**Surrender at Appomattox**

On April 9, 1865, Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered his approximately 28,000 troops to Union General Ulysses S. Grant in the front parlor of Wilmer McLean’s home in Appomattox Court House, Virginia, effectively ending the American Civil War (1861-65).

Days earlier, Lee had abandoned the Confederate capital of Richmond and city of Petersburg, hoping to escape with the remnants of his Army of Northern Virginia, meet up with additional Confederate forces in North Carolina and resume fighting. When Union forces cut off his final retreat, Lee was forced to surrender, finally ending four years of bloody sectional conflict.

Characteristically, Grant arrived in his muddy field uniform while Lee had turned out in full dress attire, complete with sash and sword. Lee asked for the terms of surrender, and Grant hurriedly wrote them out. All officers and men were to be pardoned, and they would be sent home with their private property; most important to the men were their horses, which could be used for a late spring planting. Officers would keep their side arms, and Lee’s starving men would be given Union rations.

Quieting a band that had begun to play in celebration, Grant told his officers, “The war is over. The Rebels are our countrymen again.” Although scattered resistance continued for several weeks, for all practical purposes the Civil War had come to an end.