



[Return I. Holcombe Papers.](#)

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ANTIETAM.

The action at Antietam is set down as one of the great battles in the world's history. But its greatness is composed of heroic fighting, gallant deeds, long hours of struggle, and appalling loss of life, a gory record of wounds, and it is believed to have caused the issuing of President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. There was nothing decided by it, for it was not a decisive battle. It did not change the map of the country in any particular; it did not shorten or lengthen the war a single day.

*more than anything else*  
It was ~~a~~ a great slaughtering and wounding of men. At its conclusion neither party had a substantial advantage.

*transpose*

In this great contest, this awful holocaust, this mighty incident of the great War, Minnesota was represented as she was on nearly every great battlefield of that dreadful four years. The First Minnesota and Russell's Sharpshooters were present as delegates to this terrible convocation, and were active participants in the proceedings.

It was in the afternoon of September 15 when the main advance of the Army of the Potomac approached Gen. Lee's position east of Sharpsburg and drew up along the left bank of Antietam Creek. On the opposite side, but a mile west of the creek, the Confederate line was ostentatiously displayed. The batteries were in position, the infantry in plain view. It was as if Gen. Lee were challenging the great Army of the Potomac to a fair fight with no favors, and yet at the time the Confederates had but 20,000 men, at the most, on the field--Longstreet's Corps, D. H. Hill's

big Division,\* and Stuart's Cavalry. Stonewall Jackson's Corps was<sup>yet</sup> at Harper's Ferry.

The Confederate battalion of artillery under Col. Stephen D. Lee had crossed Antietam Creek at 8 o'clock that morning and gone into position on the left or east of the turnpike running southward from Hagerstown to Sharpsburg; later it fell back to the west of the turnpike. Gen. Lee had moved his army down from Hagerstown the day before, so that the forces he had sent to take Harper's Ferry could the more easily join him when they had finished their work; he would meet them half way.

Later in the forenoon the blue uniforms of the Union troops appeared among the trees that crowned the heights of the eastern banks of the Antietam. The number increased and increased and the field of blue grew larger and larger until four great Army Corps were practically present--Hooker's First, (14,856) Sumner's Second, (18,813) Franklin's Sixth, (12,300) and Reno's Ninth, (13,819) a total of 59,888 officers and men, besides a brigade of Gen. Pleasanton's Cavalry and 150 cannons. There were 35 big strong Union brigades and 14 Confederate brigades; of the latter fully one-fourth of the regiments numbered less than 200 men each.\*\* A liberal estimate of the Confederate forces confronting the 60,000 on the 15th was 20,000 men of all arms, and half of these had been badly defeated in battle the day before. An advance upon them that afternoon would have killed, wounded, or captured what were not chased swiftly away.

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\*On the "field return" of Lee's army for Sept. 22, D. H. Hill's Division appears as belonging to Jackson's Corps, but at Antietam it seems to have served independently.

\*\*According to Vol. 19, War Recs., the 56th Va., had 80; the 8th Va., 34; Hampton Legion, 77; 17th S. C., 59; 8th S. C., 45; 17th Va., 55, etc.

About 1 P. M. the Union infantry came up within range, and Lee opened upon them with his long range guns; the Union batteries soon replied, and there was considerable artillery firing that afternoon. At 3 o'clock Gen. McClellan came up on the hill where other prominent officers were, and instantly was under fire. A Confederate shell screamed over the heads of the group of officers, and McClellan directed that all but one or two of them should retire behind the ridge, while he continued his reconnoissance coolly and business like. (Gen. J. D. Cox, Batts. and Leads. Vol. 2, p.631.) Antietam was the only battle where McClellan was actually under the enemy's fire while he was commander of the Army of the Potomac, ~~but he was in active battle in two or three instances on this occasion.~~

It was on the morning of the 15th, at 8 o'clock, when Harper's Ferry surrendered and Stonewall Jackson was under orders to return to Lee at Sharpsburg just as soon as that event was over. Jackson had three Divisions, his own old Division, now commanded by Gen. J. R. Jones; Ewell's, commanded by Gen. A. R. Lawton, and A. P. Hill's, commanded by that general himself.

Jones's and Lawton's Divisions left Harper's Ferry after midnight of the 15th, came by Shepp<sup>h</sup>erdstown, waded the Potomac at <sup>o</sup> Beteler's Ford, and did not all reach Sharpsburg until the afternoon of the 16th. Jones got into position on the left of the Confederate line "two hours before dark" under the fire of one of Hooker's batteries which was pounding Hood's Division. Lawton came later and went into position, according to Early's report, "at a woods in which there was a Dunkard church." Early's Brigade was placed on the left of Jones, the extreme left of the line, north of the church, to support Stuart's batteries. Gen. Early says: "It was then getting

dark and the shells/ from the enemy's guns were flying tolerably thick." Hays's Louisiana brigade came up later and formed in the rear of Early's. Douglass's (Lawton's old) and Trimble's brigades did not get up till "between 10 and 11 o'clock that night."

Now, two miles north of the positions of Jones and Lawton, *while* *were* near the Dunkard church, Meade's and Ricketts' Divisions of Hooker's Corps were in place at 4 o'clock, fully two hours before the Confederates came to the church woods. Doubleday's Division came about 5 o'clock. Meade had fought a considerable battle with Hood's Division, over in the East Woods, east of the Hagerstown pike, before 6 o'clock. If Hooker had been diligent, he could have occupied the key to the battlefield and all the ground about the Dunkard Church two hours before a man of Stonewall's came. Then a great Union victory would have been won before 9 o'clock the next morning.

## THE BALL OPENS.

The examination of the ground, the posting of troops, and a lively artillery duel occupied the forenoon of the 16th. At 2 P. M. (Meade's report) Hooker's First Corps, 14,800 strong, (according to McClellan) was put in motion and crossed Antietam Creek at the bridge and ford highest up the stream, (Bridge No. 1) near and a little west of Keedysville, and also near Samuel Pry's mill. The crossing was out of range of the hostile fire.

Gen. Hooker continued the march westward for nearly a mile and a half, and was half a mile east of the Sharpsburg and Hagerstown turnpike, when the skirmishers of Meade's Division of two brigades, struck Hood's Division of Longstreet's Corps, in position in the woods to the left or south of the Union column. It was now nearly sundown. There was a brisk skirmish for several minutes.

Both of Hood's brigades, Wofford's and Law's, were in action. The latter, commanded by Col. E. M. Law, Fourth Alabama, was the old Bee's brigade, which the First Minnesota had twice before confronted, and among the killed this evening was Col. P. F. Liddell, of the Eleventh Mississippi. Wofford's was Hood's old brigade, Hampton Legion, Eighteenth Georgia, First, Fourth, and Fifth Texas. The skirmishing lasted until after dark. Then Lee sent up, as stated, first Gen. J. R. Jones's Division and then Gen. Lawton's, of Jackson's Corps, with two brigades, to relieve Hood's worn-out command.\*

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\* "The officers and men of my command having been without food for three days, except a half ration of beef for one day, and green corn, Gen. Lawton, with two brigades, was directed to take my position to enable my men to cook."--Hood's Report.

The opposing forces rested on their arms, both occupying a skirt of woods which formed the eastern enclosure of D. R. Miller's corn field, which, according to varying estimates, was from 30 acres to 50 acres in extent, and was on both sides of the turnpike, just south of Miller's house.

After Hooker's column was well under way, across the creek, McClellan came to it. To him Gen. Hooker ~~xxixix~~ said: "You have sent me across with my small corps of 13,000 to attack the whole rebel army, and if re-enforcements are not sent promptly, or another attack is not made on the left of our line, the rebels will eat me up." (Hooker's report.) So, about midnight, McClellan sent over Mansfield's Twelfth Corps, of two Divisions, to the re-enforcement <sup>of Hooker</sup> and they went into camp immediately in the rear of ~~Hooker's~~ <sup>his First Corps.</sup>

Gen. Mansfield was 59 years of age, an old officer of the army, <sup>and</sup> of long and faithful experience. His two Divisions, Gen. A. S. Williams's and Gen. Geo. S. Greene's, aggregated 10,126 officers and men. (McClellan's report) and so there were now nearly 24,000 Union troops against the Confederate left wing, where there were perhaps 10,000 men. Hooker's movement had accomplished nothing, save to inform Lee that the main battle was to be fought on the left of his position, although there would probably be, to use Phil Kearney's expression, "beautiful fighting along the whole line."

That night was dark and drizzly. Gen. Hooker went to bed in D. R. Miller's barn. Gen. Lawton, worn out by his hard march from Harper's Ferry, pillowed his head on his saddle and slept on the ground under the gentle rain. The opposing pickets kept up a scattering firing during the night.

Sedgwick's Division, which included Gorman's Brigade and the First Minnesota, were encamped on Pry's farm, on the Antietam, in the extreme northeastern corner of the battle ground. Gen. McClellan established his headquarters in Pry's big square farm house. That night the men were not allowed to build fires where they slept, for the site was within Confederate cannon shot. They had to go to the rear and boil their coffee and fry their bacon in deep gullies and ravines, where the light of the cook fires could not be seen.

The Antietam was easily fordable almost anywhere, but the banks were precipitous. Many crossing places were desired. That evening a detail from Gorman's brigade, including several men from the First Minnesota, the whole under Lieut. Martin Maginnis, then of Company F, graded down the banks of the creek in several places, making suitable approaches to crossing places.

As early as 3 o'clock in the morning of that memorable Wednesday, September 17, 1862, the pickets of Lawton's Confederates and those of Seymour's Union brigade were "at it" in earnest. (Hood's report.) At 6 o'clock Lawton sent for Hood's brigades, which came back immediately, but before they could get up Lawton was grievously wounded and was succeeded in the command of the Division by Gen. Jubal A. Early, who brought his brigade down from the support of Stuart's Cavalry and batteries, to the northwest. Hooker's men were inflicting great losses, but were receiving the same.

At 7 o'clock, or a little later, Hooker had cleared the woods (called the East Woods) and the fields of D. R. Miller's farm, on the east of the Hagerstown turnpike, and the Confederates

on the upper part of the line had been driven to the west of the turnpike, about the Dunker church, in what were called the West Woods. Here they had a good position, concealed in the woods *and copees,* behind trees, boulders, stone ledges, inequalities of the ground and other shelters. In addition to the infantry attacks upon them, they had been under a very destructive artillery fire and were certainly in a sad condition.

Hooker advanced his center division under Meade to take the Hagerstown pike, the position at the Dunker Church, and the West Woods--all three. Resisting this movement, John R. Jones's Division, (1,600 men, says its commander) and Hood's two brigades advanced from the woods, threw back Meade's strong Division and broke it badly, *driving* ~~sending~~ it to the rear. Ricketts's Division, at the left of Hooker's line, advanced to the Hagerstown pike, but was met by three brigades of Dan Hill's Division (which had closed up to Jackson's line and was on its right) and was also driven from the field. Hooker's remaining Division, Gen. Doubleday's, got down into Miller's corn field opposite the Dunker Church, but was driven back by the fire of the enemy in the church woods and by Stuart's batteries, and took refuge behind the advancing lines of Sedgwick's Division. (Doubleday's report.)

~~Hooker's~~ First Corps had suffered severely from the enemy's fire, and had lost nearly half its men by straggling, (McClellan's and Meade's reports) so that its effectiveness was practically gone. But Hooker continued to fight until about 9:15, when he was badly wounded in the foot and Gen. Meade took command of the Corps. As he was being carried from the field, Gen. Hooker encountered Gen. Sumner, who was coming on with the Second Corps. Gen. Sumner's

testimony before the War Conduct Committee (Vol.1, p.368) regarding this meeting reads:

On going upon the field I found that Gen. Hooker's Corps had been dispersed and routed. I passed him some distance in the rear, where he had been carried wounded, but I saw nothing of his Corps at all as I was advancing with my command on the field. I sent one of my staff officers to find where they were, and Gen. Ricketts, the only officer we could find, stated that he could not raise 300 men of the Corps.

The evidence is all one way that Hooker's two Divisions left the field defeated and demoralized by a <sup>much</sup> ~~largely~~ inferior force.

Entering into battle, Gen. Hooker soon found he had a hot, tough job on his hands. At 7 o'clock he ordered up Mansfield's Twelfth Corps, 10,000 strong, which had arrived to his support at midnight. That Corps' two Divisions, Williams's and Greene's, at once went into line, the former on the right and Greene on the left and both in the right rear of Meade's Division. The deployment was scarcely made, and the men of Williams's Division had fired but a few rounds, when Gen. Mansfield rode down to the Tenth Maine, of Crawford's Brigade, and ordered the men to cease firing, telling them they were shooting into Duryea's Brigade, to the left front. The Maine boys remonstrated and asked the commander to "look at their gray coats;" he did so, and exclaimed: "Yes, yes; you are right; they are rebels." In another instant he was mortally shot through the body and his horse badly wounded.

## THE KEY TO THE BATTLEFIELD IGNORED.

*might have been*

Great as ~~were~~ the military abilities of Gen. McClellan and Gen. Hooker, neither of them had the intelligence to see-- perhaps they did not look for it-- the controlling natural position and critical point of the battlefield of Antietam. That point was a high ground on the Nicodemus farm, west of the Hagerstown pike and to the right of where Hooker formed his battle line. At the distance of from half a mile to a mile north (and a little west) it perfectly ~~enfiladed~~ and commanded the lower land about the Dunker Church and Stonewall Jackson's first and ~~second~~ positions.

Had two or three good batteries--and Hooker and Mansfield had 17--been placed upon this key-point, Stonewall Jackson's force could not have lived in that low ground fifteen minutes. (See Swinton)

To defend this point at the beginning of the battle was Early, with his small brigade and Pelham's Battery; but Stonewall Jackson realized its importance, and put first Fitz ~~Hugh~~ Lee's brigade, and later all of Stuart's Cavalry upon it, with Pelham's, Poague's, Pegram's, Carpenter's, and Chew's Virginia, and Hart's South Carolina batteries, 28 guns in all. (McClellan's Stuart's Campaigns, p. 131.) But these guns except Pelham's, were not there until 7/30 o'clock of the evening of the 16th. They contributed largely to Hooker's discomfiture and the failure of the Second and Twelfth Corps. They sent their case shot and shells plowing through Hooker's (and afterwards through Mansfield's and Sumner's) columns, and they, with some ~~of~~ Stuart's dismounted cavalry and Early's brigade, after the First and Twelfth Corps and Sedgwick's

Division had been driven to the rear, held them in check during the rest of the day.

Had Hooker sent one Division to the <sup>key=</sup> ground at sunset on the 16th, or Mansfield and <sup>he two</sup> ~~2~~ First Corps Divisions, with their batteries, at daylight on the 17th, how different the result of the battle would have been! Jackson's Corps would have been destroyed and Lee's army rolled up in defeat. Then, as the Potomac was only half a mile away from the position, the Confederate line of retreat up the river road towards Shepp<sup>h</sup>erdstown would have been cut and <sup>the road to the only ford across the Potomac in front of the field commanded,</sup> impeded, and the defeated Confederates made prisoners by thousands.

When Sumner's Corps came, at 9:30 <sup>ok</sup> 10, it was pretty late and very dangerous to try to seize the key-ground. Stuart's 15 regiments of cavalry and six batteries and Early's brigade were defending it then. At 11 o'clock French's and Branch's batteries, of Walker's Division, were sent up to the plateau and then Stuart had eight batteries and his position <sup>well nigh</sup> was impregnable. The Confederates appreciated the position, if the Union generals did not.

## HOOKER'S CORPS PUT OUT OF THE FIGHT.

As a result of the engagement, Hooker's Corps retired to the northward, up the Hagerstown road, and did not stop until it reached a point at Joseph Poffenberger's and Wm. Middlekauff's farms, fully a mile north of where the <sup>Corps</sup> had formed the night before and from where <sup>it</sup> they had started that morning. The Corps was badly demoralized. A great many had been killed and wounded but a far greater number had skedaddled or "straggled," as the milder term was. Gen. Meade reported that there were but 6,729 men of the Corps present on the 18th; but on the 22d, after the stragglers had come up, there were 13,093.

The Confederates, too, had been badly hurt. In the early cannonade Gen. John R. ~~W~~Jones, commanding Jackson's left Division, was so badly injured that he had to leave the field. Gen. Wm. E. Starke took command of the Division and a half-hour later fell dead with three minie balls in his body. In his report Stonewall Jackson says:

The carnage on both sides was terrific. At an early hour Gen. Starke was killed. Col. Douglass, commanding Lawton's Brigade, was also killed. Gen. Lawton, commanding Division, and Col. Walker commanding brigade, were seriously wounded. More than half of the brigades of Lawton ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ and Hayes were either killed or wounded, and more than a third of Trimble's; all the regimental commanders in those brigades, except two, were killed or wounded.

## THE TWELFTH CORPS FOLLOWS THE FIRST.

Meanwhile the two Divisions of the Twelfth Corps had come up. Upon the mortal wounding of Gen. Mansfield, Gen. A. S. Williams had taken command and brought his Division, now commanded by Gen. Crawford, and that of Gen. Greene down to the Dunkard Church. Crawford, with his two brigades, advanced across the southern part of D. R. Miller's cornfield and seized a point of the woods on the west side of the Hagerstown road, north of the church. At the same time Greene's Division, on the left or south of Crawford, cleared its front and crossed into the woods on the left of the church. The Confederates of Early's Brigade and Lawton's and ~~the~~ the J. R. Jones Division were back in the woods, behind trees, boulders, and rock ledges; Stuart's batteries were pounding ~~them~~, *and the latter* and Crawford and Greene held their positions under heavy loss; finally their troops too began to waver and break, and at last withdrew from before a force less than half their number.\* It was now between 9:30 and 10 o'clock, and Gen. Sumner with the Second Corps came upon the field.

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\*In his report Gen. Doubleday claims that the Twelfth Corps "did not attack in the right place," and were therefore "soon swept away."

## THE FIRST MINNESOTA AT ANTIETAM.

The morning of the 17th of September opened cloudy and cool at Antietam. "Thank the Lord," said many of the men, "we won't have to fight today under a broiling sun." The First Minnesota and the whole of Gorman's Brigade, from the vantage ground on Pry's farm, east of the creek, could overlook a great part of the battlefield. They had been called up at 4 o'clock in the early morning, for Sumner had orders to be ready to take in the Corps at daybreak, and to be ready to move at a moment's notice. Breakfast had been cooked and eaten and the knapsacks packed to leave in camp.

When daylight came and Hooker began his attack, many of the men sought to see the show. Some sought the hilltops, some climbed to the crests of straw stacks, and from these elevated positions saw the battle "from afar off," and saw it plainly, commenting upon it as it progressed. When Hooker's troops, at the first stage, drove the Confederates out of the East Woods, there was great satisfaction and even enthusiasm; but when the advance stopped in front of the West Woods and presently the masses in blue began to go back, there was consternation.

It was 7:20 when Gen. Sumner received orders to take his Corps to the field. O, the miserable tactics of the Union commander! McClellan may have learned them from McDowell. Fighting and being worsted again by detail! First putting in Hooker's Corps by itself and having it defeated; then sending in Mansfield's to have it shattered; now sending in Sumner to take his chances. There was no good reason why all three Corps had not been put in at once, and overwhelming victory made sure beyond peradventure.

The Corps marched promptly. Sedgwick's Division moved first in three lines, a brigade to the line. Gorman's Brigade was the first in line, and the First Minnesota was at the head of the Brigade. The route from camp for the first half mile was toward the northeast. The Antietam was waded at knee deep over a little fording place half a mile west of Philip Pry's house, where Gen. McClellan had his headquarters during the battle, and the farm and house on the west bank of the creek belonged to Harmon F. Neikirk.

A quarter of a mile up the slope from Neikirk's the Division was formed into battle column and advanced toward the west. The Dunker church was about a mile due west from where the Corps crossed Antietam Creek, and the church was the point aimed at. The formation was by brigades "en echelon;" (pronounced in eshelon) that is to say, in three parallel lines, one behind the other, a brigade to the line. Gorman's Brigade was in the first line, Dana's in the second, and Howard's in the third. Kirby's Battery, now in charge of Lieut. Geo. A. Woodruff, was being held in the rear for an emergency.

In Gorman's brigade line the First Minnesota was on the right, and on its extreme left Russell's company of Minnesota Sharpshooters; Company I, the Wabashaw Company, under Capt. Pell, was on provost guard duty and not with the Regiment that day. The Regiment marched into action with 435 officers and men. The Eighty-Second New York came next, then came the Fifteenth Massachusetts *and* ~~the~~ the company of Andrew Sharpshooters, and the Thirty-Fourth New York was on the extreme left of the brigade. Fifty yards behind Gorman's was Dana's Brigade, and 50 yards behind Dana's was Howard's.

If a bullet coming from the front missed Gorman's men, it had a chance to strike Dana's, but if it missed Dana's it still had a chance to ~~xxxxxx~~ hit Howard's; so that few of the enemy's bullets would be thrown away. The best military authorities say that an echelon movement is allowable only when the position and strength of the enemy are in sight or well known, and then only when other movements have failed.

Under Sedgwick's orders the three brigades advanced to the westward simultaneously. French's Division was following Sedgwick's, Richardson's was crossing the Antietam. French's Division had been added to the Corps only the previous morning. It was commanded by Gen. Wm. H. French and had three brigades, under Gen. Nathan Kimball, Col. Dwight Morris, and Gen. Max Weber, in all ten regiments, all veterans of the Shenandoah Campaigns but one, the One Hundred Thirtieth Pennsylvania, now in its first battle. Richardson's Division came up half an hour later.

The three brigades <sup>of Sedgwick's Division</sup> moved rapidly forward at the double-quick for about three-quarters of a mile westward. Then the direction (at least of Gorman's Brigade) was changed to the southwest. They had passed through the East Woods, a fine grove, mostly of oaks, without underbrush, ~~dead~~ and dying under all the trees. Then they entered D. R. Miller's big corn field, nearly ready for the husking, but now yielding another sort of and a very horrible harvest, a crop of shot men. The field was already strewn with the victims of battle, largely Hooker's men. Dead men and grievously wounded men lay in every furrow and behind every corn hill.

It was a brave sight those three lines of battle, 5,000 men, marching to the conflict. The ground was fairly open and favorable. The lines were well kept--too well kept; hardly a shot against them could miss. The men bore themselves well, even gallantly--no shrinking and no faltering, although every man knew he was going against the force, somewhere in the West Woods, ~~and~~ that had destroyed Hooker and Mansfield. They had not proceeded 50 yards from where <sup>their</sup> ~~they~~ lines were formed when they came under the fire of Jeb Stuart's batteries, to the west on the ~~Key~~-point.

On went Gorman's Brigade to the Hagerstown road, across which thoroughfare, in the woods about the Dunker Church, lay the Confederates. They were of Jackson's old Division, here commanded first by J. R. Jones, then by Starke, now by Col. A. J. Grigsby, and of four brigades: Winder's, under Lieut. Col. Gardner; Jones's, under Capt. J. E. Penn; Taliaferro's, under Col. E. T. Warren; Starke's, under Col. L. A. Stafford. Then there was Ewell's (or Lawton's) Division, now commanded by Gen. Early, with four brigades: Lawton's, under Maj. J. H. Lowe; Early's, under Col. Wm. Smith; Trimble's, under Col. J. A. Walker, and Hays's, under Gen. Harry T. Hays. The Confederates report the strength of these two Divisions--Early's brigade not counted-- when they entered the battle at 4,000, in round numbers; Ewell's, 2,400; Jackson's (or J. R. Jones's) 1,600. But in his report (War Recs., Vol. 19, part 2, p. 968) Gen. Early, who commanded Ewell's Division, says the three brigades had lost nearly 1,300 men before they encountered Sedgwick: The old Jackson Division had lost heavily, and Ewell's Brigade did not number more than 300. So that this Confederate force did not amount to over 2,500. But Hood's two brigades, Wofford's and

Law's, and "Tige" Anderson's were present, and therefore the entire force confronting Sedgwick's Division was hardly less than 3,500 infantry and seven batteries, all in good, sheltered positions, while the Union Division was about 5,000 men strong and practically in the open.

On each side of and running parallel with the Hagerstown pike was a post-and-rail fence. These were soon passed and the West Woods entered. But at the west fence the color-bearer of the First Minnesota, Sergt. Sam Bloomer, of the Stillwater Company (B) had his leg shattered by a musket ball and surrendered the flag to other brave hands. He had received it when the gallant George Burgess fell with it at Savage's Station, and had borne it in honor thereafter.

Passing over the two fences and the Hagerstown pike, the Brigade entered the West Woods to the right or north of the Dunker Church. The woods were being held by Hood's two brigades, Law's and Wofford's, and by "Tige" Anderson's. Law's was the old Barnard E. Bee's brigade of the First Bull Run, and here ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ were, as of old, the Second and the Eleventh Mississippi, Fourth Alabama, and Sixth North Carolina. Gorman's Brigade had last met them at Fair Oaks.

The Brigade passed into the woods, where Union troops had never before entered, and pressed forward firing deliberately and effectively. Hood's brigades and Anderson's were driven out of the woods and ~~and~~ away from the battle ground by this firing. They were short of ammunition and were being badly shattered. Gen. Hood had called loudly and repeatedly for re-enforcements, and not receiving them had ordered his brigades to retire and they needed no

to second command, but retreated hastily, yet in tolerable order.

"Tige" Anderson knew when he had enough, and he too left the ground in haste.

Soon Gorman's Brigade had reached the open ground at the west side of the woods, the most advanced position to the westward occupied by the Union troops during the battle. It was the foremost brigade. It constituted a diagonal line from northwest to southeast, facing toward the southwest, and the First Minnesota was on the northwest end, and was the farthest regiment to the west front that day.

The Division had come into the woods among the scattered detachments of Williams's and Greene's Divisions of the Twelfth Corps, which had succeeded not only to the field position of Hooker's Corps but to its fate. Both Divisions were in great disorder. As a whole they had been ordered from the field, but in squads, companies, and sometimes in regiments, many were hiding or wandering about the field.

In entering the Dunker Church woods Col. Sulter's Thirty-Fourth New York, on the extreme left of Gorman's Brigade, ran afoul of a derelict regiment, the One Hundred Twenty-Fifth Pennsylvania, which, in the wreck of Williams's Division, had drifted away on the sea of battle and was floating about hither and thither. A ravine had thrown the Thirty-Fourth away from the Brigade, and the Pennsylvania regiment somehow got between the two for some minutes, adding to the Thirty-Fourth's confusion. There was also a great wide gap between the left of that regiment and the right of French's Division, which was at least a quarter of a mile to the southeast of Gorman's Brigade; French's Division never crossed the

Hagerstown pike. Col. Suiter's left wing was therefore "in air."

The other regiments of Gorman's Brigade had emerged from the west woods and were fighting Early's thin lines about the John Hauser buildings. Ten minutes more would have brought a Union victory; but at the decisive time and place the Devil "took care of his own" and a large volume of Confederate re-enforcements came.

It was not later than 10 o'clock that morning when Gen. Lafayette McLaws's Division, of Longstreet's Corps, 2,893 infantry and two batteries, arrived at Lee's headquarters, (a little west of Sharpsburg) from Harper's Ferry. They had left the Ferry at midnight, waded the Potomac, and by a round-about route had marched nearly 18 miles to get to Sharpsburg, which they reached a little after sunrise. The men had no breakfast; many, including Kershaw's Brigade, had not eaten for two days.\* All were therefore desperate and wolfish and in fine fighting disposition.

Gen. McLaws had four brigades and their respective strengths were thus reported: Barksdale's, 891; Howell Cobb's, 357; Kershaw's, 936; Semmes's, 709; total, excluding artillery men, 2,893. They were brought up to the Dunker Church woods in response to Gen.

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\*"Owing to the exigencies of the service, my command were without their usual supply of subsistence from Monday morning Sept. 15, until the night of the 17th. All were worn and jaded."--Kershaw's report. Gen. Barksdale reports that many of his brigade had been on duty night and day for five or six days, and that on the march from Harper's Ferry to Sharpsburg numbers fell exhausted by the wayside, "so that I went into battle with less than 800 men in my brigade."

Hood's earnest demands and had taken the place of that general's two brigades and of "Tige" Anderson's brigade, which had gone away from the fighting. Hood's brigades returned at 1 o'clock, but Anderson's remained down the line with Dan Hill's command.

With McLaws's force had come Gen. John G. Walker's Division of two brigades, Ransom's and Walker's, the latter now commanded by Col. Van H. Manning, Third Arkansas. This Division also belonged to Longstreet's Corps and had accompanied Stonewall Jackson from Harper's Ferry to Sharpsburg the previous day. It occupied a position down below Sharpsburg, commanding the Bur side bridge, until 9:30, when it was ordered up to the relief of Hood and Early, near the Dunker Church.

Ransom's Brigade, commanded by Gen. Robt. Ransom, was composed of four North Carolina regiments, and "the strength present was about 1,600 aggregate," (Ransom's report) which was a huge brigade as Confederate brigades were in those times. Walker's (or Manning's) Brigade was composed of one Arkansas, one Virginia, and three North Carolina regiments. The aggregate strength of these five regiments is not given, but it probably equalled Ransom's Brigade, or was 1,600. Thus Walker's Division was 3,200 strong; McLaws's, 2,893, and the combined strength of the two was at least 6,093.

Let us now see what Gorman's Brigade had accomplished up to this time against Hood's Division of Laws and Wofford's Brigades. In his report of affairs at this time Gen. Law (War Recs., Vol. 19, part 1, p.938) says:

So far we had been entirely successful and everything promised a decisive victory.\*\*\*At this stage of the battle a powerful Federal force (ten times our number) of fresh troops was thrown in

our front. Our losses up to this time had been heavy; our troops now confronting the enemy were insufficient to cover properly one-fourth of the line of battle; our ammunition was nearly expended. Still our men held their ground, many of them using such ammunition as they could obtain from the bodies of our own and the enemy's dead and wounded. The enemy's fire was most destructive. This state of affairs could not long continue. To remain stationary would have caused a useless butchery. I adopted the only alternative--that of falling back. The enemy followed very slowly and cautiously. Under direction of Gen. Hood, I reformed my brigade in the rear of Saint Mumma's Church (Dunkers' Chapel) and, together with the Texas Brigade, which had also retired, again confronted the enemy, who seemed to hesitate to enter the wood. Re-enforcements now arrived and the brigade was relieved for the purpose of obtaining ammunition.

Col. Wofford, who commanded the Texas Brigade, (Hood's former brigade) reports (ibid, p.928) as follows:

The enemy, now in overwhelming numbers, commenced advancing in full force. In a little time, seeing the hopelessness and folly of making a stand against them with our shattered brigade and a remnant from other commands, (the men being greatly exhausted and many of them out of ammunition) I determined to fall back to a fence in our rear. We were in line under cover of the woods to the left (or north) of the church and waited for support. None coming we fell back to the fence where we met the long looked for re-enforcements. At the same time we received an order from Gen. Hood to fall back farther to the rear to rest and collect our men.

But Gen. Paul Semmes, who commanded one of the re-enforcing brigades, says the two brigades were not met at "a fence," or near the battle ground, but well in the rear. In his report (ibid, p.874) Gen. Semmes says:

Moving forward by the flank in the direction of the enemy, before coming into view, two brigades were met retiring from the front, apparently badly cut up. An incessant current of wounded flowed to the rear, showing that the conflict had been severe and well contested. Coming in full view of the enemy's line, Maj. Gen. McLaws, in person, ordered me to move forward in line.\*\*\*

It will be observed that Gen. Semmes met the retiring brigades "before coming in view" of the Union line, so that at this juncture there was no enemy at all within gun-shot of the front of Gorman's Brigade.

Gen. McLaws also testifies that Hood's Division had left

the field. In his report, (ibid, p.858) describing his arrival on the battle ground, he says:

Gen. Hood pointed out the direction for the advance, and my line of battle was rapidly formed, with Gen. Cobb's brigade on the right, next Gen. Kershaw's, Gen. Barksdale and Gen. Semmes on the left. Just in front of the line was a large body of woods, from which parties of our troops--of whose command I do not know-- were seen retiring, and the enemy, I could see, were advancing rapidly, occupying the place. My advance was ordered before the entire line of Gen. Kershaw could be formed. (Italics by Compiler.)

There is no question that Hood's Division was tired from its fighting with Hooker's and Mansfield's men; but there is equally no question that the Division was driven back into the West Wood, "in the rear of Saint Mumma's Church, Dunkard's Chapel" (Law) <sup>or</sup> "to the left (or north) of the church," (Wofford) and then driven entirely out of and to the west of the Wood by Gorman's Brigade. Perhaps Gen. Gorman was not aware of this condition of the enemy, for Stuart's dismounted cavalry to the right and some of Early's forces to the southwest were still firing musketry at him, but the condition existed.

"Tige" Anderson's brigade had also been driven off to the south and connected with D. H. Hill's Division. (See Anderson's report) This division had all the while fought on the extreme southern portion of Hood's line, having come up as a re-enforcement to Hood. Singularly enough neither Lochren's sketch, the History of the Fifteenth Massachusetts, Walker's History of the Second Corps, nor any other publication available to the compiler, except the Official Records, mentions that Col. Anderson's Brigade was engaged against Gorman's at Antietam.

General Francis A. Walker, who was Assistant Adjutant General of the Second Army Corps from Oct. 9, 1862, to Jan. 12, 1865,

and was on Gen. Sumner's staff at Antietam, writes, in his admirable History of the Second Army Corps, (p.104) about the passage of Sedgwick's Division into the woods about the Dunker Church. He notes that after a little while there was no enemy in the Division's front--which was at the time when Hood's Division and Tige Anderson's Brigade had retreated. Says Gen. Walker:

Leaving the Dunker Church on their left and rear, Sedgwick's Division, in close array, in three lines by brigade, having crossed the Hagerstown pike, disappears in the woods. This is no tangled thicket like the Wilderness, where a captain may not see the left of his company, but a noble grove of perfect trees, free from underbrush, allowing the rapid advance of the lines in unbroken order. Even when the leading brigade (Gorman's) emerges from the further side of the grove, no enemy is seen in front. Only Stuart's batteries, from some high, rocky ground on the right, search the woods, as they had the corn field with shell and solid shot. What means this unopposed progress? Is it well or ill that this ground should not be disputed? Does it signify success or danger?

Gen. Walker makes no reference to the fact that Hood's Division and Anderson's Brigade had been driven from the field by Sedgwick's Division, *and that this explained the "unopposed progress."*

The Division was now unopposed, except by Early's weak line and was pressing on in column. Neither of its flanks was protected. No regiment was fronted south or north, but the command was marching westward--or southwestward. The intervals between the crowded brigades <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ not increased, and they could not have wheeled into line without overlapping more than two-thirds of their lengths. Gorman's and Dana's Brigades almost touched each other on their left wings--their danger point-- and Howard's was very close upon Dana's.

Gen. Sumner was riding with the field officers, of Gorman's Brigade (Gen. Walker) and driving his <sup>a</sup> massed column straight forward

to find his enemy. From Gen. Hooker's experience, "Old Bull" evidently expected to find the Confederates in heavy and strong force, and he meant to throw against them <sup>Sidgwick's</sup> ~~his~~ huge massed Division like a great battle-bolt, which would shiver their front lines to pieces by its weight and impact, and utterly demolish their organization by its subsequent work. He was, where he always was when a charge was in progress, at the head of the column, this time Gorman's Brigade, and he was waving the same hat that he waved at Savage's Station, and his heavy gray hair was tossing in the wind as it tossed at Fair Oaks.

Gen. McClellan had informed all his generals that the Confederate army in front numbered practically 100,000 men, or literally, 97,445, (War Recs., Vol. 19, part 1, p. 67;) and because on this part of the field Hooker's big strong Corps had been disastrously defeated and Mansfield's two Divisions broken up and scattered, it was reasonable to believe that the Confederate force which had done the defeating, the breaking up, and the scattering was in great strength in front. And it was evidently in front, and not on either flank; and it might be 20,000 strong, or at least 10,000, for either number could well be spared from an army of 97,445.

As Gorman's Brigade emerged from the West Wood upon the farm of John Hauser, firing was opened upon it from a Confederate line extending along a crest of a slight ridge in front upon which stood Hauser's farmhouse, barn, and stacks. This fire was from some of Early's men. "Jeb" Stuart's Poague's battery was still playing on the Dunker Church woods. The Thirty-Fourth New York, in extricating itself from the tangle with the new Pennsylvania

regiment, and in trying to march clear of the ravine, had become detached somewhat from the Brigade.

There was a great gap in both the Confederate and Union lines for several minutes. It was soon filled!

Col. Suiter, with the Thirty-Fourth New York, now had the One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Pennsylvania on his right, and that regiment belonged to ~~Crawford's Brigade, Williams's Division,~~ <sup>the</sup> Twelfth Corps. Next to Col. Suiter's regiment should have been its old-time comrade regiment, the Fifteenth Massachusetts, which made such a bloody but glorious record that day. The Thirty-Fourth, being at the extreme left of the line, should have connected with the extreme right of French's Division;\* but Gen. Sumner, in his great impatience to get into the fight, had not waited for French to come up in line with Sedgwick, but pushed on with Sedgwick's Division "in the air."

And now the Confederate re-enforcements under Walker and McLaws burst upon the field. It would seem from the somewhat obscure reports that Walker was the first to come. He went into line with his own old brigade, under Col. Manning, on the right or south, and Ransom's on the left or north, and the left of Ransom's brigade extended nearly up to but yet a little south of the Dunker Church. Leaving two regiments (Third Arkansas and Twenty-Seventh North Carolina) to hold the gap between his right and Longstreet's left, Gen. Walker advanced to the Union lines and struck the

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\*Lochren says it was the failure of the left of the Brigade to connect with "Richardson's Division" which caused the trouble; but Richardson's Division was then not on the battlefield, and not expected to be. French's Division was the one to be connected with.

wandering One Hundred Twenty-Fifth Pennsylvania and the left of Sedgwick's Division.

McLaws advanced perhaps five minutes later than Walker. As has been stated, the former general went forward with Cobb's Brigade (under Col. Sanders) on the right, Kershaw's next, Barksdale's next, and Gen. Paul Semmes's to the extreme left.\* They at once re-enforced Early's men behind the rock ledges, the outbuildings, fences, and stacks of straw and grain on the Hauser farm. Hardly had they been put into position when there was work for them.

Sedgwick's three brigades were now all facing southwest in extended lines, with no protection whatever for the exposed flanks. As Gorman's Brigade had emerged from the West Woods Gen. Early's scattered regiments had opened fire. Now came McLaws's men to the re-enforcement. Walker's two brigades had already struck the exposed left flank, had hit the Pennsylvania regiment hard, and routed out a lot of Hooker's and Mansfield's skulkers that had been hiding in the woods since the first fighting. Ransom's Brigade in part was advancing down the ravine on the north flank of the Thirty-Fourth New York, and that regiment was almost between two Confederate lines.

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\*On the map accompanying the History of the Fifteenth Massachusetts, page 191, the position of Walker's Division is given as on the left of the Confederate line, while McLaws's is located as on the right, both north and west of the Dunker Church. These are errors. Walker's report, in the War Records, shows that his Division was on the Confederate right, next to D. H. Hill's, and McLaws's report proves that his Division was on the Confederate left to the west of the Dunker Church.

McLaws's brigades were deployed along the entire length, practically, of Sedgwick's Division. Cobb's (first under Col. Sanders, and then under Col. McRae, Fifteenth North Carolina) numbered 357 men. Col. McRae reports that when the brigade came on the field it marched south and joined Rodes's Brigade of D. H. Hill's Division. It did not rejoin McLaws's Division until next morning and hence did not fight Sedgwick but a few minutes.\*

Kershaw was in front of the Andrew Sharpshooters and the Fifteenth Massachusetts; Kershaw and Barksdale were in front of the Fifteenth Massachusetts and Eighty-Second New York; Barksdale and Semmes were in front of Russell's company of Sharpshooters and the First Minnesota.

And now there was about twenty minutes of as desperate and deadly fighting as ever took place on a battlefield. The contending forces were not more than from 100 to 150 yards apart. The Union troops were unprotected; the Confederates were under fairly good covering. Both sides were about equally well (or illy) armed with old muzzle-loading muskets, using paper cartridges and percussion caps. If a soldier loaded and fired his gun once a minute, he made good time.

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\*There are strong indications that Cobb's Brigade was reakly driven from the field by the fire of the left of Gorman's Brigade. Lieut. Col. Sanders, Twenty-Fourth Georgia, commanded the brigade when it first came up. In a few minutes it moved south. Gen. McLaws ordered it back and to go to the left, where the fighting still was, but Col. Sanders said he did not hear the order (!) and kept on southward, until he connected with D. H. Hill's Division. The brigade was in the battle at Crampton's Gap, three days before, and there lost 800 men. (Cobb's report) The survivors were not in fine fighting trim at Antietam. By leaving the Dunkard Church and joining D. H. Hill, however, they jumped from the frying pan into the fire. Gen. Hill put them into some hard fighting. Col. Sanders "became exhausted" and Lieut. Col. McRae succeeded him. The brigade entered the battle with 357 ~~men~~ and came out with 52, (McRae's report) an average of 13 men to the regiment.

The men had been at work perhaps 20 minutes; Gen. Howard e says they had fired from 30 to 40 rounds, but Gen. Gorman gives the number as from 40 to 50 rounds, when there was a sudden commotion on the left of the Brigade and of the Division. Gen. Walker's Division had struck!

The first blow fell upon the One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Pennsylvania, the nine months regiment of the Twelfth Corps, which had become fouled with the Thirty-Fourth New York. Col. Jacob Higgins, of the Pennsylvania regiment, reports that the Confederates were advancing on his front in force and he commenced firing and checked them. "I held them here for some time when I discovered two regiments of them moving around my right, while a brigade charged on my front. On looking around and finding no support in sight, I was compelled to retire. Had I remained in my position two minutes longer, I would have lost my whole command."

The Thirty-Fourth New York was now cut off from Gorman's Brigade by the intervention of the Pennsylvania regiment and the two Confederate regiments on the right, and was also being flanked on the left. Col. Suiter reports:

Fronting the pike road to Sharpsburg was a piece of timber land, into which I moved my command, still at double quick, arriving at about 20 yards in rear of a school house, ~~the~~ [Dunker Church] when I discovered the enemy under the hill. I immediately ordered my command to fire.

From some cause to me unknown I had become detached from my brigade, the One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Pennsylvania being on my right. On my left and rear I was entirely unsupported by infantry or artillery. The enemy were in strong force at this point and poured a tremendous fire of musketry and artillery upon me. At this time I discovered that the enemy were making a move to flank me on the left. Lieutenant Howe\* arriving at this time, I informed him of my suspicions. He replied that he thought they were our friends. Lieutenant Wallace went to the front to make what discovery he could and returned saying that the enemy were moving upon my left flank with a strong force. I turned and discovered

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\*Lieut. Church Howe, Fifteenth Mass., then aide to Gen. Sedgwick.

Lieut. Richard [L.] Gorman, of Gen. Gorman's staff, and requested him to inform the General that the enemy were flanking me. He immediately returned for that purpose. Presently Gen. Sedgwick arrived upon the ground. Moving down my line he discovered the situation of my command, and that the point could not be held by me and gave the order for me to retire, which I did. Rallying my command, I formed them in line of battle, supporting a battery some 400 yards in rear of the battlefiled.

From the reports it is reasonable to conclude that Ker-shaw's Brigade followed Walker's and contributed to the flanking process against the left of Sedgwick's Division. They came against the ~~left of Sedgwick's Division~~. Fifteenth Massachusetts, that day commanded by Lieut. Col. John W. Kimball, and this regiment, by the falling back of the Thirty-Fourth New York, was now on the extreme left of Gorman's line. In his report Col. Kimball writes:

The enemy soon appeared in heavy columns, advancing upon my left and rear, pouring in a deadly cross-fire on my left. I immediately and without orders ordered my command to retire, having first witnessed the same movement on the part of both the second [Dana's] and third [Howard's] lines. We retired slowly and in good order, bringing off our colors and a battle-flag captured from the enemy, reforming by the orders of Gen. Gorman in a piece of woods some 500 yards to the rear under cover of our artillery.

But in an address before the Fifteenth Massachusetts Association on the field of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1900, the 38th anniversary of the battle, and upon the dedication of its fine regimental monument, on the field, Gen. Kimball made a more striking and a somewhat different statement of the breaking of the Union line. He said:

While the fighting was the fiercest, Gen. Sumner rode along the line, and halting behind the Fifteenth, said to me, (I was on foot, my horse having been shot under me,) "Colonel, how goes the battle?" I replied: "We are holding our ground and slowly gaining, but losing heavily, as you can see." At that moment I discovered that the enemy had turned our flank, and was moving rapidly upon the left and rear of the Division, and I called Gen. Sumner's attention to them. He could not believe it possible and said: "Are you sure, Colonel, that it is the enemy?" I replied, "I am sure." His response was, "My God! we must get out of this,"

and rode to the left and rear, evidently intending to change the position of the other brigades to meet the enemy, but there was not time for such a movement.

Gen. Walker, in his History of the Second Army Corps, (p.106) says:

At the moment the storm is breaking Sumner is riding along the rear of the leading brigade, enjoying the furious fire of musketry and encouraging Gorman's regiments to a fresh advance. As he pauses a moment to converse with Col. Kimball, of the Fifteenth Massachusetts, Major [Chase] Philbrick calls attention to a large force of the enemy advancing from the left upon the flank of the Division, driving before them some of Hooker's [Mansfield's] men [One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Pennsylvania?] who had still held to their ground in the woods around the Dunker Church. "My God!" exclaims Sumner, "we must get out of this," and he dashes back to form Dana's and Howard's Brigades to meet this sudden and appalling danger. But there is not time.

Walker's Division had charged the Union lines within a few minutes after coming up. McLaws was compelled to halt and fight for at least twenty minutes, then seeing the Union forces in commotion as they were changing formation, two or three brigades of his Division charged very bravely. At this time, by the fighting that had been done and by the loss of Cobb's Brigade, (only 357 men) McLaws's Division could not have numbered more than 2,000 men.

The reports of Gen. McLaws, Gen. Semmes, and other Confederate commanders indicate that immediately upon coming up in front of Sedgwick's Division the Confederates went into line and charged, driving the Division from the field. But other commanders testify that there was considerable fighting after Walker's men had charged and before McLaws's went in. Gen. Barksdale says he "fired several volleys into their ranks" before charging. Gen. Kershaw at once sent Col. Kennedy's Second South Carolina in, and this seems to have been the regiment that got between the Pennsylvania regiment and the Fifteenth Massachusetts, and which Maj. Philbrick saw. The rest of Kershaw's Brigade stood and fought

while the Second South Carolina was making its movement.

As to Semmes's Brigade, which seems to have been the command that encountered the First Minnesota most prominently, it was composed of the Tenth and Fifty-Third Georgia and the Fifteenth and Thirty-Second Virginia. Capt. P. H. Loud, who commanded the Tenth Georgia, says:

The regiment was marched by the right flank to an open field opposite some hay-stacks and piles of rocks, where, finding the enemy fronting us, posted in force, the order was given, "by company into line" and "forward into line," which movements were made by the regiment under a most galling fire from the enemy's sharpshooters. These movements having been made and the line formed, the regiment, with the balance of the brigade, advanced as far as the haystacks and piles of rocks, where we opened fire on the enemy and maintained this position for about half an hour, when the order was given to advance. Up to and at this point the regiment sustained its principal loss in killed and wounded [16 killed and 67 wounded out of 148 in action.]

Col. E. B. Montague, Thirty-Second Virginia, reports:

Under direction of the brigadier general commanding [Semmes] I halted my command under cover of a slight hill, which to some degree protected us from the galling fire of the enemy. Herethe conflict, at comparatively close quarters, was for a while most severe, and my command suffered heavily, [15 killed and 57 wounded out of 158] as the enemy had an enfilading fire on our right besides his heavy fire on our front. In a short time his center (with reference to us) gave way and the regiment again advanced in pursuit, drifting him through a skirt of woods and an open field until he succeeded in forming a new line in a strong position behind a stone wall. We advanced within less than 150 yards of his line, where we were compelled to get under shelter of a barn and haystacks, [Nicodemus's] ready to advance again, [italics ~~marked~~ by compiler.]

The Fifty-Third Georgia had 11 killed and 63 wounded out of 276 engaged, and the Fifteenth Virginia had 11 killed and 64 wounded out of 128. Total Semmes's Brigade loss, 73 killed and 251 wounded or 324 killed and wounded out of 709 taken into action, not quite 46 per cent. Two regiments were nearly wiped out. The Tenth Georgia had but 65 officers and men left; the Fifteenth Virginia but 53.

Walker's men hurried around Col. Higgins's and Col. Suiter's regiments and dashed upon the left flank of Howard's (formerly Burns's) Philadelphia Brigade, the third line of Sedgwick's Division, and then swinging around gained its rear. The left regiment, Baxter's Fire Zouaves, (Seventy-Second Pennsylvania) was crushed and driven out. Dana's Brigade, too, was in great confusion, and had been getting hurt all the time, losing more than Gorman's and many more than Howard's. It is always confusing to change the formation of a brigade, even on a level parade ground, but to make the change on a rough, irregular and obstructed field, under a deadly fire, with men falling killed every second, is a thing involving dreadful entanglements. Sedgwick's Division was being reformed to meet new conditions.

"My God! We must get out of this!"

Old Bull Sumner daunted at last! He had given an order to retreat, something he had never done before!

Howard's regiments began to slip away to the rear, and Dana's Brigade became the rear line. Gorman's Brigade was still fighting in front, but under discouraging circumstances. Dana's regiments were crumbling. Dana himself had been badly wounded, but that was no time to leave the battlefield for a musket-ball wound, no matter how severe. He broke off the Tammany Regiment (Forty-Second New York) from the disorganized mass and made it "change front to the left" to meet the attack of Ransom's and Manning's Brigades of Walker and Kershaw's of McLaws; but while the regiment was in the confusion incident to the movement and was trying to connect with the Seventh Michigan, here came the Confederates and poured upon the two regiments a fire which Dana said was "the

most terrific" he ever witnessed. The two regiments continued to fight, however, until half their number was disabled. The Forty-Second New York lost 181 officers and men, the Seventh Michigan, 221.

Howard's Brigade was gone and Dana's Brigade was gone. Barksdale's and Semmes's Confederates were advancing on Gorman. The Fifteenth Virginia, of Semmes, was the extreme left or north regiment of the charging Confederate line and overlapped the right or north companies of the First Minnesota.

The casualties in Gorman's Brigade had been heavy. The regiments had been foolishly drilled and trained to present solid lines to the front in battle, instead of "taking intervals" and fighting in open order, and now they were suffering from their training. A shot fired at Sedgwick's Division would hit it somewhere and hurt somebody. The Division was as easy to hit as the town of Sharpsburg. The Confederates were "scattered out"; a hundred of them would "string out" for more than a quarter of a mile, or cover an acre.

Sumner had said the Division "must get out of this" and it was getting out. Gorman's Brigade was the farthest forward of any other Union command, and yet the Brigade was the last to leave. It did not do so in perfect order, but that was not the fault of the men. Too many cooks spoil the broth; too many commanders confuse a brigade. Gen. Sedgwick himself, when he saw that the Thirty-Fourth New York was flanked, ordered Col. Suiter to take away that regiment. Old James A. Suiter would have had every hair of his great long beard shot off with musket balls and gone back to old Herkimer county "in a box" before he would have left a field disgracefully.

Gen. Gorman ordered Col. Sully to move quietly by the right flank (in four ranks) to the north. He shouted the order to

all the regimental commanders, but such was the noise and uproar that none of them heard it but Sully. The idea was to march the whole brigade away from the front of Dana's Brigade and let that command be the front line and engage the enemy. At the time Gorman did not realize that both Dana's and Howard's Brigades had gone to pieces and were well nigh demolished, and that his own Thirty-Fourth New York had left the field by Sedgwick's orders.

So Col. Sully led away the First Minnesota through the woods to the open ground on the north. Col. Hudson followed with the Eighty-Second New York. Then Lieut. Col. Kimball, seeing that he was entirely alone on the field except for the charging Confederates, had sense enough to order himself to take away the good old Fifteenth Massachusetts, which he did decently and in order. A Confederate battle flag (of the First Texas?) taken from the enemy <sup>by the Massachusetts boys</sup> was carried along, but more than 300 killed and wounded of the regiment were left behind.

Col. Sully was very good at making history, but very poor at writing it. His report of the services of the First Minnesota at Antietam, as elsewhere, is very incomplete and nearly barren of details and real information. One cannot understand from his report alone what the First Minnesota did, or what was meant ~~xxx~~ by certain maneuvers. However we know from other reliable authorities that the Regiment retreated to the north end of the woods about the Dunker Church, then halted and faced about to hold back the enemy. Col. Hudson formed the Eighty-Second New York on Sully's right or west; soon came the Nineteenth Massachusetts, of Dana's Brigade, and formed on the left or east. The Nineteenth was now another derelict regiment afloat on a bloody sea, without

compass or rudder and with no organization to look to for support. It was glad to <sup>make fast to and</sup> stand beside its old comrade regiment of the Ball's Bluff days. Its Colonel, Ed W. Hinks, had been badly wounded and Lieut. Col. Devereux was in command. Soon the three regiments were in line fronting Semmes's Brigade.

In a few seconds here came the Confederates of Semmes's and Barksdale's Brigades. The fight was short but very hot and bloody. In a few minutes--during which time Col. Sully says the First Minnesota "suffered greatly in killed and wounded"--the three regiments had to retreat again. They made a brief stand near Nicodemus's log farm house, then went farther back 125 yards and took up a good safe position behind a strong stone fence.

"Here," Col. Sully says, "a section of artillery was sent to assist us." This was Kirby's Battery, so long attached to Gorman's Brigade. It was the full battery, not "a section," <sup>and</sup> Lieut. Geo. A. Woodruff commanded it that day. It went into ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ position in the field opposite the north end of the Dunker Church woods and opened with canister on the pursuing Confederates and helped to check them. "We kept the enemy in check," says Col. Sully, "till they brought a battery of artillery on our flank, which compelled me to order the regiments back to join our line of battle." This battery was Poague's "Rockbridge battery," of three 12-pound Napoleons, <sup>then</sup> ~~now~~ serving with Stuart's artillery battalion on the Nicodemus plateau, which was on Col. Sully's right or west flank.\* Where the line of battle was to which the Colonel

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\*Poague's Confederate battery, called the Rickbridge Artillery, was from Lexington, Rockbridge county, Va. Among the privates in the battery at the time of the battle of Antietam was Robert E. Lee, Jr., the 17-year old son of the General. The boy served as a private nearly one year; then was sergeant, and finally, in 1864, became a lieutenant and a cavalry staff officer.

ordered the regiments "back to join" he does not give the slightest hint; but without doubt it was the position described by Gen. Gorman in his report, as "the woods, on the left and east of the turnpike, where I found the entire Brigade at a distance of 400 yards from the original position." By "original position" is perhaps meant the position at the East Woods, east of the Dunker Church.

At the Nicodemus stone fence the Thirty-Fourth New York came up, and after a time the Brigade, now quite re-constructed, but with quite too many men "missing," moved still further back a mile or so to the Joseph Poffenberger farm. This farm had been occupied by Gen. Hooker and his Corps the night before, and here now were two of his Divisions, Meade's and Ricketts', once great and powerful, but now demoralized and inefficient. Doubleday's Division was also near by. Here too were Mansfield's two Divisions, the Twelfth Corps, in similar conditions to Hooker's. Sedgwick's Division came up, and as a whole it was not in much better condition than either of the Divisions of the First and Twelfth Corps.

Of the condition of the Division on the retreat, and especially of Sully's line at Nicodemus's stone fence, when Stuart's battery disturbed it, Gen. McClellan testifies. He says he was present and in his "Own Story" (p. 606) says:

When I was on the right on the afternoon of the 17th I found the troops a good deal shaken--that is, some of them who had been in the early part of the action. Even Sedgwick's Division commenced giving way under a few shots from a battery that suddenly commenced firing from an unexpected position. I had to ride in and rally them myself. Sedgwick had been carried off severely wounded."

It is denied that Gen. McClellan did this. The brigade never passed from under the control of its officers. The First

Minnesota never refused to obey an order. *Moreover, Gen. McClellan did not "ride in and rally" Gorman's brigade at any time. He was not seen until late in the day, when the fighting was over on that part of the field, and then he rode along the line of Sedgwick's Division and was cheered.*

In his first official report Gen. McClellan also wrote:

Toward the middle of the afternoon, proceeding to the right, I found that Sumner's, Hooker's, and Mansfield's Corps had met with serious losses.\*\*\*One Division of Gen. Sumner's (Sedgwick's) and all of Gen. Hooker's Corps on the right had, after fighting most valiantly for several hours, been driven back in great disorder, and much scattered, so that they were for the time somewhat demoralized.\*\*\*One Division of Sumner's Corps (Sedgwick's) had also been overpowered and was a good deal scattered and demoralized. It was not deemed by its Corps commander in proper condition to attack the enemy vigorously the next day.

But Gorman's Brigade was, as a brigade, in fine order considering the circumstances. The First Minnesota and the Fifteenth Massachusetts <sup>had lost heavily but</sup> were in admirable form. The two New York regiments were not in perfect shape, but, in two days, only a few men were unaccounted for or missing. Howard's Pennsylvanians and Dana's Brigade were really in bad condition. But as to the First Minnesota Col. Sully reported:

The officers and men of the Regiment behaved nobly, and it was with some difficulty I got some of them to obey the order to fall back.

Gen. Gorman notes the "coolness and accuracy" of the firing done by the Regiment and its effectiveness and his report shows that it never retired except when ordered to.

Col. Hudson, Eighty-Second New York, which regiment attached itself to the First Minnesota on the retreat, reports that the two regiments retired every time in good order and "slowly left the field." Gen. Howard, who commanded the Division after Gen. Sedgwick retired, said:

The following officers were successful in drawing off their regiments without breaking: Col. Sully, First Minnesota; Col. Hinks and Lieut. Col. Devereux, Nineteenth Massachusetts, and Col. Hall, Seventh Michigan. I noticed Gen. Gorman at his post near his command while it was retiring and he remained with it during the rest of the day inspiring his men by his remarks and calling upon them to sustain their reputation.

Gen. McClellan, in his revised and more elaborate report made in August, 1863, said in writing of the retreat of Sedgwick's Division:

Gen. Gorman's Brigade and one regiment [Nineteenth Massachusetts\*] of Gen. Dana's soon rallied and gallantly checked the advance of the enemy on the right.

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\*The First Minnesota was on the extreme right of Gorman's Brigade in the front line. The Nineteenth Massachusetts was on the extreme right of Dana's Brigade in the second line, immediately behind the First Minnesota. When the break to the rear came, Capt. Weymouth, commanding the Nineteenth, reports: "The Minnesota was the last regiment in its line to leave the position and was immediately followed by the Nineteenth." Soon the two regiments were together on the fighting line. Col. Hinks of the Nineteenth, was badly wounded here.

GEN. GORMAN CRITICIZES--GEN. McCLELLAN'S CHARGE DENIED.

But Gen. Gorman's Brigade was not demoralized or scattered. The whole number reported "missing," which included the skeddaddlers, (but also meant men that were taken prisoners) was but 66; the First Minnesota, three days after the battle, had 21, and of these 6 were believed to have been taken prisoners.

In great and righteous indignation Gen. Gorman, that night at Poffenberger's, loudly criticized the action of his superiors in ordering the Division to retreat. He said that even in the hottest of the battle his Brigade could have held its ground had its left flank been strengthened, and then it could have charged and overcome the enemy both in flank and front. "I told Gen. Sumner that my flank must be protected against the terrible attack in progress," said the General, "but I am sure this could have been done without a retreat.\* The whole thing was mismanaged. There is not a man in the Brigade that does not know we would have won a great victory had the proper orders been given." (Gen. C. P. Adams, in National Tribune, 1885.)

Gen. McClellan's assertion that he "had to ride in and rally" Sedgwick's Division on its retreat, ~~was~~ <sup>by Gen. Gorman</sup> disputed. So far as the statement applies to Gorman's Brigade, it is emphatically denied. The General says it was "in the afternoon of the 17th," when he did the rallying. But at that time the Division was back on the Poffenberger farm, out of serious danger, and the ranks were practically reformed in order. There was no disorder. The men were ready and willing to obey all orders, even to go forward and fight.

*Gorman and other Commanders  
When the assertion became known,*

\*"I informed the General that my left must be supported or I could not hold the position."--Gorman's report.

the enemy again.

Gen. Palfrey says in his volume "Antietam and Fredericksburg," p.119, that Gen. McClellan remained on the east side of the Antietam, on the high ground near Pry's house, "till towards the middle of the afternoon, when all the fighting was over," and then came on the battlefield. He had field glasses strapped to Pry's fence and viewed the fighting in different directions.

The recollections of the Minnesota men and all the other best evidences are that McClellan with his staff came over in the afternoon, galloped along the well formed Union lines of Sedgwick's and Hooker's Divisions, and was received by the men with great cheering and enthusiasm, and that he did not come among them at any other time and place that day, and that he never "rallied" them anywhere.

"Battles and Leaders of the Civil War," p;648, presents an engraving of McClellan's review of Sedgwick's and Hooker's men on this occasion, from a sketch by Forbes, "made at the time." The time, however, is given as "about 11 A. M.," when the best evidence is that it was in the afternoon.

He did no rallying. He merely galloped along the lines on his famous horse, "Dan Webster" and lifted his cap in response to the rapturous cheers with which his men always greeted him and which were the sweetest strains of music to his ears. He dearly liked that sort of thing and he got plenty of it. Why he made the baseless charge cannot be explained, except that he wanted to make it appear that he did wonderful things that day and that but for him the whole army would have gone to pot.

*And after Sedgwick's troops had greeted him so warmly and cheered him so wildly, McClellan went away and when he came to write about them in history he deliberately slandered them, virtually calling them a pack of panic-stricken cowards that he had to ride in and rally." The idea of Gen. McClellan's "rallying" anybody in a battle!*

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THE CONFEDERATE SIDE OF THE STORY.

Of the Confederate pursuit of Sedgwick's Division Gen. John G. Walker makes this report of the advance of his Division on the greater part of Dana's and Howard's Brigades:

Leaving the (27th) North Carolina and Third Arkansas regiments, of Manning's brigade, to hold the open space between the woods and Longstreet's left, the Division, with Ransom's Brigade on the left, advanced in splendid style, firing and cheering as they went, and in a few minutes cleared the woods, strewing it with the enemy's dead and wounded. Col. Manning, with the remaining regiments of his brigade, the Forty-Sixth and Forty-Eighth North Carolina and Thirtieth Virginia, not content with the possession of the woods, dashed forward in gallant style, crossed the open fields beyond, driving the enemy before him like sheep, until, arriving at a long line of strong post-and-rail fences, behind which the enemy's infantry was lying, their advance was checked. It being impossible to climb over these fences under such a fire, the regiments, after suffering a heavy loss, were compelled to fall back to the woods. Here the Forty-Sixth and Forty-Eighth North Carolina were quickly reformed, but the Thirtieth Virginia went entirely off the field and was not again engaged during the day.

The "post-and-rail fences" mentioned were the fences of the Hagerstown pike east of ~~Miller's corn field~~ *the Dunker church* and west of the East woods. Col. Manning was severely wounded in this pursuit.

Gen. McLaws reports:

Our advance was made steadily and in perfect order, and the troops were immediately engaged, driving the enemy before them in magnificent style at all points, sweeping the woods with perfect ease and inflicting great loss on the Federals. They were driven not only through the woods, but over a field in front of the woods and over two high fences beyond and into another body of woods [*East Woods*] over half a mile distant.

Gen. Semmes, whose brigade followed the First Minnesota, Eighty-Second New York, and Nineteenth Massachusetts, reports:

Our troops pressed forward, pouring a deadly fire into the enemy's ranks and he, after advancing [toward the rear] about 100 yards, soon gave way. We continued to drive him from position to position through wood and field, for a mile, expending not less than 40 rounds of ammunition.

Gen. Barksdale's four Mississippi regiments did not

pursue far, only "into a field beyond the wood in which the church is situated."

Gen. Semmes adds the following to the portion of his report above quoted:

After the enemy was thus driven back, and the fire of his small arms had for some time entirely ceased, the troops, having been under an incessant musketry and artillery fire for two hours and twenty minutes, were so thoroughly exhausted and their ammunition so nearly expended, as to render necessary the order to retire for the purpose of reforming and obtaining a fresh supply of ammunition.

Retiring "for the purpose of reforming," means that the Confederates were badly disorganized. That they were short of ammunition is undeniable. They scoured the battlefield for it, taking away the cartridge and cap boxes of the dead and wounded.\*

\*John A. Remick, Company G, Fifteenth Massachusetts (Gorman's Brigade) was terribly wounded while his regiment was fighting in the Dunker Church woods. In three seconds he received three grievous wounds, two through the shoulder and upper arm and one through the face, the ball passing through both cheeks, crushing and tearing away one jawbone and shattering the other and cutting the tongue badly.

Mr. Remick, then 19 years of age, exhibited great courage and fortitude under his perilous condition, for every hurt he got was practically a death wound. His regiment began retiring just as he was struck. Unassisted he made his way nearly half a mile to the Nicodemus house, the three-room log structure heretofore mentioned. The family had fled, leaving all their furniture, etc. The house was soon filled with wounded, among them being Col. Isaac J. Wistar, of the Seventy-First Pennsylvania, Dana's Brigade, who was wounded in the left arm while his right arm was still disabled from a wound received in front of Richmond. (Howard's report.)

Mr. Remick, who is now a custodian of the Old Capitol building, St. Paul, says that he heard the noises incident to the Confederate pursuit of Gorman's Brigade; that very soon after the pursuit ceased a smartly dressed Confederate, apparently a non-commissioned staff officer, came into the Nicodemus house and took all the cartridge boxes from the wounded and carried them away. The officer's arms were strung with belts from which hung the cartridge boxes. Mr. Remick had three brothers in the battle of Antietam, and two of them, who belonged to the Second Massachusetts, were killed; he held the hand of one when he died in a barn near Smoketown. Mr. Remick lay in the Nicodemus house from Wednesday forenoon till Friday evening without receiving a doctor's aid or care, or anything but a little water.

## THE FIGHTING OF FRENCH AND RICHARDSON.

Meanwhile what of Sumner's other Divisions, French's in the center of the Corps line from north to south and Richardson's on the extreme left, or south? Now that the right of the line had been defeated, how was the left going? It will be remembered that Sedgwick and French both came upon the field ~~practically~~ <sup>nearly</sup> at the same time, French to the left or south and a little in the rear of Sedgwick. French's Division was opposite D. H. Hill's and Longstreet's Confederates, who were in the fields east of the Hagerstown pike.

When the fight on Sedgwick was getting hot, Gen. Sumner sent word to Gen. French to go in and attack Dan Hill as a diversion in favor of Sedgwick. French did so with Kimball's and Max Weber's brigades. They started from a line half a mile east of the Dunker Church, near the embers and smoking ruins of "Sant" Mumma's house and barns, which had been burned by order of Gen. ~~D. H.~~ Hill early that morning to keep the Union troops from using them as vantage points. A little south of Mumma's was W. Roulette's house and barns.

Gen. D. H. Hill's Division resisted French's. The Confederates had the brigades of Ripley, Rodes, Garland, Geo. B. Anderson, and Colquitt. Soon, about the time when McLaws and Walker were charging Sedgwick, Richardson's advance brigade, Caldwell's, came and joined French's Division; Meagher's Brigade was just behind. Gen. Richardson was with Caldwell's men. Gen. French, after some hard fighting, drove George Anderson's, Garland's, and Colquitt's brigades from the Roulette and Mumma farms, and from Abram Clipp's premises, just below Roulette's. Ripley's and Rodes's brigades were also driven.

South of Abe Clipp's premises a quarter of a mile, was a zig-zag neighborhood road cutting across from the Boonsborough

and Sharpsburg road, which ran nearly east and west, with the Hagerstown and Sharpsburg pike. Where it entered the pike the division of this cross road was a quarter of a mile from northeast to southwest, forming one side of an obtuse triangle, of which the other leg was another quarter of a mile, running from northwest to southeast. This thoroughfare, not being a public road, was not kept graded up and its bed had sunk from two to three feet below the surface, forming fine rifle pits and intrenchments.

Being chased away from Roulette's and Clipp's premises, Colquitt's, Anderson's, Garland's and Ripley's brigades took refuge in the sunken road. The troops of both French and Richardson followed them and Kimball's brigade, of French, got on the flank of the northwest portion of the elbow-shaped lane, and Caldwell's, of Richardson, got on the flank of the southeast part. The result was that Ripley's, Anderson's, Garland's, and Colquitt's brigades well nigh perished in those bloody ditches. Gen. George B. Anderson ("the praying general") and many of his brigade officers were killed. Colquitt's was a Georgia Brigade of four regiments; three of the Colonels were killed and the fourth badly wounded.

The slaughter of the Confederates by French and Richardson was fairly distressing and sickening, even to those that did the killing. The whole Confederate Division was driven back to the general position west of the Hagerstown pike and south of the Dunker Church. Rodes says he took in "less than 800 effective men" and he lost in killed and wounded 203; missing uncounted. Col. Bennett, commanding George B. Anderson's Brigade after Anderson was killed, says the brigade numbered "about 500" at the beginning of the fight and lost 302 killed and wounded. Ripley took in 600

and lost 348. (See reports.) Photographs and sketches were made of the ghastly spectacles presented by "bloody lane" after the battle, but none of the representations could depict the reality of the horror.

But all this killing was not unresisted on the part of the Confederates; <sup>anybody might know that.</sup> Richardson came up with two of his brigades, Meagher's and Brooke's, to the support of his third, Caldwell's. He went in on the left of French and south of Clipp's house. Meagher's Irish Brigade first attacked the Confederates in the sunken road and the men soon shot away all their ammunition, the brigade losing heavily. Caldwell's brigade relieved Meagher's, and with Brooke's brigade at once became engaged.

~~Gen. Hill had been calling lustily for re-enforcements and at last Gen. Lee sent <sup>Gen. Hill</sup> him 3,000 or 4,000 men from Gen. Richard H. Anderson's Division, under Gen. Anderson himself. ~~Then Hill became very bold and aggressive and endeavored to turn the left flank of Richardson, but Col. Cross of the Fifth New Hampshire, (that built Richardson's grapevine bridge over the Chickaheminy) in a race with the enemy for a piece of high ground, "got the most men thar fust," and demonstrated the wisdom of Gen. Forrest's principle by "a-whuppin' of 'em as they come up," and keeping the flank safe. Brooke's and Caldwell's brigades, <sup>aided by</sup> ~~and~~ Wier's, of French's Division, checked Gen. Anderson's effort to turn the Union right flank, and then came the direct attack of these troops and a portion of Kimball's brigade which carried the sunken road and the position about Piper's house, three-quarters of a mile southeast of the Dunker Church. Gen. Anderson was severely wounded and disabled for months, and one of his brigadiers, Gen. A. R. Wright, was also~~~~

badly wounded.

By this attack and repulse the troops of Hill and R. H. Anderson were so hurt and so disorganized that their commanders were able to rally but a few hundred of them back in the old line along the Hagerstown pike. At this time only a comparatively insignificant force formed the Confederate center. If the Union commander had possessed only a fair amount of military perception and sense, and a little fighting pluck, and directed an energetic following up of the success gained, the Confederate position would have been easily carried and the two wings of Lee's army hopelessly divided. The Confederate generals, including Gen. Lee, were really alarmed. In his report Gen. Hill says:

There were no troops near to hold the center except a few hundred rallied from various brigades. The Yankees crossed the old road which we had occupied in the morning and occupied an orchard and cornfield in advance of it. Affairs looked very critical. They had now got within a few hundred yards of the hill which commanded Sharpsburg and our rear.

Meanwhile a great loss had occurred on the Union side. Brave and faithful Maj. Gen. Israel B. Richardson, of Michigan, who had so long and so efficiently commanded the First Division of the Second Corps, had been mortally wounded <sup>about 12 o'clock</sup> while directing Capt. Graham about the work of his battery (K, First U. S.) which was stationed in some plowed ground in Piper's field, ~~at about 12 o'clock.~~ He was struck in the breast by a ball from an exploded <sup>shell</sup> shot. (Graham's report.) He was taken to Pry's house (McClellan's headquarters) where he died Nov. 3, following. Gen. Hancock was appointed to succeed Gen. Richardson in command of the First Division and at once assumed his duties.

There was not much done in the center of the battle line

after the driving back of the Confederates. French and Hancock reformed and connected their lines, and were in prime shape to advance on the demoralized and cowering Confederates on the west side of the Hagerstown pike. But neither French nor Hancock could attack, tempting as seemed the opportunity; for Gen. McClellan had ordered both these generals not to advance, but to "hold their positions to the last extremity." (French's report.)

Gen. McClellan still seemed to imagine that the enemy in his front practically numbered 100,000 men. To strengthen this delusion, when everything looked the blackest to Lee and his generals, Dan Hill resorted to a very risky subterfuge. He actually came out from the Confederate position and with two columns of 200 men each boldly attacked French and Hancock. Of course the attacks were easily repulsed, but they served their purpose in making McClellan (and perhaps others) believe that the Confederates were very strong, very bold, and very dangerous.

Gen. Hill's bluffing attacks were unnecessary. Gen. McClellan had not the slightest intention of attacking the position held by the shattered Confederate Divisions of Hill and Anderson. French and Hancock maintained their lines until the morning of the 19th.

## FRANKLIN'S SIXTH CORPS COMES TO THE FIELD.

The strongest three of the six Army Corps of the Army of the Potomac--the First, Second, and Twelfth--had been drawn into action on the right of the Union battle line along the Hagerstown pike, and each of them had been discomfited. At noon they seemed to have no offensive energy; each seemed content to hold its own. Three Corps remained and two of them, the Fifth and Sixth, had not been under fire. Burnside's Ninth Corps had been wasting the hours away at the extreme left of the Union line, on the east of south side of Antietam creek, about the lowest stone arch bridge, thereafter to be called the Burnside bridge. Porter, with the Fifth Corps, 13,000 strong, was also on the east side of the creek on or near the Pry farm.

Between 12 and 1 o'clock Gen. Franklin, with two Divisions of the Sixth Corps, arrived from the victorious field of Crampton's Gap. These were the Divisions of Slocum, and W. F. ("Baldy") Smith. Gen. Couch's Division had been acting with this Corps, but it had been left back near Harper's Ferry, with its 7,500 good men.

Hooker's, Sumner's, and Mansfield's Corps had been sent against the Confederate left flank; Sedgwick's Division was being driven from the field; the First and Twelfth Corps had been defeated before. In an effort to relieve the pressure on Sedgwick, and at the same time to help French, the Division of W. F. Smith was sent up Dunker Church way. Col. Irwin's Brigade charged forward with much impetuosity and drove back the advance of Ransom's Brigade, and perhaps a part of Barksdale's, to the Hagerstown pike or abreast

of the "white brick church," just north of where the sunken road intersects the Hagerstown pike. But the Confederates rallied and drove Irwin back to where he came from--the Piper house and farm.

A notable incident happened later. Col. Irwin directed Maj. Hyde, of the Seventh Maine, to take only his regiment and charge the enemy at the Hagerstown pike. The regiment went out with 181 men, was gone 20 minutes, and came back with 78 unhurt and 40 wounded that the unhurt carried off. Every officer but one was killed or wounded.

As showing how badly the Confederates were scattered and disorganized at this time, the composition of the force that repelled the Seventh Maine may be given. Though it was compact, with no intervals between the commands, the Union wounded left behind reported that it consisted of the Seventh Georgia, of "Tige" Anderson's Brigade; the First Texas, of Wofford's Brigade; the Second Mississippi, of Law's Brigade, of Longstreet's Corps, and the Fifth Louisiana, Hays's Brigade, of Stonewall Jackson's Corps.

Gen. Franklin now formed the rest of his two Divisions and declared his determination of assaulting the woods about the Dunker Church. If he had been let alone, he would have succeeded. The Confederates were able to make but a feeble resistance, except for what Stuart's batteries might do. But Gen. Sumner, who was in a bad way, directed Franklin to suspend or "postpone" the movement until McClellan could be consulted. McClellan came up and forbade the movement. In his report Gen. Franklin says:

The commanding general came to the position and decided that it would not be prudent to make the attack, as our position on the right was considerably in advance of what it had been in the morning.

The statement in several war histories that Gen. Sumner forbade Gen. Franklin's proposed attack is incorrect. Gen. Franklin plainly states that Gen. Sumner only "directed the attack to be postponed" until McClellan could be heard from; that "shortly afterward" McClellan "came to the position" and himself prevented the movement.

Gen. Franklin then held his line on the Piper farm the remainder of the day and through the night of the 17th. The next morning Gen. Couch's Division, three brigades, constituting then all of the Fourth Corps, came up from Harper's Ferry way and was posted on the left of Slocum's Division of Franklin's Sixth Corps. A week or so later Couch's Division became the Third Division of the Sixth Corps.

## BURNSIDE'S FIGHTING AT THE CONFEDERATE LEFT.

The operations of Gen. Burnside, with the Ninth Corps, and Gen. D. R. Jones, with his Confederate Division, 2,430 strong, at the extreme Confederate right, near Antietam Creek, concluded the battle of the 17th.

~~A few~~ <sup>Two</sup> miles up from where the Antietam empties into the Potomac, and a mile east of Sharpsburg, there was (and still is) a fine stone three-arch bridge, with high stone parapets, but only 75 feet in length. This bridge is a part of the road from Rohrer'sville, six miles east, and from down Harper's Ferry way to Sharpsburg and the Hagerstown pike. At that time Sharpsburg was a village of 500 badly frightened people; now it is a pleasant little town of 1,200 self-contained inhabitants. The operations of the day were conducted about the stone arch bridge and the southeastern limits of Sharpsburg.

It was all arranged between Gen. McClellan and Burnside that the latter, with the Ninth Corps, of four Divisions, aggregating 30 good regiments of infantry and 20 batteries, in all 13,819 men present for duty, (McClellan's report) should assault the Confederate right under Gen. D. R. Jones and destroy it. To do this the Antietam--passable anywhere by infantry, but with banks too steep for artillery except at fords-- must be crossed, and McClellan had directed that the principal crossing should be by the lowest stone arch bridge over the Antietam, then called the lower stone bridge. There were numerous crossings for both infantry and artillery above and below the bridge.

On the west side of the Antietam there is a narrow valley along the creek and then a steep hill or ridge slopes back.

On the crest of this hill were the Confederates. The hill was as easy of ascent opposite any slope as at the bridge, and it is not understood why it was thought necessary that the crossing must be only by the bridge, which first had to be carried by assault. A crossing above and below it--easily made, and which were made--would as certainly, and more easily, capture the bridge as a charge over it. But Gen. McClellan thought the capture of the bridge by a charge <sup>would be</sup> of tremendous importance and ordered that this kind of assault be made.

September 7, Gen. McClellan had placed Gen. Burnside in command of the right wing of the army, composed of Hooker's First and Reno's Ninth Corps. Gen. Reno was killed at South Mountain, September 14, and the next day Gen. McClellan "detached" Hooker and his Corps from Burnside's command and Gen. Burnside placed Gen. J. D. Cox in temporary command of the Ninth Corps, Gen. Cox having previously led a Division in that Corps.

As stated by himself in his most elaborate report, written in 1863, Gen. McClellan's plan for fighting the battle of Antietam was this:

My plan for the impending general engagement was to attack the enemy's left with the Corps of Hooker and Mansfield, supported by Sumner's, and if necessary by Franklin's; and as soon as matters looked favorably there to move the Corps of Burnside against the enemy's extreme right upon the ridge running to the south and rear of Sharpsburg, and having carried the position to press along the crest toward our right; and whenever either of these flank movements should be successful to advance our center with all the forces then disposable.

McClellan's idea, expressed in sportsman's parlance, was to "play both ends against the middle." Gens. Hooker and Mansfield were to attack the north end of the Confederate line and

Burnside the south end. If either attack was a complete success, it was to be continued against the flank of the center or "middle," which was also to be attacked in front.

Gen. McClellan says he ordered Burnside to attack at 8 o'clock on the morning of the 17th, but Burnside says he received the order at 10 o'clock; Gen. Cox says it was 9 o'clock when the order came. Operations immediately began. All through the forenoon, until 12:30 precious time was spent and precious lives were lost in endeavors to carry the stone arch bridge by indirect assault. ~~Regiments were put along the east side of the creek, on either side of the bridge, and fired on the Confederate defensive force on the other side of the stream half way up the hill, among the trees and big boulders. It was expected that the Confederates would be driven away by the infantry fire and then the bridge could be carried.~~

The Confederate force defending the bridge were two insignificant infantry regiments, the Second and Twentieth Georgia, of Gen. Robert Toombs's brigade, and Eutank's four-gun battery. Gen. Toombs says his infantry consisted of "400 muskets;" two other regiments of his brigade were absent until the defense was over. Gen. D. R. Jones says Toombs had "under him in the defense 403 men," and that until after the bridge had been carried and Toombs's two other regiments came up, "my force had been too weak to aid him with a single man."

Right well, however, did this Confederate Horatius "keep the bridge" against great odds, as did his predecessor in "the brave days of old." With the Second Georgia on his right hand and the

Twentieth Georgia on his left hand, he made a great front. From their vantage ground his 400 had a plunging fire on the unprotected Union troops along the creek and the exposed valley and slew them by scores and wounded them by hundreds. Two formidable assaults by wings on either side of the bridge were repulsed with serious loss.

At last, about 1 o'clock in the afternoon, the bridge was carried. Gen. McClellan sent imperative word that the structure was to be taken "at all hazards." Gen. Burnside was greatly worried at his failures and directed Gen. Sturgis to capture the bridge "for God's sake." Gen. Sturgis took the Fifty-First New York under Col. R. B. Potter, and <sup>the</sup> Fifty-First Pennsylvania under Col. John F. Hartranft, and sent them charging over the bridge in five minutes, driving Toombs's two regiments hurriedly away; their commander led them down to the lower fords where Rodman's Division and Scammon's brigade, with their batteries, were crossing.

Toombs had lost 125 of his men killed and wounded before the bridge was carried. He made but little resistance to the charge, and as he then had but 275 men he could not have made much had he tried. The charge could as well have been made and the bridge taken three hours before. The rest of the brigade (Ferrero's) to which the two charging regiments belonged followed the charge, and Ferrero rushed one of them to the crest of the ridge on the west side to hold the ground until a stronger force came.

It soon came. Sturgis's and Willcox's Divisions were pushed across and took position. A portion of Crook's brigade crossed above the bridge, and Rodman and Scammon with their forces, including batteries, advanced toward the battle line. And yet

so deliberately was everything done that it was nearly 4 o'clock before the line was formed. McClellan had imbued Burnside with the idea that the Confederates numbered 100,000 men, and Burnside moved cautiously.

All through the forenoon Burnside's attempts to carry the bridge had only excited the contempt and derision of Jones, Longstreet, and Lee. They weakened their forces by sending away three whole Divisions and some regiments to their left flank to resist Hooker, Mansfield, and Sumner, and had lain carelessly about at their end of the line. But now, when Burnside's men were actually in line of battle and threatening them, they got very busy in preparing to resist. Gen. Jones declares that he had but 2,430 men, divided into six brigades.\* He could put in but five of his six brigades, for "Tige" Anderson's was up on the north part of the line. He sent in Drayton's, Kemper's, Jenkins's under Walker, Pickett's under Garnett, and Toombs's re-enforced brigade, now of four regiments.

The Union advance on the Confederates, led by Willcox, began about 3:45 o'clock, two hours too late for its success. Had it been made even an hour earlier, all might have been well. Jones's little brigades fought fiercely but they were driven all the same. Kemper's and Drayton's were sent flying through the outskirts of Sharpsburg; Walker's and Garnett's were also pushed back, and

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\*"When it is known that on that morning my whole command of six small brigades comprised only 2,430 men, the enormous disparity of force with which I contended can be seen."--Gen. Jones's report. Gen. Garnett says he had in his brigade but 200 men. The Eighth Virginia regiment had but 22 men; the Nineteenth 50, and the Fifty-Sixth 40.

finally Toombs's gave way. It looked like a great Union victory.

Cox's old Kanawha Division, under Scammon, and Willcox's were doing the fighting for the Union side, and doing it well; Sturgis's Division was in reserve. The Union commands chased the enemy through fields and farm yards until they reached the edge of Sharpsburg. The greater part of the Corps batteries had crossed the creek and were at work. They blew Jenkins's brigade out of an apple orchard and from an elevation, and then Willcox's infantry pushed forward and occupied the high ground commanding Sharpsburg on the southeast, where the National Cemetery is now located.

Rodman's Division was now coming forward from the lower fords to join Willcox and Scammon in a swing to the right designed to sweep Jones's Division clear away. The Division had not come far when it struck the enemy, and it seemed that this enemy was another force than that fighting Willcox and Scammon. In truth it was. Many of its men wore bright blue Union trousers and other pieces of the Yankee uniform.

The force that Rodman encountered was A. P. Hill's Division of Stonewall Jackson's Corps with five brigades--Branch's North Carolina, Gregg's South Carolina, Field's and Pender's Virginia, and Archer's miscellaneous. It was just from Harper's Ferry, where Thomas's brigade had been left. The new articles of Federal uniform had been secured when Harper's Ferry was captured. Gen. Hill reports that he left Harper's Ferry that morning at 7:30. After a march of 17 miles, involving wading the Potomac, the "head of my Division," says Gen. Hill, "came upon the Antietam battlefield at 2:30." The whole Division was up at 3:30, and went into battle about 4:15.

Coming into the fight, Hill sent Pender's and Field's brigades down towards the mouth of the Antietam to guard the lower fords, "not knowing that there were no more Federals to cross," and these brigades took no part in the fight. Gen. Hill says he fought with but three brigades, and they did not comprise "more than 2,000 men." He also had four batteries, one of which--McIntosh's Pee Dee, South Carolina, battery-- was sent in before the infantry, and Willcox's men captured it.

A strange fatality attended the Union operations at three critical periods of the battle of Antietam. Lawton's Division coming suddenly up at a crisis, defeated Hooker and Mansfield; McLaw's and Walker's Divisions coming up at another <sup>cr</sup>isis caused Sedgwick's Division to leave the field; A. P. Hill's unexpected advent, just when a complete victory ~~was~~ in sight of the Ninth Corps, checked Burnside and caused his men to fall back to Antietam creek and yield the advantages they had gained.

Within a few minutes after Hill's brigades went in they had routed Rodman's Division; Archer's Brigade had recaptured the Pee Dee battery; Jones's men came back into the fight and joined Hill's, and by sunset the whole Union line had fallen back to the crest of the ridge overlooking the bridge and Antietam Creek; and here the line was fixed until the 19th.

Gen. McClellan was badly frightened at the unexpected turn of affairs. He gave this order to Burnside: "Hold your ground! If you cannot, then the bridge, to the last man. Always the bridge! If the bridge is lost, all is lost!" He seemed to fear that the Confederates would cross the creek with their 3,500 effectives and fall upon Burnside and Fitz John Porter with their 20,000!

Gen. Hill reported that the loss in killed and wounded

out of his 2,000 men was 346. Gen. Toombs said his two regiments lost 138. Gen. Jones's five brigades lost perhaps 100 men each. The total loss of the Confederates in killed and wounded was therefore about 1,100. Gen. L. O'Brien Branch, of North Carolina, and three Colonels were among the Confederate killed. Gen. Branch was the Confederate commander that fought Fitz John Porter at Hanover C. H. The Colonels killed were Holmes of the Second Georgia, Millican of the Fifteenth Georgia, both of Toombs's Brigade, and Dixon Barnes, Twelfth South Carolina, Gregg's Brigade. Gen. Toombs was severely wounded near the close of the battle.\*

The total loss in Burnside's Ninth Corps for the day was in killed and wounded 2,236; in missing, 115. Gen. Isaac P. Rodman was mortally wounded by a musket ball while trying to rally Harland's Brigade. Col. H. W. Kingsbury, Eleventh Connecticut, and three lieutenant colonels were killed. The greater portion of the casualties occurred in Gen. Burnside's unwise attempt to carry the bridge by placing regiments in exposed positions on either side of it without an effort at direct assault. The only direct assault succeeded, but it was not made until 1 o'clock. It could and should have been made at least as early as 10.

Gen. Burnside's dilatoriness contributed very largely to the defeat of Sedgwick's Division away up at the other end of the battle line. Had he begun vigorous demonstrations against

\*Gen. Robert Toombs was an old and serviceable friend of Minnesota. He was a member of the lower house of Congress in 1848-49 and greatly aided Sibley in the passage of the bill organizing Minnesota Territory. In 1858 he was a United States Senator from Georgia and did valuable work for the admission of our State into the Union. In gratitude for his services, the Legislature created and named a county for him; but when he became a prominent Confederate the name of Toombs county was changed to Wilkin in honor of Alexander Wilkin, at one time captain and major in the First Minnesota, and who was killed in the battle of Tupelo, Miss. in July 1864, as colonel of the

*Ninth Minnesota.*

the Confederate right as late as 9 o'clock, he would have prevented Walker's Confederate Division from being sent from near the Burnside Brigade up to help McLaws in his efforts to check and drive back Sedgwick. It was Walker's sudden appearance, with his two strong brigades, on Sedgwick's flank that routed the Union command. Sedgwick could have defeated McLaws easily but for Walker, and Walker did not get orders to leave Antietam Creek until after 9 o'clock. Had Burnside been active, Walker would never have been sent away, and Sedgwick's advance would have been a great Union victory of which every man in the First Minnesota would have been a hero.

And had Burnside carried the bridge at 10 or 11 o'clock, or 12 o'clock, and thrown his troops across the stream and vigorously engaged the enemy, he could have ~~crushed~~<sup>run</sup> the Confederate right. Then A. P. Hill would never have interfered. He would have heard of the disaster before crossing the Potomac and turned back to Harper's Ferry. The delays in both cases were fairly criminal offenses against the Union cause, and the two criminals are easily recognized.

Had Gen. Burnside attacked at 9 o'clock, Walker's Division would have been among the commands to resist him. Then if by the numerous fords Burnside had crossed all his Corps at any time before noon, he could have defeated the Confederate right completely in an hour's fighting. Then A. P. Hill would not have interfered.

Or had Burnside carried the bridge earlier and hurried his forces across; or had he hurried them after he carried the bridge, at 1 P. M., and attacked vigorously, he would have crushed and driven back the Confederates as he did and kept crushing and

driving them until the Confederate right was in hopeless defeat  
and flying to the Potomac or surrendering as prisoners. Then A. P.  
Hill would not have interfered, or if he had he would have wished  
he had not.

## WHAT WAS THE MATTER WITH SUMNER?

Gen. Sumner daunted at last! For the first time in his military history, when Walker's Confederates struck the left flank of Sedgwick's Division and McLaws's had assaulted it in front, the old warrior seemed to lose his presence of mind. As one in distress, he cried out, "My God! We must get out of this," and then gave the order to "get out."

During the Mexican War, when he was leading a charge up Cerro Gordo mountain, a Mexican ounce ball, ~~hit~~ struck him fairly on top of the head and glanced off! The wound disabled him but did not break the skull. Thereafter his brother officers called him "Hard-Head" Sumner. He liked to fight. He delighted in being under fire. He relished leading a charge, roaring like a tempest and striking like a thunderbolt. He was a war horse that shouted among the battle trumpets "Ha! Ha!" What was the matter with him now?

McClellan had deceived him. McClellan had assured all his generals that the Confederates could put 100,000 men into battle against his 87,000 and Sumner believed his commander. He thought it must have been a strong force that had defeated Hooker and Mansfield, and when Walker's 3,000 men flung themselves against Sedgwick's flank, while a heavy fire came from the front, he thought he had encountered this same triumphant force that had driven Hooker and was now flushed with victory and largely re-enforced. He wanted to save his men and not try to make them do impossible things.

Had he known the truth, that Sedgwick was nearly as

strong as Walker\*and McLaws combined, he would have bellowed out the orders for a charge, and swinging his hat would have led it, and though he would have lost 500 men he would have killed and wounded a thousand of the enemy and won a glorious victory. He had the men to do it with. Better men never entered battle; all they needed was proper leaders. Gen. Walker says that Gen. Sumner's "heart was broken" when Sedgwick's Division was defeated.

On this point Gen. ~~Francis A.~~ Walker, the old adjutant general of the Second Corps, is clear that Gen. McClellan's misrepresentations caused Gen. Sumner's demoralization. In his "History of the Second Army Corps," page 118, Gen. Walker says:

The blame rests not mainly on Sumner. The prime cause of the great errors was in the monstrosly exaggerated estimates of Lee's force made at the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac and transmitted downward to Corps commanders, officers, staff, and troops. Headquarters had insisted that Lee crossed the Potomac with over 100,000 men; and, even in his official report of Antietam, Gen. McClellan estimated the force opposed to him at 97,000.\*\*\*

As a matter of now undoubted fact, all the troops which, from daybreak to dark of the 17th of September, Lee was able to put into action at Antietam was considerably below 40,000, including the troops awaiting Burnside's attack and the division of A. P. Hill, which, at 1 o'clock, was still marching toward the battlefield to the music of the artillery.

Gen. Walker further says that Gen. Sumner's "heart was broken" when Sedgwick's Division was defeated.

Commenting upon Gen. McClellan's refusal to allow Franklin's Sixth Corps, at 1 o'clock, to charge the Confederates, Gen. Walker says:

At that time, most of Lee's brigades had been more than once driven in disorder from the ground they occupied. Many of them, if not most of them, had been reduced to the condition of the

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\*Walker had 3,000; McLaws, 2,536; total 5,536. Sedgwick had over 5,000. Early's (Lawton's) Division had about 1,200 then fighting.

brigades of the First and Twelfth Corps, troops which are not considered in regarding the situation of affairs in the afternoon at Antietam.

## THE FIRST MINNESOTA AFTER THE REPULSE.

Back at Joe Poffenberger's farm, the First Minnesota rested comfortably behind a snug fence during the afternoon and evening of the 17th. The Division was under a scattering fire from Stuart's forces, down on the Nicodemus farm, nearly all the time. A number of Stuart's cavalry were merely mounted infantry armed with muskets; the rest had good carbines. Stuart kept out skirmishers who pecked steadily away at the Union lines.

Late in the afternoon Stonewall Jackson, obeying Gen. Lee's order, directed Jeb Stuart to take his cavalry and the infantry of McLaws and Early and turn the extreme right flank of the Union line, on the Poffenberger farm. "We will drive McClellan into the Potomac," said Jackson. But in attempting the movement, Stuart found that Doubleday's batteries and Hooker's extreme right were within a few hundred yards of the Potomac, or as <sup>he</sup> ~~Stuart~~ said virtually rested on the Potomac, and therefore the Union flank could not be turned, and so the attempt was abandoned. Perhaps it was a good thing for the Union side that the attempt was not made; the Union forces <sup>on that part of its field</sup> were not in condition to resist it, except that Doubleday's batteries were in position and might have checked it.

The night after the battle was not a restful one. Each army had out a strong picket line and the pickets were spitting at one another all night. The Minnesotians were too far away from where they had fought to visit their dead and wounded comrades, who were now either within the Confederate lines or between the two hostile forces, and under fire all the time. How the poor Union wounded suffered! Many a valuable man's life could have been saved if he could have been reached and ministered to that

night.

The morning of the 18th opened with showers, for a rain, more or less heavy, always fell after a <sup>great</sup> battle. The picket lines on each side were strengthened and there was light skirmishing at intervals during the day. For all day long, the two armies confronted each other. Neither offered to make a formidable attack. One was afraid to; the other dare not.

In his report made October 15, Gen. McClellan gave this excuse for his non-action: "A careful and anxious survey of the condition of my command, and my knowledge of the enemy's force and position, failed to impress me with any reasonable certainty of success if I renewed the attack without re-enforcing columns."

Gen. Lee said: "This great battle was fought by less than 40,000 men on our side, all of whom had undergone the greatest labors and hardships on the field and on the march; our artillery was much inferior to that of the enemy in the number of guns and weight of metal; the army of the enemy was much larger than ours and fully supplied and equipped; no re-enforcements could be expected, and therefore it was not thought prudent to attack or even wait until McClellan should offer battle."<sup>10</sup>

*And so* That night Lee and his army retreated, taking off everything that was in good order. The route was by <sup>the only line of retreat, which was</sup> a rough road running south from Sharpsburg a mile or so to the Potomac and the crossing was at Boteler's ford and at Shep<sup>h</sup>erdstown. The wagons and most of the artillery went first. The infantry waded the river; Fitzhugh Lee's brigade of Stuart's Cavalry guarded the rear.

The movement was made so rapidly and the Confederates

slipped away so quietly, although taking a lot of their wounded with them, that McClellan did not discover what they had done until next morning at daylight. And we may believe that he was fight glad they had gone. He had ordered another attack on the 19th, and he had misgivings about its success.

All day on the 18th he had his batteries massed on the ridge on the east side of the Antietam near the Burnside Bridge, expecting an attack from the Confederates in that quarter. Porter's

and Burnside's Corps stood at arms to resist it. The Union troops numbered 22,000; the Confederates less than 10,000, and yet McClellan was dreadfully apprehensive that this weak and shattered force would cross the Antietam and in the face of 20,000 infantry and the formidable batteries, assault the high ridge storm the batteries, capture the supports or drive them away, and play smash with everything on the Union side. At the same time the poor Confederates were covering behind their frail defenses expecting, McClellan would send a strong force against them, and then there would be nothing for them but destruction or surrender.

McClellan, too, neglected another important duty. At any time before the Confederate retreat the posting of a single Union battery at the proper place would have prevented that retreat. There was but one road over which the Confederates could retire, and that led to the only practical ford over the Potomac, which was a mile above the mouth of Antietam creek. A six-gun battery placed on the high ground east of Antietam Creek, at almost any point a mile below the Burnside Bridge, would have ~~been~~ perfectly commanded the road and ford and made them impassable for wagons, artillery, or troops. Then the Confederates would have been virtually in a state of siege. Gen. McClellan's attention was repeatedly called to this feature of the situation, but he ordered no battery placed. He seemed to want a hole left open through which the Confederates might escape.

the  
every minute

~~MCCLELLAN CLAIMED A VICTORY.~~

The situation on the Confederate side after Burnside's battle is described by Gen. Longstreet in "Battles and Leaders," Vol.2, pp. 669-70:

We were already badly whipped and were only holding our ground by sheer force of desperation.\*\*\*Nearly one-fourth of our troops who went into the battle were killed or wounded. We were so badly crushed that at the close of the day 10,000 fresh troops could have come in and taken Lee's army and everything it had.\* But McClellan did not know it, and feared, when Burnside was pressed back, that Sharpsburg was a Confederate victory, and that he would have to retire. As it was, when night settled down, both armies were content to stay where they were.

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\*Of Franklin's Corps, Porter's Corps, Pleasanton's Cavalry and other detachments, McClellan had at least 25,000 men that had not been under fire, and in all 50,000 of his men were really "fresh" and fit for duty. Chas. C. Coffin, the noted war correspondent, who was in the battle, writes in "Battles and Leaders," Vol.2, p.685: "Everybody knew that McClellan had 29,000 men who either as yet had not fired a musket, or had been only slightly engaged. Why did he not attack? No one could tell."

## THE RESPECTIVE FORCES AT ANTIETAM.

According to the revised records and matured opinions of the authorities and experts of recent years, the battle of Antietam was really fought on the Union side by only 67,000 men. McClellan had 87,164 men present, (according to the morning reports of the 16th) but many of Porter's Fifth Corps present, (12,930) Franklin's Sixth, (12,300) and Pleasanton's Cavalry (4,320)--numbering nearly 30,000--took no active part in the fight. In Franklin's the fighting was by a portion of Slocum's Division, and the entire Corps lost in the aggregate 439; in Porter's, detachments of Sykes's regulars and Morell's Division did a little fighting and the Corps' total loss was 109; the cavalry's loss was but 30.

The Confederates had in the <sup>actual</sup> ~~fight~~ <sup>at least</sup> ~~about~~ 37,000. Gen. Lee says "less than 40,000 men." Col. W. H. Taylor, of Lee's staff, in charge of records, puts the force in round numbers at 37,000, as follows: Jackson, including A. P. Hill, 10,000; Longstreet, 12,000; D. H. Hill and Walker, 7,000; total infantry, 29,000. Cavalry and artillery, 8,000; grand total, 37,000. Thos. White, chief clerk in the office of Gen. Chilton, Lee's Adjutant General, says in all the Confederates had in round numbers 33,000 infantry or 41,500 of all arms. Of these, two brigades (Pender's and Field's) of A. P. Hill, 500 other infantry, and 2,500 of Stuart's Cavalry "did not fire a shot on the 17th, making in all a force of 4,500 or 5,000 men." (Batts. and Leads., p. 565.)

Col. Livermore (in his "Numbers and Losses in the Civil War") estimates that 93 percent of the 87,000 Union troops present--or 75,316--actually fought, and that about 51,000 Confederates resisted them. Col. Livermore shows from the records that Sept. 22, five days after Antietam, Lee's army reported 37,330 infantry and artillery and 5,761 cavalry present for duty, in all, 43,091. He assumes that 38,120 were in the fight at Antietam and to that number he adds the total Confederate losses in the battle which he says were 13,724; this makes a total of 51,844. The Confederates reported a loss of 11,172, or 2,600 less than Col. Livermore's estimate.

37,330  
 5,761  
 43,091  
 90  
 37,819  
 43,091  
 3,878  
 39,213  
 13

## THE LOSSES IN EACH ARMY.

The aggregate loss of the Union army was 12,410, (or nearly 19 per cent) as follows: Killed, 2,108, or 139 officers and 1,969 men; wounded, 9,549, or 474 officers and 9,075 men; missing, 753, or 7 ~~officers~~ <sup>offi</sup> and 746 men.

The Confederate loss, as <sup>incompletely reported</sup> ~~determined~~ some years ago, was in the aggregate 11,172, (more than 30 per cent) as follows: Killed, 1,512; wounded, 7,816; missing, 1,844.

Of the Union missing a conservative estimate is that 10 per cent, or 75, were killed, making the total death loss 2,183. Of the Confederate missing the per centage of killed has been estimated at from 10 to 33 per cent, or from 180 to 600. Maj. Nelson H. Davis, inspector general on McClellan's staff, and who superintended the burial of the dead on the battlefield, reports that his details buried more than 2,600 Confederate dead bodies, in addition to what the Confederates themselves buried. The Union authorities account for but 1,000 Confederate prisoners, leaving 844 of the Confederate missing unaccounted ~~of~~ for. It is not improbably that the Confederate dead amounted to 2,500.

McClellan's loss cut his army down to 66,000; Lee had but 30,000. Re-enforcements were rushed to McClellan, and September 20, three days after Antietam, he had 89,352 "present for duty" with him. (Vol. 19, War Recs., part 2, p.336.) The Confederate conscription was working fine and by September 22 Lee had 33,686 "present for duty," not counting the cavalry and reserve artillery.

(Ibid, p.621.)

*As noted elsewhere, Col. Livermore, the noted military statistician, estimates the Confederate loss at Antietam as 13,724, instead of 11,172 as stated in the Southern reports, which were invariably, owing to slipshod methods of doing things, invariably incomplete and inaccurate. Col. Livermore substantiates, moreover, his assertion. He says the Union reports of casualties are correct and rarely over-puffed.*

By Union Army Corps, the losses in killed and wounded and missing <sup>as reported</sup> were: In Hooker's First, 2,590; in Sumner's Second, 5,138; in Porter's Fifth, 109; in Franklin's Sixth, 439; in Burnside's Ninth, 2,349; in Mansfield's (now Williams's) Twelfth, 1,746; in the cavalry division, 30. Thus Sumner's Corps sustained almost half the entire Union loss.

In the Second Corps the losses by Divisions were:

	Killed	Wounded	Missing	Total
Richardson's First,	210	939	16	1,165
Sedgwick's Second,	373	1,593	244	2,210
French's Third,	299	1,315	136	1,750
	<u>882</u>	<u>3,847</u>	<u>396</u>	<u>5,125</u>

Artillery reserve and Corps staff, 13 killed and wounded, making a grand total of 5,138.

In Sedgwick's Second Division the losses by brigades were:

	Killed	Wounded	Missing	Total
Gorman's First	134	539	67	740
Howard's Second,	93	379	73	545
Dana's Third,	142	654	104	898
Artillery, 2 Batteries	4	21		25
Totals	<u>373</u>	<u>1,593</u>	<u>244</u>	<u>2,210</u>

Sedgwick's Division was at least 5,000 strong at the beginning of the battle.

According to the condensed reports in the official records-

(Vol.19,p.192) the losses in Gorman's Brigade\* by regiments were:

	Killed	Wounded	Missing	Total
First Minnesota	15	60	15	90
Fifteenth Massachusetts	57	238	23	318
Thirty-Fourth New York	33	111	10	154
Eighty-Second New York	21	92	15	128
Mass. Sharpshooters	8	17	1	26
Minn. Sharpshooters		21	3	24
	<u>134</u>	<u>539</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>740</u>

\*Gorman's Brigade took into battle, 1,800 men.

*excluding Russell's Sharpshooters,*  
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But the nominal list of the First Minnesota gives one officer and 15 privates killed and 1 private mortally wounded, a total of 17 lives lost; 5 officers and 65 privates wounded, and 21 privates missing, a total of 107 killed, wounded, and missing, not including the Sharpshooters. The officer killed was Capt. Gustavus Adolphus Holtzborn, commanding Company K, the Winona Company. The officers wounded were Capt. D. C. Smith, of Company D, the Minneapolis Company, who received a severe wound in the thigh; Capt. George Pomeroy and Lieut. J. H. Shepley, Company E, the St. Anthony Company; Capt. Chas. P. Adams, Company H, the Hastings Company, and Sergt. Major E. S. Post received slight wounds. The Regiment's loss was less than that of any other in the brigade, as it was on the extreme right and hence not exposed to the enemy's heaviest fire, which was mainly directed upon the Fifteenth Massachusetts.

Capt. Russell's Company, L, Second Minnesota Sharpshooters, had 21 men wounded, one <sup>Edward Ryan,</sup> dying of his wound <sup>October 6,</sup> ~~later~~. The company took 42 men into the fight and its loss was therefore 50 per cent.

Of the strength of the Regiment on entering the fight, Col. Sully says: "We marched into the action with 435 men. This includes the Second Minnesota Sharpshooters, but not Company I; that company was not with us."

All the same three men of Company I were wounded in the battle, and two of them, Chas. Nassig and Milo S. Whitcomb, were discharged on account of their wounds. Adding the sharpshooters' loss of 21 wounded to the Regiment's casualty list gives a total loss of 128 killed, wounded, and missing. The Government Records (War Recs., Vol. 12, part 1, p.192) give the total at 90, but

these figures are from imperfect reports furnished soon after the battle. Lochren says: "The loss of the regiment was 147; but this figure cannot be corroborated or verified by any available record; it is not known where he obtained it. Fox gives the Regiment's loss (including Sharpshooters) in killed and mortally wounded as 200."

*Church records*

<sup>Capt.</sup> Antietam.  
 Officers Killed - G. A. Holzburn, Co. K.  
 Officers Wounded - Capt. Geo. Pomeroy in the breast and Capt. James H. Shipley slightly, both of Company E; Capt. De Witt C. Smith, severely in the thigh; Capt. Mas. P. Adams, of Company H, slightly in the shoulder;  
 Non-Commissioned Staff - Acting Sergeant Major E. S. Post, slightly in leg.  
 Total - One officer killed, four officers wounded; total, 5; one non-com. staff wounded.

<sup>Privates.</sup>  
 Killed - Sgt. John McEwen, Company A; Oscar L. Cornman and John E. Goundry, Company B; Robt. C. Simpson, Company C; Wm. O. Taylor and James H. Anscombe, Company E; David P. Abbott, Edwin Cox, Marshall B. Milliken, Company J; George E. Boyce, <sup>John C. Boyce</sup> Wilson Cagger, Geo. J. Panchat, alias Panchalt, Company H; Wm. A. Martin, Wm. Smith, Company K. Total 15. Mortally Wd (died Oct. 6) Sgt. David B. Dudley, Company K. Total lives lost 1 offr. and 16 men - 17. In sharpshooters Edward Ryan was shot in the head and died of the wound.

The Fifteenth Massachusetts suffered in numbers the greatest regimental loss at Antietam. Including the company of Andrew Sharpshooters, it took into the battle 606 officers and men, and its loss in killed and wounded was 320 and missing 24; total 344, more than 52 per cent. The killed and died of wounds numbered 104; of the latter six were commissioned officers.

The Twenty-Eighth Pennsylvania, of Mansfield's Corps, was second in regimental loss, 266; the Seventy-Second Pennsylvania, (Baxter's Fire Zouaves) of Howard's Brigade, Sedgwick's Division, was third, 237.

## McCLELLAN WAS HIMSELF TO THE LAST.

Though when the battle ended Gen. McClellan had lost 12,000 men, including three generals and one acting general killed, and four generals and two acting brigadiers disabled by wounds, and though his army was at a standstill,--yet when the Confederates retreated he claimed for himself a great victory. It is difficult to determine whether the following extracts from his letters written just after the battle are comic or pathetic. On the 18th he wrote: "Those in whose judgment I rely tell me that I fought the battle splendidly and that it was a masterpiece of art." On the 20th he wrote: "I feel that I have done all that can be asked in twice saving the country.\*\*\*I feel some pride in having defeated Lee so utterly and saved the North so completely." (Own Story, pp. 612-13.)

Imagine Grant, or Sherman, or Sheridan writing like that!

COLOR-SERGEANT BLOOMER'S ADVENTURE.

On the morning of the 19th (Friday) many of the First Minnesota visited the battlefield, relieved and removed their wounded comrades, buried the dead, and marked the graves. Among the wounded recovered was Sam Bloomer, of Company B, the Stillwater Company, the regimental color bearer, whose right knee was shattered by a musket ball, while resting the flagstaff on a fence at the Hagerstown pike. He crawled into the West Woods, near the Dunker Church, and sheltered himself behind an oak tree until the battle was over, caring for his wound as best he could.

After Sedgwick's Division left the field, Sergeant Bloomer was assisted by some Confederates, who piled cordwood about him as a breastwork. These Confederates were of the First Georgia Regulars, of "Tige" Anderson's Brigade, which had been sent up by Gen. Longstreet to help Hood. The brigade was driven away by Sedgwick's advance (chiefly by the firing of Gorman's Brigade) and

Sergt. Bloomer's friends had become separated from their regiment. *After the Union forces retreated the sergeant was at the mercy of his enemies.* One Confederate officer abused the wounded and helpless soldier and took away his sword and revolver; but Stonewall Jackson rode by\* and spoke kindly to him.

In 1901 Sam Bloomer, who had his leg amputated at the David Hoffman barn, on the Antietam battlefield, corresponded with W. H. Andrews, formerly first sergeant of Company M, First Georgia Regulars, one of the Confederates that assisted him when he lay wounded in the Dunker Church woods. Mr. Andrews, in 1901, lived at Sugar Valley, Gordon County, Ga. The correspondence is interesting and is preserved in Sam Bloomer's scrap book, in the

Stillwater Public Library. It corroborates the official evidence that Geo. T. Anderson's Brigade assisted Hood's Division in defending the Dunker Church woods against Sedgwick's attack. The First Georgia Regulars and the Eighth Georgia, mentioned by Sergt. Andrews, were regiments in the brigade of Geo. T. (or "Tige") Anderson.

## FROM ANTIETAM TO LOUDOUN VALLEY.

On the evening of September 18 the Confederates began slipping their wagon trains and some of their artillery across the Potomac by the numerous fords and crossings in the vicinity of Shepherdstown. The principal crossing was just below Shepherdstown by Boteler's or Blackford's ford. Shepherdstown is on the West Virginia side of the Potomac and about two miles south of Sharpsburg, and therefore from two to four miles from the Antietam battlefield. The Potomac in this vicinity was then about 300 yards wide but only about three feet deep. The infantry waded it and every wheeled vehicle passed it without difficulty. The whole Confederate army except the wounded was across by the morning of the 19th. Shepherdstown then, like Sharpsburg, was populated very largely by Confederate wounded, every building being a hospital.

Fitzhugh Lee's brigade of Virginia Cavalry protected the rear of the direct retreat, but Hampton's and Munford's brigades of Stuart's Cavalry crossed into Virginia at an obscure ford and then went up the river 15 miles to Williamsport, and re-crossed into Maryland. Stuart apparently threatened to go back and attack the Union forces in the rear of Antietam battlefield. This was a "bluff" to draw away a part of the pursuit after Lee's weak army. It did not wholly succeed. Couch's Division of 7,000 was sent up to Williamsport and soon drove away the Confederate cavalry, but this did not interfere with McClellan's other movements.

In the evening of the 19th the Confederates moved out from Shepherdstown on the road leading to Martinsburg, ~~then~~ <sup>three</sup> miles to the west. Their affairs were in bad shape. Wagons full of wounded but empty as to provisions; ammunition very scarce; the spirits of the

men very low. The leading officers were happy. No attack worthy the name had been made against them on the 18th, and not a trigger drawn against their re-crossing the Potomac back into the welcoming embraces of "Ole Virgini nny." Lawton's shattered brigade was left on the high bluffs of the Potomac, near Shep<sup>h</sup>erdstown, in support of some batteries.

On the morning of the 18th Couch's Division, 6,500, came up from near Harper's Ferry and Gen. Humphreys' newly-recruited Division of Pennsylvanians, 7,000 strong (Humphreys' report) came down from Frederick and were posted on the east side of the Antietam all day, though they were willing to cross over to the west side at any time and fight the enemy. The re-enforcements of these two Divisions supplied the places of McClellan's killed and wounded in the Antietam battle and gave him 2,000 men besides. So that on the 18th he had 90,000 men against Lee's 28,000, for Lee received no re-enforcements. *(or perhaps 38,000)*

Couch's Division was attached to Franklin's Sixth Corps and Humphreys' to Porter's Fifth. In the afternoon of the 19th, when McClellan concluded to pursue Lee, Porter's Corps--being fresh and unhurt--was selected to lead the pursuit. Gen. Griffin took a part of his brigade and crossed the river, scaled the high bluffs, and captured a few pieces of artillery, Lawton's played-out men making but little fight. Griffin returned to the Maryland side. Next morning Sykes's and Morell's Divisions crossed.

The Confederates were four miles on the way to Martinsburg when Sykes and Morell crossed. At once A. P. Hill and Early with nine small brigades were sent back. In the fight that resulted Barnes's Brigade of Morell was engaged on the Union side and

defeated by Hill's and Early's brigades. The One Hundred Eighteenth Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia Corn Exchange Regiment, was the worst sufferer. It was chased down the steep bank and across the Potomac, many passing over on the crest of a dam. The total Union loss was 361, of which Col. Prevost reported that the Corn Exchange regiment lost in all 269, or 63 killed, 101 wounded, and 105 prisoners, out of 737 taken in.

But in his report Gen. A. P. Hill made a most ridiculously boastful claim. Said he:

\*\*\*Then commenced the most terrible slaughter that this war has witnessed. The broad surface of the Potomac was blue with the bodies of our foe. But few escaped to tell the tale. By their own account they lost 3,000 men, killed and drowned, from one brigade alone. Some 200 prisoners were taken. My own loss was 30 killed and 231 wounded.

Col. Barnes reports that his brigade was composed of 1,711 men, all old and small regiments, except the Corn Exchange organization. It is hardly probable that any one would report the loss of 3,000 in any Union brigade, since no brigade in the army at that time numbered 3,000 men. It was ascertained that in crossing the river not more than 25 men were killed and wounded, (none drowned in the three feet of water) and that number could hardly render the Potomac "blue with the floating bodies of our foe." Moreover 1,350 of the 1,711 "escaped to tell the tale," Gen. Hill was evidently trying to cheer up the Southern people for the failure of the Confederate campaign into Maryland.

## THE FIRST MINNESOTA AFTER THE BATTLE.

For four days after the great and bloody passage at arms at Antietam the First Minnesota remained in camp on the battlefield. It was engaged in burying the dead, in picket duty, and in reconnoissances until September 22. On the 21st Rev. Henry B. Whipple, afterwards the well known bishop of the Episcopal Church, visited the regiment and made an interesting address to the men.

The Twelfth Corps, now commanded by Gen. Williams, marched down and occupied Maryland Heights, near Harper's Ferry on the 20th. McClellan was ostensibly preparing to follow Lee and Jackson. At daylight on the 22d the First Minnesota broke camp at Antietam and marched to Harper's Ferry, ten miles away to the south. The Regiment encamped on Bolivar Heights, with the rest of Gorman's Brigade. Gen. Sumner, with the Second Corps, was in general command at Harper's Ferry. It was determined that the Union occupation of this important point should be permanent, and to prevent any more captures of the place the three commanding points, Maryland, Bolivar, and Loudoun Heights, were strongly fortified.

COL. SULLY BECOMES A BRIGADIER--LIEUT. COL. MORGAN  
BECOMES COLONEL.

To date from September 26 Col. Sully was promoted to brigadier general of volunteers. Lieut. Col. Geo. N. Morgan was promoted to the Colonelcy of the Regiment in Gen. Sully's stead, and to rank as such from Nov. 14, 1862; Col. Morgan had previously ranked as lieutenant colonel from October 22. Major Wm. Colvill became lieutenant colonel in Col. Morgan's place, having been major since September 17, when Col. Miller had been succeeded by Col. Sully; Maj. Colvill was originally captain of Company F, the Red Wing Company. Capt. Chas. P. Adams, of Company H, the Hastings Company, was promoted to major to take rank from September 26.

Col. Morgan had gone out as captain of Company E, the St. Anthony Company, and had passed regularly through the grades of major and lieutenant colonel. He was a very efficient officer in all <sup>but one</sup> respects; ~~he~~ unfortunately he was in poor health and unable to command at all times, and at last was forced to resign from the service, May 5, 1863.

Gen. John Sedgwick never returned to his Division after he was wounded at Antietam. When he rejoined the army he was placed in command of the Sixth Corps. He was succeeded in the command of the Second Division by Gen. Oliver O. Howard, who had been in command of the Third Brigade. He did not assume the position immediately, and for some days the Division was commanded by Gen. Gorman, who was succeeded in the command of the First Brigade by the new Gen. Sully. When the latter made up his staff he selected as one of his aides Lieut. Josias R. King, who had been serving

as adjutant of the First Minnesota for some time.

The Regiment, with the brigade, remained on Bolivar Heights for about six weeks. When it first came the men were in need of clothing; the three weeks of marching and campaigning from Washington to Harper's Ferry had been hard on the uniforms. But in a little while new clothing was received, the men were paid off, and happiness was general throughout the camps.

*McClellan*

#420.

THE PRESIDENT AGAIN VISITS MCCLELLAN.

October 1 President Lincoln reviewed the troops at Harper's Ferry and thoroughly inspected the place. Gen. McClellan accompanied him. At this time the General still maintained his headquarters at Antietam and the President visited him there and was his guest. Together the general and the President rode over the battlefields of South Mountain and Antietam and McClellan explained the contests from his view point. The President had with him <sup>*his Lincoln's friend,*</sup> Gen. John A. McClern <sup>*and of the Western army,*</sup> and other prominent personages.

McClellan was very gracious toward the President and very kind withal and "gave him my reasons for not following the enemy after he crossed the Potomac." The general thought he had secured the President's endorsement of his course, past, present, and prospective.\* He had purposed holding back his army from the pursuit of Lee "until everything was ready," and he says that Lincoln told him "not to stir an inch" until the state of readiness arrived. But two days after President Lincoln got back to Washington, or October 6, McClellan received a telegram that sent the cold chills over his system. It was from Gen. Halleck and began in these brutal terms: "The President directs that you cross the Potomac and give battle to the enemy or drive him south. Your army must move now while the roads are good," etc.

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\*"He told me that he was entirely satisfied with me and all that I had done; that he would stand by me" etc.--Own Story, p.627.

But, as was to be expected, the army did not move "while the roads were good." The Second and the Twelfth Corps were at Harper's Ferry, but all the other Corps were on the Maryland side of the Potomac, in good camps, performing no military duty except cooking and eating their rations.

## JEB STUART RIDES AROUND AGAIN.

On the 10th of October Stuart with 1,800 cavalry again started to repeat his "raid around McClellan," which he first made the previous spring when McClellan was in front of Richmond. Stuart crossed the Potomac at McCoy's Ferry, above Williamsport, rode rapidly through western Maryland into Pennsylvania, captured and held Chambersburg for a day, went on within seven miles of Gettysburg, then turned and rode back through Maryland and recrossed the Potomac at White's Ford, below the mouth of the Monocacy, having made a complete circuit about McClellan's army. He thwarted all efforts of Pleasanton's and Stoneman's Cavalry and the Union infantry forces to interfere with him. He destroyed considerable railroad property and brought out 1,200 good horses from Pennsylvania and other loot. He rode from Chambersburg to White's Ford, a distance of 80 miles, in 27 hours.

## BRAVE OLD GEN. SUMNER LEAVES THE SECOND CORPS.

October 7 the noble old commander of the Second Corps, Maj. Gen. Edwin Vose Sumner, was, on his own application, granted a leave of absence which involved his surrendering the command of the Corps. He was succeeded by Maj. Gen. Darius N. Couch, who in front of Richmond had commanded a Division in Keyes's Fourth Corps <sup>and</sup> to whose timely relief the First Minnesota and Gorman's Brigade came at the battle of Fair Oaks. A few weeks before, Gen. Couch's Division had been transferred to Porter's Fifth Corps. Gen. Couch assumed his Corps command on the 9th. He was a small man, slightly built and very quiet in his manners. He was a brave man, and without being a great general he was a very good one and withal a faithful soldier.

Ever since Antietam, when Sedgwick's Division gave way, old Gen. Sumner had been depressed and disconsolate. The defection of his favorite division well nigh broke his heart. Gen. Walker was adjutant general of the Second Corps and very intimate with Gen. Sumner. In his History of the Second Corps, page 117, Gen. Walker says of the old hero: "He was heart broken at the terrible fate of the splendid Division on which he had so much relied, which he had deemed invincible, and his proximity to the disaster had been so close as to convey a shock to his system from which he had not recovered."

Although Gen. Sumner had himself ordered the Division away from the field, saying, "My God! We must get out of this," yet he claimed that he did so because he saw that the regiments were in disorder and not disposed to fight the enemy with proper

bravery and desperation, and that they would soon be suffering far worse than they then were. Gen. Sedgwick had been so badly wounded that at last he had to leave the field; his cousin, (who was also his adjutant general) Maj. W. D. Sedgwick, was mortally hurt, dying in a few hours; Gen. Dana and a lot of other good officers had been seriously wounded and many had been killed, and now the good regiments on whom he relied were broken and bleeding almost at every pore. Then the sudden appearance on the left flank of Walker's Confederates, yelling and slaying, without being sufficiently resisted,--these disasters demoralized him and he gave the order to "get out of this."

This great old warrior, the American Blucher, the Yankee "Marshal Forward," sank in spirits and in health after Antietam. His 65 years of active life began to tell on him. He came back to the army in the first week of November and was soon given command of Burnside's "Right Grand Division," composed of the Second and Ninth Corps, and fought it as well as possible at Fredericksburg. The ill success and the fatigue of that criminal operation hurt him in mind and heart and frame. He was relieved from active service a month after Fredericksburg and soon after appointed to the command of the Department of Missouri. He was on his way to his command when by serious illness he was forced to stop at Syracuse, N. Y. Here he languished until March 21, when, having lived nobly, he died bravely. Fifteen minutes before his spirit took flight he roused himself from sleep and extending his

hand cried out exultantly: "The Second Corps never lost a flag or a cannon!"\* The attendants ran to his bedside and he said to them: "That is true--never lost one." Then he sank into a seeming stupor. The attendants raised his head and handed him a glass of wine and asked him to drink it. With great effort he waved the glass above his head and uttered this sentiment: "God save my country, the United States of America." He took the wine at one draught. Then he lay back, the glass loosened from his fingers, and in two minutes he was dead. *(See Appleton's American Cyclopaedia of Biography.)*

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\*A common version is that the old general said: "The Second Corps never lost a color or a gun," but the quotation above is from an eye and ear witness.--See American Encyclopedia.

## THE CHARLESTOWN EXPEDITION.

McClellan had a few reconnoissances made into Virginia by the troops at Harper's Ferry, the object being to find out if the Confederates were still in the country. They were. And they should have been attacked and driven out or captured. We now know that they were then in great discomfort. They were on short rations, ragged, dirty, many of them without shoes or warm clothing, and all of them very lousy, because few had but one suit of clothes. Yet conscripts and stragglers were daily coming in and forages were active, and the men seemed reconciled. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was never perfectly happy.

October 16, while the greater part of the army was on the Maryland side of the Potomac, Gen. McClellan sent out two important reconnoissances to "feel the enemy." Gen. Humphreys took his Division, 500 cavalry, and a battery, in all 6,000, and went from Sharpsburg to Smithfield, Va., via Shep<sup>h</sup>erdsto<sup>n</sup> and Kearne<sup>y</sup>ville. He found plenty of Confederates and had a light skirmish with a small force at Kearneysville, losing three killed.

The same day Gen. Hancock took Richardson's old Division-- which he now commanded--1,500 men of other Divisions, under Col. Lee, of the Twentieth Massachusetts, some cavalry, and ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Tompkin's Rhode Island battery, and went from Harper's Ferry ten miles westward to Charlestown, the county seat of Jefferson County, and where John Brown was tried and executed. This was another effort to "ascertain the whereabouts of the enemy," and when his "whereabouts" were ascertained then his "which-aways" were to be looked into.

The First Minnesota went on this expedition. It belonged

to Col. Lee's command and there were with it the Twentieth Massachusetts, Seventh Michigan, the Forty-Second and Fifty-Ninth New York, and the Seventy-First and Seventy-Second Pennsylvania, the last two named ~~being~~ ~~respectively known as~~ the California Regiment and Baxter's Fire Zouaves. The First Minnesota was under command of Col. Morgan, and was detached for skirmishers during the reconnoissance.

Charlestown was reached in due time and there was a little skirmishing with Col. Munford's brigade of four regiments of Virginia Cavalry and one gun of Chew's battery and three guns of the Richmond Howitzers. The latter were under Capt. B. H. Smith, of Richmond, and he fought them so pluckily as to win Hancock's and everybody else's praise. Tompkins' Battery shot his foot off, but he stayed on the field until the infantry was about to charge him.

Munford's command was soon driven away and Gen. Hancock occupied Charlestown until the afternoon of the next day. Capt. Smith, the brave artillerist, and about 100 Confederates wounded at Antietam, with surgeons, nurses, etc., were found in the town and paroled, and 28 stragglers rounded up and taken back to Harper's Ferry. Gen. Hancock learned that Lee's army was still in the Valley, encamped along Opequan Creek, from seven to ten miles west of Charlestown. The command returned to Harper's Ferry on the 18th. It encamped at Halltown, five miles east of Charlestown the night of the 17th. (War Recs.) No casualties were reported on the Union side. Col. Munford said he had two killed and three wounded in his batteries and several cavalry were wounded.

Lochren says that at Charlestown the Confederates "shelled

us furiously as we advanced toward the town, but retired before our infantry about four miles beyond that place." Munford was pursued beyond Charlestown by the infantry and Lochren says: "Night and heavy rain coming on we started to return [from the pursuit] in intense darkness, in which our guides lost their way and the most of the night was spent in comfortless wandering, not reaching Charlestown until near day." Col. Lee, the commander of the temporary brigade, to which the First Minnesota was attached on the expedition, reported: "The troops under my command were not engaged with the enemy, but their behavior was in every respect perfectly satisfactory."

## PREPARING FOR "ON TO RICHMOND" AGAIN.

About the 4th of October, Sully's Brigade was joined by a new regiment, the Nineteenth Maine, Col. Frederick D. Sewall. It was one of the new regiments recruited and organized in August, and came out with the new levy under the President's call for 300,000 more, "shouting the battle cry of freedom." Nearly all of the new regiments organized under this call in the Eastern and Middle States came to the Army of the Potomac, and as has been noted some of them came in time to take part in the battle of Antietam. The Nineteenth Maine was a splendid regiment, nearly 900 strong. It was badly needed by the Brigade, which had lost nearly 800 of its members at Antietam. Twenty-one other new infantry regiments came to McClellan's army about this time.

For some time McClellan had been getting his army ready for another invasion of Virginia. He began this preparation about September 25, but he had what Lincoln called "the slows" to such a degree that it seemed he would never complete his preparations. As stated, Lincoln peremptorily ordered him to move the army October 6. Again and again was the order repeated, and again and again was it disregarded. For one excuse McClellan said he had but 1,000 cavalry and that arm of the service was badly deficient in horses and must have a fresh supply. But Quartermaster General Meigs showed by his records that 10,254 horses and a very large number of mules had been sent to the Army of the Potomac in the six weeks ending October 14, and Gen. Meigs wanted to know what had become of them. McClellan then said his horses were fatigued, and President Lincoln wrote him asking: "What have the

horses of your army done since the battle of Antietam that fatigues anything?"

When Lincoln told him that he ought to improve the fine Indian summer weather by moving down into Virginia against the enemy, McClellan replied that he could not do so because of the deficiency in his army of all kinds of supplies. As early as the 11th of October he said his army had no shoes, and added: "The men cannot march without shoes." He indicated that a great destitution of necessaries existed in his army, which, as was well known and still remembered, was not the fact. Most of the troops were well supplied; the others were by no means destitute, and no barefooted men are remembered at this time.

And yet in the middle of October one-third of Lee's **men** were literally barefoot--not a shoe on their feet--and as to their other clothing there was much to be desired! In some companies, as the Southern historians tell us, there were not more than a dozen pairs of shoes and the men took turns wearing them when they went on picket. Not one-half of the men had tents; most of them were sheltered in brush arbors covered with rubber blankets, etc.

Now, the men of the Army of the Potomac were just as patriotic as the Confederates, and if Gen. McClellan had told them that the necessities of the case demanded that for a time they march without shoes and endure other hardships, they would cheerfully have done so. Stonewall Jackson consoled his barefoot men by telling them to wait until after the next battle, when they could get plenty of shoes "off the feet of the dead Yankees." McClellan could have told his men that their every want would be supplied in due time.

At <sup>one</sup>~~the~~ time Gen. McClellan concluded that the army could

not move until it had from 3,000 to 4,000 hospital tents, and he asked the Quartermaster General how long it would take to make and supply them; but Gen. Meigs answered that it would take quite a long time and cost \$500,000. (War Recs., Vol. 19, part 2, p. 396.) It seemed as if he were on the hunt for excuses for his delay in marching.

Finally, after a long and inexcusable wait, from September 22 to October 29, the Army of the Potomac began to cross the river for which it was named and to take the first steps forward into Virginia, with Lee's army in front of Richmond as its main objective point.

Filed to Area

for John Embolt

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Right

## McCLELLAN ADVANCES INTO THE DOUDOUN VALLEY.

On the 26th of October the extreme advance of that part of McClellan's army on the Maryland side of the Potomac began crossing that river on a pontoon bridge at Berlin, five miles below Harper's Ferry. The crossing was well under way on the 29th. The Sixth Corps was the last to cross, on November 2.

The Second Corps, to which the First Minnesota belonged, and which formed the head of McClellan's great infantry column, crossed the Shenandoah at Harper's Ferry, October 30, and, passing around the base of Loudoun Heights in Loudoun Valley, moved southward nearly to Hill Grove, encamping that night in the woods.

This first day of the march was very hot. The Nineteenth Maine, inexperienced in campaigning, had an uncomfortable experience. Its men were newly recruited and had large outfits of clothing. Their knapsacks were stuffed on the inside and covered with articles strapped and tied on the outside. As the march progressed the burdens grew heavier, and finally, in order to lighten them so as to be able to march at all, the men began throwing their clothing away to the sides of the road. First the overcoats went, then the extra blankets, then trousers, etc., until finally the men were in good sensible marching order. McClellan protested that his regiments were not fit to march because they were insufficiently supplied with clothing, but surely the Nineteenth Maine was not one of them. The surplus clothing that they threw away on this march <sup>dec</sup>decorated the roadway for a distance.

The First Minnesota and the other older regiments had gone through about the same experience that the Maine boys now met,

and had profited by it. Lochren says: "As our regiment marched next behind the Maine regiment, with light knapsacks, and were well seasoned to fatigue, the men picked up the discarded new overcoats and much other clothing and before night were fully supplied for the cold weather which set in a week afterward." The Maine boys soon learned, as their older comrades had, not to draw clothing when expecting marching orders.

The last day of October was spent pleasantly by the greater part of the Brigade in picket duty and scouting up among the Blue Ridge mountains. McClellan made shrewd demonstrations against the gaps in the Blue Ridge mountains, as if he meant to pass them and go westward and attack Lee and Jackson on the Occoquan. The passage of the Blue Ridge range could be made only at the gaps, which were not plentiful or always where they were desired. Every important gap was now defended by a detachment of Stuart's cavalry, with occasionally a small party of infantry.

November 1 Gorman's Division occupied Gregory's Gap in the Blue Ridge, 13 miles south of Harper's Ferry. Sunday morning, November 2, the Brigade marched on and bivouacked in line of battle during the night in front of <sup>n</sup>Snicker's Gap, which is 18 miles south of Harper's Ferry, about 25 miles a little south of east of Winchester, and ten miles east of Berryville. A part of Hancock's Division held the Gap. At first the Confederate Cavalry did not offer much opposition to the capture of the Gap, but after it was occupied they came back to regain it; a few rounds from two batteries drove them away.

At the east end of Snicker's Gap is the little hamlet of Snickersville, named for its founder, Col. George Snicker, who

graded and improved the gap under a charter from the Virginia Legislature in Colonial times. On the 3d the Division moved about ten miles south to Upperville, four miles east of Ashby's Gap, another noted pass through the Blue Ridge, 28 miles outh of Harper's Ferry. Hancock's Division was left at Snickersville. On the 4th Sully's Brigade moved westward from Upperville to Paris, a little village at the east end of Ashby's Gap. Upperville now has a population of 350 and Paris of 168; each was nearly as large during the war.

The Confederates were preparing for a fight at Ashby's Gap and Gorman's Division and some cavalry moved against them. Approaching the Gap a line of battle was formed and skirmishers were thrown out. The batteries shelled the woods in front, the Fifteenth Massachusetts rushed and carried an important hill, and it seemed as if a battle were imminent. A heavy reserve occupied the hill and the pickets were thrown out half a mile beyond. The small Confederate force retired after developing the Union force and the next morning at 9 o'clock the Division was in unopposed and undisputed possession of Ashby's Gap. These demonstrations of McClellan against the gaps were, as has been said, merely deceptions.

The First Minnesota took part in the skirmishing operations at Snicker's and Ashby's Gaps. While Gen. Gorman was viewing the country from Ashby's Gap, and the troops were resting along the road leading thereto, Gen. McClellan and his staff passed along on the way to the front.

Gorman's Brigade stayed in what was afterwards written of as "the dirty little village of Paris" until November 6. After

the train had passed, the brigade followed as rear guard. Some sutlers that remained at the Gap to trade with the citizens were captured and their possessions confiscated by a dash of Stuart's Cavalry that had lurked in the rear watching for an opportunity to damage the Yankees without much risk to themselves. The Brigade remained in a commanding position, only a few miles from Ashby's Gap until November 8.

The march of the Brigade and Division, after it passed the Blue Ridge to the east near Harper's Ferry, down to Upperville and Paris, was through the famous Loudoun County. This county is nearly 30 miles long by from 20 to 25 miles wide, and its northern boundary is the Potomac. Leesburg, near Edwards Ferry and Ball's Bluff, is the county seat. The great Loudoun Valley was then a beautiful and fertile country with pleasant villages and thrifty farms. It had never been overrun by the Yankee troops, but the Confederates had made frequent requisitions upon it.

The people were mainly of Confederate sympathies and hated Yankees intensely, although a majority of them had never seen one in all their lives. Nearly all the able-bodied men were in the Confederate army, either as volunteers or conscripts. The county is largely hilly and mountainous, and in the mountain districts were plenty of Union men, mostly of the poorer class. About 200 citizens of Loudoun County served in the Union army, and Capt Sam Means's company, the "Loudoun Rangers," performed valuable services as scouts and raiders, frequently routing Confederate detachments and on two or three occasions defeated Mosby's men. In 1863 and 1864 Loudoun County was the scene of almost daily raids and

encounters between Mosby's and other Confederates and detachments of Union cavalry.

South of Loudoun, with the boundary running east and west a few hundred yards north of Paris and Upperville, is Fauquier County, whose county seat, about the center of the county, is Warrenton. Fauquier is largely a replica of Loudoun County, and it too in 1862 had fine farms with bountiful supplies for an army. These counties were often bragged about by the Confederates as examples of the high state of civilization generally prevalent throughout the Confederacy. The country was well enough, but not nearly so finely developed, attractive, and prosperous as scores of the older counties of Minnesota today. The so-called "plantations" were not so well kept and so valuable as thousands of farms in the North Star State have been for twenty years, and the dwelling houses of the wealthiest planters were not superior in any respect to very many of the residences of our Minnesota farmers. The ideal and much written of "magnificent plantations and palatial residences" in the South were almost mythical, and at least few and far apart.

But Loudoun and Fauquier Counties abounded in things more attractive to McClellan's soldiers than fine plantations and attractive manor houses. The farms fairly swarmed with fat cattle, pigs, sheep, and poultry, all belonging to the enemy and fair spoil for the Union soldiers--as fair as was the property of the Union Marylanders to Lee's men. In particular the country abounded in nice fat sheep, to the raising of which the rolling and hilly country was well adapted.

There were stringent orders against foraging on the country, notwithstanding it was as Confederate in sympathy as

South Carolina, for McClellan was yet as kind to his enemies as he had been on the Peninsula. Notwithstanding any of the owners of these flocks and herds would have exultantly shot the general or any of his men in the back if they could have done so without discovery; and notwithstanding the Confederate forces had been and would continue to be supplied with meat from Fauquier and Loudoun, yet the Union soldiers were forbidden, under penalties extending even to death, to take any sort of supplies from the hostile people through whom they marched. They were not allowed to take a sheep or a pig from a pasture or an apple from an orchard; the only fruit they were allowed to gather was persimmons, which were then eatable, grew wild, and were very abundant. McClellan still sustained among the Confederates his Peninsula reputation of being "the only gentleman in the Yankee army."

But his rigorous orders were not invariably obeyed. The natural human carnivorous nature among the soldiers would not always be appeased by rather scanty rations of greasy and salty pork or tough and salty corned beef. In particular there was a craving for the savory and fresh mutton so plentiful in the country and so easily obtained. In his History of the Second Army Corps, (p.134) referring to the situation at this time, Gen. Francis A. Walker says:

Although this was one of the best-disciplined commands of the army, with a high repute for good order, a mania now seized the troops for killing sheep. When the fat and fleecy flocks of the country through which we were now called to pass came in sight, discipline for the moment gave way, at least so far as mutton was concerned. In vain did officers storm and swear; in vain was the saber used freely over the heads of the offenders who were caught; in vain, even, did the provost guard of one division fire ball cartridges from the road at their comrades crossing a field on a sheep foray. By order of Gen. Couch, every evening upon coming into camp three courts, one in each Division, were in session with sheep raiders before them. Sharp and summary were the punishments inflicted, but the sheep killing went on as bad as ever.

Lochren relates an incident of sheep foraging at this time, when some First Minnesota men, by their presence of mind, escaped punishment for cold-blooded sheepicide and put the offense upon some of the unsophisticated Nineteenth Maine:

One of our men, an incorrigible forager, at the close of a day's march, with the assistance of two or three comrades, captured a fat sheep in the edge of the wood, and while they were dressing it some members of the Maine regiment came up and watched the proceedings. The chief forager chanced to see what no one else saw--a squad of the provost guard approaching stealthily through the brush. Speaking quickly, but in low tones, to his comrades, he said: "Boys, that other sheep we got is enough for us; let us give this one to these Maine boys." His comrades knew there was no "other sheep," but also knew there was good reason for his sudden generosity. They replied, "all right," and all four of them hurried away. The Maine men had begun to divide the carcass when the provost guard pounced upon them, and in spite of their protests marched them away. Passing Division headquarters later in the evening, the Minnesota forager saw the luckless Maine boys tied up to cross bars and added insult to their injuries by calling out to them: "Say, boys, how did you like your mutton?"

Lochren further says that the people of the country were all staunch Confederates, but were willing and even anxious to sell their produce to the soldiers for Confederate paper currency. At this time a certain Philadelphia concern was flooding the army with counterfeit Confederate notes, and a large volume of this spurious paper was soon circulating among the people of Loudoun and Fauquier. But the U. S. authorities soon stopped the manufacture and passing of the bogus "rebel money." To make or pass it was made a crime of equal gravity with the crime of making or passing spurious U. S. money.

The weather in the Valley during the first days of the marching was changeable. Some days were hot. The 7th of November there was a chilling wind and the air was full of frost and flying snow the greater part of the day. But the men were well supplied with clothing, tents, and other necessary articles and there was not much discomfort.

## WHAT THE MOVEMENT MEANT.

McClellan's movement down Loudoun Valley, east of the Blue Ridge Mountains and between Lee's army and Washington, was, as has been previously stated, another movement on Richmond. His primary destination was Culpeper C. H., 60 miles south of Harper's Ferry, and his secondary objective point was Gordonsville, 25 miles south of Culpeper. En route he meant to occupy Warrenton, at the southern end of the famous turnpike from Washington, and the terminus of a branch of the Orange & Alexandria Railway; Warrenton is the county seat of Fauquier. Culpeper and Gordonsville are both on the Orange & Alexandria Railway, which line Gen. McClellan expected to use to draw his supplies from Washington.

New enlistments under President Lincoln's call and other re-enforcements had increased McClellan's army very largely after the battle of Antietam. October 25 he said it numbered 116,000 men; by Nov. 1 he had sent a brigade back to Maryland and the Twelfth Corps, under Slocum, was left at Harper's Ferry. He probably invaded Virginia with 100,000 officers and men, and 6,000 were cavalry, under Gen. John Buford.

## LOOK OUT, GEN. MCCLELLAN!

The President had by this time become greatly dissatisfied with Gen. McClellan. He had little faith in the General's plan of invasion. He had no faith that Lee would be fooled by McClellan's demonstrations against the Blue Ridge gaps as if he meant to suddenly go through them and fall on the Confederate forces about Winchester and the ~~Occoquan~~ <sup>Opequan</sup>. He feared that after the Union army had proceeded 50 miles or so it would find the Confederates in its front disputing every inch of the way to Richmond. So Lincoln said, after consenting to trust McClellan once more: "If he shall permit Lee to cross the Blue Ridge to the east, and place his army between Richmond and the Army of the Potomac, I shall remove him from command." (Nic. & Hay, Vol. 6, p.188.) And on the 5th of November Lincoln learned that Longstreet's Corps had crossed the Blue Ridge and was firmly fixed at Culpeper C. H., squarely across McClellan's front and at the first objective point the Union general aimed! He had reached Culpeper the evening of the 3d, the day after McClellan's rear guard crossed the Potomac.

## THE CONFEDERATE SITUATION.

Lee's army in its camps about Winchester and on the Opequan was much stronger than it was soon after the battle of Antietam. The men were rested, plenty of provisions came up from Richmond, several thousands of stragglers came in, and several thousand conscripts under the new conscription law were added to the army. The effective total of the army September 30, about two weeks after Antietam, was 48,933 infantry and artillery and 5,000 cavalry--nearly 54,000. October 10 the force "present for duty" was 68,033, including 6,500 cavalry. Watch it grow. November 10 it was 72,000. (See Vol. 19, part 2, War Recs.)

If only Lee's men had all been provided with tents and blankets and full suits of clothes they might have been happy, for they had plenty to eat. But there was a great scarcity of tents and blankets and November 10, when Longstreet's Corps was at Culpeper, having marched across from Winchester way 60 miles and more, a great many of his men were stark barefoot and had been for some time. They were living witnesses to dispute McClellan's statement that "men cannot march without shoes." Gen. Longstreet reported (War Recs., Vol. 19, part 2) that his Corps numbered about 32,000 men and of these--not counting those in Ransom's Division--6,466 men were literally barefoot, as follows:

R. H. Anderson's Division	2,003
Pickett's Division	2,071
McLaws's Division	1,475
Hood's Division	758
Alexander's Artillery Battalion	95
Washington Artillery Battalion	64
Total	6,466

Stonewall Jackson's Corps was said to be in worse con-

dition. The weather was bleak and cold and ice and frost formed every night.

Lee and his generals soon perceived McClellan's plans. They were never deceived for a moment by his demonstrations against the mountain passes. As early as November 1, before McClellan's army had all got across the Potomac, Longstreet was sent with his Corps down to the southeast to Culpeper to head off its movement on Richmond. Longstreet marched his men the 60 miles over the roughroads in three days, taking it easy on account of the barefooted men.

Stonewall Jackson with his Corps of 30,000 was left back in the Shenandoah Valley. He took position on the road from Berryville to Charlestown, about twelve miles west of Snicker's Gap. If McClellan should pass through that Gap and come toward Berryville, Jackson would meet him and check him till Longstreet could come to his assistance.

When McClellan learned that Longstreet was at Culpeper and Stonewall Jackson at Berryville, and the two over 50 miles apart, he had a splendid opportunity to at least strike Jackson a heavy blow if not a crushing one. A swift march of 25 miles westward through Snicker's and Ashby's Gaps would do the business. A small force behind him at each Gap would hold it against the attempted passage of a force from Longstreet ten times as strong, and Longstreet could not cover the distance in less than two days. Or McClellan could have hurried on and fallen on Longstreet with his 30,000 at Culpeper and demolished him and then finished Jackson at his leisure.

But McClellan was not that kind of a general. He did nothing but putter around in Fauquier County. On the 6th of November

he pushed the First Corps to Warrenton, ~~xxx~~ where it went into camp; the same day Hancock's Division of the Second went to Rectortown and went into camp. The troops were scattered over the face of the earth. The Fifth Corps was at Snicker's Gap; the Ninth Corps at Waterloo, on the North Fork of the Rappahannock, eight miles west of Warrenton; the Eleventh Corps was away to the east at Thoroughfare and Hopewell Gaps in the Bull Run Mountains, not far from Bull Run battlefield, and Sickles's Division was guarding the railroad near Manassas Junction. Gen. McClellan could not have got his army in compact form in less than two days.

## GOOD-BYE, GEN. MCCLELLAN.

On the night of November 7, when Gen. McClellan was at Rectortown and Sumner was there and Hancock's Division was there and Gorman's old brigade was out near Ashby's Gap, an order came from the Secretary of War "by direction of the President" relieving McClellan of the command of the Army of the Potomac. Gen. Burnside was appointed his successor. Burnside protested vigorously and for a long time against accepting the command. He said frankly and earnestly: "I am not competent to command such a large army as this." He wanted McClellan left in command and said that, "if things could be satisfactorily arranged," that officer could command the army better than any other general in it. Gen. Burnside was determined to refuse the position until some one with authority told him that if he didn't take it Gen. Hooker would be appointed. Whereupon all the officers present exclaimed "Oh, horrors!"

This is what certain military critics say of McClellan. Swinton:(p.231) "He ranges with that middle category of meritorious commanders\*\*\*generally unfortunate in war." Gen. Palfrey, who served long under him and was wounded at Antietam, says: "I regard McClellan as a failure. He was not only a disappointment, but his tall talk made him an aggravating disappointment. His talk about his perfect readiness to take Richmond, of dying with his army, etc., did not comport with his inadequate performance of his part even in a defensive battle and his almost invariable absence from a battlefield when the battle was raging. And yet we ought not to regard McClellan with anger or contempt; sorrow is the true

feeling." Lord Wolsely styles him " a mediocre general both in planning and executing." <sup>(The Civil War in America, Vol. 2, 557)</sup> The Comte de Paris ~~extols~~ extols the personal qualities of "our old chief," but has no praise for his military abilities. The undisputed records show the facts. They are clear and accessible to every one.

McClellan himself, in the letters he wrote just after his removal, gave perhaps sufficient reasons for the President's action. They were of the general tenor that his virtual dismissal was a great calamity for the country, and that the Administration would be mighty sorry for what it had done to him some day. In one letter announcing his removal he wrote: "They have made a great mistake. Alas, for my poor country!" (Own Story, p.660.) Proper stuff for an American general to write!

But it may be disputed that he was really conceited. He was too timid, too cautious. It seems that he knew his own abilities and inabilities. He knew that he was not a great general, and he feared to deliver a great battle or make an important campaign, because he did not know how to manage either. So he was always delaying and making excuses for his delays. The press and the people had over-praised him; they said he was a mighty genius, "a young Napoleon," and he wanted to live up to his reputation and not hazard it. The result was that from August, 1861, to November, 1862, he had control in Virginia of from 200,000 to 300,000 men, with 100,000 to 200,000 of them ~~always xxxxxxxx~~ under his immediate command. The enemy was always less than half his strength in every important detail, and yet when McClellan

had ended his campaigning--during which he was never under fire but once--the Confederate forces in Virginia were stronger and in better shape every way than when he first met them. A really skillful and aggressive general would have captured Richmond and driven every opposing force from the State months before.

And yet a very large majority of the Army of the Potomac believed in Gen. McClellan. At least they admired him. They had not studied his career and his operations, and thought but little about them. They did not realize how much valuable time and means he had wasted and how many valuable lives he had sacrificed and how little he had accomplished. They could not know how many neat opportunities he had thrown away or failed to perceive. They liked him, many passionately admired him, but they could not tell why to save their lives.

Lochren says that when the news of McClellan's removal reached Gorman's Division, "officers and men were stunned and exasperated almost to the point of mutiny.\*\*\*Deepest sorrow and despondency prevailed on November 10, when the army was drawn up to take leave of McClellan. Strong men shed tears. A majority of the line officers of the First Minnesota sent in their resignations," etc. The resignations were soon recalled, however, and the men had to accept the situation.

BURNSIDE'S CAMPAIGN TO THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

With a strong military and naval force Gen. Burnside had, a year before, driven away an inferior force of "Tar Heel" (North Carolina) Confederates from Roanoke Island and acquired a deserved reputation as a brave soldier and good general. His first fight in the war was at Bull Run, where after fighting his brigade very well for half an hour or so, he, by McDowell's permission, withdrew it to the rear to let the men "fill their cartridge boxes," and he never brought them back to the battle! His last feat of arms had been at Antietam, where he wasted four hours with 10,000 men in foolish and fruitless efforts to carry the Burnside Bridge, and then Gen. Sturgis took two regiments and captured the structure in six minutes, driving away its defenders.

But Gen. Burnside was not only to be tolerated, but respected. He was thoroughly loyal and patriotic. He was sincere, honest, and frank. He was not a great general and he denied that he was. He was as good a general as McClellan, but he said he was not. He did not want the command of the Army of the Potomac and he protested for two days against taking it. He said he would do his best, but it was evident that he "feared his fate too much" and had no hope of success.

Gen. Longstreet (Batts. & Leads., Vol. 3, p. 70) tells us what Gen. Lee thought of the substitution of Gen. Burnside for Gen. McClellan:

The order assigning Gen. Burnside to command was received at Gen. Lee's headquarters, then at Culpeper Court House, about 24 hours after it reached Warrenton--but not through official courtesy! Gen. Lee, on receiving the news, said he regretted to part with McClellan, "for," he added, "we always understood each other so well. I fear they may continue to make changes until they find some one whom I don't understand." *Gen. Lee's fear was verified when Gen. Meade was appointed.*

Certainly Lee always "understood" McClellan and acted accordingly; McClellan "understood" that Lee was a dangerous antagonist and seemed to avoid him as often and as long as possible.

Having had the command of the army virtually forced upon him, Gen. Burnside assumed it reluctantly. He gathered up the greater part of the divisions that McClellan had scattered about, apparently fearing an attack from any quarter or all quarters at once, and concentrated them about Warrenton. Here he spent ten valuable days. In order to get the reins of the army well into his hands, he divided it into three teams which he called Grand Divisions.

These were the Right Grand Division, commanded by Gen. Sumner and composed of the Second Corps under Gen. Couch and the Ninth Corps under Gen. Orlando B. Willcox; the Center Grand Division, commanded by Gen. Hooker and composed of the Third Corps under Gen. George Stoneman and the Fifth Corps under Gen. Dan Butterfield; the Left Grand Division, commanded by Gen. Franklin and composed of the First Corps under Gen. John F. Reynolds and the Sixth Corps under Gen. Wm. Farrar Smith. Distributed among the Grand Divisions were 15 cavalry regiments organized into four brigades, the whole commanded by Gen. Alfred Pleasanton.

Gen. Hancock still commanded the First and Gen. French the Third Division of the Second Corps, while the Second Division was now commanded by Gen. O. O. Howard, Gen. Gorman having gone to the West. The First Minnesota was still in Gen. Couch's Second Corps, and in the Second Division and in that Division's First Brigade, now commanded by Gen. Sully. The other regiments of the Brigade

were the old comrades, the Fifteenth Massachusetts, Maj. Chase Philbrick; the ~~XXXXXX~~ Thirty-Fourth New York, Col. James A. Suiter; the Eighty-Second New York, Lieut. Col. James Huston, and the new Nineteenth Maine, Col. Fred D. Sewall. There were attached to the Brigade two companies of sharpshooters, the First Company of Massachusetts, Capt. Wm. Plumer, and the Second of Minnesota, Capt. W. F. Russell.

Gen. McClellan, after he had been superseded, declared that his removal had spoiled a plan of his, which, if he had been allowed to execute it, would have nearly ended the war. This plan was to go from Warrenton to Culpeper, drive away Longstreet, push on to Gordonsville, drive away the Confederates there, and then Heigh-ho for Richmond!

But after some days of study and deliberation, this was not Burnside's plan. He and McClellan were very intimate and friendly and many of their ideas were the same. He said before the Committee on the Conduct of the War that he never believed McClellan had any immediate designs on Gordonsville; for he feared Longstreet, a lion in his path at Culpeper, and Stonewall Jackson, a tiger ready to spring from the Blue Ridge upon his right or west flank. And Gen. Burnside said that he feared them in some wise too; at least he feared that they would interfere with and cause serious delay in an immediate advance on Gordonsville.

So Gen. Burnside resolved to abandon offensive action on the Gordonsville line and make a change of base from Warrenton to Fredricksburg. The latter is on the Rappahannock River, 35 miles or so southeast of Warrenton, and 12 miles southwest of the Potomac River, which was at the mouth of Acquia Creek, at Acquia Station,

the eastern terminus of the Fredrick<sup>e</sup>sburg & Potomac Railroad. Gen. Burnside thought Fredrick<sup>e</sup>sburg would make an admirable base for his operations against Richmond. The ground was high, dry, and easily defended and his supplies could be brought by water up the Potomac to Acquia Creek Station and from thence by rail over the Fredrick<sup>e</sup>sburg & Potomac Railroad to Fredrick<sup>e</sup>sburg, which is on the south side of the Rappahannock, in Spottsylvania County, and nearly 40 miles due north of Richmond, and 16 miles by rail southwest of Acquia Creek Station.

Burnside, like McClellan, would not move against Lee and Longstreet's Corps at Culpeper, with the chance that Jackson would be there. He did not seem to believe that the cheapest and quickest way to capture Richmond would be to defeat these Confederate forces-- these divided armies-- which a well planned and well executed battle would do. Swinton tells us (p.233) on the authority of one of Burnside's Corps commanders "then most intimate in his confidence" that Gen. Burnside did not intend to try to reach Richmond until the next spring. He meant to pass the winter at Fredrick<sup>e</sup>sburg and in the spring set out for Richmond, via the Peninsula and the James River, McClellan's old route.

But he must first capture Fredrick<sup>e</sup>sburg and that place was on the south side of the Rappahannock, where the stream was troublesome to cross. Burnside's army was on the north side of the river, and the Confederates were on the south side ~~of~~ ready to dispute his passage wherever he might attempt it. If, moving down from Warrenton, Gen. Burnside attempted to get on the south side by crossing far up the stream where it could be forded, he would have to cross two considerable streams, the North Fork of the Rappahannock and the

Rapidan, which uniting ten miles northwest of Fredericksburg, form the main Rappahannock. Then, after crossing high up, his army would have to enter into that almost impassable region called the Wilderness. At and in the near vicinity of Fredericksburg the river could not easily be forded.

It will be remembered that Gen. McDowell with his Corps was at Fredericksburg in the summer of 1862 on his way to join McClellan, but was called back to help Gen. Pope. A wagon bridge across the river was destroyed at the time. Therefore the country was well known to the Union generals.

If Burnside had been a good general, he would have marched swiftly and determinedly against the Confederate armies before winter set in. Then when he defeated them he could take his time in marching against Richmond.\* At that season of the year in Virginia, with the cold, snowy, sleety, rainy weather and the practically impassable Virginia roads with their deep mud and unbridged streams, it was nonsense to think of marching on Richmond by the Fredericksburg route or any other. Perhaps, as has been said, Gen. Burnside did not really mean to try it.

At that date the gospel of good roads had not been preached to the people of Virginia, or at least not many of them had embraced it. Except a few turnpikes, the thoroughfares of this proud and conceited old State were simply wretched. In time of

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\*"Burnside should have gone from Warrenton to Chester Gap [northeast of Warrenton] He might then have held Jackson and fought ~~BRAX~~ me or held me and fought Jackson. With skill equal to the occasion he should have had success"--Gen. Longstreet, Batts. & Leads., Vol. 3.

Rapidan, which, uniting ten miles northwest of Fredricksburg

peace they were execrable, but in war they were indescribable. All roads to Richmond were unsuited to the passage of a large army at any time.

The project of changing the line of operations to the Fredericksburg route was not thoroughly approved at Washington, but was finally assented to. Lincoln had removed McClellan because he would not march rapidly and give battle to the enemy, and now Burnside was practically running away from a fight. But Lincoln did not want to change commanders every week, and so on the 15th of November Gen. Burnside put his troops in motion from Warrenton for Fredericksburg. It was determined to march to Falmouth, a little hamlet on the north bank of the Rappahannock, a mile or so above Fredericksburg, and cross the river by a pontoon bridge and seize the high bluffs on the south bank. Burnside had no pontoons with him; they were to be sent to him from Washington.

Sumner's Right Grand Division led the van and after a two days' march arrived at Falmouth on the afternoon of the 17th. Fredericksburg was then occupied by Col. Ball's Fifteenth Virginia Cavalry, four companies of Mississippi infantry from Barksdale's Brigade, and Lewis's Virginia battery. When the head of Sumner's Column reached the bluff overlooking the river, Lewis's battery opened fire. Sumner ordered up the nearest Union battery, Pettit's, B, First New York, and in a few minutes it not only silenced the Confederate guns but drove all the gunners away.

Of course the "Old Bull of the Woods" was for dashing across the river at once. The river was fordable then, four miles above at Banks's Ford, and could be easily waded by infantry and crossed by the batteries. There was also another practicable ford

between Banks's and Fredericksburg. Gen. Sumner was very impatient to cross at once and take possession of Fredericksburg and the heights in the rear, but Burnside would not allow him to. In his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War Gen.

Sumner testified on this point:

My orders were not to cross; but the temptation was strong to go over and take these guns the enemy had left. That same night I sent a note to Gen. Burnside asking if I should take Fredericksburg in the morning should I be able to find a practicable ford, which, by the way, I knew when I wrote that I could find [having already found it] The General replied that he did not think it advisable to occupy Fredericksburg until his communications were established.--Report, p.657.

Burnside's inexcusable delay proved disastrous to his army and the Union cause. On the 19th and 20th Hooker's and Franklin's Grand Divisions came up, but no move was made to cross the river.

## LEE MOVES TO MEET BURNSIDE.

When Burnside's army began its march from Warrenton, Longstreet's Confederate Corps was at Culpeper. Jackson's Corps, except one Division, was west of the Blue Ridge and in the Shenandoah Valley. Swinton and others have criticised Gen. Lee for not moving to the rear of Burnside when he was near Fredericksburg, thus causing the Union general to fall back to the Potomac. Lee and his generals saw the opportunity and deliberated over it. They finally concluded to let Burnside come on to the Rappahannock unmolested; they knew his destination even before he left Warrenton, but did not know at just what point on the river he aimed.

They meant to let him come on to the river and then make it extremely disagreeable and unfortunate for him and his army before they could get away. Indeed Lee favored letting the fatuous Union general come clear down to the North and the South Anna, only comparatively a short distance north of Richmond, and then striving hard to prevent his ever returning. November 19, when Lee was at Culpeper, he wrote to Jackson that he had sent Longstreet to Fredericksburg, but added: "I do not now anticipate making a determined stand north of the North Anna." (War Recs., Vol. 21, p. 102.)

When Stonewall Jackson came to Fredericksburg he favored falling back to the North Anna, notwithstanding preparations had been made to fight at Fredericksburg. Lee and Jackson had no fear of the result of a battle on the Rappahannock, but thought that a victory behind the North Anna would produce more fruitful and valuable results. But Jeff Davis and the Secretary of War believed in

playing for what was in sight, and if a fight could be won at Fredericksburg let it be won. Even the second day after the great battle which came, Lee dispatched the Richmond authorities that if Burnside crossed his army at Port Royal he favored the following plan: "I think it more advantageous to retire to the ~~An~~nas and give battle than on the banks of the Rappahannock. My design was to have done so in the first instance." (War Recs., Vol. 21, p. 549; see also Longstreet in Batts. & Leads., Vol. 3, p. 72.)

The total strength of Lee's army menacing Burnside was at this time 86,583, of which force Longstreet's Corps had 37,512, Jackson's 38,532 and Stuart's Cavalry 10,539. These were present for duty; that is to say, they were ready to fight. (War Recs., Vol. 3, p. 1025.) The strength of the army had more than doubled since Antietam. This had been accomplished by a vigorous campaign against stragglers away from their commands and by a rigid enforcement of the conscript law.

It is but the truth to say that, after the summer of 1862, by far the greater part of the accessions to the Confederate army were conscripts. The volunteers did not constitute one-fourth of the recruits. Very many men volunteered, because they knew they would be conscripted and forced into the army anyhow, and if they volunteered they could select the regiment and the arm of service with which they wished to serve; but such enlistments can hardly be considered voluntary. Many an ex-Confederate soldier who has been wont to boast of his service for "Southern rights," would convey the idea that he enlisted willingly, while in reality he was forced or conscripted into the ranks. A strange fact is, however, that the Southern conscripts fought as well as the volun-

teers. In the Union army conscripts or drafted men formed a very small portion of the forces.

As soon as Burnside had developed his intention of occupying Fredericksburg, Stonewall Jackson was directed to bring his Corps from the Shenandoah Valley down to Orange Court House, which is 40 miles west of Fredericksburg and be prepared to join Longstreet at the latter town. Jackson came by slow marches, for the roads were rough, the weather inclement, some thousands of his men were stark barefoot, and all of them were indifferently clothed and supplied. Jackson reached Fredericksburg about December 1, having been for some days watching the lower Rappahannock, for Burnside pretended that he was about to cross the river at Port Royal, which is 20 miles below Fredericksburg. When he came up Jackson reported that 3,000 of his infantry had no muskets and that between 2,000 and 3,000 of them had no shoes, but were walking barefoot over the ground and in the snow. Those without muskets were conscripts newly impressed.

With Jackson's arrival the fate of Burnside's army was determined, and the determination was not in its favor.

## MCCLELLAN'S TACTICS STILL USED.

Gen. Burnside had always been in full sympathy with the tactics of Gen. McClellan, and now he steadily employed them. He delayed moving just as long as he could. He lost a week's time in moving from Warrenton. He rejected the Culpeper route and went to Fredericksburg to avoid a battle. He meant to cross the river, and intrench himself in the rear of the town before Lee and Longstreet could disturb him; but he moved so slowly that when he got to Falmouth, on the 20th, he saw just across the river, Longstreet's gray lines and red flags behind good intrenchments and defying him to try to cross the river. Delay! Delay! Delay!

Had Burnside let Sumner cross when he wanted to, all would have been well.

Burnside did not try to cross the river until December 11, three weeks after his arrival, and by that time the Confederates had been able to build such strong fortifications to shelter themselves that they had no fears whatever of the result of any attack. Gen. Burnside was not blamable for some days of this delay. Gen. Walker says, in his History of the Second Corps, (p.141) that the authorities at Washington had promised Gen. Burnside that pontoon boats to enable him to cross the Rappahannock should be sent to Falmouth and arrive there as soon as the army. Gen. Sumner's advance reached Falmouth, November 17; the whole army was up on the 20th; the pontoons did not come until the 25th.

Gen. Burnside's first care was for his supplies, and these were soon arriving regularly. A great depot was built at

Acquia Creek Station, where that stream empties into the Potomac, and big sea-going vessels could land or dock at that station. Then the railroad between the station and Fredericksburg was soon put in full running order, and supplies reached Burnside's army as regularly as if it had been encamped at Washington.

After thorough consideration, involving several days, Gen. Burnside decided to cross the river and attack the Confederates on the high ridges west of Fredericksburg. Some of the generals protested, but others said that if they did not fight, after all the preparation that had been made, they would be hooted at. It was understood, too, that the Administration at Washington desired a battle.

## THE BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG.

Passing over many of the preliminaries to the battle of Fredericksburg, it is necessary, in order that the great conflict be intelligently understood, to describe briefly the natural situation. At Fredericksburg the Rappahannock flows through a huge trough-shaped valley, resembling portions of the Minnesota Valley in our own State. A high ridge runs along either side, the river flowing in a general direction from northwest to southeast. On the south or west side, the ground at the river is flat and slopes gradually back to the crest of the ridge. A portion of this crest is called Marye's Heights (local pronunciation, Maree's Heights) or Marye's Hill, because the ground was then owned and partly occupied by the fine house and premises of a Col. Marye. It is now (1912) the fine dairy and stock farm of Capt. M. B. Rowe. On these heights and the crest of the ridge were the Confederate positions and fortifications. Between the river bank and the crest, on the level and the sloping land, was built the town of Fredericksburg.

On the north or east side of the river was another high and commanding ridge called Stafford Heights, because that side of the river is in Stafford County. Along this ridge, which equalled in height the west ~~r~~idge, was disposed the army of Gen. Burnside, whose artillery perfectly commanded the plain of Fredericksburg.

SUMNER DEMANDS THE CITY'S SURRENDER.

On the 21st of November Gen. Sumner demanded of the mayor and council of Fredericksburg the surrender of the city. He said his troops had been fired upon from it, and that it was and would continue to be occupied by detachments of the Confederate army, and that the whole town was in general rebellion, etc. If the demand was refused, the general said he would, after 16 hours, shell the town. In great alarm Mayor Slaughter ran to Gen. Longstreet and the latter said: "Answer Gen. Sumner that we shall not occupy the town, for he would drive us out of it in five minutes with his artillery." When the mayor told the general this, the latter said he would not shell the town. But eventually Longstreet's troops did occupy the town and Sumner shelled it.

## TROUBLE IN CROSSING THE RIVER.

Gen. Burnside now prepared to cross the Rappahannock and attack his enemies. He had feared to attack them in the open field, but now he would assault them behind strong fortifications! During the night of December 10, Col. Henry J. Hunt, Chief of Artillery, crowned Stafford Heights with 147 cannon bearing on Fredericksburg and the enemy's position. These cannon were to cover and assist in the crossing. At the same time the troops were moved forward to positions immediately behind the ridge, and the pontoon trains were drawn down to the river's brink.

*Leave out*

At first Gen. Burnside decided to make the passage of the river at or near Skinker's Neck, an ox-bow or horse-shoe bend in the river, about 12 miles below Fredericksburg. He began these preparations by moving down troops December 7. But Gen. Lee at once discovered the movement and sent down Dan Hill's Division to oppose it. Stonewall Jackson's Corps was also sent down in that direction and so disposed as to support Hill, at Skinker's Neck and Port Royal, or Longstreet, who had remained at Fredericksburg. Then, according to his report, Burnside's thoughts were: "I concluded that the enemy would be more surprised by a crossing at or near Fredericksburg, where we were making no preparations, than at Skinker's Neck, and I determined to make the attempt at the former place." But Gen. Lee refused to be "surprised." It was difficult to catch that old weasel asleep.

Gen. Burnside refused to attempt to cross at any place up the river, where it was narrower and shallower and the Confederates were not in strong position; but authorities say he should have done so, for then he would have struck Lee's weakest flank, and if the

Confederates were defeated they could have been pushed eastward to the Atlantic coast not many miles away. There were two good crossings above Fredericksburg--Banks's Ford, four miles up the river and the U. S. Ford, six miles beyond.

To ~~cross~~ his army Gen. Burnside ordered that the river be spanned by five pontoon bridges--three directly opposite the city and two a couple of miles below. On the three, Sumner's and Hooker's Grand Division <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ to make the passage by the two lower bridges.

At three o'clock on the morning of the 11th, while it was very dark, because very foggy, the pontoon boats were unloaded from their wagons. Swiftly and silently the engineer troops proceeded to lay the bridges opposite the town. But the artificers had laid only about one-third of the length of the bridges when at 5 A.M. they received sudden and hot volleys of musketry at short range from rifle men posted behind houses, walls, and in cellars along the water street of Fredericksburg, and almost instantly a Confederate signal gun was fired. The riflemen were detachments from Gen. Barksdale's Mississippi Brigade, with the 17th Mississippi in front and the 13th and 21st in rear support. They were of the command that had met the First Minnesota at Edwards' Ferry, at Savage's Station, and Antietam.

The pontoniers were of the Fifteenth and Fiftieth New York Engineers under Gen. Woodbury. They made nine desperate but unsuccessful attempts to lay the bridges. They lost 56 killed and wounded. Gen. Hancock sent the Fifty-Seventh and Sixty-Sixth New York, of Zook's Brigade, to support them and in the effort to do so these two regiments lost 162 men. Both the pontoniers and the

supports were soon driven away by the Mississippians, who numbered about 500. It was plain that the hornets' nest must be broken up and the hornets swatted and made to fly off. At Franklin's crossing, two miles below town, there was not much trouble. The Eighteenth and detachments of the Twenty-First Mississippi resisted the passage here, but by noon Franklin had two bridges across.

By the advice of the Confederate generals the inhabitants of Fredericksburg had nearly all left the city. Many went by the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad; others went to the country by wagon or on foot. They left behind the most of their belongings, because they could not carry them away. It was cold weather and there was much suffering. Col. Fiser, of the 17th Mississippi, drove away a number of people from Sophia street, early on the 11th, with only the clothing they had on.

There seemed no other way to drive out the 500 Mississippians (and a few Floridians) but to cannonade the part of the town where they were. So, at about 2 o'clock, by Gen. Burnside's orders, guns were opened on the little city and from Stafford Heights sent down a perfect storm of shot and shell, crushing the buildings along Sophia street and Princess Anne, running parallel with the river, as if a fiery metallic cyclone had descended upon them. The town caught fire in several places, but the shells continued to crash and burst and the solid shot to rain like huge hailstones. Yet still the plucky Mississippi hornets clung to their nests and continued to sting.

## THE HORNETS' NEST BROKEN UP.

During the height of the bombardment, another attempt was made to finish the half-completed bridge opposite the town, but this attempt failed. The day was wearing away; the Union operatives were at a standstill because of 500 men. The Confederates on the ridges were laughing and hooting. Then Gen. Hunt proposed that a party be sent across the river in open pontoon boats and drive away the Mississippians and allow the pontoniers to finish their work.

Howard's Division was called upon to furnish the men. He selected Dana's old brigade, now commanded by Col. Norman J. Hall. The Seventh Michigan and the Nineteenth Massachusetts volunteered to man the boats and make the crossing. The New York engineers ran away and would not row the boats, and men of the two regiments did the rowing and the firing as they crossed. The first party was 70 men of the Seventh Michigan. They hurriedly pulled across, formed under the bank, 20 of them returned in the boats for another load, and the other 50 ran up on Sophia street (the first street running along the river front) and began to punch out the hornets and break up their nests. In a few minutes they had killed and wounded 16 Mississippians and taken 31 prisoners. The rest of the regiment and the Nineteenth Massachusetts soon followed, and then came the Twentieth Massachusetts, and the Mississippians were driven back to Caroline street, the second street back from the river.

Then the Twentieth Massachusetts, led by Capt. George Macy, was ordered to charge up Hanover street in column and drive off the Mississippians, as if they were a lot of rioters disturbing the peace of the town. Very gallantly did the brave Twentieth

do its work, but it was a bloody job. It drove the Confederates from Caroline to Princess Anne, from Princess Anne to Charles, and from Charles to Prince Edward, at the western border of town. But as it charged, platoon after platoon fell, and 97 officers and men were killed and wounded in charging a distance of 50 yards. (Col. Hall's report.) The Seventeenth Mississippi lost 116 killed and wounded during the day; the loss of the Eighth Florida was 44 during the battle. The other Union regiments did not lose seriously. Only one ~~xx~~ man was killed in crossing the river. The bridges were completed near sundown.

That evening the whole of Howard's Division crossed and occupied Fredericksburg, and Hall's brigade skirmished sharply in the back streets. The next day, under cover of a heavy fog, the other Divisions (Hancock's and French's) of Couch's Second Corps and the Ninth Corps, under Gen. O. B. Willcox, passed over. Thus Sumner's entire Right Grand Division was now on the south side of the Rappahannock. At the same time Gen. Franklin crossed several detachments of his Left Grand Division by the bridges he had constructed a mile below the eastern limits of Fredericksburg. The Center Grand Division, under Gen. Hooker, was still held on the north bank of the river.

Though many of Howard's men felt that they were marching to their deaths as they crossed the river, yet all were cheerful and many were in high spirits. The Tammany Regiment had many jolly members who would not forego a rollicking song if they were to be shot the next minute. As the regiment approached the chilly, dark-rolling Rappahannock, many of the boys struck up a current negro minstrel song, "One More River to Cross," and sang it lustily and

with great relish all the way over the pontoons!

Howard's Division occupied the town of Fredericksburg the night of the 11th and many of the men slept on feather beds. For the houses and their ordinary contents were abandoned by the owners and were rapaciously looted by the soldiers. The whole day of the 12th was spent in bringing over the remainder of the troops, the batteries, the hospital stores, etc., in reconnoitering the Confederate positions, and in general preparation for the awful killing of the next day. That night the troops lay on their arms under a cold December sky and under depressing conditions, but all seemed cheerful and unapprehensive. Then came the morning of the 13th, and this was to be the day of battle.

During the forenoon of the 12th a thick fog, like a great heavy gray veil, hung over Fredericksburg and shielded from the observation of Lee, Longstreet, and Jackson the Union troops as they crossed the river and sat down in the town. The weather during the last week in November was unusually cold and some snow fell, and the same temperature prevailed during the first week in December. On the 5th several inches of snow fell. On the 7th it was as cold as the same day in Minnesota. The ground was frozen on the 10th and the artillery passed over without breaking it. But the 11th and 12th, though too cold for comfort, were a little milder, causing heavy fogs to rise from the river and its low banks.

## PRELIMINARIES OF THE BATTLE.

Gen. Burnside learned nothing from his expensive and criminal delay in crossing the stone bridge over Antietam Creek. He wasted and dallied away many precious days in getting ready to cross the Rappahannock, and he sacrificed many precious hours on that 12th of December/ in ~~mixing~~ pattering about, ostensibly preparing for battle. The Confederates had been given ample time to complete their fortifications and to man them, and had done so. They constituted one impregnable citadel after another, but they were each to be assaulted. The only possible chance to have carried them would have been by an attack made somehow and somewhere under cover of the fog, taking care that the assaulting force itself did not fall into confusion; but such a thing was never contemplated.

The battlefield of Fredericksburg presents the character of a broken plain stretching back from the southern bank of the Rappahannock from 600 yards to two miles. At these distances the field rises into a bold ridge that forms a slight angle with the river, and is itself commanded by an elevated plateau. This ridge from opposite Falmouth down to where it touches Massaponax Creek, is about six miles long. For its six miles it constituted the natural vantage ground which the Confederates had strengthened with earthworks and crowned with artillery. On Marye's Hill the cannon were so thickly and so well placed that Gen. Alexander, the Confederate Chief of Artillery declared to Gen. Longstreet: "They will rake the hillside as close as a fine-toothed comb; a chicken cannot live down there when the assault is being made." (Batts. & Leads., p. 79.)

Between the rear of the town and the main hill there then ran a canal, extending from a bend in the river above the town, southward nearly to the extreme southern limits of the town, when it turned eastward and emptied into Hazel Run; this canal turned a paper mill in the northwestern part of town. It had to be crossed by an assaulting party before the hill could be fairly attacked. Gen. Couch informed Gen. Burnside of this canal, but Gen. Burnside replied: "You are mistaken; there is no such canal or ditch. I was over the ground last August." Col. Christ stoutly asserted that there was such a canal, and then Burnside became very angry, but still contended that there was no canal..At noon of the 12th, by order of Gen. Patrick, the Provost Marshal, Capt. Cummings' Company, Eighty-Second New York (Sully's Brigade) went out to the paper mill, chased away the Confederate pickets, and turned off the water of the mill race that emptied into the canal which Burnside said did not exist.(Col. Huston's report.)

From the center of the town westward ran two prominent roads. The northern or plank road ran northwest to Culpeper Court House; the southern called the Telegraph road, ran almost due south towards Richmond. It had been used so long and washed out by heavy rains so frequently that its bed was from two to three feet below the surface, and certain writers call it the "sunken road." Both roads ascended the ridge and crossed the Confederate works at right angles. By the first mile of these roads and over the intervening ground the Union assault was to be made on <sup>the</sup> high ridge called Marye's Heights. This position formed the left of the Confederate line, and here Gen. Lee had disposed Longstreet's Corps, 30,000 men, whose infantry was behind a good stone wall on the east side of

the Telegraph road.\* It was these heights which Gen. Sumner's Right Grand Division was to assail.

The left of the Union line, composed of Franklin's Grand Division, was two miles below Fredericksburg proper. The plain here between the river and the western heights is nearly two miles wide. The ground was then scalloped and corrugated by spurs of hills, not so high as Marye's Heights, and then was covered with dark pines and leafless oaks. This position, forming the right of the Confederate line, was held by Stonewall Jackson's Corps, 28,000 strong. Jeb Stuart, with two brigades of cavalry, 3,500 men and 18 pieces of horse artillery formed the extreme right, extending down to Massaponax Creek, five miles below Fredericksburg.

The nature of the ground demanded that the attack should be made on the Union left by Franklin. The field there gave almost unimpeded room for the deployment of the assaulting columns out of deadly range of the enemy. The plain on the Union right, directly in the rear of Fredericksburg, was restricted in extent, cut up by a small stream called Hazel Run, by the canal mentioned, and by fences, ravines, a few buildings, etc. This plain presented no opportunity for deployment. Every movement would have to be made under fire, and the nature of the ground compelled a direct attack on Marye's Heights, terraced with breastworks, which, it seemed, looked contemptuously down upon all preparations to storm them.

Gen. Burnside changed and confused his own plans. On the evening of the 12th he ordered that Gen. Franklin, who now had

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\*There was a wall on both sides of the road, but that on the east side, which was breast high, was the one mostly used. (Longstreet.)

practically three Corps--his own two and two Divisions of the Third and one of the Ninth--and Gen. Bayard's cavalry division, ~~to~~ make the main attack on the left. According to Gen. Burnside, Franklin had 60,000 men and was to attack Stonewall Jackson, who had 28,000, and with Stuart's Cavalry 31,000. If Franklin succeeded and drove back Jackson, thus turning the Confederate right flank, then Sumner was to go forward and try to carry Marye's Heights. This plan was all well understood among the generals, and under the circumstances was not a very bad one.

But on the morning of the 13th, when Gens. Sumner and Franklin received their final instructions, they learned to their great amazement that having framed one plan of battle Gen. Burnside had determined to fight on another! He had changed plans over night, and the last state of his plans was lamentably worse than the first.

Under the new plan Franklin was not to make an effective attack, but to put in "one Division," ~~at least,~~ (one Division--count it) out of his 60,000 men, and try to carry the enemy's position. The order said: "You will send on e division, at least, to seize, if possible, the heights near Hamilton's Crossing and take care to keep it well supported and its line of retreat open." The rest of the Grand Division was to be held in reserve, "in position for a rapid movement down the old Richmond road," a road running west from the extreme Union left well around Jackson's flank, including Stuart's Cavalry and crossing the Massaponax. "One Division"-- or two Divisions at the most--of not more than 10,000, to assault and beat Stonewall Jackson's 30,000!

Gen. Sumner's instructions were of like tenor. He was to extend the left of his Grand Division to Deep Run, to connect with Franklin's. Then he was to get "a Division or more" in readiness to move "along the plank road and the telegraph road with a view to seizing the heights in the rear of the town;" but he was not to move this Division until ordered by Gen. Burnside, which meant that he must wait until Franklin's movement had succeeded. Gen. Burnside had sent one or two regiments at a time against the stone bridge across the Antietam for four hours and lost 800 men; now he was sending a division or two at a time against Lee's strong position held by 60,000 men. His plan contemplated two isolated ~~attacks~~ attacks by fractional forces on strong positions, movements which never succeed.

## THE ATTACK OF FRANKLIN'S LEFT GRAND DIVISION.

*Struggling of the*

That Saturday, December 13, 1862, began with the morning sun ~~struggling~~ to penetrate a thick haze which enveloped Fredericksburg and the surrounding valley. In his report Gen. Longstreet says: "The dense fog concealed the enemy from view; but his commands, 'Forward--guide center--march!' were distinctly heard at different points near my right." About 10 o'clock the lifting fog revealed the left of the Union army, under Franklin, spread out on the valley and plain below town and showed the flags and bayonets of a column advancing to the attack.

Gen. Franklin selected Gen. Meade's as the "one Division" to make the assault on Stonewall Jackson; but he sent Gibbon's to support its right, and ordered Doubleday's to be ready for any emergency. These Divisions were all of Gen. Reynolds's First Corps. Meade went out and up, taking his batteries along and putting ahead a strong line of skirmishers, the regiments following close after. To the musketry firing and the fierce discharges of artillery, which did serious injury, the Confederates made no reply with musket or cannon until Meade's battle line reached a point-blank range from the woods in which they were concealed; then the Confederate batteries opened with shell and canister and the infantry got busy with their muskets.

Meade's Division was composed of three brigades or 15 regiments of Pennsylvanians and four Pennsylvania batteries--all Pennsylvanians and mostly Pennsylvania Dutch, mighty good men to have on a charge. They ran toward the Confederate line so fast that three Confederate batteries down by the railroad had barely time to limber up and get away. When the Confederate fire opened they plunged right into it and through it. They drove Lane's North

Carolina brigade back through the woods in a hurry. Then when Lane formed again they drove between his brigade and Archer's, swept back the right flank of one and the left flank of the other, captured 250 prisoners and five flags and brought them off the field.

They crossed the railroad and pushed up the crest and upon it at the road called the military road. Here they encountered Gen. Maxcy Gregg's big brigade, five regiments of South Carolinians, who at once opened a severe fire at short range. They pushed a lot of Confederates before them, and were practically accompanied by others, and Gen. Gregg thought they were <sup>all</sup> Confederates and began beating down the muskets of his men with his sword, saying, "They are friends." But just then a Pennsylvania musket ball found the vitals of Gen. Gregg and he fell from his horse, vomiting blood over his long black beard, and was dead in an hour. His men hardly slackened their fire. Then Early's Division, 7,715 men, came forward and attacked Meade on his front and right flank, and Pender's brigade came against his left flank and Trimble's brigade followed Pender, and <sup>finally</sup> the Pennsylvanians were driven back down the hill, with severe loss.

This ~~xx~~ loss would have been far heavier but for Gibbon's Division, which came up on Meade's right, but got separated from him in the woods. The Confederates took part of the force with which they were driving Meade, added other troops to it, and jumped upon Gibbon's Division now by itself. Gibbon's men were soon driven down the hill, as were two regiments of the Third Corps which had been sent to support them. Gen. Gibbon was severely wounded. The total loss of the three Divisions of the First Corps was 3,334, of which 561 were reported missing. The loss in Meade's Division was 1,853 and among his killed was the commander of the Third

Brigade, Gen. C. Feger Jackson, who was killed on the crest fairly within the Confederate lines while pursuing Lane's North Carolinians. Gibbon's Division lost 1,267; Doubleday's, in skirmishes to the left towards Massaponax Creek, lost but 214.

The Left Grand Division lost another general that day. Gen. George D. Bayard, commanding the cavalry brigade, was mortally wounded, dying the next afternoon. He was within ten feet of Gen. Franklin, and just rising from the ground to go to luncheon, when a round six-pound cannon ball from a gun on the crest of the hill crushed his thigh. He was but 27 years of age, a West Pointer, from Iowa, had already distinguished himself and gave great promise.

Save Torbert's New Jersey Brigade, the Sixth Army Corps did not prominently participate in Gen. Franklin's operations; its total loss was 446.

## THE ATTACK OF SUMNER'S RIGHT GRAND DIVISION.

At the time Burnside's attack on the Union left was fully developed, Gen. Sumner, on the right, was ordered to assail Marye's Heights. As has been said, the same idiotic direction given to Franklin, to take "one Division," was given to Sumner, but the latter's "one Division" was to be supported by another. Of the two Corps which composed Sumner's Grand Division Couch's Second Corps occupied the town, and Willcox's Ninth held the ground between the left of Couch's line and the right of Franklin's, down by Deep Run.

Gen. Burnside forbade Gen. Sumner from crossing the river to direct the assault of his men, for fear that he would do "something rash." (Batts. & Leads., page 110.) From the north side of the river, where he couldn't even smell the powder, the old "Bull of the Woods" had to give his orders and do his fighting! As per Burnside's orders, Sumner directed Couch to "form a column of a Division" and push out along the plank and telegraph roads and "seize the heights." Another Division was to be "held in readiness to advance in support of this movement." In sending the order to Couch for the movement, Col. Taylor, Sumner's Chief of Staff, added the following postscript: "The major-general [Sumner] thinks that as Howard's Division led into the town it is proper that one of the others take the advance." The men of the First Minnesota always felt grateful to Gen. Sumner that in this murderous movement their Division was not ordered to "take the advance."

Gen. Couch directed Gen. French to prepare his Division in three brigade lines for the advance; Hancock was to follow with his Division in the same order. The distance between the brigade

lines was to be about 200 yards. Gen. French's formation was exactly like that of Sedgwick's when the latter's Division moved against the Dunker Church woods at Antietam. McClellan ordered Sedgwick's movement and Burnside ordered French's, and both movements were as much to the Confederate advantage as if Gen. Lee had directed them.

Toward 10 o'clock the cold, dense fog began to lift. The bluff but truly loyal old Marylander, Gen. French, signaled, "I am ready." Gen. Couch passed the signal on to Sumner, and about 11 o'clock the advance was ordered. French threw out a strong line of skirmishers and his brigades filed out of town on the quick step, by two parallel streets, Hanover on the right and Charlotte on the left. Hanover street ran into the telegraph road, which ran directly along the base of Marye's Hill, the stronghold of the Confederates.

On the outskirts of the town French's men struck the canal or ditch before mentioned, and which Gen. Burnside declared did not exist. It was quite deep, and, though but 18 or 20 feet wide, was hardly passable except at the street bridges. The floor of the Charlotte street bridge had been torn up, and the advance men had to cross single file on the stringers. The advance was so delayed that the rear brigades were made to jump into the ditch, hurry across, and then scramble out again. Thus much time was spent. Luckily the canal was nearly empty, Company H, of the Eighty-Second New York, having turned off the water 24 hours before.

Once across the canal, the Division deployed under the bank bordering the plain over which the men were to charge. This plain was obstructed here and there by houses and fences, notably at a fork made by the telegraph and plank roads. In the narrow angle of this fork was a cluster of houses and gardens; on the parallel road

just south stood a large square brick house. The cluster of houses and the brick house became rallying points for the disordered troops returning from the attack. The fork in the telegraph road and the brick house were less than 150 yards from the stone wall, behind which Longstreet's infantrymen were posted, and which extended along the edge of the plain in front of the brick house for half a mile. A little in advance of this brick house a slight rising ground afforded some protection from the musketry behind the stone wall <sup>in front of the sunken road,</sup> but not against the combined and converging fire of the Confederate artillery on the Heights. It must be borne in mind that the stone wall was at the base of the hill; the batteries were on the crest, 100 yards back of and 50 feet higher than the wall.

Now, the Confederate force on the heights and Marye's Hill was of Longstreet's Corps. McLaws's Division, with four brigades--Kershaw's South Carolina, Barksdale's Mississippi, and Cobb's and Semmes' Georgia--was in front; in its rear as a reserve ~~was~~ was Ransom's Division, two brigades of North Carolinians; to the south of McLaws were Pickett's and Hood's Divisions; to the left was R. H. Anderson's. Gen. McLaws (in Batts. & Leads.) says that the heights above Kershaw's and Barksdale's brigades were crowned with 18 rifle guns and 8 smooth bores; the official records confirm this <sup>statement</sup> and also show that there <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ present Col. Walton's Washington Artillery, nine guns, and Alexander's Artillery Battalion, four batteries, "with a number of smooth bores from the reserve artillery." These guns being 100 yards back of and 50 feet higher than the stone wall (behind which the infantry lay) could easily fire over that infantry without danger to them.

French's Division did not have to go against the right of Hood's and the left of Anderson's Divisions, but it had to

squarely assault McLaw's and Ransom's and indirectly attack Pickett's Division, and Featherston's Mississippi brigade of Anderson's Division. In all, French's men had to undergo the fire of 20,000 infantry and at least 53 pieces of artillery. The Division went into the charge with less than 2,800 officers and men. It was composed of 11 old and two new regiments, and the old regiments averaged less than 200 men apiece.

A few minutes after noon French's Division charged, Kimball's brigade leading, and a part of his brigade getting into the cluster of houses, which Gen. Kimball in his report calls "a small village." No sooner had the Division burst upon the plain than from Longstreet's 53 cannon and Longstreet's 20,000 infantry came terrible and horrible volleys. The shot and shell opened gaps in the ranks, but the gaps were closed, and the constantly thinning lines pressed bravely on. They <sup>had</sup> nearly reached the stone wall when Cobb's brigade and all the infantry within range opened upon them.

Let us hasten with the story. The shattered and broken brigades, having lost nearly half their number, fell hastily back, amid the shouts and yells of the Confederates. Back they went to the brick house and the cluster of houses, where they reformed and held their ground under a continuous artillery fire. The Division had lost 1,160 in killed and wounded out of about 2,750. Among the killed was Col. Zinn, of the One Hundred <sup>and</sup> Thirtieth Pennsylvania, a new regiment; this brave officer fell while carrying the flag of

his regiment.\*

Following French's came Hancock's Division, with Zook's, Meagher's Irish, and Caldwell's brigades in that order. Zook's and Meagher's got nearer to the stone wall than any who had gone before, except a few of Kimball's men, and nearer than any brigade that followed them; this was what the burial parties reported. Half a dozen of Meagher's Irishmen and a like number of Zook's Fifty-Third Pennsylvania were packed up within 50 feet of the wall. Hancock's men were driven back as French's had been. Hancock took in 4,834 officers and men and lost 2,021 in killed and wounded, including 34 officers killed outright.

Gen. Couch now ordered out Col. Owen's and Col. Hall's Brigades of Howard's Division. Luckily he did not call for Sully's Brigade. Gen. Couch's first intention was to send these brigades to the right to make a flank attack, instead of pushing them as a forlorn hope over the ground where French and Hancock had gone. But Hancock and French called earnestly for help, and Couch countermanded the first order and sent Gen. Howard with the two brigades mentioned to support Hancock. Howard left Sully's Brigade in the outskirts of town ready to support either Owen or Hall.

Col. Owen moved out Hanover street and crossed the canal

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*Foot note* \*According to Col. Robert McMillan's report, (See War Recs.) it was "twelve of fifteen minutes after" the repulse of French's Division from in front of the stone wall when the Confederate Gen. Thos. R. R. Cobb, commanding the Georgia brigade, was mortally wounded. A stray bullet passed through the calf of his leg, cutting an artery. He received prompt and thorough attention but died in two hours. His five Georgia regiments were the principal defenders of the stone wall. He was a brother of Howell Cobb, and was a noted lawyer and author of law books.

on the bridge. He began to receive case shot and shell before he got outside of the town. Kirby's battery came up to his support and opened on the enemy at a thousand yards. The Colonel deployed the brigade in a plowed field and advanced to within 100 yards of the Confederate "first line," which was the stone wall near the base of the hill; ~~The~~ artillery-crowned crest was called the second line. A terrific fire was opened on him and he ordered his brigade to lie down, which it did, and this saved many men. The brigade fired on the enemy and kept fighting until nightfall.

Col. Owen was a brave man and a skillful officer and knew how to take care of his men and at the same time make them acquit themselves creditably. He reported to Gen. Howard while on the field: "I was sent out here to support Gen. Hancock's Division; but there is not much left of it to support." The total loss of killed and wounded in the brigade was 258, of which Baxter's Zouaves (Seventy-Second Pennsylvania) lost 71.

Col. Hall, of the Seventh Michigan, commanding the Third Brigade, (Dana's old command) followed Col. Owen, but was not nearly so careful of his men. He went tearing up against a part of the stone wall near the foot of the hill and made two determined attempts to carry it and kill all the "rebs" in his front. He was driven back both times. The first fire on him must have been a terrible one, for it drove back the Seventh Michigan, the Tammany Regiment, the Fifty-Ninth New York, and the Nineteenth Massachusetts; but the brave Twentieth Massachusetts never budged an inch, though it lost 125 of its 300 men, and two days before had lost 97 on Hanover street, while driving the Mississippians out of town.

The fleeing regiments soon stopped, reformed, and came

back, and again tried to carry the Confederate position. The Nineteenth Massachusetts drove some skirmishers out of some houses, captured the buildings, and held them, but lost severely, including two commanding officers and nine officers in all. Col. Hall reported to Gen. Howard: "I can hold my position, but can't advance," and Howard replied: "Hold your position." And Col. Hall and what men he had left held on till late at night, when Sykes's Division relieved them. Hall's regiments were all old 1861 men and did not average 175 men to the regiment. The Forty-Second New York (Tammany) had but 110. The Twentieth Massachusetts had 260 and lost in all 128. Col. Hall reported that he took but 800 in all into the fight and his total loss was 515--more than 64 per cent.

Gen. Couch, about 11:45, ordered Gen. Willcox to send a Division of the Ninth Corps to assault the Confederate position on the heights to the left of where French and Hancock had tried. Willcox sent Sturgis's Division, Nagle's and Ferrero's Brigades, and they went up the hill and attacked Pickett's and Hood's Divisions and got terribly repulsed and driven down the hill. The total loss of the Division was 1,007. Hood's Division lost but 343, and Pickett's 46. Law's brigade, of Hood, lost 218 and the Fourth Alabama, the First Minnesota's old antagonist, had 4 killed and 18 wounded.

About 3 o'clock Gen. Hooker, commanding the Center Grand Division, (Stoneman's Third and Butterfield's Fifth Corps) came upon the field. <sup>Goto next page without a paragraph</sup> Some time before this, however, Whipple's Division, of Stoneman, had come over and relieved Howard's, so that the latter might join in the center attack, and Griffin's, of Butterfield, had come over to the support of Sturgis. Humphreys and Sykes with their Division, of Butterfield, came to Couch's support. Gen. Couch's

*Willcox with  
two L's.*

*Leave out*

Divisions had been fought to a standstill. He asked Sumner for help, and Sumner answered at 2:40: "Hooker has been ordered to put in everything; you must hold on until he comes in." It will be remembered that Hooker's Grand Division was to furnish re-enforcements. Gen. Couch told Hooker that Marye's Heights could not be carried by a front attack, but might be by an assault on the Confederate left, ~~the~~ the Union right. Hooker replied: "I will go and see Hancock about it," and away he rode to confer with that accomplished general. (Couch in Batts. & Leads.) Very often did a Union general in doubt ~~xx~~ what to do, "go and see Hancock about it." Hooker left word with Humphreys to take Couch's orders and Gen. Butterfield told him the same.

*Left out**Insert from preceding paragraph marked,*

There was a lull in the firing on the Confederate center, and Gen. Caldwell sent word to Hancock that the enemy was retreating from Marye's house. Hancock passed the word on to Gen. Couch and Couch said to Humphreys: "Gen. Humphreys, it is reported by Gen. Hancock that the enemy is falling back; now is the time for you to go in." Humphreys' Division had but two brigades, eight regiments, all Pennsylvanians, and all new recruits but one, the Ninety-First Pennsylvania. The new regiments joined the army the day after Antietam and this was their first battle.

Spurring to his work, Gen. Humphreys led his two brigades over precisely the same ground traversed by French and Hancock. There is still a dispute as to which of the three Divisions got the nearest to the stonewall on Marye's Heights. The musketry fire on Humphreys' men was very heavy and the artillery fire was terrible. *(no paragraph)*

*Leave out*

At one time Gen. Couch thought that Hooker's batteries on Falmouth Heights were firing short and dropping shells into Humphreys'

*Leave out**(no paragraph)*

Division, and sent word to that effect. Humphreys was very gallant. He charged with his men, had two horses killed under him, and then charged on foot. All to no purpose.

The Division was driven back to the foot of the hill, but in first-rate order and some of the men were very cheerful. Col. Clark's and Col. Allen's regiments, of Col. Allentach's brigade, came back hurrahing and singing, and as they went into position at the foot of the hill some of them were heard to call out exultingly: "Well, we had a ~~xxxxxx~~ h---- of a time, didn't we?" (Humphreys' report.) The Division went in with 3,500 men and lost 1,020. Gen. Couch should not have sent it in. He ought to have known that the Confederates were not retreating; what would they be retreating from, and why?

Just after Humphreys' charge was made, Griffin's Division of Butterfield's Fifth Corps, three brigades, made a charge on the stone wall over the ground where Sturgis's brigades had assaulted, to the left of the main line, and against Hood and Pickett. Same result. The Division was repulsed with a loss of 66 killed, 752 wounded, and 120 missing, or 938 in all. About 5 o'clock, while Gen. Humphreys was leading his Pennsylvanians on their hopeless charge, Getty's Division of Willcox was ordered by Gen. Willcox to the charge on the left of the route taken by French, Hancock, and the rest. It went out Prussia street, the third street south of Hanover, and struck into and upon an unfinished railroad cut and track; when completed this was called the Potomac, Fredericksburg & Piedmont Railroad. Soon after getting out on the unfinished railroad, Hawkins's advance brigade came under a hot fire and was somewhat cut up before it had advanced half as far as French and Hancock.

Only Rush Hawkins's First Brigade was conspicuously engaged. It did not charge very far or very hard, for darkness came on, and it soon fell back, as Gen. Getty reports, to "the cover afforded by a depression of ground and the bed of an old canal." From this position the brigade was withdrawn behind the Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad grade and finally stationed at the slaughter house near the corner of Princess Anne and Prussia streets for the night.

Harland's Second Brigade advanced in the rear of Hawkins's to the railroad and there stayed until next morning, when it returned to its former station on Caroline street. It lost one officer (Col. Cross, Fourth Rhode Island) and one man killed and 9 wounded. The total loss in the Division was 551. Rush Hawkins's terrible Zouaves (Ninth New York) did not charge--but guarded a battery at a brick kiln--else the result might have been different!

## BURNSIDE WANTS MORE MEN KILLED.

This bloody day at Fredericksburg should have proven to Gen. Burnside the folly of an attack directly against the front and center of a powerful and well concentrated and well established enemy, when a ~~well conducted~~ flanking movement was possible. The success of such a direct attack is always doubtful; in this instance there was no chance of success, and even if the effort had succeeded it would have cost too much.

All of Burnside's generals except Sumner had protested against the assaults on Marye's Heights. Sumner supported the idea of a direct assault, but not with only one Division. When Burnside appealed to him he weakened and said: "I always support my commander." And now Burnside was determined to repeat the assault on the 14th. At 11 o'clock the night of the 13th Hooker, Franklin, and other officers were in consultation at the Phillips House. Burnside came suddenly in, saying as he entered the door: "Well, it's all arranged; we attack at dawn, the Ninth Corps in the center, which I shall lead in person. The troops that did not fight today will get plenty to do tomorrow."

Gens. Willcox, Humphreys, Getty, Butterfield, Meade, and others had sent Rush Hawkins to the conference to say for them that there must be no more assaulting. Hooker had been swearing that there had been enough of slaughter, and Sumner agreed with him. After Burnside had made the announcement there was silence for a few moments, and then Hooker arose and pointing his finger at Sumner said: "Sumner, tell him," and then stretched himself on a bed. Sumner stated the object of Rush Hawkins's visit and said the troops had met with such disasters, were so fatigued, etc., that they ought not to be required to make another assault so soon--"Wait a few days." Burnside finally consented to postpone the attack and

did so.

Gen. Couch was not at this council. He was very angry with Gen. Hooker--so angry that he was beside himself and might have shot his senior officer had he met him then. That afternoon, when Hooker went "to see Hancock", he talked with that general and then went back across the river and saw Burnside. He told Burnside that there had been enough men sacrificed; that even the stone wall could hardly be carried, but that if it should be, the line of the 53 cannon and the supporting works on the crest could not possibly be taken. To all this Burnside replied, "That crest must be taken tonight."

Hooker returned to the battle side of the river in great rage. He was directing the formation of Humphreys' Division when Gen. Couch rode up and again urged that the assault be made far out to the right. Hooker replied very hotly and insolently. He said bitter things. He said that Couch was very ready to suggest where troops should be sent, but he insinuated that he was unwilling to lead them and afraid to go with them. Gen. Walker, who, as Gen. Couch's Adjutant General, was present at the time, tells the rest of the story in his History of the Second Corps, p.179:

Stung by the insults, broken-hearted at the defeat of his Corps and the massacre of his gallant soldiers, and perhaps shrinking from the spectacle of a fresh slaughter, Gen. Couch turned away and dashed up the telegraph road. Passing Hazard's battery, he rode slowly up to Adams's gun, which was being served in the road, and stopped and talked with Adams; then he galloped forward to the extreme advance of the Union line at the end nearest town. Here, while under fire, he stopped and talked with Col. John R. Brooke, of Zook's Brigade, who begged and almost prayed him to retire. Then, turning to the left, he rode slowly down the full line of his Corps, just in the rear of where the men lay, and then rode back again-- all the while under a most terrible fire!

That was simply a piece of fool-hardiness. Gen. Couch would not have attempted it had he not been half distracted by his senior commander's insults. He was accompanied by three of his staff

but set out alone. Apparently he wanted to be killed with his Corps on the field, but though under a continuous storm of shot, shell, and musket balls during his ride, not one of the party, nor even a horse, was seriously hit.

After dark Couch was out on the line, having his wounded brought off the plain, when an order came to him from Hooker relieving the Second Corps and putting Sykes's Division of regulars in its place. Instantly and indignantly Couch said to the officer that had brought the order: "No! Say to Gen. Hooker that no men shall take the place of the Second Corps until General Sumner gives the order. The Corps has fought and gained this ground and shall hold it." But about midnight an order came from Sumner for Sykes to relieve the Second Corps, and Couch assented and French and Hancock came back to town.

The repulse of Humphreys and Griffin virtually closed the battle of Fredericksburg. Gen. Hooker, at nightfall, took the situation in hand and stopped the assaulting. To the Committee on the Conduct of the War he said: "Finding that I had lost as many men as my orders required me to lose, I suspended the attack." (Report, Vo. 1, p. 668.) And Gen. Burnside did not over rule the somewhat presumptuous action, so far as it affected operations that night. It was later that he threatened to renew the attack in the morning.\* Gen. Walker says:

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\*Gen. Hooker strenuously opposed the attacks on the 13th. In his report he says: "A prisoner in the morning had given to Gen. Burnside, Gen. Sumner and myself full information of the position and defenses of the enemy; that it was perfectly impossible for any troops to carry the position; that if the first line was carried a second line of batteries commanded it. The result of the operations of Gen. Sumner's Corps fully confirmed the statements of this prisoner, a very intelligent man.\*\*\*I dispatched an aide to Gen. Burnside to say that I advised him not to attack. The reply came that the attack must be made."



Even back into the town as far as Caroline street--the second from the river--Union troops were stationed during the 15th and there was a constant interchange of shots with the enemy. There was danger that the Confederates would learn the shaken condition of the Union army and charge down the hill upon it, with deplorable results to it. The detachments holding the ground were expected to meet this attack if it should be made. It would have been made had not Lee discovered from certain indications that Burnside intended a renewal of his assaults. Really this was the Union general's ~~de-~~clared intention. Every general he had resisted his proposition almost to the point of insubordination.

Then Gen. Burnside insisted that the town be held and occupied. He said that if this were done the loyal people of the country would say that the battle had not resulted in total defeat, and would be in some sense consoled. He urged, and his generals agreed, that the attack be postponed for a few days at least. So preparations were at once begun for intrenching and holding the town, and at 6 o'clock on the evening of the 15th Gen. Burnside returned to his headquarters across the river at the Lacy House, apparently satisfied and contented that he was to hold his ground.

But he changed his mind, and between 8 and 9 o'clock the troops in the town received orders to recross the river to Falmouth, and during the night, under cover of the darkness and a driving storm, this movement was accomplished.

## THE FORCES AND LOSSES IN THE BATTLE.

According to the records and documents revised in 1884, some 22 years after the battle of Fredericksburg, the forces present on that occasion were as follows: Union troops present on both sides of the river, 104,903 infantry, 5,884 cavalry, and 5,896 artillery-- a total of 116,683. Number of men actually engaged in the battle (receiving and returning the fire of the enemy, etc.) about 72,000; but not more than half of this number participated actively in the fighting.

Confederate troops present for duty equipped, 78,513. Of these it is claimed that only 58,500 of all arms were in line at Fredericksburg; but it is further claimed that only 28,000 of these took actual part in the fighting, some 30,000 being held in reserve.

The Union loss was reported at 1,284 killed, 9,600 wounded, 1,769 captured and missing; total 12,653. The Confederates reported that they captured but 936 prisoners, (Gen. Lee reports "~~More~~ than 900.") and it is quite probable that of the captured and missing 800 were killed and not identified, increasing the Union loss in killed to more than 2,000. Two Union generals were killed, Geo. D. Bayard and C. F. Jackson. The Union loss in killed and wounded, 11,684, was 16 per cent of the whole number of men engaged, or 72,000. But of this large number several thousand did not fire a shot or make an assault and their loss was trivial--some brigades reporting less than 50--while Hancock's Division lost 42 per cent of its number engaged; French's, 40 per cent. Out of not more than 4,800 (Gen. Meade says only 4,500) men taken into action Meade's Division lost 3,337 in all, or 70 per cent; 2,776 were reported killed and wounded or 60 per cent, but the number killed must have

been larger. Gibbon's, Sturgis's, Humphreys' and Birney's Divisions each lost about 30 per cent.

The loss in the First Minnesota was slightly, only two officers and 15 men wounded, as reported by Lochren, two officers and 10 men wounded, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ and two men missing as reported by Col. Morgan. The nominal list shows one officer and 13 men wounded, as follows: Capt. John J. McCallum, and Private Wm. M. Herbert, of Company F, and E. B. Robinson, of Company B, were hurt so badly that they were transferred to the Invalid Corps. John M. Darms, of Company B, Thomas Kelly, of Company D, James E. Russell and B. K. Soule, of Company G, were discharged from service on account of their wounds, while Chas. W. Savage, of Company D; Chas. A. Berdan, Daniel Bond, Almeron Davis, and Josiah Richardson, of Company F; Chas. B. Boardman and Alex Shaw, of Company K, were severely wounded.

The Confederate loss as reported was killed, 608; wounded, 4,116; captured or missing, 653; total, 5,377. The Union provost marshal delivered but 356 Confederate prisoners (nearly all taken by Franklin's command) at Acquia Creek, from whence they were sent North. It is probable therefore, that of Gen. Lee's captured and missing 300 were killed, making the total Confederate killed about 900. The loss in killed and wounded, 5,016, was about 17 per cent of the number engaged, 30,000. Two generals were killed, Maxcy Gregg and T. R. R. Cobb.

A comparison of the losses attests not only the security of the shelters from behind which the Confederates fought, but the bravery of the Union soldiers that assaulted them.

The Confederates gathered off the field 11,091 Union muskets, of which 1,400 were damaged and had to be sent to Richmond

to be repaired. They also secured 2,000 sets of accouterments, mostly from dead men. These came very handy, for there were 5,000 unarmed new conscripts with the army.

Among the other visible spoils of the victory the Confederates secured several hundred suits. On the night of the 13th and 14th they slipped upon the battlefield and stripped the bodies of nearly all the dead Union soldiers. They took every blanket, overcoat, dress coat, jacket, pair of trousers and pair of shoes, and in some instances stripped the corpses entirely naked. A Confederate officer wrote: "The evening of the battle the field where the Federals charged was fairly blue, but the next morning it was white with the stripped bodies." Of course all of the 900 Confederate dead with clothing worth taking were stripped. Stonewall Jackson had told his barefoot men that after the next battle they could get plenty of shoes and other clothing from the dead Yankees, and they did so.

## THE FIRST MINNESOTA AT FREDERICKSBURG.

11<sup>th</sup>

Early on the morning of December 11<sup>th</sup> the First Minnesota left its camp east of the Rappahannock and marched about two miles to near the river opposite Fredericksburg. The entire Division halted for the day under the shelter of a hill. There was no possible danger except from the Confederate artillery away across the river on Marye's Heights, and not much from that. Gen. Longstreet, in his book, "Manassas to Appomattox," (p.300) says the Confederates had on Marye's Hill at this time 306 pieces of artillery, including two 30-lb. Parrotts and an English Whitworth gun; but only these and half a dozen 20-lb. Parrotts could be depended upon to throw a shot across the river, and both of the 30-pounders burst after a few discharges. The Union forces had 370 cannons of all calibers, including several siege guns not used.

The operations, which included the laying of the pontoon bridges and the expulsion of the Seventeenth Mississippi from the town, were well known to the entire Division. The sound of the musketry was even heard. And late in the afternoon, when Gen. Burnside ordered the bombardment of the town, the thundering of the artillery fairly shook the earth. Two companies of the Nineteenth Maine were sent to support a battery on the north side of the river, though why a battery in such a locality needed support is not clear. The pontoon bridges were completed at sunset, and soon after Howard's Division crossed upon them under the enemy's fire. There were still some Confederate skirmishers in the houses and elsewhere among the back streets and Owen's and Hall's Brigades were looking after them. Also there were two batteries at work a mile back from the river, and they were throwing shot and shell at the advancing Union troops all the time.

Sully's Brigade crossed the river with 2,211 officers and men. It bivouacked on Sophia street, the street directly in front of and parallel with the river\*, and here it remained till morning. Only Howard's Division crossed that night, so that Gen. Howard was in command of Fredericksburg. Hall's Brigade advanced skirmishing from the river along George and Commerce streets two blocks, or to Princess Anne, but the Twentieth Massachusetts had charged and driven back the Mississippians two blocks farther <sup>or</sup> to Prince Edward. Owen's Brigade got only one block from Sophia, or to Caroline street, but it skirmished all the way and captured 21 prisoners, mostly from the Twenty-First Miss<sup>is</sup>ippi. The Brigade bivouacked on Caroline. Howard's Division contained about 3,500 officers and men.

When faint daylight came on the 12th Owen's and Sully's Brigades, of Howard, and Hawkins's Brigade, of the Ninth Corps, were ordered to advance upon the back streets of the town and clear them of the enemy's troops, who were supposed to have been re-enforced during the night and to be fortified in some manner. A bloody time was looked for, but not a man of the First Minnesota or of Sully's Brigade flinched. All preparations were made for a hot time, but when the advanced skirmishers went out they found

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\*At that time the streets of Fredericksburg running north and south, or parallel with the river, were, in order, commencing on the river front, Sophia, Caroline, Princess Anne, Charles, Prince Edward, Winchester, and Barton. Hanover was the principal street running perpendicular to the river, or east and west. The streets north of it were in order George, William (or Commerce) Amelia, Lewis, Fauquier, and Hawks. Those south of Hanover were Charlotte, Wolfe, Prussia, Frederick, and Princess Elizabeth. The court house faced west on Princess Anne, between Hanover and George. *Directly at Fredericksburg the river and the streets run from northwest to southeast.*

that the Confederates had retired from the town during the night. Then Howard's three brigades were ordered into various positions, some inside and some without the city, to cover the crossing of the remaining troops.

Sully's Brigade was moved out and disposed among several positions in the western suburbs of the city to the north of Hanover street. The First Minnesota was along or near the upper part of the canal and not very far from Mary Washington's ~~XXXXXX~~ grave, which is about half a mile back from the river. The regiment was on picket duty during the day and the night following and throughout the entire time was under a very dangerous artillery fire from Marye's Heights. There was good shelter, however, and the boys found it, and only two men were wounded.

On the night of the 11th, while Owen's and Hall's men were skirmishing with the Mississippians, only two blocks away, and the bullets were whistling in every direction, the looting commenced. The citizens had abandoned their houses, after having foolishly held to them until it was too late to remove their contents, and had left, bearing with them but few of their possessions. The contents of the stores had been for the most part taken away, but scores of boxes of tobacco had been left. Lochren says:

Some of our boys made their way to the houses and stores, and returned laden with provisions, wines, liquors, tobacco and a violin. Soon quadrilles and contra dances were under way, the melody of the fiddle being often varied by the hissing of passing bullets. The next morning early we moved into one of the principal streets, and because the houses had been used as cover by the enemy, the men ransacked them and the stores, from which the owners had fled. Provisions were found in abundance and boxes of tobacco were thrown out on the sidewalk that all might help themselves. The men were not allowed to quarter in the houses, but fences and outhouses were broken up for little fires in the street and over these they boiled coffee and fried bacon. Many carried out furniture and ate their suppers from sofas and upholstered chairs.\*\*\* Gen. Sully took possession of a handsome residence that chanced to be near the place occupied by the Regiment, and when it was invaded by a squad of the boys told them to help themselves freely, as the place belonged to his brother-in-law, "a d \_\_\_\_\_ rebel."\* The boys

*Footnote* \*Lochren also notes that there were several excellent portraits in this house, which, he says, were painted "by the General's father, the eminent painter, Thomas Sully." It is more probable that the pictures were made by the General's sister, Mrs. Jane Darley, wife of John C. Darley, the owner of the house. Mrs. Darley was a very talented and skillful artist, as was her brother Thomas Sully, Junior.

(took nothing and kept off all other marauders.

Even during the early hours of the 12th, while the army was crossing and troops were being shifted from place to place, the plundering went on and continued the rest of the day, as long as there was anything to take. Other troops than those of Howard's Division were now in the town. Hancock's and French's men were the first to come that morning. In his "History of the Second Army Corps," (p.153) Gen. Walker says:

Much of the plundering was done in a spirit of fun rather than of hatred. The writer recollects seeing one gigantic private of the Irish Brigade wearing the white satin bonnet of some fair secesh bride, while another sported a huge "scoop" bonnet of the olden time. One man had a coffee pot that would hold ten gallons; another was staggering under a featherbed which he had carried from a house and meant to sleep on that night in the open air; the Inspector General entered a house on the outskirts occupied by the picket reserve and every man was wearing a lady's chemise over his uniform. But many things were done which could not be excused as frolics. Pianos were broken and thrown into the street, elegant furniture chopped up, family portraits pierced by bayonets, choice libraries scattered, frescoed walls done over with charcoal sketches by rude military amateurs, etc.

In this near vandalism there was, strictly speaking, nothing contrary to the laws of war. The people of Fredericksburg were ardent Confederates, deadly enemies of the Union army. They urged Mayor Slaughter not to surrender the town; they refused to remove their property, and to remove themselves until the last moment, when Union bullets were flying through the streets; their town was captured by fierce and deadly fighting, street by street, and English, French, or German troops would have stripped it of everything they could carry off and then destroyed every house in the place--and the laws of war would have justified ~~them~~. All the same, it would be pleasanter to remember Fredericksburg had there been no looting by any Union soldiers. About 48 hours afterward many that participated in it were lying cold in death out on the slopes below Marye's Heights.

At 8 P.M. of Friday evening, the 12th, the First Minnesota went out and relieved the Eighty-Second New York, on the elevated ground in the western suburbs of town, near the tomb and the unfinished monument of Mary Washington.

The Regiment spent the night of the 12th in cold, comfortless vigil on the picket line, having been moved out from down town just after nightfall. In the morning of the 13th Howard's Division was moved to the right rear of Fredericksburg again, this time to be ready for action at any moment. Sully's Brigade was on the right flank and the First Minnesota was on the extreme right of the Brigade. Kirby's Battery was ordered up to this quarter, but as no position could be found for the guns "in battery," the three sections were placed in the ends of the streets, Lewis, Fauquier, and Hawke. The Regiment was sent to support the battery. It was on a ridge in full view of the enemy's batteries on the crest of the ridge in front. They seemed to concentrate their fire on the Regiment and Kirby and gave them a tremendous cannonading. But the Minnesotians found good shelters of one kind or another, lay close to the ground, and lost but 7 men wounded; Kirby had 4 wounded.

While the Regiment lay here it saw--imperfectly, yet plain enough--the terribly bloody and wholly futile attempts made by the Divisions of French, Hancock, and Humphrey, and their comrade brigades of Owen and Hall to carry the Confederate position behind the stone wall on the telegraph road and the batteries on the crest of Marye's Heights. The field was only a mile away. The men momentarily expected orders to move out and participate in the charges and every man was ready. Nobody sought to slink away.

At 2:30 the Nineteenth Maine was sent to the extreme right of the Brigade and the Union line near the paper mill at the upper end of the canal, 250 feet north of Mary Washington's tomb. (American soldiers engaged in <sup>fr</sup>patricidal war, and killing one another almost over the grave of the mother of Washington!) The Fifteenth Massachusetts came up from down town and was sent out to relieve the pickets of Owen's Brigade, which was <sup>t</sup>getting ready to charge. En route Surgeon Haven, of the Fifteenth, was killed by an exploding shell from a Confederate battery on the ridge.

When night came on the First Minnesota was ordered to the front as a reserve and support to the picket lines and remained on this duty till daylight of the 14th, when it was moved back to Princess Anne street, where it remained quietly during the day. The position was under shell fire from the batteries on Marye's Heights. The Confederate gunners seemed to follow the rule of Donnybrook Fair and whenever they saw a Yankee head they tried to hit it with a solid shot or shell. They had a good range and command of the streets running east and west and could send shots down them with great accuracy, and would do so whenever a bunch of "Feds" attempted to cross them. Lochren says he saw a young lady ("the only woman I saw in the place") walking along the sidewalk of a street leading towards the river while a bunch of soldiers was starting to cross at a corner in front of her. Instantly half a dozen shells came shrieking down the street and exploded near the corner. The soldiers ran or threw themselves on the ground, but the brave Southern maiden/continued her walk, apparently unafraid and undisturbed.

It was soon after dark of the 14th when, as previously noted, the five regiments of Howard's Division were ordered to the

front to relieve a portion of Gen. Sykes's regulars. These regiments were for the time under the command of Col. Morgan, of the First Minnesota, which regiment was one of them.

The regiments went out along the Telegraph road and were stationed for a considerable distance along a line in front of where the regulars had been posted, and which ran over a part of the ground where the hardest fighting had occurred. Only a few rods to the front were the Confederate rifle-pits, now formidable in character and strongly manned. The picket regiments of Cobb's Georgia Brigade, McLaws's Division, occupied them the first part of the night, but after midnight they were relieved by the four Georgia regiments of Paul Semmes's Brigade. Featherston's Mississippi Brigade had its pickets out to the right front. (See reports of McLaws, McMillan, commanding Cobb's Brigade, Semmes, and Featherston.)

During the night, when it was intensely dark, ~~in front~~, the clinking of picks and shovels was heard to the front, indicating that the Confederates were either strengthening the positions they occupied or digging new rifle pits in front, preparatory to a sudden assault on the Union lines. The guide furnished to Col. Morgan had left and nobody knew the situation in front topographically or military. Col. Morgan greatly desired to know what the enemy was doing.

Lieut. Chris. B. Heffelfinger, of the Minneapolis Company(D) volunteered to try and find out. He took Corporal William N. Irvine, (commonly called Newell Irvine) with him. Irvine was also a Company D man. The two crawled carefully out to the front and wriggled themselves slowly along until they discovered what the "Johnnies" were up to. They were busy at work on their

rifle pits. Nearing the enemy's position the lieutenant and the corporal separated--spread apart--so as to hear and see as much as possible. Lieut. Heffelfinger got along all right, but Corporal Irvine did not get very far until a big Georgian called out in the Southern vernacular, "Who comes thar?" In a trice the luckless corporal was a prisoner, booked for Belle Isle or Libby,\* but Lieut. Heffelfinger crawled back in safety and reported. It was a hazardous exploit, but of great value.

Col. Morgan at once sent to the rear for intrenching tools and by working hard the remainder of the night a good trench and breastwork were made amply sufficient to shelter the men. If this protection had not been secured, the Union line at the front would not have lasted half an hour after daylight the next morning. The enemy's rifle pits were not a hundred yards away, their heavily intrenched lines were only a short distance to the rear of the pits, several buildings within easy range were filled with sharpshooters, while the Union line would have been comparatively unsheltered and in the open.

If <sup>that</sup> ~~the Union~~ line had been driven back, a Confederate assault would have followed, and the greater part of the Union positions then being held, and the greater part of those defending them, were not in condition to resist an assault. In his report of the battle Col. Morgan makes the following reference to this incident:

I regret here also to mention the loss of a brave and intelligent soldier, Corporal Irvine, of Company D/. He was sent by my order to examine a point where the sound of intrenching tools could be heard, and which we afterward ascertained to be within the

*in a few days on parole*

\*Corporal Irvine got back from prison all right. He veteranized and enlisted in Company B, First Battalion, and was made a sergeant. He was killed in front of Petersburg in June, 1864.

rebel lines. As he did not return, it is presumed he was captured by the enemy.

In his official report Gen. McLaws, in front of whose Confederate Division the First Minnesota was on December 15, says: "On the 15th it was discovered that the enemy had constructed rifle pits at the edge of the ravine to our front."

Only the First Minnesota and the Fifteenth Massachusetts were present on the Union picket line from Sully's Brigade at this time. But on Monday, the 15th, the firing at the front began to be pretty severe, indicating that the Confederates were trying to break the line preparatory to an assault. Then Gen. Sully brought up the Nineteenth Maine and the Eighty-Second New York to re-enforce their two comrade regiments. The Thirty-Fourth New York was down town on Prussia street, near the Richmond railroad.

When it came up the Nineteenth Maine was sent to the right under cover of some houses. The Eighty-Second was placed behind some houses to the front. Lieut. Murphy, of the Eighty-Second, was sent by Gen. Sully, with a few men, to occupy a house on the right of the First Minnesota. The devil-may-care Irishman thought he had been sent on a picnic. He and Lieut. Huggins took but five men and ran out laughing and cheering, under heavy volleys from the enemy, which somehow failed to kill anybody, and got safely into the house and began peppering away from it. In a few minutes Col. Huston sent up Company C to re-enforce the seven brave spirits and the house was held until 8 o'clock that night. In his report\* Col. Huston says:

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*Foot note* \*Gen. Sully says in his report that he sent "Lieutenant Murphy in command of two companies" to take the house, but Col. Huston reports the facts as stated above.

The occupying of this house was the most hazardous undertaking we had to perform. The lieutenant-colonel commanding the regiment feels grateful to Lieutenants Murphy and Huggins for its accomplishment.

In the afternoon the enemy on the Confederate left-- R. H. Anderson's Division--gave the regiments on the Union skirmish line much annoyance and uneasiness. Frank Huger's Virginia Battery, belonging to Mahone's Brigade, got a position on the heights a mile above the Marye House from whence it had a good enfilade range on the Union line. Gen. Mahone himself, whose brigade was on the northern section of the Confederate ridge, assisted in putting the guns, four in number, in position.\* They opened and sent solid shot, shells and case-shot down the line in fair range and with most uncomfortable accuracy. Even though the men were lying down, they were in great danger from the hurtling and screaming projectiles coming from the right; but if they rose and sought shelter by running to the left they would be under almost perfect range and in deadly peril. So Sully's Brigade lay low and mighty still!

There were two regiments, the Seventy-First and One Hundred and Twenty-Seventh Pennsylvania, of Owen's Brigade, on the right of the First Minnesota. (Lochren terms them "a brigade") They too, came under the fire of Mahone's artillery. The One Hundred and Twenty-Seventh was a new regiment and on the 13th, when under fire, had broken and run. It now repeated the disgraceful performance. Huger's shells and case-shot were too much for it, and it rose and scampered away toward the left in search of safety. In vain did the men of the First Minnesota yell at them,

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\*In his report Gen. Anderson says: "It is due to Brig. Gen. Mahone to say that he discovered and pointed out the important position for a battery which enfiladed the slope, and that he rendered very efficient service assisting in the construction of the battery which drove them from their place of shelter along the skirmish line."

as they passed wildly by, to "go back," and that they were jumping from the frying pan into the fire; they would not be satisfied until they ran on and came out under the almost direct fire of at least two batteries, when they returned to the position they had left.

The Seventy-First was the old "California" regiment and had been under fire repeatedly, but somehow it became frightened and followed off Col. Jennings's regiment, the One Hundred and Twenty-Seventh. There was a great hubbub for a few minutes, but amidst it all the First Minnesota remained unshaken and only laughed at the fear and ridiculous conduct of some of its comrades.

Gen. Howard, who witnessed the whole scene, turned to Gen. Sully and said: "Sully, your First Minnesota doesn't run." Gen. Sully afterward said that he had really been afraid that the Regiment might run, but now he turned to Howard and said proudly: "General, the First Minnesota never runs!" In an address to the Regiment a few days later and in general orders Gen. Howard complimented it for its conduct on this occasion.

The position occupied by the First Minnesota at Fredericksburg was a trying one. The long hours spent under a deadly fire, without opportunity or permission to fire a shot in return, constituted an ordeal through which nobody of men may desire to pass. The time was spent under great and exhaustive strain, which called for the exercise of the greatest fortitude. The men would really have preferred to spring up and out into the open, fight it out with the enemy and have done with it.

As has been stated, Burnside declared that he would hold Fredericksburg, and Sully's Brigade had been ordered to build intrenchments where they were, commencing that Monday night; but at sundown the General changed his mind and all of Howard's Division

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was withdrawn, recrossed the Rappahannock and got back into the old camps in the rear of Falmouth by daylight the next morning, Monday, December 16.