

THE
GETTYSBURG ADDRESS:
MARKING
THE TURNING POINT OF
THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

By Katherine Dang

PRESUPPOSITIONS

- ***The Gettysburg Address*** is America's greatest patriotic utterance
 - widely accepted as a master piece.one of the greatest speeches in American history
 - he most famous address ever given by an American President
 - to a divided audience he spoke of timeless principles which united them
 - Lincoln gave meaning to the sacrifice of the dead and, he gave inspiration to the living.
 - As President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln was bound to protect ***The Constitution*** [the union established by the people]***of the United States*** :
 - Article II, Section I, Clause 8: Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:— “I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.”
 - The Civil War is the consequence of actions of an impatient America, a nation overcome by its youthful pride, passion and impetuosity
 - As President of the United States during The Civil War, Abraham Lincoln possessed unusual ***magnanimity*** not found in the divided nation:
 - “Greatness of mind; that elevation or dignity of soul, which encounters danger and trouble with tranquillity and firmness, which raises the possessor above revenge, and makes him delight in acts of benevolence, which makes him disdain injustice and meanness, and prompts him to sacrifice personal ease, interest and safety for the accomplishment of useful and noble objects.”
 - Lincoln's ***Gettysburg Address*** can only be appreciated by an America on the verge of ***forgetting*** its founding principles, of ***losing*** its reason for existing, and of morally ***perishing*** for lack of vision.
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Lincoln Waged War on Secession, Not Slavery

- “I hold that in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution *the Union* of these States *is perpetual*.”—First Inaugural Address, 1861
 - “The Union is much older than the Constitution. It was formed, in fact, by the *Articles of Association* in 1774. It was matured and continued by *the Declaration of Independence* in 1776. It was further matured, and the faith of all the then thirteen States expressly plighted and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the *Articles of Confederation* in 1778. And finally, in 1787, one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing *the Constitution* was ‘to form a more perfect Union.’”
 - “But *if* destruction of the Union by one or by a part only of the States *be lawfully possible*, the Union is *less* perfect than before the Constitution, having lost the vital element of perpetuity.”
- “Shall fugitives from labor be surrendered by national or by State authority? *The Constitution does not expressly say*. May Congress prohibit slavery in the Territories? The Constitution does not expressly say. *Must* Congress protect slavery in the Territories? *The Constitution does not expressly say*.”
 - From questions of this class spring all our *constitutional controversies*, and we divide upon them into majorities and minorities. If the minority will not acquiesce, the majority must, or the Government must cease. There is no other alternative, for continuing the Government is acquiescence on one side or the other. If a minority in such case will secede rather than acquiesce, *they make a precedent which in turn will divide and ruin them, for a minority of their own will secede from them whenever a majority refuses to be controlled by such minority*. For instance, why may not any portion of a new confederacy a year or two hence arbitrarily secede again, precisely as portions of the present Union now claim to secede from it? All who cherish disunion sentiments are now being educated to the exact temper of doing this.
 - Is there such perfect identity of interests among the States to compose a new union as to produce harmony only and prevent renewed secession?
- “Plainly the central idea of *secession* is the essence of *anarchy*.”
 - A majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations, and always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is *the only true sovereign of a free people*. Whoever rejects it does of necessity fly to anarchy or to despotism. Unanimity is impossible.
 - The rule of a minority, as a permanent arrangement, is wholly inadmissible; so that, rejecting the majority principle, anarchy or despotism in some form is all that is left.

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- Why should there not be *a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people?*
 - Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences, *is either party without faith of being in the right?*
 - If the Almighty Ruler of Nations, with His eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people.
 - I do not forget the position assumed by *some that constitutional questions are to be decided by the Supreme Court*, nor do I deny that such decisions must be binding in any case upon the parties to a suit as to the object of that suit, while they are also entitled to very high respect and consideration in all parallel cases by all other departments of the Government if the policy of the Government
 - *upon vital questions* affecting the whole people is to be irrevocably *fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court*, the instant they are made in ordinary litigation between parties in personal actions *the people will have ceased to be their own rulers*, having to that extent practically resigned their Government into the hands of that eminent tribunal.
 - *Physically speaking, we can not separate.*
 - We can not remove our respective sections from each other nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other, but the different parts of our country can not do this.
 - They can not but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them.
 - Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory *after* separation than *before*?
 - Can *aliens make treaties* easier than *friends can make laws*?
 - Can *treaties* be more *faithfully enforced* between aliens than laws can among friends?
 - Suppose you go to war, you can not fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides and no gain on either, you cease fighting, *the identical old questions*, as to terms of intercourse, are again upon you.
 - The Chief Magistrate derives all his *authority from the people*, and they have referred *none* upon him *to fix terms for the separation of the States.*
 - The people themselves can do this if also they choose, but the Executive as such has nothing to do with it. *His duty is to administer the present Government as it came to his hands and to transmit it unimpaired by him to his successor.*
 - “If I could *save the Union* without freeing any slaves, I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it, and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also so that.” —A. Lincoln, reply to Horace Greely, an editor of the New York Tribune, who published an open letter insisting President Lincoln free the slaves immediately August, 1862
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Civil War Time Line

1861	March 4	Lincoln inaugurated
	April 12	Firing on Fort Sumter, S.C., initiated the Civil War
	June-September	2nd Bull Run Campaign
	July 21	1st Battle of Bull Run
1862	July 13	Lincoln read initial draft of the Emancipation Proclamation to Secretaries Seward and Welles
	July 22	Lincoln discussed Draft of the Emancipation Proclamation at a Cabinet Meeting.
	September	Antietam Campaign
	September 22	Cabinet discussion of Emancipation First printing of preliminary version of Emancipation Proclamation
1863	January 1	Lincoln signed the Final Draft of the Emancipation Proclamation
	April-May	Chancellorsville Campaign
	June-July	<i>Gettysburg Campaign</i>
	November 19	<i>The Gettysburg Address</i>
1864	April 4	Lincoln explained his choices related to emancipation
	May-December	The March Toward Richmond
	May 5-7	Grant's Wilderness Campaign
	May 7-20	Battle of Spotsylvania
	June '64-May '65	Petersburg Campaign
	September 1	Fall of Atlanta
November 8	Lincoln Re-Elected	
1865	April 9	General Lee surrendered
	April 14	Lincoln assassinated.

The Gettysburg Campaign

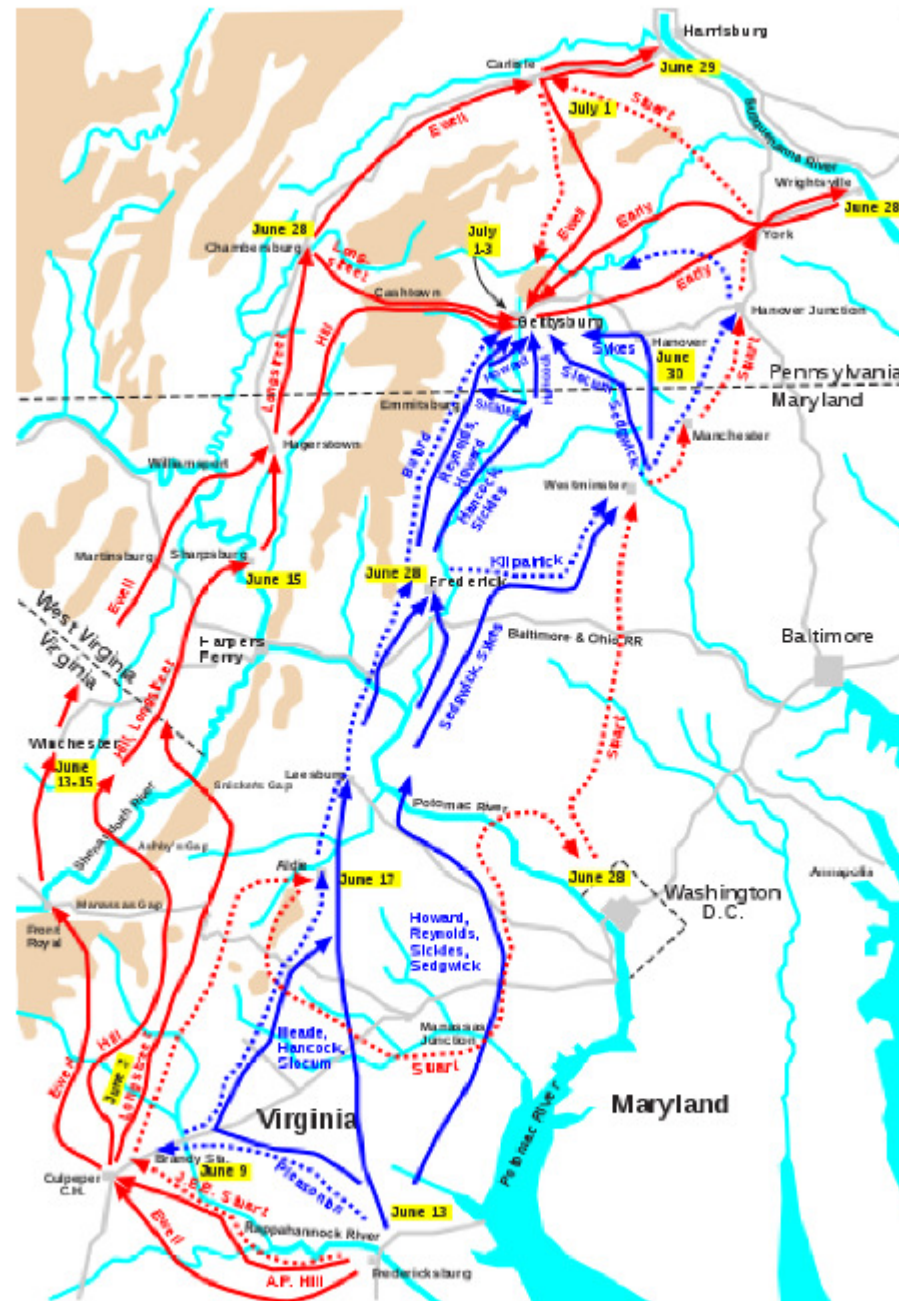
In June, Robert E. Lee decided to take the war north. He planned to destroy the railroad bridge at Harrisburg, then “turn my attention to Philadelphia, Baltimore, or Washington as may seem best for our interest.” After the long march north, Confederate troops were spread from Chambersburg, through Carlisle, and into York.

Towns across southern Pennsylvania were being “explored” for much needed supplies to continue the Southern offensive. While looking in Gettysburg, Pettigrew’s brigade spotted Buford’s cavalry on a ridge a mile west of town.

Of the more than 2,000 land engagements of the Civil War, Gettysburg ranks supreme. At Gettysburg on July 1, 2, and 3, 1863, more men actually fought and more men died than any other battle before or since on North American soil. *The Battle of Gettysburg was the largest and most significant of the war.* Around 160,000 Americans faced each other in what would prove to be a turning point of the Civil War. When it was over, more than 50,000 Americans were dead. The Confederate army brought 75,000 men to the battle, losing 28,000 soldiers. The Union Army brought 90,000 soldiers to the battle, losing 23,000.

Over 172,000 men and 634 cannon had been positioned in an area encompassing 25 square miles. Additionally, an estimated 569 tons of ammunition was expended and, when the battle had ended, 5,000 dead horses and the other wreckage of war presented a scene of terrible devastation.

The Confederacy never recovered from the losses of Gettysburg.



The Three Days of Brutal Battle

July 1	July 2	July 3
<p>General Robert E. Lee's Army Of Northern Virginia and the Union Army Of The Potomac under General George G. Meade met, by chance, when a Confederate brigade sent forward for supplies observed a forward column of Meade's cavalry.</p> <p>Gen. Robert E. Lee concentrated his full strength against Maj. Gen. George G. Meade's Army of the Potomac at the crossroads county seat of Gettysburg. On July 1, Confederate forces converged on the town from west and north, driving Union defenders back through the streets to Cemetery Hill.</p> <p>Out-numbered, the Union forces managed to hold, and even drive the Confederate army back, after the addition of John Reynold's Infantry division (and Reynold's subsequent death on the front lines).</p> <p>They prevailed until afternoon, when they were overpowered by additional southern troops, and driven back through town. In the confusion, thousands of Union soldiers were captured before they could rally on Cemetery Hill, south of town.</p> <p>Long into the night Union troops labored over their defenses while the bulk of Meade's army arrived and took positions.</p>	<p>Lee attempted to envelop the Federals, first striking the Union left flank at the Peach Orchard, Wheatfield, Devil's Den, and the Round Tops with Longstreet's and Hill's divisions, and then attacking the Union right at Culp's and East Cemetery Hills with Ewell's divisions.</p> <p>On the south, James Longstreet's thrust on the Union left broke through D.E. Sickles' advance lines at the Peach Orchard, left the Wheatfield and Plum Run (now known as Bloody Run) strewn with dead and wounded, and turned the rocky area called the "Devils Den", at the base of Little Round Top, into a shambles. Only a very observant General G. K. Warren saved Little Round Top for the Union, when he saw that the strategic hill was unmanned.</p> <p>To the north, R. S. Ewell's attack ultimately proved futile against the entrenched Union right on East Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill, even though they were able to take possession of the southern slope of Culp's Hill on one occasion. <i>The frequent lack of effective communication would prove the downfall of the Confederacy this day.</i> If they had only known that they were only a few hundred yards away from taking the Unions supply trains...if only Rodes had moved through the streets of Gettysburg to aid in the attack on Cemetery Hill...</p>	<p>During the morning , the Confederate infantry were driven from their last toe-hold on Culp's Hill. In the afternoon, after a preliminary artillery bombardment, Lee attacked the Union center on Cemetery Ridge.</p> <p>Then came <i>the climax of the Battle of Gettysburg</i>...with a salute from Longstreet, General George E. Pickett, in a desperate attempt to recapture the partial success of the preceding day, spearheaded one of the most incredible efforts in military history...a massed infantry assault of 15,000 Confederate troops across the open field toward the Union center on Cemetery Ridge. One mile they marched, while being pounded by artillery and rifle fire. Through it all, Pickett's men reached but failed to break the Union line, and the magnificent effort ended in disaster. The tide of the Confederacy had "swept to its crest, paused, and receded."</p> <p>On July 4, Lee began withdrawing his army toward Williamsport on the Potomac River. His train of wounded stretched more than fourteen miles.</p>

The *Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg*, Dedicated, November 19, 1863

- Interring the dead in a dignified and orderly manner became a high priority for the 2,400 inhabitants of Gettysburg.
 - The battlefield contained the bodies of more than **7,500** dead soldiers
 - Local attorney David Wills was the man primarily responsible for acquiring the land, overseeing the construction of the cemetery, and planning its dedication ceremony. With the support of Pennsylvania Governor Andrew Curtin, the site was purchased. Wills, suggesting a National Cemetery to be funded by the states, was authorized to purchase **17** acres for a cemetery to honor those lost in the summer's battle, paying **\$2,475.87** for the land.
 - The Union dead were moved from shallow and inadequate burial sites on the battlefield to the cemetery; **3,512** Union soldiers were buried in the cemetery; of these, **979** are unknown
 - The removal of Confederate dead from the field burial plots was not undertaken until seven years after the battle. From 1870 to 1873, upon the initiative of the Ladies Memorial Associations of Richmond, Raleigh, Savannah, and Charleston, **3,320** bodies were dug up and sent to cemeteries in those cities for reburial, **2,935** being interred in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond. Seventy-three bodies were reburied in home cemeteries.
 - The cemetery became a National Cemetery on May 1, 1872, and its control was transferred to the War Department.
- The design of the cemetery
 - By the landscape architect William Saunders
 - First, the Soldiers National Monument was placed at the center, promoting the Union victory and the valor of the fallen soldiers
 - Second, the graves were arranged in a series of semi-circles around the monument, emphasizing the fundamental egalitarian nature of U.S. society, with all the graves considered equal.
 - The graves are grouped by state, with two sections for unknowns and one section for the regular army
- The dedication ceremonies
 - The main speaker at the ceremony was Edward Everett, but it was here that Abraham Lincoln delivered his most famous speech, the Gettysburg Address: "I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion, in two hours, as you did in two minutes," Edward Everett, the national authority on rhetoric and oration
 - Lincoln received formal notice of his invitation to participate only seventeen days before the ceremony, while Everett had been invited 40 days earlier. Wills's letter "made it equally clear to the president that *he would have only a small part in the ceremonies*"
 - Approximately 15,000 people are estimated to have attended the ceremony, including the sitting governors of six of the 24 Union states

Timeless Glory and Dream of America

• The *glory* that is America's

- “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 created equal*.
 - Americans *are* uniquely *united* in [related by] common *sacred* principles, history, trials, problems, and grounds for resolution
 - An undergirding principle of *The Constitution of the United States* along *with* another principle that “*governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed*”, *the principle of self government*

• A *national purpose* for the living

- “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*.
 - thinking of ourselves as a nation, as one people, acting from a national perspective rather than from a geographic, economic or local views; no issue can be so important as to destroy a union with a cause as just as America's
 - this war will make or break what past generations had worked to create, *a far greater problem* than deciding whether or not slavery will be tolerated, but *whether* “*that nation* [of ours], or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, *can long endure*”.
 - The great *solution is* to dedicate [devote] ourselves to the unfinished work of *preserving our nation*.

• The *practical dream* that is America's

- “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 [self government] shall not perish from the earth.”
 - “a new birth of freedom”, enlarged understanding of what it means to be *free from the control of another*
 - to expand farther than ever before America's great and worthy cause of securing individual life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness *through* self government
 - the task of preserving [saving from injury, sustaining and upholding, keeping and defending from corruption] America remains unfinished

CONCLUSIONS

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- Lincoln skilfully molded public opinion of the war for history, succinctly laying out *a rationale for Union victory*, with the idea of preservation of self-government at its center.
 - In two minutes Lincoln was able to give them all pride, consoling, purpose, hope and a united goal.
 - The structure and language were strategically *planned* based on the time, place current situation in order *to effectively explain Lincoln's purpose and persuade unified support for it*.
 - Avoids any mention of the institution of slavery, the South, the Union, or the Emancipation Proclamation. Instead, these issues are addressed indirectly by the speech
 - Made the Battle of Gettysburg significant in leading minds to equate the death of the thousands with “a new birth of freedom” for the United States.
 - Lincoln's *understanding of what the divided, grieving people of this nation needed* was the key element in the success of his oration. Something no one had been able to achieve since the beginning of the separation of the North and South long before the war.
 - In his *Gettysburg Address*, President Abraham Lincoln reminds *all* Americans of their unique history, responsibility and practicable ideals
 - *The Gettysburg Address* is an appeal to humanity to preserve self government, liberty, and justice for all time.
 - Lincoln made sure that his words could understood by all.
 - Americans *are growing into* the Constitution
 - The Constitution is designed for the government of rational, free thinking, magnanimous men and not for the intellectually immature, who are susceptible to the influence of others and are slaves to their own passions
 - The Constitution appeals to *a people who live* to promote liberty and prosperity *for posterity*.
 - The essential challenges facing succeeding generations of a nation “conceived in Liberty” are
 - ignoring the history of liberty
 - learning to distinguish the business of local self government from the business of the nation.
 - retaining as much of their own power and self government secured to them under *The Constitution*
 - upholding the decisions made by “We the people” in Congress assembled
 - letting the politics of party or issues divide them from the principles of *The Constitution*
-