

ARMY HISTORY

Summer 2019

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The Professional Bulletin of Army History

ARMYHISTORY

The Professional Bulletin of Army History

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Issue Cover: *The Battle of Five Forks*, by Paul D. Philippoteaux
(Virginia Historical Society)

EDITOR'S JOURNAL

The Summer 2019 issue of *Army History* features an interesting Civil War article and a thoughtful commentary in response to our staff-ride-themed Winter 2019 edition. We also highlight a unique artifact, the installation of more fascinating exhibits at the National Museum of the U.S. Army (NMUSA), and an extended message from our chief historian on the ongoing production of the series of volumes covering the Vietnam War.

The first article, authored by Matthew T. Percy, concludes a story that started in the pages of *Army History* nearly a decade ago. This piece is the third in what is now a trilogy covering Union general Andrew A. Humphreys. The initial article by Percy, titled "No Heroism Can Avail: Andrew A. Humphreys and His Pennsylvania Division at Antietam and Fredericksburg," appeared in the Summer 2010 (No. 76) issue. The second submission, entitled "Nothing but the Spirit of Heroism: Andrew A. Humphreys at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg," was published in the Summer 2013 (No. 88) issue. With his third offering, Percy brings to a close the epic story of one of the greatest corps commanders in the Union Army.

The next piece, by Temple University history professor Gregory J. W. Urwin, offers a response and a unique perspective concerning our Winter 2019 issue that covered staff rides. As all the contributors featured in that issue were from the Department of Defense, I thought it important that a point of view from civilian academia also be offered. Hopefully readers will find Urwin's observations of value.

This issue's artifact spotlight centers on a piece of Army history with religious symbolism and a connection to D-Day. As we commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Normandy landings, it seems fitting to examine a chaplain's flag that went ashore at UTAH Beach and traveled well beyond. The NMUSA feature examines the installation of two important macro artifacts in the *Cold War* and *Army and Society* galleries. The UH-1B Iroquois "Huey" and the R-4B "Sikorsky" helicopters on display have interesting histories all their own and tell an important part of the Army aviation story as a whole.

In this edition, the chief historian takes some extra space to explain the genesis and production of the ongoing U.S. Army in the Vietnam War book series, and how the lessons learned from producing these volumes are improving practices in writing the "Tan Books," as the volumes covering Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM will be known.

As always, I invite your submissions and comments as we strive to publish engaging content and improve this journal.

Bryan J. Hockensmith
Managing Editor



SUMMER 2019



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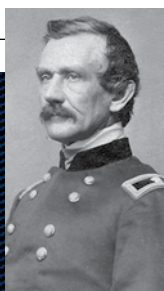
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**MUSINGS OF A STAFF-
RIDE FACILITATOR**

GREGORY J. W. URWIN



CHIEF HISTORIAN'S FOREWORD

JON T. HOFFMAN

LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

The Center of Military History (CMH) recently received a public inquiry about the genesis of the U.S. Army in the Vietnam War book series. It turned out we had a fifty-page working paper on the subject written in 1981, drawn primarily from contemporary records and supplemented by the memory of those who were involved in the early days of the project. It makes interesting reading as CMH moves forward on the new “Tan Books” series covering the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Vietnam effort began in the shadow of the U.S. Army in World War II series, which was then the major focus of the Center’s publishing effort. The secretary of war had formally initiated the World War II official history program (eventually known as the “Green Books”) with War Department Circular No. 45 issued on 12 February 1946. It succinctly stated the mission: “The War Department will prepare and publish an official history of World War II.” In four short paragraphs covering half a page, the directive sketched out the plan for accomplishing that goal. A year and a half later, Chief of Staff of the Army General Dwight D. Eisenhower followed up with a memorandum emphasizing declassification of information to the greatest extent possible to support work on the series.

In contrast, the Army did not issue similar directives for Vietnam, though CMH started work much closer to the events being covered. In July 1965, barely two months after the first U.S. Army ground combat units deployed to the conflict, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General Creighton W. Abrams Jr., told CMH to prepare a history series “comparable in objectivity and reliability to the one treating World War II.”¹ The Center already had a preliminary monograph underway covering the Army’s activity in support of the South Vietnamese army before 1965. In 1966, CMH began planning the details of the series, recognizing that because the war was still ongoing, things could change.

There was considerable debate over a number of issues. One was how to cover combat operations, because they did not lend themselves to the typical narrative of a conventional campaign—a starting point, the movement of front lines, and an ultimate conclusion. There was talk instead of documenting selected actions at different command levels to provide a representative sample of the Army’s experience in Vietnam. The chief of military history

settled the discussion, directing that combat volumes would provide a chronological campaign narrative similar to the Green Books. Another point of contention was how to handle national policy, as classification issues at that level had hampered work on the Korean War series. The result was a focus on the war at the service level and below. Finally there was deliberation whether the Center would do all volumes in the series, or farm out some of the specialized topics to the relevant commands and technical services, as it had done for the Green Books. There was consensus that it would take about six years to produce each book—the same planning factor CMH is using for the Tan Books.

At the end of 1966, CMH adopted a plan envisioning six volumes: advice and support to the Vietnamese 1954–1965, planning and support at the Department of the Army level, combat operations (two volumes), logistics, and combat techniques (covering special operations, aviation, riverine warfare, etc.). On 6 December 1966, two authors formally began work on the planning and support volume. In March 1967, the Center established a Southeast Asia Team of seven historians. The project thus had momentum less than two years into the war. At almost the same time, the chief of military history expanded the series to ten volumes, adding ones on engineering and medical activities, advice and support from 1965 onward, and a one-volume overview of the conflict. To ensure information about national policy decisions would be available, he also believed that CMH “should originate a move which would lead to making the needed Defense Department records available to all service historical offices.”²

In 1971, the Center undertook a comprehensive review of the series and expanded it to fifteen volumes. It dropped the combat techniques book, deciding that those activities properly belonged in the chronological combat narratives. The additions covered communications, U.S.-based logistical support to the war, a third combat volume for the period around the Tet Offensive, a fourth picking up the action after that, and a pictorial history. Two years later, CMH completed another reassessment, driven by the shortage of available authors, and evaluated cutting the number of volumes in half. The study actually expanded the series by one book, though it changed some of the topics. Over the next eight years, the series grew to twenty-three projected volumes.

NEWSNOTES



ARMY HISTORY AUTHOR WINS JAMES MADISON PRIZE

Dr. Thomas Boghardt is the recipient of this year's James Madison Prize for his article "Semper Vigilis: The U.S. Army Security Agency in Early Cold War Germany," which appeared in the Winter 2018 issue (No. 106) of *Army History* magazine. Given by the Society for History in the Federal Government, this annual award recognizes excellence in an article or essay that centers on any aspect of the federal government's history. The prize emphasizes not only value in furthering our understanding of the federal government but rigor of methodology and the employment of original and underutilized primary source materials. Dr. Boghardt is a senior historian at the U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH).

SEARCH FOR MATERIALS

CMH is in search of source material related to Army operations in Southwest Asia, 1991–2001. If you have "green book" journals, documents, narratives, pictures, *Desert Voice* newspapers, or other related material, please contact Dr. J. Travis Moger at jourden.t.moger.civ@mail.mil.

Operations of interest:

VIGILANT WARRIOR (1994)
VIGILANT SENTINEL (1995)
DESERT STRIKE (1996)
DESERT THUNDER (1998)
DESERT FOX (1998)
INTRINSIC ACTION Rotations

WORLD WAR II CAMPAIGN BROCHURES CONVERTED TO EPUB

To coincide with the seventy-fifth anniversary of World War II, CMH is converting all forty of its World War II Campaign Brochures into ePub format. All brochures are currently available in PDF format on the CMH Web site, but ePub format will allow for better viewing and expanded capabilities on tablets and other e-readers. The first batch of seven brochures to be released are *Normandy*, *New Guinea*, *Rome-Arno*, *Southern France*, *Rhineland*, *Leyte*, and *Ardennes-Alsace*, with the rest to follow. These ePub versions include new covers and title pages, contemporary fonts, rescanned and enhanced photographs, additional images, some updated and redrawn maps, a World War II seventy-fifth anniversary logo on the inside front cover, and a new introduction for the series by Jon T. Hoffman,

CMH's chief historian. The new ePub editions of these brochures will be available alongside the original PDF versions here: <https://history.army.mil/html/bookshelves/collect/ww2-broch.html>.

WOMEN'S MILITARY HISTORY SYMPOSIUM

On 18 July 2019, the Smithsonian will host a one-day symposium, *Towards a More Inclusive Women's Military History*. The forum will convene students, archivists, scholars, and curators of women's military history—as well as veterans and active members of the military—to share their work, reflect on the past and future of women's military history, and develop a way forward for a more inclusive community across diverse institutions and audiences. Concentrating on the collective network of military institutions located in the Washington, D.C., region, the symposium seeks to build connections and foundations for the broader community of interest. If you are based in the national capital region and interested in attending, contact Miranda Summers Lowe (summerslmm@si.edu).

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“NOTHING DAUNTED”

ANDREW A. HUMPHREYS, THE UNION II CORPS,
AND THE APPOMATTOX CAMPAIGN

MATTHEW T. PEARCY



(Left) Maj. Gen. Andrew A. Humphreys; (Top) Crow's Nest battery and lookout in front of Petersburg, Virginia

Maj. Gen. Andrew A. Humphreys (1810–1883) was the best chief of staff in the storied history of the Army of the Potomac.¹ He was smart, meticulous, and obsessively hardworking. He had accumulated in the years before the Civil War more high-level administrative experience than anyone in the Army. Over a period of sixteen months, he served successfully under the mercurial Maj. Gen. George G. Meade and played a vital role in bloody encounters in Virginia at the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg. In June 1864, prominent newspaperman and War Department liaison Charles A. Dana called Humphreys “the great soldier of the Army of the Potomac.”² Others, including Meade and Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, admired his talents as a strategist, tactician, and topographical engineer and were effusive in their praise.³ But the fiery and ambitious Humphreys was always apathetic about the position. Several weeks into it, he grumbled to a friend that “it suits me in nothing, my habits, my wishes, my tastes. It is even more distasteful to me than I can well express.”⁴ He wanted a top field command, preferably something in the Army of the Potomac, and vowed to quit volunteer service if he did not get it.⁵ Then in November 1864, a way opened. Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock, still suffering from a festering wound received at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, relinquished command of the vaunted II Corps. Grant turned it over to Humphreys and never for a day regretted it.

NEW COMMAND

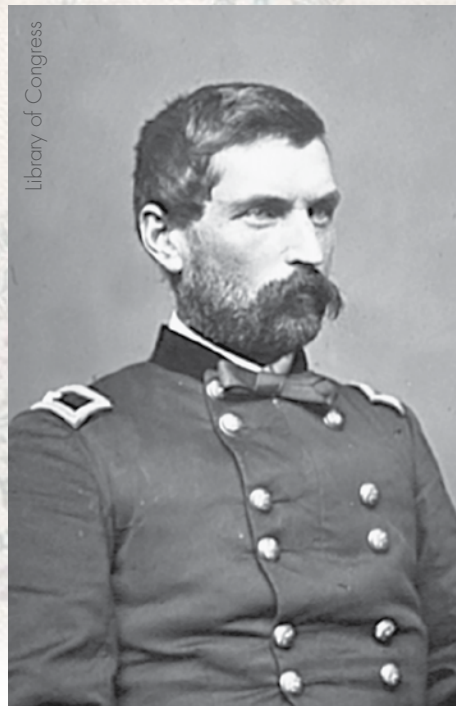
On a brisk Saturday morning, 26 November 1864, Humphreys mounted his gray mare, Beckie, and departed from his familiar

spot at Army headquarters in the direction of his new assignment. “Expressing their regard,” fifteen mounted officers skipped breakfast to accompany him to his new post and remained with him all morning, stomachs growling.⁶ The II Corps held a dangerous and fatiguing frontline position on the army’s right, east of Petersburg, and it took Humphreys and his entourage more than an hour to navigate the nearly six miles to his new headquarters.⁷ There he was warmly received by Hancock, a fellow West Pointer and Pennsylvanian and probably the most consistently successful corps commander of the war. The two were “best of friends,” according to Humphreys, and had been “since we first met in the Peninsula [Campaign].”⁸ They later fought together at Gettysburg in a desperate effort to resist and ultimately throw back a slashing Confederate attack along Emmitsburg Road.⁹ At Petersburg, they were occasional eating (and drinking) companions.¹⁰

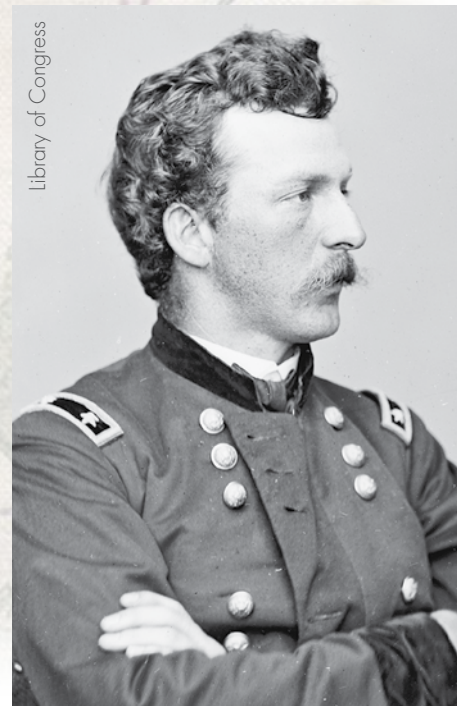
That morning they “passed an hour and a half together,” during which Humphreys met with his division commanders. All three were, Humphreys wrote, “known to me and very clever men they are.”¹¹ The best was Maj. Gen. John Gibbon who commanded the 2d Division, but he was “mad,” as one staff officer described him, at being passed over for command of the corps.¹² He asked to be relieved, but Meade, and later Grant, talked him down.¹³ Brig. Gen. Nelson A. Miles, a gifted 25-year-old officer who later gained fame as an Indian fighter, ably managed the 1st Division. Maj. Gen. Gershom Mott led the 3d Division. He was brave and popular with his men but was, as one contemporary historian wrote, “lacking a little in that stirring ambition.”¹⁴



General Grant



General Gibbon

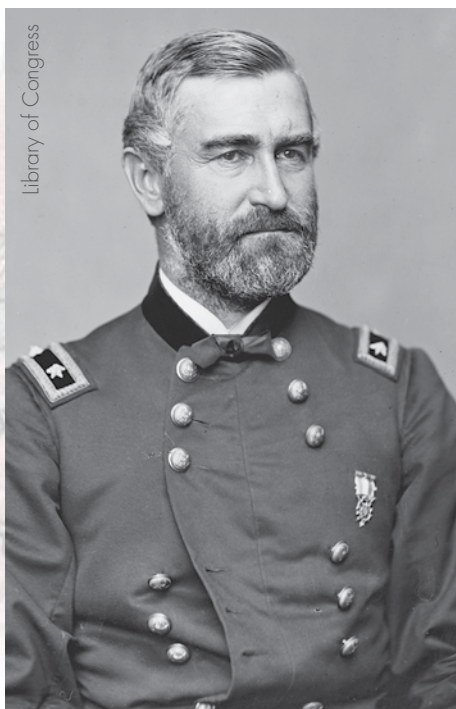


General Miles

At midday, Humphreys saw Hancock off to the train for City Point and returned to set up camp. "The transfer to a new command," he wrote to his wife, Rebecca, "is always uncomfortable. There are so many little arrangements to make or to be understood." In this case, however, it was "all . . . done quickly and without fatigue."¹⁵ Before the sun set behind enemy works, he had "tents pitched and arranged" and "settled . . . the servants, the horses, the orderlies, [and]

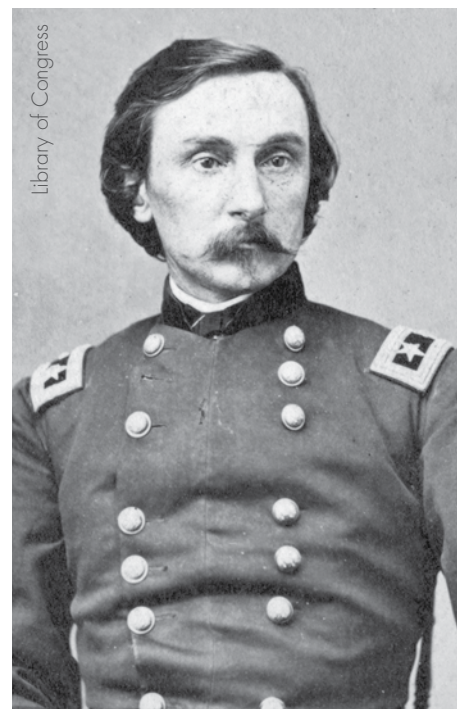
the mail carrier." He met—all on that first day—with each department head, including the "Inspector General, Chief of Staff, Chief Commissary, Chief ambulance, Chief signal, Provost Marshall, Chief of Artillery." He also drafted a general order marking the transition and promising the men that "I shall try to do my duty, and preserve your reputation unsullied."¹⁶ By evening he was content. "Everything is now arranged like an old establishment."¹⁷

Wartime exigencies saw that second engineer entity take over the first to create a combined Corps of Engineers headed by a new chief of engineers at the rank of a brigadier general in the Regular Army. The top engineer job was, as Humphreys foreshadowed years earlier, the only one in the Army "worth striving for."¹⁸ That alone seems to explain his support for the 1863 merger that put him crossways with most of his fellow topographical



General Mott

As the new commander of the II Corps, Humphreys could also take satisfaction in knowing that he and his fellow West Point engineers now dominated the highest ranks of the Army of the Potomac. Meade, an 1835 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, was, of course, the commanding general. Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren, the "Hero of Little Round Top," had the V Corps; Maj. Gen. John Grubb Parke led the IX Corps; and Maj. Gen. Horatio G. Wright commanded the VI Corps. Coincidentally, Warren, Parke, and Wright each graduated second in his class at West Point—in 1850, 1849, and 1841, respectively. Humphreys, an 1831 graduate, was five years older than Meade and the oldest major general in the Army. He already had served thirty years as an Army engineer—the vast majority of that time with the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers, which later produced Meade, Parke, and Warren as well. Wright was the product of a companion organization, the Army Corps of Engineers.



General Warren



Portrait of General Meade and corps commanders in the vicinity of Washington, D.C., June 1865. From left to right: Major Generals Wright, John A. Logan, Meade, Parke, and Humphreys



Colonel Lyman

engineers. Parke and others staunchly opposed the move and the consequent loss of a distinct topog identity.¹⁹ There would be stiff competition for postwar assignments in the consolidated Corps of Engineers, particularly for the top job, but, as an engineer, Humphreys enjoyed a reputation second to none. He understood, perhaps better than his rivals, that much would depend on the outcome of the war with reputations made (or unmade) on the battlefield—and with Grant as a likely final arbiter. Humphreys was anxious to distinguish himself. According to one close staff officer, the wealthy bon vivant and diarist Lt. Col. Theodore Lyman, Humphreys was “in high glee at going [to the II Corps], and will be in despair if a big fight is not got up for his special benefit.”²⁰

THE II CORPS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

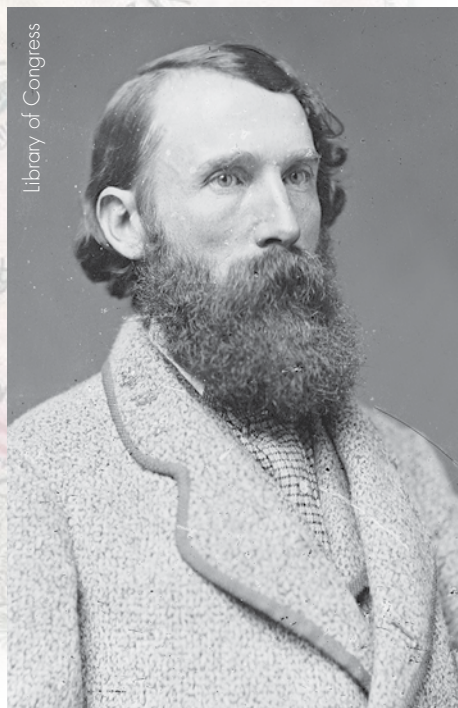
President Abraham Lincoln’s landslide re-election in early November 1864, together with the start of Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman’s devastating March to the Sea through Georgia and the Carolinas, hastened the end of the Confederacy, but the rebel army remained a formidable and dangerous foe. General Robert E. Lee (himself a onetime Army engineer) and the battered Army of Northern Virginia, numbering 50,000 men, were entrenched at Petersburg behind powerful fortifications. They maintained supply lines via the South

Side Railroad and Boydton Plank Road, both approaching from the west, and the Weldon Railroad from the south. Grant faced Lee with 100,000 men positioned mainly to the east and south of Petersburg. The Army of the Potomac constituted the bulk of that force, and it too had been bled by years of hard fighting. Meade, who spoke “strictly confidential, as I would be condemned for telling the truth,” reported that “this army . . . lost one-hundred thousand, killed and wounded” through 1863 and another “ninety thousand men, killed, wounded, and missing” through November 1864.²¹

Of its four remaining corps, the II Corps was the oldest and most celebrated. Its men had fought and died by the thousands on famous battlefields stretching from the Bloody Lane at Antietam to Devil’s Den at Gettysburg to the Mule Shoe salient at Spotsylvania. It suffered the highest numerical losses of any Union corps with a wartime casualty rate approaching 40 percent. Its officer ranks had been decimated. Over the years, twelve brigades had chewed up twenty-five commanders, and the replacements were, according to Hancock, “not half as good as when he started.”²² Things were even worse at the regimental level where the expiration of the three-year enlistees, the patriotic volunteers of 1861, in summer of 1864 exacerbated painful losses at the Wilderness and Cold Harbor.



General Lee



General Hill

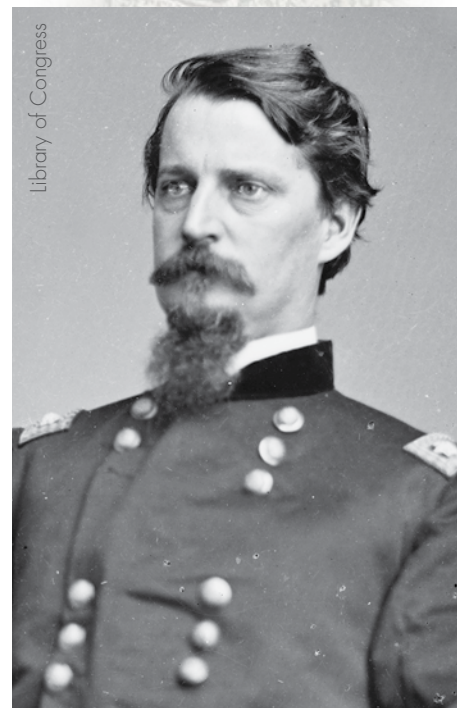
The Union had to discharge thousands of hardened veterans. To replace those wounded, killed, and retired, the Union armies turned to draftees, substitutes, and bounty men. Many were paid as much as \$1,000 to enlist, a tidy sum in 1864 and a powerful inducement that lured the uncertain as well as the unscrupulous.²³ These “reluctant soldiers” swelled the depleted ranks of the II Corps and, together with returning veterans, made good nearly all of the losses sustained in the Overland Campaign the previous spring.²⁴ Still, much of the army was green and of generally poor quality.²⁵

These worrying deficits had already brought disaster to the II Corps. After the crater incident in late July, Grant abandoned the frontal assault for a series of flanking maneuvers intended to stretch rebel defenses to the south, weaken the line, and expose the railroads behind Lee’s right and rear. These lines were the lifeblood of Richmond. Lee had to hold them or abandon the Confederate capital. In mid-August, Warren and his V Corps destroyed the final few miles of the Weldon Railroad as it approached Petersburg from the south, forcing Lee and his teamsters to haul supplies in wagons by a roundabout way. A week later, Grant followed up with Hancock and two of his divisions (Mott stayed behind) to extend the job. It went well enough at first. By late

evening of 24 August they had destroyed an additional eight miles of track and worked their ruin several miles south of Reams Station as far as Malone’s Crossing. Under a blazing summer sun, the soldiers raised large fires to heat the rails, bend them, and otherwise render them useless. Some they twisted but, try as they might, could not manage the shape of the II Corps emblem, the trefoil (“Clubs are trump!”).²⁶

That night, Hancock received a dispatch from Chief of Staff Humphreys indicating that “large bodies of infantry,” about 8,000 to 10,000 men, had been seen “leaving their works” about sunset and “passing southward from the Petersburg entrenchments.”²⁷ These were elements of the Confederate Third Corps, under the command of Lt. Gen. A. P. Hill. Forewarned, Hancock returned to Reams Station and settled into open trenches. These had been “hastily thrown up” by the VI Corps two months earlier and were, according to Humphreys, “slight.”²⁸ Hancock made little effort to improve them before the following afternoon when Hill’s division smashed headlong into his works. Three green New York regiments under Miles caught the brunt of it, and the line buckled. Some of the soldiers fled, but most surrendered en masse. Gibbon fared little better as his men “fell back in great confusion.”²⁹ It was a rout. Badly stung by the failure of his two crack divisions, Hancock ordered a withdrawal to the east. His losses were 559 men killed and wounded, 2,046 men captured and missing. He had also lost nine cannon and twelve colors, several times the losses at any previous engagement.³⁰ Hancock blamed the lack of experienced junior officers, some of whom did not speak English, and the poor quality of the new recruits. The whole affair dealt a devastating psychological blow that left Hancock and his men deeply scarred. It forced Grant to admit that the “gallant old corps” was, at the moment anyway, unfit for offensive operations.³¹




In a late November letter to his wife, Humphreys related the sorry condition of his new command—“a corps with a high reputation, but completely broken down, as everyone knew.”³² The terrible battles of May and June and the debacle at Reams Station had nearly extinguished the fire that had always animated the II Corps.³³



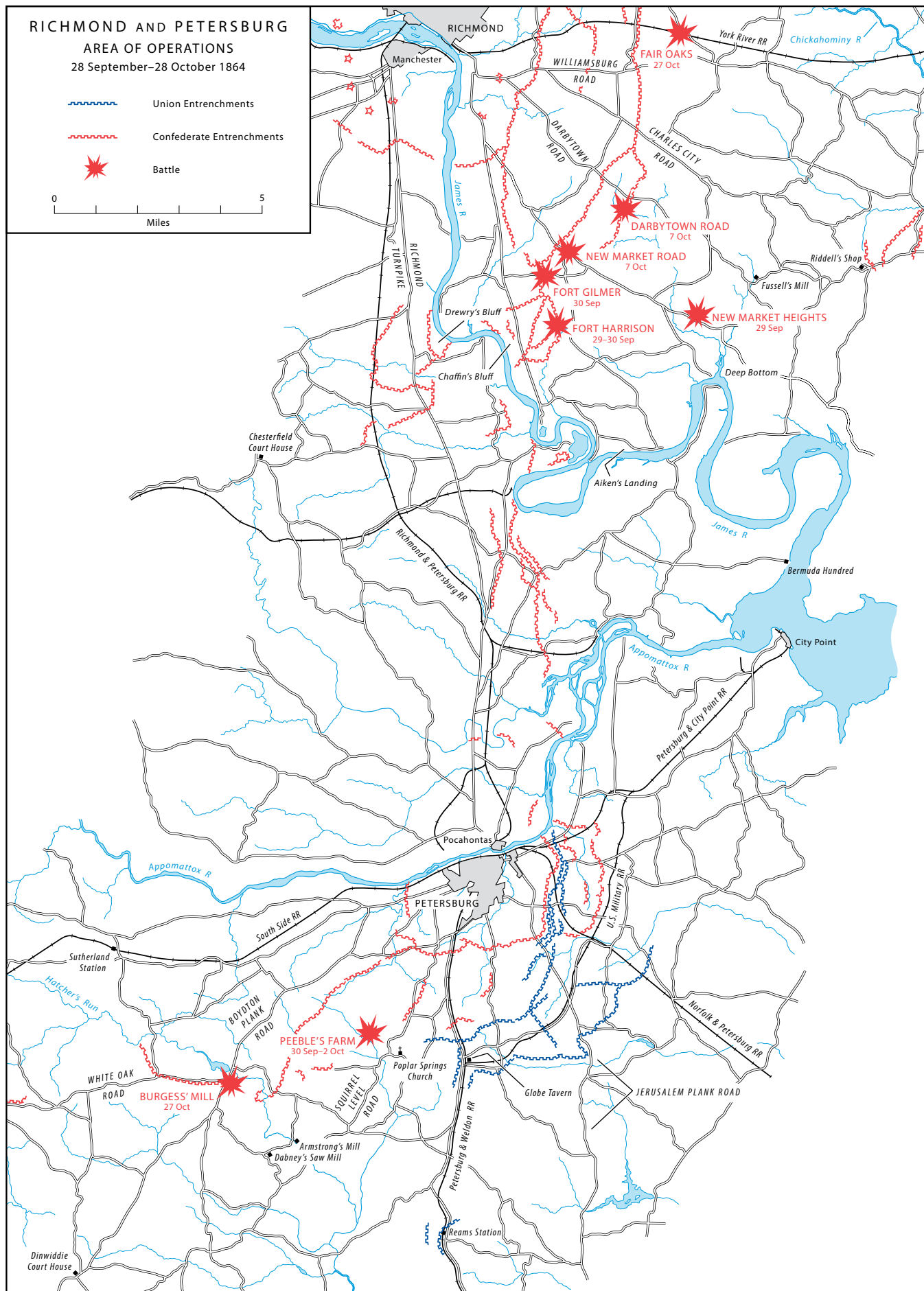
General Hancock

It needed rest but could find little at its current frontline position in the vicinity of Fort Sedgwick (also known as Fort Hell).³⁴ For three months, Hancock held the right of the entrenchments before Petersburg. Running for five-and-a-half miles and punctuated by a series of enclosed forts, these were “in close contact with the enemy where the [sniper and artillery] firing was incessant.” The danger, as Humphreys explained, was that “troops lose their discipline in long continued campaigns” but “especially if they are kept in trenches” where conditions precluded any “opportunity for drill or rest” or to assimilate incoming recruits who composed more than half of the enlisted men in many regiments.³⁵ Two days after assuming command, he received orders to transfer his corps off to the extreme left. He was to swap places with his friend and fellow Pennsylvanian, Parke and the IX Corps. This was, as Lyman explained, “a delicate job in the face of the enemy, who are pretty close up; but it was all done in entire quiet.”³⁶ Humphreys located his new headquarters along Squirrel Level Road in the vicinity of Peeble’s Farm. From this new vantage point, he was happy to report that for the first time in many months, “virtually the whole corps is resting and in reserve.”³⁷ He could now turn his attention to the heavy work of restoring the II Corps to its former glory.

RICHMOND AND PETERSBURG AREA OF OPERATIONS 28 September–28 October 1864

-  Union Entrenchments
-  Confederate Entrenchments
-  Battle

0 5
Miles



STAFFING THE II CORPS

First, Humphreys needed a personal staff that he could trust. His inclination was to bring back the old gang—a coterie of loyal staff officers from his previous division commands.³⁸ At the top of the list were Captains Carswell McClellan, Henry C. Christiancy, and his eldest son, Henry H. “Harry” Humphreys. His close association with McClellan went back to July 1862 when Carswell, a Williams College graduate and first cousin to former army commander Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan, transferred to the Corps of Topographical Engineers, Army of the Potomac, then under Humphreys. McClellan followed Humphreys as a staff officer through his two division commands before transferring to Army headquarters. He was serving in that latter capacity when Confederates captured him along with 2,500 Union soldiers on 19 August 1864, during Warren’s first assault on the Weldon Railroad. McClellan did a two-week stint at the infamous Libby Prison in Richmond and was granted parole on 16 November. Then, “compelled from imperative private considerations,” he resigned his commission.³⁹ Upon hearing from his former commander, he moved to recall his “order for my dismissal” but inexplicably was boxed out.⁴⁰ Humphreys blamed it on “personal hostility to [Carswell’s cousin] General McClellan in the War Department” though persistent rumors of alcoholism had long followed him.⁴¹ Deeply disappointed,



Colonel Whittier



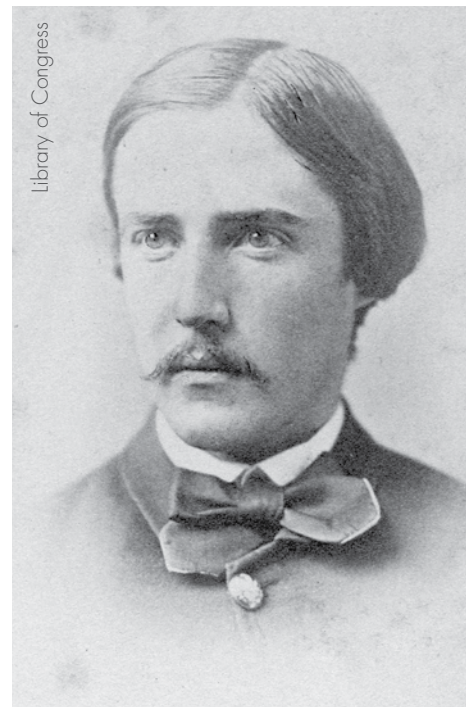
(Left to right) Lieutenant Christiancy, Lieutenant Humphreys, General Humphreys, Captain McClellan, Capt. Adolfo Fernández Cavada

Humphreys had, as he wrote to his wife, “counted much on having him with me. He is a most efficient officer and a devoted friend.”⁴² His luck was no better with Christiancy who had apparently tired of Army life, returned to his native Michigan, and was, as he excused himself, “expecting to go into business within a month.”⁴³ That left only Harry who had scarcely left his father’s side since abandoning his studies at Yale Scientific School for an Army commission in October 1862.

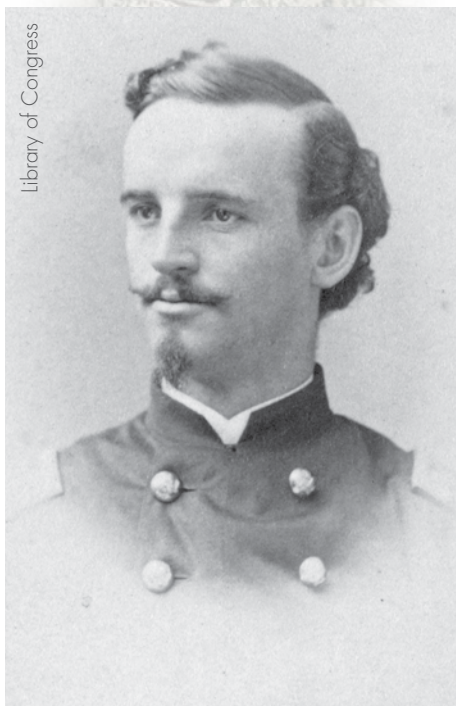
Joining Harry on staff, then, were several exceptional young officers. Two, like Colonel Lyman, were recent Harvard graduates from the Boston elite. They were Lt. Col. Charles A. Whittier and Capt. Charles James “Charlie” Mills, both classmates (class of 1860) of the martyred Col. Robert Gould Shaw of the 54th Regiment Infantry, Massachusetts Volunteers. Whittier came from a family of abolitionists. One prominent relative, John Greenleaf Whittier, was a “fireside poet,” a newspaper editor, and close associate of William Lloyd Garrison. In 1861, the younger Whittier received a commission into the famed 20th Regiment Infantry, Massachusetts Volunteers, nicknamed the “Harvard Regiment” for the preponderance of the college’s graduates among its officers. Before joining Humphreys late in the war, he was senior aide-de-camp to Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick, then commander of the VI

Corps. Whittier was at Sedgwick’s side at Spotsylvania when a sniper’s bullet claimed the life of the popular general.⁴⁴

Mills studied engineering at the Lawrence Scientific School for two years before the war began and was a nephew of the prominent Navy scientist, R. Adm. Charles Henry Davis, who later served with Humphreys on the U. S. Lighthouse Board. Mills was injured



Captain Mills



Major Livermore

badly at Antietam—shot through both thighs while prone on a sweltering battlefield—and was discharged for disability. He worked briefly for his uncle in the Navy’s new Bureau of Navigation but was anxious to return to the war, which he did in January 1864, though he was scarcely fit for it.⁴⁵ As a fellow officer recounted, “one leg was shorter than the other and he was obliged to walk with a cane, and climbed with great exertion into his saddle,” though “this did not dispirit him at all.”⁴⁶ He was already on staff when Humphreys took command of the II Corps and soon became, as the general later admitted, “one of my favorites.”⁴⁷

A third staff member was Maj. Thomas L. Livermore, who shared a tent with Mills. Born in Galena, Illinois, Livermore lacked the advantages of birth and family but was quick-witted and good with numbers. When war came, he was a student at Lombard University in Galesburg, Illinois, and was anticipating an appointment to West Point. He thus declined service in a company raised in his hometown and, for a time, drilled by a “Mr. U. S. Grant,” whom Livermore described as “a leather dealer... who had been a captain in the army, a quiet respectable diligent man.” The academy appointment never materialized, and the eighteen-year-old soldier rushed off to Washington, D.C., to enlist as a private in the 1st Regiment, New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry.⁴⁸ By November 1864, Livermore was a captain in the 18th Regiment, New

Hampshire Volunteer Infantry, and holding down a staff position in the II Corps.

THE HICKSFORD RAID

As Humphreys pulled his personal staff together, Grant made plans for a third raid on the Weldon Railroad. “If but one Corps goes on the expedition,” he wrote Meade, “I would as soon General Humphreys would command it as any other officer.” He ultimately decided on a larger force “of twenty thousand infantry” that would combine elements of two corps and so went with the senior Warren and his V Corps supplemented by an additional infantry division from the II Corps—Mott and his 3d Division.

Humphreys stayed behind, but the episode showcased his best brigade commanders. The two could not have been more different in personality or temperament. Brig. Gen. Robert McAllister, a former Pennsylvania railroader and a staid, clean-shaven, Presbyterian teetotaler (nicknamed “Mother McAllister” by his men) was in command of the 3d Brigade. The colorful French artist and aristocrat, Brig. Gen. Régis de Trobriand, a childhood playmate to a grandson of Charles X of France, commanded the 1st Brigade.⁴⁹ Humphreys and de Trobriand were, like Mott, veterans of the old III Corps and were well acquainted and friendly.

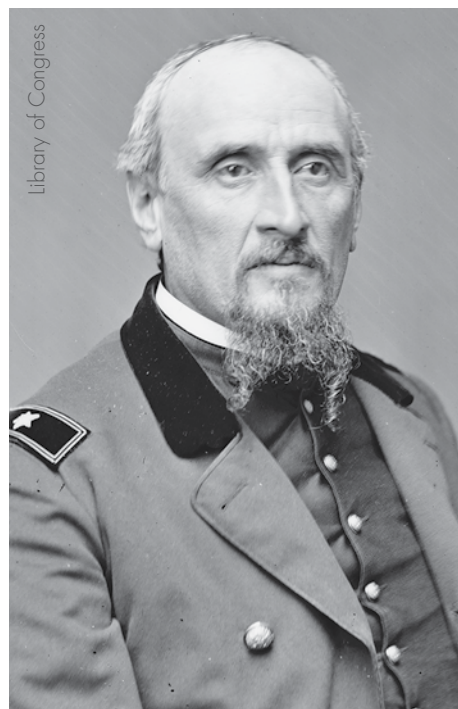
Very early on 7 December 1864, Mott’s division followed Warren out of Petersburg on a southwesterly march along Jerusalem



General McAllister

Plank Road. A heavy fog soon gave way to warmer temperatures and, despite some early rain, a comfortable autumn afternoon. It was good marching weather. The long blue column covered twenty miles that first day and another fifteen the next, bringing it to Jarratt’s Station on the Weldon line. The army’s only mounted division, then operating under Brig. Gen. David M. Gregg, had already cleared the area of rebels, burned the station and bridge, cut the telegraph line, and, together with men of the V Corps, begun a somewhat feeble effort to destroy the road.⁵⁰ Mott’s division guarded the trains before retiring for the night as area temperatures plunged into the teens.⁵¹

The men awoke to a cold north wind, ate their breakfasts, and moved stiffly down the tracks in preparation for their work of destruction. Mott rode up to his 3d Brigade with instructions but McAllister politely rebuffed him. McAllister later explained, “As I was a builder of railroads, I thought I ought to know how best to demolish them.” His plan was simple and effective. He lined his full brigade in single file along one side of track and then, as he explained to his wife, gave an order “not known in tactics and not taught at West Point.” It was “Take Hold!” whereupon several hundred men grabbed and loosened one end of the crossties and lifted them waist high in a common effort. Then, to the order of “Turn Over!” the men flipped the entire track. That done, the track broke apart easily, with the ties burned and



General de Trobriand



General Gregg

the iron rails melted. The men then moved down the line and repeated the process. The men completed the entire work by 2100, with track demolished for twenty miles to the town of Hicksford (now Emporia) on the Meherrin River. The men then settled in for the night.⁵²

The following morning, 10 December, they awoke to a “strange scene.” An ice storm had transformed the Virginia countryside into, as de Trobriand later recounted, a “landscape of sugar candy.” It was “as beautiful as an opera decoration, and fantastic as a fairy tale, but exceedingly uncomfortable.”⁵³ As late morning temperatures crept above freezing, a slow thaw saw conditions quickly deteriorate. Mud and ice turned the road into a pig wallow. Some soldiers were “almost barefooted,” according to McAllister, “shoes having given out as they often do on a long march.”⁵⁴ And there were other more deadly hazards. Lee had already dispatched A. P. Hill to intercept the column, and it was a race against time to avoid an open fight. Then there was the immediate threat of local guerrillas. These irregulars avoided the main body of soldiers but fell upon stragglers in deadly raids. The guerrillas captured one group of six or seven dalliers and stripped them of their clothing, placed them in a rough circle and summarily executed them—“shot in the head” according to McAllister. The irregulars murdered other soldiers while they slept in local farmhouses—their bodies

had been found with “the throat cut, the head crushed in by blows of an ax, and the breast pierced by a knife.”⁵⁵ These atrocities sparked a blind fury in the men, and, as de Trobriand recalled, “punishment began at the same hour.” Union men burned the Sussex County Courthouse and, with Hill and his Confederates forgotten, continued to unleash their rage on the return to Petersburg. They torched thirty or more plantations to include barns, cotton gins, and haystacks. They even burned the large tavern on the Nottoway River before crossing it and stopping for the night.⁵⁶ The following day, the weary bluecoats reached Petersburg unmolested and filed back into camp. The Hicksford Raid, as it became known, was the final campaign of 1864.

WINTERING AT PETERSBURG

The approaching winter proved to be “one of unusual severity,” but the Army of the Potomac weathered it remarkably well.⁵⁷ The II Corps had only recently relocated to the extreme left of the Union lines, so the men spent the first days adjusting to their new location and building temporary lodging. Some scratched together wooden shacks. Others remained in tents but put down wood plank foundations. Still others appropriated the crude huts left behind by the IX Corps and made them their own. Many of the officers, like McAllister, put up simple log cabins.⁵⁸ But Humphreys preferred a tent when in the field and, in a late-January letter to his wife, was unabashedly sentimental about outdoor life.

There is the wind still rising and falling in its notes among the pine tops on the grove in which our tents are pitched. How much I shall miss the sounds, familiar to me as the accompaniment of three winter camps, were I transferred to more humanizing scenes. What companionship they have made with me all through life, those sounds of the wind in the pine forests.⁵⁹

Daily necessities were plentiful throughout the winter. The sprawling depot at City Point, a tiny backwater before the war but by 1864 one of the busiest ports in the world, pushed forward a steady flow of food, clothing, ammunition, and other supplies. The numbers were staggering. On an average day, vast warehouses held 9 million standard rations and 12,000 tons of hay and oats. A commissary bakery built on the grounds produced 100,000 servings of bread a day. Two dozen locomotives and 275 railroad cars delivered the goods along a dedicated rail line.⁶⁰ Thanksgiving had been an extravaganza as turkeys, chickens, geese, apples, baked beans, and assorted pies arrived by the thousands. This extraordinary bounty was, according to Lyman, “a great treat to our ragamuffins.”⁶¹

With his men settled into winter quarters and their immediate needs met, Humphreys saw to it that training began in earnest. Drilling became part of the daily routine as officers worked to restore discipline, conformity, and trust while teaching and practicing battlefield maneuvers. The 141st



Union headquarters at Petersburg from 1864 to 1865



A view of City Point

Regiment Infantry, Pennsylvania Volunteers, one of Mott's regiments, followed a typical training regimen. According to its chaplain, it spent the early winter "doing camp and picket duty . . . and engaged in regular drills when not otherwise employed."⁶² On 26 December it had its "first dress parade since they set out on the spring campaign."⁶³ Several days later in a formal general order, Humphreys enjoined his division commanders to use "every hour of favorable weather for drills and evolutions. Regular recitations in tactics and regulations should now be had, and the Articles of War should be frequently read. A systematic effort should be made by division, brigade, and regimental commanders to bring their troops to the highest practicable state of discipline."⁶⁴

Humphreys reviewed Gibbon's 2d Division on 12 January and, though a sopped field left his grey mare "floundering in quicksand," was pleased with what he saw. "The troops looked finely, clearly intelligent, active young men with their arms in elegant order."⁶⁵ Two days later, Gibbon left to take command of the XXIV Corps in the Army of the James. It was a loss for the II Corps, but Humphreys had a ready replacement in 32-year-old Brig. Gen. Thomas Alfred "Tom"

Smyth, a prominent Irish nationalist, former carriage maker, and one of the most experienced and capable brigade commanders in the Army.⁶⁶ On 17 January, Humphreys reviewed Mott's 3d Division which he "found in surprisingly good condition. In fact, the whole corps seems to me to be in excellent discipline and improving daily." McAllister's brigade especially impressed him, which he thought "the finest . . . yet inspected."⁶⁷ Humphreys hoped "by spring to see the Second Corps as effective as it ever was."⁶⁸

To combat winter doldrums, the Union men turned to all types of entertainment. Music was pervasive. The II Corps had "several bands, but," according to Humphreys, "only two that are remarkable."⁶⁹ In late January, he enjoyed "some delicious air from a German band . . . a favorite quartette." He especially liked a song called "The Chapel," with the "words and music being descriptive of the chapel as seen perched in the distance on a mountain peak." Minstrel troupes were popular in camp and often accompanied by a banjo. Humphreys described one show headed by a small man, "his face . . . grotesquely misshapen, his figure dwarfed," and later joined by four or five others, one of whom

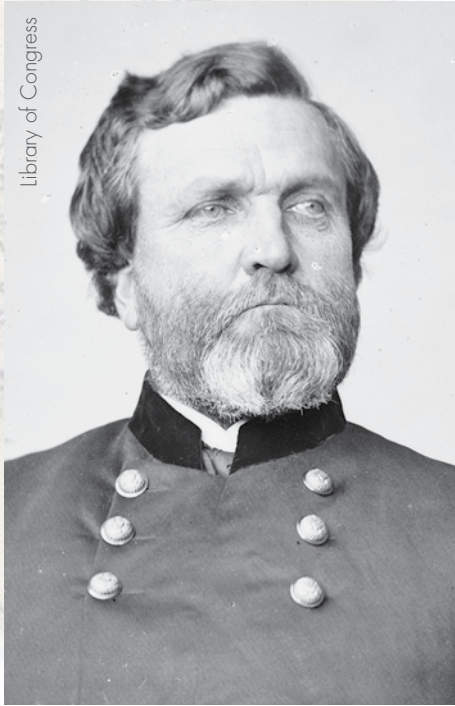
was "more grotesque, dwarfish, and comical and impish than the first." It was a rousing show. "They danced," as the general recalled, "until they exhausted us with laughter."⁷⁰ Horse racing was another popular activity. Thousands attended a St. Patrick's Day race organized by the 1st Brigade (also known as the Irish Brigade) with Humphreys presiding and Warren and Meade in the audience.⁷¹ The brigade erected a grandstand and distributed sandwiches and whiskey punch. Preliminary foot, sack, and mule races set the stage for the main event which included several flat and hurdle races. Livermore's new horse, Ajax, marred the festivities when it "bolted to one side" of an obstacle and struck a soldier of the 69th Regiment, New York Volunteers. The man later died of head injuries.⁷²

News from afar was plentiful and practically all good through the winter. December brought word that Union Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas had crushed Confederate Lt. Gen. John Bell Hood, a former student of his at West Point, and destroyed the Army of Tennessee as an effective fighting force. The Army of the Potomac celebrated by "firing a hundred shotted guns from the forts." The fall of Savannah, Georgia, a week later had the men "wild with delight." The capture of Fort Fisher, North Carolina, the "Gibraltar of the South" in mid-January and the fall of Charleston, South Carolina, a month later "gave such evidence of waning power [of the Confederacy] that the men began to forecast the day when their services were



General Smyth

Smithsonian Institution



General Thomas

no longer needed.” For the men of the II Corps, there was additional and more immediate evidence that the Confederacy was “tottering to its fall.”⁷³

The months following Lincoln’s re-election, which gutted any prospect of a negotiated peace, saw a sharp spike in Confederate desertions. Lyman estimated that 900 rebels had come over the Union lines in the month of February alone and that, notably, “these were old men [veterans]—nearly all of them—and not raw conscripts.”⁷⁴ That same period saw the return of thousands of Union veterans. Such was their confidence and resolve, wrote one regimental historian, that “conscripts and hirelings were animated by it and the Army of the Potomac was itself again.”⁷⁵

While Humphreys prepared his men for a spring campaign that many believed would end the war, he continued to fret about his postwar prospects. The seniority system that determined rank in the old Army was rigid and demonstrably flawed, but it curbed favoritism and corruption and was, if anything, predictable.⁷⁶ The war, together with the merger of the two engineer corps, tossed it all in the air, and the resulting uncertainty created enormous anxieties for Humphreys. He shared these with his wife in early November:

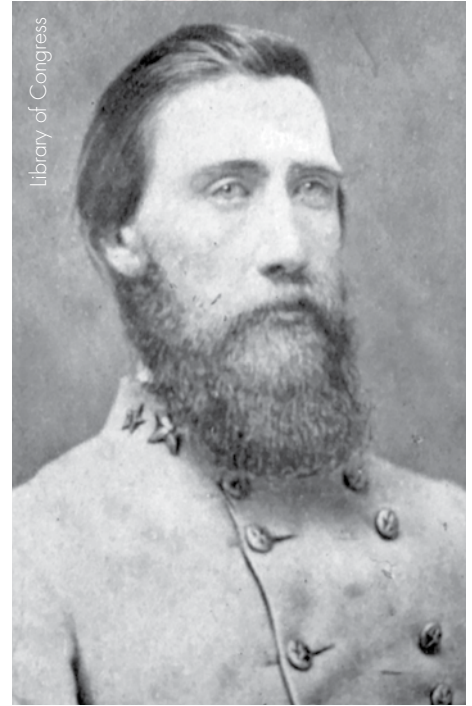
Those who have accepted commissions in the Volunteer Service, like myself, and have served in the highest positions with the

highest rank known in the Army . . . [and] have led divisions and corps in battles that are famous, are nothing more in the regular service than they were at the beginning of the war, and when necessity for the large volunteer forces ceases they will have nothing but their old regular army commissions.⁷⁷

His concerns were not unfounded. Promotion in the Army had always been slow, relying as it did on the death or resignation of more senior officers. By the time of the Civil War, Humphreys had decades of distinguished service yet held the rank of captain. He was elevated to major in August 1861 while still with the topographical engineers. His final wartime promotion in the Regular Army came in March 1863, and, despite his volunteer rank of major general and his recent elevation to corps command, he remained yet a lieutenant colonel in the Corps of Engineers.

Meanwhile, men whom Humphreys considered rivals had stayed behind “in Washington, Philadelphia, and New York, and . . . received Corps promotions in the Regular Army owing to the expansion of the Staff Departments.” Among these were Brig. Gen. George W. Cullum (superintendent of West Point), Maj. Gen. John Gross Barnard (chief engineer of the armies in the field), and Brig. Gen. Richard Delafield (chief of engineers). Another prominent engineer, Montgomery C. Meigs, became quartermaster general of the Army in May 1861 and held that position throughout the war at the rank of brigadier general.⁷⁸ Humphreys’ relative position in the field was no better. Fellow engineers Warren, Wright, and Parke—all much younger—ranked him in the volunteer service and threatened to overtake him in the engineer corps as well. Meade was promoted to major general in the Regular Army in early December and, unbeknownst to Humphreys who thought his immediate commander had “done nothing in recommending any corps commanders or myself for anything,” Meade had also been lobbying Grant for months to promote Warren, but not Humphreys, to a brigadier generalship in the Regular Army. Warren was, of course, a dear friend and close protégé of Humphreys but fully twenty years his junior.

After two months of “mortification and depression,” Humphreys set aside his better



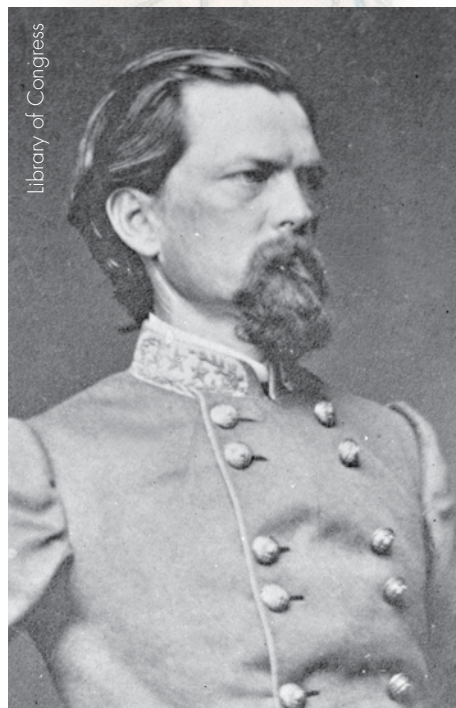
General Hood

judgment and fired off a letter to Grant on 26 February.⁷⁹ The trigger was, as he wrote, a list of “recent promotions to the rank of general officer by brevet in the Regular Army by which I find so low an estimate placed upon services in the field and so high a one upon the subordinate administrative duties chiefly not in the field.” It was “humiliating in the extreme” and left him with the “depressing conviction . . . that all this extraordinary [field] service counts for nothing.” He concluded with the assertion that “these brevets that have been given should follow the promotion of those in the field, not take their place or precede them.” Grant never responded, but Humphreys—for whom “the subject . . . never . . . ceased to be a source of unquiet”—believed that his letter would “bear fruit in time” and was on the whole “glad” he sent it. Parke saw a draft copy and commented favorably, “I doubt not [it] will make Genl. G. put on his thinking cap.”⁸⁰ The Army largely resolved (or rendered meaningless) the issue of brevets on 13 March 1865, when it gave wholesale brevet promotions to thousands of officers for “faithful and meritorious service,” including hundreds of staff officers and “desk soldiers” who, as a disgusted Humphreys put it, “have not heard the sound of a battle.”⁸¹ The same order brevetted Humphreys to brigadier general for his “gallant” actions at Gettysburg. It was his second such promotion. He had received a brevet to full colonel in December 1862 following Fredericksburg.

THE BATTLE OF HATCHER'S RUN

In February, the war once again imposed itself on Humphreys and his II Corps. Lee had turned to wagon trains to carry vital supplies from the truncated Weldon Railroad along the Meherrin River and then northeast on the Boydton Plank Road through the town of Dinwiddie and on to Petersburg. The road was vulnerable, and Grant wanted to take a whack at it before the spring thaw. Again he turned to Warren, the horseman Gregg, and elements of the II Corps. But this time Humphreys would accompany his men in what would be his first engagement as a corps commander. In the cold early hours of 5 February, the army's lone cavalry division advanced west from Ream's Station for the plank road with instructions to "intercept the trains said to be on it" and to "do such other injury."⁸² Warren and his V Corps followed Gregg along the Vaughan Road, waded across the frigid Hatcher's Run, and advanced to a position about halfway between the run and Dinwiddie.

Bringing up the rear, Humphreys and two of his divisions under Smyth and Mott (Miles stayed behind) approached Hatcher's Run and, instead of following Warren to the west, turned north toward Armstrong's Mill, occupying about two miles between the Vaughan Road and the

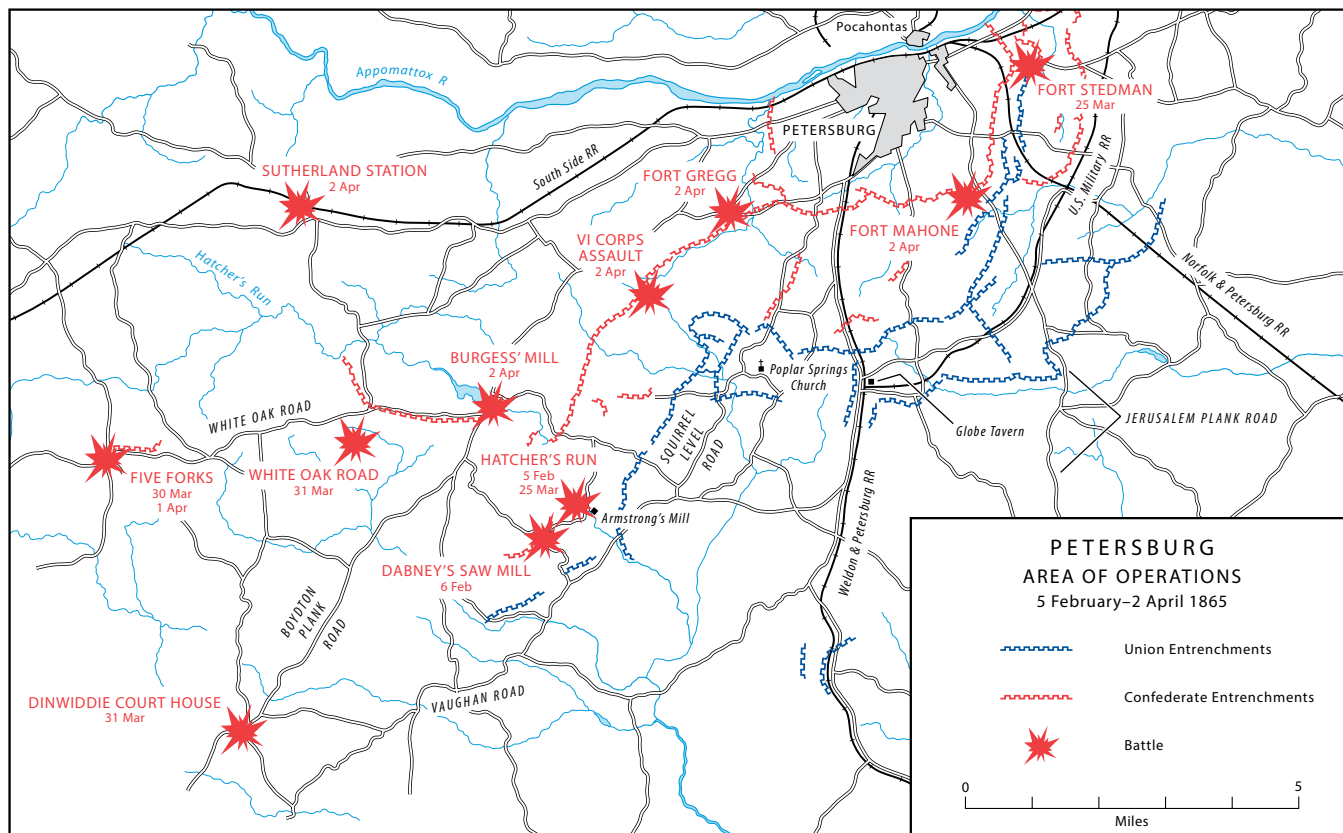


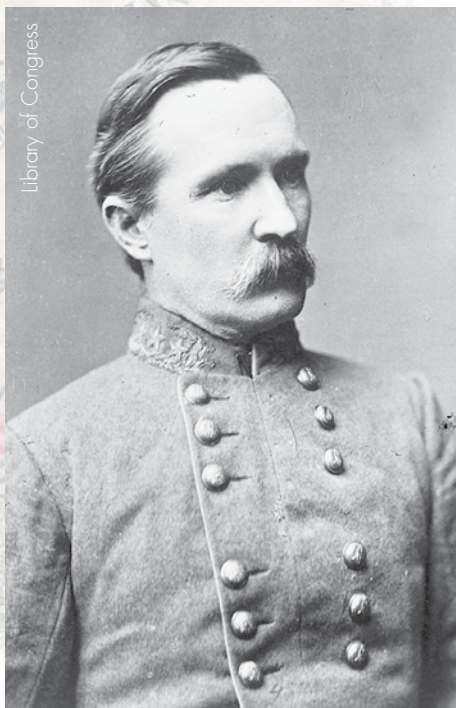
General Gordon

mill and covering Warren's right flank. Both divisions "entrenched sufficiently." Situated immediately north of Mott, Smyth held an advanced position within view of the Confederate trenches. Humphreys surveyed the new line that afternoon and saw a "wood road" opening into a field on Smyth's right. "To sit down in this way all day close to the

enemy's entrenchments," Humphreys wrote later, "was to invite an attempt on one's flanks, and I anticipated that one would be made on Smyth's right, expecting the enemy to come along the wood road." To foil such an attempt, he "brought over McAllister's brigade of Mott's division and put it along the edge of the wood" where it was hidden from view and positioned to cover the road. At about noon, Humphreys "took a survey" of the brigade, and, according to McAllister, ordered it "to put up breastworks at once."⁸³ Riding with Livermore, Humphreys also brought up the Harvard Regiment to close a gap between Smyth and McAllister.⁸⁴

Lee was, of course, sensitive to any movement along his right flank and sent elements of Maj. Gen. John B. Gordon's Second Corps and Hill's Third Corps (including most prominently Maj. Gen. Henry Heth's division) to meet Humphreys. Arriving late in the afternoon, the rebels "made a determined attack" along Smyth's entire front. Hundreds fell on both sides, but the Union line held.⁸⁵ Then, exactly as Humphreys anticipated, "a column of infantry emerged from the woods . . . by the road already mentioned, evidently expecting to find it unoccupied, and that they would take Smyth in flank and rear."⁸⁶ Instead it found McAllister's mostly entrenched brigade which "promptly opened a heavy and unexpected





General Heth

fire upon the enemy's column," forcing it back at once through the woods. Hearing the exchange, Humphreys sent a staff officer to see how they were "making out." McAllister reported back that he was fighting "with and without breastworks and also that he would whip the rebels either way."⁸⁷ Humphreys ordered up additional reinforcements and made his way to the action as the Confederates rallied and, accompanied by a rousing rebel yell, charged McAllister in massed columns. The Union soldiers, still outnumbered along a narrow front, "opened a most destructive fire," and again the enemy fell back. Just after dark, the rebels made a second attempt and, as "flashing powder illuminated the battle scene," were repulsed yet again and withdrew. A cheer broke out along McAllister's line.⁸⁸ In his first outing, Humphreys notched a win as his men "bravely stood firm and inflicted severe loss on their assailants."⁸⁹ He and Gordon would continue to lock horns through the spring. The encounter at Armstrong's Mill also touched off a minor rebel mutiny. According to a captured lieutenant from Heth's division, Robert E. Lee was present at the concentrated attack on McAllister's right and yet "the first efforts failing, the troops could not be got up to the attack." The men of his Mississippi company afterward "heard General Lee say that for the first time his troops failed him."⁹⁰

The II Corps was reinforced that night by both the V Corps and Gregg's cavalry, which

had returned to the Vaughan Road after finding little traffic on Boydton Plank Road. The second day brought renewed fighting but mainly involving the V Corps. About noon, Meade ordered Warren and his men forward "to feel the enemy" along his front and "fight him if outside his lines." They enjoyed some early success in the vicinity of Dabney's Saw Mill before a sharp Confederate counterattack overwhelmed whole units, tossing them back in a chaotic retreat. Witnesses described it as "disgraceful beyond anything they have ever seen on the part of the fifth Corps."⁹¹ Amid a violent winter storm the next morning, Warren set out again and recovered part of the ground taken and then lost the previous day but could not—fairly or unfairly—wash away the growing stain to his reputation.⁹²

Press accounts called the entire operation a failure, but Meade put a positive spin on it in a telegram to Grant. The Battle of Hatcher's Run extended the Union line southwest by several miles to the Vaughan Road crossing, putting it, as Meade reported, "nearer to threaten the enemys [*sic*] line of communications on the Boydton plank road." He wanted the new spot held, which for Humphreys meant abandoning a comfortable and secure camp for a more forward and exposed position on the extreme left of the Union lines.⁹³ The move occurred with little fanfare. Humphreys placed his new headquarters about a half mile east of Hatcher's Run near the Wilkinson House, extended the terminus of the military railroad to nearly his front door, and engaged his engineers in the construction of new protective works. Livermore was impressed that, with the entrenching work underway, Humphreys "rode from one end of the line to the other ceaselessly, until his earthworks were completed—a practice of this admirable officer which I never knew to be pursued by any other corps officer."⁹⁴ The Confederates kept the Boydton Plank Road open, but Humphreys forced them to extend their own thinly stretched defenses.

DOWN TIME

After overseeing the establishment of his new line and what would be his last permanent camp of the war, Humphreys pressed for a long-promised, two-week leave of absence. Grant approved it on 13 February but only hesitantly and with the caveat that his II Corps commander be subject to recall "at any time by telegraphic orders."⁹⁵ Humphreys hoped to enjoy the company of

his wife, Rebecca, and to attend a birthday party for his youngest daughter, Leticia.⁹⁶ He also planned to shore up support in Washington among political allies for his still-pending (formal) promotion to II Corps command. Little was accomplished in any case before he was recalled to Petersburg after less than a week at home. Grant anticipated some movement by Lee and asked Meade to "please direct Gen. Humphreys, who is now in Washington, to return immediately to his command. He has yet four or five days leave which he will have to take another time when he can be better spared."⁹⁷ Humphreys returned to find no activity at all. He grumbled to his wife that "there was no necessity whatever for my returning. Lee has no occasion for withdrawing from Petersburg just now, and he doesn't intend doing it until the last moment." By 10 March, after days of rain and "only grayish light," Humphreys was again "desperately homesick, despairingly so at moments to such a degree," as he told his wife, "that I felt like getting up, walking out of my tent and going home."⁹⁸

As springtime settled on the Virginia Piedmont, Humphreys took solace in the warmer air, longer days, and returning wildlife, especially, as he noted in a letter to Rebecca, "blue birds, robins, and the little twittering yellow birds, and some others whose cheerful notes I recognize." He wrote more frequently in these last quiet weeks of the war, filling long letters with accounts of everyday camp life and mollifying his wife with frequent updates on Harry and their second son, Charley, a young Army captain who was "looking remarkably well," having "taken the excess flesh off. He appears to be very much interested in his duties and very constantly occupied." On 6 March he wrote that Harry "took a flag of truce yesterday and today on my left to enable a party to remove the remains of a private." The senior Humphreys coordinated the effort with the rebel Gordon who responded "in a most courteous manner."⁹⁹

The letters also referenced the more frequent forays into his personal library. He read (or likely reread) at least two books during this period. The first was by Thomas Carlyle, a respected European historian and a famous purveyor of the "great man theory." Humphreys recalled in his own words one of Carlyle's "great principles," probably in reference to the Scotsman's *History of Friedrich II of Prussia* (Leipzig, 1858), that "the art of war has always been the same.



General Ord

It is simply common sense, good judgment applied to destruction instead of preservation and improvement.” Humphreys also enjoyed William Makepeace Thackeray’s *The Four Georges* (London, 1860), a fictionalized account of the personal side of British royal life. He appreciated the tender description of the third George who ended life as a madman, blind and deaf. Humphreys reproduced one particularly melancholy line in a 4 March letter—“All light, all sound of human voices, all reason, all the pleasure of the world were taken from him.”¹⁰⁰

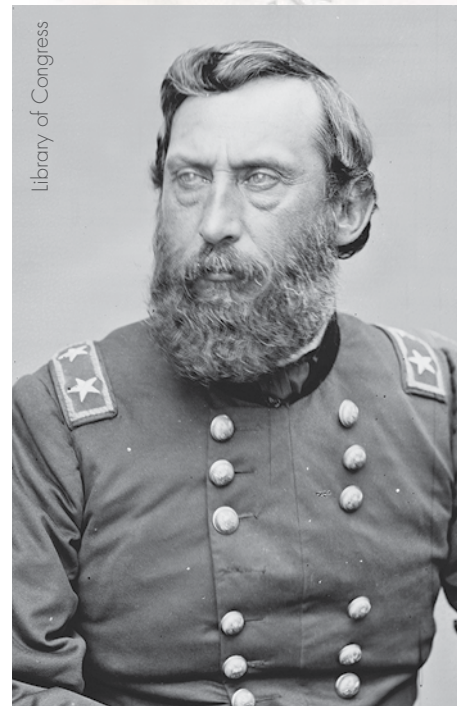
The II Corps had its final wartime review on Thursday, 23 March. The whole body—numbering some 18,000 men—turned out with six batteries of artillery. A gathering crowd of “ladies and gentlemen from Boston and Philadelphia,” joined them throughout the late morning. The group included William Biddle, Margaretta Sergeant Meade (Meade’s wife) with her daughters, and Elizabeth Russell Lyman (Lyman’s wife) and her sister—“both lovely,” according to Humphreys, but “especially Miss Russell.” Then, just after 1200, about an hour before the scheduled review, skies rapidly darkened as a violent storm moved through the area—“the wind rose to almost a hurricane.” Within minutes it was “impossible to see anything five feet from you or to face the wind. Driving dust and sand filled the whole atmosphere and not only rendered it impossible to see but almost to breathe.” The storm started fires, downed trees, and killed men.

Meade and his entourage arrived in railroad cars nearly two hours late and missed the whole affair. They had lost their way as “fallen trees had impeded their progress.” Nevertheless, Humphreys, who conducted the review in Meade’s absence, was pleased with his men, “I have never seen so soldierly a review.”¹⁰¹

The next day, Humphreys and his son, Harry, traveled to Deep Bottom to see fellow West Pointer, Maj. Gen. Edward O. C. Ord, commander of the Army of the James. They visited a “fleet of Monitors, Dutch Gap and vicinity, and Genl. Ord’s Headquarters and the troops there and the works.”¹⁰² They also met with R. Adm. David D. Porter and enjoyed “a fine lunch in his cabin, everything very elegant compared to our own rough establishment within the army.” Humphreys reminded Porter where they had previously met—“at Charles Davis’s table.” As was usually the custom, there was some considerable drinking throughout the evening, and it was 2300 before Humphreys undertook the return trip. It was the early morning on Saturday 25 March when he stumbled into his tent to find some sleep.

THE BATTLE OF FORT STEDMAN

He awoke at 0500 to “a sick headache” and a rumbling sound of “cannonading and some musketry going on.” As he clambered to his feet, it was “hot haste” and confusion at corps headquarters while officers, awaiting orders, struck tents, saddled horses, and readied weapons. All could hearartil-



Henry J. Hunt,
shown here as a major general

lery pounding away off to the north “as if in a pitched battle,” and, as Livermore noted later, false rumors quickly spread “that the enemy had reached the military railroad and were holding it.”¹⁰³ At 0545, Humphreys received a telegram from Brig. Gen. Henry J. Hunt, the chief of artillery, that bore out the facts. Lee had gathered a large force under Gordon—about half of the remaining infantry of the Army of Northern Virginia—and had undertaken a predawn



A Union picket line in front of Fort Stedman

attack against the right of the Union lines, capturing Fort Stedman and opening a gap nearly 1,000 feet wide in the line. The rebels initiated a move toward City Point ten miles away, where a visiting Lincoln, together with Grant and Meade, slept unawares through most of the early excitement.¹⁰⁴ Confederate soldiers had cut the telegraph line.¹⁰⁵

That left General Parke in command of the Army of the Potomac, but he was under siege. Fort Stedman anchored his line just south of Petersburg. As he worked furiously to seal off the Confederate incursion, Humphreys, several miles to the south, updated his division commanders and seized on an active strategy. He would initiate a strong reconnaissance across his whole front to “ascertain the condition of the enemy . . . and to attack their entrenched picket line with a view to assaulting their main works, if the force holding them had been materially weakened” in support of the rebel offensive against Parke. The orders went out. Humphreys led the charge, as Livermore recalled, “into the thickest of it like the old fire-eater he was in battle.” Lyman celebrated “good Duke Humphreys, who, spectacles on his nose, rushed violently at the entrenched skirmish line of the enemy . . . with the double view of making a reconnaissance and a diversion, and furthermore of showing the Johns that we were not going to be pitched into without hitting back.”¹⁰⁶

As Humphreys engaged across his whole front, Gordon bogged down and found himself surrounded on three sides as Parke gathered his men on the hills behind Fort Stedman. These included five regiments and about 4,000 men, stretched in a semicircle nearly a mile wide and ready to charge and retake the fort. Wright had a division still en route, but Parke pushed ahead anyway. At 0730 the long line swept down on Fort Stedman from the east. Its success was “immediate and complete.”¹⁰⁷ Hundreds of apparently stunned Confederates threw down their rifles and surrendered. There was a momentary hand-to-hand struggle for the rebel flags in the fort, but a squad from the 208th Regiment Infantry, Pennsylvania Volunteers, shortly won the fight. In the meantime, Humphreys had advanced through the enemy picket line and pushed ahead until 0800 when the assault stalled, as he later wrote, “under the close fire of artillery and musketry of their main works, which proved to be held by a force sufficient to maintain them against assault.”¹⁰⁸ Humphreys fell back only to the captured



An interior view of Fort Stedman

rebel picket lines, which he was determined to hold. The Confederates demonstrated against these throughout the afternoon and evening but were, as Humphreys reported, “thrown back” every time, “leaving his dead and wounded on the field.”¹⁰⁹ Lyman wrote to his wife that “our men never behaved better” and then teased her, “Isn’t it funny for you to think of the polite Humphreys riding round in an ambulance with you Friday, and, the next day, smashing fiercely about in a fight?”¹¹⁰ The II Corps casualties were about 500 killed and wounded, equal roughly to the number of enemy killed, but Humphreys also captured over 500 rebel prisoners. Total Confederate losses on the day (killed, wounded, missing, or captured) were 4,000 irreplaceable men—nearly a third of those engaged. Late in the day at Patrick Station, south of Petersburg, President Lincoln and his wife saw trains carrying Union dead and wounded off to distant hospitals. Lincoln lamented that “he had seen enough of the horrors of war and had hoped that this was the beginning of the end.”¹¹¹ He had fewer than three weeks to live.

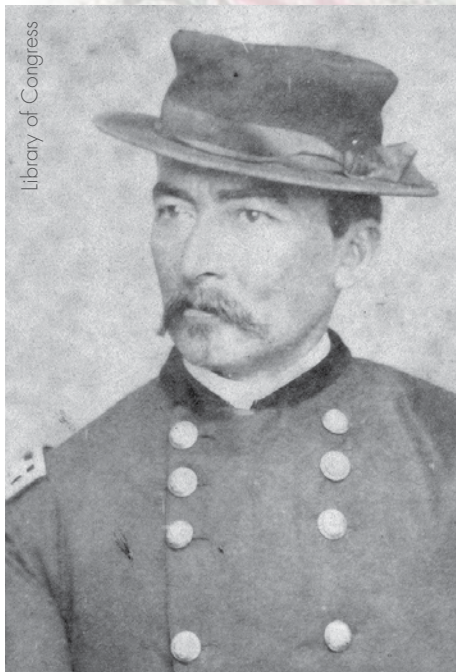
THE FINAL STRETCH

Monday, 27 March, saw a new moon overhead—a harbinger of change and herald of fresh plans. On that day, Humphreys learned that he had “at last been assigned by the President to the command of the II Corps.”¹¹² The news, as he wrote to his wife, “came to me by telegraph this evening” and was “of course . . . gratifying.” He had

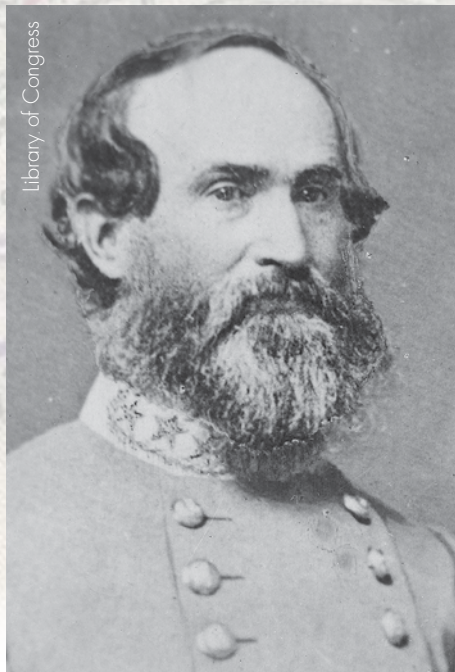
heretofore been ad interim. The “one good of it will be the making of Harry a Major, as I shall at once send his name as the senior Aide de Camp with that rank.”

Humphreys also noted the return of favored aide Charlie Mills, who had left in late January for his home in Boston suffering from a “bilious colic,” “severe dyspepsia,” and, as Mills explained in a letter to his mother, “a great deal of pain in my bowels.” After six weeks of treatment, he had permission from his doctors to return to the war. He traveled by train through Philadelphia and Baltimore and stopped in the capital to see his uncle Charles Davis (“the Admiral,” as he referred to him), and also to make a friendly call on Rebecca Humphreys before pushing on to camp late Sunday. He was warmly received the next morning upon presenting himself at corps headquarters—“everyone seemed glad to see me, and altogether it is delightful to be back.”¹¹³ He was pleased especially to see Whittier, his old Harvard classmate. That evening, Humphreys noted to his wife that, despite the young man’s protestations to the contrary, Mills was “in delicate health from severe wounds he has received . . . I hope he will be able to remain in the field.”

Monday saw Lincoln return to City Point, where former Western Theater generals joined him for a fateful meeting, one that would determine the final tactics of the war while relegating the fighting engineers of the Army of the Potomac—Humphreys, Warren, Wright, Parke, and even Meade—to



General Sheridan



General Early



Colonel Mosby

subordinate roles. With the latter notably absent, Grant confabbed with his close friend, Sherman, whose devastating march through the Carolinas put his Army of the Tennessee on pace to reach Petersburg by the end of April. Grant determined, however, to push ahead without him, preferring instead his cavalry commander, Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan, a short, stocky, and bombastic figure who, at Grant's request, left the Western Theater in April 1864 to lead the horsemen of the Army of the Potomac.

Sheridan served for a time under Meade, but the prideful cavalryman bristled at a supporting role. In August, he leveraged his close friendship with Grant for command of the Army of the Shenandoah and was tasked with subduing the wily Maj. Gen. Jubal A. Early and his Confederate Second Corps as well as local guerrillas under Col. John S. Mosby. Sheridan's record in the valley was mixed. The decisive battle came in October 1864 at Cedar Creek where he narrowly avoided disaster in a comeback win over a much smaller rebel force. Lincoln rewarded the timely victory, which came just ahead of the 1864 presidential election, by elevating Sheridan to major general in the Regular Army. That placed him over every Union corps commander, ranking the thirty-six-year-old behind only Grant, Sherman, and Meade. In March 1865, Sheridan moved to rejoin the Army of the Potomac, feeling, as he later wrote, "that the war was nearing its end, I desired my cavalry to be in at the death." Midnight approached when Grant

gave Sheridan his marching orders. The cavalry commander was to lead the Union offensive with a separate command—outside and above the Army of the Potomac—and to include at times the II, V, and VI Army Corps. Warren, Wright, and Humphreys would be subordinate to Sheridan who would answer only to Grant.¹¹⁴ The objective was to disrupt the nearly nine-month stalemate by unpinning the Petersburg defenses, cutting the one remaining railway line (the South Side Railroad), and isolating and forcing Lee from his entrenchments. Sheridan would target his sizeable force at a lonely country crossroads known as Five Forks.¹¹⁵

Grant had already, in fact, put the first pieces of his plan in motion. That same Monday night, he sent Ord and half of his Army of the James—about 16,000 infantrymen—on a "secret march of 36 miles to the left of the Army of the Potomac, taking post," as Humphreys recalled, "in rear of the Second Corps . . . on the evening of the 28th."¹¹⁶ Arriving unnoticed by the enemy, Ord and his men anchored the Union left, freeing both Humphreys and Warren to withdraw from their works and spearhead the planned offensive. Before dawn the next morning, Warren swung around the extreme left of the Union lines for Quaker Road while Sheridan's cavalry took a longer, more southerly route toward Dinwiddie Court House. Humphreys followed the familiar Vaughan Road over Hatcher's Run, where he pinned his right while wheeling around his left until his corps was in line,

facing north, and in contact with Warren's right flank near Gravelly Run. There, Lyman spotted "the sturdy Humphreys, who was gleaning through his spectacles with a fun-ahead sort of expression and presently rode ahead to get his men 'straightened out.'"¹¹⁷

THE BATTLE OF WHITE OAK ROAD

The Confederates did not fully engage and eventually fell back to their works along the far side of White Oak Road which ran due west from Boydton Plank Road and intersected Five Forks about five miles out. Recognizing the threat to his right flank and to his last remaining rail line, Lee pulled men from his left and center to reinforce Maj. Gen. George E. Pickett on the right while directing his nephew, Maj. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee, to hold Five Forks and assume command of all rebel cavalry. Then came the rain. It fell all night and most of Thursday, rendering the roads, according to Humphreys, "impassable for artillery and wagons until corduroyed. The country was flat, covered generally with dense forest and tangled undergrowth, with numerous small, swampy streams, that . . . did not drain the downfall quickly."¹¹⁸ One chief quartermaster told Lyman "it was the worst day for moving trains he had ever had in all of his experience."¹¹⁹ During the downpour and under limited visibility, the V and II Corps closed on White Oak Road and the Confederate lines—as near as they could get without triggering a general engagement—and entrenched.



General Pickett



Maj. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee



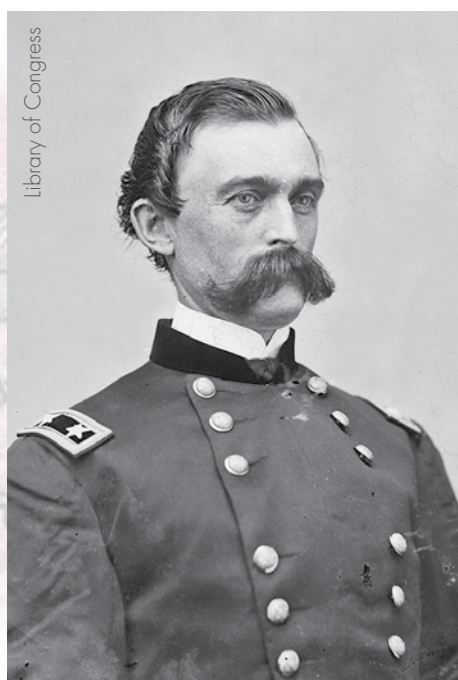
General Johnson

As the sun reappeared late on a soggy Friday morning, 31 March, Humphreys mounted his horse and, with flags flying and a staff escort numbering nearly fifty men, rode ahead to the Rainey House for a better look at his own lines and the Confederate defenses opposite. It was about 1100. The house stood near the southern end of a large open field at the intersection of Boydton Plank and Quaker Roads and in plain view of the enemy out about 700 yards. There was a distant rolling of musketry when after some minutes a rebel battery of Napoleons opened on their position, sending 12-pound iron cannonballs “ricocheting around us,” as Lyman recalled. He turned at one point and

“saw Charlie Mills sitting on horseback, near General Humphreys.” The two Harvard men nodded and smiled at each other. Then came another boom, and Humphreys, following the projectile through the air, “saw it strike the ground and bouncing upwards come with a thud into the staff.” The men had instinctively spurred away, but the unlucky Mills was struck in his left side, just below the ribs. Larger than a man’s fist, the ball ripped clean through him, knocking the twenty-five-year-old off his horse. He landed on his back, opened his mouth once “without utterance,” and died. The same shot then tore through the neck of a horse ridden by an engineer officer and brought both down

together—the horse dead and the officer shaken but uninjured. The incident rattled Humphreys, and he long mourned the death of a favored aide. He also felt responsible for it and, according to Livermore, “sincerely reproached himself for having ridden out with so many as to attract the attention of the enemy.”¹²⁰ After sending away his staff, the general resumed his reconnaissance with the understanding that, per guidance from headquarters, “there would be no movement of troops that day, owing to the almost impassable condition of the roads and country.”¹²¹

Lee did not fret the road conditions. His inspection that morning of the White Oak



General Griffin

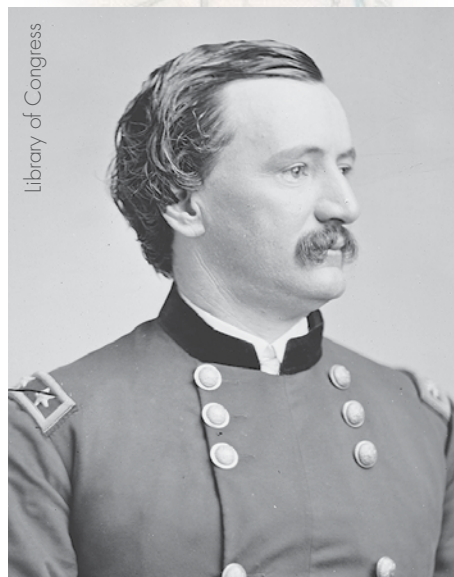


General Hays and his staff

Road line identified a wide gap between the Union left held by the V Corps and the nearest cavalry units in the vicinity of Dinwiddie Court House.¹²² He ordered a flanking attack and sent in three Confederate brigades under Maj. Gen. Bushrod R. Johnson, a former West Pointer, disgraced Army officer, and longtime university professor. Though substantially outnumbered, he routed four Union brigades and drove them back across Gravelly Run and down Boydton Plank Road. Some stragglers—"trailing," as Lyman recalled, "sulkily to the rear"—began to trickle into the lines of the II Corps. Miles and his 1st Division occupied that stretch. At noon, and in coordination with Warren and his lone remaining division under Maj. Gen. Charles Griffin, Humphreys threw Miles into the exposed flank of the attacking force crossing to his left.¹²³ "This was," as Humphreys recalled, "done in a prompt and spirited manner."¹²⁴ Two brigades flung freely through the woods west of the Boydton Plank Road and drove the rebels from the field and back into their entrenchments, capturing the flag of an Alabama regiment along with 300 prisoners.¹²⁵ Miles then pressed ahead on White Oak Road, moving west and dislodging enemy pickets along the way. To prevent Lee from concentrating against Miles, Humphreys had also sent Mott and Brig. Gen. William Hays forward against rebel positions on their fronts. Neither division broke through, but each made a vigorous assault.¹²⁶ The Battle of White Oak Road changed the lines only a little, but the Confederates lost control of the strategic highway and were trapped in their works. Lee also lost contact with his task force around Five Forks, which left the occasionally unreliable Pickett cut off and without guidance at a critical juncture.¹²⁷

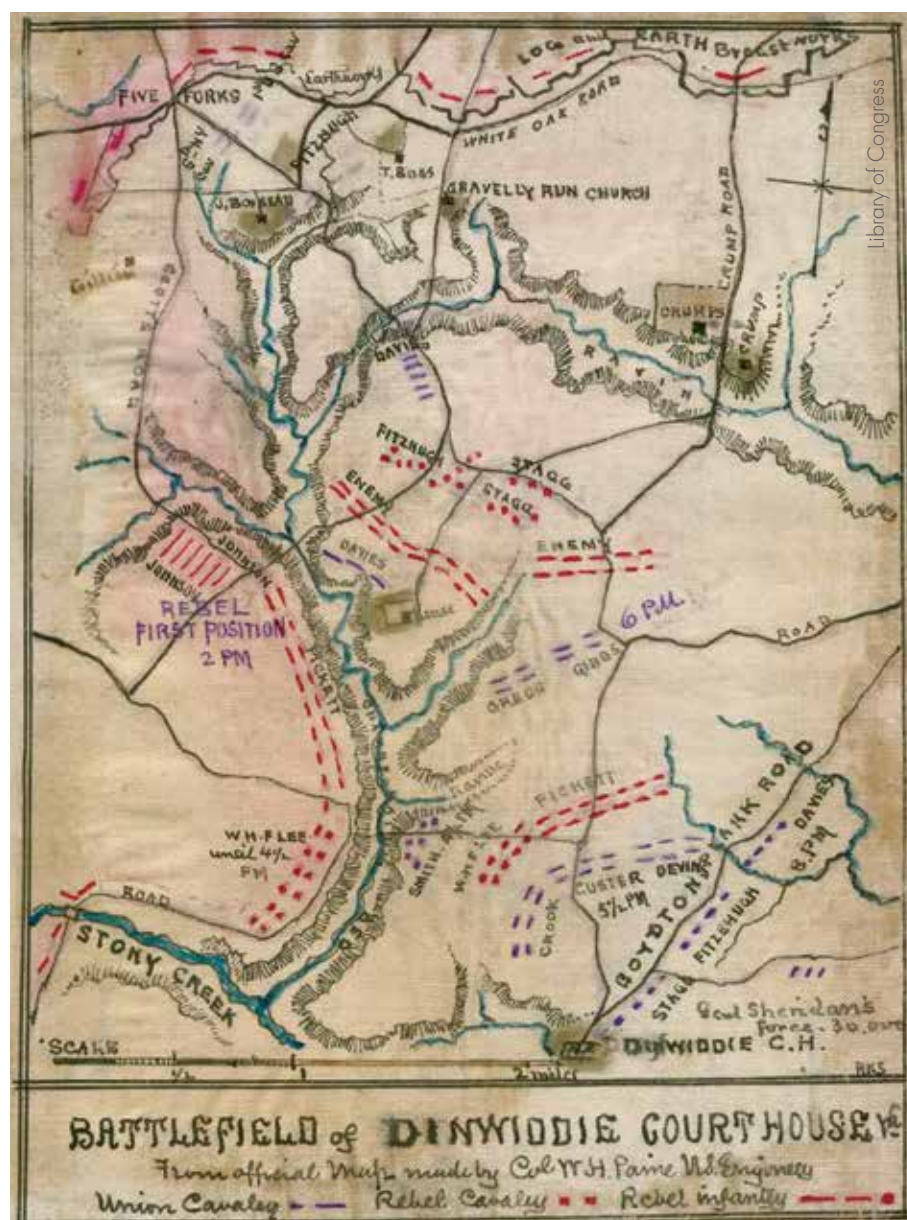
THE BATTLE OF DINWIDDIE COURT HOUSE

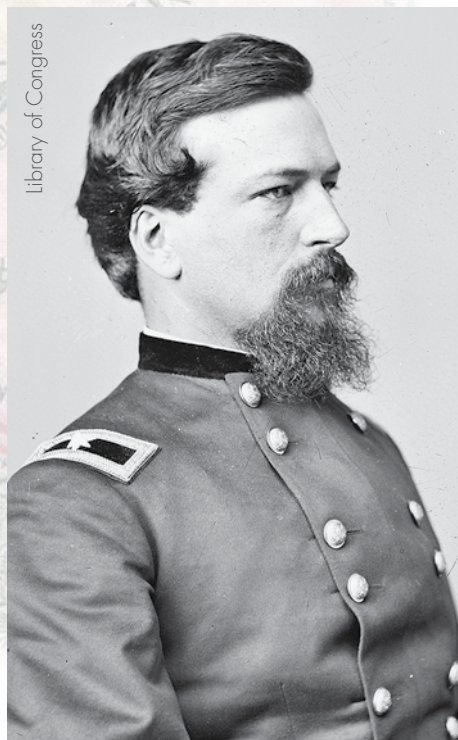
As the fighting on his own front quieted late that afternoon, Warren heard the sounds of a distant battle receding toward Dinwiddie Court House.¹²⁸ He correctly inferred that Sheridan was in retreat and in need of rescue. Late that morning, the brash horseman had ridden for Five Forks but a strong force of cavalry supported by infantry met him midway and drove him back in confusion to his starting point. Warren, acting entirely on his own initiative, sent a brigade of men under Brig. Gen. Joseph J. Bartlett



Joseph J. Bartlett,
shown here as a major general

"across country," as Humphreys later detailed, "to General Sheridan's support, with directions to attack the enemy in flank."¹²⁹ It was getting dark when Bartlett reached the swollen Gravelly Run. He did not attempt a dangerous crossing but engaged Confederates on the opposite side with sniper fire. Nightfall gave cover to his brigade, which Pickett mistook for a much larger force, perhaps even a corps.¹³⁰ Completely uncovered and fearing a flank attack, the Confederate commander decided at 2200 to withdraw to Five Forks just as Grant ordered the V Corps to march in support of Sheridan and to "start at once."¹³¹ Warren was happy to oblige, but advised Meade's chief of staff, Brig. Gen. Alexander S. Webb, that there would be some considerable delay. The rebels had destroyed the bridge over the





General Webb

Gravelly Run, which was in flood and too deep to ford. The crossing would have to be restored, requiring a span of forty feet and the attention of competent engineers to complete.¹³²

Also, Warren and his V Corps had just fought a bitterly contested, daylong battle and returned fatigued to their lines. Most of the men were fast asleep by 2200. As Warren himself later explained, “Our troops, so near the enemy could not be roused by drums or bugles or loud commands, but each order had to be communicated . . . from the General till it reached the non-commissioned officers, which latter only could arouse each man by a shaking.” And all of this had to be coordinated with Humphreys who had been ordered to fall back on his left to Boydton Plank Road and assume responsibility for that end of the Union line. So timing was an issue as well. Travel conditions remained abysmal. Warren had six miles to cover—at night—over byways already damaged by the winter thaw and heavy traffic. Days of drenching rain had only further degraded “these sandy, clayey roads,” as Lyman drolly put it, “to pudding or porridge, as the case may be.”¹³³ Grant dismissed all of this—the abysmal travel conditions, the destroyed bridge, the late hour, the need for secrecy and careful coordination, and the fatigued state of the V Corps—and, without any basis at all, told his cavalry commander to expect Warren “by 12 tonight.” After preparing his men, Warren set out at 2300 with his two

remaining divisions.¹³⁴ It was 0200 before his engineers finished the bridgework and nearly 0700 when his vanguard reached Dinwiddie Court House.¹³⁵ Sheridan was, of course, livid and blamed Warren for the delay and the lost opportunity of catching Pickett outside his lines.

THE BATTLE OF FIVE FORKS

Lee scored a pair of tactical victories at White Oak Road and Dinwiddie Court House, but his strategic position had only deteriorated. He was outnumbered more than three-to-one, had fatally weakened his left and center to support his right, and had lost nearly 1500 men whom he could not replace and could ill spare. By the morning of Saturday, 1 April 1865, what remained of the Army of Northern Virginia faced likely destruction. Pickett had abandoned any temporary advantage won over Sheridan at Dinwiddie and retreated to Five Forks, which he had been instructed to hold “at all hazards.”¹³⁶ He had just 10,000 men. His lines extended for about a mile in either direction of the crossroads; and his left hung in the air. His defensive line was poorly and hastily constructed. And Sheridan was coming after him with overwhelming force. By late morning, Sheridan had under his



Confederate prisoners on their way to the rear, captured at Five Forks, 3 April 1865.

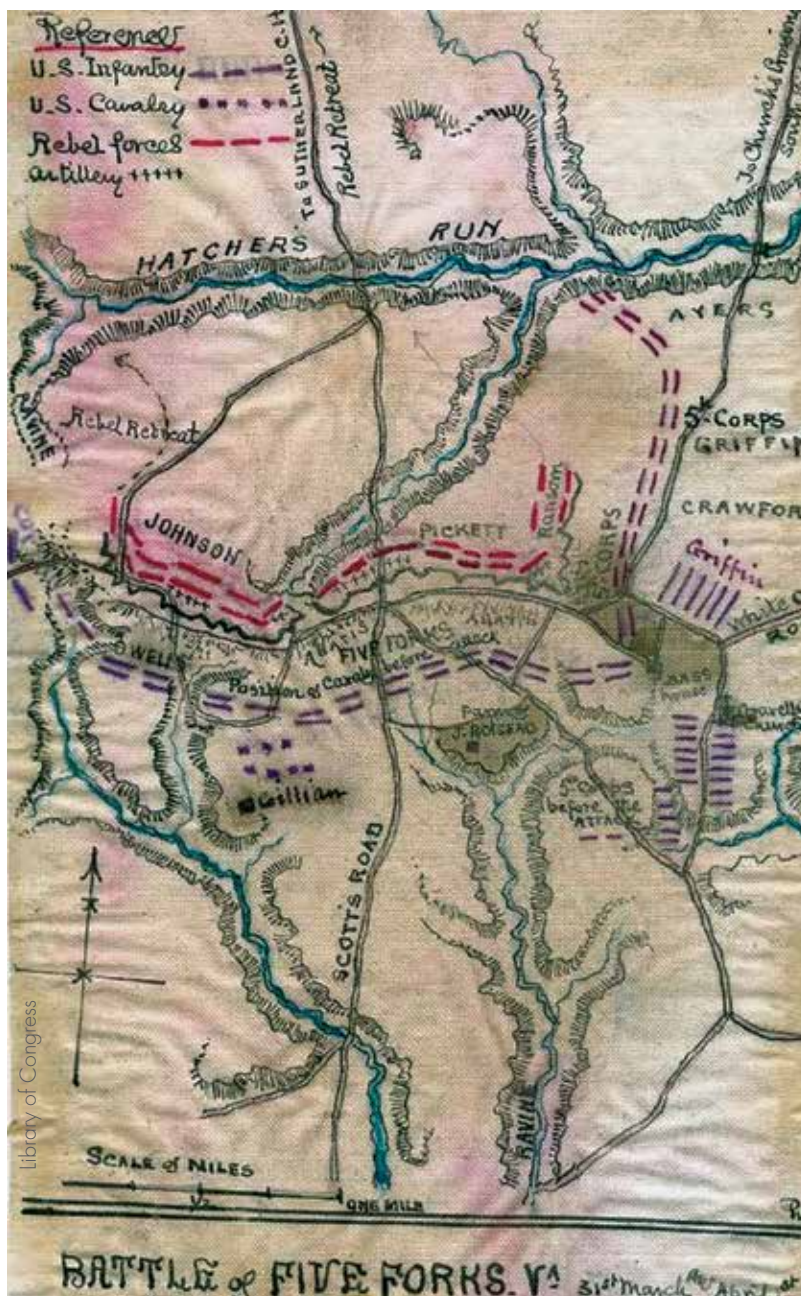


command 12,000 cavalry and Warren's V Corps numbering almost 16,000 infantry. Humphreys and his II Corps occupied the left of the Union lines south of White Oak Road and were in position to send reinforcements on short notice.

Sheridan, whatever his flaws (and they were many and paramount), was a fighter, and, late that afternoon, he seized the moment, dividing his sizeable contingent and throwing it against both rebel flanks. At about the same time, Grant ordered the left of the II Corps to advance once again on White Oak Road, to hold it, and, as Humphreys later wrote, to "prevent the enemy from sending any force against General Sheridan by that road. This was done at once, and the road strongly held by Miles's division."¹³⁷ Pickett held out through late afternoon and into early evening, but by 1900 the battle was over and the Confederates driven from the field. Pickett lost 5,000 men—nearly half his force. Warren had a horse shot out from under him and led a final charge on rebel lines, but none of that saved him. As the men of the V Corps celebrated their great victory, Sheridan fired their commander, sparking decades of bitter acrimony. It unsettled Humphreys, but, in the immediate aftermath, he could do nothing for his friend and former protégé. As the war raced toward its final conclusion, it would occupy his every moment.

THE FALL OF PETERSBURG

Grant followed up on the destruction of the Confederate right flank at Five Forks with a night assault all along the Union front at Petersburg. Humphreys opened his artillery at 2100 and sent both Miles and Mott dashing across White Oak Road into the enemy. The two divisions drove in rebel pickets and, according to Humphreys, "got up close to the slashing of the intrenchments" but could not yet carry them.¹³⁸ Anxious that Lee might abandon his lines and fall upon the Union cavalry at Five Forks, Grant ordered Miles to disengage and move down the main road to reinforce Sheridan. Livermore hand delivered the guidance to Miles at midnight.¹³⁹ Humphreys, still anchoring the left flank of the Union army but now with a reduced force, peeled back his left but, from 0400 on Sunday 2 April, "kept up constant attacks . . . feeling the enemy closely and holding . . . [his two remaining] divisions ready to take advantage of any weakening."¹⁴⁰ A general bombardment continued through early morning, screening





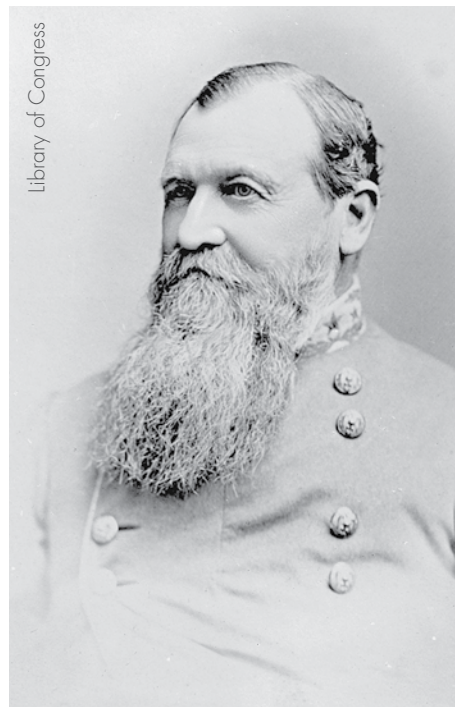
Fortifications in front of Petersburg

a massive surge well off to his right as Parke and Wright broke the enemy's lines and, sweeping down from the north, captured a large part of the main rebel works around Petersburg. Lee was pulling back across all fronts, and at 0600, just after sunrise, Humphreys directed Mott and Hays to seize the redoubts on their fronts. Hays opened a salient and took the Crow house battery including "the works, their artillery, and the greater part of the garrison."¹⁴¹ Shortly after, Mott captured the "intrenched picket line at the Burgess's mill works under severe artillery and musketry fire."¹⁴² By midmorning, Humphreys controlled everything on his front and had personally negotiated with Sheridan on the return of Miles and his 1st Division.¹⁴³

THE BATTLE OF SOUTHERLAND STATION

His corps whole again, Humphreys turned his eyes north to the strategic South Side Railroad, directing, as he later wrote, "General Miles, General Mott, and General Hays to pursue the enemy by the Claiborne road toward Sutherland Station."¹⁴⁴ There he expected to "close in on the rear of all the enemy's force" and destroy it before it could escape. The plan was sound, but Meade stepped in at the last moment, countermanded the order, and instead directed Humphreys and the II Corps to Petersburg. Despite his own strong inclination—"not to go to Petersburg to see what *had been*," as

one staff officer later put it, "but to go to Lee and see what *is*"—Humphreys obediently reversed course and sent Mott and Hays along the Boydton Plank Road to align with Wright and his VI Corps.¹⁴⁵ Miles, however, was beyond immediate recall. Having moved rapidly up Claiborne Road, he was already closing on four Confederate brigades under Georgian Brig. Gen. Philip Cook (previously under Heth), a future Congressman who,



General Cook

like Humphreys, had fought years earlier in the Seminole Wars. Cook had hastily occupied the crest of an open ridge and thrown up crude entrenchments in a belated effort to protect the railroad.

While Miles prepared for the first of what would be several bloody assaults, Humphreys followed him up the Claiborne Road, ultimately locating his wayward division just south of Sutherland Station. There, Miles assured his commanding officer that he "could defeat the force before him." Skirting Meade's orders, Humphreys "left him to accomplish it" and rode again for Petersburg.¹⁴⁶ By early afternoon, though, Miles had launched two failed assaults and was taking heavy losses. Casualties included two brigade commanders. Word got to Meade who then reversed course, sending Humphreys back to Sutherland Station, this time with his 2d Division in tow. Arriving there by midafternoon via Coxe Road, Humphreys expected to join the fight and was planning a flank attack. Livermore rode ahead to notify Miles but found him already "master of the field." His third assault had routed the rebels, and Livermore later quipped, "our 2d Division came up to find the game flown."¹⁴⁷ Miles captured 1,000 rebels and two cannon, but substantial elements the Confederate force escaped to fight another day. Humphreys later noted, with profound disappointment and frustration, that "probably the whole force would have been captured in the morning had the Second Corps continued its march toward Sutherland Station."¹⁴⁸ That Sunday night, Humphreys and his II Corps—indeed the entire the Union Army—got some much needed rest. And while they slept, Lee slipped away.

PURSUIT

Before daylight on Monday 3 April, Lee evacuated forty miles of rebel works stretching from Petersburg to Richmond and, with fewer than 30,000 men, fled west along the north bank of the Appomattox River. He marched first for Amelia Court House where he planned to reassemble the scattered remnants of his army and feed and supply it before setting out for Lynchburg and then to points south where he would link up with Brig. Gen. Joseph E. Johnston and his Army of Tennessee, presumably to continue the fight from North Carolina. Elements of three Union armies numbering nearly 100,000 men took chase, transforming the long stagnant siege of Petersburg



General Johnston

into a marathon footrace that ultimately stretched over a hundred miles of difficult and generally hostile terrain. Humphreys, a lifelong topographer, described that region as “broken, wooded, thick undergrowth, marshy fields, streams, roads only in name, sparsely inhabited, hardly any one to be seen, and others met with, silent.”¹⁴⁹ Exacerbating things, there were no quality maps of the region—only “a general map of it on a very small scale was furnished, which gave next to nothing of importance as to roads, streams and bridges, fords.”¹⁵⁰

The next several days saw the rival armies race westward, in nearly parallel lines and with little fighting, never at a great distance

and often in plain sight. Humphreys and his II Corps, following the V Corps out of Sutherland Station that first day, moved west along River Road, crossed Namozine Creek, and camped for the night in “a little white one-story house on the right of the road” near Winticomack Creek, a tributary to the Appomattox River.¹⁵¹ On Tuesday, Humphreys, still holding close to Griffin, moved over roads rendered almost impassable by rain and, being much delayed by Sheridan’s cavalry, which always claimed the right of way, decamped near the aptly named Deep Creek at 1900. Humphreys and his staff were, as Livermore recalled, “nicely fixed in the yard of a large mansion on a hill.”¹⁵² There in the early evening Humphreys hastily scratched off a few lines to Rebecca.

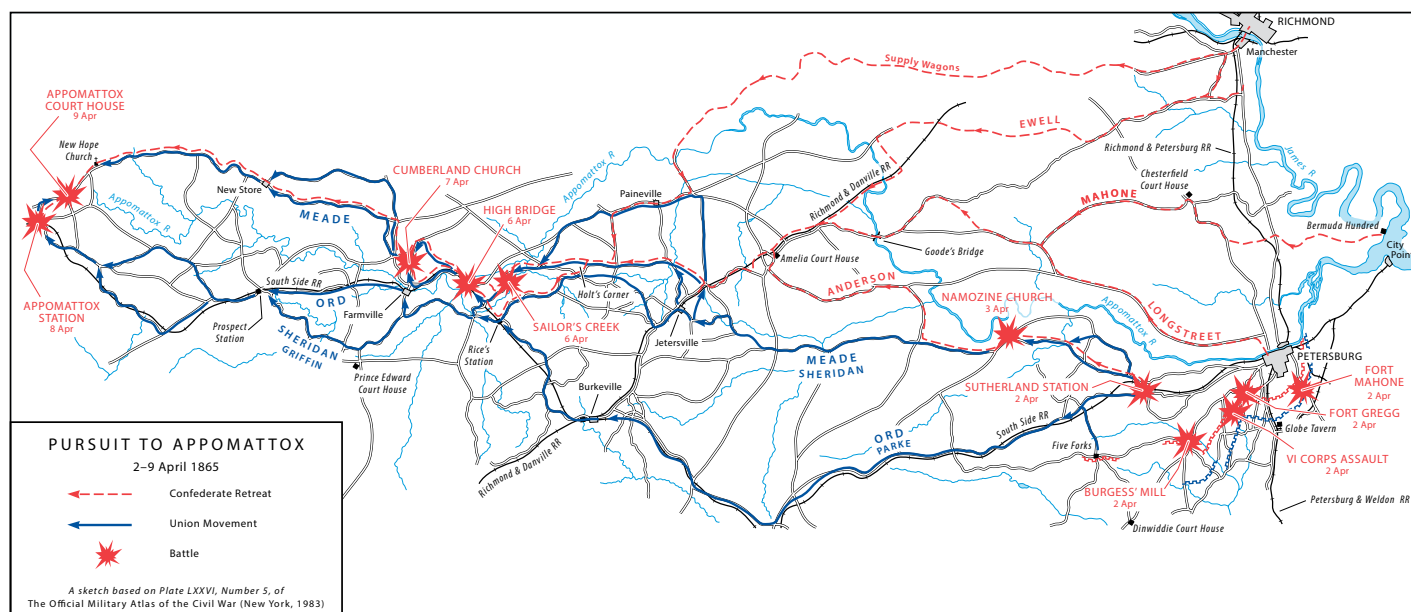
I cannot tell you all that has happened since I last wrote. We are all well and untouched. The only member of my staff hurt was poor Mills, who I wrote you was killed by my side. I have no moment for writing. Was exhausted with loss of sleep and fatigue, but did not feel it until I could sleep, which I did Sunday night. . . . You know that everything has fallen before us. Lee’s loss has not been less than 25,000 men. He cannot make stand again. We shall not have another great battle.”¹⁵³

“We must soon,” he concluded, “have peace.”

At 2100 Tuesday evening, Meade received a note from Sheridan. The horseman was out ahead with the V Corps at Jetersville, a small crossroads on the Richmond and Danville Railroad, and reporting “that the

whole rebel army was in his front trying to get off its trains; that he expected to be attacked.”¹⁵⁴ If the remaining infantry could be “hurried up,” he continued, there was a chance “of taking the whole of the enemy.”¹⁵⁵ The distance was fifteen or sixteen miles. Meade had been sick for several days with “a distressing cough and a high fever” but gave the order from his ambulance for a 0100 march. Livermore recalled that everyone had finally “got quietly at rest, when orders came to move.”¹⁵⁶ But not Humphreys, who was up and ready to go, as Lyman recalled—“sturdy as ever, issuing orders for the advance, with his eyes wide open, as much to say; ‘Sleep—don’t mention it!’”¹⁵⁷ Marching again in the very early hours of Wednesday, 5 April, the infantrymen had scarcely stretched out their legs when, as Lyman bitterly recounted, “the same cavalry which blocked our road the day before was found ahead again, and we had tediously to wait until after daylight before the road was cleared.”¹⁵⁸ During the many hour delay, Humphreys had his men bed down by the roadside and “his rations were, with incredible exertions, gotten up to him, over fearful roads.”¹⁵⁹ The column began moving again at 0700 and reached Jetersville in the late afternoon—first the II and then the VI Corps.¹⁶⁰ Amelia Court House was scarcely seven miles to the northeast and directly up the Richmond and Danville Railroad. Grant and Meade drew up plans for a morning march. They had at hand an overwhelming force including Sheridan’s cavalry and three Army corps, all told some 60,000 men under arms.

The II Corps awoke on the morning of Thursday, 6 April, to the smell of coffee





General Barlow

and to instructions to prepare for a 0600 march. At the appointed time, however, Humphreys found the officers of his 2d Division headquarters asleep in their tents. It was an inexcusable lapse. He promptly relieved Hays and elevated the reliable Smyth. Later in the day, though, permanent command of the 2d Division passed to Maj. Gen. Francis C. Barlow. The “boy general” was a Hancock protégé and three-year veteran of the II Corps going back to the Peninsula Campaign. He had just that day reported for duty after a lengthy period of convalescence. Yet another Harvard man (class of 1855) and a New York City lawyer of some prominence, Barlow had a long record of distinguished military service in the war, but his health failed him early in the Petersburg Campaign. He returned only after an extended sick leave in Europe and arrived at camp just in time to replace Hays. There was no time for introductions.

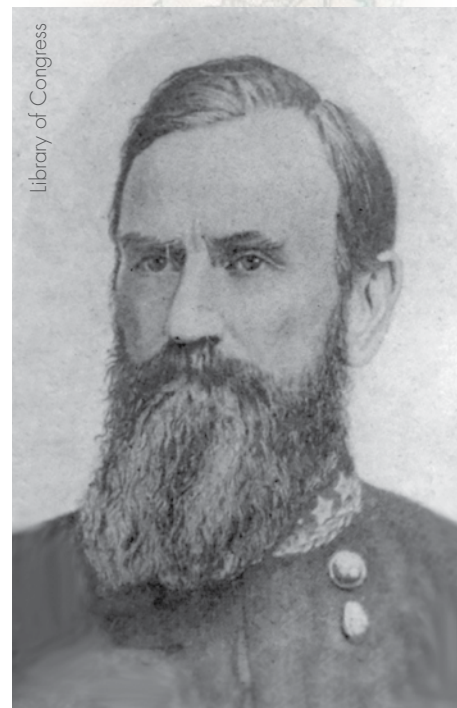
After the briefest stay, all three corps were underway toward Amelia Court House.¹⁶¹ The line advanced about four miles when Humphreys, riding out in front with his staff, discovered “a strong column of the enemy’s infantry on the north bank of Flat Creek, moving westward” and fast disappearing into a forest. It was the rear of the main Confederate army, and Humphreys ordered an attack. Miles brought up his guns and began firing into the retreating column. Lyman witnessed the action from afar as “the distant smoke of Humphreys’

batteries curls above the pine trees.”¹⁶² Mott advanced with his skirmishers and a brigade while Humphreys notified Meade and began preparations to cross the creek with his entire force. He needed to bridge the swollen stream—a hundred feet wide and armpit deep—to move his artillery and trains, and that work began in earnest. Meade at once faced his army about and cut Humphreys and his II Corps loose in pursuit. He sent Wright to the left toward Jetersville and Griffin to the right toward Paineville.¹⁶³ Humphreys’ engineers completed the bridge work in “an incredibly short space of time,” and a sharp running fight commenced at once.¹⁶⁴

THE BATTLE OF SAILOR’S CREEK

The ensuing chase carried Humphreys and his men through broken country consisting, as he later wrote, “of woods with dense undergrowth and swamps, alternating with open fields, through and over which lines of battle [nearly a mile wide along the front] followed closely on the skirmish line.”¹⁶⁵ At about 0900, Mott rode up to de Trobriand to confer on some matter and took a bullet through the leg. The Frenchman took command of the division, and Mott retired to the ambulance where his part in the war ended.¹⁶⁶

Late morning saw a brief engagement at Deatonsville, a junction of two roads and a half dozen brick farmhouses, where Gordon and his rearguard turned to fight but fell back at the first wave of Union skirmishers.¹⁶⁷ Humphreys afterward met with Wright, still following on his left, to coordinate their joint movement.¹⁶⁸ But as Lyman recalled, there was “no rest for the wicked. All day long the peppery Humphreys, glaring through those spectacles, presses hotly in their rear.”¹⁶⁹ The enemy would make stand, wrote Livermore, “wherever a favorable position occurred, and our lines, almost without a halt to prepare, assaulted them and drove them from every position.”¹⁷⁰ De Trobriand remembers that, about midmorning, Humphreys came up on the line and dismounted. “[W]hile the balls began to whistle around our ears,” Humphreys asked his newest division commander “the exact position of my three brigades, consulted a topographical sketch which he held in his hand, explained to me where the road led to, where we had a good opportunity to strike . . . the guns of the enemy’s train, . . . which he was particularly desirous of capturing.” Then, satisfied on all points but drawing heavy fire, Humphreys



Brig. Gen. Benjamin G. Humphreys

said, “I think we had better get further to the rear.”¹⁷¹ Having already covered eleven miles by late afternoon, the running contest continued for several more along Sailor’s Creek, “the road . . . being strewn with tents, camp equipage, baggage, battery-forges, limbers, and wagons,” all remnants of a fleeing and increasingly demoralized rebel army. Gordon made his last stand of the day near Perkinson’s mills where just before dark a “short, sharp contest” cost him 13 guns, 3 flags, 1,700 prisoners, and “a large part of the main trains of Lee’s army, which were huddled together in a confused mass at the crossing of the creek.”¹⁷²

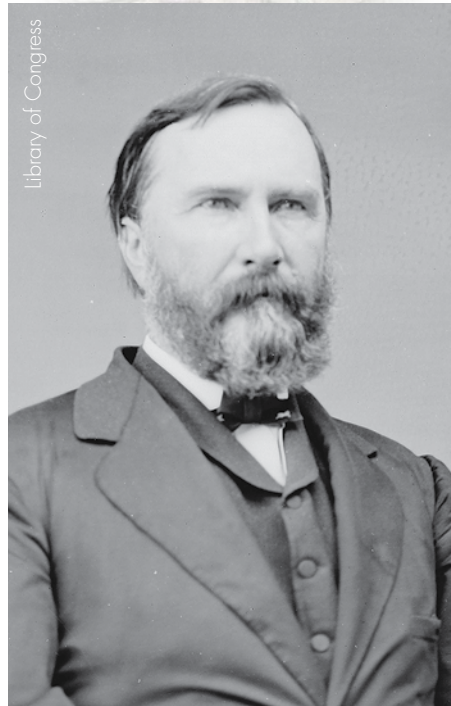
Among the spoils were barrels of worthless Confederate currency. As rebel prisoners filed past to the rear, several men of Miles’ division “asked them when they were paid last,” as Livermore recalled, “and with jocular gravity handed out the Confederate bills to them lavishly, and enjoyed the joke hugely.”¹⁷³ The men also found a rebel spring wagon with the words “General Humphreys’ Headquarters” printed in large letters on the side. It belonged to Confederate Brig. Gen. Benjamin Grubb Humphreys, a distant cousin and commander of a Mississippi brigade under Gordon. Miles’ division retained the wagon, “much to the amusement of Humphreys.”¹⁷⁴ Word in the II Corps was that “Humphreys (meaning their corps Commander) is beating his brother badly.”¹⁷⁵ That night, as the men celebrated their victory at Sailor’s Creek, Gordon and

his remaining force escaped north in the vicinity of the Appomattox River where the fight would commence in the morning. All told, it was a banner day for Humphreys, Wright, and Sheridan. Together they had cut off a quarter of the rebel army, destroyed much of its wagon train, and slowed its retreat. Lee quailed over his losses. “My God!” he exclaimed, “Has the army been dissolved?”¹⁷⁶

THE BATTLE OF HIGH BRIDGE

Humphreys and his men took much needed sleep that night in the vicinity of the Lockett farm while Meade prepared orders for the next day, Friday 7 April. These called for the II Corps “to move at 5:30 a.m., *punctually*” but otherwise differed little from the instructions of the previous day—“to come up with and attack the enemy whenever seen and to move with the utmost celerity.”¹⁷⁷ The loose guidance gave Humphreys a free hand in his dogged pursuit of the Confederate army. Lyman, in fact, called him “an erasable pointer.”¹⁷⁸ “Sometimes,” as Humphreys later remembered, “the marks on the road governed us, sometimes what we could learn from the people, sometimes what we saw of the enemy or learned by contact with him.”¹⁷⁹ Two miles into their morning march, he came to a fork in the road—with the left leading to Farmville, a small town situated just across the Appomattox River, and the right to High Bridge. The marks on the road told him that “one main body of Lee’s Army [Lt. Gen. James Longstreet’s] moved by the left hand road,” and off Humphreys went toward Farmville, but he sent staff officers and his escort to the High Bridge “to learn what they could of the enemy.” Humphreys proceeded up the road with Miles (1st Division) and de Trobriand (3d Division) and pushed Barlow (2d Division) a thousand yards to the right to advance along a parallel path in closer proximity to the river.¹⁸⁰

They had progressed only a mile or so before several riders returned with urgent news. A large party of rebels had recently crossed the High Bridge and were attempting to burn it behind them. Just then, as Humphreys later wrote, “smoke from the burning bridge came in sight, having been hidden before by the high ground and forest.”¹⁸¹ He understood the implications immediately. Lee hoped, by crossing the swollen Appomattox and destroying the bridge (the river being too deep to ford by infantry), that he could stymie his pursuers and buy time to rest and feed his exhausted



General Longstreet

army. It was a desperate measure, and its success hinged on the destruction of the crossings.

Humphreys set out immediately to save the bridge, directing Miles and de Trobriand “to turn short to the right and move across the High Bridge Road” and then sending Livermore to find Barlow and direct the 2d Division to make its way to the bridge as well, and quickly. He then moved off in that direction himself, “riding as rapidly as possible.” Arriving at 0700, he was on the bluff

overlooking the valley. It was an impressive site. Lyman described the High Bridge—an engineering marvel of its age—as a “great viaduct . . . a railroad bridge, nearly 2500 feet long, over the valley of the Appomattox, and is supported by great brick piers, of which the central ones are 140 feet high.”¹⁸² There was a second and much smaller structure as well—a crude wagon-road bridge spanning only the river (and not the valley) far below and just to the east of the railroad. Both had been torched from the far side. Flames already engulfed much of the High Bridge, and it was no longer traversable. A Confederate division under Maj. Gen. William Mahone had drawn up on the far side of the wagon bridge. “So strong was his position and so bad the ground we must move over,” Humphreys later wrote, “that I thought he had abandoned the wagon road bridge so as to invite an attack.”¹⁸³

Nevertheless, he pushed ahead, selecting a position for his artillery (assigning Miles) and sending a dispatch to Griffin advising him to cross the river at Jamestown several miles below and to attack the enemy on his flank. Humphreys then raced down to the wagon-road bridge where he arrived just ahead of Barlow whose division had marched double-quick to the riverbank. They then forced a crossing. Within minutes, lead elements of Barlow’s division had seized a redoubt on the opposite side, but they struggled to hold it against a sharp rebel counterattack. Miles then opened with his artillery, and Smyth, commanding Barlow’s



A view of the High Bridge with the wagon bridge visible to the lower right, April 1865



General Mahone

3d brigade, surged across the bridge in support. The rebel lines held briefly before collapsing and falling back.¹⁸⁴ Then Barlow and his men doused the flames using wet blankets and the contents of their canteens and even throwing up river water. They saved the wagon bridge from serious damage. In the meantime, high above them on the railroad bridge, Livermore and a separate party of pioneers braved the heights and “put out fires while fighting almost hand to hand with the enemy’s skirmishers.” They “saved the bridge” with the exception of four long spans.¹⁸⁵ Two fell burning into the ravine more than a hundred feet below. After failing at the critical task of destroying the crossings, Mahone abandoned his defenses and moved along the Lynchburg Road in a northwesterly direction toward Cumberland Church while Gordon followed the railroad bed to the vicinity of Farmville. The II Corps then crossed the singed wagon bridge without opposition. Humphreys had denied Lee any respite and scored an important tactical victory that may have shortened the war by several days.¹⁸⁶

THE BATTLE OF CUMBERLAND CHURCH

Humphreys renewed the chase that same morning as temperatures climbed into the sixties but with “a cold, disagreeable rain falling.”¹⁸⁷ Again dividing his force, he sent Barlow “to follow General Gordon along the railroad bed [west] toward Farmville” and led the rest of the II Corps—about 12,000

men—after Mahone via “the old stage-road north of the Appomattox River.”¹⁸⁸ Several miles up, Barlow overtook Gordon at the intersection of High Bridge and Farmville roads and ordered an attack. The Irishman Smyth led his brigade to within fifty yards of the enemy when a sniper’s bullet caught him in the face, knocking him paralyzed from his horse. He died two days later, the last Union general killed in the war.¹⁸⁹ After some confusion and the capture of a hundred or so men from both the 7th Regiment Infantry, Michigan Volunteers, and 59th Regiment, New York Volunteers, Barlow continued his push into the Confederate rear, “cut off a large number of wagons, which were burnt,” and followed the retreating rebels to the north side of the river facing Farmville.¹⁹⁰

Humphreys was having a harder time of it. Along with Miles and de Trobriand, he

approached the town of Cumberland Church, about three miles north of Farmville, at 1300 when the column “suddenly came in contact with the enemy, who opened on him with [Col. William T.] Poague’s sixteen guns.”¹⁹¹ According to Livermore, it “swept some of the 1st Division down with solid shot, which flew directly down the road up which they were marching in . . . column.”¹⁹² A short time later while moving ahead to survey the field, Humphreys and Livermore witnessed the resulting carnage firsthand—“six or eight of our men in the road stone dead, through whom the shot had gone.”¹⁹³ The two officers dismounted there and walked to the skirmish line “where it was hot work,” according to Livermore, but from which Humphreys could see the enemy “well entrenched on a crest in front of us, perhaps four hundred yards away.”¹⁹⁴





Colonel Poague

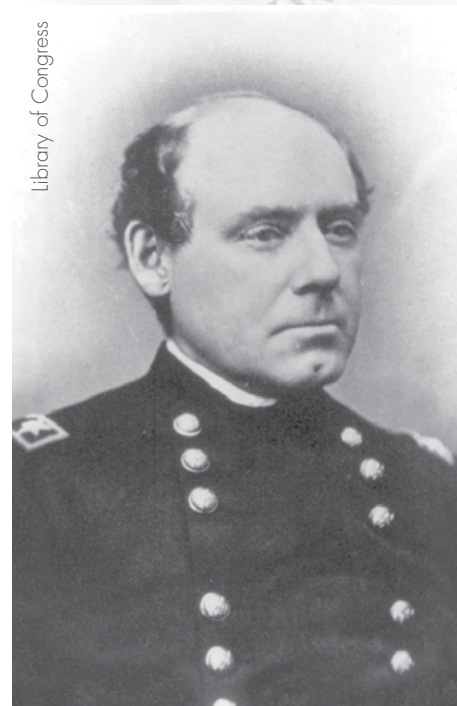
His own reconnaissance, together with intelligence gathered from “prisoners taken,” persuaded Humphreys that he had bumped up against the entire Confederate army.¹⁹⁵ He sent Livermore to retrieve Barlow and got word to Meade that “Lee’s whole remaining force, probably about 18,000 infantry, had been come up with.” He recommended that a Union corps “attack Lee from the direction of Farmville at the same time that the Second Corps attacked from the opposite direction.” Meade approved and ordered the VI and XXIV Corps, both at or near Farmville, to “cross the river there and attack jointly with the Second Corps.”¹⁹⁶ It was a splendid plan but—unbeknownst to either Humphreys or Meade—the Confederates had destroyed the bridges at Farmville. Longstreet had marched through the town earlier that day and, after crossing to the north side of the Appomattox to rejoin Lee, set a proper engineer to the task of destroying the bridges and closing off pursuit from the town.¹⁹⁷ The swollen river was “impassable” for infantry, leaving “everything at a standstill.”¹⁹⁸ It would be many hours and well into the night before Wright and his VI Corps could build a substantial foot crossing or bring up a pontoon bridge necessary for the heavy artillery. Until then, the II Corps was on its own. Sheridan had a few scouts about, but nothing in force.

While waiting for Barlow, Humphreys heard heavy firing from the direction of Farmville and reasonably (but incorrectly)

assumed that Wright had made a crossing. In accordance with the plan approved by Meade, Humphreys “contracted his left and extended his right to envelop the enemy’s left flank.”¹⁹⁹ At about 1600 he also threw forward three regiments from Miles’ division. Lyman reported it all from his vantage point in Farmville. “[H]eavy firing across the river [coming] from Humphreys, who had . . . struck the whole of Lee’s army, entrenched and covering his trains. *Nothing daunted*, he crowded up close and attempted to assault one point with a brigade, but was repulsed with heavy loss.”²⁰⁰ Lee, of course, heard it too. From his headquarters at or near Cumberland Church, a mile or so west of his breastworks, he grumbled, “There is that Second Corps again.”²⁰¹ Barlow arrived on the field at sunset, but it was dark before he took position and too late for a renewal of hostilities.²⁰² McAllister, situated in front of the Rice House which served as a temporary II Corps headquarters, made note in his journal that he was “satisfied that Genl. Grant did not want to drive them further but to hold them here.”²⁰³

PEACE PROPOSALS

Then came the first of several peace overtures. Grant had taken up residence at a hotel in Farmville and from there saw things plainly. Lee was finished or soon would be. While Humphreys had tied up the Confederate Army at Cumberland Church, Grant sent Sheridan, Ord, and Griffin racing ahead to Appomattox Court House, about thirty miles distant, where Lee had pinned his final hopes on a train of provisions that would soon arrive there by rail.²⁰⁴ But it was very likely now that the Union cavalry would get there first, seize the supplies, and, supposing that the infantry got up quickly enough, cut off all escape. At 2030 of Friday 7 April, Grant penned a letter to Lee asking the Confederate commander to surrender his army.²⁰⁵ He then passed it along to his Adjutant-General, Brig. Gen. Seth Williams, with instructions to bring it to Humphreys who was close up on Lee. The letter passed through McAllister’s picket line while Humphreys authorized a short truce “to enable the enemy to gather up their wounded, that were lying between the lines.”²⁰⁶ Lee responded an hour later by refusing Grant’s overture but asking for terms, and—the letter again passing through the lines of the II Corps—Williams set out on the return to Farmville via the wagon bridge.



General Williams

As expected, Lee moved off during the night bound for Appomattox Court House. Humphreys roused his II Corps early on 8 April for a sunrise march that would be one of its longest and most excruciating of the war. Following the Lynchburg Road, the corps passed by the Confederate works at Cumberland Church while Wright and his VI Corps—a pontoon bridge finally in place—crossed the river at Farmville and fell in behind.²⁰⁷ Grant took the wagon bridge instead and for a time joined Meade and his entourage. Still early in the march, Lyman rode ahead to find Humphreys at the Piedmont Coal Company mine “having been out on several roads, ahead of his column, and getting down on his knees and peering at foot-tracks, through his spectacles, to determine by which the main body had retreated.”²⁰⁸ The accumulating debris soon confirmed his choice. Man and horse were yielding to exhaustion, and the retreating rebel column littered the countryside with “everything that belonged to an army,” McAllister remembered, including “caissons blown up and wagons left behind” and a “number of artillery pieces . . . found in the woods.”²⁰⁹

Later that Saturday morning, as Humphreys began closing again on trailing elements of the rebel army, Williams came up with Grant’s second letter to Lee. Humphreys sent him ahead with Whittier and two orderlies, all riding under a white flag, to approach the Confederate rear guard,



A pontoon bridge leading into Petersburg

then under the command of the general's nephew and top cavalry commander, Fitzhugh Lee. Though "our flag seemed prominent," as Whittier later remembered, "the enemy fired and shot one of the orderlies behind us."²¹⁰ The small entourage delivered the letter anyway along with word that "there would be no interruptions of military movements."²¹¹ The fast moving Union column had long since outpaced its supply trains, but spirits remained high. Among his men, McAllister heard rumors and "stories afloat." Many of these were "far from the truth, some bordered on it, and all helped to enliven the scene and raise the spirits of the boys who were weak and hungry, having had no rations to eat."²¹²

Humphreys received Lee's answer at dusk when the II Corps halted two miles beyond New Store, after a twenty-mile march.²¹³ He sent Whittier to carry the letter back to Grant's headquarters. The young officer remembered that it was "a long distance from our halting place at evening, and I returned from Grant, . . . leaving at midnight, and not reaching the Corps which had moved on until some hours later." Whittier slept for only a "short time" that early Sunday morning when "awakened by Gen. Humphreys with an apology for asking me to go out again after so hard and long a journey." But Whittier was "only too glad of the opportunity."²¹⁴ He gathered up his flag and his orderly and set out on a beautiful but

treacherous Sunday morning ride through the woods, eventually finding his way to Lt. Col. Charles Marshall, a longtime member of Lee's personal staff (and a distant relative of Chief Justice John J. Marshall).²¹⁵ The two approached Lee together at 0900. The general dismounted, as Whittier remembered, "sat on the stump of a tree and after reading the letter, began dictating a reply." Marshall took it all down. The gist of it was that Lee wanted to meet personally with Grant to "ascertain definitely what terms were embraced in your proposition of yesterday with reference to the



Colonel Marshall

surrender of this army."²¹⁶ Whittier put the letter in his vest pocket and rode for Meade, delivering it at 1000. Grant, who had rejoined Sheridan and Ord, had it in his hand by noon.

THE BATTLE OF APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE

Humphreys, meanwhile, had roused his men and pushed ahead. En route to Appomattox, he began to pitch into Longstreet, who was by then in command of both the I and III Corps (following the death of A.P. Hill at Petersburg a week earlier). Lee sent Marshall under a flag of truce with "two [separate] earnest verbal requests" asking Humphreys, as he recalled, "not to press forward upon him, but to halt, as negotiations were going on for a surrender." Direct orders constrained Humphreys—the ongoing negotiations were "in no way to interfere with his operations." His temperament and distrust also compelled him.²¹⁷ "They shan't stop me!" he retorted along with instructions to "receive the message but push on the skirmishers!" He sent word twice to Marshall that "the requests [for truce] could not be complied with, and that he must retire from the front at once." Lee was, according to Humphreys, "in full sight on the road, not over 100 yards distant from the head of the corps." At 1100, the II Corps came up on Longstreet's command entrenched in the vicinity of Appomattox Court House. Humphreys "at once formed for attack," with Wright and his VI Corps aligned to his right. Then, "at the moment when it was about to begin," Meade arrived with authorization for a one-hour cease-fire, to expire at 1300. Humphreys waited impatiently. Time slowed to pace. At one minute to the hour, he checked his watch, mounted his horse, and gave the order to move. He and his II Corps advanced several hundred yards, far enough to see that the rebel pickets had disappeared, when two men—a Confederate and a Union officer—approached with instructions from Grant. The truce had been extended.²¹⁸ The clock ran out on the war several hours later when Grant and Lee negotiated the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Meade delivered the news to the II Corps on horseback, galloping from Appomattox. "Lee has surrendered!"²¹⁹ The men of the Army of the Potomac celebrated as they had never before. De Trobriand recalled the mood that suddenly struck—"all hopes of four years at last realized; all the fears dissipated, all the perils disappeared; all the privations, all the sufferings, all the



The McLean House, where Lee surrendered to Grant

misery ended; the intoxication of triumph; the joy at the near return to the domestic hearth.”²²⁰ That evening, Humphreys penned a long letter to his wife detailing the feverish activities of the past few days. His thoughts were drawn particularly to 7 April and Cumberland Church (Farmville) when “I alone had to deal with Lee. . . . I understand some considerable uneasiness was felt for me, but I did not participate in

it after I had gotten my corps together.” He then detailed the “communication between General Grant and General Lee [which] began to pass through my lines, thickening last night and this morning, terminating at last in the signing of terms of capitulation.”²²¹ Humphreys understood the import of what he and his men had accomplished. “One great source of satisfaction is the fact that the Army of the Potomac has

completely destroyed, annihilated the Army of Northern Virginia, its old opponent; has made the most wonderful campaign on record and will now receive the credit it was entitled to for former deeds. Glorious two weeks!”²²² Four years of sacrifice, dedication, and commitment had been vindicated, and he knew it. For a time at least, he allowed himself to revel in it.

FAMILY REUNION

On the Tuesday after the surrender, Humphreys and his II Corps left Appomattox for a forty-mile march to Burkeville, covering a little less than half the distance back to Richmond. There they remained for several weeks. These were restful if not uneventful days, and Humphreys was busy with his pen. He first wrote the father of Charles Mills, “killed by my side by a cannon shot,” and admitted that his “sincere sorrow” was “deepened by the reflection that probably the very means I took to shelter my staff against the fire of the enemy’s batteries, to which they were fully exposed, led to his death.”²²³ In a subsequent letter to Rebecca dated 16 April he told of “a rumor prevalent that I am to be the Military Governor of Virginia” though “there is probably no foundation whatever to it, and I certainly hope there is none, for that is the last position which I could wish to see myself placed.” The same letter had news that must have reverberated



The first Union wagon train entering Petersburg, April 1865



Capt. Henry H. Humphreys

throughout the extended Humphreys clan. He had received a note from his sister-in-law, Margaret dated 9 April and asking for "a letter of introduction to the Command of Troops about Richmond so that she might obtain protection."²²⁴ Margaret was the wife of his younger brother, Joshua—a Richmond resident and a former Confederate naval officer. Like thousands of others, the two brothers had been estranged by the war, and their families had had little or no contact in years. Because Humphreys had married his first cousin, though, Rebecca would have

had more than a passing interest in her brother-in-law who was also a first cousin. They had grown up together at Pont Reading, the family estate in Haverford, Pennsylvania. Humphreys wrote Ord who commanded that department "requesting protection for her." He also made plans to meet his brother on the march through Richmond, if it could be arranged amid all the confusion. In closing the letter to his wife, he turned to the murder of Abraham Lincoln—"We were all greatly shocked last evening at hearing of the assassination of the President and of the attempts on Mr. Seward and his son. It is a fearful thing."²²⁵ Humphreys was a Democrat and a conservative, but along with tens of millions of Americans he mourned his president all the same.

On the glorious spring afternoon of 2 May 1865, the corps broke camp for the long march to Washington. The sky was clear with temperatures in the sixties, and the regimental bands livened things up with popular favorites including "When Johnny Comes Marching Home."²²⁶ The Union column stopped in the vicinity of Richmond two days later, and Humphreys went on ahead, as he explained to his wife, to "try to find Josh." He made a late start but searched several places around the city including the home of a mutual friend, but "neither he nor Josh was in town, much to my disappointment." Two days later, as it resumed its

march, the corps paraded through the streets of the rebel capital. Just as Humphreys passed "General Lee's house," Harry called to out to his father—"there is Uncle Josh!" The senior Humphreys "at once alighted and stood talking with Josh until the troops began to get up on me—when I went on to the termination of the line in Broad Street." There his brother rejoined him, and the two watched as the entire corps passed. They then rode out together to camp, about six miles from Richmond on the Pamunkey River. Humphreys was relieved to find that "Josh looked much better than I expected to find him." They parted in the morning after a campsite breakfast. Humphreys told his wife that "we had of course a great deal to say to each other and would have much more."²²⁷ But the schism created by war never fully healed. Joshua shortly after resettled his family in Fredericksburg and, after years of failed business ventures, died at the age of 60 in November 1873.

THE GRAND REVIEW

The last hurrah for the Army of the Potomac came several weeks later in Washington as the Union armies paraded in Grand Review down Pennsylvania Avenue. Meade led 80,000 men from Capitol Hill to the White House, past newly sworn-in President Andrew Johnson and his cabinet as well as Grant, Hancock, and other leading military and government



The Presidential Stand at the Grand Review



Humphreys (on the gray horse) leading the II Corps during the Grand Review

officials. Crowds numbering in the thousands lined the streets. The infantry marched sixteen-across, followed by artillery and then cavalry. In all, the column stretched seven miles long and continued in procession for six hours. The mood throughout the city was “gay and jovial” with the soldiers and the crowds breaking into song as the long train snaked its way through the city.²²⁸

Humphreys and his II Corps had camped overnight on Arlington Heights opposite the capital. At the prescribed time, they followed Griffin and his V Corps in the long parade. Humphreys came first with six of his personal staff, all on horseback. Then came a regimental band followed by each of his three divisions marching in turn.²²⁹ Two of the commanders—Barlow (2d Division) and Mott (3d Division)—were in place.²³⁰ Miles (1st Division) was not. Grant had whisked him away to take command of the Military District of Fort Monroe, Virginia, where he was, on that very day, overseeing the

imprisonment of the Confederate president, Jefferson F. Davis.²³¹ Photographer Mathew B. Brady captured the head of the column as it moved up the broad avenue. A hazy visage of the newly enlarged Capitol dome is visible about a half mile in the distance. The faces of the riders are all blurred badly, but Humphreys is recognizable on his gray mare, Beckie.²³²

POSTWAR

Unlike the triumvirate of Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan, and even top corps commanders like Hancock, Warren, and Maj. Gen. John F. Reynolds, Humphreys never became a household name. Yet the men of the II Corps and his fellow Army officers held him in the highest esteem. A number of contemporaneous writers and historians, especially John Watts De Peyster and, later, Carswell McClellan, concluded that Humphreys was—at war’s end—the best corps commander in the

Army of the Potomac.²³³ Warren had been fired, if unfairly so. Wright was a fighter but showed little élan for strategy.²³⁴ Parke was a competent field commander but his long-time association with Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside did nothing for his reputation. Also, unlike any of his fellow engineer officers, Humphreys would probably have risen to Army command had the war continued another year. Certainly Grant favored him. Among the final pages of his extraordinary autobiography, Grant identified three “good corps commanders” who “came into that position so near to the close of the war as not to attract public attention”—these included Major Generals Griffin, Alexander Mackenzie, and Humphreys.²³⁵ The irascible Griffin held corps command for scarcely a week. Mackenzie was a rising star but only twenty-one and less than a year out of West Point by April 1865. Humphreys had however proved his mettle as an exceptional division commander at Fredericksburg,



Humphreys (sitting, center) and his II Corps staff, c. June 1865

Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg; as the best chief of staff that the Army of the Potomac ever had; and as commander of the famed II Corps, which he rebuilt and led with tremendous success against Lee at Hatcher's Run, Cumberland Church, and Appomattox. As McClellan memorialized, Humphreys in those final days of the war "so clung to the rapidly retreating Army of Northern Virginia, that it bled to death under the constantly repeated wounds which he inflicted."²³⁶ While fame unfairly eluded him, Humphreys got much of what he wanted from the war—the admiration and respect of his peers, a Regular Army promotion to brigadier general, and one of the few truly plum jobs in the peacetime Army, that of chief of engineers.

In August 1866, Grant pushed General Delafield into retirement and selected Humphreys as chief of the Army Corps of Engineers, a position he held until his own retirement in 1879. During his thirteen-year tenure, he managed a dramatic postwar expansion of internal improvements and oversaw important surveys and explorations of the American West as well as a complete overhaul of the nation's coastal fortifications. He also established the Army's first engineer school at Willets Point, New York, and served on a number of important boards and commissions, including the Washington Monument Commission, the U.S. Lighthouse Board, and the Inter-oceanic Canal Commission. He retired at the age of sixty-eight as the second longest serving

chief of engineers in history, behind only Brig. Gen. Joseph G. Totten. Humphreys devoted his last years to penning two important and highly reputable histories of the Virginia campaigns. Having survived unscathed more than forty named battles stretching back to the Second Seminole War (1835–1842), he died quietly in his reading chair at his Connecticut Avenue row house in Washington, D.C., on 27 December 1883.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Matthew T. Percy has been a historian with the Office of History of Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in Alexandria, Virginia, since 2006. He worked from 2001 to 2006 as the historian of the St. Paul District of the Corps of Engineers in St. Paul, Minnesota. While there, he joined with Charles A. Camillo to coauthor *Upon Their Shoulders: A History of the Mississippi River Commission* (Vicksburg: Mississippi River Commission, 2004). He has published articles in *Louisiana History*, *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, *Florida Historical Quarterly*, *Military History of the West*, and two previous articles on Humphreys in *Army History*. He holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of North Texas. He is currently working on a book-length biography of Andrew A. Humphreys (1810–1883).

NOTES

1. John J. Hennessy, "I Dread the Spring: The Army of the Potomac Prepares for the Overland

Campaign," in *The Wilderness Campaign*, ed. Gary W. Gallagher (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), p. 72.

2. Charles A. Dana, *Recollections of the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), p. 192. Dana made the comment in May 1864 while Humphreys was chief of staff.

3. Grant frequently urged Meade to replace Warren with then Chief of Staff Humphreys, as at Spotsylvania. See Horace Porter, *Campaigning with Grant* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), p. 108. And, of course, it was Grant who signed off on Humphreys' elevation to II Corps command, *Ibid.*, p. 329. Notably, Grant also mentions Humphreys at the very end of his *Personal Memoirs* as one of three "good Corps commanders" who did not get the attention or the credit they deserved. Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs* (New York: The Modern Library, 1999), p. 610.

4. Henry H. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys: A Biography* (Philadelphia, Pa.: The John C. Winston Company, 1924), pp. 200–201.

5. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 258. In July 1864, Grant offered Humphreys command of the X Corps, of which African Americans comprised about half. Humphreys turned it down, *Ibid.*, p. 241.

6. For location of headquarters at Peebles' House, see Francis A. Walker, *History of the Second Army Corps in the Army of the Potomac* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1886), p. 642; Theodore Lyman, *Meade's Headquarters, 1863–1865: Letters of Colonel Theodore Lyman from The Wilderness to Appomattox*, ed. George R. Agassiz (Boston, Mass.: Atlantic Monthly

- Press, 1922), p. 279; Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 26 Nov 1864, Andrew A. Humphreys Papers (AAHP), Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), 33/104.
7. A. Wilson Greene, *Breaking the Backbone of the Rebellion: The Final Battles of the Petersburg Campaign* (Mason City, Iowa: Savas Publishing Co., 2000), p. 29.
8. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 259.
9. For Hancock, see Matthew T. Percy, “‘No Heroism Can Avail’: Andrew A. Humphreys and His Pennsylvania Division at Antietam and Fredericksburg,” *Army History* 76 (Summer 2010): 14; Matthew T. Percy, “Nothing but the Spirit of Heroism: Andrew A. Humphreys at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg,” *Army History* 88 (Summer 2013): 30.
10. For more on the Humphreys-Hancock friendship, see John Watts De Peyster, “Andrew Atkinson Humphreys,” *Magazine of American History* (October 1886): 350.
11. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 26 Nov 1864, AAHP, HSP, 33/104.
12. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 107; David M. Jordan, *Winfield Scott Hancock: A Soldier’s Life* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), pp. 163–64. Irish-born Thomas Alfred Smyth (31-year-old) replaced Gibbon from 23 December 1864–25 February 1865. William Hays then took over command of the 2d Division but was relieved of command on 6 April for sleeping on duty. Francis C. Barlow replaced him. See also Theodore Lyman, *Meade’s Army: The Private Notebooks of Lt. Col. Theodore Lyman*, ed. David W. Lowe (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2007), p. 300.
13. Gibbon made it clear to Humphreys that “the matter was uninfluenced by any objection of serving under his orders, for he is one of the most accomplished soldiers and highest-toned gentlemen in the army.” John Gibbon, *Personal Recollections of the Civil War* (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Bookshop, 1988), pp. 273–75. For Grant’s letter to Meade on Gibbon, see letter dated 30 November 1864, in John Y. Simon, ed., *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, v. 13: 16 November 1864–20 February 1865 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), p. 43.
14. The II Corps was something of a coming home for Humphreys, as it had fully absorbed the remnants of the famed “Hooker’s Division” of the III Corps—the division that Humphreys had led at Gettysburg—see De Peyster, “Andrew Atkinson Humphreys,” p. 360. For repeated instances where Mott’s division “behaved shamefully,” see Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, pp. 92, 93, 95, 109–10, 114, etc. Also see Lawrence A. Kreiser Jr., *Defeating Lee: A History of the Second Corps, Army of the Potomac* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), p. 220. Gershom Mott led the 3d Division (II Corps), which had been formed from a reorganization of the Army of the Potomac in March 1864 that discontinued the III Corps and divvied up its troops between two II Corps divisions, the 3d and 4th. Humphreys had held a division command in that now defunct corps under Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Sickles at Gettysburg, so a fair number of the men in the II Corps—particularly in Mott’s division—had already served under Humphreys in some capacity. See Francis A. Walker, *General Hancock* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1895), p. 245.
15. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 26 Nov 1864, AAHP, HSP, 33/104.
16. James H. Wilson, “Major-General Andrew Atkinson Humphreys,” *Military Historical Society of Massachusetts*, v. 10 (Wilmington, N.C.: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1895), p. 89.
17. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 26 Nov 1864, AAHP, HSP, 33/104.
18. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Alexander Dallas Bache, Sep 1855, AAHP, HSP, 4/10. “I do not estimate highly any position in my Corps that I am likely to hold within a reasonable time though appreciate fully the advantage of a commission. A post less than that of Chief of the Corps is not worth striving for.”
19. Ltr, Israel C. Woodruff to Andrew Humphreys, 20 Mar 1863, AAHP, HSP, 13/87. “Neither Parke, [Nathaniel] Michler, [James Hervey] Simpson, nor [John N.] Macomb are satisfied.” Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck and Brig. Gen. George W. Cullum were the driving forces for the consolidation through Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan.
20. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 279 (entry dated 27 November 1864).
21. Ltr, Maj. Gen. George G. Meade to Henry A. Cram, 11 Dec 1864, in George Meade, *The Life and Letters of George Gordon Meade, Major-General United States Army*, v. II (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1913), p. 251.
22. Jones Archer, *Civil War Command and Strategy: The Process of Victory and Defeat* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), p. 196.
23. Andrew A. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign, 1864 and 1865: The Army of the Potomac and The Army of the James* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1995), p. 283 (see footnote); Kreiser, *Defeating Lee*, pp. ix–x; James M. McPherson, *The Illustrated Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 626.
24. Kreiser, *Defeating Lee*, p. 218; Earl J. Hess, *The Union Soldier in Battle: Enduring the Ordeal of Combat* (Lawrence: The University Press of Kansas, 1997), p. 90.
25. William W. Bergen, “Grant Finally Takes Command: How the Race to Appomattox Was Won,” in *Petersburg to Appomattox: The End of the War in Virginia*, ed. Caroline E. Janney (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018), p. 31; Kreiser, *Defeating Lee*, p. 221.
26. See Kreiser, *Defeating Lee*, p. 137.
27. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 279; Walker, *Second Army Corps*, p. 584.
28. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 279.
29. Gibbon, *Personal Recollections*, p. 257.
30. Kreiser, *Defeating Lee*, p. 208.
31. Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative*, v. 3: *Red River to Appomattox* (New York: Vintage Books, 1986), p. 547. For “gallant old corps,” see Lawrence A. Kreiser Jr., “The Fighting Second,” *New York Times*, 3 Apr 2012.
32. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, pp. 265, 272.
33. Perry D. Jamieson, *Winfield Scott Hancock: Gettysburg Hero* (Abilene, Tex.: McWhiney Foundation Press, 2003), p. 127.
34. Régis de Trobriand, *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac* (Boston, Mass.: Ticknor and Company, 1889), p. 688.
35. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 273; Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 30 Nov 1864, AAHP, HSP, 33/107. For percentages of new recruits, see Robert Wooster, *Nelson A. Miles and the Twilight of the Frontier Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), p. 32.
36. See Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 285, entry dated 30 Nov 1864.
37. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 30 Nov 1864, AAHP, HSP, 33/107.
38. For more on Humphreys as a division commander, see Percy, “‘No Heroism Can Avail’”; Percy, “Nothing but the Spirit of Heroism.”
39. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 23 Nov 1864, AAHP, HSP, 33/103.
40. Ltr, Carswell McClellan to Andrew Humphreys, 12 Dec 1864, AAHP, HSP, 19/14.
41. William Henry Armstrong, *Red-Tape and Pigeon-Hole Generals: Andrew A. Humphreys in the Army of the Potomac* (Charlottesville, Va.: Rockbridge Publishing, 1999), p. 248.
42. Humphreys still lamented the loss two months later: “If I could get back Carswell . . . and some others, the corps would equal what it was in its proudest day.” Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 23 Nov 1864, AAHP, HSP, 33/103.
43. Ltr, Henry C. Christiancy to Andrew Humphreys, 6 Dec 1864, AAHP, HSP, 19/8.
44. Richard F. Miller, *Harvard’s Civil War: A History of the Twentieth Massachusetts Volunteer*

Infantry (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2005), p. 54.

45. Gregory A. Coco, ed., *Through Blood and Fire: The Civil War Letters of Major Charles J. Mills, 1862–1865* (Gettysburg, PA: privately printed, 1982), pp. ix–x; Thomas Wentworth Higginson, ed., *Harvard Memorial Biographies*, v. 2, (Cambridge, Mass.: Sever and Francis, 1867), pp. 141–50.

46. Thomas L. Livermore, *Days and Events, 1860–1866* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920), p. 417.

47. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 27 Mar 1865, AAHP, HSP, 34/8.

48. Livermore, *Days and Events*, pp. 3–5. Augustus Louis Chetlain established the company that was added to the 12th Regiment, Illinois Volunteers, in late April 1861. He later commanded the regiment.

49. For the best description of McAllister, see de Trobriand, *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac*, p. 707; for background on de Trobriand, see William B. Styple, ed., *Our Noble Blood: The Civil War Letters of Régis de Trobriand* (Kearny, N.J.: Belle Grove Publishing, 1997), p. vii.

50. McAllister says the cavalry made “but little progress” overnight and were “utterly astonished and looked on in wonder” at his method. James I. Robertson Jr., ed., *The Civil War Letters of General Robert McAllister* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), p. 554; de Trobriand, *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac*, p. 691.

51. Robert K. Krick, *Civil War Weather in Virginia* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2016), p. 146.

52. Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 554; de Trobriand, *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac*, p. 691.

53. De Trobriand, *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac*, p. 692.

54. Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 555.

55. De Trobriand, *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac*, p. 693; Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 553.

56. George S. Burkhardt, *Confederate Rage, Yankee Wrath: No Quarter in the Civil War* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2007), p. 215.

57. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 310. For the severity of the winter, see also George A. Bruce, *The Twentieth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, 1861–1865* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton, Mifflin, 1906), p. 429; for lack of snow, see Greene, *Breaking the Backbone of the Rebellion*, p. 61.

58. Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 562. McAllister spent the winter “in a nice little log house.” He reported to his wife that “I am very

comfortable and have a nice open fire which I enjoy so much.”

59. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 26 Jan 1865, AAHP, HSP, 33/113.

60. Bruce Catton, *A Stillness at Appomattox* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1953), p. 321.

61. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 278.

62. The Union’s Fort Fisher at Petersburg should not be confused with the Confederate Fort Fisher protecting the port at Wilmington, North Carolina.

63. David Craft, *History of the One Hundred Forty-First Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1862–1865* (Towanda, Pa.: Reporter-Journal Printing Co., 1885), p. 233.

64. *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1880–1900), Serial 96, p. 6. For more on “evolutions,” see Earl J. Hess, *Civil War Infantry Tactics: Tactics, Combat, and Small-Unit Effectiveness* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015), pp. 53, 176.

65. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 12 Jan 1865, AAHP, HSP, 33/111.

66. Damian Shiels, *Irish in the American Civil War* (Dublin: History Press Ireland, 2013), ebook, see section “The Last to Fall.”

67. Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, (dated 17 Jan 1865), p. 564.

68. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 12 Jan 1865, AAHP, HSP, 33/111.

69. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 17 Jan 1865, AAHP, HSP, 33/112.

70. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 26 Jan 1865, AAHP, HSP, 33/113.

71. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 18 Mar 1865, AAHP, HSP, 33/127.

72. Second Lt. Michael McConville suffered a fatal fracture of the skull. David P. Conyngham, *The Irish Brigade and its Campaigns: With Some Account of the Corcoran Legion, and Sketches of the Principal Officers* (Glasgow, Scotland: Cameron & Ferguson, 1866), p. 253.

73. Bruce, *The Twentieth Regiment*, p. 430.

74. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 305.

75. Bruce, *The Twentieth Regiment*, p. 430.

76. Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784–1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 49–50.

77. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 12 Nov 1864, AAHP, HSP, 33/101.

78. Cullum was superintendent at West Point, a position traditionally held by the chief of engineers. Barnard was chief engineer of the armies in the field and had turned down the position of chief of engineers because Delafield ranked him. Delafield took the job as a brigadier general in the

Regular Army. Meigs left the Corps of Engineers to head the Quartermaster Corps and was a Brigadier General in the Regular Army.

79. Ltr (early draft), Andrew Humphreys to Ulysses S. Grant, 28 Jan 1865, AAHP, HSP, 19/43. The following sentence was crossed out in the draft: “If it had not been the source of so much mortification and depression I should let it rest.”

80. Ibid.; See Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, pp. 270–71, for 26 February mailing date and additional coverage of the final letter; Ltr, John G. Parke to Andrew Humphreys, 27 Feb 1865, AAHP, HSP, 19/58.

81. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 12 Nov 1864, AAHP, HSP, 33/101. Joshua Chamberlain also had strong feelings on the matter of brevets; see Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, *The Passing of Armies: An Account of the Final Campaign of the Army of the Potomac* (New York: Bantam, 1992), pp. 297–98. Also see An Ex-Army Officer [pseud.], *A Brief Dissertation on Military Titles and Brevet Rank* (Boston, Mass., 1886).

82. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 312.

83. Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 581.

84. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 420.

85. Simon, *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, v. 13, 6 Feb 1865, pp. 375–76. See letter from Grant to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton reporting on the battle.

86. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 313.

87. See Gershom Mott’s Draft Report on Hatcher’s Run, HSP, 19/51.

88. Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 584.

89. Mott, Draft Report on Hatcher’s Run, HSP.

90. Note, “Statement of Lieutenant Lee,” 28 Feb 1865, AAHP, HSP, 19/54. “Lieutenant Lee” (no first name given) was an officer in one of the Mississippi regiments of Joseph R. Davis’ Brigade, Henry Heth’s Division.

91. David M. Jordan, “Happiness is Not My Companion.” *The Life of General G. K. Warren* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), p. 206.

92. Jordan, *Happiness is Not My Companion*, p. 207; Eric J. Wittenberg, *Little Phil: A Reassessment of the Civil War Leadership of Gen. Philip H. Sheridan* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey’s, 2002), p. 117.

93. Simon, *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, v. 13, 6 Feb 1865, pp. 382–83.

94. Livermore, *Days and Events*, pp. 421–22; Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 269.

95. Simon, *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, v. 14, 13 Feb 1865, pp. 17–18.

96. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 1 Mar 1865, AAHP, HSP, 33/116.

97. Simon, *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, v. 14, 13 Feb 1865, p. 17.
98. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 10 Mar 1865, AAHP, HSP, 33/122.
99. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 6 Mar 1865, AAHP, HSP, 33/119.
100. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 4 Mar 1865, AAHP, HSP, 33/118.
101. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, pp. 277–78.
102. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 25 Mar 1865, AAHP, HSP, 34/6.
103. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 427; Walker, *Second Army Corps*, p. 651.
104. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 320; Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, v. IV (New York: The Century Co., 1888), pp. 584–89.
105. See Johnson and Buel, *Battles and Leaders*, v. IV, pp. 4, 586 (footnote); Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 25 Mar 1865, AAHP, HSP, 34/6. Humphreys writes that “for an hour and a half the tel [telegraph] wire was cut.”
106. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 324.
107. Johnson and Buel, *Battles and Leaders*, v. IV, p. 588.
108. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 321.
109. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 25 Mar 1865, AAHP, HSP, 34/6; 1st Division Report on Battle of Fort Stedman, 28 May 1865, AAHP, HSP, 19/86 for quote on “leaving dead on the field.” See also Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 325.
110. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 326.
111. For Lincoln’s statement as related by Captain John Barnes, see National Park Service, “President Lincoln Visits City Point and Petersburg, March 24–April 8, 1865,” accessed 11 Apr 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/pete/learn/news/upload/Lincoln-at-Pete-and-CPrev2.pdf>.
112. For copy of telegraph dated 27 Mar 1865, see AAHP, HSP, 19/89.
113. Coco, *Through Blood and Fire*, pp. 247–50.
114. Porter, *Campaigning with Grant*, p. 422.
115. Michael McCarthy, *Confederate Waterloo: The Battle of Five Forks, April 1, 1865, and the Controversy that Brought Down a General* (El Dorado Hills, Calif.: Savas Beatie, 2016), p. 18.
116. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 323.
117. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 329.
118. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 327.
119. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 330.
120. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 4 Apr 1865, AAHP, HSP, 34/9; Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 280; Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, pp. 331–32; Higginson, *Harvard Memorial Biographies*, v. 2, pp. 141–50; Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 433; Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to father of Charles Mills, 14 Apr 1865, AAHP, HSP, 34/12.
121. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 330.
122. Livermore blamed Warren’s 2d Division commander, General Romeyn B. Ayres, who, it seemed, “never secured his flanks.” Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 434.
123. Edwin C. Bearss, *The Battle of Five Forks* (Lynchburg, Va.: H. E. Howard, 1985), p. 63; Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 332.
124. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 532.
125. Walker, *Second Army Corps*, p. 662. On the significance of Humphreys’ flank attack at White Oak, see DePeyster, who argues that it “made Five Forks a possibility.” John Watts DePeyster, *La Royale: The Grand Hunt of the Army of the Potomac, on the 3d–7th April, 1865, Major-General Andrew Atkinson Humphreys and the Combined Second-Third Corps Leading the Pursuit*, part VII, (New York: J. R. Huth, 1872), p. ii.
126. Bearss, *Battle of Five Forks*, p. 68; Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 333.
127. Bearss, *Battle of Five Forks*, p. 72.
128. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
129. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 336.
130. *Ibid.*, p. 342.
131. Bearss, *Battle of Five Forks*, p. 76; Gouverneur Kemble Warren, *An Account of the Operations of the Fifth Army Corps, Commanded by Maj. Gen. G. K. Warren at the Battle of Five Forks, April 1, 1865, and the Battles and Movements Preliminary to It* (New York: William M. Franklin, Printer, 1866), p. 18.
132. Warren, *Account of the Operations*, p. 18.
133. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 330.
134. Warren, *Account of the Operations*, (report), p. 22.
135. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 340.
136. Bearss, *Battle of Five Forks*, p. 76.
137. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 362.
138. *Ibid.*
139. At about midnight on the first of April, Livermore passed along the order for Miles to “go down White Oak road to General Sheridan.” Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 436.
140. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 362; Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 436.
141. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 367.
142. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 367. Walker, *Second Army Corps*, p. 669.
143. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 438.
144. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 367.
145. De Peyster, *La Royale*, p. vii.
146. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 368.
147. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 441. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 369.
148. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 369; Henry H. Humphreys, *Major General Andrew Atkinson Humphreys, United States Volunteers, at Fredericksburg, Va., December 13th, 1862 and Farmville, Va., April 7th, 1865* (Chicago, Ill.: R. R. McCabe, 1896), pp. 39–40; De Peyster, *La Royale*, pp. v, vii.
149. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 285; Catton uses the term “foot race.” Catton, *Stillness at Appomattox*, p. 369.
150. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 285.
151. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 442.
152. *Ibid.*
153. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 283.
154. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 345.
155. *Ibid.*
156. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 442; Meade, *The Life and Letters*, p. 269.
157. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 346.
158. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 442.
159. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 346.
160. Walker, *Second Army Corps*, p. 675.
161. Humphreys, *Major General Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 43.
162. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 350; Carswell McClellan, *The Personal Memoirs and Military History of U. S. Grant versus the Record of the Army of the Potomac* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1887), p. 252.
163. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, pp. 378–79.
164. *Ibid.*, p. 379.
165. *Ibid.*; Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 448; McAllister remembered “driving the Rebels back over hill and dale, swamp and upland, field and forest.” See Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 605.
166. de Trobriand, *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac*, p. 735.
167. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 445; Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 351.
168. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 445.
169. Lyman, *Meade’s Headquarters*, p. 350.
170. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 445.
171. de Trobriand, *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac*, p. 736.
172. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 381.
173. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 449.

174. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 287.
175. Ibid.
176. Edward H. Bonekemper, III, *Grant and Lee: Victorious American and Vanquished Virginian* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2008), p. 227.
177. Ibid., p. 290.
178. Lyman, *Meade's Headquarters*, p. 353.
179. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, pp. 289–90 (see “Letter to William Swinton” dated 8 Dec 1866).
180. U.S. War Department, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, serial no. 95 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880–1901), p. 683.
181. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 292.
182. Lyman, *Meade's Headquarters*, p. 352.
183. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, pp. 292–93; Christopher M. Calkins, *Thirty-Six Hours Before Appomattox, April 6 and 7, 1865* (Farmville, Va.: Farmville Herald, 1980), p. 45.
184. Robert F. Welch, *The Boy General: The Life and Careers of Francis Channing Barlow* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2005), p. 203.
185. Walker, *Second Army Corps*, pp. 681–82; Livermore provides a very detailed account of his efforts to fight the fire on the High Bridge. Livermore, *Days and Events*, pp. 450–51.
186. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 296; De Peyster, *La Royale*, pp. 5, 133; Humphreys, *Major General Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, pp. 48–50.
187. Lyman, *Meade's Army*, p. 366; Krick, *Civil War Weather*, p. 156.
188. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 388.
189. D. W. Maull, *The Life and Military Services of the Late Brigadier General Thomas A. Smyth* (Wilmington, Del.: H. & E. F. James, 1870), p. 43. Maull was Surgeon in Chief, 2d Division, II Corps; Welch, *The Boy General*, p. 204.
190. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 388; Barlow claimed to have destroyed 135 wagons, Welch, *The Boy General*, p. 204.
191. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 388.
192. Livermore, *Days and Events*, p. 452.
193. Ibid., p. 453.
194. Ibid.
195. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 388.
196. Ibid., p. 389.
197. Lyman, *Meade's Headquarters*, p. 353. The able Brig. Gen. Edward Porter Alexander managed the destruction himself.
198. Lyman, *Meade's Headquarters*, p. 352.
199. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 389.
200. Lyman, *Meade's Headquarters*, p. 352.
201. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 298; Calkins, *Thirty-Six Hours Before Appomattox*, p. 55.
202. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 390; Walker, *Second Army Corps*, p. 684.
203. Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 606.
204. Philip Henry Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs of P. H. Sheridan, General United States Army* (Cambridge, Mass.: Da Capo Press, 1992), p. 390.
205. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 439.
206. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 391; Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, p. 300. McAllister scarcely notes his role in transferring the surrender dispatch: “It was sent through our lines at this point.” Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 606.
207. Catton, *Stillness at Appomattox*, p. 372.
208. Lyman, *Meade's Headquarters*, p. 353.
209. Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 606. “Shattered and demoralized,” Meade, *The Life and Letters*, p. 270.
210. Charles A. Whittier, *Egotistical Memoirs* (Boston: Massachusetts Military Historical Society, 1888), pp. 19–20.
211. Ibid.
212. Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 607.
213. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, p. 392.
214. Charles Whittier, *Diary*, pp. 19–20.
215. Frederick Maurice, ed., *An Aide-de-Camp of Lee: Being the Papers of Colonel Charles Marshall, Sometime Aide-de-Camp, Military Secretary, and Assistant Adjutant General on the Staff of Robert E. Lee, 1862–1865* (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown, and Co., 1927), pp. xiii, 263–74.
216. For Lee quote, see Edward A. Pollard, *Lee and His Lieutenants* (New York: E. B. Treat & Co., 1867), p. 163.
217. Humphreys, *The Virginia Campaign*, pp. 394–95; Charles Marshall, *The Story of Appomattox: An Address Delivered Before the Society of the Army and Navy of the Confederate States in the State of Maryland* (Baltimore, Md.: Guggenheimer, Weil & Co., 1894).
218. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, pp. 306–07.
219. de Trobriand, *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac*, pp. 751–52; Robertson, *Civil War Letters*, p. 607.
220. de Trobriand, *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac*, p. 751.
221. Humphreys, *Andrew Atkinson Humphreys*, pp. 310–11.
222. Ibid., pp. 311–12.
223. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to father of Charles Mills, 14 Apr 1865, AAHP, HSP, 34/13; Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 5 May 1865, AAHP, HSP, 34/17, Humphreys mentions that Mill's mother responded with a photo of Charles and a letter “written under the same influence of the same tender feelings that were characteristic of her son.”
224. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 16 Apr 1865, AAHP, HSP, 34/14.
225. Ibid.
226. J. W. Muffly, ed., *The Story of Our Regiment: A History of the 148th Pennsylvania Vols.* (Des Moines, Iowa: The Kenyon Printing & Mfg. Co, 1904), p. 355.
227. Ltr, Andrew Humphreys to Rebecca Humphreys, 5 and 7 May 1865, AAHP, HSP, 34/17–18.
228. *New York Times*, 24 May 1865.
229. Chamberlain, *The Passing of Armies*, p. 267.
230. “Review of the Armies,” *New York Times*, 24 May 1865.
231. Wooster, *Nelson A. Miles*, pp. 39–40; For an excellent account of the II Corps at the Grand Review, see Chamberlain, *The Passing of Armies*, pp. 267–70.
232. Chamberlain, *The Passing of Armies*, p. 267.
233. See, for example, John Watts De Peyster, “Andrew Atkinson Humphreys of Pennsylvania,” *Lancaster Daily Intelligencer*, 11 Dec 1886; Wilson, “Major-General Andrew Atkinson Humphreys,” p. 95.
234. “Then he [Meade] called Wright slow (a very true proposition as a general one).” Lyman, *Meade's Headquarters*, p. 138. Also see p. 176 for a 24 June 1864 journal entry—“On this particular occasion Wright showed himself totally unfit to command a corps.”
235. Simon, *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, p. 610.
236. Carswell McClellan, *General Andrew A. Humphreys at Malvern Hill, VA, July 1, 1862, and at Fredericksburg, VA, December 13, 1862: A Memoir* (St. Paul, Minn., 1888), pp. 28–29.



2018

2018



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ARMY HISTORY

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NMUSA FEATURE



U.S. Army Air Forces 2d Lt. Carter Harman (*standing, left*) with his YR-4B and crew in 1944. Harman made the first helicopter rescue on 23 April 1944 in Burma.

TWO HELICOPTERS INSTALLED IN MUSEUM GALLERIES

By Paul Morando

The National Museum of the United States Army (NMUSA) recently installed two historic artifacts—a UH-1B Iroquois “Huey” helicopter and an R-4B “Sikorsky” helicopter—to their permanent locations above the *Cold War* and *Army and Society* galleries, respectively. The two helicopters are an integral part of the Army’s story of rotary-wing aircraft.

The rise of helicopters at the end of World War II transformed how the U.S. Army operated on the battlefield. Initially, the Army used helicopters for transportation, but evolved to have the aircraft carry out more tactical missions such as communication, logistics, and search-and-rescue operations. Leading this role was the Sikorsky R-4B, the first mass-produced helicopter in the world. Designed by Dr. Igor Sikorsky from his famous VS-300 experimental helicopter, his prototype (XR-4) made its first flight in January 1942. A year later, after successful flight tests, the U.S. Army Air Forces purchased one hundred production examples, making it the first service helicopter. With a cruising speed of sixty-five miles per hour and a range of over 130 miles, the R-4B stood out from other rotary-wing aircraft.

The R-4B’s maneuverability during sustained flight convinced the Army that it was capable to be used in theater. In April 1944, during training with the 1st Air Commando Group in Burma, a

preproduction R-4B conducted the first casualty evacuation by helicopter. The following June, R-4B and R-6A helicopters flew the first combat medevac missions under fire, evacuating dozens of wounded members of the 112th U.S. Cavalry in the Philippine mountains. The Army quickly realized the importance of helicopters and began adding more to their inventory.

The Army’s investment in rotary-wing aircraft proved useful during the Korean War, most famously with the Bell H-13 Sioux and its role in medical evacuation of wounded personnel to field hospitals. However, it was the Vietnam War where the helicopter became a permanent part of military strategy. The Bell UH-1 Iroquois, nicknamed “Huey” because of its original HU-1 designation, was the most common utility helicopter used by American forces during the war. The Iroquois, equipped with 30-mm. machine guns and rocket pods, could be used in combat operations, along with reinforcing and resupplying troops on the ground. Once again the role of the helicopter evolved; and with today’s sophisticated aircraft, the U.S. Army remains a leader in military aviation.

NMUSA will highlight this evolution by displaying Sikorsky R-4B and Bell UH-1B helicopters. Located in the *Army and Society Gallery*, the R-4B has been restored with the markings



Scott Metzler, NMUSA



Scott Metzler, NMUSA



Scott Metzler, NMUSA

The soldier cast figures will portray the Huey pilot, copilot, and gunner.

of the Sikorsky flown by 2d Lt. Carter Harman of the 1st Air Commando Group. The UH-1B resides in the *Cold War Gallery* and is displayed with realistic cast figures: pilot, copilot, and door gunner. This restored aircraft was used extensively in Vietnam as a gunship by the 129th Aviation Company, 10th Aviation Battalion. Both aircraft tell an important story of the Army's commitment to innovation and both have found a permanent home in the museum.

The National Museum of the United States Army is under construction at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, and is expected to open in 2020.

Paul Morando is chief, Exhibits Division, of the National Museum of the United States Army.

U.S. ARMY ARTIFACT SPOTLIGHT



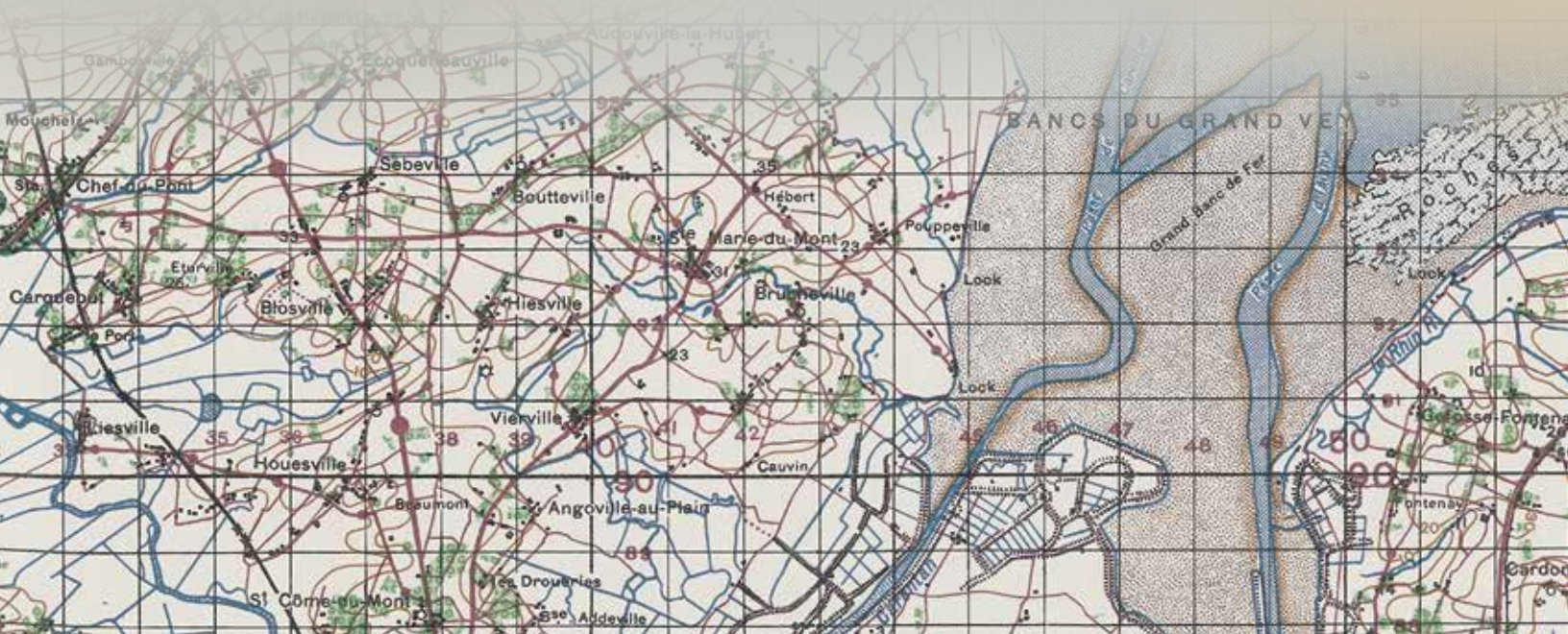
A SYMBOL OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AND READINESS THE CHAPLAIN'S FLAG OF CAPT. JULIAN S. ELLENBERG

By Dieter Stenger

Julian S. Ellenberg, a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, graduated from the U.S. Army Chaplain School at Harvard University on 5 April 1943. He reported for duty in August 1943 with the 8th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division, at Fort Dix, New Jersey. He received a chaplain's flag, displayed it in his office at Warner's Camp, Seaton, Devonshire, England, and carried it to France on D-Day. Coming ashore at UTAH Beach at 0700 on 6 June 1944, some thirty minutes after four waves of assault troops and tanks of the 8th Infantry had landed, Ellenberg experienced intense enemy fire, but provided spiritual aid to the wounded and dying. German artillery shell

fragments wounded Ellenberg several times, but he still helped to establish and maintain an aid station, for which he later received the Silver Star.¹

Easily folded and stored almost anywhere, the chaplain's flag shown here accompanied Ellenberg as he provided spiritual leadership and readiness for the liberators of Europe. The flag's historic journey did not end at UTAH Beach. Ellenberg carried it to Cherbourg and during the breakout from the Normandy beachheads. He displayed it on his jeep on 25 August 1944 during the liberation of Paris and it flew over German soil at 0230 on Good Friday, 1945, after he crossed the Rhine at Lauingen. The flag



was with Ellenberg as he entered Augsburg, Germany, on 7 May 1945 and when the war in Europe ended the next day.² The Army recalled Chaplain Ellenberg to duty in 1946 and promoted him to major in 1947. In the Korean War, he cared for patients at the Army-operated hospital in Tokyo, Japan. As a lieutenant colonel in 1952, he assumed the post of executive officer, Army Chaplain School, Fort Slocum, New York, and served until he retired as the post chaplain at Fort McPherson, Georgia.³

A symbol of hope in 1944, Ellenberg's flag is a tactile symbol of remembrance of the spiritual leadership of the Chaplain Corps. The corps has ministered to the compromised, disfigured, and psychologically impaired members of the armed forces since it was authorized as an Army branch on 29 July 1775, always "serving God and Country." Today, the Chaplain Corps continues Ellenberg's tradition of service by conducting religious services, providing spiritual guidance, maintaining morale, and ensuring commanders respect the free exercise of religion by all soldiers. Chaplains nurture the living, care for the wounded, and honor the fallen across the full spectrum of Army activity.⁴ In 2018, the Army Museum Enterprise conserved Ellenberg's flag and tasked the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps Museum at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, to keep it under professional museum care.

Dieter Stenger is a curator of arms and ordnance with the Army Museum Enterprise, Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

NOTES

1. "Changes: Armed Forces," *Living Church* 124 (10 Feb 1952): 23. This weekly record of the news, work, and thought of the Episcopal Church credits Chaplain Ellenberg as the first chaplain ashore at Normandy around 0700, although a chaplain of the 5th Engineer Special Brigade Group at OMAHA Beach, also around 0700, may have preceded Ellenberg. See Lyle W. Dorsett, *Serving God and Country: U.S. Military Chaplains in World War II* (New York: Berkley Caliber, 2013), pp. 162–64.

2. Daryl Densford, "Chaplain Julian S. Ellenberg," *The Chaplain Kit: The Online Chaplain Museum Providing Chaplain History, Information, and Resources*, accessed 21 Mar 2019, <https://thechaplainkit.com/history/stories/chaplain-julian-s-ellenberg/>; *250th Anniversary of the Parish of*



U.S. Army Chaplain Corps Museum

Chaplain Lt. Col. Julian S. Ellenberg, 1952

Trinity Church in the City of New York: Catalogue of the Commemorative Exhibition at the New-York Historical Society, (New York: New York Historical Society, 1947), p. 47.

3. See Julian S. Ellenberg, World War II personnel card, Office of the Chief of Chaplains and Vita, U.S. Army Chaplain Corps Museum, Fort Jackson, S.C.; Christopher Semancik, *Army Museum Enterprise Collections Philosophy*, U.S. Army Center of Military History, October 2018, copy in curators files.

4. "Mission," *U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School*, accessed 28 Mar 2019, <https://usachcs.tradoc.army.mil/>.



COMMENTARY

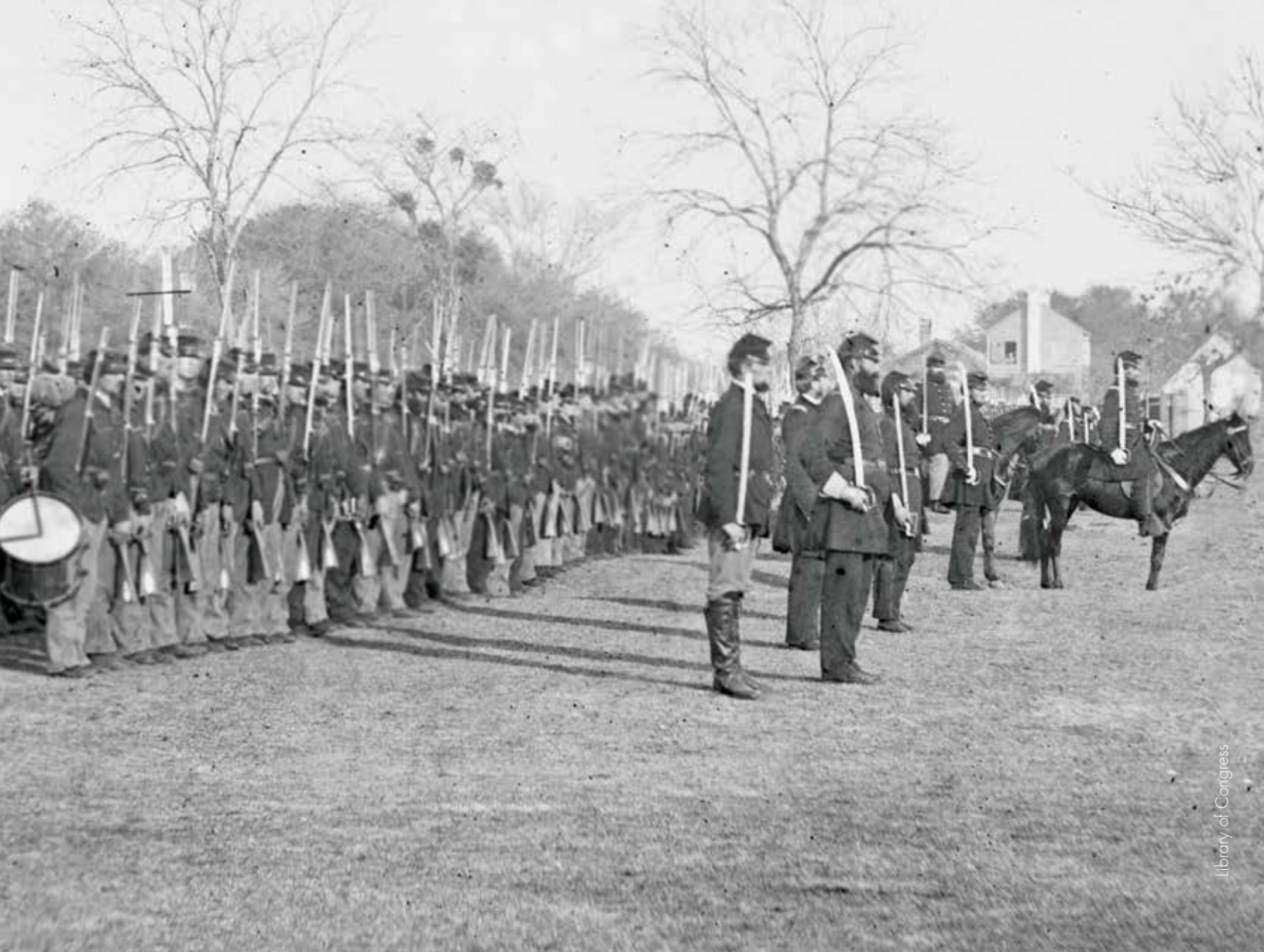
MUSINGS OF A STAFF-RIDE FACILITATOR

Gregory J. W. Urwin

Whenever *Army History* arrives in my mailbox, it brightens my day. I experienced even greater pleasure than usual, however, on the arrival of the Winter 2019 issue. As the originator and longtime facilitator of staff rides for Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) programs at two different universities, I took a keen interest in how the U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH), the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, the Combat Studies Institute, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, and the U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College are reimagining this venerable learning exercise. I gleaned valuable information and insights from the five thoughtful articles *Army History* devoted to this theme, and I identified several ideas to incorporate into the staff rides I will accompany in the future.

My first exposure to the staff-ride experience came in the summer of 1985 when I participated in the West Point Summer Seminar in Military History. That now extinct program lasted a full month in those days, with a week devoted to a field trip that stopped at several locations. Our schedule included excursions to two famous Civil War sites—a daylong visit to Gettysburg National Military Park (Pennsylvania) and another full day at Antietam National Battlefield (Maryland). The young West Point tactical officers who were our instructors entrusted us to Dr. Jay Luvaas, a civilian faculty member at the U.S. Army War College, during these outings.

Many military historians consider Luvaas the father of the modern staff ride. A historian with a Ph.D. from Duke University (1956), Luvaas returned immediately to his undergraduate alma



mater, Allegheny College (Meadville, Pa.), where he taught until 1982. Luvaas went on a yearlong hiatus in 1972 to become the first civilian to serve as a visiting professor at West Point. He left Allegheny in 1982 to fill the Harold Keith Johnson Chair of Military History at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and then accepted a permanent position there. Long before Luvaas moved to Carlisle, however, he had rediscovered the utility of the staff ride as a teaching tool. In 1962, he had begun leading groups of amateur and student historians to Civil War battlefields in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. Much later, he coauthored volumes in the Army War College Staff Ride Series on Civil War battles and campaigns such as Gettysburg, Antietam, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville (Virginia), Shiloh (Tennessee), and Atlanta (Georgia).¹

I had visited several battlefields before meeting Luvaas, but I credit him with showing me how to read contested ground in a way that improved my teaching the art of war. What I recall most vividly of Luvaas' method was the importance of terrain. There are certain things that do not stand out readily, even from reading good maps. One must walk the ground. Luvaas drove home this point in memorable ways. At Gettysburg, he broke into a run and led us up the steep, boulder-strewn southeast slope of

Little Round Top where the 4th and 5th Texas Infantry Regiments had attempted their ascent on 2 July 1863. Luvaas was in his late fifties at the time, but he was still agile enough to beat the rest of us to the top. At Antietam, he led us over the undulating ground across which the 2d Brigade, 1st Division, II Corps, Army of the Potomac, also known as the Irish Brigade, had advanced against elements of Maj. Gen. Richard H. Anderson's division and Brig. Gen. Daniel H. Hill's division holding a stretch of the Sunken Road. The now-you-see-us-now-you-don't nature of that terrain helped us understand how the Irish Brigade could reach a rise that permitted them and other Union troops to transform a natural fortification into the trap that became known as "Bloody Lane." At the end of the summer seminar, I returned home to the University of Central Arkansas (UCA), my place of employment at the time, with dreams of someday converting a Civil War battlefield into an outdoor classroom.

After the CMH published William Glenn Robertson's *The Staff Ride* in 1987, the idea of mounting such excursions began spreading to ROTC detachments at universities across the nation. A couple of years later, Lt. Col. Louis A. Kresge, UCA's professor of military science, and I decided to introduce the staff ride to his senior cadets' curriculum. This initiative owed much to the



The author (center) and Lt. Col. Robert K. Beale (far right) pose with the seniors from Temple University's Red Diamond Battalion within "the Angle" on Cemetery Ridge at the completion of their staff ride, 1 February 2019. (Michael Nguyen, Temple University Army ROTC Program)

proximity of UCA to Pea Ridge National Military Park—three hours away by car in northwest Arkansas.

Local boosters had dubbed Pea Ridge the "Gettysburg of the West," but despite such hyperbole, the site suited our purposes admirably.² Every foot of ground over which the opposing armies fought on 7 and 8 March 1862 lay within the boundaries of the park. This meant we could access any sector important to understanding the battle and its outcome.

Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn, the dashing former cavalryman who commanded the Confederate Army of the West, embodied the principle of the offensive (one of the U.S. Military's Principles of War, meaning to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative). He also valued the principles of maneuver and surprise. Rather than launch a frontal assault against the smaller Union Army of the Southwest, which Brig. Gen. Samuel R. Curtis had entrenched on the high ground overlooking Little Sugar Creek, Van Dorn directed his troops to march around the Union troops' right flank. Trusting the cloak of night to mask his movements, Van Dorn hoped to place his troops at the enemy's rear and thwart the Telegraph Road—the Union line of communications—by dawn. In Curtis, however, Van Dorn faced a foe who realized the importance of the principle of security. Union scouts had detected the Confederate movement. Curtis also turned out to be an aggressive general. Rather than flee the trap that Van Dorn was trying to set, he simply directed the Army of the South-

west to turn around and then advanced combined contingents of infantry, cavalry, and artillery to engage the enemy. In the end, logistics determined the outcome at Pea Ridge. Van Dorn failed to bring up his baggage train, which carried his reserve artillery ammunition, after the first day's fighting. When the battle recommenced the next day, Confederate cannon fire dwindled, and Union gunners won the upper hand.

Curtis sensed what had happened, ordered a general advance along his entire line, and drove Van Dorn's army off the field—a victory that ensured Missouri's retention in the Union.

We launched our first staff ride before William L. Shea and Earl J. Hess published their classic *Pea Ridge: Civil War Campaign in the West* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1992). To obtain a clear idea of what transpired at Pea Ridge, I approached the battlefield staff, who kindly sent me copies of the detailed and heavily documented studies that the National Park Service had commissioned in the 1950s for the site's interpretation guide. With these tools, I put together a "playbook" that allowed me to offer pertinent statistics and quotations at every stand on the route. In those days, I must confess, I conducted our Pea Ridge visits more like a battlefield tour than a true staff ride. The cadets and the non-ROTC students who accompanied us still seemed to get a lot out of the experience, but like a lot of teachers, there are things I would do differently if I could go back in time.

One year, we opted for variety and staged our staff ride a little farther north at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield. Like Pea Ridge, the engagement that raged along Wilson's Creek on 10 August 1861 featured a wide flanking movement. It also produced



The author (far right) and the senior cadets from Temple's University's Army ROTC program at the completion of their staff ride of the Trenton-Princeton Campaign on 27 April 2013. The group stands in front of Nassau Hall on Princeton University's campus, where effective British resistance came to an end on 3 January 1777. Lt. Col. James P. Castelli, then Temple's professor of military science, stands at center in the light blue polo shirt. (Author's Collection)

lessons concerning the conduct of green troops in combat. Having tried something different, however, we decided that Pea Ridge served our needs better and never returned to Wilson's Creek.

In 1999, I relocated to my current position at Temple University, and my staff-riding days ostensibly came to an end. Although I interacted with Temple's Military Science Department, no one ever asked me to facilitate a staff ride, and I assumed that the cadre handled the task for itself. Then on 3 April 2010, I led a tour of Gettysburg for the Temple Undergraduate History and Social Studies Association and it reawakened my appetite for staff riding. I broached the subject with Lt. Col. James P. Castelli, then Temple's professor of military science. He told me that the ROTC's Red Diamond Battalion had been going without battlefield visits for some time. I offered to help change that, and he accepted.

Located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Temple University is within easy reach of major battlefields from two pivotal conflicts—the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. Residing in a city so steeped in memories of the Revolution undoubtedly influenced our thinking. We chose initially to visit New Jersey and retrace the Trenton-Princeton Campaign, 25 December 1776 to 3 January 1777. This campaign promised to yield numerous benefits from the staff-ride treatment. Although it encompassed three battles (First and Second Trenton and Princeton) instead of one, they were small and simple enough to cover in one day, even while following General George Washington's routes to Trenton on the night of 25–26 December 1776, and to Princeton on the night of 2–3 January 1777. Washington used the principles of surprise and offense to shatter the myth of British invincibility by destroying a Hessian brigade at Trenton and routing a British brigade at Princeton. Traveling the roads Washington took to those two battlefields imbued cadets with a sense of strategic vision. It also highlighted the hardships the Continental Army endured in moving themselves and their artillery to positions from which they could assail their foes. In addition, we stressed the importance of the local militia's insurgency that inhibited the ability of the Hessians at Trenton to communicate with other British garrisons in New Jersey. It kept those isolated troops



Temple University's Red Diamond Battalion in front of Lt. Alonzo Cushing's Battery A, 4th U.S. Artillery, Cemetery Ridge, 21 March 2015, after retracing the route of Pickett's Charge, the climax of the Battle of Gettysburg. (Author's Collection)

in a constant state of alarm and left them badly fatigued by the time Washington launched his attack on the morning of 26 December.

The Red Diamond Battalion relived the Trenton-Princeton Campaign with positive results in 2011, 2012, and 2013. By then, I had developed more mature ideas concerning what constituted a staff ride, and we adopted the character-driven model. I made up a list of prominent players in the campaign, and cadets adopted those personae and delivered briefings at the various stands. The battles of Trenton and the Princeton fight had inspired several fine books, including David Hackett Fischer's Pulitzer-Prize winner, *Washington's Crossing* (New York, 2004). This made it easier for cadets to research these engagements and their principals.

In 2014, we changed focus and visited Gettysburg National Military Park. While the Revolutionary War is the current focus of my research, this change was better for the students. Gettysburg was a bigger battle and gave us a larger cast of compelling characters and more choice of scenarios. It is often said that more has been written about Gettysburg than any other battle in American history. Whether true or not, numerous books and articles exist—both in print and online—that permit cadets to research almost any facet of the battle.³ Twenty-first-century univer-

sity students sometimes find it easier to relate to the combatants at Gettysburg because American literacy rates rose dramatically during the first half of the nineteenth century. This means that a much higher proportion of recorded experiences exist for Gettysburg than for Trenton and Princeton. These letters, diaries, after-action reports, and memoirs are readily available in print and on the Internet. Cavalry played no major role in the Trenton-Princeton Campaign, but the mounted arm, along with infantry and large quantities of artillery, figured prominently in the fighting around Gettysburg. Finally, many volunteers have assisted the National Park Service in returning the land to its 1863 appearance, which enhances the battlefield's utility as an outdoor classroom.

It is impossible to do justice to a battle as vast and involved as Gettysburg in a single day, so I devised an itinerary that presents the big picture while emphasizing a succession of pivotal case studies that illustrate how the battle unfolded.

Our first stand occurs off the battlefield in a nearby parking lot. There, I use my reproduction Model 1853 Enfield rifle musket and Union infantry accoutrements to conduct a briefing on Civil War small arms. This information helps cadets understand the conflict's infantry tactics, which I reference at several points on the battlefield.



The author briefs ROTC cadets and other Temple University students on the use of the rifle musket, the standard Civil War infantry weapon, at the start of a Gettysburg battlefield staff ride on 21 March 2015. (Author's Collection)

The vehicles carrying the cadets then drive west through Gettysburg along the Chambersburg Pike to our first stand on the battlefield—McPherson's Ridge. This setting is ideal for orienting participants to the battlefield's geography and how Gettysburg's crossroads location brought the opposing armies together. After the cadets channeling General Robert E. Lee and Maj. Gen. George G. Meade explain their prebattle planning and movements, we explore how an engagement between Union cavalry vedettes and a Confederate infantry division escalated into the largest battle ever fought on American soil.

Cadets quickly appreciate the important role played by Brig. Gen. John Buford, commander of the Union Army of the Potomac's 1st Division, Cavalry Corps. True to the principle of security, Buford gathered intelligence on the Confederates' composition, strength, and intentions, while keeping the enemy in the dark regarding Union strategy. Buford also conducted a capable holding action on the morning of 1 July 1863 that prevented his opponents from seizing the high ground northwest of Gettysburg until Maj. Gen. John F. Reynolds and

the leading elements of the Army of the Potomac's I Corps arrived.

At this point, we do a little walking. First, we cross to the fields north of the railroad cut to consider how advancing Confederate infantry shattered three regiments belonging to Brig. Gen. Lysander Cutler's brigade from the 1st Division of the Army of the Potomac's I Corps. We then head south to Herbst's woods, where the 1st Brigade, 1st Division, I Corps, Army of the Potomac, also known as the Iron Brigade, broke a Confederate attack. The open ground west of the woods is an ideal spot to introduce Civil War infantry tactics. I teach the students how to form a battle line and then go into a column of fours and finally back into line. The realization that Civil War infantry were trained to fight in two ranks set eighteen inches apart—with the troops dressed by touching elbows—usually has a sobering effect on the cadets. This interlude presents the opportunity to discuss the ways mission-command and warfighting functions (or command and control) have changed since 1863 and the challenges officers faced in moving and fighting their commands in the days before radios.

After securing Herbst's woods, we turn north toward the Chambersburg Pike. There, we explore the counterattack on the railroad cut delivered by the Iron Brigade's 6th Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers and the two unbroken regiments from Cutler's brigade (the 14th and 95th Regiments, New York State Volunteers) that stabilized the crisis on the 1st Division's right. I then wrap up our survey of the first day's fighting by describing the convergence of Confederate divisions from the north and west that eventually compromised the positions of the Army of the Potomac's I and XI Corps and forced their hasty retreat to high ground south of Gettysburg.

For the battle's second day, we drive south along Confederate Avenue to the far end of the famous "fishhook"—the line that some of Meade's corps formed as they converged on Gettysburg on 1–2 July. The next stand is located at Houck's Ridge and Devil's Den, which anchored the left flank of the Army of the Potomac's III Corps after Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Sickles advanced it from its original position on Cemetery Ridge. Houck's Ridge provides an ideal platform for the cadet acting as General Lee to describe his strategy for 2 July. Next, the student portraying Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, the commander of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia's I Corps, briefs the group on his efforts to assail the Union left and the unexpected delays and obstacles he encountered. The fight for Houck's Ridge threw one of Longstreet's divisions into disarray and caused two of its brigades to fragment, which diluted the Confederate blow on Little Round Top.

As the ride makes its way to Little Round Top, the cadets, most of whom have seen the 1993 film *Gettysburg*, are eager to visit the ground defended by Col. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain and the 20th Regiment Infantry, Maine Volunteers. Once there, however, they learn of the daring and initiative of several other Union officers who also helped to keep that eminence in Union hands. As anyone who has visited Gettysburg knows, Little Round Top makes an excellent natural vantage point for surveying most of the battlefield, and some of the morning's discussions about strategy and terrain can be revisited here to good advantage.

The ride then turns to a consideration of the battle's third day—3 July 1863—and its climax in Pickett's Charge. Stopping at



The author instructs ROTC cadets and other Temple students on how to form a Civil War-era line-of-battle just east of Herbst's woods during the annual Temple University Army ROTC's staff ride on 21 March 2015. The Army of the Potomac's famed Iron Brigade advanced over this ground to repel attacking Confederates on 1 July 1863. (Author's Collection)

the Virginia Monument, General Lee once again explains his plans and his decision to launch a frontal assault against the center of the Union line. Next, General Longstreet takes center stage to express why he opposed his commander's plan and the reluctant steps he took to execute it. We then advance some distance east of the Virginia Monument to a Napoleon howitzer. From there we can survey the ground where the assault troops—the three fresh Virginia brigades led by Maj. Gen. George E. Pickett and six mauled brigades from Lt. Gen. A. P. Hill's III Corps—formed their ranks. We inform the group about the series of left oblique movements made by Pickett's men to ensure they would converge with their comrades from Hill's corps on the objective, the famous copse of trees atop Cemetery Ridge.

At this point, the ride includes an interactive exercise. I have the cadets form the line of battle once again, with their battalion guidon in the center. They receive a briefing on how Civil War infantry advanced under fire, using their regimental colors and a pair of guidons—one posted on each flank—to preserve their alignment. It has been my ambition to have the cadets try to march the entire distance to the Emmitsburg Road in this formation. The Red Diamond Battalion conducts its staff rides in the spring,

however, and the ground is usually much too wet to make such an experiment practical. We end up straggling across the field, each person trying to avoid the deepest puddles and the boggiest stretches. As we go forward, I repeatedly point out how the undulating terrain often shielded Pickett's men from enemy fire, which accounts for why so many of them got as far as they did.



The author points out the Union dispositions on Cemetery Ridge on 3 July 1863, before leading senior ROTC cadets from Temple University's Red Diamond Battalion and students from his Civil War and Reconstruction class over the ground covered by Pickett's Charge during a Gettysburg staff ride conducted on 12 March 2016. (Temple University Army ROTC Program)

Once we clamber over the stone wall that sheltered Cemetery Ridge's defenders (the Army of the Potomac's II Corps), we gather in "the Angle" to consider Pickett's Charge from the Union perspective. The briefings highlight the conduct of Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock and Brig. Gen. John Gibbon of the Army of the Potomac's II Corps, Brig. Gen. Alexander S. Webb's 2d Brigade, 3d Division, II Corps, Army of the Potomac, also known as the Philadelphia Brigade, and Col. Dennis O'Kane, who commanded a regiment of Irish immigrants under Webb, the 69th Regiment Infantry, Pennsylvania Volunteers. We also take note of Lt. Alonzo H. Cushing, who recently received a posthumous Medal of Honor for his handling of Battery A, 4th U.S. Artillery.

Usually, the sun is setting when the ride reaches the final stand, the East Cavalry Field, about three miles east of Gettysburg. Just as Buford's conduct on 1 July underscored the value of well-commanded cavalry to Civil War armies, so did the actions of Brig. Gen. David McMurtree Gregg on the East Cavalry Field two days later. With two brigades of his own and one under freshly promoted Brig. Gen. George Armstrong Custer, Gregg checked the attempt of the Confederate cavalry commander, Maj. Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, to slip around Meade's right to menace the Army of the Potomac. Once again, Union horsemen validated the principle of security.



The author listens as a Temple University Army ROTC cadet briefs her classmates from the Red Diamond Battalion on Houck's Ridge at the south end of the Gettysburg battlefield, 12 March 2016. (Temple University Army ROTC Program)

The East Cavalry Field attracts little traffic, even during the summer—the peak of tourist visitation. This makes it the ideal spot for the integration phase of the staff ride. As we almost always have the place to ourselves, there are no distractions as the cadets express their thoughts.

Different battlefields lend themselves to different themes in officer formation. The events at Gettysburg, for instance, stress the importance of leadership from the most senior levels to the lowest. General Meade received his appointment to command the Army of the Potomac on 28 June 1863, just three days before the fighting at Gettysburg erupted. He was not well acquainted with his command by that time, which meant he had to rely on the judgment and resolve of his subordinates. With the possible exception of General Sickles, they did not fail him. As the seniors of the Red Diamond Battalion make their way around Gettysburg, I pepper them with questions and comments that highlight how corps, division, brigade, regimental, and battery commanders had to make snap decisions that meant the difference between victory and defeat. The fact that so many Gettysburg heroes practiced a self-sacrificing style of leadership—and paid for it with their lives—does not go unnoticed. For students who know they may be leading troops in a matter of months, moments like this take on a special resonance.

What goes into developing a successful staff ride? Preparation is first and foremost. In a character-driven staff ride, every

participant has a part to play—and that means researching a role and composing a set of intelligible notes for delivering briefings without any appreciable hitches. In ROTC staff rides, shyness can be an encumbrance. Some students are uncomfortable with public speaking. An alert

facilitator can usually help a cadet recover his or her stride with a tactful prompt. Knowing there is a safety net in place bolsters cadets' confidence.

In the Red Diamond Battalion, cadet performance in the staff ride has improved over the years as expectations have become clearer and the cadre has improved its preparative techniques. Staff-ride veterans also pass on what they have learned from the experience, which benefits the cadets following in their footsteps. Cadet briefings have improved steadily over the years. During our last staff ride on 1 February 2019, Lt. Col. Robert K. Beale, Temple's new professor of military science, and his cadre prepped the participants, achieving our highest standards yet. I look forward to seeing what next year's senior cadets can do.

After reading the articles in the Winter 2019 issue of *Army History*, I plan to inject additional opportunities for reflection in future staff rides. For instance, I will ask the cadets portraying battlefield personae, "If you were in that officer's place, what would you do differently?" After the cadet's response, the group will be invited to comment. This will generate added critical thinking.



Attired as a British infantryman of the Revolutionary War, the author waits on the New Jersey side of the Delaware River early on 27 April 2013, to begin a briefing on eighteenth-century weapons and tactics to start Temple University's Army ROTC staff ride of the Trenton-Princeton Campaign. This spot is where General George Washington's reduced Continental Army crossed the river on the night of 25–26 December 1776. (Author's Collection)



The author starts the Red Diamond Battalion's Gettysburg staff ride on 1 February 2019, with a briefing on the use and capabilities of the rifle musket, the standard infantry weapon of the U.S. Civil War. (Michael Nguyen, Temple University Army ROTC Program)

The Red Diamond Battalion is undoubtedly fortunate to be based within driving distance of the storied battlegrounds of Trenton, Princeton, and Monmouth in New Jersey; Bladensburg, Fort McHenry, and Antietam in Maryland; Brandywine, and Gettysburg in Pennsylvania; and Bull Run in Virginia. Even sites of smaller battles or skirmishes can produce valuable lessons under the staff-ride treatment. Battlefields exist with remarkable density in the United States from the East Coast to the Mississippi River and beyond, especially in Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas. Further west there are Indian wars sites, but these are often situated far from ROTC detachments and some are inaccessible because they occupy portions of privately owned land. Nevertheless, the proliferation of virtual staff rides should soon make it possible for cadets to participate in exercises even in these remote locations.⁴

The staff ride is now a commissioning requirement for Army ROTC programs, which means facilitators must keep in mind what U.S. Army Cadet Command (USACC) wants its charges to derive from that exercise. USACC Pamphlet 145-10, issued on 12 February 2019, states that a staff ride should involve cadets “in a formal battle analysis” by permitting them to discuss “the strategic and operational context” of an engagement and “focusing on the tactical level.”⁵

Effective facilitators come from a variety of backgrounds, but they all have certain traits in common. Facilitators are familiar with the battlefield and its surrounding area. They should not only know what happened on the ground in question, but also be able to situate that engagement in the larger context of the war during which it occurred. An ability to make connections between one battle and others—including those from more recent

wars—is an added advantage. A knowledge of the weapons systems employed in your battle—and their impact on the tactics of the day—is also imperative.

The facilitator should not think of himself or herself as the “star” of the staff ride. Your job is to help the cadets learn as much as possible—either through their own efforts or with coaching. When I take the field with a class of cadets, I see it as my job to set the stage at each stand by orienting the group to the surrounding geography. Then I get out of the way and let the cadets deliver their briefings, occasionally coming to the assistance of anyone who runs into a snag. Once the cadets finish, I add some additional details that will help them to comprehend the lessons to be learned from that location.

Each facilitator draws on his or her own bag of tricks. In the course of my career, I have published scholarly work on military operations in the American War of Independence, U.S. Civil War, and World War II. I have also taught a U.S. military history survey and a Civil War course for three-and-a-half decades, adding a World War II course to my repertoire in 1999. If you do something often enough, you learn more, and I have managed to fill my head with the kind of facts, anecdotes, and ideas that enliven a staff ride. I also indulged in historical reenacting from 1974 to 2016, reliving the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. Handling the weapons and mastering the infantry drill of those two conflicts imbued me with considerable practical knowledge concerning the life of the common soldier in the 1770s and 1860s. While living in Arkansas, I rose to the level of field command in the Frontier Battalion, a Union living-history organization, and I got the chance to train over two hundred participants in the battalion and brigade evolutions commonly used in the Civil War, and then lead them in simulated combat. It is one thing to read about such things in period manuals, and quite another to perform them. These experiences prepared me to explain what military units did in historical situations and to give cadets a taste of these procedures.

When I facilitate a staff ride, I usually dress as a soldier of the war we are studying. Such behavior will strike some as eccentric, but I find it works well as a teaching tool. I prefer to facilitate staff rides without the benefit of notes, which fosters the illusion that the cadets are dealing with an ambassador from the past. Like some professors, I am something of a ham actor, and I try to immerse the



The author orients senior cadets from Temple University's Red Diamond Battalion on the lay of the Gettysburg battlefield as seen from McPherson's Ridge, 1 February 2019. (Michael Nguyen, Temple University Army ROTC Program)

cadets in the scenarios by channeling the historical characters involved. There are numerous other ways to put staff riders in the moment, but these methods have worked for me. A facilitator should remember that a staff ride is a sensory exercise as well as an intellectual one.

The staff ride also treats facilitators to rewarding bonding experiences. Even under ideal weather conditions, tramping around a battlefield involves a certain amount of adversity, and the shared hardship usually brings people closer together.

The staff rides on which I have participated will always rank among the high points in my years as a professor.

With USACC implementing new standards and developing additional resources, the ROTC staff ride is due to undergo considerable revitalization. That possibly makes this the best time to function as a facilitator. There is no telling where strides in technology and cadet training will take us. That is an exciting prospect, and it will be interesting and fun to see where the staff-ride trail leads.



The author (*left*) poses with the senior cadets from Temple University's Red Diamond Battalion in front of the memorial to Lt. Alonzo Cushing's Battery A, 4th U.S. Artillery, within "the Angle" on Cemetery Ridge after the group retraced the route of Pickett's Charge, 12 March 2016. (Temple University Army ROTC Program)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gregory J. W. Urwin holds a Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame and is a professor of history at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he specializes in American and British military affairs. A former president of the Society for Military History, he has authored or edited nine books, including *Facing Fearful Odds: The Siege of Wake Island* (Lincoln, Neb., 1997), which won the General Wallace M. Greene Jr. Award from the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation.

NOTES

1. Jay Luvaas was a prolific and influential scholar. His better known books include *The Military Legacy of the Civil War: The European Inheritance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959); *The Education of an Army: British Military Thought, 1815–1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964); and such edited volumes as *Dear Miss Em: General Eichelberger's War in the Pacific* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972); *Frederick the Great on the Art of War* (New York: Da Capo, 1999); and *Napoleon on the Art of War* (New York: Free Press, 1999).

2. Curiously, since moving to Pennsylvania in 1999, I have never heard anyone in these parts refer to Gettysburg as the "Pea Ridge of the East."

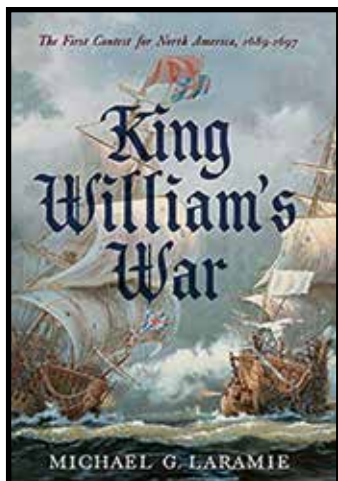
3. Among the ever-growing mountain of Gettysburg books, I recommend staff-ride facilitators consult Mark Grimsley and Brooks D. Simpson, *Gettysburg: A Battlefield Guide* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), and Carol Reardon and Tom Vossler, *A Field Guide to Gettysburg: Experiencing the Battlefield through Its History, Places, and People*, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

4. Because of a book I wrote, *Facing Fearful Odds: The Siege of Wake Island* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), the U.S. Marine Corps asked me in August 2009 to conduct a staff ride on Wake Island for Marine Attack Squadron (VMA) 211, whose predecessor organization (VMF-211) helped defend the atoll from 8–23 December 1941.

5. Department of the Army, Headquarters, U.S. Army Cadet Command, *USACC Pamphlet 145–10*, 12 February 2019, pp. 5–6, (accessed 5 March 2019) https://www.cadetcommand.army.mil/res/files/forms_policies/pamphlets/USACC%20Pamphlet%20145-10.pdf.



BOOKREVIEWS



King William's War: The First Contest for North America, 1689–1697

By Michael G. Laramie
Westholme Publishing, 2017
Pp. xvi, 322. \$35

Review by John R. Maass

In *King William's War: The First Contest for North America, 1689–1697*, author Michael G. Laramie has written the only modern study of King William's War. He examines the first of four colonial-era wars in North America between Louis XIV's France and England under William and Mary's rule and fills in a large gap in early American military history. With well-chosen illustrations and helpful maps, this book provides a detailed look at the earliest "French and Indian War" (also known as War of the League of Augsburg) involving not only European powers, but also colonists and native inhabitants.

Laramie's opening chapters detail the competing interests of the English, Dutch, and French for the beaver trade in North America in the second half of the seventeenth century. Caught in the middle of this commercial conflict were the Iroquois Indians who sought to dominate the beaver trade and control access to eager Dutch and English buyers at Albany and New York. The Iroquois also came into conflict with western, French-allied Indian tribes that provided much of the Canadian pelts

to Quebec. The French also allied with the Wabanaki tribes of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, which allowed them to successfully defend much of New France.

Brutality often characterized the war. French and Indian raids launched from Canada, often in winter, devastated the English and their native allies in New England and northern New York. Laramie points out that the French and their allies had the initiative on the frontier for most of the war, especially in raiding the English, picking isolated towns and attacking at will. The French also burned the towns and crops of Iroquois' enemies as their successful campaigns separated the tribes from the English and made them sue for peace.

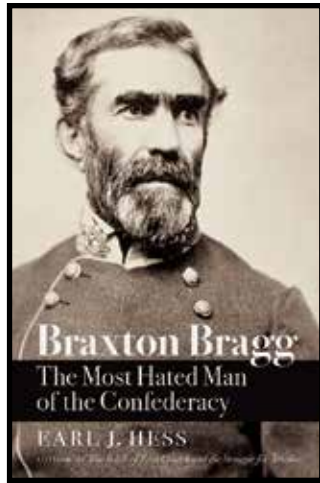
France was the undisputed victor in the war, "the only war that can be said to have been won by the French" against the English in America (p. 283). French forces and Wabanaki native warriors successfully defended Nova Scotia against American and English attacks, while a large-scale colonial campaign against Quebec led by William Phips in 1690 was a failure. Laramie also details the little-known operations along the rocky shores of Hudson Bay and the Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland for control of trading posts and rude forts. His narrative also shows why the English and their American colonists lost the war: the lack of an overall military commander in the colonies; the "fractured colonial political system" (p. 284); an absence of colonists willing to sustain the war; and the lack of Royal Navy support for offensive and defensive operations along the New England coast.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the war, which Laramie explores in detail, are the enormous logistical challenges encountered by the European powers and the colonists during the conflict. England provided scant material support for the war, much to the advantage of France. All operations required great effort to recruit troops from small or unwilling populations to undertake complex raids, attacks, sieges, and fort construction with little money, labor, or supplies. Moreover, attacking

the enemy or meeting with allies to plan assaults involved vast distances—from Newfoundland to the western Great Lakes and from Hudson Bay to New York City, often during the dead of winter. Combatants fought some of the skirmishes and battles of this war in locations that are remote even today, making it difficult to imagine how the Indians and soldiers of the 1690s managed to reach them on foot or by sail.

Laramie's book is well researched and organized, written in a clear narrative style. His biographical sketches of key leaders such as Phips, Benjamin Church, the Comte de Frontenac, and Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville are enlightening. The book's weakness, however, is that it lacks context. The author provides little detail about how this derivative conflict in North America was part of the larger struggle all across Europe for nine years. Readers will find few connections between events in royal courts and on European battlefields and those in the forests, lakes, and forts of New France, New England, and the Great Lakes. The decisions made at Versailles and London related to the New World struggle are encountered rarely in the text, so that it seems that King William's War, as Laramie describes it, might be construed as a purely colonial event. Nevertheless, readers will no doubt enjoy this study that provides a much-needed account of an important conflict.

Dr. John R. Maass is a historian at the National Museum of the U.S. Army. He received a bachelor's degree in history from Washington and Lee University and a Ph.D. in early U.S. history from Ohio State University. He is the author of *Defending a New Nation, 1783–1811*, the first pamphlet in the Center of Military History's Campaigns of the War of 1812 series (Washington, D.C., 2013), and of the books *The Road to Yorktown: Jefferson, Lafayette and the British Invasion of Virginia* (Charleston, S.C., 2015) and *George Washington's Virginia* (Charleston, S.C., 2017).



Braxton Bragg: The Most Hated Man of the Confederacy

By Earl J. Hess

University of North Carolina Press, 2016
Pp. xx, 341. \$35

Review by Michael P. Irvin

Braxton Bragg could very well be the most vilified and denounced general of the Civil War. Surely, he was a staunch defender of the Southern cause and a loyal lieutenant to Jefferson Davis, but his uncompromising demeanor and unyielding obsession with discipline induced many of his officers and soldiers to resist his orders while detesting him as their commander. We know that Bragg possessed a strong sense of duty and a resolute commitment to his soldiers that he displayed from his initial post in Florida in 1861 to his final command in North Carolina in 1865. Nevertheless, if Bragg's name finds its way into a conversation with Civil War enthusiasts today, there is a good chance he will be rebuked for indiscriminate executions of his own men and criticized for mismanaging the Army of Tennessee. Yet, how much of what we truly know about Bragg is excess or representations distorted by the elements of time?

Earl J. Hess, an esteemed military historian and author of several distinguished books, clears the uncertainty with an unbiased and balanced perspective into the narrative of Bragg's controversial time as a Confederate general. His book provides new interpretations grounded in comprehensive research and sound analysis drawn from a variety of primary sources, leaving the reader with little doubt that the conclusions Hess arrives at are judicious and reliable. Hess also challenges

longstanding beliefs and examines the verdicts of other notable historians, both past and present, to paint a vibrant picture of Braxton Bragg, the husband and soldier. While this study in no way professes to be a biography, it does provide enough details for the reader to understand Bragg's life before and after the Civil War. This book is an excellent synthesis that delves into Bragg's decisions and relationships as a general combined with the usual superb writing we have grown accustomed to from Hess. More importantly, it is an equitable exploration that reveals how newspapers largely shaped public opinion of Bragg and how a few of his subordinate commanders provoked defiance and opposition among the rank and file toward him.

It is true that an inconsistency exists concerning contemporary thought and memory surrounding Bragg. The negative image so easily accepted of him labels Bragg as commander who freely executed his soldiers at will for minor infractions, while in reality he cared deeply for his soldiers and viewed the army as an extension of his own family. Hess exposes the longstanding fallacy and notes that while Bragg did approve the death penalty for several soldiers, the number of executions during his tenure was less than or equal to other prominent Confederate generals. Hess interprets Bragg's enduring stigma as largely originating in his antagonistic relationship with the press. Unschooled in military arts and unaware of the intricacies inherent in military command, newspaper correspondents and editors provided amateur analysis to the public about Bragg's decisions and the results of his campaigns. Hess suggests that Bragg's unwillingness to entertain reporters in his camp or set the record straight following the war has led to Bragg's unfavorable reputation, stating that, "public opinion, indeed, was Bragg's biggest enemy" (p. 267).

Hess expertly examines the troubled relationships Bragg faced with men like Leonidas Polk, James Longstreet, Benjamin F. Cheatham, and Daniel Harvey Hill. At decisive points in critical engagements such as Perryville, Stones River, Chickamauga, and Chattanooga, these men were either slow to obey or outright derelict in their duties. Regarding Chickamauga, Hess states that the corps commanders "were willful, unreliable subordinates who could not be counted on to obey orders or to cooperate with

their commander" (p. 168). Moreover, Hess illuminates the cancerous effect this had within Bragg's army and reveals why the problems lingered throughout his period in command. While Bragg certainly had his share of supporters within the Army of Tennessee, the faultfinders undoubtedly created complications and stressors that began to influence Bragg's efficiency in decision making. Despite a poor command climate and the resulting fallout, Bragg refused to step down.

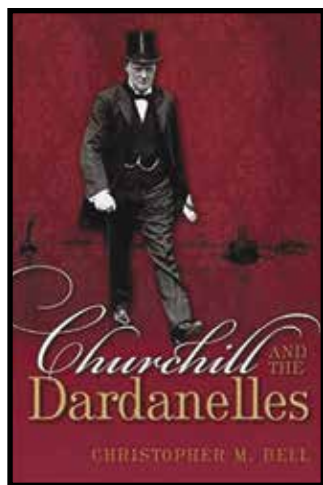
The book also effectively calls attention to Bragg's ill-advised decision to openly confront his generals regarding their support and approval of him as their commander. Hess provides an ample amount of detail in his chapter entitled, "Revolt of the Generals," which explains his actions after the lost opportunity at Chickamauga. In a meeting on 10 October 1863, Jefferson Davis personally solicited the generals' opinions about their commander and "not a single voice was raised on Bragg's behalf in this unusual moment in Civil War history" (p. 180). Despite the dissension within Bragg's formation and the continued degradation of his capacity to command the army, Jefferson Davis was immovable in his persistent commitment and support for the embattled commander. The ineffectual and oftentimes insubordinate conduct of Bragg's generals, coupled with his feeble responses, ultimately influenced the strategic success of the Army of Tennessee and certainly tarnished his reputation as a competent and accomplished Civil War commander.

My only critical remark regarding this exceptional work of history is the lack of maps. While Hess presents several suitable photos of key leaders throughout the book, he only provides two relatively simple maps that are absent of specific details. Readers with a strong understanding of Civil War battles and troop movements will most likely get by, but a novice may struggle to envision the particulars. The reader can certainly look up each battle on the Internet to gain a better appreciation for Bragg's decisions, but it decelerates the momentum of the narration to do so.

In general, this book is a first-rate analysis of Braxton Bragg and a superb piece of Civil War history that should be required reading for military leaders. It serves as a lesson to those in command in how perceptions and morale for an entire

unit can shift with the influence of a few detractors and why well-rounded leadership is critical to success. It also lays bare the consequences for not fully appreciating the media and its sway over public opinion, while also illustrating the pitfalls of blind loyalty to one's subordinates. This is a fresh and welcome study that stands on its own as a fair and equitable treatment of Braxton Bragg. It will be a valued addition to the existing literature for years to come.

Sgt. Maj. Michael P. Irvin is the vice chair for the Department of Professional Studies at the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy. He earned his master's degree from Penn State University and he currently teaches history at Park University in El Paso, Texas.



Churchill and the Dardanelles

By Christopher M. Bell
Oxford University Press, 2017
Pp. xvii, 439. \$34.95

Review by Mason W. Watson

Assessments of the Royal Navy's attempt to force the Dardanelles Strait in 1915 vary widely. Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty when the operation began, argued that the campaign had the potential to shorten World War I, or even to win it outright. Churchill believed that if the commanders on the spot had acted decisively, the British fleet might have broken through to Constantinople, forcing the Ottoman Empire to surrender. The strategic consequences would have been far-reaching, and Britain might have been able to bring the war to a victorious conclusion

without the bloodletting of Verdun, the Somme, and Passchendaele. On the other hand, Churchill's critics maintained that the campaign was never likely to succeed, and that it was attempted only because he—a civilian politician—acted contrary to the advice of his professional military advisers. Postwar commentators pointed to the Dardanelles campaign as an example of the dangers of civilian meddling in military affairs and argued that more than 50,000 Allied soldiers had died because of Churchill's misguided interference.

Author Christopher M. Bell's argument in *Churchill and the Dardanelles* is that neither of these perspectives is wholly accurate. Drawing on a range of contemporary documents, Bell presents a detailed account of the decision-making process that led to the campaign's inception in January–February 1915. Contrary to the “Churchill legend,” pervasive after the Second World War, the forty-year-old First Lord of the Admiralty was hardly in a position to personally determine the course of British strategy. While the Dardanelles scheme might never have been considered without Churchill's sponsorship, it could never have been undertaken without the support—or at least acquiescence—of the War Council and the Admiralty staff. Churchill genuinely believed that the plan had the support of his chief naval adviser, the elderly Admiral Lord John “Jacky” Fisher, even though Fisher considered Churchill's scheme to be dangerous at best. But while Fisher made his objections clear in private correspondence with a wide range of figures, he waited until the campaign was already underway before voicing his opposition to Churchill directly. By then, of course, it was far too late.

It is clear that Churchill does not bear sole or even primary responsibility for the Dardanelles venture. His naval advisers had prudently dissuaded him from pursuing other impractical schemes, including the occupation of the German North Sea island of Borkum; they might have handled the proposed Dardanelles campaign in a similar way, especially if Fisher had clarified his views early on. Churchill also cannot be blamed (at least not exclusively) for much of what happened after the operation was launched, including the decision to land

troops on the Gallipoli peninsula. Lord Herbert Kitchener, the Secretary of State for War, was ultimately responsible for authorizing the deployment of land forces. Political considerations nevertheless ensured that Churchill—not Kitchener—became a casualty of a cabinet reshuffle in the spring of 1915.

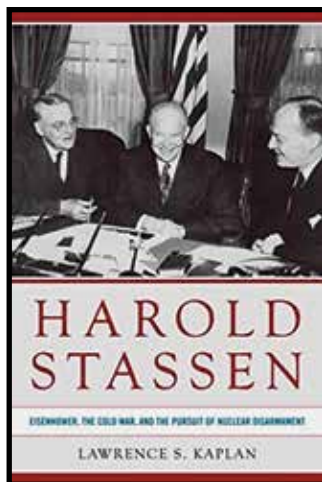
Regardless of whether Churchill was to blame for the British defeat in the Dardanelles, Bell maintains that the operation was never the potentially war-winning masterstroke Churchill later made it out to be. In the second half of his book, the author examines the mythology surrounding the “lost victory” in the Dardanelles—much of which Churchill created himself. Sacked from Prime Minister H. H. Asquith's cabinet in the autumn of 1915, Churchill immediately embarked on a campaign to rehabilitate his popular reputation, using the Dardanelles Commission—a parliamentary inquiry into the failed campaign—as a platform to make the case for his own defense. Bell recounts how Churchill went to great lengths to collude with other witnesses, helping to ensure that his point of view was well-represented in the commission's final report.

After the war, Churchill continued his campaign to shape the history of the Dardanelles operation, using his power as a member of Prime Minister David Lloyd George's cabinet to influence the historians writing the official account of the campaign. Churchill ultimately found that the simplest solution was to write the history of the war himself—a course that he would follow with similar success after the Second World War. This was the impetus behind his bestselling memoir *The World Crisis*, which used selective quotations from official documents to represent the Dardanelles campaign as brilliant in conception but tragically flawed in execution. Published during the mid- to late 1920s, Churchill's work struck the right chord at a time when growing disillusionment with the results of Britain's military effort on the Western Front led many to look favorably on the “missed opportunity” of the Dardanelles. By 1939, public opinion had swung almost entirely to Churchill's point of view; when he returned to office as First Lord of the Admiralty at the beginning of World War II, few questioned whether he was the right man for the job.

As Bell suggests, Churchill's mythologized account of the Dardanelles campaign has its own inaccuracies—but these generally have been overlooked due to the popularity of the “Churchill legend.” Bell argues that the Dardanelles had only a fleeting prospect of success, suggesting that the only way Churchill's hopes might have been fulfilled would have been through an amphibious operation to simultaneously seize Gallipoli and force the Dardanelles in January or February 1915. By March it was already too late. And even if this plan for an early combined arms operation had worked, there is no guarantee that it would have achieved the strategic results that Churchill anticipated. It is possible that the Ottomans would just have relocated the seat of government elsewhere and continued the war, even if Constantinople had fallen to the British.

Bell's work is detailed and closely argued, providing a balanced account of the British government's complex and inefficient decision-making machinery in early 1915. The author's emphasis on the role of the popular press is particularly valuable—especially his discussion of the role played by the *Morning Post's* outspoken editor H. A. Gwynne, who waged a personal crusade against Churchill throughout the First World War. Bell's most important contribution, however, is his discussion of Churchill's myth-making efforts after 1915. While there are a few aspects of Bell's interpretation that are open to question—he dismisses the land campaign on the Gallipoli peninsula, for example, without taking into consideration just how close that campaign came to success—this work nevertheless stands as a valuable contribution to our understanding of Winston Churchill's role in one of the most controversial episodes of British military history.

Mason W. Watson is a history Ph.D. student at Ohio State University, where he has taught courses in military and European history. He received his B.A. from the College of William and Mary in 2012 and his M.A. from Ohio State in 2016. His dissertation deals with the interwar British Army and the memory of the First World War. He is currently working as a Pathways Intern in the General Histories Division at the U.S. Army Center of Military History.



Harold Stassen: Eisenhower, the Cold War, and the Pursuit of Nuclear Disarmament

By Lawrence S. Kaplan
University Press of Kentucky, 2018
Pp. iii, 233. \$80

Review by Shannon Granville

In the introduction to his book on Republican politician Harold Stassen, Lawrence S. Kaplan summarizes the popular perception of Minnesota's unfortunate son: “a figure of mockery as a perennial also-ran on the margins of the history of the twentieth century” (p. 1). Stassen's early career successes as the youthful governor of his home state in the late 1930s and early 1940s made him a promising challenger to Franklin D. Roosevelt's Democratic stranglehold over the presidency. However, his repeated failed attempts to secure the Republican presidential nomination between 1944 and 1992 severely undermined his reputation both inside and outside his party. In this new biography, Kaplan aims to separate Stassen's political legacy from his fruitless presidential ambitions. During and after World War II, Stassen was a passionate advocate of a new Republican internationalism, unafraid to challenge his party's isolationist tendencies in order to press for a U.S. commitment to foreign aid and international security. His work as President Dwight D. Eisenhower's special assistant for disarmament in the mid-1950s centered on arms control negotiations, as he sought to develop a nuclear test ban treaty acceptable to both the United States and the Soviet Union. Yet when these negotiations foundered,

the trajectory of Stassen's political career fell with them, and he never regained anything close to the status or influence he enjoyed during that period. As a result, his historical role has been overlooked in nearly all histories of the Eisenhower administration—a fault that Kaplan has worked to redress in this book.

Kaplan's biography opens with Stassen's career foundations, including his beginnings as a Republican leader in his native Minnesota, his wartime naval service on Admiral William F. Halsey's staff, and his participation in the U.S. delegation to the 1945 San Francisco Conference and the creation of the United Nations (UN). Stassen's forceful personality and penchant for self-promotion—described by Republican Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg as “his belligerent respect for his own opinion” (p. 29)—caused friction with his Republican colleagues, specifically John Foster Dulles. Yet in a nod to Stassen's administrative skills and international connections, in January 1953 the incoming President Eisenhower named him as head of the Mutual Security Agency, responsible for coordinating U.S. military and economic aid. In this position, Stassen pressed for economic and technical cooperation as a tool to promote peace in Europe. Following a State Department reorganization under Secretary of State Dulles in mid-1953, Stassen continued to manage his assistance programs as the head of the new Foreign Operations Administration (FAO). But within a few years, the FAO itself was dismantled—its functions split between the State and Defense departments—and in mid-1955 Stassen received a cabinet-level position as Eisenhower's special assistant for disarmament.

Stassen had long been an advocate of controlling the atomic bomb. As early as 1945, he spoke of the need to tame the destructive power of the atom, and advocated a solution in which nuclear scientists would register their peaceful research with the UN Atomic Commission, “a new and higher level of governmental machinery where it can be more effectively administered for the people's welfare” (p. 38). Under Eisenhower, Stassen linked his disarmament work with the president's Open Skies

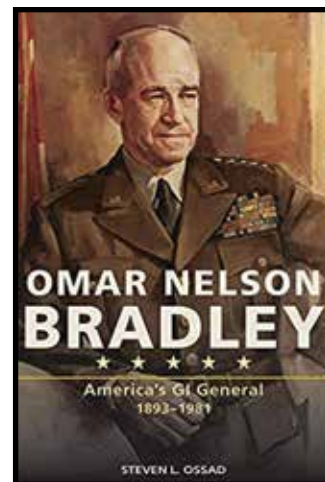
proposals for aerial surveillance of military installations, as presented during the 1955 Geneva summit meeting with U.S., British, French, and Soviet representatives. From there, he continued to work with the UN Subcommittee on Disarmament, pressing for limits to nuclear testing and the existing nuclear stockpiles. Yet Stassen's supreme confidence in his own abilities meant that he tended to exceed his remit as a diplomat, to the displeasure of Dulles and other key figures at home and abroad. The tensions between Stassen and his superiors came to a head in May 1957, when he presented a proposed arms control negotiating position to Soviet diplomat Valerian A. Zorin without full consultation from the State Department and the White House, or the approval of the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) allies most affected by its proposals. In the face of disapproval at home and protests from the French, British, and West German leadership, Eisenhower and Dulles rebuked Stassen and curbed his authority. Though the negotiations limped along for a time, they ended in deadlock, and in early 1958 Stassen left the Eisenhower administration. Over the next few decades, he ran for office in Pennsylvania and Minnesota, seeking governorships and congressional seats to no avail, and by the time of his death in 2001, his role in U.S. foreign policy had been all but forgotten.

Kaplan has mined a number of domestic sources on his subject, from Stassen's collection of personal papers with the Minnesota Historical Society to the materials in the Eisenhower Presidential Library to the official State and Defense department files at the National Archives. Most of the personal sources focus on Stassen's immediate contemporaries, although one key source of diplomatic perspectives—the Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection held by the Library of Congress—does not appear in this book. Another critical omission, moreover, is the view of Stassen's peers outside the United States. Considering Stassen's regular participation in international meetings and conferences, from his role as part of the U.S. delegation to the San Francisco Conference to his disarmament work with NATO allies, it is unfortunate that Kaplan's biography incorporates little

international source material. It would be informative, for instance, to see whether Stassen's overseas trips with the FAO succeeded in raising his profile with his hosts in Europe and Asia, and what sort of impression, if any, he left upon those he met. The files of the French, British, or West German foreign offices might also provide a broader record of the diplomatic gaffe that effectively ended Stassen's disarmament work. Such alternate perspectives would provide a clearer sense of Stassen's historical contribution, supporting Kaplan's endeavor to give Stassen due credit for his service to his country.

Kaplan concludes his assessment of Stassen's career by suggesting that it "seemed to fit the definition of insanity: repeating the same mistakes while expecting different results" (p. 189). Stassen repeatedly overplayed his hand, overestimating his influence and underestimating the degree to which more influential individuals like Dulles disapproved of his actions. Yet other factors outside Stassen's control contributed to the collapse of his disarmament efforts, not least of which was the launch of the *Sputnik I* satellite in late 1957 and its detrimental effect on U.S.-Soviet relations. In this context, Kaplan's biography of Harold Stassen is both a redemptive narrative for its subject and a cautionary tale for anyone with diplomatic or political aspirations, as well as a supplement to the existing literature on the Eisenhower years.

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Omar Nelson Bradley: America's GI General, 1893-1981

By Steven L. Ossad
University of Missouri Press, 2017
Pp. xxx, 460. \$36.95

Review by Gregory C. McCarthy

In *Omar Nelson Bradley: America's GI General, 1893-1981*, author Steven L. Ossad sets out to prove that his subject is not as dry as often thought. He mostly succeeds, but at the expense of Bradley's sainthood. Ossad provides a thorough biography of one of World War II's slightly less heralded senior generals. Bradley rose through succeeding commands, on the strength of his performance and with the support of Generals George C. Marshall and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Bradley's reputation for sound judgment, even temperament, and success in increasing levels of responsibility helped him advance. Unlike General George S. Patton, Bradley usually thrived with minimal supervision. As 12th Army Group general in 1944-1945, he commanded the largest body of American soldiers (1.3 million strong) ever to serve under a single field commander.

The book is well researched; Ossad cites Army histories and biographies. Ossad covers the right level of detail, providing enough information for the lay reader and historian alike. He pieces together multiple sources to resolve disputes—for example, if one belated Patton battlefield sighting in North Africa against Eisenhower's orders could have happened (he thinks not). Bradley wrote two autobiographies, *A Soldier's Story* (New York, 1951), based on aide Chester B. "Chet" Hansen's diary, and *A General's Life* (New York, 1983), which was published posthumously. Ossad objects to both books. The former was a rehash of fresh

controversies (personalities and alliance issues); the latter Bradley had little to do with because of his declining health.

Bradley was the last living five-star general. Because five-star generals never officially retire (and because military academy entrance then marked the beginning of active service), Bradley holds the certainly unbreakable record for longest time on active duty—just under 70 years. However, barely more than six months into his classmate Eisenhower's presidency in 1953, Bradley's public service ended as he vacated the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) job. His falling-out with Eisenhower might partly reflect their similarity. Both were superficially benign and smiling, but stubborn, proud Midwesterners who rose far above their humble beginnings. Apparently, neither could move beyond old slights.

Ossad realistically covers Bradley's flaws: bearing grudges that last for decades; his apparent cover-up of the Patton sick bay abuse incident; and his inability to self-critique. Additionally, his malfeasance in directing close-air support in Operation COBRA in 1944 resulted in the fratricide of his friend, Lt. Gen. Lesley J. McNair, a responsibility Bradley evaded for the remainder of his life. Ossad describes correspondence indicating Bradley's affair with the woman who would become his second wife began years before his first wife's death. Ossad is taken aback by the bitterness of Bradley's private response to Patton's accidental December 1945 death. Bradley's near-catatonic immediate response to the Battle of the Bulge is especially damning. Eisenhower never forgives him.

Bradley benefited from good timing. He got accepted to West Point's Class of 1915 ("the class that stars fell on"), which included Eisenhower. He later acquires the highly influential George Marshall as an early mentor and future advocate. Ossad demonstrates convincingly that legendary war correspondent Ernie T. Pyle, initially cool toward Bradley, embraced him as the "GI's General" and is most responsible for bringing him favorable public attention. Readers well versed in World War II will find much familiar: a strained alliance embodied by the insufferable British Field Marshal Bernard L. Montgomery, the touch-and-go nature of both D-Day and the Bulge, and the early difficulties in North Africa and the Mediterranean.

There is little discussion of Bradley's personal life. Ossad explains at the outset that correspondence with his first wife cannot be found. Esther Dora "Kitty" Buhler, Bradley's second wife, is suspected in the disappearance of such records. Buhler, a former journalist, controlled Bradley's reputation in his retirement, becoming his late-stage Ernie Pyle. Bradley and Kitty were technical consultants on the 1970 hit movie, *Patton*, and were paid a percentage of the movie's proceeds. The movie portrays Bradley as kindly and avuncular, in contrast to the overbearing protagonist. Bradley eclipsed his longtime rival, Patton, in rank and command and outlived him by thirty-five years.

Bradley was at the center of much of the post-World War II national security structure. Accepting the job grudgingly, he became the first head of the postwar Veterans Administration, then a cesspool of cronyism, corruption, patient backlogs, and overwhelming numbers of returning veterans (one million per month at one point). He then became chief of staff of the Army and subsequently the first CJCS as a result of the National Security Act of 1947. He received his fifth star as CJCS in 1950.

However, all the Joint Chiefs, but primarily Bradley as chairman, bear responsibility for not vetting General Douglas MacArthur's push to the Chinese border in late 1950. President Harry S. Truman and Bradley state MacArthur glibly brushed aside any concerns at their Wake Island meeting. However, the buck stopped with the president as Truman belatedly acknowledged. Additionally, Bradley and his chiefs were not engaged strongly and were actually in quiet opposition to the September 1950 Inchon landing, which succeeded.

Ossad reports that when Truman told Bradley of his intent to fire MacArthur, Bradley, no fan of MacArthur, was not immediately supportive, wanting to discuss it with the Joint Chiefs. Bradley was not certain MacArthur had technically been insubordinate. Bradley memorably tells a congressional hearing that bringing in China is "the wrong war, at the wrong place, at the wrong time, and with the wrong enemy" while leaving out his virtual acquiescence in the run-up to this effort.¹ Moreover, in late 1967, Bradley strongly endorses the Vietnam War after a trip there.

With a career as long and significant as Bradley's, there is much to digest. He tackled every problem as if a corps

commander and usually effectively delegated responsibility to functional subcomponents. *Omar Nelson Bradley* will acquaint modern readers with a man born in the nineteenth century and one of the seminal figures of World War II and its aftermath. The book will be of particular interest to soldiers and a useful professional military education addition for continued study of both World War II and leadership, respectively. Ossad has provided a useful contribution.

NOTE

1. Omar Nelson Bradley, testimony before the Senate Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Relations, 15 May 1951, *Military Situation in the Far East*, hearings, 82d Congress, 1st session, part 2, p. 732.

Col. Greg McCarthy, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, earned his Ph.D. at Catholic University of America and has deployed to Afghanistan as a Marine historian. He is currently an instructor at the Defense Institute of Security Cooperation Studies in Washington, D.C.



The Wehrmacht's Last Stand: The German Campaigns of 1944-1945

By Robert M. Citino
University of Kansas Press, 2017
Pp. xiv, 615. \$34.95

Review by Timothy Heck

Robert Citino's *The Wehrmacht's Last Stand: The German Campaigns of 1944-1945* is the fitting conclusion to his trilogy on the German Army from 1942 through the end of World War II. Currently the Samuel Zemurray

Stone Senior Historian at the National WWII Museum and formerly a visiting professor at the U.S. Army War College, Citino is one of the foremost experts on the German military and its way of war. His preceding works include *Blitzkrieg to Desert Storm: The Evolution of Operational Warfare*, as well as the two previous installments in this series, *Death of the Wehrmacht: The German Campaigns of 1942* and *The Wehrmacht Retreats: Fighting a Lost War, 1943*. As with his previous works, Citino writes in an engaging style, supported by extensive archival and secondary research, and presents the German Army's struggles on the personal, tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war.

By 1943, after Italy's defection to the Allies and catastrophic Axis defeats in North Africa and in Stalingrad, Germany's eventual defeat became increasingly inevitable, even to those within the German military. Why, then, did the German military keep fighting? Traditional narratives focus on Hitler or Nazism as the driving force behind continued German resistance. Citino, however, argues that German military tradition and focus on a concept of war based on operational maneuver (*Bewegungskrieg*) kept the armies in the field longer than expected. *Bewegungskrieg* "required brisk maneuver, high levels of aggression, and a flexible system of command" (p. 5), all of which the Germans continued to pursue until the very end. The result was the destruction of Germany, and the deaths of "millions of ordinary soldiers who were willing to fight for the cause and die at their posts" (p. 58).

In postwar memoirs, the German commanders and staff officers pointed to oaths of loyalty to Germany or Hitler as reasons to keep fighting. Citino, however, punctures this self-serving myopia by reminding readers that these same officers were less than loyal to their subordinates and to the millions of German civilians who suffered because of the continuation of the war. Furthermore, he reminds readers that many of these commanders who sacrificed their men in the name of loyalty to Germany were quick to surrender or flee to the Western Allies in the final days of the war, leaving their men to die or be

captured by the Red Army.

Citino alternates between Eastern and Western Fronts, drawing common threads between the two. By moving back and forth, the reader is able to view the war as a whole from the German perspective instead of as isolated events. Central to Citino's narrative is the role *Bewegungskrieg* played in German decision making as "the Wehrmacht was marching to the graveyard" (p. 58). Based on mobility, Citino argues German officers were steeped in the historical legacy of *Bewegungskrieg*: Friedrich Wilhelm ("the Great Elector") in 1678–1679, Frederick the Great in 1757, the Battle of Tannenberg in 1914, and France in 1940. By 1944, however, the war had moved from one of movement to a positional one (*Stellungskrieg*), which the Germans (as with their Prussian forebearers) slowly lost as their enemies gained the upper hand.

The German Army, Citino adroitly explains, was surprisingly resilient as the war dragged on. Although no longer the successful force that stormed Europe from 1939 to 1941, by 1944 "German divisions still possessed enormous reservoirs of unit cohesion and staying power in battle, even in the face of Allied superiority in material and fire" (p. 66). Throughout the text, Citino relates example after example of how close the *Wehrmacht* was to victory at the operational level in spite of the odds against them. The German operational defeat, he posits, was far from inevitable even as the Germans struggled to snatch victory from defeat and their wounds and losses became irrecoverable. Strategically, however, Citino successfully argues that Germany was doomed as soon as the phase of *Bewegungskrieg* ended.

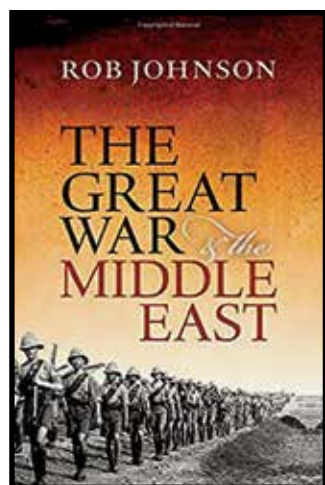
Overall, the work is masterful, but there are areas for improvement. First, Citino rarely discusses the contributions of Germany's allies. Romania's defection to the Soviets is well covered but the end of the Hungarian alliance receives just a page, even though Hitler's obsession with Hungary would have dire consequences when the Soviets launched their Vistula-Oder operation in January 1945. Similarly, Germany's relationship with Finland is mentioned only in passing. By ignoring these contributions and their impact on German strategic and operational concerns, Citino does not paint

the full picture of Germany's reality. As he writes in his concluding analysis, "*Wehrmacht* commanders paid no real attention to the Axis-allied armies fighting at their side . . . without whom continuation of the war was impossible" (p. 468).

Second, the portrayal of the Red Army requires more nuance than it is given. The Red Army is largely described as a juggernaut or, in the quoted words of General Erich von Manstein, "a hydra" (p. 39). Soviet military art is given a short shrift, especially when compared to analysis of Western campaigning. As an example, Soviet application of *maskirovka* (deception) ahead of the Vistula-Oder campaign, considered a fantastic success and a model for Soviet deception campaigns during the Cold War, was described as almost nonexistent despite documentary evidence to the contrary. With evermore scholarship on the Red Army coming out, the focus on Soviet numerical superiority instead of operational prowess does not advance our understanding of Germany's main opponent.

By focusing on the operational nature of the German model of war, which often overlooked concerns about intelligence, supply, and logistics, *The Wehrmacht's Last Stand* explains not only why but how the German Army fought for so long on so little against the Allies. Through exemplary research (there are almost one hundred pages of footnotes alone), Citino breaks down the idea that Hitler or Nazism were to blame for Germany's defeat. Instead, he effectively argues, the German military's focus on *Bewegungskrieg* had dire consequences for Europe, Germany, and the individual German soldier. This book, like its two predecessors, belongs on the shelves of dedicated military historians.

Maj. Timothy Heck is a Brigade Platoon Commander at 6th Air/Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, United States Marine Corps Reserve. He recently published a chapter on Soviet military art during the Great Patriotic War in Army University Press' *Deep Maneuver: Historical Case Studies in Large-Scale Combat Operations* (2018). He is pursuing a master's degree at King's College, London.



The Great War & the Middle East

By Rob Johnson
Oxford University Press, 2016
Pp. xxvii, 354. \$34.95

Review by Mark Klobas

The First World War is the great force of modern Middle Eastern history, one in which the Ottoman Empire was swept away by the Allied powers and replaced with a series of mandates and protectorates from which the modern states in the region emerged. Because of this, any understanding of the region must begin with the war and the ways in which it shaped the area into what it is today. Though Rob Johnson's book is not the first to undertake this challenge, it is among the best produced in the wave of publications occasioned by the World War I centennial, thanks to his clear assessment of the various participants and the campaigns that they waged.

What distinguishes Johnson's book from its counterparts is his focus on strategy. Throughout the book, he submits the combatants' designs to a straightforward "ends-ways-means" assessment that considers their available goals, plans, and resources. In his evaluation of their efforts on the region's fronts, Johnson makes clear the various challenges that they faced, how they sought to overcome them, and the factors that determined their success or failure. Johnson's scope is broad, encompassing not just the familiar fronts in the Dardanelles, Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia, but the less frequently addressed clash between the Ottomans and the Russians in the Caucasus and the German efforts to foment insurrections in Iran and Afghanistan. In the process, he brings into his analysis regional groups whose role in the war is often underappreciated. This enables Johnson to provide a more

comprehensive assessment of the factors that went into formulating the participants' ever-evolving strategies.

These changing strategies reflected the considerable fluidity of events in the area. As Johnson notes, prewar British policymakers were largely content with the status quo in the region. The growing alignment of the Young Turks in Istanbul with Germany, however, changed this, leading the British and their Allied partners to pursue the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. This soon proved more difficult than the Allies anticipated. The Ottomans turned out to be more resilient than their recent defeats in the Balkan Wars suggested. Here, Johnson credits the confluence of technologies, such as modern artillery and machine guns, as giving the defense the advantage in the Middle East, much as they had on the Western Front. Underequipped British armies in Palestine and in Mesopotamia suffered defeats in 1915 and 1916, forcing the British to reassess the "means" needed to achieve their "ends." This led to victories in 1917 and 1918 that reflected the importance of planning and preparation over the improvisation and dash that had characterized their successes in previous colonial wars.

For the Ottomans and their German partners, however, the greater limits on their "means" forced them to pursue different "ways" of attacking their opponents. One early result of this was the adoption of a "strategy of revolution," with Sultan Mehmed V declaring a jihad on the Allies soon after the Ottoman Empire's entry into the war. Though the general uprising of Muslim subjects in the British, French, and Russian empires did not take place, the British suppressed risings in western Egypt, Sudan, and southern Iran. The British also faced ongoing efforts to stir up opposition in Iran and Afghanistan as German agents spread propaganda and gold in an effort to inflame long-smoldering resentment toward the British and Russian presence. The Allies returned the favor by courting Armenians and Hashemite Arabs. This required an intricate balancing act between the various tribes in the region and the postwar plans of the Allied powers—one not always performed successfully. The Arab leaders were hardly pawns in this process and they often made their own political calculations by weighing personal ambition and traditional hostility against practical concerns.

It is this rich nuance in his analysis that makes Johnson's book such a valuable contribution to the history of the First World War in the Middle East. Though his coverage

of the British (who are the only beneficiaries of any personal archival research by the author) is the most detailed, his assessment of all participants is a straightforward evaluation free from most of the assumptions and misconceptions that have accumulated around them since the war. As a result, he provides readers with an assessment of the theater that helps them to understand what the actors in the region sought to accomplish and why they succeeded or failed. Anyone seeking to understand the course of World War I in the Middle East and its impact on the region's development would do well to read this book—not the least for its demonstration that the gap between plans and outcomes in Middle Eastern conflicts is far from new.

Mark Klobas teaches history at Scottsdale Community College in Scottsdale, Arizona. A graduate of Texas A&M University, he is a podcaster with the New Books Network and is currently at work on a biography of the twentieth-century British newspaper editor James Louis Garvin.



NEWS NOTES

Continued from page 5

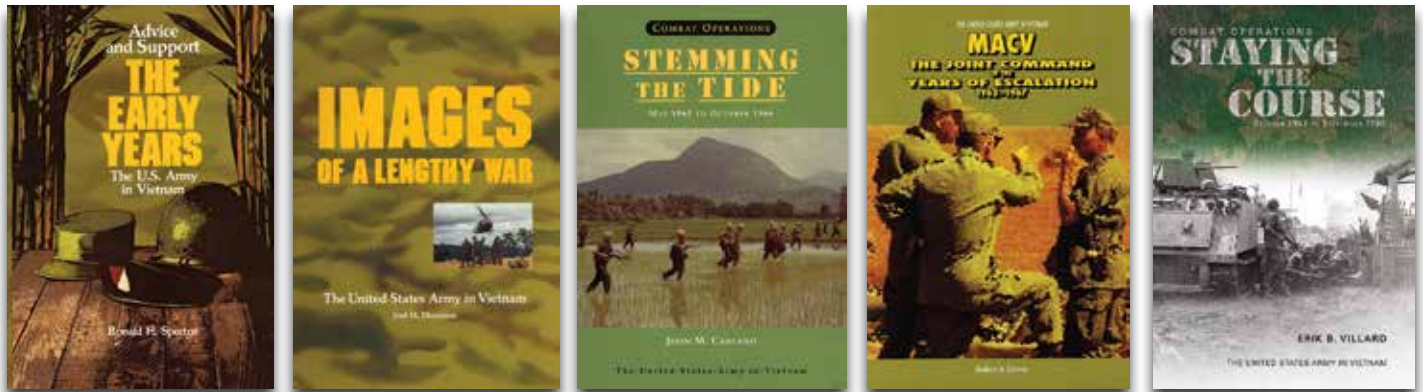
2019 CONFERENCE OF ARMY HISTORIANS

CMH will host the 2019 Conference of Army Historians (CAH) at the Fort Eustis Club on Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia, from 22 to 26 July. The conference is open to Department of Defense historians, archivists, and museum specialists, as well as historians from other government agencies, civilian academia, and the general public. The CAH is a biennial event dedicated to the professional development of the military historians, archivists, and museum specialists of the Army History Program (AHP). The theme of this year's conference is *Creating a Twenty-First Century Army History Program*. The conference, which has no registration fees, will consist of a series of workshops and roundtables, punctuated with special topic presentations focused on the important and challenging aspects of the AHP. For more information, or to request the agenda or a registration form, please contact Mr. Thomas Crecca at thomas.w.crecca.civ@mail.mil.



CHIEF' HISTORIAN'S FOREWORD

Continued from page 4



In 1981, sixteen years after starting work, CMH had not yet put a Vietnam book into print. Nine of the twenty-three volumes had not yet gotten underway. Two authors had been assigned to topics that had grown to two-volume length, meaning that two books were awaiting completion of their companion before they could get started. Twelve were in some stage of actual progress, albeit very slow in some cases. One of the two authors originally assigned to the first book on planning and support was still working at it fifteen years later—as an additional duty. Never satisfactorily completed, the Center later dropped it from the series.

The Vietnam histories finally began to see the light of day in 1983 with publication of *Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941–1960*. That same year, the chief of military history planned to complete an eighteen-volume Vietnam series in five years. Two more books followed in 1986 (*Images of a Lengthy War* and *Military Communications*). Another pair appeared in 1988 (*Public Affairs: The Military and the Media, 1968–1973* and *Advice and Support: The Final Years, 1965–1973*). Only two additional books made it into print in the following decade (*Public Affairs: The Military and the Media, 1962–1968* and *Combat Operations: Taking the Offensive, October 1966 to October 1967*). CMH has published five more since 2000: *Combat Operations: Stemming the Tide, May 1965 to October 1966*; *MACV: The Joint Command in the Years of Escalation, 1962–1967*; *MACV: The Joint Command in the Years of Withdrawal, 1968–1973*; *Engineers at War*; and *Combat Operations: Staying the Course, October 1967 to September 1968*.

Work continues. The volume covering logistics from 1964 to 1967 is to undergo external panel review in May and should be published toward the end of 2020. That author will then begin the second logistics volume covering the remainder of the war. Another historian has written twelve of eighteen chapters for the middle volume on advice and support and he should complete a draft by the middle of 2020. The Center has a thousand-page manuscript in hand for the combat volume covering 1968 to 1973, but it is incomplete. We plan to break it into two volumes, each to be finished by a different author once we obtain contract money to do the work. Those books will wrap up the series, as it is now envisioned, at seventeen volumes.

A number of factors contributed to the series stretching out toward six decades. One was the primacy of the Green Books, which were still in progress through the 1990s. Another delay resulted from staff cuts at the Center that began after the end of the Vietnam War and have recurred several times since. In some cases, the effort to shorten the process did not work. For example, to reduce the size of the series, CMH combined all three planned logistics volumes into one in 1985, but that merely meant that the topic became overwhelming and the book remained unfinished three decades later. The frequent diversion of authors to other tasks, assignment of poorly qualified historians or part-time authors, the promotion of the best writers into supervisory billets, and sometimes contradictory or insufficient editorial guidance added considerable delay. The slowdown from those causes, coupled with the sheer scale of some topics, stretched them out over so many years that the original authors moved on, resulting in additional time lost as new historians got up to speed on the projects.

The Center did not specifically look back at the Vietnam experience when crafting the plan for the Tan Books, but it already was addressing some of the ongoing problems that had plagued book production in recent decades. A primary goal is obtaining official approval for the Tan Books from the top levels of the Army to ensure that adequate resources are available. The Book Process Standard Operating Procedure attempts to minimize sources of delay and we are looking to harness the entire Army Historical Program to contribute to the series. Time will tell whether our efforts prove effective in producing each book in an average of six years and the overall series in two decades.

NOTES

1. David F. Trask, A Brief History of the Series *The U.S. Army in Vietnam*, Dec 1981, chief historian files.
2. Ibid.





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