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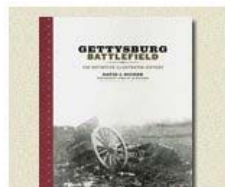
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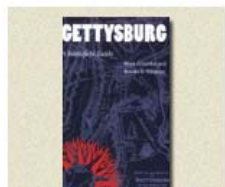
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American Civil War Battlefields

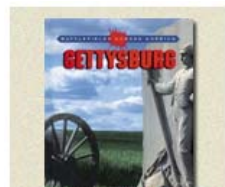
The Gettysburg battlefield is located in [Gettysburg, PA](#) and currently spans close to 6,000 acres. The battle was fought over a 3-day period from July 1-3, 1863 in and around the town of Gettysburg and to the west and south of town.



[Gettysburg Battlefield](#)
The definitive illustrated history of the battle



[Gettysburg](#)
One in a series of battlefield guides



[Gettysburg \(Battlefields Across America\)](#)
Superb history of Gettysburg

Reflections on the Gettysburg Battlefield

After our recent visit to the Gettysburg battlefield we were ever more impressed with the vast spaces this battle covered.

It would be a daunting task as a commander on either side to coordinate troop placements and movements numbering in the tens-of-thousands.

It illustrated to me that no matter how much control one wants to have over an army, the battlefield is fluid and the ebbs and tides of battle are forever changing thereby making this task extremely difficult.

We can look back and say so-and-so should have done this or that but in reality, all commanders had to make snap decisions under the most difficult circumstances and the vast enormity of the battlefield only added to this dilemma.

- Scott Sarich, Total Gettysburg

In 1863, Gettysburg was a town of commerce with roads linking to Baltimore and other large towns in Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland. All the roads leading to Gettysburg made it an ideal spot for the two armies to converge.

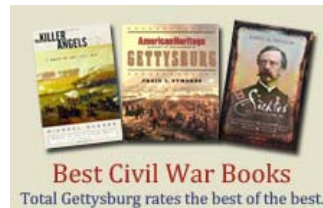
To the west of Gettysburg lies [Seminary Ridge](#) named for the the Lutheran Theological Seminary that commands the hill. The Union cavalry under [Brigadier General John Buford](#) held the line here until Union reinforcements could arrive thereby protecting the high ground south of Gettysburg.

Due south of Gettysburg sits Cemetery Hill which was occupied by Union troops at the end of [July 1](#). A combined Union cavalry and infantry force crumbled and was pushed back through town after heavy fighting on Seminary Ridge.

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Read about Gettysburg battlefield experiences [here](#).



Seminary Ridge

Just to the east is [Culp's Hill](#) which created the extreme right flank of the Union army. Coordinated Confederate attacks there late on July 2 were bloody affairs, but the Union forces were able to defend. Early on July 3, Union artillery opened up on Confederate forces camped on lower Culp's Hill and after more fierce fighting, they were driven back.

Due west of the Union center on Cemetery Hill is Cemetery Ridge. On the final day on July 3, General Lee ordered a massive infantry assault on the center of the Union line on Cemetery Ridge. The attack was disastrous for the Confederates and effectively ended the battle.



On the far left of the Union lines is [Little Round Top](#) and Round Top. Little Round Top was the scene of a heroic stand by the 20th Maine against attacking Alabama regiments under General John Bell Hood. Each Confederate charge was repulsed and the Union army maintained the heights on their left flank.

Just below the Round Tops is [Devils Den](#), with rough rocky terrain and large boulders the size of cars. Union sharpshooters used the terrain to maintain cover while firing on the advancing enemy.



Cemetery Hill

To the northeast of Devil's Den lies [The Wheatfield](#) where some of the bloodiest fighting on the Gettysburg battlefield occurred. The Wheatfield exchanged hands many times on the 20 acre plot. Union [General Daniel Sickles](#) had moved his men forward without permission from General George Meade creating a salient in the lines putting the entire union left in jeopardy. The Confederates attacked in force and the brave fighting ended with no tactical advantage to either side.

Adjacent to The Wheatfield, heavy fighting took place at the [Peach Orchard](#). The Confederates were able to rout the Union lines and push them out of the Peach Orchard. Union artillery helped cover the Union retreat but eventually they were



Additional information on the Battle of Gettysburg and the American Civil War can be found in books and videos. Please find many suggestions for good reading & viewing resources throughout this site.



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routed as well.

Finally, a mass infantry assault by the Confederates aimed at the Union center was named [Pickett's Charge](#) took place on July 3, 1863. The Confederate [casualties](#) were staggering and they retreated back to Virginia in bitter defeat.

Gettysburg battlefield maps provide an excellent reference point for those looking for a visual representation of the battle. See our [maps](#) of the Gettysburg battlefield from the initial assault on day 1, to the final ill-fated charge.

Today, the Gettysburg battlefield can be visited year-round and [Gettysburg monuments](#) dot the landscape commemorating the men who fought and died there. Walking tours originate at the visitor's center and a museum houses artifacts from the battle.

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