



## Gettysburg: Day 2

### July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1863:

Despite their successes during the previous day's battles, July 2<sup>nd</sup> brought many military defeats to Lee's army. Notified earlier in the day that the high ground (Little Round Top) on the Union left flank had no soldiers on it, Lee ordered an attack on the position using soldiers under the command of General James Longstreet. Lee wanted Longstreet's attack on the Union left to weaken the Army of the Potomac's position and so he ordered an attack on the Union right flank on Culp's Hill, at the same time. Lee wanted to take the high ground south of Gettysburg, which looked over the town and capture the Union supply lines because accomplishing these goals would enable him to threaten the Union capital at Washington D.C.. To accomplish these goals, he believed an attack along the Emmitsburg Road was the best decision.

The attack on the Emmitsburg Road began around 4pm as Longstreet's soldiers charged toward the Union lines, using his divisions to attack Little Round Top as well as the stretched out III Corp., under the command of General Dan Sickles, in position at its crest. Meade, understanding the urgency of the situation, quickly marched troops from the north, to the top of the undefended Little Round Top to prevent the Confederates from taking the high ground. Despite the repetitive assaults against Little Round Top on the Union left flank and the surrounding fields at its base, the Union line held. This was because of the advantage of the high ground and General Meade's "fish hook" formation that allowed him to quickly transfer troops from one area of the battlefield, to meet threats in other areas. Around 7pm, Confederate soldiers

under the command of General Richard S. Ewell attacked the Union right flank on Culp's Hill, but a strong Union defense left them bloodily defeated after fierce fighting. At the end of the day, the Union army still had the high ground, while Lee planned his next attack.