

## Boys Who Fought at Gettysburg to Meet There Again

Veterans who followed Meade and Hancock at Gettysburg



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IN THE FIELD at Gettysburg, where fifty years ago two great armies, one from the north and one from the south, fought three days for what each thought was the right, on July 1, 2 and 3 of the present year, with one flag waving above them, and that the Stars and Stripes, survivors will meet around the camp fires and all together celebrate the anniversary of one of the bloodiest battles in all the history of the world and one that marked the beginning of an era of peace that has ever since continued, wiping off the map the Mason-Dixon line and uniting all parts of a nation that for three years had been torn apart by strife and war.

The battle of Gettysburg, fought almost within the corporate limits of the town, one of the fairest and most important in the southern portion of the state of Pennsylvania, and which resulted in the crushing defeat of the confederate forces under General Robert E. Lee, has always been regarded as the closing event of the war of the rebellion that had continued for more than three years, though peace was not restored until some months later.

This battle that has had an important place in American history commenced on July 1, 1863, and continued almost without intermission until July 4, when completely routed, Lee withdrew from the field, retreating into Maryland with only a remnant of what had been an army that was the flower of the southland.

**Invasion of the North.**  
Early in June, 1863, General Lee conceived the idea of an invasion of the north. The treasury and the granaries of the confederacy were empty and needed replenishing if the war was to continue. The south had been overrun, its towns and cities destroyed and its business in all lines prostrated. Knowing this, Lee felt that if he could invade the north he could strike his enemy in his home and perhaps stir up a revolution and that peace would follow on such terms as he himself might dictate. With this idea in view, he organized three army corps, commanded by Longstreet, Ewell and Hill,

the latter being left to hold Fredericksburg. It was on June 3 that General Lee ordered the movement of his troops constituting the other divisions, making up the finest and greatest army that the confederacy had put into the field. In the onward move, battle after battle was fought, victory almost always coming to the army of the stars and bars.

Like the waves of the ocean, the army of General Lee swept on, the union forces seemingly powerless to resist the onslaughts. Ewell was marching up the Shenandoah valley; Harper's Ferry was in the hands of the confederates and apparently the way into Pennsylvania was cleared for the invaders.

City after city surrendered and for a time it looked as if there was no power that could stop Lee's onward march from Virginia to New York. The people of Philadelphia and other Pennsylvania cities and towns gathered their families and their valuables and fled to far-away places in the north for safety.

In the meantime General Hooker of the union forces was guarding Washington and preparing to cut through the Blue Ridge mountains and intercept Lee. He laid his plans before General Halleck, commander-in-chief, but they met with disapproval. Hooker then asked to be relieved of the command of the army of the Potomac and the request was granted June 27, General Meade succeeded him.  
Governors of northern states issued calls for

volunteers and companies, regiments and brigades of raw recruits were soon on the field, armed and for the defense of their homes and firesides. Lee received notice of the uprising of the masses prepared to give him battle and became alarmed, but still he pushed on. To concentrate his forces he directed General Ewell to fall back to Gettysburg and General Longstreet and Hill to advance on the Chambersburg road through Gettysburg to Baltimore.

Realizing that a battle of more than ordinary importance and with sanguinary results must soon be fought, General Meade massed his army with the idea of sweeping the enemy from the midst of the terrified citizens. During the night of June 30, 6,000 cavalry under General Buford arrived before Gettysburg for the protection of the city and its inhabitants. The following morning the confederates, who had almost reached the city, attacked Buford, but he held the force in check until General Howard's corps came to his relief. The following day the battle commenced in earnest, though neither Lee nor Meade had intended that Gettysburg should be the scene of the engagement.

Meade was at Pipestone, fifteen miles away, while Lee had stopped at Gettysburg as a base for defensive operations. The attack, however, was made by the confederate forces and General Doubleday was pushed back to Seminary Ridge, taking with him 800 confederate prisoners. As he moved back through the village his troops scat-

tered and 3,000 of them were taken prisoners. Reinforcements for both armies commenced to arrive and during the afternoon the battle became general, the union line extending three miles along the front of the town and in the form of a triangle.

Having ranked Doubleday, Howard continued the retreat to Cemetery Ridge, covered by Buford's cavalry. This ended the first day of the battle, but all night troops kept arriving and taking position, the union forces on Cemetery and the confederate forces on Seminary Ridge.

**Second Day of Battle.**  
The morning of July 2 dawned clear and bright and early both armies were astir, but both commanders seemed loth to order an attack, apparently Lee wishing to draw Meade from his position and the latter being unwilling to leave it. About noon General Sickles took position on the left from Round Top, in front of Meade's intended line of battle. This was a bait and Lee swallowed it. He directed Longstreet to crush this force, Ewell to attack the union right and Hill the center, thus securing Little Round Top. Meade was thus forced to support Sickles, who was finally forced back to Cemetery Ridge after a desperate hand-to-hand struggle. Here Sickles stood firmly.

Elated by what seemed a victory, the confederates rushed up to the very foot of the union position, but were repulsed with heavy loss. At 10 o'clock that night, after various charges and counter charges, Ewell succeeded in getting a foothold on Culp's Hill, but at 1 o'clock the morning of July 3 he was forced back after a struggle that lasted until after sunrise.

Lee spent all the morning of July 3 in preparation for a crushing blow on Meade's center. During the night batteries had been placed and at 1 o'clock Lee opened fire with 150 guns, which were answered promptly by the union forces, who

brought 100 cannon into action. For two hours the artillery battle raged, the air being alive with solid shot and shell, the explosions shaking the ground and being heard twenty miles away.

**Pickett's Famous Charge.**  
When the artillery fire ceased the confederate line made a general advance, General Pickett taking the lead in a charge that has gone down into history as one of the bravest ever conceived. His men scaled the union breastworks thrown up in front of Cemetery Ridge, and, though hurried back time after time, continued the assault until only a handful of them were left, and many of them maimed and wounded.

The two armies, practically 80,000 each, had met and the flower of the south had been vanquished by the flower and youth of the north. The losses had been enormous, those of the union army being estimated at 23,000 and those of the confederate at 38,000, besides many thousands of prisoners, and thousands of small arms and hundreds of cannon captured.

The following day, July 4, there was some fighting, but the battle was only a skirmish as compared with what had occurred on the days previous, and most of the time was devoted to the burial of the dead.

Every band of the union army played "Yankee Doodle," "The Star Spangled Banner" and other patriotic airs, while the Stars and Stripes waved over positions occupied by the confederates for three days previous.

Late in the day, Lee, with the remnant of his army, commenced the retreat, but Meade did not follow rapidly, and at Rapid Anna he was allowed to rest and nurse his command for a day, when he resumed his march back toward Verplank, the

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