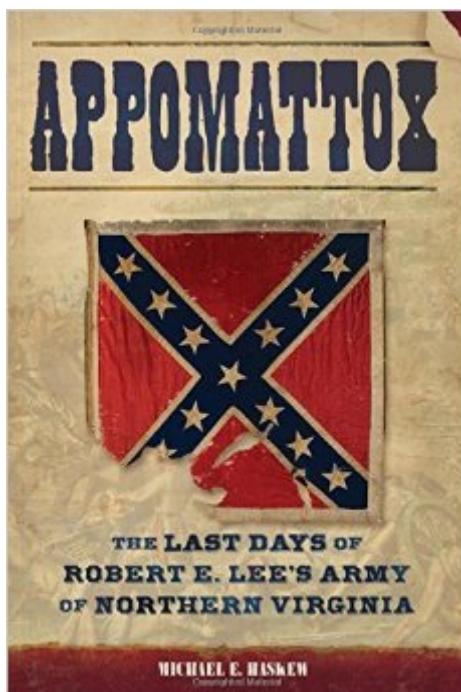


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Appomattox: The Last Days Of Robert E. Lee's Army Of Northern Virginia



Synopsis

They endured hardship and deprivation as they fought for their home and ideals - relive the final days of the Army of Northern Virginia. *Appomattox: The Last Days of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia* encompasses the defense and evacuation of the Confederate capital of Richmond, the horrific combat in the trenches of Petersburg, General Robert E. Lee's withdrawal toward the Carolinas in his forlorn hope of a rendezvous with General Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee to carry on the fight, the relentless pursuit of Union forces, and the ultimate realization that further resistance against overwhelming odds was futile. The Army of Northern Virginia was the fighting soul of the Confederacy in the Eastern Theater of the Civil War. From its inception, it fought against overwhelming odds. Union forces might have occupied territory, but as long as the Confederate army was active in the field, the rebellion was alive. Through four years of bitter conflict, the Army of Northern Virginia and its longtime commander, General Robert E. Lee, became the stuff of legend. By April 1865, its days were numbered. There are many stories of heroism and sacrifice, both Union and Confederate, during the Civil War, and Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia wrote their own epic chapter. Author Michael E. Haskew, a researcher, writer, and editor of many military history subjects for over twenty years, puts the hardship and deprivation suffered by this Army's soldiers while defending their home and ideals into proper perspective.

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General Lee posed

for this portrait by photographer Julian Vannerson in March 1864. Within days, Lee was in the field with the Army of Northern Virginia countering the offensive thrust of General Ulysses S.

Grant's Federal armies during the Overland Campaign, which culminated with the Siege of Petersburg. The siege lasted nearly ten months and significantly eroded the fighting capability of

Lee's army. Library of Congress General Ulysses S. Grant took command of all Union

armies in the field in March 1864. He chose to make his headquarters on the march with the forces that eventually compelled Gen. Robert E. Lee and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia to

surrender. Grant's tactics differed from his predecessors in that he chose to maintain the offensive against Lee even while absorbing staggering casualties. This photo was taken after the Civil War ended, probably during Grant's second term as President of the United States.

Library of Congress Delivering his second inaugural address from the Capitol on March 4, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln stands before a large crowd and urges "malice toward none,

charity for all". Later that month, Lincoln traveled to the Union supply base at City Point, Virginia, to confer with Generals Grant and Sherman and remained there for two weeks. During that time, he visited war-torn Petersburg and the Confederate capital at Richmond after the city fell on

April 3, 1865. Library of Congress The bustling Union supply depot at City Point, Virginia, served as the distribution point for the men and materiel that defeated the Army of Northern Virginia in the spring of 1865. This image, taken by photographer Andrew J. Russell, depicts the City Point railroad station and a view of the wharf near the confluence of the James and Appomattox rivers. The historic meeting between President Abraham Lincoln and Generals Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman took place at City Point in late March 1865. Library of Congress

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A significant section

of the business district of Richmond was looted and burned during the chaos of April 2, 1865, as government officials, military personnel, and ordinary citizens fled the Confederate capital city. This photograph by Andrew J. Russell shows Union soldiers amid the ruins of the devastated area.

When the first Union troops entered Richmond, many of them were put to work fighting the fires and restoring order. Library of Congress In this photograph by Timothy O'Sullivan, the

impressive High Bridge belonging to the South Side Railroad stretches across the Appomattox River near Farmville, Virginia. The failure of Confederate troops to destroy the High Bridge allowed Union troops to cross the Appomattox in pursuit of the Army of Northern Virginia without the appreciable delay for which Gen. Robert E. Lee had hoped. Library of Congress Lieutenant General James

Longstreet commanded I Corps, Army of Northern Virginia for much of the Civil War. He was Robert

E. Lee's senior corps commander, and Lee's affection for Longstreet was readily apparent, referring to the corps commander as his "Old War Horse". Due to Longstreet's association with the Republican Party and acceptance of government appointments after the war, he became the target of Lost Cause advocates who blamed him for the defeat at Gettysburg and ultimately for the downfall of the Confederacy. Library of Congress The fine brick home of merchant Wilmer McLean was the setting for the meeting between Gens. Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee on Palm Sunday, April 9, 1865, as the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia surrendered to the overwhelming strength and resources of three Union armies arrayed against it. Grant's terms were generous. At the conclusion of the proceedings, Union officers paid McLean for many of the items in the parlor where the meeting had taken place, including candlesticks, an inkwell, and the tables and chairs used by the commanders. Library of Congress

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