

GETTYSBURG

NATIONAL MILITARY PARK, PA.

Scene of the climactic Battle of Gettysburg and the place where President Lincoln made his celebrated Gettysburg Address

Of the more than 2,000 land engagements of the Civil War, Gettysburg ranks supreme. Though Gettysburg did not end the war, nor attain any major war aim for North or South, it remains the great battle of the war.

Here at Gettysburg on July 1, 2, and 3, 1863, more men died than in any other battle fought before or since on North American soil. Here the Confederacy saw its greatest offensive turned back, saw its splendid army retreat to Virginia with no gain to match its valor and terrible sacrifices. Here for the first time in the war, the men in the Union Army of the Potomac rose up from their lines after the battle and cheered, aware that they had repulsed the hardest hammering that Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia could give them. Here—4 months later—President Lincoln summed up the meaning of the war, using 269 words that surpass the millions uttered and written since.

General Lee had led his men north of the Potomac River once before—in September 1862. He had hoped that a successful campaign on Northern soil might win foreign recognition for the Confederacy and lead to a negotiated peace. But the Battle of Antietam halted this invasion, and the war had continued.

Great Southern victories had since been won at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville in Virginia. In the West, however, Union armies were probing deep into the Confederacy. The Southern stronghold at Vicksburg—key to control of the Mississippi River—was besieged.

If Lee's veterans now launched another offensive across the Potomac, they might relieve the pressure on Vicksburg; they might even win a decisive victory that would bring peace and independence to the South. Out of such hopes was born the Gettysburg Campaign.

The Army of Northern Virginia began its march on June 3. From Fredericksburg, where they had shielded Richmond from the Army of the Potomac, the long columns headed west through the gaps of the Blue Ridge, then northeast to Pennsylvania in

the sheltered slot of the Shenandoah and Cumberland Valleys.

When Union Gen. Joseph Hooker saw the thin ranks Lee had left behind to screen Richmond, he wanted to strike for the Confederate Capital. But President Lincoln directed him to pursue Lee's army, keeping between the Southern host and Washington.

During Lee's northward march, his main body of cavalry under Gen. J.E.B. Stuart had swung to the east. Union forces in close pursuit cut Stuart off, depriving Lee of the "eyes" of his army. Lacking Stuart's reports, Lee did not know until June 28 that the Union army—now commanded by Gen. George G. Meade—was following him. Then, realizing that a battle was imminent, Lee ordered his scattered forces to concentrate at Cashtown, 8 miles west of Gettysburg.

Two days later, on June 30, Gen. John Buford's Union cavalry contacted a Confederate detachment near Gettysburg, then occupied McPherson Ridge, just west of the town. Thus, groping through the fog of war, the fingertips of the vast armies had chanced to touch at Gettysburg. Now began the race to concentrate winning power.

Early on July 1, Buford's pickets opened fire on the Confederate vanguard approaching from Cashtown. Soon the Union cavalry was reinforced by Gen. John F. Reynolds' infantry. Meanwhile, jamming the roads which converged like spokes on the hub of Gettysburg, dusty columns of both armies pounded toward the sound of the guns.

Until 1 p.m., the Union troops on McPherson Ridge held the attacking Confederates at bay. But suddenly the hills and ridges north of town came alive with charging men. In a concerted attack from west and north the powerful Confederate forces smashed into the Union lines.

Back through the town fled the men in blue. Many units fought heroic rearguard actions to protect their retreating comrades. By 5:30 p.m., the Union remnants were hurriedly entrenching south of Gettysburg on Cemetery Hill, where Generals Winfield Scott Hancock—a rock in adversity—and O. O. Howard rallied their shattered ranks.

At the sound of the cannonade, General Lee had

hastened to the front. He watched the Federals stream toward the hills south of town and begin their entrenchments. Though aware that their position was a strong one, he believed it could be crushed by attacking Culp's Hill or Cemetery Ridge, the southerly extension of Cemetery Hill.

By dawn, July 2, Lee's army was poised before the hook-shaped Union line; he hoped to break it before Meade's entire force reached the field. His plan of attack called for Gen. James Longstreet to assault the Union left on Cemetery Ridge. To aid the main attack, Gen. Richard Ewell's men would advance on Cemetery and Culp's Hills, at the right of the Union line.

Delay dogged Confederate preparations, and the morning wore away; with it went Lee's hopes for an early attack.

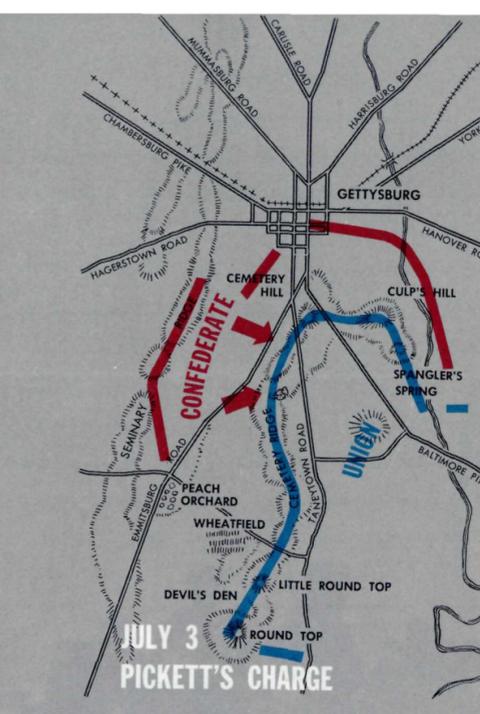
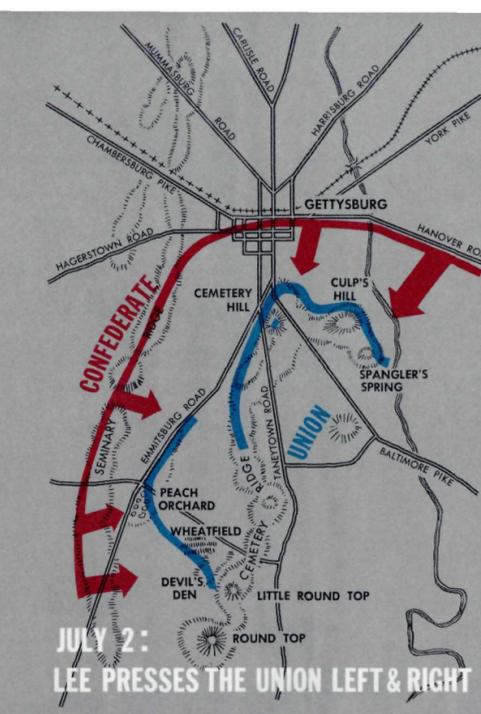
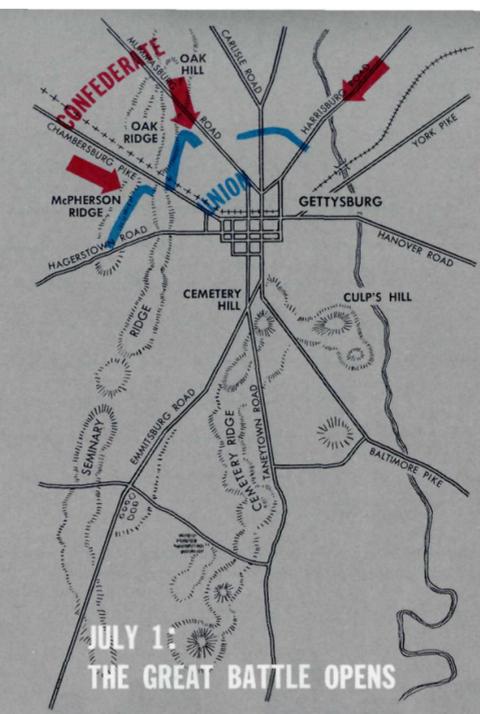
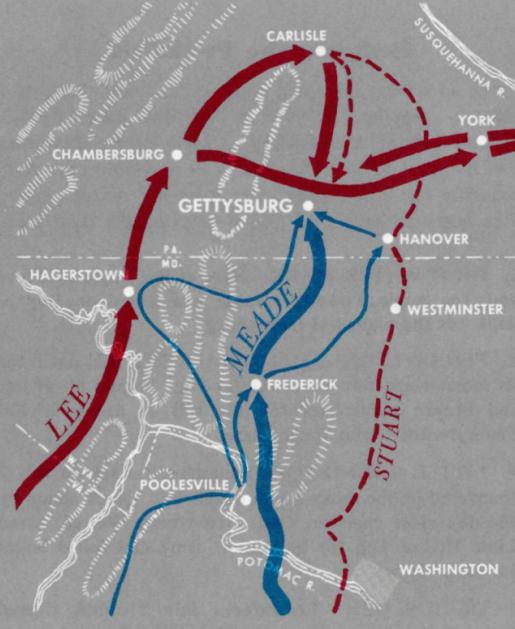
Just after noon, Union Gen. Daniel Sickles pushed his troops westward from Cemetery Ridge. His new line formed a salient with its apex at the Peach Orchard on the Emmitsburg Road. This powerful intrusion further complicated Lee's attack plan.

Finally, at 4 p.m., Longstreet's batteries broke the silence. Gen. John B. Hood's division struck the Union flank at the Round Tops, Devil's Den, and the Wheatfield; close on his left, Lafayette McLaws' men charged the Union salient at the Peach Orchard. Farther north, R. H. Anderson's division struck the Emmitsburg Road. By sundown, the Confederates had completely shattered the Union salient.

But to the north, Ewell's attack on Cemetery and Culp's Hills had bogged down. Though individual units had been desperately brave, the attack failed for lack of coordination. Spangler's Spring and the Union works just north of it were captured after dark, but the main Union line stood unbroken. Except for the isolated struggle to the north, darkness ended the fighting and blotted from view the corpses that signified the day's work.

Though partially successful, Lee had lost the race to win a decisive victory while still holding the advantage of numbers. Throughout July 2, fresh infantry had filed into Meade's line and new batteries had wheeled into place. Facing Lee now, in a position growing ever stronger, was the entire Army of the Potomac.

THE GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN



July 3 broke with the thunder of Union guns near Spangler's Spring and Culp's Hill. After a furious struggle, the Federals recaptured the spring, erasing the threat to their right flank.

Meanwhile, Lee decided that further attacks against the strong Federal flanks were not feasible. To retain the initiative he decided upon a massive frontal assault against Meade's center. A breakthrough there would cut the Federal army in half and might open the way to that decisive victory the Confederacy needed.

His fighting blood up, Lee waved aside Longstreet's objections to a frontal assault against the strong Union line. Pointing to Cemetery Ridge, he exclaimed: "The enemy is there, and I am going to strike him."

Now Lee massed his forces along and in front of Seminary Ridge. J.E.B. Stuart—finally back with the army—began moving his cavalry to a point where he might harass the rear of the Federal army. (This design was thwarted when alert Union cavalry intercepted Stuart.)

Meanwhile, the Federal troops of General Hancock's Corps eyed the Confederate line from behind the stone wall that marked their position on Cemetery Ridge. Near an angle in the wall, an umbrella-shaped copse of trees provided shade for some of the men. These lucky ones might have preferred hot sun elsewhere had they known that the anticipated Confederate attack was to be aimed directly at these trees.

At noon, stillness descended over the battlefield. Men waited in their positions, and the heat grew more intense.

Suddenly at 1 o'clock, 140 Confederate guns in line from the Peach Orchard to the seminary let loose an earth-shaking cannonade. Its objective: To prepare the way for the infantry assault against the Union line on Cemetery Ridge. Federal artillery responded with counterbattery fire, and for a time the massed guns dueling for supremacy. Finally, nearly 2 hours later, the cannonade died away.

Then, reluctant with foreboding, the commander of the assault column, General Longstreet, ordered the advance. With Gen. George Pickett's division on the right and those of James Pettigrew and Isaac

Trimble on the left, nearly 15,000 Confederates moved forward in magnificent array. Union defenders were stunned at sight of the mile-wide column with its scores of regimental flags.

Marching in dressed ranks across the open fields, battered by Union artillery most of the way, the attackers now converged upon Meade's center. Momentarily the long lines were slowed by the rail fence at the Emmitsburg Road, then they rushed up the slope of Cemetery Ridge toward the line of fire erupting from the stone wall.

From front and flank, double canister and rifle volleys assailed the charging line. They crumbled, re-formed, and again pressed forward.

Only 150 men led by Gen. Lewis Armistead crossed the stone wall, there to be overcome after savage hand-to-hand fighting. Meanwhile, Federal regiments to the right and to the left of The Angle wheeled in front of the stone wall and delivered a raking fire into the blunted wedge of Confederate attackers. Then came a Union counter-charge that swept the staggering Confederates off Cemetery Ridge—those that could walk. Thousands of dead and wounded remained behind.

The remnants of the great charge sullenly retreated toward the shelter of their guns. There General Lee greeted them, told them to re-form, to rest, and to prepare defenses against a possible Federal counterattack.

Lee's supreme effort had failed. The Copse of Trees on Cemetery Ridge became the High Water Mark where the tide of the Confederacy had "swept to its crest, paused and receded."

It was all over at Gettysburg. Lee's heavy losses precluded further effort by him on this field. And Meade did not reopen the battle.

Late on the afternoon of July 4, Lee began an orderly retreat southwest over the Hagerstown Road and through the mountain pass. Followed cautiously by Meade, Lee crossed the Potomac safely into Virginia on the night of July 13.

The Army of Northern Virginia had escaped, but it had been so cruelly mauled that never again would it invade the North.

In the battle, 75,000 Confederates had been pitted against 97,000 Union troops. Lee lost 28,000 killed, wounded, and captured, as against a Union loss of 23,000.

How soon and seven years ago our fathers
brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, con-
ceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition
that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, test-
ing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived,
and so dedicated, can long survive. We are met
here on a great battlefield of that war. We have
come to dedicate a portion of it as the final rest-
ing place for those who here gave their lives that
this nation might live. It is altogether fitting
and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense we can not dedicate
we can not consecrate we can not hallow this
ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggle
here have consecrated it far above our power
to add or detract. The world will little note,
nor long remember, what we say here, but
can never forget what they did here. It is
for us, the living, rather to be dedicated
here to the unfinished work which they have
thus far, so nobly carried on. 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 the cause for which they here gave
the last full measure of devotion—that
we here highly resolve that these dead
shall not have died in vain; that this
nation shall have a new birth of freedom;
and that this government of the people, by
the people, for the people, shall not perish
from the earth.

The object of the crowd's gaze, Lincoln appears at left in what may be the only photograph of the President at the dedication.
NATIONAL ARCHIVES



LINCOLN AT GETTYSBURG: "A FEW APPROPRIATE REMARKS"

For the townspeople the aftermath of battle was as trying as the struggle itself. Wounded and dying men were crowded into every building. Dead men littered the countryside. Soon after the battle Gov. Andrew Curtin commissioned Attorney David Wills of Gettysburg to purchase a burial ground for the Union dead. Within 6 weeks Wills had chosen 17 acres on Cemetery Hill and reinterment was begun from temporary battlefield graves.

Because of the epic proportions of the battle, it was thought fitting to consecrate the grounds with appropriate ceremonies. That Edward Everett should be the principal speaker signified the dignity of the event. Successively a minister, professor, and statesman, Everett was the outstanding orator of his day, and the dedication was set for November 19 to allow him time to prepare his address. President Lincoln too was invited, but only formally along with a number of other national figures.

When those in charge of the ceremonies learned that Lincoln wished to attend, Wills sent him a personal invitation, requesting that he make "a few appropriate remarks."

Throngs filled the town the day before the ceremony, and the next morning thousands more poured in. The procession to the cemetery was late in getting under way, but by noon the playing of a dirge signaled the start. A prayer was offered. Then Everett arose, surveyed for a moment the distant South Mountain range, and for nearly 2 hours delivered a fine classical oration. President Lincoln next arose and spoke in 2 minutes the 10 sentences that stand as the Nation's noblest utterance.

In contrast to Everett's speech, Lincoln's was startling in its brevity. If Everett by a learned address, rich in historical and classical allusions, lent stateliness to the occasion, Lincoln by his few remarks came closer to the central idea. His words, directed to both North and South, transformed Gettysburg from a scene of carnage into an ideal, giving meaning to the sacrifice of the dead and inspiration to the living.

ABOUT YOUR VISIT The park visitor center, open daily except Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and January 1, is just south of Gettysburg on either U.S. 15 or Pa. 134. Here you can see an orientation program, exhibits, and the famous Gettysburg Cyclorama, a panoramic painting by the French artist Paul Philippoteaux of the climax of Pickett's Charge. Admission to the visitor center is free, but persons 12 years and older must pay 50¢ to view the cyclorama. Family groups (parents and children) are admitted for \$1.50. Licensed guides conduct visitors on a 2-hour complete tour of the park for \$5 or on a 1-hour shorter tour for \$3. Bus groups are guided on a 2-hour tour for \$10. Information on guides is available at the visitor center.

ADMINISTRATION Gettysburg National Military Park, established in 1895 and now covering over 3,000 acres, is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The National Park System, of which this park is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and inspiration of the people. A superintendent, whose address is Gettysburg, Pa. 17325, is in immediate charge of the park.
You can help make your visit and the visit of those who come after you safe and enjoyable by observing the following rules:
SPEED LIMIT is 25 m.p.h.—15 m.p.h. in crowded areas; **PARK** only on the pavement; **DO NOT CLIMB** on cannon and monuments; **PICNIC** only in designated areas; **HELP PRESERVE** all natural and historical features.

Exploring the Battlefield

An absorbing historical experience awaits those who want to tour the battlefield at their own pace. Both a 1-hour walking tour leading to Meade's Headquarters and the High Water Mark and a 2- to 3-hour auto tour covering the entire park start from the visitor center. The text and map that follow describe the auto tour.

1. HIGH WATER MARK. Here at the Copse of Trees and The Angle, Pickett's Charge was halted on July 3. This was the climax at Gettysburg.

2. PENNSYLVANIA MEMORIAL. On a field noted for its monuments, this one is outstanding. Statues of officers and bronze nameplates call the roll of nearly 35,000 Pennsylvanians who fought here.

3. LITTLE ROUND TOP. Longstreet's attack on July 2 foundered on the rocky slopes of this hill. Quick action by Meade's chief engineer, Gen. Gouverneur Warren, saved Little Round Top for the Union army and foiled hopes for early victory.

4. DEVIL'S DEN. Longstreet's July 2 attack cleared Union troops from these boulders. Confederate sharpshooters, one of whose barricades can still be seen, fired on Little Round Top from here.

5. THE WHEATFIELD. Diamonds, Maltese crosses, and trefoils on monuments mark this ground as the field of battle of three Union corps defending against Longstreet's onslaught.

6. THE PEACH ORCHARD. On July 2, General Sickles' Union salient extended from Devil's Den to here, then angled northward on the Emmitsburg Road. Federal batteries from the high ground here bombarded Confederates to the south and west before Longstreet's attack shattered this line.

7. PITZER WOODS. After a skirmish at noon on July 2, the Confederates occupied these woods. Four hours later they attacked and smashed Sickles line along the road three-tenths of a mile to the east.

8. VIRGINIA MEMORIAL. General Lee watched the gallant charge of July 3 from here. And when it failed, he rode forward to the fields in front of you and rallied his men.

9. NORTH CAROLINA MEMORIAL. Along and in front of this ridge, Lee marshalled his forces, among them thousands of North Carolinians, for the supreme effort on July 3.

10. McPHERSON RIDGE. Just beyond McPherson's barn, the Battle of Gettysburg began early on July 1. General John F. Reynolds, whose Union infantry held this line, was killed in the woods to the left.

11. ETERNAL LIGHT PEACE MEMORIAL. This memorial was dedicated in 1938, 75th anniversary of the battle, to "Peace Eternal in a Nation United." Arrival of General Rodes' Confederate division on this hill at 1 p.m. on July 1 threatened Federal forces west and north of Gettysburg.

12. OAK RIDGE. Union troops here held stubbornly against Rodes' advance from Oak Hill to the north on the afternoon of July 1.

13. BARLOW KNOLL. When Jubal Early's Confederates smashed Union defenders here on the afternoon of July 1, the Union line north of Gettysburg collapsed.

From Barlow Knoll, take U.S. 15 toward Gettysburg to the point where it curves right. Just past the curve, turn left on Stratton Street. Continue to East Middle Street, then turn left and drive east one block to East Confederate Avenue (Liberty Street). Turn right on East Confederate Avenue and follow the road to Culp's Hill.

14. CULP'S HILL. At dusk on July 2 Johnson's Confederates unsuccessfully attacked Union troops on Culp's Hill (ahead), advancing over the fields to your left.

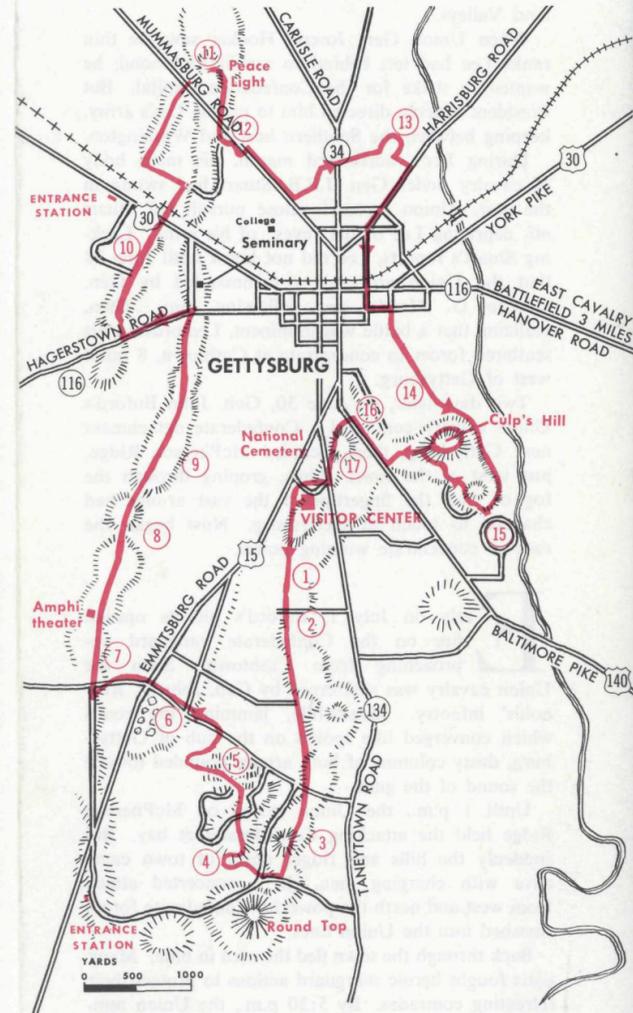
15. SPANGLER'S SPRING. Though repulsed at Culp's Hill, the Confederates seized this spring and the Union earthworks north of it, only to lose them the next morning.

16. CEMETERY HILL. Here Union troops rallied late on July 1. The next evening they repelled a Confederate assault that reached the crest of the hill east of this road.

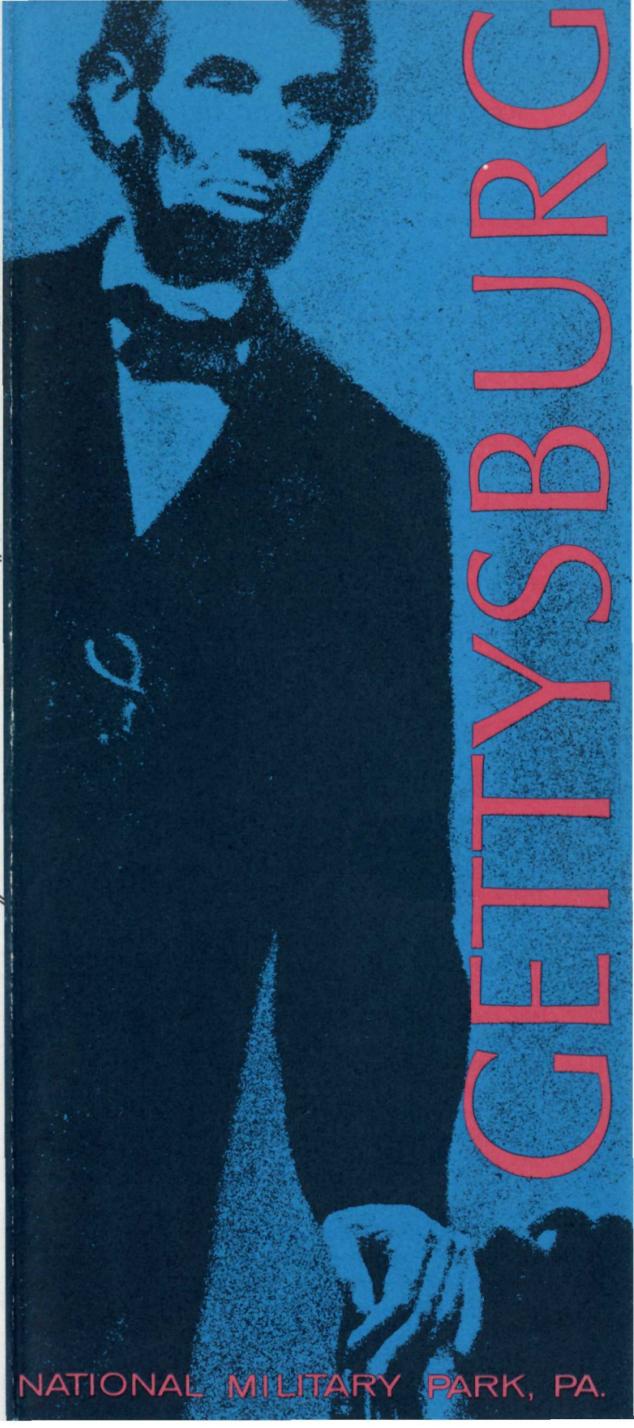
17. NATIONAL CEMETERY. Soldiers' National Monument, commemorating Union dead who fell here, stands on the spot where President Lincoln delivered his Gettysburg Address.

This concludes the auto tour except for the important site at East Cavalry Battlefield, 3 miles east of Gettysburg on Pa. 116. Here Union cavalry under Gen. D. M. Gregg intercepted and defeated J.E.B. Stuart.

AROUND THE BATTLEFIELD BY CAR



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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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