

A) Define the Subject: The Battle of Chancellorsville

1) The Union fought under the leadership of General Joseph Hooker, against The Confederacy led by General Robert E. Lee.

2) The Battle lasted from April 26 through May 6, 1863

3) The Battle took place in Chancellorsville, VA in Spotsylvania County. Located west of Fredericksburg, near the Rappahannock River.

B) Review the Strategic Setting.

1) Causes of the Battle of Chancellorsville:

It was a reaction to the Union's loss at Fredericksburg, in hopes the Union could win at Chancellorsville under the leadership of their new General, Gen. Hooker. President Lincoln, along with the war, was becoming unpopular. Lincoln was being pressured for a victory, and the senate was beginning to turn against him.

2) Confederates Objective was to push Union Army out of Virginia, Union's objective as to gain access and cross the Rappahannock, as well as push further into the south. Also so the Union could gain a win to raise the popularity of the war.

3) PERST

a) Union was having problems with their Generals. Secretly a few General's met with President Lincoln to discuss General Burnside's inability to strategically fight. With the loss at Fredericksburg, and the poor decision-making led by Gen. Burnside the Union Troops were feeling demoralized, and lacked motivation.

On the other side, the Confederate soldiers were spirited and stood behind their gallant leader, General Robert E Lee, and Stonewall Jackson. But were being demoralized because of hunger, lack of clothing, and exhaustion.

b) The confederates lacked the economics that the union side had. Therefore their troops often went hungry, and lacked appropriate clothing. The south was not as industrialized as the north therefore had to rely on imported goods, and what profit they could make off trading their crops such as Tobacco, and cotton. If the Union got hold of an important railroad, or port, the south would be in big trouble. The Union had a more stable background for economics and therefore was able to provide soldiers with adequate clothing, and equipment.

c) Religion did not play a major role in this battle.

d) Many Union soldiers were signed up for just a few months, and quickly wanted to get out of there as soon as possible. Others had civilian clothes shipped to them, then snuck away, unnoticed, pretending to be a civilian, or a discharged confederate soldier. Confederate Soldiers were more loyal fighters and believed wholeheartedly in “the cause”. Men from the confederate states were more willing to fight, and even the women and older people of the south contributed everything to winning the war.

e) The Union, since it was the north they had been becoming industrialized and had more factories, and ports to import important materials to be used in making weapons and other equipment. Transportation was more advanced in the north opposed to the south. The north was more technologically advanced than the south therefore had a greater advantage over the Confederates when it came to supplies, communication, and transportation.

4) Confederates defeated Union in the battle of Fredericksburg, during December of 1862, and now pushed Union to the opposite side of the Rappahannock River. The Confederates now occupied Fredericksburg. Generals of the Union complain to President Lincoln about General Burnside’s lack of skill in leadership. Burnside has planned to cross over north of Fredericksburg to attack Confederates in February of 1863. This failed miserably because of poor planning. It rained for many days and as a result General Burnside got stuck in the mud in what is known as the “mud march”. Shortly after that President Lincoln let Gen. Burnside know he was not to proceed with any more attacks without letting the President know. General Burnside was furious, and wrote President Lincoln a letter giving him an ultimatum. Either he gets rid of half a dozen generals, or Gen. Burnside would resign. The next day Lincoln told Burnside that he would be replacing him with Gen. Hooker. Once General Hooker took over, he led the Union to attack the Confederates in the Battle of Chancellorsville.

### C. Describe the Action

1) Area around Chancellorsville was heavily wooded and dense. Around Fredericksburg, where The Confederates were occupying, hills and banks were created

that provided good cover and concealment and made it easy to defend. The weather made it difficult, it was very cold in the winter months, and into spring it often rained which made everything muddy, and hard to maneuver through. The Rappahannock River posed some difficulty to cross without being seen, but also provided a barrier between troops. The intense woods around this area made it difficult to maneuver, and impossible for the cavalry to go through.

2) Union troops were better outfitted with weapons, clothes, ammunition, and other equipment, than the poor Confederate troops. But the Confederates had a higher moral and greater loyalty due to the better leadership they had. The Union had many more soldiers, but did not prove to be useful in this battle. Compare about 134,000 of Union to about 60,00 Confederates (Sears, 130).

3) General Hooker of the Union wanted to divide his troops and leave one part across the Rappahannock River near Fredericksburg, and the other cross the Rappahannock far up stream near Kelly's Ford, or the Rappahannock Bridge, and move down the Orange Turnpike into Chancellorsville and attack Lee's rear, flanking him.

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

General Lee's plan was to occupy Fredericksburg and wait for The Union Army to attack, and then gain the initiative by secretly sending Gen. Jackson to flank the Union side that was already to be flanking the Confederates.

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

4) At the Start of the battle each force was located across from each other on the Rappahannock River. Confederates occupied Fredericksburg, while Union occupied land across from them, over the river.

5) Chronological Order of Events:

General Hooker took over as the General for the Union

April 26- 2 Corps of Union began crossing the Rappahannock River in order to distract The Confederates while the rest crossed way above to flank the Confederates side.

April 29- The 3 Corps not at Fredericksburg crossed north up the River at Kelley's Ford. He then split his force, the cavalry went towards the west, while the army stayed and protected Getmanna and Ely's Fords.

April 30- Lee hears word of what union is doing and reacts by dividing his troops into two. Leaving one at Fredericksburg and the other to move toward Chancellorsville

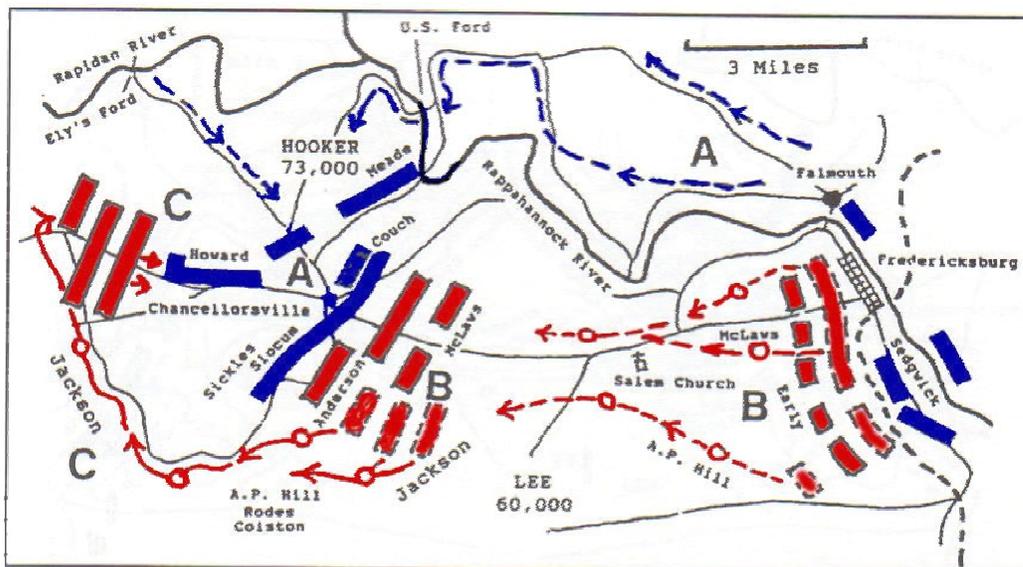
May 1- Hooker met with Lee's forces and Hooker retreated back into what is known as "The Wilderness", a dense wood surrounding Chancellorsville.

May 2- Lee divides his troops yet again, and sends Jackson around to flank Hooker's right side. 2 hours before dusk, Jackson attacks the surprised Union, but because of dense woods and nightfall, confusion sets in and the two Confederate lines become entangled. Jackson later tries to regroup, but is accidentally shot by his own man, which would later end his life.

May 3- General Stuart takes over for Jackson and reunites the troops with Lee's. General Lee gets word that the troops he left to defend Fredericksburg are being overrun, and his attention is diverted from this battle.

May 3-5- Fighting continues and Lee is able to stop Union army from advancing.

May 6- Lee chases Union to retreat across river, and Victory is in the hands of the Confederacy.



6) The Confederacy won. It further pushed union out of Virginia, and further instilled a high spirit for the soldiers of the Confederacy. This battle, however, led to

one of the most bloodiest battles of all time, the battle of Gettysburg. When combining killed, wounded and missing, the union comes out to a total of 17,287, and The Confederacy comes out at 12,463.

#### D) Significance

Hooker crossing the Rappahannock with little notice

1) Hooker thought ahead and distracted Confederate troops, while his troops moved across river in order to flank Gen. Lee.

2) This forced General Lee to think on his feet and, and led the Union to be on the attack, not the defense

3) Splitting troops up is a smart thing to do.

4) Many different leaders of many different platoons, so easy to conduct different efforts of action, but all on the same objective

Lee divides his Troops up once again to flank Hooker's exposed right side.

1) Confederates were able to gain initiative, and force Union to be on the defense

2) Confederates were able to surprise Union and therefore have an advantage.

3) Flanking is one of the most important abilities in the battle field, as well as the element of surprise can gain and great advantage

4) Different battle drills, and techniques use flanking as a way to gain and advantage.

During and ambush, as well, surprise is the key elements against the enemy.

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