

THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

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GENERAL LEE'S PLAN.

During the month of May, General Lee visited Richmond to discuss with the Confederate government various plans involving political and military considerations. Up to this time, the South had won the major victories, but her resources, both in men and sinews of war, were diminishing, and a prolonged conflict would be disastrous. It was decided that the army should invade the North via the Shenandoah and Cumberland valleys, with Harrisburg as an objective. This route not only afforded a continuous highway but put the army in a position to threaten Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington from the north. The Blue Ridge Mountains to the east would screen the advance, and the rich agricultural section would furnish supplies of food and forage.

The time was propitious. General Lee's army was in the prime of condition. The North was discouraged by losses, distrustful of Lincoln, weary of war. The South believed that one great victory would assure her the friendliness of the leading powers of Europe. Her independence once acknowledged, she could import the materials of war and the necessities of life which she lacked. It was thought certain that at the prospect of invasion the North would withdraw troops from the siege of Vicksburg then being conducted by General Grant. With high hopes the march was begun.



Since 1863 the population of Gettysburg has increased from 2,000 to 5,500

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