

# No End in Sight

## MAIN IDEA

In the first two years of the war, neither side gained a decisive victory over the other.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

A long war can cause much death and destruction and leave a bitter legacy.

## TERMS & NAMES

Ulysses S. Grant  
Battle of Shiloh  
cavalry  
Seven Days' Battles  
Battle of Antietam

## ONE AMERICAN'S STORY

In the summer of 1861, President Lincoln gave George McClellan command of the Union army in the East. The army had recently been defeated at Bull Run. Within months, McClellan restored the soldiers' confidence and organized and trained an army that could defeat the Confederates. But while Lincoln kept urging him to attack Richmond, McClellan kept drilling his troops.

### A VOICE FROM THE PAST

[S]oon as I feel that my army is well organized and well disciplined and strong enough, I will advance and force the Rebels to a battle on a field of my own selection. A long time must elapse before I can do that.

General George McClellan, quoted in *Civil War Journal: The Leaders*

Lincoln said McClellan had “the slows.” While McClellan was stalling in the East, another general was winning victories in the West.

## Union Victories in the West

That victorious Union general in the West was **Ulysses S. Grant**. In civilian life, he had failed at many things. But Grant had a simple strategy of war: “Find out where your enemy is, get at him as soon as you can, strike at him as hard as you can, and keep moving on.”

In February 1862, Grant made a bold move to take Tennessee. Using ironclad gunboats, Grant's forces captured two Confederate river forts. These were Fort Henry on the Tennessee and Fort Donelson on the nearby Cumberland. (See map on next page.) The seizure of Fort Henry opened up a river highway into the heart of the South. Union gunboats could now travel on the river as far as northern Alabama. When the people of Nashville, Tennessee, heard the forts were lost, they fled the city in panic. A week later, Union troops marched into Nashville.



President Lincoln (right) meets with General McClellan (left) on the Antietam battlefield in 1862.

### Taking Notes

Use your chart to take notes about the battle victories for both sides.

Reasons for fighting	
Advantages	
Disadvantages	
Military strategy	
Battle victories	

## The Battle of Shiloh

After Grant's river victories, Albert S. Johnston, Confederate commander on the Western front, ordered a retreat to Corinth, Mississippi. Grant followed. By early April, Grant's troops had reached Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River. There he waited for more troops from Nashville. Johnston, however, decided to attack before Grant gained reinforcements. Marching his troops north from Corinth on April 6, 1862, Johnston surprised the Union forces near Shiloh Church. The **Battle of Shiloh** in Tennessee turned into the fiercest fighting the Civil War had yet seen.

Commanders on each side rode into the thick of battle to rally their troops. One Union general, William Tecumseh Sherman, had three horses shot out from under him. General Johnston was killed, and the command passed to General Pierre Beauregard. By the end of the day, each side believed that dawn would bring victory.

That night, there was a terrible thunderstorm. Lightning lit up the battlefield, where dead and dying soldiers lay in water and mud. During the night, Union boats ran upriver to ferry fresh troops to Grant's camp. Grant then led an attack at dawn and forced the exhausted Southern troops to retreat.

The cost of the Union victory was staggering. Union casualties at Shiloh numbered over 13,000, about one-fourth of those who had fought. The Confederates lost nearly 11,000 out of 41,000 soldiers. Describing

### ReadingHistory

#### A. Contrasting

How did Grant differ from McClellan as a military leader?

## The Civil War, 1861–1862

### A. Battles of the West



### B. Fall of New Orleans



the piles of mangled bodies, General Sherman wrote home, “The scenes on this field would have cured anybody of war.” Congressmen criticized Grant for the high casualties and urged Lincoln to replace him. But Lincoln replied, “I can’t spare this man—he fights.”

**“I can’t spare this man—he fights.”**

Abraham Lincoln, describing General Grant

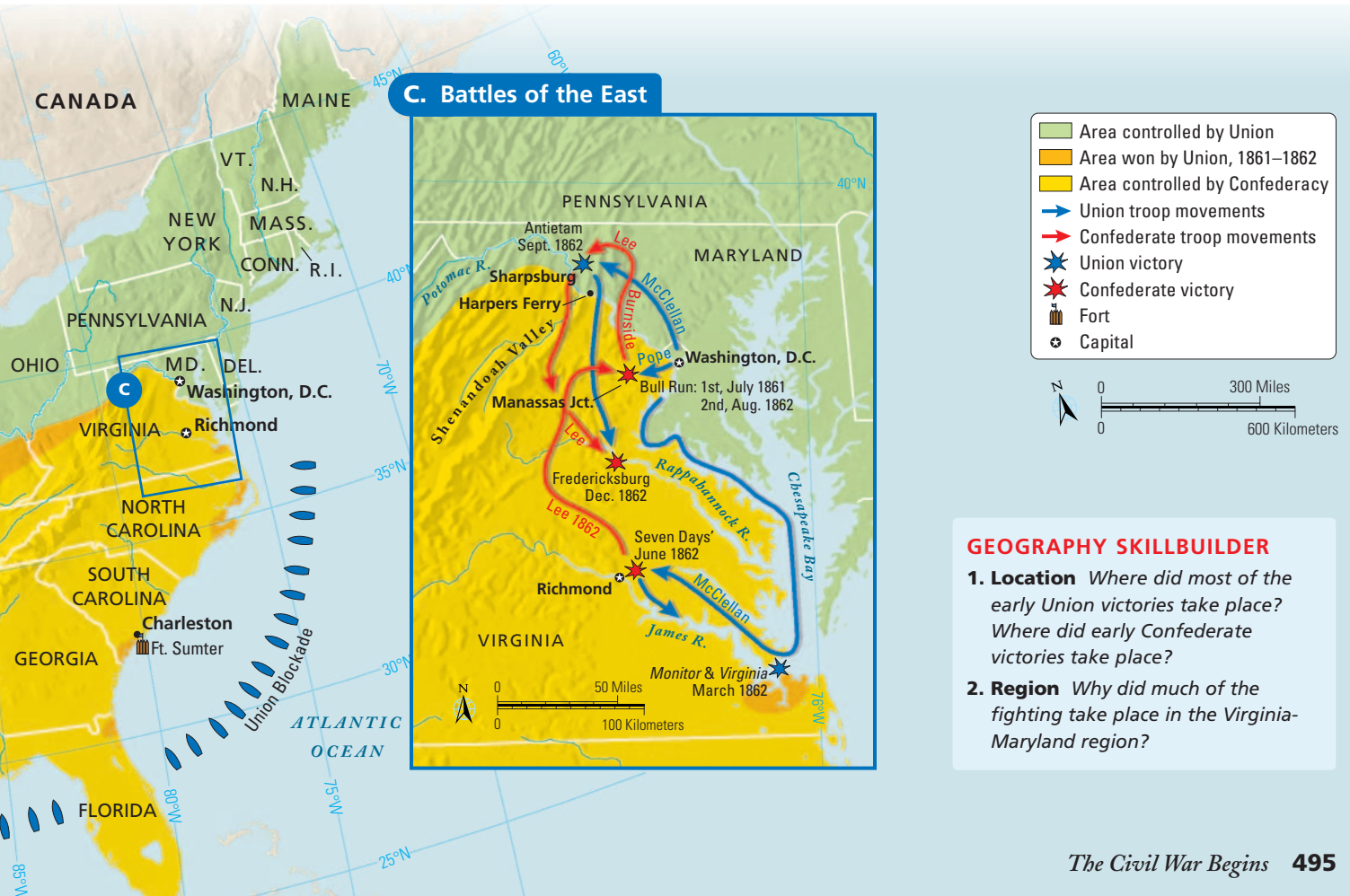
## The Fall of New Orleans

The spring of 1862 brought other bad news for the Confederacy. On April 25, a Union fleet led by David Farragut captured New Orleans, the largest city in the South. Rebel gunboats tried to ram the Union warships and succeeded in sinking one. Farragut’s ships had to run through cannon fire and then dodge burning rafts in order to reach the city. Residents stood on the docks and cursed the Yankee invaders, but they were powerless to stop them.

The fall of New Orleans was a heavy blow to the South. Mary Chesnut of South Carolina, the wife of an aide to President Davis, wrote in her diary, “New Orleans gone—and with it the Confederacy. Are we not cut in two?” Indeed, after the victories of General Grant and Admiral Farragut, only a 150-mile stretch of the Mississippi remained in Southern hands. The Union was well on its way to achieving its goal of cutting the Confederacy in two. But guarding the remaining stretch of the river was the heavily armed Confederate fort at Vicksburg, Mississippi.

### ReadingHistory

**B. Recognizing Effects** Why was the fall of New Orleans significant?



## Lee Claims Victories in the East

Meanwhile, also in the spring of 1862, McClellan finally made his move to try to capture Richmond. He planned to attack the Confederate capital by way of a stretch of land between the York and James rivers. McClellan succeeded in bringing his troops within a few miles of Richmond.

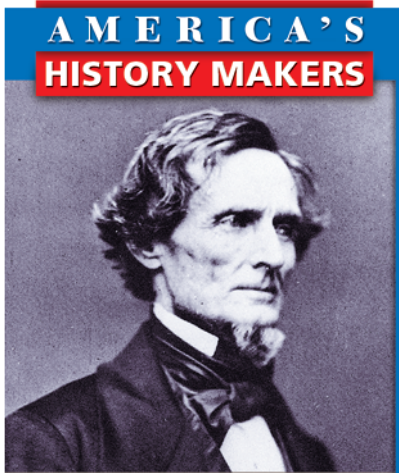
But in June 1862, Robert E. Lee took charge of the Army of Northern Virginia and proceeded to turn the situation around. Lee sent Jeb Stuart and his **cavalry**—soldiers on horseback—to spy on McClellan. With about 1,000 men, Stuart rode around the whole Union army in a few days and reported its size back to Lee. Lee then attacked McClellan's army. The two sides clashed for a week, from June 25 to July 1, 1862, in what became known as the **Seven Days' Battles**. The Army of Northern Virginia suffered heavier losses, but it forced McClellan's army to retreat.

In late August, the Confederates won a second victory at Bull Run, and Union troops withdrew back to Washington. Within just a few months, Lee had ended the Union threat in Virginia.

### ReadingHistory

#### C. Making

**Inferences** How was Lee's appointment fortunate for the South?



## AMERICA'S HISTORY MAKERS

### JEFFERSON DAVIS

1808–1889

Jefferson Davis expected to be given a military command when the Confederacy was formed in 1861. But Davis was chosen President of the Confederacy instead, which stunned and saddened him.

Because of his strong sense of duty and loyalty to the South, Davis accepted the unwelcome post. He had to immediately form a national government and prepare for war at the same time. Davis found it hard to compromise or accept disagreement with his opinions.

**How do the qualities required in a military leader differ from those required in a political leader?**

## Lee Invades the North

Riding a wave of victories, General Lee decided to invade the Union. He wrote to tell President Davis of his plan. Lee thought it was a crucial time, with the North at a low point. Without waiting for Davis's response, Lee crossed the Potomac with his army and invaded Maryland in early September 1862.

Lee had several reasons for taking the war to the North. He hoped a victory in the North might force Lincoln to talk peace. The invasion would give Virginia farmers a rest from war during the harvest season. The Confederates could plunder Northern farms for food.

Lee hoped the invasion would show that the Confederacy could indeed win the war, which might convince Europe to side with the South. By this time, both Britain and France were leaning toward recognizing the Confederacy as a separate nation. They were impressed by Lee's military successes, and their textile industry was now hurting from the lack of Southern cotton.

### ReadingHistory

#### D. Reading a Map

Use the map on page 495 to follow Lee's movements into the North.

## Bloody Antietam

Soon after invading Maryland, Lee drew up a plan for his campaign in the North. A Confederate officer accidentally left a copy of Lee's battle plans wrapped around three cigars at a campsite. When Union troops stopped to rest at the abandoned campsite, a Union soldier stumbled on the plans. The captured plans gave McClellan a chance to stop Lee and his army.



Confederate artillery soldiers lie dead after the Battle of Antietam.

McClellan went on the attack, though he moved slowly as always. On September 17, 1862, at Antietam Creek near Sharpsburg, Maryland, McClellan's army clashed with Lee's. The resulting **Battle of Antietam** was the bloodiest day in all of American history. A Confederate officer later described the battle.

#### A VOICE FROM THE PAST

Again and again . . . by charges and counter-charges, this portion of the field was lost and recovered, until the green corn that grew upon it looked as if it had been struck by a storm of bloody hail. . . . From sheer exhaustion, both sides, like battered and bleeding athletes, seemed willing to rest.

John B. Gordon, quoted in *Voices of the Civil War*

After fighting all day, neither side had gained any ground by nightfall. The only difference was that about 25,000 men were dead or wounded. Lee, who lost as much as one-third of his fighting force, withdrew to Virginia. The cautious McClellan did not follow, missing a chance to finish off the crippled Southern army. Lincoln was so fed up that he fired McClellan in November, 1862. In the next chapter, you will learn about the historic action Lincoln took after the Battle of Antietam.

### Section 3 Assessment

#### 1. Terms & Names

Explain the significance of:

- Ulysses S. Grant
- Battle of Shiloh
- cavalry
- Seven Days' Battles
- Battle of Antietam

#### 2. Using Graphics

Review the section and find five key events to place on a time line as shown.



Which of these events do you think was most important?

#### 3. Main Ideas

- Why were Union victories in the West and the fall of New Orleans significant to the Union cause?
- Why did Lee go on the offensive against the North?
- How did the South's fortunes change after Lee took command of the Army of Northern Virginia?

#### 4. Critical Thinking

**Making Inferences** What does Lee's invasion of the North suggest about his qualities as a general and a leader?

#### THINK ABOUT

- Lee's military skills and style
- the North's resources

#### ACTIVITY OPTIONS

##### GEOGRAPHY

##### ART

Develop a new military strategy for either the North or the South. Show your strategy on a **map** or in a **diagram** of troop movements.