

THE REENACTMENT BATTLES

Battle of the Wilderness	
Summary:	<p>This was the opening battle of Grant's Overland Campaign that took place in May and June of 1864 between the Union Army of the Potomac and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. The Battle of the Wilderness began about noon on May 5, 1864, when the Union V Corps under Maj. Gen. Warren (US) engaged Lt. Gen. Ewell's Second Corps (CS) at the edge of a clearing called Saunders Field. Three miles south, Lt. Gen. Hill's Third Corps (CS) battled Maj. Gen. Hancock's Union II Corps (US) on Plank Road. A Division of the VI Corps (US) helped Hancock drive the overmatched Confederate brigades through the forest. At dawn on May 6, Hancock attacked Hill's Corps, who were soon supported by Lt. Gen. Longstreet's First Corps (CS), driving back Hancock's troops. As Longstreet was pursuing Hancock's troops, he was shot and wounded by his own men. Neither side initiated combat on May 7, but fires burning in the forest seared the wounded, trapped between the lines.</p>
Dates:	May 5-7, 1864
Location:	Spotsylvania County, Virginia
Result:	Inconclusive. Even though Grant withdrew his troops at the end of the battle, he continued his offensive toward the crossroads of the Spotsylvania Courthouse.
Commanders:	Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and Maj. Gen. George G. Meade (US) General Robert E. Lee (CS)
Forces Engaged:	101,895 (US) 61,025 (CS)
USA Casualties:	2,246 killed; 12,037 wounded; 3,383 captured/missing
CSA Casualties:	1,495 killed; 7,928 wounded; 1,702 captured/missing

Battle of Spotsylvania Court House

Summary:	After the Battle of the Wilderness, Lt. Gen. Grant and Major Gen. Meade continued the Overland Campaign toward Richmond, but were stalled almost immediately for two weeks in a series of combats at Spotsylvania Court House. One of the longest sustained close-quarters combats of the war took place on May 12-13 in an attempt by Grant to break through a weakness in Lee's line at Mule Shoe. Known as the Bloody Angle for the angle between the Union II and VI Corps, it was remembered by soldiers on both sides as one of the darkest days of the war. Continuous fighting lasted nearly 20 hours. In the end, Lee's men retreated to a fallback line. Grant was unable to penetrate, and moved to the southeast along roads Lee was unable to block.
Dates:	May 8-21, 1864
Location:	Spotsylvania County, Virginia
Result:	Inconclusive
Commanders:	Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and Maj. Gen. George G. Meade (US) General Robert E. Lee (CS)
Forces Engaged:	100,000 (US) 52,000 (CS)
USA Casualties:	2,725 killed; 13,416 wounded; 2,258 captured/missing
CSA Casualties:	1,467 killed; 6,235 wounded; 5,719 captured/missing

Battle of Cold Harbor

Summary:	<p>Up until this battle, Lee was only able to stall, but not stop Grant's Overland Campaign as it moved toward Richmond. The crossroads at Old Cold Harbor were a significant strategic point in that, if controlled by Grant, would have allowed easy access to Richmond and Lee's rear areas. On May 31, Maj. Gen. Sheridan's Cavalry (US) captured the crossroads, and held off an assault by Maj. Gen. Kershaw and Maj. Gen. Hoke on June 1. Union troop movements on June 1 and 2 allowed Lee's army time to strengthen his defenses. In the early morning of June 3, nearly 50,000 troops from the Union II, VI and XVIII Corps, began a major assault, only to be slaughtered by the well-entrenched Confederate army. Later in his memoirs, Grant said it was the only attack he wished he had never ordered. June 4-12 saw trench warfare with many more casualties, but without any major attacks. At that point, Grant abandoned the campaign toward Richmond, deciding instead on moving his troops toward Petersburg. This was the final victory won by Lee's army during the war.</p>
Dates:	May 31-June 12, 1864
Location:	Hanover County, Virginia
Result:	Confederate Victory
Commanders:	Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and Maj. Gen. George G. Meade (US) General Robert E. Lee (CS)
Forces Engaged:	108,000 (US) 62,000 (CS)
USA Casualties:	1,844 killed; 9,077 wounded; 1,816 captured/missing
CSA Casualties:	83 killed; 3,380 wounded; 1,132 captured/missing

Battle of Saylor's Creek

Summary:	At the end of the Appomattox campaign, on April 6, 1865, Maj. Gen. Sheridan's Cavalry and elements of the II and VI Corps cut off two Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia (CS) under Lt Gen. Anderson and Lt. Gen Ewell, who were retreating from Richmond and Petersburg. Watching from nearby, Lee exclaimed, "My God! Has the army been dissolved?" By dusk, Lee had lost over 8,000 troops, including 8 generals. Seventy-two hours later, Lee surrendered at Appomattox.
Dates:	April 6, 1865
Location:	Amelia County, Prince Edward County, and Nottoway County, Virginia
Result:	Union Victory
Commanders:	Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan (US) Lt. Gen. Richard Ewell and Maj. Gen. John B. Gordon (CS)
Forces Engaged:	15-16,000 (US) 11,500 (CS)
USA Casualties:	1,148
CSA Casualties:	7,700 captured – Unknown number killed or wounded