Gen. George Brinton McClellan, who obtained a copy of Lee's battle plans.

Gen. Joseph "Fighting Joe" Hooker (seated, second from right) and his staff in a photo taken shortly before Antietam. Hooker's I Corp led the attack, his troops cut to pieces by Rebels under Stonewall Jackson and John Bell Hood.

Hooker's I Corps is shown crossing Antietam Creek at dawn, Sept. 17, 1862, to lead the attack against Jackson and the Confederate left flank in what was to become the first of three major battles of that day, the bloodiest day in the Civil War; within three hours, thousands of these men lay wounded or dead and Hooker, wounded himself, would retreat, then renew the attack to decimate the ranks of Jackson and Hood.

southeast of Sharpsburg, and here the opposing lines were very close as the Confederates jealously guarded this crossing point.

Union reserves consisted of V Corps under the command of Gen. Fitz-John Porter. McClellan's plan was simple and methodical. He would send his strongest corps, under the commands of Hooker, Mansfield and Sumner, against Lee's strung-out and thinly guarded left flank, held by Jackson. I Corps would form the tip of a spearhead that would, by sheer weight of numbers, drive through Jackson's front, pouring division after division down the Hagerstown Road, followed by Mansfield's XII Corps, then part of Sumner's II Corps and, if need be, Franklin's VI Corps.

McClellan, unlike his previous military strategy, planned a massive and relentless assault, hurling more than half his army, 60,000 men, at Lee's weakest spot, his left flank, intending to crush Jackson, collapse the flank back on the Confederate center and then, racing like a locomotive behind the main body of Southern forces, to join with Burnside who, facing Lee's right flank, would press across the stone bridge, take Sharpsburg, seize the Shepherdstown Ford and prevent the decimated remnants of Lee's army from escaping once more across the Potomac into Virginia. McClellan's plan of battle was sound but unimaginative. He would use sheer numbers to overwhelm the enemy by driving in Lee's flanks, bending them back to the breaking point, and simply surround the Confederate army, forcing Lee to surrender.

Lee was not ignorant of this plan. McClellan had as much as told him about it on Sept. 16 when advance elements of Hooker's corps, at about 3:30 p.m., crossed Antietam Creek and began attacking Jackson's front, which was pushed back until dark. Mansfield's force then followed Hooker, crossing the Antietam by the same ford and bridge and remaining about a mile behind Hooker's men. These Union forces slept that night while clutching their muskets. Lee knew, of course, that McClellan would attack his left flank in force and continue attacking at that point until Jackson broke, assuming that the die-hard ranks of Stonewall Jackson could be broken.

At dawn, Sept. 17, the energetic Gen. Abner Doubleday rode quickly down the line of men making up the 4th Brig., 1st Div. in Hooker's I Corps. He dismounted many times, ran along rows of sleeping men, kicking their boots, rousing them, shouting all from their slumbers, then mounting his horse and riding further down the line to repeat the same action. At each stop, Doubleday shouted to junior officers that their men were in open range and vulnerable to Confederate batteries that had been moved up to face them during the night. The Union troops began a great flurry of activity and the noise alerted the Confederate gunners. The 4th Brig. formed into a column and began to march forward.

In the van of the 4th Brig. was Maj. Rufus R. Dawes, who reported: "We had marched ten rods, when *whiz-z-z! Bang!* burst a shell over our heads; then another; then a percussion shell struck and exploded in the very center of the moving mass of men. It killed two men and wounded eleven. It tore off Captain David K. Noyes' foot and cut off both arms of a man in his company. This dreadful scene occurred within a few feet of where I was riding, and before my eyes. The column pushed on without a halt, and in another moment had the shelter of a barn."

Hooker's men kept advancing in columns, finding little resistance, mostly Confederate sharpshooters behind trees, fences and rocks, picking away at the formations and then falling back to where they joined Jackson's main forces. Jackson's men were massed on high ground, some of his units near a small building called Dunker Church, which was about a mile north of Sharpsburg. Confederate infantry was hidden in a 40-acre cornfield owned by D.R. Miller. The corn in this season was head high and green. Running south from this spot were Confederate troops under D.H. Hill, who came under Longstreet's command, and on Hill's front was a sunken road that zigzagged along the crest of rolling hills. This road, later called Bloody Lane or The Sunken Road, offered a natural trench, a fortification in which Southern troops were shielded by a bank of earth and could, with considerable protection, shoot at advancing Yankees through the split rails of a fence running along the crest of the hill.

Behind Jackson's position at Dunker Church were Hood's Texas brigades, the only real reserves Jackson could muster when needed. These men had been pulled out of the line at midnight so that they could have their first real cooked rations in three days. Into this area by early morning plunged the elements of three divisions of Hooker's I Corps, about 9,000 men. To the left and right of this Union line were thick woods, in the center the cornfield, and rearward the squat white Dunker Church, which was Hooker's objective. The cornfield was packed with Jackson's men—the brigades of Hays, Law and Trimble—and when Union skirmishers approached it, they were met by a withering fire.

Lt. Col. Edward S. Bragg commanded the 6th Wis., part of the 1st Brig., 1st Div. in Hooker's I Corps. An agile, crafty officer, Bragg led his men through open ground and to a fence that fronted on the cornfield into which retreating Confederate skirmishers had disappeared. Bragg ordered his men into the cornfield, but when they attempted to leap over the fence they were shot down in great numbers from a blistering fire from the cornfield and from the woodlands to the left. The Union line wavered, then fell back to the fence, where Bragg was seriously wounded. He turned his command over to a major, ordering him to "press on," and was then placed on a tent and carried to the rear.

Hooker's men tried several times to enter the cornfield, one Union company pushing halfway through it, but the fire that greeted them was so devastating that those who were not shot down instantly threw themselves to the ground. Said one Wisconsin officer: "The bullets began to clip through the corn, and spin through the soft furrows thick, almost as hail. Shells burst around us, the fragments tearing up the ground and canister whistled through the corn above us." The Wisconsin men, what was left of them, fell back once more.

Hooker, riding forward and seeing this obstacle, ordered his artillery in that area, 36 field guns, brought to a small rise behind his infantry. These guns, hub to hub, then opened fire on the cornfield. More guns, long-range pieces, were hurriedly brought forward and positioned on a ridge beyond the creek. These guns began to rip the cornfield to pieces in a furious cannonade, throwing into the air dismembered bodies, headless corpses, arms, legs, equipment, splintered muskets. Hooker

The Confederate battery commanded by Stephen D. Lee, at left, with Dunker Church at top left; in the distance at right are the long lines of Union regiments about to attack Jackson's position and be mowed down by a murderous crossfire from Southern guns.

Gen. Joseph Mansfield's XII Corps advancing against Hood's Texans near Dunker Church; Mansfield shouted to his troops from horseback: "We'll whip them today!" He was mortally wounded after mistaking Rebel troops for his own.

observed this carnage, reporting that "every stalk in the northern and greater part of the field was cut as closely as could have been done with a knife."

When the fierce barrage ended, Hooker again ordered his men into the now flattened cornfield, so thick with bodies that few Union soldiers found a spot of ground not covered by human remains. Union forces also advanced into the woods at right and left, but were suddenly greeted with a blinding blast of musketry that cut them down. According to one survivor, his comrades "were knocked out of the ranks by the dozen." Yet the courageous Northerners pressed onward, refusing to turn and run, frantically waving their battle flags, exchanging fire with Confederate ranks, halting, wavering, regrouping, then moving forward again, their thinned-out lines replenished by more and more Union reinforcements rushing blindly forward into this death charge.

The Southerners appeared to have had enough. Their lines finally broke under the intense Union fire and the men in butternut scurried rearward. Some Rebel officers attempted to rally the bloodied Southerners, but there were not enough survivors to make up a company. Victory seemed within the Union grasp as Federal detachments approached the now battered Dunker Church, only a thousand yards distant. In the cornfield and flanking woods lay hundreds of Jackson's men, along with the shattered divisions of Lawton and Gen. Harry Hays. There was nothing to stop the bluecoats from punching through the line to Lee's rear except the exhausted Texas and Louisiana brigades of John Bell Hood, the only reserves left in the Confederate army. Beyond them nothing more existed, nothing at all.

Hood's men were to the rear of Dunker Church, huddled about their campfires, making breakfast, their second hot meal in three days, when one of Lawton's staff officers galloped up to Hood, breathless, his uniform streaked with blood from a wound. He said: "General Lawton sends his compliments with the request that you come at once to his support." The indefatigable Hood mounted his horse and immediately sent out the call: "To arms!" Hood's men threw away their hot breakfast food, kicked over their campfires and grabbed their muskets, running to form columns and then quick marching toward Dunker Church, all this in a matter of a few minutes. As Hood moved to plug the gap in the line, he knew that there was nothing behind him to support his men. A courier had already arrived from D.H. Hill to inform him that Hill was himself being hard pressed by another Union column and could send no help.

At a run, Hood's two brigades, displaying magnificent élan, suddenly appeared at the southern edge of the cornfield, whooping and letting loose the spine-tingling Rebel Yell, their bayonets glinting in the bright sun, but they paused momentarily, stunned at the sight of slaughter that had been inflicted upon the brigades of Lawton and Hays, half of these men sprawled dead before them, cut to pieces by enfilading cannon and musket fire. Confederate officers had been decimated. Lawton himself was wounded and greeted Hood on the battlefield in an almost unconscious state. Killed was Col. Marcellus Douglass, commander of a Georgia brigade, who lay dead at the head of his men, also dead row on row. Gen. John R. Jones, who commanded the Stonewall Brigade, had been paralyzed when a shell exploded directly over his head, and, although not injured by any fragments, he had to be led to a clump of trees, unable to function in his shell-shocked condition.

Gen. William Edwin Starke, who had fought valiantly at Cheat River, at Donelson in Kentucky, through countless battles in North Carolina and throughout the Seven Days' Battles in Virginia, at Second Bull Run, and who had helped Jackson take Harpers Ferry two days earlier, was also dead, shot three times as he led the remnants of Jackson's division from the field. Colonels such as Andrew Jackson Grigsby (who had ordered the last salvo from Maryland Heights at Harpers Ferry that fatally wounded Union commander Dixon Miles) had taken over command of divisions, since there were no Confederate generals available to lead. Only two regimental commanders out of 15 were on their feet and still fighting. All the rest were either dead or had been dragged away wounded.

Thousands of Federal troops were rushing forward down the Hagerstown Road, pouring through a gap in the Confederate line. Hood threw his Texans and those of Col. Evander McIvor Law, about 2,000 men, into this gap. The Southerners, in several ranks, fired devastating volley after volley into the bluecoats rushing madly toward them, mowing them down by the scores. By drawing men from other positions, reinforcements were fed into Hood's flanks, these being elements of D.H. Hill's and Jubal Early's divisions, and help also came from Gen. Richard Ewell's division, so that the Confederate ranks swelled.

Reinforcements now strengthened Hood's flanks. More than 300 of Jackson's men rallied to join Early's men facing the Federal right and D.H. Hill sent hundreds more to confront the Union left, while Hood's stalwarts repulsed the Federals attacking their center. The Confederates inadvertently formed a horseshoe of formations, half ringing the attacking bluecoats, with the Union forces plunging into this deep defensive pocket where they were enfiladed by a murderous crossfire and cut to ribbons.

At this moment, Union Gen. John Gibbon attempted to bring some field guns forward, but most of the batteries were pounded to pieces by rifle fire and some of Hill's nearby field guns. Gibbon dismounted and, after a crew at one gun had been killed, he and some of his aides frantically manned the gun. Gibbon, a trained artilleryman, watched his men breaking and falling back, then, his own hands and face caked with grime, packed his gun with grapeshot and waited until a company of Texans were within yards before firing into their ranks, killing most in the front line. Gibbon then ordered the gun pulled to the rear and withdrew.

Lt. James Stewart, one of Gibbon's officers in the 4th Art., ordered a battery removed and pulled back to two haystacks. Confederate infantry in the woods to the west poured volley after volley into this area, igniting the haystacks and killing 17 of Stewart's men. Capt. Joseph Campbell arrived to unlimber four more guns and line these up with Stewart's. As Campbell was about to dismount, he was struck by two bullets, his horse riddled. John Cook, a 15-year-old bugler, ran forward and helped Campbell to his feet, the officer leaning his large, heavy frame on the small boy. With bullets whistling about them, Cook and Campbell walked through the lethal

ABOVE, Dunker Church where Hooker's and Hood's troops clashed; Confederate dead are shown in the foreground, part of Hood's decimated 1st Tex. regiment; LEFT, Gen. John Bell Hood, who reported to Gen. Jackson that his division was "dead on the field"; RIGHT, Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, who pointed to the heaps of Union dead strewn across his battlefront and told his regimental surgeon that "God has been good to us this day."

Union zouaves, part of Sumner's II Corps, attacking a Rebel battery at Lee's center, just barely held by D.H. Hill.

hailstorm, Cook delivering his wounded commander to medical orderlies. Campbell grabbed the boy by the arm and said weakly: "Bugler, tell Lt. Stewart to take command of all the guns and to pull them out if the Johnnies get too close."

Cook raced back to the awful battlefield, dodging shells and having rifle bullets nipping at his fast-moving feet. He reported to Stewart whose men had been all but wiped out. Said Cook later: "Seeing the cannoneers nearly all down and one, with a pouch full of ammunition, lying dead, I unstrapped the pouch, started for the battery and worked as a cannoneer." For the courage he displayed at Antietam, Bugler John Cook would win the Congressional Medal of Honor. A year later, at Gettysburg, Cook would again display incredible bravery, running messages over a mile and a half of open ground while Confederate sharpshooters used him for target practice. He would nevertheless survive the war and live to old age.

The tide on the Confederate left flank was slowly turning. Hood's Texans marched forward, retaking part of the Hagerstown Road and the cornfield and driving the Pennsylvanians of George Meade into the adjacent East Woods. But as they advanced, their ranks again came under terrific cannon and musket fire. Jackson by then had sent 22-year-old Capt. "Sandie" Pendleton, his favorite staff officer, to see if Hood could hold his position. Pendleton rode through a nightmare of shot and shell to reach the beleaguered Hood. Pendleton later stated: "Such a storm of balls I never conceived it possible for men to live through. Shot and shell shrieking and crashing, canister and bullets whistling and hissing most fiendlike through the air until you could almost see them. In that mile's ride I never expected to come back alive."

When Pendleton galloped up to Hood, the tough Texan said: "Tell General Jackson unless I get reinforcements I must be forced back, but I am going on while I can!" In the face of incredible odds, Hood's men, advancing in several ranks, loading, firing, loading, firing, had to step over hundreds of their dead Confederate comrades. Hood himself went forward with them on horseback, later stating: "Never before was I so continuously troubled with fear that my horse would further injure some wounded fellow soldier, lying helpless on the ground."

Hooker's I Corps had been splintered, almost broken in the desperate Confederate counterattack and Hooker himself, shot in the foot, realized that his corps was facing disaster. He ordered Mansfield's XII Corps to attack, followed by part of Sumner's corps, and these hordes of Union soldiers went boyishly eager to their destruction down the Hagerstown Road and through the North and East Woods. They finally brought the determined Hood to a halt. The Texans held on minute after minute against odds that were often 50 to one. Lee was informed of Hood's plight and immediately ordered most of Walker's division and that of McLaws to reinforce Hood.

Union Gen. Mansfield then rode forward at the head of his men who had advanced into the East Woods, the divisions of Generals Alpheus Williams and George Greene following him. He removed his hat so that his long white hair and flowing beard streamed in the wind. As his regiments rushed forward to the attack, Mansfield waved his hat at them and they cheered him. He shouted: "That's right, boys, cheer! We're going to whip them today!" He ordered his units into double columns so that their strength would be as a wave when they met Hood's thinning lines. He continued to shout: "We will whip them today! We will whip them today!"

Though having spent 40 years in the army, the 58-year-old Mansfield was not battle-seasoned, although he had seen brief action in the Mexican War and had been cited for his gallantry. He had worked as a staff officer and on engineering projects, but had never commanded large bodies of men in battle until now. He worried that his raw recruits might bolt at the first sign of battle and nurtured their comfort by herding them together in tightly packed formations—"columns of companies, closed in mass"—so that his regiments were 10 ranks deep, instead of arrayed in two lines. Thus, they were extremely vulnerable to enemy fire. To Capt. John Gould of the 10th Me., this formation "was almost as good a target as a barn."

Mansfield galloped to the front of his columns, believing that Hooker had already crushed the Confederate left flank and that his own corps would simply mop up what was left of Jackson's wrecked divisions. To his shock, Mansfield, as he entered the dense East Woods, saw Hooker riding wildly toward him on a handsome white horse. Hooker, bleeding from a wound in the foot, hardly paused to shout above the roar of guns to Mansfield: "The enemy are breaking through my lines! You must hold this wood, general!" Hooker's wound worsened and he was soon invalided from the battle. What was left of his corps was taken over by Gen. George G. Meade, a resolute officer who would prove his mettle a year later at Gettysburg.

Mansfield and his XII Corps worked deeper into the East Woods and were met by withering fire from what was left of Hood's division. At one point, Mansfield saw several of his companies huddling in a ditch next to a fence at the edge of a woods, firing frantically at dark figures moving through the trees. The old man rode up to these troops, part of the 10th Me., and shouted: "You are firing at our own men!" Mansfield then spurred his horse onward so that it jumped the fence and he rode toward the woods to see if, indeed, it was full of Union soldiers.

"Those are Rebels, general!" a Union officer shouted to Mansfield.

Mansfield leaned forward in his saddle, squinting at the dark forms moving through the woods toward him. "Yes, I believe you're right," he finally replied. At that moment, a ripple of musketry was heard and Mansfield's horse was shot dead from under him, sending the old man crashing to the ground. He stood up and, with shaky legs, slowly went to the fence. He labored to climb it and while he was doing so, another volley from the woods crashed into the split rail to which Mansfield clung. One bullet ploughed into his stomach, doubling him up in groaning agony.

Several Union soldiers reached up and pulled Mansfield to the safety of the ditch. He was carried to an aid station, where an overworked young physician took one look at the mortally wounded Mansfield and shrugged. He then took a bottle of whiskey and almost forced Mansfield to gulp down its contents. Mansfield came close to choking to death and did, indeed, die the following day from his painful wound. (One account held that Mansfield, after being shot in the *chest,*

Gen. Edwin V. Sumner, who protested McClellan's attack order.

Gen. Israel B. Richardson, mortally wounded at Antietam.

Built of freshly cut logs, this small tower served as a Union lookout point for artillery spotters at Antietam.

Gen. Joseph Mansfield, mortally wounded at Antietam.

Gen. Isaac P. Rodman, mortally wounded at Antietam.

A rare battle photo shows a Union spotter inspecting the defenses of Gen. D. H. Hill at Antietam.

Gen. Nathaniel Prentiss Banks.

Gen. William B. Franklin.

Union troops commanded by Gen. Franklin, preparing for a charge they never made.

actually led his horse up the road and then collapsed; this tale, designed undoubtedly to create a more heroic image for Mansfield, is not supported by those present when he was mortally wounded, but, within the sly machinations of revisionist historians, the latter version provides a more dignified end to a Union corps commander than the actual portrait of Mansfield being shot while trying to climb a fence with his back to the enemy.)

Mansfield's two divisions, led by Greene and Williams (the latter assumed command of XII Corps), took to the attack, swarming into the East Woods and pushing the Confederates back, a Massachusetts unit racing so far ahead that it captured one of Hood's front ranks and seized the Texas banner, one of the few times a battle flag from this famous brigade was ever taken. A Union colonel waved this flag as he led his men forward. As Hood's men fell back under great pressure, reinforcements under Gen. George Thomas "Tige" Anderson and elements of Walker's division arrived. One of Anderson's officers approached Hood and asked him where his division was and Hood replied: "I have no division. It is dead on the field." About 82 percent of Hood's 1st Tex. had been killed or wounded, mostly in the cornfield and the East Woods.

It was in the cornfield that Lt. Col. George Hector Tyndale led with conspicuous gallantry the 1st Brig., 2nd Div., XII Corps that decimated Alfred Colquitt's men. Tyndale had three horses shot from under him that day, was wounded twice and then left for dead on the battlefield.

When McLaws' brigades began to appear, the Union advance was once more halted and driven back. Two Union corps, five Federal divisions, that of Hooker and Mansfield, had been stopped and thrown back. Now it was Sumner's turn, the II Corps being the largest in McClellan's army. Sumner, at this time, was actually attacking on two fronts at the same time, splitting his force so that the bulk pressed D.H. Hill at the Confederate center while three more of his divisions attacked in the wake of Mansfield's badly mauled divisions on the Union right.

McLaws, his men fighting like men possessed, managed to repeat Hood's valiant feat of only an hour earlier, driving back elements of Sumner's startled troops until the battlefield was just as it had been at sunrise when Hooker opened the attack. When Sumner's leading division, that of Gen. John Sedgwick, marched into the West Woods in line formation, more than 4,000 of McLaws' troops fell upon them, unleashing murderous volley fire that, within 20 minutes, claimed more than 2,200 of Sedgwick's men. McLaws was joined by brigades from Walker's division and from Early's, catching the flank of Sedgwick's division and smashing into it, rolling it up and causing the hopelessly outnumbered Federals to retreat at a screaming run. (One of the reasons for the extraordinary number of Union casualties in this sector of the battle was that Confederate soldiers here were firing buck-and-ball cartridges that were made up of three pieces of buckshot and a ball so that when fired, these loads exploded as would shotgun bursts, killing the first man targeted and wounding as many as a dozen more standing nearby.)

The energetic, 61-year-old Gen. Greene, however, pushed two of his brigades into the northeast edge of the cornfield, the 66th Ohio attacking with such fury that it devastated the Rebels attempting to hold this position. According to Col. Eugene Powell of the 66th, the Confederate dead were "literally piled upon and across each other." Greene's 102nd N.Y. then raced toward Dunker Church, but Greene halted this regiment 200 yards from the small white building, telling them not to "go any farther." XII Corps, as Greene knew, was scattered and had suffered immense casualties (almost 25 percent). He reformed his men and waited.

Meanwhile, Jeb Stuart's horse artillery on the extreme left Rebel flank had also brought its guns to bear and poured a murderous cannonade into the right flank of Sumner's trapped men. Sumner, seeing this disaster, yelled to an aide: "My God, we've got to get out of here!" He did not have to order a withdrawal; his men were already routed. Those who managed to survive ran in panic, weaponless, terror-struck, toward the rear. Strewn along the Hagerstown Road and mostly inside the 40-acre cornfield were the hideously mangled bodies and writhing wounded of both sides, more than 8,000 men dead and wounded. Both sides on the Confederate left flank now rested and resumed artillery duels and occasional skirmishes, which echoed sporadic musketry as this part of the battle, the first of three separate battles fought that day, flamed down.

Stonewall Jackson rode into view near Dunker Church, sitting placidly on his horse and surveying the carpet of dead and dying that stretched through the cornfield and down the Hagerstown Road and into the thick woods on either side. "God has been very kind to us this day," he said to his regimental surgeon while chewing a peach, his taciturn remark being an expression of gratitude that his men were able to stop the enemy. The numbers of his own dead and wounded, perhaps as high as 5,000 irreplaceable veterans, seemed not to concern him. This was the unavoidable hazard of war and Jackson accepted death as God's will, he being deeply religious, some said a fanatic who prayed to God to allow him and his men to kill as many Federals as possible each day.

The surgeon, Dr. Hunter McGuire, was working furiously to save wounded men and asked Jackson about casualties. "Heavy" was Jackson's only response as he continued munching the peach. Dr. McGuire then told his commander that, in his estimation, Jackson's men were so badly shot up that they could never withstand another Union attack. Jackson pointed to a ridge a mile to the north where Federal troops remained behind a line of cannons and said: "Dr. McGuire, they have done their worst."

McClellan, wrongly believing Jackson's troops were too strong to overcome, ordered Sumner to concentrate on Lee's center, and Sumner sent forth his best divisions to break the Confederate line at that point. The Confederate center was held by D.H. Hill's men at the Sunken Road, which would later be aptly called the Bloody Lane. This defensive position was occupied by brigades under the command of Gen. Robert Emmett Rodes and Gen. George Burgwyn Anderson, the only two units of Hill's division that had been relatively unaffected by other Union attacks that had devastated brigades commanded by Gens. Alfred Holt Colquitt and Roswell Sabine Ripley (who had been severely wounded). Samuel Garland's brigade had also been torn to shreds by Union attacks, but without its commanding general, who had been mortally wounded on Sept. 14 at South Mountain.

The men of Rodes and Anderson were crowded into the Sunken Road, which ran perpendicular from the right of the Hagerstown Road about 500 yards south of Dunker Church. To the left of these two brigades were two regiments of Walker's division, the 27th N.C. and the 3rd Ark. On the flank of these regiments was the 6th Ala. under the command of the fiery Col. John B. Gordon.

Lee suddenly appeared, riding along the Sunken Road, D.H. Hill at his side. Both generals stopped to urge the defenders in this area to hold their ground at all costs. Lee added that if any break in the line occurred, the entire army could be swept away. Gordon heard these words and, as Lee and Hill began to ride away, the valiant commander shouted after them: "These men are going to stay here, General, until the sun goes down or victory is won!"

The Sunken Road was an ideal defensive position, a deep depression that offered a bank against which the Confederates could remain prone and shoot through a split rail fence. The ground the Union troops had to cover to approach the road rose steadily away from it so that as they marched forward, they could not see the enemy hidden in the trench-like Sunken Road, until they were upon them and facing point-blank fire. Against this position, Sumner threw more than 12,000 men, the divisions of Gen. William H. French and Gen. Israel Richardson. Facing these formations, Hill had about 7,000 men, including 4,000 reinforcements from Gen. Richard Anderson's division that had just arrived with McLaws from Harpers Ferry. Anderson's men were placed in a second line behind Hill's troops.

Sumner, white-headed and courageous, rode toward Hill's center and then waved the division of Gen. William Henry French to the attack. These men marched in almost perfect order, their bayonets held high, going over a battle-charred farm owned by Samuel Mumma, heading, or drifting through clouds of smoke, to the southeast. They heard Confederates hidden in the Sunken Road near a farm owned by William Roulette shouting at them as they approached: "Go home, you black devils! Run home!" The Federals moved through an area recently torn up by cannon fire and the black smoke that curled through their ranks sooted their faces so that the Confederates thought they were Negro troops. The first Federal ranks wavered and fell as the Southern musketry hit home, scything the blue line.

One of the first Union brigades to be torn to pieces was led by 38-year-old Gen. Max Weber, who had been trained in Germany. His 4th N.Y. was made up of mostly German immigrants. This regiment, along with the 1st Del. and the 5th Md., advanced as close as 20 yards to the Sunken Road before their ranks were almost obliterated. Weber, who was shot in the arm, saw his men stubbornly stand and return fire for five minutes before falling back, leaving 450 dead and wounded on the field.

Next came a Union brigade led by Col. Dwight Morris, three regiments (the 14th Conn., 108th N.Y. and 130th Pa.) made up of raw recruits who had enlisted only a month earlier. These youths were also torn to pieces and retreated. French threw his last brigade, commanded by Gen. Nathan Kimball, at the stubborn Confederate center. Of the four regiments in this brigade, only one was made up of recruits. The other three were seasoned units, but even these veterans of many battles were shocked by the intensity of fire blasting from the Sunken Road.

Pvt. Thomas Galwey of the 8th Ohio, who knelt with his company on a slope to fire at the Sunken Road, stated: "Almost every blade of grass is moving. For some time I supposed that this is caused by the merry crickets; and it is not until I have made a remark to that effect to one of our boys near me and notice him laugh, that I know that it is the bullets that are falling thickly around us."

These regiments, too, were shot up and driven to ground. Pvt. George Coursen of the 132nd Pa. suddenly leaped atop a boulder, sitting on this large rock, firing, reloading and firing. Lt. Frederick L. Hitchcock, his commander, ordered Coursen to get down. Coursen shook his head, saying: "I can see the Rebels better from here." He remained on his perch, untouched, as he fired away.

On the flank of the 132nd Pa. was the 108th N.Y., its troops pinned to the ground by incessant fire from the Sunken Road, and its commander, Col. Oliver Hazard Palmer, shamefully cowered on the ground, clinging to it for dear life. Seeing this, Gen. Kimball ordered Lt. Hitchcock to tell Palmer to take his men forward. When Hitchcock gave Palmer this message, the colonel "merely turned his face toward me without replying or attempting to obey the order."

Hitchcock returned to Kimball to tell him that Col. Palmer was not responding. Kimball cursed Palmer and then ordered Hitchcock to "repeat the order at gunpoint. If Colonel Palmer does not obey, shoot him!" Hitchcock began to return to the position held by the 108th N.Y., gun in hand, but he was prevented from having to execute Palmer by officers of the 108th who finally managed to prod their men forward. They rushed to the crest of the hill only to be shot down in great numbers and driven back.

Beyond this cauldron of fire, appearing on a splendid horse, field glasses in hand, was McClellan himself, who, despite Sumner's protests of mounting frontal charges at this time, ordered forth Sumner's last division, that of Gen. Israel Richardson, which was to bolster the faltering left flank of French's hard-hit division. Spearheading the attack of this division was the Irish Brigade led by Thomas Francis Meagher.

An Irish immigrant and political activist, Meagher had been a soldier of fortune. He had fought in Ireland against the British and had been banished to Tasmania for sedition. He had migrated to the U.S., settling in New York, where he practiced law, ran a newspaper and lectured on the evils of slavery. He had organized the N.Y. Irish Brigade, which included the 29th Mass., 63rd, 88th and 69th N.Y. regiments, the latter being the celebrated "Fighting 69th." Meagher had led this brigade brilliantly during the Peninsular Campaign, and at Second Bull Run. Here, at Antietam, the brigade would almost be wiped out in its magnificent charge against the Confederates holding the Sunken Road. With the American flag and Irish banners next to it, a regimental band blaring Irish martial music, Meagher led his men forward.

One witness described the attack thusly: "The ground over which they were about to move was rough and uneven, and in

the distance appeared to be a freshly plowed field ... the gun and musket belched forth their vengeful volleys with telling accuracy. But the gallant Irishmen moved into battle array with the precision of parade. As the scathing fire cut out its fearful gaps, the line halted with deliberation to adjust itself. The dead and wounded strewed the ground, thickening as the distance from the enemy lessened. Twice and again the green standard fell, but only to be promptly seized again. Vast curtains of smoke concealed the enemy, rising at intervals, disclosing him holding firmly to his post."

The Irish Brigade had been slaughtered; 540 of its men lay dead or wounded on the field. Gen. Richardson then personally led the brigade of Gen. John C. Caldwell, racing on foot ahead of his troops, whirling his sword about his head. The 46-year-old Richardson, a West Point graduate and Mexican War veteran, suddenly looked back for the brigade commander, shouting: "Where's General Caldwell?"

An enlisted man pointed rearward and shouted back: "Behind a haystack!"

"God damn the field officers!" yelled Richardson as he ordered the bluecoat lines forward to within 30 yards of the Sunken Road, where it was stopped cold by withering fire from Hill's indefatigable troops. A Union surgeon could not help but admire the men of D.H. Hill, who slew rank upon rank of Union troops sweeping down on them without faltering, rising from the Sunken Road, a single thin line of defense that stubbornly refused to yield.

Said the surgeon: "It is beyond all wonder how such men as the Rebel troops can fight as they do; that, filthy, sick, hungry and miserable, they should prove such heroes in fight, is past explanation. One regiment stood up before the fire of two or three of our long-range batteries and of two regiments of infantry, and though the air around them was vocal with the whistle of bullets and screams of shells, there they stood and delivered their fire in perfect order."

Hill's men were resolute as Sumner threw one full division at them, then another. Gordon and his men prepared for the shock. Said Gordon: "The men in blue formed in my front four lines deep. The brave Union commander, superbly mounted, placed himself in front, while his band in the rear cheered them with martial music. It was a thrilling spectacle. To impose man against man was impossible, for there were four lines of blue to my one line of gray. The only plan was to hold my fire until the advancing Federals were almost upon my lines. No troops with empty guns could withstand the shock." Gordon ordered his men to lie down upon the grass and wait for the bluecoats. "Not a shot would be fired until my voice should be heard commanding 'Fire!'

"There was no artillery at this point upon either side, and not a rifle was discharged. The stillness was literally oppressive, as this column of Union infantry moved majestically toward us. Now the front rank was within a few rods of where I stood. With all my lung power, I shouted 'Fire!' Our rifles flamed and roared in the Federals' faces like a blinding blaze of lightning. The effect was appalling. The entire front line, with few exceptions, went down. Before the rear lines could recover, my exultant men were on their feet, devouring them with successive volleys. Even then these stubborn blue lines retreated in fairly good order."

Gordon had not long to wait for the Federals to resume their massive attacks. Wave upon wave of Union troops marched forward and, when finally gaining some high ground that overlooked the Sunken Road, unleashed their own deadly volleys, which began to rip apart the Confederates. Gordon himself went down in a hail of bullets, wounded seven times. He later remembered how he "fell forward and lay unconscious with my face in my cap. I might have been smothered by the blood running into my cap from this last wound, but for the act of some Yankee, who had at a previous hour during the battle, shot a hole through the cap, which let the blood out."

All along the Sunken Road, Sumner's legions dashed themselves against Hill's single line of defense. The forces of Gen. Richard Heron "Dick" Anderson arrived to bolster Hill's defensive line, making a second line behind Hill's troops. Following one attack, Anderson himself was badly wounded and had to be carried from the field. He was replaced by Roger A. Pryor, an ardent secessionist who had declined the honor of firing the first shot at Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, but who was now the senior brigadier of Anderson's troops. Pryor failed to coordinate Anderson's units, which caused regiments and companies to fight as independent units without the tight supervision of an overall commander. Pryor merely sat atop his horse, babbling senseless orders that no one obeyed.

Hill, holding the very center of Lee's weakening lines, saw his men begin to falter. They ran out of ammunition while shooting down wave after wave of advancing Federals. Their own ranks were torn apart. Then, Col. Francis C. Barlow, commanding the 61st and 64th N.Y. regiments, found a knoll overlooking a bend in the Sunken Road from which his men could pour enfilading fire onto the defending Rebels. Barlow, a tenacious fighter and resourceful commander, wore a crumpled black hat and waved a huge cavalry saber, one which he had purposely selected in order to use it on stragglers, whacking their backsides with its broad blade.

A practicing New York attorney before the war, the 27-year-old Barlow refused to allow anyone in his command to shirk. When the battle began that morning and he found his drummer boys lagging behind, he tied them to his long red sash and dragged them forward to battle.

Now Barlow had found high ground overlooking the Sunken Road and, with 350 men, raked the road and brought slaughter to the Confederates. Sgt. Charles Fuller of the 61st N.Y. would later write: "We were shooting them like sheep in a pen. If a bullet missed the mark at first, it was liable to strike the further bank, angle back, and take them secondarily." This tremendous fire was unleashed on the 6th Ala., and it was this hailstorm of bullets that felled the intrepid Col. John B. Gordon.

With Gordon unconscious, Lt. Col. James N. Lightfoot took command of Gordon's brigade. Division commander Robert E. Rodes, seeing the incursion made against the Alabamans by Barlow's New Yorkers, sent an order to Lightfoot to bend back the right flank of the 6th Ala. so that it could fight off Barlow's attack. Lightfoot, in the din of battle, misunderstood Rodes' order, believing that he had been flanked and was to pull his men entirely out of the line, a disastrous misunderstanding.

Lightfoot shouted to his officers to have their men "about face, forward march!" At that moment, Maj. Edwin L. Hobson,

Gen. Paul Jones Semmes, whose brigade was badly mauled at Antietam.

Gen. D.H. Hill, who barely managed to hold Lee's center at Antietam with 150 men.

The three photos at right depict, TOP, Confederate dead along a fence line held by D.H. Hill; CENTER and BOTTOM show the gory remains of Southern troops killed in the Sunken Road ("Bloody Lane"), commanded by the heroic Gen. John Brown Gordon.

Gen. John Brown Gordon of Georgia, horribly wounded at Antietam.

who commanded the 5th Ala. on Lightfoot's flank, asked Lightfoot if Rodes' order applied to the entire brigade. "Yes!" shouted Lightfoot. As the 6th Ala. pulled out of line, the 5th followed, and so did three more regiments. This opened a large gap in Hill's defenses. Gen. Richardson saw the opening in Hill's line and ordered his men to rush forward and through it so that they could pour enfilading fire down the entire Confederate flank.

Rodes was shocked to see his men fleeing past him, "without visible cause to me, retreating in confusion." He rode after them on horseback, shouting, begging, threatening these regiments to return to the line. Then Rodes was shot from his horse. He staggered to his feet and managed to assemble about 150 men to form a weak line on higher ground, sending occasional volleys into the river of blue that was running down the Sunken Road, but this gunfire had little effect on the swarms of Union troops. By then Federal troops under Barlow surged into the Sunken Road to capture 300 confused Rebels, shooting others as they fled. The road was so thick with Confederate dead that even the most hardened Union veterans were in horror at "this ghastly flooring."

Those Confederates who stood their ground were killed. One of these was Col. Charles C. Tew, who commanded the 2nd N.C. (The 2nd and 14th N.C. were the only Rebel regiments remaining in the Sunken Road.) Col. Tew was found propped up against the bank of the road, still clutching his sword with both hands, shot in the head, blood trickling from this wound. A soldier of the 8th Ohio found Tew and thought to take his sword as a trophy. As he reached for it, Tew suddenly came to life and thrust the blade at the startled Federal, then fell back, finally dead.

T.F. DeBurgh Galwey was one of the Union soldiers who ran through the gap and leaped into the Sunken Road, firing at the exposed flank of the Confederate lines that simply melted away under the bluecoat volleys, causing "the Confederates [to break] away in haste and flee up the slope. What a sight was that lane! I shall not dwell on the horror of it; I saw many a ghastly array of dead afterward, but none, I think, that so affected me as did the sight of the poor brave fellows in butternut homespun that had died there for what they believed to be honor and a righteous cause."

The dead of Hill's and Anderson's divisions lay sprawled on top of one another. So thick were the bodies that Union soldiers could not find a spot of ground to step upon. They literally walked upon a sea of corpses as they pursued the fleeing Confederates down the Sunken Road, renaming the awful place the Bloody Lane. The Confederate line was giving way and the Union forces poured into the gap, but oddly did not advance immediately over the high ground beyond the Sunken Road, not knowing that Lee's center was all but destroyed. Confederate artillery commander Edward Porter Alexander believed that "Lee's army was ruined and the end of the Confederacy was in sight."

D.H. Hill, however, was still full of fight. He had three horses shot out from under him before he furiously ran through the ranks of his retreating soldiers on foot, grabbing them, spinning them about, and, like Rodes before him, ordering them to follow him in forming another defensive line. A few hundred did so, managing to halt a brief Union charge. Hill then seized a rifle from one of his dead soldiers and led an infantry charge that was repulsed. Hill then mounted another horse and dashed to the rear to find a Confederate battery commanded by Capt. Robert Boyce. Hill asked Boyce what he was doing there and Boyce replied with a boyish grin: "Awaiting orders, sir." Hill told him that the Confederate line was smashed and that only he and his battery could save the day. Boyce was jubilant as he shouted to his men: "Do you hear that, boys? Here's our chance for glory!" In seconds, Boyce's batteries were racing toward the gap in the line and were quickly put into action on high ground, raking the Union troops beginning to move up from the Sunken Road.

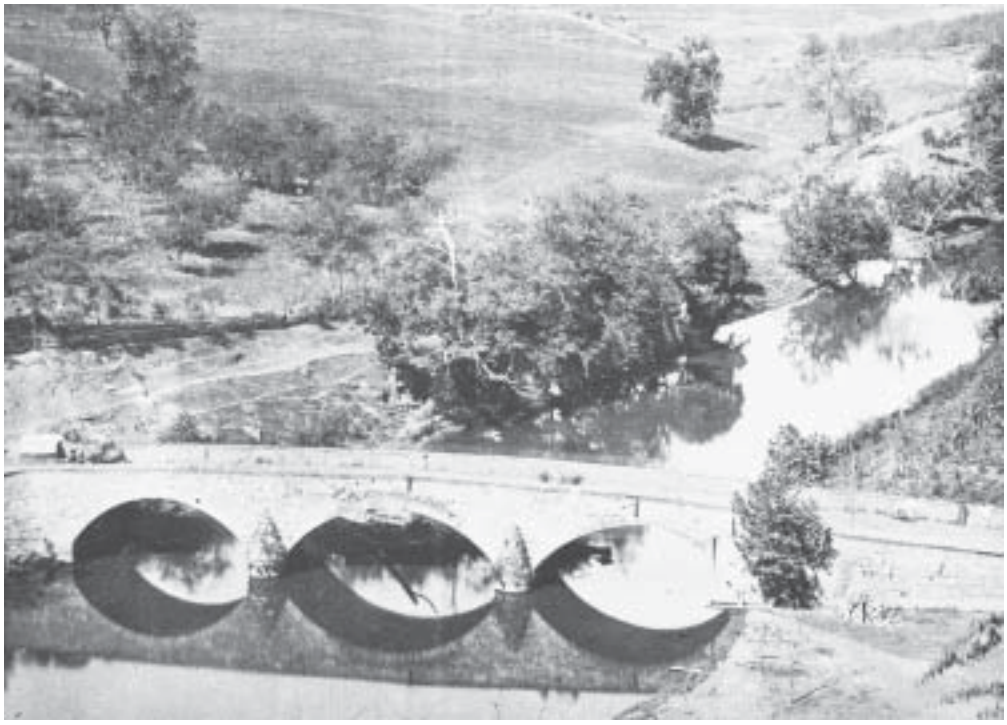
Hill began to round up more and more men to form a defensive line next to Boyce's battery. He was aided by Gen. James "Old Pete" Longstreet, who also desperately sought men and guns to aid Hill. Wearing a carpet slipper on one infected foot, Longstreet rode frantically behind his lines, pulling out small units and sending them on the run to Hill. Longstreet found a Washington artillery battery under the command of Merritt B. Miller and ordered it to join Boyce's guns.

Confederate forces on both flanks began to feed units into Hill's new defensive position. The 27th N.C. and the 3rd Ark. of Walker's division, on the flank of Gordon's crushed Alabamans, reformed to strengthen the line and these two regiments poured such a volume of fire into advancing Federals that Union commanders believed they were facing a fresh Southern brigade. Union commanders halted their advancing troops. Seeing the Federals stop, Col. John Rogers Cooke of the 27th N.C. led a new Confederate attack. Cooke, Harvard educated, was the 29-year-old son of Union cavalry leader Gen. Philip St. George Cooke and the brother-in-law of Confederate cavalry leader Gen. J.E.B. Stuart.

Realizing that his men were firing wildly at Union positions, Cooke ran about 15 yards in front of his line, taking shelter behind a large hickory tree. From that position he could see the Union lines; he stood there directing the fire of his men, risking death from both sides, misdirected bullets from his own men and the volleys that thudded into the tree from Union lines. The Federals, however, were beaten back and the unscathed Cooke rejoined his men, who cheered him through their ranks.

Before Cooke's attack, his men had been near Dunker Church, and when he was ordered to aid Hill, a regimental barber raced up to one of Cooke's officers, with his fiddle in hand, saying: "Sir, would it be all right if I give the boys a tune as they move out?" The officer agreed and the man began sawing an old mountain square dance entitled "Granny, Will Your Dog Bite? Hellfire, No!" The barber fiddled his way right into the battle and was later found dead in the Sunken Road, still clutching his battered instrument.

As the battle in Hill's center waged, an unidentified Confederate officer suddenly appeared, riding to the front of the North Carolinians. He was weaving in his saddle and when he drew his saber and held it aloft, his arm flopped about in the air. He was obviously drunk, slurring his cry: "Come on, boys! I'm leading this charge!"



The three-arch stone bridge spanning Antietam Creek, later called Burnside Bridge.

Gen. Ambrose Everett Burnside, famous for his muttonchop sideburns; he was overly cautious at Antietam and obsessed with the bridge spanning Antietam Creek, studying this span for hours, delaying his attack against orders and finally sending his IX Corp rushing over the bridge late in the day to crush weakly defended Confederate positions.

More than 10,000 Union troops in Burnside's IX Corps attacked thin Rebel defenses and bent back Lee's right flank all the way to Sharpsburg.

Lt. Col. Richard W. Singletary of the 27th N.C. ran forward and pulled the drunken officer from the saddle, shaking him and shouting: "You are a liar, sir! We lead our own charges!" The officer was shoved away and Singletary drew his own sword, waving on his Carolinians who followed *him* forward. Such was the battle of Antietam, where men bitterly argued for the privilege of leading their *own* people to death in suicidal charges.

The Carolinians were finally driven back, but Gen. D. H. Hill gathered more small units and hurled them against the Union troops infiltrating the Sunken Road and up a slope into a cornfield. Here the 5th N.H. under the fire-eating Col. Edward E. Cross shot down Hill's charging Confederate units with deadly accuracy.

Cross had battled Indians on the frontier, fought in a Mexican revolution and was one of the fiercest fighters in the Union Army. He would not tolerate cowards and, only hours before the battle began at Antietam, he had stated to his troops: "You have never disgraced your state. I hope you won't this time. If any man runs, I want the file closers to shoot him. If they don't, I shall myself." Cross had made his soldiers appear sinister by ordering them to smear their faces with black powder from their own cartridges, and shout "the war whoop," Cross' own version of the Rebel Yell.

As the 5th N.H. and the 81st Pa. began to enter a cornfield masking Hill's thinly manned positions, a tremendous barrage tore apart the advancing Union lines. Startled, the Federals saw that more than 20 Rebel guns, mounted on high ground just west of the Hagerstown Road, were in the perfect position to blow their lines to pieces, which they proceeded to do. These were the guns that Longstreet had rounded up and had desperately aligned to stop the Union advance.

Richardson's forces had been used up, more than 3,000 of them were now dead or wounded. Barlow was one of these, having fallen wounded when struck by canister. Richardson's men had advanced about 600 yards south of the Sunken Road to Piper's farmhouse and were no more than a half mile away from the town of Sharpsburg, but they could go no farther, halted by the devastating cannon fire unleashed by the batteries Longstreet had put into action.

Richardson asked for cannon to combat the Confederate artillery, but received only eight guns out of the 300 in McClellan's army. The first to arrive at Richardson's front was Battery K of the 1st U.S. Art., commanded by Capt. William M. Graham, along with a unit of horse artillery. Graham's six Napoleon smoothbores silenced two Confederate smoothbores only 700 yards distant, but failed to reach the distance of Confederate rifled guns, which continued to pound Richardson's position.

As the artillery dueled, a civilian carriage suddenly appeared on the battlefield; in it was Maryland resident Martin Eakle, a wealthy miller from Keedysville. He astounded the artillerymen of Battery K by enthusiastically shaking their hands and then handing them biscuits and slices of ham from a hamper. Eakle then loaded his carriage with wounded Union soldiers and drove them to the rear. He returned within minutes for another load of wounded men, and when he drove off a shell exploded nearby, wounding one of his horses.

Battery K, however, needed long-range guns, not humanitarians like Eakle. Graham informed Richardson that he was in a losing battle with the longer-range guns of the Confederate batteries. Richardson ordered Graham to pull out his batteries and save them for a general advance that was then being planned. A few minutes later, about 1 p.m., Richardson's own position came under artillery fire. A spherical case shot exploded near Richardson and a shell fragment cut into his side. Richardson's wound was mortal. As he was being carried from the field, Richardson shouted to his men to continue the attack. He would die from his wound on Nov. 3, 1862, in the Pry House (McClellan's headquarters), but not before being promoted to major general for his heroic actions at Antietam.

Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock, one of the most able field commanders in the Union army, replaced Richardson, but there existed no battle plan for him to follow. Moreover, Richardson's forces were sapped, more than 3,000 of them being killed or wounded. In the Sunken Road, 2,600 Confederates lay dead or wounded. Longstreet looked along the front of Lee's center to see it held by ragtag units of a few hundred men each. Some regiments, such as the badly mauled 27th N.C., were completely out of ammunition, but these game Confederates hooted and waved their battle flags in wild excitement to mislead the Federals into believing that they were still present in force on the battlefield. The situation appeared hopeless to Longstreet who later remarked: "We were already badly whipped and were only holding our ground by sheer force of desperation."

Robert E. Lee faced utter destruction at this moment when Gen. William Buel Franklin arrived with another 8,000 Union troops, five out of his six brigades, all fresh and unbloodied, ready for battle. The 39-year-old Franklin reported to Sumner, the senior general, a man almost twice his age. Franklin told Sumner that he was prepared to hurl his men forward at that moment, but Sumner shook his gray head as he peered toward the Confederate lines. He had no way of knowing, of course, that one determined brigade of Union troops could push through Hill's almost helpless position. He believed the enemy awaited in great strength at this point and told Franklin that he had lost more than 5,000 men in taking the Sunken Road and that he would not abide further slaughter of his troops.

Just then a courier from McClellan arrived. Little Mac suggested in his message to Sumner that another attack be made against Lee's center. Sumner exploded, shouting at the courier: "Go back, young man, and tell General McClellan that I have no command! Tell him that my command, Banks' command, and Hooker's command are all cut up and demoralized! Tell him that General Franklin has the only organized command on this part of the field!"

When this message was delivered, McClellan rode to Sumner's lines and conferred with Sumner and Franklin. He nervously looked toward the haze-shrouded ridge where the Confederates had formed a new defense line and believed, like Sumner, that the Southern forces were too strong to overwhelm at this point. He later reported that Robert E. Lee had no less than 100,000 men in reserve in this area. Lee, of course, had no reserves backing his almost nonexistent center.

Longstreet was with Hill at this time, near the two batteries and the two small regiments commanded by Cooke of the

27th N. C. and Capt. John W. Reedy, the ranking officer left alive in the 3rd Ark. Cooke had sent a message to Longstreet telling him that "I have not a cartridge in my command, but will hold my position at the point of the bayonet." Longstreet then told one of Lee's aides that he was holding the center with only two small regiments and that his men were completely out of ammunition, words that caused the courier's eyes to pop and sent him galloping back to Lee.

As the hot early afternoon sun beat down on him, George McClellan called a halt to this second battle of the day, one which had raged for four hours, the first battle against the Confederate left flank having been fought from about 8 a.m. to noon. McClellan, believing Lee's center was impenetrable, would try one more gigantic thrust, to the south, using Burnside's corps to take Sharpsburg, slice to the Potomac and cut off Lee's only avenue of retreat. Actually, Burnside, whose IX Corps McClellan originally thought to use as a "diversionary" force, had the discretion to attack as he saw fit and could have begun his assault across Antietam Creek at 9 a.m., but his corps, four divisions numbering more than 12,000 men, had not moved from the far side of the creek. Skirmishers and pickets had exchanged sniper fire with Confederates on the far shore and about 200 men had been hit, mostly Union soldiers. That had been the extent of battle along the Union left flank up to this time.

Gen. Ambrose Burnside, for his part, proved to be more cautious than McClellan himself. He had remained on a hilltop looking down on a three-arched 12-foot-wide stone bridge that spanned the muddy Antietam, wondering how many of his men might cross this span under fire from Confederate guns. He had not bothered to test the depth of the creek, but had sent runners looking frantically for local guides who could point out a ford where his men might cross. Had one of his men attempted to cross the 50-yard-wide creek, he would have discovered that it was only waist-high. For several hours Burnside sat in the saddle, gazing down on the bridge with his field glasses, fretting.

Burnside's relationship with McClellan, a man who had been his friend since their days together at West Point, was fast dissolving. Before the war, Burnside had quit the army, attempting to make a fortune by manufacturing a breech-loading rifle he had himself designed. The company had gone broke and Burnside would have been destitute had not McClellan gotten him a job with the Illinois Central Railroad. The two men had always been close, but in the last two days their relationship had become strained, particularly after McClellan had criticized Burnside for moving his corps too slowly.

Moreover, Burnside was still upset over having lost control of Hooker's I Corps, which had been under his command when McClellan's "Wing" commands were in use. McClellan had since scrapped the concept of "Wings," which gave Hooker independent command of his own corps. Since Burnside still saw himself a "Wing" commander, he relayed McClellan's orders to Gen. Jacob Cox, who had direct command of the IX Corps after Gen. Jesse Reno had been killed at South Mountain. Oddly, both Burnside and Cox commanded IX Corps, with Burnside having the senior position and the overall responsibility of command.

Resentful and peevish, Burnside was no longer his easy-going, congenial self, a man who normally exuded great confidence, so much so that President Lincoln had twice offered him the command of the Army of the Potomac. On both occasions, Burnside had declined the responsibility.

In the morning, couriers began arriving from McClellan, ordering Burnside to cross the Antietam and engage the enemy. Burnside, a heavyset man with thick, bushy sideburns and an owlish face, glared at Col. Delos B. Sacket, McClellan's inspector general, who, by late morning, brought still another urgent message from Little Mac: "Push forward the troops without a moment's delay."

Burnside bristled, barking at Sacket: "McClellan appears to think I am not trying my best to carry this bridge! You are the third or fourth one who has been to me this morning with similar orders." Burnside then held up his field glasses once more and began staring at the stone bridge and the road opposite that ran along the shore of the creek. McClellan would continue to send couriers and officers to Burnside, at one point sending Col. Thomas Key to make sure that Burnside was following orders. Key had been authorized by McClellan to actually relieve Burnside, if, in his opinion, he thought Burnside was not taking the initiative, and replace him with Gen. George Morrell of Porter's V Corps. By the time Key arrived, at about 2 p.m., Burnside's men were already across the creek and the general himself was directing traffic on the blood-soaked bridge. That, however, was several hours away from Burnside's first serious move to cross that narrow bridge.

Above the bridge and along the western bank were Confederate positions; Burnside had no idea of how many men faced his forces, but he, like McClellan, always feared the worst, believing himself outnumbered. Further, many Confederate batteries were positioned on the opposite hilltop and had dueled effectively with his own 50 cannons on the western bank for several hours, 22 of these guns working in close support of Burnside's infantry.

The truth was that Burnside could have pushed through the Confederate force at any time. There were only about 2,000 men, a thinned-out division under the command of Gen. David Rumph Jones defending the whole of the Confederate right flank; six meager brigades were all that made up Lee's forces on this flank. Throughout the morning battle on Jackson's front and later along Hill's caved-in center, Lee and Longstreet had bled the right flank of men, guns and equipment. Walker's division had been taken from this position, then six brigades of Anderson's force, until Jones had only a token division to cover more than a mile of front to fight off an entire Union corps, that of the hesitant Burnside. Close to the creek bank was a single brigade of 550 men (2nd, 15th, 17th and 20th Ga.) under the command of Gen. Robert Augustus Toombs, the fiery Georgia politician who had been secretary of state for the Confederacy but resigned, calling his political post an "idle station."

Toombs had since organized and led a tough Georgia brigade, but he was anything but a disciplinarian. Argumentative with superiors and critical of the strategy exercised by the Confederate high command, he had little patience on the battlefield. His first impulse was to attack the enemy all out, regard-

less of consequences. Toombs had argued with his superior, D.H. Hill, and when Hill censored him for allowing his men to break ranks at Malvern Hill, Toombs challenged Hill to a duel, which earned him another official reprimand; this also caused Toombs to seethe with anger. Toombs vowed to win back the respect of his superiors at Antietam and he was spoiling for a fight. He had written to his wife that he intended to distinguish himself in a great battle and then resign. Wrote Toombs: "The day after such an event I will retire, if I live through it."

Spearheading the first attack on the bridge was an Ohio brigade (11th, 26th and 36th) from Cox's old Kanawha Division, led by Gen. George Crook and supported by Gen. Samuel Sturgis' division. The first men on the bridge, however, were skirmishers from the 11th Conn., led by Col. Henry W. Kingsbury, an officer Burnside held in high esteem. Kingsbury had graduated from West Point only a year earlier, and his father, a regular army officer for many years, was Burnside's close friend. Kingsbury's sister was married to Simon Bolivar Buckner, a Confederate general.

Toombs' sharpshooters fired hundreds of rounds at the slowly advancing skirmishers creeping along the inside low walls of the bridge. Then Kingsbury rallied a company of men and led the first charge across. Rebel fire drove them back after a 15-minute firefight. The 11th Conn. left 139 dead and wounded men on the bridge. One of these was young Kingsbury, shot four times, the bullet that penetrated his stomach being mortal.

At the same time Kingsbury's action took place, two more companies from his regiment reached the road alongside the creek but were pinned down by murderous fire from Toombs' marksmen and could not get near the bridge where Kingsbury's men were trying to cross. Frustrated, Capt. John D. Griswold, on his own initiative, took a company of the 11th Conn. into the creek to discover that it was only four feet deep. As the men waded toward the far shore, the water about them was suddenly roiled by hundreds of bullets. As he waved his men forward from midstream, Griswold was smacked by a bullet in the chest. He managed to stagger to the opposite shore only to fall fatally wounded. His men turned back.

Toombs, through his second-in-command, Col. Henry L. "Old Rock" Bening, continued to repulse Union forces attempting to form ranks near the opposite side of the bridge. The 2nd Md. and 6th N.H., with bayonets fixed, tried to rush the bridge, but Toombs' Georgians were waiting for them and sent several fierce volleys into these men that staggered them and drove them back.

At noon, McClellan sent a sharp order to Burnside, telling an aide to ride to Burnside and say to him: "... if it cost 10,000 men he must go now." When Burnside received this order, he decided on a direct assault in force against the bridge. He would no longer probe the waters or creep across the bridge. His men would storm it.

Rather than massing his men along the banks of the creek where they would present easy targets to Confederate sharpshooters on the heights opposite, Burnside ordered two regiments, the 51st N.Y. and the 51st Pa., to form atop the hill directly looking down on the bridge that had mesmerized Burnside for hours and would eventually be named after him. He personally gave the order to attack, and the regiments raced down the hill with banners waving, driving straight over the bridge to battle Toombs' tiny brigade.

Only minutes before the charge of these two fine regiments, their brigade commander, the dapper, vain and diminutive Col. Edward Ferrero, a former dancing master at West Point and politically connected to New York's powerful Tammany Hall, had lined up his men. Possessing a stentorian voice, he boomed: "It is General Burnside's special request that the two 51sts take that bridge. Will you do it?"

There was silence in the ranks. Ferrero was not well liked. He had, for minor offenses, recently denied these regiments their daily ration of whiskey, one shot for each man. (Issuing whiskey rations was not part of army regulations, but a discretionary privilege accorded troops by their commanders during cold weather or after a battle.) As his troops stood in silence to his question, Ferrero nervously stared at his front rank, from which Cpl. Lewis Patterson finally replied: "Colonel, if we take that bridge, will you give us our whiskey?"

Ferrero roared back: "Yes, by God, you shall have as much as you want!"

Supported by two Union batteries, including a howitzer that had been captured from the Rebels at South Mountain and was now belching canister at the opposite shore, Ferrero's two regiments formed two four-man columns. They were to charge simultaneously across the bridge; once on the other side, each column would veer in an opposite direction, forming single lines that would then advance against the enemy.

The two regiments came over the crest of the hill, and went down it toward the bridge on the double-quick. Toombs' men sent volley fire into them and many fell, but the Federals came on, taking refuge close to the bridge, returning their own volley fire from a fence running alongside the creek. With the 51st N.Y. was Lt. George Washington Whitman, brother of poet Walt Whitman. He later recalled: "The way we showered the lead across that creek was nobody's business."

Col. John F. Hartranft, commander of the 51st Pa., shouted himself hoarse in asking his men to sweep across the bridge. Capt. William Allenbaugh responded by suddenly leaping up from behind a wall and motioned his 1st sergeant and two color-bearers to follow him. With that Allenbaugh dashed onto the bridge and his men, seeing that the flag was going forward, rushed after him. The New Yorkers, under the command of Col. Robert Potter, did the same, and in minutes both regiments were streaming across the bridge.

It was too much for Toombs' outnumbered command, which was almost out of ammunition. Seeing this horde of bluecoats swarm forth, the Confederates abandoned their positions and began climbing the hills a half mile rearward to entrench in another defensive position. One of Toombs' officers, Lt. Col. William R. Holmes of the 2nd Ga., refused to retreat. As his men left their positions, he alone turned toward Antietam Creek and ran to the water's edge where he brandished his sword at the oncoming Federals, cursing them. Dozens of bullets struck him, bringing him instant death.

Troops under Gen. Isaac Rodman attacking Rebels at Sharpsburg.

Sharpsburg Lutheran Church battered by Union artillery.

Gen. Ambrose Powell Hill, savior of the Confederate Army at Antietam.

After an incredible 17-mile forced march from Harpers Ferry, Hill's light division hurled itself into the astonished ranks of Burnside's IX Corps, just as it was about to break through Lee's right flank.

The main street of Sharpsburg showing the ravages of bombardment in a photo taken only a short time after the battle.

As his men retreated in good order, Toombs looked back to see the Federals slowly advancing up the hill. He had done his job. His small brigade had delayed Burnside for more than three hours and had killed or wounded more than 500 Federals while losing about 150 men. Now that the expected Union breakthrough had occurred, Toombs looked to Longstreet to send him reinforcements to hold the higher ground.

With the bridge secured, Sturgis marched his division across to the opposite bank where a Union bridgehead was established. Ferrero, delighted at his men's accomplishment, lauded them, but they would not receive their whiskey until three days later, on the very day, in fact, that Ferrero was promoted to brigadier general.

Three-quarters of a mile downstream, a Union division under Gen. Isaac Rodman waded across the Antietam on the extreme Confederate right flank at Snavley's Ford to engage two Southern regiments that, like Toombs', were woefully outnumbered. These men gave way. Both of these Rebel units were understrength, especially the 17th Va., which was almost overrun by the horde of Federal troops. Pvt. Alexander Hunter of the 17th later recalled: "The first thing we saw appear was the gilded eagle that surmounted the pole, then the top of the flag, next the flutter of the Stars and Stripes; then their hats came in sight; still rising, the faces emerged; next a range of curious eyes appeared, then such a hurrah that only the Yankee troops could give broke the stillness, and they surged towards us."

This charging formation was the 9th N.Y. Zouaves, commanded by Lt. Col. Edgar A. Kimball. This was the spearhead regiment of the brigade commanded by Col. Harrison Fairchild of Rodman's division. When the 9th was hit by the first volley of the 17th Virginia, the front ranks melted to the ground and its flag went into the dust. Capt. Adolph Libaire grabbed the colors and waved the flag wildly, yelling to the Zouaves hugging the ground: "Up, damn you, and forward!" Inspired, the Zouaves chanted their war cry: "Zou! Zou! Zou!" and charged against a stone wall behind which the 17th Va. and 1st Va. waited.

The 9th N.Y. went forward, over the wall and, using their bayonets and muskets like clubs, smashed their way through the meager Confederate ranks. The Virginia units gave way and the Rebels fled toward Sharpsburg. Pvt. John Dooley of the 1st Va. later wrote: "Oh, how I ran! I was afraid of being struck in the back, and I frequently turned around in running, so as to avoid if possible so graceful a wound."

Burnside had by then poured two divisions, that of Sturgis and Gen. Orlando B. Willcox, across the stone bridge and these forces quickly fanned out, pushing toward Sharpsburg at about 3:30 p.m. Rodman's division managed to turn Toombs' flank and the Georgians broke for distant defensive positions.

Confederate gunners manning batteries on Cemetery Hill looking down on the stone bridge and creek road leveled their guns and fired frantically, but the cannonade had little effect except to stop the horde of bluecoats in their tracks momentarily, causing them to hug the ground while Toombs and Jones reformed their splintered ranks outside of Sharpsburg, throwing up barricades and squirreling behind fences and buildings, about 2,500 men steeling themselves for the arrival of Burnside's entire corps.

Four full divisions of Union troops had pushed across the stone bridge and at Snavley's Ford downstream by this time, but their progress toward Sharpsburg had been slowed by the Confederate batteries on heights above them. Several wild charges were required to dislodge the Southern guns.

Burnside's troops pressed fiercely against the thinning ranks of Gen. James L. Kemper's brigade, which was forced back into Sharpsburg. It was the same with the 15th S.C. under the command of Gen. Thomas F. Drayton, a regiment that was shattered, but whose remnants kept reforming to withdraw in good order. The rushing Federal troops crashed through the ranks of Gen. Richard B. Garnett's brigade, tearing the Confederates to shreds, but they held for some time until driven to the far north side of Sharpsburg. The command of Gen. Micah Jenkins was surrounded and battered, but it clung to its ground.

Inside Sharpsburg, all was chaos. Rebel stragglers were everywhere, choking the roads going south on which Confederate ambulances, loaded with groaning wounded, rattled and clattered. Those citizens who had elected to remain in the town now hid in cellars as Union artillery began to send shells down upon them. About 200 terrified citizens had fled to the Potomac and crammed themselves into a large cave, waiting until the battle ended. Meanwhile, Zouave skirmishers probed the outskirts of the town. They were less than a mile away from Boteler's Ford on the Potomac. Once this ford was in Federal hands, Lee's army would be trapped.

Even though Lee knew the position of his right flank was near hopeless, he thought to instill panic in McClellan by somehow managing an attack. He sent word to his loyal Jackson to try to press back what remained of Hooker's and Mansfield's shattered corps or, at least, mount a strong diversionary attack that would frighten McClellan just enough to pull his men back from the collapsing Confederate right flank. Lee thought to send his only fresh forces, Jeb Stuart's cavalry, supported by whatever infantry and artillery Jackson could muster, in a wide flanking movement to the northeast where it could get behind what was left of Hooker's corps.

Jackson was up to the task, but he had to know the enemy's strength. He asked for a volunteer to climb a tall hickory tree to act as an observer. William S. Hood, a private in the 35th N.C., volunteered. When Hood had climbed the tree, Jackson called up to him as he pointed in the direction of the Union lines: "How many troops are over there?"

"Oceans of them, sir!" Hood shouted back.

"Count the flags, sir!" Jackson ordered.

Hood began counting battlefield and regimental flags, shouting out the numbers. When he reached the number 39, Jackson told him to climb down. Knowing he was facing at least 20 Union regiments, Jackson nevertheless ordered Stuart to begin his attack. Stuart had gone only a short distance forward when his men ran into a huge Federal artillery formation arrayed on the farmlands owned by Joseph Poffenberger, guns that began to rip apart Stuart's formations.

Jackson immediately called off the attack, knowing he could not push back the Union position with only Stuart. At that moment he could not muster a single brigade to support Stuart's attack and sent word back to Lee that there simply did not exist enough men for even a minor assault. Meanwhile, Lee, headquartered to the west of Sharpsburg, could hear the battle between Burnside's men and the battered regiments on his crumbling right flank rolling back toward him, the sound of cannon, then musket fire, growing nearer and nearer.

Several grime-smeared artillery gunners approached Lee. One of them, a young captain whose face was black with powder, asked: "General, are you going to send us back into the line?" The youthful officer wiped away some of the dirt from his face and Gen. Lee recognized the young captain as his own son, Robert E. Lee, Jr.

"Yes, son," Lee said. "Today the South needs every man."

The Union menace loomed larger. Burnside's regiments haphazardly attacked Jones', Toombs' and Walker's forces east and south of Sharpsburg, the Federal numbers increasing by the minute, but it seemed as if Burnside was hesitating for some reason before ordering an all-out attack. Then the town came under attack from Union batteries firing from hills recently captured from the Confederates. Shells exploded in the streets and into buildings in Sharpsburg. Columns of bluecoats were everywhere outside the town, clogging the roads running west. One huge Union column was already on the Shepherdstown Road, only a mile from the Potomac. Once it reached this point, it would control the only ford across the Potomac, Boteler's Ford, blocking Lee's escape into Virginia.

On the Federal far left, a half mile south of Sharpsburg, Robert Toombs waited for annihilation. He had pulled back his battered brigade of Georgians along with some other fragmented regiments, no more than 700 men, to the Harpers Ferry Road and watched as a long, powerful Union column snaked toward him. Toombs felt that his ragged troops didn't have a chance.

The hour was desperate for the South, even more desperate than it had been throughout the day. It appeared that Lee's badly damaged army would be bagged at any moment. Atop a ridge, Lee could see a large dust cloud to the southeast, and a long column of men marching beneath it. He called to an officer and asked: "What troops are those?" The officer offered him a telescope, but Lee held up his splinted hands, saying: "Can't use it." The officer peered through the telescope and told Lee: "They are flying the United States flag." Lee looked solemn; the day seemed lost. He and the brave ragtag remains of his once great army appeared to be almost surrounded.

Then Lee noticed another huge dust cloud created by another column, more distant, to the southeast, approaching fast, this column moving almost perpendicular to the first column. "And those troops?" asked Lee. The officer held up the telescope again and peered for some moments. Then, grinning, he reported: "They are flying the Virginia and Confederate flags!"

Said Lee unexcitedly: "It is A.P. Hill from Harpers Ferry."

It *was* Hill. He had gotten desperate word that every man in his division—the most powerful and arguably the best division in Lee's army—was needed at Sharpsburg. After bundling off more than 11,500 Federal prisoners, with only a brigade to escort them, Hill had called to arms his remaining five brigades, more than 5,000 men, and raced them up the dusty roads leading from Harpers Ferry to Antietam, a distance of 17 miles. He rode along his panting ranks with sword in hand, prodding stragglers with its point, urging exhausted men to rise again and march, march to save the army. Hill knew well the urgency of the moment.

Ironically, he had been reprimanded by Jackson for not policing his stragglers on earlier marches. Now he dogged the stragglers like a man possessed. Wearing no coat, his red flannel "battle shirt" blazing in the late afternoon sun, Hill dashed back and forth along his quickly moving ranks—some regiments were actually trotting, if not running forward—rounding up those who had fallen out of line to catch their breath or bandage bleeding feet. In a rare moment, Hill found a young lieutenant cowering behind a tree as the troops neared the battle. He demanded the young man's sword and then broke it over the shirker's back before dashing onward.

Hill finally gave up on the stragglers, realizing that arriving with an intact division would undoubtedly cost Lee the battle, if not the war. The healthiest and the strongest of his men maintained a furious pace on their incredible march, going cross-country, then using a farm road that fed into the Harpers Ferry Road. Just when it appeared that the Union forces under Rodman would collapse the Confederate right wing, Hill and his men raced into Sharpsburg. Word of Hill's arrival spread
through the Southern ranks and caused great cheering. "Hill is coming!" shouted the exhausted Southerners to each other, and they went back to the fight renewed with hope.

Hill arrived with little more than 3,000 footsore men, but they were eager for battle. He threw them like a thunderbolt against the Union troops pressing Sharpsburg. Troops under Gen. James Jay Archer, Gen. Maxcy Gregg and Gen. Lawrence O'Bryan Branch reinforced Jones and Toombs and then made counterattacks that tore up the slowly advancing Union lines. Filing in on the right of Toombs' men, three of Hill's brigades attacked through a gap between three of Rodman's brigades and that of the slow-moving Col. Edward Harland.

Rodman saw the Confederates breaking through and galloped forth to alert the brigade under Fairchild. As his horse dashed across a meadow, a Rebel sharpshooter kneeled, took careful aim and shot Rodman from the saddle. Rodman was hit in the chest with a mortal wound; he was the ninth Federal general to become a casualty that day at Antietam. Rodman would die of his wound on Sept. 30, 1862.

At this point, the Northern commanders were already indecisive, having no clear orders of battle. Further, Union forces were perplexed when seeing thousands of men wearing bluecoats charging and shooting at them. These were Hill's men who had liberated bluecoats from Union storehouses at Harpers Ferry and, when they appeared in this garb, were immediately mistaken for Northern troops. The result was utter confusion on the part of attacking Union soldiers.

At about 3:45 p.m., Hill sent Gen. Maxcy Gregg's South Carolina brigade into a cornfield owned by John Otto. Gregg led his men into the cornfield in a column of fours, ordering them to fan out and fire immediately: "Commence firing, men, and form the line as you fight!"

Ferociously attacked by what they thought were many new Confederate divisions, the Federals broke rank after rank and then began to race toward the rear, whole brigades leaving the battlefield. The green troops of the 16th Conn. and the 4th R.I., who thought that when they had crossed Burnside's Bridge they were about to participate in a glorious victory, were cut to pieces and the boyish survivors bolted for the rear. So, too, did the outflanked 8th Conn. As the rout developed, Cox attempted to stem the tide by bringing up several regiments from his Kanawha Division, but Hill's brigades simply ran over them. When their survivors broke for the Union rear, the Rebels under Archer, Gregg, Branch, Jones and Toombs ran after them, letting loose the Rebel Yell, chasing the Yankees back to the heights they had fought so hard to gain hours earlier.

Briefly conferring with his brigadiers, Hill urged Archer, Gregg and Branch to pursue the enemy until nightfall. As the commanders were about to turn their horses toward their commands, a Union sharpshooter's bullet struck the head of the young and promising Gen. Branch who fell to the ground dead. Branch was Hill's senior brigadier, a dashing, courageous North Carolinian who had been expected to rise to higher command.

As the Confederates moved forward, Gregg's horse was shot by a retreating Federal officer. As he fell to earth, Gregg felt a sharp pain in his right hip. As he lay on the ground, Gregg told his aide, Capt. Alexander Cheves Haskell, to "notify and put the next officer in command." He was then carried to an aid station. A sergeant leaned down to examine Gregg's wound and then said: "General, you ain't wounded, only bruised." Gregg, a surprised look on his face, leaped up, ran to a bony ambulance horse without a saddle and mounted it, riding off to the sound of the distant battle.

When he approached the running battle, Gregg, along with Hill and the other Confederate commanders on this front, realized that they had broken the Federal far left and that they could now outflank Burnside's entire corps. This was also evident to Cox who ordered his brigades to withdraw. Willcox pulled back his shredded regiments, but had difficulty in getting Col. Kimball to withdraw his Zouaves. The 9th N.Y. had taken high ground and, although there were but 100 men left in this valiant unit, Kimball wanted to advance, not retreat. "Look at my men!" Kimball shouted to Willcox. "Do they look like a beaten regiment?" Willcox repeated the order to retreat and Kimball finally complied, his men being the last to leave the field.

The third Union threat at Antietam had been overcome and Lee's army was still intact. Burnside was frantic, thinking his corps was now surrounded by a huge Confederate army, and though he still outnumbered opponents directly confronting him five to one, he sent off messengers that told McClellan that if he, Burnside, was expected to hold his position, he needed reinforcements. McClellan sent back a courier to Burnside with a terse, dire reply: "I can do nothing more. I have no infantry." Of course, this was nonsense; he had at hand more than 20,000 fresh, unbloodied troops, most of Porter's V Corps and Franklin's VI Corps.

But McClellan believed, like Burnside and many other Union officers that day, that Lee's reserves were almost limitless and he at once began sending messages off to Washington to request more troops. Both armies began to collect their wounded and bury their dead. The wounded, thousands strewn over a 20-mile area, wailed from sundown into twilight. Their cries for help and shrieks of pain pierced the silence of the dark battlefield throughout the night.

For the Army of Northern Virginia, Antietam, called Sharpsburg by the South, was the longest, most indecisive battle fought to that time, and the most costly. Lee met with his top commanders and was so glad to see A.P. Hill that he embraced him. When Longstreet reported that evening to Lee's headquarters, his commander-in-chief warmly clapped him on the back and said: "Ah, here's my old warhorse."

In a war conference, Lee was advised by his top generals that if McClellan threw another corps against them, the Confederate army could be easily routed headlong into the Potomac and catastrophe. Lee ordered his commanders to return to their positions and take care of their troops, see that the men had hot meals, call in all stragglers, put walking wounded into the line, if need be, and strengthen all positions. He believed that if McClellan struck the next day, he would be able to give the Union general a tough fight. Lee's lieutenants felt otherwise, although they did not argue with their commander, a man they held in such lofty esteem that even his most serious errors were, if not forgettable, instantly forgivable.

McClellan was also in conference with his top generals at this time, pondering the possibility of renewing the attack. Gen. George Sykes, who commanded 2nd Div., V Corps, urged McClellan to renew the attack, pointing out that he had personally surveyed the battleground, especially the line held by D.H. Hill, and learned that Hill's division had been weakened so severely that the Confederate line was held together by an easily breakable thread of men. One push through Hill's position, Sykes firmly pointed out, and McClellan could split Lee's entire force, then gobble up both flanks piecemeal. Sykes also pointed out that four full divisions, two of Franklin's and two of Fitz-John Porter's, had seen little battle, 20,000 fresh men who should be employed to break Lee's army in one final attack. (Small units from these divisions did see some action, taking more than 500 casualties, but for the most part these divisions were fully capable of meeting the demands of another full-scale attack.)

Porter was present at this meeting and he refused to support Sykes' idea. Porter was already suffering under a cloud, having been charged by Gen. John Pope of "misconduct in the face of the enemy" at the Second Bull Run, and he would later be cashiered (although many historians believe he was made a scapegoat for Pope's ineptitude). Yet Porter had remained in command of McClellan's best reserves at Antietam.

ABOVE, Union physicians operate on wounded brought from the battlefield at Antietam, the worst single day of casualties throughout the war, with more than 3,500 men killed and 17,000 men wounded on both sides; so many wounded men were brought to aid stations that hundreds died while awaiting surgery. At RIGHT, Confederate generals William E. Starke, top, and George B. Anderson, bottom, were both killed at Antietam.

President Abraham Lincoln meets with Gen. George McClellan (sixth from left, facing Lincoln) at McClellan's camp near Antietam, the battle proving just enough of a victory to convince Lincoln to announce his Emancipation Proclamation, to take effect Jan. 1, 1863, freeing all slaves in Southern-held states, a move that caused the Confederacy to brand Lincoln a renegade.

Porter listened quietly to Sykes' plan and then turned to McClellan, knowing his commander's worst fears (and apparently playing on them) when he solemnly shook his head and stated: "Remember, general. I command the last reserve of the last Army of the Republic." McClellan nodded slowly. He would not attack again. He would risk no more of his precious, hoarded troops.

At midnight, one of Jackson's aides, Henry Kyd Douglas, rode with his courier toward the West Woods with dispatches. His course took him through the cornfield where the battle had begun that morning and which was now littered with the dead and wounded. Douglas winced as he rode slowly forward through the field of death, recalling how "the pitiable cries for water and appeals for help were much more horrible to listen to than the deadliest sounds of battle.

"Silent were the dead, and motionless. But here and there were raised stiffened arms; heads made a last effort to lift themselves from the ground; prayers were mingled with oaths, the oaths of delirium; men were wriggling over the earth; and midnight hid all distinction between the blue and the gray. My horse trembled under me in terror, looking down at the ground, sniffing the scent of blood, stepping falteringly as a horse will over or by the side of human flesh; afraid to stand still; hesitating to go on, his animal instinct shuddering at this cruel human mystery."

That night, McClellan sent another urgent request to Halleck for more troops. He informed his commanders, those still alive, that when several more divisions arrived he would consider renewing the attack. On the following day, Sept. 18, both armies did little more than glare at each other. Lee was in the worst shape, although various commands began to swell with the return of those who had either broken and run or were separated and fought with other units, until the Army of Northern Virginia proved to have more than 35,000 effectives. The Army of the Potomac still outnumbered Lee by more than two to one in effectives.

McClellan did receive his reinforcements—Gen. Darius Couch's division from Pleasant Valley and, from Frederick, the division of Gen. Andrew Humphreys, more than 14,000 fresh troops. Yet, McClellan declined battle, saying that "success of an attack was not certain." He was by then reviewing his casualty lists, as was Lee. The losses on both sides were so staggering as to stun the generals into near paralysis.

Both armies had been terribly bled—more Americans had fallen in a single day than on any other in the history of the country. Lee had lost 10,316 men (1,546 killed, 7,752 wounded and 1,018 missing). McClellan's losses amounted to 12,410 (2,108 killed, 9,549 wounded, 753 missing). A total of 22,726 on both sides proved to shock even the most hardened commanders. Union losses at Harpers Ferry brought the Northern count of wounded, killed and captured to more than 27,000, twice that incurred by Lee. But the North could always replenish its losses. Lee could not. The Southern men lost could never be replaced. When hearing these reports and the condition of his surviving troops, Lee made the decision to recross the Potomac and return to the familiar terrain of Virginia.

On the night of Sept. 18, 1862, Confederates lit large, bright campfires along the ridges of their defense line to give McClellan the impression that Lee's army was remaining. The Rebels then began to withdraw, first the army's ordnance, 44 guns under the command of Lee's chief of artillery, Gen. William Nelson Pendleton, then Longstreet's brigades, which formed a defense line to protect these guns trained on the Shepherdstown ford, guarding the retreat. Brigade after brigade sloshed into the waters of the Potomac, crossing the river with heads bent, shoulders stooped, silent, wholly unlike the almost jubilant troops who had crossed the same river almost two weeks earlier singing "Maryland, My Maryland."

Walker's division was the last to cross, with Walker himself riding into the water as the sun rose. He met Gen. Lee in midstream. Lee sat silently on his horse; he had been there all night, watching his battered troops cross the river. A few wagons filled with wounded and then some artillery caissons crossed into Virginia, and Walker reported to Lee that all the troops had been successfully evacuated. Lee sighed: "Thank God." He turned his horse about and followed his men.

Boteler's Ford (or Blackford's Ford), **W. Va.**, Sept. 18-20, 1862.

After the Southern army encamped on the other side of a hilly range beyond the Potomac, Robert E. Lee went to sleep beneath an apple tree. At midnight he was tugged awake by Gen. Pendleton who came to report a new disaster. McClellan had discovered Lee's retreat and had brought up long-range guns that had bombarded Pendleton's batteries, badly damaging them, and had then thrown a division across the Potomac and had captured all of the Confederate artillery. Lee moaned and summoned Jackson who promised Lee that he would soon regain the vital guns.

Jackson sent A.P. Hill to the Potomac. Hill savagely attacked the Union troops that had overrun Pendleton's guns, and soon discovered that they had captured only four Confederate cannon. Moreover, only a portion of Sykes' division had crossed the river and proceeded about a mile into Virginia, and these bluecoats were quickly overcome, captured or driven back across the Potomac. Union losses at the river were 269 out of 750 in the rearguard regiment (118th Pa.); most of these troops were killed either in attempting to resist Hill or were shot while trying to flee back across the river. Gen. Sykes, who had so ardently urged McClellan to make a final thrust at Lee at Antietam, had been given the job of hounding Lee's retreating army, but without support. Sykes' lone division accomplished little more than a show of pursuit, like a terrier vainly snapping at the flanks of a tiger.

The battle of Antietam was not a clearcut victory for either side, but a terrible stalemate that created the bloodiest day of the war. Since Lee had been driven from Maryland, the Union held up the battle as a Union victory, but there was little to celebrate. McClellan wrote his wife that "the general result was in our favor, that is to say we gained a great deal of ground and held it." He added: "I feel that I have done all that

can be asked in twice saving the country ... this last short campaign is a sufficient legacy for our child, so far as honor is concerned." Then the old bravado returned, the gnawing vanity of the man who insisted to himself that he was, indeed, the military genius of the day: "Those in whose judgment I rely tell me that I fought the battle splendidly and that it is a masterpiece of art."

Antietam was far from a Union masterpiece of strategy. McClellan had attacked Lee piecemeal, using entire corps to probe and reconnoiter and determine weakness or strength. McClellan's lack of intelligence concerning the enemy served only to feed his fears that he was facing an enormous host when, in truth, he greatly outnumbered the Confederates. Further, McClellan refused to launch a contiguous attack in force to determine which point of Lee's line was weakest. He undoubtedly feared the loss of too many troops in ordering a unified front-long attack. He husbanded whole divisions, using them as reserves when these troops would have been better employed as assault forces.

By allowing one corps to attack in uncoordinated assaults, McClellan allowed Lee enough time to shift men from one flank to the other and then to the center so that even by weakening his defensive lines, Lee remained intact without exposing his true weaknesses. What was required and found wanting in McClellan's strategy were uniformly concentrated attacks following a workable timetable. Instead, he used separate commands to fight three separate battles. The first battle was fought in the early morning with attacks on the Confederate left flank by Hooker, Mansfield and finally Sumner. The second battle fought by Sumner against the center of Lee's line occurred at midday, and the third battle was launched by Burnside in the early afternoon against truly the weakest part of Lee's line, the Confederate right flank.

It was here on the Confederate right flank that the Union should have carried the day. Even with the arrival of A.P. Hill's 3,000 men, combined with the 2,500 effectives in line under the command of Jones and Toombs, Burnside still outnumbered the Confederates almost three to one. It is true that only half his men were veterans, the remainder green recruits with no battle sense or experience and who bolted at the first sight of Hill's seasoned troops. Burnside, nevertheless, did not press his attack or take advantage of great opportunities. He, like his commander, McClellan, was too fearful of error and too concerned with protecting his military reputation. While his men were still attacking, Burnside was already preparing for retreat and defense.

Few commanders in the war had the daring of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, none really in the Union high command until the appearance of Ulysses Simpson Grant and that was more than a year in the future. Meanwhile, McClellan began taking bows and claiming a great victory.

Lincoln knew differently and quietly resolved to replace McClellan with Burnside, who would prove to be even less effective and certainly, as his tactics at Fredericksburg would later prove, more irresponsible than any of his predecessors. Lincoln, however, needed Antietam, such as it was, a battle the Union did not lose and could claim to have won in that for the first time Southern forces were compelled to retreat after a major battle. It was a slice of victory if not the whole of it, enough to prompt Lincoln to issue his historic Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slaves, an executive order to take effect on Jan. 1, 1863, a presidential decision that would injure the South more deeply than had the legions of Little Mac at Antietam, and one that would truly immortalize Lincoln as the Great Emancipator.

Also See: Bull Run, 1862; Malvern Hill, Va., 1862;Peninsular Campaign, 1862.

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Apache Canyon (Johnson's Ranch), **N. Mex.**, March 26, 1862, See: **New Mexico and Arizona Operations**, 1861-1862.

Appomattox, Va. Campaign (Lee's Retreat and Surrender), Mar. 29-April 9, 1865, includes **Quaker Road** (Gravelly Run), **Va.**, Mar. 29, 1865; **Boydton Plank Road and Dinwiddie Court House**, March 31, 1865; **Five Forks, Va.**, March 30-April 1, 1865; **Petersburg, Va., Final Assault**, April 2, 1865;**Richmond, Va.**, Evacuation, Destruction and Surrender, April 2-3, 1865; **Willocomack Creek, Namozine Church, and Deep Creek, Va.**, April 3, 1865; **Sayler's Creek** (or Sailor's Creek; Harper's Farm, Deatonsville), **Va.**, April 6, 1865; **Farmville and High Bridge, Va.**, April 6-7, 1865; **Appomattox Station, Va.**, April 8, 1865; **Appomattox Court House, Va.**, April 9, 1865.

Summary of battles, engagements and skirmishes: **Quaker Road** (Gravelly Run), **Va.**, 03/29/65. The Union envelopment of the Petersburg defenses was attempted by V Corps under Gen. Gouverneur Kemble Warren, the 1st Div. of Gen. Charles Griffin driving Confederate skirmishers back at Rowanty Creek at about 5 a.m., on 03/29/65. By noon, Griffin's advancing troops met stiffer resistance at Quaker Road and Gravelly Run, but they were bolstered by the 2nd Div. under the command of Gen. Samuel Wylie Crawford, which supported Griffin's left flank and the two divisions moved slowly forward before fierce resistance stopped them at Arnold's Sawmill.

The Confederates counterattacked with brigades commanded by Gen. Henry Alexander Wise and Gen. William Henry Wallace of Anderson's Corps, driving back the Union brigades of Joshua Chamberlain and Edgar Gregory, despite the valiant efforts of Battery B, 4th U.S. Art. After halting the Rebels, Griffin and Crawford's men slowly advanced to the Boydton plank road where they entrenched. According to Warren's report, 370 of his men had been either killed or wounded. Confederate losses were 130 killed (these were the dead left on the battlefield to be buried by Union troops) and 200 taken prisoner. (Miller states that Union losses were 55 killed and 306 wounded; Confederate losses were 135 killed, 400 wounded and 100 missing.)

Gen. Philip H. Sheridan, on 03/29/65, assembled three cavalry divisions under Gen. Wesley Merritt near Globe tavern and led them across the Malone Bridge spanning Rowanty Creek, riding toward Dinwiddie Court House, his advance taking place simultaneously with that of V and I Corps, which pushed against Lee's right flank, a strategy aimed at turning the Confederate defense line at Petersburg. When receiving reports of these Union movements, Lee ordered Gen. George Edward Pickett to Five Forks, Va., with approximately 10,000 infantry and cavalry (some exaggerated reports have the number at 19,000), with instructions to prevent the Union forces from cutting the Southside Railroad, which Lee planned to use in removing his entire command to the south where he would march to join Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's command in North Carolina. Pickett would command his three brigades and two of Anderson's.

Boydton Plank Road and Dinwiddie Court House, 03/31/65: Sheridan's cavalry, halted by heavy rains on 03/30/65 at Dinwiddie Court House, was located by Confederate cavalry under the command of Gen. Thomas Taylor Munford, but the Federal horsemen did not get underway until 03/31/65. When about 3 miles from Five Forks, Confederate cavalry under Fitzhugh Lee and Rooney Lee fell upon the Union west flank, driving the Federal cavalry back toward Dinwiddie Court House. Losses estimated by Miller were: Union, 67 killed, 354 wounded; Confederate, 400 killed and wounded. Confederate counterattacks at Boydton Plank Road and White Oak Road pushed back Warren's V Corps, about 3 miles eastward of Sheridan's force. Warren, by the evening of 03/31/65, received reports that Pickett was destroying Sheridan in detail (this was not the case) and he immediately sent Bartlett's brigade, then other units, to Sheridan's support. Sheridan believed he could crush Pickett by surrounding him. Miller estimated that along the Boydton Plank and White Oak Roads, Union losses were 177 killed, 1,134 wounded, 556 missing; Confederate losses: 1,000 killed, 235 missing.

A crack Union cavalry brigade under Gen. Ranald Slidell Mackenzie, arrived to support Sheridan late on 03/31/65 and by dawn of 04/01/65, Warren's three divisions arrived to join Sheridan.
Pickett, learning that Warren had joined Sheridan, withdrew toward Five Forks where he ordered the undermanned brigades of Col. Robert Murphy Mayo and Generals William Henry Wallace, Matt Whittaker Ransom, George H. "Maryland" Steuart and Montgomery Corse to entrench east to west along the north side of the White Oak Road. To the east of Pickett's line was a three-mile gap into which Pickett ordered the small cavalry brigade of Gen. William Paul Roberts and a dismounted brigade of Munford's cavalry. Pickett's left flank formed a 90 degree angle, which was "refused," its last 100 yards forming a hook ("return").

Five Forks (White Oak Road) **Va.**, 04/01/65: Sheridan sent his cavalry under Generals George Armstrong Custer and Thomas Casimer Devin against the Confederate right while sending three of his divisions against the Confederate left, believing he could turn this flank and get behind the Rebel position. He first hurled Gen. Romeyn Beck Ayres's division against this position at 4 p.m. on 04/01/65. The Union attack was in the air, going far beyond the Confederate east flank to receive vicious infilading fire. Ayres abruptly ordered his men to change direction and they began attack the very end of the Confederate flank. Two more Union divisions led by Gen. Samuel Crawford, at Ayres' right, and Gen. Charles Griffin, following Crawford, turned in on the collapsing Confederate flank.

The brigades of Wallace and Ransom then broke under the overwhelming Union forces on the Confederate east flank and, by 4:30 p.m., Ayres' was suddenly behind the Confederate line. Pickett, who had been at a shad bake with Fitz Lee and Thomas Rosser at Hatcher's Run when the battle began, rode to the sound of the guns and arrived just in time to order Mayo's brigade to pull from its defense line to reform another defensive position to stem Ayres' rapidly advancing troops. Elements of the shattered brigades of Wallace and Ransom joined Mayo's troops, which slowed V Corps' advancing divisions.

At the center of Pickett's line was the Confederate artillery under the brilliant 23-year-old Col. William Johnson Pegram, which blasted the advancing Union forces on its front, this being dismounted cavalry. (Pegram was mortally wounded in the fierce fighting.) The brigades of Steuart, Corse and W.H.F. "Rooney" Lee repulsed several attacks and Corse was then ordered to cover Pickett's general retreat by forming a new defense line, which ran north and south.

As Mayo withdrew from the Five Forks position, a Union brigade under Col. Charles Lane Fitzhugh swept forward to capture three guns and two battle flags. More than 1,000 Confederates were killed (Humphreys reported 351). When Ransom and Wallace collapsed, advancing union lines were clogged with Confederate prisoners. Warren's forces captured 3,244 men while the Union cavalry scooped up more than 2,000 Rebels. Union losses at Five Forks numbered 634, including Col. Frederick Winthrop. (Miller reported that 124 Federals were killed and 706 wounded).

Pickett, who had run a gauntlet of fire to reach his troops when the battle began, was later condemned by critics for selecting Five Forks as a defensive position, particularly for deploying his troops in a line that extended such a weak and vulnerable left flank. Lee, however, had ordered Pickett to defend that very position.

Petersburg, Va. Final Assault, 04/02/65: Although Sheridan had not cut the Southside Railroad as Grant had wanted, the Union triumph at Five Forks compelled Lee to weaken his Petersburg defensive line by pulling Anderson from these entrenchments and sending him with three

brigades to bolster Pickett's shattered forces. (Lee had by then informed President Davis that Richmond and Petersburg had to be evacuated on the night of 04/01/65.) When Grant learned that Lee's position was weakened, he ordered a general dawn assault for 04/02/65 against the Petersburg defense line.

The IX Corps under Gen. John Grubb Parke attacked at 4:30 a.m., and made some progress near the Jerusalem Plank Road, but could not make further penetration. At the same time, to the southwest, the VI Corps under Gen. Horatio Gouverneur Wright smashed through the Confederate line at Fort Fisher and rolled up the Rebel defensive position, splitting the forces of Generals A.P. Hill, Henry Heth and Cadmus Marcellus Wilcox, driving the Rebels back to Hatcher's Run and taking many prisoners. The XXIV Corps under Gen. John Gibbon, poured through the breaking Confederate line and continued its attack across the front of VI Corps down the Plank Road, capturing Forts Whitworth and Gregg.

On the left flank, the II Corps under Gen. Andrew Atkinson Humphreys drove through Gen. Henry Heth's thin lines to take the Crow Salient, pursuing what was left of Heth's division up the Claiborne Road. Only one division from II Corps, commanded by Gen. Nelson Appleton Miles, at Grant's explicit order, pursued Heth and when the Confederates turned to make a last stand at 3 p.m., Miles overwhelmed them at Sutherland Station. Petersburg was nevertheless held by Longstreet's and Gordon's troops until nightfall when they withdrew on the night of 04/02-03/65, retreating toward Amelia Court House, to which all retreating Confederate forces were then converging.

Confederate losses are unknown in the Final Assault at Petersburg but, according to Livermore, 18,579 Rebels faced 63,299 Federals in the massive attack. Livermore estimated Union losses 4,140; Fox put Federal losses at 3,361. Miller reported Union losses at 296 killed, 2,565 wounded, 500 missing; Confederate losses were unreported, but estimates had 3,000 captured. Killed while attempting to join his troops was Lt. Gen. Ambrose Powell Hill, one of Lee's greatest field commanders.

Richmond, Va. Evacuation, Destruction and Surrender, 04/03/65: As Lee retreated toward Appomattox, the Confederate Government evacuated Richmond on the night of 04/02-03/65. The city was set to the torch and all arsenals, including what was left of the Confederate fleet anchored in the James River, were blown up. Fires consumed much of the city's business district. At 8 a.m. on 04/03/65, Federal troops of the XVIII, XXIV and XXV Corps under the command of Gen. Godfrey Weitzel entered the city; Weitzel accepted the formal surrender of the city 15 minutes later at City Hall.

Willocomack Creek, Namozine Church and Deep Creek, Va., 04/03/65: Following Confederate defeats at Five Forks and Petersburg, Gen. George Armstrong Custer, on 04/03/65, pursued the Confederate cavalry under Fitz Lee, one of his fast-riding brigades under Col. William Wells overtaking the Southerners at Willocomack Creek. Wells led his dismounted men in a charge that took the Confederate position held by Gen. Rufus Barringer, capturing most of Barringer's command.

Custer's forces pursued Lee's retreating cavalry to Namozine Church. Here Lee's riders turned about and made a wild charge into the ranks of the 8th N.Y. Cav., which barely managed to repulse the Rebels. Driven back, Fitz Lee separated his command, taking some of his riders toward Amelia Court House while Gen. W.H.F. "Rooney" Lee led his cavalry toward Bevill's Bridge.

Fitz Lee had his men dig in at Deep Creek, but the zealous Wells, coming upon this shallow defense line at dark, hurled his brigade at the Southerners. Lee's men held the line and by the time a reserve regiment under the command of Col. Alexander Pennington arrived, the Rebels had withdrawn once more. Custer's cavalry entrenched at this point, waiting for the arrival of Union II, V and VI Corps. Although several hundred men of Barringer's command had been taken prisoner, no reports of Confederate casualties were available. Union losses were reported to be 95.

Sayler's Creek (or Sailor's Creek; Harper's Farm, Deatonsville), **Va.**, 04/06/65: When Lee's straggling columns reached Amelia Court House, the supplies and rations he had earlier ordered be sent there were not present. Believing he still might escape with his tattered army to the southwest to join with Johnston, Lee learned that 7 miles to the southwest at Jetersville, large Federal forces—about 15,000 cavalry under Sheridan and the V Corps under Griffin, who had replaced Warren at Sheridan's order) blocked that line of retreat. Lee then ordered his men to march southwest to Rice's Station where food and ammunition held at Lynchburg might reach them via the railroad from Farmville.

Lee led the retreat at the head of Longstreet's two fairly fit divisions commanded by Generals William Mahone and Charles William Field. These troops were followed by Richard Anderson's ragged III Corps, then Richard Stoddert Ewell's small force—the last of Richmond's defenders—about 3,000 men, followed by the wagon train and, finally, the rear guard of John Brown Gordon.

Meanwhile, Grant, guessing accurately at the direction of Lee's retreat, ordered Humphreys' II Corps and Wright's VI Corps to join with Griffin's V Corps and Sheridan's cavalry in an assault on Amelia Court House early on 04/06/65. At about 8:30 a.m., Humphreys' II Corps, on the Union left and to the west of the Confederate forces, probed for the head of Lee's advancing column, and Wright's VI Corps moved to support II Corps on the south, while Griffin's V Corps marched north through Painesville.

Anderson and Ewell, meanwhile, had slowed so that the wagon train could move ahead of their forces while they and Gordon attempted to delay increasing pressure from the rear by hordes of Federal cavalry. Ewell, believing the wagon train in jeopardy, ordered the wagons to turn west from the Jamestown Road, and take a less hazardous route. This they did at about 2 p.m., but Gordon, not informed of this order, followed the wagons west, instead of retreating with the main Confederate body south.

Custer, supported by troops under Generals George Crook and Devin menaced the advance of Anderson and Ewell and while these Confederate commanders were busy with attempting to clear away the Union cavalry, Ewell's rear was threatened by two fresh Federal infantry divisions of the VI Corps, the 1st Div., under Gen. Frank Wheaton and the 3rd Div., commanded by Truman Seymour.

Ewell ordered his men to hastily dig in at Sayler's Creek. Two guns from a Federal battery deployed on high ground at Hillsman farm devastated Ewell's thin defense line. The Union forces of Wheaton and Seymour attacked, but were driven back with such ferocity that Ewell's men bent back the Federal center. Leading the heavy artillerists from the Richmond garrison, Col. Stapleton Crutchfield, joined in the fierce Confederate attack. Crutchfield was killed.

As Ewell's forces made a deep penetration into Wright's VI Corps, the strong Federal flanks, led by the 2nd Div. of Gen. George Washington Getty, enveloped the woefully outnumbered Confederates. Hearing the guns of VI Corps, Sheridan then ordered a full scale attack by his cavalry on Ewell's right flank, the brigade of Gen. Peter Stagg of Devin's division encircling and capturing almost all of the Confederate division commanded by Gen. Joseph Brevard Kershaw.

Pickett held a position at the Sayler Creek defense line with what was left of his command following the Five Forks disaster. It was assailed by a powerful Union cavalry force under Crook, who sent forth troops under Gen. Henry Eugene Davies, two dismounted brigades—that of Col. John Irvin Gregg and Gen. Charles Henry Smith—their troopers rapidly firing new repeating carbines as they advanced.

The Federals overran the Confederate position as Pickett, Anderson and Gen. Bushrod Johnson, along with a few aides, managed to escape on horseback. Ewell, however, decided to remain with his troops. He attempted to rally his shattered forces, trying lead them out of the encirclement. To that end, Confederate naval commander John Randolph

Tucker, who had led his naval battalion in the retreat from Richmond, took his sailors forward in a wild bayonet charge that actually drove the massive ranks of Federals back, but, after fierce hand-to-hand fighting, all were taken prisoner.

The Federal onslaught continued to Perkinson's Mills that was part of the Sayler Creek line and where Gordon had dug in with his men. One massive Union assault was thrown back, but the Federal forces that had overrun Ewell arrived in strength. Gordon's small command was overwhelmed. Gordon, nevertheless, managed to rally hundreds of men, which he led to High Bridge in a night march and where they dug in to await the next day's action.

Southern losses were staggering, between 7,000 and 8,000 men, most of these being captured. Among the ranks of the Rebel prisoners were Confederate Generals Ewell, Corse, Kershaw, Eppa Hunton, Dudley Dubose and George Washington Custis Lee, eldest son of Robert E. Lee. Union losses were reported to be 1,180 (Miller gives 1,014) of whom 166 had been killed. Confederate fatalities are unknown.

Farmville and High Bridge, Va., 04/06-07/65: Halting at Rice's Station, Longstreet gave orders for the remaining Confederate corps to close up on his position. There were few to answer in that the forces of Ewell, Anderson, and Pickett had been all but wiped out at Sayler's Creek. Union forces pursued under Gen. Edward Ord, skirmishing with Longstreet's picket line on 04/06/65, but since Ord had only two divisions of the XXIV Corps under Gen. Gibbon, he decided to wait until more Union forces arrived. That night, Longstreet retreated toward Farmville, crossing the Appomattox River, which was almost at full spring flood and unfordable in most places.

Crossing at High Bridge were the divisions of Heth, Mahone and Wilcox, with Gordon leading those of Anderson's and Ewell's commands who had survived the envelopment at Sayler's Creek. Gordon's force was protected by the rear guard of Mahone as it straggled across the wagon bridge running alongside and beneath High Bridge. Mahone's division was the last to cross and failed to burn this vital bridge. (Mahone, a railroad engineer and later president of the Southside Railroad, the very line that owned High Bridge, was severely criticized for not having destroyed this bridge).

Hot on Mahone's heels was a Union division led by Gen. Francis Channing Barlow (2nd Div., II Corps), who began sending his men across the wagon bridge at the same time Confederate engineers returned to set fire to the structure. Southern skirmishers in force supported the Rebel engineers, battling with Barlow's men on the bridge. Elements of Humphreys' II Corps arrived and one of its staff officers, Col. Thomas Leonard Livermore (later considered to be the topmost statistician of Civil War records), directed a pioneer unit to extinguish the fires set by the Rebels. Union and Confederate skirmishers were, at that moment, in a fierce firefight 60 feet below the open deck of High Bridge, battling for control of the wagon bridge that ran beneath it.

Once the fires were put out, Humphreys rushed his II Corps across the bridge, pursuing Lee's army toward Farmville, his 1st Div. under Miles and his 3rd Div. under Gen. Philippe Regis De Trobriand going northwest after Mahone while Barlow's 2nd Div. marched after Gordon along the railroad. Leading Barlow's pursuit was the 3rd Brigade, led by Gen. Thomas Alfred Smyth. It made a dash for Gordon's rear guard, which turned on the Federals, inflicting a bloody repulse that took Smyth's life.

Upon reaching Farmville, Lee's army entrenched, the starving Southerners finally given rations that had been sent to that place from Lynchburg. Gibbon's XXIV Corps and Wright's VI Corps could not attack Lee from the south since the bridges at Farmville had been burned. Union cavalry under John Irvin Gregg, however, found a place to ford the river on 04/07/65, but once across, they were assaulted by Fitz Lee's cavalry under Munford and Gen. Thomas Lafayette Rosser as well as Heth's infantry. The Federals were soundly defeated and Gregg captured.

Humphreys, whose II Corps was east and north of Lee's position, thought that the sound of battle from Gregg's attack was that of Gibbon and Wright whom Humphreys wrongly believed were assaulting Lee. He ordered Col. George Washington Scott to attack Lee's left flank with his 1st Brig. (1st Div., II Corps). Mahone's shock troops met Scott's assault, the brigade of Gen. George Thomas Anderson (Field's division), hurling back the Federals with heavy losses.

Lee ordered the retreat to continue toward Appomattox Station, 25 miles west of Farmville, where wagon trains with ammunition and full rations awaited. He had, however, delayed his march by six or more hours at Farmville, allowing his teamsters to forage in supplementing the half rations given his hungry troops. This allowed Sheridan and Ord and his Army of the James to encircle the small Confederate army, as well as seize Lee's next vital supply area, Appomattox Station and, at Appomattox Court House, to cut off Lee's avenue of retreat. Humphreys reported 571 killed and 71 wounded at Farmville from II Corps but no other losses were available.

Appomattox Station, Va., 04/08/65: Sheridan learned from his scouts that Gen. Reuben Lindsay Walker's artillery had reached Appomattox Station and ordered Custer to capture the place. Custer's first attack was beaten off by two companies of Confederate artillerists acting as infantry, but additional assaults finally overwhelmed Walker's tiny command. Custer reported that he had defeated "about two divisions of infantry," and captured "thirty pieces of artillery." His division had overrun a few hundred starving artillerists and had captured 24 guns. Sheridan then arrived at Appomattox Station with his full command and prepared to attack Lee, who was southwest of Appomattox Court House. Confederate losses were about 300 killed, wounded and captured. Union losses were less than 100.

Appomattox Court House (Clover Hill), **Va.**, 04/09/65: Realizing that his small army was surrounded, Lee ordered a breakthrough by Longstreet who, at 5 a.m., sent Gordon with 1,600 infantry and Fitz Lee with 2,400 cavalry against Sheridan's entrenched position along the Bent Creek Road. At first the furious Southern attack proved successful, Sheridan's line breaking in many places. These gaps were, however, filled with more and more Union replacements. Further, Union cavalry began to envelop the Confederate left flank while Federal infantry enveloped the Rebel left. At the same time, II and VI Corps vigorously attacked Longstreet's rear. Miller gives 200 killed and wounded for the Union and 500 killed and wounded for the Confederates.

Learning that Gordon could not break through the Federal lines and with all of his supplies and rations gone, Lee decided to seek surrender terms from Grant. After sending out a flag of truce and asking to meet Grant, Lee went to the McLean House near Appomattox Court House where Grant joined him a short time after 1:30 p.m. Grant did not demand his usual "unconditional surrender" terms, but allowed officers to retain their swords and sidearms and all ranks to keep their horses and mules. Lee considered the terms generous and accepted. What was left of the Army of Northern Virginia stacked its arms and awaited exchange and parole, its haggard troops taking the oath of allegiance to the U.S. The next day, Lee wrote his farewell to his troops, and said goodbye to his valiant little army.

The Appomattox Campaign, the last of the war, had, according to Livermore, 112,892 Union effectives and 49,496 Confederates involved, of which 26,765 were surrendered at Appomattox, 13,769 having been earlier captured in the campaign, and 6,266 having been killed or wounded. (Miller states that Lee surrendered a total of 27,805.) There were about 3,800 Rebel desertions and 1,000 Southern cavalrymen "left the ranks," while another 2,400 Confederate horsemen escaped before Lee surrendered. Union losses totaled 10,780, of which 1,316 were killed, 7,750 were wounded and 1,714 listed as missing. (Noah

Trudeau and other so-called "modern historians" have given higher numbers for Lee's total effectives in this campaign, but their inflated numbers appear to be based on guesswork and the reliability of these calculations is highly questionable; no "modern historian" possesses any greater insight than "older" or "ancient" historians—if such comparisons can be logically made—relative to long-accepted facts as set down by those "original" statisticians—Livermore, Miller et al—who had at hand the very battle reports as submitted by the actual commanders in the field. To question these slightly variating "original" estimates at this late date, without substantially new and verifiable research to support such challenges—and none are in evidence—is dismissible as nothing more than academic conceit and hindsight arrogance.)

Following the failed Confederate assault on Fort Stedman on March 25, 1865, and the arrival of Union cavalry under Gen. Philip H. Sheridan, upwards of 13,000 men, on the Petersburg front on March 27, Lee concluded that his position running from Petersburg to Richmond was untenable. He then thought to abandon Richmond and Petersburg and move south to join Confederate forces under Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, who was retreating before Sherman in North Carolina. To accomplish this move, Lee had to maintain his lines along the Southside Railroad, as well as reach his supply trains at Amelia Court House and Appomattox Station, but Grant, anticipating Lee's retreat, ordered V and II Corps to attack the right of the Petersburg line while sending Sheridan forward to cut the railroad. Lee tirelessly rode along the Richmond defense lines toward Petersburg each day and each day he was greeted by scarecrow troops, many of whom were no longer in awe of him. On one occasion a ragged soldier stepped in the path of his horse, Traveller, and held up a naked, bloody foot. "I got no shoes, general," said the man. A short distance later another soldier blocked Lee's path and held up an empty tin plate, groaning: "I'm hungry, sir. We have nothing to eat."

Food, shoes, clothes, nothing was in supply, even soap, which angered and puzzled Lee since he knew that his commissary had ample supplies of lye soap. He demanded this be issued immediately to troops suffering with widespread infection and disease. Even wood to make fires in the trenches was in such short supply that a stick of fire wood cost $5. Lee went to Confederate politicians in Richmond to plead for food, supplies, clothes, blankets, ammunition. He was promised all would be delivered, but only half rations of hardtack and cornpone were sent to the trenches. To his son Custis, Lee complained: "The Congress don't seem to be able to do anything except eat peanuts and chew tobacco, while my army is starving."

On March 25, President Lincoln arrived at City Point, a bustling new harbor and supply center, where the Appomattox River flowed into the James. Lincoln, who was feeling ill (the result, it was suspected, of bad drinking water) had sailed on the *River Queen* from Washington with his wife Mary and son Robert. He noted the around-the-clock activity in the teeming harbor. Ships of all stripe—steamers, barges, sailing ships, sidewheelers, tugs, barges laden with supplies, troopships disembarking recruits—crowded the piers and anchorages.

Lining the banks of City Point were wharves stacked with ammunition and guns and wagons constantly being moved from piers to warehouses creaking under the strain of foodstuffs, clothing, blankets and shoes, all the necessities of feeding and supplying Grant's army. These days, while Lee's ragged legions starved, no Federal soldier went to sleep on an empty stomach.

Among the treasures and bounties of City Point, Lincoln noticed the presence of another element of supply, coffins by the thousands, sealed and being lifted in stacks of tens aboard freighters sailing for the north and burial. The occupants were Grant's slain men from Petersburg and the Richmond line. The names of the dead were written atop these fresh pine boxes. Lincoln knew that Grant was using up troops in recent massive attacks on Lee's wavering line, taking his war of attrition to its fullest and bloodiest measure and he wanted that stopped, but also knew that the seemingly senseless sacrifice would only stop with Lee's surrender.

Lincoln had come to talk about exactly that with Grant, Sherman and Admiral David Porter. After reviewing Grant's and Meade's troops, Lincoln decided to stay with Admiral Porter, selecting a small cabin on board Porter's flagship, *Malvern*, so small that Porter later said it hadn't room "to swing a cat." He likened it to the size of a large closet. The bunk on which the President slept was too short for his six-foot-four-inch frame and he spent uncomfortable hours tossing while throughout the night the tugs and ships went by with whistles screaming and bells clanging, blue, red and yellow lights glistening so brightly on the churning waters that the President slung his coat over a porthole to darken his tiny cabin.

Porter went to the door of Lincoln's cabin that night and found his shoes and socks outside. The admiral bent down to see large holes in the socks and the leather on the shoes scuffed and worn. He summoned an orderly and instructed him to wash and darn the socks and clean up the shoes. Within an hour the freshly laundered socks, holes sewn shut, and the worn-out shoes, now buffed to a high gloss, were placed before the cabin door.

At breakfast, Lincoln smiled broadly at Porter and said: "A miracle happened to me last night. When I went to bed I had two large holes in my socks, and this morning they are gone. That never happened to me before. It must be a mistake."

Porter asked Lincoln how he had slept and the President replied: "Well enough, but you cannot put a long blade into a short scabbard. I was too long for that berth." While Lincoln reviewed troops and Porter's war vessels that day, his stateroom was enlarged and his bed lengthened and widened by a horde of carpenters. Fresh bedding was provided and that night Lincoln slept soundly. He remarked to Porter the next morning: "A greater miracle than ever happened last night. I shrank six inches in length and about a foot sideways. I got somebody else's big pillow and slept in a better bed than I did on the *River Queen*."

On March 27 and 28, Lincoln met on board the *River Queen* with Grant, Porter and Sherman, who had traveled from the Carolinas where he was pushing back Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's small army. They gathered in the stateroom of Admiral Porter where a large map was spread out on a table. Lincoln studied this map, noting that Grant's Petersburg siege line ran 45 miles. Grant traced his defense line with his finger,

then moved it to a junction of roads to the south and west. "Five Forks," he said emphatically. "I'll try to take it. That would pull Lee out of the trenches to fight."

On March 28, 1865, Lee was able to observe great columns of Federal cavalry moving behind Union infantry, going southward. Outposts and spies confirmed that it was Sheridan, with perhaps as many as 15,000 troopers, obviously intending to turn Lee's right flank, its objective painfully obvious to Lee. Sheridan was heading toward the Southside Railroad to cut off and his avenue of escape to North Carolina and union with Gen. Johnston's forces. Lee had already begun moving troops from the Confederate line, sending part of Anderson's division, the two brigades of Wallace and Wise, in a sideslipping movement that paralleled that of Sheridan, toward Dinwiddie Court House.

Quaker Road (Gravelly Run), **Va.**, March 29, 1965 (skirmish).

Warren lost no time in probing for the unknown Confederate lines. He sent a division under Griffin toward Rowanty Creek at dawn. The Federal infantry brushed up against Confederate pickets and drove them back. At noon, however, Griffin's slowly advancing troops reached Quaker Road and Gravelly Run. Here they were greeted by volley fire that staggered their ranks. The Union troops wavered and fell back, then, when supported by Crawford's 2nd Div. on their left flank, the Federals once more advanced slowly.

Confederate resistance became stubborn with more and more Rebels appearing. These were the seasoned Petersburg veterans from the commands of Wise and Wallace who finally brought the inching blue line to a stop at Arnold's Sawmill. Tired and half-starved, the Rebels fought like demons, small units advancing at bayonet point to splinter the front lines of the Union advance. The brigades of Chamberlain and Gregory that were in the most advanced Union positions, were suddenly struck with such savage fury by several thousand men that they reeled back in shock, dozens of Federals falling under the withering Confederate counterattack.

Battery B of the 4th U.S. Artillery hurriedly positioned its cannon, but the Confederates overran this position before the guns got into action. Chamberlain and Gregory led counterattacks that finally stopped the Rebels and retook the lost ground and guns. Crawford and Griffin then cautiously advanced to the Boydton plank road where their exhausted men were ordered to entrench for the night. Warren was nervous; in his forced flanking march to the left, he had not expected to be met with such Rebel forces, believing, as did Sheridan, that Lee's main body of troops were pinned to the Petersburg line.

Warren's losses were close to 400, and he estimated that at least 4,000 Confederates faced his front (it was more like 2,000). Among the Union wounded was Gen. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, one of the heroes of Little Round Top at Gettysburg, a priceless brigade commander. From captured prisoners, Warren learned that he had been confronted by two Confederate brigades, that of Wise and Wallace, part of Richard Anderson's old Corps.

It soon became apparent to Sheridan and Grant that Lee had anticipated Grant's typical crablike sidle to the Confederate right and realized that Sheridan and the Federal infantry were aiming at Dinwiddie Court House, only 6 miles distant and from there the only logical route of march was to the key road junction of Five Forks. Three miles beyond Five Forks was the Southside Railroad, Lee's only means of escape to the Carolinas.

Grant arrived near Gravelly Run after the day's actions of March 29, and sent that night a letter to Lincoln who had remained at City Point: "Griffin was attacked near where the Quaker road intersects the Boydton plank road. At 5:30 p.m. Warren reports the fighting pretty severe but the enemy repulsed leaving 100 prisoners in our hands. Warren advanced to attack at the hour named but found the enemy gone, he thinks inside of his main works. Warrens [sic] pickets on his left along Boydton plank road reported the enemy's Cavalry moving rapidly Northward and they thought Sheridan after them. Sheridan was in Dinwiddie this afternoon—."

On March 30, 1865, Lee ordered Pickett to pull his three small brigades from the Petersburg defense lines, along with six cannon commanded by Col. William Pegram, and march toward Dinwiddie Church to cut off Sheridan. Two of Anderson's brigades joined him, giving him an estimated strength of 5,500 infantry. Fitz Lee's cavalry would join Pickett, bringing his total strength to about 11,000. Lee's selection of Pickett for the key command at Five Forks was later seriously questioned. He had many brilliant corps commanders, including Longstreet, Anderson, and Ewell. Yet, he chose Pickett for this awesome responsibility, a division commander who, since the destruction of his command at Gettysburg, had not been particularly active and, as one report had it, had become "dissipated." He still harbored, it was rumored, deep resentment toward Lee for squandering his men at Gettysburg in the decimating charge made against Cemetery Ridge.

Gen. Henry Heth opposed Lee's plan to send Pickett to Five Forks. He wanted to fight then and there at Petersburg, unrealistically believing that it was still possible to pierce Grant's phalanxes, saying to Lee: "I'll attack in my front. Let Pickett support from the flank."

Lee shook his head and Pickett's men marched off to take trains on the Southside Railroad to Sutherland Station, detrain there and move to Five Forks. Then Lee received a message from Fitz Lee that his cavalry at Five Forks was being pressured by Federal cavalry, which had driven back his pickets. A young Union captain who had been taken prisoner was brought before Lee and he arrogantly informed the Confederate commander that Sheridan was "turning you, sir. The whole line." He added that Sheridan was supported by "a big infantry force."

Lee sent off an order that Fitz Lee was to take a strong position at Five Forks and that he was to screen Pickett's force. Pickett would be in command. A short time later, Lee heard distant rifle fire and knew that Fitz Lee and his top commanders, Rosser, Rooney Lee, and Munford were engaging the enemy. Lee then continued his ride toward Petersburg, closely inspecting the trench line that was so scantily defended that each ragged soldier was 20 or more feet from his neighbor.

A heavy downpour slowed Sheridan's advance on March 30, but he had reached Dinwiddie Court House. Skirmishing occurred along Hatcher's Run and Gravelly Run between Confederate forces and Humphreys' II Corps and Warren's V Corps. Pickett by then had reached Five Forks and he consolidated his command with Fitz Lee's cavalry.

Along the Petersburg line, Federal scouts reported that Lee had bled his defensive line of troops, feeding them to Five Forks, and that other Confederate units near Richmond were also withdrawing. Petersburg was vulnerable for a main assault, Grant's advisers urged. Lincoln, too, was aware of this possibility. He remained at City Point though he felt he should return to Washington. "And yet," he said, "I dislike to leave without seeing nearer to the end of General Grant's present movement." He sensed that the end was near.

So did President Jefferson Davis. Lee had already informed him that Richmond could no longer be defended. The Confederate congress and officials scattered, going to their homes, if they were not in Federal hands by then, or to friends and neighbors in unoccupied areas of the South, mostly in areas of North Carolina, which had not been penetrated by Sherman's legions. Davis told his wife Varina that he would flee alone, attempt to join other Confederate forces, rally them and return to Virginia. He gave her a pistol, instructing her how to use it on herself if Federals attempted to attack her. Davis blamed the impending disaster on uncooperative Southern politicians, gloomily reporting to a friend that "faction has done much to cloud our prospects and impair my power to serve the country."

On March 31, 1865, Union guns opened up on the Danville defense line near Richmond as Grant probed Lee's strength. Varina Davis packed her belongings and a small cart and horse were put at her servant's disposal. That night, with her sister Margaret Howell, her four small children, a nurse and Burton Harrison, President Davis' secretary, she would board one of the last trains scheduled to leave Richmond, heading for Charlotte, N.C. and safety. Her retinue would occupy a single, dilapidated coach with threadbare plush seats, its aisle carpeting speckled with bloodstains where wounded men brought to Richmond's hospitals had earlier bled. While his wife went toward Charlotte, Davis and members of the Confederate government would head for Danville and points beyond.

Boydton Plank Road and Dinwiddie Court House, March 31, 1865 (skirmishes).

Sheridan, meanwhile, on that day, pressed Confederate forces, pushing forth some of his troops from Dinwiddie Court House, only to be pushed back toward the main Federal force. Warren's and Humphreys' infantry advanced at White Oak Road, Hatcher's Run, Boydton Road and Crow's House, skirmishing with the enemy. The Federals were driven back by resolute Southern regiments suddenly appearing before the Union advance. This was Pickett who attacked the Federals at about 10 a.m., advancing with cavalry and infantry along two roads toward Dinwiddie Court House. Gen. Richard Beale, of Rooney Lee's cavalry spearheaded his drive down one road with a spirited brigade that forded one deep stream that brought water up to the armpits of its troopers. Beale's riders attacked and took a Federal skirmishing position.

Pickett's infantry showed equal spirit in driving in Union picket lines and skirmishing successfully with Sheridan's cavalry. All of the prisoners Pickett took this day were dismounted Federal troopers and he wrongly believed that he was facing only Union cavalry in force. By nightfall, his forces were only a few miles from Dinwiddie Court House. At 9 p.m., some of Munford's men brought in two prisoners who were infantrymen of Bartlett's division of Warren's V Corps and Pickett then realized that not only was he facing a powerful Federal cavalry command under Sheridan at Dinwiddie, but that Union infantry in great numbers was dug in north of Gravelly Run and was poised to attack.

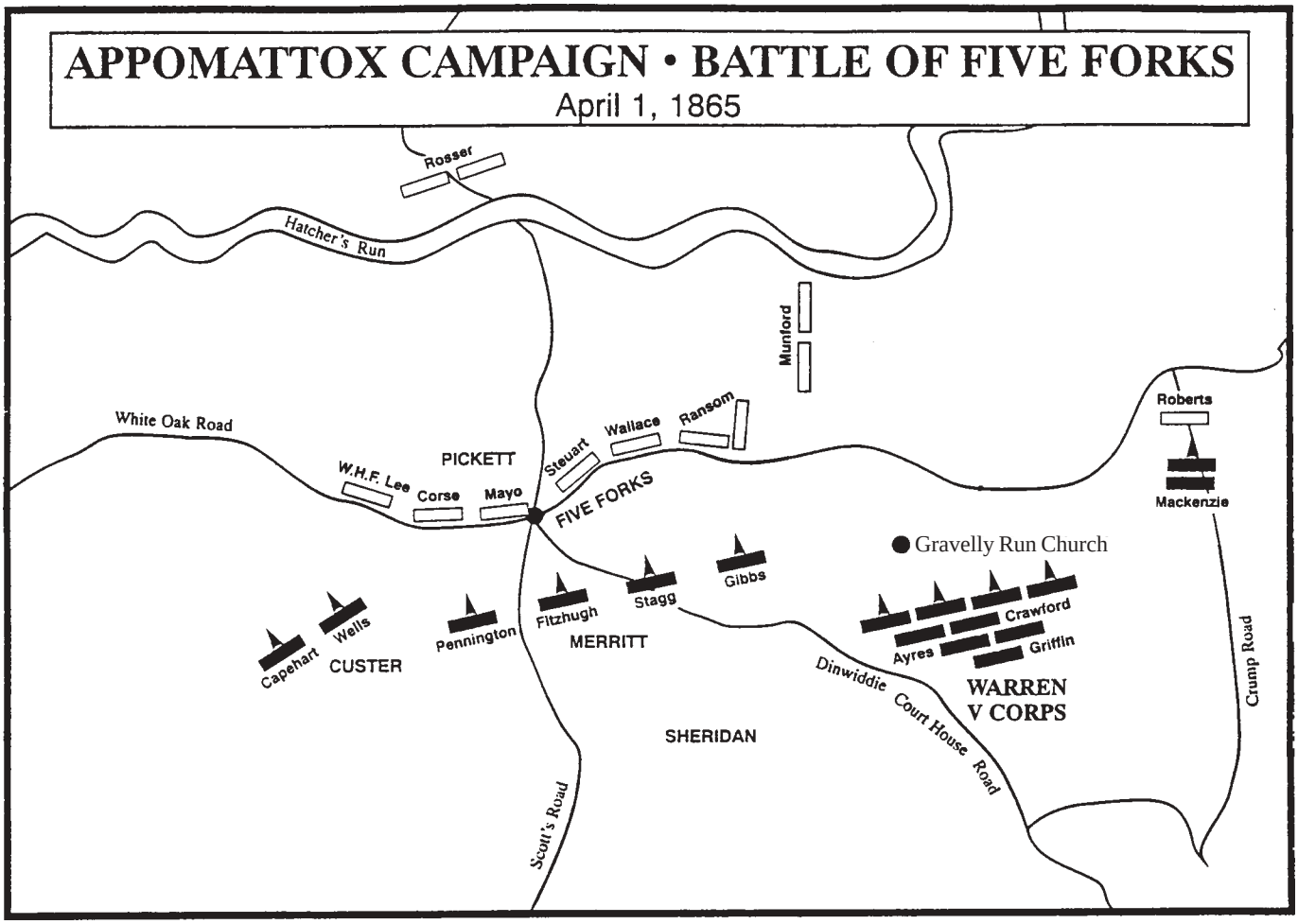
Pickett ordered his men to march back to Five Forks and to entrench. He realized that he could not attack the superior forces of Sheridan, Warren and Humphreys and he withdrew his men to his main line of defense at Five Forks in order to protect the right flank of the Confederate army.

Five Forks (White Oak Road), **Va.**, April 1, 1865 (battle).

On the morning of April 1, Pickett received a message from Robert E. Lee: "Hold Five Forks at all hazards. Protect road to Ford's Depot and prevent Union forces from striking the Southside Railroad. Regret exceedingly your forced withdrawal and your
inability to hold the advantage you had gained [on March 29]." In Richmond, Gen. Ewell, commander of the city, received orders to collect all his troops and join Gen. Longstreet who had earlier moved his small divisions south of the James. Ewell's small, ragged companies began leaving the Richmond defense line, marching down the Darbytown Road. Kershaw's division, now hopelessly outnumbered by Union besiegers, was left to defend the city.

Pickett was up at dawn, riding up and down the White Oak Road, inspecting his entrenchments. Two miles to his rear was the precious last rail line, the Southside Railroad. Work crews chopped down trees and piled them chest high along the roadway, but in many places Pickett failed to notice that his troops were badly positioned on low ground. Pickett was confident that his men could drive off any cavalry attack by Sheridan and if Federal infantry appeared in strength, he would be able to call for help from Lee's reserves, except that there were no reserves.

At his flanks, Pickett ordered Munford and Roberts with a regiment of cavalry to cover the left and Rooney Lee's cavalry to cover the right. He then positioned a thousand-man brigade, under the joint command of Ransom and Wallace, to protect the "return" or the position that hooked backward toward the main Confederate defense line. Next came Steuart's brigade of 1,000 men, then Corse's brigade, at about 1,100 and Mayo's brigade of about 800 men. At the center of this line, Col. Pegram and his officers, readied their artillery, six guns. The Rebel gunners had left Richmond without provisions and, hungry, they and their youthful commander, ate parched corn from their horses' feed bags. Pegram placed three of his guns in



Gen. George Pickett's position at the crucial battle of Five Forks was ill-chosen and poorly prepared, allowing Union troops under Gen. Warren (shown at right in map) to overwhelm his left flank, which was "in the air," while Sheridan's vastly superior cavalry under Custer and Merritt (shown at center in map) crushed the center of the Confederate line.

the line and the other three farther back in a position near a farmhouse to give enfilading fire. He coordinated his entrenching with his boy lieutenants and with his close aides Capt. W. Gordon McCabe and, the most experienced artillerist of the lot, Capt. Thomas Ellet.

Beyond Pegram's position to the rear was Fitz Lee's cavalry, about 1,400 troopers, positioned along Ford Road that connected to the vital Southside Railroad. These were the two brigades of Gen. James Dearing and Gen. John McCausland, under the command of Rosser. Many were dismounted and stood behind hastily-built entrenchments, clutching carbines, some with Enfields and Sharps rifles. Others roamed the nearby countryside, foraging for food. Those that had food, ate in the saddle and peered through the mist for the enemy, a mist that began to burn off at noon when Fitz Lee arrived along the Ford Road with another 1,000 Confederate cavalry.

Among the gray riders were two superior cavalry commanders, Thomas Munford and Rosser. The latter was a large, youthful and dashing leader who had over many campaigns led reckless charges that had saved the army. On several occasions Rosser had bested Custer, the strutting, gold-braided Union cavalry general. It was certain that Custer feared only one man in the Confederate Army, Thomas Lafayette Rosser. He was a heavy drinker, but had never been impaired by liquor on the battlefield.

Munford, who was Rosser's junior in rank, was, on the other hand, a strict disciplinarian who had clashed with Rosser during the previous winter. Rosser, at that time, had been preparing a raid into West Virginia and had called on Munford to supply him with a detachment of men. Munford begged for time, saying his horses were shoeless and his men worn out. This had led to a court martial in which Munford was cleared. He was then given command of his own cavalry unit, a move that further rankled Rosser.

As a field commander, however, there was none like Rosser, brave and intelligent, fearless in his abiding belief in the cavalry attack. He had recently been in the Shenandoah where he had won new victories and, on Feb. 28, 1865, the Confederate Senate had confirmed his appointment to major general. By the time he joined Fitz Lee's command, he was worn out as were his men and horses. He was also hungry. On March 31, had taken his aides and Negro servants to the Nottoway River where they caught shad. A short time later, in a fierce skirmish with Union cavalry, Rosser was shot in the fleshy part of the arm.

Gen. Robert E. Lee inexplicably chose Gen. George Picket (above) to defend the key position at Five Forks.

Rebel cavalry commander, Gen. Thomas Rosser, who hosted Pickett at a shad bake while Union forces attacked at Five Forks.

Gen. Philip H. Sheridan, commanding all Union troops at Five Forks; he was relentless in driving his troops forward.

The aggressive Union Gen. Ranald Mackenzie, the first to attack Pickett's positions ate Five Forks with his cavalry.

The next morning, Rosser reported to Pickett, telling him that he had to rest his men and horses and that he had caught some shad and would have a shad bake, asking Pickett to join him for lunch. He described how the fresh fish would be cleaned, split and baked on open fires. Pickett, as stomach-gnawing hungry as any of his men, gratefully accepted. So did Fitz Lee. Before Lee rode to the rear for the shad bake, Munford rode up to him with a report that Federal infantry had attacked Gen. Roberts' brigade farther up White Oak Road and had broken it so that Pickett's line was severed.

Fitz Lee seemed not to understand the report, stating that Munford was "to go over in person at once and see what this means. If necessary, draw up your division and let me hear from you." With that, Fitz Lee rode off to Rosser's shad bake at Hatcher's Run, leaving Gen. Rooney Lee as the senior officer in charge of the Confederate cavalry. Fitz Lee did not bother to inform Rooney Lee as to his whereabouts.

That morning, Sheridan fretted over the slowness of Warren's V Corps in joining his cavalry. Warren, in fact, was nowhere to be seen at the head of his troops. Sheridan stopped Col. Richard

BELOW center, Gen. Philip H. Sheridan, sitting atop his favorite mount, Rienzi, with Custer immediately to his right, received information from a runaway slave about Pickett's positions at Five Forks.

Bowerman who headed the advance units of V Corps and asked him who the division commander was. Bowerman told him it was Gen. Ayres. Sheridan believed that Warren's tardiness had allowed Pickett to escape to Five Forks and dig in. He would later write: "That we accomplished nothing but to oblige our foe to retreat was to me bitterly disappointing."

A short time later, Gen. Chamberlain, though wounded but still riding with his troops, was stopped by Sheridan who asked him as to the whereabouts of Gen. Warren. "He is at the rear of the column with the rear guard," Chamberlain responded.

Sheridan said sharply: "That is where I should expect him to be."

Warren, who had been a hero of Little Round Top at Gettysburg, was, indeed, at the rear of V Corps' strung-out columns, hurrying Crawford's division, the rear guard, to close ranks. He had not officially come under Sheridan's command until 9 a.m. that morning and knew that Sheridan had already met with several of his division commanders who spearheaded his columns, specifically Generals Ayres and Griffin. Moreover, Sheridan had not asked to confer with him. He ordered a hot breakfast to be made for him and sat down beneath the shade of a tree.

Grant, meanwhile, was headquartered at Dabney's Mill. He called his aide, Col. Horace Porter and told him to "spend the day with Sheridan's command and send me a bulletin every half hour or so, advising me fully as to the progress of his movements. Tell him the contemplated movement is left entirely in his hands, and he must be responsible for its execution." Porter rode quickly to locate Sheridan, taking with him a half dozen couriers who would ride back to Grant with his reports.

Grant shared Sheridan's low opinion of Warren. Because of the proximity of V Corps to Sheridan's command, he had reluctantly assigned Warren to support the Union cavalry. He later wrote that he doubted the performance of "General Warren in this critical position, which I then expected to make in the last battle of the war [and I worried] that he would probably fail." When an aide reported to Grant that much of V Corps was still stalled at Gravelly Run where it had clashed with Wallace and Wise two days earlier, Grant became enraged. (The report was not true; Warren's troops were by that time almost all in fairly close support of Sheridan.)

In May of 1864, Grant had become disillusioned with Warren and his poor performance at the battle of Spotsylvania. He had thought to relieve Warren at the time, but had been dissuaded from doing so by Gen. George Meade. Grant summoned an aide, Lt. Col. Orville E. Babcock, and said: "Tell General Sheridan that if, in his judgment, the Fifth Corps would do better under one of the division commanders, he is authorized to relieve General Warren and order him to report to me."

Sheridan, at that moment, was fuming about getting the infantry in line to support his cavalry before attacking Pickett. At that moment, Warren rode up and dismounted, sitting on a log. Sheridan was half lying on a blanket. Sheridan told Warren to rest his troops and then have them ready to move against the Confederate position at Five Forks. Warren pointed out that his men had fought an engagement within the last 24 hours and "had had rather a field day of it since yesterday morning."

Sheridan gave him a withering look and snapped: "Do you call that a field day?" He then stood up, went to his horse and mounted it, telling Warren he was riding to the front to investigate the situation for himself. Col. Babcock, Grant's emissary, found Sheridan with a brigade of Custer's cavalry, one commanded by Col. Alexander C.M. Pennington, whose troopers had just come upon
Pickett's outposts. After some light skirmishing, the Confederates had fallen back to their defense line.

The hours rolled out into the afternoon when troopers of Gen. Devin's division began to encounter stiffer resistance as the dismounted cavalrymen made their way through woods and fields, climbing over fences and scurrying up and down ravines. Then some artillery shells were lobbed into their midst, followed by intense musketry, one of Devin's men remembering how "the shells were coming thick and fast, knocking off limbs and felling small trees."

The afternoon evaporated and so did Sheridan's patience as he waited, pacing up and down, for Warren's V Corps to get into position to attack. Finally, he ordered Gen. Mackenzie, who had arrived with his small cavalry division from the Army of the James, to attack. The Federal cavalry dashed forward and, as they neared the White Oak Road, slammed into Confederates spitting fire from a line of rifle pits, these being the dismounted North Carolina troopers of Gen. William Roberts' brigade.

Mackenzie rode to the head of his column and led a charge that drove into the Rebel position and scattered the defenders. The Southerners pulled back to the entrenchments at White Oak Road where Ransom and his five North Carolina infantry regiments stood in rifle pits, waiting, watching for any Union movement in force at their front. The Confederates had no way of knowing that beyond some fields and thick stands of timber, two huge Federal Corps were joining Sheridan's cavalry corps, a total of almost 40,000 men, moving against Pickett's line, held by one fourth that number.

The very instrument that could have determined the kind of forces Pickett was facing, his cavalry, was not sent out in any reconnaissance strength to probe and search and report. Instead, the troopers of Munford, Fitz Lee, Rooney Lee, and Rosser remained in defensive positions as dismounted cavalry or roamed about the open areas to the rear. Pickett and Fitz Lee were careless in this matter. Further, Gen. Robert E. Lee anxiously awaited word from Pickett regarding enemy movements, but only received a report that Pickett was withdrawing to his defensive positions along White Oak Road on the evening of March 31, after encountering strong resistance at Dinwiddie Court House.

Pickett would later claim that he sent a dispatch reporting very strong Federal forces moving toward his front and requesting reinforcements. This dispatch was never received, according to Lee and his aides and it has been conjectured that Pickett's message was lost or intercepted. Yet, Pickett sent no couriers directly to Lee at Petersburg. Strangely, Pickett and Fitz Lee assumed that Lee would contact *them* and send rein-

Confederate cavalry under the command of Gens. Fitzhugh Lee and "Rooney" Lee attacking and driving back Sheridan's cavalry toward Dinwiddie Court House during the opening hours of the battle at Five Forks.

Union infantry—the troops of V Corps led by Gen. G. K. Warren—swarming forward to roll up Pickett's left flank at Five Forks and overwhelm the Confederate commands of M. W. Ransom and Wallace.

forcements should *he* detect any significant enemy troop movements in their direction. Of course, it was Pickett's responsibility to provide for his own intelligence in this regard.

Sheridan, on the other hand, by late afternoon, had a clear picture of the enemy's position. He gathered several officers of his own divisions and those of Warren's V Corps to him and drew a battle map in the dirt with his sword, showing where Pickett had entrenched along the White Oak Road and how his left flank was "refused." He announced: "I will attack their entire front..." He jabbed the very end of line—the Confederate left flank—which curled inward at a 90 degree angle, stating: "I will strike this salient and wheel on to their left and rear."

The Federal forces reached Pickett's entrenchments at White Oak Road in the late afternoon, about 4:30 p.m. Ayre's division of Warren's V Corps led the way, with Crawford to the right and Griffin in support. Warren instructed his commanders to "keep closed to the left and preserve their direction in the wood, by keeping the sun, then shining brightly, in the same position over their left shoulders."

Sheridan ordered Mackenzie's division to hook up to the right of Crawford's advancing infantry. Col. Richard Bowerman and Col. James Gwyn led the first two brigades of Ayre's division, supported by another brigade commanded by Col. Frederick Winthrop. These brigades drew Rebel fire from woods to their right. This scattered one of the Union brigades that Sheridan himself rallied and brought back into formation.

Ayres was the first to receive the full impact of the Confederate defenses as he entered some woods. "I got a sharp, full volley from the left," he remembered, "out of the dense woods ... raking my left flank." Ayres realized that the Confederate left flank was actually "in the air," as his troops were literally passing the Rebels on the left. Ayres ordered Winthrop to wheel his brigade 70 degrees to its left and ordered them to charge forward, while wheeling his other two brigades in the same direction, changing the course of their march from north to west. Ayres later recalled that the entire shift of advance "took no more than fifteen minutes."

Crawford, on the right, had not been informed of Ayre's new direction and continued on his original line of march, still going north, two hundred yards or more beyond White Oak Road. Warren, who saw the change of direction taken by Ayres, sent an aide to have Crawford, then Griffin, form on Ayres' line of attack. Griffin, however, was confused over this sudden change in the order of battle and ordered the brigades of Bartlett and Chamberlain halted until he could determine what course to take.

Griffin, following in Ayres' wake, rode to Ayres to find out what was happening. Ayres jocularly told him: "Nothing much ... nothing new, The same old story. Crawford has gone off and left me to fight alone." Griffin returned to his men to bring them in with Ayres whose regiments were directly attacking the short return of the Confederate line, coming in right where the line hooked backward upon itself.

Ayres' men rushed forward through thick underbrush and fallen timbers. Suddenly Sheridan was among them, dashing about atop his favorite horse, Rienzi, urging Ayres' troops forward, pointing with his sword to thick stands of timber and sections of underbrush: "Go in there! There is nothing in there!" Abrupt, volatile, overflowing with confidence and energy, Philip Sheridan fully understood at that moment his enemy's position and the opportunities of the battle.

The Confederate defenders—Ransom and Wallace's men—were by then pouring volley fire into Ayre's advancing lines, dropping scores into the thick underbrush. Said Col. Porter: "Bullets were humming like a swarm of bees." By 5 p.m., however, Ayres' brigades smashed into the eastern end of Pickett's line at White Oak Road, turning it. Troops in the rear were suddenly startled to see a frenzied skirmisher of Gwyn's brigade returning from the front, shouting: "We've got them! We're right in their rear! We'll take them all!"

Ransom's North Carolinians were swarmed into submission. Everywhere they looked and from all directions came a rush of Union troops, hundreds pouring in on them. Ayres' men ran over the low parapets of the 24th N.C. and shouted for the Rebels to surrender. The 24th rolled backward on the next regiment and then the next as the Rebel line began to collapse. W.N. Rose, Jr., saw his commander, Ransom, hatless, his horse stumbling among the thick underbrush, as he attempted to rally his fleeing men.

"We were powerless to help ourselves," Rose would remember, "as the Yankees were closing in on us from every quarter, and the order was given to fall back by companies, beginning on the left of the regiment; but before the right companies received the order the enemy had cut off all chances of retreat."

Federals surrounded the quickly diminishing ranks of the 24th N.C. A small knot of Confederates led by Maj. Thaddeus Love refused to surrender. Love slashed out at Union soldiers pressing forward with jutting bayonets. A Federal color bearer dashed by him and Love jerked the U.S. flag from his grasp. A dozen Federals shot and bayoneted Love to the ground.

Gen. Ransom's horse was shot from under him. He mounted another, dashing about to assemble a thin line of defenders, but several lines of Union troops shot down these Rebels, including Ransom who crashed into timbers after receiving part of the volley. At first it was reported that Ransom was dead, but two of his officers found him pinned beneath his dying mount and freed him just in time to flee into thick woods before being captured along with what was left of his command.

While disaster visited Pickett's command, its commander was enjoying Rosser's shad bake on the banks of Hatcher's Run, one where he, Fitz Lee, Rosser and other officers ate their fill of succulent fish and washed this down with whiskey for two or three hours. (Contrary to rumors, none of these officers got drunk.). Pickett was not concerned about his defense line. He and his companions heard no firing from White Oak Road, although a dense pine forest between them and the entrenchments could have muffled the noise of battle, creating the "acoustic shadow" phenomenon.

As the generals were feasting, two pickets appeared to report that Federals were advancing on all the roads toward Pickett's line of defense. Rosser later wrote somewhat defensively: "These reports were made to Pickett and to [Fitz] Lee and as the position at Five Forks was considered as well chosen and strong but little attention was given to the enemy's advance. I was suffer-

ing from my wound and as I was not immediately in command of the pickets I took no steps to reinforce them. Indeed the pickets were part of Col. Munford's command, and I, reporting direct to General [Fitz] Lee, and he was present [at the shad bake], felt little or no concern about them."

At about 4 p.m., Picket asked Rosser to provide a courier to be sent to his defense line at White Oak Road. Rosser ordered two couriers, as was his custom, to deliver Pickett's message. The first courier would remain in sight of the second. The two couriers galloped off, crossed a stream and entered the pine forest. Moments later, the generals were startled to hear several shots. The couriers came dashing back, the first overtaken and captured by Union infantry, which began dashing across the stream toward the generals. The second courier rode up, panting: "Woods full of Yankees."

The Confederate generals and their aides leaped upon their horses and rode toward their separate commands. Pickett galloped south of Hatcher's Run where he encountered Rebel cavalry retreating under the command of Munford. "What troops are these?" Picket asked Munford.

"Part of Fitz Lee's division," came Munford's response.

A little more than 100 yards distant Pickett could see Union infantry advancing. "Hold them back until I can pass to Five Forks," he told Munford and Capt. James Breckinridge. The 3rd Virginia cavalry regiment dismounted and formed a thin line under the command of Capt. Breckinridge, who led a wild charge into the Union line, hurling back the Federals. It cost Breckinridge his life.

While Breckinridge and a handful of Virginia cavalrymen were sacrificing their lives, Pickett rode frantically toward Five Forks, Union troops firing at his horse as it dashed through the woods. Pickett kept his head low on the neck of his horse and went unscathed. Fitz Lee tried to follow Pickett but was driven back when Federals rushed forward. Lee assembled Rosser's men and led them in a charge into the woods, but they were repulsed with heavy losses by streams of bluecoats who seemed to be coming from every direction.

At Five Forks, the Confederate position was disintegrating, unit by unit, as Ayres' division rolled down its flank. One member of the 56th N.C. saw that his regiment's "flag was shot all to pieces, nothing but a bunch of rags tied to a stick, but we stood by like a wall of iron ... We poured the hot Minies into them as long as we had time to load our guns, but we could not stop them."

A Lt. Palmer jumped atop the parapet and fired two pistols into the onrushing Federals, his men loading two more and handing these to him but, though he felled a dozen Union soldiers, he was simply mobbed by Federals into surrender. The Federal forces at the angle of the return became so dense that there was not room for a Confederate defender to lift a musket and fire. It was a mad crowd scene where neither side could really fire.

Before he broke and ran for the woods, a member of the 49th N.C. watched his regiment's flag disappear inside the horde of invading Yankees: "They literally swarmed on all sides of us, and, by and by, as I looked toward the center of the regiment, I saw our old tattered banner slowly sinking out of sight."

To the right, Wallace's 26th S.C. was also swarmed under and through a dense cloud of gun smoke, one of Ransom's young officers rode to Wallace. He wore a Union coat, which caused Wallace's to think him a Federal. Some shouted: "Shoot the Yankee spy!" A dozen bullets tore Ransom's aide dead from his saddle. There was little hope for the beleaguered Carolinians. Said one later: "The fighting was fierce and bloody until we were completely overlapped by superior numbers and stood as it were between the blades of scissors, the enemy being within twenty steps of our front and rear."

The combined brigade of Ransom and Wallace was shattered. Many fled into the woods or toward the rear of Pickett's extended line, hoping to reform. Some never reformed, but decided the war was over then and there and began wandering homeward. Hundreds were taken prisoner and these Sheridan rode up to inspect. One stared glumly at Sheridan and said: "Where do you want us to go?"

Sheridan pointed to the rear: "Right over there. Get right along now. Drop your guns. You'll never need them again. You'll be safe over there. Are there any more of you? We want every one of you fellows." He was elated.

To the right, Warren stumbled through heavy woodlands in search of Crawford's division, finally locating one of his leading brigades, that commanded by Col. John A. Kellogg. He ordered Kellogg to change his line of march "at right angles and remain halted" until Warren could locate Crawford's next-in-line brigade.

As soon as he rode off, Col. George A. Forsyth, leading the 7th Wis., appeared near Kellogg's brigade. Forsyth told Kellogg to advance to the west, according to Sheridan's orders. Kellogg first hesitated, telling Forsyth that he had orders from Warren to wait for Crawford's men. Forsyth repeated the order, then rode off. Kellogg would either disobey Warren or Sheridan. He ordered his men to advance toward the west, following Sheridan's command.

Griffin, meanwhile, with Bartlett's and Chamberlain's brigades in front, joined Ayres' men to charge down the Confederate line, rolling up Pickett's flank, attacking "Maryland" Steuart's brigade and what was left of the broken brigade of Wallace and Ransom. Sheridan saw that his cavalry was attacking this position frontally and he halted Ayres so that the Union infantry would not accidentally "kill the cavalry." By then, Sheridan was convinced that he had won a victory, later claiming that "the battle was won, in my opinion, when the angle was taken."

The Confederate line, however, was still intact. Gen. Steuart summoned Col. Mayo and asked him to send one of his regiments to aid Ransom and Wallace, saying that he was sending two of his own. Mayo asked where Gen. Pickett was and Steuart told him that he did not know and had not seen him. Mayo dashed back to his brigade and dispatched the 11th Va. to Ransom who, with Wallace and the brigades of Steuart formed a new line northwest of the smashed return. The 11th Va. was soon driven back, along with the rest of the Confederate line.

Thousands of massed Federals swarmed against the crumbling Rebel line. Said one Confederate defender: "the men fought until the Federals literally ran over them. The only

time during the war that I saw guns clubbed and blows struck with them was at this time and place." It was a stampede as the various Rebel commands mixed with each other, their officers dead, captured or fled. "The cowardly ran," reported one survivor, "the timid were dumbfounded and the brave, alone, could not withstand the vastly superior force of the enemy."

Next it was Pegram's turn. His guns were red hot with constant firing at the Union enemy, which came down the inside flank of the Confederate line in waves. "It was terrific," said Capt. McCabe, "beyond anything I had ever seen." Pegram was directing the cannon to his front against charging Union cavalry when he suddenly pitched from his horse. Capt. McCabe rushed to Pegram to find his side and left arm coated with blood. Pegram cried to him: "Oh, Gordon, I'm mortally wounded. Take me off the field." McCabe called some stretcher bearers who loaded Pegram into a wagon that began jostling to the rear. McCabe gave one last order to Pegram's stalwart artillerists: "Fire your canister low!" He then dashed after the wagon to be with his best and dying friend.

Warren by then had returned to where Kellogg's force had turned toward the Confederate flank. He found nothing, but sent another aide in search of Crawford and Griffin. Sheridan found him there, shouting to Warren: "We turned them gloriously!" He then began complaining about Crawford and Griffin, saying that they had not followed his plan of attack. Warren defended his division commanders, pointing out

Gen. George Armstrong Custer, who led his Union cavalry regiments with almost suicidal zeal at Five Forks.

Custer's cavalry charging the center of Pickett's defenses at Five Forks; these troopers later dismounted and charged on foot through the collapsing regiments of W. H. F. Lee, Montgomery Corse and Joseph Mayo.

to Sheridan that they were conscientious officers. With that he rode off in search of Griffin and found him; he then searched for Crawford.

As the furiously galloping Pickett neared Five Forks the din of battle roared in his ears, the thundering of cannon and constant crackle of musketry. By the time he appeared at Five Forks, his left flank had been rolled back almost a half mile. As if atoning for his inexplicable absence, Pickett, his long dark ringlets flying about, rode wildly up and down the line, rallying his fleeing men, the remnants of Ransom's, Wallace's and Steuart's brigades, herding the survivors into the ranks of the only brigade left intact, that of Gen. Montgomery Corse. Union cavalry under Gen. George Armstrong Custer had briefly attacked Corse's front when attempting to cross an open field and ride over the Confederate entrenchments at White Oak Road. Custer's men had been beaten off.

Next to Pickett was his adjutant, Lt. Col. Walter Harrison who later reported how "Pickett got a sergeant and men enough to put one piece [cannon] in position on the left and fired eight rounds into the head of the enemy column, when the axle broke and the piece was disabled ... He had also pulled out [Gen. William Richard] Terry's brigade from its position and threw it on the left flank, charging over Wallace's men and forcing them back to their position.

"Even then, with all odds against us, we might have held until night, which was fast approaching, but the ammunition was fast giving out. Col. Flowers' regiment fought hand to hand after the cartridges were gone but to no avail, though the enemy lay in heaps. The left was completely turned."

While Pickett stood by the disabled cannon, a burly Federal sergeant leaped over the parapet on a mule, firing a pistol and demanding that the general surrender. "Damn you!" Pickett shouted back at him, and leaped on his horse and rode off just as a platoon of Federals engulfed the cannon's position. Most of Corse's men and those from the other broken brigades followed Pickett in retreat down the White Oak Road line as troops led by Crawford, Mackenzie, Devin and Custer slashed into their ranks. Only Rooney Lee's cavalry remained intact, beating off vicious attacks to retire in good order.

Rooney Lee would not be destroyed nor captured that day, he vowed. As Pickett's infantry fled past his retreating cavalrymen, Lee's men fought rearguard actions near the open fields of Gilliam farm. When Custer and Mackenzie appeared and charged, Rooney Lee led several counterattacks, which Lt. Col. Harrison described as "one of the most brilliant cavalry engagements of the war." Lee and his riders sliced along Custer's line, shearing its front ranks and turning back those in the rear, then dashing after them until the Federal riders raced for the cover of woods. Only then did Rooney Lee and his cavalry resume their slow retreat stopping to repulse several more Federal cavalry attacks until night made both armies blind.

By then the wagon in which the dying Pegram lay rattled toward Ford's Station with the Capt. McCabe at Pegram's side. He clasped Pegram's hand, holding his colonel in his arms, kissing his white face. Pegram rolled in and out of consciousness. At one point he opened his eyes wide and said in a clear voice to McCabe: "If it's God's will to take me, I am perfectly resigned. I only want to live for the sake of my mother and sisters."

A few minutes later he said weakly: "Take my love to mother and the girls and tell them I thought of them at the last."

McCabe was in agony as he watched his closest friend, saying: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Pegram heard this and rebuked his aide: "Don't say that, Gordon. It isn't right."

McCabe kissed Pegram's forehead and said: "I never knew how much I loved you until now, Willie." This was the first time McCabe had ever addressed his commander by his first name.

Pegram smiled, squeezing McCabe's hand, and whispered: "But I did."

As Pegram fell into a coma, McCabe prayed so loudly that the wagon driver could hear him over the rumbling and creaking of the wagon. Upon reaching Ford's Station, McCabe found a room for Pegram, but no doctor. His colonel lay in a bed bleeding to death. McCabe gave him morphine and bound his wounds as best he could. When told at midnight that Union cavalry was expected at any moment, McCabe sent away his horses, sabres, pistols and spurs, accepting the fact that capture would take place at any moment.

Exhausted after praying all night, McCabe reported that, on Sunday, the 23-year-old Col. William Johnson Pegram, one of the most brilliant artillerists in the Confederate army, "died as gently as possible." He wrapped his commander's body in a blanket, then, with two orderlies, dug a grave and buried his friend, reading an Episcopal funeral service over the fresh mound of earth before trudging after what was left of the retreating Confederate forces.

For the Confederacy, Five Forks was a major disaster. Warren's V Corps had captured 3,244 Rebels on April 1 and in a round up the following day. It had also taken eleven Confederate battle flags and one gun. Sheridan's cavalry had captured another 2,000 Rebels. Confederate casualties are unknown, but it was estimated by one source that more than 1,000 Confederates were killed and wounded, yet another states that the Rebels lost no more than a total of 3,000 killed, wounded, captured and missing.

Another disaster of sorts befell Gen. Warren of V Corps. Late in the evening of April 1, he finally located Crawford's division that had marched steadily west, almost to Ford's Station. Warren ordered Crawford to turn his troops back toward White Oak Road, which he did. Warren then dispatched his aide, Lt. Col. Frederick T. Locke to Sheridan. When arriving before Sheridan, Locke proudly relayed his commander's message, that he had "gained the enemy's rear and had taken over 1,500 prisoners, and that he was pushing in a division as rapidly as he could."

Instead of approval, Sheridan;s face darkened into a frown. He wheeled his horse about and said almost in a shout: "Tell General Warren, by God! I say that he was not at the front. That is all I have to say to him."

Shocked, Locke asked: "Must I tell General Warren that, sir?"

Sheridan roared back: "Tell him that, sir!"

Gouverneur Kemble Warren, commander of the Union V Corps, whose infantry largely won the battle of Five Forks, but who was unfairly blamed by Gen. Philip H. Sheridan for some of his units going astray. With the collusion of Grant, Sheridan removed Warren from command and it would take many years before this heroic soldier was posthumously vindicated.

Confederate prisoners captured at Five Forks are shown in the above rare photo. More than 5,000 of Lee's best troops were taken prisoner in this devastating Rebel defeat, one which led to the ultimate collapse of the Army of Northern Virginia. Gen. George Pickett bore the brunt of criticism for being absent at the opening of this battle and for losing half his 11,000 troops.

Confederate artillerists destroying cannon that had to be abandoned following the devastating defeat of Pickett at Five Forks. Everywhere, the Rebels lost supplies, wagon trains, rations as the Federal armies closed in on Lee's dwindling army.

As Locke rode back to deliver the terrible message to Warren, Sheridan looked about and spotted Gen. Bartlett who had heard his remark about Warren. Sheridan said to Bartlett: "You are in charge of Griffin's division. Griffin is in command of the corps."

Sheridan had concluded from the day's events that Warren could not inspire his men to battle and was certainly not a combat
commander to lead a corps or any other kind of unit, despite the fact that Warren had been doing exactly that for a number of years, particularly since his spirited defense of Little Round Top at Gettysburg, an action that undoubtedly saved the Union Army that day in 1863, if not the Union itself.

Warren, of course, was blamed for the groping advance of Ayre's division, the unsteadiness of Griffin's direction of attack and, most of all, for Crawford's almost aimless wandering in the wrong direction during the battle for Five Forks. Upon hearing that he had been relieved, Warren rode to Sheridan and said to him: "General, I trust you will reconsider your determination."

"Reconsider?" said Sheridan. "Hell! I don't reconsider my determination."

"I will not rest under it," said Warren, in what one of Sheridan's aides later described in tone as "very insubordinate."

"Go on, General," Sheridan said, waving him away.

Warren was finished as a corps commander, something Grant and Sheridan had wanted all along. He spent the rest of the war performing rear echelon duties and his post war years were given to backwater commands. Warren felt that he had been unfairly relieved of his command at Five Forks and he finally sought vindication by demanding in 1880, 16 years after the battle, a court of military inquiry. This was held and the battle and Warren's actions argued all over again. The three issues debated were the reasons Philip Sheridan gave for Warren's removal: 1) That he did not move V Corps fast enough from the White Oak Road to Dinwiddie Court House on the night of March 31, 1865; 2), That he was unnecessarily slow in positioning his troops for the Federal assault on Pickett's extreme left flank on April 1, 1865 and 3) That he did not exercise effective control over his troops during the attack.

The tribunal heard dozens of witnesses, former Union officers and even Rebel commanders who had been at Five Forks. It did not publish its findings, however, until Nov. 21, 1882, finding Warren innocent of all of Sheridan's charges. By then it was too late; Warren, though vindicated, had died of acute liver failure three months earlier on Aug. 8, 1882. Warren's last sad words were: "I die a disgraced soldier." The umbilical Union three—Grant, Sheridan and even Sherman who had lobbied against Warren during the years of controversy—had crushed the career of Gouverneur Kemble Warren as savagely as they had their Confederate foes of yesteryear.

These were the men who had won the war and kept the power. None had changed since Appomattox. All three gloried in the collective image of their supreme authority and anyone who challenged that authority for any reason would live and die ingloriously throughout the era they claimed as their own. Grant, Sherman and Sheridan had, indeed, won the war, but they had won it as utterly brutal men, and all three, saviors or not, would go to their graves as brutal men.

Petersburg, Va. Final Assault, April 2, 1865 (battle).

On the night of April 1, 1865, Grant was too elated over the victory at Five Forks to give Warren another thought. When hearing the news, he sent Sylvanus Cadwallader, a correspondent for the New York *Herald*, to Lincoln with his report of the battle (not having any others to serve as a courier at the time, or so goes the report). Cadwallader, a lickspittle who had ingratiated himself to Grant and served as the commander's unofficial publicist, took Grant's message to Lincoln at City Point, along with some captured Confederate regimental battle flags.

Cadwallader awoke Lincoln on board the *River Queen*, handing him Grant's message of victory, as well as slowly spreading out the battle flags before the President, one after another. Lincoln held the flags and said softly: "Here is something material—something I can see, feel, and understand. This means victory. This *is* victory."

A short time later, at about 10 p.m., Lincoln heard from his berth on the *River Queen* the rolling thunder of Union guns from Richmond to Petersburg. This was the beginning of Grant's final assault, the President knew. Grant had, upon receiving the news of Five Forks, told aides: "I have ordered a general assault along the lines." In preparation for the enormous assault he planned, Grant ordered every piece of Union artillery available to bombard Petersburg.

By this time, Lee and the Confederate government had received the news of Pickett's disastrous defeat. Lee immediately ordered Longstreet to move south from his northern defenses of Richmond, while informing President Davis that the capital had to be abandoned while he tried to save what was left of the army. One of those who reacted most violently to Lee's proposal to evacuate Richmond was the third highest-ranking officer of the Confederacy, Lt. Gen. Ambrose Powell Hill.

Hill was no longer the fire-eater of Antietam, Gettysburg and dozens of other battles. He had led a corps and had been at Falling Waters, the Wilderness, Spotsylvania and the Crater, but he had grown ill and was often on sick leave. His wife and two small children lived in Petersburg and he often visited them. Hill had vowed that he would not survive if Richmond fell.

For four hours, Union guns hammered Petersburg's defenses, ceasing at 2 a.m. At that moment, four Union army corps, the II, VI, IX, and the XXIV, almost 60,000 men, assembled into formations and marched southwest, crossing the Boydton Plank Road. Two corps, the VI under the command of Gen. Horatio Wright and the IX, under Gen. John G. Parke, would spearhead the attack. Unlike previous assaults against the Petersburg line, Union strategists were confident of victory, correctly believing that Lee had so weakened his line by sending troops to the southwest that penetration in force was now possible.

Parke ordered two of his divisions, about 10,000 men, to

assemble along the Jerusalem Plank Road that ran through the Confederate and Union positions. On the Confederate side, however, were a number of small forts, redans and a maze of trenches that ran into each other. Beyond were more forts and hidden batteries that could fire upon the first line of defense if this line was captured. Two brigades, led by squads of axmen, crept close to the nearest Confederate batteries and first line of defense. At the first line, the axmen began chopping paths through Rebel abatis and entanglements.

Col. William H. Palmer notified Gen. Hill before dawn of April 2, that Union forces had struck during the night and captured part of the Confederate line at Rives' Salient. No reports came from either Gen. Heth or Gen. Wilcox and Hill felt that the part of the line defended by these men was secure. He nevertheless rode to Gen. Robert E. Lee's headquarters, the Turnbull House at Edge Hill, a mile and a half distant and found the commander partly dressed, lying on a bed and studying a battle map.

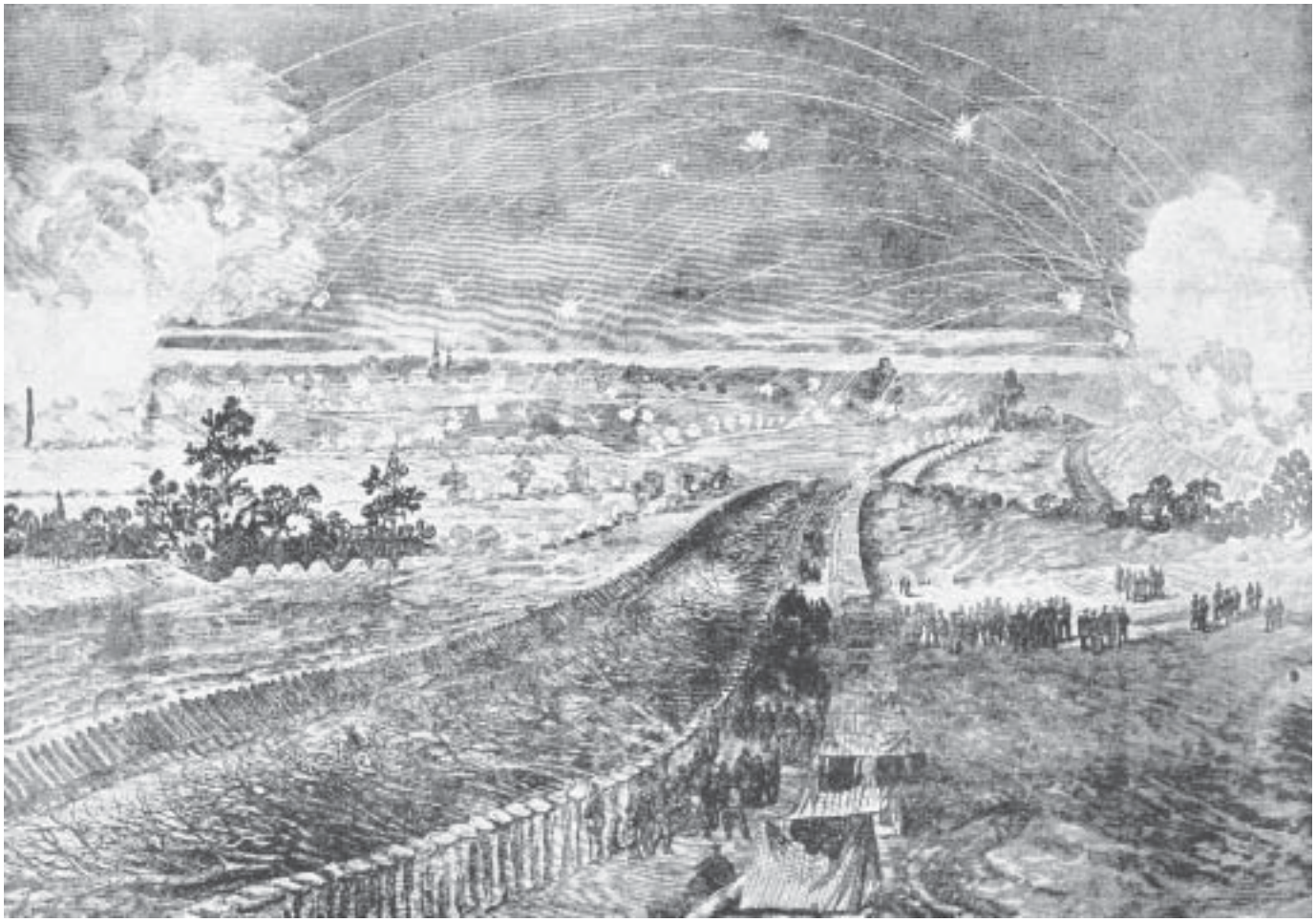
As Hill conferred with Lee about what could be done to hold the line, Col. Charles S. Venable appeared to report that in Hill's sector army wagons were being driven quickly down the road and that Union skirmishers in large numbers had overrun a Confederate position. Hill dashed from Turnbull House and leaped into the saddle. Hill, accompanied by Venable and two aides galloped toward Hill's front and soon saw Federals swarming through a series of huts that Mahone's division had used during the winter. Then bullets whistled about Hill and his men.

Hill pointed to high ground occupied by a Rebel artillery battalion and ordered Venable to have these men fire their guns on the Union-occupied areas. As Venable rode off, Hill then galloped off across a field, cutting in and out of ravines, as he searched for his men. His chief courier, Sgt. George Tucker, stopped his chief, saying: "Excuse me, General, but where are you going?"

"I must go to the right as quickly as possible," Hill replied. "We will go up this side of the branch to the woods, which will cover us until reaching the field in the rear of General Heth's headquarters. I hope to find the road clear at General Heth's."

Hill and Tucker rode along for some time without encountering a single person, then Hill said to Tucker: "Sergeant, should anything happen to me, you must go back to General Lee and report it."

As they galloped parallel to the Boydton Plank Road, Hill stopped to peer through is field glasses. He could see



ABOVE, the trememdous Union bombardment of Lee's defensive positions at Petersburg before the massive Union forces made their final assault on April 2, 1865. In most places, Confederate ranks were so thin that each defender was separated from the next defender by 20 feet.

Union Gen. Andrew A. Humphreys, who sent his II Corps in dense columns to pierce the Rebel defenses at Petersburg.

Lt. Gen. Ambrose Powell Hill, one of Lee's finest field commanders, was shot to death by two Federal stragglers during the assault on Petersburg.

Confederate Gen. Cadmus M. Wilcox, whose haggard troops at Petersburg were overwhelmed by hordes of Union soldiers pouring through Lee's ruptured defense line.

Federal troops advancing on the other side of the road. "There they are," he said. "We must keep to the right." They galloped on. Suddenly, they spotted two Union soldiers hiding behind a tree. Tucker shouted to them to surrender, saying that "our men are here!"

"Surrender!" Hill shouted. He drew his pistol and leveled it at the two Union soldiers.

The two young Federals, Corp. John W. Mauk and Pvt. Daniel Wolford lowered their rifles. "I can't see it," Wolford replied to the Confederate riders.

Mauk said to Wolford: "Let's shoot them!"

The two Federals raised their rifles and fired. Tucker ducked and went unscathed while Hill, who had been holding up one hand and clutching a pistol with the other, was mortally struck, a bullet piercing his hand and ploughing into his heart. He fell from the saddle and lay motionless, his arms outstretched. Tucker knew he was dead and grabbed the reins of Hill's horse, then galloped back to the Confederate lines, dodging Union patrols and the bullets of Federal sharpshooters that smacked after him.

Hill's horse later broke free and raced back to the Hill home in Petersburg where Hill's wife saw it idling with empty saddle. She knew, before Col. Venable arrived with the news, that her husband was dead. Late that night, when the day's fighting ceased, Mauk and Wolford returned to their units only to be summoned before VI Corps commander, Gen. Horatio Wright.

They stood trembling before Wright who said: "Do you know who you killed, Mauk?"

"No, sir," replied the nervous corporal.

"You have killed General A.P. Hill of the Confederate army." There was no joy in Wright's voice.

About an hour before Mauk and Wolford had encountered Hill that day, Gen. Parke had thrown two full divisions against the Confederate front on the Jerusalem Plank Road. His men broke through the weakly held lines of Gen. John B. Gordon's corps where single defenders were separated by 20 feet. Yet, Parke's thousands were swallowed by the hundreds of interconnecting trenches, chasing after North Carolina and Alabama defenders who collected on higher ground to join batteries that poured enfilading fire into them. An officer stood next to an artillerist with Battery Number 30, asking if the cannoneers could hold back the Federals.

"Don't you see that we're giving them double charges of canister?" came the artillerist's reply. "They'll never get up that ravine, sir." All day long the battle here swung back and forth as each side reinforced the other, small bands of men fighting hand-to-hand over a small trench system here or a traverse there. The combatants slipped and slithered through the muddy runways and rifle pits. Fierce fighting took place near a redoubt called Fort Mahone, but neither side budged the other, although Parke's forces did make considerable penetration into the maze of Confederate trenches.

Gen. John Gordon was everywhere along his front. Only a day earlier, his wife had given birth to a child and now he was faced with extinction. He rode his horse erect, his black beard jutting as he gave orders and rallied one small unit after another. When Fort Mahone gave way, he reinforced another small defense area, a mound of earthworks called Fort Gregg. "With barely six thousand men," he later reported, "I was holding six miles of line. Just about 1,000 men to a mile or about one to every two yards ... Some part of this thin line was being forced continually ... our line would bend and twist and swell and break and close only to be battered again once more ... Men weak and hungry never complained ... fought grimly, as men who had made up their minds to die."

ABOVE AT RIGHT: Confederate dead littered the trenches at Petersburg following Grant's final and overwhelming assault on April 2, 1865. Many of the slain Rebels were old men and barefoot boys in their mid-teens. The sight of these youthful casualties sickened and sobered advancing Union troops and commanders on both side wept at the slaughter.

Though Gordon's line held, just barely, the front of the dead A.P. Hill was pierced by another 10,000 Federals under the command of Gen. Horatio Wright. Men of the VI Corps breached the line held by Wilcox and Heth, driving these brigades right and left and to the rear. Gen. Lee emerged from the Turnbull house just as this line broke and soon Edge Hill was mushrooming with Union artillery shells, several of them exploding on the house and causing fires to break out, lapping through the windows. Lee looked back at the house with regret, saying to Col. Walter Taylor: "I'm afraid it was burned because they knew I had been there. I should not occupy a private house."

Lee gave immediate orders to hold onto Petersburg as best as possible until he could withdraw the bulk of his command, Longstreet from the northern defenses of Richmond, Mahone from the Howlett line, Gordon and Hill's forces from the main defense line, then Ewell's troops as rear guard, to leave Richmond that night. Meanwhile, he learned that Wright's legions, instead of charging straight through to Petersburg, had veered right and left where they had broken through the Rebel lines to roll up the Confederate flanks. Moreover, a few hundred men of Wilcox's division made a valiant stand at Fort Gregg and held back the Union invaders long enough for Longstreet to form another line of defense on the east side of Indian Town Creek. This gave Lee several precious hours of time to save the rest of his battered army.

The defenders of Fort Gregg fought for hours, firing an average of 200 rounds for each man, holding back about 3,000 Federals. They inflicted 714 casualties on the Federals and had 57 of their number killed, 129 wounded who were taken prisoner and 30 more who were captured unhurt. The fighting at Fort Gregg was some of the fiercest of the war. When the defenders ran out of ammunition, they threw cannon balls and bricks down at the charging Federals.

One of the defenders of Gregg was 18-year-old A.A. Garrison, of the 37th N.C. He and two others loaded muskets for a sharpshooter who never seemed to miss. "This soldier took good aim," Garrison later reported, "and I think he must have killed and wounded scores of the enemy. Near the close he was shot through the jugular vein."

As soon as the Federals swarmed into the tiny fort, Confederate batteries directed by Col. William Poague opened up on Gregg, the first shell killing and scattering the bodies of a half dozen Union soldiers who had come to the rear wall of the fort. Shells then exploded throughout the crumbling walls of Gregg, killing dozens of Union troops who had just begun to cheer their victory.

The South Carolina brigade of Gen. Samuel McGowan, mostly made up of sharpshooters, fought tenaciously for every inch of ground as they were pushed back by Wright's forces. At one point, McGowan's men counterattacked and regained some ground on which a young Federal soldier lay, shot in the thigh. Some Rebels reached out to help him but he screamed: "God damn you, Johnnies! Get away from me! I will not be taken!" One of the Rebels explained that they only wanted to bind up his wound. The youthful Federal writhed on the ground and then asked the Confederates standing about him to shoot him. When they refused, the young soldier, to the shock of the Rebels, withdrew a knife and slashed his own throat, then died.

McGowan's brigade was soon again attacked with such force that it broke and ran, officers and men dashing across a large, open field while Union volleys were sent into their ranks from front and flanks, mowing down the frenzied Confederates. The survivors regrouped and then quick-marched toward Amelia Court House. Union forces pursued them to the banks of the Appomattox before night fell. More than 600 men of McGowan's brigade were captured, along with two guns, and three of its five regimental commanders.

That night Lee's men straggled southwest and he himself approached Petersburg when his aide, Col. Walter Taylor, begged him for permission to return to doomed Richmond, explaining that his mother and sister were there and he wanted to say goodbye to them. He also wanted to marry his fiancée, Elizabeth Selden Saunders.

Lee stared at his aide for a moment and then said: "Married. Not tonight?"

Taylor persisted in his odd request. Lee finally relented, saying "go on." Taylor rode to Dunlop's station and here managed to get aboard an engine that raced into Richmond where he joined his bride-to-be and later still managed to return to Lee's side.

Grant dutifully reported the progress of his Final Assault on Petersburg to Lincoln throughout the day. By 4:40 p.m., he sent Lincoln a message that Union forces had broken through the Confederate defenses at Petersburg and had ringed the town, as well as extending its advancing lines. He received a reply from the President: "Allow me to tender to you and all with you the nation's grateful thanks for this additional and magnificent success."

Meanwhile, Sheridan pushed toward Appomattox against light resistance, until he neared Sutherland Station where he rested his men. Sheridan had gone cautiously forward throughout the day, much more cautiously than had Warren the day earlier—he having sacked Warren for his slowness—because he had received word from Grant to be wary, that Lee might turn his entire army upon him.

Anderson and Gen. Bushrod Johnson had also withdrawn their forces during the day, fighting an exhausting rear guard action all the way to Church Crossing on Ford Road with Federal cavalry. Also managing to escape was the Naval Battalion and the heavy artillery under Gen. William Pendleton who miraculously withdrew his large guns without mishap, as did Col. Stapleton Crutchfield. The troops of Custis Lee, recently promoted to the rank of major general, and that of Kershaw, crossed a pontoon bridge below Richmond.

Richmond, Va., Evaluation, Destruction and Surrender, April 2-3, 1865.

In the Confederate capital, all was chaos. The last Confederate cavalry force in the city, that of Gen. Martin W. Gary, rode into a city awash with the worst of its denizens, thousands of drunken gamblers, whores and thieves who openly looted stores and homes that had been evacuated. The Provost Guard and what few policemen were on hand were powerless to control the mobs. Shopkeepers had thought to appease the chaotic crowds by pouring all their liquor into the gutters and this the dregs of Richmond drank, using their shoes, cupped hands or any other means by which to trap the alcohol flowing over the cobblestones.

Gen. Ewell, who was just then retreating with the last of his troops, rode through the riotous crowds with his aides, attempting to restore order. It was useless. Ewell ordered Kershaw to bring his men back into the city to quell the rioters, but by the time these bewildered troops arrived the city was in flames. The Provost Guard, acting under orders from the now departed government leaders, had set fire to the huge tobacco warehouses.

Other warehouses containing foodstuffs were thrown open and thousands fought for their contents. Flames from the tobacco warehouses leaped to adjoining buildings and looters also ignited fires so that by midnight the business district of the city was ablaze and the sky over Richmond glowed red. In their trenches and along roads and inside woodlands outside of Richmond, Union soldiers looked at the bright night sky in amazement. Retreating Confederates looked back at the crimson glow and many, then and there, realized that their cause was finally lost.

Ewell then pulled out the last defenders of Richmond from their trenches, the forces of Gen. Charles William Field, commander of Hood's old Texas division, replacing them with a hospital division of 1,200 walking wounded, cripples, orderlies and youthful VMI cadets, all under the command of Capt. H.E. Wood. These men groped their miserable way into positions along the Richmond defense line, each man so distant from his neighbor that they were barely within calling distance. They huddled there beneath a night sky turned crimson, grimly awaiting the blue tide to wash over them.

In the city, Ewell rode about, hurrying stragglers to the southwest to join Lee. Because of his missing leg, he was strapped to his saddle, but his patient horse, Rifle, a worn out gray, never missed a step. Next to him, carbine in hand, was his loyal servant, the ever-vigilant Apache Boy.

Raphael Semmes, the great Confederate naval raider, who had returned to Richmond only two weeks earlier, was ordered to blow up his tiny fleet of four ironclads and five wooden

Union troops marching into a ruined, still blazing Richmond, while jubilant blacks greet their liberators.

vessels, along with all naval ordnance, which had been trapped in the James. Semmes waited deep into the night. When he saw Rebel soldiers igniting their barracks and setting the torch to army stores along the riverfront, he turned to his officers and ordered them to blow up the Confederate fleet. As his sailors drew arms and formed naval units to march after and fight with Lee, Semmes' ordnance officers and men set fire to his fleet, including his flagship, the ironclad *Virginia*.

Semmes later described the destruction of his flagship: "The spectacle was grand beyond description. Her shell rooms had been full of loaded shells. The explosion of the magazine threw all the shells, with their fuses lighted, into the air. The fuses were of different lengths, and as the shells exploded by twos and threes, and by the dozen, the pyrotechnic effect was very fine. The explosion shook the houses in Richmond."

At the depot, a last rickety train was preparing to leave dying Richmond. A slave dealer named Lumpkin suddenly appeared, shotgun in hand, herding 50 slaves, their ankles chained, toward one of the cars. A young Confederate officer waved him away, but Lumpkin raised the shotgun. The officer pushed the gun aside and withdrew his pistol, holding it at his side. "There's no room for you or your gang," the officer told the slave dealer.

"Damn, you, "Lumpkin shouted: "This lot is worth $50,000!"

Continuing to wave off the slave dealer, the officer replied: "No one will be buying slaves now."

Lumpkin unshackled his slaves who then ran pell-mell down the street, disappearing into the shouting, half-drunken crowds.

Union soldiersraise the Stars and Stripes while the evacuated city of Richmond burns about them, April 3, 1865.

President Lincoln, shown in a carriage wearing a stovepipe hat, leaves the Confederate White House in Richmond as liberated slaves give him a joyous welcome.

Gen. Godfrey Weitzel, who commanded Union troops occupying conquered Richmond; Lincoln told him to "Let 'em up easy," when referring to the captive population.

Meanwhile, Col. Taylor arrived to be married after midnight to his betrothed, Miss Saunders. He had a two-hour honeymoon and at 3 a.m., galloped over Mayo's Bridge to rejoin Robert E. Lee. His new bride was left behind to witness the death throes of the city, which she later described: "People were running about everywhere with plunder and provisions ... Barrels and boxes were rolled and tumbled about the streets ... Barrels of liquor were broken open and the gutters ran with whiskey and molasses. There were plenty of straggling soldiers who had had too much whiskey. Rough women had it plentifully, and many Negroes were drunk. The air was filled with yells, curses, cries of distress, and horrid songs."

Gen. Ewell was at Mayo's Bridge, directing the last of the retreating Confederate troops across it. After hearing some nearby explosions, Ewell drew his pistol and flourished it, shouting: "I'll shoot the first man who puts a torch to this bridge."

Thousands of civilians carrying all the belongings they could manage attempted to flee with the army. The wife of Gen. Robert E. Lee, however, remained in the Lee house on Franklin Street. She was ill with arthritis and refused to leave Richmond, saying to friends that she would remain to make sure that her husband had a home to which he could return. Despite pleas from friends who warned her of the flames engulfing nearby buildings, Mrs. Lee remained in a rocking chair, a shawl about her shoulders, staring out of the parlor window.

One of the last trains to leave Richmond carried all of the gold, silver, coins and currency—more than $1 million—of the Confederate government and the Richmond banks, guarded by 60 picked naval officers and men. Another train carrying ordnance and ordnance chief, Gen. Josiah Gorgas, groaned under its weight as it left the city, crossing the railroad bridge of the James and halted in Manchester where Gorgas had a clear view of burning Richmond. He watched the blaze for two hours, fretting about his wife Amelia, whom he had left behind in their Richmond home.

Where Gorgas managed to save his best ordnance, very little of the official records of the Confederate government were preserved. Lee had given President Davis short notice to evacuate Richmond and Davis himself, for fear of widespread panic, had delayed telling many junior officials, waiting until the last minute to spread the word. Most officials immediately abandoned their posts and records.

Those who attempted to preserve the records were impeded by guards ordering them out of government buildings

Though the capital building atop a hill is shown intact, most of Richmond was destroyed to the river's edge. A demolished gun and abandoned cannonballs are seen in the foreground.

The gutted remains of Richmond's business district, looted and torched by drunken pillagers during and after the Rebel evacuation.

which were scheduled for destruction. Almost all of the muster rolls, military reports regarding organization, equipment, supplies for of the Army of Norther Virginia and the Army of Tennessee, the two great Confederate armies in the field, were abandoned, first strewn on the floors of the Capitol's offices, then burned. Duplicate information carried by commanders in the field was also almost completely lost as corps wagon trains were overtaken and burned or destroyed by their commanders during the retreat from Richmond.

In that badly organized retreat, Gary's cavalry had orders to remain in burning Richmond until 2 a.m., then withdraw and burn all the bridges after it. Rebel stragglers, however, kept coming toward Mayo's Bridge and Gary waited until dawn. One of the last stragglers to cross was drummer boy John L.G. Woods, of the 53rd Ga. who had fallen asleep in the defense lines and had been left behind. He had packed up his meager belongings and run to Richmond, been swept up by the crowds looting the Government commissary where he gleefully filled his knapsack, and then dashed toward the bridge and the last of the retreating Confederates.

The 7th S.C. Cav., led by Col. Alexander Haskell, was one of the last units to leave Richmond. Its troopers rode through the burning city, ignoring the drunken mobs sweeping past them. They maintained the rigid discipline demanded by Haskell who had told them before entering Richmond: "Men, not one of you will leave the ranks. I don't want one thing touched."

As the troopers rode past a warehouse where mobs were looting and tossing goods and supplies from upper windows, Lt. David Walker was surprised to suddenly see a marvelous gift bestowed upon him. He pointed to a pair of shoes tied together (they would fit him) that someone had thrown from the warehouse, landing astride his horse's neck. "Colonel," Walker explained, "they came out of the warehouse window and landed right here!" Haskell gave him a grin and waved him on.

Just as the 7th S.C. reached Mayo's Bridge, a small group of Federal cavalrymen appeared at the end of the street leading to the span. They fired over the heads of the rioters before them and at the retreating Confederates. Lt. Edward M. Boykin wanted to take a squad of men and charge the Union troopers, saying to Haskell: "Let me give them cold steel!"

Haskell noted that there were only a few Federals present far up the street and said: "If the commanding officer is a true soldier, he won't massacre the mob by fighting through them." He was correct. A Union officer appeared and waved away his men who rode from sight as the 7th crossed the James to the south bank.

Upon reaching a hill in Manchester, Lt. Edward M. Boykin of the 7th looked back to view the spectacle of the burning capital, later stating: "It was marked by a peculiar blackness of smoke; from the middle of it would come the roar of bursting shells and boxes of fixed ammunition, with flashes that gave it the appearance of a thunder cloud of huge proportions with lightning playing through it. On our right was the Navy Yard, at which were several steamers and gunboats on fire, and burning in the river, from which the cannon were thundering as the fire reached them. The old war-scarred city seemed to prefer annihilation to conquest."

Captain Charles Stevens Dwight sat his horse next to Boykin. He had gone back into Richmond to receive orders from Gen. Ewell as to the direction the 7th should take and was told to ride toward Amelia Court House. He had to run a gauntlet of fire along Fourteenth Street where several houses on either side of the street blazed. He kept his head low on his horse's mane and barely managed to escape the flames. The hairs on his horse were singed and
Dwight's face was blackened by the smoke.

As he looked back on Richmond, Dwight noted how the huge flour mills, Gallego and Haxall, caught fire—these were two of the largest mills in the world, nine and ten stories high—and the sight of the blaze riveted his attention. He remembered later that "out of every one of the several hundred windows and doors rushed great tongues of flame mixed with boiling black smoke; and finally, as the roofs were burned through or fell in, huge pyramids of fire and smoke shot up high above the towering walls ... the view of the burning city was at once sublime and terrible."

All the bridges spanning the James had been destroyed except Mayo's Bridge. Gen. Ewell crossed the bridge with Haskell's 7th S.C. and he was followed closely by the troops of Gen. Joseph Kershaw, the last regular soldiers to leave Richmond. Kershaw rode onto the bridge and looked up the street. No more men in gray followed. He looked down at Capt. Clement Sulivane, who commanded a militia brigade and was in charge of destroying the bridge. Kershaw touched his hat and said: "All over. Goodbye." He then looked at Sulivane's men, who held torches and stood next to piles of wood along the bridge. "Blow her to hell!" Kershaw ordered and wheeled his horse about, clattering across the bridge. Sulivane signaled to his men who lit the wood piles as they retreated across the bridge and soon the structure, like much of the city, was consumed by flames. Sulivane watched from the south bank as the timbers and planking burned, then collapsed into the James.

At dawn, the rioters were less in evidence, having fled or passed out from liquor in the streets. Union soldiers appeared but, like the Richmond denizens, they were leaderless looters. A group of these rogue soldiers broke into the house next to that of Amelia Gorgas and were soon hooting back into the street, holding stolen silverware, candlesticks and other objects of value. Amelia Gorgas, her 10-year-old son Willie, and her black cook hid their valuables, then waited for the intruders to appear. Mrs. Gorgas, peering anxiously from her front window, finally sighed with relief as Union officers and provost guards suddenly appeared to arrest the Federal looters.

To the south, where Lee had withdrawn his troops from the Petersburg defense line, the citizens of Petersburg did not experience the havoc and ruination that visited Richmond. Petersburg Mayor, W.W. Townes, rode out to surrender the city to Union forces at about 4:30 a.m. Townes met with Col. Oliver Edwards who was leading a line of skirmishers forward, giving him a written request to spare the city further destruction.

A lone Federal soldier is seen with guns abandoned in Richmond by the retreating Confederate rear guard. Many of these guns, as can be seen above, have been spiked Rebel artillerymen.

Townes' note read: "The city of Petersburg, having been evacuated by Confederate troops, we, a committee authorized by the Common Council, do hereby surrender the city to U.S. forces, with a request for the protection of the persons and property of its inhabitants."

Grant entered the city at about 9 a.m., to see a large U.S. flag flying from the courthouse clock tower, placed there by the 1st Mich. Sharpshooters, the first Federals into Petersburg; the 1st Mich. and 2nd Mich. had raced each other in a mad dash down the empty streets at 4:30 a.m. President Lincoln, to the rousing cheers of Union troops, joined Grant in Petersburg to discuss Grant's next plan of action.

At Richmond, Gen. Godfrey Weitzel, commander of the Army of the James, arrived at the head of his troops, entering Richmond's Capitol Square at 8:15 a.m. Weitzel, a by-the-book officer, had cautiously entered the city, warned that "torpedoes" may have been planted beneath the roadways and streets, but no such devices were found. Upon entering Capitol Square, Weitzel was greeted by the sight of hundreds of women and children, terror-stricken, who had gathered there to escape the raging fires that still burned. "It was a sight that would have melted a heart of stone," Weitzel later wrote.

After accepting the official surrender of the city from Mayor Joseph Mayo, Weitzel sent a dispatch to Grant that announced that he now occupied Richmond, adding: "I captured many guns. The enemy left in great haste. The city is on fire in two places. Am making every effort to put it out." One of his aides, Lt. Johnston Livingston de Peyster, went to the Capitol Building, rushed to the roof and raised a huge U.S. flag. Weitzel, meanwhile, ordered the women and children to be taken to places of shelter and fed. He also ordered all men wearing Confederate uniforms to be arrested and locked up in Libby Prison, which had been emptied of Federal prisoners—they had been herded southward with the retreating Confederates.

Union bands began to play triumphant martial airs as the citizens hid behind the locked doors of their homes. Negroes by the hundreds, mostly men who had been drinking and reveling throughout the early hours, danced about enthusiastically until Union officers ordered them into fire brigades and compelled them to put out the fires or work on the water pumps of fire engines abandoned by regular Confederate firefighters. "This ain't what I call liberation," complained one black.

Union troops hauled down Confederate flags and trampled them as old men covered their faces or turned away. Young girls wept and small boys taunted the "rotten Yankees." Weitzel, when learning of this, ordered his men to stop such vindictive-

ness and further cautioned his men that anyone found looting, destroying private property or molesting private citizens would be arrested, even shot.

Weitzel learned that Mrs. Robert E. Lee was still in her home and he sent guards to protect her and the house. A Union captain posting the guards all about the house and down the street said in a clear voice to his men: "If anyone attempts to violate that house or Mrs. Lee or her people, you are to shoot them on sight, even if they are wearing a blue uniform!" Ironically, the guards were Negro troops. A short time later, a message came from the Lee household, stating that the posting of Negro guards outside the Lee home could be considered an insult. Weitzel ordered white soldiers to replace the black Federals.

After visiting Petersburg and Grant, President Lincoln returned to City Point and boarded the *Malvern* to lunch with Admiral Porter. From the deck of the *Malvern* Lincoln caught sight of a nearby transport packed with Confederate prisoners. They were a pitiable sight, half-starved skeletal men in rags. The President suddenly lost his exuberance over the Union victory and his face, according to an aide, "was pitying and sorrowful ... All happiness was gone." Lincoln stared at the vanquished Confederates for some time, then said: "Poor fellows. It's a hard lot. Poor fellows..."

These men, near death as they were, still harbored a deep will to fight on. Nearby, a huge pen held more than 4,500 Rebel prisoners. A Union officer shouted to them: "Step aside, all those who want to take the oath of allegiance! We'll give you full protection!" Less than 100 men finally came forward and as they were led to a steamer that would take them north, their comrades shouted and hooted: "Traitors! Cowards!"

Willocomack Creek, Namozine Church, and Deep Creek, Va., April 3, 1865 (skirmishes).

By mid-afternoon on April 3, Grant was riding with Gen. George Meade with long columns of Union troops that reached Sutherland Station, 9 miles from Petersburg. Grant's intelligence reports informed him that Lee had moved more than 20 miles from Petersburg and Richmond during the night with most of his forces drawn out of the Petersburg and Richmond lines, marching west along roads that were parallel to the Appomattox River. Exactly how many men he had with him Grant did not know. (Though current historians, for whatever reasons, have inflated Lee's numbers to as much as 58,000, he had, in reality, no more than 30,000 effectives at this time, and, of these, hundreds, were deserting each day.)

Grant had sent Sheridan's cavalry ahead to Burkeville Junction, to cut off Lee's line of retreat, while marching Meade's Army of the Potomac parallel to Lee's retreating forces. He would send Meade northward to join with Sheridan and Gen. Edward Ord's columns, which were moving parallel to Lee to the north, so that all Union forces joined at Burkeville Junction where Lee would be cut off and compelled to either fight a last ditch battle or surrender.

Lee's retreat to the west was in great disorder. Units mixed with each other and officers exhausted themselves trying to sort out commands and put them in marching order. There was little or no food and many men simply fell unconscious into the roads from hunger. They were picked up and dragged to the side of the roads while their comrades trudged on. Lee and his staff began to see muskets jammed into the ground at the bayonet point, dozens of them, appearing along the roads and across open fields, like
strange burial markers. Lee knew what this meant—his men were quitting the ranks, deserting, leaving the symbols of their war behind.

Union cavalry under Custer and advance units of Ord's army pecked away at the retreating Confederates. Gen. Gordon, in charge of the rear guard, later reported: "Fighting all day, marching all night, with exhaustion and hunger claiming their victims, with charges of [Union] infantry in rear and of cavalry on the flanks, it seemed the war-god had turned loose all his furies to revel in havoc. On and on, hour after hour, from hilltop to hilltop, the lines were alternately forming, fighting and retreating, making one, almost continuing battle.

"Here a battery of artillery became involved; there a blocked ammunition train required rescue, while the different divisions of Lee's lionhearted army were being scattered or captured. Out of one of these whirlwinds there came running a boy soldier. When asked why he was running, he shouted back: 'Golly, I'm running 'cause I can't fly!.'"

Seasoned officers, colonels, even generals, found no energy to police their ranks. They fell from exhaustion from their horses or collapsed wobbly-legged to the side of the road. The heart of Lee's army was still beating, but its torn flesh had begun to fall from its bones. Pvt. George S. Bernard saw one veteran officer of four years of battle fall by the side of a road. He unbuckled his sword and pushed it away from him, saying weakly: "I'll never draw that blade again."

Robert Stiles, an officer in the provost guard, had the unpleasant duty of rounding up stragglers and deserters, hurrying them at gunpoint back to their commands or what was left of their units. He stopped by a farm house to see two elderly persons on a porch. A door opened and a young woman, who had been crying, stepped onto the porch where Stiles heard her say to her mother: "Tell him that if he passes here without coming in, he is no husband of mine."

Stiles reminded the woman that she was obviously encouraging her husband to desert. The woman told Stiles that her husband had been fighting in the Stonewall Brigade since the spring of 1861 and that he had done his duty. Stiles replied that "he is your husband, madam, but these are my soldiers. They and I belong to the same army as your husband."

"Army!" The woman waved her arm in the direction of the line of trudging scarecrows who filed past her farmhouse. "Do you call this mob of retreating cowards an army? Soldiers! If you are soldiers why don't you stand and fight the savage wolves that are coming upon us defenseless women and children?"

"We don't stand and fight, madam, because we have to obey orders," Stiles explained.

"Quite a fine speech, sir, but the thing is over. The government has run off bag and baggage, and there is no longer any country for my husband to owe allegiance to. He does owe allegiance to me and to his starving children." She then pro-

duced a thumb-worn piece of paper, hand-written by General Robert E. Lee himself, one which recommended the woman's husband for a special furlough because of extraordinary gallantry in battle. The woman explained that her husband had never taken that furlough.

"This little paper is your most precious possession, isn't it?" Stiles asked.

"It is."

"And yet you would disgrace this husband of yours, for the rear guard would hunt him from his own cottage in half an hour, a deserter and a coward."

The woman took back the paper and folded it carefully, clutching it in the palm of her hand. She then turned to her elderly mother and said: "Mother, tell him not to come in."

The most serious actions of the day took place when Custer's cavalry aggressively pursued Fitzhugh Lee's horsemen who were acting as rear guard for Pickett's and Anderson's retreating forces. Rear guard skirmishes with pursuing Federal cavalry took place at Willocomack Creek and Deep Creek, but the Union horsemen were drive off. At Namozine Church, about 10 miles northwest of Sutherland Station, where Gen. Rufus Barringer's Rebel cavalry was protecting the rear of Anderson's and Pickett's retreating forces, Sheridan's cavalry caught up with the Confederate horsemen.

Barringer, instead of falling back, ordered his men to attack and, after leading several charges, Barringer thought he had driven back the enemy and began to once more retreat. He had, however, pushed his line so far to the east that elements of Custer's
cavalry easily outflanked his force, forcing Barringer and his command to make a mad dash for safety.

Custer's force captured about 350 men. Union losses were four killed and 15 wounded, but these figures may have been altered by Custer who always showed a good face to his superiors. George Armstrong Custer was brave as a bluejay and true as steel, but he was also a flagrant opportunist, a strutting and unbearable braggart and often a fabricator who instantly came to believe his own lies, particularly his inflated figures of the number of enemy slain, wounded, and captured. He was, however, the darling of Philip H. Sheridan in whose eyes he could do no wrong.

The number of Confederates captured at Richmond, those either left behind in the trenches and hospitals or those who had deserted and were later rounded up by Union provost guard, swelled to more than 6,000. These were the last so-called defenders of the capital, elements of Ewell's forces and those of the local militia. All were herded to Union barges and steamers on the James and taken off to prison camps.

Lincoln arrived in Richmond on April 4, arriving in Admiral Porter's barge after the *Malvern* grounded in the James. Guarded by marines, the President disembarked and almost immediately an old Negro ran to him, shouting "Bless the Lord! The great messiah!" The old man said to those around the somewhat embarrassed Lincoln: "I knowed him soon as I seen him. He's been in my heart four long years. Come to free his children from bondage. Glory, hallelujah!" The old man sank to his knees and kissed Lincoln's muddy shoes. Dozens, then hundreds more of the now ex-slaves ran to Lincoln as he tried to work his way down the street, crowding him, falling to their knees before him.

"Don't kneel to me," Lincoln told the blacks. "That's not right. You must kneel to God only, and thank Him for liberty ... But you may rest assured that as long as I live no one shall put a shackle on your limbs."

Porter came forward and tried to gently push away the swarming blacks, but the old man who had first approached Lincoln said: "We means no disrespect to Massa Lincoln. We means all love and gratitude." Hundreds, then thousands of Negroes rippled before Lincoln, down and up the street to the Capitol Building. They began to sing hymns.

When the singing died down, Lincoln said to the multitude: "My poor friends. You are free—free as air. You can cast off the name of slave and trample on it. It will come to you no more. Liberty is your birthright. God gave it to you as He gave to others, and it is a sin that you have been deprived of it for so many years. But you must try to deserve this priceless boon. Let the world see that you merit it ... Learn the laws and obey them. Obey God's commandments and thank Him for giving you liberty, for to Him you owe all things."

Lincoln stood there in silence for some moments, then added: "There now, let me pass on. I have but little time to spare. I want to see the capital."

The blacks parted a path for him and Lincoln began walking toward the home of Jefferson Davis. Whites inside the houses, mostly women, parted curtains and stared silently at him as he passed by. More whites gathered along the route, including men in civilian garb. They glowered at the President, but said nothing. The marines held rifles with bayonets high as they passed these crowds. A young white girl ran to Lincoln and pressed a bunch of roses into his hands. A young woman at the Spotswood Hotel appeared with a small American flag.

A white man then dashed forward, alarming Admiral Porter and the marines but as he neared the President, he whipped off his hat and shouted: "Abraham Lincoln! God bless you! You are the poor man's friend."

An aide of General Weitzel's took Lincoln to the residence of Jefferson Davis. When he reached the White House, Lincoln entered the study. He sat down at a desk and said to the aide: "This must have been President Davis' chair." He gazed out of the window with what was described as "a serious, dreamy expression."

Gen. Weitzel arrived with Judge John A. Campbell, one of Richmond's leading citizens. With him was Confederate general Joseph Anderson, owner of the Tredegar Foundry, the one-time armament center of the Confederacy. Lincoln had lunch with these former enemies, then conferred with them and Weitzel in Davis' study as to the methods of keeping good order in conquered
Richmond.

That night, Lincoln returned to the *Malvern*. Before leaving Richmond, Weitzel asked him for orders concerning the captive population of Richmond. "I don't want to give any orders on that, General," Lincoln replied, "but if I were in your place, I'd let 'em up easy." Then slowly, deliberately, he repeated the words: "Let 'em up easy."

After Lincoln went to sleep that night on the *Malvern*, someone hailed the watch from the shore: "Ho, *Malvern*! Dispatches for the President. Send a boat."

Admiral Porter sent a marine ashore in a small boat with orders to bring the dispatches, but to make sure the caller remained on shore. The marine returned empty-handed, saying "he won't send the dispatch. He says he must deliver it in person."

Porter nodded and sent the marine back to retrieve the caller. When the marine got ashore, he found the man gone. An hour later, another voice rang out from the shore: "I'm a sailor off the *Saugus*! Let me come on board!"

Porter quickly ordered a squad of heavily armed marines to go ashore and fetch the man, ordering that he be arrested and brought to him. The marines did as ordered, but returned without the man, explaining that he, like the previous caller, had vanished. One of Porter's aides looked at him quizzically until the Admiral stated ominously: "There is no ship in our fleet called the *Saugus*."

With that, Porter ordered armed marines to stand before the door of the President's cabin. Lincoln was in the heart of enemy country, Porter realized, and the war not yet over. Ashore, lurking in the dark, were many who wanted Abraham Lincoln dead.

As Lincoln slept, Judith Brockenbrough McGuire, the daughter of a prominent Confederate judge, sat in her Richmond home, writing in her diary. Earlier that day she had chased a drunken Union soldier out of her kitchen and watched, horrified, as a half dozen Federals looted the house next door. She had gone to Gen. Weitzel who immediately sent a squad of Union soldiers to guard her house and those of her neighbors.

None of that mollified Miss McGuire who wrote that night: "The streets are now perfectly quiet. The moon is shining brightly on our captivity." She had heard of Lincoln's visit to the Davis home and this particularly rankled her. She scribbled into her diary: "Ah, it is a bitter pill. I would that dear old house, with all its associations, so sacred to Southerners, so sweet to us as a family, had shared in the general conflagration. Then its history would have been unsullied."

Another Richmond diarist, T.C. DeLeon, had recorded the fall of the city the previous day and the reaction of its white citizenry, best summed up, perhaps, in his sketch of a little, old woman known as "Aunt Sallie" from Henrico County. She appeared at Weitzel's headquarters in the Capitol Building wearing a black bombazine dress and a poke bonnet, her servant, an ancient black man who refused to be "liberated," at her side.

"What do you wish, madam?" a young Union officer asked her.

"What do I wish?" she repeated, her dark eyes flashing at him.

"That's what I asked, madam!" the officer snapped.

She returned his fire: "I wish all you Yankees were in hell!"

Sayler's Creek (or Sailor's Creek), **Va.**, April 6, 1865 (battle)

Robert E. Lee was in shock when he arrived at Amelia Court House. The trains sent ahead to this place from Richmond were supposed to contain food and supplies that were to last his army for several weeks, 350,000 rations drawn from the Confederate Commissary. When the boxcars were thrown open all that greeted the Confederates was ammunition, artillery shells, caissons and harnesses for artillery horses. No food, not a side of pork or a barrel of flour, was present.

Maj. John Esten Cooke, one of Lee's aides, saw the look of disappointment on his commander's face when learning that the supply trains bore no food. "No face wore a heavier shadow than that of General Lee," wrote Cooke. "The failure of the supply of rations completely paralyzed him. An anxious and haggard expression came to his face."

Within minutes, however, Lee ordered several companies into the countryside to forage for food and sent out a desperate appeal to citizens to supply his men with food. He then sent a wire to Danville, asking that 200,000 rations be sent to Amelia Court House. His rider had to gallop 7 miles to Jetersville before finding telegraph wires still intact through which he could send the message.

To encourage his hungry legions, Lee, with Longstreet at his side, rode through the ranks gathering at Amelia Court House. His men cheered him; the mere sight of this man gave reborn confidence to his starving, ragged troops. Capt. J.D. Cummings saw Lee pass by and later wrote: "Here I saw General Lee for the last time ... I had never seen him look so grand and martial and handsome on horseback. He was the finest specimen of a man I ever looked at, then apparently about 60 years of age, deep brown eyes, clear skin, a well-shaped Roman nose, abundant gray hair, silky beard and mustache, well and neatly trimmed, wearing a gray coat and soft hat, his uniform buttoned up and fitting to perfection. He was a picture worth seeing ... General Lee and staff rode up and rested a few minutes under the slight shade of the new leaves...presently the party moved on ... and when he disappeared it seemed as if a great light had gone out."

Lee's army was once again reforming at Amelia Court House. What remained of Richard Anderson's and Pickett's forces had crossed Goode's Bridge, the survivors of Five Forks having marched along the south side of the Appomattox River. Longstreet's forces then crossed the same bridge and Lee ordered Mahone's division to guard the crossing until Ewell's men arrived. Many of these men were sent to forage for food, anything the army could eat. Lee knew that he was using precious time, halting to forage, but he had no choice. Desertions were increasing, he knew, only for lack of food.

It was noon, April 5, when the foraging wagons rolled back from the countryside, most of them empty. Lee could wait no more. Union cavalry had already overtaken one of his wagon trains near Paineville. Sheridan and 15,000 cavalry, along with V Corps under Griffin were already at Jetersville, 7 miles to the southwest, blocking that line of retreat. He received word that 80,000 rations had been sent from Lynchburg and was en route to Rice's Station along the railroad from Farmville. If his army could reach this point, it might have a chance to feed itself and then fight its way to Johnston who was already extending his lines north to link up with Lee.

Lee ordered the surplus ammunition at the depot destroyed and then put his army on the march away from Amelia Court

House. Rooney Lee's cavalry took the point and the divisions of Mahone and Field followed. The Rebels left with the banging and popping of explosions in their ears as the artillery shells went up with the torch. The sound of musketry broke out about 7 miles southwest of Amelia Court House. Lee and Longstreet rode to their front. Rooney Lee's scouts reported that the road to Danville was blocked, thick with Union cavalry and infantry, the latter digging trenches.

The army must circle to the north via Amelia Springs, Lee said. Once it reached the Southside Railroad, the army would march alongside the roadbed westward to Farmville, then Lynchburg. This was the line of march Sheridan anticipated, or so he later claimed, and he sent Gen. Henry Davies with his 1st Brig. of cavalry toward Amelia Springs. Having ridden about 3 miles, Davies came upon the headquarters wagon trains of Lee and Fitz Lee. Leading several charges through the train, the Federal cavalrymen routed the Rebel teamsters and their supporting infantry.

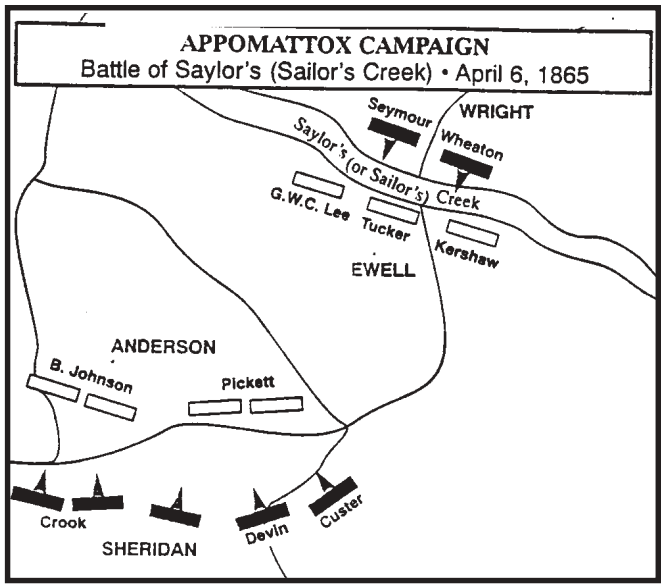
Davies was soon back at Jetersville, reporting a great coup to Sheridan. He had taken 1,000 prisoners, destroyed 180 wagons, five cannon and about 200 mules. Those Confederate horses and mules that could not be swept up by dashing Federals before Confederate infantry in force came up to chase Davies off had been shot and killed.

Gen. Meade, who was in nominal command of Sheridan, arrived in Jetersville. He was ill with fever and rode in an ambulance wagon, but he insisted on conferring with Sheridan. Meade told Sheridan that he would attack Lee in strength as soon as possible on April 6 and he wanted the entire Army of the Potomac under his command. Sheridan ordered V Corps to join Meade's columns, although there was no love lost between the two commanders. Sheridan resented Meade's authority (in fact any authority other than Grant's) and thought of Meade as part of the old Union army regime.

Though he had won at Gettysburg, Meade, in Sheridan's guarded opinion, was too cautious, as had been the entire top echelon of the Union command before Grant took command, and it was the lightning tactics of Philip Sheridan that would end the war. He more or less said so in a dispatch he got off to Grant who was then near Nottoway Court House. Sheridan described in detail to Grant how Davies had destroyed most of Lee's wagon trains, then added: "I wish you were here yourself. I feel confident of capturing the Army of Northern Virginia if we exert ourselves."

On April 6, Lee was with Longstreet's Corps and its two strong divisions of Field and Mahone. Richard Anderson's III Corps followed, then Ewell's force of about 3,000, with John B. Gordon commanding the Rebel rear guard. Longstreet's men crossed Sayler's Creek and came upon a Union raiding party led by Col. Francis Washburn, attempting to destroy High Bridge, which was about 11 miles northwest of Burkeville where Gen. Ord and his XXIV Corps were located. High Bridge was well-named, a structure 2,500 feet long and 126 feet high, which was built on 21 brick piers.

Ord had given Washburn explicit instructions to destroy this and all other bridges Lee might use in his retreat toward Rice's Station. With about nine hundred men, mostly infantry,



The above map shows the small Confederate corps of generals Ewell and Anderson hemmed in by the attacking Union corps of Wright and Sheridan at Sayler's Creek, a fierce but uneven battle that resulted in another Confederate disaster.

The energetic Union corps commander Horatio Wright, whose divisions attacked and overwhelmed the outnumbered Rebel defenders at Sayler's Creek.

Rebel Gen. Rufus Barringer, whose cavalry was destroyed at Willocomack Creek on April 3, 1865, three days before the Confederate defeat at Sayler's Creek.

Confederate Lt. Gen. Richard S. Ewell, captured at Sayler's Creek; he was described by Rebel Gen. Eppa Hunton as "thoroughly whipped and dreadfully demoralized,:

Gen. George Washington Curtis Lee, one of Robert E. Lee's sons, captured at Sayler's Creek, a crushing Confederate defeat where Lee lost half his doomed army.

the 123rd Ohio and the 54th Pa., and less than 100 cavalrymen from the 4th Mass. Washburn force marched to High Bridge and, just when the span was in sight, Ord's chief of staff, Gen. Theodore Read, arrived to take command and tell Washburn that Confederate cavalry was hot on their heels to prevent them from destroying the bridge.

This was true. Longstreet had gotten word of Washburn's movements and had sent Tom Rosser's cavalry to intercept the bridge-burners. Longstreet's orders to Rosser were clear: "Destroy that detachment if it takes the last man in your command to do it."

Washburn's men had driven off the Confederate guard company protecting the bridge and were preparing to put it to the torch when his rear was attacked by Rebel cavalry, which had dismounted and was fighting on foot. This force was Gen. Munford's brigade of Fitz Lee's cavalry. Gen. Read ordered Washburn's infantry to attack, supported by the 80 Federal horsemen. The charge was successful and scattered Munford's small Confederate force. Just then, at 1 p.m., however, Rosser's cavalry appeared in strength, two brigades led by Gen. Dearing and Gen. McCausland.

Leading his men against this second force, Washburn recklessly charged his infantry into three well-disciplined lines of Rosser's charging cavalry. The Union infantry was cut to pieces. Washburn fell with a sabre slash that almost took off the top of his head and a bullet in the mouth. He miraculously survived until April 22, when he died of his terrible wounds. Gen. Read endured no such agony. He was killed in the first charge.

The disorganized Federals broke ranks and dashed up a hill to make a last stand. The 6th Va. Cav. charged this position, overrunning it and capturing all of Washburn's luckless command, about 800 men. Forty-two Federals had been killed and equal number wounded. The Rebel triumph cost the Confederates some of their finest cavalry leaders. Mortally wounded was Gen. Dearing, 25-years-old; he would die of his wounds on April 23, one day after Washburn succumbed. Maj. James W. Thompson of Stuart's Horse Artillery was dead and so, too, was Maj. John Locher Knott of the 12th Va. Cav., and Col. Reuben B. Boston of the 5th Va. Cav.

One of Rosser's aides remarked after the battle that "this is a complete victory."

"Yes," Rosser replied, "and paid for dearly."

Rosser then ordered a courier to return to Longstreet to tell him that High Bridge was in Confederate Hands. Rosser, who had again been wounded, showed up at Longstreet's headquarters riding a handsome black and was carrying a new sword. "It was a gallant fight," Rosser announced with pride. "This is Read's horse and this is his sabre. Both beauties, aren't they?" Rosser admitted that he himself might have killed Gen. Read in his last charge on the Union position at High Bridge.

Lee's retreat toward Rice's Station could continue. Yet, that retreat was still full of peril as Lee led his men down a single road. Gordon, who was fighting a rear guard action all the way as Sheridan's cavalry snapped at his heels, confronted two young Union spies who had been counting his wagons and units. They were dressed in gray uniforms and claimed to be part of Fitz Lee's cavalry returning from furlough. Inside the boot of the oldest, no more than 19, Gordon found an order from Gen. Grant to Gen. Ord., telling Ord to cut off Lee on the roads between Burkeville and Farmville.

Gordon sent the captured dispatch on to Gen. Lee and then said to the two youths: "Well, you know your fate. I'll shoot you at sunrise."

One of the youths pleaded, saying that the war was almost over and shooting him and his friend would serve no real cause. Gordon ignored him. When Lee was told of the two spies, he informed one of Gordon's aides not to shoot them, but to "keep the prisoners until he hears further from me."

Longstreet, meanwhile, had pushed his corps forward in a forced march, crossing High Bridge and reaching Rice's Station. The speed of march achieved by Longstreet was both commendable and regrettable in that it opened a gap between Longstreet's rear and that of the following Confederate corps under Gen. Richard Anderson, and behind that, the troops of Gen. Ewell. Union cavalry under Custer, Devin and Crook slipped into the gap between Longstreet and Anderson in an attempt to block Anderson and Ewell.

Meanwhile, Ewell, believing the wagon train at his front was menaced, ordered it to turn off the Jamestown road and head west, which it did. Ewell did not send an order to Gordon, however, regarding the wagon train's movement and for him to continue along the Jamestown road. Gordon simply followed the wagon train, which exposed Ewell's force to the advancing Union divisions of Generals Seymour and Wheaton of the VI Corps, while Gordon was pursued by Humphreys' II Corps.

It soon became apparent to Anderson and Ewell that they were trapped, cut off from Longstreet's corps by Union cavalry in front and pressed by huge numbers of Federal infantry from the rear. Reaching Sayler's Creek, Ewell ordered his men to dig in along a ridge west of the creek so that his line of about 4,200 men faced east and northeast. He placed Kershaw's troops on the right, Commodore Tucker's Naval Battalion in the center and Custis Lee on the left. Anderson and Ewell held a hurried conference while Ewell's lines were already being pounded by Federal artillery.

Anderson proposed that they either unite their forces and attempt to break through Sheridan's cavalry at their front or sideslip to the right and attempt to find a road that would take them to Farmville where they could join with Longstreet. Ewell knew that it was impossible; he was already engaged by the enemy in force and to attempt to retreat in the face of an all-out Federal attack would result in a rout.

Anderson then said: "I'll charge in front, you hold them here." If Anderson could break through, Ewell's men would follow. Anderson advanced his weary infantry against Custer's cavalry, which was spearheaded by a brigade led by Col. Henry Capehart. Anderson's men were thrown back and then the Federal horsemen charged right through the demoralized Confederates, overrunning Gen. Pickett and 800 men, as well as the command of Gen. Bushrod Johnson. According to one Union trooper: "The Rebels rose and delivered a terrific volley ... but they fired too quickly and too high and before they could reload the most of our brigade had leaped the works and were among them ... The scene at this time was fierce and wild, but

ABOVE, Union Gen. Philip H. Sheridan is shown rallying his troops at Sayler's Creek to make the final charge that overwhelmed the small Confederate commands of Gens. Bushrod Johnson and George Pickett; BELOW, in a memorable painting, the valiant troops of Kershaw's staunch brigade are shown making their last heroic stand at Sayler's Creek.

the sabre, revolver and Spencer carbine of the cavalry were too much for the bayonet and the musket that could not be quickly loaded."

Anderson's troops then broke and scattered "like children just out from school," said one trooper from the 10th N.Y., "our boys chasing up and gathering them in." Anderson, Johnson and Pickett and some of their aides escaped on horseback, slipping into the woods to rejoin Lee. For Ewell, there would be no escape. His force took a terrible pounding from Union artillery, which fired down on his defense line from a ridge near Hillsman farm. At 6 p.m., four brigades, two each under Seymour and Wheaton, charged across Sayler's Creek and up a small hill, attacking the center of the Confederate line.

The Naval Battalion stood its ground and delivered such murderous volleys that the Union forces melted in front of them. Commodore Tucker took heart, ordering his men from their positions in a wild counterattack. As the Union troops fled, the Rebels were right behind them, firing and bayoneting the fleeing Federals. The advancing Rebels were greeted, however, with the blast of 20 Union cannon, which destroyed their ranks. What was left of the Rebel sailors were taken prisoner. Col. Stapleton Crutchfield, commanding the a Confederate cannon, was killed outright with a bullet through his head when he led his heavy artillerists in a futile charge into dense Union lines.

Union Gen. Joseph Warren Keifer later wrote to his wife that Tucker's Naval Battalion "fought better and longer than any other troops on the field." Keifer thought the Rebel sailors were ready to quit so he rode into their lines to accept Commodore Tucker's surrender. Confused, the sailors first thought Keifer was a Confederate officer giving them instructions (many Rebels wore blue coats taken from captured Union wagon trains), but when they realized he was demanding their surrender, the sailors leveled their muskets at him. Just before they fired, Commodore Tucker "knocked up the muzzles of the guns nearest to me and saved my life. I succeeded in escaping to my lines unhurt. I at once bore down upon them and in a few moments captured the Brigade entire."

Ewell's right was held by three brigades under Kershaw, each of these now thin units having fought in almost all of the battles of the war. The first was Barksdale's old brigade, now commanded by Col. William H. Fitzgerald, the second was Tom Cobb's, led by Gen. Dudley Du Bose and Paul Semmes old brigade, commanded by Gen. James Phillip Simms. Gen. Benjamin G. Humphreys, who commanded a small Rebel cavalry detachment, was at first positioned at the Hillsman farm, but his troopers were driven off. They joined the center of Kershaw's defenses.

Just before the main Federal attack, Ewell did the inexplicable. He left his line, saying that he was going to check on Anderson to see if he had accomplished a break-through. By the time the Union lines advanced, he was with Anderson's forces, which were, by then, crumbling. Along Ewell's defense line, Simms' brigade, on the extreme Confederate right, was flanked and then hit from the rear by swarms of Union infantry.

Kershaw sought to evade capture by swinging Simms, Humphreys and Du Bose to the left and rear toward a woods and open field 400 yards distant. But he found the woods packed with Union infantry and the field swarming with Federal cavalry. "Every man for himself!" Kershaw roared and his command ran pell-mell in any direction that might offer escape. There was none. Kershaw and his entire division were captured. Kershaw later claimed that only one of his soldiers managed to evade capture.

When Kershaw's tiny division broke, Custis Lee's ragtag force of clerks and officials were exposed and were completely enveloped. Lee, to save the lives of his citizen-soldiers, ordered his men to throw down their arms and surrender. They, too, with the exception of a few fleet-footed clerks who dashed into some nearby woods, became Federal captives.

Anderson later stated that "the troops seemed to be wholly broken down and disheartened. After a feeble effort to advance, they gave way in confusion, and with the exception of 150 or 200 men the whole of General Ewell's and my command were captured." This was not the actual case. Though Anderson and Bushrod Johnson and others, mostly mounted, managed to escape, so, too, did Pickett and some of his officers, their path to freedom held open by several brave squads of Pickett's men who fired point blank into the faces of charging Federal cavalrymen.

Gen. Wise managed to fight his brigade out of the trap. "We pressed up a hill in our front," Wise recalled, "halted behind a worn fence on the crest, fired three volleys to the rear, poured three volleys obliquely to the left and front, broke the enemy and got out." Wise's men then fired into a wood and a white flag was shown. Out of the timbers stepped William Wallace's South Carolina brigade of Bushrod Johnson's division. Wise ordered the officers of this brigade to march their men ahead of his while his own brigade formed a rear guard. These two brigades began marching toward Farmville and Lee.

Ewell did not flee with Anderson. He galloped back to his own command, hoping to gather survivors and lead them into some protective woods to the north. "On riding past my left," Ewell later recalled, "I came suddenly upon a strong line of the enemy's skirmishers advancing upon my left rear. This closed the only avenue of escape, as shells and even bullets were crossing each other from front and rear over my troops, and my right was completely enveloped. I surrendered myself and my staff to a cavalry officer who came in by the same road General Anderson had gone out on. At my request, he sent a message to Gen. G.W.C. [Custis] Lee who was nearest, with a note from me telling him he was surrounded. General Anderson's attack had failed, I had surrendered and he had better do so too, to prevent useless loss of life, though I gave no orders, being a prisoner."

Ewell was a prize Union catch, a Confederate lieutenant general, the successor to Stonewall Jackson and one of the great stalwarts of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. According to Gen. Eppa Hunton, who had also been captured, Ewell was a shattered man: "He was thoroughly whipped and seemed to be dreadfully demoralized."

Though Lee had lost half his army with the collapse of Anderson's and Ewell's forces, Gordon had managed to fight his way free of Humphreys' II Corps in a running rear guard battle that consumed 14 miles of bloody terrain. He succeeded in saving a large portion of the wagon trains in front of him by having his men in relays, first one brigade, then another, form rear guard stands behind hastily thrown up breastworks of timber and underbrush, then falling back, replacing the last brigade with a fresh one. He also employed his artillery effectively, one battery unlimbering and taking a position while another fled past it to take up still another position farther up the road.

When Ewell's position collapsed, more Federal infantry attacked Gordon's retreating forces. By that time, Rooney Lee's cavalry had been withdrawn and Gordon had to fight his rear guard battles alone. Gordon was attacked from the left, front and right and, west of Sayler's Creek, his line broke and his men there were scattered, more than 1,700 becoming prisoner. Gordon managed to rally the rest of his troops, and, as night fell, he moved back to High Bridge.

The day was a disaster, the blackest in the history of Lee's army and Lee knew it. Ewell, Anderson and Gordon had lost between 7,000 and 8,000 men, about a third of what was left of the Army of Northern Virginia. Eight Confederate generals were in Union hands—Ewell, Kershaw, Custis Lee, Simms, Du Bose, Hutton, Corse and Seth Barton. From a hill west of the scene of Ewell's surrender, Lee joined Gen. Mahone. He looked through field glasses to see, in Mahone's words, "hurrying teamsters with their teams and dangling traces (no wagons), retreating infantry without guns, many without hats, a harmless mob, with the massive columns of the enemy moving orderly on."

Lee straightened himself in the saddle and then said: "My God! Has the army dissolved?"

"No, general," Mahone said, waving his arm toward his intact division. "Here are troops ready to do their duty."

Lee replied: "Yes, general. There are some true men left. Will you please keep those people back?" Lee was referring to the advancing Union forces. As night fell, Mahone scooped up the retreating survivors from Ewell's, Anderson's and Gordon's commands, and formed them into new regiments, equipping them with muskets and ammunition and some meager rations. The army would fight on.

Farmville and High Bridge, Va., April 6-7, 1865 (battles)

Lee's army now consisted of six divisions of which only two were healthy enough to fight any kind of battle, that of Mahone and Field. Longstreet's two divisions, that of Wilcox and Heth, had been bled white. Wise's brigade, which had escaped the trap at Sayler's Creek, was assigned to Gordon who collected what was left of his own force and the remnants of Anderson, Ewell and Pickett. Lee's plan was to effect an escape by continuing west in a wide arc toward Roanoke. If that way was blocked, he would continue west toward the mountains.

The army marched toward Farmville on the night of April 6, Longstreet moving along a road south of the Southside Railroad and Gordon along the railroad, crossing the swollen Appomattox River at High Bridge. Of the two paths, Longstreet's was the most arduous. The road on which he men trod was a foot deep in mud and the men sloshed along, the mud clinging to their feet, making each step a chore. Many units broke down in the night and exhausted, starving men fell by the roadside to wait for death or, worse, the Yankees to take them prisoner. They simply had no more energy to go on.

Gordon's line of march was more organized with Gordon and Mahone policing their ranks, putting stragglers into organized regiments and assigning officers to command these newly-formed units. Gen. Bushrod Johnson was among them. He located a few hundred of his men and trudged along with them, but he was a beaten man, so dejected that he made no effort to command his bedraggled troops. Wise, whose brigade was intact and still full of fight, scorned Johnson, his division commander, a man he despised in any event. Wise felt that Johnson had acted irresponsibly at Sayler's Creek, had deserted his men when the Union advance enveloped them, when, had Johnson the presence of mind, he, like Wise, could have rallied many of his men and saved them from capture by fighting out of the trap.

Mahone's division crossed High Bridge after Gordon's men had passed. Mahone, an engineer, was given the task of destroying this bridge once the Confederates had crossed the Appomattox. For inexplicable reasons the engineers stationed at the bridge delayed setting fire to the enormous High Bridge, two spans really, one with the railroad line running atop a wagon bridge beneath. Apparently Mahone had given orders that once the last of the Confederate forces were across the bridge it was to be set afire, but the engineers waited for Mahone or one of his staff officers to give them a final order to do so and while they waited, they were suddenly assaulted by Union soldiers, the 19th Me. of Gen. Francis Channing Barlow's 2nd Div. of II Corps.

As soon as the Yankees were spotted, the Confederate engineers set fire to the bridge but the Federals began extinguishing the blazes while more Union forces appeared at the same time that Rebel skirmishers returned to battle with them on the bridge. The sight was incredible, both sides pouring volleys into each other on the bridge while blue and gray troopers sought to set fires and put them out at the same time.

Lt. Col. Joseph W. Spaulding of the 19th Me., arrived at the bridge to see the bridge "had twenty-one spans of a hundred feet each ... and three of the spans at the further end were on fire and one or more had already fallen. A few rods below the railroad bridge was a low wooden bridge, for the dirt road, and that too was on fire with a few of the enemy still encouraging the fire."

Several hundred Confederate and Union skirmishers were now firing volleys at each other from each end of the wagon bridge that ran below the train bridge while on the train bridge, Union troops commanded by Col. Thomas Livermore and Spaulding attempted to put out the fires. Spaulding later wrote how his men put out the fires by "reaching down from the

ABOVE, Union Gen. Edward Ord, whose XXIV Corps pursued Longstreet's retreating troops toward Farmville; LEFT, straggling Confederate artillerymen near Farmville.

low bridge with dippers, canteens, hats—anything that could hold water—and throwing the water upon the blazing bridge."

The Federals managed to put out the fires and by sheer dint of numbers force the Confederate skirmishers off the bridge. Humphreys then pushed his II Corps across the bridge and sent two divisions after Mahone's retreating force and two more after Gordon. Ord's Army of the James, the XXIV Corps and the XXV (Negro) Corps advanced toward Farmville as did Wright's VI Corps, coming up from Sayler's Creek. Sheridan, with more than 10,000 cavalry kept ahead of Lee by dashing for Prince Edward Court House, about 6 miles southwest of Farmville. Lee's tiny army was caught in a huge Union pincer, which Grant was about to close about it.

There was still fight left in the Army of Northern Virginia. When Lee's troops reached Farmville, they received rations for the first time in days, bacon, flour, biscuits. The starving Confederates busily built fires, using whatever skillets and pans they could find to make what for them was a feast. There was little time to consume the food. Within the hour, Humphreys' II Corps attacked Mahone and Gordon along a defense line near Farmville at Cumberland Church.

Watching from a small hill, Lee saw the Federals pressing

At left, the hotly-contested High Bridge, which carried trains atop and wagons beneath the trestle. The huge double bridge was saved from destruction by quick-acting Federal troops.

Mahone's line to the point where it appeared to break. He suddenly turned to Longstreet and told him that he himself would lead a counterattack at that position. Longstreet attempted to stop Lee who began riding toward Mahone's line. Seeing this, a small North Carolina brigade rushed forth, one of the few reserve units left, one of its officers shouting to Lee: "No, no, sir! If you will retire, we will do the work!" The North Carolinians rushed forward and filled the breach in the line, driving back the Federals.

Lee's willingness to lead an attack at this time with his army falling to pieces may have indicated to his staff that he preferred death in battle to inevitable surrender. To many in his command, he knew, such a thought was unthinkable. Gordon was one of these. He led his men in repulsing one Union attack after another. In one fierce hand-to-hand struggle, Federal Gen. Thomas Smyth was mortally wounded; he would die of his wounds on April 9.

Union cavalry under Gen. John Irwin Gregg forded the Appomattox and attacked Fitz Lee's cavalry. It was thrown back and then shattered when Lee's cavalry flanked Gregg's force while Heth's infantry disrupted its center. Gregg and most of his command were taken prisoner. Humphreys then sent Col. George Washington Scott's 1st Brig., 1st Div., II Corps in a wild charge against Lee's left flank, but the brigade commanded by George Anderson of Field's division stopped the Federals cold with sustained volleys that decimated the Union ranks.

Union losses at High Bridge and Farmville on April 7 were estimated to be about 600, but these were casualties reported only by Humphreys. The number may have been twice that number. Confederate losses are not known, but one report had it that Lee had lost another 500-600 men. Lee resumed his march westward. His men now moved as ghosts through the night. Many of his officers spoke of surrender; Gen. Wise had urged it upon Lee at Farmville and Lee had rebuked the old man, telling him not to "speak so wildly."

Lee nevertheless saw that his situation was hopeless. What was left of his army was marching itself to death and he knew it. One of his artillery officers summed up the scene: "The constant marching and fighting without sleep or food are rapidly thinning the ranks of this grand old army. Men who have stood by their flags since the beginning of the war fall out of their ranks and are captured, simply because it is beyond their power of physical endurance to go any farther."

There was little real victory for the Union forces that surrounded and pressed in on every side now. Their enemy was in rags, dying of starvation, many so thin and wan that their tattered clothes almost slipped from their flesh.

One band of Federals found a South Carolina soldier holding onto a fence rail, to weak to take another step.

"Surrender! Surrender!" the young Union soldiers cried out, as they pointed rifles at him. "We've got you!" They were recruits in their late teens, new to battle and battle for them in these closing moments of the war was a game.

The Confederate soldier gazed at these well-fed, warmly clothed young soldiers, then let slip from his bony hands an empty musket. "Yes, boys," replied the North Carolinian softly, "you've got me—and a helluva git you got!"

Appomattox Station, Va., April 8, 1865 (battle).

Gen. Ewell glumly told his Union captors that he felt the war was now finally lost and that Lee, to save the lives of what remained of the Army of Northern Virginia, ought to surrender. Ewell's sentiments were repeated to Gen. Grant on the night of April 7, 1865 and most probably moved him to write to Lee that night (in a letter with that date and the time of 5 p.m.):

General R.E. Lee,

Commanding Confederate States Army:

GENERAL: The results of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia in this struggle. I feel it is so, and regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any further effusion of blood by asking of you the surrender of that portion of the Confederate army known as the Army of Northern Virginia.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
U.S. Grant
Lieutenant-General,
Commanding Armies of the United States

Grant's message was carried to Longstreet's front by Gen. Williams that night under a flag of truce. In charge of the Confederate picket line that moon-bright night was Capt. James W. English who called his regimental commander, Col. Herman W. Perry, to the battle line. Perry buckled on his sword and sidearm, then stepped over the barricade, walking carefully over the bodies of Union dead that littered the no-man's land. After going 50 yards, Perry called out: "Flag of truce! Here!"

A tall, handsome figure dressed in the resplendent Federal uniform of a general appeared out of the darkness. "I'm General Seth Williams of Grant's staff," the Union officer said.

Perry gave his name and rank and saluted.

Williams produced a flask and offered Perry a drink of brandy. Perry, who had not eaten in two days and had but a handful of unparched corn in one of his pockets to sustain him, politely refused. Williams then handed Perry a letter, which, he said, was from General Grant for General Lee.

Before departing, Perry agreed to have Union dead removed from the field and Confederate soldiers came forth to help Federals take away their fallen comrades. A Union colonel then gave Perry letters and photographs of Gen. Mahone's family, which had been captured in one of the lost Confederate wagon trains, asking that these be returned to Mahone. Perry thanked this colonel and returned to his lines. By 9:30 p.m., Lee was given Grant's letter.

When Grant's message was delivered to Lee, the commander-in-chief took a minute or so to study it. He then handed it to his aide, Col. Venable, saying: "How would you answer that?"

Venable did not pause: "I would answer no such letter."

Several other officers at Lee's headquarters looked at Grant's message and debated how it might be answered. Lee then showed the letter to Gen. Longstreet.

Longstreet glanced at it, returned it to Lee and said: "Not yet."

Lee did reply on the night of April 7, writing to Grant:

Genl

I have rec'd your note of this date. Though not entertaining the opinion you express of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of N. Va.—I reciprocate your desire to avoid endless effusion of blood, & therefore, before considering your proposition, ask the terms you will offer on condition of surrender.

Very respy your obt. Servt.
R.E. Lee
Genl

Grant was asleep at the Prince Edward Hotel in Farmville when he was awakened and given Lee's reply. It was early in the morning of April 8, 1865 when he wrote another missive to Lee:

General R.E. Lee
Commanding C.S.A.

Your note of last evening in reply of mine same date, asking the condition on which I will accept the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia is just received. In reply, I would say that, peace being my great desire, there is but one condition that I would insist upon, namely: that the men and officers surrendered shall be disqualified for taking up arms against the Government of the United States until properly exchanged. I will meet you, or will designate officers to meet any officers you may name for the same purpose, at any point agreeable to you, for the purpose of arranging definitely the terms upon which the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia will be received.

U.S. Grant
Lieut.-General

Grant went back to bed and awoke a few hours later with a "sick headache." He nevertheless ordered his armies forth to complete the encirclement of Lee's forces, which, he learned, had again marched west during the night, heading for Appomattox Court House. Wright's VI Corps and Humphreys' II Corps pursued Lee, and Sheridan's Cavalry was ordered to race to Appomattox Station where it was to block any further Rebel retreat.

In Lee's camp many of his generals now thought that surrender was the only choice facing the Confederate army. Gen. William Nelson Pendleton had been selected to represent the senior officers of Lee's command in requesting that Lee meet with Grant and surrender the army. Pendleton went to Longstreet with this petition, asking Longstreet to go to Lee and ask him to surrender.

Longstreet bristled at the request. His face clouded over and he warned Pendleton that the articles of war provided for the death penalty of anyone proposing surrender. He then thundered: "If General Lee doesn't know when to surrender until I tell him, he will never know!"

Pendleton went over Longstreet's head, seeking out Lee and making the proposal for surrender on behalf of himself and many of Lee's top officers (they did not include Longstreet and Gordon). "I have still too many brave men to think about surrendering," Lee told him and dismissed Pendleton as if annoyed.

Grant, meanwhile, had accompanied Humphreys' II Corps as far as he could go. He was suffering from fatigue, anxiety and loss of sleep, so much so that he was on the verge of collapse. Grant went to a farmhouse along the road and, while his aides stood guard, he collapsed into a bed. For Union forces it was a day of constant marching, the II Corps reaching New Store by evening with the VI Corps right behind it. To the south, the Army of the James marched toward Appomattox Station, stopping 3 miles from that place to bivouac.

Sheridan, however, had left the Union infantry following the Confederate retreat and moved along the Southside Railroad going 20 miles east of Appomattox. Gordon reached Appomattox Court House in late afternoon where his exhausted men rested. Beyond Gordon's position was Appomattox Station where the Confederate artillery had been sent under the command of the towering Gen. Lindsay Walker.

Gen. Pendleton rode to Appomattox Station to check on Walker's ordnance and while there witnessed an attack by Federal cavalrymen at about 4 p.m. This was the first of Custer's three brigades that had just arrived in the area. Custer sent in the brigade to raid the train depot, telling its commander: "Go in, old fellow! Don't let anything stop you—now is the chance for your stars! I'll be right behind you." With that Custer rode off to find his other two brigades. The Union troopers charged into the depot and drove off the small Confederate force guarding several cars loaded with provisions.

The Federal cavalry then raced beyond the depot to where Walker had parked his artillery, 24 guns. But Walker had heard the firefight at the depot and had turned his two companies of artillerists into infantry, as well as positioning many of his guns. When the Union riders dashed forward to his position, he blew them out of their saddles line by line, repulsing the attack. Pendleton, confident that Walker could hold his position, returned to Gordon's lines. Some hours later, about 9 p.m., he heard Walker's cannon booming once more.

Walker was by then under attack from Custer's two other cavalry brigades. Custer had to dismount his men who went forth in the dark through thick underbrush, losing their caps, stumbling into thorny bushes where they were scratched and bloodied. They charged Walker's tiny force several times, but were thrown back, their ranks rented with canister and fierce volleys of musketry. Finally, Custer led a wild charge on foot around Walker's flank and captured the two companies of Confederate gunners.

Elated, Custer sent a dispatch to Sheridan, claiming that he captured "two divisions of Confederate troops and thirty guns." In his hands were less than 200 ragged Rebels and 24 guns. Twenty minutes after Custer's small victory, Sheridan arrived at Appomattox Station. He immediately sent a note to Grant that read: "If General Gibbon [XXIV Corps] and the V Corps can get up tonight we will perhaps finish the job in the morning. I do

not think Lee means to surrender until compelled to do so."

When Pendleton and others at Gordon's front heard Walker's guns go silent they knew the Confederate artillery had been overwhelmed. That night, Lee and his command stared at the skies to the south, west and east. In these directions there was a semicircle of red tinting the skies, the glow of the enemy campfires were all around them, except to the north. Lee by then, without consulting any of his top commanders, had written another letter to Grant. He had been edified by the contents of Grant's second message to him, one in which Grant did not, as was his famous custom, demand "unconditional surrender," but indicated that he would allow the Confederate troops to lay down their arms and go home until exchanged.

In the late afternoon of April 8, 1865, Lee sat by a roadside and wrote to Grant:

> Genl
> I received at a late hour your note of today. In mine of yesterday I did not intend to propose the surrender of the Army of N. Va.—but to ask the terms of your proposition. To be frank, I do not think the emergency has arisen to call for the surrender of this Army, but as the restoration of peace should be the sole object of all, I desired to know whether your proposals would lead to that and I cannot therefore meet you with a view to surrender the Army of N. Va.—but as far as your proposal may affect the C.S. forces under my command & tend to the restoration of peace, I shall be pleased to meet you at 10 a.m. tomorrow on the old stage road to Richmond between the picket lines of the two armies.
> Very respy your Obt Servt
> R.E. Lee
> Genl

After giving this letter to his aide, Col. Charles Marshall, to be copied and delivered, Lee rode about 2 miles from Appomattox Court House, where, at 9 p.m. he heard the mutter of muskets and grumbling of artillery—Custer's fight with Walker at Appomattox Station. Lee planned one more move before facing what most thought to be the inevitable. He would attempt to break through the Union lines with Fitz Lee's cavalry and Gordon's infantry, one last attempt to break the stranglehold Grant had affixed about the Army of Northern Virginia. If that failed, he would have no choice but to go and see General Grant.

Appomattox Court House, Va. April 9, 1865 (battle, surrender).

Lee was still confident that his army might survive. He was convinced that only Sheridan's cavalry blocked his way and that the Federal cavalry could be sent reeling from a combined attack of Confederate horse and infantry. Lee called his commanders together to discuss the battle plans for the following morning, Palm Sunday, April 9, 1865. Gordon was to position his infantry, now only 1,600 with muskets, a half mile west of the Court House. To Gordon's right would be Fitz Lee's cavalry, 2,400 men under Rooney Lee, Tom Rosser and Tom Munford.

Once Fitz Lee's attack punched through Sheridan's cavalry and scattered the Federals, Gordon's men would overwhelm any Federal strongpoints. The army would then march down the Lynchburg Road and, hopefully make its escape and join Johnston. Fitz Lee stated that if the path was blocked by dense formations of Federal infantry, he would remove his men from the field and, at that time, a truce should be called. He feared that in this last battle, the privately owned horses of his men would be taken from them.

Robert E. Lee looked resplendent this morning, wearing his finest uniform, new sash, best sword and gold spurs. When Longstreet asked why he had dressed in such fashion, Lee said: "I have probably to be General Grant's prisoner, and thought I must make my best appearance."

At dawn, both Gordon and Fitz Lee studied the newly erected Federal earthworks, both studying the Union troops behind these barricades. Fitz Lee said he thought the Federals were infantry and should therefore be attacked by Gordon. Yet, Gordon believed the Federals were cavalry, dismounted troopers and asked Fitz Lee to clear them. The two argued for some time until 36-year-old Bryan Grimes, who had recently been made a general, broke in, saying: "It is *somebody's* duty to attack!"

Gordon looked at Grimes and then said: "Well, drive them off!"

Grimes shook his head. "I cannot do that with my division alone, but require assistance."

"You can take the other two divisions of the corps," Gordon told him. Grimes rode off to organize his lines of attack.

At this moment, Grant was finishing his breakfast in the rear of Humphreys' II Corps, which was 25 miles to the northeast above the Appomattox River. Grant had read Lee's latest message which proposed a meeting at 10 a.m. that day. He had decided that he had not the authority to embrace the broad terms Lee had outlined, but he nevertheless wrote a response:

> General R.E. Lee
> Commanding C.S. Armies:
>
> General: Your note of yesterday is received. As I have no authority to treat on the subject of peace the meeting proposed for 10 a.m. today could lead to no good. I will state, however, General, that I am equally anxious for peace with yourself and the whole North entertain the same feeling. The terms upon which peace can be had are well understood. By the South laying down their arms they will hasten the most desirable event, save thousands of human lives, and hundreds of millions of property not yet destroyed. Sincerely hoping that all our difficulties may be settled without the loss of another life, I subscribe myself,
> Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
> U.S. Grant
> Lieutenant-General, U.S. Army

Grant then rode toward Sheridan, so that he would be out of contact for several hours, as if he half-heartedly expected no more replies from Lee. As Gordon and Fitz Lee's men prepared

for battle, Lee rode to the top of a small hill northeast of Appomattox Court House, positioned between Fitz Lee's cavalry and Gordon's infantry where he surveyed through his glasses the beginning of the fight.

Grimes rode to the left of his line where he ordered Gen. James A. Walker to advance his division, which had once been commanded by Jubal Early. Walker's skirmishers jumped from their earthworks and marched forward, drawing sniper fire from Union sharpshooters and returning this fire. Federal artillery and a few Confederate cannon began to duel with each other. Grimes, who could see the Union forces crouching behind rail fences on the other side of an open field, rode into the open. A shell from a Union battery exploded nearby.

"I remember well the appearance of the shell," Grimes later recalled, "and how directly they came towards me, exploding and completely enveloping me in smoke. I gave the signal to advance."

The Rebel Yell went up throughout the ranks of Gordon's corps as the three small divisions rushed forward through several Union volleys—these weak and exhausted men somehow finding some mystic energy to propel them forward. Nothing could stop them; they raced through Union strongpoints and then swept over the entire Federal defense line, going beyond that to capture a Union battery of two guns.

As Gordon's corps went forward, so too did Rooney Lee's cavalry, the 9th and 14th Va. Cav., moving out of some woods and into an open field. Beyond, in a stand of pines, was a Union battery supported by infantry. Virginia cavalryman John Bouldin trotted onto the field when Rooney Lee gave the order to advance. He later wrote: "Across the field we dashed right up to the guns, shooting the gunners and support down with our Colt's Navies. Just as our colors were planted on the guns, out of the woods on our left flank came a regiment of Yankee cavalry in fine style. With empty pistols and disorganized as we were, every man wheeled his horse to the left and we drew sabers and went at them with steel ... We soon sent them back in great confusion."

Rooney Lee's men were being dropped from their saddles by Federal sharpshooters hiding in a nearby wood. The Rebels charged this infantry, sweeping them away and riding straight into their camp where they had been cooking breakfast—ham, bacon, eggs, beefsteak, real coffee. Though the temptation was great, the famished Confederates did not stop for the food, but went forward to capture two Union guns, dragging these back to their own lines.

Federal prisoners were brought back to the Confederate lines; they were, as Gordon had suspected, dismounted cavalry; From one of the prisoners Grimes learned that Gen. Ord's entire Army of the James, more than 10,000 men, was on his flank and was preparing to attack. Grimes did not lose his nerve, but immediately prepared to repulse the enemy. "Halting my troops," Grimes wrote, "I placed the skirmishers commanded by Colonel J.R. Winston, 45th North Carolina, in front, about 100 yards distant ... I placed Cox's brigade, which occupied the right of the division, at right angles to the other troops, to watch that flank ... I then sent an officer to General Gordon, announcing our success, and that the Lynchburg Road was open for the escape of the wagons, and that I awaited orders."

Gordon lacked Grimes' confidence, especially after he saw a heavy column of Federal infantry advancing on the right and another at his rear. Gordon would recall how he "gathered around me my sharpshooters, who were now held for such emergencies, and directed Colonel Thomas H. Carter to turn all his guns upon the advancing column. It was held at bay by his shrapnel."

At that moment a strong Union cavalry column appeared on a nearby hill and seem ready to attack between Gordon's forces and that of Longstreet. Col. Charles Venable of Lee's staff rode up and said: "General Lee wants to know if you can cut a way through."

Gordon was his usual blunt self: "Tell General Lee I've fought my corps to a frazzle, and I can do nothing unless Longstreet can support me." As Venable rode back to Lee, Gordon sent Grimes an order to withdraw.

Grimes received this order and saw no reason why his men should give up the hard-fought ground they had achieved. Grimes refused to obey Gordon's order, remembering how "he [Gordon] continued to send me order after order to the same effect, which I still disregarded, being under the impression that he did not comprehend our favorable location."

Grimes then received a direct order from Lee, ordering him to fall back and he obeyed, telling Gen. William Cox: "Hold your line right here and keep the men down. Don't show one man until we have pulled the rear line back a hundred yards or more. Then fall back to protect us."

When Grimes retreated, a long line of Federal infantry and some dismounted cavalry moved out of some woods and cautiously advanced. Then Cox's brigade rose from the earth and fired a terrific volley that mowed down the Union line. Those who survived this deadly blast ran back into the woods.

Grimes was angry by the time he got back to Gordon, saying to his commander: "Where shall I form my line."

Gordon's answer was listless: "Anywhere you choose."

"What does that mean?" Grimes asked.

Gordon sighed and said: "We're going to be surrendered."

"Why didn't you tell me," Grimes asked Gordon, his voice rising in anger. "I could have got away. I'm going to tell my men. I'll take them with me."

"Are you going to desert the army and tarnish your honor as a soldier?" Gordon said as he held Grimes by the shoulder. "It will be a reflection on General Lee and an indelible disgrace."

"All right, all right," Grimes said. "I'll tell them nothing."

Grimes rode back to his men, but by then the rumor had spread through the ranks and scores of men surrounded Grimes, one asking: "General, is it true? Are we surrendered?"

Grimes did not have the heart to lie. "Yes, men ... I'm afraid it's so."

One grizzled soldier threw his musket into the dust and shouted: "Blow, Gabriel, blow! My God, let him blow! I'm ready to die!"

Gordon's troops rebounded, however, with the appearance of fresh Federal infantry—Gen. Robert S. Foster's division of Gen. John Gibbon's XXIV Corps. Foster's division attacked the left flank of Gordon's line, but Grimes, leading Cox's brigade, drove these Federals back, inflicting considerable losses. The Union line wavered then reformed, supported by Gen. John Wesley Turner's newly-arrived division, along with two

brigades of Negro troops from the all-black XXV Corps. The blacks were not put into line but held in reserve.

As Gordon was pushing back Foster's troops, Tom Rosser, to Gordon's right, saw a Federal cavalry division gather on a nearby hill. This Union force, however, made no move to advance. Rosser sent Col. Magnus Thompson and his 35th Va. in a charge against this force. Thompson later said: "Again, but for the last time, the avenging sabres of the Laurel Brigade flashed fiercely over the Yankee cavalry, many of them being killed or wounded, but no prisoners were taken." Thompson's troopers chased the Federals for almost 2 miles and then dismounted to fight on foot against strong Union infantry.

Although the rumor of surrender had swept the army, the troops refused to believe it. Unarmed as many of the Rebels were, they sought weapons with which to again hurl back the Federals. One of the guns captured earlier by Rooney Lee's men came under guard into the ranks of Gen. Field where Lt. Fletcher Massie and ten of his unarmed gunners waited. When Massie saw Lee's top artillerist, Gen. Edward Porter Alexander, he asked him if he and his men could take over the captured Federal gun. Alexander nodded and Massie and his men soon wheeled this cannon in the enemy's direction and began shelling Federal positions.

All of this was futile and Lee knew it as soon as he received Gordon's message that heavy Union infantry now blocked the Lynchburg Road, the only avenue of retreat. He said to Col. Venable: "Then there is nothing left for me to do but go and see General Grant and I would rather die a thousand deaths." He seemed to be on the verge of emotional collapse, but he somehow held himself together, saying in a low voice that was almost a moan: "How easily I could be rid of this, and

In the painting above, an elderly Confederate officer collapses into the arms of an aide during the exhausting retreat toward Appomattox Court House. Thousands of Lee's men slipped from the ranks, suffering fatigue and starvation.

Longstreet's troops, who made up the only effective Confederate corps left to Lee at Appomattox Court House, for the ranks for the last battle, believing they could still fight their way through the massive Union forces encircling them.

be at rest! I have only to ride along the line and all will be over. But it is our duty to live. What will become of the women and children of the South if we are not here to protect them?"

Longstreet, whose men were now under heavy attack at the rear of the army, arrived and Lee asked him his thoughts about surrender.

"Can the sacrifice of the army help the cause in other quarters?" Longstreet said.

"I think not," said Lee.

Longstreet said: "Then your situation speaks for itself."

Lee looked about at his commanders. Feisty Gen. Mahone— "Little Billy"—stood shivering before the dying embers of a fence rail fire. Lee called him forth and Mahone stepped up to apologize for shaking so. "I don't want you to think I'm scared," apologized Mahone. "I'm only chilled." Mahone then echoed Longstreet's opinion and suggested that Lee ask for Grant's terms. Mahone's haggard appearance perhaps reminded Lee of Gen. Wise's demeanor and appearance only a few days earlier when Wise had practically demanded that Lee surrender. Wise had washed his face in the muddy clay ruts of a road that day and his face was streaked with red, making him look like an Indian wearing war paint. Wise had lost all his horses and had trudged along on foot. He had worn a blanket about him, which was held together by a large pin. He, too, had shivered like Little Billy Mahone.

Lee then conferred with his brilliant artillerist, Gen. Edward Alexander who was opposed to surrender, arguing that it was better to fight it out. But Lee had made up his mind. He mounted Traveller and asked his aides, Col. Taylor and Col. Marshall to accompany him to see General Grant. Burly Sgt. G.W. Tucker, who had been A.P. Hill's aide, led the way, holding a flag of truce, a small white handkerchief tied to a stick. The small group rode toward the rear and as they passed one Confederate unit after another, the Rebels rose and cheered and wept. Lee asked them not to cheer, fearing that this might draw down Federal artillery on them.

As word of Lee's intentions spread, flags of truce appeared throughout the Confederate lines and also on the Union fronts, but skirmishers and remote batteries continued to exchange shots and shells and men continued to die throughout the morning. As Lee departed, a hard-riding courier from Fitz Lee arrived at Longstreet's headquarters to tell Longstreet that Fitz Lee had found a way by which the army could escape. Longstreet grabbed at the straw, sending Col. John Cheeves Haskell after Lee.

To an aide, Longstreet declared that if Lee did not receive honorable terms from Grant, they should try to take the route Fitz Lee said was still open and escape. "I know my corps will follow me," Longstreet said, "and I know we can get through, though we may have a hard time." This was wishful thinking, certainly, on Longstreet's part, but preferable at this agonizing moment, to the nightmarish thought of surrender. Haskell rode wildly after Lee, his horse breaking down as he caught up with the commander.

By this time Lee and his small entourage had reached a Federal picket line and were talking with Union Col. Charles Whittier of Gen. Humphreys' staff, preparing to deliver a message from Lee to Grant. Lee was startled to see Haskell and asked him what he wanted. He then looked at Haskell's dying horse, said: "Oh, why did you do it? You have killed your beautiful horse."

Haskell blurted: "Fitz Lee has found a way out. The army can get away if we hurry."

Lee heard Haskell out, then continued to dictate his message to Grant as Marshall wrote it down and gave it to Whittier. For Lee it was over; there was no escape for his army. Fitz Lee sent another rider to say that the escape route was closed, but by then this message did not matter.

Whittier delivered Lee's message to Gen. Meade who had ordered an attack at the very spot where Lee waited. Lee requested a "suspension of hostilities" until he could discuss the terms of surrender with Grant. Meade honored this request. Couriers were sent to all commands on both sides to hold their fire. Gordon sent Col. Green Peyton to Gen. Ord's lines, asking for a truce. Peyton returned with an elegant looking Union officer whose tawny hair fell to his shoulders and whose uniform was a mass of glittering gold braid. Around his neck he wore a beautiful red scarf on the front of which was a two-inch gold pin reading: "George A. Custer, Major General."

Custer sat proudly in the saddle, saluting Gordon with his sabre. "I am General Custer and I bear a message to you from General Sheridan," he said. "The General desires me to present to you his compliments, and to demand the immediate and unconditional surrender of all the troops under your command."

Gordon spat out a quick reply: "You will please, General, return my compliments to General Sheridan and say to him that I shall not surrender my command."

Arrogant and bold, Custer acted as if he had not heard Gordon's remark, adding: "He directs me to say, General, that if there is any hesitation about your surrender, that he has you surrounded and can annihilate your command in an hour."

Gordon was too worn out to argue with Custer, who, in the words of one Confederate officer, "bore himself in the manner of a conqueror." Finally, Gordon said: "I'm probably as well aware of my situation as General Sheridan. I have nothing to add to my message from General Lee. If General Sheridan decides to continue fighting in the face of a flag of truce the responsibility for the blood shed will be his, and not mine."

Custer was stymied. He asked to see Gen. Longstreet, an unusual request, Gordon thought, but he honored it, sending Custer to Longstreet while accompanied by his aide, Maj. Robert Hunter. A few minutes after Custer rode off in search of Longstreet, Gordon was informed that another Union general under a flag of truce had entered his lines. It was Gen. Philip Sheridan, described as "a small man" who was "riding a tremendous horse ... On him was the flush of victory."

Sheridan rode through Gordon's lines with an escort that was, in Gordon's opinion "almost as large as one of Fitz Lee's regiments." Both Gordon and Sheridan were slight men, each 33-years-old and each man was a determined individualist. Gordon rode out to meet Sheridan who again repeated his demand for Gordon's unconditional surrender. Gordon replied that Lee was at that moment en route to see General Grant and a truce had been arranged through Gen. Meade.

Rebel Gen. William Mahone lost the will to fight on an urged Lee to surrender at Appomattox.

Gen. John B. Gordon wanted to continue the fight, but eventually had his men lay down their arms.

Brash George Armstrong Custer tried to bluff Longstreet into a premature surrender and failed.

Union Gen. Joshua Chamberlain sympathetically received the weapons of Lee's surrending troops.

ABOVE, Confederate Gen. Fitzhugh Lee, who refused to surrender at Appomattox and escaped with 2,400 of cavalrymen; ABOVE RIGHT, Rebel troops hold their muskets butt-upward to signify surrender; BELOW, the remnants of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia (at center) surrounded by Union regiments at Appomattox.

Sheridan backed down and ordered a truce all along his lines. He studied Gordon for a moment, then said: "We have met before, I believe, at Winchester and at Cedar Creek in the Valley."

"I was there," Gordon admitted.

Sheridan could not resist gloating: "I had the pleasure of receiving some artillery from your government, consigned to me through your commander, General Early."

Gordon retorted: "That is true, and I have this morning received from your government artillery consigned to me through General Sheridan."

Sheridan bristled; he had not heard about the loss of his batteries to Grimes and Rooney Lee, but before the issue could be debated, musketry erupted on the Confederate left, which alarmed Sheridan. Gordon apologized: "It's my fault, General. I had forgotten that brigade. Let me stop the firing first and then I will explain." Riders were sent to the errant brigade and silence fell across Gordon's front. Sheridan, realizing that he could not preempt Grant from taking the surrender, went back to his own lines fuming.

Custer, his vainglorious emissary, however, persisted in attempting to do exactly that. He was escorted by Maj. Hunter to Longstreet who was waiting for Lee's return alongside a roadway. Custer dismounted, then walked up to Longstreet and almost shouted so that all of Longstreet's aides could hear: "I have come to demand your instant surrender! We are in a position to crush you, and, unless you surrender immediately, we will destroy you!"

Longstreet exploded: "By what authority do you come in our lines? General Lee is in communication with General Grant. We certainly will not recognize any subordinate!"

Custer was stunned, but he brazened it out: "Oh, Sheridan and I are independent of Grant today, and we will destroy you if you don't surrender at once!"

Longstreet could barely control his rage at Custer's lies and pompous demands. He roared into the face of the 25-year-old Union general: "I suppose you know no better and have violated the decencies of military procedure because you know no better but it will not save you if you do so again. Now, go and act as you and Sheridan choose and I will teach you a lesson you won't forget! Now go!" With that Longstreet raised his gloved hand, which was clenched into a fist.

Startled and with a look of what some observers thought was fear on his face, Custer remained silent, then backed away from Longstreet and mounted his horse, a poor mount that was spent. As he rode from Longstreet's camp, Custer paused to admire the well-groomed horse of Col. John Haskell, saying covetously: "I would like to have that horse."

"My horse is not for sale or plunder," snapped Haskell. The South Carolina officer then focused upon a pair of magnificent gold spurs affixed to Custer's boots. "Is Colonel Frank Huger still alive?" (Huger, a dedicated artillerist who had fought in many major campaigns, had been captured on April 6, at Sayler's Creek.) Haskell pointed to Custer's boots and said: "I believe those are his spurs you are wearing."

Custer's cheeks flushed crimson with embarrassment. He then said that, yes, they were Huger's spurs, and that he, Custer, was "taking care of them for Huger," who was alive and a prisoner. Custer added that Huger was an old classmate of Custer's at West Point. (Huger had graduated West Point in 1860; Custer had graduated from the academy in 1861.)

The spurs Custer wore that day had a famous military history; they had belonged to the Mexican General Santa Anna and had been given to Huger's father, Confederate General Benjamin Huger, who had fought in the Mexican War. Huger had given these ornate and dazzling spurs to his son who wore them until he became a prisoner and Custer appropriated them into his custodial protection. Haskell was later to write: "Years after, Colonel Huger told me that he had never been able to get [the spurs] from Custer, who insisted on continuing to take care of them until his death." Custer wore Santa Anna's spurs when he rode into the valley of the Little Big Horn and to his death in 1876.

Following his rebuff by both Gordon and Longstreet, Custer rode back to his own lines and waited, like Sheridan, for Lee and Grant to meet. Grant by this time, had received Lee's latest message and was hurrying to meet Lee. The Confederate commander rested beneath an apple tree until 12:30 p.m., when he left to ride with Col. Marshall and an orderly to Appomattox Court House to meet Grant.

Before this time and before flags of truce had gone up on both sides, Fitzhugh Lee, as it had been arranged, took his cavalry out of the action and rode quickly down the Lynchburg Road, escaping with about 2,400 riders. Fitz Lee and his men would attempt to join Gen. Johnston's forces in North Carolina and fight on, but this was not to be. Johnston would himself surrender to Sherman's forces before Fitz Lee and his riders could join him.

The place of Lee's surrender was quickly arranged. Col. Marshall of Lee's staff rode into the village of Appomattox Court House and selected the house of Wilmer McLean as the site where Grant and Lee would meet to discuss the surrender. McLean, ironically, had owned a home at Bull Run around which tremendous battles in 1861 and 1862 had been fought. In 1863, McLean, promising his family that he would provide a new house where "the sound of battle would never reach them," bought a home at Appomattox Court House, around which swirled the last great battle of the Civil War.

Lee had wanted Col. Walter Taylor, his favorite aide, to go with him to the McLean House, but Taylor begged off, saying that he simply could not bear the idea of surrender. Lee understood and rode to the McLean House with an orderly, Joshua B. Johns, accompanied by Lt. Col. Orville E. Babcock and Capt. William McKee Dunn, of Grant's staff. When arriving at the McLean House, Lee was greeted by Col. Marshall and escorted inside and into the parlor where Lee, Marshall and Babcock exchanged small talk as they waited for Grant.

By 1 p.m. Grant had arrived in the village and met with Sheridan and Ord. Sheridan told Grant that he believed the truce called for by Lee was nothing but a ruse, a play for time, until Johnston could come up from the Carolinas and join with Lee. He urged Grant to allow an attack on the Confederates, assuring his commander that he could "whip the rebels where they were now in five minutes." Grant refused, later stat-

At right, the home of Wilmer McLean, the site of Lee's surrender to Grant; McLean saw his home stripped of its furnishings by souvenir-hunting Federal generals only minutes after the surrender.

Gen. Robert E. Lee, seated at table, signs the surrender terms of Grant, who sits at right. Grant uncharacteristically gave Lee liberal terms, allowing Confederate officers to keep their sidearms, baggage and horses; he then gave verbal orders that all Confederate troops were to keep their horses to work "their little farms."

ing: "I had not a doubt about the good faith of Lee."

"Is Lee over there?" Grant said.

"Yes. He's in that brick house."

"Well, then, we'll go over."

The McLean House, on the east side of the village, sat back from the roadway. A small fence fronted the house and a large porch ran along the entire front of the house. A Confederate orderly was at the north end of the porch holding the reins of three horses that were grazing. One of Grant's officers went to the orderly and asked: "Who's horses are they?"

"General Lee's," replied the orderly. He pointed to the house. "He's in there."

Sylvanus Cadwallader, Grant's self-appointed publicist and biographer, was with Grant and he noticed that one of the horses was a magnificent "dapple gray" with a Grimsley saddle. This was the famous Traveller, Lee's favorite mount.

As Grant went past the fence gate and entered the yard he suddenly became self-conscious about his appearance. His boots and plain uniform were mud-spattered and only the dark blue epaulets on his shoulders bearing three stars indicated that he was a lieutenant general in the Union army. Grant's stoic nature was moved at this time, perhaps the first time throughout the war, to endure emotions he had never before felt, or admitted to feeling. Though he and his armies had achieved the greatest American military triumph in the nineteenth century, there was no jubilation in him. "I felt anything rather than rejoicing," he would later write, "at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and valiantly, and had suffered so much for a cause."

When Grant entered the McLean parlor, a solid little man of no more than 5 feet 8 inches in height, Lee, got up from a chair, towering over Grant, standing more than six feet in height. Lee's appearance was stunning; his uniform was resplendent, his ornate sword gleamed, as did his gold spurs, attached to boots with a high gloss. Grant was conscious of his own shabby appearance, apologizing to Lee, saying that he had just ridden a considerable distance and had come to the meeting as soon as he was informed that Lee was at the McLean House.

Grant wore a soiled soldier's blouse and no sword, which was his custom when riding on horseback. He wore no spurs and had his trousers tucked into his boots. The Union commander shook Lee's outstretched hand and said: "I met you once before, General Lee, while we were serving in Mexico, when you came over from General Scott's headquarters to visit Garland's brigade. I have always remembered your appearance and I think I should have recognized you anywhere."

Lee nodded and said: "Yes, I know I met you on that occasion, and I have often tried to recollect how you looked, but I have never been able to recall a single feature."

Both men refrained from recalling another incident during the Mexican War when Lee and Grant met. This was an occasion when Grant had rushed to Gen. Winfield Scott's headquarters to relate some important battlefield information and came before Scott's by-the-book adjutant, Robert E. Lee. Grant, then as now, had a disheveled appearance, his uniform soiled, his boots muddy. Lee had ordered him to return to his quarters, clean up, and then report back so that he presented a proper military appearance before seeing Gen. Scott.

The conversation wandered into reminiscences, mostly on the part of Grant as Col. Babcock went to the door and motioned several Union officers into the parlor. Silently filing into the room were Generals Sheridan, Seth Williams, John Aaron Rawlins, Col. Horace Porter, Col. Ely Parker, Capt. Robert Lincoln, the President's son, the newsman Cadwallader, and Adam Badeau, Grant's secretary. Porter later remembered how "we walked in softly and ranged ourselves quietly about the sides of the room, very much as people enter a sick chamber when they expect to find the patient dangerously ill."

Some of the officers sat on a sofa, but most stood in silence. Grant sat facing Lee in the center of the room. Lee, with Marshall standing next to him, sat at a small oval table near the front window. It was Lee who got down to business, ending the pleasantries by saying: "I suppose, General Grant, that the object of our meeting is fully understood. I have asked to see you to ascertain upon what terms you would receive the surrender of my army."

Grant, too, was then all protocol, replying: "The terms I propose are those stated substantially in my letter of yesterday—that is the officers and men surrendered to be paroled and disqualified from taking up arms again until properly exchanged, and all arms, ammunition, and supplies to be delivered up as captured property."

Lee remained silent for a few seconds, then said: "Those are about the conditions I expected."

Grant leaned forward slightly, a trace of eagerness on his face. "Yes, I think our correspondence indicated pretty clearly the action that would be taken. I hope it will lead to a cessation of hostilities ... preventing any further loss of life."

Lee then said in a clear voice: "I presume we have both carefully considered the proper steps to be taken, and I suggest that you commit to writing the terms you have proposed, so that they may be formally acted upon."

"Very well, I will write them out," Grant said.

Col. Parker placed a small marble-top table next to Grant who withdrew his order book and began to scratch out the terms. Grant paused and looked up at Lee, a man he profoundly admired and respected as he had indicated by his conduct that day. According to Gen. Porter, Grant stared at Lee's gleaming dress sword and added a sentence to what he had written: "This will not embrace the side arms of the officers, nor their private horses and baggage." It was clear that the indefatigable Union commander would not maintain this day his image as "Unconditional Surrender Grant."

Gen. Porter went to the door and gave a signal, twirling his forage cap, which meant to those Federal officers crowding the porch, including Col. George Forsyth, that all was going well, that the thing was settled. Henry King, a New York newsman, caught the signal and rode his horse toward the telegraph station.

Inside the house, Sylvanus Cadwallader, who believed Grant, his idol, was impressive, could not take his eyes from Lee, who all present knew was the real reason why the Union high command, with some few exceptions, had become differential and considerate toward the enemy in these closing mo-

ABOVE, Gen. Robert E. Lee rides through the ragged ranks of his surrendered army on his favorite mount, Traveller, while his dispirited, battle-hardened veterans plead for him to fight on, weep openly, or sit in despair of their Lost Cause; BELOW, Union troops share their rations with starving Confederates following Lee's surrender; these now-peaceful Americans talked of battles, but mostly of going home.

ments of the war. He was not only the great Southerner to his own troops, the real reason why they had fought on and on as their cause faded, but was the symbol to his Federal foes of all that was good, sincere and decent in the Old South. None who stood in the McLean parlor and viewed the man could discard that perception. Lee had beaten them for three years, inflicted defeat after defeat upon them with less men, supplies, and armaments and he had fought with honor. Grant knew this more than most and was determined to allow Lee and his valiant little army to surrender with honor, a determination of spirit and compassion that elevated Ulysses Simpson Grant to the level of Robert Edward Lee.

Cadwallader gloried in Lee's magnificent bearing at this hour, describing him thusly: "He wore his hair and whiskers cut short, both of which were iron gray in color. He was rather stout and fleshy than otherwise; with bronze face from exposure ... but showing a remarkably fine white skin above the line of his hatband ... His manners and bearing were perfect, and stamped him a thoroughbred gentlemen in the estimation of all who saw him ... that happy blending of dignity and courtesy so difficult to describe ... no haughtiness or ill-humor betrayed on the one hand; nor affected cheerfulness, forced politeness nor flippancy on the other. He was a gentleman—which fully and wholly expresses his behavior."

Grant later summed up his feelings on that fateful day: "What General Lee's feelings were I do not know. As he was a man of much dignity, with an impassive face, it was impossible to say whether he felt inwardly glad that the end had finally come, or felt over the result, and was too manly to show it. Whatever his feelings, they were entirely concealed from my observations; but my own feelings, which had been quite jubilant upon the receipt of his letters, were sad and depressed."

When Grant finished writing out his terms of surrender, he handed this to Lt. Col. T.S. Bowers to copy, but Bowers whispered that he was "too nervous" to get the job done and Col. Parker took over the chore. When this was finished, the original was handed to Lee, who was asked to look over the document. Lee took Grant's order book and placed it carefully on the table. He then deliberately withdrew a pair of steel-rimmed spectacles and wiped the lenses with a handkerchief. He then crossed his legs so that the leather of his boots squeaked in the silence of the room, and read Grant's letter:

> General R.E. Lee, Commanding, C.S.A.
> Appomattox Ct.H., Va., April 9, 1865
> General: In accordance with the substance of my letter to you of the 8th inst., I propose to receive the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia on the following terms, to wit: Rolls of all officers and men to be made in duplicate, one copy to be given to an officer designated by me, the other to be retained by such officer or officers as you may designate. The officers to give their individual paroles not to take up arms against the Government of the United States until properly, and each company or regimental commander to sign a like parole for the men of their commands. The arms, artillery and public property to be parked, and stacked and turned over to the officers appointed by men to receive them. This will not embrace the sidearms of the officers, nor their private horses or baggage. This done, each officer and man will be allowed to return to his home, not to be disturbed by the United States authorities so long as they observe their paroles, and the laws in force where they may reside. Very respectfully
> U.S. Grant, Lieutenant-General

Lee read the letter and pointed to Grant that "after the words 'until properly,' the word 'exchanged' seems to be omitted. You doubtless intended to use that word."

Grant said, "yes, I thought I had put it in."

Lee said that, with Grant's permission, he would insert the word where it should be and grant said "certainly."

When Lee came to the sentence where Grant allowed Confederate officers to keep their horses, sidearms and baggage, he looked up at Grant, obviously pleased, saying: "This will have a very happy effect upon my army."

Grant nodded and said: "Unless you have some suggestions to make in regard to the form, I will have a copy made in ink and sign it."

Lee paused for a moment, then said: "There is one thing I would like to mention. The cavalrymen and artillerymen in our army own their own horses. Our organization differs from yours. I would like to understand whether these men will be permitted to retain their horses."

Grant spoke perfunctorily: "You will find that the terms as written do not allow it."

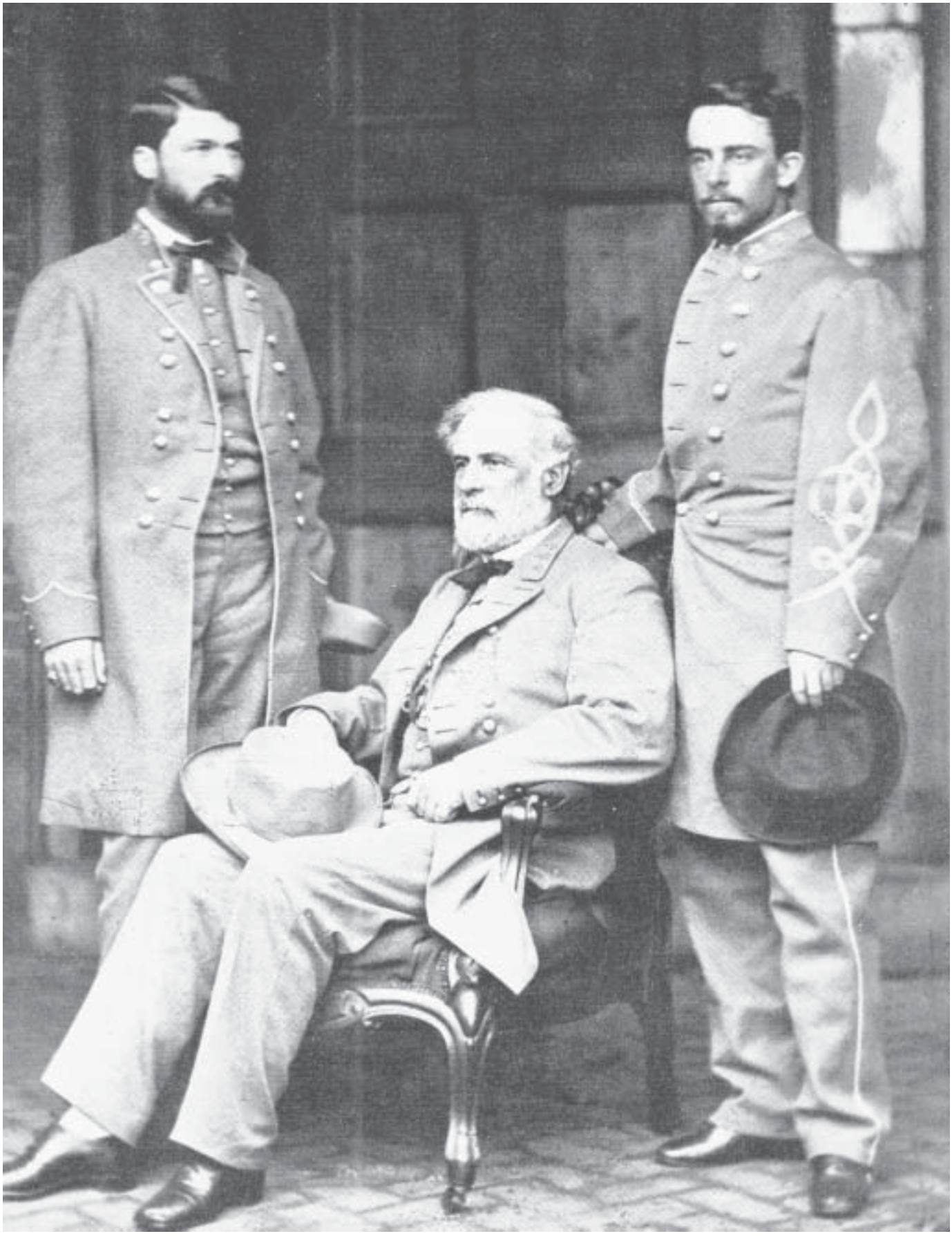
Lee replied: "No, I see the terms do not allow it. That is clear." He then fell silent and many felt that there was a great eloquence in his silence. Gen. Porter thought that Lee's "face showed plainly that he was quite anxious to have this concession made."

Grant seemed embarrassed at having bluntly refused Lee's request and hurried to make the concession without losing any face. "Well, the subject is quite new to me," he said. "Of course I did not know that any private soldiers owned their animals, but I think this will be the last battle of the war—I sincerely hope so—and ... I take it that most of the men in the ranks are small farmers, and it is doubtful whether they will be able to put in a crop and carry themselves and their families through next winter without their horses..."

Grant paused for a moment, then said: "I will arrange it this way: I will not change the terms as they are written, but I will instruct the officers to let all the men who claim to own a horse or mule take the animals home with them to work their little farms."

A hint of a smile came upon Lee's face as he said: "This will have the best possible effect upon my men. It will be very gratifying and will do much toward conciliating our people."

Lee then dictated to Marshall his own letter of surrender, which tersely read:



Gen. Robert E. Lee, seated, in a Brady photo taken outside his Richmond home a short time after his surrender at Appomattox; Lee's son, Gen. George Washington Curtis Lee, stands at left; at right is Lee's loyal aide, Col. Walter Taylor.

Lieut-Gen. U.S. Grant
Commanding Armies of the United States

General: I have received your letter of this date containing the terms of surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia as proposed by you. As they are substantially the same as those expressed in your letter of the 8th inst., they are accepted. I will proceed to designate the proper officers to carry the stipulation into effect.
Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
R.E. Lee
General

As Grant's and Lee's letters were put to ink and paper, Grant introduced his officers to Lee. When shaking the hand of Gen. Seth Williams, whom Lee had known when he was the commandant of West Point, Lee thank Williams for sending him word that his son, Custis Lee, captured at Sayler's Creek, was unhurt.

Grant then learned from Lee that the Confederates were holding about 1,500 Federal prisoners, but since the Rebels had no food, none of these prisoners had been fed. Grant asked Sheridan how many rations he could send to the Confederates.

"Twenty-five thousand," Sheridan said.

Grant turned to Col. Michael R. Morgan, Asst. Commissary General and said: "Colonel, feed the Confederate army."

"How many men are there?" Morgan asked.

Grant turned to Lee, saying: "How many men have you, General Lee?"

For the first and only time, Lee seemed to waver as his thoughts focused upon his loyal, starving army, those still alive to face the anguish of his surrender. Said Lee: "Our books are lost ... Our organization has broken up. The companies are mostly commanded by non-commissioned officers. We have nothing but what we have on our backs—"

"Say twenty-five thousand men?" interrupted Morgan.

"Yes, say twenty-five thousand."

Morgan went outside to find Col. M.P. Small and told him to distribute to the Confederates "three day's rations—fresh beef, salt, hard bread, coffee and sugar." Small mounted his horse and rode off to execute the order.

With a copy of Grant's freshly copied and signed letter, Lee shook Grant's hand and, followed by Marshall, stepped from the room and onto the porch where a host of Federal officers eager to glimpse the great Confederate leader stood to attention and saluted. Lee returned their salute, then drew on his gauntlets and peered across the yard to the valley where his troops waited. He absent-mindedly drove a fist into the palm of one hand three times, then called for his orderly who brought Traveller to the front gate.

He swung himself into the saddle as Marshall emerged from the McLean house and also mounted his horse. Lee began to slowly ride away. Thaddeus S. Seybold, a correspondent for the New York *Tribune* arrived at the scene and asked a young Confederate officer: "Who is that distinguished-looking gentleman?"

"That, sir," replied the young officer, tears streaming down his cheeks, "is the greatest man the country ever produced, General Robert E. Lee."

Grant came out of the McLean House and stood on the porch as Lee looked back at him. Grant lifted his hat in salute. Lee raised his hat in response, then rode out of sight with Marshall and his orderly.

Adam Badeau, Grant's secretary, stood next to Grant and said: "This will live in history."

Grant seemed not to take notice, but went to his own horse, Cincinnati, and mounted. He then rode off to his headquarters to prepare his message to Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton. Inside the McLean House, newsman Cadwallader noted how high-ranking federal officers suddenly and in a frenzy began bidding for McLean's parlor furnishings. Sheridan bought the table, which Grant used while Custer paid $25 for the table used by Lee. Ord bought another table.

Dozens of Union officers, generals and colonels pressed money into the hands of the startled Wilmer McLean, who shouted: "I don't want your money. I'm not selling my things." He was ignored as his parlor was stripped of chairs, pictures, even the sofa. Officers carried this loot from the place, shoving paper money and coins into McLean's hands. He, in turn, threw the money onto the floor of the porch in disgust and watched his furnishings disappear. Wrote Cadwallader: "Cane bottomed chairs were ruthlessly cut to pieces; the cane splits broken into pieces a few inches long, and parceled out among those who swarmed around. Haircloth upholstery was cut from chairs, and sofas were also cut into strips and patches and carried away."

As news of the surrender spread among the Union ranks, wild cheering ensued. Grant ordered this stopped and silence fell at Appomattox. The news of Lee's surrender stunned and shocked the Confederates. Many wanted to die, others simply sank to the ground in silence or openly wept. As Lee rode through his weeping legions, ragged, proud men by the thousands crowded around him, touching his boots and Traveller, begging him to go on with the war, begging for one more battle. A wizened old veteran standing close by held up his arms and shouted: "I love you just as well as ever, General Lee!"

Federals and Rebels went into each other's lines. The Federals, for the most part, shared their rations with the Confederates long before Small's rations reached the Rebel lines. Near the village of Appomattox Court House, however, several companies of Union soldiers jeered and cursed the Confederates laying down their arms before them. A Union major then appeared on horseback and shouted at his men: "These Confederate soldiers are brave men! If you were half as brave as they are, you would have conquered them long ago! If I hear another cowardly scoundrel curse these men again, I'll break my sword over his head!" The Federals stood silent and remained that way as the Confederates continued to file past them. One of the Rebels, Pvt. I.G. Bradwell, tried to find the Union officer and thank him for his remarks, but he never learned the officer's identity.

Fitz Lee and his cavalry by then were riding to join Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, moving in small units toward the southeast, dodging Union patrols. None of the Confederate cavalry was on the rolls of those surrendered, a fact that irked Gen.

Philip Sheridan until his dying day. As Fitz Lee rode through a wood, he met a Rebel infantryman who was trudging toward the Court House and Lee's lines.

"Never mind, old man," Fitz Lee told the ancient Confederate. "Lee has surrendered. You might as well go home."

"What's that?" cried the Rebel, "Lee's surrendered?" Tears swelled in his eyes.

"That's right," confirmed Fitz Lee.

"You can't make me believe that Marse Robert has surrendered!" thundered the old warrior. "It must have been that goddamned Fitzhugh Lee!"

That night, stopping alongside the road, Grant sat down and wrote out a letter to Secretary of War Stanton:

Hon. E.M. Stanton, Secretary of War
Washington

General Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia this afternoon on terms proposed by myself. The accompanying additional correspondence will show the conditions fully.

U.S. Grant
Lieut-General

Grant said little about Lee or the end of the war when dining with his staff that night. Before retiring, he told Badeau that he knew that several of his senior officers did not like the terms he had given Lee and that they wanted many of the top Confederate officers held for trial. "I'll keep the terms, no matter who's opposed," Grant declared emphatically. "But Lincoln is sure to be on my side."

President Jefferson Davis, who, along with many members of the Confederate government, had reached Danville, learned of Lee's surrender. Davis vowed to escape and somehow fight on. Not until he returned to Washington did Abraham Lincoln learn of Lee's surrender.

On April 12, John Brown Gordon led the Army of Northern Virginia into the town square of Appomattox Court House and brigade after brigade stacked its arms. Gen. Joshua Chamberlain of the Union army received these men, having his men stand to attention as the Confederates marched by. Gen. Gordon returned the compliment by saluting Chamberlain with his sword. The following day, the Confederates went home, some going in groups, some alone. Lee rode to Richmond.

By that time, Lee's farewell to his troops had been written, copied and distributed to his men. His noble veterans ended their war on empty stomachs and wearing threadbare uniforms, but they clutched Lee's farewell as if it were a great inheritance of the war they had so desperately fought and lost. It read:

GENERAL ORDER, NO. 9
Headquarters, Army of Northern Virginia
April 10, 1865

After four years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources.

I need not tell the brave survivors of so many hard fought battles, who have remained steadfast to the last, that I have consented to the result from no distrust of them.

But feeling that valor and devotion could accomplish nothing that would compensate for the loss that must have attended the continuance of the contest, I determined to avoid the useless sacrifice of those whose past services have endeared them to their countrymen.

By the terms of the agreement officers and men can return to their homes and remain until exchanged. You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed, and I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you His blessing and protection.

With an increasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous considerations for myself, I bid you all an affectionate farewell.

R.E. Lee
General

Also See: Petersburg, Va. Campaign, 1864-1865.

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Arkansas, CSS 1862, Confederate ironclad ram.

Background: Laid down at Memphis, Tenn., in 10/61 by John Shirley, completion of the ironclad ram was interrupted by the approach of Union forces descending the Mississippi River; the vessel was towed down the Mississippi and then taken up the Yazoo River to Greenwood, Miss., then to Yazoo City, Miss., where work was completed under the direction of Confederate naval Lt. Isaac Newton Brown. Christened *Arkansas*, the vessel was a twin-screw-propeller ram, 165 feet in length, 35 feet in width, having an 11- to 12-foot draft. Though her two ends were slanted, her casement sides, covered with railway T-rails, were unlike many other Rebel armored vessels in that they were perpendicular. The *Arkansas* had a compliment of 200 officers and men and 10 guns consisting of two 9-inch shell guns, two 9-inch smoothbores, two 64-pounders, two 6-inch rifles and two 32-pounder smoothbores.

Sailing down the Yazoo River on 07/14/62, the *Arkansas* engaged three Federal war ships, the *Queen of the West*, *Tyler* and *Carondelet* on 07/15/62. The *Carondelet* was disabled by the *Arkansas* and the other two Union ships fled downstream with the Rebel ironclad in pursuit. Chasing the Union ships into the Mississippi River, the *Arkansas* then faced the entire Union fleet of 30 warships under the combined commands of David Farragut and Charles Davis. The Confederate ironclad gave battle to the entire fleet, sailing slowly through the Union vessels, battling each in turn and seriously damaged the *Lancaster,* though hit many times.

Reaching besieged Vicksburg, Miss., the *Arkansas*, on the night of 07/15/62, again engaged the entire Union fleet as it headed downstream, running beneath the Rebel land batteries at Vicksburg. The *Arkansas* made several hits on the passing Federal ships and was, in turn, hit several times, but sustained little damage. On 07/22/62, two Union ships—the huge *Essex*, one of the largest ironclads in the Federal fleet, and the *Queen of the West*—sailed close to the *Arkansas*' berth and attempted to destroy the Confederate ram but, after a fierce fight, left Vicksburg with more damage than they inflicted.

Following repairs, the Rebel ironclad left Vicksburg, descending the Mississippi on 08/03/62 to support a combined river and land-based assault on Union-held Baton Rouge, La. The *Arkansas'* engines developed trouble and the ironclad made anchor while its engineers worked to solve the problem. Underway within 24 hours, the ironclad's engines again broke down just as Baton Rouge came within sight. Engineers worked feverishly to make repairs as Union warships, led by the ironclad *Essex*, approached the crippled Rebel ship. Unable to make repairs, the *Arkansas* was set ablaze and abandoned by her crew. She drifted downstream a burning hulk, than sank.

In October 1861, Memphis shipbuilder John Shirley designed and began construction of the vessel that would later be called the *Arkansas*, one of the most devastating Confederate ironclad rams in the Civil War. When it was learned that a Union flotilla was sailing toward Memphis to appropriate all ships at anchor or under construction, the uncompleted vessel was towed down the Mississippi and then up the Yazoo River to Greenwood, Miss., where it was put in drydock. There the wooden hull and its iron fittings and guns remained for seven months.

In early June 1862, a Confederate naval officer, 45-year-old Lt. Isaac Newton Brown, arrived in Greenwood. He had received orders on May 28, 1862, from the Navy Department in Richmond to "finish and equip that vessel without regard to expenditure of men or money." Realizing that facilities at Greenwood were inadequate, Brown, a rugged Kentuckian who had served in the U.S. Navy from the days of the Mexican War and had fought at Vera Cruz, ordered the *Arkansas*, its guns, engines and the railway iron to be used to clad its exterior (which resided on a sunken barge that had to be refloated) towed to Yazoo City, Miss., a site better suited for the construction.

Brown had the sunken barge containing the railway iron refloated and towed to Yazoo City, where, using the hoisting engine of a steamboat anchored nearby to power his drills, he bolted the iron to the wooden frame atop the *Arkansas*' hull. He designed and built carriages for the 10 guns mounted inside the vessel's frame while assembling and installing the engines. Within five weeks, Brown completed work on the *Arkansas*, which was a more heavily armed ironclad than most rams of the day and was also, as her trial runs proved, a fast and highly maneuverable ship. Its boiler room was a trouble spot, since the engines proved temperamental.

During the speedy construction of the ship, Brown recruited a crew of more than 200 men, artillerists from Missouri and Tennessee regiments, and Southern sailors, mostly riverboat workers and engineers. He was in a hurry, hoping to aid in the relief of Vicksburg, Miss., that river-guarding bastion now under siege by Grant's land-based forces and a powerful Union fleet commanded by Adm. David Farragut and Flag Officer Charles H. Davis. This, in fact, was the reason why Brown had

been ordered to quickly complete the construction of the *Arkansas*.

The Yazoo itself compelled haste in that the level of the river was receding and if the *Arkansas* did not soon leave its berth, there was a chance that the waters would be too shallow to allow for its 12-foot draft and would trap it at Yazoo City. On July 14, 1862, Brown ordered the *Arkansas* to sail down the Yazoo. While under a full head of steam, a boiler sprang a leak that, in turn, partially flooded one of the powder magazines. Brown took the vessel to shore, where he waited for the sun to dry everything, but he was apprehensive, "expecting the enemy every moment," according to his later report.

Brown had every right to expect to see the enemy. Federal scouts had learned of the *Arkansas*'s construction and had heard that it had left its berth somewhere on the Yazoo and was looking for Union prey. Flag Officer Davis ordered three Federal ships to investigate the rumor that a large Rebel ironclad was somewhere on the Yazoo, these vessels being the *Queen of the West*, a ram commanded by Lt. James M. Hunter; *Tyler*, a light gunboat commanded by Lt. William Gwin; and *Carondelet*, a large ironclad gunboat. The latter was a powerful warship, larger than the *Arkansas*. At 175 feet long and 50 feet wide, the *Carondelet* had five boilers and was driven by a massive paddle wheel, which was housed under its sloping, iron-clad casement.

The *Carondelet* had a shallower draft than that of the *Arkansas*, about 8 feet, and it boasted 13 guns—three 8-inch 64-pounder Dahlgren guns forward, four guns on either side and two at the stern, these being made up of six 32-pounder smoothbores and four 43-pounder army rifles. When Brown sighted this ship, he knew he was in for trouble; the *Carondelet* had fought at forts Henry and Donelson and had been chiefly instrumental in the Union victory at Island No. 10. Moreover, Brown knew that this vessel was commanded by Henry Walke, an ask-no-quarter skipper who had been a friend of Brown's when both served in the U.S. Navy before the war. In fact, they had been fellow officers and roommates in an around-the-world voyage.

Inside the *Arkansas*'s casement, the heat was so intense that all on board, except Brown, stripped naked to the waist and tied kerchiefs about their heads so that sweat would not drip into their eyes and blind them. Brown remained in full uniform, stroking his full brown beard as he sighted his forward guns on the enemy.

As the Union ships steamed up the Yazoo three abreast, the Federals spotted the *Arkansas* steaming straight for them. The formidable-looking *Arkansas* caused the *Queen of the West*, which had no iron plating and was at the time unarmed, to turn about and flee downstream. Its captain signaled to Walke that they were on a scouting expedition to locate the *Arkansas* and had accomplished their mission, which was not necessarily to do battle. The *Tyler* also turned about and followed the fleeing *Queen of the West*. Walke, to protect these ships, followed suit with the *Carondelet*.

The *Arkansas* came on quickly, moving faster than the Union ships, and was soon within range. It opened fire, hitting the *Tyler*, then the *Queen of the West*. Walke turned the *Carondelet* about and gave battle, exchanging shot for shot with the advancing *Arkansas*. One of the *Carondelet*'s shells struck the *Arkansas*, ricocheting along its side and taking off the head of a seaman who had been too curious; he had stuck his head out of a gunport to view the battle and was decapitated. When his headless body fell back onto the deck, an officer ordered the corpse thrown overboard so that the gruesome sight would not dispirit his crew. The youth to whom he gave the order replied: "Oh, I can't do that, sir. He's my brother."

Another shell went through the pilothouse and exploded inside, mortally wounding the *Arkansas*' pilot and wounding Brown in the head. Brown later stated that he knew he would survive his wounds because "I had failed to find any brains mixed with the handful of clotted blood, which I drew from the wound and examined." As Hodges, the pilot, was carried from the pilothouse, he told Brown to "keep her in the middle of the river." This Brown did as his gunners began to score hits on the fiercely fighting *Carondelet*. One of the *Arkansas'* shells smashed into the *Carondelet's* steering mechanism, dismantling it and forcing Walke to run his ship aground.

As the *Arkansas* passed the crippled, smoking *Carondelet*, it let loose a broadside into her that struck with such force that it literally lifted the Union warship partially out of the water. These hits, however, ricocheted off the *Carondelet's* 2½-inch iron plating, which was backed by 20 inches of solid oak. Fortunately for the Union sailors, this volley hit the *Carondelet's* sides, which were iron-plated, and not the forward or stern areas, which were simply covered with heavy planking. Walke later stated that had one of Brown's shells pierced his ship at either of these points, it would have blown up and killed all aboard.

Brown's men cheered as the *Arkansas* steamed past the defeated, smoking *Carondelet*, especially when the *Carondelet*'s crew was seen to scramble from the housing and tumble ashore, fearful that the ship's magazines might explode at any second. The *Arkansas* by then was firing her forward guns at the fleeing *Tyler* and *Queen of the West*, its shells landing closer with each round fired. Then, quite suddenly, the *Arkansas* began to lose power, and the Federal ships soon outdistanced the pursuing Confederate ram.

A shell had struck and severed the pipe connecting the smokestack to the furnace, which caused a fire to break out in the main cabin, where the temperature quickly rose to 130 degrees. The pressure dropped from 120 pounds to 20 and there was barely enough power left to steer the ship. Brown let the downstream current take the *Arkansas* out of the mouth of the Yazoo and into the deeper waters of the Mississippi as his crew frantically put out the cabin fire and reconnected the pipe to the smokestack.

These makeshift repairs were completed by the time the *Arkansas* arrived 10 miles above Vicksburg. The battered ship continued its course toward the Federal fleet, which was anchored on both sides of the river 3 miles downstream, a fleet Brown described as "the greatest naval force hitherto assembled at one time in the New World." The *Queen of the West* and the *Tyler* had not been able to give warning, and none of the ships of the Federal fleet, except one, were under steam by the time the *Arkansas* sailed into its midst. Brown's only plan was to simply sail through the entire Union fleet and blast every vessel within range, a courageous if not suicidal strategy.