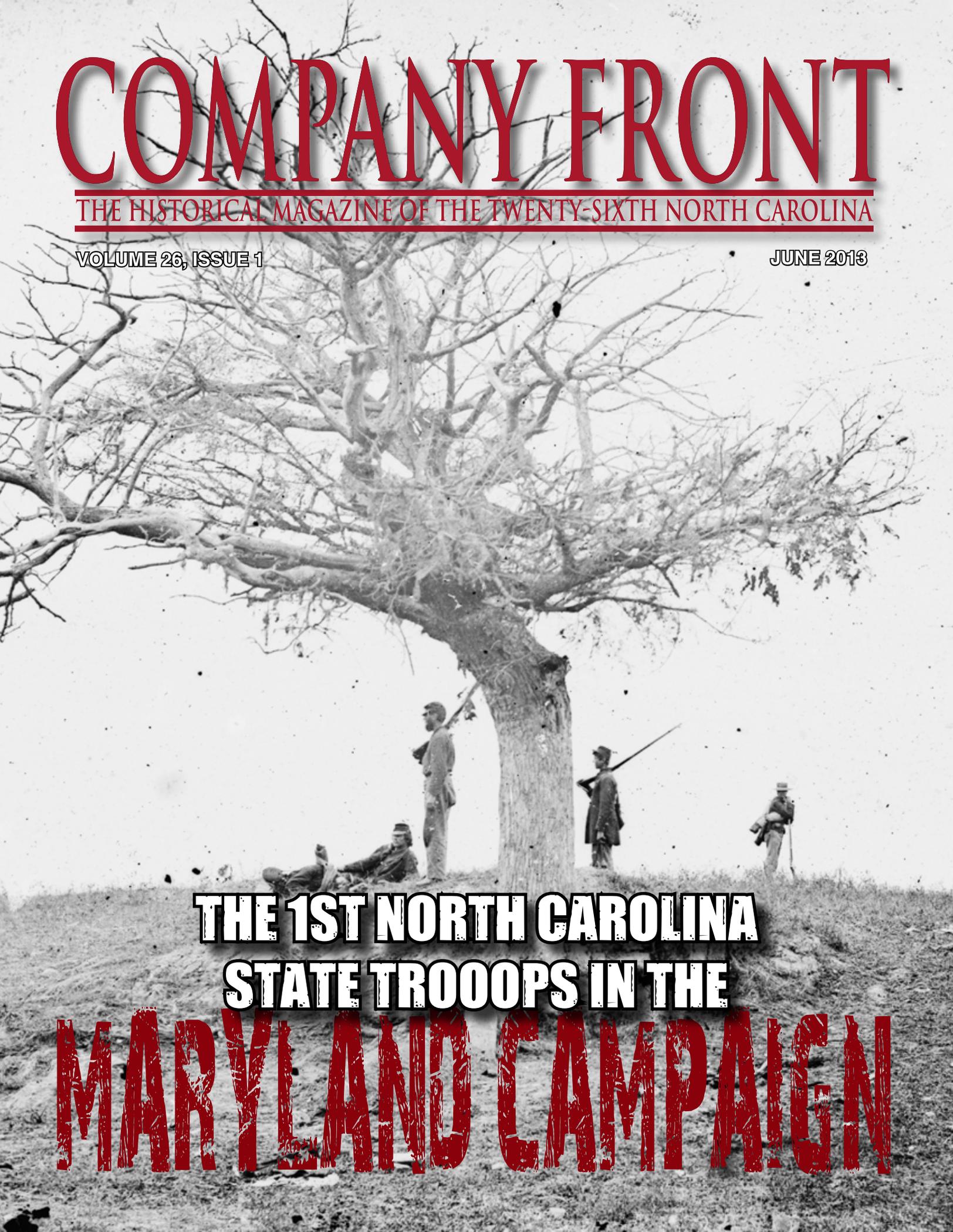


COMPANY FRONT

THE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH NORTH CAROLINA

VOLUME 26, ISSUE 1

JUNE 2013



**THE 1ST NORTH CAROLINA
STATE TROOOPS IN THE**

MARYLAND CAMPAIGN



Front Cover

Located 300 yards east of the Dunker Church near Sharpsburg, Maryland, this lone tree overlooks the gentle swale on Samuel Mumma's farm where the Georgians and North Carolinians of General Roswell Ripley's brigade spent the night of September 16, 1862. Awakened early the following morning by accurate Federal artillery fire, the brigade was soon thrust into the thick of fighting for the East Woods and Cornfield. Photograph by Alexander Gardner taken September 19, 1862. (Library of Congress).

Inside Front Cover

The same spot as it appears today from the opposite direction, looking northeast toward the Mumma Farm. Photo by Robert A. Williams.

Back Cover

"The Embrace," by Jeremy Scott. This highly detailed painting accurately depicts the advance of the 3rd North Carolina State Troops into the southern boundary of The Cornfield. The regiment is shown changing front to meet an attack on their right flank by the large but inexperienced 128th Pennsylvania Infantry. In the background may be seen the East Woods and burning Mumma Farm buildings. In foreground may be seen an officer instructing one of the young conscripts to look beneath the smoke and "fire at the blue breeches." Many members of the 3rd North Carolina are correctly shown carrying .69 caliber smoothbore muskets and wearing a mixture of both state and CS issue clothing.

Contrary to orders to carry only the Confederate battle flag into action, the regiment also unfurled their North Carolina state colors at Sharpsburg "at the request of both officers and men." A special guard had been created for the flag's defense. Captain Stephen D. Thurston of the regiment later returned the state colors to Governor Zebulon Vance with the notation: "It bears evidence in its folds that it was in the very thickest [of the fighting], while our list of killed and wounded shows that we did not fail in our trust. Two of its bearers were killed and as many wounded, yet not once was it allowed to touch the ground . . ."



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I LONGED for NIGHT to COME

The 1st Regiment North Carolina State Troops in the Maryland Campaign

By Robert A. Williams

Like most Southern cities in the summer of 1862, Raleigh, North Carolina, visibly exhibited the harsh affects associated with over one year of civil war. As the center of that state's war effort, most warehouses and vacant buildings had been converted to the production of arms, equipment, and munitions. Military encampments occupied public grounds and previously empty fields. As Raleigh became the central training base for processing conscripted recruits, the constant comings and goings of large bodies of troops turned her main railroad depot into what one newspaper correspondent termed a "hog wallow." All in all, a certain degree of shabbiness pervaded the once genteel state capital.¹

Yet, for Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton Allen Brown of the 1st Regiment North Carolina State Troops, temporary duty in Raleigh must have seemed like paradise compared to tramping through the soggy Chickahominy River bottomlands of Virginia. Following the strategically victorious but costly Seven Days Battles around Richmond, Brown had been detailed to Raleigh in early July along with regimental Major John S. Hines. Their purpose was to procure and fit for service more than 400 much needed replacements for the decimated 1st North Carolina. Brown's proficiency as a drill instructor during the war's early months had already earned him the confidence of Governor John W. Ellis.²

Known to his family and close associates as Allen, Brown was a native of Wilkes County. He attended the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis as a member of the class of 1858, but did not graduate. With the outbreak of sectional hostilities, Brown served as First Lieutenant of the newly formed "Wilkes Volunteers," which became Company B of the 1st North Carolina on June 3, 1861. Shortly thereafter he was appointed captain. After all the regiment's field officers were shot down in its baptismal engagement at Mechanicsville, Virginia on June 26, 1862, Captain Brown courageously led the unit's survivors through the subsequent bitter actions at Gaines's Mill and Malvern Hill. His capable performance during the Seven Days earned Brown promotion to lieutenant colonel of the 1st North Carolina to rank from July 8, 1862.³ Brown had a brother and half-brother who likewise served the Confederacy⁴

The fact that Brown spoke with a pronounced stutter apparently did not hinder his capacity to lead, although his verbal orders were often said to be unintelligible to an untrained ear. One soldier irreverently described a command from Brown as sounding thusly: "A-a-a-a—damn—a-a-a—damnit—pst—pst—pst—a-a—forward, Company B!"⁵ Brown liked what he saw in the new recruits, most of whom were conscripts. He later wrote: "These men proved to be excellent material for soldiers, brave and willing, as was fully proven on many a bloody field afterward." No doubt the twenty-

four-year-old lieutenant colonel made quite a first impression upon them as well.⁶

Even as Lieutenant Colonel Brown and Major Hines processed the raw recruits, Private Edgar A. Jackson of Company C took time to write home on the state of affairs with the 1st North Carolina around Richmond. On July 15th, he penned: "I have been quite unwell for a day or two past; in fact, the health of the regiment in general is bad, as there is not more than two hundred on daily drill. We have been into no engagement since the final retreat [from Malvern Hill] of McClellan, but have been encamped near the . . . battlefield until last Wednesday, when General [D. H.] Hill's division came to their old camp [along the Williamsburg Road] to recuperate its health and reorganize. Many of our boys . . . had hair-breadth escapes. One of them had a button cut off by a ball from the side of his cap; one [had] a ball put through a canteen on one side and a haversack upon the other."

Concerning the loss of officers, Jackson lamented: "Col. [Montfort Sydney] Stokes has died of his wounds. Lt. Col. [John A.] McDowell is in critical condition, and . . . Adjutant [J. S. R. Miller] has gone home and it is thought will resign." In a later letter Jackson further noted: "Conscripts are continually coming in to the regiments around here, but as yet none have come to this one . . . On Battalion drill this morning . . . [most] companies were commanded by sergeants."⁷ That soon changed, as the diary entry of Private Calvin Leach for August 1st recorded: "[Lieutenant Colonel] Brown . . . returned from home . . . [and] brought some 411 conscripts to this regiment."⁸ Brown quickly made his presence felt. He had the new recruits assigned to their proper companies and instituted a rigorous regimen of instruction. Fledgling Captain Thomas S. Bouchelle recalled: "My Company 'B' received 33 men, mostly farmers from Alamance County, N. C., good men physically and morally . . . but at first were very awkward, with no knowledge of drill or camp life." An exception was eighteen-year-old Private William A. Newlin, a former cadet at Hillsborough Military Academy and an accomplished drillmaster. Since new men now comprised nearly half the aggregate strength of the regiment, Newlin's skills proved a welcome resource for the overworked non-commissioned officers. An equal number of recruits likewise bolstered the ranks of the 3rd North Carolina State Troops, an excellent unit that would serve alongside the 1st North Carolina for most of the war.⁹

Officers conducted frequent inspections to re-

store the unit's fighting trim. The camp of the 1st North Carolina was also relocated to a new and cleaner site near the Charles City Road. From there the regiment performed routine outpost duty "in the swamps below Richmond" and provided regular fatigue details for the purpose of building permanent fortifications.¹⁰ The large quantity of small arms recently captured from the Federals enabled most every man to be equipped with a modern Springfield or Enfield rifled musket. "I have got me a Minnie rifle," Edgar Jackson proudly wrote home. Some however, retained their .69 caliber smoothbore muskets, preferring the large buck and ball load for close range work.¹¹

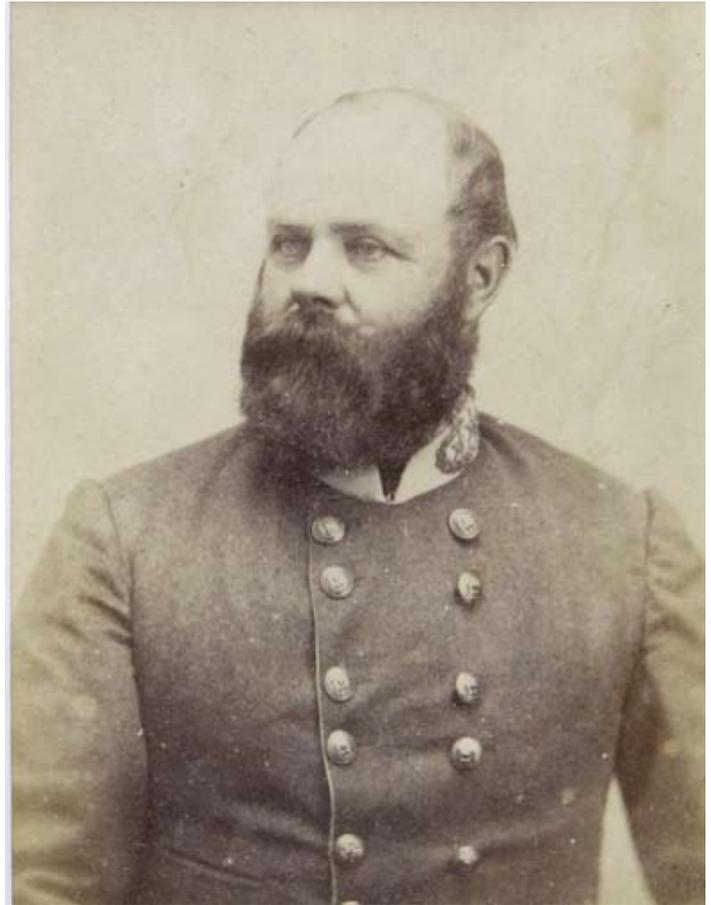
A final but unpleasant disciplinary measure was the execution by firing squad on August 12th of a deserter from Company E. An officer in the 3rd North Carolina described the incident: "The first execution under sentence of a military court took place in the brigade on the person of an Irishman who had deserted and was captured in his efforts to reach the enemy's lines. He belonged to Captain [Guilford L.] Dudley's company of the First North Carolina, and the firing party was from his own company, who did their sad duty like true soldiers." Not one to spare the details, Edgar Jackson graphically wrote his father: "A man by the name of [Martin] Hogan was shot before our Brigade last Tuesday. Jim Darden put one ball in him. He was struck by 8 balls and two buck shot, killing him instantly . . . George Beale of our company put a ball and two buck shot in him; six balls went through his heart."¹²

It was during this period of relative quiet around Richmond that Roswell S. Ripley's brigade of D. H. Hill's division, to which the 1st North Carolina belonged, underwent minor reshuffling. The 48th Georgia was reassigned and replaced by Colonel George Doles' veteran 4th Georgia Infantry. The resulting new organization, comprising the 1st North Carolina, 3rd North Carolina, 4th Georgia, and 44th Georgia, was a solid one any officer would be proud to lead.¹³

Similar good feeling was not wholly reciprocated towards Ripley, however. Private Jackson blamed the corpulent Ohio-born general for his unit's heavy losses at Mechanicsville: "General Ripley is highly censured for sending us in as he did, and is reported as being seen to take several drinks while there."¹⁴ Of Malvern Hill, a soldier in the 3rd North Carolina claimed: "Ripley [was] not . . . seen about the lines after the first order was given to advance." Even Major General D.H. Hill faulted Ripley for not managing his brigade firmly in the recent campaign, and said as much in his official re-



Greg Mast



Cdv, Author's Collection

Lt. Colonel Hamilton Brown 1st NCST (Left) and Brigadier General Roswell Ripley (Right)

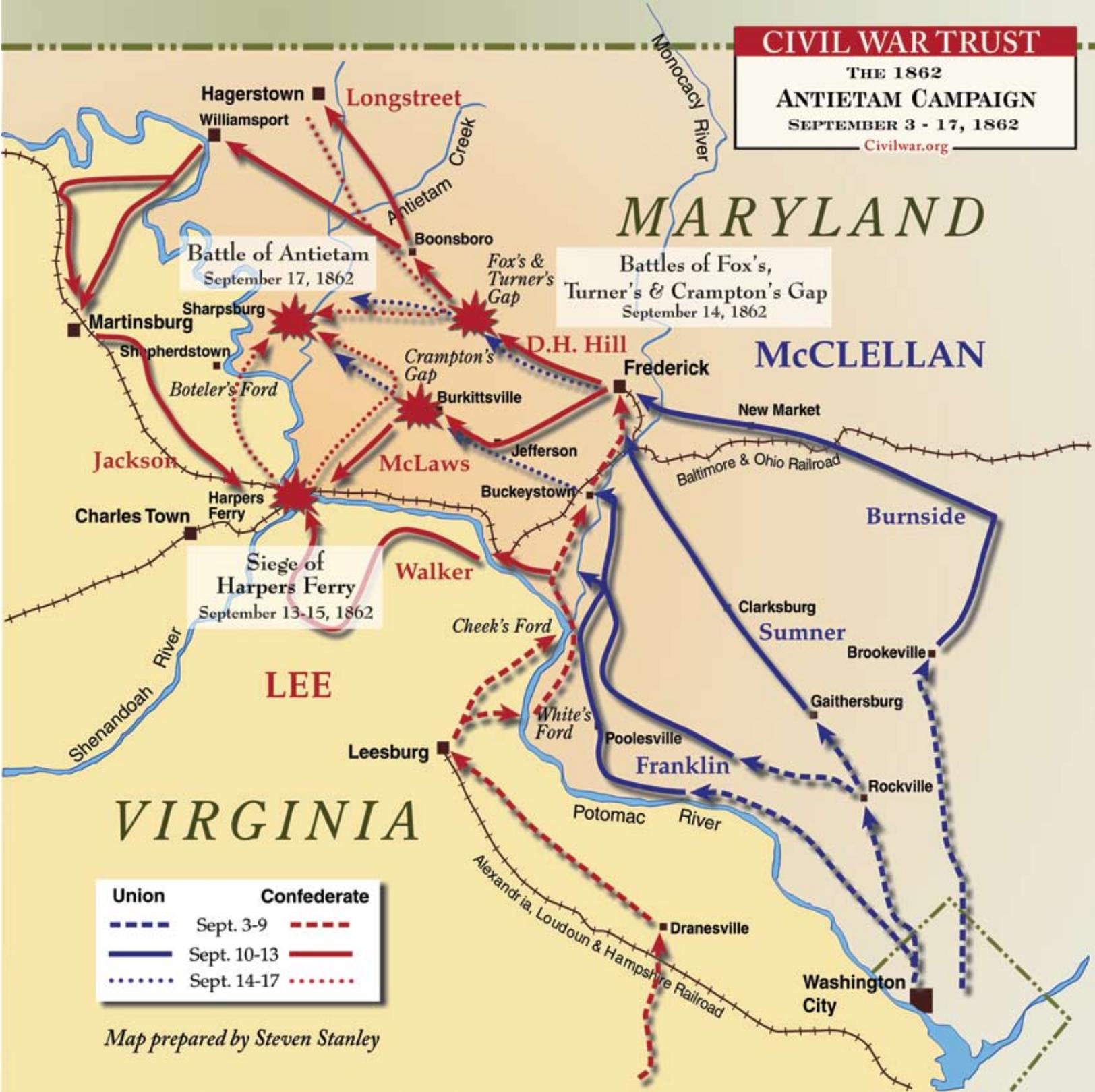
port. Clearly, Ripley's future actions would bear watching.¹⁵

By mid-August it was apparent to many that the Confederate capital faced no further threat from the Union Army of the Potomac, then entrenched 20 miles below the city at Harrison's Landing on the James River. On August 5th McClellan had initiated a reconnaissance in force towards Richmond and surprisingly reoccupied his old Malvern Hill position. Two days later he just as suddenly withdrew, prompting General Robert E. Lee to judge of McClellan: "I have no idea he will advance on Richmond now."¹⁶ From the enlisted ranks, Private Harrison Proffitt of Company B likewise opined: "If the Yankees are making any demonstrations for a renewal of the contest for Richmond, I am unaware of it. 'Stonewall' Jackson is keeping their attention directed toward the Valley of Virginia . . . Large forces are concentrating in the vicinity of Gordonsville, Va. and the weasel is expected to pop in a few days . . ." ¹⁷

Indeed, a more pressing source of concern for Lee at this time was the newly created Union Army of Virginia under Major General John Pope. Stationed

around Culpeper, Virginia, Pope's forces constituted a viable threat to the Virginia Central railroad and communications with the Shenandoah Valley. Lee had already dispatched "Stonewall" Jackson northward with two divisions to deal with Pope. A bloody but inconclusive battle was fought at Cedar Mountain on August 9th that blunted but did not cripple the Federal force. Lee proposed to finish the job by sending sizable reinforcements from around Richmond to Jackson. When intelligence reports on August 13th hinted that McClellan was beginning to vacate his base on the James, Lee moved quickly to cash in on the opportunity to strike Pope's army a decisive blow.¹⁸

Among the last troops dispatched to assist Jackson were the five brigades of D. H. Hill's division. Roswell Ripley's regiments led the march on August 19th. They boarded trains at Richmond for a daylong northwesterly journey to Orange Court House. There they bivouacked for several days, allowing their baggage wagons and the rest of Hill's column to catch up.¹⁹ Captain Thomas S. Bouchelle of Company B made maximum use of this available time by "exercising [the new] recruits in the . . . Manual of Arms [sic] – on and



up through squad to company drill.” Bouchelle was assisted by newly promoted Second Lieutenant Joseph W. Pedin, who clung to his Enfield rifle rather than brandish a line officers sword. This training, another officer observed . . . not only helped discipline the raw levies, but hardened them somewhat, thus enabling them the better to stand the strains . . . which soon followed.”²⁰

Hill’s advance did not resume until August 27th, leaving “officers and men wondering why we were held back, when it was evident hard work was going on at the front.” While signs of strife and dead Federals were much in evidence, Ripley’s thirsty and footsore brigade did not unite with Jackson and the balance of Lee’s victorious army until September 2nd. They were too late to participate in the battles of Second Manassas

and Chantilly.

A disgruntled officer in the 3rd North Carolina believed General Ripley had selfishly hindered the pace of their march on at least two occasions. Once, Ripley diverted his column away from its primary objective of Warrenton, giving as a reason: “I am going to see my sweetheart in Luray.” Later, “the General repaired to a private house for refreshments, directing the command to proceed to a point a mile or two out on the Manassas road and bivouac, with special instructions to the officers left in command to have the column drawn up in line on the road ready to march at 4 o’clock a. m. next day, but not to move until he came up. The command was on time, and stood in a drenching rain until about 7 o’clock, when Ripley appeared, and the column moved on.” Such unprofessional behavior did nothing to heighten Ripley’s stature with his fine brigade.²¹

On September 3rd, buoyed by his profound thrashing of Pope at Second Manassas, Lee proposed to carry the war into Maryland. As outlined by Lee in a letter to Confederate President Jefferson Davis: “The army is not properly equipped for an invasion of the enemy’s territory. It lacks much of the material of war, is feeble in transportation, the animals being much reduced, and the men are poorly provided with clothes, and in thousands of instances are destitute of shoes. Still, we cannot afford to be idle, and though weaker than our opponents in men and military equipment, [we] must endeavor to harass, if we cannot destroy them. I am aware that the moment is attended with much risk, yet I do not consider success impossible, and shall endeavor to guard [the Army] from loss. As long as the enemy is employed on this frontier, I have no fears for the safety of Richmond . . .” The cautious McClellan was, in fact, already hurrying his forces northward to counter Lee.²²

For a general whose army was admittedly poorly equipped and scantily provisioned, the move into Maryland by Lee constituted an audacious gamble. D.H. Hill’s men were probably less worn down than most, having avoided the recent Manassas fighting. That his “fresh” division was the first to cross the Potomac on September 4th, at Point of Rocks and other nearby fords, was no accident.²³ An artilleryman attached to Hill’s command described the historic moment: “As the men approached the water they were instructed to cross quietly. The September [temperature] of the water, however, was too much for them, and before they had gone into it far, gave several [w]hoops, such as were used in their charges and had come to be known as the ‘rebel

yell.’”²⁴ Ripley’s infantrymen waited their turn and crossed on the morning of September 6th, “taking [for many] our last view of old Virginia.” The column then moved forward to near Frederick, Maryland, where the men rested for several days. There the balance of Lee’s forces joined them. Calvin Leach of Company B was pleased to discover that “the first spring I found in Maryland was excellent water.”²⁵

The Army of Northern Virginia made a rich, if decidedly unflattering, impression on the civilian population around Frederick. Uniforms worn and tattered by weeks of campaigning caused one citizen to observe: “They were the dirtiest men I ever saw, a most ragged, lean and hungry set of wolves.” Another declared: “A dirtier, filthier and more unsavory set of human beings never strolled through a town—marching it could not be called without doing violence to the word . . .” Still, more than one Union sympathizer was willing to concede: “In manners, in the conduct of soldiers and the discipline, these bundles of rags, these cough-racked, diseased and starved men excel our well-fed, well clothed, our best soldiers. No one can point to a single act of vandalism perpetuated by the Rebel soldiery during the occupation of Frederick . . .”²⁶

Many Southerners, on the other hand, thought Maryland the finest and most fertile countryside they had ever seen. Even so, sustenance soon became a matter of prime concern. Strong orders against foraging had been issued, and Captain Tom Bouchelle of the “Wilkes Volunteers” remembered: “We were fed on green corn, three ears of corn per day for each man, including officers, and we had no salt for the corn . . . The orders against foraging and pillaging were strictly enforced and the men submitted to the green corn ration as a necessity . . . A fat hog, grunting with a surfeit of food, was in a pen less than 20 paces from our bivouac near a farmer’s house for a day and a night, and we left him still grunting his satisfaction unmolested! A cornfield was purchased and guards placed about it to prevent the boys from wasting the corn . . . and every man coming out of the field with corn in his arms or in his haversack was arrested for disobedience of orders.” Private Nelson Hagens of Bouchelle’s company circumvented the “three ears per day” limit by secretly topping off his canteen at night with kernels of shelled corn, which he later stewed with water. Bouchelle knowingly turned a blind eye to this enterprise in exchange for a portion of Hagen’s “corn soup!”²⁷

While encamped around Frederick, Lee made another bold decision that gave further shape to the



National Archives and Records Administration

This remarkable image, thought to have been made in September 1862, shows Confederate soldiers on the streets of Frederick, MD. One citizen of the town described the invading army as “a lean and hungry set of wolves.”

upcoming campaign. In an official proclamation on September 8th addressed “To the People of Maryland,” the Confederate general had stated his army’s earnest intentions “to assist you with the power of its arms in regaining the rights of which you have been despoiled. It is for you to decide your destiny freely and without restraint.” The reception received by his “liberating forces” was less than enthusiastic. Moreover, supplies in the country around Frederick were rapidly approaching exhaustion. Lee therefore decided to shift his forces westward into the Shenandoah Valley, near Hagerstown, Maryland. Once his supply links with Richmond were secured behind the protecting mountains of the Blue Ridge, Lee might then safely redirect his attention “to Philadelphia, Baltimore, or Washington, as may seem best for our interests.”²⁸

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To accomplish this change of base Lee needed to concern himself with substantial Union garrisons at Harpers Ferry and Martinsburg, Virginia, both of which were astride his proposed new communications line. It was half expected these posts might be abandoned upon the Confederate’s initial incursion across the Potomac, but Federal authorities had ordered them held “at all costs.” Now they presented themselves as ripe plums, ready for the picking.²⁹

On September 9th, Lee presented his corps commanders with a breathtaking proposal designed to reduce these garrisons through a rapid division and then re-concentration of his army. The sheer audacity of such an enterprise was heightened by the fact McClellan’s Federal forces were already reorganizing in the vicin-

ity of Washington and groping the Maryland countryside for the Southerners' whereabouts. Yet, Lee banked heavily on his opponent's characteristically overcautious nature to ensure the plan's success.

Despite objections to dividing the army from his corps commanders, Major Generals "Stonewall" Jackson and James Longstreet, Lee proceeded to draft Special Orders No. 191 initiating the plan in specific detail. Six divisions split into three separate wings would descend upon Harpers Ferry from the west, north, and south. The largest, under Jackson, would neutralize Martinsburg in the process. Meanwhile, a fourth wing under Longstreet, comprising three divisions, would accompany the reserve artillery and supply trains via Boonsboro to Hagerstown. There, Lee planned to reunite his forces. During this operation, D. H. Hill's command would be temporarily attached to Longstreet, and constitute the army's rearguard.³⁰

The movement began early on the morning of September 10th. Jackson's troops, who had the longest march, were the first to leave Frederick. They headed westward along the National road towards the South Mountain range and beyond. Although regimental bands gaily played "The Girl I Left Behind Me," most citizens were relieved to see the Rebels depart. When Longstreet's and later D.H. Hill's commands followed Jackson, Private Calvin Leach of Company B counted only "a few Secesh flags waved at us while passing through the town by the ladies." If Leach saw anything of the venerable Barbara Fritchie, he failed to comment!³¹

The tramp of Hill's command across the mountain at Turner's Gap was unhurried, but not without its rigors. Private Leach noted of their passage: "The ridge at this place is not more than a mile to the top. This was a very warm day and we suffered much for water." In addition, the hard macadamized surface of the National Road provided further woe to the poorly shod Confederates. Hill termed the straggling in his division "enormous in consequence of heavy marches, deficient commissariat, want of shoes, and inefficient officers." By the time he reached Boonsboro, at the western base of South Mountain, Hill estimated his division had been reduced to a total strength of fewer than 5,000 effectives.³²

While Longstreet's force moved on towards Hagerstown, Hill remained deployed around Boonsboro, keeping an unconcerned watch on the mountain gaps. He was further ordered by Lee on September

13th "to distribute my five brigades so as to not only protect the wagons and guns, but also to watch all the roads leading from Harper's Ferry, in order to intercept the Federal forces that might make their escape before Jackson had completed the investment of that place. It required considerable separation of my small command to accomplish these two objects, and my tent . . . was pitched about the center [of our line] . . . not less than three miles from Turner's Gap on the National Road . . ." Little could Hill then know that the very salvation of Robert E. Lee's divided army would soon depend on how well these same five worn, understrength brigades could defend the South Mountain passes!³³

Mid-day of September 13th brought to D.H. Hill the first inklings of a change in the grand tactical situation, as he understood it. A courier sent by Major General "Jeb" Stuart arrived at Hill's headquarters with startling news: two Federal brigades were doggedly pressing the cavalry screen that picketed the roads east of South Mountain. Stuart requested an infantry brigade to assist his beleaguered horsemen in holding Turner's Gap. Could it be that the normally timorous McClellan was closing with his army at a faster pace than anyone had reckoned possible?

Although not unduly alarmed, Hill dispatched the all-Georgia brigade of Alfred H. Colquitt to Stuart's relief.³⁴ Then, factoring in the depleted strength of his units, Hill ordered Samuel Garland's North Carolina brigade and two batteries to support Colquitt. Hill's other three brigades, including Roswell Ripley's, were summoned to rendezvous at Boonsboro. General Ripley himself was ordered to meet with Stuart to learn the latest intelligence on local topography. Colonel George Doles' 4th Georgia Regiment was also ordered detached from Ripley's command and sent to cover Hamburg pass, several miles to the north.³⁵

The sudden orders came unexpectedly to Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton Brown's 1st N. C. Infantry, encamped four miles west of Boonsboro. Private Calvin Leach described how :

we got ready leaving our rations half cooked [and] started back the way we came, marching by moonshine until we came to Boonville close to where we crossed [South Mountain]. There we were placed in line of battle and remained till [next] day." Captain Bouchelle later remembered their new position as being "in the fields between Boonsboro and the mountains [where] the brigade was held in line of battle and I think some crack-



Library of Congress

The Battle of Turner's Gap, September 14th, 1862. Due to mismanagement by General Roswell Ripley, his brigade contributed little to the brilliant Confederate defense of the South Mountain passes.

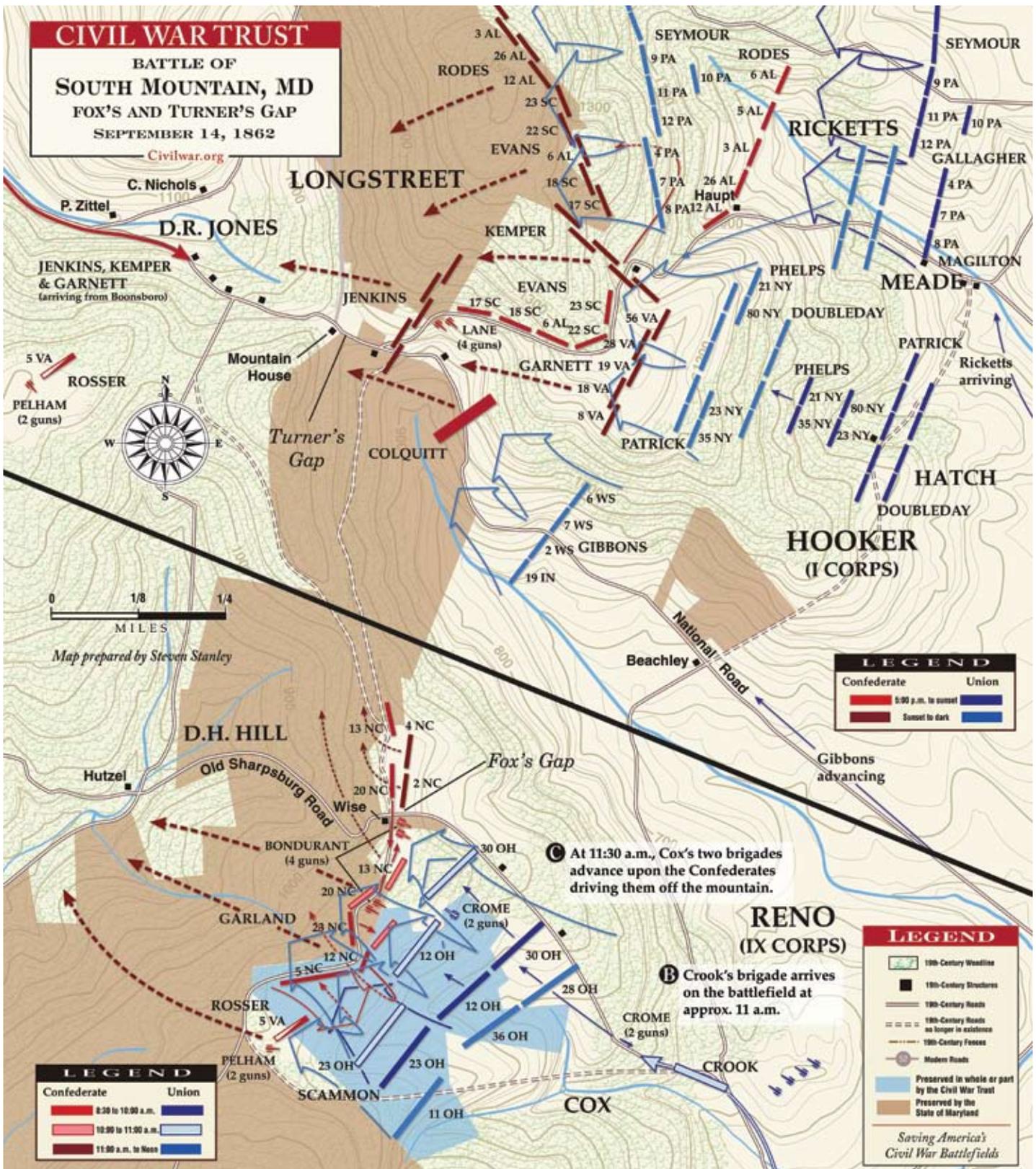
ers were furnished us, but no cooking was done nor fires made." Doubtless, most of the regiment's new conscripts got little rest that evening.³⁶

Meanwhile, Colquitt had reached the apex of Turner's Gap near a toll station known as Mountain House. There, watching as Stuart's troopers retreated up the mountainside, he deployed his Georgians on both sides of the National Road "at the most available points." In a brief meeting that followed with the cavalry chief, Colquitt learned some surprising news: "[Stuart] informed me that he could not remain – that he would move with his cavalry to Harpers Ferry – that I would have no difficulty in holding my position – that the enemy's forces, he thought, consisted of cavalry and one or two brigades of infantry." Of this Colquitt remained unconvinced, particularly after viewing billowing clouds of dust extending along roads in the valley below. "General Stuart must have been mistaken as to the strength of the enemy" he warned Hill later that evening.³⁷

If Hill still needed further awakening to the grav-

ity of the military situation on South Mountain, Robert E. Lee did not. Shortly after midnight on September 14th, a courier arrived at Hill's headquarters tent with an order from the Confederate commander to defend Turner's Gap. Obediently, Hill personally proceeded to the mountain pass before dawn to have a look for himself. Lee also ordered most of Longstreet's troops at Hagerstown to march at first light to D.H. Hill's assistance. The wisdom of Lee's precautionary measures became manifestly evident the following morning, when he learned that a copy of Special Orders No. 191 had fallen into Federal hands. No wonder McClellan came on with such vigor!³⁸

Hill reached the crest near daybreak and scanned the eastern valley from a convenient observation deck at Mountain House. What he saw must have sent a chill up his spine! "The marching [Federal] columns extended back as far as the eye could see in the distance," Hill later wrote, "but many of the troops had already arrived and were in double lines of battle, and those advancing were taking up positions as fast as they arrived. It was a grand and glorious spectacle, and it was impos-



sible to look at it without some degree of admiration. I had never seen so tremendous an army before, and I did not see one like it afterward." Hill had glimpses of his small command being "brushed away as readily as the strong man can brush to one side the wasp or hornet . . ."39 However, Hill was a well-trained and resourceful combat leader. Could he not, at least, buy

enough time for Longstreet's reinforcements to arrive? Hill quickly set about organizing a stout defense of the heights. Colquitt's brigade he redeployed to a superior position behind a stone fence near the crest at Turner's Gap. At some risk, Hill personally reconnoitered nearby Fox's Gap, about a mile away. Here the Sharpsburg road crossed the mountain and here, by means of

a connecting path known locally as Ridge Road, Samuel Garland's North Carolina brigade was instructed to hurriedly proceed. It was not long before both brigades were furiously engaging the enemy. The "prompt and gallant soldier" Garland was soon killed and his command "too roughly handled to be of any further use that day," Hill remembered. With a degree of desperation the scrappy North Carolinian ordered up his remaining three brigades, those of George B. Anderson, V.M.I. trained Robert E. Rodes, and Roswell Ripley.⁴⁰

Calvin Leach chronicled the 1st North Carolina's activities that morning: "Today at 10 o'clock we moved off from our position and marched toward the roaring of the cannons. We marched about half way up the mountain and stopped for a moment . . . [and] took off our knapsacks . . . Here I lost a Testament which was given me by a friend. [We] loaded our guns. This was now an exciting time. Many of the wounded came down the road meeting us, also the citizens leaving out . . . While we were stopped here they passed with the dead body of Gen. Garland."

Anderson's veteran North Carolina brigade was first to reach the crest, much to Hill's relief. It was pushed forward with "great obstinacy and boldness" in a valiant but futile attempt to blunt the Federal success at Fox's Gap. Rodes' and Ripley's brigades arrived around 11 a.m. Hill positioned Rodes' Alabamians north of the National Road to guard against a Federal advance from that direction. Ripley was ordered to "attach himself to G. B. Anderson's left," a task much easier said than done in the rugged mountain terrain.⁴¹

Captain Tom Bouchelle recalled: "We were ordered along the road into the Gap, from thence to the right forming line of battle on the crest of the ridge, where we were within range of the heaviest artillery of the Union Army . . ." This position provided a panoramic view of the battlefield. "I could see the Yankees in a line of battle and their artillery placed firing on us and our artillery was in position playing on them," an enthralled Private Leach observed. Except for the desultory artillery fire, a general lull settled over the field shortly after noon as both armies marshaled additional troops. Of the Southern fire, D.H. Hill wryly confessed: "I had every possible gun turned upon the Yankee columns, but owing to the steepness of the acclivity and the bad handling of the guns . . . little harm was done to the 'restorers of the Union.'" With masterful hyperbole did Hill style the cannonade being "as harmless as blank-cartridge salutes in honor of a militia general."⁴²

After linking up with Anderson, Ripley began to fear that the two brigades were isolated from the rest of Hill's command and vulnerable to attack by Federal forces advancing from the south. In characteristically impetuous fashion, Ripley assumed impromptu command of the two brigades and began shifting them southward preparatory to an attack in that direction. Calvin Leach recollected the movement: "The enemy were now trying to flank us on the right. We were now ordered by the right flank and marched on the top of the mountain keeping even with the enemy going over rocks and cliffs, and some of the worst places I almost ever saw." Captain Bouchelle remembered that "the very rough nature of the ground and the dense thickets of laurel and other undergrowth render[ed] impractical any regular evolution in line."⁴³

At around 3 p.m., as Ripley and Anderson stumbled through the brush, D.H. Hill himself arrived on the scene. Accompanying him were the first of Longstreet's arriving units: two brigades under Thomas F. Drayton and "Tige" Anderson. Hill quickly surveyed the situation. Capitalizing on Ripley's initial plan, he proposed to execute a "left grand wheel" of all four brigades that would sweep the Federals on this part of the field off South Mountain and away from Fox's Gap. This would require the brigades of George Anderson and Ripley to shift even further southward in order to allow room for "Tige" Anderson's and Drayton's men to deploy on their left. Roswell Ripley, as senior brigadier present, was assigned tactical control of the complex maneuver. Colonel William L. DeRosset of the 3rd North Carolina assumed command of Ripley's brigade.

The "left grand wheel" fell apart before it had scarcely begun. Ripley noted in his official report: "General [George] Anderson's and my own brigade got into position . . . and General Drayton's command was rapidly forming when the action commenced by the enemy attacking him in force. This he sustained for some time, General Anderson's and my own brigade pushing forward through dense thickets and up very steep acclivities to outflank the enemy and come into General Drayton's support." With no degree of understatement, Ripley added: "The natural difficulties of the ground and the condition of the troops prevented these movements from being made with the rapidity which was desirable, and the enemy forced his way . . . between General Drayton's forces and my own . . ."⁴⁴

Fortunately for the Confederates, Drayton put up a resolute fight before being driven by the Federals. The sturdy brigades of George Anderson and "Tige"

Anderson launched reflexive but uncoordinated counter punches that prevented the line from total collapse. Additional reinforcements from Longstreet's Corps pitched in to stabilize the tenuous position. Meanwhile, Ripley's brigade, under Colonel DeRosset of the 3rd North Carolina, got squeezed out of line and groped blindly through the woods on the west side of South Mountain. Private Leach described the exasperating afternoon: "We were march[ed] backward and forward across the mountain and were marched to the top of it by the left flank in a line of battle and waited there till near sundown and then back again." In the meantime, six companies of the 1st North Carolina under Lieutenant Colonel Brown rendered effective service on the skirmish line, where they lost several men.⁴⁵

Elsewhere along the summit, Hill's other brigades, reinforced by Longstreet, staged a truly Homeric defense of the South Mountain passes against vicious Federal assaults. Nightfall found the battered and weary Confederates still holding their ground in most places, albeit dubiously. While losses had been extremely heavy, D.H. Hill's gritty decision to "hold at all costs," coupled with his superb tactical direction of the battle had, in effect, saved Lee's army from possible ruin. Well could Hill comment in his official report: "Should the truth ever be known, the battle of South Mountain, as far as my division was concerned, will be regarded as one of the most remarkable and creditable of the war."

Hill also praised lavishly all the brigadiers in his division, excepting Roswell Ripley. Of the Ohio born general's performance, Hill caustically averred: "Ripley did not draw trigger; why, I do not know." In point of fact, Hill was all too aware of what happened. Just as at Gaines' Mill in June, Roswell Ripley had failed to keep a firm, controlling hand on his command.⁴⁶ Colonel DeRosset, temporarily commanding Ripley's brigade in the action, went so far as to accuse Ripley of "remaining at the foot of the mountain" during the engagement, giving out conflicting orders. Yet, it was DeRosset who also put his brigade's contribution in its best light: "While . . . we accomplished nothing tangible, we were [at least] in position to do any duty for which we might be called."⁴⁷

Even as intermittent firing sputtered to a close in the gathering darkness, Lee anxiously met with Hill and Longstreet to determine his next move. In true form, Hill was frank in his appraisal of the situation. Federal reinforcements were many, he said, and their batteries held the higher ground. Southern positions would be

rendered untenable on the morrow! Longstreet deferred to Hill, acknowledging the North Carolinian's better understanding of the field. This disheartening information validated an opinion and course of action Lee had already decided upon: No choice remained but to consolidate the army's scattered columns behind Antietam Creek at Sharpsburg, eight miles away.⁴⁸

Well before midnight, Hill and Longstreet began the risky process of extricating their exhausted troops from South Mountain in the presence of a numerically superior and vigilant enemy. Marching orders were deliberately vague so as to mask Lee's true intentions. Ripley sullenly returned to his brigade after his botched exercise in demi-division command and was instructed to act as rear-guard. Rousing the weary soldiers, many of whom had sought shelter for the night, proved to be a major undertaking. Some would not be found in the darkness and, like the dead and wounded, left to their fate.

No doubt many veterans who took up the march to Sharpsburg shared experiences similar to those of Captain Tom Bouchelle and the 1st North Carolina: "After nightfall we were in a narrow gullied cartway leading down the mountain towards Boonsboro. Orders were received to lie down in ranks, with arms in our hands, and to make no noise, not even to give a command except to pass it along a file in low tones. The Union forces were in hearing, perhaps nearly surrounding us. Thus situated, we fell asleep, as weary soldiers will . . . Between two and three a.m. next morning, September 15th, we were waked by the touch of a hand and a low whispered command to move silently down the cart way – this led us to the turnpike at Boonsboro, and at the next turning we filed square to the left, a mounted officer at the corner sharply commanding each successive company to 'Close up! Close Up!' I now understood that we were retreating."

Not all of the 1st North Carolina got off the mountain range safely. While official returns show no casualties for the regiment since leaving Frederick, compiled service records document the loss of at least one man killed, two wounded, and more than three-dozen missing. Most are listed as "Captured at Boonsboro, Md., September 14th." Fatigue and straggling doubtless accounted for most of the losses, which included 12 of the new conscripts.⁴⁹

In later years, Captain Bouchelle always maintained that his Company B of the 1st North Carolina was the last unit to quit the field. However, thanks to what



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The Middle Bridge over Antietam Creek, looking easterly, as viewed from the initial position of the 1st North Carolina and Ripley's Brigade at Sharpsburg, MD. Here the men gained much needed rest and sought out food.

appears to be another blunder by General Ripley, that distinction may rightly belong to Colonel George Doles 4th Georgia Infantry.

It will be recalled the Georgians had been detached from Ripley's command late on the evening of the 13th and sent to guard Hamburg Pass northeast of Boonsboro. While Ripley opined that his brigade's withdrawal from South Mountain in the pre-dawn hours of September 15th "was made without confusion," at least one member of the 4th Georgia had an entirely different perspective. He later wrote: "[Our] entire regiment came very near being captured that night . . . for when our army was ordered to evacuate the position, General Ripley forgot all about us and started with the rest of the brigade for Sharpsburg. Colonel DeRosset, of the Third North Carolina, discovered our absence and a courier was dispatched to notify us. We left hurriedly, but none too soon, for as we passed through [Boonsboro] the enemy was entering it. Had our notice been ten minutes later, we would have certainly been cut off and captured in a body." ⁵⁰

In the morning light of September 15th, the tidy

village of Sharpsburg appeared as a pale specter to Hill's and Longstreet's jaded veterans following their tiresome night tramp. Tom Bouchelle remembered: "We were hungry and weary. Our march was slow. We crossed [the] Antietam over a bridge a little after sun up." Lee personally directed many of the troops into position along a line parallel to the sluggish creek and just east of Sharpsburg, boldly declaring: "We will make our stand on those hills." To his army's back, a scant three miles away, coursed the winding Potomac River. ⁵¹

Utilized by the retreating Confederates to pass Antietam Creek was a picturesque, three-arched, stone edifice known locally as the "Middle Bridge," on the Boonsboro Pike. Once across the stream, Longstreet's columns swung to the left and Hill's to the right. Longstreet brought about 13,500 men on the field; Hill another 4,500. Later, Hill would grouse his troops were given less favorable terrain "on the flats," while Longstreet got the choice higher ground southeast of Sharpsburg. Hill nonetheless deployed his five depleted brigades generally north-northeast of town, with Ripley anchoring the division's right along the Boonsboro Pike. Hav-

ing been spared major harm at Turner's Gap, Ripley's brigade of roughly 1,350 effectives was nominally the strongest of Hill's units.⁵²

However, one fact was obvious: the forces Lee deployed along the banks of the Antietam that day were woefully insufficient to halt McClellan's advancing legions. Until Jackson joined him, Lee had less than 18,000 men to oppose more than three times as many Federals. Consolidation of the scattered Confederate forces was paramount! When, around noon on the 15th, news arrived from Stonewall Jackson that Harpers Ferry had fallen and reinforcements were coming, a much relieved Lee exclaimed: "This is indeed good news, let it be announced to the men."⁵³

While such tidings may have reenergized the private soldiers, many pursued more basic concerns. Some sought shade and a quiet place to rest. Others scoured nearby homes and farms looking for food and drink. Some of Robert Rodes' famished Alabamians got into a cellar full of cider, which took instant effect on empty stomachs. Near one of Longstreet's brigades, an unfortunate cow wandered onto the scene and was promptly felled by musketry. In the ranks of the 1st North Carolina, the bill of fare was less exotic but no less appreciated: "Here we fared sumptuously on green corn and pumpkins," Captain Hamilton Brown remembered, "till the firing of the enemy's artillery in the afternoon admonished us of more important matters."⁵⁴

Roswell Ripley's brigade remained in position near the "Middle Bridge" throughout the night of the 15th and most of the 16th. They were keenly aware of McClellan's hosts gathering on the east bank of the Antietam. Blue-coated ax men felled trees in order to create fields of fire for Federal gunners, whose practice was lively but ineffective, due, in part, to a protecting ridgeline behind which the Carolinians and Georgians lay. Large elements of Jackson's victorious Harpers Ferry force likewise reached Sharpsburg, where they were skillfully deployed to guard the Confederate left. Columns of Federal infantry were seen crossing Antietam Creek in that direction. Of the day's activities, Private Calvin Leach of the 1st North Carolina scribed simply in his diary: "In line of battle day and night. Today the ball was opened by artillery. No infantry firing."⁵⁵

Shortly after nightfall, in response to persistent ominous signs (including some heated skirmishing) opposite the Confederate northern flank, Ripley received orders to shift his brigade from its position astride the

Boonsboro Pike to the extreme left of Hill's divisional line. While Anderson's brigade relieved them, Ripley's men trod northwestwardly across the gently rolling countryside. They passed behind the natural earthwork of a sunken road occupied by three of Hill's brigades, and into a broad swale east of the Hagerstown Turnpike near its intersection with the Smoketown Road. There they occupied the west side of a small hill, approximately 300 yards east of a modest whitewashed brick building along the pike. Known locally as the Dunker Church, many soldiers mistook the building to be a schoolhouse. Immediately to the rear of Ripley's brigade, three batteries of Colonel Stephen D. Lee's artillery battalion occupied a sheltered hollow by the church.

Dispositions were promptly made in readiness for what portended to be a major Federal thrust on the morrow. Having their own artillery directly behind them was not a thought that reassured many of Ripley's veterans, since any such firing would have to be done directly over their heads. Yet, personal discomfort was at least partially alleviated by the issue of some hot food. Captain Bouchelle recalled: "While here in line of battle (sometime after dark of the 16th), I think some cooked food was brought to us – the bread had been baked on stones taken from a wall and heated by fires – and the beef was cooked in the same way or on the fire itself." For a great many men in Roswell Ripley's brigade and the 1st North Carolina, this would be their final meal.⁵⁶

Shortly before midnight, a steady, drizzling rain began to fall. Intermittent outbursts of nervous gunfire added further to the gloom. Tormented by their own presentiments, men slept fitfully, if at all. Virginia Captain Robert W. Parker, commanding one of S. D. Lee's excellent batteries, later recounted: "No man who lay upon that field, and realized the deep tragedy which was to be enacted on the morrow, could be but sad and thoughtful . . . We thought of dear ones far away, and were glad they knew not of the trying hour . . . [coming] rapidly on."⁵⁷

At dawn on September 17th, the disciplined Federal batteries east of Antietam Creek again began hammering Southern positions. With their right flank vulnerably exposed to enfilade fire, Ripley's brigade hugged the ground. Expectantly they lay in line, deployed from left to right as follows: 4th Georgia, 44th Georgia, 1st North Carolina, and 3rd North Carolina. Unlike at Fox's Gap, these regiments would not have to search for the battle. One of the very first rounds



Library of Congress

The Dunker Church along the Hagerstown Pike. Ripley's brigade was shifted to a position in a shallow swale near here on the evening of September 16th. The unimposing white structure became the focal point of Federal attacks the following day.

hurled by Union guns exploded squarely in front of the 3rd North Carolina, wounding sixteen officers and men. Another brigade member agreed that the shelling caused "considerable execution." As anticipated, Stephen D. Lee's three batteries wheeled into position on a broad, elevated plateau just behind Ripley's prone line. "Friendly" shells were soon screaming overhead in reply. Sharp pieces of metal sabots from rifled shells and premature explosions caused by unreliable CS time fuses posed an additional danger. "I tell you reader," one infantryman in the vicinity later wrote, "that was a very unpleasant place to be in."⁵⁸

First light revealed a heavy ground fog the density of which was compounded by sulfurous gun smoke. Visibility proved initially difficult. Several hundred yards in front of Ripley's line the men could vaguely identify a large, white farmhouse. This commodious dwelling was the residence of Samuel Mumma [pronounced Moo'-ma], an elderly German Baptist who now found refuge at a neighboring church. Mumma's property also included a barn, miscellaneous outbuildings, and a family cemetery enclosed by a stout stone-wall. Rail fences, a farm lane, orchard, and numerous haystacks interspersed the property.

Recognizing that the farmhouse and outbuildings might provide safe haven for enemy sharpshooters, D.H. Hill ordered the structures burned. Sergeant Major James Clarke and several members of the 3rd North Carolina dutifully complied, brandishing torches lit from cook fires. Enemy bullets chinked bricks and whacked against wood planking as the daring Carolinians darted from point to point on their errand of arson. Flames were soon leaping briskly skyward, but not before Clarke took a painful wound to the arm. Hill too was nearly injured when an artillery shell struck his horse just behind the saddle.⁵⁹

The sounds of conflict increased in proportion with the daylight. Shortly before 6 a.m., Major General Joseph Hooker's Federal First Corps launched a furious, rolling assault from the North, aimed at turning the Confederate left. The visual focus of Hooker's drive was the distant, white beacon of Dunker Church and a large, open woodlot behind known as the West Woods. The rightmost division in Hooker's line centered its thrust down the Hagerstown Pike. Somewhat intermixed, his other two divisions stretched eastward towards and across the narrow Smoketown Road. In the path of the southerly Union advance lay the farm of

CIVIL WAR TRUST

BATTLE OF ANTIETAM, MD

SEPTEMBER 17, 1862
6:00 A.M. TO 7:00 A.M.

CivilWar.org

Crawford and Gordon of Williams' Division, XII Corps arriving.

HOOKER (I CORPS)

MEADE

DOUBLEDAY

JACKSON

LONGSTREET

D.H. HILL

Nicodemus Heights

PELHAM (4 guns)

CARPENTER (4 guns)

WOODING (4 guns)

BALTHIS (3 guns)

D'AQUIN (4 guns)

EARLY

LEGEND

- | Confederate | Union |
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Saving America's Civil War Battlefields

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Map prepared by Steven Stanley



David Miller, with a large 25-acre cornfield in full tassel. To its left lay the rock-studded recesses of the East Woods.

To the front and left of Ripley's Brigade, fighting magnified in intensity as Jackson's men resolutely resisted Hooker's attack. Reinforcements from other commands arrived to bolster the Southern line. Brigadier General John Bell Hood's Division of Longstreet's Corps launched a savage counter attack into Farmer Miller's cornfield that temporarily stunned the Federals. It was not long before Ripley was ordered to support the hard-pressed brigade of Colonel James H. Walker, battling around the Mumma Farm near the western fringes of the East Wood. Moving by the left flank, Ripley's Carolinians and Georgians advanced "at the double quick" across a narrow swale directly towards the burning farm buildings. Captain Bouchelle took time to notice: "In front of the [Mumma] house a bell, as large as some church bells of that day, hung on a frame about 8 or 10 feet high." Federal bullets striking the bell caused it to clang intermittently.⁶⁰

Negotiating the blazing structures proved a challenging task. One member of the 44th Georgia, near the center of Ripley's line, admitted: "Our brigade was considerably confused owing to the heat of these burning buildings, and at one time the regiments got mixed up . . ." The two North Carolina regiments were forced to veer right of the blazing farmhouse where they pushed ahead towards a fence line near the Mumma orchard. The 4th and 44th Georgia guided left. There they found protection behind a sturdy "staked and ridged rail fence" bordering the Mumma farm lane by the family cemetery.⁶¹

On this occasion, no one could accuse the unpopular Roswell Ripley of not being with his troops. In his own after-action report, Ripley noted: "While engaged in reforming the brigade, I received a shot in the neck, which disabled me, and the troops moved forward under the command of Colonel Doles, of the Fourth Georgia Regiment." Although one Tar Heel ungenerously described Ripley's wound as "slight," even the normally critical D.H. Hill acknowledged: "Brigadier General Ripley received a severe wound in the throat from a Minie-ball, which would have proven fatal but for passing through his cravat."⁶²

While Ripley headed to the rear to have his wound dressed, Colonel Doles promptly tried to restore order to the disorganized command. Clearing the Mumma farmyard had brought the men within easy range

of the Union infantry brigade of Colonel William A. Christian. Deployed in the southwestern environs of the East Woods, Christian's regiments fired by file, "evenly and carefully." Doles had his men lie down to catch their wind.

Even in this position, the weight of enemy metal proved punishing. "The fence [before us] was continually being hit by bullets coming from our front," Captain Tom Bouchelle recounted. "A number of our men were wounded, some killed. One man in my front was killed by a ball punctuating the fence and striking him on top of his head while he was lying on the ground. Shells were following in our rear and all around us." To make matters worse, "a rick of wheat probably 40 feet long and 15 ft. high" took fire directly in front of Bouchelle's Company B. He was forced to shift his men to the right and rear of the next company in order to escape the intense heat.⁶³

Sensing the precarious nature of their situation, the combative Doles was not long in giving the order to "Charge bayonets!" Colonel Brown asserted that: "The troops obeyed with alacrity, manifesting more than their usual determination and efficiency, [and crossing the] formidable fence . . . moved through a skirt of woods . . ." A Georgian in the brigade enthusiastically contended how "the men forgot in a moment their empty haversacks and sore feet, and sprang forward at the double-quick, yelling like so many demons. The Federal line in our front gave way like chaff before the cyclone." In truth, the New Yorkers and Pennsylvanians of Christian's brigade had nearly exhausted their ammunition by the time of the spirited Confederate charge. They fell back into the East Woods in dogged and deliberate fashion.⁶⁴

A sudden quiet settled over the field as Ripley's men pushed to the southern extension of the woodlot. It was shortly after 7:00 a.m. Captain Bouchelle remembered "passing some Confederate dead during our advance, but there were no troops in front of us now in sight, neither extending to [our] right." To their left front, in the now tattered cornfield, the wreckage of Hood's and Jackson's divisions were sullenly giving ground as weighty numbers of Federal reinforcements arrived on the scene. According to one Tar Heel, Colonel Doles gave orders for the brigade to "change direction to the left, to meet the pressure upon General Jackson, near what is known as the Dunker Church, on the Sharpsburg-Hagerstown Pike."⁶⁵

Marching by the left flank, the four regiments



Library of Congress

This photograph was originally catalogued as “Confederate dead in the vicinity of Burnside’s Bridge.” Subsequent investigative research has determined the actual image location to be in the quadrangular field looking westward towards the Hagerstown Pike and West Woods.

crossed the Smoketown Road and moved into a large, quadrangular shaped pasture immediately south of the cornfield. Their line of advance was generally northeast, and unopposed except for a few Federal skirmishers. Captain Bouchelle remained perplexed that no organized troops of either army were visible. He later conceded that perhaps “the fog and smoke prevented an extended view.” Continuing for nearly half a mile, the brigade traversed a broad hollow and began ascending a small, rolling ridge. Beyond ran the fence-lined Hagerstown Pike and the southwestern reaches of Farmer Miller’s cornfield. Brown’s 1st North Carolina was first of Ripley’s command to face to the front and therefore reached the hill’s crest ahead of the other units. ⁶⁶

The view presented the Tar Heels was as martially imposing as it was unnerving! Advancing up the reverse slope of the ridge were portions of the black-hatted “Iron Brigade,” tough Mid-Western men from

Indiana and Wisconsin. Along with several seasoned New York and Pennsylvania regiments from Hooker’s First Corps, they were bent on following up Hood’s repulse. Lieutenant Colonel Brown recalled: “Three distinct lines of the enemy could be plainly seen approaching. As they advanced they were reviewed by a Federal officer, with hat in hand, riding rapidly in front of each line. We were near enough to hear the angry and determined cheers of his men.” Brown gave orders to “Fix bayonets.” ⁶⁷

Tom Bouchelle nervously observed: “We were now halted and closed up ranks in good order, in full view of long lines of the Union army . . . [their] right flank extend[ing] further than our left. Our position was slightly more elevated than that of the Union forces. Thus, we were at a disadvantage [since] we were within easy musket range and our new recruits would be certain to overshoot their enemy . . . especially my com-



Library of Congress

Rocky outcropping just a few yards south of The Cornfield that stood along Ripley's line of battle. The Confederate dead seen in photo could well be members of the 1st or 3rd North Carolina Regiments. View is to the southwest, toward the Dunker Church (not seen).

pany, who were armed with Enfield rifles.”

Nonetheless, the North Carolinians were first to unleash a withering volley that momentarily staggered the blue-coated lines. “You are doing well,” Bouchelle cheerfully exhorted his men, seeking to stiffen their resolve. Then, return Federal fire sent a minie ball crashing through the young Captain’s lower jaw and teeth.

Severely hurt, Bouchelle graphically described what happened next: “At the same time, Lieutenant Joe Peden fell shot in the groin, and men were falling in the ranks. Peden came dragging up to me about the same time I regained my feet and informed me of his condition. Sergt. L. J. Curtis was in the front rank using his rifle. I endeavored to reach him and bid him take command of the company, Turning, I saw [Lieutenant] Colonel Brown approaching. The [Lieutenant] Colonel, seeing the blood spouting from my mouth and

from both sides and thinking, as I did, that my entire lower jaw had been carried away, threw up both hands with the expression, ‘My God,’ and hastened forward. By this time, I had found the point where the largest artery was spouting and by pressure with fingers checked the flow of blood. The [Lieutenant] Colonel called a man to my assistance and I then, with pointing with my sword to Peden’s condition and to Curtis, indicated to the [Lieutenant] Colonel my desire to place Curtis in command.”

Unwilling to weaken the firing line, Captain Bouchelle and Lieutenant Peden declined all offers of succor. They gamely supported each one another to the rear. Even as they did, the 1st North Carolina blazed away vigorously in a conflict Lieutenant Colonel Brown judged “murderous beyond description.”⁶⁸

Private Calvin Leach described the ensuing action: “I commenced loading and shooting with all

CIVIL WAR TRUST

BATTLE OF ANTIETAM, MD

SEPTEMBER 17, 1862
7:00 A.M. TO 7:40 A.M.

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HOOKER
(I CORPS)

WILLIAMS
MANSFIELD
(XII CORPS)

DOUBLEDAY

MEADE

HOOD

JACKSON

LONGSTREET

LEGEND

Confederate	Union

0 250 500
YARDS

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Map prepared by Steven Stanley

my might but my gun got choked the first round, and I picked up the gun of one of my comrades who fell by my side and continued to fire. Here I could see the second line of the enemy and when their men would fall, the rest would close in and fill their places. Their first line was lying behind a fence and I could see the old "Stars & Stripes" waving over them. I fired as near as I could aim at the men around the flag. I do not know if I killed anyone or not." ⁶⁹

A Union officer in the 7th Wisconsin Infantry confirmed the Confederate musketry wrought "sad havoc in our ranks." Another, from the 19th Indiana, likewise acknowledged: "In making the charge and retiring, our colors fell three times, the bearers severely wounded." One-third of the Hoosiers became casualties, including their lieutenant colonel. The Union pursuit was blunted as the rest of Ripley's men swung into position along the ridgeline beside the 1st North Carolina. The 4th and 44th Georgia extended Brown's left, while the 3rd North Carolina anchored the brigade line on the right. Their combined fire added further weight of metal to the contest.

Grudgingly, the Federals retreated to shelter behind a limestone ledge west of the Hagerstown Pike. From there, they maintained a presence more annoying than damaging to the Southerners. ⁷⁰

The 3rd North Carolina actually penetrated the southern reaches of the cornfield. This forward movement "brought . . . us in the deadly embrace of the enemy," an officer in the unit grimly remembered. There, volleys were traded among the trampled cornstalks with several more Union regiments, these belonging to a brigade of the veteran Pennsylvania Reserves. If any of the North Carolinians recognized that they faced their old adversaries of the Seven Days, they surely took aim all the more carefully! ⁷¹

In later years, Colonel William L. DeRosset reminisced proudly about the performance of his new recruits: "During this engagement, one of the conscripts was observed calmly walking up and down behind his company, and upon being asked why he was not in ranks and firing, replied: 'I have seen nothing to shoot at, and I have only 60 rounds of cartridges; I don't care to waste them.' He was instructed to lie down, and being shown the blue breeches under the smoke, his face brightened up at once as he began firing. Seldom was truer courage displayed than by this man, who under his first experience in battle, having evidently been left behind as his company double-quickened to the front, came

up as the smoke from the first volleys had obscured everything and could see nothing in front." ⁷²

Under Doles' strong hand, Ripley's brigade succeeded in driving off most remaining elements of Hooker's shot-up First Corps. Yet, any respite was brief. Additional contingents of Major-General Joseph K. F. Mansfield's Federal Twelfth Corps began arriving from the northeast as reinforcements. Brigadier General Samuel W. Crawford's large brigade was the first to reach the battlefield.

Fortunately for the Confederates, Crawford's command contained a number of new regiments, unaccustomed to drill and discipline. These troops boldly advanced through the rocky East Woods aligned in "column of companies closed in mass." While the fatherly, sixty-year-old Mansfield felt "elbow-to-elbow" formations would steady his raw recruits, a Maine Captain supposed the ten-rank-deep columns provided "almost as good a target as a barn." Another Federal officer was disturbed that "proper intervals for deployment had not been properly been attended to." Mansfield himself soon fell, mistaking Rebel skirmishers for his own. ⁷³

The time consuming and piecemeal commitment of Crawford's regiments mystified many of Ripley's men. "One curious incident of this morning's battle," marveled Captain S. D. Thurston of the 3rd North Carolina, "was when Mansfield's Corps came into action, a Federal division marched up, and halting in column of battalions in the [East] Woods, part of the time within one hundred yards of the right of [our regiment], made no effort to advance, although for five hundred yards to our right there was nothing to prevent its doing so . . . The gap existed, and the enemy was expected every minute to march through." Thurston compared the poised Federals to "a hound in the leash." ⁷⁴

One of Crawford's inexperienced regiments, the 9-month 128th Pennsylvania Volunteers, lost both its colonel and lieutenant colonel before orders could be adequately conveyed through the ranks to form line of battle. Obediently, the rookies stood stock-still in column, rendering themselves totally ineffective. They also masked the field of fire of the hindmost advancing Union units. Not until the colonel of a sister regiment sought to unbundle the distraught Pennsylvanians' tight formation was inertia broken. Under intense pounding, attempting a deployment that would have challenged even the most veteran unit, the green 128th broke for the rear! Yet, driven by the tremendous exertions of their officers, most of Crawford's regiments eventually man-

aged to sort themselves out and get into the fight.⁷⁵

To the right of Crawford, other elements of the Twelfth Corps positioned themselves north of the cornfield, extending eastward to relieve Hooker's pressed men. Union General George H. Gordon's brigade faced off directly opposite Ripley's command, but its ability to engage was initially thwarted by the retreating 128th Pennsylvania. Colonel Silas Colgrove of the 27th Indiana recalled the confusion: "Immediately in front or beyond the cornfield, upon open ground at a distance of about 400 yards, were three [Rebel] regiments in line of battle, and farther to the right, on a high ridge of ground, was still another regiment in line diagonally to our line. When we first took position it was impossible to immediately open fire upon the enemy without firing on our own troops, who were retreating out of the cornfield. As soon as these troops had filed past my left, I immediately ordered my regiment to fire, which was done in good order. The firing was heavy on both sides . . ." ⁷⁶

The 3rd North Carolina had to "change front to the rear on the Tenth Company" to meet the threat of Mansfield's Corps. While directing this difficult maneuver, Colonel DeRosset received a severe wound that took him out of the war. This placed the regiment at nearly right angles to the rest of Ripley's line. The 3rd North Carolina launched a brief counterattack, incurring enormous losses. Elsewhere on the line, Doles' 4th Georgia lost its major, most company officers, and three color bearers within a matter of minutes. Several companies of the 1st North Carolina had to be detached from the right center of the line to support the Georgians on the left.

The delay occasioned by Mansfield's faulty tactical dispositions enabled the ever-vigilant D.H. Hill to react to the Federal attack. He threw more of his division into the fray. Shrieking their high pitched "yip-yip" battle yell, the brigades of Alfred H. Colquitt and D. H. McRae (formerly Samuel Garland's) plunged into the broad gap on Dole's right. The contest quickly degenerated into a stand-up slugfest of attrition that raged throughout the quadrangular pasture, cornfield, and East Woods. "The roar of the infantry was beyond anything conceivable," one Union general later remembered.⁷⁷

The balance of Hamilton Brown's 1st North Carolina continued to maintain its position on the small ridgeline near the Hagerstown Pike. There they dueling with the 124th Pennsylvania Volunteers, another of

Samuel Crawford's big, novice regiments. Resolutely, the Tar Heels served up crashing volleys of musketry to their blue-clad opponents in the Cornfield and Miller farmyard. "During this time our Regt. got cut up very badly," Calvin Leach acknowledged. Indeed, men tumbled from the ranks by the scores. Particularly hard hit were the recently inducted conscripts. In Company A, more than a dozen new men from Guilford County who joined the unit in July became casualties. Likewise, Private William Newlin of Company B, the young drill-master recruit from Hillsborough Military Academy, fell to Federal bullets.

Line officers did not escape the frightful carnage. First Lieutenant William S. Shepherd of Company F was killed outright. Lieutenants Joseph A. Parker of Company A and William D. Scarborough of Company I took wounds that would soon prove mortal. Less serious in nature were the injuries sustained by Captain Louis C. Latham of Company G and First Lieutenant John M. Guyther of Company H. Miraculously, Colonel Brown avoided being hit amidst the storm of shot and shell which lasted, he judged, "for more than an hour and a half."⁷⁸

Since a considerable number of the Carolinians and Georgians still carried .69 caliber smoothbore muskets, their fire was particularly injurious to the opposing enemy. Gordon's brigade of the Union Twelfth Corps suffered a huge and disproportionate ratio of wounded-to-killed, caused principally by the shotgun-like effect of Confederate buck-and-ball rounds. One Federal avowed: "At one time during this part of the engagement the fire of the enemy was so terribly destructive it seemed that our little force would be entirely annihilated." Among the wounded was Corporal Barton Mitchell of the 27th Indiana, the finder of Lee's "lost" Special Orders No. 191.⁷⁹

However, try as they might, it soon became apparent that D.H. Hill's three depleted brigades could not stem the advance of the entire Federal Twelfth Corps. Colquitt's command was literally torn to pieces and McRae's ingloriously scattered in the point blank cornfield fighting. Hill admitted to being "broken and much demoralized." Only Ripley's Carolinians and Georgians maintained any precept of organization, but ammunition and men were nearly exhausted. Even the dead had been stripped of remaining cartridges.

Hill sent several urgent messages to General Lee for reinforcements as he ordered the survivors of Ripley's brigade to fall back. The gray batteries of Col-

onel S. D. Lee covered their withdrawal with blasts of canister. Hamilton Brown observed that “the manner of this retreat was slow and in order and under General Hill’s personal supervision. Observing an abandoned caisson . . . Hill ordered the soldiers to remove it from the field, remarking: ‘We will not leave the enemy so much as a wheel.’ The retreat was continued to [beyond] the Dunker Church on the Hagerstown Road, where, after being supplied with ammunition, our lines were reformed . . .”⁸⁰

If no wheels were left behind, many casualties were. Captain Robert Gould Shaw of the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry described the ground vacated by Ripley: “Beyond the cornfield was a large open field, and such a mass of dead and wounded men, mostly Rebels, as were lying there I never saw before. It was a terrible sight and our men had to be very careful to avoid treading on them; many were mangled and torn to pieces by artillery but most of them had been wounded by musketry fire . . . There were so many young boys and old men among the Rebels that it seems hardly possible that they can have come of their own accord to fight us . . . One boy, seventeen or eighteen, told [us] he had only left North Carolina three weeks ago, and how his father and mother grieved at his going.”⁸¹

It was not long before reinforcements from Lafayette McLaws’ and Richard H. Anderson’s divisions of Longstreet’s command arrived to blunt Federal advances towards the Dunker Church plateau. Calvin Leach, for one, was glad for the relief, noting: “I was nearly tired to death, not having anything to eat for 4 or 5 days.” Another Carolinian proudly concluded: “[Our] duty was nobly done . . . and the day was saved.”⁸² The day was, in fact, “saved” many times at many places along the thread-like butternut battle line. Not until A.P. Hill’s Division arrived from Harpers Ferry in the late afternoon to stave up the crumbling Confederate right flank could it be reckoned that the Army of Northern Virginia would survive McClellan’s assaults.

After a brief rest, Ripley’s regiments were later individually dispatched to stabilize various threatened points along fence lines near the Confederate center. While not again directly engaged, they were subjected to damaging long-range shelling that produced additional casualties. It was trying service to say the least.⁸³

Behind a stone wall in the Confederate rear, horribly injured Captain Thomas Bouchelle of Company B had his jaw wound temporarily dressed. Southern am-

balances were unable to evacuate the wounded because of intense Federal cannon fire and Bouchelle was carried on a litter to a hospital closer to Sharpsburg. The plucky Wilkes County native survived both his wound and the war, but for the rest of his life “never masticated a morsel of food and suffered often from slivers of shattered bone working out.”⁸⁴

Brigadier General Ripley had his neck wound bandaged and surprisingly rejoined the weary remnants of his gallant command. One question is if his reception was a warm one. “After an absence of an hour and a half,” Ripley noted in his official report, “I returned to the field with such force as I could collect from detachments, and found my brigade relieved and in position to the west of Sharpsburg. I remained with it until the afternoon, when, finding myself faint and exhausted, I [again] relinquished the command to Colonel Doles . . .” Within weeks, Lee deftly reassigned Ripley to sea-coast duty in South Carolina and away from the Army of Northern Virginia for good.⁸⁵

Division commander D. H. Hill miraculously went unscathed during the day but experienced another close brush with injury. While reconnoitering enemy troop concentrations with Lee and Longstreet, he rashly exposed himself on a hilltop. A vigilant Federal battery spotted the mounted Confederate and hurled a shell in his direction. The well-directed missile neatly severed both forelegs off Hill’s horse, dropping the poor animal on its stumps. Longstreet later recounted the situation, not without some relish: “The horse’s head was so low and his croup was so high that Hill was in a most ludicrous position. With one foot in the stirrup he finally made several efforts to get the other leg over the croup, but failed. Finally, we prevailed to get him to try the other end of the horse, and he got down.”⁸⁶

Nightfall finally brought an end to the butchery, mercifully masking the true cost of the day’s horrors: a combined total on both sides of nearly 4000 killed and 18,000 wounded. One participant remembered how “the ground was strewn with dead horses and men, clothing, knapsacks, canteens, muskets and side arms broken and twisted in every imaginable manner. The blue and the gray were indiscriminately mingled, either motionless and lifeless, or dragging their bleeding forms along in some less exposed position. And there were those whose life-blood was fast or slowly ebbing away, with only strength remaining to raise a supplicating arm for assistance or relief.”⁸⁷

Candles flickered in the darkness as soldiers

from both sides roamed the field, gathering the fallen and seeking out missing comrades. Calvin Leach counted only 66 remaining muskets in the 1st North Carolina immediately after the battle, but returning stragglers and lightly wounded later boosted the ranks somewhat. Casualties in the regiment would eventually be determined as 50 killed and mortally wounded, 75 wounded, 11 prisoners of war, and 10 wounded prisoners of war, total 146. The 3rd North Carolina lost a hefty 330 out of 520 effectives, while the 4th Georgia had over 140 men hit and the 44th Georgia another 80.⁸⁸

Sandwiched between Hood's spectacular charge into the cornfield and the later bloody attacks of Colquitt and McRae, the stoic, patient stand of Ripley's North Carolinians and Georgians in the quadrangular meadow often receives only passing note in studies of the battle. Yet, the losses of Ripley's four regiments were among the highest sustained by any Confederate brigade that day. Moreover, by stalling for more than an hour the advance of Mansfield's Twelfth Corps, they successfully bought just enough time for reinforcing units to patch the shaky Southern line. Certainly, under Colonel George Dole's capable leadership, the brigade more than atoned for its poor utilization by Ripley at Fox's Gap on South Mountain, three days earlier.

That evening, General Robert E. Lee assessed the condition of his grievously battered Army of Northern Virginia. Listening to the grim reports and counsel of his senior commanders, the ever-audacious Virginian refused to be shaken. "Gentlemen," he declared to those present, "we will not cross the Potomac tonight. You will go to your respective commands [and] strengthen your lines . . . I have had the proper steps taken to collect all of the men who are in the rear. If McClellan wants to fight in the morning, I will give him battle again."⁸⁹

A bright sun rose over the battlefield on the morning September 18th, speeding up decomposition of thousands of corpses. Soldiers on both sides, many no strangers to combat, were appalled at the sheer scope of the horrible spectacle revealed to them by daylight. Only occasional picket and cannon firing and the ever-increasing stench of the dead marred the day. In his diary, Private Leach wrote: "Our men sent over a flag of truce asking permission to bury our dead and it was granted. It seemed very curious to see the men on both sides come together and talk to each other when the day before [they] were firing at each other."⁹⁰

Although Lee was willing to offer battle on the

18th, he was not disposed to begin it. George McClellan, likewise, was loath to renew the conflict. Content with his near successes of the previous day, the cautious Union commander was averse to taking any additional risks that might achieve unqualified victory. In a moment of self-patronization, McClellan would later write of Antietam: "Those in whose judgment I rely tell me I fought the battle splendidly and that it was a masterpiece of art."⁹¹

That night Robert E. Lee sullenly withdrew his decimated legions across the Potomac River and back into Virginia. "*Maryland, My Maryland*" clearly was not his! Lee knew he had averted disaster on the high ground between Antietam Creek and the Potomac by the barest of margins. Reflecting on the traumatic battle of September 17th, Tar Heel survivor Calvin Leach likely expressed the sentiments of not only the commanding general but many of his soldier comrades when he wrote: "I often looked at the sun and longed for night to come so the firing would cease."⁹²

NOTES

1. William R. Trotter, *Silk Flags and Cold Steel, The Civil War in North Carolina: The Piedmont* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair Publishers, 1988), 30-35, 58.

2. Hamilton A. Brown, "First Regiment" (hereinafter cited as Brown "First Regiment"), in Walter Clark, ed., *Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65. Written by Members of the Respective Commands*, 5 vols. (Goldsboro: Nash Brothers, 1901; Wendell: Broadfoot's Bookmark, 1982), 1:141, hereinafter cited as Clark, *North Carolina Regiments*.

3. Louis H. Manarin, Weymouth T. Jordan, Jr., Matthew W. Brown, and Michael W. Coffey, comps., *North Carolina Troops 1861-1865: A Roster* (hereinafter cited as Manarin et al., *North Carolina Troops*), 18 vols. to date (Raleigh: Office of Archives and History, 1966-), 1:139-140.

4. Both died in combat. Brother Hugh Thomas Brown was killed at the Battle of Wilson's Creek, Missouri in August 1861. Half-brother James Brown Gordon became a cavalry general but was fatally wounded near Richmond, Virginia in May 1864. Thomas F. Hickerson, *Echoes of Happy Valley* (Durham: Seeman Printery, 1962), 60-61; Hamilton Brown Papers, *Biographical Information*, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, 2-4, hereinafter cited as Brown Papers.

5. Finley P. Curtis, "The Black Shadow of the Sixties," *Confederate Veteran* 24 (1916), 401.

6. Brown, "First Regiment," 1:141.

7. Edgar Jackson, *Three Rebels Write Home: Including the Letters of Edgar Allen Jackson* (Franklin, Virginia: The News Publishing Company, 1955), 26-27, hereinafter cited as Jackson, *Three Rebels Write Home*. In fact McDowell did not die and was promoted

- to colonel. He resigned--possibly because of his Mechanicsville wound--on December 14, 1863. Miller also returned to duty and was promoted within the regiment to captain of Company H. He was killed in action at the Battle of Second Winchester, Virginia, June 15, 1863. Manarin et. al., *North Carolina Troops*, 3:141-142, 222.
8. Private Calvin Leach of Company B, whose diary provides one of the best sources of the early war history of the 1st North Carolina, served until he was killed in action at the Battle of Bethesda Church, Virginia, May 30, 1864. Calvin Leach Diary and Letters, August 1, 1862, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, hereinafter cited as Leach Diary.
9. Thomas S. Bouchelle, "Reminisces of the Antietam Campaign," Military Collection, N.C. Office of Archives and History, hereinafter cited as Bouchelle "Reminisces;" Brown, "First Regiment," 1:140; William L. DeRosset, "Additional Sketch Third Regiment," (hereinafter cited as DeRosset "Additional Sketch") in Clark, *North Carolina Regiments*, 1:222; Greg Mast, *State Troops and Volunteers: A Photographic Record of North Carolina's Civil War Soldiers*, 1 vol. to date (Raleigh: Office of Archives and History: 1995), 358-359, hereinafter cited as Mast, *State Troops and Volunteers*.
10. Leach Diary, August 2-August 10, 1862; Bouchelle, "Reminisces,;" U.S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (hereinafter cited as *Official Records [Army]*), 4 series in 70 vols. in 127 parts with index vol. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1881-1902; all citations to ser. 1 unless otherwise noted), 11 (pt. 3), 658, 668-669.
11. Jackson, *Three Rebels Write Home*, 25; John Cowan and James I. Metts, "Third Regiment," (hereinafter cited as Cowan and Metts, "Third Regiment") in Clark, *North Carolina Regiments*, 1:183-184; De Rosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:222.
12. Ibid.; Jackson, *Three Rebels Write Home*, 27-28; Leach Diary, August 12, 1862.
13. Henry W. Thomas, *History of the Doles-Cook Brigade, Army of Northern Virginia, C.S.A.* (Atlanta: Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, 1903; Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Bookshop, 1981), 68, (hereinafter cited as Thomas, *Doles-Cook Brigade*).
14. Jackson, *Three Rebels Write Home*, 25.
15. DeRosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:219; *Official Records (Army)*, 11 (pt. 2), 649.
16. Douglas Southall Freeman, *R.E. Lee: A Biography*, 4 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934), 2:268-273, hereinafter cited as Freeman, *R.E. Lee; Official Records (Army)*, 12 (pt. 3), 925-926.
17. Mary Alice Hancock, *Four Brothers in Gray* (Wilkesboro: Wilkes Community College, 1975), 10. Proffitt died of typhoid fever, October 26, 1863.
18. Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, 3 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942-44), 2: 1 ff, 273 ff, (hereinafter cited as Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*).
19. *Official Records (Army)*, 12 (pt. 3), 942; Manarin et. al., *North Carolina Troops*, 3:136; Leach, Diary and Letters, August 19, 1862.
20. Bouchelle, "Reminisces;" DeRosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:219.
21. Ibid., 1:223-224; Leach Diary, August 27, 1862.
22. *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 2), 590-591.
23. Hal Bridges, *Lee's Maverick General: Daniel Harvey Hill* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 91, (hereinafter cited as Bridges, *Lee's Maverick General*).
24. Lawrence R. Laboda, *From Selma to Appomattox: The History of the Jeff Davis Artillery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 42.
25. DeRosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:224; Leach Diary, September 6, 1862.
26. Stephen W. Sears, *Landscape Turned Red: The Battle of Antietam* (New Haven and New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1983), 83-87, (hereinafter cited as Sears, *Landscape Turned Red*); James V. Murfin, *The Gleam of Bayonets: The Battle of Antietam and the Maryland Campaign of 1862* (New York and London, Thomas Yoseloff, 1968), 107-110, (hereinafter cited as Murfin, *Gleam of Bayonets*).
27. Sears, *Landscape Turned Red*, 86-87; Bouchelle, "Reminisces."
28. Freeman, *R.E. Lee*, 2:358 ff; Murfin, *Gleam of Bayonets*, 113-114.
29. Donald H. Bailey, *The Bloodiest Day: The Battle of Antietam* (Alexandria, Virginia: Time-Life Books, 1984), 18, (hereinafter cited as Bailey, *Bloodiest Day*). Both Harpers Ferry and Martinsburg are in present-day West Virginia, which was formed in 1863.
30. There is some controversy as to whether Jackson approved of or opposed the bold move. Bridges, *Lee's Maverick General*, 91-93; Bailey, *Bloodiest Day*, 18 ff; Murfin, *Gleam of Bayonets*, 116.
31. Sears, *Landscape Turned Red*, 92 ff; Murfin, *Gleam of Bayonets*, 117-118. Leach Diary, September 11, 1862.
32. Hamilton Brown in his history of the 1st North Carolina refers to crossing South Mountain at Crampton's Gap, but Calvin Leach's diary makes it clear that Turner's Gap was used. Brown, "First Regiment," 1:140; Leach Diary, September 12-14, 1862; *Official Records (Army)*; 19 (pt. 1), 1021-1022.
33. Daniel Harvey Hill, "The Battle of South Mountain, or Boonsboro," in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 4 vols. (New York: The Century Company, 1887-1888; New York Thomas Yoseloff, 1956), 2:560, (hereinafter cited as Hill, "Battle of South Mountain"); *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1019.
34. Bridges, *Lee's Maverick General*, 100 ff; Freeman, *R.E. Lee*, 2:367; James K. Swisher, *Warrior in Gray: General Robert Rodes of Lee's Army* (Shippensburg, Pennsylvania: The White Mane Publishing Co, 1989), 53, (hereinafter cited as Swisher, *Warrior in*

Gray).

35. *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1019, 1031; Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*, 2:172; Thomas, *Doles-Cook Brigade*, 68.

36. *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1052; Leach Diary, September 13, 1862; Bouchelle, "Reminisces."

37. Bridges, *Lee's Maverick General*, 100-103; *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1052.

38. Freeman, *R.E. Lee*, 2:369; Bridges, *Lee's Maverick General*, 94 ff. The debate continues as to whether the famous "lost order" was found in the abandoned campsite of D.H. Hill's or A.P. Hill's division.

39. Hill, "The Battle of South Mountain," 2:562-564; Bridges, *Lee's Maverick General*, 106-107.

40. *Ibid.*, 108-110; *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1019-1020; Hill, "Battle of South Mountain," 562 ff.

41. *Ibid.*, 567; Leach, Diary and Letters, diary entry September 14, 1862; Swisher, *Warrior in Gray*, 53 ff.

42. Bouchelle, "Reminisces,"; Leach Diary, September 14, 1862; *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1021; Hill, "Battle of South Mountain," 2:574.

43. DeRosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:224-225; *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1031-1032; Leach Diary, September 14, 1862; Bouchelle, "Reminisces."

44. Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*, 2:180-181; *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1020; 1031-1032; DeRosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:224-225.

45. Brown, "First Regiment," 1:141; Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*, 2:181; Hill, "Battle of South Mountain," 2:569n; Leach Diary, September 14, 1862.

46. Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*, 2:182; Swisher, *Warrior in Gray*, 62-63; *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1021-1022.

47. DeRosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:224-225; Hill, "Battle of South Mountain," 2:569n.

48. Bridges, *Lee's Maverick General*, 113; Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*, 2:192; Freeman, *R.E. Lee*, 2:373-374.

49. *Ibid.*, 2:374-376; DeRosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:225; *Official Records* 19 (pt. 1), 1032; Manarin et. al., *North Carolina Troops*, 3: 116, 142-258; Bouchelle, "Reminisces."

50. *Ibid.*; Thomas, *Dole-Cook Brigade*, 68-69.

51. Bridges, *Lee's Maverick General*, 115-116; Bouchelle, "Reminisces"; Freeman, *R.E. Lee*, 2:378.

52. William A. Frassanito, *Antietam: The Photographic Legacy of America's Bloodiest Day* (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1978), 80-85, (hereinafter cited as Frassanito, *Antietam*); John M. Priest, *Antietam: The Soldier's Battle* (Shippensburg, Pennsylvania: The White Mane Publishing Company, 1989), 317-343, (hereinafter cited as Priest, *Antietam*).

53. Freeman, *R.E. Lee*, 2:378-379; Sears, *Landscape Turned Red*, 172-174; Bailey, *Bloodiest Day*, 60.

54. Swisher, *Warrior in Gray*, 62-63; Brown, "First Regiment," 1:141.

55. Cowan and Metts, "Third Regiment," 1:184-185; Robert K. Krick, *Parker's Virginia Battery, C.S.A.* (Wilmington: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1989), 54, (hereinafter cited as Krick, *Parker's Virginia Battery*); Leach Diary, September 16, 1862.

56. Cowan and Metts, "Third Regiment," 1:184-185; Murfin, *Gleam of Bayonets*, 220 (map); Bouchelle, "Reminisces."

57. Priest, *Antietam*, 25-29; Krick, *Parker's Virginia Battery*, 56.

58. Brown, "First Regiment," 1:141; Derosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:225; J.C. Key, "Georgians and 'Tar Heels' at Sharpsburg," *Confederate Veteran* 9 (1901), 405, hereinafter cited as Key, "Georgians and 'Tar Heels'"; Murfin, *Gleam of Bayonets*, 220, 223 (maps); Krick, *Parker's Virginia Battery*, 56-57.

59. Priest, *Antietam*, 1, 46; Frassanito, *Antietam*, 109-111; Cowan and Metts, "Third Regiment," 1:185; Bouchelle, "Reminisces"; R. H. Daniels, "The Battle of Sharpsburg or Antietam," *Confederate Veteran*, 9 (1901), 217, (hereinafter cited as Daniels, "Battle of Sharpsburg),

60. Sears, *Landscape Turned Red*, 180 ff; Brown, "First Regiment," 1:141; Bouchelle "Reminisces."

61. *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1033; Thomas, *Doles-Cook Brigade*, 469-470; Brown, "First Regiment," 1:141; Cowan and Metts, "Third Regiment," 1:185; Key, "Georgians and 'Tar Heels,'" 405; Daniels, "Battle of Sharpsburg," 217.

62. *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1027, 1033; DeRosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:226.

63. Priest, *Antietam*, 44-47; Thomas, *Doles-Cook Brigade*, 69, 470; Bouchelle, "Reminisces."

64. Thomas, *Doles-Cook Brigade*, 470; Brown, "First Regiment," 1:141; Sears, *Landscape Turned Red*, 187-188.

65. Priest, *Antietam*, 47, 76-77; Brown, "First Regiment," 1:141; Cowan and Metts, "Third Regiment," 1:185.

66. *Ibid.*, 1:185; Thomas, *Doles-Cook Brigade*, 69; Murfin, *Gleam of Bayonets*, 220, 223, 229 (maps).

67. Alan D. Gaff, *On Many a Bloody Field: Four Years in the Iron Brigade* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1966), 185-186. Lance J. Herdgen, *The Men Stood like Iron: How the Iron Brigade Won Its Name* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997), 179-181, (hereinafter cited as Herdgen, *The Men Stood Like Iron*); Brown, "First Regiment," 1:141.

68. Bouchelle, "Reminisces," Letter from Thomas S. Bouchelle to General E. A. Carmen, July 5, 1898. The letter to General Carmen is part of the "Reminisces."

69. Cowan and Metts, "Third Regiment," 1:185; Leach Diary, September 17, 1862.

70. *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 252, 258; Thomas, *Doles-Cook Brigade*, 69, 470; Herdegen, *the Men Stood Like Iron*, 180; Cowan and Metts, "Third Regiment," 1:185; Bouchelle, *Reminiscences*."
71. *Ibid.*; *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 269-270; Priest, *Antietam*, 78 (map).
72. DeRosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:227.
73. Priest, *Antietam*, 72-76; *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 475-477.
74. Cowan and Metts, "Third Regiment," 1:186-187.
75. *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 484-487, 493.
76. *Ibid.*, 19 (pt. 1), 498-499.
77. William L. DeRosset, "The Battle of Sharpsburg--A Correction," *Confederate Veteran* 9 (1901), 165; Cowan and Metts, "Third Regiment," 1:186-187; DeRosset, "Additional Sketch," 1:226; *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1022-1023; Priest, *Antietam*, 84-88; Thomas, *Doles-Cook Brigade*, 69, 470.
78. *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 490-491; Leach Diary, September 17, 1862; Manarin et. al., *North Carolina Troops*, 3:142 ff]; Mast, *State Troops and Volunteers*, 1:340, 358-359;
79. *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 198; 498-499; Key, "Georgians and 'Tar Heels,'" 405; Wilbur D. Jones, *Giants in the Cornfield: the 27th Indiana Infantry* (Shippensburg, Pennsylvania: The White Mane Publishing Company, 1997), 4 ff, 228 ff.
80. Brown, "First Regiment," 1:141-142; Krick, *Parker's Virginia Battery*, 60-61.
81. Shaw was later colonel of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry, a famous African American regiment. Editors of Time-Life Books, *Voices of the Civil War: Antietam* (Richmond: Time-Life Books, 1996), 85, (hereinafter cited as *Voices of the Civil War: Antietam*).
82. Leach Diary, September 17, 1862; Cowan and Metts, "Third Regiment," 1:188.
83. *Ibid.*, 1:188-189.
84. Bouchelle, "Reminiscences," Letter from Thomas S. Bouchelle to General E. A. Carmen, July 5, 1898.
85. *Official Records (Army)*, 19 (pt. 1), 1033.
86. James Longstreet, "The Invasion of Maryland," in *Battles and Leaders*, 2:671; Bridges, *Lee's Maverick General*, 118-119.
87. *Voices of the Civil War: Antietam*, 77; Sears, *Landscape Turned Red*, 294-296.
88. Leach Diary, September 17, 1862; Manarin et. al., *North Carolina Troops*, 3:137; Greg Mast, "Organizational and Statistical Profile of the 1st Regiment North Carolina State Troops," *infra*, p. 46. 89. Freeman, *R.E. Lee*, 2:403-404.
90. Leach Diary, September 18, 1862.
91. Sears, *Landscape Turned Red*, 299.
92. Leach Diary, September 17, 1862.

ORGANIZATIONAL and STATISTICAL P R O F I L E Of The 1st Regiment North Carolina State Troops

By Greg Mast

I. Introduction

This paper provides an accounting of *recorded* enlistments, casualties, deaths, and desertions sustained by the 1st Regiment N.C. State Troops during the years 1861-1865. Civil war unit records, although massive in quantity, are still fragmentary. The figures on enlistments, deaths, and captures are reasonably accurate, but the number of men wounded-in-action is probably low. Many lightly wounded men recovered and returned to duty without any record of their injury. See below for a discussion of the difficulty in quantifying desertions.

The data collected here are mostly from Louis H. Manarin, Weymouth T. Jordan, Matthew M. Brown, and Michael W. Coffey, comps., *North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865: A Roster*, 18 vols. to date (Raleigh: N.C. Office of Archives and History), which provides detailed service record information on each North Carolina soldier. The service records for the 1st Regiment N.C. State Troops are found in Volume III, pages 136-258. Also frequently consulted was the principal source for *North Carolina Troops: Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served During the Civil War, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers who Served in Organizations from the State of North Carolina*, Record Group 109, National Archives, now available on-line at fold3.com. Some minor corrections and additions to the above records were made from information collected by me during my research on the photographic history of North Carolina's soldiers, 1847-1865; from Charles Purser, *Additional Information and Amendments to the NORTH CAROLINA TROOPS 1861-1865 Seventeen Volume Roster* (Wake Forest: The Scuppernon Press, 2010), and other sources.

A peculiar difficulty in compiling information on any North Carolina regiment or battalion with a low line number is the number of different units which could call themselves (in shortened form) by the same name. Doubtless the most common name by which members of the 1st Regiment N.C. State Troops referred to their unit was the "1st North Carolina." However, the following units could (and very often did) refer to themselves by the same phrase:

1st Regiment N.C. Volunteers (six months 1861)

1st Regiment N.C. Detailed Men

1st Regiment N.C. Junior Reserves
1st Regiment, Thomas's Legion N.C. Troops
1st Regiment N.C. Artillery
1st Regiment N.C. Cavalry
1st Regiment N.C. Militia
1st Regiment N.C. Home Guard
1st Battalion N.C. Infantry
1st Battalion N.C. Sharpshooters
1st Battalion N.C. Light Artillery
1st Battalion N.C. Heavy Artillery
1st Battalion N.C. Junior Reserves
1st Battalion N.C. Local Defense Troops
1st Battalion N.C. Home Guard

Unsurprisingly, the surviving records of some of these units are commingled with others, particularly in prisoner-of-war records. Record Group 109 of the National Archives was compiled by War Department copyists in the early years of the 20th century, and the records of the 1st Regiment N.C. State Troops contain many fragments pertaining to men who served with other commands. I did not count any man whom I judged not to be a member of the regiment. Thus the number of enlistments (and other statistics) claimed for each company will be less than the number found in Volume III of *North Carolina Troops*.

Throughout this paper I use the abbreviation "BD," which means "battle deaths." It is the sum of men killed in action and mortally wounded in action, although the actual death date of the mortally wounded might be days or weeks after the battle. Men captured by Federal forces who subsequently died in prison are not counted as battle deaths, but rather in the "disease" or "unspecified" categories.

II. Organization and Brigade Affiliation.

Organized June 3, 1861, at a racetrack near Warrenton, Warren County. On July 22, 1861, the regiment was ordered to Richmond. It served in the Army of Northern Virginia or its antecedent organizations until the surrender at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, April 9, 1865.

September 1861-May 1862: Holmes-Walker Brigade (2nd and 3rd Regiments N.C. State Troops; 30th Regiment Virginia Infantry; 1st Regiment Arkansas Infantry).

May 1862-January 23, 1863: Brigadier General Roswell Ripley's Brigade (3rd Regiment N.C. State Troops; 44th and 48th Regiments Georgia Infantry).

January 23, 1863-May 1864: Taliaferro-Colston-Steuart Brigade (3rd Regiment N.C. State Troops; 10th, 23rd, and 37th Regiments Virginia Infantry; 1st Battalion Maryland Infantry).

May 1864-April 9, 1865: Anderson-Ramseur-Cox Brigade (2nd, 3rd, and 4th Regiments N.C. State Troops; 14th and 30th Regiments N.C. Troops).

III. Field Officers

Colonel Montford Sidney Stokes (Wilkes County). Mortally wounded in action at the Battle of Mechanicsville, June 26, 1862, and died on July 8, 1862.

Colonel John A. McDowell (Bladen County). Resigned December 14, 1863.

Colonel Hamilton A. Brown (Wilkes County). Captured at the Battle of Fort Stedman, March 25, 1865.

Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Whitaker Ransom (Northampton County). Promoted to colonel and transferred to the 35th Regiment N.C. Troops, April 21, 1862.

Lieutenant Colonel Jarrett Norfleet Harrell (Hertford County). Captured at the Battle of Wilderness, May 10, 1864.

Major Tristram Lowther Skinner (Chowan County). Killed in action at the Battle of Mechanicsville, June 26, 1862.

Major James Stephen Hines (New Hanover County). Resigned July 29, 1863.

Major Louis Charles Latham (Washington County). Surrendered at Appomattox Court House, April 9, 1865.

IV. Companies

Company A (the “Albemarle Guards”)

Organized at Edenton, Chowan County, between May 15-May 18, 1861. Recruiting continued at Edenton through June 1, and the company appears to have traveled to Warrenton by June 3, on which date it was designated Company A of this regiment. At least part of the trip was by water. On June 12 Captain Tristram L. Skinner wrote that “my Company, the Albemarle Guards, was transported from Edenton to Black Water [present-day Franklin, Virginia] on board the steamer *Curlaw*, numbering eighty nine men and five servants,” and from there traveled to the camp of instruction at Warrenton, probably by rail.¹ Most of the men were from Chowan County, but the company also included eight men from Perquimans County, and smaller contingents from the nearby counties of Bertie, Currituck, and Pasquotank. In early August 1862 Company A received 61 conscripts, all of whom were from Guilford County.²

Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Chowan County	76	7	1	0	0	0	84
Guilford County	--	60	1	2	0	0	63
Perquimans County	8	0	0	0	0	0	8
Others and Unknown	7	2	0	0	0	3	12
Total	90	70	2	2	0	3	167

Mortality Summary

Battle Deaths

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Chowan County	0	5	1	1	0	0	7
Guilford County	--	4	1	0	0	0	5
Perquimans County	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Others and Unknown	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Total	0	14	2	1	0	0	17

Disease and Unspecified Causes

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Chowan County	5	7	2	2	3	0	19
Guilford County	--	9	4	6	4	0	23
Perquimans County	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Others and Unknown	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	6	17	6	8	7	0	44

Mortality Rate: 36.5%

Eighteen men died in Federal prisons.

Company B (the “Wilkes Volunteers”)

Alternate name: “the Wilkes Valley Guards.” Raised in Wilkes County during May 1861, but the men did not formally enlist until May 31, by which time the company was encamped at Raleigh. The initial enlistment was 80 men, and on June 3 the “Wilkes Volunteers” were designated Company B of this regiment. The company probably moved to Warrenton about that date. Enlistments continued for some weeks, and by the time the regiment departed for Virginia on July 22, Company B was 96 men strong, the largest company in the regiment. Most of the men were from Wilkes County, but the company also included seven men from Caldwell County and smaller contingents from eight other western North Carolina counties. In early August 1862 Company B received 35 conscripts, 31 of whom were from Alamance County.

Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Wilkes County	84	15	9	0	0	4	112
Alamance County	--	31	0	1	0	0	32
Caldwell County	5	2	0	0	0	0	7
Others and Unknown	8	10	3	1	0	1	23
Total	97	58	12	2	0	5	174

Mortality Summary

Battle Deaths

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Wilkes County	0	6	13	2	0	0	21
Alamance County	--	3	2	0	0	0	5
Caldwell County	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Others and Unknown	0	1	1	2	1	0	5
Total	0	11	16	4	1	0	32

Disease and Unspecified Causes

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Wilkes County	3	6	4	1	4	0	18
Alamance County	--	3	2	2	0	0	7
Caldwell County	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Others and Unknown	0	2	0	2	0	0	4
Total	4	11	6	5	4	0	30

Mortality rate: 35.6%

Six men died in Federal prisons.

Company C (the "Lillington Rifle Guards")

Enlisted at Lillington, New Hanover County, on June 11, 1861 (present-day Long Creek, Pender County). The initial enlistment was 79 men; seven more men enlisted by year's end. The company joined the regiment at Warrenton, probably in June, and was designated Company C. Most of the men were from New Hanover County. However, in early 1862 five men from Sampson County enlisted, and in early August 1862 Company C received 52 conscripts: 32 men from Johnston County and 20 from Nash County.

Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
New Hanover County	82	13	1	0	0	0	96
Johnston County	--	32	0	1	0	0	33
Nash County	--	20	0	0	0	0	20
Sampson County	1	5	0	0	0	0	6
Others and Unknown	2	1	0	1	0	1	5
Total	85	71	1	2	0	1	160

Mortality Summary

Battle Deaths

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
New Hanover County	0	13	0	2	0	0	15
Johnston County	--	3	4	1	0	0	8
Nash County	--	2	1	3	0	0	6
Sampson County	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	0	19	5	6	0	0	30

Disease and Unspecified Causes

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
New Hanover County	3	3	5	1	0	0	12
Johnston County	--	2	1	1	1	0	5
Nash County	--	2	2	2	0	0	6
Others	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Total	3	7	8	5	2	0	25

Mortality rate: 34.4%

Eight men died in Federal prisons.

Company D

Organized at Warrenton in late July 1861 by the consolidation of separate contingents that had failed to attain company strength. The largest group, 47 men, began enlisting at Hillsborough, Orange County, in mid-June. Merging with them were 21 men from Lincoln County, 5 men from Guilford County, and a handful of men from other counties. Because its organization and training were not completed, Company D remained at the camp of instruction until August 30. (Most of the regiment moved to Virginia on July 22.) By August 25, company strength amounted to 83 men. The company grew substantially in February-March 1862 with the arrival of more than 60 volunteers from Lincoln and Orange counties. Only sixteen conscripts were received in early August, principally from Franklin and Nash counties.

Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Orange County	47	36	1	2	0	0	86
Lincoln County	21	18	1	0	0	0	40
Franklin County	--	7	0	0	0	0	7

Nash County	--	7	0	0	0	0	7
Gaston County	1	5	0	0	0	0	6
Guilford County	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
Others and Unknown	9	8	3	6	0	1	27
Total	83	81	5	8	0	1	178

Mortality Summary

Battle Deaths

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Orange County	0	9	4	2	0	0	15
Lincoln County	0	3	0	1	0	0	4
Franklin	--	1	0	0	0	0	1
Nash	--	1	0	0	0	0	1
Others and Unknown	--	1	0	1	0	0	2
Total	0	15	4	4	0	0	23

Disease and Unspecified Causes

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Orange County	5	9	4	3	0	0	21
Lincoln County	0	2	1	2	2	0	7
Franklin County	--	2	0	1	0	0	3
Nash	--	1	1	0	0	0	2
Gaston	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Others and Unknown	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Total	5	17	6	7	3	0	38

Mortality rate: 34.3%

Eleven men died in Federal prisons.

Company E

Organized at Wilmington, New Hanover County, where the men began enlisting on May 31, 1861. By June 27, enlistments amounted to 73 men. The company probably moved to the Warrenton camp of instruction about July 1, but enlistments continued at Wilmington until August 27. The company received few recruits until early August 1862, when 57 conscripts arrived, almost all of whom were from Alamance County.

Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
New Hanover County	79	6	0	0	0	0	85
Alamance County	--	49	2	2	0	0	53
Others and Unknown	3	11	0	1	0	0	15
Total	82	66	2	3	0	0	153

Mortality Summary

Battle Deaths

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
New Hanover County	0	11	2	3	0	0	16
Alamance County	--	0	3	4	0	0	7
Others and Unknown	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Total	0	13	5	7	0	0	25

Disease and Unspecified Causes

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
New Hanover County	7	6	2	1	1	0	17
Alamance County	--	3	0	4	5	0	12
Others and Unknown	0	4	2	0	0	0	6
Total	7	13	4	5	6	0	35

Mortality rate: 39.2%

Eight men died in Federal prisons.

Company F (the "Hertford Grays")

Organized at Murfreesboro, Hertford County, and began recruiting on June 15, 1861. The company probably moved to the Warrenton camp of instruction in early July. Despite its informal appellation, only 34 of the 79 men who enlisted in the company were from Hertford County. Most of the others were from the neighboring counties of Northampton (36 men) and Bertie (8 men). The company was reinforced twice in 1862: 37 volunteers, mostly from Hertford and Northampton, between January and May, and 35 conscripts, almost all of whom were from Orange County, who arrived in early August.

Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Hertford County	34	13	0	0	0	0	47
Northampton County	36	22	0	0	0	0	58
Orange County	--	29	0	0	0	0	29
Bertie County	8	1	0	0	0	0	9
Others and unknown	1	7	0	0	0	0	8
Total	79	72	0	0	0	0	151

Mortality Summary

Battle Deaths

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Hertford County	0	8	6	0	0	0	14
Northampton County	0	4	4	2	0	0	10
Orange County	--	3	3	2	0	0	8
Bertie County	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Others and unknown	0	0	1	2	0	0	3
Total	0	15	14	7	0	0	36

Disease and Unspecified Causes

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Hertford County	2	3	3	0	1	0	9
Northampton County	1	4	0	2 ³	2	0	9
Orange County	--	3	1	2	0	0	6
Bertie County	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Others and unknown	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	3	12	4	4	3	0	26

Mortality rate: 41.1%

Five men died in Federal prisons.

Company G (the "Washington Volunteers")

Alternate name: the "Washington Light Guards." Organized at Plymouth, Washington County, and began enlist-

ing on June 24, 1861. On July 1 the company, numbering “sixty three men and one servant was transported from Plymouth to Franklin, [Virginia], on board the steamer *Seabird*.”²⁴ From Franklin the men traveled to the camp of instruction, probably transported part of the way by railroad. More recruits joined at Warrenton and in Virginia, and by October 1 enlistments amounted to 82 men. The company received 20 volunteers from Washington and Tyrrell counties in early 1862, but in February lost 14 men who transferred to the Confederate States Navy. In early August the company gained 72 conscripts, most of whom were from Wake County.

Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Washington County	80	11	0	0	0	0	91
Wake County	--	69	1	0	0	0	70
Tyrrell County	1	12	0	0	0	0	13
Others and Unknown	1	2	0	1	0	0	4
Total	82	94	1	1	0	0	178

Mortality Summary

Battle Deaths

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Washington County	0	8	0	2	0	0	10
Wake County	--	1	4	2	0	0	7
Tyrrell County	0	3	0	1	0	0	4
Total	0	12	4	5	0	0	21

Disease and Unspecified Causes

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Washington County	11	8	2	2	2	0	25
Wake County	--	12 ⁵	7	3	5	0	27
Tyrrell County	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Others and Unknown	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Total	11	21	9	7	7	1	56

Mortality rate: 43.3%

Ten men died in Federal prisons.

Company H (the “Bagley Guards”)

Organized at Williamston, Martin County, on June 24, 1861, on which date 85 men enlisted. The company remained at Williamston until about July 12, when it marched to Plymouth where it was “transported from Plymouth NC to Franklin Depot [modern-day Franklin, Virginia] on board the *Seabird*.” At Franklin the men received transportation to Weldon on Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad, and from there either marched to the camp of instruction or boarded another train, arriving on July 14.⁶ Company H received 20 volunteers, mostly from Martin County, in early 1862, and in early August gained 36 conscripts, all from Guilford County.

Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Martin County	85	23	0	2	0	0	110
Guilford County	--	36	1	4	0	0	41
Others and Unknown	3	3	1	1	0	0	8
Total	88	62	2	7	0	0	159

Mortality Summary

Battle Deaths

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Martin County	0	11	7	1	0	0	19
Guilford County	--	3	4	1	0	0	8
Others and Unknown	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
Total	0	16	12	2	0	0	30

Disease and Unspecified Causes

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Martin County	3	9	3	9	4	0	28
Guilford County	--	5	3	3	3	0	14
Others and Unknown	1	1	0	1	1	0	4
Total	4	15	6	13	8	0	46

Mortality rate: 47.8%

Twenty-two men died in Federal prisons.

Company I (the “Wake Light Infantry”)

Organized at Forestville, Wake County, and began enlisting on July 16, 1861. Many of the men were students at Wake Forest College, and the captain, James Henry Foote, was a professor at that institution.⁷ The company

probably moved to the camp of instruction at Warrenton soon thereafter, and, its organization and training not completed, remained there until August 30. (Most of the regiment moved to Virginia on July 22). Seventy-eight men enlisted in 1861. The company grew substantially in early 1862 with the arrival of 51 volunteers, all from Wake County, and in early August received 19 conscripts, mostly from Franklin and Ashe counties.

Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Wake County	74	57	5	3	0	0	139
Franklin County	3	10	1	0	0	0	14
Ashe County	--	5	0	0	0	0	5
Others and Unknown	1	4	1	1	0	0	7
Total	78	76	7	4	0	0	165

Mortality Summary

Battle Deaths

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Wake County	0	10	7	9	0	0	26
Franklin County	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Others and Unknown	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	0	12	7	9	0	0	28

Disease and Unspecified Causes

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Wake County	4	8	5	11	4	0	33
Franklin County	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
Ashe County	--	1	1	0	0	0	2
Others and Unknown	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Total	4	13	8	11	4	0	41

Mortality rate: 41.8%

Fifteen men died in Federal prisons.

Company K

Organized at Weldon, Halifax County, on July 4, 1861, although enlistments had begun on June 10 in various other locations in Halifax County, including Littleton and Halifax. Seventy-four men enlisted in 1861, and the company received 38 volunteers in early 1862, mostly from Halifax County. Unlike the other companies of this regiment, the conscript contingent that arrived in early August (37 men) was mostly from the home county.

Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Halifax County	68	70	1	1	0	0	140
Others and Unknown	6	5	0	0	0	0	11
Total	74	75	1	1	0	0	151

Mortality Summary

Battle Deaths

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Halifax County	0	8	9	9	0	0	26

Disease and Unspecified Causes

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Halifax County	3	14	5	5	9	0	36
Others and Unknown	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Total	3	117	5	5	9	0	39

Mortality rate: 43.0%

Twelve men died in Federal prisons.

Field and Staff

Thirty-six men served on the Field and Staff of the 1st Regiment N.C. State Troops. Of that number, 22 transferred from the various companies of the regiment, and their enlistments are counted with their home companies.

Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
	8	2	3	1	0	0	14

Three members of the Field and Staff died in service. Colonel Montford Sidney Stokes and Major Tristram

Lowther Skinner were killed at the Battle of Mechanicsville, July 26, 1862. Chaplain James H. Spainhour died of disease October 18, 1861.

V. Regimental Enlistment Summary

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Company A	90	70	2	2	0	3	167
Company B	97	58	12	2	0	5	174
Company C	85	71	1	2	0	1	160
Company D	83	81	5	8	0	1	178
Company E	82	66	2	3	0	0	153
Company F	79	72	0	0	0	0	151
Company G	82	94	1	1	0	0	178
Company H	88	62	2	7	0	0	159
Company I	78	76	7	4	0	0	165
Company K	74	75	1	1	0	0	151
Field and Staff	8	2	3	1	0	0	14
Total	846	727	36	31	0	10	1650

VI. Regimental Mortality Summaries

Mortality by Company

	Enlistments	Battle Deaths	Disease and Un-specified Causes	Total	Mortality Rate
Company A	167	17	44	61	36.5%
Company B	174	32	30	62	35.6%
Company C	160	30	25	55	34.4%
Company D	178	23	38	61	34.3%
Company E	153	25	35	60	39.2%
Company F	151	36	26	62	41.1%
Company G	178	21	56	77	43.3%
Company H	159	30	46	76	47.8%
Company I	165	28	41	69	41.8%
Company K	151	26	39	65	43.0%
Field and Staff	14	2	1	3	--
Total	1650	270	381	651	39.5%

Mortality by Year

	Battle Deaths	Disease and Un-specified Causes	Total
1861	0	48	48
1862	136	145 ⁸	281
1863	79	63 ⁹	142
1864	54	71 ¹⁰	125
1865	1	54 ¹¹	55
Total	270	381	651

Mortality in Federal Prisons

The 1st Regiment N.C. State Troops lost 657 prisoners-of-war, mostly in 1864 and 1865. (However, some men were captured two or more times.) Of that number, 117 men died in Federal prisons.

Elmira, New York	79 deaths
Point Lookout, Maryland	26 deaths
Fort Delaware, Delaware	6 deaths
Federal field hospitals	3 deaths
Federal truce boats	2 deaths
Fortress Monroe, Virginia	1 death

VII. Desertion Summary

No attempt has been made to count every incident of desertion found in the service records, but only three categories: men who deserted or went absent without leave and never returned to the regiment; men who deserted and were forcibly returned to duty; and men shot for desertion. Men in those categories may more surely be considered as intending to leave the Confederate army than those whose were accused of desertion or absence without leave but who voluntarily returned to duty. The difficulty in discerning the exact circumstances of an absent soldier is illustrated in the Record of Events of the November-December 1862 muster roll of Company E, 1st Regiment N.C. State Troops. Second Lieutenant Frederick S. Moore, then commanding the company, observed that

Many of the men are absent, from the fact that the constant movement of the command has rendered it impossible to communicate with them. Many of those reported absent sick are said to be discharged, to have died at, or to have been sent home from the various hospitals, but no official return having been made with regard to them, I have not felt myself justified in reporting them otherwise than as they stand upon the roll.¹²

	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	unkn	Total
Company A	0	1	8	1	3	0	13
Company B	0	5	5	4	0	0	14
Company C	0	1	1	1	1	0	4
Company D	0	3	6	5	0	0	14
Company E	4	8	1	1	0	0	14
Company F	0	6	3	2	0	0	11
Company G	0	8	2	0	5	0	15
Company H	0	2	1	3	10	0	16
Company I	0	0	5	0	0	0	5
Company K	0	1	1	1	2	0	5
Field and Staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4	35	33	18	21 ¹³	0	111

Enlistments in United States Units

Seventeen members of the 1st Regiment N.C. State Troops are known to have joined the United States Army, 16 of them recruited in Federal prisons. Most of them enlisted in the so-called “Galvanized Yankee” units: the 1st and 4th Regiments U.S. Volunteer Infantry. Those regiments were recruited for service in the west and the men were never required to serve in combat against Confederate units.

1 st Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry	11
Ahl’s Company, Delaware Heavy Artillery	2
1 st Regiment Connecticut Cavalry	1
2 nd Regiment N.C. Infantry	1
3 rd Regiment Maryland Cavalry	1
4 th Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry	1

VIII. Campaigns and Battles

The usual method of counting casualties in a battle is to tabulate the “killed, wounded, and captured.” That begs the question, however, of which category to count prisoners of war who are also wounded. This work uses four categories:

Battle Deaths. This is the sum of men killed in action and mortally wounded in action, although the actual death date of the mortally wounded might be days or weeks after the battle.

Wounded in Action. The number of men who sustained wounds but remained within Confederate lines.

Prisoners of War. Men captured by Federal forces but who were not wounded.

Wounded Prisoners. Men captured by Federal forces who were also wounded.

No individual is counted more than once for any battle. Thus, if a soldier was captured at Gettysburg, but died of his wounds ten days later at Fort Delaware, he is counted only under “Battle Deaths.”

	Battle Deaths	Wounded in Action	Prisoners of War	Wounded Prisoners	Total
1861					
No engagements.					
1862					
Seven Pines, Virginia, June 15 ¹⁴	0	1	6	0	7
Seven Days Campaign, June 25-July 1					
Mechanicsville, Virginia, June 26	54	63	0	0	117
Gaines's Mill, Virginia, June 27	5	7	0	0	12
Malvern Hill, Virginia, July 1	25	38	0	0	63
Unspecified, June 25-July 1	1	1	1	0	3
Total	85	109	1	0	195
Maryland Campaign, September 4-20					
South Mountain, Maryland, September 14	1	1	32	0	34
Sharpsburg, Maryland, September 17	50	75	11	10	146
Unspecified September 4-20	0	4	14	0	18
Total	51	80	57	10	198
Battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia, December 13	3	15	0	0	18
Total 1862	139	204	58	10	411
1863					
Chancellorsville, Virginia, April 30-May 6	47	91	21	2	161
Gettysburg Campaign, June 9-July 14					
Second Winchester, Virginia, June 13-15	6	18	0	0	24
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, July 1-3	14	20	68	5	107
Retreat from Gettysburg, July 4-14	0	0	5	0	5
Total	20	38	73	5	136
Mine Run Campaign, November 27-December 2					
Payne's Farm, Virginia, November 27	12	46	2	0	60
Unspecified, November 27-December 2	0	4	3	0	7
Total	12	50	5	0	67
Total 1863	79	179	99	7	364
1864					
Overland Campaign, May 4-June 16					
Wilderness, Virginia, May 5-7	16	27	2	0	45
Spotsylvania Court House, Virginia, May 8-21	17	9	317	1	344
Bethesda Church, Virginia, May 30	1	1	3	0	5
Cold Harbor, Virginia, June 1-4	1	2	0	0	3
Unspecified, May 4-June 16	0	2	0	0	2
Total	35	41	322	1	399
Shenandoah Valley Campaign, June 17-December 15					
Washington, District of Columbia, July 14	0	0	1	0	1
Third Winchester, Virginia, September 19	6	5	10	1	22

Fisher's Hill, Virginia, September 22	3	7	3	0	13
Cedar Creek, Virginia, October 19	5	7	2	2	16
Unspecified, June 17-December 15	1	6	3	0	10
Total	15	25	19	3	62
Total 1864	50	66	341	4	461
1865					
Siege of Petersburg, December 15, 1864-March 28, 1865	0	2	2	0	4
Appomattox Campaign, March 29-April 9					
Appomattox Court House	0	0	72	0	72
Unspecified, March 29-April 9 ¹⁵	1	1	38 ¹⁶	1	41
Post-Appomattox Surrenders, April 11-21					
Farmville, April 11-21	0	0	4	0	4
Burkeville Junction, April 14-17	0	0	9	0	9
Lynchburg, April 15	0	0	1	0	1
Total	0	0	15	0	15
Total 1865	1	3	127	1	132
Others and Unknown	1	2	10	0	13
Total	270	454	635	22	1381

NOTES

1. Service record file of Tristram Lowther Skinner, 1st Regiment N.C. State Troops, Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served During the Civil War, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers who Served in Organizations from the State of North Carolina, Record Group 109, National Archives, hereinafter cited as Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers from the State of North Carolina.
2. The Confederate Conscription Act of April 16, 1862, called into service for three years all white males from 18 to 35. It further extended the service of existing units (most of which had enlisted for one year) to three years. (Thus making moot the distinction among North Carolina units of "State Troops" regiments, which had enlisted for three years in 1861, and "Volunteer" regiments, most of which had enlisted for one year). Most of the conscripts were used to fill the ranks of existing units.
3. Includes one man shot for desertion, February 11, 1864.
4. Service record of Louis Charles Latham, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers from the State of North Carolina.
5. Includes one man "killed in a private brawl."
6. Service record of Richard W. Rives, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers from the State of North Carolina.
7. Service record of James Henry Foote, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers from the State of North Carolina.
8. Includes one man shot for desertion.
9. Includes one man killed in a "private brawl."
10. Includes one man shot for desertion.
11. Includes one man struck by a train.
12. "Record of Events," November-December 1862 Muster Roll, Company E, 1st Regiment N.C. State Troops, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers from the State of North Carolina.
13. No muster rolls for the companies of the 1st Regiment N.C. State Troops are extant after December 1864. The 1865 desertions are of men who crossed the lines into Federal custody. It is presumed other desertions occurred by men who stayed within Confederate lines.
14. The encounter on June 15 was at the old Seven Pines battlefield and should not be confused with the much larger battle there on May 31-June 1, 1862.
15. The regiment was engaged at Little Sailor's Creek (April 6) and Farmville (April 7).
16. Includes 11 men captured in Richmond hospitals on April 3.

