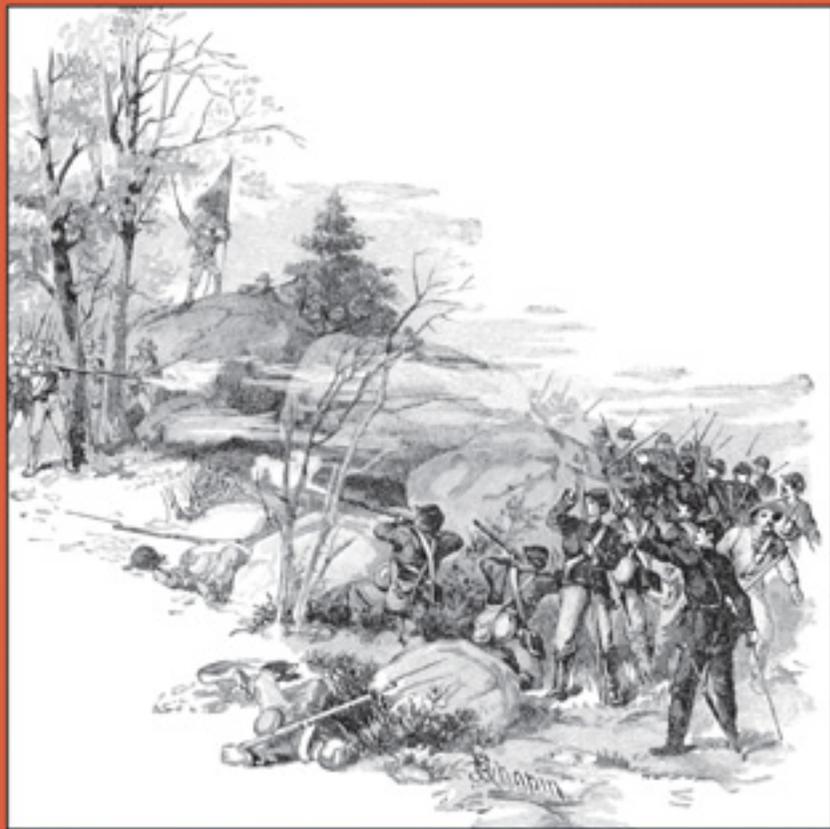


*History*  
UNFOLDING

# GETTYSBURG

## AN HISTORIC TURNING POINT



**MindSparks**  
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	.....	2
<b>Lesson 1</b>	The Road to Gettysburg.....	4
<b>Lesson 2</b>	Lee's Desperate Gamble .....	8
<b>Lesson 3</b>	The Final Horror .....	12
<b>Lesson 4</b>	Gettysburg: A Turning Point.....	16
<b>Appendix</b>	Image Close-ups .....	21

# Introduction

## Gettysburg and the Civil War

In one sense, this booklet is about a turning point within a larger turning point. That larger event, the Civil War itself, transformed the nation. For four years, it divided states, communities, even families. It dominated every aspect of life. And its impact was felt for decades. In fact, we still live in its aftermath.

Within that great conflict, several key moments could be considered key “turning points,” at least in terms of the war itself—the Battle of Antietam, the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation, the fall of Atlanta, etc. Yet in comparison to these events, the Battle of Gettysburg still stands out. It was the most daring attempt the South would make to force the Union to compromise and accept Southern independence. It followed the great Confederate victory at Chancellorsville. With frustration in the North building, President Lincoln could not be sure people there were fully committed to his goals of preserving of the Union and ending slavery. A decisive victory on Northern soil might have generated panic within the Union and convinced Great Britain to side with the Confederacy. History could well have taken a different turn had events gone Lee’s way as his men approached Gettysburg on the morning of July 1, 1863.

It is difficult to tell the story of this enormous battle clearly with just twelve illustrations. But the twelve we have chosen highlight, in chronological order, most of the key moments before, during, and after the battle. The illustrations are presented in four lessons. Each lesson uses three of the illustrations to explore one broad topic in the overall story. Briefly, the four lessons are as follows:

### **The Road to Gettysburg**

The illustration in this lesson set the Battle of Gettysburg in context and call attention to the overall strategy behind Lee’s decision to invade the North.

### **Lee’s Desperate Gamble**

The first day of battle left the two sides facing each other across two ridges south of the town. Lee hoped to attack both Union flanks, to the south and north, thereby squeezing its line together and forcing a surrender. It might well have worked. But for a variety of reasons, it failed.

### **The Final Horror**

On the final day, Lee ordered one last attack, this one directly into the center of the Union line. The result was “Pickett’s Charge,” one of the most desperate, deadly, and heroic moments of the war. The Union line again held. The Battle of Gettysburg was over.

### **Gettysburg: A Turning Point**

Lee’s successful retreat to Virginia allowed his army to fight again. But his chance for a decisive breakthrough had passed. The illustrations here focus on the outcome of the battle and the impact of Lincoln’s famous Address commemorating it.

## Using Photos, Cartoons, and Other Visuals to Teach History

Many textbooks are full of colorful visuals. However, all too often these visuals function primarily as window dressing. They make the text more entertaining, or at least more palatable. Only occasionally do the visuals in textbooks do more than offer simple pictorial reinforcement of ideas already presented in the text. In many cases, they pander to the visual orientation of the young while doing little to help young people master the challenges of the visual media that dominate their lives.

By way of contrast, our approach to using visual materials emphasizes their unique strengths as historical documents. The lessons in this booklet focus students on the visual symbols and metaphors in editorial cartoons, the dramatic qualities of certain photographs, the potential of many images to make abstract ideas more specific and concrete, the implicit biases and stereotypes in certain images, their emotional power, and their ability to invoke the spirit of a time and place. In the process, we make every effort to strengthen students' visual literacy skills in general, as well as their ability to think critically and engage in spirited but disciplined discussions.

## How to Use This Booklet

The booklet is divided into four lessons, with three illustrations per lesson. Each lesson consists of the following:

**A BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET** This page provides brief summaries explaining the three illustrations on which the lesson is based and their relevance to the lesson's objectives.

**DIGITAL IMAGES** The booklet's PDF allows you to project the images for use in your class discussions.

### **DISCUSSION-ACTIVITY SHEETS**

Each sheet displays one illustration. It includes a sequence of questions to help you plan an all-class discussion while using the projected images. The questions take students step by step through an analysis of the illustration. If you wish, you may reproduce these pages and hand them out. In addition to the discussion questions on the illustration itself, one or two follow-up activities are suggested. Some of these can be made into individual assignments. Others will work best as small-group or all-class activities.

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**OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will better understand the South's overall objectives in planning to invade and fight in the North in 1863.
  2. Students will understand how Lee planned to fight and win the Battle of Gettysburg.
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# The Road to Gettysburg

## *“Brave Men, Living and Dead”*

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*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION****Illustration 1**

The Battle of Gettysburg began on July 1, 1863. By then, the Civil War was already two years old. Southern soldiers had often out-fought the North. Yet the South's Confederacy was at a big disadvantage from the start. It had fewer people than the North. And it was much poorer. It is true that Confederate troops were brave and determined. But they were also ill-fed and ill-clothed. In this illustration, some of them have removed their shoes and pants to ford a stream. Shoes especially were closely guarded. At times, some soldiers had to go without them. Scenes such as this must have been common in June of 1863 as the South's Army of Northern Virginia headed north toward Pennsylvania.

**Illustration 2**

As he led his army North, Confederate General Robert E. Lee had several goals. His army was short of supplies. He hoped to resupply and live off the rich, fertile Pennsylvania farmland for a time. He also hoped to lure the Union's Army of the Potomac into a decisive battle. A big victory in the North might convince Great Britain to aid the Confederates. And it might further divide Northern public opinion. For by then, many Northerners longed for a quick settlement of the war. This Northern editorial cartoon shows that people in that region were not all united behind President Abraham Lincoln. The cartoon mocks Lincoln, picturing him as telling jokes while the Union's brave soldiers were fighting and dying.

**Illustration 3**

By late June, Lee's forces were north and northwest of Gettysburg. Lee is on the left here. When he learned that the Army of the Potomac was after him, he turned back southward toward Gettysburg. Meanwhile, Union forces, under General George G. Meade, on the right, were moving north toward the town. The map shows key points on the Gettysburg battlefield. Fighting started northwest of the town on July 1. Union troops were soon forced back through the town, up Culp's Hill, and down along Cemetery Ridge. The next day, General Lee decided to attack the Union from the north and from across the Emmitsburg Road. He spread his troops down along Seminary Ridge west of that road. On July 2 and 3, the battles in the Peach Orchard, the Devil's Den, Culp's Hill and elsewhere, would be among the bloodiest of the entire Civil War.

## Lesson 1 – The Road to Gettysburg

# Illustration 1



From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3. (Century Company, New York, 1884)

### Discussing the Illustration

1. This scene shows Confederate soldiers on a journey north in the summer of 1863. Why were the soldiers of the South called “Confederates?”
2. As you can see, the Confederates are taking off their shoes as they prepare to cross a stream. Why do you suppose they were so worried about keeping their shoes in good condition?
3. Several different armies made up the forces of both the North and the South during the Civil War. The soldiers you see here on their way north in June of 1863 were part of the South’s most important army. Can you name that army? And can you name the general in charge of it?
4. By late June, the Army of Northern Virginia was on its way from Virginia to Maryland and across that state’s border into Pennsylvania. In other words, it was making its way into Northern territory. From what you know about the Civil War, why do you think Lee decided to take his troops north in June of 1863?

### Follow-up Activities

1. In the spring of 1863, General Robert E. Lee, with key help from “Stonewall” Jackson, achieved a major military success against the North at the battle of Chancellorsville. Read more about this battle. Now, prepare a report to President Abraham Lincoln on it. Describe the South’s success at Chancellorsville, and explain why it might lead General Lee to think he could succeed at whatever he had planned as he headed north into Maryland and Pennsylvania.
2. Pretend you are a Confederate soldier in the above drawing. You recently fought at Chancellorsville. Now you’re headed North, though you’re not sure where or why. Read more about Chancellorsville. Now, write a long letter home, perhaps to your parents, perhaps to your wife or a sister or brother. In the letter, explain your thoughts and hopes for the near future. Also, talk about ordinary events, such as eating, sleeping, passing the time, talking with your fellow soldiers, etc.

## Lesson 1—The Road to Gettysburg

# Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

### Discussing the Illustration

1. This editorial cartoon from the time of the Civil War comments on the man who led the the Northern states through the Civil War. From the cartoon and from your knowledge of history, can you name him?
2. As you can see, the cartoonist uses a famous figure as a symbol. Can you identify this famous figure.
3. Here Columbia stands for the Union—that is, the Northern states fighting in the Civil War. She is shown begging President Lincoln to end the war and bring “her” sons home. What point does this seem to make about Northern attitudes toward the Civil War? By 1863, do you think many Northerners actually felt as Columbia does here? Why or why not?
4. Mr. Lincoln was known to enjoy telling funny stories and jokes. And he is about to do that here. What point do you think this is meant to make about Lincoln? Do you agree with the point? Why or why not?
5. What do you suppose General Lee would have felt about this cartoon?

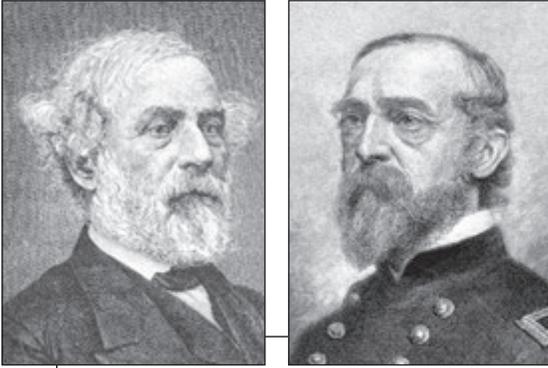
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### Follow-up Activities

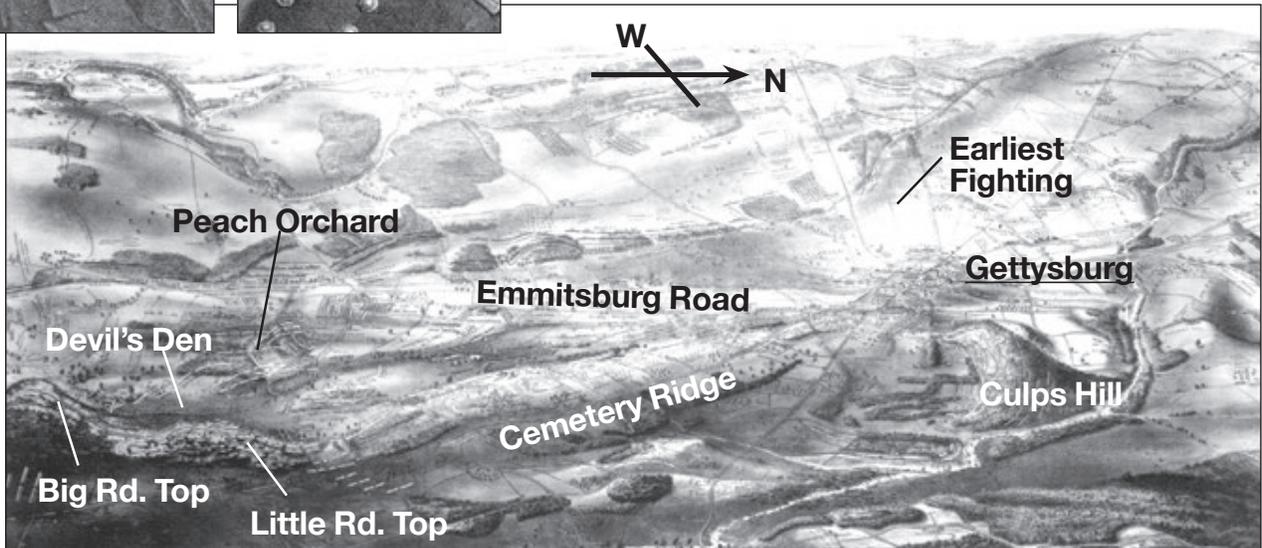
1. **Small-group activity:** Collect and photocopy ten cartoons on Abraham Lincoln from the Civil War era. Ask your teacher or librarian for help. A good source is *The Glorious Burden: The American Presidency*, by Stefan Lorant (Authors Edition, Inc., Lenox, Mass., 1976). Choose favorable and unfavorable cartoons. Make a bulletin board display called “Lincoln and the Divided North.” Next to each cartoon, give its date and write a paragraph or two explaining it.
2. Opposition to the Civil War was spreading in the North in 1863, especially among the so-called “Peace Democrats”—many of whom were against fighting a war to free the slaves. Just after the Battle of Gettysburg, for example, riots broke out in New York City. The rioters were angry about the draft, which had recently gone into effect. Read more about the draft riots in mid-July of 1863. Then prepare a report explaining what the riots tell us about the political problems Abraham Lincoln faced.

## Lesson 1 – The Road to Gettysburg

# Illustration 3



From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3 (Century Company, New York, 1884)



Courtesy of Library of Congress

### Discussing the Illustrations

1. The map here shows some of the key points on the Gettysburg Battlefield. Above the map are the generals in charge of the two armies that clashed at Gettysburg. Can you name them?
2. The first day of fighting took place northwest and north of Gettysburg. But after that, Confederate and Union forces faced each other along two ridges south of the town. From the map, and from what you know about the Battle of Gettysburg, along which ridge were Union forces massed?
3. On the second day of the battle, the South's forces were strung along Seminary Ridge running just west of the Emmitsburg Road. From there, they faced the Union troops along Cemetery Ridge. Some Southern officers especially wanted to capture two small hills, Little Round Top and Big Round Top. From the map, can you guess why the officers thought those hills would be crucial? Do you agree that capturing those hills should have been the main objective for the Confederates? Why or why not?

### Follow-up Activities

1. Just before the Battle of Gettysburg, President Lincoln put George G. Meade in charge of the Army of the Potomac. Meade replaced General Joseph Hooker. What led Lincoln to replace Hooker? Read more about this. From your research, prepare a talk to give in the class explaining Meade's strengths and weaknesses at Gettysburg. Did Lincoln make the right choice in putting Meade in charge?
2. Robert E. Lee was beloved by his troops, as well as by most Southerners. He was even admired by many in the North. Why? Read a biography of Lee. Pretend you are one of the soldiers with him in Pennsylvania in late June of 1863. Some members of your family wrote to you earlier asking about General Lee. It is evening. Write a long letter home describing Lee, your adventures serving with him, and your overall view of his leadership. Keep in mind, the Battle of Gettysburg has not yet begun, but there are signs that a battle of some sort is about to begin.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will better understand the overall course of the fighting on the first two days of the Battle of Gettysburg.
2. Students will better appreciate the dangers and challenges of fighting in Civil War battles.

# Lee's Desperate Gamble

*“We Have Met on a Great Battlefield”*

*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION****Illustration 1**

The Battle of Gettysburg actually started over shoes. Some Confederates were searching for a supply of shoes rumored to be in Gettysburg when they encountered General John Buford's Union cavalry division there. A bitter fight took place, bringing reinforcements for both sides running. This drawing shows General Buford's cavalry holding off Confederate troops at Willoughby Run. The arrival of more of Lee's troops forced the Union to retreat late in the day. Union forces scattered through Gettysburg and out the southern end of town. They took positions on the high ground of Culp's Hill, Cemetery Hill, and Cemetery Ridge. The fighting that day was fierce. But compared with what was to come, it was just a skirmish.

**Illustration 2**

On July 2, about 65,000 Confederate troops faced about 85,000 Union troops at Gettysburg. The Union forces on Cemetery Ridge were lined along the top of the ridge—except for troops led by General Daniel E. Sickles, shown in the upper right here. Sickles was supposed to defend the southern part of Cemetery Ridge near two hills, Big and Little Round Top. Instead, he moved west into the more open area of the Peach Orchard. This painting shows his men preparing to hold off a Confederate charge there. In the Civil War, defending troops often had the advantage. But this time, after many fierce back-and-forth clashes, the Confederates broke through and pushed Sickles' men back to Cemetery Ridge.

**Illustration 3**

Lee planned to start his attack on July 2 at the southern end of his line moving through the Peach Orchard to Little Round Top. Had the South taken this hill, it might have then been able to box in Union troops all along Cemetery Ridge and force a surrender. But General James Longstreet took too long to move his Confederates into position. As a result, fighting started late in the day. Bloody clashes took place in a boulder-strewn area near Little Round Top called Devil's Den. The drawing on the left shows how close in and confusing this fighting was. In the upper right, a Union general is shown on the summit of Little Round Top at a signal station (note the flag). The South's late start that day was a big blunder. After many clashes, the Union line held along Cemetery Ridge. By the end of July 2, Lee's desperate gamble had still not succeeded.

## Lesson 2—Lee’s Desperate Gamble

# Illustration 1



From Warren Lee Goss, *Recollections of a Private: A Story of the Army of the Potomac* (Thomas Y. Crowell, New York, 1890)

### Discussing the Illustration

1. The soldiers you see here are part of General John Buford’s Federal cavalry division, the first Union troops to get to Gettysburg. From which direction that day did the Union troops come? Likewise, from which direction did the Confederate troops come? Which side can be said to have “won” the first day’s battle?
2. What advantages or disadvantages do you think cavalry soldiers had in Civil War battles like this?
3. Given what you know about Civil War weapons and tactics, what advantages do you think these soldiers would have had over the attackers in the fight as it is shown in this drawing?
4. Would you have preferred being in the cavalry instead of being a foot soldier in the Civil War? Why or why not?

### Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** Have each member of your group read more about the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg and about one of the following Union soldiers involved in it:

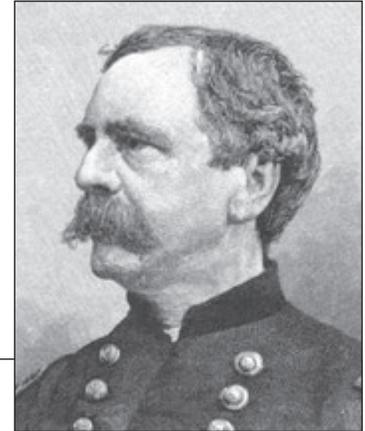
George G. Meade  
John Buford  
Abner Doubleday  
Winfield Scott Hancock

Pretend it is the night of July 1. In character, write a diary entry describing the action you saw that day. Also include your view of what the North should do next. Share your thoughts in a planning session in front of the rest of the class.

2. **Small-group activity:** Pretend television existed in 1863. Your group is a TV news team sent to Gettysburg to report on the first day’s fighting. Have group members take roles as the news anchor and other reporters. Present a report to the class on the first day of the battle.

## Lesson 2—Lee’s Desperate Gamble

# Illustration 2



From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3 (Century Company, New York, 1884)



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

### Discussing the Illustrations

1. This painting shows Union troops under General Daniel Sickles on July 2 near the Peach Orchard, an area west of Cemetery Ridge and much closer to the South’s forces. The drawing in the upper right is of Sickles. Sickles disobeyed orders by moving to the Peach Orchard. He did so because he felt Cemetery Ridge was not high enough in his area. Why might he have worried about the low height of the ridge?
2. Why do you think Sickles saw the Peach Orchard as easier to defend than Cemetery Ridge that day?
3. Many have criticized Sickles for moving out in front of the rest of the Union line. Can you guess why? From what you know of the battle, can you describe what happened to Sickles’ forces on July 2?
4. The Confederate attack opened up with an artillery barrage. Why do you think Civil War attacks often began in that way? Would you rather have been the attackers or the defenders in this scene? Explain your answer.

### Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** It is 20 years after Gettysburg, and General Sickles’ tactics on July 2 are still being hotly debated. Each member of your group should assume the role of one of the following:

Daniel Sickles  
Winfield Scott Hancock  
George Meade  
Union soldiers under Sickles (as many as needed for each group member to have a role)

In character, group members should write one letter each to another group member on the fighting in the Peach Orchard. They should also write one reply each to any letters they get. Arrange the letters in a bulletin board display, along with scenes of the Battle of Gettysburg, drawings or photos of Sickles, Meade and Hancock, and a detailed map of the Peach Orchard area of the battlefield.

2. Research and write a report on one other Gettysburg fight on July 2—for example, the fighting on Culp’s Hill and Cemetery Hill.

## Lesson 2—Lee's Desperate Gamble

# Illustration 3



From Warren Lee Goss, *Recollections of a Private: A Story of the Army of the Potomac* (Thomas Y. Crowell, New York, 1890)



From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3 (Century Company, New York, 1884)

### Discussing the Illustrations

1. The scene on the left is an area called Devil's Den, near the Peach Orchard. The fighting there on July 2 was especially brutal. From the illustration, can you guess why?
2. On July 2, the Confederate attack at the southern end of the line—into the Peach Orchard, Devil's Den, and near Little Round Top—got started late. Why? Why was this late start important?
3. Devil's Den is near the foot of Little Round Top. The drawing in the upper right here shows Union General G. K. Warren at the signal station on the summit of Little Round Top. Confederate General John Bell Hood especially hoped to capture that hill. Suppose the Confederates had captured Little Round Top on July 2. How do you think that would have affected the Battle of Gettysburg? Why?

### Follow-up Activities

1. "We will attack the enemy in the morning, as early as is practicable." These were the words of General Lee at the end of July 1, the first day of fighting. But the next day, the first battles across Emmitsburg Road into the Peach Orchard didn't begin until late in the afternoon, around 4 o'clock. Why did this happen? General Lee wants to know. It is your job to explain it to him. Write a message to him, but be brief—he has to decide what to do next.
2. You are a Confederate officer who fought with your men that day in Devil's Den. You now have to write a letter to the family of one of your men who was killed. First do some background reading on the fighting in Devil's Den. Also, many books are available with letters written by Civil War soldiers and officers. Your teacher or librarian should be able to help you find some. Now write your letter.

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**OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will understand the course of the final day's fighting in the Battle of Gettysburg.
  2. Students will better appreciate the tremendous sacrifices men made on this final day of the battle.
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# The Final Horror

## *“The Last Full Measure of Devotion”*

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*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION****Illustration 1**

By July 3, Lee still did not have the decisive victory he needed. On July 2, the Confederates had attacked the Union flanks—that is, the ends of the Union line at Culp’s Hill to the north and Little Round Top to the south. This time, Lee would aim directly at the Union’s center, along Cemetery Ridge. This drawing shows the battlefield on July 3, looking from the Union forces on Cemetery Ridge to the South’s troops across the Emmitsburg Road. A tremendous barrage from more than one hundred Confederate cannons preceded the attack for two hours. This was meant to cause as much damage as possible before the main attack.

**Illustration 2**

After the artillery barrage, Lee expected General Longstreet to begin the charge. Longstreet had doubts about Lee’s strategy. But, like many others, he had too much respect for Lee to challenge him forcefully. General George E. Pickett’s division was to lead the final charge. At about 2:00 p.m., in 90-degree heat, Pickett asked Longstreet if his men should prepare to charge. The scene is pictured here. Longstreet was sure the attack was a terrible mistake. Burdened with doubt, he only nodded to Pickett. As with many Civil War commanders, Pickett led his men personally and with great courage. He survived, but others did not. On that day, some 15 Southern regimental commanders would be killed, as would 16 of 17 field officers, three brigade generals and eight colonels.

**Illustration 3**

Pickett’s division of 6,000 was fresh, having been held in reserve at earlier battles. At around 3:00 p.m., that division and two others left the woods. Some 13,000 men in all crossed an open field, heading toward Cemetery Ridge and a stone wall a mile-and-a-half away. Suddenly, Union artillery on Little Round Top and Cemetery Ridge opened up with a murderous fire. The Union line held against the Confederate onslaught. Less than an hour after they started, more than half of those who had stepped out of the woods had fallen. The survivors were in full retreat. Pickett’s Charge had failed. The Battle of Gettysburg was over. Pickett lost 3,000 of his men that day. When told by General Lee to gather his division to repel a possible Union counterattack, Pickett is said to have answered, simply, “General Lee, I have no division now.”

## Lesson 3—The Final Horror

# Illustration 1



From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3 (Century Company, New York, 1884)

### Discussing the Illustration

1. This scene shows the start of the final day of battle on July 3. It is from the Union side looking to the west. What road would these Union soldiers have been looking toward just beyond the fields closest to them?
2. As you can see, there are white puffs of smoke rising all along the other side of Emmitsburg Road. The Confederate charge had not yet begun at this point. What was causing all these white puffs of smoke?
3. This cannon barrage lasted about two hours. From what you know about the battle on July 3, was this cannon barrage a success? Why or why not?
4. Civil War historian Shelby Foote described the final charge on July 3 as, “a terrible mistake, a desperate endeavor.” Do you agree? Why or why not? In thinking about your answer, try to put yourself in General Lee’s shoes. Why would he have thought the charge could be successful?

### Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** Learn more about the uses of artillery in the Civil War. Find photos and illustrations of various kinds of artillery weapons used in the war. Then create a bulletin board display as if the display is to be included in a Civil War museum. Write captions for each illustration. The captions should describe the weapons. But in addition, they should explain how each weapon was meant to be used in the Civil War.
2. Imagine you are a war correspondent for a big city newspaper in the North. You are behind the Union lines at Gettysburg with this scene before you. Write a dispatch back to your newspaper, explaining what is happening at this moment. Also, discuss what has already occurred on the previous two days and what this coming day’s battle is likely to mean for the North. Remember, you don’t know how the battle will turn out. Now, try writing the same article as if you are over on the Confederate side and are a reporter for a newspaper in the South.

## Lesson 3—The Final Horror

# Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

### **Discussing the Illustration**

1. This is an artist's idea of what took place at Gettysburg just before the final, dramatic charge on July 3. The man on the left in front is the general whom Lee put in charge of all forces at the southern end of the Confederate line. Can you name him?
2. In this scene, General Longstreet is ordering another general to lead his division into battle in what would be turn out to be the final charge at Gettysburg. This other general's name has always been connected to that famous charge. Can you name him?
3. General Pickett survived "Pickett's Charge." But many top commanders at Gettysburg, as well as in many other Civil War battles, did not survive. Why do you think this was so?
4. What character traits do you think made for a good commanding officer under the battlefield conditions at Gettysburg? Do you think these same traits are as necessary for commanding officers in the military today? Why or why not?

### **Follow-up Activities**

1. **Small-group activity:** Create a bulletin board display called "Gettysburg Commanders: Leadership Under Fire." Learn more about six to eight top officers (not Lee or Meade) who took part in the fighting at the Battle of Gettysburg. Include an equal number from both sides. Get photos or drawings of these men and any other illustrations, diary entries, letters, etc., that pertain to them. Write accounts of their lives and their careers in the Civil War. Pay special attention to the role each one played at Gettysburg.
2. Ask your librarian or teacher to help you find out more about General James Longstreet. If possible, read his own account of the Battle of Gettysburg. Prepare of brief talk to the class about him, his differences with Lee, and his later views about Gettysburg.

## Lesson 3—The Final Horror

# Illustration 3



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

### **Discussing the Illustration**

1. This is an artist's idea of what Pickett's Charge on July 3 looked like. Actually, this scene would have been at the very end of the charge. Can you explain why this must be so?
2. Based on what you have read, how much of Pickett's Charge do you know about, starting with Longstreet's order to Pickett to take his men into battle? Describe as much of the charge as you can.
3. In Pickett's Charge, thousands of men were killed or wounded. In the heat of battles like this, some men stand and fight to the bitter end, while others break and run at some point. What do you think explains the difference between these two groups of soldiers? Does it have to do with differences in their character? Or does it simply have to do with specific events that occur during the battle? Explain your answers.

### **Follow-up Activities**

1. What must it have been like to be under heavy fire as the men in this drawing were? Stephen Crane dealt with this in his book *The Red Badge of Courage*. Read this book. Pay close attention to the scenes in which certain men under fire turn and run while others do not. Choose three brief passages from the book that seem to show best how Crane explains these differences in behavior under fire. Discuss the passages you chose with the rest of the class.
2. **Small-group activity:** Look through as many books on the Civil War or the Battle of Gettysburg as you can find. Make photocopies of at least five artist's depictions of Pickett's Charge. Use these in a bulletin board display. But as a group, also rank the pictures from most to least dramatic and most to least realistic. Show your group's rankings in the display. Discuss the illustrations and the rankings with the rest of the class. Does the rest of the class agree with your rankings?

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will better understand why the Battle of Gettysburg was a turning point in the Civil War.
2. Students will discuss the impact of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address on the course of the war.

# Gettysburg: A Turning Point

## *"A New Birth of Freedom"*

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*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION****Illustration 1**

Pickett's Charge failed. And with it, Lee's hope of a decisive strike against the Union was gone. Faced with this fact, General Lee now had to save his army and get it back to Virginia to fight another day. On July 4, in a steady rain, Lee began an exhausting 10-day retreat. Lee's wagon train, shown here, stretched more than 17 miles. Meanwhile, Lincoln urged Meade to go after Lee and deliver a deathblow to his army. At first, Meade waited, claiming that his army was too tired and needed time to regroup. Lincoln was furious. Eventually, Meade did go after Lee. But he was too late. Lee's army lived to fight another day.

**Illustration 2**

The full horror of the Battle of Gettysburg is made clear in this gruesome image. The photo was captioned "Harvest of Death." Gettysburg was indeed a "Harvest of Death." Total casualties were about 23,000 for the North and 28,000 for the South. This was an especially huge disaster for the South, since these numbers amounted to 40 percent of Lee's force. Gettysburg was a turning point. The war would go on for almost two more years. But the South would never again have as good a chance to turn the tide. It would always be on the defensive. Lincoln soon began to look for yet another new commander for the Army of the Potomac. He wanted a general who would not rest until he had destroyed Lee's army. In time, he would find just the right man—Ulysses S. Grant.

**Illustration 3**

On November 19, 1863, President Lincoln traveled to Gettysburg to dedicate a battle cemetery. He spoke for only two minutes. But his words have stirred Americans ever since. He noted how young the republic still was, though it was now fighting for its life. Speaking of those killed at Gettysburg, he asked the nation to work harder for "that cause for which they here gave their last full measure of devotion." And what was that cause? "That this nation 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." With this short speech, Lincoln further united the North in a struggle both to save the Union and to end slavery. The Gettysburg Address, therefore, helped make the Battle of Gettysburg a turning point not simply in a war but in our nation's entire history.

## Lesson 4—Gettysburg: A Turning Point

# Illustration 1



From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3 (Century Company, New York, 1884)

### Discussing the Illustration

1. With Pickett's charge, Lee's desperate gamble ended in failure. This drawing is of Confederate soldiers the next day. What are they doing? What do you suppose they are thinking and feeling?
2. After word came of the Union victory at Gettysburg, President Lincoln was pleased. But he did not remain happy for very long. That's because these Southern soldiers actually succeeded in what they are doing here. Can you explain?
3. Lincoln urged Meade to chase Lee's forces and destroy his army. But Meade hesitated to act. In your opinion, should Meade have tried harder to stop Lee's retreat? Why or why not?
4. In what ways, if any, would the Civil War have turned out differently had Meade been able to stop Lee's retreat?

### Follow-up Activities

1. Read more about the days following the Battle of Gettysburg and Lee's escape back to Virginia. You are one of the men in this convoy. Write several diary entries for these days, from the end of the Battle of Gettysburg until Lee's forces are safely back across the Potomac and in Virginia.
2. Put yourself in the places of General Meade and Abraham Lincoln. As Lincoln, write a letter to General Meade urging him to go after the retreating Lee and deal his army a final deathblow. In the letter, discuss the Battle of Gettysburg's place in the overall course of the war, the effect that capturing Lee's army might have, your political concerns at the time, etc. Then take the role of General Meade. Answer President Lincoln's letter. You should be respectful in tone. But you obviously feel strongly that such a pursuit of Lee at this time is unwise. Why? Explain your reasoning to the President.

## Lesson 4—Gettysburg: A Turning Point

# Illustration 2



The National Archives

### Discussing the Illustration

1. About 23,000 Northerners and 28,000 Southerners were killed, wounded, or missing at the Battle of Gettysburg. Civil War photos like this are all too common. More Americans died in the Civil War than in any other war the United States has fought in, before or since. Why do you think the Civil War was so destructive?
2. Many historians say Gettysburg was a major turning point in the fighting of the Civil War. Are they right? And if so, was it worth the sacrifice of thousands of men like these to achieve that turning point? Explain your answers.
3. The poet Walt Whitman wrote, “Future years will never know the seething hell and the black infernal background, the countless minor scenes and interiors of the secession war; and it is best they should not. The real war will never get in the books.” Is Whitman correct that we don’t know what the “real” Civil War was like? And is he correct when he says it is “best” that we not know this? Why or why not?

### Follow-up Activities

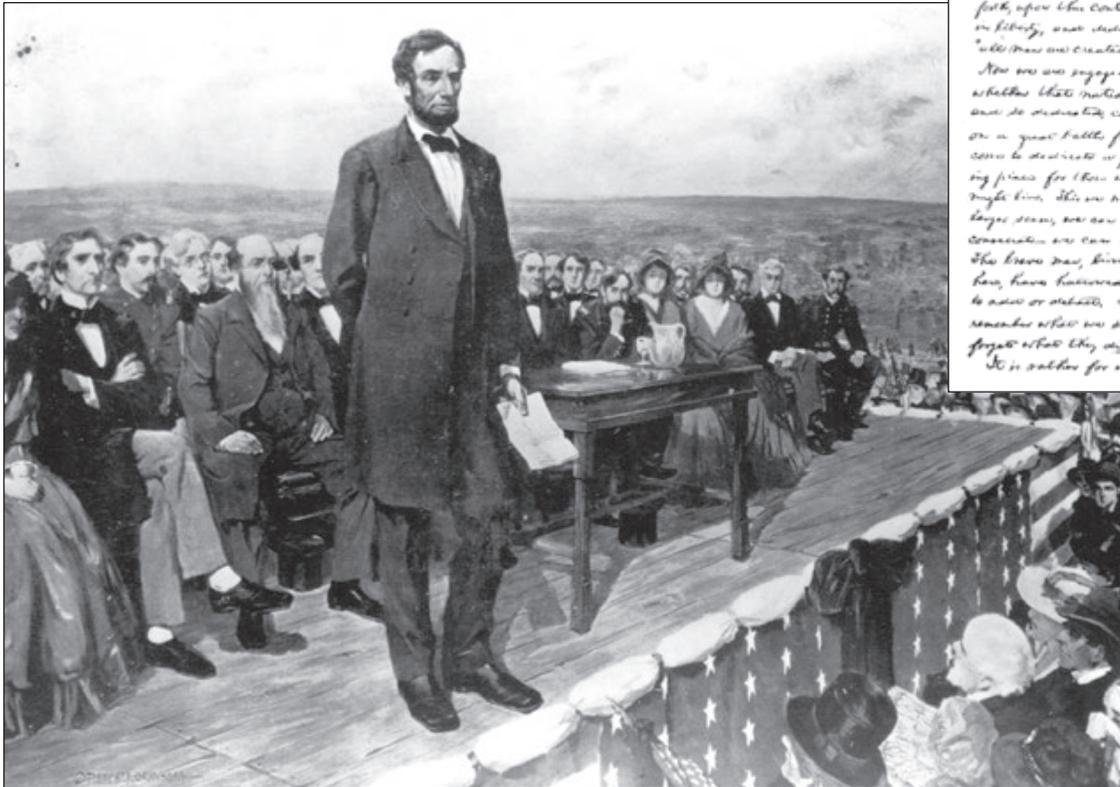
1. Some people say gruesome or upsetting photos like this one should not be shown to young people, even for educational reasons. Do you agree or disagree? Why? In other words, what value, if any, is there in seeing such photographs? Give your answer in the form of a two-page essay. Be sure to back up your answer with sound, logical reasoning.
2. In public television’s documentary *The Civil War*, historian Shelby Foote says:

*Any understanding of this nation has to be based, and I mean really based, on an understanding of the Civil War. . . . The Civil War defined us as what we are and it opened us to being what we became. . . . It was the crossroads of our being, and it was a hell of a crossroads: the suffering, the enormous tragedy of the whole thing.*

As a class, discuss this statement. What do you think Foote means when he says the Civil War “defined us” and that it was the “crossroads of our being”?

## Lesson 4—Gettysburg: A Turning Point

# Illustration 3



Courtesy of Library of Congress

### Executive Mansion,

Belton

Two and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that "all men are created equal."

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it, as a final resting place for those who here have given the noblest lives. It is for us the proper occasion to dedicate a larger section, we can not dedicate, we can not consecrate, we can not hallow, the ground the brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have hallowed it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, while it can never forget what they did here.

It is rather for us, the living, to dedicate

### Discussing the Illustrations

1. The main illustration here is a drawing of a famous moment that took place at Gettysburg on November 19, 1863, more than four months after the actual battle there. What is going on in this drawing?
2. President Lincoln's speech that day is called the Gettysburg Address. His copy of it is shown in the upper right. Only 269 words in length, it is one of the most famous speeches in American history. Why do you think the Gettysburg Address has come to be seen as such an important part of the story of the Civil War?
3. Many American students used to have to memorize the Gettysburg Address. Some still do today. Do you think this is a good idea? How much of the Address do you know? Can you recite any phrases from it? If so, which ones? Which phrases in the speech do you think are most important? Why?

### Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** Lincoln was actually not the main speaker at Gettysburg on November 19, 1863. A well-known orator named Edward Everett was. He spoke for more than two hours. He later wrote: "Dear Mr. President. I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes." Find the text of Everett's speech. As a group, read parts of it and discuss them along with Lincoln's speech. Choose three passages from Everett's speech that help explain why it did not become as famous as Lincoln's. Share these passages with the rest of the class.
2. In the Gettysburg Address, President Lincoln said, "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here . . ." As brilliant as his speech was, Lincoln was quite wrong about this. The Gettysburg Address often seems to be better known than the battle itself. Do you agree that this is so? And which do you think should be better known, the Address or the battle itself? Write a brief essay explaining your thoughts.



# **Image Close-ups**



# The Road to Gettysburg Illustration 1



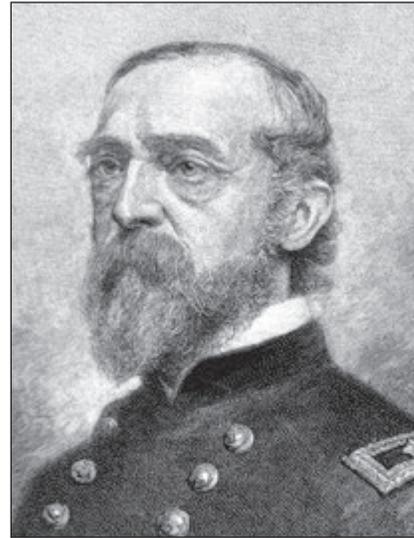
From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3 (Century Company, New York, 1884)

# The Road to Gettysburg Illustration 2

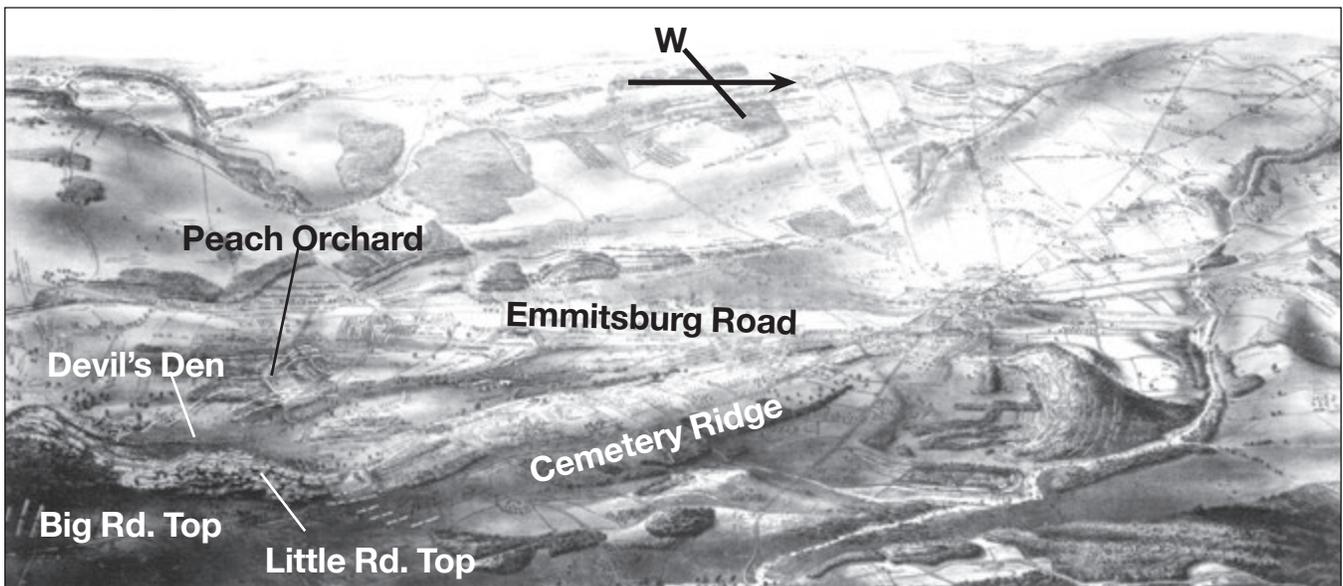


Courtesy of the Library of Congress

# The Road to Gettysburg Illustration 3



From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3 (Century Company, New York, 1884)



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

## Lee's Desperate Gamble

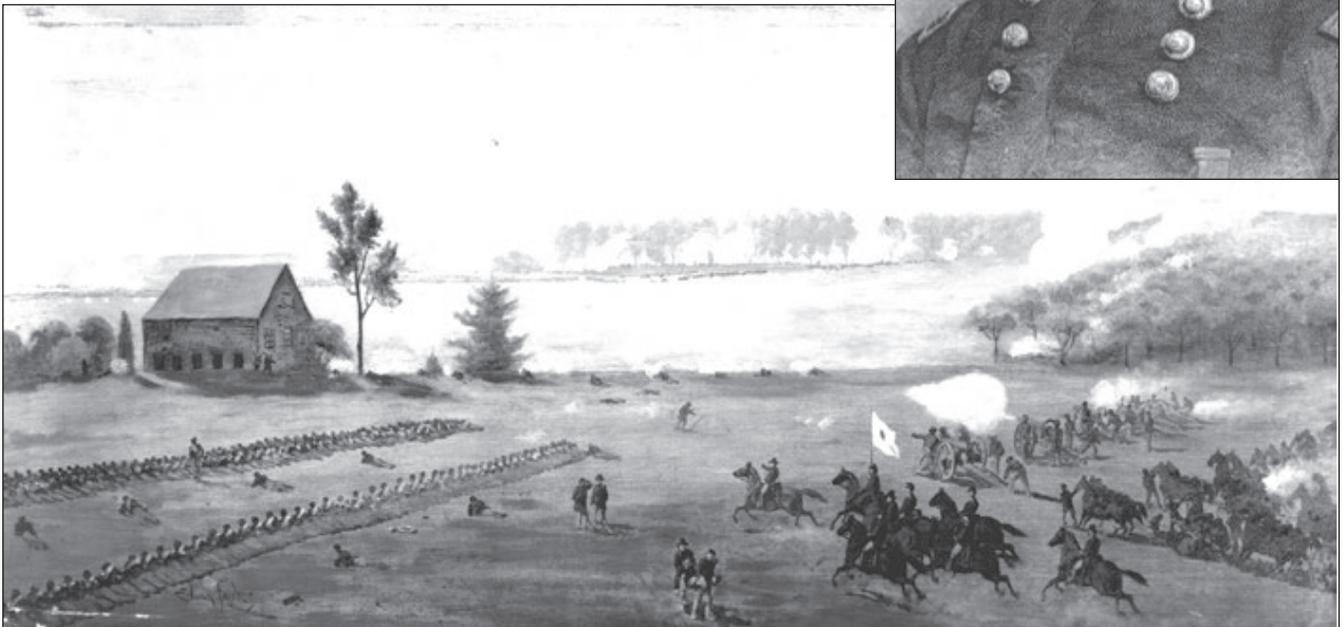
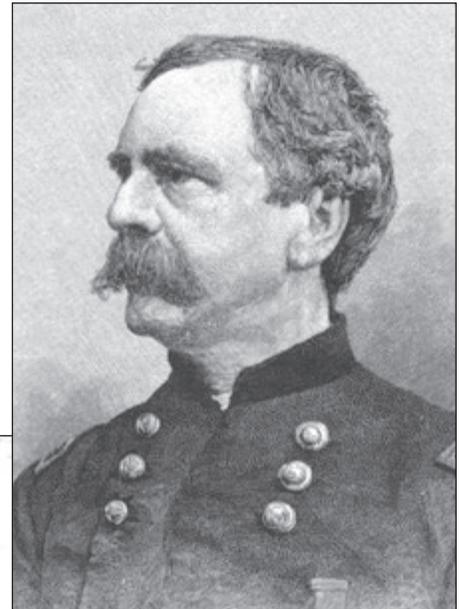
# Illustration 1



From Warren Lee Goss, *Recollections of a Private: A Story of the Army of the Potomac* (Thomas Y. Crowell, New York, 1890)

# Lee's Desperate Gamble Illustration 2

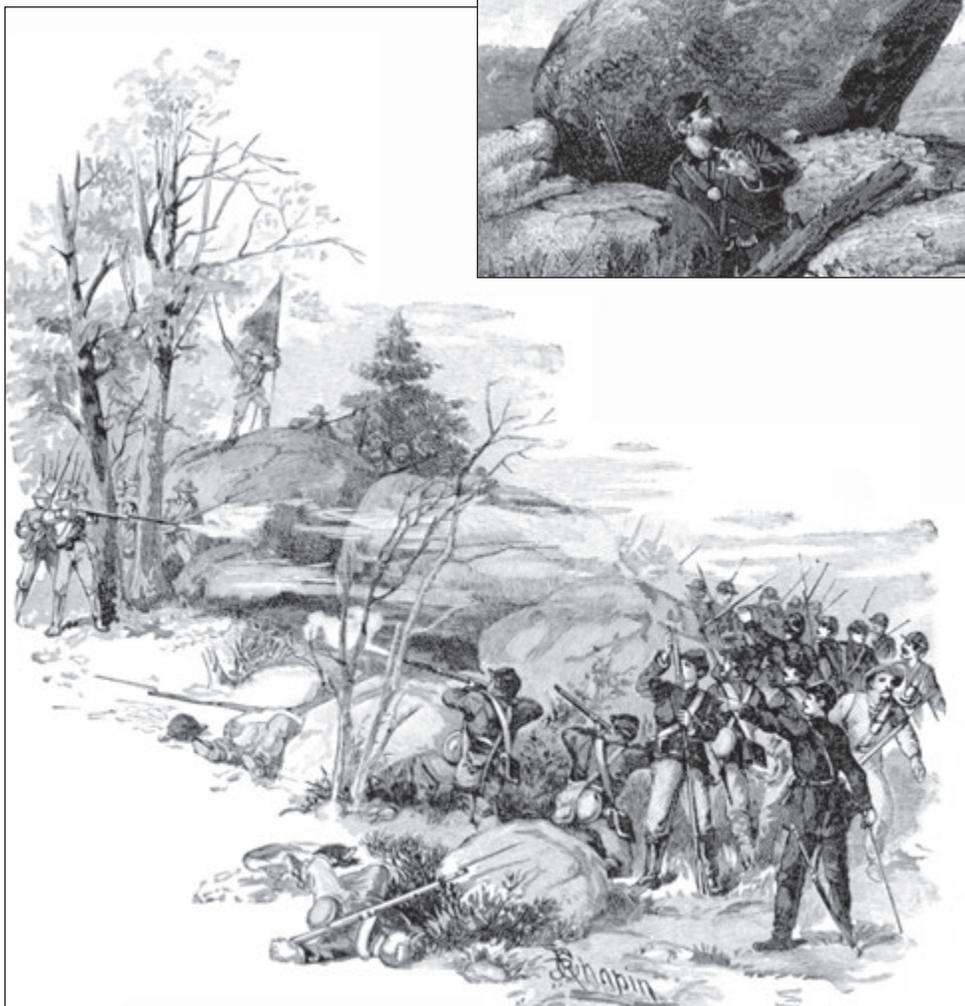
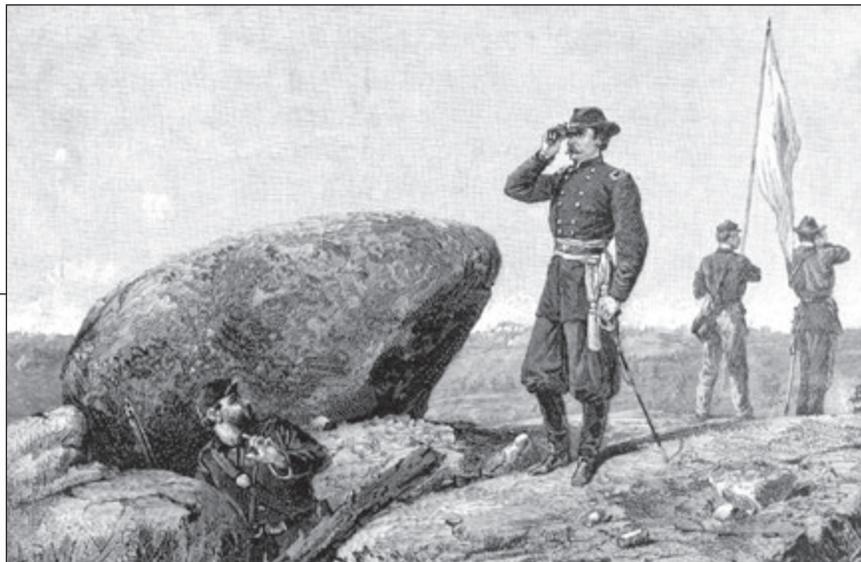
From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds,  
*Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3  
(Century Company, New York, 1884)



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

# Lee's Desperate Gamble Illustration 3

From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3 (Century Company, New York, 1884)



From Warren Lee Goss, *Recollections of a Private: A Story of the Army of the Potomac* (Thomas Y. Crowell, New York, 1890)

# The Final Horror Illustration 1



From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3 (Century Company, New York, 1884)

## The Final Horror **Illustration 2**



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

# The Final Horror Illustration 3



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

# Gettysburg: A Turning Point Illustration 1



From Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. 3 (Century Company, New York, 1884)

## Gettysburg: A Turning Point **Illustration 2**



The National Archives

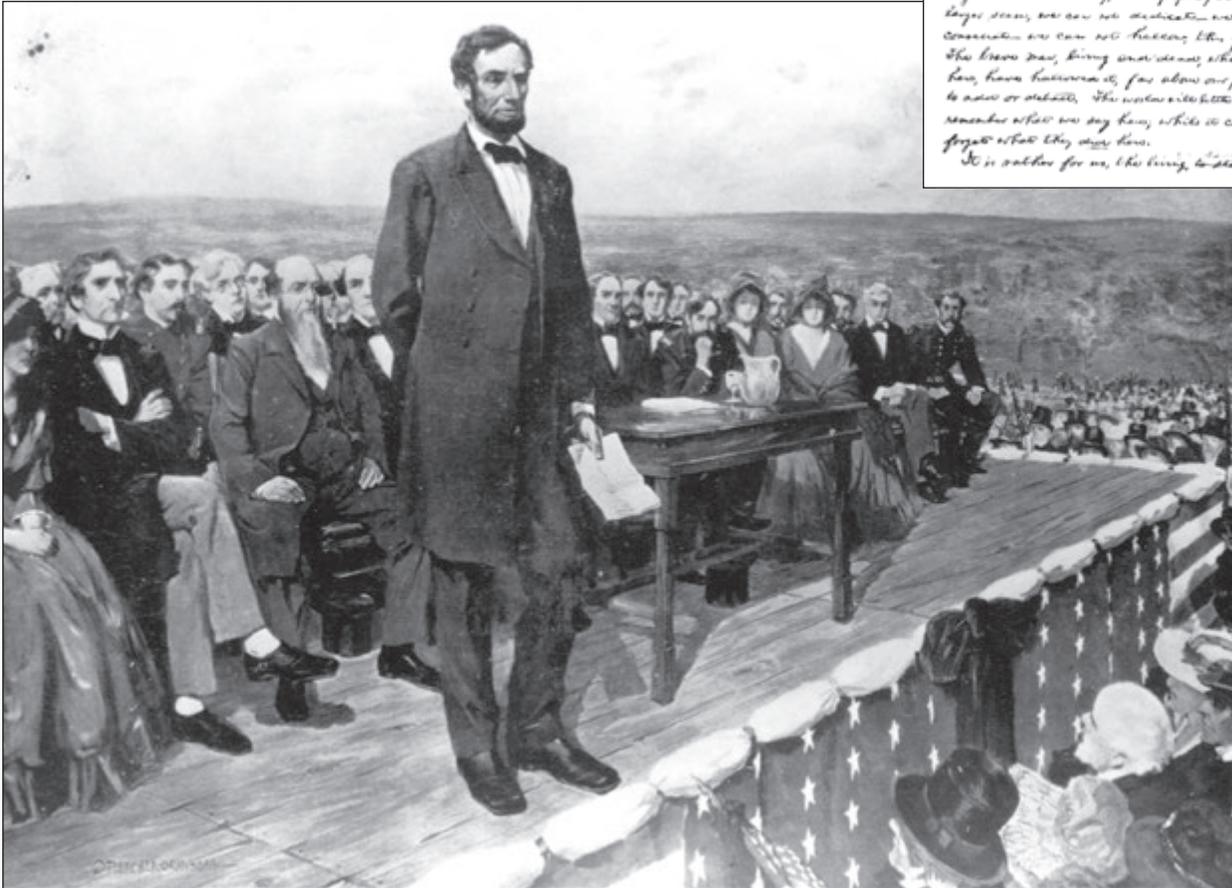
# Gettysburg: A Turning Point Illustration 3

**Executive Mansion,**

*Philadelphia*

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that "all men are created equal."

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it, as a final resting place for those who here have given their lives that this nation might live. It is for us the living, the yet to live, that we are here. It is rather for us, the living, to dedicate



Courtesy of the Library of Congress



