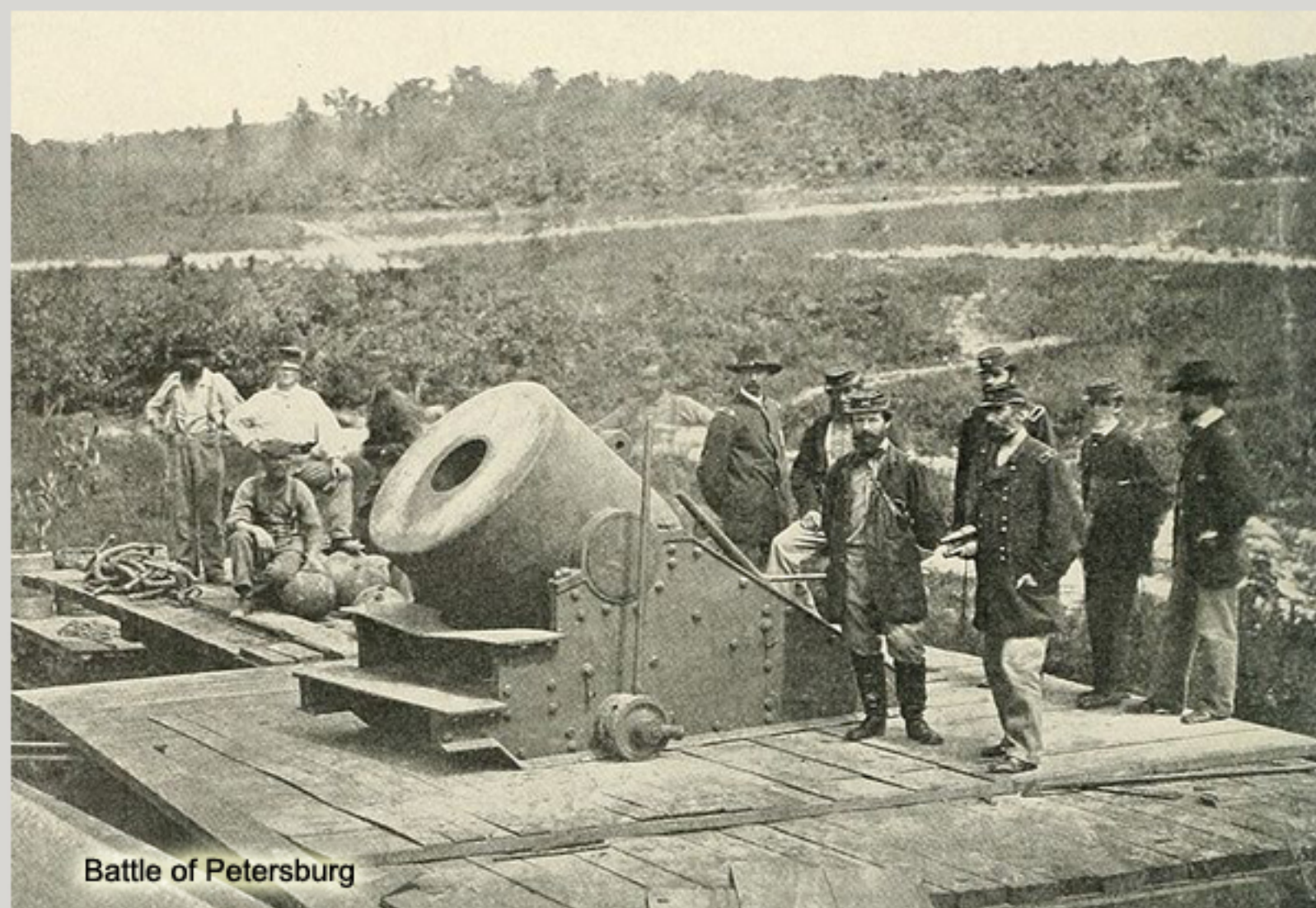


# The Battle of Petersburg, 1864



Battle of Petersburg

The **Richmond–Petersburg Campaign** was a series of battles around Petersburg, Virginia, fought from June 9, 1864, to March 25, 1865, during the American Civil War. Although it is more popularly known as the **Siege of Petersburg**, it was not a classic military siege, in which a city is usually surrounded and all supply lines are cut off, nor was it strictly limited to actions against Petersburg. The campaign was nine months of trench warfare in which Union forces commanded by Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant assaulted Petersburg unsuccessfully and then constructed trench lines that eventually extended over 30 miles (48 km) from the eastern outskirts of Richmond, Virginia, to around the eastern and southern outskirts of Petersburg. Petersburg was crucial to the supply of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's army and the Confederate capital of Richmond. Numerous raids were conducted and battles fought in attempts to cut off the railroad supply lines through Petersburg to Richmond, and many of these caused the lengthening of the trench lines, overloading dwindling Confederate resources.

Lee finally yielded to the overwhelming pressure—the point at which supply lines were finally cut and a true siege would have begun—and abandoned both cities in April 1865, leading to his retreat and surrender at Appomattox Court House. The Siege of Petersburg foreshadowed the trench warfare that was common in World War I, earning it a prominent position in military history. It also featured the war's largest concentration of African American troops, who suffered heavy casualties at such engagements as the Battle of the Crater and Chaffin's Farm.