GETTYSBURG TO APPOMATTOX:

THE SOUTH'S CRITICAL FAILURES

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With Contributions By

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Preface

It was in the cold winter month of January 2007 that I turned to my favorite pastime, reading the Civil War books I had acquired over the years. At one point I stopped, and asked the simple question, "What were the battle errors that contributed to the Southern Army loosing the war?"

As a U.S. Navy Seabee in World War II, I experienced first-hand the conditions of combat during the invasions of Saipan and Tinian. I also served later during the Vietnam War as an officer at Subic Bay in the Philippines. I finished my military service as a Commander in the US Navy Reserves. These experiences were helpful in analyzing and appreciating battle conditions in writing this book.

There was a cluster of battle events that registered failure for the Southern Army, and I found them at the battle of Gettysburg. My studies led me to analyze the elements which clearly showed the failure mode of the Confederacy, and place them in my book.

The battle of Gettysburg was only part of the series of failures for the Confederates. Other battles, near the conclusion of the war, such as Fort Steadman, Five Forks, Sailor's Creek, Cumberland Church, and finally Appomattox illustrated the weakness of the Confederate Army. There are also many interesting parallels between the key players at Gettysburg, and those who participated in the final major battles of the Civil War.

In writing this book, I felt the occasional use of colloquial expressions would support a better understanding of the historical events and context from more than just an academic perspective. The words of Albert Szent-Gyorgyi (a Nobel prize-winning biochemist) best capture my motivation: “Research is to see what everybody has seen, and to think what nobody else has thought.” I hope you will enjoy and learn as much from reading this book as I enjoyed and learned from writing it.

Acknowledgments

I am very grateful to William C. Wyrick, author of articles and a book on the Civil War, for his scholarly advice and suggestions. His technical edits and comments vastly improved this document. I give many thanks to Robert C. Steensma, PhD, English Professor, and Captain, U.S. Navy, Retired, for his gifts of civil war materials and technical advice. I am also thankful for the encouragement and advice that Rear Admiral Jack E. Buffington, U.S. Navy, CEC, Retired, gave after reading a draft copy of the text. I express my appreciation to the late Frank P. King, PhD, History Professor, for not only providing historical advice, but also sharing many pertinent articles and books on the Civil War. Captain Frank C. Gilmore, U.S. Navy, Retired, also reviewed the book and provided insight on the command structure of the military forces. I appreciate the research by John R. Caldwell in his contribution of biographies of leading Gettysburg generals both during and after the war. John's interest in the Battle began at an early age when he visited Gettysburg as a young boy. I appreciate the assistance of Erica Forsman, who helped resolve technical problems in developing and printing drafts of the document. I am most grateful to John E. Moore (my son), for his numerous contributions in researching many details of the book and editing the final manuscript, which added greatly to its accuracy and readability. I am also grateful for his computer skills which helped place the book on the world-wide-web, where it could be shared with others.

This work is dedicated to the memory of my dear departed wife, Frances O'Brien Moore, who supported my efforts, and those of many others', to bring "light into the world."

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INTRODUCTION

To understand the battle of Gettysburg and the final battles near Appomattox as vital turning points in our country's history, we must first examine the basic causes of the American Civil War. Some writers have termed this period the *second revolution*. It was a firm conviction in the roots of sovereignty, which made the war so long and so destructive with hard feelings extending through generations to the present time. There is an old saying, "The road to hell is paved with gold." We enlarge on this thesis in real terms to explain the principal reason for the war and killing that occurred between families, friends, and our fellow countrymen. To make this discussion more coherent, we can separate the contents into such topics as the background for the war, a review of the daily conduct of the battle, and errors the commanders committed that changed the course of this battle to a new beginning of a true union under the Constitution of our United States.

A Divided Nation

In the early colonial period of the 1760's the King and Parliament of England enacted laws for their right to govern commerce, taxation, and domestic issues in the original thirteen American colonies, such as New York and Virginia. This resulted in a relationship that many in the colonies thought was unfair. Eventually, hostility built up and the colonies declared themselves independent from England on July 4, 1776.

This Declaration of Independence was in essence a declaration of war and was signed by representatives from all thirteen American colonies. The second paragraph of the declaration contained this statement "...we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal…" Since black African slaves were treated in law books in Southern colonies as property, the Southerners reasoned that this portion of the declaration did not apply to their slaves. The slaves were property, not people. This continued in the Southern states that were created out of the original colonies after the success of the American Revolution.

We feel it is important to recognize the author of these famous lines addressing freedom in our declaration. Thomas Jefferson was Virginia's delegate to the Continental Congress and his pen carried this message through the Congress and to the King Of England. Jefferson, along with many others from his Southern states, believed in a union of states, and in the people's freedom whom the states served. His work for our nation was so rewarding that the people voted him into office as the Third President of the United States. We recommend a visit to his home, Monticello, in Virginia (Town of Jefferson: Route 522) to view his papers and other historical objects of that period of our founding fathers, and to remember that "all men are created equal".

But the Northern States were not dependant on slavery for their economic wellbeing. Their population expanded with immigration from Europe, and new wealth was created from expanding small industries. The Southern States depended upon agriculture to drive their economy. This mainly consisted of large cotton plantations that required hands-on labor by many slaves. The South also had some manufacturing industries, mostly near seaports, which employed both the black and white races. As the United States matured, Northern States enjoyed power in Congress, and used it in 1832 to enact protective tariff measures to protect their industries and farmers. However these tariff laws hurt farmers and the export businesses in South Carolina and other Southern States. This caused a clash with the Federal system and the South Carolina State Legislature attempted to enact their own trade laws. This was an early threat of insurgency that was resolved without war. However, these issues caused much friction, which would grow in intensity between states in the North and those in the South.

In the 1830's and 1840's, abolitionists of slavery became active in Free States, which added more fuel to the ill feelings between the North and South. The Dred Scott Decision of the United States Supreme Court illustrates the seriousness of slavery issues in that period. A slaveholder took Scott, a Negro, in 1834 from Missouri (a slave state) to Minnesota, a state that did not recognize slavery. The slaveholder returned to Missouri, and Scott sued in 1846 in court for his freedom, since he had previously lived in a slave-free state. (P: 24) The Scott case went through the court system to end up in the U.S. Supreme Court. Chief Justice R. B. Taney of this court was from the South, and his

Supreme Court finally ruled in March 1857. The ruling was 6 against and 3 for Scott. (P 23, 24) This Court ruled this slave was property and had no state rights as a citizen because he was of a certain race.

The Court said that this "property" was protected by the due process clause in the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution; therefore, Congress had no legal rights in this matter according to the Constitution, and the Missouri Compromise was void! (P: 24) Black slaves were not citizens of any state. (W: 172) (P: 24) Slavery would be permitted in the territories! This would tend to expand slavery outside the South into the Northern States and the territories. This became a major factor in precipitating conflict. This court decision was stupid, based on subsequent legal events, and should be blamed for striking a flame that started the Civil War. All Hell broke loose in the Northern States protesting this decision. This court decision formally placed slavery as a respectful institution in our law books.

With all this action, Abraham Lincoln came out of his early retirement and was again cast into the violent political arena with subsequent heated debates on slavery and the law. Since Chief Justice Taney's Supreme Court proslavery decision opened the doors to slavery throughout the Northern States and territories, the Northerners felt they needed to redefine the course for the nation on this critical constitutional issue. Within this turmoil, the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates characterized a new anti-slavery determination for the people of the North. These important debates gave national notability to Lincoln's anti-slavery theme. About two years later, the country voted Lincoln into the U.S. Presidency.

Now comes a shocking paradox. On a chilly March 4th in 1861, the oath for the Presidential Office required two great adversaries to stand on the podium face to face, eyeball to eyeball; the stern Chief Justice Taney, who had placed slavery in the national law books, and the brilliant Abe Lincoln, who had pledged to remove slavery from those books. As Taney clearly spoke the oath, Lincoln repeated the words with his hand resting on the Bible. (Z11: 222, 223) Lincoln would use this holy pledge with the power

the executive branch and the command of all Northern armed forces during this Civil War to rectify the institution of slavery in our government. (W: 172, 173)

In 1857, what the Supreme Court did not address was the “whole” body in this equation of property and life. The body parts of the slave require the human spirit or soul to make them operate, like the raising of an arm. The question that should have been addressed was: can a person purchase the operating system, the soul (spirit) that belongs to God only, if the judge believes in God? (King James Bible, I John 3: 24 &4:13) The oath for supreme office in our country is taken with one hand on the Bible and the words "So help me God." The Supreme Court Judges' decision cast the shadow of hypocrisy on future freedom in our country. All this stirred up more fire in the abolition camp. By this time, many blacks in the North owned businesses and enjoyed freedom. Interestingly enough, one free black even built a rock fence on his farm near Gettysburg, which was used by the Union army in its defense and resulted in a significant difference to the outcome of the battle. Let us look at the economics of the South to show how "gold" (the value of slavery or a better term, the tyrannical "golden rod") played in the "advancement" of civilization.

Civilization was both blessed and cursed when Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1793. It automatically removed seeds from raw cotton, ultimately resulting in low cost clothing for the world. But it also resulted in the United States being the largest slave-holder in the world before the Civil War with a count of some four million slaves; most of whom served as unpaid labor in Southern cotton fields. (A: 8) At the start of the Civil War, some 45 percent of the nine million people in the Rebel States were slaves. In addition, slaves were not permitted the Southern "privilege" of fighting in a war. (A: 57) The prewar market value of these slaves amounted to some three billion dollars. (A: 14) Cotton production was a very important trading commodity for the United States, contributing over half of the value of its exports. By any measure slavery and cotton were big business even as judged in values from our present market place. The South would fight with all of its strength and kill people, even close friends, as we shall see in the "Third Day" of the Gettysburg battle. This killing spree in our history was unleashed

when Southern whites feared loosing what they believed to be their fundamental source of economic supply, their “gold”.

In the market place, a young, healthy, black male slave in the South could be sold for $2000 in pre-Civil War dollars. (A: 15) And, sadly, a black child could be taken from his or her mother and sold for some $100 — so reproduction of this "resource" was encouraged. (A: 15) This enterprise was similar to present-day ranching, where cattle or horses are bred and the offspring raised for sale at the market. For the Southern slaveholder, like the rancher, it was a way to gain wealth (gold).

It is difficult to determine the role deep-seated beliefs, even, religion, might have played in justifying a slave-based economy, but a guess would be that Southern whites viewed slaves simply as property, not people. They were not viewed as full members of the human family with equal rights. The white Southern religious institutions reasonably co-existed with slavery with minimum friction. Often people use religion to justify their actions, even those in wartime that result in the killing of other people. To highlight this proposition, we can select a personal letter showing the thought of a Rebel warrior on the subject. Young Gen. William Pender was an excellent division commander with a ruthless drive for success in battle, but deeply religious. He closed a love letter to his dear wife before he left on the long march north to battle with “...May God in His goodness be more gracious than in our last trial. We certainly may be allowed to hope as our mission is one of peace altho’ through blood”. (D: 48) We can also look at the carnage caused by just one minister on the Southern side by the name of Gen. William Pendleton, Chief of Confederate Artillery. He was a principle player at Gettysburg. He supervised the deadly artillery fire of rebel cannoneers that killed many Yankees, especially on the third day of the battle when 140 Rebel cannons rained destruction on Cemetery Hill. He observed that with Northern troops massed, his artillery would be more effective and the South would suffer much less. (D: 461) The artillery was one of the most destructive weapons in the war, especially when using canister shot. A rifleman sights, pulls the trigger, and kills; this principle also applies to the commanding officer of the artillery. Before the war Gen. Pendleton was a minister in the Church, and after the war he became a minister of Grace Church in Lexington, Virginia. (D: 561) Gen. Lee

attended this church. A justification in this case seems to be that one can kill another man if the other man disagrees with your politics. Perhaps Pendleton did not carefully read the Bible.

There seems to be mental conflict in the justification for all wars that is caused by Moses' commandment: "Thou shalt not kill".

Hot heads on both sides of the conflict lit the fuse of the long Civil War — long before cannon shells fell on Fort Sumter. This was illustrated in 1859 with an unexpected episode by one of the major players in the Civil War: Lt. Colonel Robt. E. Lee of the United States Army. This was two years before Lee would find himself a Major General in command of the Southern Army and winning important battles. The episode started on October 17 when John Brown, a Christian Minister from Kansas, and a band of 16 whites and 5 blacks took over the U. S. Armory at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, for its guns. In this case, Brown used religion to justify his violent actions against slavery. Brown's uprising was intended to free all the slaves. A bunch of nuts was on the loose! If they had not taken the government armory, it is possible that Colonel Lee would not have been called to put down the upraising, and perhaps a kinder chapter would be nestled in our history books. Colonel Lee was assigned fifty marines and Lieutenant J.E.B. (Jeb) Stuart, his long time friend to put down the rebellion. When Lee was Superintendent of West Point, "Jeb" Stuart was a cadet. The skirmish was a success, and Brown and his conspirators were captured. The Commonwealth of Virginia tried Brown and five others for treason and hung them. Thus, came the song, "John's Brown's body lies a smoldering in the grave, but his soul goes marching on". Within two years, Lee would join the unsuccessful Southern rebellion. But by then, those at war changed the rules and did not hang people for rebelling. Sadly, the other part of the story is that the young, thirty-one year old, brave Gen. "Jeb" Stuart would die at the end of the Civil War in a cavalry charge during the Yellow Tavern Battle in protecting his Southern capital at Richmond.

In summary, the Civil War resolved into the issue of human Civil Rights versus human Property Rights. The people of the North believed the Federal Constitution and the Federal Congress should govern the rights of the people; those of the South believed

that the state government and state legislature should control people's rights within their social structure. The sad part is that thousands of people died in this conflict for their fear of the possible loss of wealth (gold), domination by a more powerful racial community, and the belief they were morally or religiously correct.

This war was to define the rights of a human being. Soldiers of the South believed their state (State Rights) should govern their lives and property, and slaves were property, animals to be bought and sold. Soldiers of the North believed our national Constitution should have the power to govern all the people, assigning some local powers like state taxation to the states. They believed all men are created equal, and humans were not property. The Dred Scott Decision raised the possibility that slavery could expand beyond the South. Perhaps, some Northern soldiers thought that if the Negro was property today, then tomorrow poor people with unpaid debt could become property to be bought and sold as well. Whatever the reasons, thousands of Americans were killed and wounded in Civil War battles. Thousands of friends and loved ones died over the issues of preserving the Republic, a common economic policy to satisfy North and South, and ending slavery. The Civil War began just after Abraham Lincoln took the Presidency of the Union in 1861, with the shelling of Fort Sumter by the Southern army.

Prologue to the Battle

When eleven Southern states seceded from the Union after Lincoln's election, this alliance created a new nation with Jefferson Davis as the President of the Confederate States of America. It created a legislative body, an army, a navy, and the usual departments of national government. Truly, this was a monumental accomplishment in a short time. It showed there was determination for the Southern cause, and the war to change its course would be terrible.

Little did this new government know that in the spring of l863, after the two years of war which included an effective Northern naval blockade, conditions would bring a mob of women to President Davis' office door in Richmond, shouting for food. Clothing and shoes were also in short supply. This hurt the operation of the army, and in future campaigns, living off the enemy's farm products would be essential. Inflation had

appeared: it took ten dollars to buy the same product that sold for one dollar before the war. For President Davis, and others like General Lee, the bad economics plus other adversities of hard fought battles weighed heavily in preparing battle plans to quickly win the war. There could be no mistakes for the South, but there were, as we will soon discover.

Two comparisons illustrate the key assets of war available to each side for this long conflict. The first was population. The Northern States had about 22 million people that could furnish a large armed force, while the Southern States had only about 9 million, which included some 4 million Negroes not eligible for conflict. (A: 57) The second was railroad transportation, which could move large armies to battlegrounds much faster than by marching or riding horses. The North had some thirty thousand miles of track. The South had only about nine thousand miles.

The North also held an advantage in creating and manufacturing railroad equipment, rifles, cannons, ships and other parts of the war machine. This provided more modern war equipment to the North than was available to South. An example of this advantage was shown in 1863, when the North had armed their cavalry with Sharp's (1859) breech-loading repeating rifles to increase their mobile firepower. (Z: 10, 41) General Buford's Union cavalry had repeating rifles in the opening day of the battle for Gettysburg. He held off a much larger attacking force of Rebel infantry for a precious few hours until the main army of the North arrived on the scene to eventually settle the score.

The Army Generals

Let's examine the leadership on each side of the conflict to see how their motives influenced how they fought the war. Thousands of men were killed in this battle by their personal direction. The two star players in this battle of Gettysburg were Gen. Robert E. Lee of the South and Gen. George G. Meade of the North. Gen. Lee was a rather inspiring man in full control of his life. He was an outstanding general by any military measure and well honored by his men. Prior to Gettysburg, he had won a series of impressive battles for the South. He did not have nearly the soldiers or equipment (like

cannons and food) that the Northern commanders had. Clausewitz stated in his writings that the best attributes of command were a superior mind and strength of character; Gen. Lee had both.

Now, we will look at his family history that would lie heavily on future decisions of battle and his life. His family was from the upper class. He was the son of Harry Lee, known as "Light Horse Harry Lee," and a famous commander of cavalry in the Revolutionary War. Light Horse Harry was a friend of George Washington. Slavery was a concern with Gen. Lee. According to Harry Hanson in his book, *The Civil War: A History*, Gen. Lee's father-in-law, George Washington Parke Custis, was a slaveholder and gave 63 slaves to Gen. Lee's wife in a will, which said they were to be freed in five years. (H: 66) But Diane Coles found letters in an old trunk which told a different story, which she related in her article, "The Private Thoughts of a Southern Icon" in *U.S. News and World Report* (July 9, 2007). This points to the fact that Gen. Lee was the caretaker of his wife's 196 slaves. (R: 36) The later number of slaves puts Gen. Lee into "big time slavery". The letters indicated he was a firm taskmaster, who rented out slaves. So Gen. Lee was their caretaker in this period. But still, he was exposed to the slavery issue and opposed to the slave trade. He held a vested interest in the Southern rights, as did his family. Just after Fort Sumter fell to the Rebels, the vote in his native state of Virginia was for separation from the Union.

At the beginning of the war, Gen. Winfield Scott was appointed by Abraham Lincoln to head the Union Army. Although he was a Virginian, like Lee, he was faithful to the Union cause. Born in 1786, he served as an honorable general in the two previous wars. Although Scott was very old, he remained very astute. It was he who proposed the successful Anaconda war plan (after the large boa snake) to Lincoln. Simply, it used the powerful Union Navy to blockade Southern ports, so that much needed imports like guns and exports like cotton, which was a primary source of their money supply, were stopped. It became the North's most important weapon in winning the war.

Little known to historians is the fact that President Davis' decision to withhold cotton from the European market in the first 12 months of the war, when there was no

blockade, was an act of costly stupidity that eventually cost him his victory. (K: 447) The wealth of the South was in its cotton, worth some $500,000,000 at that time if sold in Europe. (K: 446) It was this trading resource, which the South needed to buy weapons, food, and shoes for its soldiers. Davis thought that creating a cotton shortage would bring pressure on European capitals to recognize the southern states as a country. Thus, it would help in winning the South's independence. It did not happen that way. Europe had a years supply from a previous bumper cotton crop. Europe also saw that fighting their way through a highly armed blockade would start a war they didn't want. So the South did not have money to buy more guns and warships to aid in winning the war. Most of the Southern armament came from pillage of Federal armories and the surrender of Federal arms in battle.

Gen. Scott is mentioned here to show there were dedicated Southerners who wanted the Constitution to prevail. In fact, Gen. Scott was approached by his Southern friend, a judge in Virginia, to command the Virginia Army, like the offer also given to Gen. Lee. Gen. Scott's reply was something like this: I have served my country, under a flag of the Union, for more than 50 years and so long as God permits me to live, I will defend that flag with my sword, even if my own native state assails it. Regretfully, Gen. Lee would give a different answer.

Gen. Scott was Lee's friend and old time mentor dating back to the Mexican War. In that foreign war, Lee was a captain on Gen. Scott's staff and he was given very high marks for his performance. In fact, he was wounded in the battle Chapultepec. It turned out that the Mexican War was the training ground for the Civil War. Lee served along side such officers who would later show up in the Civil War like the Northern Generals Grant, McDowell, McClellan, Hancock, and Meade! There were also many future Confederate officers in the Mexican War such as P. Beauregard (associated with firing the first shot in the Civil War), L. Armistead (a close friend of Gen. Hancock), and J. E. Johnston (Commander of Southern Armies). The Mexican War training ground found many later associations.

In the troubled early days of the Civil War, Gen. Scott, along with President Lincoln, offered the General-in-Chief position to Lee because of his outstanding military record. (K: 19) (H: 67) Lee gave solemn consideration to this offer. He had served loyally for the Union during his lifetime service in the army, but he was equally committed to defend his state, which held his family with roots of some 160 years. His reply was in general terms that he would not militarily invade his state. On April 20th, he resigned his rank as colonel in the cavalry thanked his friend, Gen. Scott, and said briefly that he would draw his sword only to defend his state. Within three days, on April 23rd he accepted a Major General position in charge of the Rebel army at Richmond that had just been created as part of their new army. The sad fact that was carried over from Gen. Lee's comment of "drawing his sword to defend his state" is simply that Washington D.C. was surrounded on one side by Virginia soil, and therefore war was immediate.

During Gen. Lee's parting words with his old army comrades who were siding with the Union, Gen. Scott replied to his close friend that he had made the greatest mistake of his life. True. Perhaps, he did make the greatest mistake of the entire war. At this time, Gen. Lee was served with three alternatives: 1) Become the General-In-Chief of the Northern Army; 2) Become a general in the Southern Army; 3) Or what many have not considered: retire gracefully, free his slaves, and enjoy life on his vast estates at Arlington. By choosing the second alternative, he proved to be the most qualified general of the South to win their war. But in the end, the South lost the war; thousands of young men died for a lost cause that Gen. Lee might have shortened by his retirement. What is ironic about Gen. Lee's decision to fight for the South is that the Federal government soon conscripted his family estate, the Curtis-Lee plantation on the outskirts of Washington, DC, and Union soldiers occupied it on May 27, 1861. Portions of the estate were used as a cemetery for Union soldiers killed in the conflict, which later became Arlington National Cemetery, where soldiers of our past wars are buried with honors. Nearly a quarter of Southern young white males were killed in the Civil War, yet the hallowed ground once owned by their leader was reserved exclusively for their fallen adversaries.

Now, let us turn to the other star player of the Gettysburg conflict, General George S. Meade, Commander of the Northern Army. Gen. Meade was born in Spain in 1815 of good parents; his father was a businessman trading in supplies to Spain and England. Unfortunately, his father's business experience was a rocky ride. George was one of ten children, and the family lived on a frugal allowance. In contrast to Gen. Lee's upper class family with its estates and slaves, Meade came from much humbler beginnings. Like Gen. Lee, he achieved high grades at West Point, graduating in1835 some 6 years after Lee graduated. In fact, most of his life was spent with his nose in a book. About a year after he graduated, he left the army to work in private civil engineering practice, and in1842 at the beginning of the Mexican War, he rejoined the army. Both Gen. Meade's and Gen. Lee's careers in the army involved civil engineering at one point or another. It is interesting to note that civil engineering prepares an officer to make fortifications, prepare and use maps for travel by his army, and judge physical battle conditions for a successful attack. Like Gen. Lee, Meade served on the staff of General Scott in the training ground of the Mexican War. How well did they know each other? We do not know. But Gen. Lee held a high respect for Gen. Meade as we will learn later, when he discovered that Meade had been given command of the Union Army in the prelude to the Gettysburg conflict.

Gen. Meade had battle experience leading large units such as brigades, divisions, and corps; in the Seven Day's Battle, he was seriously wounded at a place called Glendale. (B: 17) In the Battle of Gettysburg, Gen. Lee would mostly direct the battle from his command center behind the battle lines. Gen. Meade would direct the battle from the firing line where he was a hands-on leader. On the second day of this battle, he was on the firing line directing Yankee support to plug a gap in the line of the 2nd Corps when bullets seriously wounded his faithful horse "Baldy" that he was riding. (V: 448) This shows he was just as exposed to death as his soldiers. He was an excitable leader, and his staff nicknamed him the old snapping turtle; but he was successful in battle. He received high marks from other generals, who recommended him to President Lincoln for leading this Northern Army. Most of his wartime history we know from letters he addressed to his dear wife. After the war, he peacefully died at the young age of 57 from old battle wounds.

The Battle Plans

It is very interesting to review the events prior to Gettysburg and the rationale that prevailed in the commanding sectors on both sides. Let us turn to Richmond, the Confederate capital. On May 2, 1863, the South had just won a significant victory at Chancellorsville with Lee's Southern army of only 65,000 men, turning the flank of the much larger Union army (some 135,000 men), commanded by Gen. Joseph Hooker. Many of the other Union generals felt that Gen. Hooker was unstable and had misdirected his troops in the heat of battle, and protested his command with President Lincoln. Unfortunately, the very able Gen. "Stonewall" Jackson, who managed this Southern feat, was killed by accident during a night reconnaissance with bullets from his own troops. It turned out that this loss would jeopardize the chances of winning Gettysburg by Gen. Lee's appointment of Gen. Ewell, an inferior, to fill Jackson's vital position. Love, a recent marriage, religion, and a wooden leg, gained at the expense of a recent battle, seem to have mellowed Ewell to the horrors of battle.

At Chancellorsville, the Union Army "lost" by having to return to their old positions, but the South did not win a decisive victory and the Union army was not destroyed. However, Lee had proven that the Confederates had a first class army capable of taking on the army of the North. Even with holes in their shoes and rags for clothes, the Southern army held a strong determination to win or die for their cause, and this feeling also prevailed in Richmond.

General Lee wasted no time in getting to Richmond following this victory at Chancellorsville and the burial of his old trusted friend, Gen. Jackson. He reported in on the 15th of May to President Davis and his war cabinet. The discussions focused on the next phase of the war. As they reviewed the situation, they found the Southern Army had a very proud record: four Northern armies lead by the top Northern generals, McClellan, Pope, Burnside and now Hooker had been beaten, but not destroyed in battles in Virginia. However, by looking at the statistics of losses in people, areas, food, and the economy, the South could be viewed as winning individual battles, but gradually loosing the war. In addition, the important Southern stronghold at Vicksburg, Mississippi, which controlled the critical Mississippi River, was in serious trouble. The North needed full

access to traffic on the river for transportation of food, soldiers, and goods but the Vicksburg forts stopped movement and shipping by the Union to support their war effort in the West. Loss of these forts and its control of the river would split the South into two parts. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's army, which numbered some 70,000 men, was sacking Jackson, Mississippi, the state capitol, and was moving on to the fortifications at Vicksburg.

To those in this conference, President Davis had only two choices for winning the war: he could send troops to save Gen. Pemberton's army (roughly 30,000 men) at Vicksburg or take one more chance in winning a victory over the Union Army of the Potomac. If the Union Army of the Potomac was destroyed, the South could easily capture Baltimore, Maryland, and then move on to Washington (about 75 miles away or 4 to 5 days of travel for their army). Then a document could be forced on President Lincoln to sign, favorably serving the separation of the South. A major victory might even get recognition for the Confederacy from England and France. Saving Vicksburg would not win separation of the South, but it would temporary stop breaking up the Southern states along the river. Winning a decisive battle with the Northern army, commanded by the unstable Hooker, stood a good chance to finalize separation of the South. A vote in this cabinet session was held. There was one vote to aid Gen. Pemberton and five votes to send General Lee and his reinforced army north again. (F: 113) There could be two new nations!

Just two weeks after the approval of this strategic battle plan by the Confederate Cabinet in Richmond, Gen. Lee was in his headquarters at Fredericksburg planning changes for his next attack. Lee would give no rest to the North. It was a good decision, since the previous battle proved Gen. Hooker was flaky in battle. Gen. Lee was very busy requisitioning men and equipment to replace the causalities from the big battle a month before. It turns out that trying to get back his four experienced brigades that were lent to Gen. D. H. Hill to stabilize his front on the Virginia Peninsula was a serious mistake. Although Gen. Lee was the senior commander of Gen. Hill, President Davis would not approve their return. It has been said that Gen. Lee should have ordered Gen. Hill to return the brigades when his intelligence reports showed and there was no

immediate threat from the Union Army at Hampton Roads. This denial of Lee's orders to return the elite troops for use in the most important campaign of the war was the first of many serious mistakes made in the Battle of Gettysburg. Two of the four brigades were the best ones in Gen. George Pickett's division. This resistance to Lee's request would seriously hamper Gen. Lee's strength in the future fighting at Gettysburg. More men were needed by Gen. Pickett in his last charge at Gettysburg than were available to break the Union line. At the last moment, Richmond did release two inexperience brigades, but these did not make up for the experienced soldiers that can play such a critical role in battle.

Gen. Lee had some 32 years experience in the world of war; he served in most the departments of the old Union army. His expertise was in planning, and timely executing battle components. From that experience, he changed the make-up of his army from two large corps with three divisions each to three corps with four divisions each. He felt this would make the command more responsive in battle. Each corps had its component of cavalry, artillery, and supply; these were also tied to the army command. This arrangement was somewhat like three small armies under the umbrella of the central army command.

The First Corps was commanded by Gen. John Longstreet, a trusted general serving as Lee's right hand. He was Lee's old "war horse", and Lee would ride with him on the march. The Second Corps was assigned to Gen. Richard Ewell. Early in life, he was a hard drinker and was tough before he lost a leg in battle, and then he turned to religion and marriage. In battle, he rode in a buggy or was tied to his horse. He was judged a worthy officer by Gen. Jackson, who recommended him on his deathbed for his old command.

The Third Corps was commanded by Gen. Ambrose Hill, who had a capable fighting record, but had friction with Longstreet. Both Longstreet and Gen. Stonewall Jackson had arrested him in the past for poor performance. But Gen. Hill had been successful in battle, and that is what counted with Gen. Lee. This record was shown by deeds in the past. He had saved Gen. Lee at the battle of Sharpsburg, and Gen. Stonewall

Jackson at Cedar Mountain. (F: 144) Gen. Lee needed offensive action from Hill in this new command for this next important battle. But, in this coming fight, his performance could be rated as poor, probably due earlier medical problems, in the most important battle of his life. As we shall see, Gen. Lee was always a gentleman, who dearly respected, and cared for his people, and in turn, they gave him great affection and fought with him until the end. However, being a gentleman is one thing; being a manager of harmony for an effective top command in battle is another. Gen. Lee failed to recognize this important attribute, because Hill and Longstreet, and others as well, did not cooperate very well at critical times in the coming battle. So this appointment was a critical failure.

Gen. Lee's technique to command his three corps in battle was straightforward. Gen. Lee was gifted with insight to quickly pick the opponents weak side that he would position his corps for the attack. He would tell each especially picked corps commander with much experience what objective and mission he wanted him to accomplish. He would coordinate the corps' attack with the proper time and the signals to move. He coordinated the movements of each commander in conjunction with other corps. Then, he would let each corps commander have full command over the battle in his sector like which division in the corps should accomplish the objective as assigned by corps commander. In summary, we shall study this technique in command to see its deficiencies in the Gettysburg battle when events go askew.

Planning the Details

In May 1863, Gen. Lee's army was confined to Fredericksburg, and across the river were Gen. Hooker's massive fortifications of the Northern Army. Instead of attacking these works, Gen. Lee decided to move north into the lush Cumberland Valley where food for his men would be plentiful. Gen. Lee did speak of the fact that food for the army gave him more trouble than anything. This move would draw Gen. Hooker's out of his entrenchments and give Gen. Lee more maneuvering ground in the wide valleys in the north for the next big battle. Once again Gen. Lee's strategy worked as the Northern army followed most of his movements.

Basically, Gen. Lee's battle plan was rather simple. In a conversation between Gen. Lee and an old warrior, Gen. Trimble, who had reentered the army after a bad leg wound, Lee revealed his general plan. It went something like this. He would carefully move out of his fortifications at Fredericksburg, which shielded Richmond from attack by the Union and travel north. The large Southern army would circle in a wide northeast manner passing through the Bull Run and the Blue Ridge Mountain ranges into the Shenandoah and the Cumberland valleys. At the north end of the large Cumberland Valley, they would easily capture Harrisburg, the Capitol of Pennsylvania. The only army at Harrisburg would be made of home guardsmen. The prize of a Union state capitol would bring much needed glory to the Southern cause, and then the fighting would along the road to Washington.

Since it was very important to prevent the Union army from knowing that the Southern Army was on the move northward, Lee was careful. Because he needed every advantage they could find for victory. Lee had all the mountain passes guarded by his cavalry, and it was effective. As soon as the Union army knew where Lee was, they would follow him. Lee planned that once he took Harrisburg, then the Union Army would try to impose themselves somewhere between Gen. Lee and Baltimore or Philadelphia, the next logical Confederate targets. Hooker's actual orders were to protect Washington. Gen. Lee planned that when the Union army entered Pennsylvania in its chase after him, he would hit them with a large force, overwhelm their advance on its point, and crush it. Then, he would drive one corps upon another in the column, which would create terror and confusion in the following Union corps. This would separate the Northern units for quick destruction by the Southern Army. It was a good plan if Lee could determine his battlefield.

There was another conversation between Gen. Lee and Gen. Trimble at Hagerstown in which Lee asked him about the terrain around Gettysburg. As one could see from a map, Gettysburg stands out like a hub of a wheel with roads as spokes. Perhaps, Gen. Lee thought, he could use it as a possible point for assembly. Gen. Trimble replied that it contained good battle areas for maneuvering, but he did not mention the hilly ridgeline around the town. Strangely, Gen, Lee's orders were for Gens.

Early and Gordon to attack York and then Harrisburg; they stopped over at Gettysburg on the route to York on 26 June. This was only a few days before the big battle and they would have looked at the local terrain including Cemetery Hill above the town. Why didn't Gen. Lee quiz them on what they saw of the hills on their way to York? This will remain a nagging question. It was only four days before the big battle, and this was a significant error in planning the battle of Gettysburg when he changed object of the battle plan from Harrisburg to Gettysburg.

If the battle of Gettysburg had developed along a stationary straight line on the paper, it appears Gen. Lee's battle plan had merit. However, this battle placed the Union Corps in curved, random positions, spread out along the top of hills, which formed an uneven battle line. The unkind goddess of war handed Gen. Lee a new ball game that did not fit into his basic plan. It happened at Gettysburg, the Yankees were on the high ground. Since war produces much instability as the fighting progresses, the leaders must plan alternatives. Because Lee did not clearly define those alternatives at Gettysburg, this aspect of Gen. Lee's planning was seriously flawed.

The Long March North

In the early days of June with reinforcements in place, Gen. Lee's highly optimistic army began their trip north toward Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to win the next battle. There was hardly any straggling, which is unusual in marches, and their spirits were as high as they thought of past victories. Harrisburg was over 150 miles away as the crow flies, and they had plenty of good food and livestock that was taken from people along the way. They always paid for their "requisitions" in Confederate paper money, which, in theory, could be converted to Confederate gold. The receipt noted the purchase as military supplies. But the dirt roads were dusty, and the big army moved slowly. We should look at the size of the matching armies to view the massive manpower that was gathering for one great battle. Following an extensive reorganization for more effectiveness, Gen. Lee's three large corps held some 67,000 infantry and artillery personnel. This along with the supporting cavalry of 12,400 well-lead experienced troopers made a mass of some 79,400 men looking for a fight. To give you an idea how big these armies were, you can visualize that just a corps would extend down the road

some 14 miles with their baggage and ammunition. And Gen. Lee had three corps on this long march going to battle.

The following figures show the large Union army still resting at that time across the river from Fredericksburg where the last of Gen. Lee's army was posted as a rear guard. The Union army with seven corps, still under Gen. Hooker, had an infantry-artillery force of some 80,000 men. With newly trained cavalry totaling some 7,960, this brought the total to 87,960 Union men. These numbers were judged reasonable for Lee in this coming battle since the Rebel army soundly beat the larger Northern army in the previous battle.

To activate his move north, Gen. Lee was faced with a serious problem. He had to disengage his forces from Hooker's army in their fortifications across the river from Fredericksburg without showing the withdrawal, which would invite their attack. He decided to pull his corps out of the battle line, one at a different time. But there must be total secrecy.

Gen. Lee would move his units out of their fortifications at night away from the eyes of those in Gen. Hooker's balloon unit. (Z: 10-16) Interestingly, the North used modern techniques such as balloon observers with field glasses, telegraph communication with Washington, and railroad trains to carry messengers, and well-equipped troops to win this battle. Most of these facilities were not available to the South. The Southern railroad equipment was poor. Thus, during the night of June 3rd, Gen. Lee moved one of the divisions of the Third Corps to Culpepper, the assembly area for the Confederate Army's move. And on the night of June 4th, he commenced moving the Second Corps to the assembly area. This left the Third Corps as the main block stopping Gen. Hooker, should he move on the Rebel positions.

But those in the balloon did not overlook all this activity, and in the morning of June 3rd, the balloon group reported that there was a line of dust on the road and 20 wagons were moving northward. Gen. Hooker became alarmed all of at this Rebel activity, and ordered a reconnaissance by Sedgwick's Sixth Corps for late in the afternoon of June 5th. With this order, the Union Gen. Howe opened up on the far bank of the Rebels with his

artillery and his men moved across the river. They ran up the small heights gaining about a mile of land, but were stopped by elements of Gen. Hill's Third Corps. The next day, Gen. Lee watched the Yanks on June 6th. Gen. Lee correctly believed that this small battle was meaningless, and that same day, he continued his trip to Culpepper to move his army northward. Gen. Sedgwick told Gen. Hooker the enemy was strong, and it was not safe to post men on the other side of the river. So there was a feeling in the Northern Army to wait and see; the changes were likely due to Gen. Lee's reorganization of his army, which made a change in the Rebel camps.

For a moment, I would like to digress and bring in the subject of Hooker's management techniques for improving the army, which would apply to the future. After Gen. Hooker's failure at Chancellorsville, he needed to upgrade the artillery and cavalry. From lessons learned in the previous battle, the artillery needed more guidance. He removed the batteries from the divisions and gave each of the seven corps a brigade of artillery, which would concentrate their firepower on the objective of the corps. He placed five brigades under control of army headquarters as Artillery Reserve, which could move artillery to the hot spots in a hurry. This turned out to be very effective at Gettysburg. The cavalry needed an upgrade since they often came off badly, after they encountered the professional Rebel cavalry. It is well known that farms and ranches of the South provided the Rebel army with many experienced horsemen with their own horses. The first act of this transaction was to increase the new Union Cavalry Corps under the direct control of the Army Headquarters to some 15,000 men. The next serious move was to give an unheard-of 8 promotions, which included raising three experienced captains to brigadier generals, each in the command of a brigade serving under the Cavalry Corps. This became part of Army Headquarters. The new brigadier generals, G. Custer, E. Farnsworth, and W. Merritt changed the corps overnight into a tough, mean, group who meant business with their sabers. Later in the war, Gen. Sheridan led a wild bunch trained like these to stop Gen. Lee in his last battle of the war at Appomattox Court House.

On the 8th of June, Gen. Lee's attention was turned to Brandy Station; a day's ride north from his old headquarters. This action permitted Gen. Lee to review of the entire

five brigades of his cavalry. This important command would serve as Gen. Lee's eyes in getting important tactical formation to direct his troops in the next battle. And this cavalry considered themselves the elite, much more professional than the Northern cavalry, as proven by experience. Lee took pleasure to see the splendid Southern cavalry parade.

Next day at sunrise on June 9th, all hell broke loose! With orders from Gen. Hooker, Gen. Pleasonton attacked the splendid Southern Cavalry with his six brigades. In numbers, the North equaled the South. It was the biggest cavalry battle of the war. With all the cavalry under his army command, Gen. Pleasonton was to find out what this troop movement of Gen. Lee's army was all about. The fight lasted a full sixteen hours with moments that the South could suffer a serious defeat. But at the end of the day, Gen. Jeb Stuart proved he was an outstanding combat commander, and the battle was a standoff. The tally was 870 dead for the North and 520 for the South. The Southern cavalry was saved for another day, but the real winner was the North. The tough Federal cavalry had received their spurs and would not take a second place in this war. The young generals of the North and their men would eventually show an important cavalry victory on the last day of Gettysburg.

June 10th was a banner day for the South. The point, led by Gen. Jenkins cavalry of Gen. Lee's army, under the command of Gen. Ewell's Second Corps, marched out of the staging area at Culpepper to clear the dusty road to the Shenandoah Valley where they would find food in abundance. They were on the long trail to Harrisburg and destiny.

When Gen. Hooker reorganized the army, he included an intelligence unit, the Bureau of Military Information (BMI), which was needed to assess the type, size, and operation of enemy units that the army would be fighting. It was a new, excellent tool to control the battle. On June 12th, Capt. McEntee of the BMI reported to General Hooker that units of Ewell and Longstreet had marched through Culpepper, which indicated they were going north to the Shenandoah Valley. Gen. Hooker acknowledged this fact, so on June 13th he sent orders to move the Corps of his Army of the Potomac in this general

direction. It was on the15th that Longstreet's Corps would complete their move from Culpepper. This same day Hill's Corps left Fredericksburg, since there was no longer a threat from the Federal Army. Thus, at this time both the armies of the South and the North were moving north toward their future battleground.

Gen. Ewell marched his men fast for the regular army cadence; he wanted to show he was capable of handling his part of the army as well as did his dead mentor, Gen. Jackson. By evening of the third day (June 13th), his point was insight of the outline of Winchester. At sunrise on June 14th, Gen. Early sent his men to form a trap for Gen. Milroy and his Union men in their fortifications. Gen. Early's troops overwhelmed the Northern force with disaster: the South bagged 3,300 prisoners, 23 cannons (which were used against the North at Gettysburg), and some 300 wagons with much needed supplies. (E: 81) Gen. Milroy fled with a couple of hundred men to Harpers Ferry. After this skirmish the Rebel cavalry held control of the entire Cumberland Valley all the way to Harrisburg. Gen. Jenkins' Rebel Cavalry rounded up some 50 blacks and marched them south into bondage showing the slavery issue, and their value as gold was still on the front burner. (E: 82)

This battle was a grave error on the part of this Northern general who had an advanced warning of the approaching Rebels. On June 17th the commander at Harpers Ferry was "smart" and moved his Federal men to the opposite side of the Potomac River, out of "harm's way." Not unexpectedly, President Lincoln removed Gen. Milroy from his command.

Also on June 17th, Gen. Lee moved his headquarters to Berryville on his way to prepare his units for the oncoming battle of Harrisburg. It so happened that along this route there is an important town, named Chambersburg located on a road junction, some 58 miles north of Berryville. One road pointed to Harrisburg and the other to Gettysburg. Moving with a Corps took time since this large unit could only travel about 25 miles a day plus time for issuing orders and alike. Gen. Lee arrived in Chambersburg on the 26th of June. About this time, separate orders were given for Gen. Ewell, the leading point in the army, to send Rhodes' division along the main road to Carlisle followed by Johnson's

division to Greenville, also on a main road. Early's division was sent on the road east through the mountain range via Cashtown Gap to Gettysburg, and thence on to York and Wrightsville, which were on the large Susquehanna River. Hence, that division would move over the river to Columbia and on up the river to do battle at Harrisburg. These divisions moved fast into their positions for the future battle of Harrisburg. Gen. Rodes reached Carlisle on 28th June. Carlisle was a short distance and a few hours marching time to Harrisburg. This was the staging area for the attack.

Gen. Ewell's orders on June 28th from Gen. Lee were to attack Harrisburg, and take the prize big prize, the state capital of Pennsylvania. It started with a two-prong movement. One division under Rodes would travel east along the Carlisle roadway for 16 miles, cross the Susquehanna River, and drive directly into Harrisburg. The other prong, a division under Gen. Early, would come in to Harrisburg from the south by a long arc through Gettysburg to York and on to Wrightsville on the bank of the river. There, Gen. Gordon was on the point with orders to cross a long covered wooden bridge over the river, and travel up the far side, some 30 miles. Then, he would strike the capital in conjunction with Rodes' attack.

When Gen. Early entered York, a large community about 15 miles from the river crossing, he gave the mayor a list goods (spoils) he wanted in lieu of threatening the town with destruction. He received most of the supplies, but it came from the local populace, who then were even less predisposed to help the Southern cause than before. It was an act of war that provoked hostility in the local community. We can see, by Early asking for these spoils, that the Northern blockade of the South was working reasonably well. Southern goods for the Rebel Army were in short supply. Stuart's Rebel cavalry came through York a couple of days later, and no one told Stuart where Early's Rebel army had gone. Early's provocative acts possibly denied the South the much needed Stuart's cavalry at Gettysburg. Stuart's forces did not follow Early to Gettysburg and into battle, but turned northward. Northward was the wrong choice to make.

In evening of 27th of June, the Rebel Gen. Cordon, was ready to attack Colonel Frick's Northern militia holding the long covered wooden bridge at Wrightsville the next

morning. This militia resembled more of a mob than a military unit. In the morning, when the Rebel cannons opened up to disburse the militia, the mob ran fast across the bridge at the orders from Col. Frick. They might have been a mob, but they were a smart mob. The last of the mob stopped in the middle of the span, and gently ignited the wood with fire. Sure enough, the bridge went up in flames. (G: 61) The Rebels might have thought that setting a fire was a stupid thing to do, but they were unsuccessful in putting it out and the bridge burnt down. This part of the battle of Harrisburg was won by this Northern "mob", hardly firing a shot. To stop an incident like fire on the bridge, it would have been proper to send a cavalry unit ahead of the advancing party. If part of Jenkins' cavalry attached with Rodes' Division in Carlisle had been with Gen. Gordon's point, it is likely that the bridge would have been cleared of the militia, and the span would have been saved. The Rebels could have moved over the river and on to victory at Harrisburg. Harrisburg's militias would have easily fallen to Gen. Gordon after his passing over this undestroyed bridge. However, losing the bridge was a serious mistake.

When Gen. Early learned of the bridge disaster, his oversized ego must have caused a tear for he had lost a big opportunity in this battle of capturing a major capital of the North. It is possible there would have been no Gettysburg battle since the major part of this campaign would have been played out at Harrisburg instead.

Orders to Gen. Ewell for an attack on Harrisburg were cancelled, and new orders were issued due to new information from Longstreet's famous spy on the location of Gen. Meade and this Northern army. Thus, Johnson's and Rode's divisions were ordered to Chambersburg, and then on to Gettysburg. Gen. Early's Division was sent to Gettysburg.

The Spy

We need to discuss in some detail the scout, spy and actor, Henry Thomas Harrison who played a critical role in the battle at Gettysburg. The time was 10:00 pm, Sunday night, June 28th. Gen. Lee had just issued written orders to his corps commanders to attack Harrisburg, the capitol of Pennsylvania, a big prize in his long march north. At this time, a thin, shabby-looking man with dirty clothes showed up in Gen. Longstreet's quarters; Harrison was Longstreet's favorite spy, and was paid $150 a

month to get information on the enemy. Harrison had come from Washington, where he had been spying. (G: 80) He had information on Union troop movements; notably, that Gen. Meade and his entire army had crossed the Potomac River and were about 32 miles south of Lee in a village called Taneytown waiting for a fight.

Gen. Lee really did not want to talk with the tramp, but since he had not heard from Gen. Stuart and his cavalry for over a week, he badly needed information on the Northern Army. So where was this Union army that he was to fight? Gen. Longstreet brought Harrison to Gen. Lee's tent. Gen. Lee soon discovered that Gen. Meade was relatively close with the possibility that Meade could cross over the near-by mountains and cut his supply line with Richmond. Wow! Harrison's report stirred up hell and thunder; Gen. Lee sent out dispatches for all commands to assemble at Gettysburg, which had roads extending to each corps, so that they may gather with all possible speed. This ended the Lee's Harrisburg campaign in a hurry; just what President Lincoln badly needed. To show the depth of Lee's thinking of his Union counterpart, he was asked the question of what he thought of Gen. Meade. His reply went something like this: Meade would not make the mistakes of his predecessors and "if Lee made a mistake, Meade would be certain to take an advantage of it". (G: 89)

Stuart's Famous Cavalry Ride

A few days before the spy showed up to report Union troop movements, Gen. Stuart had discussed a cavalry attack with Gen. Lee. We will turn to Gen. Stuart and his famous cavalry ride around the entire Northern Army. He had done this before with success and glory in previous battles. So likely in his mind, this ride to destroy railroads and telegraph lines would recoup honors he lost in the Southern press when the Northern cavalry recently fought his splendid cavalry to a standstill at Brandy Station. Stuart wanted revenge. When we carefully examine the details of Stuart's long ride, we can see how ego and the quest for gold, in the form of supplies, undermined Gen. Lee's position in the battle of Gettysburg.

Gen. Lee and Gen. Stuart enjoyed a long relationship dating back to Stuart's student days in West Point, when Lee was its superintendent. From experience, Lee

could depend upon the right battle decisions by Stuart, the commanding officer of all Lee's cavalry. There had been no large scale contacts except small skirmishes at some of the mountain passes with the Union Cavalry. And all Rebel evidence pointed to the fact that the Union Army remained below the Potomac River; the front line was quiet. So Gen. Stuart proposed that he take a large contingent of cavalry and slip behind the enemy lines for a few days like he did in the past and cause the Union Army a lot of trouble. It would likely detour the Union thinking about Gen. Lee's pending attack on Harrisburg. At this point in time, the Union Army did not know where Gen. Lee's Army was, and neither did Lee know exactly the where the Union Army was. It was a time when uncertainty ruled the day in battle, and that is when danger entered the picture. Gen. Lee did not clearly think through the ramifications of his status in the prologue of this battle.

Gen. Lee was in Northern territory, and the pro-north people in the towns he passed through gave word of his march to the Union outpost in Harrisburg who telegraphed Washington. In turn, a message was sent to the field commander, like Gen. Hooker, so that he had some information on Lee's location. The point is that Gen. Lee should have realized that a battle would be soon coming and retained Stuart's cavalry in close support. But Lee did not, and committed one of the most serious errors of the battle. He lost his "eyes" for finding the Yankee forces, and just as important, the valuable judgment from Stuart in planning the oncoming conflict. Briefly, Gen. Stuart's orders were: 1) form on Ewell's right (protect the flank), 2) gather intelligence (locate the Union Army), 3) collect all supplies you can use for the army (gold in the form of supplies), 4) do all the damage you can (terrorize the Yankees).

In retrospect, we can look at Stuart's report card: 1) he did not form on Ewell's right because the Northern Army cut him off, 2) he gathered a lot of good intelligence, but it was old and unusable by the time it reached Lee, 3) he collected 125 wagons full of very good products and 400 Union soldiers but the time consumed to move the wagon trains cost Stuart the first two critical days at the Gettysburg killing field, 4) he cut the telegraph lines between Washington and Harrisburg for a couple of days, but the Union Army marched northward to the battle just the same. He cut the railroad lines going to Harpers Ferry, but they were not used in the short battle anyway. In summary, his

mission was a failure. More important, he did not serve as Gen. Lee's eyes to tell him there were no Union soldiers (only signal men) on Round top and no Union Cavalry in sight on the second day of the battle, so Lee could have had an easy victory by charging that right end of his line with the 5,000 cavalry that Stuart took away on his big eight day trip.

We should briefly tell of Gen. Stuart's wayward trip as it gives a good lesson of futility in an important battle. Gen. Lee issued orders on the June 23rd for Stuart to take three brigades of cavalry (5,000 men) around the Northern army as conditions dictated and protect the army's main leading flank under Gen. Ewell as he advanced on Harrisburg. Stuart was to leave Gen. Robertson with two Rebel brigades (3,000 men) to protect his line of supplies and communications with Richmond from Union cavalry operating in the mountain passes. It turns out neither of these two commands would be available to Gen. Lee for his major three day battle. However, Jenkins cavalry brigade would remain with Gen. Ewell for his point. This battle plan of Stuart's did not work, and we shall see why. Gen. Stuart left the main army column marching north in the early hours of 24th June, and traveled southeast rapidly, bypassing some large Union Army units moving north toward a future battle. This action should have tipped Gen. Stuart off that they were marching north for some military action against the South; big corps do not move out of their posts unless there is real trouble ahead. This placed all the Northern Corps in a random movement between Gen. Stuart's forces and those of Gen. Ewell. He should have identified the Union units of Gen. Hooker's army on the move and returned to Gen. Lee's headquarters with the information. This is what Gen. Lee needed badly to plan his battle. Instead, Stuart made a very big mistake. His ego was larger than his duty.

He continued the movement arriving at Fairfax, Virginia, some 15 miles west of Washington D.C. on the 27th. At Fairfax Station, he stopped long enough to capture a detachment of some 100 Union cavalrymen. From there Stuart quickly move north to Rockville, Maryland, where he discovered his Achilles' heel, which was gold and more gold in the form of a Union wagon train with 125 wagons that he easily captured. He remembered Gen. Lee's words that he should collect supplies needed for the Rebel army

if possible. But the wagon trains only travel at 2.5 miles per hour. They could normally not move much over 8 hours a day because the horses need to stop and eat their hay. This great impediment would him cost his crown of fame in the Civil War when he missed the main days of the Gettysburg battle; he could not see the forest because of the trees.

Now, Stuart was moving north as fast as possible to the next stop, which was Westminster, Maryland on June 29th. The devil was at play as his orders were to report into Gen. Ewell, so he appeared at Hanover on June 30th some 15 miles north on the correct route north to reach Ewell. The Rebels were just in time to meet Gen. Kilpatrick's Northern cavalry with the Custer and Farnsworth brigades standing in the way. These men had Spencer repeating rifles with firepower, and were looking for a fight. After battling throughout the day, Kilpatrick stood content in blocking the road to Gettysburg, and as fate would have it, Stuart's 5,000 cavalrymen continued north to York. Little did Gen. Stuart know that Gettysburg was only14 miles east (less than 3.5 hours of horse travel away); it was now the important gathering point for Lee's army in the storm of battle. And also, Stuart still did not know where either Gen. Lee or Gen. Ewell was located. From Union newspaper headlines that he gathered along the way, they mentioned trouble with the Southern army at both York and Carlisle. This was misleading. Obviously, he was not going to pick another fight with Kilpatrick's 3,900 men; his orders were to find Ewell, and with bad fate, he chose to again move north to York dragging the slow wagon train along.

At York, not a soul told Stuart where Gen. Early and his Southern Army had gone. Perhaps, they were still mad at Generals Early and Gordon for causing the destruction of their wonderful wooden bridge and the spoils he claimed. If only Stuart had cleared Kilpatrick out of the way and headed to Gettysburg, he would have been just in time to put his glory crown back on and share in a big victory that would go down in Southern history. On the other hand, if Gen. Kilpatrick had recaptured the heavy baggage of the wagon train, it would have freed Gen. Stuart of his burden and would have speeded Gen. Stuart's travel by a day or two putting him just in time for the big battle that was getting underway. In battle, fate hands strange gifts to the winners and

losers. Having no luck at York, Stuart's cavalry traveled on to reach Carlisle in the after noon of July 1st, and there he received a message from Gen. Lee asking his help at Gettysburg.

Rebel Cavalry Attacks

Without hesitation, Stuart started his command for the sound of battle, which was then underway. Haste was important so he pushed his troopers to their limit; some of his men were falling from their mounts for lack of sleep. He arrived before Gen. Lee's tent for orders late in the afternoon of July 2nd. Sadly, the main two days of the battle had already played out to a stand-off. But he was still in time for the important third day. Gen. Lee's instructions to Gen. Stuart were simple: rest and prepare for tomorrow's big battle; and in the afternoon, at the large sound of cannons, Gen. Stuart's Cavalry Corps were to attack to create great havoc on the rear of the Union Army. Gen. Pickett's divisions were to attack, at the same time, the middle of the Union line on Cemetery Ridge.

On the 3rd of July, as Gen. Lee had directed, Gen. Stuart placed the main cavalry corps of the South at a high point on Cress Ridge, located about three miles northwest of Gettysburg behind the large Federal Army. This action would be fought at the northern end of the long Union battle line of Gettysburg. The Southern corps was composed of four small, cavalry brigades, who were waiting for a signal from cannons to attack. The 3,000 Rebels who arrived yesterday from a long, trying trip around the Federal army were very tired; they showed losses of about 1,800 men. Also Jenkins' brigade of some 430, who were led by Col. Ferguson (previously served as the point for Gen. Ewell's Corps) joined Stuart's command. This gave Gen. Stuart about 3,430 troopers in four small brigades. On the Federal side of this oncoming cavalry battle, there 3,250 troopers in two large brigades of cavalry. This showed the battle was an even count. It is an interesting curiosity of war that three days prior to this time at Hanover, Stuart's cavalry was stopped cold on the side road to Gettysburg by the Union cavalry. They were led by Generals Custer, Gregg, Farnsworth, and Kilpatrick, who were also in this battle on the third day of Gettysburg.

A disaster for the North was in the cards as Gen. Gregg was about to relieve Gen. Custer of his command by orders from Gen. Alfred Pleasonton. At this important moment, Custer could see in the distance that Stuart was moving in for his attack; Gregg did not have the troops to hold his ground. Gen. Custer was a twenty-three year old nut, a big man wearing a flashy uniform who was known for his special oversized saber, which he used with great skill in battle. He also never ran from a good fight. He turned to Gen. Gregg and suggested he be given orders to remain for the oncoming battle as he could spare a few hours. This was easily arranged. Obviously, Gen. Pleasonton's order to withdraw Gen. Custer, without viewing the field conditions, was a real error.

The objective for Gen. Stuart's attack was the intersection of the Hanover Road and Low Dutch Road (about 3 miles southeast of Gettysburg); the latter lead to the rear of Gen. Meade's army, who was under a major attack by Gen. Pickett. It was in the afternoon of the third day at Gettysburg. Stuart's Rebel cannons had signaled 1:00 pm as the time for attack. Custer and Gregg were there standing in his way. Custer had repeating rifles and sent out dismounted skirmishers to feel out the oncoming enemy. These skirmishers pushed so hard that Gen. Stuart sent in his mounted cavalry at full gallop. Seeing the Rebels coming on fast, Custer led his brigade, the 7th Michigan, along with Hampton's Brigade, and moved in fast. They crashed into the main Rebel body with their oncoming sabers. Fighting was everywhere. Gen. Custer's horse was down, so Custer, holding his big saber, mounted another horse and was off to do more damage.

The Union Army was very determined to continue the fight. But Gen. Stuart decided he had enough and withdrew to safe ground. The Northern cavalry lost 254 men of which 219 were from the Michigan Brigade, and the South lost 181 men. The Union Cavalry had gained their spurs and won this part of the battle: there was no attack on Meade's rear. This event showed that if Gen. Stuart had the missing 1,800 riders from the long march around the Union Army in his command, he would have had an excellent chance of defeating Gen. Custer. When you consider the losses, it is obvious that Stuart's long trip was a serious error in lowering the effectiveness of his command.

But on this same day, the battle for the Union cavalry was not over as Kilpatrick's division was assigned to protect the northern end of Meade's battle line. Little Roundtop was in the vicinity of the fight between the Northern cavalry and Longstreet's infantry divisions.

Briefly, Gen. Pleasonton ordered Gen. Kilpatrick to press the enemy on the Union left flank in the afternoon. No one knows what the real purpose was as the rough ground was not suitable for a cavalry attack. It had broken ground, bushes, fences, which would breakup a charge into small individual units; these could be easily taken care of by infantry. There were two Brigades, one under Gen. Merritt and the other under Gen. Farnsworth. Gen. Merritt's dismounted brigade charged first, and was easily driven back by Southern artillery and infantry. Then, Gen. Farnsworth's brigade charged mounted; it was a total disaster. General Farnsworth would not surrender behind the lines, and was killed. His entire brigade was nearly destroyed. It is thought that Gen. Kilpatrick's ego was on the line for glory because he may have had news of Gen. Pickett's charge before he sent Farnsworth's Brigade into the roaring fire of the Rebel troops. It was a waste of men and a major mistake.

Before The Battle of Gettysburg

We have already just reviewed the incidents that took place in moving Gen. Lee's cavalry into their battle positions. Now, we will look at the infantry movements of both armies. But first, we should say that the unrecognized date, June 28th, Sunday, will stand out as a most important day in this battle as two events on that date would change the face of battle. The first event, as we have previously mentioned, was serious news brought in the evening to Gen. Lee by the rebel spy, Harrison, that the Union Army was in the area of Gettysburg. By this event, orders went to all of his command to assemble at Gettysburg. A second event on this day occurred at 2:00 in the morning of June 28th when Col. James A. Hardie, Chief of Staff for General in Chief Halleck (some references prefer Gen. Hardie), with papers approved by President Lincoln, appeared in Gen. Meade's tent at Frederick. (G: 72) Upon awaking from a bad dream, the shock was so great that Meade thought he was under arrest for some infraction of army rules. (C: 43) The papers relieved Gen. Hooker and placed Gen. Meade in command of the Northern

Army. Col. Hardie rode in civilian clothes on the train from Washington to Frederick because of rumors that raiders (Gen. Stuart's men) were in the vicinity of Washington. (C: 42, 43) With only wild speculation, think of what this bad dream would have had on this battle and a different ending if Stuart had actually captured Col. Hardie!

Most authors do not give an enough space in their works on Civil War history to show how one little event can change the course of this war. Senior General John Reynolds was a very demanding and smart general who was favored to replace the discredited Gen. Hooker for commanding the army. When he was talking to Pres. Lincoln following the battle of Chancellorsville, he was given this opportunity to command the Union Army. He turned it down. Washington was micromanaging the war, and the commander in the field, like Hooker's replacement needed latitude to meet the challenges of Gen. Lee. Gen. Reynolds recommended his trusted friend, Gen. Meade, who had a proven record. He was twice wounded in battle and successfully commanded a corps up front; to his men he was known as the old snapping turtle as he demanded action now. Lincoln did not ask Meade to lead the army at that time, but he sent Meade orders on 28th of June. Lincoln moved fast in these serious circumstances of immediate battle. These orders changed history. The orders read, "Your army is free to act as you deem proper under the circumstances as they arise". They also said that the army must protect Washington and Baltimore. In addition, they gave him authority to appoint to command any officers he felt capable. (D: 105, 118)

As an example of the dynamics of these orders, Elon Farnsworth, Wesley Merritt, and George Custer were promoted from captains to brigadier generals in the Union Cavalry. (D: 118) And on 3rd of July (only 5 days later), Gen. Farnsworth was killed along with his 98 men in a mounted attack on the Rebel right flank in stopping the Rebels. Also, in this same contest on the right flank, Gen. Merritt's dismounted cavalry attack also fought the Rebels to a stand still. Gen. Custer saved the Union line on the Rebel left flank by his unorthodox charge. Just by changing these orders to Meade, these new brigades kept the Rebel infantry from joining in the critical Pickett's charge on day three of the battle.

The change in Meade's commanding orders was important. On the third day, at the extreme left end of Lee's line, the main Confederate Cavalry under Gen. Stuart was ordered to break the rear of Union line at the very same time Pickett's Rebels charged for the clump of trees in the center of the main Union line. As mentioned before, Gen. Custer was ordered to move to a different front, but decided to delay the orders. He and Gen. Gregg teamed up to badly defeat Gen. Stuart's charge. It prevented a disaster from occurring to the attacking Union Army from its rear position. (D: 473) Think of Gen. Meade's orders for his command this way; if the Union Army was not able to make captains into generals, who could actively lead their brigades to success in this last stage of the critical battle on the third day, the battle could have gone significantly worse for the Yankees.

On the 29th and 30th June, all of Gen. Lee's Corps was traveling to Gettysburg. Gen. Ewell's two divisions near Carlisle were told to forget about attacking Harrisburg on Wednesday. Thus, in reality, the spy's (Harrison) message to Gen. Lee on Sunday night saved Harrisburg, the prize, from the torch of war. (G: 80, 91) However, if Harrison had delayed the message to Gen. Lee for just one day, for some strange reason - like his horse lost its shoe, Harrisburg would have been in flames and that might have given the South a much needed victory. To continue the "what if " drama, Gen. Meade would have turned his attention toward saving Harrisburg, so there would have been a new "ball game" and Gen. Stuart and his "lost" 5,000 troopers might have made the difference in joining Gen. Lee in this battle that never happened. Thus, wars at times are won and lost on fate, and there could have been two countries.

Now, we will examine the positions of the Corps of the South and North Armies as they prepared for battle for battle. According to the spy's information, the Northern Army was assembling in the area of Fredrick, Maryland, and Gettysburg, which would place them in position to come through the mountains at Cashtown Gap and cut Lee's supply lines with Richmond. On the morning of June 29th, Gen. Ewell was in the preliminary stage of his attack on Harrisburg; Gen. Jenkins's cavalry had skirmished with the Northern home guard near Harrisburg. (D: 124) Plans were underway to attack the next day. Later, in the same afternoon, Gen. Ewell received delayed orders, to terminate

the attack on Harrisburg with Johnson's and Rodes' Divisions. Later, an order was received to send both divisions to Chambersburg and on to Gettysburg. Shortly, more new orders were received for Gen. Ewell to travel south with Rodes Division to Gettysburg by the Heidlersburg road. The map indicates that this is a more direct route to the battlefield. (D: 128) However, a serious mistake was in this decision, as we shall see. Gen. Johnson had been guarding a supply train and upon receiving the first order began his march toward Chambersburg. Thus, Gen. Ewell told him to continue the movement on to Gettysburg by the Chambersburg route instead of recalling him to take the Heidlersburg route.

Here is the error. The map indicates that Gen. Johnson's route by Chambersburg to Gettysburg was some 47 miles, while the route that Gen. Ewell was instructed to take with Rodes' division was 30 miles. There is a difference of some 17 miles, give or take a few miles. Strange things happen in war; at this time, when Johnson was at the mountainous Cashtown Gap, he met Gen. Early's captured Northern militia under guard. (E: 134) They were taken in a recent skirmish and were paroled having signed forms saying that they would never fight again. They were on their way back to homes in Pennsylvania. The militia had shoes and Johnson's men needed shoes for their Gettysburg adventure. So they exchanged shoes, which took about a half hour. The militia had the last laugh, since the defeated Southern army later walked from Gettysburg back to their base at Fredericksburg in the Northern shoes.

An easy calculation will show that with the infantry marching at 2.5 miles per hour by the manual, it would take many more hours for Johnson to march over the Chambersburg route than the one he should have taken over the Heidlersburg route. (I: 9) In all these calculations, the total time for Johnson's march was about 7 hours more plus or minus if we include the shoe episode. This was much longer than the other route. What does all this mean to victory at Gettysburg? We shall see that on the next day (July 1st), which was the first day of the big battle, Gen. Ewell waited late in the evening to complete Gen. Lee's order, intending to use Gen. Johnson's division when they showed up to attack Culp's Hill. This hill was a very favorable battle position for the Rebels. But Johnson was too late as it was nearly dark. The next day, it was not readily possible to

take the hill from the heavy fortified Union Army. Not carefully examining the route to battle was a costly, timely mistake.

Gen. Lee's orders to Gen. A. P. Hill were simple; move your Corps to Cashtown (about 8 miles from Gettysburg). Exercise care and do not bring on a major engagement. (F: 144) On 30th June, early in the morning, Hill moved two divisions near the Gap with Gen. Heth's Division leading the way. Second in line was Gen. Pender's Division. It would be about a 3-hour march (8 miles). But the third division, which was Anderson's, was delayed due to moving cannons, wagons, and alike until night fall; still they were also ready for battle the next day, (July 1st). On June 30th Gen. Heth was camped outside of Cashtown, and, with approval, sent a unit to carefully survey Gettysburg, some 8 miles away, for some shoes.

He sent out a reconnaissance team commanded by Gen. Pender in the after noon to have a look with the warning not to bring on a fight. They saw some Union soldiers in the distance; Gen. Buford's cavalry saw some Rebels at a distance. It was a standoff; each went his way, but no fighting. In the early hours of the 1st of July, the remaining parts of the army, Gen. Longstreet's two divisions (Gen. Hood and Gen. McLaws) were on the same crowded road to Cashtown. His third division, under Gen. Pickett, was temporarily assigned to guard supplies in the Rebel wagon train. On the third day of battle, he would play a leading role. So all of Gen. Hill's Corps was in place, backed up by Longstreet's divisions. All of these Rebels were looking for a fight.

Following Gen. Lee's orders, Gen. Ewell assembled his two division commanders and their men at Heidlersburg to determine if Lee's order meant for them to go to Cashtown or Gettysburg. It turns out that their destination was Gettysburg regardless of orders because the battle overrode the paper trail. In the morning of 1st July, these men had moved 10 miles, and at about 2:00 PM, they answered a message from Gen. Hill to join him in battle at Gettysburg. Thus, Gen. Ewell's men were positioned to join in the battle. Lastly, Gen. Johnson, Second Corps, would follow Gen. Hill's Corps late in the afternoon to Cashtown. At this time on the 30th June, Gen. Lee's three corps (each with

about 20,000 men) would be marching towards Gettysburg with a strong will towards victory.

Now, I will digress a bit and tell you how the morale of the Southern soldiers gave a driving force to the Gettysburg campaign. In the planning stage, Gen. Lee acknowledged that food rations had been cut, clothes were ragged, and shoes had big holes. For provisions to support his army, he was going to take along sufficient Confederate money to pay for every thing obtained from foraging in Pennsylvania and other places. All this trouble was due to the successful blockade of the South initiated by Gen. Lee's old friend, Gen. Winfield Scott (the dedicated Virginian). With the blockade, production of goods, food, money, and new shoes nearly came to a stop. It was easy to see that slowly, but surely the blockade planned by this ancient warrior was winning the war. It is very difficult to charge across the rugged battlefield with holes in the shoes.

The condition of Gen. Gordon 's brigade as it marched through Gettysburg, the first time on its way to attack York, was noted by the postmaster's wife, Fannie Buchler as: the men were dirty, hatless, shoeless, and footsore. (D: 85) These were strong words, which permits a sad feeling for the condition of the Rebel troops. They had a real need for foraging. There are two examples I will cite to show successful foraging on their way to the attack on Harrisburg. Gen. Johnson asked his Brigadier Gen. Stuart to go out and bring in needed supplies. The town of McConnellsburg was requisitioned of 60 head of cattle and 40 horses (D: 82). Still, another account in the two weeks travel north through Maryland and Pennsylvania, the food collection from local farms was: "7,900 bushels of wheat, 5,200 head of cattle, 1000 hogs, and 51,000 lbs. of cured meat." (E: 108). Upon taking York, the Yankees were required to give shoes, and they provided Gen. Early with 1,200 pairs of shoes and 1,500 pairs of boots, along with $26,800 Federal dollars. (G: 61) We wondered how they could spend all this Union money in Richmond where Confederate currency was the legal tender. And the taking all of the local farmers winter food storage made these farmers damn mad at the Rebel Army.

The farmers were so mad at the Rebels for taking their cattle that they sent Washington via Harrisburg all the information on rebel troop movements. The

Harrisburg people sent the data to Washington by wire, so Meade had an idea where Lee was hiding, but Lee did not know any thing about Meade. In this battle, the Southern soldiers held their cause in the highest esteem, and vied to get even for all the troubles the North had caused. Perhaps, in general the Southern army was a little too self-assured with their high expectation of victory, having won the four previous battles and advancing all over this Northern area without the Union Army in sight.

On the other side of this battle, we will view the Northern Army in motion. Recall that on June 12th the new intelligence section (BM1, under Col. Sharpe, a fitting name to a fitting assignment), said his evidence showed the entire Rebel army was moving north. Two days later, Gen. Hooker, then the previous northern commander, also ordered his army to move north. The orders to Gen. Hooker were to position his army to protect Washington. President Lincoln told him that his mission was not to capture Richmond, which Hooker had previously proposed, but it was to destroy Lee's army. A brilliant idea. Before being replaced, Gen. Hooker maneuvered his army of some 80,000 troops for two weeks, arranging the units on the eve of battle into defensive positions on the south side of the Blue River Mountain Range.

On the other side of this range was Gen. Lee's Army getting ready to capture the prize, Harrisburg. Without his cavalry, Gen. Lee did not know where the new Northern commander, Gen. Meade, and his army were located. By 29 June the Northern army had moved north on the east side of the Blue Ridge Mountains, just over the mountains from Gen. Lee. But with the splendid work of the Northern intelligence unit along with the Northern citizens, who had been paid with worthless Confederate money for taking their horses and cattle and were unhappy. They gave Gen. Meade a good idea where each unit of the Southern Army was hiding. And most of Lee's army was in the area over the hill on the Harrisburg Road and some were near Cashtown, which was just 10 miles from Gettysburg. The problem Meade faced was, as soon as Lee found out about Northern army, he would come over a mountain pass and make a lot trouble in some clever way as he had done before. But which mountain pass, was Gen. Meade's real concern. We can say that Meade was a smart defensive general who knew where the likely spot for trouble might lie; the roads pointed to Gettysburg.

Since Meade did not know exactly where the battle would start, he placed his seven army corps at strategic locations, each within a day or two marching time from Gettysburg. The following is a list of the Union Corps (about 10,000 men each) with their locations and approximate marching times to the battlefield at Gettysburg, to show the difficulty of marching infantry units into the critical stages of battle. Do not forget, it takes hours for the messengers of the Army commander to reach the Corps commander by horseback, and the time that was lost could determine the out-come of the battle; the Union Army lost the first day by poor communications as we shall see. The location and travel time to Gettysburg by the Union forces were:

- 1st Corps- Reynolds- 4 miles- 1.5 hrs - Gettysburg, 1st day fighting
- 11th Corps- Howard- 8 miles- 3 hrs - Taneytown area, 1st day fighting
- 6th Corps- Sedgwick- 35 miles- 14 hrs - Manchester, second day fighting
- 3rd Corps- Sickles- 8 miles- 3hrs. Gettysburg area 1st day support, second day fighting
- 5th Corps- Sykes- 15 miles- 6 hrs.-Union Hills, second day fighting
- 2nd Corps - Hancock- 12 miles- 5.3 hrs - Taneytown, second day fighting
- 12th Corps- Slocum- 8 miles- 3 hrs - Littlestown, second day fighting
- Two brigades of cavalry (2,950)-Buford-dismounted cavalry, at Gettysburg, 1st day
- Gen. Meade - Army Headquarters- 12 miles- Taneytown, midnight of 1st day Gettysburg

Thus, all seven of Gen. Meade's Corps and Buford's cavalry were either fighting or on the road to the big battle on the 1st of July.

THE FIRST DAY

If you recall, one reason that Gen. Lee chose A. P. Hill to command the elite Third Corps was that he held an excellent record for winning in battles and was aggressive. However, today was not to be one of his best days. On the previous day, he had sent Gen. Pettigrew's Division to conduct a reconnaissance of Gettysburg because he had learned there were some Union soldiers in the town. Sure enough, Gen. Pettigrew saw Union soldiers and returned without firing a shot, which were his instructions. Pettigrew's brigade commander, Gen. Heth, took him to the Corps commander, Gen. A. P. Hill, to give the report in person on his inspection. Gen. Hill listened and said something like it was just a cavalry observation detachment as Gen. Meade's army was

down in Maryland. Big mistake. Gen. Heth followed up on this thought, and asked Hill if he would have any objection in taking his men into Gettysburg the next day (June 1st) to get some shoes.

Ah! Gold, greed, and fame, enter the picture. Gen. Hill approved Heth's proposal. (F: 145). That order to Gen. Heth would start the battle of Gettysburg! You may note that Heth's division was some 7,400 men, and that is a lot of men to go after a few shoes. During the night, Gen. Pender was awakened, so he would have his division (6,700 men) ready to support Gen. Heth if required. (G: 170) And when you think of 14,100 men going after some shoes, it is a lot of men who mean business in the game of shoes. Their ego sensed war and honor.

Gen. Lee rightly did not want the battle until all of his army was on the field which was smart thinking; how would Lee win against the unknown, and Gen. Stuart's cavalry was not in sight to provide the answers. But A. P. Hill had previously sent a dispatch to Gen. Lee that Hill was advancing in the morning (1 July) to see what was in his front at Gettysburg. Lee did not reply as some said that Lee had a passive frame of mind. (E: 161) Aggression has one place in battle, and disobeying orders has another. But Hill had lit the fuse that threw two large armies into the upheaval of a critical battle.

Day One - The Attack

The only opposing force was the Northern cavalry commander, Gen. Buford with 3,000 troopers, who knew his men were the bait for the opposing larger Confederate forces since his cavalry was in small numbers. He also knew from his intelligence that his opposition was of large Corps strength, and informed his superiors. (E: 144) Gen. Buford realized that the many roads leading to Gettysburg would make the location convenient to pull all the Northern Army together in case of a battle. Also, the hilly ridge (Cemetery Ridge) running south about 3 miles from Gettysburg to two large hills called Big and Little Round Tops would give the Union Army the high ground. Soon, the1st Corps (Reynolds), the 11th corps (Howard), and others had marching orders for Gettysburg; the two corps would be the only ones arriving this morning of 1st July for battle.

To show the will in the Union Army, we will cite some cases. The 1st Corps was first on the firing line under Gen. Reynolds. They started marching from Middletown to Emmitsburg (just 10 miles from Gettysburg), a distance of 36 miles in 22 hours with a 2-hour stop. The second case was that of the tough Gen. Hancock's 2nd Corps who marched his men for 32 miles in18 hours straight for their battle on the 2nd of July. (E: 145). At this time, Gen. Meade's orders of 30th June meant business. One of his orders to all commands said to issue 60 rounds and three days rations; another one, that Corps commanders were authorized to order instant death to any soldier who fails in his duty (E: 147-8). This was war!

It is important to stop here and look at an overview. It is very confusing to follow the beginning of the battle because so many army units were fighting each other at the same time. But the outcome of various small unit conflicts would obviously influence the other larger units in the victory or defeat. Thus, we have decided to separate the story into two major sectors: the north sector, commanded by the Southern Gen. Ewell, (2nd Army Corps), and the west sector, commanded by the Southern, Gen. Hill (3rd Army Corps). These were the commanders who, along with Gen. Lee, controlled the initial battle.

The battle began in the morning of July 1st on the road leading from Cashtown to Gettysburg in the western sector. Then, additional fighting spread to the northern sector in the afternoon as more troops entered the battle. So in summary, two separate Rebel commanders fought in this battle, each controlling his sector. And with poor luck, less numbers, lack of good command control, and no additional support by other corps, the 1st Corps and the 11th Corps of the Northern army were destined to complete a bad day.

Let us look at Buford's cavalry position before the battle began in the western sector. He believed from his intelligence that the Rebel army would attack in the morning of 1st July. He had only two brigades. Buford was a hard senior officer who had fought Indians in the West and had a long experience with the cavalry; many of the new cavalry tactics were of his making. He was outstanding in battle. He used the trooper as dismounted infantry who could fire from a prone position. One trooper held

four horses in the rear to change the troopers quickly to a new location. Buford was from the wide-open spaces of Kentucky, tough, and lean from the front line. He had minor wounds from this battle and within a half a year would die at age 36 from a sickness.

In the evening preceding the battle, he carefully placed his pickets, some 550 men, out in front. (E: 163). There was a railroad cut that paralleled the road leading to Gettysburg, and a small creek in front of a small ridge that was at a right angle to the road. These obstacles would give Buford some protection for his troopers. Like the Rebels, Gen. Buford was looking for a fight, and he was about to get one.

The initial attack by the advancing Rebel column, Heth's Division, came about 7:30 AM. (E: 162) The heavy rapid-fire power of the Union cavalry was so intensive that Heth had to expand his front into lines that took an hour and a half to form. So the attack began in earnest at about 9:00. (E: 163). This time the Rebels were in for a big surprise; these Union troopers were armed with the new seven-shot Spencer repeating rifle. (C: 121) The Union trooper could get off four shots while his adversary was getting off one of the muzzle loading rifles. (F: 145). With this fire power, Buford's 3,000 men held his position for about 3 hours against the Rebels composed mainly of Heth's Division of 7,500 men and a supporting element, Pender's Division of 6,700 men. (D: 591-2).

About 9:00 am Buford was looking through his glasses from a position on the top of the Lutheran seminary. His men were under great pressure from the new formation in the Rebel lines, and he wondered if he could hold. Just then, his old friend Gen. Reynolds, one the most timely and skillful commanders of the Union Army, shouted to Buford that his 1st Division had arrived, and with that signal, he move his unbeatable Iron Brigade into the battle line.

Gen. Meade had previously made Gen. Reynolds commander over all three corps on his left flank; Reynolds immediately sent orders to generals of the 1st , 11th and 3rd Corps to move at all possible haste to Gettysburg. Also he sent a status message to Gen. Meade. Gen. Reynolds was making arrangements at the battle line for his men to relieve the cavalry when fate played the worst card: a Rebel sniper shot Gen. Reynolds in the

head. This placed Gen. Howard, who was bringing up the Second Corps, as the senior officer on the field.

It was close to 11:00 am when both of the Northern brigades, Gen. Meredith and Gen. Cutler of the 1st Corps with a total of 3,800 men, were on the field facing opposite two Rebel brigades in the western sector, Gen. Archer and Gen. Davis with their 3,500 men. The Rebels were advancing on each side of the road toward Gettysburg..

In this incident, we will first talk about what happened on the far left side of the Chambersburg Pike (road) as Gen. Meredith advanced toward the Rebels. (E: 177) On this side there were trees, brush, obstructions that would break up communications and solid troop formations, and as the Archer's Rebel Brigade came through this entanglement, they were hit by Gen. Meredith's full Union brigade. Some fancy combat footwork by Meredith's Regiments on the flanks turned each side of the advance into a Rebel rout. Brigadier General Archer was captured. The tally at this time for the Iron Brigade engagement was about 1400 engaged with roughly 300 casualties. On the Rebel side there was one general captured from his brigade of 1,200 men with about 370 casualties. So far it was not a bad morning for the Yankees.

Now, in the same time frame, we will look across the Chambersburg Pike leading to Gettysburg on the right side to see how Rebel Gen. Davis' brigade was advancing on Yankee Gen. Cutler's Brigade. Cutler placed three Union regiments on the right side of the road and two on the immediate left to meet the oncoming Rebel brigade. Within 15 minutes after the Union regiments formed, they were mixing it up with Archer's Rebel Brigade on the far side of the road. And this time, the table was turned.

Davis' three Rebel regiments crushed Cutler's three regiments, pushing the Yankees in full retreat, back a quarter of a mile to Wills Woods for shelter. Gen. Doubleday, the new Union 1st Corps commander, saw the disaster develop. He ordered 6th Wisconsin and the brigade guard forward to face the oncoming Davis's victorious regiments. The two remaining Union regiments along side the road to Gettysburg(14th Brooklyn and the 95th New York) were also ordered to face the road where Davis's men were firing. These Rebels were crossing the open railroad cut parallel to the road to

continue their attack as a new threat on the Union flank. The rebels piled into the railroad cut for shelter; their formation was broken up. Soldiers of the 6th Wisconsin and the 95th New York were ordered to charge the Rebels in the railroad cut, which they did in perfect order, taking many prisoners and driving the rest into retreat.

Doubleday had temporarily saved the Union forces from rout, but still this war game remained to be played out later in this afternoon. The score of this action was: out of the Union Gen. Cutler's Brigade of 2,000 men, he lost about 660 men, killed, wounded, and prisoners. The rebel force with 12,300 soldiers lost about 600 men (D: 196). Unfortunately, at the end of this skirmish both Archer's and Davis's brigades had taken heavy causalities.

The second session of this complex game of war was to be played out in the afternoon, mostly in the northern sector. To boost spirits of the Union Army, it was before noon when the remaining elements of the 1st Corps reached the battleground extending the battle line northward to connect the western sector with the northern sector. Also, Gen. Howard's 11th Corps moved onto the field soon afterward to cover parts of the northern battle line. Gen. Howard was the senior general, and by army protocol became the senior commander on the field now that Gen. Reynolds was not present.

The afternoon disaster was really two remaining battles being played out; one in the north sector, and the other was a continuance of the morning battle in the west sector, which was between the Northern 1st Corps along with the elements of 11th Corps fighting Hill's Rebel Corps. But at the end of the first day, the two Corps of the Southern Army enjoyed success by capturing Gettysburg. To continue, after 1:00 PM the battle lines were formed, and in the first part of the battle in the north, Gen. Howard posted the 11th Corps of the Union Army to meet the on coming larger Ewell's Corps, who were marching to Gettysburg from the north on the Harrisburg and Carlisle Roads.

Also, by this hour, the Union 1st Corps, under Gen. Doubleday, was posted on line on the west side of the Gettysburg area facing Hill's Corps. Thus, two battle lines were formed somewhat like a large inverted "V". And there was no prior communication

or planning with Gen. Lee by the Southern commanders for details of this initial battle. ”It just happened this way.”

About 2:00, Gen. Howard was informed that the Rebel Corps of Gen. Ewell's force had arrived by the northern roads with two divisions (Gen. Rodes and Gen. Early). To meet this menace, Gen. Howard alerted the Federal 11th Corps and some of his 1st Corps. They extended a long Union line across the north side of the Gettysburg area. But this northern side of the Union was very long and Federals were too thin, so a gap existed at a juncture of the lines between the two Union Corps. These were the only two Northern Corps, which would do the fighting against heavy odds. There were not enough northern men to close the gap. This joint in the lines was the spot where the Southern army charged about half way through the battle causing a break in the Union battle line.

Let us take another overview of the Southern Army. There were two separate parts of the main battle; the north was handled by Gen. Ewell’s Corps and the west by Gen. Hill’s Corps. In the first part, our observation is that there had been no coordination except a note from Hill to Ewell saying to come as he was moving on Gettysburg. This showed the serious lack of control of this disjointed battle by Gen. Lee, who was traveling on his faithful horse, Traveller, to Gettysburg at a slow pace. (In the end, it would be this horse that would carry Gen. Lee and a white flag of truce to Gen. Grant at Appomattox.) (L: 404) A big error in this battle was committed in the beginning as there were no major battle assignments for the first day by Gen. Lee. It was a "free for all". Without additional communication, the Rebel Gen. Ewell riding with his division commander, Gen. Rodes, quickly moved his Corps from Heidlersburg (10 miles) to answer the sound of the cannons. (D: 198) Gen. Lee had not arrived, so each Corps Commander (Ewell and Hill) was on his own to make the initial decisions of attack.

It was about 2:00 pm when Rodes, under Ewell’s orders, arrived and formed his five Rebel brigades in line for the attack on both sides of the Carlisle Road. (E: 219) Off in the distance to his right was some fighting by Hill’s men. Iverson’s Brigade (1,380 men) did not have the scouts out. By ill luck, O’Neal’s division on Iverson’s left flank was engaged with some small arms fire and could not provide support. Iverson wore a

lot of ego on his sleeve and wanted the honor of getting into the battle first. Thus, he made contact with the Yankee Gen. Baxter's brigade (1,450 men) and Gen. Paul's brigade (1,540 men) hiding behind a stone wall. How all these men could hide behind one wall is still a mystery. When the Southern force was about 75 yards from the stone fence, the Yankees stood up and mowed the Southerners down. It was a disaster for Gen. Ewell. This was another big mistake. The lesson learned was to restrain the ego and not to rush into battle with out scouting the enemy. The Yankees in the 11th Corps and 1st Corps were stretched very thin across their front on the northern sector. Although the Iverson attack was a set back, Gen. Rodes still kept up the attack on this northern sector in action.

About a half hour later, at 3:00 PM Gen. Early's rebel Division of Ewell's Corps marched into the battle with 5,500 men (D: 586), the flags were flying, and their spirits were at high pitched. They were assigned the left flank of the Southern Army on each side of the Harrisburg Road to add their support to Gen. Rodes Division, then in close combat. (E: 219) The opponent was the Union 11th Corps, the only Corps holding the northern sector. Gen. Gordon's brigade with 6 Rebel regiments was first in line as the point. The next tier in the rear of Gordon was Gen. Hays' Brigade (1,300 men) on the right with 5 regiments and Gen. Avery's brigade (1,200 men) on the left with 6 regiments. With 17 regiments the South enjoyed a marked advantage in regiments that faced the Northern regiments. The Rebels were facing 2400 Union men, which was from the First Division, 11th Corps, located at the end of the Union line. This Union force consisted of Gen. Giles' brigade with 4 regiments and Ames' brigade with 4 regiments or a total of 8 regiments. (D: 566-576) The attack was conducted for the point to open up the end of the Union line, in order that the following Rebel brigades could get behind the Union line and attack the Yankees from the rear.

In summary two divisions of Gen. Ewell's Corps, Gen. Early and Gen. Rodes, conducted the main Rebel attack in the northern sector with a totaled of about 15,400 men. The 11th Corps of Howard's command had only 9200 men. (D: 576 - 586) By about 3:30PM, it was easy tell that the South's soldiers would eventually put to rout those in the Northern Army. They would fall back to their destiny in Gettysburg. There, as a

Union mob without direction, were rounded up and easily captured in the crooked, crowded streets by Gen. Ewell's men. Much of this fault of the unfortunate capture of the Union soldiers rests with the Yankee commanders, who did not clearly convey a plan to the retreating units to move around to the open south area on the edge of the town and then to the ridge in an orderly action instead of moving as a mob through the crowed streets. This closes the successful action of the Southern army in the northern sector, and now we will turn to action of the brave soldiers on the western sector.

Gen. Lee left Gen. Longstreet and his troops who were advancing toward Gettysburg to hurry on at the sound of cannon fire. At around 3:00 PM, Lee was close to Gettysburg in the western sector and was riding towards the front. Gen. Lee was met by Gen. Heth, the rebel field division commander since Heth 's superior, Gen. Hill, was subject to an old-time sickness and had difficultly riding a horse at that time. Heth gave Gen. Lee the status of his side of the battle. Soon after, Lee studied the general battlefield from a knoll with his field glasses and noted the initial skirmishing by Rebel Gen. Rodes' Division in the northern sector. The fighting had started in earnest. He was still out of commutation with the northern sector. When asked by Gen. Heth if his division could support Rodes, Lee replied with a "no" because Longstreet was not available for the main attack. Shortly afterward, Gen. Hill made it to the meeting, and when Gen. Lee studied the north sector again with his glasses, he saw a new development on the end of the northern sector of the line. Early had arrived and was pressing the Yankee line inward. Then Gen. Lee told Gen, Hill to put in Gen. Heth and Gen. Pender and "sweep the field". (F: 155).

Gen. Heth's Division (18 regiments) took heavy casualties in the morning engagement and had to back off and reform in a rest area. As previously directed by Gen. Lee, Heth was ordered to again clear the Yankees along the Cashtown road to Gettysburg, Instead of using Archer and Davis, whose divisions were in bad shape, Heth told Pettigrew (2600 men with 4 regiments) and Brockenborough (1000 men with 4 regiments) it was their turn to take on what was left of the Yankee 1st Corps on McPherson Ridge. (D: 238) The Yankees were hurting, but still "damn well" ready to fight after heavy losses. On the Rebel right flank, Gen. Pender's Division (3,300 men

with 9 regiments) was fresh and rested; they were also ordered to also clear out the Yankees to Gettysburg. Pender was noted to be smart and aggressive in battle. This was a big gift in planning the attack on the flank for the Rebel side at this time.

The main attack was now centered on the western sector and Gettysburg was the goal. Heth's attack met with a storm of lead from the battle fatigued Yankee 1st Corps; there were heavy causalities on both sides and the Rebels were brought to a halt. To show the intensity of a spot in this battle at the end: the outstanding 24th Michigan came to the ridge with 496 officers and men; they left with 97, an 80% loss. (F: 155) Also, as fate would have it, Gen. Meredith of the hardened Iron Brigade was wounded in the head just like his Rebel opponent, Gen. Heth, the tough division commander. (F: 155)

The battle continued in force on the ridge, which the Yankees held in defense of Gettysburg. Gen. Hill, still sick and in his saddle at the front, ordered the attack to continue with new troops. So it was that Gen. Perrin's brigade of with 1900 men in 5 regiments (under guidance of Gen. Pender) that took its turn at breaking through the Union line, With luck and courage, they hit the weakest spot on the ridge and outflanked the barricade. (D: 240) They began "rolling up" the small Federal units at this point in the Union line causing much chaos among the Federals, who were greatly outnumbered.

Gen. Doubleday could see his Northern line was crumbling with growing casualties and fatigue. He wisely gave the order, "Retreat to Cemetery Hill", which was located just behind the town. A mass of defeated Union soldiers streamed toward the high ground on Cemetery Hill. Some of the 1st corps would join some from the defeated 11th Corps and would sadly be captured in the street maze of the town. It has been estimated that the Yankees had some 9,000 wounded or captured, as compared with Gen. Lee's losses of some 8,000 men wounded or captured, (F: 158). It was a big "win" for the Southern Army even without much guidance help or direction from their high command.

However, Gen. Lee did take command for the final blow from the South, and he finally sent orders to the senior Southern Commanders directing the successful last attack. Ha! There was a "last laugh" in this failure of the first day of battle. The

remaining Union soldiers on the top of Cemetery Ridge would be ready tomorrow for another fight; neither side was going to quit.

One of the most critical phases of this battle was played out in the closing period of this part of the battle. It was around 5:00 PM when Gen. Lee entered Gettysburg, while masses of his Rebel soldiers were milling through the town. They were as disorganized as the retreating Yankees were. The senior Rebel commanders, Ewell, Early and Rodes, were resting on their laurels. After all, the Rebels had just captured a town that they had spent all day in hell fighting for. At once Gen. Lee noticed the important defensive position of Culp's Hill, which would play a critical role in this phase of the war if it were fully occupied by the Union soldiers. He sent his aide to find Gen. Ewell and tell him to take the hill, if possible. The words "if possible" were the contribution to failure.

The battered remains of Meade's army were in total disarray, resting on the ridge that included Culp's Hill, overlooking the town. The Northern Army was without their Army Commander, who was in Taneytown, and no additional troop support was in sight. Their morale was lower than if the had smelled a nearby skunk from the beating which they had just received an hour ago. Thinking of these adverse conditions facing the Northern Army and its men, Gen. Ewell, upon reviewing Lee's order to continue the fight for Culp's Hill, consulted with his generals. A very big mistake; eventually, he would be tasked with the attack decision. He did not need more opinions. He needed to study the facts and act now.

But perhaps we can excuse Ewell as he apparently could not think well in making strategic decisions at that time. About 4:30 PM, as Old Baldy was riding with his men from Oak Hill, a shell exploded nearby and killed his horse, pitching him to the ground. (D: 245) He got up and continued to follow his troops into Gettysburg. Demonstrating courage to his men, he entered the town with them, a little upset. You see, he had recently married to an old flame, and wanted to return to his love; perhaps, then, these close calls provide some excuse in a lack of straight thinking for directing the attack.

As we mentioned, Gen. Lee had requested Gen. Ewell to take Culp's Hill. In a meeting with Gen. Early, Gen. Rodes, and Gen. Ewell, there was an agreement that they would attack Culp's Hill if they had support on their left. Lee said at that time he had no support. But in this time frame, Lee had just placed Gen. Anderson's large division (7,100 men), which just arrived, in his reserve. The reserve was to be used only in an emergency. (E: 229) Why Gen. Lee would not see this occasion as an emergency and use the division to take Culp's Hill will remain a great mystery and an error in this campaign. Lee could have ordered Anderson's division up to the challenge, thus overriding the negative decision of his uneasy Corps commander, Gen. Ewell. Lee had the right idea to take Culp's Hill with the wrong solution. This was a failure.

To complete this story, about 7:00 PM Ewell, Early and their aids again surveyed Culp's Hill to determine if an attack was feasible at this hour. Taking the hill now, would deny the Northern Army a battle position for tomorrow. When they returned to the headquarters tent, they found Gen. Johnson waiting; his division (6,400 men) would arrive in an hour. (D: 588) They had been seriously delayed by a wagon train on the same road. It was getting dark, and the attack must be made now, before sundown. Gen. Ewell asked Gen. Early if he could attack. It was a major mistake, as he should have ordered Early to attack! Early's reply to this vital question was that he had been doing all the hard fighting, and his men were not in condition to attack. It was a case of Early's ego playing a central role in the decision. It appeared as if Early's law practice before the war was retarding his decision to attack Culp's Hill. Yes, it was a serious mistake.

As was just mentioned, the Northern army had been doing hard fighting also and was in a worse condition as they were more disorganized with heavier casualties, making a Southern attack appear to be more successful at this time. As the result of all this haggling, Johnson's Division was posted at the base of Culp's Hill to be ready for an attack in the morning. By then, the hill would be filled with Yankees, and there would be heavy casualties on both sides when the battle continued.

Another area of contention arose later in the afternoon during a strategy meeting, which included Gen. Lee and his long time associate Gen. Longstreet. Gen. Lee had

studied the battle line and said to Longstreet that he was going to attack Cemetery Ridge in the morning. This provoked a swift response from Longstreet, who also had studied the field conditions. Longstreet said that he wanted the army to move to the right and find a defensive location between Round Top and Washington to the south such that the Northern Army would be forced to attack Gen. Lee. (D: 252) This was the opposite maneuver of what Lee was planning. It appears the attacking force has a disadvantage. Simply put, it is more effective to stand and shoot from fortifications, than in running and shooting by charging them.

Longstreet would sulk because he thought his plan was the best. In fact, on the last day of the battle, Longstreet would not give the verbal order, but only a nod for attack as he was convinced the movement was wrong. However, Lee discussed the withdrawal to a new location in the south within the present lines in a meeting with Ewell and his staff; they opposed the move for such reasons as moving the wounded, lowering the morale that was attained in the first day victory, and other nonessential reasons. So Lee had some supporting his plan of attack in the morning and others opposing it. Generally, by experience, Gen. Lee had a better concept of battle conditions than his generals on the effect of such critical elements as morale, supplies, amount and type of ammunition, risk of the supply lines, care of the wounded. But the main reason for not supporting Longstreet's plan to turn and move south was that Lee did not have the eyes of Gen. Stuart and his cavalry to tell him where the missing large Union Corps were. Without his "eyes", the battle pointed to a critical failure as the ego in the command played itself out. He decided he would attack in the morning. And history would record the results along with this argument.

Before we close this first day, we would like to fill in a few details pertinent to this day. As we mentioned before, Gen. Meade spaced his Corps in a fan-like manner so they would be about one day or less marching time from his selected headquarters at Taneytown. He was only 12 miles from the possible trouble point, Gettysburg. A message by horse to Gettysburg would take a little less than 3 hours and sending a reply or decision would double that time. Thus, Gen. Meade received a message about the conflict that was sent by Gen. Reynolds about 1:00, and news of Reynolds's death

followed. Immediately, Gen. Hancock was designated as area commander over the battle. This shows Gen. Meade was thinking immediately to place the battle in the hands of his most effective, trusted general to control the battle. Hancock reached Cemetery Hill about 4:00, and after handling a turnover problem with Gen. Howard, he assigned Northern units to provide an effective defensive position on Cemetery Hill.

Gen. Hancock left Gettysburg about 7:00 PM to plan the attack with Gen. Meade. Both Meade and Hancock returned to Gettysburg about 1:00 AM in the morning. At that hour, Gen. Meade held a status meeting with the senior officers, rode around his position to plan for tomorrow, and rested until daylight. Gen. Meade (the snapping turtle) was all business at 1:00 AM in the morning; Gen. Lee was sleeping soundly after a victorious day.

THE SECOND DAY

At sunrise roughly, some 160,000 men were preparing for a significant battle to be fought on the Cemetery Ridge running south from Gettysburg. (G: 280) By a strange coincidence the name of this ridge would represent the ending the lives of well over 6,000 soldiers from both armies. And this day, all the fighting would be over controlling this ridge.

Gen. Lee Prepares for Battle

It was daylight and Gen. Lee rose early at 5:00 AM to have a bit of breakfast. Then, he went over to a high point at the Lutheran seminary to again study the front of the Yankee line on the ridge. Next, he was on his way to talk to Gen. Longstreet to receive status on his corps. They were marching in from Cashtown and finally would arrive for battle in early afternoon.

Unfortunately, Gen. Longstreet had not given up his plan to move the Rebel Army out of this position to a better one to the south; this provoked Gen. Lee, but Lee kept his cool. It was a big mistake to upset the Commander at this time; Lee needed some good support, not trouble. In meetings of the previous night and at an early morning meeting Gen. Ewell and Gen. Early were vacillating on the ability of their Corps

to attack in the morning. To justify his stand Early would finally attack late in the afternoon and temporarily hold the hill as will be discussed.

Poor Gen. Ewell did not know which way was up, especially when it came to Culp's Hill. His indecisiveness prompted Gen. Lee to choose Gen. Longstreet's Corps to lead the attack as soon as his men arrived. However, wagon trains were in the way of marching soldiers due to poor staff planning on troop movements. These men lost six hours waiting for the trains to clear the way. (G: 224) Their arrival was delayed into late in the afternoon. Gen. Lee's staff did not program the control of troop and supply movements. Obviously, if the troops are not at the battle, they are not effective. This was a serious error in managing the Rebel army causing lost time. The poor staff work, the ego of Ewell as well as that of Longstreet, all showed up in the lack of cooperation.

Moreover, Gen. Lee was sick (diarrhea) and not at ease on this day, perhaps from stress or fresh fruit. (G: 222) All this played poorly in attempting to win this phase of the battle of Gettysburg. It was another failure of the part of the Southern commanders.

Gen. Meade Prepares For Battle

Now, we will turn briefly to the northern Army: Gen. Sickles' 2nd Corps and Slocum's 12th Corps arrived in the evening after the fighting in the streets was over. Not only did the South make mistakes, so did the North. If these two corps had arrived a few hours earlier, they could have provided a shield for the Yankee retreat through the town and saved many from being wounded and captured by the Rebels. Lack of communication in Meade's orders for the corps to move fast to Gettysburg caused this Yankee failure.

Let us go back to the sunrise at the Union Army encampment on Cemetery Hill. Gen. Meade arose early, had his coffee, slipped into the saddle, and with Gen. Hunt (artillery), Gen. Howard (infantry), and Gen. Paine (engineers) they again surveyed his encamped forces in the daylight. He thought that the Rebels might attack in the Culp's Hill area and gave thought to attacking first. He asked Gen. Slocum for his opinion. The area between the lines was filed with trees and brush, so Slocum cautioned against

attacking at this time. This shows that Gen. Meade was still ready for a fight. Gen. Hunt made the initial plan for his batteries. Paine made notes for placement of infantry units. (E: 245) This was the big battle and Gen. Meade was all business.

A most amazing story demonstrates the Union's determination to fight at Gettysburg. Gen. John Sedgwick, "Uncle John", had the largest Corps in the army. With 18,000 men, the Sixth Corps represented nearly one fifth of the army. These men were badly needed at Gettysburg, since the Northern army had been defeated on the first day. This message was delivered at midnight to Uncle John from Gen. Meade. Gen. Sedgwick was one tough, old soldier with one tough corps as his battle record showed. After midnight the bugle sounded his men fell into ranks, four abreast with packs, rifles, and ammunition for battle. The 6th Corps was stationed at Manchester as the right flank guard, which was 36 miles of dirt and dusty roads from Gettysburg. There were 36 regiments and artillery. This column stretched some 10 miles along the road. "Forward March" was shouted and the column moved out.

It would be 4:00 AM on July 2nd when the last regiment left its base before the sun was up. Gen. Meade needed an answer on the time of the Corps arrival, as there was a question if Meade could hold out against Lee's next terrifying attack. Uncle John answered to Gen. Meade that it would be 4:00 PM when they would arrive. The old General said there was a war on, and there was no time to eat on the way. So they marched, and they marched fast. Uncle John reported to Gen. Meade at 2:00 PM, and the Corps was in the army reserve at Gettysburg at 4:00. (G: 210) The manual shows a corps marching time to be about 2.5 miles per hour. (I: 9) Uncle John and his large fighting corps held the record of 3.1miles per hour.

As fate would have it, Gen. Longstreet's 1st Rebel Corps opened cannon fire on the Yankee Sickle's 3rd Corps at 4:00. Shortly, a couple of union regiments from the 5th Corps would be sent to Sickle's 3d Corps sector, which was under heavy attack. Other regiments from the 6th Corps would be sent to desperately needed spots. Although the 6th Corps was used as Meade's reserve, that reserve was thrown into the areas under the greatest fire. Gen. Sedgwick was possibly the most important man in this second day.

Without his men arriving in time for the battle, it is doubtful the Union line could have held.

Before turning to the assemblage of Longstreet's Rebel troops for the massive attack, we should look at the stupidity going on in the Union ranks, which was in the Third Corps holding an area facing the main path of Gen. Longstreet's attack up the Emmitsburg Road. The right flank of the Third Corps touched the Second Corps on Cemetery Hill. The left flank bordered on Little Round Top. Unluckily, Gen. Sickles controlled this area. Sickles was a political general from the New York militias appointed by Lincoln to get that state to support the war. Gen. Sickles learned his trade by experience in prior battles, and was thought inferior by other West Point Union Generals. Gen. Sickles had been studying his front all morning; he asked Gen. Hunt's opinion if he should occupy a higher knoll in front of his line, which would give his Corps protection. Gen. Hunt could not give him direction as it was up to Gen. Meade, the over all commander. And Gen. Meade was very busy placing newly arrived troops on the line. In summary, since Meade was not available, Sickles placed his line out on that knoll.

This was a very big mistake because in the move, Sickles' Third Corps did not have enough men to connect with to the next Corps, the 2nd Corps on the battle line. There was a space in between the two Corps. This troop movement to disaster was completed about 4:00 PM, just as a few Rebel cannon began shelling. Ironically, this was the same time that Gen. Meade showed up to finally look at the problem. Seeing where Sickles placed his men, the old snapping turtle went into orbit. Sickles asked Meade if he should retrace his steps. It was too late to open up the line as the Rebel shells were exploding and an attack was in progress. But more damning was the fact that Gen. Slocum had pulled his men off Little Round Top (an adjacent mountain at the end of the battle line) without telling Gen. Sickles to make sure it was defended.

Gen. Meade was faced with a major problem: his flank was in shambles, and the Rebels were charging. Lady luck was on Gen. Meade's side. The famous big Six Corps had just arrived in time that would furnish men to support Sickles and help fill the gap in

his line. The second piece of good luck was that Gen. Meade's old friend, Gen. Warren (the engineer), was inspecting the end of the line for Meade at this time; he discovered that Little Round Top was unprotected and under attack by Rebels at the base of the hill. The condition was critical. (E: 281)

At this time, Col. Vincent intercepted a message from Gen. Sykes of the 5th Corps to the division commander, which read to send Weed's (1500 men) and Vincent's (1300 men) Brigades to secure Little Round Top, and he immediately move these brigades in that direction. In another location on Little Round Top at this same time, Gen. Warren looked again from this mountain through his glasses, only to discover that the Rebels were fast marching on his front. He climbed on his horse and raced for the nearby road at the base of Little Round Top. Behold, his first contact was the last regiment of the 5th Army Corps commanded by his old friend, Col. Patrick O'Rourke and his "140th New York". It happened to be the regiment that Warren commanded in the Peninsula Campaign. Gen. Warren told "Patty" that he would take the responsibility and to follow him to secure Little Round Top now! (G: 259) (E: 281)

Forming on line, they opened fire with the first salvo of lead to initially stop the Rebel assault. There would be eight Union regiments firing away in this part of the battle. What is interesting about this action is the Northern commanders saw the immediate threat by the Rebels and used their own initiative to stop a disaster; in this case, minutes counted and the Yankees knew it. The Rebels in this battle were never able to master this technique.

There were serious failures in the Union command resting with Gen. Meade. He had signal people on top of Little Round Top, and he should have contacted those signalmen to find out the status on that end of the battle line. That is what signalmen do best! Another incident occurred in late morning that threatened the Union position. Gen. Pendleton, Commanding Union Cavalry, sent to a rest area the shot-up troopers of Buford's surviving cavalry brigade for replacements. To fill the gap in the Union line, he was to send in a replacement Brigade to protect Gen. Meade's left flank. Guess what... he forgot. If only the Rebel Gen. Stuart and his cavalry not been waltzing around the main

Union Army on a shooting and destroy mission, this attack could have had Rebel cavalry support with no interference. But at this time, Stuart was not available. This could have easily changed the outcome of the battle to a Rebel success.

Gen. Longstreet Attacks

Now that we have looked at the confusion in the Union Army ranks before the battle started, we will look at the confusion on the Rebel side of the battle line. To get into an attack formation with some 70,000 Rebels takes time and maneuvering. It was 2:00 AM on 2nd July when Gen. Hood's Division reached Cashtown; there, they rested for two hours and marched on to Gettysburg, arriving at dawn. Col. Alexander with his artillery battalion followed Gen. Hood all night with the same urgency. (G: 225) They arrived at 9:00 AM at the battle staging area, which was too late for an attack in the early morning. This contradicts the claim that Lee ordered an early morning attack, and that Longstreet did not meet the challenge. Since it would take an hour or two to position the battalion artillery for firing, these troops would not be available for an early morning attack. It was not before McLaws division arrived just before noon that all of Gen. Longstreet' Corps was now on hand for the attack. (D: 312)

In a meeting with his commanders at around 11:00, Gen. Lee gave instructions to move onto the battle line. He gave Gen. McLaws specific directions on this movement and assigned Captain Johnson as the guide; this cut his boss, Longstreet, out of the chain of command making Longstreet very unhappy. Lee wanted this attack to be a surprise, and cautioned Gen. Longstreet not to be seen by the Yankees. (V: 378) This was a critical order and a mistake on Lee's part by not letting Longstreet use his discretion on directing the movement from the battle line. If Lee was concerned over achieving success of a surprise attack, he should have moved the army along the path that other successful units personally used to survey battle conditions. It is possible that he was ill at the time. At this particular period there was no Yankee infantry on Little Round top, and Sedgwick's Sixth Corps, which was used to stop the Rebel attack was about 3 hours away from Gettysburg.

This incident of attempting a large surprise attack in rugged terrain would make happiness in Lee's command fade at this point in time. Gen. Longstreet took this as the order to move the units into battle positions, and he first sent Col. Alexander to a position, opposite the Little Round Top Mountain in some trees on the Rebel side. The artillery, as with all units, was instructed not to be seen by the signal men on top of the mountain as Lee's orders directed. Col. Alexander was very smart. He chose his pathway that was a shortcut to his assigned artillery position. And this is very important; the point of Longstreet's large corps, which was to follow the artillery, had become lost in the trees and dirt roads.

The road they were following came upon an open space where Longstreet thought that the Union signalmen could see his corps if they crossed at this point. And no one would be humble enough to find Alexander and obtain his help; from this time on, it was a comedy of errors. Longstreet wanted another route, so he ordered Hood, who was last in the column to be first in the column, thus they had to reverse the column and move out to retrace the movement. There was confusion and consternation among the generals who would now lead the movement into battle causing more delay in starting the battle. The change in course would result in 13 more miles of travel and about 3 hours additional marching time. (G: 234- 235) Now, comes the punch line. Only the Union signalmen, and no troops, were on the hill scheduled for the attack; no reserve troops were nearby.

At this time, all Longstreet had to do was to form his troops into a battle line beyond the troublesome open space. He could then take not only Little Round Top but also the confused position held by the 3rd Yankee Corps, who were moving toward their new outpost position. He could have had an assurance of this weakened position of the Yankees if he had just sent a heavy scouting party to locate the enemy, and if successful, follow it up by a full attack. It was a serious mistake not to investigate the Union troop strength in detail on Little Round Top. This mistake in judgment of timing the attack likely cost a Rebel victory on the second day. Further, Gen. Lee should have been at this point to personally direct the operations.

It was about 4:00 PM in the after noon and well beyond Gen. Lee's planned time for the attack. But getting an agreement on the attack between the leaders in the Southern army was edgy for Longstreet at best.

About this time, Gen. Meade was upset at Union 3rd Corps Commander for moving to the mound a three quarters of a mile in advance of the main battle line, thus leaving a big gap in the Union lines. It also upset Lee's plans for the attack by the Southern commanders. Gen. Sickles, the New York politician and General of the Yankee 3rd Corps had truly "up set the apple cart" for both the Union and Rebel Armies

Gen. Lee had planned an attack up Emmitsburg Road which angled upward toward the top of the Cemetery Ridge to break through the Union line near the center. (D: 322-323) Lee's plan was to attack along the road, adding divisions to the assault by echelon (Figure 1). A good plan, but Gen. Sickles had placed his Union corps close to the road only an hour before the rebel attack. This strange movement was not factored into Lee's planning when he studied the ridge through his glasses that morning. It upset the Rebel commanders because Yankees, so close to the road, would permit them to throw a lot of Union lead at the Rebel soldier's exposed flank as they fought their way along the roadway. Fate had dealt Gen. Lee a bad card again. As we shall see, this nutty movement by Sickles took rebel troops away from the main thrust of Lee's attack, and the final Rebel drive on the center of the Union line would fail.

To counter this new adverse development, Lee and Longstreet changed the command of the attack in the field from McLaws' Division to Hood's Division because of his position on the right in battle. These brigades were assigned objectives and areas in making their critical attack against parts of the battle line of Meade's Union Army. Gen. Hood had just obtained information from his scouts that Little Round Top was unoccupied at that time. Note the words "at that time." Hood wanted to attack Round Top and turn the end of the line; he did not want fight up the road as Lee had planned. Longstreet said to follow Gen. Lee's plan.

Hood was a tough fighter, but with a big ego, who would make a big mistake this time for the Confederacy. His closure finally came in late 1864 at the Battle of Nashville,

when Union Gen. Thomas destroyed his army; the result of his brash, imprudent manner in command, as it was this day at Gettysburg. (J: 365) Glenn Tucker's book, *High Tide at Gettysburg*, provides the evidence for this pending disaster, and we quote from William Youngblood's recall (a courier) of Lee's given orders, "I cannot take the risk of loosing a brigade. We must do the best we can. When the signals are given you [General Hood] advance your men and do the best you can." (G: 248)

We need to separate the parts of the Confederate Forces and briefly identify their role to reduce some confusion of this complex picture. Gen. Lee had three large corps (roughly 20,000 men each, the size of a modern city) on the field: Longstreet on the right of the line near Round Top, Hill in the center, and Ewell on the left side around Culp's Hill; the battle line resembled a big fishhook. We will talk about each area separately as each corps participated in their part of the action.

Each of these large corps had three divisions (roughly 5,000 to 7,000 men). There were normally four brigades to each division and four to five regiments in a brigade. The brigades with their commander's name were normally assigned an objective and area for the attack. Regiments in the brigade had a name such as the 5th Georgia connecting its men with the state, this unit fought in a localized sector of the battle such as the 15th Georgia fought with the 20th Main on Little Round Top. And parts of the battle were identified under these names as their action occurred.

To begin, we will start with Longstreet's Corps attack, which was assigned the key role this day in defeating the Yankees. About 3:40 PM the battle started with an inconclusive duel between Col. Alexander's cannons, 54 in number, and Gen. Hunt's cannons on the Yankee side. (E: 281) Of the three divisions in Longstreet's Corps only two, McLaws' and Hood's, would be available for this day s fighting; Gen. Lee, added Gen. Anderson's division from the reserve to replace Longstreet's missing division. Gen. Hood was commanding the leading division and started his line of soldiers on the infantry attack just after 4:00. Other divisions would join in the attack as the front progressed up Emmitsburg road toward the ridge.

Gen. Hood's plan of attack was to take a large fan-like sweep to clear out the Yankees along his side of the road, and then get back to driving up Emmitsburg Road; thus, he would still be vaguely within Lee's orders. Well, conditions do not happen to be static in war. The first changing condition, by coincidence, was that the Union' 5th Corps at this time was moving at high speed to cover Union positions on top of Little Round Top. The second, Gen. Lee's plan was dynamic requiring cooperation and timing by all his units. It is important to note that Hood did not communicate Lee's plan to Hood's subordinates. Gen. Hood 's division had just started their attack when a cannon shell exploded over Hood's head, and he was severely wounded in his arm, which was later amputated. (E: 268)

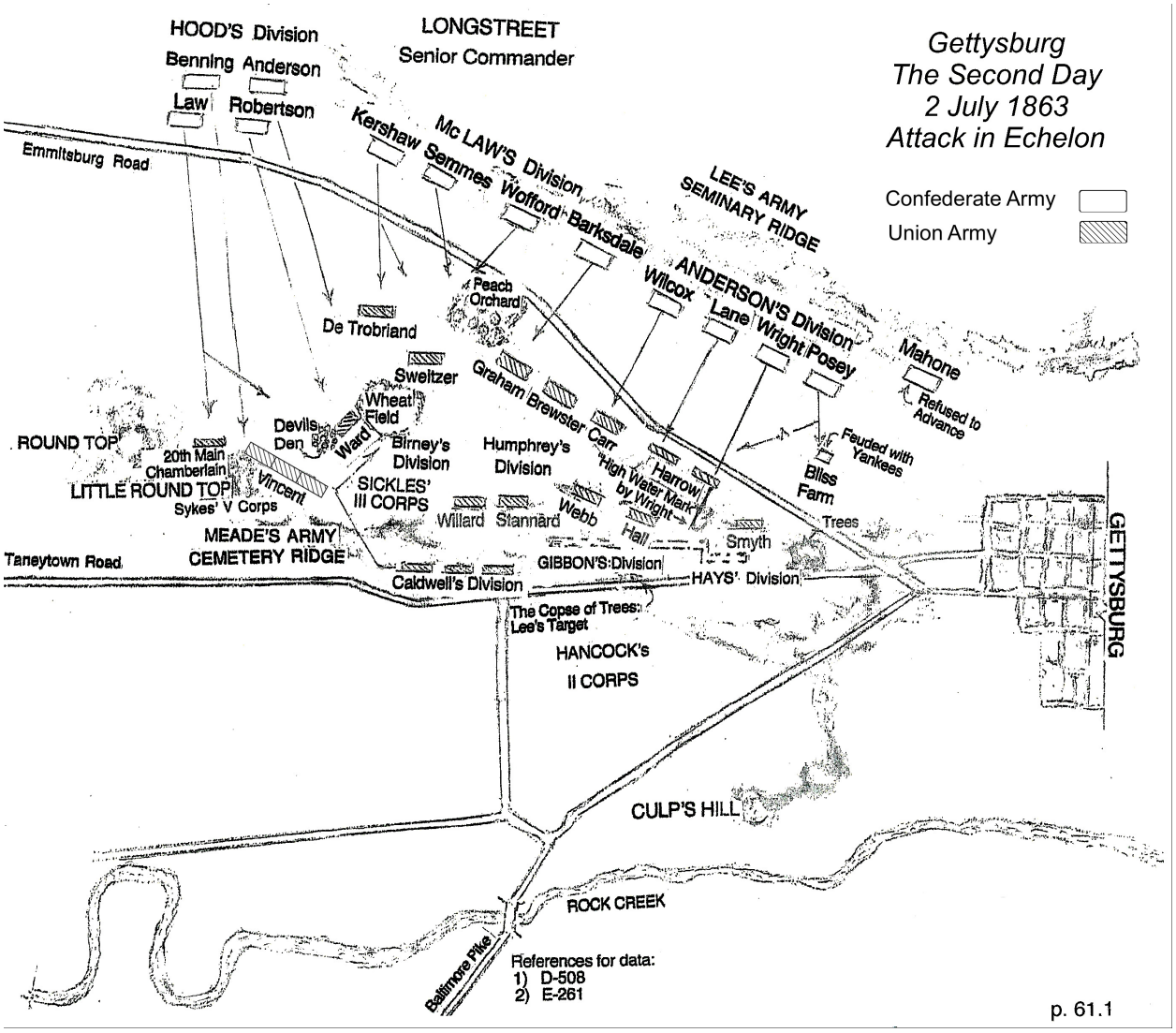

Figure 1. Gettysburg the Second Day (2 July 1863): Attack in Echelon

When he was taken from the division so was his personal plan to wheel his division out of the oncoming conflict with the Yanks on Little Round Top and attack up the road as Lee had ordered. Gen. Laws replaced him with no knowledge of the plan of attack. (E: 268) His division would spend the remainder of the day in an unsuccessful fight with the Union 5th Corps holding Little Round Top. Gen. Lee was denied the use of this division. It was sorely needed when his attacking point was stalled while trying to break through the weakened Union line on the ridge in the final moments of the battle. Failure to obey the command of Gen. Lee was a big error because later, the southern army lacked the troop strength to break though the Union line in the center. It was "not getting their act together" that contributed to the Rebel defeat for that day.

On this second day, the story should be told how the extreme the left flank of the Union army was nearly turned by the sweep of Hood's rebels forward to Little Round Top, which if successful, could have caused a disaster for the rest of the Union army along the ridge. If the rebels moved behind the Union Army at that point and blocked its retreat to the Pipe Creek defense line, which could have been the case if the Union line could not hold against Lee's attack, chaos would have appeared in the Yankee ranks. As mentioned before, at the time the Rebel cannons sounded the attack, Sykes was told to send some regiments of his 5th Corps to unoccupied Round Top to stop Laws' advance. Gen. Laws took Hood's command and continued the unapproved movement on Round Top in place of the turning movement to get the Division aligned with Emmitsburg Road. (E: 271) This was a critical error. When there is a change in a major command, the battle plan should be reviewed to provide assurance that your movement would be in line with that of your commander. Gen. Laws had not discussed his views of the battle with Gen. Longstreet, but used his personal plan, which followed Gen. Hood's prior alignment.

On the Rebel flank, to the far right of this high hill, marched the 47th Alabama (347men) and 15th Alabama (499 men), and on the left was the 4th Alabama (346 men), the 4th Texas (415 men), the 5thTexas (409 men), and the 48th Alabama (374 men). (D: 585) Thus, some 2400 men were not available later to support Gen. Ambrose Wright's Brigade; he needed men to remain on top of the ridge after his successful attack at the center of the battle line.

On the Union side, defending against the attack on Little Round Top, was Col. Strong Vincent 's Brigade (1300 men) plus O'Rourke's 140th New York Regiment (450 men). These totaled some 1750 troops. (D: 573) Some of the Southern soldiers had marched 24 miles before the battle started, and they were low on drinking water. (G: 249). The South could be very proud of these fighting men in this battle. On the other side, Col. Joshua Chamberlain, a farm boy and a professor from Maine, commanded the 20th Maine. What is not normally known about the 20th Maine is its composition. The 20th had about 360 men of which about 115, one third (!), were classified as prisoners from a disbanded Maine regiment, and could be shot for disobeying orders. Their claim was that their enlistment had run out, so they refused to fight anymore. Col. Chamberlain said to the prisoners that he was not going to shoot any man from Maine, and if they would join his outfit, he would readdress their grievances when this battle was over. They then joined their Maine leader for another fight. It is doubtful that with one third of his men out of the battle, the 20th Maine could have prevented the15th Alabama from destroying the end of the Yankee line. The men from Maine showed guts and determination this day.

As the 20th Maine was at the very end of the Union line, Col. Vincent ordered Chamberlain to hold this position at "all costs". The 20th had been attacked several times by Col. Oates' 15th Alabama. Fighting was as bad for the thirsty Confederates as for the Yankees; Col. Oates lost his Rebel brother, Lt. John Oates, who died in this battle. (E: 295) With the Yankees, there was no ammunition left; there were two choices: retreat or charge. With one third of his men dead and wounded, Chamberlain shouted "fix bayonets", and then "charge". All hell broke loose as Chamberlain's men stormed down the hill to drive the Rebels into retreat. At about 6:00 PM, weighed down with fatigue and battle shock, the defeated Rebel Units withdrew from Round Top to a reserve area in their rear.

As previously mentioned, the political general, Gen. Sickles, did not play by the old army rules because he never had a course in them, and today, he would learn the rules the hard way when a shell would blow his leg away in the fighting. Sadly, he placed the Union 3rd Corps along Emmitsburg Road. This left his divisions disconnected from each

other and the main battle line, which his corps was sticking out like a thumb from the battle line along Cemetery Ridge, showing serious gaps along his edges. By fate, Gen. Lee directed the attack of the Rebel army to wheel Gen. Hoods Division to be perpendicular with the road, and march up the right side near Sickles. At the beginning, McLaws' Division would advance on the other side or left side of the road until turning and facing the union battle line as they continued marching up the road. This is a complex movement as it mixed up the units at times. Example; the 44th Alabama crossed over the front of Law and Roberson divisions to fight in Devil's Den while most of other regiments marched nearly straight onward to fight on Round Top. This direction shows poor planning and poor use the firepower, which was one of the many mistakes in the detailed planning by the Rebel Command.

Having observed the long difficult fighting on Round Top, we will turn our attention to the movements of Gen. Sickles and his Union 3rd Corps, in places like Devil's Den (covered with very large pieces of rock, a terrible place to fight), and the adjoining Wheat Field. This could be considered as the first phase of local conflict. The Union line, held by Gen. Birney's Division, was the area of this phase under attack after 4:00. Wards Brigade (2,200 men) shielded Devil's Den; while "next door", De Trobriand's Brigade (1,400 men) shielded the Wheat Field. (D: 570-571) The attacking rebel force was G. T. Anderson's Brigade (1,900 men) striking across the Wheat Field and Benning's Brigade (1,400 men) moving on the Devil's Den. Benning's Brigade picked up the support of the 3rd Arkansas (500 men), 1st Texas (450 men), and the 44th Alabama (360 men). (D: 585)

In this case, the South had the North out numbered by over 1000 men, and the Northern units retreated to regroup. Just then, by good luck, Gen. Meade ordered reserves from the Fifth Corps into action. This was the same Corps that was saving the day in the Round Top fighting. Now, Col. Sweitzer's Brigade (1,400 men), followed by Col. Tilton's Brigade (650 men) from the Yankee Fifth quickly charged into the fighting in the Wheat Field; this action was more dramatic than any plot you could find in the old moves. After attacks on both sides of the fight, they settled on a standoff for the rest of the day. The 3rd Corps was saved; except, Gen. Sickles ended his duty with a bad leg

wound, and spent time in the hospital getting use to a new wooden leg. Who really knows: this unconventional (plain dumb) movement by Gen. Sickles, the political general, threw the Southern command into a state of confusion, which adversely affected the execution of their overall battle plan. The senior commanders of the South could have done better in execution of orders without this confusion.

Our attention turns back to the Union 3rd Corps, which was stretched northward along the Emmitsburg Road. In the second phase of local conflict in the 3rd Corps' battle area faced McLaws brigades a half mile east; the Confederates would, in less than a one half an hour, march to reach the Union lines. Gen. Andrew A. Humphreys' Union Division of the 3rd Corps was responsible for defending the northern edge of the wheat field and the line along the roadway. Col. Burling's Brigade (1,370 men) held an internal reserve position at the Northern edge of the Wheat Field. Col. Carr's Brigade (1700 men) and Col. Brewster (1,800 men) were stationed along the road. Thus, a total of 4,870 Yankees formed for this second local phase. (D: 571-572) They were facing the Rebels, which were G. T. Anderson's Brigade (1,870 men), Semmes' Brigade (1,330 men), Barksdale's Brigade (1,620 men), and Kershaw's Brigade (2,200 men), amounting to 7020 Rebel opponents. (D: 582-586)

It was after 4:30 PM when the Rebels hit the Yankee 3rd Corps line in full force, and the overwhelming numbers of the Rebels threw the Yankees into retreat. The Yankees fought a tough rear guard action, which prevented a rout; Gen. Sickles was seriously wounded in the retreat and could not command. As Gen. Meade saw a large gap growing within the Yankee lines, and being a hands-on General at the battle line, he place Gen. Hancock in command of both his and Sickles Corps. Then, Gen. Hancock sent in other units of the reserve. Soon, it was obvious that the new line would not hold, so Hancock sent in Gen. Caldwell's large, well trained, First Division (3,320 men) of the 2nd Corps which stopped the Rebels cold, and turned a few Rebel units into retreat. (D: 362) Because this solution was temporary, Meade ordered up additional reserves from Slocum's 12th Corps (4,800 men located on his extreme right who had not been in action), and this stalled the Rebel attack for the day. The Rebels were stopped short of the Union defenses line on the ridge. And after the battle, we should mention that with

its high 40% causalities, the brave 3rd Corps faded from army records. (D: 570) Eventually, both division commanders (Gen. David B. Birney and Gen. Andrew A. Humphreys) of this 3rd Corps would each command a Corps that paid Gen. Lee back, when they eventually played a major role of Gen. Lee's surrender at Appomattox. This we shall relate at the end of this history (J: 380).

In summary, Gen. Meade was a hands-on division commander at the battle line, experienced in many previous battles, and knew how to fight a war. This day in the afternoon, Gen. Lee would not venture much beyond his tent. He sent no written orders, and his personal staff could not remember carrying messages to the front lines. Perhaps, Gen. Lee's inaction was due to illness, which has been noted by others. (Z: 10-69) (D: 491) The lack of orders was a big mistake because, as we shall see, some of his brigades did not cooperate in the attack and needed strong senior commander's instructions.

Gen. Hill Attacks

Further north, but still adjacent to Gen. Sickles area of battle, was the area assigned to Gen. Anderson's Division of Gen. A. P. Hill Corps. This was along Emmitsburg Road (used for the battle alignment) to the top of the Cemetery Hill, which held the famous clump trees. Gen. Lee selected these trees as his main objective on the ridge. For this assignment, Gen. Hill had four brigades: Wilcox, Lang, Wright, and Posey. They were hidden by trees on Seminary ridge, about a 30 minute march east of the Union battle line. The first three of these four brigades would join in the fight; the fourth, Posey's brigade failed to appear at the main battle and will be discussed as a "mystery brigade." The Union corps on the ridge was commanded by Gen. Hancock, one of the toughest fighters of the Northern Army and his men knew it.

At about 7:00 PM both Gen. Wilcox's Brigade (1,700 men) and Col. Lang's Brigade (740 men) tangled with the left flank of the Union force comprised of Carr's Brigade (1,720 men) and Col. Brewster's brigade (1,830 men). This part of the Union Army was also under attack by McLaws' forces from the south. The Union Army broke at this point, and both Lang's Brigade and Wilcox's Brigade moved forward to Gen.

Hancock's thin line on the ridge. Gen. Hancock was at this point of his line without sufficient forces to stop the Rebels as he had sent men to help the troubled 3rd Corps; without hesitation, he ordered the nearby Col. Colville's 1st Minnesota (about 250 men) to charge and take the colors of the oncoming rebels. And this successful suicide mission held the Union Line, but the cost was high; they lost nearly 75% of their men. Three out every four would not return. (D: 393) This action pushed Lane's men's back from the ridge, and when more Union troops formed on the ridge, Lane's men withdrew to a more defensible position near the road as did Wilcox's men.

Laterally, the next Rebel Brigade to charge the ridge a little south of Col. Lang's Brigade was Gen. Wright's Brigade at a little after 7:00 PM. Looking at Wright, his past performance was splendid, and he had been seriously wounded twice in previous battles. He came from a very poor Georgia family and worked his way up the ladder of life to become a lawyer; he was not going to fail in this battle. Meeting less resistance than Col. Lang faced, Wright easily pushed through the skirmish line in his front that was part of the Yankee defense assigned to Gen. Gibbon of the 2nd Corps. This Yankee Corps was hiding in a field just beyond the crest of the ridge. Two regiments of Gibbon's command were sent to the skirmish line but were driven back losing three of the four cannons assigned to protect the regiments. The swift charge of the Rebels had reached the clump of trees and rock fence that would become a famous landmark for Pickett's charge tomorrow, on the third day. Wright was smart; he took his bearings. Both Lang's and Wilcox's brigades were retiring to the road. Gibbon's large Yankee Division was ready for a deadly fight. There was no support in sight, like there should have been, if Gen. Hill and Gen. Longstreet would have had kept their field glasses on the troops and the position of the attacking brigades. Gen. Gibbon did not need to be told; he immediately ordered five Yankee companies of Col. Randall's 13th Vermont (630 men) to attack; they did just that, recapturing three guns and chasing the Rebels back down the hill. (D: 397)

This closed Gen. Longstreet's attack on the second day, but his work was not ended, as he would see the deciding chapter of this battle played out on the next day at this same place.

Now, we have seen the stand-off of the first three of Gen. Hill's brigades (Wilcox, Lang, and Wright) of Anderson's Division as they reached the Yankee battle on the ridge; we will discuss what happened to the critical support of the remaining two brigades in Anderson's Division, Posey's Brigade and Mahone's Brigade. Rational for their lack of support in the attack remains a mystery. It was a very sad mess. Posey's Brigade was to move on to the ridgeline after Wright's brigade was underway. On the left flank of Posey's field of operations were the Bliss farm buildings where small Union detachments were contesting the Rebels for their control. They had no real meaning for the major security post of either side. It was an ego problem on both sides. Posey was to clean out the skirmishers in his front and support Gen. Wright's attack. Guess what. The Yankees made Bliss Farm a real fight, which detoured Posey (1,320 men) from supporting Wright in the main thrust of breaking through the Yankee ridgeline. The Union forces at the farmhouse were not going to attack anyone this day; they just wanted to hold onto the farm house. We must add that a couple of Posey's small companies did join Wright's attack, but it was not nearly enough to change the face of battle. So for the rest of the day, Gen. Lee did not tell Hill to do his duty and charge the ridge, and Gen. Hill did not tell Gen. Anderson to tell Gen. Posey to do his duty and charge the ridge.

Now, we will look at what happened to Mahone's Brigade, which was posted a little north of Posey's Brigade and which could have moved next to the ridge. Mahone was told he was the reserve, which means they were on call by Gen. Anderson for an emergency. Gen. Anderson, the superior officer, disregarded Wright's requests for Mahone's Brigade to join the fight. Mahone was the reserve, and he was going to stay the reserve regardless what his division commander ordered; there was no follow up to Anderson's orders. Now comes the punch line of Anderson's command picture, which shows the laxity in his command. Stephen W. Sears' book *GETTYSBURG* describes a key part of this calamity as follows. Gen. Wilcox sent his adjutant to Gen. Anderson, the division commander, for help as he was under serious attack with his position on the ridge. The adjutant noted that he found the General back in the woods where he found the general's horse tide to a tree, "… and all his staff lying on the ground (indifferent) as tho' nothing was going on... I am quite certain that Gen'l. A. never saw a foot of the ground on which his three brigades fought on the 2nd July". (E: 318). Gen. Anderson did

not change his laid back attitude in battle; it again showed up in his disastrous Rebel defeat in the last major battle at Sailor's Creek at the end of the Civil War, as we will eventually tell.

Still, there were many more troops available, including Pender's Division during this time. Gen. Pender was rated as one of Lee's best younger generals. But at this time, Lady Fate entered the picture. Gen. Pender rode to the right of his formation to find out what the delay in movement to battle was all about. In the distance, a Union artilleryman saw his flag and sent an exploding round in that direction. It burst overhead to give Pender a bad leg wound. He would die two weeks later in a hospital; the South and his wonderful family lost a brilliant, proven general. Gen. Lane, the next in command did not want to move the division, and no one, like Gen. Lee or Gen. Anderson, directed him to change his mind.

At the edge of victory this afternoon, at this location, the command with Rebel troops of the Confederacy was in disorder as to a common purpose: winning the war. Posey's 1,320 men and Wright's 1,410 men, plus Pender's full Division (some 6,680 men) (D: 592) would have given 9,410 Rebels the golden opportunity to open a decisive breach in the Union line. At this time, Meade had moved two brigades out of this part of the battle line to reinforce attacks on his southern flank. It could have been the day that saved the Confederacy. The Rebel Command had made a serious mistake in not following this battle plan and orders. It was just plain confusion and poor leadership at its best.

Although we have seen a lot of fighting and killing on the battle line extending from the Wheat Field and Devil's Den to Round Top, which was along the southern flank of the Union battle line, it was very peaceful in the northern section, except for a cannon shell or two being exchanged. The reason was that Gen. Ewell, the supposed firebrand, who commanded the large Rebel Second Corps was asleep on his ores. His orders from Gen. Lee were to make a demonstration against the Union line on the south to keep the Union troops on the southern end inactive while Gen. Longstreet's soldiers penetrated the line in the middle of the Union center. The signal to attack was the sound of Longstreet's

cannons in the south. It was a very good plan, but a few southern generals wanted the glory this day of winning the war by themselves. Gen. Ewell with Generals Rodes, Early, and Johnson (division commanders with about 7,000 men each) were on an ego trip, as we shall see.

Gen. Ewell Attacks

As you may recall, Gen. Lee gave Gen. Ewell the option of converting his demonstration attack into an all out attack should conditions merit it. These were loose orders at best and should have been timelier since Ewell's goals differed from Gen. Lee's. Ewell realized it would be a good idea to turn his demonstration into an attack in force. The attack should have followed the sound of Longstreet's cannons at 4:00 PM, but Ewell was a slow to act, and it took him until 6:00 PM to issue the command for his divisions to advance.. Preparations for the charge took another hour, so it was after 7:00 PM before the Rebels would see the whites of the Yankee eyes. And the sun was going down! Thus, the serious fighting would be done in the black of night that terminated the battle. That was a dumb mistake for Ewell to hold off on signaling the charge because with an additional hour, and by using his reserves from Rodes and Gordon early in the fight, he could have punched a big hole in the Union lines. As darkness fell, Ewell's units had gained critical positions on the top of the ridge, as we shall see.

Each of these three generals, Rodes, Early, and Anderson was given his field of battle for success or failure. To describe the final battle of the second day and attempt to avoid confusion, we should first digress and describe the terrain and positions of the Northern and Southern Forces. The small town of Gettysburg (about 2000 people) was located on the junction of one ridge going south and a short spur going west. It was called the fishhook ridgeline. At this bend on the hook, there is a small hill, say 100 feet high, which holds the town cemetery, so the nearby hill is called Cemetery Hill. It was the place where Lincoln would give his famous address that we study in high school. To the west, an easy walking time of 20 minutes, is a little higher mound called Culp's Hill. The Union army was the king of these two hills and the higher ridgeline connecting the hills along with the ridgeline to the south and west.

At Gen. Ewell's order, his three divisions would move in their sectors to battle positions. In the first sector, Gen. Rodes' Division (7,870 troops) was assigned to hold the ground on Cemetery hill on Ewell's Confederate right flank. (D: 587)

In the second sector, Gen. Early's Division (5,460 men) was assigned the left side of the town to charge up the Cemetery Hill from Ewell's central position, but the fast talking general and ex-lawyer pulled a dumb trick. Early assigned only Hays' Brigade (1,300) and Avery's Brigade (1,240 men) to charge up the hill, leaving his best brigade, Gen. Gordon's Brigade to sit quietly as his reserve. (F: 198) He did not need a reserve sitting quietly at that time of night, since the Union force had faced a hard day of fighting and were unlikely to attack. If the enemy charges your line, you may need a reserve, but in this case, Early was doing the attacking and needed all his men to punch a big hole in the Yankee line. So, 1,810 men from Gordon's brigade just sat out this part of the battle, together with Rodes' Division of 7,870 men, as we shall see. It was a serious miscalculation in both in timing the battle and programming the players. It was vacation time in the middle of battle.

In the third sector, the combatants of Johnson's Division numbering some 4,310 men would attack the higher Culp's Hill and the gulch in-between the two hills. (F: 198) (D: 586-587). And to top this stupidity off, Early's fourth brigade, Smith's brigade (800 men), was posted two miles out on York Pike to defend against a phantom attack produced by a rumor of a possible attack on the rear. (F: 198) Gen. Early could have gone to Ewell and asked for some cavalry to investigate the incident or used a signal flag detachment along with skirmishers to provide a shield against the possible attack until darkness. Thus, Smith's men, some 800, were missing from the assault on Culp's Hill. Not using Gordon's reserve and Smith's Brigade was likely to have cost a victory in Early's sector. It was another failure in mismanagement of the available firepower.

Now, we should look at a few plays in this game with Lady Luck as it indirectly pertains to Gen. Ewell's Union forces on Cemetery hill. At around 6:30 PM, the battle in the center part of Meade's line near Gen. Sickles' Wheat Field engagement was getting very hot with Longstreet's and Hill's troops pressuring Gen. Hancock's troops. This

caused a retreat in some of Sickles' brigades. Meade, the snapping turtle, was in deep trouble, and he quickly requested Slocum on the Union right flank to send all the troops he could spare from the12th Corps to Gen. Hancock. Earlier, there had been no fighting by Gen. Ewell's Rebel Corps in the north around Gettysburg. To Gen. Slocum, since it was in the evening without fighting, this urgent request really meant to send the entire Corps, which is plain nuts in terms of logical thinking; if Gen. Ewell decided to attack Meade's flank, who would be there to stop this unusual challenge? At Slocum's request, Meade left only Gen. Greene's brigade (1,400 men) to fill the vacant embankments of the 7500 soldiers, who just moved to the fighting in Gen. Hancock's battleground. This is all Greene had as Meade's right flank guard, and Culp's Hill was practically left unguarded. The sad part of the story is that due to mismanagement at Meade's level, only a few of Slocum units were used in the battle of the center of the line. They would have contributed more in their previous trenches.

To rearrange his prior evacuated firing line, Greene refused his line in the center back at a right angle, which permitted firepower to be directed to the side and the front, striking the oncoming Rebels in their flank. For tactics, this was very smart thinking and would surprise any oncoming rebels. Gen. Greene was a very old general with the appearance of a farmer with his old slouched hat, but he had years of experience in private civil engineering work. This experience fitted into the existing challenge using of embankments as a protection of his men to stop the Rebels. Lady Luck placed Greene at the right place at the right time. Gen. Greene's divisional commander, John Geary, was personally opposed to the building of Green's breastworks, but left the matter to his brigadiers. (E: 325) Breastworks turned out to be the very successful method of stopping a superior enemy force. Most Generals in this period would not have his private practice in Civil Engineering to give this advantage over the Rebels and save this part of the battle for the Yankees.

As we had mentioned, Gen. Lee has asked Gen. Ewell to take the east end of the Rebel line at Culp's Hill, which was covered with brushes and trees - a real mess to move through. Gen. Johnson came into the town of Gettysburg late in the previous evening and was slated by Ewell to take this hill; but Ewell and Early convinced Gen. Lee that it was

too big of a challenge as they saw some Yankees on the ridge. Thus, Lee made a big mistake by overlooking his order on that previous day. Well, those Yankees on the ridge had grown many fold just like weeds, and Gen. Johnson was given the honor to "take the ridge" as planned the day before.

The only real change was that Gen. Greene's men, assigned to hold the hill, were unfortunately reduced to some 20 percent of the men previously assigned this awesome task. Thus, "Lady Fate" had just thrown a big wrench into the remote possibility of holding out against the pending Rebel charge. Gen. Johnson arranged his three brigades to attack Culp's Hill as follows: Gen. Jones' Brigade (1,500 men) to attack on the Union right or east side of Culp's Hill, Gen. Williams' brigade (1,100 men) on the center of the hill, and Gen. Stuart (2,120 men) on the left of the hill which was also the most important end of the entire Federal battle line.

These Rebel brigades started their attack the same time, 7:30 PM, a little before dark. The astute Gen. Greene had placed three regiments in the previously vacated trenches and sent two regiments as skirmishers on the lower part of the hill; it was these skirmishers on the lower hillside that put up a brisk delaying action with the oncoming Rebels, and then the Yankees returned to their trenches. This gave Gen. Greene time to urgently call for help. Gen. Wadsworth commanded what was left of the Iron Brigade (some 700 men) and other troops of the famous 1st Corps. These were assigned the part of Culp's Hill on the east side that Rebels under Gen. Jones were fighting for. For the time being, the fighting on this east side was light, so Wadsworth was splendid in his cooperation as he sent Greene two regiments, the 6th Wisconsin (about 340 men) and the 14th Brooklyn (about 310 men). (G: 304)

We note that after the third day of battle the Wisconsin regiment lost 50% of its men and the Brooklyn regiment 70% of its men. These were men of great valor. Wadsworth trusted Greene's assessment of the battle conditions; if Greene was routed, it would expose Wadsworth's right and his own position, so he sent the best of his depleted units. To show a measure of their devotion to duty, it is worth mentioning that on the Rebel side, Heth's Division (7,450 men) had losses of 54% on the first day fighting with

Wadsworth's Division and other divisions of the Yankee 1st Corps; thus Gen. Lee did not call on Heth in the second and third day of fighting when he needed help like on Culp's Hill. Not using all the available troops in the critical attack at this time on Culp's Hill was a big mistake, as there were many Union troops on the hill.

Also, Gen. Hancock sent a regiment, the 71st Pennsylvania, commanded by Colonel Richard Smith as the regimental commander to support Greene's wavering defense. It was dark with flashes of fire from the rifles on the hill. The colonel did not like being in the dark with disorder about, and he ordered his troops to withdraw and march back to the 2nd Corps battle line. When asked about this withdrawal, Smith answered that he would not have his men murdered; what he should have said was that "we" don't want to be murdered; simply put, all war is murder on both sides. (E: 330) And tomorrow (the third day), we shall see how Colonel Smith's reserve or cowardice was again displayed when he was asked to fill a hole in the center of the Union lines when the Rebels were charging under Gen. Pickett. While the 71st Pennsylvania was withdrawing from Culp's Hill, the five absent Union brigades of Gen. Slocum's Corps came marching back from their assignment in Gen. Hancock's front in the battle line. By this time, the shooting had stopped on Hancock's center of the line, and on Culp's Hill. It was very dark and most difficult to shoot at anybody, Rebel or Yankee.

Thus, both Jones' Brigade and William's Brigade gained no permanent foothold on the hill as darkness set in, and the Rebels would wait at the bottom of the hill for the attack orders at daylight. But Gen. Steuart, the competent Rebel, had occupied half of the vacant Union trenches and would hold this ground on the ridge until morning. In summary, on Culp's Hill, the Rebels won a springboard to upset the Union line on the next day. This was due to the foolishness of Gen. Meade in taking his men away from the right flank, and on next day he would pay a price of a two-pronged attack. Darkness set in, and the fighting was postponed until sunrise on the third day.

Briefly, we have mentioned the physical features of Cemetery Hill in connection to the nearby Culp's Hill. We have discussed the battle of Culp's Hill, and now, we will turn back to the battle of Cemetery Hill taking place at about the same time. This part of

the battlefield was just south of Culp's Hill, and also under the command of Gen. Ewell. When he gave the order to attack, Gen. Early's division would advance on west side of Cemetery Hill as Gen. Johnson was attacking Culp's Hill, thus keeping the Yankees well occupied on the ridge line above the town. In Early's attack on Cemetery Hill, Gen. Hays' brigade (about 1,300 men) would attack the northern side of the hill and Gen. Avery (about 1,200 men) would attack on Hays' right side. All seemed to be in good order for these brigades to attack, except the time of execution was like that on Culp's Hill, the sun was about set. To avoid confusion, we will discuss the attack of each brigade separately, although they attacked as one large wave. We will discuss this in greater detail than other parts because it is one of the most serious attempts to succeed and win a big victory by the South.

Both of these Rebel brigades advanced in very good order along side each other. They both hit a Yankee skirmish line at the base of the hill, which extended from the Rebel right controlled by Gen. Hays' Brigade to the far left controlled by Gen. Avery's Brigade. In front of Hays' Brigade was the Yankee Harris' Brigade; in front of Avery's Brigade was the Yankee Von Gilsa Brigade. The cannons high on the right ridge had some cover by an old stone wall which was the main line facing the Rebels. As the battle opened, these guns delivered a little "hell" to the Rebels as the guns had been sighted to various attacking positions earlier in the day. (G: 292) This shows that the Yankees were taking no chances and planned their firepower. As the big guns opened up on the advancing Rebels, sadly, one of the cannon balls exploded above Gen. Avery's head with a mortal wound. As he was dying, he penned a note to his father that went something like this: I died with my face to the enemy. (G: 293) And that is the useless values of this war, as the soldiers on both sides died this day.

At about 8:00 PM, in their rapid pace up the slope, the Rebel line easily overcame the skirmishers, but advance of both battalions was retarded by a Yankee second defensive tier of an old stone fence along with brush and timber barriers, located higher near the ridge. On the left, several cannon were firing canister shells (like a coffee can filled with loose metal shot) at the Rebels. This is a very deadly weapon; as the loose metal shot leaves the mouth of the cannon, it sprays the shot over a wide area, wounding

soldiers somewhat like the modern machine gun. So the Rebels were determined to put these cannons out of business. The first indication of trouble in holding the Union line was when the 25th Ohio and the 107 Ohio (Harris' Brigade) retreated up the hill on the Union's left flank towards the protection of Wiedrich's battery.

This point of the defense weakened, and nearly all units of Union line moved back up hill to the second tier of the stone wall fortifications. At the stone wall, there was a vicious fight and a mixed one at that. The northern troops of Wiedrich's Battery worked their guns with bravery and skill, and this cannonry kept the Rebels away by using canister and hand to hand fighting. (E: 336) They retrieved their name as being tough Germans as they did not run as other Germans troops had done on Gen. Howard's front. Thus, they held this section of the stone wall. Some units of the Union line held while others left holes through which the Rebels commenced their travel to the top of the ridge in darkness. Getting to the top of the ridge shows the Rebels had played the king out of their deck of cards, but staying there was a different matter.

Two of the strangest events of the battle of Gettysburg were being played out as the Rebels were breaking through of the Yankees defenses. The first event occurred on Gen. Hancock's front located in the center of the Union main battle line. It was nearly dark, but there was a firefight exploding on Cemetery Hill that got Hancock's attention. There was trouble on the Union right flank that had been quiet all day. He did not request orders from Gen. Meade as time was essential. The attack was serious. He immediately told Gen. Gibbon to send Col. Carroll's Brigade to stop the Rebel attack. Gen. Hancock could not have chosen a warrior who loved battle better than Carroll. Carroll told his men to drop their packs, and leading the way, he double-timed his men along the ridge. He led them through the town's cemetery on Cemetery Hill, and down the slope through Capt. Ricketts Battery, just in time to save the guns. (E: 339) Carroll was a man who meant business. His orders went something like this: halt, front face, charge with bayonets, double-quick march, and give them hell! So through the cannons his outfit went and piled into the Hays' Rebel Forces pushing them back down the hill. The Rebels were no longer "King of The Hill". (E: 339)

A similar important story was being played out on the extreme left of this sector of the Union line at this time. They acted to save the battle without any coordination between the two Union Brigades, or with any orders from the senior officer. Simply put, there wasn't time for runners to communicate. The central theme they followed was that they were doing their best in a hopeless situation at a dark hour of the night when no one traveled under normal conditions. But the loud sound of the guns told the real story of a serious Rebel attack, and the men in blue wanted to do their duty for their country. Gen. Schurz was the Union's 3rd division commander in Gen. Howard's 11th Corps. (D: 409) He became aware of Hays' successful Rebel attack on his flank as the day slipped into darkness and the Rebels moved to the stone wall defensive line.

Something had to be done, so he did not wait for orders. Gen. Schurz took several regiments out of his line facing the Rebel Rodes' Division where there was no action at this time, and he personally led the charge on Gen. Hays Rebel troops who were pressing on the northern flank where the Wiedrich Union Battery was under attack. (D: 409) The Union troops pushed through the guns, and moved on to clean out the Rebels holding the stone wall line. This occurred at the same time Col. Carroll's men were attacking the central and southern side of the battle line where Rickets Union Battery was being pressed. (D: 406) The combined Union force now included the additional men from other battle sectors. This was too strong a wave of Union men facing the Rebels for the Rebels to hold the hill.

Gen. Hays looked for Rebel support from Rodes' Rebel Division. But Rodes was ordered to move only when Gen. Lane, who was commanding Pender's division on Rodes right, charged the hill. In this game of war, Rodes lost the battle of Cemetery Hill when the Rebels were on top of the hill, but there was no support from Rodes available. No one told Lane in the reserve to attack up the hill, and thus, neither did Gen. Rodes with his entire division (about 7,000 men) move to attack the Yankees on the hill. The men on the Union side were some of the same weakened troops facing Gen. Rodes whom he defeated on the previous day.

On the southern sector of the hill, Col. Avery's battalion looked for support from Gen. Gordon's brigade in the Rebel reserve. But, Gen. Early cancelled that movement to save lives. Both General Hays Brigade and Col. Godwin's Brigade, who took the place of the fallen Col. Avery, withdrew from the hill into their previous staging areas. (D: 407) Although Hays lost his high mark on the hill by his withdrawal, he brought back to his camp 4 Union battle flags and 100 prisoners to feed; those Rebels who charged this Cemetery Hill should receive high marks in courage. The Southern senior commanders like Gens. Early and Rodes were at fault for poor management of their supporting units when victory on the hill was in sight. (G: 296, 298).

The second day closed with the North winning more points in this game of war than the South. Shelby Foote wrote in *The Civil War: A Narrative* that by his count only 16 brigades were seriously engaged out of the 37 Southern infantry brigades available in the second day of battle at Gettysburg. (F: 202) Ineffective management from the top command through the ranks was to blame for the poor showing in critical areas, as we shall see in our summary of the battle.

Looking back over the long day of fighting, we can assess the battle honors as follows. Much turmoil existed on both the Yankee and the Rebel sides along the battle line. And the third day of battle would not look any better than the previous two. On the left end of the Union fish hook battle line, much of the vital Yankee trenches on Little Round Top were saved from the Rebels by a whisker. With no ammunition left and some 30 percent casualties, the 20th Maine, under command of Col. Joshua Chamberlain, bravely charged into the attacking Rebels, barely forcing a withdrawal, but tomorrow they could likely return to try an other end run.

Gen. Hancock's 2nd Corps was under great pressure to hold the Cemetery Ridge battle line in the center of the Union line. If fact, Gen. Wright's Rebel brigade (about 1600 men) had achieved a position on top of the ridge as a wedge inside the Union line, but they could not hold it. Gen. Gibbon used his devoted Yankees to slip in an opening on the Rebel flank to get in the rear of the attackers to do great damage to Wright's people, driving them out of the wedge and down the hill to their reserve area. This fight

cost these brave Rebels about 60% casualties. The Rebels did break the Yankee line in the center for a short time, and they could try it again tomorrow.

Over on Cemetery Hill at dusk, Gen. Hays' Rebels pushed through the Yankee stone wall defenses and celebrated for a moment with a view and ownership of the top of Cemetery Hill that they were fighting for. Col. Carroll's Brigade, as directed by Gen. Hancock, showed up and surprised the Rebels, driving them back down the hillside to their starting point.

In the same area, the Rebels attack on Culp's Hill had some success. Gen. Steuart's Brigade attacked around the end to the fish hook line, and by dark, they held some of the vacant Union entrenchments high on the west side of Culp's Hill; the Union Gen. Greene held the remainder.

After reviewing his assessment of the battle so far, Gen. Meade did not think the battle for the next day was a sure bet. At about 8:00 PM, he sent a status message to the Washington Headquarters that read something like this. The army was attacked by the Rebels in one of the sharpest conflicts of the war, but they were repulsed after a severe battle. And then he added that he would remain in his present position until tomorrow; when he would be advised of the condition of the army; with this information his operations would be either be "offensive" or "defensive". (E: 342) This tells us one important thing. The old snapping turtle was really snapping and did not know if he was on foot or horseback, as they would say in the old West. He did not know what to do with his army tomorrow.

Should he retreat tonight to the previously planned Pipe Creek defense line (some 15 miles away), or stay on the ridge and fight it out, like was done today? He had Gen. Pendleton, the commander of the Union Cavalry, investigate the procedure for a possible move to the Pipe Creek line, and his chief of staff, Gen. Butterfield, prepared orders (only one copy survived) for each corps to move to Pipe Creek in case this action was necessary. All of this was good thinking by Meade because a good general should have a fallback plan in case of trouble pointing to disaster.

However, let us look at the possible consequences of pulling out of the existing proven fortifications and retreating to Pipe Creek. If the Union Brigades pulled out of their line, they could leave holes between the marching brigades and an alert Rebel Brigade could slip through the holes and rout the Union Army. Union Brigades would be in marching order, and the Rebel Brigades would be fighting order. The effective use of cavalry for flank protection was doubtful. So staying in tested fortifications was justifiable with a backup plan for a disaster. Why is this detailed discussion of the Pipe Creek move given? Simply put, our highest Union field general at Gettysburg now held the power to change our country's destiny by winning or losing this battle. He was confused and edgy on the direction he should take for the third day, so he called a conference of his corps commanders.

All nine corps generals and some of their aides were assembled at Union headquarters, most of them sitting on the floor, in one little room of Gen. Meade's old farmhouse on the ridge. It was 11:00 PM. He said he would abide by their comments on battle plans for the next day. A smart move because when each general "signed on" to the direction the Union Army should take; he would then be committed to do his best to throw his Corps into winning the battle tomorrow. After the close-calls of second day of battle, Gen. Meade needed all the help he could get. The Union Army had lost some 17,000 men (killed, wounded, and missing) in the first two days of fighting. (G: 308) So Gen. Butterfield, Chief of Staff, ask three questions for comments: 1) Stay and fight it out or retire? All agreed to stay and fight it out. Good news. 2) Should the army attack or wait for an attack? Holding the high ground, all agreed to wait for attack. Good news, let the Rebels waste their blood in attacking the Union entrenchments. 3) To wait for the attack, how long? Stay, fight it out, and not wait long. (F: 205) Good news!

The strange part of war is that there seems to be no relation from one side of the battlefield to the other side. Across the way from Meade at about the same time on Gen. Lee's side, Gen. Lee did not personally meet and discuss tomorrow's battle plan plans with his corps commanders. (E: 346) His orders were to follow the same plan as used on second day. Although Gen. Longstreet objected to that battle plan, his opinion did not

count. This was a big mistake, as Gen. Lee needed support from all of his senior commanders; it is called "esprit de corps" in this critical battle, especially in its third day.

THE THIRD DAY

The first two days of this terrible battle showed, by the large causalities of both armies, that the limits of complete exhaustion were being reached on both sides. Today, July 3rd would decide the victor. There were two phases to this day's fighting in the Gettysburg Battle. It would close a most important chapter of the Civil War, when the South reached their high-water mark of invading the Northern States and nearly winning their independence.

The first phase of this day's fighting is termed, "The Fight for Culp's Hill". The second phase is termed, "Breaking the Center of the Union Line". The first phase started early at daybreak and lasted until just before noon. The second phase started early in the afternoon and lasted until nearly 5:00 PM. These attacks would involve almost of all the troops and all the cannons on both sides. It would last the full day. Both sides really meant business in winning this game of war and freedom; whether it was to define freedom of the states or freedom of the individual.

The Fight for Culp's Hill

It is commonly believed that "Pickett's Charge" deserves the hallmark of the third day's battle, but that is not necessarily so. The Culp's Hill phase was as critical to winning the day's fighting, as was the second phase, the famous Pickett's charge. The Rebel object of winning Culp's Hill was not the hill itself, but to turn the Union right flank (the end of the fishhook line) and get behind the main battle line. This action would destroy the rear of the Union Army infantry as well as the ammunition, food, and cannon reserves. This position controlled the Baltimore Pike, the route the Union Army would have to use to the Pipe Creek fallback position in case a retreat was needed. As one will recall, this phase is really a continuation of the attack on the hill from the preceding night when Gen. Johnson's Rebel Division occupied much of the trenches vacated by Gen. Slocum's men. Gen. Slocum's 12th Army Corps had been called away to support the Union forces under attack in the center of the battle line, and Slocum left only Gen.

Greene's Brigade to defend empty trenches; they were not sufficient for the task and they held only part of the line. Gen. Slocum returned in the middle of the night only to find most of his trenches filled with Rebels. This Rebel position on the hill was a great asset for an attack in the third day's battle. It was around 1:00 AM in the morning when Slocum discovered from his reports that he was in great trouble.

We need to examine Slocum's characteristics because what he would do within the next 12 hours from this alarming discovery, could save or defeat the Union Army at Gettysburg. The object of the Rebel Army was to turn the Union flank on the end of the fish hook and hammer the rear of the main Yankee battle line while Gen. Longstreet's Rebel forces, including Gen. Pickett's men, would hammer the front of the line. Thus, Slocum's situation was very critical.

Now, let us look at his poor performance in the first day of battle to view the chances of Yankee success in this case. In the morning of the first day, Gen. Howard arrived on the battlefield with the 11th Army corps and was assigned to fight Gen. Ewell's large Rebel 2nd Corps who defeated the Yankees. These were the very same Rebel troops who were now facing Slocum on this third day of battle. On the first day, Howard requested help from Gen. Slocum, who was only 8 miles or 3 hours away. No help came as Slocum was waiting orders to move from Gen. Meade, who was 12 miles away (about 6 hours of travel round trip by messenger). Slocum did not come to the rescue and he could have saved Union lives by acting as a shield in Howard's retreat. Gen. Howard lost about a third of his men (about 3,500 men) that day. One Union officer called Slocum, General "Slow Come." Gen. Slocum was an old West Point man and an honor student at the Point. He left the army after some service and became a lawyer in New York, returning to the army when this war started. Given his background, Slocum followed orders by the book. And this was not good news, as sometimes to win in battle you have to be practical in combat as the message may not get through.

The time was 1:00 AM (midnight) in Slocum's command tent on Powers Hill (a small knoll). It took about 20 minutes for orders to reach Slocum's front line troops. Gen. Meade had issued orders to retake the trenches that Slocum had lost to the rebels

earlier in the evening. The fear in Slocum's mind at that time of night was at first daylight the Rebels in those Yankee trenches would sweep forward, right over his command post, if he did not correctly prepare his defense for their attack. No one slept in the trenches the tents. The lamps were lit in Slocum's tent, where he pored over maps and sent out orders. He realized he had only a few hours to place cannon and move infantry in the dark of night. Fortunately, he was aided by Gen. Williams, a very astute and practical commander in the art of war. The approach they worked out was to attack first thing in the morning to recapture the lost trenches.

It is strange that people can do the impossible when there is a realization that this may be their last day, the last chance to win. In this case, they did not wait for orders to place the cannon and infantry; they positioned them to stop the Rebels who might be coming to the command post at any moment. Gen. Ewell had received orders from Gen. Lee to attack in the morning and control Baltimore Pike. Gen. Lee subsequently issued revised orders to delay timing the attack, but they arrived too late. The other orders to delay the attack did not reach Ewell until after Slocum opened his attack, which gave a "new ball game" to this field of the battle. (F: 207)

Let's look at the large Rebel forces involved in this contest. Gen. Edward "Allegheny" Johnson had 7 Rebel Brigades facing Culp's Hill: Jones (on the far right 1,500 men), Williams (center 1,100 men), O'Neal (center 1,700 men), Walker (center and left end 1,300 men), Daniel (center 2,000 men), Steuart (left end facing Power's Hill, 2,100 men), Smith (far left 200 men). All were looking forward to sharing Slocum's tent the next day. (D: 588-589) (E: 365) Two additional Rebel brigades, Daniel's and O'Neal's from Rodes command, came in during the night to add to those who had fought the previous day. Gen. Ewell needed more men to assure success in the next attack. Smith's brigade was taken from the reserve at Gen. Johnson's directions to add more assurance to his effort.

The Rebels meant business this time as they mounted a full-scale effort to turn the Union flank (end). This attack could win the battle of Gettysburg. The number of men on the Rebel side of the hill reached some 10,500 men which is a lot of Rebel soldiers.

On the Union side on the hill, the count was about 9,800 men in Slocum's 12th Army Corps. In addition, Gen. Meade was nervous and sent two brigades from the 6th Army Corps which added about 2,000 men to support Slocum. (E: 354) The total Union Army count was raised to about 11,800 men. With these approximate numbers, we can see the battle appeared to be an even contest.

Not so. On the confederate side, the ground was very rough, covered with large rocks, heavy brush, and a creek. This rough ground would slow the Rebel advance. In fact, their ammunition train was parked a little over a mile away because of the difficult terrain. When the Rebels on the firing line were running short of ammunition, some men were assigned to carry the rifle ammunition from the wagon train using blankets and poles to get this important product of war back to the Rebel fighters. The Rebel commanders concluded that this rough ground precluded moving artillery close the battle line to support their attack. Obviously, if the Rebel commanders could move thousands of men to the battle line for their attack, they could find a suitable pathway by cutting brush to bring the important artillery pieces with wheels to the battle line.

For some unknown reason, it may be the rough ground problem or others, Gen. Johnson did not use his artillery to weaken the enemy's defensive positions. Johnson gave his artillery orders to wait; action orders never came. (E: 364) Why such a serious mistake was made in the Rebel command, we will never know. However, a plaque on the present tower on Culp's Hill indicates there was a Rebel battery firing at the Union forces from a distance, but historical papers do not mention its effectiveness. Not using the artillery and not keeping ammunition for the infantry within proper reach were a serious error in planning the Rebel attack. In contrast, no Union batteries were destroyed by counter battery fire, but the Union batteries did great damage to the Rebel infantry beyond their weight in gold. Now, we will see what Gen. Slocum was doing in the black of night to prepare the placing his artillery for the expected early morning attack as Johnson and his Rebels slept.

Let us look at how the Union artillery was effectively placed. We must describe the shape of the battlefield to appreciate the control the artillery had over the attacking

forces. Slightly to the west of Culp's Hill runs Rock Creek Valley. It is a small meadow. Not only did the battle cover the western part of Culp's Hill, it also took place in the valley to the east where the Rebels were making an end run around the Union fish hook line. Along this valley looking south there is a small knoll known as McAllister's Hill. About a thousand feet further south is another slightly larger knoll known as Power's Hill. From both of these knolls, it is easy for the artillery people to see the east and south sides of Culp's Hill and also have a straight shot view of the small Rock Creek Valley.

And guess what a surprise Gen. Slocum was going to give the attacking Rebels: tons of cannon shot fired from these high knolls where he could easily see the advancing enemy. His headquarters was on Power's Hill, where 16 big guns looked straight down the valley and also pointing to trenches up on Culp's Hill. These guns (cannons) had a range of more than 2,400 feet, and when a spherical case (plain shrapnel) exploded over the heads of a company of soldiers, the pieces from the shell would wipe out most of them. We might add that later in the day, when the Rebels had the gun range of Meade's headquarters in the Rebel attack on the main battle line, Meade was forced to move and share Power's Hill with Slocum. At the top on Culp's Hill, Slocum placed 4 guns. On McAllister Hill he placed another battery (4 guns). On Power's Hill he placed 16 guns which could fire upon Rebels in the valley or on the side of Culp's Hill hitting Rebel held trenches Along the embankment of Baltimore Pike, a road that crossed the valley and could served as a possible escape route from Gettysburg, he placed 10 guns that looked down the valley and also to Culp's Hill in the direction of the Rebel attack. You can see all the approaches to his line were well covered by Union artillery. As we mentioned, Gen. Johnson had no Rebel artillery positioned to oppose any heavy Yankee artillery shelling that the advancing Rebels would face. Perhaps, if Gen. Lee had visited this sector, he might have pickup this flaw in Johnson's plan of attack, and saved many Rebels.

In addition to positioning artillery, Slocum massed brigades on the Union side of Culp's Hill to take back the trenches in the morning that had been captured in the previous evening. Some of the trenches and spaces on top of the hill were still held by Gen. Greene and his Union forces. Gen. Apheus S. Williams, temporary commander of

the 6th Corps, was the expert who was instrumental in planning details of gun and infantry emplacements. (E: 361) Williams enjoyed a half hour sleep before all hell broke loose when the big guns fired. All this shows that Gen. Slocum had also not slept, and had regained his worth that he lost on the pervious day. In this fight, firepower counted, and both Slocum and Williams knew how to handle it to win this important fight.

As was mentioned, Slocum intended to surprise the attacking Rebel army, and at the terrible hour of 3:45 AM, he ordered Gen. Geary to give a signal with pistol shots for the artillery to begin their destructive power. All the batteries on McAllister's and Power's hills were firing at the southeast face of Culp's Hill into the Rebel lines. No Rebel batteries returned the fire. Also at this time, the Yankee infantry commenced firing their rifles. While all these fireworks at night created quiet a show for the Rebels, who occupied the Union trenches, not many Rebels were hit.

At this time, we should discuss a unique procedure not in the military manual of that time. It was developed by Gen. Greene (an old civil engineer) to increase his effective firepower of his unit when he was vastly outnumbered in his trenches on Culp's hill. He rotated the ranks; after the front rank fired, they would turn to the rear to reload. The rear rank would take the front rank's place and fire. (D: 444) Thus, the cycle would continue, and there would be a steady sheet of bullets for the Rebels. Other units on the hill quickly took up this rotation method. They used the method in the next series of attacks, and this tactic would stop the Rebels cold. The artillery shelling stopped after an hour, to permit the Union Army to attack.

At this point I would like to digress a moment, and point to tactics that were not considered, but could have possibly given the South a victory at Gettysburg. In the morning of the third day, Gen. Longstreet discussed his plan for the day's battle that was based on information gathered during the night. He had suggested moving the army to attack the right flank. Longstreet had proposed that plan before, and it was rejected. To reinforce his decision, Lee replied that the enemy is on that ridge, and his army was going to strike the Yankees there. Thus, Lee's concentration was with attacking the large enemy forces on the ridge. From the many history books, there is no basic evidence, that

either Gen. Lee or Gen. Ewell (the Corps commander responsible for Gen. Johnson's sector) discussed the battle plan in detail on Johnson's side of the Union's fishhook battle line or visited this sector during the heavy fighting on this important part of the battle of Gettysburg. So the artillery support and the supply of ammunition required in the sector were not planned in detail for this site. Ammunition for the Rebels had to be carried from wagons a mile away. (G: 324) Gen. Lee considered the Culp's Hill attack, at a minimum, as a diversion that would keep Union forces occupied, so that they would not be available to support the Union Army on the Cemetery Ridge when Gen. Lee's main forces attacked.

Perhaps, with the condition that existed on Culp's Hill at the time Johnson attacked, a different tactic should have been employed by the South as given by S. W. Sears in his book, *Gettysburg*. (E: 362) The condition was that the lower unoccupied Union trenches on the hill (during the night) were only 600 yards from the Baltimore Pike that led directly to Baltimore and then on to Washington. Winning this route, Lee might have been in position to deliver the terms of Confederate separation on Lincoln's desk. As mentioned before, adjacent to the west of Culp's Hill is a small valley with the small Rock Creek flowing in a grassy meadow. Brigades of the North and South opposed each other in that space in the valley. Gen. "Allegheny" Johnson still had some 9,700 men under his command and four batteries (some 16 guns not used) available for this attack. To show the importance of the Culp's Hill's fight, we can compare it to that of the famous Pickett's charge on Cemetery Hill that occurred late in this same afternoon and was the final battle at Gettysburg. Pickett charged the hill with some 11,000 men. (D: 481) Both sides suffering heavy losses, the number of infantry involved at each of these locations remained nearly equal as they extended the third day of fighting.

S. W. Sears, as we just mentioned, suggested that Johnson should have considered using his men in a frontal attack on the more level valley floor instead of choosing to go up the rocky, steep, rugged face of Culp's Hill. There the earthworks were lined with trenches and the battlefield was up a steep slope of the rocky hill. To repeat the attack on the same Yankee battle line that held back the Rebels in the previous night with additional men now behind the Yankee works, does not appear reasonable, when a more

favorable pathway to victory was obvious as given by the following description. This was a critical error in the management of this battle.

Now the bottom line: what was not known to Gen. Lee, Gen. Ewell, and Gen. Johnson, due mainly to the missing cavalry eyes of Gen. Stuart, was there was a present, just like gold, on the Baltimore Pike a short distance away. Gen. Hunt, the artillery commander of the Union Army, had stored some of 60 wagons of ammunition to serve the entire Union Army on this road. About this time Gen. Pendleton, Chief of Rebel Artillery, knew the Rebel Army was low on ammunition for its guns and related it through Col. Alexander to Gen. Longstreet. In these Union wagons, Gen. Hunt had stored an additional 20 rounds per gun over the issued requirements as an assist from his friend, the quartermaster. (E: 355) This shows there was cooperation among the Union officers in winning this battle. Fighting with the Yankees on the steep slopes of Culp's Hill, instead of making a heavy Rebel thrust along the valley floor, only added to the many Rebel casualties. The Union works that the Rebel Gen. George Steuart (his men were the infantry not cavalry) had captured on the hill the previous night were only 600 yards from the treasured Baltimore Pike, which held the reserve Union ammunition wagons. (E: 362) This suggests that Johnson should have used his 16 cannons, blasted his way to the Pike, and taken Hunt's ammunition train, along with destroying the Union rear guard. This was a serious mistake. Both Gen. Lee and Gen. Ewell were at fault for not inspecting the conditions on that front.

Three Union brigades (Greene, Candy, and Kane) held positions in a line on the top ridge of Culp's Hill. Gen. Greene' s brigade was in his trenches, while Gens. Candy and Kane had the assignment to recapture their connecting trenches to the southeast. Kind of a mixed way to fight a war, but sometimes fate plays this game. From this point, the defense line went down to the small valley and across the meadow. This lower line was the responsibility of three Union brigades (Lockwood, McDougall, and Colgrove). After an hour of bombardment, the Union artillery ceased firing. The Union men in Candy's brigade and Kane's brigade attacked to regain their trenches, but they were stopped. The men on the meadow line attacked, but they were stopped. Now, it was the Gen. Johnson's turn to attack with his experienced southern men. Johnson ordered a full

assault on the Yankee line. One of the Yankee officers noted that the Rebel advance was in excellent order. One small picture of the big picture is described to provide a meaning to this fight. As the Rebels approached the Yankee line to within than100 yards, the Yanks aimed accurately and the fire of the old professionals mowed down the Southern troops with rapidity; they were using Greene's rotating method of loading and firing. (E: 363) The Rebels attacking McDougal's brigade were so close to their goal of blocking the Baltimore Pike, that they saw it in the distance only 600 yards away! (E: 362) The fighting was deadly, and they did not make their goal that day, but it was close. (G: 323)

Then came seven hours of back-and-forth fighting, spilling plenty of infantry blood on both sides. Neither side gained a decisive position. In this skirmishing, the rebels held a stone wall in the lower section of the battle line in the meadow, but it was finally won by Col. Pardee's 147th Pennsylvania at a heavy cost. (E: 364) The line was finally stabilized. Still some parts of the lower hill remained in Rebel hands that they had captured. As we related earlier, Gen. Lee had ordered an early morning attack to help Gen. Longstreet's morning attack in the center of the fishhook. Longstreet was not prepared at this time, prompting Lee to sent word to Gen. Ewell to delay his fighting on Culp's hill until 10 AM. War is not a perfect game. As previously told, the Yankees started the all day fight early in the morning, and that is when most of Gen. Lee's plan on his left flank went out the window. However, part of Lee's plan remained to be played out; at 10 AM Gen. Johnson thought he would help Longstreet and ordered the last maximum effort. (E: 368) Three brigades would lead the attacking line followed by supporting brigades. Again, Steuart's Brigade would lead the left side, Daniel's Brigade would be in the center and Walker's Stonewall Brigade (the one with high honors) would frame the right. Both Gens. Steuart and Daniel, experienced officers, protested that they "strongly disapproved of making this assault". The attack proved to be a slaughterhouse, and it failed. The rotation of the Yankee firing lines provided to be a destructive killing machine. A veteran from the Stonewall Brigade said he had never, "…seen in all my life fighting as bloody, or as hard contested field." (D: 447) Gen. Johnson assembled his men in the trenches at the Rebel firing line, and he waited out the rest of the day. As night fell, word came to Johnson that Gen. Pickett's charge had also failed with similar losses

of men. Gen. Lee would issue orders for a general withdrawal to an area near Gettysburg where Gen. Ewell forces, along with Gen. Johnson's Division, would assemble.

Gen. Johnson's later comments tells his story of this defeat, "The enemy were too strongly entrenched and in too great numbers to be dislodged by the force at my command … No further assault was made; all had been done that was possible to do." (D: 449) He did not mention that his artillery was not used, and he did not mention that his main objective was to capture the Baltimore Pike.

Perhaps, the casualty numbers, including those of Gen. Johnson, tell more of the story on the outcome of this side of the important battle of Gettysburg than any other measure. N. A. Trudeau's book, *Gettysburg* gives the statistics: The Union 12th Corps suffered casualties of 1,082 of which 204 were killed (D: 449), but he did not include Shaler's Brigade of the 6th Corps which lost 74 men. Yankee losses were about 1150 casualties for fighting on the east side of the Culp's Hill that faced the sector assigned to Gen. Johnson. Additional casualties were suffered by Gen. Wadsworth's Division, 1st Corps, in all of three days of battle, including two days on the east side of Culp's Hill. This division lost about 2,150 men of their original count of 3,860 men or about 56 %. The number that could be assigned to Culp's Hill is unknown. Given the information of the battle Gen. Meade used every division in the battle regardless of its casualties; his men were also expendable in battle.

In Gen. Johnson's division, the Rebel casualties were 2,002. (D: 449) But additional losses were from Daniel's brigade and from O'Neal's Brigade, which were about 400 each. These two brigades were supporting units from Rodes' Division. Smith's Brigade of Early's Division lost 213 men. The Rebels' loss for fighting at Culp's Hill was about 3000 brave Southern soldiers. This mark would be about 40% of the total casualties suffered by the Confederates this day when the losses at Culp's Hill are added to those along with Pickett's Charge (F: 244) at the center of the Yankee line on Seminary Hill in the late afternoon. Truly, the men who died on Culp's Hill made a valuable contribution to their cause at Gettysburg, which seems to be downplayed by many writers.

Attack on the Center of the Union Line

It was around noon on the third day that Gen. Lee received Gen. Ewell's report that all that could be done was done in the failed attempt to dislodge the Yankees from their entrenchments on Culp's Hill. At that time, he must have realized that all of the 9 brigades he was going to use in charging the Yankee line that afternoon must succeed in breaking the center of the Yankee line if the South were to win her independence at Gettysburg. Thus, at this time Gen. Lee held a meeting with Gen. Longstreet to discuss the final battle plan and appointed him, his old "war horse", as the overall commander of this critical afternoon attack; he did not want any mistakes. Gen. Longstreet gave Gen. Lee his opinion that, in his experience, as an old soldier, that the ridge could not be taken. Lee replied that the enemy is on the ridge, and the Confederate Army will attack him there. So there was a cleavage in purpose and method in the battle plan (bad news), but Longstreet would follow orders. Then, to heal the breakage, both of these army commanders would ride the full length of the battle line together while planning the details in the attack.

Previously, on the second day, we looked at a case of sour humor dealing with the skirmishing at the Bliss farm. This farm had a nice house along with a stone and brick barn not easily destroyed by war; it became a small bastion midway between the Union and Confederate lines. Who ever captured the buildings and played king of the hill, would use the buildings for their expert sharp shooters to try and kill the opposition's soldiers. On the second day, the Union soldiers caused much trouble at that farm house which detoured Gen. Posey brigade to take the farm buildings (losing 92 men) rather than supporting Gen. Wright Brigade. (D: 393) Wright had broken the Union line for a very short time before on Cemetery Ridge. He called for help from Posey and others, who did not come.

Now, it was midmorning on the following day, and Gen. Hays sent a company of Union soldiers to remove the rebel sharp shooters at the farm. The action got out of hand as the Rebels moved more firepower to the farm. Tired of all this foolishness of playing king of the hill, Gen. Hays ordered the house and barn to be burnt, which was done. (E: 390) The last laugh was with the Union men as they carried the chickens back to

their lines. In summary, this shows how foolish pieces of war may become as the Bliss farm served no real strategy to either side, and many men were killed in the skirmish. The Rebels wasted artillery shells at Bliss farm that could have used in the main attack. Because of the diversion of Gen. Posey to the farm, the South missed the opportunity to hold a vital position on the ridge. This is a case of failure in the higher command to control elements of the battle plan.

Overview of the Rebel Battle Line

This important phase of the battle is commonly known as "Pickett's Charge", simply because he was the right field commander of the troops in the most important charge to break the center of the main Union fish hook line, (see Figure 2, The Third Day: Pickett's Charge). Winning this last battle would salvage a Southern victory and win their independence. We should review some events that will show the frame of mind of the Southern commanders who planned and implemented the strategy of this part of the campaign.

Gen. Longstreet, the 1st Corps commander, would have normally visited his mentor, Gen. Lee, at the end of the second day's fighting. He did not report in person, but sent a messenger with the details of the second day. There was a running dispute between these two over the directions the army should take. As we have noted before, Gen. Longstreet wanted to withdraw from Gettysburg and fight a battle between Gettysburg and Washington on more favorable ground instead of attacking Cemetery Ridge with its entrenchments. Gen. Ewell, the 2nd Corps commander, also did not visit Gen. Lee, maybe because of his poor showing on the second day in getting his troops into action. The 3rd Corps commander, Gen. Hill, was sick from an old aliment. While his personal contact at this time with Lee was not recorded, he had reported that he did make a brief breakthrough on the ridge, but he withdrew due to lack of support. The fact that Gen. Wright had broken the Yankee line at the clump of trees formed the war plans that Gen. Lee would employ the next day.

Unhappiness in the senior Rebel command was prominent during the last day of battle. In the morning of the third day, on the last day of battle, Gen. Lee told Gen. Hill

that he would assign Hill's six brigades to Gen. Longstreet's command for the attack on Cemetery Ridge. A conversation was held between Hill and Longstreet on this transfer arrangement. An unfortunate relationship existed between these two generals over a conflict covering an order given long ago; they closed the conversation without shaking hands. Thus, discord in the attitude within the Rebel Command pointed to a lack of cooperation that is a serious fault in any battle.

As previous mentioned, the Corps commanders did not visit Gen. Lee the evening of the second day. (F: 203) In Gen. Lee's camp, there was no joy for the attack. Conversely, looking back in the Union camp, Gen. Meade's late nightly meeting of the second day of battle resulted in the attitude that all of seven Union corps commanders agreed to stay and fight it out.

The Artillery

The elements for success in battle include the astute commanders, the sufficient supplies, the courageous soldiers, the mobile cavalry and the heavy weapons. This section will discuss the heavy weapons or the artillery that were skillfully used. These were the main artillery players in this game of war at Gettysburg. On the Union side was the fire-eater Gen. Henry Hunt, an old general. On the Confederate side was Col. Edward P. Alexander, a young active colonel of the 2nd Corps, along with the reserved Gen. William Pendleton, an old general and Chief of Artillery. Let us discuss these actors on the stage of war to see their merits and contribution to winning and loosing this battle.

Gen. Hunt was a crusty old army man with a record extending back to his days at West Point. He specialized in artillery and taught the subject to army officers as one of his assignments in a long army career. Col. Armistead Long, on Lee's staff, was one of his students. (E: 397) After graduation from West Point, Hunt fought in the Mexican War along with such old soldiers as Lee and Grant. Thus, he had the theory and hands-on experience with artillery since the battle of Bull Run in '61. He would be professional and not make many mistakes. Each corps had an artillery brigade. For example, the 2nd Corps under Gen. Hancock, who would hold a vital sector against Gen. Pickett in his last

charge, had about 6 batteries with about 4 guns each. Gen. Hunt personally supervised the placement of 24 guns with 600 gunners, and would add more guns where needed. That is where his hands-on experience counted. In the middle of the fight, Gen. Hancock ordered these guns to fire to raise the troop moral during the oncoming Rebel charge. Hunt ordered them to quit to save ammunition. Who won this tug-of-war? Gen. Hunt did!

The artillery brigade commanders were chosen carefully and trained by Gen. Hunt, so they knew his style of fighting. Hunt placed 116 guns from all the army corps to cover the 2nd Corps area of the battle at positions that would provide a deadly a cross-fire in the sector of the attack. Hunt anticipated the attack would be at the center of the line at the clump of trees. Using his experience, he told his gunners that the primary target was the enemy who were advancing. The secondary target was the enemy canons. All the guns must work as a unit. (F: 376)

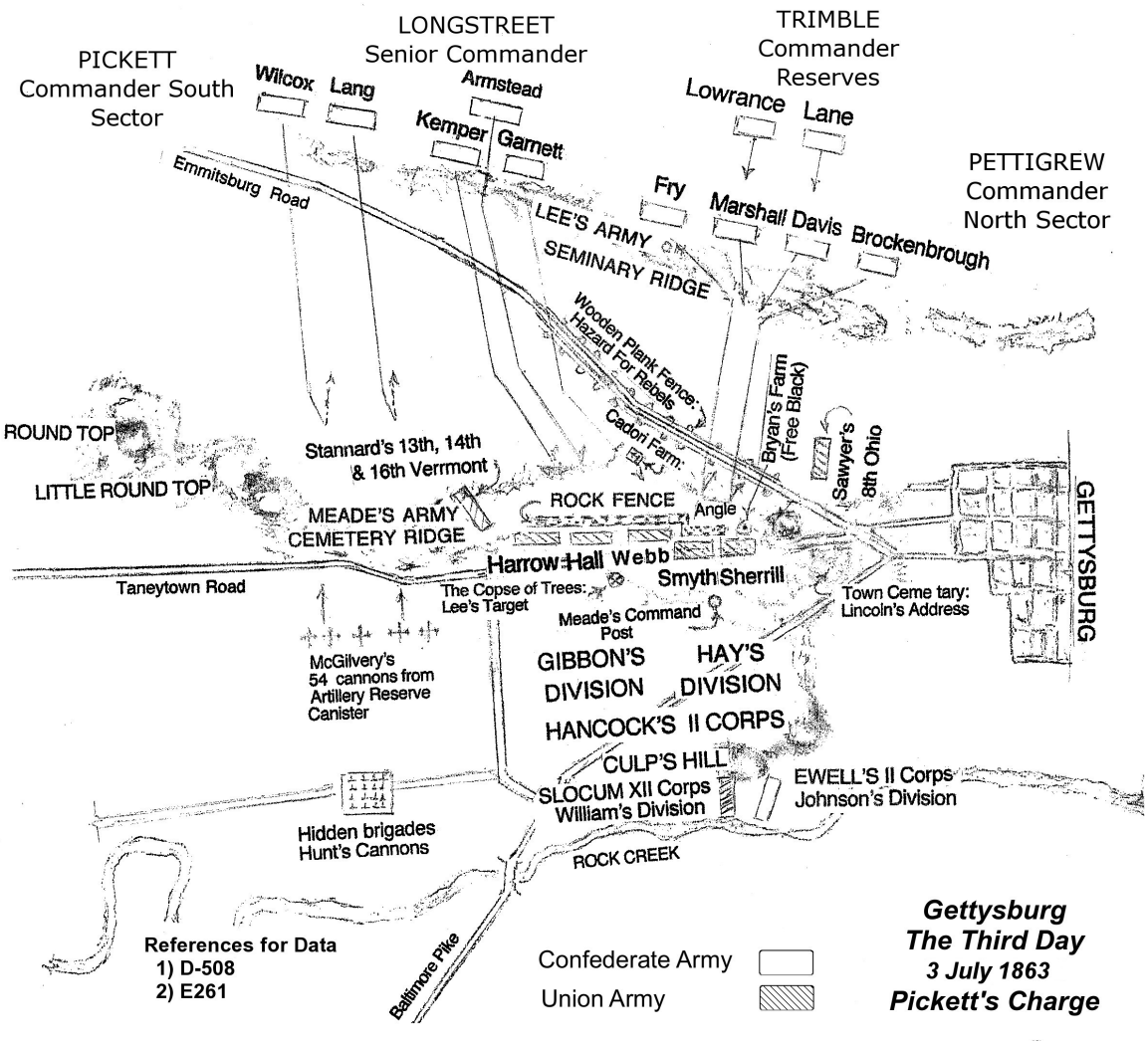

Figure 2. Gettysburg, the Third Day (3 July 1863), Pickett's Charge

He had a hidden artillery reserve that could be used to replace guns destroyed in the attack. He placed 41 guns under the dynamic Col. McGilvery, who was the hero of the previous day, when he held the Yankee line with only artillery. These guns awaited action in a special undetected ravine on the ridge. Hunt's ammunition was sufficient as he made arrangements to stock 20 rounds more per gun than was specified by regulations. (E: 355) In summary, Hunt had planned his artillery positions and instructed his men very well, and he would work that plan when Lee attacked. All this would result in an excellent performance in the afternoon.

These officers were responsible for delivering heavy firepower upon the charging soldiers in front of the fortifications, and the more enemy casualties they inflicted caused the better the chance for the survival of those in the front line. To kill the enemy charging across the field, the artillerymen would use a common shell shot filled with gunpowder that had a fuse timed to burst at ground level or a little higher, scattering pieces in all directions. Most cannons had a maximum range of some 4,500 feet (under a mile). (I: 27) This was about the distance between the Rebel and Yankee lines.

Some of the shells were solid shot that would bounce into enemy ranks. As the attackers reached the front line the cannons would fire deadly canister (small metal balls in a coffee can type shell) that would act like a giant shotgun, with the effect similar to a modern machinegun. You can easily see that proper placement and sighting of these cannons can cause the enemy many casualties before the attackers arrive at the distance where the infantry men can fire accurately. In addition, the explosion of the cannon shells in the ranks of the charging enemy is greatly demoralizing.

Now, we will look at the Confederate artillery force hidden by trees along Seminary ridge across the shallow depression from the Yankees. As we mentioned, each of the three Rebel corps had their artillery brigade with their own cannons and commander; the army artillery commander would plan and coordinate the firepower of the Rebel army. This is what the artillery count looked like on the rebel side. To support the army, Lee had to ship the supplies and shells from the Staunton depot, some 200 miles away in Virginia, but the Union depot was at Westminster, Maryland, some 30

miles away. (E: 380) So for the Rebels to replace shells and the alike during combat was a troublesome problem. Every shell must be on target, and those commanding the Rebel artillery must be astute in executing their assignment.

Gen. William Pendleton was the Chief of Army Confederate Artillery, and Gen. Lee passed his plans for the planning and operation of his guns through Pendleton. Gen. Pendleton was a product of West Point. He left the army in peacetime and faithfully served in the ministry. He was close friends with both Gen. Lee and President Jeff Davis which helped in his being chosen for the position, Chief of Artillery. Pendleton was a strange character to handle such an important assignment in this battle. He was prominent in his church and should have obeyed the church laws of Moses: "Thou shall not kill". But on the other hand, he was in charge of the cannons that killed many Union soldiers sending their souls to Heaven.

Civil War literature is not kind to Gen. Pendleton. In this battle assignment he gave insufficient attention to such duties as instructing and coordinating cannon firepower, ordering batteries to advance with the infantry, positioning replacement batteries and ordnance trains, and appraisal of shells for the artillery support. In fact, he was a poor selection for this important job. (F: 379) Additional details of these functions will be given as the battle unfolds which will show serious errors were made by the artillery command and by Gen. Pendleton.

Gen. Lee had ordered Pendleton to have the army artillery concentrate their firepower on the Yankee battle line at the clump of trees on Cemetery Ridge. This was the target for the Rebel breakthrough of the Yankee line. The rebel battle line in front the 1st Corps extended under a mile with cannons aimed at these trees and Yankee fortifications. Hiding in the trees along the Rebel Seminary Ridge, the Rebel line of cannons for battle is listed: 1) right sector, 1st Corps, Col. Alexander's Brigade- 75 guns, 2) center sector, 3rd Corps, Col. Walker's Brigade- 53 guns, 3) left sector, 2nd Corps, Maj. Latimer's brigade- 33guns. This totals 161 guns that could fire at the clump of trees with massive concentrated destructive power. It was an ingenuous new battle tactic

employed by Gen. Lee, and it became accepted practice in later wars like World War One.

The battle effectiveness of the cannoneers depended upon each artillery brigade commander. Col. Alexander, 1st Corps had his batteries firing satisfactory with reasonable concentration, but the shells went over the ridge. The 3rd Corps brigade had only one battalion firing from an ideal position, and it delivered just two dozen shots. Alexander was highly critical of the 3rd Corps artillery brigade commander and Gen. Pendleton for not measuring up to their duty and opportunity. (E: 381) Gen. Pendleton was not very effective in controlling some elements of the battle. Troublesome items were lack of ammunition, batteries of the 2nd and 3rd Corps not cooperating in the firing order, and not employing some of the reserve batteries with the infantry.

The Rebel Infantry

Gen. Lee wanted the battle to start the first thing in the morning. In fact, he told Gen. Ewell his plan was to start firing at sunrise on Culp's Hill to keep the Yankees occupied on the left of the line while Gen. Longstreet would hit the Yankees in their center on Cemetery Ridge. Even generals like Lee don't always get their own way, so his plan was seriously modified. Lee delayed telling Ewell of a change in plans, since skirmishing on his right flank had put Lee's plans in a state of flux. But by then, Ewell had a good battle going on his front in the morning anyway, at a tune set by the Yankees.

It turns out that the Yankees on the far right of the Confederate line didn't play fair at that time, as they were seriously "entertaining" McLaws' and Hood's (Law's) divisions with cannons and the like. Thus, Lee had to change plans and leave these two divisions on the Confederate right flank as protection from this combative activity. Thus, the final plan would use brigades from Gen. Hill's 2nd Corps, along with the fresh troops of newly arrived Gen. Pickett's men, a division of Longstreet's 1st Corps, to punch a big hole through the center of the Yankee line. It would take hours to place the thousands of Lee's men into their correct positions for the attack, so the formation for battle was delayed until afternoon.

We should mention a little history of Pickett's men as they were the main Confederate players in this important segment of the Battle of Gettysburg. More details of Pickett's personality are given later when we describe his role of the famous Rebel charge on the third day of battle. As was related earlier in the profile of this battle, President Davis of the Confederacy was worried that the Yankees on the seacoast near Richmond could attack his city, so he ordered two of Gen. Pickett's best divisions to remain on the seacoast. Inexperienced substitute divisions were given to Pickett, which impaired the important fighting ability of Pickett's division. Now, I will digress and tell an interesting tale of this division. It had many excellent fighters, just the men to lead a charge. But they were not in the second day of fighting because Lee needed a force to guard the wagon supply trains positioned near Chambersburg and assigned Pickett this task. This assignment was really the job for the important Stuart's cavalry, which was missing due to his scouting and destroy mission around the Union Army. At that town, Pickett kept himself busy by tearing up their railroad and alike. After being relieved of this duty, Pickett's division marched all of the second day some 30 miles from Chambersburg to arrive in Gettysburg; Pickett reported to Gen. Lee at close to 7:00 PM for instructions.

As "Mother Fate" planned it, this was the same time that Gen. Wright's brigade had punched a hole the Yankee line at the clump of trees on Seminary Ridge and was calling for supporting brigades that never came. Yet, at this same time, Pickett's Division was available for battle. Longstreet had signaled Lee "We are doing well". (G: 331) Wow! The message system from Wright to Lee had failed; Lee thanked Pickett and sent his division to the rest area saying his division would be needed tomorrow. If Pickett had known and supported Wright for the next two hours, both Wright and Pickett could have held the honor of gaining a major position on the ridge; this could have changed the picture for the third day and saved Pickett thousands of casualties while trying to retake these clump of trees on the next day. The lack of effective communication, such as assigning orderlies to routinely supply status information to Gen. Lee was missing; reserve units were not thrown into the battle at critical points in the Rebel battle line, when they were seriously needed. The sad part of this story is that Gen.

Lee did not learn from this days experience to use runners from the front lines to keep abreast of the current status of his fighting troops.

Discussing the elements of battle is very complex at best due to the timing, the personalities, the strategy, the magnitudes of opposing forces, and the like. We will tell this part of the Gettysburg battle in the Third Day as simple, separate elements. Thus, one element is the rationale for an alignment of the divisions and their subunits, then, another element pertains to the famous "Pickett's Charge". As was mentioned before, in the morning of the third day Gen. Lee changed his components of the attacking formation and used only part of Gen. Longstreet's Corps for the main battle. This left other of Longstreet's brigades to protect his right sector from active Northern forces. For the remainder of the battle line, Lee used brigades from Hill's Corps. This rearranging the troops was the prelude to the main attack. The second element is the famous "Pickett's Charge" or the attack on the center of the Yankee battle line.

To gain a better overview of the action, we should review the structure of the armies, which indicates the size, function and relationship to battle commanders. The Southern Army was tailored from the same pattern as the Northern Army since most of the officers of the South attended West Point, as did most of those of the North. These armies differed in soldiers (numbers) assigned to the various levels of command. There were six levels of command in the Union Army: Army (Major Gen.), Corps (Major Gen.), Division (Brig. Gen.), Brigade (Brig. Gen. or Colonel), Regiment (Col. or Lt. Col, or Major), and Company (Captain or Lieutenant). The Southerners had about the same arrangement of command, but their upper echelons were rated a little higher. The number of soldiers in these units differed. The Southerners had three corps, which would number a little over 20, 000 soldiers each. The North had seven corps that were composed of a little over 10,000 soldiers each. But the key to the battle would be the regiments, who fought eyeball to eyeball. The names of the regiments were taken from the state that provided volunteers for the army.

Now, we will discuss the formation of the long Southern battle line stretching southward from the Lutheran Seminary near Gettysburg along the Seminary Ridge to a

point opposite Little Round Top. The formation was divided into the south sector under command of Gen. Pickett (Longstreet's Corps) and the north sector under command of Gen. Pettigrew (Hill's Corps). Gen. Lee assigned Gen. Longstreet as the overall field commander of the Southern attack forces. Gen. Longstreet was responsible for the assembly and execution of the attack. Why history did not name this famous attack after Longstreet instead of Pickett will always remain a mystery; then, he could share the blame. His communication between the Rebel units was in shambles as they reached the Yankee line.

In the south sector, Gen. Pickett commanded the main section on the right flank. The first line (right to left) was formed by Kemper's Brigade and Garnett's Brigade. The second line was composed of Armistead's Brigade. These three brigades were from Longstreet's Corps. In the third line were Wilcox's Brigade and Lang's Brigade from Hill's Corps. These two were acting as supporting units. Unfortunately, these two support units did not have written orders of how or when to attack with the three brigades lead by Gen. Pickett. No firm written direction was a serious mistake of the field commanders, Gen. Longstreet and Gen. Lee. In the north sector (main left flank), the section commanded by Gen. Pettigrew was the first line of Fry's Brigade, Marshall's Brigade, Davis' Brigade, and Brockenbrough's (Mayo) Brigade. The second line consisted Lowrance's (Scales) Brigade and Lane's Brigade (from Pender's Division), both under Gen. Trimble.

Longstreet estimated his force to be some 15,000 Rebels in planning the attack with Gen. Lee. At that point, he also expressed his objections to the attack, which were ignored. (E: 357) (G: 344) Shelby Foote counted the men in the attacking force that reached the enemy line to be about 12,500 soldiers. (F: 216) Stephen Sears estimated the wave of Rebels to reach the wall to be 13,000 soldiers. (E: 392) Whatever the real number is, we can say that this was a mass of men (about the size of a small city) to strike about 1,500 feet of enemy stone wall with a heavy force that was initially defended by about 8,000 Yankees with heavy artillery support as we shall reveal. (E: 395) Again simply put, the object of this part of the battle was to concentrate enough men at one spot

to open up a hole in the long Yankee line for the Rebel army to pour through the split the Union army and digest the scattered parts amid the chaos.

It just happens that the location, which Gen. Lee had picked for the breakthrough of the Yankee battle line was held by one the most professional and toughest fighting corps of the Union Army. It was the Second Corps, in Meade's Union Army, commanded by Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock. While this general wore a white shirt with pure white cuffs extending from the sleeve of his uniform in battle, he would cuss like "hell" when it was required. (G: 194) (E: 400) He was without fear, aggressive, smart - a hard combination to beat for an opponent. His military experience included the command of rough and tumble units in the Indian country of the West winding up at a post in Los Angeles.

While in the West, Hancock found an old, good friend, none other than the famous Rebel from our history books, Gen. Armistead. As they went their separate ways to fight in the great war, Armistead was deeply saddened at their parting. Today, on the 3rd, Armistead, the courageous commander of his brigade in Longstreet's 1st Division, was killed planting his Rebel flag over the rock wall that formed as the Yankee battle line of defense. It was this wall that a Negro built, and by chance, would protect the Yankee soldiers trying to hold our country together.

As fate would have it, and at the same time, unknown to each other, Armistead's friend, the Union Gen. Hancock, was also leading a critical flank attack in this battle on Armistead's far right at the northern end of the wall. Hancock was directing his soldiers from the front line on his horse so all of his men would know of his presence in the danger of war; but also he was seen by Rebel soldiers as well. One of the Rebels carefully aimed and fired, seriously wounding Hancock in the groin, as we shall soon reveal. Hancock would also place his "life on the battle line", like the Rebel general Armistead (his close friend), and stake his claim to those roots of sovereignty which his beautiful wife and family were entitled to. Hancock would be missed by his trusted friend, Gen. Meade, as Hancock had helped make Meade's battle plan work successfully.

This battle line on Cemetery Ridge that the Gen. Hancock's 2nd Corps held against the Rebel attack was defined by the long rock fence (as previously mentioned) along with the famous small clump of trees that Gen. Lee used as the object for his large army for their attack. Now, we must discuss a little known, but a most important symbol in the Civil War that was played out at this time and at this point. This famous symbol is the low rock fence (wall) which shielded the Union troops against the critical Rebel attack. It extended north, along the ridge beyond the clump of small trees for a short distance to a point near another larger forested area called Ziegler's Grove. From a small angle in the wall alignment at midpoint, the wall extended about the same distance to its south end along the ridge. And the area around this angle in the wall is where we will discuss much of the critical fighting that took place. This is the place where the battle of Gettysburg would be won or lost!

The most important historical feature about this wall was that a free black, Abraham Bryan, built it as we previously mentioned, and this symbol of freedom marked his property line. The principle at stake in this war was that the Negros were property under the law in the Southern States; and since the Negro was property, their properties also belonged to the South according to a prior U. S. Supreme Court decision (the Scott Case). Unwitting, the Rebels would attempt to take back Southern property, the rock fence, owned by a black. Ironically, it was truly a battle for states rights and thousands of people would die this day for their principles. (E: 395)

About in the center the rock line was a jog that resembled a large "Z in configuration, which was given the name "angle". The line south from this angle was a continuation of the low rock wall is called the southern sector of this battle. The wall to the north was the northern sector. So this wall of stone and an old sturdily built wooden fence that ran along a road, a few hundred feet in front from the rock fence, served as the Union defensive line.

Gen. Hancock's 2nd Corps force defended this line, which was composed of two large divisions. One division was Gen. Hays' Division with two brigades and the other was Gen. Gibbon's Division with three brigades. Willard's Brigade and Smyth's Brigade

of Hays' division held the northern sector from the angle to Ziegler's Grove. Col. Willard was killed and replaced by Col. Sherrill, who was also killed. Col. Smyth was wounded and replaced by Lt. Col. Pierce. They held their line against the attack by four Pettigrew Brigades as well as two brigades assigned to Trimble that was a large attacking force to stop.

The southern sector of the Union battle line was manned by Gibbon's Division, which was composed of three brigades. The order of the brigades was Webb's, Hall's, and Harrow's. Gen. Gibbon was wounded and replaced by Gen. Harrow. Gibbon's division was pitted against Pickett's three brigades and two reserve brigades placed under Pickett's control. Gibbon's division occupied the clump of trees, which was Lee's target for the main attack.

Webb's Brigade (about 1,000 soldiers) was in the heaviest part of the fighting and held the angle against large odds. Stone's Brigade (about 1,300) from Doubleday's 1st Corps served as a reserve behind Webb's main line at the angle. Thus, there were about 2,000 Yankees initially at the "angle" to stop Pickett's four brigades. In summary the Rebels outnumbered Yankees at this "angle". But the brave rebels were at a great disadvantage because of the difficulty of assaulting entrenched positions. Doubleday's 1st Corps, Humphreys' 3rd Corps, and Caldwell's Division, 2nd Corps completed Federal line running further south.

A most important consideration in advancing troops on the offense, such as Pickett's charge, or holding a defensive position like the Gen. Hancock's entrenchments on the ridge is to prevent enemy fire from the ends of the line. Thus, flank guards are stationed on the ends of the Corps' battle line. Gen. Meade and Gen. Hancock placed Lt. Col. Sawyer's 8th Ohio regiment of Hays' Division, on his right flank, and on the left flank, Gen. Doubleday sent Gen. Stannard's Brigade (about 2,000 men) from the 1st Corps to make sure that the flank was secure. Those five regiments were all new men without battle experience from Vermont.

Also notice the harmony between the Yankee Commanders, as one Corps commander will send his brigade to the aid of another Corps commander. In the morning

Gen. Newton asked Gen. Hancock for help in filling a gap in his line, and it was taken care of immediately. (E: 356) In contrast, lack of harmony in the Rebel forces could have been improved by their higher command. This deficiency should have been brought to Gen. Lee's attention. With the Rebel and Union forces now in place, the Rebel artillery would have the honor of signaling the commencement of battle by placing their exploding shells on the killing field of Gettysburg.

Because Gen, Meade did not know which part of the line would receive the point of the attack, he had to spread his men to cover areas that could be under attack all along his line. He positioned troops from Fifth and Six Corps on his left end by Little Round Top to block one possible avenue of Rebel attack. (G: 350) But Gen. Meade spent most of day three with Gen. Hunt, Gen. Hancock, Gen, Warren and other officers studying and positioning his infantry, artillery, and ammunition for the battle. (E: 372, 375) By early afternoon Meade expected the Rebel Batteries to open at any moment.

The Artillery Duel

Gen. Longstreet was at the front commanding the Rebel army and his orders were to let the batteries open up, exercising great care and precision. This was easier said than done, especially with care and precision, as we shall see. At 1:07 PM fate would begin ticking for the Confederate States. (E: 396) The Washington Battery of New Orleans would have the honor of firing a two-gun signal to start the fireworks with 140 guns of the 2nd Corps. (F: 219) These guns would soon be joined by additional batteries to make a rain of iron for the Yankees in the center of their fishhook line. As the shelling became constant, Samuel Wilkerson, a reporter for the New York Times who was at Meade's Headquarters, and estimated the shells fell at two a second and sometimes at six a second. (G: 351)

Gen. Pendleton, Chief of Artillery, was at fault for not coordinating the effective timing and hitting targets with the Rebel army guns, which he wasted precious ammunition and reduced the destructive effects of one of the largest concentrations of rebel batteries in the war. According to a report from Col. Alexander in Longstreet's 2nd

Corps, Hill's artillery was wasted on the worthless target, Bliss farmhouse, as we previously mentioned. (E: 390)

Gen. Meade and his staff, along with Gen. Hancock and his staff, had just finished their lunch and were resting under the shade engaged in small talk waiting for Lee to drop the other shoe. Gen. Longstreet's signal sent plenty of iron raining though this area, and everyone scrambled for cover. A snapshot would tell part of the story. Medical aid stations beyond the ridge were blown up along with the wounded. Supply wagons were wrecked in supposedly safely reserve areas over the ridge, leaving dead horses tied to the wagons. Four guns to a battery were obviously choice targets to be blown apart along the Union line full of troops.

Meade's Headquarters was a special target; one shell removed the entry steps, another took away the porch and door, another went through the roof. Many horses for the staff were killed while tied to the hitching bar. (N: 174) Still the Rebels would have liked one of their shells to remove Gen. Meade from his army, improving their chances of the possibility of winning this battle. But the Rebel Artillery did wound Gen. Butterfield, Chief of Staff, as the staff moved to a barn in the rear of the headquarters. (E: 398) This shows that the iron was flying close to Meade. These close calls convinced Meade that his staff should move to a safe location to save Meade's Union Army Headquarters. It is noted that Lee's headquarters did not observe this type of heavy fire from the Northern artillery.

So Meade and his staff picked up what was left of the command and moved across the ridge to Slocum's headquarters on Power's Hill. The signalmen were to stay at headquarters and keep him in contact with his army. (N: 174) This did not happen. The Rebel Artillery's product became too hot for the signalmen, and they moved. So Meade lost his connection with the army. Did Meade flinch with this trouble? No, he directed his staff to return to the damaged Leister House to regain contact with the army, and he personally moved toward the trenches at the front. (E: 399)

He, Henry Hunt, John Gibbon, Alexander Hays, Winfield S. Hancock and others of the higher command would go to the front line and meet the enemy in person, and their

men knew it. Many of their counterparts in the Rebel Forces were more conservative. We should mention that of the many histories have been written, none mention that a Yankee cannon ball fell near Gen. Lee's Headquarters. Was he out of Yankee artillery range or was it just poor eyesight of the Yankee gunners?

We should tell a little of the details of this artillery duel to show some defects that could have influenced the course of battle. Gen. Gibbon commanded a large division in Hancock's 2nd Corps that was in charge of defending the immediate left section of the Union line located at the point of Gen. Lee's attack. He said that the, "… whole air above and around us was filled with bursting and screaming projectiles." (E: 396) It happens that Gen, Gibbon was also a professional in the artillery, and at one time taught this subject at West Point. At this time, the shelling had killed his orderly while trying to get his horse. Without the horse, Gibbon raced on foot to his command post on the crest of the ridge. He then walked the length of his divisional line to boost the morale of his men. Fortunately for the Yankees, one of those same Rebel shells just missed killing Gibbon also, but he was seriously wounded later in the fight. Much later in the war, during the siege at Richmond, this brave officer would be promoted to Major General and command the 24th Corps in the Union Army of the James. (Z: 6)

It is noted that the Union generals were not spared in this shelling as Gen. Butterfield (Meade's Chief of Staff), Gen. Barnes (Division Commander 3rd Corps), Gen. Doubleday (Division Commander 5th Corps), and Gen. Smyth (Brigade Commander 2nd Corps) were wounded. (D: 469) Gibbon's report gave some valuable information on the accuracy of the Rebel artillery gunners and their ammunition. He observed that the shells generally overshot the lines of his troops landing on the opposite side of the ridge. (E: 400) Also, Gibbon's report is supported by observations from Col. Wainwright, Union 1st Corps, and Commander of the Artillery Brigade. Wainwright said the Rebel artillery was not effective as some, "nine-tenths of their shots passed over our men". This number may have been on the high side, but it indicates the Rebel artillery had a major problem supporting Gen. Lee's plan of attack. (E: 397)

One of the purposes of the artillery barrage to support the assault was to destroy the front-line Union cannons that could fire deadly canister at charging infantry. But Gen. Pendleton lost track of the ammunition count, and the Confederates were very low on shells. Col. Alexander, Rebel First Corps, found about 12 cannons with enough ammunition (only 15 rounds each) for close-in Rebel support. (N: 207) (E: 440) In this action, Alexander's guns made only a small contribution in the final phase of the attack of following the Rebel infantry.

However, on the Union front Capt. Frederick Edgell, New Hampshire Light Artillery, Army Artillery Reserve, who was stationed on Cemetery Hill, fired directly on the four advancing brigades of Pettigrew's division. His battery (say 4 guns) fired about 248 shells at the Rebels that afternoon and the shells were the exploding type that would shower metal shrapnel throughout the Rebel lines. S.W. Sears in his book, *GETTYSBURG*, wrote that if this rate was typical of all of Osborn's 39 guns stationed on Cemetery Hill, the killing field would have more than 1,600 rounds showered on the Rebel attack. (E: 425) As we have mentioned before, the 11th Mississippi under Gen. Joseph R. Davis was brave enough to cross the rock fence in their frontal attack in fighting with Gen. Hays' men. Gen. Davis said in this charge that the regiment lost 312 of its 592 men and easily a third to a half fell before the Yankee artillery. (E: 425) This is a definitive statement as to the effectiveness of Union artillery under Gen. Hunt. The artillery made a significant contribution to the Union victory at Gettysburg.

Gen. Lee was counting on his artillery to destroy the Yankee defenses and their infantry to permit his men's entry into the Yankee line, and that was an important part of his strategy. Little known was the fact that a significant number of the fuses on the artillery shells were defective or flawed; also there was a tendency for Rebel cannon to shoot higher after its continuing operation. (D: 468) Thus, the accuracy of Southern guns in this long two hour artillery duel was compromised. Conversely, S.W. Spears in his book, *Gettysburg*, reported that "…Unlike the rebels' ammunition, exceedingly few Federal shots were misfires due to faulty fuses". (E: 424) And this was an important contribution to Yankee success in this battle. Shelby Foote estimated that the casualties from this shelling on the Northern Forces was only some 200, while the Southern Forces

casualties were about double this amount (even these numbers were likely on the light side). (F: 229)

This flaw in fuses was very serious, but was overlooked. Think of the problem this way. In the preceding battle of Chancellorsville one observer said, " An extraordinarily large percentage of Confederate shells failed to burst and many were more ineffective by reason of premature explosions." (E: 381) In the previous battles, this problem was identified, but the command in Richmond did not correct it. There was no quality control effort made in Richmond on testing and upgrading the fuses. Rebel troops were thus endangered when Rebel cannon was fired over their heads. Simply put, the use of faulty shells by the Confederate Army resulted in a lack of critical artillery support to destroy the Yankees who were shooting the brave Rebel soldiers as they charged with an incredible determination to break the Yankee line at Gettysburg.

Pickett's Famous Charge

A strange event took place on the morning of the third day. Gen. Lee ordered Gen. Longstreet to control the placement of the troops for the attack and signal the advance even though there were more troops in the attack from Hill's Corps than from Longstreet's Corps. At that time, Hill had been sick the day before, and perhaps, Gen. Lee felt he could at best trust the success of the movement to Gen. Longstreet, his old war-horse. At that point in time, Longstreet told Lee that these soldiers could not take the Union fortified position. Gen. Lee overlooked that comment.

It is important to note that there was disharmony at the top level in the Confederate command. Some time before, Longstreet wanted Lee to break off this Gettysburg battle and pick a fight some where at a more favorable place between this point and Washington. Longstreet had forgotten that only one person should command the army. Lee had the overall knowledge of his assets and position of his forces to win the battle at this time. It was a judgment call. It turns out there was a serious lack of artillery ammunition as an example of items that the army commander must consider as an influence on the conduct of this battle.

Now, we will again briefly summarize the position and size of the Confederate attacking force. In the left sector, Gen. Pettigrew commanded seven brigades from Hill's 3rd Corps, which included two brigades under Gen. Trimble to give some 6,760 men. In the right sector, Gen. Pickett commanded three brigades which amounted to some 5,830 men. The total Rebel men in the direct attacking force were about 12,590, which is an estimate. This was the number that was given in studies by N. A. Trudeau. (D: 477) It is noted that this attacking Rebel force initially faced a Yankee force of about 8,000 men. Pickett held two additional brigades, Wilcox (1,040) and Lang (1,355) (D: 477), in the reserve that advanced later in the attack. The brigades of Malone and Posey also were alerted as reserve behind Pettigrew, but were inactive. We should say that although the Rebels had more numbers than the Northern force, they were at a great disadvantage because they could not fire accurately or as often as they bravely rushed toward the front.

There are a few events worth citing that will show the excitement along Cemetery Ridge in the Yankee line. When the Rebel artillery opened up, Gen. Gibbon, the division commander of the critical Union defense line, bravely walked along his line among the explosions with his aid, Lt. Haskell, to verify that his men and artillery were ready for the attack; he gave real assurance to his men that he cared. Some shells came in so close as to kill his orderly. (E: 396) Independently, on the other end of the critical Union defense line, old rough and tough Gen. Hays rode along his section of the critical defense line as the shells flew by him as he damned the Rebels with a few cuss words as reported by his aid, Lt. Shields. (E: 399) During the charge of the Rebels, Hays would give drill instructions to one of his small units as the shells flew bye to sharpen their wits. Most of his men were reported to have two or more rifles to help their cause. (E: 399)

Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock with his white shirt cuffs showing beyond his sleeves, would proudly ride his entire defense line with his Corps flag flying to show he held no fear of the flying missiles. One of his brigadiers said something like he was not expected to risk his life to these explosions; he replied with the tone related to this critical occasion, " There are times when a corps commander does not count". (E: 400)

Gen. Lee and Gen. Longstreet made a careful study of the approaches to the Yankee lines in the morning to set their strategy, but there is no record of Gen. Lee addressing the army before the main attack in the afternoon. However, Gen. Pickett gave encouragement to his right side of the battle line. This overlooked contact by Gen. Lee was an error by not boosting troop moral when they needed it most. Also, there is no evidence that Lee hardwired his critical contacts with lower commands by issuing written orders to detail directions to such units as those controlling ammunition supplies and backup artillery action along with the function and timing of his support brigades.

After about two hours (3 PM) of heavy action, the artillery on both sides ran low on long distance ammunition. It was a long period of noise from explosions that tried the souls of the Yankees. Hunt requested that his cannons cease firing to save ammunition for the main attack; Hancock wanted the artillery to provide support for the infantry, so this resulted in a big argument and strong language between the two commanders. Strangely, both Meade and Hunt agreed at about the same time that if they stopped shelling, the Rebels would think the Yankees were hurting, and it would be a good time for them to attack the Yankees with their infantry. It happened that the Rebels were also nearly out of long range ammunition. Then, there was a quiet period with a little firing on either side.

As Col. Alexander studied Cemetery Ridge with his glasses, he saw the Yankees removing crippled batteries from their battle line near the point scheduled for the Rebel attack. He sent a message to Gen. Longstreet that the Yankees were being pressed hard, causing a reduction in their artillery firing. Also, this message said the Rebels were nearly out of ammunition and could have difficulty supporting the Rebel attack. Longstreet made his way across the field, and talked directly with Alexander. Confusion reined at this important point in time on deciding when the rebels would attack. Alexander had just found out that Gen. Pendleton, Chief of Confederate Artillery, had removed his artillery supply wagons out of the range of the Yankee shelling without telling Alexander. This confusion over the control of the supply of ammunition was laid to rest at Gen. Lee's and Gen. Pendleton's doorstep; Lee wrote that on 3rd July the lack of

ammunition (shells) was unknown to him when the assault took place, and that assertion was made a part of his final report on the Gettysburg campaign (E: 382)

Longstreet said he wanted to delay his attack until the artillery could properly support his troops. Alexander told Longstreet, it would take an hour to supply his cannons with shells, as the artillery reserve had been moved to a distant location. Alexander added to his comments that while waiting for ammunition, the Yankees could recover from the present pressure they were under and reply by shelling the Rebel side in the attack. After a short period, Gen. Longstreet moved on to join with Gen. Pickett on the front line. Col. Alexander had again surveyed his situation. With his very limited number of artillery shells available to shell the Yankee lines to keep their soldiers pinned down, and firing and with some Union batteries being withdrawn, this would be the proper time to strike.

He sent a message to Gen. Pickett (on the right side of the battle line) with a copy to Gen. Pettigrew (on the left side), that said briefly if you are to advance at all, you must move at once or we will not be able to support you. Moments later, Col. Alexander sent another brief message repeating the urgency of this action. Gen. Pickett handed the message to Gen. Longstreet and asked if he should obey. Later in life, Gen. Longstreet would describe the event, saying that he merely nodded to his old, dear friend, and then a tear came. (E: 406-408) (G: 355-356) Longstreet did not want to make this charge, but he would follow Lee's orders. There was a good chance that with all the unused soldiers available (as we shall see) and following a detailed, harmonized plan, including written orders by Longstreet, the Rebels could have enjoyed a possible breakthrough in the Union lines.

According to Gen. Lee's instructions some artillery batteries would move along with the attacking troops to give close fire support and to blow large holes in the Union line as the Rebels approached their personal contact. Col. Alexander needed some seven cannon (special 12-pounders) or more to support this infantry attack, and he secured these unused cannons from the Third Corps Artillery through arrangements made by Gen. Pendleton, Chief of Army artillery. They were placed in a safe reserve location. But

when the army marched into their battle, the special cannons could not be found - the bungling Gen. Pendleton had sent them to other places without informing Alexander. (G: 338, 356)

Did our Col. Alexander throw in the towel with all these troubles? He personally rode to his batteries and selected those cannons with ammunition that could be used to provide close support for the infantry. Then, he led his men into this battle. (N: 188, 199) It is noted that Walker's Rebel cannons of the 3rd Corps were to support Pettigrew on the left wing of the attacking infantry in the same way that Alexander's cannons did on the right, but Walker did not react. The reason was unknown. We should mention that Trudeau reported that Gen. Pendleton remained in this high post as "generally ineffective command of Lee's artillery through Appomattox". (D: 561) These were serious mistakes in the area of military management. No wonder the South had troubles in the war.

Gen. Pickett receive his orders to advance by a nod and a tear from Gen. Longstreet; this historic message would be a most critical factor in the new Confederate Nation's survival, Pickett rode to the head of the attack line and gave his orders by carriers to all brigades in the right and left sectors to "fall in", and dress on the battle line. The commanders of the brigades and their lower command units had been briefed well in advanced on their parts in the plan of attack. Pickett was satisfied that there were over some 13,000 soldiers of the Confederacy in the attack formation (E: 419); he briefly gave an unrecorded address concerning their purpose and their state, Virginia (the men were from Virginia). And then he commanded "forward" as did the other commanders.

This was a lot of soldiers to move with massive effort from the brigade areas along the strip on Seminary Ridge onto a single point at a clump of trees on the Yankee line that was about three quarters of a mile away on Cemetery Ridge. (E: 419) By using army standard regulations to move troops, it would take about 20 minutes for a body of troops to move across the shallow depression between the two ridges in conflict; but, with heavy shelling from the Yankees and iron flying through the air, it would take a little more time.

After the long lines of Rebels started to move across the shallow depression separating the Rebel and Yankee lines, there was a big gap between the right and left sectors that needed to be closed if the main body were to strike the Yankees at one time. Gen. Trimble, the commander of the only active support for Pettigrew, said that his two brigades following Pettigrew's four brigades (the total left sector) should have started out some 15 minutes ahead of Pickett's right sector to close the gap and hit Yankees at the same time. (E: 418) However, the gap was closed as Pickett's battalions in right sector performed very well their proper marching drills. Although the timing element was overlooked in planning the Rebel advance, it is doubtful that this oversight significantly changed the face of battle. Obstructions, such as uneven ground, sunken roads, and firm wooden fences, would have greater effect on timing of the approach of the Rebel line of battle than an uncoordinated start.

Briefly, we should examine the danger of the wooden fences in front of the Yankee line. These fences were mostly on both sides of the Emmitsburg Road that run diagonally (750 feet to 500 feet) in front of the Yankee rock fence on the ridge. (E: 427) These wooden fences are described in detail by author J. D. Wert as "Stoutly built, with five rails of chestnut wood, the pair of post-and-rail fences framed the roadbed…" He also added that there was a "…two-foot-deep roadbed…". (N: 205) This became a trench to protect the rebels as they fired at the Yankees from road, but it made it difficult for them to cross as a brigade because it broke up the effective control and the formation. The wooden fence turned out to be a serious hazard that had been overlooked by the Confederate Command (Gen. Lee and Gen. Longstreet and others) in their morning planning session for the attack on the third day. On the second day, Gen. Wright's men must have witnessed trouble crossing this fence in their afternoon attack, but there was no report of this problem.

Clash at the Rock Wall

Detailed accounts of the clash at the Yankee rock wall defense line are voluminous and given in the works of excellent authors. This part will briefly draw from their work to color the event. The episode of the main attack on the Third Day will be

divided into four parts: Pettigrew's attack (Longstreet's command), Hays' defense (Hancock's command), Pickett's attack (Longstreet), and Gibbon's defense (Hancock).

Before we start the details of the clash of the armies at the stone wall on Cemetery Ridge, recall that it was built by a freed black named Abram Bryan. (E: 395) We would like to also recall that it was symbolic of the slavery issue in the Civil War, and this wall would define the "high water" mark in that war. We would like to give a few interesting historical "snap shots" of players in this battle to show that friends and associates were destined to choose "sides" in the battle of Gettysburg.

Glenn Tucker in his book, *High Tide at Gettysburg*, has arranged some interesting facts that personalized the Rebel attack on the Third Day. Among the personal connections, some associations in this battle are also part of the Mexican War. Gen. Pickett commanded the right sector at the Gettysburg Rebel attack. Believe it or not, President Lincoln instigated his appointment to West Point through Congressman Stuart. (G: 335) Lincoln and Pickett remained friends over the years. Gen. Lee was the engineering officer who provided Union Gen. Scott (Union General-in-Chief and Lee's friend) with plans to win the critical Battle of Chapultepec in the Mexican War long ago. During the Mexican War, Lt. Armistead (Rebel brigade commander at Gettysburg) led the 6th U. S. Infantry storming party in an attack against the Mexican stronghold, a castle. In this U. S. Army attack against the Chapultepec Castle, Lt. Pickett honorably picked up "Old Glory" dropped by Lt. Longstreet (senior general at Gettysburg) when Longstreet was seriously wounded. Lt. Pickett climbed the walls to place the Union flag so that it would fly high over the castle. Lt. Hancock was a few paces behind Longstreet when Longstreet was wounded. (G: 334) And Gen. Hunt (the Union artillery senior commander who directed the shelling of Pickett's Rebels at Gettysburg) was also in the Mexican War. Facing once close associates in battle can be a terrible experience for the professional soldier.

Left Sector of the Rebel Attack

As was previously mentioned, the fighting at the rock wall was divided into to two sectors with Gen. Pettigrew commanding the left Rebel sector and Gen. Pickett

commanding the right.. Gen. Pettigrew had five brigades (right to left) with their commanders: Gen. Fry, Gen. Marshall, Gen. Joe Davis, and Gen. Brockenbrough. Gen. Brockenbrough divided his brigade into two parts within the brigade to move his brigade through some difficult terrain; he would command the 22nd Virginia Battalion (237 men) and the 40th Virginia (253 men). Col. Mayo commanded the 47th Virginia (210 men) and the 55th Virginia (268 men). (D: 591) (E: 418) As a support for Pettigrew's sector, Gen. Trimble would command two brigades that were under Col. Lowrance and Gen. Lane.

We should stop here and mention a rather odd occurrence. Gen. Joseph R. Davis was the nephew of President Jeff Davis of the Confederacy; young Joe Davis won his appointment through political connections, which created turmoil at that time. He would lead his brigade with his family honor attached. Unfortunately, he would be defeated in this critical battle of the Civil War. (E: 386)

Disaster struck Gen. Lee's advancing army before a single musket was fired in this critical attack. Gen. Brockenbrough's brigade had suffered heavy casualties in the preceding battle of Chancellorsville that were never replaced. The brigade also served under temporary commanders. Thus, their morale was very low, and the top command (Gen. Lee, Gen. Hill, and Gen. Heth) had done little to improve it. This would be the day of reckoning.

Gen. Hays of Hancock's 2nd Division was responsible for the sector that extended the Yankee line to the right of the "angle" near the clump of trees, which was Gen. Lee's target. This is about where the main battle was centered. As the waves of Rebel infantry entered no man's land, Major Osborn's artillery, some 39 cannons, on nearby cemetery hill had the exact range of the Rebel left wing. (E: 424) This included Col. Mayo's unfortunate men in particular as they were close to the guns. The shelling was plain hell for those men with a borderline morale as they moved up the hill in clouds of dust and powder smoke in attack formation.

Gen. Hays of the Union Third Division needed a right flank guard at his side to make sure the Rebels would not be successful in an end run around his battle line, and he picked Lt. Col. Franklin Sawyer and his 8th Ohio regiment for the task. He could not

have picked a better colonel; this man was a feisty, no-nonsense officer, who was smart and used his head without waiting for orders. His men, only about 160 strong, were serving as skirmishers to test the Rebel strength. (E: 423) As the massive wave of the Confederate Army moved past his front, he decided without orders to attack instead of sitting and waiting. To attack this mass of soldiers takes "guts" on the part of the officer and his men. He called his men into formation, marched them across the cornfield and took a position along a fence line in a single line, ordered them to aim and to continue firing. Sawyer's musketry and shelling from Osborn's Union batteries on Cemetery Hill greatly added to the dead on the killing field.

That was not enough! The battle was personal. It was Gen. Lee's Virginians against Gen. Meade's Ohioans, and the small band from Ohio were determined and meant business. They drove Brockenbrough's Brigade (some 970 men) (D: 591) into retreat, creating a large mob scene. The entire left Rebel guard disappeared in the fog of war as most these of men returned to their rear staging area. (F: 236) (D: 488) There was more to do for Col. Sawyer and his 8thOhioans. Next, the regiment on the left of Gen. Davis' Brigade (next in line of attack) was exposed to the 8th Ohio rifles. Col. Sawyer quickly refused his formation to align them with a nearby fence; this placed his regiment due south so that his men could fire directly into the flank of the oncoming troops of Gen. Davis' Brigade. The firing and shelling from the Yankees was such that parts of the nearest regiment also retreated. (E: 423) But the other three regiments in Gen. Davis' Brigade kept moving on the attack, and broke into the Yankee line with much bravery as we shall soon see.

Both Gen. Pettigrew and Gen. Pickett sent officers from their command to rally the retreating men, but it was no avail. (E: 423) (F: 236, 237) This incident was very rare in the Rebel Army. The famous Union 8th Ohio signaled that a determined 160 good men with a tough officer could turn a large Rebel attack into retreat. Unfortunately, the records do not show that this courageous 8th Ohio and its commander ever received a high recognition from our government for their help in winning this most important battle in our country's history. The critical lesson of this Rebel defeat was that the Confederate

Command (Gen. Lee and other commanders) must know the limits of the morale and physical condition of their men, and act accordingly to ensure victory.

Now that the left guard under Gen. Brockenbrough and Col. Mayo had broken and retreated to their previous staging area on Seminary Ridge, Gen. Davis became the left guard. The 24 plus Union guns of Osborn's unit on Cemetery Hill hurled exploding shells on the advancing Mississippians of Davis' left flank. To add to their misery, elements of the 128th New York and 108th New York joined the 8th Ohio to pour a steady fire into this side of Davis's line.

We have a good description of the close-in fighting from Lt. William Peel (11th Miss.). As Davis' men crossed over the Emmitsburg road and scrambled over the adjoining plank fence, they moved into the Yankees at close quarters. (E: 432) The fence proved to be a true hazard. As the Rebels climbed the fence rails, the Yankees, resting their rifles on the barricade of a stone wall with some debris, picked off the Rebels as in a turkey shoot. Later, someone took time to count the holes in the board from the fence that was 16 feet long and 14 inches high; there were 836 musket balls buried in the wood. This was a terrible sheet of fire for the bravest to charge through. (E: 431)

The men on the Yankee line often had two muskets per man on the line. As each soldier fired, he would rotate with the man standing behind the shooter. To show wits of the Yankee, men of the 12th NJ had obsolete large caliber smoothbore rifles, which used a replacement of the solid ball with some buckshot that would scatter when fired like a shotgun to cause more wounds. Rotating rifleman and flank attacks were tricks much like Gen. Greene's men used in the successful fighting on Culp's Hill on the previous evening.

A constant sheet of fire blazed from the Yankee entrenchments. Gen. Hays commanded the Union sector that held against his opponents of Davis' Brigade and three others. Davis' brave men came from 2nd Miss, 11th Miss, 43rd Miss, and 55th N. C. (D: 591) Hays was one of the ablest generals in the Union army, and he did not want any defeats on his watch. He even had drilled one of his small units as the Rebels advanced to make sure they could give a good fight. He crowded every unit he had up to the front

line, holding no one back, which is the reason for the heavy firepower. He borrowed this trick from Napoleon. The 800 feet of Yankee wall that he was defending presented a solid line of fire. From left flank included the 39th NY, 111th NY, 125th NY, and the 126th NY. (E: 430) (D: 570) On the right side of Hays' line, the fire came from 14th Con, 1st Del, 12 NJ, 10th NY, 108 NY and the tough 8th Ohio. Hays had a total of 2,580 men facing the Rebels of both Davis and other Pettigrew Brigades. This shows the array of people on both sides of the battle line were determined people from different states.

We should relate other details to show the terrible conditions that the brave, young Rebels faced as they approached the Yankee battle line. On the extreme left of Davis' Brigade, 14 men and an officer remained from a company under the command of Lt. Peel of the 11th Mississippi. They fought their way to the Bryan barn, which was through the Union line, about 500 feet beyond the troublesome Emmitsburg Road. (D: 494) This, by any measurement in blood and guts, was a high-water mark of the Confederacy. As Lt. Peel looked back for support, the rest of the soldiers of the brigade were moving to their rear leaving a large space between Peel and the Rebel brigade. If he tried to reach the brigade, his men would face sure death from the Yankees on each side of the empty space. After he discussed the intolerable condition with his men, Peel decided to hang a white cloth out the door, and they surrendered. (E: 432)

A most strange event occurred at this point. The barn, which protected these brave soldiers from death, was built by the freed black, Abraham Bryan mentioned previously (E: 395) (D: 492). There is a report that Capt. Fletcher Satterfield, commanding a Rebel company in the 55th N.C. Regiment, had also achieved a break through of the Union line and had thus achieved honor in this attack; Capt. Satterfield was unfortunately killed. (G: 375)

In summary, when Davis' brigade ended its attack it looked something like this: 11th Miss. - Col. Green wounded and his regimental losses 53%, 2nd Miss. – Col. Stone wounded and his regimental losses 47%, 42nd Miss. – Col. Miller wounded and his regimental losses 46%, and finally the 55th N. C. – Col. Connally wounded and his regimental losses 34%. (D: 591) There were simply not enough men to continue the

slaughter much beyond the Yankee barricade. Those Yankee cannons and the rifles had worked well. However, at last moment, Lt. A. Baker ordered a charge of his small unit near the famous Bryan barn as, and most of his men including Barker were cut to pieces by the heavy fire. It was their gift of loyalty to the Confederacy. (N: 215) As you can understand, the remaining Rebel brave men at this location were lost in a mob scene and retreated down the hill.

To the right of Davis' brigade was Col. Marshall's Brigade of some 2,580 Rebel soldiers. These were serving under Gen. Pettigrew until Marshall was promoted to command the left wing of this attack. Marshall's soldiers were a few minutes later than Davis' men in going over the wooden plank fences lining the Emmitsburg road. At that time, some of Davis' men were stalling due to the heavy fire of artillery and muskets. In the front of both of the Davis' and Marshall's men were 6 fresh heavy cannons belonging to Lt. Gulian Weir's battery (5^{th} US Army) that had just pulled into place on the Yankee line. Some of these guns hit the Confederate right (Marshall's and Davis' Rebel troops), and some guns hit the left (Fey's Rebels). It was hard to tell who received the most lead. This battery had lost their guns and some men the day before to Gen. Wright's Rebels, and they won the guns back with the help of Yankee infantry. The battery was very determined to get even, so they loaded their guns with double canister and fired as often as they could to eliminate Rebels as they crossed a second wooden fence line only 80 yards away. (E: 433) The effect was that of a modern machinegun sowing death; the loose pellets flying from the canisters simply "blew away" the line of rebels reaching this fence.

Col. Marshall recognized that an optimum effort was to be made this day for his brigade to break the Union line. It was the third brigade in formation to threaten Gen. Hays' Union position. Somewhere in this maze of war, Gen. Pettigrew was directing this brigade (his former brigade) as well as the others of the left wing when a shell burst nearby, seriously shattering his hand, which he wrapped in a cloth and continued his duties. (E: 429)

The story of the 47th North Carolina Regiment (567 men) under command of Lt. Col. John Graves is typical of the contribution of the other three regiments in this brigade. Col. Graves took charge of his front line to relieve his wounded Commander, Col. Faribault. Sustaining many casualties, his regiment was locked in place beyond the third wooden fence by heavy fire from the Union line. He ordered a "charge". Most of his 150 Rebels were now active and could bravely move forward, but they could not gain ground against the canister and rifle fire. Some came to within 15 yards of the wall. To avoid the hail of bullets, the men stayed close to the ground. When supporting forces did not arrive to break through the old stone wall, Col. Graves and his men surrendered. (E: 433) Near the end of this episode, Col. Marshall, was shot in the head while leading his brigade and fell from his horse. Col. Leventhorpe of the 11th N. Carolina Regiment was down. Col. Burgwyn of the 26th N. Carolina was down. Lt. Col. Parks of the 52nd N. Carolina was down. The brigade was nearly destroyed. The remaining men, some 1,400 initially, (D: 591) (G: 370) finally retreated in mass back to their staging area after losing some 56% of their men in killed, wounded, and missing.

The last brigade in the left sector of the Confederate attack was Col. Birkett Fry's Third Brigade (2,300 men). The regiments in this brigade are listed: 5th Ala. Bn., 13th Ala., 1st Tenn., 7th Tenn., and 14th Tenn. In the battle they would meet the same fate as the other brigades to their left when they attacked Gen. Hays' well prepared line of Union soldiers. Their losses would be nearly the same as the adjoining Marshall's Brigade shown that the fire power coming from the Union line was the same. Col. Fry's brigade was the key in guiding all of Gen. Pickett's brigades to the center point at the clump of trees in the line of battle. Despite of the problems posed by this alignment, the Rebel generals were true professionals in controlling the movement of their troops. Col. Fry's guide (a lieutenant and a Virginian), met Gen. Pickett's guide (a Tennessee boy) from Garnett' Brigade at the clump of trees with a saying "Virginia and Tennessee will stand together on these works." (G: 368) Sadly, they did stand their flags on the rock wall of these works, but they did not have the strength to keep them there.

Unfortunately, Fry's Brigade drew some bad cards in this attack assignment as about half of his men were to attack the Yankees along the straight section on the north

end of the rock wall, and the other half were to attack the so-called bloody "angle" in the form of a large "Z" about a 80 yards across. (F: 240) This strange connection continued the north rock fence to the southern section of the fence, where Gen. Pickett's men would attack. Inside the jog was posted Gen. Webb's regiments as follows. The 69 Pa. Regiment (284 men) was on the rock line running at the lower part of the jog would face Pickett's soldiers. The 71 Pa. Reg. (261 men) was in the upper corner of the jog facing Col. Fry's men. In the middle of the jog was the 72nd Pa. Reg. (380 men) along with the 106th Pa. Reg. (280 men) were Webb's reserves. (D: 571) (N: 209) On the south end of the jog were Capt. Arnold's four big guns, the 1st Rhode Island Light Artillery, that sprayed canister into both Fry's brigade and those from Gen. Pickett's forces. And in the northern corner, remained the famous Lt. Cushing's two guns. With both these artillery batteries acting in concert, they would spray a deadly crossfire in the jog area along the fence. Fry's men received their share of deadly canister, and so did Garnett's men in Pickett's right wing from the deadly canister, as we will relate.

In summary, even though Col. Fry was down, his men, with losses of 57%, took their flag up to the fence line in the heavy fire. The division commander, Gen. Pettigrew was down. Col. Marshall was dead. Many other officers were down. The brave Rebels who were left were forced into retreat. The upsetting fence configuration and the heavy crossfire from canister and rifles tended to add to a loss of command control, turning the attacking forces into a mob. These were the unfortunate cards dealt to Fry that caused his brigade and others to retreat.

We should enlarge on the post and rail wooden fence entanglement on both sides of the roadbed near the Union line that made the Rebel soldiers good targets. When they climbed up the rails, they fell to the ground to seek safety. Col. Fry was a brave officer who would command by example. He climbed through this nightmare obstacle and raced toward the Yankees with a shout "Follow me". As fate would have it, Col. Fry was shot in the thigh. (E: 429) He told his men to leave him and race forward as victory was theirs. Unfortunately, the tables turned, and he became a Union prisoner because he could not walk during the retreat of his regiment. There was a deep depression in the roadbed, which provided cover for wounded Rebels as well as the charging Rebels from

the fire of the muskets and canister of the nearby cannons from the front of the Yankee line. This shelter deterred soldiers from continuing the attack; Col. John Fite of the 7th Tennessee estimated that one half of the men in this protected area did not advance. (E: 430) The Rebel plan of attack that Gen. Lee and Gen. Longstreet prepared did not allow for these serious obstacles (the fences, roadbed, sheets of short range canister, and alike) which contributed to the Rebel defeat.

We have just reviewed the troubles of the four main Rebel brigades of Gen. Pettigrew's left wing in trying to penetrate the Yankee line on the ridge. Now, we will turn to the unsuccessful effort experienced by the two reserve brigades of this left wing in their supporting role. These brigades were Col. James Lane's Brigade (1,730 men) and Col. Lee Lowrance's Brigade (1,351 men). Gen. Lee assigned Gen. Isaac Trimble as field commander of this reserve on this same day. As often happens in war, Trimble was not acquainted with the officers or their men of this reserve. He had a tough job, but he was full of fight.

Who was this Gen. Trimble? Similar to other officers, he had experience in the army, but left to become a civil engineer, gaining experience in the region of Gettysburg as well as other areas such as Harrisburg. Harrisburg was Lee's first target of this northern invasion, and Trimble was slated to play a leading role with Gen. Ewell's Corps. (D: 94) The war changed, so Trimble gained another role at Gettysburg. Being attached to Ewell's Corps on the first day of battle, he asked for a regiment to take Culp's Hill as Lee had ordered taken on the evening of that day. He was refused, and he slammed his sword aside as a protest. (C: 153)

In the old days, he had fought well in the battle of Second Manassas leading troops and received a serious leg wound that kept him from more action for several months. He was assigned a desk job in the Shenandoah Valley. Lee was passing through that valley, and on his way to Gettysburg; Trimble wanted war so he contrived a way to join Lee's staff. His experience in battle would prove that he was a capable leader, and Gen. Lee assigned him to Ewell's division. And today, with a new command of reserves, Trimble was ready to fight again with his two brigades.

The left flank guard was attacked, had broken, and was in retreat. Gen. Pettigrew called on Gen. Trimble to bring his reserve up to support the three brigades in the attacking force. The orders from Trimble were not clear, and three of five regiments in Lane's brigade were first to reach the sunken Emmitsburg Road as the left wing guard (7th:37th:2 8th:18th:33rd: N.C.) (D: 498) The leader of this Rebel infantry unit (Col. James Lane) was a life long professor of mathematics and science in southern universities. (G: 371) At about 3:30, his brigade closed with the Yankees, and they sacrifice their life for the basic Rebel principles.

The horse that Lane was riding in the charge was shot. It went down, and he went with it; he rose to his feet and shouted for his men to move forward. He was lucky that he did not get killed, as were many of his fellow officers while leading their charges. The Union's canister bullets were not selective. By now, the depression of the road was filled with the dead and wounded from Davis' Brigade and Lane's men. It was hard to find a safe place. Lane's men would fire at the Yankees from a prone position, resting their rifles on the fence rails or on any support. To show that the Rebels were fighting at their very best, a report from the Yankee side showed that the 1st Delaware lost two color bearers in two minutes, and their Yankee officers were picked off as we shall see. Woodruff's guns behind the Union wall would spray canister over a fifty foot swath of bullets at each firing. It was deadly, deadly, deadly. The Yankees were packed at the stone wall, resting their rifles on its top. A sheet of death fell on Lane's brigade. Later, Lane's Brigade would fall under the command of Col. Avery.

The preceding scene was no different as Col. Lee Lowrance's (Scales) Brigade (16th, 22nd, 34th,13th, 38th, N.C.) (D: 498) as it pulled along side Lane's brigade at the Emmitsburg Road. They were to support the brave Rebels from Davis's and Marshall's brigades, who were getting hammered by the Yankees in front of the rock wall. But Lowrance's brigade was already in very bad shape and should not have been chosen for this attack by Gen. Lee and Gen. Longstreet. Also, Gen. Hill was not in position at this point in time to approve this action. The status of this brigade goes back to first day of battle at Gettysburg.

Gen. Scales, with this brigade, was given orders to take Lutheran Seminary Hill on that first day, and it looked like a relative easy job. But, Scales did not know that Col. Wainwright of the Union First Corps had assembled 18 guns in hiding for this occasion. The fight was sharp with round shot and much canister filling the air on the Rebel side. Thus, on the first day, the attack was a complete disaster. Gen. Scales was wounded (he was replaced later by Col. Lowrance) and the commanders of four of five of his regiments were killed or wounded. On the first day of this battle, this same brigade started out with about 1, 500 men in the afternoon, and in the evening a little over 500 men answered "here". (E: 218) So, morale on this third day of battle was very low, as you can easily see. No one was "attending to business" on the Rebel side in picking this troubled brigade for attack on the third day This was a serious error as there were many other qualified brigades available that had not witnessed this trouble.

A letter from Lt. Henry, 38th North Carolina of Lowrance's Brigade can best describe the horrors of war that the brigade faced at this time, "…the fire from the enemy's artillery was now terrible, and we were reduced to a mere skirmish line." (E: 434) At this point, Col. Lowrance was wounded and moved to the rear with his men. Later, he wrote that his and Gen. Lane's brigades were the only lines to be seen on the vast field with no support in view. The natural inquiry was: what should we do? There was no one to answer. The decision was in the hands of his men. He continued. It was the men who answered for themselves, and without orders, the brigade retreated. (E: 434) The finale of this courageous charge by these two reserve brigades came as Gen. Trimble was shot in the leg at the damnable wooden fence line, which marked the deaths of many of his men this day. By fate, in a previous battle, he also had been shot in the leg. This time, he could not walk, and he could not be carried a mile under fire to safety. So, he was taken prisoner. The old fighter had served the Confederacy to his very best and was now out of the war. The men and their officers had given their "all" to break the Yankee line. It seems no formal orders to retreat were issued to Pettigrew's left sector. It is clear, by reviewing death and destruction on this front, why these two reserve brigades under Trimble honorably served as the last units on the killing field on Pettigrew's left flank.

Hay's Union Defense

We must also describe the horrors of war, as they existed on the right of Gen. Winfield S. Hancock's 2nd Corps battle line. On this right flank was a division under command of Gen. Alexander Hays, facing all of the attacking Pettigrew brigades. On the left of the 2nd Corps was a division commanded by Gen. John Gibbon (that will be discussed later). First, we will talk about the trials and tribulations in Gen. Hays' division that directly faced and defeated the massive attack by Gen. Pettigrew on the left wing of Lee's army, which has been previously described. Then later, we will talk about Gibbon's war.

Hancock's right consisted of the division commanded by Gen. Alexander Hays of the Second Corps. They defended a position from about half of the famous "angle" and continued along a rock fence line extending north (about 800 feet) to the trees in Ziegler's Grove. (E: 430) Although Alexander Hays looked a little older and heavier than most of the Union generals, he was a fierce, ferocious, smart, and a professional general. He was a character in battle, the kind of general you would want on your side when the odds were against you. And this was so; Pettigrew had more men than Hays had. But Hays' real attribute was simple. In battle, he believed in hands-on management of his front line troops from the saddle.

Let us look at a picture of Gen. Hays in action to show the hazards of war that the Union generals faced from those expert Rebel riflemen stranded on the roadbed in front of the Union lines. Hays placed all his men on the firing line; there was no reserve. Napoleon did not hesitate to move all his men into the line. A serious fault of Southern commanders at Gettysburg was that they did not use their reserve units at critical times. Hays copied Gen. Green's method of rotating his men and rifles out of the firing line to reload. It provided a continuous rate of fire. This commander lost 14 of his 20 orderlies suggesting that rebel bullets were coming back through the line with deadly accuracy. The general was not exempt from this hazard. (E: 435)

Hays rode back and forth along his lines shouting encouragement to his men. While doing so, he lost two of his best riding horses. Still the unfortunate rebel

marksmen only shot the horses and not the rider. (E: 435) Think of the real possibility the loss of Hays would have had on the battle. If Hays were unable to lead, confusion could strike the Yankee line, and perhaps a Southern victory could be had. When a Rebel sharpshooter shot Gen. Reynolds on the first day at Gettysburg, his wing of the Union army collapsed into disaster due to lack of good, top leadership. So this feat was possible. In addition to riding the firing line, Hays was responsible for moving the 8th Ohio to his right flank. When the 8th Ohio struck at Mayo's regiment advancing on the Rebel left. The 8th Ohio destroyed Col. Mayo's regiment, which in turn endangered the entire left wing of the Rebel army. Gen. Hancock repeated this maneuver on the Union's extreme left flank, as we will relate, causing a defeat of the Rebels on this left flank. In summery, Hays was a brave, competent officer, and an excellent independent thinker who led his front line in stopping over half of the attacking Confederate Army (under Gen. Longstreet) from breaking the Union line on this third day. Unfortunately, the history books tell little of the Gen. Hays' feats at Gettysburg. As fate would have its way in this Civil War, we do know that this outstanding general was wounded in the head and died the following spring in the Battle of the Wilderness. His leadership helped save the day for the Union Army. His opponent in the Wilderness Battle was none other than Gen. Longstreet, who was also seriously wounded in the same battle. (J: 292)

The Union Artillery

At this point, we should stop, digress a bit, and tell some details of the important role that Union cannons played in the killing field over which Pettigrew's left sector and Pickett's right sector were to strike with artillery along the Rebel battle line on Cemetery Ridge. Cannons all the way over on Little Round Top and on nearby Cemetery Hill zeroed in on these long lines of advancing Rebel infantry, thus fulfilling Gen. Hunt's famous killing plan of using a crossfire from the sides and from hidden batteries. The Union General Hunt was an expert in artillery dating back to the Mexican War; his counterpart was the Confederate General Pendleton, a "political" general with little practical experience in this trade. Gen. Lee wanted artillery to follow the infantry, which was Pendleton's assignment on day three. But here were only a few guns in this supporting role to blast holes in the Yankee rock wall due to lack of Pendleton's orders.

As was mention before for, the fuses of the Southern artillery shells were not very reliable, while the Northern fuses were. It was a case that the South did not use a quality control method to upgrade their shells giving the Southern cannoneers more destructive power such as destroying the Union cannons in this attack. This simply means for the South that all the man-hours expended in making an unreliable shell, transporting the shell, and firing it was unlikely to destroy many targets along the Union rock wall. It was an adversity that the South could not bear in this battle.

And we will look at the new killing machine, invented just before the war. It was called the canister shell, named after the way it was made. Simply said, the name came from firing "…a tin full of round balls of varying weights, used as an anti-personnel weapon on the scatter gun principle." (I: 27) The gunner put the canister and a two and a half pound bag of black power in the gun and fired it to get a spray of metal for the advancing enemy. It could be used in any of the cannons on the front line. Other shells were hollow metal balls filled with black powder, musket shells, and a fuse. When they burst, they threw iron all over the enemy troops. In some cases, a solid metal ball was fired, like those in ancient times, long ago, which injured any soldier it hit. (I: 27)

Now, we will examine canister shot. Glenn Tucker described it in *High Tide at Gettysburg*: "Double canister meant 98 iron balls, each about an inch in diameter. In a single charge, canister was packed in seven layers of seven balls each. A double charge-the balls would spread like shot from a shot gun-was certain to make havoc of anything in its front." (G: 367) Think of the time it would take for 98 infantrymen to load their muskets and fire them at the Rebels as opposed to one blast of a cannon with its canister. Admittedly, each bullet of the canister will not be as accurate the bullet from the musket. But there will many more bullets in the general area of the advancing soldiers exposed to one canister shell. An object is to wound the enemy not kill him, and many people will be needed to care for a wounded man. Previously, I mentioned the case where 836 musket balls were found in a 16 foot rail of the famous wood fence that the Rebels crossed to reach the Yankee battle line. (E: 431) We will never know how many of those bullets came from the canister. However, it is important to note that this weapon could

substitute for many infantrymen in preventing the rebels from crossing over the stone wall.

We must disclose an important maneuver that Gen. Hunt, the artillery professional made without Gen. Lee's knowledge. On the southern part of Cemetery Ridge held by the Union Army, there was a shallow gully, hidden from the eyes of the Rebel artillery across the battlefield on the northern Seminary Ridge. In this gully, he placed 41 guns from the reserve under the command of Col. McGilvery, pointing toward the killing field in front of the famous clump of trees. (E: 424) Hunt told McGilvery not to fire, as counter battery firing would expose his guns to a Rebel shelling before the main attack. And he did not fire in spite of Hancock instructions to open fire. The Rebels could have destroyed many of the Union guns, which would later play a very important role in cutting down the hordes of advancing Rebel infantry before they could reach the Union lines. By following Gen. Hunt's instructions, all guns were ready for the Rebel attack. Only one had received a Rebel shell.

Now comes the big surprise of the Union Artillery. McGilvery's hidden guns could easily see the turning movement of Kemper's flanking brigade as it turned to get in alignment with their target, the clump of trees. The Rebel brigade had a range that varied from 400 to 800 yards from the Union guns. (E: 428) The normal range of the canister was 300 yards, but the new canister of a heavy-duty type increased the range to 800 yards. (I: 27) The order came "load canister". Capt. Patrick Hart, 15th New York Battery of McGilvery's Brigade, had been looking for this moment for a long time, and loaded his four Napoleons with double canister and fired by the book.

As the range closed, his battery continued to fire. His quote was recorded, "I continued this dreadful fire on this line until there was not a man of them to be seen." (E: 428) Can you imagine 96 Yankee men loading their rifles and firing at Kemper's terrified lines of infantrymen which would be similar to one of Hart's cannons delivering the same amount of bullets in double canister; we recognized the fact that the canister would be more scattered. Still, you can see the hell these brave Rebel soldiers passed through, as they entered the shower of flying lead pieces and bullets from the Union line.

McGilvery's batteries were not the only Union guns in the life or death struggle of Cemetery Ridge. Gen. Hancock's 2nd Corps was assigned the responsibility of holding the Union battle line at Gen. Lee's point of attack, which was breaking the Yankee line along the clump of trees. Gen. Hancock had assigned Gen. Hays the responsibility of the left sector from the clump of trees north with 3 batteries, and Gen. Gibbon was assigned the command of the line south from the clump of trees with three batteries. Of course, these sections would receive crossfire support from Col. McGilvery's 41 guns, from Maj. Osborn's five batteries on nearby cemetery hill (D: 577), and from Lt. Benjamin Rittenhouse's battery of 6 guns near the top of Little Round. These guns were the Parrott type and very effective in killing soldiers down the long lines of the attacking Rebels. (E: 375) The batteries at the clump of trees took a terrible beating and it is proper to tell their story.

We will tell of the story the six batteries covering Gen. Hancock's front at the center of the Rebel attack. The crew of the batteries varied, but generally it was over 110 men. In some cases, batteries were damaged which required replacement from the artillery reserve, so the number of guns would change in the battle. The three batteries supporting Hay's line began with Lt. Woodruff's battery of 6 guns. (D: 498, 570) Midway through the attack he was mortally wounded and turned over his command to Lt. McCrea. A Rebel shell ignited the caisson destroying guns and killed his men; he had to get volunteers from the nearby infantry to continue operating his guns. (D: 403) The next in line was Lt. J. G. Tumboll's battery of 8 guns (D: 498) from the reserve (losses 21%). His guns faced mostly those Rebels from Marshall and Fry Brigades. At the "angle" Lt. W. A. Arnold's battery with 6 guns (D: 498) held the hotspot at the clump of trees. This brigade faced Rebels from Fry, Garnett and Armistead Brigades. In the end, this Union brigade had only one gun operating (losses 27%).

Also, the "angle" was the far right corner stone for Gen. Gibbon's Union Division's responsibility for holding the northern Yankee battle line under the overall command of Gen. Hancock. On the very front corner of the angle was Lt. A. H. Cushing's battery with 6 guns supporting Gen. Webb's Brigade. (D: 478) Fighting was so bad he had lost 5 guns as the Rebels reached the stone wall. Cushing was wounded 3

times including a hit in the groin, but he kept operating his last gun. Near the last shot of canister, he was overrun and died from a wound in the head. He gave his very best to his country: his devotion to duty. His losses were 38 men from his complement of126 men. Behind Gen. Webb's 69th Penn. Regiment, who were holding on in a desperate, hand-to-hand struggle over the stone wall at the "Angle", was the 1st Rhode Island Light Artillery Battery B under Lt. W. S. Perrin (losses 22%). He had only 3 guns firing canister at the attacking force after 3 guns were destroyed along with two limbers and their thirty horses. (D: 570, 478)

Lt. Perrin was replaced by Lt. Cowan employing the 1st New York Light Battery I with 6 guns (D: 576) that supported both Gen. Webb's Brigade and Col. Hall's Brigade, which were in line along the rock wall (D: 498). Cowan's men fired the small 3 inch Ordnance guns, and avoiding regulations, these men loaded their guns with triple canister to give the Rebel a big surprise in this very critical spot. (E: 440)

The third unit in the Union line in this critical sector was Gen. Harrow's brigade. He had the artillery support of the 1st New York Light Artillery, Battery B under the command of Capt. James Rorty. Rorty was assigned to Gen. Hays Division, but later transferred to support Harrow. Battery commanders were changed often due to casualties and authors have some difficulty following this identify. The Captain began this day of hell with 4 guns operating. As the last wave of Rebels made it to the wall, Rorty was dead. His battery was now under command of Lt. Robert Rogers, and only one gun was still operating. Rogers kept up the fire with canister. At times the untrained crew would put found objects like tin cups, rocks and unused bayonets in the guns to add spice to this occasion. (E: 440) He kept his guns firing by using the services of the nearby infantrymen of the 15th Massachusetts (losses 22%). (D: 498) (D: 479, 570) (E: 446)

This is the punch line on the contribution of the Union artillery in winning this battle. At one time there were about 33 guns firing canister as the Rebel masses reached the wall. And if we assume one round of double canister held 98 bullets that would mean some 3,200 bullets could reach the attacking Rebel line with each round fired. And if each cannon cut a 50-foot swath with canister, most of Rebel line could show some

deadly effects of the firing. (E: 449) Although these figures are not exact, it illustrates a way the modern killing field had developed, and why the South and the North lost so many brave men. War is plain Hell as so many veterans have witnessed!

Right Sector of the Rebel Attack

We have just covered the movements of Gen. Pettigrew's left sector in its unsuccessful attack on the main Union line and discussed the role that the Union artillery played in supporting the Union infantry. Now, we will examine the details of Gen. Pickett's right sector in its attack along the Union line. The first long line in Pickett's charge consisted of Gen. Richard Garnett' Brigade (1,850 men). (D: 584) Its function was to move so as to align on the clump of trees (near the center of the Union line), and connect with the right side of Pettigrew's formation to hit the Union lines at the same time. Garnett's brigade was outstanding as they smartly marched professional cross the fields and into the jaws of death created by the heavy canon fire, as we have previously noted. And they hit the "angle" concurrently with Pettigrew's men approaching from the left. Some went over the Union stone wall where Gen. Webb's Union Brigade was assigned. But staying there was a new problem. Directly to the right of Gen. Garnett's brigade was Gen. Kemper's Rebel Brigade (1,780 men). They had a slight delay in starting the attack, and they had to do some maneuvering to close the gap with Garnett's men. This move exposed them to Union rifle fire because the flank was open to the Yankees, as we will soon see. Kemper's brigade hit the middle of Gen. Gibbon's Union Division, held by Col. Hall's Brigade (next to Gen. Webb) with much force, but Kemper's men was held at the stone fence by Yankee fire. The third in this group to hit the Yankees was Armistead's Brigade (2190 men), acting as support for Garnett critical thrust in breaking the line at the clump of trees near the area of the "angle".

In addition, there were two Confederate brigades attacking on the right, Wilcox's brigade (1,726 men), and Lang's brigade (742 men); both from Hill's Corps. (D: 590) (D: 479) They were assigned to Pickett's command. Interestingly enough, these brigades were assigned three functions as follows: right flank guards (by Gen. Lee), reinforcements to be called into the fight (by Gen. Pickett), and auxiliary units who were not to move until the receipt of positive orders (by Gen. Wilcox) (D: 479). In summary,

there was serious confusion with orders. Gen. Lee should have issued written orders for these brigades to correctly execute his battle plan. In the final minutes of combat, Gen. Pickett ordered these units to move up as his flank guard when he was getting heavy Yankee fire from the flank. Both brigades came forward into fight and to share the range of the right flank in supporting Kemper's brigade. Gen. Longstreet authorized this action. (E: 454) Pickett's staff overlooked providing a guide to lead the brigades into position. And the smoke was troublesome, so there existed, with no fault of the two supporting Rebel Brigades, a large gap between these two reserve brigades and Gen. Kemper's brigade. (E: 454)

As these two reserve brigades were reaching Pickett's sector, they were continuously shelled by some of the Union's 59 cannons. (E: 454) (E: 455) Most of the cannons were located in Col. McGilvery's gun park hidden on Cemetery Ridge. Two other guns of Lt. Rittenhouse's battery were located high on Little Round Top. These guns were firing case shot and canister, which ripped through the two Confederate brigades. Col. Wilcox called for Rebel anti-battery fire, but was told no long-range shells were available. This reflected poor attack planning by the Rebel Command. Then, to add to their troubles, from the Union line Gen. Stannard unexpectedly marched with his novice Yankee Brigade into the large gap between these Rebel brigades and Kemper's Brigade of the main Rebel attacking force, as we will soon describe in more detail. Stannard's men of Col Randall's 13th Vermont opened fire and charged taking prisoners; 4 companies of Col. Nichols 14th Vermont came running to join the action. The human cost for the Rebels was some 500 dead, wounded and captured. (N: 241, 242) Col. Lang was stunned by the destruction from the heavy artillery fire to his Rebel force and had considered a withdrawal. Of course, this attack by 13th and 14th Vermont, along with the artillery, overwhelmed both of the Rebel reserve brigades. They broke and returned to their initial staging area.

At this point in time, we should relate a most interesting contribution to winning this battle by individual effort a critical moment. This was shown by Stannard's Brigade, which was formed with 9-month volunteers from Vermont farms who had just one month remaining in the service. They wanted to get back to collecting special maple syrup,

milking cows for butter, and cutting their timber. They were as tough as any fighters as was any in the Union Army, but they wanted to pay for the deed of freedom and go home. Up to now they had served all of their time guarding Washington and living high as soldiers, so they had not seen a battlefield. All the Washington experience was under Gen. Stannard, a no nonsense leader who drilled with discipline. In one case, a lieutenant who filled canteens with water, when it was against the rules, had lost his sword to command for a while.

These soldiers were hardy men from the farm, had been drilled well for 8 months, and could easily hit the bull's-eye. Gen. George Stannard's orders were to secure the end of the Union line that was under heavy attack. Stannard held some reservations because of their lack of battle experience and their soft assignment. So he wondered if they were going to fight or go home. When their Union Battery was lost on the second day to the Rebels, Stannard was ordered by Gen. Hancock to recapture this battery from the Rebels and that success was the only combat seen by Stannard's men. (N: 152) (G: 161) They were still rookies. These farmers were taught well: they were going to fight hard, win the battle at all costs, and then go home, knowing the meaning of what freedom really costs.

Gen. Stannard watched the long lines of confederates as they marched at an angle toward the clump of trees on Stannard's right. A long distance away, Gen. Kemper's Rebels of Pickett's Sector were marching toward Stannard, and then turned at an angle, and lined up on Garnett's right for the main hand-to-hand attack.

As we mentioned, Stannard saw the large hole evolve in his front, and on his own judgment, immediately ordered his two regiments (14th and 16th) forward at quick time to pivot as a right angle on the 13th Vermont that remained on the line to protect the movement. The 16th was placed some 300 yards beyond the 14th.to give them a wide field of coverage. Of course, all three regiments were realigned to face the advancing rebels. This shows the real capabilities of an outstanding commander. He immediately recognized the critical development in the field. He had vision, understood his capability and had guts.

He did not asked for orders; he moved his men to the weak spot in the enemy lines and attacked. He had ordered them to make a complex perpendicular movement that he had practiced back in his Washington days just for an occasion like this one. (G: 362) (E: 437) This was not quite regulation, but it placed his regiments (the 13th, and 14 Vermont) perpendicular to the last rebel units in their line (11th and 24th Virginia of Kemper's Brigades and the exposed 8th Virginia). The 16th was deployed as skirmishers. (N: 152) (E: 437) The placements were just right for all of his men to shoot down the length of the Rebel line. The killing was plain Hell. As was discussed a bit earlier, the 13th regiment moved out toward the Rebels advancing from the left at this same time. The Vermonters finished the work of the Union guns destroying Pickett's two reserve brigades. (N: 153) Deadly fire killed many Rebels and created chaos on Pickett's entire right flank. The losses on the Rebel right were significant, preventing these Rebels from joining from joining others in breaking through of the stone wall. It was the first sign of a great victory.

Now comes a heart breaker for the Yankee side. At the same time that Stannard had ordered his regiments forward to meet the attack, Gen. Hancock, the 2nd Corps commander rode up. He had quickly ridden the full battle line through a hail of bullets to tell Stannard about 8th Ohio's rout of the Rebels on the far right flank, and for him to do the same on the Union left flank. But he was a little late. Stannard had already ordered the attack. Hancock looked at the fancy footwork by Stannard's Brigade to align with the enemy, and said something like Stannard had "gone to Hell." Stannard was one of the best generals in the army, as the proof was in the pudding, and he replied…"to Hell it is then!"(E: 437)

The Union attack on the flank was a great success. But just as Gen. Hancock turned his horse away from Stannard, a Rebel soldier fired at this man on the horse and struck Hancock in the groin. Hancock would then carry this wound every day of the war because it did not heal. During siege at Petersburg when he led his men from horseback, the old wound was unbearable. He was very brave, smart, and an outstanding general of the Union Army. In November 1864, due to this medical condition, the army command assigned him to a post near Washington.

Hancock, the most aggressive commander on the field, an equal to challenge Gen. Lee, would not be moved from the field with his serious wound until he was assured of victory. A few minutes later, Gen. Stannard was giving orders to better his brigade's position and was shot in the leg; he too would not leave the field until the victory was assured. (G: 367) There was an additional cost of victory. Gen. Meade was on the battle line when the Rebel artillery blew up his headquarters and wounded Gen. Butterfield, his Chief of Staff.

It is noted that Gen. Longstreet, Commander of the Confederate First Corps, was the commander of the Rebel charge; he was not wounded. He stayed well behind the front line. Gen. Pickett was not injured; but Gen. Pettigrew had a serious hand wound, and remained in command throughout the battle. Nearly all the Confederate brigade commanders and lower officers were killed or wounded. With the leadership of the Confederate side decimated, the Confederate Army could not continue the attack. War does not play favorites.

We must discuss Gen. Pickett's background and his personal role in this famous battle. Maj. Gen. George Pickett is a notable figure in this contest to the extent that historians have named the failed Rebel attack on the Union center on the third day as "Pickett's Charge". Thus, we will enlarge on some characteristics of this commander, that are appropriate to this battle in addition to those we previously cited, such as his bravery in the Mexican war of long ago and his personal contacts with the Union President Lincoln. We believe he was a rather strange general.

Gen. Pickett held a longtime friendship with Gen. Longstreet, who gave him preference at times. It was Gen. Longstreet who appointed Pickett to division command over the entire right sector in the attack against the Union line in this critical battle. The Rebel Gen. Pettigrew commanded troops on the left sector. Sears describes the eccentric Pickett in his book, *Gettysburg* (E: 52) as having "long ringlets flowed loosely over his shoulders, trimmed and highly perfumed. His beard likewise was curling and giving out the scents of Araby." (G: 52) He was in his middle years and madly in love with a very beautiful, young lady, LaSalle Corbell. He would leave camp at night to see her and

would write to her of his adventures at every occasion. In fact, right after this battle, he would marry Miss Corbell, and it is likely they lived happily ever after. (G: 131) But this brings up another issue: would he be so careful with his life that he could be out of range of death and the close command of his troops?

For the most part, historians have located his command post close to the Codori barn, which was near the front line of the battle. Glenn tucker's assessment of the situation was that Pickett's command post was "near the barn in some dead space, protected from Cemetery Ridge." (G: 373) It is important to note that none of his staff or their horses were killed or wounded, so they must have been out of sight with their command flags from the Union artillery. Later, the Rebel Colonel Eppa Hunton, commander of the 8th Virginia, made his assessment of the Pickett's condition as "every man who was known to have gone into the charge on horseback was killed or had his horse killed". Col, Hunton was wounded near Codori barn, so he should have been an able judge of the shelling and fighting in that area. (G: 373) Gen. Pickett did give orders on the formation for the line of attack. With the approval of Gen. Longstreet, Pickett ordered additional support for his attack, which was in trouble, by using Gen. Wilcox Brigade and the Gen. Lang Brigade from Hill's Corps. This was mentioned previously in our description of this battle. They were available on the far right flank. Gen. Pickett did not make contact in the smoke of battle with Gen. Wilcox nor Gen. Lang, so this support of some 1600 men charged directly toward into the hidden Union artillery reserve of some 59 guns, which opened up with deadly shot and canister. At the same time, the Union 16th Vermont, under Col. Veazey, wheeled into position on Gen. Wilcox's flank, delivering several volleys. It was a disaster for the Rebels that left some 360 dead. (E: 454) The point of discussing this misconduct in Gen. Pickett's command is that these two Rebel support brigades could have made an important difference in punching through the center of the Union line when it was in near failure had the proper Rebel communication been maintained.

S. W. Sears points to the intensity of battle in the killing of senior officers from Gen. Pickett's command who lead the important right section of the "Grand Charge" (E: 455). A review of the events of the day showed the destruction in the Rebel charge.

On the right Gen. Pickett commanded 3 brigades, which were in turn directed by senior generals Garnett, Armistead, and Kemper. The first two were killed and only Kemper, who barely escaped the Yankees, was wounded and carried to safety by his men. Serving under these generals were 15 regimental commanders who were mostly Colonels and Lt. Colonels; all these officers but two, were killed or wounded. For all practical purposes, Gen. Pickett's command was all but wiped out. Let us look at the left sector and the 4 brigades that were directed by Gen. Pettigrew. He was wounded along with a brigade commander; and another brigade commander was killed. His two remaining generals retreated unharmed from the field as the attack became hopeless. But as we have mentioned, Gen. Pickett, his staff, and their horses were not harmed, which leads one to conclude that they were well out of harms way.

Thus, the consensus of historians is that Gen. Pickett bore some responsibility for in the failure of this battle. We shall see in the conclusion of the Civil War that at the battle at Sailor's Creek, his division was destroyed.

Gibbon's Union Defense

We have discussed Pickett's right sector charge which consisted of Garnett's Brigade, Kemper's Brigade, and Armistead' Brigade. Also, there were two supporting brigades from Wilcox and Lang. Against this Rebel attack on the Union side of the stone wall on Cemetery Ridge was the Union men of Gibbon's division under Gen. Hancock, the corps commander with a little over half the number of the attacking Rebels. As mentioned before, Gibbon's regiments were positioned from the area of the "angle" to the left along the rock fence line as follows. Gen. Alexander Webb's brigade occupied the corner of the angle where Lee pointed for his attack. At the edge of the corner was room for the two last operating guns of Lt. Cushing. Somehow, Webb's luck was running low because Gibbon also assigned him the additional battle line running on the edge of a right angle to his rear some 80 yards to meet with Gen. Hays' defensive line. He really was shy of men for this feat. But Gen. Gibbon could not have picked a better commander than Gen. Webb for defending this important sector. Although he was 28 years old and assigned command of the brigade only six days before the battle, he had plenty of battle experiences, which proved effective in this battle. (E: 411)

In the rear area near the junction with Hays' line, Webb placed Col. De Witt C. Baxter's 72nd Pennsylvania (380 men), Col. Richard Smith's 71st Pennsylvania (260 men), and Lt. Col. William Curry's 106th Pennsylvania (280 men); these were a reserve along with maintaining a position to fire on the advancing Rebels from the rear and side of his defense area. (E: 437) They would cover the (angle) including the battle line with rifle fire; Arnold's 1st Rhode Island Battery A, a battery from Hays' side of the line, would deliver a lot of canister when it was needed. The only serious flaw in protecting this critical point in the Union battle line was human; Col. Smith was a flaky commander to be placed in this spot. The previous night, (second day) he was given the assignment to support Gen. Greene's fight over on Culp's Hill in the darkness. When the Rebels attacked the hill, he pickup his men, along with their guns and went back to his division, saying he did not want his men to be murdered. And today, we will see that he had not change his colors.

On the main rock fence line, adjacent to Cushing's Battery, Webb placed the toughest regiment in the Union Army, Col. Dennis O'Kane's 69th Pennsylvania (284 veteran soldiers). (E: 436, 437) They would hold the line at all cost with 10 small companies, (D: 498) making up the manpower deficiency on the end of the line shown in a withdrawal of parts of the 71st Pennsylvania during the Rebel attack. Next, in line along the stone fence was Col. Hall's Brigade (920 men) who were one best brigades in the army and battle harden, dependable men. They would successfully take on the brute force of some units from of both Gen. Kemper's Rebels and some from Gen. Garnett attack. The last of Gen. Gibbon's men on the firing line were in Gen. William Harrow's Brigade, also a professional brigade with war experience (1,370 men). (D: 498) Gen. Harrow's men saw the Rebel flanking movement of Gen. Kemper in the last part of this battle and counterattacked along with adjacent regiments from Gen. Stannard's Brigade that shattered and scattered Gen. Pickett's flank guard.

Now, we will relate a few scenes witnessed by the three Union brigades in Gen. Gibbon's Division. They held the stone wall, extending north from the angle "Z" in the wall alignment (near the clump of trees) to its northern end. One of the first scenes was the meeting of Pettigrew's command and Pickett's command at this angle to concentrate

Rebel troops and punch a hole through the Union line. At the end of their charge across the rough fields, with the air full of Union artillery shells exploding overhead and a sheet of rifle fire, they joined forces at the clump of trees They were right on time, showing that they were truly professional soldiers. In this small space they joined with Gen. Fry's brigade (some 1200 Rebels) from Pettigrew's left sector, and Gen. Garnett's Brigade (some 1,800 Rebels) from Gen. Pickett's right sector. This was the concentration of Rebels attacking Gen. Webb's battalion (some 1200 Yankees) in a relatively small space, which spread his men very thin.

By and large, Fry‘s men were mixed with Garnett’s in one big mass of soldiers pouring into the area marked out by the “Z”. The Union Gen. Webb looked hard at the approaching Rebel mass and instantly graduated to a master in tactics. He shouted at the 71st Penn. Regiment to join him at the front line near the corner where Lt. Cushing’s last two cannons were in danger of leaving a hole in the line. Most of Cushing's men were shot. He was on his last rounds of canister. And Cushing was dying of two wounds, one in the groin. As a man on the lanyard pulled for the last shot, the Rebels finally got even by shooting the courageous Lt. Cushing through the head.

At this point in time, Col. Richard Smith sent only about half of his 71st Penn. regiment to the rock fence line because he thought there was only room enough for that number. (D: 496) He had shown fear last night on Culp’s Hill when he prematurely withdrew his men as the battle was getting hot on that hill. This time his color was not different. As Garnet's rebels reached his front line and Archer's Rebels reached the outer angle, the 71st Penn. at the front moved back to their original position about 150 feet to the rear, (D: 499) leaving a big hole in the line where they had been. To stop the carnage at Cushing’s guns, (E: 447) (D: 496) some 50 men from the 71st Penn. replaced the wounded to help operate the cannons, and that was highly commendable. (D: 496)

While Col. Smith may have been cautious, the men of the 71st Penn. regiment were not. When the Rebels came over the wall in the critical last stage of this battle, the 71st Penn. showed contempt for fear as the regiment captured 4 Rebel regimental flags in the fight over that wall at their old location. At this time, all the shouting by Gen. Webb

to move the men of the 72 Penn. and reserve units to the critical zone in the rock fence was in vain. Perhaps, his short time in command plus lack of contacts precluded recognition of Webb as the one giving orders in all of the smoke. This could be a reason for bad faith. Still his men in the reserve area maintained control over the rock fence on the back leg of the 'Z" and were there to stay. Webb moved to his 69th Pennsylvania, which occupied the hottest spot on the battle line. After the battle, his men claimed that "Webb was everywhere." (N: 224) For his courageous conduct at Gettysburg and later battles, Gen. Meade promoted Gen. Webb to his Chief of Staff of the Army of the Potomac. Webb would serve effectively in this assignment to the last battle at Appomattox.

This killing ground was like hell. It was the spot that Lee had chosen as his target to break through the line. It is interesting to note a historic event that took place at this time in which Webb played a part. He wrote home after the battle that he was near a Rebel general as he joined the fighting of the 69th Penn., his letter read in part, " a rebel general (later he would learn was Gen. Armistead the famous Rebel brigade commander in the second wave) came over my fence and passed me with four of his men." (E: 451) This tells us how close the Generals on both sides were in the fighting. It also tells us death was evenly distributed among the privates and generals.

The first Rebel brigade to reach the wall in the first wave at the "angle" was Gen. Garnett's men (56^{th}-28^{th}-19^{th}-18^{th} Virginia (some 1,780 men spread out along the wall). As we have noted, when the Rebels hit the wall, the Union 71^{St} Penn. moved back to the rear in the reserve area, leaving a hole on the right side of Col. Dennis O'Kane's Union 69^{th} Penn line with about 280 men. He immediately ordered Companies L, A, F, to face at a right angle that refused their line to protect his right flank against the Rebels firing inside the wall. The problem with this movement was that the captain of 'F" company was killed and could not comply with the order to move. Thus, his company was completely destroyed by the Rebel advance. At that moment, Col. O'Kane ordered D company to wheel right and fill the void created by the F company disaster. (N: 223) Thus, Companies "L", "A", and "D" were able to hold the flank and, with the remaining

companies of the 69th, they held against the rebels and “the day was saved" on their part of the line.

Many saw through the fires of hell and lived, but many also died. Sadly, Col. O’Kane, the Union brigade commander from the famous 69th Penn., was mortally wounded in this exchange. Next in line for command was Lt. Col. Martin Tschudy, who was killed. Next in line was Major James Duffy; he was down, severely wounded. At the end, the commander of the regiment was a Captain William Davis, who sold hats on better days in Philadelphia before the war. (N: 224) About this time, Gen. Webb was directing his brigade in this chaos and was wounded, but remained in the battle. (N: 230) The toll of officers of the Union forces was as high, as it was for the Rebels. When the bullets were flying, officers and men found no place for cover, and good luck played a part as it does in every war.

An avalanche of Southern warriors made up of the 56th Virginia Regiment and others charged the Union 69th Regiment's defense at the stone wall near the "angle". Gen. Garnett was at the forefront as the 56th stormed the wall. Because he was sick, he rode his horse cloaked in an old army overcoat (on a hot day). Garnett ordered his brave men to stop and fire. What is not well known, is that Garnett had been court-martialed by the hard-nosed Stonewall Jackson for a lack of bravery in leading and caring for his men in the snow at a previous battle called Kernston. Today, he earned the rank as a brave and outstanding officer of the Confederacy. His Rebels rifle fire was returned by a massive volley from the Yankees. He was an obvious target at 20 yards from the wall. (E: 452) Gen. Garnett died instantly and fell from his horse into the many piles of the dead. (F: 239) Strangely, they have never discovered where he was buried; perhaps his beat-up, old army coat deceived the burial detail.

On Gen. Garnett's right was Gen. Kemper's Brigade (about 1,780 men) also hitting the famous Yankee rock wall, that was mostly defended by Union Gen. Hall's Third Brigade (about 920 men). It was close to the same time that Garnett at the angle was having trouble making any headway. Kemper's Brigade consisted of the following regiments: 1st, Va., 3rd Va., 7th Va., 11th Va., and the 24th Va. They were a little to the

right and behind Garnett's men in the attack formation. Close to the rear of Garnett's Brigade was Armistead's Brigade (about 2,180 men) to support both Gen. Garnett and Gen. Kemper. These three Rebel commanders were old friends who would all fall this dreadful day at the wall from a hail of rifle and double canister. We have given some description of the battle concerning Garnett's attack, but actually parts of the two other brigades, Garnett's and Kemper's, were mixed together at the fence line.

Gen. Kemper's men attacked the Union Gen. Hall's Brigade next to Union Gen. Webb's Brigade at the rock wall. As the Rebels approached the Yankees, a Captain Smith of the 11th Virginia (410 men) was very surprised to see some of the 59th New York men break and travel to the rear. Then he was very pleased to see that the remainder of the 59th broke and ran back through Captain Andrew Cowan's battery of 5 guns. This appeared to be the perfect opening for Captain Smith and his Rebels at this strange stage of the battle. Another break in the Union line occurred at the same time at the "Angle" as Gen. Armistead's Rebels moved through Cushing's destroyed guns. This second opening was made by the 11th Virginia (Kemper's Brigade) under command of Maj. Kirkwood Otey and it had the potential to turn the center of the main Yankee battle line which could clinch victory for the South. (D: 584) (E: 445) The Yankees of the 59th NY retreated partly because Captain Cowan intended to fire those 5 cannons over their heads at the oncoming Rebels. The men had been lying on the ground several yards in front of the cannons and they were probably afraid that friendly fire from the gunners might kill a few of their own men by the gunners' misjudgment.

It is likely that Major Kirkwood Otey, commander of the 11th Virginia, ordered his men to take the guns. He charged into this opening in the Union line with most of the 400 men of his regiment. Captain Cowan retained his "cool" (anxiety) and when the Rebels were close, he ordered his gunners to load "double canister" and to lower the guns elevation for effect. (E: 446) Another strange incident occurred at this moment. Gen. Hunt, Chief of Army Artillery, was deeply concerned about his artillery. As he was inspecting his batteries, he stopped at Cowan's Battery. He could see the Rebels pouring over the fence. He took out his pistol and started firing. It was just like the old time movies of the 1930's. The Rebels fired back and killed his horse, which fell and pinned

him under the saddle. (E: 445) At some point, Captain Cowan cried "fire" and all hell broke lose. Five guns, with 98 bullets of canister per gun cut a swath, or close to 250 feet wide through the field. It was like 480 muskets firing at one time. The dead and wounded, including Maj. Otey (wounded), covered the field. After a few firing exchanges, the Union gunners freed Gen. Hunt from his misfortune. Yankee infantry came back in to "clean up" what remained of the retiring Rebels, and closed the break in the line.

Gen. Hunt wrote something like this to his wife after the battle: he escaped by a miracle, when there appeared no escape to be possible. (E: 445) The miracle would also apply to closing the dangerous gap in the Union line. Unfortunately, we could find little information on Gen. Pendleton, the Rebel Chief of Artillery, personally surveying the results of his Rebel artillery firing from the front line where Union shells were bursting. This may show some differences between the Union and the Confederate chief of Artillery Commanders in directing their batteries.

Kemper's Brigade did not make further inroads in the area of the Union Gen. Hall's brigade, because the Rebel soldiers looked back for more support that never came. As Gen. Kemper rode up to direct his last units in their attack on the rock wall, he was struck by a bullet in the groin and fell from his horse. A few Yankees were placing him on a blanket when his soldiers notice the calamity and recovered Kemper for the Confederacy. (N: 231) This story would not be complete unless we recall that Gen. Stannard's Union Brigades attacked Kemper's men on the right flank, which added to the confusion and death in the Rebel ranks. Also, Gen. Stannard's defeat of the support brigades of Gen. Lang and Gen. Wilcox, who were coming from the right, denied the brave Gen. Kemper the fruits of victory. Thus, without this support, the remainder of Kemper's men withdrew to their staging area after massive losses.

Now, we will return to the second phase of Gen. Webb' s struggle along with other elements of the Union Army to hold on to the area of the "angle" assigned to him. The Rebels reached the stone wall and broke through a hole in the line where Lt. Cushing's cannoneers fell and the Union 71st Penn. regiment had fallen back in their

redeployment. Both had been supporting the battle line at the corner of the "Angle". At this time, Gen. Garnett's rebels were inside the "angle", but this brave general was already dead.

Directly behind Garnett's men was their support. It was the second wave of Rebels to reach and pour over the wall. It was Gen. Armistead's large brigade with some 2,190 men (prior to the attack). (D: 584) Gen. Lee's troops had suffered heavy losses, but they were still pushing forward. The effective Union artillery had taken a toll. By now little or no artillery was used by the Rebels to counter the Union guns because the Rebel command had performed poorly and had run out ammunition. Gen. Armistead was at the head of the second wave of his Rebels, and he was over the stone fence. He was running with his hat high on top of his sword shouting for his men to charge.

A strange event happened here. Up on the ridge, a distance away, Gen. Hancock (Armistead's old Union friend) was galloping toward his left flank with important orders for his troops there. The Union Col. Arthur Devereux, who commanded the 19th Massachusetts in reserve at the rear of Gen. Hall's Brigade ("next door" to Webb's Brigade), could see at a distance the massive break through of Gen. Armistead and his Rebels. Col. Devereux could also easily see Gen. Hancock's flag and stopped his friend, Hancock, to show him that Webb was in serious trouble, and asked if he should help Webb. The action on Hall's front was dormant after Capt. Cowan's battery earlier blew away the attacking Rebel force of Garnett's men. The famous words of Gen. Hancock to the colonel were "to get in God damned quick". (N: 229) (D: 499) Of course, Hancock stopped long enough to talk to Devereux's commander, Gen. Hall, for his concurrence. Gen. Hall sent, at quick time, both Col Devereux's 19th Massachusetts (160 men) and Col. James Mallon's 42nd NY (200 men) to help Gen. Webb. (N: 229) And this action clearly shows this splendid cooperation that was lacking with many of the Rebel commanders.

As we continue, it is interesting to relate a personalized ending of a long friendship between two important players, Gen. Hancock and Gen. Armistead, at this time in this battle. Before the war, Gen. Hancock and Gen. Armistead were very close

friends. They were stationed in California at an army outpost where life on the frontier was easy and happy. About 15 years earlier, they had both served in combat on the front lines together in the Mexican War. As the Civil War began, they held their last dinner together before Armistead left the Union Army to join the Confederacy; they embraced and a tear came to Armistead's eye. Today at Gettysburg, high on the ridge line, Col. Arthur Devereux pointed out to Hancock that many rebel units were coming over the wall at the corner of the "angle". Their commander was no other than Hancock's old friend, Armistead; of course, Hancock was too far away and the Rebel units were mixed, so he was not able to identify his friend.

It was ironic that, in this game of war, Armistead's orders were to break through the line even if it meant killing those soldiers and Hancock on the ridge. Hancock's unwritten orders were to stop this breakthrough at all costs, which also meant killing any grey shirted Rebel. It was, in the real world, that both would direct their men to kill in this "angle" of death. So they both met on this field of Gettysburg, and as we mentioned, with his hat high on his sword, Armistead and his 150 rebels (perhaps 200 men) rushed forward past the destroyed guns of Cushing's battery. At that point three bullets from the Union Pennsylvania riflemen struck Armistead in the chest and arm, critically wounding him, (G: 365) (D: 508) He would die in a Union hospital the next day. He whispered to Capt. Bingham of Hancock's staff and the Union medical attendant that he was a friend of General Hancock; he asked them to give his spurs, watch, seal, chain , and pocketbook to Gen. Hancock for a memoir. (D: 512) Ironically, within minutes of this incident, Gen. Hancock was directing a major counter attack on the southern flank of this same battle line and was struck by a bullet from a Rebel; inflicting a serious wound in the groin. Gen. Hancock would live and eventually lose the election for President of our country later in his life. Both friends were down together in this same battle of our terrible and unnecessary Civil War.

Now, we will return to the last stages in the life or death struggle that occurred in the "angle". Even after Gen. Armistead was down, more Rebels continued pouring through the gap in the line at the point of the "angle". Lt. Haskell, staff officer from Gen. Gibbon's Division, had just returned from a delivering a message to Gen. Meade and was

passing through the "angle" at time the Rebels had broken the line. He tried to contact his superior, Gen. Gibbon, but Gibbon was wounded. Seeing the situation, and knowing the Union brigades commanders, Haskell decided on his own to move more Union men into the "angle" immediately. His first contact was Col Norman Hall, a 26 year old man from West Point with proven battle competence. Col. Hall said he was already moving three brigades in that direction. His next contact was Gen. Harrow, who said he would immediately move up four of his regiments, which were the 9th Maine (440 men), 15th Massachusetts (240 men), 82nd New York (360 men), and the 1st Minnesota (sharpshooters) (330 men) to the breakthrough. Everyone in Harrow's Brigade wanted to "get at" the Rebels. Col. Francis Heath, commander of the 19th Maine painted a good word picture of this event. He wrote," It was impossible to get there in order. Everyone wanted to be first and the men of the various commands were all mixed up. We went up more like a mob than a disciplined force". (N: 229) The mob scene of mixed Union regiments was not military, but it was certainly effective, solid, and unbreakable. The word "determined" should describe the Yankees and their fight.

As we know, Col. Arthur Devereux's orders from Hancock were to march his 19th Massachusetts into the breech, …damn quick, and his men double timed to the spot in the "angle" by the famous oak grove that Lee had chosen as his target. Major Edmond Rice of the 19th Massachusetts told a tale about his trip through hell, that went something like this. As he approached the mass of Rebels, he thought he was their target. One shot took off his hat. The next one knocked his sword from his hand, and the third bullet was into the abdomen. He was down, but not out and lived, by the grace of God, to fight another day and become the winner of the Medal of Honor. (N: 231) Sergeant Michael Cuddy was advancing near Rice with his colors flying high for the next Union regiment in line, the 42nd New York from Hall's Brigade, when he was shot dead. Behind Devereux's men, came Gen. Harrow's Brigade into the fight. As described by a soldier of the 1st Minnesota, in this fight, it was every one for himself. Another lieutenant from this regiment believed they fought like wild beasts. (N: 230) A lieutenant from the 56th Virginia, Garnett's Rebel Brigade, who was in the "angle" wrote that at times the bullets seem to come from both sides and the front. The Rebels looked to the rear for reinforcements that never came! (N: 230)

The action that takes place in battle that we just described is normally told in minutes. Some brave, devoted 150 Rebels or more, probably 300 (F: 236) (no one knows the real count) had broken through the wall and moved into the area of the "angle", which took 10 to 15 minutes, and within this time frame the Union had to react fast. If the Union command had not acted promptly, they could easily have lost this battle. To send an order to a commander next door, who would withdraw his unit from his battle line, and move it to this critical point where the line was broken would likely take more than 20 minutes. (M: 11) To bring other supporting units into the battle would take a like amount of time or more. It was very important that the Union soldiers who were fighting in the "angle" had to stop the Rebels until the Union supporting units arrived. And all these Union troops had to move very fast at the hasty shouted commands of their officers, which gave the Union their victory.

The difference between good commanders and outstanding commanders is the latter anticipates and sees trouble before it develops, then acts on his own with his men to prevent disaster. Thus, in this case, there were outstanding Union commanders, like Col. Arthur Devereux, commander of the 19th Massachusetts, who moved quickly to the fighting with 160 men. (N: 229) There were also Col. Norman Hall, the 2nd Brigade Commander, and Gen. Harrow of 1st Brigade, who sent in supporting units without orders from the command. And there was Lt. Frank Haskell of Gen. Gibbon's staff, who acted on the wounded Gibbon's behalf to draw in the units that plugged a critical hole in the line. Gen. Gibbon was led from the field with a wound through the right shoulder blade. (D: 509) Haskell was also injured by a spent bullet, but rallied the troops. (N: 228, 230) Many of the courageous die in battle, and one of these would be Frank Haskell. Following this battle, Haskell's career lead to a promotion as regimental commander of the 36th Wisconsin (Colonel); he was killed a year later in line of duty at Cold Harbor in 1864. (D: 559)

Some Rebel commanders seemed reluctant to act in support of other Rebel commanders who got into in trouble. Case in point was in Day Two, when Gen. Mahone's Brigade did not support Gen. Wright's Brigade in his breakthrough on this same Cemetery Ridge causing Rebels to withdrawal.

We can easily judge the intensity of the killing, if we look at the data showing the regimental Confederate flags captured in this battle. Honor dictates that the regimental flags of that period were carried into battle at the head of the attack; if the flag bearer is shot, and the flag is down, it is the duty of the next soldier to pick it up and charge onward. Men around the bearer are often killed at the same time. This duty calls for extreme courage. The following shows the flags captured by the Union commands involved in the action at the "Angle", and the Rebel regiments with their Rebel Brigade. The following are partial lists of the flags that were captured by the Union regiments. (N: 231) List one: Union 71st Penn, commander, Col. Richard Smith (Gen. Alexander Webb Brigade): Confederate 3rd Virginia (Gen. Kemper Brigade), 56th Virginia (Gen. Garnett), 9th Virginia (Gen. Armistead), and 53rd Virginia (Gen. Armistead). List two: Union 19th Massachusetts, Col. Arthur Devereux (Col. Norman Hall Brigade): Confederate 57th Virginia (Gen. Armistead), 19th Virginia (Gen. Garnett), and 14th Virginia (Gen. Armistead). List three: Union 82nd New York, Lt. Col. James Huston (Gen. William Harrow Brigade): 1st Virginia (Gen. Kemper), 7th Virginia (Gen. Kemper). List Four: Union, 59th New York, Lt. Col. Max Thoman (Col. William Hall Brigade): 18th Virginia (Gen. Garnett), 28th Virginia (Gen. Garnett). (N: 231) Shelby Foote in his book, *The Civil War Narrative*, says that of the 38 flags that reached musket range, no less than 30 were lost or captured. (F: 245) In summary, this tells the story that many brave Rebels with their flags were fighting desperately.

The important item that most history books do not cover is that this critical hand to hand fighting was done in the area of the "angle" in the inward section of the "Z" along the fence line; this is the place where such Union supporting reserve regiments like the 71st Pennsylvania, 19th Massachusetts, 28th New York captured many flags of Rebels flags, who broke through the wall. You can see from the previous list of the lost flags that there were men over the wall from the Garnett, Kemper, and Armistead Brigades. All that was needed to win the battle was to order heavy Rebel support brigades to follow Pettigrew and Pickett in a timely manner. But they did not come. In an interview after the war with William Allen, Gen. Lee would later admit that "... there was nothing foolish in Pickett's attack had it been executed as designed: had the supports been employed…" (D: 481) This was a serious mistake in planning and executing the attack.

While looking at the carnage in the area of the "angle", we should try to describe the chaos in the closing moments of this historical attack. As the Yankee reserve units arrived in their disorderly military rage in the upper pocket of the "Angle", someone cried "charge". Although no one heard the general make it an order, the Yankee units pushed forward down the ridge in one large mass into the attacking Rebel Army. (N: 230)

The men in gray in the "angle" quickly retreated to the rear, except for a few pockets of Rebels that were easily overcome. Perhaps a Southern private from the 14th Virginia described the retreat best when he wrote somewhere that, … "going back was as bad as it was coming forward. They continued to shoot at us." (N: 231) Lt. Col. Powhatan Whittle, 38th Virginia of Armistead 's brigade, observed that in the muster the July 4th, only 73 of 350 men answered the call. (N: 291) In front of Gen. Hays' Division, Lt. Crandell, 125th NY, said his count was 156 slain confederates in two acres (N: 248)

Gen. Hays' shouted to his men to stop firing when it was obvious the Rebels were retreating in disorder; Gen. Hays was not bloodthirsty. (D: 511) For the moment, he had enough of war. Another part of this picture was given by Capt John Smith, 11th Virginia, who had experienced the canister from Capt. Cowan's NY Light Artillery in the Rebel charge on Col. Hill's Union Brigade. He was bandaging his leg wound when Yankees came in his direction. He decided to make a run for a safe place. He wrote about his experience "…no organized body of troops did I meet in going back". (E: 456) Simply said, there were no formal orders given to these brave men to retreat in units. It was a scramble by small groups helping their wounded and each other back to the Rebel staging area on Seminary Ridge.

The dominant question of the Rebels, who had fought their way to the inward area of the "angle" and the battle line along the stone wall, was "why don't they support us?" (D: 510) Let us look at the role that supporting units could have played if they moved up behind the main brigades. Because so many orders were verbal, this information is difficult to obtain and sort out. It is general knowledge that Gen. Lee entrusted Gen. Longstreet with the responsibility of adding supporting brigades "for continuing the

action if he believed it might succeed". (D: 510) There is a real question whether Longstreet's was in the right frame of mind for this attack to succeed. (D: 442)

At a time early in the attack, Gen. Alexander informed Gen. Longstreet that there was problem with his artillery supporting the attack because of a lack of ammunition. Longstreet replied that, "I don't want to make this attack… I believe it will fail … (and then he added) …I would not make it even now, but Gen. Lee has ordered it and expects it." (E: 408) Gen. Lee named Gen. Longstreet his " Old War Horse" because he had more successful experience in handling large units in battle than his other two new Corps Commanders. Thus, Longstreet was the overall field commander of this attack.

Apparently, with no written orders, Gen. Lee designated support brigades from Gen. Anderson's Division of Hill's Corps to support Gen. Longstreet's deployment in the main attack. They are listed as follows: Wilcox's Brigade (1,770 men), Lang's Brigade (740 men), Wright's Brigade (1,410 men), Posey's Brigade (1,320 men), Mahone's Brigade (1,540 men). (D: 510, 590) Somehow, Gen. Robert Rodes's Division made up of Ramseur's Brigade (1,030 men), Iverson's Brigade (1,380 men), and Doles's Brigade (1,320 men) of Gen. Ewell's Corps were also alerted to support left wing forces in the attack if needed; they received a notice that this deployment was canceled after the attack had failed. (D: 481) (D: 510) The sum of manpower in these support units is a figure of only about 10,500 men that were available to Gen. Longstreet for the attack. (D: 510) For this battle, Longstreet committed Wilcox's Brigade and Lang's brigade to the attack on the right wing. (D: 481) Removing Wilcox's Brigade and Lang's Brigade from the available count left about 8,000 men ready for use that Longstreet could employ as supports.

Some qualifications to this support figure are made as follows. The right flank of Pickett's charge was threatened by a Union attack, and Pickett, with Longstreet's approval, ordered Wilcox's Brigade and Lang's Brigade to participate in aiding Gen. Pickett's attack. Both were badly mauled by the musketry of nine-month wonders of Gen. George Stannard's Brigade and the additional fire from 41 hidden cannons of Col. McGilvery's artillery. Longstreet called up Wright's Brigade and Posey's Brigade to also

support Pickett's attack, but he cancelled their movement as he saw that the battle was going badly. (D: 510) Gen. Anderson was alerted to hold his division in as support with five brigades, should it be needed. (D: 481) It appears likely that these 8,000 more men (less some losses in the charge) would have made a significant difference in completing the Confederates' attempt break the Yankee line at the "angle". As we previously mentioned that not drawing on this large troop support that was under control of orders from Longstreet along with the serious errors in planning and controlling the role of support troops contributed the Rebel retreat. Perhaps Longstreet thought that the Rebel Army would need these support units in case there was a failure and a Union counter attack would occur. It was a judgment call by Longstreet that turned sour.

The Confederacy should have resented Gen. William Mahone's record in this battle as it appeared suspect. On the second day of this battle, he refused to come to the aid of Gen. Wright's Brigade that was at a point of breaking through the Yankee line on this ridge and under heavy attack by the Yankees. His brigade had fewer casualties than any brigade in Lee's Army in this battle. When told his brigade on the 3 rd day was in the support units, he protested to Gen. Anderson, the Division Commander. Gen. Anderson's answer was correct; he would not confront Gen. Lee, and said, "We have nothing to do, but obey the order". (D: 458) Mahone was one officer that showed his true colors and would likely not fight hard at this time for his new country. Gen. Mahone had a spotted career with some successes and some failures, which ended at Appomattox. His action shows that some generals did not fully support the Confederacy to provide a high motivation for their victory.

In the troublesome, closing moments of "Pickett's charge", the Rebels returned to their staging area in bunches, bitter about the loss of good friends and fellow Confederates, but not beaten. As the Rebels gathered on Seminary Ridge, Gen. Lee personally and sadly greeted them. His words were similar to " I am responsible for your disappointment. All good men must rally." To Col. Fremantle, the observing officer from England, Lee said something like, this has been a sad day, but we can not always expect to gain victories. (D: 520) The end of this affair was not in sight as both Lee and Longstreet expected Meade to counterattack at anytime; at least that is what both of these

generals would do in this case. Lee immediately sent out orders to reorganize the regiments for this expected counter attack. But it did not happen this way.

Meade knew already he had a great victory in hand and did not want to risk losing it. To counterattack Meade would have to charge up Seminary Ridge (a similar condition to what Lee just witnessed), and at the moment, he did not want to lose any more soldiers than he already had. Many Rebel guns still had deadly canister, but little long-range ammunition. It is important to realize that Meade recognized that his most aggressive generals were either dead, wounded, or injured, like Reynolds, Hancock, Gibbon, Webb, and Hunt. It would be difficult to change from his defensive posture to mount a major offensive operation only a few minutes after victory.

So Meade decided to wait until tomorrow, the 4th of July. But the next day turned out to be very rainy, and the troops could not attack because they could neither move nor shoot easily in the rain. Thus, the rainy day was dedicated to care for the wounded and burying of the dead in the thousands. There was no room in the army medical centers, and many soldiers on both sides were cared for in the warm and comfort of Gettysburg homes. To made matters worse there was no room in the local cemetery! The data (approximately) on this costly battle of Gettysburg are given: (C: 284)

	Yankees	Rebels
Killed:	3, 070	2,590
Wounded:	14,500	12,710
Missing:	5,430	5,000 to 12,230 (estimated)

THE CONFEDERATE RETREAT

To conclude our story of the battle of Gettysburg, we should tell of the successful Rebel retreat, and the ending of the Confederate "golden rod" (slavery), the issue that drove the divided country to war. A significant part of this tale occurred a few days before the Rebels crossed the Potomac River while retreating to their home base near Fredericksburg. As you recall, the defeat of Pickett's charge on the evening of July 3rd ended the killing at Gettysburg. Gen. Lee then guided the main elements of his army out of harms way along two routes to safely cross the Potomac River at Falling Waters. On

July 4th, the Union cavalry rode from Harper's Ferry in the rear of Gen. Lee's army, and destroyed the only bridge available to cross the river in that area. (E: 481) It was a critical point as Lee's army had its back against a river, which was 13 feet deep and at flood stage. (E: 485)

The only solution to prevent a disaster at the hands of the Union Army was to prevent the Union forces from taking the bridgehead and to construct a pontoon bridge with lumber removed from nearby houses and barns. By 7th May, Lee had his advanced parties on the site, building the pontoon bridge and about 6 miles of fortifications (dirt, logs, and rocks) with strong points for artillery along Salisbury ridge that would protect his army when they arrived. (E: 485) The construction of the bridge was a major feat. The structure had 7 original salvaged pontoons and 15 new pontoons; it was built with deck planking from pieces of barns and other farm buildings in an amazingly 16 hours. The bridge had a span of 800 feet. (E: 486) This was outstanding work on the part of a determined army, and it saved the Rebels in their retreat. Major Harman, with his dedication and profanity, saved "the day" by organizing and completing the almost impossible task. (E: 486) By this time, Lee's army was finally working well together; there was no other choice.

Now that we have examined the status of Lee's army in retreat, it is necessary to describe the Rebel army organization in this effort. Lee realized that his large army, still mustering some 47,000 men (like a small city) remaining after this battle, could not move quickly. So he authorized two sections or commands of the army with wagon trains to go by their separate routes to the same point for crossing the Potomac River. Gen. Imboden commanded the first section. He had his own Northwestern Brigade of 2,100 mounted troopers and five batteries. The wagon train carried some 8,500 wounded men. Another 4,500 seriously wounded Rebels remained in the Yankees' care. (E: 471) Gen. Imboden's section would move through Cashtown gap on to Greencastle, and then to the river crossing at Falling Waters. The distance was about 45 miles. It was estimated this wagon train was 17 miles long. (E: 471) You can see how difficult it would be to guard every mile of this wagon train from Yankee cavalry on its fast horses. There were a few

skirmishes, but Imboden delivered the train to the pontoon bridge without major problems.

As we close the chapter on Gen. Imboden's excellent performance with the first section of the Southern Army in its long retreat to their river crossing, we now open the important chapter of the second section of the main Southern Army in its retreat. This section was under the command of Gen. Lee. At this stage an important change happened in Gen. Lee's thinking. He knew that he was in great danger getting back to his home base with the Union Army on his flanks, picking fights at their convenience. Thus, he cut back his verbal instructions to his command trusting instead to written directions. This eliminated misunderstandings such as that in Pickett's charge (when his supporting units did not enter the fight as they were needed).

On the evening after failure of Pickett's charge, Lee studied his maps with Gen. Hill, to find the quickest way to the Potomac River crossing, which would be the roadway south through Fairfield. From there, the route was nearly straight line on to Hagerstown, and then on to Williamsport where fortifications along the river would protect his army while crossing the river. Lee then issued a general order stating who was responsible for the respective objectives of the mission, routes, and schedule. This action showed Lee's splendid ability to wage war and win. These specific orders safely moved his main army quickly to the Potomac River. (E: 470) Following Lee's orders, the Rebels started their retreat by the Fairfield route on the next day (July 4th)) after the battle. The column filled with spoils that Lee's army was bringing to treat the folks back home a special wagon train containing spoils that Lee's army had intended as a treat for the folks back home. It held a relationship to theme of the South's interest in "gold" as discussed in the first part on this story, which we will soon tell.

As the wagon trains were moving out, Lee had carefully planned for an attack by the Yankees, which he anticipated would come immediately. However, Gen. Meade had different plans--he would not waste his men on the entrenchments that Lee had erected on Seminary Ridge. Meade felt Lee would have to move soon due to lack of supplies and ammunition, and he had reports that this was the case. On the night of the 4th, the Rebel

artillery left their fortifications on the ridge signaling that Lee's army had moved south. Gen. Meade sent an army Corps under the command of Gen. Warren and Gen. Sedgwick to scout the Rebel army's withdrawal. They found that the Fairfield Gap in the mountains was heavily guarded as were other mountain passes. With Gen. Lee's army on the march, the boots of the infantry, hoofs of the cavalry horses, and the wagon wheels of the artillery ruined the muddy roads. Gen. Meade selected another route south that was longer than Lee's route to the Potomac River, but in the end would provide a better chance for another battle on even terms.

Gen. Meade was no fool and he would profit by all the books he had read. He did not wish to get into battle by following Lee's Army through the fortified mountain passes. Instead, he would find a better place to attack Lee, which he would mention in a letter to his wife. His plans were to travel south to Frederick, Maryland (35 miles), which was close by Lee's route. By traveling on this road, Meade kept his army between Lee and his ultimate prize, Washington, D.C.

Then, Meade would circle to the west to Boonsboro near the river crossing where Lee was building his fortifications. He would be moving fast on the pike with good compacted roads. Meade left Gettysburg early on the July 7th and traveled 33 miles to Frederick on the same day. (E: 484) He was moving fast. At Frederick Station he picked up much needed supplies like food, ammunition, and shoes for the upcoming battle. Meade wanted to overtake Lee before the Grey Fox arrived at the Potomac River. But Gen. Lee was crafty, and anticipating Meade's moves, he too traveled very fast. In the evening of July 7th, Lee arrived in the vicinity of his Potomac fortifications. (E: 484) Meade would travel nearly twice the distance of Lee's route, but he did move faster than the army manual dictated. One of his corps marched 30 miles in one day, which was excellent and the other Union Corps traveled almost as fast. On July 9th, most of Gen. Meade's army had marched about 15 miles on good roads from Frederick westward through Middleton and into the Cumberland Valley, camping near Rohrersville and Boonsboro. This brought up the Union army in front of Lee's fortifications. They were ready for battle with Gen. Lee's Army. (V: 556)

Now, we will return to the past and tell of a very interesting sideshow of this Rebel retreat. The second section of the Rebel army train, which was marching toward the bridge over the Potomac River consisted of infantry, artillery, cavalry, supply wagons and a special unit of the train carrying important plunder of Gen. Lee's campaign. Responsibility for security of this unit with plunder was assigned to Gen. Ewell. This army stretched along the roadway for miles. Unfortunately, the weather for the days following the battle was heavy rain, and it lasted for week. Rather than travel behind Lee's army, Meade, as we know, chose to travel to battle on a different route. He also sent also his cavalry to attack the flanks of the Confederate Army. This would disrupt Rebel army operations and slow down the movement of their train.

Gen. Meade sent orders to Gen. Alfred Pleasonton, Union Army Cavalry Commander, to pursue the flank of Gen. Lee's retreating army on July 4th. Pleasonton assigned Gen. Kilpatrick's Third Cavalry Division (3,900 troopers) along with Gen. Custer to "raise a bit of Hell" with the long Rebel train that had left Gettysburg on the night of July 4th. The wild, unpredictable Judson Kilpatrick and tough George Custer were the right combination for the task. Kilpatrick's troopers rode 8 miles to Emmitsburg in 2 hours travel time, and then turned west for another 2 hours to the vicinity of Monterey Pass. By the time Kilpatrick arrived in the pass, it was a dark and rainy night just after midnight on the July 4th. A Rebel company of the 1st Maryland Confederate Cavalry guarded the pass. Kilpatrick was prevented from moving forward, until he called on Gen. Custer's Brigade to charge the Rebel line. Then Custer broke the line and the fight moved on to the wagon train. (V: 548) Gen. Kilpatrick's troops were armed with the Spencer 7 shot repeating rifles, which work well in the rain. The Rebel troops had the old muzzle load rifle, which did not function properly in the rain. It is easy to see who held the advantage.

The wagon train contained the plunder taken during the invasion of Pennsylvania. Part of this plunder included Negroes, once free men in the Northern States. Some of the Negroes were possibility taken when the Rebel Gen. Jenkins' cavalry raided local communities on his way to Gettysburg. (V: 161, 642) The slaves were property in the South as discussed earlier in this story as the Golden Rod of slavery (gold) and it was still

practiced by the Southern Army at this time. Captured Negroes who were from the Northern States had a significant value at the southern slave auctions and on Southern farms. The Rebel generals knew of this blameworthy act as Longstreet told Pickett at Chambersburg to "bring along the captured contrabands" (slaves) (V: 161). The items in this plunder are important as it clearly describes values of the southern fighter. Adding more details to describe the plunder, Edwin Coddington in his book, *The Gettysburg Campaign*, lists the results of this action as the destruction or seizure of all Ewell's wagon train and the capture of 1,500 prisoners, in addition to a large number of horses, mules, and Negroes. (V: 548) Stephen Sears, in his book, *Gettysburg*, stated that Kilpatrick's Brigade captured 1,360 prisoners and 38 wagons. (E: 481) Regardless of the variation in the count of the booty lost in this engagement, the loss was significant. Glenn Tucker wrote in his book that other losses to the Rebel retreat were 12,000 head of cattle and 8,000 head of sheep. (G: 394) A final witness to this plunder was Col. Fremantle, an observer from the English Army, who noted long lines of Confederate wagons and herds of confiscated animals on the move along the Fairfield road. (D: 540)

We have no way of identifying the Negroes in Ewell's wagon train, who were freed by Gen. Kilpatrick. However, S. W. Sears tells in his book, *Gettysburg*, that Professor Schaff recorded in his diary that horses, cows, sheep and goods were stolen daily, and that without mercy. Negroes were taken. Some were born and raised on free soil and were taken back into slavery. (E: 111) Obviously, The Federal Constitution did not apply anymore to the South. Sears continued that slave-catching with the Rebels was without question widely and officially tolerated. There were exceptions by the grace of God. Col. Christian, 55th Virginia, said the Rebels "took a lot of Negroes yesterday, and I was offered my choice". His humanity took over his senses, and he released them. (E: 111) Now, after citing this activity of plundering Pennsylvania for the "gold", we can say what goes around comes around in war. The plundering of the estates in the South by Gen. Sherman was widely accepted by farmers in Pennsylvania. The South's demand for "gold (Negro) booty", as we defined it, was a root cause in losing this battle. It inspired the Northern fighters to win the battle.

We have now discussed the travel of both the Rebel and the Union Armies from Gettysburg to the pontoon bridge location on the Potomac River. The bridge had been ingeniously built by Lee's engineers to replace the bridge previously destroyed by Federal troopers sent from Harper's Ferry. At that time, the only other way to transport ammunition and the wounded to and from Lee over the river was by a flat boat tied to a cable. This would make a passage of one way in 7 minutes. (V: 566)

The first Yankees arrived on evening of July 10th. By the morning of July 12th, Gen. Lee had completed his fortifications and was ready for the Yankee attack. The Washington people wanted a battle soon. The reconnaissance by Yankee scouts showed Lee's fortifications to be very strong. Gen. Meade had lost a quarter of his army in battle up to this moment, and he was a little edgy. Gen. Meade clearly saw the difficulty of taking the Rebel fortifications and called a meeting of his senior commanders on the evening of the 12th. The commanders were asked to express their views for the attack on the Rebels in the morning. Five wanted more information on the fortifications, and they voted no, but two wanted to attack. You cannot win a war by committee consent; you win it by the senior commander's analysis and decision from his facts and plans.

In the diary entry of July 11, Lt. Col. Wainwright of the Union Army expressed one view that the Yankees held at that time. It was something like if the Union Army could capture the Rebel army, and end the rebellion, he would agree with this battle. However, if the Yankees were beaten, then it would only give the glory to those in the rebel homes and to governments abroad. Lt. Col. Wainwright would not attempt the fight unless the chances to win were 4 out of 5 and those were big odds. (E: 487) However, in this part of the game of war, it turns out attacking the next day would be the last chance for battle.

When Meade told the General in Chief, Halleck, of his own commander's vote with a negative decision to attack now, Halleck telegraphed back to follow his own judgment and require the other generals to follow orders. Accordingly, Gen. Meade ordered an attack on July 14th with "recon patrols" first in line of attack. Why the attack was scheduled for the 14th in place the 13th remains a mystery. Another part of the

mystery is why Meade did not employ his artillery against the bridgehead on the 13th. He could have used all his resources of his intelligence unit to find the status of the bridge under construction in order to time his attack properly, but there is no information on this effort. We know that Union balloon units were used to tell Gen. Hooker that the Rebels were traveling north toward some encounter in Pennsylvania, but sadly there is no mention of these same units in the Union Army to tell Gen. Meade the status of the pontoon bridge. Coddington points out in his book, that in the last part of the Gettysburg Campaign the roles of this battle had changed. Gen. Meade was asked to assume the offensive with an army weakened by casualties, while Lee's Army was well entrenched behind heavy Rebel fortifications. (V: 569)

In the night of the 13th ~ 14th at 11 PM, all of Lee's Army began their march to Virginia over the new pontoon bridge, which had just been completed. Arranging for the Rebel movement out of the fortifications, a few miles from the bridge, and for the march in the rain and over muddy roads at black of night to the floating bridge, was a real challenge. The components of the main force were Longstreet's Corps and Hill's Corps. Gen. Ewell's component waded the river, which had receded at Williamsport. Ewell's artillery along with the remaining cannons and supplies of the army crossed over the bridge. (V: 570) And this brings up an interesting observation. What did Ewell do with the special train that was carrying the booty to their homecoming? It would not be able to easily move over the river. The cattle could not be herded over the long pontoon bridge at midnight without rails on the sides of the bridge. And the cattle would not easily swim the wide river. We know Gen. Ewell lost a good part of the booty in the attack on his wagon train by Gen. Kilpatrick. So the lost booty containing the captured Negroes will remain a Rebel mystery.

The end of the battle came as the Pender Division, now commanded by Gen. Heth, was assigned the rear guard function. Gen. Pettigrew was placed in charge of this rearguard, even though he had a bad hand wound from the fighting on the 3rd. In the early morning of 14th July, the tricky Gen. Kilpatrick was notified in Hagerstown that the Rebels had withdrawn to the bridge, so he sent his cavalry after them. A fight ensued when they overtook the rear guard, and Gen. Pettigrew was seriously wounded again.

Still the Union cavalry was defeated, and the brave, capable Gen. Pettigrew was taken over the bridge to Virginia where he died 3 days later. Then Union infantry continued the attack at this time. In the end, Gen. Meade reported that some 2000 Rebels were captured by Union cavalry units, but this figure has been disputed. (V: 571) At that point in time, the famous pontoon bridge that saved Lee's army from disaster was cut from its anchor and the bridge was destroyed. Thus, Gen. Meade's army could not follow Lee's troops in their retreat back to Virginia. Building the bridge (by Major Harman) and moving the Rebel Army (about 47,000 men) over the Potomac in the black of night before the full Yankee Army could attack in the morning were among the Confederates' finest efforts of the campaign.

Yes, there was great disappointment in Lincoln's sharp mind over Meade's inability to strike a decisive blow that might have ended the long war. Gen. Halleck made Lincoln's views known in a telegram to Gen. Meade. As a practical matter, this attack was a commander's judgment-call in the field. It was made after Meade surveyed with his generals the solid fortifications, and he wanted to make sure the attack would succeed at the weakest point. When Meade finally ordered the attack, it was 24 hours too late to be a success. Lincoln, as well as others who were not on the ground to judge this military decision were kept guessing what the able Lee would do at this time with his successful record in battle strategy. Much later in this game of war, it would take our famous general, General Ulysses S. Grant, nearly 9 months to break through the fortifications that Lee occupied on the perimeter around Richmond. The tactical challenge made Meade cautious in attacking Lee's solid defenses along his line of retreat over the Potomac River.

Upon receiving Halleck's telegram with Lincoln's adverse comments on the battle, Gen. Meade, being a man of honor, immediately replied asking to be relieved of his command of the U. S. Army (E: 494). It was immediately rejected. Who else could defeat Lee? Meade had just accomplished a great victory in the three days at Gettysburg. This entire event was a deep disappointment for Gen. Meade to live with, although Lincoln would eventually award him with a permanent promotion to Major General as a consolation prize. This disappointment would stay with him through every major battle

that he later fought as Commander of the Potomac Army of the Potomac under Gen. Grant, Commander of United States Armies. This uneasy feeling would remain with Meade from Gettysburg through the Wilderness, Cold Harbor, Five Forks, Petersburg, Sailor Creek, and finally Appomattox. But we shall see that in our last battles at Sailor's Creek and Appomattox, General Meade "got even". He personally gave the correct orders to his army units in the important battle at Sailor's Creek that significantly produced large losses for Gen. Lee's army in the final blow that ended this war.

But even with a successful retreat, the Confederates clearly lost this battle of Gettysburg due to the new collective, competent leadership of the Union Army. General Meade was given command of the Union Army just 3 days before the battle, and there was no battle plan. A historian of this war was once asked who showed the best generalship in this battle, and his reply was simple: Meade, because he defeated Lee, preventing him from conquering Washington.

On July 14th, the long train of Gen. Lee's men, cannons, supply wagons, and cavalry guard moved south from the point of crossing on the Potomac River and on to safety. However, they would soon be heading down along a road toward more failures that would eventually end at Richmond and the famous Appomattox Court House. Details of the closing battles of the war at Sailor's Creek and Appomattox, the final contest between Gen. Lee and Gen. Meade is included in the our last chapter.

THE EVERLASTING GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

The full impact of this great battle would not be known until well after the Union victory at Gettysburg, which sent Lee's army into full retreat. It was four months later on Nov 19, 1864 when Abraham Lincoln gave his speech on this great victory. It has found a special place in our schoolbooks for the education of each generation. Our president, speaking from a wooden platform in the Gettysburg Cemetery, which was part of the killing field of this war, gave the real meaning to this battle and the Civil War. Before he came to this event his son, Tad, lay seriously ill in the White House, and Mrs. Lincoln did not want him to go to Gettysburg, but the compelling purpose of the occasion demanded his presence. He uttered no condemnation of the South. Instead the theme of his speech

reached back to the principles of the Founding Fathers and forward into the future of our country's direction. It came forth in Abe's words on pointing to the price of preserving the nation's freedom and its principles on that chilly day. Over 33,000 (some say it was 40,300) Yankees and Rebels had lain dead and wounded, covering this killing field. We had lost so many of our youth who could have helped in building a better nation instead of being wasted to a stupid, senseless war.

President Abraham Lincoln took out his notes and began: "Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who gave their lives that that their nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

"But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate … we cannot consecrate…we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far beyond our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work, which they who fought here have so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us…that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion…that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain…that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom…and that the government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from this earth." (Z: 9-586)

And there is something you should know that was mentioned by Benjamin Thomas as he wrote for posterity in his book, *Abraham Lincoln*. The very important words "under God" came to Lincoln as he gave the speech; the first and second preparatory drafts do not show these words. (W: 402) They were divine! It would give a splendid formality to place this thesis before our people at every presidential inaugural address. Abraham Lincoln has given in his address of this war the basic principals from the Constitution to guide toward a better government for all of the people.

THE GRAND FINALE

The South's Slavery Problem

With the killing in this war, we should examine the degradation of slavery issue in the South, and the loss of this Confederate gold in their economy. You may recall that of the nine million people in the Southern states, about four million were slaves. (A: 57) An entire generation of Southern white men was being eliminated. When Southern Army men were killed and wounded in an attack, the ratio of the blacks to the whites increased. As the war dragged on, the loss of white Confederates soldiers became serious and the South was in need of more fighting men. Slaves were not permitted in the Confederate Army until the very last days, as we shall tell.

A few Generals in the Confederate army recognized the serious manpower problem. Brigadier General Cleburne (an Irishman with the high rank of division commander) said his piece on the subject, reading from his paper in the fall of 1864 at a Rebel military conference in Dalton, Georgia. It was a planning meeting for all Joe Johnston's Army Rebel commanders on the eve of an expected attack by Sherman's Union Army. Gen. Cleburne touched on the critical manpower status of the army and proposed to permit entry of slaves into the Confederate Army and grant them freedom in return for their services. This had the approval of two brigadier generals as well as other officers in the command. This bordered on treason. President Davis became "unglued to no end". He wrote through Secretary of War Seddon that this mischief touched upon discouragement, distraction, and dissension (U: 309), and in essence it will not be tolerated. The three "D's" pointed to national destruction. Davis' letter did not matter.

Gen. Cleburne was killed the next fall in the Battle of Franklin. Gen. Hood, a wild character, charged the Union fortification at Franklin with more numbers than the Rebels had at Gettysburg, wasting many precious men, including Gen. Cleburne. The earlier statement made by Davis ended all discussions on the matter of slavery and the Rebel Army, which included those contained in Cleburne's paper. However, the need for more Rebel soldiers in the army would not go away. It was apparent in the last battle of

Sailor's Creek when black soldiers were used to defend the Confederacy, as we will relate at the end of this story.

Bruce Catton, author of *This Hallowed Ground* (hardback copy), expressed the slavery problem in the South at that time quite clearly: the white and black people of the South could not live in a community as equals. There could be no black mayor. Catton recognized that there was a mindset that compelled Southern whites, "…to act on the assumption that one race was superior and the other was inferior. Slavery was the only barrier imaginable. If it were removed, society would be up against something monstrous and horrifying." (U: 309)

Resolution of the issue of slavery was the major issue in the election of 1864. Lincoln ran for President and won the election (1864) on a platform built on unification of the Union and the abolition of slavery. Soon the Thirteenth Amendment was added to the Constitution, which freed the slaves. This recognized equality for all people, black and white. Can anyone imagine this? It just squeaked through the Congress by only a few votes, like three, but it became the law of the land on January 31, 1865, which included the states in the south, even though they were acting like a separate country. (R: 236) With the Northern Army closing in on Richmond that spring, the Southern people were compelled the rethink the slavery issue.

Let us go back in time to the end of 1862 when Lincoln freed southern slaves issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. The action still needed Congressional approval to make it permanent. This presidential order freed the slaves in those states in rebellion. The very strange part of this period in the enactment of the acts to free the slaves was the unwitting role that was played by Gen. Lee. As you may recall, Diane Cole mentioned that, based on her studies of Gen, Lee's letters that his wife inherited 196 slaves from her father in 1857, which were to be freed in five years. Gen. Lee regarded his slaves as property, which was needed to run his farms; it was the code of his society at that time. But his court petition to keep the slaves was rejected. Thus, with some strange irony, he happened to set his slaves free on Jan. 1, 1863 - at the same time that Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation became law. (R: 37) (A: 137) With his slaves freed, Gen.

Lee had no personal feeling on the issue of slaves in his army; he needed more manpower to fight the Yankees and incorporated a very small contingent of black soldiers from Richmond to help his army in the last days of the war.

Stepping back and looking at progress in the equality of races in our country over the past hundred years, we find there is the brainpower of the human race that clearly shows equality when the opportunity is given in our great country. In just the past 20 years, we have had a black general who commanded our entire army in winning a war and then served as Secretary of State. We have had a black woman Secretary of State who is superior in her war-time position. We have a black Justice of the United States Supreme Court. We have a black senator running who became president of the United States. Blacks are numerous in the president's chairs of businesses. Looking back on the Battle of Gettysburg, we can see that all the killing, led by intelligent, important people, was plain nonsense when you consider slavery as an issue.

Slavery: A Final Issue

Now, we will return to the final phase in the great contest between the North and the South, which includes addressing the slavery issue. The slaves in the North and South were freed under the new Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, but the hitch was that the South held on to the flaky idea that there were two countries when most of the South had been reoccupied by Gen. Grant's legions, including the famous Union Gen. Sherman's army.

In late Dec. 1864, push came to shove for Confederate President Davis, so he sent his assistant through Grant's lines to ask for talks with President Lincoln to settle this war without further bloodshed. This was a great stride toward peace, and the meeting was held on Feb 3rd at Fort Monroe, Hampton Roads. (W: 502) Lincoln was speaking for the North and Alexander Stephens, Vice President for the Confederate States, spoke for peace commissioners of the South. However, Davis stipulated was that the commission could not talk about joining the two separate countries, so obviously the talks failed.

When Lincoln's negative answer came back to Davis, he said that there would be war to the end; there was still more killing to do. But the proposal by Lincoln is not normally told in our history books. To rejoin the Union, he said he would ask Congress to pay the slave owners in the South $400 in Union currency for each slave (the old, the workers, the children who were blacks) and free them of course. It so happens that due to Gen. Scott's blockade (the old loyal Virginian) and destruction by this war, the price of a black human male slave climbed in the South to $10,000 in Rebel money or $100 in gold. (W: 506) Can you imagine that $100 in gold coins would buy a human being who could shine your shoes, wash your clothes, and make your meals day or night forever. Wow! What a buy! Again, gold would be the central topic in the conflict. Lincoln admitted this would be expensive, but it was less costly than continuing the war in terms of both money and the lives of the young men. (U: 380) Continuing the war would make a much higher payment for a slave considering the value of money in the worthless Confederate dollars.

So, gold for slaves and sovereignty over slavery remained what this killing was all about. About three months later, the South lost the war after the terrible costs of the siege of Richmond and Petersburg. The slaveholders were broke (including Gen. Lee) without the good old Yankee green backs to keep the plantations in business. Continuing the war was not smart decision by the South because the slave owners could have walked into a new peaceful world with a basket full of good money. Davis refused to attend any more peace meetings because he felt betrayed by the peace commissioners. From the time of this peace conference forward, Davis would be fighting in an extension of the war from his high tide at Gettysburg over the jurisdiction of slavery and sovereignty for more months to until his capture in May 1865. He would lose many more wonderful young men.

This session with Lincoln and the Rebel Peace Commissioners did not end the problem of slavery that was associated with manpower for the Confederate Army. As more men were lost and not replaced after each battle with the North, the Northern Army was provided with an advantage in its killing power. It was in the form of repeating rifles, more modern cannons, larger cavalry units, and improved supply trains like using

the railroad system at City Point near Richmond, which reduced the effective fighting power of the South over the North. The South badly needed more men.

Finally, President Davis signed on March 13, 1865 a proposal for the Confederate Congress to pass a law to take Negro slaves into the army, which was successfully carried. And just 10 days before evacuation from Richmond, on March 23, that the Confederate War Department issued a document under the law that enrolled blacks into the army. "These Negroes would be paid, fed, and clad on an equality with white troops." (U: 381 hardback) There is a debate among authors as to the status of Rebel black soldiers. Were they enrolled as freemen or slaves? Bruce Catton's research showed that the President Davis had been empowered to accept slaves from their owners, and he could also accept quotas from states. The last passage in this military directive should shed light on the slavery issue, which is quoted from Catton's book, "As a final rider, the Rebel Congress stipulated that nothing in this law should call for any change 'in the relation which the said slaves shall bear to their owners' except by the consent of the owners and of the states in which they lived." (U: 381 hardback)

Under this law, quotas from the states would be no more than 25% of the male Negroes in the state. (U: 381) Oddly enough, the Virginia State Legislature was the only state to allow recruitment of slaves for Rebel soldiers. (A: 235) Some black soldiers did fight for the Confederacy at the end of the war in a minor skirmish at the Amelia Court House.

The more interesting part of this effort of bringing slaves into the Rebel Army came from an event in Gen. Lee's life at Petersburg which protected Richmond on the south. It was three PM on 2nd April, Gen. Lee was writing a message to President Davis on plans for raising Negro troops for the army when a message on adverse events on the battle line warning that the defenses had been broken that Lee must withdraw from Petersburg. (L: 372) His retreat from Petersburg would abandon the defense of Richmond and he would seek to join Gen. Joe Johnston in the west. Also, the warning extended to Davis; he should evacuate Richmond immediately!

GENERAL MEADE AND THE LAST BATTLE

The Battlefield at Richmond

It would be remiss to close this work and not to discuss the victor of Gettysburg, General Meade, and the important contribution of his Army of the Potomac in winning the last battles of a long bloody civil war. This period ended with the successful conclusion of the battle at Appomattox, when Gen. Lee surrendered the Confederate Army of the Northern Virginia to Gen. Grant. The background of this famous surrender is given in some detail to set the stage for the players and events leading up to this victory.

First, let us discuss the prologue to this final battle. By the last year of the war most of the Confederate Armies had been defeated in many battles since Gettysburg with only two main large Southern battle areas remaining in the hands of the Rebels. The one around Richmond was under command of Gen. Robert Lee. To gain a better control over the Rebel armies, in February 1865 Jefferson Davis appointed Lee the General-in-Chief of all Southern Armies. (Z11: 468) Lee in Richmond was opposed by two of Gen. Grant's Union Army legions: the Army of the Potomac and the Army of the James. Lee's other main area of combat was in the Carolinas under Confederate command of Gen, Joseph Johnston. However, there were a few other minor Rebel areas in the South. But Gen. Johnston's army was the main Rebel Force battling Gen. Sherman's Union Forces for control of the Carolinas. (Z11: 490)

At this point, we should say that the bloody battles of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and Cold Harbor carried Grant's Army to the fortifications around Richmond and Petersburg in 1864. With the coming of spring of 1865, Gen. Grant's Army had held Gen. Lee's Army with a strong, semi-circular gripe. Thirty-seven miles of fortifications extended from Richmond past Petersburg.

Now, we should give a little background to show the important connection between Confederate fortifications at Petersburg and the security at Richmond. From the Colonial Period, Petersburg's industries had important links with industries in Richmond by trade on the James River. These links also included vital railroad connections with the

Rebel states to the south. Early in of the Civil War (1862), the Rebel Command recognized the importance of protecting Petersburg from the Yankees who were threatening Richmond. They ordered Rebel Capt. Charles Dimmock to lay out and build the fortifications for Petersburg (population about 19,000), which at that time, were 10 miles long. (Z7: 1, 2) It was a masterful accomplishment built mostly by slave labor. At that time, there were 9,000 blacks in the city of which 3,000 were free blacks, who worked on ships and railroads. (Z: 27) That left some 6,000 slaves, which would provide a large workforce for building fortifications in a hurry.

In fact, when Gen. Grant's forces reached Petersburg in the summer of 1864, which held Petersburg's outline of barricades, the overwhelming Union forces were stopped due to a clumsy command system in the Union Army. The Union officers did not properly coordinate their offensive when Petersburg had no real defense, and they were unable to take the city. So for many months Grant's Army suffered much heartache trying to break the effective Rebel defense system for Petersburg that protected Richmond. In a short time these strong barricades at Petersburg's Dimmock line had been adjusted to some 37 miles in a curve that successfully protected Richmond. In turn this defense system also still kept many slaves who built this effective defense system as property. The work had provided the South with protection for their capitol, and it was effective; less than 60,000 Rebels stopped over 100,000 Yankees for 9 months with a Union loss of about 42,000 men. (Z7: 51) This is an amazing ratio to ponder. There seemed to be some relationship of slavery in the South with bondage such as described in the Bible, and the time-honored principle of attaining human freedom. Can you visualize the irony of the blacks building their own barricade to stop Union attackers who were willing to die in giving the blacks their freedom?

It was a difficult life for the Southern people of these cities; Lee's Army and his people in the area were starving. Soldiers were deserting. (J: 379) Recall Gen. Scott, the old Virginian, who remained dedicated to the Union cause, provided the Anaconda Plan of blockading the South; it was working well for the North. This situation was desperate.

During the long 9 months of blockading Richmond and Petersburg, Grant launched a series of offensives to cut Lee's transportation hub at Petersburg, which in turn would cut supplies going into Richmond. Several attacks were made by the Union Army to stop supplies from reaching Richmond. Each action was stoutheartedly defended by the able rebel troops sent by Gen. Lee, but eventually Lee lost his supply routes. This operation took time by the Yankees. We have chosen to illustrate the Yankee troubles by citing two major skirmishes for control over the Rebel supply system. The first was when Gen. Grant assigned Gen. Warren with the V Corps and the IX Corps to block the Weldon Railroad, which brought into Petersburg the food and military supplies from North Carolina. The Union attack came late in August, 1864. Gen. Beauregard and Gen. Lee tried to destroy the entrenched Yankee blocking force, but Gen. Warren used his defensive skills and defeated the Rebels. The lodgment remained in place. It was made a part of Union forts surrounding Petersburg. The cost to the Union force was high: the union casualties were 4,300 men while the Confederates lost only 2,300. (Z7: 17) After that time, there was only one railroad operating to bring in food and other supplies into Richmond to help the starving. Cutting this railroad was the second major skirmish, but there were other minor skirmishes.

Shortly after the lost of the Weldon Railroad to the Yankees, the second skirmish was fought in September 30, 1864. It was the battle of Burgess Mill, intended to sever the Boydton Plank road (made with wooden slates) and the South Side Railroad. It required Parke's IX Corps, Warren's V Corps, and Hancock's II Corps to meet the challenge. The IV Corps and the V Corps were stopped cold at the beginning of the attack; then, Hancock's II Corps reached and held the road after a bitter fight, but no support came. Hancock finally retreated in the night in face of a Rebel pincher movement on Hancock's flanks. All this time, Gen. Hancock was in the saddle giving orders up front, but his old wound in the groin from Gettysburg was causing him pain. The Rebels were in possession of the battlefield, and the Yankees lost some 1, 800 men. Cost to the Rebels was 1,300 causalities (Z7: 25)

Gen. Winfield S. Hancock was a remarkable senior commander in the Union Army; he saved his battle position many times from Rebel attack with proper quick

thinking and some "guts". We should tell a little of his closing chapter in this war. Gen. Hancock served with high honors in successfully directing his Corps in the three major battles leading to Richmond after his fighting at Gettysburg. The fighting around the Rebel Capitol was long, cold and bloody with no quarter. Gen. Hancock's II Corps was often chosen for a main attack role such as the battle of Burgess' Mill. As we have mentioned, he directed combat movements from his horse, although he had trouble with his old wound.

In late November, 1864, Gen. Grant knew of Hancock's medical problem and arranged to have him sent to light duty in the Washington area where he would command veterans, designated as the elite 1st Corps. (Z7: 25) The fireball, Gen. Humphreys, who continued to win battles with the old II Corps, replaced Hancock. To illustrate additional personal destruction in this Civil War, we should recall the incident of Hancock's close Rebel friend, Gen. Armistead dying on the field at Gettysburg at the same time Gen. Hancock received his life long serious wound. This will illustrate how very close friends fought each other, and both were casualties in a terrible war that was not valid.

Critical Battle at Fort Stedman

With the coming of spring in 1865, Gen. Lee and President Davis could see the futility of the Richmond battleground and hoped to withdraw from Petersburg and join forces with Gen. Johnston's army in North Carolina. Once there, they would unite to quickly defeat Gen. Sherman and then turn north to defeat Grant. So with this plan in mind, on March 25, 1865, Lee's able soldiers attacked the Union siege line at large Fort Stedman with Gen. Gordon leading his Rebel troops. More details of this last famous large attack of breaking through Union barricade of the Confederated Capitol at Richmond was professionally told by Bill Wyrick in his story of the "Lee's Last Offensive, Attack On Fort Stedman" in the *Blue and Grey Magazine*. (Z8: 6-40) The charge at Fort Stedman was at four thirty in the morning in pitch black night. Union forces were not expecting the attack, and the rebels quickly seized the entire fort. But the fight was not over as fate would have it. Gen. Gordon had assigned three special guides to lead his advanced troops to separate forts on the hills behind Fort Stedman. Bad luck caused the three guides to become lost in the night fighting. The Rebels lost momentum

as they left the fort to expand the breakthrough and met Union reserves on the second battle line in the bleak daylight.

The Union commander on the combat field under attack at this unearthly hour was the astute Union Gen. Parke with his IX Corps and their artillery. He was under Meade's Army Command and telegraphed Gen. Meade, only to find out that Meade had been ordered by Gen. Grant to accompany the High Command for a meeting with President Lincoln at nearby City Point. As fate would have it, Meade spent the night on board a ship at City Point and was still there when Gen. Lee started his attack on Fort Stedman. Maj. Gen, Webb, Meade's Chief of Staff, sent the Army Command the order "Gen. Meade is not here, and the command devolves on you", who was Gen. Parke. (Z8: 26) This shows splendid Union army cooperation in time of emergency. We should point out that back in time on the last day at Gettysburg, Gen. Lee's attack on the center of the Gettysburg battle line at the clump of trees was defeated by no other than Gen. Webb with his Brigade.

Parke had the full confidence of Meade, and in this emergency immediately acted in his behalf. Back in time, Gen. Hunt had served as Meade's Chief of Artillery at Gettysburg. Parke now directed him to coordinate the troop movements of the V and VI Corps who were ordered to repel the attack on Fort Stedman. (Z8: 26) In the meantime Parke sent his officer, Col. John Tidball to the scene. Tidball trained his guns on the Rebels packed inside Fort Stedman. At the first rays of morning, Parke's Corps fired every cannon and rifle they had into the contained box of Fort Stedman. The dazed Rebels soon retreated to their line. The result of the attack was a disaster for the Rebels with a loss of some 4,000 men. (J: 380)

The unfortunate part of this major attack was that although Lee and Gordon broke through the main Yankee line at Fort Stedman, there was no backup plan to continue the battle in case the three important guides were unable to direct the Rebels to the secondary battle line. (Z8: 42) This caused the assault to stall as fire from Union Battery IX on the north side and fire from Fort Haskell on the south confined the Rebels to Fort Stedman.

(Z8: 43) A backup plan may have readily guided the Rebels to victory past the Union secondary line during the night before the Union army could be organized.

Gen. Grant had been making plans to attack the long Rebel defenses at Petersburg, and this Rebel attack on Fort Stedman showed the rebels were at their breaking point. So Grant ordered the newly arrived Sheridan's cavalry (some 10,000 men with new repeating carbines which gave them more fire power), and Meade's V Corps to assemble at the west end of the Rebel line. (A: 238) (J: 381) The place for the decisive Union attack on Lee's flank was called Five Forks.

Gen. Lee needed to hold this crossroads if he was to protect the only Richmond supply line to Petersburg along with his escape route to the west by the railroad line to join Gen. Johnston in North Carolina. Gen. Lee observing Meade's troops movements toward Five Forks. He placed one of his favorites, Gen. Pickett (the Confederate division commander at Gettysburg) with some 15,000 men and the Rebel cavalry to counter Meade's oncoming attack. So again, it would be Lee's units against Meade's units in this game of war and killing; it was the continuation of players who served at Gettysburg long ago (J: 381)

The Five Forks Battle opened on April 1st with much fighting all day long. Sadly, Gen. A. P. Hill, one of Lee's senior favorite corps commanders, was killed in this fight. Unfortunately at dusk, the days fighting still remained at a stalemate. The Rebel commanders, Gen. Pickett, Gen. Fitz Lee, and Gen. Rosser, felt secure and met in the rear for a fresh fish dinner to relax and discuss the daily events. But the tough Gen. Sheridan was not in this mood and ordered a full-scale attack by his infantry and cavalry at dusk. (L: 368) Upon relieving the Union Gen. Warren from his duty, Sheridan drove through the Rebel defense and scattered Rebel infantry and cavalry in all directions. The Rebel generals did not learn about the battle until it was too late to act. They did not do their duty. The battle did not go well for the Rebels and Pickett's front finally "caved in ". (Y: 403) In addition, a large number of Lee's Rebel cavalry were destroyed by Sheridan's cavalry and infantry. The Rebel troops retreated to the north, and the costs to the Rebels were 2,500 casualties and 4,500 prisoners. (J: 382) The South Side Railroad, which

served as the last supply line for Petersburg and Richmond was exposed to Union attack. All "hell" was breaking loose in Richmond and along the entire battle line.

Gen. Sheridan sent a special message to Gen. Grant stating that he had been victorious and fully engaged (1st April), which really meant he had been fighting an unusual number of Rebel units, and they came from parts of a weakened Rebel line. The Rebels began retreating from Five Forks that night and the next day, April 2nd. Grant came to the conclusion that Lee's lines had been stretched to the breaking point. Grant immediately ordered a full-scale attack on the entire front the night of the 1st but it was limited by darkness. Grant would continue the attack in the morning of 2nd April. During the night and in the morning, Gen. Parke's and Gen. Wright's soldiers would break through their part of the line. Wright's men alone captured about 3,000 prisoners and artillery. (Y: 404) During the night, however, Gen. Lee evacuated his trenches and retreated.

Lincoln's Triumph

Following Gen. Lee's defeats at Stedman and Five Forks, Petersburg and Richmond were evacuated on the night of April 2nd (see Figure 3, Retreat: Petersburg To Appomattox and Figure 4, Sailor Creek Battlefield). In Richmond, the Rebels set fire to their warehouses. The fire traveled out of control and accidentally destroyed the downtown in its path.

Since President Lincoln was still at Gen. Grant's City Point headquarters, he decided to travel in a small gunboat to the Richmond pier, and with a small escort of sailors, he walked through the smoking ruins of the main street. Dazed Rebels stared in total disbelief as President Lincoln passed by and on to the Confederate White House.

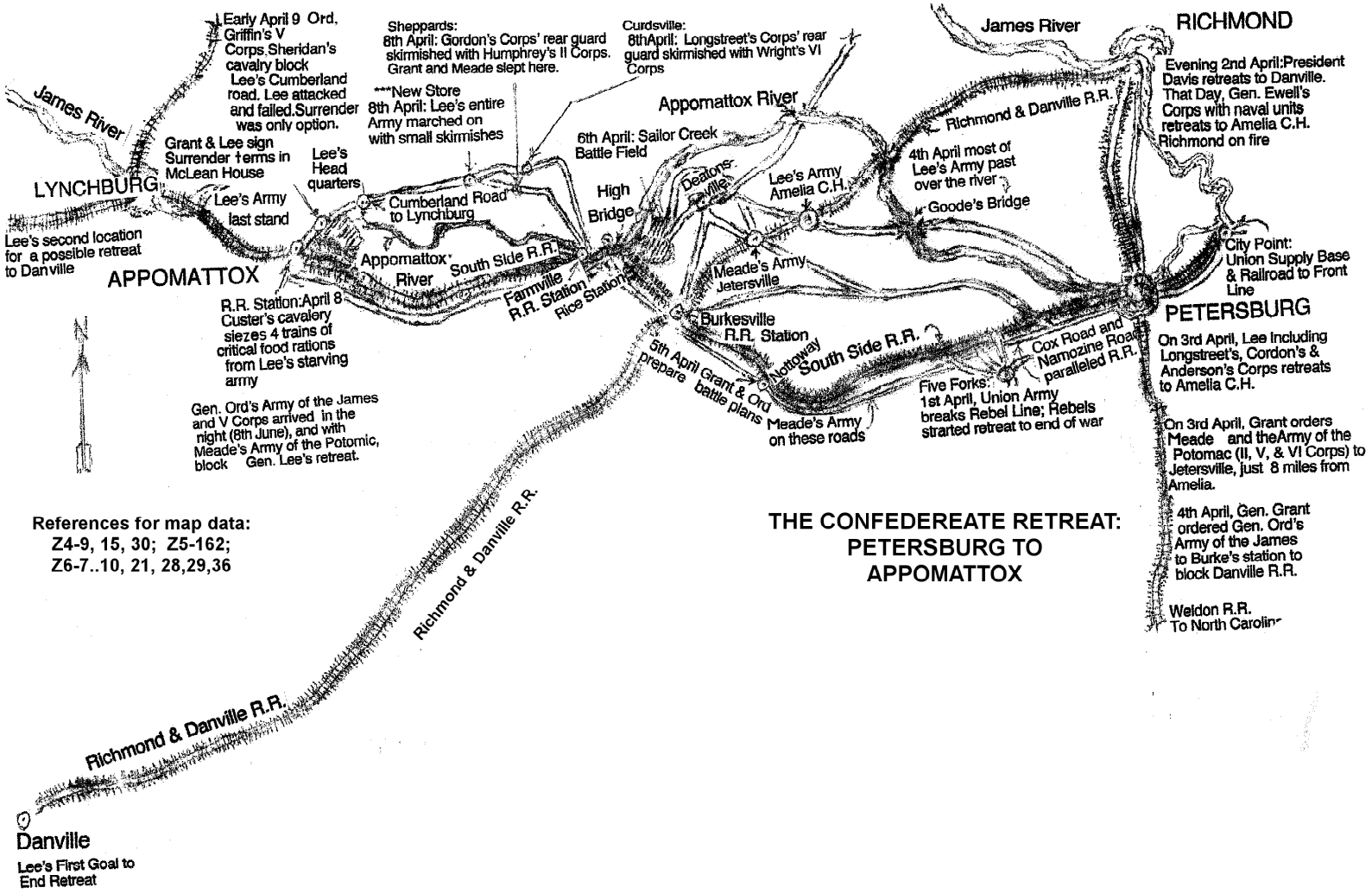

Figure 3. The Confederate Retreat: Petersburg to Appomattox

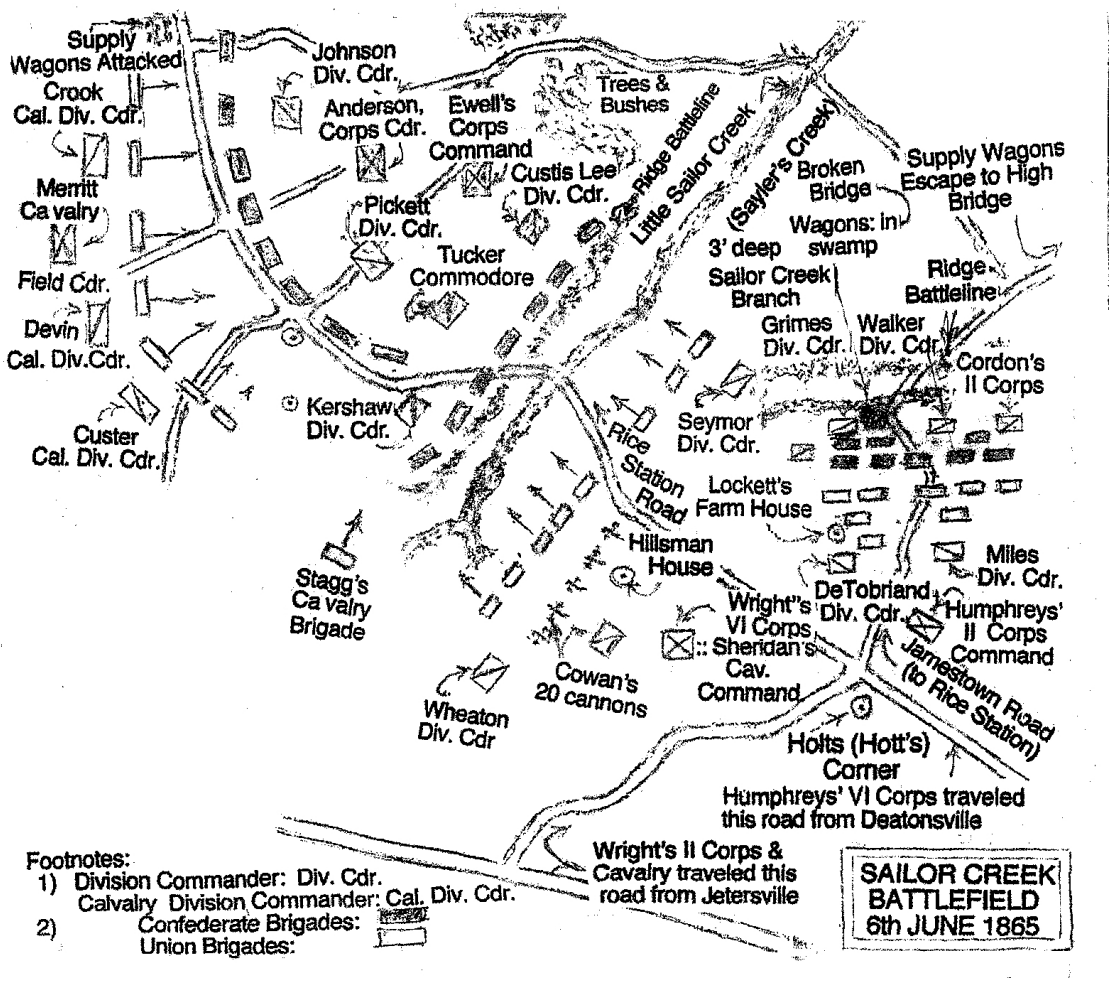

Figure 4. Sailor's Creek Battlefield (6 June 1865)

As Lincoln sat in that vacated seat, which represented the apex of the Confederate States of America, we can only speculate on his thoughts in President Davis' office, which smelled from the burning buildings nearby. To Lincoln this great moment represented the end of a long terrible war that drained the blood from the precious youth of both the North and the South. He likely recalled four years ago when his adversary, the honorable Chief Justice R. B. Taney (a southerner) of the Supreme Court spoke Lincoln's oath of office for President of the United States. It was "I, Abraham Lincoln, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United State and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States". Over these four years of total war and its hell, Lincoln's thoughts turned to the fact that he had indeed successfully preserved, protected, and defended our

Constitution. Within 11 days of this event, an assassin's bullet would also immortalize his place in history.

Staging At Amelia Court House

With the loss at Five Forks, the Rebel infantry and cavalry of Lee's retreating forces were on roads leading northward. The new staging area for the Rebel Army would be at Amelia Court House, about 40 miles northwest and an equal distance from Richmond and Petersburg. President Davis and his government left Richmond on the Danville railroad train ahead of the Rebel retreat. Danville was the important location for Lee to reach. There he would be close to his last source of supplies and his last hope of linking up with Southern Gen. Johnston's Army. This important railroad line figured in Lee's the plan to move his army south from the central staging area at Amelia. Gen. Lee asked for food and other critical supplies to be shipped at once by railroad to Amelia; unfortunately, when he got there, there was no food for his army.

Here is a very sad story to tell. The train loaded with food from the supply base near Danville pulled into the Amelia railroad station before Gen. Lee's army arrived from their evacuation of Richmond. Orders reached the officer in charge of the train to proceed to Richmond for transportation of the Confederate government and archives. Instead of unloading the most valuable asset (food) of the Confederacy for the soldiers at Amelia, the officer moved the train with its food to Richmond where food was lost and replaced with Archives and the like. (Z4: 5) The Rebels had little or no food in their last days of retreat. Everyone should know that soldiers cannot march long distances, and fight on empty stomachs. There was little or no food for the Rebel soldiers around Amelia, which was needed for them to follow the new battle plan.

The lack of food was to the survival of Lee's army. As we shall see, Sheridan's cavalry continually attacked Lee's supply wagons to starve the Rebel soldiers into submission. These actions caused a delay in troop movements that contributed to Lee's defeat.

Now comes an important part of the story: Gen. Meade's contribution to the Union in winning the last battle of the war. Recall that President Lincoln criticized Gen. Meade for not ending the war at the Battle of Gettysburg. Meade carried this misfortune with him, and he sought to restore his honor. Gen. Joshua L. Chamberlain provides many details of Meade's history in later battles as recorded in his daily account of his many adventures including this last campaign. Here, we must stop and provide some background on Gen. Chamberlain's interesting life in the Civil War.

General Chamberlain, the Battle Historian

Chamberlain was a smart farm boy from the back woods of Maine where everyone enjoys and honors his rights, his country, and his family. This part tells of a commoner and farmer fighting for the North. Chamberlain graduated from Bowdoin College and in 1855 became a professor of modern language with a mastery of 8 languages. So, he was very smart as well as being dedicated to his country. He gained an insight into the slavery problem through reading "Uncle Tom's Cabin" by Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose husband he replaced as professor at the college. He developed a clear purpose for fighting and winning the civil war.

At the beginning of the war, he took a sabbatical from the college, joined the army, and, with a practical background in life, became a self-taught major general. He was wounded six times, was close to dying, and knew the sweet smell of death and flies on the battlefield (which qualifies a soldier of battle) as only the real veteran can experience. Recall that July 2nd, 1863, in the middle of the battle of Gettysburg, his outnumbered regiment ran out of ammunition just as the Rebels were turning the critical flank of the Yankee line. Col. Chamberlain did not blink. Although he was wounded in the leg, he ordered his men to fix bayonets and charge. He was awarded the Congressional of Honor for holding out against heavy odds, and saving the flank of the Union Army that day. After the war, he wrote his famous history about the war, *The Passing of the Armies*, and later became governor of Maine.

Rebel Retreat from Amelia Court House

It is important to consider Gen. Meade's role in the final defeat of Gen. Lee as his army retreated from Amelia Court House. Meade's dedication in compensating for his failure to aggressively pursue Lee after Gettysburg is lacking in many history books, and some of the historical details this action should be recorded.

Needless to say, Lee was very disappointed with his supply situation at Amelia. His hungry soldiers marched far beyond their expected capability, and they maintained the will to die after every step for their Confederacy. This truly verifies that they were most loyal and dedicated to their cause. To survive, Lee's Army had two choices: one would be to go south on the Southern Danville Railroad which would lead toward Gen. Johnston's Rebel army; the other one would be to travel the roads west toward Lynchburg (beyond Appomattox Court House) and survive in the mountains.

One reason that Grant was in the winners circle in the Civil War was that he was a natural born tactician and a skilful strategist. Grant knew Lee's next move would be to assemble his soldiers at Amelia because of its location. Grant's mind reached out to picture Lee's next move. Gen. Lee would likely move down the Danville Railroad Line to secure the line sufficiently to join Gen. Johnston. At this time in Union headquarters in Petersburg, Grant told Meade of his plan to stop Lee's next play, which was moving Lee's army to Danville. (Y: 407)

Now, we will stop and recall the structure of Grant's Union Army and Meade's relationship to Grant, which is part of the command structure in the last phase of this war. After the battle of Gettysburg, Grant was made supreme commander of all United States Armies, Lieutenant General (four stars). The Army of the Potomac was commanded by Major General George Meade (regular army). Grant's other army attacking Gen. Lee was Gen. Ord's Army of the James. Grant would send his orders through an army commander, like Gen. Meade, to direct the Corps (also commanded by a general, like a small army) to act on Grant's plan. Each Corps had divisions and regiments of infantry, along with an artillery brigade. Gen. Griffin commanded the V Corps. (Y: 413) In the V Corps, Gen. Chamberlain commanded a division with two brigades. Gen. Humphreys

commanded the II Corps, Gen. Hancock's old Corps. Gen. Wright commanded the VI Corps. (J: 384) Gen. Parke commanded the IX Corps. (Y: 369)

The Army of the James was a smaller unit with 3 Corps and was commanded by Gen. Ord. Ord and Chamberlain were good friends. Ord's army would form the southern flank of Gen. Grant's Army. Ord's XXIV Corps was commanded by Gen. Gibbon, who helped repel Gen. Lee's and Gen. Pickett's famous charge at Gettysburg on the third day at Gettysburg long ago. Gen. Gibbon also commanded Ord's division of Yankee black troops from the Twenty-Fifth Corps that was under the commanded of Gen. Birney, whose old unit was nearly destroyed at Gettysburg. (X: 169)

Gen. Sheridan's infantry and his cavalry reported to Gen. Grant as an individual command. You may recall that most of the cavalry commanders like Gens. Merritt, Devin, Gregg, and Custer were with Meade at Gettysburg. Meade and Ord held the main senior Union Army Commands of the infantry in the last campaign that resulted in Lee's surrender, as we will soon relate. In an emergency, Gen. Grant could direct units of the lower command without going through the chain of commanders, but this was not usually done.

Now comes an important action that is not well known—the battle of Sailor's Creek. Gen. Robert E. Lee's two sons and his nephew, all Major Generals in the Confederate Army, were at the front lines at the Sailor's Creek battle. Gen. Lee had been appointed Commander In Chief of the Confederate Armies (all forces) by President Davis a few months prior to this time.

His nephew, Maj. Gen, Fitzhugh Lee, was from West Point and he commanded Gen. Lee's cavalry (2,120 troopers); he was appointed the commanding officer of the cavalry after Gen. Stuart was killed at Yellow Tavern in 1864. (Z6: 44) He was very capable, but during the retreat from Petersburg lost skirmishes to a larger Union force. Gen. Lee's youngest son, Maj. Gen. William H. F. "Rooney" Lee was a graduate from Harvard and was given an officer's rank in the U.S. Army in 1857. He was commanding officer of a cavalry division (600 troopers) and was wounded at Brandy Station; he returned to service and fought along side "Fitz" Lee. (Z6: 44) He was smart, brave and

effective. Gen. Lee's oldest son, Maj. Gen. George Washington Custis Lee, graduated from West Point in1854 and served in the U.S. Army. In 1861 he joined the Confederate Army. At the battle of Sailor's Creek, he commanded a division of 1600 men. (Z6: 71) His men were overcome by superior Union forces and surrendered as we will describe, but he performed well in battle. We should mention that the "Major General" rank of his sons was among the highest senior ranks of general grade (very few reached Lt. General Army Commanders) in the Confederate Army.

A Block on the Danville Railroad

While Gen. Lee was assembling his army at the town of Amelia, Gen. Grant planned to sever the Danville Railroad at Jetersville to prevent Lee from using that route to escape the Union army and move to the Carolinas. In the afternoon on April 3rd, Grant ordered Gen. Sheridan to move out quickly to block Lee's movement. By late evening Sheridan had Gen. Crook and his troopers moving towards that goal. Gen. Grant ordered Gen. Meade to send "with all dispatch" in the following morning (April 4th) the V Corps along the same road used by Sheridan. The V Corps would support the cavalry at Jetersville, which was only 8 miles from Gen. Lee's Army at Amelia. Gen. Chamberlain, now leading a division of the V Corps, said his men covered the 35 miles in one day, which was an outstanding march for a day. By midnight, they were blocking the railroad point in battle formation. (X: 149) Chamberlain believed that they could be assaulted by a much larger Rebel Force in the morning when Gen. Lee discovered Gen. Grant's plan. And then fate played its card.

Gen. Lee was told by his son, Gen. "Rooney" Lee of the Rebel cavalry who had scouted enemy positions, that Sheridan had a large force of infantry guarding the railroad point. (X: 149) The truth was that the Union support of the II and the VI Corps would not arrive until the afternoon of the next day (April 5th) because of a traffic jam by cavalry, supply trains, and the like.

Gen. Ord's Army of the James was directed to go to Burks Station also on the Danville Railroad to give more assurance for this blocking action. (Y: 408) Gen. Grant had split up the Union Army for his new mission. Later, Sheridan said somewhere that

Gen. Lee had lost a great opportunity because the Union position at Jetersville had no reinforcements. (W: 149) Gen. Lee could have used his old strategy of destroying one unit at a time in a successful offensive assault as conveyed to Gen. Trimble at Gettysburg long ago. However, Lee would still have to contend with the Union Gen. Ord, who was also ordered to block the railroad at a different point. When Gen. Lee reviewed his position, he decided to send his army with their wagon trains (food, ammunition, artillery, and other support) by a more protected northern route to rail lines and roads leading towards Danville or the dense mountains. This route for Rebel troops led them towards the Appomattox Court House.

About noon on April 5th Gen. Meade arrived, even though he had been very sick for the last two days. He had been riding by horse and in an ambulance with difficulty on this long march. It is important that we should mention that Gen. Meade was shot through the lungs in an early battle of the war; this illness of the lungs occasionally made him very sick, but he stayed with his men to the last battle. In fact, soon after the war he died of this affliction. In the late afternoon, the Army of the Potomac (II, V and VI Corps) was at Jetersville in command of Gen. Meade, facing Lee a few miles away and looking for a fight. Sheridan was also at Jetersville at this time with some cavalry.

Sheridan wanted to run the show at this point in time. Ego was on both of his sleeves for more glory. Sheridan was a proven outstanding cavalry commander, but like other leaders, he also had his faults. On the previous day (April 4th) he wanted Meade's small V Corps to attack Lee's army of over 26,000 men, which did not make good sense, while the rest of Meade's men were still marching to Jetersville. This number was on Gen. Lee's last muster upon leaving Richmond. (Z1: 150) Gen. Lee's Army could still reply with a very nasty sting. Meade would delay the movement until all of his army was in place. So Sheridan took the issue up with Gen. Grant, who wanted to end this war quickly.

Gen. Grant stopped in the afternoon on his way to the front lines at a point near Burkeville to let Ord's Army pass. At that time, Grant received word from Sheridan to meet him at Jetersville as he planned to attack Gen. Lee. Gen. Grant traveled by horse at

night through a path in the woods to reach Sheridan about 10 PM. In their meeting, Sheridan complained that Meade's orders "of moving out to his (Meade's) right flank…would give him (Lee) the coveted opportunity of escaping us and putting us in the rear of him." (Y: 415) There was a serious breakdown in communications between Sheridan and Meade. Both Grant and Sheridan went to Meade's headquarters before midnight for a talk about the war plan. Meade changed his orders at once to concur with Grant thinking. He would attack Lee's Army in the morning!

In his memoirs Grant wrote this of Meade, "Meade, always prompt in obeying orders now pushed forward with great energy, although he was himself sick and hardly able to be out of bed."(Y: 413) The orders were now given for the army to advance from Jetersville onto Amelia Court House. (Y: 415) This did not end this unfortunate episode as we will soon see when plot of the battle unfolded. Gen. Chamberlain wrote in his book, *The Passing of the Armies*, that the visit of Sheridan and Grant took on the color of "a very distinct intimation that his (Meade's) plans are weak and silly, and that Sheridan's plans would now be put into execution." (X: 154) Sheridan luckily returned the command of the V corps back to Meade; and in the final attack the V Corps stood-down the last attack by Lee's army as we shall soon relate.

The result of this miscommunication of war plans between Sheridan and Meade is summarized in a quote from Gen. Chamberlain's book, "For it was well known to some (like Chamberlain) whose business it is to know, that Meade had planned to move in a very different direction and on shorter lines on the morning of the 6th, April, and strike Longstreet at Rice Station on the Lynchburg Road, where it may have brought Lee to his last battle." (X: 154) Sheridan assured Meade that Lee was still at Amelia Court House. The final battle plan for the morning of the April 6th called for Meade's army to attack Lee at Amelia while Sheridan with his cavalry would take Meade's prior intended direction for his forces.

At daylight on the April 6th, Gen. Meade moved his army out of camp following Gen. Grant's orders to attack Gen. Lee at Amelia Court House. A few miles from Amelia, the scouts of the Union Army reported to Gen. Meade that Lee's Army had left

the town in the night. The Rebels were about 8 hours ahead of the Union forces, which must be made up, supported by the proper orders given to the units, if there was to be a battle this day. This was the responsibility of Gen. Meade and Gen. Sheridan.

A Meeting at Amelia Court House

Recall that early in the morning of April 3rd, Lee ordered a general withdrawal from the Richmond defenses and movement of his army to Amelia Court House. Many of his Rebel force arrived at Amelia on the next day; his divisions had used different roads to speed up the marching. At the same time, Grant recognized that Jetersville station on the railroad must be held to keep Gen. Lee from escaping south. So he sent Gen. Sheridan with Gen. Crook's Division to accomplish this task. And Gen. Crook, with only about 3,000 troopers, set up the defenses to protect the town. (Z3: 8)

The next morning Gen. Sheridan wanted to know if Rebels were on his northern left flank, and Gen. Crook sent Gen. Henry Davies with his Union cavalry battalion to reconnoiter the area. A strange but important event occurred at this point in time; it was the first appearance of the new Confederate black soldier ushered into the Rebel Army by Virginia. A Rebel wagon train was only 4 miles from Amelia where there was safety when Union Gen. Davies spotted the train and attacked. Gen. Davies' men easily won the fight. The Union troopers captured 10 heavy mortars and other pieces of artillery, about 200 wagons, and some 640 prisoners. Of this number, 400 were soldiers of which about half were black soldiers. It turns out that in mid-March Lee authorized Ewell to recruit two black companies for the army. In that short time, it is likely that rifle training for these black soldiers was minimal and they would be of limited value for the South for this skirmish. Hypocrisy in using black soldiers was finally working its way through the Confederacy. (Z5: 29, 30)

The Rebels were not the kind to let Davies and his troopers escape this disastrous engagement without a fight. Gen. Gary and his rebel cavalry were only 3 miles away when they learned of the fighting; they retaliated and sent Davies' cavalry fleeing for Jetersville. Luckily for Davies, Crook sent out two brigades of cavalry and some men of the V Corps to successfully repel the Rebel counterattack. (Z5: 32)

What is most amazing is that the Rebel high command had actually used black soldiers to protect their government, even though the issue of freedom for blacks was the fundamental principal that divided our nation. The wagon train and its essential food supply of 20,000 rations were critical to feed Lee's starving army. Lee spent most of a precious day at Amelia Court House gathering food for his retreat instead of trying to break through Grant's weak position only 8 miles south at Jetersville. It turns out that Lee needed this precious day as a savior in his last battle at Appomattox. Starvation was one of the main causes of the Rebel defeat in this important retreat.

Now, we will continue the story of the Rebel retreat and tell about what separates an average general from an outstanding general. Meade's Army moved along the road to Amelia with the V Corps, with Gen. Griffin leading the column. They were 3 miles from Amelia when the scouts reported to Griffin that Gen. Lee's Army had left the town during the night; Lee was not going to wait for the Yankees, 8 miles away, to strike at daylight. At this point in time the qualities of an outstanding general shines in General Lee, who ordered his Rebel movement at night, and in Gen. Meade, who immediately issued battle orders directing his Corps to counter this threat, perhaps leading to Union victory. Going on to Amelia and following Lee was not in Meade's mind. Meade might have been sick, but he was a brave fighter and a smart tactician who wanted to correct the misconception that after Gettysburg he let Lee retreat without a fight. The two old opponents of the Civil War would meet in their last battle, and it would be a fight to the finish!

Meade's Marching Orders

At this point in time, Gen. Meade was faced with a critical decision: should he follow Gen. Lee's rear guard or strike him in his flank? To hell with the orders that only permitted Meade's army to follow Lee. The old Snapping Turtle came here to fight, and he declared Grant's and Sheridan's general order personally unacceptable, which was to continue to Amelia, thus following the rear guard. They had chastised his plan as weak and silly (X: 154), and now he would put its principle into action by hitting Lee's flank. Gen. Lee was a good 8 hours ahead of him. Gen. Meade might have been sick, but he had a shrewd mind and was determined to fight. Catching Lee's army would be a serious challenge. Meade faced his army towards the enemy, while he carefully studied his

vague maps. He then ordered his men to make up the time by separating his divisions, sending them westward on different parallel roads in the Appomattox River basin. (X: 155)

Meade took this challenge seriously to prepare his men for battle. The following suggests that Meade was not a timid man as portrayed by Gen. Sheridan and Gen. Grant in their meeting the night before this battle. Gen. Meade's orders were clear and precise "to follow, outmarch, and intercept Lee's flying army." (X: 155)

To make the picture of battle a little more understandable, we will examine the movements of Meade's three corps individually according to his orders. 1) The II Corps (Humphreys) would travel on roads to the left of the general advance toward Deatonville, and then to Sailor's Creek. They would apply pressure to the Rebel rear guard, and would strike into the middle or lower half Lee's column. 2) The VI Corps (Wright) would travel on the roads to the far left to join with some of Sheridan's cavalry units. The cavalry would work in conjunction with the infantry as they struck Lee's column in the midsection when they arrived at Sailor's Creek. Actually, Wright and Sheridan jointly commanded this operation. 3) The V Corps (Griffin) would travel through Ligontown to encircle and contain Rebels along the northern Union flank. As they moved to Rodophil and on to Sailor's Creek, they would pressure the rear of Lee's column. Their fighting would be light. In summary, Meade's orders were well handled, the Union Army made up the lost 8 hours, and they would win their battle before the sun was down.

For some unknown reason, Grant had shifted the VI corps from Gen. Meade to Gen. Sheridan just as Meade's force was marching to attack Lee at Amelia Court House (Z5: 51). As we mentioned, Lee left Amelia in the night so there was a new battle plan. Sheridan believed he needed infantry to support his cavalry, but in the afternoon in the fighting at Sailor's Creek, the cavalry won their part of the battle with Gen. Anderson without infantry, as we shall soon narrate. Gen. Wright's infantry also won another part of same battle, so Sheridan and Wright equally shared the victory. Gen. Meade was the senior flank commander, so Meade and Wright were old friends and fought together to the end at Appomattox. Meade's Corps had been reduced in strength from the original

Corps size to about 16,000 men and could move much faster than Gen. Lee's long column. Gen. Lee's Army was about 28,000 men. Counting the reserves from Richmond and the Confederate Naval Personnel; they were still a creditable fighting force. (Z5: 5)

In this story it is difficult to make out "who is on first" because there were three Union Corps and the Union Cavalry that were fighting closely together at various points along Gen. Lee's long army column in their retreat. The important battle of Sailor's Creek is not discussed, or is minimized as a small engagement in many history books. Perhaps, this is because it is complex and difficult to follow with some detail. We especially mention the works of Derek Smith, "Lee's Last Stand: Sailor's Creek Virginia, 1985", as a most creditable source in describing the Battle of Sailor's Creek. Note that some scholars call it "Sayler's Creek" (Z5: ix).

We have separated this major regional battle into 4 engagements, under the umbrella of the Battle at Sailor's Creek. These engagements are: (1) Combat at High Bridge, (2) Combat at Sailor's Creek-Hillsman and Marshall, (3) Combat at Sailor's Creek Double Bridges-Lockett, and (4) Combat at Cumberland Church.

Combat at High Bridge

After carefully studying the routes and conditions that Gen. Lee would likely take in his westward retreat from Amelia Court House, Gen. Grant decided that Gen. Lee would likely need to cross over the Appomattox River at High Bridge on his route to Lynchburg. Gen. Grant gave orders to Gen. Ord, Commander of the Army of the James, to destroy the both the railroad bridge and the wagon bridge at High Bridge that were on Gen. Lee's route. This episode tells of the first of two battles for the control of the bridge which occurred just before the large battle of Sailor's Creek. The second conflict was a skirmish on following day, 7th April, between the Union forces and Gen. Lee's rear guard at the bridge in the Rebel retreat.

Gen. Ord assigned 4 companies of cavalry (4th Massachusetts Cavalry- 80 troopers) and two infantry regiments (Lt. Col. Kellogg's 123rd Ohio) and (Lt. Col. Moulton's 54th Pennsylvania) to destroy the bridges. The infantry units were about 800

soldiers. (Z5: 81) Col. Washburn commanded the cavalry and was the overall commander of this detachment; Col. Kellogg commanded the infantry. The detachment left Burke's Station about 4 AM. The distance to High Bridge was about 12 miles, and it would take about 6 hours to reach the bridge, including a rest stop for breakfast.

Longstreet's Corps was in the lead of the retreat. Leaving early in the night from Amelia Springs, Longstreet arrived a little before noon at Rice's Station, 4.5 miles south of High Bridge. Being this close to the bridges, Longstreet soon learned that a Union detachment was on its way to the bridges, and he understood their purpose. As luck would have it, Gen. Rosser had a small Confederate cavalry division on a nearby scouting mission and contacted Gen. Longstreet. Of course Gen. Longstreet ordered Rosser to attack the Yankees immediately. In the meantime, Gen. Ord learned that the Rebel army was close-by and ordered Gen. Read of his staff to ride to High Bridge and warn Col. Washburn of the danger; in fact, Gen. Read would assume over all command.

When Gen. Read arrived there were no Rebels in sight, so he instructed his men to move to the bridge for an inspection and ran into home guards that opened fire. At this time, gunfire was heard by Gen. Read, which was coming from the location of the infantry. The Union infantry was under attack by not only Gen. Rosser's cavalry, but also by Col. Munford's Rebel Division who had joined the fight; these Rebels numbered 1200 troopers to give the Rebels the advantage. (Z5: 81) The large number of Rebel cavalry soon wiped out the unit containing 80 Union cavalry. The Union infantry took a position on a nearby small hill. At the orders of Gen. McCausland from Rosser's Division, three Virginia Cavalry Brigades charged straight up the hill into the infantry while a fourth Virginia Brigade charge the flank. It was pure chaos. The Union infantry soon surrendered; the entire Union command was destroyed. The Rebels took some 780 prisoners. There was no official count of the Rebel casualties; a guess by a Union soldier placed the Rebel lost at about 100. (Z6: 40) The battle was costly to both sides as their commanding officers were killed; the Union Army lost Gen. Read and Col. Washburn and the South lost Gen. Dearing and Col. Boston. (Z5: 83) Clearly, the South had won a victory in this engagement.

Combat At Sailor's Creek- Hillsman and Marshall

The Hillsman and Marshall farmhouses were near where two separate engagements were fought in the general rural area called Sailor's Creek. Recall that in the early morning of April 6th, Gen. Meade sent Wright's VI Corps west along the dirt roads paralleling the one taken by Lee's retreating column. Wright's Corps was to join Sheridan's cavalry and strike at Lee's flank. Humphreys' II Corps was to move west on another parallel dirt road used by Gen. Lee's rear guard and strike those Confederates upon contact. Both of these Union corps traveled toward Sailor's Creek, and their destiny, on different roads.

Gen. Humphreys' 2nd Corps reached Gen. Gordon's rear guard of Lee's army in mid-morning. The ensuing action began with some brisk fighting at Deatonville, slowing the Rebels by forcing them to leapfrog their defensive units. The first skirmish between these two enemies at Deatonville netted Humphreys' Corps some 400 prisoners and a cannon. (Z3: 12)

It is important to note Gen. Meade's participation in directing his Corps in this part of the fighting. Derek Smith gave the following details of the orders issued by Meade and his staff. From Jetersville (about 5 miles away from the Deatonville fighting) Gen. Grant sent the following message to Gen. Meade which Meade immediately dispatched to his generals. "Major General Sheridan reports that the advance of the enemy is checked. He urges an attack by all the infantry (which was under Meade's command). The Major General Commanding (Gen. Meade) sends this for your information and feels that all (which was Meade's Corps commanders: Wright, Humphreys, and Griffin) will appreciate the rapidity of the movement." (Z5: 90)

Shortly after the first battle message was sent, a second one followed with orders to Gen. Humphreys and his II Corps, who were closing with Gen. Gordon's Rebel column in the range of Holt's Corner road junction. Within a few hours of receiving the message, this area became the battleground of the Double Bridges, another important part of the Sailor's Creek actions. The message to Gen. Humphreys is quoted: "Gen. Sheridan is in Deatonville with his cavalry. The V Corps covers well your flank and rear and Wright

your left. You are therefore at liberty to push forward with your whole corps and to strike the enemy wherever you find him. The Major General (Meade) commanding desires you to push on as rapidly as possible."

Gen. Meade's Chief of Staff, Gen. Webb, added a curt postscript to Meade's orders that read, "… Sheridan will attack with three divisions at three points. Gen. Meade says: 'Push on without fear of your flanks.'" (Z5: 90) As Gen. Webb added this to Meade's orders, a view of his past experience in the last battle at Gettysburg may have entered his mind. We have previously detailed Gen. Webb's battle experience at Gettysburg, so we are now reminded of Webb's ties to previous battles. His addition reflected a sense urgency to achieve payback for Lee's attack with superior numbers against his small brigade in the critical center of the shaky Gettysburg battle line. He was wounded at that battle, but gave orders so that his Union force held their important position. Gen. Meade's orders would prove to be effective.

Gen. Humphreys was very aggressive and he attacked without being told. Before the orders reached him, he had taken Deatonville, and he struck hard at Gen. Gordon's rear guard. A couple of hours later, his II Corps destroyed much of Gordon's Corps as well as most of the wagon train Gordon was protecting. Here are the details of this conflict.

The Rebel column continued on the main road (Deatonville-Rice Road) toward Rice Station, one of Lee's objectives. As Gen. Lee's troops approached the area of Sailor's Creek, Gen. Stagg's Union cavalry brigade began sniping at the Rebel column, and Gen. Ewell could tell these Yankees were getting ready for an all out attack. About six miles west on the main road, just after Sailor's Creek, is a critical point called Holt's Junction. Here the main road led west to Rice Station, and beyond to Appomattox Court House. The north fork at this junction led to the Jamestown Road which, in a roundabout manner, also led to Rice's Station after again crossing Sailor's creek.

So there were two roads that led to Rice Station, and Lee's column would be split into two segments. This stemmed from Ewell's decision that it would be safer and faster to send most of the wagons over a less crowded route. Consequently, Ewell sent most of

the wagons westward by the way of the Jamestown Road (alternate route) away from the heavy fighting. Gen. Gordon's rear guard followed, protecting these wagons. Why is this detail in our story? It turns out that Sheridan's cavalry and Wright's VI Corps would battle Gen. Ewell and Gen. Anderson along the Rice Station Road at a point about a mile from the Crossroads. About an hour later Gen. Humphreys' II Corps would catch up with Gen. Gordon and attack his rear guard on the Jamestown Road at a point a little over three miles from the Crossroads. These two separate important engagements occurred at nearly the same time.

Now, we will provide some additional details of this Rebel calamity. The slow movement on the Rice Station Road of the leading wagon train attached to Anderson's Corps was troublesome. It was one of the two segments of the original wagon train separated at the Holt's Crossroads. Gen. Anderson's infantry units marching at the head of the wagons slowed the pace of the column that they meant to protect. Stagg's Union cavalry battalion began harassing the column. The attack was repulsed, but he Union forces were now known to be nearby. Gen. Ewell was also the senior commander of Anderson's Corps, assigned to protect the forward wagons. (Z5: 57) Gen. Ewell's Corps contained Gen. Custis Lee's Division along Gen. Kershaw's Division, which brought up the rear.

At this time Mahone's Division of Longstreet's Corps moved ahead without recognizing that a 2 mile gap was growing in the column. (Z5: 73) This was a serious military blunder because the gap prevented one part of the column from supporting the other in case of a general attack. The gap could invite Union cavalry, and it eventually did!

Another misfortune occurred at this location. As we mentioned, Gen. Anderson's Corps with Johnson's Division and Pickett's division were under Gen. Ewell as the senior commander in this part of the column. (Z9: 118) Gen. Anderson's Corps was responsible for defending the western sector that was slightly ahead of Gen. Ewell's other divisions in the northern sector of the battleground. When battle positions were finally formed to meet the Union threat, a small gap (about 1,000 feet) was created between these two

Rebel commands. In this area, two small dirt roads cross at Marshall's Crossroads. The gap limited movement of Rebel troops from one sector to the other. Gen. Ewell's Command remained close to Gen. Kershaw's division and Gen. Custis Lee's Division. There, heavy attacks were expected from Wright's Union infantry, which were forming for battle on the far side of Sailor's Creek.

Unfortunately for the Rebels, Gen. Custer arrived on the scene with three brigades of Union cavalry. Custer passed along the Confederate column and found the spot where the column had separated ahead of Anderson's Rebels. Of course, Gen. Custer saw his advantage and moved into the opening destroying some wagons, but retarding the movement of the Rebel column. Thus, the one of the critical battlefields of the Civil War on Sailor's Creek was in the making. Shortly, more Union cavalry appeared and General Anderson, with his eight brigades of infantry would be fighting Gen. Sheridan's eight brigades of Cavalry with their Sharps repeating rifles. These Union troopers had the advantage with higher firepower. (Z4: 15)

At the same time, Ewell's two divisions (seven brigades) on Sailor's Creek were preparing for battle along the river bank. On the east side of the creek, opposite the Rebels, Wright's Union infantry (eight brigades) had formed their battle line. (Z4: 12) Gen. Seymour's Union Division was located on the right side of the road that crossed the creek, while Gen. Wheaton's Division occupied the left side of the road. Behind the Union brigades were Major Andrew Cowan's artillery batteries with over 20 big guns.

During the fighting at Gettysburg long ago, Cowan's guns were very effective in repelling the Rebels as they tried to break the Union center on the last day and failed; so Cowan's men were experts in the art of war. The guns were placed near the Hillsman House - about 800 yards from the Rebel ridgeline with a commanding view of their targets. The guns took a deadly toll on Rebels behind their embankments on the hill once the battle started. Sadly, the Rebel artillery was with the wagons in the front of the column, and was thus not available to reply to the Union attack.

Before discussing the movements in the battle, we should relate the strange composition of Ewell's Corps. Gen. Kershaw's Division saw action in the Gettysburg

battle long ago and was very professional in their performance; all his men came from South Carolina. Gen. Custis Lee was the oldest son of Gen. Robt. E. Lee and had not seen the killing field before this time; so, his father, The General-in-Chief of the Confederacy, was deeply concerned over the outcome of this phase of his battle. Custis Lee's Division consisted of military commands that had held reserve positions in the Richmond Capitol. These included Barton's Brigade, Crutchfield's Brigade, and Tucker's Naval Battalion (who had operated artillery at the harbor and now had rifles).

As we mentioned, the attacks on the head of the column, which was under Gen. Anderson's control, brought the Rebels in the western section to a halt. At that point, Gen. Ewell rode forward to discuss a plan with Gen. Anderson to break through the Union roadblock. He planned to use Custis Lee as a tactical support for Anderson's attack; however, when he returned to his eastern section, he saw that a large Union force was ready to attack. Plans had changed. He placed Custis Lee's force on his left at the upper edge the hill, and Gen. Kershaw on his right to receive the attack by Wright's VI Corps. Since Gen. Ewell could not assist Anderson, Anderson ordered his men to entrench on a ridge parallel to the road to receive the Union cavalry attack that was gathering on his front. (Z4: 8). More Union cavalry were directed by Gen. Sheridan to support Gen. Custer, who was increasing the pressure on Anderson's flank. Gen. Ewell was also concerned about a large Union force that was gathering on his front, and he ordered his men to prepare for the attack.

Wright's VI Corps Attacks

At the battle of Sailor's Creek, there was skirmishing between Custer's cavalry and Gen. Anderson's Rebels early in the afternoon. Then, heavy fighting began for both Gen. Anderson's forces and Gen. Ewell's forces about 5 PM in the afternoon. The fighting in the western sector against the Union cavalry began at the same time Union infantry attacked in the northern sector. To his credit, Gen. Sheridan expertly coordinated the Union forces on the field. To clarify battle movements we will discuss fighting in each sector separately.

Major Cowan's 20 guns at Hillsman House began shelling the Rebel line at about 5 PM. It was deadly and effective. Union shells poured down for a half hour on the Chaffin's Bluff Battalion (artillery soldiers from Richmond defense) and other Rebel units, doing much damage. Shortly after the shelling stopped, the Union troops attacked. This Rebel battalion would be the only one to turn the center of the Union line in their attack as we will note. Strange things happen in war.

When Lt. Col. Rhodes of the 2nd Rhode Island Infantry was aligning his men in battle formation, he noted that several of his troops were "raw". Because this would be their first time under heavy fire, this could adversely affect their performance in this charge. Col. Rhodes also noticed a group of officers including Generals Sheridan, Wright, Wheaton and Edwards to the side planning the attack. (Z5: 132) Col. Rhodes' regiment with its 400 men fell into the formation of the VI Corps for their attack. (Z5: 132) The long parallel Union lines marched quickly down a sloping open plane to the edge of Sailor's Creek, which was a swampy mess. The soldiers waded across the creek where it was 2 to 4 feet deep, carrying the rifle and ammunition over their heads, and they fell into formation on the Rebel side. (Z5: 113) The command "forward" was shouted. The Union troops moved in one large mass over another short flat area and up the other slope to meet the Rebels. During this time the Rebels were taking "pot shots" from the ridge, and Union soldiers were falling.

The orders on the rebel side of the battle line were strict: hold your fire until the Yanks were within 200 yards or less. The flanks on both sides were in trees, but Union advance move upward in a wide sweep over the field toward the obvious Rebel embankments. The Union center move forward, but they did stop to load, and fire. Features of the terrain placed the center well ahead of the line. (Z5: 136) As the Federals approached the Rebel line, a Rebel officer called out slowly, “ready (the soldiers arose), aim, fire.” The effect was highly destructive. One Rebel officer wrote "the volley 'swallowed up' the advanced Federal line." (Z4: 13) The following volleys were just as effective, and as we had mentioned, some of the new soldiers of 2nd Rhode Island along with the some veterans in the 49th Pennsylvania broke ranks and moved back toward the creek.

These Yanks retreated back down the hill side; Major Stiles' senior battalion of artillerymen from the Richmond defense system were carrying rifles and intended to use them with their bayonets. So without orders, these artillerymen along with their battalion commander, Col. Crutchfield, jumped out of the embankments. They ran in mass together with the 10th and 19th Virginia regiments, after the Yanks, forcing many of them back across the creek to safety. (Z5: 138, 139) For the moment, the Rebels surprised the Yankees, and had broken the critical center of the Yankee line. For the moment, they were winning the battle. However, war is unpredictable at best.

It happened that an experienced regiment, the 119th Pennsylvania was on the right of the break, and they stayed their ground on top of the ridge, feeding lead shot into the flank of the wild Rebel artillerymen. On the other side, to the left of the break, the 37th Massachusetts regiment with their wicked Sharp's repeating rifles, stood along with the 121 New York Regiment. They contained the Rebel attack by firing into the Virginian masses in the break. As the Rebels reached the flat area along the creek, the fleeing Union forces re-grouped into units and began firing at the attackers. To even the odds, a couple of Union cannons were ordered to cover the break in the Union center and they began to send heavy loads of canister directly into these Rebels.

Gen. Custis Lee was amazed and proud of the breakthrough. Major Stiles of the Rebel artillerymen finally contacted Lee, and told him the attack was not ordered. Since Lee's entire line was under attack, he told Major Stiles to withdraw his men to the main Rebel battle line. (Z4: 13) The rebel Artillerymen re-formed and marched back to their original positions on the ridge.

During the breakthrough in the Union center, the right and left flanks of Union infantry pivoted on their flanks to contain the Rebels in a pocket on the ridge. As soon as the Union line was stabilized with a closure of the center, orders were sent to the Union commands: charge, double quick. The Union forces on both flanks, together with those of the newly formed center, hit the Rebel line almost simultaneously. Looking at the numbers will tell the story of Rebel defeat. Gen. Kershaw's Rebel Division on the overall left flank had some 2,000 men; Gen. Custis Lee's Division, on the overall right flank had

about 3,000 men. The Union men were about three times as many as the Rebels, who faced their adversary (Wright's VI Corps). Wright's force of 16,000 men soon overpowered the Confederates. (Z3: 16) Witnesses described the chaotic scene as one of plain butchery. (Z4: 13)

As the Union soldiers surged inward from the Union left, Col. Hamblin's two infantry brigades turned the flank on Kershaw's Rebels while also hitting Kershaw's division broadly in his middle. Luckily, Col. Stagg's Brigade of wild Union Cavalry coming from the west hit Gen. Kershaw's Division on the northern flank in their rear at the same time. (Z3: 16) Gen. Capehart's Brigade and Col. Pennington's Brigade of the Union Cavalry were also in this area along with other units from Gen. Custer's Division. (Z4: 15) These large numbers of Sheridan's Union Cavalry broke Gen. Anderson's northern Rebel defensive line. As Kershaw's men began to pull back, both Fitzgerald's and DuBose's Brigades were broken with Union soldiers and troopers at their back. (Z5: 149) The retreat of Kershaw's Division was also blocked by Col. Pennington's Brigade of Union cavalry. Then, reports from the Rebel flank by the 12th Virginia and the 10th Virginia confirmed that Union Cavalry had blocked their retreat. (Z5: 123, 126 127, 148) At this point, Corporal Smith of the 2nd Ohio Cavalry captured Gen. Kershaw and his division flag at their headquarters. (Z: 150) Death was seen everywhere on the killing field. And this ended the fighting. Gen. Kershaw surrendered his large division.

In this period, Gen. Ewell and his staff were riding from a meeting with Gen. Anderson to Gen. Custis Lee's front when Ewell encountered Union skirmishers. These Federals had broken through the battle lines and were now in the rear of Gen. Custis Lee's Division. The sight of these troops and Union Cavalry in the area signaled that escape was not possible. (Z5: 149) Gen. Ewell sent a note and a truce flag carried by Major Pegram through the battle line stating that he wanted to surrender. The Rebels were ordered to hold their fire as a truce flag was displayed. There are a number of accounts of this surrender; the more credible one is that he surrendered to a cavalry unit under Gen. Custer. (Z: 187) Gen. Ewell sent his surrender decision to Gen. Custis Lee, who was nearby, and shortly after receiving Gen. Ewell's note, Gen. Custis Lee

surrendered his command as well. This ended the fighting in the northern sector of this costly battle.

Gen. Sheridan's Cavalry Attack

Now, we will look into what happened during the fighting within the western sector of the Battle of Sailor's Creek, which was 1,000 feet or more west of the one fought by the VI Corps as we just discussed. At this point, we will stop and give the command structure of the Union cavalry to avoid confusion in our story. Gen. Sheridan, located at Holt's Corner, was the army commander and directed of all the cavalry units on the battlefield. He had 3 divisions with 3 brigades each under the separate commands of Brigadier Generals Devin, and Custer, and Major General Crook. (Z5: 18) Due to the complexity of this mission, Gen. Sheridan assigned Brigadier General Wesley Merritt as the senior battlefield commander over Gen. Devin's, Gen. Custer's, and Gen. Cook's Divisions. Merritt gave orders to these divisions in their attacks on the wagon train and Gen. Anderson's Rebel infantry. There were nine brigades, which totaled roughly 12,000 troopers in the Battle of Sailor's Creek.

In this same western sector, Gen. Anderson was the Rebel Forth Corps commander which included Gen. Johnson Division on his right flank and Gen. Pickett's Division his left. (Z5: 116) These Confederates would face units of Gen. Sheridan's cavalry across Rice Station Road. Gen. Ewell's and Gen. Anderson's Confederates made up a large infantry force of about 10,000 men. (Z4: 71)

Sheridan's directed the overall attack by the cavalry and infantry from his command post. He ordered all of his cavalry to hit the Rebel wagons after they crossed over the creek. At about 11 AM, Smith's cavalry, a part of Crook's Third Division, was the first to find the long line (several miles) of well-guarded wagons. Smith's attack was easily repulsed; however, it slowed the movement of the train, which created a serious gap of two miles between the train and Mahone's infantry ahead in the main column. Col. Stagg's Michigan cavalry, also of Crooks Division, was assigned to continue his harassment of the Rebels on Gen. Kershaw's flank. They were also repulsed at this time. But after trials in the final phase of this battle, Stagg's Battalion again raided the rear of

the Rebel army and was successful. As Kershaw was being assaulted on his front by the VI Corps, Stagg's Battalion prevented the retreat of Confederates, contributing to Kershaw's surrender. (Z5: 92)

Both Devin's First Division and Custer's Second Divisions were coming into view when they were needed. As mentioned in the beginning of these cavalry attacks, Gen. Devin had sent Col. Stagg's Brigade to try his luck in attacking the column, and it failed. But Gen. Sheridan was a smart tactician, he ordered his division commanders to have one unit by-pass another (his "leap frog" attacks) to find a weak link in the Rebel line.

As Gen. Custer, with his three brigades (Pennington, Capehart, and Wells), was traveling at a distance along side the Rebel wagon train, he spied a weak, unguarded segment near Marshall's Crossroads, located a little north of Gen. Ewell's large command. Custer attacked the train, burning some wagons. This was the beginning of the Union attacks in the western sector of the battlefield. It resulted in part of the wagon train on the road to Rice station becoming slightly separated from Gen. Anderson's position on the train, and this became a prime target. This also stopped the remaining column movement, which Gen. Anderson Division controlled in its movement toward Rice Station.

The nearby 7th Virginia from Gen. Hunton's brigade of Gen. Pickett's Division saw the destruction; without orders they charged and sent Gen. Custer's men retreating. This temporarily removed Custer as a threat to their column. The three Rebel brigades of Pickett's Generals (Corse, Hunton and Terry) were too many for Gen. Custer's force, and he sent a message to Gen. Merritt, his commander, for help. Fortunately, Gen. Devin with his brigades (Fitzhugh and Gibbs) happened to be passing Gen. Custer's position and responded quickly to his call. Devin moved up on the left side of Custer's Division to provide a common front facing Pickett's Division.

About this time, Gen. Anderson ordered Gen. Pickett's men to attempt a breakthrough so that the column could move west again. This was a feeble attempt, and it failed. As Gen. Anderson and Gen. Ewell were discussing the next effort to move the column forward, they were informed by a staff officer of Pickett's failure. (Z5: 101) Each

returned to his command post to prepare for a massive attack. Gen. Ewell's men would be facing the VI Corps as we have described. At this same time, Gen. Anderson's forces were attacked by Sheridan's cavalry in the western sector. There was a lull in the fighting as the cavalry was being aligned for battle. During this time, Wright VI Corps was moving against Ewell's forces in the northern sector.

This action took place just before Gen. Pickett's Division began erecting a barricade along the east side of the main road, which was near the Marshall's Crossroads and over 1,000 feet west from Gen. Ewell's Corps. Ewell's corps was now at the rear of the Rebel column and erected a defensive position on a ridge of Little Sandy Creek on the north end of the battle line.

Gen. Merritt ordered Crook to prepare for battle and to move his division, comprised of three battalions under the commands of Col. Gregg, Gen. Davies, Col. Smith, to the far west end of the battle line. (Z4: 16) They faced Gen. Johnson's four brigades (Generals Ransom, Moody, Wallace, and Wise) who were protecting the besieged wagon train. This posted the cavalry units along the main road (western sector boundary) leading to Rice Station and completed the Union battle line west of Sailor's Creek.

Sheridan ordered his cavalry to strike at the same time the Union VI Corps attacked Gen, Ewell's position. (Z4: 17) The 1st Maine Cavalry of Cook's Division on the far western part of the battle line, aligned themselves with the other regiments. Its buglers sounded the command to "charge", and the sound traveled along the battlefront. The troopers on their horses in a line with their swords flashing moved toward the Confederates. (Z4: 17)

Just prior to this charge, Gen. Crooks Division had been ordered to turn the Rebel flank and seize the road, and he directed this task to Col. J. Irvin Gregg's Second Brigade which had 1500 troopers. (Z4: 17) (Z5: 119) Col. Smith's Third Brigade of this division also supported Gregg's attack. The charge employed both dismounted troopers and mounted troopers. In this action, the Union brigades turned Anderson's right flank pushing Gen. Ransom's Rebel Brigade into the stalled Rebel wagon train and the Union

brigades burnt a few wagons. (Z5: 119) These two Union Brigades held the Union left end until they were ordered to continue with the main attack on the Anderson forces. They successfully forced the Rebel right flank into retreat during the general Union advance.

Davis's Brigade was next in line to Gregg's Brigade during this famous charge. His horsemen and dismounted troopers overran the Rebel barricade sending Wallace's and Wise's Brigades into retreat. At this time Gen. Smith's Battalion of Crooks division overwhelmed Gen. Steuart's Rebel Brigade, who had held the center of Anderson's line, sending them into retreat. (Z4: 15, 16)

Back at Marshall's crossroads, the only units that seemed to have much trouble in the attack were none other than Gen. Custer's Brigades (Pennington, Wells, and Capehart) who were noted for being very daring and tough in battle. They were joined by Gen. Devin's two brigades (Fitzhugh and Gibbs) who added strength to the Union line in the hotly contested area. However, Gen, Custer still had serious trouble with the Rebel Brigades of Terry and Hunton. These Confederates were capable, professional soldiers and put up good fight; Custer's battle report stated his men were "several times driven back". (Z4: 17) Finally, Capehart's Union Brigade, along with some men from Pennington's unit, broke through the line. (Z4: 17)

Strangely, in this final charge of Custer's troops that broke the Rebel line into pieces, Union Sgt. Cunningham (1st West Virginia Cavalry) from West Virginia, charged over the hazards in the battlefield on his mule, and jumped into the Rebel infantry of the 12th Virginia. The mule help put their "brawany" color-bearer out of the picture. This mule was seized from Lee's wagon train at Amelia two days before this attack, guarded by black Rebel Soldiers. It was Virginians against Virginians in the battle. (Z4: 17)

As Gen. Custer's and Gen. Devin's Divisions charged through hole in Gen. Pickett's line shooting their rapid firing Spencer rifles, the starving Confederate soldiers scattered, as told by a Union trooper, like "…children just getting out of school and our boys chasing up and gathering them in". (Z4: 17) Most of the Union cavalry pushed the Rebels across the wide field, gathering in the Rebel prisoners. Only about 1000 Rebels

of Pickett's Division reached the woods on the other side and rejoined the Rebels forces at nearby High Bridge. (Z4: 71)

Part of Gen. Custer's troops (Capehart and Pennington Brigades) then turned toward the wild fighting on the west bank of Little Sailor Creek. As previously described, they played a crucial part in the driving main rear guard of Gen. Ewell's men into pockets, prompting their surrender.

We should look at the cost of this disaster to Gen. Lee's army. This phase of the Sailor's Creek Battle at the Hillsman and Marshall farms cost Lee's Rebel Army it's most proficient, and experienced fighters. It is estimated that the loss of men in both Anderson's Division and in the remaining elements in Gen. Ewell's Corps (Gen. Kershaw and Gen, Custis Lee) amounted to some 6,000 men, 300 wagons, and 15 cannons. (Z4: 17, 71, 32, 20) Perhaps, one of the most important losses to Lee's army was 8 experienced generals who commanded much of Lee's infantry. These were: Ewell, Kershaw, Hunton, Corse, Barton, Simms, Dubose, and Lee's oldest son, Custis Lee. (Z4: 20) We will not know, but the capture of Gen. Lee's son may have factored into his decision to surrender his entire army. All this happened at the Battle of Sailor's Creek, a major action that many history writers of the Civil War may have overlooked.

Combat at Sailor's Creek - Double Bridges-Lockett Farm

We must recall the events at Holt's Crossroads so that we can link the battle at Lockett Farm with the one fought at Hillsman Farm on Sailor's Creek. As Gen. Lee's long wagon column was passing by Holt's Corner on the road going directly to Lee's Headquarters at Rice Station, the column was harassed by Sheridan's cavalry. To speed up movement of the army, Gen. Ewell sent at Holt's intersection the rear portion of the wagon train along the Jamestown Road. Gen. Gordon's Corps would continue as its rear guard along this same road. This road was an alternate northwestern route, to Rice Station. Gen. Gordon's command included three divisions listed under the names of Grimes, Walker, and Evans, and they were among Lee's most experienced generals. (Z5: 164)

Unknown to Ewell, this road posed serious hazards for a long wagon train. The area was full of heavy undergrowth, brush, swamps near the creeks, and thick groves of trees, confining movement of the wagons to the narrow roads , and restricting detours. If bridges were broken or damaged, there would be a road bock until repairs were made. Further, large numbers of troops could not be formed in the brush to mount an attack.

It was in the middle of the morning that Humphreys' II Corps finally encountered Gordon's rear guard of the Rebel wagon train in their retreat. For the next 14 miles, until the battle at Lockett's Farm began, units of the Rebel rear guard held the pursuing Union forces in check. One of the three division commanders, Gen. Grimes devised an effective rotation process of his units to combat the Union forces. This tactic allowed the wagons to continue their movement forward, and it limited attacks by the following Union forces (Z5: 165)

The winding secondary route to Rice Station, which the rebel wagons were traveling, led them for about 2 miles from Holts Corner into a small valley, which held the Big and Little Sailor's creeks close together. This area was called Double Bridges for the two structures over the twin creeks. These bridges were built for occasional farm traffic, and one broke carrying the heavy loads of the Rebel army. The creek was about 20 feet across and three feet deep. (Z5: 167) Fortunately for the Rebels, about half of the heavy weapons and the long supply wagon train had already crossed the creek. But a great number of the wagons were trapped- deeply stuck in mud, wet grassy areas, and swamps which surrounded the bridges in their misalignment. (Z5: 168) The land sloped slightly upward from the bridges and creek line to the more even ground where Lockett's farm house stood back from the ridge line. Gen. Gordon had no choice but to fight on the ridge and along the roadway near the bridges to protect the wagons.

At this time, the Rebel cavalry and "Ronney" Lee's troops (Ronney was another son of Gen. Robert E. Lee), had been working with the Rebel infantry all day to protect the column. The Rebel cavalry unit was withdrawn to Rice Station for army security. This left Gen. Gordon with only 7,000 men to defend against the 16,000 troops in the Union Gen. Humphreys' II Corps. (Z5: 171) (Z: 44) Gen. Gordon was in a very tight spot

Gen. Gordon's battle line ran along the ridge and down to the two creeks in front of the massive jumble of wagons. The Rebel line included all soldiers that were available, including men from the artillery acting as infantry since some of their cannons had disappeared. Meade's aide, Col. Theodore Lyman, once said that "If you put a man in a hole with a battery behind and he can defeat three times his number…"(Z5: 205). The Rebels would test that theory this today.

Aligned in front of the Rebels on the ridge, Gen. Miles formed his 1st Division for the attack at the foot of the hill. Gen. Miles and his men, who held the honor of the attacking force, had made the mark as being one of the toughest divisions in the Union army. At the end of this battle, he would have been wounded four separate times in the Civil War and had previously been awarded the Medal of Honor. His First Brigade, under Col. Scott, had units from Michigan, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire and New York for the direct attack. And on the right flank, he had the Third Brigade, under Col. MacDougall, with men from New York. Other units from Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York from de Trobriand's Brigade (under Col. McAllister) joined Gen. Pierce's men to serve in support of the all out attack. (Z5: 169) This shows the participants came from many states in the north.

It was about 5:30 PM and the sun was setting when Gen. Miles gave the order, "battalions attack". The wave of Union soldiers surged up the hill in face of rapid fire by the Rebels. The Union artillery under Major Hazard had traveled with the infantry and was posted near the front; they opened on the Rebels forces, forcing two Rebel batteries to withdraw. (Z5: 168) Later, the Yankee batteries would prove very valuable to the Union infantry in their attack as they could use deadly canister. Even though the Union's first attack was made in-force, the Rebels held their strong position and the Union troops had to withdraw. At this time Gen. Gordon sent Gen. Lee a note stating he had been under attack all day, and now had an insufficient force to protect the wagon train.

It was 6 PM when Gen. Barlow's large 2nd Division of the II Union Corps had been seen moving around the north end to attack Gen. Cordon flank. At this time, the Union assaults became more severe penetrating the frontline and pressing the flanks were

also under attack. Finally, the Union forces appeared to be attacking from the rear. By then the sun was nearly down. Soon there was chaos in the rebel line, and they retreated in disorder over the creeks reaching the roadway that pointed toward Rice Station where Gen. Lee's forces had safety. (Z5: 171)

Soon, the wagon train was being fired on and destroyed by Union infantry from Gen. Pierce's Brigade, and the wagons were captured. (Z5: 175) Gen. Gordon could clearly see the end of the battle was near. Henry Balahnson, a Rebel soldier, wrote that Gen. Gordon could see the Yankees in the rear and fighting was hopeless, and gave orders for us to save our selves. Then, Gen. Gordon rode down the hill and swam his horse across the creek, showing the way to avoid capture. (Z5: 171) The retreating rebel units scrambled across the creeks and tried to form on the other side to repel Union attacks, as directed by Gen. Gordon, but that was not possible. The twilight turned to blackness, and it became nearly impossible for Gen. Humphreys to reorganize the tired Union Army and follow the Rebel fugitives to Rice Station. At Lockett Farm, the black of night and the thick brush along the road prohibited any further hand-to-hand fighting.

Let us look at the losses Gen. Lee's Rebels suffered as a result of the Union II Corps victory over Gen. Gordon's Divisions. Gen. Miles reported that when Rebels attempted to form their first battle line across the creek from Union forces, MacDougall Brigade's stormed across the creek and seized 2 cannon and about 140 wagons. When the Rebels were in full retreat, Gen. Miles assigned Lt. Col. Smith and his men to the securing of about 250 "wheeled war trophies" and gave Gen, Pierce the care of another 56 wagons and ambulances. (Z5: 175, 176) We assume the first group of wagons comprised some of the "wheeled war trophies" that Miles mentioned in his later report. If we assume there were 1000 wagons in the train, the destruction of 306 wagons by the II Corps would reduce Lee's train some by some 30%; if we add to this figure of the 300 wagons that VI Corps captured a little earlier at Hillsman Farm, total destruction for the day would be in the 60% range. This would nearly eliminate Lee's supplies of food and war materiel.

The big prize in the fight with Gen. Gordon's Division was approximately 1,700 Rebels captured and 300 dead or wounded. (Z5: 171, 190) There could have been many more prisoners if a Union brigade or two from the II Corps could have slipped ahead of the retreating men of Gordon Corps traveling on the road to Rice Station and placed a road block to capture more escaping soldiers. But it was night. In contrast, Humphreys' II Corps lost about 310 men and that was enough for the long day. We shall relate another tale at the end of this episode that Gen. Gordon and his men would be called upon to test the Yankee line at Appomattox on the last day of the war, and they served with honor.

We have discussed the very active participation of the Union Corps (II Corps and the VI Corps) of Gen. Meade's Army of the Potomac in this successful Battle of Sailor's Creek. So now we will tell the story of Gen. Meade's remaining unit, Gen. Griffin's V Corps, which was assigned to contain the right flank of the moving Rebel Army. The V Corps, as a component of Gen. Meade's army was assigned to harass the elements of the Rebel rear guard and their right flank. After the V Corps had traveled some distance, the V Corps was joined by Barlow's Division of the II Corps. Intelligence had revealed the V Corps could soon meet resistance from the heavy enemy columns. (X: 161) Gen. Meade did not want defeats at this time.

But alas, as we have previously related, Gen. Lee had "out foxed" Gen. Meade and Gen. Grant as the Rebel columns moved the previous night from Amelia Court House and were well ahead of Grant's units. Thus, the units of the V Corps had a hard march of 32 miles that day over rough roads and broken bridges in a round about way to find the Rebels at the battleground. Late in the evening, they stopped in the vicinity of the smoldering battlefield with its smoke and muffled rumble at Sailor Creek.

Since the V Corps was assigned the out-of-way route to Sailor's Creek, they did limited fighting at the end of the battle; mostly they captured of 300 stragglers from the massive Rebel defeat just discussed. (X: 164) The next day (April 7th) the V corps would travel to the left flank of Grant's Army to join Gen. Ord's Army of the James. This move discouraged Gen. Lee from turning south and making a flanking movement. The V

corps would do no more fighting until the last battle. Although the contribution of the V Corps was relatively limited in the Battle of Sailor's Creek, its fighting ability proved critical on the last day of this phase of the war as we shall soon relate.

Combat at Cumberland Church

Following the combat at Lockett's Farm, many of Gen. Gordon's Rebels were able the escape the wrath of the Union II Corps, and in the black of night traveled a little over an hour (4 miles) to safety at High Bridge. It had one bridge for the railroad, while the nearby second bridge was for wagons. Gen. Mahone's Division held the responsibility of getting the battered wagon train, artillery and Rebels soldiers over the river at High Bridge during night after the fighting at Sailor's Creek. To prevent the Yankees from interfering with Rebels destroying of the bridges, Mahone assigned a brigade for the important task, but as we will soon see this shield was incapable of stopping the battle hardened men of the Union VI Corps from reaching the bridges. (Z3: 21) After Gen. Mahone's men passed all the Rebels and supply wagons over the bridges, they set the bridges afire. Destroying these bridges by the Rebels would be crucial in stopping the main Union Army from attacking the rear guard of Gen. Lee 's column that could cause delays in reaching a safe haven in Lynchburg. Why Mahone did not personally determine that his Brigade was insufficient to stop the Union attack and add more troops to the fight will remain a mystery.

To add more spice to this action, it was early in the morning on April 7th, the day after the Sailor’s Creek Battle, that Gen. Humphreys ordered Gen. Barlow's Division to secure these bridges for the Yankees as soon as possible. (Z5: 43) Another battle was in the offering.

We should pause here and recognize that Gen. Meade was near the skirmishing (second battle) at High Bridge and held overall command of his army in the combat assignments for this area. This was noted in Grant's writings "Meade was back at High Bridge and Humphreys was confronting Lee." (Y: 419) A little later in the morning on April 7th, Humphreys asked Gen. Meade for assistance for his II Corps. He was facing a large force Cumberland Church, just a few miles west from High Bridge. Meade then

ordered Union troops from the Wright's VI Corps in Farmville to support Humphreys, but because of the burnt bridges at the edge of Farmville, they were delayed getting to the battle at the church which was the next important battle. (Y: 419)

Barlow's Division had been assigned the right flank of the Union column on the previous day where there was little fighting. But on April 7th they would see more than their share of trouble. Barlow arrived at High Bridge at 7:00 AM, and with his 19th Maine, and he immediately attacked the Rebels on the wooden bridges. Barlow could not had selected a better regiment than the tough 19th Maine, which successfully held the center of the battle line against "Pickett's Charge" in the Battle of Gettysburg, two years earlier. (V: 424, note 80 on p.760) The Rebels had started fires on both bridges. The Maine soldiers brought up some cannons that fired along the railroad on the bridge, and the Rebels fled to safety. Then, the 19th Maine cut a section out of the railroad bridge, which limited the fire on that structure, but the railroad bridge could not be used. On the wagon bridge, after a brisk fight, the Yankees put the fire out by carrying water in canteens, boxes, and tents, which saved the bridge from destruction. (Z4: 45) But there was a cost to this victory, Col. I. W. Sarbird, commander of the 19th Maine, was taken from the battlefield seriously wounded. Then, Humphreys' Corps crossed over the scorched bridge on their way to attack Gen. Lee's rear guard.

In summary, to view the importance of this critical skirmish, we should consider its effect on Gen. Lee's retreat in moving to the security of Lynchburg. First, it is speculation, but we believe Gen. Lee should have commanded the Rebel troops at the bridge and added more units to the rebel brigade that was assigned to assure that the bridges were burnt. This would have blocked the entire Union Army on that road for about a day – instead the Rebels spent that day fighting at Cumberland Church. If there were no other delays on the route to Appomattox, it is possible that the Rebel Army would have obtained their rations at that town (Custer subsequently destroyed the rations) and marched on to Lynchburg

At this time that there was fighting going on at Farmville, which was temporarily occupied by Gen. Longstreet's Rebels; so Gen. Barlow Division was sent south by a

branch road to support Union forces in the Farmville skirmish. This was a serious mistake because Gen. Humphreys could have later used Gen. Barlow's men in the fighting at Cumberland Church to stop the same Gen. Longstreet's Rebels who came up from Farmville, as we shall reveal. At this church, which is only 3 miles north of Farmville and 4 miles west of High Bridge, (Z3: 61) Lee's rear guard, under command of Gen. Mahone, was planning to make a stand at a good defensive position located on crossroads to protect the much reduced supply train. This same church was Gen. Longstreet's objective when he marched north out of Farmville to join Lee's main rear guard column.

After the Farmville skirmish, Barlow's Division marched north on one of the several dirt roads to rejoin Humphreys' Corps that evening, but it was too late to help the Union forces in the battle at the church. Barlow's orders could be called a real "snafu" because Gen. Humphreys had to settle for a draw in lieu of a victory.

Now, we will fill in the details of the Battle of Cumberland Church. It took until about 1 PM for Gen. Miles 1st Division of the 2nd Corps to catch up with Gen. Lee's rear guard, who put up a surprisingly stiff resistance. The Union Corps marched toward the crossroads at Cumberland Church. In the distance was the crossroads, and on one side was an open field with a slight crest where Col. Poague's 16 Rebel cannons were strategically placed near the church fortifications surrounding the church. The rebels had "dug in" and Gen. Mahone had positioned several battalions of Lee's rear guard so as to prevent any attack on his wagons. Fighting in the past day at Sailor's Creek convinced him that he had to arrange his forces in a strong fishhook-like fashion along a low ridge to stop the Yankees. The Cumberland Church stood on top of the ridge. The tables were turned from the Battle of Gettysburg of long ago when the Union forces held the high ground in a fishhook defensive alignment. At that time, the Rebels charged that fishhook defense and lost. It would be just the opposite this time.

Col. Poague's Artillery opened a wicked fire at the Union column and temporarily stopped the II Corps "cold". (Z4: 53) Then Gen. Humphreys deployed his Union force

for an attack. Mile's 1st Division was assigned the south flank and De Trobriand's 3rd Division was assigned the west flank of the rebel fortifications.

At this time, Gen. Humphreys did not know that the Rebels, earlier in the day, had burnt the bridges on the Cumberland Road and others leading north of Farmville to his location. Thus, no Union support would be available in case he tangled in a serious fight with Gen. Lee's rear guard, which was in front of him. While the VI Union corps set about repairing the bridges at Farmville, it would be too late in the day before Wright's infantry could support the II Corps.

Earlier that day, Gen. Crook had sent Gen. Gregg's cavalry brigade north from Farmville on this road by wading the river to reconnoiter this area. Gen. Gregg attacked a well-guarded section of the Rebel wagon train moving north to join Lee's forces. In the fight the larger Rebel cavalry unit surrounded and captured Gen. Gregg along with several troopers. This ended any hope of support for Gen. Humphreys this day. Unfortunately, Humphreys mistakenly heard this heavy gunfire in the south from the wagon train attack and believed the VI corps was on the way to support him, so he opened his assault on the Cumberland Church bastion.

The battle started at the church after Humphreys heard the gunfire from the south, and ordered Gen. Miles' 1st Division to attack, testing the left flank of Gen. Mahone's position. The Union skirmish line, with the support of 3 regiments of the 81st Pennsylvania, the 5th New Hampshire, and the 2nd New York Heavy Artillery made the charge. (Z4: 55) The line of approach was over broken small gullies of rough hillside, which broke up the approaching Union Army formation. Gen. Mahone's counterattack, with men from Gen. Grime's Division and from Gen. Tige of Anderson's Brigade, swept the Yankees back to their fortifications. (Z4: 56) Although Mahone's forces did poorly in stopping the Yankees at High Bridge, they showed professional prowess in this battle of Cumberland Church.

Gen. Humphreys was not going to give up his attack without another determined effort. Again, Gen. Miles' men were selected to make an attack that was scheduled for about 3:00 PM. In preparing for the attack, Gen. Longstreet took the assignment of

protecting the Rebel right flank. But Gen. Miles decided the opportunity for his success was on the Rebel left flank. Gen. Mahone saw the Yankee forces massing on his left flank and reinforced it with a brigade from Longstreet's Corp as well as some other units. Some of the Union troops moved into line on the left of the Rebel embankment, hoping to get behind the Rebel main line.

Again, as in the earlier attack, there were ravines on the slope toward the Rebel barricades, which tended to break up the Union lines. Col. Scott was placed in command of the 6 attacking regiments. As soon as the Union soldiers reached the Rebel lines, Longstreet initiated a vicious counterattack, that cut off part of the aggressive Union battle line and killed many of the soldiers. The Yankees fell back to their lines in confusion. Minor fighting continued until sunset. At that time, more Union support came as Gen. Barlow's 2nd Division of the VI Corps joined Humphreys' men to continue the fight in the morning. (Z6: 32) (Z3: 46) (Z4: 65) Neither army could claim a significant victory. But the Rebels could claim that they stopped the Yankees from destroying the wagon train with its much needed food and ammunition.

It was not a good day for the Union Army. In the Rebel counterattack, Malone's soldiers took over 200 Union prisoners. (Z3: 46) A count in the field hospitals showed there were some 210 Union wounded. About 150 were from the 1st Division, who did most of the heavy fighting. (Z4: 55) No causality count was available for the Rebel side. The Rebels did save the wagon train with a minimal loss of their soldiers. But they also lost most of the day in their forward movement. However, let us digress for a moment and recall that Malone's men failed early this morning to destroy the critical wagon bridge at High Bridge, permitting Union army to attack the Confederate Army at Cumberland Church. This delayed the forward movement of Lee's Army, and the loss of a day might have provided Lee's army with the loosing hand at Appomattox.

Later in the evening, the Gen. Lee received a note at a house near Mahone's command center. It was from Gen. Grant suggesting that they talk about terms of surrender. After battling the Yankees to a standoff at the church, Gen. Lee and Gen. Longstreet were still hesitant to consider surrender. Lee sent a reply asking for more

clarification of Grant's proposal, which was appropriate. At 11 PM, Gen. Lee moved his army away from the Cumberland Church barricades and marched them 12 miles to New Store where they stopped for a rest. (Z4: 56) It would take time of the Union Army to close the gap between these forces in the morning.

SURRENDER OF THE CONFEDERATE ARMY

To continue the picture of the Rebel retreat, after the heavy fighting at Sailors Creek, and High Bridge, Gen. Lee had lost about one third of his army. Lee revised his strategy for the Army of North Virginia: it was to reach Appomattox Court House, take on supplies and make a shield to retard attacks from Grant's army. Then, they would march for two more days to Lynchburg and safety in the mountains. From Cumberland Church, the trek to Appomattox would take about two days. Skirmishing continued on April 7th between Lee's rear guard and the II Corps along the northern route to Appomattox.

On this same day, in the early morning of April 7th Gen. Longstreet's Corps was in Farmville where they arrived from the fighting at High Bridge. The Corps was treated to Rebel food stores supplied by seven Rebel railroad trains. (Z4: 47) Soon, cavalry and infantry of Gen. Grant's forces arrived at Farmville, which resulted in active skirmish. The trains soon move to safety. Gen. Longstreet pulled his men out of Farmville, burnt the bridges, and marched his Corps forward to join Gen. Lee at Cumberland Church. Then, Gen. Lee's army marched along the northern route toward Appomattox. We should point out that Gen. Alexander (Gen. Lee's artillery expert) suggested to Lee that it would save time to take "the southern river road" from Farmville, which paralleled the South Side Railroad to Appomattox. This was the same road that the Union Gen. Ord's Army took later to Appomattox; Ord's Army played the critical card in winning the last battle. (Z4: 47) Think of this view. If Lee would have used the trains to move some his troops to Appomattox, his base at that town may have been secured, and the face of battle could have favored the Rebel retreat.

Only Humphreys' II Corps and Wright's VI Corps remained under Gen. Meade's Army of the Potomac Command as Grant's northern flank, they fought Gen. Lee's Army

in the Battle of Gettysburg, a long time ago. They were finally marching to victory, and they knew it. They would go home to their families, isolated from the horrors of this war. We have no doubt that the brave, starving Confederate soldiers were of a similar feeling. Today, the Union II and VI Corps would again be doing the daily heavy fighting to pressure Gen Lee's column. Moreover, Lee's army was also traveling on roads along the northern route. On this route, during April 8th, Rebels were marching beyond New Store towards Appomattox, with fighting at every turn in the road. (X: 169)

Now, we will turn to the southern flank of Grant's Union Army as it advanced toward Appomattox. The southern route from High Bridges to Appomattox was shorter than the one on the northern flank, but the difficulty of travel was about the same. However, there was little fighting for the Union Cavalry along the southern route except for Sheridan's significant engagement in a heavy role at Sailor's Creek and Farmville. And in the evening of the 8th, Sheridan ordered his cavalry units to the railroad station on the outskirts of Appomattox where they captured railroad cars stockpiled with food for Lee's starving army. Only 3 out of 7 trains escaped. Additional details of this important skirmish will be given later as Gen. Lee moved into Appomattox. But the supplies in these 3 trains were a source of hope for the Rebels, who now faced the Union cavalry. (Y: 421) This southern route permitted faster movement as it mainly followed the Southside Railroad alignment through Prospect Station. This station was only 10 miles south of New Store; the village at New Store was located on Grant's northern flank where the rebels were also traveling towards Appomattox. Thus, Grant's Armies were split traveling to Appomattox by a southern route and by a northern route as we will describe.

Two senior Union commands that answered to Gen. Grant, were marching on the southern route. One command was Sheridan's Cavalry. The other command was Gen. E. O. Ord's Army of the James, which included Gen. Griffin's infantry of the V Corps, including Chamberlain's troops. (X: 169) (Z6: 44) Gen. E. O. Ord was the senior officer present on the southern route. (X: 169)

Orders from Grant reassigned Wright's Corps to Meade's Army of the Potomac on the northern route, completely out of touch from Sheridan. It was Humphreys' II Corps

and Wright's VI Corps under the senor command of Gen. Meade that did all of the rear guard fighting with Longstreet's Rebels as the long column moved closer to the Appomattox Court House.

The large infantry command on the southern route, Gen. Ord's Army of the James, also included Gen. Gibbon's XXIV Corps and Gen. Birney's XXV Corps (Colored Troops). (X: 169) It is noted that the Union Gen. Gibbon was seriously wounded in "Pickett's Charge" long ago in the critical fight at Gettysburg. Gen. Ord was the senior commander on the southern route, and he was a little slow in his march to the front lines at Appomattox. He had not seen any fighting since Richmond, and Griffin's V Corps let Gen. Ord pass along the line to have the honor of leading the next attack at Appomattox Village. Griffin's V Corps, with Chamberlain's Brigade in its center, had marched 29 miles that day. The march for this Union column stretched into the black of night when no fighting was feasible. (X: 171) A bugle signaled "rest", and the entire column sank to the hard ground, "dead" tired, which was a few miles from Appomattox Village and the next skirmish.

On the northern route in the afternoon of this same day, Gen. Lee's Army entered the general area containing Appomattox Village; in fact, the supporting artillery of Lee's Army was parked near Appomattox Village, which made a good target for Union cavalry. The supporting Rebel artillery was close to the railroad station, and the question may arise: why did not Gen. Lee assign his cavalry to protect his food supply at the station and his artillery? There was no critical military assignment for the Rebel cavalry at this time. In fact, Gen. Fitz Lee told his uncle, Gen. Lee, at 1;00 PM this same day that he expected the Union Cavalry would attack ahead of the Rebel column to slow it down so the Union infantry could attack Lee's column. (Z3: 50) Not following up on Fitz Lee's observation was a serious error in tactics.

As previously mentioned, in this same evening Gen. Custer's cavalry division and Gen. Devin's cavalry division destroyed Lee's army food supply along with most of the trains at Appomattox Village. Later, these Union cavalry divisions found the park of Lee's supporting artillery units nearby, and destroyed many of cannons. Then, both of

these outstanding Union cavalry generals took their troopers to the high ground on the ridge just north the village. The roughly 6000 dismounted troopers were told to "dig in" on the road leading to Lynchburg. (Z6 44) This was Lee's main strategic objective to provide safety to his army. They were to hold this point at all costs until Gen. Ord's Army arrived. If we take the number of 22,349 soldiers for Gen. Lee's infantry who surrendered at Appomattox, it is easy to see these Yankee troopers were in for a bit of real trouble and a piece of Hell. (Z6: 44) The final battle of this war would begin as the sun rose in the east.

The end was near for Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. We should trace the movements of Gen. Grant and Gen. Lee along with the players in this event. It had been nearly two years since the Union victory at Gettysburg, but Gen. Lee still had not decided to surrender; he wanted to escape westward. To make this discussion clear, we will separate their actions into 1) key military units on the battlefield and their role in the surrender, 2) Lee's role, 3) Grant's role, and 4) final unification.

As we have written, the past victory at Gettysburg was only the beginning of a long series of battles that ended in the final destruction of the Rebels at Sailor's Creek and Appomattox. Think of the many actions fought by the officers and soldiers (less their dead) who served with Meade's Army of the Potomac and Lee's Army of Northern Virginia in this long war. The men of both armies had fought each other in the great battle of Gettysburg and would soon finish it at Appomattox.

Let us continue the story pertaining to Griffin's V Corps as they soundly slept on the ground after a long march to just outside Appomattox near midnight. There is no record in Grant's memoirs of transferring Griffin's V Corps (including Chamberlain's Brigade) to Sheridan's cavalry that was to block the northwestern road. This road was to be used by Lee's remaining troops to reach safety in the west at Lynchburg. After the Battle of Sailor's Creek, Gen. Sheridan and Gen. Wright clashed over whose men should receive credit for the victory. Gen. Wright refused to write the battle report until Grant ordered him to do so. (X: 156) Thus, to restore harmony, we believe Wright's VI corps was reassigned their old spot with Meade's Army of the Potomac. Wright would now

lead the assault on Lee's rear guard, fighting below Longstreet west of New Store. (X: 169) To replace Wright's VI corps, Grant assigned Griffin's V Corps to Ord's Army of the James in the Union's southwestern advance to Appomattox without ever mentioning the conflict between his generals. In fact, Gen. Meade, by protocol, remained in charge of the northern Yankee column.

Ending of the Long War

It is difficult to piece together the many critical events in this stage of the fighting because they happened at the same time. Jeff Shaara in his book, *The Last Full Measure*, clarifies many of the points. We will trace the some of the events pertaining to Gen. Grant's activities in the days leading up to Gen. Lee's surrender. In the evening at Farmville on April 7th, after the destruction of over a third of Lee's army, Grant sent Lee an informal note through the lines asking him to surrender and stop the bloodshed. However, after his successful stand-off at Cumberland Church, Lee delayed answering, but he ultimately agreed to meet with Grant. (Y: 419)

It is important to note that Lee's reply came through Humphreys' II Corps on the Northern route of the Rebel escape to the West. Humphreys' II Corps was on the point of the Union column and closely supported by Wright's VI Corps in fighting confined by the rugged terrain. The Rebels would sometimes split their Army column to speed up the travel by using different roads. In this last phase of the Rebel movement, the column was separated near Sheppard into two nearby routes. The Rebels in Gordon's Corps on one route were pursued by Humphreys' II Corps. In the other part of the column on a parallel route, the Rebels under Longstreet were under attack by Wright VI Corps. (Z6: 34, 35)

This was the place for the commanding officer of the army to be. So the next day, April 8th, Grant rode his horse to make contact with Gen. Meade and Gen. Humphreys, who were skirmishing with Gen. Longstreet's rear guard between New Store and Appomattox. (Z2: 509) By the time Gen. Grant reached the front lines, he was afflicted with a serious headache stemming from battle fatigue and the long horseback ride. Grant stopped to rest in a large vacated house near Gen. Meade's headquarters in the rear of the main body of the Union Army. (Y: 422) The location was at Sheppards about 17 miles

from Appomattox Court House. The remedy for Grant's condition was application of a mustard plaster. It was in this house at midnight that Gen. Grant received a second letter from Gen. Lee asking for a meeting on peace terms. (Z6: 35) Both Grant and Meade played an important role in directing battle decisions on this front as this final chapter of the war unfolded.

Now, we will tell of a most important scene in making the final decisions of the war. In the late afternoon of April 8th, the Rebel Army reached the hilly outskirts of Appomattox after marching hard westward for the past two days following the battle of Sailor's Creek. No enemy was in sight, but there was little food and the men were exhausted. The Union cavalry, under orders from Gen. Custer, had disrupted the railroad trains that would have provided essential food and supplies.

Gen. Lee was informed by his cavalry commander, Gen. Fitz Lee that the Union cavalry divisions were expected to arrive early the next morning. So he called together his senior commanders that evening at a campfire on the outskirts of Appomattox to ask for their views on the direction of the army. His senior generals attending the meeting were Longstreet, Gordon, Fitz Lee, and Pendleton. The unanimous decision was that the Rebel Army, led by Gordon's infantry, Fitz Lee's cavalry, and Long's artillery, would strike any Union soldiers in their way at sunrise and then march for the mountains to the west. (L: 394) However, there was a condition placed on the attack by Gen. Lee: if they met cavalry, the attack would proceed, but if they met a large body of entrenched troops, then they would abandon the fight. He did not feel that Gordon's depleted infantry was strong enough to successfully break through a stronger Union force. (Z: 822) (Z2: 522) Reports on Custer's evening attack on the trains may have reached Gen. Lee sometime after this meeting with his senior commanders; however, it did not change the battle plan for the morning attack.

We believe that sometime after Lee's meeting with his generals, reports were received by Lee's command post that the Union cavalry had arrived sooner than they were expected. The war plan from the earlier meeting was still valid; Gordon Divisions would attack at sunrise in their westward march to security.

As previously told, after the leading Union cavalry units had captured the supply trains at Appomattox, the divisions of Gen. Custer and Gen. Devin were then ordered to dismount and block the road needed by the Rebels to retreat to the west. The two cavalry divisions were greatly outnumbered by Lee's army units and waited anxiously for support by the Gen. Ord's infantry. (Z: 521) (X: 175) It was a true "cliff hanger". Although the Yanks were armed with repeating rifles, which gave them greater firepower, the Rebels clearly held the edge since they were a very capable and determined army with superior numbers.

An interesting common bond between these two cavalry divisions was their action at Gettysburg years ago. Devin's cavalry held back Lee's army on the first day at Gettysburg until the main Union infantry force arrived; on the last day at Gettysburg, Custer's cavalry prevented the Rebel cavalry under Gen. Stuart from destroying the Union troops at the rear of the main battle line. This day, they were again replaying critical roles against Lee's valiant soldiers.

Gen. Meade, the Union commanding officer at Gettysburg, along with his Army of the Potomac were now on the scene of this last battle on the northern flank of Gen. Grant's Army. He directed the army from his command post in an ambulance since the old wounds in his lungs were "acting up". (Z3: 54) Meade was tough and smart; he was "damn" determined to stay until the end of the fight, clear his name with President Lincoln, and go home to his wonderful wife. (E: 495)

At this point, we should digress to recall a time on Meade's first day when he first took command of the Union Army at Gettysburg. He wrote his wife, "We are marching as fast as we can to relieve Harrisburg (Capitol of Pennsylvania), but have to keep a sharp lookout that the Rebels don't get in our rear. They have a cavalry force in our rear, destroying railroads etc. with the view of getting me to turn back, but I shall not do it. I am going straight for them and settle this thing one way or another." (D: 125) In the morning, April 9th, his two corps were in the battle line facing the corps of Gen. Longstreet (his old archenemy) at Appomattox. About mid-morning, after Gen. Ord's Union Army securely blocked the Lynchburg Pike and stopped the main Rebel attack,

Gen. Meade, was preparing his command for the attack to "go straight for them and settle this thing" when a messenger from Gen. Lee arrived with Lee's note on surrender talks. Gen. Meade's attack was stopped by a "whisker". Meade decided to wait two hours.

As we previous mentioned, Lincoln's un-mailed letter to Meade, chastising his performance on the last days of the Gettysburg Battle, lay hidden for years in Lincoln's desk and would remain uncorrected to give honors to Meade; Abe Lincoln was assassinated 5 days after the surrender of Lee's Army. Gen. Meade was now directing Humphreys' II Corps and Wright's VI Corps in their continuing skirmishing with Gen. Longstreet's Corps, who were trying to protect Gen. Lee's rear guard. Strangely, these were some of the main players (Lee, Longstreet, Anderson, Gordon, Fitz Lee, Pendleton, Pickett, Ewell, Mahone, Meade, Humphreys, Wright, Devin, Merritt, Webb, Barlow, Cowan) who fought at Gettysburg. They were now ending their long war, with the road from Gettysburg to Appomattox strewn with American dead.

As given in Gen. Lee's plan, General Gordon did attack a little before sunrise. Gordon's Rebels spread out in front of the Union cavalry and attacked the Union dismounted force on the ridge behind their small barrier, which was easily overcome. Within the next half hour or so, the Union line had retreated about a mile. (L: 399) Gen. Gordon was winning his battle! Just as Custer's and Devin's Union divisions of dismounted troopers were collapsing, out of the sunrise came Griffin's V Corps and Ord's Army of the James at double-time. They arrived just in time to re-enforce the battle lines and change the face of battle from war to surrender. There was a lull as the Union infantry fell into place on the battle line. The Rebels then hesitated to advance when they saw the strengthened positions. The long terrible war was ending. In our view, Gen. Custer, Gen. Devin and their troopers should have been awarded high national honors for their determination to hold the line, as the battle had favored the Rebels. This was an unusual event in its timing that ended the killing in our long Civil War.

The End—A Cliff Hanger

We have a strange story to tell at this point as Lady Luck played her hand to help Ord's infantry shore up Custer's and Devin's troopers as they faced Lee's superior

attacking Rebels. We must go back to the event that we previously mentioned when Gen. Chamberlain and his battalion of the V Corps laid down to sleep along the road, which was about 6 miles (2 hours of fast marching) from Appomattox. (X: 172) At this point in time, Gen. Sheridan was with his cavalry on the front lines. Long before daylight on the 9th April, a messenger urgently rode to up to Ord's army command with critical orders from Gen. Sheridan that read something like push your infantry up to the battle now. Sheridan's vanity would not admit that his cavalry was unable to stop Lee's infantry in their initial successful attack.

Under these orders, the entire column under Gen. Ord was moving forward into battle, including Griffin's V Corps. Chamberlain's brigade was now in the center of the V Corps. Before daylight, a Union staff officer urgently rode out of trees at the side of the column and recognized General Chamberlain by his rank. When asked by the staff officer what his duties were, Chamberlain replied that he commanded two brigades (about 2000 men). The messenger said that Gen. Sheridan had no time for orders through the normal chain of command, but to break from the column and follow him, as Sheridan's flank was under heavy attack. (X: 174) Chamberlain informed Gen. Griffin of his new orders, and with quick time they followed the staff officer to the critical battle position.

At this point, Ord's main leading units (some 10,000 men), along with Devin's cavalry division, were responding to the Rebel Gen. Gordon's attempt to break through on Lynchburg Pike. (L: 399) (X: 174) Gen. Gordon (a Confederate general at Gettysburg) then tried for another breach in the Union Line near the Court House. Chamberlain moved to the point of attack, and he successfully repelled Gordon's front. Chamberlain was acting with same determination as he did at Gettysburg, when he and his men stopped the Rebels from turning the flank of the Union Army long ago. This was the unfortunate development that Gen. Lee dreaded. (X: 174)

It is interesting to note that Ord's men who were blocking the road included Gen. Birney's Negro Corps, the XXIV. They participated in this last battle, and they fought well to keep their freedom. (X: 169) What is remembered about Gen. Birney? His old

division suffered 40%'s causalities in his critical defeat at Devil's Den and the Wheat Field in the Gettysburg battle. (D: 570) In this last battle, he was determined to not let Gen. Lee break the battle line.

It was obvious to Gen. Gordon that the stalemate signified the last phase of battle was over. His reply to a question on the existing Rebel position from Col. Venable of Gen. Lee's staff was "Tell general Lee I have fought my Corps to a frazzle, and I can do nothing unless I am heavily supported by Longstreet." As this was repeated to Gen. Lee, his response was, "Then, there is nothing left for me to do but go see General Grant, and I would rather die a thousand deaths". (L: 401) Shortly, Gen. Meade's two large corps were held from continuing their fighting, since Meade knew of Lee's surrender letter that was just past through his front. The surrender terms were a main issue for Gen. Lee, but actually stopping the killing became another serious matter for the Rebels.

As we mentioned, Gen. Grant spent the night of the 8th April sick in bed with horrible headache in a pleasant farmhouse near Meade's headquarters. This location was close to Gen Humphreys' II Corps skirmishers on the front battle line. It was certainly a blessing that official messages could be exchanged through the skirmishers from both armies, as we shall soon see. Long overdue, a letter finally came during the night from Lee addressed to Grant. Lee said he would not surrender his army, but would listen to Grant's terms at "old stage road". (Z2: 511) Grant commented to his aide that " it appears he intends to fight it out". He added that he was disappointed, and in the morning (9th April), Grant said that we may "all reply" (back to the practice of war). (Z2: 511)

During the same period that Lee was trying to contact Gen. Grant through the II Corps front (9th April), another message was sent through this troublesome contact of skirmishers. This was an important message, unrecognized by most historians. It was received by Gen. Lee from the Union Gen. Seth Williams, who was Meade's army adjutant general in charge of Rebel prisoners and alike. (E: 130) Long ago, Williams was a trusted aide to Gen. Lee, when Lee was superintendent at West Point. Since Grant, Meade, and Williams were at the same place at the same time, it is very likely all of these men knew about this important message that Williams sent; it showed compassion for an

old soldier. It said that Gen. Lee's missing son, Custis was alive and unharmed from his capture at the recent battle of Sailor's Creek. (L: 407) Given this development, one can imagine Lee's positive feelings about terminating this long war and seeing his sons with his wife again.

During this time, while Lee was close to the Union line of Humphreys' II Corps, the battle reports convinced Gen. Lee that there was no option but surrender. Gen. Marshall, Lee's aide, wrote Lee's brief but important surrender message to Gen. Grant. "I received your note this morning on the picket line, whither I come to meet you and ascertain definitely what terms were embraced in your proposition of yesterday with reference to the surrender of this army". (L: 405) Lee's letter was positive in regard to Grant's prior terms of surrender.

At this occasion, we should point out that Gen. Humphreys' II Corps was holding Gen. Longstreet Corps on Lee's northern flank from moving into position at Appomattox. And now comes a point of irony. Long ago in the battle of Gettysburg, General Longstreet's Corps destroyed Gen. Humphreys' Division with some 40% causalities (D 571) in fighting over a break in the Union line at the "wheat field". Today, Gen. Humphreys was aching to settle that score and destroy Longstreet's Rebels "once and for all".

But life doesn't play the cards that easily. Although Lee and his staff had been on the picket line close to Meade's Headquarters, Lee's surrender letter (which could only be opened by Grant) would be hours in finding Grant as he was on his way by horse to reach Sheridan's lines. Further, Grant was under the impression at this time that Lee would not surrender; he had ordered Meade to continue the battle. Meade sent a messenger to Lee explaining this delay. And Grant could not be reached to stop the killing! Lee sent a messenger back to Meade and asked him to read the surrender letter intended for Gen. Grant. As Commander of the Army of the Potomac, Gen. Meade ordered his army to delay the attack two hours, and he suggested to Gen. Lee to make a copy of the letter and have it carried directly to Grant through the lines on the southern flank. It was a "shortcut" to peace and the journey home to Meade's lovely, lonely wife.

When Gen. Grant finally received the messenger, along with the surrender letter, his severe headache suddenly disappeared. He wrote a note telling Lee that he was 4 miles west of Walker's Church, which was near Appomattox and the time was 11:50 AM. He would push forward. (Y: 424) But it would still take about two hours to reach Lee on horseback. The messenger, with his white flag flying, hurried back to Lee. Time was running out, and battle could commence at any time. There is no mention in our books that Gen. Meade would start his part of the war at noon. After reading the letter, he knew killing Rebels was not the thing to do when they were surrendering. But this was not quite the case with Sheridan, who commanded the southern flank of the Union army. We shall soon reveal that Sheridan did not conceal his feelings to those nearby. He wanted unconditional surrender. These were harsh terms compared to those finally offered by Gen. Grant. (X: 183)

Now, we will return to the point in time in midmorning when Chamberlain's two brigades stopped Gordon's attack cold near the Court House. After this, the battle stalled for a short time, and a young Rebel staff officer rode up with a white flag on a pole. He was from Gordon; the rider said Gen. Gordon had sent the message, "For God's sake, stop this infantry, or hell will be to pay!" (X: 180) These famous words echoed through time into our schoolrooms. It meant they really wanted peace. Of course, Chamberlain could not act on this commitment, so he sent the rider to his corps commander, Gen. Griffin. Shortly, the order came back to cease firing and halt. (X: 181) His soldiers threw their hats in the air! Truce was set to last to 1:00 PM, but Gen. Sheridan was the overall commander, and no one could judge what the hot-head was thinking. It was a "cliff hanger", and the trigger was held to prevent more killing. At an unmarked spot near the Court House, Confederate officers, Gordon, Wilcox, Heth and "Rooney" Lee (Gen. Lee's son) gathered to talk to Sheridan and his staff. They told Sheridan that "in good faith the game was up for them". (X: 183) But Sheridan, a little flaky, did not trust them.

It was after one o'clock and the front lines had been quiet for some time. But Sheridan had not heard from Gen. Grant. Grant had received the surrender message and was riding his horse toward the front as fast as possible. Sheridan issued orders for Gen. Griffin to prepare for battle. The rifles had been stacked in good order; but then, Gen.

Griffin seemed to destroy all hopes of peace by ordering Gen. Chamberlain to have the men "prepare" and they re-took their rifles. They were in a good position across the road and "stood fast", waiting. (X: 183) The killing field had become ripe for more dead. As he was preparing for battle, Chamberlain mounted his horse. Just then, he felt a "strange sense of some presence, invisible and powerful - like those unearthly visitants told of in an ancient story, charged with a supernal message!!!"(X: 184) As he turned on his horse, there appeared Gen. Lee, a proud stately figure, with his staff riding with their flags between the Union lines. (X: 184) Well, how could Sheridan restart the fighting when his prime adversary was riding peacefully through the Union Army to parley with Gen. Grant?

At that point, Gen. Chamberlain's soldiers again restacked their rifles and waited in anticipation for the final word of victory. They had to wait until a little before 3:00 PM, when Gen. Grant arrived at the McLean House in Appomattox. (J: 386)

In the front room of the McLean House, Gen. Grant greeted Gen. Lee with humbleness and dignity. Grant's terms were clear, simple, and noble: the enemy soldiers would merely lay down their arms, obey the law, and go home. (Z3: 51) Sadly, Meade was still in his ambulance, recuperating the resurgence of his war injury. (Z3: 54) But he still firmly held command of his men, who were holding Gen. Longstreet's Corps at bay from attacking on the flank of the Union line. Unfortunately, Gen. Meade, Gen. Lee's long-worthy opponent, was denied his long-earned honor to witness Lee's surrender, as the Generals pens verified the terms.

Finally, the killing ended and there was peace; the United States would be reunited. The value of slavery, termed the "golden rod" would be no more. The blacks were free and would never be bought and sold again. Perhaps, one day a dedicated black would even become President. And so it happened. Some 143 years later in 2008, a black Harvard law graduate with the uncommon name of Barack Hussein Obama, was elected President of these United States.

Lincoln's everlasting speech on a cold, fall day following the battle of Gettysburg told the purpose of this terrible civil war and remains the hallmark of our national

freedom and destiny. "…Our fathers brought forth upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal…that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation under God, shall have a new birth in freedom—and that, government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." (W: 402)

EPITAPH OF THE CIVIL WAR

We are indeed fortunate that Derek Smith caught the essence of our great Civil War in a scene on the last day of the killing fields in his book, *Lee's Last Stand.* On the day when Gen. Lee signed the surrender agreement with Gen. Grant at Appomattox, another heart breaking story, that should be a part of our history books and is as touching as Lincoln' Gettysburg Address, was being played out. It told of a death that should not have been. Smith powerfully writes to bring the Lord's Prayer into this war, "For new drummer Delavan Miller, the war ended with a sorrowful encounter with a dying youngster from South Carolina, who had been grievously wounded either at Sailor's Creek or in the Farmville fighting. The Rebel, not old enough to carry a musket, was found in a wagon taken by Union troops at Appomattox surrender." Of Miller, we are told:

> He, too, was a drummer boy and had been wounded two or three days before. We got our surgeon and had his wound dressed and gave him stimulants and a little food, but he was very weak, "all marched out," he said, and was afraid that he would not see his old Carolina home again. We bathed his face and hands with cold water and his lips quivered and tears coursed down his cheeks as he faintly whispered of his widowed mother. We, too, were "marched out" and had to lie down and rest, but before leaving "Little Grey" as we called him, two boys knelt by his side and repeated the Lord's Prayer that had been learned at a mother's knees. In the morning the little Confederate from the Palmetto state was dead, we buried him on the field with his comrades." (Z5: 222)

The killing field at Appomattox had received its last dedicated patriot.

BIOGRAPHIES OF LEADING GENERALS by John R. Caldwell

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