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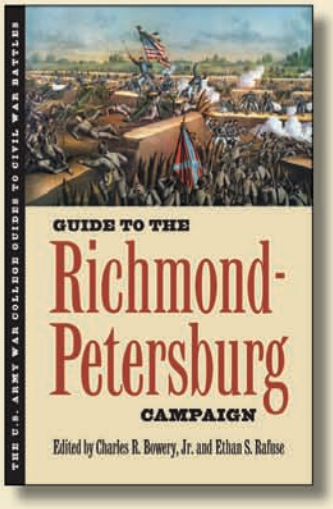

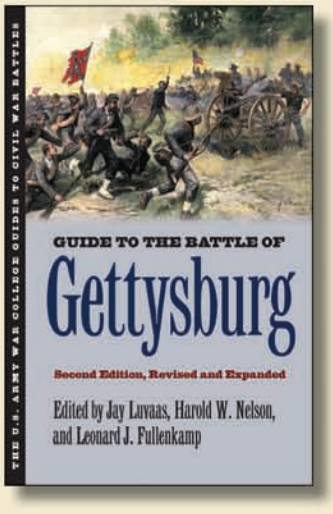

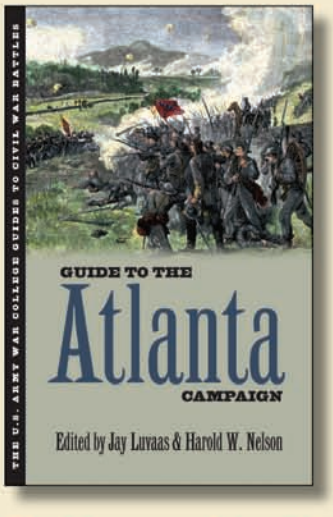

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COVER: In Bradley Schmehl's painting, *Stonewall,* Jackson seems to be contemplating his next attack on Union forces. See story, page 74. Painting © Bradley Schmehl Fine Arts. Used by permission. www.bradleyschmehl.com

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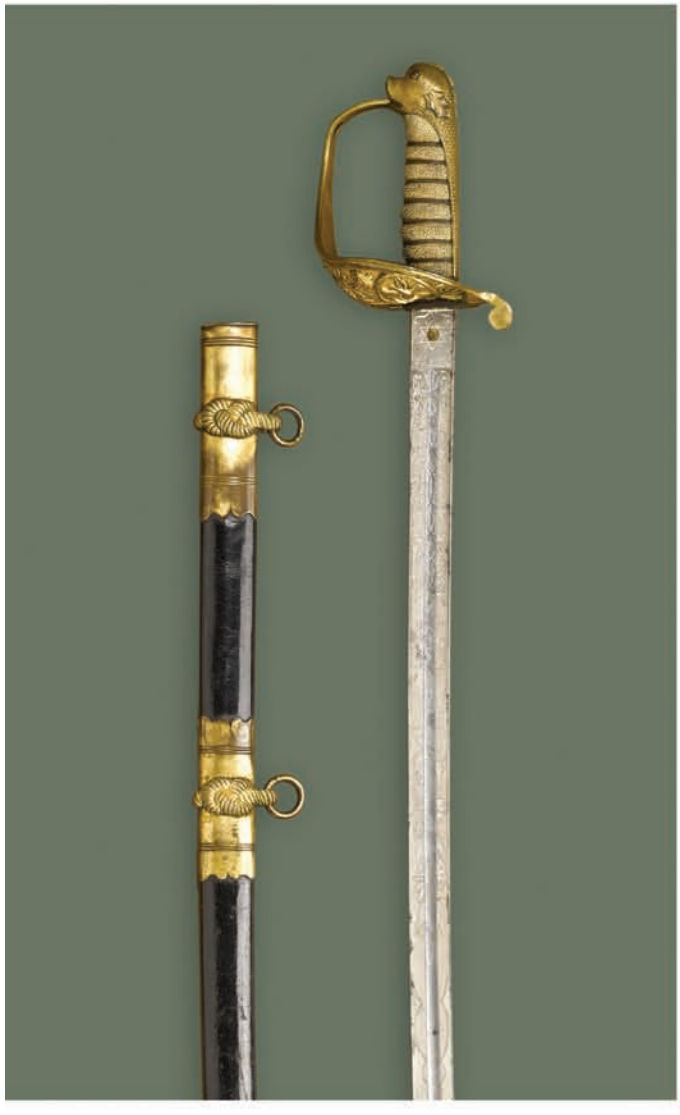

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Editorial

Roy Morris Jr.

Dying generals' last words sometimes depended more on what listeners wanted to hear than on what was actually said.

Although undeniably brave and noble, Union General Robert McCook's parting comments as he lay dying of a gunshot wound in a stranger's bed in south-central Tennessee did not achieve the immortality of other famous last words by Civil War generals. "I am done with life," McCook reportedly told a comrade. "Yes, this ends it all. You and I part now, but the loss of ten thousand such lives as yours and mine would be nothing if their sacrifice would but save such a government as ours."

McCook's last words, suspiciously grandiloquent and self-abnegating for a man shot in the bowels, could not match the homespun poetry of Confederate general Stonewall Jackson's legendary farewell. Jackson, himself dying of the effects of a gunshot wound suffered at the Battle of Chancellorsville, roused himself to mutter poetically, "Let us cross over the river and rest under the shade of the trees." Despite being based on a rather humble childhood memory of coming home one night from a long day of drudgery in a sawmill, Jackson's vaguely biblical words entered the national lexicon as a timeless expression of peace, acceptance, and resignation. Modern writer Ernest Hemingway appropriated the quote as the title for one of his worst novels, Across the River and Into the Trees. One wishes it had been put to better use.

Civil War-era society had a morbid if understandable fascination with death, and it was not uncommon for a dying man's friends and relatives to cluster about his deathbed to record his last earthly statement. Such words, it was believed, were messages from the great beyond. The mystical nature of such messages did not always deter listeners from improving upon or even inventing entirely more suitable parting words. Such was the case of Jackson's old commander, Robert E. Lee.

After suffering a debilitating stroke in September 1870, Lee lingered near death for nearly two weeks at his family home in Lexington, Virginia. Family members attended every groan and sigh from the great general, listening in vain for a last memorable pronouncement. Lee's condition did not permit coherent speech. Biographer Emory Thomas notes that Lee spoke an average of one word per day during the last 12 days of his life. Lee, says Thomas, "may have lived an exemplary life, but he was certainly doing a poor job of dying." Finally, on the last day, the general murmured inscrutably, "I will give that sum." No one knew what he was talking about.

Lee idolator Douglas Southall Freeman, ignoring the direct testimony of Lee's relatives, attending physicians and friends, came up with a more suitable leave-taking for the Confederate icon. In Freeman's version, Lee alternated between pious prayers and crisp, commanding orders such as, "Tell [A.P.] Hill he must come up." According to Freeman, Lee's last words were the simple and majestic "Strike the tent," after which he expired as conveniently and dramatically as the wispy heroine in a Victorian-era melodrama. As the hero in another Hemingway novel says sardonically, "Isn't it pretty to think so?"

Another Civil War general's famous last words were not invented outright, but they were subtly changed for comic purposes. On May 9, 1864, Union Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick was overseeing his troops prior to the Battle of Spotsylvania. Sedgwick became annoyed by what he considered his men's excessive bobbing and weaving in the face of enemy fire. "They couldn't hit an elephant at this distance," Sedgwick grumbled to his staff. A few minutes later, a bullet crashed into Sedgwick's face below the left eye, simultaneously contradicting his recent statement and ending his life. Ever since, jokesters have shortened the general's prosaic last words to the more gruesomely comic, "They couldn't hit an elephant at this dist—." Such, perhaps, is the price of fame.

CIVIL WAR Quarterly

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By James A. Davis

Music—from strident command signals in battle to the serenading lilt of regimental bands in camp—was an integral part of a soldier's life during the Civil War.

WINTER WAS THE calmest period for Civil War soldiers. Knowing that there was no combat immediately looming on the horizon allowed the soldiers to relax and recuperate in ways they had not been able to enjoy before. There was time for playing games, writing letters, taking naps, and exchanging gossip. For a time, at least, the war seemed far away.

Union regimental musicians play a parade ground camp call in the Keith Rocco painting, *The Fifes and Drums.* RIGHT: Samuel W. Doble, a drummer boy in Company D., 12th Maine Infantry.

While the men indulged in moments of free time during winter quarters, their daily regimen was still dictated by the army. This meant that the soldiers' lives were governed by the sounds of the bugles, fifes, and drums that structured the day, and by the sound of drum corps and brass bands that accompanied military ceremonies. Organization was crucial in sustaining and controlling such vast numbers of men. Communication was the backbone of organization, and musicians were at the core of that communication. In Union bugler Oliver Norton's colorful phrase, field musicians were the "mouthpiece for the general." Those who had volunteered for the military had placed themselves under the noisy rule of military musicians, and the sound of camp calls and marches became synonymous with their lives as soldiers.

There were two generic categories of military calls, also known as beats. The first, known as camp calls, were used at specific times of the day to summon soldiers to their duties. These sounded daily whether the men were in camp, garrison, or bivouac. Skirmish calls, on the other hand, governed the martial movements and actions of the troops both in drill and on the battlefield. Camp and skirmish calls could be played by bugle, fife, or drum. In addition, there were short compositions for the drum corps (made up of a unit's fifes and drums) for primary duties such as reveille.

A camp's commanding officer designated the specific hours when camp calls were sounded. The first calls began around sunrise, and the final calls occurred by 9 or 10 PM. According to General Order No. 164, 2nd Division, I Corps of the Army of the Potomac, the daily schedule included reveille at daylight, police call 15 minutes later, surgeon's call at 6 AM, breakfast at 7, guard mounting at 8, drill at 9, and recall at 11. Dinner was scheduled for 12:30 PM, followed by more drill at 2, recall at 4, first call for parade 45 minutes before sunset, and second call 15 minutes before sunset. Tattoo was at 8 PM and Taps at 9:20.

The ranking field musician was usually attached to brigade or division headquarters and conferred with the adjutant to set the calls for the day. It was the ranking musician's responsibility to sound the calls first, which were then echoed in turn by each lower level of musician. The result was a veritable tidal wave of sound that swept over every sol-

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A sharply dressed group of fifers and drummers in the 30th Pennsylvania Infantry poses for the camera. The omnipresent music provoked some grumbling from the soldiers in the ranks.

dier as well as any unlucky civilians within sounding distance of a camp.

Starting from a single note to eventually encompass hundreds of musicians, with staggered entrances overlapping the tune and different instruments joining in, the resulting music was a vibrant combination of color and chaos. It began with a single drummer or bugler at headquarters, then moved to the principle musicians in each regiment, and climaxed when all the field musicians joined the call. The motion was from a single player to an orchestra of field musicians, from the individual to the group, an aural metaphor of soldier life in the army. The calls of the field musicians gave each army structure and unity of purpose that helped weld the various units into an organic whole.

The literal and figurative mixture of solo and ensemble performances corresponded with the intended audiences for the musicians' messages. Each field musician was responsible for issuing commands to a limited number of men. A soldier's primary musical loyalty was to his unit's musicians, and he took his orders from his company drummer or regimental bugler. Inevitably, musicians from numerous different units would be sounding the same call at the same time, transforming a solo performance into a polyphonic choir of calls. The farther away the listener was from camp, the more the calls merged into a homogeneous wall of sound.

There were two such orchestras present in central Virginia in the winter of 1864, one dressed in blue and other in butternut and gray. Due to the compact nature of winter camp, some soldiers were stationed within hearing distance of the enemy's camp and could hear their opponents' daily calls as well as their own. The enemy's music might draw a certain measure of empathy, as all soldiers could sympathize with the insistent commands that resounded from bugles and drums.

Attrition of musicians through sickness, injury, and death severely impacted the functioning of a company or regiment. Competent field musicians required some musical aptitude in addition to military training. It became increasingly difficult to replace experienced field musicians or their instruments as the war progressed. Some companies were forced to do without bugles, drums, or fifes, depending on the fortunes of the unit. While stationed at Gordonsville, William D. Rutherford of the 3rd South Carolina Infantry mentioned that the "drums have just sounded for Dress Parade," perhaps indicating the absence of fifes or a bugler. George Peyton of the 13th Virginia Infantry recorded in his diary: "Had what they call retreat at sundown. They beat the drums and play a tune or two on a fife."

Some units were forced to share field musicians; the three companies that made up the 1st Battalion, New York Sharpshooters, were down to two drummers and three fifers in their drum corps by April 1864. These smaller ensembles produced a sparse sound when compared to the full drum corps that so many regiments featured at the start of the war. On the other hand, plenty of musicians and instruments producing a big sound were sure signs of a large and well-provisioned regiment or brigade.

Both large and small groups of musicians had devoted audiences. While a large brigade would take pride in the musical proficiency of its full band or drum corps, a battle-hardened regiment also took pride in its handful of musicians, knowing that their modest sound was a musical reflection of hardships shared and survived.

Because the bugle, fife, and drum controlled the soldiers' daily lives, the officious notes of the musicians, as well as the musicians themselves, attracted some hostility from the men. After recounting the pain of being woken at 6 AM by the braying of a bugle, William Dane, a private in the Richmond Howitzers, complained: "To be waked up and hauled out about day dawn on a cold, wet, dismal morning, and to have to hustle out and stand shivering at roll call, was about the most exasperating item of the soldier's life. We didn't kill old Crouch [the bugler]. I don't know why, except that he was protected by a special providence, which sometimes permits such evil deeds to go unpunished. We used to hope that he would blow his own brains out, through his bugle, but he didn't—he lived many

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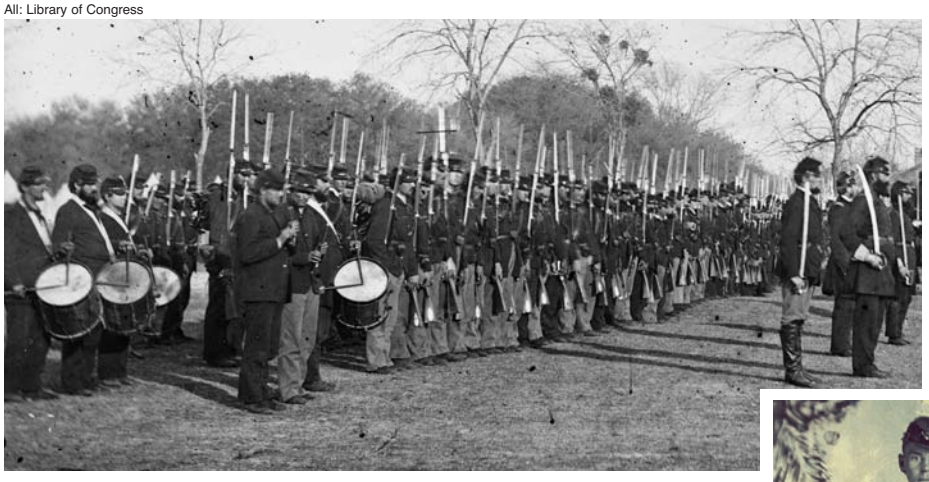


ABOVE: The 50th Pennsylvania Regiment masses to parade through Beaufort, S.C., in February 1862. Musicians form on the flanks. RIGHT: A young Union musician poses with his bugle and his largely ornamental musician's sword.

years after the war."

Others were less accommodating to the field musicians. Cries of "Put the bugler in the guard house!" or "Shoot the bugler!" greeted many musicians on particularly unpleasant mornings. Such was the disdain for field musicians that they received the questionable honor of having a song written about them. The "Upidee Song" presented a sadistic bugler who took great delight in tormenting his colleagues: "He saw, as in their bunks they lay,/ Tra la la! Tra la la!/How soldiers spent the dawning day./Tra la la la la/'There's too much comfort there,' said he, 'And so I'll blow the 'Reveille.'"

More than the mere disruption of sleep created animus against the musicians. Field calls were synonymous with duty—they were orders that could not be ignored. Field instruments had an intentionally penetrating sound that could be hard to take in terms of music. Those new to the instruments' timbres found them painfully loud and alarming. The intrusive power of field music lay not only in the raucous nature of the instruments but also in their incessant presence. This was the image Colonel Mason Tyler Whiting of Massachusetts shared with his civilian brother: "If you had to be drummed out to the notes of that infernal drum three or ten times a day, according as it happens, you would growl, I know, when you heard it beat."

The omnipresent and ferocious sound of fifes, drums and bugles was an indisputable separator between the civilian and soldier worlds coexisting in central Virginia in 1863-64. The constant playing by field musicians was an unavoidable reminder of the perilous reality soldiers now faced and could trigger memories of the gentler life they had left behind. Samuel Potter of Pennsylvania confessed to his wife his desire to be home with her and their children, eating cakes and drinking "catnip tea" while listening to his children sing. "It would sound much better if one of them would call me to dinner or supper than the sound of our bugle making its different calls," he said wistfully. "You may be sure I would prefer the music of home in its different keys."

The brash sounds of field musicians stood in opposition to the normal sounds of nature. Before departing for the Battle of the Wilderness, Confederate Maj. Gen. John B. Gordon noted his surroundings near Brandy Station, Virginia, with an eye toward its natural beauty: "There was not a cloud in the sky, and the broad expanse of meadow-lands on the north side of the little river and the steep wooded hills on the other seemed 'apparelled in celestial light' as the sun rose upon them." Gordon's poetic moment was sadly short lived, as field music intruded into his reverie: "At an early hour, however, the enchantment of the scene was rudely broken by bugles and kettledrums calling Lee's veterans to strike tents and 'fall into line.'"

Not all depictions of field music were negative. Despite its mechanistic functionality, field music was still music and as such could trigger positive responses as well. Gordon, whose meditation on the beauties of nature was so rudely interrupted by the sound of field musicians, could also hear the aesthetic sigh of the music. "A more peaceful scene could scarcely be conceived than that which brought upon our view day after day as the rays of the morning sun fell upon the quiet, wide-spreading Union camp," he wrote, "with its thousands of smoke columns rising like miniature geysers, its fluttering flags marking, at regular intervals, the different divisions, its stillness unbroken save by an occasional drum-beat and the clear ringing notes of bugles sounding the familiar calls."

What separated the two contrasting moments for Gordon was less the sound of the instruments themselves than the message they conveyed. Fifer Harry Kieffer recollected the "peculiar charm" that the drum corps gave to dress parade and the "pleasant tattoo at night" performed by he and his fellows. Jefferson Whitcomb of Massachusetts was even willing to toss a compliment to a performer one pleasant day in April: "Cleaned up round the camp. Bugler very nice."

There was something about the music from field musicians that appealed to the soldiers aside from any specific messages the music conveyed. When remembering the attractions of soldier life, Captain Samuel Craig of Pennsylvania included the musical sounds of the morning. The bugles were "sweet," the fifes were "shrill," and the drums "loud," but somehow they generated a certain fondness as much as they irritated. Ted Barclay, a member of the 4th Virginia Infantry, included field music when answering his sister's concerns for his situation in camp in Orange County, Virginia: "We have a great many friendships of which homefolks are deprived of, for instance you cannot get around one oven in the sociable way and eat your meals, neither are your ears charmed with the rattle of the fife and drum, etc., etc. A soldier is after all not so much to be pitied as you would suppose." Barclay's view was shared by Charles George of the 10th Vermont, who admitted his grudging attachment to the sound: "The drum Corps is just beating

out tattoo—I think I shall miss the drums when this cruel war is over!"

John Esten Cooke was even more inclined to respond positively to field music. The sentimental novelist of the Confederacy was prone to poeticize most of what he saw around him, as seen in his description of the sound of a bugle: "The tattoo, reveille, and stable-call have echoed through the pine woods, making cheerful music in the short, dull days, and the winter nights. It is singular how far you can hear a bugle-note. That one is victor over space, and sends its martial peal through the forest for miles around. There is something in this species of music unlike all others. It sounds the call to combat always to my ears; and speaks of charging squadrons, and the clash of sabres, mingled with the sharp ring of the carbine. But what I hear now is only the stable-call. They have set it to music; and I once heard the daughter of a cavalry officer play it on the piano—a gay little waltz, and merry enough to set the feet of maidens and young men in motion."

The repetitious and orderly nature of camp calls was one of the most obvious ways in which the army imposed its collective will on the social, temporal, and physical environment of the men during winter camp. Field music reminded each soldier that he was a part of a company or regiment and structured his environment. The calls were meant for "us," not "I." The music unified the army as a whole, and the longer the armies stayed in one place, the more stability accrued. It was as if there were one language spoken by the men, said Union veteran Ira Dodds, "The voice of the comradeship of a mighty, invisible host."

Reveille, Tattoo, Taps—each held significant meaning for the soldiers whose lives were now ruled by the sound of field musicians. For the men in uniform, the pieces were an intrinsic part of their new lives, an obtrusive yet necessary voice of the military machine. For better or worse, the sounds of fifes, drums, and bugles became synonymous with their lives as soldiers, symbolizing their years of service as well as the lasting bonds of comradeship that developed between them. For soldiers in both armies, waking every morning to the piercing cry of bugles and the thundering of drums was a potent reminder that the war was always with them, no matter how well they might have slept the night before. □

Confederate Colonel Elijah White's hard-charging 35th Virginia Battalion, nicknamed White's Comanches, overrun Union artillery at the base of Fleetwood Hill during the climax of the Battle of Brandy Station. Painting by Don Troiani.

Cavalry Duel at Brandy Station

BY DAVID A. NORRIS

MAJOR HENRY B. MCCLELLAN SHOULD have had a quiet afternoon. At dawn on June 9, 1863, Union cavalry had launched a surprise attack on Maj. Gen. James Ewell Brown Stuart's forces near Brandy Station, Virginia. Untroubled, the Confederate leader led his men out of camp to deal with the threat, assigning McClellan to remain at their headquarters on Fleetwood Hill. As the recently appointed assistant adjutant general of Stuart's force, McClellan expected to have little more to do than coordinate and relay reports from mounted couriers. All hope for anything like a routine day vanished when McClellan turned to see several thousand Federal horsemen bearing down on Fleetwood Hill.

By mid-1863, Stuart was already a legendary cavalry commander. Born in Virginia in 1833, he graduated from West Point in 1854 and served on the western frontier. In 1859, Stuart took part in capturing John Brown at the arsenal at Harpers Ferry. Joining the Confederacy in 1861, Stuart thrived as a cavalry commander. He had an eccentric fondness for display, wearing a bright yellow sash, a gray cape lined with bright red, and a hat decorated with ostrich plumes. Although a bit of a dandy, Stuart could back up a reputation as a horseback hero. Twice he led his cavalry completely around the Union Army, gathering vital intelligence, tying up thousands of enemy troops, and escaping scot free.

After the Confederate victory at Chancellorsville, Stuart's forces grew, with veteran troops returning from furloughs with new horses to replace those lost in earlier battles. The brigades of Brig. Gen. Beverly Robertson and William E. "Grumble" Jones were added to Stuart's command, and Brig. Gen. Wade Hampton's division came back from detached duty. Also with Stuart were the brigades of W.H.F. "Rooney" Lee and Fitzhugh Lee, the son and nephew of General Robert E. Lee. Under Major Robert F. Beckham, the cavalry division's horse artillery was also augmented, bringing it to five batteries. In June 1863 Stuart's five brigades of cavalry numbered about 9,500 men.

The Army of Northern Virginia moved out of Fredericksburg on June 3, headed for Pennsylvania. Marching south of the Rappahannock, it would pass through Culpeper County on the way to the Shenandoah Valley into Maryland and Pennsylvania. Stuart's cavalry was to screen the army's movements. Early in June, Stuart and his men camped around Brandy Station, six miles east of Culpeper. The cavalry's attention was focused not on the Yankees, but on a grand review scheduled for June 5. Confederate dignitaries, friends, and relatives of Stuart's officers arrived by train from Richmond. Wagons and army ambulances met the trains and brought the audience to the show. Many visitors and officers attended a ball at the courthouse in Culpeper on the night of June 4.

The largest cavalry battle of the Civil War took place at Brandy Station, Virginia, where J.E.B. Stuart's Confederates and Alfred Pleasonton's Federals went at each other with swords flashing and pistols blazing.

At 8 AM, Stuart and his staff rode to the site of the review, a broad rolling plain between Culpeper and Brandy Station. Trumpets sounded as Stuart rode by on a splendid horse draped with flowers. His officers, too, made a fine spectacle in new uniforms, with their hats bedecked with plumes. Thunderous salutes echoed from the batteries of the horse artillery, and the cavalry corps lined up for a mile and a half across the plain. Thousands of horses galloped in front of the review stand, their riders brandishing sabers and shouting as if they were bearing down on enemy lines

All: Library of Congress

Troopers in the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry rest after the battle. As part of Brig. Gen. John Buford's force, the Keystone regiment suffered the highest number of casualties during the battle.

in a real charge. Another review took place on June 8. Held primarily for General Lee, there were fewer dignitaries and civilians on hand. Lee enjoyed the sight, although he ordered a less strenuous program to spare the horses and men.

Stuart planned to cross the Rappahannock the next day to see what the Yankee cavalry was up to. Confederate intelligence placed the enemy camp about 12 miles from the north bank of the river. But Stuart was not the only one with plans to cross the Rappahannock. After spending the winter strengthening the cavalry, the Union Army was ready to try out the revised version of their mounted arm, now under the command of Brig. Gen. Alfred Pleasonton.

In February, Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker had consolidated the cavalry of the Army of the Potomac into a single corps under Maj. Gen. George Stoneman. Displeased with Stoneman's efforts during the Chancellorsville campaign, Hooker fired Stoneman on May 22 and replaced him with Pleasanton, who had been a cavalry division commander. An 1844 graduate of West Point, Pleasanton had served well in the war with Mexico and later Indian campaigns. Promoted to captain in 1855, he became the senior cavalry captain following the mass resignations of Southern officers in 1861.

Dissatisfied with his status, Pleasanton constantly maneuvered for higher posts, and his self-aggrandizement irritated his subordinates. Rising to command of a cavalry brigade, he achieved considerable notice during the Antietam campaign, in part from embroidering his reports and partly from careful cultivation of news reporters. Charles Francis Adams, Jr., a captain in the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry and the grandson of President John Quincy Adams, considered Pleasonton "pure and simple a newspaper humbug. You always see his name in the papers, but to us he is notorious as a bully and a toady. He does nothing save with a view to a newspaper paragraph." Similarly, Colonel Charles Russell Lowell believed that Pleasonton's rapid rise to promotion was due to his "systematic lying."

Although Pleasanton was more skilled at scheming than at military tactics, he commanded a remarkable lineup of young officers. Commanding the 8th Illinois Cavalry was Colonel Elon Farnsworth. With Farnsworth's regiment was Captain George A. Forsyth. One of Pleasonton's aides was a first lieutenant of the 5th U.S. Cavalry named George A. Custer. Another of the general's aides-de-camp was Captain Ulric Dahlgren, the son of Rear Admiral John A. Dahlgren. Captain Wesley Merritt was also an up-and-coming young officer.

On June 7, Dahlgren brought orders to Pleasonton from Hooker to cross the river and attack Stuart. Pleasonton was instructed to "disperse and destroy the Rebel force assembled in the vicinity of Culpeper, and to destroy his trains and supplies to the utmost of your ability." The Union force was split into two sections. Brig. Gen. John Buford, with the cavalry brigades of Colonel Benjamin F. Davis, Colonel Thomas C. Devin, and Major Charles Whiting, would cross Beverly Ford on the Rappahannock. Whiting's command was the reserve brigade, with the regulars of the 1st, 2nd, 5th, and 6th U.S.

Cavalry and three regular batteries of Captain James M. Robertson's U.S. Horse Artillery. Whiting also had one state regiment, the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry. The steadiness of the regulars was welcome, but several of the regiments' companies were not present, being scattered on detached duty.

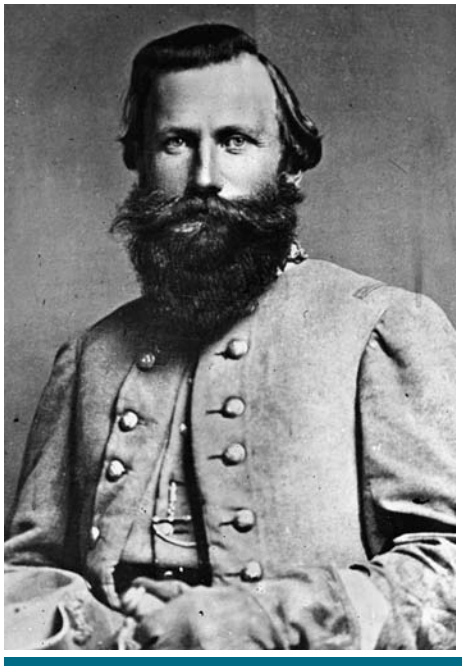
Brigadier General David M. Gregg would lead two more divisions with three batteries of artillery across the Rappahannock at Kelly's Ford, about five miles southeast of Beverly Ford. Gregg's own cavalry division included the brigades of Colonel Judson Kilpatrick and Colonel Sir Percy Wyndham. Also under Gregg's command was Colonel Alfred Duffié's division, with two brigades, those of Colonel Luigi Palma di Cesnola and Colonel John Irvin Gregg (a cousin of General Gregg). Brig. Gen. David A. Russell brought a brigade of infantry as well.

Part of Gregg's force was the 1st Maine Cavalry, of Kilpatrick's brigade. They received their orders at noon on June 8. The regiment rode out of camp, watching immense clouds of dust across the river that were being kicked up by Stuart's second review. Halting for the night near Kelly's Ford, the troopers were forbidden to cook or make coffee, lest the fires tip off the enemy to their march. After eating some cold food, the men were allowed to sleep, but "holding their horses by their bridles." When the troopers were awakened to begin their advance long before dawn, a veteran of the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry remembered the order "to horse" was whispered to his regiment.

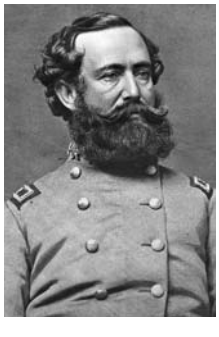
About midnight, the 1st Maine Cavalry was awakened and told to be ready to move out at 3 AM. Their early rising was for nothing. Gregg's men were left waiting because Duffié's brigade was led down the wrong road by their guide. They waited, "enjoying the soldiers' prerogative of growling," a veteran later recalled. Lack of sleep and coffee had the Maine troopers "cross enough for all practical purposes."

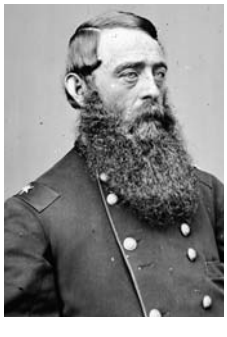
In contrast with the Federal forces across the Rappahannock, the Confederates were relaxed and casual. Troopers of Jones's brigade, who were closest to the attack route planned by Buford, turned their horses loose to graze before settling in to sleep on the night of June 8-9. The gunners of the horse artillery, camped near Jones, also turned their horses loose for the night.

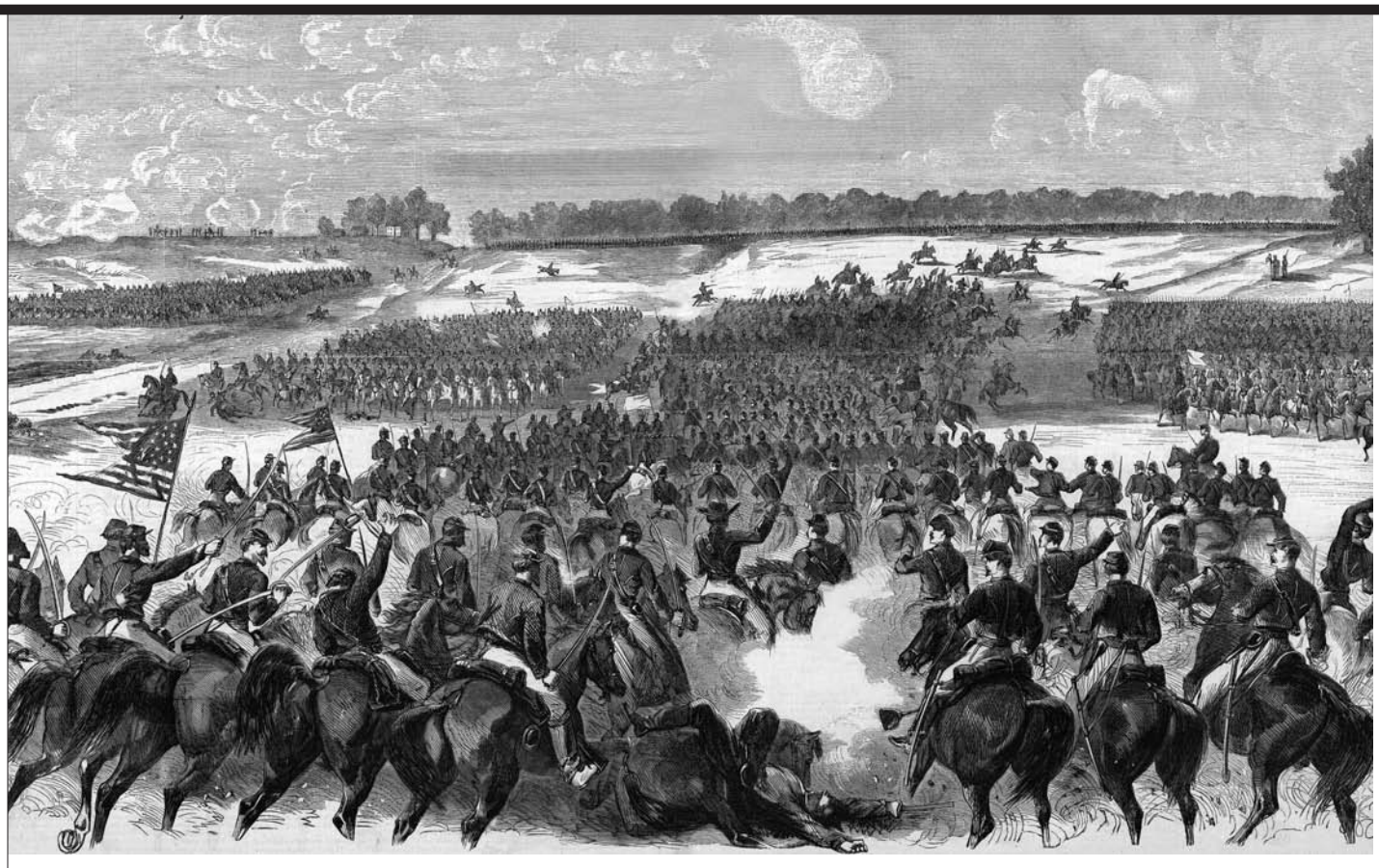
Buford's force reached the Confederates long before the rest of the Federals. Fog hovered over the water as his bluecoats splashed across Beverly Ford at 4:30 AM. Water poured over a dam just upstream of the ford, helping muffle the noise of the crossing. The water was about stirrup deep. Strong currents knocked some of the 124th New York Infantry off their feet, soaking



ABOVE: Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart, left, and Brig. Gen. Alfred Pleasonton. BELOW: Left to right, Brig. Gens. Wade Hampton, Rooney Lee, and David Gregg and Colonel Alfred Duffié.







them and their ammunition. As the cavalrymen rode out of the ford and onto the bank, a staff officer quietly ordered, "Draw sabers." Buford quickly swept through the pickets at the ford, who were a single company of the 6th Virginia Cavalry. The only route through the low ground was the Beverly Ford Road. Bordered by deep ditches, the road squeezed the Federal horsemen into a column of fours.

Jones's brigade was camped roughly two miles down the Beverly Ford Road. The 6th Virginia Cavalry bedded down in a grove of oaks near a brick home known as the Gee House, on the south side of the road. Across the road at St. James' Church was the rest of the brigade. Awakened from their sleep by gunshots coming from Beverly Ford, some of Jones's men dashed to the fighting on foot. Others pitched into Buford's advance half-dressed and riding their horses bareback.

Major Cabell E. Flournoy and about 100 men from the 6th Virginia Cavalry attacked the lead Union brigade, under Colonel Benjamin "Grimes" Davis. A former dragoon officer on the frontier, Davis was born in Alabama but gave his loyalty to the Union. Flournoy's force couldn't stop Davis, but did slow him down before they turned and rode back toward their camp. One of Flournoy's officers, Lieutenant R.O. Allen, spotted Davis leading Union soldiers down the road. Spurring his horse, Allen rode toward the surprised enemy horsemen until he was nearly upon the colonel. The Union commander hacked at Allen with his saber, but the Virginian ducked and fired his pistol. Davis died instantly from a bullet through his brain. Davis's men believed that their commander was avenged moments later when a Union officer killed a Confederate soldier with a saber stroke that nearly cut the man's skull in two. But Allen had gotten away, and the man killed was a Sergeant John Stone, of Allen's regiment.

Soon after Davis fell, the commander of the 8th Illinois Cavalry, Major Alpheus Clark, was mortally wounded. Captain George A. Forsyth took command for a few minutes, but he too fell, shot in the thigh. He was carried back to the rear by several men. Confident of success, Forsyth's men heard him wish out loud that he could have been hit at sunset instead of sunrise on this day.

Davis's death and the sharp reaction of Jones's brigade halted Buford's advance. There was a brief delay while they stopped a few hundred yards from where Beckham's gunners were trying to catch their horses and drag their guns out of reach. While the guns were withdrawn to the Gee House and St. James' Church, Captain James F. Hart kept two guns to open fire on Federals.

As Captain James F. Hart's guns went into action, the 7th Virginia Cavalry reached the scene. They charged into the Union horsemen but were thrown back and reeled behind Hart's guns. Left to themselves, the gun crews took turns covering each other with canister fire as the others drew back until they reached the rest of Beckham's horse artillery. They saved all of their guns, and the only real loss was Beckham's desk, which fell out of

a wagon during the confusion. It was just about dawn when Hart's two wayward guns were safe, and all 16 of Beckham's guns roared at once against the Federal cavalry.

Wade Hampton heard the firing at about 6 AM. Reporting to Stuart, Hampton was ordered to support Jones. One of Hampton's regiments, Colonel Matthew C. Butler's 2nd South Carolina, was sent to guard Brandy Station and the approaches to Kelly's Ford. Hampton was unable to find another of his regiments, the 1st South Carolina Cavalry. Stuart had bypassed Hampton and ordered the regiment off without telling him.

Jones fell in to the left of Beckham's artillery. To their right, Hampton's remaining three regiments arrived to take up positions. Against them, Pleasonton sent two partial regiments, the 6th Pennsylvania and the 6th U.S. Cavalry. Earlier in the war, the Pennsylvanians were known as Rush's Lancers because they were armed with nine-foot-long lances. By mid-1863, the lances decorated with scarlet streamers had been put aside in favor of more practical sabers and pistols.

Dahlgren joined the Pennsylvanians as they charged. Bursting from the cover of some woods, they came to 800 yards of open ground, behind which were Beckham's guns and the carbines of Jones and Hampton. The Confederate line was concave. Charging straight into the center, canister sprayed into them from the horse artillery, and carbine fire poured into them from both flanks. Despite the heavy fire, the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry kept an unwavering course toward the guns. The bluecoats burst through the artillery line, but after riding between the guns they were stopped and driven back by Confederate small arms fire.

Riding next to regimental commander Major Robert Morris, Dahlgren saw the major fall when his horse was hit. Injured, Morris was captured that day and later died in Libby Prison. Dahlgren's horse was also hit and threw the captain to the ground. Staggering to his feet, Dahlgren saw that the regiment was reeling back under the hot fire. He was within moments of being surrounded and taken. The admiral's son managed to get his horse back up and escape, although a blow from the back of a saber nearly knocked him from the saddle again. From that charge, the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry suffered 108 casualties, the highest losses of any Union regiment at Brandy Station.

While Jones and Hampton held on, Buford anchored his right on the Hazel River, a tributary that flowed into the Rappahannock near Beverly Ford. Rooney Lee's brigade reached the fighting and settled on the left of Jones's troops, behind a stone wall in front of a rise called Yew Ridge. Stuart sent Beverly Robertson with his brigade, along with Hampton's 1st South Carolina Cavalry, to cover Kelly's Ford.

ABOVE: Private Archibald Magill Smith of Company D, 6th Virginia Cavalry. The Virginians were camped around the Gee House when they were attacked by the lead Union brigade of Colonel Benjamin Davis. OPPOSITE: Buford's division, arriving first, pushes back the Confederate left flank for more than a mile at Beverly Ford. As more units came onto the scene, the fighting became general.

By late morning, Buford had succeeded only in driving the Confederates from the stone wall. Bogged down by stubborn Confederate resistance, he was unable to advance to meet Gregg at Brandy Station. He didn't even have any idea of the location of the rest of the Federal forces until the Confederates suddenly withdrew from the stubbornly held lines in front of him. But Gregg had at last reached Brandy Station and the Confederates were in serious trouble.

Because Gregg's forces lost a lot of time early that morning waiting for Duffiè's lost brigades, they had a late start. Then, although Kelly's Ford was unguarded, they found that the road they intended to take to Brandy Station was blocked by Robertson's brigade. As the Federals had recently held the area, they had good knowledge of the local roads and it was easy to evade Robertson by taking another route. Fortunately for the Federals, Robertson held rigidly to his orders. Assigned to block the road from Kelly's Ford, he did just that and stayed in place rather than pursue the enemy. Robertson sent couriers to warn Stuart, but even this minimal effort was not done quickly enough. For the rest of the battle, Robertson's sabers were idle, depriving the Confederates of badly needed manpower.

Duffiè had orders to separate from Gregg and head for Stevensburg, five miles south of Brandy Station. At the expense of some weakening of the Federal force, Duffiè would protect the rest of the bluecoats from a flanking attack from any of Lee's infantry coming from the south or west. Gregg got to Brandy Station about 11:30, hours behind schedule. But, once he got there, he was in the Confederate rear and within one mile of Fleetwood Hill. Robertson's inaction meant that no one knew the Federals were coming.

His attention focused on Buford, Stuart had almost abandoned Fleetwood Hill. Now, the way was open for Gregg to take it, which offered an ideal position on the battlefield. Unlike the wooded land closer to Beverly's Ford, Fleetwood Hill overlooked mostly open and gently rolling terrain. The elevation of the hill would give a commanding position to whoever got their artillery there first. All around, there were

broad open spaces for cavalry to maneuver in the open. Most of the fences and hedges had been destroyed when the armies passed through during the Second Manassas campaign in late summer 1862.

Back at headquarters, Major Henry McClellan found himself nearly alone on the key objective of the battlefield. Earlier, McClellan had sent the 2nd South Carolina Cavalry from Brandy Station to cover the approaches from Stevensburg. Like Stuart, McClellan had felt that the hill was quite safe. He was not shocked so much as baffled when one of Robertson's couriers galloped up with warnings that a big Federal force was headed toward Fleetwood Hill. At first, the courier's report was just unbelievable. Surely Robertson would not have let the Federals simply slip by him. McClellan sent Robertson's rider back to make sure that "he had not mistaken some of our troops for the enemy."

Less than five minutes passed before the courier was back. Now, he told McClellan, you can see for yourself. Sure enough, the new forces were not Confederates, but thousands of blue-coated Federal troopers engulfing the depot at Brandy Station. Fleetwood Hill, now already within cannon range of the enemy, looked doomed to a quick capture. If the Federals took to the summit, they could only be driven away at a terrible cost.

McClellan was playing his last cards. He had sent his one remaining courier and now there were no Confederates with him on Fleetwood Hill except for the crew of a single 6-pounder howitzer. That lone gun of Captain Robert Preston Chew's battery was commanded by Lieutenant John Wright "Tuck" Carter. During the morning, Carter had shot away almost all of his ammunition and his gun was ordered withdrawn. This gun was supplied only by a nearly empty caisson, and Carter had already found out that most of his remaining shells were defective.

But Carter's gun turned out to be just barely enough to hold the hill for a few minutes. When the 6-pounder gun opened fire, even its defective ammunition proved dangerous enough to make the Federals hesitate. Where there was one gun, there could soon be more. Buford was nowhere to be seen, and Gregg had not established contact with him. Gregg called a halt and ordered three of his rifled guns into action before sending in his cavalry.

As Carter's gun fired away its remaining shots, Windham's brigade swept up the western side of Fleetwood Hill. They were led by Wyndham, one of the war's most colorful characters. Born on a ship to a British military couple bound for India, Wyndham had a strange military career. Not following his father into the British service, he first tried the French Navy, and then he became an Austrian cavalry officer. Resigning from the emperor's service, he joined the Italian forces fighting for their independence under Garibaldi. Sir Percy's knighthood was granted by King Victor Emanuel of Italy. Coming to America, he sided with the Union and his experience and military bearing helped him rise to brigade commander.

Like Stuart, Wyndham had a fondness for military pomp. He loved fancy uniforms and sported one of the war's most spectacular moustaches. Lieutenant Samuel Harris of the 5th Michigan Cavalry served under

the flashy officer, who he considered a "bag of wind." Under pressure, Wyndham's bombast was matched by dash and courage. He led his riders to the crest of the hill, where they slammed into Jones's men, the first to reach the field after McClellan's desperate appeals.

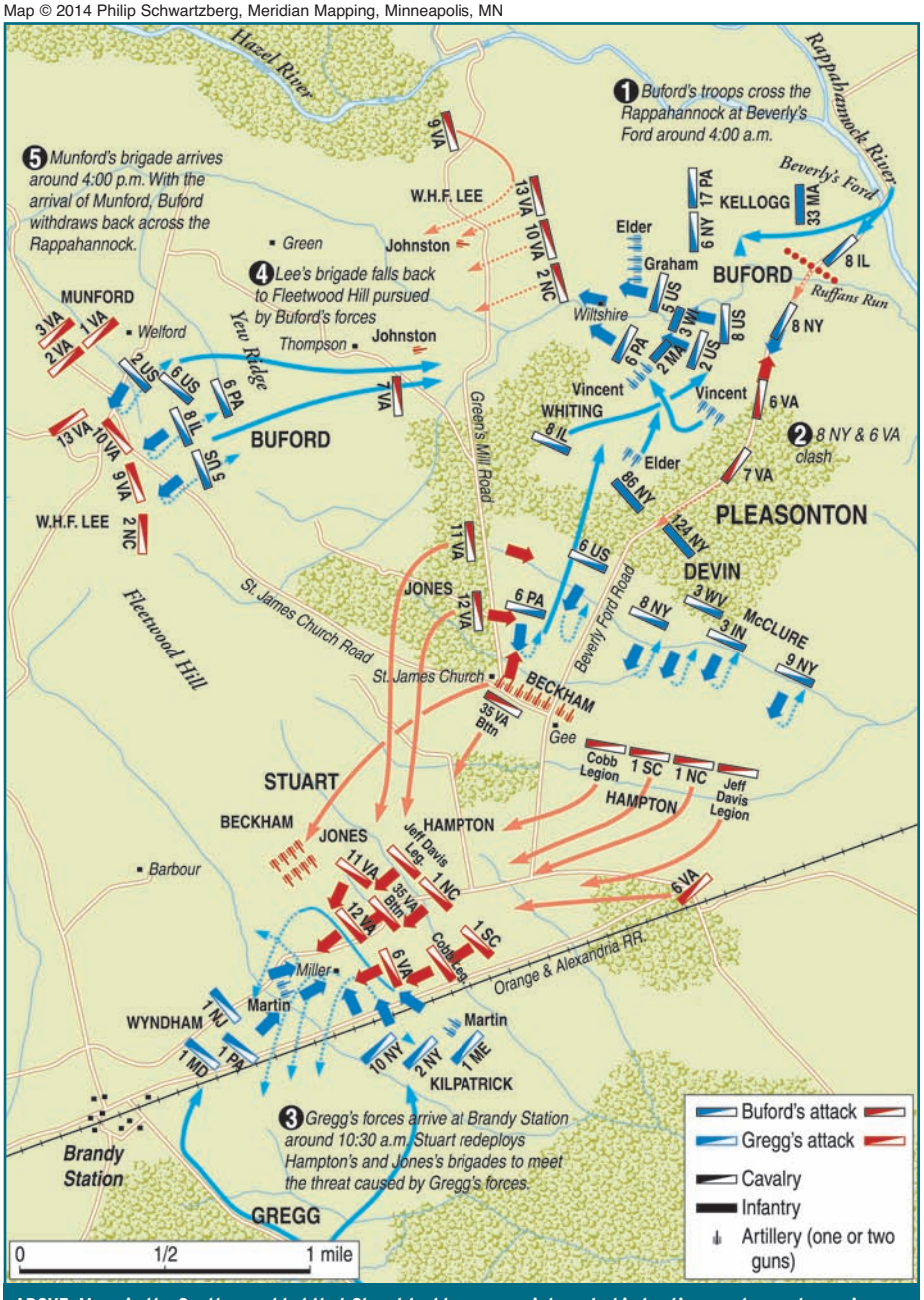
Just as McClellan didn't believe the courier warning him of Gregg's approach, Stuart was annoyed and skeptical about McClellan's call for help. Turning to Captain James F. Hart, the commander said, "Ride back there and see that all that foolishness is about." When the next courier from McClellan arrived, he was accompanied by a plain warning: the booming of cannon from the direction of Fleetwood Hill. Some of Jones's cavalry was peeled away and sent flying to defend the hill.

The vanguard of Colonel A.W. Harmon's 12th Virginia Cavalry reached the hill just as Carter fired his last shot. Close behind them came the 6th Virginia Cavalry and the 35th Battalion Virginia Cavalry. They found Wyndham's troops charging up the western slope of the hill. Already worn down from a long morning of fighting, the Virginians were widely scattered in their headlong rush to the hill. Private John Newton Opie of the 6th recalled, "So great was the danger, that we were marched for two miles in a sweeping gallop; consequently, when we reached the enemy, our horses were blown and our ranks completely disordered." Hitting the Union attackers piecemeal, the Virginians were thrown back.

Stuart reached the hill and it took only a glance for him to see that more men were needed there. He summoned all of Jones's and Hampton's brigades and the artillery from the Beverly Ford Road. Hampton was already withdrawing his men to avoid being trapped between two Union forces. Some of Beckham's pieces had been dispatched to aid Robertson and Butler. Damaged by the shock of recoil, three guns were out of action. Beckham left three pieces to support Rooney Lee and followed Hampton with the rest.

For the moment, the Confederate cavalry was thrown back, and Sir Percy Wyndham led the 1st New Jersey Cavalry in charging two Confederate batteries from their right flank. The batteries, under Captains Hart and William M. McGregor, had just reached Fleetwood Hill. With no support at all, the gunners fought off the enemy cavalry with pistols, trail handspikes, or whatever came to hand. One gunner knocked a horseman from the saddle with his sponge staff.

More Confederate cavalry reached the fighting, and the New Jersey horsemen were driven back off the hill. Many were left behind wounded or dead. Their commander, Lt. Col. Virgil Brodrick, was found with a saber through his body. Near Brodrick was a dead Confederate soldier, impaled on the lieutenant colonel's saber.



ABOVE: Many in the South grumbled that Stuart had been more interested in hosting a gala cavalry review at Culpeper than in screening Robert E. Lee's advance across the Rappahannock. At Brandy Station he would pay a high price for his inattention. OPPOSITE: Disciplined Regulars in the 2nd U.S. Cavalry charges the Confederates near Beverly Ford in this battlefield sketch by artist Edwin Forbes. The reserve force covered Buford's fighting retreat.

When Union cavalry under British-born Colonel Sir Percy Wyndham attacked Fleetwood Hill, Confederate artillery gunners used pistols and hand spikes to fight them off. Confederate cavalry counterattacked Wyndham's men and drove them off the hill.

Taking over the regiment, Major John Shellmire also fell with a fatal wound. Wyndham, badly wounded in the leg, withdrew with the remnants of the 1st New Jersey with 150 prisoners in tow.

On a knoll near the bottom of Fleetwood Hill were three rifled Union guns from Captain Joseph W. Martin's 6th New York Independent Battery. Martin, following orders from Wyndham, brought his two-gun section to this advanced position. While Martin was in transit, three more couriers arrived from Wyndham urging him to hurry up. He joined Lieutenant M.P. Clark, who was already on the knoll with one gun. Clark's other gun had burst earlier in the battle.

Twice Martin called for support. Although assured that help was coming, the only cavalry approaching his isolated position were all Confederates. Led by Lt. Col. Elijah "Lige" White, the 35th Battalion Virginia Cavalry swept down upon the battery. Originally raised as partisan rangers, White's unit grew into a small but formidable battalion of regulars. Later they came to be called White's Comanches for their headlong bravery. Martin's gunners fired canister as quickly as they could. They slowed White's riders, but three guns could not fire fast enough to fend them off for long. After a few blasts of canister, White's troopers and their sabers and pistols cut their way amid the New York guns and squelched their fire.

Only half a dozen of the 36 Union gunners avoided being wounded or captured. Private James Ingram stated that his crew tried to save their gun, "but we had only two horses left, and one of them was wounded." Leaving their guns disabled by bursting, wedging, and spiking and destroying all of their fuses, the gunners scattered. Most were either wounded or captured. Ingram and one comrade ran but made it only about 100 yards before they were captured. They escaped briefly but were captured again and this time sent to Richmond. Like most of the battery's captured enlisted men, they were exchanged for parole a few days later.

After the hard fighting to take the guns, White's Confederates lost them to two companies of the 1st Maryland Cavalry. Yet the Marylanders found themselves in the same fix as the New York gunners, unable to move the guns for lack of horses. The guns changed owners twice before ending up for good in Confederate hands.

There was no sign of Duffié yet. Gregg threw Kilpatrick's brigade into the growing melee on the hill, while Stuart fed in all the men he could spare from keeping Buford in place. For the rest of the afternoon, Union and Confederate regiments took turns holding the hill. By 1863, the deadly artillery of the age and the long ranges attained by the rifled musket firing a Minie bullet were changing cavalry tactics. Cavalry horses brought men quickly to where they were needed, but the horsemen usually dismounted and fought on foot. At Brandy Station, there was no time for dismounting and digging in on Fleetwood Hill, and often no time to reload firearms. The massive cavalry charges and clashing saber duels of the afternoon are what are remembered most about the battle.

The sheer number of horses on the field stirred massive amounts of dust from the dry ground. A newspaper man wrote that "the choking dust was so thick that we could not tell 't'other from which.' Horses, wild beyond the control of their riders,

were charging away through the lines of the enemy and back again." The newsman continued, "I have only mentioned what passed under my own eye and in the dust one man could not see far." Visibility was so limited that officers could not always keep regiments or even companies together. Soldiers found themselves cut off among enemy troops and fought in squadrons, scattered small groups, or sometimes even alone.

After interfering with two of Hampton's regiments that morning, Stuart further annoyed the South Carolinian with other orders that undercut him on the field. Some of Stuart's horse artillery, which rushed to the top of the hill, took aim and bombarded his 1st North Carolina Cavalry. When they halted to correct their mistake, some Union cavalry escaped into the woods. To follow up what seemed to be a fine opportunity, Hampton ordered two of his regiments after them, but their officers told him that they had direct orders from Stuart to remain in place and defend the hill.

Although most Confederates had been pulled back from the Beverly Ford Road, Rooney Lee stayed in place to keep Buford in check during the afternoon. He was joined by Colonel Thomas T. Munford, leading the brigade of Fitzhugh Lee in place of its commander, who was on the sick list.

Duffiè and his 1,200 men, assigned to ride to Stevensburg, were too far from the main battle to have much direct impact. Butler's 2nd South Carolina Cavalry, numbering about 220 men and separated into detachments, fought to slow their advance to Fleetwood Hill. Leading three dozen mounted men in a charge against part of Duffié's force, Wade Hampton's brother, Lt. Col. Frank Hampton, crossed sabers with a bluecoat rider. While fighting the horseman, Frank Hampton took a saber slash to the head, and another Federal fatally shot him.

Arriving on the scene, the 4th Virginia Cavalry were surprised by Duffié's fire and broke. After the regiment was scattered, the Union troopers again fired on the 2nd South Carolina. One bursting shell cut off Butler's foot, tore through his horse and then through the horse of Stuart's staff officer, Captain William Downs Fairley, slicing off Fairley's leg at the knee. Fairley, still conscious as he was being carried away for treatment, pointed to the severed piece of his leg and asked for it. Holding the remnant of his leg to him, he said, "It is an old friend, gentlemen, and I do not wish to part with it." Butler survived a long recovery and returned to service, but Fairly died later that day.

This sideshow, remote from the main battlefield, extorted a heavy cost in top-notch Confederate officers. But their stand kept Duffié away from Fleetwood Hill and potentially saved the day for the defenders. Gregg finally made contact with Buford's left, but he was gradually driven from Fleetwood Hill back to the railroad. Buford had not been able to decisively break through the line of Rooney Lee. Late in the day, Lee was seriously wounded in the leg near the end of the battle. Lee would be sent to recover at the Hanover County home of Colonel William Carter Wickham, one of Stuart's officers and a relative of Lee's wife. On June 26, Union cavalry raiders under Colonel Samuel Spear captured Lee, carried him out on a mattress, and took him away in a wagon. He remained a Union prisoner until his exchange at City Point on March 14, 1864.

At 5 PM, Pleasonton ordered a withdrawal because he heard that Confederate reinforcements were coming. Buford's forces returned to Beverly Ford to cross the Rappahannock, and about the same time, Duffié finally reached Brandy Station. Gregg and Duffié withdrew by way of Rappahannock Ford (also called Rappahannock Station Ford or Cow's Ford), near the Orange & Alexandria Railroad bridge between Beverly and Kelly's Fords. Although the Confederates threw some shells after the Federals, Stuart declined to chase them.

Brandy Station is generally considered the greatest cavalry battle ever fought in North America. About 20,500 soldiers—some 9,500 Confederate cavalry and 11,000 Union troops including 3,000 infantry—took part in the battle. Union casualties numbered 866, including 10 officers and 71 enlisted men killed. Confederate losses were 523.

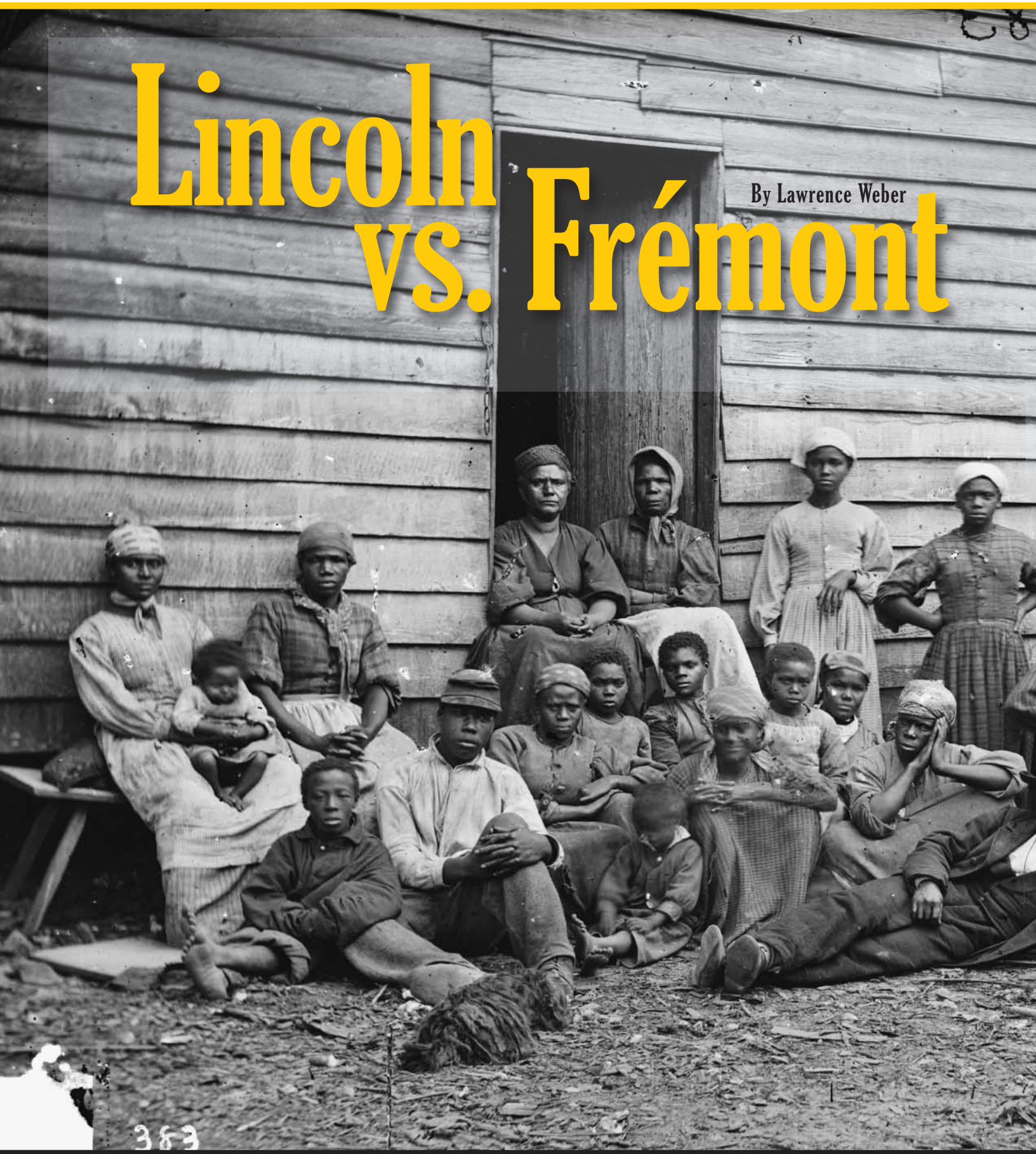
Stuart considered Brandy Station a Confederate victory. Admittedly, the Southerners were caught off guard but recovered from their surprise and held the field at the end of battle. So adamant was Stuart on the latter point that he intended to set his headquarters camp once again on Fleetwood Hill. But W.W. Blackford noted that after the battle the once-idyllic headquarters site was strewn with dead horses and swarming with bluebottle flies. Stuart reluctantly ordered camp set up elsewhere.

Stuart's claims of victory were, by a narrow definition, true enough. Most Confederates, though, agreed with the *Richmond Examiner* that Brandy Station was "a victory over which few will exult." Recovering from a surprise attack and fighting well was one thing, but the thought arose that Pleasonton should not have been able to make a surprise attack in the first place. To the Confederate public, Stuart had been showing off for his grand reviews and wearing out his horses and men for no purpose. Instead of detecting the enemy movement ahead of time, the cavalry was caught napping by the very Union horsemen they had embarrassed and outclassed many times.

As far as the North was concerned, the Battle of Brandy Station was something to celebrate. For the first time, Union cavalry had held its own in a major clash with Stuart's force. Deftly adjusting to the flaws and unexpected changes in their battle plans, they were more than once on the verge of a significant victory. Henry B. McClellan said of Gregg's attack, "Modern warfare cannot furnish an instance of a field more closely, more valiantly, contested." The earlier embarrassments of the Union cavalry were behind them now. After Brandy Station, they felt themselves the equals of Stuart's legendary horsemen. By 1865, they would be a major factor in granting victory to the Army of the Potomac. As McClellan tersely summed up Brandy Station, "It made the Federal cavalry." □

Lincoln vs. Frémont

By Lawrence Weber



Determined to hold on to the crucial border states of Kentucky and Missouri, Abraham Lincoln clashed publicly with Maj. Gen. John C. Frémont, the famous "Pathfinder," over Frémont's hasty emancipation proclamation in Missouri.

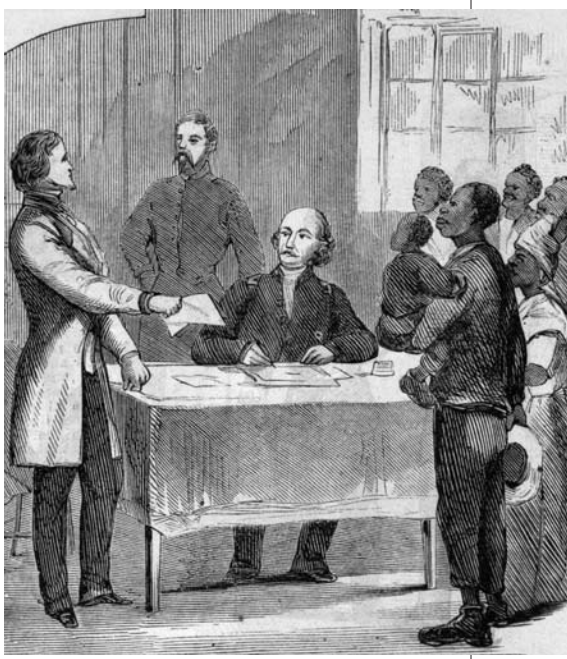
All: Library of Congress

AS THE EARLY DAYS OF THE Civil War were unfolding and the destiny of the republic was beginning to be contested on the battlefield, Abraham Lincoln was engaged in a no less perilous type of battle. The newly elected president was privately working his way through the dangerous political minefield of slavery, emancipation, and the maintenance of Union loyalty within the border states of Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, and Delaware. For Lincoln, holding on to these states was of critical importance to the ultimate preservation of the nation itself. In the initial days of the war he observed, "I hope to have God on my side, but I must have Kentucky." Walking a thin political line between unionists and slaveholders in these states became a primary goal of the Lincoln administration.

Lincoln's birthplace of Kentucky was arguably the most significant border state. With the secession of Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Arkansas after the bombardment of Fort Sumter in April 1861, Kentucky played a pivotal role in linking the western border state of Missouri to the eastern border states of Maryland and Delaware. Kentucky also served as a buffer between key Confederate states in the Deep South and the loyal Midwestern states of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Without Kentucky, Missouri would be completely isolated, and vital supply centers such as St. Louis would be much more difficult to maintain while Union forces waged war in the western theater. To lose Kentucky could very well mean losing the war, and Lincoln knew it.

The attack on Fort Sumter did not change Lincoln's mind about the illegality of secession. On April 19, 1861, he referred to the current situation as "an insurrection against the government of the United States," not an attack from a foreign nation. He went on to renounce any hostile actions from the seceded states as coming merely from the "pretended authority of such states." Lincoln was working out a way to classify and eventually destroy the insurrection while also attempting to find a middle ground on the slave question in an effort to placate the border states and ultimately save the Union.

The first real test of the Federal government's stance on the slave question came at Fort Monroe, Virginia. On May 23, three of Colonel Charles Mallory's slaves from the 115th Virginia Militia secretly rowed across the James River to Fort Monroe, then in possession of Union soldiers under the command of Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler. When Butler discovered that the slaves were being used to construct military fortifications in Virginia and were eventually going to be sent to North Carolina to do



ABOVE: Union Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler unilaterally refused to return runaway slaves unless their owners pledged allegiance to the United States. LEFT: A large group of "contraband" slaves rests at a plantation near Pamunkey Run, Virginia, after escaping captivity.

the same, Butler knew that he needed to make a swift decision on the fate of the runaways.

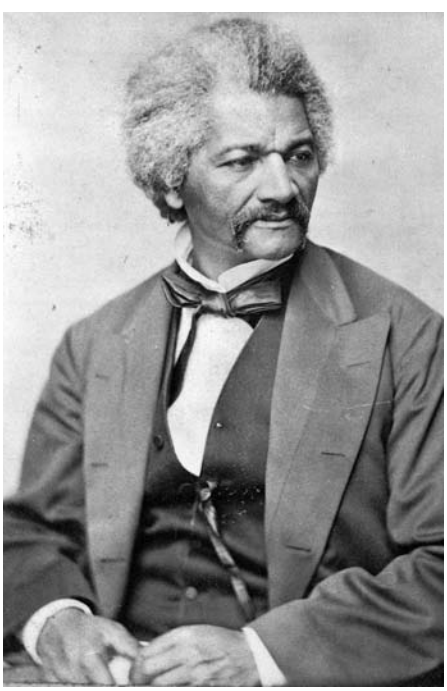
As Butler pondered his options, Major John B. Cary from the 115th Virginia Militia approached Fort Monroe under a flag of truce to request the return of the fugitives. When Cary urged him to honor his constitutional obligation to return the slaves, Butler responded, "I mean to take Virginia at her word. I am under no constitutional obligations to a foreign coun-

try, which Virginia now claims to be." Pressed further by Cary about the Federal government's stance of secession as being invalid, Butler replied, "But you say you have seceded, so you cannot consistently claim them. I shall hold these Negroes as contraband of war, since they are engaged in the construction of your battery and are claimed as your property." Cary abandoned his case and returned to his regiment.

Butler's ad hoc contraband policy presented the Lincoln administration with a host of major political problems, the most obvious being that Butler's policy stood in direct opposition to Lincoln's recent inaugural address, in which he maintained the illegality of secession. Butler's policy was going to force Lincoln to reconsider the issue in light of his determination to preserve the loyalty of the border states, where slavery had been firmly entrenched for years. Without addressing Butler's policy explicitly, Lincoln reminded the general that "the business you are sent upon is war, not emancipation."

Remaining publicly silent on the issue, Lincoln crafted a special Fourth of July message to Congress in which he defined his belief that the overarching aim of his administration was to preserve the Union. He requested from Congress "the legal means for making this contest a short and decisive one," including 400,000 men and $400 million. Republican majorities in both houses of Congress increased the appropriations to 500,000 men and $500 million in a clear show of support for the president and his agenda. Conspicuously missing from the discourse was the issue of slavery. Then, on July 21, the Union disaster at First Bull Run occurred.

The day after that decisive Union defeat, Lincoln signed a bill authorizing the enlistment of 500,000 men for three years' service. Three days later, he signed a second bill authorizing another 500,000 men. While a general feeling of despair permeated the North in the days immediately following Bull Run, not everyone had given in to despondency. On July 25, Congress passed the Crittenden-Johnson Resolution,



ABOVE: John C. Frémont, the famous Pathfinder, in full explorer's regalia. BELOW: Abolitionist leader and former slave Frederick Douglass.

named for its sponsors, Representative John J. Crittenden of Kentucky and Senator Andrew Johnson of Tennessee. The Crittenden-Johnson Resolution, also known as the War Aims Resolution, committed the Union to its original aims of self-preservation and noninterference with slavery. Once again, the government walked a fine line between appeasing the border states and maintaining the Union.

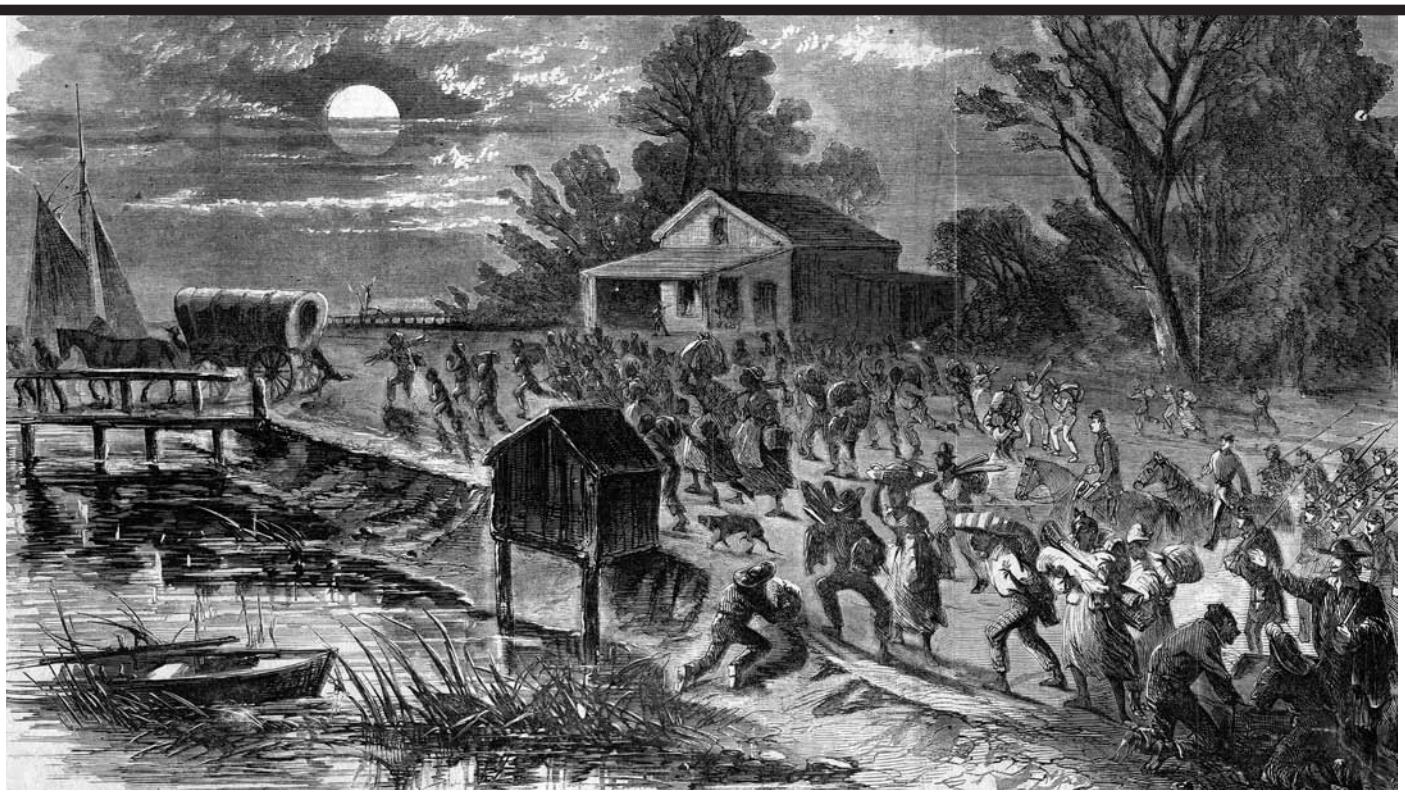
As rumors began to filter into the War Department that slaves were being pressed into service against the Union, the Lincoln administration and Congress began a new debate on what to do about the slave question. Abolitionist (and former slave) Frederick Douglass understood the complexity of the crisis immediately. "War for the destruction of liberty must be met with war for the destruction of slavery," he said.

More moderate voices attempted to find a middle ground that would strike at the military aspect of slavery while at the same time protect the border states from breaking away.

Crittenden maintained that Congress had no right to legislate on the slave issue. Illinois Senator Lyman Trumbull argued that Congress already was able to punish treason by confiscating property, in effect attacking individual instances of slavery by confiscating slaves who aided the Confederacy during the rebellion, while not attacking the entire institution of slavery.

On July 30, Butler wrote to Secretary of War Simon Cameron, asking him to clarify the status of confiscated slaves at Fort Monroe. "Are these men, women, and children slaves?" Butler wanted to know. "Are they free? What has been the effect of the rebellion and a state of war upon [their] status?" Before Cameron could answer, Congress on August 6 passed the First Confiscation Act, a law designed to "confiscate property [including slaves] utilized for Confederate military purposes and declared that the owner would 'forfeit his claim' to any slave so employed." The Confiscation Act was passed along party lines, with all but six Republicans voting in favor of the act and all but three Democrats voting against it. Lincoln's bipartisan support for the war was quickly eroding. "This bill," John J. Crittenden complained, "will be considered as giving an anti-slavery character and application to the war." Delaware Senator James A. Bayard, a Peace Democrat, advised, "Anything is better than a fruitless, hopeless, unnatural civil war."

Fearing that the Confiscation Act vio-



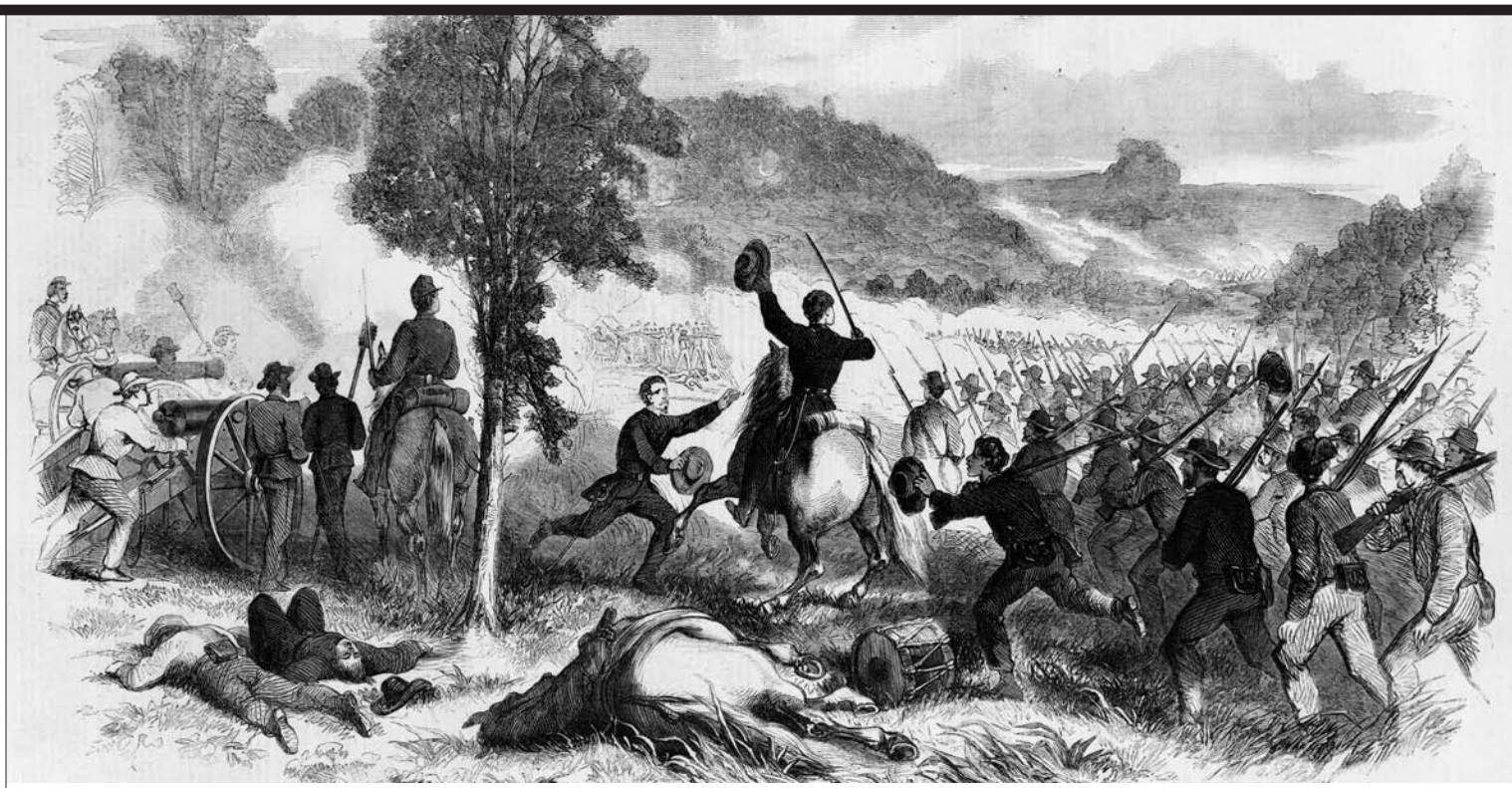
Fugitive slaves rush into Fort Monroe after learning that Butler is refusing to return them to their masters.

lated the constitutional right to due process under the law and would further alienate the border states by its antislavery tone, Lincoln nevertheless reluctantly signed the bill into law, bowing to pressure from the bill's overwhelming Republican support. The Confiscation Act essentially nullified the Crittenden-Johnson Resolution. Preservation of the Union began to take on a divisive antislavery nature, just as Crittenden had predicted and Lincoln had feared.

Two days after the Confiscation Act was signed into law, Cameron responded to Butler's letter on the status of escaped slaves. Purportedly speaking on behalf of Lincoln, Cameron instructed Butler to follow the provisions of the Confiscation Act in dealing with persons "employed in hostility to the United States." Much to the eventual chagrin of the president, who was not speaking through his secretary of war, Cameron added, "A more difficult question is presented in respect to persons escaping from the service of loyal masters. Under these circumstances it seems quite clear that the substantial rights of loyal masters will be best protected by receiving such fugitives as well as fugitives from disloyal masters into the service of the United States. Upon the return of peace Congress will doubtless properly provide for all the persons thus received into the service of the Union and for just compensation to loyal masters." Cameron in essence was extending the Confiscation Act to include fugitive slaves within border states, effectively nullifying the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850.

Four days after the passage of the Confiscation Act, on August 10, the first major battle west of the Mississippi River was fought in Missouri at Wilson's Creek, a 14-mile waterway near Springfield. Union soldiers in the Army of the West, commanded by Brig. Gen. Nathaniel Lyon, clashed with Confederate and Missouri State Guard soldiers commanded by Generals Benjamin McCulloch and Sterling Price. Confederates carried the day after an intense fight that began at first light and lasted for more than five hours, with most of the carnage centering on a ridge soon to be known as "Bloody Hill." Along with being the first major battle in a border state and the first major battle west of the Mississippi River, the battle was notable for the death of Lyon, the first Union general killed in the Civil War.

Between the Battle of Wilson's Creek and the subsequent Battles of Fredericktown and Springfield, which both took place in late October 1861, the fate of Missouri hung in the balance as tension between pro-Unionist, and pro-secessionists flared to alarming levels. With the death of Lyon at Wilson's Creek, it was up to the Western Department's commander, Maj. Gen. John C. Frémont, to ensure that Missouri did not descend into anarchy and secession. He seemed imminently qualified to face the challenge. By the time the Civil War began, Frémont was already a household name and national hero, having earned the sobriquet "the Pathfinder" for his western excursions during the 1840s, including several with the noted guide Kit Carson. Frémont's journeys included an exploration of the South Pass along the Oregon Trail, an expedition through the Sierra Nevada mountain range, a dangerous journey into California during the Mexican War, and a disastrous self-funded journey to the Southwest with the purpose



of finding a suitable route for a transcontinental railroad, which ended with the death of 10 members of his party.

By the time he ran for the 1856 presidency as the first candidate of the newly organized Republican Party, Frémont had been military governor of California, one of the first two senators from the new state of California, a famous writer and explorer, and a leading voice for the anti-slavery platform in national politics. With the election of Lincoln to the presidency in November 1860, it was just a matter of time before Frémont would land a position somewhere in the new Republican administration. On Christmas Day, William Seward wrote to President-elect Lincoln suggesting Frémont for consideration as secretary of war.

Despite Seward's recommendation, Frémont was never seriously considered by Lincoln for a cabinet position. But in March 1861, Lincoln wrote to Seward asking for his thoughts on Frémont as American minister to France. Seward replied: "Frémont and France—the prestige is good. But I think that is all." Once again, Frémont was passed over for a position in the Lincoln administration. Finally, on July 3, more

ABOVE: Brig. Gen. Nathaniel Lyon leads the 1st Iowa into action at the Battle of Wilson's Creek on August 10, 1861. Lyon would become the first Union general killed in the war. RIGHT: John C. Frémont and his wife, Jessie Benton Frémont. OPPOSITE: Frémont is sketched as a petulant child suffering from a "sore head" in this period cartoon. "Lincoln" is imprinted on his scalp.

than half a year after the initial exchange between Lincoln and Seward, Lincoln asked Seward to assemble the cabinet to "see Gen. Scott, Gen. Cameron, about assigning a position to Gen. Frémont." The same day, General Order No. 40 was issued creating the Western Department for the Union Army and placing Frémont in command with the rank of major general. Frémont set off to Missouri to bring the tumultuous border state in line with the Union.

Less than three weeks after the Battle of Wilson's Creek, citing concerns for the public safety in Missouri, Frémont declared martial law in the state "in order to suppress disorders, to maintain as far as now practicable the public peace, and to give security and protection to the persons and property of loyal citizens." That was all well and good, but what he said next threatened the entire course of the war. "The property, real and personal, of all persons in the State of Missouri who shall take up arms against

the United States, and who shall be directly proven to have taken an active part with their enemies in the field, is declared to be confiscated to the public use," Fremont declared, "and their slaves, if any they have, are hereby declared free."

Frémont's de facto emancipation proclamation went well beyond both Butler's contraband policy, which applied only to fugitives, and the Confiscation Act, which dealt with slaves employed for military purposes. The proclamation sent a shockwave through the Union. If the initial military failures at Fort Sumter, Bull Run, and Wilson's Creek were not enough to pull the states of Maryland, Delaware, Missouri, and Kentucky away from the Union, targeting the institution of slavery within those states might effectively do the trick.

On September 2, in a letter marked private and confidential, Lincoln addressed Frémont and his proclamation, stating, "Two points in your proclamation of August 30th give me some anxiety." The first concerned Frémont's statement that "all persons who shall be taken with arms in their hands within these lines shall be tried by court-martial, and, if found guilty, will be shot." Lincoln believed that this policy would lead Confederates to "shoot our best men in their hands in retaliation; and so, man for man, indefinitely." Lincoln ordered Frémont to get presidential authorization before executing any man under the proclamation.

Frémont's proclamation and its potential impact on the border states, particularly Kentucky, made Lincoln exceedingly anxious. He wrote again to Fremont. "I think there is great danger that the closing paragraph, in relation to the confiscation of property, and the liberating slaves of traitorous owners, will alarm our Southern Union friends, and turn them against us—perhaps ruin our rather fair prospect for Kentucky," fretted Lincoln. "Allow me therefore to ask, that you will as of your own motion, modify that paragraph so as to conform to the first and fourth sections of the act of Congress, entitled, 'An act to confiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes,' approved August 6th, 1861, and a copy of which act I herewith send you. This letter is written in a spirit of caution and not of censure."

Frémont did not receive Lincoln's letter in the spirit that Lincoln had intended. The stage was set for an embarrassing public confrontation. When Frémont sent his politically well-connected wife Jessie, the daughter of former Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton, to Washington to advocate for the proclamation on his behalf, Lincoln met with her coldly, ultimately dismissing her complaints in a letter that stated, "No impression has been made on my mind against the honor or integrity of Gen. Frémont; and I now enter my protest against being understood as acting in any hostility towards him."

Responding to the president's perceived

THAT'S WHAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH JOHN C.

MRS. COLUMBIA. "Tell me, DOCTOR, what is the *matter* with him? Do you think his Brain is affected?"

DOCTOR JONATHAN. "Oh! no, my dear MADAM; it's only a rather aggravated case of *Sore Head!*"

snub of his wife, Frémont coolly wrote: "If upon reflection, your better judgment still decides that I am wrong in the article respecting the liberation of slaves I have to ask that you will openly direct me to make the correction. The implied censure will be received by me as a soldier always should the reprimand of his chief. If I were to retract of my own accord it would imply that I myself thought it wrong and that I had acted without the reflection which the gravity of the point demanded. But I did not do so. I acted with full deliberation and upon the certain conviction that it was a measure right and necessary, and I think so still."

Fallout from the Frémont proclamation was quick and sharp. Kentucky slaveholder and longtime Lincoln friend Joshua Speed told the president that "Frémont's order would inspire border slaves to 'assert their freedom' and would 'crush out every vestige of a union party' in Kentucky." Kentucky native Robert Anderson of Fort Sumter fame warned the president that unless the Frémont order was rescinded, "Kentucky will be lost to the Union." These dire warnings, along with the terrible timing of the proclamation itself—just as the Kentucky legislature was voting to abandon neutrality in favor of Union—prompted Lincoln to act more definitively on the slave issue.

Lincoln's response to Frémont's letter was swift and explicitly direct: "Your answer, just received, expresses the preference on your part, that I should make an open order for the modification, which I very cheerfully do. It is therefore ordered that the said clause of said proclamation be so modified, held, and construed, as to conform to, and not to transcend, the provisions on the same subject contained in the act of Congress entitled 'An Act to con-

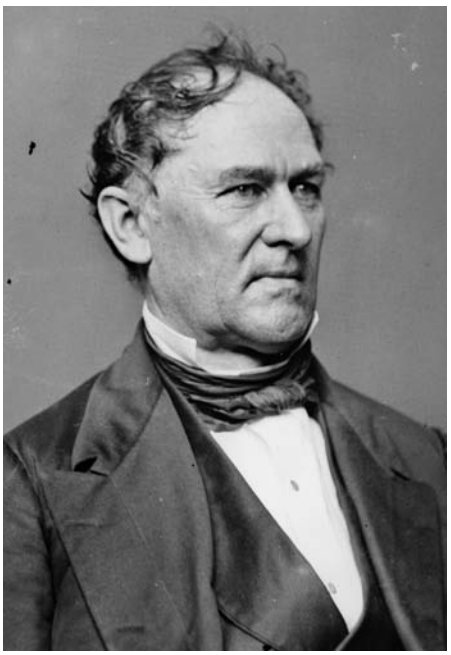
fiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes' Approved, August 6, 1861; and that said act be published at length with this order."

Lincoln was acting to save the border states for the Union. While Lincoln detested slavery personally, the preservation of the Union, and not a sweeping move on emancipation, remained the ultimate goal of his administration in 1861. The decision to order Frémont to modify his proclamation was intended to ensure the Union maintenance of the border states, preeminently Kentucky. Unfortunately for Lincoln, most of the members of the Republican Party, and many more average citizens from the Union, did not see it the same way.

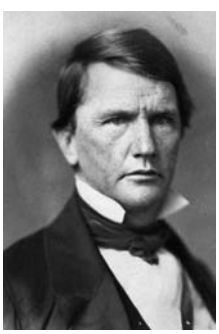
Republican Congressman George Washington Julian of Indiana wrote, "Frémont's proclamation stirred and united the people of the North during its ten days of life far more than any other event of the war." And a Cincinnati citizen writing to Horace Greeley regarding Lincoln's letter to Frémont said, "If a cheer were hip-hipped for Lincoln there the response would be a groan." Other dissenters were even harsher. "If it is said that we must consult the border states," wrote one prominent Connecticut Republican, "permit me to say damn the border states. A Thousand Lincolns cannot stop the people from fighting slavery."

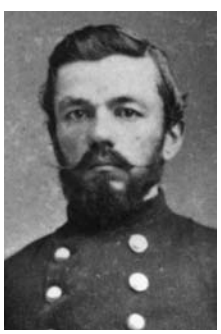
Everyone from newspaper editors to common citizens, from ministers in the pulpit to high-powered politicians, seemed to be criticizing the president for his response to Frémont, but it was criticism from his close friends that stung Lincoln most sharply. On September 17, he received a letter from his close personal friend, Illinois Senator Orville Hickman Browning, criticizing Lincoln's response to Frémont and his stance on the slave question. According to Browning, the only way to save the government was to strike a blow against slavery, and Frémont's proclamation represented the government's best weapon against the rebellion.

On September 22, in a letter marked private and confidential, Lincoln responded to Browning. Clearly surprised by Browning's letter, Lincoln wrote: "I confess it



ABOVE: Lincoln's close friend, Illinois Senator Orville Browning, supported Frémont. BELOW: Left to right, Congressman Frank Blair and Major Charles Zagonyi, who commanded Frémont's headquarters guard.





astonishes me. That you should object to my adhering to a law, which you had assisted in making, and presented to me, less than a month before, is odd enough." Lincoln went on to say that he felt the Frémont stance on slavery and emancipation was "purely political, and not within the range of military law, or necessity." Elaborating on the rule of law, Lincoln added, "If the General needs them, he can seize them, and use them; but when the need is past, it is not for him to fix their permanent future condition. This must be settled by law-makers, and not by military proclamations. The proclamation in the point in question is simply dictatorship."

Lincoln then addressed Browning's position that the Frémont proclamation on emancipation was the only way to save the government. "But I cannot assume this reckless position; nor allow others to assume it on my responsibility," wrote Lincoln. "You speak of it as being the only means of saving the government. On the contrary it is itself the surrender of the government."

A careful reading of Lincoln's letter to Browning shows the president methodically working his way through the legalities of emancipation, Union war objectives, presidential war powers, and border state political strategy. In this early stage of his presidency, Lincoln did not feel that he could permanently emancipate slaves, nor did he think that his role as commander-in-chief allowed him the power to extend permanent emancipation to slaves through his military commanders. "What I object to, is, that I as President, shall expressly or impliedly seize and exercise the permanent legislative functions of the government." Lincoln's response to Browning highlighted the fact that Lincoln was truly conservative regarding the possibility of emancipation and that his primary focus during the early months of the war was always the preservation of the Union.

Since preservation of the Union represented Lincoln's highest objective, maintenance of the border states and not emancipation of the slaves remained his chief war objective. No border state was more important to Lincoln than Kentucky, and in Lincoln's response to Browning, he explicitly stated that. "I think to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game. Kentucky gone, we can not hold Missouri, nor, as I think, Maryland," said the president. "These all against us, and the job on our hands is too large for us. We would as well consent to separation at once, including the surrender of this capital."

Back in Missouri, Frémont continued to stew, bombarding Washington with demands that he be given a vote of confidence for his actions. "I want the Secretary of War to put an end to the kind of action which is impeding me by producing want of confidence," he told Jessie Frémont. He complained that Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas, then visiting Frémont's Missouri

headquarters, was "not friendly to me, and therefore I have a right to demand that he be at once removed from my department. I think that he has been purposely sent with the object that being unfriendly, he would embarrass me. I ought not to have impediments." When Thomas removed several of Frémont's subordinates without clearing it first with Frémont, the Pathfinder exploded: "General Thomas is my enemy. He is one of those who opposed my appointment, and I am told indulged in some of the abusive and false language which a certain class about Washington has habitually permitted to themselves in reference to me."

Surrounding himself with a handpicked personal bodyguard of mostly European officers led by Hungarian Major Charles Zagonyi, Frémont governed like a potentate. "I doubt whether there was as much difficulty and ceremony displayed in gaining an audience with any emperor or king as there was in order to be ushered into the presence of General Frémont," one visitor complained. Other soldiers in the army took to calling the elaborately uniformed bodyguard "Frémont's Pets" and the "Kid Glove Brigade." Frémont's 10-year-old son, Charley, was given a special cut-down uniform and named an honorary member of the unit. He even drilled with the troops. When Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs and Postmaster General Montgomery Blair went to Missouri to look into complaints that Fremont was dealing with fraudulent or incompetent arms suppliers, Frémont's bodyguard denied them admission to his headquarters.

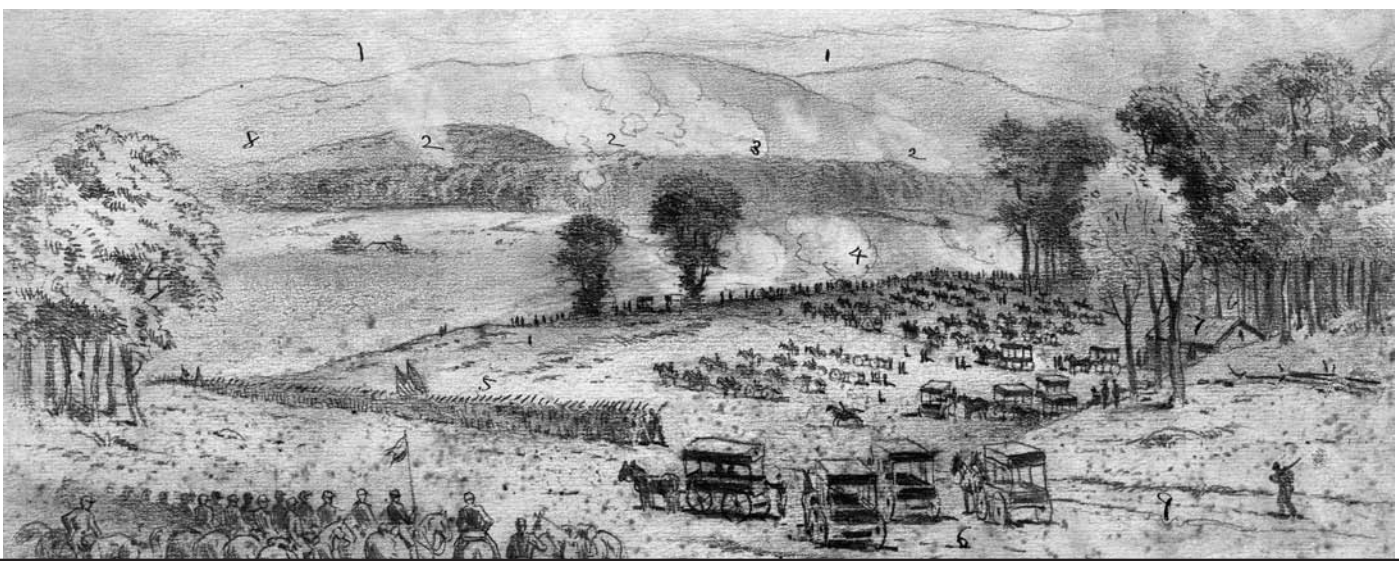
After being defeated by Stonewall Jackson at the Battle of Cross Keys in the Shenandoah Valley in 1862, Frémont was removed from command. He resigned in protest.

Frémont's arrest of Congressman Frank Blair for "insidious and dishonorable efforts to bring my authority into contempt with the government, and to undermine my influence as an officer" created another political headache for Lincoln, as did rumors that Frémont was abusing opium. The general's subsequent arrest of the editor of the influential *St. Louis Evening News* for daring to criticize Frémont's military decisions was the last straw. On November 2, Lincoln removed Fremont from command and replaced him with Maj. Gen. David Hunter. Ironically, Hunter would later issue his own unilateral emancipation proclamation while serving as commander of the Department of the South in May 1862, leading Lincoln to remove yet another high-handed general from command.

Frémont was transferred to West Virginia and given command of the newly created Mountain Department, but had the bad luck to go up against Confederate Maj. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson during Jackson's fabled Shenandoah Valley campaign. After losing to Jackson at the Battle of Cross Keys, Frémont was replaced by his subordinate, Maj. Gen. John Pope. He immediately resigned. His war was over.

After the Civil War, Frémont eventually retired to New York, but several poor financial investments involving railroads left his family all but destitute. In 1878, a sympathetic President Rutherford B. Hayes appointed Frémont governor of the Arizona Territory, but he resigned from office in 1881 following well-founded charges of dereliction of duty. Frémont spent very little time in the territory he was called upon to govern, preferring to haunt the political corridors in Washington, where he and Jessie devoted much of their time to wining and dining big-money investors for their personal mining and cattle-raising enterprises. Politically and financially ruined, Frémont died in New York City on July 13, 1890, at the age of 77.

Frémont's historical legacy remains controversial. Gifted with an iron will, a strong moral compass, and an intrepid heart, Frémont was his own worst enemy, often acting with impulsive self-righteousness and without prudence. Frémont truly was a pathfinder in his legendary explorations of the American West, but Lincoln in his way was also a pathfinder. And though Lincoln's path was more moderate and prudent, reflecting the president's much greater grasp of political reality and moral suasion, it ultimately proved more successful and far-reaching in the long run. Frémont's explorations helped expand the American nation. Lincoln's steely determination held it together. □



Crossroads of Destiny

The year 1864 was shaping up to be a critical one in the three-year-long Civil War. During the previous year, Federal armies had gained control of the Mississippi River and consolidated their grip on Tennessee. Only two significant Confederate military forces still remained in the field. In northern Georgia, General Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee, having retreated from Chattanooga, was engaging Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's Union forces on their drive toward Atlanta. Meanwhile, in the eastern theater, General Robert E. Lee's redoubtable Army of Northern Virginia was opposed by the long-suffering Army of the Potomac, still buoyed by its great, if incomplete, victory at Gettysburg six months earlier.

In February 1864, the ever-aggressive Lee planned once again to take the offensive. Recognizing that the Confederacy lacked the resources to gain a permanent advantage by a lengthy campaign in northern territory, he aimed to embarrass the enemy and prevent them from initiating a major campaign of their own. In mid-March, Lee learned that Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant had assumed command of all Union armies. Toward the end of the month, northern newspapers reported that the new Federal commander intended to make his headquarters in the field with the Army of the Potomac. This indicated that Virginia would be his main theater of operations. Southern scouts confirmed

In the forbidding countryside of Virginia's Wilderness, Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee stumbled blindly toward their first wartime encounter. Each intended to do what he did best—attack. BY JONAS L. GOLDSTEIN

that Grant had indeed joined Maj. Gen. George G. Meade at Culpeper Court House, a small Virginia town immediately north of the Rapidan River. Lee monitored Meade's growing buildup with concern but not panic.

In Washington, D.C., Grant was the toast of the town. President Abraham Lincoln had summoned the victor of Fort Donelson, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga to the Union capital to receive his well-earned promotion to lieutenant general—the first man since George Washington to hold that exalted rank in the United States Army. In promoting his fellow Illinoisan, Lincoln had ignored widespread rumors of Grant's occasional binge drinking. "I can't spare this man, he fights," the president had said, joking that perhaps he should find out what brand of whiskey Grant drank and send a case to the rest of his generals to stiffen their resolve. The soldiers in camp were less impressed. One private noted the new commander's less than impressive physical appearance. "Of all the officers in the group," he said, "I should have selected almost anyone but him as the general who won Vicksburg. But for his straps, which came down too far in front of his shoulders on his rusty uniform, I should have taken him for a clerk at headquarters rather than a general." Said another private: "He cannot be worse than his predecessors; and, if he is a fighter, he can find all the fighting he wants. We have never complained that

Confederate Lieutenant General James Longstreet, left, reels in the saddle after being wounded during the desperate fight at Orange Court House on May 6, 1864. Lithograph by Kurz & Allison.

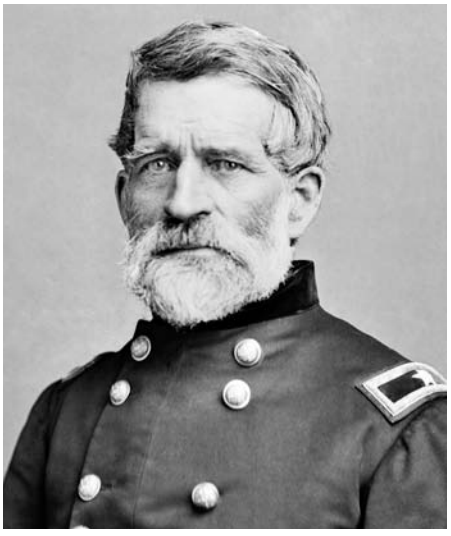
All photos: Library of Congress

Lee's men would not fight."

The main Union objective was the Confederate capital of Richmond, located approximately 70 miles to the south. The Union Army had been stymied along the Rapidan since the previous fall. What had prevented the Federals from advancing was not the river itself, but the strength of the defensive works at Mine Run, works that Lee, a former engineer, had converted into a natural fortress. High hills on the southern bank lined with interlocking rifle pits and artillery positions made crossing the river extremely difficult. If the Confederate leader could secure Richmond against secondary threats, he proposed to President Jefferson Davis on April 15, "I could draw [Lt. Gen. James] Longstreet to me and move right against the enemy across the Rapidan. Should God give us a crowning victory here, all their plans would be dissipated, and their troops now collecting on the waters of the Chesapeake would be recalled to the defense of Washington."

The instrument to accomplish this was the Army of Northern Virginia. Heading Lee's three corps were Lt. Gens. Longstreet, Richard S. Ewell, and Ambrose Powell Hill. Lee's premier fighting unit was Longstreet's I Corps, which came primarily from the Deep South. On the face of it, Lee's plan was logical. A few miles below the Rapidan fords on Lee's right sprawled a densely wooded area known as the Wilderness of Spotsylvania. From the Confederate perspective, this location offered an ideal battlefield. Meade's artillery and cavalry would be severely handicapped, and he would have difficulty applying his superior numbers in force. The 70-mile-wide, 30-mile-long stretch of second-growth timber, wiry underbrush, brackish water, and barren soil was all too familiar to the Union soldiers—they had suffered a disastrous defeat there at Chancellorsville exactly one year earlier. Indians legends said the Wilderness was haunted, and no one who had survived the previous spring's debacle doubted it in the least.

Grant, who was probably the least superstitious man in either army, had no fixed plan of campaign beyond the general idea of avoiding the strong defensive line occupied by Lee at Mine Run and finding a way to draw him into an open battle. "My general plan," he recalled later, "was to concentrate all the force possible against the Confederate armies in the field. To get possession of Lee's army was the first great object. With the capture of his army Richmond would necessarily follow." The only question was where. Federals had mustered nearly 120,000 men and 316 guns. The Army of the Potomac had been organized into three corps—the II, V, and VI—commanded respectively by Maj. Gens. Winfield Scott Hancock, Gouverneur K. Warren, and John Sedgwick. The IX Corps, reorganized under Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside, was intended to function as a mobile reserve. The Confederates, for their part, had only 64,000 men and 274 guns. The Army of Northern Virginia stood on the east side of the Rapidan River. Mine Run was on its right, extending north. The Federals realized the difficulty involved and wanted to avoid fighting in the Wilderness if at all possible.



ABOVE: Brigadier General Lysander Cutler commanded the famous Irish Brigade. BELOW: Lieutenant General A.P. Hill headed III Corps of the Army of Northern Viginia.

Grant planned to send Meade's Army of the Potomac, supplemented by Burnside's corps, directly against Lee, while Maj. Gen. Benjamin E. Butler's Army of the James advanced up its namesake river toward Richmond and another army under Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel threatened the Confederates' western flank. Lee, meanwhile, decided to wait and strike Grant when he crossed the Rapidan. The river drew an unofficial boundary between Union-held northern Virginia and the rest of the state still under Confederate control. Lee's troops remained behind their works lining the river's southern bank, just above the village of Orange Court House. On the river's far side stood Meade's army.

On May 4, Lee sent another letter to Jefferson Davis, stating: "You will already have learned that the army of General Meade is in motion, and is crossing the Rapidan on our right, whether with the intention of attacking, or moving toward Fredericksburg, I am not able to say. But it is apparent that the long threatened effort to take Richmond has begun, and that the enemy has collected all his available force to accomplish it. Success in resisting the chief armies of the enemy will enable us more easily to recover the country now occupied by him." Other than writing to the Confederate president, Lee made no other preliminary moves to reunite his scattered army, which was still in various winter camps at Orange Court House, Gordonsville, and Clark's Mountain. Perhaps Lee underestimated his new opponent—he had usually faced inferior generals on the battlefield. Lee's I Corps commander, James Longstreet, had no such misperceptions. He had been Grant's closest friend in the prewar army and had

Members of the Union VI Corps fight in the deep woods. Sketch by battlefield artist Alfred A. Waud.

even served as best man in Grant's wedding to a Longstreet cousin, Julia Boggs Dent of St. Louis. He understood Grant in a way that Lee did not. "That man," he warned, "will fight us every day and every hour till the end of the war." Lee ignored the prescient warning.

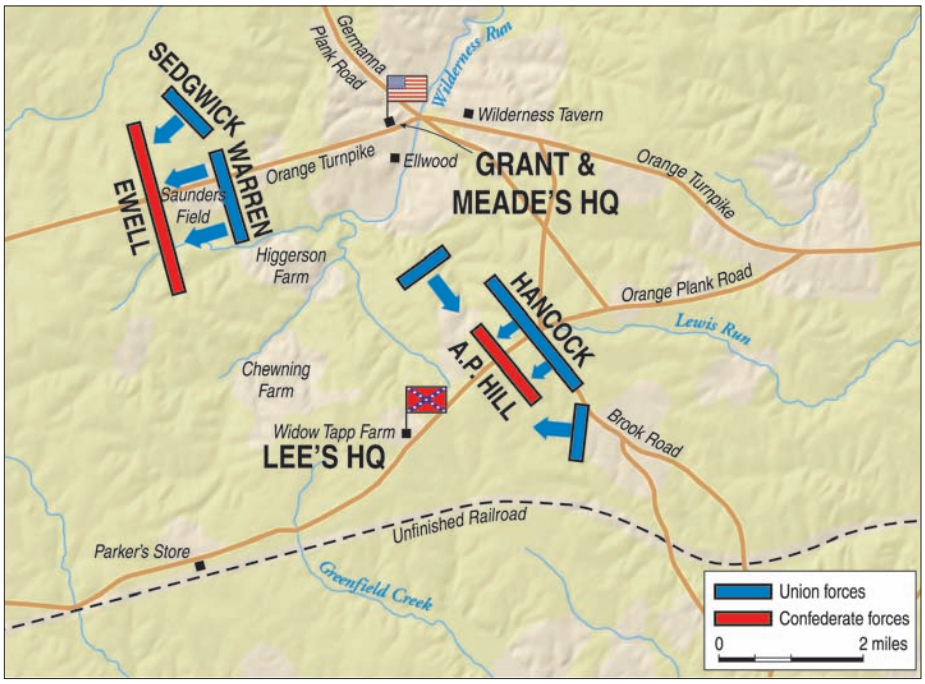
By the afternoon of May 4, the first critical phase of the Federal offensive had been completed: the crossing of the Rapidan at Ely's and Germanna Fords. The cavalry had crossed the night before to establish a bridgehead and scout ahead. Once on the opposite bank, each of the Federal corps had headed in a southeasterly direction but had gone only a short distance before making camp. Warren's corps went only as far as Wilderness Tavern, six miles south of the river. At the same time, Hancock stopped his command a shorter distance from the Rapidan at defeat-haunted Chancellorsville. Sedgwick, meanwhile, followed Warren's route and had encamped along the road leading to Wilderness Tavern, one of the few landmarks in the gloomy woods. The army's supply train was not expected to be south of the river until late on the fifth.

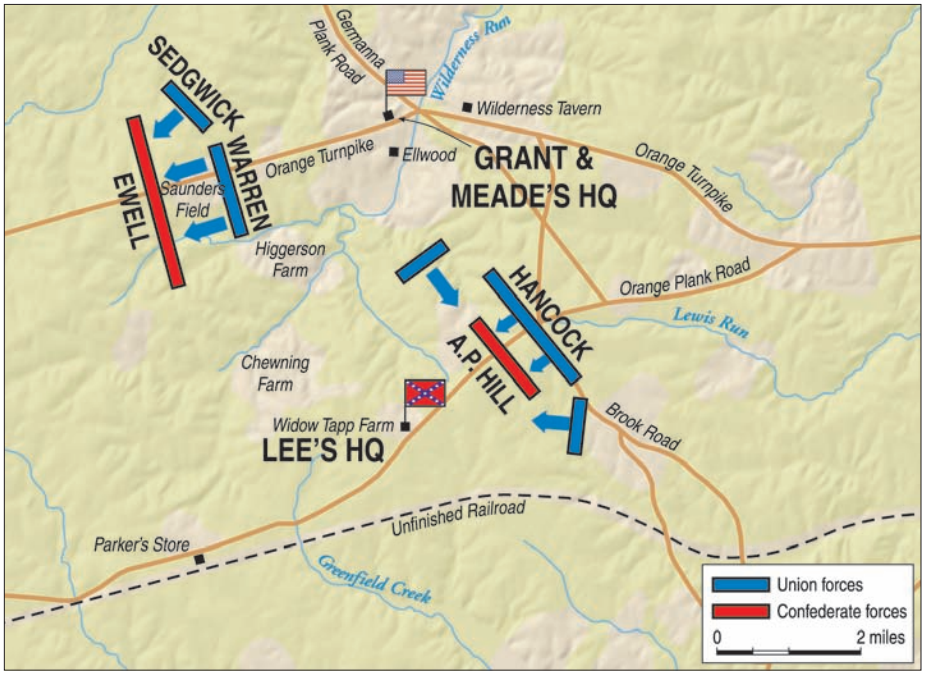
The Union soldiers, many of them as green as grass, camped for the night amid the disinterred remains of their hastily buried comrades at Chancellorsville. As night thickened, they grew uneasy, seized by "a sense of ominous dread which many of us found impossible to shake off." "It was a very easy matter to discover just where pools of blood had been," noted one soldier, "for those particular spots were marked by the greenest tufts of grass and brightest flowers to be found upon the field." A veteran cavalryman pried up a bullet-shattered skull from a shallow grave and rolled it across the ground at the new men. "That is what you are all coming to," he said, "and some of you will start toward it tomorrow." Another veteran warned that "the wounded are liable to be burned to death." Few soldiers slept well that night.

Grant and his personal entourage crossed the river at Germanna Ford. In contradistinction to his normal wear, Grant had pulled on a pair of yellow dress gloves and a black slouch hat with a gold cord to mark the occasion. Illinois Congressman Elihu B. Washburne, his political mentor, rode at Grant's side, dressed entirely in black and causing the soldiers in line to wonder aloud if the somberly dressed stranger was Grant's "personal undertaker." A northern newspaperman asked the general how long he thought it would take to reach Richmond. Grant responded good-naturedly: "About four days—that is, if General Lee becomes a party to the agreement; but [if] he objects, the trip will undoubtedly be prolonged."

Providing all went as expected, Grant would meet Lee's forces where the North's numerical superiority could be used to its advantage. However, that afternoon he and Meade made a critical decision that shaped the nature of the upcoming battle. Meade's original plan called for the infantry to march at a sustained pace throughout the day. They had started just after midnight, and a forced march would bring them through the Wilderness before sunset. Meade's timetable assumed that Lee would be taken by surprise and would react slowly, allowing the Army of the Potomac to maintain the initiative.

If Lee moved first, however, all those careful calculations would be upset. The problem was the massive army wagon train. The infantry might clear the Wilderness by nightfall, but it would be impossi-





TOP: Major General Gouverneur K. Warren's V Corps opens the Battle of the Wilderness with an attack on Lieutenant General Richard Ewell's II Corps on the Confederate left. ABOVE: James Longstreet's fresh troops, spearheaded by General David M. Gregg's Texas brigade, retake lost ground on May 6. OPPOSITE: Union soldiers carry their wounded comrades to safety from the burning woods of the Wilderness in this Waud sketch.

ble for its wagons to do so. Accordingly, and with Grant's approval, Meade halted the march in the afternoon to allow the wagons to catch up, thus giving Lee the opportunity to initiate hostilities in the Wilderness, where odds favoring the Confederates were the greatest. The Confederate leader already had decided to divide his army, outnumbered 2-to-1, and march toward the Federals. The scheme entailed risk, but Lee counted on the dense underbrush of the terrain to offset Grant's considerable advantage in troops and weapons.

The Wilderness was traversed by four principal roads. Two ran south from the Rapidan, and two ran east from Orange to Fredericksburg. The Army of the Potomac was marching on the roads running south. Lee would soon move along those heading east. Both sets of roadways intersected in the vicinity of Wilderness Tavern, a ramshackle stagecoach depot five miles below the Rapidan. If Lee were to encounter Meade in the midst of the Wilderness, he would have to take steps to stall the Union advance. Otherwise the Federals might march through the Wilderness before he had sufficient opportunity to maneuver his own army into place.

Grant and Meade had crossed the Rapidan below the main position of Lee's army, Confederate headquarters being at Orange Court House. After crossing, while Grant was waiting for lunch, a courier brought a message from a signal corps station in the rear, which had intercepted and deciphered a dispatch from a Confederate station on Clark Mountain. It stated that Ewell, commanding the left wing corps of Lee's army, was already moving forward, apparently meaning to cut the Federal line of march. Lee's purpose was to pin Grant in place with Ewell and Hill, then swing his entire army into action. Grant immediately ordered Burnside to force march his IX Corps from the Rapidan and rejoin the rest of the army.

Early on May 5, Ewell deployed along the western edge of a clearing named Saunders' Field. Meade ordered Warren's V Corps to attack immediately, but the troops were unable to form rapidly in the woods. First light came early in springtime Virginia, and by 5 AM, Union columns had been on the march to take their positions. Warren rode to the front and reluctantly ordered the advance to begin. The slightly built general had been born in New York and attended the United States Military Academy at West Point. During the war, he had served during the Peninsula campaign and at Fredericksburg. He had initiated the defense of Little Round Top during the Battle of Gettysburg, an act that had won him a promotion to major general.

The inbred caution of the Army of the Potomac prevented the hammer blows Grant wanted from being delivered promptly, and the time lag worked to Lee's advantage. Ewell's II Corps moved east toward Grant along Orange Turnpike. Lee reminded Ewell that he was not to bring on a major engagement until Longstreet arrived, instructing him: "Captain [R.E.] Wilbourn reports everything moving to our right except cavalry, if so, better move the divisions to occupy lines at Mine Run, and be prepared for action." By then, Grant was advancing in force to meet the thrust on his right. Ewell's corps advanced until 10 o'clock, when suddenly it was brought to a halt about two miles from where the old Ford Road crossed the turnpike. Ahead, Federal troops were moving south through the intersection of the two roads. Just hours before, Union headquarters had learned of Ewell's advance up the Orange Turnpike, and Meade had immediately ordered Warren, whose divisions, had already moved past the intersection of the turnpike and Germanna Ford Road, to reverse his course and attack the Southern force.

Meade again ordered Warren to attack immediately, but his troops had trouble forming in the woods. It was nearly 11 AM before V Corps's lead division first made contact with Brig. Gen. John M. Jones's Confederate brigade. "A red volcano yawned before us," one Maine soldier remembered, "and vomited forth fire, and lead, and death." The woods became a bedlam of noise, so loud that the soldiers could not even hear their own rifle fire. The furious Union assault caught Jones's troops by surprise. They broke for the rear. Before long the 5th Confederate Brigade, which had been posted behind Jones, was also caught in the confusion and left in a temporary state of panic. Jones, seeing his line waver, rode to the front to encourage his troops. Soon he was cornered by two Pennsylvania privates, who demanded that he surrender. Refusing to hand over his sword to men of lesser rank, Jones remained on horseback. Unimpressed, the Northerners simply shot him off his horse and stole his sword. Jones died immediately.

"It seemed as though Christian men had turned to fiends, and, hell itself had usurped the place of earth."

The entire II Corps was in a desperate situation. Ewell quickly brought up Brig. Gen. John B. Gordon's brigade, which managed to check the Union advance. Spearheading Gordon's advance was a leather-lunged private from the 26th Georgia. Nicknamed "Gordon's Bull," James E. Spivey emitted a truly awe-inspiring battle cry, described by listeners as "a kind of scream or low, like a terrible bull, with a kind of neigh mixed along with it, and nearly as loud as a steam whistle." Inspired by Spivey's unearthly yelling, Gordon's men struck the famous Iron Brigade, commanded by Brig. Gen. Lysander Cutler. For the first time in its proud history, the Iron Brigade broke and ran, leaving behind a pair of silver bugles that the Georgians scooped up and added to their own regimental band. Ewell's fortunes improved as other brigades, including Brig. Gen. Cullen A. Battle's command, joined the fight. Before long the Federals were outflanked and forced to withdraw. Union reinforcements consisting of two full divisions were moving by then, but they could do nothing to stall the Confederate counterattack.

Ewell's men had regained the ground lost at the outset of the struggle. At that point, he halted his brigades where they were and had them dig in on both sides of the road. Eventually, the Confederate works extended for about a mile north and south of the turnpike. For the balance of the day, Warren attempted without success to drive Ewell's corps from its defenses. Ewell, born and raised in Virginia, was another West Point graduate, having later served in the cavalry during the Mexican War. He had joined the Confederacy in 1861 and was promoted to brigadier general. As a major general, he had commanded a division during Stonewall Jackson's inspired Shenandoah Valley campaign. A severe knee wound during the Battle of Groveton had resulted in the amputation of Ewell's right leg, but he returned to duty as a lieutenant general in May 1863. Subsequently,

he fought at Gettysburg with questionable results before participating in the Wilderness battle.

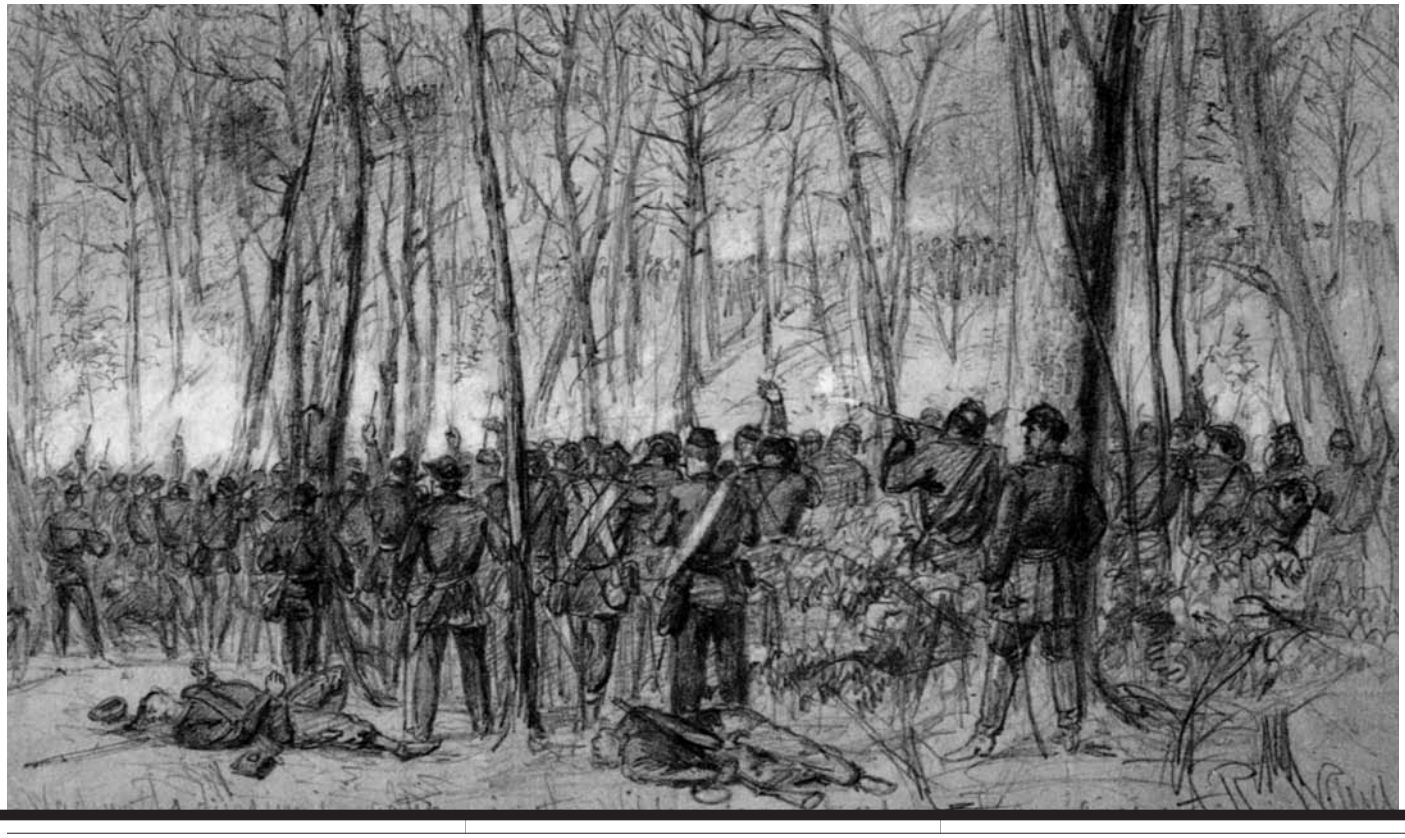
In the late afternoon, while the fighting along Orange Turnpike was winding down, another battle was developing a few miles to the south in the vicinity of the junction of Brock Road and Orange Plank Road. There, Maj. Gen. Henry Heth's division of Hill's corps was being attacked by both Sedgwick's VI and Hancock's II Corps. The attack, like the one launched against Ewell, came without much warning. At about one o'clock, the Confederates made contact with the skirmishers of Brig. Gen. George W. Getty's division of the VI Corps, which had halted and deployed in line of battle. Skirmishing continued until an intense battle developed. The Federal assault fell entirely upon Heth's unsupported division. It was, said one North Carolina soldier, "a butchery pure and simple, unrelieved by any of the arts of war." To another Confederate, it was not even a formal battle, but simply "bushwhacking on a grand scale."

Although outnumbered more than 3-to-1, the Confederates successfully halted the enemy's advance, while inflicting heavy casualties of their own. The Union leadership committed more men into the fight, thereby increasing the pressure on the already hard-pressed defenders. Hancock advanced again and the weight of the attack began to tell. A portion of Heth's force was in danger of giving way at a critical moment. Hancock then launched a massive frontal attack and later hit the enemy's left flank, ultimately resulting in the rout of the Confederate III Corps. Hancock, born in 1824 in Pennsylvania, had distinguished himself at Gettysburg. Grant considered him in many ways his most able general. To prevent reinforcements from being provided to assist Hill, simultaneous attacks were made against other Confederate units. The Southern right offered some resistance at first, but the strength of the Federal offensive quickly began to tell.

With only two divisions, Hill fought a stubborn defensive action against overwhelming odds and was saved by the arrival of night. By then, as one young Confederate told reinforcements rushing to enter the fight, "dead Yankees were knee deep all over four acres of ground." At that time, Lee ordered Longstreet to abandon his flanking movement and hurry to relieve Hill. Lee assumed that Longstreet would arrive before daylight, and so permitted Hill's tired men to rest without repairing their lines. Lee sent a telegram to Confederate Secretary of War James Seddon, reporting the fighting. "The enemy crossed the Rapidan yesterday," said Lee. "A strong attack was made upon Ewell, who repulsed it. The enemy subsequently concentrated upon General Hill, who resisted repeated and desperate assaults. By the blessing of God we maintained our position."

Grant, understandably, had a different view of the situation. "I feel pretty well satisfied with the results of the engagement," he told Meade, "for it is evident that Lee attempted by a bold movement to strike this enemy in the flank, but in this he failed." Grant's plan for May 6 was simple enough: Warren and Sedgwick would renew their attack against the Confederate II Corps, hold Ewell in place, and pre-

General James Wadsworth's division continues fighting near the spot where he was fatally wounded.



vent any reinforcements from being sent to Hill. Hancock, meanwhile, reinforced with all available forces, would deliver the principal Union attack along the Orange Plank Road and annihilate Hill before Longstreet arrived. Meanwhile, Grant recommended that everyone try to get a little sleep. "We shall have a busy day tomorrow," Grant advised, "and I think we had better get all the sleep we can tonight. I am a confirmed believer in the restorative qualities of sleep, and always like to get at least seven hours of it." In the pitch-black battlefield around him, thousands of Union and Confederate soldiers were already sleeping their last sleep.

Longstreet's corps, which since its arrival from Tennessee had been posted at Gordonsville, 20 miles distant from Hill, was delayed in reaching the scene. At first light, Hancock attacked. With the help of Wadsworth, he easily overwhelmed Hill and poured into Widow Tapp's Field, where Lee had his headquarters. "We are driving them beautifully," Hancock cried. "Tell Meade we are driving them most beautifully." At the last moment, Longstreet's Confederates reached the clearing. David M. Gregg's Texas brigade led the way. The Texans cheered lustily as their line of battle passed through their comrades' disordered columns. Lee himself rode out to greet them. "Who are you, my boys?" he cried. "Texas boys!" they yelled back. "Texans always move them!" Lee cried. Enlivened by the greeting, Lee spurred his horse through an opening in the trenches and followed Gregg's men as they moved rapidly forward. When the men recognized him, they cried: "Go back, General Lee! Go back! We won't go on unless you go back!" With some difficulty, Lee's aides managed to turn around the general's horse. Longstreet, coming upon the scene, thought that Lee was "off his balance." Finally, the Confederate leader retired out of danger.

By 10 o'clock, Longstreet's men had regained the ground lost earlier in the day. While Hill's men filled the gap between Longstreet and Ewell, Longstreet's fresh troops pushed back the flustered Union troops. Longstreet first repulsed Hancock,

Confederate troops swarm over Federal breastworks at the height of their May 6 assault in the Wilderness.

then launched a surprise attack against the Union southern flank from an unfinished railroad gradient. The Federal right wing was driven back in confusion. "The terrible tempest of disaster swept on down the Union line," one New Yorker recalled, "beating back brigade and brigade until upwards of twenty thousand veterans were fleeing, every man for himself."

Having achieved his objective, Longstreet planned a flanking movement to force the enemy from the crucial intersection of the Brock and Plank Roads. Instructions were issued to the various brigade commanders, and Longstreet moved up the Plank Road nearer the action. "We shall smash them now," Brig. Gen. Micah Jenkins told a fellow staff officer. Suddenly, some of his men opened fire on some stragglers from another Confederate brigade who had been mistaken for the enemy. Longstreet rode ahead to stop the firing. Mistaking the approaching horsemen for Union cavalry, the Confederates in the woods opened fire, blasting Jenkins from his saddle with a fatal head wound and striking Longstreet in the shoulder and throat. "At the moment that Jenkins fell I received a severe shock from a minié ball passing through my throat and right shoulder," Longstreet recalled. "The blow lifted me from the saddle, and my right arm dropped to my side, but I settled back to my seat, and started to ride on, when in a minute the flow of blood admonished me that my work for the day was done. As I turned to ride back, members of the staff, seeing me about to fall, dismounted and lifted me to the ground."

Longstreet gasped out a final order directing his men to take the Brock Road, but his wounding had broken the Confederate momentum. When the gray-clad troops finally resumed their advance some four hours later, the results were disastrous. They ran into a strengthened Federal line and, after a difficult struggle, were repulsed. The fighting now settled down on the Southern right. Lee once again attacked Hancock, who was entrenched along the Brock Road. A portion of Hancock's works ignited, and Southerners poured through the breach, only to be driven back by well-placed Union artillery. Fighting closed around 6 PM. Shortly before dark, Gordon assaulted the northern end of Grant's line and overran a portion of Sedgwick's corps. Darkness ended the attack. With the repulse of Gordon's

Continued on page 96

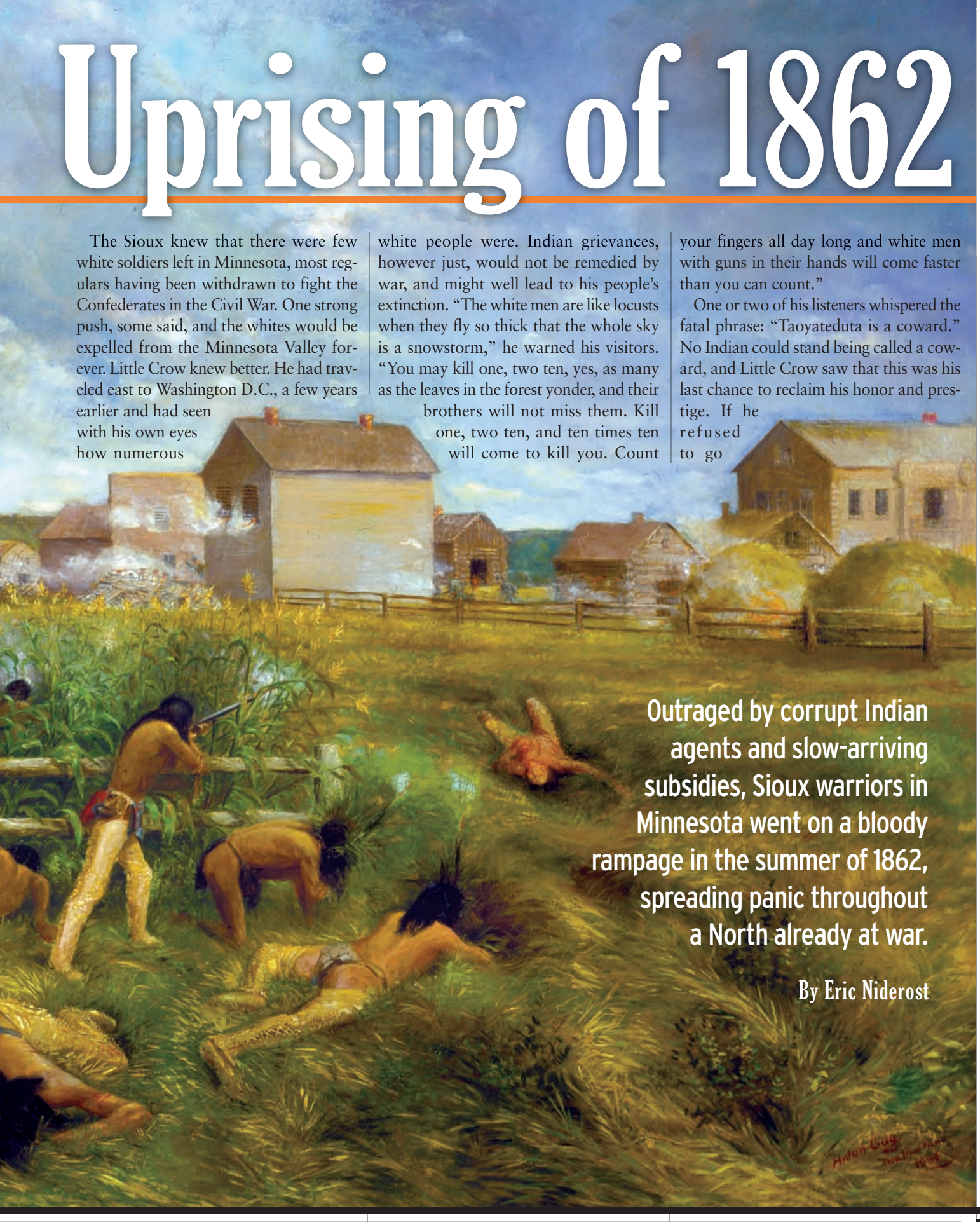
The Great Sioux

SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT on the morning of Monday, August 18, 1862, an uneasy group of Santee Sioux warriors arrived at the simple frame home of Taoyateduta, known to the whites as Little Crow. The day before, four Santee warriors had killed five white people, including two women, while hunting near Acton, Minnesota, 40 miles north of the Lower Sioux Agency on the Minnesota River. Recognizing the gravity of the situation, a council of elders decided to seek the chief's advice. Little Crow was asleep on the ground floor of his house when they arrived, but he quickly rose and came outside to confront the assembled crowd of 100 chiefs and warriors.

For years, Little Crow had been the principal spokesman and negotiator for his people, but recently he had been accused of becoming a pliant tool of the whites, counseling peace and acquiescence to the ceaseless demands for more Indian land. As tensions mounted, the Mdewakanton—his branch of the Santee Sioux—showed their anger by removing Little Crow from his speakership. This was a serious blow to his honor and prestige, and Little Crow took the demotion bitterly. Now it seemed as though he was needed again. His prestige, however tarnished, would be an asset in an all-out war with the whites, which many now feared was coming soon.

While a building burns in the background, Sioux attackers press through a cornfield to menace white settlers at New Ulm, Minnesota, in this painting by Anton Gag.

Uprising of 1862



Outraged by corrupt Indian agents and slow-arriving subsidies, Sioux warriors in Minnesota went on a bloody rampage in the summer of 1862, spreading panic throughout a North already at war.

By Eric Niderost

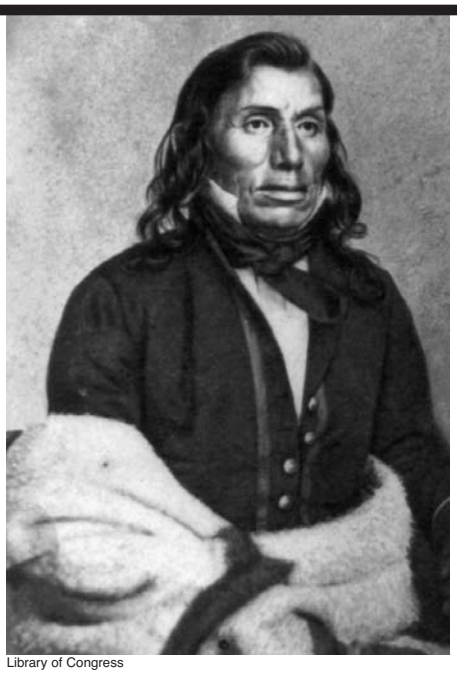
The Sioux knew that there were few white soldiers left in Minnesota, most regulars having been withdrawn to fight the Confederates in the Civil War. One strong push, some said, and the whites would be expelled from the Minnesota Valley forever. Little Crow knew better. He had traveled east to Washington D.C., a few years earlier and had seen with his own eyes how numerous white people were. Indian grievances, however just, would not be remedied by war, and might well lead to his people's extinction. "The white men are like locusts when they fly so thick that the whole sky is a snowstorm," he warned his visitors. "You may kill one, two ten, yes, as many as the leaves in the forest yonder, and their brothers will not miss them. Kill one, two ten, and ten times ten will come to kill you. Count your fingers all day long and white men with guns in their hands will come faster than you can count."

One or two of his listeners whispered the fatal phrase: "Taoyateduta is a coward." No Indian could stand being called a coward, and Little Crow saw that this was his last chance to reclaim his honor and prestige. If he refused to go

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

to war, his reputation would sink even lower. Against his better judgment, the chief decided to fight. "You will die like rabbits when the hungry wolves hunt them in the Hard Moon," he warned, but added: "Taoyateduta is not a coward. He will die with you." With that simple statement, the Great Sioux Uprising of 1862 began.

The origins of the uprising could be traced to a series of ill-advised treaties the Indians had signed in the 1850s. The first pacts were signed at Traverse des Sioux and Mendota in 1851. Collectively, the Sioux ceded almost 24 million acres of prime agricultural land, which was legally opened to white settlers three years later. The tribe agreed to part with the priceless territory in exchange for comparatively insubstantial amounts of cash and annuities. The treaties left the Sioux—some 7,000 strong—on two reservations, each 20 miles wide and 70 miles long, hugging the Minnesota River. As was customary, the federal government established administrative agencies on each reservation. The Upper Sioux Reservation was served by the Yellow Medicine Agency, while the Lower Sioux Reservation had the Redwood Agency. White merchants established stores at both agencies where the Sioux could spend their annuity money or



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trade furs for food and other goods.

By 1857, white settlers, rapacious as ever for new land, started to pressure the government to open the Dakota Territory for settlement. In the spring of 1858, a Sioux delegation led by Little Crow and Indian agent Joseph R. Brown traveled to Washington to negotiate a new series of treaties. The treaties of 1858 further reduced the Santee reservations, ceding the strip that was north of the Minnesota River for an amount to be determined by the U.S. Senate. It would take two more years for the senators to decide on payment, a laughable 30 cents per acre—well below the going rate for prime real estate. Meanwhile, almost a million additional acres of Sioux homeland were lost at the stroke of a pen. Returning home, Little Crow was hard put to cast the treaty in a favorable light.

White traders were the greatest source of conflict and controversy in the years leading up to the 1862 uprising. As early as 1851, traders had laid claim to a substantial portion of the Indian annuities. For the 1851 pact, the figure was approximately $400,000. Traders also insisted that they be given the annuity money directly. In theory, they would then subtract what the Indians owed them and distribute what was left. In practice, many unscrupulous traders presented fraudulent claims that left little, if any, cash for the Sioux. Intratribal friction rose between those who sought to take on white ways, called "cut hairs," and those who clung to traditional tribal beliefs, called "blanket Indians."

The novel specter of financial debt haunted the free-living Sioux, many of whom found themselves owing huge sums of money for blankets and food. It was a vicious cycle, especially when wild game became scarce. The Santees in the north became increasingly dependent on white men for food and other goods. The

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traders' greed was doubly resented, since virtually all of them had married Indian women. Social relationships and kinship were the cornerstones of Indian society. In the Santees' eyes, the traders should have had the decency to simply wait patiently until their customers, who were often their relatives, were able to pay their bills.

A delay in annuity payments caused by the worsening war between the Union and the Confederacy sparked the great Sioux uprising of 1862. Hungry tribesmen, desperate for food, broke into a government agency storehouse at Upper Agency to take flour and other items. Indian agent Thomas Galbraith was reluctant to depart from the norm—distributing food only after the annuity money arrived—and the white traders adamantly refused to extend credit. Army Lieutenant Timothy J. Sheehan, commanding the 5th Minnesota Regiment, had his men train a loaded howitzer on the angry crowd.

Little Crow and other Indian leaders at the Lower Agency convened a council to discuss the crisis. Among those present were Little Crow, Galbraith, and several white traders. John P. Williamson, a missionary, handled the translating chores. Little Crow asked that the Indians be given the food that was rightfully theirs. They were starving, he warned, adding, "When men are hungry, they help themselves." Andrew J. Myrick, one of the leading traders, discounted the warning. "So far as I am concerned," he said, "if they are hungry they can eat grass." After Williamson translated Myrick's words into Dakota Sioux, the assembled Indians reacted with angry war whoops and threatening gestures. Myrick's stubborn insensitivity was glossed over when Sheehan convinced Galbraith to distribute some pork and flour to the starving Indians.

That same day, four young Santees were passing the Robinson Jones homestead in Acton, three miles southwest of Grove City. They knew Jones, who ran a combination post office, inn, and store. The Indians went up to the house and demanded whiskey, becoming angry when Jones refused. One thing led to another, and the

ABOVE: Sioux warriors attempt to burn out defenders at New Ulm. The siege lasted for two days before the settlers withdrew to nearby Mankato by wagon. OPPOSITE TOP: Chief Little Crow (Taoyateduta) in an 1862 photograph. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: This contemporary drawing by Dan Nelson shows Santee Sioux tribesmen killing five white settlers, including two women, at the Robinson Jones homestead in Acton.

Indians killed Jones, his wife, and neighbors Viranus Webster and Howard Baker. Fifteen-year-old Clara Wilson, whom Jones had adopted, was also shot and killed. Once their fury had abated, the four warriors realized that they were in serious trouble. They returned to their village, explaining what had happened and urging an all-out war to drive the whites from the Minnesota River Valley. The late-night meeting with Little Crow followed.

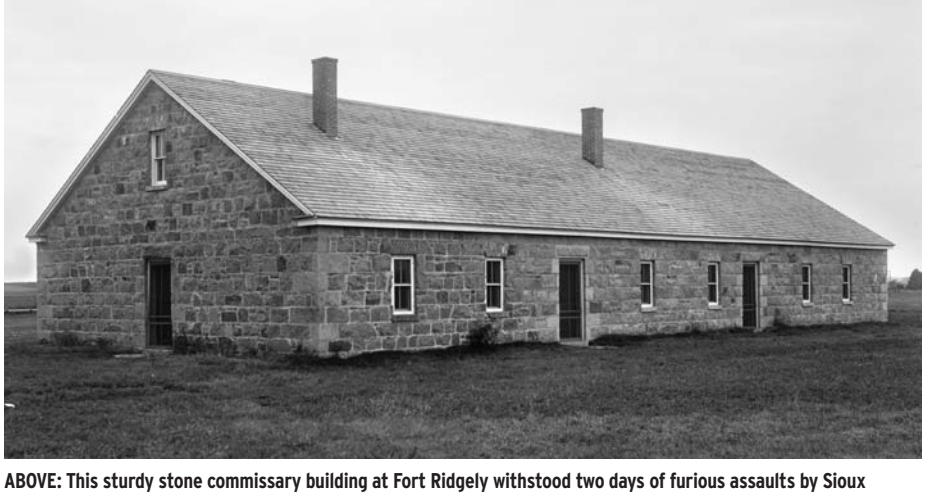
Once he had decided on war, Little Crow directed that the Lower Sioux Agency's Redwood post be attacked at dawn. The agency post was a small cluster of log cabins, frame houses, and brick buildings perched atop a bluff. Some 60 white men and women lived there, including cooks, clerks, teachers, missionaries, and government laborers who tilled the fields. The traders' stores were located a quarter of a mile from the government buildings.

The merchants, clerks, and others had just sat down for breakfast when a large party of Indians arrived, ominously painted for battle. Before the whites could react, or even fully comprehend, the meaning of the war paint, the Indians began killing them. Dakota warriors broke into small groups, shooting down all they encountered. Taken by surprise, the victims were probably unaware of why they were being murdered. Myrick's store was a special target. One warrior was heard to mutter, "Now I will kill the dog who wouldn't give me credit."

Myrick's clerk and cook were shot down, but at first the merchant himself could not be found. He was discovered trying to flee from a second-story window in his store and shot down without mercy. It was said Myrick had fathered three children by a Sioux woman, then abandoned her for a younger woman. The jilted woman's brother was the first to pump a bullet into the businessman's body. As was customary in Sioux culture, Myrick's body suffered post-mortem indignities. Arrows were shot in his corpse and an old scythe driven through his rib cage. Remembering his insulting words, warriors stuffed Myrick's mouth with grass. "Now Myrick eats grass himself," one warrior exalted.

The general massacre slowed when the Indians began to loot the buildings, then put them to the torch. The distraction allowed many settlers time to escape. Not all the Indians joined in the general bloodlust. Several slipped away and warned white friends and relatives, giving them

Both: Library of Congress



ABOVE: This sturdy stone commissary building at Fort Ridgely withstood two days of furious assaults by Sioux attackers. TOP: Shocked survivors of the Sioux uprising reflect in their faces a lingering dread as they take a quick dinner on the open prairie. Many knew the Indians as friends.

enough time to escape. The fugitives made their way to the Redwood Ferry in an attempt to cross the Minnesota River and comparative safety. Ferryman Humbert Miller heroically stayed at his post, shuttling dozens of people over to the far bank before the Sioux finally killed him.

Warriors fanned out, spreading terror and death through the surrounding countryside. From August 18 to August 21, many white homesteads were wiped out. The Beaver Creek settlement, just across the Minnesota River from Redwood and Milford Township, was particularly hated, since the Sioux felt that the whites living there were squatting on stolen Indian land. In Milford alone, 50 or so whites, mostly unarmed German immigrants, were felled by bullets or chopped down by hatchets.

Most of the civilian refugees made for Fort Ridgely, situated on a spur of high prairie ground 150 feet above the Minnesota Valley floor. The site was commanding but flawed. Deep ravines to the east, north, and southwest provided ample cover for potential attackers. The post itself was unfortified, merely a hodgepodge of barracks, stables, commissary, and other military buildings. Like many forts of the period, Fort Ridgely did not have a stockade wall like the ones often depicted in Westerns.

The main buildings were a two-story stone barracks, a one-story commissary, officer's quarters, and a combination headquarters and surgeon's facility, all grouped around a parade ground 90 yards wide. Behind the barracks were some log houses and the post hospital. To the south was a large stable just across the road from New Ulm. The ammunition magazines were exposed, lying some 200 yards northwest of the fort.

Refugees began streaming into Fort Ridgely not long after the first attacks on the Lower Agency. Post commander Captain John S. Marsh was incredulous at first, scarcely believing that such a major uprising could be taking place under his very nose. But when the reports became too numerous to ignore, Marsh took action. Drummer boy Charles Culver beat a steady tattoo, and 76 soldiers fell into line. Lieutenant Sheehan had left for Fort Ripley, located on the Mississippi River, the day before. A messenger was quickly dispatched urging Sheehan to return immediately. "The Indians are raising hell in the Lower Agency," Marsh's missive explained.

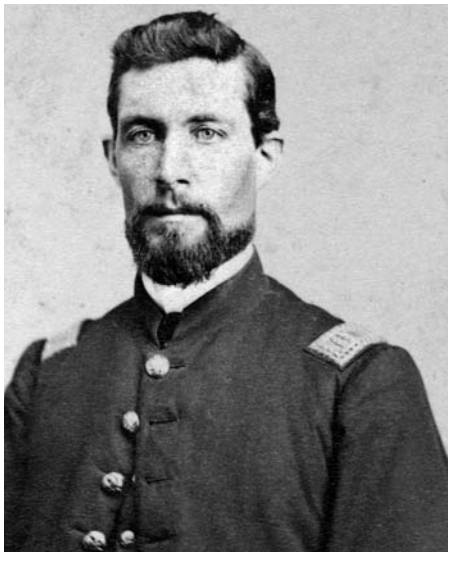
Marsh took 46 soldiers and headed for the scene of the fighting at the Lower Agency. Nineteen-year-old Lieutenant Thomas B. Gere was left in command of the post. Gere, a "shavetail," or greenhorn, had only been in the Army for eight months. To make matters worse, he was also ill, having contracted mumps a short time earlier. There were 29 men left to defend the post. In the meantime, Marsh continued on toward Lower Agency. Marsh and interpreter Peter Quinn rode mules, while the soldiers were riding in wagons. They began to encounter refugees going in the opposite direction, all with the same tale of surprise, mayhem, and abject terror.

At Redwood Ferry, Marsh and his men were ambushed by Chief White Dog, a sub-chief who was normally known to be friendly to whites. Attacked on three sides, the soldiers made their way through thick

Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images

vegetation along the river bank. Marsh, attempting to swim across the river, was seized by a cramp and drowned. The surviving soldiers—half the original force—extricated themselves with difficulty and returned to Fort Ridgely. The ambush was the Indians' first major victory, and their elation knew no bounds. One warrior boasted, "The white men can be killed like sheep!" Little Crow, who knew what they were up against, cautioned against overconfidence, but he was overruled by young hotheads who were openly contemptuous of the whites' fighting abilities.

Little Crow wanted to attack Fort Ridgley the next morning, but several days passed before he could muster enough warriors to mount a credible assault. By then, Fort Ridgely's most vulnerable time had passed, although the Indians did not yet know it. Sheehan had arrived at the fort after a grueling all-night march of 40 miles. He took over command from Gere and continued to prepare for the defense. Indian agent Galbraith, who had been at St. Peter, arrived at the fort with 50 members of the Renville Rangers, a mixed-blood militia unit originally recruited to fight Confederates. Including 20 or so male refugees, Sheehan now had around 180 effectives inside the fort. He sent urgent word to Minnesota governor Alexander Ramsey for more reinforcements, and Ramsey commissioned former governor Henry Hastings Sibley to lead relief troops from Fort Snelling to Fort Ridgely.



ABOVE: Mounted Sioux warriors, one flourishing a tomahawk, stream past an oddly waving settler at the beginning of the 1862 uprising. LEFT: Newly promoted Captain Timothy J. Sheehan in 1865. Then Lieutenant Sheehan commanded the 5th Minnesota Regiment during the war with the Sioux.

It would take time for Sibley to arrive. In the meantime, the defenders would have to fend for themselves. Breastworks were thrown together to connect the innermost buildings. Barrels of flour, salt pork and beef went into the barricades, the gaps filled in by odd pieces of cordwood. The post had four artillery pieces that had been left behind when the Regular Army troops had been withdrawn for Civil War service. In a stroke of luck, Sergeants James G. McGrew and John Jones, both skilled artillerists, had remained behind. Hastily, they trained infantry soldiers and civilians to work as effective gun crews. One 12-pounder mountain howitzer was placed in the gap between the two-story barracks and the bake house. Another howitzer was wheeled out to the northwest corner.

The Indians finally attacked on the morning of August 20. Little Crow led a diversionary attack on the west side of the post. While the defenders' attention was fixed on Little Crow, Chiefs Mankato, Gray Bird, Shakopee, and others led an

assault on the northern perimeter They managed to seize several outbuildings, and for a time it looked as if the Sioux might win. The fighting grew heavier, with the defenders' Springfield rifle-muskets unleashing sheets of smoke and flame with each volley. Then the artillery opened up, iron monsters the natives had never seen before—at least not in action.

The warriors were particularly upset by the howitzer shells, which they called "rotten balls." When they exploded, they sent up a lethal spray of hot metal in every direction, killing and maiming with horrifying ease. The Indians rushed the western corner of the fort, but were stopped cold when Jones and his 6-pounder crew shot their gun off at point-blank range. It was too much for flesh and blood to stand. The warriors withdrew, carrying off their dead and wounded. A thunderstorm moved in that night, soaking the ground and washing away the stains of carnage.

On August 22 the Sioux massed for a final, all-out assault on the beleaguered post. Little Crow, who had been slightly grazed by a cannonball the day before, rode to battle in style, seated in a handsome horse-drawn buggy driven by a mixed-blood named David. Some 800 Indians gathered for the effort, including many warriors who had newly joined the uprising. The Sioux sneaked close to the fort, using the tall grass for cover and camouflaging themselves with prairie grass and flowers in their headbands. They rushed several buildings, gaining a foothold in the stables and the sutler's house. Well aimed artillery shells soon set the stables alight, the flames and smoke forcing the Indians to abandon their newly won prize. The sutler's house was soon engulfed in flames as well.

The Indians literally tried to fight fire with fire by launching a hail of flaming arrows on building roofs, but the shingles were still damp from the previous night's rains and failed to ignite. One or two roofs did finally catch fire, but were quickly extinguished with buckets of water. Frustrated, the Sioux launched another all-out attack on the southwest corner. It was the same story—case shot and shells broke up the attempt, leaving the natives little to show for their courage.

The Sioux withdrew, this time for good. Chief Big Eagle said later: "We thought the fort was the door to the valley as far as St. Paul, and if we got through nothing could stop us. But the defenders of the fort were very brave, and kept the door shut." Sibley's relief force of some 1,400 men arrived at Fort Ridgely a few days later.

Now the Indians' wrath fell upon New Ulm, a community of some 900 souls and the largest white settlement near the Sioux reservation. Many of New Ulm's men were gone, having joined the Union Army to fight the South. The town's vulnerability made it a tempting target, full of goods—and pretty young women—that could be carried off as booty. New Ulm was built on two natural terraces of land like two giant steps that rose up from the Minnesota River Valley to the height of about 200 feet and ended in a high bluff in back of the town. The community, which was founded by Germans, boasted a fine hotel called the Dacotah House.

On August 18, a recruiting party of New Ulm men had left town to gather volunteers for the Union Army from the scattered farm homesteads in the area. Sioux warriors ambushed them at Milford Township, killing 11 and causing the survivors to fall back to New Ulm. The citizens were thrown into a near-panic by the evil tidings. There were few able-bodied men in town, perhaps 40 individuals, and even fewer arms and ammunition. Some defenders were forced to arm themselves

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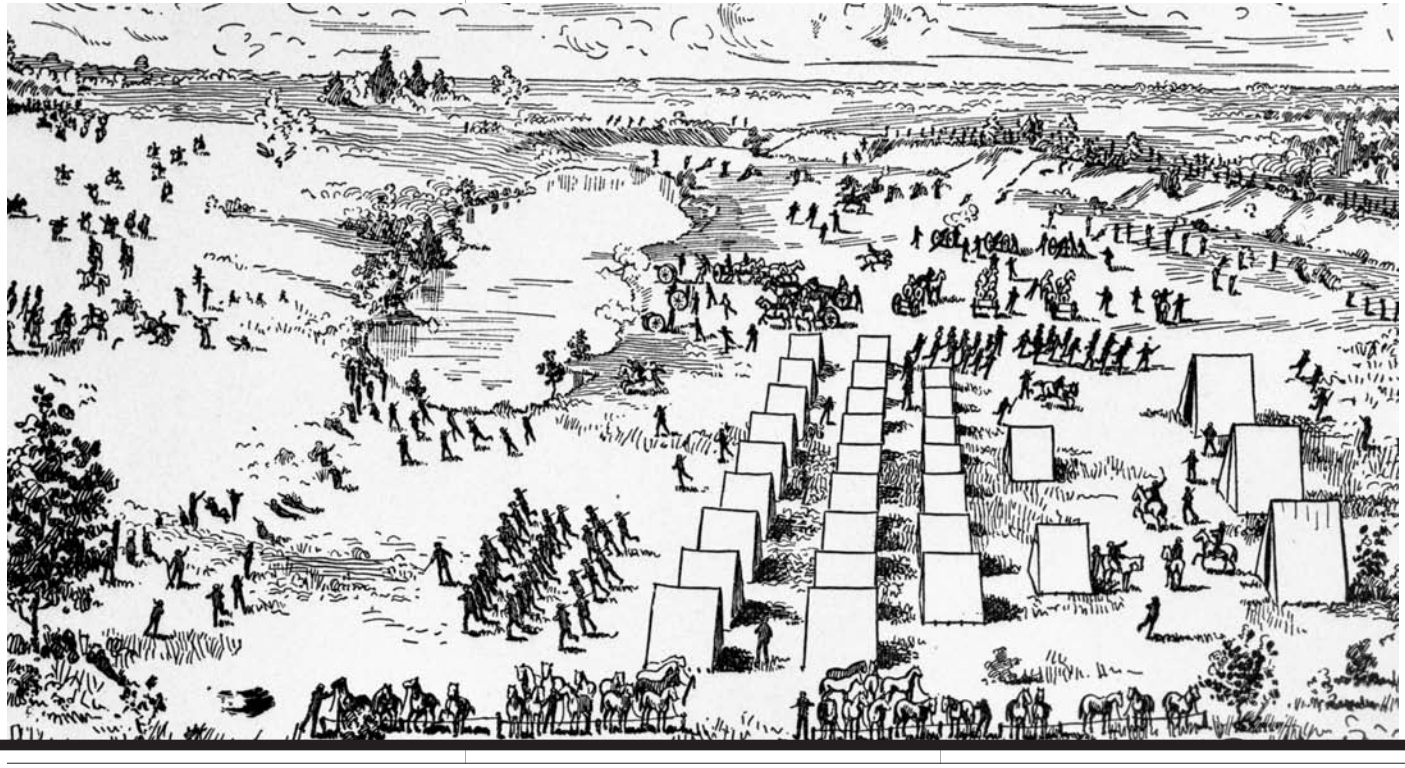

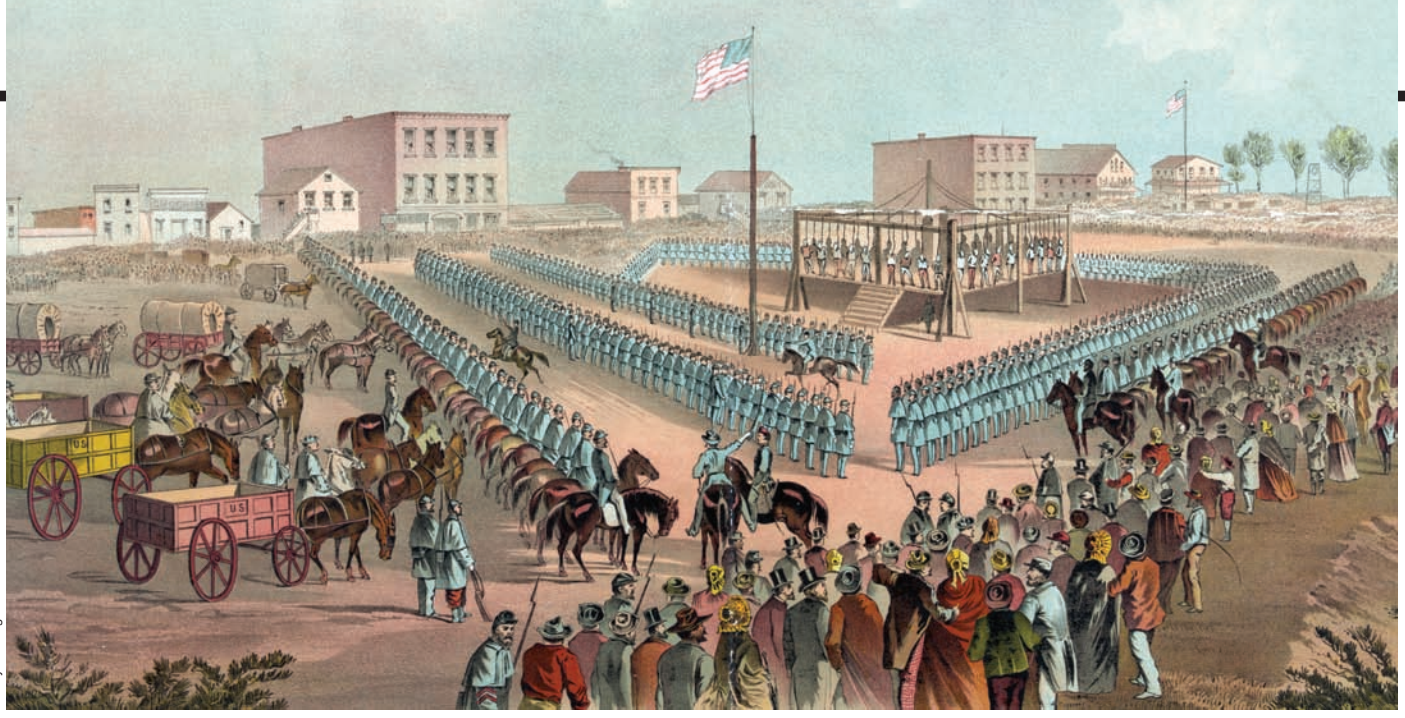

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ABOVE: Soldiers and civilians gather at Mankato on December 16, 1862, to witness the mass hanging of 38 Sioux prisoners following the massacres. It was the largest mass execution in American history. OPPOSITE: Sioux forces tried to surprise Brig. Gen. Henry Sibley's relief column but were decisively defeated at the Battle of Wood Lake on September 23, 1862.

with pitchforks and other farm implements—little use against an enemy armed with up-to-date rifles. Brown County Sheriff Charles Roos and local citizen Jacob Nix organized the defense.

Minnesota Street, the town's principal thoroughfare, was barricaded for three blocks from Center to Third North. New Ulm's brick buildings made good defensive positions because of their relative resistance to fire. Couriers were dispatched to neighboring towns asking for immediate help. The citizens of St. Peter, Le Sueur, and other settlements responded with alacrity, but it would be some time before reinforcements arrived. In the meantime, New Ulm had to weather its first Indian assault alone. About 3 PM on Tuesday, August 19, a force of 100 warriors dismounted and began firing into the town. Six townsfolk were killed, including a 13-year-old girl named Emilie Pauli, and five others were wounded.

The sky turned overcast, signaling the beginning of a large thunderstorm. Jagged streaks of lighting sliced through the sky, accompanied by torrential downpours of rain. The rainstorm seemed to dampen the Indians' ardor. The citizens welcomed the reprieve, but the danger was not over. Beginning about 9 PM, much-needed reinforcements rode into town. Judge Charles E. Flandrau headed some 125 armed militiamen, a welcome addition to the defense. Other militia units also came in, many of then sporting bellicose names like the Le Sueur Tigers and the Winnebago Guards. Flandrau took overall command of the town's 300 able-bodied defenders. After this, it was simply a matter of watching and waiting. More refugees had come to New Ulm, swelling the town's numbers to perhaps 1,500 people.

On Saturday morning, August 23, New Ulm scouts spotted pillars of smoke rising into the sky in the direction of Fort Ridgely. If the fort had fallen, the Sioux might attack New Ulm from the north side of the Minnesota River. To guard against this possibility, Flandrau sent William Harvey and 75 men to investigate. It was a ruse, and Flandrau had risen to the bait. Harvey and his men were soon cut off and forced to retreat to St. Peter. Harvey's departure left New Ulm with around 200 defenders, not all of them well-armed.

At about 9:30 AM, the Indians finally showed themselves, coming out of the woods to assemble on the prairie just west of New Ulm. The 600 to 800 warriors were led by Mankato, Wabasha, and Big Eagle, chiefs of considerable experience and skill. Flandreau ordered his second in command, militia captain William B. Dodd, to take his men and meet the Indians beyond the barricades. It was a near-fatal error. The Sioux began fanning out until they covered the defenders' entire front. The Indians, wearing breechcloths, arm bands, and feathered headdresses, picked up the pace. The advance culminated with the Indians sweeping down on the defenders with a cry so bloodcurdling that it unnerved the defenders, who broke and ran for the safety of the barricades and nearby houses. The Indians pressed forward and managed to occupy several dwellings before the townsfolk rallied and stopped the attack.

Flandrau later recalled that "the firing from both sides became general, sharp, and rapid. It got to be a regular Indian skirmish, in which every man did his own work after his own fashion." About 20 men from the Le Sueur Tigers took shelter in a local windmill three blocks from the business district and made it a major stronghold. The Frederick Forester Building, a combination pottery works, post office, and private home, located outside the barricaded perimeter, was another major strongpoint.

The town's lower terrace, near the river, was buffeted by high winds, which the

Continued on page 98

EAST TENNESSEE Sideshow

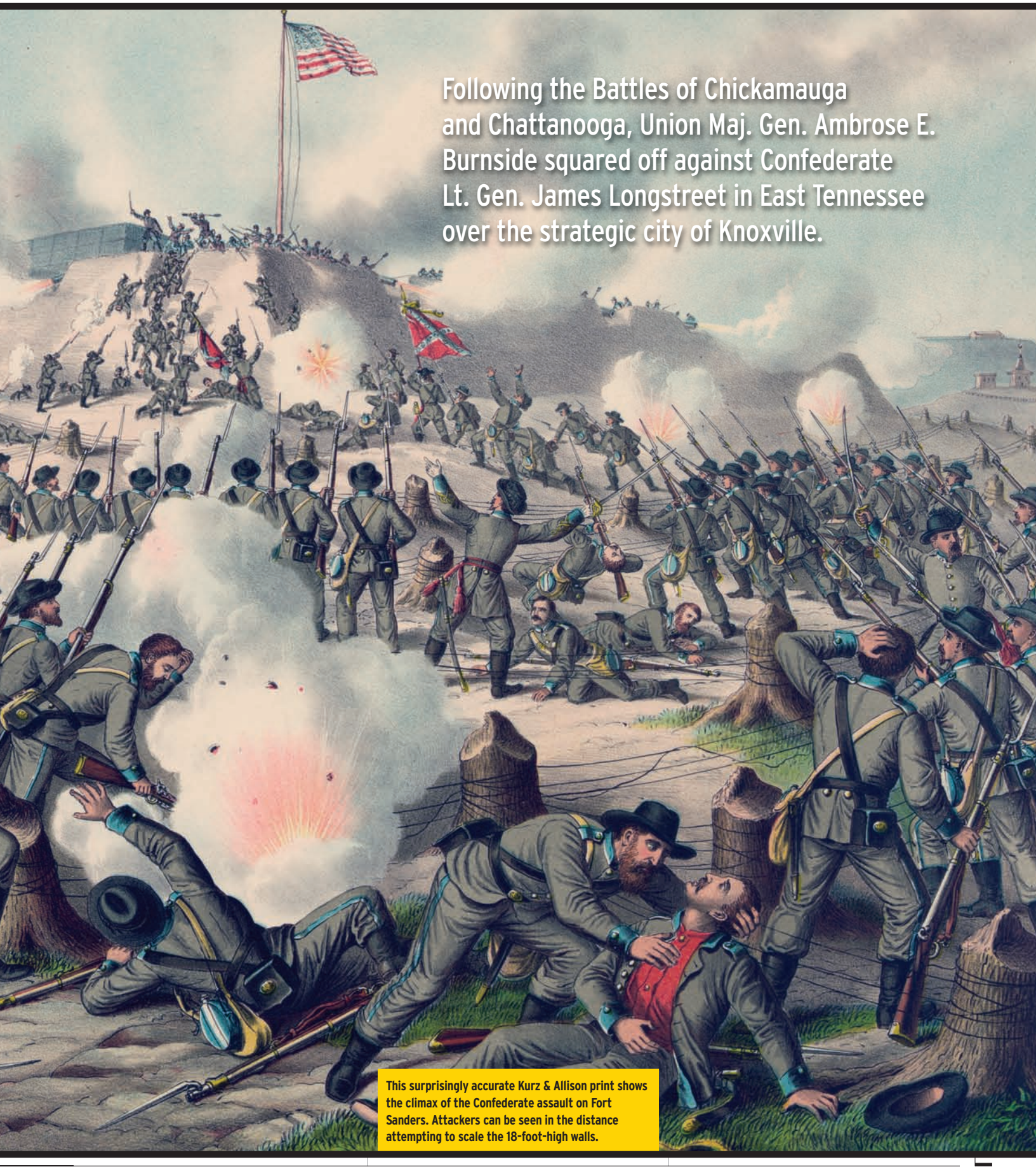
BY ARNOLD BLUMBERG

AFTER THE CRUSHING UNION DEFEAT at the Battle of Fredericksburg on December 13, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln relieved Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside from command of the Army of the Potomac. However, impressed with his assumption of full responsibility for the failure at Fredericksburg, Lincoln assigned the humiliated officer to head the Department of the Ohio encompassing the states of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and most of Kentucky.

Taking up his new duties in mid-March 1863, Burnside spent the next several months securing Kentucky from guerrilla forces, cracking down on seditious civilians residing north of the Ohio River, and creating a field force for the long-awaited invasion of East Tennessee, an operation his superiors in Washington had urged him to undertake. Burnside's field force, totaling 31,000 men, was organized into two corps: three infantry divisions comprising his old command, the IX Infantry Corps, plus two divisions of the XXIII Corps and a cavalry corps of two divisions.

At the end of May, Burnside prepared to cross his army over the Cumberland River into East Tennessee to guard the left flank of Union Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland as it marched through the Volunteer State to the critical Confederate railroad center at Chattanooga. However, before Burnside could advance, Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck, general-in-chief of the Union armies, directed him to send 8,000 of his men to Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, then besieging Vicksburg, Mississippi. Burnside dutifully sent two divisions (8,600 soldiers) of the IX Corps. With most of his veteran IX Corps gone, Burnside was hard pressed to find enough troops to defend Kentucky, let alone mount a serious incursion into East Tennessee.

In late July, Halleck's badgering of Burn-



Following the Battles of Chickamauga and Chattanooga, Union Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside squared off against Confederate Lt. Gen. James Longstreet in East Tennessee over the strategic city of Knoxville.

This surprisingly accurate Kurz & Allison print shows the climax of the Confederate assault on Fort Sanders. Attackers can be seen in the distance attempting to scale the 18-foot-high walls.

All: Library of Congress

side to mount a full Union invasion reached a crescendo, even though IX Corps was still with Grant on the Mississippi River, and Brig. Gen. John Hunt Morgan's Confederate cavalry was boldly raiding through Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio. Burnside responded that he could scrape together 12,000 men for the enterprise, but that it would weaken the defense of the Bluegrass State and make his lines of communication into East Tennessee vulnerable. Halleck, unmoved by his subordinate's plight, ordered an immediate move on Knoxville.

On August 16, Burnside's command, principally XXIII Corps (IX Corps, only 6,000 strong, would not join him until October), in five columns spread over a 100-mile distance, began its march to the Tennessee River on atrocious, bottomless mountain roads without sufficient transport to carry food or forage through a picked-over landscape destitute of resources. The Federal forces went on half rations immediately after commencing their march. The columns melded into one as they neared the Tennessee River at Kingston on September 2, 40 miles to the east. The day before, Federal cavalry had occupied Knoxville without a fight. Burnside pushed some of his mounted men 50 miles south of the Tennessee to connect with Rosecrans's left as it swept toward Chattanooga. Meanwhile, Southern forces of the Confederate Department of East Tennessee, outnumbered and spread thin, retreated 100 miles southwest of Knoxville. Another 2,000 Confederates garrisoning Cumberland Gap, 60 miles north of the city, were captured by Burnside's invaders on September 9 with scarcely a shot being fired.

Burnside intended to use Knoxville as a fortified camp from which Union forces would control East Tennessee, but his resolve was soon shaken by reports that reinforcements from Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia had boarded trains in the Old Dominion and were heading his way. It was true. Elements of Lee's army were heading south, but East Tennessee was not their intended destination. Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's formidable I Corps (two infantry divisions and one artillery battalion) had been dispatched to the western theater in response to the imminent loss of Chattanooga by General Braxton Bragg and his luckless Army of Tennessee. The city fell to the Federals on September 9. Its capture meant that the door to the interior of the Confederacy was thrown open, presaging an enemy invasion of the Confederate heartland. To forestall such a strategic catastrophe, the Richmond government had sent Longstreet and two-thirds of his corps from Bristol, Virginia, on an 800-mile roundabout journey via Georgia to Bragg's assistance. The first trains carrying Longstreet's veterans rolled toward Chattanooga the same day the city fell.

Burnside's assumption that Lee's reinforcements were meant to eject him from East Tennessee was a reasonable one. Longstreet had been sent to join Bragg in northern Georgia due to the mistaken belief that Rosecrans and Burnside intended to combine against Bragg. Had he known that Burnside was moving on Knoxville instead, Lee wrote to Confederate President Jefferson Davis, he would have sent Longstreet there instead to contest the Federal occupation of East Tennessee and protect the integrity of the Confederacy's east-west communications. The move against Burnside made other military sense as well since his was the smaller army, his flank was in the air, and his supply line to Kentucky was very precarious.

As Burnside pondered whether he could defend his area of responsibility (nearly 200 miles of front, and 200 miles from his sup-

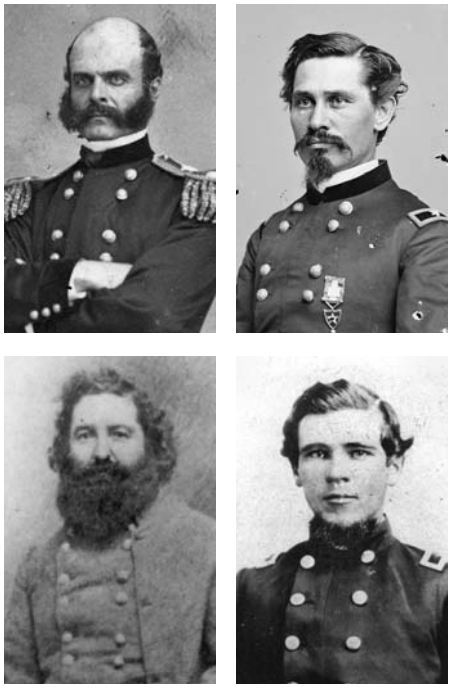
Union soldiers in IX Corps board transports at Aquia Creek Landing, Virginia, en route to join Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside's forces in Kentucky. The corps would be diverted to Vicksburg, Mississippi, first.

ply base in Kentucky) with only 20,000 men, he began to receive a string of disconcerting messages from Halleck, who directed him to forward to Rosecrans as many men he could spare as soon as possible since Bragg was about to attack at any moment. Burnside sent two infantry divisions and some cavalry, about half his combat strength, south of the Tennessee River to join Rosecrans. However, these troops were blocked by Southern forces and ultimately returned to Burnside.

After Longstreet had spearheaded the Confederate victory at the Battle of Chickamauga on September 19-20, a growing rift between him and Bragg prompted Jefferson Davis to propose that Longstreet be sent north to oust the Union forces occupying East Tennessee. Bragg readily agreed. Longstreet strongly disagreed, warning, "We thus expose both to failure, and really take no chance to ourselves of great result." Later he would say, "It was the fate of our army to wait until all good opportunities had passed, and then, in desperation, seize upon the least favorable movement." Nevertheless, Longstreet began implementing the scheme on November 4 when the first 12,000 men and two artillery battalions (35 guns), supported by 5,000 horse soldiers under Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler, left the vicinity of Chattanooga. On November 13, after moving by rail and road, Longstreet's force appeared just south of the Tennessee River near the town of Loudon.

Longstreet initially planned to approach Knoxville from the south, but without enough wagons to carry the pontoons he needed to cross the rivers and creeks along the way, he had to move his bridging equipment by rail as close to the Tennessee as possible. This forced him to cross to the north bank of the waterway miles west of Knoxville, then strike east toward the city. Once across, he wanted to bring his enemy to battle as soon as possible. An early fight was essential to conserve his troop strength and dwindling supplies and deny Burnside the opportunity to be reinforced.

Meanwhile, Burnside was informed that his new immediate superior, Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, who had replaced the ill-



Some of the principals, clockwise from top left: Ambrose Burnside, Chief Engineer Orlando M. Poe, Brig. Gen. Micah Jenkins, and Maj. Gen. Lafayette McLaws.

starred Rosecrans, intended to attack Bragg near Chattanooga, thus forcing Longstreet to return to the Army of Tennessee. In Grant's opinion, Burnside must control the Knoxville area as long as possible while Bragg was disposed of. Grant would then send a relief force to Burnside within a week of defeating Bragg. Burnside agreed; he would delay Longstreet's advance on Knoxville then hold the city as long as he could.

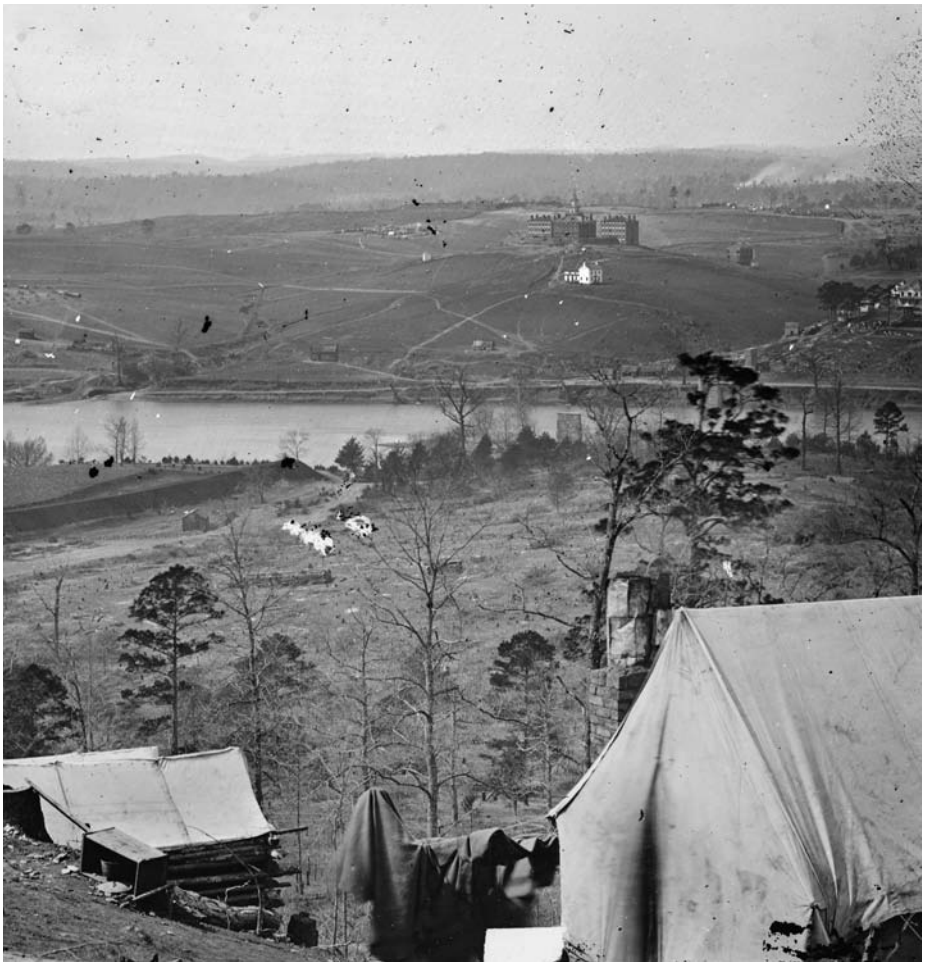
On November 14, the Confederates lurched over the Tennessee under a rainy sky, with Brig. Gen. Micah Jenkins's infantry division leading the way at Hough's Ferry just short of Loudon and 40 miles west of Knoxville. As Jenkins crossed, Longstreet's other division, under Maj. Gen. Lafayette McLaws, diverted enemy attention from the real crossing site with a move to the northeast. A further diversion was undertaken by Wheeler's cavalry to threaten Knoxville from the south side of the river.

While Longstreet's advance guard spilled over the Tennessee, Burnside concentrated his nearest combat units, Brig. Gen. Julius White's 2nd Division, XXIII Corps, near the ferry, and Brig. Gen. Edward Ferrero's 1st Division, IX Corps, at Lenoir's Station on the Tennessee & Georgia Railroad, and sent them to confront the enemy spearhead. After shaking out a thin battle line, White and Ferrero drove the Confederate skirmishers for a mile and a half until the arrival of Southern reinforcements, darkness and pelting rain halted the Union advance. Burnside ordered a night attack but cancelled it. Instead, he decided to give up the fight at the river in order to lure Longstreet toward Knoxville, farther away from Bragg, while Grant struck the Confederate army at Chattanooga.

At dawn on the 15th, the Federal columns commenced their retreat to Lenoir's Station, and by dusk had formed a strong defensive shield north and northeast of that place to cover the next Union retrograde movement toward Knoxville. As Burnside put more men, guns, and wagons in motion from Lenoir's on the road to Knoxville that night, Jenkins's division, with McLaws to its north, approached Lenoir's. Throughout the early-morning hours of the 16th, Burnside pulled out of Lenoir's Station and headed for Campbell's Station, 10 miles farther up the rail line. Soon Jenkins and McLaws were hard on the Federals' trail.

Throughout the cold November day, the Confederates came up against a succession of enemy blocking positions at Little Turkey Creek, Smith's Hill, Road Junction, Turkey Creek, and Loveville. These actions, ranging from intensive skirmishing to prolonged artillery duels, coupled with unsuccessful Confederate flanking movements, lasted until 6 PM. The series of fights on the 16th, collectively referred to as the Battle of Campbell's Station, cost the Union 318 men killed, wounded, and missing. Jenkins lost 174 men from all causes; McLaws never reported his loss tally. As dark settled over the area, Burnside continued his retreat to Knoxville under drizzly skies and over ankle-deep muddy roads. By 4 AM on the 17th, the first of White's and Potter's 5,000 men straggled into the city. Longstreet's force did not follow, but bivouacked on the field at Loveville that night.

Bestirring themselves on the morning of



November 17, the foot soldiers of McLaws' division led the chase toward Knoxville. Four miles west of the town they collided with four regiments belonging to Brig. Gen. William P. Sanders's 1st Cavalry Division. Sanders and his troopers had for the past several days blocked the path of Wheeler's cavalry trying to reach Knoxville from the south over the Tennessee River. After frustrating Wheeler, they traveled west to help delay Longstreet's main force. During the day the blue riders took up three successive positions along the Kingston Road just outside Knoxville, delaying the Confederate infantry while Burnside got his men to work creating a defensible line to protect the city.

Posting 600 men behind three-foot-high rail breastworks, in a line stretching from the Tennessee River to the wooded valley of Third Creek, and resting his right on a bare hill a little farther to the north, only two miles west of Knoxville, Sanders was able to foil repeated attacks made by clouds of Confederate skirmishers from 10 AM to 1 PM on November 18. As Colonel E. Porter Alexander, Longstreet's chief of artillery, stated afterward, "Here these fellows held, and just would not quit for anything our skirmishers could do to them." Sanders, suicidally exposing himself, walked the fence line rallying his men.

Finally, Longstreet ordered a full-scale attack on Sanders's position, preceded by a preliminary artillery bombardment followed by an assault delivered by Brig. Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw's infantry brigade of McLaws' division. The Confederates went in at 3 PM and drove the Federal cavalrymen from their works, mortally wounding their commander. "I told Sanders not to expose himself," a grief-stricken Burnside said, "but he would do it." Union losses in all totaled nearly 300 men; the Confederates lost 140.

As heroic as Sanders's delaying action was on the 18th, it was unnecessary. Longstreet had determined earlier that day that he could not attack the growing Union defenses—slim as they were—with any chance of success. Sanders had only blocked the enemy along the Kingston Road. Jenkins's force, north of the Kingston highway, had an unobstructed march to the main Union line protecting Knoxville on the 18th, but instead of attacking spent the entire day skirmishing with the Federals manning that part of the city's defensive line.

On November 19, Longstreet closed in on Knoxville's protective perimeter. For days thereafter he simply observed the Union positions. Lacking sufficient manpower or tools to completely encircle the city, he could not starve it into submission. The Confederates were themselves chronically short of supplies. Longstreet demurred when it came to a direct assault on Knoxville. His army was small (about 14,000 men and 35 cannons), and the chances of success in such an endeavor were uncertain against a fortified opponent 12,000 men strong with 51 pieces of artillery. Each day the Confederate general pondered how to take the city.

Knoxville, the prize that would once again assure Confederate control of East Tennessee, was the largest city in the predominantly pro-Union area. Most of the town was perched atop a half-mile-wide plateau between two creeks, standing 150 feet above the Tennessee River. The railroad to the north squared off the city's boundary. East Knoxville, across First Creek, occupied two hills. Flint Hill rose near the river and the railway; 80 feet higher was Temperance Hill. Farther east and higher than the others was Mabry's Hill on the Dandridge Road. West of town, the University of Tennessee sat on another plateau beyond Second Creek. A mile down river flowed Third Creek, which ran to the Tennessee.

Knoxville's defenses had been in preparation since September of that year, and had been in the charge of Burnside's chief engineer, Captain Orlando M. Poe. By mid-November, Poe had constructed 13

redoubts and batteries made of thick, wide parapets located on advantageous ground along the 100-foot-high ridge that started two miles northeast of town and paralleled the Tennessee River. Three more forts were constructed south of the river.

At the extreme northwest corner of the city's defense system stood a star fort originally built by the Confederates and called Fort Loudon. Anchoring the entire Union defensive line, this bastion, the strongest work in the Federal defense scheme, was renamed Fort Sanders by the Federals after the fallen cavalry leader. It had an eight-foot-wide, six-foot-deep ditch around it, with a surrounding parapet 12 feet high. The irregular-quadrilateral star configuration was 95 yards on the west side, 125 yards on the north and south sides, and 85 yards on the east face. Two strongpoints on the northwest and southwest corners were built, with a single Napoleon smoothbore cannon sited in the northwest one. Because the ground in front of the northwest bastion sloped sharply in front of the position, the gun could not fully protect the site, and that sector of the fort remained a weak one. Unfortunately for the Federals occupying it, the fortification formed a salient that diffused the defenders' fire. Situated as far down the hill crest as possible, its location also prevented the Federals from covering adequately all the ground along the line of approach.

In an attempt to remedy these shortcomings, Poe creatively used the remains of a forest fronting Fort Sanders. The woods had been cut down to tree stumps, and Poe strung reels of telegraph wire around the stumps, creating an entanglement both treacherous and almost invisible. In addition, an abatis was erected at a point between the northwest corner and a row of rifle pits 80 yards from the fort. The work's parapets were reinforced with large bales of cotton covered with animal hides

The Federal garrison of Fort Sanders comprised about 335 infantry picked from the 79th New York, 29th Massachusetts, 2nd Michigan, and 20th Michigan Infantry Regiments. The foot soldiers were supported three companies of artillery commanded by Lieutenant Samuel N. Benjamin, Captain William W. Buckley, and Captain Jacob Roemar, totaling 12 guns and 105 artillerymen. Benjamin, chief of artillery for IX Corps, was the de facto commander of the garrison. Stationed immediately to either side of the fort were an additional 500 men who could respond quickly to an attack on the post. Farther to the rear stood about 2,000 infantry in Colonels Benjamin C. Christ's and William Humphreys' brigades. Even with all the force concentrated at Fort Sanders, Poe admitted that the salient "caused us great anxiety."

As the days dragged on, numerous petty skirmishes and sorties flared before the Federal main defensive line. Confederate sniper fire was especially galling, but sniper fire alone was not going to crack the Union lines. Alexander favored an attack on Fort Sanders, and from the early stages of the siege he concentrated his artillery fire against that post to weaken it preparatory to a ground assault. Longstreet was not so sure. He favored sending some of his men to the south side of the Tennessee and threatening Knoxville from the south, but all his preliminary attacks on this front ended in failure.

Finally, on November 27, Longstreet determined to break the impasse at Knoxville with a full-blown assault on the Union entrenchments. The arrival of two infantry brigades (2,600 men) from Bragg's army as reinforcements spurred him to that decision. Longstreet's original target was Mabry's Hill, with a diversionary advance on Fort Sanders. But later that day, standing 400 yards from Fort Sanders, Longstreet observed a Union soldier from the fort walking along the position's protective ditch. It appeared to be only waist high and therefore not an obstacle to an attack. Longstreet did not realize that the enemy soldier had traversed the deep ditch on planks that been placed across it.

The attack, set for the 28th, was postponed until the 29th due to rain. McLaws' men, stationed closest to Fort Sanders, were assigned the lead role. McLaws planned to maneuver a heavy skirmish line of 3,000 men to within 200 yards of the fort's northwest bastion during the night. The Confederate skirmishers, it was hoped, would suppress the fire from the enemy entrenchments

Orlando M. Poe, left, confers after the Battle of Knoxville with fellow engineer Orville Babcock amid the tree stumps in front of Fort Sanders' northwest bastion. OPPOSITE: Taken shortly after the Confederate withdrawal, this photo shows the University of Tennessee, atop its famous "Hallowed Hill," across the Tennessee River in Knoxville.

ABOVE: The 79th New York Highlanders bore much of the fighting at Fort Sanders. The regiment, comprised largely of Scottish-born immigrants, occasionally sported kilts and tartan pants. One soldier in the center wears the Scottish "Glengarrie" cap. OPPOSITE: Confederates attacking the northwest bastion at Fort Sanders find themselves entangled in telegraph wire Union defenders had craftily strung through tree stumps. Others attempt to climb out of the deep trench while under enfilading fire.

that would normally be directed at the assaulting force, as well as drive the enemy advance picket line back to within 80 yards of the fort's northwest corner.

The main assault contingent was made up of two columns. On the right were Brig. Gen. Goode Bryan's and Humphreys' Georgia and Mississippi brigades, some 1,350 men. To the left was Brig. Gen. William Wofford's Georgia brigade, under Colonel Solon Z. Ruff (1,080 soldiers). Behind the initial attacking formations, Jenkins's three-brigade division (2,625 men) was ready to support McLaws' left column, as was Brig. Gen. Bushrod Johnson's newly arrived two-brigade division. They would widen the penetration of the Federal line if the fort was taken by the first assault troops. McLaws made no provision to fill in the ditch fronting the enemy position with fascines or employ scaling ladders since he, like Longstreet, wrongly assumed that the trench around Sanders was shallow.

The gray skirmish line started its advance at 10 AM on the 28th, quickly gaining ground that brought them to within 80 to 120 yards of their objective. However, the Federals now knew an attack on Sanders was in the offing the next morning. They strengthened their lines in anticipation of such an attack. Unofficial reports of Bragg's defeat at Chattanooga and his subsequent retreat to northern Georgia reached the Confederate camp that night, and McLaws recommended postponing the attack on Fort Sanders until they could better ascertain the situation. Longstreet refused. "It is a great mistake to suppose that there is any safety for us in going to Virginia if General Bragg has been defeated," he said, "for we leave him at the mercy of his victors, and with his army destroyed our own had better be also, for we will not only be destroyed but disgraced. There is neither safety nor honor in any other course than the one I have chosen." The attack would proceed.

At 6 AM on an intensely cold and foggy November 29, 20 Confederate artillery pieces opened fire on Fort Sanders as 6,000 of their infantry comrades waited to advance against the fort. The cannons in Fort Sanders did not at first reply, the Union gunners wishing to reserve their fire for the expected enemy infantry attack. At 6:20 AM, the Confederate storming columns moved to the attack in utter silence. The first 150 yards of their trek was through tangled brush, but after that they reached open ground, reformed their ranks, and moved on. In the dim light many Confederates fell blindly over the wire obstacles and then encountered the abatis fronting the fort, causing confusion and hesitation in the columns. As the head of the gray assault force came within 50 yards of Fort Sanders' northwest corner, the Union defenders opened fire, bringing down an estimated 60 Confederates.

As McLaws' two rows of soldiers neared the fort, all command and control evaporated as more than 2,000 men rushed headlong toward the same target. At the same time, the mass of men came to an abrupt halt as it came to the deep, wide ditch fronting the northwest bastion of Fort Sanders. The attackers were surprised by its height—more than 18 feet—with an angled slope of 70 percent coated with a hard, slippery surface of icy mud. Orlando Poe, watching the Confederate assault, was moved to grudging admiration. "Although suffering from the terribly destructive fire to which they were subjected, they soon reached the outer brink of the ditch," he reported. "There could be no pause at that point, and, leaping into the ditch in such numbers as nearly to fill it, they endeavored to scale the walls."

Faced with the unexpected impediment, many Confederates jumped into ditch to avoid enemy fire, or were pushed by the

pressure of those behind them. Others took shelter outside the ditch and fired at the Union parapet. The defenders, in their turn, blazed away at the enemy with rifle-muskets and double and triple canister rounds. Despite the desperate Union fire, some Confederates managed to surge into the fort twice within six minutes. The first attempt was easily repulsed, but the second saw the Southerners enter through the gun embrasures, plant three Confederate flags upon the parapet, and nearly overwhelm the Union garrison before the gray surge was pushed back. The cruel fact for the Confederates was that too few of them could climb out of the ditch and over the parapet at any one time to decisively tilt the balance of force in the Confederates' favor. All who did so were either killed outright or quickly captured.

The fight degenerated into a bloody stalemate, with more and more Federal reserves pouring into Fort Sanders, doubling its original strength. Among those engaged was Lieutenant Sam Benjamin. He fought close up with his pistol and then started throwing lighted artillery shells into the mass of enemy soldiers struggling in the ditch. Benjamin's improvised hand grenades, as well as flanking fire by the 20th Michigan Infantry Regiment hitting the Confederates in the ditch from the east, broke Confederate morale. Many in the ditch tried to flee or surrender.

The ditch had become a veritable death trap, reminiscent of a scene in Dante's *Inferno*. "There was no need to take carefully aim," recorded William Todd of the 79th New York. "The brave rebels crowded up to the ditch and almost every bullet fired by us found a death mark. Many tried to scramble out by making a platform of the bodies of their dead comrades, but few came out alive, and those only to be a mark for our unerring rifles. To most of those who entered, it was indeed the 'Last Ditch.'"

It did not help the Confederate cause that Jenkins's men failed to adequately support McLaws. Had they done their job, the murderous fire coming from the 20th Michigan would not have been directed at the Confederates trying to gain entrance in to the northwest strongpoint of Fort Sanders. Other units of Jenkins's command also failed to attempt to break the Federal lines east of the fort as they were originally ordered to do. Johnson's troops, which started the fight between 800 and 1,000 yards from Fort Sanders, pushed to within 250 yards of the Federal position but fell back to the main Confederate line when they saw McLaws' attack apparently fail.

Longstreet was near Johnson's command when he noticed a flood of men making their way back from Fort Sanders. Informed by a staff officer that the attack could not succeed due to the wire entanglements and intense enemy fire, he brushed off Johnson's plea to allow his men to carry on the offensive and instead ordered a general retreat. McLaws, consulting with his subordinate combat leaders, authorized his division to fall back 400 yards from Fort Sanders, then to the Confederate starting line. It was 6:45 AM. The entire attack on Fort Sanders had lasted 40 minutes, half of that time being the struggle for control of the fort's parapet.

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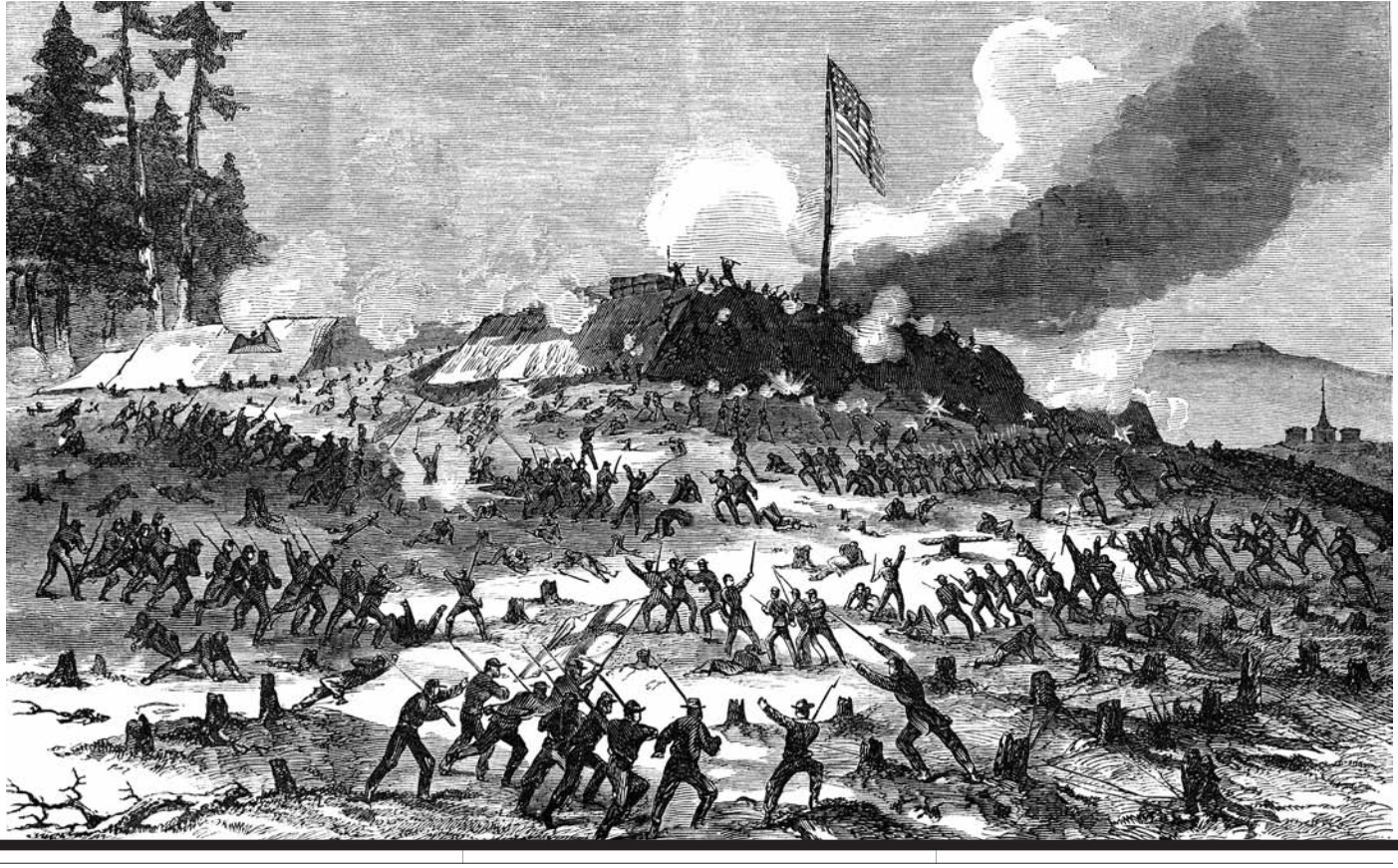
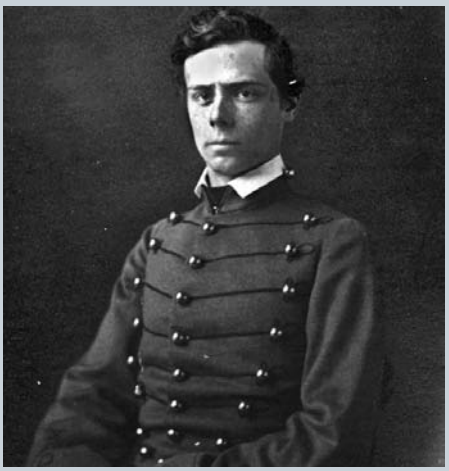


4th U.S. Regulars at Gettysburg

The proud Regulars in Company H, 4th U.S. Infantry, made a gallant stand in the blood-soaked Wheatfield on the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg.

By Donald McConnell & Gustav Person

When the Civil War erupted in April 1861, the 10 companies of the 4th U.S. Infantry were spread along the West Coast from Puget Sound to the Gulf of California in various small, far-flung garrisons. After distinguished service in the Mexican War and garrison duty along the Great Lakes from Mackinac to Plattsburgh, the regiment had spent the last nine years garrisoning posts, guarding the coast, escorting new settlers, and fighting Indians. Company H, commanded for a time by Captain Ulysses S. Grant in the early 1850s, was based at Fort Vancouver in the Washington Territory.



Author's Collection

With the outbreak of the Civil War, authorities quickly realized that the main body of the Regular Army would be needed back East to form a reserve force and train the multitude of state volunteer forces that were hurriedly mustering in to suppress the rebellion. The 4th returned by sea after a disease-ridden march across the Isthmus of Panama. It arrived at New York and then traveled by train to the camps of the Army of the Potomac around Washington, D.C., in November 1861.

In the spring of 1862, the available Regular infantry regiments in the capital were formed into two brigades in the 2nd Division of the V Army Corps, commanded by Maj. Gen. George Sykes, who had commanded the Regular battalion at the First Battle of Bull Run in July 1861. They accompanied the Army of the Potomac to the James Peninsula in March 1862, and later fought in the Seven Days Battles in June and July. Returning to northern Virginia that summer, the Regulars fought at Second Bull Run and Antietam. They were heavily engaged at Fredericksburg in December, and then went into winter quarters around Falmouth, Virginia. After service at Chancellorsville in April and May 1863, they returned to their winter camps while their main opponent, General Robert E. Lee, made plans for his second invasion of the North.

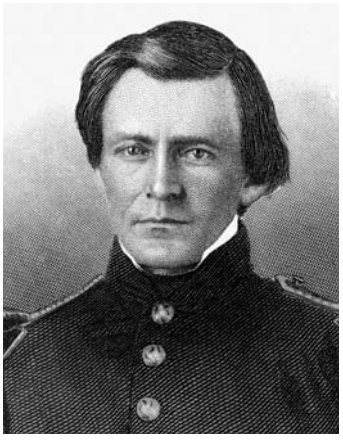
During the disorderly retreat after the Battle of Chancellorsville, most of the Regulars lost their heavy Model 1853 knapsacks, which weighed up to 50 pounds. The knapsacks carried the soldiers' greatcoats, spare clothing, wool blankets and personal items. Because the knapsacks were not replaced before the Gettysburg campaign, most soldiers adapted by rolling their remaining personal items in a vulcanized, gum rubber blanket (the forerunner of the modern poncho), tied in a horseshoe roll, and worn over the right shoulder. This greatly reduced their burdens. The soldiers carried blackened canvas haversacks on their left hips for their field rations and canteens containing about three pints of water. The basic load of 40 rounds for the .58-cailiber Model 1861

U.S. Regulars calmly wait with their color-bearers to enter battle in Don Troiani's painting, *Union Standard Bearer*. OPPOSITE: Captain Julius W. Adams, Jr., Class of 1861, in his West Point cadet uniform. Adams commanded the 4th U.S. Regiment at Gettysburg.

Springfield Rifle-Musket was carried in a cartridge box worn on the right hip. Waist belts supported the small pouches for percussion caps worn to the right of their brass U.S. belt buckle and the triangular socket bayonet in its scabbard worn on the left hip.

Per general orders of the Army of the Potomac in March 1863, each Regular wore a white Maltese Cross cloth badge on the crown of his Model 1858 Forage Cap. This was the insignia of the 2nd Division, V Army Corps, and it was the origin of the organizational patches each modern soldier wears on the sleeves of his combat uniform. The Regulars wore sky-blue trousers and dark-blue, four-button Model 1858 Fatigue Jackets.

Library of Congress



Ulysses S. Grant, above, briefly commanded the 4th U.S. Infantry in the pre-war Army. Fifty-nine-year-old Colonel Hannibal Day, below, led the 1st Brigade at Gettysburg.

National Archives

By the late spring of 1863, the 4th Infantry, through casualties and attrition, had been consolidated into four companies (C, F, H, and K), commanded by Captain Julius W. Adams, Jr., who rose to command of the battalion-sized regiment. Adams, the son of a former commander of the 67th New York Volunteer Infantry, graduated from the United States Military Academy in the class of 1861. He remained at the academy after commissioning (along with George Armstrong Custer, who was under arrest) to train the incoming class of cadets in leadership and infantry tactics. He had already survived a serious groin wound sustained at the Battle of Gaines' Mill on June 27, 1862.

When the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia marched toward Maryland and Pennsylvania, the 4th Infantry left its winter camp on June 4 and marched west eight miles to Banks Ford on the Rappahannock River to provide a picketing force. The regiment remained there for nine days before receiving orders to pursue the advancing Confederates. Obediently, the regiment crossed the Potomac River at Edward's Ferry. The 4th U.S. Infantry was a regiment in name only when it approached Gettysburg at the end of June 1863. Reduced from 10 to four companies, its total strength was just 230 enlisted men and 32 officers, counting the regimental staff and band. In actual numbers, there were only 179 enlisted men that could be counted as present for duty. By then, the Army Adjutant General had approved plans to allow regiments to reduce some companies to cadre strength and transfer the privates to other companies. As a result, the 4th Infantry had disbanded Companies D and E in July 1862, and four more companies (A, B, G, and I) in March 1863.

Infantry companies were authorized three commissioned officers. Captain Samuel Sprole was assigned to command Company H on June 11, but he was still on sick leave. First Lieutenant Thomas A. Martin had been under arrest for undetermined causes earlier that spring. He took temporary command of the company in June. Second Lieutenant George W. Dost was a long-service enlisted man prior to being commissioned an officer in February 1863. Second Lieutenant George Williams was temporarily attached to the company from Company I.

Fully authorized strength for a Regular Army infantry company was 82 enlisted men. When Company H departed its winter camp on the Rappahannock River on June 4, it numbered 67 soldiers, but not all of them finished the march. Over the next 29 days, the men covered an average of more than 12 miles per day on nine separate occasions. The longest marches were 18 miles per day. Heat, fatigue, and combat stress had a significant impact on the company's soldiers.

On June 26, the company left its camp at Aldie, Virginia, marched through Leesburg, and crossed the Potomac River before halting in Maryland about 12 hours later, having covered 25 miles in constant, drizzling rain. Three sick men were left behind in Frederick, Maryland, following the march. One of the soldiers, Private Pratt Day, was hospitalized in Frederick until early September, then transferred to Fort Columbus in New York harbor, where he died on October 6 from the effects of sunstroke incurred while on the march to Gettysburg.

After another 25-mile, 13½-hour march on June 30, the company strength stood at 54 men. Of these 54, over two-thirds were immigrants. Typical of other Regular Army units at this point in the war, the vast majority (26) were from Ireland. Six hailed from Germany and three from England. The other two immigrants came from Canada and France. Sixteen men claimed birth in the United States. New York was home to nine, while Pennsylvania provided three. One man each claimed his birthplace in Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, and Ohio, and one man's place of birth was unrecorded.

Over 20 different civilian occupations were noted on the enlistment forms: the majority of the men (16) were unskilled laborers; seven men worked in construction; six were shoemakers; and another five were farmers. The most educated men in the company were Private William Hamilton, who listed his occupation as a druggist, and First Sergeant John Rowlands and Private Leon Dandelooy, who were both clerks before the war. Dandelooy often worked as a clerk in the regimental headquarters.

The core of the company was composed of 44 Old Army Regulars from various companies of the 4th and 9th Infantry Regiments, men who had served together in California, Oregon, and Washington Territory prior to the war. They were experienced soldiers with an average age of about 30 and just over six years in service. Three soldiers had been in the Army at least 15 years. Another three were approaching the end of their second five-year enlistment. At least one had fought in the Mexican War. These veterans would bear the brunt of the company's casualties at Gettysburg.

The other 10 men in the company had either been recruited from volunteer units in late 1862 or recently enlisted. As a group, they averaged only about 7½ months in uniform. They tended to be younger, had minimal training or combat experience, and shared no common bonds with the Old Army veterans. All four of the men who went over the hill on the march to Gettysburg were from this group. The case of Private Adolphus Pickney illustrated the problem of desertion and its consequences. Pickney had enlisted in early 1860 in the 9th U.S. Infantry, and by early in 1862 had transferred into Company H of the 4th Infantry. Just days before the Battle of Second Bull Run in August 1862, Pickney deserted and remained a fugitive until apprehended on March 11, 1863. Tried by a general court-martial and found guilty, he was sentenced to forfeit all pay and allowances and be dishonorably discharged. The court clearly decided to make an example of him to discourage further desertion. The muster rolls for April 1863 record that Pickney was "to be marked indelibly on his left hip with the letter 'D'; then to have his head shaved and to be drummed out of the service." Regular Army discipline was exacting and rigorously enforced.

While total enlisted strength stood at 54 on paper, just 43 soldiers marched with Company H onto the field at Gettysburg—barely 50 percent of authorized strength. Two soldiers were on detached service (temporary duty), and eight more were sick in various hospitals. Another soldier, Private Richard Bears, probably the luckiest man in the regiment, received his discharge papers in camp at Union Mills, Maryland, on the morning of July 1. He did not reenlist.

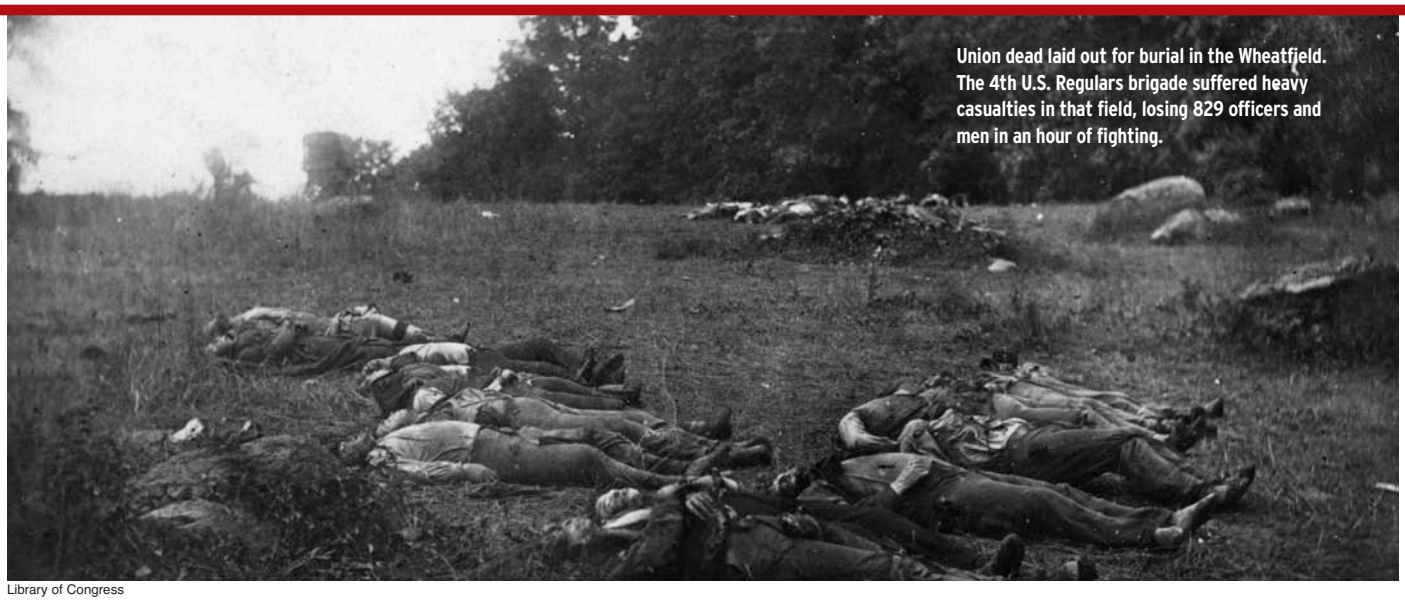
When the Battle of Gettysburg started on July 1, V Corps arrived in the late afternoon at Hanover, Pennsylvania, after a hot, tiring march of 15 miles from Union Mills. Sykes, elevated to command the corps, received a peremptory order from army headquarters to bring his corps to Gettysburg without delay. He decided to keep the troops on the road for a few more hours. They finally went into bivouac around midnight, but reveille sounded in the camps at 3 AM. The troops were soon on the march again after a quick breakfast, and arrived near Gettysburg around 7 AM. They occupied an assembly area on Powell's Hill, southeast of the town. Since leaving camp at Falmouth, the Regulars had marched an incredible 195 miles.

The 4th Infantry, along with the 3rd, 6th, 12th, and 14th U.S. Infantry Regiments formed the 1st Brigade of the 2nd Division. On June 28, Colonel Hannibal Day arrived to take command of the brigade. Almost 60 years old, he had graduated in the West Point class of 1823. Day was originally commissioned in the 2nd U.S. Infantry. He served in a number of operational and administrative postings until June 1862, when he was appointed as the colonel of the 6th Infantry. However, for a number of recent years his questionable health had kept him from an active field command.

Around 1 PM on July 2, the Regulars moved to a new assembly area behind the center of the Union line, where the soldiers dozed, lounged, and talked. It was a brief respite. Confederate Lt. Gen. James Longstreet launched his sledgehammer attack on the Union left flank at 4 PM that

Library of Congress

Alfred Waud's sketch of the execution of five Union deserters shortly after the Battle of Gettysburg. Four members of the Company H, 4th U.S. Regulars, deserted en route to the battlefield.



Union dead laid out for burial in the Wheatfield. The 4th U.S. Regulars brigade suffered heavy casualties in that field, losing 829 officers and men in an hour of fighting.

Library of Congress

afternoon. The Confederates stormed through the Peach Orchard and the Rose Farm and decimated the Union III Corps. Portions of II Corps and all of V Corps were directed to the south to save III Corps from destruction and restore the threatened flank.

The 2nd Division of V Corps set off at double-quick time cross country over fields and fences and panting with the exertions of recent days. While Brig. Gen. Stephen H. Weed's 3rd Brigade of the division was rushed onto Little Round Top, the two brigades of Regulars deployed on the north slope of that key terrain feature. Colonel Sidney Burbank, commanding the 2nd Brigade of Regulars, formed his brigade into a single line of battle with the 2nd Infantry on the right, followed to the left by the 7th, 10th, 11th, and 17th Regiments. Day's 1st Brigade formed in column behind the 2nd Brigade with the 3rd, 4th, and 6th Regiments in the first line, followed by the 14th Infantry in the second line, and the 12th Infantry in the third line.

The Regulars were ordered into the Wheatfield to support Caldwell's division of the II Army Corps. They set off down the slope of Little Round Top at double-quick time and crossed Plum Run, an ankle-deep marshy area about 50 yards wide. The 2nd Brigade mounted Houck's Ridge at the east side of the Wheatfield, while Day's brigade adopted a supporting position in Burbank's rear along the west slope of the valley. As they moved forward, the Regulars received considerable fire from Confederate snipers firing from Devil's Den on their left flank. The 17th Infantry refused their left flank to provide covering fire. After sheltering momentarily behind the stone wall on the crest of the ridge, the 2nd Brigade then passed through a thin strip of Rose's Woods before executing a half-left wheel into the open Wheatfield after Caldwell's division and Schweitzer's brigade had withdrawn from the field after running out of ammunition.

Attempting to stem Longstreet's onslaught, Burbank's brigade was opposed by two Confederate brigades. A heavy firefight ensued, creating great noise, smoke, and rampant confusion. When two further Confederate brigades entered the fight on the Regulars' right flank and rear, it was quickly realized that they could not hold their position. The noise was so loud that some of Burbank's men did not hear the order to fall back, and the Wheatfield was swarming with Georgians and South Carolinians inspired by the prospect of victory. By this time, both brigades were receiving fire from three directions in a perfect storm of shot and shell. The hell in the Wheatfield was remembered by an officer in the 11th Infantry as "almost a semi-circle of fire. The slaughter was fearful."

The Regulars had spent less than an hour in the Wheatfield fight. At the turn of the century, Lt. Col. William F. Fox, New York's official historian of the battle, wrote, "They moved off the field in admiral style, with well-aligned ranks, facing about at times to deliver their [volley] fire and check pursuit. Re-crossing Plum Run Valley, under a storm of bullets that told fearfully on their ranks, they returned to their original position. In this action the regulars sustained severe losses, but gave ample evidence of the fighting qualities, discipline and steadiness under fire which made them the pattern and admiration of the entire army."

The Regulars fought their way back 250 yards across the swampy ground, having lost a total of 53 officers and 776 men out of 2,500 engaged in the fight. Day's brigade, which had occupied a relatively safe supporting position in the initial action, still lost 25 percent of its men. Most of these losses occurred during the withdrawal from the Wheatfield sector. Captain Adams reported that his loss in the 4th Infantry was 10 enlisted men killed and two officers and 28 enlisted men wounded. Unquestionably, the Regulars' superior discipline and professionalism served them very well in this extremely difficult situation. Less disciplined troops would have folded under the considerable Confederate pressure. A notable absence was the lack of effective artillery support ordinarily coordinated by the Regulars' commanders. The Confederates now controlled all of the Wheatfield and Houck's Ridge.

The Regulars remained in their original

positions on Little Round Top throughout the rest of the battle, skirmishing periodically with the enemy. On July 5, the entire V Corps left its positions at Gettysburg and set off in pursuit of the Confederates who were now on their way back to Virginia. When the Regulars finally ended the campaign at Warrenton, Virginia, on July 27, they had marched a total of 320 miles since June 1.

Four soldiers in Company H were killed in action on July 2, and nine others were wounded that day, including Second Lieutenant George Williams, who had been attached to the company since May. Of the wounded, four died before August 15. Perhaps because they were Regulars, the backgrounds of some of the dead were recorded carefully.

From Hanover, Germany, Private Christian Abert had been in the Army for almost 15 years and was at the end of his third enlistment when he was killed. He had served in three separate regiments in Texas, California, and Washington Territory. Private Peter McManaman from County Mayo, Ireland, was among the oldest soldiers in the unit at age 42 and had served 14 years. Like Abert, he first enlisted in 1848 but served his entire time in the 4th Infantry. Both are buried in the Regulars' section of the Gettysburg National Military Park Cemetery.

Private Christian Engers was a cabinet maker from Prussia and had been in the Army for nine years when he was killed. He initially enlisted in 1854 in the 2nd U.S. Infantry and served in Minnesota, and then reenlisted in 1859 into Company I, 4th Infantry at Fort Steilacoom in Washington. Engers was one of the 37 privates transferred into Company H in March 1863. Private Roger McDonald, a shoemaker from Ireland, enlisted in the 9th Infantry in early 1860 and was among the group transferred into the 4th Infantry in January 1862. Both are also buried at Gettysburg.

Private William Becker, a carpenter from Marburg, Germany, was shot in the left chest on July 2 and died of his wound about a week later. Becker presents an unusual case. He enlisted in 1852 but deserted in California in July 1853 along with 15 other men. Becker probably didn't find his fortune in the gold fields but remained a fugitive for seven years before surrendering on November 21, 1860, at Fort Vancouver. He was tried by court-martial, sentenced to one year at hard labor, and transferred into Company H to make good the time he lost to desertion. His record indicates that his subsequent service was honorable. Private Michael Carroll was shot in both legs on July 2 and died of his wounds on July 5. He had had about nine years in the army when he marched into the Wheatfield. Carroll, from Tipperary, Ireland, had served in the 4th U.S. Artillery and the 9th Infantry before his transfer to Company H in early 1862.

Private William Hamilton was wounded in the left leg and died on July 22 from complications following amputation. A pharmacist from Maryland in civilian life, Hamilton was called a "hospital steward," an unofficial company medic, by his fellow soldiers. Corporal Richard Patterson was wounded in the right arm on July 2. He was treated on the field and evacuated to a general hospital in Germantown, Pennsylvania. Medical records indicate he contracted an infection there and died on August 15. His comrades, engaged in pursuing Lee's army back to Virginia, did not find out about his death until September.

Private David Dunbar was the first man wounded in the entire regiment, according to Lieutenant Dost. Dunbar was shot in the left leg, the bullet "fracturing both shin bones, leaving the leg entirely useless," according to a surgeon's report. After treatment in a number of hospitals in the army medical system, Dunbar was transferred to the General Hospital at Fort Columbus on Governors Island in New York harbor, where he was discharged for disability in January 1864. He died on June 23, 1926, at the Soldiers' Home in Washington, D.C., and was buried in the nearby U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery.

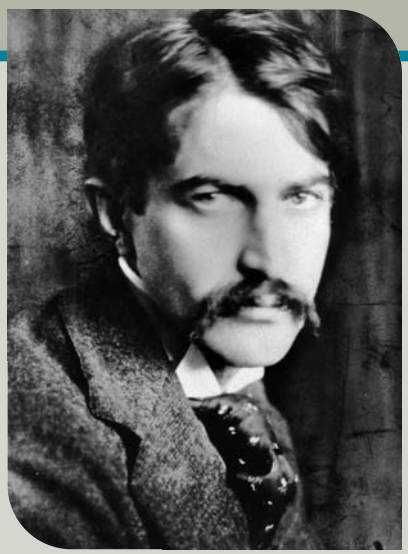
Corporal Martin Kenna was 40 years old with almost 10 years in the army when he was wounded. Kenna survived and was later promoted to sergeant. Private George Farnham received a shell wound, causing a severe bruise to his left foot, but was able to return to duty in late July. Records do not reveal how Private Eugene Mahoney was wounded, only that he was discharged in 1864 at the end of his five-year enlistment.

Two unidentified soldiers believed to be from the 4th U.S. Regulars, including an officer above. The corporal below holds his Model 1858 Forage Cap, with a Company H insignia.

Both: Library of Congress

On August 14, the 4th Infantry embarked at Alexandria on the steamship *W.P. Clyde* to New York City to help quell the ongoing draft riots. Company H had more than 40 men on its rolls from September 1863 to April 1864, when most were attached to Company K. In the spring of 1864, the regiment was transferred to Virginia to participate in Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's Overland campaign. Assigned to Brig. Gen. James Ledlie's brigade in the IX Army Corps, the regiment lost 12 men killed in action, 35 wounded, and 35 missing by the end of May 1864. The following month, the 4th was posted as headquarters guard for General Grant at City Point, Virginia, where it would serve out the remainder of the war. □

When struggling young writer Stephen Crane flipped open a copy of *Century* magazine in 1893, the entire course of American literature changed. The Civil War's greatest novel, *The Red Badge of Courage*, was born.



STEPHEN CRANE'S Red Badge of Courage

By Roy Morris Jr.

In the winter of 1893, a struggling young writer named Stephen Crane dropped by the art studio of his painter friend Corwin Linson at the corner of Broadway and 30th Street in New York City. Crane, a native of New Jersey, had grown up in Port Jervis in upstate New York, the son of a widowed temperance crusader and a Methodist minister father who died when Crane was six. Now 22, Crane had recently written his first novel, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets,* a scandalous account of a young woman's descent into poverty, prostitution, and death. But the book, despite positive reviews from such leading critics as William Dean Howells, had sold few copies, and its almost literally starving author was reduced to burning copies of the book in the fireplace of his Bowery apartment for warmth. Barely scraping by as a freelance journalist for various New York newspapers, Crane joked mordantly, "I'd sell my steps to the grave at ten cents per foot."

Linson was doing better financially, supporting himself as a magazine illustrator. As an offshoot of his work he avidly collected back issues of the leading journals of the day. On this early March afternoon, while Linson sketched at his easel, Crane's attention turned to a stack of *Century* magazines lying scattered on the floor. The magazine featured a popular, long-running series, "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War." Crane had long been fascinated by the subject of war; his ancestors had been heroes during the American Revolution. He had been entertaining thoughts of writing a war story of his own, "a potboiler, something that would take the boarding school element." He picked up an issue of the magazine—and American literature would never be the same.

The more he read about the Civil War, the more Crane became excited by the possibilities of writing a serious novel about it. He began steeping himself in the legend and lore of the conflict. It was a good time to begin such research. Almost daily, veterans' memoirs, biographies, regimental histories, pamphlets, poems, and diaries were appearing in print. From leading generals such as Ulysses S. Grant and William Tecumseh Sherman to the humblest privates in the ranks, Civil War participants finally were recording for posterity their ever-vivid memories of the conflict.

As a boy living in Port Jervis, Crane had grown up listening to oral accounts of the war told by veterans sitting around the Orange County courthouse. Many of these men had served in the 124th New York Volunteers, nicknamed the "Orange Blossoms."

Both: Library of Congress

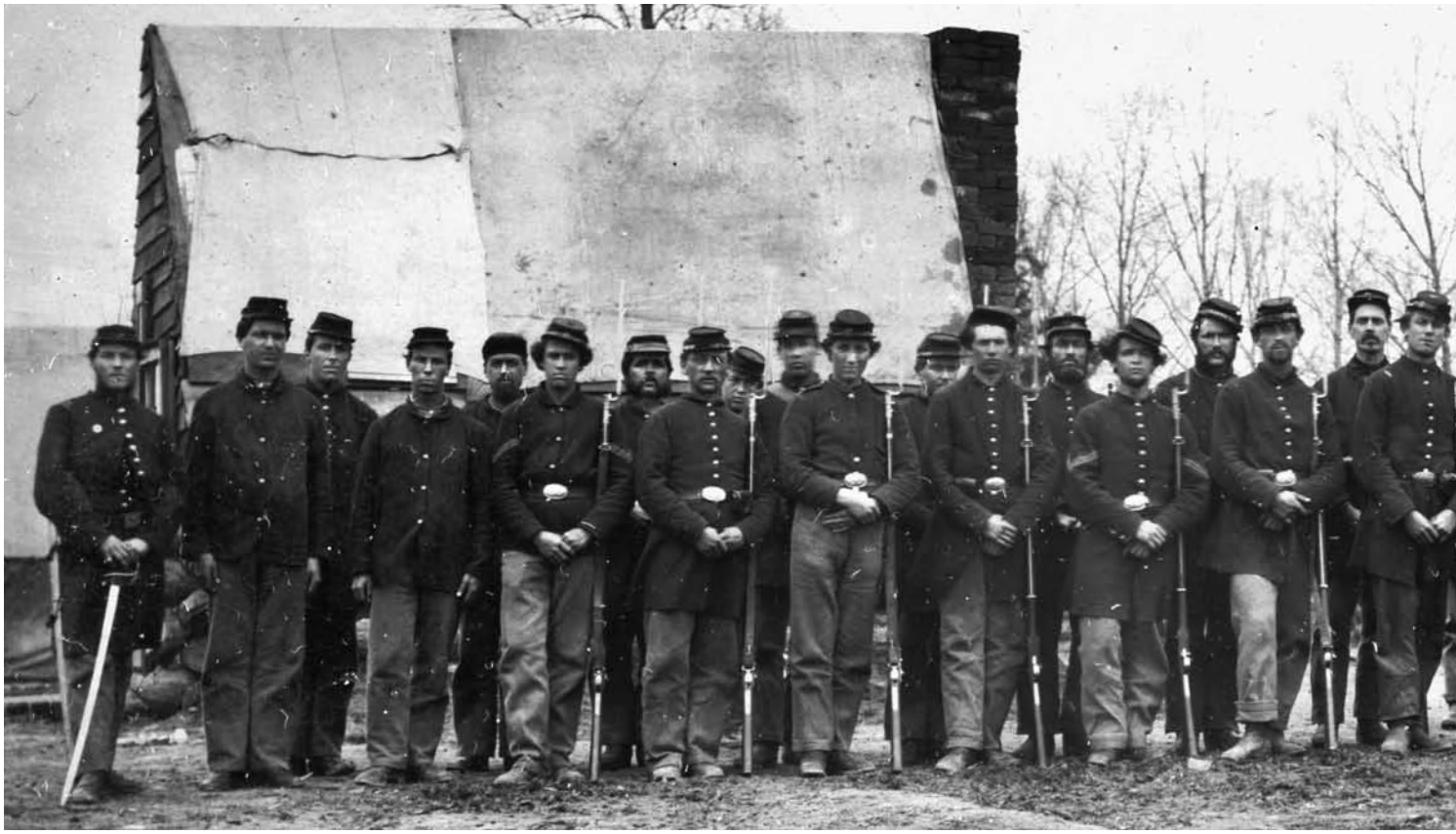
The regiment saw action in every major eastern battle after mustering into service during the summer of 1862. Five Medal of Honor winners were numbered among the ranks of the regiment, which local newspapers dubbed "the regiment of Heroes."

The 124th's baptism of fire came at the Battle of Chancellorsville, Virginia, in May 1863. There the regiment marched, countermarched, and fought a desperate rearguard action near the Plank Road on the battlefield following the rout of the all-German XI Corps by Lt. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson's Confederates. In danger of being overrun itself, the green regiment made a daring bayonet charge, breaking the enemy line and capturing a number of prisoners. "Our men fought like tigers, cheering loudly, but falling fast," regimental commander Colonel Augustus Van Horne Ellis reported. Private Henry Howell noted in his diary: "Our regiment was under a crossfire from their sharpshooters, and out of 540 men that went in 160 came out with the colors." He added a comment that would become a major plot point in Crane's novel: "There was quite a number taking the wounded back [to the rear]."

The Orange Blossoms never tired of reliving their experiences for wide-eyed boys like Stephen Crane. Another firsthand source for war stories was Crane's history teacher at nearby Claverack College. Despite its name, Claverack College was actually a quasi-military academy, and Crane spent two years there preparing for the entrance exam to the United States Military Academy at West Point. (In the end he never took the test; his brother William convinced him that there was no future for him in the military, since there would not be another war in his lifetime. William, of course, was wrong.) At Claverack, Crane wore the school's required Civil War-era uniform and drilled with old muskets and bayonets salvaged from the war. He rose to the rank of cadet captain, and under his hard-driving leadership the company won the school's coveted Washington's Birthday award for close-order drill. One of the judges was the school's history teacher and resident Civil War hero, brevet Brig. Gen. John Bullock Van Petten. "General Reverend" Van Petten, like Crane's own father, was an ordained Methodist minister. Besides teaching history and elocution, Van Petten monitored one of the tables in the school dining hall, where, one of his former students recalled, "he often recounted some of his war expe-

The rout of the all-German XI Corps at Chancellorsville, as depicted in *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War*. Not even the cattle were immune to panic. TOP: Author Stephen Crane in 1895, about the time *The Red Badge of Courage* appeared.

Library of Congress



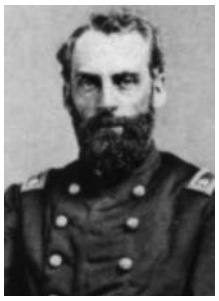
riences [and] became much excited as he lived over the old days."

As a chaplain in the 34th New York Infantry and a lieutenant colonel of the 160th New York, Van Petten had a lot of war experiences to recount, including action at the Battles of Williamsburg, Fair Oaks, Malvern Hill, Second Manassas, Antietam, Port Hudson, and Winchester. At Antietam, the bloodiest single day of the war, Van Petten witnessed the rout of the 34th New York in the East Woods around Dunker Church, where he observed the death of the regimental color-sergeant and the rescue of the unit's flag by a young corporal—two more events that would be featured prominently in Crane's novel. Two years later, at the Battle of Winchester, Van Petten experienced the rout of another Union regiment and suffered a career-ending bullet wound to his leg.

Besides transmitting his own eyewitness experiences to Crane, Van Petten may have put Crane onto another important source—Union veteran John W. De Forest. Like Van Petten, De Forest was a Union infantry officer and had served with Van Petten in the Port Hudson and Shenandoah Valley campaigns of 1862 and 1864. In his nonfiction account of his Civil War service, *A Volunteer's Adventures,* De Forest praised Van Petten as "an officer of distinguished gallantry," yet one who was sufficiently fun loving to run "foot races in his big boots with a private, to make the soldiers laugh at the unusual buffoonery."

In 1867 De Forest published one of the first fictional depictions of the Civil War, *Miss Ravenel's Conversion from Secession to Loyalty.* It is doubtful that Crane paid much attention to the book's main plot, an old-fashioned love triangle between a virtuous young woman, an honorable and adoring gentleman, and a dashing and colorful rogue. The lead characters are little more than stock figures: flighty heroine, solemn swain, caddish cavalier, avuncular father, interfering aunt. What would have attracted Crane's interest were the comparatively few scenes of Civil War combat that the veteran De Forest sprinkled through his narrative. Given his own lifelong fascination with cowardice and heroism, Crane would have been particularly interested in De Forest's depiction of skulking soldiers during the height of battle: "Grim faces turned in every direction with hasty stares of alarm, looking aloft and on every side, as well as to the front, for destruction. Pallid stragglers who had dropped out of the leading brigade drifted by dodging from trunk to trunk in an instinctive search for cover. One abject hound came by with a ghastly backward glare of horror, his face colorless, he eyes projecting, and his chin shaking. Colburne cursed him for a poltroon, struck him with the flat of his sabre, and dragged him into the ranks of his own regiment."

In another passage in *Miss Ravenel's Conversion,* the hero, Captain Colburne, witnesses a fellow soldier killed by a stray bullet. "I had just finished breakfast, and was lying on my back smoking," Colburne relates. "A bullet whistled so unusually low as to attract my attention and struck with a loud smash in a tree about twenty feet from me. Between me and the tree a soldier, with



Clockwise, from top left: Crane's artist friend Corwin Linson; Crane in his military cadet uniform; 1st Lt. Ambrose Bierce; Brig. Gen. John Bullock Van Petten. LEFT: Company H of the 124th New York Regiment, nicknamed the Orange Blossoms, in winter camp in 1863, possibly around Brandy Station, Virginia. As a boy, Crane heard the veterans' Civil War stories.

his great coat rolled under his head for a pillow, lay on his back reading a newspaper which he held in both hands. I remember smiling to myself to see this man start as the bullet passed. The man who was reading remained perfectly still, his eyes fixed on the paper with a steadiness which I thought curious, considering the bustle around him. Presently I noticed that there were a few drops of blood on his neck, and that his face was paling. The ball had struck him under the chin, traversed the neck, and cut the spinal column where it joins the brain, making a fearful hole through which the blood had already soaked his great coat. It was the man's head, and not the tree, which had been struck with such a report. There he lay, still holding the *New York Independent* with his eyes fixed on a sermon by Henry Ward Beecher."

Such macabre sights were common on the battlefield. Union veteran Warren Lee Goss, in his seven-part series for *Century* magazine, "Recollections of a Private," recounted a similar event: "Advancing through the tangled mass of logs and stumps, I saw one of our men aiming over the branch of a fallen tree. I called to him, but he did not turn or move. Advancing nearer, I put my hand on his shoulder, looked in his face, and started back. He was dead!—shot through the brain; and so suddenly had the end come that his rigid hand grasped his musket, and he still preserved the attitude of watchfulness—literally occupying his post after death."

In another passage of De Forest's novel, Colburne witnesses a battlefield injury that may well have been the germ for the title of Crane's book, *The Red Badge of Courage*. "I had scarcely recovered myself when I saw a broad flow of blood stream down the face of a color-corporal who stood within arm's-length of me," Colburne says. "I thought he was surely a dead man; but it was only one of the wonderful escapes of battle. The bullet had skirted his cap where the forepiece joins the cloth, forcing the edge of the leather through the skin, and making a clean cut to the bone from temple to temple. He went to the rear blinded and with a smart headache, but not seriously injured."

Crane's hero, young Private Henry Fleming, suffers a similar injury during his first battle when he is struck in the head with a musket wielded by a fear-crazed Union comrade. A friendly soldier mistakes Henry's injury for a bullet wound. "Yeh've been grazed by a ball," the soldier says. "It's raised a queer lump jest as if some feller lammed yeh on th' head with a club." Henry, having run away from the battle, does nothing to dissuade his friend from his mistake. He is welcomed back into the ranks as a wounded hero, and later in the novel performs an impulsive act of true heroism, rescuing the regiment's fallen colors from Confederate attackers. He discovers, to his surprise, that he "had been to touch the great death, and found that, after all, it was but the great death."

Another Civil War veteran whose writings proved an inspiration to Crane was Indiana-born Ambrose Bierce. Like De Forest, Bierce served in the Union Army during the war, where he probably saw more hard fighting than any other writer in American history. Bierce, a member of the 9th Indiana Infantry, fought at Shiloh, Stones River, Chickamauga, Chattanooga, Resaca, Pickett's Mill and Kennesaw Mountain, where he was almost killed by a bullet to the head. After the war, Bierce was one of the first writers to transmute his experiences into fiction, producing a number of tense, terse, ironic short stories focusing on individual soldiers trapped in an insane, unforgiving universe. Bierce, a noted cynic and misanthrope, did not think much of Crane—"the Crane freak," he called him, adding dismissively, "I had thought that there could be only two worse writers than Stephen Crane, namely, two Stephen Cranes." But Crane, for his part, went out of his way to praise Bierce's writing, particularly his most celebrated short story, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," based on Bierce's experiences at Shiloh. "That story has everything," Crane told a friend. "Nothing better exists."

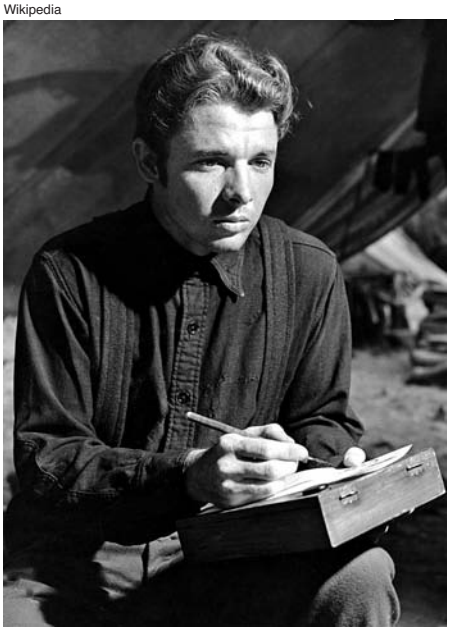
Bierce's influence seeped into Crane's own short stories, particularly "A Mystery of Heroism," in which a Union private heroically fetches water for his comrades

under fire, only to have two young officers carelessly drop the bucket he has so courageously brought them. In *The Red Badge of Courage,* Bierce's influence appears in the cool, somewhat sarcastic distance that Crane keeps from his main character and in the overwhelming irony of Henry being celebrated for a "red badge of courage," a wound suffered while running away from the battlefield in abject terror. Many of Bierce's own Civil War stories concern the problem of fear. In "One of the Missing," the protagonist actually dies of fright, while in two other stories, "A Tough Tussle" and "One Officer, One Man," the main characters die by their own hands rather than face the terrors of combat. A fourth story, "Killed at Resaca," concerns a young officer who dies performing an act of suicidal bravery after receiving a letter from his girlfriend accusing him backhandedly of cowardice.

As Crane delved deeper into Linson's stack of *Century* magazines, his attention naturally gravitated to the stories of the common soldiers in combat. Goss's account, in particular, caught his eye. Goss had served in the 2nd Massachusetts Heavy Artillery and later had written a hair-raising account of his days as a prisoner at the infamous Confederate prison camp at Andersonville, Georgia. His series for *Century* was more light hearted, dealing mostly with his early days as a green recruit. Goss recounted the common experiences of incoming soldiers everywhere: the patriotic rush to the recruiting office, the tearful farewell to family and friends, the endless drilling and marching, the nervous waiting on the eve of battle. Crane would make good use of Goss's account in his novel.

The Red Badge of Courage famously opens with the untried soldiers of the fictitious 304th New York Infantry of the Union Army of the Potomac resting in their winter camp along the Rappahannock River in northern Virginia: "The cold passed reluctantly from the earth, and the retiring fogs revealed an army stretched out on the hills, resting. As the landscape changed from brown to green, the army awakened, and began to tremble with

Wikipedia



ABOVE: Publicity photo of Audie Murphy as Henry Fleming in the 1951 movie version of *The Red Badge of Courage.* Murphy was WWII's most decorated soldier. BELOW: Authors John W. DeForest, left, and Count Leo Tolstoy were two of Crane's influences.

Both: Library of Congress

eagerness at the noise of rumors." In the second installment of "Recollections of a Private," Goss remarks similarly that "in a camp of soldiers, rumor, with her thousand tongues, is always speaking. The rank and file and under-officers of the line are not taken into the confidence of their superiors. Hence the private soldier is usually in ignorance as to his destination. What he lacks in information is usually made up in surmise and conjecture; every hint is caught at and worked out in possible and impossible combinations. He plans and fights imaginary battles."

This is precisely what the young protagonist in *The Red Badge of Courage* finds himself doing in response to the rumors. Indeed, the central issue in the book involves the interior struggle that Henry fights with himself over the question of his moral and physical courage. In Chapter 1 he is pictured lying on his bunk "in a little trance of astonishment. He tried to mathematically prove to himself that he would not run from a battle. Previously he had never felt obliged to wrestle too seriously with this question. In his life he had taken certain things for granted, never challenging his belief in ultimate success, and bothering little about means and roads. But here he was confronted with a thing of moment. It had suddenly appeared to him that perhaps in a battle he might run. He was forced to admit that as far as war was concerned he knew nothing of himself." Goss admits to having similar doubts. "It is common to the most of humanity," he notes, "that, when confronted with actual danger, men have less fear than in its contemplation. I have found danger always less terrible to face than on the night before the battle."

There are other notable similarities between the two works. Both Goss and Crane describe the new recruits bidding farewell to their former schoolmates. In Goss's account, the student "came slobbering around camp, as one of the boys ungraciously expressed it. We bade adieu to our friends with heavy hearts." Crane stresses Henry's ridiculous self-inflation: "From his home he had gone to the seminary to bid adieu [note the identical phrasing in both accounts] to many schoolmates. They had thronged about him with wonder and admiration. He had felt the gulf now between them and had swelled with calm pride. He and some of his fellows who had donned blue were quite overwhelmed with privileges for all of one afternoon, and it had been a very delicious thing. They had strutted." Both accounts feature, as well, scenes where the soldiers' mothers send them off to war with a jar of preserves (Henry's mother packs him "a cup of blackberry jam" in his bundle). It is upon such small but authentic touches that the novelist built a plausibly realistic narrative.

Other similarities in the two accounts include descriptions of the long tedium of drill, the soldiers discarding their heavy backpacks during the march to the battle-

Library of Congress

Union dead laid out for burial in front of Dunker Church at Antietam. Crane's history teacher, John B. Van Petten, described the bloody and confused fighting at the battle.

field, and their first encounter with a dead man in the field. In Goss's account: "We came upon one of our men who had evidently died from wounds. Near one of his hands was a Testament, and on his breast lay an ambrotype picture of a group of children and another of a young woman. We searched in vain for his name." In *The Red Badge of Courage,* Henry's regiment marches past a dead Confederate skirmisher: "He lay upon his back staring at the sky. He was dressed in an awkward suit of yellowish brown. The youth could see that the soles of his shoes had been worn to the thinness of writing paper, and from a great rent in one the dead foot projected piteously. The ranks opened covertly to avoid the corpse. The invulnerable dead man forced a way for himself. The youth looked keenly at the ashen face. He vaguely desired to walk around and around the body and stare; the impulse of the living to try to read in dead eyes the answer to the Question."

Goss's account is straightforward and modestly undramatic, leading Crane to complain: "I wonder that some of these fellows don't tell how they felt in those scraps. They spout eternally of what they did, but they are emotionless as rocks." Crane's emphasis in his novel is entirely upon how, and what, Henry is feeling at any particular time. This is particularly true in the most famous set-piece of the novel, when the youth comes upon a decaying body lying undisturbed in a cathedral-like clearing in the forest. It is, in a way, the heart of the novel, where Henry confronts his deepest fears, and Crane lavishes upon the scene all his remarkable descriptive powers: "At length he reached a place where the high, arching boughs made a chapel. He softly pushed the green doors aside and entered. Pine needles were a gentle brown carpet. There was a religious half light. Near the threshold he stopped, horror-stricken at the sight of a thing. He was being looked at by a dead man who was seated with his back against a columnlike tree. The corpse was dressed in a uniform that once had been blue, but was now faded to a melancholy shade of green. The eyes, staring at the youth, had changed to the dull hue to be seen on the side of a dead fish. The mouth was open. Its red had changed to an appalling yellow. Over the gray skin of the face ran little ants. One was trundling some sort of bundle along the upper lip."

Goss was not the only old soldier whose wartime memories Crane mined for his book. There was even a real-life Jim Conklin, Henry's doomed best friend, in the 124th New York, although unlike his fictional counterpart, James Conklin survived the war and returned to Orange County. It is tempting, but ultimately unknowable, to think that he might have been one of the old soldiers to whom young Stephen Crane listened as they recounted their great charge at Chancellorsville. It seems plausible.

If there was any doubt that Chancellorsville was the battle depicted in *The Red Badge of Courage,* it was answered by the most authoritative source—the novelist himself—in a later short story, "The Veteran." In that story an aged Henry Fleming recounts his wartime experiences for a group of listeners sitting on soap boxes in a country store. "Mr. Fleming," says one of the listeners, "you never was frightened much in them battles was you?" "Well I guess I was," Henry answers. "Pretty well scared, sometimes. Why, in my first battle I thought the sky was falling down. I thought the world was coming to an end. You bet I was scared. The trouble was, I thought they were all shooting at me. Yes, sir, I thought every man in the other army was aiming at me in particular, and only me. It seemed so darned unreasonable, you know. I wanted to explain to 'em what an almighty good fellow I was, because I thought then they might quit all trying to hit me. But I couldn't explain, and they kept on being unreasonable—blim! blam! bang! So I run. That was at Chancellorsville."

Other suggested sources for Crane's novel range from the ridiculous to the sublime. It has been asserted that Crane was influenced by a popular 1887 novel, *Corporal Si Klegg and His 'Pard',* a long, fictionalized account of the Civil War service of Lt. Col. Wilbur F. Hinman of the 65th Ohio Infantry. Hinman's lengthy book—the sheer length alone would seem to argue against anyone as restless as Stephen Crane wading through it—does include some episodes similar to Crane's novel, including the familiar patriotic rush to enlist, the rigors and boredom of camp life, a bantering conversation with a Confederate picket, and the heroic rescue of a falling flag in the heat of battle. But Hinman's account is both broadly comic and sentimentally patriotic, two traits that are notably missing from *The Red Badge of Courage.* There is no evidence that Crane ever saw Hinman's book, much less borrowed from it.

Continued on page 98

Death of a Beau

By Stuart W. Sanders

When the Civil War erupted, so many of Lisbon, Ohio-born Robert McCook's large extended family joined the Union Army that the clan became known as the "Fighting McCooks." Nine brothers, his father, uncle, and five cousins all entered Federal service. Many of them would not live to see the end of the war.

Having opened a law practice in Cincinnati, 33-year-old Robert McCook became colonel of the 9th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment. The regiment was composed mainly of German residents of the Queen City, many of whom had seen prior service in European wars. McCook had specifically wanted to command an all-German regiment, stating, "I know the Germans will fight. Our American boys mean well enough, but they don't know how." On April 22, 1861, 10 companies of the 9th Ohio were enrolled for three months' service. With no uniforms available at the time, McCook wore civilian clothes, a stovepipe hat, and a sword. When the regiment reached Camp Dennison near Cincinnati for training, members learned that President Abraham Lincoln had called for three-year enlistments. A majority of the men, including their commander, immediately extended their service.

An examination of the early regimental rolls shows that of the 11 officers in the regiment, nine were German. In addition, of the 10 companies that enlisted in 1861, the majority of the members were recent immigrants. Names like Gebhard Krug (Company B) and Sebastian Hienrich (Company E) were the norm, while men like Henry W. Sanders (Company E) and Charles Boyle (regimental surgeon) proved the exception. According to the unit's regimental history, 57 members were born in the United States, 1,012 were born in Germany, 56 in Switzerland, 25 in France, three in Russia, one in Holland, and one was born at sea. Although most were recent immigrants, one 19th-century historian noted, "No regiment is more justly entitled to the thanks of the patriotic people of Ohio for distinguished services in support of the Union and the flag than the 9th [Ohio] Infantry."

Luckily for the English-speaking McCook, German-born Lieutenant August Willich handled regimental drill. So competent was Willich that many Union officers believed that the 9th Ohio was the best-drilled Union regiment in the army at that time. McCook modestly did not take credit for the men's

Ohio Historical Society

This Charles T. Webber painting depicts the Fighting McCooks, the Ohio family that sent 15 men to serve the Union in the Civil War. Family patriarch Daniel McCook Sr. is seated at center right. Robert McCook is standing behind him. Seated at far left is Maj. Gen. Alexander McDowell McCook. Daniel McCook Jr., reclining center, and Charles McCook, seated beside him, were also killed in the war.

Ideal

Brigadier General Robert McCook was the beau ideal of his predominantly German regiment. His murky death at the hands of Southern guerrillas sparked angry reprisals by his comrades.

discipline. One soldier wrote that "McCook, who humorously exaggerated his own lack of military knowledge, used to say that he was only 'clerk for a thousand Dutchmen,' so completely did the care of equipping and providing for his regiment engross his time and labor." The self-described clerk soon found himself in combat.

On September 10, McCook led a brigade consisting of the 9th Ohio and 13th Massachusetts near Carnifex Ferry in western Virginia. Although the 9th skirmished with Southern troops and was ordered to storm Confederate entrenchments, nightfall prevented the Ohioans from further engaging the enemy. One month later, McCook's men battled near Harpers Ferry. On October 8, the 13th Massachusetts crossed the Potomac River and moved to capture Confederate wheat supplies. Although the grain was secured, Southern troops under Colonel

Turner Ashby drove Federal pickets off Bolivar Heights, 2½ miles from Harpers Ferry. The Confederates charged the town of Bolivar but were repulsed after sustaining 10 casualties. Union troops held the heights until midnight then crossed back into Maryland, suffering four killed, seven wounded, and two captured. Another Federal officer remarked that McCook, "as an amateur soldier, gun in hand, volunteered and rendered much service during the engagement."

Early the next year, McCook commanded a brigade in Kentucky under Brig. Gen. George H. Thomas that included the 9th Ohio and the 2nd Minnesota Regiments. Confederate General Felix Zollicoffer had occupied Mill Springs in southern Kentucky. The Confederate commander made a tactical error by placing his troops' backs to the swollen Cumberland River. Confederate Maj. Gen. George Crittenden disapproved of the strategy and took command but had no time to fix Zollicoffer's blunder. Thomas's troops were approaching. A cornered Crittenden decided to attack.

Crittenden's lead regiments encountered the 10th Indiana and 4th Kentucky Union Infantry Regiments. As the Confederates deployed on the enemy left, the Federal soldiers began to run low on ammunition. McCook's two regiments were soon ordered to the front. Forming on the Mill Springs Road, McCook briefly stopped to speak with the commander of the 10th Indiana. He learned that the enemy was in force on the top of the next hill beyond the woods and that they had forced the 10th Indiana to retire. McCook ordered his brigade forward.

McCook's men advanced, he said, "with the order and steadiness of veterans." The Confederates shouted and pressed forward. McCook deployed his brigade, placing the 2nd Minnesota on the left of the road and the 9th Ohio in a cornfield on the right. He then engaged the enemy. As the Federals pressed forward, gunfire erupted and McCook was shot through the right leg below the knee. Three other balls passed through his horse and another through his overcoat. McCook, dismounted, refused to leave his command.

With their commander limping forward at the head of the brigade, the 2nd Minnesota found their right flank 10 feet from the Confederate line. The 9th Ohio also pressed the enemy, who were positioned behind hay bales and fence rails. When the Union left closed with the Confederates, the contest became hand to hand. The troops battled at close quarters for half an hour, and the Confederate line wavered. McCook saw an opportunity and ordered the Ohio regiment to charge. Thomas reported that "the Ninth Ohio charged the enemy on the right with bayonets fixed, turned their flank, and drove them from the field, the whole line giving way and retreating in the utmost disorder and confusion." McCook's German regiment broke the enemy line and drove the Confederates from the field.

Drummer boy William Bircher of the 2nd Minnesota recalled the rout. "Our regiment charged up to a rail fence, and here occurred a hand-to-hand conflict: the Rebels putting their guns through the fence from one side and our boys from the other," he wrote. "The smoke hung so close to the ground on account of the rain that it was impossible to see each other at times. The Ninth Ohio then made a charge along the Rebel left flank and drove them from their front. Then followed one of the worst stampedes, I think, that occurred during the war."

The Confederates, many of whom carried antiquated flintlocks, were routed. Hastening their defeat was the death of General Zollicoffer. As the fighting reached a crescendo, Zollicoffer accidentally wandered into enemy lines and was shot dead. Although Crittenden attempted to rally his men, the 9th

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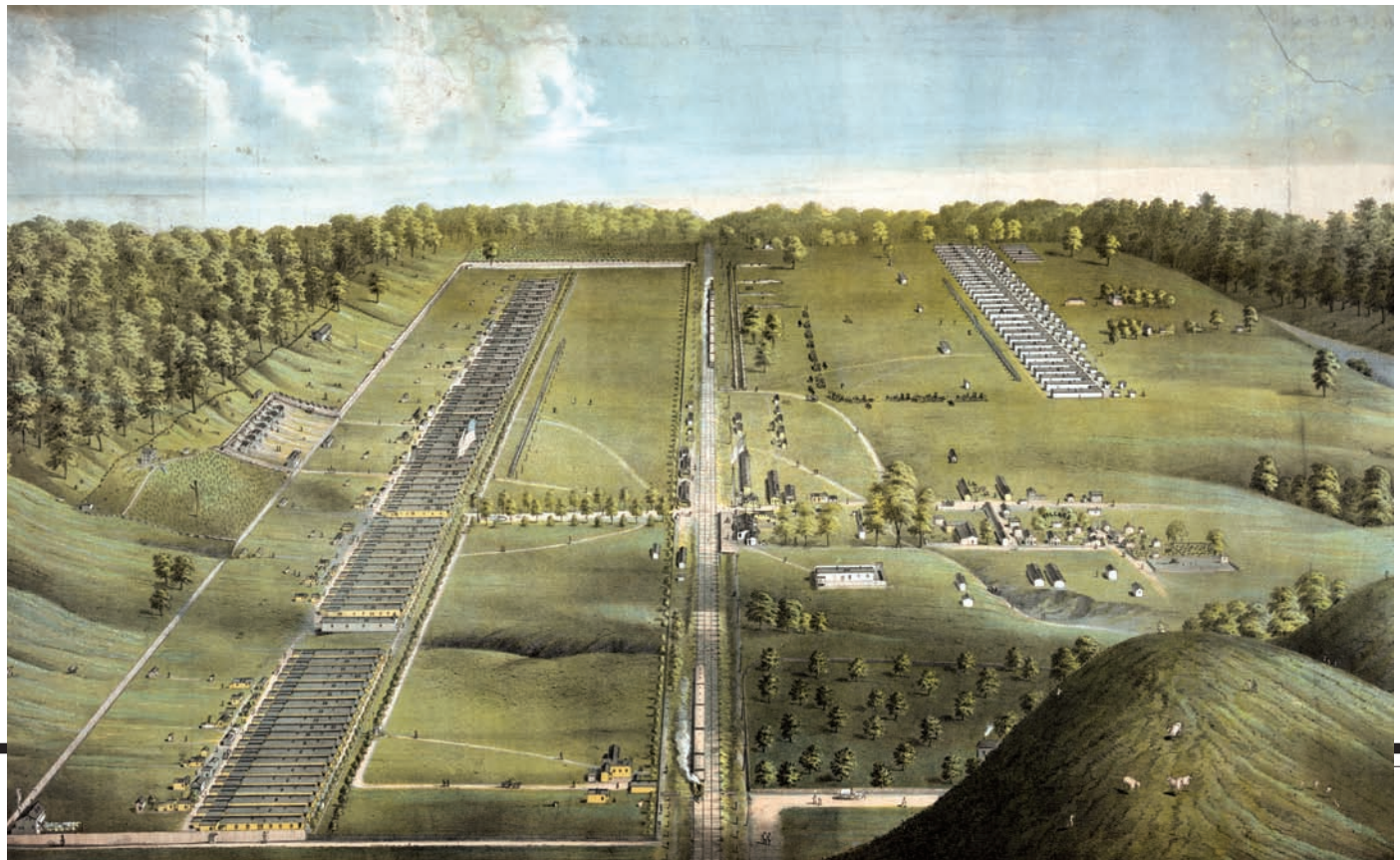

Ohio's bayonet charge pushed the defenders from the field. At Mill Springs, the Federals lost 39 killed and 207 wounded. The Southerners suffered 125 killed, 309 wounded, and nearly 100 captured.

McCook's brigade suffered 55 casualties, and his men took great pains to care for the wounded. According to one Union soldier, "Some of the 9th Ohio carried their wounded comrades nine miles to avoid jolting them over the rough roads." Although seriously injured, McCook remained on duty until his brigade returned to camp. On January 28, the Ohio General Assembly passed a resolution thanking Thomas, McCook, and Colonel James A. Garfield for their successes in the Bluegrass State. Colonel Mahlon D. Manson of the 10th Indiana remarked, "I shall ever remember with feeling of gratitude and admiration for the prompt manner in which [McCook] sustained me in the hour of trial." Had McCook not arrived at the field on time, it is likely that Manson's 10th Indiana would have been decimated. For his service at Mill Springs, McCook was promoted to brigadier general.

Following the Battle of Shiloh, in which McCook's men did not take part, the Union Army of the Ohio, led by Maj. Gen. Don Carlos Buell, began a slow trek toward Chattanooga in the hope of capturing the important railroad center. The Federals believed that their advance would cause Unionist elements in East Tennessee to rally to the Stars and Stripes, while hindering Confederate attempts to secure coal, saltpeter, and lead.

During the advance, Confederate guerrillas in northern Alabama and southern Tennessee continually harassed Buell's army. On May 19, Union Maj. Gen. Ormsby Mitchel informed Secretary of War Edwin Stanton that "the most terrible outrages—robberies, rapes, arsons, and plundering—are being committed by lawless brigands and vagabonds." Mitchel wanted to hang any captured guerrillas. Three days later, he was allowed to execute anyone who participated in "irregular or guerrilla warfare."

In late July, Thomas established his headquarters at Decherd, Tennessee. On August 1, McCook was ordered to follow the road taken by the cavalry and artillery to Decherd,

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ABOVE: Brig. Gen. Robert L. McCook left behind a lucrative law practice in Cincinnati to follow the Stars and Stripes in the Civil War. He first distinguished himself at the Battle of Bolivar Heights in October 1861. OPPOSITE: Thanks to the assistance of German-born Lieutenant August Willich, the 9th Ohio was trained at Camp Dennison near Cincinnati and was considered one of the best-drilled regiments in the Union Army.

"where you will encamp your brigade and await the orders of the general commanding." It was the last order McCook would ever receive.

While on the way to Decherd, McCook rode three miles ahead of his brigade with a staff member, an officer from the 35th Ohio Infantry, and an escort of nine men. McCook was ill—likely with dysentery—and traveled in an ambulance, riding uncomfortably in a bed in an open carriage. At noon on August 5, the command neared New Market, Alabama. When McCook stopped at a house to ask about water and potential campsites, his escort divided. Two men, accompanied by a citizen on an escort's horse, traveled a half-mile to the rear. Three others rode ahead to find a campsite, while four remained with McCook. One was dismounted, having loaned his horse to the citizen, while another was unarmed and was tending to the sick commander.

As the four men waited near the house, shots echoed from some nearby woods. Suddenly, the men were attacked by a band of 100 to 200 mounted guerrillas. The horsemen stormed toward them, and McCook ordered the ambulance turned around. The wagon's horses ran away at top speed, but the guerrillas quickly surrounded the party, firing their pistols and yelling, "Stop! Stop!"

McCook rose on his bed, shouting, "Don't

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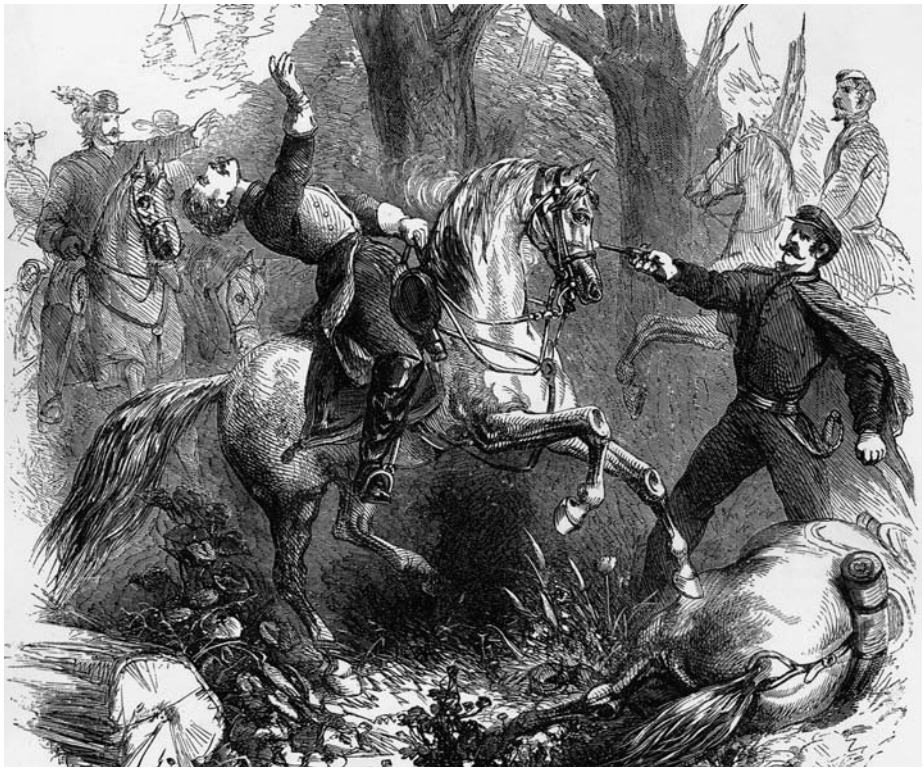

ABOVE: A contemporary sketch shows the death of Confederate Brig. Gen. Felix Zollicoffer at the Battle of Mill Springs, Kentucky. Zollicoffer accidentally wandered into Union lines and was shot. OPPOSITE: Union troops drive off the Confederates at Mill Springs. McCook's brigade, including the 9th Ohio and 2nd Minnesota, suffered 55 casualties in the victory.

shoot; the horses are running; we will stop as soon as possible." A guerrilla struck one member of the escort in the head with a saber. Another horseman fired into the ambulance. One bullet pierced McCook's hat, a second struck him in the side. The shot had passed through his body from the rear, coming out near the buckle of his sword belt. McCook had been gravely wounded.

Finally the ambulance stopped. As the wagon rolled to a halt, a guerrilla rode up with a cocked pistol in hand. McCook simply told him that there was no point in firing because he was fatally wounded already. Two of McCook's escort, including Captain Hunter Brooke, carried the general into a nearby home. The residents initially wanted to move the officer into the slave quarters because they feared their home would be burned in retaliation if McCook died there. However, McCook remained in the residence thanks to the insistence of Brooke and the other officers.

Once McCook was moved, the raiders put the wagons to the torch, secured all horses and mules, and took the four members of the escort as prisoners. The Confederates also captured an engraved sword with a solid silver scabbard. The inscription on the blade revealed that the U.S. Congress had given it to McCook, likely in thanks for his role in the Mill Springs victory. The sword was returned to McCook's family after the war.

When a subsequent party of Union soldiers found McCook, two surgeons examined the wound and admitted that it was fatal. According to a graphic report in the *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, "The wound was in the bowels, a single ball entering the left side and coming out between the ninth and tenth ribs. When the physicians arrived, General McCook was vomiting blood. He was cool and calm to the last, but suffered greatly."

McCook took the news calmly, telling one of his subordinates, Captain Andrew Burt, "Andy, the problem of life will soon be solved for me." When asked if he had a message for his brother, Union Maj. Gen. Alexander McCook, Robert replied, "Tell him and the rest I have tried to live as a man, and die attempting to do my duty." Later he told Burt, "My good boy, may your life be longer, and to a better purpose, than mine."

McCook asked another officer to draw up his will. He left his two favorite horses to his brothers Alex and Daniel and gave the rest of his property to his mother. Immediately before his death, McCook clasped the hand of the brigade wagon master and exclaimed, "I am done with life; yes, this ends it all. You and I part now, but the loss of ten thousand such lives as yours and mine would be nothing if their sacrifice would but save such a government as ours." McCook died at midnight on August 6.

McCook's brigade was outraged by the attack and quickly took revenge on unoffending local civilians. On August 8, the *Nashville Daily Union* reported that one of McCook's regiments went to a nearby plantation "and demolished everything on his premises. We learn they also wreaked their fury on the heads of the rebels in the vicinity." The vengeful Federals burned private property and shot a Confederate lieutenant who was on furlough and who supposedly had been connected with the men who killed McCook.

The 9th Ohio was particularly vengeful. Not only did they destroy property, they also hanged several people they suspected were involved in the attack. On August 9, the *New York Herald* reported that "the Ninth Ohio, McCook's own regiment, on learning of the assassination, marched back to the scene of the occurrence, burned every house in the neighborhood and laid waste to the lands. Several men who were implicated in the murder were taken out and hung to trees by the infuriated soldiery." Union Colonel John Beatty confirmed the report, noting, "When the Dutchmen of his old regiment learned of the unfortunate occurrence they became uncontrollable, and destroyed the buildings and property on five plantations near the scene of the murder."

Even the family who had housed the dying officer faced the wrath of angry Federal soldiers. According to one witness, "After General McCook's death, which was in twenty-four hours, the entire premises of those who had sheltered him were burned, and a sick man, seventy-five years old, with the ladies

and children of his family, was made homeless." Their earlier fears had been realized.

The quest for vengeance continued. One member of the 19th Illinois Infantry killed the horse of an Athens tavern keeper who supposedly had refused to give McCook shelter when the officer was ill. Other soldiers burned portions of Athens, which 15 months earlier had suffered even worse destruction at the hands of Union Colonel John B. Turchin's brigade. During the earlier incident, the Russian-born Turchin, angry at the townspeople's resistance to Union troops, had told his men in heavily accented English, "I shut mine eyes for von hour." The men got the message; an orgy of looting, burning, and pillaging ensued. Now, after several hours of similar destuction, Federal officers succeeded in getting the men under control. Thomas, who hoped to prevent further outrages, implored, "Let us be steady in our efforts to maintain such discipline as will insure to our arms a just retribution upon the dastardly foe who could take advantage of his defenseless condition." Thomas then ordered the division to wear a badge of mourning for 30 days.

"Everything ahead of us was panic stricken. In the lane we overtook a buggy containing the Federal officers. NO ONE COULD TELL WHO HAD SHOT GENERAL MCCOOK. Pistol fire is very inaccurate even when men are afoot and near each other. When men are mounted and horses running at full speed and several firing in the same direction, no man can tell whose bullet finds the mark."

Union troops in other commands were also shocked by McCook's death, and it shook many soldiers out of supporting any policy that was conciliatory toward the enemy. A member of the 29th Indiana Infantry wrote home, "It must be a very forgiving spirit that will see such work and not swear to take no more prisoners. The time for milk and water manner of doing business is past." According to the *Ohio State Journal,* when Robert's younger brother, Dan, learned of the attack, he swore, "I'll never take another rebel prisoner as long as God gives me breath." At the time of Robert's death, Dan was colonel of the 52nd Ohio Infantry Regiment. He would also die during the war, succumbing to wounds at Kennesaw Mountain, Georgia, on July 17, 1864, one day after receiving his promotion to brigadier general.

Inaccurate press reports and rumors that swirled around the Union camps generated much of the anger in the ranks. On August 8, Robert S. Dilworth of the 21st Ohio Infantry wrote, "Col. McCook of late acting brig gen was shot on his way to Huntsville. He was in the ambulance and the division

The Granger Collection, New York

sutlers train was with him. He was sick and on his way to Huntsville to put up until he would be able to join his command. The secesh took him out of the ambulance & shot him and the sutler in the leg."

The public was also inflamed by dozens of inaccurate press reports. On August 9, the *New York Herald* reported, "The rebel guerrillas in the West have inaugurated the course which might fairly be expected from them, in the cowardly and cold blooded murder of General Robert McCook, of Ohio, while journeying sick in an ambulance near Salem, Ala., to join his brigade. The marauders surrounded the ambulance, overturned it, throwing the wounded and helpless officer to the ground, and there butchered him."

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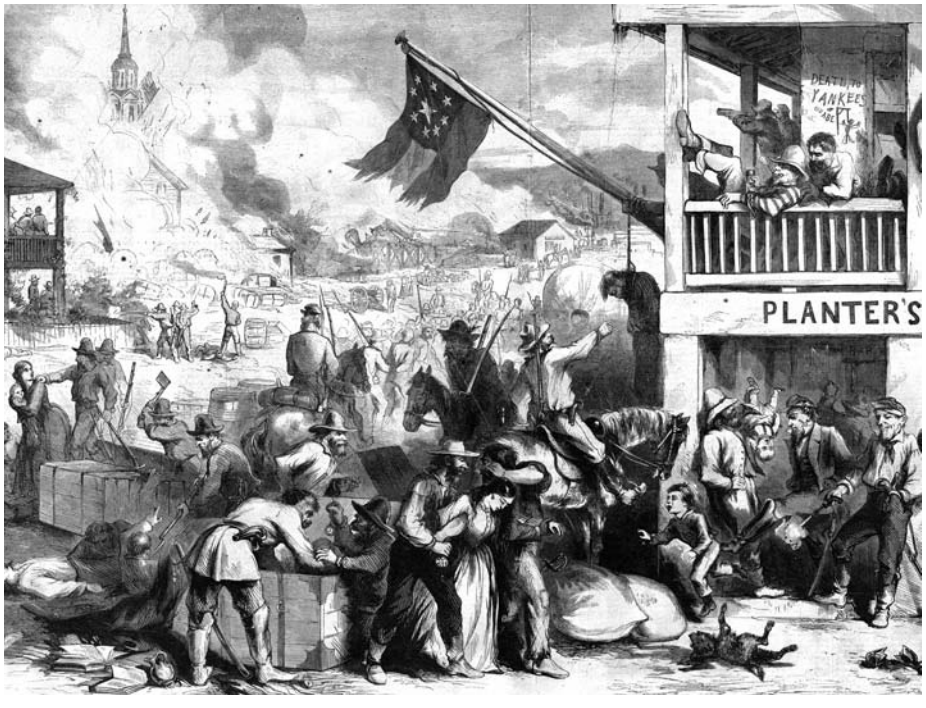

The August 23, edition of *Harper's Weekly* also fanned the flames of controversy. This magazine presented a drawing to the public that depicted the "murder" of McCook. Surrounded by overturned wagons and heavily bearded Confederate ruffians, the engraving showed the Northern public that the Union officer did not have a chance. As mounted partisans surround the chaotic scene, their sabers drawn, a stern-visaged bushwhacker fires a rifle into McCook from a few feet away. Held on his knees by the Confederates, the uniformed McCook clutches his chest, throws his head back, and dies. Southern newspapers placed their own spin on the event. The *Charleston Mercury* stated that the Confederates, who were ambushed by McCook's party, turned and attacked. McCook, the *Mercury* noted, "was riding erect, and apparently in fine health, in a carriage stolen from a citizen of North Alabama" when he was killed.

Although many believed the attackers to be bushwhackers, loosely aligned with the Southern service, Captain Hunter Brooke, captured by the raiders, related that the horsemen were regular Confederate soldiers. Brooke sent a note to the colonel of the 35th Indiana after Robert's death. He wrote that he was the prisoner of a Captain J.M. Hambrick, who wanted to exchange Brooke for his brother, who was a prisoner in Huntsville. Although the fate of Hambrick's brother is unknown, Brooke was eventually released.

Federal officers who respected McCook did not quickly forget that he had been shot down in his ambulance. On October 23, Brig. Gen. George Crook wrote to future president James A. Garfield that a scouting party "last night caught the notorious Captain [Frank B.] Gurley and his brother, a lieutenant, who murdered General McCook." For several months, Federal authorities had believed that Gurley was McCook's killer, although a Confederate at the scene claimed that "as three or four were firing at this party when the General fell, it will always be a matter of doubt as to who fired the fatal shot." The McCook family, for its part, was certain. Robert's cousin Edward informed Robert's brother Alexander, "Watkins last night caught Ragsdale, one of the party with Gurley when Robert was murdered."

While Federal authorities were initially unsure of Gurley's role in McCook's death, the most damning evidence appeared that November. Hunter Brooke, who noted that his own captor was a regular Confederate soldier, testified differently about Gurley. Brooke reported, "A little over a year ago, I can positively swear that [Gurley] was a guerrilla acting without authority from the Confederate government, claiming a partisan ranger without commission and subsisting himself and his band entirely by plunder. He was the murderer of Brigadier General Robert L. McCook, which I well know, as I was present at that sad event and narrowly escaped with my life, being carried away as a prisoner."

According to J.M. Mann, a Confederate who was also present at the shooting, the chaos of the event made it impossible to determine who fired the fatal shot. "Everything ahead of us was panic stricken," Mann wrote. "In the lane we overtook a buggy containing the Federal officers. No one could tell who had shot General McCook. Pistol fire is very inaccurate even when men are afoot and near each other. When men are mounted and horses running at full speed and several firing in the same direction, no man can tell whose bullet finds the mark."

While Mann's comments cast doubt on Gurley's role in the incident, Gurley years later may have implicated himself as the shooter. In 1906, a member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy presented a paper on McCook's death. Using Gurley as a source for her research, Annie B. Robertson stated that when attacked, McCook's wagon turned around and ran into some overhanging limbs, which tore off the top. Gurley and his comrades saw two officers in the back, one in uniform [Brooke] and "the other in

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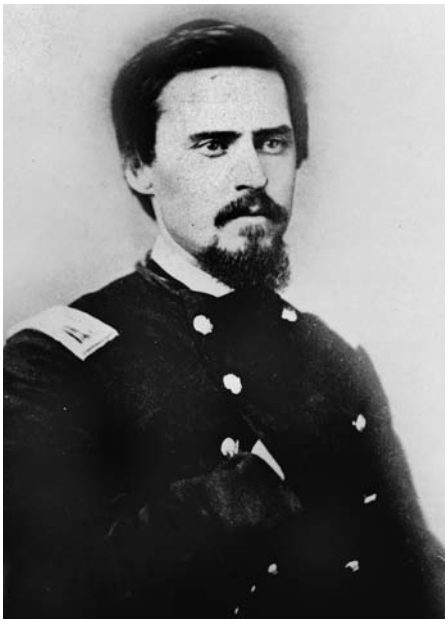

ABOVE: Robert McCook's brothers, left to right, included Brig. Gen. Daniel McCook, killed at Kennesaw Mountain; Maj. Gen. Edwin McCook, wounded three times; and Maj. Gen. Alexander McDowell McCook, who survived the war unscathed. OPPOSITE: Northern artist Thomas Nast depicted Confederate guerrillas raiding a town, abusing citizens, and executing civilians. After McCook's death at the hand of such guerrillas, it was his comrades who did the abusing.

his shirt sleeves." Riding after the wagon, Gurley fired three times at the uniformed officer when he was 50 yards away. One of those bullets struck McCook.

Although the capture of Gurley came as good news to Federal commanders, Confederate officials were concerned. On October 21, a scout reported Gurley's capture. The scout had learned that Gurley, a Tennessee native who had served in the 4th Alabama Cavalry, would be hanged. Gurley, however, escaped the hangman's noose. As the war drew to a close, Federal authorities determined that McCook's death was "one of the fortunes of war." Exchanged in February 1865, Gurley lived after the war on a plantation near Gurley, Alabama and was active in veterans' affairs.

Gurley's neighbors viewed him as a "splendid old soldier and leading citizen of North Alabama." Living in a community named for his ancestors, the formerly condemned man was elected sheriff of Madison County. Although Confederate veterans lauded the supposed killer of Robert McCook, Gurley's presence irritated the Reconstruction government. At one point, without any official charges being brought against him, Gurley was imprisoned for five months in the Huntsville jail.

Despite harassment by Federal authorities, Gurley remained active in veterans' affairs and sponsored several barbeques and reunions for Confederate veterans on his farm. During these events, according to one former soldier who knew him after the war, "It was very hard to get the Captain to discuss his General McCook experience, as it appeared to bring up unpleasant memories." At the 1912 reunion on Gurley's farm (the seventh such reunion), the veterans passed a resolution in honor of their host. They resolved: "That we hereby extend to him our most grateful appreciation of his heroic services during the war and our keen remembrance of the punishment inflicted upon him after the war by imprisonment, fettered with chains, and a narrow escape from execution by the Federal authorities, all because he participated conspicuously in a fight in which the Federal General McCook was killed." Eight years later, on March 29, 1920, Gurley died at his home.

For their part, the surviving veterans of the 9th Ohio did not forget their slain commander. In the 1870s, artist Leopold Fettweiss sculpted a marble portrait bust of McCook that was dedicated in August 1877. Placed in Cincinnati's Washington Park, the bust still stands in memory of one more Civil War soldier who had died, as he related, "attempting to do my duty."

McCook lies buried in Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati. There, 20 McCook graves surround a temple built to honor "the fighting McCooks of Ohio." The monument, modeled after the Choragic Monument to Lysicrates in Athens, stands more than 17 feet tall and is nine feet in diameter. The structure is surrounded by 12 Corinthian columns, each etched with the name of one of the McCook children.

Buried under the temple is Robert's father, Daniel, who was mortally wounded while chasing Confederate raider John Hunt Morgan in Ohio. In addition, several of Robert's brothers also rest there. Alexander, who survived the war and retired as a major general; Daniel, killed at Kennesaw Mountain; Charles, a casualty of First Manassas (Bull Run); Edwin, who was wounded three times during the Civil War yet survived; and Latimer, who also served in the Union Army and lived through the war. Along with the McCook family, 40 other Union generals, including Joseph Hooker, William H. Lytle, and Henry M. Cist (author of the classic study *Army of the Cumberland*) lie buried at Spring Grove. The cemetery was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1976. □

Brawl at B

THE GROUND AROUND MANASSAS, Virginia, was not auspicious for Union Army forces in the first two years of the Civil War. It was there, on July 21, 1861, that a Union army broke to pieces on the bulwark of Brig. Gen. Thomas Jackson's brigade, earning the Confederate general the sobriquet of "Stonewall" and his men the proud appellation the Stonewall Brigade. The scene of the first major battle of the war, Manassas was about to become the focus of attention once again.

The failure of Maj. Gen. George McClellan's attack on Richmond prompted President Abraham Lincoln to order the withdrawal of the Army of the Potomac from the peninsula to Washington in the summer of 1862. Lincoln then summoned Maj. Gen. John Pope from the western theater and gave him command of the newly created Union Army of Virginia. Formed by the consolidation of the commands of Generals Irvin McDowell, Nathaniel Banks, and John C. Frémont, the new army was tasked with covering McClellan's movement and protecting the nation's capital.

Midwesterners in the 2nd Wisconsin Regiment, sporting the famous black hats of their brigade, fire on the Stonewall Brigade at Brawner's Farm as darkness falls on the battlefield. Painting by Michael Thorson.

By mid-July, Pope's 51,000-man army (which would soon receive reinforcements, mostly from the Army of the Potomac, that would bring its strength up to more than 70,000 men), had moved south to threaten Richmond's access to the Shenandoah Valley. Although McClellan's withdrawing forces were still perceived to be a threat to Richmond, General Robert E. Lee felt that Pope now represented the more immediate threat and sent reinforcements to Jackson with orders to counter Pope's forces and suppress the new Union army.

On August 3, McClellan finally received orders to evacuate the peninsula, thus removing the dual threat to Lee's troops and allowing him the opportunity to concentrate on Pope exclusively. On August 13, 10 of Lee's brigades, commanded by Maj. Gen. James Longstreet, joined Jackson in the reorganized Army of Northern Virginia. Lee's aim was for Jackson to take his corps around Pope's flank, cutting off his supply lines, at which point Longstreet's corps would rejoin him to defeat Pope before the rest of McClellan's slow-moving reinforcements could combine with Pope.

Backed by Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart's cavalry, Jackson's 23,000-man corps marched 54 miles in two days. On the evening of August 26, Jackson captured Bristoe Station on the Orange & Alexandria Railroad, destroyed several trains, and threatened to

With Union and Confederate forces massing around the key railroad junction of Manassas, Virginia, Stonewall Jackson's II Corps confronted Brig. Gen. John Gibbon's Iron Brigade at the tiny hamlet of Groveton. It was a prelude of what was to come.

BY JOHN WALKER

rawner's Farm

Image © Mike Thorson

cut the Union lines of communication with Washington. The first sign of serious trouble in his army's rear reached Pope at about 8 o'clock on the night of August 26, just before the wires went dead, when the telegraph operator at Union-held Manassas Junction reported that "enemy cavalry has fallen upon the railroad."

Confederate Brig Gen. Isaac Trimble was en route from Bristoe Station to Manassas Junction, four miles up the line, with two regiments of infantry. Before midnight he easily captured the huge but lightly defended Union supply depot. The next morning, with Jackson's corps firmly between his army and Washington, Pope ordered the precipitous withdrawal of almost his entire force from the Rappahannock line into an all-out pursuit north to corral Jackson's host.

For two days Pope exhausted his com-

bined force in a massive, futile search for Jackson, first ordering his units to converge on Manassas Junction. When Pope arrived there in person at noon on the 28th to find his antagonist gone, he concluded wrongly that the Confederate divisions had moved east to Centreville, and he rerouted his scattered units there. Repeated marches and countermarches in the Virginia heat took a heavy toll on officers, enlisted men, and horses.

Meanwhile, Jackson had actually moved his men in the opposite direction. After ransacking the massive supply base at Manassas Junction and putting the torch to whatever his men could not consume or carry away, Jackson consolidated his three divisions several miles to the northwest along Stony Ridge north of the tiny hamlet of Groveton, not far from the old Manassas battlefield. Jackson had chosen a superb defensive position a few hundred yards up the hill from the strategic Warrenton Turnpike. Hidden in the fields and woods behind the embankments of an unfinished railroad, he could monitor Union movement on the turnpike while awaiting the arrival of Longstreet's wing of the Army of Northern Virginia. The Confederates had an excellent view of the turnpike to their front and could easily launch a strike against an isolated unit of Pope's army moving along the pike.

Late on the afternoon of August 28, Jackson was reconnoitering the ridge to his front when blue-coated troops belonging to the division of Brig. Gen. Rufus King came into view, marching east along the pike in the direction of Centreville. As his worried staff watched, Jackson rode down the ridge for a better look, trotting slowly back and forth within musket range of the blue infantry columns, which paid him no heed. As the sun was about to set, King's column drew abreast of Jackson's position. Jackson rode back to his officers on the ridge and calmly told them, "Bring up your men, gentlemen." Within minutes the Battle of Brawner's Farm erupted in earnest.

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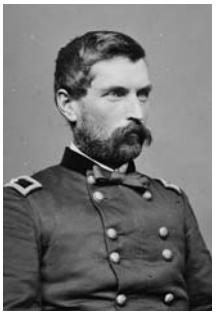

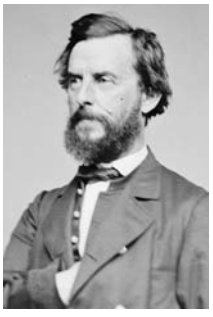

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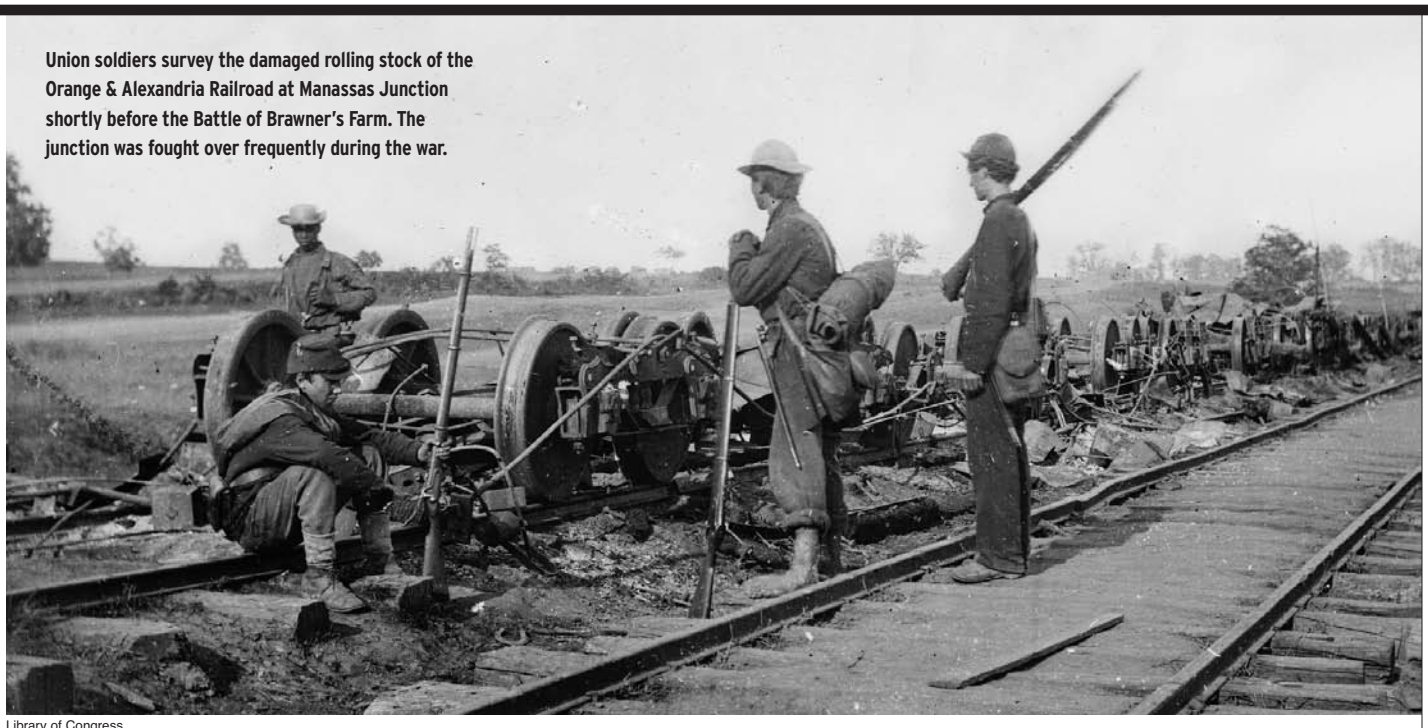
ABOVE: The Brawner farm house was a focal point for both sides during the battle. John Brawner and his family left the house as shots and shells passed through it, but returned later to find it still standing. TOP: Brig. Gens. John Gibbon, left, and Rufus King led Union forces.

King's division consisted of one brigade of all Westerners—three regiments from Wisconsin and one from Indiana—under the command of Brig. Gen. John Gibbon, and three additional brigades of untested troops from New York and Pennsylvania. Though yet to see action in the war, Gibbon was an experienced Regular Army officer, a veteran of the Mexican and Seminole Indian Wars. He had also served as an artillery instructor at West Point, and was the author of *The Artillerist's Manual,* a scientific treatise on gunnery used by both sides in the war. Gibbon was appointed brigadier general of volunteers in 1862 and given command of King's Wisconsin brigade.

Demanding the same level of discipline and professionalism from these volunteer Westerners that he demanded of his Regular artillerymen, Gibbon quickly set about drilling his troops and improving their appearance, ordering them to wear white leggings and, rather than the standard Union kepi, black Hardee hats, known as the Model 1858 Dress Hat. These tall hats were adorned with a plume, giving the brigade a distinctive appearance, and it soon became known, logically enough, as the "Black Hat Brigade." Of Gibbon's four regiments, only one—the 2nd Wisconsin—had seen action in the war, 13 months earlier on this same ground.

King was commanding his division from an ambulance after suffering a severe epileptic seizure on August 23. Now, as his mile-long column unknowingly neared the front of Jackson's entire corps, with Brig. Gen. John Hatch's brigade in the lead, King suffered another mild seizure that rendered him combat ineffective and left his division without a commander for the remainder of the evening. At 6 PM, after Hatch's brigade marched through Groveton past the Brawner and Dogan farms north of the pike, his men approached a knoll east of the village and spotted movement on the ridge to the north. With Hatch now in temporary command of the division, the blue



Union soldiers survey the damaged rolling stock of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad at Manassas Junction shortly before the Battle of Brawner's Farm. The junction was fought over frequently during the war.

Library of Congress

column halted while the 14th Brooklyn was brought up to reconnoiter the woods and fields below the ridgeline. Finding nothing, they fell back to the pike.

As Hatch and the other brigade commanders—Gibbon and Brig. Gens. Abner Doubleday and Marsena Patrick—scanned the ridgeline with field glasses, a lone Confederate horse-drawn battery emerged from the trees and wheeled into position. Captain Aston Gerber's Staunton Artillery promptly opened up on the Union column; their third discharge found the range and began targeting Gibbon's brigade and the two brigades behind him, strung out along the pike.

As shells screamed overhead and exploded around them, some of the Union column quickly scattered, their ambulances and wagons careening panic-stricken off the road into the fields and forests south of the pike. The New York regiments in Patrick's brigade, now about 1,000 yards behind Gibbon, immediately broke up and headed for the trees—they would not participate in the fight to come despite Gibbon's repeated pleas for help. It would be hours before Patrick could regain control of his troops, leaving Gibbon and Doubleday to contend with the Confederates by themselves. (Hatch had marched his lead brigade farther east along the turnpike, putting himself out of the fighting and almost out of range of Confederate cannons.)

With his brigade posted on the road a quarter mile behind Hatch's, Gibbon rode to a knoll north of the pike and watched as two additional Confederate batteries emerged from the tree line, unlimbered, and opened fire on the broken Union column on the road below. Keeping his head like the veteran he was, Gibbon shouted for his old battery, Battery B of the 4th U.S. Artillery, to deploy on a small knoll east of the Brawner farmhouse. Soon the ground trembled violently as Union and Confederate gunners exchanged fire. Within minutes, the Union regulars were getting the better of it and the Southerners elected to pull their guns back to safety. Just as the guns fell back, Jackson sent in another battery, on Gibbon's left, and it began blasting case and solid shot at the Union battery. Doubleday's lead regiment, the 76th New York, was hit hard and began to panic; its commander, Colonel William Wainwright, succeeded in calming his jittery troops.

Gibbon quickly ordered his entire brigade off the road and north into the cover of the trees on the Brawner farm, followed by Doubleday's entire brigade. At this moment, Gibbon could only assume that this was merely harassing fire from a few light horse batteries. He had no idea that Jackson's entire force of almost 24,000 men lay just beyond the trees within a mile of his position. Doubleday found Gibbon, and the two brigadiers agreed that since Jackson's main force was reported to be at Centreville, the artillery to their front must be that of Stuart's Confederate horse artillery. Gibbon quickly assented to Doubleday's suggestion that an attack on the closest enemy battery was called for. Those members of the Black Hat Brigade who had yet to experience combat were about to about to receive their baptism of fire.

Gibbon ordered Colonel Edgar O'Connor, commanding the 2nd Wisconsin, to advance his regiment and capture one of Stuart's guns. The Badgers moved through the woods onto open ground and formed into line of battle, pushing out skirmishers and finally halting in a broom sedge field near the southern end of the ridge, 300 yards from the Brawner farm. To their front and left lay a log farmhouse, a barn, several outbuildings, and a peach and apple orchard.

Suddenly, a long line of Confederate infantry columns emerged from the woods to their right and a bit farther up the hill, five scarlet battle flags waving proudly, one

for each Virginia regiment marching forward. It was the storied Stonewall Brigade, the flower of the Confederate Army. Called "Jackson's foot cavalry" because of the incredible distances they could travel in mere days, they were arguably the best soldiers in Lee's army. Veterans of every major battle fought in the East, Jackson's men had suffered heavy losses in the Seven Days and Shenandoah campaigns, cutting their numbers from 2,000 to 800. But this 800, commanded by Colonel William Baylor, were tough, seasoned, hard fighters and outnumbered Gibbon's Badgers by almost 2 to 1. Soon, Gibbon's troops found themselves under musket fire from the advancing Confederates.

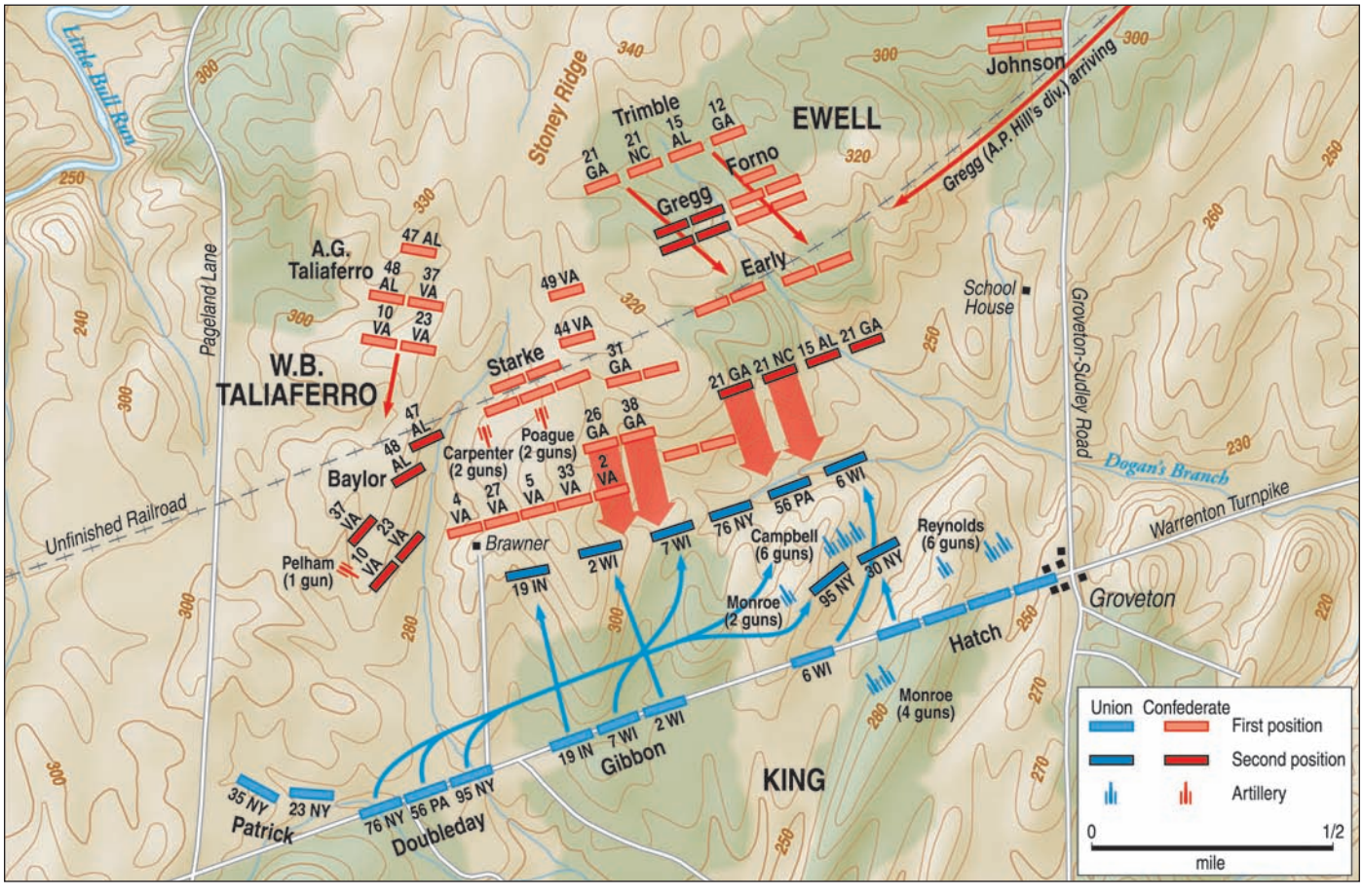
Although the sight of Jackson's veterans sent a ripple of awe through Gibbon's line, the Wisconsin men weren't deterred and continued moving up the hill toward the enemy. Other than a few wild volleys that endangered the Union skirmishers more than it did the Confederates, the 450 men of 2nd Wisconsin held their fire. As the two groups closed to musket range, one young Union soldier noted that his comrades "held their pieces with a tighter grasp" and began to murmur quietly, "Come on, God damn you." At less than 100 yards, the 2nd Wisconsin unleashed what a Confederate officer remembered as "a most terrific and deadly fire." The Virginians staggered and came to a halt in the face of the Union volley.

The Confederate column pushed forward to an old fence 80 yards from the blue line, halted, and opened fire themselves, letting loose with the fearsome Rebel yell. "Within one minute, all was enveloped in smoke," wrote one Union survivor, "and a sheet of flame seemed to go out from each side to the other along the whole length of the line." For 20 minutes the two lines blazed away as casualties began to mount. O'Connor was knocked from his horse by musket fire and died within the hour.

Soon the Confederate numbers began to tell, as 4th Virginia gained the fences and outbuildings around the Brawner home, threatening to overlap the Badgers' left flank. Gibbon ordered Colonel Solomon Meredith's 19th Indiana, 423 men strong, to move up on the Badgers' flank east of the Brawner home. As the inexperienced Hoosiers moved into position, they came under a murderous volley from 4th Virginia. Somehow they steadied themselves and began to fire back as rapidly as the more experienced Wisconsin men next to them.

With the initial advance by the Stonewall Brigade stalled and the daylight beginning to fade, Jackson attempted to bring additional units into the fray. The closest troops available were three or four regiments of Brig. Gen. Alexander Lawton's brigade.

Brawner's Farm was not one of Stonewall Jackson's better performances. The Stonewall Brigade alone lost one-third of its men, including two regimental commanders, Richard S. Ewell and W.B. Taliaferro. Jackson would perform better two days later at Second Manassas.



Ignoring the chain of command, the impatient Jackson personally led some 900 Georgia troops across 400 yards of open ground into a blaze of fire from Federal muskets. They took up positions on Baylor's left, overlapping the 2nd Wisconsin's right flank, which they targeted with massed volleys. Responding to Lawton's advance, Gibbon hurried forward Colonel William Robinson's 7th Wisconsin, and the men of the 440-strong regiment cleared Brawner's Woods and aligned themselves on the Union right, sighting Lawton's Confederates less than 100 yards to their front.

The two lines stood and blasted away, with casualties mounting on both sides. Union wounded began to steadily stream down the hillside toward field hospitals south of the turnpike. As it became darker, the rifle fire merged into what Gibbon described as "a long and continuous roll." In his ambulance south of the pike, King wrote that, as the dim twilight deepened, "night and hell seem to come down together."

As the brutal fighting continued, Jackson became uncharacteristically desperate. The Union troops were fighting with what he described later as "obstinate determination," and Jackson was not a man given to hyperbole. He tried to get more men into the line to break the Union front once and for all. He dispatched Trimble's 1,200-man brigade to form up on the Stonewall Brigade's left, hoping to envelop Gibbon's line and turn the Union flank. However, as Trimble's men approached their place in the Confederate line, they discovered that Gibbon was ahead of Jackson. Gibbon had sent his last regiment, Colonel Lysander Cutler's 6th Wisconsin, forward into a dry streambed, lengthening the Union line to the right. As Cutler's green troops moved up the slope, they could clearly see, even as darkness approached, their 2nd and 7th Wisconsin comrades on higher ground to their left. They were, as a Union survivor remembered, "seemingly under the concentrated fire of at least six times their own numbers."

As Cutler's men fell into line, he ordered them to halt, dress their ranks, and open

Both: Library of Congress

Opponents at Brawner's Farm. Private Samuel H. White, left, of Company I, 4th Virginia Infantry, died in the Union POW camp in September 1863. Corporal John I. Guigher, right, of Company I, 56th Pennsylvania, helped support the Black Hat Brigade.

fire; a sheet of flame from 500 muskets erupted. At a range of only 75 yards, the Union volley brought the Southerners to a complete and utterly stunned halt. One Union survivor from 6th Wisconsin recalled, "Every gun cracked at once, and the line in front, which had faced us as the command 'ready' melted away, and instead of the heavy line of battle that was there before our volley, they presented the appearance of a skirmish line." Trimble's troops were veterans and doggedly continued their advance, seeking cover behind an old snake-rail fence, and were soon firing back. For 90 minutes, the two lines exchanged murderous volleys as the light grew dimmer and dimmer.

When he discovered a 250-yard gap in his line between 7th Wisconsin's right and the left of the 6th, Gibbon appealed to Hatch, Doubleday, and Patrick for help. Tied down under heavy Confederate artillery fire, Hatch managed to send one regiment to support Gibbon's artillery units. Patrick preferred to hold in place. As far as he was concerned, Gibbon, the son of a slaveholder from North Carolina, with three brothers, two brothers-in-law, and a cousin serving the Confederacy, had gotten himself into this scrape and he would have to get himself out of it.

Doubleday unilaterally ordered forward the 450-man 76th New York and the 531 men of 56th Pennsylvania to aid Gibbon. Almost 1,000 fresh troops moved into the gap, stiffening Gibbon's battered line as well as completing it. The Union line now stretched for nearly half a mile, with six regiments—2,781 men—engaged. On the other side, Jackson had committed three brigades against Gibbon and Doubleday and now had more than 3,000 men engaged. Although he had over 20,000 troops in the area, he was having difficulty bringing more troops to bear. Darkness was less than an hour away. On the Union left, 19th Indiana and 2nd Wisconsin continued to battle the Stonewall Brigade. In the smoke and dust on the Union right, 6th Wisconsin and Trimble's men fired blindly at each other's muzzle flashes, the lines remaining locked in pitched battle.

Refusing to accept a stalemate, at 7:15 PM Jackson ordered Brig. Gen. William Taliaferro to dispatch a fresh brigade against 19th Indiana on the Union left. Taliaferro's

Library of Congress

The 4th U.S. Artillery, photographed near Culpeper, Virginia. Battery B of the unit dueled with Confederate artillery at Brawner's Farm.

nearest uncommitted brigade, that of his uncle Colonel A.G. Taliaferro, was more than a quarter mile away and would take some time to arrive. Jackson ordered a frontal assault by the combined forces of Lawton and Trimble to advance and crush all resistance. Only one unit, Trimble's brigade, was able to respond immediately.

Due to a deadly lapse in communications that seemingly plagued the Confederates for the entire day, only two of Trimble's four regiments got the order to advance, and they went forward together, unsupported and with their flanks hanging in the air. Trimble's 21st Georgia and 21st North Carolina received a devastating volley from 56th Pennsylvania to their front, while the 6th Wisconsin poured musket fire into the Confederate left. Within seconds the attacking line seemed to melt into the ground, withered by the storm of lead loosed upon it. One 6th Wisconsin officer remembered, "Human nature could not stand such a terrible wasting fire. It literally mowed out great gaps in the line."

As Trimble's assault ground to a complete halt, Jackson rode to Lawton, whose brigade of Georgians was now near the center of the Confederate line, and ordered him forward. Once again only two regiments—the 26th and 28th Georgia—responded, and they met a fate similar to Trimble's, as 7th Wisconsin and 76th New York wheeled from their positions to deliver a crushing volley into the Southern flank. "Our fire perfectly annihilated the rebels," one soldier in the 7th Wisconsin reported. A 76th New Yorker added, "No rebel of that column who escaped death will ever forget that volley. It seemed like one gun." The 26th Georgia suffered 74 percent casualties in the assault, leaving their colors on the field. The survivors fell back to their original positions. Nothing came of the Confederate advance, but both sides battled on, neither advancing nor retreating.

The final act in the bloody drama came on the Federal left where Gibbon, realizing the tactical importance of 19th Indiana's position, had stationed himself for the duration of the fighting. Confederate artilleryman Captain John Pelham hurried three rifled guns from the rear and managed to get two of them unlimbered within 100 yards of the 19th's line. Seeing this, Colonel Meredith, known as "Long Sol" to his troops for his six-foot, seven-inch height, moved two companies to his left and forward, where their fire forced Pelham to move his guns back. Meredith himself was severely wounded when his horse was shot and fell on top of him. Behind Pelham came three of the five regiments of the brigade commanded by Taliaferro's uncle, some 600 Virginians and Georgians, the last of Jackson's immediate reinforcements in that sector.

The fresh troops halted in the yard of the now-riddled Brawner home and raked the left of the Union line as almost full darkness shrouded the field. "The most terrific musketry fire I have ever listened to rolled along those two lines of battle," Gibbon recalled later, "neither side yielding a foot." At last, after Pelham's guns found the range from their new position, adding to the rain of musket fire, Gibbon ordered 19th Indiana to conduct a fighting retreat. After almost two hour of continuous, close-range fighting and heavy losses on both sides, darkness and fatigue finally slowed the firing and the battle ground to a halt sometime after 8 PM.

All: Library of Congress

Clockwise, from top left: Major John Pelham, Brig. Gen. A.R. Lawton, Brig. Gen. Isaac Trimble, Brig. Gen. Lysander Cutler.

When it was over, both sides had suffered heavily—one of every three men to enter the battle was killed or wounded—but neither could claim a tactical victory. Jackson had not communicated well with his division commanders, resulting in piecemeal frontal attacks that were met by determined opposition from six Union regiments. Jackson commanded 14 brigades

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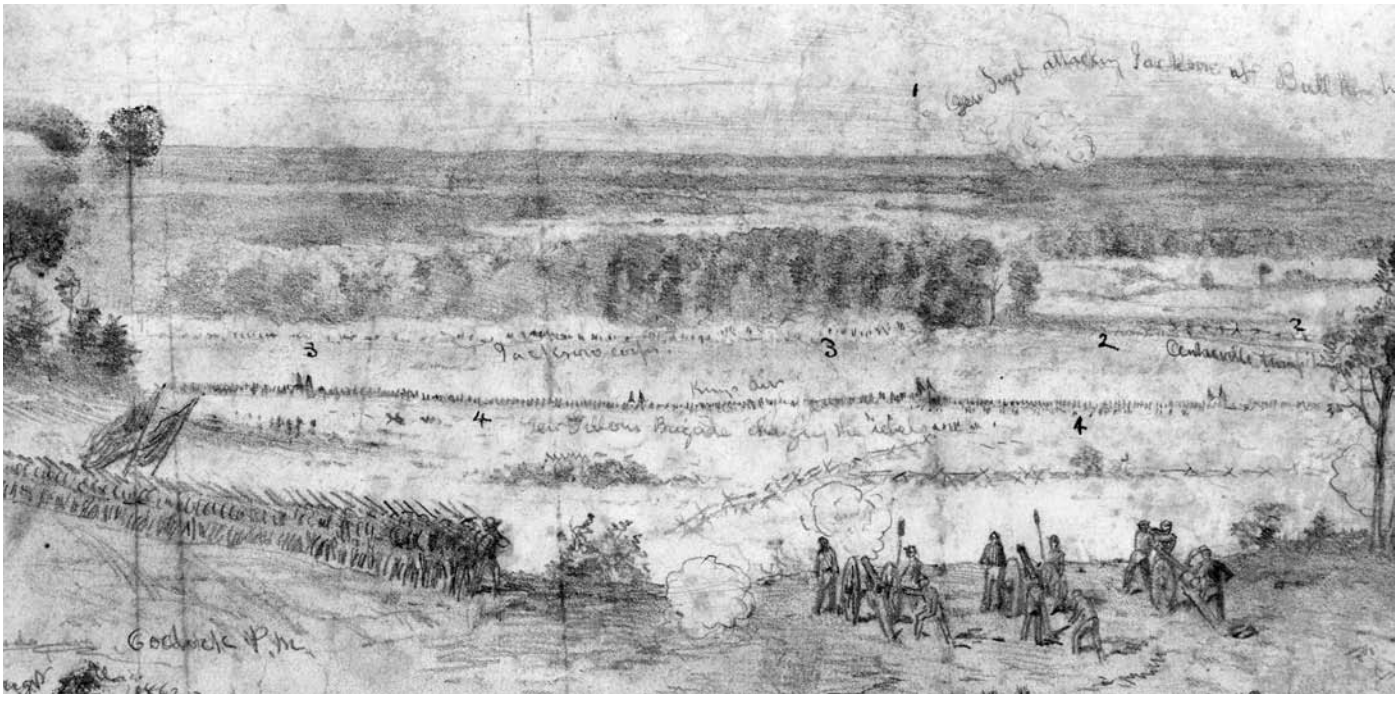


Battlefield artist Edwin Forbes sketched Brig. Gen. Rufus King's division, in the middle distance, attacking Stonewall Jackson's left flank. The view is looking south across the Warrenton Turnpike.

but was able to get only three seriously engaged, fielding two understrength brigades—Baylor's and Trimble's—and regiments of two other brigades commanded by Lawton and A.G. Taliaferro. After Taliaferro's 600 men entered the fray, the total strength of the Confederate assault force outnumbered the Union's six regiments by about 800 men. Jackson lost two of his three division commanders—a Minie bullet shattered Ewell's leg and Taliaferro was wounded three times and put out of action—and Maj. Gen. A.P. Hill's reinforcements arrived too late to take part.

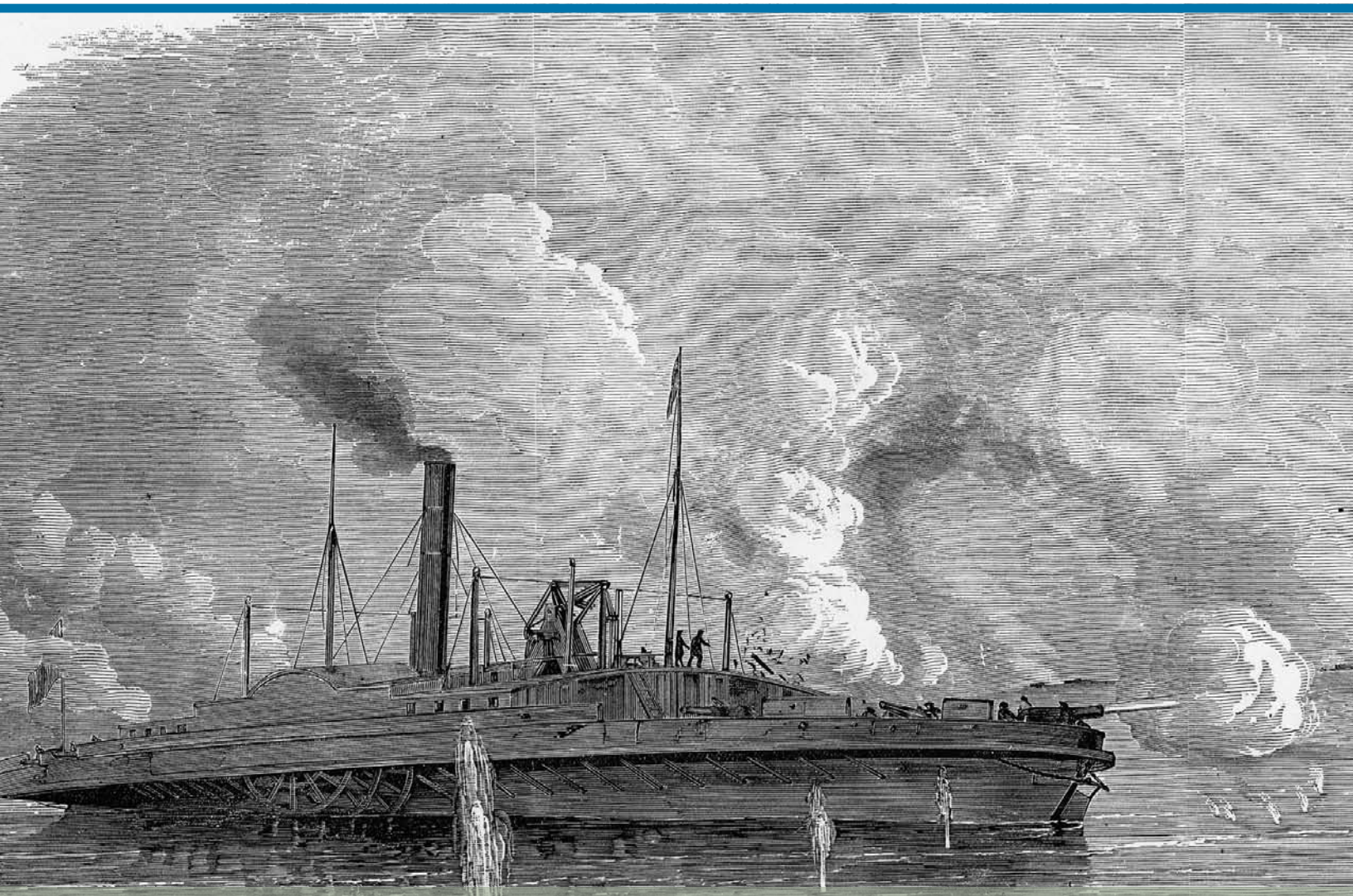
As the field hospitals quickly filled and surgeons began their grim work, the dreadful losses on both sides became apparent. The first units to enter the fray suffered terribly: the 2nd Wisconsin went into battle with 430 men and counted 276 casualties, including 83 men killed outright, while the Stonewall Brigade suffered 300 casualties, almost 40 percent of its strength. The 19th Indiana suffered heavy losses as well, around 60 percent, with 260 casualties out of 423 men. Lawton's Confederate brigade lost more than 300 men killed, wounded, and missing, while in little more than an hour of fighting, Trimble's brigade suffered some 350 casualties, almost a third of its strength. Trimble's 21st Georgia lost 184 men out of 242, the second worst Confederate regimental loss in the entire war, second only to 1st Texas at the Battle of Antietam.

As a whole, Gibbon's brigade lost almost 40 percent of its strength—725 casualties out of 1,900 troops engaged. Doubleday's two regiments suffered another 425 casualties, bringing the Federal total to 1,150. Jackson's force of 3,500 suffered 1,100 casualties.

King reassumed command at about 11 PM, and after conferring with his brigade commanders he decided to march his battered division to Manassas Junction, eight miles away. The division of Brig. Gen. James Ricketts joined him on the road, retreating from Thoroughfare Gap after a brief encounter with Longstreet's Confederate wing as the latter was making its way to the battlefield.

All things considered, Brawner's Farm was not one of Stonewall Jackson's shining moments. Although fully invested and present on the battlefield, he had been unable to win a tactical victory over an isolated, ostensibly outnumbered Union division fighting without a commander. Over the course of the fighting, Jackson's various units failed to deliver sufficient numbers to overwhelm, or even breach, the Union line. Taliaferro was slow getting his division to the front—out of four brigades, only one full brigade and part of another saw action—and Ewell failed to deliver his two available brigades with cohesion, ensuring piecemeal attacks and forcing Jackson to intervene personally, something a major general should never have to do. Both Ewell and Taliaferro were seriously wounded during the battle, further adding to the command problems the Confederates faced.

John Gibbon, on the other hand, could take away a measure of pride in his performance and that of his largely untested men. After the Battle of Brawner's Farm, the members of the Black Hat Brigade could truly say that they had "been to see the elephant," as Civil War soldiers called the experience of combat. They had lived—some of them, anyway—to fight another day, but though they were "always ready for battle," as one of them noted, after Brawner's Farm they were "no longer eager for it." Spoken like a true veteran. □



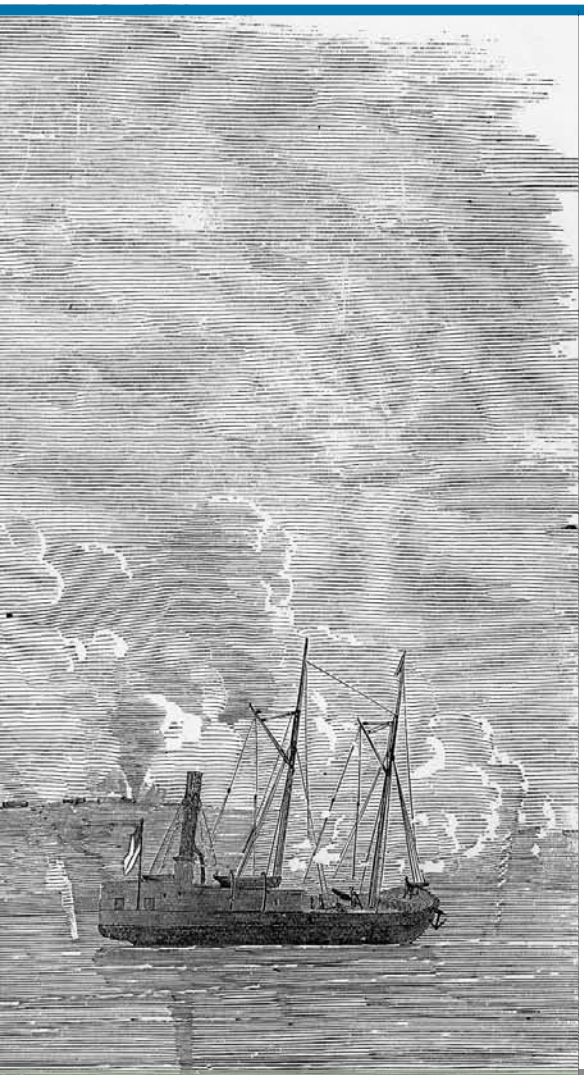
Invasion at Sabine

A clutch of Confederate Irishmen faced thousands of Federals in a battle for Texas.

IN 1863 the tide was running against the South—except in Texas. A new Confederate commander, John Magruder, chased the Yankees out of both Galveston and the Rio Grande Valley. Holding on to Texas challenged Magruder, however. Despite a brief incursion by the CSS *Alabama* in January, the Union Navy was dominant in Gulf of Mexico waters, allowing the Federals to strike anywhere along Texas's 400-mile coast.

Much of this coast was tidal flat and swamp. Texas had few railroads. Supplies followed rivers. An invasion of Texas had to come through Shreveport, La., or six ports on the coast. But Magruder had to cover all these invasion points—and the eastern border of Texas—with only 2,500 men. A Union operation on the Red River and Union incursions at Galveston and Brownsville absorbed most of his forces.

One exposed spot was Sabine Pass. The outlet for the Sabine and Neches Rivers, it guarded the eastern approaches to Texas. Union forces raided Sabine Pass in September 1862. Navy gunboats smashed the fort, then landed troops that



Pass

BY MARK N. LARDAS

the pass—a sharp bend where two narrow channels merged. Kellersberg dug a three-sided earth embankment reinforced with iron rails and cross-ties. The fort was named Fort Griffin, after the local district commander.

Kellersberg scraped up six cannon. He took two 24-pound iron long guns and two 32-pound howitzers from forts upstream of Sabine Pass. He unearthed two 32-pound long guns that had been smashed and buried when the old fort was abandoned a year previous. They had been spiked and cut from their trunnions but were otherwise intact. He had them refitted in Galveston.

Magruder assigned the Davis Guards, a company of the 1st Texas Heavy Artillery Regiment, to Fort Griffin. Forty-two strong, this Houston militia unit raised in 1860 was composed of Irish immigrants. Their officers were Irish-American merchants and tradesmen. The ranks were filled with longshoremen and day laborers.

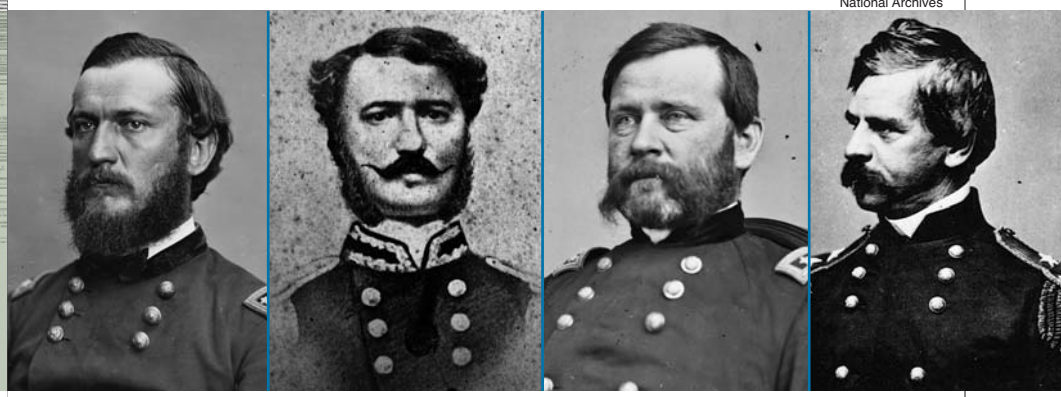
The Davis Guards had a reputation for mutinous and fractious behavior. Much of their negative reputation seems to have rested on prejudice against the Irish common in the 1860s. The unit had been ordered disbanded, and then the order was countermanded. Magruder's experience with the Davis Guard was positive—it had led the charge that sealed Magruder's victory at Galveston.

Whether the reassignment represented a reward, or an attempt to remove the brawling Irishmen from Galveston, or because Irish troops were viewed as most suitable for a task that required digging (Irishmen were known as canal builders), the choice was fortuitous. The men welcomed an excuse to fire cannon, conducting live-fire target practice weekly. Kellersberg assisted these efforts by planting range stakes at 300-yard intervals across both channels covered by the battery. By September the Irish-bred soldiers could use their guns with deadly efficiency.

Magruder assigned two bay steamers armed with 12-pound guns and cotton-bale armor to Sabine Pass. These "cottonclads," the *Uncle Ben* and *Josiah Bell*, formed the Second Squadron of Magruder's navy, a collection of river and bay steamboats armed with a miscellany of guns and protected with bales of cotton. Two unarmed transports rounded out the Confederate forces at Sabine Pass.

In 1863, the French were making foreign intrigue in Mexico. President Lincoln wanted Texas back under Union control before Texas and the French made common cause. He pressed Nathaniel P. Banks, commanding the Department of the Gulf, to move Union forces into Texas—preferably near the Rio Grande, where they could monitor the French. Henry Halleck, Lincoln's chief of staff, preferred a push up the Red River.

National Archives

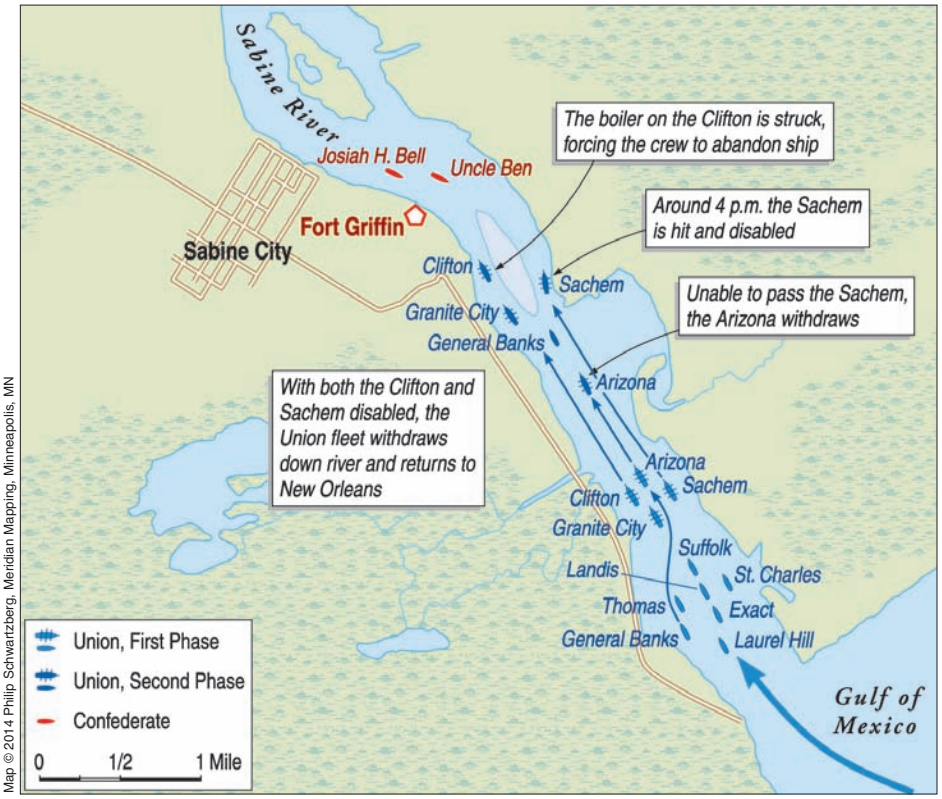


A converted Staten Island ferry, *Clifton* braves the Confederate works near the mouth of the Sabine River in a bold effort to knock Texas out of the war. Participants from left to right: U.S. General Godfrey Weitzel; CSA Maj. Gen. John Magruder; U.S. General William Franklin; U.S. General Nathaniel Banks

burned sawmills and railroad shops, destroyed track, and pulled down the bridge over the Sabine.

So, in the spring of 1863, Magruder sent his chief engineer for East Texas, Major Julius Kellersberg, to Sabine City with 500 slaves and orders to build a new fort. Kellersberg picked a spot upstream of the ruined fort overlooking the trickiest part of

Banks distrusted the concept of sending an army by sea 600 miles from his New Orleans headquarters, as an invasion near



the Rio Grande would have required. Nor did fighting in Louisiana swampland hold appeal for him were he to sally up the Red. Instead, he decided to move against Sabine Pass. It was closer than Brownsville and 40,000 bales of Rebel cotton were within reach of the Sabine River. No doubt he was aware of his own benefit were the venture to succeed—as department commander, Banks profited from any prize money collected.

Union intelligence pegged Confederate strength in the Department of Texas to be no more than 3,500 men—40 percent more than Magruder actually had. Banks wanted to use 20,000 troops in the invasion, but the Union Navy lacked transports to carry more than 5,000 to 6,000. Under protest, the army cut its plan. Four infantry brigades, six artillery batteries, and several troops of the U.S. First Texas Cavalry (known in Texas as the "First Texas Traitors")—5,000 in all—would be loaded into 17 transports. General William Buell Franklin would command the army contingent.

The invasion force was to be escorted by five Union warships—the deep-draft *Cayuga* and four light gunboats capable of entering the shallow channel. All four gunboats were acquired merchant vessels, purchased at the war's outset or captured when attempting to run the Federal blockade. Typical of much of the Union Navy, the ships were lightly armored and carried a mixed battery of guns. They were among the few available seagoing Federal warships capable of operating in brown water.

The *Arizona* was a 950-ton side-wheeler, 202 feet long, carrying four 32-pound smoothbores, one 30-pound Parrott rifle, and one 12-pound Parrott rifle. She drew 10 feet. The *Clifton*, originally a side-wheel ferryboat, displaced 892 tons, was 210 feet long, and carried four 32-pound and two 9-inch smoothbores. She drew 13 feet. The *Granite City*, an iron-hulled side-wheeler, was 450 tons, 160 feet long, and drew 9 feet, 2 inches. She carried four 24-pound howitzers and a 12-pound rifle. The *Sachem*, screw-powered, displaced 195 tons, and drew 7 1/2 feet. Only 120 feet long, she carried a 20-pound Parrott rifle and four 32-pound long guns. While not the most powerful shallow-draft craft available to the Union, these ships individually were at least a match for Fort Griffin.

The Union plan called for one gunboat, the *Granite City,* to sail to the pass, where the *Cayuga* was on blockading duty. The *Granite City* would mark the mouth of Sabine Pass with a lantern visible to seaward.

The rest of the fleet, escorts and transports, would sail from New Orleans and rendezvous with *Granite City* under cover of darkness. At dawn, eight combat-loaded transports would land troops on the beach south of Sabine Pass. The four gunboats, their crews augmented with 170 army riflemen serving as snipers, would force the channel, silencing the fort with both artillery and small-arms fire. Then troops marching overland from the beaches would carry the fort. From there, the Union forces would consolidate at Sabine City, then press on to Beaumont.

The plan began unraveling when *Cayuga,* which had not been informed of the invasion, left station for Galveston on September 6, 1863 for badly needed engine oil. She was back on station by dawn, but by that time *Granite City* arrived to find the pass unguarded. Then *Granite City* made contact with a phantom enemy. When *Granite City* anchored off Sabine Pass shortly after sunset, Acting Master Charles Lamson, commanding the ship, observed a large warship steaming west along the Texas coast. It was the Union warship *Ossipee*, steaming to join the Federal blockade at Galveston.

Nervous about the missing *Cayuga*, Lamson assumed the unidentified vessel was *Alabama*—at that time at Capetown. He doused his lantern. Deciding *Granite City* was too frail to match *Alabama*, he raised anchor and quietly slipped east. He rode out the night in the Calcusieu River, 35 miles east, waiting until dawn before leaving its shelter.

The transports had left New Orleans in two groups on the previous day. The advance contingent, carrying the invasion forces commanded by Brig. Gen. Godfrey Weitzel, departed first. Escorted by the remaining gunboats, they swept past the Calcusieu River during the night. The fleet

missed the hidden *Granite City*, and Lamson either did not see them or ignored them. The ships also missed the mouth of the Sabine in the moonless night. Depending on dead reckoning, the fleet steamed halfway to Galveston searching for the signal lamp. At 2 AM they reversed course, sailing northeast. Dawn found them off the Louisiana coast where *Granite City* joined them.

When the advance group finally reached the Sabine River it was daylight. They found *Cayuga* there with the remaining transports, waiting at anchor. Franklin decided that with surprise lost a beach landing was too dangerous. The Federal forces spent September 7 reorganizing, sorting out the confused assembly of ships, and planning how to move the invasion forward.

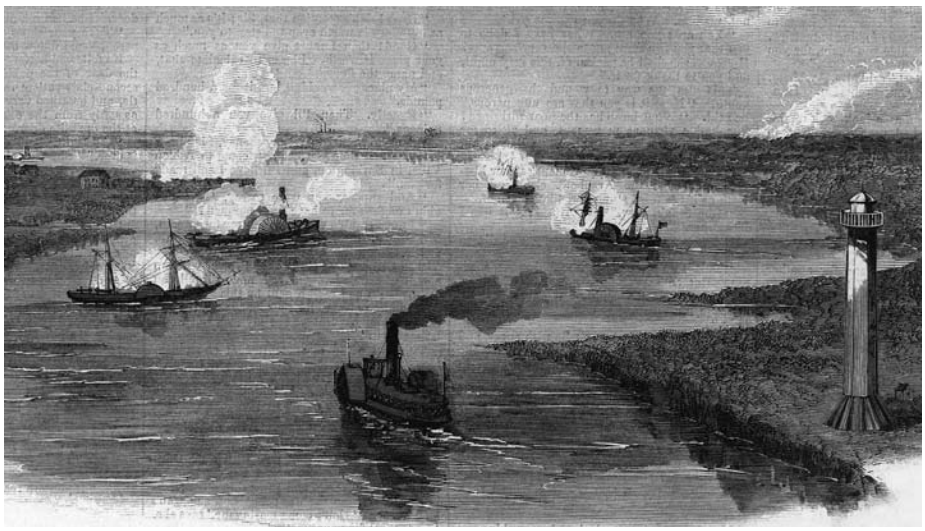
The Confederate forces were, indeed, no longer surprised—they were aghast. The Federal departure from New Orleans had been noticed, and garrisons along the Texas coast had been placed on full alert. For Sabine Pass, this meant sending scouts to the mouth of the pass, having the 41 gunners at Fort Griffin standing by their guns, and sending orders to recall 17 men on leave or detached service. By dawn the scouts reported the Federal ships gathering off the coast.

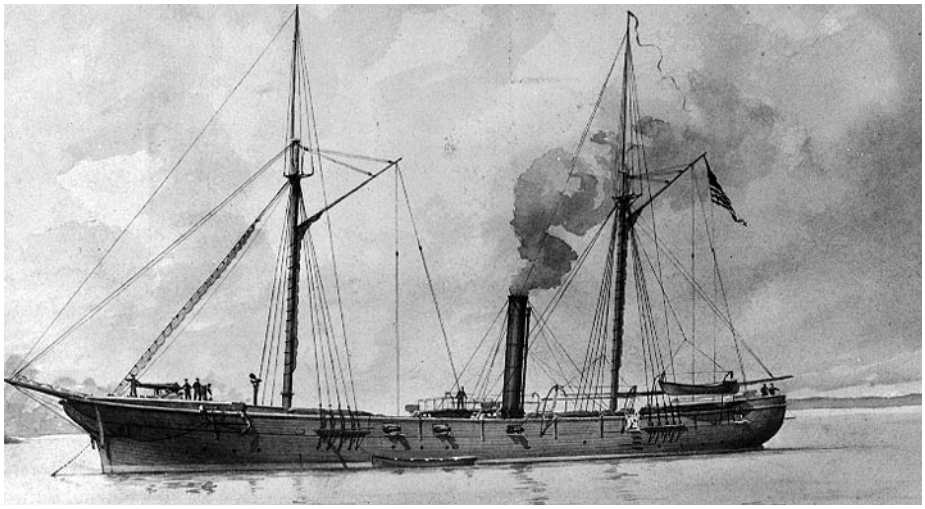
Captain Odlum, commanding at Sabine City in Colonel Griffin's absence, telegraphed General Magruder with news of the invasion. Magruder had no reinforcements immediately available, and felt resistance would cause unnecessary bloodshed. Magruder ordered the fort destroyed, and instructed the garrison to retreat west.

Odlum passed Magruder's instructions to Lieutenant Dick Dowling, commanding the fort, framing them as permission to withdraw rather than as an order to withdraw. A vote was taken. The gunners, having practiced for months, were spoiling to use their weapons. They needed little encouragement from Dowling to fight. Odlum soon received a response from Dowling: The garrison would stay and fight.

At 6 AM on September 8 *Clifton* crossed the bar, anchoring within three-quarters of a mile of the fort. *Clifton* then bombarded the fort using her 9-inch Parrott gun, firing 26 rounds of the 100-plus-pound projectiles. Two were direct hits on the fort. The rest were near misses. But they all went unanswered. Dowling had his men stand down in the fort's bomb-proof shelters until the Union ships were closer.

Crocker examined the fort. He noted very few men in it and assumed that the lack of response indicated that the fort was incapacitated. So Crocker raised anchor at 7:30, sailing back to the main force to report that the fort had been silenced. Crocker recommended landing troops at the old fort a thousand yards south of Fort Griffin.





TOP: Farthest inland, *Sachem* lies wounded from the Confederate barrage. *Arizona* rushes to help while side-wheeler *Clifton* fires on the fort. BELOW: USS *Cayuga* went missing at exactly the wrong time, prompting Union commanders to hesitate, dither, and delay. OPPOSITE: The Union invasion fleet steamed up the Sabine River from the Gulf of Mexico, only to steam back down again after Confederate gunners disabled the lead ships, *Clifton* and *Sachem*.

A new plan evolved. Four gunboats and seven transports would cross the bar. Crocker felt that all four gunboats attacking simultaneously would overwhelm the fort. With the gunboats in the lead, the flotilla would move through the two channels and land troops. By 9 AM the Federal forces were on the move.

While the rest of the ships anchored out of range of the fort, *Sachem* steamed slowly down the Louisiana channel to cover Generals Franklin and Weitzel as they conducted a personal reconnaissance in a ship's boat.

About that time, at 11 o'clock, the cottonclad *Uncle Ben* approached the fort, steaming to within a thousand yards of the

boat carrying the generals. Seeing the enemy vessel, *Sachem* fired three rounds with her Parrott gun. *Uncle Ben* scurried back upriver.

Once the army leaders were satisfied, the attack began. At 3 PM *Sachem* and *Arizona* began steaming down the shallower Louisiana Channel to the east, while *Clifton* and *Granite City* entered the Texas Channel on the west. Because *Arizona* had the deepest draft of the four gunboats, she lagged behind *Sachem* as she picked through the channel. Lamson, on *Granite City*, did not need a reason to fall behind the *Clifton*. He simply did.

Thus the Union ships were approaching the fort individually rather than collectively. *Sachem* led, opening fire at 2,000 yards. The Confederates held fire until *Sachem* was well within the range stakes they had laid out. When the *Sachem* was within 1,000 yards, at the closest approach to the fort and in the narrowest stretch of the channel, Fort Griffin finally spoke.

The unit's practice paid dividends. The Irish Southerners struck *Sachem* with the fifth round they fired. More hits followed, all clustered around the pilothouse. The ship reeled under the barrage, and then, as she cleared the narrows, *Sachem* fell afoul of an unexpected cross-current that nudged her onto a shoal; the *Sachem* was aground. Then a shot penetrated her steam drum.

The hit effectively ended *Sachem*'s ability to fight, flooding her with live steam. Both the crew and a contingent of 77 sharpshooters detailed by the army were forced to flee or boil. The fortunate ones jumped overboard, and were soon floundering through waist-deep mud.

Master Amos Johnson, commanding *Sachem*, signaled for *Arizona* to tow his ship off. *Arizona* acknowledged the signal and indicated she would assist. As she closed, she, too, came under fire and ran aground. More fortunate than *Sachem*, *Arizona* received a respite from the fort's fire as *Clifton* drew the fort's fire away from both *Sachem* and *Arizona*. *Arizona* freed herself from the mud, and then withdrew south, abandoning *Sachem*.

The battle reached its climax as *Clifton* closed on the fort. Because the fort was initially preoccupied with *Sachem* and *Arizona*, *Clifton* steamed to within 500 yards of the works unmolested. While the fort concentrated fire on the other two ships, *Clifton*'s 9-inch smoothbore carved huge chunks out of the dirt ramparts. But while the hits created impressive sprays of mud, they failed to disable any of the guns. Then, with the other two Federal ships out of the fight, the Irish gunners in Fort Griffin turned to *Clifton*.

The first salvo missed the ironclad. Only one shot of the second volley hit *Clifton*, but it struck astern, severing the tiller ropes. The ship slewed left, running aground in a salt marsh 300 yards from the fort. Once *Clifton* was grounded the fort took full advantage of her situation. As Crocker attempted to back *Clifton* off the bank, Confederate shot raked the ship. Shots struck the boiler so that steam and boiling water sprayed across the deck. Another shot struck the forward 9-inch gun.

Crocker attempted to keep the ship in action but was sabotaged by his subordinates and circumstance. The surgeon hid by the sternpost. The executive officer was killed, and the second officer refused to

The Leadership Gap

Strategically isolated from the South, geographically isolated from the Far West, and separated from the Union plains states by the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), Texas was a backwater. Texas's ultimate fate depended on the success of the Confederacy. Defeat the rest of the South and Texas would follow.

The result? Both sides used the Western Theater as dumping grounds, especially for leaders. Generals like Grant and Sherman moved east, where their skills would be most useful. Less competent generals moved west, where they could do little strategic damage, and their presence could free up a more competent leader for a move east.

Nathaniel Banks illustrates the principle. Banks relieved Benjamin Butler, hardly at the top of the leadership pantheon in the Civil War. But Butler was a capable administrator and a good military governor, if not a war leader.

Banks was known as "Commissary Banks" owing to the volume of supplies his inept leadership lost to the Confederates when he mishandled Stonewall Jackson's 1862 march through the Shenandoah Valley. His record after Sabine Pass was no better. The disastrous Red River campaign rounded out an undistinguished military career.

William Franklin was another officer whose career peaked early. He finished first in his West Point class, had compiled a good record in the Mexican War, and went nowhere in the Civil War. He led the Left Division at Fredricksburg, where his errors contributed to the Union defeat. Following the Sabine Pass disaster, he commanded the Red River campaign and was wounded in April 1864, at the Battle of Sabine Crossroads.

The rot frequently went deeper. While Crocker and Johnson handled their gunboats aggressively and energetically, Tibbets and especially Lamson did not. Lamson's timidity and love of comfort colored his career. He was consistently last in and first out. He treated *Granite City* as a personal possession rather than as a warship, outfitting her cabins with furniture and carpeting looted from a Mississippi mansion.

Nor was the South immune from the tendency to send bad leaders west. John Magruder, known as "Prince John" because he was a lavish entertainer, was given command of the Department of Texas as a "reward" for perceived shortcomings during the Battle of Seven Pines.

The Irishmen of the Davis Guard were manning a mud fort on the Texas coast rather than fighting alongside Hood's Texas Brigade for similar reasons. They were viewed as unreliable, owing both to their Irish heritage and perceived insubordination shown in the Rio Grande Valley.

If Texas military men were more successful than the Northerners who invaded their territory, it was because the assumptions about them were wrong. Magruder was an energetic leader who had had a few bad breaks in Virginia. The Davis Guards were outstanding artillerymen. Their pugnacious nature was interpreted in the worst light by those inclined toward low expectations of the Irish.

Sabine Pass was a paradox that reflected both governments' management of leadership. The North lost because it recognized when a leader was inept rather than unlucky. The South won because it did not.

- MARK N. LARDAS

obey Crocker's orders to fight fires. Instead, he struck the colors. Once the colors came down, the gunners, who had stood to their guns despite live steam and enemy fire, abandoned ship.

Even then, the Federal forces could have salvaged the situation. Crocker rehoisted his flag. *Arizona* had finally freed herself from the shoal. *Granite City* and the transport *Suffolk* were close at hand, and six other transports, loaded with combat-ready troops, were inside the bar. One Confederate gun had been dismounted, and the rest were overheating. The Confederate gunners were tiring. No Confederate reinforcements were available, except for a five-man headquarters group in Sabine City. Resolute action—committing the remaining gunboats and landing troops from the transports—would have broken the Texan resistance.

Instead, the *Granite City* withdrew. As she passed the *Suffolk,* Lamson signaled that the Confederates were bringing up horse artillery to reinforce the fort and continued south. Unsupported, *Clifton* and then *Sachem* lowered their colors.

Franklin ordered the ships withdrawn, overriding Weitzel, who had troops in boats ready to land and felt that the Confederates could be beaten. Possibly the smoke of *Uncle Ben* steaming toward *Sachem* influenced Franklin. Possibly he believed in Lamson's phantom horse artillery.

The withdrawal order triggered a rout. Lamson's "Confederate battery" multiplied in the telling. Ships raced across the bar. Two ran aground and dumped cargo overboard to lighten the ships enough to clear the shoal. By 4:30 the battle was over.

Lieutenant Dowling accepted *Clifton*'s surrender, wading out in waist-deep water rather than allowing the Yankees ashore where they could learn the weakness of the garrison. *Uncle Ben* took *Sachem*. Twenty-eight Federal soldiers and sailors were dead, 75 seriously wounded, and over 300 taken prisoner.

Dowling's men had no serious injuries. Several had burns from handling overheated guns or suffered minor cuts from flying debris. Two guns had been struck glancing blows, but the only gun disabled was one of the howitzers, which rolled off its platform after being fired.

A statue of Confederate hero Lieutenant Dick Dowling still stands guard over what remains of Fort Griffin. An inscription describes what was one of the most outstanding and unlikely Confederate victories of the war.

The Federal fleet—less two gunboats—returned to New Orleans, the last stragglers arriving by September 10. No Union landing at Sabine Pass was ever again attempted. Instead, troops were committed to offensives along the Red River in Louisiana and Brownsville at the mouth of the Rio Grande.

When news of the defeat reached northeastern cities, it caused a sensation. The New York City stock exchanges fell. Combined with the defeat at Chickamauga, Sabine Pass reduced the nation's credit rating.

At the same time, Texas gained a hero. To the beleaguered Texans, Sabine Pass was the Alamo refought, with Texas winning. Dick Dowling was hailed as the new Achilles. He spent the rest of the war recruiting on the Civil War equivalent of the War Bond tour.

Texas also gained a respite. A Federal army at Sabine City would have knocked Texas out of the war. Franklin's 5,000 men would have been quickly reinforced to 15,000. Magruder lacked the forces to stop a Union advance over the coastal plain. Instead, Texas remained the only Confederate state whose heartland remained inviolate until after Appomattox.

Nevertheless, John Magruder had gained a new worry. He became obsessed with the notion that the Union troops would return to Sabine Pass. He moved more troops to Sabine City and dug a series of redoubts to cover the overland approaches southwest of Fort Griffin.

Over in Union-occupied territory, Franklin and Banks gained ridicule for inept leadership. Franklin's reputation was hurt most, especially because he cited the strength of the Confederate resistance as a reason for his withdrawal. Most observers felt it ridiculous that 42 militia gunners bluffed 5,000 soldiers.

Lamson escaped punishment for his actions, as did Tibbets, commanding *Arizona*. Lamson did not escape the Rebels, however. Confederate forces captured him, and *Granite City*, on May 6, 1864—in the same inlet in which he had taken shelter eight months previously, the Calcusieu River. Tibbets and *Arizona* revived their reputations with outstanding service off Brownsville in the fall and winter of 1864.

Dick Dowling died of yellow fever soon after the end of the Civil War. A grateful Texas erected two statues to him, one in Hermann Park in Houston, and one where Fort Griffin once stood. Both are heroic and larger than life.

Today the battlefield is a state park. Gas and oil wells stand watch over the waters occupied by the fleeing Federal fleet. The fort is gone. The channel has been dredged, allowing deep-draft tankers access to Sabine Lake. The only token of the battle visible to the casual observer is the walking beam from the *Clifton*'s engine, a monument to a forgotten battle. □

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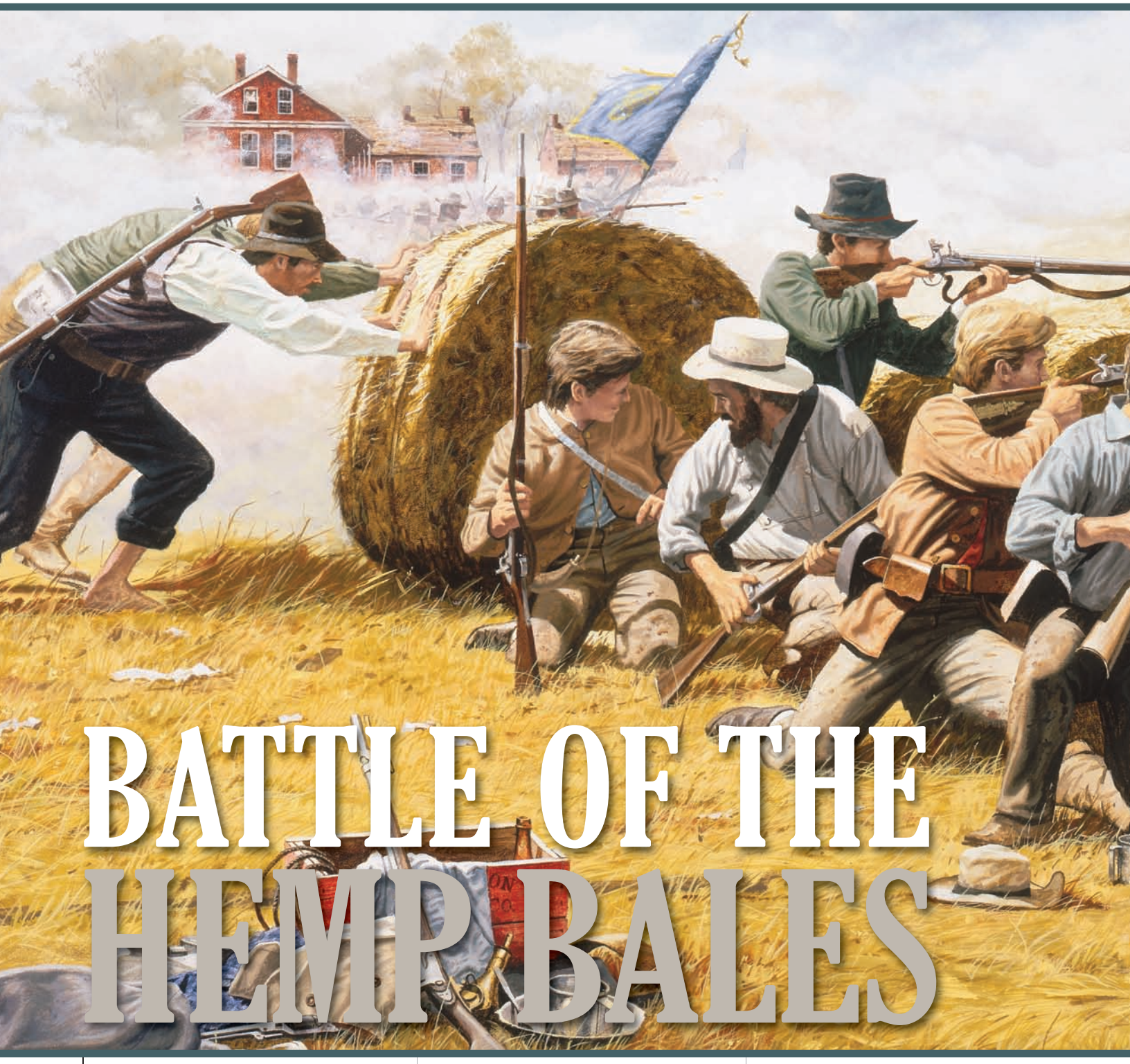


BATTLE OF THE HEMP BALES

BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES S. RAINS'S Confederate cavalry rode confidently toward the prosperous little town of Lexington, Missouri. Dressed in Missouri homespun, Rains's men hardly looked the part of a flying military column, but most of the hard-riding horsemen had known only victory during their short service. As they approached Lexington's outskirts, blue-coated Federal pickets opened fire, driving the horsemen back. Even the recently commissioned Rains could see the insanity of leading a headlong cavalry charge into the town. Although Rains habitually overestimated his opponents, Maj. Gen. Sterling Price, his commanding officer, surveyed the situation more carefully and chose to wait for his infantry and artillery to arrive before further testing the Federals' resolve. It was September 12, 1861.

Price knew Lexington well. It lay 65 miles

General Sterling Price and 7,000 men in the Missouri State Guard lay siege to the town of Lexington, Missouri, for eight days before storming the Union bastion behind an improvised mobile shelter of hemp bales.

By Steve Lilley

Quick-thinking Missouri militiamen advance behind an improvised mobile breastwork of hemp bales at the Battle of Lexington, also called the Battle of the Hemp Bales. Painting by Dale Gallon.

southwest of his tobacco plantation at Keytesville, and he had traveled there often for business and pleasure. On this warm, late summer day, Price was visiting Lexington for very different reasons. He intended to dispose of a small Union army dug into its green hillsides, a situation he would not have dreamed possible a year earlier. An ardent unionist, "Old Pap," as many Missourians called Price, had served as Missouri's governor and later as one of the state's congressmen. Even after Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter, he fervently hoped that Missouri would remain neutral.

That would prove difficult. After Sumter's fall, President Abraham Lincoln had requested that the state send four regiments as part of his call for 75,000 volunteers to suppress the rebellion, but Governor Claiborne F. Jackson refused. Knowing that a majority of his fellow Missourians probably favored neutrality, Jackson remained coy about the state's relationship with the emerging Confederacy. In the meantime, he asked the legislature to raise a state militia and quietly sought arms from the new Southern government.

Nathaniel Lyon harbored no doubts about Missouri's ultimate loyalty. Rightly suspecting that the state was raising troops to aid the rebellion, Lyon acted decisively. On May 10, the zealous young Federal brigadier general seized Camp Jackson in St. Louis and arrested 800 state militiamen. Lyon's action triggered a riot that resulted in Union troops, many of them German immigrants, gunning down 15 civilians while losing two of their own men.

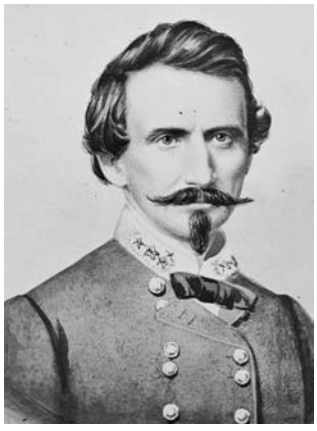
The incident outraged many Missourians, including Price. One of his friends, Horatio Jones, later observed that Price was "the picture of wrath. I have always had the feeling that the Camp Jackson affair toppled him over." It also prompted the state's general assembly to form its own militia, the Missouri State Guards, and to commission Price a major general to command it.

In June, Federal forces under Lyon's command drove the legislature and Governor Jackson from the capital in Jefferson City and chased them westward across the state. Not only did Lyon's bold campaign preempt a suspected Missouri rebellion, it also enabled the St. Louis politicians to wrest control of the state from rural Democrats. On July 31, a state convention met in St. Louis under the protection of Federal troops, declared Missouri government offices vacant, and, in an act that was probably unconstitutional, established a provisional government under the newly appointed Republican Governor Hamilton Gamble.

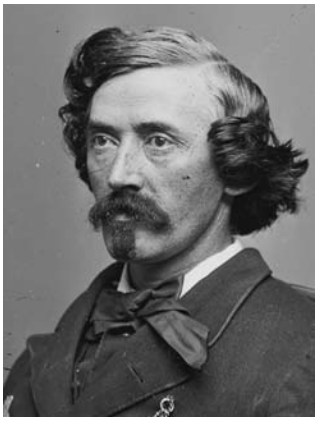
In response, on August 5 Jackson proclaimed Missouri a free and sovereign state.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Five days later, Missouri's legally elected but temporarily dislocated government struck a blow for state sovereignty. On August 10, a combined army composed of Confederate regulars under Brig. Gen. Benjamin McCulloch and Price's Missouri State Guards soundly whipped the Federals and killed the feisty Lyon near Springfield, Missouri, at the Battle of Wilson's Creek.



Confederate Brig. Gen. Benjamin McCulloch, above, refused to take part in Sterling Price's Missouri campaign. Colonel James Mulligan of the 23rd Illinois, below, commanded the Union forces at Lexington.



Even as the opposing forces fought, political confusion and uncertainty reigned in Missouri. Although it was a slave state, Missouri had not joined the Confederate States of America. Like Price, most Missourians would only take up arms against the Union if the Federals invaded the state and placed it under the control of U.S. Army troops. Many of those troops were Irish and German immigrants and hated by the natives. Now that invasion had taken place.

After thrashing Lyon at Wilson's Creek, Price saw an opportunity to rescue Missouri from the Federal invaders and their foreign-born minions. McCulloch would have none of it. Despite their shared victory, McCulloch considered Price an overbearing amateur commanding a half-armed mob. When Price invited the Confederate general to join him in freeing Missouri from Federal control, the Texan declined and marched his army back into Arkansas. Price would have to fight alone.

While the Missouri State Guards' commander had no West Point training, he had successfully commanded troops during the Mexican War. Many professional officers scoffed at the part-time general, but Price displayed two attributes his critics often lacked: He handled volunteer troops well, and he acted decisively. Under his leadership, thousands of volunteers formed infantry and cavalry units. The fledgling army even assembled a small body of artillery and learned how to manufacture munitions for their cannons. One of these, a 12-pounder field piece nicknamed "Old Sacramento," Price had brought back from the Mexican War. Having scattered one Federal army, he prepared to drive the rest of the invaders from the state.

On August 20, Price issued a proclamation datelined Jefferson City but more likely issued from Springfield that declared his army legally and constitutionally authorized to resist Federal usurpation of power in Missouri. He also proclaimed his determination to protect all Missourians regardless of their sympathies unless they supported Gamble's provisional government. These he would consider enemies. On August 25, Price and his volunteers began their northward march of liberation.

Major General John C. Frémont, Lincoln's recently appointed western district commander, viewed the situation with horror. Headquartered in St. Louis, the legendary Pathfinder scrambled to assemble a military force to hold Missouri for the Union and protect Hamilton Gamble's rump government. Threatened by Confederate forces arrayed in unknown strength along Missouri's southern borders and facing revolt within St. Louis, Frémont attempted to discourage the rebellion with both words and military action. On August 30, Frémont proclaimed martial law throughout Missouri, announced that the U.S. government would free any slaves owned by disloyal masters, and warned that any citizens bearing arms without proper authorization would be shot. Predictably, that proclamation appalled Lincoln and drove more recruits into Price's army.

On that same night, Frémont's subordinate, Colonel Jefferson C. Davis, ordered Colonel James A. Mulligan to march his brigade, the 23rd Illinois Volunteers (known as the Irish Brigade), from Jefferson City to Lexington and hold it at all costs. Mulligan's orders included instructions to relieve Colonel Thomas A. Marshall's cavalry regiment, which Confederate troops had hemmed in at Tipton. Mulligan eagerly complied. The son of Irish Catholic immigrants, he had become a Chicago lawyer and saw prospects for political advancement through military achievement. Mulligan issued 40 rounds of ammunition and three days' rations to his men, said goodbye to his pretty, 19-year-old wife, and enthusiastically led his command westward.

Price faced minimal opposition on his own march. On September 2, his army brushed aside 500 of James Lane's Jayhawkers, commanded by Colonel James A. Montgomery, in a skirmish at Drywood Creek near the Missouri-Kansas border Fought in prairie grass more than seven feet high, neither side inflicted much damage on the other, but captured soldiers revealed Price's destination. The Federals now knew that the Missourians were headed for Lexington.

Estimating Price's column to number at least 10,000 men, Lane, who commanded only 2,000 troops, avoided further battle but sent a request for reinforcements to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Leavenworth's commander, Major W.E. Prince, forwarded Lane's request via telegraph to Frémont. Thoroughly distracted by the controversy his August 30 proclamation had ignited, Fremont responded tentatively to Lane's request.

There was nothing tentative about Price's actions. He drove his men as much as 22 miles daily. Some of the State Guards marched for 24 hours without eating. Heavy rain doused the Missourians' campfires but failed to dampen their spirits. Farmers and townspeople greeted the

troops as liberators and supplied them with food and drink. All along Price's line of march, young men saddled their horses, grabbed their fowling pieces, and fell in line with Old Pap's legions.

As Price's host approached, Union Colonel Everett Peabody evacuated Warrensburg, led his largely German regiment toward Lexington, and sent word to Mulligan of his intentions. The Guardsmen entered Warrensburg at dawn, just as more rain turned the roads to slime. Price, discovering that the Federals had escaped, halted his hungry, exhausted column and observed with satisfaction that the town's citizens "vied with each other in feeding my almost famished soldiers."

By the time Mulligan received Peabody's news, he had reached Tipton, only to learn that Marshall had also made good his escape and fled to Lexington. Mulligan marched his command in the same direction and notified Frémont that he would need reinforcements immediately. The Irish Brigade reached Lexington on September 12. Mulligan ordered the men to halt, detail their uniforms, wash their faces, and slick down their hair so that they could make a proper impression on the town's residents, especially the young ladies.

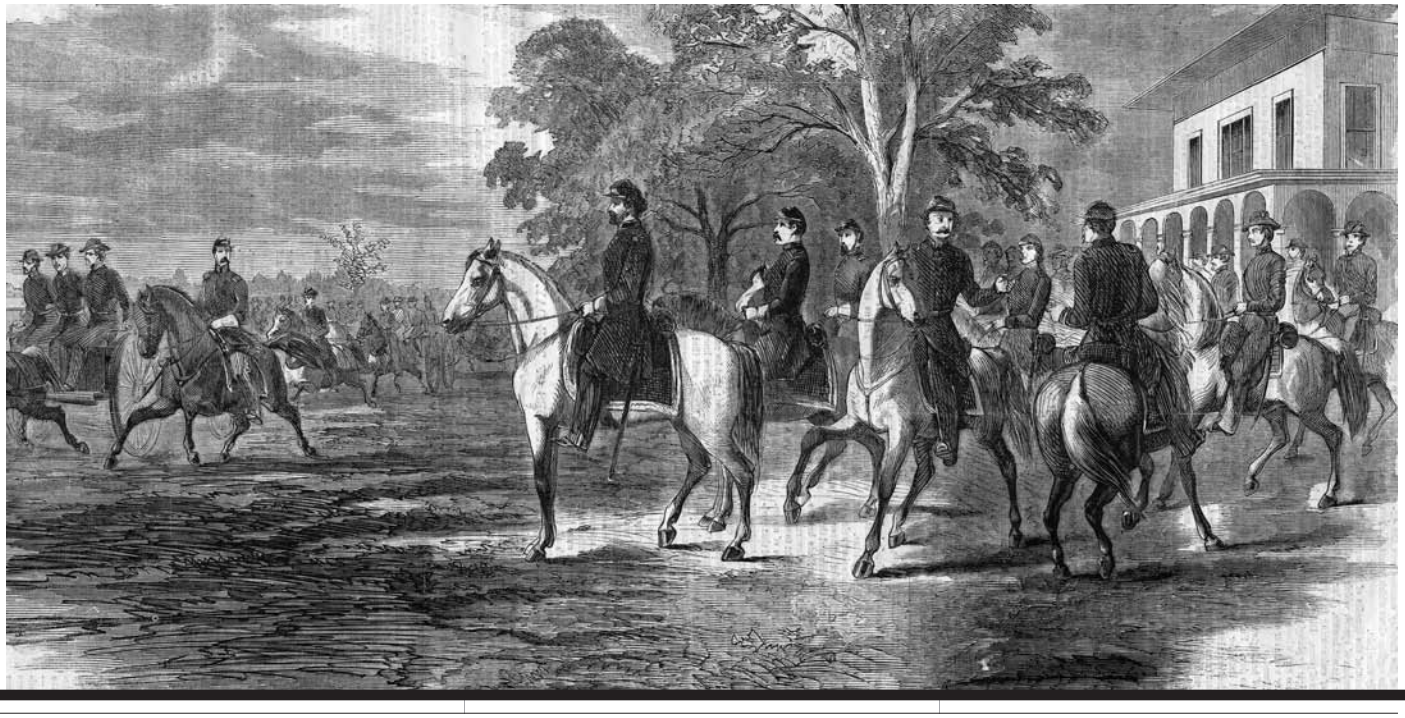
The town the Federals entered was the jewel of western Missouri. Its bank held larger deposits than any other bank in the state. Made prosperous by surrounding hemp plantations and rope walks, Lexington had once served as the home of Russell, Waddell and Majors, the wealthy shipping company that originated the Pony Express. Thousands of wagons and teams had crowded its streets and Missouri River dockyards. During the 1850s, the town's residents achieved infamy by routinely searching steamers and confiscating the firearms of Free Staters bound for Kansas. Now Lexington lay under the heel of Federal troops.

A brief conference among the Union colonels determined that Mulligan enjoyed seniority and would exercise command over their combined force of 3,500 troops. Mulligan ordered the town's stately Masonic College occupied and buried for safe keeping confiscated property, including the state's Great Seal and $900,000 liberated from Lexington's bank. He then began preparing for a siege. His troopers felled ancient oak trees on the campus to clear a field of fire. In short order, Mulligan's men dug earthworks with abatis and rifle pits encompassing 17 acres around the college. The defenders augmented their works with explosive devices activated by trip wires and threw up ramparts 12 feet tall and 12 feet thick. Price's enthusiastic amateurs might have enjoyed superior numbers, but Mulligan felt confident that his command could hold off the rebels until reinforcements arrived—if they arrived.

Rains's cavalry, with Price in the vanguard, arrived first. Rather than throw his tired men at prepared positions, Price camped his troops at the fairgrounds two miles away to await dawn and reinforcements before attacking. Knowing the State Guard had arrived, the Federals continued entrenching well after dark. "It was a night of fearful anxiety," Mulligan remembered. "None knew at what moment the enemy would be upon our devoted little band." As his men threw up breastworks, Mulligan sent word to Jefferson C. Davis that Price and Jackson threatened him with a force of between 10,000 and 15,000 men. "We will hold out," he assured Davis, but added: "Strengthen us. We will require it." Davis forwarded Mulligan's appeal to Frémont.

At daybreak on Friday the 13th, a messenger burst into Mulligan's headquarters with news that the State Guard was crossing the covered bridge into town. Mulligan

Western Department commander Maj. Gen. John C. Frémont and his staff make a spruce appearance at Camp Benton in St. Louis. Despite political pressure from Washington, Frémont took his time marching to Lexington.



Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

dispatched three companies that repelled Price's advance and burned the bridge. A similar attempt by Price's men to enter Lexington along the Independence Road also bogged down when six companies of the 13th Missouri and some Illinois cavalry blocked their path. Fighting raged in the town's cemetery, where combatants sought cover behind the tombstones.

That afternoon, Captain Henry Guibor, a veteran of the Camp Jackson affair and Wilson's Creek, arrived and unlimbered his artillery battery. A well-placed volley of homemade grapeshot and canister scattered Federal officers, who retreated inside their works. The bluecoats sheepishly explained that the cannon fire had panicked their horses. When Mulligan ordered his own field pieces to reply, a fortuitous round blasted a Confederate caisson, sending clouds of white smoke shooting skyward and prompting loud Federal cheers.

For the moment, Price felt satisfied at having driven the Union forces into their trenches. "The enemy fled like rats," sneered the tough Ozark native, Brig. Gen. J.H. McBride. With darkness approaching and his ammunition running short, Price again withdrew his troops to the fairgrounds, feeling that time was on his side. He had pushed his cavalry and advanced infantry units to the limit in pursuit of the Union troops. Now that his adversaries had dug in, he waited for his supply train and lagging regiments to reach the battlefield.

After the fighting died down, State Guard commander Monroe M. Parsons negotiated a truce with the Federals, during which time both sides retrieved their wounded from the day's fighting. The siege began in earnest. Pickets occasionally exchanged fire, and Price's artillery bombarded Union positions. The townspeople recognized "Old Sacramento's" rumbling boom. For years after the Mexican War, the cannon had been fired to commemorate Lexington's 4th of July celebrations.

During the lull, the Federals improvised a foundry in the college's basement where they fashioned 150 rounds of grapeshot and canister for their 6-pounders, but the defenders quickly faced supply shortages. Having begun their march with enough food for only a few days, Mulligan put his men on half rations. The Federals still found it necessary to commandeer food from the locals. Even worse, Marshall's cavalry carried only pistols and sabers, making them ineffective for siege defense. Some scrounged weapons from Lexington's residents, a tactic that only deepened resentment toward the occupiers. Water quickly became scarce.

As Price's units reached Lexington, he deployed them in a ring around the Federal positions, denying the enemy access to the river and posting guards at nearby springs. The town's cisterns could not supply an additional 3,500 men, much less their animals. The Union cavalry's fine horses proved more of a liability than an asset, drinking much and contributing little. Heavy rains briefly relieved the water shortage but also turned the trenches into boot-sucking slops. Day after day the mud-spattered Federals watched as enemy units poured in and tightened Price's grip on the town. On September 15, Father Thaddeus Butler, the Federal chaplain, held mass on the college's hillside. "All were considerably strengthened and encouraged by his words," said Mulligan, "and after services were over we went back to work, actively casting shot and stealing provisions from the inhabitants round about."

As Father Butler celebrated the mass, Price's troops continued to take up positions surrounding the Federal works. Brig. Gen. Thomas A. Harris brought his 2,000-man division from northeast Missouri, where one of his recruits, 25-year-old Hannibal resident Samuel Clemens, had recently decided that the soldier's life was

Lexington's Anderson House, used as a Federal field hospital, became the unwitting target of Confederate cannoneers, who claimed that enemy snipers were unsportingly using the building's roof as a vantage point.

not for him and "lit out for the territory" of Nevada with his older brother Orion. Clemens was not greatly missed. By September 17, Price's supply wagons reached Lexington. With his army in place and fully provisioned, Price ordered an attack for the next morning.

If Mulligan had ever seriously considered evacuating Lexington, the opportunity had long since passed. Harris's and McBride's divisions stood between the Federals and the Missouri River. McBride's ragged, barefoot, undisciplined Ozark boys resembled an armed mob but were crack shots and fearless in battle. To the northeast, Rains's division held the high ground. Clark's division joined Rains's left, and Parsons' division extended from Clark's left along Main Street to the courthouse. Green's and Steen's divisions held the ground along Pine and Tenth Streets down to the river bluffs.

For amateur militia, the State Guard opened the battle with considerable flair. Units advanced, banners snapping in the breeze, led by a full military band. Even Mulligan found it impressive. "They came as one dark moving mass," he reported, "their guns beaming in the sun, their banners waving, and their drums beating—everywhere, as far as we could see, were men, men, men, approaching grandly."

Price's 16 cannons opened fire on the Federal positions. Most of the Union soldiers had little combat experience, but Father Butler walked among them blessing the men as he passed, calming and reassuring them. Well dug in, the Federals held their ground. Inspired by the cannonade's grandeur, Rains offered a gold medal to the artillerymen who could shoot down the Stars and Stripes from the Union battlements. When the flag fell, he proclaimed, the infantry assault would begin. Despite the gunners' best efforts, hours passed with the flag unscathed.

The Federals' seven field pieces replied to Price's barrage, and Mulligan's entrenched soldiers blazed away at the advancing State Guardsmen, most firing high.

Whizzing shot prompted most of the Rebel officers to dismount as they advanced, but Price remained in the saddle scanning the enemy emplacements. A stray piece of grapeshot smashed the field glass in his hands but somehow left him unharmed. Ignoring the close call, Price retained his composure and, to his men's astonishment, remained in the saddle directing the battle for another 20 minutes before leaving the front line.

The home of Oliver Anderson drew more than its share of artillery fire. Lying outside Mulligan's works, the elegant, two-story Greek Revival brick home had been converted into a Union field hospital. Clearly marked with a hospital flag, the Anderson House could not properly be considered a legitimate target, but the attackers complained that Union soldiers were using its roof as a snipers' roost. Determined to neutralize the threat, State Guard artillery batteries raked the house with hot shot and shell.

Cannonballs crashed through the building. One burst through the attic and fell to the floor in a second-story hallway, leaving a hole in the ceiling. A Union officer, Major R.T. Van Horn, entered the Anderson House and found a ball smoldering on the floorboards. Grabbing a shovel, he scooped up the ball and threw it out a window. A 13-year-old boy named Linthicum volunteered to take over the job. Before Van Horn could voice his doubts about the boy's ability to handle the task, a ball burst through the wall and rolled to a stop. Linthicum instantly seized the shovel and disposed of the smoking projectile. Convinced that the boy was more than equal to the job, the officer left.

Once his cannons failed to neutralize the threat from the Anderson House, Price ordered Harris and Colonel B.A. Rives to assault the building. The Guardsmen emerged from the shelter of the river bluffs and advanced through tall weeds toward their objective. Occasionally, Confederate soldiers detonated Federal booby traps, but the troops behind them passed safely through the smoking craters. Within minutes, the Guardsmen entered the house from which the snipers had fled. A search of the building revealed some escaped slaves hiding in the basement. Rives ordered them returned to their masters. Confederate troops now held an ideal position from which to fire into the Federal trenches.

Enraged that Price's men had violated the sanctity of a hospital building, Mulligan ordered companies from the Home Guard and the 14th Missouri to retake the Anderson House. The troops looked nervously at the open field in front of their objective. Having already witnessed the toll that massed gunfire inflicted on men making grand charges, they refused to budge. Appalled by their disobedience, Mulligan unleashed a torrent of obscenities and called for volunteers. The Irish Brigade's Montgomery Guards and some of Peabody's Germans took up the challenge, fixed bayonets, and swept the attackers from the hospital. As the Federals burst into the building, three State Guard troops attempted to surrender, but the Federal soldiers bayoneted them on the spot. One resourceful Rebel, seeing that he could neither escape nor surrender, slipped into bed next to a wounded Illinois soldier and waited for matters to calm down. The Federal victory proved short lived. Confederate troops retook the Anderson House that evening and held it for the remainder of the battle.

Federal troops continued to suffer from lack of water. Price's troops continued to guard the two springs beneath the bluffs and blocked Union access to the Missouri River. The cisterns within Mulligan's works had run dry supplying the cavalry's horses, many of which had fallen to gunfire. Federal canteens ran dry. During their occupation of the Anderson House, Union soldiers maddened by thirst had scuffled over drinks from bloody wash pans in the hospital. The late summer sun beat down on the men in the trenches whose lips cracked and bled from tearing open paper cartridges with their teeth. Hoping to augment the water supply, Mulligan detailed men to dig groundwater wells.

Late in the day, the Federals attempted a counterattack on Rains's front, but his weary Guardsmen drove them back. Both sides settled in for the night. Price's men remained in position, sleeping on their

weapons without blankets or rations. A few of the more fortunate soldiers feasted on sugar that Rives's troops had commandeered when they captured two steamers loaded with supplies on the riverfront. The vessels' capture completed Mulligan's isolation from the outside world.

After darkness fell, troops delivered Frank B. Wilkie to Price. Thoroughly hung over, the captive identified himself as a war correspondent for the *New York Times* and claimed that he wanted to write an account of the Lexington battle sympathetic to Missouri. As proof of his good will, Wilkie invited the Missouri general to review his article covering the Battle of Wilson's Creek. Price read the story and, concluding Wilkie could do little harm, wrote the tottering correspondent a safe-conduct pass, adding the cautionary words: "Keep an eye on him. He is a Yankee."

September 19 dawned warm and soon grew hotter. Each side continued their cannonade, while some Rebels banged away harmlessly with their short-ranged shot guns. At the beginning of the battle, Price had evacuated the town's civilians for their own safety. A number of locals fell in alongside the State Guardsmen, augmenting Price's numbers. One resident, a Lexington farmer in his sixties, arrived carrying his flintlock and a lunch pail. Each morning he fired at any Yankee who dared show himself above the earthworks, took a brief lunch break, smoked his pipe, and then returned to the firing line.

Despite Price's growing strength and his own dwindling supplies, Mulligan assured his embattled troops that relief columns would soon arrive. Unknown to him, Brig. Gen. Samuel Sturgis's six Union companies had marched from Mexico, Missouri, to within 15 miles of Lexington. Unfortunately for the Federals, Price, learning of Sturgis's approach, sent Parson's division to ambush the column. As Sturgis advanced through the fields of ripening corn, a black man intercepted the general and alerted him to the danger. A West Pointer who had graduated with classmate Thomas Jackson, Sturgis possessed none of Stonewall's daring. Rather than confront a superior force, Sturgis hurriedly turned his column toward Kansas City, discarding 200 tents and similarly abandoning Mulligan to his fate. By noon Parsons' men had returned to their positions at Lexington.

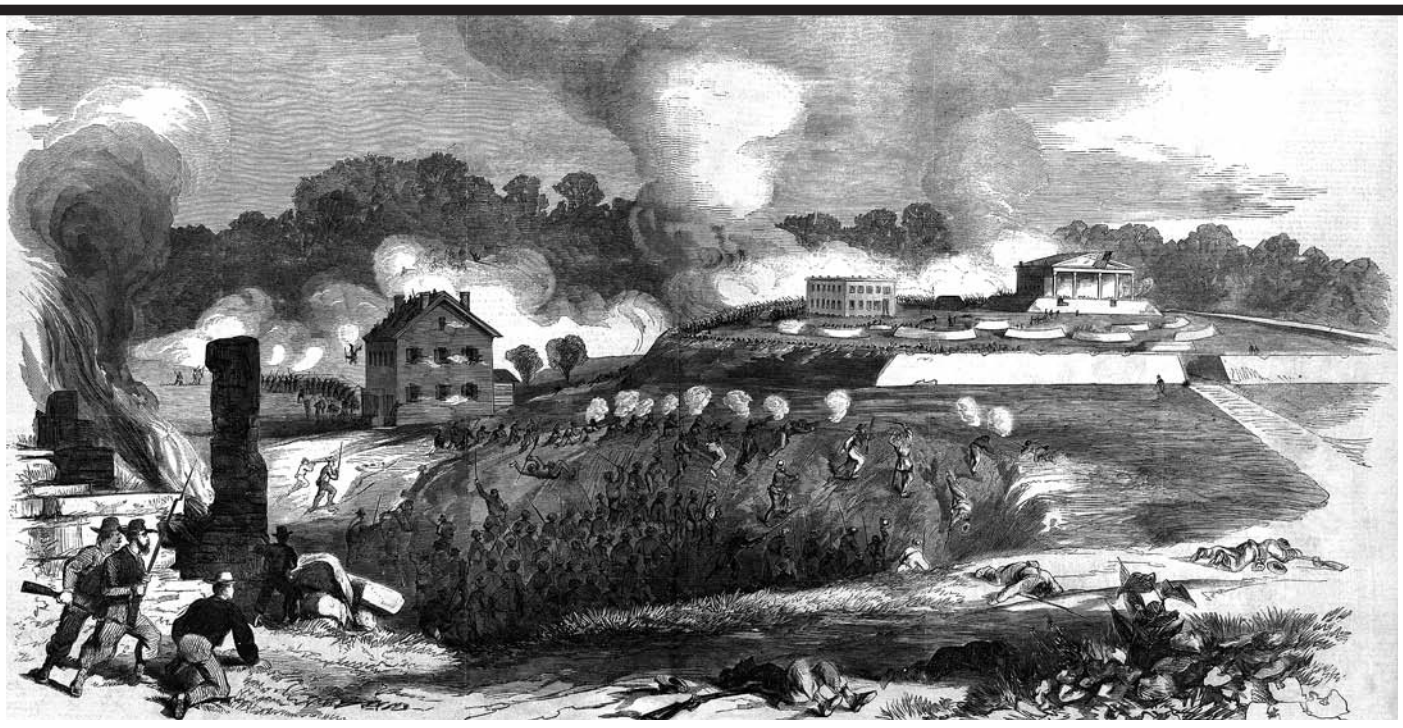
As Federal hopes of victory faded, Confederate impatience with the slow pace of the siege grew. Some of Price's officers urged him to take advantage of his larger force and assault Mulligan's lines. Price demurred, assuring his officers that "it is unnecessary to kill off the boys here. Patience will give us what we want." On the afternoon of the 19th, some of Price's troops began advancing on Federal positions behind a rolling breastwork of hemp bales that they had found at the dockyards. The Guardsmen found that once the bales had been soaked with water, they repelled both artillery shells and bullets. The bales' first use appeared promising. During the night, the men of Harris's 2nd Division rolled more than 130 bales into place.

"My own men were so fired up with enthusiastic courage that it was almost impossible to prevent them from leaping over the bales of hemp and scaling the enemy's entrenchments, and plunging right into the ditches."

When the sun rose on the morning of the 20th, the Federals saw a long line of hemp bales arranged to the north and west of their entrenchments. In some places the bales lay within 100 yards of the Union works. Confederates rolled them forward in a continuous line while their riflemen fired on the Federals from behind the improvised bulwark. Enterprising Union artillerymen directed cannon fire against the bales, only to see them rock backward after absorbing the shock. Amused by the Federals' frustration, Harris quipped that the hemp bales "elicited the obstinate resentment of the enemy, who was profuse in the bestowal of round and grape shot, and was not at all economical of his Minie balls." Rebel spirits soared as the line advanced. "My own men were so fired up with enthusiastic courage," Colonel J.T. Hughes later reported, "that it was almost impossible to prevent them from leaping over the bales of hemp and scaling the enemy's entrenchments, and plunging right into the ditches." Within a few hours Price's mobile rampart had positioned the Missourians for a short, final dash into the Federal defenses.

At about 2 PM, a white flag appeared above the Union earthworks. One of the Union officers raised the flag despite Mulligan's warnings that any unauthorized attempt to surrender would result in the offender's execution. Firing ceased on both sides, and Price sent a courier under a flag of truce to ask Mulligan why the shooting had stopped. In his reply, Mulligan brazenly wrote, "General, I hardly know unless you have surrendered." Despite his pluck, Mulligan knew that the end had come. Most of his troops had exhausted their ammunition, food, and water, with no word of relief reaching the besieged Federals. Additional white handkerchiefs began fluttering from Union bayonets. Mulligan polled his officers; they voted to surrender.

The State Guard's adjutant general, Colonel Thomas Snead, conveyed Price's terms to Mulligan through Colonel Marshall. A transplanted Virginian, Snead was a college professor of ancient languages and an attorney with no military experience prior to his commission. Price, he informed Marshall, required the Federals' unconditional surrender. The Union colonel responded that he would pass along Price's terms to Mulligan. Snead feared that additional Federal troops could arrive at any time. If Mulligan did not accept the terms within 10 minutes, he warned Marshall, the Missourians would assault the Federal positions. Marshall disappeared into the Union works and



A bird's-eye view of the Confederate attack on Lexington shows the hemp bales at the center, with gunsmoke rising prettily above them. The Masonic College is in the right background.

returned to Snead just as the second hand on the colonel's watch swept inexorably toward the deadline. Mulligan had accepted Price's terms.

Price proved a magnanimous victor. In the spirit of Southern chivalry, he allowed all Federal officers to keep their side arms, horses, and personal property. Mulligan's command stacked their muskets and marched out of their trenches to be paroled. Price could not accommodate so many prisoners and happily sent them on their way. Soldiers returned civilians who had joined the Federals to the "custody" of their wives. As the bluecoats marched into the open, the Irish regimental band marched around the college grounds playing defiantly. Patient as ever, Price allowed them to continue until their anger cooled. That night, he treated the Federal officers to a champagne dinner.

Mulligan, who had suffered a wound, and his young bride, who had joined him at Lexington, remained as prisoners. Price treated his captives as honored guests, transporting them in his personal carriage and lodging them in a comfortable tent near his own. Price later sent the Mulligans to St. Louis with an armed escort under a flag of truce. From there, the dashing Irish colonel returned to Chicago, where he received a hero's welcome.

From Washington, General Winfield Scott telegraphed Frémont that President Lincoln expected him "to repair the disaster at Lexington without loss of time." Despite Lincoln's impatience, Price's army lingered in Lexington for another two weeks before Frémont finally began a leisurely march westward with 38,000 troops. Price's troops found the time for band concerts and dances with village girls all along their line of withdrawal.

Price's victory at Lexington, though small by comparison to the bloody battles that still lay months in the future, accomplished much. At the cost of only 97 casualties, 25 dead and 72 wounded, he had captured more than 3,300 enemy troops and inflicted 150 casualties. His poorly armed troops obtained more than 3,000 rifles, seven cannons, 750 horses, and large quantities of wagons and equipment. Although Price returned all the cash seized by the Federals from the Farmer's Bank of Lexington, he retained $37,000 in badly needed gold which the state legislature had authorized him to appropriate for military expenses. Most importantly, he had lifted the morale of secessionists and State's Righters throughout Missouri.

Had the Confederacy achieved a string of victories as inexpensive and profitable as Lexington, it might have won its independence. On the day that Mulligan surrendered, the Confederate Congress authorized President Jefferson Davis to form an alliance with Missouri. The action proved more symbolic than real. No Confederate army marched to join Price in halting Frémont's cautious advance. Such decisive action might have rallied thousands of wavering Missourians to the Southern cause.

Instead, Price's troops went into winter quarters. Gradually, more than half of the Guardsman drifted away, returning to their warm homes and well-stocked cellars while the Union forces in Missouri grew. By the following spring, the opportunity to secure Missouri's independence and its effective membership in the Confederacy had passed. Eighty-six years earlier, Massachusetts farmers had defied the British Empire at another Lexington and thousands of armed Americans from 12 other colonies had joined them in a war for independence. The outcome following the Battle of Lexington, Missouri, had proved far different. □

Knoxville

Continued from page 53

After the battle was over, an eight-hour truce was made between the parties to recover the dead and wounded. The Federals collected 250 prisoners. In addition to the captured, the Confederates left behind 129 killed, 458 wounded, and 226 missing. In exchange for their gruesome losses, Longstreet's men inflicted only 50 Union casualties, 20 of which occurred inside Fort Sanders.

Longstreet shouldered the blame for calling off the attack, but he severely criticized McLaws for the way the attack was carried out in the first place, blaming him for not having fascines and scaling ladders on hand. Longstreet's reason was without foundation since every Confederate leader involved in planning the battle, including Longstreet himself, had assumed that such items were not needed since the ditch appeared to be no real hindrance. On the other side of the hill, Burnside lavished equal praise on Poe and Benjamin. To the rank and file defenders of Fort Sanders, the victory was sweet revenge, a virtual Battle of Fredericksburg in reverse.

Advised officially of Bragg's crushing defeat at Lookout Mountain, Longstreeet at first was going to retreat from Knoxville but soon changed his mind. He reasoned that by holding on at Knoxville he would force Grant to send a force to relieve Burnside, thus taking some pressure off Bragg's beaten army. In this, he was correct. Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman marched to Knoxville with 30,000 men, reaching the city on December 6. Longstreet had retreated the night before. He and his reduced army remained in East Tennessee throughout the winter and early spring, making occasional feints toward Knoxville, until Davis ordered him back to Virginia on April 17. Five days later Longstreet and his men were back in the Old Dominion and reunited with the Army of Northern Virginia, the bitter memories of the unfortunate East Tennessee operation behind them. □

Wilderness

Continued from page 37

attack on the Union right, the two-day Battle of the Wilderness came to a close.

Both sides spent the whole day of May 7 straightening out their positions, but that night Grant withdrew to the northeast. Lee had fought Grant to impasse and occupied a strong position along high ground. It was clear to Union leaders that continued attempts to force their way through the Wilderness would be extremely costly, so the Northern army simply maneuvered to a route where it could attack in open country. After dark, Grant started south toward the crossroads hamlet of Spotsylvania Courthouse, intending to interpose himself between Lee and Richmond. "I can certainly drive Lee back into his works," Grant told his staff, "but I shall not assault him there; he would have all the advantages in such a fight. If he falls back and entrenches, my notion is to move promptly toward the left. This will, in all probability, compel him to try and throw himself between us and Richmond, and in such a movement I hope to be able to attack him in a more open country, and outside of his breastworks."

Grant had suffered a tactical defeat, but he persisted in his strategic goal of attempting to destroy Lee's army. Lee had thwarted a well-provisioned force twice as large as his own, but his grievous loss in men had fatally gutted his offensive capacity. Henceforth, the Army of Northern Virginia would fight defensively. The Federals had suffered 17,666 causalities (2,246 killed, 12,073 wounded), the Confederates, 7,750. In all, five generals were killed, six wounded, and two captured. The deadly logic of Grant's mathematical equation remained the same: the more men he lost, the more men Lee would lose, and Grant had more men to lose. The numbers were all on his side.

For the troops of the Army of the Potomac, the realization that they were moving south—not retreating north again—was uplifting. When Grant and Meade rode past the ranks, wild cheers echoed through the forest. Following the stalemate of the Battle of the Wilderness, the Federal army moved toward a key junction on the way to the Confederate capital of Richmond. The Army of Northern Virginia successfully blocked the way, and the Battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse ensued. Early on May 12, Grant struck hard at "Bloody Angle," trying to eliminate the salient. For almost a week the Federals probed the Confederate flanks, but found no exploitable weakness. The battle, which finally ended on May 20, had been costly. Casualties included 17,400 Federals and 9,600 Confederates.

Grant would write in his memoirs: "More desperate fighting has not been witnessed on this continent than that of the 5th and 6th of May. Our victory consisted in having successfully crossed a formidable stream, almost in the face of an enemy, and in getting the army together as a unit. We gained an advantage on the morning of the 6th, which, if it had been followed up, must have proven very decisive. In the evening the enemy gained an advantage; but was speedily repulsed. As we stood at the close, the two armies were relatively in about the same condition to meet each other as when the river divided them. But the fact of having safely crossed was a victory."

The Battle of the Wilderness marked the beginning of a 40-day campaign that included some of the bloodiest fighting of the Civil War. Grant intended nothing less than a showdown between the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia. In this, Grant said, his design was "to hammer continuously against the armed force of the enemy and its resources, until by mere attrition, if by nothing else there should be nothing left for Lee but an eventual submission to the loyal section of our common country, to the Constitution and the laws." He would make good on his plans, but only after another 11 months of hard fighting. Behind him, in the Wilderness, he left a place where, as his aide Colonel Horace Porter said, "It seemed as though Christian men had turned to fiends, and, hell itself had usurped the place of earth."□

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Sioux Uprising

Continued from page 45

Indians tried to use in their favor. They put many buildings to the torch, the thick black coils joining together to form a perfect cover for their advance. Sixty warriors, some on horse, others on foot, made their way through the acrid stench of burning wood. The fighting reached a climax around the blacksmith shop of August Kiesling, which the Indians had occupied early in the attack. When Flandrau realized the Sioux were advancing behind the smokescreen, he gathered some men to leave the relative safety of the barricades and meet the enemy head on. This time the tables were turned, and the whites' fierce battle cry unnerved the Indians. Getting a taste of their own medicine, the Sioux warriors halted, wavered, then withdrew. The Indians also evacuated the blacksmith shop, a major thorn in the defenders' side.

Before withdrawing into the barricades, Flandrau torched the remaining buildings in the lower parts of town. Soon, crackling flames devoured the houses and belongings of German settlers who had come to America with such hope. Once the houses and other buildings were consumed, the Indians could find little cover in the blackened ruins. There was little left of New Ulm; around 190 buildings were destroyed.

The Sioux finally broke off the attack, leaving the exhausted defenders with their lives, but little else. On Monday, August 25, it was decided to evacuate what remained of New Ulm. There was little food, and ammunitions stocks were perilously low. The smell of burnt wood hovered over the town like the remains of a funeral pyre, to which was added the sickening stench of unburied corpses decaying in the summer heat. Fear of pestilence decided the issue, and a melancholy caravan of 153 wagons, packed with women, children, and wounded men, painfully made its way to Mankato, 34 miles distant.

Although there was more fighting in the weeks to come, the clashes at Fort Ridgely and New Ulm ultimately decided the Great Sioux Uprising of 1862. Increasingly divided and poorly led, the Sioux were planning a last large attack on Sibley's relief force, camped near Wood Lake, on September 23. Discovered by chance when soldiers of the 3rd Minnesota Regiment, newly paroled from Civil War battlefields, left camp without orders to pick potatoes in nearby fields, the Indians attacked in piecemeal fashion, only to be driven back into a ravine. Cannon fire swept the hollow, killing Chief Mankato and breaking the back of the Sioux resistance. Most surrendered, at the same time releasing 267 prisoners, including 162 mixed bloods and 107 whites, almost all of them women and children. In all, more than 800 white settlers had died in the uprising.

Little Crow fled to Canada, and 303 Sioux warriors were tried and sentenced to death for war crimes and atrocities. The trials were a travesty of justice, given the cultural differences, the defendants' lack of understanding, and the whites' thirst for revenge. Some trials lasted only five minutes. President Abraham Lincoln, a lawyer himself, intervened, reviewing each case personally. After careful deliberation, only those who had raped or murdered were condemned to death. Lincoln commuted the death sentences of 264 defendants, allowing the execution of 39 prisoners. Last-minute evidence gave a reprieve to one of the condemned; the rest were hanged on December 26, 1862. It was the largest mass execution in American history.

Little Crow drifted back to the United States and was killed a few months later while picking berries in a farmer's field. The settler, a man named Nathan Lamson, didn't even know at first that he had killed the infamous Little Crow. When the chief's body was taken into town, it was recognized, and the chief's remains were dragged through the street and thrown ingloriously onto a garbage heap. More than a century later, in 1971, in a gesture of reconciliation, the Minnesota Historical Society released Little Crow's bones to his descendants. He was buried with honor in a small ceremony attended only by family members. □

Stephen Crane

Continued from page 65

A far more artistic model for Crane's novel may have been Russian Count Leo Tolstoy's nonfiction book, *Sebastopol,* concerning the siege of the city during the Crimean War. Crane had read Tolstoy first while (briefly) attending Syracuse University, and had remarked then that the Russian was "the world's foremost writer." After writing *The Red Badge of Courage,* he reiterated that view, telling William Dean Howells, "Tolstoy is the writer I admire most of all." Tolstoy arrived in the Crimea in 1854 as a second lieutenant in the 5th Light Battery of the 12th Artillery Brigade. At Sevastopol he dodged British and French shells to recount vivid scenes of suffering, dismemberment, and death for the people back home. The czarina, it was said, wept at his accounts. Tolstoy's ground-eye view of the horrors of combat made a lasting impact on Crane.

Eight years before *The Red Badge of Courage* appeared, John W. De Forest also praised Tolstoy to Howells. "Nobody but he has written the whole truth about war and battle," said De Forest. "I tried and told all I dared, and perhaps all I could. But there was one thing I did not dare tell, lest the world should infer that I was naturally a coward, and so could not know the feelings of a brave man. I actually did not dare state the extreme horror of battle, and the anguish with which the bravest soldiers struggle through it." That task fell to Stephen Crane, a veteran of no wars himself but a writer of genius who understood intuitively the razor-thin divide between heroism and cowardice. With the help of firsthand testimony from such true veterans as Tolstoy, De Forest, Ambrose Bierce, Warren Lee Goss, and John Bullock Van Petten, Crane took readers on an unforgettable journey with grass-green Henry Fleming "to touch the great death" in battle and somehow live to tell about it, like the Union veterans young Stephen Crane had listened to in front of the Orange County Courthouse so many years earlier. □

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