

Gettysburg

NATIONAL MILITARY PARK • PENNSYLVANIA

The Battle of Gettysburg was one of the decisive battles of American history. Here, on July 1, 2, and 3, the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, commanded by Gen. Robert E. Lee, attempted to defeat the Union Army of the Potomac, commanded by Maj. Gen. George G. Meade. This battle has become known as the High Water Mark of the Confederacy and the turning point of the Civil War.

After his victories over the Union Army at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, Lee embarked on his second invasion of the North. The first invasion had been turned back at the Battle of Antietam in September 1862, but Confederate leaders were still hoping that a victory on Northern soil would lead to a negotiated peace on the basis of Southern independence. It was also possible that another offensive across the Potomac would relieve pressure on Vicksburg, then under Union siege.

In June 1863, the Army of Northern Virginia, reorganized into three infantry corps and totaling about 75,000 men, marched west from Fredericksburg through the gaps of the Blue Ridge, then northward into Maryland and Pennsylvania. Learning of Lee's movement, President Lincoln ordered the Army of the Potomac, nearly 100,000 strong, to keep between the Confederate army and Washington. The absence of J. E. B. Stuart's cavalry, on a brash raid around the Union Army and now unable to rejoin the Confederate column, prevented Lee from learning of the Federal Army's presence behind him until June 28. With the entire Union Army close at hand and far from his base, Lee recalled his advance columns from Carlisle and York. He planned to concentrate his force at Cashtown, 8 miles west of Gettysburg.

On June 30, a Confederate brigade sent into Gettysburg to obtain supplies observed an advance Union cavalry column and retired. The following day, the Confederates came on in force, driving the Federals to the hills south of town. Meade's army, the main portion of which did not reach the field until July 2, formed a battleline extending from Spangler's Spring to Cemetery Hill and southward along Cemetery Ridge toward Little Round Top. Lee prepared his battleline on Seminary Ridge and eastward through the town.

On July 2, Lee ordered a simultaneous movement against both Union flanks. R. S. Ewell's thrust on the Union right at Culp's Hill failed, but James Longstreet's attack on the left broke through the Peach Orchard salient, left the Wheatfield strewn with dead and wounded, and turned the base of Little Round Top into a shambles. On the afternoon of July 3, spurred on by the partial success of the preceding day and after an ineffective artillery bombardment lasting 2 hours, nearly 15,000 Confederate troops under George Pickett charged against the Union center. Pickett's men were decimated

in the futile attack that reached but failed to break the Union line. The following day, Lee retreated to the south. Meade's army pursued cautiously and made no attempt to halt the Confederate withdrawal. By July 13 the Confederate army was safely across the Potomac.

Battle casualties were enormous. Lee lost about 28,000 in killed, wounded or missing, as compared to a Union loss of 23,000. The Confederate Army that staggered back from Gettysburg was never the same again.

Four months after the battle, President Abraham Lincoln came to Gettysburg to deliver "a few appropriate remarks" at the dedication of the National Cemetery. Lincoln's words, directed at both North and South, perpetuate in the minds and hearts of Americans the high purpose of the soldiers who fell in the battle. But, in larger measure, they crystallize the ideals for which free men, then and since, have lived and died.

ABOUT YOUR VISIT

The park visitor center, open daily, is just south of Gettysburg on either U.S. 15-Business or Pa. 134. Here you can see an orientation program, exhibits, and the famous Gettysburg Cyclorama, a panoramic painting by the French artist Paul Philippoteaux of the climax of Pickett's Charge.

The self-guiding auto tour of the battlefield takes you to the most important historic sites and monuments (see map). A 1-hour High Water Mark walking tour starts at the visitor center.

Licensed guides conduct visitors on a 2-hour complete tour of the battlefield for \$7; bus groups are guided on a 2-hour tour for \$12. Arrangements for licensed guides should be made with the park superintendent.

There is a picnic area in the park, but fires and public camping are not allowed. Organized youth group camping is permitted from April 15 to October 15, reservations for which should be made with the superintendent.

HELP US PROTECT THIS PARK

All historic sites, structures, and exhibits, as well as all plants, animals, and minerals, must be left undisturbed so that others may enjoy them. Relic collecting is not allowed.

You can make your visit and the visit of others safe and enjoyable by parking only in designated areas or on the avenues but not on the grass; by obeying the posted speed limits; and by not climbing on cannon and monuments.

Pets must be kept under physical control at all times. They may not be taken on trails, into buildings, or into crowded areas.

Park rangers are here to assist you and to enforce regulations.

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1968—347-046/6

ADMINISTRATION

Gettysburg National Military Park, established in 1895, is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Gettysburg, Pa. 17325, is in immediate charge.

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR—the Nation's principal natural resource agency—has a special obligation to assure that our expendable resources are conserved, that renewable resources are managed to produce optimum benefits, and that all resources contribute to the progress and prosperity of the United States, now and in the future.

U. S. Department of the Interior

National Park Service



AUTO TOUR OF THE BATTLEFIELD

An absorbing historical experience awaits those who want to tour the battlefield at their own pace. The following 1- to 3-hour auto tour which covers the entire park, starts from the visitor center.

1. High Water Mark. Here at the Copse of Trees and The Angle, Pickett's Charge was halted on July 3. This was the climax at Gettysburg.

2. Pennsylvania Memorial. On a field noted for its monuments, this one is outstanding. Statues of officers and bronze nameplates call the roll of nearly 35,000 Pennsylvanians who fought here.

3. Little Round Top. Longstreet's attack on July 2 founded on the rocky slopes of this hill. Quick action by Meade's chief engineer, Gen. Gouverneur Warren, saved Little Round Top for the Union army and foiled hopes for a Confederate victory.

4. Devil's Den. Longstreet's July 2 attack cleared Union troops from these boulders. Confederate sharpshooters, one of whose barricades can still be seen, fired on Little Round Top from here.

5. The Wheatfield. Diamonds, Maltese crosses, and trefoils on monuments mark this ground as the field of battle of three Union corps defending against Longstreet's onslaught.

6. The Peach Orchard. On July 2, General Sickles' Union salient extended from Devil's Den to here, then angled northward on the Emmitsburg Road. Federal batteries from the high ground here bombarded Confederates to the south and west before Longstreet's attack shattered this line.

7. Pitzer Woods. After a skirmish at noon on July 2, the Confederates occupied these woods. Four hours later they attacked and smashed Sickles' line along the road three-tenths of a mile to the east.

8. Virginia Memorial. General Lee watched the gallant charge of July 3 from here. And when it failed, he rode forward to the fields in front of you and rallied his men.

9. North Carolina Memorial. Along and in front of this ridge, Lee marshaled his forces, among them thousands of North Carolinians, for the supreme effort on July 3.

10. McPherson Ridge. Just beyond McPherson's barn, the Battle of Gettysburg began early on July 1. General John F. Reynolds, whose Union infantry held this line, was killed in the woods to the left.

11. Eternal Light Peace Memorial. This memorial was dedicated in 1938, the 75th anniversary of the battle, to "Peace Eternal in a Nation United." Arrival of General Rodes' Confederate division on this hill at 1 p.m. on July 1 threatened Federal forces west and north of Gettysburg.

12. Oak Ridge. Union troops here held stubbornly against Rodes' advance from Oak Hill to the north on the afternoon of July 1.

13. Barlow Knoll. When Jubal Early's Confederates smashed Union defenders here on the afternoon of July 1, the Union line north of Gettysburg collapsed.

From Barlow Knoll, take U.S. 15 toward Gettysburg to the point where it curves right. Just past the curve, turn left on Stratton Street. Continue to East Middle Street, then turn left and drive east one block to East Confederate Avenue (Liberty Street). Turn right on East Confederate Avenue and proceed to Culp's Hill.

14. Culp's Hill. At dusk on July 2, Johnson's Confederates unsuccessfully attacked Union troops on Culp's Hill (ahead), advancing over the fields to your left.

15. Spangler's Spring. Though repulsed at Culp's Hill, the Confederates seized this spring and the Union earthworks north of it, only to lose them the next morning.

16. Cemetery Hill. Here Union troops rallied late on July 1. The next evening they repelled a Confederate assault that reached the crest of the hill east of this road.

17. National Cemetery. Soldiers' National Monument, commemorating Union dead who fell here, stands on the spot where President Lincoln delivered his Gettysburg Address.

This concludes the auto tour except for the important site at East Cavalry Battlefield, 3 miles east of Gettysburg on Pa. 116. Here Union cavalry under Gen. D. M. Gregg intercepted and defeated J. E. B. Stuart's cavalry.

