Lincoln, Jackson, Grant, Lee, Sheridan, Meade, and many other leaders had profound influences on various aspects of the war. Strong character and leadership can be seen demonstrated in each of their lives. It was during the Battle of Gettysburg and the Battle of Vicksburg that the tide of the war finally started to turn in favor of the North and the Union army.

The Peacemakers on the River Queen, March 1865. Sherman, Grant, Lincoln, and Porter pictured discussing plans for the last weeks of the Civil War

Reading and Assignments

Based on your student’s age and ability, the reading in this unit may be read aloud to the student and journaling and notebook pages may be completed orally. Likewise, other assignments can be done with an appropriate combination of independent and guided study.
In this unit, students will:

- Complete three lessons in which they will learn about Lincoln, Jackson, Grant, and the Battle of Gettysburg.
- Define vocabulary words.
- Explore the following websites:
  - Interactive Battle of Gettysburg
  - Audio Recording of The Gettysburg Address
  - “Sheridan's Ride” (the poem)
    [http://poetry.literaturelearning.org/?q=node/436](http://poetry.literaturelearning.org/?q=node/436)
- Visit [www.ArtiosHCS.com](http://www.ArtiosHCS.com) for additional resources.

**Leading Ideas**

Honesty is a character quality to be desired.

*Unequal weights are an abomination to the Lord, and false scales are not good.*
— Proverbs 20:23

The Bible provides the ethics upon which to judge people and nations.
— Exodus 20:1-17

God is sovereign over the affairs of men.

*And He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place.*
— Acts 17:26

**Vocabulary**

**Lesson 1:**
- hamlet
- foliage

**Lesson 2:**
- impetuous
- gallant

**Lesson 3:**
- rations
- inferno
- oust
- endeavor

**Key People, Places, and Events**

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<th>People</th>
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<tr>
<td>General Joseph Hooker</td>
<td>General Phillip Sheridan</td>
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<td>(Fighting Joe)</td>
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<td>General Stonewall Jackson</td>
<td>General Ulysses S. Grant</td>
<td>Battle of Vicksburg</td>
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<td>General Robert E. Lee</td>
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Stonewall Jackson was a true Christian and a great soldier, and his death was a great loss to the Confederate cause. He believed to the end that he was fighting for the right, and, mistaken although he might have been, his honor and valor were alike perfect. Both North and South may unite in admiration for him as a soldier, and in love for him as a Christian gentleman.

Reading and Assignments

- Read the article: *Lincoln - Chancellorsville and the Death of Stonewall Jackson*.
- Define each vocabulary word in the context of the reading and put the word and its definition in the vocabulary section of your notebook.
- After reading the article, summarize the story you read by either:
  - Retelling it out loud to your teacher or parent.
  - Completing an appropriate notebook page. Either way, be sure to include the answers to the discussion questions and an overview of key people, dates, and events in your summary.
- Create a biography notebook page on Stonewall Jackson.
- Be sure to visit [www.ArtiosHCS.com](http://www.ArtiosHCS.com) for additional resources.

Vocabulary

- hamlet
- foliage

Key People, Places, and Events

- General Joseph Hooker (Fighting Joe)
- General Stonewall Jackson
- General George Meade
- General Ambrose E. Burnside
- General Robert E. Lee
- Battle of Chancellorsville
- Battle of the Wilderness

Discussion Questions

1. Why did it appear that the Union had the advantage at the Battle of Chancellorsville?
2. What was General Hooker not expecting from the Confederate army that upset his plans at the Battle of Chancellorsville?
3. What was the outcome of the Battle of Chancellorsville?

4. How was Stonewall Jackson killed?

5. What were Stonewall Jackson’s last words?

6. What type of leader was Stonewall Jackson?

7. Why do you think Stonewall Jackson’s men loved him so much?

**This Country of Ours**

by Henrietta Elizabeth Marshall

**Lincoln - Chancellorsville and the Death of Stonewall Jackson**

The war went on, and still the North suffered many losses. Soon after the battle of Fredericksburg, General Burnside resigned the command of the army of the Potomac. His place was taken by General Joseph Hooker, known to his men as “Fighting Joe.” He was a tall and handsome man, brave, and dashing almost to rashness. “Beware of rashness, beware of rashness,” said Lincoln, when he appointed him. “But with energy and sleepless vigilance go forward, and give us victories.”

But not even “Fighting Joe” could bring victory to the North at once. He found the army disheartened, dwindling daily by desertion, and altogether in something like confusion. He was, however, a splendid organizer, and in less than two months he had pulled the army together and once more made it a terrible fighting machine. He declared it to be the finest army in the world, and full of pride in his men, and pride in himself, he set out to crush Lee.

Near the tiny hamlet of Chancellorsville the two armies met, and the four days’ fighting which followed is known as the Battle of Chancellorsville.

Everything seemed to favor the Federals. They had the larger army, they were encamped in a good position, and above all the men were full of admiration for, and trust in, “Fighting Joe.”

General Hooker’s movements had been quick and sure, his plans well laid. But he had expected the enemy to “flee ingloriously” before him.

The enemy, however, did not flee but showed a stubborn intention of fighting. Then Hooker’s courage failed him. He seemed to lose his grip on things, and much to the surprise of his officers he left his high position and took a lower one.

“Great heavens,” said General Meade, when he heard the order, “if we cannot hold the top of a hill we certainly cannot hold the bottom of it.”

The first day of the battle passed without any great loss on either side. Night came,
the fighting ceased, and the weary men lay down to rest. But for Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson there was little sleep. Beneath a small clump of pine trees they sat on packing cases, with maps spread out before them. For Jackson was planning one of his quick and stealthy marches, intent on catching the Federals unaware where they least expected it. And Lee, seeing the indecision of the Federal leader, was nothing loath. He had grown bold even to rashness in proportion as Hooker had grown cautious.

“What exactly do you propose to do?” asked Lee, as he studied the map.

“Go around here,” replied Jackson, as with his finger he traced a line on the map which encircled the whole right wing of the Federal army.

“What force do you propose to make this movement?” asked Lee.

“With my whole corps,” answered Jackson.

General Lee thought for a few minutes in silence. Then he spoke.

“Well, go on,” he said.

He knew that it was a great gamble. The Federal army was twice as large as their own and yet Jackson proposed to cut theirs in two and place the whole Federal army between the two halves. If the movement failed, it would be a terrible failure. If it succeeded, it would be a great success. It was worth the risk. So Lee said, “Go on.”

As for Jackson, he had no doubts. At Lee’s words he rose, smiling, and eager.

“My troops will move at once, sir,” he said, and with a salute he was gone.

Soon in the cool and lovely May morning Jackson’s men were marching through what was known as the Wilderness. It was a forest of smallish trees, so thickly set that a man could hardly march through it gun on shoulder. The Federals saw the great column of men move off without misgivings, imagining them to be retreating. Soon they were lost to sight, swallowed up by the Wilderness.

Here and there through the wood, paths were cut, and along these hour after hour twenty-five thousand men moved ceaselessly and silently. Through the thick foliage there came to them faint echoes of the thundering guns, while close about them the cries of startled birds broke the stillness, and the timid, wild things of the woods scurried in terror before them. As the day went on the heat became stifling, and dust rose in clouds beneath the tramping feet. Still, choking, hot, and dusty the men pressed on.

The soldiers of the right wing of the Federal army were resting about six o’clock that evening. Their arms were stacked, some were cooking supper, and others were smoking or playing cards, when suddenly from the woods there came the flutter of wings and a rush of frightened squirrels and rabbits, and other woodland creatures.

It was the first warning the Federals had of the approach of the enemy. They flew to arms, but it was already too late. With their wild yell the Confederates dashed into the camp. The Federals fought bravely, but they were taken both in front and rear, and were utterly overwhelmed.

Now and again a regiment tried to make a stand, only to be swept away by the terrific onslaught of the Confederates, and leaving half their number dead on the field they fled in panic. Still with desperate courage the Federal leaders sought to stem the onrush of the enemy and stay the rout.

“You must charge into those woods and
hold the foe until I get some guns into position,” said General Alfred Pleasonton, turning to Major Peter Keenan.

“I will, sir,” replied Keenan. Then calmly smiling at the head of his handful of men, he rode to certain death.

Ten minutes later he lay dead with more than half his gallant followers beside him. But his sacrifice was not in vain. For his desperate thrust had held the Confederates until the guns were placed and the army saved from utter rout.

The sun went down on a brilliant victory for the Confederates. Yet the night brought disaster for them.

Eager to find out what the Federals were doing, General Jackson rode out toward their lines in the gathering darkness. It was a dangerous thing to do, for he ran the risk of being picked off by their sharp-shooters. The danger indeed was so great that an officer of his staff tried to make him turn back. “General,” he said, “don’t you think that this is the wrong place for you?”

But Jackson would not listen. “The danger is all over,” he said carelessly. “The enemy is routed. Go back and tell Hill to press right on.”

Soon after giving this order Jackson himself turned and rode back with his staff at a quick trot. But in the dim light his men mistook the little party for a company of Federals charging, and they fired. Many of his officers were killed, Jackson himself was sorely wounded and fell from his horse into the arms of one of his officers.

“General,” asked someone anxiously, “are you much hurt?”

“I think I am,” replied Jackson. “And all my wounds are from my own men,” he added sadly.

As tenderly as might be he was carried to the rear, and all that could be done was done. But Stonewall Jackson had fought his last victorious fight. Eight days later the Conqueror of all men laid his hand upon him, and he passed to the land of perfect Peace.

During these days he seemed to forget the Great War. His wife and children were with him, and thoughts of them filled his heart. But at the end he was once more in imagination with his men on the field of battle.

“Order A.P. Hill to prepare for action,” he cried. “Pass the infantry to the front. Tell Major Hawks—”

Then he stopped, leaving the sentence unfinished. A puzzled, troubled look overspread his handsome, worn face. But in a few minutes it passed away, and calm peace took its place.

“Let us cross over the river,” he said, softly and clearly, “and rest under the shade of the trees.”

Then with a contented sigh, he entered into his rest.

Stonewall Jackson was a true Christian and a great soldier, and his death was a great loss to the Confederate cause. He believed to the end that he was fighting for the right, and, mistaken although he might have been, his honor and valor were alike perfect. Both North and South may unite in admiration for him as a soldier, and in love for him as a Christian gentleman.
Lesson Two

History Overview and Assignments
Lincoln - The Battle of Gettysburg

The Union’s victory in the Battle of Gettysburg was neither very great nor in any way decisive, and the cost of life was frightful. Indeed, so many brave men fell upon that dreadful field that the thought came to the governor of the state that it would be well to make a portion of it into a soldiers’ burial place and thus consecrate it forever as holy ground. All the states whose sons had taken part in the battle willingly helped, and a few months after the battle it was dedicated. It was there that President Lincoln made one of his most beautiful and famous speeches, The Gettysburg Address.

Key People, Places, and Events

- General J.E.B. Stuart
- General George Meade
- The Battle of Gettysburg
- Seminary Ridge
- Cemetery Hill
- General Robert E. Lee
- General James Longstreet
- General George E. Pickett
- Pickett’s Charge

Reading and Assignments

- Read the article: Lincoln - The Battle of Gettysburg.
- Define each vocabulary word in the context of the reading and put the word and its definition in the vocabulary section of your notebook.
- After reading the article, summarize the story you read by either:
  ▪ Retelling it out loud to your teacher or parent.
  ▪ Completing an appropriate notebook page.
  Either way, be sure to include the answers to the discussion questions and an overview of key people, dates, and events in your summary.
- Memorize The Gettysburg Address.
- Visit the website below and trace each important moment in the Battle of Gettysburg: http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/A-Cutting-Edge-Second-Look-at-the-Battle-of-Gettysburg-1-180947921/
- Listen to this recording of The Gettysburg Address: http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1512410
- Be sure to visit www.ArtiosHCS.com for additional resources.

Modern: Elementary
Unit 5: The Civil War, Part Three
**Vocabulary**

fusillade
impetuous
gallant

**Discussion Questions**

1. From yesterday’s article, explain why General Hooker resigned his post as commander-in-chief of the Union army.
2. Who replaced General Hooker as commander-in-chief of the Union army?
3. How long did the Battle of Gettysburg last?
4. Why was General Longstreet opposed to General Lee’s plan for General George E. Pickett’s division?
5. How many men were killed in Pickett’s charge?
6. How did the Battle of Gettysburg end?
7. What did both North and South do to commemorate the Battle of Gettysburg?

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*Adapted for Elementary School from the book:*

**This Country of Ours**

*by* Henrietta Elizabeth Marshall

**Lincoln - The Battle of Gettysburg**

The day after Jackson was wounded, the Battle of Chancellorsville continued, ending in a second victory for the Confederates. Soon afterward, the fighting was renewed. After this the Federals retired across the Rappahannock to their former camping ground unmolested, the Confederates being too exhausted to pursue them.

After Fredericksburg the Confederates had rejoiced. After Chancellorsville they rejoiced still more, and they made up their minds to carry the war into the Northern states. So leaving part of his army under General J.E.B. Stuart to prevent the Federals pursuing him, Lee marched into Pennsylvania. But General Stuart was unable to hold the Federals back, and they were soon in pursuit of Lee.

At Chancellorsville Hooker had shown that although he was a splendid fighting general he was a poor commander-in-chief, and toward the end of June, while the army was in full cry after the foe, General George Gordon Meade was made commander-in-chief. Meade continued the pursuit and Lee, having no choice, gave up his plans of invasion and turned to meet the foe.
The two forces met near the little town of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania, and a great three-day’s battle took place.

The fighting began on the first of July when the Federal army was still widely scattered through the country and Meade himself far in the rear, and again the Confederates triumphed.

Late that night General Meade arrived upon the field and began to make preparations for the struggle on the morrow. On both sides the commanders and armies seemed to feel that a great turning point of the war had come, and they bent all their energies on winning. Both camps were early astir, yet each side seemed to hesitate to begin the fearful game and put fortune to the test. So the morning passed quietly, the hot silence of the summer day being broken only now and again by fitful spurts of firing.

Next day there was no hesitation. Both sides knew that the deadly duel must be fought to the close, and at dawn the roll and thud of cannon began. From hill to hill gun answered gun, shells screamed and hissed, and the whole valley seemed to be encircled with flame and smoke. But the Confederates gained nothing. The Federals stood firm.

At length Lee determined to make a mighty effort to smash the center of the Federal line and split it in two. Collecting about a hundred and fifty guns he massed them along a height named Seminary Ridge, and with these he pounded the Federals on Cemetery Hill opposite. For two hours the terrible cannonade lasted. At first the Federal guns replied vigorously, then they almost ceased. They ceased, not because they had been put out of action, not because ammunition was running short, but because Meade was reserving his strength for the infantry attack he knew must come.

In the Confederate camp there was strained anxiety. Lee had determined to make the attack, but General Longstreet was against it. He did not believe that it could succeed. It was, he felt sure, only the useless throwing away of brave lives, and his heart was wrung with sorrow at the thought.
But Lee insisted, and General George E. Pickett’s division was chosen to make the attempt.

So Longstreet gave way. But when Pickett came to him for last orders he could not speak; he merely nodded his head, and turned away with a sob.

Pickett, however, knew neither hesitation nor fear.

“Sir,” he said firmly, “I shall lead my division forward.”

Again Longstreet gave a sign, and Pickett, bold and gallant, rode off “into the jaws of death.” Erect and smiling, his cap set rakishly over one ear, his brown-gold hair shining in the sun, he seemed, said Longstreet long after, more like a “holiday soldier” than a general about to lead a desperate and almost hopeless attack.

The Federal lines were a mile away. Toward them, toward the bristling row of guns, the men marched steadily, keeping step as if on parade, their banners fluttering gaily, and their bayonets glittering in the sunshine. Confident and elated, they swept on. They were out to win not merely the battle but the war, and they meant to do it.

Half the distance was covered. Then the Federal guns spoke. Crashing and thundering they tore great gaps in the approaching column. Still the men moved on steadily, relentlessly, until they came within musket range. Then on a sudden the whole Federal line became as it were a sheet of flame and smoke, and the first line of the advancing Confederates seemed to crumble away before the fearful fusillade. But the second line came on only faster and yet faster, firing volley after volley, scattering frightful death as they came.

Nothing could stay their impetuous charge. On they came right up to the rifle pits. In a rush they were across them and over the barricades. Then with a yell of victory they threw themselves upon the guns, bayoneting the gunners. Leaping upon the barricade a man held aloft the Confederate flag, waving it in triumphant joy. The next instant he fell mortally wounded, and the flag, bloodstained and torn, was trampled underfoot.

The Confederate success was only the success of a moment. The handful of heroic men who had reached the Federal guns could not hope to hold them. They died gallantly. That was all.

A storm of shot and shell tore its way through the still advancing ranks. It became an ordeal of fire too great for even the bravest to face. The lines at length wavered, they broke, and the men were scattered in flight. Thousands lay dead and dying on the field, many surrendered and were taken prisoner, and of the fifteen thousand gallant soldiers who had set forth so gaily, only a pitiful remnant of thirteen hundred bloodstained, weary men at length reached their own lines.
This gallant and hopeless charge brought the battle of Gettysburg to an end. It brought victory to the Federal side, and the Confederates slowly retired into Virginia once more.

Yet the victory was not very great nor in any way decisive, and the cost of life had been frightful. Indeed, so many brave men had fallen upon this dreadful field that the thought came to the governor of the state that it would be well to make a portion of it into a soldiers’ burial place and thus consecrate it forever as holy ground. All the states whose sons had taken part in the battle willingly helped, and it was dedicated a few months after the battle. And there President Lincoln made one of his most beautiful and famous speeches, known today as the Gettysburg Address:

“Fourscore and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are 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 battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that 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.”
Lesson Three

History Overview and Assignments

Lincoln - Grant’s Campaign and Sheridan’s Ride

The victory of Gettysburg which had been so dearly bought was not very great. But hard upon it came the news that on the 4th of July Vicksburg, Mississippi had surrendered to General Grant. And taking both victories together the people of the North felt that now they had cause to hope. After becoming commander-in-chief of the Union army, Grant’s aim was to take Richmond, the Confederate capital, while the goal of Robert E. Lee and the Confederate army was to take Washington. Save for the heroics of General Phillip Sheridan and his men, they might have succeeded.

Reading and Assignments

- Read the article: Lincoln - Grant’s Campaign and Sheridan’s Ride.
- Define each vocabulary word in the context of the reading and put the word and its definition in the vocabulary section of your notebook.
- After reading the article, summarize the story you read by either:
  - Retelling it out loud to your teacher or parent.
  - OR
  - Completing an appropriate notebook page. Either way, be sure to include the answers to the discussion questions and an overview of key people, dates, and events in your summary.
- Read all of the poem “Sheridan’s Ride,” by Thomas Buchanan Read:
  http://www.bartleby.com/102/150.html
- Be sure to visit www.ArtiosHCS.com for additional resources.

Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>rations</th>
<th>inferno</th>
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<tr>
<td>oust</td>
<td>endeavor</td>
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Key People, Places, and Events

- General David Glasgow Farragut
- General John C. Pemberton
- Battle of Spotsylvania Court House
- Battle of Vicksburg
- Battle of the Wilderness
- “Sheridan’s Ride” (poem)
- General Ulysses S. Grant
- General Phillip Sheridan
- General Jubal A. Early
Discussion Questions

1. Why was the control of the city of Vicksburg, MS so important?
2. Why were many people in the North clamoring for the recall of General Grant during this time?
3. How did President Lincoln respond to their demands?
4. How did Grant finally have success in capturing Vicksburg?
5. How did General Grant and General Pemberton know each other prior to the Civil War?
6. How many men became prisoners of war after Vicksburg was captured by the Union army?
7. How would you describe General Grant?
8. What position did Lincoln give to General Grant after the capture of Vicksburg?
9. What was Grant’s supreme goal after becoming commander-in-chief?
10. Describe Grant’s strategic blunder while trying to take Richmond.
11. What happened while Sheridan was in Washington?
12. How did Sheridan react when he became aware of the battle?
13. What did he say to his men who were fleeing the scene of the battle?

Adapted for Elementary School from the book:

This Country of Ours
by Henrietta Elizabeth Marshall

Lincoln - Grant’s Campaign and Sheridan’s Ride

The victory of Gettysburg which had been so dearly bought was not very great. But hard upon it came the news that on the 4th of July Vicksburg, Mississippi had surrendered to General Grant. And taking both victories together, the people of the North felt that now they had cause to hope.

After the capture of New Orleans in April, 1862, Captain Farragut had sailed up the Mississippi, and except for Vicksburg the whole valley was in the control of the Federals. Farragut would have attacked Vicksburg also but his land force was not strong enough, and Halleck, who was then general-in-chief, did not see the great importance of Vicksburg and refused to send soldiers to aid him.

The Confederates, however, knew the importance of holding the city, for it was the connecting link between the rebellious states which lay east and those which lay west of the great river. Through it passed enormous supplies of food from the West, as well as great quantities of arms, ammunition, and other war stores which came from Europe by way of Mexico.

So while the Federals neglected to take Vicksburg, the Confederates improved its fortifications until they were so strong that it seemed almost impossible that it should ever be taken.

At length General Grant was given supreme command of the western army, and he, well knowing the importance of Vicksburg, became intent on taking it. Again and yet again he tried and failed. Indeed he
failed so often that people began to clamor for his recall. But President Lincoln turned a deaf ear to the clamor and decided always to “try him a little longer” and still a little longer. And Grant justified his trust.

Finding it impossible to take Vicksburg by assault, he determined to besiege it. In a brilliant campaign of less than a fortnight, he marched a hundred and fifty miles and fought four battles. Then he sat down with his victorious army before Vicksburg, and a regular siege began.

**Siege of Vicksburg, by Kurz and Allison**

Vicksburg was now completely surrounded. On the river the fleet kept watch so that no boats carrying food, ammunition, or relief of any kind could reach the fated city. On land Grant’s army dug itself in, daily bringing the ring of trenches closer and closer to the Confederate fortifications. They were so close at last that the soldiers on either side could hear each other talking, and often friendly chat passed between the “Yanks” and the “Johnnies,” or Southerners.

“When are you coming into town, Yank?” the Confederates would ask.

“Well, Johnnie, we are thinking of celebrating the 4th of July there,” the Northerners would reply.

And at this the Johnnies would laugh as at a huge joke. No 4th of July would the Yanks celebrate in their city.

Regularly, too, the Confederates would pass the little Vicksburg paper, the Daily Citizen, to their enemies. This paper appeared daily to the last, although paper grew so scarce that it sometimes consisted only of one sheet eighteen inches long and six inches wide. At length printing paper gave out altogether, and the journal appeared printed on the plain side of wallpaper.

Day was added to day, and week to week, and still the siege of Vicksburg lasted. All day cannon roared, shells screamed and whistled, and the city seemed enveloped in flame and noise. The streets were places of death and danger, and the people took refuge in the cellars of the houses, or in caves which they dug out of the clay-filled soil. In these caves whole families lived for weeks together, only creeping out to breathe the air during the short intervals, night and morning, when the guns ceased firing.

Food grew scarcer and scarcer until at length there was nothing left but salt bacon, the flesh of mules and rats, and moldy pea flour. The soldiers were no longer fit to man the guns, their rations being no more than a quarter of a pound of bacon and the same of flour each day. Water too ran short, and they were obliged to drink the muddy water of the Mississippi.

Like pale specters the people crept about, and many, both soldiers and citizens, died from starvation and disease brought on by starvation. At length Vicksburg seemed little more than one great hospital, encircled by fire, made hideous by noise. Human nature could endure no longer, and on the morning of the 3rd of July white flags appeared upon the ramparts.
Immediately the roar of cannon ceased, and silence fell on city and camp. After the six weeks’ inferno it seemed to the wracked nerves and aching ears of the inhabitants as if the silence might be felt, as if the peace wrapped them about like a soft robe. The relief was so great that many who had endured the weeks of torture dry-eyed now burst into tears. But they were healing tears.

Under a lonely tree, a few hundred yards beyond the Confederate lines, Grant met General John C. Pemberton, the defender of Vicksburg. The two men had fought side by side in the Mexican War and had been friends. Now, although divided by cruel strife, they shook hands as of old. But memories of bygone days did not soften Grant’s heart. His terms were hard. Once more he demanded unconditional surrender. And Pemberton, knowing that resistance was impossible, yielded.

Next day the surrender was accomplished, and thirty thousand men became prisoners of war. Before noon the Union flag was flying over the Court House. Thus the “Yanks” celebrated the “glorious Fourth” in Vicksburg, as they had said they would do. But there was no noisy rejoicing. The Federals took possession almost in silence, for they had too much admiration for their gallant foe to wish to give them pain. One cheer indeed rent the air, but it was given for the glorious defenders of Vicksburg.

The whole North was now united in passionate admiration for Grant. Cheering crowds followed him in the streets. Fools and wise men alike were eager to know him, to boast that they had spoken to him or touched his hand. Yet, at first sight Grant seemed to have little of the hero about him. He was an “ordinary, scrubby looking man, with a slightly seedy look,” said one who saw him in those days. “He did not march nor quite walk, but pitched along as if the next step would bring him to his nose.” But his eye was clear and blue, he had a determined look and seemed like a man it would be bad to trifle with.

This shambling, scrubby looking man with the clear blue eyes was now the idol of the people. Lincoln too saw his genius as a leader, and willingly yielding to the popular demand, made him commander-in-chief of all the United States armies.

Before long Grant had made his plans for the next campaign. It was a twofold one. He himself with one army determined by blow after blow to hammer Lee into submission, while Sherman was to tackle the other great Confederate army under Johnston.

Grant set out in the beginning of May, and on the 5th and 6th the Battle of the Wilderness was fought not far from where the battle of Chancellorsville had been fought the year before. Grant had not meant to fight here, but Lee, who knew every inch of the ground, forced the fight on him.

In the tangled underwood of the Wilderness artillery and cavalry were of little use, and the battle became a fierce struggle between the foot soldiers of either army. The forest was so thick that officers could see only a small part of their men, and they could only guess at what was going on by the sound of the firing and the shouts exultant or despairing, of the men who were driven to and fro in the dark and dreary thickets. In the end neither side gained anything except an increased respect for the foe.

Grant’s aim was to take Richmond, the Confederate capital, and with that aim still
before him after the Battle of the Wilderness he moved his army to Spotsylvania. He was hotly pursued by Lee and here on the 10th and 12th of May another stern struggle, the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House, took place.

The fighting on the 10th was so terrible that on the 11th both armies rested as by common consent. Next day the battle began again and lasted until midnight. It was a hand-to-hand struggle. The tide of victory swung this way and that. Positions were taken and the battle lost and taken again, and after twenty-four hours of fighting neither side had won and thousands of brave men lay dead upon the field.

Still intent on Richmond, Grant moved southward after this terrible battle, followed closely by Lee. Almost every day there were skirmishes between the two armies, but still Grant pressed onward and arrived at length within a few miles of Richmond. Here at Cold Harbor Lee took up a strongly entrenched position from which it seemed impossible to oust him, except by a grand assault. Grant determined to make that assault.

Both officers and men knew that it could not succeed, but Grant commanded it and they obeyed. Yet so sure were many of the men that they were going to certain death that it is said they wrote their names and addresses on slips of paper which they tacked to the backs of their coats, so that when their bodies were found it might be easily known who they were and news be sent to their families.

At half-past four in the gray morning light, eighty thousand men rushed upon the foe. They were met with a blinding fire and swept away. In half an hour the attack was over. It was the deadliest half hour in all American history up to this point, and eight thousand Union men lay dead upon the field.

“Someone blundered,” it was said. Grant had blundered. He knew it, and all his life afterward regretted it. “No advantage whatever was gained,” he said, “to make up for the heavy loss we suffered.”

In this terrible campaign he had lost sixty thousand men. He had not taken Richmond. He had neither destroyed nor dispersed Lee’s army. Still he hammered on, hoping in the long run to wear out Lee. For the Confederates had lost heavily too, and they had no more men with which to make good their losses. On the other hand, the gaps in the Federal army were filled up almost as soon as they were made. “It’s no use killing these fellows,” said the Confederates, “a half dozen take the place of every one we kill.”

But the people of the North could not look on calmly at these terrible doings. They cast their idol down and cried out against Grant as a “butcher.” They demanded his removal. But Lincoln refused again to listen to the clamor as he had refused before. “I cannot spare that man,” he said. “At least he fights.”

Grant was terrible only for a good end. He was ruthless so that the war might be brought the more speedily to a close. And Lincoln, the most tenderhearted of all men, knew it. Undismayed therefore, Grant fought on. But his army was weary of much fighting, disheartened by ill success, and weakened by many losses. New recruits indeed had been poured into. But they were all unused to discipline. Months of drill were needed before they could become good soldiers. In June Grant settled down to besiege Petersburg and drill his new men.
the while, and not till the spring of 1865 did the army of the Potomac again take the field.

Meanwhile, there was fighting elsewhere.

On the part of the Confederates there was a constant endeavor to take Washington, and in July of this year the Confederate army actually came within a few miles of the city. There was great alarm in the capital, for it was defended chiefly by citizen soldiers and fresh recruits who had little knowledge of warfare. But just in time Grant sent strong reinforcements from the army of the Potomac, and the Confederates marched away without making an attack. They only retired, however, into the Shenandoah Valley, and their presence there was a constant menace to Washington. Early in August therefore, General Philip Sheridan was sent to clear the enemy out of the valley and relieve Washington from the constant fear of attack.

Sheridan began his work vigorously and soon had command of most of the roads leading to Washington. But he knew that General Jubal A. Early, who commanded the Confederate troops, was a skillful and tried soldier and that he moved with caution. For some weeks indeed both commanders played as it were a game of chess, maneuvering for advantage of position. But at length a great battle was fought at Winchester in which the Confederates were defeated and driven from the field. Three days later another battle was fought at Fisher’s Hill, and once again in spite of gallant fighting the Confederates were beaten.

After this battle Sheridan marched back through the valley, destroying and carrying away everything which might be of use to the foe. Houses were left untouched, but barns and mills with all their stores of food and forage were burned to the ground. Thousands of horses and cattle were driven off, and the rich, pleasant valley made a desolation, with nothing left in it, as Grant said, to invite the enemy to return.

Having finished this work Sheridan dashed off to Washington to consult with the secretary of war about his future movements. The Confederate army had meanwhile encamped again near Fisher’s Hill. And Early, hearing of Sheridan’s absence, determined to make a surprise attack on the Federal army.

In the darkness of the night they set out and stealthily crept towards the Federal camp at Cedar Creek. Every care was taken so that no sound should be made. The men were even ordered to leave their canteens behind, lest they should rattle against their rifles. Not a word was spoken as the great column crept onward, climbing up and down steep hillsides, fording streams, pushing through thickly growing brushwood. At length before sunrise, without alarm or hindrance of any kind the Confederates reached the camp of the sleeping Federals.

Each man was soon in his appointed place, and in the cold gray dawn stood waiting the signal. At length a shot rang out, and with their well-known yell the Confederates threw themselves into the camp.

As quickly as might be, the Federals sprang up and seized their arms. But they had been taken utterly by surprise, and before they could form in battle array they were scattered in flight.

Before the sun was well up the Federals
were defeated, and their camp and cannon were in the hands of the enemy. Meanwhile Sheridan had reached Winchester on his return journey from Washington. He had slept the night there and had been awakened by the sound of firing. At first he thought little of it, but as the roar continued he became sure that a great battle was being fought—and he was twenty miles away! He set spurs to his horse, and through the cool morning air:

“A steed as black as steeds of night
Was seen to pass, as with eagle flight.
As if he knew the terrible need,
He stretched away with his utmost speed.”

Mile after mile the great black horse ate up the roads. The sound of firing grew louder and louder, and at length men fleeing in rout and confusion came in sight. There was every sign of a complete defeat. Wounded, unwounded, baggage wagons, mule teams, all were fleeing in confusion.

It was a grievous sight for Sheridan. But he refused to accept defeat. Rising high in his stirrups, he waved his hat in the air and shouted cheerily, “Face the other way, boys. We are going back to our camp. We are going to lick them into their boots.”

At the sound of his voice the fleeing soldiers paused, and with a mighty shout they faced about. Even the wounded joined in the cheering. The beaten, disheartened army took heart again, the scattered, disorganized groups were gathered, a compact line of battle was formed, and at the end of two hours the men were not only ready but eager once more to grapple with the foe.

Then the second battle of Cedar Creek was fought. By ten o’clock in the morning, the Federals appeared defeated. But by five in the afternoon, the Confederates were not only defeated, but utterly routed. Their army was shattered and the war swept out of the Shenandoah Valley for good. Then Sheridan marched his victorious troops to join Grant before Petersburg.

1 From “Sheridan’s Ride,” by Thomas Buchanan Read.