister tore through the Confederate ranks, shredding all formation and turning the regiments into blood-spattered mobs. Many troops, trapped in the tangle of felled trees, were caught in a murderous crossfire of small arms and artillery. Others could be glimpsed, through the pall of smoke that soon descended, regrouping and charging again and again—several Federals counted up to 13 charges.

But in some places, the Confederates poured across the Union line, the battle surging back and forth around a barn, outbuildings, and brick farmhouse that

Combat at Franklin
The Battle of Franklin was sometimes called the "Pickett's Charge of the West," so quickly did the Rebels advance. Though moving "with the speed of an avalanche," the Army of Tennessee was all but devastated in five hours.

Union defense
Nashville was occupied by Union forces in 1862, and the city's defensive centerpiece was the star-shaped Fort Negley. Two years later, Nashville was among the most impressively fortified cities in the United States.

"The **death-angel was there** to gather its last harvest. It was the **grand coronation** of death."

PRIVATE SAM WATKINS, 1ST TENNESSEE INFANTRY, ON THE BATTLE OF FRANKLIN

belonged to the Carter family. Desperate hand-to-hand fighting spilled over fences into the gardens. Nightfall brought no letup in the frenzy; it only raged the more spectacularly along the main line of breastworks, where for hundreds of yards men standing three or four deep in the bloody ditches fired at each other over the parapet as quickly as they could be handed loaded rifles. One man described the muzzle flashes in the dark as "but one line of streaming fire." The inconclusive battle sputtered to a halt by 9 p.m. At midnight a whispered order was passed down the Union line: "Fall in." The Federals slipped away before dawn, heading north for Nashville, carrying at least 13 Confederate battle flags but leaving behind 2,500 casualties, including most of their seriously wounded.

Confederate losses

Daylight revealed a scene of appalling carnage. One man recalled how the dead were piled "one on the other all over the ground" and especially how numerous horses "had died game on the gory breastworks." The Confederates buried 1,750 of their mangled comrades on the field that day. Around 3,800 wounded crowded the makeshift hospitals. Hood had lost nearly a third of his available infantry; some regiments counted upward of 64 percent casualties. No less than 12 generals and 54 regimental commanders had been killed or wounded—a captain becoming the most senior ranked officer in some brigades.

Nevertheless, Hood soon had the survivors marching north on Nashville too. General George H. Thomas had assembled at least 55,000 Union troops, including Schofield's battered army, behind the city's daunting fortifications. The Confederate Army of Tennessee entrenched itself in a range of low hills 4 miles (6.4km) to the south, inviting Thomas to attack. For two weeks, when not shivering through ice storms, the opposing sides glared at each other.

Thomas attacks

General Ulysses S. Grant was on the point of relieving Thomas for inactivity when the weather improved. On December 15 Thomas struck. As the fog lifted that morning, the Confederates saw the long blue lines, flags flying, moving toward them. Union artillery fired a barrage so deafening that individual guns could not be distinguished. Hood's men repulsed the assaults on their front; but that was only a diversion. The Federals turning their left flank were the real striking force. They swarmed over fields and stone walls taking one Rebel position after another, capturing 16 guns and a thousand prisoners before winter darkness halted their momentum. That night Hood withdrew to another set of bluffs, where his weary soldiers cut trees and entrenched in the dark. Dawn revealed an imposing new line of Confederate works curving over a steep 3-mile (4.8-km) front.

General George H. Thomas
Born in Virginia, the stalwart Thomas remained loyal to the Union during the Civil War, for which he was permanently ostracized by members of his family.

Union surge

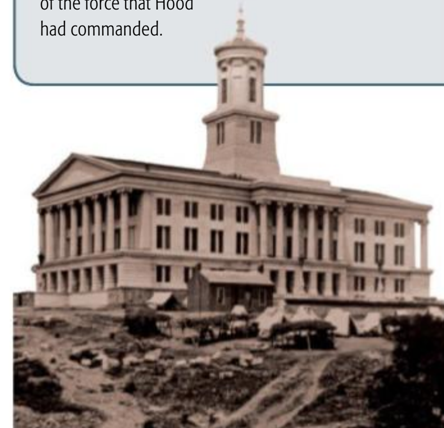
Gray clouds and cold rain had arrived by the time Thomas's attack again got underway. On the Confederate right, the Federals struggling upward were slaughtered in terrible profusion. But to his left, Hood's line had been sited too far up the slope; the defenders could not train their guns on the enemy until it was too late. Hood's left began giving way, and when the Union cavalry got into its rear, it broke. Panic spread like wildfire. Down the line exultant Federals seized guns, ammunition, flags, and thousands of dazed Confederates. Entire divisions melted away, soldiers fleeing to the rear ignoring their officers' cries to rally. It was as decisive a victory as any in the war. The Army of Tennessee, once among the proudest in the Confederacy, had reached the limit of its endurance. Its men fled down the Franklin Pike in the rain. Later that night, Hood was observed "much agitated and affected, pulling his hair with his one hand and crying like his heart would break."

AFTER

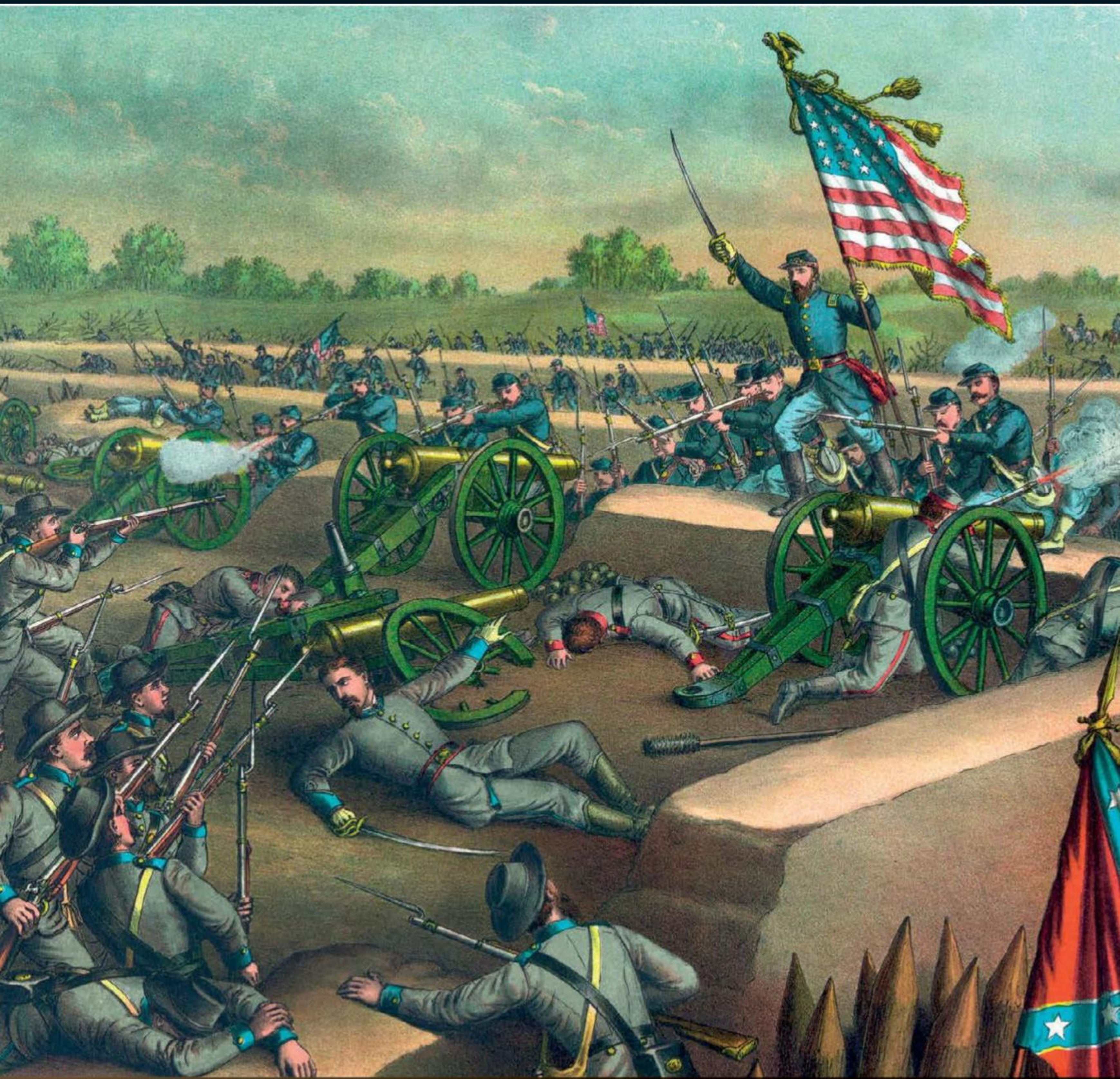
The collapse of Hood's Tennessee Campaign spelled the end of major fighting in that state—and very different ends for the two commanding generals.

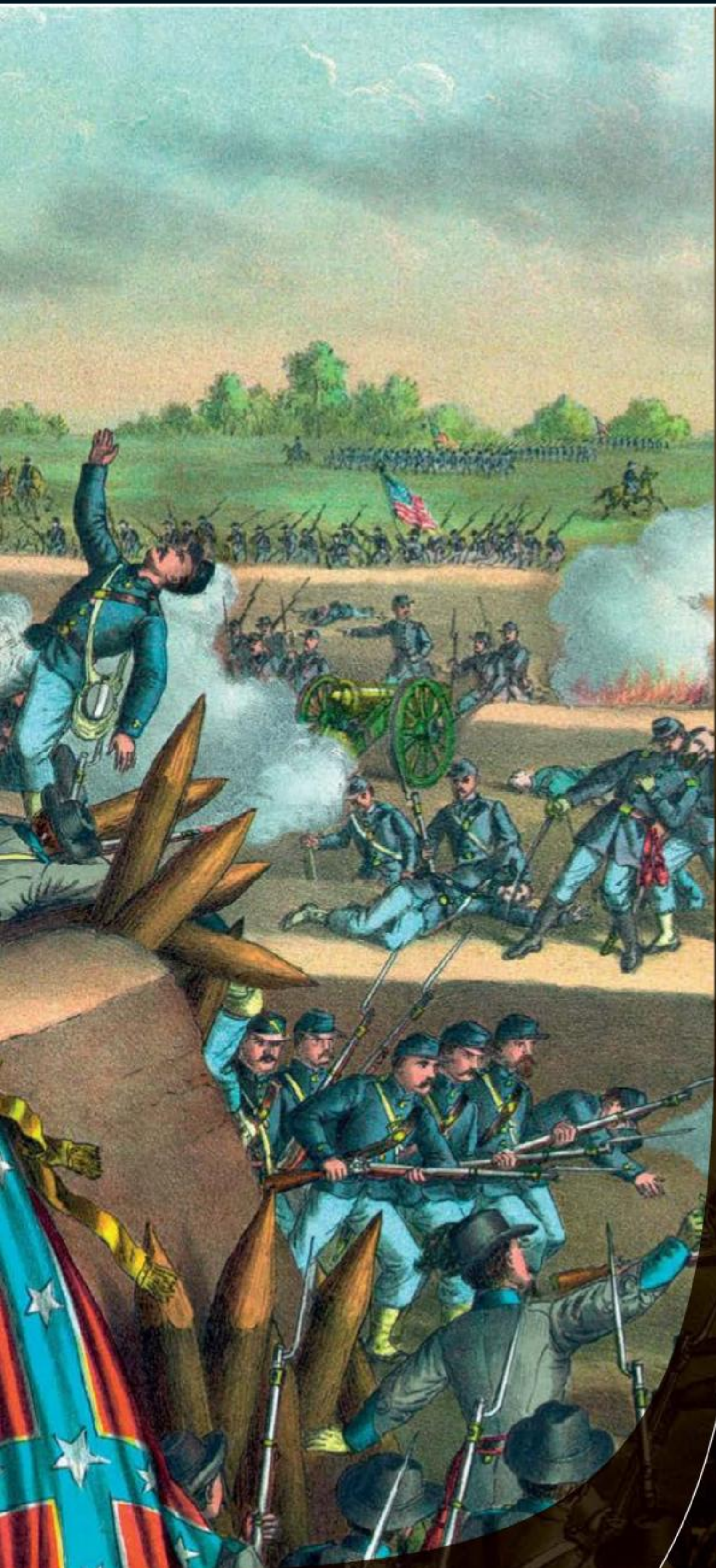
TENNESSEE CONCLUSION
In early January 1865, General Hood would tender his resignation, his **career now in ruins**. In March, General Thomas would receive the **"Thanks of Congress"** for his victory at Nashville.

END OF AN ARMY
The Army of Tennessee's demoralized survivors—those who didn't head for home after the **disaster at Nashville**—were continually harried by Union forces as they retreated south. They might have been completely destroyed were it not for Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest and his cavalry who kept much of the pursuit at bay. Many **soldiers limped barefoot** through the ice until they reached Tupelo, Mississippi. In March 1865, when they joined General Johnston for the **last campaign in the Carolinas** **150–151 ››**, they mustered only 4,500—ten percent of the force that Hood had commanded.



Tennessee State Capitol
Modeled after a Greek Ionic temple, the Tennessee State Capitol building in Nashville was completed in 1859 and was one of the tallest structures in the United States at the time of the Civil War.





6

COLLAPSE OF THE CONFEDERACY

1865

Military reverses in the last months of 1864 had left the Confederacy reeling, but the Union armies still had much to do before they could claim victory. In 1865, they took the struggle to the Southern heartland and finally found the decisive breakthrough they sought in Virginia.

« Fall of Petersburg
Less than 30 miles (48km) from the Confederate capital of Richmond, Petersburg had become the central focus of the conflict. When General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was eventually forced to abandon the town in April 1865, the end of the war was in sight.

COLLAPSE OF THE CONFEDERACY

Richmond burning
Before the Confederate leaders evacuate their capital, Richmond, on April 2, 1865, they give orders for key installations to be put to the torch. The conflagration spreads, burning through the night.

Sayler's Creek
Confederate troops surrender after clashing with Union forces at Sayler's Creek, southwest of Petersburg, on April 6, 1865. Robert E. Lee's eldest son is among some 6,000 men taken prisoner.

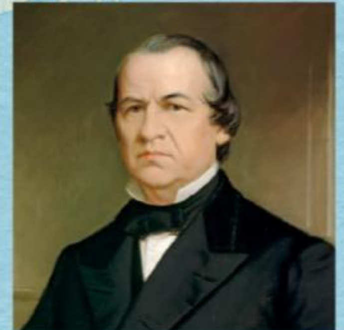
Riding to Appomattox
Robert E. Lee, Confederate commander-in-chief, rides to the village of Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865, to arrange terms of surrender with his Union counterpart, Ulysses S. Grant.

On the eve of Robert E. Lee's surrender of his army on April 9, 1865, large areas of the southeastern United States were still nominally in Confederate hands. In reality, the situation was in flux, and none of the developments favored the Southern cause.

With the fall of Richmond six days before Lee's surrender, the Confederate government had lost its capital, and President Jefferson Davis had become a fugitive, dependent on those railroads still operated by the Confederacy to stay out of Federal hands. Eleven days before that, Union general William T. Sherman, advancing northward from Savannah through the Carolinas, had successfully rendezvoused at Goldsboro with another Federal force, under John M. Schofield, which was moving inland from the port of Wilmington. The remaining Confederate forces in the area were no match for the combined strength of Sherman and Schofield.

1865

Death of the president
Fatally wounded by John Wilkes Booth in a Washington theater on April 14, 1865, Abraham Lincoln is carried to a boarding house across the street, where he dies the following morning.



Next president
Andrew Johnson, a War Democrat co-opted as Abraham Lincoln's running mate for the 1864 election, finds himself leading a largely Republican administration following the president's assassination.

Sherman and Johnston
After Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House, General Joseph E. Johnston commands the largest Confederate force still in the field. He surrenders to Sherman 17 days later at Bennett Place, a farm near Raleigh, North Carolina.

Entering Charleston
The 55th Massachusetts, a black Union regiment, marches into Charleston in mid-February 1865, to the jubilation of the city's black inhabitants. Confederate troops had evacuated the port three days earlier.

Meanwhile, Union armies were also making progress in Alabama. A cavalry force under James H. Wilson was striking south from the Tennessee border at the same time that troops under Edward Canby were besieging the port of Mobile at the southern end of the state. Mobile finally fell on April 12, just three days after Lee's capitulation; on the same day, Wilson's raiders entered the state capital of Montgomery. For a time, Jefferson Davis refused to accept the reality of the situation, but his remaining commanders soon convinced him that their troops were no longer in a condition to fight. Joseph E. Johnston, leading Confederate forces in the Carolinas, entered negotiations with his adversary, Sherman, on April 17, formally surrendering nine days later. Confederate commanders in Alabama and the Trans-Mississippi Department followed suit shortly after, bringing the war to an end by early June.

The **Thirteenth Amendment**

Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 established the abolition of slavery as a Federal war aim, but abolitionists feared that it might be set aside as a temporary measure once the conflict ended. The passing of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution ensured that slavery was banned in the United States.

BEFORE

The Thirteenth Amendment outlawing slavery throughout the United States came to be seen as a summary of the war's moral purpose. Yet four years earlier, the situation had looked very different.

THE 1861 AMENDMENT

Ironically, the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865, **to address the instution of slavery**, was not the first adopted by Congress. In 1861, when a final attempt was made to conciliate the South, an amendment that guaranteed the rights of slaveholding states had **passed the House and Senate**. Although it had been signed by President Buchanan on his last day in office, it had **never been ratified by the individual states**. The difference between it and its successor marked **the distance the U.S. had traversed politically** in the intervening four years.

THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

President Abraham Lincoln's **Emancipation Proclamation of 1863** **« 84–85** changed fundamentally the character of the Civil War. By embracing the **abolition of slavery** as the backbone of Union policy, it gave the conflict a fresh **moral dimension**. However, the form it took was dictated by expediency. If slavery was to be abolished once and for all, **more permanent measures** were called for.

President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 left unfinished business. It gave freedom to slaves only in the ten named Confederate states that had failed to rejoin the Union by January 1st, the date on which the proclamation came into force. Some territories were specifically exempted from its provisions, among them the city of New Orleans and the 48 Virginia counties then in the process of forming the state of West Virginia. Other slaveholding border states, where the president still hoped to court moderate opinion in favor of rejoining the Union, were simply not mentioned at all. It was clear, then, that some further measure would be required if slavery was to be banned forever across the United States.

Passing the amendment

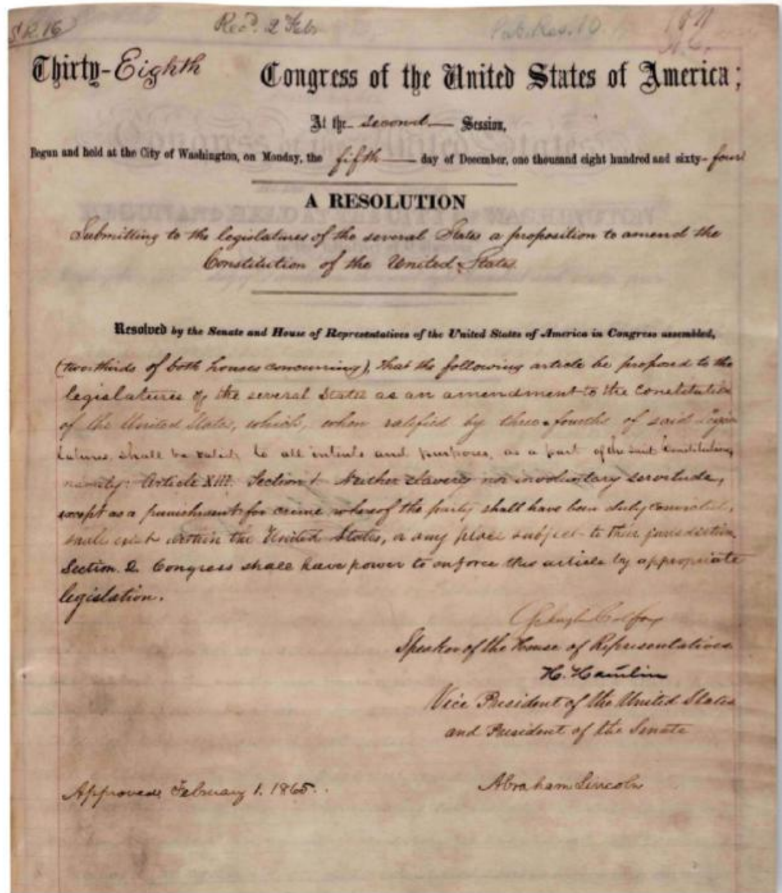
Lincoln himself believed that the only suitable vehicle would be a constitutional amendment. Yet there were formidable obstacles in the way of such a move. No new amendment had been passed in 60 years, and successful passage would require the support of two-thirds of the members of both Houses of Congress, and then ratification by three-quarters of the individual states. To make the measure truly binding, Lincoln took this to mean three-quarters of all states, including those in the South that had taken up arms to defend slavery.

The easy part proved to be getting the amendment through the Senate, whose Republican majority ensured its smooth passage on April 8, 1864. The House of Representatives proved more recalcitrant, however, and the measure failed to get the necessary two-thirds majority by 13 votes.

Its fate then became a leading issue in the 1864 presidential election campaign, with the Republicans eagerly adopting the cause as a central plank of their platform. The Democrats denounced the amendment as "unwise, impolitic, cruel, and unworthy of the support of a civilized people." Lincoln's re-election in November 1864 effectively settled the debate between the two parties. But instead of choosing to wait for the sitting of the Republican-dominated 39th Congress in March 1865, the president used his annual message to Congress on December 6, 1864, to introduce the measure.

Cheers in the House

Lincoln preferred to solicit the support of dissenting Democrats in the lame-duck 38th Congress, wanting to make its passage a bipartisan measure. With some arm-twisting, the necessary backing was obtained; on January 31, 1865, the amendment passed the House with two votes to spare. The news was greeted with wild rejoicing in Congress itself and by a 100-gun salute in Washington, D.C. It was fitting that among those celebrating inside the House were African-Americans, who had been admitted to the public galleries for the first time the previous



Thirty-Eighth Congress of the United States of America;

At the Second Session,

Begun and held at the City of Washington, on Monday, the fifth day of December, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four

A RESOLUTION

Submitting to the legislatures of the several States a proposition to amend the Constitution of the United States.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, (two-thirds of both houses concurring), that the following article be proposed to the legislatures of the several States as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which, when ratified by three-fourths of said legislatures, shall be valid, to all intents and purposes, as a part of the said Constitution, namely: Article XIII. Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction. Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Schuyler Colfax
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

H. Hamlin
Vice President of the United States and President of the Senate

Approved February 1. 1865.

Abraham Lincoln

The Thirteenth Amendment
Section 1 of the Thirteenth Amendment declared that "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime ... shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

HARPER'S WEEKLY
A JOURNAL OF CIVILIZATION

Jubilant scenes
In his diary, Republican congressman George W. Julian wrote of the reaction in the House: "Members joined in the shouting and kept it up for some minutes. Some embraced one another, others wept like children."

> "there is only a **question of *time*** … may we not agree that **the sooner the better?**"
>
> **PRESIDENT LINCOLN, IN HIS MESSAGE TO CONGRESS,** DECEMBER 6, 1864

A celebration of emancipation
In this Thomas Nast print of 1865, African-Americans are shown in the center enjoying a comfortable home life. On the left are scenes of their former slavery; the right shows a future with equality in the workplace and education for all.

year. George W. Julian, a Republican congressman, noted, "I have felt, ever since the vote, as if I were in a new country."

Unlike the struggle in the House of Representatives, ratification itself proved relatively straightforward. Most Northern states quickly fell into line, and as the Civil War came to an end it was made known to former

27 **The number of states that had voted to ratify the amendment by December 6, 1865.**

Confederate states that acceptance was a precondition for full re-admission into the Union. The necessary quorum was achieved on December 6, 1865, and 12 days later Secretary of State William H. Seward proclaimed the amendment adopted. For abolitionists, the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment served as moral justification for the war. The fact that slavery was no longer legal anywhere in U.S. territory was befitting considering all the deaths and suffering that the nation had endured.

The implications

In practical terms, the implementation of the measure still had to play out. Emancipated, or freed, slaves were no longer in legal bondage, but most of them still had to earn a living tilling the lands on which they had formerly worked, and their rights had to be won and protected. Full civil rights for blacks would be a long time coming and the fight would span far into the next century.

In the meantime, the thousands of former slaves who poured onto the nation's streets to celebrate the passing of the amendment experienced personally an important milestone. The United States had changed decisively and they were no longer regarded as property. Still they looked forward to the day when they could vote and live among whites with true equality.

A new life
For most former slaves the amendment's passing was a joyful time. Celebrations took place on plantations throughout the South. Couples were finally allowed to marry, and many people dropped their slave names.

AFTER

Ratification of the amendment was the final measure in ending slavery in the United States. The way was legally open for the integration of former slaves into society.

DEFINING FREEDOM

The amendment guaranteed that **slaves would be free**, but the exact nature of that freedom remained to be defined. Other measures were needed. The Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in 1868, **gave former slaves U.S. citizenship**, and the Fifteenth, passed into law the following year, guaranteed their **right to vote**.

THE ONGOING DIVIDE

White opposition in the South later rolled back integration by making voter registration harder. In practice, the South's black population would have to wait almost another century, until the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** and the **Voting Rights Act of 1965**, to win effective enfranchisement.

The **Carolinas** and **Alabama**

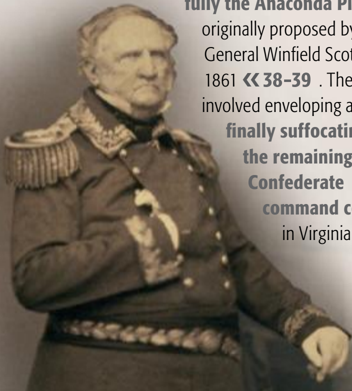
In the wake of General Sherman's march through Georgia to the sea, the year 1865 saw further Union incursions bringing total war to the Southern heartland. South Carolina, where the war had begun four years earlier, was a particular target.

BEFORE

Sherman's march through Georgia had badly damaged Confederate morale. Union leaders now sought to reap the benefits.

BRINGING THE WAR HOME
Earlier in the war, the **deep Southern states had escaped much of the fighting**, which was concentrated in border areas to the north and west. That **situation changed** dramatically with Sherman's invasion of Georgia and the evaporation of large-scale armed resistance after the fall of Atlanta. The question now was how best to **press home the advantage**.

REVIVING THE ANACONDA PLAN
With General Sherman in Savannah, Federal strategists saw a chance at last to **implement fully the Anaconda Plan**, originally proposed by General Winfield Scott in 1861 « 38–39. The project involved enveloping and **finally suffocating the remaining Confederate command centers** in Virginia.



Initially, General Grant—fearing the hazardous state of South Carolina's roads in the winter—wanted to ship General William T. Sherman's victorious troops from Savannah to support his own forces in Virginia. Sherman, however, insisted that his men were up to the task of overcoming any difficulties confronting them. Given that it would have taken two months to arrange the shipping option, Grant let himself be persuaded.

Although Sherman was to encounter formidable obstacles in his path, the opposition forces were the least of his worries. General P. G. T. Beauregard, commanding Confederate troops in South Carolina, had only about 17,500 men scattered across the state to combat Sherman's 60,000 battle-hardened veterans. In addition, morale in the Union ranks was extremely high. Most of the men were champing at the bit at the prospect of carrying the war to the state where the fighting had started. In the minds of many Northerners, South Carolina was more responsible than any other state for the suffering the nation had endured for nearly four years.

Natural obstacles

The logistical problems of marching an army through the swamps and rain-swollen rivers that lay between Savannah, Georgia, and South Carolina's state capital, Columbia, presented a greater challenge than did the Confederate troops. In many places the roads were impassable, and Sherman's men had to create causeways by the slow process of "corduroying." This entailed cutting down trees, stripping off the bark, and flattening them on one side, then laying them crosswise, interspersed with saplings, to form a usable surface for the men and the supply wagons. In spite of the difficulties, Sherman's bummers made extraordinarily fast progress, covering almost 10 miles (16km) a day. By February 17, barely a month after leaving Savannah, they reached Columbia. That night, the city burned. By the following morning, two-thirds of it lay in ashes.

The fate of Columbia was only part of the trail of destruction Sherman's forces blazed across the state. In their path they looted farms and torched villages to the ground. The Confederate forces opposing them felt the pinch because they were forced to live off the land as best they could.

On February 23, at Robert E. Lee's insistance, Joseph Johnston took command of all Southern forces in the Carolinas. Under the circumstances, the best that he could manage was a holding action designed to delay Sherman's progress.

From Columbia, the Union commander headed north toward Goldsboro, North Carolina, where he

458 **The number of buildings estimated to have been burned in South Carolina's capital Columbia, including six churches, eleven banks, and a printing plant where Confederate currency was minted.**

> "The **truth** is, the whole army is burning with an insatiable desire to **wreak vengeance** upon **South Carolina**. I … feel that **she deserves all** that seems in store for her."
>
> **GENERAL WILLIAM T. SHERMAN IN A LETTER TO MAJOR GENERAL HENRY W. HALLECK, UNION ARMY CHIEF-OF-STAFF,** DECEMBER 24, 1864

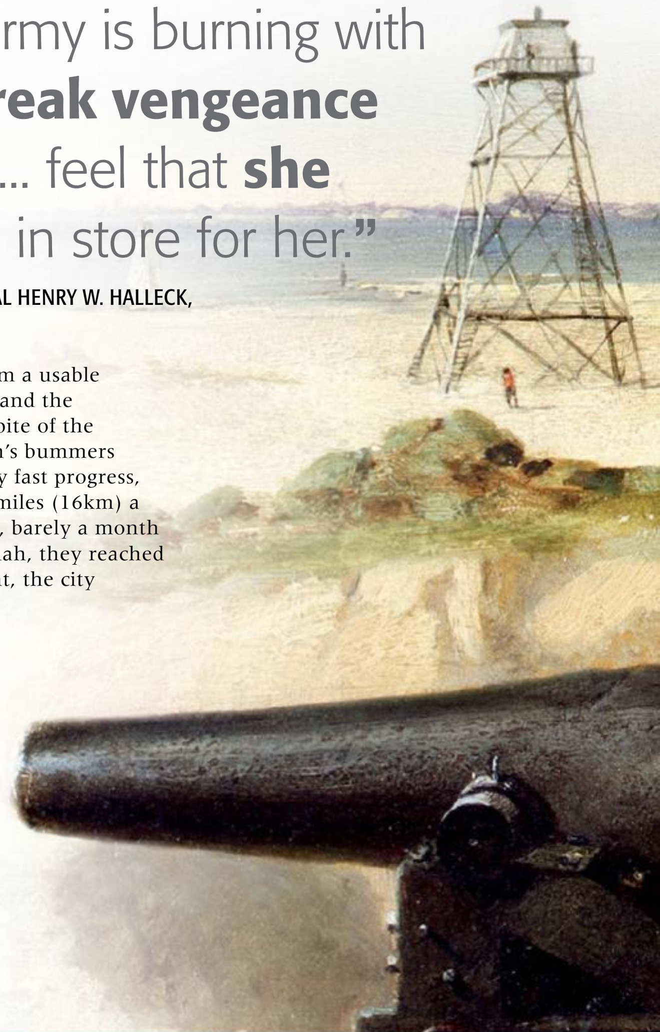
KEY MOMENT

THE FALL OF FORT FISHER

By late 1864, Wilmington, North Carolina, was the only major port through which overseas supplies were still reaching the Confederate armies. It was protected from attack by Fort Fisher, a massive log-and-earth bastion at the mouth of the Cape Fear River, defended by 47 guns, 22 facing the ocean and 25 facing the land.

On January 15, 1865, a fleet under Admiral David D. Porter bombarded the fort from the sea, while the troops of General Alfred H. Terry attacked from the land. Under these two men, a combined force of 6,500 Union soldiers and sailors took the fort in a single day, with battle raging into the night. At 10 p.m. the Confederates under General W. H. C. Whiting surrendered to General Terry.

The Union forces had taken the garrison with 2,000 men inside. Wilmington itself fell soon after, leaving the Southern heartland cut off from trade with foreign countries.



Defending Charleston
Soldier and painter Conrad Wise Chapman was stationed in Charleston in 1864 and often sketched while under fire. After the war, he made a series of paintings from his sketches.

expected to rendezvous with 20,000 additional Federal troops under General John M. Schofield, marching from the Confederate port of Wilmington, recently captured after the Battle of Fort Fisher.

Confederate strategy

General Sherman had split his troops into two columns, and Johnston's only realistic hope lay in attacking the splintered Union forces. The Confederates attempted to delay one of the two columns outside the village of Averasboro before launching a fully fledged attack on the Federal left wing at Bentonville, barely a day's march south of Goldsboro.

The initial Confederate successes were soon countered by the arrival of Union reinforcements, and Sherman was able to rendezvous successfully with Schofield on March 23.

The Alabama campaign

Meanwhile, Union leaders had devised a two-pronged strategy to carry the war into Alabama. One force under General E. R. S. Canby was sent to invade the state from the south through lower Mobile Bay, which had been occupied by Union forces after a naval battle the previous August. Canby succeeded in taking the city of Mobile itself in April 1865. In the meantime, a 27-year-old cavalry commander, James H. Wilson, led a mounted troop of 13,000 men south from Tennessee into northern Alabama. There, he was confronted by Confederate cavalry under General Nathan Bedford Forrest.

The youthful Wilson managed the capture of northern Alabama brilliantly. He outmaneuvered and outnumbered Forrest and destroyed the Confederate munitions complex at Selma. Wilson then moved east to capture the state capital of Montgomery before heading into southern Georgia.

Entering Charleston
As the 55th Massachusetts Colored Regiment entered the city on February 21, they sang "John Brown's Body." The line "John Brown died that the slave might be free" caused rejoicing among former slaves.

By the time Wilson's force took Macon, Georgia, on April 20, the war was effectively over. Although less decisive than the confrontation between Grant and Lee in Virginia, the Carolina and Alabama campaigns had between them put several more nails in the coffin of the Confederate cause.

AFTER

The success of Federal forces in the Carolinas and Alabama effectively thwarted Confederate hopes of a second line of defense if Richmond fell.

THE TIGHTENING NOOSE
The setbacks in the South increased the **pressure on Robert E. Lee's army** defending Petersburg, which increasingly came to be seen as the **last point of resistance** to a Union victory. The Union advance in the Carolinas had cut Lee off from the sea, leaving him increasingly reliant on a handful of westbound roads and railroad lines for all his supplies.

EBBING HOPES
News of Union incursions also had **a devastating effect on the morale** of Confederate soldiers. Many came from areas affected by the fighting, leading to an **upsurge in desertions** among men desperate to return home to check on their families' fate.

JOHNSTON'S SURRENDER
Confederate general **Joseph Johnston finally surrendered** to William T. Sherman on April 26 156–157 ››, 17 days after General Lee's **surrender at Appomattox Court House**. The Battle of Palmito Ranch, Texas, on May 19, was the war's last battle.

The **Fall** of **Petersburg** and **Richmond**

The war's central conflict between the armies of Grant and Lee had become bogged down in a bloody stalemate in the trenches outside Petersburg, Virginia. When Union troops finally broke through in April 1865, the Confederate capital of Richmond was doomed, falling barely 24 hours later.

Major General John B. Gordon
Gordon was one of Lee's most trusted lieutenants in the final stages of the war. He fought in many of the most important battles, from First Bull Run through Antietam and Gettysburg, and was wounded numerous times.

BEFORE

By early 1865, the plight of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was becoming increasingly desperate. If it was defeated, the Confederate capital would fall.

OTHER CONFEDERATE ARMIES
Late 1864 saw a **succession of Southern defeats** throughout Georgia and Tennessee. General William T. Sherman concluded his devastating **March to the Sea** « 140–141 with the **capture of Savannah**. Meanwhile, General John Bell Hood's **invasion of Tennessee** was smashed at **Nashville** « 142–143.

LENGTHENING ODDS
Immobilized in the trenches outside Petersburg « 130–131 since June 1864, the Confederate force confronted a **numerically stronger, better-supplied enemy**. With the odds lengthening week by week, Lee's only recourse lay in bold action. But the chances of success were never good.

As 1865 dawned, the opposing armies dug in outside Petersburg were stymied. In a campaign that foreshadowed the trench warfare of World War I, both sides had made repeated attempts to achieve a breakthrough without gaining any decisive advantage.

Union superiority

Yet the situation was much more serious for Robert E. Lee's army than it was for Ulysses S. Grant's. The Southern army was outnumbered by more than two to one, and the odds were worsening week by week as a steady stream of desertions further sapped its manpower. Grant had been able to use his numerical advantage gradually to extend his lines, which stretched Lee's resources to the limits. Moreover, the Confederate supply routes had been cut one by one, with the loss of Wilmington, the only surviving link to the sea, delivering a particularly devastating blow.

Major General George E. Pickett and Fitzhugh Lee, the senior officers of the Southern forces in the decisive encounter at Five Forks, were absent for much of the fighting, having been invited to a shad (fish) bake nearby by a fellow general.

With only bad news coming from the Carolinas, Lee knew that it could only be a matter of time before General Sherman's forces would be able to link up with the Army of the Potomac and complete his encirclement. To avoid that scenario, Lee had to extricate his army as soon as possible.

Lee turned to Major General John B. Gordon, commander of the Second Corps, who devised a strategy that involved sending armed troops masquerading as deserters to launch a surprise assault on Fort Stedman, a strongpoint at the eastern end of the Federal lines. At first the ploy succeeded, but after four hours' fighting, Union forces staged a successful counterattack and Gordon's men were driven back with heavy losses.

Decisive clash at Five Forks

Grant at once determined to take advantage of this reverse. On March 29, he sent an infantry corps accompanied by General Philip Sheridan's cavalry, newly arrived from the victorious Union campaign in the Shenandoah Valley, to probe the western end of Lee's lines. Lee took vigorous measures to counter the move, and there was hard fighting on March 30, with neither side managing to achieve an advantage. The next

The Battle of Five Forks
Union cavalry break the Confederate line, as depicted by French artist Paul Philippoteaux. General Sheridan personally led the decisive charge that broke Pickett's division. About 3,000 Confederate troops were captured.

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA.

Evacuation order
Jefferson Davis's order to evacuate the Confederate capital was issued on April 2. He and various members of his cabinet abandoned the city that night, heading by train for Danville, Virginia.

day, Philip Sheridan's horsemen confronted General George E. Pickett's division at a crossroads known as Five Forks, 20 miles (32km) southwest of Petersburg.

Sheridan dispatched the Fifth Corps of the Army of the Potomac under Major General Gouverneur K. Warren with orders to attack the Confederate left flank. Despite confusion in the plan's execution, the pincer attack worked. By 7 p.m., Pickett's force had collapsed, with half the men surrendering and the rest taking flight. The Union breakthrough had finally been achieved.

The defeat at Five Forks, sometimes called the "Waterloo of the Confederacy," threatened Lee's last remaining lines of communication to the west and south and his position was untenable. The next morning, April 2, he sent word to Jefferson Davis that Petersburg would fall and that when it did, Richmond itself would have to be abandoned.

As it happened, the message had barely reached the Southern president, who was attending a Sunday-morning church service at the time, when Grant's men launched an all-out attack along Lee's lines at Petersburg. The Confederates resisted, but only as a holding action designed to give the army time to withdraw in some semblance of order from the beleaguered city. By the following morning, Petersburg was in Union hands.

The fall of Richmond

With Petersburg fallen, Richmond could not be defended. As soon as Lee had telegraphed Jefferson Davis that April 2 morning to abandon the city, the evacuation had commenced. Orders were given to torch everything of military or strategic value.

After the civil authorities had departed, the city was unpoliced and the conflagrations spread uncontrolled until the first Union detachments arrived next morning to accept the city's formal surrender and to begin dousing the flames. By then, much of the Southern capital was in ruins; an estimated 25 percent of its buildings had burned down, and remaining hopes for the Confederacy lay smoldering.

Richmond in flames
Confederate troops destroyed the city's arsenals and factories before they fled. The explosions started fires in residential areas, and all night long the citizens rushed away in "every description of cart, carriage, and vehicle."

"**We took Richmond** at 8:15 this morning … The enemy left **in great haste** … "

UNION GENERAL GODFREY WEITZEL, IN A TELEGRAM TO GRANT, APRIL 3, 1865

AFTER

Following the fall of Richmond, the Confederacy became a country and a cause without a capital. Lee's retreating army was its only remaining bulwark.

EVACUATING RICHMOND
Jefferson Davis used the city's **last rail link** to **escape to Danville**, 130 miles (210km) to the southwest, where he issued a **defiant promise** to continue the struggle.

LINCOLN'S TRIUMPH
In contrast, **Abraham Lincoln** who happened to be visiting the Army of the Potomac when Richmond fell, **traveled into the city** barely a day after Davis had left it. He was **welcomed as a liberator** by the city's black population. "You are free, free as air," the President told them. But **Lincoln would die** within two weeks 154–155 ».

LAST BATTLES
Lee **hoped to escape** with his army to the Danville area and **fight on**, but the **move was blocked by Grant**. With this, Lee had no option left but to surrender.

LINCOLN IN RICHMOND

The **Assassination** of **Lincoln**

With the war effectively won and the Union virtually restored, the nation needed a leader of vision to heal the wounds of four years in which brother had fought brother. John Wilkes Booth's murderous action on Good Friday of 1865 removed the man best fitted for the task.

BEFORE

President Lincoln had every reason to be optimistic in the wake of Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House. But within six days, fate cruelly intervened.

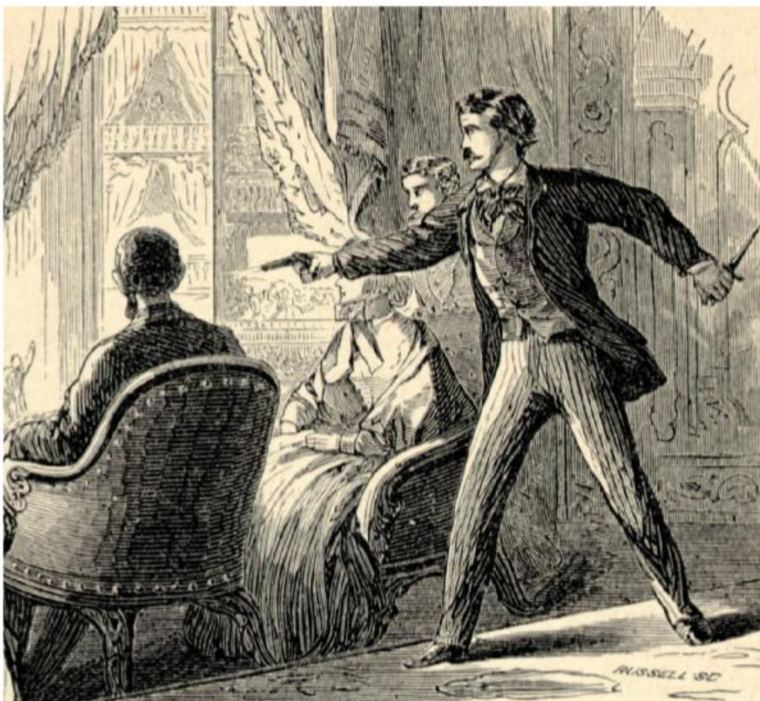
THE FIRST CONSPIRACY
Although the president had no way of knowing, **John Wilkes Booth and a band of Southern sympathizers** had made plans to **kidnap Lincoln** the previous year. Their hopes had been to hold the president as a bargaining tool in order to gain the release of **Confederate prisoners of war** « 122–123. At the time the plot was aborted, but the conspirators **remained in contact**.

PUNCTURED HOPES
The dawning **prospect of peace** brought great relief to Lincoln, who was intent on **promoting reconciliation with the Rebel states**. Yet the very news that cheered the president only **reignited the anger of his enemies**. A speech in which Lincoln lent his support to the cause of black enfranchisement unwittingly **sealed his fate**. Booth was now determined to **silence him forever**.

Lincoln was in an upbeat mood on the morning of Good Friday, April 14, 1865; a political colleague remarked that he had never seen the president looking so happy. Although he was very aware of the challenges that lay ahead, the knowledge that the war was almost over gave him good reason to celebrate. Yet he was not free of personal anxieties.

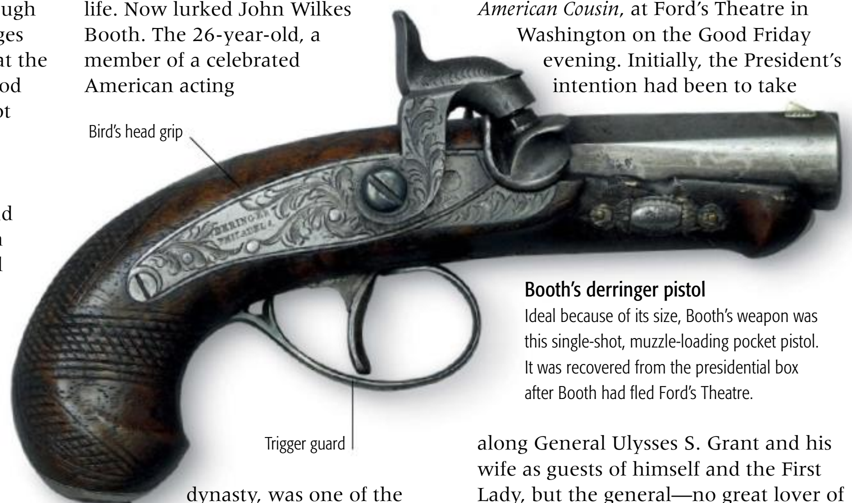
A portentous dream

Just three days before, Lincoln had described to his wife and friends a dream in which he had wandered through the rooms of a deserted White House only to find a body laid out in state. When he asked an attendant who it was that had died, he was told it was the president, killed by an assassin. "I slept no more that night," Lincoln told his audience, "and although it was only a dream, I have been strangely annoyed by it ever since."



The assassination
A print captures the moment that John Wilkes Booth fired the fatal shot. Taking no chances, the assassin holds a knife as he takes aim at President Lincoln's head.

Lincoln had good reason to be disturbed. From the beginning of his presidency, he had received hate mail, some of which contained threats on his life. Now lurked John Wilkes Booth. The 26-year-old, a member of a celebrated American acting dynasty, was one of the nation's leading players and a familiar face around Washington, D.C., where he often performed. A passionate supporter of the Confederate cause, the Maryland-born actor was eager to leave his mark on history through some great, dramatic act. He had gathered around him a group of followers who shared his hatred of the president, and over a period of months they had discussed various ways of doing him harm.



Booth's derringer pistol
Ideal because of its size, Booth's weapon was this single-shot, muzzle-loading pocket pistol. It was recovered from the presidential box after Booth had fled Ford's Theatre.

The plot takes shape

News of Lee's surrender at Appomattox brought matters to a head. The day before, Booth had heard Lincoln give an impromptu speech from a window of the White House, in which the president gave his support to the enfranchisement of black voters. For Booth, who was an ardent advocate of slavery, this was the final straw and it was time to act.

> **Owner of the boarding house where the conspirators met, Mary Surratt, hanged for her alleged part in the plot, was the first woman executed by the U.S. government.**

The plot that he and his co-conspirators hatched was multi-pronged. Booth took it upon himself to assassinate Lincoln. A 20-year-old Confederate veteran named Lewis Powell was assigned the task of killing Secretary of State William Seward, while 29-year-old George Atzerodt, the German-born owner of a Maryland carriage-repair business, was instructed to murder Vice President Andrew Johnson. The warped goal was to remove the Union's top leadership in one bloody night, thereby avenging the Confederate defeat and giving the South a chance to rally and gather new forces to continue the struggle.

The timing of the attack was settled when Booth heard that Lincoln was to attend a performance of a comedy, *Our American Cousin*, at Ford's Theatre in Washington on the Good Friday evening. Initially, the President's intention had been to take along General Ulysses S. Grant and his wife as guests of himself and the First Lady, but the general—no great lover of social occasions—had made an excuse and left town to visit relatives. In their place, Mary Todd Lincoln invited a friend of the family, Major Henry Rathbone, and his fiancée, Clara Harris.

The events of the evening

Booth knew the theater well, having performed there on many occasions. A familiar figure backstage, he had no trouble in gaining access to the building and wandering around its corridors at will. In the course of the day he took the precaution of drilling a small spy hole in the door of the presidential box, to provide him with a view of what was happening inside. That evening, he waited until the play was well underway before taking action. He knew the script himself, and had settled on one line as a cue for his deed—it always got a good reaction from the audience, and Booth hoped he could count on the laughter in the theater to help conceal the sound of the shot. Stealing into the presidential box with his pistol, he shot Lincoln in the head at the chosen moment, and then leaped down onto the stage, shouting, "*Sic semper tyrannis*" ("Thus always to tyrants"), to the astonishment of the theatergoers. Upon landing, he broke his leg, but managed to limp to a horse he had waiting

SURRAT. BOOTH. HAROLD.

War Department, Washington, April 20, 1865,

☞ $100,000 REWARD!

THE MURDERER

Of our late beloved President, Abraham Lincoln,

IS STILL AT LARGE.

$50,000 REWARD

Will be paid by this Department for his apprehension, in addition to any reward offered by Municipal Authorities or State Executives.

$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of JOHN H. SURRATT, one of Booth's Accomplices.

$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of David C. Harold, another of Booth's accomplices.

LIBERAL REWARDS will be paid for any information that shall conduce to the arrest of either of the above-named criminals, or their accomplices.

All persons harboring or secreting the said persons, or either of them, or aiding or assisting their concealment or escape, will be treated as accomplices in the murder of the President and the attempted assassination of the Secretary of State, and shall be subject to trial before a Military Commission and the punishment of DEATH.

Let the stain of innocent blood be removed from the land by the arrest and punishment of the murderers.

All good citizens are exhorted to aid public justice on this occasion. Every man should consider his own conscience charged with this solemn duty, and rest neither night nor day until it be accomplished.

EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

DESCRIPTIONS.—BOOTH is Five Feet 7 or 8 inches high, slender build, high forehead, black hair, black eyes, and wears a heavy black moustache.

JOHN H. SURRAT is about 5 feet, 9 inches. Hair rather thin and dark; eyes rather light; no beard. Would weigh 145 or 150 pounds. Complexion rather pale and clear, with color in his cheeks. Wore light clothes of fine quality. Shoulders square; cheek bones rather prominent; chin narrow; ears projecting at the top; forehead rather low and square, but broad. Parts his hair on the right side; neck rather long. His lips are firmly set. A slim man.

DAVID C. HAROLD is five feet six inches high, hair dark, eyes dark, eyebrows rather heavy, full face, nose short, hand short and fleshy, feet small, instep high, round bodied, naturally quick and active, slightly closes his eyes when looking at a person.

NOTICE.—In addition to the above, State and other authorities have offered rewards amounting to almost one hundred thousand dollars, making an aggregate of about TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS.

Reward poster

A massive $100,000 was offered as a reward for the capture of Booth and his coconspirators. Pictured among them is Mary Surratt's son, John, who escaped conviction by fleeing the country.

> "But **O heart! heart! heart! O the bleeding** drops of red, Where on the deck my **Captain lies**, / Fallen **cold and dead**."
>
> WALT WHITMAN, FROM HIS POEM, *O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!*, 1865

outside. He then fled the city. Booth's two accomplices were less successful. Powell entered William Seward's house and managed to make his way to the bedroom where the statesman was lying injured, having broken his arm and jaw in a carriage accident nine days earlier. When his gun jammed, Powell pulled a knife and stabbed his victim repeatedly, but not fatally. The brace supporting Seward's broken arm diverted the worst of the blows, When help arrived, Powell broke off the attack, exited the house, and, like Booth, escaped on a waiting horse. Seward subsequently made a full recovery. As for Atzerodt, his courage simply failed him. He spent the evening drinking in the bar of the hotel where the vice president was staying, then wandered off into the night without having even approached his target.

Lincoln fights for survival

Meanwhile, desperate attempts were being made to save Lincoln's life. Too badly injured to be taken back to the White House, he was carried instead to a boarding house across the street from the theater. But there was little the doctors could do. Fatally wounded by a single bullet to the brain, the president died early the following morning without having regained consciousness. The hunt for the conspirators now began to intensify.

Capturing the culprits

Powell was the first to be apprehended, three days after the attack, when he returned to the boarding house where the plot had been hatched. Powell found federal agents sent to arrest the owner, a Confederate sympathizer named Mary Surratt, waiting for him there. Atzerodt was tracked down three days later on a Maryland farm some 25 miles (40km) from the capital. John Wilkes Booth managed to evade capture until April 26, when he was traced to a barn in Virginia and shot dead. Others who were party to the plot were also arrested, including David Herold. He had accompanied Booth on his flight, but chose to surrender to the pursuing troops rather than die trapped in the Virginia barn as it burned around him.

Toward a united country

Lincoln's murder was unprecedented at the time—no previous president had ever been assassinated. His death deprived the nation of sound leadership, while his successor, Andrew Johnson, was generally considered lacking in wise counsel. Some Unreconciled Confederates applauded Booth's deed; however, the bulk of the nation was united in grief. Although federal authorities were at first suspicious of a Confederate conspiracy, Lincoln's death helped bind the nation in common sympathy.

Lincoln's hat

Despite his impressive height of 6ft 4in (1.9m), Lincoln was renowned for wearing tall or high hats. On the night of his assassination, he wore this one, now in the Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.

AFTER

Lincoln's death plunged the nation into mourning and opened new wounds at a time when old ones had not yet started to heal.

POLITICAL AFTERSHOCKS

Vice President Andrew Johnson became president. Thus a **Southern Democrat**, drafted to attract swing voters in 1864, now headed a **Republican administration**. Lacking Lincoln's political and moral authority, he was ill-equipped for **the task of Reconstruction**.

THE FATE OF THE CONSPIRATORS

Eight suspects went on trial. Held in isolation, their heads were covered in cotton-lined canvas hoods with **a slit for eating but no ear or eyeholes**. Powell, Herold, Atzerodt, and Mary Surratt were condemned to death and **hanged on July 7, 1865**. Three others received sentences of **life imprisonment**, while another, a carpenter at Ford's Theatre accused of **assisting in Booth's escape**, got six years.

Last Terms of Surrender

General Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House left some 175,000 Confederate soldiers still in arms in three armies and numerous garrisons scattered across the South. The war's final acts were played out in North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Texas, and even Liverpool, England.

The surrender of Johnston
Confederate General Johnston (on the right) surrenders to General Sherman on April 26, 1865. The two men became firm friends, and a quarter of a century later Johnston was a pallbearer at Sherman's funeral.

BEFORE

After April 9, 1865, when General Lee's Army of Northern Virginia laid down its arms, most of the South's generals accepted that the cause was lost.

DIEHARD RESISTANCE
Some Southern leaders, however, **wanted to fight on**. The most prominent of these diehards, **Confederate President Jefferson Davis was still urging resistance** three weeks after Lee's surrender. By then, he and his cabinet had abandoned the Confederate capital, Richmond, and **fled south to Greensboro, North Carolina**. The cabinet met for the last time on May 5, 1865, in Washington, Georgia, after which Davis went into hiding.

A NEW PRESIDENT
Meanwhile, events in Washington, D.C. had taken a dramatic turn with the **assassination of President Lincoln** **« 154–155**, fatally shot on April 14. Lincoln was succeeded by his vice president, the Southern War Democrat **Andrew Johnson, who was swiftly sworn in as 17th President of the United States** on the morning after the shooting.

By far the largest and best organized of the Confederate armies remaining in the field after Lee's surrender was the one confronting General William T. Sherman in North Carolina under the command of General Joseph E. Johnston. Here, the balance of power had altered in late March 1865, when Sherman made a successful rendezvous with reinforcements from Wilmington. Confronted with the Union's overwhelming superiority in numbers, Johnston retreated westward to the North Carolina state capital, Raleigh.

Meeting with Davis

Johnston was preparing to abandon Raleigh to Sherman's advancing Union forces when word came of events at Appomattox. While still digesting the news, Johnston was summoned to a meeting with Confederate President Jefferson Davis in Greensboro, about 80 miles (130km) away. When the two men met on April 12, Davis—without even requesting Johnston's opinion of the military situation—talked ramblingly of gathering up deserters to fight on. Once Johnston was eventually given a chance to speak, he was blunt: "My views are, sir, that our people are tired of war, feel themselves whipped and will not fight." Shocked into silence, Davis unwillingly gave Johnston permission to put out peace feelers to Sherman.

In the meeting that followed—held on April 17, in a log cabin near Durham Station—Sherman initially went beyond his remit from Washington. He held out to Johnston the prospect of the readmission of Southern states to the Union on terms of full citizenship with no threat of persecution for treason or war crimes. In doing so, he strayed into political rather than purely military territory. He was subsequently reprimanded by the authorities in Washington and General Ulysses S. Grant was sent to take over the negotiations. Grant made it clear that while the military terms offered at Appomattox still stood and applied to Johnston's army as well as Lee's, there could be no bargaining on the larger postwar settlement.

Johnston surrenders

When Davis was informed of Grant's conditions, he was eager to fight on. Johnston's reply was scathing. "We have to save the people, spare the blood of the army, and save the high civic functionaries," he told the Confederate president. He added that "your plan, I think, can do only the last." The next day, April 26, Johnston agreed to surrender the forces under his command, including Confederate troops in Georgia, Florida, and the Carolinas, a total of almost 90,000 men.

In Alabama, the Confederate commander, General Richard Taylor, watched developments to the north with fatalistic gloom. Like Johnston, he had been fighting a losing battle, in his case against two separate Union forces in the north and south of the state. As soon as he heard of Johnston's negotiations with Sherman, he too sued for peace. On May 8 at Citronelle, Alabama, he agreed with General Edward Canby, the Union commander-in-chief in the state, to accept terms similar to those that had been offered to Lee and Johnston.

A three-man detachment posted to Virginia's Great Dismal Swamp are thought to have been the last Confederate soldiers to lay down their arms. They finally emerged in July 1866, 15 months after Lee's surrender.

> "My small force is **melting away like snow** before the sun ..."
> **JOSEPH E. JOHNSTON,** APRIL 13, 1865

By that time only one Confederate army was still officially at war with the Union: that of the vast Trans-Mississippi Department, under the command of General Edmund Kirby Smith. Not having suffered the reverses that Johnston and Taylor had known, Kirby Smith proved less willing to come to terms. On the day after Taylor's capitulation, he flatly refused a Union invitation to lay down his arms. On May 12 and 13, a final engagement was fought at Palmito Ranch, a Confederate outpost on the Rio Grande. Twice the position fell to attacking Union regiments, and twice the defenders reclaimed it. Ironically, it was the Confederates who thus won the last battle of the Civil War, at a cost of four men killed and a dozen or more wounded—the Union force suffered 30 casualties.

Imprisoned president
A contemporary sketch shows the captured Jefferson Davis at Fort Monroe on the Virginia coast. He was held a prisoner there for two years until released on bail paid by wealthy citizens from both North and South.

Jefferson Davis captured

Meanwhile in Georgia, Jefferson Davis had been captured near Irwinville. At dawn on May 10, Union cavalrymen surrounded the Confederate leader, his wife, their four children, and a small group of loyal officials, all of whom had been camping out in a pine forest. The Union troops consisted of two separate units, neither of which was aware of the other at first. In the ensuing confusion, two of the cavalrymen were killed as a result of "friendly fire." The South's fate was now firmly in the hands of the U.S. Government, headed by Lincoln's successor, President Andrew Johnson. The first indication of Johnson's intentions came in two proclamations issued on May 29. One granted pardons and restored property to almost all Southerners who were willing to take an oath of allegiance. The other, directed at North Carolina, set a pattern for states wishing to rejoin the Union. Delegates were to be elected to draft a new state constitution, with the power to determine the qualifications required of voters in future state elections.

In the Trans-Mississippi region, Kirby Smith was starting to feel the pressure of changed circumstances. As news of Jefferson Davis's arrest spread, many of his men laid down their arms and set off for home. With his army dissolving around him, the general also learned that Grant was sending the redoubtable General Philip Sheridan to enforce peace. Recognizing the inevitable, Kirby Smith sent word to General Canby, now in New Orleans, that he too was prepared to negotiate a surrender. The document was signed on June 2.

Final surrenders

Even then, some groups held out. Brigadier General Stand Watie, a Cherokee in command of the Native American cavalry in Kirby Smith's army, only accepted a ceasefire on June 23. On August 2, the Confederate cruiser *Shenandoah*, which had been raiding Union ships in international waters, was in the Pacific when its crew learned of the capitulations. They continued to England, rather than a U.S. port, where they risked being tried for piracy. They surrendered in Liverpool on November 6. The crew dispersed, and the British later turned the ship over to the U.S. government.

Victory parade
Mounted Union officers ride down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. during a Grand Review held on May 23–24, 1865. Soldiers from both Meade's and Sherman's armies marched on consecutive days.

Stand Watie
Principal chief of the Cherokee Nation since 1862, Brigadier General Stand Watie commanded the First Indian Brigade under General Kirby Smith. Before the war, he had been a successful plantation- and slave-owner.

AFTER

The restoration of peace left huge questions about the direction the reunited nation would take. First and foremost, former Confederate soldiers had to be resettled.

LIVES TO REBUILD

By the **terms offered to Robert E. Lee and his army at Appomattox Court House** soldiers who surrendered were **free to return home** with their horses or mules and, in the case of officers, with their sidearms as well. They carried with them **signed parole passes** that guaranteed them the right to remain undisturbed as long as they kept their paroles and "the laws in force where they reside."

Yet many soldiers returned to find their homesteads ravaged. In addition, the former Confederacy's **transport infrastructure had been badly damaged**, with much of the region's rail network destroyed. A huge task of **national reconstruction lay ahead**.

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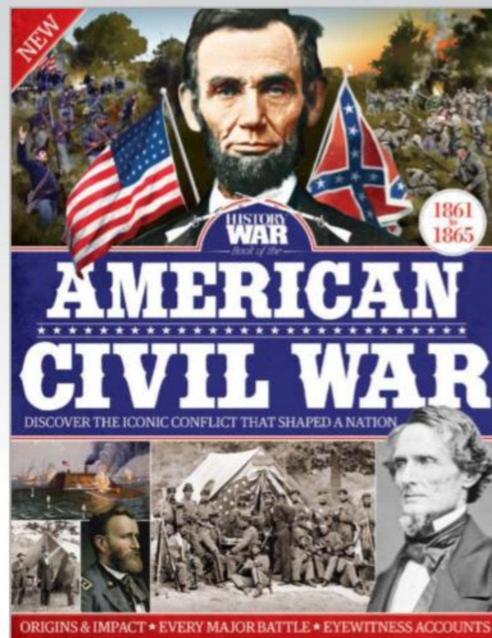

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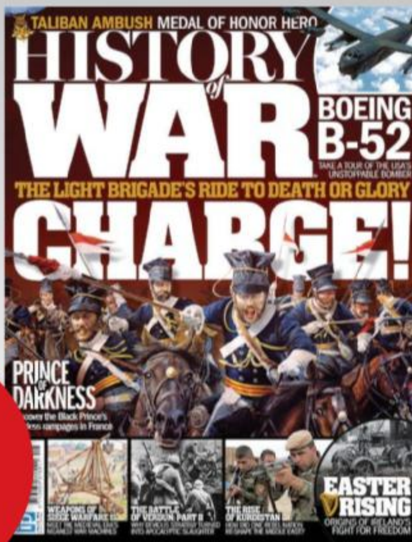

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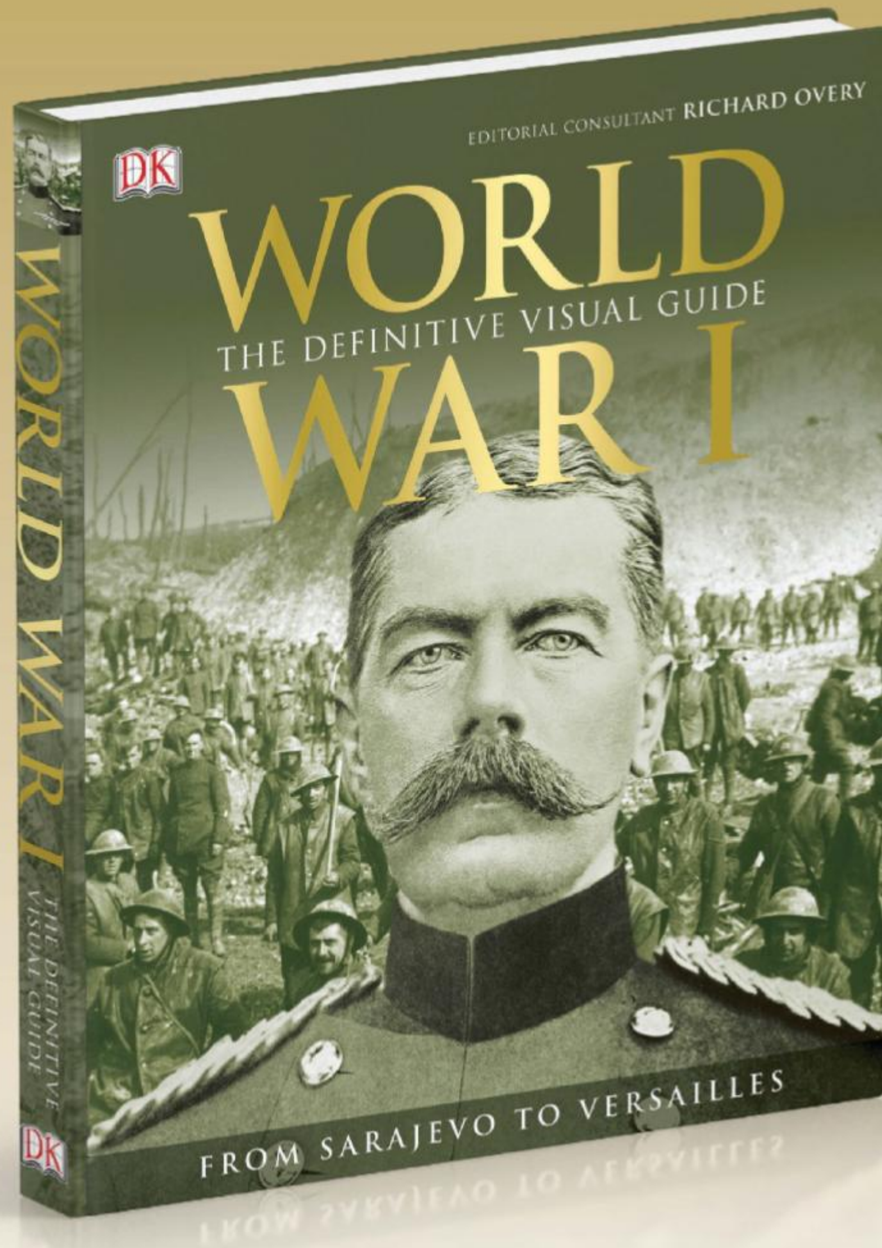

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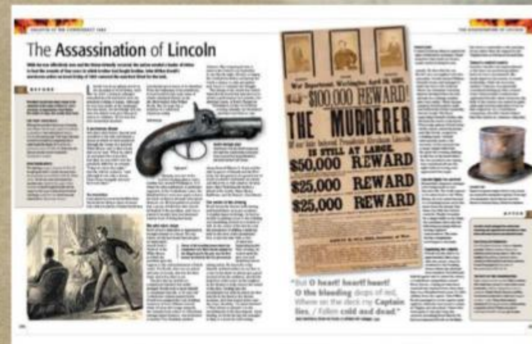

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