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COVER: General Ulysses S. Grant at his Cold Harbor, Virginia, headquarters, June 1864. See story page 60. Photograph: Library of Congress

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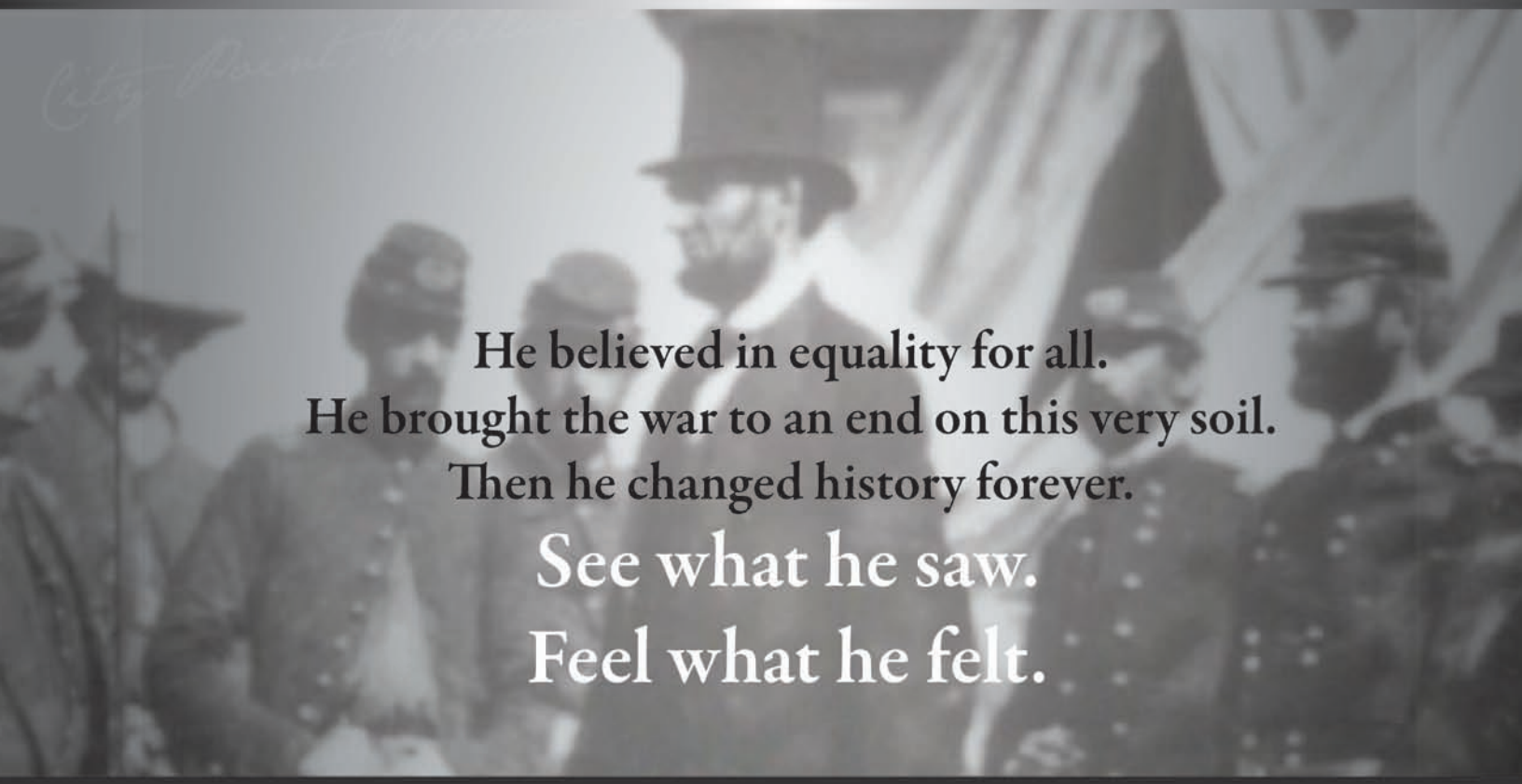

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Editorial

The battle over CSS *Alabama* and her seagoing depredations lasted well after she had gone to her watery grave in 1864.

The CSS *Alabama* went to her watery grave on June 19, 1864, off the coast of France, but the lingering effects of her wartime successes continued to haunt the American and British governments for years to come, embroiling the two English-speaking nations in a legal test of wills that would last well into the next decade.

Almost from the day she was launched at the Laird Shipyards in Liverpool, England, in May 1862, *Alabama* was a cause of friction between the two countries.

U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain Charles Francis Adams complained long and loudly to his British counterpart, Lord John Russell, about England's practice of building and selling warships to the Confederacy. In particular, Adams was incensed by the clumsy subterfuge used to build and transport *Alabama* from Liverpool to Terceira in the Azores. The ship left Liverpool on July 29, 1862, on what was supposed to be trial run around the harbor. Instead, it became the ship's maiden voyage, and visitors aboard the vessel were dispatched back to shore while the steamer set a course southwest to the Azores, where Confederate Captain Raphael Semmes and his crew were waiting to take possession.

Eventually, Adams's protests were effective in curtailing the amount of shipbuilding done by English interests during the latter stages of the Civil War, but the complaints came too late to stop *Alabama*. For the next 22 months, the sleek Confederate raider literally sailed the seven seas, disrupting Federal shipping around the globe, from the Gulf Coast of Texas to the Indian Ocean. *Alabama* captured more than 60 vessels and inflicted some $6.5million in material damages.

The U.S. government, through Secretary of State William Seward, demanded more than $19 million in damages and reparations from the British for the losses inflicted by *Alabama* and her fellow raiders *Shenandoah* and *Florida*. The claims met with a magisterial silence from Great Britain. Sumner demanded exorbitant reparations from the British, including the ridiculous demand that Britain surrender all her holdings in North America,

CIVIL WAR Quarterly

Carl A. Gnam, Jr.
Editorial Director, Founder

Roy Morris Jr.
Editor

Samantha DeTulleo
Art Director

Contributors:
Rick Beard, Arnold Blumberg, Mike Haskew, Don Holloway, Peter Kross, Mike Phifer, James M. Powles, Joshua Shepherd, Lawrence Weber

ADVERTISING OFFICE:
Ben Boyles
Advertising Manager
(570) 322-7848, ext. 110
benjaminb@sovhomestead.com

Mark Hintz
Vice President & Publisher

Subscription Customer Services
sovereign@publishersserviceassociates.com

Ken Fornwalt
Data Processing Director

including Canada.

With the appointment of his fellow Radical Republican Hamilton Fish as the new secretary of state, Sumner dropped his demands, and a joint Anglo-American commission was created to mediate the claims. In 1871, the two countries signed the Treaty of Washington, submitting their opposing claims to binding arbitration. A five-member board was empanelled to hear the charges, with representatives from the Untied States, Great Britain, Italy, Switzerland, and Brazil named to the panel.

Subsequently, a nine-month-long hearing was held in Geneva over the so-called "Alabama Claims." Due in part to effective championing of the American position by Charles Francis Adams, who had been recalled from retirement to represent American claims, and in part by the desire of both countries to put the embarrassing diplomatic wrangle behind them, a legalistic solution was finally found.

The tribunal ruled that Great Britain had been guilty of failing to show sufficient due diligence in enforcing existing neutrality laws. The United States was awarded $15.5 million in gold for damages suffered at the hands of Confederate privateers. In turn, the British government was granted $1.9 million in damages for wartime losses to her seagoing subjects. Both nations emerged from the trial with their dignity intact, and the ghost of *Alabama* was finally put to rest, eight years after her watery death. □

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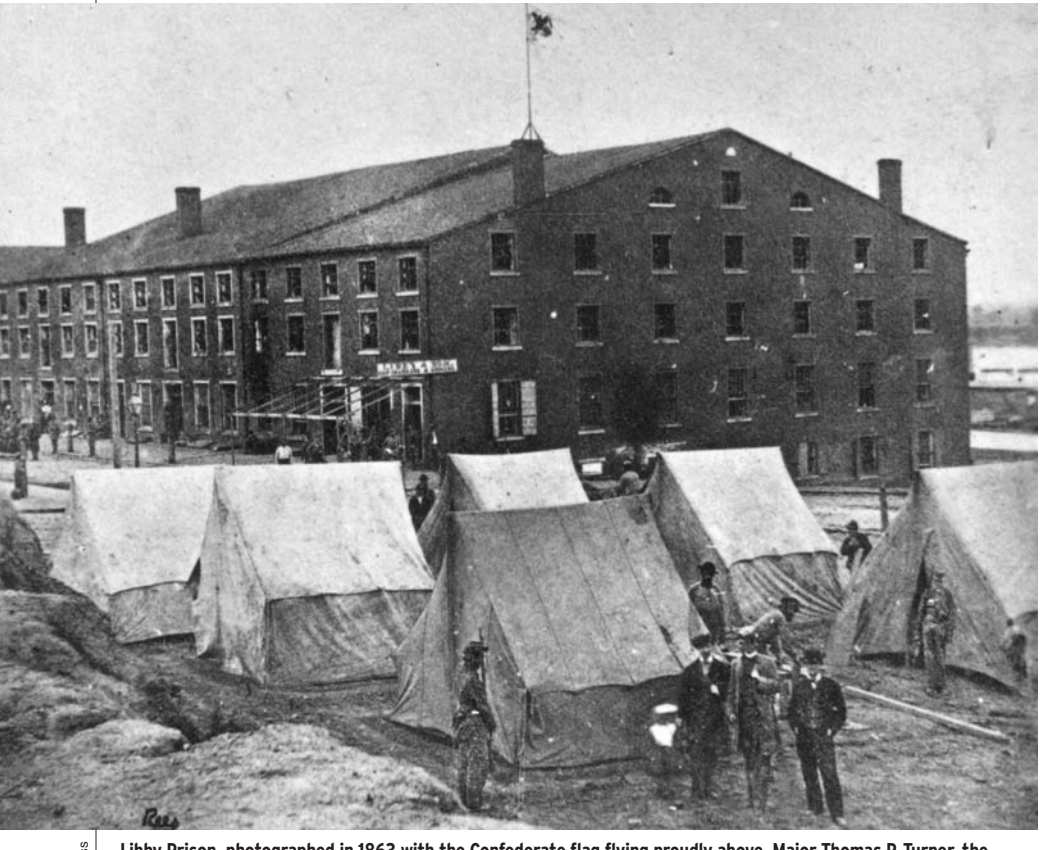
By James M. Powles

Union Captain Henry Sawyer drew the short straw in Libby Prison's infamous "Lottery of Death."

ONE OF THE primary reasons given for the Union defeat at the First Battle of Bull Run was the lack of adequate cavalry. In response, Secretary of War Simon Cameron granted permission to prominent men in various Northern states to raise three-year cavalry regiments. One of these men was 67-year-old William Halsted of Trenton, New Jersey, an eminent state politician, former congressman and lawyer. Since the State of New Jersey was authorized by the Federal government to raise only infantry regiments and there was no organized cavalry in the state militia, Halsted raised his cavalry regiment as an independent unit under orders from the War Department. Halsted began recruiting for his regiment, called Halsted's Horse, in August 1861. He had no trouble filling his ranks, and by August 24 the first four companies had arrived in Washington, followed a week later by the remaining six companies. In February the regiment was accepted into Federal service as the 1st New Jersey Cavalry.



Libby Prison, photographed in 1863 with the Confederate flag flying proudly above. Major Thomas P. Turner, the prison commandant, is standing with others at lower right.

All photos: Library of Congress

One of the first volunteers to join the regiment was Henry Washington Sawyer, a 32-year-old carpenter from Cape May, New Jersey. Born to German parents on March 16, 1829, in Egypt, Pennsylvania, Sawyer's last name was originally Saeger. In 1848, after having taken up the carpentry trade, he left the family farm against his father's wishes and moved to the resort town of Cape May, which at the time was experiencing a building boom. To more easily fit into the community, he Anglicized his German name of Saeger, which translates into carpenter or sawyer, to Sawyer. He married Harriett Ware Eldredge of Cape May in 1850, and the couple had three children, two of whom died during childhood.

When President Abraham Lincoln issued his call for volunteers on April 15, 1861, Sawyer answered the call that very day, being the first in the county to volunteer. Since there were no military units in the state ready to accept volunteers, he went to Trenton and offered his services to New Jersey Governor Charles Olden, who sent him to Washington with important dispatches for the secretary of war. A few days after arriving in Washington, Sawyer joined a paramilitary unit raised to guard the city. Shortly after that he enlisted in the Allentown Rifles, one of the first Pennsylvania volunteer companies sent to protect the city.

Discharged in July when the 90-day enlistment of his company ended, Sawyer returned to Cape May. He stayed home for only two weeks before volunteering for a cavalry regiment that he heard was being formed in the state. Because of his previous meritorious service, he received a commission as a second lieutenant in Company D of Halsted's cavalry regiment on August 14, 1861, the day the regiment was authorized by the War Department. He soon showed himself to be a dedicated and capable officer and was promoted to first lieutenant on April 7, 1862. Six months later, on October 8, he was promoted to captain and given command of Company K. At the

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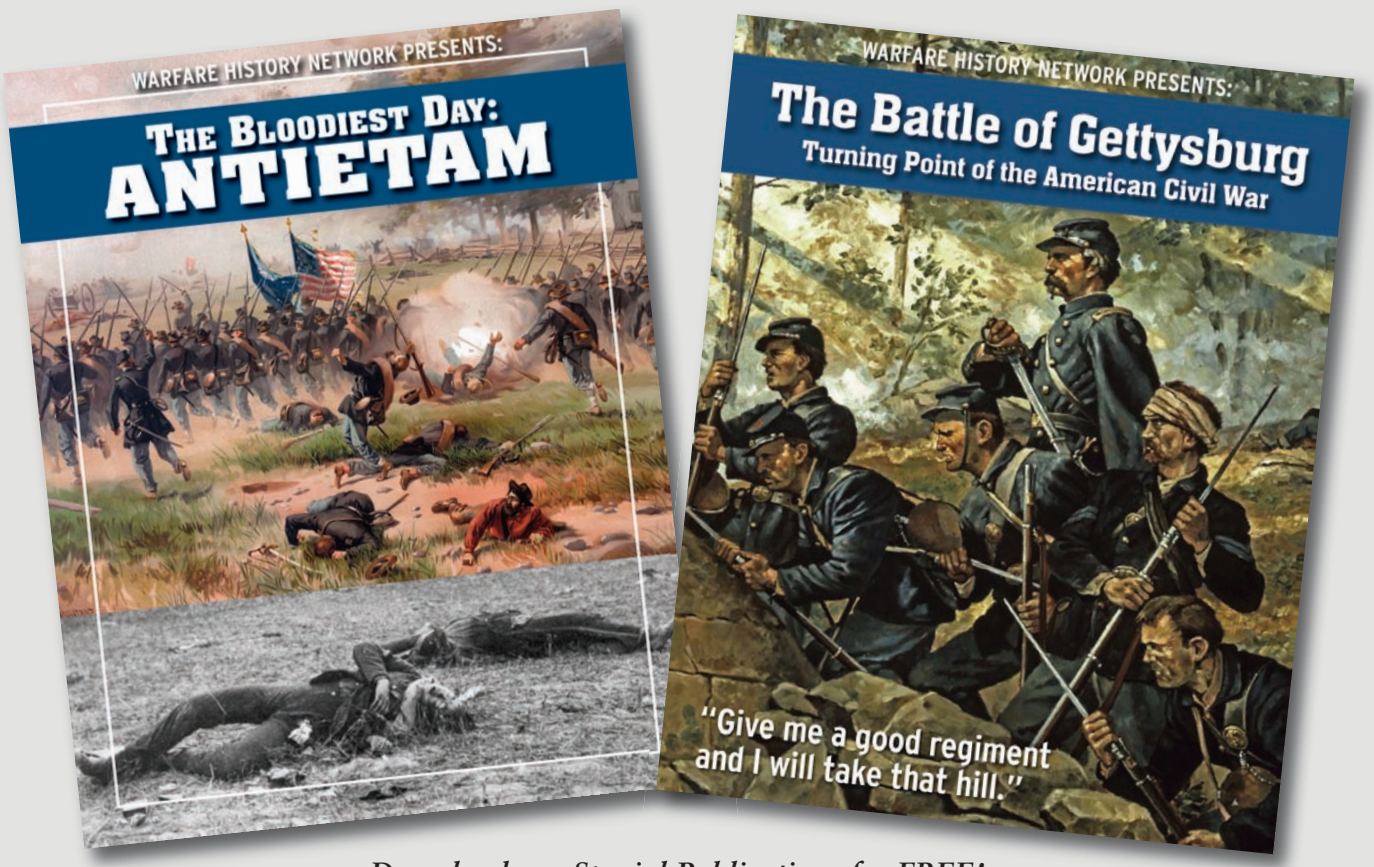

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end of the month, Sawyer's military career was temporarily interrupted when he was wounded in the stomach during a skirmish at Aldie, Virginia. He soon recovered and returned to his company.

On June 9, 1863, at Brandy Station, Virginia, the 1st New Jersey Cavalry fought one of its fiercest and finest engagements of the war when a force of Union cavalrymen supported by infantry and artillery made an early morning attack on the encamped Confederate horsemen of Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart. The 1st New Jersey, under Lt. Col. Virgil Broderick, was in the forefront of the action, making charge after charge into the Confederate ranks. Near the end of the battle, Sawyer was shot in the neck and thigh. Severely wounded, he was left for dead. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported: "Towards the conclusion, Captain Sawyer received two pistol bullets. Notwithstanding, he still kept the saddle until his horse was shot, when the latter sprang up into the air and fell dead, throwing his rider with such force as to render him insensible. When he recovered consciousness, Captain Sawyer saw Lieutenant-Colonel Broderick lying nearby, and crawled up to him, but on examination found that he was dead. While by the side of Colonel Broderick, Captain Sawyer was seen by two rebel soldiers who took him prisoner, and, after washing the blood from his face pronounced his wounds very dangerous, if not mortal." Sawyer survived his wounds and was sent to Richmond, Virginia, where he was confined in Libby Prison.

Arriving at Libby, Sawyer expected to be treated like any other Union officer and hoped to be exchanged soon. However, this was not to be his lot. Sawyer and another officer soon found themselves pawns in a lethal tit-for-tat game between the Federal and Confederate governments that would make headlines in both the North and South. Sawyer's ordeal had begun back in April when Confederate Captains William F. Corbin and T.G. McGraw were arrested near Rouse's Mills, Kentucky, for "recruiting men within the lines of the U.S. forces for the so-called Confederate Army." Corbin was also charged with "being the carrier of mails, communications and information from within our [Union] lines to persons in arms against the Government."

On April 22, 1863, by order of Union Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside, commander of the Department of the Ohio, the two men were tried as spies before a military commission in Cincinnati. Corbin and McGraw were found guilty by the court and sentenced to death. The sentence was approved by Burnside and President Lincoln, and the pair was taken to the prisoner of war camp on Johnson's Island, where on May 15 they were executed by firing squad.

Confederate authorities reacted swiftly after learning of the deaths of Corbin and McGraw from Northern newspapers. Considering the victims to have been duly authorized by the Confederate Army to recruit in Kentucky and not spies working as recruiters, the Confederate government ordered that "two captains now in our custody shall be selected for execution in retaliation for this gross barbarity." Three days later the Federal government upped the ante when Lt. Col. William Ludlow, agent of prisoner exchange for the Union, responded "that for each officer so executed one of your officers in our hands will immediately be put to death and if this number be not sufficient it will be increased." Thus began a series of events that had the potential of turning the war into a vicious conflict of retaliation.

In Libby Prison on the morning of July 6, 74 Union prisoners with the rank of captain, including Sawyer, were assembled in a room of the prison. Expecting to be paroled, the officers were shocked to learn that two of them were to be selected by lot to be executed in retaliation for the deaths of two Confederate officers shot for being spies in Kentucky. When the question came up of who was to draw the names, Sawyer suggested that one of the prison chaplains be appointed. The Reverend Joseph P. Brown of the 6th Maryland reluctantly accepted the unenviable task. The first name he drew was Sawyer's, and the second was Captain John M. Flinn of Company F, 51st Indiana Volunteers. "When the names were read out," the *Richmond Dispatch* reported, "Sawyer heard it with no apparent emotion, remarking that someone had to be drawn, and he could stand it as well as anyone else. Flinn was very white and much depressed."

Sawyer and Flinn were granted permission to write letters to their families. However, before either man had finished his letter they were put in a cart and made their way through the streets of Richmond toward the gallows under cavalry escort. Sawyer later recalled, "We had almost reached the city limits when we met a prominent Roman Catholic bishop, who stopped to enquire of the Confederate officer about us. Captain Flinn, who was a Catholic, said he was being executed without the 'rites of clergy.'" The bishop, who was a friend of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, interceded on Flinn's behalf and secured a 10-day stay of execution for him and Sawyer.

Sawyer finished a letter to his wife upon his return to the prison. After finishing the letter, Sawyer related, "We were taken to the cellar and placed in a dungeon, and isolated from the world and our companions; and the only company we now had were the rats and the vermin, which swarmed over us in great numbers." Sawyer's heartfelt letter to his wife began, "My Dear Wife: I am under the necessity of informing you that my prospect looks dark. This morning, all the captains now prisoners at the Libby military prison, drew lots for two to be executed. It fell to my lot. Myself and Captain Flynn will be executed for two captains executed by Burnside."

After requesting that his wife and children visit him, which Confederate authorities refused to allow, Sawyer concluded, "My dear wife—the fortune of war has put me in this position. If I must die, a sacrifice to my country, with God's will I must submit; only let me see you once more, and I will die becoming a man and an officer: but for God's sake do not disappoint me. Write me as soon as you get this, and go to Captain Whildin; he will advise you what to do. I have done nothing to deserve this penalty. But you must submit to your fate.

It will be no disgrace to myself, you, or the children; but you may point with pride and say, 'I give my husband;' my children will have the consolation to say, 'I was made an orphan for my country.' God will provide for you, never fear. Oh! It is hard to leave thus. I wish the ball that passed through my head in the last battle would have done its work; but it was not to be so. My mind is somewhat influenced, for it has come so suddenly on me. Write to me as soon as you get this; leave your letter open and I will get it. Direct my name and rank, by way of Fortress Monroe. Farewell! Farewell! And hope it is all for the best. I remain yours until death."

Immediately upon receiving the letter, Mrs. Sawyer brought the matter to the attention of influential friends and the press. The letter had the effect Sawyer had hoped, and his predicament became public knowledge. As a result, on July 15, Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck wrote to Ludlow: "The President directs that you immediately place General W.H.F. Lee and another officer selected by you in close confinement [and to] be immediately hung in retaliation" if Sawyer and Flinn were executed. Furthermore, Ludlow was instructed to notify the Confederate government of the decision.

Sawyer and his companion were fortunate that at the time the Federal government held as a prisoner of war Brig. Gen. William Henry Fitzhugh Lee, the second son of Robert E. Lee. Rooney Lee, like Sawyer, had been wounded at the Battle of Brandy Station but was not captured until almost two weeks later while recuperating at the home of one of his wife's relatives near Hanover, Virginia. The other officer selected for retaliation was Captain Robert H. Tyler of the 8th Virginia Infantry, who was a prisoner in the Old Capitol Prison in Washington. Lee was held as hostage for Sawyer and Tyler for Flinn.

As the story of Sawyer and Flinn unfolded, newspapers on both sides fed the furor over their fate and the possibility of retaliation. Ignoring the fact that a son of General Lee and another officer were being held for retaliation, the Richmond newspapers continued to clamor for the execution of Sawyer and Flinn, while newspapers in the North debated whether the death sentence would be carried out. In the meantime, Sawyer and Flinn were released from their underground cells and received the same treatment as the other Union officers in the prison. Despite their rhetoric, the Richmond newspapers wrote of Sawyer's courage and his stated determination "that New Jersey should have no cause to be ashamed of his conduct."

Newly promoted to major, a somewhat gaunt Henry Sawyer poses for the camera after returning to his regiment, the 1st New Jersey Cavalry, following his release from prison.

Both sides now found themselves in a sticky situation. If Sawyer and Flinn were executed and Lee and Tyler killed in return, what would stop the South from executing two or more prisoners in retaliation for Lee and Tyler. The whole affair could easily spiral out of control, resulting in the mass execution of prisoners of war. Fortunately for all concerned, cooler heads prevailed and through quiet negotiations an exchange of the doomed men was arranged. In March 1864, Sawyer was exchanged for Tyler and Flinn for another Confederate captain, while Lee was exchanged for Brig. Gen. Neal Dow of Maine. Sawyer's nine-month ordeal was final over.

On March 23, 1864, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported: "Captain Sawyer, of the First New Jersey cavalry, who has been a prisoner in Libby Prison for nine months, arrived in this city Monday. Captain Sawyer, from long and close confinement is of course somewhat weak; but he is in good spirits and hopes to rejoin his regiment at an early date." Returning to Cape May to recuperate, Sawyer received a hero's welcome and was presented with a gold watch. Sawyer was now a major, having been promoted while in prison. He returned to his regiment to finish the war, being mustered out on July 24, 1865. Unfortunately, Sawyer's companion Flinn did not do as well. He contracted tuberculosis while in prison and after being exchanged was discharged due to poor health. He became an alcoholic and died seven years later.

Sawyer returned to Cape May, where he became the proprietor of the Ocean House, one of the town's largest hotels. In 1875 he built a boarding house nearby and developed it into one of Cape May's finest resorts, the Chalfonte Hotel, which is still in business today. All told, he was involved in some 10 hotels in three states. He also held various local, state, and federal government jobs, was a successful real estate investor, and gave a popular lecture on his military career and the "Lottery of Death." After his first wife died, he married a much younger woman and had two more children. He died on October 16, 1893, in Cape May. His obituary read: "Captain Sawyer fought in the war of the rebellion, and was recognized as one of the bravest soldiers that ever entered a battle. One of the most stirring incidents of his life, and one which the Colonel loved to talk about, was his capture and confinement in Libby Prison, and his subsequent sentence to be shot to death, he having been the unfortunate victim of the drawing in the 'Lottery of Death.'" Henry Sawyer had cheated death for nearly 30 years. □

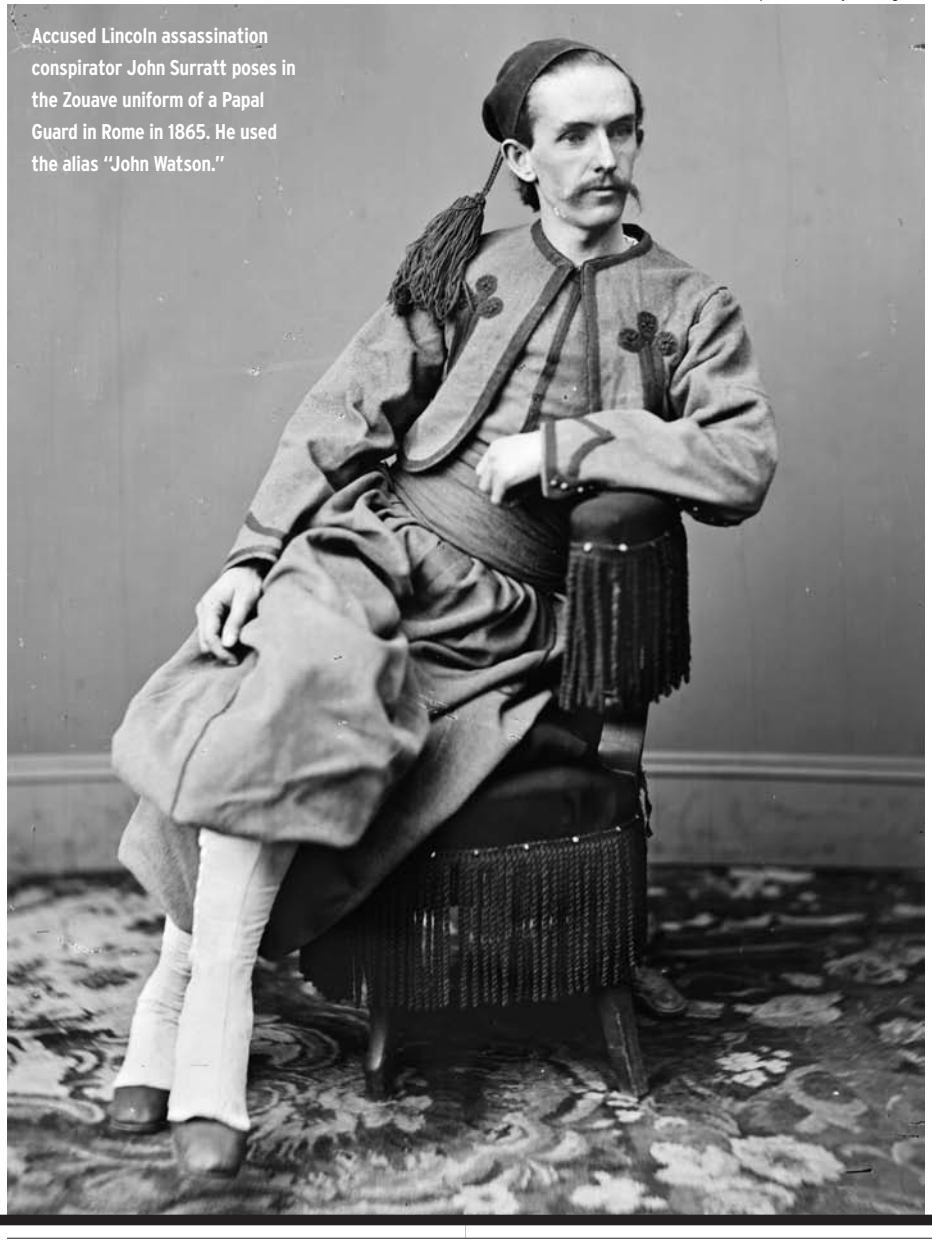
By Peter Kross

John Surratt somehow escaped justice after Lincoln's assassination despite being intimately acquainted with John Wilkes Booth and other conspirators.

ON THE evening of April 14, 1865, noted actor John Wilkes Booth entered Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C., where a play entitled *Our American Cousin* was well underway. A number of people saw and recognized Booth as he entered the theater, but they paid him little mind. After all, Booth had performed often at the theater and he even got his mail delivered there since he had no permanent mailing address in the city.

Shortly after 10 o'clock, Booth entered President Abraham Lincoln's private box overlooking the stage, barring the door behind him so that no one else could enter. He waited patiently until the proper time in the play arrived when he knew there would be the loudest laughter. "You sockdologizing old mantrap!" one of the cast called another. The audience roared. Stepping forward with his small pistol, Booth fired one bullet into the president's brain, inflicting a mortal wound behind his left ear. He then leaped down onto the stage, catching his boot spur on the bunting beneath the presidential box and breaking his leg in the fall, but quickly limping offstage and making his way out of Washington on horseback with his accomplice, David Herold, a boyhood friend.

All photos: Library of Congress



Accused Lincoln assassination conspirator John Surratt poses in the Zouave uniform of a Papal Guard in Rome in 1865. He used the alias "John Watson."

For the next 12 days, the largest manhunt in the nation's history took place. Booth and Herold were finally cornered by Union soldiers at the Maryland farm of Richard Garrett, and after a brief firefight Herold gave up. Booth, remaining inside a burning barn on the property, was mortally wounded in the neck by a rifle shot and died on the morning of April 26. "Useless," was the last word his Union captors heard him utter.

Booth's death was not the end of the manhunt for his co-conspirators. While others in the plot were quickly rounded up, one man escaped, beginning the pursuit of the last Lincoln conspirator still on the loose. His name was John Harrison Surratt, Jr., and he was the son of Mary Surratt, at whose home the assassination had been planned. Before the hunt for John Surratt was over, his pursuers would follow him to Canada and Europe before finally catching up with him in Egypt.

John Surratt was born on April 13, 1844, the last child of Mary and John Surratt, Sr. The elder Surratt was a drunk, but he managed to purchase a boarding house

in Washington, as well as a tavern in Surrattsville, Maryland, where he also served as the local postmaster. As a young man, Surratt attended St. Charles College in Ellicott Mills near Baltimore. One of his Catholic seminary classmates there was Louis Wiechmann, who in later years would live in Mary Surratt's boarding house at 541 H Street in Washington and would play an important role in the events leading up to the Lincoln assassination.

Shortly after the outbreak of the Civil War, Surratt left St. Charles School and joined the Confederate cause as a dispatch rider. He delivered mail from Washington to his Confederate allies across the Potomac River. He once told a friend, "If the Yankees knew what I was doing they would stretch this old neck of mine." After the death of his father, Surratt came home to Surrattsville to take over the reins of the hotel. The tavern at Surrattsville was a weigh station for Confederate couriers who often stopped by for food and lodging. The store also served as a mail drop for Confederate riders, and Surratt became even more deeply involved in the Confederate cause.

By the fall of 1864, Mary Surratt was having financial difficulty with her Surrattsville tavern; she decided to move her family to her boarding house in Washington. Mary leased the tavern to a man named John Lloyd for $600 a year. On December 23, 1864, Surratt and his friend Wiechmann were strolling down a street in Washington when they ran into Samuel Mudd, an old Maryland acquaintance who was Christmas shopping for his family. Accompanying Mudd was John Wilkes Booth. Mudd introduced Booth to Surratt, and they went to Booth's room at the National Hotel. The actor took Mudd aside for a private conversation out of earshot of both Surratt and Wiechmann. He then handed Surratt a piece of paper and asked him to draw lines showing the roads leading into and out of Charles County. Shortly thereafter, the men all went their separate ways.

Over the next several weeks, Booth asked Surratt more questions about the routes from Washington to the Potomac River without telling him why he wanted such information. Exasperated, Surratt finally told Booth that he was fed up with his evasiveness and demanded to know what Booth wanted. Finally, Booth told Surratt of a plan he had been pursuing for some time—nothing less than a plot to kidnap President Lincoln. He planned to capture the president as he rode to the Soldiers' Home and spirit him away to Richmond, where he would be exchanged for thousands of Confederate prisoners. Booth asked Surratt if he wanted to join the conspiracy. The young man said yes.

Mary Surratt at the time of her arrest.

Booth became a frequent visitor to Mary Surratt's boarding house on H Street. Booth and Surratt would sit alone for hours, poring over intricate plans to capture the president. Booth insisted that it was foolproof and that it could be carried out without a hitch. Booth's plan called for the conspirators to take the captured president south via the Potomac River. They needed people who were familiar with the intricate routes and rivers to aid them. One such man was a German immigrant to the United States, George Atzerodt, a 29-year-old carriage builder who lived in Port Tobacco in Charles County. Surratt persuaded Atzerodt to join the conspiracy due to his vast knowledge of the Potomac and its tributaries. It was Surratt's job to secure the boats to take Lincoln south; he bought one from Richard Smoot, a farmer who lived near Port Tobacco.

Among the other men enlisted in the kidnap scheme were Samuel Arnold, David Herold, and Michael O'Laughlin. Booth's plan was to kidnap Lincoln while he attended a play at Ford's Theater, but it fell through after much bickering. Booth's next attempt to kidnap the president took place on March 17, 1865. Lincoln was supposed to travel to the Campbell Hospital to visit wounded soldiers. Booth's plan was to capture Lincoln on his way back to the White House. Booth gathered his heavily armed team and waited at a wooded spot near the hospital. Unfortunately for the conspirators, the president cancelled his visit at the last moment to attend a ceremony at the National Hotel in Washington, the same hotel in which Booth rented a room. Disgusted and disappointed, the conspirators blended back into the night to lick their wounds and devise another plan.

On April 14, Booth made a fateful decision. He decided to kill the president as he attended a play at Ford's Theater called *Our American Cousin,* starring the famous British stage actress Laura Keene. Booth was to kill the president, while Lewis Powell (or Paine), a former Confederate soldier, would kill Secretary of State William Seward at his home. Atzerodt's job was to kill Vice President Andrew Johnson at his residence, the Kirkwood House. That night Booth succeeded in killing the president, but Powell failed to kill Seward despite inflicting grievous knife wounds upon him. Atzerodt got drunk and failed to kill the vice president. While all this was going on, John Surratt was carrying out his duties as a courier and had gone to Montreal, Canada, in early April on a spy mission.

On April 14, the day of the assassination, Surratt was in Elmira, New York, on orders to scout the infamous Union prison there for a possible raid to free Confederate prisoners. It is not known if Surratt was privy to Booth's plan to kill the president, but his being away from Washington on

the day of the assassination proved beneficial to him in the long run. Booth had told Herold and Atzerodt that Surratt was in Washington, even though he knew that Surratt was in Elmira, possibly to set up Surratt as a fall guy if the assassination plot went awry

At 3 AM on April 15, detectives from the Metropolitan Police arrived at the home of Mary Surratt. They had received a tip that her son may have been involved in the assassination, and they quickly followed up the lead. The police told boarders at the residence of the president's assassination and said they were looking for Booth and Surratt. The detectives searched the house but found no trace of either man. The police then asked Mary Surratt when she had last seen Booth. She replied that she had seen him at 2 PM the previous day. They asked her if she knew the whereabouts of her son. Mary said no but that she believed he was in Canada. On April 17, detectives arrived once again at Mary Surratt's boarding house and placed her under arrest for conspiracy in the assassination of the president.

While the manhunt for Booth and Herold was underway, John Surratt was back in Canada preparing for his journey to Europe. Unknown to most people in the conspiracy, Surratt had obtained a passport the previous January from both the American and British colonial officials in Quebec under the name of John Watson

The United States government now mounted a worldwide hunt for Surratt. Confederate Secret Service agents took Surratt to a Catholic priest named Father Charles Boucher, who hid the former seminarian for three months at his parish in St. Liboire. Surratt was then given over to a Father La Pierre and stayed at his home for the next two months. In the meantime, Mary Surratt and the other Lincoln conspirators were tried, convicted, and hanged. Surratt made no attempt to contact his mother before her death. He said later, a little unconvincingly, that he was unaware of the grave danger she was in.

Believing that it was not safe to keep him in Canada any longer, the priests arranged

Convicted Lincoln conspirators hang from the gallows after their execution at Washington's Old Penitentiary on July 7, 1865. Mary Surratt is at the far left.

for Surratt to be taken on board a ship, *Peruvian,* that sailed from Quebec to Liverpool, England. Surratt booked passage under the name "McCarthy." Once the ship docked in Liverpool, *Peruvian*'s surgeon, Dr. Lewis McMillen, told the American vice-consul that Surratt was in the city.

Surratt did not linger long in England. He soon made his way to Italy, where he enlisted in the Papal Zouaves under the name of John Watson. One of the men Surratt met in the same unit was a Canadian, Henri St. Marie, a Southern sympathizer who had joined the Confederate Army and been captured while serving on a gunboat. Surratt and St. Marie became friends, and Surratt told him that his real name was not John Watson, but John Surratt.

Surratt's uneasy confidant went immediately to the American minister in Rome, Rufus King, and informed him of his meeting with Surratt. King cabled Washington, informing officials of St. Marie's claim that Surratt had told St. Marie he was involved in the plot on Lincoln's life, and furthermore that Confederate President Jefferson Davis had initiated the plot. King informed Pope Pius IX of the charges facing Surratt, and the Catholic pontiff gave his permission to arrest Surratt and take him back to the United States to face trial.

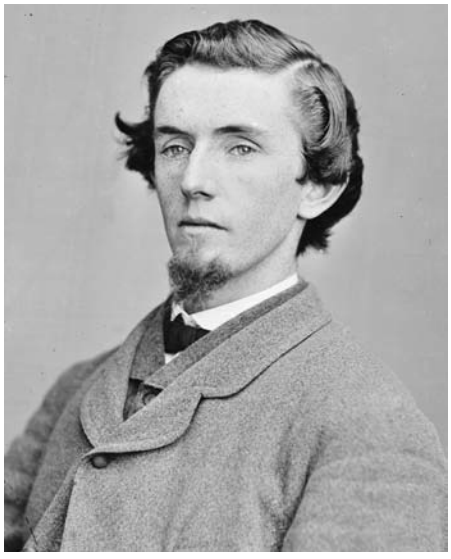
Surratt brazenly escaped from Rome and made his way to Naples, where he booked passage on a ship bound for Alexandria, Egypt. After being on the run for 20 months, Surratt was captured along with St. Marie as soon as he set foot in Egypt and put aboard the U.S. Navy vessel *Swatora* for the long voyage back to America. *Swatora* stopped for refueling and supplies in Minorca, and St. Marie was taken off the ship and transported back to the United States on a separate vessel.

As Surratt was heading home, a discussion took place between President Andrew Johnson and Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles. According to Welles, "The President remarked that no good could result from any communication with Surratt, and that the more reckless Radicals, if they could have access to him, would be ready to tamper with and suborn him. The man's life was at stake, he was desperate and resentful. Such a person and in such a condition might, if approached, make almost any statement. He, therefore, thought [Sur-

ratt] should not be allowed to communicate with others, nor should unauthorized persons be permitted to see him."

Swatara arrived at the Washington Navy Yard on February 18, 1867, and Surratt was taken away by a bevy of U.S. marshals. Unlike the trial of his mother Mary, who went before a military tribunal, John went before a civil court. After two years, the horror of the Lincoln assassination was back in the headlines, but this time the result would be different. The trial lasted from June to August, with the prosecution trying desperately to convince the jury that Surratt had been part of the assassination plot, and that he was in Washington on the fatal night. The defense brought forth witnesses who testified that Surratt was in Elmira on April 14, 1865, and that he had played no role in the actual murder conspiracy.

In the end, the trial resulted in a hung jury. A year later the government tried to bring new charges against Surratt, getting



John Surratt turned 21 the day after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.

indictments based on the District of Columbia's treason statute of 1862. The court ruled that the treason statute had expired two years previously and that Surratt was legally a free man. Had Surratt been tried in military court, it is highly probable that he would have been found guilty and executed, like his mother.

After the trial, Surratt moved to Rockville, Maryland, where he took a teaching job at a girl's school. He then went on the lecture circuit, appearing first before an audience at the Montgomery County Courthouse, where he told his listeners that he had taken part in Booth's attempt to kidnap the president but that he had no role or knowledge of the assassination. He married a woman in Baltimore in 1872 and found a job with the Old Bay Line shipping company as an auditor.

Surratt, the last of the Lincoln conspirators, died well into the 20th century, on April 16, 1916, almost exactly 51 years removed from the first presidential assassination. With his death, the last remaining figure in the assassination of the 16th president of the United States passed from the scene, unpunished and unrepentant.

Across the Bloody Cornfield

BY MICHAEL E. HASKEW

America's bloodiest day began with heavy fighting that ravaged a previously innocuous cornfield in western Maryland. It was a misleadingly bucolic place for such a slaughter.

THE WHITE HOUSE was a somber place in the summer of 1862. The Civil War was in the midst of its second costly year, and the Union armies had yet to win a significant victory in the eastern theater. President Abraham Lincoln, still mourning the death of his 11-year-old son, Willie, earlier that year, sought desperately to find a general who could reverse the growing belief that Confederate arms, under the able leadership of General Robert E. Lee, were invincible.

The Peninsula Campaign had come to naught in July after the Confederates turned away Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan and the Union Army of the Potomac from the gates of the Confederate capital of Richmond in the costly Seven Days' Battles. At the end of August, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia routed another Union army, under Maj. Gen. John Pope, at the Second Battle of Bull Run. Adding insult to injury, Confederate cavalry under Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart had raided Pope's very headquarters, carrying off the general's dress coat.

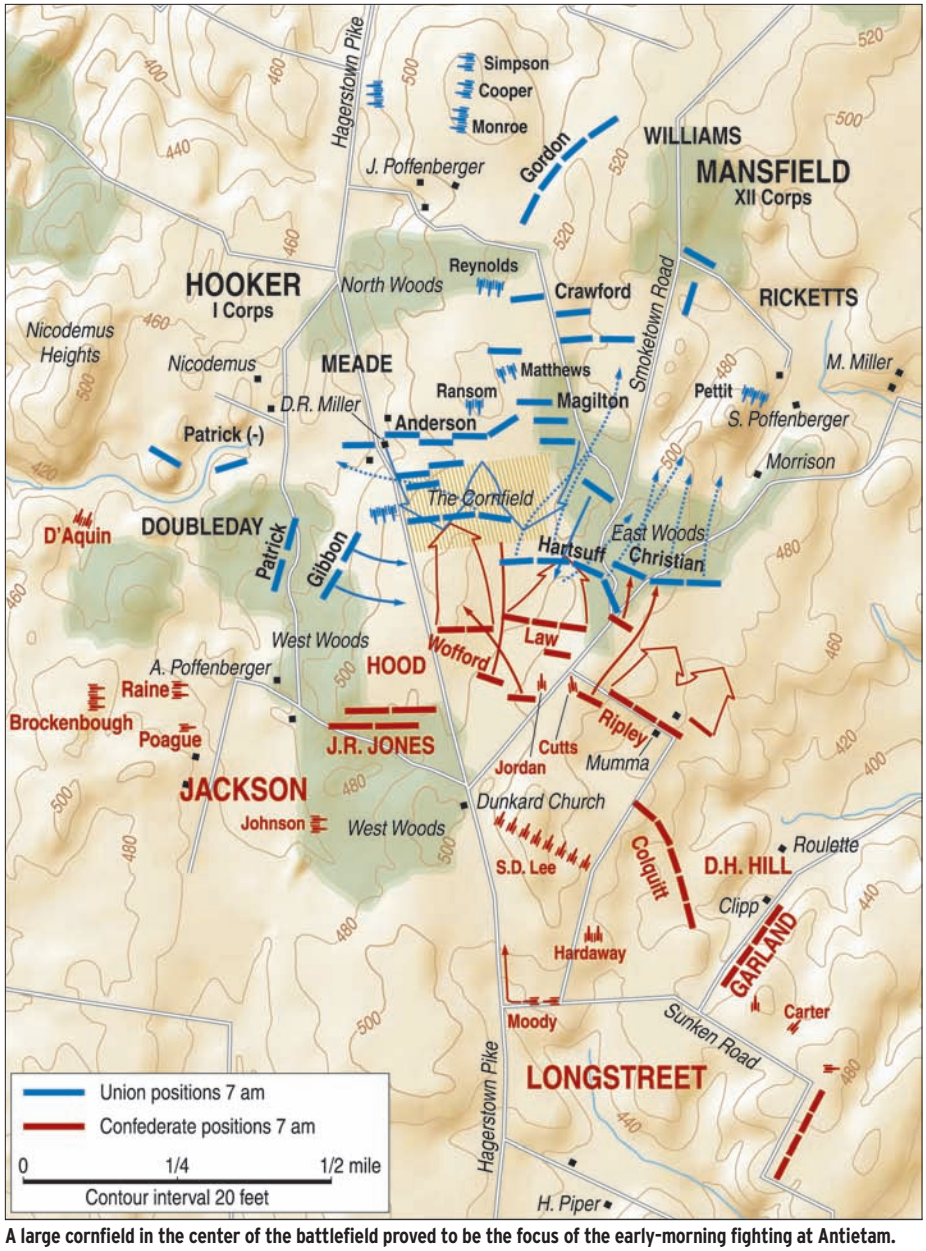
Following the debacle at Second Bull Run, Lincoln turned again to McClellan, whose extreme timidity in the field was contrasted with his superb organizational skills and the enduring confidence of his men. Lincoln hoped against hope that McClellan would finally bring Lee to decisive battle and destroy the Army of Northern Virginia once and for all. On the political front, Lincoln felt that the war-weary North needed to be energized. He contemplated issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, a document that freed all slaves in the rebellious states. The proclamation, Lincoln hoped, would add a moral dimension to the war besides the preservation of the Union. He needed a legitimatizing Union victory in the field before he could issue the proclamation.

While Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia were indeed triumphant, the Confederate commander realized all too well that his gains were temporary; he needed to undertake a bold stroke while the opportunity still presented itself. Lee knew that the capacity of the Union to wage war was virtually limitless. From his headquarters at Chantilly, Virginia, Lee wrote to Confederate President Jefferson Davis of his intent to carry the war to Northern soil. "The present seems the most propitious time since the commencement of the war for the Confederate Army to enter Maryland," Lee noted. "We cannot afford to be idle."

Strategically, Lee's decision to invade the North made sense. For the first time since hostilities opened, Virginia was largely free of Union troops. Continued passivity would invite the Federals to return and once again mount an offensive against Richmond. Maryland was a border state

Men from Brig. Gen. John Gibbon's hard-fighting Iron Brigade emerge from Miller's Cornfield into a hailstorm of Confederate bullets in the morning hours of September 17, 1862, at Antietam. Painting by Keith Rocco.

Map © 2014 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN



A large cornfield in the center of the battlefield proved to be the focus of the early-morning fighting at Antietam. Confederate Brig. Gen. John Bell Hood typically struck hard.

and remained in the Union, but Lee believed that large numbers of Southern sympathizers would rally to his ranks once the Army of Northern Virginia entered the state. If successful in Maryland, the army might venture into Pennsylvania, destroy the vital Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge across the Susquehanna River, and threaten the state capital of Harrisburg. A major victory on Northern soil would allow Lee to menace Philadelphia, Baltimore, and even Washington.

On the diplomatic front, the Confederate cause was ripe for recognition by European powers, particularly Great Britain and France. The textile mills of Europe were dependent on Southern cotton for continuing operations, and the British government keenly felt the urgency to recognize the Confederacy. A military victory in the North, Lee reasoned, would all but assure recognition of the Confederate States of America as a sovereign nation. Following the Confederate triumph at Second Bull Run, British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston had observed that the Union forces had received "a very complete smashing." If Lee's remarkable run of success continued, said Palmerston, "Would it not be time for us to consider whether in such a state of things England and France might not address the contending parties and recommend an arrangement on the basis of separation?"

For all those reasons, the stakes were extremely high when the Army of Northern Virginia reached White's Ford on the banks of the Potomac River on September 4 and 55,000 hungry troops stripped off their ragged clothes and began wading into Maryland. By the 7th, the army was completely across the Potomac and camped in the vicinity of Frederick. Lee issued a proclamation to the people of Maryland inviting them to join the Southern cause. "No constraint upon your free will is intended, no intimidation is allowed," Lee promised. "Within the limits of this Army, at least, Marylanders shall once more enjoy their ancient freedom of thought and speech. We know no enemies among you, and will protect all of every opinion. It is for you to decide your destiny, freely and without constraint. This army will respect your choice whatever it may be."

To Lee's immediate disappointment, the citizens of Frederick generally kept their shops locked up tight. Western Maryland did not rally to the Stars and Bars. Marylanders were wary and observed the Confederates with a mixture of sympathy, awe, and disdain. Commented one civilian: "They were the dirtiest men I ever saw. A most ragged lean and hungry set of wolves."

Meanwhile, on September 2, McClellan retook command of the army to the cheers of his men. In a superb organizational effort lasting just four days, he completed the assimilation of units from the former Army of Virginia into the Army of the Potomac. His orders from Lincoln and Army General-in-Chief Henry W. Halleck were somewhat vague: protect Washington and, if possible, destroy Lee's army in the process. The first reports of the Confederate move into Maryland arrived in Washington on the afternoon of Septem-

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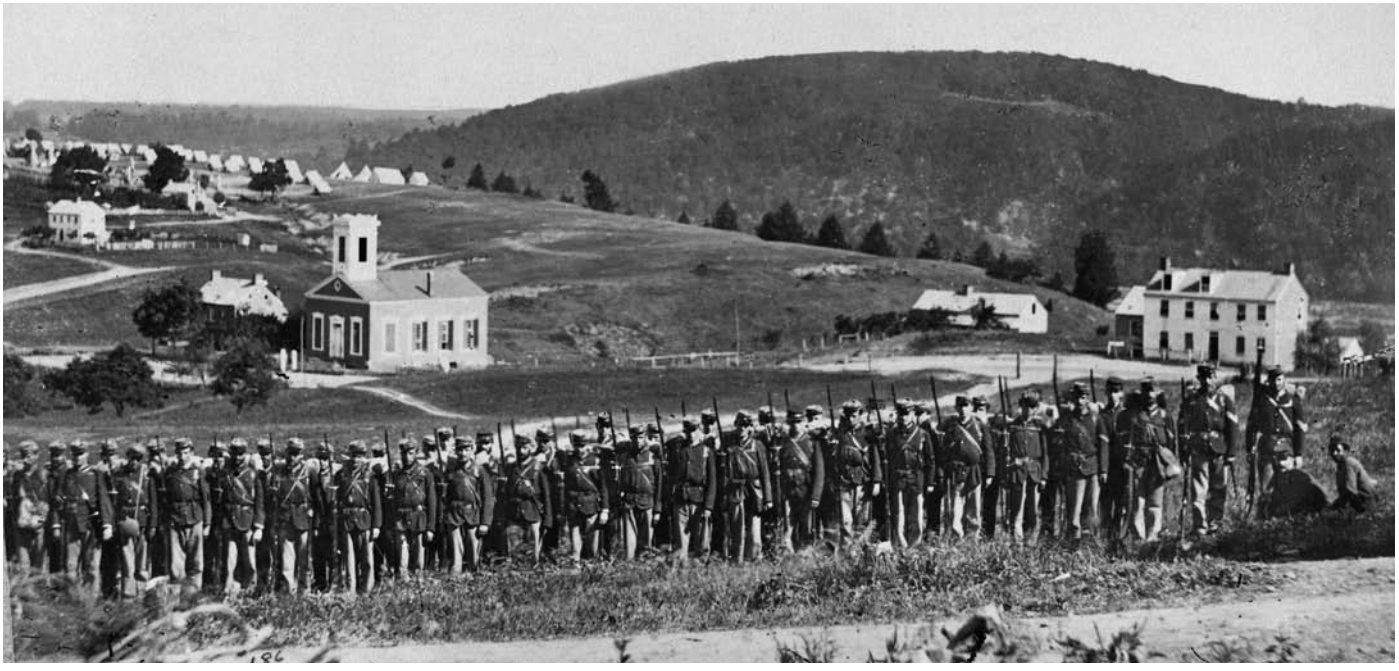

Company A, 22nd New York State Militia, poses for a group photograph near Harpers Ferry. Confederate forces would later seize the arsenal.

ber 4, prompting McClellan to begin moving at a deliberate pace from his encampment at Rockville, Maryland.

While his own numbers swelled to nearly 90,000, McClellan, ever cautious, was concerned about the strength of his enemy. Wildly exaggerated estimates of Lee's numbers, ranging upwards of 200,000 men, filtered into McClellan's command from unreliable civilian sources and from agents employed by private detective Allan Pinkerton, whom McClellan knew from their days together on the Illinois Central Railroad before the war. The exaggerated estimates played on McClellan's natural tendency toward caution and contributed to his lack of aggressiveness.

By September 12, the Army of Northern Virginia expected to mass in the vicinity of Hagerstown, poised for the push into Pennsylvania. Meanwhile, Lee counted on McClellan's lack of aggressiveness. Lee directed Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's three divisions to cross South Mountain, a ridgeline running north to south along the eastern edge of the Cumberland Valley, and proceed to Boonsboro, about halfway to Hagerstown. Detached from the command of Maj. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, Maj. Gen. D.H. Hill's division was to follow Longstreet as the army's rear guard.

The remainder of the Army of Northern Virginia, divided into three separate commands, would converge on Harpers Ferry and compel the garrison to surrender. Swinging widely to the west, Jackson was to scoop up the enemy garrison at Martinsburg and move on to Harpers Ferry. Two divisions under Maj. Gen. Lafayette McLaws were to approach the arsenal from the north and seize the commanding position of Maryland Heights. Moving due east, Brig. Gen. John Walker's division was to recross the Potomac and capture Loudoun Heights on the Virginia side of Harpers Ferry. Stuart's cavalry was to remain east of South Mountain, screening the movements from the enemy. Following the surrender of Harpers Ferry, the scattered Confederate forces would converge.

Lee detailed his complex plan in Special Orders No. 191, dated September 9. Colonel Robert H. Chilton, his adjutant, copied the orders for subordinate generals. When Lee's order reached Jackson, he dutifully prepared another copy for Hill, his brother-in-law, unaware that Chilton had included Hill among those receiving the order directly from Lee. The next day, the Army of Northern Virginia set out from Frederick.

On the morning of the 13th, the 27th Indiana Infantry paused to rest in a field on the outskirts of Frederick. It was obvious to the Union veterans that the area had recently served as a Rebel bivouac. Corporal Barton W. Mitchell of Company F noticed something unusual lying in the grass. He retrieved an envelope that contained three cigars wrapped around the copy of Special Orders No. 191 that Chilton had intended for Hill. Apparently it never reached the general.

Mitchell took the document to Sergeant John M. Bloss, and the two took it to Captain Peter Kop, their company commander. Kop sent the order farther up the chain to Colonel Silas Colgrove, the commander of the 27th Indiana, who went directly to XII Corps headquarters, where Brig. Gen. Alpheus Williams and Colonel Samuel Pittman read the document with great interest. Its authenticity was confirmed when Pittman noted Chilton's signature and recognized the handwriting of Lee's adjutant, with whom he had served before the war. Williams sent the order to McClellan with a note that read: "I enclose a Special Order of Gen. Lee commanding Rebel forces which was found on the field where

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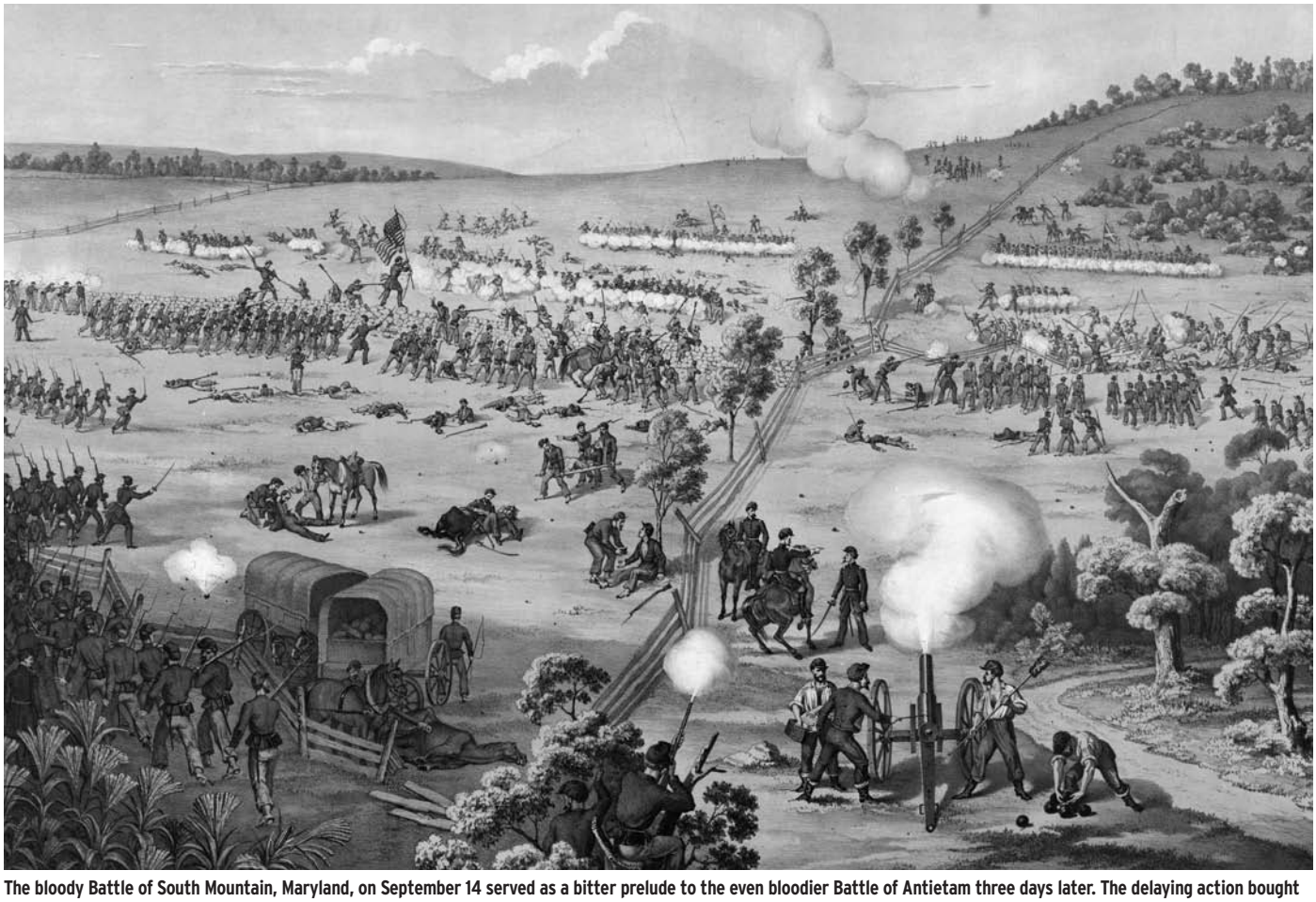


The bloody Battle of South Mountain, Maryland, on September 14 served as a bitter prelude to the even bloodier Battle of Antietam three days later. The delaying action bought the Confederates much-needed time.

my corps is encamped. It is a document of interest and is also thought genuine."

When McClellan received the communication from Williams, he abruptly ended a conference with a delegation of citizens from Frederick. As he read, McClellan waved his arms and shouted, "Now I know what to do!" Later that day, McClellan visited with his old friend, Brig. Gen. John Gibbon, commander of the 4th Brigade, I Corps. "Here is a paper," McClellan chirped, "with which if I cannot whip Bobbie Lee, I will be willing to go home."

Certainly McClellan's opportunity was great. If the Army of the Potomac moved rapidly through the passes in South Mountain, which an overconfident Lee had failed to defend, McClellan might interpose superior forces between Longstreet to the north and Jackson, McLaws, and Walker to the south, take on the Rebel commands separately, and defeat them one at a time. McClellan talked of rapid movement and exhorted subordinates to prepare for the march. Typically, he waited until the morning of September 14 to get moving.

Meanwhile, Lee was becoming anxious. Early reports from Stuart's cavalry told him that McClellan was on the road to Frederick, and on September 10 he ordered Longstreet to advance to Hagerstown with 10,000 troops, occupying the village before any Union forces might contest the Confederate rallying point. Hill's rear guard remained at Boonsboro with 5,000 troops.

By the evening of the 13th, it appeared to Lee that his risky plan was coming apart. Harpers Ferry was still in Union hands, and McClellan's advance toward South Mountain was disturbing. Lee prodded Jackson and McLaws to wrap up their work at Harpers Ferry. At the same time, he began throwing together a patchwork defense of the South Mountain passes at Turner's, Fox's, and Crampton's Gaps. Lee had no illusions of holding the gaps for an extended period, but any delay in the Union advance might allow the Army of Northern Virginia to escape destruction.

The Battle of South Mountain began early on September 14, and by 11 AM Union troops of Brig. Gen. Jacob Cox's Kanawha Division were in control of Fox's Gap. Among the wounded during two hours of savage fighting was Lt. Col. Rutherford B. Hayes, commander of the 23rd Ohio Regiment and a future president of the United States. The Confederates lost one of their most promising brigade commanders, Brig. Gen. Samuel Garland, mortally wounded just as he completed an assessment of the situation.

Hill forced Cox back to Fox's Gap with a gritty, tooth-and-nail defense that

included arming cooks, clerks, and teamsters. Late in the afternoon, reinforcements from Longstreet began to arrive. On the same ground where Garland had been killed earlier in the day, Maj. Gen. Jesse Reno, commander of the Union IX Corps, was shot. As he was carried to the rear, Reno yelled to Brig. Gen. Samuel Sturgis, one of his division commanders, "Hallo, Sam, I am dead!" Within minutes, Reno proved as good as his word.

As the sun was setting, the entire Union I Corps under Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker advanced toward Turner's Gap. Fighting raged into the gathering darkness as Georgia and Alabama troops under Brig. Gens. Alfred Colquitt and Robert Rodes fought desperately to hold the pass. Colquitt lost 100 casualties in an already understrength brigade, while Rodes faced two full Federal divisions, Brig. Gen. John Hatch's 1st Division, I Corps, on his right, and the Pennsylvania Reserve Division under Brig. Gen. George G. Meade on his left. The avalanche of Union troops pushed Rodes steadily back and cost him more than one-third of his command. Reinforcements from Longstreet tried to stem the tide but were driven back. Only darkness halted the Union advance.

To the south, at Crampton's Gap, a Confederate contingent of 1,000 men consisting of three Virginia infantry regiments and another from Georgia, two regiments of dismounted cavalry, and a few scattered guns of the horse artillery confronted more than 12,000 Union troops of Maj. Gen. William B. Franklin's VI Corps. One amazed Confederate artilleryman saw columns of enemy soldiers stretching into the distance and remarked that they were "so numerous that it looked as if they were creeping up out of the ground."

The three-hour fight at Crampton's Gap left 500 Union and 750 Confederate dead and wounded. When the Confederates withdrew, Franklin was only six miles from Harpers Ferry. McClellan had given him the option to push on to relieve the trapped garrison at the arsenal, but McLaws hastily put together a defensive line that gave Franklin pause. Eventually he decided against another general assault. His decision was pivotal. Had Franklin overwhelmed McLaws and marched hard for Harpers Ferry, he might have lifted the siege and checked any subsequent movement by Jackson.

Lee was left with few cards to play. It was obvious that Turner's Gap could not be held, and he ordered Longstreet and Hill to withdraw to the west. To save his army from impending destruction, Lee decided to terminate the siege of Harpers Ferry and prepare for a general retirement across the Potomac to the safety of Virginia. Lee wrote to McLaws: "The day has gone against us and this army will go by Sharpsburg and cross the river. It is necessary for you to abandon your position tonight. Send forward officers to explore the way, ascertain the best crossing of the Potomac."

Library of Congress

Confederate Brig. Gen. Alfred Colquitt.

The dejected Lee ordered Jackson to march to Shepherdstown to cover the withdrawal of Longstreet's force. Lee had heard nothing from Stonewall and was startled to receive word a short time later that Harpers Ferry was expected to fall the next day. The delaying action at South Mountain, though costly, had given Jackson enough time to tighten his grip on the arsenal. As Longstreet's men began trudging toward Sharpsburg, Lee reversed his earlier order. The siege of Harpers Ferry was to be successfully concluded as soon as possible.

Lee accompanied Longstreet's columns across Antietam Creek, a tributary of the Potomac, heading toward the village of Sharpsburg. As the sun climbed into the sky on September 15, Lee surveyed a long, low ridgeline east of the town and asserted, "We will make our stand on those hills." At noon he received confirmation from Jackson that Harpers Ferry had fallen and directed Stonewall to hurry to Sharpsburg, 12 miles to the north. Jackson in turn detailed Maj. Gen. A.P. Hill and his Light Division to take custody of 73 pieces of artillery and 13,000 rifles and revolvers and parole the prisoners at the arsenal. Meanwhile, Jackson got the remainder of his command on the road toward Sharpsburg.

Over Longstreet's objections, Lee deployed 18,000 men, 14 infantry and three cavalry brigades in a four-mile line across the woods and fields at the northern end of the ridge, down to the bluffs of Antietam Creek, where the southernmost of three stone bridges spanned its waters. Lee's positions provided natural cover, with an undulating landscape and rocky limestone outcroppings, while west of the Hagerstown Turnpike the knoll known as Nicodemus Hill offered a commanding position for Confederate artillery. The terrain was dotted by farmsteads, pastures, and cornfields, separated here and there by rail fences. Although it offered some advantages, it was also precarious. Lee's back was to the Potomac, and only Boteler's Ford at Shepherdstown offered a clear avenue of escape across the river if the Confederates were driven from the field.

On the Confederate left, two brigades under Brig. Gen. John Bell Hood went into line on the fringe of the West Woods, a stretch of trees 300 yards wide to the west of the Hagerstown Turnpike, the major thoroughfare that led into Sharpsburg. Prominent in Hood's defensive area was a plain, whitewashed church belonging to the German Baptist Brethren, a Christian sect that shunned anything ostentatious,

including church steeples, and believed in baptism by full immersion. Locally, the members of the congregation were known as Dunkers.

About half a mile on the other side of the Hagerstown Turnpike, the East Woods flanked the Smoketown Road, which joined the turnpike at an acute angle. The North Woods stretched across the farmland of Joseph Poffenberger. East of the turnpike lay the prosperous farm of David R. Miller, including the house, outbuildings, orchard, and a 24-acre field of ripening corn, grown taller than a man's head and nearly ready for harvest.

Stuart's cavalry screened the Confederate left while D.H. Hill's five brigades were funneled into the center of the Confederate line and filed into the sunken road. Brig. Gen. D.R. Jones covered the ground to the south and occupied the bluffs above the lower bridge across the Antietam with six brigades. Colonel Thomas Munford led a brigade of cavalry, bloodied from the fighting at South Mountain, to cover the fords south of the lower bridge.

Lee, hopelessly outnumbered, still intended to make a stand in Maryland. He was convinced that the bulk of Jackson's command, marching hard from Harpers Ferry, would reach the battlefield and swell his ranks to 50,000 men to confront McClellan's force of 80,000. He also counted on McClellan to move slowly, which he did. Lieutenant James Wilson, a member of McClellan's staff, observed, "Nobody seemed to be in a hurry. Corps and divisions moved as languidly to the places assigned them as if they were getting ready for a grand review instead of a decisive battle."

The first Union infantry formations did not arrive until the afternoon of September 15. The Army of the Potomac began to concentrate that night, but during the following day McClellan declined to make a decisive move. He tended to details while three of Jackson's footsore divisions began trickling into the vicinity. About noon on the 16th, Jackson rode up to find Lee and Longstreet observing the Union troops across the creek.

McClellan deployed Hooker's I Corps astride the Hagerstown Turnpike to the north. Running southward, XII Corps under Maj. Gen. Joseph K.F. Mansfield and II Corps under Maj. Gen. Edwin Sumner extended the Federal right opposite Hood's positions along the Smoketown Road to high ground near McClellan's headquarters at a brick farmhouse. Maj. Gen. Fitz-John Porter's V Corps occupied the Union center along the hills east of Antietam Creek, while Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside positioned his IX Corps opposite the lower bridge and the bluffs that commanded the approaches. Franklin's VI Corps was held in reserve.

McClellan's plan of attack depended on coordination and timing all along the line. It was finalized on the afternoon of the 16th, a full day after McClellan had arrived on the scene. McClellan charged Hooker and Mansfield, supported by Sumner, with the main effort against the Confederate left, while Burnside crossed the lower bridge and fords at Antietam Creek to attack the ridgeline on the Confederate right. If either effort made good

Stephen D. Lee's Confederate artillery firing on Union forces early on the morning of the battle. The soon to be famous Dunker Church is in the background. Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick's division advances on right. Painting by Vermont Captain James Hope, who was there that day.

National Park Service

progress, McClellan was prepared to pitch every available soldier against the center of Lee's line.

Late on the afternoon of the 16th, Hooker crossed Antietam Creek intending to position more than 8,000 Union troops to launch the attack the following morning. Brig. Gen. George G. Meade's 3rd Division led the way as flank protection, and one of its regiments, the 13th Pennsylvania, hearty deer hunters from the western woodlands known as the Bucktails, was hit particularly hard. Its commander, Colonel Hugh McNeil, was killed along with five others, and 20 were wounded. The fight began to peter out with the gathering darkness. Hooker threw a blanket on the ground near the Poffenberger farmhouse and commented within earshot of George Smalley, a reporter for the *New York Tribune,* "If they had let us start earlier, we might have finished tonight."

A steady drizzle pelted down during the night, soaking the men as they fitfully slept. Occasionally, a nervous picket fired into the darkness. An hour before dawn, Hooker rode from the Poffenberger farm to his picket line beyond the edge of the North Woods. He surveyed the terrain and noticed a patch of high ground about a mile to his front near the junction of the Smoketown Road and the Hagerstown Turnpike. The little hillock would be his objective for the morning attack. To take it, Hooker's divisions would advance along the turnpike between the East and West Woods, through the pastures of the Miller farm, and across the cornfield at the turnpike's eastern edge.

Hood's Confederates had been marching and fighting continually for several days, and Jackson gave permission for Hood to withdraw his division to the vicinity of the Dunker Church to cook rations. Jackson included the caveat that Hood be ready to move at a moment's notice if called upon.

By 5:30 AM, the morning fog had burned off enough for the Confederate horse artillery under Major John Pelham to fire at the Union vanguard from Nicodemus Hill. As Brig. Gen. Abner Doubleday's 1st Division marched through the North Woods, Gibbon's 4th Brigade, wearing its distinctive black hats, led the way on the right. Gibbon's command had fought with such ferocity at Turner's Gap that Hooker commented that the men were as strong as iron. The troops began calling themselves the Iron Brigade.

Library of Congress

Slain Union infantry and Confederate artillerymen lie together on the field in front of Dunker Church. It would be the bloodiest single day in American history.

Brigadier General David Ricketts' 2nd Division, led by Brig. Gen. Abram Duryea's 1st Brigade, stepped off to Gibbon's left. The two brigades emerged from the North Woods simultaneously and crossed a field of clover. The Iron Brigade headed down the turnpike and into the northwest corner of the cornfield, while Duryea struck toward the East Woods and the cornfield's southern edge. Meade's 3rd Division followed in support.

The first Confederate shell struck the ranks of the 6th Wisconsin, killing two soldiers and wounding 11. As the Union troops came into view, more enemy guns under Colonel Stephen D. Lee, sited on the high ground opposite the Dunker Church, hit the attackers in their front. Nine Union batteries on the ridge behind the Poffenberger farm replied. Colonel Lee later described the fighting as "artillery hell."

While Hooker watched the opening moments of the fight from the Miller farm, he noticed that the cornfield was teeming with Rebels; bayonets gleamed in the morning sun above the ripening stalks of corn. Hooker ordered four batteries to unlimber. Their fire was devastating. In his later report, Hooker noted, "In the time that I am writing, every stalk of corn in the northern and greater part of the field was cut as closely as could have been done with a knife, and the slain lay in rows precisely as they had stood in their ranks a few moments before. It was never my fortune to witness a more bloody, dismal battlefield."

Under withering fire the Union vanguard pushed forward and the five Pennsylvania regiments of Meade's 1st Brigade, under Brig. Gen. Truman Seymour, quickly reached the edge of the East Woods at the Smoketown Road. There they ran headlong into one of Lawton's brigades under Colonel James A. Walker. These Alabama, Georgia, and North Carolina troops stood fast and poured such deadly fire into the Pennsylvanians that they fell back to the cover of the trees.

Library of Congress

Members of the 14th Brooklyn Regiment engage Confederates in hand-to-hand fighting around Dunker Church. The fighting ebbed back and forth all morning.

Duryea's brigade followed Seymour out of the East Woods and into the cornfield, stepping over mangled Confederate corpses that canister shots had killed moments earlier. The distance between the blue and gray lines was less than 250 yards. A brigade of Georgians under the command of Colonel Marcellus Douglass stood firm along the southern edge of the cornfield, reinforced by three regiments from Walker's brigade. Over the next half hour, Douglass and half his command fell in the heated exchange of rifle and artillery fire. Walker lost 228 of his 700 soldiers and was forced to retire.

Duryea's men fought valiantly, pressing the Georgians hard. In 20 minutes of fighting, Duryea lost 300 men. Ricketts' remaining two brigades, under Colonel William A. Christian and Brig. Gen. George A. Hartsuff, moved forward. Hartsuff was wounded and Christian suffered an emotional breakdown and fled the field. The ensuing delay was costly, and before the brigades could rally it was too late to help Duryea.

While Douglass and Walker held on, Colonel Harry T. Hays' hard-fighting Louisiana brigade, nicknamed the Louisiana Tigers, moved forward. Duryea's battered brigade withdrew through the cornfield toward the East Woods, exposing the Iron Brigade's left flank. The Tigers poured heavy fire into the 2nd and 6th Wisconsin, temporarily checking their advance. The Tigers also clashed with Ricketts' brigade, under Colonel Richard Coulter, who had replaced the wounded Hartsuff, as the Federals rushed through the shattered cornfield. Firing canister at point-blank range, Union artillery raked the attackers.

After more than an hour of fighting around the East Woods and the eastern half of the cornfield, the Federals had failed to press their slight advantage, feeding troops into the battle piecemeal as the Confederates had rushed reinforcements from the center to stem the Union tide. Casualties were fearful. The Louisiana Tigers were reduced to fewer than 200 men after sending 500 into the battle. The 12th Massachusetts had 224 of its 334 soldiers shot down, a casualty rate of 67 percent that was the highest of any Union regiment on the field.

Captain Benjamin F. Cook of the 12th Massachusetts remembered the horrific fighting in the cornfield and its aftermath. "Rifles are shot to pieces in the hands of the soldiers, canteens and haversacks are riddled by bullets, the dead and wounded go down in scores," he wrote. "The smoke and fog lift; and almost at our feet, concealed in a hollow behind a demolished fence, lies a rebel brigade pouring into our ranks the most deadly fire of the war. What there are left of us open on them with a cheer; and the next day, the burial parties put up a board in front of the position held by the Twelfth with the following inscription: 'In this trench lie buried the colonel, the major, six line officers, and one hundred and forty men of the [13th] Georgia Regiment.'"

To the west, Doubleday's division made better progress. Gibbon's Iron Brigade plowed down the Hagerstown Turnpike toward the cornfield and the West Woods. After chasing Confederate skirmishers off the Miller farm, Gibbon's men headed for the northwest corner of the cornfield and began taking fire from Douglass' troops and the Stonewall Brigade posted in the West Woods.

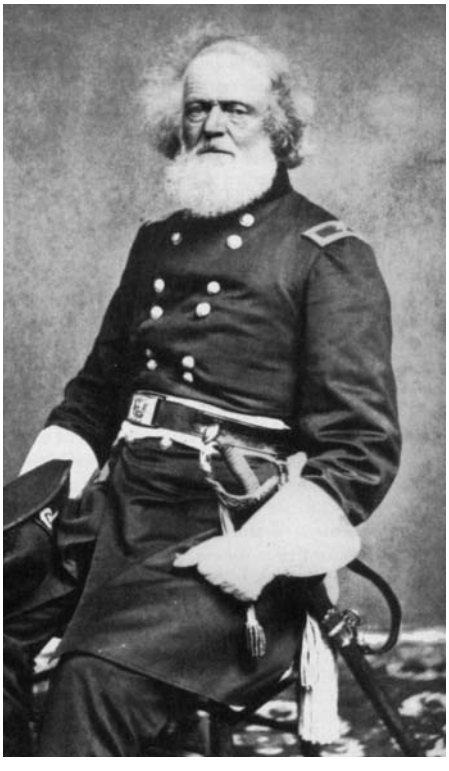
The 19th Indiana and 7th Wisconsin crossed the turnpike to cover the Iron Brigade's flank, and Gibbon brought up Battery B, 4th U.S. Artillery to dislodge the Rebels to his front. The gunners went into action amid Miller's haystacks, ignoring Confederate fire that cut down men and horses. Lt. Col. Edward Bragg of the 6th Wisconsin was wounded as the regiment was hit in both flanks. Major Rufus Dawes took command, pushing to a rail fence and engaging in a heated fight with Georgia troops south of the cornfield. Dawes remembered: "As we appeared at the edge of the cornfield, a long line of men in butternut and gray rose up from the ground. Simultaneously, the hostile battle lines opened a tremendous fire upon each other. Men, I cannot say fell; they were knocked out of the ranks by dozens."

The 7th Wisconsin and 19th Indiana, moving as flank protection, fired a devastating volley into the two brigades assailing the 6th Wisconsin. The Confederates were hit from three sides and melted away while the Wisconsin soldiers, accompanied by the 2nd U.S. Sharpshooters and the 14th Brooklyn, moved toward the high ground around the Dunker Church, still

several hundred yards away.

As Jackson's line wavered under unrelenting Union pressure, two brigades of his old division, 1,150 strong, rolled out of the West Woods. The division commander, John R. Jones, had been wounded by shrapnel earlier, and Brig. Gen. William E. Starke spurred his brigade of Louisiana soldiers and accompanying Virginians headlong into the Iron Brigade. Starke's Louisiana men took up positions along a rail fence on the east side of the Hagerstown Turnpike. The distance closed to 30 yards, and the two sides blazed away at one another. The rail fence provided little protection, and Starke's men fell in heaps. After the battle, photographer Alexander

Both: Library of Congress



Gardner photographed their corpses, twisted and contorted into grotesque positions, lying unburied in the summer sun. Starke, shot three times, died on the field.

Despite heavy losses and tenacious resistance, Doubleday had driven deeply into Jackson's line. A collapse of the Confederate left appeared imminent. Jackson summoned his last reserves, the 2,300 men of Hood's division. Hood's men threw down half-eaten biscuits and stuffed bacon into

ABOVE: Dead Confederate soldiers from Brig. Gen. William E. Starke's Louisiana Brigade lie crumpled on the Hagerstown Turnpike north of Dunker Church. LEFT: Maj. Gen. Joseph Mansfield.

their mouths as they rushed to fill the gap. Hood, a Kentuckian, commanded a full division including his old brigade of the 1st, 4th, and 5th Texas, the 18th Georgia, Brig. Gen. Wade Hampton's South Carolina Legion under the command of Colonel William T. Wofford, and a second brigade under Colonel Evander M. Law that consisted of the 4th Alabama, 2nd and 11th Mississippi, and the 6th North Carolina regiments.

Hood's division roared out of the West Woods, around the Dunker Church, and through a gap in the fence along the Hagerstown Turnpike, pitching furiously into the Iron Brigade. The Union troops were thrown back as Wofford rolled into the western portion of the cornfield and Law struck to the east.Three brigades from Hill's division supported Hood's defenders, and Brig. Gen. Jubal Early's brigade left Pelham's horse artillery on Nicodemus Hill to join the fray.

As the reliable Battery B, 4th U.S. Artillery blasted Hood's Texans with double loads of canister, Gibbon moved in to personally direct the fire. The cannon fire literally blew men apart. One Union officer saw "an arm go 30 feet in the air and fall back again." The fighting was desperate as the Confederate tide surged forward. Hood said to one of Jackson's aides, "Tell General Jackson unless I get reinforcements I must be forced back, but I am going on while I can."

Within minutes, Doubleday's hard-won progress was completely reversed. Ricketts' division was knocked out of the battle with 30 percent casualties, and it fell to Meade to patch a defensive line together. Lt. Col. Robert Anderson's 3rd Brigade, four regiments of Pennsylvania Reserves, crouched low behind a rail fence at the northern end of the cornfield and waited.

The 1st Texas, under Colonel P.A. Works, was hot on the heels of the fleeing Federals and outran the rest of Wofford's brigade. Racing 150 yards ahead of the units on either side, the whooping Texans came within 30 yards of the Pennsylvanians, who rested their rifles on the lowest fence rails and fired a withering volley at the legs of the onrushing Rebels, shrouded in the thick smoke of battle. More Union troops joined in from across the turnpike, and the Texans were caught in a murderous crossfire. Nine regimental color bearers were killed, and in less than half an hour the 1st Texas lost 186 dead and wounded, more than 82 percent of its strength, the highest casualty rate of any regiment on either side during the entire war.

Hood's lightning counterattack prevented the collapse of the Confederate left

Library of Congress

and forced Hooker's corps back essentially to its early morning starting point with more than 2,500 casualties. Hood, however, was unable to consolidate his gains. His division had suffered 1,380 dead and wounded, about 60 percent of its strength, and was forced to withdraw to the West Woods. Hood was aghast at the losses. When another officer asked the whereabouts of his division, he replied sorrowfully, "Dead on the field."

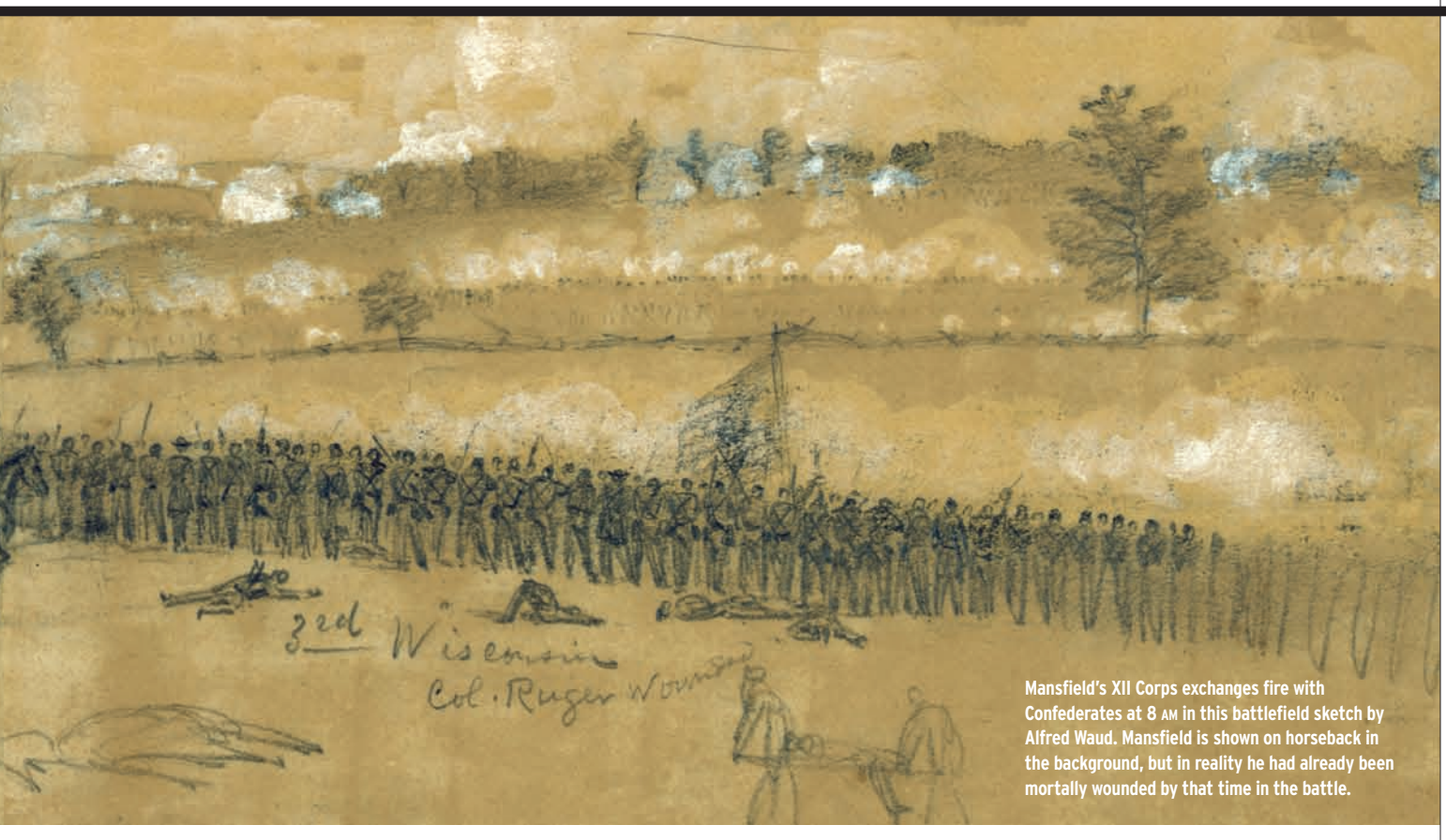
During the course of the morning, the cornfield, a space 250 yards long and 400 yards wide, changed hands 15 times. The ordeal on the Confederate left was not yet over. At the sound of guns to their right, Mansfield's 7,200-strong XII Corps, half of whom had never fired a shot in anger, set out at a leisurely pace, often allowed to break ranks and boil coffee. Fearful that his untried troops would break and run, Mansfield countermanded an order to deploy from columns into line of battle, and the massed ranks became a prime target for Confederate artillery.

Spotting Mansfield's tightly packed troops, Hood's men fired on the 10th Maine Regiment. When the Union men loosed a volley in reply, Mansfield, who had only taken command two days earlier, became confused, believing that large numbers of Federal troops were still to their front. "You are firing at our own men!" he shouted. Sergeant E.J. Libby remembered a loud response from the Maine men to the contrary. "Thomas Wait and myself told him that we were not firing at our own men for those that were firing at us from behind the trees had been firing at us from the first," recalled Libby. Mansfield spluttered, "Yes, yes, you are right." Precisely at that moment a bullet hit the 58-year-old general squarely in the chest. Mansfield was carried from the field and died within hours.

Williams took command of XII Corps and the fight for the cornfield continued, with men from both sides tripping over the dead and falling bleeding among the severed cornstalks. Among the wounded were Sergeant Bloss and Corporal Mitchell, who had found Lee's lost orders four days earlier. Their company commander, Captain Kop, was killed.

Meanwhile, Colonel D.K. McRae's North Carolina troops advanced into the East Woods. One of his junior officers observed a large Union formation moving to the right. Fearful that the brigade was about to be flanked, he raised the alarm prematurely. A wave of panic gripped McRae's men, who turned and fled, causing the remnants of Hood's brigades to fall back as well. McRae remembered: "The most unutterable stampede occurred. It was one of those marvelous flights that beggar explanation or description."

The Union formation that panicked the Confederates in the East Woods was Mansfield's 2nd Division under 61-year-old Brig. Gen. George S. Greene, a descendant of Revolutionary War General Nathanael Greene. The 28th Pennsylvania and 5th, 7th, and 66th Ohio of Lt. Col. Hector Tyndale's 1st Brigade led the way. The Pennsylvanians fired a tremendous volley into the flank of Colquitt's brigade, already locked in heavy combat with Union troops in the



Mansfield's XII Corps exchanges fire with Confederates at 8 AM in this battlefield sketch by Alfred Waud. Mansfield is shown on horseback in the background, but in reality he had already been mortally wounded by that time in the battle.

clover pasture beyond the northern fringe of the cornfield. Tyndale's men charged into the cornfield, and several minutes of hand-to-hand fighting ensued before the Confederates began withdrawing toward the West Woods. The carnage was terrific; only two dozen of the original 250 men of the 6th Georgia survived the maelstrom without being killed or wounded.

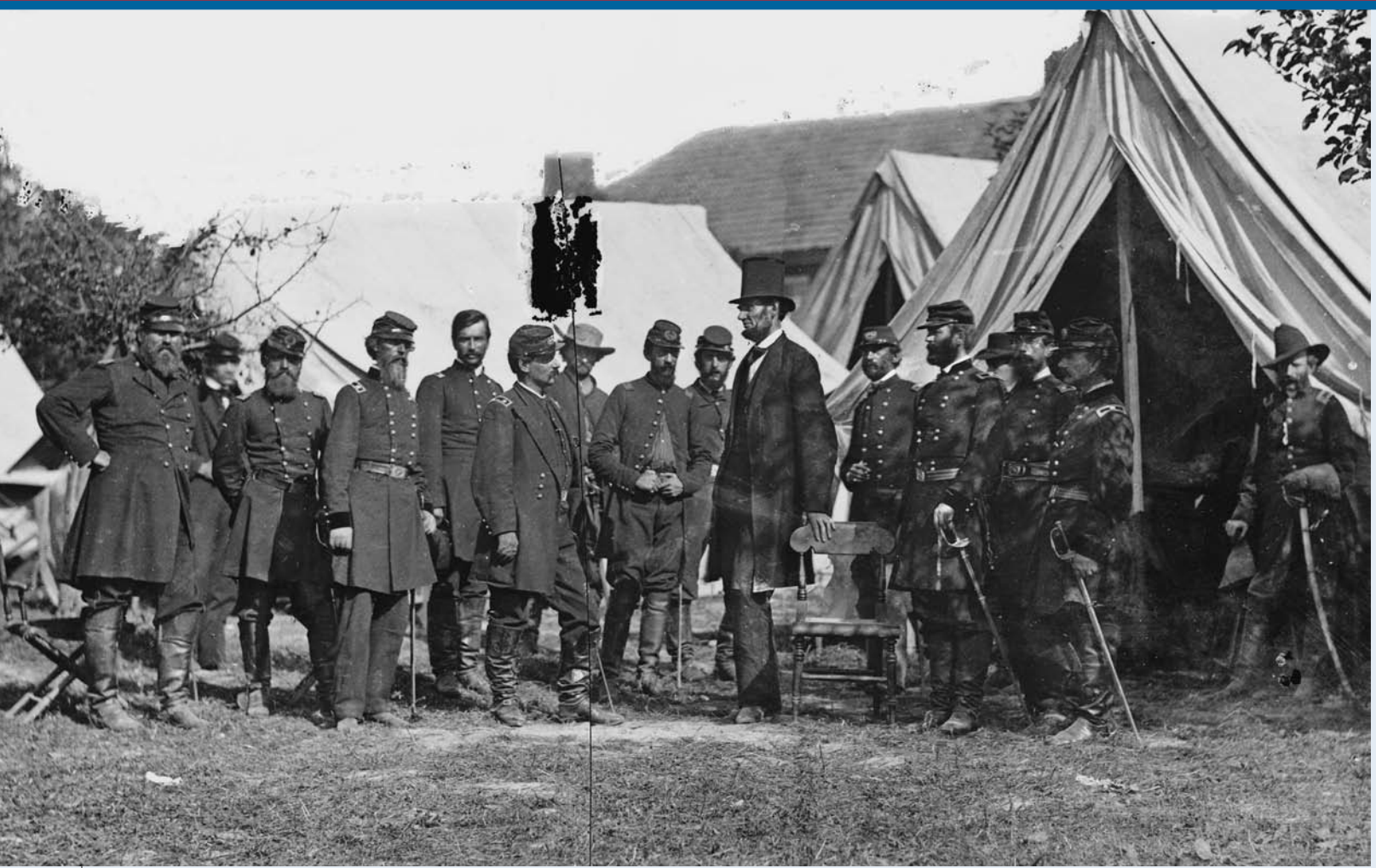
Two divisions of Sumner's corps, commanded by Brig. Gen. William French and Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick, crossed Antietam Creek to support Mansfield. The divisions became separated, and Sedgwick pressed forward with 5,000 men through the northern edge of the West Woods, coming under heavy attack from elements of three Confederate divisions and Pelham's horse artillery on Nicodemus Hill. The decimated survivors retreated in disorder, leaving behind 2,200 killed and wounded.

Greene's 2nd Brigade, under Colonel Henry J. Stainrook, reached the Smoketown Road and unhinged the Confederate right flank. Hill worked feverishly to extricate his battered brigades, while the 102nd New York Regiment drove relentlessly toward the high ground around the Dunker Church, where Colonel Lee's artillerymen were doing their best to limber their guns and retire. Greene rode forward and warned the New Yorkers to slow down before they outran covering artillery. "Halt, 102nd," he ordered. "You are bully boys but don't go any farther. Halt where you are. I will have a battery here to help you."

Greene's two brigades were within 200 yards of the Dunker Church, where they halted and watched the West Woods swarm with Confederates. Hooker, conspicuously mounted on a white charger, rode to the southern edge of the cornfield and saw an opportunity to rally the remains of his corps, bring artillery forward, and join with XII Corps to strike the decisive blow. Just then, an enemy sharpshooter put a bullet through Hooker's foot, which bled profusely. Unable to remain in command, he left the scene convinced that Union forces were poised to drive the Confederates into the Potomac. "I supposed that we had everything in our own hands," he thought.

The situation was not as promising as Hooker had hoped. XII Corps had lost a quarter of its men during the rush across the cornfield toward the Dunker Church. Stragglers were everywhere, and entire regiments milled about without direction. Commanders on both sides were trying to make order out of chaos, and even the most hardened veteran could scarcely comprehend the unimaginable holocaust that engulfed the cornfield, the woods, turnpike, and high ground around the Dunker Church, where more than 8,000 soldiers, Union and Confederate, lay dead or wounded.

One soldier of the 6th Wisconsin captured the essence of that horrific morning. The fighting, he said, was like "a great tumbling together of all heaven and earth—the slaughter on both sides was enormous." By 10 AM, the opening phase of the battle had blown itself out, and the fighting swung southward. America's bloodiest day was far from over. □



Photographing Antietam

BY ROY MORRIS JR.

TWO DAYS after the unparalleled bloodletting at Antietam, a bushy-bearded Scottish photographer and his pudgy, clean-shaven assistant rolled onto the battlefield with their bulky stereoscopic cameras and portable darkroom. Forty-year-old Alexander Gardner and James F. Gibson were part of Mathew Brady's team of field photographers. To this point in the war, the photographers had mainly snapped pictures of generals, cannons, tents, bridges, houses, wagons, rivers, creeks and horses. It was almost like a giant summer camp. After Gardner and Gibson had finished taking 70 photographs at Antietam, no one would ever make that mistake again.

The Maryland battlefield, controlled by the Union forces of Maj. Gen. George McClellan's Army of the Potomac, was nothing less than a charnel house. Per longstanding military tradition, the victorious army had the responsibility of caring for the wounded and burying the dead of both sides (the defeated army, having retreated, could scarcely be expected to help). By the time Gardner and Gibson began taking photographs on September 19, most of the 2,100 Union dead had been buried, but the 2,700 slain Confederates remained lying for the most part where they had fallen, many in the sunken roadway known, without exaggeration, as "Bloody Lane." Others lay crumpled behind a wooden fence alongside the Hagerstown Turnpike.

The photographers spent their first two

ABOVE: An exhausted Union burial detail takes a break from its melancholy work on the Miller Farm at Antietam. Dead Confederates awaiting interment lie scattered before them.

RIGHT: Mathew Brady appended a caption to this Alexander Gardner photograph of a dead Confederate soldier, surmising that the victim had crawled to the relative safety of a small ravine where he died. Gardner was later found to have moved bodies on the battlefield for dramatic effect, which he may have done in this case.

OPPOSITE: Abraham Lincoln visits with Maj. Gen. George McClellan and his staff on October 3, 1862, two weeks after the Battle of Antietam. On the far right is a then-little-known captain named George Armstrong Custer.

ABOVE: Union troops in the 130th Pennsylvania Infantry inspect piles of Confederate bodies in the all-too-descriptive "Bloody Lane" at Antietam. More than 4,800 soldiers in the two armies were killed in the one-day battle, the bloodiest single day in American history.

BELOW: A rare sight of Union dead at Antietam. These victims, gathered for burial, served in Brig. Gen. Thomas Meagher's famed Irish Brigade. Luckily for civilian viewers, the victims were too far away to make out their identities.

ABOVE: A Union soldier, possibly a personal friend, views the newly turned grave of 1st Lt. John A. Clark of the 7th Michigan Infantry. An unburied Confederate lies nearby. Understandably, the friendly dead were attended to first.

BELOW: Dr. Anson Hurd, a regimental surgeon in the 14th Indiana Volunteers, attends to Confederate wounded in a makeshift camp near Smith's barn at Antietam. The victorious army had the responsibility to care for the wounded of both sides after a battle.

days at Antietam photographing the Confederate dead, many of whom belonged to Brig. Gen. William Starke's Louisiana Brigade, known as the Tigers. Prior to Antietam, the Tigers had been known more for their boisterous, hard-drinking antics in camp than their prowess on the battlefield. Gardner and Gibson would pay mute tribute to their valor and sacrifice. In death, they had more than lived up to their nickname.

Wherever they turned, the photographers found scenes of horrific slaughter, as exhausted members of the burial parties were hard-pressed to keep up with the demands of their terrible task. The weather, warm and sunny, did nothing to help. The broiling sun hastened the decomposition of the swelling, fly-covered bodies, making the job of retrieval and burial even more repulsive. Meanwhile, thousands of wounded soldiers suffered in makeshift field hospitals, often within yards of the bloated dead.

In all, Gardner and Gibson spent four days at Antietam; the final two days they concentrated on the battle on the Union right at the already famous Burnside Bridge. Gardner sent an understated telegram back to his assistant, David Knox, at Brady's Washington, D.C., studio: "Got forty five negatives of battle. Tell Jim please deliver as soon as possible."

Gardner would return to the battlefield on October 3-4 with President Abraham Lincoln, taking another 25 prints while the president attempted unsuccessfully to get McClellan to follow up his ghastly victory. Later that same month, Mathew Brady displayed the Gardner-Gibson photographs in his New York studio, where they created a sensation. Thousands flocked to see the first-ever photographs of dead Americans on a battlefield. Said an unnamed reporter for the New York Times; "Mr. Brady has done something to bring home to us the terrible reality and earnestness of war. If he has not brought bodies and laid them in our dooryards and along streets, he has done something very like it." The face of war had suddenly become real. □

BY JOSHUA SHEPHERD

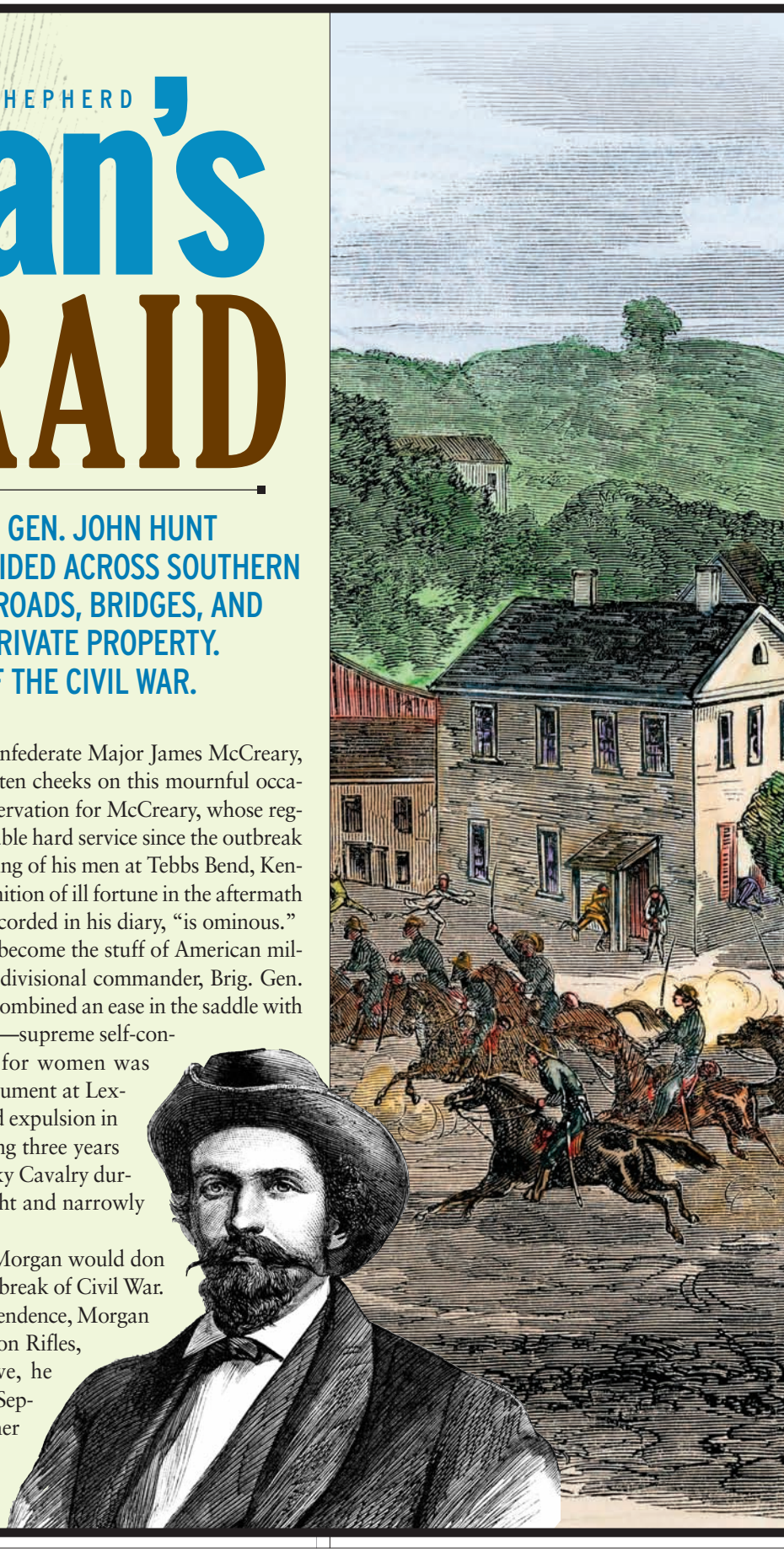
Morgan's OHIO RAID

FOR THREE WEEKS IN JULY 1863, BRIG. GEN. JOHN HUNT MORGAN'S CONFEDERATE CAVALRY RAIDED ACROSS SOUTHERN INDIANA AND OHIO, DESTROYING RAILROADS, BRIDGES, AND THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF PRIVATE PROPERTY. IT WAS THE LONGEST CAVALRY RAID OF THE CIVIL WAR.

"IT WAS A SAD, SORROWFUL DAY," recalled Confederate Major James McCreary, "and more tears of grief rolled over my weather beaten cheeks on this mournful occasion than have before for years." It was no slight observation for McCreary, whose regiment, the 11th Kentucky Cavalry, had seen considerable hard service since the outbreak of the Civil War. But after witnessing the severe mauling of his men at Tebbs Bend, Kentucky, McCreary was left with an inexplicable premonition of ill fortune in the aftermath of the fight. "The commencement of this raid," he recorded in his diary, "is ominous."

The raid on which the 11th was embarked would become the stuff of American military legend. It was the brainchild of the regiment's divisional commander, Brig. Gen. John Hunt Morgan, a transplanted Kentuckian who combined an ease in the saddle with the most necessary trait of a successful cavalry leader—supreme self-confidence. The dashing Morgan's reputed fondness for women was exceeded only by his love for fighting. A juvenile argument at Lexington's Transylvania University had led to a duel and expulsion in 1844, and Morgan experienced a dose of real fighting three years later when he served as a lieutenant in the 1st Kentucky Cavalry during the Mexican War, seeing action at the hard-fought and narrowly won American victory at Buena Vista.

His brief taste of soldiering virtually ensured that Morgan would don a uniform when the secession crisis resulted in the outbreak of Civil War. Although by no means an advocate of Southern independence, Morgan raised and trained a volunteer company, the Lexington Rifles, in 1857. When Kentucky neutrality proved elusive, he unflinchingly cast his lot with the Confederacy, and in September 1861 he led his men south to link up with other Confederate forces. The following April, Morgan was named colonel of the 2nd Kentucky Cavalry.



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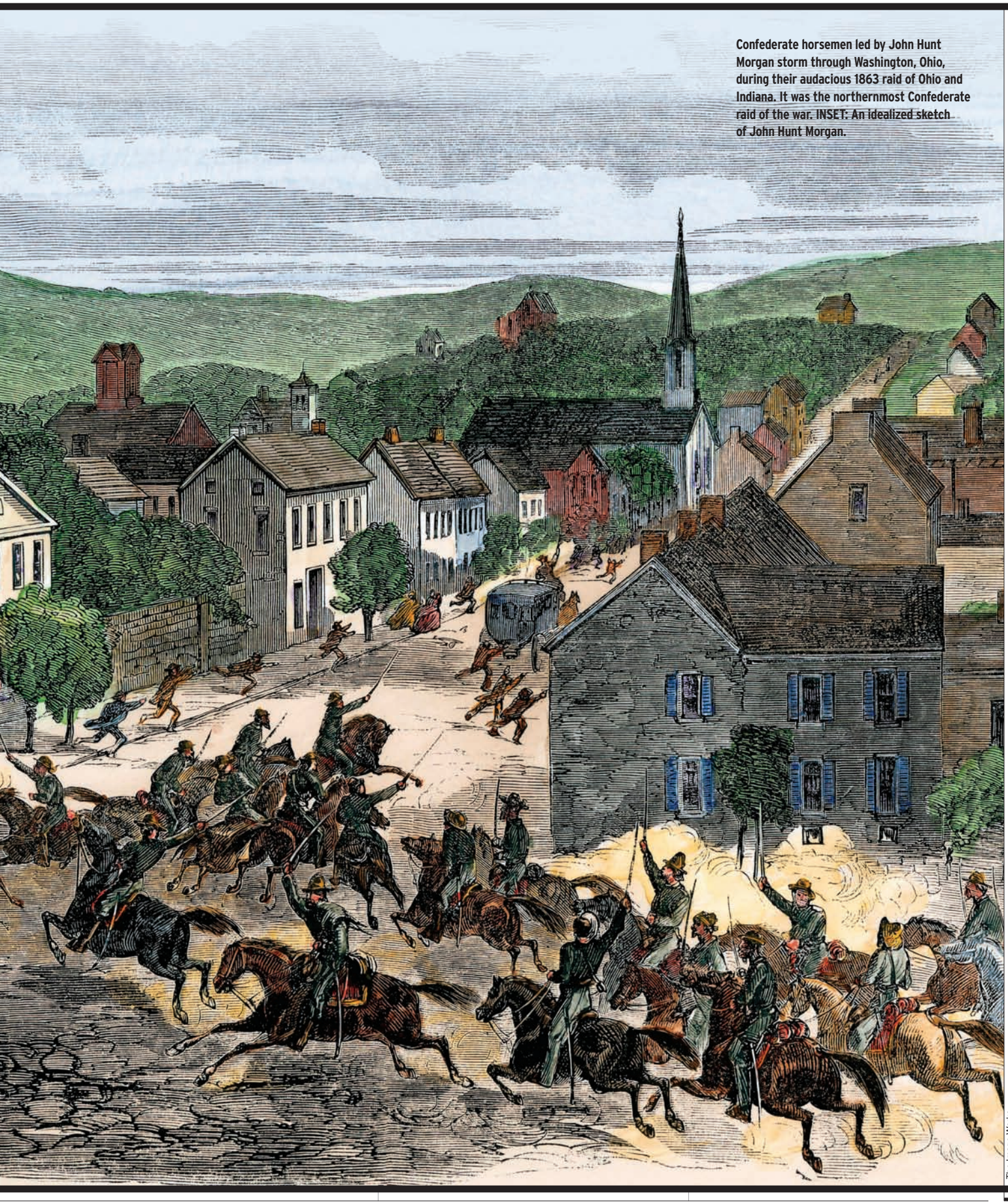
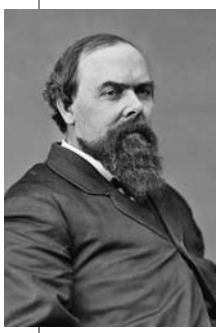


Confederate horsemen led by John Hunt Morgan storm through Washington, Ohio, during their audacious 1863 raid of Ohio and Indiana. It was the northernmost Confederate raid of the war. INSET: An idealized sketch of John Hunt Morgan.

The Image Works

Morgan quickly proved himself adept at irregular operations, menacing enemy supply depots and lines of communication in hard-driving raids that left befuddled Federal commanders wobbling on their heels. In July 1862, he led a raid deep into his home state and captured some 1,500 Federal troops. His most spectacular coup came that December, when he led a combined arms force of about 1,300 men in an unexpected strike against an enemy brigade guarding the Huntsville crossing of the Cumberland River. Despite being up against some 2,400 Federals, Morgan fixed his opponent with infantry, lashed his flanks and rear with cavalry, and made off with more than 1,800 prisoners. Awarded a brigadier's star for the stunning exploit and heralded a partisan genius in the Southern press, Morgan earned the sobriquet of "Thunderbolt of the Confederacy."



All: Library of Congress

ABOVE: Union leaders who reacted with urgency to Morgan's raid included, left to right, Indiana Governor Oliver Morton, Brig. Gen. Edward Hobson, and Colonel August Kautz, whose men eventually caught up with the elusive Confederate leader at Buffington Island, Ohio. OPPOSITE: Mounted on a superb Bluegrass thoroughbred, a well-turned-out member of Morgan's 2nd Kentucky Cavalry rides to battle in this painting by Don Troiani.

Unfortunately, Morgan's own commanding officer was not as effusive in his praise. Braxton Bragg, arguably the most despised general in the Confederacy, grudgingly admitted that Morgan had few peers as a partisan leader but regarded him and his troops as gravely deficient for conventional cavalry operations. Eminently fussy by nature, Bragg was easily nettled by Morgan's swaggering troopers, self-styled knights in gray who were ill disposed to submit to regular military discipline. Bragg's subordinates generally responded with a seething contempt for their commander's abilities, or lack thereof, and such near insubordination proved particularly acute among commissioned officers hailing from the Bluegrass State. Bragg's cool personality and inept generalship, thought one of Morgan's men, "have made an abhorrence of him part of a Kentuckian's creed." Ultimately, Bragg was left distrustful of his hell-for-leather horsemen, and he would later write that Morgan, despite his undeniable skills, was "a dangerous man, on account of his intense desire to act independently."

By the summer of 1863, Bragg would be in desperate need of a cavalryman with just such a predilection for independent command. The Army of Tennessee's senior officers expected to receive a multi-pronged Union thrust into Middle and East Tennessee. The Federal Army of the Cumberland under Maj. Gen. William Rosecrans was within striking distance of Bragg, whose army occupied the Duck River line centered at Tullahoma. Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside was likewise known to be mustering the Army of the Ohio, estimated between 15,000 and 30,000 men, for a push into East Tennessee. Centered in Glasgow, Kentucky, was a formidable detachment of Federal cavalry, thought to be upward of 5,000 men, under the command of Brig. Gen. Henry Judah. It was feared that as Rosecrans and Burnside advanced Judah would maintain communication between the two Federal forces and be in an advantageous position to fall on Bragg's flanks and rear should the latter be forced to give ground.

Bragg opted to assume the strategic defensive and give up the Tullahoma line, fall back behind the Tennessee River, and then turn to fight Rosecrans somewhere in the vicinity of Chattanooga. To render the delicate maneuver of withdrawing in the face of the enemy less hazardous, Bragg was considering a plan suggested by Morgan. As usual, the cavalryman thought on a large scale. He proposed to lead his entire division, nearly 2,700 men, on a massive raid far into the Federal rear to wreak havoc on Rosecrans' lines of communication, threaten Louisville, and give Bragg a better chance of withdrawing his army from Tullahoma unmolested. Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler, Bragg's chief of cavalry, had suggested a similar feint toward Louisville as early as March, and he eagerly endorsed Morgan's plan.

Fully aware of Morgan's penchant for recklessness, Bragg approved the operation but outlined rigid parameters designed to keep his impetuous partisan commander in check. On June 14, Wheeler forwarded written authorization for the raid. Morgan would be allowed to take just 1,500 men; the balance of his division would remain behind to screen Bragg. Furthermore, Wheeler stressed that the operation was designed to relieve pressure on the Army of Tennessee, and Morgan should remain close enough to his base to directly cooperate with Bragg. "Should you hear that the enemy is advancing for a general engagement," wrote Wheeler, "General Bragg wishes you to turn rapidly and fall on his rear." And despite Louisville's tantalizing proximity to the Union-loving heartland of Indiana, the raiders were to confine their movements to Kentucky.

Not surprisingly, Morgan had plans of his own. In a meeting with his senior officers, he revealed the ambitious scope of the proposed expedition, which he had clearly been contemplating for some time. Morgan intended to take the bulk of his division on an unprecedented raid through Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio before returning to Confederate lines by way of West Virginia. Morgan's officers, who were by no means strangers to desperate operations behind enemy lines, were nonetheless left speechless by the general's plan. Morgan was confident they could outpace any Federal pursuit but highlighted four primary obstacles to the success of the raid: crossing the Cumberland River, crossing the Ohio River, bypassing Cincinnati, and recrossing the Ohio. "All who heard him felt he was right in the main," recalled one

officer, "although some of us were filled with a grave apprehension."

Morgan did not inform his officers of Bragg's explicit orders to limit the raid to Kentucky. But in a private conversation with Colonel Basil Duke, his senior brigade commander, brother-in-law, and closest confidant, Morgan made a stunning admission. "General Morgan told me," Duke later recalled, "that General Bragg had ordered him to operate in Kentucky, and further stated that he intended, notwithstanding his orders, to cross the Ohio." Morgan feared that if he followed the letter of his instructions and remained in a state teeming with Federal troops the contest "would be decided very soon, and he would be driven out or cut to pieces in a few days."

Entering Indiana presented greater prospects for success. Morgan was certain that such an unexpected move would draw thousands of pursing Federals out of Kentucky, where he could keep them occupied for weeks on end. From a strategic standpoint, Morgan felt that the Federals would do better to focus their energies on Bragg, but he was equally certain that the mass hysteria that resulted from an invasion of the North would compel the Union high command to deal with the threat immediately and "furnish the troops that would be called for." Morgan was willing to run the very real risk of wrecking his division, as well as his own career, flatly stating that "even if he lost his command, he could greatly benefit General Bragg by crossing the Ohio River, and only in that way." Notwithstanding such high talk, it was evident that Morgan conflated genuine patriotism with unbounded ambition. Crossing the Ohio with a substantial number of troops, observed Duke, "had long been a favorite idea" of his exuberant brother-in-law.

As he began to implement the operation, Morgan ordered Duke to dispatch horsemen to scout a number of potential fords along the Ohio River upstream from Cincinnati. Another body of 62 men led by Captain Thomas Hines moved out under the vague pretense of operating "north of the Cumberland" but headed straight for Indiana. Anticipating his orders, Morgan had already set his troops in motion by June 11, heading out from Alexandria, Tennessee, on what proved to be a fitful start to the raid. A hesitant Bragg immediately recalled Morgan's troopers to counter the Federal cavalry brigade of Colonel William Sanders, whom he feared was targeting East Tennessee for a raid of his own. The threat proved to be groundless, but Morgan was delayed for the better part of two weeks.

By June 30, Union pickets on the Cumberland River were growing suspicious of an increased Confederate presence on the south bank of the river. The Federal commander in the area, Brig. Gen. Edward Hobson, was convinced that Morgan's troops had occupied Turkey Neck Bend in force and threatened a crossing. A competent horse soldier and veteran of the Mexican War, Hobson requested permission to attack Turkey Neck Bend that night and post a cavalry brigade at Burkesville, Kentucky. His immediate commander, Henry Judah, demurred, regarding an enemy crossing of the swollen Cumberland as extremely unlikely. Hobson sent a single company to Burkesville.

Judah's tepid response would prove to be a serious mistake. On the evening of June 30, Colonel Richard Morgan's 14th Kentucky Cavalry began crossing the river to secure a bridgehead on the north bank. Although ultimately authorized to lead 2,000 men north, Morgan had characteristically ignored his orders, leaving behind a single regiment, the 9th Kentucky, to operate with the Army of Tennessee. Morgan would mount the long-awaited raid with the lion's share of his division, consisting of two brigades of crack Confederate cavalry. His second brigade, consisting of about 1,000 men commanded by Colonel Adam "Stovepipe" Johnson, began crossing the Cumberland on the morning of July 1. They were followed by his first brigade, about 1,500 men, led by Basil Duke. Morgan's complement of artillery consisted of Captain Edward Byrne's Kentucky Battery, which boasted 12-pounder howitzers as well as several Parrott rifles.

By July 2, Morgan had all his men across the river and handily brushed aside the company that Hobson had posted at Burkesville. Rosecrans and Burnside were informed of developments that afternoon, and Hobson, desperate to slow the advance of Morgan's troops until an effective response could be mounted, ordered reinforcements to the vicinity. Inexplicably, the order was countermanded by Judah.

Morgan's division was already riding hard to the north. On the afternoon of July 3, the horsemen thundered into Columbia, Kentucky, driving off 100 enemy cavalry in a brief skirmish. From the outset of the raid, Morgan's men took considerable liberties with private property, a dangerous breach of discipline bemoaned (at least formally) by the officers. In the aftermath of the fight, some of the troopers, reportedly in their cups, broke into one of the town's stores and commenced looting. Lt. Col. Robert Alston, Morgan's chief of staff, angrily ordered the return of the goods, observing: "These outrages are very disgraceful, and are usually perpetrated by men accompanying the army simply for plunder. They are not worth a damn, and are a disgrace to both armies."

That evening the main body camped about six miles north of Columbia, and during the night Morgan's scouts reported hearing the disconcerting sound of Federal troops feverishly felling trees. By dawn, Morgan found himself facing a difficult decision. Drawn up on Tebbs Bend of the Green River were Federal troops who clearly intended to fight—men from the 25th Michigan, bolstered by companies from the 8th Michigan and 79th New York. The thin force, around 200 men, was commanded by Colonel Orlando Moore, a starchy veteran officer of the 6th U.S. Infantry who clearly knew his business. Moore used the ground to good advantage, deploying his men on the Columbia-Campbellsville Turnpike where the road bottlenecked across a high ridge before dropping down to a bridge over the Green River.

Moore had further strengthened his position with crude but effective field works. Out front was a simple rifle pit manned by 75 men. The bulk of the force occupied a more formidable earthwork whose front was covered by a nasty tangle of abatis. Morgan, inherently aggressive and disinclined to seek a detour, opted to assault the position. A detachment of Confederate horsemen was ordered to cross the river and fall on the bridge from the rear, while the main body advanced along the turnpike. At about 6:30 AM, a salvo from Byrne's Parrotts announced the Confederate presence, and Morgan sent in a demand for unconditional surrender. "If it was any other day," Moore responded, "I might consider your demand, but the Fourth of July is a bad day to talk about surrender, and I must therefore decline."

Moore's rejection brought on the fight in earnest. Morgan sent in elements of Stovepipe Johnson's brigade, the 11th and 7th Kentucky with a single company of the 10th on the right. Advancing dismounted, Johnson's men seized the enemy's advanced line, where they were afforded a better view of Moore's main position. Morgan and Johnson entered the rifle pit for a better look, and Johnson blanched at the sight. Moore had clearly laid a deadly trap for the Southerners, and Johnson pleaded in vain to bypass the position and locate alternate crossings of the Green. "I begged the general not to attempt it," he recalled, "as I had but seven rounds of ammunition and we could easily flank the place; but he insisted and I led my men to the charge."

Johnson's opinions should have carried greater weight. A native of Kentucky, he moved to the Texas frontier in 1854 and cut his teeth fighting the much dreaded Comanche. Regarded as an expert tracker and scout, he served in that capacity early in the war with no less a fighter than Nathan Bedford Forrest. He then raised the 10th Kentucky Cavalry and led his men on the first Confederate incursion into Indiana in July 1862. It was during his celebrated raid of Newburgh that Johnson earned the nickname "Stovepipe" when he bluffed a garrison of rattled Hoosiers into surrender after rolling a preposterous Quaker gun into view. His men loved him for the exploit.

Johnson led his brigade forward supported by the 5th Kentucky of Duke's brigade. Despite a weight in numbers, the Confederates were unable to gain the earthwork and were subjected to heavy fire as they stalled in the confusing mass of downed timber in front of the Federal position. At times the combatants fought from the mere distance of six feet. In an attempt to flank the position, Colonel David Chenault's 11th Kentucky was ordered to turn the enemy's left. Chenault gamely led his men into the abatis but was fatally shot through the head as he fired his sidearm into the earthwork.

Further attempts to force the bridge were deemed pointless, and Morgan pulled his men out, bypassed Moore's position by means of alternate fords, and picked up the turnpike again north of the Green River. The furious fight at Tebbs Bend had cost Morgan 35 killed and 45 wounded.

Library of Congress

Writing in his diary that evening, Alston recorded that the men remained in good spirits but were growing fatigued after enduring "bad roads, little rest or sleep, little to eat, and a fight every day." Morgan, he thought, looked "haggard and weary."

The following day was only worse. Morgan rode hard for Lebanon, hoping to bag the town's rich Federal supply depot. The Union officer in charge at Lebanon was Lt. Col. Charles Hanson, an acquaintance of the Morgan family, who led his own 20th Kentucky as well as detachments from three other regiments—all told about 380 men. Burnside had telegraphed Hanson the previous evening with orders to hold the town until reinforcements arrived. When Morgan's division converged on the town early that morning, Hanson was driven through the streets to a ready-made fortress he had prepared in advance consisting of the depot of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad and several adjacent structures. Morgan demanded unconditional surrender. The Federals refused, and he shelled the depot until its upper story was reduced to rubble.

Around 1 PM, after nearly seven hours of frustrating stalemate, Morgan ordered the 2nd and 5th Kentucky to dismount and storm the buildings. As the troops rushed forward, the general's youngest brother, Lieutenant Thomas Morgan, was shot in the chest and exclaimed, "Brother Cally, they have killed me!" The attack fell apart, but the death of Tommy Morgan, something of a favorite in the division, incited "a terrible excitement" thought Colonel Alston, and the men were reduced to "a state of frenzy." Morgan ordered the buildings around the depot burned, and angry troopers yelled that they would burn the entire town. In the face of such threats, Hanson capitulated at 1:20 PM.

In the wake of the surrender, the general nearly lost control of his enraged men. Captain Charleton Morgan stalked up to Hanson, grabbed him by the beard, and raged, "I'll blow your brains out, you damned rascal!" Confederate Colonel D. Howard Smith, who had been reared with Hanson, intervened, and General Morgan

Map © 2014 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

ABOVE: Morgan's July 1863 raid, undertaken against the express orders of General Braxton Bragg, covered nearly 1,000 miles in three states, but cost the raider all but 364 of his men. Debate about the usefulness of the raid continues. OPPOSITE: John Hunt Morgan, center, appears to recoil from the fiery trail of destruction left by his own raiders in Columbia, Kentucky. His officers later made the men return all looted goods.

reportedly drew his pistol to restore order. No further blood was shed, but the Confederates made a swift wreck of the town. About 20 buildings were destroyed and one disgusted officer recorded that a minority of unsavory soldiers "behaved badly breaking open stores and plundering indiscriminately." All in all, the repeated robbery of Kentucky civilians, whom the Confederates had ostensibly come to liberate, was "very disgraceful."

The breakneck pace of the raid was clearly taking a toll on the exhausted cavalrymen, but Morgan could ill afford to rest his men after expending so much time and energy dealing with small but stubborn detachments of Federal troops. He met with the same difficulty when he arrived at Bardstown at 4 AM on July 6. The night before, his lead elements had collided with 25 men of the 4th U.S. Cavalry, who promptly took refuge in a livery stable and barricaded the doors with lumber and horse manure. A dismounted assault failed to dislodge them, as did an attempt to set fire to the building, and the stubborn defenders refused two demands to surrender, holding out until 7 AM, when Confederate artillery was unlimbered and trained on the building. Dick Morgan, exasperated at the embarrassing episode and seething over the death of his brother the day before, initially refused to recognize the white flag but soon thought better of it and accepted the surrender. A mere two dozen defenders had detained Morgan's division for several more precious hours.

Morgan could ill afford such delays. The day before, Burnside had placed Hobson in command of a provisional cavalry divi-

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

A contemporary watercolor by Henry Ogden shows John Hunt Morgan and his brother-in-law and closest adviser, Colonel Basil Duke, during the 1863 raid.

sion of nearly 4,000 men, which set out in pursuit from Greensburg, Kentucky. Morgan had a head start on his opponent, but Hobson, a solid officer and dependable commander, could read a map. By the afternoon of July 7, he was convinced that Morgan was heading for Brandenburg, Kentucky, which sat on the Ohio River about 50 miles downstream from Louisville. From Brandenburg, Morgan's next move was obvious.

He had, in fact, already set in motion his plans for a river crossing. On the afternoon of July 7, Morgan dispatched Captain William Davis and a company of cavalry to ride beyond Louisville and cross the river east of town, where it was hoped they would divert attention from the main body. Another detachment rode into Brandenburg for a linkup with the mercurial Captain Thomas Hines, who had led a brief raid into southern Indiana. Hines had tangled with particularly feisty Hoosier militia and gotten the worst of it. Of the 80 men who had followed him, only 12 escaped.

For Morgan, there was no turning back. His division reached Brandenburg in force on the morning of July 8 and immediately made preparations for a crossing of the Ohio. Two steamers, *John T. McCoombs* and *Alice Dean,* were already available, having been seized the previous day by members of the 10th Kentucky. But as a heavy morning fog lifted from the river, it became apparent that the crossing would be contested. About 130 Indiana militia under the command of Colonel John Timberlake had hastily assembled at Morvin's Landing on the north bank of the river, training a single 6-pounder at Brandenburg.

As soon as the fog lifted, Timberlake's gun dispersed Morgan's men from the Brandenburg wharf, and he confidently shouted across the river for the surrender of the two steamers, or "I will blow you all to hell in five minutes." One cheerful Confederate trooper, with perhaps more good humor than good sense, shouted back, "Oh hell, old man, come over and take a drink." The exchange that resulted was less than cordial. Morgan's guns went into battery on Brandenburg's courthouse hill and promptly scattered the Hoosiers, who scampered back into the bushes from the river bank.

With Morvin's Landing cleared, Morgan began crossing his men and secured a bridgehead with the 9th Tennessee and 2nd Kentucky. As soon as the two regiments were over, Morgan was delayed again by the abrupt appearance of the Federal gunboat USS *Springfield,* which commenced a duel with the raiders' guns at Brandenburg. With Hobson's force fast closing the distance to his rear, Morgan grew concerned that the Union gunboat could effectively cut him off from the two regiments on the north bank of the river. His fears were unfounded. Ensign Joseph Watson, *Springfield*'s commander, drew off for reinforcements after a noisy but bloodless artillery exchange. He later reported that the raiders numbered at a greatly exaggerated 10,000 men.

Morgan resumed ferrying his troops. Duke's brigade went over soon after dark, and Johnson's brigade continued crossing until after midnight. *Alice Dean* was burned to the water line, but *McCoombs*, whose skipper was an old acquaintance of Colonel Duke, was spared. Not long after Morgan's rear guard disappeared from the river bottoms early the next morning, Hobson's provisional division, which had stopped to rest a mere dozen miles away, finally arrived in Brandenburg.

As Morgan drove north up the Mauckport Road, the local militia was scrambling to halt the invasion. By the morning of July 9, about 450 Home Guards under the command of Colonel Lewis Jordan took up position on a slight ridge about a mile south of Corydon and hastily improvised

breastworks from logs and fence rails. At half past noon, Morgan deployed his division, Johnson's brigade out front with Duke in support. The battle was joined on the Confederate right, where Dick Morgan's 14th Kentucky engaged in a sharp fight with the militia to their front, who put up stiffer resistance than expected. The guardsmen repulsed three separate charges, and Duke recalled with grudging admiration that the Hoosiers "resolutely defended their rail piles."

Real fighting, however, lasted no longer than 30 minutes. The militia line crumpled when Johnson's dismounted troopers snapped at the flanks, and as the Hoosiers raced pell-mell for Corydon, the battle degenerated, recalled one survivor, into "a series of skirmishes in which each man seemed to fight upon his own hook." Morgan was determined to capture the lot. Byrne's artillery unlimbered on the heights above Corydon, and the 14th Kentucky galloped east of town, where the troopers seized the Louisville Plank Road, the Hoosiers' only adequate route of retreat or reinforcement. Jordan quickly surrendered, and Morgan just as quickly paroled the militia en masse. The Confederates briefly rested in town, tramping into private homes in a search for food and ransacking Denbo's Store, where they made off with boots, hats, and clothing. Morgan refrained from burning the town's mills after demanding payment of $3,000. He settled for $2,100.

The furor created by the invasion of Indiana was exactly what Morgan hoped. Every militia company south of the National Road was mobilized, and Oliver Morton, the state's iron-fisted Republican governor, flew into a state of near panic. Morgan contributed to the confusion by unleashing a lively campaign of false intelligence, the handiwork of George "Lightning" Ellsworth, a popeyed eccentric who possessed boundless energy for disrupting the Union war effort. Regarded as little more than a buffoon by some of Morgan's officers, Ellsworth was unquestionably skilled at tapping telegraph lines and copying the rhythm of Federal operators. Thanks to his efforts, the Union lines were flooded with false reports of Morgan's whereabouts and intentions; nearly every town in southern Indiana considered itself specifically targeted.

Despite the hysteria, Morgan was anxious to get out of the state as quickly as possible after causing as much damage as possible in the process. His main body, as well as smaller parties dispersed in the countryside, stripped the region of horses, impressing fresh mounts multiple times each day. The division averaged 21 hours in the saddle and 40 miles per day, and even the best horses gave out after 20 miles. The raiders gleefully wrecked the state's infrastructure, destroying bridges, rail lines, depots, and mills in a wide swath across southeast Indiana.

After scattering 200 jittery militia at Salem on July 10, Morgan's feats created a sensation in the Northern press. He ordered a number of bridges burned, as well as the town's railroad depot. In the process, his men lost all sense of proportion. Duke thought the ever present danger had rendered the troops more and more reckless, resulting in wholesale plunder of the town's stores. "It seemed to be a mania," said Duke, "senseless and purposeless," as men seized such useless articles as bolts of cloth, birdcages, and ice skates. "They pillaged like boys robbing an orchard," he recalled, adding that he was shocked "that such a passion could have been developed so ludicrously among any body of civilized men."

Duke could muster no more than 200 men, but they held out until their ammunition was expended. A wild race ensued, Morgan's indomitable brother-in-law, at the head of 50 frightened and hungry men, was captured hiding in nearby woods.

As soon as the merriment at Salem was over, Morgan had the division on the move—and for good reason. Hobson was hot on his trail and arrived in Salem at 9 o'clock that evening. Morgan drove his men hard, reaching Vernon on the Muscatatuck River the next afternoon. A scratch force of about 1,000 militiamen occupied impressive bluffs on the north bank and twice refused a Confederate demand for surrender. Morgan was bluffing. After dark, the militia heard what was thought to be a crossing and rushed to counter the threat; several men lost their footing and tumbled down the bluffs only to find that a local farmer's cows had caused the commotion.

By then the raiders were gone. Disinclined to waste further time on militia, Morgan pulled out and slipped away on back roads. The division made for the hamlet of Dupont, where the raiders caught about four hours of sleep and then were treated to a Sunday dinner of 2,000 hams liberated from a local packing house. By the morning of July 13, Morgan was closing fast on the Ohio border and facing what he considered the greatest obstacle of the raid, the Cincinnati, Hamilton & Dayton Railroad. Not without good reason, Morgan feared that Burnside, who had upward of 10,000 armed men in Cincinnati, could easily avail himself of the rail line to rapidly deploy troops across Morgan's front.

That Morgan was able to cross the CH&D and bypass a heavily defended Cincinnati unmolested was nothing short of miraculous. His plan, which was to cross the railroad at night and keep moving until he was well east of Cincinnati, resulted in a merciless ride that taxed man and beast. "It was without doubt the darkest of all nights," remembered Lieutenant Kelion Peddicord of the 14th Kentucky. The men were spent. "Oftentimes I have seen on that raid both man and horse," Peddicord

wrote, "nodding together, and at such times the horse staggering like one intoxicated." To Duke, the ride around Cincinnati was nothing short of a nightmare.

Upon reaching Sharonville, 17 miles northeast of Cincinnati, Morgan felt confident enough to celebrate with his officers over brandy and cigars. Meanwhile, his exhausted and hungry men spread out to forage what they could from the nearby countryside. When they found a local intersection defended by a mere 200 convalescents and militia, Morgan chose to backtrack to an alternate route rather than throw his exhausted men into more unnecessary combat. At 4 PM on July 14, the division set up camp at Williamsburg, Ohio, having ridden a remarkable 84 miles in 36 hours.

At 3:30 the next morning, they were back in the saddle again. Although Morgan had succeeded in wreaking havoc on a wide swath of Indiana and Ohio, the raid was taking a considerable toll on the division, and he knew it. Of the 2,460 men who headed out on the raid, only 2,000 were left in the ranks. Despite the continued destruction of bridges and rail lines, Morgan's paramount objective was to get his men back across the Ohio River. He sent Dick Morgan to investigate possible crossing sites, and Dick found the ford at Ripley defended by militia and a single gun. He didn't press for a closer look, but he did glimpse a most unwelcome sight: Federal gunboats in the river.

The presence of such vessels, which could tear his command to pieces during a river crossing, forced Morgan to continue east to the fords above Portsmouth, where, in the summer months, gunboats typically found the shallow waters of the Ohio unnavigable. The Ohio couldn't be crossed too soon. On the evening of July 14, a persistent Hobson had reached Mulberry, Ohio, 14 miles behind Morgan, where he linked up with an additional brigade of Michigan cavalry under the command of Colonel William Sanders.

As the Confederate column drove deeper into Ohio, it was regularly delayed by roadblocks of felled trees, testament to industrious northern farmers more adept with an ax than a gun. Local militias were not averse to fighting and increasingly snapped at the raiders' flanks as they passed, inflicting casualties by twos and threes. Duke respected the militias' grit but noted that larger bodies were easily put to flight by simple flanking maneuvers. "We captured hundreds of prisoners," noted McCreary in his diary, "but, parole being null, we can only sweep them as chaff out of the way."

On July 17, the raiders tangled with a substantial force of 1,500 militia at Berlin Crossroads, and although they were eventually driven off Morgan lost three more precious hours in the process. By the time he approached the roads to the ford at Eight Mile Island, near Cheshire, Morgan found the rugged hills commanding the route swarming with militia. The general, along with Duke, caught a glimpse far more ominous: telltale plumes of smoke from Federal gunboats. The pair agreed to make for the ford at Buffington Island, where the river was expected to be entirely impassable to larger vessels. To get there, the division was forced to utilize the Stagecoach Road, a narrow thoroughfare that paralleled the Ohio but was flanked by steep hillsides guarded not by militia but two regiments of veteran Federal troops under the command of Colonel Rutherford B. Hayes, whose stubborn delaying action cost Morgan three killed and 16 wounded and afforded the pursuing Union cavalry time to close the distance on the Confederate rear.

The raiders arrived in Cheshire at 1 PM. Morgan was elated. Sitting on the front porch of a general store, he called to Stovepipe Johnson to rest with him a bit. The general was smiling and clearly relieved. "All our troubles are now over," he told his brigade commander. "The river is only twenty-five miles away, and tomorrow we will be on southern soil." Unknown to Morgan, the Federal noose was tightening around his division. Hobson arrived in Cheshire about 8 that evening, briefly rested, and then rode on after the raiders. Judah, who reached Pomeroy at 4 that afternoon, decided on a forced march for Racine, a crossroads hamlet within striking distance of Buffington Island. Heavy rains had unseasonably swollen the Ohio, and some of the water at Buffington Island, normally around three feet deep in July, now was double that depth.

Morgan rode into Portland Bottoms, a large flood plain adjacent to Buffington Island, at around 8 PM. In the dark, his scouts located a redoubt guarding the ford, defended by what appeared to be Federal troops and two guns. After assessing the situation, Duke pressed for immediate action, suggesting that the division abandon their wounded, seize the redoubt in a night attack, and swim their horses to West Virginia. Morgan mulled over his choices and decided a night crossing was too risky; he would assault the earthwork and cross his rested men in the morning. Even men in the ranks were uneasy about the decision. "All night long every one of us that I heard express themselves," remembered Private John Weatherred, "said we would be captured, many of us, if we remained all night."

The river was blanketed by heavy fog the following morning, July 19. Duke advanced the 5th and 6th Kentucky to attack the redoubt but found it abandoned. The jittery militiamen guarding it had run off in the night. About 110 men of the 9th Tennessee nabbed a flatboat and four skiffs, crossed the river, and took up positions on the south bank to cover the rest of the division as it came over. Federal cavalry was known to be near, but so far all was going according to plan.

Suddenly, at 5:30 AM, bedlam erupted. Elements of Duke's brigade patrolling in dense fog south of Portland Bottoms ran into Judah's advance guard, which had executed a forced night march, opening a sharp skirmish that left the Federals reeling. Thirty Union troops were captured, and Judah himself narrowly escaped. Duke's horsemen gave chase through a thinning fog but saw the enemy's main body deploying into line of battle. Judah had about 1,000 men and three batteries in his scratch brigade.

Duke hastily formed his troops across the bottoms to cover the rest of the division but was badly outmatched. Judah's batteries possessed 3-inch ordnance rifles that played havoc on the raiders' line, and a wild charge of the 5th Indiana Cavalry cut up Duke's right rear, seizing several guns. Looking to the river, Duke was horrified. A Federal gunboat, USS *Moose,* accompanied by two armed steamers, appeared off his flank and unleashed a devastating enfilade fire. Duke's line crumpled under the pressure, but he succeeded in withdrawing his men in good order, reforming them closer to Johnson's brigade, which was positioned along the Chester Road.

University of Kentucky

A notably unrepentant group of officers from Morgan's cavalry share a consoling drink during their imprisonment at Western Penitentiary in Allegheny City, Pennsylvania. Morgan and six others escaped from prison in Columbus, Ohio.

Momentum was clearly against the cornered raiders. Union Colonel August Kautz, whose fresh troopers had been sent out by Hobson to ride down Morgan's command, drove into Confederate pickets two miles west of Buffington and then assaulted Johnson's right. Morgan held his own until 6:30, when more Federal troops poured into the fight—Sanders' brigade along with the 11th Michigan Battery. One gun unlimbered on the Chester Road, within 600 yards of Johnson, while another opened fire from a commanding hill that covered the bottoms. Great gaps were torn into the ranks of the disoriented Confederates, who broke in panic for the rear. The raiders, remembered Private Alfred Austin of the 5th Indiana, "skedaddled like a scared flock of sheep."

In the confusion, Morgan was able to make off with about half the division while Johnson and Duke covered the retreat with what men they could gather. The two brigade commanders hastily conferred. Duke offered to fight it out in the bottoms while Johnson extricated the remnants of his brigade. Duke could muster no more than 200 men, but they held out until their ammunition was expended. A wild race ensued. Morgan's indomitable brother-in-law, at the head of 50 frightened and hungry men, was captured hiding in nearby woods. The fight at Buffington Island had been an utter disaster. Morgan suffered 57 killed, 63 wounded, and 50 captured. An additional 570 disoriented raiders were rounded up over ensuing days.

Morgan desperately sought to escape with the shattered remnants of his command. The following afternoon, the demoralized Confederates arrived at Belleville Island Ford and immediately attempted a crossing there. While Morgan was midstream, *Moose* steamed into range, although Lt. Cmdr. Leroy Fitch mercifully ordered his gunners not to fire on the helpless Confederates in the river. About 300 men reached the West Virginia shore. Morgan, seeing the bulk of his command still stranded in Ohio, headed for the north bank.

Miraculously, Morgan kept his scarecrow division on the run for another week. Increasingly hemmed in and daily losing men to capture and desertion, Morgan made a final attempt to reach Bobb's Island Ford on July 26. On the Beaver Creek Road, he ran into a barricade manned by wide-eyed volunteers of the New Lisbon Militia armed with an antiquated cannon. Most of the militia scattered, but their captured commander, Captain James Burbick, agreed to accept Morgan's sick and wounded and guide the remaining Rebels to Pennsylvania. A mere 12 miles from the border, Morgan saw a dust cloud on a parallel farm lane and recognized that Federal cavalry had finally cut him off. The game was up. Hoping to cheat his pursuers one last time, Morgan abruptly offered to surrender to Burbick. The startled militia officer agreed, and the men negotiated rather lenient terms, which granted the raiders parole, their side arms, and a safe escort out of Ohio. Morgan then trotted to a nearby farm and calmly sat down in the shade of a cherry tree. Many of his troopers simply collapsed by the side of the road for a few moments of much needed sleep.

Major George Rue, the Federal officer who had finally trapped the elusive Morgan, arrived to disarm the legendary general and his senior officers. When informed of Morgan's surrender terms, Rue blinked in disbelief. "Who the hell is Burbick?" he barked. Brig. Gen. James Shackelford, who met with Morgan in the orchard and ultimately claimed the honor of capturing him, disavowed the arrangement, calling it with some accuracy "not only absurd and ridiculous, but unfair and

Continued on page 98

SEALING VICKSBURG'S FATE

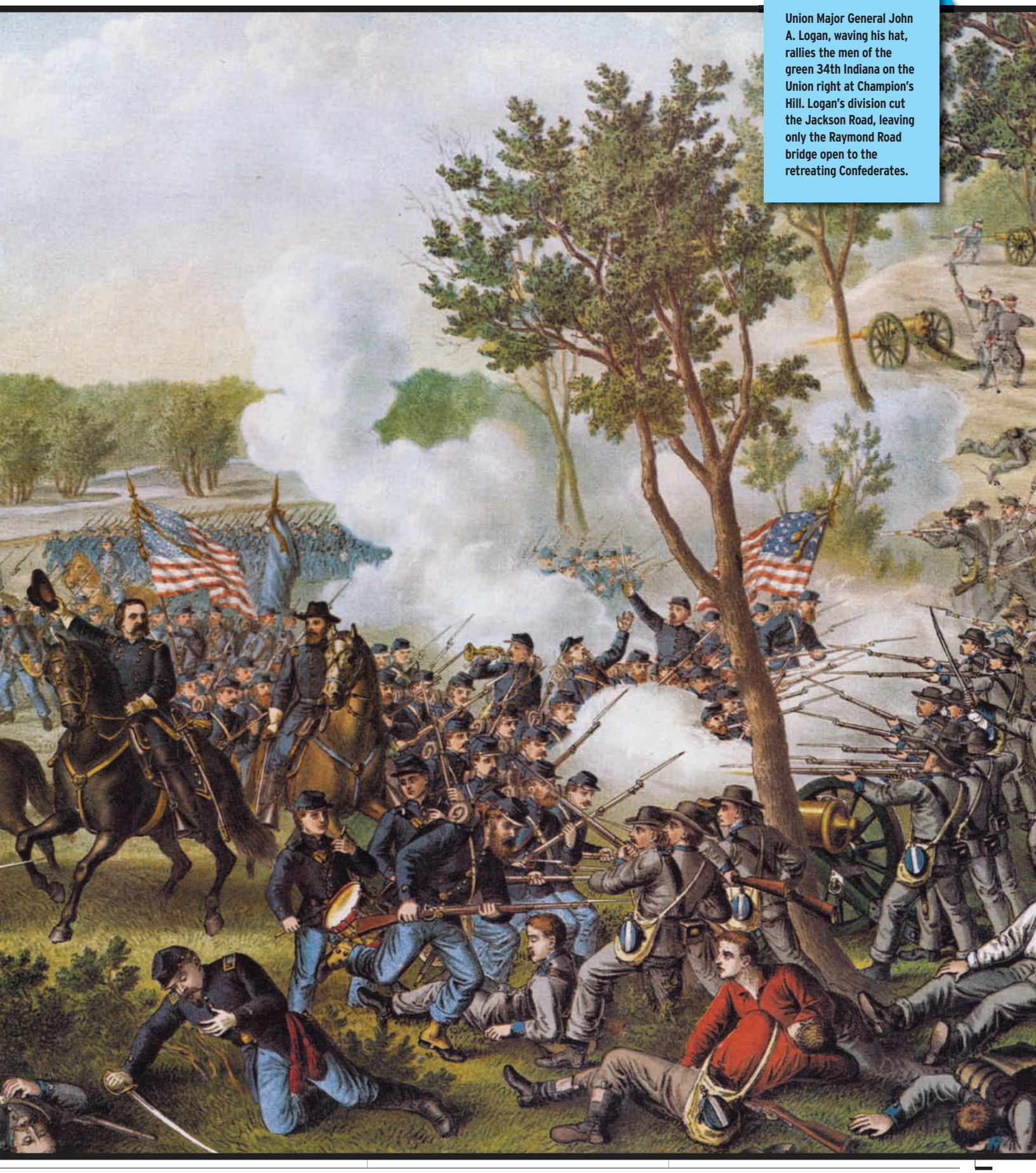
With Union forces swarming toward Vicksburg, Confederate General John C. Pemberton reluctantly moved out of the city to intercept Ulysses S. Grant's hard-charging forces. They would collide at Champion's Hill.

By Lawrence Weber

During the Civil War, the strategic importance of Vicksburg, Mississippi, was readily apparent to both the Union and the Confederacy. Abraham Lincoln considered Vicksburg the key to the war in the West and a necessary target for the Union if they hoped to achieve overall victory. "Vicksburg is the key," wrote Lincoln. "The war can never be brought to a close until that key is in our pocket. I am acquainted with that region and know what I am talking about, and as valuable as New Orleans will be to us, Vicksburg will be more so."

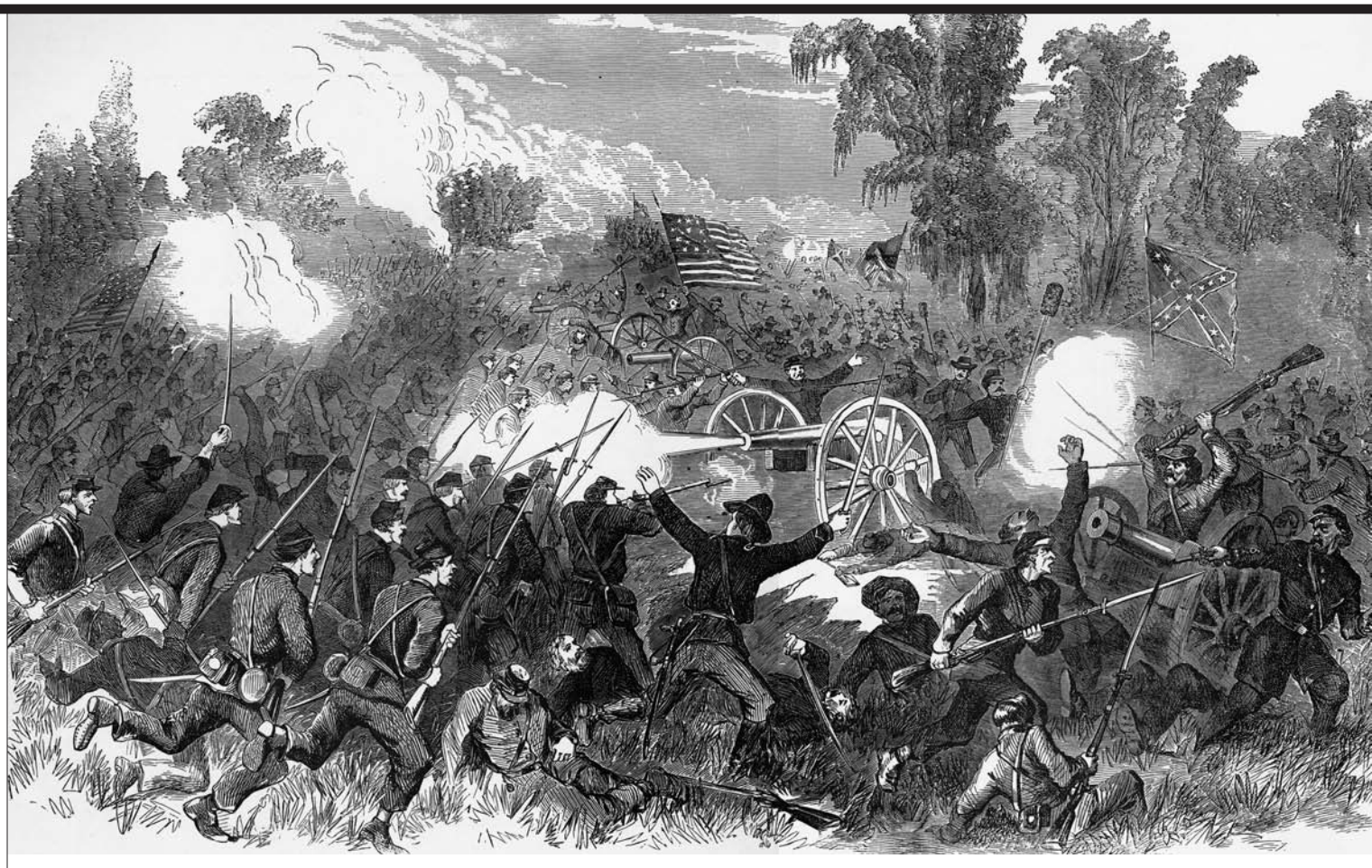
Vicksburg, situated on a high bluff, was the last Confederate military stronghold on the Mississippi River. The location of the city allowed the Confederacy significant mobility along the strategic river, not only regarding troops, but also supply and communications. Southern President Jefferson Davis understood as well as Lincoln the importance of Vicksburg. In a letter dated May 8, 1863, Davis wrote: "If [Lt. Gen. John] Pemberton is able to repulse the enemy in his land attack and to maintain possession of both Vicksburg and Port Hudson, the enemy's fleet cannot long remain in the River between those points from their inability to get coal and other necessary supplies."

On the morning of May 14, Pemberton was en route to Edward's Depot just east of Vicksburg, where he was preparing to establish defensive positions, when he received a message from General Joseph Johnston, who had just evacuated Jackson. Johnston informed Pemberton that Union Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman had moved between them with four detached divisions at Clinton. If Pemberton could advance on Sherman from the rear while Johnston advanced from the front, together they could defeat Sherman's detached divisions. It was a bold idea, but it did not sit well with Pem-



Union Major General John A. Logan, waving his hat, rallies the men of the green 34th Indiana on the Union right at Champion's Hill. Logan's division cut the Jackson Road, leaving only the Raymond Road bridge open to the retreating Confederates.

All photos: Library of Congress



berton. Advancing on four enemy divisions to the east meant moving the majority of Confederate forces farther away from Vicksburg, leaving the city even more vulnerable to an attack by the Union forces of Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant.

Pemberton convened a council of war with his generals. The opinions in the council were mixed, but a majority of the generals favored the advance that Johnston had proposed. Pemberton, however, felt that moving on Clinton would be suicidal, and instead sided with his two senior divisional commanders, Maj. Gens. William W. Loring and Carter L. Stevenson. They proposed that Pemberton move toward Grant's rear and cut off his communication and supply lines in the hope of forcing him to retreat. Pemberton agreed and ordered his army to move the next day toward Dillon's Plantation, located on the main road leading from Raymond to Port Gibson.

Pemberton was unaware that Johnston had evacuated Jackson without a fight. In a letter to his new commander, Pemberton wrote: "I shall move as early tomorrow morning as practicable with a column of 17,000 men to Dillon's, situated on the main road leading from Raymond to Port Gibson, 7½ miles below Raymond and 9½ miles from Edward's Depot. The object is to cut the enemy's communications and to force him to attack me, as I do not consider my force sufficient to justify an attack on the enemy in position or to attempt to cut my way to Jackson."

At 1 in the afternoon of May 15, Pemberton put his men into motion. Moving his army across Baker's Creek during the afternoon proved impossible as the creek had swelled tremendously due to a hard-driving rainstorm that had washed away the bridge. Pemberton halted for several hours before eventually moving his army across the creek using the Clinton Road Bridge, 1½ miles to the north. He continued marching toward Raymond Road and eventually gave orders to bivouac for the night near the Elliston plantation, home of Mrs. Sara Elliston, where Pemberton established his headquarters. Upon settling in, Pemberton detailed Colonel Wirt Adams's 1st Mississippi Cavalry to patrol the vicinity during the night and scout for enemy positions. The night passed uneventfully.

The next morning, around 6:30, Adams encountered the lead Union forces of Maj. Gen. John A. McClernand's XIII Corps on the Raymond Road and began to skirmish with them. Around the same time that Adams sent word to Pemberton of his encounter, Pemberton received a troubling dispatch from Johnston. "Our being compelled to leave Jackson makes your plan impracticable," wrote Johnston. "The only mode by which we can unite is by your moving directly to Clinton, informing me, that we may move to that point with about 6,000 troops. I have no means of estimating enemy's force at Jackson. The principal officers here differ very widely, and I fear he will fortify if time is left him. Let me hear from

you immediately."

Pemberton, thinking that Adams was simply skirmishing with a small band of Union forces on the Raymond Road and sensing the urgency in Johnston's dispatch, ordered his men to begin a retrograde march toward Clinton in the hope of reuniting with Johnston's forces. As Pemberton and his men began their countermarch, Union forces commenced to attack the head of his column with long-range artillery fire. Pemberton fell back to strategic Champion's Hill, a 75-foot-high prominence located on the grounds of the Champion plantation.

As the early-morning clash grew more intense, Pemberton quickly deployed all three of his divisions into battle lines stretching roughly three miles in length, with Loring on the right, Bowen in the center, and Stevenson on the left. The line of battle was quickly formed, without any interference on the part of the enemy. The position selected was a naturally strong one, and all approaches from the front well covered. Even Grant later commended Pemberton's position, writing in his memoirs: "Champion's Hill, where Pemberton had chosen his position to receive us, whether taken by accident or design, was well selected. It is one of the highest points in that section, and commanded all the ground in range."

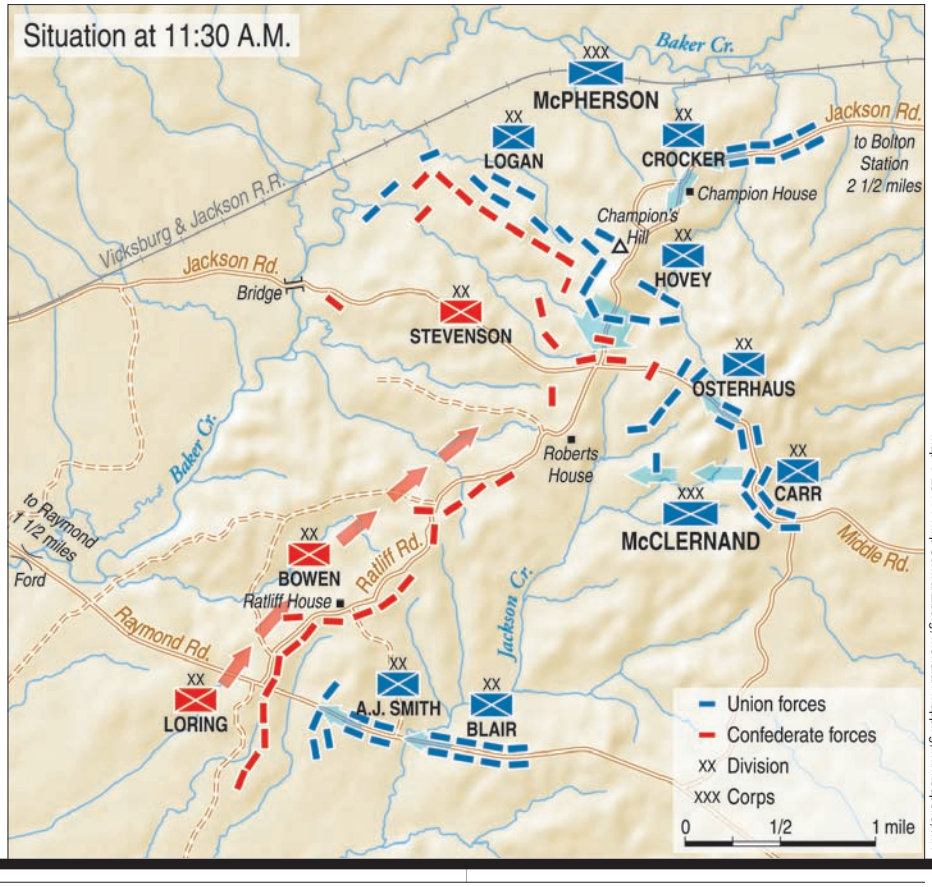
There was one weakness in Pemberton's battle line, however. The left flank was vulnerable to an attack from the north via the Jackson Road, which crossed at the crest of the hill. This key intersection, known as the Crossroads, became one of the most hotly contested parts of the battlefield. During the early morning of May 16, Pemberton was unaware that a Union force commanded by Maj. Gen. John A. Logan (3rd Division, XVII Corps) was attempting to move from Bolton, down the Jackson Road to the Crossroads, in an attempt to cut the Confederates off from Vicksburg. If the Union forces could surprise Pemberton's men at the Crossroads and overlap their left flank, Pemberton's army would be trapped and all would be lost for the Confederates.

Good scouting on the part of the Confederacy foiled the Union trap before it could be implemented. Around 9 AM, a Confederate messenger brought word to Pemberton that Union forces were moving along the Jackson Road toward the Crossroads on their left flank. This information allowed Pemberton to adjust his lines in the defense of the Crossroads, and he ordered Stevenson and his men to establish lines at the crest of Champion's Hill. If the Confederates were to have any hope for success, the left flank had to hold their positions. One of the most critical and bloody parts of the battle was about to begin.

At about 10 o'clock, the battle began in earnest along Stevenson's entire front. Stevenson described the fighting in his official report: "At about 10:30 AM a division of the enemy, in column of brigades, attacked [Brig. Gen. Stephen D.] Lee and [Brig. Gen. Alfred] Cumming. They were handsomely met and forced back some distance, when they were reinforced, apparently by about three divisions, two of which moved forward to the attack and the third continued its march toward the left, with the view of forcing it. The enemy now made a vigorous attack in three lines upon the whole front. They were bravely met, and for a long time the unequal conflict was maintained with stubborn resolution. But this could not last. Six thousand five hundred men could not hold permanently in check four divisions, numbering, from their own statements, about 25,000 men; and finally, crushed by overwhelming numbers, my right gave way and was pressed back upon the two regiments covering the Clinton and Raymond roads, where they were in part rallied. Encouraged by this success, the enemy redoubled his efforts and pressed with the utmost vigor along my line, forcing it back."

While the Confederate left was surging back and forth against Maj. Gen. James B. McPherson's XVII Corps around the Crossroads, other Union forces began focusing their crosshairs on the Confederate center and right. Brig. Gen. Alvin P. Hovey's 12th Division, XIII Corps, battled along the cen-

BELOW: With Major General Ulysses S. Grant's forces fully in control of the high ground east of Vicksburg, luckless Confederate Lieutenant General John Pemberton had no choice but to fall back to the river fortress. Six weeks later, he would surrender the city to Grant. OPPOSITE: Union troops led by Brigadier Generals George F. McGinnis and Alvin P. Hovey attack the Confederate center at Champion's Hill, capturing 11 guns and 300 prisoners in an hour-long assault.



ter of the Confederate position with great success. Hovey ordered Brig. Gen. George F. McGinnis and Colonel James R. Slack to press their skirmishers forward up the hill and follow with their respective brigades. In a few minutes the fire opened briskly along the entire line, continuing for an hour. The Union troops drove forward 600 yards up Champion's Hill, capturing 11 guns and more than 300 prisoners.

The Confederates would not surrender the ground easily, however, and soon countercharged Hovey's men in fierce and lethal waves. Leading the countercharge was Brig. Gen. John S. Bowen's crack 3rd Division, considered by many "undoubtedly the best combat troops in either army." Bowen's men received minimal, if any, support from Loring's division. According to Pemberton's official report, Bowen's men, who took the brunt of the assault, performed courageously: "Just at this time a column of the enemy were seen moving in front of our center toward the right. [John C.] Landis' battery, of Bowen's division, opened upon and soon broke this column, and compelled it to retire. I then directed Major General Loring to move forward and crush the enemy in his front, and directed General Bowen to cooperate with him in the movement. Immediately on the receipt of my message, General Bowen rode up and announced his readiness to execute his part of the movement as soon as Major General Loring should advance. No movement was made by Major General Loring, he informing me that the enemy was too strongly posted to be attacked, but that he would seize the first opportunity to assault, if one should offer."

Pemberton grew tired of waiting for Loring to move. Galloping up the plantation road, he found Colonel Francis Marion Cockrell's 1st Missouri Brigade double-quicking toward him and directed them to support Bowen at Champion's Hill. Cockrell's forces crashed into Slack's Federals with an ear-splitting Rebel yell. Cockrell, a Missouri lawyer who had enlisted in the army as a private and quickly rose through the ranks to brigade command, rode up and down the line, clutching a large magnolia blossom in one hand and a saber in the other. His men reached the hilltop and delivered what one participant termed "one unbroken deafening roar of musketry."

Eventually, Bowen's division pushed Hovey's men back to the crest of Champion's Hill, where the fight for the center of the line proved extremely hot. Hovey's division stubbornly fell back, contesting to the death every inch of the field they had won. Colonel George Boomer brought up his 3rd Brigade, which was almost bowled over by McGinnis's fleeing men. Stragglers shouted that they had left behind 1,200 bodies on the hilltop. Hovey massed 16 cannons from the 1st Missouri, 16th Ohio, and 6th Wisconsin batteries in an open field southeast of the Champion house and ordered them to open fire on

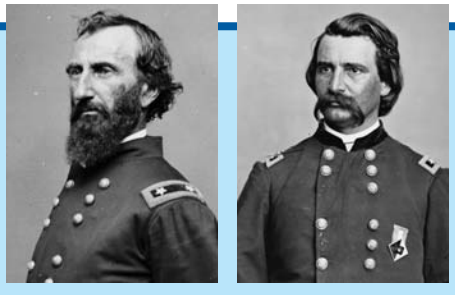
AFTER CHAMPION'S HILL

Some of the men involved in the Battle of Champion's Hill lived to see the end of the war; others did not.

After the battle, Maj. Gen. James B. McPherson, one of Ulysses S. Grant's favorite generals, was given command of the Army of the Tennessee when Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman was promoted to commander of all armies in the western theater. McPherson went on to fight with Sherman's Army of the Cumberland and Army of the Ohio during the Atlanta Campaign, where he was mortally wounded on July 22, 1864, at Peachtree Creek. His death was a heavy loss for the Union.

Major General John A. McClernand was involved in the Vicksburg siege operations for a time, but eventually was relieved of his command by Grant for insubordination and was replaced by Maj. Gen. Edward O.C. Ord. Abraham Lincoln eventually reinstated McClernand to field command in 1864, giving him command of the XIII Corps of the Department of the Gulf in a politically motivated maneuver. Poor health restricted McClernand's ability to do his job, however, and he resigned from the Army on November 30, 1864. McClernand went on to an undistinguished career in politics and law after the Civil War. He died on September 20, 1900, and was buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield, Illinois—the same cemetery as Lincoln.

Brigadier General Alvin P. Hovey went on to lead his division through the siege of Vicksburg, and was given command of the 1st Division, XXIII Corps, Army of the Ohio during the early parts of the Atlanta Campaign. In 1864, Hovey received a brevet promotion to major general. He resigned the Army in 1865. After the Civil War, he became U.S. Minister to Peru, a job he held for five years. In 1886, after years of practicing law, Hovey was elected to the United States House of Representatives, and was reelected in 1888. He later became governor of Indiana and died in office on November 23, 1891. He was buried in the Bellefontaine Cemetery, Indiana.



John A. McClernand (left) and John A. "Black Jack" Logan.

Major General John A. Logan's 3rd Division of McPherson's XVII Corps was the first to enter the city of Vicksburg after its capture. In November 1863, he was given command of the XV Corps after Sherman was promoted. When his friend and ally James B. McPherson was killed in 1864, Logan took command of the Army of the Tennessee during the Atlanta Campaign. He was relieved of command by Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard, but rejoined his old XV Corps during the Carolinas Campaign.

After the Civil War, Logan served in both houses of Congress, and was nominated for vice president of the United States on the Republican ticket with James Blaine in 1884, an election they lost. As commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, Logan issued General Order No. 11, which established

the Confederates.

The sound of artillery thundered through Confederate center with lethal force. "Through the rebel ranks these batteries hurled an incessant shower of shot and shell, entirely enfilading the rebel columns," Hovey reported later. Meanwhile, Colonel Samuel Holmes's fresh 2nd Brigade arrived on the scene and began pouring shots through the heavy smoke that enveloped the battlefield. As the Confederates fell back again, shouts of joy could be heard from the men in Hovey's division. By 3 PM, Champion's Hill, which some of the men had renamed the "hill of death," was firmly in Union hands. Yet the battle was still not finished.

By mid-afternoon, the overwhelming numerical strength of the Union forces had broken the Confederate center. In what seemed like perfect timing for the Union, the Confederate left also found itself in disarray. Stevenson's division had been broken by Union forces around 4 PM and was falling back in unorganized masses. Pemberton did his best to rally the troops one last time on the left flank, but it was of no use. "Observing that large numbers of men were abandoningthe field on Stevenson's left, deserting their comrades, who in this moment of greatest trial stood manfully at their posts," reported Pemberton, "I rode up to General Stevenson, and informing him that I had repeatedly ordered two brigades of General Loring's division to his assistance, and that I was momentarily expecting them, asked him whether he could hold his position; he replied that he could not; that he was fighting from 60,000 to 80,000 men."

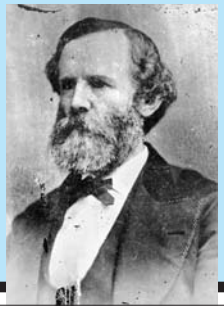
Loring's division, which was finally on its way to reinforce Stevenson's men, had taken an ill-planned route and arrived just as Stevenson's divisions had been broken—too late to make any difference. The order was given to fall back to positions around the Big Black Bridge. As he had done with Cockrell, Pemberton grabbed Brig. Gen. Abraham Buford's brigade, of Loring's division, and sent it racing to the front, but not before the enemy had taken possession of the Raymond Road. The 12th Louisiana and 35th Alabama Regiments rushed to Cockrell's support but were showered by fire from two captured batteries. Pemberton ordered a general retreat.

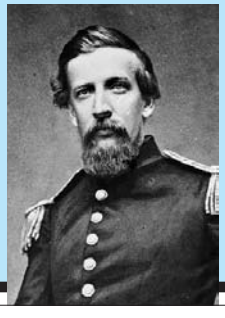
The Confederates, while retreating, did not know that earlier in the day Union forces had cut off their escape route on the Jackson and Ratliff Roads. In a last-ditch effort to escape from the Union forces, Pemberton ordered a final counterattack against the Crossroads to free up an escape route. Once again, the Crossroads became the center of a lethal storm. Some 4,500 Confederates commanded by Bowen threw themselves into the hazardous final counterattack. Charging with bayonets glistening, the Confederates pushed the Union back almost three-quarters of a mile, briefly regaining control of Champion's Hill. Sheer numbers were against

"Decoration Day," now known as Memorial Day. Logan died December 26, 1886, and was buried in U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

Major General Carter L. Stevenson's division bore the brunt of the Confederate fighting at the Battle of Champion's Hill. During the siege of Vicksburg, Stevenson commanded the right flank of the Confederate defensive line. After Vicksburg fell, he served ably at Lookout Mountain, Chattanooga, Atlanta, Kennesaw Mountain, Nashville, and Bentonville. When the Civil War ended, Stevenson moved to Virginia and became an engineer. He remained in this profession until his death on August 15, 1888. He was buried in the Confederate Cemetery in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Carter L. Stevenson (left), and John S. Bowen.





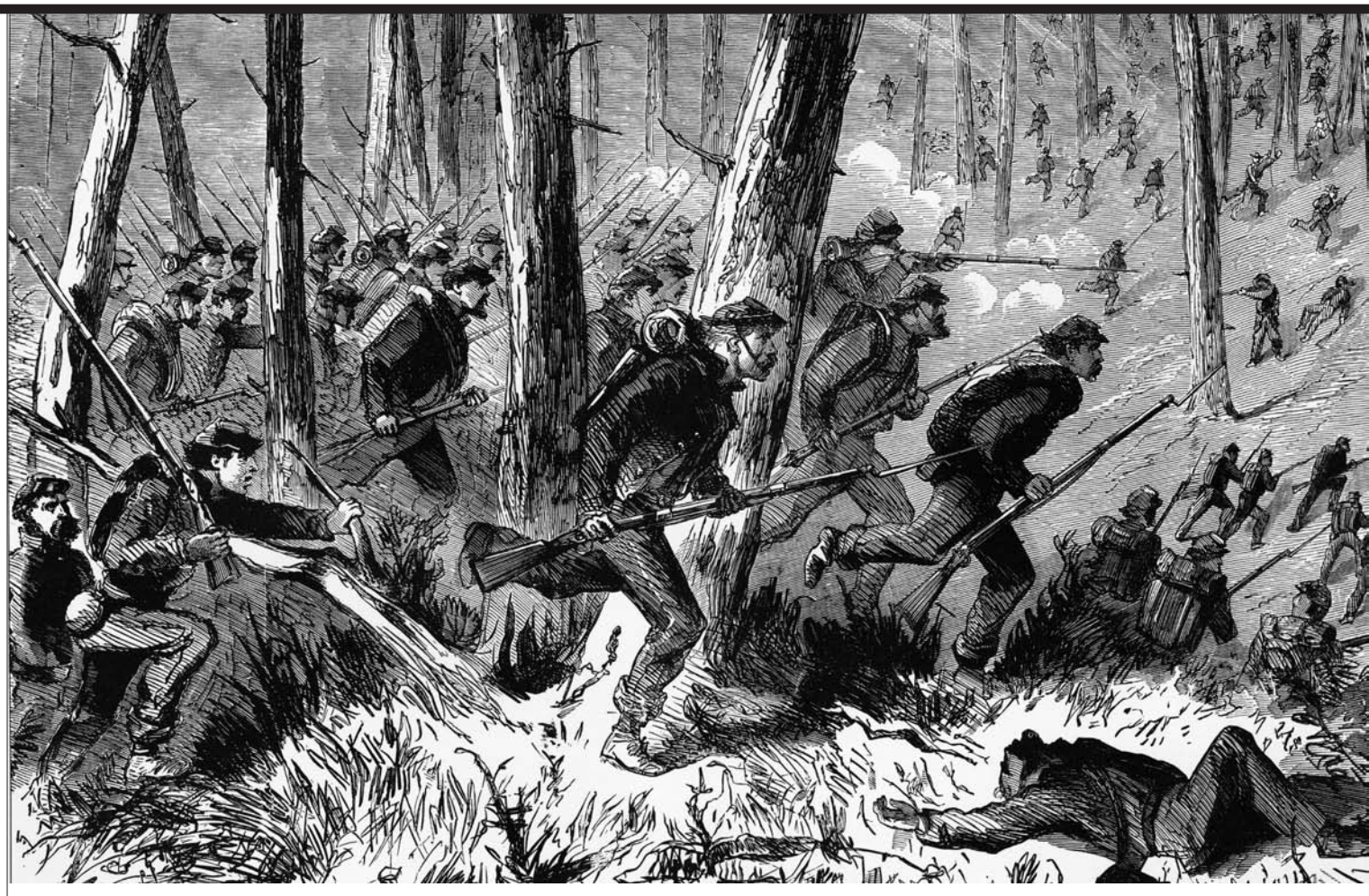
Major General John S. Bowen did not live long after the Battle of Champion's Hill. Defeated at the Battle of the Big Black River Bridge, Bowen retreated into Vicksburg with the rest of Pemberton's men. When Vicksburg fell on July 4, 1863, Bowen was taken as a prisoner of war, but was quickly paroled. He became sick with dysentery soon after and died on July 13, 1863. He was buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery in Vicksburg.

Lieutenant General John C. Pemberton surrendered Vicksburg to Grant. He was taken prisoner of war, but was exchanged rather quickly and returned to the army. Voluntarily resigning his general's commission, Pemberton went on to serve as a lieutenant colonel of artillery for the remainder of the Civil War. Despite his loyal service to the Confederacy, Pemberton was always remembered in the South as the man who surrendered Vicksburg. After the war he lived as a farmer in Virginia before moving back to his home state of Pennsylvania. He died on July 13, 1881, and was buried in Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia.

Major Samuel Hawkins Marshall Byers of the 5th Iowa Infantry perhaps put it best

Grant discusses his inflexible surrender demands with Pemberton at Vicksburg.

when he wrote: "The battle of Champion's Hill was won, and the victorious Union army was shortly in a position to compel the surrender of the key to the Mississippi River. Grant's crown of immortality was won, and the jewel that shone most bright in it was set there by the blood of the men of Champion's Hill. Had that important battle failed, Grant's army, not Pemberton's, would have become prisoners of war. Where then would have been Vicksburg, Spotsylvania, Richmond, Appomattox?" One hundred and forty-eight years later, the question still resonates.



Battle-hardened Union forces pursue the retreating Confederates through dense woods at Champion's Hill. Both sides considered the elevated battlefield a "literal hill of death."

them, however, and Grant, headquartered in the Champion plantation, ordered his own countercharge, which shattered the Confederates and sent them reeling back in the direction of Vicksburg, via the Raymond Road.

With the Raymond Road serving as the Confederates' only avenue of escape, it became imperative to protect it at all cost. Brig. Gen. Lloyd Tilghman's brigade was selected as the rear guard for the Confederacy. While defending the Raymond Road against heavy artillery fire, Tilghman climbed down from his horse to give directions to one of his men. Just as his instructions were being relayed, an artillery blast thundered in his direction. Tilghman was struck in the chest by a fragment of a Union shell, fired from a position between the Raymond Road and the Coker House, and killed instantly. Rearguard command fell to Loring and his division. Eventually all of the Confederates retreated back to positions near the Big Black River Bridge and areas around Vicksburg. The Battle of Champion's Hill was over.

While Pemberton and his forces lumbered west toward the Big Black River, the victorious Union forces camped for the night on the bloodied slopes of Champion's Hill. Sleep did not come easily for the victors; hospital teams prowled the hillside for wounded and dying comrades. General Alvin Hovey, whose division had fought back and forth with the Confederates all day, was almost in shock as he surveyed the remains of the battlefield. "Champion Hill was, after the battle, literally the hill of death," he wrote. "Men, horses, cannon, and the debris of an army lay scattered in wild confusion. Hundreds of the gallant Twelfth Division were cold in death or writhing in pain, and lay dead, dying, or wounded, intermixed with our fallen foe."

Grant, too, was reflective. "While a battle is raging one can see his enemy mowed down by the thousand, or the ten thousand, with great composure," he wrote, "but after the battle these scenes are distressing, and one is naturally disposed to do as much to alleviate the suffering of an enemy as a friend." For Grant, the victory, while spectacular, was not perfect. Commands given to McClernand to move against the Confederate right flank could have been executed with more speed and order, Grant felt, and he found McClernand to have been deficient in executing his own orders. Had McClernand followed through on orders with reasonable speed, thought Grant, Pemberton's army could have been trapped and forced to surrender completely.

Grant explained his frustrations with McClernand in his personal memoirs: "McClernand, with two divisions, was within a few miles of the battle-field long before noon and in easy hearing. I sent him repeated orders by staff officers fully com-

petent to explain to him the situation. These traversed the wood separating us, without escort, and directed him to push forward; but he did not come. It is true, in front of McClernand there was a small force of the enemy and posted in a good position behind a ravine obstructing his advance; but if he had moved to the right by the road my staff officers had followed the enemy must either have fallen back or been cut off. Instead of this he sent orders to Hovey, who belonged to his corps, to join on to his right flank. Hovey was bearing the brunt of the battle at the time. To obey the order he would have had to pull out from the front of the enemy and march back as far as McClernand had to advance to get into battle and substantially over the same ground. Of course I did not permit Hovey to obey the order of his intermediate superior. Had McClernand come up with reasonable promptness, or had I known the ground as I did afterwards, I cannot see how Pemberton could have escaped with any organized force."

This was scathing criticism from the Union commander and strong allegations of serious misconduct against McClernand. In McClernand's official report, he did not seem to recognize the opportunity that had slipped through his fingers that day. "To say that the Thirteenth Army Corps has done its whole duty manfully and nobly throughout this arduous and eventful campaign is only to say what historical facts abundantly establish," McClernand wrote blandly.

McClernand had multiple divisions that seemed to have been engaged in a very limited, if any, way during the battle. While Hovey's division, which was with Grant for the majority of the battle, lost 619 soldiers killed, wounded, or missing, Brig. Gen. Andrew J. Smith's 10th Division, which was with McClernand, suffered only six wounded soldiers. Brig. Gen. Eugene A. Carr's 14th Division had only three casualties. Blair's 2nd Division, XV Corps, which was under the command of McClernand during the battle, reported zero casualties. These were units that could have been used to prevent Pemberton's forces from retreating. By comparison, McPherson's 3rd Division lost over 400 men, and the 7th Division lost over 650 men. According to McPherson's official report: "This, by far the hardest fought battle of all since crossing at Bruinsburg, and the most decided victory for us, was not won without the loss of many brave men, who heroically periled their lives for their country's honor. Their determined spirit still animates their living comrades, who feel that the blood poured out on Champion's Hill was not spilt in vain. Every man of Logan's and [Brig. Gen. Marcellus] Crocker's divisions was engaged in the battle."

UNDER STRICT ORDERS FROM DAVIS TO STAY IN VICKSBURG, PEMBERTON CHOSE TO OBEY THE PRESIDENT. HE SPENT THE NEXT SIX WEEKS BESEIGED INSIDE THE CITY BEFORE SURRENDERING TO GRANT. THE KEY TO THE WEST HAD BEEN TRANSFERRED FROM THE POCKET OF THE CONFEDERACY TO THE POCKET OF THE UNION.

In spite of McClernand's poor performance, Grant seemed pleased, overall, with the results of the day. He recognized immediately that the Battle of Champion's Hill had secured the Union's position between Confederates Johnston and Pemberton. Pemberton was now left with two unpalatable options: either fall back into Vicksburg without Johnston and prepare for a siege, or circle around the Union position at Champion's Hill and reunite with Johnston to the east, abandoning Vicksburg altogether. Pemberton eventually chose to withdraw into Vicksburg after another Union victory at the Battle of the Big Black River Bridge, which took place the day after Champion's Hill. Pemberton hoped that Johnston's army would eventually come to the defense of Vicksburg. It never did. In fact, Johnston ordered Pemberton to abandon Vicksburg and reunite with his forces, but, under strict orders from Davis to stay in Vicksburg, Pemberton chose to obey the president. He spent the next six weeks besieged inside the city before surrendering to Grant on July 4. The key to the West had been transferred from the pocket of the Confederacy to the pocket of the Union.

Although decisive, the Battle of Champion's Hill was costly for Grant and the Union. Some 410 soldiers were killed, 1,844 soldiers were wounded, and 187 men went missing. His total engaged forces at Champion's Hill numbered 32,000 men. Pemberton lost 381 killed, 1,018 wounded, 2,441 missing, and 27 artillery pieces. Included among the dead was General Tilghman. General Bowen, who had fought so hard to retake the hill, would die of dysentery a few weeks later at Vicksburg.

Abraham Lincoln, who recognized early the importance of the key city, wrote to Grant that summer: "My Dear General, I do not remember that you and I ever met personally. I write this now as a grateful acknowledgment for the almost inestimable service you have done for the country. I wish to say a word further. When you first reached the vicinity of Vicksburg, I thought you should do what you finally did—march the troops across the neck, run the batteries with the transports, and thus go below; and I never had any faith, except a general hope that you knew better than I, that the Yazoo Pass expedition and the like could succeed. When you got below and took Port Gibson, Grand Gulf, and vicinity, I thought you should go down the river and join General Banks, and when you turned northward, east of the Big Black, I feared it was a mistake. I now wish to make the personal acknowledgement that you were right and I was wrong."□

A Short History of American

BY RICK BEARD

For nearly two centuries, the "peculiar institution" of slavery dominated Southern social and economic life in America, infecting the nation's politics with an unresolvable moral conflict that led finally to civil war.

WHEN GEORGE THATCHER, a Federalist congressman from New England, assailed slavery in 1791 as a "cancer of immense magnitude" that would destroy the young American nation, he was attacking a well-entrenched economic reality nearly 175 years old. The exchange of "20 and odd Negroes" by privateers aboard the English ship *White Lion* for food from colonists in Jamestown, Virginia, in late August 1619 was the first known sale of slaves in British North America. Six years later, the Dutch West India Company imported 11 enslaved Africans to New Amsterdam to work as farmers and laborers.

These first tentative steps toward creating chattel slavery were taken amid a century-long contest among the Dutch, Spanish, English, and French for naval supremacy in the Atlantic. England's success would solidify its control of the increasingly lucrative slave trade by 1700. Financed by private investment groups such as the Dutch West India Company, transplanted Europeans settled islands throughout the Caribbean and along the Atlantic coasts of North and South America. Once there, planters bold enough to risk their time and capital in the frontier outposts often made their fortunes—frequently at the cost of the lives of hundreds of enslaved Africans treated as expendable sources of labor. As the century progressed, both France and England entered mercantile relationships that subordinated the emerging colonial economies to the prosperity of the mother country.

TO BE SOLD, on board the Ship *Bance-Island*, on tueſday the 6th of *May* next, at *Aſhley-Ferry*; a choice cargo of about 250 fine healthy

NEGROES,

juſt arrived from the Windward & Rice Coaſt. —The utmoſt care has already been taken, and ſhall be continued, to keep them free from the leaſt danger of being infected with the SMALL-POX, no boat having been on board, and all other communication with people from *Charles-Town* prevented.

Auſtin, Laurens, & Appleby.

N. B. Full one Half of the above Negroes have had the SMALL-POX in their own Country.

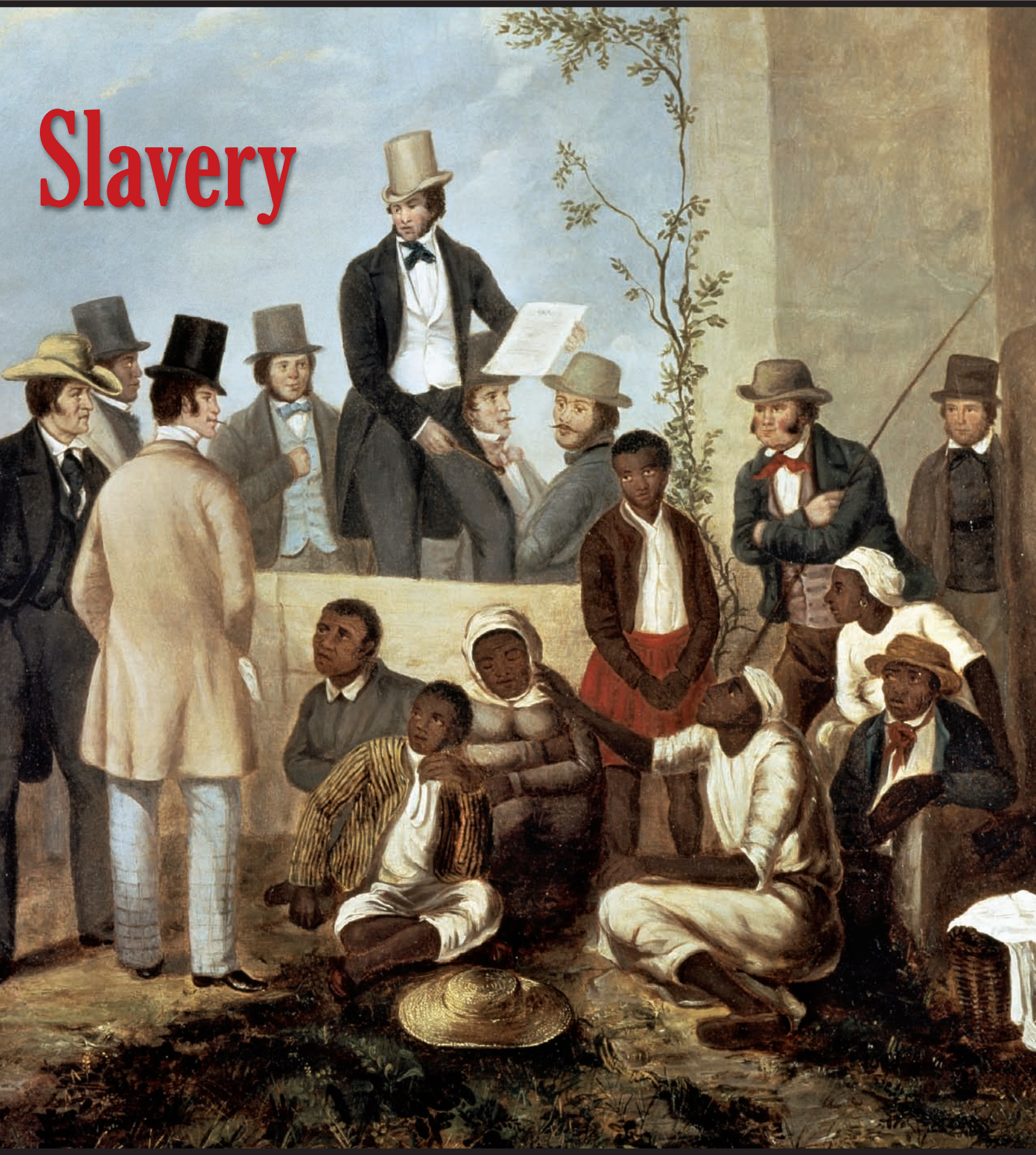
Library of Congress

DeA Picture Library / The Granger Collection, New York

ABOVE: Newspaper advertisement from the late 18th century for the sale of slaves near Charleston, South Carolina. RIGHT: This 1852 painting, *An American Slave Market*, depicts the heartless breakup of an African American family.

Slavery was fundamental to the new world economy. Whites did not initially envision the mass enslavement of people of African descent, but the growing scarcity of contractually indentured white servants, the escalating call for more labor, and the all too evident financial rewards combined to create a new reliance on enslaved Africans throughout the Western

Slavery



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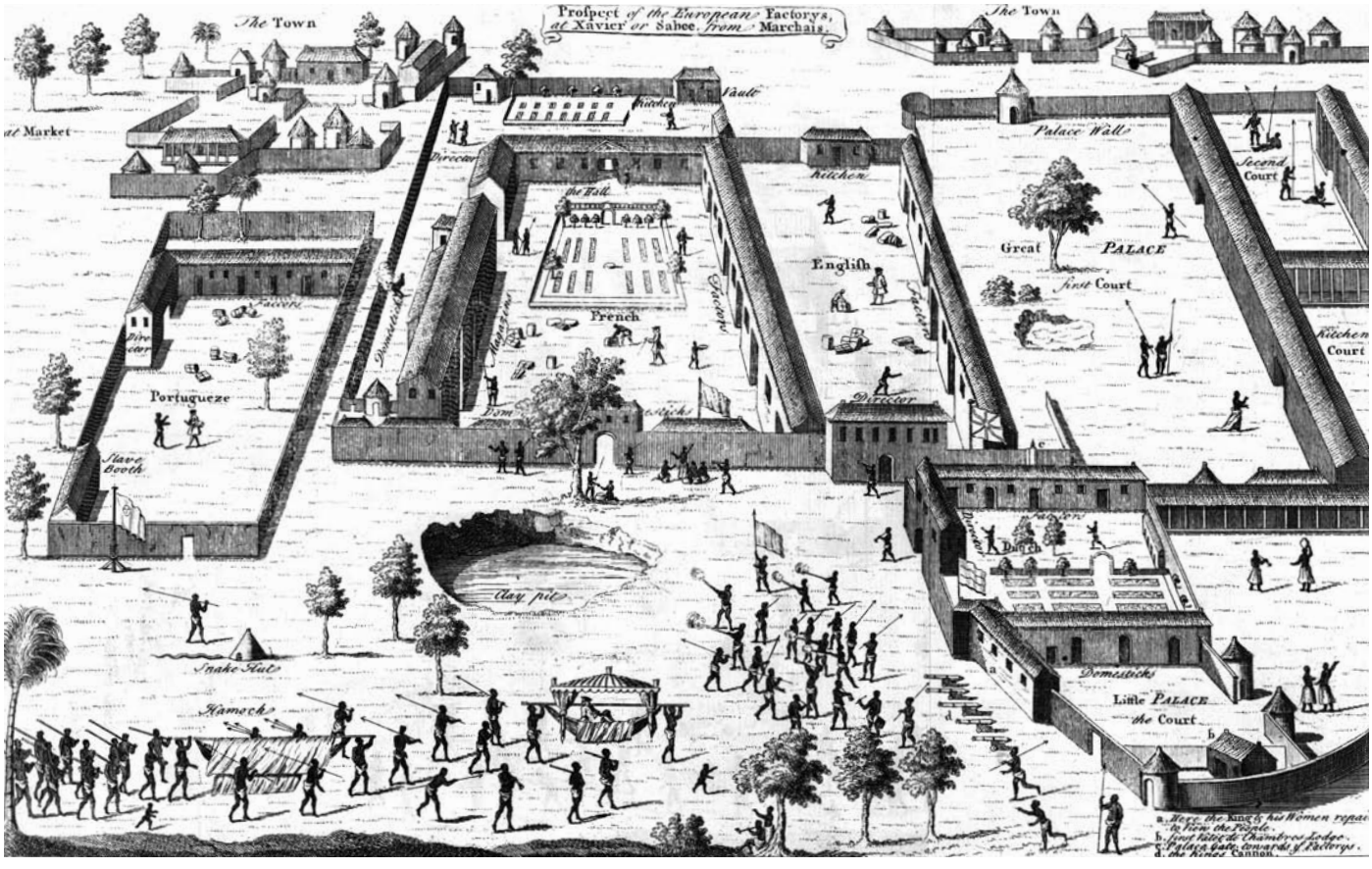

A 1746 illustration of an elaborate compound on the Gulf of Guinea, now part of Nigeria, created by traders for holding and shipping slaves to the New World.

Hemisphere. West African merchants and military and political leaders nurtured the market in human beings, linking it to long-established trade in precious metals and wood. The emergence of global banking and insurance facilitated the slave trade by guaranteeing a steady flow of investors eager to underwrite a slave ship's voyage. Slavery grew even more lucrative after 1660, when King Charles II granted the newly organized Royal African Company a monopoly on English trade with West Africa.

Slavery developed in North America incrementally. In 1641, Massachusetts became the first British colony to legalize the institution. Connecticut followed in 1650, Maryland in 1663, New York and New Jersey a year later, and Pennsylvania in 1700. In the eight decades following 1620, no more than 21,000 enslaved Africans arrived in North America, a modest total by later standards. By 1700, the slave population of the American colonies totaled 28,958, about 72 percent of whom lived in the Chesapeake region and the Upper South.

The fledgling borderland communities featured porous boundaries between slavery and freedom that created many opportunities for advancement. Atlantic Creoles—descendants of European fathers and African mothers—were especially adept at working the settlements' racial and social interstices. Among the earliest nonwhite arrivals in North America, Creoles lived primarily along the Atlantic coast and in Florida and Louisiana. Generally more cosmopolitan than most African slaves (and many of the European settlers), the mixed race colonists played a particularly important role in Florida, where they allied themselves with Spanish officials eager to counter the expansion of English settlers in the Carolinas.

Over the course of the 17th century, plantation agriculture came to dominate the colonial American economy. Tobacco, a crop introduced into the Chesapeake region in 1612, became a pathway to great riches. In 1628, Virginia planters exported 500,000 pounds to London; 11 years later, that number had risen to 1.5 million pounds; and by 1700 it exceeded 20 million pounds. Growing tobacco was grueling work, and planters quickly learned that reliance on enslaved Africans was essential to their success. Plantation agriculture also came to drive the economy of the northern colonies, whose traders supplied foodstuffs, naval stores, timber, and ships for slave-produced agricultural commodities.

The plantation model of agriculture dominated much of British North America before the American Revolution, beginning in the Chesapeake region and North Carolina and spreading to the South Carolina lowlands, where rice and indigo were staples, and finally to the lower Mississippi River Valley, where sugar and cotton were the primary crops.

Slave merchants in Great Britain and on

the European continent responded enthusiastically to the Western Hemisphere's appetite for slave labor. The vast majority of the 5.8 million Africans who arrived during the 18th century were not brought to British North America, but to the Caribbean and South America. Nevertheless, the numbers arriving in North America between 1700 and 1750, almost 146,000, accounted for a 750 percent increase in the slave population—from 28,958 to 246,648.

By 1750, the New England and Middle Atlantic colonies had 30,000 slaves, 12 percent of the North American total. A few agriculturalists had tried the plantation system in the lower Hudson River Valley and in South County, Rhode Island, but they met with limited success. While enslaved Africans in the northern colonies would remain an important source of skilled and unskilled labor throughout the 18th century, the dislocated Germans, Scots, and Scots-Irish who flooded to the backcountry of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina generally eschewed slave ownership and lived as independent yeoman farmers. Slavery in New England and the Middle Atlantic colonies remained marginal to the central economic process.

In the Chesapeake Bay region, the Carolina low country, and the lower Mississippi River Valley, an emergent class of southern planters created an alternative society in which slavery stood at the center of economic production and the master-slave relationship provided the model for all social relations. Politically self-assured and cosmopolitan, the planter class observed a well-defined social hierarchy and easily resorted to physical violence to maintain control of a slave population that often constituted a numerical majority. By the late 17th century, new laws designated African slaves as commodities to be bought and sold. New laws outlawed any social interaction between the races and subjected slaves to brutal punishments, not excluding death in more extreme cases. Planters were immune from prosecution.

The fluidity and ambiguity that had defined life for many slaves a century earlier disappeared. Entire generations of enslaved Africans might spend their lives working on a single plantation with virtually no exposure to the outside world. Such self-contained universes maintained their own hierarchies in which house slaves lorded over field hands, just as established Creole populations dominated newly arrived Africans. The various means of social control exerted by the master class assured that few members of the new slave generation would ever own land or gain freedom. But the insulated quality of plantation life did allow many of the new arrivals to retain remnants of their African culture and establish multigenerational families.

The planters' increasingly oppressive control did not go uncontested. Black people carved out small spheres of personal freedom, in rare cases earning cash with which to buy their freedom. In several instances, slaves mounted armed revolts. Bacon's Rebellion in 1676 pitted English colonists and Africans in a rare alliance against royal authorities in Virginia. The

African slaves are loaded aboard ship for the grim voyage across the Atlantic. The ship's captain, pistol in his belt, watches as crewmen handcuff and shackle the slaves before sending them below deck. More bound slaves cower behind him.

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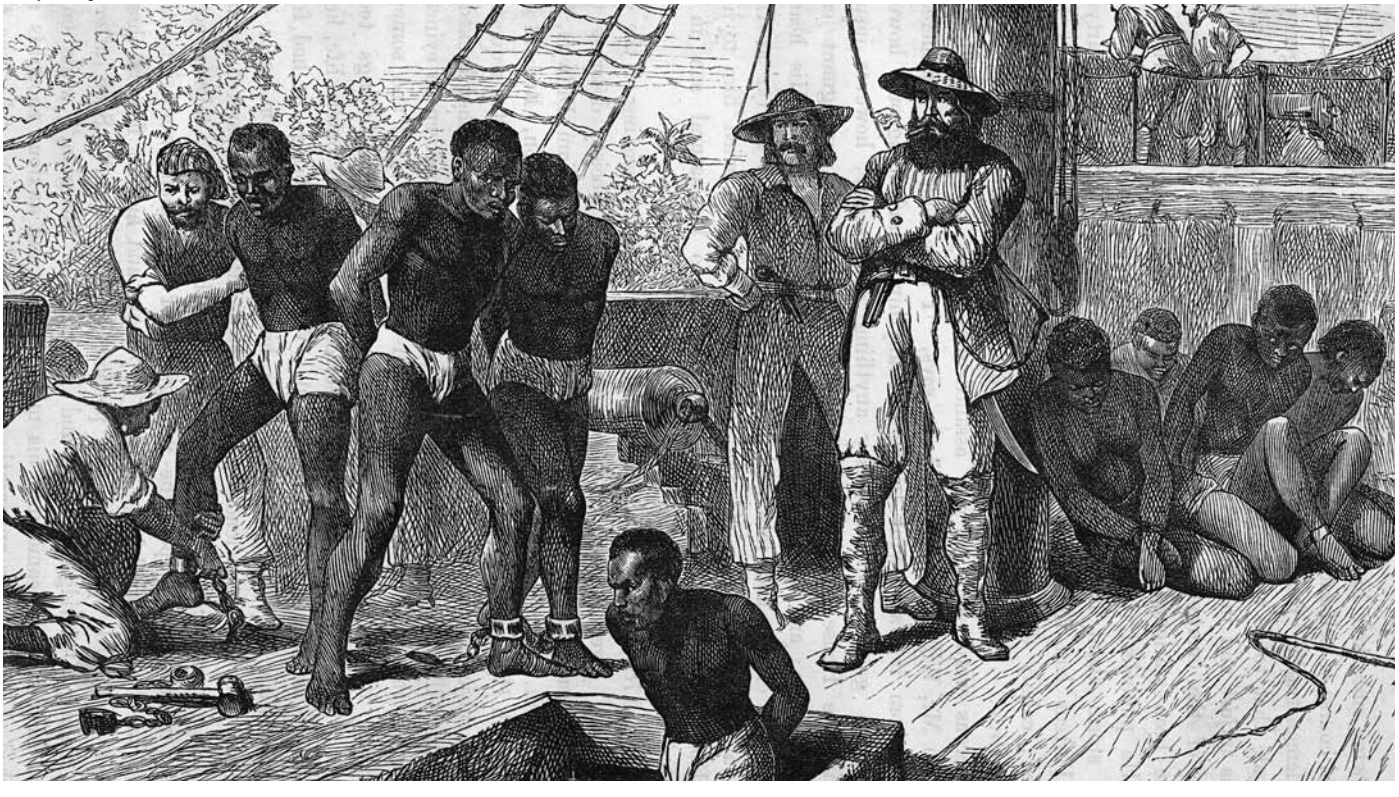

Natchez Rebellion of 1731 squelched French plans in the lower Mississippi Valley to institutionalize and expand slavery. Two of the most famous uprisings occurred within two years of one another. In 1739, enslaved Angolans in South Carolina launched the Stono Rebellion, murdering two dozen whites while attempting to reach Spanish-controlled St. Augustine, where a more tolerant regime allowed Africans freedom, independent production, and military service. Two years later, the failed Negro Plot in New York City led to the execution of 30 blacks and four whites, as well as the banishment of another 70 blacks and seven whites.

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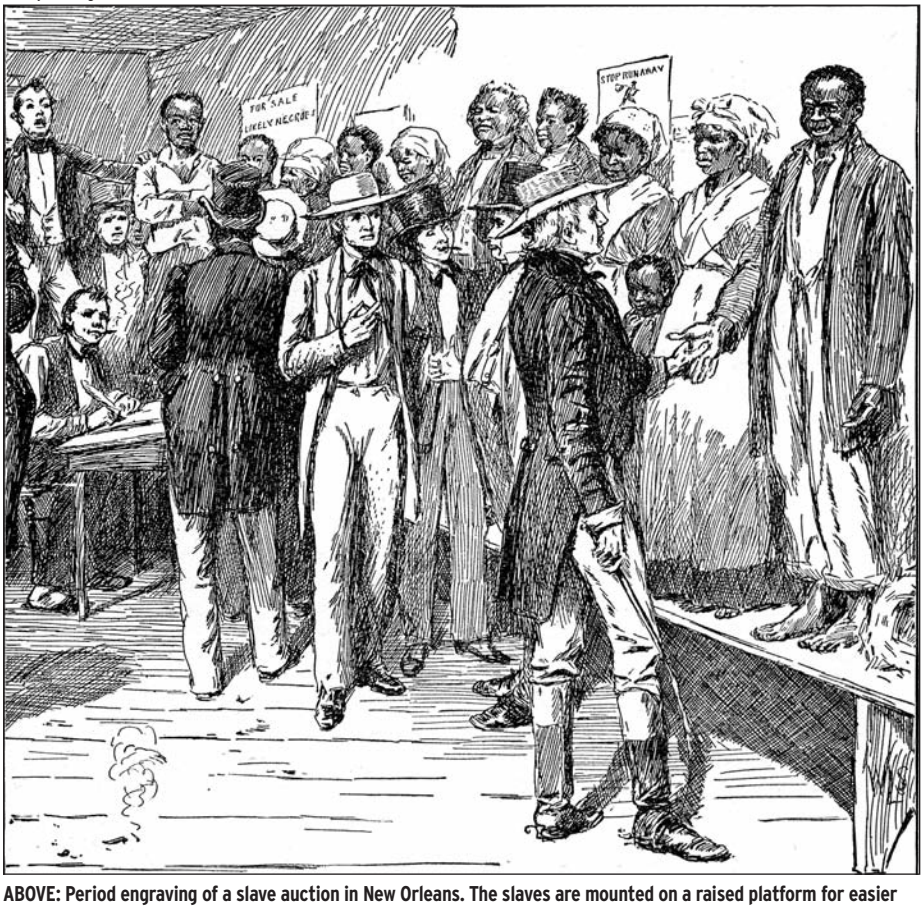

ABOVE: Period engraving of a slave auction in New Orleans. The slaves are mounted on a raised platform for easier viewing by prospective buyers. OPPOSITE: British artist Eyre Crowe's 1853 painting, *Slaves Waiting for Sale*, challenged conventional boundaries by depicting African Americans realistically and sympathetically.

Less visible threats to the plantation system were found in new philosophical and religious currents that challenged the "inevitable and natural" expansion of slavery. Enlightened thinkers questioned both the humanity and efficiency of chattel slavery, while evangelical Christians stressed the equal relationship both whites and black enjoyed before God. Free trade advocates attacked the traditional mercantilist policies that bolstered the economic rationale for slavery, and declining tobacco prices combined with the growing consumption of manufactured goods flowing from industrialized England to create a level of indebtedness among the planter class that threatened to destabilize the entire plantation society.

The end of the Seven Years' War in 1763 ushered in significant changes in the geopolitical landscape of North American slavery. Great Britain's decisive victory forced the French to forfeit control of Canada to England and cede control of New Orleans to the Spanish. At the same time, it solidified the British hold on the transatlantic slave trade. The second half of the 18th century witnessed the peak of that trade and a dramatic growth in the North American slave population.

Between 1750 and 1790, some 3.4 million enslaved Africans arrived in the Western Hemisphere. One third of these men, women, and children—1,175,703—disembarked at various ports in the British Caribbean. The number of slaves in the North American British colonies grew by a factor of almost three, from 246,648 in 1750 to 717,021 in 1790. The increase was greatest in the Chesapeake and the Upper South, which added nearly 350,000 human beings to its enslaved population. Between 1501 and 1866, a total of 12,521,336 Africans were put on slave ships. Of these, some 10,702,656 (85 percent) survived to reach a port in the Western Hemisphere. Almost 80 percent of the slave ships were bound for ports servicing the sugar plantations of Brazil and the Caribbean islands. Fewer than four percent—388,747—entered ports in North America.

At the moment that slavery seemed to be tightening its hold on the British colonies, the American Revolution challenged the institution's very foundations. Fueled by the powerful argument for human liberty implicit in the Declaration of Independence, the war represented an attack on hierarchy, inequality, and privilege that resonated as much for blacks as for whites. From the war's outset, the Revolution's language invited blacks throughout the colonies to press for their own freedom and equality. Ironically, the British would prove more receptive to black aspirations than the colonial rebels. Proclamations in 1775 and 1781 offered freedom for any slave who entered British lines. As many as 100,000 made the attempt, and hundreds fought effectively against the Americans. At the war's conclusion, the British transported 3,000 former slaves from New York to Nova Scotia.

The forces set in motion by the Revolutionary War continued to disrupt and transform slavery in the new nation, most dramatically in the northern states. Pennsylvania introduced gradual emancipation in 1780, and Massachusetts courts out-

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The Constitution failed to fulfill the implied promise of freedom and equality that had inspired both free and enslaved blacks during the Revolutionary War. American slavery now enjoyed greater legal protection than at any time in the nation's history.

lawed slavery three years later. By 1803, all the northern states had provided for the gradual abolition of slavery and had liberalized manumission laws. Slavery survived in New York and New Jersey, but its numbers gradually withered away, from 48,000 in 1770 to 27,000 in 1810 to 1,113 in 1840. Vibrant urban communities of free blacks emerged in the post-Revolutionary era. By 1800, there were 6,500 free blacks in Philadelphia, 6,300 in New York City, and 1,200 in Boston. These enclaves would nurture the growing anti-slavery movement and provide invaluable way stations for slaves fleeing their servitude.

Although the slave population in the Chesapeake and Upper South continued to grow, the institution underwent fundamental changes there as well. A shift from tobacco monoculture to more diversified farming combined with a growing demand for skilled artisans, many of whom were hired out for wages, to improve the lives of enslaved Virginians and Marylanders. Liberalized manumission laws also added significantly to the region's free black population, which by 1810 numbered 110,000.

As new agricultural patterns supplanted tobacco growing, Chesapeake planters found they owned more slaves than they needed. They began engaging in the internal slave trade to profit from their surplus chattels. The so-called "Second Middle Passage" of forced relocation through sale would eventually send more than one million slaves to southern cotton, rice and sugar plantations. Such sales generally removed the younger, healthier, and stronger men and women from the Chesapeake plantations and in the process profoundly disrupted the region's settled black family and community life. The threat of being "sold South" was an ever present terror for Chesapeake slaves.

Planters in the Carolina low country and eastern Florida provided a growing market for the internal slave trade. The exodus of slaves to British lines or Spanish Florida during the Revolutionary War had devastated coastal plantations, reducing the enslaved populations of Georgia and South Carolina by 70 and 25 percent respectively. Unlike their contemporaries in Chesapeake and the Upper South, low country planters had an unwavering commitment to sustaining slavery. They purchased thousands of slaves from the Upper South, and between 1803 and 1807 imported 90,000 Africans to South Carolina.

Life on the low country's rice and indigo plantations was brutal, but the planters'

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ABOVE: A period engraving of scenes from the Nat Turner uprising. 1. A mother defending her baby. 2. The murder of Mr. Travis. 3. Mr. Barrow defending himself as his wife escapes. BELOW: Nat Turner is captured by local farmer Benjamin Phipps on October 30, 1831.

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reliance on their slaves' skills and labor enabled them to negotiate for less onerous working conditions and access to private garden plots. Many of the planters preferred to live in the coastal cities, in effect surrendering daily life on their plantations to the overwhelming black majorities who labored there. This absentee oversight allowed the formation of a unique black subculture and an interconnected network of family, kind, and black neighborhoods. Port cities such as Charleston and Savannah also became home to vibrant communities of free blacks, many of whom provided valued artisan services. By 1800, there were 10,000 free blacks in Charleston alone.

During the latter part of the 18th century, blacks living in the lower Mississippi Valley and western Florida still enjoyed considerable freedom and opportunity. But as planters flooded into the region between 1790 and 1810 and made new demands for slave labor, many of these freedoms began to disappear. The influx of 26,000 new slaves, 70 percent of whom came directly from Africa, had the effect of "re-Africanizing" the lower Mississippi Valley. The new arrivals had not been exposed to the revolutionary ideas about freedom that had animated the existing slave populations, and after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, American control of the region led to the passage of new laws severely restricting free blacks and manumissions.

By 1787, when the new nation's leaders met in Philadelphia to draft a governing charter, the country's different patterns of slaveholding demanded compromise. Northern delegates could take heart from the prospect of banning the importation of slaves after 1808, which some hoped would lead to the institution's eventual demise. Delegates from the Chesapeake and Upper South also embraced the provision, hoping a ban on importation would enhance the market value for their region's growing surplus of slaves. The fugitive slave clause pleased the slaveholding states by guaranteeing that free states were obligated to return escaped slaves. Despite the fact that the enslaved population had no legal rights as individuals, each African man, woman, and child represented three-fifths of a free person when determining congressional representation and direct taxation.

The Constitution failed to fulfill the implied promise of freedom and equality that had inspired both free and enslaved blacks during the Revolutionary War. American slavery now enjoyed greater legal protection than at any time in the nation's history. Its favored status within the Constitution soon led to serious social, economic and political divisions. While the

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Eastman Johnson's dramatic painting, *A Ride for Freedom—the Fugitive Slaves*, was inspired by a scene he personally witnessed near Centreville, Virginia, in 1862, during the Union Army's advance toward Manassas.

Constitution protected slavery, a simple invention patented in 1793 ended any hope that the institution would die a natural death. The cotton gin invented by Eli Whitney revolutionized cotton growing by increasing 50-fold the amount that could be processed in a single day. This increase drove profits higher than ever, thereby encouraging the expansion of cotton cultivation along a belt of southern states stretching from Georgia through Alabama and Mississippi to Louisiana and Texas. From 3,135 bales in 1790, cotton production grew exponentially, increasing from 177,000 bales in 1810 to 731,000 bales in 1830. By 1860, nearly four million bales were being produced annually.

Because a profitable cotton plantation required plenty of slave labor, the enslaved population in the lower South and the lower Mississippi River Valley expanded dramatically. Between 1790 and 1820, the number of slaves in the lower South nearly tripled to 408,129; the slave population in the newly settled lower Mississippi River Valley and Deep South increased eightfold, from 18,700 to 145,394. Once the foreign slave trade closed in 1808, the internal slave trade fueled the region's rapid growth. During the same period, natural increases and the activities of smugglers accounted for an increase from 717,023 to 1,538,147 at the national level.

By 1820, the growing population of slaves made it impossible to ignore the mounting tensions between the free and slave states. That year, Kentucky lawmaker Henry Clay led Congress in fashioning the Missouri Compromise, which admitted Maine and Missouri as free and slave states, respectively, to maintain the balance between pro- and anti-slavery factions. All of the Louisiana Purchase north of Missouri's southern boundary would exclude slavery, while all the territory south of that line would be open to its expansion. While Clay's compromise delayed the conflict over the expansion of slavery for three decades, it did little to defuse the growing national debate over the moral ramifications of the institution.

In the face of abolitionist critics, slavery's apologists defended the institution as a positive good, characterizing African Americans as childlike, biologically inferior, and sacrificial lambs on the altar of white progress. As it became more and more apparent that violence was essential to sustaining the plantation system, the likelihood of violent responses to the planters' oppression also grew. The most violent of these responses occurred not in North America but in the French colony of Saint Domingue, whose bloody 13-year-long revolution would have a profound

impact on African American aspirations while simultaneously terrifying white politicians and slaveholders.

Three slave conspiracies in America during the early 19th century seemed to justify white fears. In 1800, Virginia authorities uncovered a plot by slave Gabriel Prosser to recruit and arm hundreds of his fellow slaves, free blacks, poor whites, and Indians from tidewater Virginia to attack Richmond. After hasty trials, 26 slaves, including Prosser, were executed. In 1822, Denmark Vesey, a free black in Charleston, planned for a group of slaves and free blacks to seize and execute city leaders, temporarily liberate Charleston, and then sail to Haiti to escape retaliation. After word of the plot leaked, 35 free blacks and slaves, including Vesey, were hanged, and 30 others were shipped to West Indian plantations.

The most serious revolt took place in Southampton, Virginia, in 1831, when a charismatic slave named Nat Turner led a two-day uprising of slaves and free blacks that killed more than 60 whites. Authorities tried and executed 56 blacks, including Turner, whose body they flayed, beheaded, and quartered. In the rebellion's aftermath, whites murdered nearly 200 blacks, most of whom had nothing to do with the bloody events. Turner's rebellion gave the lie to pro-slavery arguments portraying slaves as happy, well cared for, and content. It also convinced southern leaders to resort to drastic measures to prevent a recurrence. State legislatures began to limit or deny the few rights enjoyed by free and enslaved blacks. The Virginia General Assembly made it unlawful to teach slaves, free blacks, or mulattoes to read or write. Nor could slaves hold religious meetings without the presence of a licensed white minister. North Carolina made it unlawful for free or enslaved blacks to preach, and Alabama joined Virginia in preventing slaves from gaining literacy. In 1835, Georgia required all enslaved and free African Americans to register with the state. And South Carolina, fearing the spread of revolutionary fever as well as abolitionists' propaganda, forbade the introduction of printed anti-slavery materials into the state.

The fear of slave conspiracies did nothing to blunt the planters' enthusiasm for maintaining and increasing the large enslaved work forces required to grow cotton, especially as tobacco and rice became less profitable. By 1815, slaves had replaced tobacco as the principal export of Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas. As many as one million blacks were "sold downriver" to Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, where they entered a world far more brutal than any they had previously encountered. In the Chesapeake and Upper South, enslaved African Americans were often able to carve out time for planting a garden, practicing craft skills, raising livestock, or other activities that generated modest incomes. Conversely, the slaves on cotton plantations were organized into gangs and worked unrelentingly from sunrise to sunset.

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Northerners and southerners alike had a stake in the cotton economy. Fueled by southern cotton, factories in New England and Great Britain created a worldwide demand for cheap cloth. Shipping magnates in northeastern ports reaped enormous profits carrying the products of slave labor to and from Europe and the Caribbean. As early as 1822, half the exports from New York City were tied to raw cotton or finished goods. In the three years before the Civil War, the United States produced 13,719,000 bales of cotton; the 1859 total of 5,387,000 bales represented a single year's all-time high.

The economic importance of cotton raised the stakes in the ongoing political battle over the extension of slavery. While a "gag rule" in the House of Representatives prevented open debate on slavery between 1836 and 1844, the Mexican War once more brought the issue of slavery's extension to the forefront. In 1846, Pennsylvania Congressman David Wilmot proposed a ban on slavery in any territory acquired from the war. Although the Wilmot Proviso failed to pass, it reintroduced to the national stage an issue that many thought the Missouri Compromise had resolved.

This renewed debate gave rise in 1848 to the formation of the Free Soil Party by anti-slavery proponents opposed to slavery's expansion. Declaring the institution morally bankrupt and economically inefficient, they argued that it would wither and die if it could be contained. Two years later Henry Clay, in partnership with Illinois Senator Stephen Douglas, once more sought a solution to slavery's vexations. The resulting series of bills, collectively known as the Compromise of 1850, brought California into the Union as a free state, organized Utah and New Mexico as territories in which a popular vote would determine the status of slavery, abolished the slave trade (but not slavery) in the District of Columbia, and formulated a new Fugitive Slave Act that pledged the federal government's help for slaveholders in reclaiming escaped slaves.

The new compromise failed to defuse the issue. It mollified few southerners, while radicalizing many northerners who agreed with former slave turned abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass that slavery was "now an institution of the whole United States." One unintended consequence was the inspiration it provided New England author Harriet Beecher Stowe, who wrote one of the most influential novels in history. In 1852 alone, her anti-slavery screed *Uncle Tom's Cabin* sold 300,000 copies in the United States and more than a million copies in Great Britain.

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ABOVE: Dred Scott sued the federal government for his freedom in 1857 on the grounds that he had lived for several years in free territory. The Supreme Court ruled against him. OPPOSITE: Two young slave boys ride in a cart pulled by a donkey on a South Carolina plantation in 1862. Other slaves pose impassively for the camera.

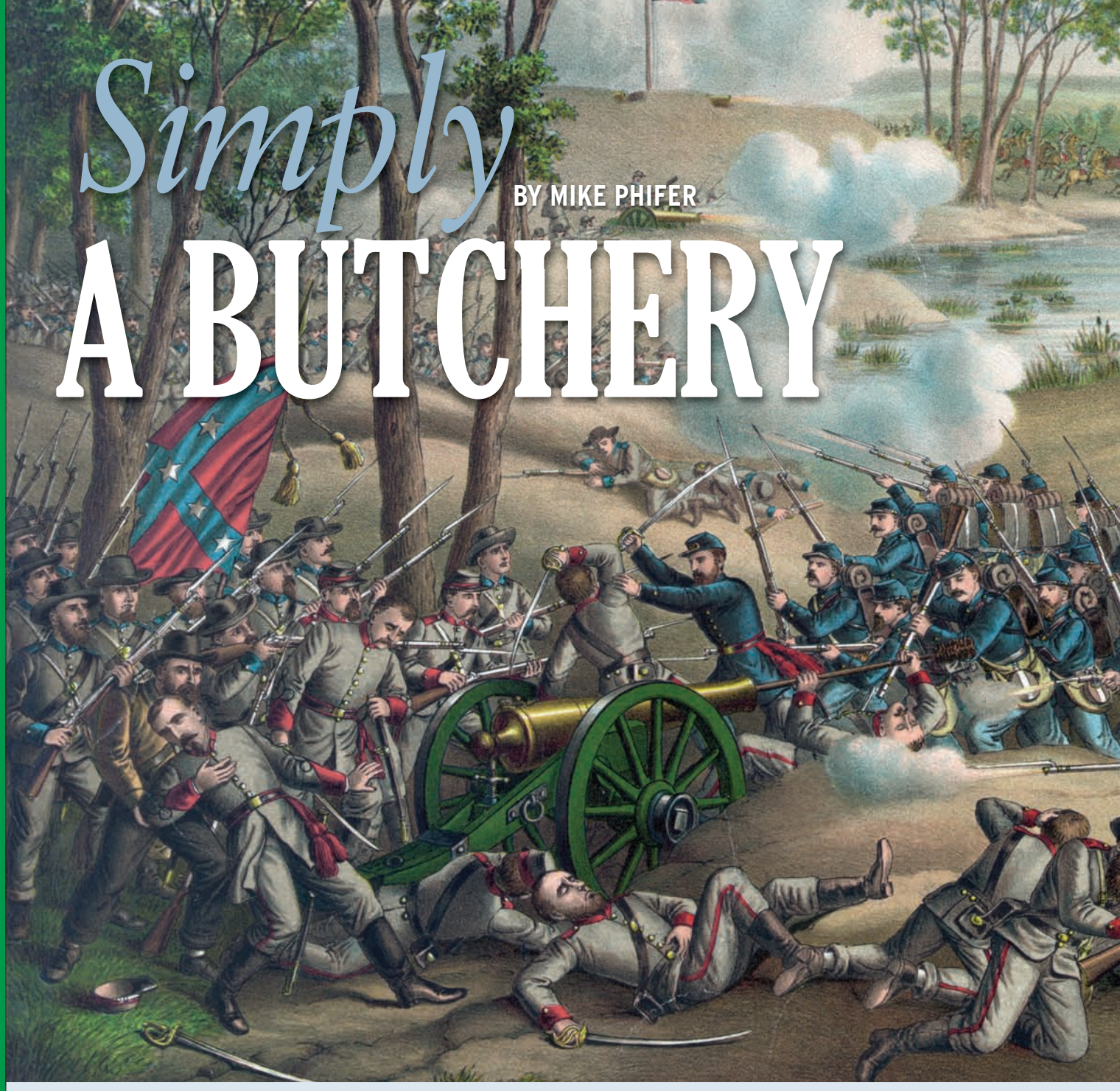
Four years after the 1850 Compromise, the Stephen Douglas-led Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Intended to encourage western settlement and the construction of a transcontinental railroad, the act embraced popular sovereignty as the means of determining the status of slavery in the two states. The effect was to set in motion a series of bloody confrontations between pro-and anti-slavery partisans, one of which introduced an anti-slavery zealot named John Brown to the nation. The act also prompted the formation of the Republican Party and led a little-known former Whig congressman and Illinois lawyer named Abraham Lincoln—a longtime personal and political enemy of Douglas—to reenter national politics.

Two events during the latter half of the 1850s reinforced each side's view of the other in the debate over slavery. The U.S. Supreme Court's Dred Scott ruling in 1857 rejected the right of the slave Dred Scott to sue for his freedom on the grounds that he had lived for several years in free territory, opining that blacks were, in the words of Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, "so far inferior [to whites] that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." The ruling put the Supreme Court's imprimatur on slave owners' increasingly paternalistic defense of slavery. Northerners saw it as evidence that yet another branch of the federal government had fallen under the sway of the slaveocracy. John Brown's ill-fated raid on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry and his trial and execution two years later made him a martyr for many in the North. To southerners, however, the murderous Brown embodied their worst fears regarding the abolitionists' violent intentions and the ever present threat of more slave insurrections.

The 1860 census recorded an enslaved population of 3,950,511, which represented 32 percent of the population in the 15 slaveholding states. In Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina, enslaved people represented between 44 percent and 57 percent of the population. Nearly half the families in Mississippi owned at least one slave, while only one in eight Maryland families did. The enormous southern investment in slavery exceeded the nation's combined investments in railroads, manufacturing, and banks. Senator James Henry Hammond of South Carolina asked the prescient question at the heart of American slavery. "Were ever any people, civilized or savage," he mused, "persuaded by argument, human or divine, to surrender voluntarily two thousand million dollars [of property]?" With the election of Abraham Lincoln as president in 1860, the nation was about to find out the answer. □

Simply A BUTCHERY

BY MIKE PHIFER



"LEE'S ARMY is really whipped," declared Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant to Maj. Gen. Henry Halleck on May 26, 1864. "The prisoners we now take show it, and the actions of his army show it unmistakably. A battle with them outside of entrenchments cannot be had." Thwarted by the Army of Northern Virginia at the North Anna River, Grant was preparing to swing around Robert E. Lee's right flank again and push southeast. Lee then would have no choice but to leave his entrenchments at North Anna and attempt to stop the Federal forces from reaching Richmond, probably along the Chickahominy River. Believing the fight had gone out of Lee's army, Grant added, "I feel that our success over Lee's army is already insured." He would quickly discover that he had spoken too soon.

Almost a month earlier, Maj. Gen. George Meade, operational commander of the Army of the Potomac, had initiated the Overland Campaign with some 118,000 troops. Then came, in swift succession, the Battles of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania Courthouse, and North Anna, which cost the Union Army an appalling 40,000 casualties. Meade needed reinforcements not only to replace his casualties, but also the many valuable veterans whose three-year enlistments were about to expire at the end of June. Grant, as general-in-chief of all

This somewhat idealized Kurz and Allison print captures some of the intensity of the doomed Union charges at Cold Harbor. The reality was a good deal less orderly or colorful.

Ulysses S. Grant would later admit that Cold Harbor was the one battle he "would not fight over again." Many Federal soldiers who survived the slaughter that early June day would likely agree. The dead had no recorded opinions on the matter.

Union forces in the East, petitioned Washington for more men. President Abraham Lincoln sent him 33,000 garrison troops belonging mostly to heavy artillery regiments with no combat experience. At the same time, Grant recalled the XVIII Corps under Maj. Gen. William Smith and other troops that could be spared from Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler's Army of the James, currently bottled up on the Virginia Peninsula at Bermuda Hundred, southeast of Richmond.

On the evening of May 26, the Federal army started to move. Maj. Gen. Phil Sheridan led two of his cavalry divisions southeast to seize a crossing over the Pamunkey River at Hanovertown. Behind them marched Brig. Gen. David Russell's

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infantry division from Maj. Gen. Horatio Wright's VI Corps. Sending out pickets to cover their withdrawal, the four remaining corps of bluecoats slipped across the North Anna River in the rain and darkness on pontoon bridges. The maneuver went without a hitch, although Confederate pickets "made things lively" for Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock's II Corps as it withdrew.

With the Army of the Potomac safely back across the North Anna, the tired Federals began to tramp southeast behind Sheridan in two columns on muddy roads. Bringing up the rear was a cavalry division under Brig. Gen. James Wilson, which had been creating a diversion on Lee's left flank. Meanwhile, horse soldiers of Brig. Gen. George Custer's brigade of Brig. Gen. Alfred Torbert's division had reached Dabney Ferry, near Hanovertown, in the foggy early morning hours of the 27th. Sheridan, who was riding with Torbert and Custer, wanted both banks of the river immediately secured so that the 50th New York Engineers could throw two pontoon bridges across the fast-moving, murky water.

The engineers' task suddenly became more difficult when a detachment of the 5th North Carolina Cavalry opened up from the other side of the river. The troopers of 5th Michigan Cavalry quickly returned fire with their repeating carbines, driving off the Tarheels. The engineers heaved two pontoon boats into the water, and a company of cavalrymen climbed into them and quickly rowed to the other side of the river under covering fire to establish a bridgehead, allowing the engineers to get a bridge across the river. Once the first bridge was complete, the rest of Torbert's division pounded across, riding hard toward Hanovertown while the engineers began work on a second bridge a few yards upriver.

At 6 AM, Lee received reports that Federal cavalry had crossed at Dabney Ferry. It was now clear that Grant was again maneuvering around Lee's right flank. Lee wasted no time in getting his recently reinforced army moving 15 miles southeast to Altee's Station. In the last month alone, the Army of Northern Virginia had suffered a staggering 25,500 casualties, roughly 40 percent of Lee's army. Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge had brought his division from the Shenandoah Valley after defeating the Federals at New Market to reinforce Lee, while Maj. Gen. George Pickett's division arrived after Butler was bottled up at Bermuda Hundred. These new troops plus others Lee managed to scrape together brought his strength back up to 64,000 men.

By that afternoon, lead elements of Lee's army approached Altee's Station, where they soon would be joined by the rest of the army. That same day the Army of North Virginia lost Lt. Gen. Richard Ewell, the II Corps commander, who took emergency medical leave due to dysentery that was also affecting Lee. Maj. Gen. Jubal Early took his place. The bulk of the Federal army, meanwhile, went into camp a few miles from Dabney Ferry and Nelson's Bridge, where the ever industrious engineers would soon be building more pontoon bridges early the next day.

On the morning of the 28th, the Confederates resumed marching toward Totopotomoy Creek, where Lee intended to take up a new defensive position. The bluecoats, meanwhile, began to cross the Pamunkey while two divisions of Sheridan's cavalry covered their rear and the remaining division under Brig. Gen. David Gregg proceeded to a crossroads named Haw's Shop to make a reconnaissance. There the Federals bumped headfirst into Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton and 4,500 Confederate cavalrymen around mid-morning. Gregg quickly dismounted his men and dug in west of Haw's Shop. Hampton also dismounted half his men and quickly constructed breastworks out of fence rails and logs on a ridge a few hundred yards west of the Federals. For the next six hours the two forces blazed away at each other across the fields and woods. At 4 PM, Custer's brigade arrived on the battlefield and launched a dismounted attack in two lines.

On the northern flank of the battlefield, a Confederate scout mistook dismounted friendly cavalrymen for Federal infantry, which led Hampton to fear that he was being cut off. He ordered a withdrawal that Custer's men quickly exploited, overrunning the 20th Georgia Battalion. Most of Hampton's force escaped, having suffered 378 casualties, and retreated toward Totopotomoy Creek with a number of prisoners. The Federal cavalry sustained 365 casualties.

By May 29, Meade's army was firmly across the Pamunkey. Grant was still not

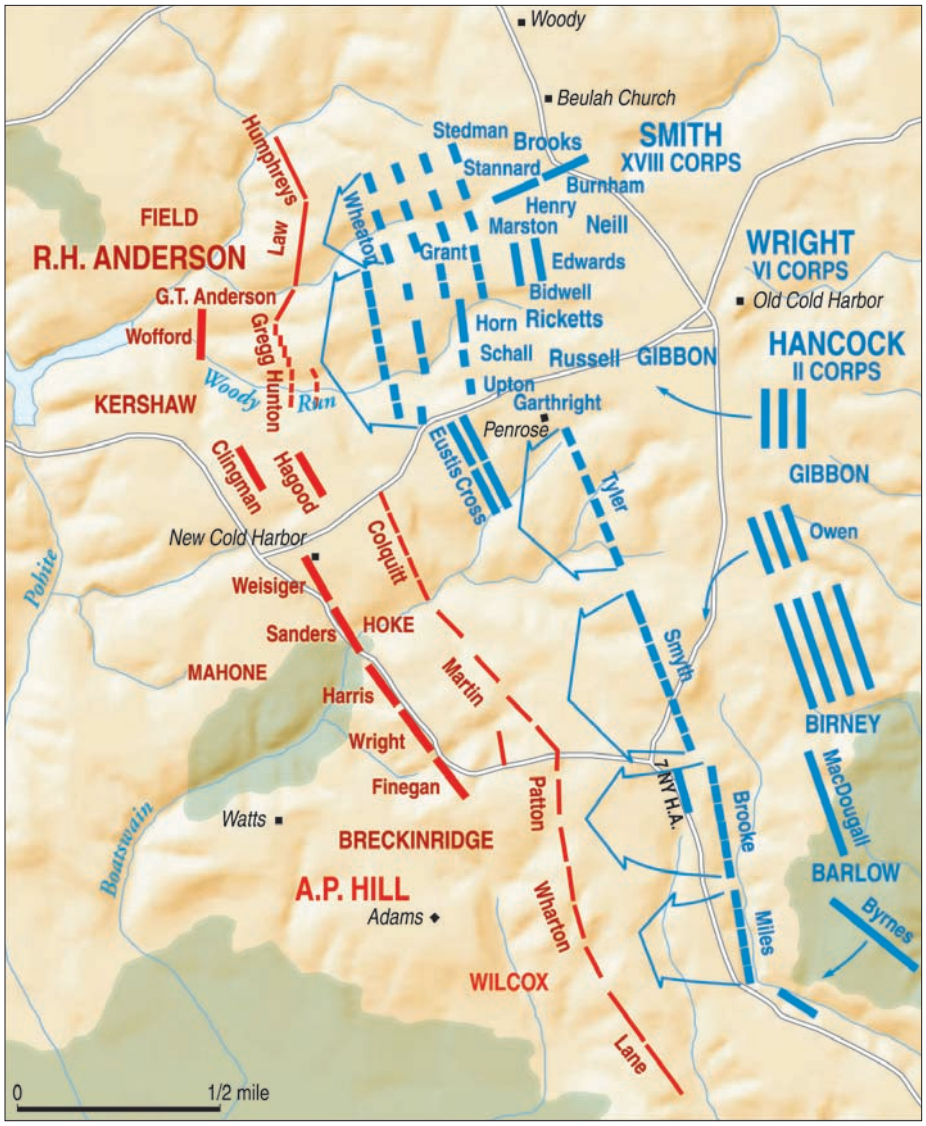
sure where Lee was, but he thought he might be somewhere along Totopotomoy Creek. With Sheridan's cavalry resting at Old Church after the fight at Haw's Shop, Union infantry began probing for the enemy. Skirmishing broke out as the Federals pushed southwest toward the Army of Northern Virginia's dug-in position along the south side of the creek. Early's II Corps held the right of the Confederate line in the swampy woods near Totopotomoy Creek; Breckinridge held the center with Lt. Gen. A.P. Hill's III Corps on the left and Lt. Gen. Richard Anderson's I Corps positioned behind Early in reserve.

While Lee waited to see what the Federals would do, he met with General P.G.T. Beauregard in an attempt to obtain more troops but initially was disappointed. Beauregard could spare none. "If General Grant advances tomorrow," Lee telegraphed Confederate President Jefferson Davis that evening, "I will engage him with my present force." It was less a threat than a simple statement of fact.

The next day the Federal army moved toward Lee's position. Skirmishing and artillery fire broke out as Hancock's corps overran some of Breckinridge's advanced rifle pits. Wright's corps, operating against Hill on the enemy's left flank, became bogged down in swampy terrain near Crump's Creek. Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren's V Corps, pressing against Early, waded Totopotomoy Creek and began probing along Shady Grove Road. Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside was ordered to move his IX Corps between Hancock and Warren.

Seeing an opportunity to strike Warren, Lee ordered Early to attack. Early sent Maj. Gens. Robert Rodes' and Stephen Ramseur's divisions forward along the Old Church Road, while Maj. Gen. John Gordon's division was held in reserve. From there, Early's men followed the road east, crashing into Colonel Martin Hardin's brigade of Brig. Gen. Samuel Crawford's division. The rest of the division had taken up position at Bethesda Church. Hardin's brigade broke and ran hard for Crawford's position with the Confederates screeching

Map © 2014 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN



ABOVE: Believing wrongly that Robert E. Lee's weary Confederates could not withstand an all-out assault at Cold Harbor, Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant attacked with three full corps at daybreak on June 3, 1864. The attacks were a gruesome failure. OPPOSITE: The 50th New York Engineers erected these pontoon bridges across the Pamunkey River near Hanovertown after troopers from the 5th Michigan Cavalry drove off North Carolina pickets from the river banks.

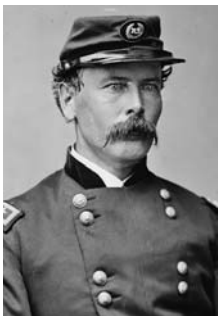
after them. Crawford's division quickly gave way as well, retreating north to Shady Grove Road. By this time, the Confederate attack had stalled. Rodes attempted to reorganize his men, losing valuable time, while Ramseur moved his division into position to lead the attack. Anderson, whom Early had instructed to attack Warren from the west, unaccountably did nothing.

Warren wasted no time in repositioning his infantry and artillery to deal with Early's attack from the south. When Ramseur's men finally charged forward "with reckless daring," they were met with deadly artillery fire from the 1st New York Light Artillery, ending the attack. Early withdrew, suffering 1,200 casualties and blaming Anderson—with some justification—for failing to help. Warren suffered 750 killed and wounded.

Colonel Thomas Devin's cavalry brigade from Torbert's division galloped southwest from Old Church for Cold Harbor, a strategic crossroads 10 miles north of Richmond, in an attempt to cover Warren's left flank. A brigade of South Carolinians under Brig. Gen. Mathew Butler collided with the Union horsemen along

Matadequin Creek. Butler's men drove in Devin's pickets, but Custer's and Brig. Gen. Wesley Merritt's brigades soon arrived. The Federal troopers, aided by horse artillery, managed to flank Butler's men and drove them back to within 1½ miles of Cold Harbor.

Lee was becoming greatly concerned about his right flank, with the Federal cavalry probing toward the crossroads of Cold Harbor, where one road led north threatening the Army of Northern Virginia's rear, another led indirectly to Richmond, and three more snaked south to Petersburg and White House Landing.



RIGHT: Union Colonel Thomas Devin, left, and Confederate Brig. Gen. Thomas Clingman. BELOW: Blurred by movement, a ghostly Union horseman is barely visible at the far left of this photograph of hastily constructed Confederate breastworks at Cold Harbor.

Adding to Lee's concern were reports that Smith's XVIII Corps, with 16,000 fresh bluecoats, was on the way to join Grant at Cold Harbor. At 11 PM, Lee finally received some good news when he learned that Maj. Gen. Robert Hoke, with 6,800 much needed reinforcements, had been dispatched from Beauregard "with all possible expedition" to reinforce him. They could not get there a moment too soon.

Brigadier General Thomas Clingman's brigade, the first element of Hoke's division to leave Richmond, arrived by train in the early morning of May 31 and was directed to march to Cold Harbor via Mechanicsville and Gaines's Mill. More trains carrying the rest of Hoke's division headed out at 9 AM. Around noon, Maj. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee rode into Cold Harbor with his cavalry division to relieve Butler and hold the crossroads until Hoke arrived. Meade's infantry, meanwhile, continued to skirmish with the Confederates at Totopotomoy Creek, but no direct assault was launched at the formidable enemy entrenchments. Concerned that the Confederate cavalry planned a counterattack, Torbert and Custer, with Sheridan's approval, decided to strike first at Cold Harbor.

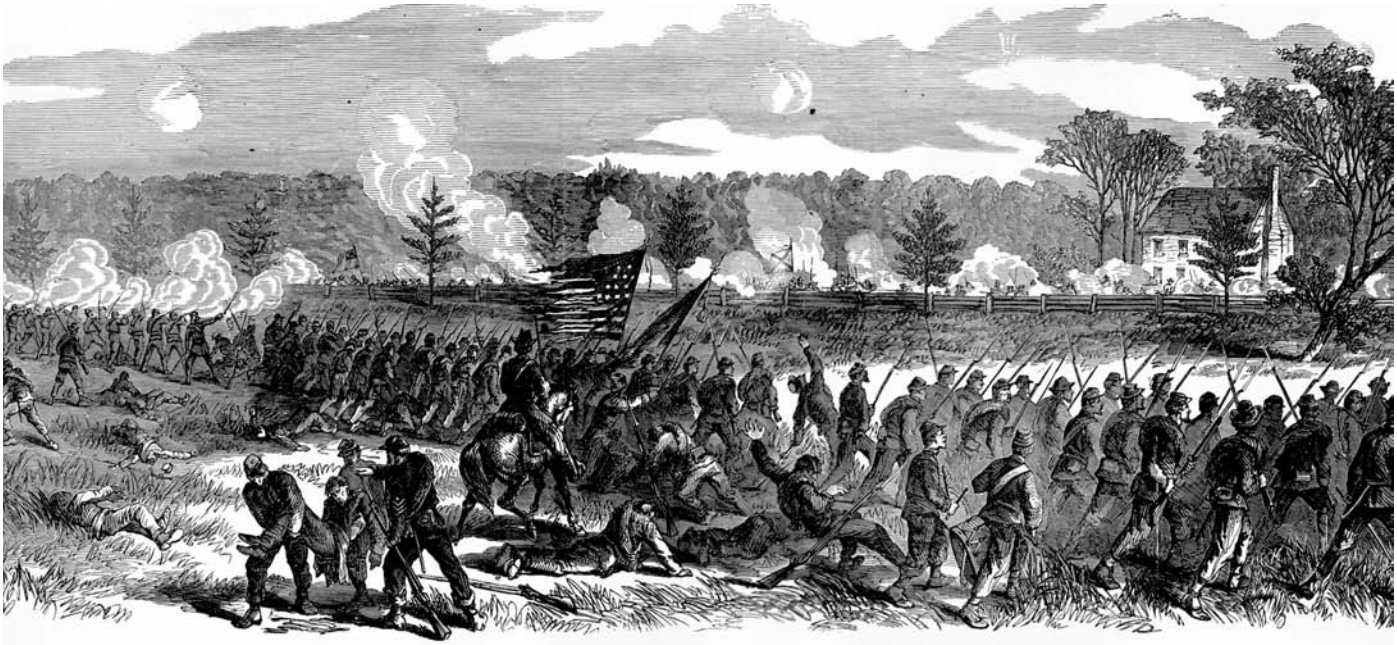
In midafternoon the Federal cavalry attacked, and Fitzhugh Lee sent an urgent message to his uncle, Robert E. Lee, telling him that he was going to dispute the Federals' progress and mentioning that Clingman's brigade was only a few miles away resting. "Had they not be better ordered on to assist in securing this place?" Fitzhugh Lee wondered. Positioned behind fence rail barricades and log breastworks, his men could use all the help they could get when the Federal cavalry attacked. Clingman finally arrived and took up position on Fitzhugh Lee's left.

The Confederates continued to hold out until Torbert decided to flank their position. While Custer held the defenders in place, Merritt hit the Confederates' left flank. Elements of Custer's command and Devin's men on Fitzhugh Lee's right struck as well. The Southern forces gave way and retreated a mile to the west, where they dug in on a low ridge soon to be reinforced with the rest of Hoke's division. The Federals now held Cold Harbor.

Earlier in the day, Lee had ordered Anderson's corps to pull out of its position at Totopotomoy Creek and head south to the crossroads. This movement was soon detected by the Federals. At Cold Harbor, Sheridan was becoming concerned with Torbert's exposed position. "I do not feel able to hold this place," he reported to Meade. Sheridan ordered Torbert to evacuate Cold Harbor after dark, but orders arrived from Meade to hold on to "Cold Harbor at all hazards." Wright's VI Corps, said Meade, was ordered south and should relieve them in the morning. Meanwhile, Smith's XVIII Corps was ordered to Cold Harbor as well, but a mixup in orders sent Smith marching toward New Castle Ferry instead. The Federal horsemen began strengthening the existing works and throwing up new ones along the road north to Beulah Church.

Wright's corps did not reach the Union troopers first on the morning of June 1. Instead, shortly after sunrise, Maj. Gen. Joseph Kershaw of Anderson's I Corps advanced toward Beulah Church, intending to attack the Union cavalry. Leading Kershaw's attack was his old brigade, now commanded by Colonel Lawrence Keitt. South of them, Hoke was expected to attack the enemy with his division, but due to a misunderstanding he never left his entrenchment.

Keitt, mounted on a gray horse, led his



Major General William Smith's XVIII Corps attacks the first line of Confederate rifle pits at Cold Harbor in this battlefield sketch by artist-correspondent Edwin Forbes.

brigade across open ground toward Beulah Church Road, where Union troopers waited behind their breastworks. Leading the charge with a Rebel yell was the 20th South Carolina. A point-blank sheet of musket fire erupted from the Federal line; horse artillery blasted the attackers as well. Keitt was shot from the saddle, and the regiment broke. A second charge was abruptly halted by a renewed torrent of fire. Kershaw ordered no more attacks. His division fell back to the left of Hoke, separated by a ravine and a waterway called Bloody Run. The Confederate line near Cold Harbor began taking shape.

Around 9 AM, elements of Wright's corps finally arrived after a grueling march and took over the defense of Cold Harbor. As the rest of the corps arrived throughout the day, the bluecoats extended the works to the north and south. After getting its orders straightened out, Smith's corps marched under a burning sun to take up position to the right of Wright's sweltering men. Orders were issued to Hancock to pull his corps out of line after dark and move south. Initially, Grant had moved troops to Cold Harbor to counter Lee's shifting of troops there, but now with two full corps there or on their way Grant began to think offensively. "The enemy have not long been in position about Cold Harbor," Meade explained to Smith, "and it is quite important to dislodge, and, if possible rout him before he can entrench himself." They would have to hurry—the Confederates were quickly digging in.

At 6:30 PM, four divisions from Wright's and Smith's corps, some 20,000 men in all, advanced toward roughly 10,000 troops of Hoke's and Kershaw's divisions sheltered behind earthworks. Two other Union divisions remained behind to protect the flanks. The attacking Federals south of the Cold Harbor Road were raked with canister and musketry well before they could reach the Confederate entrenchments. They stalled.

North of the road, artillery and small arms fire also hammered the advancing Federals, inflicting numerous casualties. Colonel Elisha Kellogg, leading his 1,500-man 2nd Connecticut Heavy Artillery from Brig. Gen. Emory Upton's 2nd Brigade, was determined to earn his novice troops a reputation as a fighting regiment. Kellogg's "Heavies" rushed across the open field and past the abandoned skirmishers' rifle pits toward the main entrenchment held by Clingman's men. There they found an impassable abatis of interweaved pine saplings. Kellogg led his men through a narrow channel in the brush, only to be greeted by a sheet of flame bursting from the Confederate breastworks that literally burned the men's faces. "A sheet of flame, sudden as lightning, red as blood, and so near it seemed to singe the men's faces, burst along the Rebel breastworks," recalled Adjutant Theodore Vaill. "The shrieks and howls of almost 250 men rose above the yells of triumphant Rebels and the roar of their musketry." A watching New Yorker thought, "Had hell been turned up sideways, the sight could not have been more fiery."

The regiment hit the ground. A second volley was high, but brutal fire from their left inflicted heavy casualties. "About face!" shouted Kellogg, who was hit three or four times by bullets and fell dead across the abatis. The men, blinded by the smoke, staggered in every direction. Some were shot down at the breastworks; others were captured. Upton arrived on the scene and ordered the survivors to lie down. Dismounting from his panicky horse, Upton took shelter behind a tree, firing round after round from muskets loaded and passed up to him from his aides.

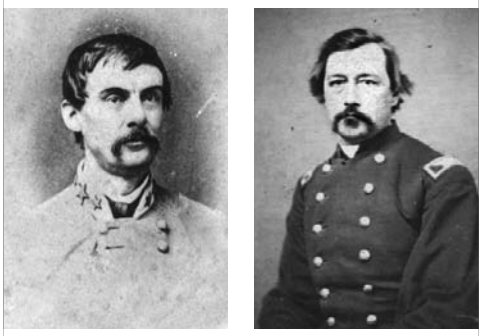
To the right of Upton's brigade the Federals had a better time of it. Colonel William Truex's brigade from Brig. Gen. James Rick-

etts' division pushed through lightly held works into the ravine between Clingman and Brig. Gen. William Wofford's brigade of Kershaw's division. Joining them was Colonel Benjamin Smith's brigade. Splashing through the mud and knee-deep marsh, the Federals from Truex's brigade attacked the 8th North Carolina of Clingman's brigade in the front, flank, and rear. The Confederates broke and ran, causing two of Clingman's other regiments to collapse and fall back as well.

To the right of Truex and Smith's brigades, Colonel Jeremiah Drake's XVIII Corps brigade endured heavy fire from the main Confederate line and was forced to dig in and wait for help. It soon came in the form of Colonel William Barton's brigade, which moved forward and hit the enemy line held by Wofford's troops. Drake, waving his sword above his head, cried, "See those devils run!" and led a handful of men into the entrenchments. There he was shot down and the surviving members taken prisoner. Under attack from the flank and rear by Federals advancing from the ravine, Wofford's brigade broke and fled to the rear at breakneck speed. A half-mile gap now appeared in the Confederate line.

Confederate reinforcements quickly rushed in to reinforce Clingman and retake the section of the works lost by Wofford. Darkness was falling as brutal fighting drove the Federals from the works and pushed them out of the ravine. Overall, the VI and XVIII Corps' attack had cost them about 2,200 casualties, but the men were now closer to the main Confederate entrenchment. Meade ordered another attack the next day, this time to be reinforced by Hancock's corps, which was ordered to take up position to the left of Wright and join the attack.

By 8:30 PM, Hancock began pulling his divisions out of line for their march south. The men tramped through the hot, breathless night made worse by suffocating clouds of dust and smoke. The march became a comedy of errors. "By some blunder we got on the wrong road," remembered John S. Jones of the 4th Ohio. "We became entangled in the woods; the artillery and infantry got mixed up in unutterable confusion; the heat was oppressive; the sand shoe-mouth deep; the air thick with choking dust, and we did not reach Cold Harbor until late on the morning of June 2. We were in a condition of utter physical exhaustion." Seeing the shape Hancock's men were in, Meade postponed the morning attack until 5 PM.



Confederate Brig. Gen. John Echols, left, defended at Cold Harbor. Colonel Lewis Morris of the 7th New York Heavy Artillery, right, was killed by a sharpshooter one day after the battle.

When word reached Lee that Hancock was pulling out of line, the Confederate commander ordered Breckinridge to move south as well. By mid-morning of June 2, two divisions from Hill's corps were marching south to join them. After some delay, Breckinridge arrived and extended the Confederate line south to Turkey Hill, driving off a small Federal force and digging in. The Confederate line was now anchored on Chickahominy Creek to the south and Totopotomoy Creek to the north.

Early acted swiftly on Lee's orders "to get upon the enemy's right flank" and drive them, falling on Burnside's forces around Bethesda Church. "The field was a mass of yelling shrieking demons wild with pain, thirst, anger and excitement," a Confederate officer remembered years later. Three divisions attacked Burnside's flanks, enduring heavy artillery fire and bending his corps and part of Warren's corps back about half a mile from the church.

Grant decided to postpone the next attack until 4:30 AM on June 3 to give Hancock's men more time to rest. The Confederates took advantage of the delay by strengthening their seven miles of entrenchments to provide interlocking fields of fire. Behind the breastworks on the Confederate right were men of Hoke's division, Breckinridge's division, and Brig. Gen. William Mahone's and Maj. Gen. Cadmus Wilcox's divisions of Hill's III Corps. Anderson's I Corps held the center, while Early's II Corps and Hill's remaining division under Maj. Gen. Henry Heth held the left flank. They looked down their muskets across an open killing ground.

Seeing the fortified Confederate position, one Federal officer noted, "It became a recognized fact amongst the men themselves that when the enemy had occupied a position six or eight hours ahead of us, it was useless to attempt to take it." Nevertheless, Grant was determined to try, believing the Rebels' morale was low. A successful assault, said Maj. Gen. Andrew Humphreys, Meade's chief of staff, would give the Federals "the opportunity of inflicting severe loss upon Lee when falling back over the Chickahominy, as that must necessarily be attended to with some disorder of his troops."

The Union troops, waiting through the day and night, were not so optimistic. Mostly, they were just tired. Drummer Delavan Miller of the 2nd New York Heavy Artillery recalled that "the men were so utterly worn out they would have willingly risked a wound for the sake of the rest it would give them." Grant's aide, Lt. Col. Horace Porter, would later claim that while he was carrying orders for the main assault the next morning he noticed that many of the soldiers were writing their names and home addresses on slips of paper and pinning them to the back of their coats in case they were killed. The makeshift name tags would enable them to be recognized and their families back home informed of their fate. It was not a good omen of things to come.

A refreshing rain stopped just before first light. The Federal troops were up and preparing to attack. Just before 4:30 AM, skirmishers on the Union left slipped out of the mist, and the sporadic crack of rifle fire soon pierced the early morning air. A sig-

nal gun boomed, and bugler George Gracey sounded the advance. Hancock's men moved forward with Brig. Gen. Francis Barlow's division on the left and Brig. Gen. John Gibbon's division to their right. Behind them in support was Brig. Gen. David Birney's division.

Moving out of the wood line and advancing quickly, screaming their typical attack cry, "Huzzah! Huzzah!" the Union troops advanced toward the shoulder-high enemy works, where they were greeted by a hailstorm of bullets and canister. The 7th New York Heavy Artillery of Colonel John Brooke's brigade, crossing the open field through tall, wet grass, had great gaps blown into its lines. Still the Heavies pushed on, leaving bodies in their wake and taking shelter in a hollow in front of the enemy works. Colonel Lewis Morris, commander of the 7th New York, reformed his men and led them over the enemy works held by the 26th Virginia Battalion of Brig. Gen. John Echols' brigade.

In the deadly churn of fighting, an officer and two men attempted to grab the 26th Virginia's colors. The color bearer refused their demand to surrender and ran the flagstaff's brass point through the Federal officer. The color bearer was promptly shot down, still clinging desperately to the flag. A melee ensued as more Confederates rushed forward to save it, but in the end the Federals captured the colors. Soon the Confederates began retreating or surrendering. One "rose up and fired into our color-guard, dropped his musket, threw up his hands and said 'I surrender,'" remembered a soldier of the 7th Heavies. "The Color-sergeant thrust the steel lance on the color-staff into his open mouth, and, with a reference to his canine ancestry, said, 'You spoke too late.'"

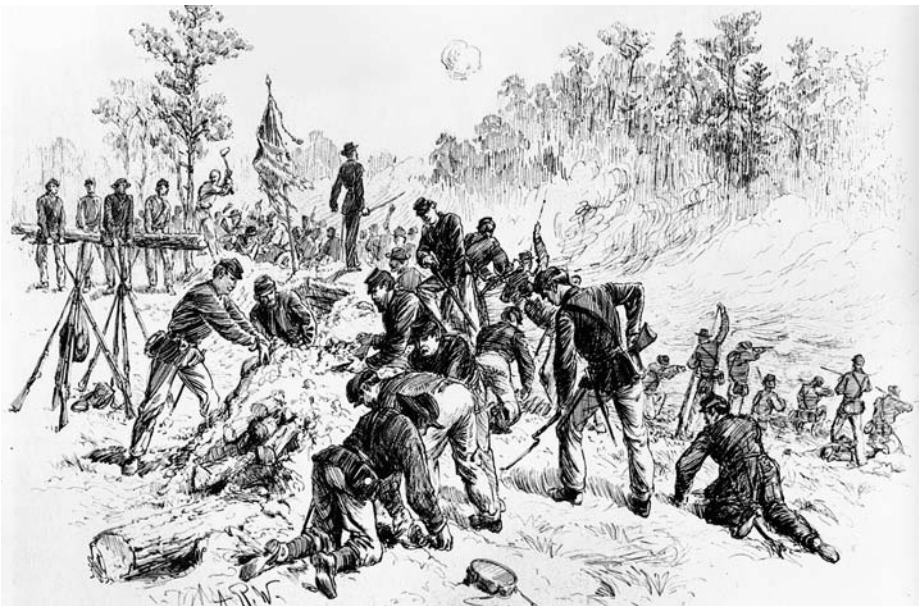
During the dash to the enemy works, Colonel Nelson Miles' brigade was to the left of Brooke's men. Enduring heavy fire from Brig. Gen. Gabriel Wharton's brigade of Virginians, Miles' men sought cover behind a road cut, while Colonel Charles Hagwood ordered his 5th New Hampshire to push on. They performed a half wheel to the right and scrambled over the enemy earthworks alongside the 7th New York Heavies. The New Hampshire boys pushed on to the McGehee House and fired on the enemy reserve line held by the 2nd Maryland Regiment from Breckinridge's command.

The Marylanders charged forward, as did Brig. Gen. Joseph Finnegan's Florida brigade. Survivors of the broken 26th Virginia came rushing past them. Once the Virginians were out of the way, the Floridians and Marylanders slammed into the bluecoats, rooting them out of the McGehee House and the earthworks. Morris regrouped and attempted to retake the breastwork but was stopped cold by a murderous fire. "We fought like hell and got licked like damnation," wrote Lieutenant Frederick Mather of the 7th New York.

To the right, Gibbon's division advanced on a two-brigade front, with two more brigades behind it. It quickly came under heavy musketry, grape, and canister fire. No

The 7th New York Heavy Artillery of Brig. Gen. Francis Barlow's 1st Division made a spirited attack on the Confederate works at Cold Harbor, overrunning several cannons and turning the guns on the Southern defenders before being pushed back.

reconnaissance had been done before the attack, and the troops soon encountered a swampy wooded area, the headwaters of Boatswain Creek. Brig. Gen. Robert Tyler's brigade, including the 1,600 men of the 8th New York Heavy Artillery, was split in two by the murky waters. Two battalions of the 8th New York Heavies were north of the swamp with their flank along the Cold Harbor Road. Brig. Gen. Alfred Colquitt's brigade of Hoke's division hammered the attackers as they struggled forward, but some of the Federals managed to get within 20 yards of the enemy breastworks before they were shot down. The rest sought cover.



ABOVE: Veteran soldiers in Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock's II Corps dig frantically with bayonets, tin plates, and bare hands to throw up shallow breastworks before an expected Confederate countercharge. OPPOSITE: Brig. Gens. Francis Barlow's and John Gibbon's men charged across the open countryside between the Mechanicsville Road and the swamp, but were unable to reach the main Confederate line.

"Our artillery fired double-shotted canister at a distance of a hundred yards," one Confederate gunner recounted. "At every discharge of our guns, heads, arms, legs, guns were seen flying high in the air. They closed the gaps in their lines as fast as we made them, and on they came, their lines swaying like great waves of the sea."

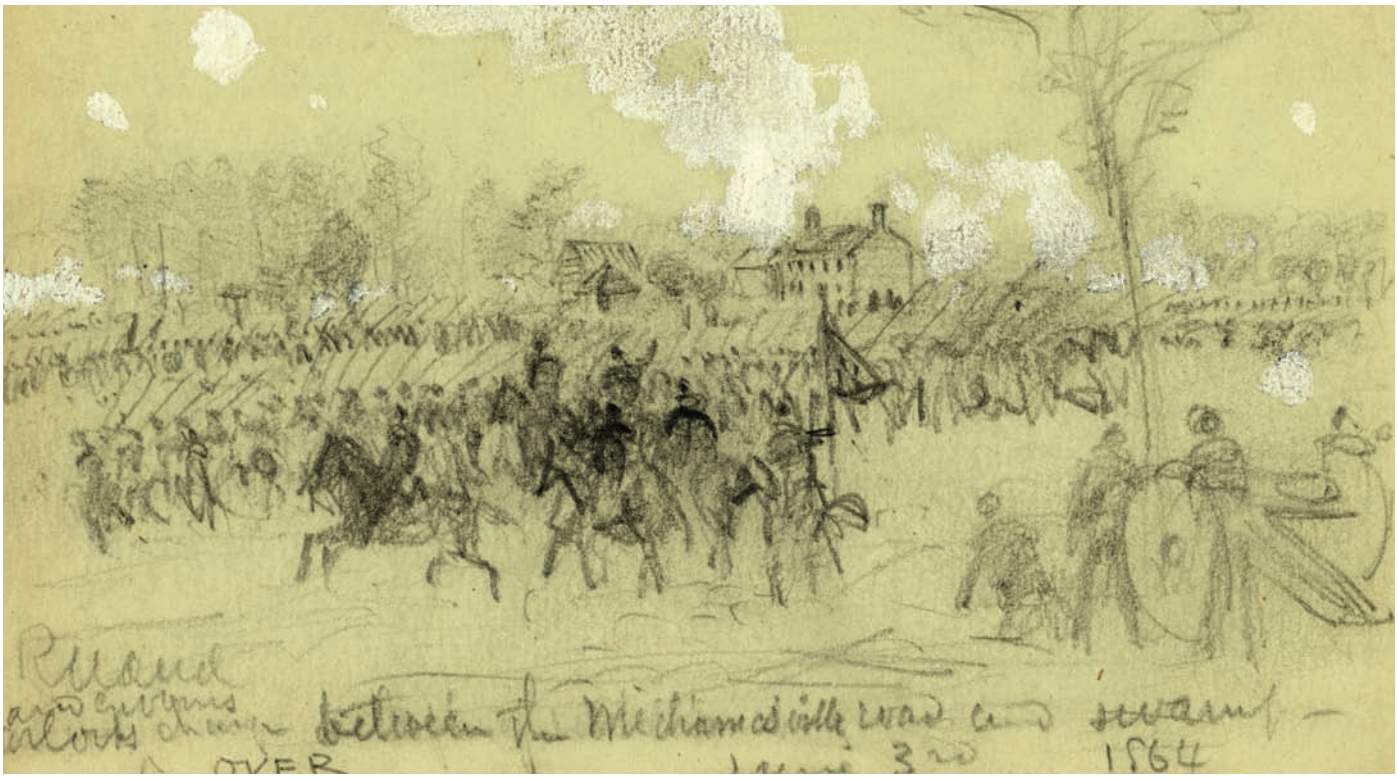
On the southern side of the swamp, the remainder of the 8th New York Heavies and the 155th and 182nd New York regiments pushed through thick undergrowth, only to be hit with devastating fire themselves. Unable to advance or retreat in the deadly hailstorm of lead, the Heavies hugged the ground. Some loaded and fired, while others made makeshift cover from fence rails and dug desperately with bayonets, knives, and their bare hands to throw earth onto the rails. "It could not be called a battle. It was simply a butchery, lasting only ten minutes," recalled a soldier from the 8th New York. The butchery may have lasted only 10 minutes, but the New Yorkers would be pinned down for the next 16 hours.

The other two New York regiments fared little better. Taking heavy casualties, they fell back 150 yards and dug in. "We felt it was murder, not war," exclaimed one soldier, "or that at best a very serious mistake had been made." On the left of Tyler's brigade, the 164th New York dressed in its flashy Zouave uniforms fought its way to the breastworks held by the 17th North Carolina of Brig. Gen. James Martin's brigade. The New Yorkers were driven back and their commander killed.

To the south of Tyler's brigade, Colonel Thomas Smyth's brigade advanced through some woods before reaching a clearing a few hundred yards away from Martin's brigade. The veteran bluecoats came under murderous fire, and although some managed to struggle close to the enemy breastworks, most were forced to seek shelter and dig in 50 to 100 yards from their objective. Behind Tyler came Colonel Boyd McKeen's brigade, packed in column formation. Casualties began to mount as it moved quickly across the open ground; McKeen himself was killed in the first rank. Colonel Frank Haskell took over but soon took a bullet in the head while ordering the men to lie down. In the rear and right of Smyth's brigade was Brig. Gen. Joshua Owen's brigade. Ordered by Gibbon to advance in column until he reached the Rebel entrenchment, Owen had other ideas. Upon reaching the swampy ground on the right of Smyth's brigade, Owen swung his men southwest and came out on Smyth's left flank and the right flank of the 7th New York Heavies. Coming under heavy fire, Owen's men too dug in. Hancock's corps would advance no farther.

Wright's corps, to Hancock's right, was still holding the territory it had bought with blood two days earlier. Wright would make only limited attacks, feeling that it was suicidal to attempt any large-scale attack on the Rebel works. "It is simply an order to slaughter my best troops," he said. Truex's brigade, now commanded by Colonel John Schall, accompanied Smyth's brigade in pushing into the swampy ground of Bloody Run before enemy fire forced it to dig in. Meanwhile, to its right, Brig. Gen. Thomas Neil's division attacked in stacked brigades. Leading the way was Colonel Frank Wheaton's brigade, which took a fearful hammering of small arms fire from the brigades of Brig. Gens. Tige Anderson and John Gregg. An artillery crossfire added to the Federals' misery. To William Derby of the 27th Massachusetts, "The surface of the field seemed like a boiling cauldron from the incessant pattering of shot which raised the dirt in geysers and spitting sands." Wheaton's men fell back. The next brigade did not go any farther, and Neill's attacked petered out.

The troops of Kershaw's division and three brigades of Maj. Gen. Charles Fields' division, both of Anderson's corps, had a



bloody surprise waiting for Smith's men. Obscured by some woods, the Confederates had constructed a horseshoe-shaped work that could catch the Federals from three directions. At 4:30 AM, Brig. Gen. William Brooks' division on the left and Brig. Gen. John Martindale's division on the right set off as ordered in a column of massed brigades. Smith hoped to use them as a battering ram.

Brook's column, led by Brig. Gen. Gilman Marston's brigade, advanced south of a wooded ravine, driving the Confederate pickets from their rifle pits and pushing heedlessly into the horseshoe, which immediately erupted in murderous fire. Marston would later report, "The ground was swept with canister and rifle-bullets until it was literally covered with the slain." Smith, seeing the massacre, ordered Brooks to stop his men and have them seek shelter until the crossfire was over. Marston pulled back his men, and they began to construct entrenchments.

Meanwhile, Martindale's division attacked on the north side of the ravine with bayonets fixed and rifles uncapped. Smith decided to split Martindale's division by sending Brig. Gen. George Stannard's brigade south into the ravine with orders to stay close to the southern edge, while Colonel Griffin Stedman pushed along the north side of the ravine. Alabamians of Brig. Gen. Evander Law's brigade, standing two deep behind their works, hammered Stedman's men, who "bent down as they went forward, as if trying, as they were, to breast a tempest," remembered a bluecoat of the 12th New Hampshire. The tempest of lead killed or wounded files of men and brought the attack to a jarring halt. "To those exposed to the full force and fury of the dreadful storm of lead and iron that met the charging columns, it seemed more like a volcanic blast than a battle," wrote Captain Asa Bartlett of the 12th New Hampshire.

To its south, Stannard's brigade fared little better; Confederate artillery blew gaps in its line, and volleys of musketry swept away the remaining bluecoats. The Confederates behind the packed breastworks had to jostle for firing position, passing forward loaded muskets to those in front of them. "It was not war, it was murder," said Law. The Union attack quickly ground to a halt, and the survivors limped back and dug in. In 10 minutes' time more men had fallen than at any comparable time during the entire war. The XVIII Corps advance was over.

So, it soon became obvious, was the entire Union assault. "Men lay in places like hogs in a pen," observed a Confederate soldier examining the carnage before him, "some side by side, across each other, some two deep, while others with their legs lying across the head and body of their dead comrades." In less than an hour, about 3,500 bluecoats had become casualties. The rest had become less an army than a badly rattled group of disaster victims. "There was a helpless mob, a swarming multitude of confused men," wrote a Confederate artillerist who witnessed the final assault. "They were falling by scores, hundreds. The mass was simply melting away under the fury of our fire."

Despite a premature report from Hancock that the enemy works had been pierced by Barlow's brigade, the II Corps commander reported to Meade at 5:30 AM that Barlow had pulled back. Half an hour

Continued on page 96

CSS *Alabama* and USS *Kearsarge* duel to the death in celebrated French Impressionist painter Edouard Manet's dramatic version of events. Manet claimed to have witnessed the battle firsthand, but he probably did not arrive until afterward.

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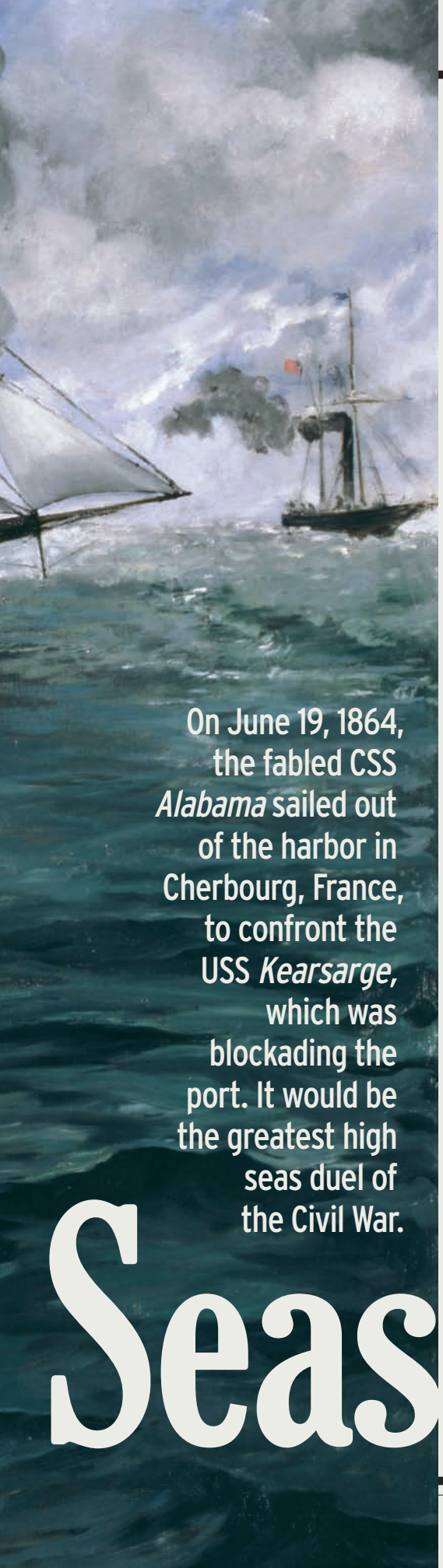


On June 19, 1864, the fabled CSS *Alabama* sailed out of the harbor in Cherbourg, France, to confront the USS *Kearsarge*, which was blockading the port. It would be the greatest high seas duel of the Civil War.

Seas DUEL

By Don Hollway

ON AUGUST 24, 1862, newly promoted Captain Raphael Semmes of the Confederate States Navy called his largely English crew to the quarterdeck of his new command, the 220-foot battle cruiser *Alabama,* lying off the coast of Terceira in the Azores. A band played "Dixie" as Semmes read aloud his commission from President Jefferson Davis and the Stars and Bars were run up the mainmast. "Now, my lads, there is the ship," said the captain. "She is as fine a vessel as ever floated. There is a chance that seldom offers itself to a British seaman, that is, to make a little money. We are going to burn, sink and destroy the commerce of the United States. Your prize money will be divided proportionately. Any of you that thinks he cannot stand to his gun, I do not want."

Covertly financed through the sale of Southern cotton and built at the famous Laird Shipyard on the Mersey River near Liverpool, *Alabama* was a wood-hulled, bark-rigged (foremasts rigged square, mizzenmast fore and aft), 220-foot sloop of 1,050 tons. With two 300-horsepower steam engines driving a single two-bladed screw, she could make 13 knots. "She was a perfect steamer and a perfect sailing ship, at the same time," marveled Semmes. "The *Alabama* was so constructed, that in fifteen minutes, her propeller could be detached from the shaft, and lifted in a well contrived for the purpose, sufficiently high out of the water, not to be an impediment to her speed. When this was done, and her sails spread, she was, to all intents and purposes, a sailing ship. On the other hand, when I desired to use her as a steamer, I had only to start the fires, lower the propeller, and if the wind was adverse, brace her yards to the wind, and the conversion was complete."

Unlike a Napoleonic-era man-of-war, which mounted more than 50 guns per side, *Alabama* totaled just eight. Her six 6.4-inch, 32-pounder smoothbores were dwarfed by her two main guns. Designed by Captain Theophilus Alexander Blakely of the British Army, with cast iron barrels and breeches wrapped in wrought iron or steel bands, they were so heavy that they had to be mounted directly amidships for proper sea keeping and manhandled on a complex system of pivots and tracks to one side or the other prior to battle. The aft 8-inch smoothbore fired a 68-pound shot or 42-pound shell; the forward 7-inch rifle fired a longer 100-pound shot or 85-pound shell.

Alabama's executive officer, Lieutenant John McIntosh Kell, had signed 80 new hands to join the veteran sailors of Semmes' previous command, the cruiser *Sumter.* "The *Alabama* will be a fine ship, quite equal to encounter any of the enemy's steam-sloops," their captain recorded in his log, "and I shall feel much more independent in her, upon the high seas, than I did in the little *Sumter.*"

While Semmes sailed off to seek glory, a former fellow officer was languishing in the backwaters of the naval war. In 1861, Commander John A. Winslow, a North Carolina-born Unionist, had been assigned to the Western Gunboat Flotilla at Cincinnati, intended to sail down the Ohio and wrest control of the Mississippi. He had not been confident of the outcome: "Our [ironclad] gunboats are heavy. It is doubtful whether we can get down the river, on

account of the draft of water, without first taking out the guns."

On his first venture downstream, commanding the flagship *Benton,* she grounded on a sandbar 30 miles south of St. Louis. As Winslow attempted to winch her off, a link of chain parted with such force that one shard flew 500 feet; another struck him in the left arm, tearing away much of the muscle. "It was a great mercy that the bolt did not strike me on the body," he wrote home, "as it would have made an end of me."

Sent home to recuperate, Winslow did not return to duty until the summer of 1862. He was promoted to captain that July and might even have expected command of the flotilla but was passed over, possibly due to his increasingly dim view of superiors up to and including President Abraham Lincoln, whom he considered insufficiently abolitionist in his sentiments. After the Union defeat at Second Bull Run that August, Winslow injudiciously told a reporter for the *Baltimore American,* "I'm glad of it. I wish the Rebs would bag Old Abe, too. Until something drastic is done to arouse Washington we shall have no fixed policy."

Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles narrowly declined to prosecute Winslow for insubordination or treason, but at the end of October he wrote to him: "You are hereby detached from the Mississippi Squadron and placed on furlough. You will regard yourself as awaiting orders." Winslow was bedridden with malaria and an inflammation of his right eye (in which he would eventually lose sight) when Welles found a suitably out of the way command for him: the sloop of war, USS *Kearsarge*.

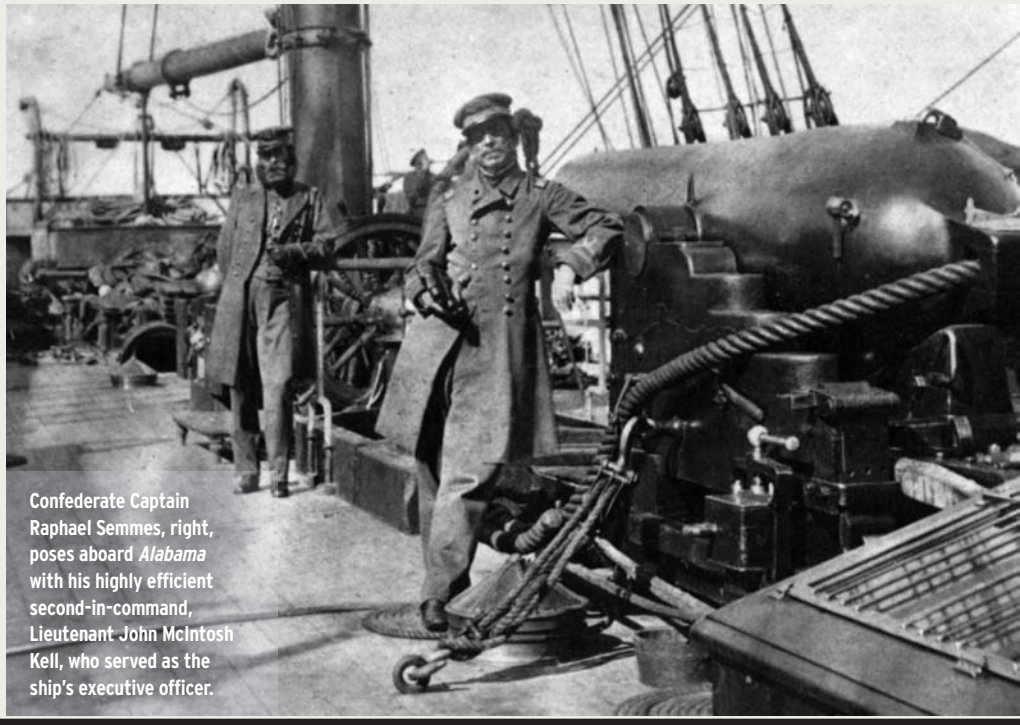
Alabama had been wreaking havoc among the Atlantic whaling fleet, taking 20 prizes up and down the Eastern Seaboard from Newfoundland to Bermuda. Among them, captured and burned on September 9, was the whaling bark *Alert,* made famous in the 1840 memoir *Two Years Before the Mast* by Richard Henry Dana, Jr. *Kearsarge* was an even match for her, and Winslow for Semmes as well. The two captains not only knew each other, they had briefly even been cabin mates.

In 1846, as young lieutenants during the Mexican War, each had assumed his first command. Winslow lost his captured Mexican sloop, renamed USS *Morris,* on a reef in a storm, and Semmes lost his brig, *Somers,* in a sudden squall while chasing a Mexican blockade runner. Both officers were completely exonerated but spent time together in the doghouse aboard the American flagship *Cumberland*. "It is a joke now," Winslow wrote, "so I frequently say, 'Captain Semmes, they are going to send you out to learn to take care of ships in blockade,' to which he replies, 'Captain Winslow, they are going to send you out to learn the bearing of reefs.'" Each was promoted to commander in 1855. In December 1860, Winslow's appointment as Inspector of the 2nd Lighthouse District was signed by Semmes, as Secretary of the U.S. Navy Lighthouse Board. The next month, however, the country sundered and the old friends took opposite sides.

In December 1862, Winslow shipped out from New York to rendezvous with *Kearsarge*. In the windward passage between Cuba and Hispaniola, *Alabama* ran down the sidewheel steamer *Ariel,* carrying 140 United States Marines and all their gear. The Confederates reaped 124 muskets, 16 swords, and $10,000 in Federal cash—*Alabama*'s largest single haul of the war—and only released their prey under a $261,000 bond (worth $3.8 million today) payable on demand when the Confederacy won the war. Even more importantly, *Ariel*'s cache of New York newspapers, less than a week old, announced that a 30,000-man army under Maj. Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks had sailed to invade Texas at Galveston.

"To transport such an army, a large number of transport ships would be required," Semmes reasoned. "As there were but twelve feet of water on the Galveston bar, very few of these transport ships would be able to enter the harbor; the great mass of them, numbering, perhaps, a hundred and more, would be obliged to anchor, pell-mell, in the open sea. Much disorder, and confusion would necessarily attend the landing of so many troops, encumbered by horses, artillery, baggage-wagons, and stores. My design was to surprise this fleet by a night-attack, and if possible destroy it, or at least greatly cripple it. Half an hour would suffice for my purpose of setting fire to the fleet, and it would take the [Union] gun-boats half an hour to get up steam, and their anchors, and pursue me."

His information wasn't quite fresh



Confederate Captain Raphael Semmes, right, poses aboard *Alabama* with his highly efficient second-in-command, Lieutenant John McIntosh Kell, who served as the ship's executive officer.

U.S. Navy

enough, however. By the time *Alabama* reached Galveston at dusk on January 11, the Texans already had repelled the assault. Banks' army disembarked at New Orleans. Instead of a fleet of helpless troop ships, *Alabama*'s lookout spotted only a few Union warships maintaining a sullen blockade. "I certainly had not come all the way into the Gulf of Mexico, to fight five ships of war, the least of which was probably my equal," Semmes wrote. "Whilst I was pondering the difficulty, the enemy himself, happily, came to my relief; for pretty soon the look-out again called from aloft, and said, 'One of the steamers, sir, is coming out in chase of us.'"

The 1,100-ton converted passenger ferry USS *Hatteras* had taken *Alabama* for a hapless blockade runner and churned out after her alone. "She was evidently a large steamer," Semmes wrote of *Hatteras*, "but we knew from her build and rig, that she belonged neither to the class of old steam frigates, or that of the new sloops, and we were quite willing to try our strength with any of the other classes."

Easily capable of outrunning the iron-hulled sidewheeler, Semmes shortened sail and let the Federals slowly gain, all the while luring them ever farther out to sea. Some 20 miles later, under cover of dusk, he took in his sails, made ready his guns, and came about to await his would-be captor. Union Lt. Cmdr. Homer C. Blake, for his part, was beginning to think something amiss. Presenting his own broadside, such as it was—a mere pair of 32-pounders and two even smaller rifled guns—he called across the water, "What ship is that?"

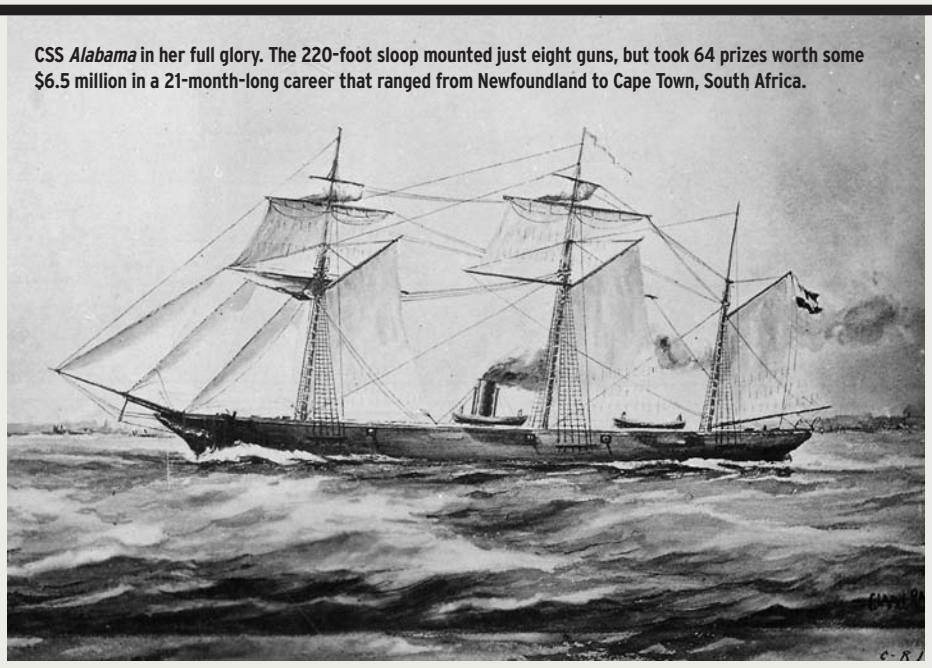
The Confederates replied, "This is her Britannic Majesty's steamer *Petrel*."

"If you please, I will send a boat on board of you."

"Certainly, we shall be happy to receive your boat," Semmes answered. As the Union boarding crew put down to row across, he turned to Lieutenant Kell. "I suppose you are all ready for action?"

"We are," said Kell. "The men are eager to begin, and only awaiting your word."

Semmes gave it. Kell stood up and shouted through his bullhorn, "This is the Confederate States steamer *Alabama*!" and the raider let fly a full broadside.



CSS *Alabama* in her full glory. The 220-foot sloop mounted just eight guns, but took 64 prizes worth some $6.5 million in a 21-month-long career that ranged from Newfoundland to Cape Town, South Africa.

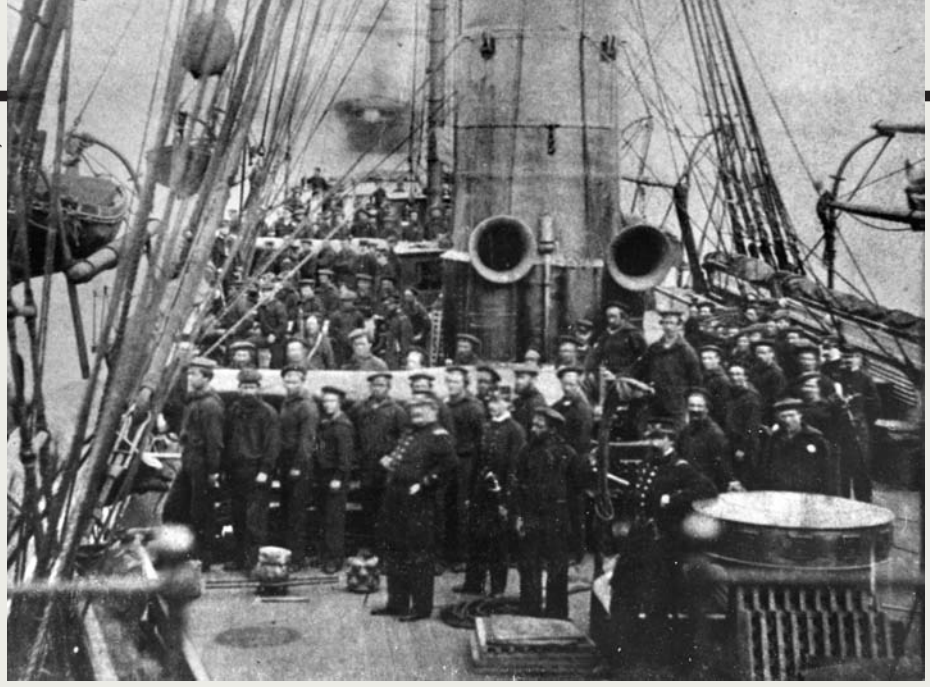
National Archives

The crew of *Hatteras,* having smelled trouble, answered immediately. The men in the cutter ducked as shot and shell flew low overhead in both directions. Giving throttle, the two warships conducted a running gunfight at ranges right down to 25 yards, so close their crews traded shots with muskets and revolvers. Several shells from *Hatteras* went through Semmes' cabin, and one passed narrowly over his head on the quarterdeck, but none struck below the waterline. The battle could only end one way. "The action was very sharp and exciting while it lasted, which was not very long," wrote Semmes, "for in just thirteen minutes after firing the first gun, the enemy hoisted a light and fired an off-gun, as a signal that he had been beaten. We at once withheld our fire, and such a cheer went up from the brazen throats of my fellows, as must have astonished even a Texan, if he had heard it."

The men of the Galveston fleet did hear, if not the cheers of the Southerners, the reports of their big pivot guns and, seeing their flashes on the horizon, realized *Hatteras* had blundered into a fight. Raising anchor and steaming out in all haste to assist, they passed the little cutter—its crew, as might be imagined, stroking with all their might for shore—but found no trace of *Alabama*. "As soon as the action was over, and I had seen the [*Hatteras*] sink," wrote Semmes, "I caused all lights to be extinguished on board my ship, and shaped my course again for the passage of Yucatan." In the morning the Federals found *Hatteras* resting on the shallow bottom of the Gulf with a pennant still flying from the tip of her mainmast, a few feet above the waves.

Meanwhile, Winslow was stuck in the Azores all spring. "The *Kearsarge* has been in [dry] dock, repairing at Cadiz, long enough to have built a vessel in the United States," he groused, "and I am not aware that she has yet got out." By the time he took delivery in April, he had formulated grand plans. *Kearsarge*'s armament would hold no great advantage over *Alabama*. She mounted only four 32-pounders, although her two pivot guns were larger than Semmes': two 11-inch smoothbores designed by Captain John Dahlgren of the Navy Ordnance Department. Made of cast iron pieces weighing nearly eight tons apiece, each could fire a 166-pound shot or 133-pound explosive shell 2,300 yards, through four inches of steel and 20 inches of oak.

Winslow's executive officer, Lt. Cmdr. James S. Thornton, knew how to turn their wood-hulled sloop into an ironclad. "We



U.S. Navy

Highly disciplined and well turned out, the crew of USS *Kearsarge* poses for a photograph at their battle stations in 1864, the year they did battle with the famous Confederate raider CSS *Alabama* off the coast of France.

remained ten days plating our vessel for some thirty feet each side, to protect our machinery," Winslow wrote. "This plating consists of our heavy [spare anchor] chains, suspended close together, which are hung to the sides of the vessel, and makes a complete armor for protection against shot, etc." Disguised with a wooden veneer, from any distance the chain cladding was nearly invisible.

Meanwhile, *Alabama* had ranged down the coast of South America on what would be her most lucrative raid. Preying on merchant traffic coming up from Cape Horn, Semmes had captured or burned 19 vessels, sometimes at the rate of two or three a day. By mid-May, when Winslow was finishing up his armor in the Azores, *Alabama* was carrying no less than four ships' crews prisoner. She stopped off in Bahia, Brazil, to put them ashore and take on coal, and by complete coincidence met *Georgia,* fresh from Ushant on her maiden raid, and her own sister ship, *Florida,* just up the coast at Pernambuco. The Confederates had formed an inadvertent South Atlantic Squadron.

The three raiders were on separate missions and soon parted company, but the possibilities must have been plain to Semmes. Capturing seven more ships in the South Atlantic by the beginning of June, he transferred spare crewmen and a pair of captured cannons to the 350-ton bark USS *Conrad* and rechristened her as the raider CSS *Tuscaloosa*. "Never, perhaps, was a ship of war fitted out so promptly before," he recounted proudly. "The *Conrad* was a commissioned ship, with armament, crew, and provisions on board, flying her pennant, and with sailing orders signed, sealed, and delivered, before sunset on the day of her capture." The Confederate high seas raiders were beginning to reproduce.

By the time she reached Cape Town, South Africa, in August 1863, *Alabama* was an international sensation. "Three hearty cheers were given for Captain Semmes and his gallant privateer," declared the *Cape Town Argus*. "It was not, perhaps, taking the view of either side, Federal or Confederate, but in admiration of the skill, pluck, and daring of the *Alabama,* her captain, and her crew, who afford a general theme of admiration for the world all over."

News from home, however, was nothing but bad. Gettysburg and Vicksburg were lost. The Mississippi River was under Federal control from the Ohio River to the Gulf of Mexico. "As for ourselves, we were doing the best we could, with our limited means, to harass and cripple the enemy's commerce, that important sinew of war," Semmes wrote, "but the enemy seemed resolved to let his commerce go, rather than forego his purpose of subjugating us."

Loath to be trapped in harbor again and guessing the U.S. Navy would await him in the shipping lanes toward Madagascar, he set out due east. With southern midwinter gales at her back, *Alabama* covered over 2,800 miles in two weeks, turning up northwest of Australia toward the East Indies. Her reputation preceded her. American ships either stayed in harbor waiting for the Confederates to vacate the area or signed themselves over to neutral nations, beyond capture. *Alabama* ranged as far as Singapore and Vietnam, but through year's end took only six vessels.

"My intention now was to make the best of my way to England or France," Semmes decided, "for the purpose of docking and thoroughly overhauling and repairing my ship." In that era few vessels could go a year and a half without putting in for a complete overhaul, but *Alabama* had never seen so much as a dry dock, let alone a home port. Her beams were splitting, her decks were sagging, her boilers were corroded with salt water, and her bottom was dragging barnacles, seaweed, and copper plating. Semmes logged, "Shall we ever reach that dear home which we left three years ago [aboard *Sumter*], and which we have yearned after so frequently since? Will it be battle, or shipwreck, or both, or neither? And when we reach the North Atlantic, will it still be war, or peace? When will the demon-like passions of the North be stilled?"

Winslow and *Kearsarge* spent the winter attempting to single-handedly blockade England, Ireland, France, and Spain. They left *Florida* in dry dock at Brest, France, trying to catch *Georgia* at Queenstown, Ireland, but *Georgia* put in at Cherbourg instead. Winslow gained nothing but 16 Irishmen who joined his crew. When Her Majesty's Foreign Office got wind of it, he was accused of signing them in violation of the Foreign Enlistment Act, which forbade her subjects from equipping or manning foreign ships of war (despite which Semmes' crew was mostly

British). "The English all hate this ship," Winslow wrote, "and took bold of this act to try and make something out of it. This thing has cost me more writing than would fill a quire of paper."

By April he was being charged in the House of Lords with violating British neutrality. He answered in the press, referring to the Irishmen as "miserable trash," accusing the British of questionable motives, and generally offending everyone involved. England and France both forbade *Kearsarge* to anchor within their ports for more than 24 hours at a time, and a full report on the incident was submitted to Washington. Winslow's career prospects were not improved by his complete inability to capture, destroy, or even detain a single enemy ship; while he was distracted with legalities, in February both Confederate raiders escaped harbor. "If we had more ships here," wrote the near disgraced captain, "we certainly could have got the *Georgia* or *Florida*."

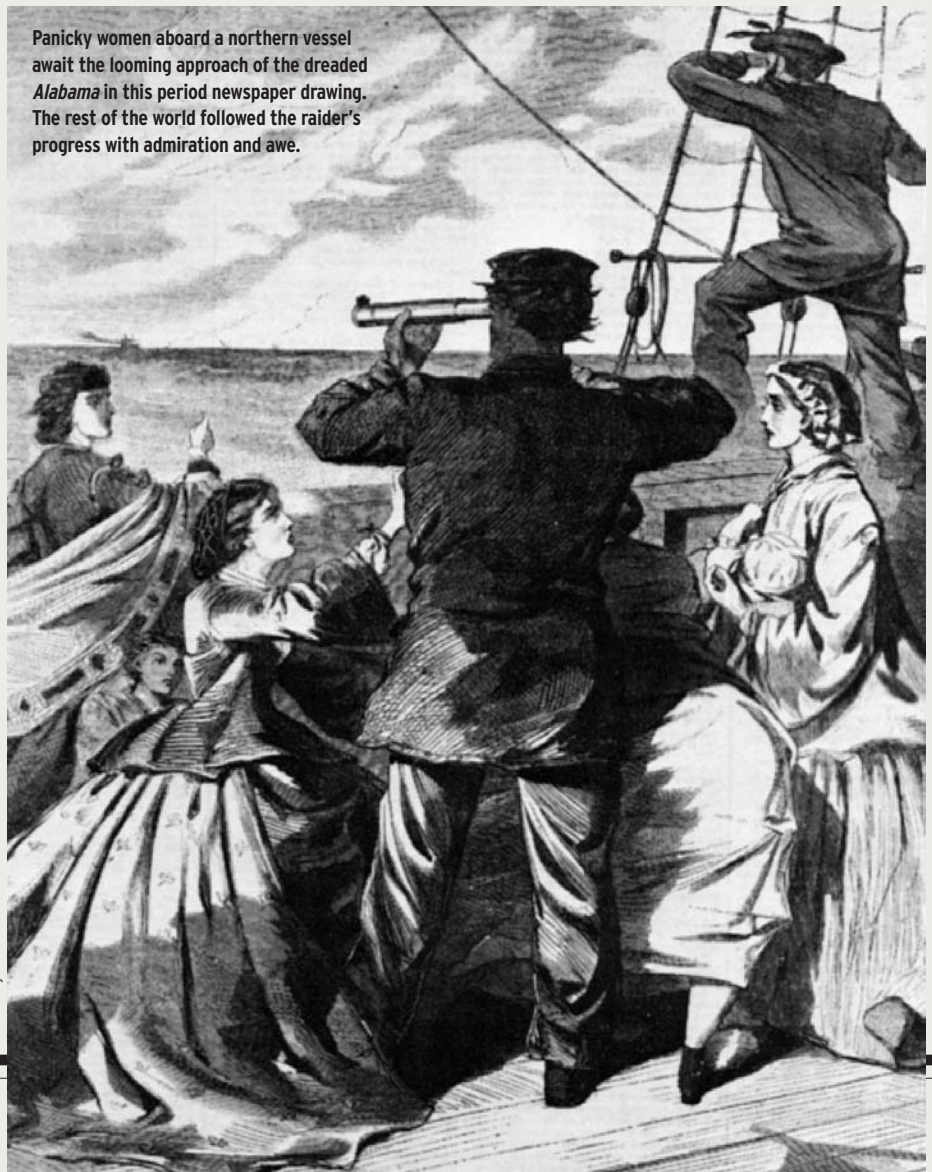
Semmes found no warmer welcome. In 1862, when victory had seemed within the South's grasp, the European powers had been sympathetic, even encouraging, to the Confederacy. In 1864 they were no longer eager to defy the Union. Arriving at Cherbourg on June 12, *Alabama* was to be permitted to repair or coal, but not both, and she was to be on her way as soon as possible. On June 14, *Kearsarge* suddenly appeared outside the Cherbourg breakwater.

Semmes and Kell talked over their options, which were few. They could remain in port, in which case Federal cruisers would flock to Winslow's aid and see to it that *Alabama* rotted at anchor, or they could fight. If they were defeated, the outcome for the Confederacy would be the same: one ship lost. A victory, on the other hand, would not only be momentous for Semmes and his crew, who might turn *Kearsarge* into a fresh new raider; for the Confederacy it would be a public relations coup that might even sway the European powers back to her side.

Historians have debated whether Semmes was aware of the Union sloop's chain cladding; in his memoirs he claimed to have learned of it only after the fact, though it seems to have been common knowledge aboard his ship. He may simply have discounted its existence as rumor or decided that it made no difference. For *Alabama,* to deny battle was tantamount to defeat. "The combat will no doubt be contested and obstinate," Semmes wrote, "but the two ships are so equally matched that I do not feel at liberty to decline it. God defend the right, and have mercy upon the souls of those who fall, as many of us must." Accordingly, he sent word through channels: "I desire to say to the U.S. consul that my intention is to fight the *Kearsarge* as soon as I can make the necessary arrangements. I hope these will not detain me more than until tomorrow evening, or after the morrow morning at furthest. I beg she will not depart before I am ready to go out."

Choosing coal over repairs, he packed the bunkers around his ship's machinery with an extra 150 tons of hard Welsh anthracite as his own kind of armor. He sent ashore five bags of gold sovereigns, about $5,000 each, bonds from his surviving victims, and a collection of ships' chronometers taken from the rest. Meanwhile, *Kearsarge* prowled back and forth outside the breakwater, Winslow running gun drills and reordering his ammunition stores for easy access.

Word of the impending fight spread across France. A new rail line from Paris had just opened; Cherbourg's hotels filled with tourists eager to witness history. French Impressionist painter Edouard Manet, usually said to have watched the battle from a boat, likely did not arrive until afterward and rendered his famous depiction from spectator accounts. On Fri-



Panicky women aboard a northern vessel await the looming approach of the dreaded *Alabama* in this period newspaper drawing. The rest of the world followed the raider's progress with admiration and awe.

U.S. Navy

day the English yacht *Deerhound* arrived from the Isle of Jersey to meet her owner, John Lancaster of the Lancashire Union Railway, who had brought his family from holiday in St. Malo to see the show.

Saturday, June 18, was stormy and heavy seas precluded combat, but Sunday dawned clear. By 6:10 AM *Alabama*'s boilers were lit; by 7:50 she had sufficient steam; and at 9:45 she set out for open water. *Deerhound*, with the Lancaster family now on board, accompanied her from the anchorage, as did several little harbor pilot boats crowded with paying passengers. The French ironclad *Couronne,* on hand to enforce the host's neutrality, escorted the little fleet out past the breakwater's western tip.

Kearsarge was about five miles out in the Channel. Winslow had finished the morning inspection and was about to conduct Sunday services when a lookout called, "She's coming!" Winslow ordered the crew to general quarters and *Kearsarge* farther out to sea. He had strict instructions not to infringe on French territorial waters and for once was following orders to the letter.

To the 19,000 spectators, picnickers, and vacationing families watching from the high ground around Cherbourg, especially to the west around the famous Chapel of St. Germain on the point of Querqueville, it must have seemed as though the Federals were running for it. The betting was hot and heavy, with the odds favoring *Alabama*. Peddlers did a brisk business in campstools, telescopes, and cheap binoculars.

By the time *Kearsarge* was six or seven miles from shore, her boilers had warmed to high pressure. Her guns were loaded with shells on five-second fuses. The 11-inch Dahlgrens had been pivoted over to starboard. Gun ports were lowered. Cannoneers stood with lanyards in hand. Thornton ordered sand scattered across the deck, lest it become slippery with blood. The ship's officers shook hands and went to their posts. Winslow had gone to his cabin and traded his uniform cap for an old, weather-beaten one. Taking up station at the foot of the mizzenmast, he ordered *Kearsarge* to come about and asked for full steam.

"The men were cut all to pieces, and the deck was strewn with arms, legs, heads and shattered trunks. One of the mates nodded to me as if to say, 'Shall I clear the deck?' I bowed my head and he picked up the mangled remains of the bodies and threw them into the sea."

Observers could see black coal smoke gush from the Union ship's stack as she turned bow-on to the enemy. Unlike *Alabama*'s clean-burning anthracite, *Kearsarge* ran on Newcastle bituminous. There could be no doubt now that Winslow intended to make a fight of it. At the three-mile limit, *Couronne* sheered off to stand guard, but the *Deerhound* and pilot boats followed in *Alabama*'s wake as she closed on her enemy.

Calling his crew aft, Semmes had stepped up on a gun carriage, much as he had that first time in the Azores almost two years earlier. He told them: "Officers and seamen of the *Alabama*! You have, at length, another opportunity of meeting the enemy—the first that has been presented to you, since you sank the *Hatteras*! In the meantime, you have been all over the world, and it is not too much to say, that you have destroyed, and driven for protection under neutral flags, one half of the enemy's commerce, which, at the beginning of the war, covered every sea. This is an achievement of which you may well be proud; and a grateful country will not be unmindful of it. The name of your ship has become a household word wherever civilization extends. Shall that name be tarnished by defeat? The thing is impossible! Remember that you are in the English Channel, the theatre of so much of the naval glory of our race, and that the eyes of all Europe are at this moment, upon you. The flag that floats over you is that of a young Republic, who bids defiance to her enemies, whenever, and wherever found. Show the world that you know how to uphold it! Go to your quarters."

The Confederate guns were loaded with solid shot for maximum reach. One of *Alabama*'s portside 32-pounders had been rolled over to starboard, and both her big Blakely pivot guns were also swung that way. The forward 7-inch rifle had the advantage of range over any other gun in the battle, including even *Kearsarge*'s Dahlgrens, and Semmes was determined to strike the first blow.

The ships were still a mile apart when, at about 11 AM, he ordered *Alabama* over to port. As her bow swung away the cannoneers realized their captain, right out of the box, was going for the Holy Grail of a gunfight at sea. With *Kearsarge* coming straight at them, he intended to "cross the T," bringing all guns to bear on the enemy's bow and raking her, stem to stern.

"She opened her full broadside, the shot cutting some of our rigging and going over and alongside of us," reported Winslow. "Immediately I ordered more speed; but in two minutes the *Alabama* had loaded and again fired another broadside, and following it with a third, without damaging us except in rigging." The Confederates' aim was surprisingly high, but so was their rate of fire. "I was apprehensive that another broadside—nearly raking as it was—would prove disastrous. Accordingly, I ordered the *Kearsarge* sheered, and opened on the *Alabama*."

The Union sloop peeled away to port. The ships passed starboard to starboard, less than a thousand yards apart. Winslow ordered, "Fire at your pleasure!" It was about 12 minutes into the battle. *Kearsarge* unleashed her first broadside to immediate effect. A 32-pound shell went through *Alabama*'s forward pivot-gun

port, ripped the leg off one of the 7-incher's crew, ricocheted off its side, and wounded a man at another gun.

Having nearly had his bow crossed, Winslow intended to turn the tables and cross the enemy's stern. He ordered the wheel over, and *Kearsarge* banked hard to starboard. But Semmes had the same idea. *Alabama* likewise turned to starboard. The two ships swung around after each other's tails, on opposite sides of a circle, broadside to broadside. To turn away now was to invite being raked their whole length.

"The remainder of the fight," Kell recalled, "occurred at a distance of not more than 500 yards." The wind was blowing from the west, though that mattered naught to steamers, which fought with furled sails. The current, flowing at about three knots to the southwest, bore the circling duelists toward Querqueville Point. *Kearsarge,* with a four-bladed prop and clean bottom, had the advantage of speed over the *Alabama*'s two-bladed prop and fouled hull. Only by a masterful job of seamanship could Semmes keep Winslow from gaining on him around the circle and crossing his wake. "I had directed my men to fire low," he wrote later, "telling them that it was better to fire too low than too high, as the ricochet in the former case—the water being smooth—would remedy the defect of their aim, whereas it was of no importance to cripple the masts and spars of a steamer."

A Union shot cut away *Alabama*'s spanker gaff (top rearmost sail), from which flew the ship's Stainless Banner, white with a Southern Cross in the canton. The Union gunners cheered to see it fall; the Confederates cheered to see another run up the mizzenmast. "When we got within good shell range," Semmes reported, "we opened upon him with shell." At about 11:20, the forward 7-inch Blakely put a round into *Kearsarge* amidships, but her chain armor bounced it up and out through the engine room skylight. The Union crew had no time to celebrate their close call before another 7-inch round struck aft, shuddering the entire ship. "Mr. Thornton!" called Winslow. "See what damage that one did!"

Thornton had barely left his post when the Confederates' 8-incher landed a shell near *Kearsarge*'s aft pivot gun. When the smoke cleared, three Union crewmen lay sprawled on the deck, two with horribly broken legs (one later died) and one with an arm nearly torn off. Few of the Confederate shells, however, had such explosive effect. "I should have beaten [Winslow] in the first thirty minutes of the engagement," declared Semmes later, "but for the defect of my ammunition, which had been two years on board, and become much deteriorated by cruising in a variety of climates."

Thornton reported a Confederate shell had lodged in the ship's sternpost, a dud. Had it gone off, it would surely have opened *Kearsarge* up to the sea. As it was, her rudder was nearly jammed, requiring four men to turn her wheel and preventing her from gaining *Alabama*'s stern and finishing the fight.

So far the Confederates had suffered just one man killed and two wounded, a

A gun crew aboard *Kearsarge* fires on *Alabama* in the heat of battle. Captain John A. Winslow had sand spread on the ship's decks to soak up the blood.

Library of Congress

nicked mainmast, and the lost gaffsail, but they were hardly winning the battle. "Perceiving that our shells, though apparently exploding against the enemy's sides, were doing him but little damage," Semmes reported, "I returned to solid-shot firing, and from this time onward alternated with shot, and shell."

The Confederates poured it on, firing at almost twice the rate of the Union gunners. A 100-pounder blew a hole through *Kearsarge*'s stack, letting black coal smoke pour low over the deck. Two 32-pound shells entered right through the Federals' own 32-pounder ports, miraculously not striking a single crewman, even though a gun captain was knocked down by the sheer shock wave and one shell caromed completely across the deck to start a fire in the opposite side hammock netting. "Sound the alarm for fire quarters," Winslow ordered. As men doused the flames, the gun crews remained steady, waiting patiently for the smoke to clear, taking their time, taking careful aim.

Watching through his scope, Semmes said, "Confound them; they've been fighting twenty minutes, and they're cool as posts."

"My position was near the eight-inch gun," recalled Kell. "An eleven-inch shell from *Kearsarge* entered a port hole and killed eight of the sixteen men serving that gun." When the smoke cleared he saw, "The men were cut all to pieces, and the deck was strewn with arms, legs, heads and shattered trunks. One of the mates nodded to me as if to say, 'Shall I clear the deck?' I bowed my head and he picked up the mangled remains of the bodies and threw them into the sea." Kell ordered a 32-pounder crew to take over the Blakely, and the battle went on.

Winslow had ordered his light guns to clear the enemy's decks and his Dahlgrens to shoot low to open *Alabama*'s bottom. "Mr. Thornton!" he called. "Aim a trifle more below her waterline." A Union shell that should have taken *Alabama* right in the engine room instead exploded in her packed bunker. For a moment a thick cloud of black coal dust enveloped the deck, but as it blew away the crew could see Semmes' improvised inner armor had worked. *Alabama* was taking on water, but she was still in the fight.

The two ships turned seven complete circles, firing continuously into each other. Kell called down to the engine room for more steam and was told the boilers would explode if fed any more coal. The 7-inch Blakely, a small gun firing a big shell, had overheated. A fragment had cut Semmes' right hand. He is reputed to have offered a reward to anyone who knocked out *Kearsarge*'s aft pivot gun, but suddenly the Confederate gun crews, stripped to the waist, streaming sweat and black with powder grime, were doused with seawater as the entire ship jolted sideways. An 11-inch shell had punched into her below the waterline.

It came at the worst moment. Five minutes sooner or later, and *Alabama* would have been pointed for France. She didn't have to reach port, but merely the three-mile limit, for safety. Instead, she had already begun another turn, faced seaward, and now had to come all the way back around. *Kearsarge,* across the circle, was already headed toward shore, perfectly positioned to cut off her escape. "For some few minutes I had hopes of being able to reach the French coast," reported Semmes, "for which purpose I gave the ship all steam, and set such of the fore-and-aft sails as were available."

Waterlogged, a shot having smashed her steering gear, *Alabama* answered the helm sluggishly, coming around to port. A forecastle hand leaped to unfurl a jib sail at the bow and quicken her turn but was, upon exposing himself, disemboweled by a shell fragment. He held in his guts with one hand long enough to release the sail with the other before falling to the deck dead.

Alabama finally came around only to find *Kearsarge* off her port bow, between her and safety. Semmes' pivot guns were now facing the wrong way; to port he had only the remaining pair of 32-pounders. Winslow, having kept him to starboard the entire time, had a full broadside ready to rake him from just 400 yards. He ordered Thornton, "Stand by with the grape." At this moment a Confederate engineer came up from below to report the rising water had reached *Alabama*'s furnaces. The ship had lost power.

Semmes ordered Kell below to assess the damage. The lieutenant remembered, "The holes in the side of the poor old *Alabama* were large enough to admit a wheelbarrow." He rushed back on deck, reporting she had at most 10 minutes left on the surface. "Strike the colors, Mister Kell," Semmes told him. "It will not do in the 19th century to sacrifice every man we have on board."

Even as *Alabama*'s flag came down, *Kearsarge* hit her with one last broadside. Afterward Winslow insisted the Confederates' two port-side 32-pounders had opened up on him and, thinking their flag had not been lowered but shot away, he merely replied in kind. "It is charitable," Semmes would write, "to suppose that a ship of war of a Christian nation could not have done this, intentionally."

Semmes sent a boat across to request assistance. The Union lifeboats had all been shot to pieces; it would take several minutes to unlimber a sailing launch and second cutter—a suspicious delay to the Confederates' minds. Meanwhile *Deerhound,* which throughout the battle had remained a mile or so to windward, moved in under *Kearsarge*'s stern to offer aid. "Yacht ahoy," answered the Federals, "lend a hand to save the people." The French pilot boats joined the rescue.

By now *Alabama* was rapidly settling by the stern. "There was no fear nor hurry-up on the part of the men," Kell remembered later. "Everything was done quietly, as if the crew were preparing for an ordinary ship inspection." The officers saw the wounded into the boats, flung their swords into the sea, and jumped after them.

Shortly before 1 PM, about five miles off the Cherbourg breakwater, *Alabama* suddenly reared up out of the water, her bottom showing green with algae and copper patina and her damaged mainmast snapping from the strain. Then, swiftly, she slid stern first below the surface of the Channel. Twenty-six of her crew died with her, several sucked under after her. "After

"Sinking of the CSS Alabama © Andy Thomas; www.andythomas.com

Confederate crewmen abandon ship as CSS *Alabama* sinks off the coast of Cherbourg, France. Twenty-six of the crew died along with her, many sucked under the water as she sank. Painting by Andy Thomas.

swimming off a few yards, I turned to see her go down," remembered Kell. "As the gallant vessel, the most beautiful I ever beheld, plunged down to her grave, I had it on my tongue to call to the men who were struggling in the water to give three cheers for her, but the dead that were floating around me and the deep sadness I felt at parting with the noble ship that had been my home so long deterred me."

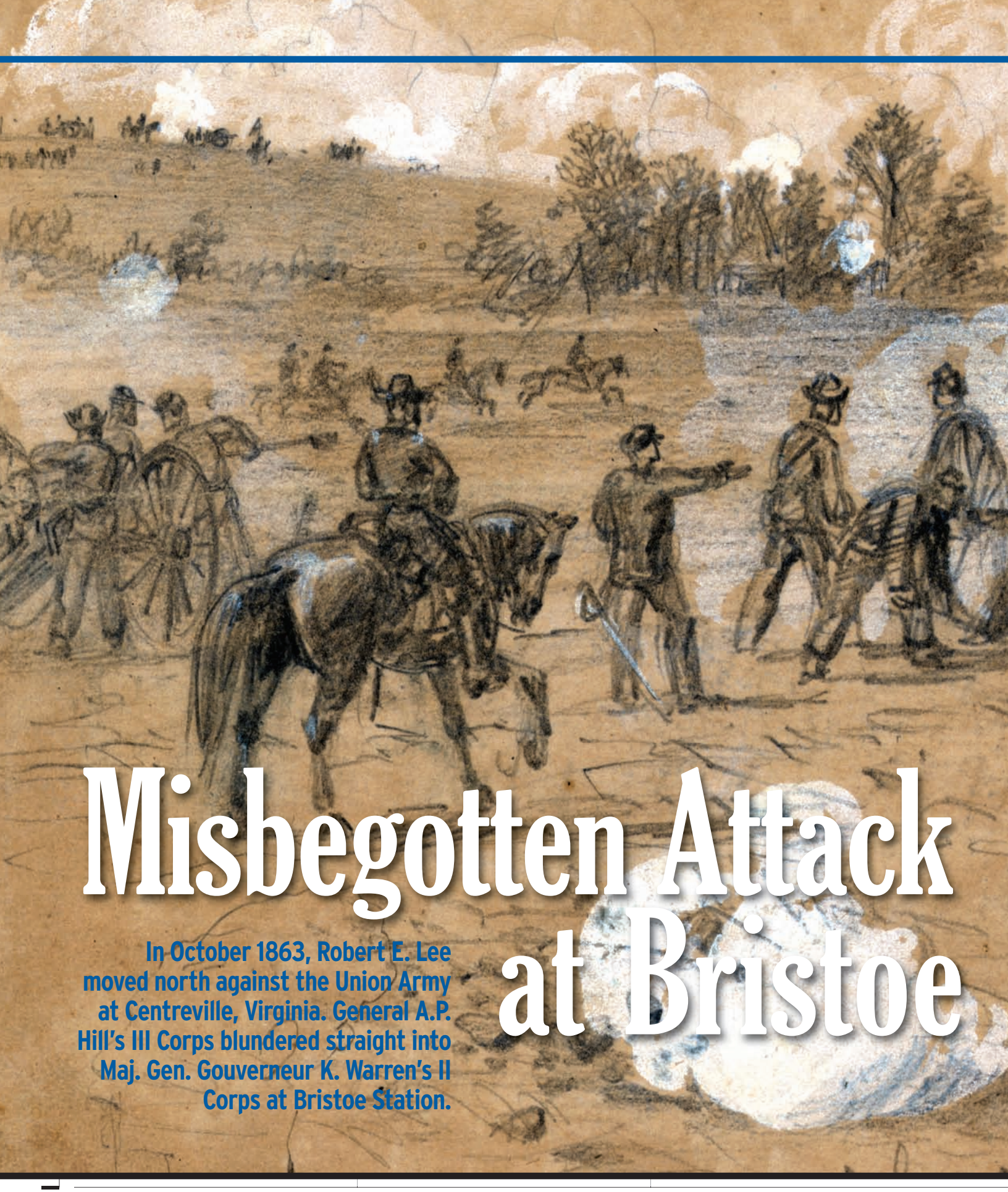
Kell, Semmes, and about 40 of the crew managed to reach *Deerhound,* where owner Lancaster and his crew took them aboard. Asked his preferred destination, Semmes requested that they be landed at Southampton, England. Some of Winslow's officers informed him that *Deerhound* was making off, but he refused to believe that she carried surrendered prisoners of war, let alone their captain. After *Kearsarge* put in at Cherbourg, he accused the English yacht of serving as a Confederate tender in violation of neutrality, setting off yet another international incident. The United States demanded the return of her rightful prisoners. England, where the Confederates were treated as heroes, refused.

Winslow, his reputation and career revived by the victory (the dud shell, still embedded in *Kearsarge*'s sternpost, was presented to President Lincoln, and now resides at the Washington Navy Yard), was promoted to rear admiral. He commanded the U.S. Navy's Pacific Squadron until 1872. Within a year of retiring, he died of a stroke and was buried under a slab of granite from Mt. Kearsarge, New Hampshire, for which his ship had been named. She served, on and off, as a Navy showpiece until she struck a reef in February 1894. She was the only ship named for the mountain; four others have been named after her.

Semmes ran the blockade to return to the Confederacy, also made rear admiral, and captained an ironclad in the James River Squadron. He ultimately had to destroy his ships to prevent their capture. He even served as a brigadier general in the Confederate Army—the only American officer to hold both ranks simultaneously—but was commanding nothing more than a muddy trench near Danville, Virginia, when word arrived of the surrender at Appomattox. He died in 1877 of food poisoning.

There is no record the two ever met again. Semmes, at least, preferred to remember Winslow as an old friend rather than his greatest adversary. "I had known, and sailed with him, in the old service, and knew him then to be a humane and Christian gentleman," he wrote. "What the war may have made of him, it is impossible to say. It has turned a great deal of the milk of human kindness to gall and wormwood."

In 1984 the French sweeper *Circé*, clearing 40-year-old mines, located a sunken shipwreck in the vicinity of the battle. Robot subs and divers revealed it to be *Alabama,* lying 180 feet down and about 30 degrees to starboard, partly sheltered by undersea sand dunes. The United States, France, and England all laid claim, but what had been international waters in 1864 were, 120 years later, within France's 12-mile limit. Strong tides prevent the wreck from being raised, but today *Alabama* artifacts can be found on both sides of the Atlantic, including the ship's bell, the 7-inch Blakely (found with a shell still in the barrel), several of her 32-pounders, and a brass ring from her wheel inscribed with her motto, "*Aide toi et dieu t'aidera.*" God helps those who help themselves. □



Misbegotten Attack at Bristoe

In October 1863, Robert E. Lee moved north against the Union Army at Centreville, Virginia. General A.P. Hill's III Corps blundered straight into Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren's II Corps at Bristoe Station.

Alfred Waud, whose battlefield sketches were turned into engraved illustrations for *Harper's Weekly*, drew Union Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren on horseback during the Battle of Bristoe Station.

Station

BY ARNOLD BLUMBERG

IN LATE JULY 1863, after the conclusion of the Gettysburg campaign, the Union Army of the Potomac, under Maj. Gen. George G. Meade, and the Army of Northern Virginia, under General Robert E. Lee, settled exhaustedly into their respective camps. The Federal troops bivouacked on the north bank of the Rappahannock River near the village of Warrenton, Virginia, while the Confederates took up positions south of the river near Culpeper.

Having won a major defensive victory—however narrowly—at Gettysburg, Meade considered going over to the offensive. He confided to Union General-in-Chief Henry W. Halleck on July 28 that he was "making every effort to prepare the army for an advance." But before any forward movement could be undertaken, Meade first had to discover the enemy's exact location. To that end, he sent out a large reconnaissance force spearheaded by Brig. Gen. John Buford's 1st Cavalry Division and supported by the infantry in Maj. Gen. John Newton's I Corps.

On August 1, Buford's 3,500 troopers splashed across the Rappahannock and started down the line of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad to Culpeper. At 10 AM, the bluecoats came into contact with Confederate horsemen guarding the area, Brig. Gen. Wade Hampton's 1,000-man brigade, temporarily commanded by Colonel Pierce M.B. Young. As Union horsemen curled around both his flanks, Young conducted a grudging four-mile fighting withdrawal to Brandy Station. A further retreat brought the contending forces within three miles of Culpeper. At 4 PM, Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart, commander of the Army of Northern Virginia's cavalry corps, appeared on the scene with reinforcements. Soon Buford's men were surrounded by a welter of saber-wielding Confederate cavalry and quickly arriving infantry. Not wanting to bring on a general engagement, Buford moved northeast toward the Rappahannock River. By nightfall he made contact with the II Corps, which had passed to the south of the waterway. Outnumbered better than 2-to-1, the Confederates broke off the action and marched back to Culpeper.

Between August 3 and 9, Confederate cavalry skirmished repeatedly with Buford's division, which continued to hold a bridgehead on the south shore of the Rappahannock near Rappahannock Station. The purpose of the brawls was to determine what Federal strength was on the south bank of the river and if Meade intended to bring his entire army across or retire to the north shore. The answer came on August 9 when Meade, concerned about his supply situation, withdrew all his soldiers to the north bank.

Robert E. Lee, guarding against an enemy turning movement that could trap him between the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers, transferred his army south of the Rapidan. By the last days of August, Lee had 60,000 men concentrated on the south side of the lower Rappahannock near Fredericksburg. As always,

All images: Library of Congress

his thoughts tended toward taking the offensive. Writing to I Corps commander Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, Lee observed, "I can see nothing better to be done than to endeavor to bring General Meade out and use our efforts to crush his army while in its present condition." Ever the gambler, Lee formulated a plan to cross the Rappahannock somewhere between Fredericksburg and the junction of the Rappahannock and Rapidan and hit Meade from the rear. However, events in another arena of the war caused the stratagem to be shelved.

In a brilliant campaign of maneuver, Union Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland had driven its opponent, the Army of Tennessee, entirely out of Middle Tennessee that summer. This deprived the Confederacy of a vast stretch of territory that supplied the Southern military with manpower, horses, and foodstuffs. The loss of the vital area moved the war to the outskirts of Chattanooga, Tennessee, the gateway to northern Georgia.

The crisis in northern Georgia prompted the Richmond government in early September to detach Longstreet's corps of 14,000 men from the Army of Northern Virginia to stabilize the situation in the West. This left Lee with only 46,000 troops to face Meade's 97,000 soldiers, presenting Lee with no real opportunity to bring the fight to the Army of the Potomac with any real chance of success.

The Federal commander did not feel so constrained. Meade had been contemplating an advance on Richmond that would start at Fredericksburg and consist of an overland campaign from there to the Confederate capital. But first he had to confirm whether the rumor of Longstreet's departure from Virginia was true. To that end, he initiated another reconnaissance in force over the Rappahannock River on September 13, using his entire cavalry corps: Buford's 1st Division, the 2nd Cavalry Division under Brig. Gen. David M. Gregg, and Brig. Gen. Hugh J. Kilpatrick's 3rd Cavalry Division. The II Infantry Corps under Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren was assigned to support the cavalry effort.

Brigadier General David Gregg's Federal troops skirmish with Confederates under Colonel Lunsford Lomax during one of several reconnaissances in force on September 13, 1863. Cavalry commander J.E.B. Stuart withdrew his own forces rather than provoke a larger attack.

After the Union cavalry traversed the Rappahannock and joined forces at Brandy Station on the Orange & Alexandria Railroad seven miles northeast of Culpeper, Kilpatrick tangled with 1,000 troopers and an attached horse artillery battery under Colonel Lunsford Lomax. The Confederate mounted brigade of Brig. Gen. William H.F. "Rooney" Lee, Robert E. Lee's son, joined the fray in a number of clashes south of Culpeper before Stuart withdrew his horsemen to the Rapidan River. Casualties for the opposing forces were light, the most notable being the wounding in the leg of Union Brig. Gen. George A. Custer, which knocked him out of action for the next three weeks.

For the next 10 days, the Federal cavalry sought in vain to discover a path across the Rapidan in the face of the defensive front put up by Confederate infantry along the river. On September 21, in an attempt discover a way to flank the enemy position on the Rapidan by way of a move to the west, Buford's and Kilpatrick's cavalry embarked on an extended scout around the Confederate left flank at the Robertson River.

The next day, eight miles south of where the Federals crossed the Robertson, at a place called Jack's Shop, Buford ran into Stuart. While Buford pinned Stuart from the north, Kilpatrick circled around to strike the Confederates from the south. Surrounded, Stuart was forced to fight his way out to the south toward Gordonsville. On the 23rd, the Federals retraced their steps and recrossed to the north side of the Rapidan.

Buford's successful foray across the Robertson River portended an advance by Meade around Lee's left, but that was not to be as the pendulum of war swung once more. In the West, Braxton Bragg's forces defeated Rosecrans at the Battle of Chickamauga (September 19-20), resulting in the siege of the Army of the Cumberland inside Chattanooga. Rushing to succor the beleaguered Federal force, the Lincoln administration sent the 20,000 men of the XI and XII Corps to Tennessee on September 25. With the disparity in enemy numbers somewhat reduced (76,000

troops to Lee's 46,000), and with the knowledge that Longstreet would not be returning to Virginia for some time—he had been detailed to conduct what turned out to be a fruitless campaign in East Tennessee after the victory at Chickamauga—Lee was determined to strike a blow. His determination to attack included his hope of bringing on a successful battle at his advantage, forcing the enemy to abandon areas of northern Virginia before the harvest season ended and preventing further detachments of Union forces from going to Tennessee.

Lee's operational plan was reminiscent of his campaign against Maj. Gen. John Pope in August 1862. He envisioned a rapid move by his army around the Union right and into its rear. Then Meade's army, like Pope's the year before, hemmed in between the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers, would be forced to fight Lee on ground of the Southerner's choosing. Scheduled to commence on October 10, the Confederate advance would see the foot soldiers of Lt. Gen. Richard S. Ewell's II Corps jumping off from Madison Court House, forming an inner arc circling around Meade's right. At the same time, Lt. Gen. Ambrose Powell Hill's III Corps, also starting from Madison Court House, would constitute another but wider curve around the enemy's right flank.

Shielding the turning movements of the 38,000 Confederate infantry from prying eyes fell to Hampton's cavalry division, 2,500 sabers strong, directly commanded by Stuart. While the bulk of the army went forward, Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry division and some infantry brigades, 7,000 fighters in all, were tasked with pinning down the opposing army along the Rapidan River, 20 miles away.

Lee hoped that his movement would come as a surprise to Meade. It would not. On October 6, four days before the Confederates rolled out of Madison Court House, Union signal corpsmen on Pony Mountain, eight miles southwest of Culpeper, intercepted Confederate messages disclosing the imminence of the Confederate offensive. On October 9, signal men from the same height spotted the enemy concentrating at Madison Court House.

Misinterpreting his enemy's redeployment as the precursor of a Confederate retreat toward Richmond, Meade got his army in motion and planned to send infantry and cavalry under Buford across the Rapidan on Lee's right flank and capture Orange County Court House, an important supply base for Lee's army. Hedging his bets in case Lee's movement turned out to be against his army's right, Meade stationed Kilpatrick's cavalry and some infantry, 8,000 men in all, at the village of James City on his right, northeast of Madison Court House, as a blocking force.

At 6:30 AM on October 10, the Bristoe Station campaign started when cavalry under Stuart stormed over the Robertson River at Russell's Ford, overwhelming Union horsemen stationed there. Three hours later, Stuart and the two brigades of cavalry accompanying him found themselves stalled in front of James City by tenacious fighting on the part of Kilpatrick's troopers and infantry from Brig. Gen. Henry Prince's 2nd Division, III Corps. Behind Stuart the infantry columns of Ewell and Hill labored over poor roads and numerous swollen creeks. They entered camp that evening after having covered only 10 miles.

By midafternoon, Meade had concluded that the Army of Northern Virginia was not withdrawing but was moving to out-

Eagle-eyed Union Signal Corps officers watch General Robert E. Lee's army in camp from an observation stand on Pony Mountain near Culpeper, Virginia, in September 1863.

flank him. In response, he rearranged his various corps. The II Corps moved to strengthen the right wing, with III Corps to the II's left and V Corps positioned near Culpeper to act as a central reserve. By day's end, three-fifths of the Federal army's infantry and one-third of its cavalry were near James City facing Lee's oncoming battalions.

On Sunday, October 11, the full impact of the Confederate advance was felt by the Army of the Potomac. One of Meade's aides, Lt. Col. Theodore Lyman, witnessed the army "all busy, packing and striking tents. All the wagons went ahead, the 1st & 6th Corps followed on the south side of the railroad [the Orange & Alexandria] and the 2nd and 5th [Corps] on the north, while the 3rd [Corps] went more to the north still, crossing at Freeman's Ford [on the Rappahannock River]." Meade had pulled his army back from the Rapidan and set it in motion for the north bank of the Rappahannock. Meanwhile, Buford, who had been on reconnaissance below the Rapidan River, after brisk fighting with Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry near Morton's Ford, slipped away from his Confederate pursuers and rejoined the main army.

Abandoning James City that morning, Kilpatrick fled to Culpeper. As Stuart closed on the south side of the Rappahannock while his opponents scrambled to reach its north bank, a large cavalry battle occurred at Brandy Station in the late afternoon. At one point both mounted forces, on parallel routes, raced for the high ground around the station. The Federals, under Buford, barely won the race. Regardless, Kilpatrick's men found themselves cut off from their comrades, and only a bold charge led by Custer and his brigade allowed the isolated troopers to join their friends on the hill. By nightfall, the Union cavalry had safely escaped across the river.

While the opposing cavalry fought at Brandy Station on the 11th, Ewell's and Hill's footsloggers were able to cover only another 10 miles that day. Meanwhile, the Federal infantry corps completed their crossing of the Rappahannock and spread out to cover the river from just below White Sulphur Springs, where Gregg's cavalry was on guard, south to Kelly's Ford.

On October 12, Lee planned to move his army to the right of the enemy and cross the Rappahannock; after that it would move to Meade's rear at Warrenton. Again, Ewell would take the inner and more direct route toward the enemy right, moving along the Culpeper-Warrenton Turnpike. A late start, muddy roads, and slow-moving divisional trains allowed for only eight miles that day. Hill's men, moving farther to the west and hampered by miserable roads, managed barely 12 miles, which nevertheless brought them to within seven miles of Meade's right flank by day's end.

Meanwhile, Meade, intent on locating Lee's infantry, decided to send a combined cavalry and infantry force made up of Buford's division and the II, V, and VI Corps under Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick south of the Rappahannock. Sedgwick moved to Brandy Station and took the high ground there.

As the Federal army commander pushed half his army to Brandy Station, Lee, with Stuart's troopers in the lead and the rest of his army in trail, made for the Union right. The Confederate advance was held up by cavalry of Gregg's division at the village of Jeffersonton, two miles from the Rappahannock. It was not until 4 PM that Confederate cavalry cleared the area of Federals and moved on to the river. A Southern cavalry charge at the Fauquier White Sulphur Springs bridge secured the crossing point two hours later, sending the Union defenders of Gregg's command fleeing. Confederate infantry from Ewell's corps immediately reinforced their cavalry brethren on the north bank.

As Gregg's men fell back eight miles to Fayetteville, they uncovered the Union III Corps' right flank at Freeman's Ford, farther to the south. Stuart pushed on that evening with two brigades of cavalry and occupied the town of Warrenton, which lay six miles northeast of the Rappahannock and six miles behind the Army of the

Potomac's right. Lee did not move his infantry over the river that day since he did not know the full extent of the enemy's dispositions in the region.

Learning of his opponent's advance on his flank late that night, Meade issued orders for Sedgwick to pull back from Brandy Station and cross to the north bank of the Rappahannock. On the 13th, I, II, and III Corps were ordered to proceed to the vicinity of Warrenton; V and VI Corps proceeded to Warrenton Junction, 10 miles southeast of Warrenton, to form a reserve. That same day, Buford was tasked with guarding the divisional, corps, and army trains, a total of 27,000 wagons and other vehicles, while Gregg's and Kilpatrick's units were posted to watch the army's right and rear.

As the Army of the Potomac prepared to move east, the Confederate infantry of Ewell and Hill managed only 13 miles for the day, bringing them close to Warrenton by nightfall. The afternoon of the 13th saw the Federal army move from around Warrenton Junction toward Bristoe Station, 22 miles from the Rappahannock River. The army marched in two columns.

As the Federals trudged on, Lee, seeking intelligence on the whereabouts of the enemy, sent Stuart with three mounted brigades on a scout from Warrenton to Catlett's Station, 10 miles to the southeast and three miles north of Warrenton Junction. The cavalry leader started before noon. Nearing his objective, he unknowingly placed himself in a position between the two roving columns of the Army of the Potomac: Kilpatrick's and Gregg's cavalry divisions and the II and III Corps traveling north five miles south of Warrenton, and Buford's men, the I, V, and VI Corps moving along the Orange & Alexandria Railroad five miles farther south of the northernmost Federal column. The army was heading for the secure position on the heights at Centreville, 20 miles from Washington.

At 4 PM, Lomax's cavalry brigade ran into Maj. Gen. William French and his III Corps near Auburn, five miles south of Warrenton. Lomax attacked but was driven off and retired to Warrenton. Meanwhile, Stuart and his 3,000 troopers near Catlett Station found themselves trapped between the two Union forces making their way toward Bristoe Station. Stuart hid his command in a wood below Auburn and spent the night no more than 300 yards from Warren's II Corps' burning campfires.

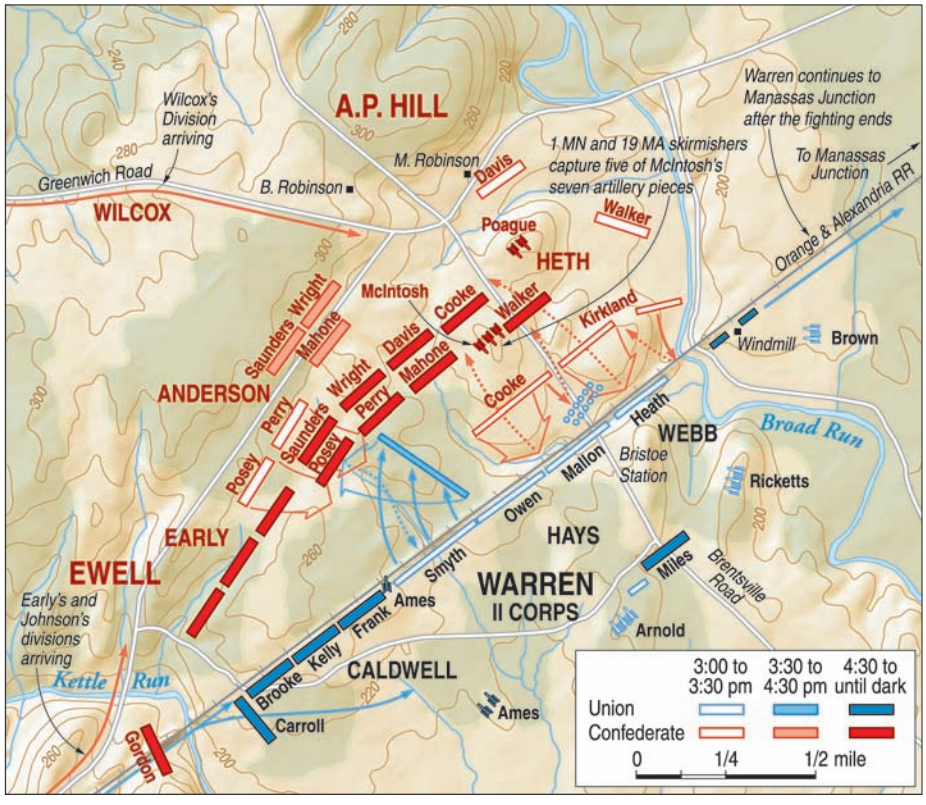
At dawn on the 14th, Lee ordered Ewell's corps, then near Warrenton, to march to Stuart's rescue. At 6 AM, Ewell's leading division under Maj. Gen. Robert E. Rodes came in contact with the Union II Corps division led by Brig. Gen. John C. Caldwell and some Federal cavalry. At the same time, Stuart ordered his horse artillery to fire on Caldwell. This in turn prompted Brig. Gen. Alexander Hays' II Corps division to attack Stuart's newly discovered position. Stuart then ordered a successful break though the Federal lines to the southeast.

As Caldwell battled Rodes and then Maj. Gen. Jubal Early's infantry along with Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry, the other infantry units of the Federal II Corps made their way from Auburn to Catlett's Station. Four hours after the fight began, both sides disengaged and proceeded to their assigned targets for the day: the II Corps to Catlett's and Bristoe Stations, while Ewell's Confederates marched to Greenwich on the northern margin of the Union army. The unwanted combat at Auburn had cost the combatants about 100 casualties each.

While Ewell fought at Auburn, A.P. Hill, with some of Fitzhugh Lee's troopers in the van, marched his three infantry divisions east on the Warrenton and Alexandria Turnpike, pushing retreating units of the Federal III Corps before them until the Union forces outpaced their pursuers. At midmorning near Buckland Mills, Lee's cavalry engaged in a series of running fights with Kilpatrick's men, who had been assigned by Meade to block the turnpike leading east to Centreville. This was important since the Confederate cavalry fell behind Hill's advancing infantry as the latter approached Bristoe Station, eight miles up the railroad from Catlett's Station. The absence of Southern cavalry at Bristoe Station meant that Hill would go into battle without knowing about the presence of Warren's corps nearby. It proved to be a deadly mistake.

By noon most of Meade's army and its enormous trains were near Centreville and safely out of Lee's reach. The sole exception was the army's rear guard, Warren's

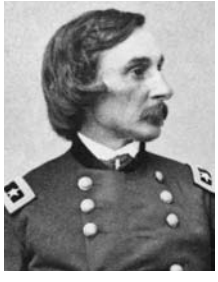
Marching briskly in formation, veteran infantry from the Army of the Potomac cross Broad Run on October 14, 1863, before the Battle of Bristoe Station.



Union forces at Bristoe Station occupied an easily defensible flat plain between Broad Run and the Orange & Alexandria Railroad.

and Gregg's formations, just departing Catlett's Station. Warren marched along the rail line with Brig. Gen. Alexander Webb's 2nd Infantry Division and two artillery batteries on the north side of the right of way; Hays' 3rd Division marched parallel with Webb on the south side, and Caldwell's 1st Division and the corps trains followed Hays and Webb on both sides of the tracks. The two brigades of Gregg's cavalry division guarded the marching infantry, Colonel John P. Taylor's 1st Brigade shielding Warren's left, while Colonel J. Irvin Gregg's 2nd Brigade took up the rearguard position.

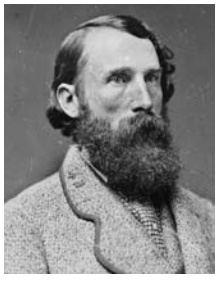
About 1 PM, Warren's nearest support, Maj. Gen. George Sykes' V Corps, had just pulled back over Broad Run Creek two miles to the north of Bristoe Station, mistakenly believing Warren was out of danger of being cut off. In fact, at that time Hill's Confederates were closer to the Broad Run Creek crossing than Warren was. Hill, seeing the last of Sykes' men crossing to the west side of the creek, determined to attack at once. "No time must be lost," he told aides.



With two of his three divisions not yet up, Hill ordered the only unit readily available, Maj. Gen. Henry Heth's division, to form a line of battle half a mile north of Bristoe Station and one mile west of the village of Milford on Broad Run Creek. Brig. Gen. John R. Cooke's brigade formed on the right, with Brig. Gen. W.W. Kirkland's men to Cooke's left and Brig. Gen. Henry H. Walker's brigade behind Kirkland. The Confederate strike force numbered 4,700 men. Hill decided to keep Heth's remaining two brigades in reserve.

The area the battle was fought over consisted of open fields studded with patches of thick pine trees, heavy undergrowth, and low ridges that were perfect for concealment of troops. The terrain was well suited for defense. "Well, I will advance," said Cooke, "and if they flank me, I will face my men about and cut my way out." He would soon have the opportunity to prove his words.

Soon after Hill gave Heth the order to advance, a column of men was seen approaching the Confederate right. Hill assumed that this was the lead regiment of Anderson's division. In fact, it was the leading unit of Warren's corps, Colonel Francis E. Heath's 1st Brigade. At 2:15 PM, elements of Heath's command supported by Lieutenant T. Fred Brown's Battery B, 1st Rhode Island Artillery, moved across Broad Run at the railway bridge. Once on the east side of the stream, the gunners went into battery to confront the Confederates coming from the north. The Union infantry fell back to the west side of the creek, where they took a defensive stance in a railway cut facing the enemy. Minutes later, Heath was joined on his left by Webb's 3rd Brigade under



Left to right: Generals Gouverneur Warren, David Gregg, A.P. Hill, and John R. Cooke (J.E.B. Stuart's brother-in-law). Cooke was wounded in the battle.

Colonel James E. Mallon.

Distracted by the fire from Heath and Mallon, Cooke and Kirkland veered toward the entrenched Federals. At 2:30 PM, Hill directed the units to ignore the enemy in the rail cut and advance toward Broad Run. Cooke chose to disobey Hill's command and led his and Kirkland's men toward the point of greatest danger, the massed Union troops under Heath and Mallon. Hidden from his view, Walker missed Cooke's and Kirkland's new march route and continued southeast toward Broad Creek. At this juncture Anderson appeared and Hill immediately ordered him to send two brigades south to aid the

Confederate attack.

At 2:30 PM, reinforcements from Colonel Joshua T. Owens' Third Infantry Brigade, Hays' division, and Captain William A. Arnold's Battery A, 1st Rhode Island Artillery arrived to bolster the Union position. These were soon joined by Batteries F and G, 1st Pennsylvania Light Artillery, under Captain R. Bruce Ricketts. The Union forces, about 3,000 infantry and 20 cannons including the battery across the creek, were augmented by the arrival of Colonel Thomas A. Smyth's 2nd Brigade of Hays' division.

At the same time, Cooke and Kirkland, not realizing the strength of the enemy position in the railroad cut, moved across an open field. Private John A. Sloan of the 27th North Carolina, one of Cooke's regiments, described the ground across which the Confederates advanced. "The space between us and the railroad was a barren, open field, descending with a gradual declivity to the railroad embankment," he recalled. "Across and beyond the railroad about 300 yards, upon a considerable elevation, were extensive woods and thickets; here the enemy had posted their artillery. In front of these woods, and on the face of the hill descending to the railroad embankment, was posted what we supposed was the enemy's skirmish line."

In fact, the onrushing Confederates were heading straight into a trap prepared for them by Gouverneur Warren. His deployment behind the embankment and at right angles to the ford created a deadly enfilade. It was, said an admiring Union officer, "as fine a trap as could have been devised in a month's engineering." For a few minutes the Confederates stopped and exchanged rifle volleys with their adversaries in the cut. Both Cooke and Kirkland went down wounded. Despite men falling by the score from enemy fire, the arrival of a friendly artillery battery, which lent close support, motivated the Confederates to charge forward.

As the butternut wave hit the blue line, the latter's close-range musket fusillades brought down dozens of the attackers just 40 yards in front of their positions. "We were mowed down like grain before a reaper," said one Tarheel. In the 27th North Carolina alone, three color bearers went down in quick succession as they grabbed the falling colors. The Federals suffered too. Webb's horse was shot from under him, and Mallon was mortally wounded. Parts of Mallon's and Heath's line on the Union right were pierced by Kirkland's men, if only momentarily. The Confederates crossed to the south of the railway and poured small arms fire into Heath's right rear and engaged in some close-quarter bayonet fighting. A deadly fire from Brown's four guns across Broad Run forced the exultant attackers back north of the tracks.

Another battlefield drawing from Alfred Waud's sketchbook of the action at Bristoe Station shows a Rhode Island artillery battery firing on Maj. Gen. Henry Heth's advancing Confederates.

On the Union extreme left, Smyth had no sooner reached his position at 3:15 PM, when he was attacked by two brigades from Anderson's division. At the height of Anderson's assault, which carried them into the rail road cut, men and cannons from Caldwell's formation came up and repelled the surging Confederates. By 4 PM, the rest of Caldwell's division appeared and anchored the Union left. Part of one brigade crossed Broad Creek to support Brown's little battery.

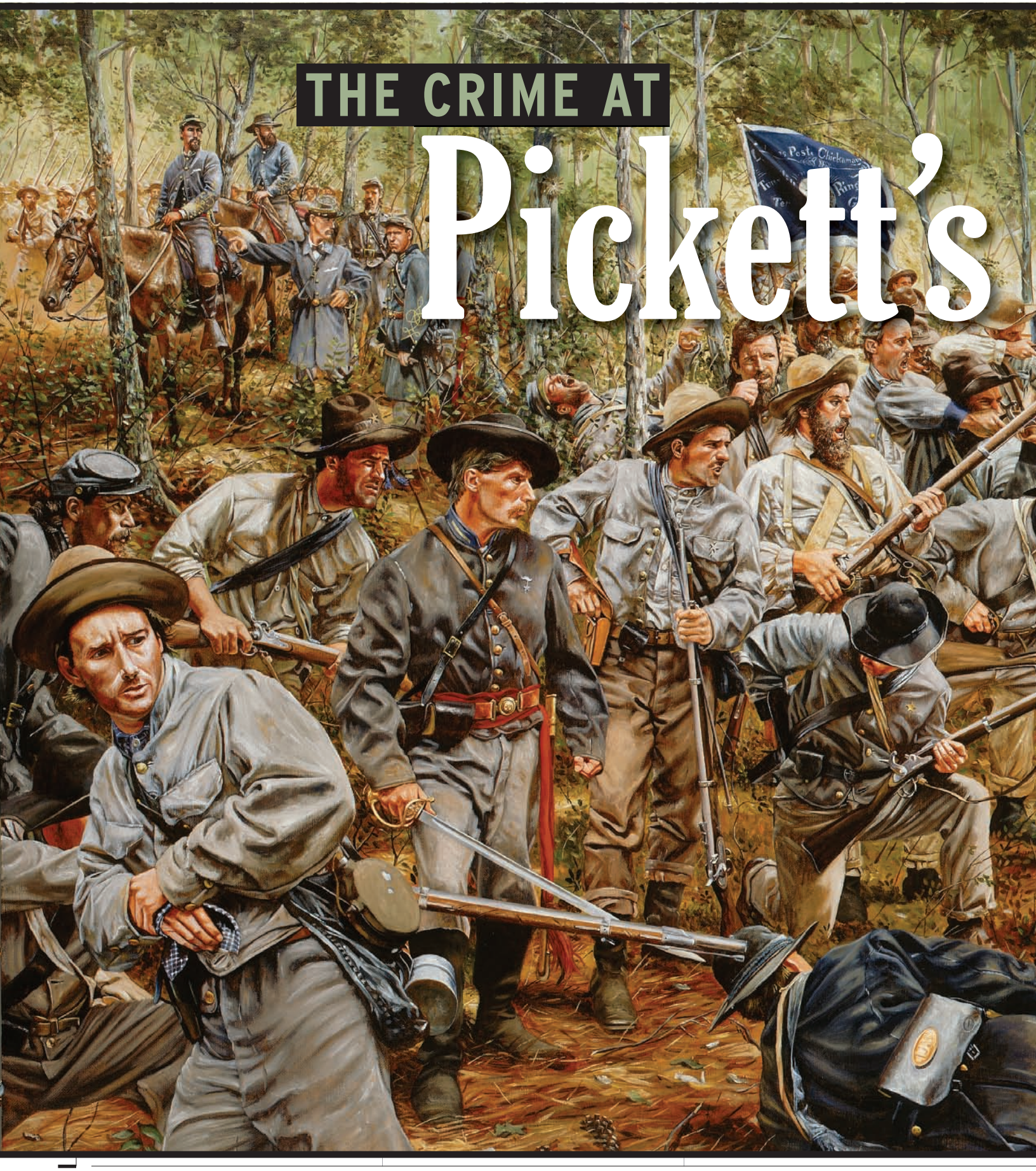
At the same time, Cooke's and Kirkland's badly beaten units had fallen back 600 yards from the Federal front. Hill formed a new battle line. Ewell's corps had arrived on the field, and the fresh units formed the new Confederate right nestling against Kettle Run, a stream half a mile west of Bristoe Station. The opposing artillery opened on each other for half an hour, but little damage was done to either side. An hour later, supported by two batteries, Rodes' division took the bridge over Kettle Run on the Union left but was not strong enough to deliver a decisive attack against the foe in that quarter.

Darkness ended the Battle of Bristoe Station at 6:30 PM. Under cover of night, Warren silently moved his men safely east of Broad Run Creek. The largest infantry encounter of the campaign had cost Lee's army 1,300 killed, wounded, or missing, with another 433 taken prisoner, as well as five artillery pieces captured. Warren's losses amounted to 586 men.

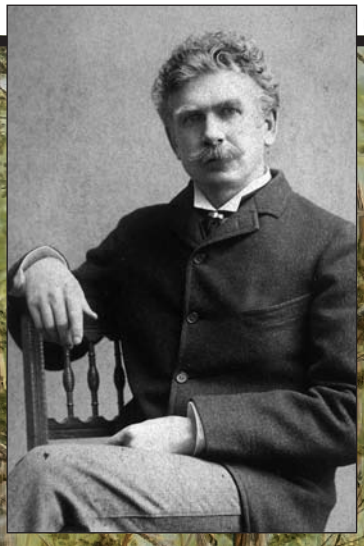
Cooke's brigade was hit hardest, losing 700 men, including the general himself. Kirkland's losses amounted to 602 casualties, half of whom had surrendered rather

Continued on page 98

THE CRIME AT Pickett's



Mill



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By Roy Morris Jr.

ANGRY AND EMBARRASSED BY THE RECENT SETBACK AT NEW HOPE CHURCH, UNION GENERAL WILLIAM T. SHERMAN ORDERED AN ILL-ADVISED ATTACK ON ENTRENCHED CONFEDERATE POSITIONS AT PICKETT'S MILL. IT WAS RECIPE FOR DISASTER.

Peering through the thick underbrush west of Little Pumpkin Vine Creek, 30 miles northwest of Atlanta, on the afternoon of May 27, 1864, Ambrose Bierce had a bad feeling. That in itself was not unusual. The cynical and sardonic young lieutenant on Brig. Gen. William Hazen's staff in the Union Army of the Cumberland was not exactly sunny natured in the best of times. Born into a dirt-poor farming family in northern Indiana and raised by fanatically religious parents, Bierce had joined the army at the very beginning of the Civil War—as much to escape his hardscrabble past as to fight for his country's future.

Three years on the firing line had thrown Bierce into some of the worst combat of the war, from Shiloh, Perryville, and Stones River to Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, and Resaca. Still one month short of his 22nd birthday, Bierce was a veteran in all senses of the word. As he would recall many years later, after he had become a prominent newspaper columnist and short story writer, he had spent the war years "among hardened and impenitent man-killers, to whom death in its awfulest forms is a fact familiar to their every-day observation; who sleep on hills trembling with the thunder of great guns, dine in the midst of streaming missiles, and play cards among the dead faces of their dearest friends." If not indifferent to death, Bierce and his comrades were largely inured to it.

Nevertheless, something about the army's present position did not sit well with Bierce or his fellow Midwesterners in Hazen's brigade. "Oh, we'll catch it today," many of the soldiers muttered. Bierce saw nothing to cause him to disagree. In his role as a topographical engineer, it was Bierce's job to scout and map the terrain in advance of the brigade's movements. "My

LEFT: Quick-firing Texans in General Hiram Granbury's brigade pour a deadly volley into the ranks of advancing Federals at Pickett's Mill in this painting by Rick Reeves. The attack was so poorly planned that author Ambrose Bierce (inset) termed it a crime.

duties as topographical engineer kept me working like a beaver," he would recall after the war. "It was hazardous work; the nearer to the enemy's lines I could penetrate, the more valuable were my field notes and the resulting maps. It was a business in which the lives of men counted as nothing against the chance of defining a road or sketching a bridge."

But Bierce had not had time to do much preliminary scouting of the brigade's new position at Little Pumpkin Vine Creek. The men had just marched four miles east from New Hope Church that morning, leaving behind the trenches and breastworks they had hastily thrown up after being roughly handled by the Confederates in General Joseph Johnston's Army of Tennessee two days earlier. Like soldiers in all wars, they did not happily leave behind a solid defensive position to go creeping through dense, shadowy woods in search of an ever elusive enemy. It made them uneasy, to say the least.

The big prize of the ongoing campaign was Atlanta, and the two sides had spent the past three weeks marching, fighting, and countermarching all the way from the Georgia-Tennessee border to the outer fringes of Atlanta proper. In that time, Sherman's men had attempted incessantly to get around the Confederates' flank and bring them to battle before they reached Atlanta. Except for one stand-up fight at Resaca 12 days earlier, a fight that Sherman's favorite subordinate, Maj. Gen. James B. McPherson, had bungled at the outset by not sealing off a vital enemy escape route through the mountains, the Federals had been frustrated in their attempts. Johnston, a skilled strategist, had correctly intuited his opponent's intentions, falling back repeatedly and refusing battle on Sherman's terms. A large portion of the Southern public, seeing only the steady backward motion of Johnston's army, had dubbed the general "Retreatin' Joe."

Two days earlier, however, Johnston had stood and fought at New Hope Church, near Dallas, Georgia, inflicting 1,500 casualties on the Union attackers on a rain-drenched battlefield that the Confederates dubbed the "Hell Hole." Refusing to believe that Johnston—of all people—would dare to make another such stand, Sherman had directed one of his army's three wings to swing around the enemy flank once more and intersperse itself between them and Atlanta.

The generals Sherman chose to direct the attempt were not, to be generous, the best suited for such a task. The IV Corps commander, Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard, and his senior divisional commander, Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Wood, had been involved in flank attacks before—but on the receiving end. Howard, a native of Maine, had been driven from the field by Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville the previous May, and the Kentucky-born Wood had been overrun at Chickamauga four months later, while attempting to execute a misbegotten flank march at the exact moment that newly arrived Confederate General James Longstreet launched an overwhelming frontal assault. Each, understandably, was somewhat skittish to find themselves once again out on a limb.

In a move that proved notably counterproductive, Union artillery commenced a vigorous bombardment of the Confederate position east of New Hope Church at daybreak on May 27. Brisk skirmishing erupted along the four-mile front. Despite his personal misgivings, Wood pulled his division out of line and began marching toward what was believed to be the Confederate right, anchored near a gristmill owned by the widow of a Southern cavalryman named Ben Pickett, who had been killed at Chickamauga. Wood had broken his division into three brigade-sized columns for the planned

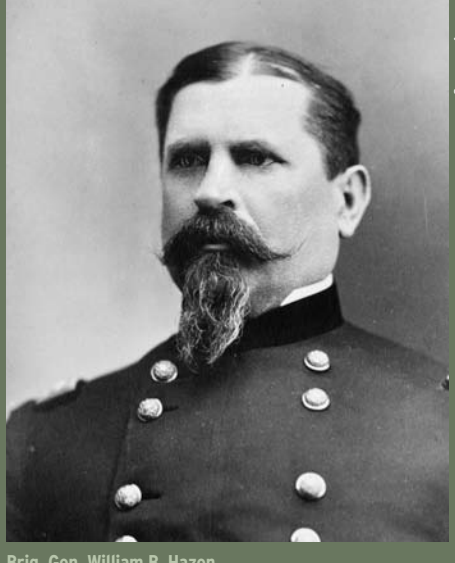
William B. Hazen, "the Best-Hated Man"

Noted author and cynic Ambrose Bierce, who knew a thing or two about hatred, once described his former Civil War commander, Brig. Gen. William B. Hazen, as "the best-hated man" in the United States Army. He meant it as a compliment.

In the course of his 30-year military career, Hazen managed to quarrel with various superior officers, up to and including the president of the United States. He was reprimanded, court-martialed, and removed several times from command, only to be restored when political allies such as Rutherford B. Hayes and James A. Garfield entered the White House. His courageous testimony in the trading post scandals surrounding Secretary of War William Belknap resulted in the secretary's resignation in disgrace but earned Hazen the lasting enmity of Belknap's patron, President Ulysses S. Grant, and Grant's minions, including Generals William T. Sherman, Phil Sheridan, and George Armstrong Custer. It was all in a day's work for the contentious Hazen.

A native of Vermont, Hazen graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1855. He served against Native American warriors in Oregon and Texas, and he carried a Comanche bullet in his side for the rest of his life after being shot in an ambush in 1859.

With the help of his boyhood friend, then-Congressman James A. Garfield, Hazen was appointed a colonel in the Union Army in November 1861. He subsequently saw severe action at Shiloh, Perryville, Stones River, Chickamauga, and Missionary Ridge before commanding his ill-fated brigade at Pickett's Mill in May 1864. Hazen served out the war in



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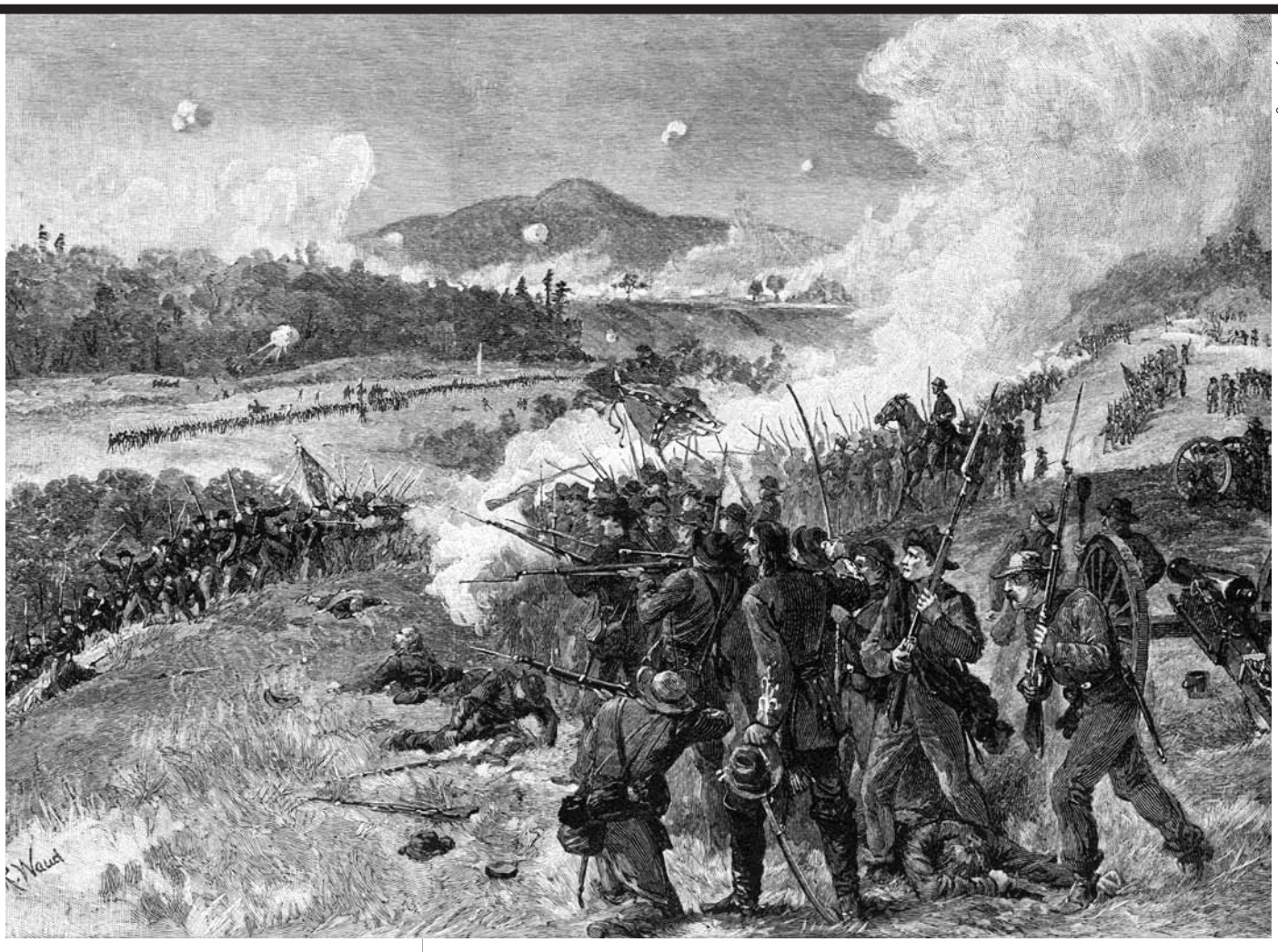
Brig. Gen. William B. Hazen.



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Confederates hold the high ground at Pickett's Mill, forcing Union troops to climb literally toward their muzzles. Rebel artillery supports the merciless fire. It was over in minutes.

Maj. Gen. William Sherman's Georgia campaign, winning a brevet promotion to major general of volunteers at the war's close.

Following the Civil War, Hazen saw service in the Plains Indian wars, commanded the all-black 38th Regiment in New Mexico, was an official observer of the Franco-Prussian War, and served as military attaché to the U.S. legation in Vienna, Austria, before becoming head of the U.S. Signal Corps in 1880.

Trouble was never far from Hazen's door, and he became embroiled in a decades-long controversy with fellow Union general David S. Stanley over their respective roles at the Battles of Shiloh and Stones River. After Stanley publicly accused Hazen of "disgraceful conduct," Hazen sued Stanley for libel. An unprecedented joint court-martial found Stanley "guilty of conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline." Charges against Hazen were dropped.

Hazen next quarreled with Secretary of War Robert Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's son, over a failed exploring expedition to the Arctic Circle, which resulted in death of 17 American soldiers. Hazen accused Lincoln of bungling the rescue mission and went public with his complaints, eliciting a formal reprimand from President Chester A. Arthur for "unwarranted and captious criticism" of Lincoln. Many of his fellow officers privately supported Hazen's view of the younger Lincoln.

Before he died in 1887, Hazen told his side of his controversial career in a well-received memoir, A Narrative of Military Service. His old Civil War aide, Ambrose Bierce, was particularly pleased to find a reference to himself in the general's memoirs. Bierce, wrote Hazen, was "a brave and gallant fellow." Bierce, who did not like many men, shared the feeling. □

attack. Hazen's brigade was leading the way, followed by those of Colonels William H. Gibson and Frederick Knefler.

The rain had ended, but the division's progress was hampered by poor roads, soggy woods, dense scrub brush, and deep ravines. Two companies became hopelessly lost in the woods, and a third managed to keep lurching in the right direction only because battalion commander Lt. Col. Robert Kimberly of the 41st Ohio Infantry was able to utilize a pocket compass he had been given as a gift. A favorite aide of Howard's managed to get himself shot through the chest when he stepped carelessly into an open pasture to try out his new field glass.

Unnerved by the incident, Howard characteristically dithered. Known to his men by

the unflattering nickname "Uh-Oh" Howard, the general did not inspire confidence in the best of times. His empty sleeve, courtesy of a battlefield amputation at the Battle of Seven Pines, seemed like an ominous portent to the troops. (Ostentatiously religious, Howard favored another nickname, "the Christian general.") For two hours, the men milled about in confusion while buglers continually blared away in a less-than-stealthy attempt to keep order in the ranks. Bierce termed the unfortunate delay an attempt "to alert the enemy of our intention to surprise him."

The battle-savvy Confederates needed no additional aid to alert them. Johnston had already reinforced his right flank with 5,000 of his best fighters, the much-feared division commanded by Maj. Gen. Patrick Cleburne, an Irish immigrant turned Arkansas lawyer who had earned a well-deserved reputation as one of the South's best officers. Cleburne had extended his lines farther to the right, positioning an artillery battalion at the end to further cement his defenses. The veteran Confederates had quickly thrown together rifle pits and linked them to trees and boulders along the ridges beyond Little Pumpkin Vine Creek. They were ready and waiting for any enemy approach.

Both: Library of Congress

Principal commanders at Pickett's Mill included Union Brigadier General Richard W. Johnson, and Confederate Major General Patrick Cleburne.

At 4 pm, Howard received a terse order from Sherman telling him to "get on the enemy's flank and rear as soon as possible." Wood, understandably perplexed, asked Howard for clarification. "Are the orders still to attack?" he wondered. "Attack," said Howard. "We will put in Hazen and see what success he has," Wood responded airily. Hazen, who was under the impression that there was to be a simultaneous attack by all three brigades, was thunderstruck by the casual change in plans. He saluted and rode back to his brigade to prepare the men for the suicidal assault. "Only by a look which I knew how to read did he betray his sense of the criminal blunder," Bierce recalled.

By 4:30, Hazen had his 1,500 men in position for the futile attack, formed into two lines of two battalions each. The artillery fire had stopped, and only the steady dripping of water from the rain-soaked trees broke the sudden silence. Bierce, who had pushed forward far enough to hear the murmuring of the Confederates on the other side of the creek, waited uneasily. "This, then, was the situation," he recalled, "a weak brigade of fifteen hundred men, with masses of idle troops behind in the character or audience, waiting for the word to march a quarter-mile uphill through almost impassable tangles of underwood, along and across precipitous ravines, and attack breastworks constructed at leisure and manned with two divisions of troops as good as themselves."

Hazen's brigade advanced along a 200-yard front, its progress immediately stymied by a deep ravine that cut across its path. The underbrush was so thick around them that the color-bearers had to keep their flags furled to prevent them from being torn to pieces by low-lying branches. Gray-clad skirmishers immediately fell back at the Union approach, which caused some of the Federals to shout erroneously, "Ah, damn you, we have caught you without your logs now!" Southern voices immediately retorted, in sarcastic reference to published newspaper reports that they were suffering from low morale, "Come on, we are demoralized!"

Hazen's brigade labored through the ravine and up the rock-strewn hillside, the color bearers now breaking out their flags and waving them back and forth in the still dusk air. Then, seemingly as one, the Confederates opened fire. Bierce, who was advancing on foot on the far right of the formation, as were all the brigade officers, heard "a ringing rattle of musketry, the familiar hissing of bullets, and before us the interspaces of the forest were all blue with smoke. Hoarse, fierce yells broke out of a thousand throats. The uproar was deafening, the air was sibilant with streams and sheets of missiles." Gusts of grapeshot mingled with the uninterrupted fire of the Southerners' muskets, crackling through the branches and tree trunks that afforded the attackers little cover and no safety.

It was the brigade's singular misfortune to be attacking Cleburne's division, which had stopped Sherman in his tracks at Missionary Ridge the previous November and treated him roughly again at Resaca two weeks earlier. Not that it made much difference whom they were attacking; by this time in the war, any veteran troops holding fortified high ground could have beaten back the unsupported assault of a single brigade attacking over virtually impassable terrain. Cleburne later gave the Union troops at Pickett's Mill a backhanded compliment, saying that they had "displayed a courage worthy of an honorable cause." Nevertheless, he noted, "As they appeared upon the slope [we] slaughtered them with deliberate aim."

Howard sent back a troublingly uncertain message to Sherman: "I am now turning the enemy's right flank, I think." Not really. Cleburne, calm as always, brought up Brig. Gen. Hiram Granbury's Texas brigade from its reserve position and had it fall in on the right to further extend the Confederate line. The Texans responded at the double-quick, clambering up a ridge with a 50-yard incline that gave them a clear field of fire. Lying flat on the ground, they waited like the seasoned hunters they were until the Union quarry was within their gun sights, then unleashed a new torrent of fire.

To Colonel Kimberly, whose Ohio troops anchored the center of Hazen's line, the Rebel volley was as sudden and unexpected as "a lightning stroke from a cloudless sky." Men fell by the dozens, almost soundlessly in the maelstrom around them. Somehow, Hazen's veterans pressed on, their line broken up and irregular as more and more men fell to the ground. Almost by accident—a function of the peculiar topography of the battlefield—the Confederates had prepared a perfect slaughter pen. By extending the right flank, Granbury's Texans had linked up at a right angle to Brig. Gen. Daniel Govan's brigade, creating a deadly crossfire effect. Quick-thinking artillerists had rolled forward a Parrott gun and two howitzers at the junction of Govan's and Granbury's lines, further intensifying the already murderous fire.

Bierce and the other officers in Hazen's brigade could only watch aghast as their crack troops were cut down. "Our brave color-bearers were now all in the forefront of battle in the open," noted Bierce, "for the enemy had cleared a space in front of his breastworks. They held the colors erect, shook out their glories, waved them forward and back to keep them spread, for there was no wind. From where I stood, at the right of the line, I could see six of our flags at one time. Occasionally one would go down, only to be instantly lifted by other hands."

Due to an almost incredible confluence of mistakes and timidity, both of Hazen's flanks were left completely unguarded. On the right, Howard had ordered Colonel Nathaniel McLean to post his brigade at the edge of a wheat field opposite Govan's troops and occupy the Confederates in his front. Unbelievably, while the fighting was at its height McLean abruptly marched his unengaged brigade to the rear, explaining lamely that his men needed to draw their rations. He, at least, had no stomach for the fight.

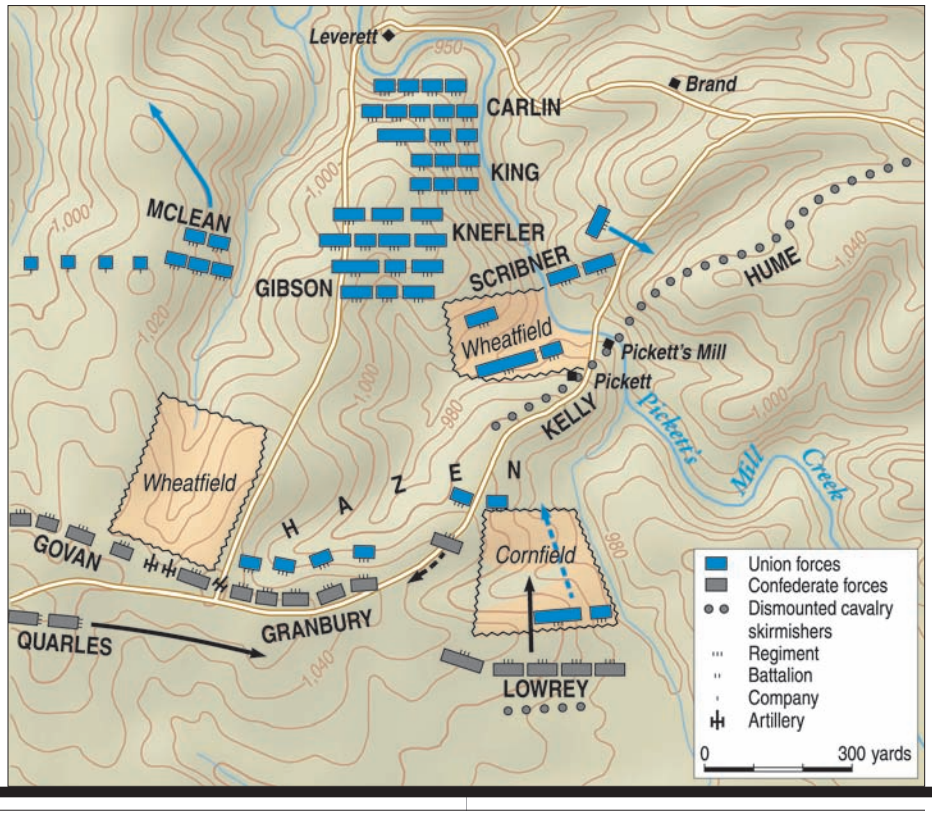
Meanwhile, on Hazen's left Brig. Gen. Richard W. Johnson—ordinarily a tough, dependable fighter—was unaccountably slow in getting his lead brigade into line to support the attack. While Johnson dithered, the Union attackers somehow managed to gain control of a ridge on the Confederate right-rear, temporarily threatening the entire enemy line. Confederate cavalry commander John Kelly, at 23 the youngest brigadier general in the Confederate Army, slowed the Union advance long enough for Colonel George Baucum's consolidated 8th and 19th Arkansas Regiment to rush up and plug the gap.

Hazen's men were caught in a tornado of small arms and artillery fire. Some individuals managed to come as close as 10 paces to the Confederate line before they were shot down. None made it any closer. Confederate Captain Samuel Foster later counted 50 Federal dead in a 30-foot circle. Most of them had been shot in the head with "their skulls busted open and their brains running out." It was a literal dead-line—the point at which no one could stand erect and live to tell about it—and Hazen's survivors threw themselves down and buried their faces into the ground.

"Not a soul of them ever reached the enemy's front to be bayoneted or captured," recalled. Bierce. "It was a matter of the difference of three or four paces—too small a distance to affect the accuracy of aim. In these affairs no aim is taken at individual antagonists; the soldier delivers his fire at the thickest mass in his front. The fire is, of course, as deadly at twenty paces as at fifteen; at fifteen as at ten. Nevertheless, there is the dead-line, with its well-defined edge of corpses—those of the bravest. Where both lines are fighting without cover—as in a charge met by a counter-charge—each has its dead-line, and between the two is a clear space, neutral ground, devoid of dead, for the living cannot reach it to fall there."

Forty-five minutes after the Union attack began, it came to a brief, exhausted pause. Hazen's brigade was virtually destroyed; nearly a third of the 1,500 men who began the attack were dead or wounded, many within the first few minutes of the assault, and those who could do so were staggering back to the rear to take cover in a ravine. Hazen sent back word to Howard to order Gibson into the fray, but for Hazen and his men it was too late to do any good. Gibson's troops went forward up the deadly slope with admirable bravery but met the same fate as Hazen's men. "The enemy had destroyed us," reported Bierce, "and was now ready to perform the same kindly office for our successors." When a young soldier who had been separated from his unit asked Hazen

Union forces crossed Little Pumpkin Vine Creek to attack the Confederate works at Pickett's Mill. The landscape was steep and wooded.



where he located his brigade, the hard-bitten general, choking back tears, replied: "Brigade, hell, I have none. But what is left is over there in the woods."

If anything, the Confederates were even better prepared to meet Gibson's attack. During the brief lull in firing, they had replenished their ammunition and stacked more fence rails, logs, and fallen branches on top of their breastworks. With no support from Johnson's still uncommitted division, Gibson's brigade met the same fate that Hazen's had just endured. In less than an hour, Gibson suffered nearly 700 casualties. Like Hazen's troops, there was a disproportionate number of dead to wounded—the Confederates had simply shot many of the Union soldiers in the head within 10 to 20 paces. At that range, few experienced marksmen could miss.

Confederate commander Joseph Johnston described the fighting in his official after-action report: "The Fourth Corps came on in deep order and assailed the Texans with great vigor, receiving their close and accurate fire with the fortitude always exhibited by General Sherman's troops in the actions of this campaign. The Federal troops approached within a few yards of the Confederates, but at last were forced to give way by their storm of well-directed bullets, and fell back to the shelter of a hollow near and behind them. They left hundreds of corpses within twenty paces of the Confederate line."

At 6 pm, just after the second futile Union attack had begun, Howard received orders from Sherman to call off the attack and link up with the XXIII Corps to protect his flank while Sherman began a march toward the railroad depot at Acworth. All Howard had needed to do was to make sure that Johnston did not get around his flank and cut off Sherman's route to the rail line. The slaughter of Hazen's and Gibson's men had been an irrelevant afterthought.

While Howard was preparing in his overly deliberate way to put his unexpected new orders into effect, a shell fragment ripped off part of his boot. Having already lost an arm in Virginia, Howard was understandably terrified of losing another limb. "I am afraid to look down! I am afraid to look down!" he gasped. Miraculously, the shell had only ripped off the bottom of his boot and left his bare foot badly bruised but still intact. Howard limped to the rear, where he spent the rest of the evening directing the battle "among the maimed" in the forest, his throbbing foot taking up much of his psychic attention.

Howard sent one last wave of attackers forward, not to break the Confederate line but to recover the Union wounded. The Rebels were not prepared to be merciful. They unleashed another devastating volley into the advancing bluecoats, who quickly cut short their recovery efforts and took what shelter they could behind trees and rocks. They would wait for nightfall before sending out patrols to gather up the wounded, whose cries and moans filled the no-man's-land between the two lines.

One final indignity awaited the Union forces at Pickett's Mill. At 10 pm, Granbury's men quietly formed ranks to launch a night attack. Captain Foster recalled that the Federal line was so close that "we could hear the Yanks just in front of us moving among the dead leaves on the ground like hogs rooting for acorns, but none speaking above a whisper." At the blare of a bugle, the Confederates unleashed a terrific yell and fell upon the startled enemy at one bound. The Federals managed to fire one volley before scampering en masse to the rear.

Granbury's men fanned out and scoured the woods for stragglers. In the confusion and darkness, they demanded that all the soldiers they came upon identify themselves immediately by regiment. According to one somewhat illiterate Texan: "Sometimes the answer would be the 40th, and our boy's knew that we dit not have no 40th Regt. In our Brigade, and, therefore, they would Kill such. Sometimes the answer would be the 24th, and when they would ask the 24th What, 'the 24th Ohio,' and they were servet the same." As many as 20 Union troops would be discovered huddling behind the same log and, according to another Rebel diarist, "All they would say was 'Don't shoot! Don't shoot!'"

By midnight, the sporadic firing had died away. The Battle of Pickett's Mill was over. The pious Howard, nursing his sore foot, looked on with distaste as some of his men proceeded to get well and understandably drunk. "Faint fires here and there revealed men wounded, armless, legless, or eyeless; some with heads bound up with cotton strips, some standing and walking nervously around, some sitting with bended forms, and some prone upon the earth," wrote Howard. "A few men, in despair, had resorted to drink for relief. The sad sounds of those in pain were mingled with the oaths of the drunken and the more heartless. That night will always be a sort of nightmare to me."

At least Howard would live to remember it. Dawn revealed how costly the battle had been. Of the 1,600 total Union casualties, 700 had been killed outright. A Mississippi lieutenant attributed the "wonderful" disparity of dead to wounded to the "over-ruling Providence of God." A Texas comrade, less spiritually

"FAINT FIRES HERE AND THERE REVEALED MEN WOUNDED, ARMLESS, LEGLESS, OR EYELESS; SOME WITH HEADS BOUND UP WITH COTTON STRIPS, SOME STANDING AND WALKING NERVOUSLY AROUND, SOME SITTING WITH BENDED FORMS, AND SOME PRONE UPON THE EARTH."

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Battlefield artist Alfred Waud made this quick sketch of the bullet-devastated landscape at Pickett's Mill.

transported, looked at the pitiful scattering of letters and ambrotypes among the Union dead and thought of the mothers, sisters, and friends who had sent them to the soldiers in the first place. "Though they had been my enemies, my heart bled at the sickening scene," the Southerner reported.

In the aftermath of the miscarried battle, an embarrassed cloak of silence, if not outright secrecy, immediately surrounded the Union high command at Pickett's Mill. The ordinarily loquacious Sherman casually informed General-in-Chief Henry Halleck in Washington, "We have had many sharp, severe encounters, but nothing decisive." Beyond that vague mention, Sherman never wrote a single word about Pickett's Mill in his official reports or his best-selling memoirs. Howard, too, fell silent—an unaccustomed state of affairs for the usually bombastic general.

It remained for 1st Lt. Ambrose Bierce alone to remember his fallen comrades at Pickett's Mill. Settling in San Francisco after the war, Bierce became a well-known and much-feared newspaper columnist, the "wickedest man in San Francisco," as one nickname put it. On May 27, 1888—the 24th anniversary of the Battle of Pickett's Mill—Bierce published an account of the butchery in his newspaper, the *San Francisco Examiner*. He titled it: "The Crime at Pickett's Mill: A Plain Account of a Bad Half Hour with Joe Johnston." It had been that, and more. Indeed, for some 700 Union soldiers in the north Georgia woods, it had been the last day of their lives. Nor did Bierce, with his hard-won cynicism, have much faith in history eventually doing justice to the dead at Pickett's Mill. As he defined it in his tart work of lexicography *The Devil's Dictionary,* history was merely "an account mostly false, of events mostly unimportant, which are brought about by rulers mostly knaves, and soldiers mostly fools."

There were knaves aplenty at Pickett's Mill, most of them in positions of leadership in the Union ranks. And as usual, it was the "fools"—the common soldiers under their command—who paid in blood for the mistakes made by their misbegotten commanders. Years later, Bierce was still challenging Howard to write "one line" about the fallen of Pickett's Mill, but "the consummate master of the art of needless defeat" continued "to ignore their hopeless heroism." It did not surprise Bierce, and it probably would not have surprised his dead comrades at Pickett's Mill, but they were now beyond all caring. □

COLD HARBOR

Continued from page 69

later, Hancock was reporting that his men were "close to the enemy" but unable to take their works. He added his opinion "that if the first dash in an assault fails other attempts are not apt to succeed better." Meade ordered Hancock to attack again, but he dug in instead. Any new attack would be futile.

At 7 AM, Meade wrote to Grant asking his view "as to the continuance of these attacks, if unsuccessful." Grant told him that "the moment it becomes certain an assault cannot succeed, suspend the offensive." Forty minutes after writing to Grant, Meade reminded Hancock of his original orders to attack. Hancock, however, did not attack. Neither did the other corps commanders. Smith called such a move "a wanton waste of life." The VI Corps partially obeyed the order, according to Wright's aide, Lt. Col. Martin McMahon, "by renewing the fire from the men as they lay in position." Griffin Stedman did not even consent to that. "I will not take my regiment in another charge if Jesus Christ himself should order it," he said with disgust.

At around 11 AM, Grant arrived to talk with Meade and then visited the corps commanders. He told Meade in a masterpiece of dry understatement, "The opinion of corps commanders not being sanguine of success in case an assault is ordered, you may direct a suspension of further advance for the present." The Union attack at Cold Harbor was over.

For the next three days, both sides hunkered down in their entrenchments as sharpshooters made any movement outside of cover a deadly venture. Stubbornly, neither Lee nor Grant asked for a flag of truce to remove the wounded or dead. One Confederate officer summed up the post-battle ordeal: "Thousands of men were cramped up in a narrow trench, unable to go out, or to get up, or to stretch or to stand, without danger to life and limb; unable to lie down, or to sleep, for lack of room and pressure of peril; night alarms, day attacks, hunger, thirst, supreme weariness, squalor, vermin, filth, disgusting odors everywhere." It was a virtual précis on the Western Front in World War I, still a half century in the future.

Bottled up in their lines, the two sides could only sit and wait, trying as best they could to ignore the screams and moans of the wounded trapped in the sun-baked no-man's-land between the trenches. "Worse even than the dreadful charge itself," thought Asa Bartlett of the 12th New Hampshire, "was the sight of comrades lying helpless in their suffering within plain sight, with no means or power to aid or even comfort them." Bartlett saw one mangled soldier end his suffering by cutting his own throat. Another wounded Federal lay trapped for two days, weakly raising his arm from time to time for help. Pitiless snipers peppered the arm with bullet after bullet.

On June 7, the commanding generals finally agreed to a truce, but by then there were few men left to save. Maggot-riddled corpses were shoveled into shallow graves. In the pocket of one dead bluecoat a diary was found with the chilling last entry: "June 3. Cold Harbor. I was killed." He was not alone. The battle had cost the Federals more than 6,000 casualties, while the Confederates suffered about 1,500. Union gunner Lewis Bissell spoke for many when he prefaced his letter home, "Cold Harbor and Hell."

Nine days after the battle, Grant shifted around Lee's left again, crossing the James River and heading to Petersburg, where the two armies would be locked in siege for the next nine months. Earlier in the campaign Lee had warned Early that they must destroy Grant before he reached the James River, adding, "If he gets there it will become a siege, and then it will be a mere question of time." He was right. Cold Harbor was Lee's last major success and, in the words of Lee's aide, Lt. Col. Charles Venable, "perhaps the easiest victory ever granted to the Confederate arms by the folly of the Federal commanders." Grant had underestimated Lee and paid dearly for it. He would not make the same mistake again. □

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BRISTOE STATION

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than run the gauntlet of fire back to their own lines. To a man, the North Carolinians were furious at their corps commander. "Hill is a fool & woeful blunderer," wrote one officer. Said another survivor, "A worse managed affair than this did not take place during the war." Hill, to his credit, accepted full blame for the fiasco. "I am convinced," he wrote in his official report, "that I made the attack too hastily."

His commanding general agreed with that assessment. After the battle, Lee was reported to be in a "very ill humor when it came to General Hill," and some sharp words were exchanged between the two concerning Hill's conduct of the battle. When Hill attempted to explain what happened at Bristoe Station, the ordinarily polite Lee cut him off abruptly. "Well, general," he said, looking at the dead North Carolinians littering the ground below them, "bury these poor men and let us say no more about it." The relationship between Hill and Lee was strained until Hill's death at Petersburg in 1865.

After the battle, Meade assumed a strong position near the old Bull Run battlefield, and Lee gave up his hope of turning his opponent out of it. With his own lines of communication broken with the destruction by the Federals of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad, Lee elected to withdraw south of the Rappahannock.

The autumn campaign had done little to alter the war's strategic situation. No Federal troops were hurried back to Virginia from the West; Lee could not hold the territory he marched through north of the Rappahannock; and the Army of Northern Virginia did not inflict any serious damage on the Army of the Potomac. On the contrary, Lee had suffered losses in men and horses that he could ill afford and found himself significantly weakened for future offensive activities. Looming in the future was the figure of the Union Army's new commanding general—Ulysses S. Grant—who would not give Lee time to breathe, much less recuperate. □

MORGAN

Continued from page 41

illegal." At 3:20 PM, Shackelford telegraphed Burnside: "By the blessing of Almighty God, I have succeeded in capturing General John Hunt Morgan."

The next day, Morgan and his men were taken by special train to Cincinnati, where they were tried, convicted of horse stealing, and sentenced to the Ohio State Penitentiary in Columbus. Four months later, Morgan and six of his officers escaped after tunneling through the cement floor of their ground floor cell and scaling a 25-foot-high wall with a rope made of bed sheets. Three of the men subsequently were recaptured, but Morgan made it safely to Franklin, Tennessee. He would be killed by Union cavalry eight months later in Andrew Johnson's adopted hometown of Greeneville, Tennessee.

The military value of Morgan's quixotic raid remains controversial, but the consequences for his selfless troopers were painfully obvious. After an epic ride of nearly 1,000 miles, Morgan surrendered a mere 364 members of his once feared division. Morgan's cavalier élan, carried to a punishing and costly extreme, had resulted in the near destruction of one of the South's finest cavalry divisions. By the summer of 1863, such horsemen were nearly irreplaceable in an increasingly beleaguered Confederacy.

In the immediate aftermath of the raid, it quickly became apparent that Morgan's actions had been next to useless in dulling the Federal advance into southern Tennessee. Rosecrans had implemented his much heralded Tullahoma Campaign on June 24, before Morgan's division had even crossed the Cumberland. By skillful maneuvers, Rosecrans deftly pried Bragg from the Duck River line and clearly had little to fear from Morgan, who was driving somewhat pointlessly into Kentucky. When it came to direct cooperation with Bragg, Morgan might as well have been on the moon.

Some Confederate officers took a long view of the raid. Basil Duke maintained that the raid had postponed Burnside's invasion of East Tennessee for weeks and delayed reinforcements to Rosecrans that otherwise would have been available to him at Chickamauga. Federal Colonel John McGowan agreed. "Had Morgan been readily beaten back from Kentucky in a crippled condition," he said, "Burnside would have met Rosecrans at Chattanooga, the battle of Chickamauga would not have been fought, and the war might have ended sooner."

It is certainly possible to argue that Morgan's unauthorized crusade north of the Ohio contributed in some measure to the great battle at Chickamauga. Such reasoning was lost on the petulant Bragg. Unable to discipline the now incarcerated Morgan, the general opted to exact retribution on his helpless troopers. Some 240 of the raid's survivors were reorganized for service and folded into the cavalry command of Maj. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest. Bragg was determined to humiliate Morgan's men and, in a petty exhibition of juvenile score settling, insisted that their mounts be reallocated. The irascible Forrest would have none of it. A pleased Stovepipe Johnson noted that Forrest risked court martial when he defiantly refused to execute Bragg's order. "Any man who says that Morgan's men are not good soldiers and fighters," claimed Forrest, "tells a damn lie."

Good fighters or not, Morgan's expedition was clearly ill advised. Despite its tragic outcome, however, the best appraisal of the raid was offered by Basil Duke. Few veterans of the raid, he thought, ever regretted it. To Confederate soldiers and civilians who had witnessed their homeland ravaged by the horrific scourge of civil war, taking the fight to the enemy's front door was a luxury "cheap at any price." It was also a point of honor. "It would have been an inexplicable shame," wrote Duke, "if, in all the Confederate army, there had been no body of men found to carry the war, however briefly, across the Ohio, and Morgan by this raid saved us, at least, that disgrace." Perhaps it was enough to justify the cost. □

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