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PONAX CHURCH

rom the beginning of the Civil War until its end, the proximity of the national capitals of Washington, D.C., and Richmond, Virginia, made the Eastern Seaboard a center of military activity. Union blood was first shed in the Baltimore Riots of April 19, 1861, and some of the last Confederate casualties fell just before Gen. Joseph E. Johnston surrendered in North Carolina on April 26, 1865. During those four years, the earth of Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina became the bloodiest in America, as the war swept through again and again.

Caught between Virginia, which seceded

in April 1861, and Maryland, which was leaning

toward secession, President Abraham Lincoln

After secessionists fueled the Baltimore Riots

by attacking Massachusetts troops en route to

Washington, D.C., Lincoln declared martial law,

suspended habeas corpus in certain areas, and

remained strongly Unionist in the west while

southeastern Maryland became a secessionist

son Davis directed a defensive war at first.

peake Bay. The state did not secede.

notbed of spies and smugglers along the Chesa-

In Virginia, Confederate President Jeffer-

risoned Maryland Confederates. The state

simply *had* to keep Maryland in the Union.



'Attack on the Massachusetts 6th at Baltimore, April 19th, 1861" Drawn by William Bomberger and engraved by George E. Perine.

When U.S. forces marched into northern Virginia to attack Manassas Junction in July 1861, the result was a stunning Confederate victory. The Federals fared better along the northeastern coast of North Carolina, which Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside secured despite resistance from Confederate gunboats and land forces.

Gen. George B. McClellan led a massive U.S. army up the Peninsula against Richmond in the spring of 1862, but Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee repulsed it near the city limits in the Seven Days' Battles in June. In the Shenandoah Valley, meanwhile, Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson defeated several Union armies before joining Lee at Richmond. Together, the generals marched north and bested another Union force under Gen. John Pope at the Second Battle of Manassas in August. Lee then invaded Western Maryland, hoping to rally Confederate support, resupply his army, and gain foreign recognition for the Confederacy. His hopes were dashed at Antietam Creek on September 17, 1862, the bloodiest day in American history, and he retreated to Virginia.

In 1863, following Lee's victory at Chancellorsville in May, he again marched north through the Shenandoah Valley, the avenue of invasion. This time he reached Pennsylvania and confronted Union Gen. George G. Meade's army at Gettysburg. Once again the Confederate tide was turned back. In Maryland and Virginia, freed and escaped slaves flocked to the Union colors and joined regiments of United States Colored Troops (USCTs). Underground Railroad "conductor" Harriet Tubman led many north to freedom from Maryland's Eastern Shore.

In the spring of 1864, Union commander-in-chief Gen. Ulysses S. Grant launched simultaneous attacks against the Confederates throughout the South. He accompanied Meade's army in Virginia during the bloody Overland Campaign battles of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania Court House, and Cold Harbor, maneuvering Lee ever closer to Richmond and finally besieging him



I NIRA BATTIE OT WINCHESTER, SEPTEMPER 19, 186 Nineteenth-century print by Kurz & Allison

him back. Early then marched north through the Valley and attacked the defenses of Washington, D.C. Eventually Gen. Philip H. Sheridan swept the Shenandoah clear of Confederates. In southwestern Virginia, eastern Tennessee, and western North Carolina, Union cavalry raided saltworks and railroads. Gen. William T. Sherman, in the Deep South, first captured Atlanta and then marched to the sea, occupying Sayannah. Next, the Carolinas, South and North, felt the weight of Sherman's boot early in 1865. Fort Fisher, the "Gibraltar of the South" that protected the blockade-running capital of Wilmington, North Carolina, fell in mid-January, cutting the supply lifeline to Lee in Virginia.

At Appomattox, Va., on April 9, 1865, Robert E. Lee, Grant, meanwhile, forced Lee's lines westcommanding general of the Army of Northern Virginia, ward around Petersburg until they finally broke at surrendered his men to Ulysses S. Grant and the Five Forks on April 1, 1865, a week and a half after Armies of the Potomac and the James Sherman had almost crushed Johnston at Bentonville, North Carolina. Lee evacuated Petersburg and Richmond and marched his dwindling army west, hoping to turn south and join Johnston. Grant blocked his way, however, and cornered him at Appomattox Court House, where Lee surrendered on April 9. The Confederate government fled south through North Carolina. In Washington, Lincoln planned for the swift reunion of North and South, but John Wilkes Booth altered the path of reconciliation on April 14 at Ford's Theater. The assassin escaped the capital and fled through Southern Maryland to Virginia, where he was shot and killed on April 26. On that same day, at Bennett Place near Raleigh, North Carolina, Johnston surrendered to Sherman, essentially ending the Civil War.

in the capital and at Petersburg. The USCTs fought valiantly in several battles, especially the Battle of the Crater in Petersburg and the Battle of New Market Heights east of **Richmond. Fourteen black soldiers received** Medals of Honor for their bravery in the latter engagement.

In mid-1864, Gen. Philip H. Sheridan led a railroad raid to Trevilian Station, and Gens. James H. Wilson and August V. Kautz tore up tracks in Southside Virginia but failed to burn the Staunton River Bridge. In the Shenandoah Valley, a succession of Union commanders pressed Confederate forces and laid waste to the "Breadbasket of the Confederacy." Federal en. David Hunter burned Virginia Military Institute in Lexington and then marched on Lynchburg, where Gen. Jubal A. Early turned



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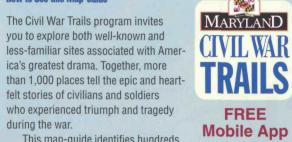
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