

7.3 Gettysburg to Appomattox

Yet none of the Confederate victories was decisive. The Union simply mustered new armies and tried again. Believing that the North's crushing defeat at Chancellorsville gave him his chance, Lee struck northward into Pennsylvania at the beginning of July 1863, almost reaching the state capital at Harrisburg. A strong Union force intercepted him at Gettysburg, where, in a titanic three-day battle—the largest of the Civil War—the Confederates made a valiant effort to break the Union lines. They failed, and on July 4 Lee's army, after crippling losses, retreated behind the Potomac.

1. What is the capital city of Pennsylvania?

- a. Allentown
- b. Gettysburg
- c. Harrisburg
- d. Philadelphia

2. The largest battle of the Civil War was fought where?

More than 3,000 Union soldiers and almost 4,000 Confederates died at

Gettysburg; wounded and missing totaled more than 20,000 on each side. On November 19, 1863, Lincoln dedicated a new national cemetery there with perhaps the most famous address in U.S. history. He concluded his brief remarks with these words:

... we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

3. When did Lincoln deliver the Gettysburg Address?

On the Mississippi, Union control had been blocked at Vicksburg, where the Confederates had strongly fortified themselves on bluffs too high for naval attack. In early 1863 Grant began to move below and around Vicksburg, subjecting it to a six-week siege. On July 4, he captured the town, together with the strongest Confederate Army in the West. The river was now entirely in Union hands. The Confederacy was broken in

two, and it became almost impossible to bring supplies from Texas and Arkansas.

4. What town was captured by Ulysses S. Grant on July 4, 1863?

The Northern victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg in July 1863 marked the turning point of the war, although the bloodshed continued unabated for more than a year-and-a-half.

5. What two battles, fought in July of 1863, were the turning point of the U.S. Civil War?

Lincoln brought Grant east and made him commander-in-chief of all Union forces. In May 1864 Grant advanced deep into Virginia and met Lee's Confederate Army in the three-day Battle of the Wilderness. Losses on both sides were heavy, but unlike other Union commanders, Grant refused to retreat. Instead, he attempted to outflank Lee, stretching the Confederate lines and pounding away with artillery and infantry attacks. "I propose to fight it out along this line if it takes all summer," the Union commander said at

Spotsylvania, during five days of bloody trench warfare that characterized fighting on the eastern front for almost a year.

6. Who was made Commanding General of the U.S. Army in 1864?

7. What type of warfare characterized fighting on the eastern front in 1864?

In the West, Union forces gained control of Tennessee in the fall of 1863 with victories at Chattanooga and nearby Lookout Mountain, opening the way for General William T. Sherman to invade Georgia. Sherman outmaneuvered several smaller Confederate armies, occupied the state capital of Atlanta, then marched to the Atlantic coast, systematically destroying railroads, factories, warehouses, and other facilities in his path. His men, cut off from their normal supply lines, ravaged the countryside for food. From the coast, Sherman marched northward; by February 1865, he had taken Charleston, South Carolina, where the first shots of the Civil War had been fired. Sherman, more than any other Union general, understood that

destroying the will and morale of the South was as important as defeating its armies.

8. Infamously, General Sherman systematically destroyed railroads, factories, warehouses, and other facilities in his path while marching his troops through what Confederate state?

- a. Alabama
- b. Georgia
- c. Mississippi
- d. Texas

9. Why did Sherman use a scorched earth military strategy?

Grant, meanwhile, lay siege to Petersburg, Virginia, for nine months, before Lee, in March 1865, knew that he had to abandon both Petersburg and the Confederate capital of Richmond in an attempt to retreat south. But it was too late. On April 9, 1865, surrounded by huge Union armies, Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Courthouse. Although scattered fighting continued elsewhere for several months, the Civil War was over.

10. Where and when did General Lee surrender to General Grant?

The terms of surrender at Appomattox were magnanimous, and on his return from his meeting with Lee, Grant quieted the noisy demonstrations of his soldiers by reminding them: "The rebels are our countrymen again." The war for Southern independence had become the "lost cause," whose hero, Robert E. Lee, had won wide admiration through the brilliance of his leadership and his greatness in defeat.

11. magnanimous:

- a. closed-minded
- b. considerate
- c. petty
- d. stingy

12. To this day, Robert E. Lee is a respected military leader. Is this praise justified? Why or why not?
