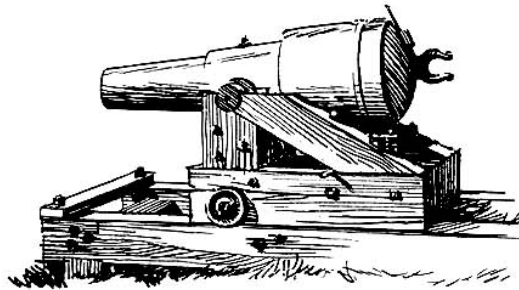


The Beginning of the End for the Rebels: Vicksburg, and the simultaneous repulse of Lee's invasion at the battle of Gettysburg, marked the beginning of the end for the Confederacy. Previously, there had been confidence that victory, although demanding desperate measures, could yet be achieved. Afterward, there was only the hope that the North might sicken of the frightful cost of continuing the war and terminate hostilities.

In the Confederate capital, Gen. Josiah Gorgas, one of the most able of Southern leaders, confided to his diary the implications of the calamitous change in fortune to the South attending the twin disasters of Gettysburg and Vicksburg:

“Events have succeeded one another with disastrous rapidity. One brief month ago we were apparently at the point of success. Lee was in Pennsylvania threatening Harrisburgh, and even Philadelphia. Vicksburgh seemed to laugh all Grant's efforts to scorn. . . . All looked bright. Now the picture is just as somber as it was bright then. Lee failed at Gettysburgh. . . . Vicksburgh and Port Hudson capitulated, surrendering thirty-five thousand men and forty-five thousand arms. It seems incredible that human power could effect such a change in so brief a space. Yesterday we rode on the pinnacle of success—today absolute ruin seems to be our portion. The Confederacy totters to its destruction.”



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VICKSBURG

by William C. Everhart

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