**Undaunted by his first failed invasion of the North at the Battle of Antietam, General Robert E. Lee marched into Northern territory again in the summer of 1863, this time into Pennsylvania.** On July 1, the advancing Confederates clashed with the Union’s Army of the Potomac, commanded by **General George G. Meade**, at the crossroads town of Gettysburg. The next day saw even heavier fighting, as the Confederates attacked the Federals on both left and right. On July 3, Lee ordered an attack by fewer than 15,000 troops on the enemy’s center at Cemetery Ridge. The assault, known as “Pickett’s Charge,” managed to pierce the Union lines but eventually failed, at the cost of thousands of rebel casualties, and Lee was forced to withdraw his battered army toward Virginia on July 4. **At the end of a bloody three-day struggle in which more than 50,000 died, Lee was once again forced to retreat. The battle was a resounding victory for the North and a catastrophe for the South.**

**The Battle of Gettysburg was the turning point of the Civil War**. **After failing at Gettysburg, the Confederate troops were on the defensive the rest of the war and the tide had turned permanently against the South.**

