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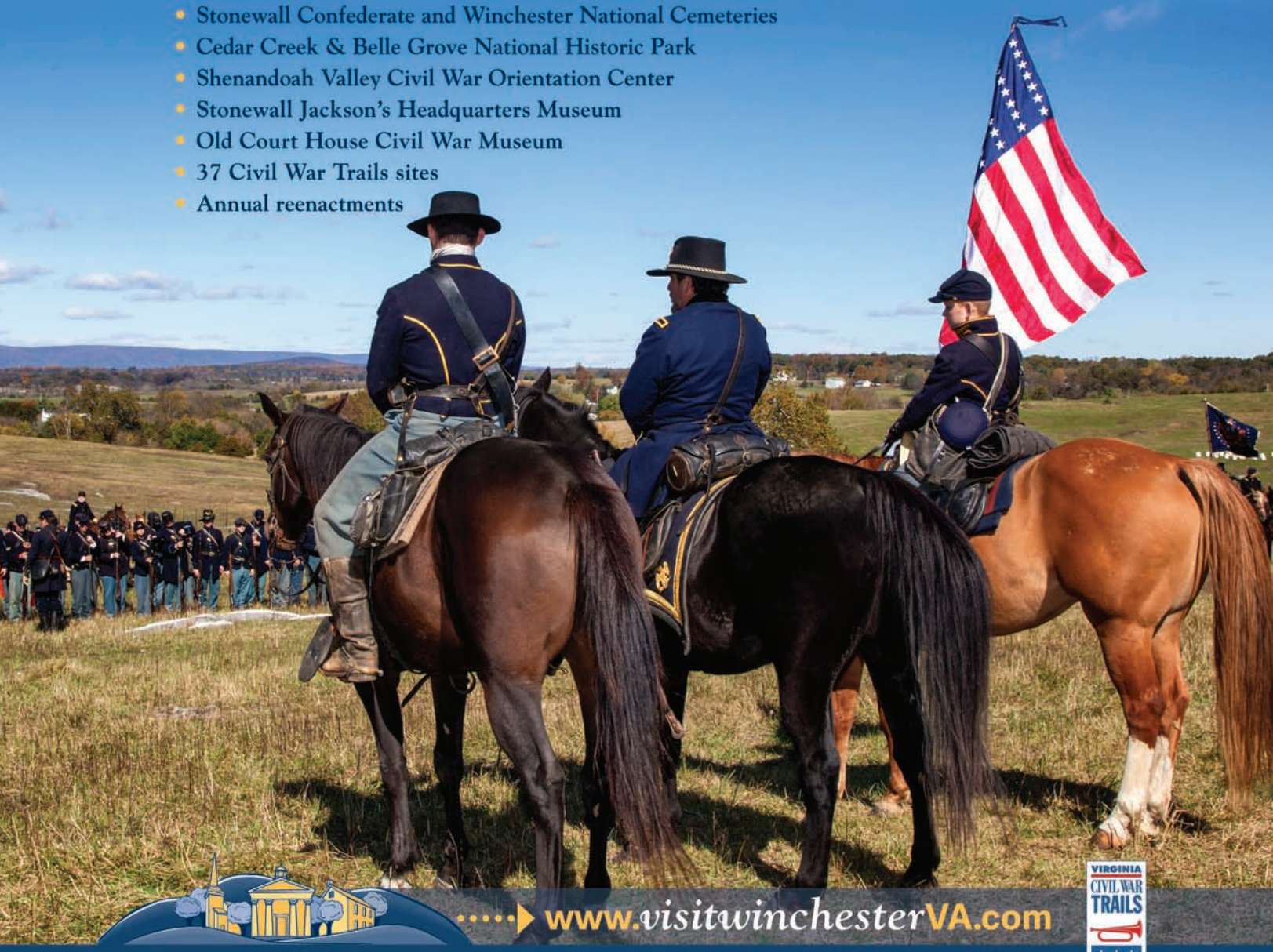

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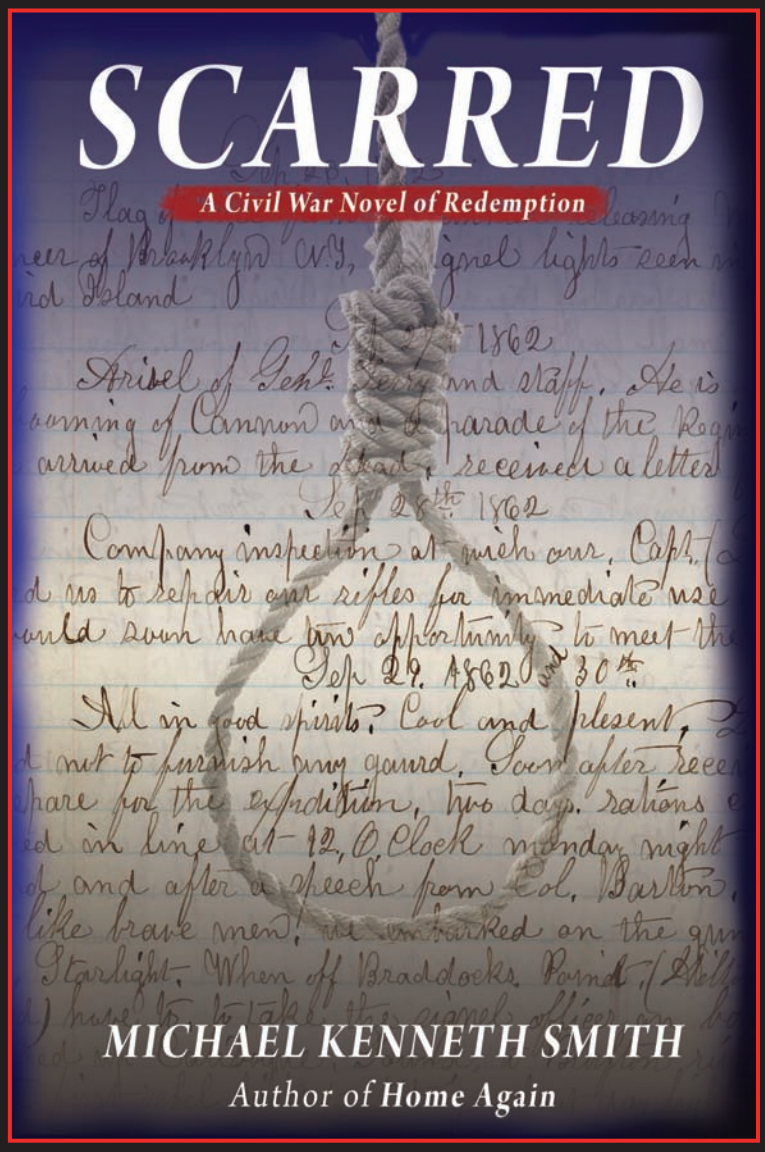

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FROM THE AUTHOR WHO BROUGHT YOU *HOME AGAIN.*

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COVER: In the painting, *Give Us Hood*, by Don Troiani, Brigadier General John Bell Hood leads the Texas Brigade to Sharpsburg, MD in September 1862. See story page 14. Don Troiani / Private Collection / Bridgeman Images

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GETTYSGEAR 1863

Editorial

Roy Morris Jr.

Contrary to popular belief, even "Beast" Butler had a softer side. He just kept it well hidden from the public.

If the Confederacy had taken a poll of the most hated Union general, New Hampshire native Benjamin Butler would have taken the laurels hand down. Short, stoop-shouldered, and cross-eyed, Butler looked the part of a consummate stage villain, and during his controversial seven-month reign as military governor of Louisiana in 1862, he played the role to the hilt, deliberately provoking New Orleans residents with a barrage of high-handed orders aimed at restoring Federal control over the famously insouciant city.

Butler's most notorious act was known officially as General Order No. 28, but outraged Southerners dubbed it "the Woman Order." Aimed at stopping the open abuse of Union soldiers by New Orleans' fairer sex, the order declared, in part, that "when any female shall, by word, gesture, or movement, insult or show contempt for any officer or soldier of the United States, she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation"—in other words, a prostitute.

The order had the anticipated effect on Southern tempers. Confederate President Jefferson Davis immediately declared Butler "an outlaw and common enemy of mankind," to be hanged outright if captured. The fact that there was no legal justification for the declaration—and certainly no military might to back it up at the time—did not unduly trouble Davis or his supporters. South Carolina poet Paul Hamilton Hayne denounced the general as "a fiend of lust" and demanded for him "a swift cord and a felon grave." Piteous appeals, supposedly from the ladies of New Orleans but more likely from male writers on various Southern newspapers, filled editorial pages from Richmond to Charleston. Even British lawmakers got into the act, protesting the order in Parliament until Butler pointed out with some glee that he had taken his wording almost verbatim from a similar London municipal ordnance.

No arrests were ever made under Butler's order, and he noted that "all the ladies forebore to insult our troops, because they didn't want to be deemed common women, all the common women forebore to insult our troops because they wanted to deemed ladies." Instead, the ladies took their protests indoors, using chamber pots with Butler's frowning visage painted on the bottom.

A second Butler ultimatum, Special Order No. 70, concerned the fate of one William Mumford, a New Orleanian arrested for desecrating the American flag. The 42-year-old Mumford was no common street thug; instead he was an accomplished gambler and bon vivant, with a wife and three children. His very prominence led to Mumford's downfall. The *New Orleans Picayune* singled him out as a "patriot" for his role in tearing down the American flag from the roof of the U.S. Mint as Union warships were approaching the city. Mumford publicized his role by going around town with a piece of the ripped-up flag dangling from his pocket.

As military governor, Butler had to review the prisoner's pending death sentence in June 1862. Earlier that same month he had commuted the death sentences of six Confederate soldiers who had violated their paroles by joining in the defense of New Orleans. Worried that his earlier leniency would be mistaken for weakness, Butler upheld Mumford's sentence, despite receiving dozens of threatening letters with sketches of pistols, coffins, skulls, and crossbones etched across their margins. "The question was now to be determined," said Butler, "whether I commanded that city or whether the mob commanded it." At 10:47 AM on June 7, Mumford was hanged on a special gallows erected on the second story of the Mint, directly below the flagstaff he had defamed.

Mumford's execution had a surprisingly unbeastly aftermath. In 1869, the slain man's widow contacted Butler, then serving as member of the U.S. House of Representatives, and asked him to relieve her "destitute" condition. Butler used his influence to get her clerkship at the Treasury Department—an ironic position for a woman whose husband had been hanged for desecrating the U.S. Mint. Butler kept his action secret. Sometimes, even a "beast" can have a softer side.

—Roy Morris Jr.

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By Stephen D. Lutz

A massive 37-year-long publishing project has become known to generations of Civil War students and historians simply as "the ORs."

In 1901, a massive 37-year-long project detailing the four years of the American Civil War came to an end. The title of the 128-book, 138,579-page work was a suitably large mouthful: *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. For grateful generations of students and scholars of the war, it would become known simply as "the ORs."

It took half a dozen people overseeing the work to get it done, beginning with Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck, general-in-chief of the Union armies from July 1862 to March 1864. One task befalling Halleck was reporting to Congress at least once yearly on the progress of the war. Halleck, an 1839 West Point graduate with 24 years in the Army, got to do such a report in 1863. What made the reporting process particularly difficult was the need to sort through an ever-mounting collection of paperwork: orders, battle plans, after-action reports, casualty lists, communiqués between civilians and politicians to military leaders, and humdrum daily comings and goings of a multi-million-man army. There was no organization in how the reports came in or were sorted out. A harried Halleck turned to Massachusetts Senator Henry Wilson for help.

The 51-year-old Wilson, one of the Republican Party's founding members, would hold a Senate seat from 1855 to 1873. In 1863, as chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, Wilson had collaborated with Halleck on a legislative proposal to provide funding, personnel, and resources to collect, sort, and catalog all the paperwork detailing the Union war effort. On May 20, 1864, President Abraham Lincoln signed his approval to the bill mandating congressional responsibility to launch the project. That began a 37-year-long project of numerous starts and stops before concluding in 1901 with the 128-volume collection.

Once approved by Congress, Halleck got the project up and going. His first step was to put it into the hands of 27-year Army veteran, Edward D. Townsend. As assistant adjutant general, Townsend had no background in the publishing, editing, or print-

This well-known color plate showing Civil War-era uniforms was published in 1895 to accompany the *Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*.

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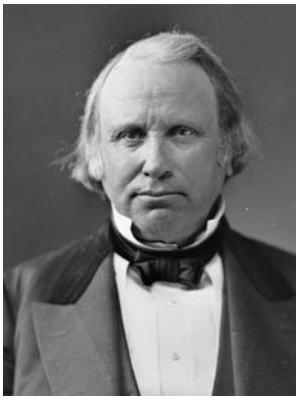
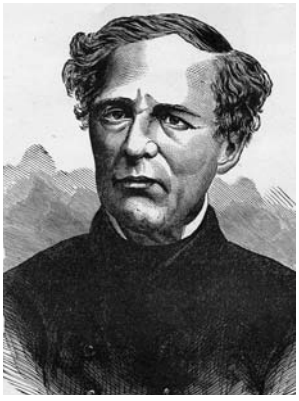



Among the many individuals involved in the 17-year-long project to put together the Official Records were, left to right, Union Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck, Massachusetts Senator Henry Wilson, and former Confederate Inspector General Samuel Cooper.

ing business. His job was to collect material, sort it out, and make it presentable for book publishing. The job of publishing went to the Superintendent of Public Printing for the U.S. House of Representatives, Joseph Hutton Defrees. Unlike Townsend, Defrees had a long acquaintance with the printing and publishing business before becoming an Indiana congressman from March 1865 to March 1867. Before that, he had enjoyed an extended political career within the state of Indiana.

The project's initial goal was to publish 10,000 copies of a complete official history. Six months into the project, Townsend sent Defrees six volumes to be reviewed and accepted for publishing. Defrees was not impressed with what he read. Given the overall lack of available Confederate documents, Defrees saw that he was sorely lacking that side of the story. It read heavy handed and one sided. Nor was there any cohesion to the readable content. The entire project was scrapped—and Townsend along with it. Henry Wilson set about revising the approach.

In mid-July 1866, Wilson approached Congress about revitalizing the official history quest. Then the bickering started. Wilson proposed a targeted budget of $500,000 to see it through. Opponents argued that the final cost would easily exceed $1 million. Wilson also stated his belief that the history could be covered within 50 volumes. Others insisted it would take as many as 500 volumes. On July 27, 1866, the two sides reached an agreement. The original goal established in 1864 would be erased from the congressional books.

President Andrew Johnson signed his approval to the new two-year plan to kick start the project. The leading clause to that agreement was finding somebody competent enough to see the work through. That led to Peter H. Watson, a former assistant secretary of war for one week in the last week of January 1862. By July 27, 1868, the project again was at a standstill. Meanwhile, the chief goal of Congress was a burning desire to scavenge every single piece of official Confederate documents to see what—if any—evidence could be found linking former Confederate President Jefferson Davis to President Abraham Lincoln's assassination. For many that was their priority.

By 1874, a growing segment of the American public was clamoring for the government to make another go at compiling the records into a multi-volume set. Civil War veterans from both sides had created their own veteran awareness organizations. They wanted their history of the great American cataclysm recorded for posterity. They turned for help to a fellow Civil War veteran, Ohio Congressman James A. Garfield. Between 1874 and 1876, at Garfield's urging, Congress doled out separate allotments totaling $100,000 to fuel the project once more.

Unfortunately, Edward Townsend was put back in charge of the project. Work proceeded just as sluggishly as it had during his first run at it. The result was a mirror image of what Townsend achieved the first time around: total chaos in written format. The system Townsend imposed would never be functional.

On July 31, 1876, Congress coughed up another $40,000 and put War Department clerk W.T. Barnard in charge of Confederate operations. Chief Clerk H.T. Crosby took Townsend's place overall. There was still no magic after 10 months. On May 26, 1877, another clerk, Thomas J. Saunders, worked his way up the career ladder. All that Congress got for its money was one misshapen effort after another.

Between March and December 1877, an additional $100,000 was added to the project's coffers to urge the work along. All that Congress got for its money was a scattered series of spasmodic work productions. By then a total of 37 volumes addressed the Union war effort; 10 others gave the Confederate side. Everyone who read them found fault after fault. Absolutely no cohesion existed. There was no easy way to follow any selected event or find collaborative connections to any other event. Volume after volume had to be surveyed to find the connecting points.

Secretary of War George Washington McCrary had been a Republican state senator in Iowa before becoming a United States congressman from 1869 to 1877. On March 12, 1877, he became incoming President Rutherford B. Hayes's new secretary of war. McCrary would be the one responsible for seeing that the right person got into the right position to get things done. He hit upon Robert Nicholson Scott, who took over the records project on December 14, 1877.

Scott was born on January 21, 1838, in Winchester, Tennessee. At age 19 he became a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Regiment. Scott began his Civil War service in Company C of the 4th Infantry Regiment. From there he moved up to being regimental adjutant. Following field experiences at Yorktown and Gaines' Mill, Scott became a staff officer in Henry Halleck's inner circle. He ended the war as a captain with the 3rd Artillery, which took him back to the West Coast. In mid-Decem-

This drawing of a Civil War-era photo of a solitary Union soldier guarding a pontoon bridge was published along with the *Official Records 1895 Atlas.*

ber 1877. McCrary put Scott into a new job. Scott would become the most influential individual putting together the official records of the war.

Scott was given authority to do whatever it took to get the job done. Between June 20, 1878, and March 3, 1879, Congress gave him a total of $80,490 to further fund the project. In return, Congress wanted 10,000 finished copies for its investment. Scott wasted no time applying restrictions as to what would be acceptable for printing. All submitted material had to have been generated during the war itself, between April 1861 and April 1865. In addition, what was submitted had to be verifiable. The one thing Scott adamantly refused to see come his way was war stories. Although participants of the war were welcomed to read the final work, there would be no challenging a document from somebody's decades-old, after the fact recollections.

Fruits of Scott's herculean labors were realized in June 1881 when the first volumes became public. But for all that Scott was doing, and doing extremely well, he kept running into a chief roadblock. Where were more Confederate documents? The answer to that question lay with Samuel Cooper, the former inspector general for the Confederate Army.

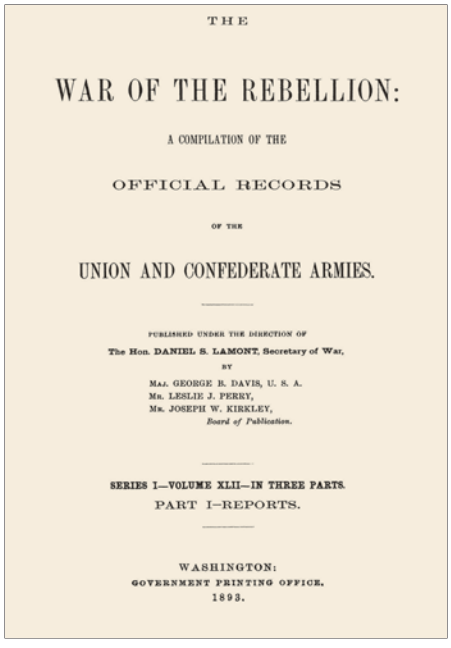
Cooper was born June 12, 1798, in Hackensack, New Jersey. Fifteen years later he became a cadet at the Unites States Military Academy at West Point. Completing the academy's two-year program during that era, at age 17 Cooper became a second

lieutenant in the artillery. He would wear a military uniform for the next five decades.

Cooper's only combat exposure came in 1841-1842 in the Seminole War. By the time the Mexican War got underway, Cooper was a mainstay in the exclusive corridors of the War Department. By 1852, he held the post of the Army's chief adjutant general, making him the Army's chief administrative officer. Essentially, if anything appeared on paper having anything to do with the Army, Cooper had some knowledge of it. When Virginia seceded, Cooper "went South" as well. By then he had worn the U.S. Army uniform for just over 45 years. At age 63 he became the Confederate Army's inspector general. In terms of total time in service, regardless of which uniform worn, nobody in the Confederate Army outranked him. Even Robert E. Lee was subordinate to Cooper.

In the first three days of April 1865, Richmond burned. Regardless of who lit the first matches, the city burned literally to the ground, including the war records of the Confederate Army. Tons upon tons of Confederate paperwork went up in smoke. Confederate President Jefferson Davis fled Richmond on a train with a selected entourage. Cooper was among that crowd with his private collection of personal baggage. Going as far as Charlotte, North Carolina, Cooper departed the train. He found an empty warehouse and stored his baggage there. Then he waited for the inevitable. That came on May 7, 1865.

On that day 24-year-old Captain Morris C. Runyan led Company C, 9th New Jersey Infantry into Charlotte. The city was in a state of near anarchy. It would be up to Company C to restore some sense of civil order and obedience. Part of that task meant searching out hidden weapons stores. Coming upon a locked warehouse a forced entry was made. Inside Morris and his crew found scores of Union Army battle flags strewn haphazardly across the floor. Then came stacks upon stacks of boxes. This is what Cooper left to be stored and kept from wanton burning. The 81 crates contained official Confederate documents Cooper refused to leave behind. He wanted them


THE

WAR OF THE REBELLION:

A COMPILATION OF THE

OFFICIAL RECORDS

OF THE

UNION AND CONFEDERATE ARMIES.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
The Hon. DANIEL S. LAMONT, Secretary of War,
BY
MAJ. GEORGE B. DAVIS, U. S. A.
MR. LESLIE J. PERRY,
MR. JOSEPH W. KIRKLEY,
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SERIES I—VOLUME XLII—IN THREE PARTS.
PART I—REPORTS.

WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.
1893.

Title page from one of the 128 volumes of the *Official Records*. Generations of Civil War scholars have come to know the collection simply as "the ORs."

saved to afford posterity an accounting of the Confederate Army. It was reported that what was found weighed 10 tons.

Meanwhile, Halleck was in Richmond overseeing what documentary history could be saved. Word came to Runyan to box up everything he had found and send it off to the War Department—it did not matter if it was a single sheet of paper found lying off to the side. In the end, nothing was done with Cooper's records for the next 13 years, when Scott finally unearthed them from the blizzard-wracked mountains of files.

So sure was Scott that he had cracked the case that he managed to squeeze another $80,000 out of Congress between June 1878 and March 1879. Still, despite the rediscovered Cooper files, it was felt that the Confederate side was missing sufficient quality accounting. Then came Marcus J. Wright.

Former Confederate General Marcus J. Wright commanded the 154th Tennessee Infantry Regiment of Maj. Gen. Benjamin Cheatham's division. In due time, Wright became a staff officer among Cheatham's influential group. Following the war, Wright became a recognized U.S. Navy purser in Washington, buying the stores needed by any given ship for sea duty. Being close to the War Department, Wright became aware of Scott's wearying efforts to go through collected Confederate documents. As a former aide and staff member of Cheatham's, Wright had his own secreted stash of official documents he had yet to reveal. Upon presenting his collection to the War Department, Wright received $2,000 and a new job as a special agent for the War Department in charge of procuring more Confederate documents. He was good at it.

Nearly a decade and a half after the war, many Southerners still distrusted the federal government. Southern resentment over losing their war of independence still held fast. Many believed that repercussions would follow the exposure of new Confederate documents. Wright quickly proved his worth to the War Department. On July 1, 1878, Wright became a recognized official Federal agent for obtaining Confederate documents. The next day he got William Preston Johnston $10,000 for his records concerning his late father, General Albert Sidney Johnston, who had been killed at the Battle of Shiloh in April 1862.

Wright's approach to Johnston paid immediate dividends, opening doors across the South for the official records project. Wright gained access to contributions from individuals and heirs to such leading Confederate generals as Robert E. Lee, Joseph E. Johnston, P.G.T. Beauregard, James Longstreet, Sidney D. Lee, Sterling Price, Lucius Polk, Edmund Kirby Smith, James R. Chambers, Samuel Jones, R.S. Ripley, A.P. Stewart, and William Steele. Jefferson Davis's widow, Varina, pitched in her fair share of documents left from her deceased husband.

With the additional Confederate contributions, work on the records project continued apace. Then, on March 5, 1887, Scott died. It may be said that he had literally worked himself to death. His immediate replacement was Lt. Col. Henry M. Lazell, a native of Enfield, Massachusetts.

Between 1879 and 1882, Lazell was commandant of West Point. At the time of

Scott's death, he was stationed at Fort Craig in New Mexico Territory. After replacing Scott, Lazell held that position for the next two years. The only major change in operations was the creation of a supervisory board as dictated by Congress. The formula settled on one military officer and two civilians acquainted with publishing at some point in their careers. When Lazell's short tenure expired, George B. Davis stepped in to lead the new structuring.

Davis, like Lazell, was from Massachusetts. He enlisted in the U.S. Army at the age of 16, having told recruiters he was 18. Once in uniform, Davis advanced from company quartermaster sergeant to regimental quartermaster sergeant, seeing action in 25 major and minor engagements. He came out of the Civil War as a second lieutenant, spending the next two years missing the military life. A direct letter from President Andrew Johnson got Davis into West Point. He graduated in June 1872.

Upon becoming a major, Davis was assigned to the War Department and given a new job managing two civilians supervising the official records project. One was Joseph W. Kirkley, who had started as an ordinary clerk in the War Department and advanced to the position of senior lead clerk. The clerk, Leslie J. Perry, had seen service in the Civil War. Davis kept his new position until July 1, 1895, when confusingly named Major George W. Davis took over. All this time, Wright was still finding scattered Confederate documents.

The final noteworthy name attached to the project was Dr. Frederick C. Ainsworth. Born in Woodstock, Vermont, Ainsworth was 12 years old when the Civil War ended. In the early 1870s he enrolled in New York University's medical program. Ainsworth found doctor life boring and joined the Army Medical Corps in November 1874. He went on to participate in the Army's pursuit of Apache war chief Geronimo. Politics brought Ainsworth to the War Department in 1879, when Civil War veterans of both sides were clamoring for an accurate accounting of their war. The Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), the most active and motivated Northern veterans group, led the charge. Congress scrubbed earlier veteran's benefit application procedures and instituted newer, broader services designed to make it easier for Union veterans to gain recognition and compensation for their services.

When Ainsworth became the Army's surgeon general in recognition of his medical experience, knowledge, and highly touted administrative skills, he streamlined federal offices. He took an antiquated index reference card system and put new efficiency into it. The existing system was as old as the Army itself. Ainsworth took the well-used index cards and wide assortments of paper and saved what was written on them. The original papers were of such poor quality that they were deteriorating. From Civil War records, Ainsworth moved backward to the Mexican War, the War of 1812, then the Revolutionary War, saving records of over 50 million former soldiers and sailors.

Between the work of Ainsworth and Joseph W. Kirkley, the 128-volume *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* became a finished reality in mid-1901. The collective series was broken down thusly: Series I held 53 volumes, equaling 111 books. This material focused on Union and Confederate battle plans, preparations, after action reports, casualty lists, communiqués between commands at various levels, and those between military-civilian channels. Series II had eight volumes holding eight books and addressed prisoners of war. Series III contained five volumes of miscellaneous Union communiqués, military and civilian orders, logistics, reports, etc., not found in Series I nor II. Series IV had three volumes of primarily Confederate documents of conscription records and political-military exchanges, material that arrived too late in the publishing process to have been included elsewhere in previously edited volumes.

The final page count for all volumes was 138,579. The total cost across 30 years of effort was a staggering $2,858,514.67. Generations of future researchers, genealogists, and historians would call it a bargain at twice the cost. □

The 51st Pennsylvania Volunteers rush Burnside's Bridge at Antietam. | BY ROB WILLIS

Colonel John F. Hartranft surveyed the blue-jacketed ranks to his front with a mixture of frustration and humiliation, and some of the men returned the favor. It was July 20, 1861, and the entire Federal Army under the command of Irvin McDowell was marching south toward the first, and hopefully last, major battle of the war.

The men of Hartranft's 4th Pennsylvania would not be going with them, however, because their 90-day enlistments had expired and most of them wanted to go home, at least for a while. Despite speeches, accusations, and even a personal plea from McDowell, the men of the 4th had had enough, and, while many had already reenlisted in new regiments, they felt that the Army had used them badly; they wanted a break. Hartranft turned his back on his regiment and rode south with the rest of the army to volunteer his services to the staff of Colonel William B. Franklin—an act that would win Hartranft the Medal of Honor after the war—while the 4th began its march north to Washington. The next day, July 21, the army would be defeated at the first Battle of Bull Run, and McDowell would lay some of the blame squarely at the feet of the 4th Pennsylvania.

Hartranft was perhaps the classic example of the volunteer officer, having served in his local militia unit before the war started. A former civil engineer and deputy sheriff, the 30-year-old had passed the

county bar exam in 1860 and was practicing law in Montgomery County, Penn., when the South seceded. Elected colonel by the militia companies of Montgomery County, Hartranft offered their services to Washington and was soon appointed head of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment. Even before the 4th had turned their backs on the Union that July day, Hartranft realized he might be of further service and, eager to prove himself, asked for and received permission to raise a second regiment. Thus, in mid-September 1861, the first men of the new, three-year 51st Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry began arriving at Camp Curtin near Harrisburg to be organized and mustered in.

The men of the 51st were drawn from Montgomery, Northhampton, Centre, Snyder, Union, and Lycoming counties. In fact, many of them had served in the ranks of the old 4th, and had felt driven to clear their reputation after the disaster at Bull Run and McDowell's indictment.

As the new officers and men of the 51st labored through September and into the late autumn to get the regiment into shape, the rain, their poor campsite, scant clothing, and the indifferent attitude of the U.S. Army were too much for some of the recruits, and desertion became an alarming problem, although one that the regiment would weather successfully.

The hardier souls of the 51st found unofficial ways to improve their lot, and such actions led some observers to look upon the 51st—to the regiment's apparent delight—as a pack of rascals. Beyond the pedestrian offenses of roughhousing, drunkenness, and generally raucous behavior, one incident stood out in the memories of the men that autumn.

In early November, after suffering through miserable rations for too long, a dozen men slid past the perimeter guard

Union soldiers advance across a bridge on the Confederate left flank while others take shelter on the bank behind its low bordering wall. Beyond, Confederates do their best to stem the attack. This painting was done by an eyewitness in the 2nd Vermont Infantry.

Will You Give Us Our WHISKEY?

one dark evening and made their way to an Army supply train not far from the camp. They selected a fine, 250-pound hog from the livestock car, killed it, and, slinging it in a blanket, made their way back to camp, envisioning a wonderful meal for their efforts. Unfortunately, they found themselves challenged by a picket but, thinking quickly, proclaimed themselves to be "railroad hands" who had found a sick soldier some distance up the tracks. Feigning grave concern for the "sick fellow," the men convinced the guard to let them pass, only to run into the camp's interior guards, who were also in the process of believing the story until the officer of the day approached while on grand rounds. In no time, stories of nonexistent physicians and harmful vapors were invented by the culprits, and the tale was related with such urgency that the OOD was fooled as well. The cargo, borne by its terrified owners, finally returned to the safety of the company street at 1 AM.

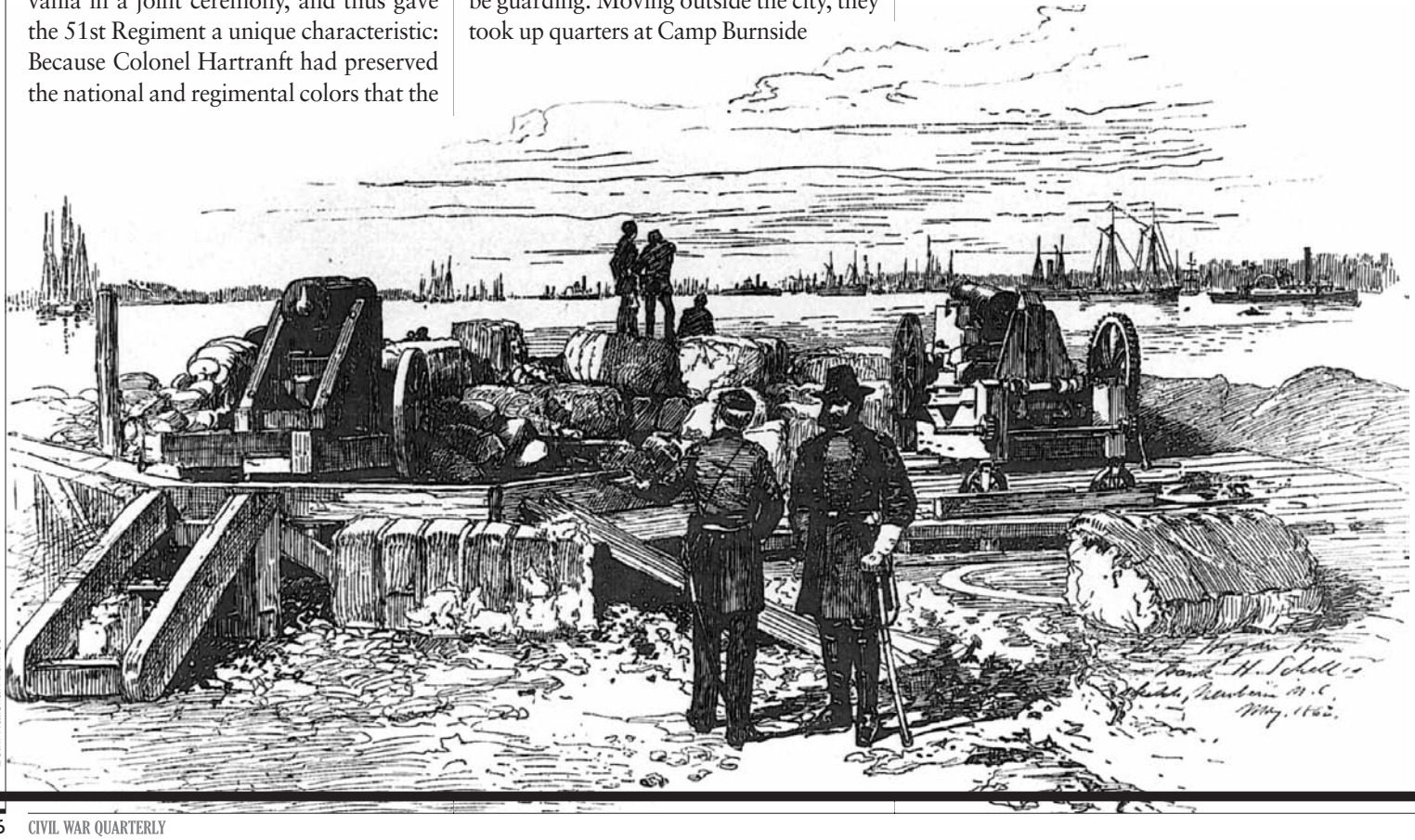
On November 5, 1861, Governor Andrew G. Curtin presented new state colors to the 51st, 52nd, and 53rd Pennsylvania in a joint ceremony, and thus gave the 51st Regiment a unique characteristic: Because Colonel Hartranft had preserved the national and regimental colors that the old 4th Pennsylvania had carried and presented them to the 51st as well, the 51st was one of very few Civil War units to carry *three* flags—two national colors and a blue state flag.

By mid-November the regiment finally received orders to move to Baltimore and, feeling that they owed Harrisburg one last fling, almost half of the 51st broke guard during the evening of November 15, went into town, and proceeded to throw themselves a party. Hartranft, fearing unimagined chaos, ordered what was left of the regiment into town to escort the revelers back to camp under guard. Unfortunately, most of the guards—many of whom were allegedly temperate to begin with—were talked into "just one toast" by the renegades, and before it was all over the rescuers were carried back to camp in a terrible state of intoxication by the rescued.

The 51st moved by rail toward Baltimore and reached Annapolis on November 18. Along the way the boys found time to forage for food that resulted in, among other things, the theft of a watchdog, his chain, and the larder he was supposed to be guarding. Moving outside the city, they took up quarters at Camp Burnside and commenced the dreary job of winter drill. On December 24, the 51st was formally assigned to Brig. Gen. Jesse Reno's brigade, together with the 51st New York, 21st Massachusetts, and 9th New Jersey. The regiment passed into the new year as part of Brig. Gen. Ambrose Burnside's Coast Division; few men realized at the time what that meant.

During the first week of January 1862, the regiment was split into halves and boarded Navy transport ships with the rest of Burnside's command for a grueling, month-long journey down the wintry coast toward destinations unknown.

Scout and *Cossack* were only two of over 100 vessels that comprised Burnside's large but inexperienced amphibious force and, as the fleet moved slowly south, it was revealed that its goal was Hatteras Inlet, N.C. Over the next 30 days the men of the regiment suffered horrible conditions on the two ships, including sweeping seasickness (most of the men had never even seen a ship this large, let alone sailed through stormy waters), ship collisions, lack of proper accommodations, and disease.



Both: National Archives

Rations were very short, even absent, for days at a time, and the men resorted to drinking vinegar for several days because the fresh-water supply had run out.

The officers tried to drill the men during calmer moments, but the sound of hundreds of rifle butts thumping on the hurricane deck compelled the ship captains to order such activity to cease, because the sailors couldn't hear orders over the din. Several soldiers died during the journey despite the efforts of the Navy to provide decent conditions, and by the time the regiment was put ashore on Roanoke Island on February 7, 1862, the soldiers were thoroughly prepared to embrace dry land again, enemy forts be damned. The next morning, Burnside's force attacked the Confederate positions and forced the surrender of the island, although the 51st was only lightly engaged.

When Roanoke Island was cleared of Confederate troops, the regiment began a miserable occupation. They found occasional distraction harassing the locals, but staying warm and fed was their chief concern. On March 3 the men were delighted to give up their old "pig-iron" rifles for new Enfield rifled muskets, and were simultaneously ordered to pack up and re-board their ships. Conditions afloat were just as bad as before but the duration of the journey was mercifully shorter and, on March 13, 1862, the brigade again reached land.

They debarked and began marching north toward New Bern, N.C., through "the muddiest mud ever invented," and made about four miles before their first halt. There they were confronted by a Marine artillery officer whose six-gun battery had become so bogged down that the Marines could no longer pull it. The 51st Pennsylvania had no choice but to pitch in, and soon the exhausted men were pulling inland both the Marine battery and two large rifled guns brought ashore by the *Cossack*'s captain.

Through near-constant rain and loaded with their own equipment, the soldiers pulled the guns for more than 14 miles through boggy, muddy tracks until they were within range of the Confederate works surrounding New Bern. The unusual anchor-and-cannon corps badge that the future IX Corps would adopt much later was a direct reference to the monumental endeavors of the Coast Division during this period.

Thankfully, the Pennsylvanians were only slightly engaged in the infantry battle that followed and suffered only a handful of wounded. After New Berne fell, the entire Federal force worked to consolidate their gains and improve their living conditions, while making occasional expeditions into the surrounding countryside.

By April 1, the 51st's ranks had thinned substantially, the original 981 men who had left Camp Curtin the previous autumn having been reduced to about 350 effectives. Hartranft himself took leave to return to Norristown where two of his children were gravely ill; tragically, they would soon die within a week of each other. During this period, the regiment was in the charge of Lt. Col. Thomas Bell, who was Hartranft's straight-laced and well-respected second-in-command.

The 51st moved its camp again in early April. Once they were situated, Bell commenced a rigorous program of drill and also tightened the regiment's discipline. Bell reduced 12 noncommissioned officers to the ranks for improper conduct. This conduct was actually part of a larger problem, namely the uncanny ability of the Pennsylvanians to find supplies of whiskey even in what appeared to be the most destitute areas of the Confederacy.

Bell attempted to teach the regiment to drill by the bugle, but so many of the men were tone deaf that the experiment was a dismal failure. Also instituted was the standing order to bathe every Saturday (when possible)—a tradition that stuck with 51st until it was mustered out.

The regiment again boarded ships in mid-April and sailed northeast to partici-

BELL ATTEMPTED TO TEACH THE REGIMENT TO DRILL BY THE BUGLE, BUT SO MANY OF THE MEN WERE TONE DEAF THAT THE EXPERIMENT WAS A DISMAL FAILURE.

ABOVE: On their way north from Carolina, the 51st Pennsylvania made various stops on a path that led them to Antietam. One, shown here, was at Culpeper, Va. OPPOSITE: General Ambrose Burnside at a captured Confederate battery in New Berne, N.C. Burnside had success invading the Carolina coast early in the war.

pate in an amphibious landing near Elizabeth City, N.C., as part of an expedition under General Reno. The 51st and Reno's other regiments were accompanied by Colonel Rush Hawkins's 4th Brigade.

The combined command moved over dusty roads inland (again pulling along cannon—this time it was two 3-inch rifles) with the mission of making a "demonstration" against Norfolk, Va. The force encountered a Rebel brigade at South Mills in Camden County, N.C., and, after a confused and exhausting fight, Reno abandoned the advance and ordered his brigades back to their ships. The 51st lost 30 men killed and wounded at South Mills—their first significant combat casualties.

Fatigue rendered the march back difficult. Arriving in Currituck Court House, the worn-out Pennsylvanians could not resist the temptation of some illicit fun and proceeded to release all of the prisoners from the town jail, after which they cleaned out the local country store, which was owned by a mouthy secessionist. The used-up troops then marched the final three miles to the landing, brought their wounded aboard the waiting transports, and collapsed after a nearly continuous nightmare-like march of over 40 miles.

Arriving back in New Bern on April 22, 1862, the men were delighted to be met by Colonel Hartranft, who had just returned from Norristown. The Pennsylvanians were given a few days to organize themselves, and it was at this time that they received their first issue of oilcloth blankets, which the men found both novel and useful.

On April 25, a whiskey ration arrived in camp and was put under guard for distribution by the regimental quartermaster. The proximity of the whiskey was too much for the guards to withstand. The detail tapped a keg and sucked the whiskey through a disassembled rifle barrel, which earned each of them a fine hangover and 10 days in a barrel-shirt for their trouble.

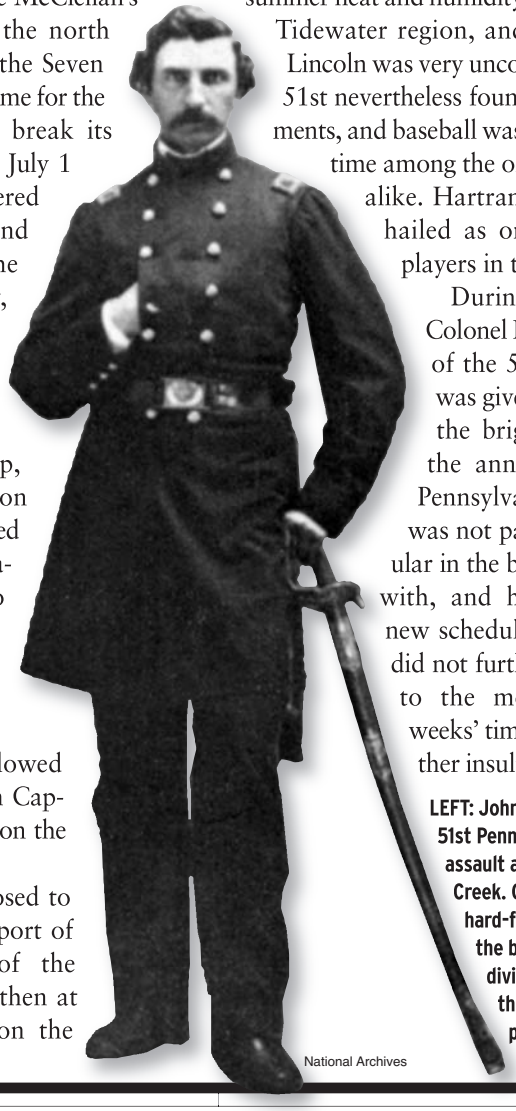
In the last week of April, life began to take on a more attractive quality for the hard-used men of Burnside's command, as excellent rations and other supplies found their way down the coast. The 51st Pennsylvania settled to the more mundane but generally less dangerous business of camp existence. April faded into May, and barring some camp gossip of a rumored attack by the retreating Rebels, little of note occurred. An exception to the tedium came on May 24, when an unpopular order was issued that required all noncommissioned officers to remove their green wool chevrons and trim for replacement with standard-issue blue chevrons.

As June arrived, Hartranft began to recognize that even with frequent moves of camp and steady drill his men were getting itchy, and his company officers began to get creative to fill the men's time. On June 22, during the regular Sunday-morning inspection, Captain William Bolton decided to offer cash prizes to the three best-groomed enlisted men of his Company A, and competitive spirits ran high. The two best men were so closely matched that the tie had to be broken by Hartranft himself, and only an upside-down coat button on one of the men decided the close contest. From that day forward, the companies of the 51st held competitions with one another for similar honors and, until the regiment mustered out, took great pride in the condition of their weapons and accoutrements.

As Maj. Gen. George McClellan's Peninsula Campaign the north drew to a close after the Seven Days' battles, orders came for the 51st Pennsylvania to break its tedium and move. On July 1 the regiment was ordered to strike the tents, and next day boarded the schooner *Recruit*, which made its way down the Neuse River in a rain squall. The vessel collided with another Union ship, causing mass confusion among the tightly packed soldiers. The Pennsylvanians' anger turned to amusement when they saw that *Recruit* had rammed their old friend *Cossack*, and the Pennsylvanians bellowed cheer after cheer when Captain Bennett appeared on the *Cossack*'s deck.

The fleet was supposed to land its troops in support of McClellan's Army of the Potomac, which was then at Harrison's Landing on the York-James Peninsula, but on July 3 word passed through the Pennsylvanians' ranks that Richmond had fallen. Accordingly, the fleet reversed its course and landed at New Bern on July 4. The next morning the sour truth that the Army of the Potomac had been driven away from Richmond circulated through the division, and once again the men were ordered to strike camp. The regiment reboarded *Recruit* early on July 6 and headed north for another earnest try to take the Confederate capital, although this attempt would also soon be abandoned. Moving to Fortress Monroe and finally Newport News, the regiment again made landfall on July 10 and established a new quarters that they quickly dubbed "Camp Lincoln." Although the campsite was adequate, the men were not prepared for the oppressive summer heat and humidity of the Virginia Tidewater region, and life at Camp Lincoln was very uncomfortable. The 51st nevertheless found some amusements, and baseball was a popular pastime among the officers and men alike. Hartranft himself was hailed as one of the best players in the regiment.

During this period, Colonel Edward Ferrero of the 51st New York was given command of the brigade, much to the annoyance of the Pennsylvanians. Ferrero was not particularly popular in the brigade to begin with, and his challenging new schedule of daily drill did not further endear him to the men. In a few weeks' time he would further insult the 51st Pennsylvania by suspending their whiskey ration as punishment for one of their transgressions. The constant work and summer heat conspired to make the July days pass slowly.



National Archives

LEFT: John Hartranft led the 51st Pennsylvania in the assault across Antietam Creek. OPPOSITE: After a hard-fought battle for the bridge, Burnside's division rushes toward the Confederate position.

Recruit sailed up the Potomac River and, on August 4, the regiment landed and moved by rail to Fredericksburg. After a short rest the 51st, along with the rest of the newly organized IX Army Corps, began moving north by hard marches and railroad. The men arrived at Culpeper on August 14. It was apparent that a major campaign was under way.

Moving again on August 15, the suspicion that something big was brewing was confirmed when the regiment watched Lt. Gen. Stonewall Jackson's Confederates making camp on the heights above the 51st's new position at Raccoon Ford, northwest of Fredericksburg.

Thus began a great game of cat-and-mouse as the blue and gray armies, again on the move after the Seven Days' battles, began pressing one another for an advantage, and in the intense heat the men grudgingly threw away or stored their excess clothing. In general, the Confederates advanced while the Federals moved northward toward Washington, D.C. During the subsequent days, the 51st Pennsylvania served as the rear guard of the IX Corps' 2nd Division and lost several men captured by Jackson's fast-moving vanguard. On August 19 the brigade reached Kelly's Ford after a 29-mile march and settled down for a rest. While the short break was welcome it was also nerve-wracking due to constant probing of the brigade's picket line by Confederate cavalry.

Over the next 10 days, the regiment marched hard through the rain and heat with almost no food. On August 29, the Pennsylvanians, in a state of near-exhaustion, reached Manassas Junction, where they joined up with the rest of the Federal army of Virginia under Maj. Gen. John Pope. The Second Battle of Bull Run was already under way in earnest, and the 51st found itself laying in support of Durrell's Battery D, 1st Pennsylvania Artillery, and standing picket duty.

By nightfall on August 30, the battle was over and Union forces were withdrawing toward Washington. Mercifully for the 51st, it had not been committed to the main part of the fighting, although Ferrero's brigade was ordered to provide the division's rear guard during the retreat. This order cost the 51st their knapsacks, which had been unslung, neatly stacked, and subsequently overrun by the enemy. Although pressed hard, the brigade managed to avoid disaster and made its way to Centreville, soaked to the skin by a rainstorm and minus 13 men who had been wounded or captured during the withdrawal. In the short time they lingered at Centreville, the 51st Pennsylvania managed to steal the stored clothing of a German regiment (whose "Cod fer tams" were frequent and loud) to replace some of what they had lost a few days earlier.

After again supporting Durrell's battery during the sharp engagement at Chantilly on September 1, the regiment made its way to Alexandria, Va., where the men enjoyed a short rest and their first hot meal in weeks. Drawing a few items of clothing but still on scant rations, the men moved first to Washington and then to Brookville, Md., on September 9. During the march Ferrero's brigade was reorganized and was now composed of the 51st Pennsylvania, the 51st New York, and the 21st and 35th Massachusetts.

During the march through Maryland, the brigade enjoyed the attention of loyal citizens and was allowed a short rest at Brookville that featured plentiful rations and time to clean up a bit. The brigade again took to the road on September 11, and on the 14th arrived near Fox's Gap in South Mountain, where yet another engagement was in progress.

Laying down once more in front of Durrell's guns, the lads of the 51st watched their artillery wage a rousing duel with Rebel cannon until the late afternoon. As the sun headed toward the nearby peaks, the brigade was ordered up the side of South Mountain to consolidate gains made in the day's fighting.

Moving into a field bordered by heavy woods, the brigade saw all around them the wreckage of the desperate fight for Fox's Gap. Earlier in the day the rookie 17th Michigan had pushed the Confederates out of a nearby field and farther up the mountain. What Ferrero, Hartranft, and the 51st did not know was that the 17th Michigan had not stayed there. As Ferrero's brigade filed into the field to stack arms and boil coffee, the dark tree line to their left exploded with a tremendous flash of musketry. The Confederates had retaken their previous positions after the Michigan troops had moved to another part of the mountain, and the 51st Pennsylvania was caught in a perfect ambush.

Scrambling to form a line and fight back, the brigade lost cohesion and, as the 51st wheeled into line to face their attackers, the green 35th Massachusetts to their rear fired a volley into the surprised Pennsylvanians. The 51st New York hurriedly stepped up and threatened to volley into the confused Massachusetts men if they fired again, and this gave Hartranft's troops a chance to charge the woods and chase away the Confederate threat.

In the aftermath of the sharp fight, the 51st Pennsylvania shook out a strong picket line and grimly tallied their losses: 6 men killed and 24 wounded. The damage was worse than they knew at the time because General Jesse Reno, who was temporarily commanding the IX Corps, had been one of the first to fall during the initial volley and died shortly thereafter. The news was a sore blow to the already stunned 51st and the corps had just lost an irreplaceable leader. Burnside, who was temporarily responsible for the right wing of the entire Army of the Potomac, gave command of IX Corps to Brig. Gen. Jacob Cox of the Kanawha (4th) Division.

Pushing forward after a troubled night's sleep, the regiment looked in wonder at the number of dead draft animals that lined the road. The Confederates were in retreat and IX Corps marched westward in pursuit. Over the next two days the corps captured a number of Confederate stragglers. On the afternoon of September 16, Ferrero's brigade, with the rest of its division, halted east of Sharpsburg, Md., about a mile from an arched stone bridge across Antietam Creek. The 51st Pennsylvania bedded down and passed a reasonable night's sleep, disregarding the ever-increasing noise of nearby skirmishers' rifles, which seemed to erupt from everywhere at once.

Well before daylight, Ferrero's men were awakened by the sound of heavy artillery fire, followed by the distant rattle of musketry as the sun rose. While making a hasty breakfast, the 51st Pennsylvania was somewhat cheered by the surprise arrival of a bag of mail. Captain Bolton of Company A received a letter from his sister, "and after reading it, [I] destroyed it, and placed the envelope in my pocket, thinking if anything happened to me it might be of use to me."

With daylight it became obvious that the massed IX Corps was in a less-than-ideal location: Several Union batteries had unlimbered on the high ground between the infantry and Rebel batteries on the opposite side of Antietam Creek, and the two sides were trading iron in the growing daylight. As Confederate overshots began to fall among the four helpless divisions, General Cox ordered them to move west and then south toward some sheltering hills that lay closer to the stream. Cox dispatched Brig. Gen. Isaac Rodman's division well to the south and Colonel George Crook's brigade to the north,with orders to move close to the banks of the Antietam and search for fords that were rumored to be in the area. Brigadier General Orlando Wilcox was to keep his division in reserve near the high ground just vacated, thus leaving Brig. Gen. Samuel Sturgis's 2nd Division—including the 51st Pennsylvania—in the center, in close proximity to the stone bridge they had glimpsed the night before. Sturgis positioned his 1st Brigade, under Brig. Gen. James Nagle, in a field south of the Rohrbach farmhouse, with Ferrero's 2nd Brigade slightly east and south of Nagle's. The 51st moved to the edge of a cornfield and, as reported by one member of the regiment, "came to a halt

The ANTIETAM Battlefield Today

The State of Maryland established the Antietam National Cemetery on March 23, 1865, three weeks before Appomattox. The Battlefield Park was established on August 30, 1890, the second one to be set aside by the War Department (Chickamauga, Georgia, was the first). It was transferred to the National Park Service in 1933. On Decoration Day of 1900, the Maryland Monument was dedicated, and 20 years later the New York Monument, perhaps the most impressive on the field, was solemnized. Dunker Church, the most notable landmark on the field and which served alternately as cover for rifleman, observation post for artillery and field hospital, was destroyed by a freak hailstorm in 1921. It was rebuilt in 1962, the same year the Visitor Center was completed.

The park encompasses 800 acres and contains eight and a half miles of paved road over which a self-conducted automobile tour may be enjoyed from the comfort of your car (walking and biking are possible also and encouraged). Tapes and tape players are available at the Visitor Center to talk you through the one and a half-hour trip (by car). There are living history shows and displays throughout the summer season—a schedule is available by writing the Antietam National Battlefield, P.O. Box 158, Sharpsburg, MD 21782 or visiting the Web site at www.nps.gov/anti.

The village of Sharpsburg itself is a charming 19th-century farming town that has even fewer residents today than at the time of the famous battle. Located at the junction of state highways 34 and 65, it lies 10 miles south of Hagerstown. There are no hotels in Sharpsburg but a collection of local bed & breakfasts welcome travelers. Accommodations and other information can be had at the Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau in Hagerstown (888-257-2600).

On the battlefield itself are 97 statues and monuments and 41 field guns. Six vertical cannon monuments stand in honor of the six general officers killed (three from each side) and 236 cast iron tablets trace the movements of the various units during the action. Corn is still grown in the famous field that bears the name of the site where so many brave men from each side fell—the field changed hands time and again on that fatal forenoon of September 17, 1862. And, of course, Burnside Bridge still spans Antietam Creek, silent sentinel to the feverish attack and parry on the Confederate right.

Nearly half a million people visit the Antietam battlefield each year. They are welcomed by permanent staff members and the many volunteers that make up the living history displays during the summer season. n

—Keith Milton

near a large log barn near Antietam Creek. Here we found a fine spring of water."

Although no one had yet told them so, it was clear to most of the IX Corps that the stone bridge had to be taken, and it was equally clear that the Confederates did not intend to give it up. During the slow march down the hill around 9 AM, the 51st heard a sharp exchange of musketry that turned out to be a probe of the bridge by some skirmishers from the 11th Ohio. About an hour later, the firing suddenly increased again, when the 11th Connecticut of Rodman's division made a frontal attack on the bridge. Portions of the Nutmeg regiment made it to the creek north of the bridge, and a few men even plunged into the four-foot-deep water to ford the creek, but they suffered heavy losses and retreated in shambles.

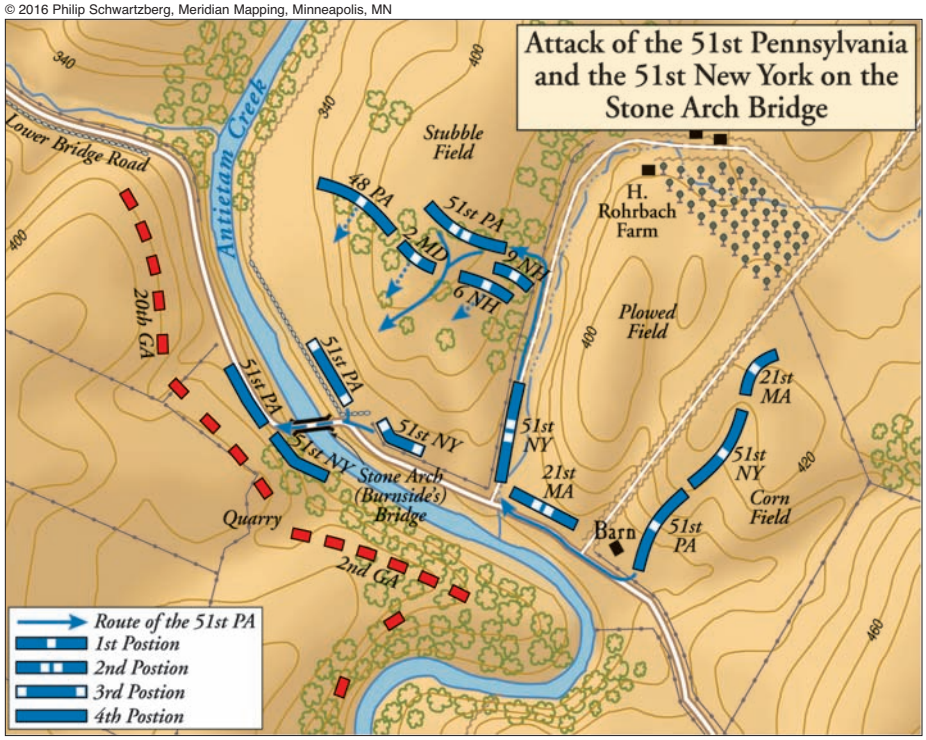
As the 11th Connecticut fell back, Burnside, who had reassumed direct command of the IX Corps and was receiving increased pressure to take the span and attack the Confederate right, ordered Sturgis's 2nd Division forward. Singling out Nagle's brigade to make the attempt, Sturgis even offered a general's star to Lt. Col. Eugene Duryea of the 2nd Maryland if he led a successful assault over the bridge. Duryea agreed and moved the 2nd Maryland from the cornfield down to the Bridge Road on his left, followed closely by the 6th New Hampshire, with the 9th New Hampshire and 48th Pennsylvania in support. Firing a wild volley into the enemy position, the two lead regiments took off down the road in a deadly race toward the bridge, which was nearly 400 yards away.

As soon as they passed the bend in the road near the barn, Nagle's formations were hit by constant rifle and cannon fire and, though a few men did reach the bridge's eastern end, they were unable to remain there. Nagle's two chewed-up regiments retreated up a sloping hill to the east and sought cover. Meanwhile, Nagle's two supporting regiments tried to move closer but were also repulsed; afterward, the 48th Pennsylvania moved across the plowed field to their right to rejoin their battered comrades, while the 9th New Hampshire huddled along a fence near the creek.

After Nagle's brigade marched from the cornfield, Ferrero's regiments filed into Nagle's former positions. The 51st Pennsylvania stacked their blanket rolls and knapsacks and placed their left company closest to the Bridge Road near the barn, which by now was serving as a field hospital. The 51st New York formed on the Pennsylvanians' right, and the 21st and 35th Massachusetts took up supporting positions slightly to the north and east.

As the sounds of Nagle's attack diminished into an artillery exchange, Ferrero's men were finally able to get a glimpse of what was happening. Bolton wrote in his diary, "The road leading to the bridge is strewn with … dead and wounded. It is a sickening sight." For nearly an hour, Hartranft's men had been watching other soldiers disappear into the tall corn, then heard the hellish noises of battle. Now the grisly epilogue to those assaults became evident when groups of mutilated men came stumbling back through the cornrows, headed to the rear. The sight nearly unnerved the inexperienced troops of the 35th Massachusetts, and none of Ferrero's men had any illusions about what was happening at the bridge.

Once again the volume of fire rose, as Nagle's partially reformed brigade again tried to take the bridge, this time charging from the hill where they had gone to ground. Almost before it had started, the attack ended in disaster, and the beaten Marylanders and New Hampshire men fell back again. It was just before 11 AM, and Nagle's brigade was used up. After Nagle's failed assaults, Ferrero's brigade was next.



ABOVE: The 51st Pennsylvania took a circuitous route to get in position for a successful rush of the bridge.
OPPOSITE: Burnside's Bridge as it appears today.

Burnside was nearly beside himself by this time and, in a final desperate bid, sent a message through Sturgis for Ferrero to "take the two 51sts out of the 2nd brigade" and let them try. Sturgis reported: "[I] directed them to charge with the bayonet. They started on their mission of death full of enthusiasm."

Ferrero, knowing his brigade was already worn out from the hard campaigning of the previous days, was hoping instead to ford the stream at a less dangerous point. After a series of short but heated exchanges between Ferrero's aide, Lieutenant John Hudson, and Sturgis, Ferrero bitterly obeyed. Bolton recorded, "Finally at 11 o'clock a.m. the dreaded order came from Burnside to Ferrero to take the 51st PA and the 51st NY holding the 21st Mass. in reserve, and take the bridge at all hazzards [sic]."

For his part, Ferrero was eager to regain some of his regimental commanders' respect, because he had made an embarrassing, errant order earlier that morning that led to an argument with Hartranft.

Ferrero rode up hard to his brigade and, ordering them to their feet, shouted:"It is General Burnside's special request that the two 51sts take that bridge. Will you do it?" The cynical silence that followed was broken when Corporal Lewis Patterson shouted from the Pennsylvania ranks, "Will you give us our whiskey, if we take it?" Eyes alit at the opportunity, Ferrero wheeled around and exclaimed, "Yes, by God, you shall all have as much as you want, if you take the bridge!" In a quick hedge that was not lost on the soldiers, he continued: "I don't mean the whole brigade, but you two regiments shall have just as much as you want, if it is in the commissary or I have to send to New York to get it, and pay for it out of my own private purse, that is if I live to see you through it! Will you take it!?" The deal was struck when a resounding "YES!" filled the air. Afterward, Patterson's bold suggestion was looked on with some wonder because he was an abstainer.

After some consultation, the brigade began marching by the left flank toward the Bridge Road with the 51st Pennsylvania in the lead. Along the way, Hartranft encountered Duryea of the 2nd Maryland, who warned him "not to go up the road"—good advice, but difficult to heed. With the 51st New York following, the Pennsylvanians moved along the road and past the barn just as Nagle's brigade had done earlier.

As they reached the fork in the road south of the bridge, the men were astonished when Hartranft suddenly led them to the right—away from the bridge—up the fenced lane that led to the Rohrbach farm, which was near the hilltop that overlooked the bridge. The 51st Pennsylvania had turned their backs to the Rebels dug in across the creek. Nevertheless, according to Bolton, "from that moment the regiment received volley after volley of grape, musketry, shot and shell, filling our faces and eyes with sand and dirt, all this time reserving our fire."

On gaining the crest of the hill, the 51st Pennsylvania turned left and jumped over the fence that lined Rohrbach's lane, entering the same depression in the field on the north side of the road where the remains of Nagle's Brigade had gone to ground. Following the Pennsylvanians, the 51st New York also filed right off the Bridge Road into Rohrbach's farm lane, but stopped at the base of the hill, perpendicular to the creek and facing upstream. The 21st Massachusetts formed a short, oblique line on the New Yorkers' left flank, parallel to the Bridge Road.

From their new positions, the twin 51sts could finally see what they were up against. The bridge crossed the creek from the open ground on the eastern bank, but terminated at a small lane on the far side. Overlooking the bridge and lane was a steep and wooded bluff that rolled higher and higher to a hill nearly half a mile to the west. The wooded slope near the bridge seemed alive with well-dug-in Confederate soldiers, and the distant hill was crowned with enemy guns that had been refining their aim on the bridge all morning as they pounded the Federal batteries and infantry with everything they had including, according to one account, chunks of railroad track.

Across the creek the Southern defenders saw the new Union troops massing and,

for the fifth time in three hours, began throwing metal as fast as they could. Situated in trees and rifle pits on the west bank of the creek were two Georgia regiments: the 2nd (south of the bridge) and the 20th (to the north). These two small regiments had covered the span with a paper-thin line all morning, often with eight feet or more separating each man from the next. Worse, the persistent Union artillery and musketry had thinned the gray line even further, and the remaining men were getting tired.

The supporting Confederate guns on the hill behind the Georgians were worn out and bloodied too, but both little groups believed they had one more good fight left in them. Colonel Henry Benning, in local command of the dwindling Confederate force, thought so too. Part of Benning's confidence stemmed from the excellent ground his troops occupied. The controversial politician-general Robert Toombs, in overall command of the Confederate forces near the creek, described the position in his official report: "From the nature of the ground on the other side, the enemy were compelled to approach mainly by the road which led up the river for nearly three hundred paces parallel with my line of battle and distant from fifty to a hundred and fifty feet, thus exposing his flank to a destructive fire the most of that distance."

The scores of dead and wounded Federals littering the far bank confirmed Toombs's words. Unfortunately for the Southerners, confidence alone could not ease Toombs and Benning's growing problems. The bridgehead's two defending regiments had less than 400 men, and their ammunition was nearly exhausted. Several hundred yards downstream, a Union regiment—the 28th Ohio of Rodman's division—was forcing its way across the creek. Further, the Federals had brought up more artillery that was, by now, pounding the wooded slope with round after round of canister. Toombs sent word to the Georgians that, should the blue troops manage to get across the bridge, they should retire to the patchwork Confederate line that was being formed in the direction of Sharpsburg. It was a little after 12 noon, and it was clear that the Yankees were going to try again.

Immediately after the 51st Pennsylvania had jumped the fence along Rohrbach's farm lane near the summit of the little hill, they were ordered to form by company into line just behind the prone ranks of Nagle's 2nd Maryland and 6th New Hampshire, whose men were still taking potshots at the Rebels from the crest of the knoll. As soon as the regiment sorted itself out, Hartranft ordered the 51st to fix bayonets, and reformed them "in close column of division just behind the crest. When the formation was complete I ordered the movement upon the bridge."

The energetic Lieutenant Hudson was with Colonel Ferrero at the base of the hill near the barn when he heard a strained cheer come from the knoll and, looking up, "saw the 51st Pennsylvania rush (not very fast—tired soldiers don't go very fast)" directly toward the bridge.

As the Pennsylvanians' column of divisions (two companies abreast) moved through the New Englanders to their front, the world seemed to explode. The remains of Nagle's brigade lining the knoll began firing with a will at the Confederate positions, and elements of Nagle's 48th Pennsylvania and 9th New Hampshire began scrambling forward on the flanks of the 51st to offer what support they could. Meanwhile, the 21st Massachusetts, back along the creek bank at the intersection of the Bridge Road and Rohrbach's lane, increased their fire, as did the 51st New York, and all the while the Federal guns on the hills behind them redoubled their efforts, throwing enormous quantities of shot over the creek.

Despite all this, the Georgians were ready and, as the 51st Pennsylvania stumbled and ran down the slope, hundreds of muskets turned a murderous fire on them. Men began falling from the careening column at what seemed like every step, and the Pennsylvanians broke into a run in a bid to get to the small stone wall that ran along the creek bank north of the bridge. The 51st New York, taking a cue from their twin regiment, jumped over the fence along Rohrbach's lane to their front and raced toward the bridge with equal determination. They finally stopped in a line behind another rail fence directly south of the crossing.

Avoiding the bodies that remained on the slope from the previous assaults, Hartranft's men finally tumbled into line behind the little wall and took a moment to catch their breath. As he ran toward the cover of the bridge abutment, Hartranft realized to his frustration that a stout rail fence, which was linked into the abutment itself, blocked the 51st's route onto the bridge—the regiment was trapped. He quickly ordered a handful of enlisted men to tear down the fence and, under tremendous fire from the Southerners, they managed to remove a few panels. Pennsylvanians tumbled through the new opening and threw themselves down on the road

John Marchetti

behind the stonework parapets— the eastern entrance of the bridge was theirs.

Simultaneously, a squad of New Yorkers made their way to the east end of the bridge as well, and both 51sts began to return the Rebels' fire with a vengeance, discharging round after round into the just-visible Confederates. It was the Georgians who began to suffer now, but they nevertheless maintained a steady fire into the paralyzed Union regiments while their own artillery continued to bark from the hill behind them. Hartranft was directing fire and shouting orders with a steadily failing voice when Hudson made a sudden appearance near the northern abutment, bearing Ferrero's impatient demand to move the 51st over the bridge immediately. Hartranft was a bit shocked—the Rebel fire was certainly slackening, but the eager Federal artillery was sending a wall of fire just over the top of the bridge, threatening to decimate anyone who tried to cross.

Realizing he had little choice but to obey, Hartranft took Hudson in tow and scurried to the southern side of the bridge to find Colonel Robert Potter of the 51st New York. Ordering Potter to follow the Pennsylvanians across, Hartranft ran back to his men and passed the word: It was time.

In a moment of electric excitement, Captain William Allebaugh of Company C found First Sgt. William Thomas nearby. Accompanied by the three color bearers and one other member of the color guard, Allebaugh and Thomas made a dash for the bridge. Rounding the corner and pushing a few feet onto the bridge itself, they planted the colors on the road and called back to the startled 51st Pennsylvania. Hartranft, waving his hat toward the colors, rasped out, "Come on, boys, for I can't halloo any longer!" and was gratified to see his veterans suddenly stand up, rush through the gap in the fence, and pour onto the bridge, stopping only to fire or to avoid the men who fell in front of them.

Allebaugh's Company C seems to have been the first onto the bridge, followed by Captain William Blair's Company G. However, the order that the companies reached the bridge really did not matter because almost immediately all was chaos, and any order or formation melted away as hundreds of men in blue tried to push through the bottleneck. Just as he was about to lead his Company A onto the eastern approach, the observant Bolton suffered a vicious hit, a Southern bullet smashing out all the teeth from his right jaw and exiting just below his left ear. Bolton stumbled to the rear and fell senseless, eventually waking up in the barn-turned-hospital from which he'd started an hour before. To add to the congestion and chaos, Colonel Potter was standing on the southern parapet, screaming like a madman and urging the men of his 51st New York to move across as well. Allebaugh's little group turned, raced across the span and, as the colors went forward, so did the 51st Pennsylvania. They were over!

General Sturgis reported, "The Stars and Stripes were planted on the opposite bank at 1 o'clock p.m., amid the most enthusiastic cheering from every part of the field from where they could be seen." At the opposite end of the bridge the quick-moving regiment turned to the right and ran north along the Bridge Road. The leading elements began to find cover and fired at the occasional target. To their surprise, the Pennsylvanians took several Confederate prisoners. Hartranft managed a peek at his watch and was amazed to discover the attack had lasted only 13 minutes; it had seemed much longer.

The Georgians had finally had enough. Nearly every one of them was now out of ammunition, and most began to fall back over the bluff as ordered; however, there were scattered groups that could not or would not leave, while others were simply too tired to run and surrendered. When they finally reformed, there were fewer than 250 men remaining of Toombs's and Benning's original 400, but even so it was a remarkably low price to pay in trade for what they had done: The little group had nearly defeated an entire Federal division and had stymied a whole corps for several critical hours.

The Pennsylvanians moved north along the Bridge Road far enough to make room for the 51st New York to file in on their left and, except for the occasional artillery round, Confederate resistance at the bridge had completely crumbled. The numbed men of the 51st Pennsylvania were nearly out of ammunition a testimony to the intense firefight at the stone wall, so, being veteran soldiers, they did the only thing that made sense to them: They stacked arms by the stream and began boiling coffee.

Like his men, Hartranft began to recover his bearings and, as he surveyed his situation, he noticed something peculiar—the two 51sts were by themselves on the western side of the creek. The Federal commanders had concentrated so hard all morning on taking the bridge that they had neglected to design a follow-up plan. Simultaneously, Ferrero, still on the eastern bank, unhappily watched as the 51sts stopped their advance and called for his Massachusetts regiments to immediately cross the bridge. As quickly as the order was delivered, the 21st and 35th Massachusetts moved toward the

HARTRANFT, WAVING HIS HAT TOWARD THE COLORS, RASPED OUT, "COME ON, BOYS, FOR I CAN'T HALLOO ANY LONGER!" AND WAS GRATIFIED TO SEE HIS VETERANS SUDDENLY STAND UP, RUSH THROUGH THE GAP IN THE FENCE, AND POUR ONTO THE BRIDGE, STOPPING ONLY TO FIRE OR TO AVOID THE MEN WHO FELL IN FRONT OF THEM.

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Two Confederates lie dead near Burnside's Bridge. They put up a stout defense for much of the day but were eventually overwhelmed.

bridge, but the bruised regiments of Nagle's brigade suddenly wanted the honor of crossing the span next, and a stampede ensued. Men from every command in Sturgis's division made for the bridge.

The nearly solid blue-clad mass pushed for the far side and, in so doing, grabbed the attention of the still-feisty Confederate artillerymen on the far hill. As flying shells began to make the crossing a very hazardous place once again, Ferrero's Massachusetts men made it to the far side and filed right, then up the bluff, pushing the Pennsylvanians farther north.

Lieutenant Colonel Bell of the 51st Pennsylvania, who had gone looking for reinforcements a few minutes earlier, was returning from the bridge after his redundant errand, and became one of the regiment's final casualties that day when a Southern canister ball grazed his skull. Rolling down the creek bank into the regiment's stacked muskets, Bell seemed only stunned at first, but he died a few hours later. This was a hard blow to the 51st, and a harder blow to Hartranft, who would mourn his dear friend for a very long time.

Over the next two hours Ferrero's brigade, which had moved north and west along the top of the bluff, waited in disbelief for other Union regiments to cross over and take up the fight. While they waited, the systematic Confederate artillery fire caused the Pennsylvanians to lose another handful of men wounded, and the regiment's beautiful, blue flag was torn to pieces when a shell passed through it.

Well over an hour after they had fired their last round, the 51st was finally relieved by the 45th Pennsylvania. The 51st had totally exhausted its ammunition and, after holding a forward position with nothing more than their bayonets, Hartranft ordered the regiment back to the Bridge Road in twos and threes.

As they struggled to reorganize themselves back at the creek, the Pennsylvanians began to reconcile the huge gaps that had rent their ranks during that maddening day. Of approximately 335 men who had marched away from the barn that morning, more than one in three were confirmed casualties: 29 were dead or dying, five of the wounded would die from their wounds before the year was out, and 91 wounded men were in the care of the surgeons. The 51st New York had been hurt too, losing 87 men during the charge. The twin regiments' casualties accounted for almost half of the Federal losses in front of the stone bridge that day.

Ferrero's brigade played a further role in the late-afternoon fighting near Sharpsburg, the unlucky 35th Massachusetts alone losing over 200 men while waiting for reinforcements that never came. As the sun set that evening, the men of the two 51sts, like future historians, would wonder what went wrong after their sacrifice at the bridge that noon. Inexplicably, it had taken nearly three hours for the generals to launch the long-awaited attack on the Rebel right and, when Burnside's attack finally came, it was too late. The Confederate army would escape the next day.

The tough boys of the 51st Pennsylvania continued their fight for three more years, and finally mustered out as a veteran volunteer regiment on July 27, 1865. Before that day, however, the Pennsylvanians would fight more hard battles in places like Fredericksburg, Vicksburg, the Wilderness, Spotsylvania Court House, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, and many others, always with their three flags flying proudly. But they would be remembered best for their wild and deadly charge on "Burnside's Bridge" that bloody September afternoon in the central Maryland countryside.

In early 1864 Hartranft was given a brigadier's star and turned over command of the 51st to the newly promoted Colonel William Bolton, who had recovered from his terrible Antietam wound.

On September 19, 1862, in the same ceremony that saw Ambrose Burnside promoted to major general, Colonel Edward Ferrero was promoted to brigadier general as a reward for his brigade's actions at Antietam. Not coincidentally, the next day the 51st Pennsylvania Volunteers finally got their whiskey. □

MELEE on St. Patrick's Day

Grim-faced and alert, Confederate cavalry patrol the Virginia countryside in this modern painting by Don Stivers.
INSET: Union General William Averell, left, and Confederate General Fitzhugh Lee, right, were friends and classmates at West Point.

Confederate cavaliers under Brigadier General Fitzhugh Lee confidently charged into their Union counterparts at Kelly's Ford, Virginia, on March 17, 1863. The swirling cavalry fight featured some of the war's most spirited and deadly mounted combat.

By Arnold Blumberg

"FIGHTING JOE" HOOKER was fighting mad when he summoned his chief of cavalry, Brig. Gen. George Stoneman, to his headquarters at Falmouth, Virginia, on February 26, 1863. "We ought to be invincible, and by God, sir we shall be!" Hooker exclaimed. "You have got to stop these disgraceful cavalry surprises. And by God, sir, if you don't do it, I give you fair notice; I will relieve the whole of you and take command of the cavalry myself."

Having lavished much care and consideration, including arms, equipment, horses, training, and better rations, on his horse soldiers since assuming command of the Army of the Potomac in late January, Hooker expected a solid return on his investment. Instead, his mounted arm had just experienced another embarrassing blow, one that not only mortified every member of the newly formed cavalry corps but led Hooker to wonder if his efforts to revive the cavalry service had been in vain.

The source of Hooker's ire was a recent cavalry foray by Confederate Brig. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee, Robert E. Lee's nephew. At Hartwood Church, Lee's troopers had captured a number of Federal troopers along with their horses and equipment. Making the episode even worse from Hooker's point of view, Federal pursuit of the Confederate raiders had rapidly degenerated into a comedy of errors that allowed the raiders to escape unharmed.

Hooker's rebuke of Stoneman notwithstanding, the consensus in the Army of the Potomac was that Brig. Gen. William Woods Averell had been the man chiefly responsible for the debacle at Hartwood Church. As head of the 2nd Division of the newly constituted Cavalry Corps, Averell's command had been tasked with monitoring that part of the Rappahannock River line penetrated by the Rebel raiders. It was his regiments—notably the 3rd and 16th Pennsylvania, 4th New York, and 1st Rhode Island—that broke and ran in the face of the unexpected Confederate attack.

In a subsequent stormy meeting with Hooker, Averell shamefacedly reported on

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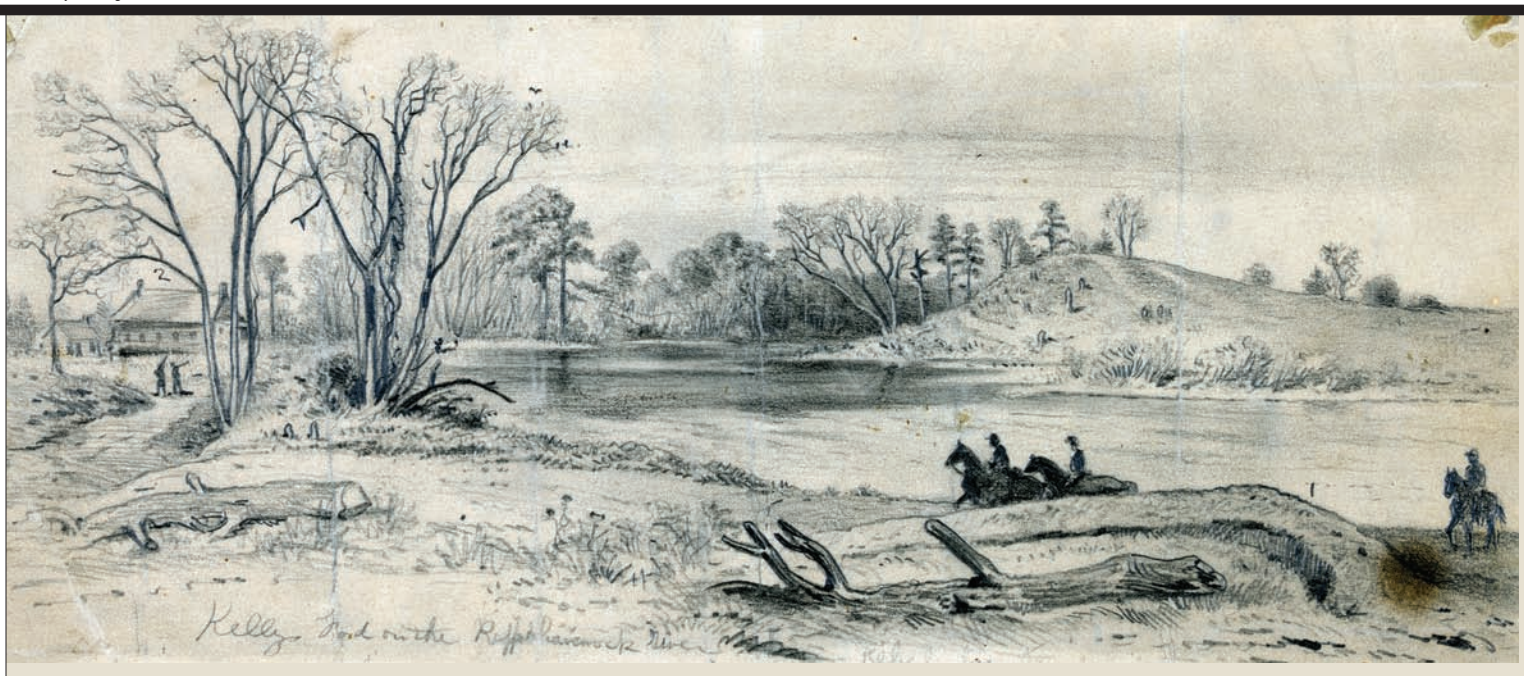


the particulars of the Hartwood episode, as well as a taunting note left behind by Fitzhugh Lee chiding Averell for lax security and suggesting helpfully that the Union brigadier leave Virginia or, failing that, leave a bag of coffee for Lee the next time he fled. Averell, his blood up, requested permission from Hooker to exact revenge for the recent enemy incursion by crossing the river and conducting his own raid. Averell was determined to even the score with his old prewar friend and West Point classmate Fitz Lee and set about planning a mission to do just that. The opportunity for the boiling mad brigadier to implement his scheme was not long in the offing.

Little more than a week after the scuffle at Hartwood, Averell and Stoneman revamped the army's picket lines to make better use of infantry support and thus decrease the possibility of another unexpected attack by Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart's cheeky cavaliers. Officers who had been captured at Hartwood Church had been recommended for dismissal, while noncommissioned prisoners had been reduced to the ranks. Beyond these measures, Averell could do little until the weather cleared. He could not operate south of the river with any confidence on half-frozen roads. The end of February found snow still covering much of the Rappahannock shore. In places where the sunlight beat down on the ground, a trooper in the 8th Illinois Volunteer Cavalry Regiment recalled that the mud was "getting deeper every day."

March brought the promise of moderate weather, but not much activity along the army's front. By midmonth, weather conditions had improved enough for Hooker to plan a retaliatory strike against Stuart. On the 12th he had Stoneman reconnoiter every Rappahannock River crossing between Falmouth and Kelly's Ford. The scouting mission turned up no Rebels along that stretch of river but did confirm that Fitzhugh Lee's brigade was camped only 12 miles west of Kelly's Ford, near Culpeper Court House. Brig. Gen. Wade Hampton's horse brigade was thought to be encamped in the same area. Lee appeared to have copied the same mistake Averell had made the month before by setting up a very thin picket line between his camp and the river.

This was all the information Hooker needed. On March 14, he instructed Averell to take 3,000 troopers and a battery of six artillery pieces and destroy "the cavalry forces of the enemy reported to be in the vicinity of Culpeper Court House." The army commander wanted to test the reaction of his opponent to a Federal crossing of the river. He would use Averell's raid as sort of a dress rehearsal for his own much anticipated spring offensive.

Hooker informed Averell that although Lee's main body lay at Culpeper Court House, a detachment of between 250 and 1,000 Rebel cavalry, with at least one piece of artillery, was currently active north of the Rappahannock near the town of Manassas. This piece of intelligence would have a significant impact on the forthcoming mission. Averell intended to cross south of the Rappahannock River at Kelly's Ford. He knew the terrain and that the Kelly's Ford Road provided the shortest path to the enemy bivouac near Culpeper Court House. He would cross the river there. Normally placid, the water at Kelly's Ford that March was running unusually fast and deep due to winter rains and melting snow, allowing only one man on horseback to navigate it at a time.

Anticipating a close-quarters fight, Averell ordered his men to sharpen their sabers. He assured his command that they would be victorious in the coming battle. Concerned about the Confederate contingent reported to be north of the river and to his rear near Manassas, he asked Hooker to send a cavalry regiment to Catlett's Station to cover the Rappahannock fords and picket toward the town of Warrenton. The army commander flatly refused to honor his request, so Averell detached 900 men from the 1st Massachusetts and 4th Pennsylvania Cavalry Regiments to guard against the sup-

posed enemy threat.

Early on the morning of March 16, after drawing one day's forage for the horses and four days rations for the men, the 2,100-man raiding party rode out of camp at Hartwood Church and advanced 20 miles to Morrisville, reaching the hamlet after dark. The column was composed of Colonel Napoleon Duffie's 1st Brigade, numbering 775 troopers; Colonel John B. McIntosh's 2nd Brigade of 565 men; Captain Marcus A. Reno's Reserve Brigade totaling 760 members, and the 6th New York Light Independent Artillery Battery sporting six 3-inch Ordnance Rifles under Lieutenant George Browne, Jr.

At 1 AM on the 17th, the men were roused from their rest and ordered to move out. As the Federals traveled across the countryside, Averell covered his advance with a heavy screen of pickets and sent small parties ahead to observe the roads and fords to mask his approach to Kelly's Ford. The head of the Union column reached Kelly's Ford at 8 AM. It was Saint Patrick's Day, and the Union horsemen under Averell intended to celebrate the occasion in high style.

Despite Averell's precautions during his move to Morrisville, the Confederates knew he was coming. The day before, Robert E. Lee had telegraphed his nephew that "a large body of cavalry has left the Federal army, and is marching up the Rappahannock." By 6 PM that same day Fitz Lee's scouts had located Averell's men near Morrisville. However, Lee still did not know whether the enemy intended to cross at Kelly's Ford or at Rappahannock Station, four miles farther up the river. Belatedly divining the enemy's goal, Lee moved to reinforce his 20-man picket party at Kelly's Ford with 40 more sharpshooters, but only 11 of the newcomers had reached the ford by daylight. In addition, Lee ordered all the regiments of his brigade to send sharpshooters down the road leading from Brandy Station to Kelly's Ford.

At Kelly's Ford, the Confederates nervously awaited the Yankees. Meanwhile, they constructed an abatis on the south side bank of the ford and manned rifle pits that had been dug along the shore over the winter. The defenders also occupied two houses that overlooked the ford, as well as a nearby millrace. As Averell neared, the Southerners had only 30 men defending the ford with another 40 troopers five miles to the west where the Orange & Alexandria Railroad and the road to Kelly's Ford split. Captain James Breckinridge of the 2nd Virginia Cavalry was in charge of the defense.

At 8 AM Averell's blue column came within sight of Kelly's Ford, Duffie's brigade leading the way. In advance of the column were 100 men from the 4th New York and 5th U.S. Cavalry Regiments whose task was to dash across the ford and capture the Southern pickets on the other side. Covering this move with small-arms fire would be two dismounted squadrons of the 4th New York. The advance guard splashed into the water, which was so high it washed over the backs of their horses, but they were driven back by the fire of the well-protected Confederate sharpshooters on the southern shore. Two more attempts were also repulsed. A member of the 6th Ohio Cavalry Regiment reported, "The [enemy] firing was very sharp and incessant and it seemed as though our men could never cross in the face of that deadly fire."

A frustrated Averell, seeking to break the deadlock at the ford, sent a small body of men downstream a quarter of a mile to flank the defenders, but the deep water and steep riverbanks foiled the attempt. After 30 minutes of failing to get his men across the river, Averell opted for a more direct way to break the enemy resistance and get his men across the ford. He ordered his chief of staff, Major Samuel Chamberlain of the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry, to force a passage. The major formed the men of the 4th New York into a column of fours and led them across the Rappahannock, where they immediately ran afoul of the abatis and were peppered by the well-aimed fire of the Confederates in their rifle pits. Southern bullets felled Chamberlain's horse and wounded the major in the face. Seeing their leader fall into the water, the men of the 4th New York beat a hasty retreat back to the northern bank of the river.

Wounded and exposed to enemy fire, Chamberlain nevertheless called for volunteers with axes to wade the river and dismantle the abatis. Twenty troopers from

Alamy

Incorrectly depicted as infantry in this period engraving, it was in fact Union cavalry that forced a crossing of the Rappahannock at Kelly's Ford. The 1st Rhode Island and 6th Ohio Cavalry spearheaded the crossing, led by Lieutenant Simeon A. Brown. OPPOSITE: Normally placid Kelly's Ford on the Rappahannock River, as sketched by battlefield artist Edwin Forbes in 1864, was running unusually fast and deep in March 1863 due to heavy winter rains and melting snow.

the 16th Pennsylvania Cavalry came forward and, under cover of friendly carbine fire, went to work to destroy the wooden impediment. With Chamberlain leading the way, men from the 4th New York once more plunged into the water and made for the other side but once again were driven back by heavy Confederate rifle fire.

As more Federals dismounted to add covering fire for the axe men working at the abatis, Chamberlain gathered men of the 1st Rhode Island Cavalry and directed Lieutenant Simeon A. Brown to "either cross [the river] or not return." Followed by Chamberlain, the balance of the 1st Rhode Island and the 6th Ohio under Brown sped toward the ford and into a torrent of renewed enemy gunfire. The hail of bullets caused the Rhode Islanders to break and run at the water's edge, while Chamberlain was wounded a second time, this time in the left cheek. His horse was mortally wounded as its rider fell to the earth. Dragged to the north bank by some of the axe-wielding pioneers, a frustrated Chamberlain first emptied his revolver at the fleeing Rhode Islanders, then turned his gun on the Confederates.

The Rhode Island men soon rallied, and with the 6th Ohio and the pioneers in tow, galloped into the frigid river. Firing their handguns as they rode, the soldiers made it across the Rappahannock and charged at the millrace, causing the Confederate defenders to flee. After a few daring attacks on the Rebel rifle pits, combined with the Southerners running out of ammunition, the Federals took some of the vulnerable places. Seeing no hope for a further defense, Breckinridge escaped. Meanwhile, Lieutenant William A. Moss, commanding Confederate sharpshooters outside the rifle pits, kept up a severe fire on the enemy. However, this did not stop Brown, who was still mounted, from reaching the shore and clearing out some of the rifle pits still held by the Confederates. Brown's actions not only secured a Union beachhead on the south bank of the ford but also netted him a well-deserved promotion to captain after the battle.

Soon the remainder of the Rhode Islanders crossed the river and broke the Confederate resistance at the ford, capturing 25 of the defenders as they tried to retreat. Over the next two hours the abatis and the road over Kelly's Ford were cleared of obstacles, allowing Averell's division to finally cross the river.

While giving his men time to water their horses and take a short breather, Averell rode ahead to scout the terrain beyond Kelly's Ford. He spotted an open plain three-quarters of a mile up the road toward Culpeper Court House near the Wheatley Farm and surmised that it would be there that any future battle with Fitz Lee would occur. The brigadier formed his regiments and at 10:15 AM moved forward, leaving one squadron to guard Kelly's Ford. The blue-clad horsemen rode through the little settlement of Kellysville, consisting of a gristmill and six houses, and followed the road northwest toward the Orange & Alexandria Railroad. Duffie's men led the way with the 6th Ohio deployed as skirmishers with the 4th New York and 1st Rhode Island following as their support. The column moved slowly and cautiously with scouts investigating every piece of wood they came to. McIntosh formed a line of battle along the woods and along a stone wall, while Reno's regulars stayed in reserve. All in all it was a cautious advance and missed any opportunity to catch Lee's regiments isolated and possibly beat them in detail.

As noon approached, Confederate skirmishers in the nearby woods drove back their Union counterparts. In response, Brown brought up an artillery section and shelled the woods. The shelling drove out the enemy from the timber line, allowing Averell's command to push through the

ABOVE: Officers and men of Company K, 1st U.S. Cavalry. The reserve regiment helped beat back Confederate counterattacks at Kelly's Ford. BELOW: Men of Companies C and D, 1st Massachusetts Cavalry, rest in camp after guarding the Union rear at Catlett's Station.

Both: Library of Congress

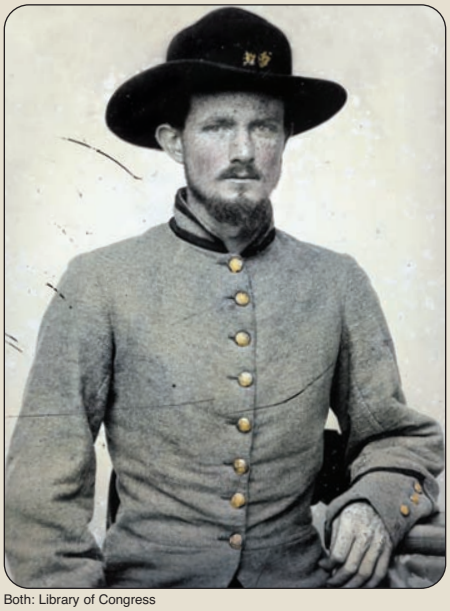
wood and form a battle line in anticipation of an enemy attack. As the Federals cautiously moved forward, they spied Lee's brigade drawn up for battle on the far side of a wide field.

At 7:30 AM, Lee, still at Culpeper, heard that Union cavalry was trying to cross the Rappahannock River at Kelly's Ford. Lee at once mounted his command, 800 men strong, and trotted off to engage his old friend Averell. His brigade was composed of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Virginia Volunteer Cavalry Regiments, supported by a four-gun horse artillery battery under Captain James Breathed. These Virginians, who had humiliated Averell at Hartwood Church, rode to Dean's Shop, a road junction about 1½ miles from Kelly's Ford and three miles from Brandy Station, a stop on the Orange & Alexandria Railroad. After sending his supply wagons and disabled mounts back to Rapidan Station, Lee eagerly awaited Averell's arrival.

Following in Lee's wake was Jeb Stuart. The Southern cavalry leader, who had gone to Culpeper to preside over court marital proceedings for one of his officers, heard the firing coming from the Federals' attempts to cross Kelly's Ford. With Stuart rode Major John Pelham, his 24-year-old chief of horse artillery. In his report concerning the battle, Stuart wrote later that "having approved of Brigadier General Fitzhugh Lee's plans [for the conduct of the battle], I determined not to interfere with his command of his brigade as long as it was commanded entirely to my satisfaction." Both Stuart and Fitz Lee were supremely confident that they would soon have the Yankees on the run back across the Rappahannock.

As Lee surveyed the Federal line, his boss joined him. Lee told Stuart, "We are in a tight place" and then offered to turn the conduct of the pending fight over to Stuart. Stuart would have none of it, laughing, "No you don't. I came as a volunteer and brought all the reinforcements I could find. Fitz, this is your fight. Command and I obey." Lee replied: "I think there are only a few platoons in the woods yonder. Hadn't we better take the bulge on them at once?" Stuart agreed that Lee should commence the attack.

Two stalwart Virginians serving in Brig. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry brigade at Kelly's Ford were Captain George Hackworth, above, of the 1st Virginia, and Private Peter Bird of the 2nd Virginia.



Both: Library of Congress

While waiting for Averell to appear and believing he faced only a weak advance guard, Lee had deployed a dismounted squadron near the Wheatley Farm. It was from these men that Averell's troopers received a volley of fire as the latter emerged from a stand of trees a mile from Kelly's Ford. In response, Averell formed a line of dismounted men from the 4th New York on the north side of the road and a similar line of men made up of the 4th Pennsylvania Cavalry on the south side of the road. After two artillery pieces were placed in between the two Union regiments, he ordered the whole force to move to the edge of the wood and open fire.

It took a great deal of cursing and threats by officers to get the Federal line moving as ordered. As soon as the Yanks stepped out, Averell spotted possible trouble on his right flank. In his after action report on the battle, he recalled that to forestall the threat to the northern end of his line his men had to take possession of the Wheatley farmhouse and outbuildings before their opponents could do so. McIntosh sent a force of dismounted troopers from the 16th Pennsylvania and a section of artillery to secure the structures. Passing the buildings, McIntosh advanced beyond his right into the open fields to his front. With Colonel J. Irvin Gregg's Keystone State men leading the way, the Federals attacked the Southern left. The 4th New York and 4th Pennsylvania soldiers advanced with a cheer against an enemy-defended stone wall on the Wheatley property, while 100 Federals from Gregg's command crashed through the woods to hit the wall from the rear. The Confederates were soon driven from the wall, replaced by the victorious 4th New Yorkers and 4th Pennsylvanians.

Alarmed by the turn of events, Lee counterattacked with his entire brigade. After tearing down a rail fence to their front, the 3rd Virginia Regiment, hoping to flank the enemy, charged the stone wall in columns of four. Riding into a hail of blistering Union fire, the Virginians veered to their left, showing their flank to the enemy while they sought to find an opening in the wall. All the while they fired their pistols at the well-protected bluecoats. Finding no way to cross or breach the wall, the riders headed for the Wheatley farmhouse in hopes of flanking the Yankees out of their position there.

Sergeant Robert S. Hudgins of the 3rd Virginia remembered that during this charge "we gave them the old Rebel Yell, we hit them and went through their advance guard nearly up to the Stevensburg Road." Colonel Thomas L. Rosser, leading

the 5th Virginia Cavalry, soon joined the 3rd Virginia in the effort to turn the enemy right near the Wheatley house. If they succeeded, Averell's line of retreat to Kelly's Ford would be cut. However, the 100 men McIntosh had posted earlier to safeguard the Federal right poured such a devastating carbine fire into the approaching 3rd and 5th Virginia that the two units had to retreat. Following up on their opponents' retirement, the Pennsylvanians went forward to a fence and poured hot fire into the Confederate flank. Still full of fight despite their recent reverse, the two Confederate regiments returned to attack the Union center but were quickly repulsed. A member of the 16th Pennsylvania described the latest Rebel charge as "a desperate one, [the enemy] riding up to the muzzles of our carbines, and attempting to force their way through the lane. All to no avail."

During the first charge, Pelham impulsively joined in the attack. He had been helping position and fire Breathed's artillery pieces before he dashed forward with the charging 3rd Virginia. Saber drawn, Pelham reached the stone wall, rose in his stirrups, turned his head toward the troopers following him and cried, "Forward! Let's get them!" At that moment a Union artillery shell exploded on the wall, spraying lethal shrapnel. A chunk of metal the size of a cherry entered the back of the young artillerist's skull, mortally wounding him. One of the South's best artillery officers would soon be dead.

As the 3rd and 5th Virginia recoiled from the failed attack, Averell, uncertain of how large an enemy force might lie ahead of him, allowed the Virginians to escape. A determined push against the shaken units by McIntosh might have caused them to quit the battlefield and clinched a singular Union victory at Kelly's Ford. But caution rode with Averell that day, and it meant that the two Rebel regiments still posed a danger to the Union force.

As McIntosh regrouped, Duffie formed the 1st Rhode Island, 4th Pennsylvania, and 6th Ohio in front of the left of the Federal line and ordered a mounted charge. He did this without first seeking permission to do so from his division commander. He kept the 4th New York in reserve. As Duffie's men took off, Averell, taken aback by Duffie's unauthorized, bold initiative, instructed Reno to advance three of his squadrons to support Duffie's attack, while the balance of the reserve brigade waited for orders to pitch into the fray.

As Duffie's men rolled forward, led by the colonel, two squadrons of the 5th U.S. Cavalry joined the charge. Almost at the same instant, McIntosh's left flank units attacked. Lee led the 1st, 2nd, and 4th Virginia to meet Duffie's assault. Seeing Lee's men coming out of the woods, Duffie halted his movement. When the Confederate troopers came within 100 yards of the Federal line, the 1st Rhode Island plunged ahead to meet the Rebels in the open field. The 6th Ohio and two squadrons of the 4th Pennsylvania followed on the right, while two squadrons of the 5th U.S. trailed on the Union left, supporting the Rhode Islanders.

The command "Charge!" rang out on both sides, and as one 6th Ohio trooper recounted, "It was like the coming together of two mighty trains at full speed." What followed was a clash of cold steel, firing of pistols, and the shouts of hundreds of combatants intermingled with explosions of artillery shells. Saber cuts and gunshots drew blood and toppled men and horses to the ground. As the melee continued, the 3rd Pennsylvania took up positions to the west of the Wheatley farm buildings on the Union right flank where the 3rd and 5th Virginia had once stood. Fearing the move would result in his left being turned, Lee ordered his outnumbered force to disengage from Duffie and retreat to the right. The discomforted Rebels were hotly pursued by the 1st Rhode Island, which swept up some Confederate prisoners. But the boys from the Ocean State rode too far ahead and were struck in turn by a fresh Southern squadron, losing two officers and 18 enlisted men in the running fight.

Leaving the field, Lee withdrew a mile to the west to rally his men and forge a new battle line. He formed a new defensive position along Carter's Run, placing mounted skirmishers in his front and bringing up Breathed's guns and placing them behind his main line. Lee's new site was a strong one, 600 yards of flat ground bordered on both sides by woods. The road to Kelly's Ford ran through the center of the Confederate line and was lined on both sides by a fence. At right angles to the road a plank fence intersected the center of the plateau.

For a half hour Averell regrouped his men and then went forward toward the new Confederate position. Discovering that the ground to the left of the road was too marshy for mounted action, he placed his left on the highway and spread his right to the edge of the woods. Due to a shortage of ammunition, two of his artillery pieces were sent back to Kelly's Ford, leaving him with only four cannons. The Federal force finally advanced and found their Southern antagonists glaring at them over 600 yards of clear, level ground sloping gently down to the banks of Carter's Run.

Although the Federals had a large numerical advantage, Averell did not intend to attack Lee's new position. Undaunted by the odds against him or the drubbing he had already received from his opponents earlier in the day, Lee elected to once more take the fight to the enemy. The Confederate commander's decision was probably reinforced by the fact that if his attack failed Averell's frequently displayed caution would no doubt prevent him from exploiting any Confederate failure with a strong Union counterattack.

Lee sent the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Virginia Cavalry at the center of the Union line, while the 2nd and 4th Virginia struck Averell's left. After crossing Carter's Run, the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Virginia bore down on three squadrons of the 3rd Pennsylvania posted on either side of a small stand of trees. Seeing the threat, Averell brought up the 1st U.S. Cavalry and placed it 100 yards to the left of the Pennsylvanians. The Union troopers deployed in a double line, the first line with carbines at the ready, the second rank eager to use their sabers.

As the Confederates slogged through the muddy ground, their left was exposed to small-arms fire delivered by the 16th Penn-

Harper's Weekly

Harper's Weekly **published this dramatic drawing of the cavalry fight at Kelly's Ford, referring to the battle as the war's "first stand-up cavalry [battle] on a large scale." The scrap gave the embattled Union troopers a much needed jolt of energy and confidence.**

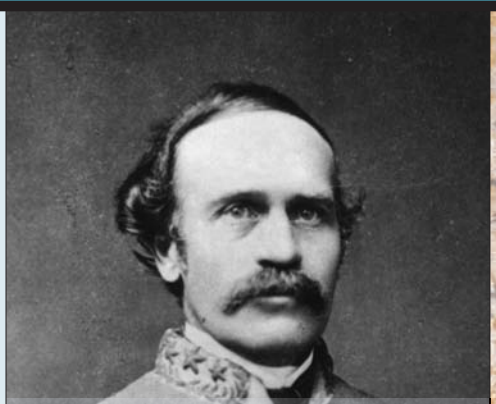
sylvania. The Confederate advance was slowed by the muddy terrain, and their close-ordered formations quickly became ragged and fragmented. Colonel William R. Carter's 3rd Virginia was hit by enemy artillery fire the minute it started its advance toward the Yankee position. After they had passed through the enemy's lines, the Federal gunners abandoned their battery. The 3rd Virginia then attempted to capture the enemy guns but was prevented from doing so by a double fence and determined Union sharpshooters. Under heavy fire, the unsupported 3rd Virginia retreated to Carter's Run.

As the 3rd Virginia retired under enemy fire, its sister regiments, the 1st and 5th Virginia, came within 25 yards of the position held by the 3rd Pennsylvania Cavalry. As the Rebel horsemen approached in three assault columns, the troopers from the Keystone State poured lethal volleys into them. The Southerners retreated in small groups but then turned to charge again. The time was favorable for a Federal counterstroke before the retreating Virginia units could rally and charge once more. After an unaccountable delay, the 3rd Pennsylvania was ordered to charge, and the Confederates were pushed back to where their artillery battery was posted.

While events took place on the Federal right, the 2nd and 4th Virginia tried to turn the enemy's left flank. Under intense artillery fire and having to knock down a fence that stood in the way, the gray-clad troopers approached the Federal line only to veer to the left and right due to the heavy cannon fire they were receiving. On the Union left, the 1st Rhode Island, parts of the 1st and 5th U.S., and the 6th Ohio crashed into the Virginians. The toll of dead and wounded was great, and the Confederates, outnumbered, broke and ran for Carter's Run. Reno joined the pursuit of the enemy but halted at the creek where Lee's attack had begun and was soon joined by the rest of the Federal division.

Concerned about the reported presence of Rebel infantry, low ammunition, and used-up horses, Averell ordered a retreat to Kelly's Ford. Reno's regulars covered the retrograde movement, which was shadowed by small bodies of Confederates with an occasional artillery shell fired at the withdrawing bluecoats. The weary Federals reached Morrisville at 11 AM. By March 18 the division was back at its camp at Hartwood Church.

As they departed Kelly's Ford, Averell's troops were in high spirts. They had won in a convincing fashion in what the *New York Times* termed "the First Real Cavalry Fight of the War." No longer would the Union cavalry feel inferior, overmatched, and on the defensive when confronting their Confederate counterpart. One Federal officer who took part in the fight wrote, "We are more than ever sure that on a fair field the Rebel Cavalry can't stand [up to] us." In this sense, the Saint Patrick Day's victory, incomplete as it was, exerted a more powerful and longer lasting impact on the Eastern cavalry than many later clear-cut victories. Sometimes perceptions matter more than reality. □



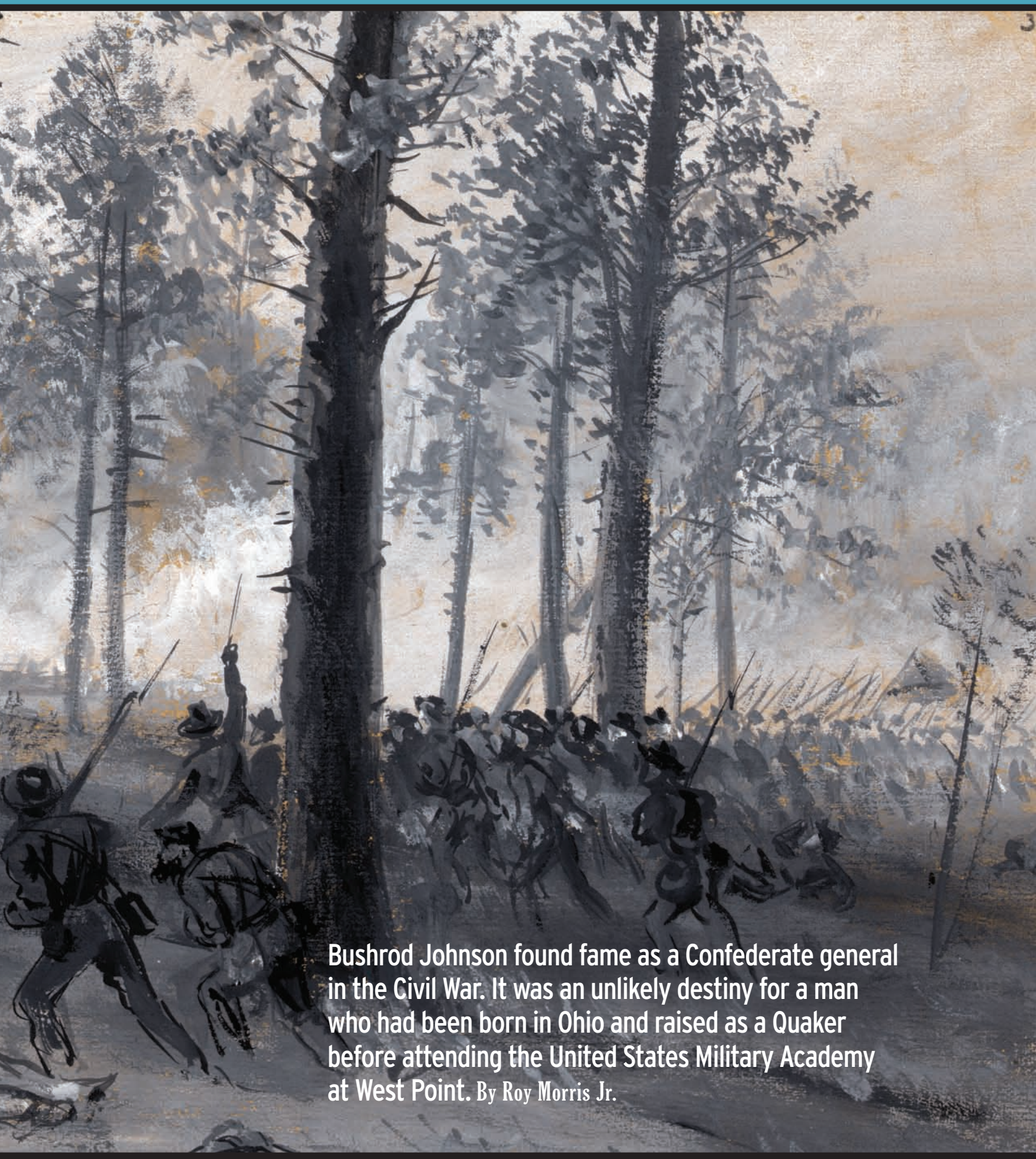
Yankee Quaker, Confederate General

OF ALL THE UNLIKELY HEROES of the Civil War, none was more unlikely than Bushrod Johnson, Ohio-born Quaker turned Confederate general. A quiet, self-effacing man, it was Johnson's destiny to lead one of the most spectacular charges in American history at the Battle of Chickamauga, a charge that very nearly altered the course of the war. Yet the day before Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House, Lee would publicly humiliate Johnson and remove him from command for a momentary lapse of courage. It was a characteristic ending for Johnson, who more than most men was his own worst enemy—unless, as it sometimes seemed, fate itself was his ultimate foe.

Johnson was born on October 7, 1817, on a small family farm in Belmont County, Ohio. His parents, Noah and Rachel Spencer Johnson, were Quakers, part of a large community of Friends who had immigrated to Ohio in the early 1800s from the slaveholding states of the Upper South. The Quakers were morally

Onrushing Confederates charge Union positions at Chickamauga. The Sunday morning breakthrough was the apex of the Southern war effort in the western theater. TOP LEFT: Confederate General Bushrod Johnson.

All images: Library of Congress



Bushrod Johnson found fame as a Confederate general in the Civil War. It was an unlikely destiny for a man who had been born in Ohio and raised as a Quaker before attending the United States Military Academy at West Point. By Roy Morris Jr.

opposed to slavery, and they were just as adamantly opposed to war, paying a special government tax to avoid military service. Nevertheless, at the age of 17 Johnson decided to seek appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point. He had been living for the previous two years with his brother Nathan's family in the village of Belmont and teaching school in nearby Barnesville. But teaching, then as now, was a poorly paid profession, and Johnson had no desire to become a farmer like his father or a doctor like his brother. A military career, with free education, travel, and the promise of adventure, seemed like the perfect choice for an ambitious young man with little money and few connections. The fact that he had been raised a Quaker was merely an inconvenience for Johnson—the first of many times he would rebel against his basic nature.

ABOVE: American soldiers advance at great cost during the 1847 Mexican War battle at Vera Cruz. Johnson missed most of the fighting while serving as assistant commissary for General Winfield Scott's amphibious army. OPPOSITE: Lindsey Hall, then part of the University of Nashville, was on the campus of the Western Military Institute, where Johnson served as superintendent before the war.

Despite Nathan Johnson's strong objections, Bushrod somehow managed to secure the coveted appointment, entering West Point in the summer of 1836 as part of the famous Class of 1840. Among his classmates were a red-haired fellow Ohioan named William Tecumseh Sherman and a stolid old-line Virginian named George Henry Thomas. Like many of their fellow cadets, the trio would face a difficult decision when the time came to choose sides in their country's bitter civil war.

At West Point, Johnson proved to be an indifferent cadet, reflecting perhaps his ambivalence as a Quaker studying to become a soldier. His class standing dropped steadily during his four years at the academy, and he drew numerous citations for such minor infractions as loitering, keeping an untidy room, and swearing. Still, Johnson was consistently promoted, rising from cadet corporal to sergeant and finally to captain. Among the lower classmen serving under him were several future generals destined to play important roles in his life: James Longstreet, William Rosecrans, Richard Anderson, and Ulysses S. Grant. Johnson graduated from West Point on time in 1840, ranked 23rd in a class of 42. His highest marks were in infantry training, his lowest in ethics. It was an accurate, if unhappy, forecast of his future career.

Johnson entered the U.S. Army as a second lieutenant in the 3rd Infantry Regiment, Andrew Jackson's old command. From the start he demonstrated a dubious ability to obtain more than the usual amount of leaves, a proclivity that adversely affected both his chances for promotion and his staff assignments. At Fort Stansbury, Florida, Johnson served as assistant commissary of subsistence, a dreary paper-shuffling job that offered no chance for quick advancement or adventures. Later, at the comparatively posh Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis, he remained in the background, taking no part in the post's active social life, although fellow lieutenants Longstreet and Grant both courted their future wives while serving at the base.

In 1845, Johnson traveled to Texas as part of Brig. Gen. Zachary Taylor's Army of Occupation. In the ensuing war with Mexico, Johnson saw action at the Battles of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, and Monterrey, where the 3rd Infantry was conspicuous in the savage street fighting. But amid the welter of young officers winning plaudits and promotions, Johnson's name was conspicuously missing. Mainly this was due to his less-than-sterling attendance record: in the first nine months of 1846, while his regiment was actively engaged in battle, Johnson missed nearly seven months of duty with a dubious string of minor physical ailments, including a persistent case of swamp fever. He fought well enough when he was present, but others had been, and continued to be, present from the start.

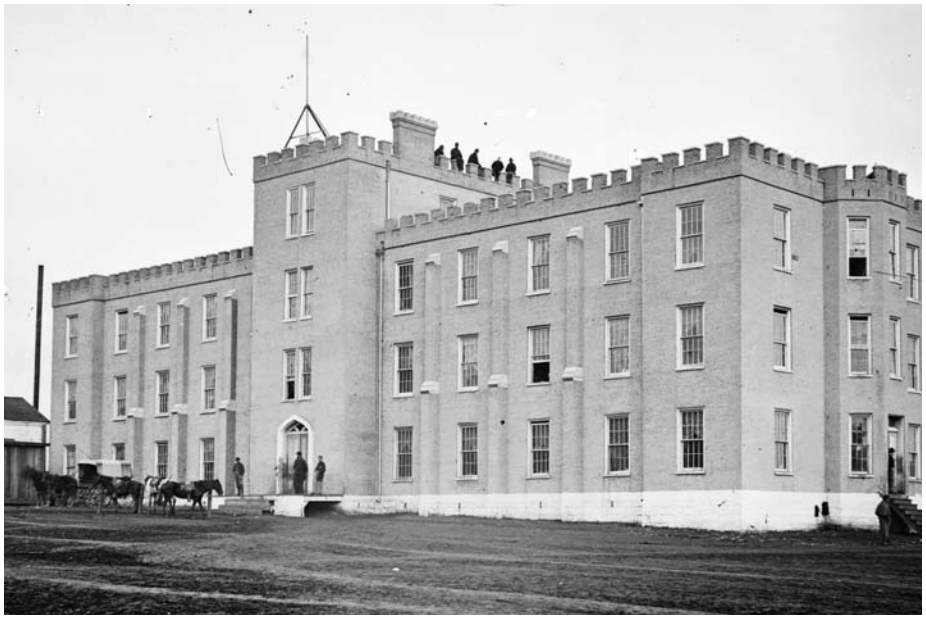
In March 1847, Johnson took part in General Winfield Scott's famous amphibious landing at Vera Cruz. There, as the army settled into a lengthy siege of the Mexican bastion, Johnson again was appointed assistant commissary, a particularly thankless job under the prevailing circumstances. Overworked and underpaid, Johnson was responsible for the unloading, storing, and distribution of all food supplies to the 13,000-man army. After the surrender of Vera Cruz he was given the additional burden of issuing rations to thousands of starving Mexicans within the captured city, ominously known as the City of the Dead for its peri-

odic outbreaks of yellow fever. Johnson himself contracted the usually fatal illness and nearly died that spring.

Weakened by his near-fatal bout of yellow fever, Johnson was easy prey for unscrupulous traders who approached him about assisting them in procuring and transporting supplies into the stricken city. On July 1, 1846, he wrote an ill-advised letter to his immediate superior in New Orleans, Major Washington Seawell of Virginia, promising him a healthy cut of the profits in return for shipments of flour, soap, and candles. Johnson compounded his grievous error of judgment by openly suggesting that the supplies be disguised as government shipments. Seawell, who scarcely knew Johnson, immediately sent a copy of the letter to the adjutant general in Washington, who in turn recommended that Johnson face a military court of inquiry.

Johnson hastened to the capital to plead his case, such as it was. In a letter to President James K. Polk, he admitted approaching Seawell with the offer but attributed it to his weakened physical condition and the burdens of his job as commissary. "It is the aggregate of a man's acts throughout the court of a number of years, and not a single fault totally disconnected with any precedence that indicates the character," he wrote to the president. The punctilious Polk was unconvinced. In recognition of Johnson's seven years of service, however, he was permitted to resign rather than face a public court martial.

Suddenly out of work at the age of 30, his military career in shambles, Johnson fell back on the only other profession he had known, that of teaching. Capitalizing on his West Point education, he secured a post on the staff of the Western Military Institute in Georgetown, Kentucky. WMI was one of many military academies in the prewar South, and Johnson, as a former army officer with actual combat experience, got along well with the faculty and cadets. By 1850 he had become school superintendent, and two years later he married 24-year-old Mary Hatch of nearby Drennon Springs. The birth of their son, Charley, in 1854 was tinged with sorrow. Charley was born sickly and mentally impaired.



In 1855 the financially challenged WMI relocated to Tennessee, where it became affiliated with the University of Nashville. Once in the Volunteer State capital, the school began to thrive. Johnson, for the first time in his life, achieved a measure of financial success. But his world darkened again three years later when Mary died unexpectedly of fever, leaving her grief-stricken husband alone to care for their handicapped son. Johnson purchased a double burial plot in Nashville's Old City Cemetery, and there he buried his wife of six years.

WMI continued to prosper during the last years of the decade, even as the country moved ever closer to civil war. In 1859 the graduating class presented "Old Bush" with an engraved sword in appreciation of his work as school superintendent. One of the graduating cadets, Smyrna, Tennessee, native Sam Davis, would be hanged as a Confederate spy four years later in Pulaski, mere miles from his boyhood home.

The school shut down for good in the spring of 1861, soon after the firing at Fort Sumter ushered in the Civil War. In May, Johnson was commissioned a major in the state's provisional army. Prior to assuming his post, he took Charley to stay with relatives in Indiana. In the not unlikely event of his own death, Johnson sought to insure his son's future by purchasing land in Illinois and Kansas and deeding the property to Charley. Then, as the current saying had it, he "went south." Throughout the course of the war, Charley was encouraged by his Hoosier relatives to believe that his father was fighting to preserve the Union.

Johnson's reasons for choosing the Southern cause were pragmatic rather than ideological. At the outset of the war he was a relatively wealthy man, respected as an educator by Nashville's leading families. Beyond that, the shadow of his forced resignation from the U.S. Army precluded any hope of reenlisting in the North. Unlike his former classmates Grant and Sherman, who had resigned to enter private business (although Grant faced some ugly rumors of his own about drunken behavior), Johnson could not have reclaimed his former commission; his Mexican fiasco was still on file in Washington.

Instead, in February 1862, as a newly commissioned Confederate brigadier general, Johnson traveled to Fort Donelson, Tennessee. There he was thrust into a tragicomic affair involving the precipitate surrender of the fort by his panicky superiors, Brig. Gens. John B. Floyd and Gideon Pillow. As the fort was being surrounded by Union forces, Johnson led a spirited counterattack. The attack seemed on the verge of success when Floyd and Pillow—with-

out bothering to notify Johnson—suddenly ordered his men to fall back. Fiery cavalry Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest urged Johnson to renew the assault. But Johnson, now understandably perplexed, hesitated to overrule his commanders. That hesitation sealed the garrison's doom.

That night Johnson was absent from a conference between Floyd, Pillow, and Brig. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner, where it was decided to surrender the fort. First Floyd, then Pillow, declined to accept responsibility for the act, and it fell to Buckner to direct the Confederate surrender. The next morning Johnson was sent to escort Union negotiators, including Brig. Gen. Lew Wallace, later author of the bestselling novel *Ben-Hur,* to Confederate headquarters. Then, while Buckner was forced to accept humiliating unconditional surrender terms from his good friend Grant, Johnson carefully faded into the background. For three days he kept out of sight while Buckner and the Union officers arranged for the transportation of 12,000 Confederate POWs to Northern prison camps. While Buckner, Grant, and their staffs were dining together at Buckner's headquarters, Johnson carefully avoided all contact with Grant or other Union officers who might have recognized him from their old Mexican War days. After watching his men loaded onto steamboats for the long trip north to prison, Johnson concluded (with a fair degree of self-interest) "that it was unlikely that I could be of any more service to them." Then, in the company of a young captain who had been one of his students at WMI, Johnson casually walked into the woods and escaped.

Victorious Union troops assault Fort Donelson in northwestern Tennessee in February 1862. Johnson avoided the mass surrender of Confederate forces there by sneaking away unnoticed through the woods.

Rejoining the army on its retreat from Nashville, Johnson commanded a brigade at the Battle of Shiloh in April 1862. On the first day of fighting, he was thrown to the ground and knocked unconscious by a shell that exploded directly beneath him, killing his horse. At first it was feared that Johnson was mortally wounded, but he recovered in time to take part in General Braxton Bragg's ill-fated invasion of Kentucky later that year. At the Battle of Perryville in October, Johnson's brigade led the assault on the Union center near the H.P. Bottom House alongside Doctor's Creek. Again Johnson performed courageously, having five horses shot from under him, but misfortune again bedeviled his efforts. At the very point of victory, his brigade ran out of ammunition, and Brig. Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne's Arkansas troops rushed into the gap and won the lion's share of the day's honors instead. For his part in the battle, Cleburne was promoted to major general—neither the first nor the last time that Johnson would be passed over for promotion by the Confederate brass.

At the Battle of Stones River two months later, Johnson's brigade again behaved admirably, suffering heavy casualties in the fierce winter fighting. In keeping with his usual misfortune, Johnson soon became embroiled in a controversy with fellow general St. John R. Liddell over which man's brigade had overrun an important Union position and killed Ohio general Joshua Sill. Johnson angrily demanded that the case be submitted to the Confederate secretary of war; he wanted "justice done to those who have a right to expect it at my hand." The matter was left in the hands of division commander Cleburne, who wisely sidestepped the issue by simply stating in his report that both generals were "contending for the honor" of having killed Sill and captured his position.

As at Perryville, the Confederates retreated after the Battle of Stones River, leaving the Federals the technical victors. Johnson continued to command a brigade under Bragg during the army's withdrawal from Middle Tennessee in the spring and summer of 1863. In September he was given command of a division as Bragg began laying a trap for Union Maj. Gen. William Rosecrans—another of Johnson's old classmates—in the North Georgia woods below Chattanooga. On the first day of the Battle of Chickamauga, September 19, Johnson's men took part in bloody but indecisive fighting. That night his old associate from the peacetime army, Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, arrived by train from Virginia to assume command of Bragg's left wing, which included Johnson's division.

ABOVE: The log cabin known as the Brotherton House was a local landmark that served as the rallying point for Johnson's men at Chickamauga. BELOW: Major General George Thomas's Union troops desperately defend the high ground at Snodgrass Hill, thus denying the Confederates a total victory.

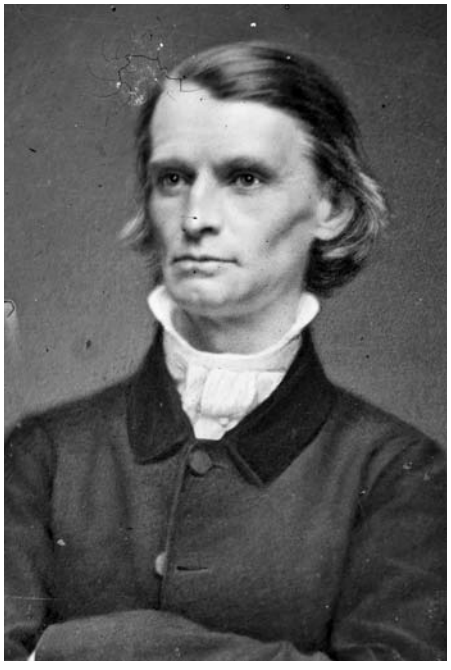
The next morning, as Confederate attacks on the Union left continued to be fruitless, Longstreet placed Johnson's men at the front of a massive column of assault 400 yards east of a log cabin known locally as the Brotherton House. With Johnson's old brigade in the forefront, the Confederates surged forward shortly before 11 AM, and Bushrod Johnson entered the history books.

Immediately prior to Johnson's attack, a harried Rosecrans had received an erroneous report of a gap in his lines. Without bothering to check the accuracy of the report, Rosecrans summarily ordered a realignment of troops already in place. At the very moment the unnecessary realignment was under way, Johnson's gray-clad infantry crashed into a newly created gap near the Brotherton House and shattered the entire Union right at a single stroke. In less than 50 minutes the Confederates, with an exultant Johnson leading the way, drove the Union right completely from the field, sent Rosecrans and his staff galloping in headlong flight, then wheeled to assault the Union left, which was massing in desperation on a low elevation called Snodgrass Hill. Never again would Johnson, or the Confederacy, know such total success.

In his official report, Johnson gave an eloquent and emotional account of the charge. "The scene now presented was unspeakably grand," he wrote. "The resolute and impetuous charge, the rush of our columns sweeping out of the shadow and gloom of the forest into the open fields flooded with sunlight, the glitter of arms, the onward rush of artillery and mounted men, the retreat of the foe, the shouts of the hosts of our army, the dust, the smoke, the noise of firearms—of whistling balls, grapeshot or bursting shells—made up a battle scene of unsurpassed grandeur." Ever mindful of the men he commanded, Johnson added: "I may be permitted to say for these noble men, with whom I have been so long associated, that I then felt that every man in the brigade was a hero."

That morning at Chickamauga would prove to be the apex of Jonson's career, as it was for the entire Confederate Army of Tennessee. Ironically, only the stalwart defense of Snodgrass Hill by Johnson's old West Point classmate George H. Thomas, a Virginian who was disavowed by his family for remaining loyal to the Union, prevented a Southern triumph of unprecedented proportions. Had Bragg followed up his hard-won victory by recapturing Chattanooga, the entire course of the war might have changed. Instead, to the disgust of many, including Johnson, Bragg settled into a two-month-long siege of Chattanooga. Johnson joined other generals in signing a petition calling for Bragg's ouster, but Jefferson Davis, a personal friend of the embattled commander, declined to heed their prescient advice. Instead, many of the unhappy generals were sent away from Bragg's army instead, at the worst possible time for the Confederates.

Immediately prior the army's stunning defeat at Chattanooga in late November, Johnson was detailed to join Longstreet for an attack on the Union garrison at Knoxville. The failure of that attack, coupled with Bragg's retreat from Chattanooga into Georgia, led Longstreet on an arduous return trip to Virginia. With him went Johnson's brigade. As the weather turned bitter in the East Tennessee mountains,



ABOVE: Enraged Confederates rush to the scene of carnage at the Battle of the Crater in July 1864. Johnson was unaccountably passive in his leadership that day; Brig. Gen. Henry A. Wise, right, was not. OPPOSITE: Dispirited Confederates surrender en masse at Sayler's Creek on April 6, 1865. Johnson escaped, but was relieved of duty by a disgusted General Robert E. Lee two days later.

many of the Confederates were without shoes or blankets. Ever solicitous of his men's well-being, Johnson ordered a four-day delay while dozens of cobblers were put to work making new shoes for the suffering men.

As a stranger entering the clannish Army of Northern Virginia, Johnson did his best to be of use, helping to turn back a Federal attack at Drewry's Bluff in May 1964. That same month he was finally promoted to major general after two years of official recommendations, legislative resolutions, and personal letters from his superiors. Soon afterward he found himself involved in yet another dispute with a fellow officer. Following Grant's first unsuccessful thrust at Petersburg in June 1864, Johnson read in a Richmond newspaper that Brig. Gen. Henry A. Wise's Virginians had presented their state with a stand of captured Union colors. Johnson, irate, fired off a letter to government officials in Richmond protesting the action and noting that it was his Tennesseans, not Wise's Virginians, who had captured the Union battle flags in the first place. "My object," wrote Johnson, "is simply to insure that a body of gallant and meritorious men are not bereft of the rewards of their heroic deeds and to procure the restitution of trophies that belong rather to the Confederate government than to any particular state." Wise, enraged and embarrassed, vowed revenge.

That July, Johnson showed himself to poor effect before General Robert E. Lee at the Battle of the Crater, where his hesitation to counterattack permitted Virginia brigadier William Mahone to take the initiative and claim credit for the Southern victory. The ever-audacious Lee would remember Johnson's unaccountably timid performance with distaste.

As the war in Virginia bogged down into dismal trench warfare with no hope for ultimate success, Johnson was not alone in seeming to lose heart. His personal bravery was undoubted; he had been wounded at Shiloh, had five horses shot from under him at Perryville, been in the thick of the fighting at Stones River, and spearheaded one of the greatest breakthroughs of the war at Chickamauga. But now, after four long years of warfare, Johnson was mentally, physically, and emotionally spent. With his old brigade of Tennesseans scattered among other commands, Johnson felt isolated and friendless among Lee's coterie of aristocratic Virginians.

In April 1865, following the fall of Petersburg and Richmond, Lee began his last desperate race for supplies at Appomattox. Johnson joined the ragged procession of Confederates seeking to escape the massive Union juggernaut that now was bearing down on them from all sides. On April 6, at Sayler's Creek, Johnson's troops, along with those of Maj. Gens. Richard H. Anderson and George E. Pickett, came under withering attack by much more numerous Union forces. In the unequal melee the Confederates broke and ran, and the three generals joined their men in a panicky dash for safety. Johnson unwisely made his way to Lee's headquarters to report the rout. But Lee, perhaps recalling Johnson's poor showing at the Crater the year before, refused even to look his crestfallen subordinate in the eye. Waving his hand dismissively toward the rear, he said tartly, "General, take these stragglers to the rear, out of the way of Mahone's troops. I wish to fight here."

A savvier individual, faced with such a caustic rebuke from the normally mild-mannered and scrupulously polite Lee, would have been careful to avoid further

notice. But Johnson, with no place else to go, was still on hand the next morning when his bitter rival Henry Wise arrived with the remnants of his division still intact. Lee, hearing Wise loudly denounce those generals who had left the field, ordered him to take command of Johnson's troops. While Wise enjoyed an unexpected 11th-hour triumph, Johnson sat alone, burning with shame and enduring sidelong glances of disapproval from his fellow officers. The next day, less than 24 hours before surrendering to Grant at Appomattox, Lee somewhat vindictively ordered Johnson, Anderson, and Pickett dismissed from the army. Johnson's second military career, like his first, ended in dismal failure and official disgrace.

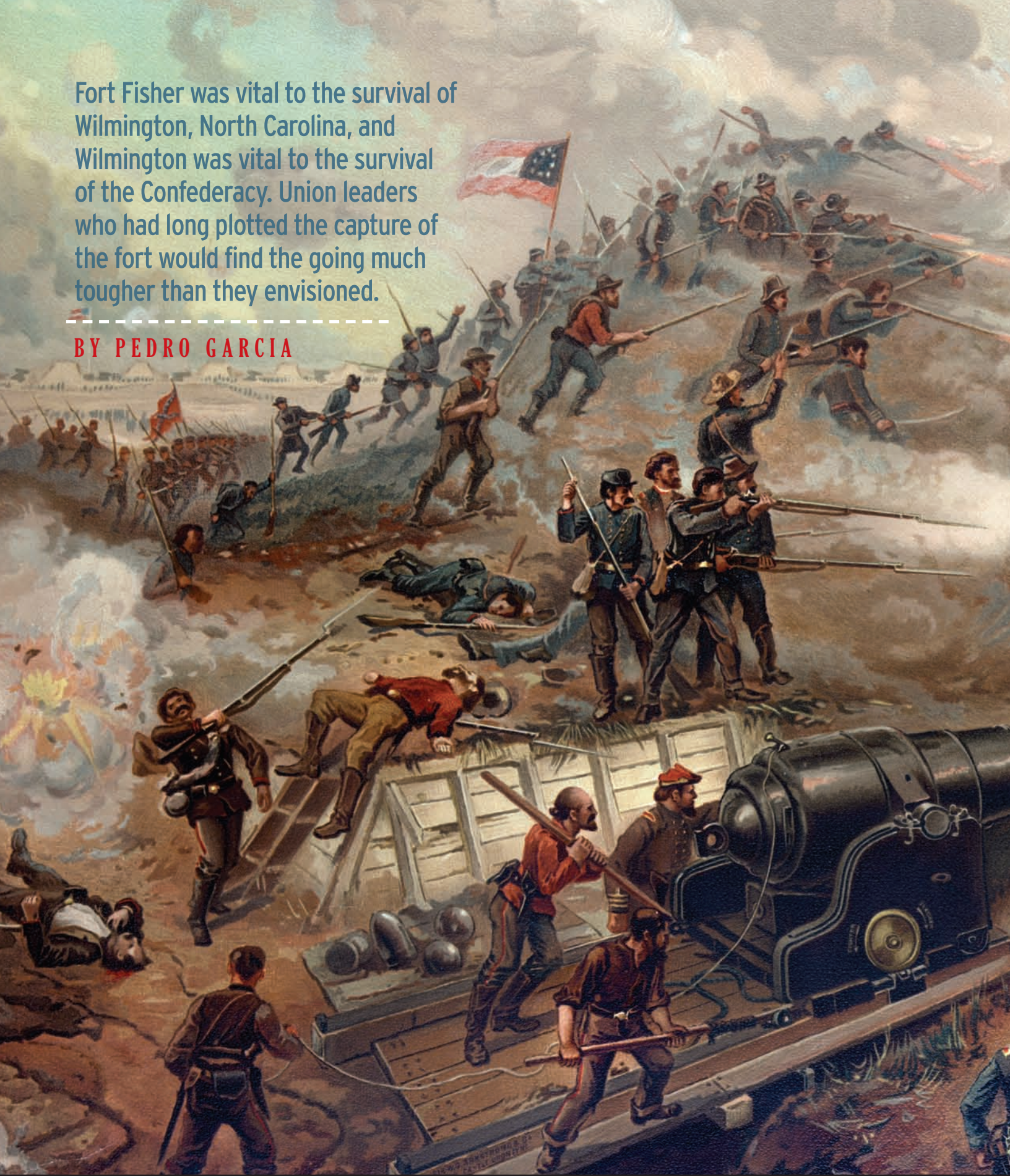
If Johnson entertained hopes of commencing a happier postwar career, he was soon disappointed. The last years of his life followed the dismaying pattern of the first. Returning to Nashville, he entered the real estate business, attempting to augment his meager savings through investments in such dubious money-making schemes as an improved churn, improved soap, a cement-making plant, and a paint-producing factory. None of the ventures succeeded, and Johnson was forced to sell his remaining property in Nashville to pay living expenses for himself and Charley, whom he had taken back into his care at the end of the war.

In 1870 Johnson returned to the scene of his greatest happiness as principal of the newly created Montgomery Bell Academy at the University of Nashville. The school, headed by former Confederate general Edmund Kirby Smith, flourished for a time, but a nationwide depression in 1873, coupled with a local cholera epidemic, compelled the academy to close its doors. Bitterly disappointed, Johnson took Charley and retired to his last remaining piece of property, a ramshackle farm purchased from his niece in Macoupin County, Illinois.

Macoupin County had furnished a large contingent of volunteers to the Union cause during the war, and residents there were less than thrilled to find a former Rebel general living in their midst. Johnson's closest neighbor, John Andrews, who had a lost a son in the war, refused even to speak to the unwelcome arrival. Andrews' brother-in-law, however, former Union Colonel Jonathan Miles, took pity on the isolated Johnson and befriended him. Ironically, Miles had been serving on the Union right at Chickamauga when Johnson's attack sent him flying to the rear with the rest of his comrades on that part of the line. Johnson also found a friend in Andrews' son, John, who was about the same age as Charley. The younger Andrews was an avid student, and Johnson frequently loaned him textbooks and quizzed him carefully about his reading.

Johnson liked to think of the farm as a temporary haven while he wistfully planned a move to California, but it was not to be. In the summer of 1880, the 62-year-old Johnson suffered a cerebral hemorrhage, leaving him speechless and paralyzed. He lingered for weeks, neither he nor his mentally challenged son being able to tell anyone about the general's long-purchased burial plot in Nashville. Johnson died in September 12 and was laid to rest in the cemetery of Mils Station Methodist Church, unmourned and unattended by any former Confederates. It was left for the Union veteran Miles to pay for a headstone and monument. On the monument was inscribed the verse: "A valiant leader, true hearted and sincere/An honored solider, who held his honor dear/A cultured scholar with mind both broad and deep/An honest man, the noblest work of God." Given the circumstances, Miles could be forgiven for exaggerating—or ignoring—the truth in several of those generous statements.

As even his strongest supporters would have conceded, Bushrod Johnson was not a great general. Nor was he a great man, except perhaps in his suffering—much of it brought on by himself. Still, his patient care of his handicapped son, his diligent attention to the educational needs of his students, and most of all his habitual concern for the soldiers he commanded in the Civil War, proved Johnson to be, at heart, a fundamentally decent man, despite his occasional lapses of ethical judgment. It is worth noting that none of the men who served under him—mostly Tennesseans who seemed to care little that Johnson was Ohio-born and raised—ever felt anything but pride and affection for their old commander. In their eyes, at least, he was undefeated. □

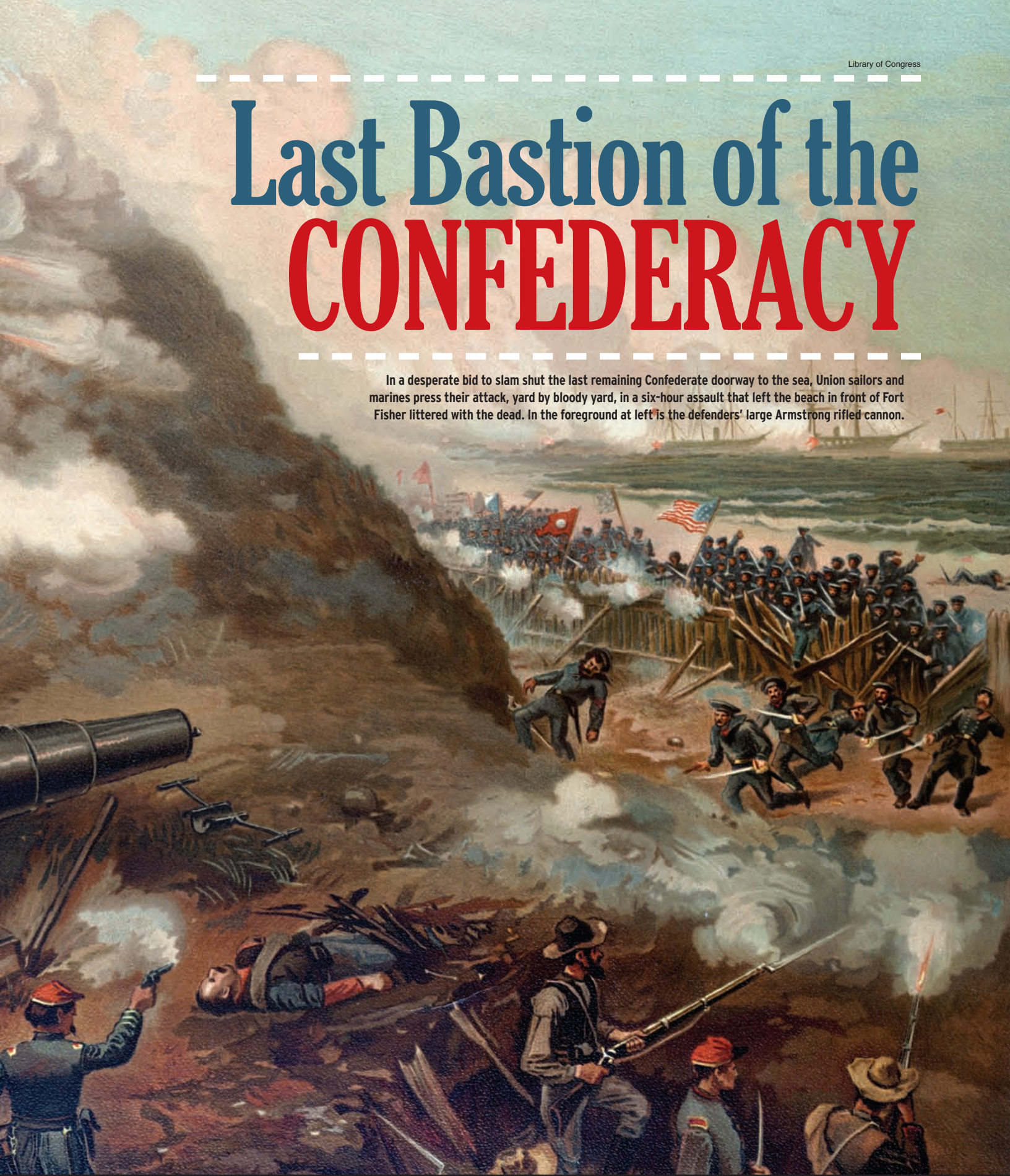


Fort Fisher was vital to the survival of Wilmington, North Carolina, and Wilmington was vital to the survival of the Confederacy. Union leaders who had long plotted the capture of the fort would find the going much tougher than they envisioned.

BY PEDRO GARCIA

Library of Congress

Last Bastion of the CONFEDERACY



In a desperate bid to slam shut the last remaining Confederate doorway to the sea, Union sailors and marines press their attack, yard by bloody yard, in a six-hour assault that left the beach in front of Fort Fisher littered with the dead. In the foreground at left is the defenders' large Armstrong rifled cannon.

Naval History and Heritage Command

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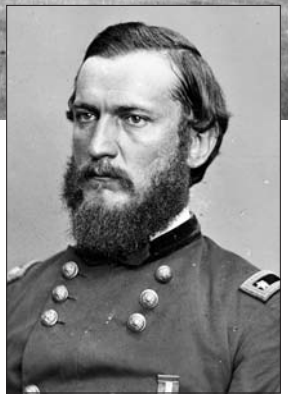


ABOVE: Union ships of the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron leave Hampton Roads, Virginia, en route to Fort Fisher in December 1864. RIGHT: Major General Alfred Terry, left, led the final Union attack; Brig. Gen. Godfrey Weitzel, right, was originally given command of the army, but found himself surprisingly replaced.

THE PROSPECT OF RUNNING the Federal blockade at Wilmington was easy in the beginning. North Carolina's principal seaport was blockaded by a single warship, USS *Daylight,* and no one took the threat seriously. The *Wilmington Journal* scoffed, "D*aylight* is a little cock-a-hoop of a thing, and a good sound shot from a rifled cannon would open daylight through her. We must get the thing up here to go a-fishing in." Southerners could afford to joke about the naval blockade in 1861—the so-called Anaconda Plan. Equipped with 50 warships more or less, the Federals had to blockade 3,550 miles of coastline, 189 harbors or inlets, and nine major seaports. However, by the close of 1864, Southerners found nothing humorous about the blockade, as almost 500 enemy warships patrolled the coastline and rivers with increasing impunity.

Evading the talons of the U.S. Navy was not an easy task for blockade runners; the odds of capture, one in 10 in 1861, were now one in three. For the 33 warships that maintained the Wilmington blockade, duty was routinely mundane, punctuated by moments of high drama. Aboard each ship, a deck officer posted aloft in the bosun's chair scanned the horizon—the moonless nights favored blockade runners—straining to spot the silhouette of a runner or a distant plume of smoke. If a runner was spotted, a signal rocket would split the darkness, sending seamen to their battle stations, and with steam up, the chase was on. Firing rocket after rocket to mark the runner's path, the blockaders would pursue their quarry. Hurriedly shoveling pitch pine and rosin chunks into the ship's furnace, the ship's firemen stoked a hotter fire to build speed. Aboard the harried blockade runner, firemen would fuel the ship's furnace with sides of bacon or turpentine-soaked cotton to build enough speed to outrun their pursuer.

Narrow escapes were common, but when capture seemed imminent a captain would heave to and surrender. More often, he would turn toward shore and try to beach his vessel in the breakers, hoping his cargo could be salvaged later. Sometimes a lighter moment highlighted the chase. Commander John Almy of the USS *Connecticut* once pursued a Wilmington-bound blockade runner for 70 miles before finally running her down and boarding her. As his sailors searched the confiscated booty, Almy came aboard and greeted her captain. "Good Morning, glad to see you." The hapless captain replied, "Damned if I'm glad to see you." It was not difficult for the Confederates to be constantly reminded of the Union naval threat. By December 1864, the beaches and sand dunes at the mouth of the Cape Fear River, which connected Wilmington to the Atlantic, were littered with the skeletal remains of at least 60 blockade runners that had been captured or forced aground by Federal blockaders.

On December 24, the day Savannah fell to Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman at the conclusion of his audacious March to the Sea, the Union Navy prepared to unleash a formidable amphibious operation against Fort Fisher, which defended Wilmington, the single most important port for blockade runners. The Tarheel seaport had become far more important than any other Southern port, the only one capable of maintaining a lifeline for the Confederacy. The fate of Wilmington, and perhaps even the Confederacy itself, rested with Fort Fisher. A world-class fortification known as the "Gibraltar of the South," the fort was considered to be stronger than the celebrated Fort Malakoff at Sevastopol during the Crimean War. Located 18 miles south of Wilmington, Fort Fisher straddled Confederate Point, formerly known as Federal Point, a long, tapering peninsula between the Cape Fear River and the Atlantic. At its mouth, Cape Fear split around Smith's Island, spilling into the ocean through two inlets—New Inlet to the north and Old Inlet to the south. Fort Fisher, which dominated New Inlet, was the anchor of the Cape Fear defense system, a remarkable network of fortifications that encircled Wilmington and extended downriver on both banks. Fort Caswell, a formidable looking masonry fort, overlooked Old Inlet, and the rest were composed of mutually supporting earthworks that bristled with wide-muzzled heavy artillery pieces.

When Colonel William Lamb assumed

command of Fort Fisher on July 4, 1862, it was not much more than a collection of earthworks consisting of six artillery batteries mounting 17 guns. Over the span of two years, and under his self-possessed guidance, Lamb transformed the fledgling fort into the ultimate earthen fortification, particularly efficient at absorbing salvos of heavy ordnance. Built in the shape of an upside-down L, the sprawling fortress stretched almost a half-mile across Confederate Point, from river to ocean, then snaked more than mile down the beach. The landface section was a bumpy line of 15 huge earthen mounds, called traverses, which were approximately 30 feet high and 25 feet thick, and was bombproofed with a hollow interior to shelter the garrison during a bombardment. Between the traverses, heavy artillery was mounted in elevated gun chambers, which consisted of 20 heavy seacoast pieces, mostly large Columbiads, supported by several field pieces and three mortars. At the angle of the L, where the landface intersected the seaface, a massive earthwork called the Northeast Bastion rose 43 feet above the beach, providing a sweeping view for miles. From the Northeast Bastion, the fort's seaface ran along the beach in another line of bumpy, sodded traverses and gun chambers, 24 pieces of heavy artillery, including a mammoth 150-pounder Armstrong rifled cannon. The seaface was punctuated by a mountainous, 60-foot-high artillery emplacement known as the Mound Battery, which mounted a beacon at its pinnacle to signal blockade runners.

Nearby, a telegraph station had been erected with lines running all the way to district headquarters in Wilmington. At the tip of Confederate Point, Lamb had built Battery Buchanan to protect New Inlet and the fort's rear. Fort Fisher also boasted the latest technology: an electrically detonated minefield of torpedoes, iron cylinders filled with 100 pounds of black powder, and specially wired artillery shells, all of which were connected to an underground network of wires linked to a primitive electric battery. However, the sprawling fortress was woefully undermanned with inexperienced troops. Although the garrison had more than doubled in the 2½ years since he assumed command, Lamb could count only on 600 troops of the 36th North Carolina Regiment.

Wilmington's increasing importance to the Confederacy had long been obvious to Union war planners. By the end of 1864, it became more so. General-in-Chief Ulysses S. Grant had become interested in supporting Sherman's drive into the Carolinas, and the Cape Fear River was an ideal logistical artery to supply Sherman's army. Even so, Grant's approval for an expedition against the fort was conditional: he wanted an aggressive naval commander to lead the attack. He got one in Admiral David Dixon Porter, by far the most successful officer in the Union Navy for combined operations. The two men were well acquainted since the Vicksburg campaign the previous year. The tough, 51-year-old admiral was ambitious, politically astute, extremely self-confident, and resourceful. An often pretentious officer, Porter frequently irritated his peers. A newspaper correspondent described Porter as "vain, arrogant, and egotistical to an extent that can neither be described or exaggerated."

Grant's choice for the mission's army commander was Brig. Gen. Godfrey Weitzel, a corps commander and chief engineer for the Army of the James. But in a surprising move, Weitzel's immediate superior, Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler, decided to assume command of the expedition himself. A political general from Massachusetts, Butler was one of the most controversial officers in the Union Army. He had boundless ambition and a total lack of scruples, and he saw himself as a presidential possibility. "I will always think of old Ben as a cross-eyed cuttle fish swimming about in waters of his own muddying," remembered one fellow general. Soldiers might consider him a bottom-feeder, but abolitionists and bitter-enders thought him a hero. Grant, for his part, had little confidence in Butler. Porter had even less—the two men despised each other. The feud had begun in 1862 when Butler criticized Porter's role in the capture of New Orleans. The animus cultivated an atmosphere of noncooperation that infected the Fort Fisher expedition from the beginning. The situation worsened because the men held joint command, with neither having final authority. It was recipe for disaster.

Gloom had pervaded Fort Fisher since

This interior view of Fort Fisher, photographed after its capture by Union forces, shows the first three traverses on the land end of the fort.

Library of Congress

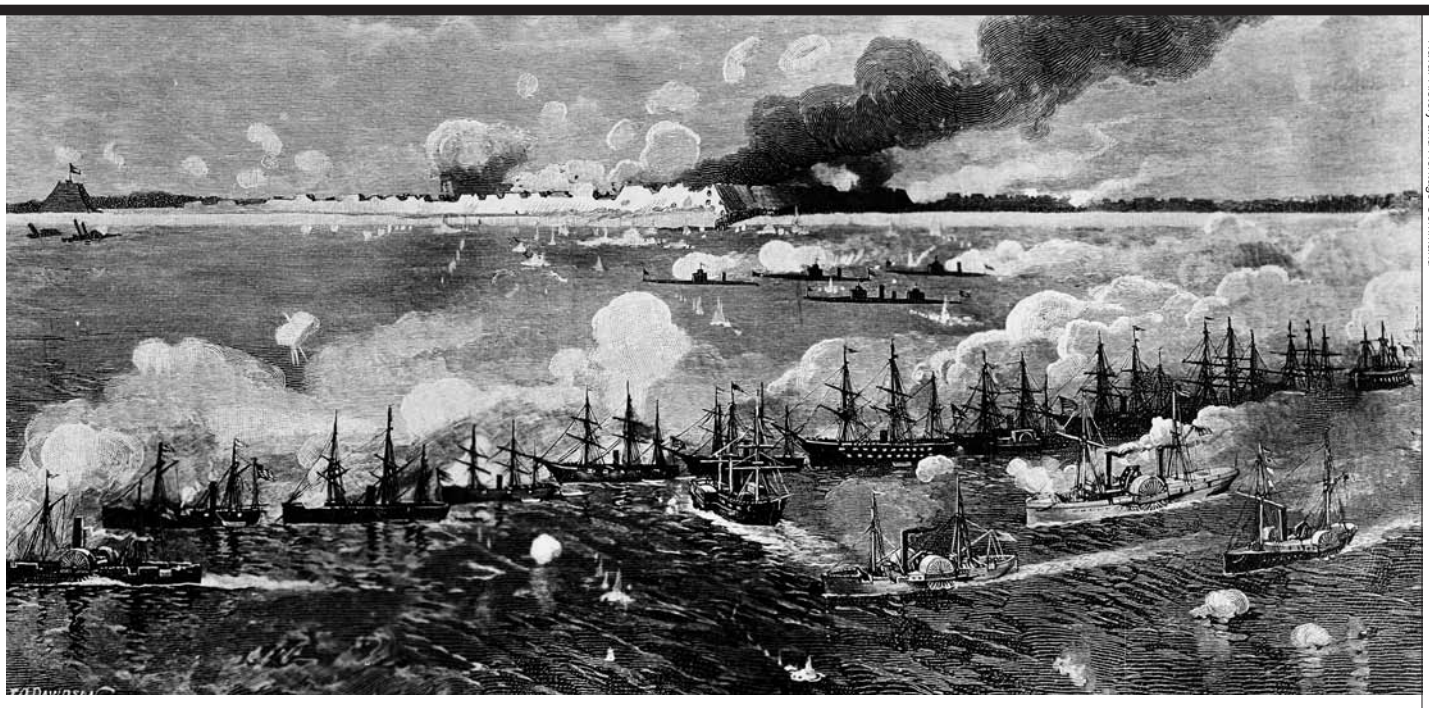
October 24, when Lamb first learned that Federal forces were gathering at Beaufort and that an attack on the fort was imminent. As he prepared for battle, Lamb was saddled with another serious worry. His longtime friend, mentor, and military commander, Maj. Gen. William Henry Chase Whiting, was abruptly relieved of command. Whiting, a brilliant engineer whose ideas had been a driving force at Fort Fisher, had incurred the mistrust of President Jefferson Davis, who replaced Whiting with Davis's friend and military adviser, General Braxton Bragg. A feckless loser with an unbroken record of futility, Bragg's appointment was widely viewed as calamitous. The *Richmond Examiner* editorialized, "Bragg sent to Wilmington. Goodbye Wilmington."

Within a month of his arrival, Bragg left for Augusta to assume temporary command of a Confederate force being assembled to slow down Sherman's juggernaut. In his absence, Whiting was left in charge of his old command, but he was dismayed to discover that half of Fort Fisher's garrison had gone with Bragg. Whiting was further disappointed to receive orders from General Robert E. Lee to send 1,500 more troops from the Cape Fear region north to Weldon to oppose a Union diversion near there. As Fort Fisher's defenders readied themselves for the impending attack, the garrison counted fewer than 800 troops, and Whiting anxiously complained, "It's an ungrateful duty, this, and no bed of roses, and the prospect is not particularly cheerful ahead. Between Bragg and Lee, Sherman and Grant, old North Carolina is in a pretty fix." Bragg dismissed Whiting as an alarmist, and on December 17 he returned to Wilmington to resume command—without the troops he had taken with him. The next day, Lee dispatched Maj. Gen. Robert F. Hoke's hard-hitting veteran division to take up the slack. It was debatable whether it would arrive in time.

Meanwhile, Butler had a bright idea. He planned to destroy Fort Fisher by exploding a ship filled with gunpowder as close to the ramparts as possible. Butler believed the blast would unleash the force of a tornado and that the resulting shockwave would flatten the fort's walls, killing most of its garrison, and that any survivors would probably suffocate on poisonous gases. Selected for the job was the USS *Louisiana,* an aging, flat-bottom boat that had the required shallow draft to run in near to shore. The 295-ton vessel was packed with 200 tons of gunpowder, transforming her into a seagoing powder keg. On December 14, a contingent of 6,500 soldiers boarded transports at Hampton Roads and steamed south, anchoring 18 miles north of Fort Fisher. They followed on the heels of Porter's armada of 56 warships.

Porter announced his arrival to Butler with a dispatch. The message made no reference to the fleet's delay, and by the 18th the army was in its third day of waiting. Butler and his officers lamented the lost opportunity to make an easy landing, and the troops began to wonder why they were not taking advantage of the perfect weather conditions to go ashore. The two old adversaries made no attempt to meet, communicating instead by dispatch. The next morning light swells replaced the calm waters. By dusk the wind was blowing hard, the sea was rolling in whitecaps, and a fierce northeaster struck with stunning violence, lasting for two days. The landing would have to be postponed until the storm ended, so Butler decided to return the troop transports to Beaufort to ride it out. While

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection



Massed Union ships bombard Fort Fisher during the final attack. Earlier bombardments did little to weaken the fort, but when the ships closed to within 700 yards on January 13, 1865, the effect was devastating to defenders. OPPOSITE: The Confederate Mound Battery returns fire on Union warships as an enemy shell lands almost directly on the cannon at the right.

there, he wired Grant a terse telegram: "Have done nothing—been waiting for navy and weather."

Despite hurricane-force winds, the naval fleet rode out the storm five miles off Fort Fisher without loss of life or vessel. Then, with his fleet intact, Porter made the unilateral decision not to wait for the squint-eyed general or his army to return. The navy would explode the powder boat against Fort Fisher. When he received the news, Butler was livid. A glory hog himself, it was obvious to Butler that Porter wanted to destroy Fort Fisher in the army's absence and claim all the credit. In preparation, Porter took his fleet 12 miles farther out to sea and ordered all his ships to release steam from their boilers to prevent them from being ruptured by the distant explosion.

On the night of December 24, *Louisiana* was towed to within 600 yards of Fort Fisher. At 1:46 AM she exploded with a towering geyser of flame, followed by a thunderous roar and a series of loud booms. A correspondent for the *New York Times* reported that the explosion "produced a deep, heavy blast and a colossal wall of gray smoke that rose from the shoreline and rolled silently toward the fleet like a massive thundercloud. As it rose rapidly in the air, and came swiftly toward us on the wings of the wind, it presented a most remarkable appearance, assuming the shape of a monstrous waterspout, its tapering base seemingly resting on the sea. In a very few minutes it passed us, filling the atmosphere with its sulphurous odor, as if a spirit from the infernal regions had swept over us."

Remarkably, the fort remained largely undamaged. In fact the explosion made so little impression on the defenders that they vaguely supposed a Yankee boiler had burst. Not even the marsh grass on the fort's sloping walls was disturbed. If the explosion was anticlimactic, what followed over the next two days was even worse. Porter's warships hove into view at Fort Fisher, and he deployed them into four lines with an ironclad division anchored three-quarters of a mile off the beach. The three forward lines would bombard the fort, and the fourth line would replace damaged ships and cover troop landings. Inside the fort, Lamb ordered the drummer boy to beat the long roll sending soldiers and gun crews to their battle stations. Lamb had only 3,000 rounds for the fort's 44 guns, fewer than 70 rounds per gun, and for the monster Armstrong cannon he had only 13 rounds. To preserve the limited ammunition he issued strict orders. Only the long-range artillery would be fired regularly, and no gun would be fired more than once every half hour. The gunners understood the purpose of the order—every shot must count.

At 12:45 PM, the grim silence was broken by a shrieking shell from the mammoth iron-plated warship USS *Ironsides*. The shot missed its intended target, the flagstaff atop the Northeast Bastion. In response, Lamb ordered the fort's signal gun fired, and a huge Columbiad belched a solid shot that ricocheted off the smooth sea toward the USS *Susquehanna*. The projectile jumped over the ship's railing and punched a hole in her smokestack. Instantly, the fort's gunners jumped to action, and all the batteries on the seaface bellowed and spat flame and smoke. The long lines of warships replied with a stunning barrage, a fiery mile-wide swarm of shot and shell, exploding overhead in showers of spinning iron that raised geysers of sand, plowed up the fort's sandy interior, or splashed harmlessly into the Cape Fear River in the rear. "It was a magnificent sight," a

Federal naval officer noted, "and one never to be forgotten. The ships' sides seemed a sheet of flame, and the roar of their guns like a mighty thunderbolt. Nothing could withstand such a storm of shot and shell as was now poured into this fort."

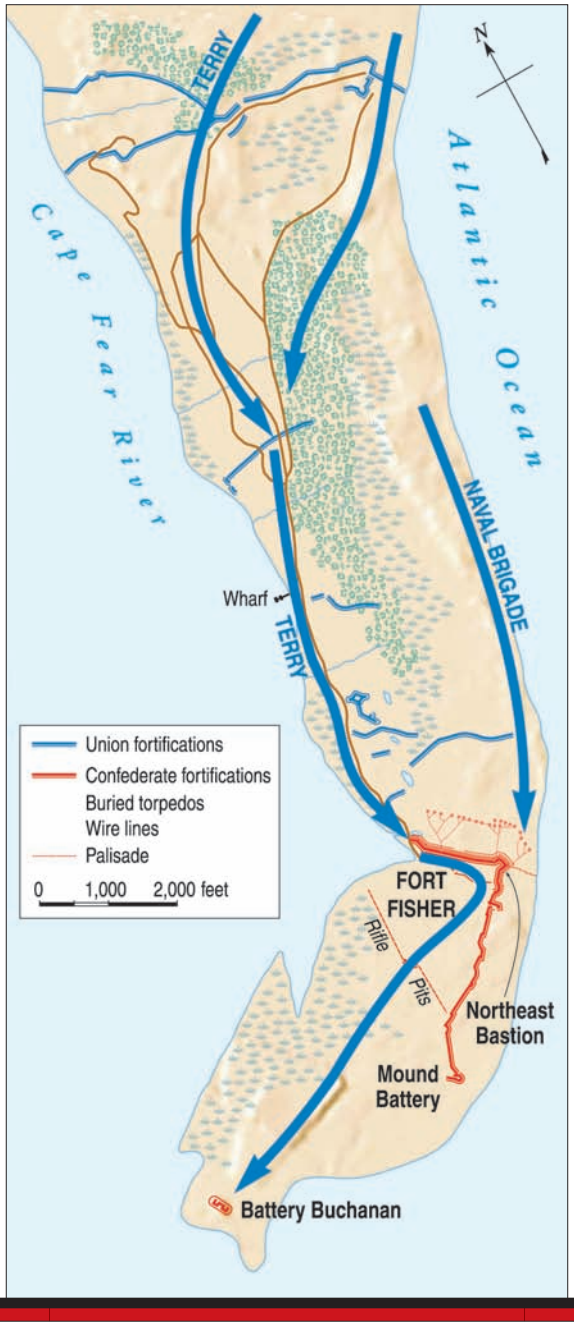
Shells tore into the fort's eastern walls, ripping jagged holes in whitewashed structures, bursting among the barracks and stables and setting them ablaze. Meanwhile, the garrison remained inside their bombproofs, protected from the enemy fire. As planned, they emerged occasionally to fire their guns. Restricted by orders to fire infrequently, the gunners had difficulty finding the range, and although they scored three direct hits, many overshot the Union warships. Despite frequently overshooting the mark, the naval bombardment took a toll on the crater-filled and smoldering fort. Near sunset, Butler finally arrived with three troop transports. The rest would be along shortly, he said—much to Porter's disgust, since the day was too far gone to attempt a landing.

Disgruntled, Porter ordered a cease-fire at 5:30 PM. The fleet had lost 83 dead and wounded, more than half of them mangled by the explosion of five new 100-pounder Parrott guns on the sloops and frigates. Ashore, Lamb took stock of his damage—two guns disabled, four mangled but serviceable, 23 casualties including four dead or mortally wounded. The fort itself had been badly cut up, its barracks and stables in ashes, but its fighting efficiency had not been seriously impaired. Porter believed otherwise. He was certain the fort had been rendered defenseless and the army would merely have to walk in and claim it for the Union. "There is not a blade of grass or a piece of stick in that fort that was not burned up," boasted the admiral.

Butler and his officers begged to differ. Weitzel flatly predicted failure. He had commanded assaults at Port Hudson and other entrenched positions in Virginia and believed the fort's garrison would make a strong defense despite damage by the naval bombardment. They all agreed that by exploding the powder boat early and beginning the bombardment without the army Porter had compromised the chances of success. Without the element of surprise, landing troops was pointless. Butler was ready to quit and return to Hampton Roads.

By 10:30 the next morning, the fleet was back at battle stations amd unleashing another furious hail of shot and shell.

Built in the shape of an upside-down L, Fort Fisher stretched almost half a mile across Confederate Point between the Cape Fear River and the Atlantic Ocean.



"Broadside followed broadside with great rapidity, and the terrible discharges of the gunboats made one continuous roar, the heavy ordnance making the shores of the Old North State reverberate the deafening roar," one Union witness reported. It was a harrowing Christmas for the defenders of Fort Fisher. The bombardment tore up the fort's interior, set the remaining barracks ablaze, and knocked down the garrison flag, but mostly missed the fort's main works and plunged harmlessly into the river. Lamb continued to restrict his own batteries' fire, conserving ammunition for the infantry assault he knew was coming soon.

Indeed, the Yankees were coming. About 1:30 PM a few miles north of the fort, the infantry landed unopposed. As the longboats headed for the beach, the fleet increased its fire, pounding the fort and shredding the wooded shoreline at the landing site with a hail of iron. Soon 2,500 troops were ashore. As they moved off the beach and into the woods, they encountered Confederate skirmishers. The staccato pop of small-arms fire rose over the peninsula. The skirmishers belonged to the 42nd North Carolina Regiment of Hoke's division; the rest had not yet arrived. Heavily outnumbered and in danger of being flanked, they withdrew, and the Federals continued their unfettered advance toward Fort Fisher's landward face. Inside the fort, Whiting sent urgent pleas to Bragg in Wilmington to reinforce the fort and order an attack on the enemy rear. Bragg seemed rattled and paralyzed with indecision. At one point, the general's hands were seen to be trembling. In a stunning display of pessimism, he proposed that Fort Fisher be evacuated and made arrangements for his wife to flee the city by train. Meanwhile, Porter maintained a methodical fire designed to make the defenders keep their heads down.

Weitzel reported his observations to Butler. A military engineer by profes-

One of the battle's eyewitnesses, Ensign John Grattan, sketched this watercolor showing Union troops storming Fort Fisher as the fleet stands offshore. The side-wheeler in the center is Admiral David Dixon Porter's flagship, USS *Malvern*.

sion, Weitzel was trained to think defensively, and looking at Fort Fisher through binoculars from 2,200 yards away he saw a giant fortress that was still intact and apparently impregnable, the final 100 yards of ground thickly planted with torpedoes. To make matters worse, Confederate prisoners boasted that Hoke's veteran division, 6,000 strong, was expected to arrive any moment. Butler weighed his options. Grant had ordered him not to withdraw once his troops had landed, but Weitzel weighed in with a critical opinion—building forts was his profession and he believed Fort Fisher was as strong as Fort Monroe, the giant Federal fortress at Hampton Roads. With the seas becoming angry again amid signs that a new storm was approaching, Butler made his decision. He ordered an immediate withdrawal.

That was the last straw for Porter. Beside himself with rage at Butler's decision, the admiral told Grant that the fort could be taken any time a competent general wanted to take it. The army's loss of one man drowned and 15 wounded indicated something far less than an all-out effort. With the presidential election over and the war on its downhill slope, Butler no longer needed to be handled with kid gloves. Grant, furious that his direct orders had been disobeyed, relieved Butler of command and sent him home to Massachusetts. Before returning to his hometown of Lowell, the politically connected former senator stopped in Washington, where he sought a hearing from the Joint Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War. After an exhaustive investigation, the committee voted unanimously to exonerate him from blame. Instead, members commended Butler for having had the presence of mind to call off the assault, thereby saving many lives. Such action, ruled the committee, "was clearly justified" by Porter's ragged gunnery and inadequate support of troops ashore.

Porter was stung by the criticism. He had thrown 20,271 projectiles weighing 1.25 tons at the fort. Inside Fort Fisher, defenders celebrated. Lamb felt that he had good reason to celebrate—the two-day bombardment and Christmas Day skirmishing had produced a mere 61 casualties—surprisingly light for such a pounding. The garrison's barracks were in ashes, the fort's traverses were battered, but only four of the fort's heavy artillery pieces had been destroyed. The Confederacy's lifeline to Europe was still open. The next day, two blockade runners slipped into New Inlet and steamed upriver to deliver their precious cargo at Wilmington, where Bragg crowed, "The successful defense of Fort Fisher against one of the most formidable naval armaments of modern times proves that the superiority of land batteries over ships of war has been reestablished by the genius of the engineer." That engineer, Whiting, was not so sure. Indeed, he was shocked by Bragg's relaxed mood. Not only did the general plan to return Hoke's veterans to Virginia, but he also suggested that North Carolina's governor disband the reserves who had helped defend Fort Fisher. Declining an offer of additional ammunition from Lee, Bragg predicted that the Federals would not return until spring. Whiting, understanding that Fort Fisher had been saved largely because the gale on Christmas night had prevented further enemy landings, expected the enemy to return soon, perhaps with a commander willing to press the issue closer than just pistol-shot of the sand walls.

Whiting was right. On January 13, 1865, two hours before dawn, Porter's flotilla of 59 warships, including five ironclads mounting 627 guns, closed to within 700 yards of the fort and unleashed a withering, fearfully accurate fire. The unrelenting rain of metal fell at a rate of 115 shells a minute, a total weight of 1.6 tons—or 1,000 pounds for every linear yard of the fort. Butler's earlier complaints about Porter's ragged gunnery had struck a nerve, and Porter had taken pains to correct it. In his

directive to the fleet he cautioned, "The object is to lodge the shell in the parapets, and tear away the traverses under which the bombproofs are located. A shell now and then exploding over a gun *en barbette* may have good effect, but there is nothing like lodging a shell before it explodes. Commanders are directed to strictly enjoin their officers and men never to fire at the flag or pole, but to pick out the guns."

The results were devastating. For a Confederate crouched beneath this deluge it was "beyond description. No language can describe that terrific bombardment." Peering through his binoculars, Porter could see that his instructions were being followed to the letter. One by one, sometimes two by two, Rebel pieces winked out and fell silent. "Traverses began to disappear," he noted, "and the southern angle of Fort Fisher commenced to look very dilapidated." Four hours into the bombardment, the army began to land under newly minted Maj. Gen. Alfred Terry. The new commander stood in stark contrast to Ben Butler. A quiet, mild-mannered man with natural tact, Terry was a seasoned combat commander with a proven record in joint operations. Grant instructed the Yale Law School graduate to cooperate fully with Porter and to regard him as the commander of the operation. By 3 PM, there were 8,897 Federals on the beach, two miles north of the fort. Terry had come to stay, and he emphasized this by digging a stout defensive line across the peninsula, facing north in case Hoke's division, still camped nearby, tried an attack.

Naval History and Heritage Command

In the end, Terry had nothing to worry about. Bragg had no intention of driving the Yankees into the sea. His mentality was defensive and, in Whiting's opinion, self-defeating. Bragg believed that nothing could be done to prevent the enemy from landing and that Porter's guns would rip Hoke to shreds. He incorrectly assumed that he was hopelessly outnumbered. Bragg moved about Wilmington headquarters like a man already defeated, picking out a line to fall back on, relocating arms and ammunition, and preparing for evacuation. Meanwhile, Whiting wanted to take Hoke's division and hit the Yankees before they could fully organize. Bragg ignored his pleas.

Alarmed and frustrated by Bragg's defeatism, Whiting stormed out and took a steamer back to Fort Fisher. Arriving at the height of the Union bombardment, Whiting made no attempt to hide his feelings from his friend and protegé, delivering a frank and pessimistic greeting. "Lamb, my boy," he said, "I have come to share your fate. You and your garrison are to be sacrificed." The naval bombardment was systematically destroying the fort's artillery, and the toll of dead and wounded was rising steadily. Lamb tried to maintain slow and deliberate return fire, but the barrage kept the gun crews pinned in their bombproofs for long intervals. Nightfall mercifully brought a slackening of the deluge but not a cessation of fire. At work beyond the surf, the five ironclads threw their projectiles with such deadly effect, Lamb reported, that "we could scarcely gather up and bury our dead without fresh casualties."

Dawn brought a resumption of the full-scale bombardment, with all the warships back on station. Meanwhile, Terry's force moved unmolested toward the fort as Lamb's casualties rose above 200. He now had only 1,550 defenders to face nearly 9,000 battle-hardened Yankees. That night, while the ironclads resumed their nocturnal harassment, Porter and Terry laid plans for the next day's climax to their joint attack. There was "the most perfect harmony of action" between the two, recorded a witness. The plan was for the fleet to continue its all-out pounding until 3 PM, then cease fire for the assault. Terry would send forward two columns driving down opposite sides of the peninsula, thus avoiding the field of torpedoes north of the fort. On the river flank, half of his command would attack the landface at its western end, while the other half would fix Hoke in position against any possible interference. The ever ambitious Porter was determined that the Navy would be in on the glory. He assembled a naval brigade of 1,600 sailors armed with revolvers and cutlasses and 400 marines carrying carbines to provide covering fire for a boarding action of the seaface. "I will show the soldiers how to do it," Porter boasted.

Sunday, January 15, dawned under a bright and cheerful winter sun. Once again the naval bombardment was accurate and effective. The seaface still drew fire from the fleet, but it was concentrated on the landface and the riverside fence. By late morning, Terry had his assaulting division within 500 yards of the landface wall. Whiting continued to press Bragg to attack the Federal rear. "Is Fort Fisher to be besieged, or you to attack? Should like to know," he demanded. Again Bragg ignored his pleas. As planned, the ships ceased their hellish fire and the naval brigade went forward. The original plan was for them to attack in three waves, but the advance broke down badly and the assault went forward in a single unorganized mass. The sailors made a mad dash up the beach only to be flattened by two volleys of well-aimed musketry. "It was sheer murderous madness," remembered one observer. They

were pinned down, their losses mounting while they dug frantically in the loose sand for cover, then turned and fled up the beach at low tide.

On the fort's parapet, the Confederates stood and cheered wildly at the backs of the sailors, who left behind more than 300 of their shipmates. However, the attack drew attention away from the riverside fence, where the advance guard of Terry's first brigade used axes to cut through the palisade and abatis. About the time the defenders were celebrating the repulse of the naval brigade, Terry's men overran the outer works and stormed the first traverse in a rush. Whiting quickly led a countercharge that retook one of the two lost gun chambers, but he was wounded twice in succession. Lamb arrived with reinforcements. What followed was an old-fashioned donnybrook, a powder-scorched prizefight in which the fighters stood toe to toe, neither side seeking shelter or retreat. The battle was as intimate as it was violent, a free-for-all in the choking heat and smoke. A second Union brigade entered the melee as a brutal struggle raged for possession of the second traverse.

The attackers seemed to waver and falter—Lamb believed if he could hold on until nightfall he would be able to drive them out. Just then, however, the fleet steamed back into action, shelling the Rebels massed in the rear. The result was "indescribably horrible," recorded Lamb. Another witness observed starkly, "The air seems darkened with death." The outnumbered Confederates held their own against the powerful blue tide, fighting ferociously and making them pay for every foot of turf they occupied. Shells from Battery Buchanan were now falling among the Yankees, adding to their hesitancy. Porter's gunboats were crucial in maintaining Federal momentum. The battle lasted for several more hours, but by 8 PM the landface was lost from end to end and the contest was for the interior. "If there has ever been a longer or more stubborn hand-to-hand encounter," Lamb declared, "I have failed to meet with it in history."

Stalled at the third traverse, the Federals appeared indecisive, perhaps even demoralized by the garrison's stubborn resistance. Lamb believed a determined counterattack would carry the day for the Confederates, but just as he sprang to lead his men forward he was knocked sprawling by a bullet to the hip, and the counterattack fizzled. The defenders yielded ground grudgingly, and Terry threw another brigade against their thinning ranks. As the fight for the last traverse commenced, naval fire along the landface increased, causing great slaughter to friend and foe alike. By now Terry had all four brigades inside the fort, pressing the defenders southward down the seaface, traverse by traverse, until there was nothing left to fall back upon. At 10 PM the flag came down. More than 500 Confederates had fallen in the fort's defense. Terry lost 955 killed and wounded, Porter 386. "If hell is what it is said to be," a weary participant wrote, "then the interior of Fort Fisher is a fair comparison. Here and there you see great heaps of human beings laying just as they fell, one upon the other. Some groaning piteously, and asking for water. Others whose mortal career is over, still grasping the weapon they used to so good an effect in life."

The fall of Fort Fisher brought an end to blockade running and sped the collapse of the Confederacy. Yet again Braxton Bragg had shown an uncanny ability to lose a battle—even when he was many miles away. □

BELOW: After giving the fort's defenders a brief reprieve, Union forces commence the final assault on January 15. "The air seemed darkened with death," Confederate Colonel William Lamb reported. OPPOSITE: Union sailors charge the fort on foot, taking heavy losses before falling back. "It was sheer murderous madness," one survivor recalled.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

BULL RUN OF THE West

BY JOSHUA VAN DERECK

Led by impetuous General Nathaniel Lyon, Union forces pursued retreating Confederates across southwestern Missouri in the summer of 1861. At Wilson's Creek, Lyon caught up with the enemy on aptly named Bloody Hill.

Doomed Union General Nathaniel Lyon urges troops from the 1st Iowa Regiment to plug a hole in their imperiled lines at the climax of the Battle of Wilson's Creek.

All photos: Library of Congress

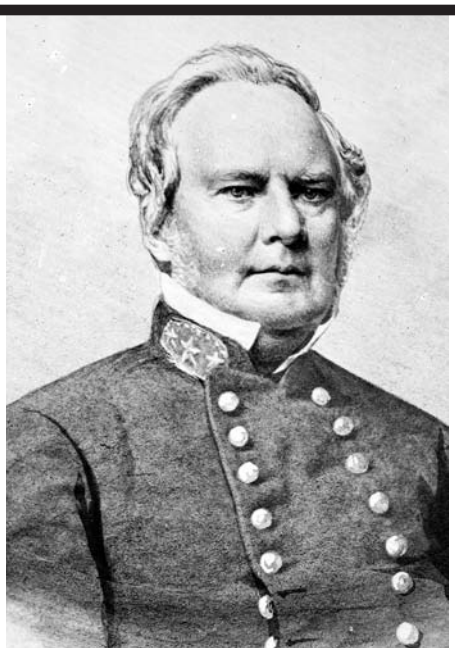
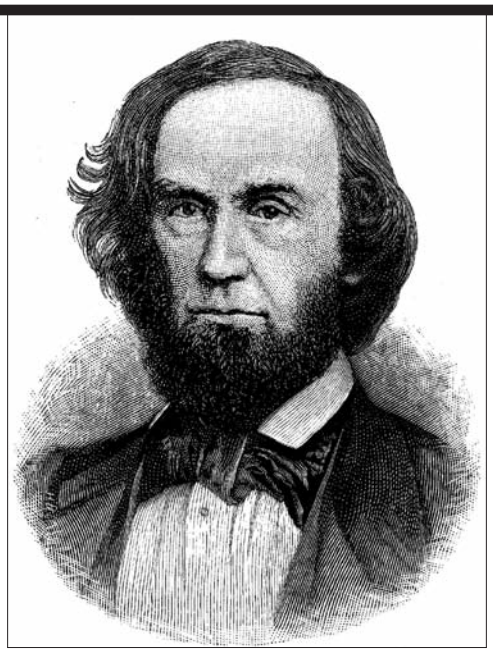
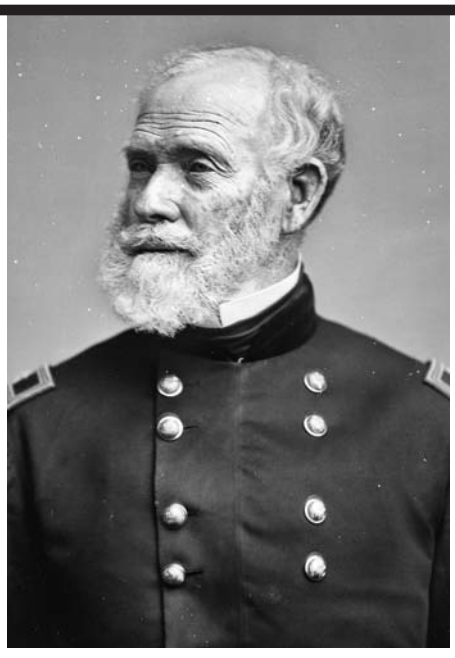
AT THE BEGINNING OF 1861, Missouri was in turmoil. A slave state since its inception in 1820, Missouri had grown increasingly tied to urban industry. Cotton and tobacco had given way to factories, and transplanted northerners and foreign immigrants were flocking to the cities. The election of Republican Party candidate Abraham Lincoln as president the previous November underscored the potential for armed conflict between northern and southern states. As a vital border state, Missouri was a prize much sought by both sides.

Governor Claiborne Jackson was among the old guard who felt that Missouri's destiny lay with the South. Dismayed when a state convention voted to maintain Missouri's place in the Union, Jackson nevertheless decreed that Missouri would not furnish a single man for what he termed the "unholy crusade" of war against the South. Missourians wanted no part of civil war, and they made their loyalties known by volunteering heavily for service in home guard units, resolving to fight against aggression from either North or South while walking the delicate tightrope of neutrality.

In St. Louis, however, belligerent partisans threatened the balance. St. Louis was Missouri's largest city, and as a prominent trade center it was home to some of the most radical factions. The German immigrant community, 50,000 strong, was staunchly Unionist. Having come to America for the promise of suffrage and personal liberty, Germans were eager to uphold the integrity of the national trust. By early 1861, German fellowship societies throughout St. Louis had begun organizing makeshift military companies and drilling under the instruction of veterans of the Prussian Army. Concurrently, groups of those who favored the South, drawn heavily from genteel old-guard families, formed Minute Men companies and also began drilling, sometimes only blocks away from their would-be adversaries.

As tensions grew, the rival factions began to raise concerns about the safety of the city's massive arsenal. St. Louis contained the largest arsenal of any slave state, and its tiny garrison was woefully insufficient for its defense. Alarmed by the situation, Republican Congressman-elect Frank Blair, brother to President Lincoln's newly appointed postmaster general, telegraphed Washington and urged the immediate reinforcement of the arsenal. Notorious for his truculent outspokenness, Blair resorted to irregular measures to augment the arsenal's defenses. Preempting Jackson's refusal to enlist troops for the Federal government, Blair began working covertly to arm the volunteer German companies, initiating a subscription drive for musket funds when he was unable to obtain arms from the arsenal itself.

Although the Army's Western Department commander, Brig. Gen. William Harney, shared Blair's concerns, he favored a more cautious approach, hoping to maintain peace in St. Louis through moderation. Instead of mustering the German volunteers, he brought in a modest reinforcement of U.S. Army

Conflicting wartime leaders in Missouri included, left to right, Confederate Maj. Gen. Sterling Price, Governor Claiborne Jackson, and Union Brig. Gen. William Harney. OPPOSITE: U.S. Volunteers on their way to safeguard the federal arsenal are attacked by pro-Southern St. Louis residents at the corner of 5th and Walnut streets. Thirty-three people—28 of them civilians—were killed in the ensuing riot.

regulars, drawn from nearby garrisons. Among the reinforcing contingent was a volatile New England-born captain, Nathaniel Lyon, who soon would prove the undoing of all attempts at conciliation.

Lyon, a native of Connecticut, harbored a deep-rooted hatred of secession, and his reputation for insubordination preceded him. Reaching St. Louis at the head of his company, he proved an immediate headache for Harney, insisting upon 24-hour perimeter patrols around the arsenal and vehemently urging the construction of firing platforms along the arsenal walls so that marksmen and artillerists could rake all approaches to the building—regardless of potential civilian casualties. Making matters worse, Lyon and Blair forged an instant alliance, with Lyon promising to arm and muster any and all Union volunteers regardless of Missouri state directives. He urged Blair to arrange Harney's removal from command.

Lyon was hardly an iconic hero. An impulsive cigar smoker who loved candy and sported a mouth full of false teeth, he was a martinet of the first order who believed that he existed as a divine instrument of justice. Devoted to draconian discipline within his command, he had developed a reputation in the Regular Army for administering punishments that bordered on torture and sadism. He was even court-martialed for illegal, arbitrary, and unmilitary conduct in the violent disciplining of a private.

Harney did what he could to control the situation through formal channels, but he had no authority over Blair, and time was against him. With rumors afoot of secessionist activity in the Missouri countryside, Blair grew ever more determined to see to it that the German volunteers were formally mustered into Federal service. On April 21, Blair tapped powerful contacts in Washington and Pennsylvania, urging Harney's removal in the interest of security. In response, directives arrived removing Harney and elevating Lyon to department command. German volunteers immediately elected Lyon a brigadier general, and he spent the rest of the week fortifying the arsenal and mustering recruits into the Army, overriding the express wishes of the state government.

Lyon's ascension provoked fear and anger in St. Louis, and the city erupted with violent disturbances. In the capital at Jefferson City, Governor Jackson, who had already commenced secret negotiations with Confederate President Jefferson Davis, called out the state militia on the pretense of protecting Missouri from outside agitators. Militiamen began converging on camps throughout the state.

St. Louis became home to Camp Jackson (named for the governor), a base that attracted some 900 volunteers whose ranks included many of the pro-southern Minute Men. Their presence deeply incensed Lyon. Emboldened by the considerable growth of his arsenal force (it was now almost 8,000 strong), he determined to capture the camp, and he scouted it himself while disguised as an old woman. Returning to the arsenal, Lyon continued to make preparations to fight, but he soon received an alarming surprise. Harney, who had appealed to General-in-Chief Winfield Scott in Washington for reinstatement, was due to return in two days to resume command. If Lyon was to act, he had no time to lose.

On the morning of May 10, Lyon sent forth his newly mustered soldiers from the arsenal in three separate columns to converge on Camp Jackson. Advancing through the streets of St. Louis, they attracted throngs of curious onlookers as well as gangs of armed ruffians who fol-

lowed them, hoping for a chance to aid the militiamen. Lyon's columns deployed along three sides of Camp Jackson, bewildering the outnumbered militiamen with a cool show of might. When all was ready, Lyon sent a messenger to deliver a strict ultimatum he had written the night before. It accused the militia members of hostility to the Federal government and demanded their immediate surrender. The militia commander protested that the demand was illegal and unconstitutional, but he agreed to comply. Having thus secured his aim, Lyon decided to make an example of his prisoners, ordering them to be marched under guard through the city to the arsenal.

No sooner had his men begun leading the march, however, than angry crowds commenced heckling them. Jeers and insults rent the air; people spat at the Union volunteers. The fury of the crowd intensified, and soon they began throwing rocks. Finally, one civilian fired a gun. Other shots broke out, and a bullet mortally wounded a Union captain. This was too much for the volunteers, who angrily fired into the crowd. Pandemonium reigned for several minutes before Lyon was able to regain control of the situation and hurry the column back to the arsenal. By then, the "Camp Jackson Affair" had done lasting damage. Twenty-eight civilians, two Union soldiers, and three militiamen lay dead. Seventy-five others were wounded, and terror gripped St. Louis. "The Black Dutch are killing them all!" one observer cried. "They are shooting women and children in cold blood!"

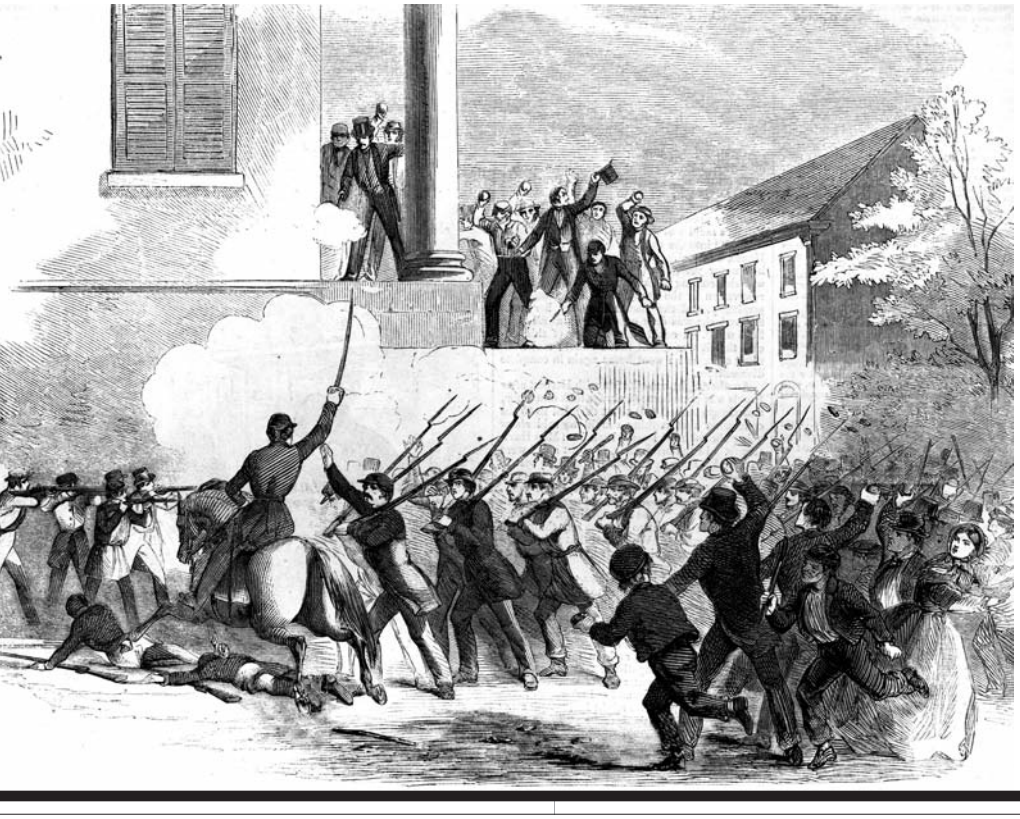
In the capital, Jackson called an emergency session of the General Assembly to discuss a bill granting him unprecedented powers to "suppress rebellion and repel invasion." It was a bill the legislators had previously debated for weeks. Now they passed it in 15 minutes. Jackson quickly appointed popular Mexican War veteran Sterling Price commander of the Missouri State Guard and commenced preparations for all-out war.

In St. Louis, Harney returned on May 11 and found the city a maelstrom of unrest and violence. Unable to cashier Lyon, he instead took measures to remove the German volunteers from the arsenal and met with Price on May 20 to iron out what was essentially a nonaggression pact. Jackson and Price wanted time to organize, and Harney still hoped for peace, but the time for conciliation had passed. On that same day, Blair received discretionary authority from Washington to remove Harney again in favor of Lyon if he deemed it necessary. Blair made it official six days later, prompted in large measure by Harney's continuing reluctance to arm and train the city's German volunteers.

On June 11, Jackson and Price traveled to St. Louis under guarantee of safe passage to meet with Lyon and determine whether he would honor Harney's previous terms. Blair accompanied Lyon, and the meeting was long and tense. After four hours of unsettling debate, Lyon rose from his chair, snuffed out his cigar, and declared: "Far better that the blood of every man, woman, and child within the limits of the State should flow, than that she should defy the Federal government. This means war." He gave the visitors an hour to leave his camp.

Jackson and Price left for Jefferson City that night, and Jackson issued a proclamation calling on Missourians to repel the Federal "invasion," reminding them that they were "under no obligations to obey the unconstitutional edicts of the military despotism at Washington, nor submit to the infamous and degrading sway of its wicked minions in Missouri."

Such defiant rhetoric was no substitute for military preparation, and Lyon was already several steps ahead. Refusing to temper his aggression to address supply shortages, Lyon moved to execute a highly ambitious plan of campaign. To crush resistance, he envisioned a two-pronged pincer movement. He would lead half his force due west up the Missouri River to seize Jefferson City, securing vital communications and dispersing Price's State Guard. A second column, under the command of popular German Colonel Franz Sigel, would move southwest to the railhead at Rolla and then advance across the state to Springfield, where it would act as the anvil against which Lyon would hammer the fleeing state troops. If everything went as planned, Federal forces would command virtually all of Missouri's vital river and railroad network.



On June 13, Lyon's column departed St. Louis aboard four commandeered civilian steamers, while Sigel's forces left via railroad. Two days later, Lyon arrived at Jefferson City, only to find that Jackson and Price had already fled. Jackson had not gone far, however, and Lyon caught up with him on the 17th near Boonville and badly routed a scratch force of State Guard in a nearly bloodless skirmish that northern papers hailed as a brilliant victory. Meanwhile, Jackson and Price gathered as many men as they could and began a wholesale retreat for the Arkansas border, where they hoped to enlist Confederate military aid.

Lyon's campaign quickly bogged down for want of supplies. A steady pattern of requisitions had vexed his quartermaster in St. Louis, and the officer retaliated by canceling many of the requests. Reduced to scrounging for wagons and teamsters, and chafing under the discomfiture of a sudden deluge of rain, Lyon waited impatiently, but the delay afforded time for reinforcements to arrive. En route was the newly mustered 1st Iowa Regiment, as well as a considerable force of Kansans and Army regulars under the command of Major Samuel Sturgis. By the time these forces arrived on July 7, Lyon was in motion once more, aided by a motley jumble of expropriated vehicles. Events were accelerating.

"MEN, WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO FIGHT. DON'T GET SCARED; IT'S NO PART OF A SOLDIER'S DUTY TO GET SCARED."

–CAPTAIN NATHANIEL LYON

In Arkansas, Confederate Brig. Gen. Benjamin McCulloch had watched Lyon's progress with apprehension. A transplanted Texan, McCulloch was something of a legend—friend to David Crockett, veteran of two wars, California gold prospector, congressional representative, Indian fighter, and now district commander for the Confederacy. Assigned to protect the northern border of Indian Territory, McCulloch believed that the presence of Price's forces in Missouri made his job considerably easier, and he decided to rescue them from impending defeat. Concentrating his mixed command of Texans, Arkansans, and Louisianans near the border, McCulloch rode ahead to confer with Price, and on July 4 he initiated the first Confederate invasion of the United States.

The next day, while McCulloch's men were pressing into Missouri, Sigel's wing of the Federal pincer teetered near disaster. Having reached Springfield on June 24 well in advance of Lyon, Sigel had determined to press forward alone and engage the retreating State Guard at Carthage. Sigel had about 1,000 soldiers on hand for the job, while Jackson commanded some 4,000 men. Price was still organizing farther to the south.

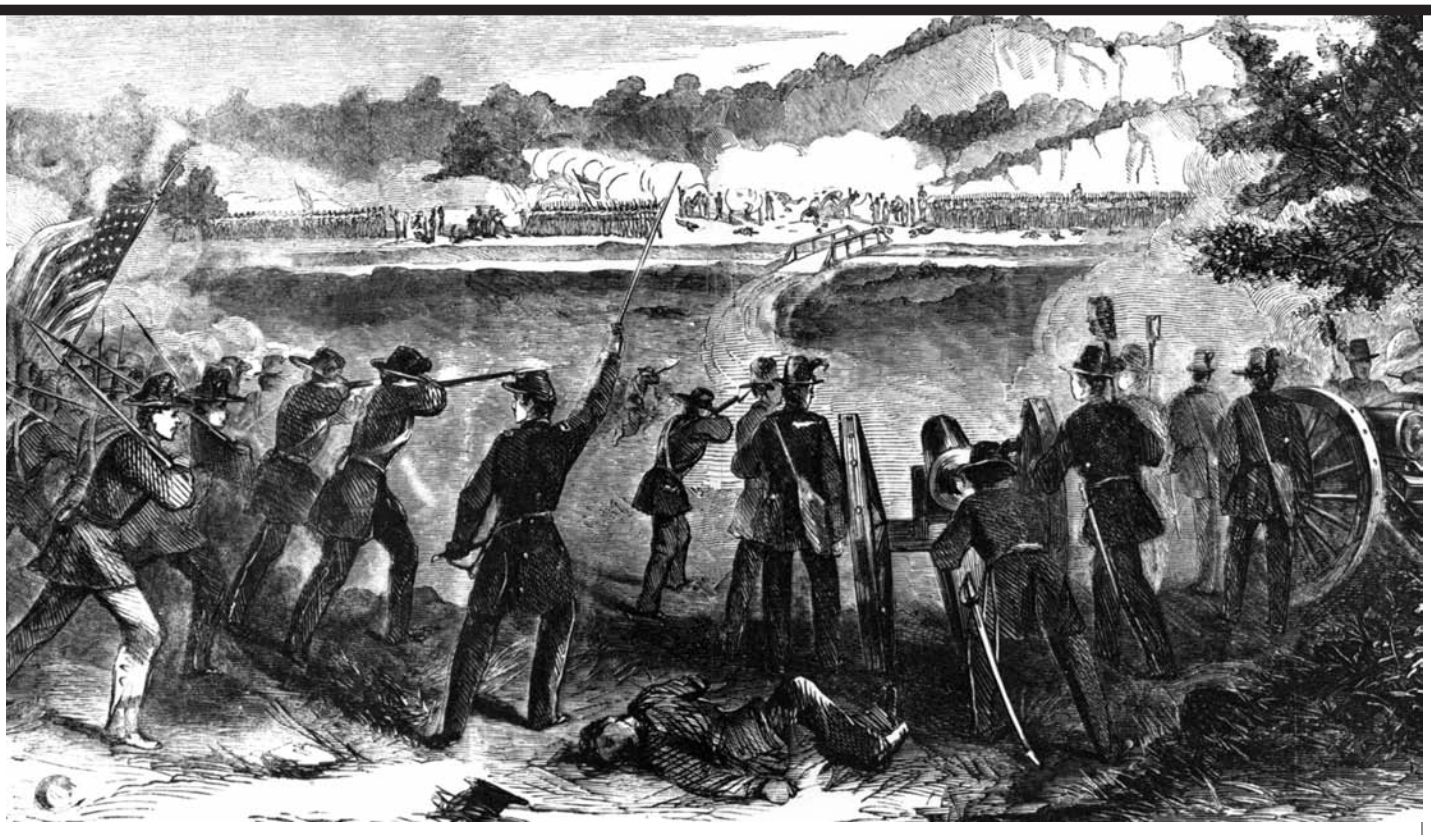
Sigel was aware of the disparity between forces, and he certainly had sufficient experience to evaluate the situation. A former German minister of war, Sigel had commanded armies in multiple battles during the German revolution of 1848. On July 5, Sigel rashly attacked Jackson's force and then withdrew. Casualties were low, a little more than 100 in all, but the Missouri State Guard reveled in their apparent success. When Lyon heard of the clash, he initiated a forced march to rescue Sigel from himself.

Lyon had to abandon much of his baggage train crossing the Grand River, and he had his men strip down even further as they hurried southward through the night, ultimately covering more than 50 miles in 30 hours to reach Springfield. Upon arriving, Lyon found that Sigel had extricated himself in good order, but now the Federal soldiers in both columns were exhausted, their uniforms reduced to tatters. Demoralized and fatigued, Lyon despaired. "The want of supplies has crippled me," he mourned. "Everything seems to combine against me."

McCulloch and Price, however, were not combining. Learning that Sigel had retreated and feeling disgusted over the lack of discipline in the ranks of the Missouri Guard, McCulloch aborted his invasion and withdrew to Arkansas to await developments. In the meantime, while Jackson strove to enlist support from Richmond, Price went into bivouac to build up his command. The Missouri State Guard now numbered some 7,000 volunteers, including 2,000 who were unarmed. Members were bedecked in all manner of attire, and those who had weapons mostly carried shotguns and squirrel rifles. Struggling through the rudiments of drill, they spent their idle hours sewing uniforms, carving slugs for artillery canister, and casting bullets. Food was perhaps their most pressing concern. In the absence of a rail or river base, the Guards stripped the surrounding countryside clean of food. Soon they would have to either advance or retreat to find more.

In Springfield, Lyon was dealing with the same dilemma. Food had grown scarce due to the haphazard supply situation, typhoid and diarrhea ravaged the ranks, and discipline was breaking down. Enlistments, many of which had been for three months, were running out, and before the end of July 2,000 men left the ranks and decamped for St. Louis. Blair's arrival in Washington had coincided with the appointment of a new department commander, Maj. Gen. John C. Frémont, who was supposed to operate out of St. Louis and direct supplies and reinforcements to the front. Lyon bombarded him with a flurry of demands, but Frémont proved notably unresponsive. "If he fights," the new department commander said of Lyon, "he will do it upon his own responsibility."

From his vantage point in St. Louis, it was clear to Frémont that Lyon's campaign had already succeeded. The heart of Missouri was securely in Federal control, and Price's recruiting efforts had been quashed. If Lyon was too short of supplies and soldiers to hold on at Springfield, Frémont advised him to make a strategic withdrawal to Rolla and repair his command for future service. It was a sensible suggestion, but one that Lyon could not bring himself to follow. Instead, the truculent New Englander determined to strike forward once more, regardless of conditions.



Union troops commanded by German-born Colonel Franz Sigel press the pro-Confederate Missouri State Guard at Carthage on July 5, 1861. They were unsuccessful in their attack.

On the morning of August 1, he marched his combined command of fewer than 6,000 men through the blistering heat in search of battle.

Price and McCulloch had combined forces again by then, initiating plans for a second invasion of Missouri. Overcoming his distrust of the State Guard, McCulloch agreed to assume command of the offensive—provided that Price leave his 2,000 unarmed men and camp followers a day's march to the rear. It was a condition that Price quickly accepted and just as quickly ignored. Advancing on August 1, McCulloch's command contained an aggregate of over 10,000 muskets, almost twice the number in Lyon's ranks. And while the State Guard troops were of somewhat dubious quality, several of McCulloch's units had already developed fierce identities. Colonel Louis Hébert's 3rd Louisiana Regiment proudly bore aloft a blue silk flag with the emblazoned inscription, "Southern Rights Inviolate," and Arkansas volunteers boasted several units with unique and dashing uniforms, including the Centerpoint Rifles who wore dark blue coats and checkered shirts with red stripes.

The next day, the rival armies came into contact amid choking dust and 110-degree temperatures. The result was an abortive skirmish in which a State Guard unit broke badly under fire and fled pell-mell for the rear. But Lyon did not press home his advantage. Overwhelmed by fatigue, the New Englander was steadily succumbing to the stress of command. When probes failed to stir up a battle the following day, he called his officers together for a council of war. It was the first time Lyon had asked for advice in the entire campaign. Once convened, the officers voiced concern over the supply situation, and Lyon gloomily ordered a withdrawal to Springfield.

Now the initiative passed to McCulloch, who was not eager to seize it. Thoroughly vexed over the performance of the State Guard, he ordered a pursuit only after much squabbling with Price. Then, after exhausting his men with forced marches in the blazing sun, he lost his resolve altogether, and ordered his units into bivouac at Wilson's Creek, 10 miles south of Springfield. For Price, it was becoming irritatingly apparent that the famous Texan was afraid to fight.

Meanwhile, in Springfield, Lyon was steadily losing his grasp on events. Conferring with subordinates regularly, he waffled between zealous convictions that he should defend his position to the last or strike out and attack. The arrival of a long-overdue wagon train on August 6 served as momentary inspiration, and the New Englander impulsively decided to launch a surprise offensive that very night. Stirring the men from their camps, he sent them to jump-off positions, but then he somehow lost track of time. As 10 PM gave way to 3 AM, a bewildered Lyon suddenly realized that the night was too far gone and canceled the attack.

For the men in the ranks, the abortive escapade was deeply confusing, and it did not help their confidence that Lyon persisted in keeping them under arms all day on August 7 in the sweltering heat. Exhausted and irritated over what seemed unnecessary exertions, the men watched for rumored enemy advances from all

Both newly promoted Brig. Gen. Franz Sigel, left, and Brig. Gen. Nathaniel Lyon, right, had healthy egos that sometimes clashed in the run-up to Wilson's Creek.

directions, none of which materialized. That night, Lyon convened his officers again to debate how to proceed. Most thought a withdrawal to Rolla the best option, but Brig. Gen. Thomas Sweeny, a one-armed Irish regular, delivered an impassioned diatribe in opposition. "Let us eat the last bit of mule flesh and fire the last cartridge before we think of retreat!" he urged. Newly persuaded, Lyon presented a new line of reasoning. Withdrawing without battle would "run the risk of having to fight every inch along [the] line of retreat," he warned; an attack was necessary to get away safely.

Inspired by this convoluted logic, Sigel proposed an audacious plan to divide the army into two columns and attack the enemy camp from front and rear at once. It was a plan that violated basic military logic, as it called for the division of a smaller force in the face of a larger enemy. All of the assembled officers thought the plan preposterous, and much to their relief Lyon rejected it. Instead, he told them to prepare for an advance the following evening, preparatory to a combined frontal attack at dawn on the 10th. On the morning of August 9, however, Sigel paid his commander a special visit and somehow persuaded Lyon to reconsider. Preposterous or not, Sigel's plan would be put to the test.

As the men prepared for the night march on August 9, Lyon rode among the ranks offering bland words of encouragement. "Men, we are going to have a fight," he said. "Don't get scared; it's no part of a soldier's duty to get scared." Most were unimpressed. "How is a man to help being skeered when he is skeered?" one queried. At 5 PM, the two columns swung into motion: Sigel with his brigade of 1,100 Germans and Lyon at the head of the rest of the 4,000 men in the army. The moon was a crescent, and the Federal march was uneventful.

At this juncture, although the attack plan was risky and the odds unpromising, Lyon had reason to be hopeful. Perhaps as many as a quarter of the men in his column were regulars, and, although many of the units were armed with antiquated muskets, their arms were still superior to the ad hoc weapons of Price's State Guard. Moreover, the reinforcing regiments from Kansas and Iowa were rugged and feisty. Colonel George Deitzler's 1st Kansas had a company known as the "Stubs," so called because so many of its members were short. The Stubs had formed in the antebellum years to defend "Bleeding Kansas" against Missouri border ruffians and had earned a reputation for ferocity. The men of the 1st Iowa brought two canine mascots with them to the battle, and, although their enlistments had expired during the stay in Springfield, the men had voted to stay and fight. Finally, Lyon had another advantage he did not even know about—McCulloch's camp had not posted a picket line.

Price had lost his temper on the 9th and delivered an ultimatum to McCulloch. If the Texan would not attack, Price would take the State Guard and advance on his own. In response, McCulloch had called together his officers for a vote and found that his was the minority voice of dissent. Reluctantly submitting, the Texan had ordered a night march to prepare for a dawn assault on Springfield on the morning of August 10. After more than a week of false starts and procrastination, Lyon and McCulloch planned to deliver simultaneous strikes. The weather turned stormy just as McCulloch prepared to leave. Anxious to avoid getting the men's powder wet, the Texan postponed the march until dawn, but he neglected to send pickets out. The army passed the night unguarded.

McCulloch's campsite lay on both sides of a shallow stream called Wilson Creek.

(After-battle reports incorrectly referenced the body of water as Wilson's Creek, and this became the name of the battle.) The creek ran roughly north-south and was crossed by the Wire Road, which led northeast to Springfield. Approaching the position at 4 am, Lyon chose to leave the road, cross the creek, and attack from due north, hopeful that this would enhance the element of surprise. The trouble was that the landscape was strewn with roving foragers from Price's State Guard, whose undisciplined failure to stay in camp ironically proved helpful. While advancing, Lyon's skirmishers encountered some of these wandering men and put them to flight, but in their retreat the foragers managed to sound the alarm.

Stunned into action, one of Price's cavalry regiments hastily deployed on a hill just north of the camps. The first casualties of the battle occurred while Lyon's advance guard stormed the hill, soon to be rechristened "Bloody Hill." Deitzler's 1st Kansas, including the Stubs, joined the all-German 1st Missouri Regiment in leading the charge. The men moved so cautiously that they did not reach the crest until 5:30 am. At that point, buoyed by success, Lyon proudly proclaimed to his chief of staff, "In less than an hour the enemy will wish they were a thousand miles away."

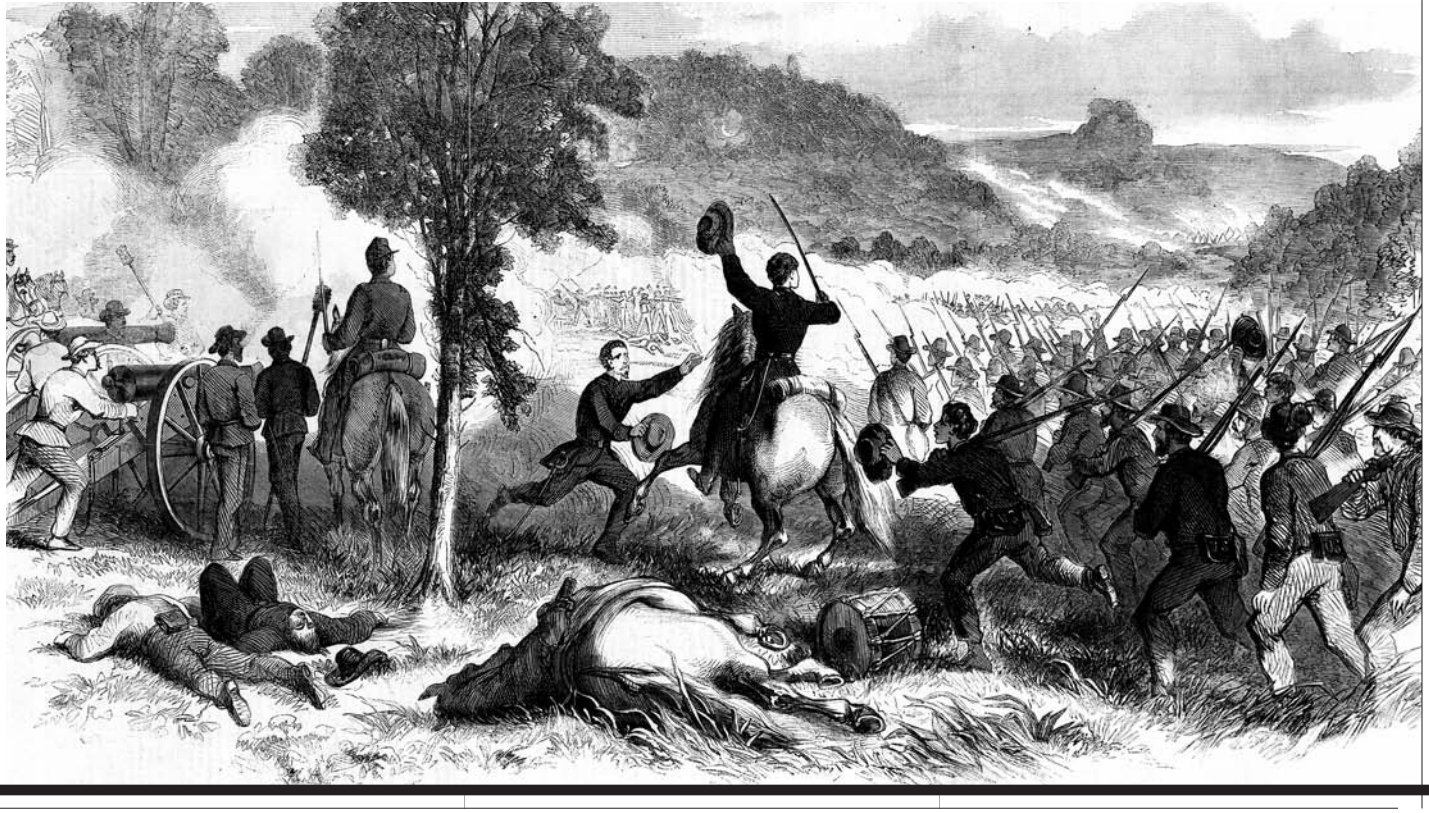
McCulloch might just as well have been that far away, for he was completely in the dark when the opening shots rang out. The landscape around Wilson Creek gave rise to an "acoustic shadow," a peculiar deadening phenomenon that can arise when topographical features or localized variances in air density block otherwise discernible sound. While the battle raged, McCulloch breakfasted placidly with Price, enjoying cornbread, beef, and coffee. When couriers reached him to announce the commencement of hostilities, the Texan laughed. Still, he sent some cavalry to investigate, and when further reports of fighting trickled in, he decided that it was time to adjourn his meal.

By then, Lyon's advance had begun to bog down, not because of the threat posed by Price's cavalry, which the Federals had brushed away, but because of the unnerving effect of an artillery battery that took Lyon completely by surprise when he pushed to the crest of Bloody Hill. The battery was located at the edge of a cornfield on the far side of Wilson Creek. Its men had been in the midst of preparing breakfast when they observed the action opening and decided to pitch in, delivering a blast of case shot and shell against the Federal flank. Lyon halted and brought up a battery of his own, and a strangely personal duel ensued.

Commanding Lyon's battery was Captain James Totten, a Pennsylvania-born regular who had served in Arkansas before the war. Venerated as a local hero by the citizens of Little Rock, Totten had received a sword as a token of esteem from the Arkansas ladies and then had horrified them by unsheathing it in defense of the Union. Engaging him was the Pulaski Light Battery, formerly the Totten Light Battery, whose gunners Totten had personally trained while stationed in Arkansas. Evidently his training was not comprehensive, as neither battery fired with great accuracy and casualties were low in both units.

Lyon, however, was sufficiently perturbed to halt his advance and begin building a defensive position on the crest of

The 1st Iowa Regiment advances at Wilson's Creek. Although their enlistment terms had run out before the battle, the Iowans voted to stay and fight.



LYON ORDERED THE 2ND KANSAS REGIMENT TO BRACE THE RETREATING LINE. "HOW THE BLOOD LEAPED IN OUR VEINS THEN," ONE OF THE KANSANS RECALLED.

Bloody Hill. This had the effect of surrendering the initiative to the enemy at a time when Price and McCulloch were still trying to discern what was happening. Worse yet, Lyon formed his line on the peak of the hill instead of on the military crest or shoulder of the hill, which meant that his infantry could not see or shoot at anyone forming along the base. For the time being, the implications of these errors were yet to be realized. Lyon, pleased with his progress, listened with encouragement as the first sounds of artillery erupted from the south, signaling the opening of Sigel's offensive.

The German colonel's attack was actually faring better than he or Lyon could have foreseen. Arriving on schedule, Sigel discovered, much as Lyon had, that the enemy camps were unguarded. Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri soldiers were sleeping or milling about in a stubble field, completely ignorant of the engagement that had opened scarcely a mile away—acoustic shadow was doing double duty for the Federals this day. Sigel promptly ordered up a battery of artillery and opened fire on the enemy camp. The result was instant pandemonium. Stunned Confederates dissolved into a wild mob, spreading panic among the thousands of unarmed men and camp followers whom Price had insisted upon bringing along. Delighted with his progress, Sigel advanced his infantry into the stubble field, gathering more than 100 prisoners with minimal effort.

In the meantime, Lyon was actively striving to advance once more. Having amassed some 2,800 men on the hill, he finally launched a probe with the 1st Missouri and 1st Kansas Regiments. High prairie grass, thickets, and scrub oaks undermined coordination, and the regiments essentially blundered into Price's still-forming line at the base of the hill. The 1st Kansas went in with a cheer, trading close-range volleys with Price's men. The commander of the 1st Missouri Regiment, Lt. Col. George L. Andrews, was preparing to charge when he noticed a State Guard unit maneuvering around his flank. The maneuver was accidental, as Price's regiments were still coming into line chaotically due to their poor discipline, but the two Federal units suddenly stopped advancing and braced themselves for an attack. Price quickly complied. A protracted and sanguinary struggle began on the side of the hill, sometimes at distances as short as 30 yards.

It was "a perfect hurricane of bullets," one participant observed. Casualties accumulated rapidly, while officers walked the lines shouting words of assurance. One major in the 1st Kansas even promised his men that anyone killed in the line of duty would go directly to heaven. The fighting raged inconclusively until nearly 7:30 AM, at which point the strength of Price's growing line forced Lyon's regiments into retreat. Lyon quickly ordered the 2nd Kansas Regiment to brace the retreating line. "How the blood leaped in our veins then," one of the Kansans recalled. The countercharge was short, fierce, and successful, and Price's Guard units broke off their attack to regroup at the base of the hill.

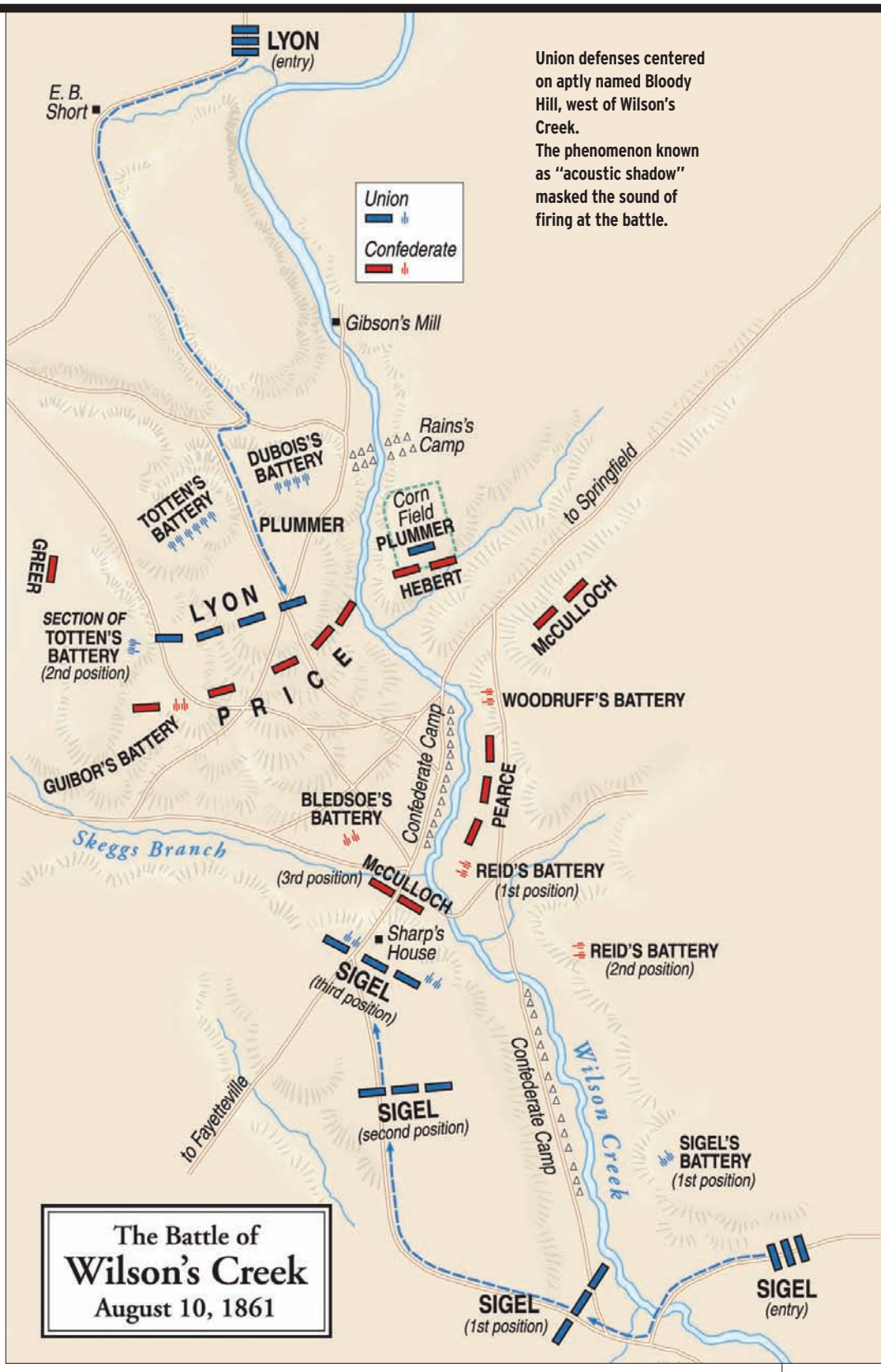
By now it was 8 AM. Lyon's offensive had essentially spent itself, and whatever potential for victory remained squarely

with Sigel. McCulloch had arrived on Sigel's front, and he was striving to make sense of the German's curious movements. After scattering thousands of men about the countryside, Sigel had pushed through the stubble field and deployed his artillery in a farmyard near the edge of a plateau, still some distance from Bloody Hill and the rest of the battle. Then, seemingly content with his accomplishments, the German went about gathering prisoners and shelling distant units of the State Guard. He made no further attempt to reach Lyon and did not even deploy his infantry to defend against a counterattack. Instead, he left the men in columns on the road. Still more absurd, he made little effort to screen the edge of the plateau, which provided ideal cover for a counterattacking force. It was a situation that virtually embraced disaster with open arms, and McCulloch was not long in appreciating the fact.

After forming his assessment, the Texan quickly rode off to find men with whom to make it a reality. Neglecting an available reserve of Arkansans, McCulloch summoned several companies of Hébert's 3rd Louisiana. "Come, my brave lads," the general called. "I have a battery for you to charge, and the day is ours!" The Louisianans followed dutifully, and McCulloch deployed them just below the edge of the plateau.

Sigel had seen the approaching column, but he thought it might be the vanguard of Lyon's forces. To make sure, he sent a solitary soldier down the road to challenge them. Approaching to within a few feet, the soldier found himself face to face with McCulloch. "What force is this?" McCulloch demanded. "Sigel's brigade," the soldier replied, raising his musket to fire. Luckily for McCulloch, one of the Louisianans shot first, dropping the Missourian in his tracks before he could fire. "That was a good shot," the general remarked. He ordered a charge.

Sigel's men outnumbered their assailants 3-to-1, but they were in no state to resist the sudden onslaught. Stunned and bewildered, the artillerists and their meager supports fled wildly



ABOVE: Union defenses centered on aptly named Bloody Hill, west of Wilson's Creek. The topographical phenomenon known as "acoustic shadow" masked the sound of firing at the battle. OPPOSITE: Famed painter N.C. Wyeth's dream-like painting of the Battle of Wilson's Creek now hangs in the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City. Bloody Hill can be seen in the background.

Mortally wounded, Nathaniel Lyon reels in the saddle as Private Ed Lehmann of the 1st U.S. Cavalry rushes to catch him. Lyon died almost instantly from a bullet to the heart and lungs.

across the field, abandoning four guns and a caisson and plunging headlong into the column of infantry that Sigel had left undeployed in the road. Panic quickly spread through the column, with German recruits scattering wild-eyed in all directions despite their commander's energetic attempts to rally them. Sigel strove mightily to make the most of disaster, salvaging some 400 of his original 1,100 troops and hurrying them to the rear. McCulloch's cavalry caught up with him and wiped out most of his force, but Sigel got away. Wrapping himself in a blanket to conceal his rank, he abandoned his men and hid in a cornfield to evade capture before eventually returning to Springfield.

Back on Bloody Hill, Lyon remained ignorant of the events on Sigel's front. It was 10 AM, and most of the Federal soldiers were in line trading scattered volleys with Price's Guard while the ineffectual artillery duel raged on. Lyon's confidence was dwindling. Grazed by one bullet on the side of the head and struck painfully in the calf by another, he was left limping awkwardly to the rear after a third bullet killed his horse. "I am afraid the day is lost," he moaned to his chief of staff, Major John Schofield. "No, General, let us try once more," Schofield responded.

Thus encouraged, Lyon determined to return to the front. With help from his staff, he mounted a replacement horse, and with blood dripping from his shoe he advanced toward the crest of the hill to lead a final desperate charge. Waving his hat, Lyon beckoned to the nearest regiment. "Come on, my brave boys!" he cried. "I will lead you! Forward!" Then a volley erupted from the underbrush ahead, a bullet piercing his heart and lungs. Lyon tried to dismount, but fell from his horse into the arms of his orderly, Private Ed Lehmann of the 1st U.S. Cavalry. "Lehmann, I am going," Lyon murmured, then died. Lyon's aides carried his body to the rear and placed it under a tree, pulling his coattails over his face to conceal his identity and prevent panic from spreading through the ranks. Then they sent for Sturgis, the senior officer remaining on Bloody Hill.

It took about 30 minutes to locate Sturgis. During that time, Price launched a second major attack. As with his first offensive, the effort was awkward and piecemeal, hindered by the men's poor training and paucity of ammunition. Units advanced cautiously until they came

within range of the Federal line. Then the men fell prone and hugged the scant cover of the prairie grass as they fired. All the while, Price labored to maintain alignment among the regiments, shrugging off a painful wound in the side. McCulloch strove to help with the offensive, redirecting most of his units to Bloody Hill, but few arrived in time to join the action. Ultimately, the second Confederate assault failed much as the first one had, from lack of coordination.

Another lull settled over Bloody Hill, as Lyon's aides finally managed to locate Sturgis. Distraught over the news of Lyon's death, the major quickly called a council of war to determine how best to proceed. Everyone felt that victory depended on Sigel's timely arrival. No one had heard from the German, but the officers quickly adjourned in excitement after they observed a column of infantry approaching from the south. The column was actually the 3rd Arkansas, marching from reserve to reinforce the State Guard. Greeting the men with aplomb, Price cautioned: "Keep as cool as the inside of a cucumber. Take your position and hold it whatever you do. Don't yield an inch." Moving up alongside the Arkansans, the 3rd Louisiana joined Price's line alongside the 5th Arkansas. McCulloch had finally achieved his grand concentration. The stage was set for one final effort.

Up and down the line, weary members of the Missouri State Guard joined McCulloch's volunteers in charging up Bloody Hill. Clouds of smoke obscured the landscape, and men fell in scores. At one point, members of the Guard advanced to within 20 feet of Totten's guns before point-blank blasts of canister sent them reeling. Sturgis pulled part of the 1st Iowa from the line and sent it in a feverish counterattack to plug a hole after another hard-pressed unit buckled. Try as they might, the men of Price's and McCulloch's commands were unable to break the Union line. "Some of the best blood in the land was being spilled as recklessly as if it were ditch water," one survivor lamented.

At this juncture, realizing that Sigel was not coming to the rescue and learning that several of his units were running low on ammunition, Sturgis decided to disengage and withdraw to Springfield. Aided by a lull in the fighting as McCulloch's and Price's men fell back in exhaustion, the Federal soldiers were able to retreat in good order, pulling out all of their artillery pieces and many of their wounded, although they accidentally left Lyon's body behind. It took Price and McCulloch a surprisingly long time to learn that the enemy had gone. Upon reaching the top of Bloody Hill, one Arkansas officer recalled watching the retreating column. "We were glad to see them go."

In their wake, the Federal forces left the devastation of what had been a surprisingly bloody contest. Combined casualties numbered over 2,500, and the medical officers of both armies were woefully unprepared for the task they faced. Soon after Sturgis reached Springfield, the wounded from his regiments overflowed public buildings, and surgeons began requisitioning private homes. Days later, one wounded man in Springfield observed that "the stench from the dead and dying was so offensive as to be almost intolerable."

The Union officers convened another council of war in Springfield and unanimously agreed that the best course of action was to fall back on Rolla—precisely the plan that Frémont had advocated in the first place. Sturgis abdicated command to Sigel at this point, and Sigel showed such favoritism to his fellow Germans on the retreat that he almost provoked a mutiny within the ranks.

With the crisis past, Price and McCulloch immediately set to squabbling again. Price urged a follow-up advance, but McCulloch, acutely aware of supply shortages, demurred. In the coming days, their mutual antipathy deepened, and they ultimately went their separate ways, diffusing any strength they might have enjoyed through concentration. Newspapers of both sides claimed success at Wilson's Creek. "Never has a greater victory crowned the efforts of the friends of Liberty and Equal Rights," crowed the pro-Confederate *Liberty Tribune*. "The victory of the Union force was brilliant and overwhelming," retorted the Topeka, Kansas *State Record*.

Aside from the casualties, the immediate effect of Wilson's Creek was negligible. Both sides pulled back, and the strategic picture remained unchanged. But the larger results of Lyon's campaign through Missouri had far-reaching consequences. In two months' time, the scrappy New Englander had secured most of the state for Union arms, but the aggressiveness of his conquest left the countryside in a state of continual unrest. Bloody partisan confrontations would erupt in the coming months, and savage guerrilla fighting would persist throughout the war and beyond, giving birth to such experienced gunmen as Frank and Jesse James and their cousin and train-robbing henchman, Cole Younger. □

Elite

The Civil War came at a crossroads moment in world history. New weapons made possible by industrialization were putting paid to old techniques of warfare that had endured since the Napoleonic Era. This made the war more difficult for men trained in classical methods but also forced innovation as those more mentally flexible found effective ways to use the new inventions. At the same time, elite units made their mark on the battlefield; some were new creations while others continued existing traditions. Such units were used to accomplish duties beyond that of a regular unit. The American military had seen elite units in the past, particularly Rogers' Rangers during the French and Indian War. The Civil War's elite outfits would build upon that proud tradition.

Artillery was one of the centerpieces of Civil War armies. Cannons supplied the firepower to break up enemy formations, batter down fortifications, and instill fear in opponents who lacked it. The disadvantage to artillery was its relative lack of mobility. Most guns had to be drawn by teams of horses using large carriages while the gun crews often walked alongside their pieces, exposed to enemy sniper fire. Over time advances in metallurgy allowed lighter yet still powerful guns that were easier to move. Such mobile cannons could be quickly dispatched to critical points on the battlefield, where their firepower might make the difference between victory and defeat.

The first versions of horse artillery, also called flying artillery in reference to their speed, came about during the Thirty Years' War in King Gustavus Adolphus's Swedish Army. Subsequent European armies created their own versions in the 18th and 19th centuries, which flourished during the Napoleonic Wars in particular. The young United States Army noted these developments and began working on horse artillery during the War of 1812, although early efforts were stifled. Finally, the horse artillery began to come into its own during the Mexican-American War, where it proved a great advantage in almost every major battle.

When the Civil War began, the Union Army found itself in possession of a much larger artillery park than the Confederacy, including over 160 field pieces that could be used in horse artillery formations. The Rebels, in contrast, initially possessed only 35 such cannons. The North also retained the majority of trained artillery soldiers. Although many artillery officers resigned to serve the South, they would use mostly untrained militia and recruits to man their guns, requiring time to build their skills. This meant the preponderance of horse artillery units were in the Union forces.

The Army of the Potomac formed an entire brigade of horse artillery in 1861. This unit drew five batteries from both the 2nd and 3rd U.S. Artillery Regiments. It fought in the Peninsula Campaign in 1862 and quickly proved a model of effectiveness and accuracy. By the time of Gettysburg in mid-1863, the Union horse artillery had grown to two brigades with a total of 12 batteries of U.S. Artillery and a battery each from Pennsylvania, New York, and Michigan. These units fought in most of the Army of the Potomac's major battles until war's end. On several occasions their speed and accurate fire helped turn the tide.

The Union's fast, mobile artillery batteries performed their duty with distinction, but the most famous of the horse artillery batteries would serve in the Confederate Army. Roger Chew was only 18 when the war began, but the energetic youth wasted no time. He raised a battery of horse artillery with all its officers drawn from the body of cadets at the Virginia Military Academy. It is believed that Chew's battery was the first Confederate horse artillery to see action against the North during the war. His men saw more action than any other artillery battery in Southern service, although not always as an independent unit. In 1862 the battery was absorbed into a battalion-sized unit led by

Library of Congress

Captain Horatio Gibson's battery of the 3rd U.S. Artillery in park at Fair Oaks, Virginia, in June 1862. The unit was one of five batteries that comprised the Union Army's first horse artillery brigade in 1861.

The rise of the Industrial Age combined with American ingenuity to form special units during the Civil War. Such units as the horse artillery, sharpshooters, sappers, and miners were used for specialized duties during the war.

Units of the Civil War

BY CHRISTOPHER MISKIMON

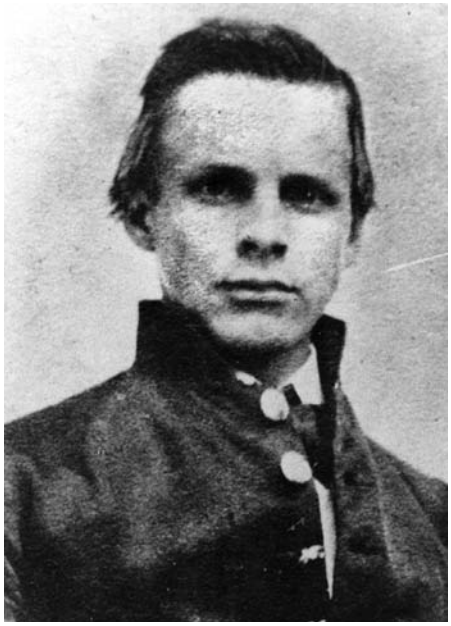
the Confederacy's other famous horse artillery commander, Major John Pelham.

The young Pelham, a 22-year-old cadet at West Point when the war began, was from Alabama and left the Academy a few weeks before graduating to return to his home state. There he was given a commission as an artillery lieutenant before being sent to Virginia with his battery. At the Battle of First Manassas, he proved himself calm under fire and notably directed his guns against a Union attack at Henry House Hill, which proved critical in driving back the enemy. Both General Joseph E. Johnston and Colonel J.E.B. Stuart noted how well the young Pelham performed in that battle. He was promoted to the rank of captain, and Johnston recommended that Pelham's battery be assigned as horse artillery to Stuart's cavalry.

During the winter of 1861-1862, Pelham conducted an intensive training regimen, drilling his artillerymen to high standards. This meant not only firing practice, but also repeated drills on moving, placing, and tearing down their guns quickly. This prepared the battery to respond rapidly to changing battlefield conditions. Pelham's battery was a large one, with 150 men serving eight guns, six of them either 6- or 12-pounder howitzers. These guns, in turn, were hauled by 130 horses. By the spring of 1862, the unit was ready to go into action.

During the Peninsula Campaign, Johnston's army began retreating from the Williamsburg area. The Confederate rear guard was near Williamsburg when the attacking Federal troops caught up to it. Three guns of Pelham's battery set up in the enemy's path; for the next three hours they poured fire into the Union ranks, firing some 360 rounds, a rate of 40 rounds per hour per gun. Due in large part to their efforts, the Confederate forces were able to withdraw successfully.

The battery's next feat occurred during the Seven Days Battles in June and July 1862. Stuart's cavalry was sent on a mission to interdict the Union supply lines. On June 29, Confederate scouts found the Union gunboat USS *Marblehead* anchored in the Pamunkey River, landing a small force of infantry. Stuart directed Pelham to attack the ship with his guns. The eager Pelham set up a howitzer on a piece of high ground overlooking the ship and pelted the vessel with a lethal rain of shells. Once the Union ship gathered enough steam, her captain recalled the infantry and began to withdraw down the river. Pelham gave chase, his gun crew limbering their weapon and moving downriver until they again had the range and resumed bombardment until *Marblehead* had fully retreated. Pelham's courage and the way his gunners handled their cannons drew great praise from Stuart, who recommended the young officer for another promotion, even though such advancement would mean Pelham's reassignment to another unit.



Charismatic leaders of elite Civil War units included Confederate Major John Pelham, above, who led a battalion of horse artillery, and Union Colonel Hiram Berdan, below, who organized the war's best-known marksmen, Berdan's Sharpshooters.

Library of Congress

After his promotion to major, Pelham combined his former battery with those of Chew and Captain James Hart into a Horse Artillery Battalion. The new unit fought with distinction over the next few months. Its most famous action occurred at the Battle of Fredericksburg on December 13, 1862. There, Pelham deployed two of his guns a full half-mile ahead of Lt. Gen. Stonewall Jackson's troops. At 9 AM, they gazed through the lifting fog to find themselves on the flank of Union Maj. Gen. William Franklin's grand division. The gunners opened fire, smoke and flame pouring from the muzzles of their cannons. Shots tore into the shocked Union troops, who thought at least two batteries of guns were ranging on them.

Abandoning their original advance, the Union soldiers turned to attack the deadly new threat. Five artillery batteries and another brigade of infantry were thrown forward to support the Union assault. The attacking troops received a hot welcome from Pelham's guns, which he continually moved to best engage the latest threat. Soon, however, one of his cannons was put out of action, prompting Stuart to order him to withdraw his remaining gun. Upon receiving this order, Pelham replied, "Tell the general I can hold my ground." The single gun kept up a high rate of fire, further hindering the enemy troops from advancing. When Stuart again ordered him to retreat, Pelham disregarded the instruction and kept firing. Only when a third withdrawal order arrived did Pelham comply. It was 11 AM, and his sole gun was out of ammunition anyway.

The Horse Artillery Battalion served for the rest of the war, but without its brave young commander. On March 17, 1863, Pelham joined in a cavalry charge against Union troops at Kelly's Ford on the Rappahannock River. Advancing with the 3rd

Don Troiani / Private Collection / Bridgeman Images

John Pelham, in command of his horse artillery, delayed advancing Federal troops at Fredericksburg, Virginia in 1862. Pelham's daring would lead to his death at the Battle of Kelly's Ford exactly six months later. Painting by Don Troiani.

Virginia Cavalry, he was hit in the neck and killed by artillery fire. After his death, a story circulated that three young women went into mourning for him simultaneously. Roger Chew took command of the battalion, leading it until the war ended.

Elite units were also formed around lighter armaments. Accurate, long-range rifle fire had been an American tradition since the Colonial period. Prior to the Civil War, muzzleloading rifles had much better accuracy than the standard muskets but took longer to load and required more training to use effectively. They were considered specialty weapons usually carried by individuals or small units. Advances in technology prior to the conflict introduced the Minie bullet, wrongly called a "ball," into wide use, which allowed rapid reloading while retaining accuracy. Effective fire could now be placed upon an enemy at ranges greater than ever before. Marksmanship became a universally desired trait. In addition, new and practical breechloading and repeating rifle designs were becoming available for mass production.

Both sides were quick to realize the implications and utility of expert marksmen. Each raised units of sharpshooters during the war. Many were company-size formations attached to regular infantry regiments, but a number of regimental-size groups were also formed, taking advantage of the large number of Americans now well practiced in the use of firearms. By far the best known of these units was Berdan's Sharpshooters, named for its founder, Hiram Berdan. The New York-born Berdan was a wealthy entrepreneur with a number of inventions to his name, including a repeating rifle and a new musket ball design. He was also an expert shot. During the summer 1861, Berdan petitioned the Army to create an independent sharpshooter regiment. The idea was accepted, with Berdan himself assigned to command the unit. He was given 90 days to raise the unit to full strength.

The subsequent recruiting drive was carried out across the North and challenged potential inductees to demonstrate their skills. Anyone who wished to join the regiment had to put 10 shots into a bull's eye at a distance of 200 yards. The distance of each shot from the target's center was then measured, and the average could not be more than five inches. Candidates would use their own rifles and if accepted would receive $60 for their weapons. The turnout was so high that Berdan not only raised his full regiment within the 90-day limit but also attracted enough recruits to man a second regiment.

By the end of September, both regiments were in Washington, D.C., undergoing extensive training. They practiced at distances of up to 600 yards and were also drilled as skirmishers. Citizens often turned out to watch the riflemen sharpen their skills. The units were designated the 1st and

Library of Congress

Famed Northern artist Winslow Homer painted this color study of a Union sharpshooter perched precariously atop a tree limb. The sniper's rifle appears to sport a civilian hunting sight, which saw limited use in the war.

2nd Regiments, United States Sharpshooters. A few men kept their civilian rifles, but this created difficulties in supplying adequate ammunition in varying calibers. Berdan also had problems acquiring Sharps rifles for his men—the full order of 2,000 weapons was not delivered until May 1862. In the interim, Colt revolving rifles were issued. The troops had distinctive uniforms as well, dark green coats with blue pants (the pants were later changed to green). Their cap badges contained the letters "U.S.S.S." within a wreath.

Once the sharpshooters went into action they quickly proved their usefulness and skill. During the Battle of Yorktown in April and May 1862, they used their long-range accuracy against Confederate artillery positions. A handful of men shot down the entire crew of one enemy cannon, knocking it out of action. Each time a Southern soldier ran out to get the gun back into action, he was struck by a sharpshooter's fire. In another instance, a Confederate gun was surrounded by sandbags. Rounds were fired into the sandbags near the bore of the weapon, causing the sand to pour into it. When the crew tried to fire the weapon, it burst, wounding several of the gunners. One of the riflemen, Private Truman Head, nicknamed "California Joe," was present at Yorktown and gained a reputation for hitting enemy gunners and horsemen. It is believed he bought his own Sharps rifle before the unit was issued them. His skill with a rifle was widely reported in the press at the time. Ironically, failing eyesight led to his discharge later in 1862.

Berdan's Sharpshooters went on to fight in most of the battles in the eastern theater of the war, including Gettysburg and the siege of Petersburg. Their accurate fire took its toll of Confederate troops, but over time the two regiments paid a fearful toll of their own. By February 1865, when both units were discharged from service, they had lost over half their original numbers in dead and wounded. The willingness of these men to act so boldly in action and their frequent assignment as skirmishers placed them in harm's way time and again. It was a high price to pay for the lasting fame that Berdan's Sharpshooters won during the war.

While Berdan made his name and units famous in the East, another civilian-turned-soldier named John Ward Birge raised his own regiment of rifle experts in Saint Louis. Birge was an optometrist in peacetime, but like Berdan quickly donned a uniform after the war's outbreak. The commander of the Union Department of the West, Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont, wanted to raise his own sharpshooter unit and authorized Birge to do so. To be eligible to join, a recruit had to hit a target at 200 yards, with no more than three shots to be more than 10 inches apart. Most of the men came from Mis-

souri, Ohio, and Illinois. Like Berdan, Birge wanted a distinctive uniform for his men but had to settle for a standard uniform with a sugar loaf hat—a sort of tall, wide-brimmed hat common to the era. By mid-1862 the hat was replaced.

Under the name Birge's Western Sharpshooters, the regiment went into action in December 1861 against Confederate irregular troops in Missouri, later performing scouting duty. After this they were attached to Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's command and took part in the Fort Donelson campaign. During the campaign they kept an enemy artillery battery out of action for three full days. At Shiloh in April 1862, they occupied one of the most hotly contested parts of the line, known as the Hornet's Nest. After the battle the unit was renamed the 14th Missouri Infantry; a few months later it was renamed once more as the 66th Illinois Infantry. Despite the new numerical designations, the regiment was still known as the Western Sharpshooters. After spending most of 1863 in anti-guerrilla operations, it became part of Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's army during the Atlanta campaign. During this time many troops spent their own money to purchase Henry repeating rifles, at $40 a major purchase at the time. During the March to the Sea, they captured a Confederate artillery battery and defeated a 1,000-strong force of Georgia militia that was dug in behind breastworks. At war's end they marched in the Grand Review in Washington D.C.

The Confederacy was slow to form its own sharpshooter regiments even though it often had sharpshooter companies within existing infantry units. It took until April 1863 before sharpshooter regiments were authorized. Even then they were formed by taking suitable men from units already on active service. Since men were loath to leave their home regiments and commanders were unwilling to lose their best shots, Southern sharpshooter units were a mix of regular troops and a few picked men. Most Sharpshooter units still performed well.

Other specialized troops included sappers and miners. These specially formed engineer troops were used to dig trenches, artillery positions, and tunnels. The trenches and artillery positions were designed to provide cover to soldiers and guns as they moved slowly closer to the enemy defenses. Eventually they got close enough for the guns to knock down the enemy's defensive works. Tunnels were used to undermine enemy defenses, often to destroy them by packing the tunnels with explosives. Such efforts were not new to warfare; by the time of the Civil War the art of trench and tunnel-building was advanced and standardized, with a body of existing knowledge for the soldiers to draw upon. Such knowledge was available to both sides as many of the officers had attended West Point, long known for its engineering curriculum. Since the Confederate armies were generally on the defensive when it came to sieges, the vast majority of such work was done by Union troops against Southern cities and forts. The title of "sapper" came from the term sap, defined as a trench dug while under fire from an enemy. Usually they were dug in a zigzag manner to provide cover while approaching an enemy fortification. Soldiers trained in such operations were called Sappers, a title still used by U.S. Army engineers to this day.

When the war began the Union Army had but a single battalion of engineers. Several states raised their own engineer units, but the African American soldiers

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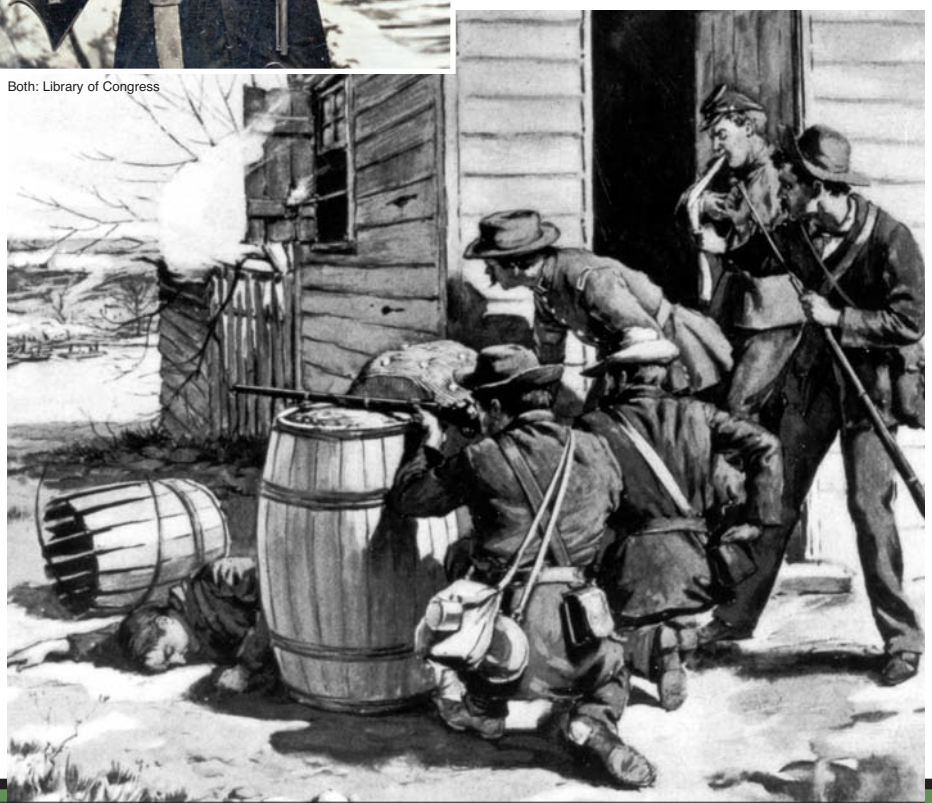


LEFT: A jaunty and well-armed member of the 2nd U.S. Sharpshooters flourishes a target rifle, Bowie knife, and Colt 1849 pocket revolver. BELOW: Confederate sharpshooters from Brig. Gen. William Barksdale's Mississippi brigade fire warily from behind barrels in deadly street fighting in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in December 1862.

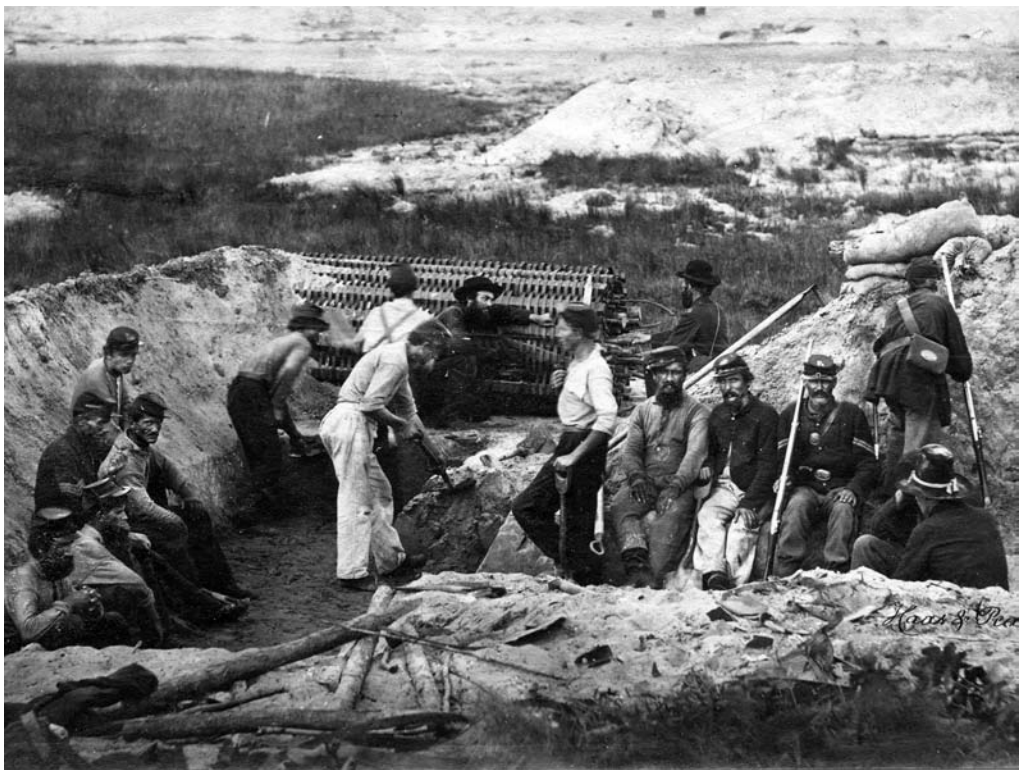
of the United States Colored Troops (USCT) would eventually raise the most, five full regiments. These troops would prove instrumental in the seizure of a number of Confederate positions over the course of the war. Often they were joined by numbers of infantrymen attached to them to help perform the almost constant digging engineer operations required. Such work was called fatigue duty to denote it did not involve martial skills or the use of weapons. Soldiers on fatigue duty were due extra pay in varying amounts depending on whether it was skilled or unskilled labor.

The often methodical routine of engineer work can be seen during the Siege of Vicksburg, Mississippi in 1863. Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant had tried twice to take the city by direct assault but failed in each attempt. He decided he would have to lay siege to the town, which had an extensive system of defenses around it. One of the positions in this system was called the Great Redoubt, also known as the Third Louisiana Redan. A redan is a V-shaped section of fortification with the point of the V toward the enemy. Two Union engineer units were called in: the 1st Missouri Engineers, who were widely referred to as the Engineer Regiment of the West, and Patterson's Independent Company of Engineers and Mechanics, originally from Kentucky.

It was decided the redan would be attacked by digging a sap toward it. Several others would be attacked the same way. A group of 300 men was divided into a pair of fatigue details of 150 each. They began their work on May 23. The first would begin the sap at night, using the darkness as cover from enemy observation. The men were spaced out at five-foot intervals with picks and shovels and began digging. By daybreak they would connect their section of trench with that of the men to their sides, providing enough depth to protect the next shift from enemy fire. They would work through the day, making the new sap deep enough for troops to move through. Each night the process would continue, moving the trench closer to the redoubt. Meanwhile, soldiers with coal-mining experience were gathered from across the Union force.

By June 23, they reached the ditch that went around the redan. Now the miners went to work. A special detail of 36 men began digging a shaft under the Great Redoubt. Like the sap detail, this group was divided in half. The first 18 men also worked at night with a group of six men working for an hour each. The first pair would use picks to dig out the tunnel while the second two would shovel the displaced soil into sacks; the remaining duo would carry the sacks out to the ditch. The next shift would repeat this pattern. The men worked efficiently and within two days had dug a tunnel 45 feet under the redan with two minor shafts 15 feet deep set at 45-degree angles from the main one. The shaft was five feet high and four feet wide.

This space was large enough to pack 2,200 pounds of gunpowder directly beneath the redoubt. After setting the fuses a large amount of earth was packed back into the tunnel to help concentrate the blast. The fuses were lit on the afternoon of June 25, the explosion sending an enormous cascade of earth into the air. These pieces rained back down in a fine cloud, bringing the remains of tents, gun carriages, and men with them. Union forces attacked, but the Confederates managed to regroup and repelled the attackers. Undaunted, the Union engineers created a new shaft and repeated the process on July 1. The fort was effectively destroyed, but still the Rebel troops held the breach closed. This time the Northern troops prepared for another attack, even widening the original sap so the assaulting units could march in columns of four. Before this final effort became necessary, however, the Confederate commander, Lt. Gen. John Pemberton, surrendered Vicksburg, in part because of the continued threat of



ABOVE: Union sappers at work on Morris Island, South Carolina, in 1863. The sap, a large basket containing logs, was used to protect the diggers and was rolled forward as a trench advanced. Armed infantrymen cover the workers as they dig. OPPOSITE TOP: The sturdily built entrance to the Union mine at Petersburg was the work of former civilian coal miners. OPPOSITE BELOW: Lieutenant Colonel Henry Pleasants of the 48th Pennsylvania personally supervises the placement of gunpowder in the mine below the Confederate works at Petersburg, Virginia.

the saps and mines.

The most famous use of sappers and miners came at the siege of Petersburg, Virginia, in the summer of 1864, but this time it was an infantry unit rather than dedicated engineers. The 48th Pennsylvania Infantry was composed mainly of men who worked as miners in civilian life. The unit's commander, Lt. Col. Henry Pleasants, said his men could dig a mine under the Confederate defenses at a point known as Elliot's Salient. Though some of his superiors doubted it would work, they nevertheless approved the plan. The regiment began digging on its own on June 25. They improvised tools by creating makeshift wheelbarrows from cracker boxes, straightened their issued picks to make them more like a miner's version, and used lumber from an abandoned sawmill and a disassembled bridge to shore up the shaft.

The Pennsylvania men dug for 511 feet until they were directly under the salient, 20 feet below it. There they dug another shaft 75 feet long perpendicular to the main one. It was packed with 320 kegs containing 8,000 pounds of explosives before 38 feet of the shaft was also filled back in with soil. An attack was set up for the morning of July 30, but it was bungled when the Colored Troops specially trained for the assault were replaced by a white division that was unfamiliar with the mission or how to navigate the terrain after the explosion. The charges were detonated at 4:44 in the morning. Once again cannons and men flew skyward amid clouds of earth. A huge hole, the Crater, 170 feet long, 30 feet deep, and 100 feet wide, was torn through the Confederate position.

The attacking Union division was briefly stunned by the explosion, delaying its advance. When it finally did move up, the white soldiers charged into the Crater rather than maneuver around it as the African American division was trained to do. Once again the Southern forces rallied quickly; the white soldiers came under heavy fire in the Crater, causing them to seek cover rather than continue the assault. As more Confederate units rushed to the area, they took up firing positions and delivered a punishing fire into the Union ranks, inflicting almost 4,000 casualties and sending them back in defeat. Pleasants' regiment had delivered exactly what he had promised, but the poor followup resulted in a lost chance for victory at the Battle of the Crater.

While sappers and miners carried out their tasks with skill and precision, following up on their success generally proved difficult. It was also hard to completely conceal their activities, which meant the besieged Southern forces could predict where a sap might be used to create a shaft under their defenses. Beyond some unsuccessful countermining attempts, however, there was little done to stop Union engineering efforts.

The staples of Civil War-era armies were infantry, artillery, and cavalry. This triad of combat arms would remain so for decades after the war. Yet even during the 1860s, the Union and Confederate armies were showing the world a hint of things to come. Horse artillery would eventually be supplanted by mobile field guns and infantry mortars, providing the same sort of responsive fire support. Specialized units of sharpshooters would give way to highly trained snipers operating alone or in small groups as rifle technology improved. Combat engineers would continue the sapper tradition. Today it is common for U.S. Army combat units to have engineer detachments attached to them. Americans have always valued those who stand out from the crowd though their own ability and determination. This was no different during the Civil War, when elite combat units gave the rest of the army something to aspire toward and civilians back home someone to look up to as an example. They helped forge a tradition of military excellence that continues to this day.□

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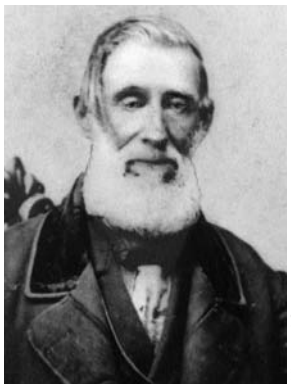
ARMAGEDDON



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Determined to strike Union forces before they reached Nashville, General John Bell Hood threw his entire army at the entrenched enemy at Franklin. The ensuing battle was nothing less than Armageddon for the Army of Tennessee.

BY JOHN WALKER

On the morning of November 30, 1864, Fountain Branch Carter, a 67-year-old farmer, planter, and Confederate sympathizer, watched as his front yard in Franklin, Tennessee, filled up with Union soldiers pitching tents and starting campfires. Carter had come into contact with blue-clad troops before, but never an entire army. The Columbia Pike, a macadamized road that ran past Carter's red-brick farmhouse near the southern edge of town, was also crowded with Union soldiers, wagons, horses, and artillery pieces. More were strung out along the pike as far as Carter could see in the direction of Spring Hill and Columbia to the south. Something bad was coming—and it was coming soon.

The blue columns swarming the town belonged to Maj. Gen. John Schofield's Army of the Ohio, consisting of Schofield's XXIII Corps and Brig. Gen. David Stanley's IV Corps. Charged by Schofield with preparing a defense of Franklin and the two vital bridges over the Harpeth River, Brig. Gen. Jacob Cox and his staff had roused the Carter family before dawn, taken possession of the house, and turned the parlor into their field headquarters. By noon well over 20,000 Federals had either marched past on the pike or taken up positions in a crescent-shaped line of breastworks running east to west 100 yards south of Carter's front door. The Carter home, situated just 50 feet from the pike on the west side of the road, occupied a prominent hill that Cox quickly recognized would be the key to his defensive line.

Federal forces had controlled this region of Tennessee for the past two years and had constructed earthen artillery emplacements on the northern bank of the Harpeth, which they dubbed Fort Granger, where Schofield now made his headquarters. While Cox and Stanley conferred with engineers about how best to get 800 wagons and 23,000 troops across the river and onto the road to Nashville by that evening, Carter had the security of his large family to worry about. Moscow Carter, his oldest living son and a paroled Confederate officer, lived with him—two other sons were serving in the 20th Tennessee Regiment, part of the gray host marching north from Spring Hill that morning—along with four daughters, a widowed daughter-in-law, and nine grandchildren under the age of 12.

After Cox informed him that any fighting that day would take place either west or east of the town, should the Confederates attempt a flanking movement as they had the previous day, Carter decided to remain in his home. A frontal assault on the works south of Carter's home—a deep trench, earthen barriers, abatis, and log entrenchments backed by 60 well-placed cannons in fortified embrasures—appeared unlikely. Carter watched as Cox's men worked to improve the deteriorating two-mile stretch of works, first constructed by Union troops in the spring of 1863. The works stretched around the southern edge of town with both flanks resting on the Harpeth. To cover the small gap in the line that allowed wagons and the rest of the army to enter the village, a Missouri unit erected a second, fallback line of works on the west side of the Columbia Pike 70 yards behind the main line. The new position was located just behind two outbuildings near the Carter home, and six artillery pieces were moved into position in Carter's backyard.

After hiding most of his food stores, Carter escorted more than a dozen family members, a group of neighbors, and three of his long-freed slaves down to his large basement, where they remained when the Battle of Franklin erupted above and around them at 4 PM. The roughly two acres taken up by the Carter home and cot-

Desperate hand-to-hand fighting takes place near the cotton gin at the climax of the Battle of Franklin in Keith Rocco's painting, *On the Rim of the Volcano.* OPPOSITE: Fountain Branch Carter, left, and his son, Captain Tod Carter, who died in the battle.

AT FRANKLIN

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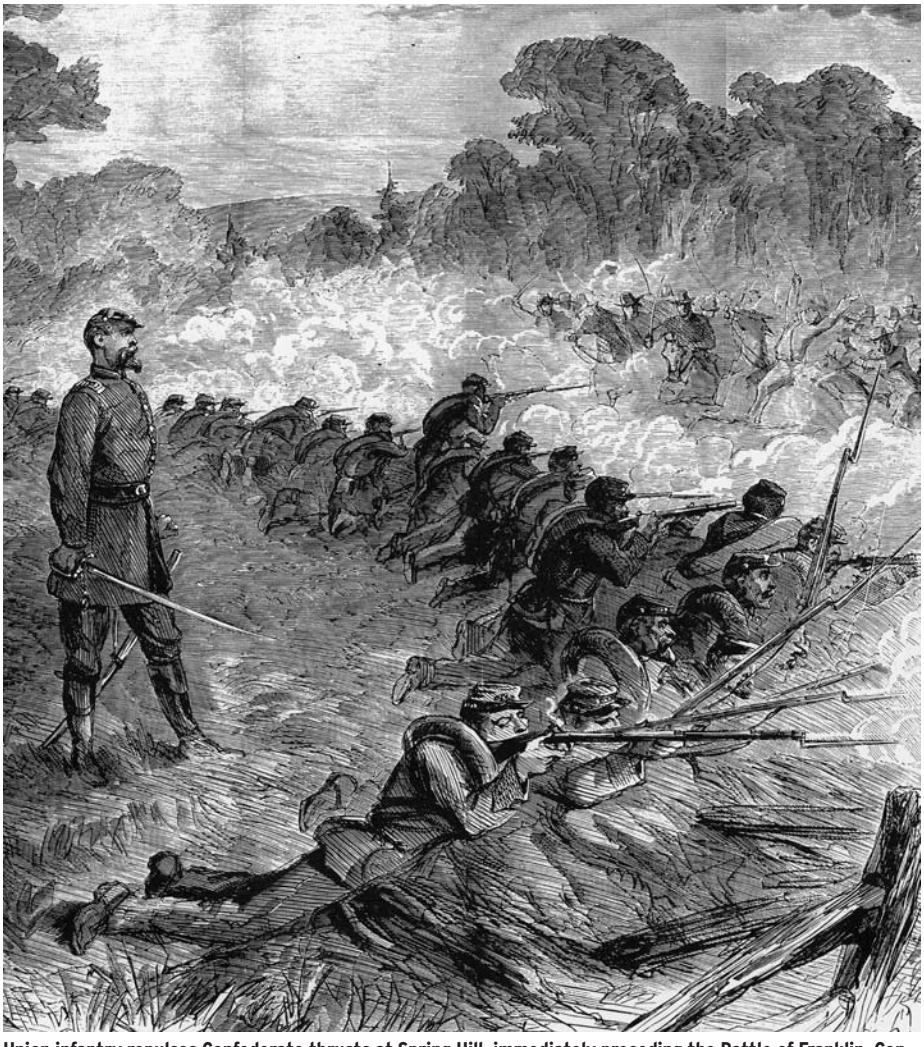


Union infantry repulses Confederate thrusts at Spring Hill, immediately preceding the Battle of Franklin. Confederate generals made multiple mistakes at the engagement, thus missing a chance to destroy at least part of Maj. Gen. John Schofield's army as it marched northward.

ton gin would quickly become the epicenter of one of the most savage, costly, and decisive battles of the Civil War.

Angry and frustrated after his Army of Tennessee failed to trap Schofield's retreating army the previous day at Spring Hill, Lt. Gen. John Bell Hood had decided to gamble everything in a last-ditch attempt to overtake Schofield's two corps at Franklin and drive them into the river. Upon his arrival at Winstead Hill, two miles south of Franklin, at the head of six of his army's nine divisions, Hood dismissed the concerns of his stunned subordinates and ordered a frontal assault to be launched within the hour. Success could alter the military balance in the western theater of the war and prolong Hood's desperate 11th-hour campaign to retake Tennessee.

By the fall of 1864, Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman had decisively achieved one of his objectives, the capture of Atlanta, but not the other, the destruction of Hood's army. Elevated to command after his predecessor, General Joseph E. Johnston, retreated 90 miles from Dalton literally to the outskirts of Atlanta, Hood did what President Jefferson Davis and his advisers wanted him to do—fight. Outnumbered almost 2-to-1 and facing the best commanders the Union could offer, Hood had fought three battles in eight days to defend the city and defeat Sherman in detail. Despite three defeats, Hood managed to extend his lines far enough to prevent Sherman from cutting rail lines into Atlanta, thus thwarting the Union general for five more weeks. Finally, to avoid encirclement, Hood abandoned the city on September 1.

Hoping to force Sherman to abandon Atlanta and fall back to protect his vulnerable single-track line of communications to Chattanooga, Hood led 38,000 Confederates along the railroad into northern Georgia during October, attacking targets of opportunity. Sherman first turned back toward Dalton to deal with Hood, skirmishing over ground captured months earlier, and finally drove the Confederates into Alabama and repaired the railroad. Frustrated, both commanders then opted for radically different plans for their respective campaigns. Sherman cut his supply line, abandoned Atlanta, and set out for the Atlantic coast with 60,000 men, detaching Maj. Gen. George Thomas to Nashville and ordering Schofield to delay Hood's expected advance into middle Tennessee.

After a costly three-week delay, Hood's army reached the Tennessee border on November 21 to a fulsome welcome from exiled Governor Isham Harris. Hood's bold but risky plan to destroy Schofield's army and retake Nashville was backed by Davis and his principal advisers, Generals Braxton Bragg and P.G.T. Beauregard. With surprising skill, Hood moved quickly and got around Schofield's small army at Columbia. By late afternoon on November 29, two Confederate corps had descended on Spring Hill and were in excellent position to cut off the Union retreat. In the fog of war, however, the Confederate high command never managed to spring the trap, allowing Schofield's army to slip by and escape up the pike to Franklin during the night. Hood awoke the next morning "wrathy as a rattlesnake," in the words of one wary subordinate, infuriated at the lost opportunity. He immediately ordered a full pursuit toward Franklin. At a council of war that morning, Hood excoriated everyone but himself for the debacle, singling out Maj. Gen. Benjamin Cheatham in particular, and by extension two of his division commanders, Maj. Gens. Patrick Cleburne and John Brown.

With Colonel Emerson Opdycke's brigade of Brig. Gen. George Wagner's division providing the rear guard, most of Schofield's army made it to the environs of Franklin by noon and immediately began working on the defenses. Stanley ordered Wagner's other two brigades, those of Colonels John Lane and Joseph Conrad, about 3,000 men, to occupy an advanced position astride the Columbia Pike a half mile in front of the main Union works, where they were to delay any general enemy advance and then withdraw into Cox's line when pressured.

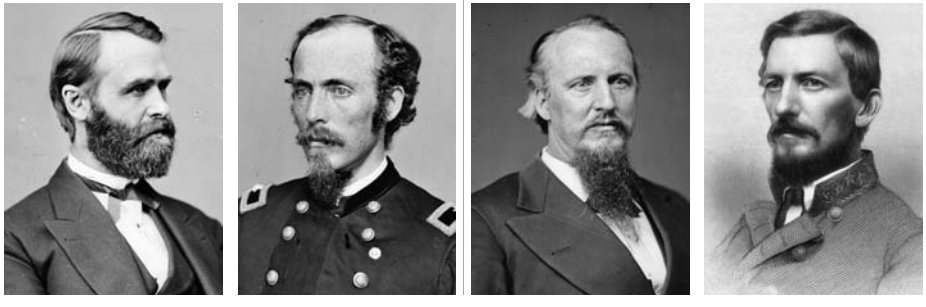
Since Wagner's division had been in the thick of the fighting at Spring Hill, suffering almost all of the Union's 350 casualties, then had to conduct rearguard actions on the march north, Wagner and other IV Corps officers resented what they felt was Schofield's preferential treatment of XXIII Corps. Opdycke was angry, as well; while Lane's and Conrad's brigades had marched at relative ease on the road to Franklin, Opdycke's Ohioans hadn't been relieved during the entire 10-mile march. Upon their arrival at Winstead Hill, they remained in line of battle, facing Maj. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest's Confederate troopers, while Wagner's other two brigades deployed east of the pike on a separate knoll known as Breezy Hill.

When the congestion on the pike cleared, Wagner began leading his division toward the safety of Franklin. Soon, though, a new order from Schofield arrived: Wagner was to hold Winstead Hill with the rear guard until dark "unless too severely pressed." Following orders, Wagner turned his column about and countermarched but soon observed two huge Confederate infantry columns advancing northward, one on the Lewisburg Pike and one on the Columbia Pike. The latter column was already deploying into a line of battle, their rifle barrels glistening in the sunlight. Without hesitation, Wagner ordered a withdrawal. Lane, Conrad, and Opdycke wasted little time complying with the command.

As he retreated northward, Wagner unilaterally decided that his division would follow the spirit of Stanley's original orders—to hold back any Rebel advance as long as possible. Halfway back across the two-mile valley, Wagner ordered Lane's brigade to halt and occupy the southern slope of a flat, open hill on the west side of the road known locally as Privet Knob. About a half mile from Cox's main line, Wagner halted his leading brigade, Conrad's, and ordered that commander to take position along a gentle rise of ground east of the pike in a cleared cotton field. Not expecting to fight, Conrad's men rested without entrenching. When Opdycke arrived, Wagner ordered him to deploy his brigade on the west side of the pike, adjacent to Conrad, to present a two-brigade front.

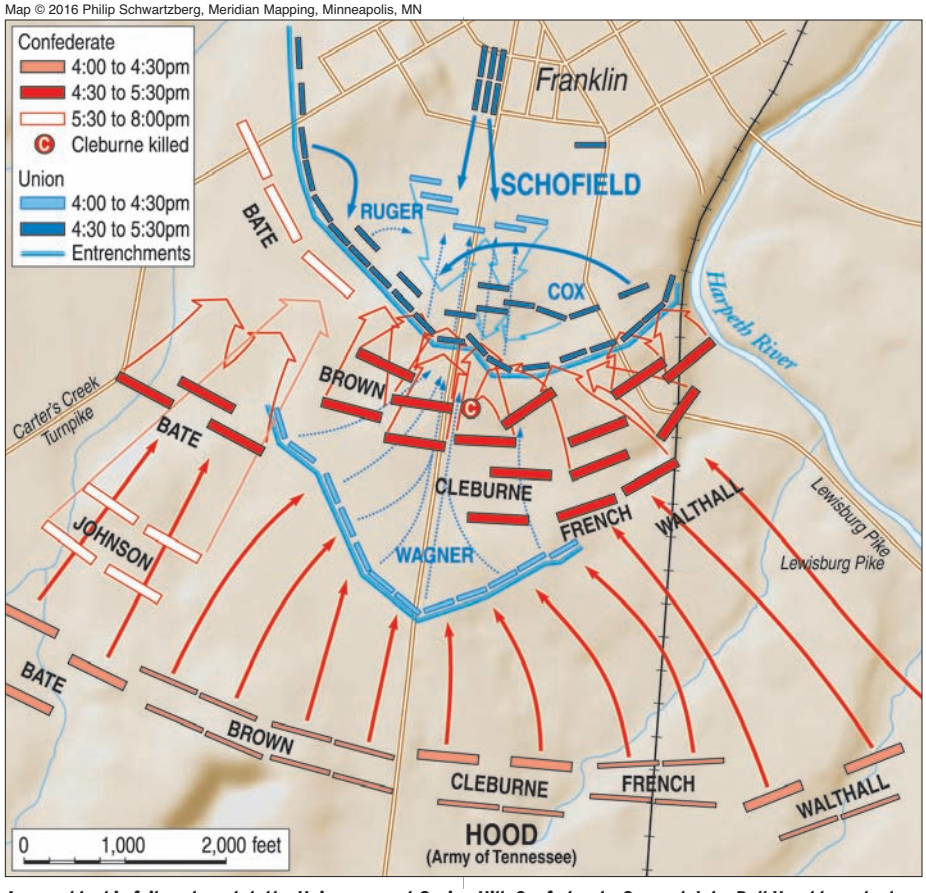
The headstrong Opdycke ran out of patience. His men had been on arduous rearguard duty since before dawn, he complained, and hadn't eaten or had coffee all day. Not only that, the position he was told to occupy was untenable, being exposed and without natural cover. Ignoring Wagner's orders, Opdycke angrily rode on without bothering to halt. When Opdycke's troops reached the main works, Wagner told Opdycke to deploy where he saw fit and fight in reserve wherever he was needed. Finding the area to the rear of the Union line overcrowded, Opdycke continued north along the pike to the first available open space, located 200 yards beyond the Carter home, where at 2:30 PM his men stacked their arms. Wagner rode to the Carter house, where he was ordered to serve under Cox, the overall commander of the main defensive line.

Unaware that vast columns of gray infantry were even now sweeping over Winstead Hill, Cox merely told Wagner to act according to his earlier orders. Angry and exhausted, Wagner sent word to Lane to withdraw from Privet Knob and take up a position on Conrad's right in the cornfield. There, he and Conrad were to stay put, fight the enemy if he advanced, and retreat to the main works only if overpowered. Wagner then returned to the safety of the Carter house where he began drinking heavily. Shaken by the unexpected orders to



ABOVE: Some opposing generals at Franklin included, left to right, Jacob Cox, Emerson Opdycke, Francis Cockrell, and Alexander Stewart. BELOW: A view southward across the open ground in front of Brig. Gen. George Wagner's Union division, looking toward Winstead Hill, where the Confederates massed for attack.

Map © 2016 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN



Angered by his failure to catch the Union army at Spring Hill, Confederate General John Bell Hood launched a suicidal frontal assault across two miles of open ground at the horseshoe-shaped defenses below Franklin. Fourteen Confederate generals were among the 7,000 casualties suffered in just five hours of fighting.

hold this open-field line, Conrad hurriedly ordered his men to entrench.

Hood, meanwhile, had been studying the enemy's dispositions through field glasses. He believed he had detected a weak spot in the Union center where the Columbia Pike bisected the defenses. Having brought the enemy to bay, Hood announced, "We will make the fight." When Lt. Gen. Alexander Stewart's corps began arriving around noon, Hood sent them and Forrest's men on a flanking march east toward the Lewisburg Pike; he had decided to use Cheatham's corps as his shock troops. At about 2:45 PM the gray columns surged forward, 20,000 strong—young men from every Southern state except North Carolina and Virginia—deploying into lines of battle at the northern edges of Winstead and Breezy Hills in a two-mile-wide front.

The attack would be made from three directions along the major roads: Stewart's corps up the Lewisburg Pike against the Union left; Cheatham's corps, with Cleburne's and Brown's divisions astride the Columbia Pike, against the Union center near the Carter house; and Maj. Gen. William Bate's division up Carter's Creek Pike against the Union right, backed by Brig. Gen. James Chalmers's cavalry division. Only two six-gun batteries were on hand to contest the Union guns. Hood had weighted the assault columns heavily against the Union left, sending four divisions of infantry and two of cavalry to attack the enemy's eastern flank from the Harpeth River to the Columbia Pike.

Across the Columbia Pike, on the longer western flank from the Carter house to Carter's Creek Pike and a bit beyond, Hood deployed two infantry divisions and a single cavalry division. Hood's last words to his men were, "Drive the enemy into the river at all hazards." Cleburne, still stung by Hood's accusation that he had failed to prevent the Union withdrawal the night before, saluted and responded tersely, "General, I will take the works or fall in the attempt." When his aide, Brig. Gen. Daniel C. Govan, turned to leave, he said, "Well, General, few of us will ever return to Arkansas to tell the story of this battle." "Well, Govan," said Cleburne, "if we are to die, let us die like men." He pulled his sword out of its scabbard.

The Confederate tide was about 100 yards from Wagner's advance line when the Union men unleashed a volley of musket fire that momentarily staggered the attackers, but due to the unchecked advance of Stewart's corps on the right, Conrad's line was soon outflanked and enveloped. Soon, all of Conrad's and Lane's men were in full retreat, the attackers pursuing the fleeing Federals as a cry of "Go into the works with them!" was heard along the line. The pursued and the pursuers became so intermingled in a wedge-shaped mass of humanity veering haphazardly toward the gap in the pike that Union defenders in the main works had to hold their fire for fear of hitting their comrades.

The ground in front of the Union parapets was soon covered with dead and wounded from both sides as Cheatham's attackers poured through the gap at the Columbia Pike on the heels of Wagner's men, into and over the adjacent breastworks. Hearing shouts of "Rally in the rear!" among Wagner's retreating officers, many of the men in the frontline brigades of Colonel Silas Strickland and Brig. Gen. James Reilly joined the mad rush for the rear. East of the road, two Ohio regiments, the 100th and 104th, had been posted to support a Kentucky battery's four rifled guns. With the guns unable to fire into the ranks of Wagner's fugitives, the drivers fled, taking their limbers and caissons with them, and soon both Ohio units fled as well.

A 200-yard front stretching from the Carter cotton gin to a locust grove west of the pike had been captured and virtually cleared of Union troops. In addition to Lane and Conrad's 12 regiments, three of Cox's regiments, plus parts of two others, had been routed, and a wild mob of men and stampeding horses was racing to the rear

past the Carter house. A Union officer later recalled, "It looked as though our line had been crushed at the center and nothing could save the little army from destruction."

From his vantage point north of the Carter home, where his six regiments had taken up position, Opdycke watched as Wagner's routed men poured back over the works. When he tried to move several of his regiments to the east side of the pike, many of Opdycke's men misconstrued the movement as an order to advance and rushed forward directly into the confused mob to their front. This initial rush for the works swept through Opdycke's remaining units like an electric current. The 125th Ohio seemed to hesitate, and Opdycke shouted, "First Brigade, forward to the works!" On horseback, Opdycke drew his revolver and plunged ahead into the fray. After first colliding with the mass of Union fugitives hurtling northward, Opdycke's men crowded and bayoneted their way into the Carter yard, pressing for the retrenched line west of the pike. There they observed the main elements of Cleburne's and Brown's divisions pouring over the low breastwork "like sheep in a wheatfield," and a vicious hand-to-hand melee erupted. As Opdycke's troops struggled to drive the enemy back across the retrenchment, the rattle of musketry swelled, great sheets of flame leaping from thousands of muzzles in a continuous roar.

Many of Cox's and Wagner's men, having rallied and returned to the fray at the urging of their officers, joined Opdycke's brigade in and around the crowded Carter yard. Soon the Federal ranks were four or five deep, those in the front rank firing and passing their empty muskets to the rear, where they were loaded and passed back to the front. Unable to stand unprotected in the face of this firestorm, many Confederates ducked back behind the retrenchment while others sprinted back 70 yards to the main Union breastworks. Still others simply dropped their weapons and surrendered. Arriving on the scene, Stanley saw so many gray-clad prisoners moving to the rear that he thought for an instant that the enemy had broken through and routed

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ABOVE: The cotton gin on the Carter farm was an easily glimpsed landmark for Confederate attackers. It was not so easily taken. BELOW: Drummer William Haines, left, of the 49th Ohio Infantry; Lieutenant John Beall of the 14th Texas Cavalry, which fought dismounted at Franklin.

Opdycke's brigade.

Although Opdycke's countercharge had pushed back the Confederates, repeated assaults mounted by Cheatham's follow-on brigades, unimpeded by abatis or obstructions, kept the Carter house in the vortex of a firestorm. On the north side of the retrenched line, the men of Opdycke's, Conrad's, Lane's, and Strickland's brigades fought from behind the low rail barricade and garden fence, while across the Carter garden to the south the Confederates returned fire from the captured main works. The six Napoleon guns deployed earlier, now worked by Opdycke's men, added greatly to the carnage in the Carter yard; firing from behind the retrenched line, they poured shell and canister into the enemy-held parapet at a range of just 70 yards. By 5 PM, when a short lull in the fighting took place, the Union lines had been reestablished across the 19 acres taken up by the Carter property. As the ferocity of the Confederate attacks ebbed, a new factor in the fighting emerged: the southern location of the Carter cotton gin had become a salient in the main line. This meant that the Confederates occupying the ditch in Strickland's front, just west of the pike, were advanced beyond the line of the cotton gin, which Cox's men still held, and were thus exposed to severe enfilading fire from that direction. As Confederate losses mounted, a stalemate was reached around the gap in the works and the Carter house. It seemed likely that the final result would

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This highly romanticized and topographically incorrect chromolithograph depicts the moment of Maj. Gen. Patrick Cleburne's death at Franklin. Sometimes called "the Stonewall Jackson of the West," the Irish-born Cleburne was much loved by his men as a hard fighter and fearless leader.

be decided elsewhere.

With Cox in overall command of the Union defenses, Reilly had assumed command of Cox's division. His brigade and those of Colonels John Casement and Israel Stiles defended the works in A.P. Stewart's front. Stiles was located on the far left near the river and railroad cut, Casement in the center just east of the cotton gin; and Reilly between the gin and the Columbia Pike. They numbered about 5,000 against perhaps 10,000 of Stewart's, 1,300 dismounted cavalry under Abraham Buford, and 4,000 of Cheatham's troops. From the woods near the McGavock mansion close to the Lewisburg Pike, three brigades under Maj. Gen. William Loring now emerged from the trees and attacked the Union left. They had about 1,000 yards to go when 3-inch rifled guns at Fort Granger opened up, followed by the roar of Reilly's 12-pounder Napoleons. Great gaps appeared in the attacking ranks, so many that not all could be closed up.

From the railroad tracks to the Lewisburg Pike and almost to the cotton gin, a thick abatis lay in front of the assaulting columns, 50 feet from the main line of works. The thorny, shrub-like trees had been chopped off about four feet above the ground by Cox's men, opening a clear field of fire above while preserving an almost impassable barrier below. Surplus hedge tops had been dragged to other sectors in the line. The attackers struggled mightily to work their way through the thorny palisade, all the while under galling cannon and musket fire. The storm of projectiles coming from front and flank blunted Loring's thrust in less than an hour. Following brigades were compelled to detour farther toward the center of the field, away from the snarling congestion at the hedges. The ground on the eastern part of the field became a virtual death zone, wrote a Union survivor, one that "not even a rabbit could cross safely."

Major General Edward Walthall's battle-hardened division now advanced on Loring's left, with Brig. Gen. William Quarles' Tennessee brigade advancing at a full run

against Casement's front, where they came to an abrupt halt at the hedge. Unable to pass through the palisade, they tried futilely to push or pull it aside, all the while making easy targets for Casement's infantrymen. One company of the 65th Indiana was armed with 16-shot Henry repeating rifles, and soon a dreadful heap of killed and wounded lay in their front, looking like a rail fence that had been toppled over, the bodies lying in a straight line. The remnants of Walthall's division staggered west toward the cotton gin salient, where Brig. Gen. Charles Shelley's troops were heavily engaged with Reilly's brigade.

The Union position there was formidable. Embrasures for two 12-pounder Napoleons of the 6th Ohio Light Battery, commanded by Lieutenant A.P. Baldwin, had been cut in the works near the cotton gin, supported by the 65th Indiana on Baldwin's left and the 104th Ohio on his right. When Shelley's men were just feet from the Union line, Baldwin's gunners opened up with double charges of canister into their massed ranks. Added to the musket fire from the parapet, the storm of missiles was so intense that the attackers seemed to be literally blown away like leaves in an autumn gust. Baldwin later recalled that he could hear two sounds above the roar of battle: the detonation of the charges and the crunching of bones in front of their muzzles.

The slaughter around the cotton gin salient raged on as four reserve brigades of Stewart's corps, their ranks mostly intact, approached the flaming works. The attackers lost cohesion, however, with converging brigades crowding toward the center of the field before being driven back upon one another. The emergence of multiple gray battle lines resulted in repeated assaults, causing some Union officers to believe that they had endured as many as 13 separate attacks, seemingly by the same Confederate troops. Among Stewart's displaced brigades was that of Brig. Gen. Francis Cockrell, whose Missouri troops struck the hedge in Casement's front, then veered west, only to be swept away by the storm of Union fire. Cockrell's 687-man unit was virtually wiped out, suffering over 60 percent casualties.

Brigadier General John Adams's brigade was the next Confederate unit to mount an uncoordinated and isolated attack near the cotton gin. It, too, was abruptly halted 50 feet from Casement's position by the abatis of hedge tops. In an attempt to get his men moving forward again in the smoke and confusion, Adams spurred his mount toward the flaming parapet and urged it to jump the ditch and embankment. Moments later, after the horse crashed onto the parapet, dead, Adams was riddled with bullets and fell, mortally wounded, into the ditch at Casement's feet. With the cotton gin firmly in Federal hands and ranks of blue-uniformed soldiers firing obliquely westward, the attacking Confederates pressed against the parapet's outer ditch were slaughtered like sheep. Confederate Brig. Gen. George Gordon, soon to be wounded and captured, called it a massacre, while an Illinois soldier remembered, "I never saw men put in such a hellish position. The wonder is any of them escaped death or capture."

Brigadier General Thomas Ruger's division of XXIII Corps constituted the main infantry force defending the Union right west of the Columbia Pike, where the cut branches and snarled treetops of a large locust grove south of the Carter house hill provided a crude abatis. Chaos had engulfed Ruger's units earlier when Wagner's fleeing soldiers came crashing back through the gap in the works, forcing them back to the retrenched line. Strickland's men had formed on Opdycke's right and helped repulse the first attack of Brown's Confederates. Meanwhile, the 111th Ohio on Strickland's right fought doggedly and retained possession of the main works adjacent to the locust thicket, withstanding attacks by the brigades of Brig. Gens. States Rights Gist and John Carter.

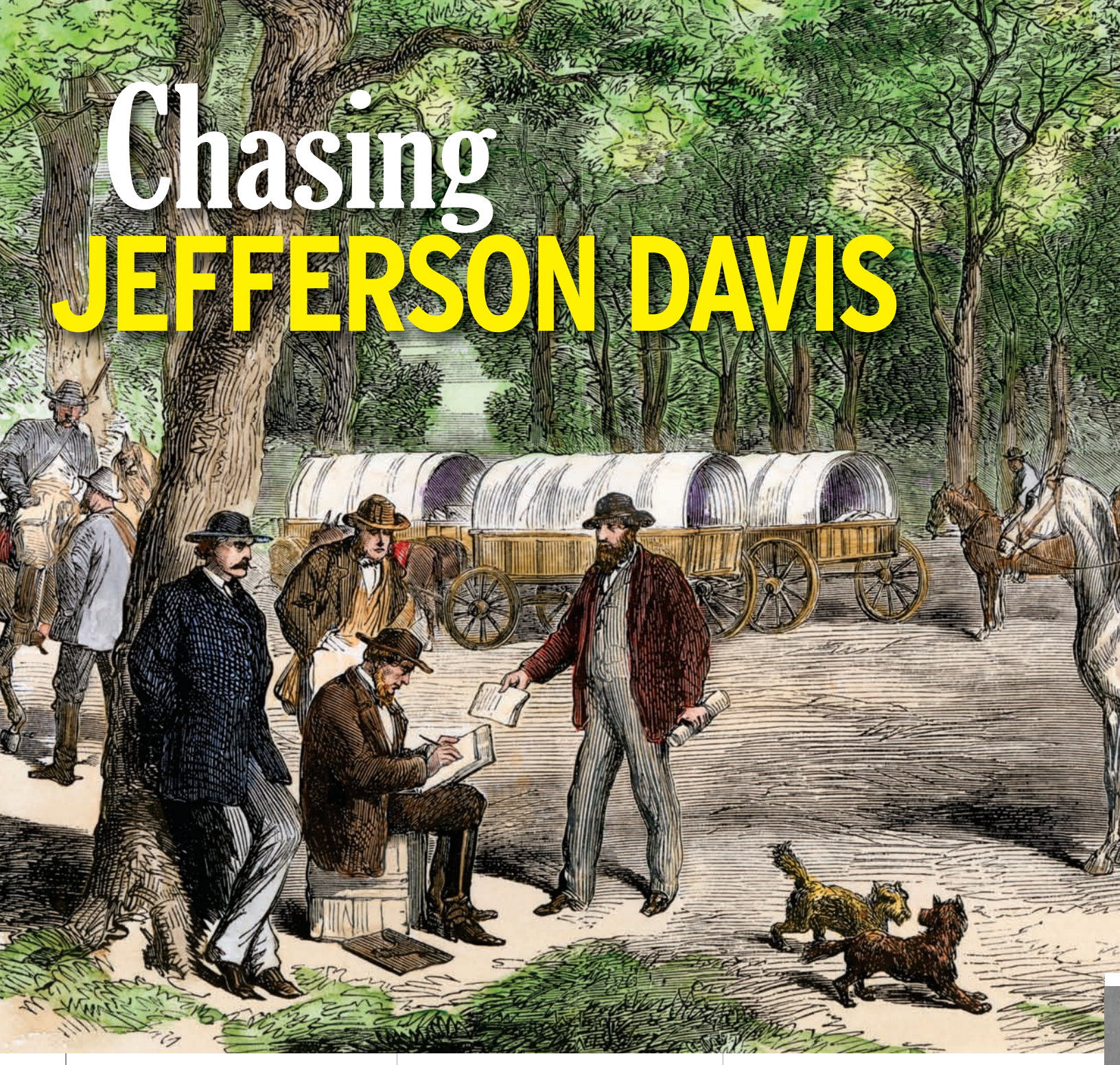
Although Gist's charge stalled when it struck the locust grove, the ongoing chaos near the Columbia Pike allowed the attackers to work their way forward through the abatis and up to the main line, where they fought hand-to-hand with the remnants of the 72nd Illinois and 111th Ohio. The 72nd Illinois gave way, but Gist's brigade didn't have the strength to do more than hold its position. When Carter's brigade came up in support, one of Gist's officers watched as Union musket and cannon fire "tore their line to pieces before it reached the locust abatis." Shattered, Carter's survivors sought shelter behind the ditch held by Gist's men. It was about this time that Captain Tod Carter, an aide to Brig. Gen. Thomas Benton Smith, joined the fray. As an assistant quartermaster, Carter wasn't obligated to fight, but the sight of Union soldiers in his home and breastworks covering his father's yard were more than enough motivation. Mounted on horseback, Carter charged into battle near the locust grove and, shot nine times, fell mortally wounded 530 feet from the home he hadn't seen in three years. He was found the next morning and taken to his boyhood home, where he died on December 2.

Brown soon learned that Carter's attack had been unsupported on the Confederate left, where Bate's division hadn't appeared on the Carter's Creek Pike as expected. Before he could act to remedy the situation, Brown was seriously wounded, and after he was carried from the field little was done to get the stalled attack going again. Unable to reach their assigned positions before darkness approached, Bate's three brigades belatedly advanced toward the smoldering locust grove. Bate split his understrength division, sending one brigade west of the Carter's Creek Pike and himself leading two brigades toward the locust grove. Although Bate's attackers were few in number, they managed to send the raw recruits of the 183rd Ohio fleeing to the rear. Bate's troops poured over the rampart, and hand-to-hand fighting ensued, but the arrival of reinforcements added to oblique artillery fire, sending Bate's men sagging back across the parapet.

Ordered to support Bate's advance, Chalmers had waited along the extreme western flank all day for the infantry's arrival. Finally, at 5 PM Chalmers sent his 2,000 dismounted troopers forward, alone,

Continued on page 98

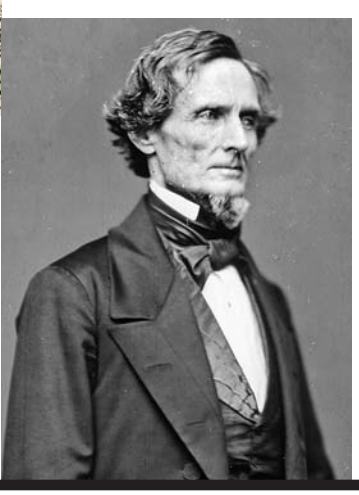
Chasing JEFFERSON DAVIS



When the end came, on April 2, 1865, Confederate President Jefferson Davis was sitting in his customary pew at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond, Virginia. A messenger interrupted the Sunday service to deliver a sealed telegram from General Robert E. Lee, then some 25 miles to the south defending Petersburg. "I advise that all preparation be made for leaving Richmond tonight," Lee reported tersely.

For the better part of a year, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia had held off three Union armies under Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, but the previous day the Federals had finally broken through at Five Forks. With Union troops threatening his main line of supply and retreat, Lee had no choice but to abandon Petersburg and race west, away from the capital. Richmond was doomed. As president, Davis's task had suddenly become to lead the Confederacy in defeat more adeptly than he had ever led it in victory.

Having commanded the 1st Mississippi Regiment in the Mexican War, the West Point-educated Davis fancied himself something of a military expert. He had



With Richmond in flames behind them, Confederate President Jefferson Davis, his family, and high-ranking government officials began a desperate dash southward. Their ultimate destination was Mexico. By Don Hollway

desired to serve the Confederacy not as its president but as overall commander of its armies and endeavored to run the nation as a military operation. Autocratic governance, however, had proven ineffective in a nation based on states' rights. Southern governors largely went their own way, sending or withholding troops as they saw fit and printing their own money. Inflation was near 6,000 percent, and the Confederacy was $700 million in debt. There had been food riots in Richmond, and city matrons had been reduced to serving river water at "starvation balls." On the war front, Davis had accepted slaves into Confederate armies with a promise of freedom for those who fought, but Southern troops were still outnumbered 10-to-1. When Lee surrendered, it was left for Davis to carry on alone.

"I went to my office," Davis recalled, "and assembled the heads of departments and bureaus, as far as they could be found on a day when all the offices were closed, and gave the needful instructions for our removal that night, simultaneously with General Lee's withdrawal from Petersburg." Each department head was to see that important documents and records were packed and ready to go and the rest destroyed. Leftover stores of cotton and tobacco were to be burned. The remaining national treasury of some $500,000 in gold nuggets, double eagles, silver bars, and Mexican coins was to be crated and taken along. The government would entrain for Danville, on the North Carolina border, at eight that evening. Anyone and anything not on board then would be left behind. The meeting was cut short by the rumble of cannon fire in the distance.

Davis hurried home to the Confederate White House at Clay and 12th Streets to wind up his personal affairs. The house was largely empty. "In view of the diminishing resources of the country on which the Army of Northern Virginia relied for supplies, I had urged the policy of sending families as far as practicable to the south and west," wrote Davis, "and had set the example by requiring my own to go." On Wednesday he had put his wife Varina and

Both: Library of Congress

their children on board a train to Charlotte, North Carolina, giving her a revolver and instructing her in its loading and firing. "If I live you can come to me when the struggle is ended," he told her, "but I do not expect to survive the destruction of constitutional liberty." As he put them on the train, his daughter Maggie hugged his leg and his son Jeff burst into tears and begged to stay with his father. Varina thought her husband appeared "as though he was looking his last upon us."

Davis had auctioned off the family horses, silver, and valuables for $28,400. He sent Confederate treasurer John Hendren with the check to the Bank of Richmond. Hendren returned with the news that the bank would not cash it, even when presented by the treasurer of the Confederacy on behalf of its president. The banks were choked with customers clamoring for their deposits, even as officials piled together millions in worthless paper notes for burning. Meanwhile, bank officials insisted on sending junior managers along to supervise the guarding of the government treasury, half of which legally was theirs.

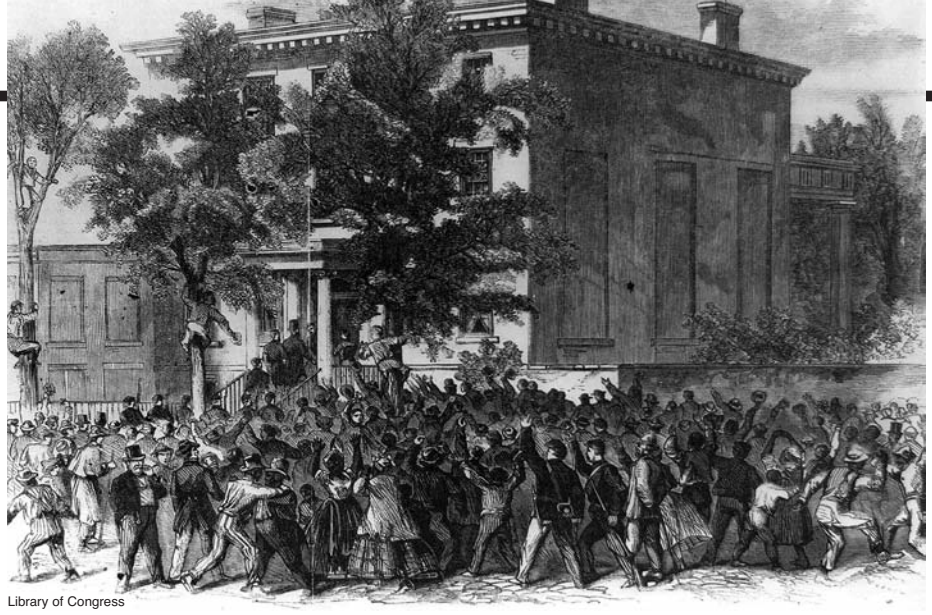
At dusk Davis left for the train station through a city rapidly sinking into chaos. Frank Lawley, correspondent for the *London Times,* reported, "During the long afternoon and throughout the feverish night, on horseback, in every description of cart, carriage, and vehicle, in every hurried train that left the city, on canal barges, skiffs, and boats, the exodus of officials and prominent citizens was unintermitted."

Liquor poured into the gutters to deny the invader was instead scooped up by rowdies and hooligans as taverns and saloons emptied and crowds gathered in the streets. Supply houses and depots were thrown open to the citizens, who had been too long denied. "The most revolting revelation," wrote Maj. Gen. George Pickett's wife, LaSalle, "was the amount of provisions, shoes and clothing which had been accumulated by the speculators who hovered like vultures over the scene of death and desolation. Taking advantage of their possession of money and lack of both patriotism and humanity, they had, by an early corner in the market and by successful blockade running, brought up all the available supplies with an eye to future gain, while our soldiers and women and children were absolutely in rags, barefoot and starving." The crowd's mood soon turned ugly.

The scene at the station was little better. The last trains out of the city sat huffing on the line. Troops endeavored to control the refugees jamming the platform, the insides and tops of the passenger cars, boxcars, freight cars, and even the locomotives. The treasury gold had been boxed and loaded, with 60 cadets from the naval academy drafted to guard it. Davis calmly awaited any last-minute reprieve from Lee at Petersburg. None came. Finally, at 11 PM, the president boarded last and the trains pulled out for Danville.

With government authority gone, Richmond quickly tumbled into anarchy. The last of the city garrison pulled out in the early hours. Throngs of maddened citizens, deserters, and criminals newly escaped from the state prison became mobs of drunken rioters and looters. Fires from government storehouses spread to the city, punctuated by explosions from ammunition magazines and ironclads scuttled at the riverfront, blowing out windows two miles away. By dawn a third of the city, including the entire business district, was on fire.

Meanwhile, along the 140-mile run to Danville, plans took shape for carrying on the war. "The design," wrote Davis, "as



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ABOVE: President Abraham Lincoln, accompanied by a throng of black and white supporters, enters the Confederate White House, where he would try out Jefferson Davis's former chair. BELOW: Ruins of the Richmond & Petersburg Railroad depot, with the remains of a smashed locomotive in the foreground. OPPOSITE: Richmond burns in the distance as Confederate troops, government officials, and panicked civilians flee the Confederate capital on the night of April 3, 1865.

previously arranged with General Lee, was that, if he should be compelled to evacuate Petersburg, he would proceed to Danville, make a new line of the Dan and Roanoke Rivers, combine his army with the troops of [General Joseph E.] Johnston in North Carolina, and make a combined attack upon [Maj. Gen. William T.] Sherman."

Parts of Richmond were still burning at 9 AM on Tuesday, when Abraham Lincoln and his son Tad, turning 12 that day, disembarked on the riverfront. They walked the two miles or so to the Confederate White House, escorted only by a handful of high-ranking officers and, almost immediately, a throng of jubilant ex-slaves. "[Lincoln] walked through the streets as if he were only a private citizen, and not the head of a mighty nation," reported the *Boston Journal*. "He came not as a conqueror, not with bitterness in his heart, but with kindness." At the presidential mansion Lincoln was shown the office Davis had vacated 40 hours earlier. Colonel Thomas Thatcher Graves recalled, "As he seated himself he remarked, 'This must have been President Davis's chair,' and, crossing his legs, he looked far off with a serious, dreamy expression."

In Danville, Davis knew none of this. Telegraph lines from the north had been cut. It was not until Saturday that the president learned that Lee had been trapped near Appomattox, and Monday when word came of his surrender. Davis did not for a moment contemplate following his commanding general's example. "Certainly better terms for our country could be secured by keeping organized armies in the field," he wrote, "than by laying down our arms and trusting to the magnanimity of the victor." He wired Johnston of the change in plans. With Lee out of the war, he said, they would meet in Greensboro, North Carolina, the headquarters of General P.G.T. Beauregard. There was no time to lose. Union horsemen were reportedly already closing in. If the rails to Greensboro were cut, it was all over for Davis and his party.

The scene at the Danville station was, if anything, even more desperate than at Richmond. Ten passenger cars were not enough to accommodate all those seeking to escape. Two more cars were added over the protests of the train crew, who were proven right when their old locomotive blew a cylinder just a few miles out of town. The government sat defenseless on the line until another engine could be brought up. Their escape was so narrow that Union cavalry burned a railroad bridge just moments after the train passed over it. With so little to cheer about, Davis smiled when he heard the news. "A miss is as good as a mile," he joked.

Behind them Dansville went the way of Richmond. Two companies of troops left behind to maintain order and protect stores were not up to the task. "Our children and we'uns are starving,"cried a woman at the head of a mob, "the Confederacy is gone up; let us help ourselves." The troops gave way and the looting began, at least until a nearby ammunition train caught fire and exploded, killing 50 people. Thinking that Federal forces had attacked, the rioters scattered in panic.

Citizens of Greensboro, long a hotbed of Union sympathies, did not look forward to sharing the same fate as Richmond and Danville. No crowds welcomed the presi-

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Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee shake hands after concluding the surrender terms at Appomattox. Davis hoped that Confederate forces still in the field would continue the war despite Lee's surrender.

dential train. What little sympathy and interest the fugitive officials received mostly involved interest in the treasure known to be on the train. A colonel of the guard recalled, "We were reported to have many millions of gold with us."

Most officials didn't even bother to disembark but set up living spaces aboard the train. National affairs were run out of a dilapidated, leaky "cabinet car." Secretary of the Navy Stephen Mallory recalled that matters of state sovereignty and secession mattered less than "more pressing and practical questions of dinner or no dinner, and how, and when and where it was to be had, and to schemes and devices for enabling a man of six feet to sleep upon a car seat four feet long." For his new White House, Davis took a 12-foot by 16-foot boardinghouse room with a single bed, table, and chair, in which he convened a strategy meeting on Thursday morning, April 13.

Reports by Beauregard and Johnston were not encouraging. Mobile had fallen; Raleigh was on the verge of surrender; Sherman was just 50 miles from Greensboro. Johnston estimated that he could field about 25,000 troops. Grant and Sherman, by contrast, had about 350,000 under arms. Davis, however, still planned to enlist fresh conscripts and rally deserters to the flag. "An army holding its position with determination to fight on, and manifest ability to maintain the struggle, will attract all the scattered soldiers and daily rapidly gather strength," he maintained.

His generals, to put it mildly, thought Davis deluded. Neither Beauregard nor Johnston had ever held Davis in particularly high regard. Johnston in particular still harbored a grudge against the president for relieving him of command at Atlanta in 1864. "I represented that under such circumstances it would be the greatest of human crimes for us to attempt to continue the war," Johnston remembered, "for, having neither money nor credit, nor arms but those in the hands of our soldiers, nor ammunition but that in their cartridge-boxes, nor shops for repairing arms or fixing ammunition, the effect of our keeping the field would be, not to harm the enemy, but to complete the devastation of our country and ruin of its people. I therefore urged that the President should exercise at once the only function of government still in his possession, and open negotiations for peace."

Beauregard, who had ordered the first shots of the war fired on Fort Sumter, South Carolina, and frequently clashed with Davis over military strategy, did not side with him now. "I concur in all General Johnston has said," the New Orleans native admitted. So did most of the cabinet. "I yielded to the judgment of my constitutional advisors, of whom only one held my views," Davis remembered, "and consented to permit General Johnston, as he desired, to hold a conference with General Sherman."

The next morning, April 14, Lincoln convened his own cabinet meeting in Washington, including General Grant. The major topic concerned the fate of Confederate leaders. "All the gentlemen present thought that, for the sake of general amity and good-will, it was desirable to have as few judicial proceedings as possible," remembered one official. "Yet would it be wise to let the leaders in treason go entirely unpunished?"

Another asked, "I suppose, Mr. President, you would not be sorry to have them escape out of the country?" "Well, I should not be sorry to have them out of the country," Lincoln joked, "but I should be for following them up pretty close, to make sure of their going."

In Greensboro, the going had become no easier. Since Union forces had cut the rail line south to Charlotte, the Davis party could only proceed on horseback. The treasury funds were divided, with $39,000 in silver left to Beauregard and $288,000 loaded onto wagons, along with most government records and papers. Recent rain having turned the roads to mud, an artillery unit was drafted into service to manhandle the wagons. Tennessee and Kentucky cavalry units, about 1,300 riders in all, were enlisted as escorts. With that, the Confederate government vanished into the countryside.

"Great curiosity is naturally felt North and South to learn what has become of Jefferson Davis," stated the *Richmond Evening Whig*, "the head of the greatest rebellion the world has yet seen." And a South Carolina newspaper admitted, "We

would like to inform our readers where these gentlemen [Davis and the Cabinet] are and what they are doing but we cannot." "We honor and trust him still, and hold the opinion that he will yet prove himself to be what we thought him when we placed him in the presidential chair."

Not until Wednesday did the presidential party finally surface in Charlotte. By then Varina and the children had already gone on ahead to Abbeville, South Carolina. Johnston and Sherman had reached an accord, sent to Washington for approval. Only then did Davis learn that final approval of the terms would not come from Lincoln. A messenger delivered a telegram: "President Lincoln was assassinated in the theatre on the night of the 14th inst. Secretary Seward's house was entered on the same night, and he was repeatedly stabbed, and is probably mortally wounded."

Conspiracy enthusiasts and vengeful Unionists would ever afterward accuse Davis of giving the assassins their orders and, upon hearing news of their mixed success, misquoting Macbeth: "If it were to be done it were better it were well done." More sympathetic witnesses said he seemed genuinely shocked by the news. "I certainly have no special regard for Mr. Lincoln," said Davis, "but there are a great many men of whose end I would much rather have heard than his. I fear it will be disastrous to our people, and I regret it deeply."

During their time together in Congress, Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson, a War Democrat, Southern Unionist, and former slave owner, had lumped Davis in with what he scorned as the South's "illegitimate, swaggering, bastard, scrub aristocracy." As recently as the afternoon of the assassination, Johnson had advised Lincoln not to be lenient with rebels and traitors. And as a fellow target in the murder plot (his assigned killer, George Atzerodt, had lost his nerve and got drunk instead), Johnson had come away from Lincoln's deathbed swearing, "They shall suffer for this."

Sherman, acting on Lincoln's wishes, had offered Johnston terms even more generous than those Grant had offered Lee, but not simply to obtain a military surrender.

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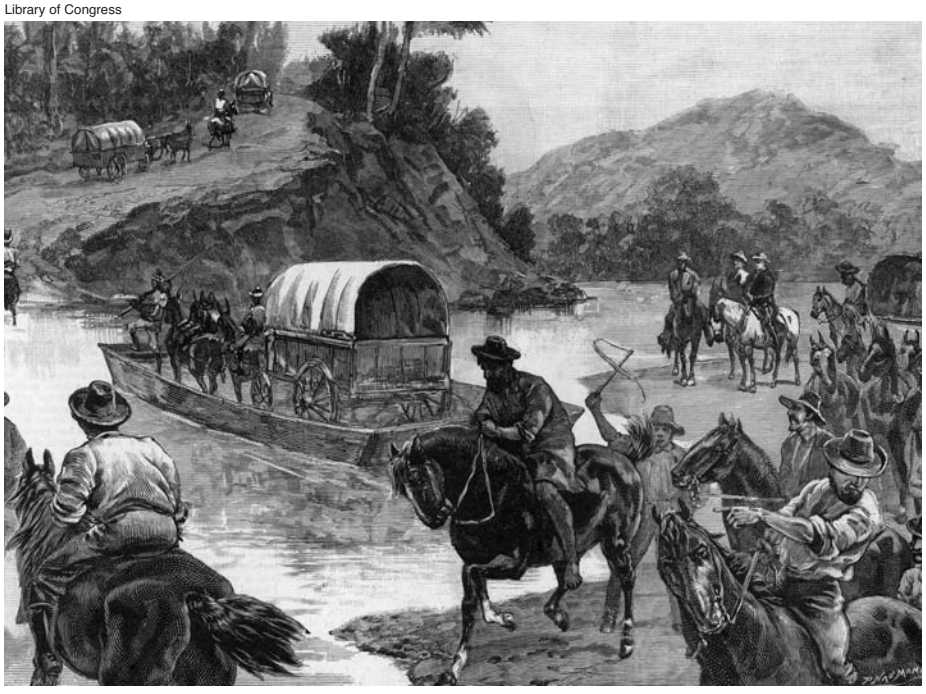

ABOVE: Davis's party, carrying the final $500,000 of the Confederate treasury, crosses the Pee Dee River in South Carolina. BELOW: Confederate Secretary of War John C. Breckinridge, Secretary of the Navy Stephen R. Mallory, and Maj. Gen. George Pickett's wife, LaSalle, left to right.

The stakes were nothing less than the final dissolution of the Confederacy. Now that was up in the air. "I doubted whether the agreement would be ratified by the United States government," Davis wrote. "The opinion I entertained in regard to President Johnson and his venomous Secretary of War, [Edwin] Stanton, did not permit me to expect that they would be less vindictive after a surrender of our army had been proposed than when it was regarded as a formidable body defiantly holding its position in the field."

As expected, Johnson, following Stanton's advice, rejected the treaty. Johnston was to surrender unconditionally or the truce would expire in 48 hours. Without further consulting Davis, Johnston agreed to the terms, not only signing over his troops in North Carolina, but also those in South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana—basically all Confederate forces east of the Mississippi except for Davis and his government, whose surrender was not subject to negotiation. Quite the contrary. Stanton had telegraphed his generals that the Rebel chiefs had with them $13 million in gold plunder, which would go to anyone apprehending them.

Meanwhile, Davis had written his wife: "I have sacrificed so much for the cause of the Confederacy that I can measure my

ability to make any further sacrifice required. It may be that, a devoted band of Cavalry will cling to me, and that I can force my way across the Mississippi, and if nothing can be done there which it will be proper to do, then I can go to Mexico, and have the world from which to choose a location."

Varina replied from Abbeville. "A stand cannot be made in this country as to the trans-Mississippi," she wrote. "I doubt if at first things will be straight, but the spirit is there." She did not plan to wait for Northern mercy, but to escape via Florida and Bermuda or the Bahamas to England, where she might leave their eldest children in school and rendezvous with her husband in Texas.

Confederate Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton felt that Johnston had exceeded his authority in surrendering and that it would be "far better for us to fight to the extreme limits of our country rather than to reconstruct the Union upon any terms." Some five brigades, about 3,000 fighting men, agreed. They made Davis the military commander of the largest Confederate army east of the Mississippi. "I cannot feel like a beaten man," he said.

When the presidential party departed Charlotte on April 26 and pushed into South Carolina, they found the going slow, their progress hampered by well-wishing crowds strewing flowers in their path. Sherman's march through central Georgia, then up the Carolina coast, had never intruded on this area of the country. Unfamiliar with the horrors wrought on their neighbors, these Southerners had nothing but admiration for Davis in his hour of retreat. "Some of the command thought we went too slow," admitted Davis, no doubt reliving the optimistic days of 1860, when the Confederacy had repelled every Union attempt to subdue it, ultimate independence had seemed possible, and its president had led a noble uprising against oppression.

Public adulation did nothing to encourage some of his war-weary troops. "His cabinet are all against him, seeing the futility of trying to resist when throughout the South scarce a respectable body guard of organized troops can be found to protect his own person," grumbled Confederate soldier John Dooley. "Mr. Davis believes that farther South the people will rise again and flock by thousands to his standard. Poor President, he is unwilling to see what all around him see. He cannot bring himself to believe that after four years of glorious struggle we are to be crushed into the dust of submission."

ABOVE: Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston, right, realized the futility of prolonging the war and urged Davis to negotiate. Johnston surrendered his own army to Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman, left, at Bentonville, North Carolina. OPPOSITE: One of numerous mocking and inaccurate Northern depictions of Davis's capture shows him wearing a woman's dress when seized by Union troops. His wife, Varina, pleads for his life.

But cavalry commander Brig. Gen. Basil W. Duke saw what his footsore troops did not: that Davis was "travelling like a president and not like a fugitive." In those last weeks of April 1865, Davis had transcended himself from a controversial, often derided politician into a supreme symbol of Confederate resistance. By his very refusal to give up, he kept the Southern nation—at least temporarily—alive.

Elsewhere, it continued to wither. His kinsman, Lt. Gen. Richard Taylor, the brother of Davis's long-deceased first wife, had opened negotiations to surrender Confederate forces in Alabama, Mississippi, and eastern Louisiana. The land route to Texas was cut off. The Confederate treasury had gotten as far as Augusta before its military escort learned of Johnston's surrender. They brought it back to Abbeville on the Georgia border, where it was secreted in a boxcar at the train station. There, Davis called a final council of war: "It is time that we adopt some definite plan upon which the further prosecution of our struggle shall be conducted," he said. "Three thousand brave men are enough for a nucleus around which the whole people will rally when the panic that now affects them has faded away."

Duke remembered the meeting. "We looked at each other in amazement and with feelings a little akin to trepidation," he recalled, "for we hardly knew how we should give expression diametrically opposed to those he had uttered." They told Davis that to continue the war would be "a cruel injustice to the people of the South." Davis inquired why, if they felt that way, they had come this far with him. Duke recalled, "We answered that we were desirous of affording him an opportunity of escaping the degradation of capture. We would ask our men to follow us until his safety was assured, and would risk them in battle for that purpose, but would not fire another shot in an effort to continue hostilities." Davis had been fleeing not for his

personal safety, but because he saw it as his patriotic duty. Now, at last, he saw that the Confederacy was dead. Those in the room remembered that he turned pale and, trembling, did not speak for a moment. Then he said, "All is indeed lost."

He left the meeting. In his absence, his commanders and cabinet members devised the ways and means of dissolving the Confederacy. Remaining archives and records were to be abandoned or destroyed. The troops would be permitted to vote on whether to march on or disband. In the town streets they were already selling their uniforms and weaponry as souvenirs. It would only be a matter of time until they turned covetous eyes on the government gold. The treasury rail car was kept under armed guard, not against Union attack but against looting by their fellow Confederates. It was decided to get both the president and the treasury out of town.

With Davis at its head, the caravan rode out at 11 PM, and at dawn the president and his escort crossed the Savannah River into Georgia. The troops guarding the treasury, however, sensed the money would soon be in Union hands. Before going any farther they demanded their share on the spot. As they were not far from mutiny and looting it themselves, Secretary of War John C. Breckinridge paid out $108,000, a total of $26.25 each. "Nothing can be done with the bulk of this command," he wrote Davis. "Many of the men have thrown away their arms. Out of nearly four thousand men present but a few hundred could be relied upon. Threats have reached me to seize the whole amount, but I hope the guard at hand will be sufficient."

Around noon on May 3, Davis and his party rode into Washington, Georgia, a little town of 2,200 whose only experience of the war was a recent influx of lice-ridden ex-Confederate troops. As one resident put it, "The foot of a Federal soldier had never trodden our streets. We were a little out of the way village, in a farming country, where the hardships and deprivations of the war, for food, had never penetrated." The irony of reaching the end of the Confederacy in a town named Washington escaped no one.

Both: Library of Congress

While the president and his party took much needed food and rest, Breckinridge spent the day trying to mollify the troops back at the river, many of whom were throwing away their weapons and walking off to surrender. Davis appointed Captain Micajah Clark as acting Confederate treasurer and sent him to see to final disbursal of the government funds: $230,000 to the Richmond bank officers; $86,000, secreted in a false carriage bottom, on its way to Charleston and thence the Confederate government account in London banks; and $30,000 to cover Davis's escape.

Varina had left a note for her husband: "I dread the Yankees getting news of you so much, you are the country's only hope, and the very best intentioned do not calculate upon a stand this side of the [Mississippi] river. Why not cut loose from your escort? Go swiftly and alone, with the exception of two or three. God keep you, my old and only love."

His cavalry being "not strong enough to fight and too large to pass without observation," Davis wrote back, "I can no longer rely upon them in case we should encounter the enemy. I have therefore determined to disband them and try to make my escape. We will cross the Mississippi River and join [General] Kirby Smith, where we can carry on the war forever." The idea of reviving the South again in the West was perhaps not so farfetched. It would take Federal troops several more decades to subdue hostile Plains Indians, many of whom had made common cause with the Confederacy. How they might have fared against 40,000 Confederates is an open-ended question.

As a diversion, Davis sent Breckinridge off with the bulk of the remaining cavalry. Former naval officer Colonel Charles Thorburn mapped a route to the east coast of Florida, where he had a boat hidden on the Indian River. From there Davis might sail around the peninsula and across the Gulf of Mexico to Texas. Davis rode out with just 10 picked men, one wagon, and two ambulances. Union cavalry rode into town 12 hours behind them.

In a few days Davis closed to within 20 miles of Varina's party, only to learn that a band of ex-Confederate marauders was on her trail. "I do not feel that you are bound to go with me," he told his men, "but I must protect my family." They rode so hard that several were left behind when their horses gave out. Outside Dublin, Georgia, Davis and the remainder spotted a small circle of wagons. A sentry called, "Who goes there?" and Davis recognized the voice of his secretary, Burton Harrison, who had escorted Varina and the children all the way from Richmond.

The happy reunion was short lived.

Library of Congress

A weary and suddenly aged Jefferson Davis sits in chains under guard in his cell at Fort Monroe. He was released on bond two years later by President Andrew Johnson.

Union forces were tightening the net. The Johnson administration had announced a $100,000 reward for Davis's capture. By May 9, Lt. Col. Henry Harnden's 150-man 1st Wisconsin Cavalry, linking up with Lt. Col. Benjamin D. Pritchard's 400-man 4th Michigan Cavalry in Abbeville, learned the Davis wagon train was just hours ahead, headed for Irwinville. That evening they split up again to search it out and, unknown to each other, converged on it from two different directions.

A drizzle had settled over the night. Just before dawn the Confederates heard horses milling out in the misty dark. Abrupt shots rang out from two directions. Bullets hummed around the camp. Davis told Varina, "The Federal cavalry are upon us."

Pritchard rode into camp, shouting for the Federal troopers to cease fire. They lost two dead and four wounded from friendly fire; no Southerner had so much as fired a shot. Davis took advantage of the confusion to try a getaway. Whether he grabbed his wife's cloak in his haste, or she threw it over him as cover, depends on who tells the tale. For the rest of his life Davis would be hounded by the story that he had tried to escape disguised as a woman. He was making for the nearest woods when a trooper called on him to halt. Varina threw her arms over her husband, pleading for his life. "Shoot me if you wish," she cried defiantly. The Union trooper was unmoved. "I wouldn't mind a bit," he said. About that time Pritchard rode up, saying, "Well, old Jeff, we've got you at last."

Word immediately spread that the Confederate president had been captured in his wife's clothes. "Jeff Davis Captured in Hoop Skirts" and "Jeff Davis in Petticoats" were two of the headlines in Northern newspapers. Cartoonists drew laughter for months with drawings of an effeminate-looking Davis mincing about in a shawl and dress. At least one of the Union soldiers on hand that day, Captain James H. Parker, went out of his way to shoot down the absurd story. "I defy any person to find a single officer or soldier who was present at the capture who will say upon his honor that he was disguised in women's clothes. Hi wife behaved like a lady, and he as a gentleman, though manifestly chagrined at being taken into custody. I am a Yankee, full of Yankee prejudices, but I think it wicked to lie about him." Still the story endured.

Taking their prisoner to Macon, Davis's captors taunted passing Confederates, "Hey, Johnny Reb, we've got your President." One defiant onlooker responded, "Yes, and the devil's got yours." Other paroled soldiers were less forgiving. Told by the Federals, "We've got your old boss back here in the ambulance," the men replied bitterly, "Hang him! Shoot him! We've got no use for him. The damned Mississippi Mule got us into this scrape." His apotheosis as a Southern martyr was not yet underway.

Within days Davis was bound for Fort Monroe, at the southernmost tip of Virginia's York-James peninsula. "Try not to weep," he told Varina as his captors marched him within the building. "They will gloat over your grief." Inside the fortress walls, 30 feet high and 100 feet thick, a subterranean gunroom had been converted into a cell especially for the leader of the rebellion. Davis was locked into heavy manacles. The dank chamber was lit around the clock. His guards were changed every two hours. With no sun, little sleep, and his chains wearing him down, Davis's health declined.

The Johnson administration couldn't decide what to do with him. Trying ex-Confederate leaders for treason would do nothing for reconciliation. Northern sympathizers and even Pope Pius IX championed Davis's freedom. After two years, Johnson, falling out with Stanton and facing (ultimately successful) threats of impeachment, didn't need the continuing headache. Davis was simply released on bond. He and his family moved to Canada, Cuba, and Europe before settling in Mississippi. His massive two-volume history of the war, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, went a long way to establishing Davis's reputation, for better or worse, as a leader and icon of the South's Lost Cause, a term he coined first. "When the cause was lost, what cause was it?" Davis wrote. "Not that of the South only, but the cause of constitutional government, of the supremacy of law, and the natural rights of man." It was, perhaps, the best face he could put on a ruinous war of choice that had cost the lives of more than 600,000 Americans, left the South destitute, and destroyed his own reputation as a political statesman. □

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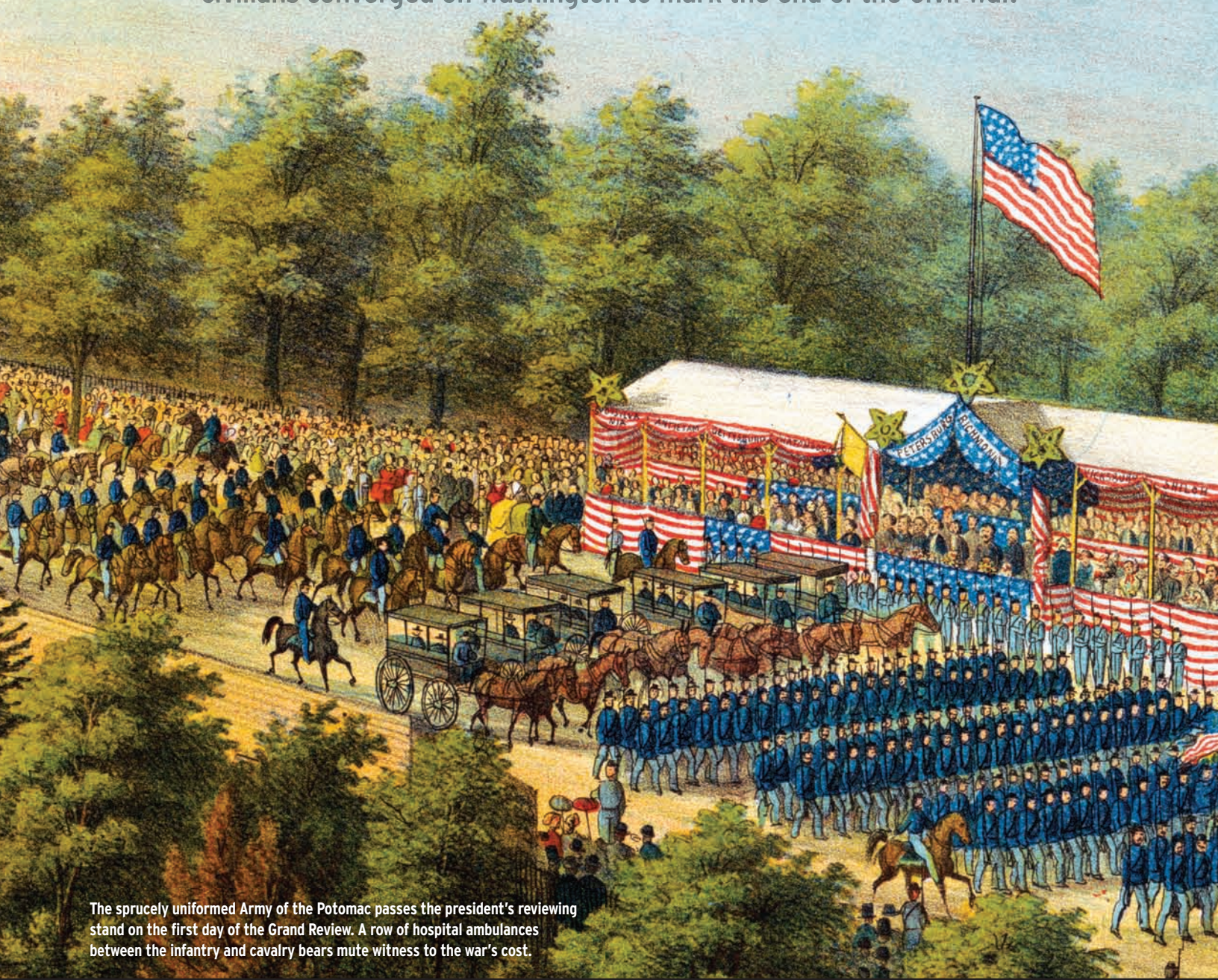
THE GRAND REVIEW OF 1865

After weeks of mourning the death of Abraham Lincoln, the nation's capital hosted a two-day Grand Review of its victorious armies. Tens of thousands of soldiers and civilians converged on Washington to mark the end of the Civil War.



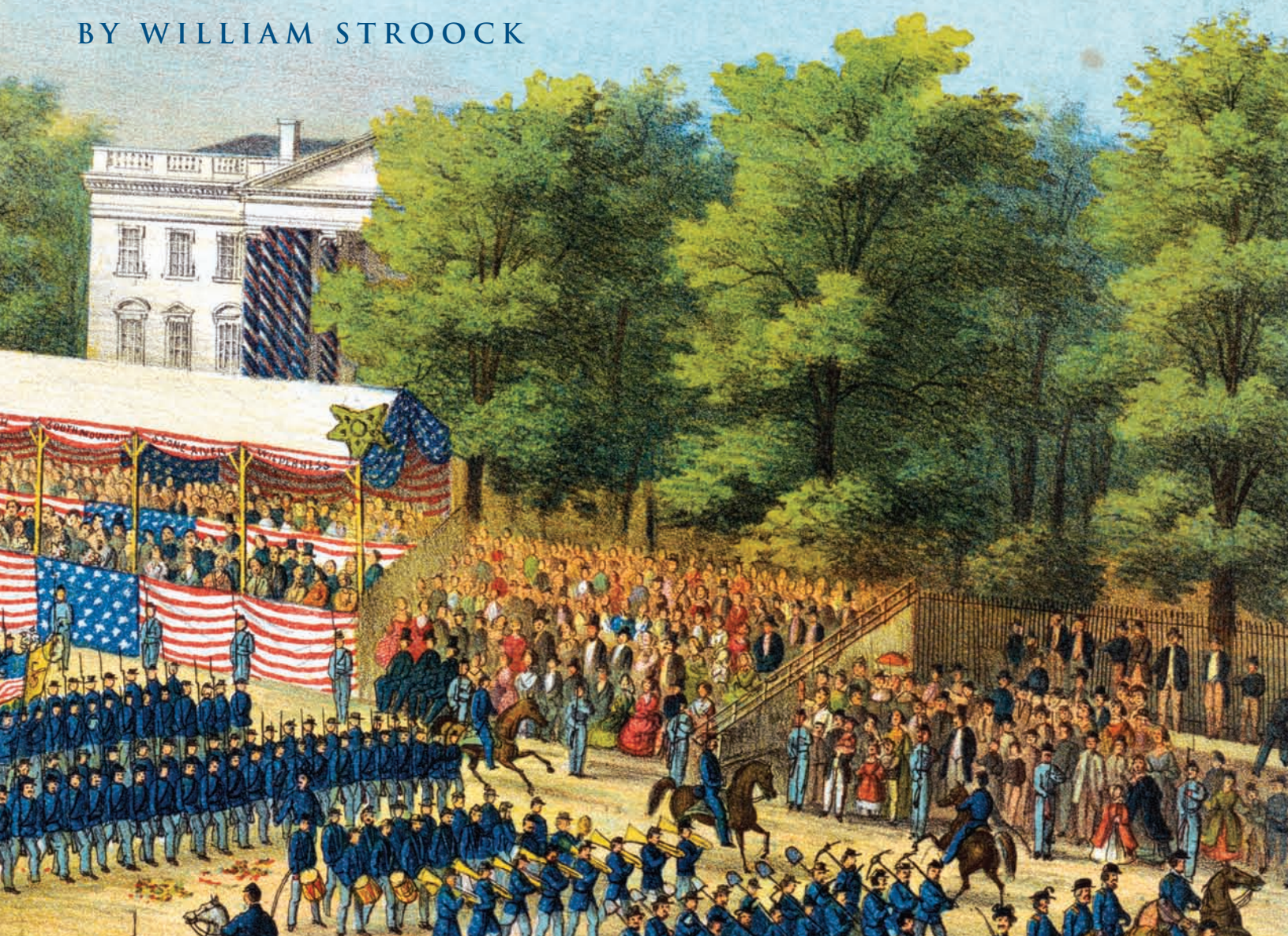
The sprucely uniformed Army of the Potomac passes the president's reviewing stand on the first day of the Grand Review. A row of hospital ambulances between the infantry and cavalry bears mute witness to the war's cost.

ROBERT E. LEE'S SURRENDER at Appomattox, presaging the subsequent surrender of other Confederate forces in the West and the capture of Southern President Jefferson Davis a few weeks later, marked the triumphant end of the nation's great sundering. It should have been a moment of great celebration. Instead, five days after Appomattox, the capital city of Washington, D.C., found itself trapped in a grief-stricken stupor, locked in a mixture of sorrow and rage at the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln by Confederate partisan John Wilkes Booth. Lincoln's assassination took away not only the nation's 16th president but also its hard-won sense of joy and relief after four years of bloody conflict and unimaginable sacrifice.

As news of Lincoln's assassination spread, many Washingtonians took to the streets demanding Confederate blood. In a driving rainstorm, shocked and enraged Washingtonians shouted, "Shoot them! Hang them!" A mob gathered outside Ford's Theater, where Lincoln had been fatally wounded, chanting, "Burn the theater!" Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, for several hours filling the role of chief executive until Vice President Andrew Johnson could be sworn in, flooded the streets with Federal troops and cordoned off the city. Eventually tempers simmered down, leaving Washington cloaked in mourning. For five weeks the American flag on the White House grounds flew at half-staff and the great columns of the portico were swathed in black. Windows and doors throughout Washington showed black curtains and black wreaths. Citizens walked about town in a daze, dressed in black or at least wearing black armbands.

As the weeks passed, the grief slowly subsided. On May 10, with most Confederate forces having surrendered and the men in butternut and gray heading home, President Johnson declared hostilities "virtually at an end." Six days earlier, the *New York Times* had urged that "before Sherman's and Meade's armies are broken up, arrangements will be made for a great mil-

BY WILLIAM STROOCK

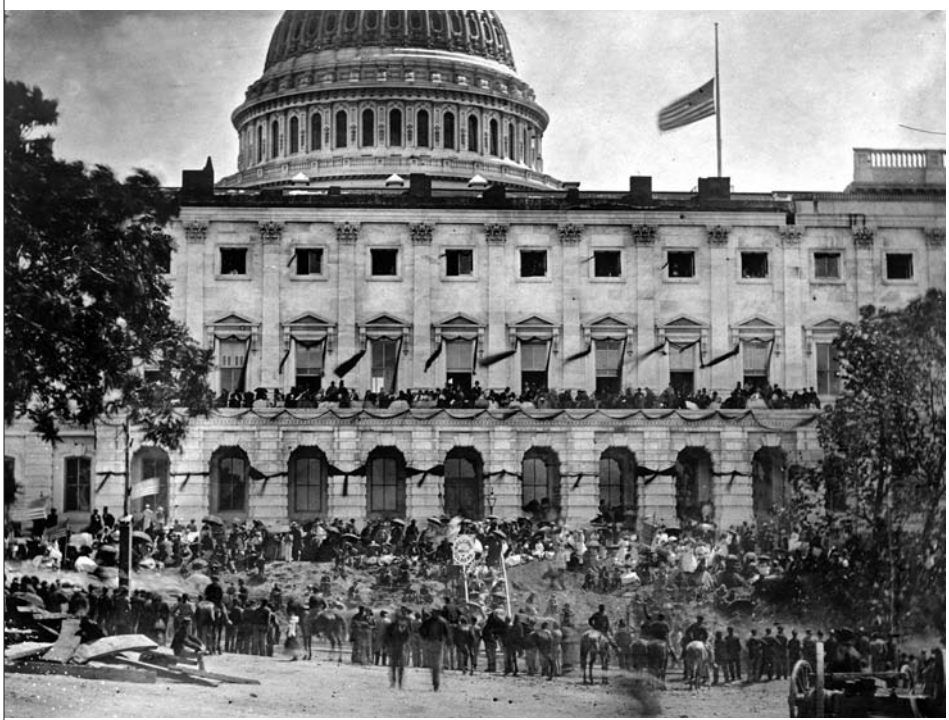


All photos: Library of Congress

itary display when the public could express its obligations to these great and famous armies in some striking and worthy manner to both their soldiers and their leaders." The new president, in one of the few shrewd political moves of his controversial and doomed tenure as chief executive, decreed that a Grand Review of the victorious Union armies should take place near the end of May. Preparations immediately got underway. After five weeks of mourning, the nation finally intended to celebrate its great victory.

The capital had never seen anything like it. The town was still bristling with military personnel, a common sight after five years of war, but now tens of thousands of civilians thronged into Washington from across the Union. The *New York Times* estimated the number of people in the streets at 200,000. (Other estimates added another 50,000 to that number.) So severe was the sudden population influx that the capital's hoteliers reluctantly turned away thousands seeking accommodations. Many simply slept in the open or stayed up all night partying—a task made harder, but not impossible, owing to the fact that the city's saloons were closed for three days by official sanction to minimize the threat of brawling between soldiers and civilians. Numerous speakeasies gladly took up the slack. For those with milder tastes, street corner entrepreneurs offered purple lemonade. All drank with impunity, since law enforcement officers were too busy arresting pickpockets, prostitutes, thieves, muggers and counterfeiters to pay any attention to illegal drinking.

Some 150,000 Union soldiers descended on the capital—90,000 in the eastern theater's Army of the Potomac, 60,000 in the Army of the West, compring the combined Army of Georgia and Army of the Tennessee. With them they brought 25,000 horses, whose daily mounds of manure were a logistical nightmare for city workers to cart away. Despite the overcrowding, the *Times* reported, the mood of the city was "gay and jovial with the good feeling that prevails, for the occasion is one of such grand import and true rejoicing that small vexations sink out of sight." Poet Walt Whitman, then working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, saw the city positively jammed with soldiers as he walked down Pennsylvania Avenue. "The city is full of soldiers, running around loose," he wrote. "Officers everywhere, of all grades. All have the weather-beaten look of practical service. It is a sight I never tire of. All the armies are now here (or portions of them) for tomorrow's review. You see them swarming like bees everywhere."

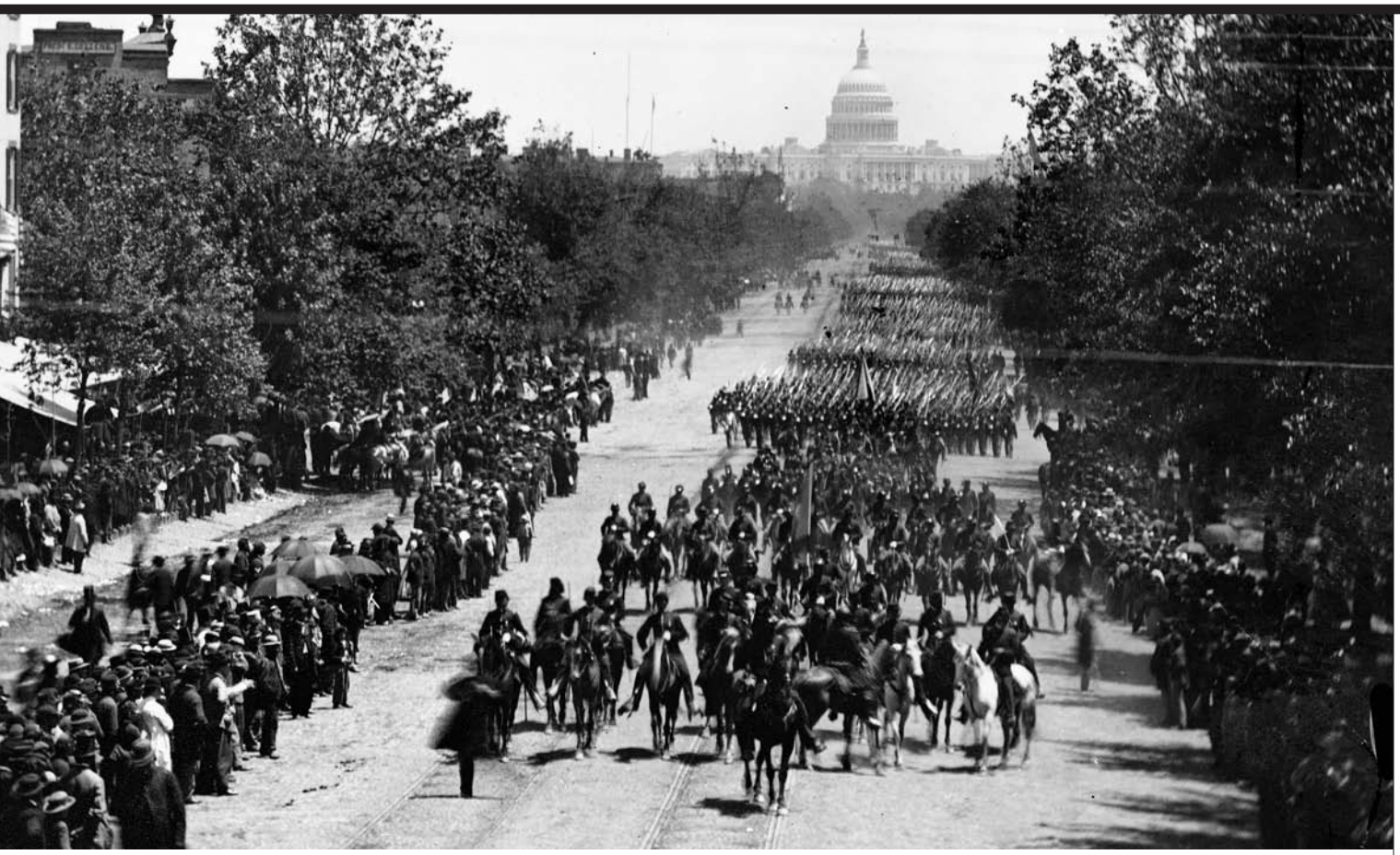


ABOVE: Spectators line Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the Capitol building, which still flies the American flag at half-mast in honor of the assassinated President Lincoln. OPPOSITE: Major General Horatio G. Wright and his staff lead VI Corps troops of the Army of the Potomac past the U.S. Treasury building on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Massive crowds gathered along Pennsylvania Avenue. People hung out the windows of buildings along the parade route. Atop each building dozens of onlookers waved banners proclaiming victory and giving thanks to the Union Army. A giant banner stretched across the front of the Treasury Building proclaimed in all caps: "THE ONLY NATIONAL DEBT WE CAN NEVER PAY IS THE DEBT WE OWE TO THE VICTORIOUS UNION SOLDIERS." Many placards simply listed the great Union victories—Gettysburg, Shiloh, Vicksburg—almost as though they were political slogans. Church choirs and children's choruses took positions along Pennsylvania Avenue, where a wreath of flowers stretched across the roadway. Thousands of onlookers held their own bouquets, wreaths, and garlands to throw at the feet of passing soldiers.

Opposite the White House, planners erected a roofed review stand decked out in stars-and-stripes bunting for the president, his cabinet, congressional leaders, generals, and foreign dignitaries. A line of placards running along the front listed the Federals' great victories. The front row was reserved for the president, his cabinet and Generals Grant and Sherman. Two special reviewing stands were erected by private citizens, including a wealthy Boston financier, one for wounded and sick soldiers, the other for deaf children. A separate stand was also erected across the avenue in Lafayette Square for lesser notables—congressmen, public officials, and members of the press.

State governors found their places elsewhere. Reuben E. Fenton, whose home state of New York had contributed dozens of regiments and suffered nearly 40,000 dead, watched the parade from a balcony



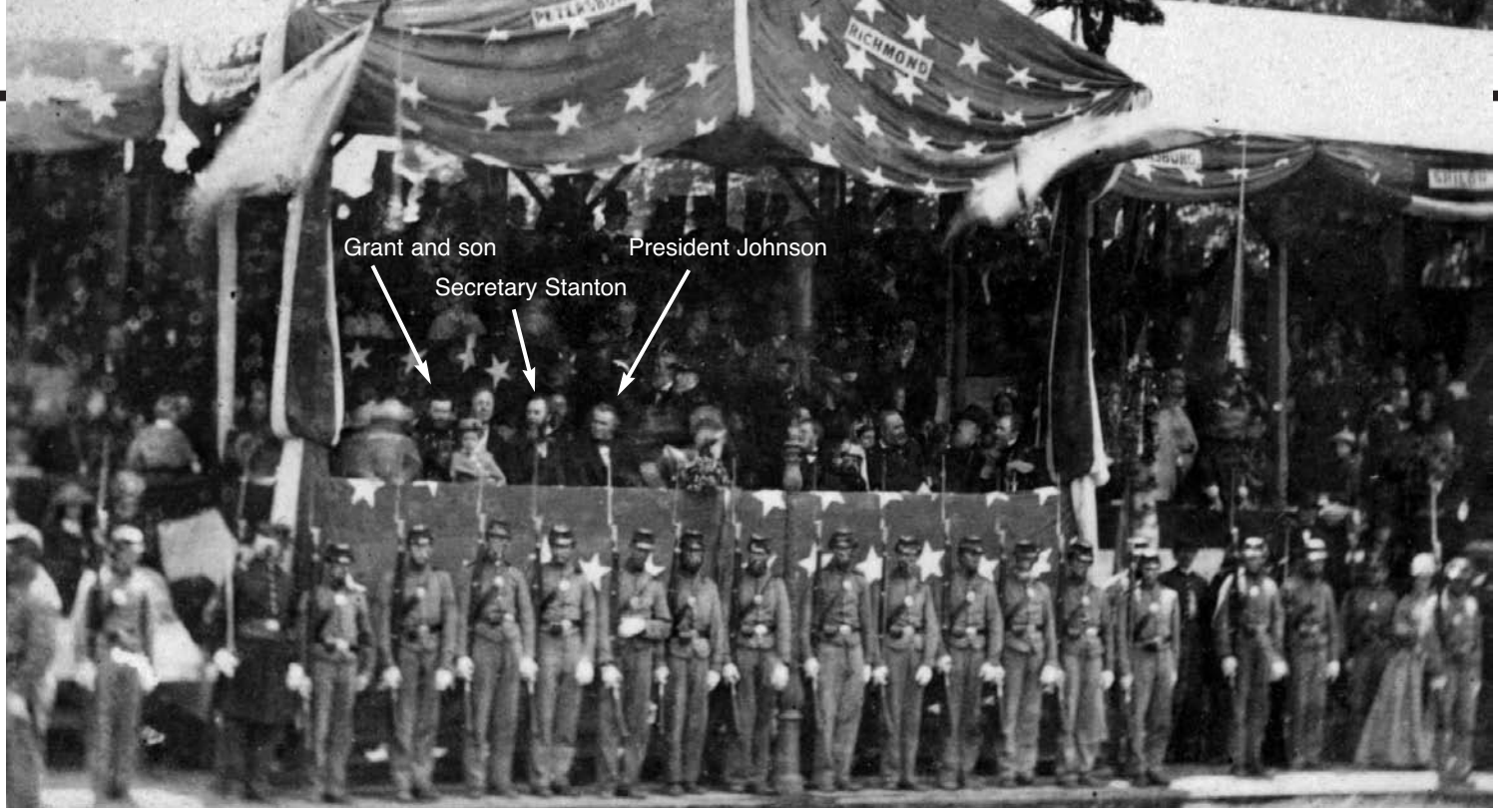
of the Metropolitan Hotel. Fenton was not the only governor so exiled from the review stand. A few blocks west at the Hotel Willard waited Governor Andrew Curtin of Pennsylvania, whose state had suffered more than 26,000 killed in the war. As the Army of the Potomac had the honor of marching first, on the first day Sherman sat in the review stand. Joining Sherman were his wife and son Tommy and his frail father-in-law, Senator Thomas Ewing. A line of soldiers stood guard at the base, bayonet tipped rifles at the ready for any sign of trouble.

Across the Potomac River in Alexandria encamped the Army of the Potomac under Maj. Gen. George Meade, the victor of Gettysburg. Meade and his staff meticulously planned the march and issued orders mandating the correct route and order. Meade slated IX Corps to lead the army down Pennsylvania Avenue, followed by II Corps and V Corps. In preparation for the review, IX Corps had marched into Washington the night before, their route taking them toward the city's famous Long Bridge. After crossing the bridge into the city, the corps had marched up Maryland Avenue and then turned east past Capitol Hill, going into camp 1½ miles east of the Capitol building. Nearby the Union Cavalry Corps also made camp, while just across the river II Corps waited to cross Long Bridge the next day.

At 9 AM a cannon shot signaled the beginning of the Grand Review, and the Army of the Potomac began its march west down Pennsylvania Avenue. Walt Whitman was in the crowd near Capitol Hill as the parade began. He captured the moment in his poem, "The Heroes Return": "Pass, pass, ye proud brigades, with your tramping sinewy legs,/With your shoulders young and strong, with your knapsacks and your muskets;/How elate I stood and watch'd you, where starting off you march'd." Whitman was particularly eager to catch a sight of his brother, George Washington Whitman, who was marching in the ranks of the 51st New York Infantry.

The army's ranks were filled mostly by men from the East, although some Midwestern regiments were also in the Review. Soldiers from the farms of Pennsylvania joined Connecticut factory workers and clerks from the tree-lined boulevards of Massachusetts. These were regiments that had endured defeat after defeat on the Virginia Peninsula, at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, only to keep going back into battle again and again. Even their victories were hard won—bloodbaths at the Wilderness and wearying trench warfare at Petersburg. For all their hardship, they remained spit-and-polish soldiers, splendid in shined boots, gleaming belt buckles, and forward-sloping kepis. Behind each infantry brigade came six mule-drawn army ambulances, their bloodstained stretchers strapped to their sides in graphic, if mute, recognition of the human cost underlying the Union triumph being celebrated that day.

Since they would not march until the next day, many thousands of men from



Sherman's army were in the crowd as the Army of the Potomac passed in review. One such soldier was Private Theodore Upson of the 100th Indiana Regiment. Upson was a farm boy who had enlisted in 1862 and had seen action in many of the great battles of the war. He and the 100th Indiana marched all the way from Atlanta through the Carolinas to Washington. He pronounced himself impressed with the easterners. "Their marching was machine like," he wrote. "They carried their guns most of the time at 'Shoulder Arms,' their officers were dressed in their finest uniforms, and their non-commissioned officers had their swords which our boys soon got tired of and long since discarded."

Meade and his retinue proceeded first down Pennsylvania Avenue, riding before a marching band. Riding his favorite mount, Blackie, Meade was greeted by thunderous cries of "Gettysburg! Gettysburg!" For reasons never explained by either Grant or Johnson, both were absent from the review stand as the parade began. Although they missed the beginning, the commanding general and the commander-in-chief arrived in time to see the Army of the Potomac's rank and file pass before them. Also present was Grant's wife, Julia, and their young son Jesse, sitting on his father's lap.

As it had done in battle, the Army of the Potomac's Cavalry Corps led the march. Whitman had encountered the cavalry the day before, describing them as "superb-looking fellows, brown, spare, keen, with well-worn clothing, many with pieces of waterproof cloth around their shoulders, hanging down. They dash'd along pretty fast, in wide close ranks, all spatter'd with mud; no holiday soldiers; brigade after brigade." Their commanding general, Maj. Gen. Phil Sheridan was down in Texas, showing the flag against French forces in Mexico, who had occupied the country since 1861. On review the corps was led by Maj. Gen. Wesley Merritt. He had commanded a brigade at Gettysburg and later the 1st Cavalry Division in Sheridan's Shenandoah Valley campaign.

Brevet Maj. Gen. George Armstrong Custer, a born showman if there ever was one, led his 3rd Cavalry Division in the forefront of the march. Custer and his horse were national celebrities, easily identifiable as they rode down Pennsylvania Avenue. Onlookers shouted the many battles in which Custer had defeated the Rebels, places like Winchester, Cedar Creek, and Gettysburg. Before the reviewing stand, a woman threw an evergreen wreath in front of Don Juan. Panicking, the horse galloped full-tilt toward the president and other dignitaries. It was a moment of high drama, but Custer drew great applause when he brought the frightened horse under control and casually resumed the march. (Some thought the incident had been contrived to attract even more attention to Custer.)

ABOVE: President Andrew Johnson, Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, and Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, indicated by arrows, watch the review behind a phalanx of armed guards. Grant's son Jesse sits on his father's lap to view the parade. OPPOSITE: Mounted officers pause on Pennsylvania Avenue during the review. Maj. Gen. George Armstrong Custer, as usual, created a stir when his horse, Don Juan, suspiciously bolted toward the reviewing stand before the general brought it under control.

Meade dismounted in front of the presidential reviewing stand, saluted the president and other dignitaries, and took a seat beside Sherman while the army continued past. "I'm afraid my poor tatterdemalion corps will make a poor appearance tomorrow, when contrasted with yours," Sherman whispered to Meade. "People will make allowances," Meade replied airily. Sherman later wrote generously of the Army of the Potomac's passing, "The day was beautiful, and the pageant was superb." As he watched the Army of the Potomac pass in review, Sherman was a

relieved and satisfied man, sensing that the controversy that had dogged him for weeks was finally past. After Grant accepted Lee's surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, Sherman accepted the surrender of Joseph E. Johnston and the Army of Tennessee. In negotiations with Johnston, Sherman had been incredibly lenient, allowing Confederate forces to keep their arms and insisting only that the existing Confederate state government swear an oath of allegiance to the Federal government. Sherman's terms also guaranteed the rights and property of Confederates, which Radical Republicans thought could be interpreted as allowing Confederates to keep their slaves.

Timing was everything. Sherman finished negotiating with Johnston and forwarded the agreed on terms to Washington for approval. The previous two days had seen Lincoln's funeral and procession through the streets of Washington. News of Johnston's surrender arrived at the White House when the wound of Lincoln's assassination was still fresh and raw. Andrew Johnson and the cabinet immediately rejected Sherman's terms. Stanton, for his part, was outraged at the agreement and accused Sherman of treason. Grant defended Sherman's motives, though not the terms. After a furious cabinet meeting, he set out for North Carolina to confer with Sherman. The next day Sherman's agreement was leaked to the press, which was itself outraged. Stanton took to the press as well, publicly rebuking Sherman with a signed statement published in the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*. Upon arriving at Sherman's headquarters in Raleigh, Grant informed his friend of the political firestorm he had triggered. Duly chastened, Sherman reluctantly informed Johnston that Washington had rejected the agreement and demanded harsh terms similar to those that Lee accepted at Appomattox.

Much to Sherman's displeasure, Maj. Gen. Henry Halleck, now commanding the Virginia Department, was also publicly critical of the surrender, ordering his own forces to enter territory occupied by Sherman and instructing his generals to ignore any orders from Sherman. Later, when Sherman was marching through the Department of Virginia, Halleck invited him and his staff to stay at his headquarters at Fortress Monroe. Sherman curtly replied, "After your dispatch to the Secretary of War of April 26th I cannot have any friendly intercourse with you. I will come to City Point tomorrow and march with my troops and I prefer we should not meet." Embittered, Sherman marched on for Washington with the army he loved.

Congress got in on the act and scheduled hearings on the matter. The hearings fell under the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, chaired by Stanton ally and leading Republican Radical Senator Benjamin Wade. Ironically, like Sherman, Wade was an Ohio man, and represented the state in the Senate alongside the general's younger brother, John Sherman. When Sherman appeared before the committee on May 22, he was livid with Stanton but kept his famous ire in check. In his testimony before the committee, Sherman described his negotiations with Johnston and his thinking behind the terms he had granted. He was mildly critical of Stanton, saying he felt "hurt and annoyed" by the secretary's actions. To Halleck, Sherman showed no mercy. "The plan of cutting [Johnston's] retreat is hardly worthy of one of his military education and genius," he said. As for the matter of the initial surrender document, Sherman took the blame himself for the lenient terms rather than fob it off on the deceased president. When the congressional grilling shifted to the meeting between Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, and Admiral Horace Porter at City Point, Sherman simply replied, "Nothing definite, it was simply a matter of general conversation, nothing specific and definite."

The controversy passed, but Sherman remained bitter toward both Halleck and Stanton. Grant told him to prepare his troops for the Grand Review. "I will be ready by Wednesday though on the

"I KNEW IT WOULD NOT BE SUCH A GLITTERING PAGEANT, FOR OUR ARMY IS TO MARCH AS THEY HAVE BEEN MARCHING—JUST AS WE COME FROM THE FRONT WITHOUT ANY EXTRA FUSS OR FEATHERS."

rough," Sherman responded. "Troops have not been paid and clothing is bad but a better sort of arms and legs cannot be displayed on the continent." On the night of the 23rd, Sherman planned his army's march down Pennsylvania Avenue. He realized that his western men could never match the Army of the Potomac's polish—they were just not those kinds of soldiers. Walt Whitman, too, thought the westerners a different breed. "These Western soldiers are more slow in their movements, and in their intellectual quality also; have no extreme alertness," he wrote. "They are larger in size, have a more serious physiognomy, are continually looking at you as they pass in the street. They are largely animal, and handsomely so." He admiringly described them in a poem: "No holiday soldiers—youthful, yet veterans,/Worn, swart, handsome, strong, of the stock of homestead and workshop,/Harden'd of many a long campaign and sweaty march,/Inured on many a hard-fought bloody field."

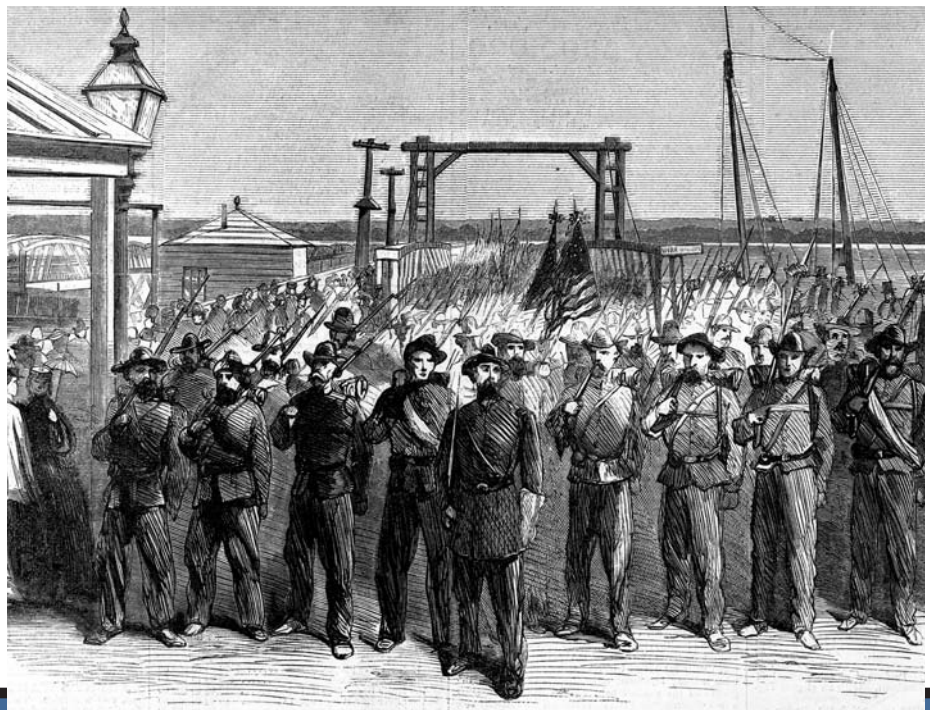
Rather than present a parade ground army, Sherman chose to present his men as they had appeared marching through Georgia and the Carolinas. As they marched down Pennsylvania Avenue, Sherman's infamous bummers preceded each division; a half dozen ambulances brought up the rear. Interspersed between each division marched Sherman's African American pioneer battalions, striding in perfect cadence and holding their axes and spades in place of rifles, their own weapons of war instrumental in defeating the Confederacy. A particular crowd favorite was Brig. Gen. H.A. Barnum of Syracuse, New York. Now commanding the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Division, XX Corps, Barnum had been wounded and left for dead in his very first battle. Recovering, he had fought four more battles before being wounded again. In Washington for the Review, he brought with him 35 enemy flags his men had captured. Loud cheers greeted his stalwart appearance.

In stark contrast to the eastern men, Sherman's men sported the same tattered uniforms they had worn during the March to the Sea and through the Carolinas. Some of the men had obtained new uniforms in Goldsboro, North Carolina, but most refused to wear them—their old uniforms were good enough for them. "Their uniforms looked dingy as if the smoke of numberless battlefields had dyed their garments, and the soil of the insurrectionary states had adhered to them," noted Sergeant Rice C. Bull of the 123rd New York. Instead of the formal kepis of the Army of the Potomac, the men of the west wore broad-brimmed slouch hats atop their heads. Many were barefoot and insisted on remaining so. The night before the War Department delivered fresh uniforms to the army encampment across the river. The western men rejected them, at least on parade. Of the army's impending march, Private Upson thought, "I knew it would not be such a glittering pageant, for our Army is to march as they have been marching—just as we come from the front without any extra fuss or feathers." After watching the Army of the Potomac, Upson and his friends came back over the Long Bridge, changed, and went into Washington for a night of revelry. Upson's commanding officer reminded the Indiana men that they were still soldiers in the United States Army and warned, "Remember I have not discharged you yet."

With many of the rank and file no doubt suffering hangovers and sleep deprivation, Sherman's army set off down Pennsylvania Avenue promptly at 9 AM. The Army of the Tennessee led the review, each man marching with his blanket roll over his right shoulder and two days' worth of cooked rations in a haversack on his left hip. At the head of the army came its commanding officer, one-armed Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard. Howard was destined for great things after the war. He had lost an arm at the Battle of Seven Pines in June 1862. After the Review, he would chair the Freedman's Bureau and later help found Howard University for the training of black divinity students.

"The streets were filled with people to see the pageant," Upson wrote, "armed with bouquets of flowers for their favorite regiments or heroes, and ever thing was propitious. My how they cheered! It was a constant roar." The men of the West were indeed a great curiosity to the throngs lining Pennsylvania Avenue, most of whom had never ventured beyond the Appalachians. The refined young ladies of Washing-

Major General William Tecumseh Sherman's western troops cross the Long Bridge from Virginia en route to their second-day appearance in the Grand Review. The men proudly wore their tattered old uniforms, bespeaking their arduous service in the war.

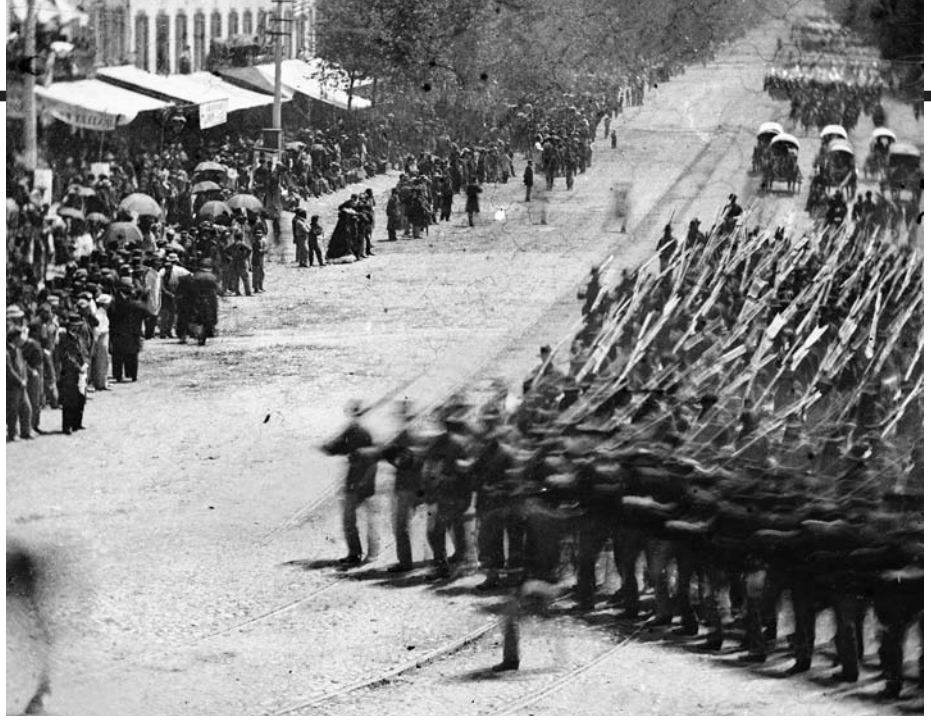


ton were intrigued; they had never seen men such as these. Rugged and tanned, the sons of western pioneers came back east as weathered, conquering heroes.

Upson marched down Pennsylvania Avenue with his fellow Indianan, Colonel Benjamin Harrison, commander of the 70th Indiana Regiment, great-grandson of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, grandson of a former president, and future president himself. Also in Sherman's army was another future president, Major William McKinley of the 23rd Ohio Regiment. Still other future presidents on the reviewing stand included Maj. Gens. Rutherford B. Hayes and James A. Garfield. Like their wartime commander-in-chief, Abraham Lincoln, Garfield and McKinley would both be assassinated during their presidencies.

Upon reaching the review stand, a teary-eyed Sherman turned in the saddle and viewed his victorious army marching down Pennsylvania Avenue. "The sight was simply magnificent," he wrote. "The column was compact, and the glittering muskets looked like a solid mass of steel, moving with the regularity of a pendulum." As he passed the reviewing stand, Sherman held his sword high in salute to the president. Before Sherman reached the reviewing stand he had ridden past the Lafayette Square home of Secretary of State William Seward, still recovering from wounds suffered in his assassination attempt. As a mark of debt and respect, Sherman had tipped his cap to the wounded secretary, who returned the gesture from his bedroom window.

As Meade had done the previous day, Sherman dismounted and took his place among the honored guests. There ensued a moment of high political drama. Sherman walked up the stand toward his wife and father-in-law. On the way he shook hands with President Johnson, Grant, and every cabinet member he saw. Sherman wrote with satisfaction, "As I approached Mr. Stanton, he offered me his hand, but I declined it publicly, and that fact was universally noticed." A hushed murmur spread through the stands. Sherman's trusted aide, Colonel Henry Hitchcock, was looking for a seat and did not see Sherman's snub of Stanton, but conceded that "the incident was plainly seen by many even across the Avenue with their opera glasses. I heard of it a few minutes later."



Infantry from XX Corps in Maj. Gen. John W. Slocum's Army of Georgia wheels onto 15th Street in front of Mathew Brady's well-aimed camera. Ambulances can be seen in the background.

After passing the White House, Sherman's army retraced its steps, heading southwest down Maryland Avenue and back across the Long Bridge. From there the army encamped a few miles down the Potomac at Crystal Springs, where Sherman began the last roll call of the Army of the West. On May 30, he issued Special Field Order No. 76, the last such order he would issue to his army: "The general commanding announces to the armies of the Tennessee and Georgia that the time has come for us to part." He briefly recounted and praised the army's exploits, attributing their combined victories to hard work and discipline. Sherman warmly concluded, "Your general now bids you farewell, with the full belief that as in war you have been good soldiers, so in peace you will make good citizens."

By then the rank and file were anxious to be mustered out and sent home. As the 100th Indiana mustered out of the Army, Theodore Upson was told that even after he returned to Indiana he remained under orders and was to report to his commanding officer via mail every 60 days. For his trouble he would receive 30 days' pay. The Indiana men traveled in boxcars through Pittsburgh and then boarded boats that took them along the Ohio River. Landing at Lawrenceburg, they entrained for Indianapolis, where a great assembly of citizens awaited their return. Upson married and fathered six children, becoming a prosperous carriage manufacturer and a well thought of member of his community. He served as commander of the local post of the Grand Army of the Republic and lived to see the next great American army, the Doughboys of the American Expeditionary Force, march off to war in 1917.

In all, some 342 infantry regiments, 27 cavalry regiments, and 44 artillery batteries, along with assorted engineers, signal corpsmen, ambulance drivers, provost marshals, and black civilian pioneers, had tramped past the reviewing stands during the Grand Review. Such an army, marveled the Prussian ambassador, could conquer the world. Perhaps not, but it had certainly conquered the Confederacy and captured the hearts of Northern patriots everywhere. "They marched like lords of the world," former Ohio Senator Tom Corwin said. No one in the crowd during those two gala days in Washington would have deigned to disagree with him. □

FRANKLIN

Continued from page 79

against the right of Brig. Gen. Nathan Kimball's line. In the face of horrendous fire, they pressed ahead to within 60 yards of the parapet before withdrawing to snipe at long range. On the Confederate right, Forrest's cavalry had been repulsed as well, north of the Harpeth. Hood had rashly split his cavalry command into segments, and the much-dreaded "Wizard of the Saddle," defeated as much by the dispersal of his division as by Union cavalry, was relegated to a minor role in the day's fighting. It probably saved Forrest's life.

Although by now the issue had long been decided, Hood wasn't ready to give up the fight. He ordered a night attack by his only available reserve, the 2,700 men of Maj. Gen. Edward Johnson's division of Lee's corps. Lee had arrived at 4 PM and, on Hood's orders, hurriedly organized a futile advance that went forward without proper guides or any understanding of what sector his men were to assault. A bit after 9 PM, four of Johnson's brigades advanced toward the center of the field by torchlight; on their left lay the shattered locust grove, on their right the smoldering parapets in front of the cotton gin. Three brigades got as far as the ditches of the outer works, where devastating blasts of musket and cannon fire, as well as enfilading fire from both flanks, halted the assault. Johnson's troops suffered 587 casualties in less than an hour.

As the night turned cold, most of the surviving Confederates abandoned the outer ditches and withdrew to the line occupied earlier by Wagner's men. By 11 PM, all was quiet, save for the moans and cries for water from the wounded. From the cotton gin across to the locust grove alone, perhaps 5,000 dead and wounded Confederates lay strewn in grotesque bundles. The death toll upon Hood's field grade officers had now reached unprecedented levels. Of the 24 generals exposed to battle, six were dead or mortally wounded: Patrick Cleburne, John Adams, Hiram Granbury, Otho Strahl, John C. Carter, and States Rights Gist. Four others were seriously wounded, and another was captured. The army's middle command structure, with 54 regimental commanders killed or wounded, had been shattered as well. The death toll on the Confederate side came to 1,700, a butcher's bill that one writer said without exaggeration sent "the entire state of Tennessee into mourning."

Although some subordinates broached the idea of a counterattack for the next morning, Schofield, after being surprised and shocked by Hood's unexpected movements twice in two days, was content to escape with his army to Nashville. Hood marched his wrecked army to Nashville as well, where he established fortified lines south of the city on December 2, appealing in vain to Confederate authorities for reinforcements and supplies and waiting for Thomas to attack. Hood hoped to defeat his old West Point instructor and pursue the defeated foe back into Nashville and reclaim it for the Confederacy. On December 15 and 16, Thomas counterattacked and routed Hood's depleted forces, using all his combat arms—infantry, artillery, cavalry with repeating rifles—to win one of the most decisive battles ever fought in North America. The hard-luck Army of Tennessee, what remained of it, fought and straggled its way back across the Tennessee River, hounded by Union cavalry and infantry. Only 18,000 Confederates crossed the river on December 25. Hood resigned in disgrace shortly thereafter.

After burying his son Tod in Franklin, Carter and his family turned to the task of restoring their shattered home and farm and reviving their livelihood. The Confederate government refused to compensate Carter for the considerable damages to his property—the cotton gin and eight outhouses were dismantled for breastworks, the fields were heavily damaged, and the farm was never again as profitable as it once was. Carter sold off much of his 288 acres of cotton and cornfields not long after the war; he died in 1871, and his son Moscow sold the home and farm property in 1896. It had seemed haunted, anyway, after the events of November 30, 1864. □

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Portrait of Gen. Felix Zollicoffer, and a handwriting sample from his order book, below.

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