

Nearly 630 cannons
were used in the
Battle of Gettysburg.



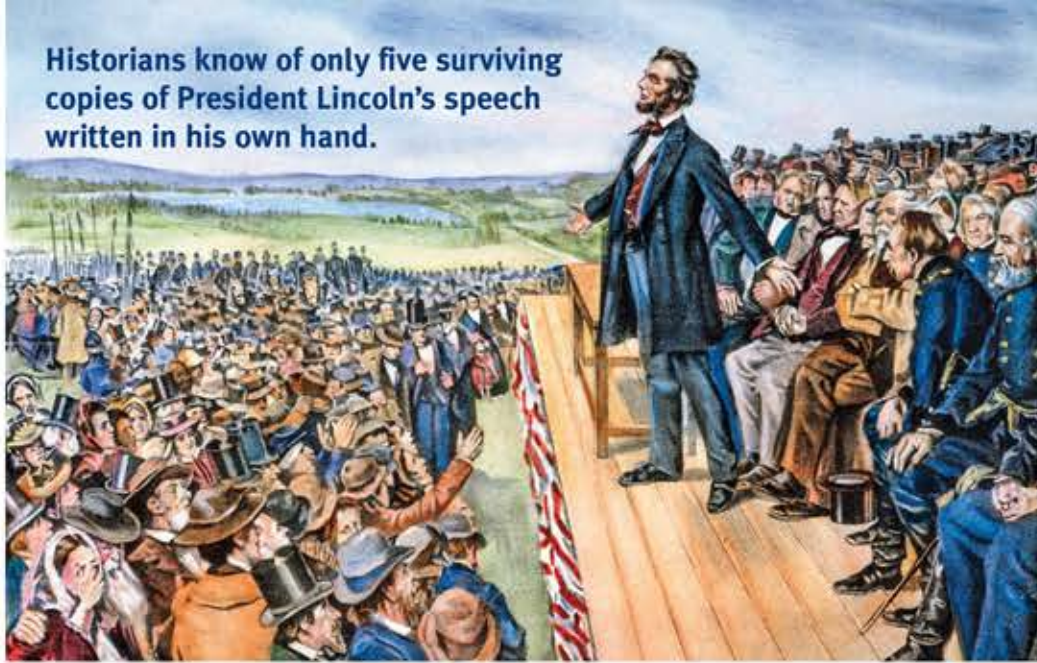
Where History Happened



If you stand in Gettysburg National Military Park, listen closely for an echo of cannons booming. The

Battle of Gettysburg took place here in southern Pennsylvania in 1863. It changed the course of the Civil War (1861–1865). More than 51,000 soldiers were wounded or died during the three-day battle. The battlefield is about 6,000 acres (2,428 hectares), just under half the size of Manhattan. It's a place to explore and to remember.

Historians know of only five surviving copies of President Lincoln's speech written in his own hand.

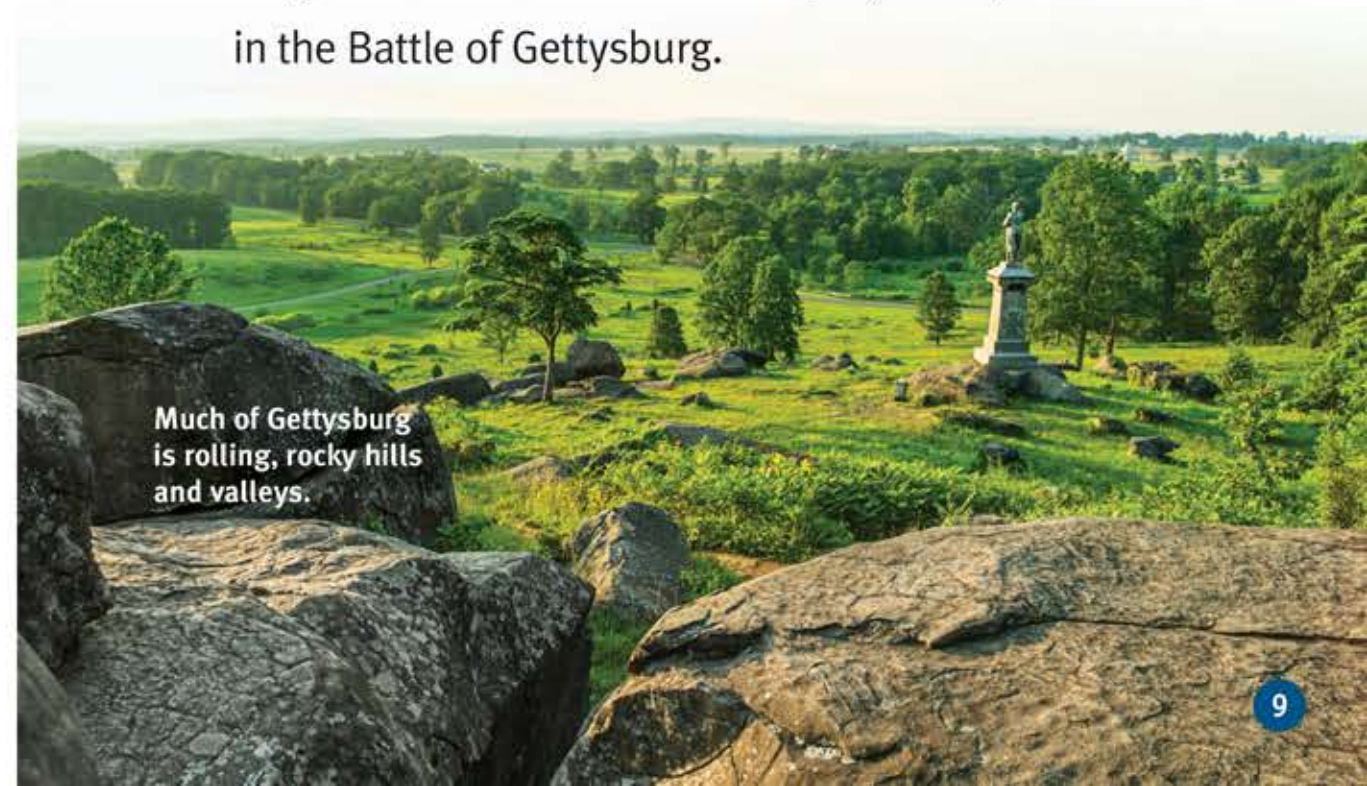


Addressing Gettysburg

Gettysburg is also famous because it's where President Abraham Lincoln made an unforgettable speech. On November 19, 1863, Lincoln spoke at the **dedication** of the cemetery at Gettysburg. Close to 20,000 people crowded around the stage to hear him. His speech, which became known as the Gettysburg Address, urged listeners to remember the soldiers who died there. You can see a monument to the Gettysburg Address in the park.

Forming Gettysburg

About 180 million years ago, **geological** activity thrust a 2,000-foot (610 meters) slab of rock into the Gettysburg region. Today, we call this slab the Gettysburg Sill. At the same time, two vertical rock formations called dikes were pushed into the area. These dikes raised land to form hills such as Little Round Top. They also created two parallel ridges: Cemetery Ridge and Seminary Ridge. These formations would play an important role in the Battle of Gettysburg.



Much of Gettysburg is rolling, rocky hills and valleys.

THE BIG TRUTH!

Fatal Mistakes?

Strategy is an important part of winning a war. To make a decision in battle, generals and other leaders study a situation and try to guess the enemy's next move. It is not always easy, and sometimes leaders make the wrong choice. Read about two controversial decisions that decided the battle and how the war ended.

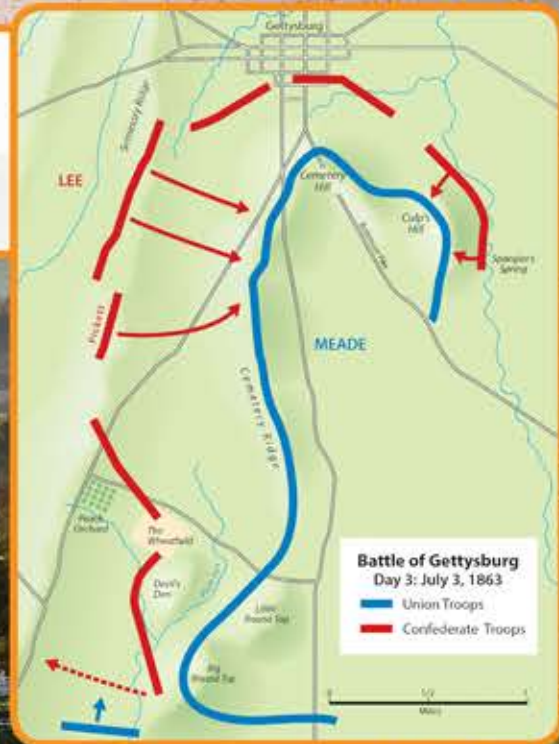


General George Meade
(Union Army)

General Robert E. Lee
(Confederate Army)

July 3, Morning After two days of fighting at Gettysburg, General Lee was winning. He believed the Union army was spread thin in the middle of their line. So he ordered Pickett to charge that area.

July 3, Afternoon The Union troops were located high on Cemetery Ridge. Height is a serious advantage. It is easier to fight from above than from below. The Union showered Pickett's men with bullets. The Confederates fell back.



July 5 Both sides were exhausted after the battle and rested on July 4. The next day, the Confederates began their retreat. Rain slowed them down. Instead of immediately following the Confederates, General Meade chose to wait. The war continued on for another two years after that.



Had General Lee tried a different strategy, could the Confederates have won the battle or even the war?

Should General Meade have followed the retreating Confederates immediately, while the enemy was weakened by battle? If he had, could Meade have forced the Confederacy to surrender then, shortening the war by as much as two years?