

EQ: How did key battles and events influence the outcome of the Civil War?



- September 17, 1862 – Site in Maryland where General Robert E. Lee and his Confederate soldiers were defeated by Union forces
- Bloodiest one day battle of the Civil War / claimed 23,000 American lives
- General Robert E. Lee attempted to attack the Union in the north in their own territory. His plan failed.
- He was forced to withdraw and this was considered a win for the north.
- Lincoln used this victory as a springboard to release The Emancipation Proclamation.

Antietam

Union Blockade of the Coast

- One of the United States' most important strategies during the Civil War
- The North's objective was to use its superior navy to prevent the South from shipping its cotton to England and France in return for weapons and other supplies
- Often called the "Anaconda Plan" due to its intention of "Squeezing" the CSA to death"

The Civil War

The Emancipation Proclamation

- An executive order issued by President Abraham Lincoln (1862), declaring an end to slavery in those states that seceded from the Union. It actually said that all slaves in the rebellious states would be freed on January 1, 1863.
- At this point, ONLY slaves in the Confederate states would be freed.
- This did not apply to slave states that stayed in the Union.
- Abraham Lincoln knew that the Confederate states would not give up.
- He also knew that once he abolished slavery that European countries would stay out of the conflict and would not support the South.

Chickamauga

- Georgia was virtually untouched until the Battle of Chickamauga
- It lasted three days (Sept 18-20, 1863) and was the second bloodiest battle of the entire war (34,000 soldiers killed)
- Chickamauga was the largest battle ever fought in Georgia (just 10 miles south of the Tennessee border)
- Confederate general: General Braxton Bragg
- Union General: General William S. Rosencrans
- The Union goal was to capture Chattanooga, TN, and important rail center, and then use that as a stepping stone to capture a more important rail road hub, Atlanta.
- Significance: First, it was the largest Union defeat in the West. Second, due to the South's victory, the focus was to recapture Chattanooga. The attack on Chattanooga was a southern defeat that led to the promotion of Ulysses S. Grant as the General of the U.S. Army. Once Chattanooga was securely in Union hands, it was used as a launching point for Sherman's Atlanta Campaign.

Gettysburg

- Pennsylvania site of the deadliest battle of the Civil War (July 1-3, 1863)
- Turning point of The Civil War
- Over 50,000 soldiers killed
- Was another attempt by General Lee to invade the North
- After heavy losses and three days, Lee retreated back to Virginia.
- The South never invaded the North again.
- The South was demoralized by this loss.
- After Gettysburg, the North put constant pressure on the South and eventually invaded the rebellious states.
- After the battle, President Lincoln gave "The Gettysburg Address" speech which offered a rationale for the war and a purpose for why so many men fought and died. This speech is considered one of the most important speeches in American history.

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- Sherman had two separate military campaigns in Georgia, the first was to capture Atlanta
- Atlanta was a major railroad hub, so it was a strategic move to control the city
- The capture of Atlanta was a major blow to the South
- It took Sherman almost 4 ½ months. There was not one major battle but rather several small battles that allowed Sherman to get close enough to bombard it with cannon fire
- Confederate General Hood was forced to withdraw from Atlanta on September 2, 1864
- The capture of Atlanta was critical not only due to Atlanta's industrial role, but also because it gave the North a victory to celebrate and the will power to continue fighting. It also assured Lincoln's presidential re-election

The Civil War

Andersonville

- Andersonville Prison is the most notorious prisoner of war camp from the Civil War era.
- Located in Macon County / built in 1864
- It was built for only 10,000 prisoners, but reached over 30,000 in population during the peak of its occupancy.
- The main water source, a small creek, was contaminated and caused disease in the prison.
- Due to the success of the blockade, the prison was not able to be supplied sufficiently.
- Over 13,000 men died there. This was more than in any other Civil War prison.
- The commander of the camp, Captain Henry Wirz, was executed by the North for war crimes.
- Captain Wirz was the only Confederate official tried and executed for war crimes.

Sherman's Atlanta Campaign

- ### Sherman's March to the Sea
- The movement of General William T. Sherman's Union forces from Atlanta, Georgia, to the port of Savannah, resulting in the capture of the port.
 - The march destroyed much of the Confederate army's infrastructure, support, and trade routes
 - Sherman wanted to end the war quickly and punish the South for starting the war
 - The march began on November 15, 1864 and ended on December 21, 1864.
 - The path he took was 300 miles long and 60 miles wide.
 - Many soldiers lived off civilian food and supplies and took things of value.
 - Sherman burned buildings and factories.
 - In some cases, he destroyed entire towns (Griswoldville, GA).
 - Savannah surrendered without a fight (did not want to be destroyed), and Sherman said it was Lincoln's Christmas present (thousands of dollars in cotton was being stored in Savannah because of the blockade and the North took it).