

Robert Lee: A Comprehensive Biography

Robert Edward Lee (January 19, 1807 – October 12, 1870) was an American soldier, educator, and civil engineer who served as a general in the Confederate States Army during the American Civil War.



Robert E. Lee: A Biography: A Biography (Revised)

by Emory M. Thomas

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 866 pages



Lee is widely considered one of the greatest military commanders in American history. He was the son of Revolutionary War hero Henry Lee III and was raised in a wealthy Virginia family. Lee graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1829 and served in the U.S. Army for 32 years. He distinguished himself in the Mexican-American War and served as superintendent of the United States Military Academy from 1852 to 1855.

When the American Civil War broke out in 1861, Lee resigned his commission in the U.S. Army and joined the Confederate States Army. He was appointed commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, which he led

to victory in numerous battles, including the Seven Days Battles, the Second Battle of Bull Run, and the Battle of Chancellorsville. However, Lee's army was defeated at the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863, which marked a turning point in the war.

After the war, Lee served as president of Washington College (now Washington and Lee University) in Lexington, Virginia. He died in 1870 at the age of 63.

Early Life and Family

Robert Edward Lee was born on January 19, 1807, at Stratford Hall Plantation in Westmoreland County, Virginia. He was the fifth of six children born to Henry Lee III and Ann Hill Carter Lee.

Lee's father was a Revolutionary War hero who served as governor of Virginia from 1791 to 1794. His mother was the daughter of Charles Carter, a wealthy Virginia planter.

Lee grew up in a privileged environment. He was educated at home by private tutors and attended the Eastern Shore Academy in Maryland. In 1825, he entered the United States Military Academy at West Point.

Military Career

Lee graduated from West Point in 1829 and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He served in the Corps of Engineers for the next 12 years, during which time he supervised the construction of coastal fortifications and roads.

In 1846, Lee served in the Mexican-American War. He distinguished himself at the Battle of Buena Vista and was promoted to major. After the war, Lee served as superintendent of the United States Military Academy from 1852 to 1855.

The Civil War

When the American Civil War broke out in 1861, Lee resigned his commission in the U.S. Army and joined the Confederate States Army. He was appointed commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, which he led to victory in numerous battles, including the Seven Days Battles, the Second Battle of Bull Run, and the Battle of Chancellorsville.

However, Lee's army was defeated at the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863, which marked a turning point in the war. After Gettysburg, Lee's army was forced to retreat from Pennsylvania and never again crossed the Potomac River.

Lee continued to lead the Army of Northern Virginia until the end of the war. He surrendered to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865.

Post-War Career

After the war, Lee served as president of Washington College (now Washington and Lee University) in Lexington, Virginia. He worked to rebuild the college and to promote reconciliation between the North and the South.

Lee died in 1870 at the age of 63. He is buried in the Lee Chapel on the campus of Washington and Lee University.

Legacy

Robert E. Lee is considered one of the greatest military commanders in American history. He was a brilliant strategist and tactician who led the Army of Northern Virginia to numerous victories. However, Lee's legacy is also controversial due to his role in the Civil War.

Some people believe that Lee was a traitor who fought to preserve slavery. Others believe that he was a noble man who fought for what he believed was right.

Regardless of one's interpretation of his legacy, there is no doubt that Robert E. Lee was a complex and fascinating figure. He was a brilliant military commander, a dedicated educator, and a devoted family man.

Additional Resources

- [Robert E. Lee on History.com](#)
- [Robert E. Lee on Britannica.com](#)
- [Robert E. Lee on CivilWar.org](#)



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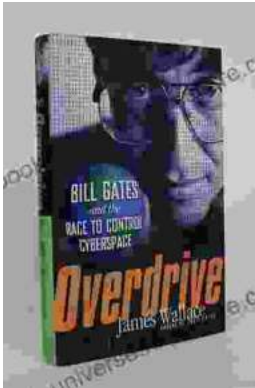
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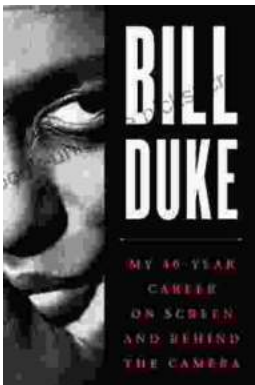
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