Staff Ride Handbook for the Overland Campaign, Virginia, 4 May to 15 June 1864: A Study in Operational-Level Command

Dr. Curtis S. King
Dr. William Glenn Robertson
LTC Steven E. Clay

Combat Studies Institute Press
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027

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Cover photo: "General Grant and Staff at Massaponax Church," O'Sullivan, Gardner Stereo, #730, 21 May 1864. (A rare, unposed Civil War photograph of a general and his staff at work. In this photograph, Lieutenant General Grant is standing, looking over the shoulder of and partially blocking Major General Meade.)

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Foreword

The *Staff Ride Handbook for the Overland Campaign, Virginia, 4 May to 15 June 1864,* is the tenth study in the Combat Studies Institute's (CSI) Staff Ride Handbook series. This handbook, prepared by Dr. Curtis S. King, Dr. William Glenn Robertson, and LTC Steven E. Clay, analyzes Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant's 1864 Overland Campaign from the crossing of the Rapidan River on 4 May to the initiation of the crossing of the James River on 15 June. Unlike many of CSI's previous handbooks, this handbook focuses on the operational level of war. Even so, it provides a heavy dose of tactical analysis, thereby making this ride a superb tool for developing Army leaders at almost all levels. Designed to be completed in three days, this staff ride is flexible enough to allow units to conduct a one-day or two-day ride that will still enable soldiers to gain a full range of insights offered by the study of this important campaign. In developing their plan for conducting an Overland Campaign staff ride, unit commanders are encouraged to consider analyzing the wide range of military problems associated with warfighting that this study offers. This campaign provides a host of issues to be examined, to include logistics, intelligence, psychological operations, use of reconnaissance (or lack thereof), deception, leadership, engineering, campaign planning, soldier initiative, and many other areas relevant to the modern military professional. Each of these issues, and others also analyzed herein, are as germane to us today as they were 150 years ago. Modern military professionals, for whom this handbook was written, will find a great deal to ponder and analyze when studying this campaign. *CSI—The Past is Prologue!*

Timothy R. Reese
Colonel, Armor
Director, Combat Studies Institute

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On a personal note, Dr. King offers heartfelt thanks to his parents, George and Cecelia King, who have always supported his career as a writer and historian with encouragement and patience.

Introduction

As a vehicle for the education of the military professional, the staff ride has long proven its efficacy. Analysis of a battle or a campaign through an examination of the actual terrain is a concept deeply rooted in military study. In Europe after the Wars of German Unification, the elder von Moltke ingrained staff rides into the training of German general staff officers by posing daunting questions to his cadets during rides of battlefields on which he had achieved his greatest triumphs. In the United States, Captain Arthur L. Wagner made an initial proposal for a staff ride, and Major Eben Swift brought the concept to fruition at the General Service and Staff School (the forerunner of the Command and General Staff College [CGSC]) in 1906. The essential elements of Wagner and Swift's staff ride concept included a detailed classroom study of a campaign followed by an in-depth visit to the sites associated with that campaign. Later pioneers of the staff ride added an integration phase in order to mesh the classroom and field study phases for further insights into the military profession. Thus, the classroom, field, and integration phases are the cornerstones of the modern staff ride.

Today, the US Army considers the staff ride an essential aspect of historical education for the modern military professional throughout its system of schools and a crucial facet of the continuing professional development of its officers and noncommissioned officers in line units. The CGSC, the Army War College, and institutions throughout the Army school system conduct staff rides with the extensive resources necessary to execute fully the preliminary study, field study, and integration methodology. Units outside of the schoolhouse environment can also benefit extensively from staff rides, but they often find resources, particularly time, to be more restricted. That is where the staff ride handbook comes in. The handbook is a tool that is particularly useful for the line unit in preparing for a staff ride. It provides background to the campaign, a suggested list of sites to visit (called "stands"), material for discussion at the stands, and advice for logistics support of the staff ride. The intent of this handbook is not to replace the detailed study needed for the ride, but it does provide a starting point that should make the unit's preparation easier.

This handbook is one in a series of works from the Combat Studies Institute (CSI) designed to facilitate the conduct of staff rides throughout the Armed Forces of the United States. The foundational document of this series is *The Staff Ride* by Dr. William Glenn Robertson (Washington, DC: Center of Military History Publication 70-21, 1987). *The Staff Ride* describes the staff ride methodology in detail and gives hints that will assist in building any staff ride. Other published handbooks focus on

particular battles and campaigns and include works on Chickamauga, Cowpens, Shiloh, and Vicksburg among others. (CSI staff ride handbooks can be obtained from the CSI website: http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/csi/staff_ride/index.asp.) All of these publications are outstanding tools for the military professional (and for that matter, anybody) interested in the detailed study of battles and campaigns. This work on the Overland Campaign has borrowed liberally from all of its predecessors, particularly in the sections on the raising, equipping, and tactics of the Union and Confederate armies, and the authors are grateful for the excellent efforts of the authors of earlier handbooks.

Although there is a considerable connection among all staff ride handbooks, the *Staff Ride Handbook for the Overland Campaign, Virginia, 4 May to 15 June 1864*, has some significant differences from other handbooks. First, the struggle between Grant and Lee in the spring of 1864 was a *campaign* and not just a single battle. As such, a staff ride for the Overland Campaign is an *operational-level* staff ride and thus a departure from the more common tactical staff rides conducted on most battlefields. Like Vicksburg, the Overland Campaign consisted of multiple engagements with complex unit movements over considerable distances and over an extended period of time. These factors create unique challenges and opportunities.

One of these unique aspects is the nature of the "ride" itself. In short, the Overland Campaign requires more vehicular travel and less walking than most staff rides. This offers a great opportunity to explore the routes of march of units on both sides and insights into the thoughts of both commanders. On a more practical note, the students will spend considerable time in vehicles. The key is to make this time fruitful by having operational maps that show the routes of each corps and to orient the students when they arrive at each stand. In addition, it is beneficial for the students to use the operational maps to analyze the corps movements while they are en route from stand to stand.

Another challenge for this staff ride is to relate each of the major battles within the campaign. The students must come away with a sense of connection between the battles—a feeling that each engagement had an effect on the next battle, even if unintended. The Overland Campaign consisted of six key actions: the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, North Anna, Yellow Tavern, Cold Harbor, and crossing the James River. There are numerous stands at these sites; but more importantly, there are stands between each major clash that often lack dramatic battle actions, but are just as crucial to understanding and linking the campaign.

Finally, one should emphasize some tactical details at appropriate times throughout the ride without becoming overly focused on small unit actions. For the most part, the staff ride leaders will concentrate at the corps and division level. Even so, there are numerous lessons at the tactical level—concepts about leadership, doctrine, and the face of battle—that should also emerge from the staff ride. For example, Upton's attack at Spotsylvania offers a classic view into one man's struggle to break a tactical deadlock with imaginative techniques. Similarly, the ride should include the pathos of battle; for example, the stand at Cold Harbor should include the story of the Union soldiers—fully expecting to die—pinning identification tags to their backs. This scene gives a needed feel for the tragedy of war. In short, staff ride leaders must choose a limited number of tactical details and human-interest stories (vignettes) to illustrate key points, even though this is essentially an operational staff ride. Of course, the staff ride leaders must ultimately tailor the stands to support their goals and the goals of the staff ride audience.

These challenges coupled with the opportunity to present the time and space considerations of an operational campaign call for a careful selection of stands. This handbook is structured for a three-day ride with over 40 stands. Staff ride leaders may have to modify the stands to fit their schedules, but they should always attempt to keep a sense of connection between stands so that students do not lose the context of the campaign. On the other hand, due to time constraints, units may choose to execute only one or two day rides. This handbook is designed to allow staff ride leaders to pick selected stands that perhaps focus on only one or two battles as time permits.

In addition, staff ride leaders must give the students a chance to conduct research and prepare before actually visiting the campaign locations. The extent of student preparation will depend on available time. At one end of the spectrum, students might have ample time to explore numerous secondary sources and even delve into the most critical primary source, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (United States War Department, Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1880-1901 [hereafter referred to as *OR*]). On the other hand, if students have less time to devote to research, Bruce Catton's *Grant Takes Command* (Boston, MA: Little Brown, 1969) and Douglas Southall Freeman's volume 3 of *Lee's Lieutenants* (New York, NY: C. Scribner's Sons, 1942-44) provide broad overviews of the campaign.

The *Staff Ride Handbook for the Overland Campaign* provides a systematic approach to the analysis of this key Civil War campaign. Part I

describes the organization of the Union and Confederate Armies, detailing their weapons, tactics, logistics, engineer, communications, and medical support.

Part II consists of a campaign overview, which establishes the context for the individual actions to be studied in the field.

Part III consists of a suggested itinerary of sites to visit in order to obtain a concrete view of the campaign in its several phases. For each stand, there is a set of travel directions, an orientation to the battle site, a discussion of the action that occurred there, vignettes by participants in the campaign, and suggested analysis questions and topics for discussion.

Part IV discusses the final phase of the staff ride, the integration phase. In this phase, students integrate the classroom portion of the staff ride with the field phase and seek to provide relevant lessons for the modern military professional.

Part V provides practical information on conducting a staff ride in the Overland Campaign area, including sources of assistance and logistical considerations.

Appendixes A, B, and C outline the order of battle for the forces included in the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and Cold Harbor battles, respectively. Appendix D provides biographical sketches of key participants, and appendix E provides historical maps of the area. An annotated bibliography suggests sources for preliminary study.

In sum, the Overland Campaign is a magnificent example of great commanders locked in a classic struggle, as well as testimony to the grim ordeal of total war and the price paid by the common soldier. The lessons that may be learned from this complex struggle encompass much of the vast panoply of warfare and can provide an unmatched tool for the education of the modern military professional.

I. Civil War Armies

Introduction

This section of the handbook is designed to give the staff ride leader and students background into the organization and tactics of Civil War armies. This brief survey is by no means exhaustive, but it should give enough material for the students to have a better understanding of the capabilities of the forces that fought the Overland Campaign. Understanding these capabilities should give insight into the reasoning behind the decisions made by commanders on both sides. Please note that much of the material in this section is borrowed from other CSI staff ride handbooks with modifications to focus specifically on the structure and tactics of units in the 1864 Overland Campaign.

Organization

The US Army in 1861

The Regular Army of the United States on the eve of the Civil War was essentially a frontier constabulary whose 16,000 officers and men were organized into 198 companies scattered across the nation at 79 different posts. In 1861, this Army was under the command of Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott, the 75-year-old hero of the Mexican-American War. His position as general in chief was traditional, not statutory, because secretaries of war since 1821 had designated a general to be in charge of the field forces without formal congressional approval. During the course of the war, Lincoln would appoint other generals in chief with little success until finally appointing Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant to the position prior to the Overland Campaign.

The field forces were controlled through a series of geographic departments whose commanders reported directly to the general in chief. This department system, frequently modified, would be used by both sides throughout the Civil War for administering regions under Army control.

Army administration was handled by a system of bureaus whose senior officers were, by 1860, in the twilight of long careers in their technical fields. Six of the 10 bureau chiefs were over 70 years old. These bureaus, modeled after the British system, answered directly to the War Department and were not subject to the orders of the general in chief. The bureaus reflected many of today's combat support and combat service support branches; however, there was no operational planning or intelligence staff. American commanders before the Civil War had never required such a structure.

This system provided suitable civilian control and administrative support to the small field army prior to 1861. Ultimately, the bureau system would respond sufficiently, if not always efficiently, to the mass mobilization required over the next four years. Indeed, it would remain essentially intact until the early 20th century. The Confederate government, forced to create an army and support organization from scratch, established a parallel structure to that of the US Army. In fact, many important figures in Confederate bureaus had served in the prewar Federal bureaus.

Raising the Armies

With the outbreak of war in April 1861, both sides faced the monumental task of organizing and equipping armies that far exceeded the prewar structure in size and complexity. The Federals maintained control of the Regular Army, and the Confederates initially created a Regular force, though in reality it was mostly on paper. Almost immediately, the North lost many of its officers to the South, including some of exceptional quality. Of 1,108 Regular Army officers serving as of 1 January 1861, 270 ultimately resigned to join the South. Only a few hundred of 15,135 enlisted men, however, left the ranks.

The federal government had two basic options for the use of the Regular Army. The government could divide the Regulars into training and leadership cadre for newly formed volunteer regiments or retain them in "pure" units to provide a reliable nucleus for the Federal Army in coming battles. For the most part, the government opted to keep the Regulars together. During the course of the war, battle losses and disease thinned the ranks of Regulars, and officials could never recruit sufficient replacements in the face of stiff competition from the states that were forming volunteer regiments. By November 1864, many Regular units had been so depleted that they were withdrawn from front-line service, although some Regular regiments fought with the Army of the Potomac in the Overland Campaign. In any case, the war was fought primarily with volunteer officers and men, the vast majority who started the war with no previous military training or experience. However, by 1864, both the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia were largely experienced forces that made up for a lack of formal training with three years of hard combat experience.

Neither side had difficulty in recruiting the numbers initially required to fill the expanding ranks. In April 1861, President Abraham Lincoln called for 75,000 men from the states' militias for a three-month period. This figure probably represented Lincoln's informed guess as to how many troops would be needed to quell the rebellion quickly. Almost 92,000 men responded, as the states recruited their "organized" but untrained militia

companies. At the First Battle of Bull Run in July 1861, these ill-trained and poorly equipped soldiers generally fought much better than they were led. Later, as the war began to require more manpower, the federal government set enlistment quotas through various "calls," which local districts struggled to fill. Similarly, the Confederate Congress authorized the acceptance of 100,000 one-year volunteers in March 1861. One-third of these men were under arms within a month. The Southern spirit of voluntarism was so strong that possibly twice that number could have been enlisted, but sufficient arms and equipment were not then available.

As the war continued and casualty lists grew, the glory of volunteering faded, and both sides ultimately resorted to conscription to help fill the ranks. The Confederates enacted the first conscription law in American history in April 1862, followed by the federal government's own law in March 1863. Throughout these first experiments in American conscription, both sides administered the programs in less than a fair and efficient way. Conscription laws tended to exempt wealthier citizens, and initially, draftees could hire substitutes or pay commutation fees. As a result, the average conscript maintained poor health, capability, and morale. Many eligible men, particularly in the South, enlisted to avoid the onus of being considered a conscript. Still, conscription or the threat of conscription ultimately helped provide a large quantity of soldiers.

Conscription was never a popular program, and the North, in particular, tried several approaches to limit conscription requirements. These efforts included offering lucrative bounties, fees paid to induce volunteers to fill required quotas. In addition, the Federals offered a series of reenlistment bonuses, including money, 30-day furloughs, and the opportunity for veteran regiments to maintain their colors and be designated as "veteran" volunteer infantry regiments. The Federals also created an Invalid Corps (later renamed the Veteran Reserve Corps) of men unfit for front-line service who performed essential rear area duties. In addition, the Union recruited almost 179,000 African-Americans, mostly in federally organized volunteer regiments. In the South, recruiting or conscripting slaves was so politically sensitive that it was not attempted until March 1865, far too late to influence the war.

Whatever the faults of the manpower mobilization, it was an impressive achievement, particularly as a first effort on that scale. Various enlistment figures exist, but the best estimates are that approximately two million men enlisted in the Federal Army from 1861 to 1865. Of that number, one million were under arms at the end of the war. Because the Confederate records are incomplete or lost, estimates of their enlistments vary from

600,000 to over 1.5 million. Most likely, between 750,000 and 800,000 men served the Confederacy during the war, with peak strength never exceeding 460,000 men.

The unit structure into which the expanding armies were organized was generally the same for Federals and Confederates, reflecting the common roots of both armies. The Federals began the war with a Regular Army organized into an essentially Napoleonic, musket-equipped structure. Both sides used a variant of the old Regular Army structure for newly formed volunteer regiments. The Federal War Department established a volunteer infantry regimental organization with a strength that could range from 866 to 1,046 (varying in authorized strength by up to 180 infantry privates). The Confederate Congress fixed its 10-company infantry regiment at 1,045 men. Combat strength in battle, however, was always much lower (especially by the time of the Overland Campaign) because of casualties, sickness, leaves, details, desertions, and straggling.

The battery remained the basic artillery unit, although battalion and larger formal groupings of artillery emerged later in the war in the eastern theater. Four understrength Regular artillery regiments existed in the US Army at the start of the war and one Regular regiment was added in 1861, for a total of 60 batteries. Nevertheless, most batteries were volunteer organizations. For the first years of the war and part way into the Overland Campaign, a Federal battery usually consisted of six guns and had an authorized strength of 80 to 156 men. A battery of six 12-pound Napoleons could include 130 horses. If organized as "horse" or flying artillery, cannoneers were provided individual mounts, and more horses than men could be assigned to the battery. After the battle of Spotsylvania in 1864, most of the Army of the Potomac's artillery was reorganized into four-gun batteries. Their Confederate counterparts, plagued by limited ordnance and available manpower, usually operated throughout the war with a four-gun battery, often with guns of mixed types and calibers. Confederate batteries seldom reached their initially authorized manning level of 80 soldiers.

Prewar Federal mounted units were organized into five Regular regiments (two dragoon, two cavalry, and one mounted rifle), and one Regular cavalry regiment was added in May 1861. Although the term "troop" was officially introduced in 1862, most cavalrymen continued to use the more familiar term "company" to describe their units throughout the war. The Federals grouped two companies or troops into squadrons, with four to six squadrons comprising a regiment. Confederate cavalry units, organized in the prewar model, were authorized 10 76-man companies per regiment.

Some volunteer cavalry units on both sides also formed into smaller cavalry battalions. Later in the war, both sides began to merge their cavalry regiments and brigades into division and corps organizations.

For both sides, the infantry unit structure above regimental level was similar to today's structure, with a brigade controlling three to five regiments and a division controlling two or more brigades. Federal brigades generally contained regiments from more than one state, while Confederate brigades often consisted of regiments from the same state. In the Confederate Army, a brigadier general usually commanded a brigade, and a major general commanded a division. The Federal Army, with no rank higher than major general until 1864, often had colonels commanding brigades, brigadier generals commanding divisions, and major generals commanding corps and armies. Grant received the revived rank of lieutenant general in 1864, placing him with clear authority over all of the Federal armies, but rank squabbles between the major generals appeared within the Union command structure throughout the Overland Campaign.

The large numbers of organizations formed, as shown in table 1, are a reflection of the politics of the time. The War Department in 1861 considered making recruitment a Federal responsibility, but this proposal seemed to be an unnecessary expense for the short war initially envisioned. Therefore, the responsibility for recruiting remained with the states, and on both sides state governors continually encouraged local constituents to form new volunteer regiments. This practice served to strengthen support for local, state, and national politicians and provided an opportunity for glory and high rank for ambitious men. Although such local recruiting created regiments with strong bonds among the men, it also hindered filling the ranks of existing regiments with new replacements. As the war progressed, the Confederates attempted to funnel replacements into units from their same state or region, but the Federals continued to create new regiments. Existing Federal regiments detailed men back home to recruit replacements, but these efforts could never successfully compete for men joining new local regiments. The newly formed regiments thus had no seasoned veterans to train the recruits, and the battle-tested regiments lost men faster than they could recruit replacements. Many regiments on both sides (particularly for the North) were reduced to combat ineffectiveness as the war progressed. Seasoned regiments were often disbanded or consolidated, usually against the wishes of the men assigned.

Table 1. Federal and Confederate Organized Forces

	Federal	Confederate
Infantry	19 regular regiments 2,125 volunteer regiments 60 separate battalions 351 separate companies	642 volunteer regiments 163 separate battalions 62 separate companies 9 legions*
Artillery	5 regular regiments 61 volunteer regiments 17 volunteer battalions 408 separate batteries	16 volunteer regiments 25 volunteer battalions 227 separate batteries
Cavalry	6 regular regiments 266 volunteer regiments 45 battalions 78 separate companies	137 volunteer regiments 143 separate battalions 101 separate companies 1 legion*

*Legions were a form of a combined arms team, with artillery, cavalry, and infantry units. They were approximately the strength of a large regiment. Long before the end of the war, legions lost their combined arms organization.

The Leaders

Because the organization, equipment, tactics, and training of the Confederate and Federal armies were similar, the performance of units in battle often depended on the quality and performance of their individual leaders. Both sides sought ways to find this leadership for their armies. The respective central governments appointed the general officers. At the start of the war, most, but certainly not all, of the more senior officers had West Point or other military school experience. In 1861, Lincoln appointed 126 general officers, of which 82 were or had been professionally trained officers. Jefferson Davis appointed 89, of which 44 had received professional training. The rest were political appointees, but of these only 16 Federal and 7 Confederate generals lacked military experience.

Of the lower ranking volunteer officers who comprised the bulk of the leadership for both armies, state governors normally appointed colonels (regimental commanders). States also appointed other field grade officers, although many were initially elected within their units. Company grade officers were usually elected by their men. This long-established militia tradition, which seldom made military leadership and capability a primary consideration, was largely an extension of states' rights and sustained political patronage in both the Union and the Confederacy.

Much has been made of the West Point backgrounds of the men who ultimately dominated the senior leadership positions of both armies, but

the graduates of military colleges were not prepared by such institutions to command divisions, corps, or armies. Moreover, though many leaders had some combat experience from the Mexican War era, very few had experience above the company or battery level in the peacetime years prior to 1861. As a result, the war was not initially conducted at any level by "professional officers" in today's terminology. Leaders became more professional through experience and at the cost of thousands of lives. General William T. Sherman would later note that the war did not enter its "professional stage" until 1863. By the time of the Overland Campaign, many officers, though varying in skill, were at least comfortable at commanding their formations.

Civil War Staffs

In the Civil War, as today, the success of large military organizations and their commanders often depended on the effectiveness of the commanders' staffs. Modern staff procedures have evolved only gradually with the increasing complexity of military operations. This evolution was far from complete in 1861, and throughout the war, commanders personally handled many vital staff functions, most notably operations and intelligence. The nature of American warfare up to the mid-19th century did not seem to overwhelm the capabilities of single commanders. However, as the Civil War progressed the armies grew larger and the war effort became a more complex undertaking and demanded larger staffs. Both sides only partially adjusted to the new demands, and bad staff work hindered operations for both the Union and Confederate forces in the Overland Campaign.

Civil War staffs were divided into a "general staff" and a "staff corps." This terminology, defined by Winfield Scott in 1855, differs from modern definitions of the terms. Table 2 lists typical staff positions at army level, although most key functions were also represented at corps and division level. Except for the chief of staff and aides-de-camp, who were considered personal staff and would often depart when a commander was reassigned, staffs mainly contained representatives of the various bureaus, with logistical areas being best represented. Later in the war, some truly effective staffs began to emerge, but this was the result of the increased experience of the officers serving in those positions rather than a comprehensive development of standard staff procedures or guidelines.

Major General George B. McClellan, when he appointed his father-in-law, was the first to officially use the title "chief of staff." Even though many senior commanders had a chief of staff, this position was not used in any uniform way and seldom did the man in this role achieve the central coordinating authority of the chief of staff in a modern

headquarters. This position, along with most other staff positions, was used as an individual commander saw fit, making staff responsibilities somewhat different under each commander. This inadequate use of the chief of staff was among the most important shortcomings of staffs during the Civil War. An equally important weakness was the lack of any formal operations or intelligence staff. Liaison procedures were also ill defined, and various staff officers or soldiers performed this function with little formal guidance. Miscommunication or lack of knowledge of friendly units proved disastrous time after time in the war's campaigns.

Table 2. Typical Staffs

General Staff	Staff Corps
Chief of staff (personal staff) Aides (personal staff) Assistant adjutant general Assistant inspector general	Engineer Ordnance Quartermaster Subsistence Medical Pay Signal Provost marshal Chief of artillery

The Armies in the Overland Campaign

The forces in the Overland Campaign evolved through several organizational changes over the course of the two-month struggle. The details of these changes are covered in the campaign overview and in the appendixes. Some key aspects of these organizations are summarized below.

On the Union side, Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant, in addition to being the commander of all of the Union forces arrayed against the Confederacy, commanded all Union forces in the eastern theater of operations that fought in the Overland Campaign. His main force was Major General George G. Meade's Army of the Potomac, which initially consisted of three infantry corps and one cavalry corps. An additional infantry corps, the IX Corps under Major General Ambrose E. Burnside, began the campaign as a separate corps reporting directly to Grant, but was later assigned to the Army of the Potomac. Major General Franz Sigel commanded a Union army in the Shenandoah Valley that had only an indirect role in the Overland Campaign. On the other hand, Major General Benjamin F. Butler's Army of the James was more directly involved in the campaign. His army consisted of two infantry corps and about a division's

worth of cavalry troops. Later in the campaign, at Cold Harbor, one of Butler's corps, the XVIII under Major General William F. Smith, was temporarily attached to the Army of the Potomac. The initial strength of the Army of the Potomac and the IX Corps at the beginning of the Overland Campaign was slightly under 120,000 men.

There are some factors affecting the strength, quality, and organization of the Union forces that should be noted. First, just prior to the campaign, the Army of the Potomac had abolished two of its infantry corps (the I and III Corps, both of which had been decimated at Gettysburg) and consolidated their subordinate units into the remaining three corps (II, V, and VI). This definitely streamlined the Army's command and control, but it also meant that some divisions and brigades were not accustomed to their new corps' methods and procedures at the start of the campaign. Second, soldiers in a large number of the Federal regiments were approaching the expiration dates of their enlistments just as the campaign was set to begin in May 1864. Most of the troops in these regiments had enlisted for three years in 1861, and they represented the most experienced fighters in the Army. A surprisingly large number of these soldiers reenlisted (over 50 percent), but there was still a large turnover and much disruption as many of the regiments that reenlisted returned to their home states for furloughs and to recruit replacements. Finally, the Union did tap a new source for soldiers in 1864: the "heavy artillery" regiments. These were units designed to man the heavy artillery in the fortifications around Washington, DC. Grant decided to strip many of these regiments from the forts and use them as infantry in the 1864 campaign, and he employed these forces more extensively as his losses accumulated. The heavy artillery regiments had a slightly different structure than the traditional infantry regiments, and they had not suffered battle casualties; thus, they often still possessed about 1,200 soldiers in a regiment. This was as large as a veteran Union brigade in 1864.

On the Confederate side, there was no overall commander in chief or even a theater commander with authority similar to that of Grant. Officially, only President Jefferson Davis had the authority to coordinate separate Confederate armies and military districts. However, the commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, General Robert E. Lee, had considerable influence over affairs in the entire eastern theater due to the immense respect he had earned from Davis and other Confederate leaders. Lee's army consisted of three infantry corps and a cavalry corps. One of these corps (Lieutenant General James Longstreet's I Corps) had been on detached duty just prior to the opening of the campaign and would not join the rest of Lee's army until the second day of the battle of the Wilderness

(6 June). Additional Confederate forces in the theater included Major General John C. Breckinridge's small army in the Shenandoah Valley and General P.G.T. Beauregard's forces protecting Richmond, southern Virginia, and northern North Carolina. In the course of the campaign, Lee received some reinforcements from both Breckinridge and Beauregard. The Army of Northern Virginia (including Longstreet's I Corps) began the campaign with about 64,000 soldiers.

Although plagued by an overall shortage in numbers, Lee had fewer worries about the organization and quality of his manpower. Most of his soldiers had enlisted for the duration of the war, thus his army lost few regiments due to expired terms of service. Also, thanks to its better replacement system, Confederate regiments were usually closer to a consistent strength of 350 to 600 men instead of the wild disparity of their Union counterparts (as low as 150 soldiers in the decimated veteran regiments and as much as 1,200 in the heavy artillery regiments). Overall, Lee could count on the quality and consistency of his units, and he did not have to endure the turmoil of troop turnover and organizational changes that hindered Grant's forces.

As for staffs, on the Union side Grant maintained a surprisingly small staff for a commander in chief. His personal chief of staff was Major General John A. Rawlins, a capable officer who generally produced concise and well-crafted orders. In addition, he was Grant's alter ego, a trusted friend who took it upon himself to keep Grant sober. In fact, recent scholarship indicates that Grant's drinking was far less of a problem than formerly indicated, and there were certainly no drinking difficulties during the Overland Campaign. The rest of Grant's small staff consisted of a coterie of friends who had earned Grant's trust from their common service in the western theater campaigns. In general, this staff performed well, although a few glaring mistakes would come back to haunt the Union effort. Of course, one of the major reasons Grant could afford to keep such a small staff in the field was that the chief of staff for the Union armies, Major General Henry W. Halleck, remained in Washington with a large staff that handled Grant's administrative duties as general in chief. In fact, Halleck was a superb staff officer who tactfully navigated the political seas of Washington and gave Grant the freedom to accompany the Army of the Potomac in the field.

In contrast to Grant's field staff, Meade had a huge staff that Grant once jokingly described as fitting for an Imperial Roman Emperor. Meade's chief of staff was Major General Andrew A. Humphreys, an extremely capable officer who only reluctantly agreed to leave field command to

serve on the army's staff. Humphreys has received some criticism for not pushing the Army of the Potomac through the Wilderness on 4 May; but for most of the campaign, his orders were solid and his movement plan for the crossing of the James River was outstanding. Another excellent officer on the army staff was the chief of artillery, Major General Henry J. Hunt. Recognized as one of the war's foremost experts on artillery, Hunt had a more active role in operational matters than most artillery chiefs who usually just performed administrative duties. The rest of Meade's staff was of mixed quality. In addition, the poor caliber of Union maps coupled with some mediocre young officers who were used as guides repeatedly led to misdirected movements and lost time.

Compared to Meade's large headquarters, Lee maintained a smaller group of trusted subordinates for his staff. Lee did not have a chief of staff, thus much of the responsibility for writing his orders fell on the shoulders of a few personal aides and secretaries, especially Lieutenant Colonel Charles Marshall. Lee employed several young officers, such as Lieutenant Colonel Walter Taylor and Colonel Charles S. Venable, as aides, and had great faith in these men to transmit his orders to subordinates. However, the lack of a true staff to ease his workload probably took its toll on Lee who was ill and physically exhausted by the time of the North Anna battles at the end of May. Other than his young aides, Lee had several other staff officers of mixed quality. His chief of artillery, Brigadier General William N. Pendleton, was mediocre at best, and the Army commander usually relegated his chief of artillery to strictly administrative duties. On the other hand, Major General Martin Luther (M.L.) Smith, Lee's chief engineer, played an active and generally positive role throughout the campaign.

Weapons

Infantry

During the 1850's, in a technological revolution of major proportions, the rifle musket began to replace the relatively inaccurate smoothbore musket in ever-increasing numbers, both in Europe and America. This process, accelerated by the Civil War, ensured that the rifled shoulder weapon would be the basic weapon used by infantrymen in both the Federal and Confederate armies.

The standard and most common shoulder weapon used in the American Civil War was the Springfield .58-caliber rifle musket, models 1855, 1861, and 1863. In 1855, the US Army adopted this weapon to replace the .69-caliber smoothbore musket and the .54-caliber rifle. In appearance, the rifle musket was similar to the smoothbore musket. Both were single-shot

muzzleloaders, but the rifled bore of the new weapon substantially increased its range and accuracy. The rifling system chosen by the United States was designed by Claude Minié, a French Army officer. Whereas earlier rifles fired a round nonexpanding ball, the Minié system used a hollow-based cylindro-conoidal projectile slightly smaller than the bore that dropped easily into the barrel. When the powder charge was ignited by a fulminate of mercury percussion cap, the released powder gases expanded the base of the bullet into the rifled grooves, giving the projectile a ballistic spin.

The model 1855 Springfield rifle musket was the first regulation arm to use the hollow-base .58-caliber minie bullet. The slightly modified model 1861 was the principal infantry weapon of the Civil War, although two subsequent models in 1863 were produced in about equal quantities. The model 1861 was 56 inches long overall, had a 40-inch barrel, and weighed 9 pounds 2 ounces with its bayonet. The 21-inch socket bayonet consisted of an 18-inch triangular blade and 3-inch socket. The Springfield had a rear sight graduated to 500 yards. The maximum effective range of this weapon was approximately 500 yards, although it had killing power at 1,000 yards. The round could penetrate 11 inches of white-pine board at 200 yards and 3¼ inches at 1,000 yards, with a penetration of 1 inch considered the equivalent of disabling a human being. Although the new weapons had increased accuracy and effectiveness, the soldiers' vision was still obscured by the clouds of smoke produced by the rifle musket's black powder propellant.

To load a muzzle-loading rifle, the soldier took a paper cartridge in hand and tore the end of the paper with his teeth. Next, he poured the powder down the barrel and placed the bullet in the muzzle. Then, using a metal ramrod, he pushed the bullet firmly down the barrel until seated. He then cocked the hammer and placed the percussion cap on the cone or nipple, which, when struck by the hammer, ignited the gunpowder. The average rate of fire was three rounds per minute. A well-trained soldier could possibly load and fire four times per minute, but in the confusion of battle, the rate of fire was probably slower, two to three rounds per minute.

In addition to the Springfields, over 100 types of muskets, rifles, rifle muskets, and rifled muskets—ranging up to .79 caliber—were used during the American Civil War. The numerous American-made weapons were supplemented early in the conflict by a wide variety of imported models. The best, most popular, and most common of the foreign weapons was the British .577-caliber Enfield rifle, model 1853, which was 54 inches long (with a 39-inch barrel), weighed 8.7 pounds (9.2 with the bayonet), could be fitted with a socket bayonet with an 18-inch blade, and had a rear sight graduated

to 800 yards. The Enfield design was produced in a variety of forms, both long and short barreled, by several British manufacturers and at least one American company. Of all the foreign designs, the Enfield most closely resembled the Springfield in characteristics and capabilities. The United States purchased over 436,000 Enfield-pattern weapons during the war. Statistics on Confederate purchases are more difficult to ascertain, but a report dated February 1863 indicated that 70,980 long Enfields and 9,715 short Enfields had been delivered by that time, with another 23,000 awaiting delivery.

While the quality of imported weapons varied, experts considered the Enfields and the Austrian Lorenz rifle muskets to be very good. However, some foreign governments and manufacturers took advantage of the huge initial demand for weapons by dumping their obsolete weapons on the American market. This practice was especially prevalent with some of the older smoothbore muskets and converted flintlocks. The greatest challenge, however, lay in maintaining these weapons and supplying ammunition and replacement parts for calibers ranging from .44 to .79. The quality of the imported weapons eventually improved as the procedures, standards, and astuteness of the purchasers improved. For the most part, the European suppliers provided needed weapons, and the newer foreign weapons were highly regarded.

Breechloaders and repeating rifles were available by 1861 and were initially purchased in limited quantities, often by individual soldiers. Generally, however, these types of rifles were not issued to troops in large numbers because of technical problems (poor breech seals, faulty ammunition), fear by the Ordnance Department that the troops would waste ammunition, and the cost of rifle production. The most famous of the breechloaders was the single-shot Sharps, produced in both carbine and rifle models. The model 1859 rifle was .52-caliber, 47⅛ inches long, and weighed 8¾ pounds, while the carbine was .52-caliber, 39⅛ inches long, and weighed 7¾ pounds. Both weapons used a linen cartridge and a pellet primer feed mechanism. Most Sharps carbines were issued to Federal cavalry units.

The best known of the repeaters was probably the seven-shot .52-caliber Spencer, which came in both rifle and carbine models. The rifle was 47-inches long and weighed 10 pounds, while the carbine was 39-inches long and weighed 8¼ pounds. The Spencer was also the first weapon adopted by the US Army that fired a metallic rim-fire, self-contained cartridge. Soldiers loaded rounds through an opening in the butt of the stock, which fed into the chamber through a tubular magazine by the action of the trigger guard. The hammer still had to be cocked manually before each shot.

The Henry rifle was, in some ways, even better than either the Sharps or the Spencer. Although never adopted by the US Army in any quantity, it was purchased privately by soldiers during the war. The Henry was a 16-shot, .44-caliber rimfire cartridge repeater. It was 43½ inches long and weighed 9¼ pounds. The tubular magazine located directly beneath the barrel had a 15-round capacity with an additional round in the chamber. Of the approximately 13,500 Henrys produced, probably 10,000 saw limited service. The government purchased only 1,731.

The Colt repeating rifle, model 1855 (or revolving carbine), also was available to Civil War soldiers in limited numbers. The weapon was produced in several lengths and calibers, the lengths varying from 32 to 42½ inches, while its calibers were .36, .44, and .56. The .36 and .44 calibers were made to chamber six shots, while the .56-caliber was made to chamber five shots. The Colt Firearms Company was also the primary supplier of revolvers (the standard sidearm for cavalry troops and officers), the .44-caliber Army revolver and the .36-caliber Navy revolver being the most popular (over 146,000 purchased). This was because they were simple, relatively sturdy, and reliable.

Cavalry

Initially armed with sabers and pistols (and in one case, lances), Federal cavalry troops quickly added the breech-loading carbine to their inventory of weapons. Troops preferred the easier-handling carbines to rifles and the breechloaders to awkward muzzleloaders. Of the single-shot breech-loading carbines that saw extensive use during the Civil War, the Hall .52-caliber accounted for approximately 20,000 in 1861. The Hall was quickly replaced by a variety of more state-of-the-art carbines, including the Merrill .54-caliber (14,495), Maynard .52-caliber (20,002), Gallager .53-caliber (22,728), Smith .52-caliber (30,062), Burnside .56-caliber (55,567), and Sharps .54-caliber (80,512). The next step in the evolutionary process was the repeating carbine, the favorite by 1864 (and commonly distributed by 1865) being the Spencer .52-caliber seven-shot repeater (94,194).

Because of the South's limited industrial capacity, Confederate cavalrymen had a more difficult time arming themselves. Nevertheless, they too embraced the firepower revolution, choosing shotguns and muzzle-loading carbines as well as multiple sets of revolvers as their primary weapons. In addition, Confederate cavalrymen made extensive use of battlefield salvage by recovering Federal weapons. However, the South's difficulties in producing the metallic-rimmed cartridges required by many of these recovered weapons limited their usefulness.

Field Artillery

In 1841, the US Army selected bronze as the standard material for fieldpieces and at the same time adopted a new system of field artillery. The 1841 field artillery system consisted entirely of smoothbore muzzle-loaders: 6- and 12-pound guns; 12-, 24-, and 32-pound howitzers; and 12-pound mountain howitzers. A pre-Civil War battery usually consisted of six fieldpieces—four guns and two howitzers. A 6-pound battery contained four 6-pound guns and two 12-pound howitzers, while a 12-pound battery had four 12-pound guns and two 24-pound howitzers. The guns fired solid shot, shell, spherical case, grapeshot, and canister rounds, while howitzers fired shell, spherical case, grapeshot, and canister rounds (artillery ammunition is described below).

The 6-pound gun (effective range 1,523 yards) was the primary fieldpiece used from the time of the Mexican War until the Civil War. By 1861, however, the 1841 artillery system based on the 6-pounder was obsolete. In 1857, a new and more versatile fieldpiece, the 12-pound gun-howitzer (Napoleon), model 1857, appeared on the scene. Designed as a multipurpose piece to replace existing guns and howitzers, the Napoleon fired canister and shell, like the 12-pound howitzer, and solid shot comparable in range to the 12-pound gun. The Napoleon was a bronze, muzzle-loading smoothbore with an effective range of 1,619 yards (see table 3 for a comparison of artillery data). Served by a nine-man crew, the piece could fire at a sustained rate of two aimed shots per minute. Like almost all smoothbore artillery, the Napoleon fired "fixed" ammunition—the projectile and powder were bound together with metal bands.

Another new development in field artillery was the introduction of rifling. Although rifled guns provided greater range and accuracy, smoothbores were generally more reliable and faster to load. Rifled ammunition was semifixed, so the charge and the projectile had to be loaded separately. In addition, the canister load of the rifle did not perform as well as that of the smoothbore. Initially, some smoothbores were rifled on the James pattern, but they soon proved unsatisfactory because the bronze rifling eroded too easily. Therefore, most rifled artillery was either wrought iron or cast iron with a wrought-iron reinforcing band.

The most commonly used rifled guns were the 10-pound Parrott and the Rodman, or 3-inch ordnance rifle. The Parrott rifle was a cast-iron piece, easily identified by the wrought-iron band reinforcing the breech. The 10-pound Parrott was made in two models: model 1861 had a 2.9-inch rifled bore with three lands and grooves and a slight muzzle swell, while model 1863 had a 3-inch bore and no muzzle swell. The Rodman or

ordnance rifle was a long-tubed, wrought-iron piece that had a 3-inch bore with seven lands and grooves. Ordnance rifles were sturdier and considered superior in accuracy and reliability to the 10-pound Parrott.

A new weapon that made its first appearance in the war during the Overland Campaign was the 24-pound Coehorn mortar. Used exclusively by the North, the Coehorn fired a projectile in a high arcing trajectory and was ideal for lobbing shells into trenches in siege warfare. The Coehorn was used briefly during the fighting at the "bloody angle" at Spotsylvania and later in the trench lines at Cold Harbor.

By 1860, the ammunition for field artillery consisted of four general types for both smoothbores and rifles: solid shot, shell, case, and canister. Solid shot was a round cast-iron projectile for smoothbores and an elongated projectile, known as a bolt, for rifled guns. Solid shot, with its smashing or battering effect, was used in a counterbattery role or against buildings and massed formations. The conical-shaped bolt lacked the effectiveness of the cannonball because it tended to bury itself on impact instead of bounding along the ground like a bowling ball.

Shell, also known as common or explosive shell, whether spherical or conical, was a hollow projectile filled with an explosive charge of black powder that was detonated by a fuse. Shell was designed to break into jagged pieces, producing an antipersonnel effect, but the low-order detonation seldom produced more than three to five fragments. In addition to its casualty-producing effects, shell had a psychological impact when it exploded over the heads of troops. It was also used against field fortifications and in a counterbattery role. Case or case shot for both smoothbore and rifled guns was a hollow projectile with thinner walls than shell. The projectile was filled with round lead or iron balls set in a matrix of sulfur that surrounded a small bursting charge. Case was primarily used in an antipersonnel role. This type of round had been invented by Henry Shrapnel, a British artillery officer, hence the term "shrapnel."

Last, there was canister, probably the most effective round and the round of choice at close range (400 yards or less) against massed troops. Canister was essentially a tin can filled with iron balls packed in sawdust with no internal bursting charge. When fired, the can disintegrated, and the balls followed their own paths to the target. The canister round for the 12-pound Napoleon consisted of 27 1½-inch iron balls packed inside an elongated tin cylinder. At extremely close ranges, men often loaded double charges of canister. By 1861, canister had replaced grapeshot in the ammunition chests of field batteries (grapeshot balls were larger than canister, and thus fewer could be fired per round).

Weapons in the Overland Campaign

The variety of weapons available to both armies during the Civil War is reflected in the battles of the Overland Campaign. To a limited extent, the Army of Northern Virginia's infantry had more uniformity in its small arms than the Army of the Potomac. In fact, some regiments of the famous Pennsylvania Reserves Brigade were still equipped with smoothbore muskets. In any case, both armies relied heavily on the Springfield and Enfield, which were the most common weapons used (although almost every other type of Civil War small arms could be found in the campaign).

The variety of weapons and calibers of ammunition required on the battlefield by each army presented sustainment challenges that ranged from production and procurement to supplying soldiers in the field. Amazingly, operations were not often affected by the need to resupply a diverse mixture of ammunition types.

The Army of the Potomac (including the IX Corps) started the campaign with 58 batteries of artillery. Of these, 42 were six-gun batteries, while the other 16 batteries were of the four-gun type. The Federals went to a four-gun battery system after the battle of Spotsylvania. Also at this time, the Army of the Potomac's Artillery Reserve was disbanded except for the ammunition train. The Reserve's batteries went to the corps-level reserve artillery brigades. The Army of Northern Virginia totaled 56 artillery batteries. The vast majority of these (42) were four-gun batteries. The rest of the mix included one six-gun battery, three five-gun, five three-gun, four two-gun, and a lone one-gun battery. (Refer to table 3 for the major types of artillery available to the two armies at the start of the campaign.)

The effectiveness of artillery during the campaign was mixed. In the Wilderness, the rugged terrain and the dense vegetation reduced the effectiveness of artillery fire. Specifically, the Federals' advantage in numbers of longer-range rifled guns was negated by the lack of good fields of fire. The more open ground at Spotsylvania and Cold Harbor allowed for better use of artillery. However, the increasing use of entrenchments on both sides tended to relegate artillery to a defensive role.

The Confederates tended to keep their batteries decentralized, usually attached to the infantry brigades within the divisions to which they were assigned. Lee's army did not have an artillery reserve. The Union tended to centralize their artillery, even after disbanding the army-level reserve. This often meant keeping reserve batteries at corps-level, other batteries in division reserves, and occasionally assigning batteries to brigades as needed.

Table 3. Artillery Available to Both Sides at the Start of the Overland Campaign

Type	Bore Diameter (inches)	Tube Weight (pounds)	Tube Length (inches)	Carriage Weight (pounds)	Range at 5° Elevation (yards)	Army of the Potomac (with IX Corps)	Army of Northern Virginia
Smooth-bore							
12-lb howitzer	4.62	788	53	900	1,072	0	6
12-lb gun-howitzer Napoleon	4.62	1,227	66	1,128	1,619	138	94
24-lb howitzer	5.82	1,318	65	1,128	1,322	0	4
Rifles							
10-lb Parrott (1863)	3.0	890	74	900	1,850	24	48
20-lb Parrott	3.67	890	78	900	2,000	6	12
3-inch ordnance-rifle Rodman	3.0	816	69	900	1,830	148	32
Special							
24-lb Coehorn Mortars	5.82	164	16.32	132	at 45° elevation 1,200	8	0

In the Overland Campaign, the Confederate cavalry had an advantage over its Union counterpart in reconnaissance and screening missions. This was largely due to personalities and the mission focus of the two sides, rather than to any organizational or tactical differences between them. The Army of the Potomac's cavalry corps was commanded by Major General Philip H. Sheridan, who clashed with the Army commander, Meade, over the role of the cavalry. After the opening of the Spotsylvania fight, Sheridan got his wish and conducted a large raid toward Richmond. Stuart countered with part of his force, but the remaining Confederate cavalry kept Lee well informed while the Federals were almost blind. Stuart was killed at the battle of Yellow Tavern, but his eventual replacement, Major General Wade Hampton, filled in admirably. Later in the war, Sheridan would make better use of the cavalry as a striking force, but he never really mastered its reconnaissance role.

Tactics

Tactical Doctrine in 1861

The Napoleonic Wars and the Mexican War were the major influences on American military thinking at the beginning of the Civil War. American military leaders knew of the Napoleonic driven theories of Jomini, while tactical doctrine reflected the lessons learned in Mexico (1846-48). However, these tactical lessons were misleading, because in Mexico relatively small armies fought only seven pitched battles. In addition, these battles were so small that almost all the tactical lessons learned during the war focused at the regimental, battery, and squadron levels. Future Civil War leaders had learned very little about brigade, division, and corps maneuvers in Mexico, yet these units were standard fighting elements of both armies in 1861-65.

The US Army's experience in Mexico validated many Napoleonic principles—particularly that of the offensive. In Mexico, tactics did not differ greatly from those of the early 19th century. Infantry marched in columns and deployed into lines to fight. Once deployed, an infantry regiment might send one or two companies forward as skirmishers, as security against surprise, or to soften the enemy's line. After identifying the enemy's position, a regiment advanced in closely ordered lines to within 100 yards. There it delivered a devastating volley, followed by a charge with bayonets. Both sides attempted to use this basic tactic in the first battles of the Civil War with tragic results.

In Mexico, American armies employed artillery and cavalry in both offensive and defensive battle situations. In the offense, artillery moved as near to the enemy lines as possible—normally just outside musket range—in order to blow gaps in the enemy's line that the infantry might exploit with a determined charge. In the defense, artillery blasted advancing enemy lines with canister and withdrew if the enemy attack got within musket range. Cavalry guarded the army's flanks and rear but held itself ready to charge if enemy infantry became disorganized or began to withdraw.

These tactics worked perfectly well with the weapons technology of the Napoleonic and Mexican Wars. The infantry musket was accurate up to 100 yards, but ineffective against even massed targets beyond that range. Rifles were specialized weapons with excellent accuracy and range but slow to load and, therefore, not usually issued to line troops. Smoothbore cannon had a range up to 1 mile with solid shot, but were most effective against infantry when firing canister at ranges under 400 yards (and even better at 200 yards or less). Artillerists worked their guns without much

fear of infantry muskets, which had a limited range. Cavalry continued to use sabers and lances as shock weapons.

American troops took the tactical offensive in most Mexican War battles with great success, and they suffered fairly light losses. Unfortunately, similar tactics proved to be obsolete in the Civil War in part because of the innovation of the rifle musket. This new weapon greatly increased the infantry's range and accuracy and loaded as fast as a musket. By the beginning of the Civil War, rifle muskets were available in moderate numbers. It was the weapon of choice in both the Union and Confederate armies during the war; by 1864, the vast majority of infantry troops on both sides had rifle muskets of good quality.

Official tactical doctrine prior to the beginning of the Civil War did not clearly recognize the potential of the new rifle musket. Prior to 1855, the most influential tactical guide was General Winfield Scott's three-volume work, *Infantry Tactics* (1835), based on French tactical models of the Napoleonic Wars. It stressed close-order, linear formations in two or three ranks advancing at "quick time" of 110 steps (86 yards) per minute. In 1855, to accompany the introduction of the new rifle musket, Major William J. Hardee published a two-volume tactical manual, *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics*. Hardee's work contained few significant revisions of Scott's manual. His major innovation was to increase the speed of the advance to a "double-quick time" of 165 steps (151 yards) per minute. If, as suggested, Hardee introduced his manual as a response to the rifle musket, then he failed to appreciate the weapon's full impact on combined arms tactics and the essential shift that the rifle musket made in favor of the defense. Hardee's *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics* was the standard infantry manual used by both sides at the outbreak of war in 1861.

If Scott's and Hardee's works lagged behind technological innovations, at least the infantry had manuals to establish a doctrinal basis for training. Cavalry and artillery fell even further behind in recognizing the potential tactical shift in favor of rifle-armed infantry. The cavalry's manual, published in 1841, was based on French sources that focused on close-order offensive tactics. It favored the traditional cavalry attack in two ranks of horsemen armed with sabers or lances. The manual took no notice of the rifle musket's potential, nor did it give much attention to dismounted operations. Similarly, the artillery had a basic drill book delineating individual crew actions, but it had no tactical manual. Like cavalrymen, artillerymen showed no concern for the potential tactical changes that the rifle musket implied.

Early War Tactics

In the battles of 1861 and 1862, both sides employed the tactics proven in Mexico and found that the tactical offensive could still occasionally be successful—but only at a great cost in casualties. Men wielding rifled weapons in the defense generally ripped incoming frontal assaults to shreds, and if the attackers paused to exchange fire, the slaughter was even greater. Rifles also increased the relative number of defenders that could engage an attacking formation, since flanking units now engaged assaulting troops with a murderous enfilading fire. Defenders usually crippled the first assault line before a second line of attackers could come forward in support. This caused successive attacking lines to intermingle with survivors to their front, thereby destroying formations, command, and control. Although both sides occasionally used the bayonet throughout the war, they quickly discovered that rifle musket fire made successful bayonet attacks almost impossible.

As the infantry troops found the bayonet charge to be of little value against rifle muskets, cavalry and artillery troops made troubling discoveries of their own. Cavalry troops learned that the old-style saber charge did not work against infantry armed with rifle muskets. Cavalry troops, however, continued their traditional intelligence gathering and screening roles and often found their place as the "eyes and ears" of the army. Artillery troops, on their part, found that they could not maneuver in the offense to canister range as they had in Mexico, because the rifle musket was accurate beyond that distance. Worse yet, at ranges where gunners were safe from rifle fire, artillery shot and shell were far less effective than canister at close range. Ironically, rifled cannon did not give the equivalent boost to artillery effectiveness that the rifle-musket gave to the infantry. The increased range of cannons proved no real advantage in the broken and wooded terrain over which so many Civil War battles were fought.

There are several possible reasons why Civil War commanders continued to employ the tactical offensive long after it was clear that the defense was superior. Most commanders believed the offensive was the decisive form of battle. This lesson came straight from the Napoleonic wars and the Mexican-American War. Commanders who chose the tactical offensive usually retained the initiative over defenders. Similarly, the tactical defensive depended heavily on the enemy choosing to attack at a point convenient to the defender and continuing to attack until badly defeated. Although this situation occurred often in the Civil War, a prudent commander could hardly count on it for victory. Consequently, few

commanders chose to exploit the defensive form of battle if they had the option to attack.

The offensive may have been the decisive form of battle, but it was very hard to coordinate and even harder to control. (For the procedure in moving a regiment into line of battle from march column, see figure 1.) The better generals often tried to attack the enemy's flanks and rear, but seldom achieved success because of the difficulty involved. Not only did the commander have to identify the enemy's flank or rear correctly, he also had to move his force into position to attack and then do so in conjunction with attacks made by other friendly units. Command and control of the type required to conduct these attacks was quite beyond the ability of most Civil War commanders. Therefore, Civil War armies repeatedly attacked each other frontally, with resulting high casualties, because that was the easiest way to conduct offensive operations. When attacking frontally, a commander had to choose between attacking on a broad front or a narrow front.

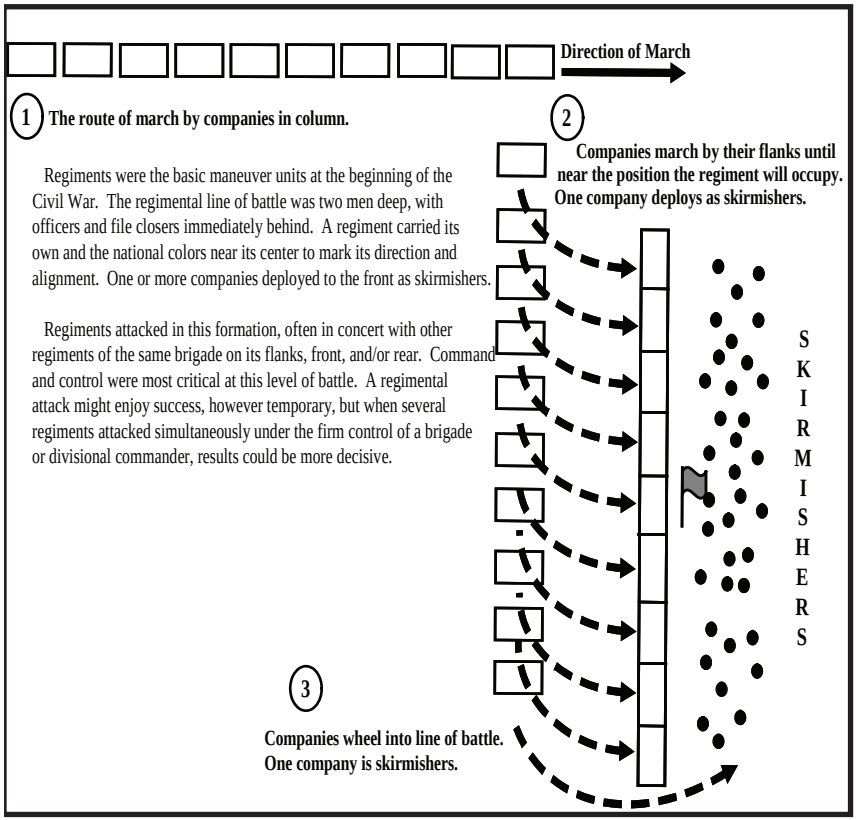


Figure 1. Regimental line of battle from march column.

Attacking on a broad front rarely succeeded except against weak and scattered defenders. Attacking on a narrow front promised greater success but required immediate reinforcement to continue the attack and achieve decisive results. As the war dragged on, experiments with attacking forces on narrow fronts against specific objectives were attempted (Upton at Spotsylvania), but no single offensive doctrine emerged as a key to success.

Later War Tactics

Poor training may have contributed to high casualty rates early in the war, but casualties remained high and even increased long after the armies became experienced. Continued high casualty rates resulted because tactical developments failed to adapt to the new weapons technology. Few commanders understood how the rifle musket strengthened the tactical defensive. However, some commanders made offensive innovations that met with varying success. When an increase in the pace of advance did not overcome defending firepower (as Hardee suggested it would), some units tried advancing in more open order. But this sort of formation lacked the appropriate mass to assault and carry prepared positions and created command and control problems beyond the ability of Civil War leaders to resolve.

Late in the war, when the difficulty of attacking field fortifications under heavy fire became apparent, other tactical expedients were employed. Attacking solidly entrenched defenders often required whole brigades and divisions moving in dense masses to rapidly cover intervening ground, seize the objective, and prepare for the inevitable counterattack. Seldom successful against alert and prepared defenses, these attacks were generally accompanied by tremendous casualties and foreshadowed the massed infantry assaults of World War I. Sometimes, large formations attempted mass charges over short distances without halting to fire. This tactic enjoyed limited success at the Spotsylvania Courthouse in May 1864, but generally failed to break a prepared enemy. At Spotsylvania, a Union task-organized division (under Colonel Emory Upton) attacked and captured an exposed portion of the Confederate line. The attack succeeded in part because the Union troops crossed the intervening ground very quickly and without stopping to fire their rifles. Once inside the Confederate defenses, the Union troops attempted to exploit their success by continuing their advance, but loss of command and control made them little better than a mob. Counterattacking Confederate units, in conventional formations, eventually forced the Federals to relinquish much of the ground gained (see figure 2).

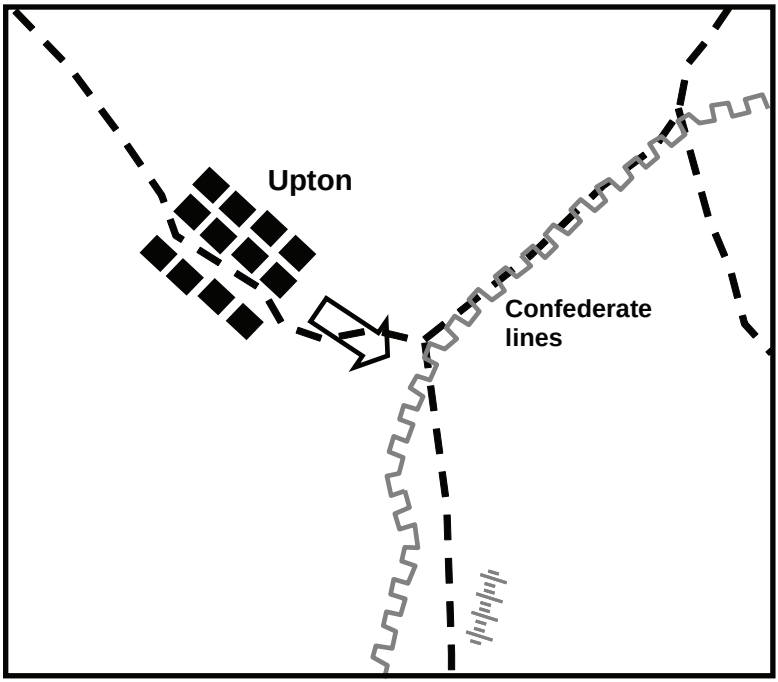


Figure 2. Union regiments massed to attack at Spotsylvania Courthouse.

As the war dragged on, tactical maneuver focused more on larger formations: brigade, division, and corps. In most of the major battles fought after 1861, brigades were employed as the primary maneuver formations. But brigade maneuver was at the upper limit of command and control for most Civil War commanders at the beginning of the war. Brigades might be able to retain coherent formations if the terrain were suitably open, but often brigade attacks degenerated into a series of poorly coordinated regimental lunges through broken and wooded terrain. Thus, brigade commanders were often on the main battle line trying to influence regimental fights. Typically, defending brigades stood in line of battle and blazed away at attackers as rapidly as possible. Volley fire usually did not continue beyond the first round. Most of the time, soldiers fired as soon as they were ready, and it was common for two soldiers to work together, one loading for the other to fire. Brigades were generally invulnerable to attacks on their front if units to the left and right held their ground.

Two or more brigades comprised a division. When a division attacked, its brigades often advanced in sequence, from left to right or vice versa—depending on terrain, suspected enemy location, and number of brigades

available to attack. At times, divisions attacked with two or more brigades leading, followed by one or more brigades ready to reinforce the lead brigades or maneuver to the flanks. Two or more divisions comprised a corps that might conduct an attack as part of a larger plan controlled by the army commander. More often, groups of divisions attacked under the control of a corps-level commander. Division and corps commanders generally took a position to the rear of the main line in order to control the flow of reinforcements into the battle, but they often rode forward into the battle lines to influence the action personally.

Of the three basic branches, cavalry made the greatest adaptation during the war. It learned to use its horses for mobility, then dismount and fight on foot like infantry. Cavalry regained a useful battlefield role by employing this tactic, especially after repeating and breech-loading rifles gave it the firepower to contend with enemy infantry. Still the most effective role for the cavalry was in reconnaissance and security in overall support of the main armies' operations. On the other hand, many cavalry leaders were enamored with using their troops in large-scale raids, often as a pretext for seeking out the enemy's cavalry for a decisive battle. In many cases, raids failed to produce either desired result: a decisive defeat of the enemy cavalry or significant destruction of enemy supply and transportation systems. During the Overland Campaign, Sheridan attempted a raid that ultimately led to the Battle of Yellow Tavern and, by chance, the death of Jeb Stuart. However, this raid effectively left the Army of the Potomac blind for two weeks during the campaign.

Artillery found that it could add its firepower to the rifle musket and tip the balance even more in favor of the tactical defensive, but artillery never regained the importance to offensive maneuver that it held in Mexico. If artillery had developed an indirect firing system, as it did prior to World War I, it might have been able to contribute more to offensive tactics. Still, both sides employed artillery effectively in defensive situations throughout the war.

The most significant tactical innovation in the Civil War was the widespread use of field fortifications after armies realized the tactical offensive's heavy cost. It did not take long for the deadly firepower of the rifle musket to convince soldiers to entrench every time they halted. Eventually, armies dug complete trenches within an hour of halting in a position. Within 24 hours, armies could create defensive works that were nearly impregnable to frontal assaults. The Overland Campaign, probably more than any other campaign in the Civil War, demonstrated the efficacy of field entrenchments. Both sides, particularly the numerically inferior

Confederates, made extensive use of entrenchments at every battle in the campaign. In this respect, the development of field fortifications during the American Civil War was a clear forerunner of the kind of trench warfare that came to dominate World War I.

Summary of Tactics

In the Civil War, the tactical defense dominated the tactical offense because assault formations proved inferior to the defender's firepower. The rifle musket, in its many forms, provided this firepower and caused the following specific alterations in tactics during the war:

- It required the attacker, in his initial dispositions, to deploy farther away from the defender, thereby increasing the distance over which the attacker had to pass.
- It increased the number of defenders who could engage attackers (with the addition of effective enfilading fire).
- It generally reduced the density of both attacking and defending formations, although in the 1864 campaigns, there was some experimentation of narrower and denser attacking formations to try to penetrate entrenched lines.
- It created a shift of emphasis in infantry battles toward firefights rather than shock attacks.
- It caused battles to last longer, because units could not close with each other for decisive shock action.
- It encouraged the widespread use of field fortifications. The habitual use of field fortifications by armies was a major innovation, but it further hindered the tactical offensive.
- It forced cavalry to the battlefield's fringes until cavalrymen acquired equivalent weapons and tactics, although cavalry still performed essential reconnaissance missions.
- It forced artillery to abandon its basic offensive maneuver—that of moving forward to within canister range of defending infantry.

Tactics in the Overland Campaign

By May 1864, Civil War battle tactics had evolved to the point that brigades were the basic maneuver units (as opposed to individual regiments). Often, division commanders had some skill at using their brigades in a coordinated fashion, but it was still difficult to bring entire corps into unified action. Thus, both sides fought the tactical battles of the campaign by maneuvering brigades and divisions in combat. However, when conducting operational movements, both sides often moved at corps level with each corps having its own route (or occasionally, two corps following each other on the same route). Tactical battlefield fighting

and the operational maneuvering between battles required tremendous coordination and synchronization, which the Civil War command system all too often failed to provide. Further, the terrain in Virginia, while not as rugged as much of the ground in the western theater, contained some heavily wooded areas such as the Wilderness, roads that could alternate between mud and dust, and numerous rivers, all of which made maneuver difficult. Much of the tactical confusion in the campaign's battles resulted from the difficulty of maneuvering large bodies of troops through difficult terrain with a command system that depended mainly on voice commands.

One trend that was common in the Overland Campaign was the tendency of the Union forces to attack in more narrow formations than the Confederate forces. Often, Union brigades advanced with half of their regiments in the front line and half in a second line. The division would in turn have two of its brigades forward with one or two behind. This allowed many Union offensives to bring fresh units into their attacks, but it often prevented the Northerners from using their numbers for an overwhelming initial assault, as their units were committed piecemeal. The Confederate brigades often put all of their regiments on line, which occasionally allowed them to overlap a Union flank. Did these formations reflect evolving doctrinal ideas? Were they responses to the restrictive nature of the terrain? Did commanders choose these methods to improve their ability to control their units? Perhaps the answers lie in the personalities, experiences, and abilities of the commanders on both sides. In any case, as the Overland Campaign wore on, the Confederates were forced to rely on the defense, and in most cases, extensive entrenchments allowed them to deploy regiments on a relatively thin line, with divisions putting two or three brigades forward and one in reserve (as at Cold Harbor).

At the tactical-level and, to a degree the operational-level, certain patterns emerged over the course of the campaign. First, the Confederates were usually short on manpower and were forced to rely more and more on the tactical defense and use of entrenchments. The Southerners launched two very successful attacks in the Wilderness, but for the remainder of the campaign, they generally stayed on the tactical defense. The Union forces were almost constantly on the attack, and they struggled, often in vain, to find a solution to the seemingly impenetrable Confederate defensive positions. Many Union attacks, in particular the tragic assaults at Cold Harbor on 3 June, were costly failures against the Southern defenders. On the other hand, attacks by Upton at Spotsylvania and by Hancock at both the Wilderness and Spotsylvania achieved some measure of success, but could not achieve a decisive victory. In each case, even when the Federals made an initial breakthrough, they found it nearly impossible to maintain

enough command and control of their forces to sustain their momentum.

This tactical stalemate forced the Union forces to seek an operational solution to the dominance of the defense. Thus emerged the outstanding operational characteristic of the Overland Campaign—Grant's attempts to maneuver around Lee's flanks and force a battle in a position favorable to the Union. Generally, Grant attempted to turn Lee's right flank, which would place Union forces between Lee and Richmond. In these conditions, the Federals might be able to fight the Confederates in a sort of "meeting engagement" outside of entrenchments, or perhaps even force Lee into attacking the Union troops in their own prepared positions. The major engagements in the campaign resulted from these operational moves, but in almost every case, Lee was able to maneuver his troops into position before the Union forces arrived. In several cases, bad Federal staff work, or just plain bad luck, also hindered the Union moves. In one case—the crossing of the James—the Union forces performed their flanking maneuver superbly and actually "stole a march" on Lee. Yet, bungled Union assaults squandered this success at Petersburg from 15 to 18 June.

In sum, the Overland Campaign was like many other Civil War campaigns in terms of tactics. Attacks were often piecemeal, frontal, and uncoordinated, and they generally failed to dislodge defenders. On the other hand, the lack of a single decisive battle forced both Grant and Lee to think more in terms of a sustained campaign, and the series of their maneuvers and battles fought over the Virginia landscape might even be considered an early example of what modern military theorists call "the operational art." The balance of two such skillful and determined opponents fighting in the conditions of 1864 was bound to lead to horrific casualties until one side or the other was exhausted.

Logistics Support

Victory on Civil War battlefields seldom hinged on the quality or quantity of tactical logistics. At the operational and strategic levels, however, logistical capabilities and concerns always shaped the plans and sometimes the outcomes of campaigns. As the war lengthened, the logistical advantage shifted inexorably to the North. The Federals controlled the majority of the financial and industrial resources of the nation. With their ability to import any needed materials, they ultimately created the best-supplied army the world had yet seen. Despite suffering from shortages of raw materials, the Confederates generated adequate ordnance but faltered gradually in their ability to acquire other war materiel. The food supply for Southern armies was often on the verge of collapse, largely because limitations of the transportation network were compounded by

political-military mismanagement. Still, the state of supply within field armies on both sides depended more on the caliber of the people managing resources than on the constraints of available materiel. In Lee's case, the Army of Northern Virginia managed to scrape by in 1864, although the need for forage and food sometimes forced Lee to disperse units to gather supplies. The situation grew worse throughout the year, but did not become critical until after the loss of the Shenandoah Valley added to the gradual decay of the Army during the siege at Petersburg.

One of the most pressing needs at the start of the war was for sufficient infantry and artillery weapons. With most of the government arsenals and private manufacturing capability located in the North, the Federals ultimately produced sufficient modern firearms for their armies, but the Confederates also accumulated adequate quantities—either from battlefield captures or through the blockade. In addition, exceptional management within the Confederate Ordnance Bureau led to the creation of a series of arsenals throughout the South that produced sufficient quantities of munitions and weapons.

The Northern manufacturing capability could have permitted the Federals eventually to produce and outfit their forces with repeating arms, the best of which had been patented before 1861. Initially, however, the North's conservative Ordnance Bureau would not risk switching to a new, unproven standard weapon that could lead to soldiers wasting huge quantities of ammunition in the midst of an expanding war. By 1864, after the retirement of Chief of Ordnance James Ripley and with President Lincoln's urging, Federal cavalry received seven-shot Spencer repeating carbines, which greatly increased battle capabilities.

Both sides initially relied on the states and local districts to provide some equipment, supplies, animals, and foodstuffs. As the war progressed, more centralized control over production and purchasing emerged under both governments. Still, embezzlement and fraud were common problems for both sides throughout the war. The North, with its preponderance of railroads and developed waterways, had ample supply and adequate distribution systems. The South's major supply problem was subsistence. Arguably, the South produced enough food during the war to provide for both military and civilian needs, but mismanagement, parochial local interests, and the relatively underdeveloped transportation network often created havoc with distribution.

In both armies, the Quartermaster, Ordnance, Subsistence, and Medical Bureaus procured and distributed equipment, food, and supplies. The items for which these bureaus were responsible are similar to the classes

of supply used today. Some needs overlapped, such as the Quartermaster Bureau's procurement of wagons for medical ambulances, but conflicts of interest usually were manageable. Department and army commanders requested needed resources directly from the bureaus, and bureau chiefs wielded considerable power as they parceled out occasionally limited resources.

Typically, materiel flowed from the factory to base depots as directed by the responsible bureaus. Supplies were then shipped to advanced depots, generally a city on a major transportation artery safely within the rear area of a department. During campaigns, the armies established temporary advance depots served by rail or river transportation—Grant's forces made particularly heavy use of resupply from the navy in the Overland Campaign. From these points, wagons carried the supplies forward to the field units. This principle is somewhat similar to the modern theater sustainment organization.

The management of this logistics system was complex and crucial. A corps wagon train, if drawn by standard six-mule teams, would be spread out from five to eight miles, based on the difficulty of terrain, weather, and road conditions. The wagons, which were capable of hauling 4,000 pounds in optimal conditions, could carry only half that load in mountainous terrain. Sustenance for the animals was a major restriction, because each animal required up to 26 pounds of hay and grain a day to stay healthy and productive. Bulky and hard to handle, this forage was a major consideration in campaign planning. Wagons delivering supplies more than one day's distance from the depot could be forced to carry excessive amounts of animal forage. If full animal forage was to be carried, the required number of wagons to support a corps increased dramatically with each subsequent day's distance from the forward depot. Another problem was the herds of beef that often accompanied the trains or were appropriated en route. This provided fresh (though tough) meat for the troops, but slowed and complicated movement.

The bulk-supply problems were alleviated somewhat by the practice of foraging, which, in the proper season, supplied much of the food for animals and men on both sides. Foraging was practiced with and without command sanction, wherever an army went, and it became command policy during Ulysses S. Grant's Vicksburg campaign and William T. Sherman's Atlanta campaign. Foraging was less prevalent in the east, especially by 1864, for the simple reason that northeastern Virginia had already been picked clean by three years of war.

Both sides based their supply requirements on pre-war regulations and

wartime improvisation. Table 4 is a list of typical requirements.

Table 4. Sample of Federal Logistics Data

Item	Packing	Weight (lbs)
Bulk ammunition:		
.58 caliber, expanding ball (500-grain bullet)	1,000 rounds per case	98
12-pound Napoleon canister (14.8 lb per round)	8 rounds per box	161
"Marching" ration (per man per day):		
1 lb hard bread (hardtack)		
3/4 lb salt pork or 1/4 lb fresh meat		2
1 oz coffee		
3 oz sugar and salt		
Forage (per horse per day):		
14 lbs hay and 12 lbs grain		26 (23 for mules)
Personal equipment:		
Includes rifle, bayonet, 60 rounds of ammunition, haversack, 3 days' rations, blanket, shelter half, canteen, personal items		50 to 60

Logistics in the Overland Campaign

Logistics played a crucial role in the Overland Campaign in a variety of ways. First, the overall lack of resources for the Southern forces (coupled with manpower shortages) constrained the Confederate options and helped to keep Lee on the defense for most of the campaign. Second, Grant made extensive use of the Federal Navy's dominance of the sea and rivers to skillfully shift his bases to secured ports as he made his flanking moves to the south. In fact, the tempo of Grant's moves was largely determined by the location and availability of his next base. Finally, Lee's forces relied almost totally on the railroads for their supplies, and thus crucial rail nodes like Hanover Junction and Petersburg were critical locations that Lee had to defend and Grant wanted to take.

Looking first at the Northern perspective, supplies for the eastern theater came from all parts of the North across an extensive and effective rail net that eventually funneled to Baltimore and Washington, DC. The supplies then had to be transported from these major ports and railheads to the armies in the field. At the start of the Overland Campaign, Grant's main forces (the Army of the Potomac and the IX Corps) received their logistics support from the port of Alexandria (across the Potomac River from Washington). The Orange and Alexandria railroad connected the Union camps at Brandy Station with the supply base at Alexandria. In their initial move into the Wilderness, the Union forces needed an extensive wagon train to carry the minimum requirements expressed in the supply regulations (see table 4). The army's animals alone needed 477 tons of forage each day. Grant tried to cut back on nonessential items and decreed a rigorous reduction in wagons, but he still ended up with 4,300 wagons and 835 ambulances at the start of the campaign.

After the Battle of the Wilderness, Grant decided to continue to the south in part driven by the desire to cut Lee's army from its rail supply lines: the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac (coming from Richmond), and the Virginia Central which brought supplies from the Shenandoah. In order to make this move, the Federals shifted their base to Aquia Landing and Belle Plain on the Potomac River. These ports were securely positioned behind the moving Union forces and connected by a short rail line to a forward position at Fredericksburg.

After Spotsylvania, Grant again shifted to the south and southeast, all the time hoping to get astride the railroads that were Lee's lifeline. In particular, the fighting on the North Anna centered on the Federal attempt to seize Hanover Junction where the Virginia Central Railroad met the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac line. In these moves, first to the North Anna, then further south to Cold Harbor, the Union forces deftly executed two more base changes: first to Port Royal on the Rappahannock River and then to White House on the Pamunkey River (which in turn flows into the York River). There was no rail line from Port Royal to the army, but the distance from the port to the troops was a relatively short wagon haul for the trains. At White House, the same base used by McClellan in the Peninsula Campaign in 1862, the Union forces could use the Richmond and York River Railroad to bring supplies from the port closer to the front lines at Cold Harbor.

Grant's final move in the campaign brought him to Petersburg, south of the James River. This final flanking movement was clearly aimed at the five rail lines that converged at Petersburg. For this final move, he had

the advantage of shifting his base to City Point, a port on the James that was already in Union hands and had been supporting Butler's Army of the James in the Bermuda Hundred Campaign. During the siege at Petersburg, City Point would become one of the busiest ports in the world—a testimony to the ample resources and logistical might of the North.

In sum, even if Grant's central objective was Lee's army, his geographic goals were shaped by the Southerners' own rail supply lines. At the same time, he made good use of sea lines of communications to keep his own forces well supplied and skillfully shifted his base with each new flanking movement.

On the Southern side, Lee's logistical problems were at once simpler in concept but more difficult in execution. Lee's resupply system was relatively straightforward. The Army of Northern Virginia received a large amount of foodstuffs and forage from the Shenandoah Valley. Most of these supplies came via the Virginia Central Railroad. The remainder of his supplies came from the Deep South along several rail lines that converged at Petersburg. Then the supplies moved from Petersburg, through Richmond and Hanover Junction to Lee's army in the field on the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad. Lee did not have to worry about shifting bases; he simply needed to protect these rail lines to keep his army supplied.

The difficulty for Lee was that the South was constantly strapped for resources, and the Army of Northern Virginia received just enough supplies to keep up its operations. Occasionally this affected Lee's planning as when he was forced to keep a large part of his cavalry dispersed prior to the Wilderness to gather forage. Also, the Confederate commander's logistical weaknesses, when added to his manpower shortages, may have discouraged him from taking a more offensive approach after the Wilderness. On the other hand, while the Confederates never enjoyed the logistical plenty of their Union counterparts, Lee's army was never faced with starvation or a shortage of arms and ammunition during the Overland Campaign.

Engineer Support

Engineers on both sides performed many tasks essential to every campaign. Engineers trained at West Point were at a premium; thus, many civil engineers, commissioned as volunteers, supplemented the work being done by engineer officers. The Confederates, in particular, relied on civilian expertise because many of their trained engineer officers sought line duties. State or even local civil engineers planned and supervised much of the work done on local fortifications.

In the prewar US Army, the Corps of Engineers contained a handful of staff officers and one company of trained engineer troops. This cadre expanded to a four-company Regular engineer battalion. Congress also created a single company of topographic engineers, which joined the Regular battalion when the engineer bureaus merged in 1863. In addition, several volunteer pioneer regiments, some containing up to 2,000 men, supported the various field armies. The Confederate Corps of Engineers, formed as a small staff and one company of sappers, miners, and pontoniers in 1861, grew more slowly and generally relied on details and contract labor rather than established units with trained engineers and craftsmen.

Engineer missions for both sides included construction of fortifications; repair and construction of roads, bridges, and, in some cases, railroads; demolition; limited construction of obstacles; and construction or reduction of siege works. The Federal Topographic Engineers, a separate prewar bureau, performed reconnaissance and produced maps. The Confederates, however, never separated these functions in creating their Corps of Engineers. Experience during the first year of the war convinced the Federals that all engineer functions should be merged under a single corps because qualified engineer officers tended to perform all related functions. As a result, the Federals also merged the Topographic Engineers into their Corps of Engineers in March 1863.

Bridging assets included wagon-mounted pontoon trains that carried either wooden or canvas-covered pontoon boats. Using this equipment, trained engineer troops could bridge even large rivers in a matter of hours. The most remarkable pontoon bridge of the war was the 2,200-foot-long bridge built by the Army of the Potomac engineers in 1864 over the James River at the culmination of the Overland Campaign. It was one of over three dozen pontoon bridges built in support of campaigns in the east that year. In 1862, the Confederates began developing pontoon trains after they had observed their effectiveness.

Both sides in every campaign of the war traveled over roads and bridges built or repaired by their engineers. Federal engineers also helped clear waterways by dredging, removing trees, or digging canals. Fixed fortifications laid out under engineer supervision played critical roles in the Vicksburg campaign and in actions around Richmond and Petersburg. Engineers also supervised the siege works attempting to reduce those fortifications.

While the Federal engineer effort expanded in both men and materiel as the war progressed, the Confederate efforts continued to be hampered by major problems. The relatively small number of organized engineer

units available forced Confederate engineers to rely heavily on details or contract labor. Finding adequate manpower, however, was often difficult because of competing demands for it. Local slave owners were reluctant to provide labor details when slave labor was crucial to their economic survival. Despite congressional authorization to conscript 20,000 slaves as a labor force, state and local opposition continually hindered efforts to draft slave labor. Another related problem concerned the value of Confederate currency. Engineer efforts required huge sums for men and materiel, yet initial authorizations were small, and although congressional appropriations grew later in the war, inflation greatly reduced effective purchasing power. A final problem was the simple shortage of iron resources, which severely limited the Confederates' ability to increase railroad mileage or even produce iron tools.

In 1861, maps for both sides were also in short supply; for many areas in the interior, maps were nonexistent. As the war progressed, the Federals developed a highly sophisticated mapping capability. Federal topographic engineers performed personal reconnaissance to develop base maps, reproduce them by several processes, and distribute them to field commanders. Photography, lithographic presses, and eventually photochemical processes gave the Federals the ability to reproduce maps quickly. Western armies, which usually operated far from base cities, carried equipment in their army headquarters to reproduce maps during campaigns. By 1864, annual map production exceeded 21,000 copies. Confederate topographic work never approached the Federal effort in quantity. Confederate topographers initially used tracing paper to reproduce maps. Not until 1864 did the use of photographic methods become widespread in the South. However, the South had a large advantage in the quality of its maps in the eastern theater in the 1864 campaign. In particular, the Confederates were fighting on their own terrain (Virginia) where many officers knew the ground. In addition, prior to the war, Virginia had produced county maps of the state that proved to be a great advantage for Lee's army.

Engineers in the Overland Campaign

Engineers on both sides played a significant role in several of the engagements of the Overland Campaign. In the Wilderness, Lee's chief engineer, Major General Martin L. Smith, conducted a reconnaissance that discovered an unfinished railroad bed on the open Union left flank on 6 May. He also plotted the route for the path cut by the Confederates for Major General Richard H. Anderson's move to Spotsylvania. On a less positive note, Smith also laid out the trace of the vulnerable Mule Shoe line at Spotsylvania (although, in Smith's defense, he did urge the heavy

use of artillery to reinforce the exposed position). Note that engineers on both sides usually laid out the trace of field fortifications, but the infantry had to do the actual construction.

On the Union side, their engineer's role in the tactical battles was sometimes less beneficial. On several occasions—for example, Barlow's night march for the attack on the Mule Shoe at Spotsylvania and the II Corps move on the night of 1 June at Cold Harbor—guides were totally inadequate for the task. They were usually totally ignorant of the ground and even led Union units down incorrect routes. It did not help that Meade's staff engineers often provided the guides and corps commanders with poor maps (or none at all).

On the other hand, the Federal engineers performed essential missions in upgrading roads, railroads, and supply depots, as well as bridging numerous rivers to include the magnificent pontoon bridge on the James River. The Federal rail system in occupied Virginia, which had been superbly organized by Brigadier General Herman Haupt in 1862-63, was a model of successful improvisation. The Confederates did not have the extensive resources of their Northern opponents, and usually, being on the defense, they did not construct as many railroads and bridges. However, the Southerners became masters at restoring broken rail lines after Union raids; for example, they repaired the Virginia Central to full operations within two weeks after Sheridan's raid in May.

Communications Support

Communications systems used during the Civil War consisted of line-of-sight signaling, telegraphic systems, and various forms of the time-honored courier methods. The telegraph mainly offered viable strategic and operational communications, line-of-sight signaling provided operational and limited tactical possibilities, and couriers were most heavily used for tactical communications.

The Federal Signal Corps was in its infancy during the Civil War. Major Albert C. Myer was appointed the first signal chief in 1860; his organization grew slowly and became officially recognized as the Signal Corps in March 1863 and achieved bureau status by November of that year. Throughout the war, the Signal Corps remained small—its maximum strength reaching just 1,500 officers and men, most of whom were on detached service with the corps. Myer also indirectly influenced the formation of the Confederate Signal Service. Among the men who assisted Myer in his prewar testing of his wigwag signaling system (Myer's wigwag system, patented in 1858, used five separate numbered movements of a single flag) was Lieutenant E.P. Alexander. Alexander used wigwag

signals to the Confederates' advantage during the First Battle of Bull Run and later organized the Confederate Signal Corps. Officially established in April 1862, the Confederate Signal Corps was attached to the Adjutant and Inspector General Department. It attained the same size as its Federal counterpart, with nearly 1,500 men ultimately being detailed for service.

Myer also fought hard to develop a Federal field telegraph service. This field service utilized the Beardslee device, a magneto-powered machine operated by turning a wheel to a specific point, which sent an electrical impulse that keyed the machine at the other end to the same letter. Although less reliable than the standard Morse code telegraph key, the Beardslee could be used by an operator with only several hours' training and did not require bulky batteries for a power source. Myer's field telegraph units carried equipment on wagons that enabled its operators to establish lines between field headquarters. The insulated wire used could also be hooked into existing trunk lines, thus offering the potential to extend the reach of the civilian telegraph network. Control over the existing fixed telegraph system, however, remained with the US Military Telegraph Service. Myer lost his struggle to keep the field telegraph service under the Signal Corps when Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton relieved Myer as the signal chief in November 1863 and placed all telegraph activity under the Military Telegraph Service.

Although the Confederate Signal Corps' visual communications capabilities were roughly equal to that of the Federals, Confederate field telegraph operations remained too limited to be of operational significance. The Confederates' existing telegraph lines provided strategic communications capabilities similar to those of the Federals, but the lack of resources and factories in the South for producing wire precluded their extending the prewar telegraph networks.

The courier system, using mounted staff officers or detailed soldiers to deliver orders and messages, was the most viable tactical communications option short of commanders meeting face to face. Although often effective, this system was fraught with difficulties, as couriers were captured, killed, or delayed en route to their destinations; commanders misinterpreted or ignored messages; and situations changed by the time a message was delivered. The weaknesses of the courier system, though often not critical, did tend to compound other errors or misjudgments during campaigns.

Communications in the Overland Campaign

On the Northern side, Grant had almost constant telegraphic communication with Halleck in Washington, which gave him a relatively good measure of strategic control over Union armies in other theaters of the

war. Within the eastern theater, Grant could communicate with Sigel in the Valley and Butler on the Virginia Peninsula via his telegraph connections to Washington.

Grant's communications with the Army of the Potomac and the initially separate IX Corps were affected more by the awkward Union command relationship than the technical means of communication. For the most part, Grant and Meade both relied heavily on couriers with some flag signaling. Initially, Grant, with his small staff and few aides, attempted to issue only broad orders to Meade and allow the army commander to execute tactical control. At the same time, Grant had to issue orders directly to the IX Corps (at least until late May) to coordinate Burnside's moves with the Army of the Potomac. On several occasions, Grant bypassed Meade and confusing or duplicate orders resulted.

Lee also relied heavily on couriers at the tactical level, and his streamlined command structure minimized confusion over orders. Lee did use flag signals, especially at the beginning of the campaign at Clark's Mountain. The Union forces occasionally intercepted these signals, but they gained only a minor advantage from this. At a higher level, Lee had solid telegraph contact with his political leadership in Richmond. Indirectly, through the capital, he remained in contact with Breckinridge in the Valley and Beauregard in North Carolina (and later at Bermuda Hundred and Petersburg).

Medical Support

Federal and Confederate medical systems followed a similar pattern. Surgeons general and medical directors for both sides had served many years in the prewar Medical Department, but were hindered by an initial lack of administrative experience in handling large numbers of casualties (see table 5), as well as the state of medical science in the mid-19th century. Administrative procedures improved with experience, but throughout the war the simple lack of knowledge about the true causes of disease and infection led to many more deaths than direct battlefield action.

After the disaster at the Battle of First Bull Run, the Federal Medical Department established an evacuation and treatment system developed by Surgeon Jonathan Letterman. At the heart of the system were three precepts: consolidation of field hospitals at division level, decentralization of medical supplies down to regimental level, and centralization of medical control of ambulances at all levels. A battle casualty evacuated from the front line normally received treatment at a regimental holding area immediately to the rear. From this point, wagons or ambulances carried wounded men to a division field hospital, normally within a mile of

the battle lines. Seriously wounded men could then be further evacuated by wagon, rail, or watercraft to general hospitals located usually in towns along lines of communication in the armies' rear areas.

Although the Confederate system followed the same general principles, their field hospitals were often consolidated at brigade rather than division level. A second difference lay in the established span of control of medical activities. Unlike their Federal counterparts who had control over all medical activities within an army area, a Confederate army medical director had no control of activities beyond his own brigade or division field hospitals. A separate medical director for general hospitals was responsible for evacuation and control. In practice, both sets of medical directors resolved potential problems through close cooperation. By 1863, the Confederacy had also introduced rear area "wayside hospitals," which were intended to handle convalescents en route home on furloughs.

Procedures, medical techniques, and medical problems for both sides were virtually identical. Commanders discouraged soldiers from leaving the battle lines to escort wounded back to the rear, but such practice was common, especially in less-disciplined units. The established technique for casualty evacuation was to detail men for litter and ambulance duty. Both armies used bandsmen, among others, for this task. Casualties would move or be assisted back from the battle line, where litter bearers evacuated them to field hospitals using ambulances or supply wagons. Ambulances were specially designed two- or four-wheel carts with springs to limit jolts, but rough roads made even short trips agonizing for wounded men. Brigade and division surgeons staffed consolidated field hospitals. Hospital site considerations were the availability of water, potential buildings to supplement the hospital tents, and security from enemy cannon and rifle fire. The majority of operations performed at field hospitals in the aftermath of battle were amputations. Approximately 70 percent of Civil War wounds occurred in the extremities, and the soft lead Minie ball shattered any bones it hit. Amputation was the best technique then available to limit the chance of serious infection. The Federals were generally well supplied with chloroform, morphine, and other drugs, though shortages did occur on the battlefield. Confederate surgeons were often short of critical drugs and medical supplies.

Medical Support in the Overland Campaign

By 1864, almost all Union forces generally conformed to the Letterman medical system. The Federals had long established considerable hospitals in the Washington area, and their command of the sea greatly aided in evacuation to these facilities. Even so, the unprecedented number of sustained

casualties in May and the first half of June put considerable strain on the Union efforts. After the bloody fights at the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, the Federals established an extensive field hospital and evacuation center at Fredericksburg, probably the largest of its kind in the war.

The Confederates were able to take advantage of protected rail lines to evacuate most of their casualties to Richmond. Their bigger problem was a lack of trained surgeons and medical supplies. The Southern medical facilities were meager compared to their Union counterparts and barely adequate for needs of the campaign.

Table 5. Casualties of the Campaign

		Union	Confederate *
Wilderness	Killed	2,246	
	Wounded	12,037	
	Missing	3,383	
	Total	17,666	11,400
Spotsylvania	Killed	2,725	
	Wounded	13,416	
	Missing	2,258	
	Total	18,399	12,000
North Anna	Killed	591	
	Wounded	2,734	
	Missing	661	
	Total	3,986	2,500
Sheridan's Raid	Killed	64	
	Wounded	337	
	Missing	224	
	Total	625	400
Cold Harbor	Killed	1,845	
	Wounded	9,077	
	Missing	1,816	
	Total	12,738	3,400
The Campaign Total**	Killed	9,634	
	Wounded	48,274	
	Missing	13,587	
	Grand Total	71,495	32,000

*Confederate numbers are often rough estimates in part because Confederate records were more difficult to maintain and many were lost in the last year of the war.

**Includes additional losses from engagements outside of the major battles.

II. The Overland Campaign: An Overview

Introduction

The Overland Campaign was one of the most crucial campaigns of the American Civil War. It was a key part of Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant's overall plan to defeat the Confederacy in 1864. Grant's strategic concept was to have all available Union forces advance simultaneously in all theaters, thus using the North's superior manpower and material resources to full advantage. In the western theater, as part of Grant's overall plan, Major General William T. Sherman's forces were to advance on Atlanta and defeat Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee. In addition, Major General Nathaniel P. Banks directed Union forces to advance from Louisiana and take Mobile, Alabama.

In the eastern theater, Grant initially toyed with the idea of landing a major Union force on the Atlantic coast near the Virginia–North Carolina border where it could advance inland and cut Richmond off from the rest of the Confederacy. By February 1864, he had discarded this idea and developed a more conventional plan. His concept called for the three major eastern armies (and a separate corps) to conduct mutually supporting advances. Major General Franz Sigel's forces were to move south through the Shenandoah Valley, defeat Confederate forces located there, and remove this great "bread basket" as a supply source for the Confederacy. Major General Benjamin F. Butler's Army of the James was to advance up the Virginia Peninsula, between the James and York Rivers, toward Richmond. Depending on the Confederate response, Butler might even take the Southern capital, while at a minimum it was hoped that he would divert significant Confederate forces.

The major Union effort in the east fell, as expected, on Major General George G. Meade's Army of the Potomac, which was to engage General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Grant's instructions to Meade were direct: "Lee's Army will be your objective point. Wherever Lee goes, there you will go also" (*OR*, series I, volume XXXIII, 828). Grant's orders to Meade were a departure from previous Union plans that focused on taking Richmond. The Confederate capital might be a geographic goal, but the true objective of Meade's army in the Overland Campaign was the destruction of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

Grant's plan and his position as general in chief of the Union armies made for some unusual command relationships. In modern colloquial terms, Grant was "wearing three hats." First, he was general in chief and thus gave strategic direction to all Union armies to include those in the

west (Sherman and Banks). Second, Grant was a theater commander trying to coordinate Butler's, Sigel's, and Meade's forces in order to defeat Lee and capture Richmond. Finally, Grant decided to travel with the Army of the Potomac, and although he often tried to work through Meade, Grant sometimes acted as the tactical commander of the army. His mere presence often hindered Meade's independence.

Grant's decision to travel with Meade's army may seem unusual, and it has come under some criticism from many historians. Certainly, Grant's close proximity to Meade made for some friction and often left Meade feeling more like a messenger than an army commander. In fact, before the campaign had even begun, Meade offered to step down and allow Grant to pick one of his western generals as a new army commander. Grant was impressed with Meade's honesty and devotion to service, and he decided to keep Meade in command. In addition to an awkward command relationship with Meade, Grant's location with the Army of the Potomac may have caused the general in chief to neglect some of his strategic and theater duties. There was not much of a problem with giving the capable Sherman considerable independence, but Grant seemed to lose control of Banks, Butler, and Sigel while he was engrossed in the details of the Overland Campaign.

Grant could have opted to stay in Washington and focus on his strategic duties; however, there were several arguments against this course. First, Grant wanted to avoid becoming enmeshed in the political infighting of Washington and the tedious details of administration. To this end, the former general in chief, Henry W. Halleck, assumed the duties of chief of staff of the Union armies and remained in Washington where his considerable administrative talents freed Grant to concentrate on operations. Second, a significant force in the upcoming campaign against Lee, Major General Ambrose E. Burnside's IX Corps, was independent from Meade's command, and Grant would need to coordinate this corps' movements with those of the Army of the Potomac. This strange quirk in command arose because Burnside was senior to Meade (by date of rank) and technically could not be Meade's subordinate. Later in the campaign, after several embarrassing episodes, Burnside readily agreed to be Meade's subordinate, but at least initially, Grant wanted to avoid any conflict over dates of rank. Finally, Grant was a fighter and more comfortable near the front. In any case, students can find fertile ground for debate over Grant's command structure and headquarters location.

The main Union force for the Overland Campaign, the Army of the Potomac, had undergone extensive reorganization since its last major battle

at Gettysburg. Two of the smaller corps, XI and XII, were transferred to the western theater where they joined the Army of the Cumberland. Two other corps, I and III, had been decimated at Gettysburg. These corps were disbanded and their subordinate units were distributed among the remaining infantry corps of the Army of the Potomac. This left Meade with three infantry corps, II, V, and VI, and his cavalry corps. The reorganization caused some hard feelings among the soldiers from the former I and III Corps, who had considerable pride in their old units. However, the change was probably for the better because it made each remaining corps stronger and reduced Meade's span of control to an optimal level.

Major General George G. Meade had a good combat record from brigade to corps command throughout almost all of this army's major campaigns, and he had performed solidly as army commander at Gettysburg. He had begun his career as an engineer and seemed more at ease in a set piece battle rather than in a fluid battle of maneuver. Meade tended to be a cautious leader, but he also had an irascible nature and potent temper that caused him to lash at subordinates who were slow to execute orders. Meade did his best to work with Grant, but as the campaign wore on, Meade became more frustrated with the awkward command relationship as well as the performance of his corps commanders. His irritation reached a high point at Cold Harbor, but to his credit Meade worked through the difficulties and made a significant contribution to the final Union victory in 1865.

The Union corps commanders presented a diverse group of fascinating characters with an uneven level of skills. The II Corps commander was Major General Winfield S. Hancock, who had gained lasting fame for his brilliant performance at Gettysburg. Hancock was handsome, dashing, and probably the most aggressive and skillful of the Union corps commanders. Unfortunately, he had suffered a painful wound in the thigh at Gettysburg, and although the wound had partially healed, it would occasionally bleed and impair Hancock's performance. Later in the war, Hancock would have to leave command to recover. Despite the occasional health problems, Hancock was Meade's most reliable corps commander.

The V Corps commander, Major General Gouverneur K. Warren, was perhaps the most enigmatic of the Union leaders in this campaign. He had commanded at brigade and division level earlier in the war. For much of 1863, Warren had been a staff officer, and it was as Meade's chief engineer that Warren earned fame for saving Little Round Top at Gettysburg. After that battle, Warren temporarily commanded the II Corps while Hancock recovered from his wound. After Hancock's return, Warren got his own

command, the V Corps. For a time, Warren was one of Meade's favorite generals, but as the Overland Campaign progressed, the V Corps commander lost favor with Meade. Warren was intelligent, but unpredictable. His personal courage was unquestionable, but he could be alternately too rash or too cautious in any situation. One major problem was that Warren had the habit of questioning orders and making suggestions with a smug air that infuriated superiors and their staffs.

Major General John Sedgwick, the Union VI Corps commander, had a reputation as one of the best commanders in the army. He was certainly loved by his soldiers who called him "Uncle John," but his operational performance was, in reality, less than spectacular. He had commanded from brigade to division in the Army of the Potomac's early campaigns with a modestly successful record. A corps commander at Fredericksburg, he later admirably extracted his forces from a vulnerable position at Salem Church in the Chancellorsville Campaign. His corps was the army's reserve at Gettysburg and saw little action. Calm and good-natured, Sedgwick was not brilliant, but he maintained his composure in difficult situations.

The Union IX Corps commander was Major General Ambrose E. Burnside, one of the more fascinating figures of the war, even if not a particularly skilled general. Ironically, Burnside had once commanded the Army of the Potomac (when Meade was a division commander); but after his defeat at Fredericksburg, Burnside was removed as army commander and returned to his old command, the IX Corps. In 1863, Burnside and his corps were transferred to eastern Tennessee where he waged one of his best campaigns of the war near Knoxville. Burnside was a genial man who recognized his own limitations (he had never really wanted army command). Unfortunately, those limitations were many, and the IX Corps always seemed to be late in movement and lacking coordination in its attacks. As mentioned earlier, Burnside's IX Corps started the Overland Campaign directly under Grant's command and not under Meade's command. The corps' initial mission was to guard the Army of the Potomac's supply line, but once the campaign started the IX Corps fought as part of the army, despite the awkward command arrangement.

Although Grant did not bring many of his fellow western officers to his new command, he did appoint one westerner, Major General Philip H. Sheridan, to a significant command within the Army of the Potomac. This short and fiery, but bull-headed, general took command of the Union army's cavalry corps. It did not take long for Sheridan and Meade to clash over the cavalry's role in the Overland Campaign, and because of a bitter argument just prior to Spotsylvania, Sheridan and the vast majority of the

Union cavalry departed on a raid that culminated in the battle at Yellow Tavern. The value of this raid is debatable, and Sheridan seems to have had little skill at the reconnaissance and screening missions that were key purposes of Civil War cavalry forces. Later in the war, Sheridan's aggressiveness would help the North in the Shenandoah Valley and at the battle of Five Forks, but his performance in the Overland Campaign was mixed at best.

From the Confederate perspective, the Overland Campaign was part of a defensive strategy that was more the result of necessity than of choice. Although not explicitly articulated, the Southern strategy seemed to be to exhaust the will of the people of the North with the hope that Lincoln would lose the presidential election in the fall of 1864. Part of the reason for the lack of a unified Confederate strategy was that President Jefferson Davis refused to appoint a commander in chief and retained that role for himself. Thus, all Confederate armies reported directly to Davis; and the Confederate President did not issue an overall strategic plan for 1864. Even within the eastern theater, there was no unified command system to coordinate the efforts of Lee's army with the forces under Major General John C. Breckinridge in the Shenandoah Valley and General P.G.T. Beauregard's forces protecting Richmond, southern Virginia, and northern North Carolina. Even so, Davis' respect for Lee's abilities and opinions was such that the Army of Northern Virginia's commander often indirectly provided coordination for all Southern efforts in Virginia through his advice to the Confederate president.

Of course, the main force for operations in the east was Lee's army. Having been defeated in his two attempts to invade the North, Lee was now committed to a strategic defense intent on wearing down the North's will to fight. However, the ever-aggressive Lee had no intention of remaining passive. He intended to launch tactical (and perhaps, even operational) attacks when such opportunities presented themselves. Lee retained the same structure for his army that had been used at Gettysburg—three infantry corps and a cavalry corps, though some of his brigades were on detached service elsewhere in Virginia when the campaign began.

Lieutenant General James Longstreet, Lee's "warhorse," commanded the I Corps. Longstreet remains a controversial figure to this day. Historians have made much of the disagreements between Longstreet and Lee at Gettysburg, and scholars seem to fall into extremes of criticism or praise when assessing Longstreet's skills as a commander. Certainly Longstreet made his share of mistakes in the war, but he was still one of the South's best corps commanders. More importantly, he and Lee had a

mutual respect that made him Lee's most trusted subordinate at the time of the Overland Campaign (it was only after the war, and after Lee's death, that Longstreet's writings would ignite bitter recriminations about their relationship). After Gettysburg, Longstreet and most of his corps had been sent west and had fought in the Chickamauga Campaign and at Knoxville. The corps returned to Virginia early in 1864, but two divisions were spread out to the west and south of Lee's main army in order to gather supplies and Pickett's division was on detached duty in southern Virginia.

The Army of Northern Virginia's II Corps was commanded by Lieutenant General Richard S. Ewell. This had been Stonewall Jackson's corps prior to his death at Chancellorsville, and Ewell had been Jackson's most trusted subordinate. Ewell had been a capable brigade and division commander, and his personal courage was unquestioned—he had lost a leg at the battle of Groveton. However, Ewell's judgment had come under a cloud after his conduct of the fights at Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill during Gettysburg. While Ewell may have been treated too harshly for his performance at Gettysburg, his abilities as a corps commander were still in doubt. As the stress of the Overland Campaign taxed him, Ewell seemed to wear down both mentally and physically.

The last of the Confederate infantry corps commanders was Lieutenant General Ambrose Powell (A.P.) Hill. Like Ewell, Hill had a successful career as a brigade and division commander prior to Gettysburg. Unfortunately, Hill also showed a spotty performance as a corps commander at Gettysburg. Hill had serious health problems, which some historians attribute to venereal disease that Hill may have contracted as a cadet at West Point. In any case, Hill was in and out of command on several occasions in the last 18 months of the war, often incapacitated by his physical problems. Worse yet, even when in command, Hill was often ill and unable to exercise vigorous leadership.

Lee's cavalry corps commander was the famous and dashing Major General J.E.B. "Jeb" Stuart. Stuart, like Longstreet, was a trusted subordinate for Lee. Despite errors in the Gettysburg Campaign, Stuart remained one of the best cavalry commanders on either side in the war. Although cavalry raids gained the most glamour for many commanders, Stuart primarily excelled at providing Lee with accurate and timely intelligence. The young cavalry commander continued to fulfill that role in the Overland Campaign until his death at Yellow Tavern.

As the start of the campaign approached, the two armies eyed each other over terrain that had seen much battle since 1861. Although Virginia was more cultivated and populated than the rough terrain of the western

theater, it was still relatively difficult country for the maneuver of armies. The terrain was somewhat flat to the east, but cut by many waterways and sometimes difficult to traverse due to marshes. Further west, the ground had gentle hills with a few key heights such as Clark Mountain that offered dominating points of observation. Much of the ground was forested, but there was usually little undergrowth among the trees, with the notable exception of the area near the old Chancellorsville battlefield known as the Wilderness. Richmond was a significant city, and both Petersburg and Fredericksburg were moderately-sized towns, but most other inhabited areas were little more than small villages. The roads were relatively extensive by American standards, but nothing like the network of macadamized roads in Europe. Most were simply dirt tracks subject to choking amounts of dust in the heat and likely to become quagmires in the rain. The rivers mostly ran from the northwest to the southeast where they emptied into the Atlantic Ocean. This path meant that the rivers acted as natural barriers to the northern advance and good lines of defense for Lee's army. However, the Union control of the sea meant that they could use the rivers as resupply routes (or lines of communication) as long as the northern force remained moderately close to the sea.

The major river separating the Union and Confederate armies in May 1864 was the Rapidan, a tributary of the Rappahannock River. Ewell's II Corps was spread over various locations south of the river watching many of the crossings. Hill's corps was concentrated near Orange Courthouse (Lee's headquarters). As mentioned earlier, Longstreet's corps was much further south and west, gathering supplies near Gordonsville. Stuart's cavalry watched the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers from Ewell's right flank to Fredericksburg.

The Union army was positioned in camps near Brandy Station and Culpeper. From this position, Grant and Meade faced two options: the Army of the Potomac could move west, around Lee's left flank, or it could move east and southeast, around Lee's right. A move to the west offered the initial advantage of avoiding the tangled terrain of the Wilderness and an indirect approach that had not been tried much in the eastern theater, but the army would have to rely on vulnerable railroad and wagon haul capacity for resupply. Such a movement also provided Lee the best opportunity to intercept and cut Grant's supply lines. The other alternative, a move to the southeast, took advantage of Union resupply from the sea, but it covered the same ground that had been the scene of Union failures at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. A potentially greater problem to this approach was that the Union army would have to pass through the Wilderness before reaching open ground further south. After considering

these choices, Grant opted for the southeastern approach around Lee's right. He felt that the supply difficulties of the western alternative were simply too great and would not allow for a longer, sustained campaign. Even if he could not defeat Lee's army in one swift blow, an advance to the southeast allowed for continuous operations that would keep unremitting pressure on the Confederate forces.

While Grant finalized his plans for a move by his left flank (the Confederate right), Lee attempted to counter his opponent's move. On 2 May, Lee and most of his ranking officers ascended Clark's Mountain, a 700-foot high promontory that offered a dominating view of the Rapidan crossing sites. Looking at the terrain, familiar to him as a native Virginian and particularly well known after several years of war, Lee pointed toward two key fords on the Rapidan, Germanna Ford and Ely's Ford, and presciently predicted that the Federals would cross at those locations. The Confederate commander correctly foresaw the next Union move, but he still had to craft a proper response.

The importance of the Wilderness in the plans of both commanders is a subject of considerable debate. Some scholars argue that Grant never wanted battle in the Wilderness (where his advantage in numbers, particularly artillery, would be lessened), and he hoped to get through the tangled ground to open terrain before starting a major battle. On the other hand, Grant, and even the more cautious Meade, did not hesitate to engage the Confederates in the Wilderness once initial contact was made. On the Confederate side, Lee faced his own dilemma. He knew the advantages of bringing the Union army to battle within the Wilderness, but he did not want to bring on a general engagement before he had a chance to reunite Longstreet's corps with the rest of the army. His orders to Ewell reflected this initial concern and urged the II Corps commander to exercise caution. Both Lee and Grant had mixed feelings about fighting in the Wilderness, but neither intended to back down. The result was, in modern terms, a meeting engagement in which both commanders found themselves exercising less control over the battle than they would have preferred.

Meade's chief of staff, Major General Andrew A. Humphreys, who hoped that by starting the Army of the Potomac's movement at midnight on 4 May it might be able to get through the Wilderness before Lee could respond, developed the details of the Union advance. Warren's V Corps was to be the first Union unit to reach the Rapidan. It would cross at Germanna Ford and then proceed south on Germanna Plank Road. Roughly midway through the Wilderness, Warren was to cross from Germanna Plank Road to Brock Road and other smaller trails, which led to open country south

of the Wilderness. Behind the V Corps came Sedgwick's VI Corps, also designated to cross at Germanna Ford. Hancock's II Corps had a different route. They were to cross at Ely's Ford (east of Germanna Ford) and move roughly parallel to the V Corps past Chancellorsville, and then turn west to Todd's Tavern and continue on Catharpin Road. This would place the II Corps on the Union army's far southern (left) flank.

Humphreys' plan was well crafted but perhaps too ambitious. The problem was not the Army of the Potomac's infantry corps, it was the artillery and trains. All three corps made good progress for most of 4 May. However, the massive number of artillery pieces, supply wagons, ambulances, horses, and a herd of cattle were simply too much to get across the two fords in one day. By early afternoon, Hancock and Warren were forced to halt, Hancock near the Chancellor house and Warren near Wilderness Tavern at the intersection of the Germanna Plank Road and Orange Turnpike. This meant that the Union army was not clear of the Wilderness and faced the prospect of spending all of 5 May trying to move through the entangled area.

On the evening of 4 May, Lee, though correctly anticipating the Union moves, was still not sure if he wanted to bring on a major battle with Longstreet's arrival time so uncertain. He had Ewell's corps advancing from west to east on Orange Turnpike and Hill's corps moving in the same direction on Orange Plank Road (basically parallel to Ewell). Both sides, somewhat unintentionally, were set on a collision course for 5 May, and the outcome of the battle would depend on how they reacted after the initial contact.

The Wilderness

The Union forces got an early start on the morning of 5 May, and Hancock's II Corps, unimpeded by any Confederates, made good progress to Todd's Tavern. Warren was more cautious. He knew that as he advanced south, his right flank could be vulnerable to a Confederate attack. Thus, the V Corps commander decided to deploy Brigadier General Charles Griffin's division on Orange Turnpike to block any Confederate move while Warren's other divisions began their move south. His units had not moved far before Griffin reported contact with Ewell at about 0700. The Union high command's reaction was quick. Meade told Warren to attack at once with his entire corps. The army commander sent word to Grant who confirmed the order to attack. Meade ordered Hancock's corps to rejoin the main Union forces by marching north on Brock Road from Todd's Tavern. He also instructed Sedgwick to support Warren's right. At the same time, Grant urged Burnside to cross the Rapidan and support the

Army of the Potomac's offensive. Grant and Meade showed few signs of trying to avoid battle in the Wilderness, and their rapid reaction to the presence of the Confederate army indicated a strong desire to grapple with the Army of Northern Virginia no matter what the terrain. Meade and Grant established their respective headquarters (separate but only several hundred yards apart) near the Wilderness Tavern, close to the key crossroads of the Orange Turnpike and Germanna Plank Road.

The Union forces were going into battle with limited knowledge of the enemy location and strength. Intercepted messages from the Confederate flag station on Clark Mountain gave some clue that Lee was approaching, but there were few details because of the poor use of Northern cavalry. Both Meade and Sheridan should share blame for this. Meade had relegated a large part of the cavalry to guarding the army's trains instead of using them in a more valuable reconnaissance and screening role. Even so, Sheridan made poor use of the remaining force. There was no Union cavalry covering Warren's move on Orange Turnpike, and Brigadier General James Wilson's cavalry division wandered into a fruitless battle well south of Orange Plank Road, leaving this important thoroughfare covered by only a single cavalry regiment.

In the meantime, Lee also became aware of an impending battle, but he wanted Ewell to halt his progress to give time for Hill to move up on the Confederate right along Orange Plank Road. Ewell deployed Major General Edward Johnson's division to the north of the road and Major General Robert E. Rodes' division to the south. Major General Jubal A. Early's division was astride the road in a reserve position to the rear (west) of Johnson and Rodes. The Southerners also began to construct earthworks.

Warren, unsure of the size and location of the Confederates to his front, attempted to comply with Meade's instructions for an offensive. However, the tangled terrain was taking its toll on the Union plan. While Griffin was deployed on the Orange Turnpike, Warren's other divisions had to be recalled from their march further south. These divisions found movement through the tangled terrain to be a nightmare. Unable to see more than several yards in any direction, commanders found it nearly impossible to deploy on line and to maintain contact with neighboring units. Brigadier General James S. Wadsworth's division groped north through the woods to try to link up with Griffin's left. As Wadsworth shifted north, an even larger gap developed between his unit and Brigadier General Samuel W. Crawford's division. In reality, Crawford was poised in a perfect position that threatened a void between Ewell's and Hill's

Confederate corps. However, in the dense woods, Crawford had no way of knowing this. He and Warren agreed to shift his division to the north and close on Wadsworth's flank. The final V Corps division, under Brigadier General John C. Robinson, was positioned in reserve behind Griffin and Wadsworth and did not participate in the day's fighting.

The net effect of the slowed movement was that as noon approached, the V Corps was still hours away from getting all units on line. Warren faced a dilemma. He was already way behind time in complying with Meade's order to attack, but he also was unprepared to assault with forces other than Griffin's division and part of Wadsworth's division. The corps commander decided to attack with his available forces and hope that his other units could join the battle as they arrived.

The resulting struggle swayed back and forth over Saunders' Field on both sides of the Orange Turnpike. The Union advance achieved some local, temporary successes, but the attacks, as could be anticipated, were piecemeal. Griffin moved forward and succeeded in routing one of the Confederate brigades. Part of Early's division counterattacked and threw back the Union advance. Both sides then continued a steady fire while they entrenched at opposite ends of Saunders' Field. Meanwhile, further to the south, Wadsworth's division advanced across Higgerson's Field. However, a timely counterattack from Brigadier General John B. Gordon's brigade of Early's division blunted the Union attack, penetrated a gap between the brigades of Wadsworth's division, and sent it fleeing to the rear. Union reinforcements plugged the gap, and by late afternoon, both sides had settled into a stalemate. The bloody impasse did not mollify Griffin who rode back to Meade's headquarters and complained about the lack of support for his attack. Toward the afternoon, the fighting on the turnpike settled into a lull.

By the end of the day's fighting on the northern part of the battlefield, there had been some shifts in unit locations. On the Confederate side, Ewell's positions were relatively unchanged, except that the majority of Early's division was in the front lines instead of the reserve. On the Union side, there were some significant changes. First, the VI Corps arrived, and Sedgwick's lead division under Brigadier General George W. Getty moved south to hold the Brock Road and Orange Plank Road intersection (more on this later). Another VI Corps division, led by Brigadier General Horatio G. Wright, deployed on Griffin's right. Wright attempted an evening attack, but it was too late in the day to have any effect. The final VI Corps division, commanded by Brigadier General James B. Ricketts, arrived in the gathering dusk and did not attack. In addition, Warren seemed to lose his earlier

aggressiveness, and he did not renew the V Corps' attacks. Finally, during the confused afternoon fighting, Wadsworth's division—after its earlier setbacks—wandered through the woods for some time before it deployed further south near Orange Plank Road. Fortuitously, this unit now threatened the left flank of A.P. Hill's Confederate forces. Wadsworth's division, ready to work in cooperation with Hancock's forces, was poised to contribute to the fighting to the south the next day (6 May).

While the battle between Ewell and Warren raged on the turnpike, Hill's advance up Orange Plank Road triggered an equally vicious struggle on 5 May. For a few critical moments, Hill's objective, the intersection of Brock and Orange Plank Roads, assumed decisive importance. Although the Union forces eventually outnumbered the Confederate forces, the Federals began the battle on 5 May with Hancock's corps far to the south of the main Union forces, and this meant that the Union forces were vulnerable to potential defeat in detail. Once Grant and Meade had determined to fight in the Wilderness, they needed to pull Hancock's troops back to the north and consolidate the army. Thus, the Northerners needed to hold the Brock and Plank Road intersection—the critical link between Warren's and Sedgwick's forces in the north and Hancock's forces to the south.

The most immediate unit available for this vital mission was George Getty's division of the VI Corps. Getty's men gained some critical time thanks to the delaying action of the 5th New York Cavalry, but time was still short. In one of the more dramatic moments of the battle, Getty and his staff bluffed the Confederates into halting just short of the intersection before deploying the division and holding the important location.

Soon after barely escaping disaster, the Union forces were able to turn their attention to launching an offensive with the arrival of the II Corps. Hancock personally arrived on the scene at the head of his corps, and he planned to use his own troops along with Getty's to defeat Hill's Confederates. However, the Union II Corps commander faced the same problems as Warren in trying to coordinate an attack in the heavy thickets. In addition, a confusing exchange of orders between Hancock and Meade contributed to a long delay in the deployment of the II Corps. Eventually, Getty—like Griffin earlier—advanced with little initial support. Additional Union units came into the battle in piecemeal fashion.

For the Confederates, the situation was hardly better. Hill was advancing down a narrow road, and although Major General Henry "Harry" Heth's division delayed Hancock's attack, Major General Cadmus M. Wilcox's division was stacked behind Heth in march formation. Hill needed to get Wilcox into the battle, but wondered if he should deploy this

division to the north or south of Heth's units. Lee was nearby, and both he and Hill decided to send Wilcox to the north, which would help to close the gap between Hill and Ewell. This was probably the best move, but Union reinforcements forced the Confederates to remain on the defensive. Late on the afternoon of 5 May, Lee examined the overall situation. Ewell was holding his own against Union forces on the turnpike, but Hill, with only two divisions, was barely holding on the Plank Road. Even with the advantage of fighting in the Wilderness terrain, Lee knew he would be hard pressed to hold long enough for Longstreet's arrival.

Fortunately for Lee, the uncoordinated arrival of Union forces precluded a combined attack. Getty moved first, virtually alone, while Hancock tried to deploy his own corps on both sides of Getty's division. In the confusion, only one brigade of Union troops, under Brigadier General Alexander Hays (part of Major General David B. Birney's division) was able to get on Getty's right. Hays was killed during the assault—a sad personal blow to Grant who had known Hays before the war. Another part of Birney's division arrived on Getty's left in bits and pieces. Brigadier General Gershom Mott's division eventually came up on Birney's left (south), but his two brigades performed poorly, and Hancock was forced to rally them near Brock Road. Still, the Union forces were gathering momentum and the net result was that the Confederates fell back under pressure, but they were not routed. By late evening, Hancock had all of his own corps on hand, along with several other attached units, and the Union army planned for a major assault the next day.

The night was horrible for both sides while they planned for the next day's battle. Fires started in the dry timber, and the flames often crept up to the wounded—many of whom could not move. Many suffocated or burned to death. Some of the wounded suffered even more when their cartridges were set off by the heat and exploded beside their bodies. Many soldiers, both North and South, remembered this as one of the worst nights of the war.

Despite the agony of the soldiers and the almost ceaseless cries for help from the wounded, the generals had to plan for the next day. Grant and Meade hoped to crush Lee's right on Orange Plank Road before Longstreet could arrive. Toward that purpose, Hancock was given control of a powerful strike force consisting of his own corps, Getty's division from the VI Corps, and Wadsworth's division from the V Corps. Meade and Grant also directed Warren and Sedgwick to attack Ewell in order to keep him from reinforcing Hill to the south. Grant even promised to use part of Burnside's IX Corps to help Hancock's attack. The general in chief

hoped to start the attack at 0400 because he wanted to keep Lee from seizing the initiative. However, there was no way the Union forces could be ready by that time. Grant agreed to delay the attack until 0500.

Lee did not harbor any offensive hopes for the morning. His forces, outnumbered on 5 May, had fought well, but he needed Longstreet's corps to improve the odds against the Federals. Thus, Lee planned to hold his defensive positions until Longstreet's arrival. After that, he might be able to take advantage of an offensive opportunity. Lee's III Corps commander, Hill, seemed content to let troops sleep in place for the night, despite objections from his division commanders. Thus, the Confederate troops were ill disposed to receive Hancock's attack on the morning of 6 May. The tired Confederate soldiers were allowed to sleep, thus they did not build breastworks or straighten their awkward front line.

Hancock started his attack promptly at 0500 on 6 May. Heth's and Wilcox's troops, unentrenched and poorly positioned to receive the Union attack, were forced to retreat. The Union attack was helped by Wadsworth's division, which flanked Heth's division from the north. Even so, the Confederates did not panic. The Southerners pulled back slowly, delaying the Northern units every step of the way. At one point, Lee chided Brigadier General Samuel McGowen (Wilcox's division) for his brigade's retreat, but McGowen replied that his troops were ready to reform and continue the fight; in fact, the South Carolinians were able to turn and resume their resistance.

The Union offensive, though steadily successful, was not achieving rapid, decisive results. Perhaps part of the problem was Hancock's plan of attack. The II Corps commander had given Birney tactical control of the offensive but had piled Union units—one behind the other—in three lines close to Orange Plank Road. Perhaps, in the dense forests of the Wilderness, Hancock might have felt that a deep and more compact Union attack would be easier to control. This formation gave the Union forces depth to their attack and an ability to move fresh units into the front line as the lead units became exhausted. However, it also meant that the superior Union numbers could only be applied gradually—not in an overwhelming simultaneous attack. In addition, Hancock worried about Longstreet's arrival and an attack on his southern flank. He directed Brigadier General John Gibbon to guard against this threat. In another unusual command arrangement, Gibbon gave up most of his division to Birney for the Union attack, but he took command of Brigadier General Francis C. Barlow's entire division and the corps artillery reserve on Brock Road for his mission of preventing a Confederate flank attack from the south.

Whatever the possible faults of Hancock's dispositions (always easier to see with the benefit of historian's hindsight), the II Corps commander's attack pressed forward with a seemingly inexorable progress, and Hancock himself was in grand form. Living up to his sobriquet, "Hancock the Superb," he urged his troops forward in what appeared to be a war-winning assault. The Union forces pushed Hill's corps back and soon approached an open area known as Tapp Farm. If the Union troops could seize this position, they would be squarely on Lee's right flank and in a position to separate Ewell and Hill from Longstreet. Lee was so worried that he ordered the Confederate trains to evacuate their position near Parker's Store. The Confederates faced complete defeat unless Longstreet's corps could arrive in time.

At this moment of crisis, Southern reinforcements arrived with no time to spare. The battle that ensued was initially confusing, but ultimately successful for the Southerners. First, Confederate artillery bought time for the Southern defense. The dense Wilderness terrain often negated the effect of artillery, but the open ground at Tapp Farm provided just enough of a clearing for the big guns to have an affect. Lieutenant Colonel William T. Poague had part of his artillery battalion positioned on the west side of the field, and his guns unleashed several volleys that staggered the Union advance. Poague's artillery could not defeat the Federals by themselves, but they forced the Union troops to pause and reform.

Taking advantage of this valuable delay, Longstreet deployed his arriving troops for a counterattack on both sides of Orange Plank Road. First, Brigadier General Joseph B. Kershaw's division turned south of the road and set up a defensive line. Then Major General Charles W. Field's division arrived, its lead brigade, under Brigadier General George T. "Tige" Anderson, following Kershaw's men to the south. However, Longstreet diverted the rest of Field's division into battle north of the road. The famed Texas Brigade, under Brigadier General John Gregg, led their attack. In one of the more celebrated incidents of the war, Lee rushed forward personally to lead the brigade's attack until the soldiers finally convinced their commander to move to the rear. The Texans' attack, though certainly heroic, was not decisive. Like Poague's artillery assault, Gregg's attack gained time, but did not repulse the Union advance. A less well-known but equally courageous attack by Brigadier General Henry L. Benning's Georgia Brigade also suffered heavy casualties and stunned the Federals without completely halting their offensive. In the end, additional brigades from Field's division, particularly troops from Brigadier General Evander McIver Law's Alabama Brigade and the counterattack of Kershaw's

division south of Plank Road, brought the Union attack to a standstill. Longstreet's timely arrival brought a pause to the battlefield as both sides now looked for other ways to renew their attacks.

On the Union side, slow movements and confusion over orders thwarted attempts to renew their attack. Grant and Meade hoped to rejuvenate the Federal advance on Plank Road, and they designated General Thomas G. Stevenson's division of Burnside's corps as reinforcements for Hancock. However, the IX Corps was taking a long time to get into position. Stevenson's troops did not arrive until evening, just in time to repulse a Confederate assault but too late to launch an offensive. Burnside's other units took up positions between Hancock's and Warren's forces but contributed little to the fighting. While waiting for these promised reinforcements, Hancock ordered Brigadier General John Gibbon to bring up the II Corps units on Brock Road (Barlow's division) to support a new attack by the Union left. Gibbon, normally a thorough professional, denied that he ever saw these orders despite the fact that some staff officers contradicted his claims. Whatever the case, more than a division's worth of Union soldiers remained on Brock Road and out of the battle.

The Confederate efforts to reform for an attack fared considerably better. Longstreet sent Lee's chief engineer, Major General Martin Luther (M.L.) Smith, on a reconnaissance to search for any weak spots on the Union left (southern) flank. Smith found an unfinished railroad bed (the track had never been laid) that passed south of the Union line. It was perfect for a flank attack. It gave the Confederates a path for an approach march, and it offered some open ground on which to deploy units perpendicular to the Federal flank. In an unusual move, Longstreet put a junior, but trusted, staff officer, Lieutenant Colonel G. Moxley Sorrel, in charge of coordinating the attack. Sorrel had to pull together units from a mix of different commands that included brigades from both of Longstreet's divisions as well as forces from Major General Richard H. Anderson's division of Hill's corps.

The Southern attack began at about 1100 and achieved a major success. As Hancock himself later recalled, the Confederate assault rolled up his left flank "like a wet blanket" (James Longstreet, *From Manassas to Appomattox*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1960, 568). Union units began to fall back, from left to right, as Longstreet's attack hit each unit on the flank. A few Union units disintegrated, but for the most part, much like their Confederate counterparts earlier in the day, the Federal troops withdrew in relatively good order. The flanking position of the Confederate attack had given them a great advantage over the front

rank units in the Union column, but after reaching the Plank Road, the Southern attackers needed to be sorted and reoriented to the east. As if this were not difficult enough, Longstreet fell wounded just as the Southerners attempted to reorganize for the new assault. In a tragic touch of irony, Longstreet was hit not far from the location of Stonewall Jackson's wounding a year before at Chancellorsville. Like Jackson, Longstreet was shot by his own troops in the confusion of battle. Though the wounds were severe, Longstreet survived but he would not return to command until after the Overland Campaign.

With his most trusted corps commander out of action, Lee decided to take personal control of the action on the Confederate right flank. It took several hours for Lee to shuffle his units and prepare for a new assault. During that time, Hancock rallied the retreating Union units and placed them along Brock Road. The Federals had earlier built breastworks on the western edge of the road, and they awaited the Southern attack in their prepared positions. Shortly after 1630, the Southerners launched their attack. Lee had opted to try to penetrate the Union line just south of the Brock and Plank Road intersection rather than attempting another attack on the Union southern flank, which was still protected by Gibbon's and Barlow's forces. The Confederate attack was aided by fires that touched off the Union breastworks and a wind that pushed smoke into the eyes of the Northern soldiers. Mott's division fell back, but a timely counterattack spearheaded by Colonel Samuel S. Carroll's brigade blunted the Confederate attack and restored the line. As night approached, the fighting stopped on the southern end of the battlefield. Both sides had gained some momentary successes, but neither could claim decisive victory.

As darkness crept over the battlefield, Lee found still one more opportunity to attack. One reason for this new opening was the relative passivity of Warren's V Corps and Burnside's slowness during much of 6 May. Another Union problem was lax dispositions by Sedgwick's corps on the Union right flank. In any case, away from the heavy fighting on the southern flank that dominated much of the day's struggle, the Confederates launched a late evening attack on the Union right that achieved considerable success. This attack was spearheaded by Brigadier General John B. Gordon's troops of Ewell's corps, and it smashed two ill-prepared brigades of the VI Corps. Nonetheless, Sedgwick did not panic, and the Federals formed a new line.

For all intents and purposes, Gordon's attack ended the battle of the Wilderness. Grant and Lee had launched attacks on both flanks of the armies, but none of these offensives had brought decisive victory.

Tactically, the Confederates had proven skillful and exacted considerable Union casualties. By the end of 6 May, Lee had established a solid defensive line that discouraged further Federal attacks. Yet, the Northern forces were not defeated. From an operational perspective, Grant and Meade had only fought their first battle of the campaign. Certainly, the Federals would have welcomed a clear victory, but with that result denied, the Union leadership planned its next move. Much has been made of Grant's decision to continue the campaign after horrible losses in the Wilderness, and Grant deserves praise for continuing the advance. The Union general in chief was determined to apply pressure until the Confederates broke. He saw the campaign as a series of battles that would crush Lee's army. Perhaps the Union troops saw the same grim, but inevitable, logic as they cheered Grant on the night of 6 May.

Spotsylvania

The new Union plan called for a move around Lee's right (southern) flank to the small town of Spotsylvania, location of the county courthouse. If the Union forces could take this road junction, they would turn the Confederate flank and be in a position to separate the Southern army from Richmond. This in turn could force Lee to battle in open ground, and perhaps even force Lee to attack the more numerous Union forces in prepared positions.

While both sides buried the dead and tended to the wounded on 7 May, the Union forces prepared for their move. The plan called for Warren to pull out of the front line, pass behind Hancock's corps, and take the lead in the advance to the south. This was the normal process for most Civil War armies—the majority of units would hold the front line in contact with the enemy while part of the force moved safely behind the lines from one flank to another.

Another standard element of large-scale army movements was to have cavalry lead the way, protect the advancing infantry, and clear roads to the objective. This operation was no different as Sheridan's cavalry was supposed to push past the intersection of the Brock and Catharpin Roads—near Todd's Tavern—all the way to Corbin's Bridge. Holding the crossroads at Todd's Tavern would keep a clear path for Warren's corps, while advancing to Corbin's Bridge would have the additional benefit of blocking a Confederate move to Spotsylvania.

Unfortunately for the North, the plan was not executed as intended. Initially, all seemed well as two divisions of Union cavalry seized Todd's Tavern and Corbin's Bridge and advanced south on Brock Road toward Spotsylvania late in the evening of 7 May. Then, inexplicably, both

divisions pulled back from their advanced positions and encamped at Todd's Tavern. Warren's infantry found Sheridan's cavalrymen asleep and blocking the road, which caused a delay in the V Corps' advance. Late that night, Meade arrived at Todd's Tavern and saw that the Union cavalry was not fulfilling its mission, whereupon he issued orders directly to the two divisions to retake their former positions. Meade was probably right to correct Sheridan's poor orders to the Union cavalry divisions, but the headstrong Sheridan seized on the opportunity to complain about Meade's interference. Both Union leaders engaged in a heated shouting match at the Army of the Potomac's headquarters later that evening. In the end, the Union suffered in two ways from this sad episode. First, the Federal advance was delayed by just enough time to enable the Confederates to get to Spotsylvania before the Northerners. Second, Sheridan—with Grant's approval—launched his cavalry in a raid against Richmond that took the Federal cavalry away from the Army of the Potomac.

Sheridan's raid, which ultimately led to the battle of Yellow Tavern, is a subject that warrants examination. The origins of the raid stemmed from the dispute between Sheridan and Meade, and Grant may have given final approval for the venture simply to avoid further conflict between his two hot-tempered subordinates. In addition, the Army of the Potomac's leadership struggled with defining the proper role for its cavalry. Meade sometimes wasted much of his cavalry in guarding the army's trains. Sheridan dreamed of using the cavalry as a strike force that would bring the Confederate horsemen to battle and decisive defeat. Neither Union leader seemed to grasp the need to use the cavalry, in cooperation with the movements of the infantry, for essential reconnaissance and security roles. In the end, Grant gave Sheridan permission for his raid, and Sheridan was allowed to take all three of his cavalry divisions for the mission. Even if the objective of defeating the Confederate cavalry had some merit, sending all of the Union cavalry was a mistake. Stuart took only two divisions in pursuit; therefore, for the next several weeks, Lee had superior intelligence from his remaining cavalry while the Army of the Potomac was virtually blind.

While the Union forces were encountering delays in their move to Spotsylvania, Lee planned his response. As was to occur on several occasions in the campaign, Lee demonstrated superior instinct and intellect in countering the Union thrusts. On 7 May, the Confederate commander received reports that the Union right flank had pulled back from Germanna Ford. He correctly interpreted this move as a Union change of base (the Federal supply base was shifting from the old Brandy Station camps to a new location at Belle Plain and Aquia Landing). Still, Lee could not be

sure if this meant that Grant would pull back to Fredericksburg to lick his wounds, or if the Union commander would continue his offensive south to Spotsylvania. As a precaution, Lee ordered his artillery chief, Brigadier General William N. Pendleton, to cut a path through the woods behind the Confederate lines that emptied near Corbin's Bridge just in case the Southerners needed to move quickly to Spotsylvania. Later on 7 May, Lee received reports indicating that the Union artillery reserve was moving to the south, and the Confederate commander correctly concluded that Spotsylvania was Grant's new objective. Lee ordered the I Corps, now under the command of Major General R.H. Anderson, to use the newly cut trail in the woods to move toward the courthouse.

Although Lee's logic and anticipation were extraordinary, the Confederates were also helped by some good luck in the race to Spotsylvania. Lee's orders to Anderson gave the new I Corps commander discretion to rest his troops before moving. However, due to fires raging through much of the Wilderness area, Anderson could not find a good bivouac site for his troops, and he decided to march all night to the vicinity of Spotsylvania.

The combination of Lee's skill, Anderson's fortunate decision, and Union delays decided the race for Spotsylvania. Stalled repeatedly while trying to push down Brock Road, Warren's troops moved early on the morning of 8 May toward the courthouse. In front of Warren's infantry, Union cavalry under Brigadier General James Wilson (in their last action before embarking on Sheridan's raid) fought with Confederate cavalry under Brigadier General Thomas Rosser and Lee's nephew, Major General Fitzhugh Lee. Both sides' cavalry commanders called for infantry support. Anderson's men arrived first, by minutes, and they relieved the Confederate cavalry from their positions on Laurel Hill. Warren's leading division under Brigadier General John Robinson, believing that it was only facing Southern cavalry, attacked in piecemeal fashion near Alsop Farm and Laurel Hill. The first two Union brigades received a bloody repulse, and Robinson fell with a painful wound. The battle kept expanding as Warren fed more troops into the fight as they arrived. The V Corps commander had been criticized for waiting too long to gather his forces for an attack in the Wilderness, and perhaps smarting from these suggestions, he was committing his troops as soon as they reached the battlefield. In any case, the Confederate reinforcements always seemed to be just ahead of the Union troops, and the V Corps suffered several costly rebuffs.

Later in the afternoon, Sedgwick's corps arrived on Warren's left and Meade ordered a combined assault. This attack was also blunted as Ewell's Confederate corps arrived just in time to cover Anderson's right flank. The

Federal attack was hindered by arguments over seniority and Meade's failure to force cooperation between Warren and Sedgwick. By late evening on 8 May, the Union forces were stalled in front of Spotsylvania, and both sides began to dig entrenchments to protect their positions.

On 9 May, both armies brought up the rest of their forces. Hancock's corps arrived on Warren's right near the Po River. This gave Meade all three of his corps on line just north and west of Spotsylvania. In the meantime, Burnside's IX Corps was moving further to the east in an attempt to flank the entrenched Confederate lines. On the Confederate side, Anderson was in place on Laurel Hill and solidly entrenched. Ewell's II Corps was on Anderson's right. They had occupied a position outlined by Lee's engineer, M.L. Smith, that took advantage of some high ground but put the troops into a salient that was soon dubbed the "Mule Shoe." The Confederate III Corps, now led by Jubal Early (Hill was sick), positioned itself on Ewell's right. By nightfall on 9 May, the Confederates were well established in fortified positions.

While the Union leadership pondered its options, they suffered the loss of one of their most popular generals. The VI Corps commander, John Sedgwick, was killed by a sniper on 9 May while urging his men to ignore the Confederate fire. Sedgwick, though not a tactical genius, was a steady commander who was much beloved by his troops and respected by officers on both sides. Major General Horatio G. Wright, the senior VI Corps division commander, took over command of the corps.

Also on 9 May, a series of maneuvers and relatively small battles set the stage for major engagements at Spotsylvania over the next few days. First, Burnside's IX Corps, which had marched on roads to the east and parallel to the Army of the Potomac, slowly approached the Confederate lines on their far right flank. This presented an opportunity for the Union forces to turn the Confederate entrenchments. Second, in a rare change in the Union pattern of movement, Hancock crossed the Po River and threatened Lee's left flank—rather than the usual move to the Confederate right. This move initially caught Lee off guard, but once alerted, the Southern commander reacted with characteristic vigor and sent Heth's division in a long, rapid march further to the west that threatened Hancock's right flank. These multiple flanking moves put both sides in a unique position. Hancock threatened part of Lee's flank, but he in turn was threatened by Heth. The II Corps outnumbered Heth's lone division, but a bend in the Po River meant that Hancock's own divisions were separated into three parts by the water course (this situation—a river dividing the Union forces into three parts—would be repeated at the North Anna River later in the

campaign). In the end, Hancock felt that he was in the weaker position and recommended a withdrawal back across the Po.

Grant and Meade agreed, and Grant developed a plan that might still take advantage of Hancock's move. The Union general in chief reasoned that if Lee had shifted forces to face Hancock, the remainder of the Confederate lines must be thin and vulnerable to an attack. Grant directed Meade to have Hancock recross the Po (except for one division to act as bait to keep Lee distracted) and join with Warren and Wright in a combined assault on 10 May. In addition, Burnside was directed to advance to a position, known locally as "Gate," on the Confederate right (eastern) flank and act as the anvil against which the II, V, and VI Corps would hammer the Army of Northern Virginia from the western flank. In retrospect, perhaps Hancock, Meade, and Grant gave up too soon on the Union move across the Po River, but Grant's new plan certainly seemed to offer success if all Union actions could be coordinated. The grand attack was set to begin at 1700 on all fronts.

Sadly for the Federals, the events of 10 May were a tragicomedy of disjointed actions that thwarted any possibility of success. Hancock's corps did not receive its orders until late in the evening, and it took time to get back across the Po. One of his divisions (under Mott) was sent to cover the gap between the VI and IX Corps, and two others (Gibbon and Birney) did not get into position until well after the appointed attack time. The final division, under Barlow, almost dangled too long in its vulnerable position on the south side of the Po, until the young division commander finally extricated his exposed brigades later that evening.

The situation with the IX Corps was not much better. Part of the problem was a poor map that incorrectly marked the location of the mysterious "Gate." Also, Burnside showed little energy and less initiative. One account claimed that the IX Corps commander spent a large part of the day drinking with friends and telling stories at his temporary headquarters. Burnside was not drunk, but he seemed more concerned with exchanging tales than pushing his troops. Ever so slowly, his lead division under Major General Orlando Wilcox advanced down Fredericksburg Road and threatened the Confederate right and rear. At this time, there was nothing but some Southern cavalry and a scratch infantry force barring the Federal path. Yet, Wilcox grew cautious and pulled back to a defensive position. Although he considerably outnumbered the Confederates to his front, the Union division commander sent messages back to IX Corps headquarters stating that he would be hard-pressed just to hold his current position.

In the end, the IX Corps contributed virtually nothing to the 10 May Union offensive.

Perhaps the most tragic story of the 10 May attack involved the V Corps. Warren requested permission to open his attack at 1600, an hour earlier than the planned combined assault (perhaps the V Corps commander was still smarting from the repulses of 8 May and attempting to regain his reputation). Amazingly, Meade agreed to this change in schedule. The resulting attacks on the old ground at Laurel Hill were a sad repeat of the slaughter on this field from two days earlier. Warren displayed exceptional personal courage—even grabbing a regimental flag to rally broken Union troops—but the effort was futile. In some cases, the Federal troops made only a perfunctory advance, going only so far as to reassure themselves that the Confederate positions were still unassailable. This was one of the first cases of increasingly frequent examples of veteran troops showing a reluctance to assault prepared defensive positions. Even so, the V Corps suffered 3,000 casualties in a sad and doomed attack.

With Warren's mistimed attack, Burnside's sluggish movements, and Hancock's entanglements on the Po, the Union plan for a grand, combined assault on 10 May was a shambles. The only measure of success came on the VI Corps front, but even this effort revealed flaws in planning and execution. This attack was one of the more famous tactical actions of the Civil War—an assault by Colonel, soon to be Brigadier General, Emory Upton on the Confederate lines on the western side of the Mule Shoe. On the positive side, Upton's attack showed extensive planning and reconnaissance work at the lower levels of command. The new VI Corps commander, Wright, tasked one of his division commanders, Brigadier General David Russell, to prepare for an assault in support of the Union efforts for 10 May. Russell selected Upton to lead the attack with a picked group of regiments that included part of Upton's brigade and units from other VI Corps' brigades. Upton conducted a reconnaissance that included bringing forward all of his regimental commanders to see the actual terrain for the attack—a Civil War rarity. Upton arranged his 12 regiments into a dense formation: three regiments across the front and four regiments deep. He also instructed the troops not to stop to exchange fire with the Confederates, and he gave each of the four "waves" of the attack specific instructions for their roles after their initial breakthrough.

Upton's attack stepped off at 1800 and initially achieved remarkable success. The Union soldiers surprised the Confederates of Brigadier General George Doles' brigade, and without stopping to fire a shot, the

Federals poured over the Southern trenches. However, several factors combined to defeat Upton's attack. First, the Confederates displayed uncanny resiliency and reacted rapidly to the breakthrough by bringing up substantial reinforcements to close the breach. Second, despite Upton's best intentions, his attacking force lost cohesion once the penetration had been made—it was nearly impossible to maintain command and control in such conditions. Finally, the planned support for Upton, an attack by Mott's division of the II Corps, started an hour before Upton and was easily repulsed. While Mott's performance was weak, he does not deserve sole blame for the failure to support Upton. In particular, one must wonder why Wright, who was supposed to be planning a massive assault for 10 May, ultimately attacked with only 12 of his own regiments and relied on Mott's attached units to help. In any case, Upton's men did not receive reinforcements and were forced to retreat back to their original positions.

Although Upton had eventually been repulsed, his initial breakthrough seemed to offer some hope for a future penetration of the Confederate lines. Wright reported Upton's success to Meade and Grant, and one post-war account alleges that Grant told his army commander: "A brigade today—we'll try a corps tomorrow" (Lumen H. Tenney, *War Diary of Lumen Harris Tenney 1861-1865*, Cleveland, OH: Evangelical Publishing House, 1914, 115). In fact, it would take two days to get ready for this new assault, and it is not clear if the Union leadership had really grasped the reasons behind Upton's success—the tactics, the terrain, the formations, the preparation, and the luck. It appears more likely that Grant was convinced that Lee's line must be vulnerable somewhere between Wright and Burnside, and that a massive Union attack could achieve even greater results than Upton's unsupported effort whatever the tactics.

Regardless of the reasons behind Grant's thought process, the general in chief developed a characteristically aggressive plan on 11 May. He wanted to wait until that evening, move Hancock's II Corps from its position on the Union right to a position between Wright and Burnside under the cover of darkness, and have it launch an early morning attack on 12 May.

The Confederate position earmarked for the Union assault was the very tip of the Mule Shoe, a large bulge in the Confederate lines occupied by Ewell's II Corps. Lee's chief engineer, M.L. Smith, had laid out this position when Ewell's corps arrived late on 8 May. The Confederate leaders have received considerable criticism for occupying a salient—a position that is naturally vulnerable to converging fire on three sides. However, the Southerners were not blind to their dilemma. Smith, Lee, and Ewell agreed

to position a powerful group of artillery in the salient that would help to offset the position's weaknesses. Perhaps a more valid criticism is that the main reason posited for the odd shape of the Confederate lines—the need to hold the higher ground in the apex of the Mule Shoe—seems flawed. The ground in the salient was certainly beneficial, but there were other positions further to the rear that offered good, defensible terrain. Whatever the historians' arguments, Ewell's position in the Mule Shoe was made even weaker on the night of 11 May by a decision to move the Confederate artillery out of salient. Lee made this decision based on reports that the Union forces might be pulling back to Fredericksburg. (Hancock's retreat back across the Po and the movement of the Union wagon train toward Fredericksburg momentarily gave Lee hope that Grant was retreating and vulnerable to an attack.) The Confederate commander wanted his artillery to be ready to join in a pursuit, and Ewell pulled his artillery out of the Mule Shoe in preparation for such a move.

Benefiting from this stroke of good fortune, the Union forces prepared for their 12 May attack. Although Grant and Meade developed a good concept on paper, the actual execution of the II Corps move to its attack positions revealed serious weaknesses in Federal planning and staff work. Union reconnaissance efforts were clumsy, their maps were useless (or nonexistent), and guides sent to help the II Corps units had no idea of the terrain to their front. After a dark and wet march, Barlow's leading division of the II Corps arrived near the Brown house in the early morning of 12 May. Soon, all of Hancock's divisions moved into position, tired and drenched, and with little information about the Confederate positions.

Despite the poor reconnaissance and staff work, the II Corps benefited from several factors, including old-fashioned good luck. Hancock's troops were some of the best in the Army of the Potomac, and despite their difficult march, they were primed for the attack. Also, in some ways Grant's assumptions were confirmed—Lee did not suspect an attack on the Mule Shoe at this time—and the withdrawal of the Confederate artillery reflected this. Additionally, the Union II Corps' night march, warts and all, had achieved some measure of surprise. As for luck, a thick fog blanketed the terrain between the Union attackers and the Confederate positions on the morning of 12 May and helped conceal the Union movements.

One other factor that may or may not have helped the Union attack was their tactics. Some historians have implied that the II Corps assault mirrored Upton's methods and succeeded because of these tactics. There might be some truth to this claim. Barlow's division adopted a dense formation that resembled Upton's more narrow thrust. On the other hand,

Birney's division (on Barlow's right) deployed in conventional formations with both brigades' regiments on line. Perhaps it was not formations that mattered as much as the instruction to advance without firing until they reached the Confederate trenches (another aspect of Upton's attack).

In the end, whether it was formations, tactics, operational surprise, Confederate mistakes, or luck, the Union attack achieved an incredible initial success. Both Barlow, near the "East Angle," and Birney, on Barlow's right, poured over the Confederate lines. Gibbon's division sent two brigades to Barlow's left, and Mott's troops pitched in to fill a gap between Birney and Barlow. The Union army had struggled so hard on many occasions to break Confederate entrenched lines, and now—with seeming ease—they had smashed the tip of the Mule Shoe. The better part of a Confederate division was captured to include Major General Edward "Allegheny" Johnson and Brigadier General George H. "Maryland" Steuart. Staff officers at Meade's headquarters rejoiced at the news, but there were signs of trouble. Union soldiers advancing down the trench lines on the east and west sides of the salient made some gains, but Confederate resistance stiffened and the breach could not be widened. In the meantime, Union troops rushed pell-mell down the center of the breach in a disorganized mass. Union reinforcements were actually counterproductive, as all unit structure was lost when the Federals simply pushed more men forward.

Despite the seeming disaster, the Confederate reaction was violent and timely. Lee had already felt that he might need a new position across the base of the Mule Shoe, and his engineers had reconnoitered a new line. The Southern commander put the broken remnants of Johnson's division to work, building the earthworks on this new line. Still, Lee needed time to construct the position, and he turned to Gordon's division for a counterattack to throw the Northerners back and gain time. Rushing past the McCoull house, Gordon's troops smashed into the disorganized Federal mass coming down the center of the salient. As he had in the Wilderness battle, Lee rushed forward to lead the attack, but was then urged back by his own soldiers. Perhaps inspired by their army commander, the Confederates sent the Union soldiers reeling back to the Mule Shoe positions. The Southern troops were able to regain their trench lines near the west angle of the Mule Shoe, but the Federal troops held their original breakthrough point at the east angle.

The initial Federal success, followed by the partially effective Confederate counterattack, set the stage for one of the most horrific engagements of the Civil War. The II Corps held its captured trenches near the east angle and fought a grim battle at that location. Even as this fight raged under a torrential rainstorm, the Union VI Corps came into battle on

the II Corps right and took positions near the west angle—better known as the "Bloody Angle." The fight at this location was unlike almost any other in the war. The Confederates had recaptured their trenches, but the Union force refused to move back from these lines. Essentially, the Southerners were on one side of the log breastworks while the Union soldiers were on the other. Men fired through the openings in the logs, held loaded weapons above their heads firing over the tops of the barricades, and even pitched rifles with bayonets like javelins into the enemy positions. One Union soldier said that it was a savagery "surpassing all former experiences" (Thomas W. Hyde, *Following the Greek Cross; or Memories of the Sixth Army Corps,* Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1894, 200). Late on the night of 12 May, the Confederates finally withdrew to their new defensive positions. The Union forces were too exhausted to interfere. The next day, several observers were revolted by the carnage that they observed at Bloody Angle.

The net result of the Union attack was decidedly mixed. The Federals had pierced the Mule Shoe, taken significant prisoners, and basically destroyed a Confederate division. Yet, they had paid a heavy cost in their own casualties and failed to achieve a decisive victory. For the next several days, Grant and Meade endeavored to shift further to their left in an effort to turn the Confederate flank. On May 13, Warren's V Corps moved from its position on the Union right behind the Federal lines to a new location on the Union left. Late that same evening, Wright's VI Corps shifted its position to the Union far left flank. Grant had hoped that he might turn the Confederate flank, but 48 hours of unremitting rain thwarted any attempt to launch an attack that might surprise the Confederates. As the rain died down, Grant reasoned that Lee had shifted his forces east to counter the Union moves. He decided to have Wright countermarch back from the Union left to its original positions on the right in order to launch an attack in combination with the II Corps. This Federal attack on the morning of 18 May was a complete failure. The Union forces had almost none of the advantages of their 12 May attack on the Mule Shoe (no early morning fog, no missing Confederate artillery, and no vulnerable bulge in the Confederate lines), and the Federals suffered over 2,000 casualties in this futile assault.

This attack was not the final act at Spotsylvania, as the Confederates made one last offensive on this bloody battlefield. After the 18 May repulse, Grant and Meade planned for another operational shift to their left (southeastern) flank. Later that evening, Wright and Hancock were pulled out of the line in preparation for this move. Lee correctly sensed this move; he hoped this would leave the Union right flank vulnerable to

an attack that might even sever the Federal supply line to Fredericksburg. On 19 May, the Confederate commander ordered Ewell to use part of his decimated II Corps for a reconnaissance in force (to borrow the modern military terminology) and probe the Union positions. Ewell decided to use almost his entire corps in a major attack, but the Southerners ran into a stout defense at Harris Farm (not far from Gate, the position that Burnside had occupied early in the Spotsylvania battle). The Union line was held by a brigade of heavy artillery regiments, under Brigadier General Robert O. Tyler, that had just arrived from the Washington fortifications. The green Union troops displayed remarkable courage as both sides exchanged volleys at point-blank range. The new Union regiments took extensive casualties, but they also bloodied Ewell's veterans. In the end, this tactical stalemate showed that the Union forces were not vulnerable to an attack on their right flank.

As the battles near Spotsylvania—some of the most fierce fighting of the war—came to a close, Grant continued to plan for his next move further to the south. As in the Wilderness, Union casualties were heavier than Confederate losses, but this did not dissuade Grant from continuing the operational offensive. In fact, the Army of Northern Virginia, ever deadly in the defense and in local counterattacks, seemed to have lost its ability to deliver a decisive offensive after the bloodletting of the first few weeks of the campaign. Grant now planned for a move to take the key rail link at Hanover Junction and push the Confederates to the brink of annihilation.

North Anna

The newest Union maneuver required the Federals to disengage from the Southern army and make a movement further than the earlier, relatively short jump from the Wilderness to Spotsylvania. There is some measure of controversy over this move; some historians claim that Grant's move was designed to bait Lee into attacking a seemingly lone and unsupported Union corps, which would in turn present an opportunity for the rest of the Union forces to catch Lee in the open. This claim is questionable and, in any case, moot. Lee made an extensive examination of the ground between Spotsylvania and the North Anna River and never contemplated attacking the II Corps. Lee was more concerned with explaining to the Davis administration his decision to abandon the ground between Spotsylvania and the North Anna.

On 20 May, Hancock's corps took the lead in the Union advance, which followed multiple routes to the east of the Southern forces. The next day, Warren and Burnside began their moves while Wright's VI Corps held a position at Spotsylvania to cover the other corps. By the end of

21 May, the VI Corps was also on the march. As the Union forces went into motion, Grant and Meade temporarily co-located their headquarters at Massaponax Church. Their staffs were busy sorting out the complex timing and routes of march, and some of this activity was captured in famous photographs of the Union leadership gathered around the pews of the church that had been pulled outside to the front lawn. The staffs were also busy planning another shift in the Union base of supplies from Belle Plain on the Potomac to Port Royal on the Rappahannock.

Initially, all of the Union corps followed the same path to Guinea Station (also called Guiney's Station on some Civil War era maps). Then Hancock moved further to the east on a path that took him to Milford Station and Bowling Green on the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad. Warren's corps moved closest to the Confederates on Telegraph Road, the major high-speed route from Fredericksburg to Hanover Junction. Burnside took a path between Warren's and Hancock's Union corps and Wright followed Warren on Telegraph Road. For a short time, Grant positioned his headquarters at the Motley house near Guinea Station. While at this location, Grant left one of his ever-present cigars on a porch chair, which soon caught fire. The flames were soon extinguished, but Mr. Motley chastised the Federal commander, and he soon retreated to Guinea Station to avoid the Motleys' wrath. This new headquarters was close to the house where Stonewall Jackson had died in 1863, just one year earlier.

As the Union forces continued their movements, Lee tried to anticipate the Federal objectives and react appropriately. After Ewell's failed attack on the Union heavy artillery regiments, Lee knew that the Federals were not retreating and not vulnerable to an attack on their right flank. He examined the terrain and the reports of Union movements to his south and east, and he analyzed potential defensive positions between Spotsylvania and Hanover Junction. He did not want to give up too much ground, but there were very few, if any, defensible positions before the North Anna River. In the end, the Southern commander decided to pull back to the North Anna line. He informed Richmond of his decision and set his corps in motion. Hill's corps moved on a route west of the main Confederate forces. Ewell and Anderson moved down Telegraph Road. They were just ahead of the Federals on this very same road, and the opposing units barely missed colliding at an obscure location known as Madison's Ordinary. Without Sheridan's cavalry, the Northerners marched blindly to the south and never realized that the Confederates were nearby. The Confederates, better informed by their cavalry, pressed south, just barely ahead of the Union forces on Telegraph Road.

Burnside's IX Corps moved on its route between Warren and Hancock without opposition throughout 21 and 22 May. Early in the march, Burnside set up his headquarters at Bethel Church. After departing Guinea Station, Grant and Meade stopped at Bethel Church to confer with Burnside before moving further south to set up their headquarters for the North Anna battle.

In the meantime, Hancock advanced on the Union army's most eastern route and arrived late on 21 May at Milford Station. Hancock was fortunate that he had the only available Union cavalry under his control—an ad hoc collection of various small units under the temporary command of Brigadier General Alfred Torbert. The Federal troops fought a sharp engagement with Confederate cavalry and cleared the path for Hancock's advance. In addition, the Union soldiers captured some prisoners from the trains at the station who indicated that Pickett's division was being sent by rail from Richmond to reinforce Lee. After taking the station, and holding the position for a day, Hancock's corps veered back to the southwest and continued its advance. Roughly following the rail line, the II Corps moved toward the bridge on the North Anna near Chesterfield.

All of the Union corps was converging on the North Anna by 23 May, but they were one step behind the Confederates who were setting up defensive positions on the river line. Both Grant and Meade were unsure of Lee's intentions as they established their headquarters at Mount Carmel Church on Telegraph Road several miles north of the North Anna. Both staffs were co-located, as they had been on many occasions, and they placed wooden planks across the church pews on which they spread their maps and set to work. On the surface, Grant, Meade, and their respective staffs continued to function relatively well despite the awkward command relationship. However, Meade's nerves were wearing thin, and the period from the battles on the North Anna through Cold Harbor was probably the low point in the relationship between the general in chief and his army commander. Grant never showed outward signs of irritation, but he certainly must have felt frustration over the Army of the Potomac's sluggish movements and Lee's skillful countermoves. Meade also kept his feelings private, but his letters to his wife showed a growing exasperation over newspaper reports that gave all credit to Grant (and blamed all mistakes on Meade). He also took a certain satisfaction in noting that Grant was beginning to realize that Lee was a difficult opponent who was not like some of the mediocre leaders that Grant had opposed in the western theater. Despite these grumblings, Grant and Meade worked through their problems and showed a remarkable degree of professionalism considering the difficulties of their situation.

The Confederate command situation was also strained as battle loomed on the North Anna. Both A.P. Hill and Dick Ewell were ill and seemed incapable of exercising any initiative. R.H. Anderson was healthy, but still inexperienced. Lee was on horseback for the better part of two days before arriving at his new headquarters at Hanover Junction. As evidenced by his repeated attempts to lead counterattacks in the Wilderness and at Spotsylvania, Lee felt compelled to intervene personally into the tactical aspects of the campaign. Without Jackson and Longstreet, Lee was ruining his health while closely supervising his corps commanders. The physically demanding ride to Hanover Junction added to his exhaustion, and by 23 May, Lee was seriously ill.

In addition, Lee had hoped to gain some time to rest his troops on the North Anna. However, although Lee had correctly anticipated the path of the Union advance, he failed to account for Grant's determination to push rapidly across the river. In fact, Lee's forces moved at a relatively leisurely pace, and they barely arrived on the North Anna ahead of the Federals. His troops occupied positions both north and south of the river, but had little time to prepare their defenses. One piece of good news for the Confederates was the arrival of Breckinridge's division from the Shenandoah Valley. Breckinridge had repulsed Sigel's advance in the Valley, and while the Union forces pulled back to lick their wounds, Lee was able to get Breckinridge and part of his force transferred to the Army of Northern Virginia.

After the various moves of Union and Confederate units, Warren's V Corps approached the North Anna on 23 May. Grant pressed Meade to get Warren across the river as soon as possible. The V Corps soldiers pushed across a ford at Jericho Mills later that afternoon. At 1600, Hancock attacked a Confederate redoubt under Colonel John Henegan (from Kershaw's division of Anderson's I Corps) north of the river that blocked the direct route on Telegraph Road to Hanover Junction. After a short fight, the Federals occupied the north bank at Chesterfield Bridge, and Hancock was poised to cross the river and press the Southern right flank.

In the meantime, Warren's corps fought a series of sharp engagements after crossing Jericho Mills that included several tactical setbacks for the North, but ultimately secured a position for the Union forces south of the river. During this fight, some old and normally reliable Union units (the Iron Brigade and Pennsylvania Bucktails) were forced to retreat when Wilcox's division (Hill's III Corps) struck them with a sharp counterattack. However, Hill failed to bring up Heth's division in time to support Wilcox's attack, and the Union V Corps' Regulars backed by artillery under Colonel Charles Wainwright forced the Confederates to retreat. During this seesaw

fight, Maryland troops, fighting on the Union side, rushed across a bridge, and after pushing retreating fellow Federals into the water, the Marylanders helped to throw back Wilcox's assaults. Union soldiers were now securely positioned across the North Anna on Lee's left and Union forces were ready to press across the Chesterfield Bridge on Lee's right. By the end of 23 May, Lee knew that he could no longer defend along the length of the North Anna River itself, and he searched for a new alternative to defend his position.

On the evening of 23 May, Lee held a meeting at his headquarters near Hanover Junction to discuss his options with staff and subordinate commanders. Lee conducted the meeting superbly. First, he directed arriving forces (Pickett's, Rodes' and Gordon's divisions) to a central position on the Virginia Central Railroad where they could be deployed to either flank as needed. Then, he asked for opinions as to whether the Army of Northern Virginia should withdraw or defend its current positions. Everyone agreed that Hanover Junction was too crucial to abandon, and thus withdrawal was out of the question. But with his flanks threatened, Lee knew that he could not regain the river line, and he asked his officers to suggest alternate positions. The Confederate engineers were divided on their opinions of potential positions for the Southern right flank at the Chesterfield Bridge. One option was to continue to hold on the banks of the river and contest the Federal crossing. Another choice was to pull slightly south of the river to some high ground at the Fox house. The final option was for the Confederates to pull further away from the river to a swampy area south and west of the Fox house.

Lee listened to the suggestions and developed a brilliant plan. Hill's corps would adjust its line on the Confederate left occupying a naturally strong position between the North Anna and Little Rivers. On the right flank, Lee opted to pull back to the defensible swampy terrain south of the Fox house. Kershaw and Field's divisions (from Anderson's corps), Breckinridge's independent division, and Rodes' division (from Ewell's corps) were to occupy this line. Early's and Gordon's divisions (from Ewell's corps), as well as Pickett's division (Anderson's corps), were designated as a reserve and positioned in a central location in the Confederate rear. Only the Confederate center (Mahone's division) remained on the North Anna. Thus, the Southern line formed an inverted "V" with the tip in an almost impregnable position on the riverbank. Lee ordered the troops on both sides of the "V" to entrench their positions as extensively as possible, but his intentions were anything but defensive. Instead, Lee fortified his positions to minimize the number of troops in the front lines, thus keeping a large number of units in reserve. He hoped that the Union forces would

take the bait and advance across the river on one or both of the flanks. If this happened, Grant's forces would be split, and Union reinforcements going from one flank to another would have to cross the North Anna twice. With his large reserve and advantage of interior lines, Lee could then launch an attack on either flank and destroy the Union forces in detail.

Lee had created an excellent plan, and his mind was as sharp as ever. However, after two days of riding and the late night meeting, the Confederate commander's health had reached the breaking point. He had a fever and was exhausted. His bad health showed early in the morning when he set out to inspect the Southern positions. After placing Breckinridge's division, Lee rode over to Hill's positions. Uncharacteristically, Lee snapped at Hill over the III Corps commander's performance in yesterday's battle: "Why did you not do as Jackson would have done—thrown your whole force upon these people and driven them back?" (As quoted by Rhea, *To the North Anna River*, p. 326 from a letter, Jedediah Hotchkiss to Henry Alexander White, January 12, 1897, in Hotchkiss Collection, Library of Congress.) This loss of temper was a clear sign of his poor health and fatigue, and an ominous sign that Lee's brilliant planning might come to naught.

On the Union side, the Federal leadership began to evince a growing sense of optimism even though the overall picture on the North Anna was still unclear. At their headquarters at Mount Carmel Church, Grant and Meade ordered Warren to take advantage of his crossing at Jericho Mills and press the Confederate left flank. Wright was to cross the river with his VI Corps and support Warren. At 0700, the Union leaders interviewed two slaves who had left the Doswell Farm (near the far end of Lee's right flank). The slaves stated that their owner had left the area and that the entire Confederate army was in retreat. This piece of news—even though false—encouraged Grant and Meade who ordered Hancock to accelerate his crossing at Chesterfield Bridge. They reasoned that if the Confederates were abandoning the river line and Hanover Junction, the Federals might have a chance to crush the Southerners while they were in the process of moving.

At about 0800 on 24 May, Hancock crossed the North Anna. Gibbon's division crossed on a makeshift pontoon bridge just east of Telegraph Road while Birney's division took Chesterfield Bridge itself. Within an hour, the II Corps had taken the Fox house and its surrounding high ground. In the meantime, on the other Union flank Warren groped slowly to the south. On both flanks, the Union forces had not faced any serious Confederate opposition (this was because they had not yet stumbled on the main Southern positions), and their reports to the Union headquarters encouraged Grant

and Meade to push their offensive even harder. They ordered Burnside, whose IX Corps was positioned between Hancock and Warren, to get across the North Anna, seize Ox Ford, and link the two Union flanks. The Union leaders believed that all of Lee's army was in retreat, so they did not anticipate that Burnside would face much of a problem.

Burnside attempted to comply with these instructions. His first plan called for two regiments to take the ford with the help of massed IX Corps artillery on the north bank. By 1000, these regiments were in position on a small island in the North Anna across from Ox Ford awaiting a bugle call to signal the attack. However, at the last minute, Burnside canceled the attack. This was certainly a wise decision; Mahone's Confederates were firmly entrenched on a bluff on the other side of the river and would have easily repulsed the attack with significant casualties to the Union regiments.

Burnside now decided on a different plan. Earlier in the morning, Crawford's division of the V Corps had moved south of the river and uncovered a crossing site at Quarles' Mill. Burnside directed Major General Thomas L. Crittenden's division to cross at this site and to advance along the southern bank of the river, thus flanking the Confederates at Ox Ford. The IX Corps commander, like Grant and Meade, assumed that the tough Confederate defense at Ox Ford was merely a covering position for the Confederate withdrawal, and he believed that the Southerners would retreat without a major assault. Crittenden understood Burnside's intent, and he directed his leading brigade under Brigadier General James H. Ledlie to cross at Quarles' Mill and move slowly down the riverbank to cover the crossing of the rest of the division. Ledlie's men began their crossing at 1400.

Unfortunately for the Union, Crittenden was at best a mediocre commander and Ledlie was an incompetent drunk. Crittenden, who had earlier been removed from corps command in the western theater for his poor performance at Chickamauga, showed little energy as he sluggishly moved his division across the river (by 1800, he still had not brought his last brigade over the North Anna). Ledlie, clearly intoxicated, ignored Crittenden's orders not to attack the entrenched Confederates. The result was a disastrous charge by Ledlie's brigade against Mahone's and Brigadier General Edward A. Perry's fortified lines. Canister and rifle fire raked the Federal attackers as they advanced across open ground. Union losses were heavy without having any effect on the Southern defenses. This sad and unnecessary episode alerted Union commanders to the fact that the Southerners still held Ox Ford in strength.

By the time of Ledlie's debacle, the Union forces had advanced into the vulnerable position that Lee had so desired. The V and VI Corps on the west were separated from the IX Corps by the North Anna, and likewise, the river bend cut between the IX Corps and the II Corps on the east. Lee seemed to sense this, but his health failed him at this opportune moment. The Confederate commander, confined to his bed and nearly delirious from fever, shouted, "We must strike them a blow—we must never let them pass us again—we must strike them a blow" (Charles S. Venable, "The Campaign from the Wilderness to Petersburg," in *Southern Historical Society Papers* [hereafter referred to as *SHSP*], volume 14, Richmond, VA: 1873, 535). As pugnacious as ever, Lee was too ill to lead the attack himself, nor would he trust his subordinate commanders to carry out the operation on their own.

Late on the evening of 24 May, Grant and Meade realized the vulnerable position of their forces. They stopped all attacks and ordered their troops to entrench. In addition, they directed the construction of additional bridges on the North Anna so that the separated corps could move reinforcements more rapidly to each other. By midday on 25 May, the Union army, although still in an awkward position, was better prepared to resist a Confederate attack. The Union command waited one more day in position before withdrawing to the north side of the river on 26 May and setting a new plan in motion.

Unlike the earlier struggles in the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, the fighting on the North Anna was relatively light and casualties were mercifully low. Even so, the results were similar: the Union forces had begun with a move around Lee's right flank that forced Lee to give ground, but the skillful Confederate commander had reacted fast enough to achieve a tactical stalemate. Lee had even created a superb opportunity to launch a major Southern attack, but due to his illness and the lack of experience and initiative in his subordinate commanders, this assault never occurred. Even so, Grant continued to retain the strategic and operational initiative. Grant remained determined in his objective and flexible in his methods. However, because of Lee's inability to launch an attack, the Union commander came away from the North Anna with the mistaken impression that the Confederates were worn out and on the verge of collapse. This incorrect view of the Southern army's morale may have factored into the tragic Union assault at Cold Harbor that occurred one week later.

Yellow Tavern

During the struggle on the North Anna River, Sheridan's cavalry returned from its long raid that had begun with the argument between

Meade and Sheridan at Todd's Tavern during the march to Spotsylvania. It is useful to go back and trace Sheridan's raid and Stuart's response, which ultimately led to the cavalry battle at Yellow Tavern, because the raid had a significant impact on the movements of both armies and on the course of the Overland Campaign.

As mentioned earlier, Meade and Sheridan had engaged in a shouting match on the night of 8 May after Sheridan's cavalry had failed to clear the road to Spotsylvania for the Union infantry. Meade informed Grant of the argument, probably hoping that the general in chief would side with the army commander and chastise the fiery—and insubordinate—Sheridan. However, when Meade told Grant that Sheridan boasted that he could whip Jeb Stuart if given the chance for independent operations, Grant seemed intrigued. He asked Meade, "Did Sheridan say that?" And then added, "Well, he generally knows what he is talking about. Let him start right out and do it" (Horace Porter, *Campaigning with Grant*, New York, NY: Century Publishing, 1897, 29).

With this casual comment, Grant set Sheridan's cavalry in motion, but the general in chief's decision revealed several flaws. First, Grant never resolved the conflict between Meade and Sheridan. Some historians have proposed that Grant may have intended avoiding command conflict by separating Sheridan from Meade. Whether or not this was the case, the festering relationship between the army commander and his cavalry leader could not be fixed with a temporary separation of the generals and would only worsen when Sheridan returned. Second, the departure of the Union cavalry left Grant and Meade without adequate reconnaissance capability. This error was compounded when Sheridan asked for, and received, permission to take all three of his divisions on the raid. Stuart, gradually reacting to Sheridan's move, left three brigades of his cavalry with Lee's army. Thus for the next two weeks, Grant and Meade were virtually "blind," while Lee remained well informed of his opponent's locations.

Sheridan set out on the morning of 9 May. His command consisted of three divisions totaling 10,000 horsemen with 32 guns. All told, his advancing column was 13 miles long as it marched. The Northern cavalry began traveling to the northwest to loop around the infantry forces locked in combat at Spotsylvania. Then the Union troops turned southwest toward the North Anna River and Richmond. Sheridan deliberately maintained a slow pace because his main intent was to draw Stuart into battle.

Stuart detected Sheridan's move almost immediately, and on 9 May, he sent a brigade to harass the Union column from the rear. Later in the day, he devised a plan for stopping Sheridan. He sent another brigade to

pursue the Federals and placed both Confederate brigades under Major General Fitzhugh Lee. Stuart took one brigade under his personal command and attempted to move on a parallel path that would allow him to block Sheridan's route. Although heavily outnumbered, Stuart hoped to catch the Union forces in a vulnerable position while crossing the North Anna.

Stuart's troops arrived too late to catch the Federals crossing the river. Most of the Union cavalry was across the North Anna by 10 May, and they destroyed the Confederate supply depot on the Virginia Central Railroad at Beaver Dam Station. In fact, Southern guards detected Sheridan's approach and set fire to most of the supplies before the Federals had arrived. The Confederates lost three weeks' worth of rations for the Army of Northern Virginia. Brigadier General Wesley Merritt's Union division pushed 10 miles south of Beaver Dam Station, destroying railroad tracks (which the Confederates later repaired without much difficulty), burning rolling stock (which was more harmful to the Southerners), and liberating 378 Federal prisoners.

Also on 10 May, Stuart changed his plans. He notified Jefferson Davis' military advisor, General Braxton Bragg, of Sheridan's approach toward Richmond. Stuart wanted Bragg to use the Richmond garrison, positioned in the city's fortifications, to assist in blocking the Union cavalry. He then joined Fitzhugh Lee's two brigades and rode to the east of the Union force in an effort to join the garrison in repulsing the Union cavalry. This left one Confederate brigade following Sheridan's force. If Stuart's blocking force could engage the Union cavalry and keep them distracted, the trailing Southern brigade might be able to hit Sheridan's rear and inflict a major defeat on the Union force.

After some hard riding, Stuart's blocking force reached the outskirts of Richmond ahead of the Union cavalry on the morning of 11 May. The Confederate cavalry commander decided to deploy his troops forward of the Richmond fortifications to try and buy more time for Bragg to concentrate the units from the garrison on the north side of the capital. Stuart selected a position at the point where Telegraph and Mountain Roads joined Brook Turnpike, a major artery into Richmond and Sheridan's most likely approach route. Near an abandoned inn called Yellow Tavern, the Confederates adopted an unusual L-shaped formation with one leg jutting toward the approaching Union column. It appears that Stuart hoped to catch the Federals in an ambush where one leg of the "L" could catch Sheridan's force in the flank as it moved down Brook Turnpike.

Merritt's Union division was the first to approach Stuart's position.

Rather than advancing into Stuart's trap, Merritt deployed his brigades against the advanced leg of the Confederate "L." After about an hour of fighting, Merritt forced the Confederate left flank back, but the Southerners established a new position that repulsed the Federals. As the afternoon approached, Sheridan waited for Brigadier General James H. Wilson's division to arrive before launching a new assault, and a lull descended on the battlefield.

During this time, Stuart gained confidence in his chances for the upcoming fight. After the morning's struggle, the Confederate position had become a straight line that was strongly posted on some high ground near Yellow Tavern. In addition, Stuart received word that 4,000 men from the Richmond garrison were on the way and that the Confederate brigade trailing Sheridan's column had pushed back the Union rear guard. The Confederate commander believed that he might yet trap Sheridan between two Southern forces and decisively defeat the Federals with the help of the Richmond reinforcements.

Stuart's hopes, however, were not to be realized. First, the Union rear guard, Brigadier General David M. Gregg's division, turned on the pursuing Confederate brigade and routed it near Allen's Station. More significantly, Sheridan launched a late afternoon attack that overwhelmed Stuart's line at Yellow Tavern. The Union attack was spearheaded by Brigadier General George A. Custer's brigade, which took a battery of Confederate artillery near the center of the Southern line. On Custer's left, part of Wilson's division overlapped Stuart's right flank, while one of his brigades penetrated the Confederate center.

Stuart personally led a mounted countercharge with his meager reserves. In the resulting melee, a Union soldier, Private John A. Huff of the 5th Michigan Cavalry Regiment, who had lost his horse and was fighting on foot, managed to get right next to Stuart and fire his pistol into Stuart's side. Several Southern soldiers managed to move the severely wounded Stuart to a calmer mount and escort him out of the battle. After turning command over to Fitzhugh Lee, Stuart transferred to an ambulance, which took him to a physician's house in Richmond. Stuart died on the evening of 12 May.

Meanwhile at Yellow Tavern, Fitzhugh Lee was unable to restore the Confederate line, and the Southern cavalry retreated, leaving open the Brook Turnpike. It appeared that Sheridan could enter the capital, but Bragg's troops were starting to file into the Richmond entrenchments in front of Sheridan, and the fortifications were formidable. In addition, the Union cavalry leader recognized that even if he entered the capital, he

could only stay for a short time. Rather than risk being trapped in the city, Sheridan decided to skirt Richmond and travel east where he could link up with Butler's Army of the James.

The Federal cavalry set out on 12 May and soon reached Meadow Bridge on the Chickahominy River. Sheridan wanted to get his troops to the north side of the river and use the Chickahominy to shield his movement from Confederate attacks to his flank as he moved. A Southern detachment had partially damaged the bridge, and the Union column was delayed while they made repairs. Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry and Bragg's (Richmond) infantry harassed the Federals, but Sheridan managed to get all three divisions across the river by the evening of 12 May. The Federal march continued uneventfully on 13 May. The next day, the Union cavalry recrossed the Chickahominy at Bottom's Bridge, and by the end of the day, they had reached Butler's army at Haxall's Landing on the James River.

The value of Sheridan's foray remains a point of historical debate. The Federals lost 625 men, but they had inflicted losses on Southerners that included taking 300 Confederate prisoners while liberating almost 400 Union prisoners. Sheridan's men had destroyed a considerable amount of Confederate supplies, and most spectacularly of all, they had killed Jeb Stuart. Even so, some of these successes were of limited utility. The Confederates took some time to replace their lost rations, but they repaired the destroyed rail lines quickly. In addition, the loss of Stuart, while tragic, was not as detrimental as might be thought because his eventual replacement, Major General Wade Hampton, was also an outstanding cavalry leader. Finally, whatever the benefits of the raid, Sheridan made a mistake by taking all of his divisions and leaving Grant and Meade only a handful of cavalry for reconnaissance and screening duties.

After resting and refitting for four days at Haxall's Landing, Sheridan's force set out to the north to rejoin Meade's army. Slowed by heavy rains, the Union cavalry stopped south of the swollen Pamunkey River at a small port called White House. His forces repaired a destroyed railroad bridge and crossed the Pamunkey on 22 and 23 May. The Union troops continued north to King William Courthouse before rejoining the Army of the Potomac on the North Anna on 24 May.

Cold Harbor

After the actions on the North Anna, and with Sheridan's cavalry back from its raid, Grant and Meade made plans for their next move. Once again, the Union leaders decided to sidle to the southeast in an attempt to turn Lee's right flank. The new move required another shift in base, this time from Port Royal on the Rappahannock River to White House

Landing on the Pamunkey River. The Federal supply services and navy skillfully conducted the change of base while the Union army made its move. In addition, the Union command arrangements improved when Grant finally placed Burnside's IX Corps officially under Meade's command in the Army of the Potomac on 24 May. Despite the excellent logistics support and better command structure, the Union army was clearly showing signs of exhaustion after several weeks of constant marching and fighting. Soldiers and staff officers were becoming weary and finding it increasingly more difficult to execute Grant's aggressive plans.

The Federals began their move early on 27 May. The Union army traveled in two columns: the V and IX Corps on the southern route and the II and VI Corps moving parallel and slightly to the north. Using the Pamunkey River to guard their flank, the leading Union forces advanced to a crossing point at the small village of Hanovertown. On 28 May, led by Sheridan's cavalry, the V and IX Corps crossed the Pamunkey at Hanovertown and edged south toward Totopotomoy Creek in order to reestablish contact with Lee's forces. The VI and II Corps crossed at Huntley's Crossing, several miles northwest of Hanovertown.

Lee detected the Union move away from the North Anna; he correctly foresaw Grant's move to the southeast, but was not sure how far the Union forces intended to move. He decided to shift his forces to a position centered on Atlee's Station, located on the Virginia Central Railroad. Hill's III Corps moved to a position north of Atlee's Station, while Breckinridge's division moved to Hill's right, just north and east of the station. Both commands were protected by Totopotomoy Creek. Curving to the south, the Confederate line was continued by Anderson's corps and then Ewell's corps (now commanded by Early due to Ewell's illness) on the far right covering Shady Grove Church Road and Mechanicsville Turnpike (also called the Old Church Road). The Confederate lines near Atlee's Station put the Southern forces in an excellent position to counter either a short Union flanking movement or a deeper move down the Pamunkey.

While repositioning his forces, Lee took several other actions. He placed Ewell on an indefinite medical leave, thus giving permanent command of the II Corps to Jubal Early. Ewell's physical condition and his performance had been spotty in the Overland Campaign, and, despite Ewell's claim of fitness, Lee used the health issue to remove Ewell from command as tactfully as possible. In addition, Lee met with Beauregard at the former's headquarters at Atlee's Station on 29 May. There is no record of their conversation, but Lee probably used the opportunity to ask Beauregard for reinforcements. Beauregard had only about 12,000 men in

the Petersburg and Richmond area, and it appears that for the moment he told Lee he could spare no men. After the meeting, Lee continued to press vigorously for reinforcements, and on 30 May Beauregard relented, sending Major General Robert F. Hoke's division to join Lee.

As Confederate infantry marched to their new positions, Lee ordered cavalry under Major General Wade Hampton to probe the Federals and determine their intent. On 28 May, Hampton advanced with two brigades toward a small crossroads called Haw's Shop. At midmorning, Hampton's force collided with the Union's 2d Cavalry Division under Major General David Gregg. The battle seesawed back and forth for several hours until the arrival of Custer's Michigan brigade, which launched an attack that drove Hampton's cavalry from the field. During the conflict, Private John Huff of the 5th Michigan Cavalry, the man credited for killing Stuart at Yellow Tavern, was killed. Tactically, the conflict was a Union victory; however, the Federal cavalry did not follow up their victory, and they failed to obtain detailed information on the Confederate positions. After the battle, Hancock's II Corps relieved the Union cavalry, which was then repositioned on the Union left flank and rested the next day. On the other hand, Hampton had taken some Union prisoners who revealed the locations of the advancing Northern infantry.

On 29 May, Grant and Meade ordered their infantry corps to advance toward the suspected Southern positions with one division in front as a reconnaissance in force. As the Federals approached Totopotomoy Creek, they found the Confederates entrenched and well positioned to repel an attack. The Northerners paused as they approached their foes; this delay presented an opportunity for a Southern offensive. The Totopotomoy split the advancing Union forces into two parts and left them vulnerable. Wright's and Hancock's corps were north of the Creek, while Burnside's corps and Warren's corps were to the south.

On 30 May, Early launched Major General Robert Rodes' division against the Union left flank at Bethesda Church. The initial assault routed part of Brigadier General Samuel Crawford's V Corps division. Rodes, however, was unsupported, and the V Corps artillery reserve forced his division to stop. During the pause, Warren brought up reinforcements that stabilized the Union line. Early ordered a renewed assault with Brigadier General Stephen D. Ramseur's division in the lead, but the Federals, now ready to receive an attack, easily repulsed Ramseur's soldiers who suffered heavily. Early later blamed Anderson for not supporting the II Corps attack, but Early's own assaults were also not well coordinated. In any case, the Federal left flank remained secure.

During the fighting at Bethesda Church, Grant and Meade had ordered Wright and Hancock to probe Lee's positions to see if they were vulnerable to attack. The Union command thought that the Confederates might have a weak spot in their thinly stretched lines, especially if they had shifted reinforcements to Early's corps for his attack. For the next two days, there was some moderate fighting, but the Union corps commanders concluded that the entrenched Southern lines could not be taken. The awkward position of the Union army astride the Totopotomoy and swampy terrain in front of Wright's VI Corps added to the arguments against assaulting the Confederates, forcing Grant to search for alternatives.

One encouraging piece of news for the Army of the Potomac was that it was about to receive significant reinforcements before its next battle—the XVIII Corps under Major General William F. "Baldy" Smith. Smith's force came from Butler's Army of the James, which was located on a peninsula, called Bermuda Hundred, formed by the James and Appomattox Rivers about midway between Petersburg and Richmond. Grant's original plan for the Virginia theater had anticipated a significant role for Butler's force, which was supposed to advance on Richmond while Meade's army engaged Lee's forces. Beauregard's Confederates halted the Union advance at Bermuda Hundred, and Butler has ever since been criticized for a lackluster effort. While Butler certainly made mistakes, his efforts were hindered by two factors. First, Grant's initial plan foresaw the Army of the Potomac linking up with Butler's forces near Richmond 10 days after the start of the campaign. Butler was in position at that time (14–15 May), but Meade's army was still enmeshed in the fighting at Spotsylvania, throwing off the Union timetable. Second, Butler was ill served by his two corps commanders who disliked both each other and Butler. One of those commanders was Smith. Known as "Baldy" in the prewar Regular Army, Smith was a favorite of Grant's due to Smith's engineering work during the Chattanooga Campaign. However, since joining the Army of the James, Smith had actively conspired to discredit Butler and get his corps transferred away from Butler's command. Whatever his methods, Smith got his wish.

On 28 May, Smith's troops boarded transports at City Point on the James to begin a move by sea designed to bring his corps to the support of the Army of the Potomac. In reality, Smith did not command his organic corps; due to the positioning of various units at Bermuda Hundred, Smith had to leave behind part of his own corps while receiving other cross-attached units in compensation. Smith's composite corps (still labeled the XVIII Corps) sailed down the James to the Atlantic and then back up

the Pamunkey River. Late on the morning of 30 May, the XVIII Corps began to arrive at White House on the Pamunkey. As Smith's troops disembarked, Grant set his sights on a new target. The Union commander directed another move around Lee's right flank to the small crossroads of Cold Harbor.

Cold Harbor was a key intersection where five roads met. In fact, this road junction was actually known as Old Cold Harbor; there was an abandoned inn called New Cold Harbor about one mile to the west of the road junction. In any case, the Union forces needed to possess Old Cold Harbor (hereafter, Cold Harbor) in order to control the roads that led around Lee's flank. Sheridan's cavalry advanced toward Cold Harbor on 31 May. Wright's VI Corps began a move from the Union right flank, behind the entire Federal army, to where it could join with Smith's XVIII Corps to give infantry support for Sheridan's cavalry on 1 June.

Late in the afternoon of 31 May, Sheridan's cavalry drove Fitzhugh Lee's troops from Cold Harbor. However, that evening Sheridan grew nervous when he received word that Confederate reinforcements from Richmond (Hoke's division) would arrive at Cold Harbor the next morning. The Union commander informed Meade of his concerns and began to pull back. Meade replied with a vigorous order to hold Cold Harbor at all costs until the arrival of Wright's VI Corps. The Union cavalry reoccupied its positions and constructed hasty earthworks in anticipation of a Confederate attack. Hoke's men, soon joined by Kershaw's division of Anderson's corps, launched several attacks on the morning of 1 June, but Sheridan's men stopped the Southern infantry with surprising ease. The firepower of the Federal cavalry's repeating rifles and single shot breechloaders wreaked havoc on the advancing Confederates. Wright's men arrived at about 1000, and both sides began to dig in.

Although Cold Harbor was safely in Union hands, their victory was incomplete. The Federals needed to drive Hoke's and Anderson's men from their positions blocking the road to Richmond, and then Grant would be between Lee's main force and the capital. Wright's men were tired after their all-night march, but they were ready to attack in the early afternoon. However, they needed Smith's corps to add weight to the attack in order to achieve a sufficient advantage over the Confederates, but the XVIII Corps was delayed. The problem was caused by an error in Union staff work, which mistakenly sent Smith's corps to New Castle Ferry on the Pamunkey instead of Cold Harbor. Smith finally received corrected orders on the morning of 1 June, and after a hard march on dusty roads, the XVIII Corps arrived on the VI Corps' right flank.

By late afternoon, the Federals were ready to launch their combined assault. The Confederates had thrown up some abatis, but they did not have enough time to build extensive earthworks. The two Union corps pushed the Southerners back in several places and achieved a significant breakthrough on the Confederate right. Anderson plugged the gap with his only reserve brigade, and the exhausted Federals were halted as night fell. The attack had cost the VI and XVIII Corps 2,200 troops, but they had inflicted similar casualties on their opponents and had taken 750 prisoners. Nevertheless, the limited Union success had not decisively defeated Lee's forces blocking the road to Richmond.

Grant and Meade realized they had gained an advantage on 1 June, and they hoped to turn that into a decisive victory with a morning attack on 2 June. They directed Hancock's II Corps to make a night march to the far left of the Union position and join the VI and XVIII Corps in a combined assault. The plan looked promising, but the exhausted Union subordinate leaders, staff officers, and soldiers were simply not up to rapid and complex maneuvers after a month of constant action. Smith reported that his men were ill positioned after their attacks, and that it would take time to reposition them during the night and to bring up a fresh supply of ammunition from the corps trains that were still positioned on roads well to his rear. Worse yet, Hancock's corps started late, took a wrong road on the advice of guides from Meade's headquarters, and ended up marching several extra miles before doubling back to get on the correct road. After an all-night march in choking dust, the lead element had barely reached Cold Harbor on the morning of 2 June, while the rest of the corps with trains and artillery were strung out for several miles on the march route. The Union forces were clearly not ready to launch an attack on the morning of 2 June.

The Union commanders initially postponed the attack to the afternoon of 2 June. However, after reconsidering the status of his troops, Grant decided to postpone the assault to the morning of 3 June. It seems that Grant may have also felt that while Lee could have shifted some reinforcements to Cold Harbor, the Union troops and leaders would benefit from the extra time to prepare a well-coordinated attack. Whatever the Union commander's intent, the decision to attack proved disastrous.

The delay in the Union assault gave the Confederates an opportunity to transfer reinforcements to their threatened flank, and perhaps more importantly, it gave them time to improve their entrenchments. Early on 2 June, Breckinridge's command was positioned on Hoke's right, and later that day, part of Hill's corps moved from the far left of the Southern

position to the right of Breckinridge. All along the line, the Southerners perfected their positions, digging better trenches and sighting their lines at angles to bring advancing Union troops under devastating flanking fire. In Kershaw's sector, where Smith's troops had made some headway near a ravine on 1 June, Brigadier General Evander M. Law repositioned his division to cover the ravine and rake any Federal assault with cannon and musket fire. The Confederates were so confident of their fieldworks that Anderson and Hill pulled troops out of the line to create extensive reserves that could block any Union penetrations.

Unfortunately for the Northern soldiers, their leadership's preparation was much less thorough than the preparation of their Southern opponents. Although Grant had become more heavily involved in the Army of the Potomac's tactics during the course of the campaign, he decided to give Meade complete tactical control of the assault (this included Smith's XVIII Corps, which had been temporarily attached to Meade's army). Meade issued vague instructions that did little more than give a start time for the attack. Smith offered to coordinate his attack with Wright, but the VI Corps commander gave a hazy reply; Hancock did not communicate directly with either of the other corps commanders. Except for some effort in the XVIII Corps area, the Union leaders failed to conduct reconnaissance.

The Union assault on 3 June was a costly failure. The only attack to achieve a modicum of success was on Hancock's front. In this area, some of Breckinridge's Confederate troops had to abandon their forward trenches, which had become flooded on the night of 2 June. Barlow's Union division found the opening and breached the Confederate line. However, the remainder of the II Corps did not advance at the same time, and Hill was able to use part of his reserve to throw the Federals back. Smith's corps advanced courageously—they had endured biting comments as "soft" soldiers from the Army of the Potomac's veterans and seemed anxious to prove themselves. Even so, the XVIII Corps was trapped in a murderous crossfire and suffered extensive casualties without penetrating the Southern lines. Between the II and XVIII Corps, Wright's VI Corps made only a token advance. Although the attacks were a dismal failure, reports of Barlow's minor success encouraged Meade to order renewed assaults. The corps commanders recognized the futility of these orders and merely intensified their skirmish firing before Meade finally called off the assaults later in the morning. Union casualties for the 3 June attacks were probably as high as 7,000 killed and wounded.

The bloody repulse of 3 June was the last major assault in the Cold Harbor area. For the next 10 days, both sides continued to dig and improve

their fieldworks while Grant worked out a new plan. Although both sides had used entrenchments extensively so far in the Overland Campaign, the pause at Cold Harbor gave the armies time to build extensive trench lines to a depth and complexity not seen before in the war. Almost every tree in the area was soon cut down, and the landscape began to resemble that of a World War I battlefield. Although there were no major assaults, snipers and artillery on both sides made life miserable for the soldiers.

On the Confederate side, Lee felt secure in his defensive position, but he was not sure what Grant would do next. He chafed at the stalemate, and on two occasions the Confederate commander even ordered attacks on the Union lines. The first of these turned into a light probe by Early's corps; the second was canceled at the last moment when Anderson convinced Lee that the Federal position was too strong. In the meantime, on 6 June Lee sent Breckinridge's division back to the Shenandoah Valley to counter a new advance by the Union forces under Major General David Hunter (Hunter had replaced Sigel after the latter's failed Valley offensive in May). Other than these few actions, Lee's army could do little more than keep a watchful eye on the Union forces.

Crossing the James

As the trench lines grew more extensive at Cold Harbor, Grant pondered his next move. So far in the Overland Campaign, the Federals had suffered staggering losses, and although they had inflicted considerable casualties on Lee's troops, they had not destroyed the Confederate army. Grant had retained the initiative and forced Lee back to the outskirts of Richmond; but ironically, the current Union proximity to the Confederate capital and the geography of the region restricted Grant's options. Lee's army was entrenched with its flanks protected by the Pamunkey and Totopotomoy Rivers to the north and the Chickahominy River to the south. If Grant wanted to make another short "hook" around Lee's right, the Union forces would need to cross the Chickahominy, but they would not be moving any closer to Richmond. Worse yet, even if they could cross the river without interference from Lee, the Federal forces would be in even more restricted terrain between the Chickahominy and James Rivers.

Faced with these problems, Grant made a bold choice. He decided to disengage completely from the Confederates at Cold Harbor, make a deep flanking march across the James River, and seize Petersburg. Petersburg, situated on the Appomattox River, was a key rail hub where several lines joined before continuing on to Richmond. By taking the city, Grant would cut many of the main supply routes for both the capital and Lee's army. There was a strong possibility that such a move would force Lee into open

battle to restore these supply lines. However, Grant's plan was also risky. It involved another shift of bases and a river crossing of unprecedented proportions. If Lee discovered the move at any time, he could strike the widely separated Union corps and destroy them in detail. The Federals needed to deceive Lee and move quickly to make the maneuver work.

Preparations for the move began on 6 June when Grant sent two of his aides, Lieutenant Colonel Horace Porter and Lieutenant Colonel Cyrus B. Comstock, to find a crossing site on the James. The next day, Sheridan took two of his three cavalry divisions on a raid to the west designed to cut the Virginia Central Railroad and create a diversion for Grant's major move to the south and east. Grant also ordered Meade to build a reserve line behind the Cold Harbor entrenchments that would be used to cover the move, and he sent word to the Union garrison at Fort Monroe to gather pontoons and bridge equipment in preparation for the river crossing. On 9 June, Grant began his shift of base from White House on the Pamunkey to City Point on the James and informed the War Department that all future reinforcements should go to City Point or Bermuda Hundred.

By 12 June, all preparations were complete, and the Union army began its operation. Smith's XVIII Corps was the first unit to move. His troops retraced their steps to White House where they boarded ships that carried them back down the Pamunkey, around the tip of the Virginia Peninsula, and up the James to Bermuda Hundred. Smith's troops were to rejoin Butler, but they also were later to play a major role in the attempt to take Petersburg.

The next units to move were Warren's V Corps and Wilson's cavalry division. Early in the evening of 12 June, the cavalry secured Long Bridge on the Chickahominy, and soon after, Warren's troops crossed the bridge and occupied a position at a small crossroads called Riddell's Shop. Warren's mission was to establish a blocking position to protect the move of the rest of the army and to deceive Lee into thinking Grant was only making a "short hook" between the Chickahominy and James Rivers. Warren performed his task skillfully. Throughout 13 June, he remained at Riddell's Shop and prevented Confederate probes from discovering and disrupting the Union moves. Late in the day, the V Corps displaced toward Charles City Courthouse before following the rest of the army across the James River.

In the meantime, the IX Corps had pulled out of the line and briefly followed the route to White House before turning south toward the Chickahominy, while the II and VI Corps pulled back to the reserve line at Cold Harbor to cover the other units' moves. On 13 June, the II Corps

crossed the Chickahominy at Long Bridge, passed to the east of V Corps, and reached the James at Wilcox's Landing. The VI Corps crossed the Chickahominy further east at Jones Bridge, soon followed by the IX Corps.

Although Grant had gained a slight advantage on Lee several times in the campaign, the crossing of the James was the first time Grant had truly "stolen a march" on his skillful adversary. Each night at Cold Harbor, Lee bombarded the Union lines to ensure the Federals were still in place. On the night of 12 June, the Confederate bombardment did not draw the usual response, and Lee grew suspicious. On the morning of 13 June, he detached Early's corps and sent it to the Shenandoah Valley to reinforce Breckinridge and counter Hunter's continued advance. His remaining two corps inched forward at Cold Harbor and discovered that the Federals were gone. Lee suspected Grant was making a short flanking move over the Chickahominy, and he ordered his two corps to cross the river and advance toward Riddell's Shop. The Southerners halted just short of Riddell's Shop at nightfall. The Confederate commander was without his cavalry, which was pursuing Sheridan's force to the west, and—like Grant earlier in the campaign—he was moving blindly. He ordered his infantry to advance beyond Riddell's Shop on 14 June, but by then Warren was gone. Lee had lost track of the Union army. He wired Davis that he suspected Grant might move south of the James, but the Confederate commander felt he could not shift his army to Petersburg until he confirmed that it was Grant's intended target.

In the meantime, the Army of the Potomac executed its river crossing. Part of the army crossed the James on transports at Wilcox's Landing, and part crossed on a pontoon bridge that was constructed nearby. The crossing sites were about 12 miles below City Point. In this area, the river was 2,100 feet wide and 80 feet deep. In addition, the Federals had to account for 4-foot tides. Union engineers began constructing the bridge from both banks simultaneously at 1600 on 14 June, and they finished at 2300. This remarkable engineering feat required 101 pontoons and three schooners anchored in the river. The bridge included a swinging span in the center that opened to allow river craft to get through to City Point.

The bridge handled most of the heavy traffic (wagons, artillery, and cavalry). The first to cross the bridge on 15 June were the trains, which totaled 50 miles in length. That evening, the IX Corps traversed the span, followed later the next day by one division of the VI Corps. Finally, on 17 June, Wilson's cavalry division crossed the bridge. On 18 June, Union engineers dismantled the bridge.

During this time, the bulk of the Union infantry were ferried across at Wilcox's Landing. Hancock's II Corps began embarking at midmorning on 14 June and was safely across the James by the next morning. Also on 14 June, Smith's XVIII Corps arrived by sea transports at Bermuda Hundred. The V Corps ferried across at Wilcox's Landing on 16 June. Later that day, two divisions of the VI Corps embarked at the landing and then sailed to Bermuda Hundred. All told, using the bridge and transports, 100,000 Federals, 5,000 wagons, 56,000 horses and mules, and 2,800 head of cattle were safely on the south side of the James by the morning of 17 June.

The initiation of the crossing of the James marks the formal end of the Overland Campaign. Grant's forces seemed poised to take Petersburg virtually unopposed, but they would eventually have to settle for a siege. The Confederate repulse of the initial Union assaults on the city marked the beginning of the Petersburg Campaign.

In the end, the Overland Campaign did not produce a decisive victory for either side. Lee continued to hold Richmond; but he had yielded most of northern Virginia and his Army had taken a pounding. Grant had retained the initiative and advanced to the gates of Richmond. However, his forces had taken horrific losses, and his shift to the Petersburg line of advance was an admission that his initial overland approach had run its course.

In fact, it was probably the equally matched skill of the two commanders that had placed them in this situation. Throughout the Overland Campaign, Grant had often conceived sound plans, and on several occasions, he had come close to decisively defeating Lee's army. However, Lee had countered Grant's moves masterfully and was able, sometimes just barely, to block the Union advances. On several occasions, these maneuvers had culminated in horrific battles, but neither side could gain a decisive advantage. With two such skillful commanders, it should not be surprising that the Overland Campaign was a bloody, yet indecisive, campaign. Despite the inconclusive results, the campaign is rich with material that remains relevant to today's military professional.

III. Suggested Routes and Stands

Introduction

The Overland Campaign was fought on several different battlefields and involved routes of march that stretched over 100 miles. This guide examines the entire campaign in a period of three days. However, groups wishing to conduct a ride of the Overland Campaign may not have a full three days available for the ride. In such cases, staff ride leaders may use a selected number of stands for a shorter ride (recommendations for modified rides are listed below). Keep in mind that the shorter the ride, the more likely the focus of analysis will shift from operational to tactical issues.

This staff ride involves significant car travel and some amount of walking. The large number of stands covers a wide variety of land with different sources of ownership and rules for access. The major battlefields are located mostly on lands with easy public access, and you can execute many of the other stands in parking lots or roadside "pull-overs" (a term used in this handbook to indicate a small area, sometimes just the shoulder of the road, where vehicles can park for a short time while conducting a stand).

Large areas of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania battlefields are preserved as part of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. This park, a unit of the National Park Service (NPS), covers the sites of four major Civil War battles: Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, and Spotsylvania. Only the latter two are part of the Overland Campaign.

Another series of engagements in the Overland Campaign occurred near the North Anna River. Unfortunately, much of the land in the area is private and inaccessible. However, an excellent stretch of ground (with preserved trenches) near Ox Ford is maintained in the North Anna Battlefield Park, a superb private and Hanover County joint venture.

The last major battle of the campaign was Cold Harbor. Like the North Anna battlefield, only a relatively small portion of the ground of the 3 June Cold Harbor battle is maintained by the NPS. A short distance from the Cold Harbor NPS unit, however, there is another part of the Cold Harbor battle area maintained by Hanover County, Virginia.

In sum, most of the crucial battlefield stands are on easily accessible federal, state, or county lands. Staff ride leaders should coordinate with the NPS headquarters of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania Park as well as the NPS headquarters at Cold Harbor prior to their visit. The North Anna site and Hanover County Cold Harbor Park do not require prior coordination

to visit. As always, staff ride leaders should execute a reconnaissance just prior to the ride to ensure all stands and routes are accessible.

On the other hand, the Yellow Tavern sites, and many of the other locations used for stands that cover operational movements, are located on road shoulders, business or church parking lots, and similar, small areas. Please exercise caution in parking and conducting your stands at these locations.

The best starting point for the Overland Staff Ride is Fredericksburg, where there is extensive lodging available for the staff ride group. Fredericksburg is also the starting point for day 2 of the ride. Ashland, Virginia, is the recommended starting point for day 3. Though smaller than Fredericksburg, Ashland has adequate lodging available and is best positioned for the first stand on day 3.

Overland Campaign Staff Ride Stands

Day 1
Stand 1, Campaign Overview
Stand 2, Germanna Ford
Stand 3, Wilderness Tavern
Stand 4, Saunders' Field
Stand 5, Higgerson's Field (Farm)
Stand 6, Intersection of Brock and Plank Roads
Stand 7, Tapp Farm ("Lee to the rear!")
Stand 8, Burning Breastworks
Stand 9, Gordon's Attack
Stand 10, Wilderness Summary and Next Movements
Stand 11, Todd's Tavern
Stand 12, Corbin's Bridge (drive-by)
Stand 13, Laurel Hill I
Stand 14, Laurel Hill II
Stand 15, Sedgwick's Death

Day 2
Stand 1, Po River and 10 May Attacks
Stand 2, Upton's Attack
Stand 3, East Angle (Confederate View)
Stand 4, Landrum Ridge (Union View, II Corps)
Stand 5, Angle I (Breakthrough)
Stand 6, McCoull House (Confederate Reactions)
Stand 7, Confederate Works
Stand 8, Angle II (Face of Battle)

Stand 9, Lee's Last Line
Stand 10, Harris Farm and Spotsylvania Summary
Stand 11, Massaponax Church
Stand 12, Motley House and Guinea (Guiney's) Station
Stand 13, Madison's Ordinary (drive-by)
Stand 14, New Bethel Church
Stand 15, Milford Station (Bowling Green)
Stand 16, Mount Carmel Church
Stand 17, Hanover Junction and Doswell
Stand 18, Jericho Mills
Stand 19, Ox Ford (Ledlie's Attack)
Stand 20, North Anna Summary

Day 3
Stand 1, Yellow Tavern I
Stand 2, Yellow Tavern II (Stuart's Death)
Stand 3, Atlee's Station
Stand 4, Haw's Shop
Stand 5, Bethesda Church (drive-by)
Stand 6, Cold Harbor I
Stand 7, Cold Harbor II (Confederate Positions)
Stand 8, Cold Harbor III (Union Positions)
Stand 9, Cold Harbor IV (Next 10 Days)
Stand 10, Cold Harbor to the James River
Stand 11, Riddell's Shop
Stand 12, Wilcox's Landing

Modifications to the Three-Day Staff Ride

Although the Overland Staff Ride is best executed as a three-day event, there are possible one- and two-day staff rides from the Overland Campaign that could still have great educational value. Below are some suggestions for structuring one- and two-day staff rides that best take advantage of the selection of stands from the full list of Overland Campaign stands.

The easiest plan for one-day staff rides is simply to execute any one of the three individual days as described in the stand list for that specific day. However, the "break point" between day 1 and day 2 does not fall at a natural division between historic events (i.e., day 1 ends in the midst of the Spotsylvania battle). Below are two other alternatives for one-day staff rides. The first covers the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, and the second covers North Anna and Cold Harbor. Both of these one-day rides would forgo much of the operational aspects of the Overland Campaign and focus instead on tactical actions, which might fit well for a younger military

audience such as Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), West Point, or Officer Candidate School (OCS) students. The staff ride leader should keep in mind that the list below only covers the physical stand locations; the material of the stands that has been removed should still be covered in abbreviated form to maintain the continuity of the ride. Finally, because of the large distances and amount of historical material covered, it is not possible to conduct a one-day ride for the entire campaign.

One-Day Wilderness and Spotsylvania Staff Ride

Stand 1, Wilderness Tavern (strategic overview and movements to the Wilderness)
Stand 2, Saunders' Field
Stand 3, Higgerson's Field (Farm)
Stand 4, Intersection of Brock and Plank Roads
Stand 5, Tapp Farm ("Lee to the rear!")
Stand 6, Burning Breastworks
Stand 7, Gordon's Attack
Stand 8, Wilderness Summary and Next Movements
Stand 9, Todd's Tavern
Stand 10, Corbin's Bridge (drive-by)
Stand 11, Laurel Hill (conduct the entire Laurel Hill battle [I and II] at the Laurel Hill I location; then use vehicles to get to Sedgwick Monument)
Stand 12, Sedgwick's Death (include Po River and 10 May Attacks)
Stand 13, Upton's Attack
Stand 14, East Angle (Confederate View)
Stand 15, Landrum Ridge (Union View, II Corps)
Stand 16, Conduct all of the following stands at the Bloody Angle: Angle I (Breakthrough), McCoull House (Confederate Reactions), Angle II (Face of Battle)
Stand 17, Lee's Last Line
Stand 18, Harris Farm and Spotsylvania Summary

One-Day North Anna and Cold Harbor Staff Ride

Stand 1, Mount Carmel Church (use this stand to set the operational situation leading up to the North Anna fight).
Stand 2, Hanover Junction and Doswell
Stand 3, Jericho Mills (conducted at Ox Ford parking lot)
Stand 4, Ox Ford (Ledlie's Attack)
Stand 5, North Anna Summary
Stand 6, Atlee's Station
Stand 7, Haw's Shop
Stand 8, Bethesda Church (drive-by)

Stand 9, Cold Harbor I
Stand 10, Cold Harbor II (Confederate Positions)
Stand 11, Cold Harbor III (Union Positions)
Stand 12, Cold Harbor IV (Next 10 Days)
Stand 13, Cold Harbor to the James River

Similar to the simple solution for a one-day ride, the easiest construct for a two-day staff ride is to execute either day 1 and day 2, or day 2 and day 3 as they are described later in this chapter. If conducting the days 2 and 3 option, the staff ride leader should begin with the Laurel Hill I as well as the Laurel Hill II and Sedgwick's Death stands from the end of the first day. Below is a possible two-day staff ride for the entire campaign. However, *caveat emptor*, this is a crowded two days that would be extremely difficult to perform.

Two-Day Overland Campaign Staff Ride

Day 1
Stand 1, Wilderness Tavern (strategic overview and movements to the Wilderness)
Stand 2, Saunders' Field
Stand 3, Intersection of Brock and Plank Roads
Stand 4, Tapp Farm ("Lee to the rear!")
Stand 5, Burning Breastworks, Gordon's Attack, Wilderness Summary, and Next Movements
Stand 6, Todd's Tavern
Stand 7, Corbin's Bridge (drive-by)
Stand 8, Laurel Hill I, Laurel Hill II
Stand 9, Sedgwick's Death, Po River, and 10 May Attacks
Stand 10, Upton's Attack
Stand 11, East Angle (Confederate View)
Stand 12, Landrum Ridge (Union View, II Corps)
Stand 13, Angle I (Breakthrough), McCoull House (Confederate Reactions), Confederate Works, and Angle II (Face of Battle), all conducted at Bloody Angle
Stand 14, Lee's Last Line
Stand 15, Harris Farm and Spotsylvania Summary

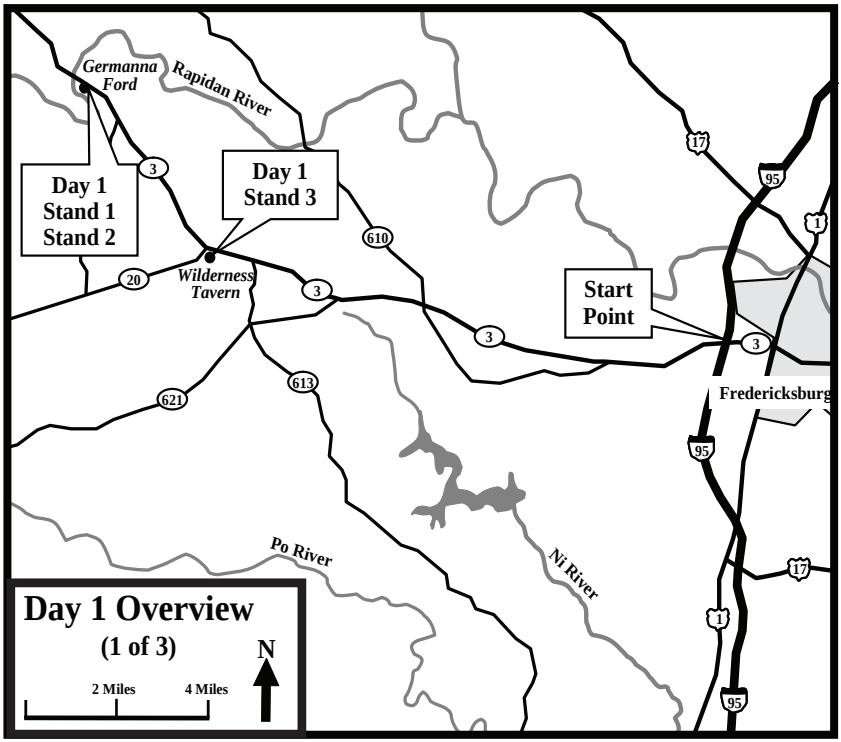
Day 2
Stand 1, Massaponax Church
Stand 2, Motley House and Guinea (Guiney's) Station
Stand 3, Madison's Ordinary (drive-by)
Stand 4, New Bethel Church
Stand 5, Milford Station (Bowling Green)

Stand 6, Mount Carmel Church
Stand 7, Hanover Junction and Doswell
Stand 8, Jericho Mills (conducted at Ox Ford parking lot)
Stand 9, Ox Ford (Ledlie's Attack)
Stand 10, North Anna Summary
Stand 12, Atlee's Station
Stand 13, Haw's Shop
Stand 14, Bethesda Church (drive-by)
Stand 15, Cold Harbor I
Stand 16, Cold Harbor II (Confederate Positions)
Stand 17, Cold Harbor III (Union Positions)
Stand 18, Cold Harbor IV (Next 10 Days)
Stand 19, Cold Harbor to the James River
Stand 20, Riddell's Shop
Stand 21, Wilcox's Landing

Overland Campaign Three-Day Staff Ride

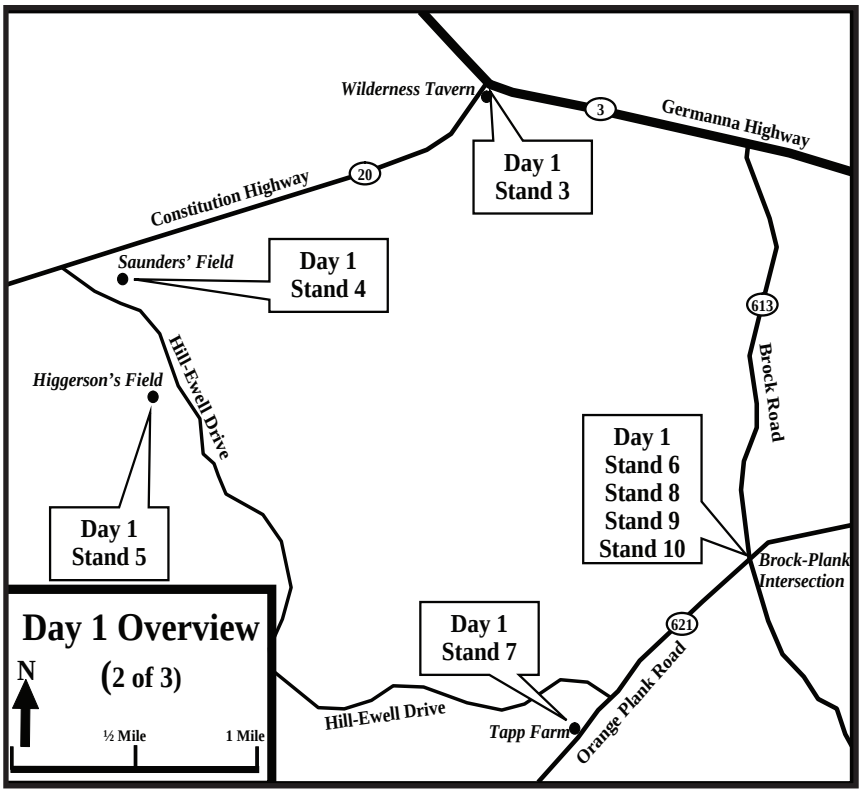
The following pages describe, in detail, the three day Overland Campaign staff ride. As stated previously, the three-day ride provides the best educational value. Each stand contains directions to the stand (with maps), an orientation, description, vignettes, and analysis.

Day 1
Wilderness to Spotsylvania
(4–9 May 1864)



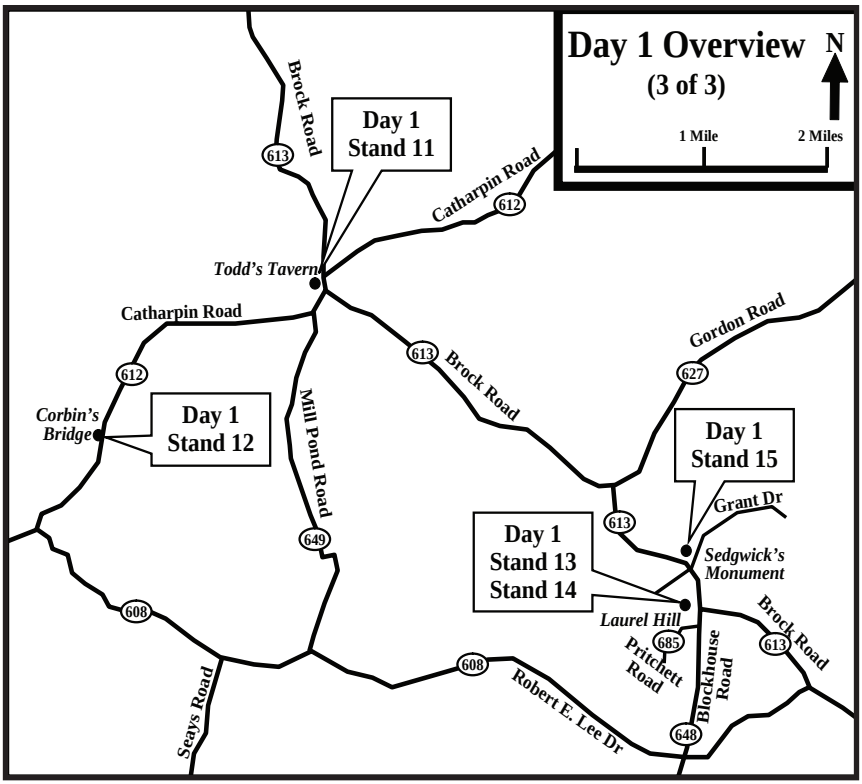
Map 1.

Stand 1, Campaign Overview (Events up to 4 May 1864)
Stand 2, Germanna Ford (4–5 May 1864)
Stand 3, Wilderness Tavern (4–5 May 1864)



Map 2.

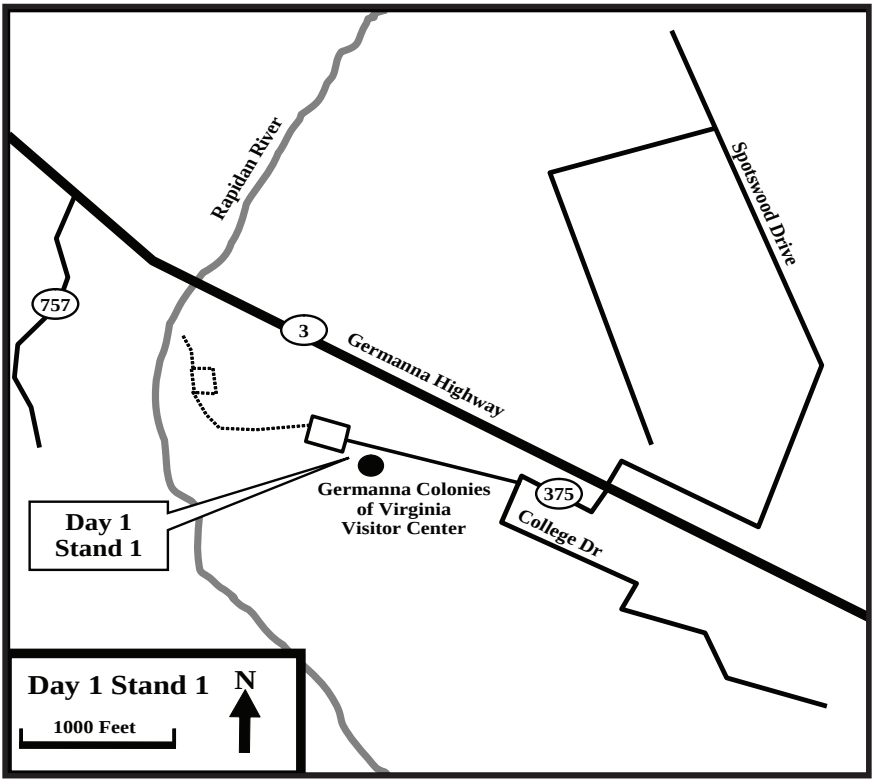
Stand 4, Saunders' Field (5 May 1864)
Stand 5, Higgerson's Field (Farm) (5 May 1864)
Stand 6, Intersection of Brock and Plank Roads (5 May 1864)
Stand 7, Tapp Farm ("Lee to the rear!") (6 May 1864)
Stand 8, Burning Breastworks (6 May 1864)
Stand 9, Gordon's Attack (6 May 1864)
Stand 10, Wilderness Summary and Next Movements (7–8 May 1864)



Map 3.

Stand 11, Todd's Tavern (7–8 May 1864)
Stand 12, Corbin's Bridge (drive-by) (8 May 1864)
Stand 13, Laurel Hill I (8 May 1864)
Stand 14, Laurel Hill II (8 May 1864)
Stand 15, Sedgwick's Death (9 May 1864)

Stand 1
Campaign Overview
(Events up to 4 May 1864)



Map 4.

Directions: Starting at Fredericksburg (where interstate Route 95 crosses Virginia state Route 3), go west on Virginia Route 3 for approximately 17.3 miles. At this point, you will be approaching the Rapidan River; just before reaching the river, turn left at the entrance to Germanna Community College (Route 375 or College Drive). After a short distance (about 100 yards), turn right on an entrance road for the Germanna Colonies of Virginia Visitors Center (also called the Brawdus Martin Visitors Center). Park the vehicle in the Visitors Center parking lot and conduct the stand anywhere nearby (but *not* inside the Center).

The Visitor Center is run by the Memorial Foundation of the Germanna Colonies in Virginia, a group that honors the history of German colonies that were in this area in the 18th century. The staff ride leader should contact the Foundation prior to conducting the ride and ask permission to use their grounds:

Memorial Foundation of the Germanna Colonies in Virginia
PO Box 729
Locust Grove, VA 22508
Phone (540) 423-1700
www.germanna.org

Orientation: You are currently standing in an area close to Germanna Ford, a crossing site on the Rapidan River. About 300 yards to your north is the Rapidan River. It may not be visible if the foliage is heavy. The road to your east is the modern Germanna Highway, which roughly follows the same path as the Civil War road to Germanna Ford. The actual ford is not visible from here, but you will be able to show it to the students at the next stand (Day 1, Stand 2).

The name, "Germanna Ford," was derived from a colonial community of German ironworkers who settled here around 1714. They eventually moved on to Fluvanna County. There was a ferry here by 1732, but not during the Civil War. The German iron industry required large quantities of wood to be turned into charcoal. They had to cut large amounts of the forest, which—after the colonists had departed—resulted in a second growth tangle of trees and brush called "the Wilderness" (approximately a 10 to 15 mile square).

Many Civil War battlefields had less tree undergrowth in the 1860s than there appears today. The society of the era needed to cut wood for fires, and the livestock ate much of the undergrowth. Even the forested areas were relatively clear of growth under the larger trees. However, the Wilderness was a notable exception to this rule.

Description: In early 1864, the war was almost three years old, and casualty lists were long on both sides. Both sides were war weary, but there were no signs of a negotiated peace or surrender from either side.

The North's political and strategic situation was shaped by the fact that Abraham Lincoln faced a presidential election in 1864. Peace Democrats in the North were active, and they threatened to win the election and possibly end the war by agreeing to Southern independence. A Union victory in the field would enhance Lincoln's chances for reelection. In addition, the three-year enlistments of many Union troops were expiring in 1864; therefore, to a large extent, the Federal armies had to be reconstituted. Lincoln was still looking for a successful commander, and he felt that Grant might be the answer.

In preparation for the 1864 military campaign, Lincoln altered the command structure in the North. He saw the need for a general in chief to coordinate all Union forces in all theaters. Major General Henry W. Halleck had been serving on paper as overall commander of the Union

forces, but he acted more like a staff officer and advisor to Lincoln. He was clearly not the man for vigorous overall leadership. Lincoln pushed a bill through Congress to restore the rank of lieutenant general (formerly held only by George Washington and Winfield Scott—the latter by brevet). In March 1864, Ulysses S. Grant was ordered east, promoted to lieutenant general, and became general in chief of the Union armies. Halleck became chief of staff for the Union armies. He performed a valuable service for Grant by remaining in Washington to execute administrative duties and keep Grant free from the bureaucracy and politics of the capital.

The Southern situation was somewhat different, but fraught with problems of its own. This was not a presidential election year for the South (Davis had a six-year term under the Confederate Constitution). Thus, in the South, it was politics as usual, which meant a lot of presidential conflict with Congress and the states that asserted their own rights. For the most part, there was no enlistment expiration problem; but as always, the South faced an overall lack of manpower. Much territory had been lost (Tennessee and parts of other Southern states were under Federal control and the Trans-Mississippi had been cut off). Even so, the Confederacy was still functioning as a viable nation. Davis was satisfied with the military command in the east (he had great trust in Lee), but the west was a problem.

Although satisfied with Lee, Davis made some changes to the Southern command structure for the upcoming campaign. Against his will, Davis gave command of the Army of Tennessee (in the western theater) to General Joseph E. Johnston. Davis found a place for his friend, Braxton Bragg, as military advisor to the president. Because there was still no general in chief, Davis, Bragg, and Secretary of War James A. Seddon provided overall strategic direction.

With the command teams in place, both sides formulated their plans.

As general in chief, Grant had to develop a plan first for all of the Union forces. In forming the plan, Grant came to hold two basic principles: concentration (consolidate garrisons and focus on significant axes only) and coordination (all Federal forces working together on a similar timetable to force the Confederates to give up key places and overstretch their resources).

As a result, Grant's plan called for two primary advances and three secondary ones. The primary thrusts were by Meade (the Army of the Potomac) against Lee and Richmond, and Sherman (the Military Division of the Mississippi) against Johnston and Atlanta. The secondary offensives were the following: Banks (the Department of the Gulf) to move on Mobile, Alabama; Sigel (the Department of West Virginia) to move on the Virginia

and Tennessee Railroad and up the Shenandoah Valley; and Butler (the Department of Virginia and North Carolina) to move up the James River toward Richmond.

Rather than stay in the political swamp of Washington to direct the Union forces, Grant elected to take the field with Meade and the Army of the Potomac. Meade offered to step down, but Grant retained him, which led to a somewhat curious command relationship. Grant wanted to give Meade tactical control of the battles, but the general in chief's presence often made Meade hesitant to show initiative. Grant retained Meade's infantry corps commanders, but he gave Meade a new commander from the west, Phil Sheridan, who took over the Army of the Potomac's cavalry.

After developing the overall plan, Grant outlined the specifics of the proposed campaign to all of his subordinate commanders, including his principal army commander in the east. Meade's primary objective was Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, as stated in Grant's orders to Meade dated 9 April 1864:

> Lee's Army will be your objective point. Wherever Lee goes, there you will go also. The only point in which I am now in doubt is whether it will be better to cross the Rapidan above or below him. Each plan presents great advantages over the other, with corresponding objections. By crossing above, Lee is cut off from all chance of ignoring Richmond and going north on a raid; but if we take this route all we do must be done while the rations we start with hold out; we separate from Butler, so that he cannot be directed how to co-operate. By the other route, Brandy Station can be used as a base of supplies until another is secured on the York or James River. These advantages and objections I will talk over with you more fully than I can write them. (US War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901 [hereafter referred to as *OR*], series I, volume XXXIII, 828.)

For Meade, Richmond was to be a secondary objective. Grant desired to fight Lee outside of the city's fortifications. The advance was to be overland (as opposed to Major General George B. McClellan's earlier amphibious operation on the Peninsula), in order to protect Washington without detaching a large garrison.

As Grant's orders indicated, there were two possible axes for an overland advance. The first option was a move around Lee's left along the Orange

and Alexandria Railroad toward Charlottesville. The main advantage was the open terrain, at least initially, by avoiding the Wilderness. The main disadvantage was a vulnerable and lengthening line of communications (LOC)—resupply would be difficult. The second option was a move around Lee's right. The advantages were that naval superiority gave the Union forces a protected LOC for resupply and medical evacuation, and such a move might more easily cut Lee off from Richmond. The disadvantages were the restricted terrain in the Wilderness and the many rivers to cross. In the end, Grant selected the latter route around Lee's right (to the southeast).

Also, Grant specified that the tempo of operations was to be continuous so as to maintain the initiative. Grant probably hoped that he could defeat Lee in a decisive battle, but if that failed, he was prepared to continue operations in a campaign that would link multiple battles to further his strategic aims.

There are also other aspects of the situation of the Army of the Potomac worth noting. This was an army that had suffered numerous defeats under bad leadership. It was built by McClellan, and then squandered by him, Pope, Burnside, and Hooker. For this campaign, it was commanded by Major General George Gordon Meade, the victor of Gettysburg. It totaled 99,400 troops (without the IX Corps). The army's five infantry corps of 1863 had been consolidated into three corps—the II, V, and VI Corps. (The I and III Corps, both devastated at Gettysburg, had been abolished and their units were given to the remaining II, V, and VI Corps.)

Working with the Army of the Potomac in an unusual relationship was the IX Corps under Major General Ambrose Everett Burnside. Burnside was senior in rank to Meade (he had been the army's commander in 1862 when Meade was only a division commander). To spare Burnside's feelings, Grant had Burnside report directly to the general in chief instead of Meade.

Grant intended to control all elements of the campaign with a small staff of 14 officers. His idea was to give general directions and let Meade do the specific implementation. This system required much teamwork and forbearance to work well. Grant also wanted to speed up the army's movements. He decreed a rigorous reduction in vehicles, but still ended up with 4,300 wagons and 835 ambulances for the campaign.

The situation and planning of the Army of Northern Virginia differed significantly from its Federal counterpart. Lee wanted to assume an offensive stance to preempt the Federals. However, the Southern forces were hindered by weaknesses in manpower and logistics. At the end of March 1864, Lee learned that the Federals in his front were receiving

reinforcements (the IX Corps) coming from the west. Lee thus asked for the return of Longstreet's I Corps from Tennessee. Even after receiving Longstreet's troops, Lee lacked the strength to launch a major offensive, and he would have to react to Grant's initial move.

By 16 April, Lee had forecast three possible (and simultaneous) Federal moves in the eastern theater: across the Rapidan River, down the Shenandoah Valley, and up the James River Peninsula. Lee's current forces were compelled to scatter their artillery and cavalry in order for the horses to forage. On 18 April, Lee issued a warning order for the Army of Northern Virginia to be prepared for movement, while he tried to divine the route of advance for Meade's army.

On 2 May 1864, Lee ascended Clark's Mountain with three corps and eight division commanders. The mountain was a Confederate signal post with a commanding view of the surrounding terrain. From here, Lee could see the camps of the Army of the Potomac around Culpeper (vicinity of Brandy Station), and he could see parts of his own army. Ewell's II Corps was to the east, covered by the Rapidan River and Mine Run. Hill's III Corps was visible to the southwest (near Orange Courthouse), which was also Lee's headquarters. Out of view was Longstreet's I Corps (minus Pickett's division). This corps was about 25 miles south of Clark's Mountain near Gordonsville. The cavalry corps, under Stuart, was scattered, either screening the line of Rapidan or south of Fredericksburg foraging for the horses.

The Clark's Mountain signal detachment was under the direction of Sergeant B.L. Wynn. When he ascended the mountain on 2 May, Lee said "I think those people over there are going to make a move soon. Grant will cross by one of those fords" (B.L. Wynn, *Confederate Veteran*, vol. 21, 68). Lee pointed in the direction of Germanna and Ely's Fords. He asked Wynn if his troops had posted a night guard, and when told they had not, the army commander directed Wynn to begin posting a lookout at night as well as during the day.

At around midnight on 3 May, a signalman notified Wynn that the enemy camps were stirring. The message was relayed to Lee at Orange Courthouse. Lee asked if the Union forces were moving west or east, but the signalmen informed him that it was too dark to tell. At 0500 on 4 May, Wynn signaled that the Federal move was to the east toward Germanna Ford.

Lee soon issued orders for the Army of Northern Virginia to move east. Ewell was to move on the Orange-Fredericksburg Turnpike with most of his corps (minus two brigades). Hill was to move on Orange Plank Road with most of his corps (minus Anderson's division). Initially, Longstreet

was to move from Gordonsville to Todd's Tavern, which would bring him on Hill's right (southern) flank. Later, Longstreet was directed to move further north toward Verdiersville, and then take Orange Plank Road—this brought him behind Hill's corps. Lee also asked the Richmond leadership to release Pickett's division of Longstreet's I Corps. Despite this request, Davis would hold Pickett back for the time being.

Lee's intent, though not specified, can be inferred from his actions and orders. If Grant continued southeast, the Federals would have to pass through the Wilderness. Lee knew that he was unable to dispute all of the Rapidan crossings (partly because of the need for the dispersion of his cavalry), but he could wait until the Union army was across the river and in the Wilderness, and then strike the Federals while they were moving in this restricted terrain. Lee knew he was outnumbered, but he thought the Federals had only 75,000 men (this underestimate may have also contributed to Lee's aggressiveness). Even with these aggressive intentions, everything depended on Longstreet's arrival. Thus, Lee's orders to Ewell and Hill on 4 and 5 May were somewhat ambivalent—he wanted to engage Grant in terrain that would help the Confederates, but he did not want to become committed until Longstreet arrived.

Vignette: Grant's opinion of Meade improved after their initial meeting, according to a recollection of Grant's comments from Horace Porter, a member of Grant's staffs: "I [Grant] had never met General Meade since the Mexican War until I visited his headquarters when I came east last month. In my first interview with him he talked in a manner which led me to form a very high opinion of him. He referred to the changes which were taking place, and said it had occurred to him that I might want to make a change in the commander of the Army of the Potomac, and to put in his place Sherman, or some other officer who had served with me in the West and urged me not to hesitate on his account if I desired to make such an assignment. He added that the success of the cause was much more important than any consideration for the feelings of an individual. He spoke so patriotically and unselfishly that even if I had any intention of relieving him, I should have been inclined to change my mind after the manly attitude he assumed in this frank interview." (Horace Porter, *Campaigning with Grant*, New York, NY: Century Publishing, 1897, 29.)

Analysis:

1. Evaluate Grant's plans. (Remember to justify your critiques.)

   a. Briefly evaluate the overall strategy, including the roles of armies outside of the eastern theater (Sherman and Banks).

   b. Look more closely at the eastern theater. Did Grant properly

provide for coordination of the three main armies in the east? How could he have done better (if at all)? Did the general in chief choose the proper axis for each army (why or why not)?

c. Did Grant choose correct objectives for his forces (why or why not)? What is the South's center of gravity (COG) overall and, more specifically, in the east?

d. Clearly, Grant has some awkward command arrangements—could he have done better? Was Grant correct to travel with the Army of the Potomac? Should he have stayed in Washington? Was he attempting to do too many jobs (general in chief, theater commander, and tactical commander)?

e. Was Grant correct to retain Meade in command? Could command arrangements with Burnside's corps have been better? How?

2. Evaluate Lee's plan.

a. Were his forces well positioned to counter Grant's offensive? Should Lee have tried to defend the river line?

b. What is the Union's COG? Did Lee choose the right objective (did he clearly define an objective)?

c. Were Lee's reactions to Grant's moves too aggressive? Did he need to be attacking at all? Was it worth risking battle in the Wilderness without having Longstreet in a closer position?

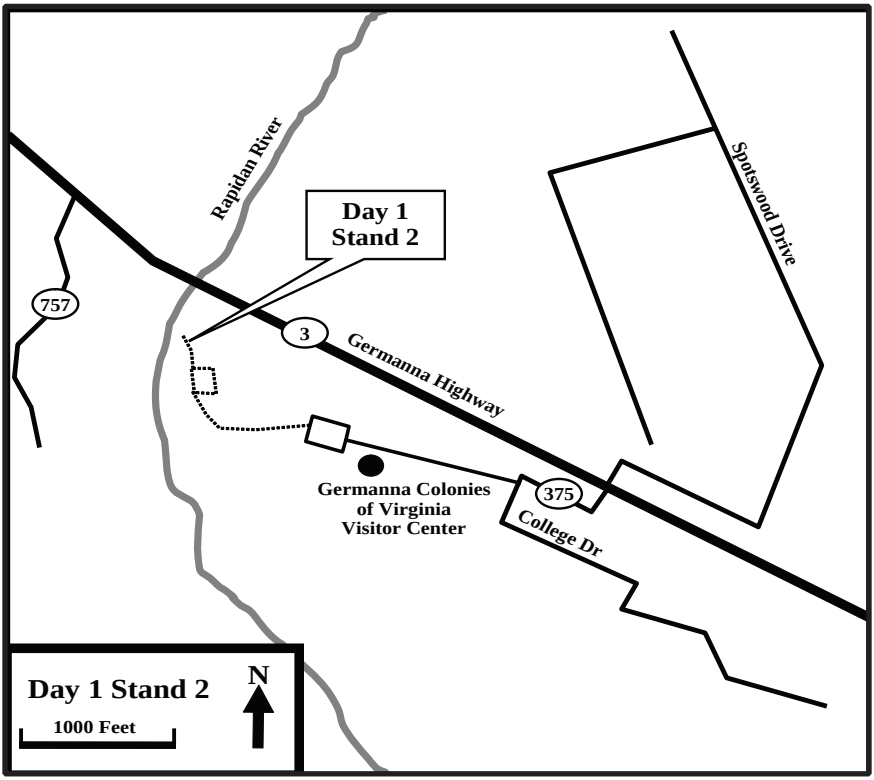
3. Modern relevance.

a. What aspects of centers of gravity (COGs) from 1864 are applicable today? Should the enemy's army always be the primary objective? How important are capital cities? Where does the will of the people fit in?

b. What are the advantages and disadvantages of defending on a river line? Where should you position your troops when defending a river (in front, on, or behind the river's edge)?

c. Today, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) do not travel with a regional combatant commander; however, can commanders at many levels still learn from Grant's dilemma in locating their headquarters? How far forward should the commander be positioned? How can the military avoid both having the boss diverted by administrative duties in the rear and micromanaging his subordinates at the front?

Stand 2
Germanna Ford
(4–5 May 1864)



Map 5.

Directions: After completing the campaign overview stand in the vicinity of the Germanna Colonies Visitor Center, walk down to Germanna Ford. The walking path begins at the rear of the parking lot for the Visitor Center—the entrance may be a bit overgrown with brush, but the path is a fairly obvious trail (note that vehicles are no longer permitted on the road).

Follow the path for about 200 yards then it will bend to the right and open into an old gravel parking lot (no longer used). At the far end of the lot (left-rear corner), the walking path will start again. Continue on the path; it will go down to the riverbank. Conduct the stand near the river in a location where the group can see under the modern highway bridge.

Orientation: You are standing on the southeastern bank of the Rapidan River, the side that was occupied by the Confederates. Grant's forces

approached from the other bank. The actual ford is just east and north of the modern highway bridge.

There were no bridges here during the war (the Federals will place a pontoon bridge after they cross). The piers and abutments in the river on the near side of the modern bridge are from a 20th century rail line.

Description: The area of Germanna Ford was picketed by a detachment of the 1st North Carolina Cavalry Regiment. The 3d Indiana Cavalry Regiment of Brigadier General James H. Wilson's Third Division rushed the ford at 0300 on 4 May, scattering the Confederates, "who gave evidence of great fright running off and leaving blankets and overcoats and a half-cooked breakfast on the ground." (An account by a Union cavalryman from Noah Andre Trudeau, *Bloody Roads South: The Wilderness to Cold Harbor, May-June 1864*, Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1989, 31.)

Union engineers quickly constructed two pontoon bridges by 0530 on 4 May. The bridges were 220 feet long. One was of wooden pontoons (upstream from our current position). The other bridge was of canvas pontoons (just downstream from the modern bridge at our current position).

The basic Union movement plan called for units to use two routes. This meant that the Union forces needed both Germanna Ford and Ely's Ford. The movements at both fords were efficiently executed.

The bulk of the Union infantry troops crossed at Germanna Ford. The V Corps crossed from 0700 to 1300 on 4 May. The VI Corps crossed from 1300 to 1800 the same day. The IX Corps crossed on 5 May. The Fourth Division of the IX Corps under Brigadier General Edward Ferrero remained to guard the one bridge left in place after all of the combat forces had crossed. Grant arrived between 1200 and 1315 on 4 May and set up a temporary headquarters near the ford. He left at 1000 on 5 May, when he was frustrated by the lack of progress of Union attacks in the Wilderness. At 1800 on 4 May, the canvas pontoon bridge was taken up to be ready for use in crossing rivers further to the south. The wooden pontoon remained in place until the end of the battle of the Wilderness.

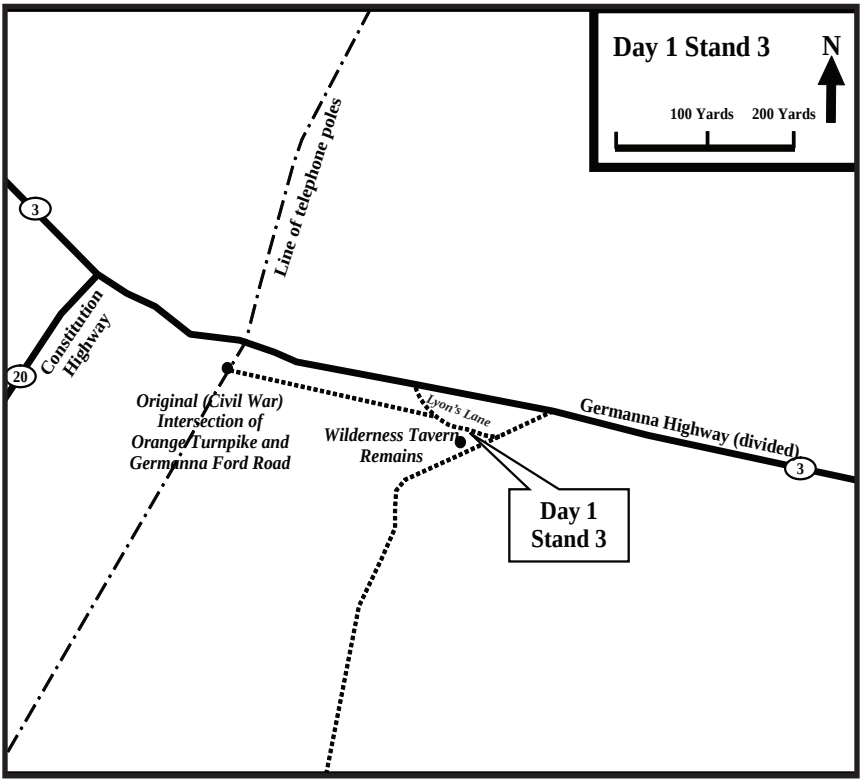
Fewer troops crossed at Ely's Ford, but a large amount of the army's trains and artillery crossed at this ford. Brigadier General David M. Gregg's Second Cavalry Division arrived at 0200 on 4 May and secured the crossing site. The Federals had built two bridges at Ely's Ford by 0530 on 4 May. Hancock's II Corps then crossed and continued on to Chancellorsville. The trains and artillery crossed after Hancock.

Vignette: Shortly after noon on 4 May, Grant crossed at Germanna Ford and set up his headquarters in an old abandoned farmhouse near the ford. The Union general in chief sat on the steps of the porch and lit a cigar.

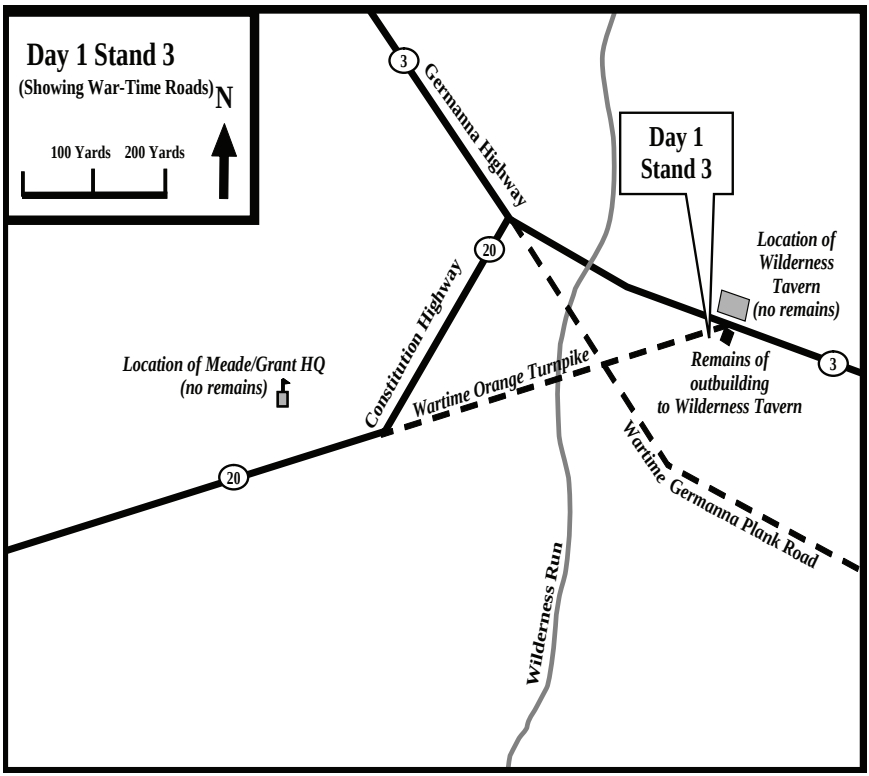
Nearby, Grant observed Meade's more extravagant headquarters and was particularly amused by Meade's new headquarters' flag—a golden eagle on a silver wreath on a lavender backdrop. Grant remarked, "What's this!—Is Imperial Caesar anywhere about here?" (Ulysses S. Grant, "Preparing for the Campaigns of '64," *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Volume IV, edited by Clarence Clough Buel and Robert Underwood Johnson, New York, NY: Castle Books, 1888, 97n.)

Analysis: Compare Civil War era engineering and river crossings with today's methods. Note how quickly these 1864 veterans were able to get a bridge over the river. Can we do the same today?

Stand 3
Wilderness Tavern
(4–5 May 1864)



Map 6.



Map 7.

Directions: Leave the Germanna Colonies Visitor Center and turn right on Virginia Route 3 (heading south and east on that route). Proceed 4.8 miles and you will come to the intersection with state Route 20. Continue going straight (east) on Route 3 for a very short distance past the intersection (0.2 mile); you will see a small dirt path (also called Lyon's Lane) on the right side of the road. Pull the vehicle on to the path, and try to park as far forward and to the right as possible (thus leaving space on the dirt/gravel path for any other vehicles). You should see some ruins and a small plaque that mark the site of some outbuildings of the Wilderness Tavern. Conduct the stand near the ruins.

Orientation: From your location, you can look down a gravel road that parallels Route 3 (this gravel road traces the original path of the Orange Turnpike). This path passes under a telephone line—at this location was the original intersection of the Orange Turnpike and the Germanna Ford Road. The Orange Turnpike was built in 1822, and it connected Fredericksburg to Orange Courthouse, roughly 41 miles.

Description: The Federals arrived at this intersection on 4 May. The advance guard was Wilson's Third Cavalry Division. He had the smallest of the three cavalry divisions (3,500 men). Wilson's division led on the Germanna Ford axis, Gregg's division led on the Ely's Ford axis, and Brigadier General Alfred T.A. Torbert's division guarded the trains. Torbert was to join Wilson when the trains were safe. Torbert's mission changed to joining Gregg (instead of Wilson) when part of Stuart's cavalry was found just south of Fredericksburg. Thus, Wilson's small division was left alone to screen the army's front and right.

Wilson began his move by going west on Orange Turnpike. He turned south at Robertson's tavern to check the Orange Plank Road; however, he did not leave pickets at the Germanna Plank Road–Orange Turnpike intersection. Therefore, he missed the arrival of the Confederate II Corps (Ewell), which bivouacked at Robertson's tavern that evening.

By midafternoon, Warren's V Corps had arrived in this vicinity, and his four divisions camped here at 1400. Sedgwick stopped along the Germanna Plank Road in the rear of the V Corps. Hancock went down the eastern route (Ely's Ford) and camped near Chancellorsville at 1300.

Confederate movements brought the Southerners closer to the Federals as they entered the Wilderness. Unencumbered by large trains, the Confederates continued moving east from their camps toward the Union army. Ewell's II Corps halted around Locust Grove, about 4.5 miles west of our current location. Hill's III Corps halted around New Verdiersville, on the Plank Road about 7 miles to the southwest of here (Lee was with this column). Longstreet was still out of supporting distance far to the southwest.

When Lee received word that Longstreet might join the Army of Northern Virginia by the middle of the next day (5 May), he issued orders (through his staff) to Ewell: "if the enemy moves down the river, he [Lee] wishes to push on after him. If he comes this way, we will take our old line. The General's desire is to bring him to battle as soon now as possible" (*OR*, series I, volume XXXIII, part 2, 948). In fact, Longstreet would not arrive on 5 May (he later arrived on the morning of 6 May). Thus, these instructions were based on the mistaken belief that Longstreet was fast approaching, and Lee's intentions were aggressive. During the evening, Stuart told Lee that Grant was still in the Wilderness.

After their halt on 4 May, the Federals hoped to clear the Wilderness the next day. Grant's and Meade's orders (published at 1800 on 4 May) called for Warren to move southwest to Parker's Store. Hancock was to move southwest to Shady Grove Church. Burnside was to protect the Rapidan River crossings, relieving Sedgwick of that duty, and Sedgwick would move to Wilderness Tavern.

At 0500 on 5 May, Warren began to move. Three of his divisions, commanded by Brigadier Generals Samuel W. Crawford, James S. Wadsworth, and John C. Robinson were to move south, while Brigadier General Charles Griffin's division was momentarily left in place facing west on the turnpike. The V Corps' trains were to move with the divisions.

On receiving the message to hold in place until the V Corps had moved, the corps picket line commander, Colonel David Jenkins, responded: "the rebel infantry have appeared on the Orange Turnpike and are forming a line of battle, three quarters of a mile in front of General Griffin's line of battle. I have my skirmishers out, and preparations are being made to meet them. There is a large cloud of dust in that direction."

Warren was somewhat surprised by this information. At 0620, he halted his corps, notified Meade, and told Griffin: "push a force out at once against the enemy and see what force he has."

At 0700, Griffin endorsed Warren's message and forwarded it to his Third Brigade commander, Brigadier General Joseph Bartlett: "General Bartlett will please execute the within order."
(The above exchange of orders are in the *OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 2, 413-416.)

Vignette: None.

Analysis:

1. Major General Andrew A. Humphreys (Meade's chief of staff) had done well in getting the large army moving, but not well enough to escape the Wilderness.

a. If the Wilderness was such a bad place for a fight, why did the Army of the Potomac stop when it was still inside of that terrain? Was it because of the large army trains, the plan, the cavalry, or other reasons?

b. Could the Army of the Potomac have gotten through the Wilderness faster? How might they have done this? Could they have used more fords and split the army into three columns? Should they have started at dark on the evening of 3 May instead of at midnight?

2. Was Lee correct in pressing for a battle in the Wilderness? How, if at all, does the Wilderness terrain benefit Lee? Does it benefit the attacker or defender, the smaller or the larger force? Why? Do the benefits outweigh the risks of attacking before Longstreet has actually arrived?

3. Relevance.

a. Which of the following factors do planners face today in road marches that reflect Humphreys' planning of the march for the Army of the Potomac?

—The size of the logistics trail and the need for supplies versus the need for speed.

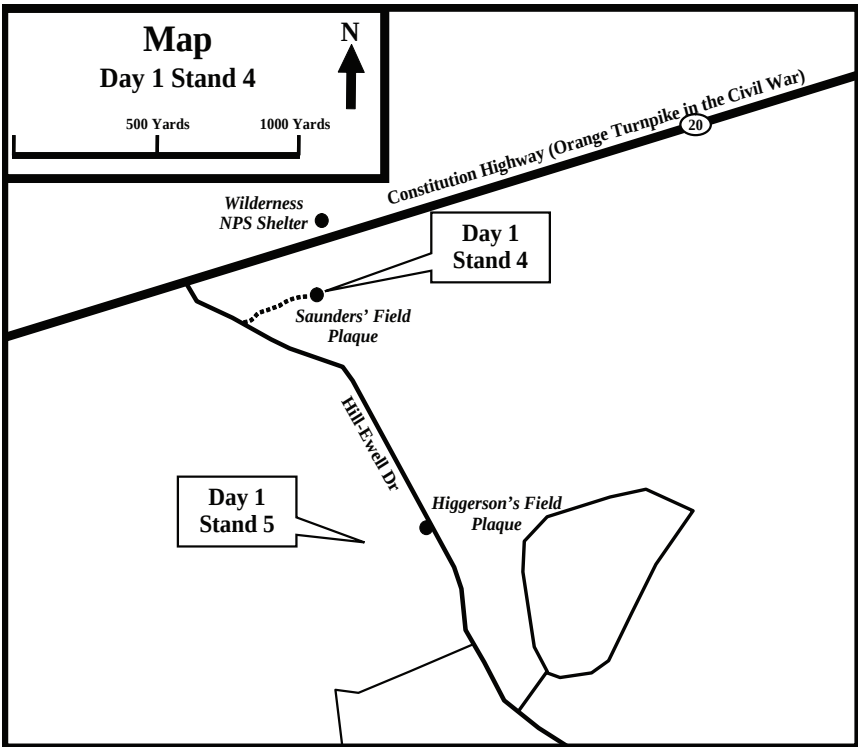
—The distance to the objective and the need to have the troops arrive ready to fight.

—How to best screen the movement.

—Supporting distance between march elements.

b. Civil War orders lacked a formal structure (e.g., five paragraphs) and often did not convey a commander's intent. How might a modern commander's intent have better helped both the Union and Confederate forces as they made initial contact?

Stand 4
Saunders' Field
(5 May 1864)



Map 8.

Directions: Heading east on state Route 3, quickly, but carefully, move to the left lane so that you can cross at the next opening in the median and make a U-turn (less than 0.2 mile). Once you are heading back west on Route 3, stay in the left lane because you will make a left turn at the intersection with state Route 20. Continue west on Route 20 for about 1.8 miles. On the left you will see an NPS road called Hill-Ewell Drive. Turn left and then immediately pull off to a small parking area on the right shoulder. Just across from the parking area is a small wooden footbridge that crosses some remains of Confederate trenches. Walk across the bridge to the plaque in the open area (Saunders' Field) for the next stand.

Orientation: You are currently located at Saunders' Field. The configuration of Saunders' Field (the wood line) is about as it was during the Civil War. Remember the earlier discussion about the nature of Civil War

woods—they tended to have less undergrowth than modern woods; however, the Wilderness was the exception with heavy undergrowth.

The Union picket lines for Griffin's First Division, V Corps, on the morning of 5 May 1864, were located just to the east of this location. The road to the north (Route 20) is the Orange Turnpike, which runs generally west to east and is on the same path as the road was in 1864. Looking along the turnpike, which heads west toward Clark's Mountain, you see the direction from which Ewell's Confederate II Corps started on its move to this location.

Description: By 0730 on 5 May, Ewell's II Corps was approaching from the west on Orange Turnpike. His three divisions were commanded by Major General Jubal A. Early, Major General Edward "Allegheny" Johnson, and Major General Robert E. Rodes. By this time, Lee realized that Longstreet would be delayed, and he issued new, more cautious orders. Ewell's mission was to conduct a reconnaissance in force to make contact with the Army of the Potomac, but not to fight a general engagement. Lee estimated that Longstreet would not arrive until the evening of 5 May. Lee was still in a dilemma; he wanted to fight the Army of the Potomac in the Wilderness, but not until the morning of 6 May.

As initial contact was made, Warren's V Corps needed to shift its positions considerably to launch an attack. Griffin's division was deployed across the Orange Turnpike with pickets forward. Robinson's division was at the Wilderness Tavern crossroads. Wadsworth's division was moving into position in the vicinity of Jones' Field (to our south). Crawford's division was moving into position at the Chewning Farm (even further south).

As mentioned above, early on 5 May Griffin's pickets had reported an enemy force moving east on Orange Turnpike. Warren, in turn, notified Meade. By 0600, Johnson's division, leading Ewell's II Corps, detected the Union pickets and began to deploy skirmishers to the right and left of the road. Both sides began harassing fires.

At about 0715, Meade arrived at Warren's headquarters at Wilderness Tavern, and "at once directed [Warren] to halt his column and attack the enemy with his whole force." The V Corps immediately began to deploy; Griffin's division began preparing breastworks on the east side of Saunders' Field. Also, Meade informed Hancock to halt at Todd's Tavern.

Soon after, Meade sent word to Grant that he was suspending the movement south and was preparing to attack Ewell. At about 0830, Grant replied to Meade: "If any opportunity presents itself for pitching into a part of Lee's Army, do so without giving time for dispositions."
(The exchange of correspondence among Grant, Meade, and Warren is in

OR, series I, volume XXXVI, part 2, 403-404.)

Within the next half hour, Meade had sent word to Grant that Warren was preparing to attack and that Sedgwick's VI Corps was going to support him. Meade was now more intent on fighting Lee's army in place rather than continuing south and getting out of the Wilderness. Perhaps, Meade, who was normally more cautious, was pleased to have Lee out of his Mine Run entrenchments, and therefore Meade was more willing to attack. For his part, Grant was probably less concerned about getting through the Wilderness than he was to force Lee into a fight.

From 0900 to 1300, Warren's corps experienced difficulty in getting into position due to the thickly wooded terrain. To Warren's north, Sedgwick's VI Corps likewise found it difficult to link up with, and support, Griffin's right flank. On Griffin's left, a half-mile gap appeared between his division and Wadsworth's men. Warren and his division commanders closed the gap by shifting Wadsworth to Higgerson's Field; but, this left a new gap between Crawford's and Wadsworth's divisions.

In the meantime, Rodes' Confederate division arrived and deployed to the south of the turnpike. Johnson was now on the turnpike and spread to the north. Early's division went into reserve behind Johnson along the turnpike.

To Warren's south, Hancock's II Corps began to return to the Wilderness area from Todd's Tavern, moving north along Brock Road. On the V Corps' other flank, Brigadier General Horatio Wright's division (VI Corps) deployed on Culpeper Mine Road, but did not move quickly to the sound of the guns. They were not in the fight for most of the day.

Still with insufficient support on his flanks at 1300, Griffin's division attacked. Brigadier General Romeyn B. Ayres' brigade made the advance on the north side of the turnpike. Ayres' first line consisted of the 140th and 146th New York Regiments, battalions of US Army Regulars from 2d, 11th, 12th, 14th, and 17th Regiments, and Winslow's section of artillery.

These troops pushed back Brigadier General George H. "Maryland" Steuart's Confederate Brigade (Johnson's division), but a counterattack by Brigadier General Leroy A. Stafford's brigade (also of Johnson's division) struck the Union right and forced them back. The lines stabilized north of the turnpike; both sides exchanged harassing fire and dug in.

South of the turnpike, the Federals had some initial success. Brigadier General Joseph J. Bartlett's brigade led the advance. With the support of Colonel Jacob B. Sweitzer's brigade, they ruptured the Confederate center of Brigadier General John M. Jones' brigade (Johnson's division).

Unfortunately, Bartlett's success left his brigade exposed. Brigadier General Lysander Cutler's famed Iron brigade was supposed to support

Bartlett on his left, but Colonel Andrew W. Denison's brigade (Robinson's division) failed to support Cutler. Some of Rodes' Confederate brigades, south of Jones, were pushed back and disorganized, but Rodes rallied them for a stand that held. Also, Confederates to the north of the turnpike poured fire into the flank of the Federals south of the road.

At about 1400, the Union attackers fell back to the west side of Saunders' Field, and both sides resumed work on breastworks they had started earlier.

Vignettes:

1. This is an account of a fistfight between two soldiers during the struggle in Saunders' Field. It is from John Worsham of the 21st Virginia Infantry Regiment:

> Running midway across the little field was a gully that had been washed by the rains. In their retreat, many of the enemy went into this gully for protection from our fire. When we advanced to it, we ordered them out and to the rear. All came out except one, who had hidden under an overhanging bank and was overlooked. When we fell back across the field, the Yankees who followed us to the edge of the woods shot at us as we crossed. One of our men, thinking the fire too warm, dropped into the gully for protection. Now there was a Yankee and a Confederate in the gully—and each was ignorant of the presence of the other!
>
> After a while they commenced to move about in the gully, there being no danger so long as they did not show themselves. Soon they came in view of each other, and they commenced to banter. Then they decided they would go into the road and have a regular fist and skull fight, the best man to have the other as prisoner. While both sides were firing, the two men came into the road about midway between the lines of battle, and in full view of both sides around the field. They surely created a commotion, because both sides ceased firing! When the two men took off their coats and commenced to fight with their fists, a yell went up along each line, and men rushed to the edge of the opening for a better view! The 'Johnny' soon had the 'Yank' down; the Yank surrendered, and both quietly rolled into the gully. Here they remained until nightfall, when the 'Johnny' brought the Yankee into our line. In

> the meantime, the disappearance of the two men into the gully was the signal for the resumption of firing. Such is war! (As quoted by Gordon C. Rhea in *The Battles of Wilderness and Spotsylvania*, National Park Civil War Series, Eastern National Park and Monument Association, 1995, 10.)

2. After Griffin's men were repulsed, their division commander rode back to Meade's and Grant's headquarters in a foul temper. Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Lyman, a member of Meade's staff, witnessed the ensuing incident and recalled that Griffin complained loudly about the lack of supporting units on his right and left during the attack. Lyman added that Griffin "implied censure on General Wright, and apparently on his [Griffin's] corps commander, General Warren." Grant's chief of staff, Rawlins, was outraged by Griffin's outburst and urged disciplinary action. Grant agreed, and although clearly unfamiliar with Griffin's name, the general in chief asked Meade, "Who is this General Gregg? You ought to arrest him." Meade was notorious for his own temper, but for some reason, he remained unusually calm. Meade approached Grant, and noticing that Grant's coat was undone, Meade began to button the commander's coat as if he were a schoolboy. In a genial voice, Meade said, "It's Griffin, not Gregg, and it's only his way of talking." (George R. Agassiz, ed., *Meade's Headquarters, 1863-65: Letters of Colonel Theodore Lyman from the Wilderness to Appomattox,* Boston, MA: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1922, 91.)

Analysis:

1. Did Meade's decision to fight in the Wilderness and his tactical deployments support the overall Union operational plan? Why or why not?

   a. Was Grant correct to support Meade's decision?

   b. Could the Union army have continued its original plan of moving through the Wilderness and getting to the clear ground to the south? What were the advantages and the risks of continuing such a move?

   c. Critique Warren's conduct of the tactical fight in Saunders' Field. Were his efforts supporting the operational plan?

2. Had Lee committed his army to the fight too soon? Should he have waited until Longstreet was closer to the battlefield before pushing Ewell forward? Why or why not? Was Ewell's conduct of the battle helping Lee achieve his overall objectives?

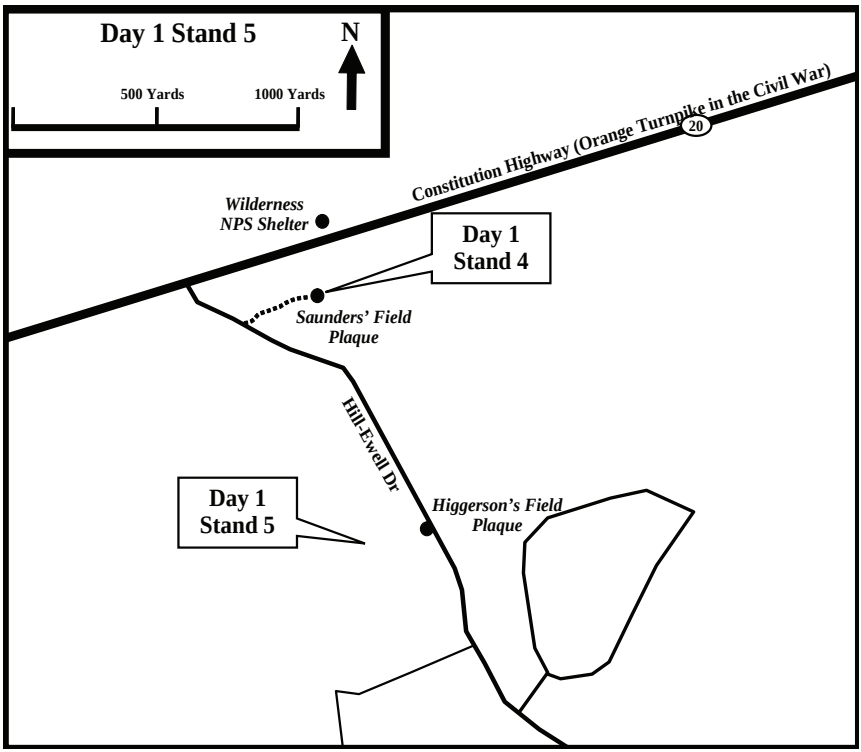
3. How was the terrain affecting the battle for both sides? Examine the effects at both the tactical and operational levels of war.

4. What are some of the implications of the opening of the Wilderness fight for the modern military professional?

a. When should a commander alter his original plan based on changed conditions? How does a commander properly balance his decisions between the extremes of rigid adherence to the plan and losing the initiative by responding to every change by the enemy?

b. How does a commander properly craft the commander's intent to allow subordinates enough freedom for the tactical fight?

Stand 5
Higgerson's Field (Farm)
(5 May 1864)



Map 9.

Directions: Continue south on Hill-Ewell Drive. After 0.7 mile there will be another small parking area on the right side with a marker and an open field beyond the marker. This is Higgerson's Field. Walk to a spot near the middle of the field for a better view of the open ground.

Orientation: You are currently located at Higgerson's Field (sometimes called Higgerson's Farm). Saunders' Field (the last stand) is just to your north. Higgerson's Field is about the same size and configuration as it was in 1864.

Description: At 1300 on 5 May, the Union lines for Colonel Roy Stone's brigade (Wadsworth's division) were located to the north side of the field across the swampy area on the east side of Mill Branch. Stone had lost contact with Cutler on his right. The Union lines for Brigadier General James C. Rice (also from Wadsworth's division) were located to the south of Stone on the east side of Higgerson's Field.

At the same time, Rodes' Confederate division was deployed to the south of the turnpike in the woods on the west side of the field. Similar to the problems encountered by the V Corps, the deployment of Brigadier General Junius Daniel's brigade in a thick tangle of woods left a gap in the Confederate lines.

Wadsworth ordered his brigades forward at 1300. Stone's Pennsylvanians struggled through the marshy area contiguous to Mill Branch and could not keep up with Cutler on the right. Stone's line began to pull to the right to try and keep the link. Rice's New Yorkers, not impeded by the marsh, also pulled to the right at a faster pace, causing their line to cross Daniel's front obliquely and exposing the left flank to enfilading fire.

Early sent Gordon's Georgia brigade to attack the flank of Wadsworth's division. He found the gap north of Daniel's brigade, but in the confusion thought he was on the far right flank of the Confederate line. Instead, Gordon advanced from between the gap and pitched into Stone's Pennsylvanians on his left. When he discovered Rice's Federals on his right flank, Gordon calmly directed half of his brigade to attack to the south, while the other half attacked to the north.

Stone's men stalled, and then began to fall back, thus exposing the Iron brigade's (Cutler's) left flank. Daniel's partially hidden Confederate brigade volleyed into Rice's left flank and began to move forward. Rice received word that a Southern force, extending well to his rear, was coming up on his left. He confirmed the situation and immediately ordered a withdrawal to the east side of Higgerson's Field.

Both Union brigades broke and were driven back across Mill Branch. The Confederates gave a brief pursuit. Wadsworth then tied in with Griffin's division to the north and also began throwing up breastworks. Note that later in the day, Wadsworth was pulled out of the line and sent south to assist Hancock near Orange Plank Road.

Vignette: None.

Analysis:

1. Assess the performances of local commanders on both sides in the Higgerson's Field fight. Should Wadsworth have done better despite the difficult terrain?

2. Was Warren correct in ordering his units to close to the north and cover the gaps in the line (or did he lose an opportunity with Crawford's division to penetrate the gap between Ewell and Hill in Lee's line)?

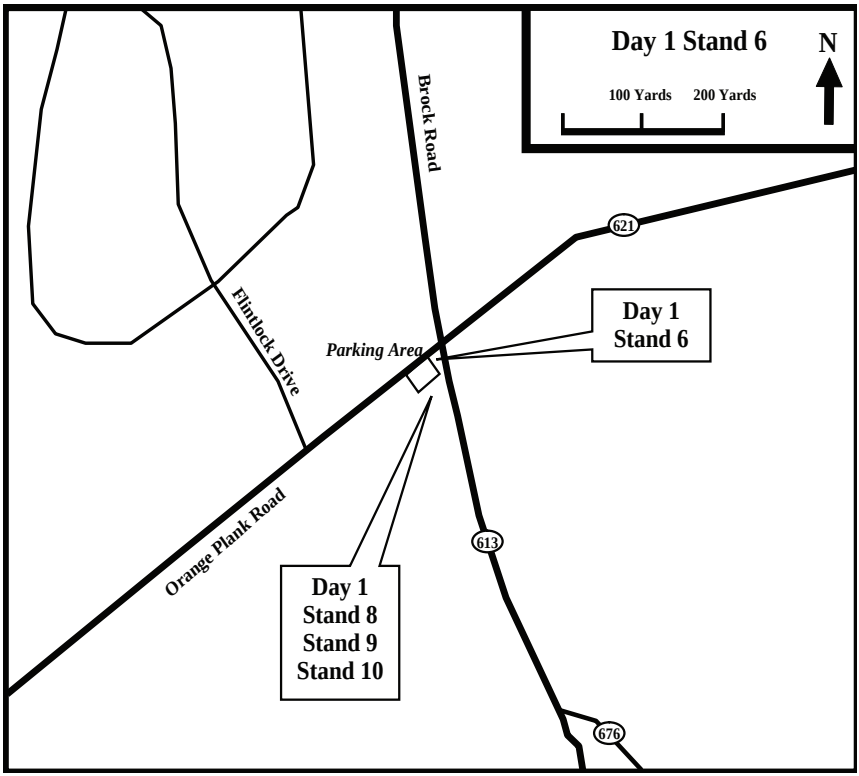
3. Does Ewell deserve credit for shifting reserves? Was Gordon skillful or lucky? Who won this phase of the battle of the Wilderness (5 May on

the northern half of the field)? How did the results of this fight affect the operational plans on both sides?

4. What were Grant's and Meade's options? Is their original plan scuttled or should they try to resurrect it?

5. Should Lee have pressed his attacks or should he have waited for Longstreet? How should he have planned to use Ewell's corps for the next day?

Stand 6
Intersection of Brock and Plank Roads
(5 May 1864)



Map 10.

Directions: Continue south and southeast on Hill-Ewell Drive. In 2.5 miles you will come to an intersection with Route 621. Turn left on Route 621 (Orange Plank Road) and head east. After 0.7 mile you will come to an intersection with Route 613 (Brock Road). **Important:** You will want to stop in a small parking area on the right side of Route 621 about 50 yards *before* you reach the intersection. Park the vehicles in this area and walk toward the intersection for the stand. Get a good view of the Orange Plank and Brock Roads, but then move slightly away from the roads so that traffic noise does not disrupt the stand.

Orientation: You have just left Higgerson's Field; that stop summed up the battle of 5 May in the north (Orange Turnpike). Now, you will discuss the battle of 5 May on the southern sector of the Wilderness battlefield (near Orange Plank Road, or more simply Plank Road). You are currently

at the intersection of Brock Road and Plank Road. Brock Road runs north-south, starting at the Germanna Plank Road and continuing south to Todd's Tavern and Spotsylvania. The Orange Plank Road runs east-west, linking Fredericksburg with Orange Courthouse and points further west.

Why is this intersection important? At least part of the answer is that the Northerners need to hold it to reunite their forces, particularly Hancock's isolated II Corps to the south. If the Southerners take the intersection, they split the Federal army.

Description: For the Federals, most of the VI Corps was deploying in the north near Saunders' Field. However, one division of the VI Corps, under Brigadier General George W. Getty, was sent behind Warren's V Corps down Brock Road to hold this intersection. One Union cavalry regiment, the 5th New York, was deployed west of this location to delay any Confederate advance. The II Corps was just north of Todd's Tavern. Hancock received Meade's orders to rejoin the army in the Wilderness at about 1100.

On the Confederate side, while Ewell was battling Warren in the north, A.P. Hill's III Corps was moving west to east on Plank Road, skirmishing with the 5th New York Cavalry Regiment. Longstreet's I Corps was still marching to the battlefield and would not arrive until 6 May.

Getty arrived at the Brock-Plank intersection at 1130. Getty's men advanced to this point (the rise in the ground at the intersection) without flankers or skirmishers, thus increasing their speed. Also, Warren's earlier decision to keep his bulky wagon trains off the cramped Brock Road allowed Getty's men to make good time. (*See vignettes* for a description of how Getty and his staff bluffed to hold the intersection.) Getty and his division had arrived just in time, and both sides paused as they decided on their next moves.

For about the next hour and a half, Getty deployed his brigades—a slow and laborious task in the thick woods. By about 1300, he had his brigades on line astride Plank Road. From north to south, the brigades were those of Brigadier General Henry L. Eustis, Brigadier General Frank Wheaton, and Colonel Lewis A. Grant (leading the famous Vermont brigade).

Opposing Getty was Major General Henry Heth's Confederate division (Hill's III Corps) deployed with three brigades across its front and one in reserve. From north to south, the front line brigades were those of Colonel John M. Stone (Davis' brigade), Brigadier General John R. Cooke, and Brigadier General Henry W. Walker. Brigadier General William W. Kirkland's brigade was in reserve.

Getty and Heth sparred until about 1400. In the meantime, Hancock had personally arrived at the crossroads at 1245. An hour later, Brigadier

General David B. Birney's division was the first II Corps' unit to arrive near the intersection. By then, Getty's and Heth's men had put up hasty earthworks. Major General Cadmus W. Wilcox's Confederate division came up behind Heth. Wilcox veered to the north of Heth's units and set his troops into position.

Hancock had to decide how to deploy his arriving corps. While his troops continued to approach the crossroads, Hancock received confusing messages. Meade and Humphreys sent two orders that arrived in reverse sequence. The first order received (written second) told Hancock to attack west down Plank Road with the entire II Corps. It assumed that the II Corps was already assembled at the intersection. The second message (written first) reflected the V Corps' difficulties: "Wadsworth's division on Griffin's left has been driven in, and Crawford's division has been called in so that his line is thrown back considerably. His left must be more than a mile in rear of where it was before. Its exact position is not reported yet; will send you word as soon as it is known." This note implied the need to attack with whatever troops were available in order to ease Warren's situation.

Hancock replied at 1440: "Your dispatches of 12 and 1:30 PM just received. I am forming my corps on Getty's left and will order an advance as soon as prepared. The ground over which I must pass is very bad—a perfect thicket."

At 1605, Hancock received another order from army headquarters: "The commanding general directs that Getty attack at once, and that you support him with your whole corps, one division on the right and one division on the left, the others in reserve, or such other disposition as you may think proper, but the attack up the Plank Road must be made at once." (The above series of messages are in *OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 2, 407-410.)

Attempting to comply with the orders, Hancock directed Getty to attack, even though the II Corps was not positioned to give full support. Getty advanced virtually alone as Hancock attempted to get Birney's division to the far right (north) flank of Getty. As Getty advanced, Colonel Lewis A. Grant's Vermonters were heavily engaged by Cooke's and Walker's Confederate brigades.

Birney sent one brigade north of Getty (Brigadier General Alexander Hays) and another (Brigadier General J.H.H. Ward's brigade) behind Grant to help Getty's effort. The fighting was extremely heavy, and the losses for Grant's brigade reflect this fact. In the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, 1,645 out of 2,100 of the Vermonters were lost, with an estimate of 1,000 in the Wilderness alone. Eventually the Union advance was halted. Both sides kept up their fire, and soon Getty's ammunition ran low.

At 1700, Hays' brigade (Birney's division) attacked on Getty's right. Hays was killed while rallying his old regiment, the 63d Pennsylvania. Grant knew Hays and was deeply moved by his death. Once again, the Union attack stalled.

At roughly the same time, Brigadier General Gershom Mott's division went into action on Getty's left (south). Both of Mott's Union brigades (one under Colonel William R. Brewster and the other under Colonel Robert McAllister) performed poorly. Walker's brigade (Heth) routed them. Hancock had to rally Mott's men to keep them in action.

By 1800, Getty's division was fought out. It pulled back, and the II Corps (with the arrival of Brigadier General John Gibbon's division) occupied the entire front line against Heth. Also at this time, part of Wilcox's division (Hill's corps) passed through Heth, hitting Getty just as he pulled back, and the Confederates took part of Rickett's battery.

Toward evening, Wadsworth, advancing from the north, hit Brigadier General Edward L. Thomas' brigade of Wilcox's division and pushed them back. Along with Wadsworth and Getty, all of the II Corps was now up—but it was too late in the day to press a new Union attack.

Vignette: Getty and his staff had to bluff for time to hold the Orange Plank Road and Brock Road intersection. Riding ahead of his fast marching troops, Getty and his "small retinue" reached the intersection just as "a detachment of cavalry came flying down the Plank Road strung out like a flock of wild geese and were soon out of sight." This was John Hammond's 5th New York Cavalry, finally giving away after slowing the advance of A.P. Hill's Confederates since dawn. Captain Hazard Stevens, Getty's chief of staff, wrote that a "few of the cavalrymen paused long enough 'to cry out that the Rebel infantry were coming down the road in force. . . .'"

Getty hurried back an aide to bring his troops up at the double quick. Stevens continued the story: "Surrounded by his staff and orderlies, with his headquarters flag flying overhead, he took position directly at the intersection of the roads. Soon a few gray uniforms were discerned far up the narrow Plank Road moving cautiously forward, then a bullet went whistling overhead, then another and another, and then the leaden hail came faster and faster over and about the little group until its destruction seemed imminent and inevitable. But Getty would not budge. 'We must hold this point at any risk' he exclaimed 'our men will soon be up.'"

The Confederates hesitated at the sight of Getty's squad, and the delay bought just enough time for the leading elements of the Union division to arrive. Getty recalled: ". . . Wheaton's Brigade (the First) was brought up at the double-quick, faced to the front, and a volley poured in, which drove back the enemy's advance. . . . The rebel dead and wounded were found

within 30 yards of the cross-roads, so nearly had they obtained possession of it." (Compiled from Getty's report, *OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 1, 676, and Hazard Stevens, "The Sixth Corps in the Wilderness," *Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts*, volume IV, 189-190.)

Analysis:

1. Critique Hancock's performance and Hill's performance.

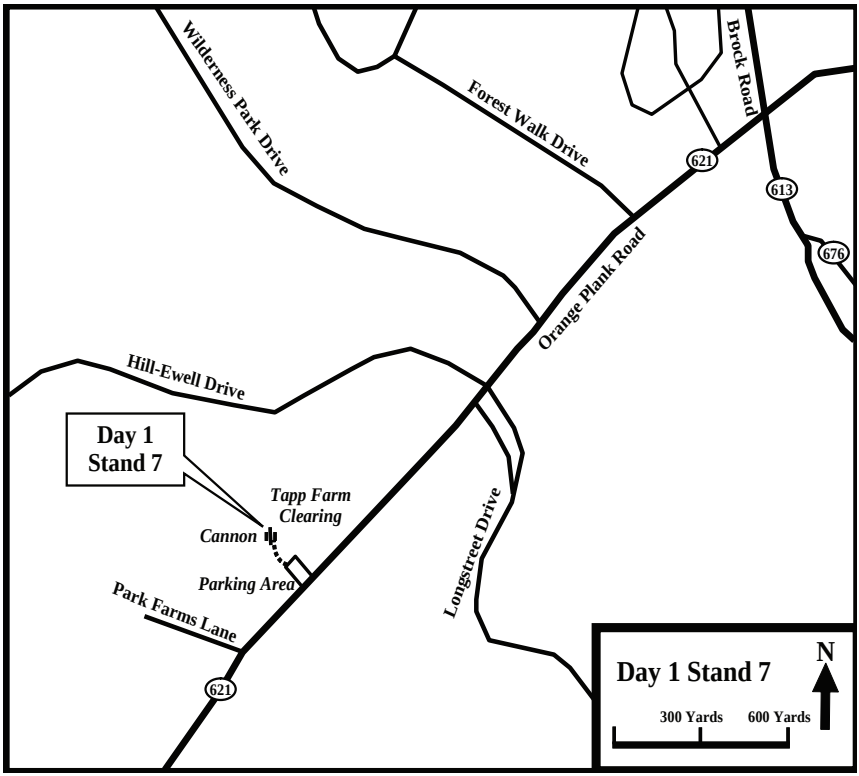
2. Who is the winner and who is the loser of this battle on the southern flank on 5 May (Federals or Confederates)? Justify your answer. Which side is in the better position for the next day?

3. Did the battle further Lee's operational goals? What were Lee's goals? Did they change? Did the battle further Grant's goals?

4. Is this flank the place to make the main Union effort on 6 May, or should the Union forces choose a different main effort and disengage here?

5. What are the options on both sides? Look especially at the operational aspects. Can the Union forces look at another operational maneuver? What about unengaged Union forces (Burnside)? Examine this battle from the Southern perspective and the effect of the planned arrival of Longstreet. Keeping in mind their objectives for the next day (6 May), is this terrain going to favor the Union or Confederate forces?

Stand 7
Tapp Farm ("Lee to the rear!")
(6 May 1864)



Map 11.

Directions: Turn left back on to Route 621 (Orange Plank Road) so that you are doubling back on the same path as before. After 0.7 mile you will pass the intersection with the Hill-Ewell NPS road. Stay on Route 621 past the intersection for a short distance, and you will see an open field on the right (Tapp Farm) and then an NPS parking area also on the right (the parking area is 0.6 mile after the Hill-Ewell intersection). A small walking path enters about 30 to 40 yards into the field and leads to a cannon. The cannon area is a good spot to conduct the stand.

Orientation: You have just left the Brock-Plank crossroads and finished with an analysis of the battle on 5 May. You are now at the Tapp Farm clearing. The path of Plank Road is just south of your location. At the time of the fighting, the Tapp Farm clearing extended on both the north

and south sides of the Plank Road (the modern field is only cleared on the north side of the road).

Description: During the night, Grant ordered an attack to start at 0430 on 6 May, with Hancock to make the main effort. After receiving Grant's instructions, Meade talked to his corps commanders who wanted to delay the start of the attack. Meade asked Grant to postpone the attack to 0600. Grant was sympathetic but feared that Lee could regain the initiative. Grant compromised and allowed a delay to 0500.

For his attack, Hancock was virtually a wing commander; he initially had more than six divisions under his command. This included his own II Corps: Barlow, Mott, Gibbon, and Birney's divisions. In addition, Hancock had Getty's division (VI Corps), Wadsworth's division (V Corps), and one brigade from Brigadier General John C. Robinson's division of the V Corps. Also, Hancock was told that Burnside would support his attack, although not directly under Hancock's command.

The Union leadership hoped to rout Hill's corps and take Parker's Store (the next clearing about 2 miles west of the Tapp Farm) before Longstreet's arrival. Hancock also feared that Longstreet might attack the Union southern flank while the attack was in progress; therefore, Hancock left substantial forces on Brock Road.

On the Confederate side, Hill was confident that Longstreet would arrive early in the morning. Consequently, the III Corps commander refused a request from Heth to adjust the Confederate positions and entrench; Hill told Heth to let the men sleep. Heth wanted Lee to intervene, but Lee let Hill have the final say. Wilcox was positioned south of Plank Road with Heth north and slightly to Wilcox's rear. Lee's trains remained at Parker's Store.

Hancock's command arrangements and deployment for the attack on the morning of 6 May were convoluted. Brigadier General Francis C. Barlow's division was put under Gibbon's command and deployed on Brock Road to cover any Confederate advance from the south. As a result, an entire division guarded the deep left of the line and was unavailable for the attack. Also, the II Corps artillery (42 guns) was left on Brock Road because it probably would not have been very useful in an attack in this wooded terrain. Gibbon's (II Corps) own division (no longer under his command), Mott (II Corps), Getty (VI Corps), and Birney (II Corps) were all placed under Birney's command. These forces were mostly south of Plank Road, and they were to deliver the main assault. Wadsworth's division (V Corps) was north of Plank Road, deployed to advance against Hill's Confederate left flank at a right angle. It was not under Birney's command, but reported directly to Hancock.

The Federals had 25,000 troops in the attack. Hill had about 14,000 men defending.

At 0500, the Federal attack began promptly on time. South of Plank Road, the lead Union line crashed into Wilcox's position. Soon, Ward's Union brigade hit Brigadier General A.M. Scales' Confederate brigade and forced it to retreat. Scales' left and right neighboring units also had to pull back. Brigadier General Samuel McGowen's Confederate brigade was on Scales' left (north). It fell back all the way to Tapp Farm. (*See vignettes* for McGowen's exchange with Lee.)

Not long afterward, Wadsworth's men smashed into the northern flank of Heth's line (Brigadier General William W. Kirkland's brigade). The Confederates were forced to fall back in confusion, but the Union success caused Wadsworth to run into the most northern units of Birney's first two lines. Union units became intermingled, and there was some delay in sorting out the confusion. Despite the confusion, Hancock's attack was succeeding. He was elated by the success. (*See vignettes* for description of Hancock's exchange with Colonel Theodore Lyman.)

Confederates of Brigadier General John R. Cooke's and Brigadier General Joseph R. Davis' brigades (Heth) came forward and delayed Wadsworth. Even so, Lee was so worried about Hill's crumbling line that he sent a staff officer (Lieutenant Colonel Walter Taylor) to Parker's Store to prepare the trains for a withdrawal. In addition, he sent Colonel Charles S. Venable to hurry Longstreet.

Just before 0600, a crucial, short sequence of events delayed the Federals just enough for Longstreet to arrive. Wadsworth emerged from the trees at the northeastern corner of Tapp Farm. Confederate artillery battalion commander Lieutenant Colonel William Poague fired on Wadsworth with his 12 guns (Pogue's battalion is represented by the gun at your current location). Wadsworth paused, then pulled back to the woods to prepare for a new advance.

Next, Hays' brigade (under Colonel John Crocker because of Hays' death on 5 May) and Ward's brigade (both from Birney's division) moved into the Tapp clearing on the south side of Plank Road. Poague turned his guns to face this threat. He lost some men to musket fire, but caused Birney's lead line to pause and reform.

At about 0600, Longstreet arrived. He was advancing straight up Plank Road in a column. He needed to deploy into lines, but his units were only able to deploy one at a time.

First, Brigadier General Joseph B. Kershaw's division deployed south of Plank Road. His leading brigade (Colonel John W. Henagan)

immediately deployed across the entire front south of Plank Road to screen the deployment of the rest of the division. Wilcox's troops (Hill's III Corps) then retreated through Henagan's position. Union troops still threatened to penetrate Henagan's line, but Kershaw's next brigade (Brigadier General Benjamin Humphreys) arrived just in time. With help from Brigadier General Micah Jenkins' brigade (Major General Charles Field's division of Longstreet's corps), they stopped the Federals. Kershaw's and Birney's men exchanged heavy fire, but neither could advance.

By 0630, Kershaw was completely deployed. Humphreys' brigade was on the left (on or near Plank Road). Henagan was south of Humphreys, and Brigadier General Goode Bryan's brigade was further to the south (right). Jenkins' brigade (of Field's division) supported Bryan, while Brigadier General William T. Wofford's brigade (Kershaw's division) was in the rear as a reserve.

In the Tapp clearing north of Plank Road, Wadsworth reformed and renewed the charge. Field needed to buy time to deploy the rest of his division in this direction. He sent the lead unit, the famed Texas brigade, under Brigadier General John Gregg, into battle from the march. He ordered them to use bayonets if needed. This was the first of a series of Confederate attacks in this region that attempted to throw Wadsworth back into the woods (*see vignettes* for the "Lee to the rear" story). Gregg's Texans (plus one Arkansas regiment) slammed into Wadsworth and bought crucial time, but they were decimated (half become casualties).

Brigadier General Henry L. Benning's Georgia brigade followed Gregg. It too was decimated but inflicted additional damage on Wadsworth. The Union troops were now beginning to waver. Finally, Law's Alabama brigade (commanded by Colonel W.F. Perry) formed a defensive line and a stalemate ensued at the Tapp clearing.

Hancock appealed for help from Burnside. Brigadier General Thomas G. Stevenson's division (IX Corps) would eventually join Hancock, but this was after the fight in the Tapp clearing was over. Hancock also ordered Gibbon to send Barlow's division around the southern end of Birney's attacking forces and to hit Longstreet's flank. (Hancock realized from prisoners that most or all of Longstreet's corps was on Plank Road, and no longer threatened a flanking movement from the south on Brock Road.) Hancock claimed that he sent two copies of the orders; however, Gibbon said that he never received them. In any case, Colonel Paul Frank's brigade (Barlow's division) was the only unit from Gibbon that actually advanced. It came up south of McAllister, but his troops broke easily and retreated.

By 0700, some Union units were running short of ammunition. In the meantime, Kershaw hammered at the line south of Plank Road. He made

very little headway, but forced Birney to commit two more of his brigades (under Brigadier General Joshua T. Owen and Colonel Samuel S. Carroll) to the fighting.

North of Plank Road, Wadsworth's division was shaken but still attempting to advance. He had Cutler's brigade in the lead. It was advancing in the woods on the north side of the Tapp clearing when it came to a stream in a ravine. Perry's Alabama brigade occupied the other side of the ravine and they forced Cutler to stop. Colonel J. Howard Kitching's independent brigade (heavy artillery regiments fighting as infantry) tried to support Wadsworth from the north. Perry sent Colonel William Oates' 15th Alabama Regiment to stop them. His 450 men routed over 2,000 Federals. (Note that this is the same Oates who sometimes receives criticism for his fight against Joshua Chamberlain at Little Round Top.)

The 15th Alabama, now joined by two more regiments, found itself on Wadsworth's exposed right (northern) flank. Perry's whole brigade joined in the charge and routed all four of Wadsworth brigades. Cutler's and Dana's (formerly Stone's) brigades fell back to the northeast near the Lacey house and were effectively out of the rest of the battle. Brigadier General Henry Baxter's brigade (Baxter was wounded) and Rice's brigade retreated down Plank Road. They reformed after reaching the Brock-Plank Road intersection. Brigadier General Alexander S. Webb's brigade advanced from its reserve position to steady the Union position north of Plank Road.

By 0830, both sides were exhausted. There was a temporary respite in the battle. At this time, Hancock was trying to handle multiple demands. He put Wadsworth in charge of all troops north of Plank Road (including Colonel Sumner Carruth's brigade from Stevenson's division of the IX Corps) and ordered a fresh charge. It gained little ground, but that part of the front was at least stabilized.

Hancock also tried to coordinate efforts with Burnside (with little results). He received a report of some Confederates on Brock Road and wondered if they could be Major General George E. Pickett's division. (In reality, Pickett was detached from Longstreet and not near the battlefield.) Hancock ordered Birney to send a brigade (Eustis) back to Gibbon to help cover this potential threat. Later, Colonel Daniel Leasure's brigade (Stevenson's division) also went to support Gibbon.

Vignettes:

1. As the Union attack appeared to be on the brink of success, Colonel Theodore Lyman from Meade's staff met Hancock. The II Corps commander informed Lyman: "We are driving them sir; tell General Meade we are driving them most beautifully." Lyman told Hancock that Burnside was

not up yet. Hancock exclaimed: "I knew it! If he could attack now, we would smash A.P. Hill all to pieces." (Agassiz, ed., *Meade's Headquarters, 1863-65: Letters of Colonel Theodore Lyman from the Wilderness to Appomattox*, 94.)

2. The counterattack of Gregg's Texans at the Tapp clearing prompted Lee to attempt to lead the charge personally as told by Colonel Venable of Lee's staff. "The Texans cheered lustily as their line of battle, coming up in splendid style, passed by Wilcox's disordered columns, and swept across our artillery pit and its adjacent breastwork. Much moved by the greeting of these brave men and their magnificent behavior, General Lee spurred his horse through an opening in the trenches and followed close on their line as it moved rapidly forward. The men did not perceive that he was going with them until they had advanced some distance in the charge; when they did, there came from the entire line, as it rushed on, the cry, 'Go back, General Lee, go back!' A sergeant seized his bridle rein. The gallant General Gregg (who [later] laid down his life on the 9th [of] October, almost in General Lee's presence, in a desperate charge of his brigade on the enemy's lines in the rear of Fort Harrison), turning his horse toward General Lee remonstrated with him. Just then I called his [Lee's] attention to General Longstreet, whom he had been seeking, and who sat on his horse on a knoll to the right of the Texans, directing the attack of his divisions. He yielded with evident reluctance to the entreaties of his men and rode up to Longstreet's position." (Charles S. Venable, "The Campaign from the Wilderness to Petersburg," *SHSP*, volume 14, Richmond, VA: 1873, 525-526.)

Analysis:

1. Critique Hancock's performance. Did he arrange his forces properly? Could he have arranged troops better in this terrain?

2. Critique Hill's performance. Is he to blame for the lack of preparation or was he right to let the troops sleep?

3. Note that Burnside is not a factor in the morning attack. What does this tell us about the Union problems with command arrangements (the IX Corps relation with the Army of the Potomac)?

4. Could Lee have done anything different to prevent the near disaster, or did he handle the battle well while waiting for Longstreet?

5. Was Longstreet's counterattack handled well? Operationally, could he have come from another direction? Given the terrain and Union dispositions, was he constrained to a head-on approach (at least initially)?

6. What are the options for both sides once Longstreet's initial attack is

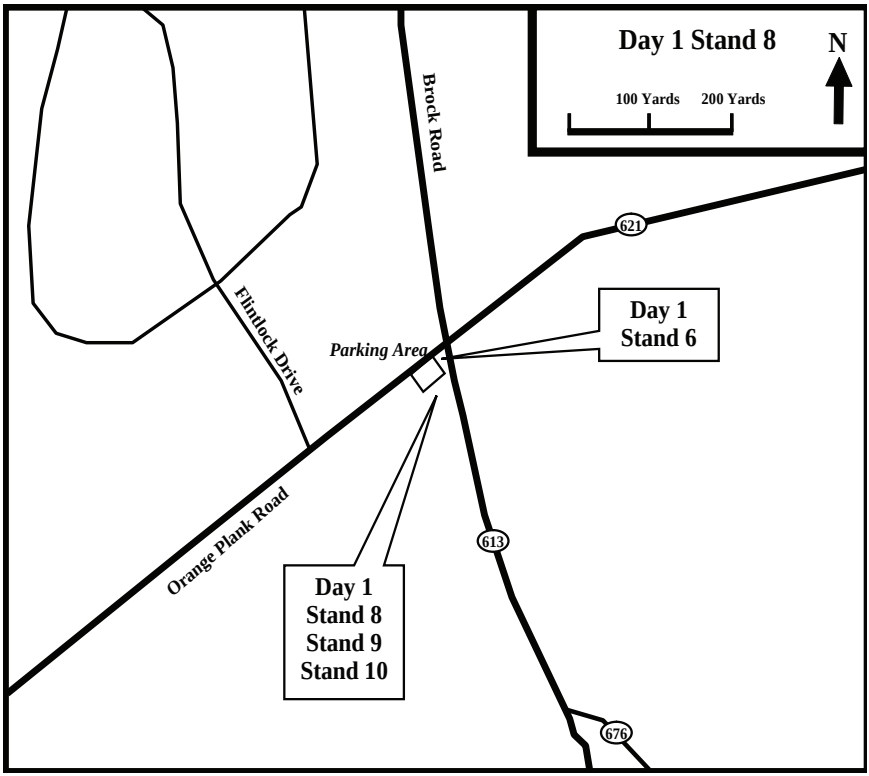
done and there is a temporary pause in the battle? Should either side renew tactical attacks (where)? Should either side halt their tactical action and go into another operational maneuver?

7. What can the modern professional learn from Hancock's and Hill's actions?

a. Hancock left considerable forces on Brock Road for security. How does a modern commander balance risk with security?

b. Like Hill, do modern commanders also have to balance resting the troops while maintaining continuous operations? How do commanders try to minimize this dilemma today?

Stand 8
Burning Breastworks
(6 May 1864)



Map 12.

Directions: On Route 621 (Orange Plank Road) head northwest toward the Brock Road intersection. Note that you are going back over the same path as before. (You have to go back and forth on this road for three stands in order to keep the battle descriptions in the proper chronological order.) Pull into the parking area you used for stand 6 on the right of Route 621 just before the intersection of Brock Road and Orange Plank Road. For a different perspective from your earlier stand, walk about 25 yards into the woods. This will provide a better feel for the action at this stand.

Orientation: You have just come from Tapp Farm and are now at the Brock and Plank Road intersection. There are two parts to this stand. Part 1 is a discussion of Longstreet's successful counterattack against the southern flank of Hancock's line. Part 2 is the later Confederate attack on Hancock's breastworks along Brock Road.

Part 1: Longstreet's Counterattack

Description: From about 0800 to 1000 there was a relative lull on the battlefield, although both sides continued to exchange fire. Wadsworth tried to rally Union forces on the north side of Orange Plank Road. On the south side of the road, the first two Union lines had meshed into one; the original third wave of Union units had now become the second line.

Longstreet decided not to renew his attack straight down Orange Plank Road. He sent Major General Martin Luther (M.L.) Smith (Lee's chief of engineers) on a reconnaissance for an attack route around the Union left (southern) flank.

Smith returned to Longstreet's headquarters at 1000 and made his report. Smith found that there was an unfinished railroad grade that passed south of the Union flank. This ground was perfect for a Confederate attack for several reasons. First, the railroad path was unguarded by Union forces. Second, the grade provided a covered route for Confederate forces to move into position. Finally, it allowed the disposition of units into attack formations perpendicular to the Union flank.

Longstreet was in overall command of the attack. The assaulting brigades were a mixture of different divisions from his own corps and A.P. Hill's corps. In an unusual move, Longstreet put his aide, Lieutenant Colonel G. Moxley Sorrel, in charge of the three brigades on the flank (Wofford, Brigadier General William Mahone, and Brigadier General George T. Anderson). This was a big responsibility for a junior ranking officer—but Sorrel was experienced and Longstreet trusted him.

The Confederate attack began at 1100. The Union troops were totally surprised and routed. After the war, Hancock told Longstreet, "You rolled me up like a wet blanket, and it was some hours before I could reorganize for battle" (James Longstreet, *From Manassas to Appomattox,* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1960, 568).

The Federal left (southern) flank brigade (McAllister) was routed first, then the rest of Mott's division collapsed. Next, Colonel Grant's Vermont brigade fell back. By 1200, Longstreet's lead units (under Sorrel) reached Orange Plank Road and hit Wadsworth's left as he was attempting to steady the fragments of his division north of Orange Plank Road. During this fighting, Wadsworth was mortally wounded while personally leading a counterattack. Wadsworth was from one of New York's wealthiest and most respected families, and he had fought without pay. His soldiers and fellow officers admired him, and his loss was deeply felt. The Confederates captured Wadsworth and tried to comfort him in his dying moments. They also cared for his body and returned it to his family. (Note: The Wadsworth Monument is on the north side of Orange Plank Road about midway

between the Tapp clearing and the intersection with Brock Road.)

By 1400, all Union troops were back at the breastworks along Brock Road (your current location).

The Confederate attack, though one of the most successful tactical actions of the campaign, had run into problems. Once again, the wooded terrain made controlling the units nearly impossible. Also, Confederate units moving from south to north (rolling up the Union flank) crossed paths with those units attacking the Federals from the front (west to east). Finally, Longstreet was seriously wounded (*see vignettes*). The wound was severe, knocking Longstreet out of command for the rest of the Overland Campaign and leaving the Confederate attackers short of leadership at a crucial time.

In sum, both sides were temporarily spent, and there was a pause in the action on this front.

Part 2: Assault on Brock Road

Orientation: You will not change locations after completing Longstreet's attack. However, remind students that the Union entrenchments were on the west edge of the road. All of the II Corps artillery was still on the road and ready to support the defense.

Description: By 1430, Hancock had positioned all of his troops along Brock Road. They were continually building breastworks while the Confederates prepared to renew their attack. Eventually the line of earthworks had abatis in front. Robinson's division (two brigades minus Baxter's brigade, which was attached to Wadsworth's division) reported to Hancock for battle and was added to the line.

Records on the deployment of the Union units are contradictory, but in general the positions started in the south with a mixture of Barlow's and Gibbon's brigades all under Gibbon's provisional command. Next came brigades from Mott's division and Birney's division. Their right touched Plank Road. Next (north of the road) were brigades from Getty's and Stevenson's divisions. Then came a brigade detached from Gibbon with Robinson's division to their right. Carroll's brigade (Gibbon's division) and Wadsworth's spent men were in general reserve.

At 1500, Meade sent orders to Hancock to launch a new attack at 1800; however, Lee preempted the Union plans with his own renewed attack.

On the Confederate side, there was also considerable time devoted to sorting out the intermingled units and preparing them for a fresh assault. After Longstreet's wounding, Lee took personal command of Confederate operations on Orange Plank Road. The Southern commander decided not to renew attempts to turn the far end of the Union left (southern) flank.

Instead, he decided to mass on and just south of Orange Plank Road and to punch through the center of Hancock's new line.

Lee's attack dispositions involved 13 total brigades, but the main force consisted of Mahone (R.H. Anderson's division), Humphreys (Kershaw's division), Henagan (Kershaw's division), G.T. Anderson (Field's division), Davis (Heth's division), and Bryan (Kershaw's division) massed two brigades deep.

At about 1615, Lee's assault began. The Confederate assaults were assisted by the direction of the wind (west to east), which lit the Union breastworks on fire and pushed smoke into the faces of the Union troops. (*See vignettes* on burning breastworks.)

Brewster's and McAllister's brigades (Mott's division) both fell back. Davis, Henagan, and G.T. Anderson's Confederate brigades exploited the gap and captured the breastworks. Federal artillery (II Corps reserve artillery) inclined to its right and hit the Confederates coming through Mott's former position.

Hancock ordered Carroll's brigade (Gibbon's division) and Brooke's brigade (Barlow's division) to close the gap. Carroll's troops were a "shock" outfit. They had repulsed Ewell's elite troops (the Louisiana Tiger Brigade) on Cemetery Hill at Gettysburg in another fierce counterattack. Carroll's men went immediately from the double quick into a bayonet charge and threw back the Confederates.

By 1700, the Union line was restored and the fighting died down. Hancock reported his successful defense, but sent a request to Meade to cancel the planned evening assault. Meade acquiesced.

Vignettes:

1. After the initial success of Longstreet's attack had run its course, the Confederate corps commander along with several other officers, including Brigadier General Micah Jenkins, rode forward to restart the attack near Orange Plank Road. Jenkins was particularly optimistic about the chances for further Confederate success: "We shall smash them now. I am happy; I have felt despair of the cause for some months, but am relieved, and feel assured that we will put the enemy back across the Rapidan before night. . . ."

Soon after Jenkins spoke, a volley of fire from Confederate troops accidentally hit the group of Southern officers. One bullet hit Jenkin's in the head, and he fell mortally wounded. Longstreet went on to describe the events: "At the moment that Jenkins fell, I received a severe shock from a minie ball passing through my throat and right shoulder. The blow lifted me from the saddle, and my right arm dropped to my side. But I settled back to my seat, and started to ride on, when in a minute, the flow

of blood admonished me that my work for the day was done. As I turned to ride back, members of the staff, seeing me about to fall, dismounted and lowered me to the ground."

Longstreet was carried from the battle on a stretcher with a hat over his head. Soldiers began to mistake him for dead, and Longstreet raised his hat to reassure the troops. His wound was severe. He would not rejoin Lee until well into the Petersburg siege. (Longstreet, *From Manassas to Appomattox*, 563-564.)

2. Private Warren Goss, a soldier in Mott's division, recalled the effects of the forest fires on the Union breastworks: "The fire swept on and reached our second line of entrenchments. . . . The men formed at some places eight and ten ranks deep, the rear men loading the muskets for the front ranks, and thus undauntedly kept up the fight while the logs in front of them were in flames. Finally, blistered, blinded, and suffocating, they gave way." (As quoted by Richard Wheeler, editor, *Voices of the Civil War*, New York, NY: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1976, 388.)

Analysis:

1. Critique Hancock's performance. Was he negligent to allow Longstreet to find an open flank? Did he recover well after the setback? Was his defense of Brock Road well planned?

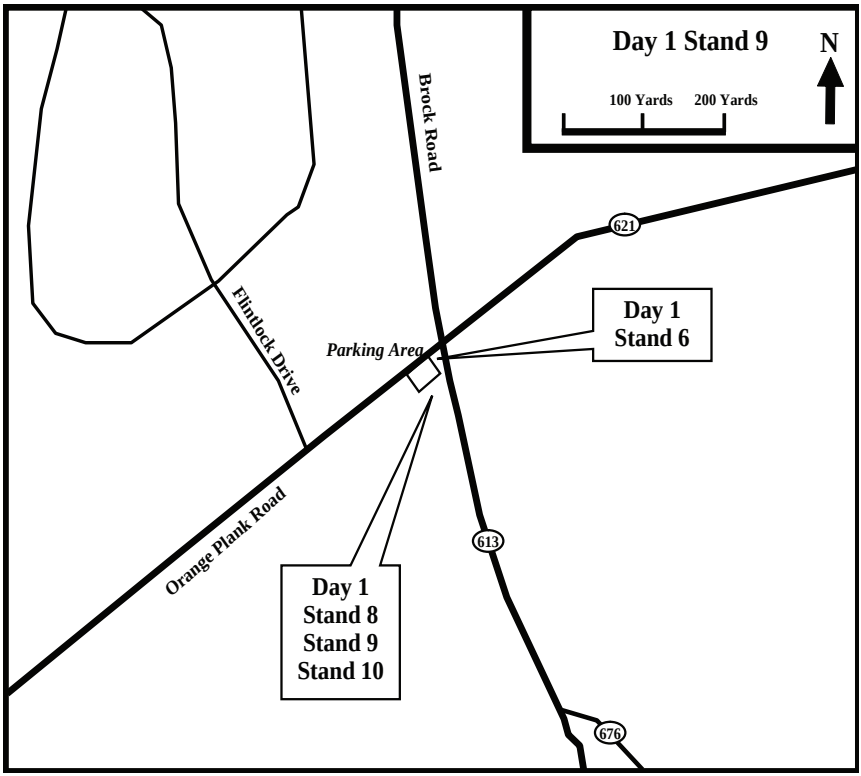
2. Examine the overall Union army performance on the southern flank. Did Meade give Hancock enough forces? How effective was Burnside? Should Grant and Meade have looked for other options rather than to continue to fight in this terrain?

3. Analyze Longstreet's attack on the flank. Were there any faults (perhaps the lack of a plan to follow the success and sort out the crossing of units on each other's fronts in the path of attack)?

4. Critique Lee's attack on Brock Road line. Was he correct to abandon any flank attacks and focus on a mass strike at the Union left/center? Should he have attacked at all? Were there better operational options (to include disengaging)?

5. What implications can you draw today from the two Confederate attacks on Hancock's forces? Do concepts such as security and surprise apply as much today as during the Civil War, or has modern technology (satellites, drones, etc.) brought dramatic changes to these principles? Do ground reconnaissances retain their importance in today's conditions?

Stand 9
Gordon's Attack
(6 May 1864)



Map 13.

Directions: This stand is at the same location as stand 8 (Burning Breastworks).

Orientation: You will need to conduct this stand with a map, because you are not on the actual ground of Gordon's attack. Gordon's assault took place just north of Saunders' Field where you were earlier in the staff ride (stand 4).

Description: The Union situation on the northern flank on 6 May had been generally quiet. Sedgwick's VI Corps was already entrenching when Meade ordered the V and VI Corps to suspend planned attacks and dig in. The focus of Sedgwick's command appeared to be on the corps' center where Johnson's division had been active in harassing the Union troops attempting to prepare their defenses.

On the Confederate side, Gordon conducted a reconnaissance and discovered the location of the Union right on the morning of 6 May. His patrols determined that security on the Union flank was almost nonexistent and there was a thick wood that could cover the approach of an attacking force.

Gordon proposed to Ewell that the Confederates launch an attack to roll up the flank of the VI Corps. Gordon's division commander, Jubal Early, was initially against the effort due to the lack of a reserve in case the attack failed and the Federals counterattacked. Ewell hesitated to give Gordon permission for the attack without Early's approval. Eventually, when the IX Corps was discovered moving south, Early changed his mind, and Ewell ordered a three-brigade attack to start at about 1800.

Gordon's brigade was the main attacking force. In support was Brigadier General John Pegram's brigade (Early's division) on Gordon's right and Brigadier General Robert D. Johnston's brigade (Rodes' division) on the left.

Brigadier General Alexander Shaler's brigade (Wright's division) was on the northern end of the VI Corps line. Next in line was the brigade of Brigadier General Truman Seymour, who was actually from a different division (under Brigadier General James B. Ricketts) than Shaler. Seymour was senior commander and was placed in nominal command of both brigades. Shaler realized the danger of the exposed position and requested additional troops through Seymour, but nothing came of the request.

By 1600, some 10,000 troops of V and VI Corps were assembled in the rear of the army's center. These men waited while Meade tried to decide how best to use this ad hoc force in light of Hancock's setbacks on the southern flank. Thus, Shaler's force was spread in an attenuated line to cover for the other withdrawn VI Corps forces.

At 1800, Gordon's brigade, supported by Johnston and Pegram, moved out toward Shaler's position. As the attack commenced, it found many of the Union troops cooking dinner and working on their entrenchments with their weapons stacked nearby.

The assault swept into the Union pickets and quickly scattered them. Johnston's men passed around the open Federal flank and gained their rear. Gordon's brigade fell directly on Shaler's thinly spread troops whose arms were stacked while they were still digging in. Pegram's brigade drove Seymour out of position. After Seymour broke, Shaler's brigade was isolated.

Colonel Daniel D. Bidwell's Union brigade quickly refused its right flank, and both Seymour and Shaler rallied their men on Bidwell's right extending the line. The two Union commanders were captured in the process of rallying their men.

For a time, Gordon's attack created a panic among some troops and leaders on the Union flank. However, Sedgwick remained calm and fed reinforcements into the new line. The Union high command did not panic; Grant and Meade chided several flustered staff officers who showed up at their headquarters *(see vignette)*.

The new Union line held and the Confederate threat to the Federal flank ended.

Vignette: Lee's attack on the Union right caused a shock among some staff officers, but Grant and Meade remained calm. Among those who came through the headquarters were two aides on Sedgwick's staff who believed that the flank of the VI Corps was broken and that Lee might reach the Germanna Ford Road. Meade cuttingly questioned the officers about the available reserves and then said, "Nonsense! If they have broken our lines, they can do no more tonight."

Grant also seemed unperturbed by the tales of disaster brought in by other officers, until one staffer's comments tried his patience: "General Grant, this is a crisis that cannot be looked upon too seriously. I know General Lee well by my past experience; he will throw his whole army between us and the Rapidan, and cut us off completely from our communications." Grant removed his cigar and heatedly replied, "Oh, I am heartily tired of hearing about what Lee is going to do. Some of you seem to think he is suddenly going to turn a double somersault, and land in our rear and both of our flanks at the same time. Go back to your command, and try to think what we are going to do ourselves, instead of what Lee is going to do." (Agassiz, 98 and Porter, 68-70.)

Analysis:

1. Gordon claimed (after the war) that if his attack had been done earlier, with more daylight, the Confederates would have won a decisive victory. Do you agree or disagree (justify your answer)?

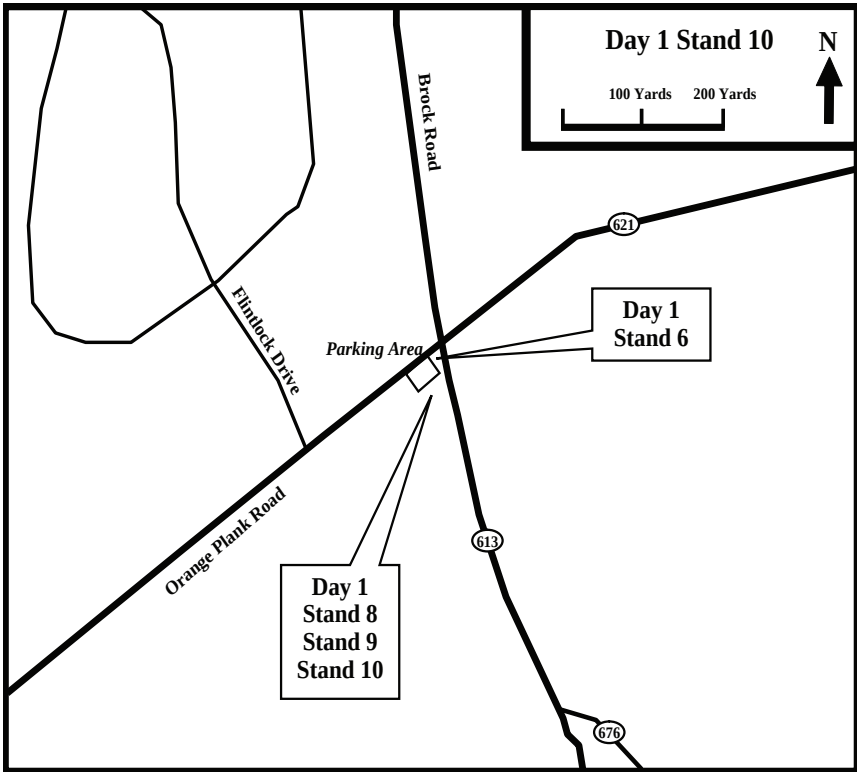
   a. What is a decisive victory for the Southerners? Can they hope to destroy the Federal army or just give it minor setbacks?

   b. What could the Southerners have done to better exploit their success? Did the Federals simply have too many reserves to be defeated?

2. Assess the Union command. Why were they so unprepared?

3. How does Gordon's attack fit into the operational picture on both sides? Did it help to further Lee's operational aims?

Stand 10
Wilderness Summary and Next Movements
(7–8 May 1864)



Map 14.

Directions: This stand is conducted in the same location as the last stand.

Orientation: Because this stand is mostly a summary, there is no need for an orientation to this particular ground. However, once you begin discussing the movements of the armies on 7–8 May, you may want to redirect attention to Brock Road—the most direct route from the Wilderness to Spotsylvania. The stand consists of two parts: the summary of the Wilderness battle and the initial movements of both sides out of the Wilderness and toward Spotsylvania.

Part 1: Summary

Description: Although no one knew it at the time, the battle of the Wilderness ended on the night of 6 May. Three-quarters of a mile of often

burning woods separated the armies, and each side was entrenched, thus discouraging any further attacks. It had been a blind, blundering battle with both sides showing as much determination as skill.

The Federal total losses were 17,666 (14,283 killed and wounded and 3,383 missing). The Confederate losses were about 11,400 killed, wounded, and missing. Note that Confederate figures for this battle, while not very detailed are relatively reliable, but that as the campaign continued, the Confederates sometimes did not record their losses (or in some cases the records were lost) and the casualty figures become rough estimates. There had been several key losses among leaders on both sides with Longstreet's wounding being particularly noticeable.

Analysis:

1. Who won this battle and why?

2. Analyze Grant's and Meade's performances. Had they made a mistake in getting caught in the terrain of the Wilderness? Who is to blame for the poor use of cavalry? Was the battle really necessary?

3. Had the Wilderness battle helped to accomplish Grant's operational objective? Keep in mind his stated goal of destroying Lee's army, his views on Richmond, and his coordination of efforts with Butler and Sigel.

4. Analyze Lee's performance. Could he have avoided the piecemeal commitment of his army? Lee had just missed taking Brock Road (and splitting the Union army), but he had succeeded in tactically turning both Union flanks. Could he have done better? Did the Wilderness battle accomplish Lee's operational objectives?

5. In light of the above analysis, what are the implications for the operational art today? How can commanders better ensure that tactical engagements fit into the operational design?

Part 2: Movements

Description: Early in the morning of 7 May, Grant decided to move by his left flank to force Lee to abandon his field works. This move required a change of base. The Rapidan bridges were taken up, thus breaking the link with the old base at Culpeper. At the same time, the Federals established a new base at the port of Belle Plain on the Potomac River. This new base gave the Federals a secure and shorter supply line that went from Belle Plain through Fredericksburg to the Union army.

At about the same time, Grant told Meade to prepare for a movement, particularly preparing the trains, moving the wounded, and pre-positioning the artillery reserve. While these preparations were made, Meade spent

much of the day checking on Confederate intentions (he worried about a renewed Southern attack on his flanks). A brigade of Wilson's cavalry division was sent to Germanna Ford to see if the Confederates would exploit Gordon's attack. They reported that the Confederate troops were not preparing an attack. Other probes by the Union forces confirmed that Lee was not preparing for an attack.

The Federal movement was to begin that night (7 May) at 2030 (the trains were to start earlier at 1500). The overall plan was to use multiple routes for speed while keeping a screening force in front of Lee to protect the army's march.

The V Corps was to pull out of the line, march behind the II Corps, and take Brock Road to Spotsylvania Courthouse. The VI Corps was to fall back to Chancellorsville, take Piney Branch Courthouse Road back to Brock Road, and follow behind the V Corps to Spotsylvania. The IX Corps was to follow the VI Corps and stop at Piney Branch Courthouse. Burnside's corps was positioned as a reserve that could support any of the other three Union corps. The II Corps had the screening mission. Hancock's troops were to hold until the other corps had passed and follow the V Corps down Brock Road to Todd's Tavern.

The Union cavalry had two missions: to guard the Federal trains and to clear the road to Spotsylvania Courthouse.

As the Federals prepared their moves, Lee faced one major question: would Grant, like Hooker in 1863, retreat back across the Rapidan and Rappahannock? Initially, Lee believed that the Federals had one more day of fight left in them in the Wilderness. By midafternoon of 7 May, Stuart reported that the Federal cavalry had withdrawn. However, this was inconclusive—it might mean a Union retreat or a movement further south. As the day progressed, Lee learned that the Federals were pulling back from their right flank and that Grant was pulling up his Rapidan River bridges. The Confederate commander correctly concluded that Grant was going to move south and continue the campaign.

Once he was sure the Federals would continue, Lee decided that Grant had two options. The Federal commander could move to Fredericksburg, closer to his new supply line. On the other hand, the Union leader could move to Spotsylvania Courthouse, a more aggressive advance toward Richmond. This path was the fastest way to Hanover Junction, Lee's critical supply point and a position that could cut Lee off from the Confederate capital.

In case Spotsylvania was Grant's target, Lee took precautions. He ordered his artillery chief, Brigadier General William N. Pendleton, to cut a path through the woods from Plank Road, behind the Confederate lines,

to a road leading to Shady Grove Church. This would give the Southerners a path parallel to the Union route on Brock Road.

Lee also selected a new commander for the Confederate I Corps. He had several choices, but Early was unpopular and Johnson was unknown. The army commander chose Major General Richard H. Anderson. Mahone took command of Anderson's division.

Later in the afternoon, the situation became clearer for Lee. First, Federal cavalry was detected around Todd's Tavern. Lee responded by telling Stuart to examine the road net toward Spotsylvania. Second, while visiting Ewell's front, Lee learned that the large Federal artillery park in the vicinity of Grant's headquarters (near the Wilderness Tavern) was moving to the south. This piece of news was the confirmation of Grant's move south that Lee needed.

Lee ordered Anderson's corps to pull out of their lines after dark, rest, and then march for Spotsylvania. Hill and Ewell were to follow.

The Union infantry corps began their move after dark. Warren's V Corps moved at 2030 on 7 May, and it reached Todd's Tavern at 0330 on 8 May where it found the road blocked by Union cavalry. Sedgwick's VI Corps moved at 2130 back to Chancellorsville and then to Piney Branch Courthouse. Burnside's IX Corps moved at 0500 on 8 May to Chancellorsville in order to guard the trains on 9 May. Hancock's II Corps moved just before daylight on 8 May. Because the road was clogged, he was delayed and reached Todd's Tavern at 0900 on 8 May.

On the Confederate side, Anderson pulled out of the line after dark, but he could not find a place to rest because the woods were ablaze so he kept moving through the night and into 8 May. In the morning, he crossed the Po River at Corbin's Bridge. Early in the morning of 8 May, Lee got positive information from his cavalry that the Federal V Corps was near Todd's Tavern. In response, he ordered Ewell's corps to Shady Grove Church, and he headed for Spotsylvania Courthouse. He arrived there at 1430 on 8 May.

Vignette: None.

Analysis:

1. Grant appeared to have claimed the initiative after the Wilderness (despite Lee's tactical attacks on 6 May). Why? Could Lee do anything different than react?

2. Critique Lee and Grant's movement plans. Did they both have reasonable operational objectives and routes? Who had the greater expectation of success?

3. In what ways are the movements of Civil War armies and today's armies similar and in what ways do they differ?

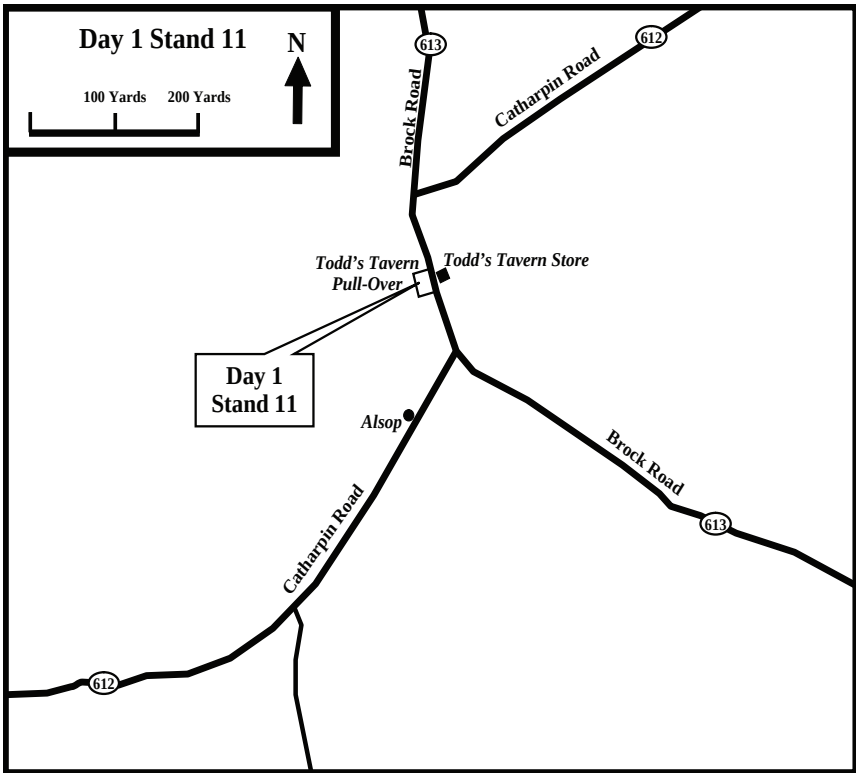
a. How do armies disengage with an enemy in contact and regain freedom of movement?

b. Do today's armies still take advantage of movement on multiple routes?

c. What is the role of screening forces in an army movement?

d. What part do the trains and supply bases play in determining objectives and routes?

Stand 11
Todd's Tavern
(7–8 May 1864)



Map 15.

Directions: As you leave the parking area, turn right and go the short distance to the Plank-Brock intersection. Turn right on Route 613 (Brock Road). Go south for 4.7 miles where you will come to Todd's Tavern, which is situated near the intersection with County Road 612 (Catharpin Road). A modern country store called "Todd's Tavern" is on the left (east) side of Brock Road, but the Civil War era tavern was on the right side of the road. There are some modern historical markers (maintained by Virginia) and a small parking area (pull-over) on the right. This is a good place to do the next stand. Also, this is a good location to give a lunch break if you brought pack lunches.

Orientation: You are now at Todd's Tavern on Brock Road (this was the road that the Union V and II Corps took to Spotsylvania). This is an

important road junction of Brock and Catharpin Roads. Brock Road leads south to Spotsylvania, and Catharpin Road leads west to the Confederate positions and routes.

Description: Sheridan's cavalry had held Todd's Tavern on 6 May. However, later that night, the Federal cavalry withdrew toward Chancellorsville. The withdrawal allowed Major General Fitzhugh Lee's Confederate cavalry division to reoccupy the crossroads at Todd's Tavern.

Grant's movement plan required Sheridan to open Brock Road all the way to Spotsylvania for the leading Union infantry unit, the V Corps. Sheridan attempted to carry out these orders on 7 May. Merritt's division (formerly under Brigadier General Alfred T.A. Torbert, who was suffering from a spinal abscess) came down the Furnace Road to Brock Road. Gregg's division came down Piney Branch Church Road. Wilson's division guarded the trains. Merritt's and Gregg's divisions were to seize Todd's Tavern from Fitzhugh Lee, then Gregg was to continue west on Catharpin Road and seize Corbin's Bridge.

The plan worked. Fitzhugh Lee contested Merritt starting about 0.75 mile north of the Tavern, until Gregg appeared on the Confederate flank, which forced Lee to retreat south. Gregg continued toward Corbin's Bridge, where he met Brigadier General Thomas L. Rosser's brigade (of Major General Wade Hampton's division) and drove it across the bridge. Merritt continued and found Lee 2 miles south behind log works. Merritt captured the works in a stiff fight.

Having succeeded so far, both Gregg and Merritt inexplicably withdrew to Todd's Tavern at dark. The Confederates regained Corbin's Bridge and the log works at the Piney Branch Road junction. The tired Federal cavalrymen bivouacked in the road at Todd's Tavern. Sheridan made his headquarters at Alrich's Farm.

On the evening of 7 May, Sheridan planned to seize Spotsylvania Courthouse and a crossing of the Po River the next day (8 May), but he did not tell Meade. Sheridan's orders were marked as 0100 on 8 May and instructed the Union cavalry to move at 0500. The plan, if implemented, would have been too late.

In the meantime, Meade and his staff reached Todd's Tavern at 0100 on 8 May. He found the Federal cavalry blocking the road and without any orders to move. Sheridan was not at the crossroads. Angry, Meade ordered Gregg back to Corbin's Bridge and Merritt south toward Spotsylvania. Meade notified Sheridan of these actions.

Merritt's men again met Fitzhugh Lee's troops. However, he was progressing so slowly that at dawn Warren replaced the Union cavalry with Robinson's infantry division of the V Corps. Robinson gradually pushed

the Confederate cavalry back through Alsop's (north of Spotsylvania on Brock Road) as the morning progressed.

Also on the morning of 8 May, Wilson entered Spotsylvania Courthouse, driving out Brigadier General William C. Wickham's cavalry brigade (Fitzhugh Lee's division); but the Union cavalry was isolated, and Sheridan ordered Wilson to withdraw.

Late in the morning, Meade sent for Sheridan to come to the army headquarters at Piney Branch Church. A huge argument ensued. (*See vignettes* for Porter's account of the argument and Sheridan's view.) The argument was due to basic philosophical disagreements on the use of cavalry, the volatile personalities, and weariness. The conflict over the use of cavalry pitted Meade's concept of having the mounted troops screen the infantry movements and guard the trains against Sheridan's view of seeking to fight a major battle with the Confederate cavalry before doing any other missions.

After the argument with Sheridan, Meade went to Grant's headquarters and described his shouting match with the army's cavalry commander. Grant decided to give Sheridan what he wanted—permission to conduct a raid that would draw Stuart into a battle.

On 9 May, Sheridan gathered his forces and set out on a raid toward Richmond. He took nearly all of the Federal cavalry with him, thus leaving Grant and Meade without reconnaissance and screening assets for the next two weeks. Stuart followed Sheridan, but he left one-third of the Southern cavalry with Lee.

Vignettes:

1. In his memoirs, Horace Porter provided a vivid account of the argument between Meade and Sheridan over the use (or misuse) of the Union cavalry on the road to Todd's Tavern and Spotsylvania: "Meade had worked himself into a towering passion regarding the delays encountered in the forward movement, and when Sheridan appeared, went at him hammer and tongs, accusing him of blunders, and charging him with not making a proper disposition of his troops, and letting the cavalry block the advance of the infantry. Sheridan was equally fiery . . . his language throughout was highly spiced and conspicuously italicized with expletives." (Porter, *Campaigning with Grant*, 83-84.)

2. Sheridan, in his postwar account of the argument over Todd's Tavern, claimed that Meade had wrecked his plans, exposed Wilson to defeat, and made the cavalry useless: "I told him I could whip Stuart if he would only let me, but since he insisted on giving the cavalry directions without consulting or even notifying me, he could thenceforth command the

cavalry corps himself—that I would not give it another order." (Philip H. Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs*, Volume I, New York, NY: C.L. Webster, 1888, 368.)

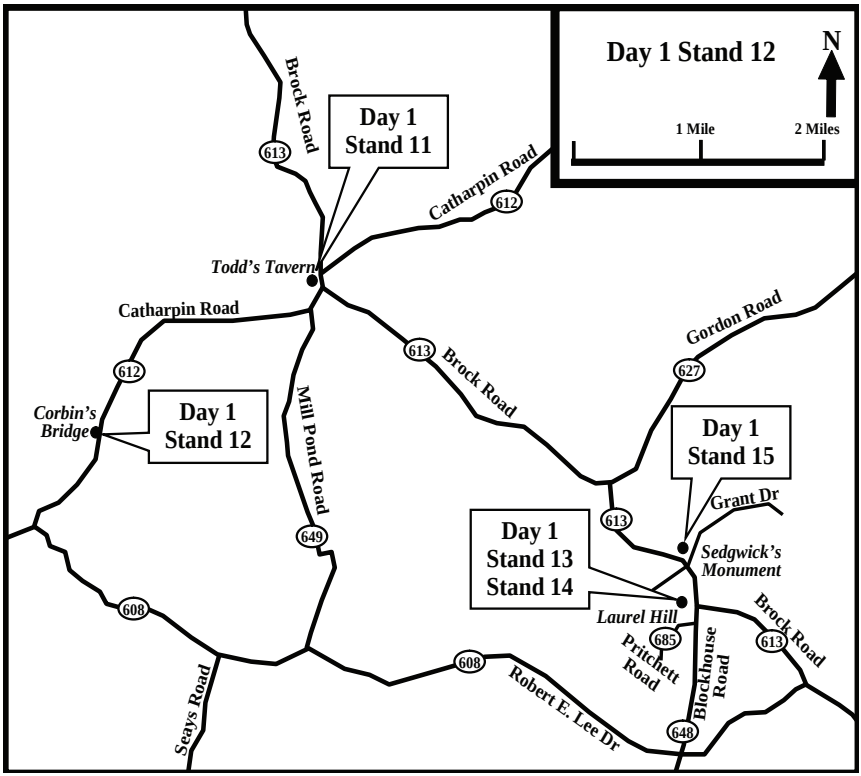
Analysis:

1. Critique the Union command structure and climate. Does it have a systemic problem or personality conflicts?

2. Who has the better idea on cavalry employment—Meade or Sheridan (or neither)? How should Civil War cavalry be used?

3. How does this cavalry debate relate to modern warfare? Who performs reconnaissance today? It might be interesting to relate this debate to modern air force proponents of winning the air superiority battle before doing other missions (a view that seems close to Sheridan's view of his role).

Stand 12
Corbin's Bridge (drive-by)
(8 May 1864)



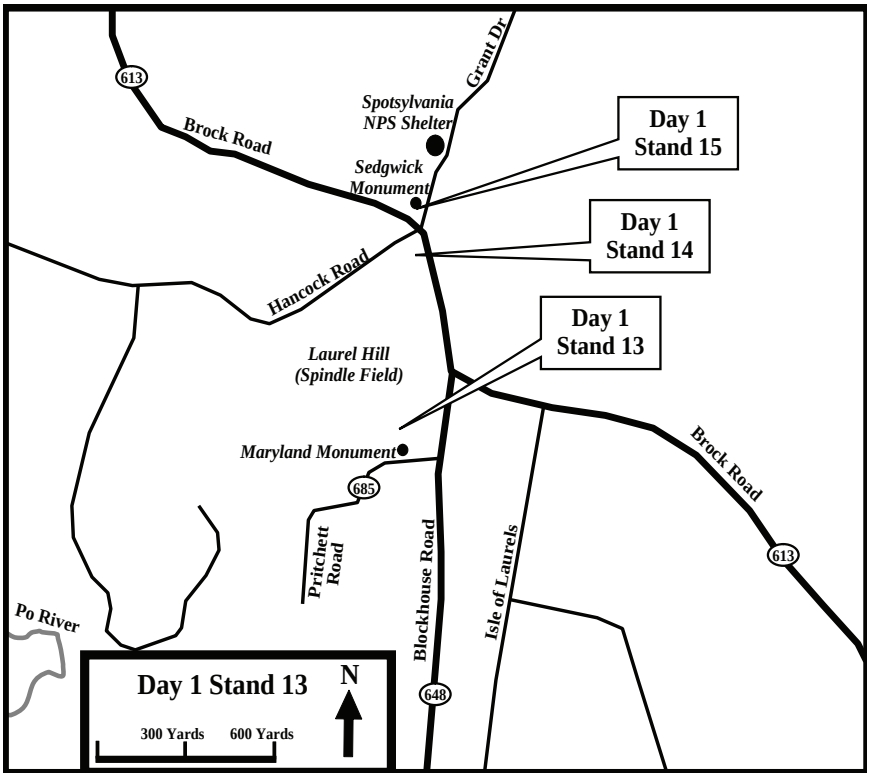
Map 16.

Directions: From the Todd's Tavern intersection, turn right (west) on to Catharpin Road, Route 612. Bear in mind that Lee's men did not pass by this intersection. They followed Pendleton's trail and farm roads leading from their positions in the Wilderness and intersecting with Catharpin Road at a point about 1.5 miles from the tavern intersection. The best landmark for locating this area is an orange road sign indicating a bend in the road and a 35-mile per hour zone. Continue past the road bend and then cross slowly (traffic permitting) over Corbin's Bridge (about 2.5 miles).

These directions will take you on part of the route that Lee's troops took to get to Spotsylvania. You will cover about half of Lee's total route—the segment beginning at the point where Pendleton's path through the woods joined Catharpin Road.

Description: The last stand discussed the action at Corbin's Bridge, so there is no need to stop on the bridge itself. As mentioned earlier, the Federals had taken Corbin's Bridge on 7 May, and they were blocking Lee's route to Spotsylvania. However, they voluntarily gave up the position that night.

Stand 13
Laurel Hill I
(8 May 1864)



Map 17.

Directions: On Route 612, about 0.7 mile past Corbin's Bridge turn left (southeast) on to Route 608, formerly the Shady Grove Church Road, now called Robert E. Lee Drive. Proceed along this road for 5.8 miles, then turn left on Route 648 (Blockhouse Road). Head north on 648 for about 1.0 mile and you will come to an intersection with a small road (Route 685, also called Pritchett Road). Turn left on this road (685). The stand is on the north side of the road, only about 0.1 mile after turning. The best way to park is to go past the stand and continue another 0.1 mile down the road where the road widens slightly. Use the wider part (and road shoulder) to make a U-turn, and then double back on 685. There should be just enough room on the right hand shoulder for you to pull the vehicles off of the road and park directly opposite of the stand.

Across the road you will see the opening to a small walking path cut through the woods. This path goes past a monument to the Maryland

brigade and then into an open field, which is Spindle Field (part of Laurel Hill). It is best to do this stand right at this opening, which gives a good view from the Confederate perspective.

Orientation: You are currently located on part of Laurel Hill (Spindle Field). The Confederate lines for Anderson's corps were in the woodline just behind where you are standing. The Union assault positions for Warren's V Corps were on the far wood line across the open field to the north. Brock Road is to the east of the open area. About 1.0 mile north on Brock Road toward Todd's Tavern is the Alsop Farm.

This field is about the same proportions as the Civil War era Spindle Field, but the woods had less undergrowth (we are now out of the Wilderness). The Spindle house was situated roughly in the middle of the field on a slight rise in the ground. There was another open field behind the woods to the Confederate rear; this field was called Perry Field. The two fields together were called Laurel Hill.

Description: Lee had ordered Anderson, the new commander of the I Corps, to proceed to Spotsylvania on 8 May after resting his troops on the night of 7 May. However, the fires in the Wilderness area made it nearly impossible to rest, so he made an all-night march to the vicinity of the Blockhouse Bridge on the Po River before stopping his command for an hour to eat breakfast. If Anderson had followed Lee's original instructions, he most likely would not have arrived in time to hold Spotsylvania.

The Army of the Potomac made an all-night march toward Spotsylvania on 7 May without stopping to feed the men (the problems with the cavalry—discussed earlier—meant that the Union infantry was "stopping and going" all night without being able to get sleep). By morning, Union V Corps infantry had replaced the Federal cavalry in the lead on Brock Road. Warren sent Robinson's division down the eastern lane at Alsop's (Brock Road split at Alsop's and then rejoined near our location). The V Corps commander sent Griffin's division down the western lane to push the Southern cavalry out of the way.

Both sides knew of the importance of Spotsylvania Courthouse. If the Federals could take the crossroads, Grant would be between Lee and the Confederate base at Hanover Junction (as well as Richmond).

At 0730, an unusual messenger—a bareheaded and shoeless old gentleman—hastened into Anderson's camp with a message from Fitzhugh Lee that Union infantry was forming north of Spindle's Field and about to attack. Fitzhugh Lee feared that he could not hold the Union infantry, and he needed assistance. Anderson started two brigades (Henagan's South Carolina brigade and Humphreys' Mississippi brigade) for the Brock Road at once, to be followed by the rest of the corps.

Stuart was at Laurel Hill to meet the approaching Confederate brigades, and he coolly placed them into position on top of the hill just minutes before the V Corps made its initial charge. Many of the Southern infantrymen had run the last mile to get to Laurel Hill. The Confederates had won the race to Spotsylvania—just barely.

Warren rode forward from the Alsop house and found Robinson deploying his division. Colonel Peter Lyle's brigade was deployed on the left (east) of the road just past the junction where the two Alsop lanes reunite. The other two brigades were following behind.

Warren ordered Robinson to attack what he still believed was only Southern cavalry. Robinson requested to wait for his other two brigades to come up, but Warren told Robinson to advance at once. Robinson sent Lyle's men down the left side of Brock Road in a column of regiments. They immediately ran into two of Henagan's South Carolina regiments who were attempting to improve the hasty fieldworks left by the cavalry. Lyle's men were repulsed, but they did not initially retreat. Instead, they deployed on line in partially covered low ground in front of the Confederates and continued to exchange fire with the Southerners.

Denison's Union brigade of Marylanders, at the quick step and in a column of regiments, came down Brock Road to catch up with Lyle and was not aware that they were about to assault until they actually deployed on line in Spindle's Field. Moving directly from column into line and then forward, the Maryland troops finally saw the Confederate works to their front.

Denison made the mistake of halting the brigade about halfway across the field. The troops then fired and attempted to reload in the open. Within minutes, Robinson and Denison were wounded. Henagan's troops (three regiments were deployed on the west side of the road) opened a heavy fire at the halted Federals, decimating their ranks. The remaining Maryland troops eventually pushed on and some actually penetrated the Rebel breastworks, but they were driven back shortly thereafter. The Union troops and leaders were now aware that their foe was Confederate infantry and not cavalry.

Griffin's division arrived as Denison's troops fell back, and Warren sent them forward to renew the assault. Bartlett's brigade of New York and Pennsylvania troops came up on the right of Denison and pushed past the Marylanders. The 83d Pennsylvania actually got troops on and over the Confederate barricades. Humphreys was deploying his troops to Henagan's right when he witnessed the Union penetration, and he later wrote: "for the first and last time in my warring, I saw two hostile lines lock bayonets." (Benjamin G. Humphreys, "Sunflower Guards" in the J.F.H. Claiborne

Collection, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina.) Still, the Federals were forced back.

Next, Griffin sent Ayres' Regulars and Sweitzer's Massachusetts troops to reinforce Bartlett as they arrived at Spindle Field. To the east of the field, Coulter's brigade (the last of Robinson's units) made their way through the woods to support Griffin's men. These last brigades moved beyond the gully only to have the broken remains of Denison's and Bartlett's brigades scramble through their ranks. While the exhausted Federals struggled, Humphreys launched a counterattack that finally drove Lyle's men from the low ground to their front and also repulsed Coulter while pouring a galling fire into Griffin's left flank. Like Robinson's men before them, Griffin's division was driven back from the Confederate breastworks.

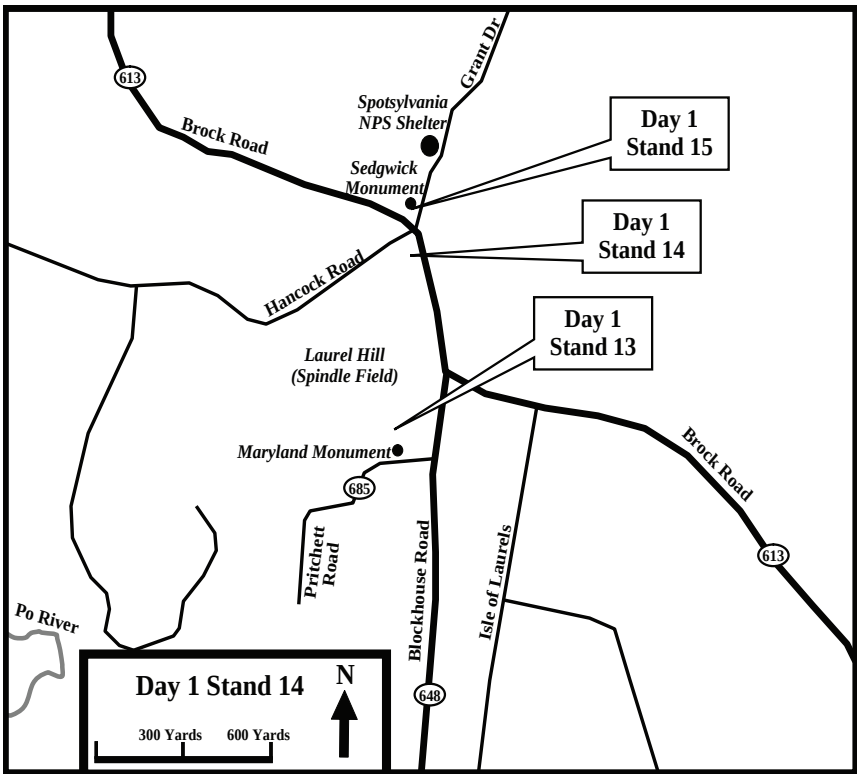
At 1015, Warren informed Meade that his initial assaults had been repulsed. The V Corps commander contemplated his next move. Criticized three days before for taking too long to assemble his troops for the initial thrust across Saunders' and Higgerson's Fields (in the Wilderness), he now directed his next two divisions to launch attacks as soon as possible. Concurrently, the Southern line was being reinforced as the rest of Anderson's I Corps came up.

About a half hour later, Cutler's division (Cutler had recently moved up from command of the Iron brigade to take over for Wadsworth) advanced in the tracks of Griffin's division on the west side of Brock Road. Crawford's division attacked on the east side. The attack began, according to Warren's own message, "in fine style, all bands playing" (*OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 2, 539-540). The Union advance reached the vicinity of the Spindle house—which the Confederates had burned to prevent its use by Union sharpshooters—and stalled. The two lines traded shots for a short time before the Union line faltered and returned to the north side of the field.

Vignette: Eugene Nash, a soldier in the 44th New York remarked of the entire episode of the V Corps' piecemeal attacks at Laurel Hill: "There had been a miscalculation somewhere." (Eugene A. Nash, *A History of the Forty-Fourth Regiment New York Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War, 1861-1865*, Chicago, IL: R.R. Donnelley & Sons, Co., 1911, 188.)

Analysis: It is probably best to wait until you cross the field and complete the full story of Laurel Hill before analyzing the actions of this battle.

Stand 14
Laurel Hill II
(8 May 1864)



Map 18.

Directions: After completing the story of the V Corps' first failed assaults (Laurel Hill I), move across the open field to the Union lines. The best position is just to the west of Brock Road at the edge of the wood line.

It is best to walk across the field to this stand to get a feel for the terrain, but you will also need to get the vehicles to this area. Once the Laurel Hill I stand is complete, have the drivers go back to the vehicles and drive on Route 685 (Pritchett Road) back to the intersection with Route 648. Turn left on 648 and head north for a short distance (0.1 mile) to the intersection with Brock Road (613). Turn left on Brock Road and proceed for 0.3 mile. You will come to the intersection with Grant Drive and the Sedgwick Monument will be located just off the road. Turn right on Grant Drive, and park the vehicles in the NPS shelter lot that is about

100 yards down the road. The drivers can then walk back to the field and join the rest of the group.

Orientation: As the VI Corps began to arrive on the battlefield, they filed to the eastern side of Brock Road; the V Corps lines were on the west of Brock Road. Similarly, point out that Ewell's corps extended the Confederate line on Anderson's eastern flank (starting about 500 yards to the east of Blockhouse Road and Brock Road intersection and continuing about 1.5 miles to the northeast). Remind the students that you have basically walked from the Confederate positions (Stand 13) to the Federal lines.

Description: At 1330, Meade ordered a combined assault by the V and VI Corps, but it took Sedgwick another five hours before his troops were fully deployed. Rather than making this a three-corps attack, Meade decided to leave Hancock's II Corps at Todd's Tavern in the event Lee tried an attack around the Union right flank.

Having decided on a two-corps assault, Meade was unsure as to whom to put in command of the combined attack. Warren was junior, but was a Meade protégé. Sedgwick was senior, but Meade was not that comfortable with him. Meade attempted to solve the dilemma by telling Warren to "cooperate" with Sedgwick. Warren refused and stated that one or the other must be in command. Warren closed with "I'll be damned if I will 'cooperate' with General Sedgwick or anybody else" (James H. Wilson, *Under the Old Flag*, volume I, New York, NY: Appleton, 1921, 395-96). Meade did not take personal command of the attacking forces because he had become preoccupied with maneuvering Hancock's troops into position.

Finally, the Union attack began at about 1830, but it was not coordinated. Two divisions of the VI Corps moved forward (Neill and Wright), but the V Corps on the right hesitated and then only came a short way out of the trenches. As darkness began to envelop the battlefield, Rodes' division of Ewell's II Corps met the Federal advance. The Union line faltered and fell back. The fighting ended in the darkness with Anderson's and Ewell's corps holding Laurel Hill and the repulsed V and VI Corps entrenching to the north.

Vignette: None.

Analysis:

1. What are the problems with the Army of the Potomac command? Who should have been in charge of the combined V and VI Corps attack: Warren, the man on the ground, or Sedgwick, the senior officer? Why not Meade himself?

2. Critique Warren's actions. Was he right to commit forces piecemeal or should he have waited to launch his corps in a massed assault?

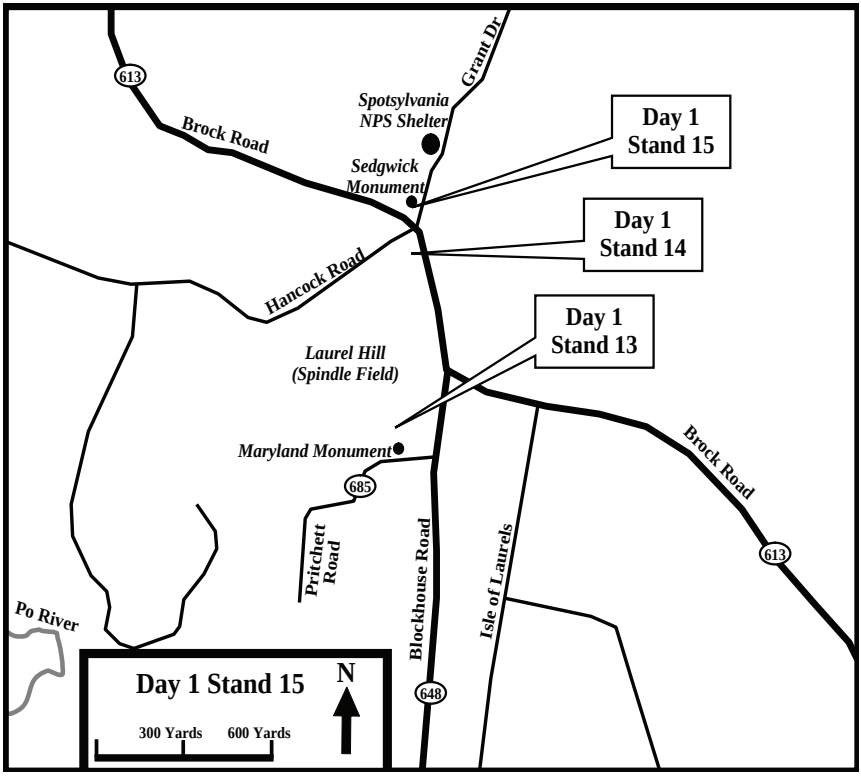
3. Critique Anderson's actions. He marched all night on his own to the battlefield, and he was a new commander.

4. What are the operational implications of this engagement? What are the options now open to both Grant and Lee?

a. Should they both continue to battle for the Spotsylvania region—why and how?

b. Would it be better to discontinue operations here and make a larger operational move to another location?

Stand 15
Sedgwick's Death
(9 May 1864)



Map 19.

Directions: Move the group across Brock Road to the Sedgwick Monument.

Orientation: You have only moved a short distance from the last stand, and thus you do not need to do a full orientation. Remind the students that you are located in the Union positions of the VI Corps.

Description and Vignette: Firing continued all night on 8 May and into 9 May, keeping soldiers from getting any sleep. Only 300 to 400 yards separated the lines of the two armies. The troops kept busy improving their works during the firing.

The Union line extended from the vicinity of the Jones house in the west to the Brown house in the east. Except for Sedgwick and Grant, the Union commanders bickered over who was to blame for the bungled march

and attacks on Spotsylvania. At 0630 on 9 May, Sedgwick received orders from Meade directing him to assume control of the front in his absence. Meade was losing confidence in Warren.

Also that morning, the VI Corps Chief of Staff, Colonel Martin T. McMahon, pointed out the location of Battery H, 1st New York Artillery at the angle of the Alsop Roads and jokingly told Sedgwick, "you are not to go near it today." Sedgwick responded good-naturedly, "McMahon, I would like to know who commands this corps, you or I?" After McMahon responded with another jest and more seriously again urged Sedgwick not to go to the exposed location, the corps commander stated, "Well, I don't know there is any reason for my going there." Some 20 men had been killed and several officers killed and wounded by particularly effective Confederate sharpshooters in the area.

At about 0830, Captain William H. McCartney's battery replaced the New York artillery. In the meantime, a New Jersey regiment had dug new entrenchments, and Sedgwick coming to this location discovered that the new positions blocked the fire of the guns. He directed the infantrymen to move. As they moved, Southern snipers became aroused. Several rounds hit near the men, and the troops dodged the rounds by lying on the ground. Sedgwick humorously chided them and said, "What are you dodging at? They can't hit an elephant at that distance." One man replied, "General, I dodged a shell once, and if I hadn't, it would have taken my head off. I believe in dodging." Sedgwick laughed and said, "All right my man, go to your place." Almost immediately, there was a shrill whistle followed by a dull thud. Sedgwick was struck below his left eye and fell into McMahon's arms. Sedgwick was dead before he hit the ground. (Martin T. McMahon, "The Death of General John Sedgwick," in *Battles and Leaders*, volume IV, 175.)

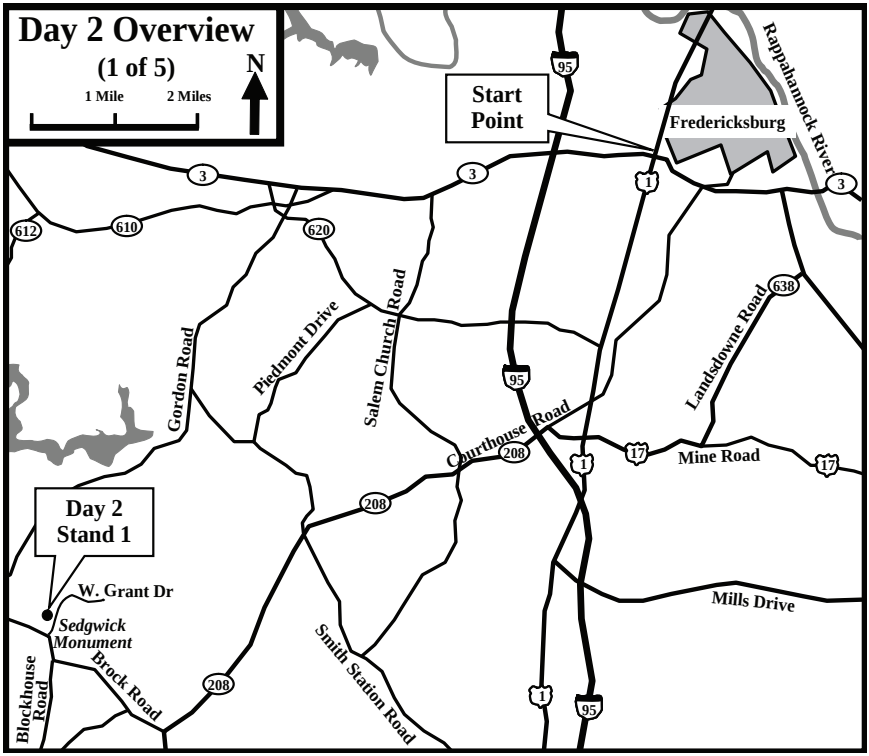
Grant was informed of Sedgwick's death by Horace Porter. Grant seemed to be in disbelief, stating: "Is he dead?" and then again, "Is he really dead?" (Porter, 90). Jeb Stuart, on hearing the news, stated that he "would have most gladly shared his blanket and last crust with him as he was one of the best friends I had in the old army." (As quoted by Gordon C. Rhea, *The Battles for Spotsylvania Court House to Yellow Tavern, May 7-12, 1864,* Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1997, 95, from the Alexander R. Boteler Diary, 9 May 1864, in William E. Brooks Collection, Library of Congress.)

Sedgwick was loved by his men and respected by officers on both sides. His tactical abilities were little better than average, but in an army fraught with political backstabbing, Sedgwick's trustworthiness and calm under fire were needed commodities.

Meade replaced Sedgwick with one of the VI Corps' division commanders, Major General Horatio G. Wright.

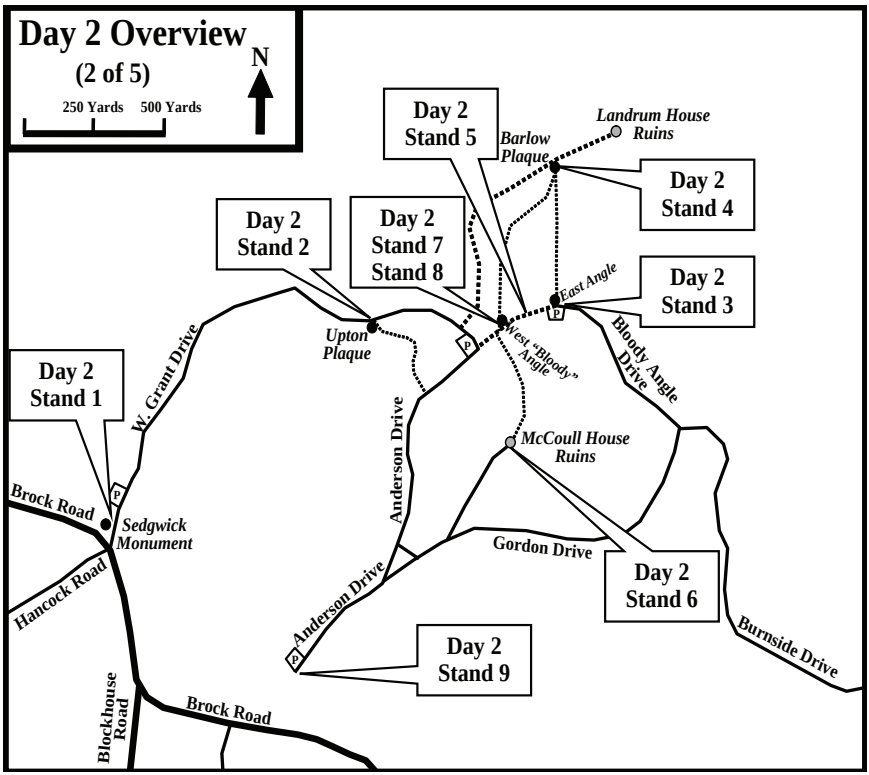
Analysis: None.

Day 2
Spotsylvania to North Anna
(9–24 May 1864)



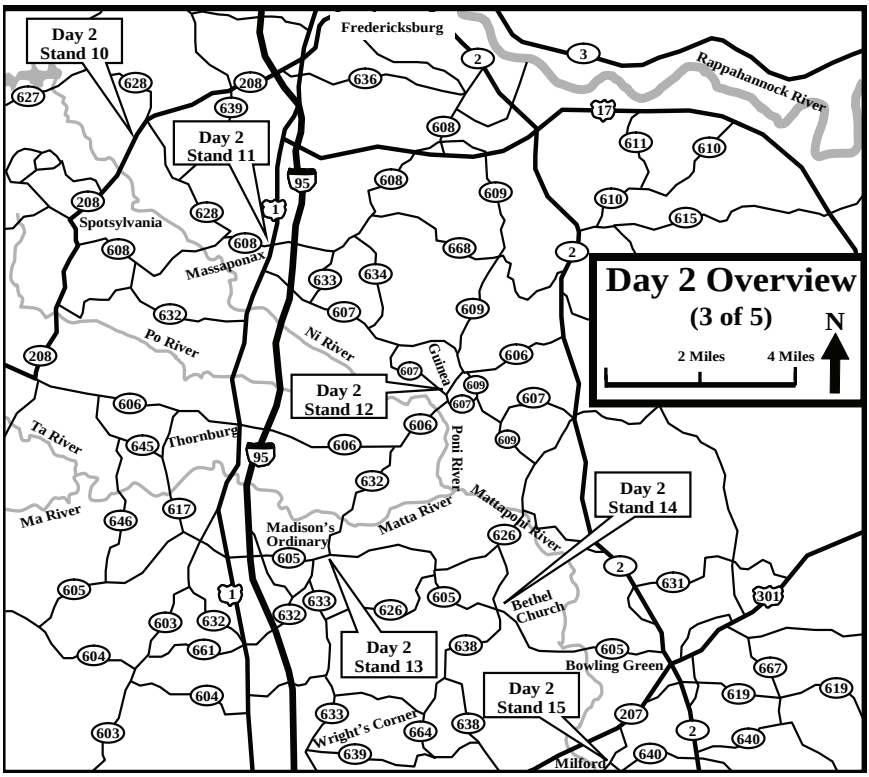
Map 20.

Stand 1, Po River and 10 May Attacks (9–10 May 1864)



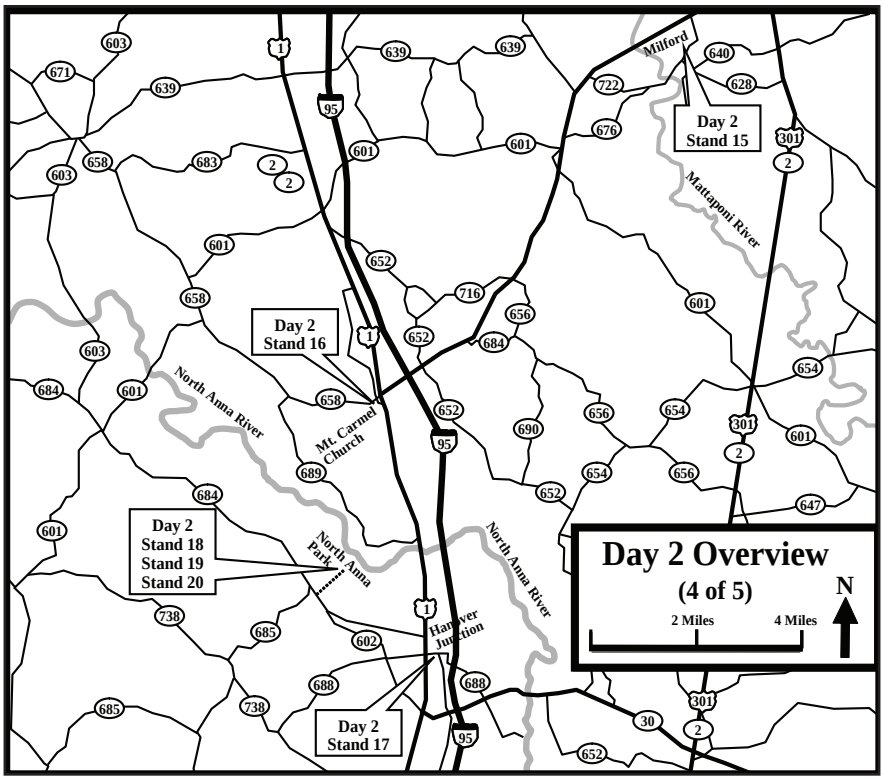
Map 21.

Stand 2, Upton's Attack (10 May 1864)
Stand 3, East Angle (Confederate View) (12 May 1864)
Stand 4, Landrum Ridge (Union View, II Corps) (11–12 May 1864)
Stand 5, Angle I (Breakthrough) (12 May 1864)
Stand 6, McCoull House (Confederate Reactions) (12 May 1864)
Stand 7, Confederate Works (12 May 1864)
Stand 8, Angle II (Face of Battle) (12 May 1864)
Stand 9, Lee's Last Line (13–18 May 1864)



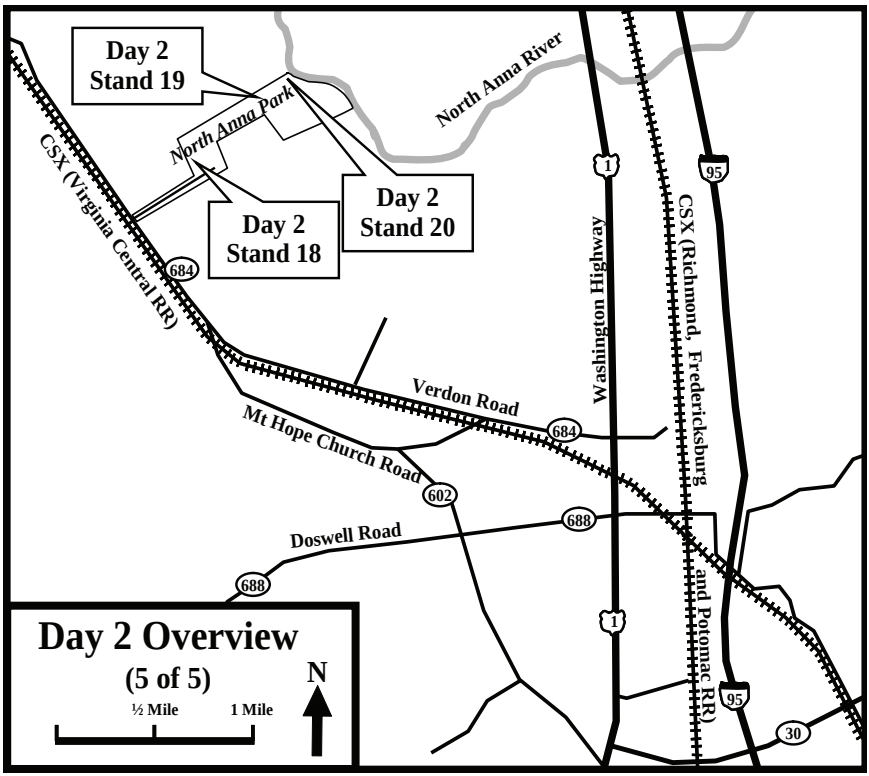
Map 22.

Stand 10, Harris Farm and Spotsylvania Summary (19–21 May 1864)
Stand 11, Massaponax Church (20–22 May 1864)
Stand 12, Motley House and Guinea (Guiney's) Station (21–22 May 1864)
Stand 13, Madison's Ordinary (drive-by) (21–22 May 1864)
Stand 14, New Bethel Church (22 May 1864)
Stand 15, Milford Station (Bowling Green) (21–23 May 1864)



Map 23.

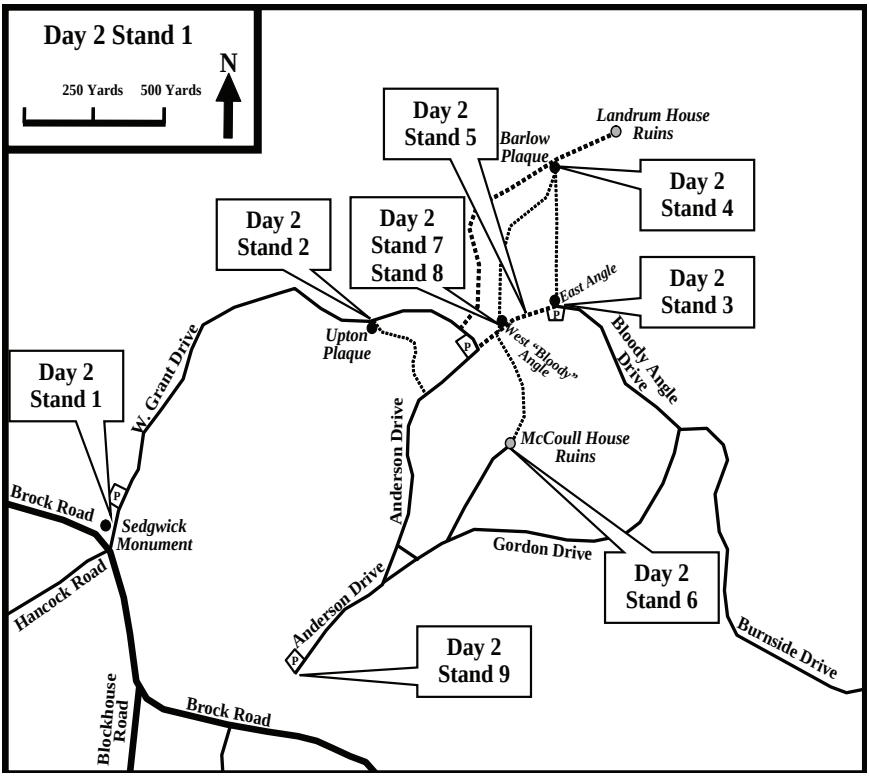
Stand 16, Mount Carmel Church (23–24 May 1864)
Stand 17, Hanover Junction and Doswell (23–24 May 1864)



Map 24.

Stand 18, Jericho Mills (conducted at Ox Ford parking lot) (May 1864)
Stand 19, Ox Ford (Ledlie's Attack) (24 May 1864)
Stand 20, North Anna Summary (May 1864)

Stand 1
Po River and 10 May Attacks
(9–10 May 1864)



Map 25.

Directions: The start point for day 2 is the Sedgwick Monument, the location of the last stand on day 1. If traveling from Fredericksburg, get on US Highway 1 (Jefferson Davis Highway—note that the Highway 1 name changes to Washington Highway south of the North Anna River) heading south. Go 3.0 miles and then turn right on Route 208 (Courthouse Road). Stay on Route 208 for 6.5 miles and enter the town of Spotsylvania. Turn right on Brock Road (Route 613) and go 0.3 mile where you will reach the NPS road, West Grant Drive, and the Sedgwick Monument (the last stand from day 1). Park your vehicle in the NPS shelter lot near the monument and conduct the stand near the shelter.

Orientation: This is the first stop on the second day of a three-day staff ride. Much of the discussion at today's first stand concerns actions that take place at other locations. You can use a training aid (map) of your

own or the park service map (a permanently mounted metal map) near the Sedgwick Monument for some of the discussion. If you use the park service map, note that the map is oriented with south at the top of the map.

At the start of 9 May, the boundary between Anderson's I Corps and Ewell's II Corps was near our current location. Early's III Corps (Early replaced Hill who was sick) was not within sight; they covered the Confederate left (western) flank toward the Po River. On the other flank, M.L. Smith, Lee's engineer, directed the construction and extension of Ewell's line to hold key high ground. The work resulted in a semicircular position that was soon to be dubbed the "Mule Shoe."

On the Union side, the bulk of the V Corps and parts of the VI Corps were near here; Brock Road roughly marked the boundary between these two corps. The II Corps was further west near the Po River, and the IX Corps had moved far to the Union left (east), somewhat isolated from the Army of the Potomac. Grant, though disappointed with the Laurel Hill fight, was not discouraged. He wasted no time assigning blame for past problems. He understood that a direct assault on the Confederate position would not likely succeed. He looked to find an opening on Lee's flanks, but had no cavalry to find these flanks. Unsure of the ground and Lee's positions, Grant directed Burnside to have the IX Corps in position at the point marked "Gate" on the Federal maps by 0600, 9 May, and to connect with the left (east) flank of the VI Corps.

Description: At 0400 on 9 May the IX Corps began its move. About three hours later, the lead element of the IX Corps, Brigadier General Orlando B. Willcox's division, arrived at the Gayle house, just short of the Ni River crossing. Willcox mistakenly reported that he was at Gate, but his actual position at Gayle house was further south and east along the Fredericksburg Road. Because of this confusion, Grant and Meade thought that Willcox was at Gate and did not realize how far forward the Union division had advanced. After driving off some Confederate cavalry, Willcox's division deployed and sent a brigade to secure the high ground on the south side of the Ni. Willcox was too far east and south to connect with the VI Corps, but the IX Corps was unknowingly in a superb position to roll up the Confederate right flank.

Brigadier General Robert D. Johnston's brigade of North Carolina troops (Ewell's II Corps) was sent to hold the Federals coming down the Fredericksburg Road until Hill's III Corps could extract itself from Hancock's front and extend the Confederate line to the south and east. After an assault by Johnston's brigade was repulsed, Willcox sent another brigade to reinforce his front line. Johnston retreated closer to Spotsylvania Courthouse.

After these moves, Willcox reported to Burnside, "I am heavily engaged against superior numbers" (*OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 2, 584). The division commander was misreading the situation; his division faced a lone Confederate brigade and more Union troops were on the way.

At 1230, Stevenson's division (IX Corps) arrived, but no fighting occurred for over an hour and no effort was made to follow Johnston's brigade as it fell back. Burnside remained at the Aldrich house, three miles from the Ni River, almost all day. (*See vignettes* for description of Burnside and his lack of initiative on 9 May.)

By midafternoon, Early's III Corps had moved unmolested into position around the courthouse, and the Union forces had missed a great opportunity. (*See vignettes* for a Confederate's opinion of the missed chance.)

Grant and Meade were soon aware that the III Corps had departed Hancock's front and was moving into position to extend the Confederate right. Both also believed, however, that Ewell had extended the Confederate line toward Gate. The absence of cavalry was plaguing the Union efforts. The Northern leadership was not sure of the positions of Lee's flanks nor did they know if Lee had thinned out his center. Meade was cautious; he wanted to move Hancock into the gap between the VI and IX Corps. Grant was aggressive; he wanted to use the II Corps to attack Lee's left flank, threaten his rear, cut his supply line, and smash him against Burnside's corps.

Grant's view held sway. He ordered Burnside to entrench and hold Lee at all costs. He then ordered Hancock to move to the high ground west of Todd's Tavern in preparation for a crossing of the Po River.

By 1400, the Union II Corps had completed its move and its location was unknown to Anderson. However, some Union troops shot at a small wagon train to scare the teamsters, and this, in turn, attracted Confederate attention to that flank. The Union troops quickly constructed a pontoon bridge, and Barlow's division crossed the Po. Grant ordered the whole II Corps forward, but it took four hours to cross and organize the corps.

As evening approached, Hancock's II Corps was re-united south of the Po and began to advance east on the Blockhouse Bridge, reaching the bridge at dark. Meade (with Hancock's advice) agreed not to move the II Corps any further during the night. Instead, Hancock would launch an attack in the morning. In the meantime, the II Corps built several bridges on the Po in case of the need to retreat.

On the evening of 9 May, Lee realized that the Federal II Corps was isolated, and he sent Harry Heth's reinforced division (III Corps) on a night march to hit Hancock from the south and west.

Grant's plan for 10 May called for a coordinated, simultaneous attack from all four Union corps. Hancock was to roll up the Confederate left

flank. Warren and Wright would attack at Laurel Hill while Burnside advanced down Fredericksburg Road. The Union leaders felt that Lee could not be in all of these positions at once, and thus either Hancock or Burnside would strike an open flank, or Warren and Wright would smash a weakened Confederate center.

Lee planned to hold his entrenched lines around the courthouse on his right and center while part of the III Corps, spearheaded by Heth's flank attack, crushed the isolated Union II Corps.

At first light, Hancock's corps started its move down the Shady Grove Church Road. The advance was slow. Barlow probed for a good spot to recross the Po River where the waterway formed a large bend in front of Mahone's Confederate division, but the Confederate position was strong and the Federals risked being in a very exposed position.

At about 1030, while Hancock probed, Warren started launching a series of heavy skirmishes that verged on being full attacks. Warren was extremely aggressive on 10 May, perhaps because of the V Corps' repulse on 8 May. After about two hours of costly thrusts, Warren called off his attacks, which had little effect on the heavily entrenched Confederate lines. Grant's plan for a coordinated attack was already starting to unravel.

In fact, prior to noon, Grant had issued new orders that changed Hancock's mission and tried to bring unified action back to the Federal forces. Based on Hancock's reports, Grant and Meade decided that Mahone's position was too strong and that the II Corps was vulnerable to Heth's flanking move. The Union leaders decided to withdraw most of the II Corps back across the Po and use it to reinforce an attack by the V Corps at Laurel Hill. One division (Barlow) of the II Corps would remain south of the Po as "bait" to entice Lee into spreading his line thin.

Still mistakenly thinking that Lee had substantial forces in front of Burnside, Grant ordered the IX Corps to fortify its position and attack only if the opportunity presented itself.

The V Corps, joined by two divisions of the II Corps and supported by the VI Corps on its left, were to launch the main effort. The belief was that Lee's line, spread from the Po all the way to Gate, was thin somewhere and would be broken by a concentrated attack. All attacks were to commence at 1700.

By 1430, Hancock had pulled most of his corps to the north of the Po, and Barlow's division remained as the lure on the south side of the river. Heth's reinforced division began its attack against Barlow. Over the next two hours, Barlow conducted a fighting withdrawal. After the war, Union leaders claimed that they had conducted a skillful rear guard action; the Confederates claimed that they drove Barlow from the field in disorder. In

either case, the Union forces extricated themselves, but their diversionary effort failed to stretch Lee's forces.

Not only were the Confederates still well prepared to receive any assault, the timing and coordination for the evening Union attack began to fall apart. Hancock, who was senior to Warren, was supposed to coordinate the II and V Corps attack at Laurel Hill. However, Barlow's fight forced Hancock to return to the Po and use Birney's division to support Barlow.

In Hancock's absence, Warren rode to Meade's headquarters and convinced him that the V Corps should attack immediately. Warren received permission to attack at 1530. Barlow was still engaged on the Po with Birney in support, and Mott's division was detached to the VI Corps, thus only Gibbon's II Corps division was ready to assist Warren's afternoon attack.

The V Corps attack was a disaster. Casualties were high and the V Corps' morale plummeted (several Federal units made only token advances). Warren bravely tried to rally his men by riding among the troops with a regimental flag, but the efforts had little effect. Later, Meade and Grant directed Hancock to reorganize the II and V Corps for another assault at 1830, but the V Corps were exhausted and barely advanced. Birney's and Gibbon's divisions (II Corps) attacked, and although one brigade did penetrate Anderson's line, the Federals were forced to fall back.

Throughout the day, the IX Corps did little to support the other units' attacks and did not divert any Confederate forces away from Lee's center and left.

The VI Corps launched an assault at 1800, a residual effort from the planned evening attack, which you will cover in more detail at the next stand.

Vignettes:

1. A New York cavalryman recorded his observations of Burnside while the IX Corps conducted desultory operations on 9 May: "Gen. Burnside's corps was passing our train and the General himself came in to our quarters where he stayed for near two hours refreshing himself with some of my brandy, etc., and amusing ourselves in conversation about the tide of battle." (Alexander Newburger Daily Journal, 9 May 1864, Alexander Newburger Collection, Library of Congress.)

2. After the war, Jeb Stuart's aide, Theodore S. Garnett wrote about the missed chance of Burnside's IX Corps on 9 May: "It occurred to many of us at the time, that the enemy here lost the best opportunity they had during the whole campaign, to fall upon our flank and destroy our army."

Garnett later rode east to find Ewell's right flank, which he was told

was near the Fredericksburg Road. Garnett wrote: "I hunted in vain at least a half hour, in which I must have ridden quite a mile in a straight line from the said Road, without finding a vidette or picket, or any human being who could tell me where our troops were. If General Grant could have known, and it seems to me that nothing could have been easier to ascertain, that his line overlapped ours for such an immense distance, it would have been the work of a very few minutes to move against our right flank, throw it into confusion and seize the very ground on which we held him at bay for more than a week." (Robert J. Trout, editor, *Riding with Stuart: Reminiscences of an Aide-de-Camp,* by Captain Theodore Stanford Garnett, Shippensburg, PA: White Mane, 1994, 59.)

Analysis:

1. How was the lack of Union cavalry beginning to cause problems for Grant and Meade? What could Grant and Meade have done better to compensate for Sheridan's absence?

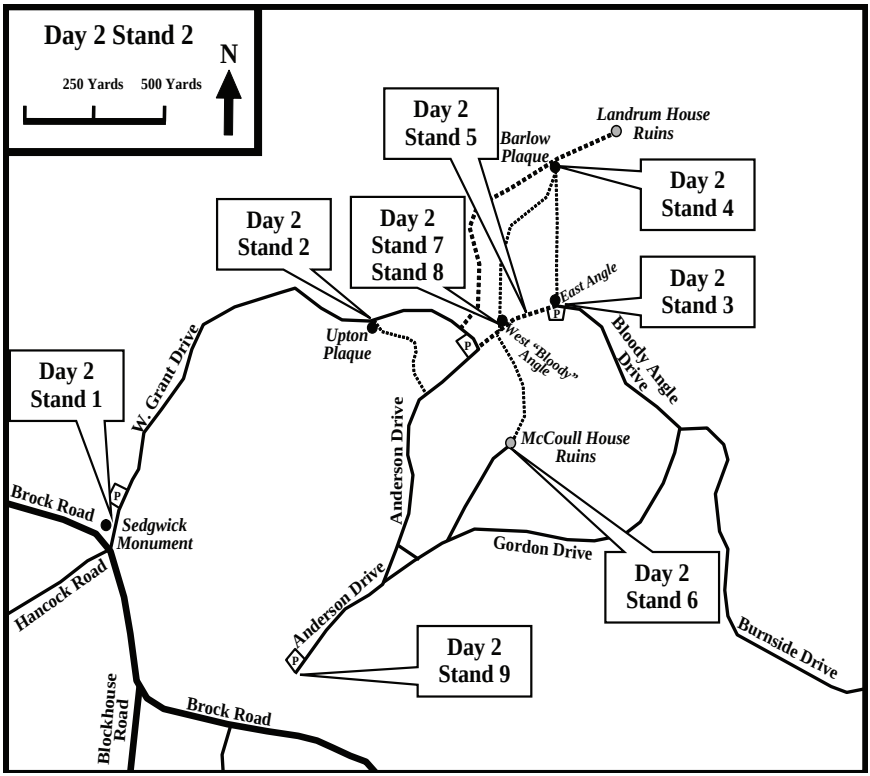
2. What were the flaws (if any) in the initial Union plan to turn Lee's flank at the Po River? Was the plan abandoned too soon? Could the IX Corps have been used more productively? How?

3. What were the flaws (if any) in the later Union plan for a coordinated attack at 1700? How did Union commanders and their personalities exacerbate the problems (Warren's desire to be aggressive, Meade starting to lose trust in Warren)?

   a. What are the inherent difficulties in trying to coordinate multiple frontal attacks in the Civil War (technology, command and control problems, etc.)?

   b. Compare these coordination difficulties with conditions today. In what ways are multifront assaults made easier under modern conditions? In what ways do difficulties remain?

Stand 2
Upton's Attack
(10 May 1864)



Map 26.

Directions: Continue down West Grant Drive for about 0.7 mile. Look for a sign (plaque) marking the path for Upton's attack; it is a small sign next to a walking path in the woods on the right hand side of the road. The stand (which is really in three parts) begins here. Note: The vehicles need to continue to the final part of the stand. After dropping off the students, the drivers should continue down West Grant Drive, which will bend slightly to the right, for about 0.4 mile. At this point, West Grant Drive ends in a parking lot, but there is another NPS road (Anderson Drive) that leaves the parking lot at a 90-degree angle on the right. Turn on Anderson Drive and go about 0.2 mile before pulling over to the side of the road to park. There are some Confederate trenches at this spot with a path that leads over the trenches toward a wood line. (At the time of the writing of this handbook, the NPS was starting to use vegetation to mark the trench lines which have

begun to fill in with erosion at Spotsylvania.) The drivers can park the vehicles here and walk the path over the trenches and through the woods to rejoin the group at the start point of the stand.

Orientation: The stand begins at the Upton sign at the entrance to the path into the woods. Mott's supporting attack was further north of your position, out of view.

This is a three-part stand. Part 1 is the entrance into the woods that was Upton's staging area. After completing the situation, follow the path through the woods and stop at a clearing where there is a monument that honors the regiments in Upton's attack. Part 2 is the planning for the attack and initial assault actions. Part 3 goes from the monument to the Confederate trench line. At the trench line, cover the actual breakthrough and Confederate reactions as well as the analysis and discussion.

The Laurel Hill area, which was discussed at last stop, is to the southwest of this position. Upton's attack was made on the same day as the fight we last discussed, but because of poor coordination and timing, Upton's and Mott's attacks did not mutually support Warren's earlier attack.

Except for Mott's division, the II Corps was involved with fights on the Po River and Laurel Hill for most of 10 May. On the night of 9 May, Mott's division moved behind the VI Corps to take up positions on the VI Corps' left flank.

The Union VI Corps was initially positioned in earthworks east of the Shelton house to your west. Brigadier General David Russell's First Division (Wright's old division) held the far left of Wright's line. Next was Neill's division (Getty's old division). The rest of the VI Corps held the line further to the right and connected with the V Corps on that flank.

Mott was placed temporarily under Wright's (VI Corps) command. Mott conducted two reconnaissances near the Brown house; both times Brewster's brigade failed to penetrate Confederate skirmish fire and did not gain adequate information on the Confederate positions. (*See vignettes* for descriptions of Mott's performance.)

Description: Prior to noon, Meade ordered Wright to conduct a reconnaissance and prepare for an assault at 1700 as part of the Union leaders' plan for a combined assault (as discussed at the last stand). At about 1200, Wright directed Russell to prepare for the assault. Russell, with Lieutenant Colonel Ranald S. MacKenzie (an engineer on Meade's staff) did the reconnaissance. They found a path that led to the woods in front of the Confederate works. It allowed a covered assembly area and attack position that was only a short distance from the Confederates—a minimum of exposure for the charging troops. You are at the beginning of the path through the woods that Russell and Upton (later) used to conduct their reconnaissances.

(At this point, walk through the woods to the clearing with the monument that lists the regiments in Upton's attack.)

Russell selected Colonel Emory Upton to lead the attack and ordered him to use part of his brigade with several attached regiments to make the assault. All told, Upton's task-organized group had a total strength of roughly 3,500 to 4,000 soldiers. Upton was an amazing figure: ambitious, bright, and willing to try new tactics. *(See vignettes* for Upton's biography.)

The Union brigades (minus) in the attack were deployed as follows: first wave—Upton's own brigade (Russell's division), second wave—Eustis' brigade (Russell's division), third wave—Bidwell's brigade (Neill's division), fourth wave—Grant's Vermont brigade (Neill's division). The regimental dispositions are shown on the monument.

The Confederates located in the target area were Doles' brigade (Rodes' division) with Daniel's brigade (Rodes' division) on its left, and Walker's brigade (Edward Johnson's division) on its right.

Upton took all of the regimental commanders forward in the early afternoon for a reconnaissance. This was very rare in the Civil War—an extensive reconnaissance by a commander with all of his subordinates. Upton then issued detailed instructions.

The first wave was to load and cap muskets. The other lines were only to load (no caps); this meant they would advance without stopping to fire. All would fix bayonets. The first line was to make the initial penetration. Then, the right and center two regiments in the first wave were to turn right and take the Confederate guns (the 3d Richmond Howitzers under Captain Benjamin H. Smith) located at the juncture of Daniel's and Doles' brigades. The left regiment was to turn left and enfilade the trench line. The second line was to halt in the captured Confederate trenches and fire forward at any potential Confederate counterattacks. The third line was to hold directly behind the second wave and await orders. The fourth line was to halt at the edge of the woods at the jump off point of the attack—they were a general reserve. They were to be prepared to oblique to the left, which is where Upton felt the Confederates could most likely threaten his penetration. All officers were to constantly shout "Forward." The soldiers were *not* to stop to shoot in front of the breastworks.

Mott was supposed to support Upton's attack; but conflicting and vague instructions left Mott's exact role unclear. At first, Meade directed Mott to support Burnside with an attack, if the IX Corps needed support. Later Mott was told simply to stay connected to Burnside's right flank. Additional orders directed him to use part, or preferably all, of his division to support Wright's (Upton's) attack. Mott needed to place so many pickets to connect his flank with Burnside that he could only use 1,200 to

1,500 troops (out of a division strength of perhaps 4,000 to 5,000 men) in his attack with Upton.

In addition, there was confusion over the timing of the attack. Mott ended up advancing at 1700—the original start time for Grant and Meade's coordinated assault. Due to the uncoordinated timings of other Union assaults (particularly Warren's early start at Laurel Hill), Upton received permission to delay his attack to 1800. No one informed Mott of the change; as a result, he began his move at the original 1700 time.

Finally, the exact method for Mott's support and exploitation of Upton's advance was unclear. Was Mott to come from behind Upton's initial position and pass through Upton's line, or just advance on Upton's left while Wright used other VI Corps troops from Upton's right to assist the attack? Should he advance simultaneously to divert enemy troops or advance later to exploit an already existing breakthrough? One concept was for certain—the plan never intended for Mott to attack before Upton (even though the Union confusion eventually caused this to happen).

In any event, Mott's troops conducted their tentative advance at 1700. It was more of a probe than a full-fledged attack, and it was repulsed by Confederate artillery fire before even engaging the main defensive line. Mott's men fell back in about 30 minutes and provided no support for Upton's assault.

In the meantime, there was confusion with the artillery barrage for Upton's attack. The start time for the attack had been postponed to 1800, but one battery opened at the original (1700) time. It was decided to let the one battery continue to fire slowly for the next hour so as not to alert the Confederates. Then the rest of the artillery began a heavy barrage from 1800 to 1810.

At 1810, Upton's infantry went forward. It took 60 to 90 seconds to cover the open ground from the woods to the Confederate works. Doles' Georgians were surprised—they fired only a few sporadic shots, not volley fire. The Confederate fire from Walker's brigade (the Stonewall brigade) on the Union left was somewhat more effective.

(Move from the Union position to the Confederate lines. From the Confederate perspective, point out that the trenches are not on the military crest. From the Southerners' position, they cannot really see [and cannot fire] on the Union soldiers for a large segment of the Union advance.)

The Federals poured over the works by the weight of their numbers, speed, and surprise. In response, Smith's Confederate battery (just south of the penetration) hit Upton with galling artillery fire. In the ensuring confusion, the Union troops were not able to follow their strict, planned roles for each of their waves. Many from first and second lines went forward to the second set of Confederate works, 60 to 80 yards to the rear. Some

turned left—but only slightly—toward the McCoull house. Some cut in behind Smith's guns, using the woods. An initial assault directly on the guns failed, but by circling behind Smith, the Union soldiers eventually seized the battery. Some elements of the leading two waves went down the line of earthworks toward the south, but not far enough to produce a bigger success. The third line (taking some of the second line with them) turned left and routed two regiments of the Stonewall brigade. Walker rallied the rest of the Stonewall brigade and formed a new line that stopped the Union advance in that direction.

Lee learned of the breakthrough and wanted to go directly to the area and lead a counterattack. However, he was persuaded to let the local commanders repair the breach. Witcher's brigade was free due to the failure of Mott's supporting attack, and it moved from the tip of Mule Shoe to Walker's right and began re-taking the trenches from the Union attackers. Ewell soon arrived on the scene. Steuart's and Battle's brigades came up. Ewell rallied Daniel's troops and got them to hold the southern flank of the breach.

Upton ordered Grant's (fourth) line (the Vermonters) forward—many had already moved on their own—but they had little effect. On the Confederate side, Gordon's division, which had been in general reserve, arrived. Upton was now heavily outnumbered, and he had to retreat. The Federals went back over the same route from which they had come.

After the battle, the Union position was much the same as before. Throughout 11 May, Grant worked on strengthening the links between Burnside and Wright with Mott's division.

The Confederates re-sorted their lines. Doles' force had been virtually destroyed and their position in the trenches had to be covered by other troops.

The Union casualties were 1,000 killed, wounded, and missing. The Confederates lost over 300 killed and 950 prisoners. The wounded number is unknown. Note that Ewell underestimated his casualties in his official report—proven by the actual number of prisoners registered by the Army of the Potomac's Provost Marshal.

Vignettes:

1. Below are two unflattering reports of Mott recounting his performance on 10 May: Theodore Lyman (Meade's staff) said "Mott appears stupid and listless." Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. (an aide to Wright) said Mott appeared "stupid and flustered." (Agassiz, ed., *Meade's Headquarters, 1863-65: Letters of Colonel Theodore Lyman from the Wilderness to Appomattox*, 208, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, *Touched With Fire: Civil War Diary and Letters of Oliver Wendell Holmes, 1861-1864,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard

University Press, 1946, 111.) In Mott's defense, the orders he received were poor, and Mott did perform much better in later campaigns.

2. Biography of Upton: Emory Upton was born 27 August 1839 on a farm near Batavia, NY. He graduated from the Military Academy in 1861, ranking eighth in the class. He was at once assigned to help drill the untutored Federal volunteers who flooded Washington in the early months of the Civil War. As a commander in all three branches of the army (infantry, cavalry, and artillery), Upton has seldom, if ever, had his record equaled. He was advanced from lieutenant to a brevet major general of both regulars and volunteers in the short space of the war's four years (he was a general at 25 years old). The interval was marked by extraordinarily valuable service on a score of battlefields. His most outstanding hour of combat came on the morning of 10 May 1864, when with 12 regiments he smashed into the Confederate lines at Spotsylvania and might have held the position if properly supported.

Upton had been colonel of the 121st NY since 23 October 1862, rose to brigade command, and was commissioned brigadier general two days after his attack at Spotsylvania. His service already included outstanding performances at Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville. After Spotsylvania, he fought with the VI Corps in Sheridan's campaign in the Shenandoah Valley. He commanded a brigade and then took over a division from the mortally wounded Russell at the battle of Winchester where Upton, himself wounded, maintained command while being carried about on a stretcher. He later participated in Wilson's cavalry raid as the commander of the Fourth Cavalry Division.

After the war, he reverted to the rank of captain in the artillery, but soon was promoted to lieutenant colonel in the 25th Infantry Regiment. For the next 15 years, he spent most of his time teaching and writing military treatises. From 1870 to 1875, he was Commandant of Cadets at West Point. He was later assigned to the Presidio of San Francisco in 1880. For some time, he suffered intolerably from an affliction that may have been severe migraine headaches. He took frequent leaves for his health, but with the pain and anguish of his malady mounting, he shot himself at the Presidio on 15 March 1881. He was buried in Auburn, NY, by the side of his young wife who had died 11 years earlier. (Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Blue,* Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1993, 519-520.)

Analysis:

1. Where does Upton's attack leave both sides operationally? What can Grant and Meade do next? What are the Confederate options?

2. Discuss the importance of tactics and its impact on operations—this is a case where it is particularly valuable to focus on tactics because it shows innovation.

a. Has Upton foreshadowed a way to solve the tactical dilemma of the trenches (or is his technique a throwback to outdated tactics that really do not solve the tactical problem)?

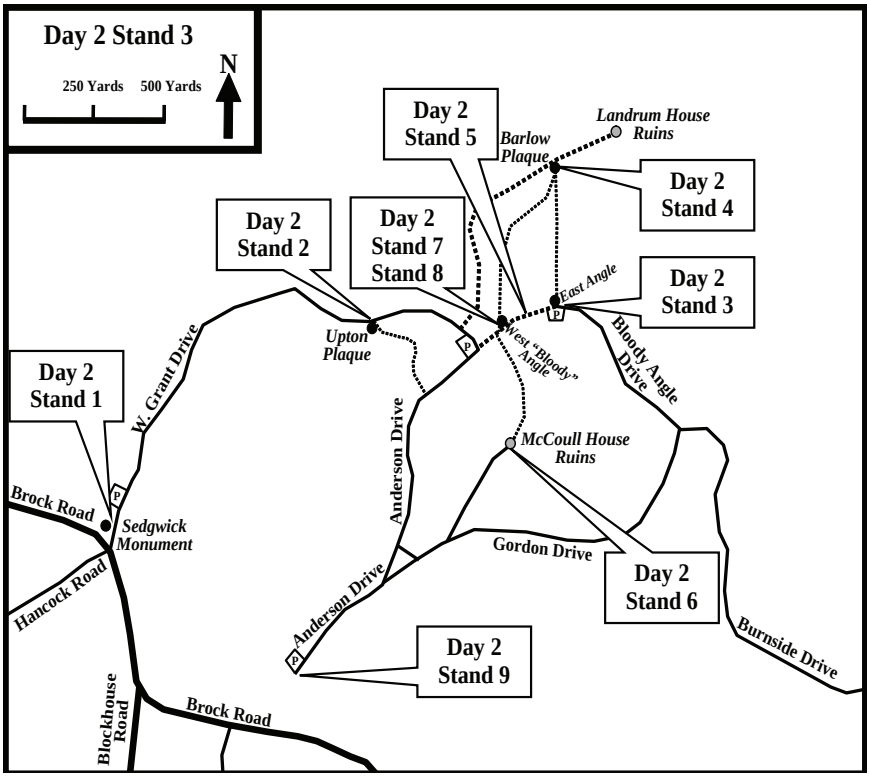
b. How important are tactics to winning wars? Are operations and strategy more important?

3. What are aspects of Upton's attack that still apply today (regardless of the tactical changes)? This might include leadership, reconnaissances, specific unit instructions, surprise, and speed.

4. Why does the Union leadership use only one reinforced brigade in their attack with the new tactics? Are they unprepared for its success? (Compare this hesitancy to commit large forces to new techniques, which brought about similar problems in World War I with gas and tanks.)

5. What are the problems of an attack after a successful breakthrough? What should the soldiers of the initial attack do? What about follow-on troops? What are the operational implications (e.g., if tactical attacks are bound to be limited in success due to the technology, what should the operational planner do)?

Stand 3
East Angle (Confederate View)
(12 May 1864)



Map 27.

Directions: Continue south on Anderson Drive for a short distance (about 0.2 mile) where you will come to a "Y" in the road. Bear left at the "Y," and you will be on another NPS road (Gordon Drive). Continue on Gordon Drive for about 0.7 mile, where the road will bear left and then come to another "Y." Again, bear left at the "Y" and continue until the road ends at a parking lot (about 0.3 mile). Park the vehicles here. On one edge of the lot is a footbridge that crosses over Confederate trenches. It is best to walk across the bridge and conduct the next stand just a few yards past the bridge.

Orientation: This location (near the small park service bridge over the trenches) marks the east angle of the Confederate trench line—not to be confused with the "Bloody Angle" which is further to our west. The

location of Upton's breakthrough (from the last stand) is about 500 yards to the southwest.

Note that the Confederate command arrangements were undergoing extensive changes after the first few days of battle at Spotsylvania. On 8 May, Jubal Early had temporarily replaced A.P. Hill in command of the III Corps due to Hill's illness. Gordon took over command of Early's division in Ewell's II Corps. Colonel Clement A. Evans took command of Gordon's brigade. After extensive casualties, the Louisiana brigades of Hays and Stafford were consolidated on 8 May. Hays was wounded on 10 May and succeeded by Colonel William Monaghan. The newly consolidated brigade was split again with Monaghan keeping Hays' original brigade and Colonel Zebulon York taking the group that used to belong to Stafford. York and Monaghan both worked for Johnson during the 12 May fight.

Description: The purpose of this stand is to discuss the Confederate defensive plan and the implications of occupying a salient. There is no actual combat at this stand (the actual breakthrough and Confederate reactions come at later stands).

Lee's chief engineer, M.L. Smith (he had found the old railroad cut in the Wilderness that helped Longstreet's attack on 6 May), selected the Mule Shoe position. Smith selected the position on the evening of 8 May, and it was occupied by Ewell's corps early on 9 May. Smith felt that the large salient was necessary to put troops on good terrain (high ground with clear fields of fire).

The salient was about a mile deep and a half-mile wide. The two angles at the tip were about 400 yards apart.

(Note: Pause here and discuss the questions below concerning the terrain and salients. After the questions and analysis, continue with the description, which will cover the withdrawal of Confederate artillery in the salient.)

Vignette: None.

Analysis:

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of occupying a salient?

a. The defender can reinforce faster from inside of the bulge than the attacker can around the outside.

b. The main problem with a salient is that the enemy has converging fire around the bulge, while the defender's fire is dispersed.

c. Salients consume more manpower than a straighter line, and they are subject to being pinched off at the base.

d. Others?

2. A salient is usually picked to occupy key ground. M.L. Smith thought this terrain was worth a salient; was he correct?

3. As the defender, how do you overcome the weaknesses of a salient (both in terms of Civil War capabilities and under modern conditions)?
   a. Increase firepower (put in more artillery).
   b. Entrench.
   c. Keep a reserve force for counterattacks.
   d. Build a reserve line for a fallback position.
   e. Others?

Description (cont): Smith and Ewell (with Lee's support) attempted to bolster the Mule Shoe with several of the efforts listed above. Ewell's corps artillery chief, Brigadier General Armistead L. Long, massed 40 guns at the tip of the salient. The entire front line was well entrenched (both sides were highly skilled in field fortifications at this point in the campaign). Gordon's division was positioned in reserve.

One weakness (up to the morning of 12 May) was the lack of a complete reserve line at the base of the salient. Upton's attack had prompted Lee and Ewell to build a line, but they allowed the troops to rest on most of 11 May. The line was only partially complete by the morning of 12 May.

Throughout 11 May, there was no heavy fighting, but the Union forces adjusted their lines in preparation for their dawn attack on 12 May. The Confederates detected this movement, but the Southern leaders were not sure how to interpret the various reports of Union moves. The Confederates repulsed a Federal probe (Miles' brigade of Barlow's division, II Corps) south of the Po River in the area of Todd's Tavern. On their right flank, the Confederates observed Burnside's IX Corps pulling back north of the Ni River. This was actually due to a mix up in orders, and the IX Corps moved back on the night of 11 May. The Southerners also repulsed a weak probe by Mott near the Landrum house.

Burnside's adjustments, in particular, convinced Lee that the Union army might be planning a move back toward Fredericksburg. Ever aggressive, Lee hoped he might be able to strike the Federals while they were on the move, and he issued orders that postured the Army of Northern Virginia for a quick respoonse.

One order was specifically directed at the army's artillery. Lee wanted the artillery withdrawn from forward positions before nightfall and prepared for movement. The I Corps chief of artillery, Brigadier General Edward Porter Alexander, felt that the artillery at Laurel Hill was critical to the Southern defense and decided not to move the cannon. Instead, he mounted all of the ordnance in the ammunition chests and cut paths to the main roads to be ready for movement.

The II Corps artillery chief, Long, decided to obey the letter of the order. He had 32 of the cannons in the Mule Shoe removed. This left only eight guns (two batteries) on the left (western) side of the salient. The division commander, "Allegheny" Johnson was not told of the move. During his evening inspection of the lines, he was surprised to find the guns missing. One of his brigade commanders, "Maryland" Steuart, was also uneasy, but he believed that headquarters would replace the removed cannons.

Shortly after midnight, the Confederates in the salient became concerned over the possibility of a Union attack. Near the Landrum house, pickets from Steuart's brigade reported noise from the northwest. One Confederate staff officer called it "a subdued roar or noise, plainly audible in the still, heavy night air, like distant falling water or machinery." (McHenry Howard, *Recollections of a Maryland Confederate and Staff Officer under Johnston, Jackson and Lee,* Baltimore, MA: Williams & Wilkins Company, 1914, 294.) Colonel William Terry of the 4th Virginia Regiment (Walker's Stonewall brigade) reported that he could hear Northerners' voices to his front.

At 0100 on 12 May, Steuart sent Johnson an urgent warning and plea for return of the artillery. Johnson sent his adjutant general to Ewell to report on the massing Northerners and ask for the return of the guns.

Ewell did not believe the situation was as serious as Johnson thought, but he forwarded the report to Lee. The Confederate commander was a bit frustrated over receiving conflicting reports (Jubal Early, in temporary command of the III Corps for the ill A.P. Hill, had just reported a Union move in his area). In any case, Lee gave permission for the return of the artillery to the Mule Shoe at about 0200 on 12 May.

Even after Lee's decision, there were delays in replacing the guns. Long could not be located until 0330. It took more time to find the responsible artillery battalion commanders. Teams of horses had to be awakened, harnessed, and hitched. At 0430, the leading guns were just beginning to arrive as the Union attack started. Only a few cannons had enough time to unlimber and fire scattered shots before almost all were captured.

Johnson asked Gordon for support. Gordon moved Hoffman's brigade and a part of Evan's brigade into a second line of trenches on the left face of the salient. Johnson also sent a circular to his brigade commanders directing them to have the men awake and ready to defend by 0400.

Johnson's division, which was about to receive the full force of the upcoming Union attack, totaled about 3,900 men: Walker's brigade—1,000, Monaghan's brigade—750, York's brigade—750, Witcher's brigade—400, and Steuart's brigade—1,000.

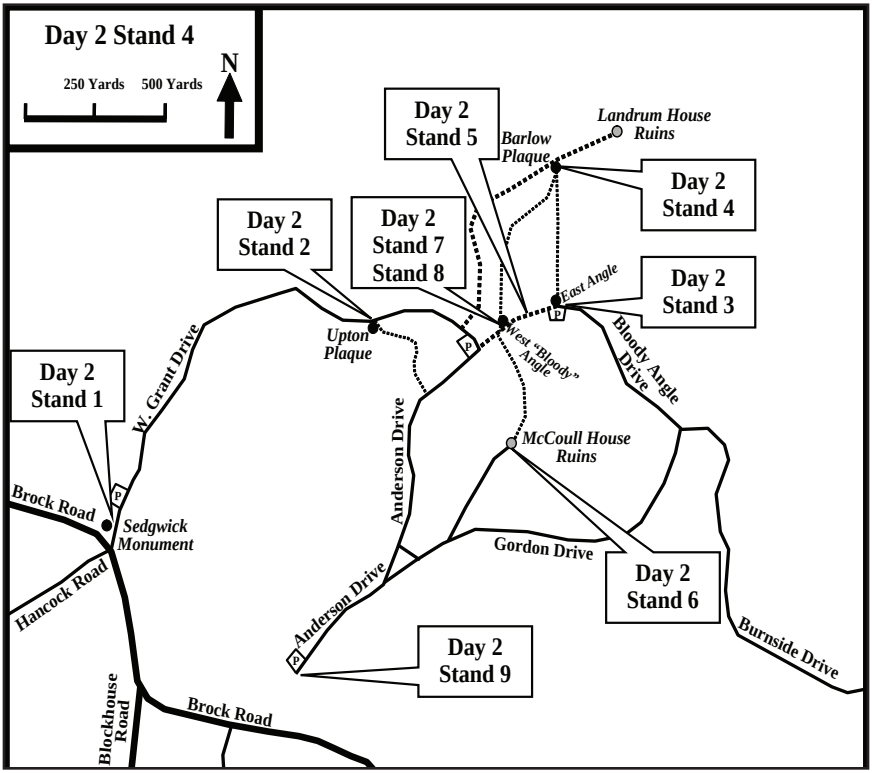
Vignette: None.

Analysis:

1. How well were the Confederates disposed to receive the Union attack? What could they have done better? Should Johnson and his brigade commanders have done more to be ready (and if so, what should they have done)?

2. Who is to blame, if anyone, for the removal of the artillery in the Mule Shoe? Were Lee's actions and orders reasonable given the information he received and his understanding of Grant's past actions?

Stand 4
Landrum Ridge (Union View, II Corps)
(11–12 May 1864)



Map 28.

Directions: Walk along the footpath that leads away from the bridge over the Confederate trenches and toward the Union lines. After about 300 yards, the path will come to a plaque that discusses Barlow's attack. It is best to conduct stand 4 near this plaque. Note that to the east of this plaque is another path that leads to the ruins of the Landrum house. If you have time, walk to the ruins for a quick look or conduct the stand from that location (although the view is probably better from the Barlow plaque).

Orientation: You are presently near the center right of the Union II Corps attack formation on 12 May (after the Federals had forced back Confederate skirmishers). The east angle is the Confederate trenches (the place you just came from). The west angle (bloody angle) is about 250 yards to the southwest along the Confederate trench line.

After Upton's success on 10 May, Grant allegedly said: "A Brigade today—we'll try a Corps tomorrow" (Lumen H. Tenney, *War Diary of Lumen Harris Tenney 1861-1865,* Cleveland, OH: Evangelical Publishing House, 1914, 115). This observation was from an Ohio soldier who was a sentry guard at Grant's headquarters. The quotation is taken from his 1914 memoir. The quote is questionable in part because of the date of the source (recalled long after the war). In addition, neither Grant nor Meade ordered any of the Union units to adopt Upton's tactics.

In any case, Grant planned for a new attack to take place early in the morning of 12 May, and he designated Hancock's II Corps as the assaulting unit.

The position of the VI Corps was to the west of Hancock's corps, and the position of IX Corps was to the east. The Brown house, the Union staging area, was on the other side of the woods that are less than 100 yards to the north and west of our current location. The II Corps (minus Mott who was already near the Brown house) would have to conduct a night march from the Union right flank to get to this location.

Hancock later used the Landrum house as his headquarters during the fighting in Mule Shoe. The path from here to the Landrum house marks the forward line of Confederate pickets driven in just before the assault force went forward.

Description: On 11 May, in preparation for a possible attack, Mott attempted a reconnaissance near the Landrum house, but his troops did not penetrate the Confederate skirmish line and failed to find the exact location of the Confederate positions. The Union leaders could guess the general location of the Mule Shoe from the outline of their own lines, but they would have to launch the attack without adequate knowledge of the terrain and enemy positions.

Grant issued the attack orders at 1500 on 11 May. He directed Meade to move the entire II Corps—after dark—behind Warren and Wright, and to launch an attack with II Corps on Wright's left flank. The plan saw the main effort as the II Corps with the IX Corps in strong support. The VI and V Corps were to support heavily, but not as part of the initial breakthrough force. Nevertheless, VI Corps ended up providing the biggest support.

At about 1600, Meade met with his three corps commanders to discuss the proposed assault. Hancock wanted to know the exact point to be attacked and the route for his approach march. No one at Meade's headquarters could give Hancock good answers to his questions. Everyone decided on the need for a reconnaissance.

Colonel Charles Morgan (Hancock's chief of staff) and an aide accompanied Colonel Cyrus B. Comstock (of Meade's staff) on the

reconnaissance. In the rain, they missed a turn and wandered all the way to the IX Corps headquarters. They retraced their steps back to the Brown house where they asked Mott for help—but he could not provide anything new. Finally, they moved to a ridge where Confederate fire prevented them from getting a good view. They did not return until dark. Comstock went back to IX Corps to help with Burnside's attack. Morgan went back to II Corps headquarters, but he could not offer much information.

At 1900, Hancock assembled his division commanders to discuss the attack. He could not tell his commanders about Confederate strengths and dispositions, the friendly forces supporting the attack, specific information of the approach route for the attack, or even a specific objective (other than to break the enemy line).

Despite the lack of intelligence and resulting vague guidance, Hancock was able to give some specific instructions on other issues. Barlow was to lead the approach march. He would start the march at 2200. Birney was to follow Barlow in the line of march and deploy on Barlow's right for the attack. Mott was to be third in line and included in the assault force. Altogether, three divisions were to make the breakthrough. Gibbon was to join the corps later and act as a reserve or exploitation force for the other three divisions in the assault.

The march started on time in a pouring rain.

Colonel Morgan (who had done the earlier reconnaissance) accompanied Barlow along with Major George H. Mendell (an army engineer from Meade's staff) who had conducted a separate reconnaissance in the Brown house area with Wright. Mendell had seen a different route than what Morgan saw. There is no definitive evidence as to the exact path of the route that was eventually taken.

The march was miserable because of the rain, mud, and darkness. The men were already tired from the earlier day's march (from the Po River). They moved in silence, but maintained surprisingly good formation and discipline. (*See vignettes* for a description of the march.)

Once Barlow arrived at the Brown house (about 0200 on 12 May), he received general compass directions toward the Confederate lines. He also had a vague sketch map on the wall of the house done by an officer in Mott's division.

Historians and participants have disagreed about events between the arrival in the assembly area and the start of the attack. Barlow claimed that he did not see Hancock until after an hour into the assault. Other accounts say that Hancock held a council of war with all of the division commanders at the Brown house, but even these accounts conflict over what might have been said.

The bottom line on final preparations for the attack remains that the attacking troops knew their dispositions but little else. The direction of attack was given by compass point. Barlow was to attack on the left, Birney to his right, with Mott directly behind Birney. Gibbon was to follow in reserve. The choice of attack formations was left to the division commanders.

Barlow was the only division commander that seemed to adopt a form of Upton's tactics. He might have heard of the formation used in Upton's attack two days earlier, but that is not known for sure (Barlow did not mention it in his report). He deployed two brigades in his first wave and two brigades following. All regiments were on line (side by side) in each brigade, but each regiment was "doubled on the center" meaning that the regiments were actually in columns that were two companies across (two companies in front and five companies deep). There were only 10 paces separating the brigades of the first and second waves. The result was a solid mass of about 275 to 300 men across the front and 20 men (ranks) deep.

Birney's two brigades were on line, and regiments were in conventional two-rank formations. Mott's two brigades deployed one behind the other in two-rank formations.

The corps artillery was positioned to the rear of the infantry and ready to move forward in support of the attack—but there was not to be a preparatory barrage. In fact, Hancock was not even sure of his artillery's position—he left it completely under his chief of artillery's discretion.

All II Corps units had instructions not to fire, nor even to shout, until they had pierced the Confederate lines. The entire II Corps' attack force numbered about 19,000 men.

The scheduled time of attack was 0400, but 15 minutes prior to this time, Hancock asked for a postponement due to the poor visibility (fog). He got permission from Meade. Finally, at 0430, Hancock felt that there was enough visibility. Barlow's and Birney's troops started their move five minutes later, with the 66th New York Regiment in front of Barlow's division as skirmishers. They were accompanied by pioneers with pick axes to clear the abatis in front of the Confederate lines.

The II Corps started forward from a position about half of a mile from your current location, covered by woods and the dense fog. They came to the slight rise of Landrum Ridge and captured many of the Confederate pickets before they could fire. The rest of the Southern skirmishers fled.

Many Union troops mistook the Landrum Ridge as their main objective. Some Union troops raised a cheer at the lane, breaking their orders for silence. Many other troops joined the cheer, but as the fog was now dissipating, they could see the main Confederate positions still lay ahead (the

discoloration of the ground indicated freshly dug dirt and earthworks).

Barlow's men lost most of their formation and were a solid mass as they swarmed into the valley between Landrum Ridge and Mule Shoe. Birney's men were still roughly in their formations. Barlow somehow managed to slide further to the left to strike directly at the east angle. This opened a slight gap between Barlow and Birney. McAllister's brigade (Mott's division) filled the gap.

At about 150 yards from the Confederate line, in the valley between Landrum ridge and the earthworks, the Union troops ran into abatis. The pioneers tore at it, and infantrymen even used their bare hands.

The Union troops ran the last 100 meters, all yelling, with no shots fired.

Vignette: Historian Bruce Catton provides a vivid description of Barlow's night march before the 12 May attack on the Mule Shoe.

> After much blind galloping by couriers and staff officers, the immense mass of soldiers began to move, mud clinging to heavy feet at every step. Barlow had his compass points straight, and he set out confidently enough, with two staff officers beside him for guidance. But as they moved on, he learned that these officers knew no more than he did about what lay ahead of them. Indeed, they were complaining bitterly about being sent to conduct a move when they knew nothing whatever about it. They staggered and stumbled on . . . and nobody could see anything and nobody knew anything, and presently the whole situation struck Barlow as funny in a horrible sort of way.
>
> At his side was Hancock's chief of staff [Morgan], and this man, Barlow wrote, was "a profane swearer" who as they plodded on kept making pungent remarks about the conduct of the war. As this officer made the high command's utter ignorance about everything connected with this venture more and more obvious, Barlow asked him finally, and in straight-faced jest, if he could at least be sure that there was not an open canyon a thousand feet deep between the place where they then were [and] the place where the Confederates had built their trenches, and the officer frankly confessed that he had no such assurance; upon which firebrand Nelson Miles, one of Barlow's brigadiers, voiced his disgust so loudly and bitterly that Barlow had to tell him to shut up. The rain

stopped and the sky began to grow dull and pale, and a thick clammy fog floated up from the lower ground. The vast column oozed along a slanting field, and Barlow at last told the staff people: "For Heaven's sake, at least face us in the right direction, so that we shall not march away from the enemy and have to go around the world and come up in their rear." (Barlow's account is from *Papers of the Military History Society of Massachusetts*, Vol. IV, 247; as told in Bruce Catton's *The Army of the Potomac: A Stillness at Appomattox,* Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1953, 119-21.)

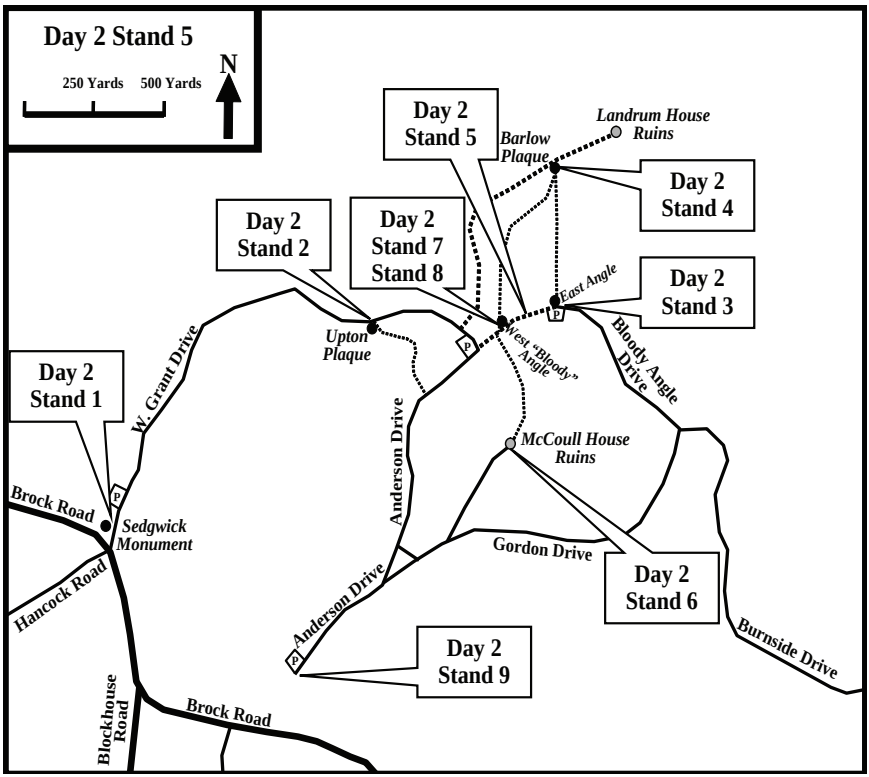
Analysis:

1. Was Grant and Meade's decision for a new massed attack wise? Could they have tried more maneuvers, maybe to find a flank? Was a further operational pause needed?

2. Critique the plan and preparation for the attack. How effective was staff work and intelligence preparation? What steps are staffs supposed to take today to avoid the errors and/or omissions demonstrated by the Federals on 11 and 12 May?

3. What factors helped the Union forces achieve their surprise? Was it luck, the weather, Confederate mistakes, a good Union plan, or something else?

Stand 5
Angle I (Breakthrough)
(12 May 1864)



Map 29.

Directions: Take the walking path that bears right from the Barlow plaque. This path leads to the west angle where the VI Corps attacked, and it crosses over the top of the Confederate trenches on a small bridge. Then turn left and follow the road behind the Confederate trenches that leads back toward the east angle. Conduct the stand behind the Confederate lines at a point midway between the two angles.

Orientation: You are roughly in a position midway between Barlow's and Birney's penetration of the Mule Shoe. The east angle is to your right and the west "bloody" angle is to your left as you face toward the Union attack positions.

Description: York's Louisiana brigade saw the Union forces clearing the abatis to their front (mostly of Birney's division). They attempted to fire,

but the previous night's rain and morning fog made the powder wet. They tried to insert new firing caps, but the wet powder would still not ignite.

The Federals poured over the works without firing. Both Birney and Barlow made the first penetrations. It happened from the east angle to a point about 300 yards toward the west. (*See vignettes* that discuss the penetration.) Troops became mixed as they piled into the entrenchments. All of Barlow's men were jumbled—Smyth's men piled into Brooke's brigade; Brown's troops piled into Miles' brigade.

On the Confederate side, the Stonewall brigade was routed; many of its troops were captured. York's Confederate command was overwhelmed, and most were taken prisoner. The Confederate artillery (eight guns under Captain William Carter's battery) that had remained in the salient got off one shot before losing the guns to the Union advance. The rest of the returning Confederate artillery attempted to unlimber. The lead battery may have fired one round, but almost all of these guns (12 of 14) were captured immediately.

Nearly all of "Maryland" Steuart's brigade was captured including the commander. While being escorted to the Federal rear, he refused to take courtesies from Hancock, who felt insulted. Steuart was later treated brusquely as a prisoner of war due to his surliness. Edward "Allegheny" Johnson was also captured, but he was more cordial and treated better. Just before being taken, he had made a valiant effort to rally his division and was seen exhorting the soldiers with his famous walking stick.

Union forces on the east face of the bulge (some from Barlow, most from Gibbon) got as far as Lane's sector of the Confederate trenches before they ran out of steam. The Union soldiers on the west face (mostly Birney) continued down the trench line and hit Monaghan's Confederate brigade. This unit also suffered, but the Union troops ran out of momentum.

Between 0500 and 0515, Hancock sent a report that he had taken the first line of trenches and captured several hundred prisoners. In fact, the attack was extremely successful—it had taken 0.75 mile of the Mule Shoe line (over a kilometer) and destroyed virtually an entire Confederate division ("Allegheny" Johnson's division of Ewell's II Corps). The Union staff officers at Grant's and Meade's headquarters were ecstatic at the news.

However, the Federal attack ran into major problems soon after the breakthrough. Confederate units on the flanks of the penetration were holding their positions, and the Union troops were becoming a disorganized mass. Units were intermingled and had lost their established formations. Union reinforcements kept piling into the trenches from the rear, but without direction. They only added to the confusion. With little direction, the mass of Union troops began to run straight forward (rather than trying

to clear trenches on the left and right). This mass headed south into the open ground behind the apex toward the McCoull house and the neck of the Mule Shoe.

Vignette: A Union soldier with Barlow's division described the final rush over the Confederate trenches: "All line and formation was now lost, and the great mass of men, with a rush like a cyclone, sprang upon the entrenchments and swarmed over." (St. Clair Augustine Mulholland, *The Story of the 116th Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers in the War of the Rebellion,* Philadelphia, PA: F. McManus, Jr. & Co., 1899, 197.)

Analysis:

1. What are the problems of an attack after a successful breakthrough? (This issue may have also been discussed at the Upton stand [stand 2].)

   a. What should the soldiers of the initial attack do? What about follow-on troops?

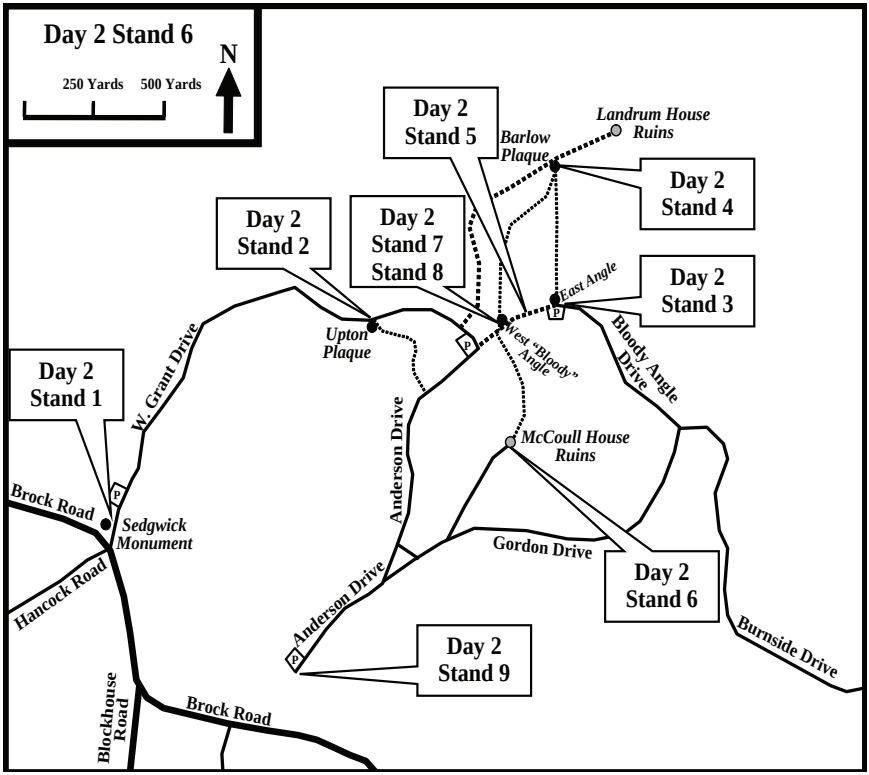
   b. Is larger always better (e.g., the use of an entire corps for the breakthrough instead of a brigade or division)?

   c. Does there need to be more, less, or the same care taken in planning for the exploitation as the penetration?

2. Do Civil War conditions make a full victory in this type of penetration impossible (command and control problems, logistics/ammunition problems, mobility problems)?

3. What are the implications of tactical, logistical, and technical limitations for the operational planner (both in the Civil War and today)?

Stand 6
McCoull House (Confederate Reactions)
(12 May 1864)



Map 30.

Directions: Return to the cars, leave the parking lot at the east angle, and go east on Bloody Angle Drive. After about 0.4 mile you will come to a "Y" in the road. Bear right at the "Y." Continue on Gordon Drive for about 0.5 mile. You will come to a dirt road that goes to the right. After about 0.2 mile on this road, you will come to a parking area at the end of the road. Conduct this stand here. At the conclusion of this stand, the drivers will need to move the vehicles while the rest of the group walks to the next stand. (Driving directions follow, and the directions for the walking group are at the beginning of the next stand.)

Driving directions to the next stand: Once this stand is over, turn the vehicles around and head back out the same dirt road. Once you reach the paved road (Gordon Drive), turn right. After less than 100 yards, you will come to a "Y." Bear right at the "Y" which will put you on Anderson

Drive. Go about 0.5 mile on Anderson Drive, which will bring you to a parking lot (you passed through this lot when coming to the stand for Upton's attack earlier). Park the vehicles in this lot. You can then walk about 50 yards north of the lot along a footpath that brings you back to the west angle of the Mule Shoe where there is a large painting and a marker for the famous tree cut down by rifle fire during the fighting in the angle. Wait here for the rest of the group. Drivers will not be able to participate in stand 7. They should wait for the walking group and meet them at stand 8.

Orientation: You are now at the site of the McCoull house, which was roughly in the center of the "thumb" formed by the Mule Shoe. To the north (beyond the woods) is the face of the salient where the II Corps broke through. To your south is the reserve trench line, which was not finished at the time of the Union assault on 12 May. Gordon's reserve troops were also to the south, working on the trench line.

Note that the woods are in roughly the same location as they were then, but in 1864 they were not as thick and with almost no undergrowth, thus the Confederates in reserve could see the Union breakthrough.

Description: As the Union troops (mostly Barlow) emerged from the woods just north and east of the McCoull house, Gordon launched the first Confederate response on his own initiative. Brigadier General Robert D. Johnston's brigade advanced from the reserve line at about 0445 and struck the Union troops at the tip of their column. Johnston's brigade was wrecked (and Johnston wounded), but they bought some time for the rest of the Confederates.

After Johnston's attack, Lee arrived on the scene, and under his direction, the Southerners began a series of counterattacks against the Union forces. Colonel Clement Evans' brigade had begun an abortive attack on its own, but Gordon pulled Evans back and joined his brigade with Colonel John S. Hoffman's brigade for a combined counterattack. Gordon personally led the two brigades forward, but before advancing, Lee was in their midst and looking as though he might lead the attack himself.

As in the Wilderness, Lee's soldiers called for their commander to move out of the danger area, and a Confederate sergeant grabbed the bridle of Lee's horse to guide the General to the rear. However, there were some differences between the Wilderness and Spotsylvania incidents. In the first instance, Lee was caught up in the emotion of the moment and in the direct line of fire; he was shouting and exhorting the men. At Spotsylvania, Lee was near the Harrison house and less emotional. He was grimly determined, but quiet, as he faced the grave but uncertain Union threat after the breakthrough. Lee was finally coaxed out of leading the attack,

and Gordon took his two brigades forward. The counterattack drove the disorganized Union troops back in a fierce struggle. By 0700, Gordon had occupied the trenches formerly held by Steuart's brigade.

In the meantime, on the west face of the Mule Shoe Rodes sent Brigadier General Stephen D. Ramseur's brigade to help Daniels' troops retake the trenches. Ramseur was wounded, but by 0600 the Southerners had reoccupied the west angle. At about the same time, Brigadier General Abner Perrin's brigade launched a counterattack on Ramseur's right. Perrin's brigade had been transferred from Blockhouse Bridge to Spotsylvania Courthouse during the previous evening, and although it belonged to Mahone's division, Gordon controlled it for this attack. Perrin was killed in the attack, but his Alabamians succeeded in regaining more of the original trench line.

By 0700, the Confederate counterattacks had pushed the Federals out of the interior of the salient. In many places (mainly from the west angle to the east angle), the Confederates were in their old trenches, but the Union soldiers clung to the outer side of the fortifications—the troops were thus separated only by the log wall on the far side of the entrenchments. For several hundred yards starting at the east angle, the Union troops held the trenches, but could not advance further.

The battle was now at equilibrium. Lee's soldiers could not recapture all of the original line, but he needed his troops to keep the Union forces at bay while he finished digging the reserve line across the base of the salient. The Union troops wanted to expand their opening and overwhelm the defenders before Lee could establish a new line. Hancock had earlier sent a message to Meade asking the VI Corps to launch its attack. Could Wright's VI Corps tip the battle decisively in the Union's favor?

Vignette: None.

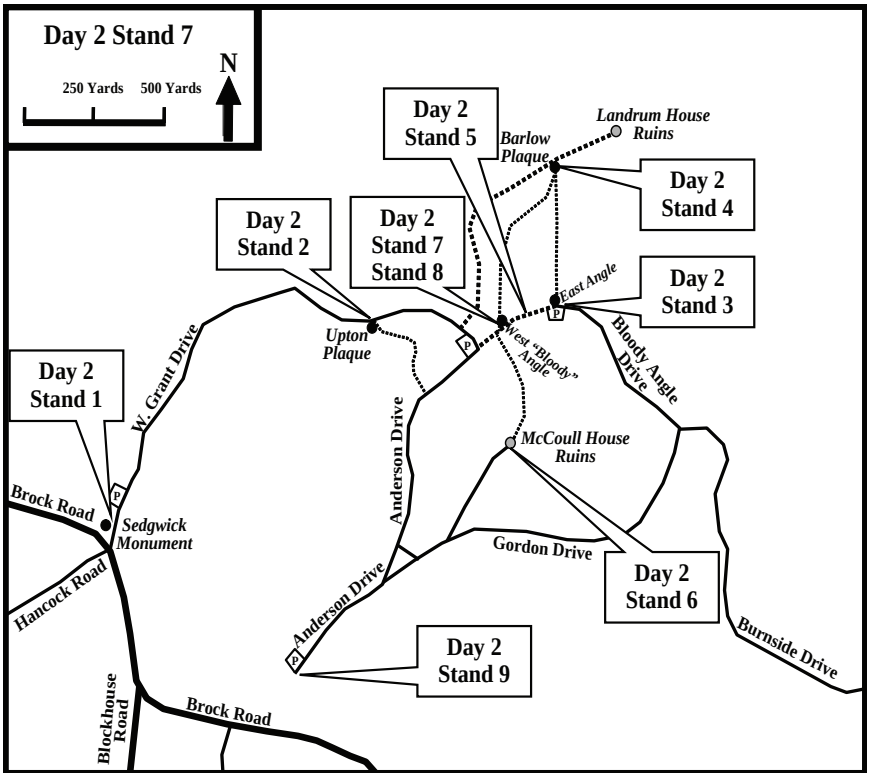
Analysis:

1. Evaluate the Confederate counterattacks. How important was it to have Gordon—the man on the spot—directing the attacks, even when using units from other commands (such as Perrin's brigade)?

2. Were the counterattacks necessary at all? Could Lee have taken an operational view, pulled the army back to defensible terrain, and not spent so many lives in trying to re-take the original trenches?

3. In general terms that can apply today as well as the Civil War, what are some key elements to a successful counterattack? Is it normally better to wait until counterattacking units are concentrated or to attack as soon as possible even if it means units are committed piecemeal?

Stand 7
Confederate Works
(12 May 1864)



Map 31.

Directions: There is a walking path cut in the woods that you can see from the area of the McCoull house; it is on the northwest edge of the McCoull clearing and veers slightly left before eventually coming to the clearing at the west angle. Entering the woods, you will find remains of Confederate trenches that were the backup position for "Allegheny" Johnson's division on the west face of the salient (not to be confused with the reserve line held by Gordon). There are several of these trenches; you can pick any one of them and stop to discuss some concepts about Civil War entrenchments.

Orientation: This stand is designed to provide background on Civil War entrenchments; it does not cover any particular operation in the battle. The trenches were a secondary line about 150 to 200 yards behind Johnson's main defensive position.

Description: For much of the first half of the war, most Civil War officers did not believe in the use of field fortifications, which they felt might dull the offensive spirit of the troops. While many officers were West Point graduates and trained engineers, their knowledge was in extensive permanent fortifications such as those developed by the famed French engineer Sebastien Le Prestre de Vaubon.

As the war progressed, both sides came to appreciate the increased killing power of rifled muskets, and they began to take advantage of field fortifications to protect their forces. By 1864, the combatants were habitually entrenching their defensive positions at nearly every stop. It is interesting to note that the growth of Civil War fortifications and the strength this gave the defender were precursors to the deadly trench warfare of the Western Front in World War I.

In the Overland Campaign, both sides showed a dramatic improvement in the skill and speed with which they made these field fortifications. In the Wilderness, Hancock's breastworks were crucial to the Union defense on Brock Road. Hill's III Corps was not properly entrenched and nearly routed, but Ewell's II Corps made excellent use of fieldworks and was never really threatened with defeat.

Anderson's (and later Ewell's) entrenchments had blunted Warren's attacks the first three days at Spotsylvania. Upton's and Barlow's attacks were specifically designed to overcome the problems of breaking a fortified position. (*See vignettes* for a description of Confederate skill in entrenching.)

There were basically two types of field entrenchments used in the war: the parapet and ditch and the trench and breastwork. The parapet style involved digging a large ditch and piling the dirt behind the ditch to form a high parapet. The soldiers would then have a firing step behind the parapet. This extensive work took some time, because of the need for a large amount of dirt from the front ditch to make the parapet high enough to protect the soldiers.

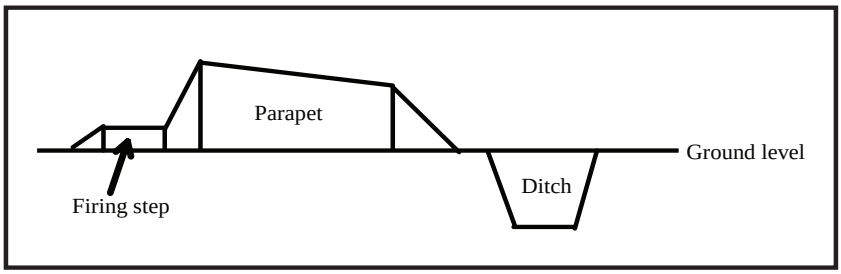


Figure 3. The parapet and the ditch.

The trench and breastwork took less time to build than the parapet style of work and was usually the initial work constructed by the soldiers (it could later be improved into the more extensive parapet and ditch). In this work, the dirt from the trench was piled in front (toward the enemy), thus reducing the need to have a deep trench. Often, the soldiers would construct a log wall that kept the dirt from falling back into the trench and might even extend higher than the dirt front.

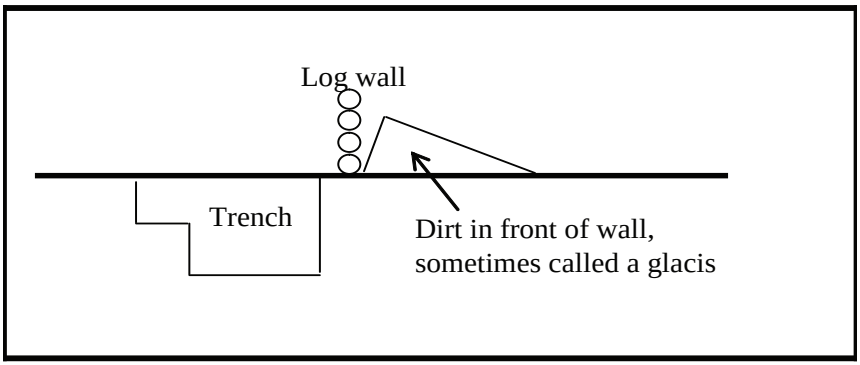


Figure 4. The trench and breastwork.

The trenches in this region were probably a mix of both types of fieldworks shown above, but with the "trench and breastwork" style being the more common. The Confederates had been in the region for several days, but many units had moved in and out of these positions as Lee shifted forces to meet Grant's maneuvers on the flanks and thus did not always have enough time in place to improve their positions.

The infantrymen had to construct almost all of the field fortifications themselves. The few number of engineer troops (sometimes called pioneers) focused their efforts on more permanent fortifications, and in the field they constructed bridges and improved roads (the modern "mobility" tasks).

Staff engineers did assist the infantry in one major area—they usually laid out the trace of the trench line, although in many cases they could do little more than make slight modifications to the defensive positions already selected and occupied by the infantrymen.

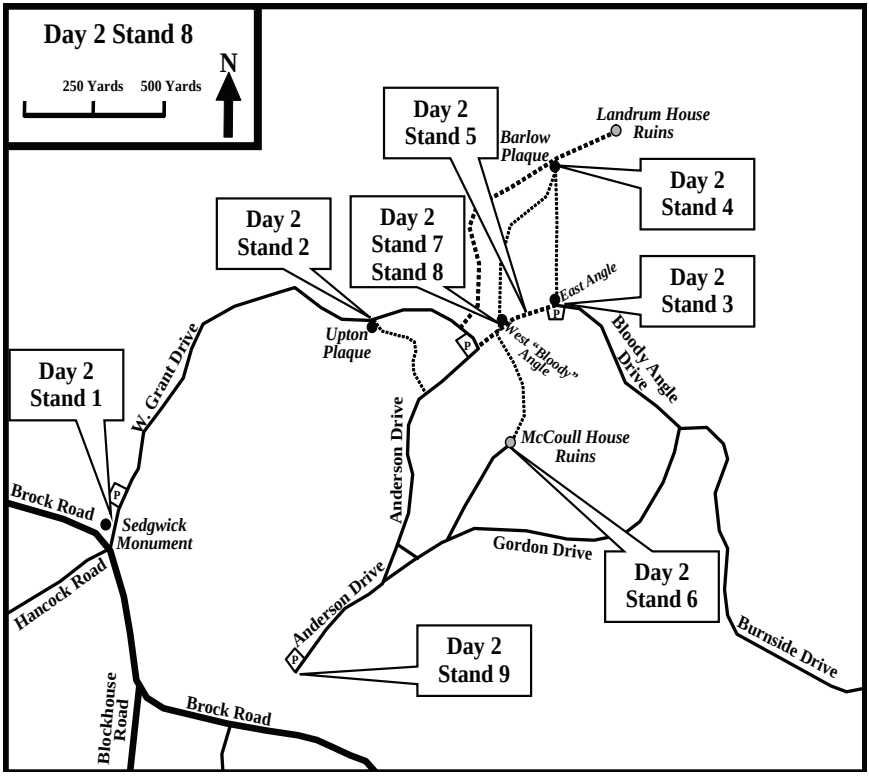
Entrenching tools were not standard issue to the infantrymen. Units received two spades, two pick axes, and two hatchets for every 15 infantrymen and 13 mounted men, and these tools were usually carried in wagons with the regimental trains. Thus, the infantry normally began the entrenching process by scraping an individual position with a bayonet or mess tin

until the tools could be brought forward. Even then, the low number of tools meant that most of the men had to use "homemade" instruments to build their entrenchments.

Vignette: In a letter home, Lieutenant Theodore Lymann of Meade's staff gave this perspective on the skill of the Confederates in building field fortifications: "It is a rule that, when the rebels halt, the first day gives them a good rifle pit; the second a regular infantry parapet with artillery in position; and the third a parapet with an abatis in front and entrenched batteries behind" (Agassiz, ed., *Meade's Headquarters, 1863-1865: Letters of Colonel Theodore Lyman from the Wilderness to Appomattox*, 100).

Analysis: This stand is mostly for information purposes; nevertheless, you may want to discuss the operational implications of field fortifications.

Stand 8
Angle II (Face of Battle)
(12 May 1864)



Map 32.

Directions: Continue the walk through the woods until you come to the clearing at the west angle. Depending on where you stopped to discuss entrenchments, your walk to the clearing should only be 200 to 300 yards. Once in the clearing, a good spot to conduct the stand is near a small footbridge over the Confederate trenches, which is near a large NPS mounted painting and the plaque for the oak tree cut down by rifle fire.

Orientation: You have just come from the McCoull house by way of some examples of Civil War trenches. You are back at the west angle. This was the VI Corps area for most of the fighting on 12 May. This location came to be known as the "bloody angle." You can see the east angle from here (it is to the right as you face the Federal attack positions). You were at both angles in stands 3, 4, and 7 earlier today.

Description: After the initial Union penetration and the Confederate counterattack, the lines stabilized and the fight degenerated into a bloody slugfest during which little ground changed hands.

The II Corps retreated to the initial Confederate trench lines and then held. The Union troops stayed in the trenches and fought with the Confederates who tried to retake the positions. As mentioned earlier, part of the trenches were in Union hands and part in Confederate hands, with troops often separated only by the log walls of the entrenchments. Meade answered Hancock's earlier call for help and ordered the VI Corps to attack and support the II Corps.

At about 0600, Wright received the order to join the attack. There was some confusion as to which unit would lead the attack. The first VI Corps unit to become engaged was Colonel Oliver Edward's brigade of Neill's division. Edward's brigade moved forward shortly after 0630; they were the first VI Corps units to arrive at the bloody angle.

Some of Brewster's Excelsior brigade (II Corps, Mott's division) came forward on Edward's right. Perrin's Alabamians counterattacked at this time. Both sides exchanged continuous fire at close range across the breastworks.

Shortly after Edward's brigade was engaged, Colonel Daniel D. Bidwell's and Brigadier General Frank Wheaton's brigades (the rest of Neill's division) joined in the fighting. Bidwell came directly behind Edward's troops; Wheaton came in on Edward's left. The final brigade of Neill's division (Grant's Vermont brigade) split into two parts. Half came in behind Barlow's troops to the left of the Bloody Angle and supported the II Corps in this area. The other half went to its right and attacked on Edward's right at the angle.

At about 0930, Wright committed Russell's division to the battle. Upton's brigade arrived first and extended the line further to the right (west) of the angle. Also at about this time, Wheaton shifted some of his troops to the left (east) to replace Brookes' II Corps units that were out of ammunition. Soon after, Colonel Henry W. Brown's New Jersey brigade came up behind Upton and formed for an attack at the "oak tree stump." They were repulsed, but continued to fight on the far side of the Confederate breastworks.

It was sometime after 1200 when Lee definitively decided that he would abandon the Mule Shoe, but he needed more time to finish the new line at the base of the salient. This meant that the Southerners had to keep fighting in their current positions until the new entrenchments were done. The Union forces were also committed to expanding their earlier success. Thus, the fighting continued all day.

The Confederates finally withdrew shortly after midnight. The withdrawal was surprisingly easy—both sides were exhausted.

Many participants as well as historians have considered the 12 May fighting the most vicious of the war. It was mostly an infantry fight. The artillery could not get clear shots at the lines, which were so close together. Upton ordered up one battery. It got close enough for some effective canister, but soon all of the gunners and horses were killed. Despite the viciousness of the fight, there were pauses. Occasionally, units on both sides would stop firing, even when at close range. Among small groups there were demands for surrender (almost all refused), and units ran out of ammunition. To add to the misery, it rained on and off all day. Many dead and wounded were buried in the mud of the trenches.

The casualties for the Mule Shoe fight were horrific. The Northerners lost about 7,000 men total (killed, wounded, and missing). Two senior leaders were wounded: Wright and Brigadier General Alexander S. Webb (a brigade commander in Gibbon's division). The Confederates lost about 6,000 men total (at least 3,000 of which were prisoners) and 20 guns. Many senior Southern leaders were lost: Daniel and Perrin were killed; Brigadier General Samuel McGowan (brigade commander in Wilcox's division, III Corps), Ramseur, R.D. Johnston, and Walker were severely wounded; and Johnson and Steuart were captured. Also on 12 May, Lee learned of Jeb Stuart's death (at the battle of Yellow Tavern).

Vignettes: One of the main purposes of this stand is to give the group a feel for the horror and desperateness of this struggle—a look at the face of battle. The following list of vignettes need not be read in its entirety; pick several of the vignettes for discussion.

1. This description from historian Bruce Catton provides an evocative view of the scene: "Never before on earth had so many muskets been fired so fast on so narrow a front and at such close range. About all that kept the two armies from completely annihilating each other was the fact that most men were firing too rapidly to aim. A whole grove of trees behind the Rebel line was killed by shots that flew too high, and the logs of the breastworks were splintered and, a Confederate officer said expressively, 'whipped into basket stuff.' Bodies of dead and wounded men were hit over and over again until they simply fell apart and became unrecognizable remnants of bloody flesh rather than corpses." (Bruce Catton, *The Army of the Potomac: A Stillness at Appomattox,* 125.)

2. Brigadier General Thomas W. Hyde (staff officer in VI Corps) recalled that the battle blurred into scenes of ". . . bloodshed surpassing all former experiences, a desperation in the struggle never before witnessed, of mad

rushes, and of as sudden repulses, of guns raised in the air with butts up and fired over log walls, of our flags in shreds. I never expect to be fully believed when I tell of what I saw of the horrors of Spotsylvania, because I should be loath to believe it myself were the case reversed." (Thomas W. Hyde, *Following the Greek Cross; or Memories of the Sixth Army Corps,* Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1894, 200.)

3. An account from Colonel Lewis A. Grant, commander of the Vermont brigade (VI Corps) reads: ". . . nothing but the piled up logs of breastworks separated the combatants. Our men would reach over the logs and fire into the faces of the enemy, would stab over with their bayonets; many were shot and stabbed through crevices and holes between the logs. Men mounted the works and with muskets rapidly handed them, kept up a continuous fire until they were shot down, when others would take their places and continue the deadly work." (Colonel Lewis A. Grant to G. Norton Galloway, n.d., in "Capture of the Salient," Philadelphia *Weekly Times*, 18 November 1882.)

4. Sergeant Thomas F. Galwey of the 8th Ohio (Gibbon's division, II Corps) searched for words to describe the struggle: "Nothing can describe the confusion, the savage blood-curdling yells, the murderous faces, the awful curses, and the grisly horror of the melee." (Thomas F. Galwey, *The Valiant Hours: An Irishman in the Civil War,* Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Company, 1961, 210.)

5. A member of McGowen's brigade (Wilcox's division, III Corps) recalled the horror of the angle fight: "The sight we encountered was not calculated to encourage us. The trenches . . . were filled with water. Dead men lay on the . . . ground and in the pools of water. The wounded bled and groaned, stretched or huddled in every attitude of pain. The water was crimsoned with blood." (James Armstrong and Varina D. Brown, "McGowan's Brigade at Spotsylvania," *Confederate Veteran*, vol. 33, 1925, 377.)

6. Historian William D. Matter described the heroic efforts of Harris' Mississippians and McGowan's South Carolinians in the bloody angle: "These Southerners had exhibited devotion to duty and physical endurance that almost defy belief. Doubtless, some had leapt the works and had surrendered during the day, and after dark a few might have slipped to the rear without orders to do so. But the vast majority had stuck it out, the South Carolinians for over eighteen hours, and the Mississippians for nearly twenty. During this time they had defended their position, unsupported, without food, their only water that scooped from puddles in the mud. No Confederate line or staff officer of division level or higher had

seen fit to visit them after they had established their position at the works. They had fought their fight alone." (William D. Matter, *If It Takes All Summer, The Battle of Spotsylvania,* Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988, 260.)

7. Grant's aide, Horace Porter, wrote about the angle the day after the battle: "Our own killed were scattered over a large space near the 'angle,' while in front of the captured breastworks the enemy's dead, vastly more numerous than our own, were piled upon each other in some places four layers deep, exhibiting every ghastly phase of mutilation. . . . below the mass of fast-decaying corpses, the convulsive twitching of limbs and the writhing of bodies showed that there [were] wounded men still alive and struggling to extricate themselves from their horrid entombment" (Porter, *Campaigning with Grant*, 111).

8. Below is the story of "Oak Stump of Spotsylvania." This is provided as background information and to answer questions (it is best to avoid reading it verbatim):

> On the morning of 13 May, a few members of the First South Carolina returned to the area of the west angle from their new position in the rear and examined the fallen oak tree. One of these men B.F. Brown, who was no relation to Col. Joseph Brown, found a piece of twine on the ground with which he measured the circumference of the stump just below the point where it had been severed. The measurement was sixty-three inches, indicating a diameter of approximately twenty inches. Brown kept the piece of string, and, as late as 1901, he had it along with his Appomattox parole in a dust-proof case.
>
> Captain W.W. Old of Edward Johnson's staff, who had escaped capture in the morning and had carried orders for Ewell the remainder of the day, also visited the oak tree on either the thirteenth or the fourteenth. Later in the day he described the severed tree to a group of officers that included General Lee. Lee appeared slightly skeptical about the story and quietly asked Old if he could show the generals the tree. Old led the party to the site. Here General Lee viewed the tree and the area where two of his brigades had served him as had few others.
>
> Approximately one year later, on 10 May 1865, the Army of the Potomac was marching north to Washington, D.C. The First Division of the Second Corps camped in the general area of the Landrum farm near Spotsylvania

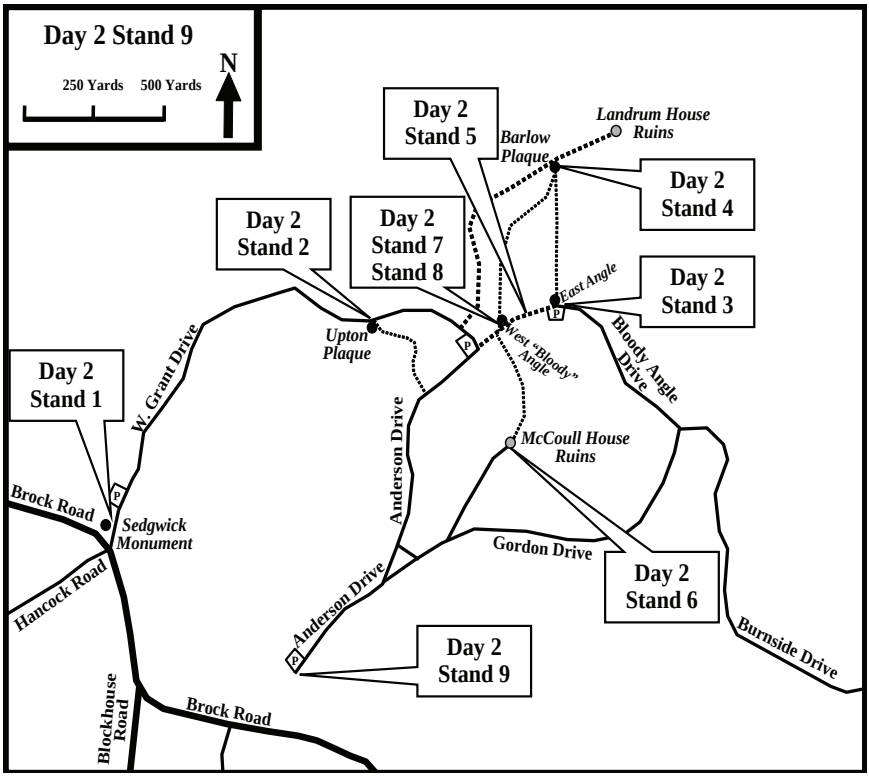
Courthouse. Everyone in the division, which was now commanded by Nelson A. Miles, went sightseeing over the battlefield. Arriving at the west angle, Miles and the members of his staff discovered that the oak stump had been removed from the ground. The remainder of the tree still lay where it had fallen and was soon cut to pieces by Yankee relic hunters. Miles and his staff rode to Spotsylvania and had dinner at the hotel. They asked the proprietor, a gentleman named Sanford, if he knew who had removed the tree stump and what had become of it. Sanford professed ignorance of anything about the tree, and throughout the meal the table conversation centered around the missing stump.

As the members of the party left the hotel and prepared to mount their horses, an orderly reported to Miles that he had overheard a waiter saying to the cook that he could tell the general something about the tree. Miles sent for the waiter, who said that the stump was locked up in the smokehouse of the hotel. Sanford refused to unlock the door, so the Federals broke it with an ax and liberated the tree stump. In Washington, Miles presented it to Secretary of War Stanton.

Today the stump is on display in the Armed Forces History Section of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History in the nation's capital. It is an authentic identifiable casualty of the battle." (Matter, *If It Takes All Summer*, 373.)

Analysis: Discuss the "face of battle"; focus on the nature of war, its brutality, heroism, and horror. Staff rides often focus on command decisions, but this is a chance to talk about the common soldier in combat.

Stand 9
Lee's Last Line
(13–18 May 1864)



Map 33.

Directions: Drive south on Anderson Drive for about 0.5 mile, and you will come to a "Y" in the road. Bear right at the "Y" which will keep you on Anderson Drive. After about 0.3 mile, the road will come to a dead end with a small parking area. At this location is one of the large mounted NPS maps. Conduct the stand somewhere close to the end of the road.

Orientation: You are now at a point about in the middle of the reserve line that Lee's forces built on the base of the Mule Shoe; the bulge of the salient was north of this location. Note the remains of the entrenchments in the area. The woods were much less dense in 1864; thus, the Confederates had relatively clear fields of fire.

Before noon on 12 May, Lee decided that he could not hold the Mule Shoe. He ordered the remnants of "Allegheny" Johnson's division to finish

digging the new line across the base of Mule Shoe after Gordon's division was committed to its counterattacks.

Back at the new line, Lee and Ewell urged the men to work faster. At about 0300 on 13 May, the fighting noticeably slackened, and the Confederates received orders to retire to the new positions. In the dark, drizzly night, the Southern soldiers slipped away unopposed and occupied the new line.

Description: On 13 May, both sides were exhausted. They rested without fighting; still, there were some activities. Mott's division was disbanded. His two brigades were added to Birney's division, and Mott became a brigade commander. Gibbon probed the new Confederate defensive line with one brigade (the brigade commander, Colonel Samuel S. Carroll, was wounded in the process). The Federals determined the line to be too strong for an attack at that time.

Later that day, Grant and Meade decided on a new plan. They wanted to pull the V Corps from the Union right flank and have it march behind the Union lines to a new position on the left that would threaten Lee's flank. The VI Corps was to pull out of the line and follow the V Corps in order to support its effort.

The V Corps began its march at 2100 in a driving rainstorm that turned the roads to mud. The VI Corps started its march six hours later. Eventually, the plan for an early morning Union attack on 14 May collapsed. At the 0400 start time for the attack, the V Corps had only 1,000 troops in position for the assault. The rest of the corps and all of the artillery were straggling behind in the mud. In addition, Wright's VI Corps was well behind Warren's straggling units. After several postponements, at 0900 Grant canceled the attack altogether.

In fact, Grant's move had caught Lee off guard, and there were no Confederate units in position to stop a coordinated Union attack that morning. However, the difficulties of a night march in the rain and mud meant that Grant was probably asking his troops to do too much.

Later that night, Grant and Meade ordered Hancock to move his II Corps from the Union right to a position behind Warren's corps. This would put Hancock roughly in the center rear of the Union lines—ready to deploy on either flank as needed.

Also on 14 May, Allegheny Johnson's division consolidated into two brigades. Later that day, Lee realized the new threat to his right flank and began to shift part of Anderson's corps to block the Union flanking move.

On 15 May, Grant began receiving some reinforcements to replenish his heavy losses. Over the next five days, he received 16,000 to 17,000 soldiers (Union losses up to that time were 37,000 men).

Most of these reinforcements were "heavy artillery" regiments. These were units that had been manning the permanent fortifications in Washington, DC, for much of the war, but were now needed in the field to help replace the infantry losses. Although called heavy artillery, these units fought as infantry. In addition, these units were exceptionally large; they had suffered few casualties so far in the war and their organizational structures gave them extra companies. Their total regimental strength was usually between 1,200 and 1,500 men, larger than most veteran brigades.

Hancock's corps executed its move (leaving behind Birney's division) on 15 May. Late in the day, Lee received information that Hancock's corps had moved. He ordered the remainder of Anderson's corps to the Confederate right flank. This meant that Gordon's reserve position (our current location) now became the left flank of the Southern army.

On 16 May both commanders planned their next moves. Anderson's corps completed its move to the Confederate right flank as rain continued to fall.

On 17 May, Grant and Meade pondered their options. Wright returned to his position on the Union right and reported that Anderson's Confederates had departed. The VI Corps commander talked with Humphreys and proposed an early morning attack for 18 May on the Confederate left flank.

Meade and Grant approved the plan and ordered Hancock to return to the Landrum house area and add his corps to Wright's assault. Burnside's IX Corps was also to assist in the attack. The Union leadership hoped that Lee had weakened his left and center enough to be vulnerable to a massed Union attack.

However, the Confederates were ready for the attack the next day. The trenches were manned by Ewell's corps with Rodes' division on the left and Gordon's division on the right. These Southerners had not moved since 13 May, and they had prepared their defensive line well.

The Federals had hoped to launch the attack at 0400, but the VI Corps had difficulty getting into position. The assault finally started a half hour later. The II Corps led with two divisions, and the VI Corps led with one division on Hancock's right (the IX Corps added two divisions on the II Corps' left). The Federal offensive was a complete failure and over by 0900. Wright never got more than three brigades involved, and all of the Union forces were repulsed without coming close to penetrating the Confederate lines. The well-positioned Southern artillery was particularly devastating to the Federals. Union losses were 2,000 men in return for negligible Confederate casualties.

Despite the successful repulse of the Union attack, Lee worried that attrition was ruining his army. He wired Jefferson Davis that any further

losses might force the Army of Northern Virginia to fall back closer to Richmond. Lee did get one piece of good news: Major General John C. Breckinridge was bringing 2,400 troops from the Shenandoah Valley. They were going to Hanover Junction to be ready to help Lee's army.

Vignette: None.

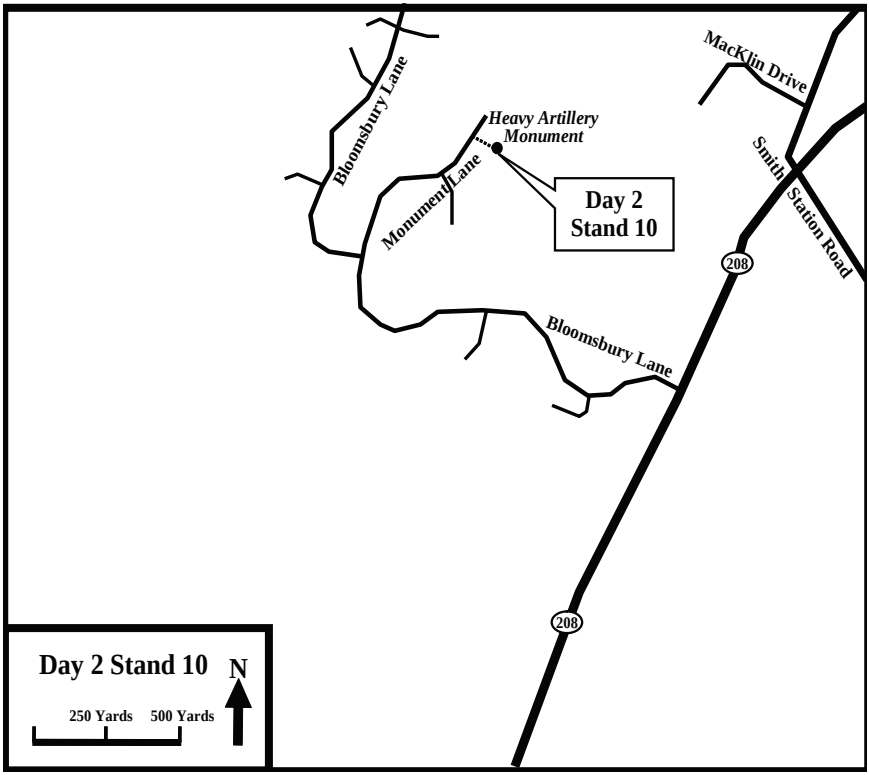
Analysis:

1. If this new Confederate position repulsed the 18 May Union attacks so easily, can Lee and the Southern leaders be criticized for occupying the Mule Shoe in the first place?

2. What operational options does Grant have after all of the attacks and maneuvers around Spotsylvania? Are there any more possibilities for success in the Spotsylvania area or does he need to disengage and move?

3. What are Lee's options? He seems to be looking for offensive opportunities, but should he be solely focused on defending and wearing down the Union will to fight?

Stand 10
Harris Farm and Spotsylvania Summary
(19–21 May 1864)



Map 34.

Directions: Drive back out on the same road that brought you to this stand (Anderson Drive). After 0.3 mile, you will come to a "Y" in the road. Bear right at the "Y" which will put you on Gordon Drive. After about 0.7 mile, you will come to another "Y" in the road. Bear right again, and this will put you on Burnside Drive. Stay on Burnside Drive for about 1.4 miles. It will take you off of the Park Service grounds; you should pass through a small wooden gate that is left open during the day. You will then come to an intersection with state Route 208. Turn left on Route 208. Go north on Route 208 for 1.3 miles and you will come to the entrance road of a housing development area on the left. This road is Route 1470 (also called Bloomsbury Lane). Turn left on Bloomsbury Lane and go for 0.8 mile. The road will change its name to Monument Lane; continue on this road for another 0.4 mile. At this point, you should be able to see a large stone

monument on a rise in the ground on the right hand side of the road (the monument is about 100 yards from the road). Park on the road shoulder and walk to the monument. (Do *not* park in the private driveway next to the monument.) The monument is for heavy artillery units that fought in the Harris Farm battle, and it is a good spot for the next stand.

Orientation: Gate (the location that Burnside incorrectly identified on 9 May) is to the north and east of your current location. The Mule Shoe is about 2 miles to the west and 1 mile to the south. About 200 yards to the east is a house and farm that was called the Harris Farm at the time of the Civil War (today it is called Bloomsbury). The ground was open at the time of the campaign (much like today except for the modern housing development). The Federal flank was positioned here, and the Confederate attacks came from the west of this location.

You will accomplish three distinct tasks at this stand. First, cover the fight at Harris Farm (the last engagement of the battles around Spotsylvania). Second, summarize the entire Spotsylvania battle (8 to 20 May). Finally, describe the initial plans and moves that will culminate in the battles near the North Anna River.

Part 1: Harris Farm

Description: After the failure of the Union assaults on 18 May, Grant abandoned the idea of any further tactical assaults at Spotsylvania and searched for a way to get around the strong Confederate positions. His plan called for Hancock's II Corps to go into a reserve position on 18 May, and then on the night of 19 May, the II Corps would move south along the path of the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad.

Several historians have asserted that Grant planned to move Hancock's corps well in front of the rest of the Union forces as "bait" to draw Lee out of his entrenchments. Whether or not Grant intended to dangle Hancock's corps as an enticement, the Union general in chief clearly intended to continue his overall concept of moving around Lee's right flank.

Hancock's path was first to go east and reach the railroad at Guinea Station. Then he would follow the rail line south to Milford Station. At this point, Hancock was to force a crossing of the Mattaponi River. This move would seem to place the II Corps in a vulnerable position; but the advance skillfully used the Mattaponi as a screen and Lee would be forced to cross three tributaries (the Matta, the Po, and the Ni) to catch the Union forces.

As part of Grant's plan, all of the Union corps shifted. On the evening of 18 May, the VI Corps moved behind the V Corps and positioned itself on that corps' left. At 0200 on 19 May, Burnside's IX Corps began its move behind the V and VI Corps, and after several delays was positioned on the VI Corps' left.

Our current location marks the extreme right flank of the Union line on the morning of 19 May. The Union units on the flank included Warren's V Corps near the Ni River—about 1 mile south of this location. Just north of Warren's corps was a brigade of heavy artillery units under Colonel J. Howard Kitching. This brigade had been with the Army of the Potomac throughout the entire Overland Campaign and had recently been assigned to the V Corps. Kitching's rightmost unit was posted here at Harris Farm.

A new unit composed entirely of heavy artillery regiments had joined the Army of the Potomac on the afternoon of 18 May. These new troops were assigned to the II Corps and positioned east of the Fredericksburg Road near Hancock's headquarters at the Anderson house. The regiments were so large that they were formed into a division (without the usual intervening brigade headquarters) under Brigadier General Robert O. Tyler.

After the successful Confederate defense on 18 May, Lee remained on the defensive, but kept his eyes open for an opportunity to strike a strong blow against Grant's forces. At his new headquarters at Zion Church, Lee received reports about Union movements that indicated a general move toward his right flank, but the reports lacked specific information. The Confederate commander suspected that Grant's apparent move to the southeast might leave the road from Spotsylvania to Fredericksburg uncovered. This might present a chance for the Confederates to get a force between the Union forces and their supply base, which went through Fredericksburg to Belle Plain.

On the morning of 19 May, Lee decided that he needed to get more information. According to Lee's aide, Major Taylor, the commander ordered Ewell to ". . . demonstrate against the enemy in his front as he [Lee] believed that Grant was about to move to our right and he wished to force his hand and ascertain his purpose." (Walter H. Taylor, *General Lee: His Campaigns in Virginia, 1861-1865, with Personal Reminiscences,* Norfolk, VA: Nusbaum Book and News Company, 1906, 243.)

These instructions have led to some controversy. Some historians claim that Lee intended for Ewell to do only a reconnaissance in force and that the Confederate II Corps commander violated Lee's intent by launching a major attack. Other historians claim that Lee's orders were vague and the army commander gave Ewell permission to take his whole corps (which had been reduced by recent fighting to about 6,000 men). In any case, Ewell seems to have intended to launch something more than a reconnaissance in force but less than an all-out assault.

By noon on 19 May, Ewell had fleshed out his plan. In addition to committing all of his corps' infantry to the operation, Ewell made some other interesting decisions. First, he chose a circuitous route of march that he hoped would take him far enough to the northwest to get around the

Union right flank. Second, he decided to leave almost all of his artillery behind. Ewell wanted to have this firepower covering his old trench positions in case of a Union attack. Also, Kershaw's division (Anderson's I Corps) moved from a reserve position to occupy Ewell's old trenches while the II Corps conducted its attack.

At 1400, Ewell began his march. Rodes' division was in the lead, followed by Gordon's division.

As the Confederates were making their move, Grant continued preparations for Hancock's advance. Grant sent a message to Halleck: "I shall make a flank movement early in the morning, and try to reach Bowling Green and Milford Station. If successful, Port Royal will be more convenient as a depot than Fredericksburg. I wish you could stir up the navy and see if they cannot reach there." (*OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 2, 906.) The ease and efficiency of the Union changes of base throughout the Overland Campaign are a tribute to Grant's logistical planning, Halleck's administrative abilities, and the Federal Navy's skill and dominance of the waterways.

Because Grant was already planning to shift his base, Ewell's attack could not fulfill one of its original purposes, cutting the Federal supply line back to Fredericksburg. However, the Confederates might still have a brief opportunity to inflict a limited, tactical defeat if they could catch the Union troops on the right flank unprepared.

At 1500 on 19 May, Kitching's "heavies" detected Confederate movement and sent reports back to Meade. The army commander sensed trouble and ordered Tyler to send part of his division to Kitching's area and ready the rest of the division for movement. About an hour later, Tyler's lead units arrived. They extended the Union flank a little further north from Harris Farm and then refused the line toward Gate.

At about the same time, Rodes' leading brigade (Ramseur's North Carolinians) pushed back skirmishers from Kitching's brigade near Stevens' Farm (about 0.75 mile west of our current location). The Confederates continued their advance, and the fighting became rather heavy as they reached the main Union lines at Harris Farm. At times, both lines swayed back and forth, but the Northern heavies displayed toughness and courage.

As the fighting continued, the rest of Rodes' brigades came up to support Ramseur and struck Kitching's men. Gordon's division swung to the north and temporarily cut the road to Fredericksburg before hitting Tyler's position. The veteran Confederates were surprised at how the green Union troops stood elbow to elbow in their exposed ranks—taking heavy casualties—and yet continued to hold their ground. (*See vignettes* for descriptions of the heavies' fight.)

At the Anderson Farm, Grant and Meade were just sitting down to dinner when they heard the musket fire from Harris Farm. Both commanders decided to dispatch the rest of Tyler's division to Harris Farm to stop the Confederates. In addition, more Union reinforcements arrived. First, the Union Maryland brigade (V Corps) joined the battle. Next came part of Birney's division of the II Corps. Finally, Crawford's division (V Corps) came to the support of the heavies.

As darkness approached, the outnumbered and exposed Confederates were forced to fight for their survival. Rodes' division held out against the heavy artillerymen; however, the additional Union reinforcements threatened to crush Gordon on several occasions. Finally, Gordon skillfully extracted his troops from their predicament. By 2200, the Confederates were back in their original lines.

The Confederates suffered about 900 total casualties at Harris Farm. The Federals lost about 1,500 men (most of the losses were among the inexperienced heavies who failed to make use of cover). Lee realized that the Union right was not exposed, and he reverted back to a defensive posture. Grant remained undeterred from his original plan to move Hancock to the southeast, and he continued with his shift of base from Belle Plain to Port Royal.

Vignettes:

1. A Union veteran from another regiment, talking to a newspaperman after the war, praised the efforts of the heavy artillerymen at Harris Farm: "After a few minutes they got a little mixed, and didn't fight very tactically, but they fought confounded plucky—just as well as I ever saw the old Second [Corps]." (Charles A. Page, *Letters of a War Correspondent,* Boston, MA: L.C. Page, 1899, 72.)

2. A Union quartermaster soldier gave Colonel Wainwright (Warren's chief of artillery) a darkly humorous description of the confused arrival of Union reinforcements: "First there was Kitching's brigade firing at the enemy; then Tyler's men fired into his; up came Birney's division and fired into Tyler's; while the artillery fired at the whole d—d lot." (Allan Nevins, ed., *A Diary of Battle: The Personal Journals of Colonel Charles S. Wainwright, 1861-1865,* New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, 379.)

Analysis:

1. Critique both Lee's and Ewell's performances at Harris Farm. Is Lee correct to be looking for offensive opportunities or should he now be content with defensive operations designed to wear out the Federals?

a. Should he have used Ewell's corps? Why not use cavalry? Had Sheridan's raid had some effect? Were Lee's orders appropriate?

b. Did Ewell organize correctly for his mission? Did he press the attack too hard?

c. Critique Grant's and Meade's reactions.

2. Although the Federals reacted relatively quickly to the Confederate attack, did the Union commanders miss an opportunity to destroy Ewell's corps that had advanced to an exposed position?

3. Does the heavies' performance have any lessons for us today? They fought heroically for not having seen fire before, but they took heavy casualties from lack of tactical skill. Where should leaders place their emphasis for the training of new troops? How much is enough training?

Part 2: Summary of Spotsylvania

Orientation: Conduct the summary at the Harris Farm location. Go over the locations of the opposing forces at the end of the battle (use a map). Note that over the course of the fighting, the armies had rotated almost 180 degrees: the Union forces were mostly to the west of the Confederates on 7 May and on the east of the Confederates by 20 May.

Description: The losses had been heavy on both sides. The Union casualties totaled 18,399 (2,725 killed, 13,416 wounded, and 2,258 captured or missing). The Confederate losses are less precise, probably about 12,000 total (there is no breakdown of killed, wounded, and captured or missing).

At the end of the battle, Lee's army was not destroyed and continued to hold entrenched lines that appeared invulnerable to frontal assaults. Grant's forces also held strong lines, and regardless of the high casualties, he retained the initiative. Despite the interruption of Harris Farm, the Union commander was prepared to continue his plan for Hancock to move to the south and east around Lee's right flank.

Analysis:

1. Who won at Spotsylvania? Remember to look at this question in terms of the strategic and operational goals on both sides. Below are some considerations for this discussion.

a. Grant had not destroyed Lee's army.

b. Lee failed to drive the Federals out of central Virginia and yielded the initiative to Grant.

c. Casualties were high—could both sides afford them? Was Grant intentionally pursuing attrition?

d. Lee did succeed in delaying Grant's move to the south, which had operational effects on the eastern theater.

(1) Grant had intended to link up with Butler in 10 days after the start of the campaign (this would have been 15 May). By 21 May, the Army of the Potomac was still far from Butler's forces near Bermuda Hundred. Beauregard was able to block Butler and send reinforcements to Lee.

(2) Similarly, Sigel's defeat in the Shenandoah Valley gave Breckinridge the chance to reinforce Lee.

2. Given the results of Spotsylvania, what are the operational options for the commanders?

a. Was Grant's new plan (Hancock's move toward Milford Station) the best option? Why not stay at Spotsylvania and continue to hammer Lee's line? Why not turn Lee's left flank?

b. How much freedom of action did Lee have after Spotsylvania? Does he have options other than to simply counter Grant's moves? Some historians think the Army of Northern Virginia, while still capable of a strong defense, was broken as an offensive force by the end of the battle. However, Lee received reinforcements while many Federal enlistments ran out. Lee probably had his best numeric odds of the campaign starting the week after Spotsylvania and continuing through the North Anna battles. Even if Lee's army is capable of attacking, where and when should he strike?

Part 3: Initial Movements after Spotsylvania

Orientation: Using a map, trace the routes for each of the units as they are described below. The next several stands leave the tactical battlefield area of Spotsylvania and follow along the routes of Union and Confederate units.

In most cases, the traces of the Civil War roads were the same as the modern roads in use today. Of course the roads were not paved. Most Civil War roads were dirt with some of the better roads (for example, Telegraph Road) having a macadam surface of crushed stone. In a very few cases, one lane of a road might be planked over with wood as in the Orange Plank Road through the Wilderness. In heavy rain, most roads turned into quagmires, but a more common problem in the summer of 1864 was hot, dry weather that brought choking dust to each road march.

Description: Meade's initial orders called for the II Corps to begin its move at 0230 on 21 May. Hancock, hoping to get a jump on the Confederates, received permission to start at 2200 on 20 May. The first leg of the corps' move was to Guinea Station. Then the II Corps was to swing southeast to Bowling Green and Milford Station. Hancock also controlled the only cavalry left to the Army of the Potomac: an ad hoc force under Brigadier

General Alfred T.A. Torbert, who had recovered from his earlier illness.

Warren's V Corps left Spotsylvania at 1000 on 21 May. Initially, he was to take the same route as the II Corps toward Guinea Station. Burnside's IX Corps was to follow the V Corps as far as Massaponax Church and then turn south on Telegraph Road to the Po River crossing at Stannard's Mill. Burnside was not to begin his move until later in the day, and he did not reach the Po until darkness on 21 May. At the Mill, the IX Corps skirmished with a Confederate screening force. Burnside decided the Southerners' position was too strong, so he reversed direction (using his discretionary orders) to follow in the path of the V and II Corps to Guinea Station.

Wright's VI Corps was the Union rear guard at the Gayle house. In the afternoon, Wilcox's Confederate division (III Corps) tapped Wright's line with a reconnaissance in force. Burnside sent back some reinforcements to help Wright, and the Confederates did not press their attack. Wright finally joined the movement, departing the Gayle house at 2000 on 21 May.

Meanwhile, on the Confederate side, by 0900 on 21 May Lee had started receiving reports of Union movements. He had Confederate scouts at points on the Po River reporting back to him at 15 minute intervals through signal flags. The lack of Union cavalry continued to help Lee and hinder Grant.

Lee pondered his options. He saw that Grant was either heading straight south (on Telegraph Road) or southeast. Lee correctly concluded that Grant would shift his base to Port Royal. (Grant had already started the process, and the base became fully operational on 26 May.) This indicated that Grant was moving to Lee's right, but still did not give definitive clues to Grant's specific route. Lee had preferred to stay as far north of Richmond as possible. He feared being forced into fortifications near the capital and a siege he could not win. In the end, however, Lee finally decided that he could not risk staying north of the North Anna River. The Southerners would have a natural defensive position behind the river, and the army could still hold the critical rail center at Hanover Junction. In sum, Lee believed that the North Anna was the farthest position north of Richmond that he could continue to defend based on Grant's probable moves.

At noon on 21 May, Lee told Ewell to prepare his II Corps for a move to Mud Tavern on Telegraph Road. Then at darkness, Ewell was to march south on the road toward the North Anna. Ewell began the move at 1600 (a part of his troops were the Confederates that discouraged Burnside from continuing south on Telegraph Road at Stannard's Mill). Anderson's I Corps was to follow Ewell, and it began its move at 1800 on 21 May.

Early's III Corps was the rear guard. It was their probe that tapped the Union VI Corps' lines in the late afternoon. Also that afternoon, Hill resumed command of the III Corps. His corps began its move that night, and they marched on a parallel path west of Ewell and Anderson's route on Telegraph Road.

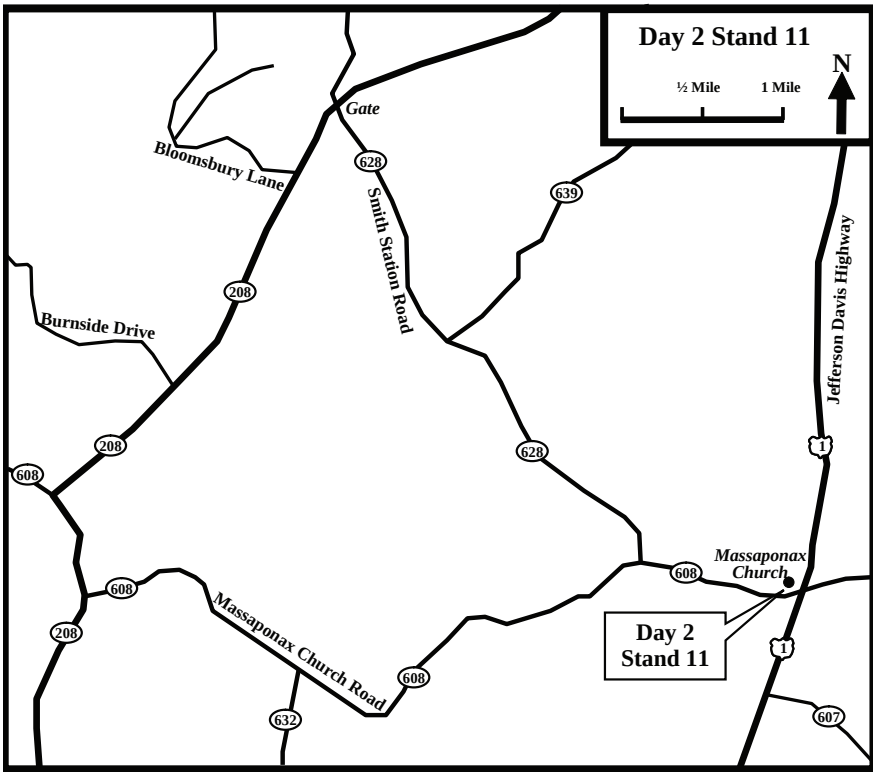
During the day, Lee met with Hill, Anderson, and Major General W.H.F. "Rooney" Lee (his son and a Confederate division cavalry commander). Later he joined Ewell's column for the Confederate move. The Confederate commander was in the saddle all day and did not sleep until 0200 on 22 May.

The war had left Spotsylvania Courthouse for good. The scene now shifted south and east as both sides maneuvered toward the North Anna River.

Vignette: None.

Analysis: There are no specific questions at this point, because the last part of the stand is only an initial view of both sides' movements. However, think about the commanders' intentions for their various movements, the distances involved, and the conditions for the soldiers in the marches.

Stand 11
Massaponax Church
(20–22 May 1864)



Map 35.

Directions: From the Harris Farm location, drive back the same way you came. At the end of Bloomsbury Lane, you will reach the intersection with Route 208. Turn left on Route 208 and head back to "Gate" (the modern intersection with Route 628, Smith Station Road), which is about 0.4 mile.

The intersection of Routes 208 and 628 has some stores and restaurants that may be a good place to stop for lunch. This intersection is at the Civil War location known as "Gate." Route 208 is on the same path as the Civil War era Fredericksburg–Spotsylvania Road. At the time of the Overland Campaign, there was a gate on the road at this location that the owner used to collect tolls. At earlier stands, this location was discussed with Burnside's movements on 10 and 11 May, and how Burnside confused

Gate with the Gayle house (located about a mile further south on Route 208, but not in existence today).

Head east on Route 628 (Smith Station Road) and proceed for 3.3 miles. The road will make a sharp right bend and then intersect with Route 608 (Massaponax Church Road). Turn left on Route 608 and proceed about 1 mile. You should be approaching US Highway 1. Just before the intersection with US Highway 1, you will see Massaponax Church on the left hand side of Route 608. Park the vehicles in the church parking lot. (Try not to arrive on a Sunday morning, because the church still has an active congregation.) On the edge of the lot is a plaque with a famous picture of Grant's staff meeting on some benches outside of the church. You should conduct the stand near this plaque.

Orientation: The last leg on Route 608 is along the same path that most of Grant's troops took from the Spotsylvania area to Massaponax. The modern US Highway 1 closely follows the same route as Telegraph Road did in 1864. The church building itself is the same building that stood during the Civil War (there may have been some minor modifications to the front facade of the top floor after the war). Use a map to show the paths of the units as they passed through this location.

Description: Each Union corps passed through this location in their movements on 20 to 22 May. Hancock's II Corps arrived at about 1300 on 20 May. His infantry linked up with Torbert's cavalry, but the cavalry was not ready to move. After a 90-minute delay, Hancock and Torbert departed for Guinea Station.

Warren's V Corps followed Hancock. It passed through Massaponax at midday on 21 May and then continued to Guinea Station.

Burnside's IX Corps passed through here on the evening of 21 May. As mentioned earlier, Burnside went directly south on Telegraph Road toward Stannard's, but he felt the Confederate defenses at the Po were too strong. He backtracked up Telegraph Road and then turned toward Guinea Station.

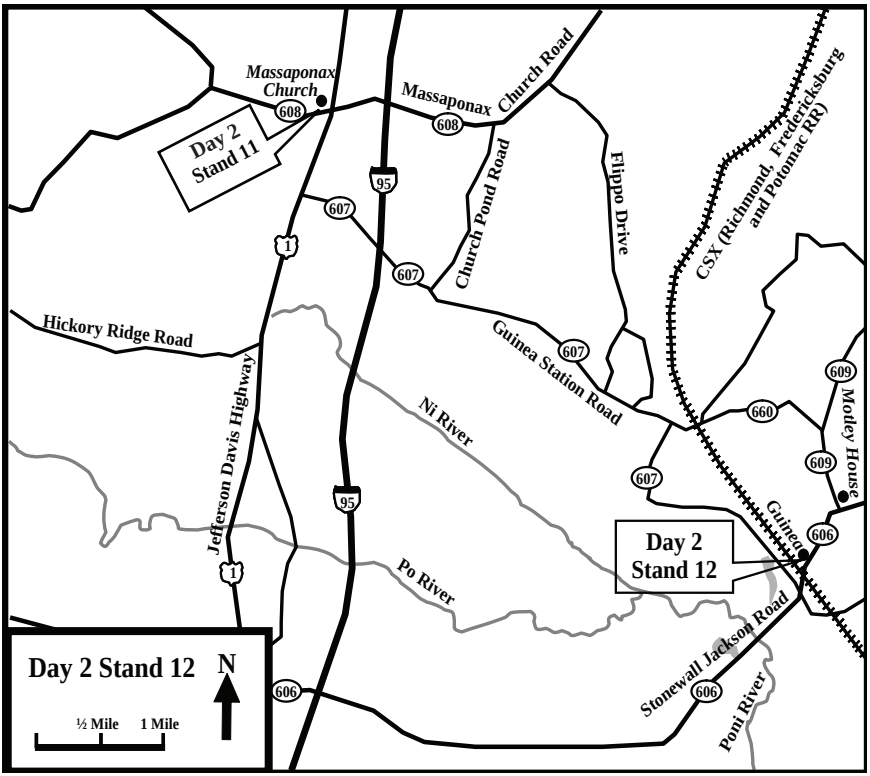
Wright's VI Corps passed here during the night of 21 May.

Vignette: Several of the most famous photographs of the Civil War were taken at Massaponax Church by Civil War photographer Timothy O'Sullivan. These photos show Grant, Meade, and members of their staffs sitting outside of the church. Unlike most Civil War photos, which are posed, these pictures show the Union officers at work (or in some cases, just relaxing). One of those photos is on the plaque in the church's parking lot. Historian William A. Frassanito, in his book *Grant and Lee: The Virginia Campaigns 1864-1865* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons,

1982), reprints the photos and provides an excellent analysis of their origins and content.

Analysis: No specific questions at this stand.

Stand 12
Motley House and Guinea (Guiney's) Station
(21–22 May 1864)



Map 36.

Directions: As you leave the church parking lot, go to the intersection with US Highway 1 and turn right. You will be heading south on US Highway 1 (Jefferson Davis Highway). After 0.6 mile, turn left on Route 607, Guinea Station Road. In 3.6 miles, you will continue to go straight, but the road will change to Route 660. In another 1.5 miles, you will come to an intersection with Route 609. Turn right on 609, and then continue for another 0.5 mile where you will come to an intersection with Route 606. Turn right on 606 (Stonewall Jackson Road).

Note that at the northwest quadrant of the 609 and 606 intersection (on your left as you approach the intersection) is the Motley house. It is private property, and you will not stop here. However, it was briefly Grant's headquarters on the evening of 21 May.

After turning right on Route 606, go for 0.5 mile where you will reach a small NPS site on the right—the Stonewall Jackson Shrine. Enter the NPS road and park in the lot at the end of the road. You can do the stand on one of the walkways next to the parking lot.

Orientation: This site (Guinea Station) is preserved as the Stonewall Jackson Shrine, and it contains the building in which Jackson died after being wounded at the Battle of Chancellorsville in 1863. Our staff ride is concerned with the events of 1864, but you may want to see the building where Jackson died before you leave the area.

Using a map, relate this location back to Massaponax Church (stand 11). During the Civil War, this ground was owned by the Chandler family. The large Chandler house no longer exists, but the small outbuilding where Jackson died is one of the original Chandler buildings.

Description: Lead elements of Hancock's II Corps reached here at dawn on 21 May. Torbert's cavalry led the II Corps. They pushed Confederate pickets back across the Poni River. Lee quickly learned of this, and he ordered Ewell to move further east to Mud Tavern. Hancock continued through here en route to Bowling Green.

Grant's headquarters guard (the 114th Pennsylvania Regiment) took a bridge over the Poni River (just south of here) from the 9th Virginia Cavalry after Hancock's corps had passed and shortly before Warren's corps arrived.

The V Corps' lead elements arrived at Guinea Station at 1500 on 21 May; the main body arrived at 1700. Part of the corps crossed the Poni and moved to the Catlett house. One brigade moved forward to Madison's Ordinary. The rest of the V Corps bivouacked in this vicinity. An exchange of orders between Meade and Warren throughout the night resulted in the 0500 movement of the V Corps through Madison's Ordinary back toward Telegraph Road.

Grant arrived at dusk on 21 May. He initially stopped at George Motley's house to have a meal prepared. He came to the Chandler property after the meal and returned to the Motley's house for the night. (*See vignettes* for stories of Grant at Motley's and Chandler's houses.) By the time they arrived at Guinea Station, Grant and Meade realized that Lee was pulling back toward North Anna.

Grant had achieved part of his goal, he had turned Lee out of his Spotsylvania positions, and the Union commander now hoped to strike Lee's moving force. But Burnside's timid moves at Stannard's, Grant's own concern about Hancock's exposed position at Milford Station, and the inherent difficulties in coordinating the separated Union corps all prevented the Federals from catching Lee.

By 0630 on 22 May, Grant recognized that Lee, taking advantage of possession of Telegraph Road, had placed the Confederates well ahead of the Union forces on the road to the North Anna. Grant now faced the choice of pursuing Lee directly to the North Anna or moving the bulk of the Union forces further east (initially following Hancock's route) for another flanking movement along the Pamunkey River. Against Meade's advice, Grant decided on a direct pursuit. Grant and Meade departed Motley's at noon on 22 May.

The lead element of Burnside's corps (part of Brigadier General Robert B. Potter's division) arrived in this vicinity at 0200 on 22 May. Potter's troops rested for several hours and then resumed their march at dawn on 22 May. They followed Hancock's path briefly before turning south to cross the Poni River at Downer's Bridge en route to Bethel Church. The remainder of the IX Corps arrived at sunrise, rested for two hours, and then followed Potter to Bethel Church.

Wright's VI Corps arrived here at 1000 on 22 May and immediately followed Warren's path toward Madison's Ordinary.

By noon on 22 May, Hancock's corps held at Milford Station while the other three Union corps veered back toward Telegraph Road in the hope that a vigorous pursuit might catch the Confederates before they could entrench on the North Anna.

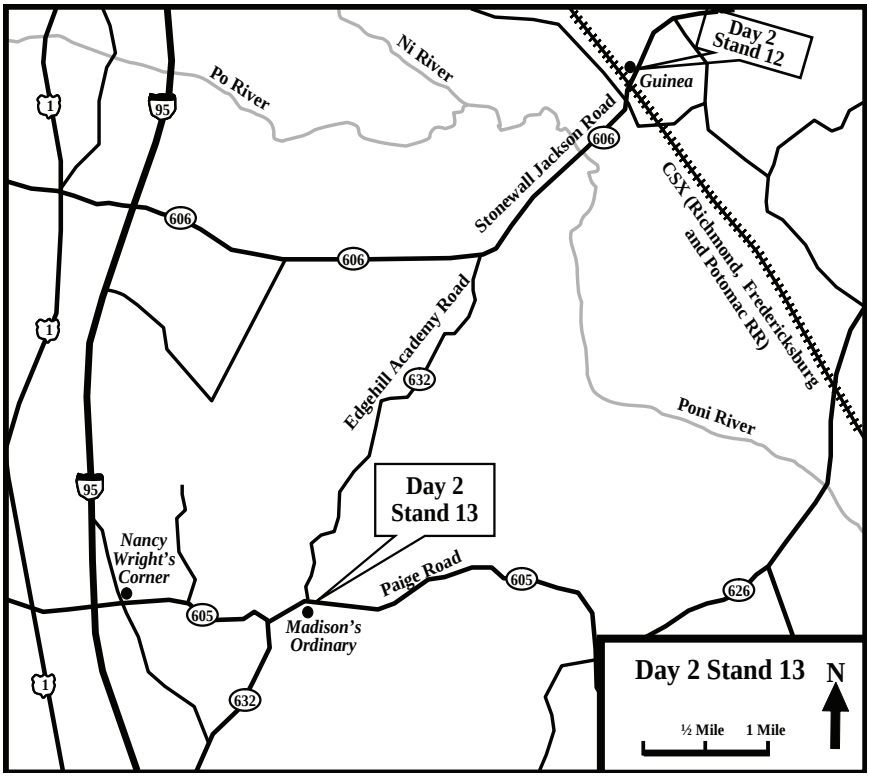
Vignette: Historian Gorden C. Rhea describes Grant's activities at the Motley house and Chandler property on the evening of 21 May:

> With Guinea Station safely in Union hands, Grant repaired to the Motley house where he sat on the porch and lit a cigar. Deep in thought, he forgot about the embers and burned the arm of the bench. Mr. Motley stormed through the door and scolded the Union commander. "What are you trying to do," he thundered, uncowed by the Federals who had occupied his property. "Burn my house down?" Duly chastised, Grant strolled over to the Chandler house north of the station and sat on the porch with his aide Porter. Presently a lady came to the door. Grant stood up, took off his hat, and introduced himself. Soon he and Mrs. Chandler were chattering away like old friends. "This house has witnessed some sad scenes," she remarked, referring to Stonewall Jackson's death the previous year. Grant interjected that he and Jackson had been contemporaries at West Point for a year, and that they had together served in Mexico. "Then you must have known how good and great he was," she asked. "Oh,

> yes," Grant answered. "He was a gallant soldier and a Christian gentleman, and I can understand fully the admiration your people have for him." Mrs. Chandler became "very affected," Porter observed, in describing the events surrounding Jackson's death. After promising to place a guard to protect her property, Grant and his aide took their leave. (Gordon C. Rhea, *To the North Anna River,* Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University, 2000, 236-237.)

Analysis: As mentioned earlier, it might be best to wait until you complete tracing all of the movements of the armies to the North Anna (stand 17 at Hanover Junction) before doing a critique of these moves. However, you could evaluate Grant's decision to move directly on Hanover Junction rather than conduct another flanking maneuver on the Pamunkey River.

Stand 13
Madison's Ordinary (drive-by)
(21–22 May 1864)



Map 37.

Directions: Exit from the Jackson Shrine and turn right on Route 606 (Stonewall Jackson Road). Go for 1.8 miles on Route 606 where you will come to an intersection with Route 632 (Edgehill Academy Road). You will cross over the Poni River while on Route 606. Turn left on Route 632 and travel for 3.2 miles where you will come to an intersection with Route 605 (Paige Road). This intersection marks the location of Madison's Ordinary.

Use extreme caution at this stop. It is a busy intersection with private property surrounding the roads. If your party is small enough, you can pull the vehicles safely across the road (605) and slightly to the right to what looks like an old, abandoned building site with just enough space to park a few cars or small vans. If your group is too large (specifically if you have

a bus), do not try to stop here; instead, proceed to the next stand and give the information for Madison's Ordinary at that location using a map.

The route that you are traveling, from Guinea Station to Madison's Ordinary, was the path for Warren's V Corps.

Orientation: Madison's Ordinary was so named because an "ordinary" was a tavern or eating house that served regular meals. The modern road pattern is almost identical to that of the Civil War with modern Route 605 tracing the path of the 1864 road that went from Bowling Green in the east to Telegraph Road in the west.

Description: Warren's lead troops, Kitching's brigade of heavy artillerymen, arrived here on the night of 21 May. Kitching had been attached to Warren's V Corps temporarily.

While Kitching's men bivouacked, the Confederates were passing south on Telegraph Road only 1.5 miles west of here. Most of these Confederate troops were from Anderson's I Corps. In addition, Lee himself passed south on Telegraph Road during the evening.

Lacking cavalry, the Union units failed to notice the Confederates in the darkness.

This presents an interesting "what if" of history: What if the Union troops had discovered the Confederates? Could they have struck the Southerners on the march as Grant often hoped they would do? Might they have captured Lee?

On the morning of 22 May, Colonel William W. Robinson's Iron brigade (Cutler's division) arrived at Madison's Ordinary. At sunrise, they saw Confederate stragglers on Telegraph Road. They turned west here, picked up some of the stragglers, and then turned south on Telegraph Road, eventually moving through Harris Store to Dr. Flippo's. The entire V Corps followed the Iron brigade and was clear of Madison's Ordinary by midmorning.

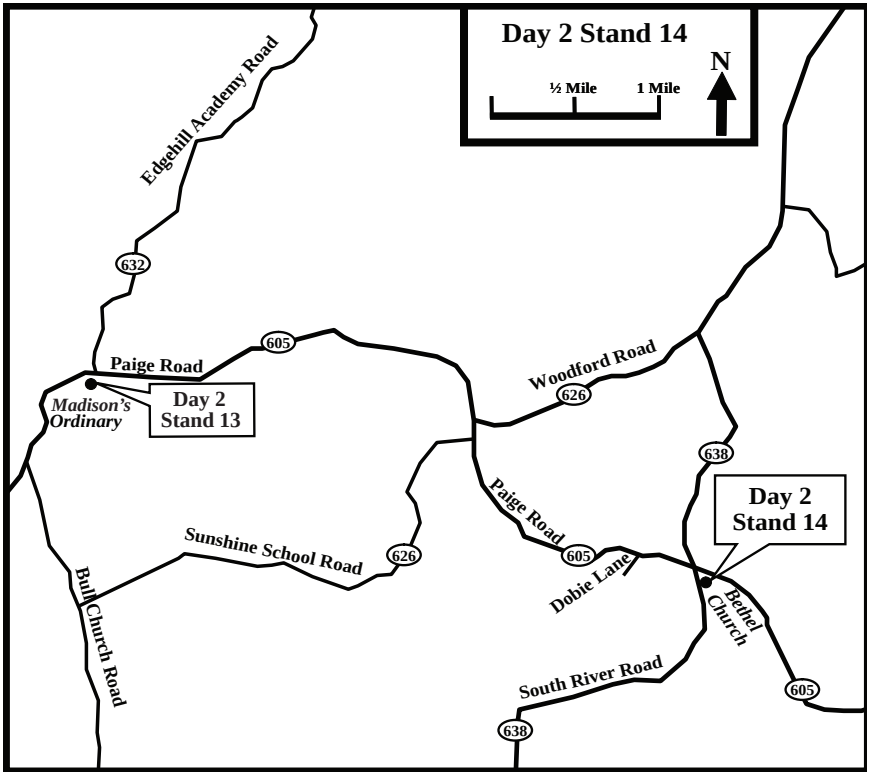
The VI Corps followed the V Corps to Madison's Ordinary and then turned on a road that paralleled Telegraph Road. This other, smaller road merged with Telegraph Road at Dr. Flippo's. Thus, the V and VI Corps were close to each other from Madison's Ordinary all the way to the North Anna.

Also on 22 May, Grant and Meade arrived at Madison's Ordinary (from Guinea Station and Motley's) in the early afternoon. They spent some time at the intersection watching the Union troops pass.

Vignette: None.

Analysis: None.

Stand 14
New Bethel Church
(22 May 1864)



Map 38.

Directions: Start traveling east on Paige Road, Route 605 (a left turn from Route 632). After 4.6 miles, you will reach an intersection with Route 638, South River Road (there is a road sign that says "Paige" at the intersection). Your next stand, New Bethel Church (today known as the Bethel Baptist Church), is on the right, just past the intersection. Pull into the church parking lot and conduct the stand in front of the church.

The path on modern Route 605 from Madison's Ordinary to New Bethel Church and eventually to the next stand at Milford Station is not along the path of any particular corps. Instead, you are moving west to east, crossing each of the Union corps' routes as you go (from V and VI Corps to IX Corps to II Corps).

Orientation: Route 638 goes on a north-south axis, and it generally traces

the original road taken by the IX Corps. Route 605 is an east-west path—to the east it leads to Bowling Green and Milford Station. The church building is partially the original from the Civil War, but it has been modified several times.

Description: Burnside's IX Corps arrived here late on the morning of 22 May having crossed the Poni River at Downer's Bridge (about 2.5 miles north of here). For a time, the IX Corps prepared to support the V and VI Corps in an attack on the Confederates; but the Southerners had evaded the Union forces and were already approaching the North Anna. Having marched all night, the corps went into camp in this area, and Burnside made his headquarters here.

Grant and Meade made their headquarters at the Tyler house about 1 mile north of here. They rode to this location late on the afternoon of 22 May and conferred with Burnside at Bethel Church, and on at least one occasion, Burnside rode to the Tyler house to speak with Grant and Meade (*see vignettes* for an account of the Union leaders' encounter with the Tyler ladies).

There appears to have been considerable looting by Union soldiers in this region (*see vignettes*). There were several reasons for this. First, this area of Virginia had seen less fighting than much of the rest of the state (and was thus an inviting target for looters). Also, the Federals had been fighting and marching without rest for almost three weeks, and they seemed to take out their frustrations on the locals. Finally, some of the old members of the Army of the Potomac felt that Grant and his "westerners" brought a more callous attitude to plundering and failed to enforce discipline.

Vignettes:

1. For a time on 22 May, Grant and Meade made their headquarters on the lawn of the Tyler house (called "Blenheim" by its owners). The Union leaders had several encounters with Mrs. Tyler and her "visibly pregnant" daughter-in-law, which ultimately resulted in a laugh much to the chagrin of Ambrose Burnside (as described by historian, Gordon Rhea).

> One of the first Union visitors to the Tyler home was Meade's staff officer, Theodore Lyman. A Union cavalryman had warned Lyman that Mrs. Tyler was a "rank secesher," and the staff officer's appearance at the front door drew tears from the young daughter-in-law and initial scorn from the mother who had lost a son at Antietam. However, after chatting for some time, the daughter was more amicable, and the mother recognized the benefit of having Union brass on her front lawn as a deterrent to

looting. Lyman even managed to buy some eggs, milk, vegetables and hot cornbread before riding to New Bethel Church.

At about 1700 hrs, Lyman returned with Grant, Meade and their staffs. The Tyler ladies were waiting at the house when Grant called out "With your permission, I will spend a few hours here." The younger Tyler politely agreed, but her mother-in-law was careful to ask the Union general for protection, "I do hope you will not let your soldiers ruin our place and carry away our property." Grant gave his assurances, "I will order a guard to keep the men out of your place, and see that you are amply protected." At this point, Mrs. Tyler leaned over to Horace Porter and asked with whom she had been speaking. Porter quietly informed her that it was General Grant.

The conversation grew more animated as the Tyler's realized the importance of their guest. It soon developed that the younger lady's husband was a colonel serving with Joe Johnston's Confederate army in the west. She asked Grant if he had any information concerning the western campaign, and the Union commander answered that Sherman's army was advancing on Rome, Georgia. The younger Mrs. Tyler huffed, "General Sherman will never capture that place. I know that country, and you haven't an army that will ever take it." Grant tried to respond politely that he disagreed, but the ladies became even more defiant. With impeccable timing, a courier delivered a telegram from Sherman that announced his capture of Rome. The younger Tyler burst into tears at the news while the elder woman proclaimed, "I came from Richmond not long ago, and I had the satisfaction of looking down every day on Yankee prisoners. I saw thousands and thousands of them, and before this campaign is over I want to see the whole of the Yankee army in southern prisons."

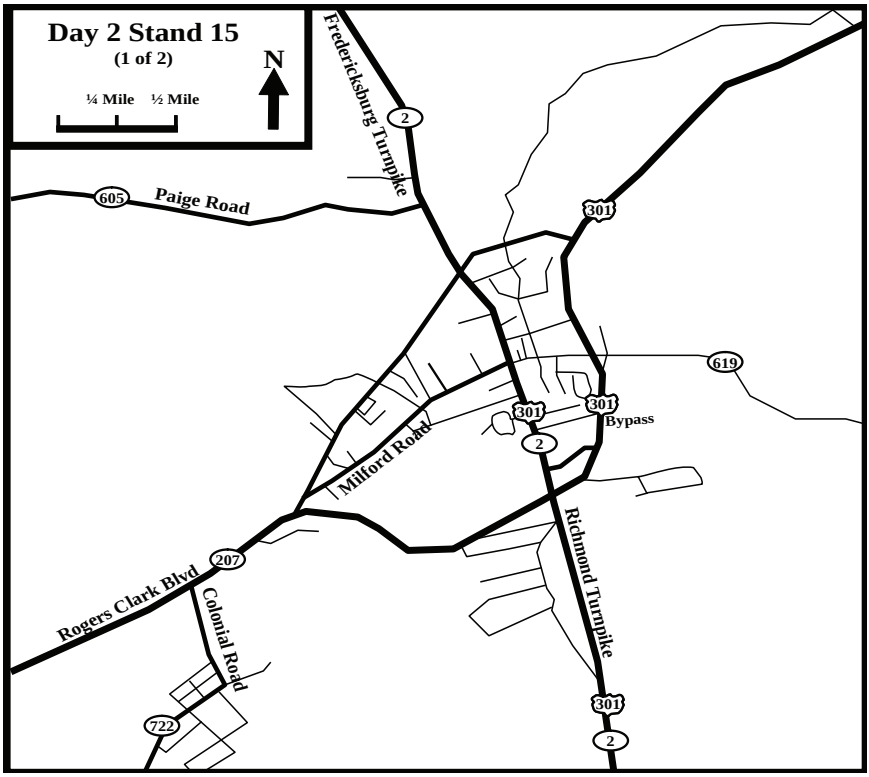
Just as Mrs. Tyler finished her tirade, Burnside rode up to the group. Removing his hat with a flourish, the IX Corps commander introduced himself to the ladies. Looking across the Tyler lawn at the large number of passing Union soldiers, Burnside asked Mrs. Tyler, "I don't suppose, madam, that you ever saw so many Yankee

soldiers before?" She quickly retorted, "Not at liberty, sir." Porter recalled that everyone was "greatly amused, and General Grant joined heartily in the laugh that followed at Burnside's expense." (Rhea, *To the North Anna River*, 277-278.)

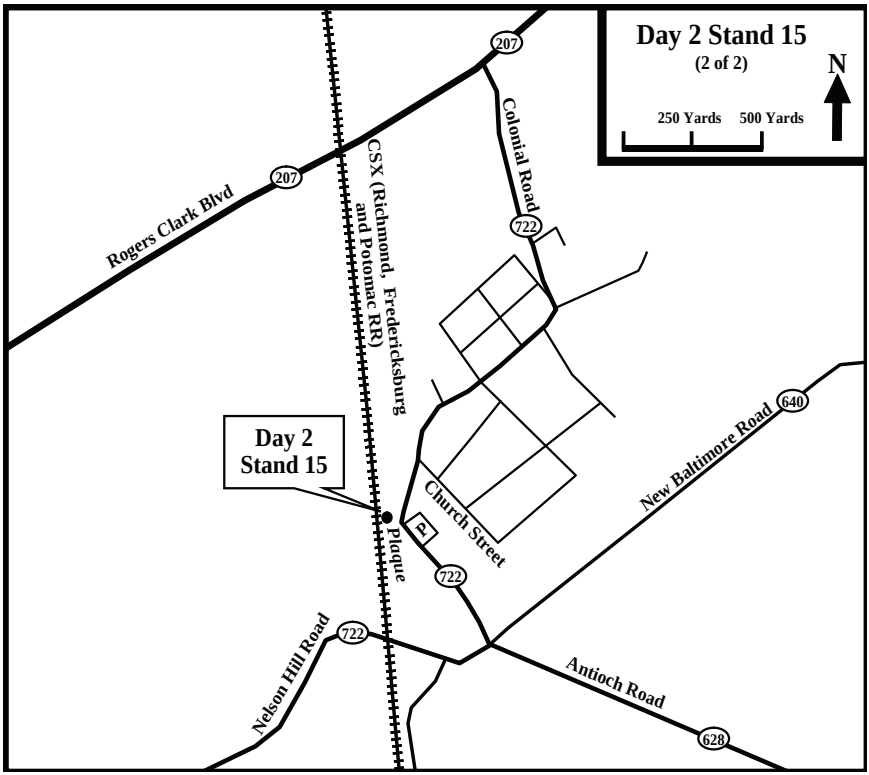
2. Brigadier General Marsena Patrick was the Provost Marshal for the Army of the Potomac. He despaired over the Union plundering of local citizens and expressed his displeasure with Grant on this issue: "We had a time, before Starting, in overhauling marauders & house plunderers, some of whom I caught—Many complaints came to me & as I had a Culprit, I went to Meade, who told me [Patrick] that he was really unable to help me, that Grant had expressed himself strongly against protecting these people at all, and I learned that his Staff, were, themselves, engaged in sheep stealing, fowl stealing and the like. . . . I am very tired—& feel very despondent about Grant's notion of discipline—" (David S. Sparks, ed., *Inside Lincoln's Army; the Diary of General Marsena Rudolph Patrick, Provost Marshal General, Army of the Potomac,* New York, NY: Thomas Yoseloff, 1964, 375-376.)

Analysis: None.

Stand 15
Milford Station (Bowling Green)
(21–23 May 1864)



Map 39.



Map 40.

Directions: Exit the Bethel Church parking lot and cross the intersection traveling east on Route 605 (toward Bowling Green). After 4.2 miles, you will come to an intersection. Turn right on Route 2.

As you travel on Route 2, you will pass through Bowling Green. You will pass the Civil War era courthouse and jail after about 0.8 mile, but do not stop in the town.

Shortly after the courthouse, you need to turn right on Milford Street (Route 619). Stay on Milford Street (619) for 1 mile, and then turn left on Route 207 (Rogers Clark Boulevard). In about 0.7 mile, you will reach an intersection with Route 722 (Colonial Road). At the intersection, turn left. In 1 mile, you will enter the small town of Milford. Park near the old railroad station (there are some small stores and a post office nearby) and then walk over to a plaque near the railroad tracks. The plaque is a Virginia State Civil War marker. Conduct the stand near this marker.

Orientation: The railroad tracks run in roughly a north-south direction and closely follow the Civil War era path of the rail line. The buildings

in this area are not from the Civil War era. You are now at the location of Hancock's farthest advance as "bait" for Lee. The path of the staff ride from Madison's Ordinary to here has crossed each of the Union corps routes (in order from V to VI to IX to II Corps).

Description: Hancock's II Corps arrived at Bowling Green at 1000 on 21 May. Some of the slaves in the area feared the Union troops and looked for their "horns," having been told by their Southern owners that the Federals were devils. In any case, many slaves were freed, including about 100 who were awaiting transport on the railroad to locations further south for safekeeping by their masters.

Also, the Union troops freed two prisoners in the local jail, one black and one white; but no one could figure out why these two were set free. The Union troops also broke into several stores taking primarily sugar and tobacco.

Just ahead of Hancock's infantry, Torbert's ad hoc cavalry unit had already reached Milford on the morning of 21 May. Torbert's men found elements of the 1st and 11th Virginia Infantry Regiments in town awaiting transport. These troops belonged to Kemper's brigade of Pickett's division, which was in the process of moving from Beauregard's command near Richmond to reinforce Lee's army. The Union cavalry, after a sharp fight, cleared the town. Each side lost about 50 men, and the Union troops took an additional 74 Confederate prisoners.

In their retreat, the Confederates failed to destroy the bridge over the Mattaponi River. Hancock notified Grant and Meade of his position and the additional information that the Southern prisoners represented troops from Richmond intended to reinforce Lee.

On 22 May, Hancock remained in place, watched by Hampton's Confederate cavalry. As noted earlier, Lee's rapid withdrawal to the North Anna on 21 and 22 May left the Union command undecided on a course of action. Grant and Meade ultimately held Hancock in place, while they tried to use the V and IX Corps to strike Lee's forces on the march. The proposed V and IX Corps' attack never took place, while the II Corps remained in place all day on 22 May. After realizing that Lee was in full retreat, the Union high command moved the II Corps toward the North Anna on 23 May.

Vignette: None.

Analysis:

1. This is a good point to evaluate both sides' movements from Spotsylvania to the North Anna and to summarize the last several stands of the staff ride.

2. Critique Grant's moves after Spotsylvania.

a. Was Grant correct to leave the Spotsylvania area? Was it better to continue shifting to the southeast, or should he have considered a move to the west (against Lee's left flank)?

b. How much did logistics affect Grant's next move? Was he right to remain tied to bases that were supported by Union naval forces?

c. Was the use of Hancock's corps as "bait" a sound operational move? What could the Union leadership have done to better support this move?

d. Were the various designated paths of the Union corps the best routes for the next move? The Union use of the rivers to protect their moves seems skillful, but was the Federal leadership too concerned about protection at the expense of aggressiveness?

3. Critique Lee's response to Grant's maneuvers.

a. Lee seemed to read Grant's move to his right appropriately, but did he stay in the Spotsylvania fortifications for too long?

b. Was the decision to retreat all the way to the North Anna correct? Should he have tried to defend further north? Should he have considered offensive action north of the river?

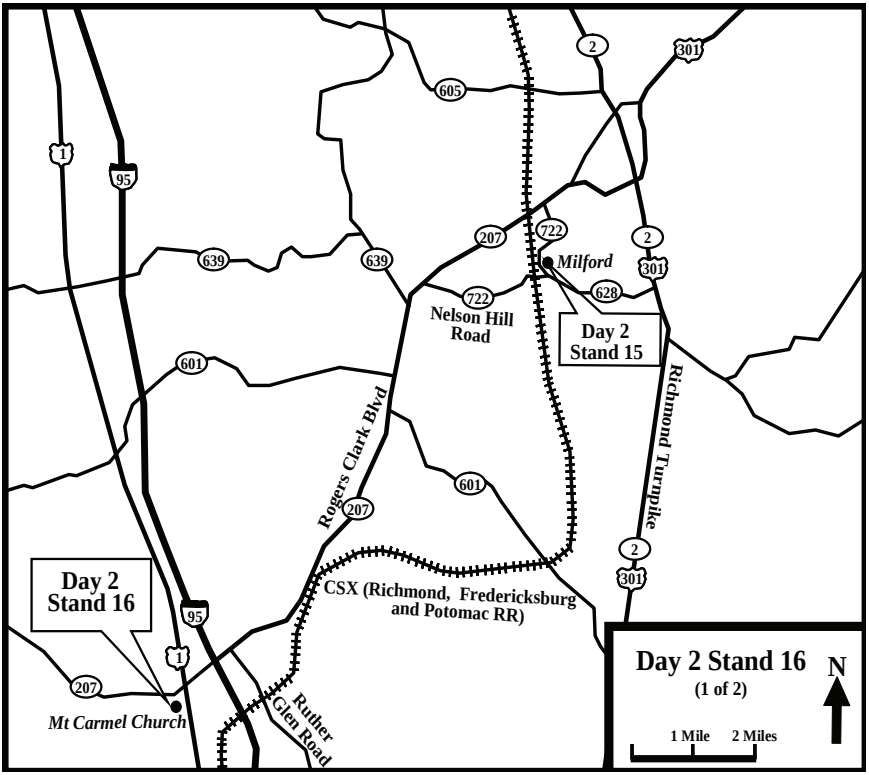
4. Compare and contrast both the Federal and Confederate operational actions with current doctrine concerning operations—look for both similarities and differences. Below are some potential topics.

a. What were Grant's and Lee's decisive points and were these correctly chosen? What considerations in selecting decisive points are the same for the Civil War era as today? What considerations have changed?

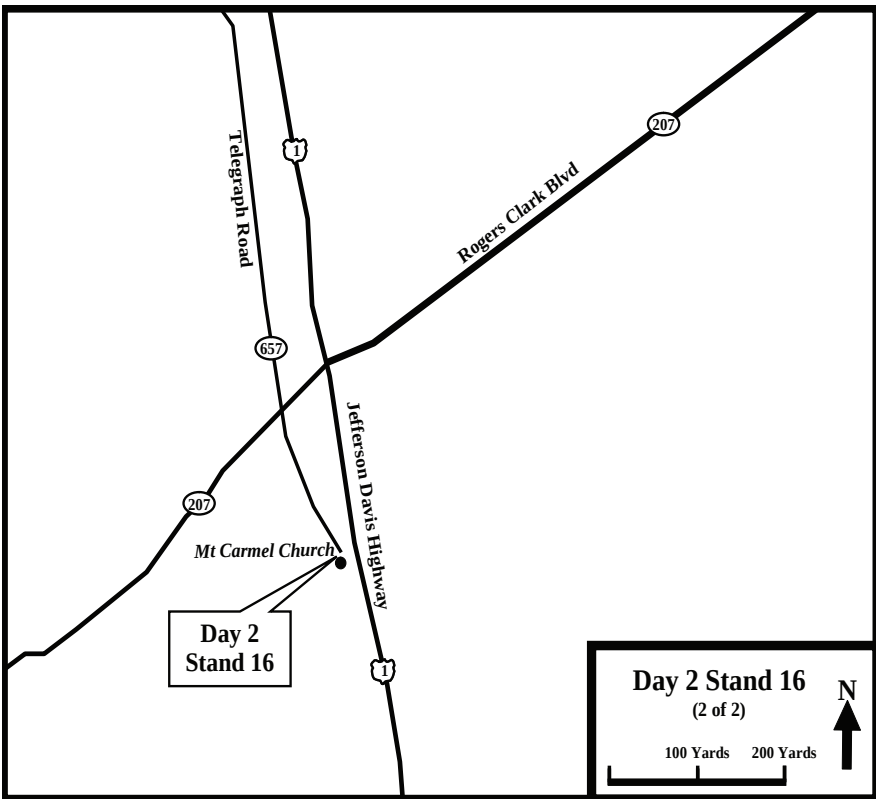
b. Did both commanders select good lines of operations? What do today's concepts of lines of operations have in common with 1864? What is different?

c. Did Grant risk exceeding his operational reach? Modern technology has often extended the geographic extent of operational reach. What factors that limited Grant still apply today?

Stand 16
Mount Carmel Church
(23–24 May 1864)



Map 41.



Map 42.

Directions: Return to Route 722 and continue for 0.2 mile to a four-way intersection. Turn right at the intersection—you will still be on Route 722, but the road name becomes Nelson Hill Road. After 2.2 miles, you will come to an intersection with state Route 207 (Rogers Clark Boulevard). Turn left on 207 and continue for 6.8 miles. You will cross US Highway 1 (there is a set of traffic lights at this crossing).

You need to exercise extreme caution at this crossing and be ready to make an immediate left just after US Highway 1 on Route 657. This road is part of the old Telegraph Road that parallels the modern US Highway 1. After making the left on Route 657 you will see a church just a few hundred yards down the road. The church is currently called Carmel Baptist Church—during the Civil War it was known as Mount Carmel Church. Park in the church parking lot, and walk to a plaque (monument) that is about 50 yards in front of the church. This is a good place to conduct the stand.

Note that the route from Milford Station (stand 15) to Mount Carmel

Church roughly traces the path of Hancock's II Corps as it moved toward the North Anna River.

Orientation: Grant and Meade used this church as a headquarters during the North Anna battles. Their staffs laid wooden boards across the pews and placed their maps on top of the impromptu tables.

Route 657 follows the original Civil War path of Telegraph Road up to the church before it turns into a dirt path and dead ends on the east side of the church. Telegraph Road was the Civil War's most rapid path from the Spotsylvania area to the North Anna.

Description: The Federal positions at dawn on 23 May had the V Corps between Dr. Joseph Flippo's house and Harris Store on Telegraph Road—about 6 miles north of the North Ann River (about 3 miles north of here), the VI Corps moving parallel with the V Corps in the same vicinity, and the IX Corps at Bethel Church. In addition, the II Corps was holding its bridgehead on the Mattaponi River at Milford.

In the morning, Grant and Meade were still at their headquarters at the Tyler house near Bethel Church. They soon realized that Lee had withdrawn rapidly enough to avoid battle north of the North Anna River. The Federal commanders departed the Tyler house before noon and set up their headquarters at Mount Carmel Church between 1300 and 1400 on 23 May.

In the meantime, the Union commander ordered the Federal forces to move south in pursuit of Lee. Grant no longer worried about the II Corps (the "bait"), and ordered them to join in the pursuit of the Confederates. Grant seems to have felt that Lee's forces were shaken from the severe battles at Spotsylvania, and he hoped to gain bridgeheads on the North Anna that would deny Lee the opportunity to use the river line to rest and refit his army.

The Federal army began its move immediately after receiving its orders. Warren's V Corps moved down Telegraph Road to this location. By 0900, Warren's corps had arrived at Mount Carmel Church and advance elements proceeded south looking for Jericho "Bridge." In fact, there was no bridge, but there was a ford further west at a place called Jericho Mills. A local slave told the Union leader that the only bridge up ahead was the Chesterfield Bridge. Torbert and his ad hoc cavalry arrived and told Warren that the II Corps was nearby. In order to avoid a traffic jam at Mount Carmel Church, Warren decided to leave Telegraph Road and move west where he would eventually find Jericho Mills' Ford. The VI Corps followed the V Corps path.

Hancock's II Corps moved from Milford Station southwest to Telegraph Road at Mount Carmel Church. After reaching the church at about 1130,

the II Corps continued south on Telegraph Road where they were to cross the North Anna at a place he believed was called Chesterfield Ford. In fact, there was a Chesterfield Bridge (not Ford) where Telegraph Road crossed the North Anna, as well as a railroad bridge (for the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad) about a half mile east of Telegraph Road. Hancock had the II Corps prepare to take the bridges.

Burnside's IX Corps followed Hancock's troops for much of the route before veering slightly west of Chesterfield Bridge toward Ox Ford on the North Anna.

Warren, through the information of another slave, learned of the ford at Jericho Mills. He sent Griffin's division to cross the river at the ford. The rest of the V Corps was to follow.

After Grant and Meade set up their headquarters at Mount Carmel Church, they directed Hancock to take the bridges at Chesterfield, but not to advance any further. Grant and Meade believed that Warren's move upstream would flank Lee's position and force the Confederates to retreat away from the river line. The VI Corps arrived at Mount Carmel Church in the midafternoon and was sent to support the V Corps. The IX Corps arrived at sundown and continued to Ox Ford.

Mount Carmel Church remained the Union high command's headquarters throughout the North Anna operations. Sheridan's cavalry arrived in this vicinity on 24 May in a driving thunderstorm. Two cavalrymen of the 10th New York were killed near the church by lightning on that day.

Also that day, the Union leadership finally removed one of the problems in their command structure, when Burnside's IX Corps was officially placed under the Army of the Potomac. Whatever his faults, Burnside made it clear that he had no problems working in subordination to Meade (technically his junior), and Grant took the opportunity to remedy the awkward arrangement that had kept the IX Corps as an independent unit.

Vignette: The relationship between Grant and Meade reached a low point on the move to the North Anna. Given the awkward Union command structure, it is remarkable that Grant and Meade worked as effectively as they did, but as the campaign progressed the strain between the two began to show.

On 19 May, Meade wrote to his wife: "If there was any honorable way of retiring from my present false position, I should undoubtedly adopt it, but there is none, and all I can do is patiently submit and bear with resignation and humiliation." (Letter from Maj. Gen. George G. Meade to his wife, 19 May 1864, located in the George G. Meade Collection at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia as quoted by Rhea, *To the North Anna River*, 259.)

On 22 May, Grant overruled Meade and ordered the Army of the Potomac to the North Anna (rather than conducting a flanking movement on the Pamunkey River). This decision added to Meade's frustration.

The next day, Meade's frustration was reflected in an oddly humorous incident during the headquarters' move to Mount Carmel Church. Normally the two Union commanders and their staffs traveled together, but Grant's group set out early on 23 May. Meade noticed this, and according to an aide, "General Meade, who got his pride up at Grant's rapidity, set off at a great rate that soon raised a cloud of dust and left the Lieutenant General far behind; whereat George G. was much pleased" (Agassiz, ed., *Meade's Headquarters, 1863-65: Letters of Colonel Theodore Lyman from the Wilderness to Appomattox*, 122).

The inevitable tension between Grant and Meade may have had an impact on Meade's performance later at Cold Harbor where he found himself with more tactical control than in earlier battles.

Analysis:

1. Examine Grant's moves to the North Anna. Was he correct to conduct a direct pursuit?

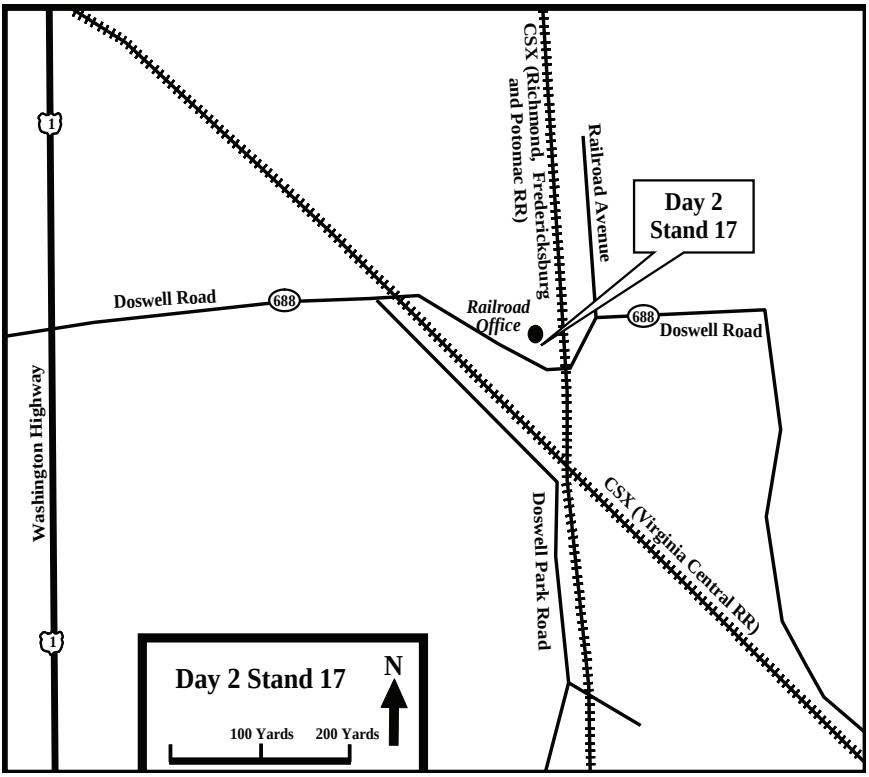
2. Once at the river, Grant made a rare exception from his normal flank moves to the left (east) and attempted to use Warren's and Wright's corps to flank Lee on the west. Was this a good move?

3. Re-look the Grant and Meade relationship.

a. Has it worked well enough (up to now) to justify Grant's decision to stay out of Washington? Could there be a better arrangement?

b. Compare the Grant-Meade relationship to our command structures and relationships today. You would not expect the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs to make his headquarters with a field force, but what are the proper roles for the combatant commander and combined force land component commander in modern actions? Where should they locate their headquarters (main, forward, and rear) and themselves? What lessons, good and bad, from Grant and Meade's command situation still apply today?

Stand 17
Hanover Junction and Doswell
(23–24 May 1864)



Map 43.

Directions: After leaving the church parking lot, go back on Route 657 (Telegraph Road) for a short distance, and then make two quick right turns so that you are heading south on US Highway 1. In about 5.0 miles, you will reach an intersection with Route 688 (Doswell Road).

Before you reach the intersection with 688, there are two points of interest: First, you will pass over the North Anna River at a position close to where Telegraph Road crossed the river over Chesterfield Bridge. This bridge was a major area of fighting on 23 and 24 May and is discussed in the next several stands. Second, about 0.25 mile south of the river, there is a large two-story brick house on the right side of US Highway 1. This building is from the Civil War era and is known as "Ellington." Lee was at this location during some of the fighting for the North Anna, which is discussed at later stands. (Note: This is private property and not accessible

for the staff ride, but you can mention it as you drive by and discuss it later in the ride.)

When you reach the intersection with 688 (Doswell Road), turn left and after traveling 0.3 mile you will reach Hanover Junction (there is a railroad administration building at this location where two sets of rail tracks cross). There is usually ample parking in front of the station for you to conduct this stand.

Please do *not* wander close to the railroad tracks. There are safety risks near the tracks. The workers at the rail station are willing to allow you to conduct the staff ride here, but they will rightfully intervene if your group begins to pose a safety risk.

IMPORTANT: You must visit the senior railroad representative at this location prior to your staff ride and get permission to visit the site. The property is owned by the railroad, and you need permission to use the site for your stand.

Orientation: This location was a crucial supply point for Lee's army. The crossing of the two rail lines made it one of the critical locations in Virginia for the Overland Campaign. The Virginia Central Railroad goes from northwest to southeast; the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad goes from north to south.

The Virginia Central was the more important rail line of the two—it brought supplies from the Shenandoah Valley and central Virginia to Lee's army and Richmond. Note that the building at the rail junction is not a Civil War structure; built in 1928, it is an administrative building for the railroad.

Description: At 0200 on 22 May, Lee halted at Dr. Joseph A. Flippo's house, about 9 miles north of our current location (Hanover Junction). Lee only stayed briefly and then proceeded another 1.5 miles further south to Steven's Mill Pond where his staff erected Lee's headquarters tent. Ewell's corps was positioned near Dickinson's Mill. After resting for about 90 minutes, Ewell's corps continued its march south toward Hanover Junction. Lee accompanied Ewell's men.

During the move, Lee sent a message to Wade Hampton to hold the Federals in check as much as possible and to fall back to Hanover Junction, while covering the movements of the Confederate infantry. Lee sent a message to Davis that explained his reasons for retreating to the North Anna line (*see vignettes*).

Lee also learned that reinforcements had arrived from Beauregard's forces after stopping Butler's Army at Bermuda Hundred. These forces consisted of Major General Robert F. Hoke's brigade (which was assigned

to Early's division) and three brigades of Pickett's division (under Brigadier General Seth M. Barton, Brigadier General Montgomery D. Corse, and Colonel William R. Terry; Brigadier General Eppa Hunton's brigade remained near Richmond). These forces, some 8,000 to 9,000 troops, along with Breckinridge's men from the Valley, helped to make up for some of the Confederate losses.

The Union forces were also receiving some reinforcements (many of them were the heavy artillery regiments), and the Federals eventually received 16,000 to 17,000 troops by the end of the North Anna battle. However, many of these troops did not arrive until after the fighting on the river, and the Army of the Potomac lost additional troops as enlistment times ran out on some of the volunteer regiments.

In sum, Lee's forces probably had a better ratio of troop strength during the North Anna struggle than they would have throughout the entire Overland Campaign. (See J. Michael Miller, *The North Anna Campaign, "Even To Hell Itself*," Lynchburg, VA: H.E. Howard, Inc., 1989, 6-11, for a detailed discussion of troop strengths prior to the North Anna fight.)

When Lee reached the North Anna, he ordered Ewell to take position on the south side of the river while still holding some small bridgeheads on the north side. Lee ordered the bridges for Telegraph Road (Chesterfield Bridge) and the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad be held. The key position north of the river that protected the bridges was known as Henagan's Redoubt (named after Colonel John W. Henagan whose South Carolina brigade from Kershaw's division, I Corps, held the location).

Lee then rode further south to Hanover Junction and established his headquarters in the southwestern quadrant formed by the rail junction. At 0930, Lee telegraphed the Confederate Secretary of War, James A. Seddon, that Ewell was in position on the North Anna with Anderson and Hill to arrive shortly and assume their positions on the river.

Although no Federals appeared on the river that afternoon (22 May), Hampton sent a report to Lee that the Union troops were moving south toward the North Anna River and Hanover Junction. Lee sent another message to Davis that spoke of taking the offensive, especially if he could get more reinforcements from Beauregard.

On the morning of 23 May, Lee rode forward from the Hanover Junction headquarters and conducted an extensive reconnaissance of the bridges on the North Anna. He decided not to fortify defensive positions on the south side at this time. There are several possible explanations for this decision. First, Lee may have felt the Federals would think the positions too strong and simply decide not to attack, thus not leaving Lee any chance for a counterstroke. Second, he may have wanted to maintain contact with

the Union forces by using the bridgeheads on the north bank. Finally, he may have felt that he could not hold the river against a concerted attack because the south bank was lower than the north bank along most of the river (except at Ox Ford). In this case, the bridgeheads would hold the higher ground as long as possible and disconcert the Federals while setting the stage for a possible Confederate counterattack south of the river.

Lee positioned Anderson's I Corps forward on the North Anna near the bridges. Ewell fell back further to Anderson's right and rear. Hill was placed on the I Corps' left flank at a location known as Anderson's Tavern.

Federal troops arrived on the North Anna at about noon on 23 May. At this time, Lee was at Ellington (a two-story brick house owned by Parson Thomas H. Fox that you saw earlier on US Highway 1). He reiterated the need to hold the bridgeheads to his staff and commanders. While at Ellington, Lee and other Confederate leaders came under Union artillery fire. As more Union troops arrived (Hancock's II Corps), the Federals applied more pressure to Henagan's Redoubt.

As discussed earlier, the Union leadership had been confused over the terrain where Telegraph Road crossed the North Anna. At 1430 on 23 May, Hancock's troops approached a stream just north of the North Anna called Long Creek and mistook it for the main river. About an hour later, Birney's division forced Confederate pickets to withdrawal from Long Creek, and Hancock soon realized that the North Anna was about 0.5 mile further south.

With a better appreciation for the terrain, Hancock deployed his corps against Henagan's Redoubt. Three brigades of Birney's division (from west to east, Brewster, Colonel Byron R. Pierce, and Colonel Thomas W. Egan) carried the brunt of the attack, assisted by effective Union artillery fire. Birney's men carried the redoubt and advanced up to the Chesterfield Bridge. Aided by Birney's success, Barlow and Gibbon advanced to the railroad bridge. Both bridges remained intact.

During this fighting, there was increased artillery fire on the left of the Confederate line (Hill's III Corps). Lee resolved to see the situation for himself, but he was so ill (fever and diarrhea were among the symptoms) that he had to ride in a carriage. After seeing Hill, Lee thought the Union moves were a feint (in fact, Warren's V Corps was making a major move across the North Anna) and returned to Hanover Junction. Hill was still concerned about the Federal effort, and he ordered Wilcox's division to move forward to Noel's Station (on the Virginia Central Railroad) and to watch and possibly disrupt the Northern effort.

Vignette: On 22 May, Lee sent a message to Davis explaining his

withdrawal to the North Anna River: ". . . in a wooded country like that in which we have been operating, where nothing is known beyond what can be ascertained by feeling, a day's march can always be gained—I should have preferred contesting the enemy's approach inch by inch; but my solicitude for Richmond caused me to abandon that plan." (Clifford Dowdey, ed., *Wartime Papers of R.E. Lee,* New York, NY: Bramhall House, 1961, 746.)

Analysis:

1. Lee seemed determined to launch an attack if possible, even during his withdrawal. Should he have been considering offensive action? Why or why not? If so, where and when should he have attacked?

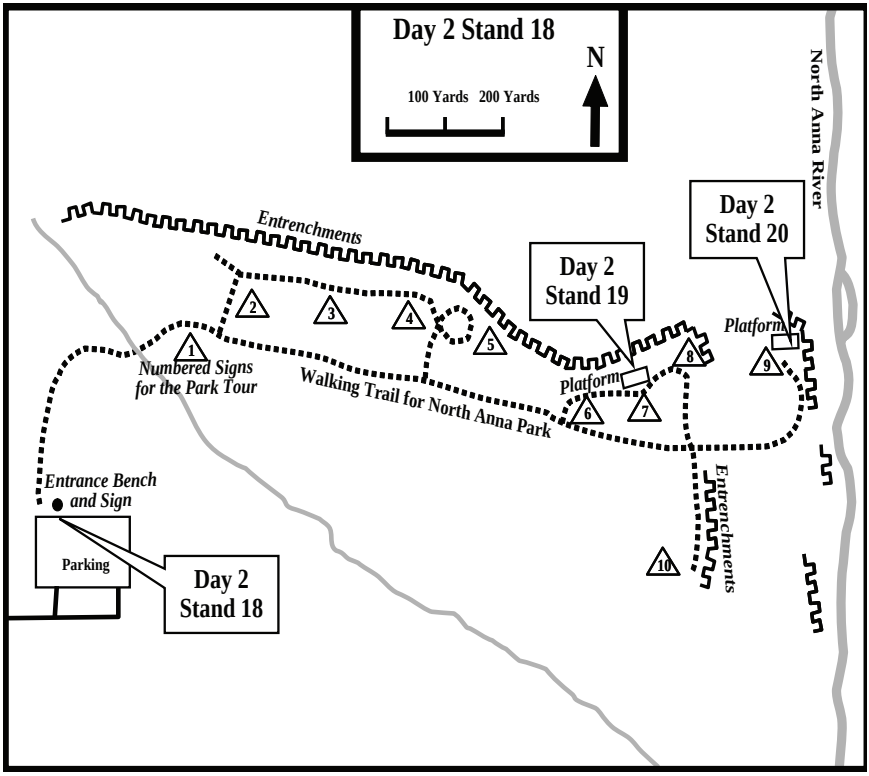
2. Was Hanover Junction really that important? How much of an influence should logistics have on operational issues? Was Lee restricting his operational choices too much based on logistics and rail lines?

3. Where should Lee have defended the North Anna—on the north side, the south side, or a combination?

a. What are the ways in which one can defend a river line (in front of the river, on the river, behind the river)? What does current doctrine say is the most effective way to defend a river line (if any "best way" exists)?

b. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each potential method of defending a river?

Stand 18
Jericho Mills
(May 1864)



Map 44.

Directions: Go back up Route 688 (Doswell Road) about 0.3 mile and turn right on US Highway 1 (heading north). After 0.4 mile, turn left on Verdon Road (Route 684). After 2.5 miles, you will see a sign on the right for the Ox Ford Battlefield Park. Turn right on the park road, go 0.5 mile down the road, and park in the lot. The next stand should be conducted at the picnic tables in the corner of the parking lot where the walking path begins.

The Ox Ford Battlefield Park is a joint project of private industry (General Crushed Stone Company), local government (Hanover County), and preservationists (National Heritage Preservation Association). It is a great success story of battlefield preservation, and it contains some of the most well-preserved Civil War trenches in Virginia.

Orientation: You are currently at the entrance to Ox Ford (North Anna Battlefield) Park. From this location, you need to discuss the battle fought

near Jericho Mills, because you will not be able to get to the actual site of the Jericho Mills battle (it is private land and not accessible to staff ride groups). Use maps to explain the battle from here. Show the general direction to the Telegraph Road and Hanover Junction (the last stand), the North Anna River, Chesterfield Bridge, Ox Ford, and Jericho Mills Ford.

Description: By 23 May, the Army of Northern Virginia had won the race to the North Anna. Hill's corps was positioned on the left flank near Anderson's Tavern and Hewlett's Station on the Virginia Central Railroad. The troops rested (no entrenchments) while the army's chief engineer, M.L. Smith, conducted a reconnaissance for a new defensive line.

At 0600 on 23 May, Confederate cavalry under Major General W.H.F. "Rooney" Lee reported to Hill that Union cavalry had arrived on the North Anna at Jericho Mills Ford (the Federals were part of Torbert's unit, which had switched from leading Hancock's corps to leading Warren's corps). Hill allowed Wilcox to send one brigade, under Brigadier General Joseph Brown, forward to Noel's Station. Hill informed Lee, but the army commander still thought the move was a feint.

The lead elements of the V Corps (Griffin's division) arrived at Jericho Mills and found the ford undefended. Griffin immediately posted artillery on high ground to cover a crossing. Between 1330 and 1400, several Union brigades crossed the river (some troops in bare feet) and came into contact with Confederate pickets. By 1500, all of Griffin's division was across the river.

Wilcox received word that Union infantry was crossing at the ford. Wilcox informed Hill who ordered Wilcox to move to the ford. Shortly thereafter, all of Wilcox's division was moving forward to Noel's Station.

After Griffin's division, Crawford's troops were the next to cross. Also, the Federals built a 160-foot pontoon bridge at the Jericho site. Griffin's and Crawford's divisions formed a line just south of the ford. Cutler's division also crossed, but remained near the riverbank as a reserve. Having not yet encountered resistance, the Union troops in all three divisions stacked arms and began cooking dinner.

"Rooney" Lee incorrectly reported to Wilcox that only two or three Federal brigades were across the river. At 1730, Wilcox began his attack with his one division (four brigades) against three Federal divisions (6,000 Confederates against 15,000 Union troops). The Confederates approached the Union line from the west and initially overlapped the Union right flank.

Warren heard the opening guns of Wilcox's attack and sent word to have Cutler's division move from the river bluffs and into position on Griffin's right. This put Cutler's troops in the direct path of Wilcox's

assault. Federal artillery at the Fontaine house and on the north bank of North Anna opened fire on Confederate artillery as it unlimbered to support Wilcox's attack.

As Cutler's division reached the plain on Griffin's right, it was attacked by two Confederate brigades (Scales' brigade, now under the command of Colonel William L. Lowrance, and Edward L. Thomas' brigade). The Iron brigade (Colonel William W. Robinson) and the Pennsylvania Bucktails brigade (Colonel Edward S. Bragg) were jolted and pushed back. The Union brigade furthest on Cutler's right (under Colonel J. William Hoffman) held its position.

Wilcox's two other Confederate brigades attacked Ayre's and Sweitzer's brigades (of Griffin's division). Sweitzer's men broke, but Ayres' Regulars held. Wilcox reported his success to A.P. Hill, while Federals filtered back to the pontoon bridge. Colonel Nathan T. Dushane's Maryland Brigade moved forward to stem the Confederate advance and collided with stragglers on the bridge. The Maryland troops pushed many of the retreating Union troops into the river and arrived to help stop Wilcox's advance.

Grant received information about the fight and sent word to Wright to have the VI Corps support Warren. In the meantime, Warren sent Colonel Peter Lyle's brigade (Crawford's division) to the sound of the guns. They took up a position and held back the Southerners. Also, three batteries under Colonel Charles S. Wainwright arrived to bolster Cutler's division—the guns helped to rally the men. Bartlett's brigade moved out and flanked Lowrance's brigade of North Carolinians. Caught between Bartlett and the artillery, Lowrance's troops broke.

The Confederate attack had failed, and darkness fell before Hill or Wright reached the fighting.

Vignette: None.

Analysis:

1. Had Lee or Hill underestimated the Union threat at Jericho Mills? Should the Confederates have defended on the river right at the ford?

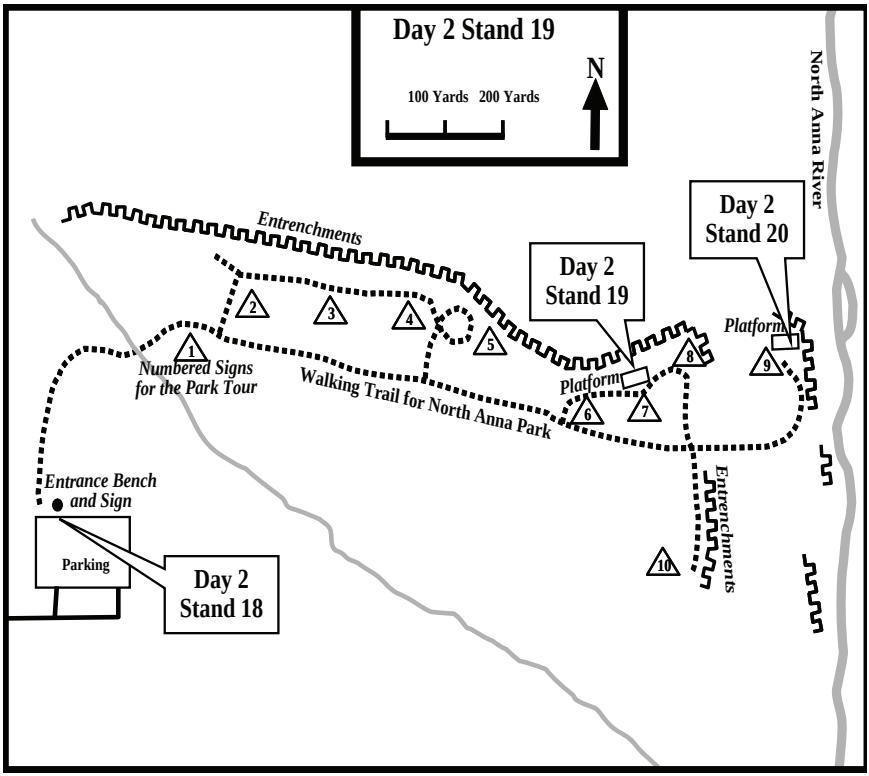
2. Once the Federals had crossed, should the Confederates have attacked as they did? Was there a realistic chance of a Confederate victory? What was the goal of the attack? Did it support the operational concept?

3. Was the lack of cavalry still haunting Union movements (they were easily surprised by Wilcox's attack)? What can commanders do with organic assets to improve intelligence?

4. What options are open to Lee and Grant on the evening of 23 May? As a reminder, the Union forces have a bridgehead at Jericho Mills and

were on the riverbank at the Chesterfield Bridge and Railroad Bridge near Telegraph Road. In other words, the Federals have made a partial, but not complete, river crossing. Discuss advantages and disadvantages of various courses of action.

Stand 19
Ox Ford Mills (Ledlie's Attack)
(24 May 1864)



Map 45.

Directions: After describing Jericho Mills from the parking lot, walk toward Ox Ford for the next stand. Start down the walking path, which will take you downhill and over a bridge. As you walk, you will pass some well-preserved trenches. Continue down the path (it is well marked) past several plaques (interpretive markers) erected by the county park commission. Marker number 6 is labeled for Ledlie's assault and it marks the center of the Confederate position that repulsed his attack. However, it is better to continue to marker number 7, which has an elevated wooden platform that marks the right portion of the Confederate troops that defended against Ledlie. The view here makes it the best location for the stand.

Orientation: You are at the right hand portion of Mahone's Confederate position (Hill's III Corps). These troops faced Ledlie's attack on 24 May.

(Use a map to refer back to Jericho Mills.) Ox Ford is less than 0.5 mile north of your current location. There were almost no trees in this area during Ledlie's attack. The Confederates cleared the trees to help build their entrenchments and to clear fields of fire.

Description: Lee called a meeting for the evening of 23 May at his headquarters near Hanover Junction to decide on his course of action. Prior to the meeting, Lee positioned his forces to handle multiple contingencies: Pickett's division (Anderson's corps) and Rodes and Gordon (from Ewell's corps) were positioned on the Virginia Central Railroad in the Confederate center rear to be ready to deploy as needed.

The meeting occurred after dark near a towering oak tree at the headquarters. All corps commanders were there, as well as some division commanders and much of the army staff (including the engineers). (*See vignettes*.) Lee conducted the meeting superbly, despite the signs of his increasing illness. All agreed that Hanover Junction was too crucial to abandon—they could not afford to withdraw. In addition, they decided that A.P. Hill could not regain the river line and would have to defend somewhere further south of the river.

As to the position of Lee's right flank, there were varying opinions. Some in the group wanted to block the Chesterfield Bridge crossing by holding the south bank at the bridge, although the northern bank was higher. Others wanted to fall back from the river to the high ground at Fox house. Still another group was willing to pull back even further south to a wooded swampy area that was good, defensible terrain. Lee decided to pull back on both flanks and form an inverted "V" position with only the tip on the North Anna River at Ox Ford.

Although Lee's "V" position was well suited for the defense, his intent was to launch an attack if the opportunity presented itself. The Southerners would use entrenchments on both sides of the "V" to minimize the need for front line troops in defensive positions. Lee then planned to keep large, mobile reserves that could shift to either flank for an attack. The inverted "V" would force Grant to commit to crossing the North Anna on both flanks. Once the Federals crossed, Union units would have to traverse the river twice if they wanted to reinforce from one flank to the other. With the Northerners thus vulnerable, Lee could wait to see which Union flank was more exposed, then mass the Confederate reserves and crush the Union forces before Grant could shift reinforcements.

The Union plan for 24 May called for an advance that mirrored Lee's hopes. Warren was to move slowly, keeping the bridgehead secure south of Jericho Mills Ford. This would allow for Wright to cross the North Anna and reinforce the V Corps' advance. Burnside was to demonstrate at Ox

Ford and distract the Confederates. Hancock was to cross at Chesterfield Bridge and continue the attack. The II Corps was the main effort.

On 0700 on the morning of 24 May, Grant and Meade interviewed some slaves from the Doswell Plantation. The slaves said that their master—and a large party of Confederate troops—had fled the area. Grant and Meade were optimistic. They wanted Hancock to cross the river and press the Confederates. They appeared to be falling into Lee's trap with misplaced enthusiasm.

At 0600, Lee rose and positioned Breckinridge. Then he rode to inspect Hill's position. He snapped at Hill over the Jericho Mills battle: "Why did you not do as Jackson would have done—thrown your whole force upon these people and driven them back?" (as quoted by Rhea, *To the North Anna River*, 326, from a letter, Jedediah Hotchkiss to Henry Alexander White, 12 January 1897, in Hotchkiss Collection, Library of Congress). Soon Lee regained his composure, but he was clearly ailing—the outburst was very uncharacteristic of Lee's command style.

Later that morning, the Union II Corps began its crossing of the North Anna. Birney crossed at the Chesterfield Bridge; Gibbon crossed on a makeshift pontoon bridge east of Chesterfield. By approximately 0900, Hancock's corps had seized the high ground at Fox house, and an hour later, the entire II Corps was south of the river. On the other flank, Warren continued his move south. He moved cautiously and could not find Hill's new line. The lack of Confederate opposition gave Grant and Meade more encouragement.

With both Union flanks advancing, Burnside's corps became the key to the Union plan. The IX Corps needed to cross the river and connect the two separate Union wings.

Burnside's first concept for taking the ford had the 21st Massachusetts (Leasure's brigade, Crittenden's division) and the 17th Michigan (Hartranft's brigade, Wilcox's division) cross near Ox Ford and occupy a small island in the river near the ford. The bulk of IX Corps artillery was massed on the north bank for an assault at Ox Ford. At the next stand, you will be able to see the actual ford. Note that the southern riverbank is higher than the northern riverbank, unlike most locations along the river. The assault was to begin with a single bugle call. The soldiers waited with incredible tension. At the last minute, the attack was called off.

By 1100, Burnside had developed a new plan. Crittenden was to cross Quarles' Mill Ford (between Ox Ford and Jericho Mills Ford) and flank the Confederates out of their Ox Ford position. Earlier in the morning, the Pennsylvania Reserves (Crawford's division, V Corps) had advanced along the southern bank of the North Anna River. Eventually, they took

Quarles' Mill Ford, which was thus uncovered for Crittenden's crossing.

At the Mount Carmel Church headquarters, the Union leaders were still optimistic, but puzzled. Warren and Hancock were advancing steadily, but Burnside faced a tough entrenched foe that did not want to give up Ox Ford. Grant and Meade concluded that the Confederates would give up the ford once they realized they were flanked. They ordered Burnside to have the whole IX Corps across the river by the morning of 25 May.

The first of Crittenden's brigades to cross at Quarles' Mill Ford was led by Brigadier General James H. Ledlie. Burnside directed Crittenden to follow Ledlie with the rest of his division along the south bank and uncover Ox Ford. Burnside and Crittenden assumed that the Union advance would flank the Confederates and force them to retreat without an attack on entrenched positions.

However, Crittenden was having trouble getting the rest of his forces across the North Anna, and for a long time, Ledlie was still the only IX Corps unit on the south bank. They advanced through Crawford's line and the 35th Massachusetts Regiment took the lead as skirmishers.

Confederate pickets gave their command a warning of the Federal approach. Mahone's men—who had been resting—filled their earthworks and were ready for the Union advance.

Ledlie decided on an attack, precipitating a strange sequence of events. First of all, Ledlie was clearly drunk—he used alcohol to add to his courage. He grabbed an officer from the nearby 57th Massachusetts and told him to go back to the ford: "Give my compliments to General Crittenden. Tell him that there is a rebel battery in my front; ask him to please send me three regiments immediately, one on my right, one on my left and the other in the rear for support and I will charge and capture it" (*OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 3, 918). Ledlie had sent a regimental officer (instead of his staff) with this request for an odd deployment of reinforcements. These were the more obvious signs of his inebriation.

While waiting for his earlier messenger to return, Ledlie sent the 35th Massachusetts Regiment forward to drive back Confederate skirmishers. The regiment attacked, but was routed by Harris' Mississippi troops. Already, this was a bad start to the operation, hurting morale for the rest of Ledlie's troops.

At about 1700, Ledlie's messenger found Crittenden. Crittenden said: "tell him [Ledlie] I have not the regiments to spare. The Division is not across the river yet. Tell him my orders are not to charge." As the messenger departed, Crittenden called after him and reiterated the instructions: "Tell General Ledlie not to charge unless he sees a sure thing . . . use the utmost caution. . . . I have information that the enemy is posted in force in

his front. Tell him to use the utmost caution" (John Anderson, *The Fifty-Seventh Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers in the War of the Rebellion,* Boston, MA: E.B. Stillings and Company, 1896, 99).

Less than an hour later, the messenger returned to Ledlie and saw that the brigade was massing for its attack. He reported Crittenden's instructions to Ledlie but "it is doubtful if he heard, or if he did, that he understood one word or cared" (Anderson, *The Fifty-Seventh Regiment*, 99).

The attack began with Ledlie clearly drunk, swaying from side to side as he led the men into the open field. The Confederate artillery pounded Ledlie's men starting at about a mile distant from the Southern lines. The infantry (Harris' Mississippi brigade and Perry's Florida brigade) opened up at 100 yards. The Confederate infantry was three ranks deep, and soldiers passed loaded muskets forward to keep up continuous fire.

Crawford's Union troops (V Corps) tried to help by pushing forward a strong skirmish line on Ledlie's right, but it could not do much. Also, IX Corps artillery on the north bank of the river tried to help with a heavy bombardment.

To add to the misery, a huge thunderstorm broke out during the attack. Ledlie's brigade halted at about 50 yards from the Confederate entrenchments and tried to exchange volleys with the Southerners. But they were ripped apart by the rifle and canister. Both of Ledlie's flanks were exposed. Saunder's Virginia brigade advanced slightly and raked Ledlie's right flank with fire.

After about an hour of this slaughter, Ledlie decided to withdraw. However, his brigade was starting to lose cohesion. Harris' men jumped over their breastworks and poured volleys into the Union soldiers as they tried to conduct their retreat. The retreat turned into a rout. The Union troops streamed through Crittenden's other two brigades, which had finally crossed the river. During the rout, Ledlie could not be found. His subordinates tried to rally their men without Ledlie. He finally returned at midnight.

Union losses included 150 killed, 150 wounded, and 100 prisoners out of the original 1,500 soldiers that attacked.

While Ledlie's brigade was wrecked, Hancock fought a battle on his front (the east side of the Confederate "V"). From 1500 to 1800, Hancock pushed troops forward in a piecemeal fashion, still unsure of the size and intent of the Confederate opposition. He got within 2 to 3 miles of Hanover Junction, but could not penetrate Ewell's main entrenched lines. In the back and forth battle near the Doswell house, some Union brigades were pretty roughed up.

By late afternoon, all of the II Corps was well south of the river and

seemingly exposed to Lee's planned counterattack, while the rest of the Union forces were halted and unable to support Hancock.

Even though it seemed that Lee's plan was working, throughout 24 May Lee's health deteriorated. By the afternoon, his doctor had confined him to bed (the only time during the war). He was delirious at times and shouted, "we must strike them a blow, we must never let them pass us again, we must strike them a blow" (Charles S. Venable, "The Campaign from the Wilderness to Petersburg," *SHSP*, volume 14, Richmond, VA: 1873, 535). Lee seemed to recognize the opportunity, but he was too ill to execute the plan, and he felt that he could not rely on his subordinates to carry out the attack without his presence.

Grant and Meade kept receiving reports from all of the corps commanders as the evening went on. By 2200 on 24 May, Grant grasped his position and Lee's intent. He stated that the enemy and situation were "so different from what I expected" (*OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 3, 153 and 158). Later that night, Grant and Meade ordered Hancock to stop his forward movement and entrench. They also ordered Warren to cancel the attack on Anderson's Tavern, and they told Wright to move to Warren's support. Burnside was to cut roads through the woods and build bridges on the North Anna to improve the Union ability to move reinforcements to its flanks. Lee's opportunity had passed.

Vignette: Historian J. Michael Miller relates a humorous story of Lee's encounter with a teamster during his meeting on the night of 23 May:

> As Lee gave orders for the disposition of the army, a series of oaths split the night air. "Get around here, you damned infernal long eared son of a jackass!" An enormous impact stressed the order. Obviously a nearby teamster was attempting to discipline his mule. One of the few things that brought Lee to anger was maltreatment of animals, but he resumed his orders after a small hesitation. The battle between man and mule continued. Lee began to give a peculiar shake of the head that his close officers knew that he used "when he was worried and what we used to call snapping at his ear." The cursing only grew louder and the beating more furious. At last, Lee could stand no more and halted his instructions. In his most sentorian tone, he commanded, "What are you beating that mule for?"
>
> The teamster, not knowing the owner of the voice, assumed a soldier was having fun with him. He called

out in a crying shiftless whine, "Is this any of your-r-r-r mule?"

The officers under the oak tree straining to hold back their smiles, while Lee snapped at his ear several more times. The commanding general turned back to his business and finished the orders. The officers were certain that Lee took care of the teamster as soon as they had left. (Miller, *The North Anna* Campaign, 89-90, from an account of E. Porter Alexander in the E. Porter Alexander Papers at the University of North Carolina.)

Analysis:

1. Discuss the futility and foolishness of Ledlie's attack. Does the military still have problems with incompetents like this today or does our officer system weed out such people?

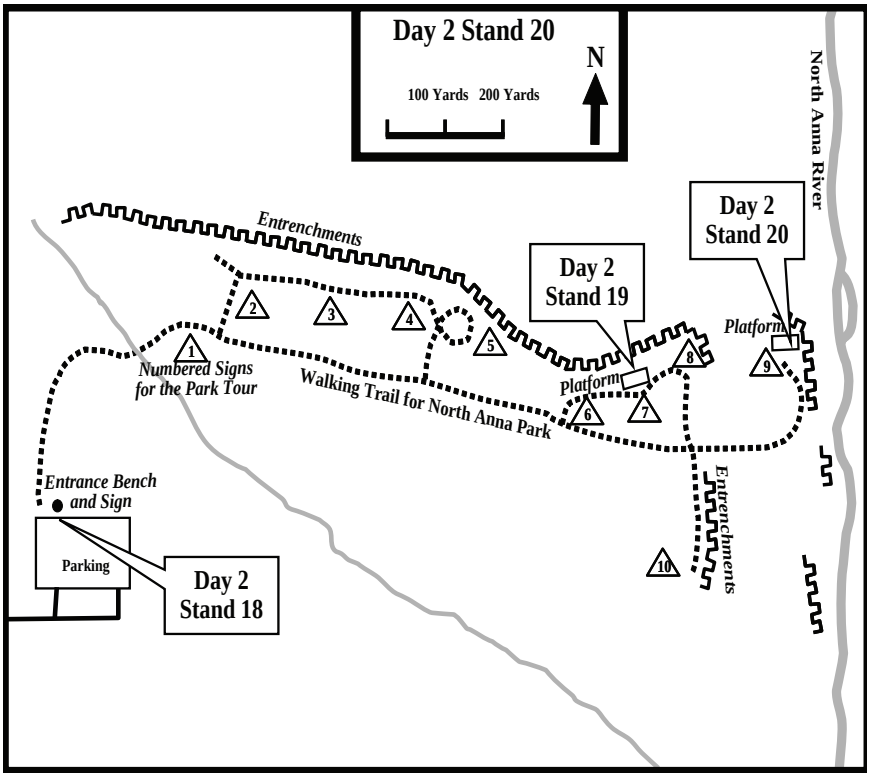
2. Was Lee's plan truly that brilliant? What were the strengths of his plan? Were there also weaknesses (perhaps a Union corps—supposedly isolated—could just as easily defend against a Confederate attack, using their entrenchments)?

3. What is the role of a commander's health (specifically Lee's bad health) in war? Compare with Napoleon at Waterloo, Lee at Gettysburg, even Halsey at Midway (replaced by Spruance).

4. What about Lee's subordinates—why couldn't they act on their own? Should Lee have trusted them more?

5. Note Lee's own pugnaciousness. He was not content to sit behind entrenchments, and he felt that he needed a significant victory over Grant if he was ever to win the overall campaign.

Stand 20
North Anna Summary
(May 1864)



Map 46.

Directions: Continue further down the park's walking trail toward Ox Ford. Stop at interpretive marker number 9. It is on a wooden platform that overlooks Ox Ford and the North Anna River.

Orientation: Here at the Ox Ford overlook, you are at the very apex of Lee's inverted "V" position (the park's interpretive marker has a useful map also at this location). Ledlie's attack was slightly to the south of this location, and Confederate troops here could probably hit Ledlie's left flank with rifle fire.

Note the remains of the Confederate trenches, particularly the artillery positions, which are well preserved (and well sighted to cover the ford). The small island in the middle of the river (if the foliage permits the view) was the staging area for Burnside's original plan of a two-regiment attack.

Now that you can see the actual Ox Ford and the nature of the terrain and Confederate positions, was Burnside right to call off his original assault?

Description: As stated at the last stand, late on the evening of 24 May, Grant and Meade realized their vulnerability, called off further advances, and ordered Union troops to entrench. By the morning of 25 May, the Union troops were ready to resist an attack, but they were still in an awkward position and ill disposed to resume the offensive from their current location.

On 25 May, there was scattered artillery fire and sharpshooting on both sides throughout the day. The Federals destroyed parts of the Virginia Central Railroad and the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroads that lay behind their lines. This damage discomfited the Confederates for a while, but once the campaign shifted further south, the Southerners repaired the Virginia Central and re-established the supply line to the Valley.

At 1400, Grant and Meade shifted their headquarters to Quarles' Mill and held a meeting of senior officers. They discussed two major options for the next move. First, they could move southeast, downstream along the Pamunkey River. The advantages for this move began with the fact that it was the safest move—the river would cover the Union right flank during the move. Also, it would continue to rely on a secure, waterborne line of communication (LOC). Finally, it would move the Army of the Potomac closer to Butler's Army of the James.

The second option was to move inland around Lee's left flank and push directly for Richmond, 25 miles away. The considerations for this plan included the advantage that it might surprise Lee (up to this point in the campaign, Grant had almost always opted to go around Lee's right flank). A major problem was that the Union forces would break away from the water LOC, and in fact this might force the Federals to operate without a supply line for an uncertain amount of time. Warren and Hunt favored the inland approach; Meade preferred the move down the Pamunkey. Grant briefly leaned toward the inland route, but he finally decided on the move to the southeast.

Meade issued orders for the Army of the Potomac to begin its move on the night of 26 May. Many Union soldiers were glad for the short pause at the North Anna before the next move. However, some commanders and staff officers were frustrated by the continued moves to the same flank. (*See vignettes* for comments from a disgruntled Union officer.)

Confederate activities on 25 May continued to be influenced by Lee's illness. Lee was still confined to his tent and snapped at his staff at times during the day. The Confederate troops remained in place. Late in the day, the headquarters moved 3 miles south to Taylorsville.

On 26 May, there was some sharpshooting in the midst of a heavy

rain that flooded the trenches on both sides. In the evening, the Federals began their move; the trains had pulled back earlier in the day. The new supply base was fully operational at Port Royal (the transfer of bases from Belle Plain to Port Royal had been conducted during the fight on the North Anna).

After dark, all Federal troops south of the North Anna moved to positions on the north bank. This move was completed by 0300 on 27 May. Torbert's and Gregg's cavalry divisions led the Union move (Torbert returned to command of his former division and his ad hoc cavalry force was split up). The cavalry was to secure a crossing on the Pamunkey at Hanovertown. Sheridan's other division (under Wilson) covered the army's rear.

The VI Corps, followed by the II Corps, moved on the River Road using the Pamunkey to cover their right flanks. The V Corps followed by the IX Corps moved along a more northerly route.

Lee was initially unaware of the Union maneuver, but by the morning of 27 May, he suspected that the Federals were on the move again. With the Union departure, the battle for the North Anna River was over.

Vignette: Colonel Wainwright, chief of V Corps artillery, questioned Grant's plans: "Can it be this is the sum of our lieutenant-general's abilities? Has he no other resource in tactics? Or is it sheer obstinacy? Three times he has tried this move, around Lee's right, and three times been foiled." (Nevins, ed., *A Diary of Battle: The Personal Journals of Colonel Charles S. Wainwright,* 388.)

Analysis:

1. Total losses on the North Anna:

a. Union losses were 591 killed, 2,734 wounded, and 661missing (out of 68,000).

b. Confederate losses were about 2,500 total killed, wounded, and missing (out of 53,000).

2. Who won the battle and why?

a. Grant had failed to destroy Lee's army and had not captured Richmond. Grant did force Lee to retreat all the way to the edge of Richmond, and he retained his freedom of movement (the initiative).

b. Lee had lost a lot of ground and failed to regain the initiative. He missed an opportunity to badly damage the Union forces on 24 May. Still, Lee had preserved his own army and still held Grant away from Richmond. Not long after the Union move to the southeast, the Confederates would re-establish their connection to the Valley, and thus the Southern stand on the North Anna ultimately protected the Confederate supply line.

c. In sum, who was in the better operational position after the North Anna?

3. Clearly Lee's health problems were partly a result of fatigue, overwork, and connected to his belief that he had to personally supervise his new or unreliable corps commanders. Was Lee correct in questioning Ewell, Hill, and Anderson's abilities (give your own evaluation of each)? Could he have done anything to better prepare these commanders? Could he afford to replace them?

Description (cont): After your discussion, set the stage for the next day of the staff ride by describing the movements of both sides on 27 May:

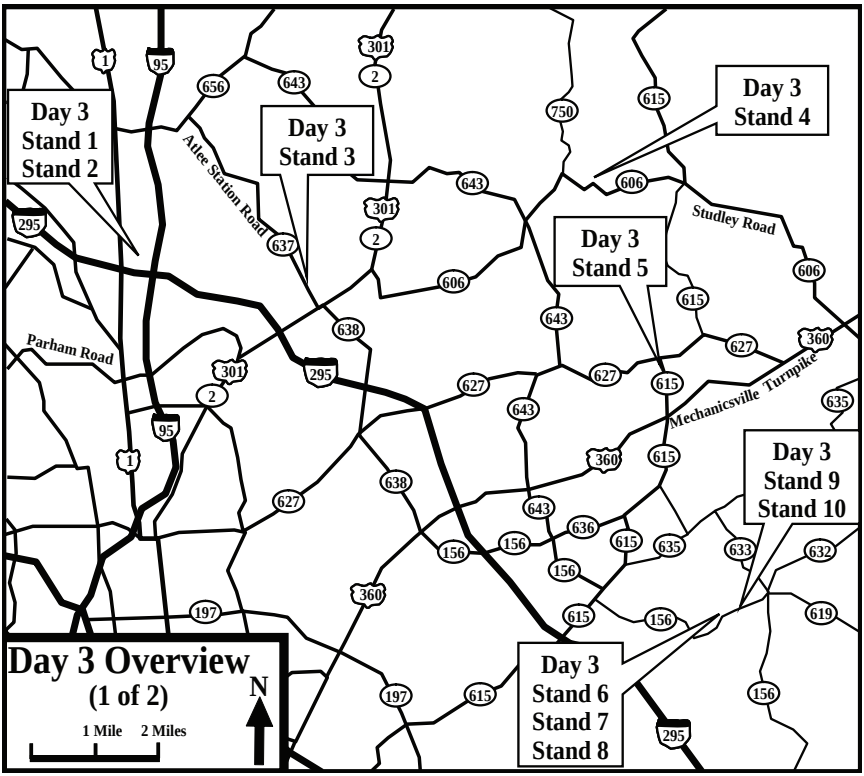
On the Union side, Sheridan's cavalry occupied Hanovertown at 0900 and crossed the Pamunkey, driving back some Confederate pickets. Two hours later, Russell's division, leading the VI Corps, crossed at Hanovertown and established a secure bridgehead on the south side. The II Corps, following the VI Corps, arrived at Hanovertown, but stayed on the north side of the river.

The V Corps started its move at 0900, and the IX Corps left Mount Carmel Church early in the afternoon. Grant and Meade established their headquarters at Mangohick Church.

For the Confederates, Lee received reports at dawn that the Federals were gone from their North Anna positions. Later in the morning, Confederate cavalry under Brigadier General Lunsford L. Lomax (from Fitzhugh Lee's division) reported the Federal crossing at Hanovertown (15 miles from Richmond).

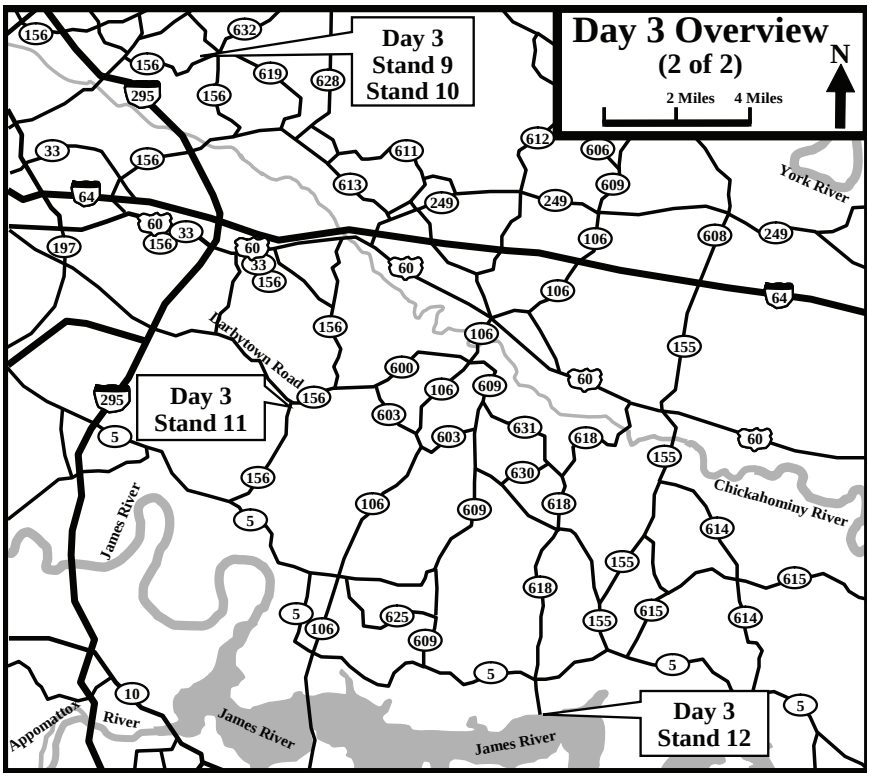
Lee was still not sure if the Union move was a feint. He decided to position the army near Ashland. This was a central location that allowed the Confederates to cover Telegraph Road while being positioned to block Grant's move to the southeast if necessary. The order of movement was II Corps, Breckinridge's division, I Corps, and III Corps. Ewell, temporarily ill, was replaced by Early as the II Corps commander. The army stopped for the evening in a position between Ashland and Atlee's Station.

Day 3
North Anna to Petersburg
(11 May–15 June 1864)



Map 47.

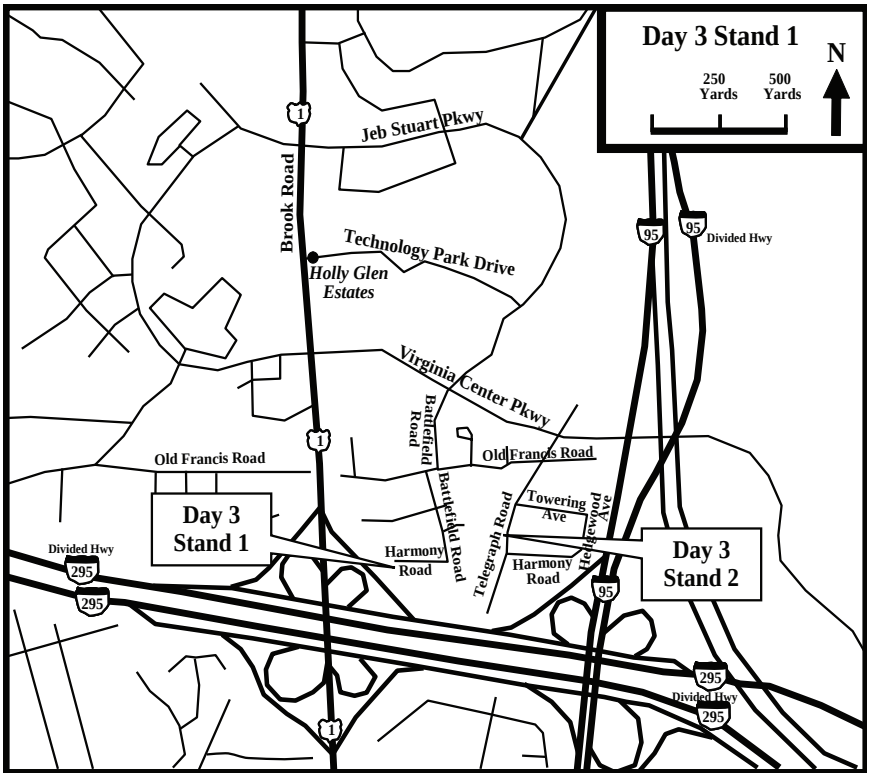
Stand 1, Yellow Tavern I (11 May 1864)
Stand 2, Yellow Tavern II (Stuart's Death) (11–12 May 1864)
Stand 3, Atlee's Station (28–29 May 1864)
Stand 4, Haw's Shop (28 May 1864)
Stand 5, Bethesda Church (drive-by) (30 May–2 June 1864)
Stand 6, Cold Harbor I (31 May–2 June 1864)
Stand 7, Cold Harbor II (Confederate Positions) (3 June 1864)
Stand 8, Cold Harbor III (Union Positions) (3 June 1864)
Stand 9, Cold Harbor IV (Next 10 Days) (3–12 June 1864)
Stand 10, Cold Harbor to the James River (12–13 June 1864)



Map 48.

Stand 11, Riddell's Shop (13 June 1864)
Stand 12, Wilcox's Landing (13–14 June 1864)

Stand 1
Yellow Tavern I
(11 May 1864)



Map 49.

Directions: Beginning in Ashland, start by heading south on US Highway 1. About 6.5 miles after leaving Ashland on US Highway 1, you will come to an intersection with the Virginia Center Parkway. Turn left on Virginia Center Parkway and travel for 0.3 mile until you come to Battlefield Road. Turn right on Battlefield Road and travel for 0.2 mile. At this point, turn right on Old Francis Road, go a very short distance, and then make a quick left turn, which will put you on Battlefield Road again. Travel on Battlefield Road for 0.3 mile (it will bear right and change its name to Harmony Road). This path will end in a cul-de-sac. Park along the edge of the cul-de-sac; be careful not to block any of the driveways of the private homes. The best place for the stand is on the edge of the road just before it turns into the cul-de-sac and adjacent to an open field on the south side. Do *not* stand on any of the private property.

Orientation: You are at the location of the battle of Yellow Tavern, which occurred on 11 May. The two stands on Yellow Tavern are out of chronological sequence for the staff ride (note that the last stand yesterday at the North Anna covered events up to 27 May). It is necessary to break the chronology to avoid driving excessive distances back and forth to Yellow Tavern. Therefore, you must remind the students of the argument between Sheridan and Meade that led to the initiation of Sheridan's raid on 9 May.

The current ground of the battlefield looks only partially like it did at the time of the battle: suburban sprawl and modern highways have overrun much of the area. Even so, you need to picture the ground as it was in 1864. Telegraph Road ran to the east of the modern US Highway 1. Our current location is between these two roads. Confederate entrenchments for Richmond were several miles to the south of this location.

Your current location is in the center of Wickham's Confederate Brigade at the opening of the Yellow Tavern battle. Note that there is a slight rise here that aided Wickham's defense against the Federals who advanced from across the open field to the south.

Description: Sheridan began his raid early in the morning on 9 May with a column of 10,000 mounted troops (he took three divisions and 32 guns, virtually all of the Army of the Potomac's cavalry forces). His column took up 13 miles of road as it marched.

Sheridan's cavalry began their march with a large move to the northwest that avoided the Southern infantry forces at Spotsylvania. Then the Union troops turned southwest along Telegraph Road toward the North Anna River and Richmond. Sheridan deliberately moved slowly, in order to draw Stuart into battle.

The Union cavalry crossed four streams (the Ni, the Po, the Ta, and the Mat, which all eventually meet to form the Mattaponi River), and by the end of the day, the Federal cavalry was well beyond the main battle lines at Spotsylvania. They also put forces on roads further west of Telegraph Road and approached the North Anna River near Anderson's Ford (just north of Beaver Dam Station).

Stuart detected Sheridan's move on 9 May, and he sent a brigade to harass the Union column from the rear. Later in the day, Stuart devised a more comprehensive plan for stopping Sheridan. He sent a second brigade to pursue the Federals and placed the two-brigade pursuing force under Major General Fitzhugh Lee. Stuart took one brigade under his personal command and attempted to move on a parallel path that would allow him to block Sheridan's route. Stuart hoped to catch the Union forces in a vulnerable position while crossing the North Anna, but Stuart's troops arrived too late to catch the Federals at the river.

Most of the Union cavalry was across the North Anna by 10 May, and they destroyed the Confederate supply depot on the Virginia Central Railroad at Beaver Dam Station. Southern guards detected Sheridan's approach and set fire to most of the supplies before the Federals arrived. The Confederates lost three weeks worth of rations for the Army of Northern Virginia.

Brigadier General Wesley Merritt's Union division pushed 10 miles south of Beaver Dam Station, destroying railroad tracks (which the Confederates later repaired without much difficulty), burning rolling stock (which was more harmful than the track damage to the Southerners), and liberating 378 Federal prisoners. The Union cavalry bivouacked on the South Anna on 10 May.

Also on 10 May, Stuart changed his plans. He notified Jefferson Davis' military advisor, General Braxton Bragg, of Sheridan's approach toward Richmond. Stuart wanted Bragg to use the Richmond garrison, positioned in the city's fortifications, to assist in blocking the Union cavalry. He then accompanied Fitzhugh Lee's two brigades (under Brigadier General Lunsford L. Lomax and Brigadier General William C. Wickham) and rode to join with the Richmond garrison to repulse the Union cavalry. This left one Confederate brigade (under Brigadier General James B. Gordon) following Sheridan's force.

If Stuart's blocking force could engage the Union cavalry and keep them distracted, the trailing Southern brigade might be able to hit Sheridan's rear and inflict a major defeat on the Union force. In addition, Confederate reinforcements from the Richmond garrison might be able to assist Stuart's efforts.

At 1000 on 11 May, Stuart arrived near Yellow Tavern. His force, both horses and men, was exhausted after hours of hard riding. Stuart formed his two brigades at right angles, perhaps hoping to catch Sheridan's cavalry in an ambush (in modern terms, an "L" shaped ambush). Wickham's brigade was east of Telegraph Road facing south. Lomax's brigade was along Telegraph Road facing west.

Sheridan's troops came down Mountain Road (from the northwest) soon after Stuart's men were in position. Due to the structure of the road network, the Union forces, arriving from the west, actually moved into a position between the Confederates and Richmond positions, and fought the battle by attacking from the south to the north.

Merritt's Union division was in the lead, and it quickly probed Lomax's position. Custer's brigade advanced between Wickham's and Lomax's forces. Gibb's brigade joined the fight on Custer's right, and along with the 9th New York from Devin's brigade, they flanked Lomax and forced him

to withdraw. Both sides' forces fought these engagements dismounted.

By 1400, Stuart had rallied Lomax's men and positioned them on Wickham's left, thus forming a straight line of defense. Although his plan for an ambush had been disrupted, Stuart hoped to hold his current defensive position and trap the Union cavalry between his forces and the Richmond garrison.

There was about a two-hour pause between Lomax's withdrawal and the subsequent Union attack on Stuart's position. During this time, Stuart received word that Gordon's force had slowly pushed back Sheridan's rear guard under Brigadier General David M. Gregg at Ground Squirrel Bridge. Despite this momentary good news, Stuart may have realized that Gordon was too far away to help the Confederates at Yellow Tavern.

Sheridan also received information about this engagement—a report that more accurately described Gregg's successful delay of Gordon's Confederates. Sheridan now realized that his rear was safe. During the lull at Yellow Tavern, he waited for the arrival of Wilson's division. In addition, Sheridan conducted a reconnaissance toward Richmond and realized he was not threatened from that quarter.

At 1600, Sheridan launched a coordinated attack on Stuart's position. Part of Custer's brigade attacked dismounted, in the open field to the west of Telegraph Road (your current location). At the same time, Custer's other two regiments, reinforced with the 1st Vermont Regiment from Chapman's brigade, launched a mounted assault straight up Telegraph Road.

The rest of Chapman's brigade, as well as Gibb's brigade, advanced dismounted on Custer's left. While a huge thunderstorm soaked the field, the Union forces began to overwhelm the Confederates.

As the battle reached its crisis, Stuart rushed to the center of his line on Telegraph Road. The Baltimore light artillery battery held this position and was soon swamped by Custer's troops. Stuart committed his small reserve (the 1st Virginia Cavalry Regiment), which delayed the Union success but soon had to yield ground. During the fighting in the Confederate center, Stuart was shot (*see vignettes*). Fitzhugh Lee took over command of the Confederate forces.

The Union forces had an advantage in numbers, and Custer's vigorous charge disrupted the Southern center. At the same time, dismounted Union troops overwhelmed the Confederates on both flanks. The Confederates suffered a significant tactical defeat, and their forces retreated in some disorder. However, Fitzhugh Lee did a good job of restoring order to his troops, and he withdrew north of the Chickahominy to avoid being trapped by the Union forces.

The fight had bought Bragg time to bring reinforcements to Richmond's

northern ring of entrenchments. These reinforcements helped to discourage Sheridan from attacking Richmond on 11 and 12 May.

Late in the day on 11 May, at about the same time that Fitzhugh Lee was trying to rally the Confederate cavalry after Yellow Tavern, Gregg's Union forces (Sheridan's rear guard) turned on Gordon's pursuing Confederates. The Southerners launched an attack at Allen's Station, but Gregg's men, taking advantage of numbers and their repeating rifles, mauled the Confederates.

Vignette: During the fight at Yellow Tavern, Private John A. Huff mortally wounded Stuart. Huff had become dismounted during the fighting and was searching for a horse when he encountered Stuart. The following account of Stuart's wounding is from historian Gordon C. Rhea:

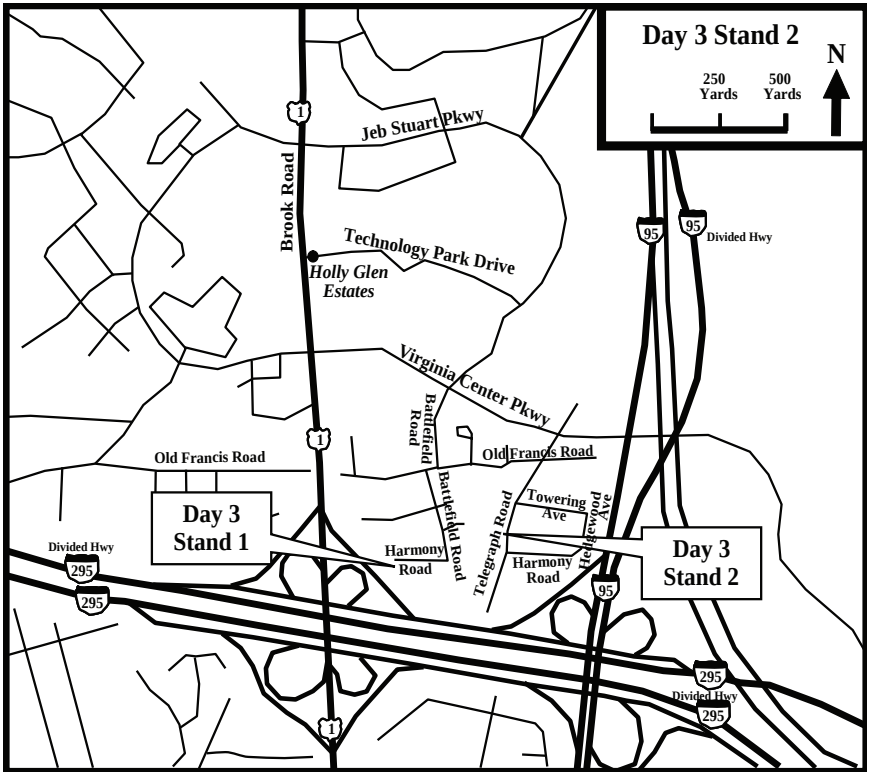
> Private John A. Huff, of the 5th Michigan, was a crack shot. He had served in Berdan's Sharpshooters and held a prize as the regiment's best marksman. The forty-eight-year-old soldier was running back [having lost his horse] when he spied a rebel cavalier sitting proudly erect, plume jauntily waving in the breeze. Huff turned and fired his pistol. A slug of lead bore into Stuart's abdomen. "Dorsey, save your men," the general shouted as he struggled to remain mounted. "Are you wounded badly?" a trooper inquired. "I am afraid I am," Stuart replied. "But don't worry boys. Fitz will do as well for you as I have." Tom Walters, of Baltimore, began leading the general, who was still mounted, to the rear.
>
> Fitzhugh Lee rode up among the 1st Virginia troopers. Stuart was sitting in his saddle, erect as ever, but clutching the pommel of his saddle with both hands. A soldier walked on either side supporting him, and an orderly led his horse. The line was in shambles, and Lee had no time to tarry. "As I went rapidly by our eyes met," he wrote. "He recognized me, his whole face was illuminated in an instant, the old battle smile came back, and his voice ran out as clear and sonorous as I have ever heard it." Stuart gave his last order. "Go ahead, Fitz old fellow," he cried. "I know you'll do what's right." And he managed to exhort the retreating Confederates, "Go back! Go back! I had rather die than be whipped." (Gordon C. Rhea, *The Battles for Spotsylvania Court House and the Road to Yellow Tavern*, 209.)

Analysis:

1. Evaluate Stuart's performance in both the pursuit and the fight at Yellow Tavern. Did he bring enough forces? Should he have committed to a fight at Yellow Tavern? Did his tactical plan make the best use of his outnumbered forces?

2. Evaluate Sheridan's performance. Should he have been more aggressive—pressed his attack sooner? Should he have been more focused on Richmond and less on Stuart? Should he have won a more decisive victory (given his advantage in strength)?

Stand 2
Yellow Tavern II (Stuart's Death)
(11–12 May 1864)



Map 50.

Directions: Start back out of the cul-de-sac on Harmony Road (remember that Harmony Road will change its name to Battlefield Road). Continue for 0.3 mile where you will reach the intersection with Old Francis Road. Turn right on Old Francis Road and continue for 0.2 mile where you will reach the intersection with Telegraph Road. Turn right on Telegraph Road and go about 0.1 mile. On the right, you should see a sharp rise in the ground with a set of stairs leading up to a monument. This is the monument to Jeb Stuart and the site of your next stand. Park the vehicles, at the base of the monument, as far to the right on Telegraph Road as possible (make sure to leave space for passing traffic).

Orientation: Stuart's monument is close to the position at which he was wounded. It was the center of the Confederate position on Telegraph Road. At this location, the modern Telegraph Road is the same as the road's path

was in 1864. The main purpose of this stop is to describe Stuart's fate and sum up Sheridan's raid. (You should have completed the tactical description of the battle at Yellow Tavern at the last stand.)

Description: Jeb Stuart was a heroic figure, and his death is a poignant story. (*See vignettes* for a description of his final days.) After his death, the two sides continued maneuvering for position.

The day after Yellow Tavern, Sheridan moved toward Richmond. He entered part of the city's outer defenses, but determined that the risk of pressing into the city center was too great. Sheridan decided to head east and look for a crossing of the Chickahominy River to link up with Butler's forces. The Union cavalry arrived at Haxall's Landing on 14 May, just across from Butler's Army at Bermuda Hundred. Sheridan initially planned to stay in this region for seven or eight days to rest and refit his worn units.

On 15 May, Sheridan met Butler to discuss future plans. Butler wanted Sheridan to join the Army of the James in an assault on Richmond. Sheridan refused and decided to leave Butler on 17 May to return to the Army of the Potomac.

Whether or not Sheridan had legitimate reasons for not assisting Butler, the Union cavalry commander and several other Union officers participated in a scheme that helped to undermine Butler's position. Prior to departing, Sheridan and one of his division commanders, Wilson, met privately with one of Butler's corps commanders, Major General William F. ("Baldy") Smith. Smith disliked Butler, and he urged Sheridan and Wilson to tell Grant to terminate the efforts at Bermuda Hundred.

After departing on 17 May, Sheridan wrote to Cyrus Comstock (one of Grant's staff) and Wilson wrote to John Rawlins to lobby for Butler's removal and replacement with Smith. Although Butler remained in command of the Army of the James, Grant was persuaded to detach Smith's XVIII Corps from Butler's Army and have it join the Army of the Potomac. Comstock wrote in his diary on 26 May, "We have at last got the general to order a large part of the force under Butler now doing nothing, to join us via West Point." (As quoted by William Glenn Robertson, *Back Door to Richmond,* Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1987, 233, from the Cyrus B. Comstock Diary, 26 May 1864, Library of Congress.)

Sheridan's cavalry reached the Army of the Potomac at Mount Carmel Church on 24 May during the battle on the North Anna.

Vignette: After Stuart's wounding, the Confederates cavalry commander insisted that he be taken to his wife in Richmond. As Stuart was carried to the rear, a Confederate courier, William B. Poindexter, saw the retreating Southern soldiers and later wrote: "I never saw such a distressed looking

body of men, many of them shedding tears when they heard our gallant General had been shot." (William B. Poindexter, "A Midnight Charge and the Death of General J.E.B. Stuart," in *SHSP*, volume 32, 121.)

In a driving rainstorm, with thunder and lightning raging, Stuart's ambulance crossed the Chickahominy and headed toward Richmond. The procession stopped for a short time at Atlee's Station, where staff members and his doctor urged Stuart to have a sip of whiskey to ease his pain. The young cavalier had promised his mother that he would never drink alcohol, but after much urging, Stuart finally took a drink. An aide, Theodore S. Garnett, wrote: "This was the first and only drop of whiskey that passed Stuart's lips in all his life." (Robert J. Trout, ed., *Riding with Stuart: Reminiscences of an Aide-de-Camp,* by Captain Theodore Stanford Garnett, Shippensburg, PA: White Main Publishing Company, 1994, 71.)

Stuart was carried to the house of his brother-in-law, Dr. Charles Brewer, in Richmond where he suffered intense pain for most of 12 May. At noon, Jefferson Davis visited the stricken cavalry commander. During the afternoon, his condition continued to worsen. Here is how historian Gordon Rhea describes the final hours: "Toward evening, the general's delirium increased. He spoke in broken sentences of his battles, then of his wife and children, then again of his battles. By nightfall, he was racked with agony, which he tried to relieve by applying ice to the wound. Knowing that his wife had been summoned, he asked the attending doctor if he would survive the night. Death, the physician answered, was fast approaching. At 7:30 it became evident that the end was near, and Stuart was asked if he had any last messages. Lillie Lee of Shepherdstown, was to have his golden spurs, he directed, and his staff officers his horses. 'You had better take the larger horse,' he suggested to a heavyset aide. 'He will carry you better.' His young son was to have his sword. Then he asked a clergyman to sing 'Rock of Ages.' After a brief prayer, he announced, 'I am going fast now. I am resigned. God's will be done.' With these words, the Army of Northern Virginia's cavalry chief breathed his last." (Gordon C. Rhea, *The Battles for Spotsylvania Court House and the Road to Yellow Tavern*, 210.)

Stuart had died of peritonitis.

Analysis:

1. The Union losses for Sheridan's raid were 64 killed, 337 wounded, 224 missing (a total of 625). Confederate losses for the campaign are approximate. On 11 May alone, Wickham lost about 100 troops and Lomax nearly 200. Gordon certainly also took high losses in his abortive attack on Gregg. Of course, the Confederate losses included Stuart.

2. Analyze Sheridan's raid, focusing particularly on the operational aspects of the campaign. Consider some of these factors:

a. Casualties on both sides (who can afford the losses the most?). The Confederate cavalry was damaged, but not destroyed.

b. Stuart's death. Note that psychologically both sides thought this was a major factor, but Stuart's eventual replacement, Wade Hampton, performed well—perhaps even better than Stuart had performed.

c. Sheridan disrupted Lee's lines of communication, but only temporarily (the damaged rolling stock did more harm to Lee's supplies than tearing up the Virginia Central Railroad).

d. The Union cavalry gained confidence in its ability to fight the Confederates.

e. Sheridan had used his entire force in the raid and left Meade and Grant with virtually no cavalry for reconnaissance. Stuart had left two brigades of cavalry with Lee; for much of the campaign from Spotsylvania to the North Anna, Lee had much better intelligence than his Union opponents did.

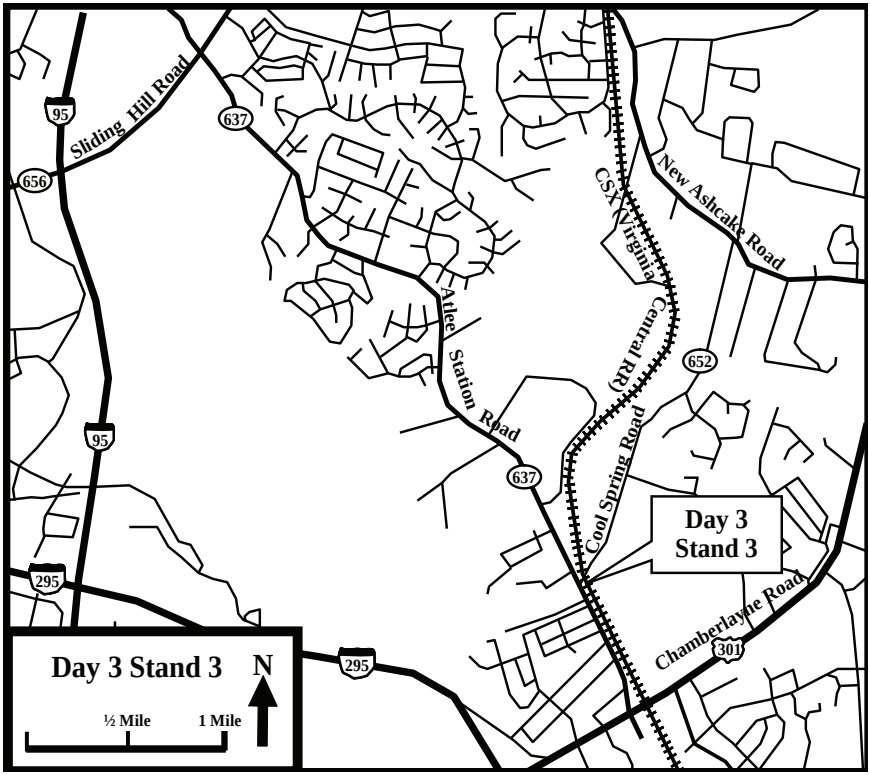
3. Considering these factors, examine several questions within the context of analyzing Sheridan's raid.

a. What was the best role for Civil War cavalry? Was it recon and screening, raiding, or acting as a mobile combat force in major battles?

b. Did cavalry need to destroy the opposing cavalry before performing its other missions? Why did Sheridan take all of his force? Could he have accomplished his mission with less?

4. Finally, look at Sheridan's raid in a modern context. An analogy can be made with some modern air theorists who state that an air force must win the air superiority/supremacy battle before it can do ground support and other missions. Do you agree with this concept? What is the best way to draw out the enemy for destruction?

Stand 3
Atlee's Station
(28–29 May 1864)



Map 51.

Directions: After completing the stand at Stuart's monument, the best way to depart is to use the streets in the residential area to make a loop that will get the vehicles heading back (in the opposite direction) on Telegraph Road. Start by going forward on Telegraph Road for 0.2 mile where you will intersect with Harmony Road. Turn left on Harmony Road. This street will bend to the left and change its name to Hedgewood Avenue. After going 0.2 mile on Hedgewood Avenue, turn left on Towering Avenue. After 0.1 mile, you will return to Telegraph Road. Turn right on Telegraph Road. You will have completed the loop and will be heading north on Telegraph Road.

Continue on Telegraph Road for 0.2 mile where you will intersect with the Virginia Center Parkway. Turn left on Virginia Center Parkway and drive for 0.5 mile, where you will intersect with US Highway 1. Turn right

on US Highway 1 and travel 1.1 miles, and then turn right at Sliding Hill Road (Route 656). Drive on Sliding Hill Road for 1.4 miles, which will then intersect with Atlee Station Road (Route 637). Turn right on Atlee Station Road and continue for 3.2 miles. At this point, you should be at the intersection of Atlee Station Road and Cool Spring Road. The stand is just past the intersection in a gravel clearing on the left side of Atlee Station Road (the clearing should be next to railroad tracks). Park the vehicles in the gravel area and conduct the stand at this location.

Orientation: This stand at Atlee's Station chronologically follows the events on the North Anna and begins with events on 28 May. By this date, the battle at Yellow Tavern had been fought and Sheridan's cavalry was back with the Army of the Potomac.

The area of this stand was the location of a small railroad station called Atlee's Station. Lee established his headquarters just across the Atlee Station Road, initially in a tent as was Lee's custom. There was no combat here, but this location was a key position with good roads that allowed Lee to keep the army ready to move in response to Grant's next effort. You will need to use a map for this stand to point out unit locations and movements.

Lee met Beauregard at this station to discuss coordination of their forces in the upcoming operations. In particular, Lee asked Beauregard for reinforcements from the Richmond defenses to join the Army of Northern Virginia for the upcoming fight.

Description: After being stalled on the North Anna, Grant and Meade had decided to move around Lee's right flank and use the Pamunkey River to screen their move. By 27 May, Sheridan's cavalry and part of the VI Corps was across the Pamunkey near Hanovertown with the II Corps close behind.

After receiving reports of the Union move, Lee repositioned his army between Ashland and Atlee's Station late on 27 May. Lee made Early the new II Corps commander, replacing the ailing Ewell who had lost the confidence of the army commander. (Ewell wanted to remain in command, but after meeting with Lee on 29 May the change to Early was confirmed.)

On 28 May, the bulk of the Army of the Potomac crossed the Pamunkey River. Torbert's and Gregg's cavalry divisions and Russell's division of the VI Corps began the day across the Pamunkey River (on the southwest side) near Hanovertown. The V Corps moved at 0400, reached the Pamunkey River at Hanovertown, and began crossing at 0900. While waiting for the V Corps, Meade's headquarters crossed the river in the morning and drove back some Confederate pickets.

While the V Corps crossed behind Russell's division (VI Corps) at Hanovertown, the rest of Wright's VI Corps crossed further upstream at Nelson's crossing, a site that Torbert had secured. Hancock's II Corps followed the VI Corps across the Pamunkey and then moved to a position on Wright's left.

The IX Corps was slowed by the army's trains and did not reach the river until 2200. They bivouacked at Hanovertown at 0100 on 29 May. By the end of the day, Grant and Meade had three corps across the Pamunkey in a bridgehead 3 miles wide and 1.5 miles deep. Also on 28 May, Grant and Meade sent two of Sheridan's divisions forward of the bridgehead to find out what Lee was doing.

Meanwhile, at Bermuda Hundred, Butler had planned an attack on Petersburg, and he hoped to use Smith's XVIII Corps for the operation. However, Union boats arrived on 28 May to move Smith's corps to join the Army of the Potomac, and Butler canceled the attack.

Lee wrote Davis early on 28 May, stating that he was still unsure if Grant was moving toward Ashland (the Confederate left) or Mechanicsville (the Confederate right). Lee felt his current position was best until he positively determined the Federals' next move.

The Confederate commander then ordered Hampton to move forward from Atlee's Station and to gather intelligence on the Union forces. Hampton took a force that included elements from three Confederate cavalry divisions in the region.

Later in the morning, Lee, still very ill, moved his headquarters into the Clarke house just across from Atlee's Station. This was an extremely rare occurrence: Lee usually lived out of his headquarters tent. Despite his illness, Lee continued to direct the army's operations (*see vignettes*).

Early's II Corps moved to Hundley's Corner, a position along Totopotomoy Creek. (Note that Polly Hundley's Corner and Hundley's Corner are two separate locations.) Breckinridge's division, on Early's left, covered the Richmond-Hanovertown Road (also known as Atlee Station Road). Hill's III Corps was on the army's far left, north of Atlee's Station and connecting with Breckinridge on Hill's right. The I Corps (Anderson) was in a reserve position behind Early.

Also on 28 May, Union and Confederate cavalry fought the Battle of Haw's Shop, which is covered at the next stand. (Note: Before moving to Haw's Shop, cover the 29 May meeting of Confederate leaders that occurred at Atlee's Station.)

At midafternoon on 29 May, Jefferson Davis rode to Atlee's Station and spoke with Lee at the Clarke house. There is no record of their conversation; the meeting was brief, and in all probability, the two Southern

leaders included a discussion of the transfer of reinforcements from Beauregard to Lee.

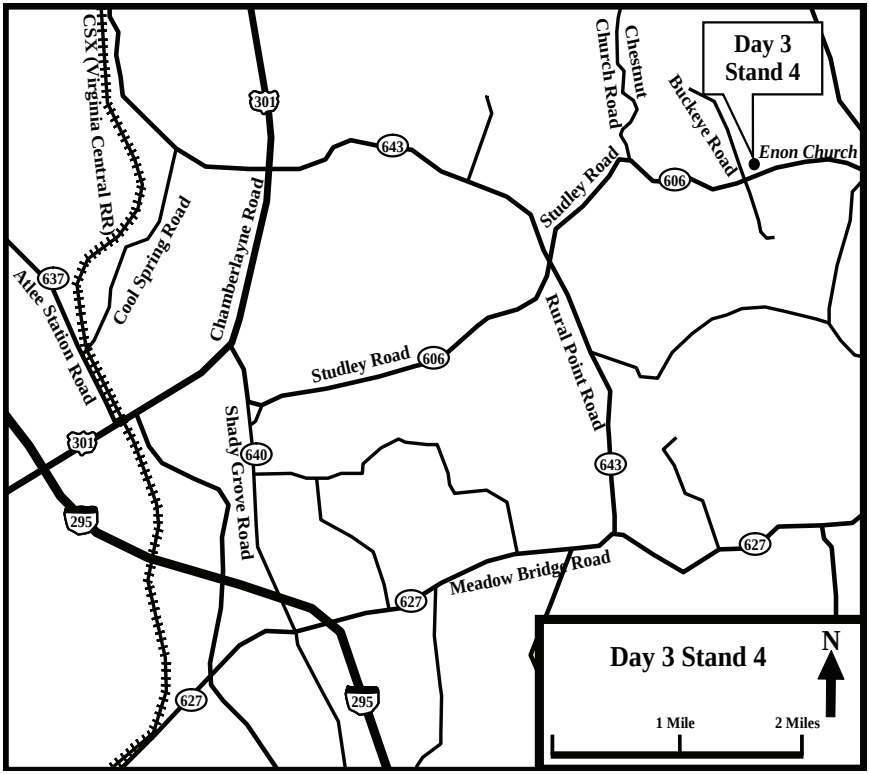
Beauregard arrived at the Clarke house later in the evening (after Davis had departed). Again, there is no record of their conversation, but it appears that Beauregard, at least temporarily, won his argument—Lee would not receive additional reinforcements from the Richmond forces. Lee wrote the next day, "I am unable to judge but suppose of course that with his [Beauregard's] means of information, his opinion is correct." (Clifford Dowdey, *The Wartime Papers of R.E. Lee,* New York, NY: Bramhall House, 1961, 757.)

At the time of these meetings, Beauregard was aware of the departure of Smith's Union corps from Bermuda Hundred, but the Confederates did not know Smith's destination. Given this uncertainty, the Southern leaders were probably prudent to keep most of Richmond's garrison in place. Two days later, when Lee received information that Smith's corps was joining the Army of the Potomac, Davis authorized the transfer of Major General Robert F. Hoke's division from Beauregard to Lee just in time to fight at Cold Harbor.

Vignette: Lee's illness, which started at the North Anna, continued to bother him on 28 and 29 May even as he conferred with Davis and Beauregard. His aide, Walter H. Taylor, wrote that the "general had been somewhat indisposed, and could attend to nothing except what was absolutely necessary for him to know and act upon." Taylor saw some improvement in Lee's condition on 29 May, but concluded that the "indisposition . . . was more serious than was generally supposed." (Walter H. Taylor, *Four Years With General Lee,* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1962, 134.)

Analysis: There are no particular issues to discuss at this location.

Stand 4
Haw's Shop
(28 May 1864)



Map 52.

Directions: Get back on Atlee Station Road (Route 637) and continue southeast. After 0.6 mile, turn left on to state Route 301 (Chamberlayne Road). Travel 1.1 miles on Route 301, and then turn right on to County Road 640 (Shady Grove Road). Continue on County Road 640 until you reach an intersection with County Road 606 (Studley Road). Turn left on to County Road 606 and continue for 4.9 miles. At this point you will come to an intersection with Buckeye Road. Just past the intersection, on the left side of Studley Road is Enon Church. This is the site for the stand. Park the vehicles in the church parking lot. You can conduct the stand at an historical marker located on the edge of the lot.

Orientation: You are currently located at Enon Church, which marked a focal point in the battle at Haw's Shop. Haw's Shop (a small machine

shop) and the Salem Presbyterian Church were located a few miles east of this location. Union horse artillery was positioned at Haw's Shop. The Haw house was about halfway between Enon Church and Haw's machine shop.

Enon Church is a modern structure, but there was a church at this location in 1864. The historical marker at the church tells the story of Private John A. Huff of the 5th Michigan Cavalry. Huff had killed J.E.B. Stuart at Yellow Tavern and was himself mortally wounded in the fight at Haw's Shop.

County Road 606 (Studley Road) is on the same path as the Richmond-Hanovertown Road was in 1864. During the Civil War, this road was often referred to as Atlee Station Road. The Confederates approached this position from the west. The Union forces advanced from the east.

Much of the terrain around the church is the same as in 1864. The road had fences on both sides, which constricted mounted operations for the cavalry.

Description: After Stuart's death, Lee waited before appointing a permanent new cavalry chief (the choices were Wade Hampton or Fitzhugh Lee). The Army commander gave Hampton overall command for the reconnaissance at Haw's Shop. Hampton put together a force that included units from all three available Confederate cavalry divisions: Brigadier General Thomas L. Rosser's brigade (from Hampton's own division) and Brigadier General Matthew C. Butler's brigade (also from Hampton's division) that included two newly arrived (and large) South Carolina regiments and a smaller Georgia contingent. Butler, himself, had not arrived in the Virginia theater yet, and thus Colonel Benjamin H. Rutledge led the brigade in this battle. The two other Confederate units with Hampton were Wickham's brigade from Fitzhugh Lee's division (Lee personally led this brigade for much of the battle) and Major General William W.H.F. "Rooney" Lee's entire division, although Brigadier General John R. Chambliss' brigade was the only unit of this division to participate in the fight (the rest of the division screened the northern flank of the main Confederate force).

Hampton's mission was to find the Union forces and determine if the Union infantry was across the Pamunkey in force.

Sheridan was also tasked with a reconnaissance mission—to locate the main Confederate forces. Sheridan had two divisions available for the fight. Brigadier General David Gregg's Second Division was the main force that advanced down Atlee Station Road. He had two brigades: First Brigade under Brigadier General Henry E. Davies, Jr., and Second Brigade under Colonel J. Irvin Gregg (no relation to his division commander, David Gregg). Torbert's First Division began the day deployed to

cover the Union river crossing at Nelson's (north of the Haw's Shop location), but was available to support Gregg. Custer's brigade was the only unit from Torbert's division to become engaged at Haw's Shop. Wilson's Third Division was guarding the army trains north of the Pamunkey and unavailable for the battle.

On 28 May, David Gregg pushed his lead brigade, under Davies, down the Atlee Station (Richmond-Hanovertown) Road toward Salem Presbyterian Church. Davies deployed his troops to cover the road (some mounted and some dismounted) and advanced west just past Enon Church.

Almost immediately, Hampton's lead elements overran Davies' pickets. Rosser's and Wickham's men launched a mounted charge that pushed Davies back to a position slightly east of Enon Church. However, the fences on both sides of the road hampered the Southern troops and effective Union fire halted their attack.

As the Confederates pulled back from their repulse, there was a lull on the battlefield and Hampton built a defensive line near Enon Church. A branch of Crump's Creek and marshes protected the line on the Confederate left, and Haw's Mill Pond was on the right. Hampton's men dismounted for the upcoming fight and built hasty earthworks of dirt and fence rails. The entire line, divided by Atlee Station Road, was about 1.5 miles in length.

Rosser's troops held the Confederate left (his brigade's position was divided by Crump's Creek). Later in the battle, Chambliss' brigade would deploy on Rosser's left. Wickham held the center and was positioned on both sides of Atlee Station Road. Butler's brigade (under Rutledge) was positioned mostly on the right.

David Gregg began the Union attack by ordering Davies to probe the Confederate defensive positions near Enon Church. This was not an all-out attack, but the Union troops applied pressure along the entire Confederate line in a seesaw fight. Davies handled his troops well, shifting regiments to both sides of the road to keep constant pressure on the Confederate line. From 1100 to 1500, Davies' troops forced Hampton to commit all of Rutledge's troops to the fight.

On the Southerners' side, the inexperienced South Carolina regiments showed stoical determination as they fought with single-shot Enfield rifled muskets against the Union breech-loaders and repeaters.

During this drawn-out struggle, Gregg committed his other brigade (J.I. Gregg) on Davies' right flank. This move was balanced by the arrival of Chambliss' Confederates. Shortly before 1500, David Gregg asked Sheridan for reinforcements. Gregg felt that some additional Federal troops could tip the balance in the Union favor and lead to a decisive victory. Sheridan ordered Torbert to send help. Torbert sent Custer's brigade,

which was resting with a supposed "day off." Torbert's other two brigades arrived late in the day and did not take part in the fighting.

Sheridan allegedly asked Meade to send forward Union infantry, and this claim has raised considerable controversy. Sheridan later wrote in his memoirs that he asked for infantry support so he could destroy Hampton's force. Some historians have used this account to emphasize the feud between Meade and Sheridan and to blame Meade for failing to support his cavalry commander. (No doubt Sheridan was only too glad to use his memoirs to belittle Meade.) However, Sheridan's official report at the time of the battle mentions nothing about a request for infantry support.

As the day wore on, Custer's troops arrived and took up a position behind Davies' line near the Haw house on Atlee Station Road. Custer ordered a dismounted assault down the road. He personally remained mounted and was conspicuous while leading the charge.

Davies' force allowed Custer's troops (four regiments from Michigan) to pass through their lines along the road and continued to provide supporting fires during Custer's attack. The Union attack suffered an initial setback. Some of Rutledge's Georgia troops found a gap between Davies and Custer, and there was a short but confusing incident of Union troops firing on each other.

Despite the Union difficulties, their attack began to push back the Southern cavalrymen. Although the Confederates continued their stubborn resistance, the situation changed dramatically between 1700 and 1800. Rooney Lee (leading Chambliss' brigade) mistook dismounted Union cavalry for infantry and persuaded Hampton to withdraw. Once Chambliss fell back, J.I. Gregg was able to thrust two Union regiments forward and flank Rosser's brigade. Rosser began his withdrawal in good order, as did Wickham to the south. However, Custer's troops felt the slackening Confederate resistance, and their renewed attack led to a breakthrough on Atlee Station Road. Davies' troops followed Custer and soon the Confederates were routed.

Lee had to order Breckinridge's infantry forward to cover the retreat of the cavalry. The Confederate cavalry safely withdrew behind Breckinridge's lines and the Totopotomoy River. Sheridan, content with his tactical victory, did not order a pursuit. In fact, the Union cavalry buried its dead and then pulled back to a reserve position for the next two days.

Vignette: None.

Analysis:

1. Tactically, the Union cavalry defeated the Confederates, but another question emerges: Which side accomplished its mission in support of the overall operational plan? This question raises some earlier issues that were

explored at Yellow Tavern. What is the role of cavalry? Should it focus on defeating enemy cavalry, conducting raids, or performing intelligence operations?

2. Although the Confederates lost the tactical battle at Haw's Shop, Lee was provided valuable information that day. A report from Lee (*OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 1, 1031) late on the evening of 28 May stated that Confederate forces had captured Union infantry from the V and VI Corps during the fight at Haw's Shop.

a. Union infantry did not participate in the fight at Haw's Shop. There are no reports of V and VI Corps prisoners in any lower-level Confederate reports; thus, Lee's information probably came from patrols near the Union bridgeheads, and not from troops at Haw's Shop.

b. In any case, how useful was the information? On one hand, Lee had evidence that Union forces were crossing the Pamunkey (i.e., Grant was moving to Lee's right)—a significant fact. On the other hand, Lee still remained unsure about the Union's intentions, and thus he did not significantly shift his own forces on the day after the battle at Haw's Shop (29 May).

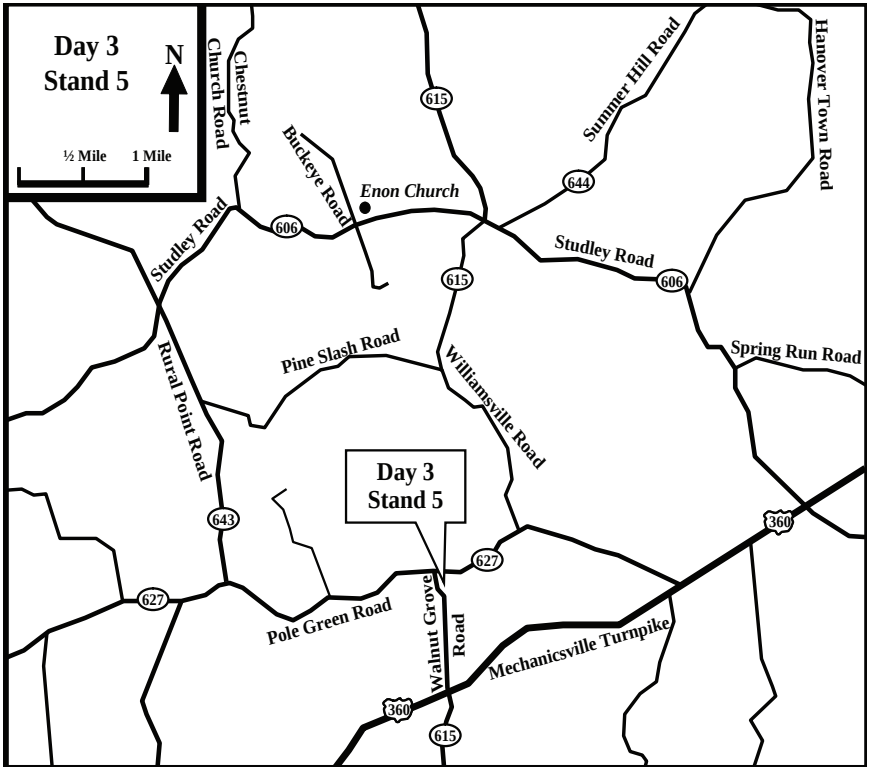
3. From the Union perspective, the battle appears to have been a lost opportunity.

a. Having achieved a tactical victory, Sheridan's troops did not pursue the defeated Southerners and missed a chance to locate the main Confederate positions on Totopotomoy Creek.

b. After a period of burying the dead at Haw's Shop, Gregg's division went into a reserve position, and Torbert's division shifted south to Old Church. The next day (29 May), Grant and Meade advanced their infantry toward the main Confederate lines without a cavalry screen.

c. In sum, did Grant, Meade, and Sheridan place too little value on the reconnaissance role of cavalry?

Stand 5
Bethesda Church (drive-by)
(30 May–2 June 1864)



Map 53.

Directions: Note: The ground on which the Bethesda Church battles were fought is private property—you cannot stop at this location. You can conduct the discussion for this stand at the last location (Haw's Shop) with a map and then drive by the Bethesda Church battlefield slowly or talk through the stand as you slowly pass the battlefield location. The latter option (talking while on the move) is best if you can speak to the whole group in the vehicle (e.g., a bus equipped with a microphone) and augment the talk with map handouts. In any case, begin the drive-by continuing in the same direction as earlier (east) on County Road 606 (Studley Road). After 1.0 mile, turn right on Route 615 (Williamsville Road). Stay on Route 615 for 2.6 miles and then turn right on Route 627 (Pole Green Road). After 0.8 mile on Route 627, you will come back to Route 615 (which will have changed its name to Walnut Grove Road). Turn left on Walnut Grove Road, and then move very slowly (as traffic permits).

The main area of the Bethesda Church fighting was in the fields to the left of the road as you move. This ground is private property—*do not trespass*. If traffic is light, you might be able to come to a complete stop on the road shoulder and conduct the stand from inside your vehicle. Again, we must emphasize that you not trespass and that you not block traffic.

Orientation: You are currently near the intersection of Pole Green Road (which was called Shady Grove Road in the Civil War) and Walnut Grove Road. The paths of the modern roads are very close to the Civil War era roads in this location.

The actual Bethesda Church is 0.5 mile south of our current location (you will pass by it on the way to the next stand). Beaver Dam Creek is located along the wood line to the front and left (south and west).

This stand, the fight at Bethesda Church, is part of the series of battles that historians usually link together as the battle of Cold Harbor.

This area was the southern end of the Union line during the first battle at Bethesda Church on 30 May; but over the next few days, both sides shifted their forces and this region became the northern flank of the armies as they fought on 2 June.

Description: After Haw's Shop, Lee finalized Ewell's relief and officially placed Early in command of II Corps. He also made some minor adjustments to his line. Most of the Confederate forces remained behind the Totopotomoy, but Anderson's corps moved forward between Breckinridge and Early. Anderson's move allowed Early to shift his II Corps slightly south, near Beaver Dam Creek. Confederate cavalry screened to the north in response to a Union feint toward Hanover Courthouse.

As discussed earlier, the Union leadership did not make good use of its cavalry on 29 May. Grant, Meade, and Sheridan all deserve blame for the failure to use aggressively Union cavalry for reconnaissance. Gregg's division spent most of the day burying the dead of Haw's Shop and resting. Wilson's division continued to guard the Union trains. Torbert's division deployed further south toward Old Church probing toward the Confederate flank.

With most of the Union cavalry on other missions, Grant and Meade decided to use Union infantry for—in modern terms—a reconnaissance-in-force. The Union commander in chief was not sure if Lee was holding on the Totopotomoy or had pulled back to the Chickahominy River. At 0900 on 29 May, Grant and Meade issued orders for Union moves. Russell's division (VI Corps) shifted from its crossing point at Hanovertown and probed north to Hanover Courthouse. The remainder of the VI Corps slowly followed.

Hancock selected Barlow's division to be the II Corps' lead element. Barlow's men advanced past Polly Hundley's Corner and encountered Breckinridge's division on the Totopotomoy. At 1600, Hancock let Meade know that the Confederates were on the Totopotomoy—still in front of the Chickahominy River. Burnside was able to position Potter's division between Hancock's left and Warren's right, while the rest of the IX Corps occupied reserve positions behind Potter. Warren moved his entire corps south of the Totopotomoy, but he feared being isolated from the rest of the army and moved cautiously. The V Corps' lead division (Griffin) encountered troops from Anderson's Confederate I Corps. Torbert's cavalry was further south of Warren and operated independently of the V Corps.

On the morning of 30 May, Grant and Meade knew that the Southerners held a position on the Totopotomoy. They ordered aggressive probes hoping to find an open flank on either side of the main Confederate position or a weakness in the middle. Returning from Hanover Courthouse, Wright's corps struggled over marshes and difficult roads and did not reach the Confederate positions until late on 30 May. Hancock's II Corps captured some Confederate forward positions, but did not press their attack. Burnside's IX Corps filled the ground between Hancock and Warren, but did not attack. Warren's corps continued its advance south of the Totopotomoy where it would come under attack at Bethesda Church.

On 30 May, Lee received a report from A.P. Hill that there was little activity on his front. In addition, Hancock's probe did not present a major threat. Thus, Lee decided to attempt offensive operations, and he gave Early permission to attack Warren's corps. He also urged Anderson to support Early's attack. As was often the case, Lee gave both commanders considerable discretion in their missions (*see vignettes*).

Early was anxious to attack. He ordered his engineers to cut two paths from Shady Grove Road to Old Church Road (today called Mechanicsville Turnpike) to improve his ability to shift forces to his right flank. The new II Corps commander used these freshly cut roads to move his entire corps toward Bethesda Church in order to launch an attack on the Union V Corps.

The Confederate forces marched to their attack positions with Rodes' division in the lead, followed by Lieutenant Colonel William Nelson's artillery, Major General Stephen D. Ramseur's division, and Gordon's division. Ramseur was a young general who had received command of Early's old division when Early was promoted to corps command.

At noon on 30 May, Doles' brigade (leading Rodes' division) made first contact with the Union forces. Rodes slowly developed the situation by deploying Daniels' brigade on Doles' left and pressing the Federals

north along Walnut Grove Road. The Confederates pushed Colonel Martin D. Hardin's brigade north, past Bethesda Church and the Tinsley house at the junction of Walnut Grove Road and Old Church Road.

Hardin's brigade fell back past Beaver Dam Creek, and for a time, Crawford's left (and hence the entire V Corps' left flank) was exposed. However, much of Early's corps was still in march column on Old Church Road and needed more time to deploy. Also, Early wanted to coordinate his attack with Anderson's corps. The II Corps commander sent messages to Anderson, urging the I Corps commander to join in Early's attack. Finally, Union artillery to the west of the Bowles house hit the Confederate infantry hard enough to cause them to hesitate before attacking across Beaver Dam Creek.

The pause in the Confederate attack gave the Union troops the opportunity to reform and prepare for renewed Confederate assaults. The V Corps artillery commander, Wainright, brought forward several batteries that deployed on Crawford's left, north of Shady Grove Road. Crawford positioned Kitching's brigade on Hardin's left (Kitching's men were the formerly independent brigade of heavy artillerists that first joined the Army of the Potomac in the Wilderness). Griffin's division entrenched on Crawford's right, covering a possible advance by Anderson along Shady Grove Road. Lockwood's division moved down Old Church Road, threatening the Confederate right. While Lockwood did not actually join in the fight, his appearance forced Rodes and Gordon to deploy parts of their divisions to the east.

After the initial Confederate pause, Early saw the strengthened Union line and waited for news from Anderson before deciding to commit to a major assault. In the meantime, Rodes' men completed their deployment. Part of the division faced west toward Lockwood's troops while Daniels' brigade sparred with Kitching's Union troops. By 1600, Ramseur's division (only two of its brigades were available for the battle) completed deploying on Rodes' left.

Despite the strength of the new Union position, Ramseur was eager to launch an attack. Union cannons near the Bowles house were pounding his troops, and the youthful Confederate commander pleaded with Early for permission to attack. Early reluctantly gave Ramseur permission at 1830.

The attack was a costly mistake. Gordon's division was still deploying and could not support Ramseur. Rodes' men were too occupied with protecting the Confederate right to assist. Even Ramseur's two available brigades could not fully commit to the attack, because Brigadier General Thomas F. Toon's brigade was pinned down by Federal fire on its open left flank. Thus, Colonel Edward Willis' brigade (formerly known as Pegram's

brigade) attacked virtually alone. Willis' Confederates advanced heroically (*see vignettes*). Even though they were caught in a severe crossfire of rifle and cannon, the Southerners closed to within 50 yards of the Union position. Willis went down with a mortal wound, and most of the other officers were killed or wounded. The Confederates fell back to their starting positions.

The repulse of Willis' brigade ended the battle of Bethesda Church for 30 May. The next day, Early pulled his corps back to the west of Bethesda Church and resumed the defense, while Lee planned the next Confederate move. Warren held his positions throughout the night and then probed slowly toward the retreating Southerners on 31 May.

While the battle raged at Bethesda Church on 30 May, Union and Confederate cavalry clashed along Matadequin Creek, several miles southeast of Bethesda Church. (Although you will not actually visit the Matadequin site, it is worth mentioning this engagement to set the stage for the next stand.)

After its inaction on 29 May, Sheridan's cavalry became more aggressive on 30 May. Torbert's division moved southeast of Warren's V Corps to Old Church in order to clear the way for another possible shift of the Union army around the Confederate right flank. Butler's Confederate cavalry brigade opposed Torbert's move. Butler's troops were the same South Carolinians who had fought at Haw's Shop under Colonel Rutledge. By 30 May, Brigadier General Matthew C. Butler had arrived and resumed command of the brigade.

The Confederates took the initiative by attacking over the creek, but Torbert had an advantage in numbers. The Federals replied with both mounted and dismounted attacks, forcing Butler's men back. Reinforcements from Brigadier General Pierce M.B. Young's brigade arrived, but could not stop the Federal advance. The Southerners retreated to Old Cold Harbor.

Torbert's troops had gained a temporary advantage that paved the way for a potential Federal advance around Lee's right flank.

Vignettes:

1. Lee's order to Anderson for the battle at Bethesda Church demonstrated Lee's style of command, which gave his subordinates considerable freedom, but also left the possibility for a lack of coordination: "After fortifying this line they [the Union forces] will probably make another move by their left flank over the Chickahominy. This is just a repetition of their former movements. It can only be arrested by striking at once at that part of their force that has crossed the Totopotomoy in General Early's front. I

have desired him to do this if he thought it could be done advantageously, and have written to him that you will support him. Please communicate with him at once. Whatever is determined on should be done as soon as practicable." (*OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 3, 850-851.)

2. Ramseur's attack in the battle of Bethesda Church was a costly repulse, but the Southern soldier's heroism earned the admiration of the Union soldiers who witnessed it. The historian of the 13th Pennsylvania Reserves recorded the event: "The slaughter was so sickening that Major Hartshorne leaped to his feet and called upon his assailants to surrender. Some hundreds did so. Rebels or no rebels, their behavior and bearing during the charge had won the admiration of their captors, who did not hesitate to express it." (As quoted by Louis J. Baltz III, *The Battle of Cold Harbor, May 27–June 13, 1864,* Lynchburg, VA: H.E. Howard, Inc., 1994, 51.)

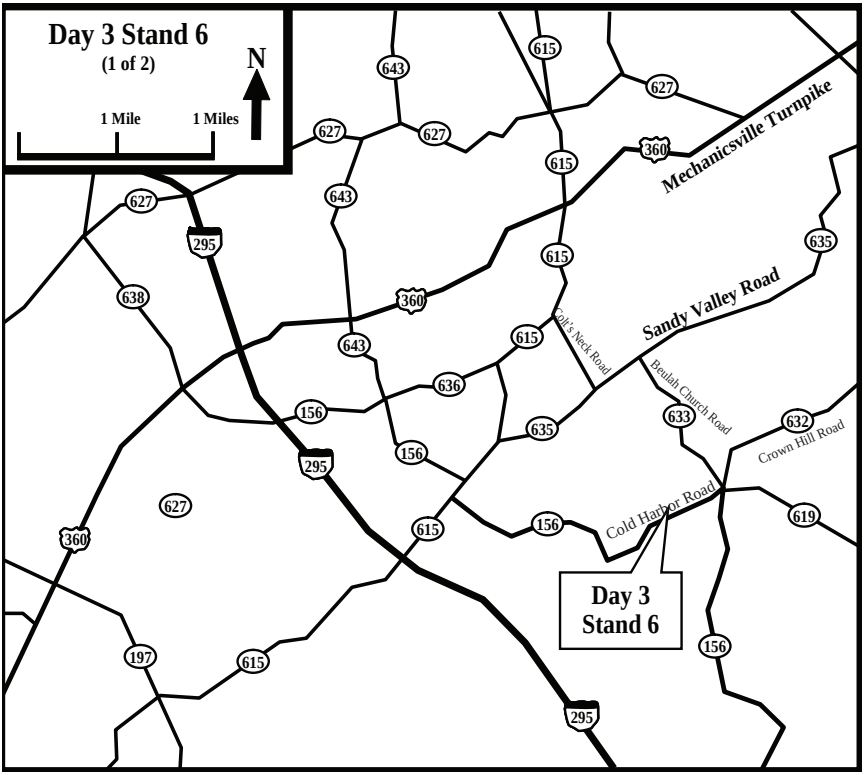
Analysis:

1. Critique Grant and Meade's concept for a reconnaissance in force toward the Totopotomoy. Can infantry fulfill the role of testing the enemy lines?

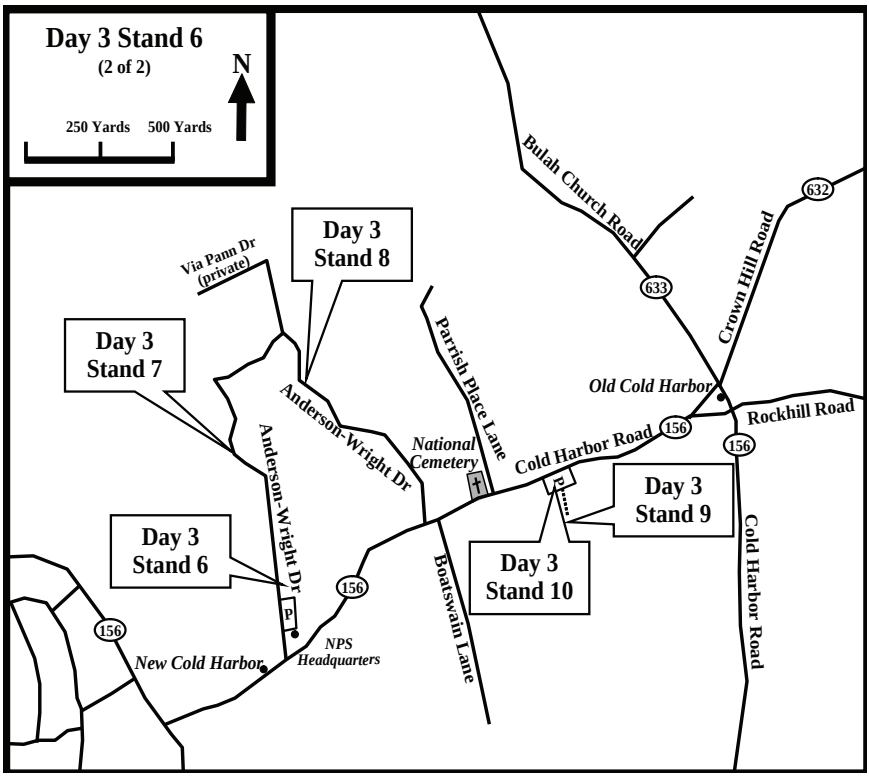
2. Should Lee have been focused on resuming the offensive as he was at Bethesda Church? Did he need to attack Warren's corps or should he have been content to stay on the defense?

3. Did the Confederates conduct the attack properly? Did Lee adequately coordinate the attack? Who deserves more blame for the attack's repulse, Early or Anderson (or someone or something else)?

Stand 6
Cold Harbor I
(31 May–2 June 1864)



Map 54.



Map 55.

Directions: Continue in the same direction (south) on Route 615 (Walnut Grove Road). After traveling for 1.8 miles (during which you will cross US Highway 360—Mechanicsville Turnpike) turn left on Colt's Neck Road (the road does not have a route number). Continue on Colt's Neck Road for 0.7 mile and then turn left on Route 635 (Sandy Valley Road). After 0.5 mile on Route 635, turn right on Route 633 (Beulah Church Road). Continue on Beulah Church Road for 1.4 miles and then turn right on Route 632 (Crown Hill Road). Crown Hill Road will quickly merge with, and change its name to, Cold Harbor Road (Route 156). After 1.0 mile on Cold Harbor Road, you will come to an intersection with an NPS road (Anderson-Wright Drive) and the Cold Harbor Park Headquarters on your right. Turn right and park in the NPS Headquarters parking lot. You can conduct the stand in the grassy area just down the slope from the headquarters building.

Orientation: You have just come from Bethesda Church where the Confederates attacked Warren's V Corps on 30 May. Your current location is between Old Cold Harbor and New Cold Harbor.

During the drive to this location, you passed Old Cold Harbor (it was the intersection of Beulah Church Road and Crown Hill/Cold Harbor Road). Note that during the Civil War, Old Cold Harbor usually was just called "Cold Harbor." Your current location is between the Union and Confederate lines during major battles on 1 and 3 June. The Union lines were to the east of here, and the Confederate lines were on the west. The NPS only owns a small part of the Cold Harbor battlefield—about 1 mile of the lines that eventually stretched for over 6 miles from Bethesda Church in the north to Turkey Hill in the south.

Description: On 31 May, Sheridan's cavalry (Torbert's division) pushed southwest toward Old Cold Harbor, following up its victory from the day before at Matadequin Creek. At 1600, Sheridan committed Gregg's division in support of Torbert, and the Union cavalry took possession of Old Cold Harbor but halted short of New Cold Harbor.

The Federal II Corps probed the Confederate positions with Barlow's division and found that the Southerners still held strong entrenched lines on the Totopotomoy River. The IX Corps moved south of the Totopotomoy and filled in positions that connected the II with the V Corps. The Totopotomoy River has a sharp bend that changes it from a north-south path (which provided a defensive line for the Confederates) to an east-west path (which was a barrier for both armies as they shifted further south). Warren's V Corps cautiously moved west of Bethesda Church, encountered Early's new line, and stopped to entrench its own position.

The Union VI Corps started 31 May with orders to probe the Confederate northern flank. Wright's troops found the Confederates well entrenched. Late on 31 May, Meade sent orders for the VI Corps to pull back from its position on the Union right and move behind the army to the south. Wright was to be ready to support Sheridan's cavalry at Old Cold Harbor on 1 June.

Smith's XVIII Corps went through a trying two days on 30 and 31 May. At 1100 on 30 May, Smith arrived at White House Landing (ahead of his troops). The soldiers began arriving on the night of 30 May. During that night, Smith received three copies of orders that directed his corps to New Castle Ferry. These orders reflected a desire to position Smith's troops in a central position that could support a Union offensive in multiple locations. At 0900 on 31 May, the head of Smith's column reached the Bassett house, about 3 miles from New Castle Ferry and not far from Old Church. It took all of 31 May to offload Smith's men from their transports, and the tail of his corps did not reach Old Church until late on the night of 31 May.

Smith's force was a composite unit from the Army of the James that included part but not all of his original XVIII Corps. The units were the First

Division of the XVIII Corps (Brigadier General T.H. Brooks), the Second Division of the XVIII Corps (Brigadier General John H. Martindale), the Third Division of the X Corps (Brigadier General Charles Devens, Jr.), and an ad hoc artillery brigade. The modified corps totaled 17,000 men.

Despite Early's repulse at Bethesda Church on 30 May, Lee still hoped to attack the Union left flank on 31 May. Lee wanted Hoke's division (a reinforcement from Beauregard's command) to spearhead a new assault that would blunt the Federal move at Old Cold Harbor. However, it took time to move Hoke from Bermuda Hundred to a new position north of the Chickahominy River. Only one brigade from Hoke (under Brigadier General Thomas L. Clingman) arrived near Cold Harbor on 31 May. Clingman's infantry, as well as Southern cavalry, were forced out of Old Cold Harbor by Sheridan's cavalry. Soon thereafter, Sheridan's troops erected fieldworks at Old Cold Harbor.

Also during the day, Lee decided to shift his own army further to the right (south) to counter the Union thrust at Cold Harbor. Lee ordered Anderson to pull out of his positions on the Totopotomoy and march to Cold Harbor to join with Hoke and attack the Federals on 1 June. Breckinridge was instructed to extend his line to the south, fill the gap left by Anderson's departure, and link up with Early's left flank.

Although he held Old Cold Harbor, Sheridan feared he would not be able to retain it on 1 June against the increasing number of Confederate infantry. He had already fought Clingman's infantry and received a report that Kershaw's division of Anderson's corps was on the way to Cold Harbor. On the evening of 31 May, Sheridan made the decision to evacuate Old Cold Harbor. Sometime near midnight, all of Torbert's troops pulled out of their positions.

At 0100 on 1 June, Meade told Sheridan to hold Old Cold Harbor "at every hazard" (Philip H. Sheridan, *The Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan,* New York, NY: De Capo Press, 1992, 221) and informed him that Wright's VI Corps was on the way to reinforce the Union cavalry. Sheridan immediately ordered Torbert to reoccupy the entrenchments. Torbert's men quietly filed back into position. They moved so stealthily that the Confederates did not notice the evacuation and reoccupation of the lines.

Anderson launched an attack on Sheridan at dawn on 1 June. He had Kershaw's division from his own corps and Hoke's division available for the attack. Anderson pressed Sheridan back and almost pushed the Union cavalry out of Old Cold Harbor. However, Confederate coordination problems left much of Hoke's division out of the attack, and at 0900, Wright's troops arrived just in time to hold the position.

Although the Union forces securely held Old Cold Harbor, Wright waited for Smith's XVIII Corps to arrive before trying to seize New Cold Harbor. Meanwhile, Smith was still having trouble getting clear orders for his mission on 1 June. At daybreak on 1 June, Smith received instructions, which seemed to confirm his earlier destination of New Castle Ferry, thus filling the gap between the V and VI Corps. One of Grant's aides, Lieutenant Colonel Orville E. Babcock, mistakenly wrote "New Castle Ferry" instead of "Cold Harbor," thus causing misdirection in Smith's movement (*OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 1, 999).

Smith moved the short distance from the Bassett house to New Castle Ferry, but the V and VI Corps were not there. Soon after this move, Grant sent Babcock to Smith with corrected orders that gave him a new destination—a position between Bethesda Church and Old Cold Harbor—and told him to join in an attack with VI Corps. The XVIII Corps marched to Old Cold Harbor, but did not arrive until the afternoon. Smith had little time to prepare for his joint attack with Wright.

At 1700, Smith and Wright attacked. The Federals took many of the Confederate rifle pits along the line and about 500 prisoners. The VI Corps also penetrated the Southern line at the juncture of Hoke's and Kershaw's divisions, but Anderson shifted two brigades to the area of the penetration and restored the line. Although they had come close to a major success, the Federals were unable to take New Cold Harbor, and they had suffered 2,200 casualties in the effort.

Also on the afternoon of 1 June, Grant and Meade ordered Hancock to move from the far right of the Union line to a position in the rear of the lines near the army headquarters. The Federal leaders wanted to use the II Corps to support a Union attack on 2 June.

At 2100, Hancock received an updated destination and mission—to go to the far left of the Union line and support the VI and XVIII Corps in a coordinated attack on the morning of 2 June. A guide (Major William A. Paine) from army headquarters joined the II Corps to assist in the march. The original route was supposed to be a 9-mile road march. However, the guide claimed to know a shortcut. As the corps moved down the new road, the path got narrower and narrower. Artillery wheels got stuck in the trees that lined the narrow path. It was pitch dark and dusty—a miserable march.

Eventually, the corps could not continue on the "shortcut" and had to double back on part of the route. In the end, the II Corps actually traveled 15 miles instead of the original 9 miles. Lead elements of the corps did not begin to arrive south of Cold Harbor until after daybreak on 2 June; the full corps was not in position until noon.

On the evening of 1 June, Lee realized that Hancock's corps had left the front, and the Confederate commander correctly deduced that the Federals were attempting, once again, to shift around the Confederate right. Lee ordered Breckinridge's division to pull out of its position and move south of Hoke's division to extend the Confederate flank. Breckinridge's march began at 2200 and was almost as miserable as Hancock's. The troops were dead tired, and a guide (Major H.B. McClellan) selected a circuitous path (*see vignettes*). Breckinridge's division arrived near Cold Harbor at about the same time as Hancock's lead division and was able to block the Union path.

The withdrawal of II Corps made IX Corps the northernmost unit of the Federal line and required that Burnside refuse his right flank. On 2 June, Burnside pulled the bulk of his corps south of the Old Church Road. He left two brigades in their original positions to cover the move. Meade told Warren about Burnside's shift and ordered the V Corps commander to coordinate with IX Corps' move. Warren placed Griffin's division in reserve at Bethesda Church just in case he needed to assist Burnside.

At midday on 2 June, Lee ordered Hill to shift two of his divisions to the Confederate right (southern) flank. Although he was shifting forces to parry the Union maneuvers on the southern flank, Lee, as well as Early, hoped for an opportunity to attack in the Bethesda Church region, which had now become the Union right flank. At about 1400, Early detected the withdrawal of parts of the IX Corps and ordered an attack. Gordon's and Rodes' divisions from his own corps and Heth's division, which remained behind when the rest of Hill's III Corps departed, struck the Union lines.

The Confederate attack achieved initial surprise and quickly brushed aside the two advanced Union brigades covering the IX Corps positions. The Confederates then struck the main IX Corps line. Rodes' division found a gap between Burnsides' left and Warren's right, hit the IX Corps on this open flank, and routed two brigades of Crittenden's division. Fortunately for the Northerners, Warren's reserve (Griffin's division) at Bethesda Church advanced to close the gap. In addition, the rest of the IX Corps stiffened, and by late afternoon, the Confederate attack had stalled.

In the meantime, on the southern portion of the lines (our current location), the Federals found themselves unable to execute the planned 2 June attack on Lee's right flank. Just after midnight, Meade sent instructions to Smith, "You will make your dispositions to attack to-morrow morning [2 June] on Major-General Wright's right, and in conjunction with that officer's attack. This attack should be made with your whole force, and as vigorous as possible" (*OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 3, 468). The order lacked a specific time, boundary, or objective. Smith complained about the

order. He said that he could not be ready—his troops were exhausted and out of ammunition. A few hours later, Smith received orders postponing the 0430 attack to 1700 on 2 June.

Hancock's corps had already missed the planned 0430 start time for the attack. The last of the II Corps troops arrived at noon (2 June), and they were dead tired and ill prepared to make an assault. After more discussion between Grant and Meade, the Union commanders decided that it was too late to make an attack that would catch the Confederates off guard. Instead, they decided to take more time to prepare a coordinated, general assault. (*See vignettes* for correspondence between Grant and Meade.) Grant may have been motivated by a mistaken impression of Lee's army; he thought that Lee's force had been severely mauled by the fighting of the last few weeks and was ready to collapse.

The pause from 1 to 2 June, and eventually to 3 June, gave Lee time to move more forces into position and entrench. First, Breckinridge's division moved to extend the Confederate line south of R.H. Anderson's corps. Then, two divisions of A.P. Hill's corps shifted south of Breckinridge and were in position to block Hancock by early afternoon on 2 June.

Vignettes:

1. Lee directed his staff to send a guide to help Breckinridge's division move to Cold Harbor on the night of 1 June. However, the man selected, Major H.B. McClellan, did not have a map and was not familiar with the ground. Not unexpectedly, McClellan took the division on an indirect route that delayed the movement. After the move was complete, Lee sent for McClellan. The errant major later recalled that he entered his commander's tent "with a sinking heart." Lee traced the correct route with his finger on a map and said in even tones, "Major, this is the road to Cold Harbor." McClellan responded, "Yes, General, I know it now." No further words were spoken, but McClellan remembered, "That quiet reproof sunk deeper and cut more deeply that [sic] words of violent vituperation would have done." (Douglas Southall Freeman, *R.E. Lee,* New York, NY: C. Scribner's Sons, 1935, volume 3, 383.)

2. Below is the exchange of orders between Grant and Meade that postponed the attack from 2 June to 3 June:

Grant to Meade (1400): "In view of the want of preparation for an attack this evening, and the heat and want of energy among the men from moving during the night last night, I think it advisable to postpone assault until early to-morrow morning."

Meade to all Corps commanders (1430): "The attack ordered for 5 P.M. today is postponed to 4:30 A.M. to-morrow. Corps commanders will

employ the interim in making examination of the ground in their fronts, and perfecting their arrangements for the assault." (*OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 3, 478-479.)

Analysis:

1. Analyze the factors that led to the Union inability to take New Cold Harbor from 31 May to 2 June.

a. Could the Union cavalry have done more to help take the crossroads?

b. Why were Wright and Smith late in launching their 1 June assault, and should they have pressed their attacks further after their initial success?

c. Who, if anyone, is to blame for the postponement of the 2 June attack to 3 June?

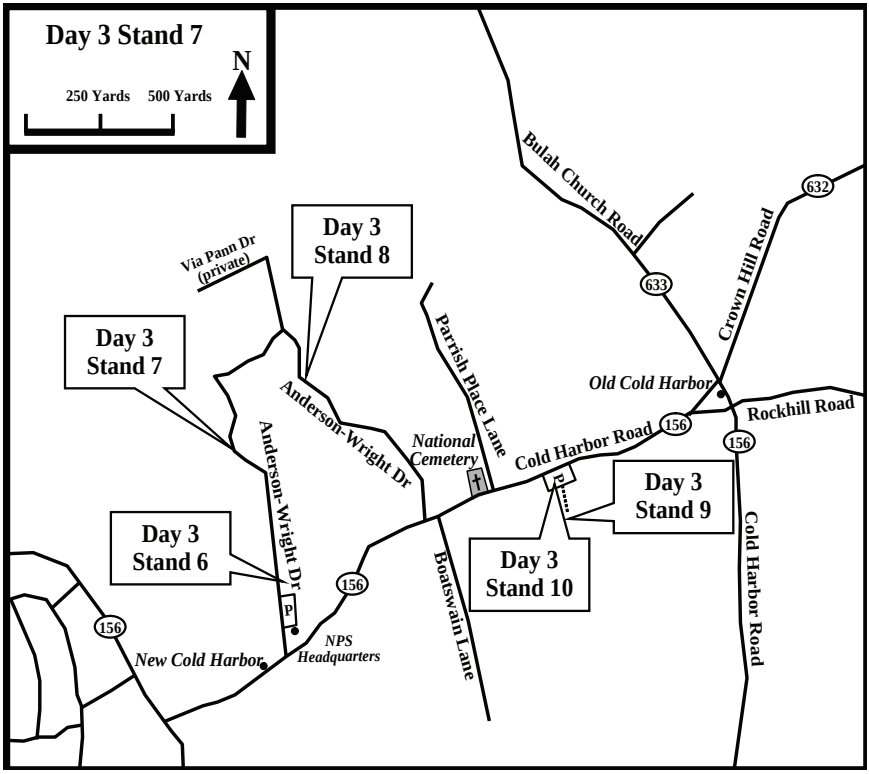
d. Consider the effects of the last month of constant fighting, marching, and casualties on the men, commanders, and their staffs as they tried to conduct the maneuvers at Cold Harbor. What can modern leaders learn about the effects of fatigue at all levels of an army? Today, how do we combat fatigue in continuous operations?

2. Some historians have argued that Grant had actually maneuvered too close to Richmond in the Cold Harbor region (particularly because the Pamunkey, Chickahominy, and James Rivers were bunched close together and restricted movement).

a. Do you agree? Why or why not?

b. Did Grant need to change his line of operations? Was it worth making one last attempt to overwhelm the Confederates with an assault?

Stand 7
Cold Harbor II (Confederate Positions)
(3 June 1864)



Map 56.

Directions: Continue on Anderson-Wright Drive (it becomes one way); after 0.4 mile, there will be a small parking area to the right with an NPS information plaque. Park in the parking area and conduct the stand near the plaque.

Orientation: You are on the Confederate side of the battle lines that repulsed the major Union assault of 3 June. The Union trenches are visible to the east of your current location. The ground between the trenches was open on 3 June 1864. Most of that ground was abandoned farmland, and the Confederates had cut down almost all of the trees in front of their positions. The initial Union attack positions were in a sparsely wooded tree line behind (east of) the trenches that are currently visible.

Description: From north to south, Lee had elements of Anderson's I Corps, Hoke's division, Hill's III Corps, and Breckinridge's division deployed to meet the main Union assault at 0430 on 3 June.

The Confederates had built extensive earthworks along the entire line prior to the Union attack. The southern end of the Confederate line (Breckinridge's, Mahone's, and Wilcox's divisions) had been in place for over 12 hours, and the Confederate center (Anderson and Hoke) had had 48 hours to improve their defenses. The Southerners angled the trench lines to form good fields of fire on the ravines that appeared as avenues of approach for Union attacks.

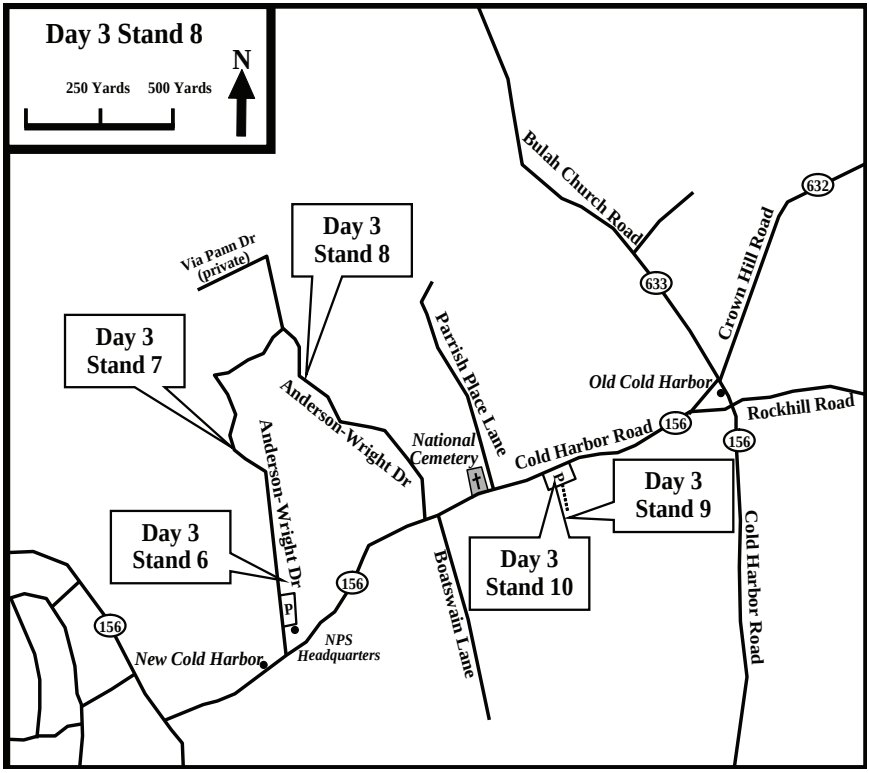
The Confederate units deployed near our current location were (from north to south) Brigadier General Evander Law's brigade, Brigadier General George T. ("Tige") Anderson's brigade, and Gregg's brigade—all from Field's division (Richard H. Anderson's corps). Brigadier General William T. Wofford's brigade of Kershaw's division was in reserve, further to the west of our position.

The specific unit located where you are standing was "Tige" Anderson's Georgia brigade. In fact, Anderson's men held most of the trench lines that are encompassed within the modern Cold Harbor NPS boundary. Somewhere to the left (north) of your position (the exact location is not sure) was the boundary between Anderson's brigade and Law's Alabama brigade. All Confederate brigades in this region were well entrenched, and Law's troops were angled slightly (northeast to southwest), giving them an excellent ability to rake the flank of Union troops attacking Anderson's position.

Vignettes: None.

Analysis: There are no particular questions for this stand, but stress how adept the soldiers had become at fortifying their positions (particularly the Confederates). Note the marked improvement in the quality of the earthworks as well as the speed in which they were constructed at Cold Harbor as compared to the works in the Wilderness.

Stand 8
Cold Harbor III (Union Positions)
(3 June 1864)



Map 57.

Directions: Continue down the one-way NPS road. During this ride, the road will curve to the right in a big loop. Go for 0.4 mile and you will come to another parking area on the right with a plaque. Park in this area and conduct the stand on the edge of the lot.

Orientation: You have just moved from the Confederate position to the Union position after the failed 3 June Cold Harbor attack. This location was probably where Brigadier General Thomas H. Neill's division (VI Corps) entrenched after attacking the Confederate lines. Also nearby, probably just to the right (north) of this position, was Brigadier General William T.H. Brooks' division of the XVIII Corps. The exact positions and paths of the attacking units are difficult to determine because many units overlapped in the attack.

The Union breastworks, which are located at this stand, mark the farthest advance of the attackers, but not the starting point of the Union

attack. The Federals began from positions behind (east of) this location in a woods. When they reached this point, they could not advance any further so the troops dug in.

The Union plan for attack was shaped by Grant's intent, but Meade had tactical control. The main effort was to be made by the three corps on the southern part of the line: from north to south, Smith's XVIII Corps, Wright's VI Corps, and Hancock's II Corps. The V and IX Corps were also to attack, but only in a supporting role.

There was no reserve for exploitation—the Union plan was simply an attack on all lines. Corps commanders were left to choose their own main attack point, their formations, their dispositions, and their tactics. The start time for the advance was 0430.

(At this stand, only discuss the attacks of the II, VI, and XVIII Corps. The V and IX Corps attacks were not vigorous and were easily repulsed.)

Description: Meade did little to coordinate his corps commanders' efforts, and neither he nor Grant examined the ground. Smith made an offer to coordinate his efforts with Wright, but the VI Corps commander gave a vague reply that did little to help coordination. Hancock and Wright did not exchange any information.

From north to south in the region of the main attacks, the Federals deployed Smith's XVIII Corps, Wright's VI Corps, and Hancock's II Corps.

Hancock's troops attacking in the south had the only, limited success of the day. Hancock formed his corps with Gibbon's division on the right (north) and Barlow's division on the left (south). Birney's division was in reserve. (*See vignettes* for the story of the II Corps' soldiers pinning tags on their uniforms before the attack.)

Both Barlow and Gibbon arranged their four brigades in dense formations with two brigades leading and two following. The division commanders instructed the men of the lead units not to stop and exchange fire with the Confederates. Perhaps they were trying to repeat the success of Mule Shoe.

Gibbon advanced in a heavy fog along a ravine. He made a limited penetration, but was forced to pull back.

Barlow had the best Union success of the day. Colonel George S. Patton's Confederate brigade (Breckinridge's division) was located across from Barlow's division. Patton's men had pulled back several hundred yards during the night because of heavy rains that flooded the trenches. There were still Confederate pickets in the trenches, but Barlow's force overwhelmed them before the main Southern forces could re-occupy the fortifications, and Barlow took most of the first line. Hancock sent up

some reinforcements from Birney, but Brigadier General Joseph Finegan's Confederate brigade counterattacked and forced Barlow to pull back.

Wright's VI Corps was next in line to the II Corps. The VI Corps troops had performed relatively well since the beginning of the Overland Campaign, fighting particularly ferociously at the bloody angle. However, it performed poorly in the 3 June attack, and failed to make a serious effort. Some historians have conjectured that the VI Corps may have lost its appetite for assaulting breastworks at Spotsylvania. In addition, Wright's troops had seen the Confederates to their front improving their entrenchments since 1 June.

The VI Corps' divisions were arranged with Russell in the south, Ricketts in the center, and Neill in the north. Due to the lack of coordination with the II Corps, Wright's men started their advance later than Hancock's attack.

Russell put the troops in his division on line. The men had observed the heavy casualties taken by Gibbon's troops on their left, and this also helped to discourage them from pressing the attack. Even Upton had to admit: "an assault was ordered, but being deemed impracticable along our front, was not made" (*OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 1, 671).

Ricketts' division had only two brigades. They were deployed side by side, but with fronts only two regiments wide. The deeper formation did little to help, and Ricketts' attack was easily repulsed.

Neill put his brigades in the narrowest formation of the VI Corps. His division was in a column, four brigades each one behind the other. The ground on which you are standing marks the farthest advance of Neill's division (Wheaton's brigade). The VI Corps made no penetrations and did little to support the II and XVIII Corps' attacks on the flanks.

Smith's XVIII Corps attacked to the north of Wright's VI Corps. Part of their attack was in this region (Brook's division adjoined Neill's VI Corps division just north of here). The XVIII Corps was the freshest and least attrited of the Union corps at Cold Harbor—they have been "sitting" at Bermuda Hundred (in fact, they had been campaigning—but they had not gone through the same brutal fighting as the II and VI Corps at the Wilderness and Spotsylvania). The Army of the Potomac soldiers considered the XVIII Corps to be "soft." Smith's troops were anxious to prove the Army of the Potomac troops wrong. The XVIII Corps pressed their attacks, no matter how fruitless, with considerable enthusiasm.

The XVIII Corps deployed with Devens' division in the north, Martindale's division in the center, and Brooks division in the south. Devens was spread out as a flank guard and did not really join in the attack. Martindale attacked with two brigades side by side. Brooks placed

his brigades in a column. He hoped to take advantage of a ravine to cover his approach to the Confederate trenches. Within each brigade, the regiments were deployed one behind the other, thus making for a dense attack formation.

Smith's attack hit G.T. Anderson's, Law's, and Humphreys' Confederate brigades. Their position was particularly strong because Evander Law had conducted a recon and repositioned the line with excellent fields of fire.

The XVIII Corps' attack began (as had the other corps' attacks) with a signal gun. Martindale's division was immediately raked by rifle and canister fire. Both brigades tried to find some covered path in which to advance, but they were stopped with heavy casualties. Brooks' units advanced further because of a ravine that gave the lead brigade (Brigadier General Gilman Marston) some cover. However, as soon as Marston's brigade emerged into the open, it was raked with rifle fire, especially on its left. The brigade veered to its right to avoid the fire and then was pinned down in front of the Confederate works.

Brooks' second brigade in the column (under Colonel Guy V. Henry) emerged from the ravine, but was stopped dead in it tracks by Confederate fire that had zeroed in on the location. So many troops were cut down so fast that the troops in the brigade behind Henry dove to the ground thinking that an order was given to lie down. The attack was a failure with heavy casualties. The Union troops, rather than retreat, began to dig in at their advanced locations under Confederate fire.

All attacks along the line had failed by 0630. The only report of success to Meade's headquarters was a brief note from Hancock when Barlow made some penetration, but Hancock soon sent word that the attacks were all stalled. Smith's messages were the most pessimistic—he clearly stated that any more attacks would be a waste of life. At about 0700, Grant sent a message to Meade that the attacks could be called off if there was no chance of success.

Meade was nearly at the peak of his frustration over the command situation and the slowness of his corps commanders in recent operations. His temper was even worse than usual. He bullishly sent orders for more attacks. Most of the orders were ignored (the soldiers and their officers knew better than to renew the attacks), but there were some additional losses.

There are claims that the Union lost 7,000 killed and wounded in 15 minutes on 3 June. This number is probably unrealistic, but it is not unreasonable that there were 7,000 Union casualties in the attacks for the entire morning (roughly two hours). The breakdown of Union casualties for the three main days of fighting (1 to 3 June) was:

II Corps	3,510
V Corps	1,340
VI Corps	2,715
XVIII Corps	3,019
IX Corps	1,701
Total	12,285

Confederate casualties totaled 1,200 to 1,500.

(Note that casualties for the entire time of the Cold Harbor battle, 30 May to 12 June, were 12,738 Union and about 3,400 Confederates.)

Grant later wrote in his memoirs that he regretted only two assaults that he had ordered in his career. One was the second attack on the Confederate siege lines at Vicksburg on 22 May 1863 and the other was the 3 June attack at Cold Harbor. Of the two, Grant admitted that the Cold Harbor attack was the most useless (Ulysses Simpson Grant, *Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant,* New York, NY: De Capo Press, 1952, 444-445).

Vignettes:

1. In a famous incident, Horace Porter, of Grant's staff, observed soldiers of the II Corps doing some unusual sewing on their uniforms prior to the 3 June assault. "As I came near one of the regiments that was making preparations for the next morning's assault, I noticed that many of the soldiers had taken off their coats, and seemed to be engaged in sewing up rents in them. This exhibition of tailoring seemed rather peculiar at such a moment, but upon closer examination it was found that the men were calmly writing their names and addresses on slips of paper, and pinning them on the backs of their coats, so that their dead bodies might be recognized on the field, and their fate made known to their families at home." (Porter, *Campaigning with Grant*, 174-175.)

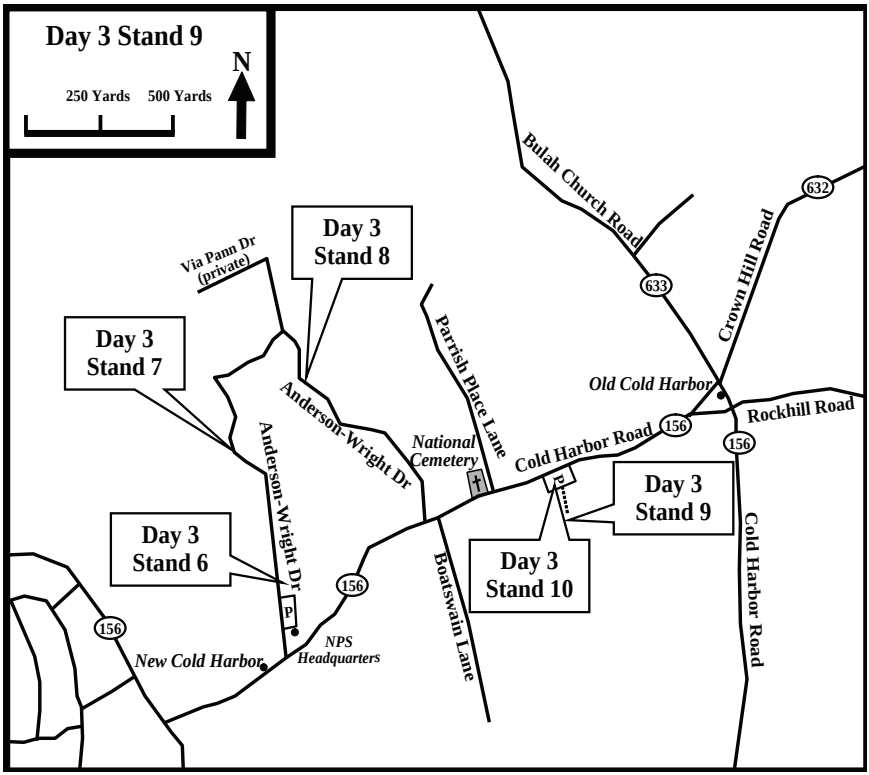
2. Another account by Porter tells of Grant's regrets over the attack, reflecting in part Grant's own words from his memoirs. According to Porter, Grant spoke with his staff on the evening of 3 June and stated: "I regret this assault more than any one I have ever ordered. I regarded it as a stern necessity, and believed that it would bring compensating results; but, as it has proved, no advantages have been gained sufficient to justify the heavy losses suffered." (Porter, 179.)

Analysis:

1. Was Grant a butcher? What was his original intent for this attack? Was it reasonable for him to expect success on 2 June or by 3 June? Was Grant really a believer in frontal assaults, or did he more commonly try to maneuver?

2. Discuss the declining quality of the troops and fatigue on both sides (look at the VI Corps' effort in particular). How should this factor affect the operational planner? What were alternatives to the 3 June assault (other than simply not attacking)?

Stand 9
Cold Harbor IV (Next 10 Days)
(3–12 June 1864)



Map 58.

Directions: Continue on the NPS road. It will complete the loop and come back past the NPS Headquarters and back to Cold Harbor Road after 0.4 mile. Turn left on Cold Harbor Road. After 0.3 mile, you will see an entrance on the right for a Hanover County Park that contains another portion of the Cold Harbor battlefield. Turn right into the County Park area and park the vehicles in the gravel parking area near the entrance. Off to one side of the gravel lot, you will see a walking path into the woods (it is marked with a sign). Take the walking path into the woods and conduct the stand about 100 to 150 yards into the wood line. There is a small plaque with a sketch map of the battle lines (originally done by a soldier to show a friend's family where his friend had been buried), which is a good place to do the stand.

Orientation: You are currently located in what was the fifth trench line of the Union VI Corps in June 1864. After the failed attacks of 3 June,

Union and Confederate soldiers continued to improve their works and build trench lines to add depth to their defense.

The last stand (stand 8) marked the first line of the VI Corps. You can see on the county park's plaque, with its sketch map, the depth of the trenches.

This area had no trees at the time; as the trench lines grew in depth, the terrain began to look like a World War I moonscape. George Stevens, a surgeon in the VI Corps, described this area: "The whole plain occupied by our Army was dug over. One is reminded, in riding over the plains, of the colonies of prairie dogs with their burrows and mounds." (George T Stevens, *Three Years in the Sixth Corps*, Albany, NY: S.R. Gray, 1866, 354.)

For the next 10 days at Cold Harbor, the two armies were locked together in miserable conditions. Sharpshooters were active on both sides. Although the troops tried to dig deeper, death still awaited many soldiers who simply raised their heads. The weather was hot during this period, baking the soldiers, most of whom could not even get a chance to bathe in the stinking trenches.

At this stand, you will cover the events at Cold Harbor from the end of the attack of 3 June to the departure of the Federal forces on 12 June. There are no major battles during this time, thus the description portion of this stand will cover other key events during the siege-like warfare at Cold Harbor with a focus on Grant's formulation of a new plan to cross the James River.

Description: Starting on the night of 3 June and continuing through the next day, the Confederates made some adjustments in their lines. Early pulled his left flank back from Bethesda Church, thus refusing the flank for a better defensive position. Lee transferred Heth (who had been attached to Early on the northern flank) back to Hill and moved him to the Confederate southern flank. The Confederates put pontoon bridges on the Chickahominy River in case Grant decided to try another move around the Confederate southern flank.

The Federals also made some small adjustments in their positions. Burnside and Warren moved their corps back about 2 miles and refused the Union right flank. The entire Union line was shortened by 1 mile, which indicated a purely defensive intent on the Cold Harbor front. The Federals brought up a battery of 24-pound Coehorn mortars to bombard the Confederate trenches with high angle fire. The Southerners countered by super elevating a howitzer.

On 4 June (and continuing for several days afterward), there was some grumbling in the Union ranks and among the officers over the Federal

leadership (*see vignettes*). Both sides began expanding their trench systems.

On 5 June, Grant formulated the outline of a new plan for the campaign. He explained the concept in a telegram to Halleck. Grant stated that at the outset of the campaign, he had hoped to defeat Lee's army north of Richmond before transferring the Union forces south of the James. He admitted that he was not able to accomplish the goal of defeating Lee's forces (Grant blamed this on the Confederate's unwillingness to come out of their entrenchments). He rejected the concept of maneuvering back to the north of Richmond, in part because it would extend his supply lines too far away from their seaborne sources.

Thus, Grant decided to shift the Federal forces to the south of the James and sever Lee's army and Richmond from its supply sources in the south. The Federal commander would preface his move with a cavalry raid to the northwest to deceive Lee. Then the Union forces would cross the James, shifting its base to City Point, and take Petersburg. Grant asked Halleck to start sending several ferryboats down to the James in preparation for the move.

Also on 5 June, Grant and Lee began exchanging a series of messages that ultimately established a truce on 7 June for the recovery of dead and wounded between the lines. Below is a brief summary of the events of the truce (the texts of the messages are in the *OR*, series I, volume XXXVI, part 3, 599-600, 603-604, 638-639, and 666-667).

Under the accepted rules of warfare of the 19th century, the losing side in a battle was supposed to send a flag of truce to the victor to ask for a cease-fire that would allow both sides to recover their dead and wounded. Grant waited two days after the 3 June assaults before making initial inquiries about a truce. It took a message from Hancock (through Meade) to prompt Grant into sending a note to Lee.

It is difficult to know exactly why Grant waited, but several historians have argued that he did not want to admit that the 3 June attack had been a failure. Grant's first message asked for local parties, under white flags, to collect the dead and wounded; thus, he was not requesting a general truce.

Lee replied that Grant needed to follow the accepted rules of warfare and request a truce. Grant, either misunderstanding Lee or still unwilling to recognize the defeat of 3 June, sent a message to Lee implying that Lee had accepted the original proposal. Lee responded by insisting that Grant make the formal request for a truce.

On 6 June, Grant relented and asked for a truce. Unfortunately, there were delays in getting messages across the line, and the Federal units were

not ready for the initial cease-fire time (the evening of 6 June). Union pickets mistakenly captured a Confederate burial party; Grant later had them returned. Finally, on 7 June, both sides recovered their wounded and dead. Sadly, very few wounded had survived, and they had suffered for days in the hot sun.

Grant certainly bears a large responsibility for this sad episode, although a few historians are probably too harsh in assigning evil motives to Grant. In any case, some of the officers and soldiers in the Union army blamed Grant for not taking care of his wounded and dead soldiers who had fought so heroically on 3 June.

As the events of the truce were unfolding, Lee received word on 6 June that Union troops under Hunter had forced Confederate forces in the Shenandoah Valley to retreat. He decided to send Breckinridge and his division back to the Valley to stop Hunter. It would take several days to rearrange Lee's lines before Breckinridge's men could begin their move.

On the same day, Early discovered the shift of Union forces on his front and received Lee's permission to try to turn the Union right flank. Early advanced toward the new Union lines of the IX Corps; however, his attack was bogged down in the swampy ground around Matadequin Creek. After pushing back some Federal pickets, Early decided to have his troops return to their own lines.

For the Federals, 6 June was also a busy day. Grant ordered Smith's corps to move out of the Cold Harbor lines to Cole's Landing on the Chickahominy River. This was in preparation for embarking on ships and moving to Bermuda Hundred.

In addition, Grant sent Porter and Comstock on a three-part mission. First, they were to inform Butler of Smith's move back to Bermuda Hundred. Then they were to warn Butler to stay alert in case Lee tried to attack the Army of the Potomac while it was moving to the James River. Most importantly, Grant's two staff officers had to find a suitable crossing site on the James.

Later that day, Warren's V Corps moved into a reserve position behind the main Union lines. The corps reorganized as the Pennsylvania Reserves mustered out of the army.

On 7 June, Sheridan began the cavalry raid designed to deceive Lee from the Army of the Potomac's main move to the James. The Federal cavalry commander took two divisions with him: Torbert and Gregg. Wilson's division remained behind with the Army of the Potomac. In addition to distracting Lee's attention, Sheridan was to tear up as much track of the Virginia Central Railroad as possible.

Also on 7 June, Meade banished a reporter, Edward Cropsey, from the

Union camps (*see vignettes*). This was one of the lowest points in Meade's relationship with the press.

On the Confederate side, Early tried another probe of the Union right flank. Once again, Anderson did not support the effort. Ramseur's division reached the Union picket lines, and after some light skirmishing, it withdrew. After this probe, Early's II Corps went into a reserve position behind the main Confederate lines. Anderson extended his front to the north and became the left flank of the army. Breckinridge's division departed for the Valley under the temporary command of Brigadier General Gabriel C. Wharton.

The next day, Ewell made one last appeal to Lee to resume command of the Confederates' II Corps. Lee turned him down. Later, Lee received word from Hampton that Sheridan had crossed the Pamunkey River. He ordered Hampton to pursue Sheridan. Hampton, with Lee's permission, took almost all of the Confederate cavalry. Thus, in a reversal of the Yellow Tavern raid, Lee had lost his "eyes" for the next several days, while Grant and Meade had retained significant Union cavalry for reconnaissance and screening. Finally, Lee alerted Anderson to be prepared to attack the Union right flank on 9 June, if the Federals were withdrawing. Pickett's division was to spearhead this attack.

Early in the morning of 9 June, Anderson probed the Union front. He immediately realized that the Federals had not withdrawn and canceled Pickett's attack.

On the Federal side, Grant told Halleck that all future reinforcements for the Union forces were to go to City Point or Bermuda Hundred. Meade ordered the Army of the Potomac's acting chief engineer, Major Nathaniel Michler, to survey a new defensive line in the rear of the Cold Harbor lines. The line was to be shorter than the current lines, but very strong, so that a single corps could hold it safely. Its purpose was to act as a screen for the army once it begins its move to the James.

On 10 June, Meade issued orders for the troops to draw four days worth of rations—a sure sign of impending movement. Additionally, Meade ordered Warren to move two of his divisions out of their lines on 11 June in preparation for a movement across the Chickahominy on 12 June. Hancock was ordered to pull Gibbon's division out of the line in preparation for the II Corps' move to the James. Wright extended his VI Corps to occupy the lines of the II Corps as it moved.

The next day, Grant sent a warning order to Butler, outlining his plan for the movement to the south side of the James. For his part, Lee shifted Early to his right flank in case Grant decided to cross the Chickahominy. However, Lee, Davis, and Bragg learned of Hunter's continued devastation

in the Shenandoah Valley (despite the sending of Breckinridge's division earlier as reinforcements). The next day, the Confederate leaders determined that Early's corps would have to be sent to the Valley.

On 12 June, although he had not received word on a crossing site on the James from Comstock and Porter, Grant made the decision to begin the movement. Later that afternoon, word came from Comstock and Porter that they had found a site for the crossing, thus reassuring the Union general in chief.

Vignettes:

1. In a letter to his sister written while in the Cold Harbor trenches, Emory Upton poured out his discontent over his superiors' leadership: "I am disgusted with the generalship displayed. Our men have, in many instances, been foolishly and wantonly sacrificed. Assault after assault has been ordered upon the enemy's entrenchments, when they knew nothing about the position or strength of the enemy. Thousands of lives might have been spared by the exercise of a little skill; but, as it is, the courage of the poor men is expected to obviate all difficulties."

A day later he wrote again: ". . . some of our corps commanders are not fit to be corporals. Lazy and indolent, they will not even ride along their lines; yet, without hesitancy, they will order us to attack the enemy, no matter what their position or numbers." (Peter S. Michie, ed., *The Life and Letters of Emory Upton,* New York, NY: D. Appleton, 1885, 108-109.)

2. Marsena Patrick, Meade's Provost Marshal, echoed Upton's frustrations: "There is much feeling in regard to this murderous & foolish system of assaulting, without supports, reserves, or any adequate force to hold the works that may be carried." (David S. Sparks, ed., *Inside Lincoln's Army. The Diary of General Marsena Rudolph Patrick, Provost Marshal General, Army of the Potomac*, 380.)

3. While his division was shifting position, one of Sheridan's cavalry commanders, Brigadier General James H. Wilson, visited Grant's and Meade's headquarters and spoke with members of their staffs. Wilson recounted that Grant was frustrated by his subordinates' inability to translate his general orders into effective, detailed plans.

Grant asked Wilson, "What is the matter with this army?"

Wilson replied, "It will take too long to explain, but I can tell you how to cure it. Give Parker a tomahawk, a supply of commissary whiskey and a scalping knife and send him out with orders to bring in the scalps of general officers." (James Harrison Wilson, *The Life and Services of General Smith*, Wilmington, DE: John M. Rogers, 1904, 98.) Captain Ely S. Parker, Grant's adjutant, was a Seneca Indian.

4. Meade, often irritable, was particularly frustrated at Cold Harbor. Although Meade did not publicly voice his disappointment in the fighting, he poured out his views in letters to his wife.

> In every instance that we have attacked the enemy in an entrenched position we have failed, except in the case of Hancock's attack at Spottsylvania [sic], which was a surprise discreditable to the enemy. So, likewise, whenever the enemy has attacked us in position, he has been repulsed.
>
> I think Grant has had his eyes opened, and is willing to admit now that Virginia and Lee's army is not Tennessee and Bragg's army. Whether the people will ever realize this fact remains to be seen. (George Meade, ed., *The Life and Letters of George Gordon Meade*, volume 2, New York, NY: Scribner's, 1913, 201.)

5. On 7 June, Meade banished a reporter, Edward Cropsey, from the Union camps. Cropsey wrote for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the "hometown" newspaper for Pennsylvanian George Meade. In the 2 June issue of the *Inquirer*, Cropsey wrote an article that was often complimentary to Meade, but it also claimed that Meade had counseled Grant to withdraw after the Battle of the Wilderness.

When the paper arrived in camp a few days later, Meade read the article and was enraged. He ordered the arrest of Cropsey (who had just returned to the Army from Washington). He asked Cropsey where he had heard the false story of Meade's advising a retreat in the Wilderness. Cropsey told him: "It was the talk of the camp." Meade declared, "It was a base and wicked lie," and he said that he would make an example of Cropsey.

Meade met with his provost marshal, Marsena Patrick, and the two decided on Cropsey's punishment: the reporter was to be paraded through the Union camps seated backwards on a mule and then banished from the army. As the order for punishment was being written, Grant walked into the tent and approved the decision. The order was published on 7 June. Throughout the document, Cropsey's name was repeatedly misspelled as "Crapsey." The order declared that "Crapsey" had published "libelous statement on the commanding general of this army calculated to impair the confidence of the army in their commanding officer, and which statement the said Crapsey has acknowledged to be false, and to have been based on some idle camp rumor. . . ."

The punishment was carried out on 8 June. Cropsey rode on a particularly homely mule with a placard hung over his body that said "Libeler of the Press." As he rode, a bugler and drummers accompanied him and

played the "Rogue's March." The troops laughed and jeered Cropsey, and one soldier wrote "He was howled at, and the wish to tear him limb from limb and strew him over the ground was fiercely expressed."

In the end, Meade's actions only served to exacerbate his already difficult relations with the press. After the incident, Cropsey and his fellow journalists made an informal agreement not to mention Meade in their articles, unless in connection with a negative event. For about the next six months, almost all of the Northern newspapers referred to the Army of the Potomac as "Grant's Army," furthering Meade's frustration. (Ernest B. Furgurson, *Not War But Murder, Cold Harbor 1864,* New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000, 220-222.)

Analysis:

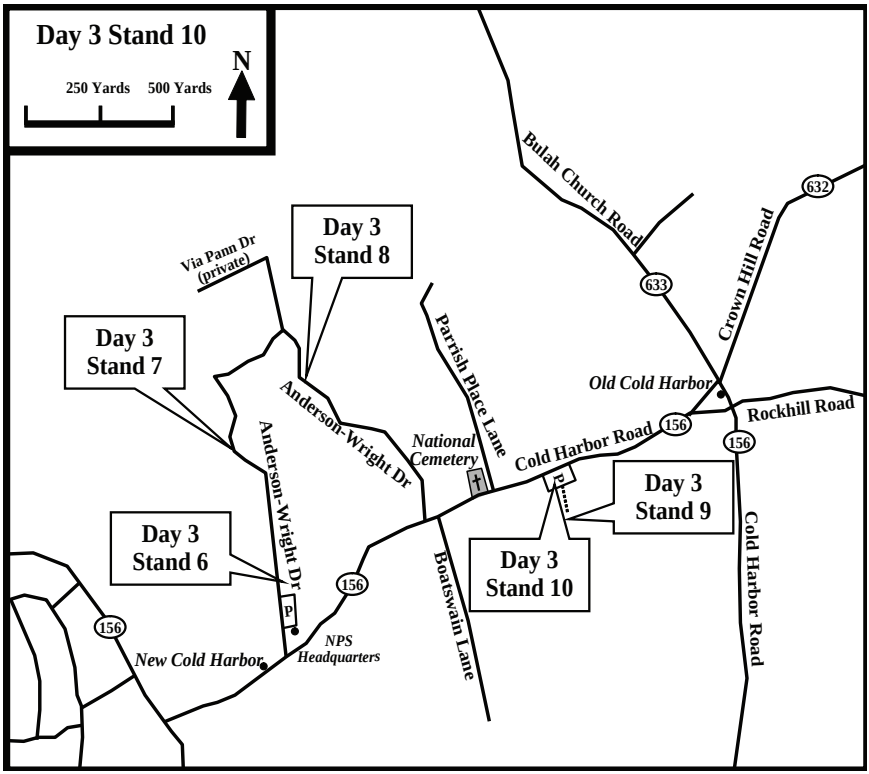
1. Do the problems of the truce negotiation at Cold Harbor exist today? Do the current rules of warfare allow for truces to help the wounded? Do such rules apply when fighting terrorists?

2. Was Grant correct to choose a crossing of the James for his next move? Do you agree with his reasons for rejecting a move to his right (northwest)?

3. Why did the lines and tactics at Cold Harbor begin to resemble World War I trench warfare? Both sides were already becoming accomplished at building entrenchments, but were there particular conditions at Cold Harbor that lent to an expansion of trench works?

4. What does the Meade–Cropsey incident show us about military–press relations? What is similar and what is different between the military–press relationships in 1864 and the military–press relationships of today?

Stand 10
Cold Harbor to the James River
(12–13 June 1864)



Map 59.

Directions: Return down the walking path to the gravel parking lot. Conduct the next stand in the lot.

Orientation: Using a map, identify the routes from Cold Harbor to the James River. The purpose of this stand is to discuss the Union plan for leaving Cold Harbor and moving to the James, and to trace the initial moves.

Description: To reiterate, Grant and Meade had taken some preliminary actions for the movement to the James. Sheridan was raiding the Virginia Central Railroad to the north of Richmond and had drawn almost all of the Confederate cavalry in pursuit. Meade had directed the digging of a reserve line behind the Cold Harbor positions to help screen the Union move, and he had issued marching rations to the troops. Comstock and

Porter were examining potential crossing sites. The Federals were gathering ferryboats, barges, and bridging material at Fort Monroe. The supply base, as well as Smith's corps, was being shifted from White House Landing to City Point. Finally, warning orders for the move had gone to all the corps commanders and to Butler.

Comstock and Porter selected a site for constructing the bridge across the James River. The location was near Fort Powhatan, where a bend in the James provided a narrower crossing between Weyanoke Neck on the north bank and Windmill Point on the south. Wilcox's Landing (sometimes called Wilcox's Wharf) was nearby, and could be used to ferry troops across the river. The bridging site was 12 miles downriver from City Point, and the river was 2,100 feet wide and 20 feet deep at this location.

The entire operation for the move across the James was extremely complex. The site was 22 miles from Cold Harbor in a direct line, but some of the Federals had to march 50 miles over the winding roads to make the crossing. In addition, the Union troops had to cross two rivers (the Chickahominy and the James). If Lee discovered the move, he could attack the Federals and defeat their separated corps, or he could take advantage of the rail net between Richmond and Petersburg to transfer forces below the James and block Grant's move. Timing and deception were critical if the Federals were to succeed.

After Grant issued his movement orders on 12 June, he broke camp and moved his headquarters to Summit Station.

The troop movement began after dark on 12 June. The II and VI Corps fell back and occupied the new defensive line in the rear of the Cold Harbor positions to cover the move. Part of Wilson's cavalry division secured Long Bridge over the Chickahominy and then probed west to clear room for Warren's move.

At 1800, Warren's V Corps left the Cold Harbor lines. They crossed the Chickahominy River at Long Bridge and followed Wilson's cavalry toward Riddell's Shop. Their mission was to set up a blocking position at the crossroads at Riddell's Shop that would screen the move of the rest of the army. The XVIII Corps arrived at White House Landing in preparation for the seaborne move to Bermuda Hundred. Burnside's IX Corps initially followed Smith's corps and then turned south toward the crossing on the Chickahominy at Jones Bridge (east of Long Bridge and protected by the V Corps).

On 13 June, the V Corps held its position at Riddell's Shop for much of the day with some skirmishing from the Confederates. At 2000, Warren's troops pulled out of Riddell's Shop and moved toward Charles City Courthouse. Smith's XVIII Corps embarked at White House Landing

and sailed downriver. The IX Corps was delayed for much of the day, but they finally crossed Jones Bridge in the evening. The II and VI Corps pulled out of the second line and moved south.

Later that day, the VI Corps, having crossed the Chickahominy at Jones Bridge (ahead of the IX Corps), moved toward Charles City Courthouse. The II Corps crossed the Chickahominy at Long Bridge, and its lead units reached Wilcox's Landing at 1730. The lead unit of the Army of the Potomac had reached the James.

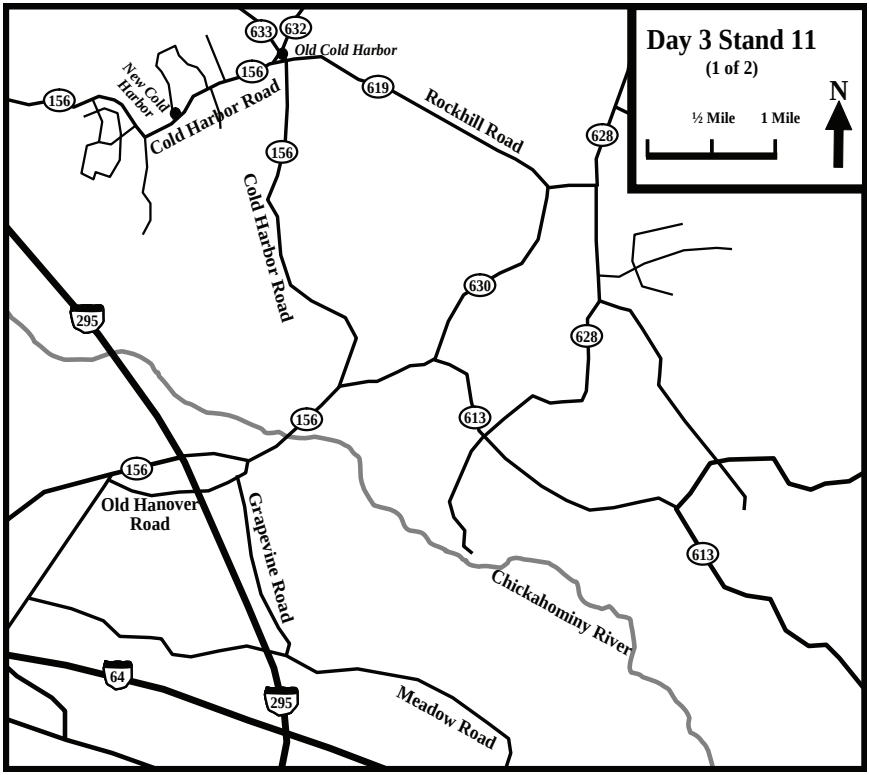
Vignettes: None.

Analysis:

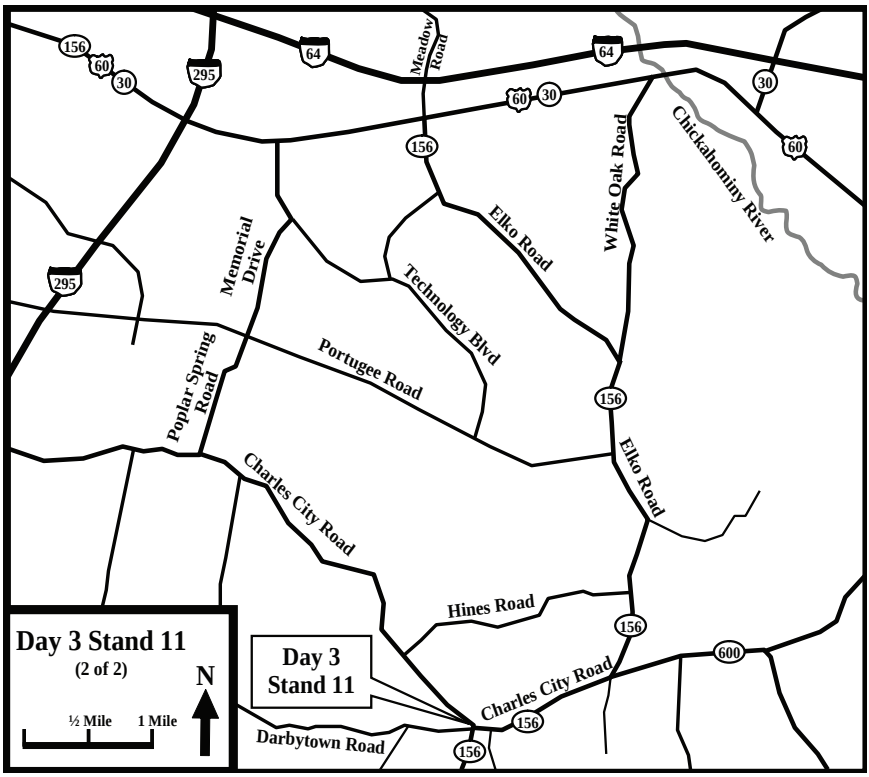
1. Critique the Union plan for departing Cold Harbor and reaching the James River. What were its strengths? What were its weaknesses?

2. Many historians contend that the Union plan and staff work was much better in the move to the James than in most of the previous movements of the Overland Campaign. Do you agree? If so, what factors may have contributed to the improvement?

Stand 11
Riddell's Shop
(13 June 1864)



Map 60.



Map 61.

Directions: Exit the parking lot by making a right on Cold Harbor Road (Route 156). After traveling 4.1 miles on Cold Harbor Road, turn left on Old Hanover Road. Go for 0.2 mile on Old Hanover Road and then turn left on Grapevine Road. After 1.4 miles, turn left on Meadow Road. After 2.6 miles on Meadow Road, you will come to an intersection with US Highway 60. (The intersection of Meadow Road and US Highway 60 is a good place to stop for lunch, because fast food and convenience stores are nearby.) Continue on Meadow Road for 5.0 miles. Along the way, Meadow Road will change its name to Elko Road. After 5 miles, turn right on Charles City Road. Travel on Charles City Road for 1.2 miles where you will reach a four-way intersection. At this intersection, Charles City Road comes from the east and then turns right (north). If you were to continue straight, the road becomes Darbytown Road. The road to the left (south) is Willis Church Road. The stand is at this intersection. It is best to turn right where there is some room on the right side of the road to park and exit the vehicles for the stand. (Keep in mind that when the stand is complete you will need to get back in the cars and make a U-turn that will

enable you to head back on Charles City Road. In any case, be cautious at this intersection—many vehicles pass at high speed.)

Orientation: The route to our current location (Riddell's Shop) is not on the same path taken by Warren's V Corps (the staff ride takes a more direct route to save time). There was no settlement here during the war; the location was named for a blacksmith's shop nearby. Both sides had fought in this area in 1862 in the Seven Day's Battles. Warren deployed in this vicinity to cover the movement of the other Union corps to the James. The paths of the Charles City, Darbytown, and Willis Church Roads are the same paths as in the Civil War. Controlling this crossroad prevented Lee from probing east and discovering the Union move.

Description: Warren's V Corps spent almost all of 13 June deployed at this location. One cavalry brigade from Wilson's division screened to the west of the crossroads. Having fulfilled its mission, the V Corps departed at 2000 for Charles City Courthouse.

The Federal movements, to include Warren's deployment here, helped to keep Lee in the dark. Unable to take the initiative, Lee waited for signs of Union intentions. Lee had his artillery bombard the Union lines at Cold Harbor every night at 2100; each time the Federals responded and the Confederate leader knew they were still in place. On the night of 12 June, the Federal artillery response was noticeably weaker than normal. Even so, on 13 June Lee sent Early and the II Corps (8,000 troops) to the Valley. As Early was departing, Lee discovered that the Federals had left Cold Harbor. Jefferson Davis suggested to Lee that he recall Early, but Lee decided to let Early complete the move.

After the discovery that the Union Army was not at Cold Harbor, Lee tried to probe for the Federals. He ordered both of his remaining corps (Anderson and Hill) across the Chickahominy toward Riddell's Shop. Confederate cavalry ran into the Union cavalry screen and pushed them back. The Southerners halted in front of Warren's infantry at Riddell's Shop at nightfall on 13 June. The Southerners occupied a line from White Oak Swamp to Malvern Hill. Lee directed Hill to continue the advance the next day.

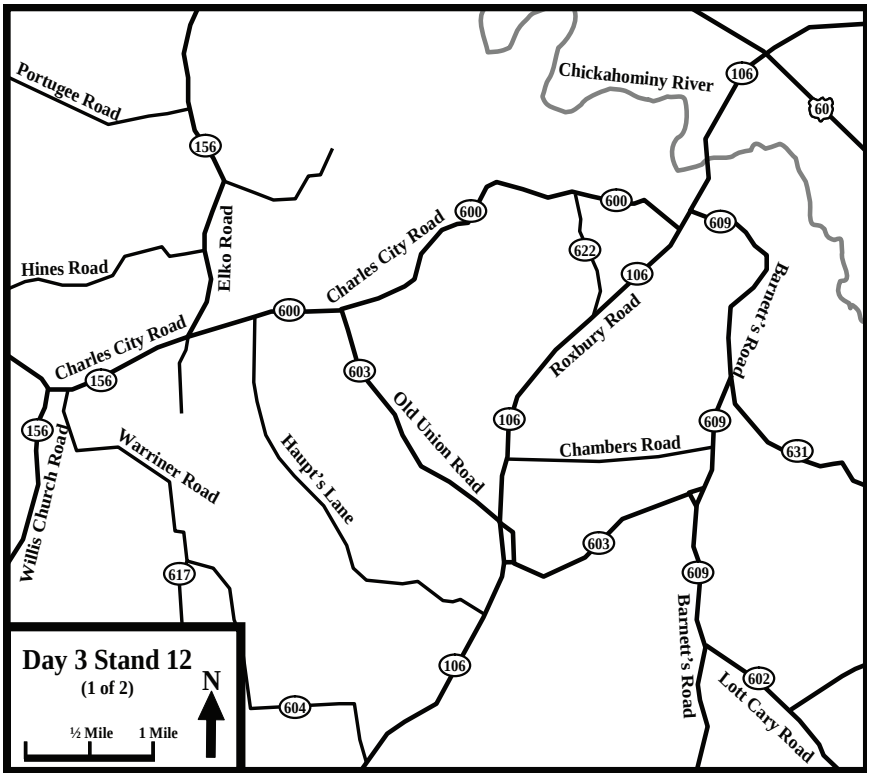
As Hill advanced early on 14 June, Lee discovered that the Federals had left Riddell's Shop. At 1210, Lee telegraphed Davis, "I think the enemy must be preparing to move south of the James River" (as quoted by Freeman, *R.E. Lee*, volume 3, 226-233, from *Lee's Dispatches: Unpublished Letters of Robert E. Lee, C.S.A., to Jefferson Davis and the War Department of the Confederate States of America, 1862-65*, New York, NY: 1915, 227). Without his cavalry, Lee could not get a fix on

Grant's moves, and he could not risk sending Confederate forces across the James until he had more hard information on the Federals.

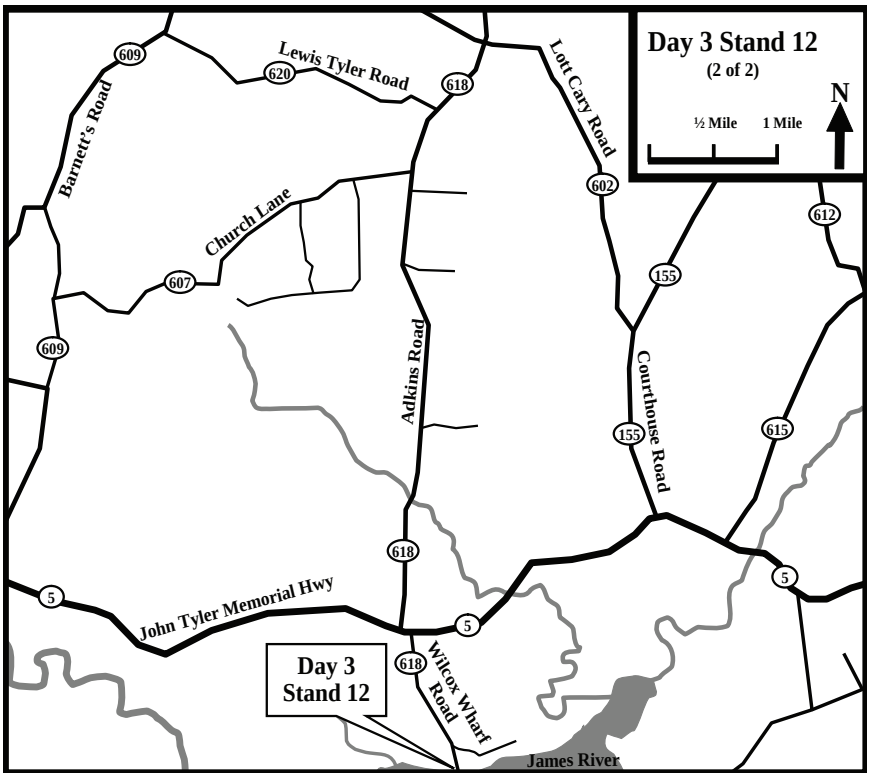
Vignettes: None.

Analysis: There are no specific points for analysis at this stand. You may want to point out that Warren's performance in the Overland Campaign was uneven; however, he and the V Corps did an excellent job in screening the army's move at Riddell's Shop.

Stand 12
Wilcox's Landing
(13–14 June 1864)



Map 62.



Map 63.

Directions: As mentioned earlier, you need to maneuver carefully at the intersection of Charles City Road and Willis Church Road so that you are back on Charles City Road heading east (opposite the direction you traveled earlier). After 1.2 miles, you will come to an intersection. Keep going straight—the road name will remain Charles City Road, but it will change numbers from Route 156 to Route 600. After 4.4 miles, turn left on Route 106 (Roxbury Road). Continue a short distance (0.2 mile) on Route 106 and then turn right on Route 609 (Barnett's Road). After 3.7 miles on Route 609, turn left on Route 602 (Lott Cary Road). Travel for 3.0 miles on Route 602 and then turn right on Route 618 (Adkins Road). After 4.5 miles you will come to a "T" intersection with Route 5 (John Tyler Memorial Highway). Turn left at the "T" and then make an immediate right turn (less than 0.1 mile) back on to Route 618 (Wilcox Wharf Road). Continue on Route 618 until it ends at the James River where you will find a parking lot at the landing. Park the cars in the lot and conduct the stand on the riverbank where you can get a good view of the river.

Orientation: Using a map, show the students the location of the last stand (Riddell's Shop) and the path you drove to get here. You are currently at Wilcox's Landing. As you face the river, downriver is to the left; upriver is to the right. Your current location is the landing where soldiers were ferried across. The site where the Federals built their bridge should be visible (in good weather) to the left (east). It is about 3 miles downriver at the second bend in the James.

Description: Hancock's II Corps arrived here (Wilcox's Landing) at 1730 on 13 June. The troops began to embark on transports at 0900 the next day. The II Corps' crossing was completed by early morning on 15 June.

At 1600 on 13 June, Union engineers, under Major James C. Duane and Brigadier General Henry W. Benham, began construction on the James River Bridge. They built the bridge from both ends, Weyanoke Neck on the north bank and Windmill Point on the south. The bridge was completed at 2300 on 13 June—it had taken only 7 hours to build. The bridge was 2,100 feet long and consisted of 101 pontoons and 3 schooners. It accommodated a four-foot tidal rise, and there was a swing span in the middle that opened up for Federal ships moving to and from City Point.

From 14 to 17 June, a major portion of the Army of the Potomac crossed the bridge. The army's trains, totaling 50 miles in length and including 3,500 head of cattle, crossed at various times throughout all four days. The IX Corps traversed on the evening of 15 June. Getty's division of the VI Corps crossed on 16 and 17 June. Finally, Wilson's cavalry division crossed on 17 June. The Federals dismantled the bridge the next day.

The rest of the army crossed the James by various means. The XVIII Corps reached Bermuda Hundred by boat on 14 June and marched on Petersburg the next day. The II Corps ferried across the river from our current location at Wilcox's Landing on 14 and 15 June and later joined Smith's corps in the advance on Petersburg. The V Corps ferried across the James on 16 June. Two divisions of the VI Corps embarked on ships near the bridging site on 16 June and sailed to Bermuda Hundred.

All told, by the end of 17 June, 100,000 Federal troops, 5,000 wagons, 56,000 horses and mules, and 3,500 cattle had crossed the James River safely.

In the meantime, Lee remained unaware of the Federal move and had not shifted any of his troops south of the James. The gates to Petersburg seemed wide open on 15 June as Beauregard with roughly 3,000 men faced the advancing XVIII and II Corps, totaling over 30,000 men. It seemed that the Confederates would not be able to hold the city, but fate would dictate another outcome.

Vignette: Horace Porter penned this account of Grant watching the crossing of the James: "As the general-in-chief stood upon the bluff on the north bank of the river on the morning of June 15, watching with unusual interest the busy scene spread out before him, it presented a sight which had never been equaled even in his extended experience in all the varied phases of warfare. His cigar had been thrown aside, his hands were clasped behind him, and he seemed lost in the contemplation of the spectacle. The great bridge was the scene of a continuous movement of infantry columns, batteries of artillery, and wagon-trains. The approaches to the river on both banks were covered with masses of troops moving briskly to their positions or waiting patiently their turn to cross. . . . The bright sun, shining through a clear sky upon the scene, cast its sheen upon the water, was reflected from the burnished gun-barrels and glittering cannon, and brought out with increased brilliancy the gay colors of the waving banners. The calmly flowing river reflected the blue of the heavens, and mirrored on its surface the beauties of nature that bordered it. The rich grain was standing high in the surrounding fields. The harvest was almost ripe, but the harvesters had fled. . . . It was a matchless pageant that could not fail to inspire all beholders with the grandeur of achievement and the majesty of military power. The man whose genius had conceived and whose skill had executed this masterly movement stood watching the spectacle in profound silence. Whether his mind was occupied with the contemplation of its magnitude and success, or was busied with maturing plans for the future, no one can tell. After a time, he woke from his reverie, mounted his horse, and gave orders to have headquarters ferried across to the south bank of the river." (Porter, 199-200.)

Analysis: It is often best not to discuss the final stand of the staff ride at this time. Save the discussion, and review of the entire staff ride, for the integration session.

IV. Integration Phase

Introduction

As this handbook has previously emphasized, a staff ride consists of three phases. The first phase is the "Preliminary Study Phase." This phase is conducted before the visit to the battlefield and prepares the students for the visit. The second phase is the "Field Study Phase." This phase is conducted on the battlefield and enables students to understand historical events through analysis of the actual terrain. The final phase of a staff ride is the "Integration Phase." No staff ride is complete without an integration phase, because it is critical for the students to understand what happened, why it happened, and, most importantly, what can be learned from the study of the battle or campaign.

There are several factors that the staff ride leader should consider when planning for and conducting the integration phase. First, the leader must work with the organization that is participating in the ride and select a time and location for the integration session. Occasionally, units may have to depart shortly after the last stand of the field phase, and the staff ride leader must conduct the integration phase on the battlefield immediately after completing the field study phase. However, when possible, students should have some time for personal reflection and thought before the integration phase. Thus, the integration phase is best if conducted the day after the field study phase ends. Even if you cannot wait an extra day, it is best to do the integration session at a location different from the last stand, a place comfortable and dry that will encourage open discussion from all the participants.

The staff ride leader should organize the integration phase based on the unit, time available, and training objectives. The leader can conduct the integration phase in a format similar to an after action review (AAR), or may simply lead a discussion with participants on what they learned. You can have specific students brief particular items, or just have an open discussion with minimal structure. It is important to keep in mind that the integration phase is *not* an AAR of the ride itself (i.e., ways to improve the ride). While it is useful to seek constructive criticism in order to continue to improve the ride, this should be done at another time or perhaps with written AAR comments. Instead, the integration phase is used for the students of the campaign to integrate their preliminary study with the fieldwork to gain insights that are relevant to their current duties and enhance their professional development. Whatever method the staff ride leader chooses to employ, the most important thing to remember is that the participants should do the majority of the talking.

One method that often produces a fruitful integration phase is to conduct the session in three parts based on three broad questions. Sometimes, the leader need only present the general question and let others carry the conversation, or the leader may have to ask more follow-up questions to prod the discussion. Each of the three questions is discussed below.

What aspects of the campaign had you developed in the preliminary study phase that changed or were strongly reinforced because of your study of the ground?

This is a crucial question because seeing the terrain is central to a staff ride, otherwise the campaign could simply be studied in the classroom. Of course, students may develop a wide range of answers based on personal study and observations in the field. Some of the more popular aspects of the discussion of terrain for the Overland Campaign include the vast distances of the operational maneuver, the wooded nature of the Wilderness, Upton's use of cover and concealment in his attack, the limited space of the Bloody Angle (so many men tragically died in such a confined area), the effectiveness of Lee's inverted "V" position on the North Anna, the depth of the defenses at Cold Harbor, and the width of the James River that needed to be bridged. The staff ride leader can ask a related question, which may also generate good discussion: *Did seeing the terrain alter your opinion of any of the leaders?* A common response to this question is that Grant may not deserve the label of "butcher" given the weapons systems of the day and the defensive advantages of the terrain and field fortifications.

What aspects of warfare have changed and what aspects have remained the same since the Overland Campaign?

The answers to the "changed" aspects will probably seem more obvious to the modern military professional and often will be related to technology. This may include changes in weapons, transportation systems, communications, and numerous other pieces of equipment. The aspects that have "remained the same" may not seem as numerous at first, but the students will often build on some initial answers and find many good items. The role of personalities; command relationships; the importance of logistics; the need for strong, positive leadership and an ability to motivate soldiers; the importance of operational maneuver; determination; courage; and fear are just some of the items of warfare that seem to have changed little since 1864. Depending on the group, you may want to ask a few more focused questions. For example, if you have a quartermaster unit, you can ask the following: *What aspects of logistics have changed and what aspects have remained the same?*

What insights can the modern military professional gain from the Overland Campaign that are relevant today?

Clearly, the participants can take this discussion into a vast number of arenas. Once again, the type of unit participating in the staff ride might help to guide the discussion. For example, a military intelligence unit might focus the commander's situational awareness, intelligence gathering, and the importance of reconnaissance. Keeping in mind that the Overland Campaign is as much an operational level staff ride as it is tactical, it might be useful to prompt discussion by using the elements of operational design as a framework for relevant lessons. These elements are:

- End state/military conditions.
- Center of gravity.
- Decisive points and objectives.
- Lines of operations.
- Culmination point.
- Operational reach/approach/pause.
- Simultaneous and sequential operations.
- Tempo.

These terms are provided as a tool; the staff ride leader may use some of them, use another framework, or simply let the students take the discussion in whatever direction they want.

The three suggested integration phase questions are to aid in sparking discussion, not to provide hard and fast "rules" of warfare. Note that the handbook provides examples of possible answers to the questions, but it does not attempt to provide a list of "right" answers. The staff ride leader should take time before the session to write down his or her own answers to these questions to have some potential ideas to generate student discussion. At the same time, the staff ride leader should strive for the participants to develop their own answers, and thus be prepared to let the discussion roam many different paths.

V. Support

1. Information and assistance.

a. The Staff Ride Team, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, has conducted numerous Overland Campaign Staff Rides and can provide advice and assistance on every aspect of the staff ride. The Staff Ride Team can also provide facilitators to lead an Overland Campaign Staff Ride. Visit the Combat Studies Institute website for information on obtaining staff ride assistance and/or leadership. Staff Ride Team support includes background information, detailed knowledge of the battle and battlefield, and familiarity with the Overland Campaign area.

Address: Combat Studies Institute
ATTN: ATZL-CSH
201 Sedwick Avenue, Building 315
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027

Telephone: DSN: 552-2078
Commercial: (913) 684-2078

Website: http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/csi/staff_ride/index.asp

b. Large parts of the Overland Campaign Staff Ride take place on National Park Service (NPS) Battlefield Parks. It is important to contact the staff of the NPS and let them know you are conducting a staff ride. Members of the United States military can enter NPS Battlefield Parks free if conducting a staff ride, and the park staff at all locations are extremely helpful.

The battlefields of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania belong to the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. The park's headquarters is Fredericksburg, and it has visitor centers at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. The Wilderness and Spotsylvania battlefields do not have visitor centers.

Address: 120 Chatham Lane
Fredericksburg, VA 22405-2508

Telephone: Superintendent's Office
(540) 373-4510
Fredericksburg Visitor Center
(540) 373-6122
Chancellorsville Visitor Center
(540) 786-2880

Website: http://www.nps.gov/frsp/

The Cold Harbor battlefield is a part of the Richmond National Battlefield system of parks. Cold Harbor has its own visitor center. Send mail to the Richmond office:

Address: Richmond National Battlefield Park
3215 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23223

Telephone: Cold Harbor: (804) 226-1981
Richmond: (804) 771-2145

Website: http://www.nps.gov/rich/

You need to contact the Memorial Foundation of the Germanna Colonies in Virginia to stop at the first stand near Germanna Ford.

Address: Memorial Foundation of the Germanna Colonies in Virginia
PO Box 279
Locust Grove, VA 22508-0279

Telephone: (540) 423-1700

Website: http://www.germanna.org

c. The North Anna and part of the Cold Harbor battlefields are maintained and operated by the Hanover County Parks and Recreation Department (HCP&RD) and are not affiliated with the National Park Service. The HCP&RD maintains a substantial portion of the Confederate trench lines of the North Anna battlefield and Union trench lines at the Cold Harbor site. These sites are open to the public; however, there are no restrooms or picnic areas at these two sites, nor is there food available for purchase. No park personnel are present to assist you; but, brochures and information about this portion of the campaign are available in the small wooden boxes at the park entrance. Each park is extremely well marked with interpretive signs and possesses well-marked and well-maintained trail systems that are posted to guide you through the various actions in a logical sequence. The North Anna Park is somewhat isolated and may be closed at unusual times. It is recommended that you contact the HCP&RD to verify dates and times of availability. For military staff rides, the park service employees are amenable to ensuring the parks are open if coordinated ahead of time.

Address: Hanover County Parks and Recreation Department
ATTN: Director
13017 Taylor Complex Lane
Ashland, VA 23005

Telephone: (804) 365-4695

Website: http://www.co.hanover.va.us/parksrec/default.htm

2. Logistics.

a. Meals. There are many restaurants in Fredericksburg, Richmond, and Ashland that are convenient to hotel locations and should take care of breakfast and dinner. Lunch can either be a box lunch carried on the vehicles or you can eat at nearby fast-food restaurants. As noted in the stands, we have recommended times to pause in the staff ride for lunch on all three days.

b. Lodging. Groups can find many hotels in Fredericksburg (for the night after day 1) and in either Ashland or Richmond (for the night after day 2). If the group wants to cut down on lodging costs, there are many military bases in Virginia and the Washington, DC, area, but they are not as conveniently located as the hotels.

c. Travel. If the group is flying to the area, the Richmond airport is the most convenient to use. Once on the ground, larger groups will need to contract for a bus—make sure it has a microphone and public address system as well as a restroom. Smaller groups (less than 20) might find it easier for parking and maneuvering to use rental vans.

3. Other considerations.

a. A reconnaissance of the stands and route just prior to execution of the ride is imperative for a successful staff ride.

b. Ensure that every member of the group has water. Additionally, some restrooms are available on the route. Plan for adequate stops at these facilities.

c. Ensure that your group has proper clothing for inclement weather. Thunderstorms can occur in any season. Some walking is required for each of the major battlefields you visit. Comfortable boots or hiking shoes are recommended. We recommend that you do not wear sandals or running shoes.

d. Mosquitoes, ants, chiggers, ticks, and other insects are prevalent from March to October, so insect repellent is advised. Poison ivy is also present in some of the more remote areas.

e. Road traffic in the Wilderness areas can be heavy. The area has several nearby housing subdivisions that ensure almost constant traffic along the Orange Turnpike (Virginia Highway 20), the Orange Plank Road (County Road 621), and Brock Road (County Road 613). Several

stands are conducted near major roads and some foot movement across or parallel to the roads is necessary. Be sure to use traffic guards and stress safety to group members when getting off and on the vehicles and when moving across or near the roads. Similarly, be careful of US Highway 1 and the highly traveled roads around Richmond.

Appendix A

Order of Battle, Wilderness

1. Federal Forces.

Headquarters, Armies in the Field
Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant
Escort: B, F, and K Companies, 5th United States Cavalry

Commander, Army of the Potomac
Maj. Gen. George G. Meade

Guards and Orderlies
Independent Company Oneida (New York) Cavalry

Provost Guard
Brig. Gen. Marsena R. Patrick
1st Massachusetts Cavalry, C and D
80th New York Infantry (20th Militia)
3d Pennsylvania Cavalry
68th Pennsylvania Infantry
114th Pennsylvania Infantry

Volunteer Engineer Brigade
Brig. Gen. Henry W. Benham
50th New York Engineers*

*With the exception of 11 companies of the 50th New York, this command, with its commander, was at the Engineer Depot, Washington, DC.

Battalion US Engineers
Capt. George H. Mendell

Artillery Chief, Army of the Potomac
Brig. Gen. Henry J. Hunt

Artillery Reserve, Army of the Potomac
Col. Henry S. Burton

First Brigade (heavy artillery, fighting as infantry), Col. J. Howard Kitching
- 6th New York Heavy Artillery
- 15th New York Heavy Artillery

Second Brigade, Maj. John A. Tompkins
- Maine Light, 5th Battery (E)
- 1st New Jersey Light, Battery A
- 1st New Jersey Light, Battery B
- New York Light, 5th Battery
- New York Light, 12th Battery
- 1st New York Light, Battery B

Third Brigade, Maj. Robert H. Fitzhugh
Massachusetts Light, 9th Battery
New York Light, 15th Battery
1st New York Light, Battery C
New York Light, 11th Battery
1st Ohio Light, Battery H
5th United States, Battery E
First Brigade Horse Artillery, Capt. James M. Robertson
New York Light, 6th Battery
2d United States, Batteries B and L
2d United States, Battery D
2d United States, Battery M
4th United States, Battery A
4th United States, Batteries C and E
Second Brigade Horse Artillery, Capt. Dunbar R. Ransom
1st United States, Batteries E and G
1st United States, Batteries H and I
1st United States, Battery K
2d United States, Battery A
2d United States, Battery G
3d United States, Batteries C, F, and K

II Corps

Maj. Gen. Winfield S. Hancock

Escort: 1st Vermont Cavalry, Company M
First Division, Brig. Gen. Francis C. Barlow
First Brigade, Col. Nelson A. Miles
26th Michigan
61st New York
81st Pennsylvania
140th Pennsylvania
183d Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. Thomas A. Smyth
28th Massachusetts
63d New York
69th New York
88th New York
116th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Col. Paul Frank
39th New York
52d New York (Detachment 7th New York attached)
57th New York

111th New York
125th New York
126th New York
Fourth Brigade, Col. John R. Brooke
2d Delaware
64th New York
66th New York
53d Pennsylvania
145th Pennsylvania
148th Pennsylvania
Second Division, Brig. Gen. John Gibbon
Provost Guard: 2d Company Minnesota Sharpshooters
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Alexander S. Webb
19th Maine
1st Company (Massachusetts Sharpshooters)
15th Massachusetts
19th Massachusetts
20th Massachusetts
7th Michigan
42d New York
59th New York
82d New York (2d Militia)
Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. Joshua T. Owen
152d New York
69th Pennsylvania
71st Pennsylvania
72d Pennsylvania
106th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Col. Samuel S. Carroll
14th Connecticut
1st Delaware
14th Indiana
12th New Jersey
10th New York Battalion
108th New York
4th Ohio
8th Ohio
7th West Virginia
Third Division, Maj. Gen. David B. Birney
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. J.H. Hobart Ward
20th Indiana

3d Maine
40th New York
86th New York
124th New York
99th Pennsylvania
110th Pennsylvania
141st Pennsylvania
2d United States Sharpshooters
Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. Alexander Hays (k); Col. John S. Crocker
4th Maine
17th Maine
3d Michigan
5th Michigan
93d New York
57th Pennsylvania
63d Pennsylvania
105th Pennsylvania
1st United States Sharpshooters
Fourth Division, Brig. Gen. Gershom Mott
First Brigade, Col. Robert McAllister
1st Massachusetts
16th Massachusetts
5th New Jersey
6th New Jersey
7th New Jersey
8th New Jersey
11th New Jersey
26th Pennsylvania
115th Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. William R. Brewster
11th Massachusetts
70th New York
71st New York
72d New York
73d New York
74th New York
120th New York
84th Pennsylvania
Artillery Brigade (II Corps), Col. John C. Tidball
6th Maine Light, Battery F
Massachusetts Light, 10th Battery

New Hampshire Light, 1st Battery
1st New York Light, Battery G
4th New York Heavy, 3d Battalion
1st Pennsylvania Light, Battery F
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery A
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery B
4th United States, Battery K
5th United States, Batteries C and I

V Corps

Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren

Provost Guard: 12th New York Battalion
First Division, Brig. Gen. Charles Griffin
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Romeyn B. Ayres
140th New York
146th New York
91st Pennsylvania
155th Pennsylvania
2d United States, Companies B, C, F, H, I, and K
11th United States, Companies B, C, D, E, F, and G, 1st Battalion
12th United States, Companies A, B, C, D, and G, 1st Battalion
12th United States, Companies A, C, D, F, and H, 2d Battalion
14th United States, 1st Battalion
17th United States, Companies A, C, D, G, and H, 1st Battalion
17th United States, Companies A, B, and C, 2d Battalion
Second Brigade, Col. Jacob B. Sweitzer
9th Massachusetts
22d Massachusetts (2d Co Massachusetts Sharpshooters attached)
32d Massachusetts
4th Michigan
62d Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Brig. Gen. Joseph J. Bartlett
20th Maine
18th Massachusetts
1st Michigan
16th Michigan
44th New York
83d Pennsylvania
118th Pennsylvania
Second Division, Brig. Gen. John C. Robinson
First Brigade, Col. Samuel H. Leonard
16th Maine

13th Massachusetts
39th Massachusetts
104th New York
Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry Baxter
12th Massachusetts
83d New York (9th Militia)
97th New York
11th Pennsylvania
88th Pennsylvania
90th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Col. Andrew W. Denison
1st Maryland
4th Maryland
7th Maryland
8th Maryland
Third Division, Brig. Gen. Samuel W. Crawford
First Brigade, Col. William McCandless
1st Pennsylvania Reserves
2d Pennsylvania Reserves
6th Pennsylvania Reserves
7th Pennsylvania Reserves
11th Pennsylvania Reserves
13th Pennsylvania Reserves (1st Rifles)
Third Brigade, Col. Joseph W. Fisher
5th Pennsylvania Reserves
8th Pennsylvania Reserves
10th Pennsylvania Reserves
12th Pennsylvania Reserves
Fourth Division, Brig. Gen. James S. Wadsworth (mw); Col. Richard Coulter
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Lysander Cutler
7th Indiana
19th Indiana
24th Michigan
1st New York Battalion Sharpshooters
2d Wisconsin
6th Wisconsin
7th Wisconsin
Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. James C. Rice
76th New York
84th New York (14th Militia)

95th New York
147th New York
56th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Col. Roy Stone (w); Col. Edward S. Bragg
121st Pennsylvania
142d Pennsylvania
143d Pennsylvania
149th Pennsylvania
150th Pennsylvania
Artillery Brigade (V Corps), Col. Charles S. Wainwright
Massachusetts Light, Battery C
Massachusetts Light, Battery E
1st New York Light, Battery D
1st New York Light, Batteries E and L
1st New York Light, Battery H
4th New York Heavy, 2d Battalion
1st Pennsylvania Light, Battery B
4th United States, Battery B
5th United States, Battery D

VI Corps

Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick

Escort: 8th Pennsylvania Cavalry, Company A
First Division, Brig. Gen. Horatio G. Wright
First Brigade, Col. Henry W. Brown
1st New Jersey
2d New Jersey
3d New Jersey
4th New Jersey
10th New Jersey
15th New Jersey
Second Brigade, Col. Emory Upton
5th Maine
121st New York
95th Pennsylvania
96th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Brig. Gen. David A. Russell
6th Maine
49th Pennsylvania
119th Pennsylvania
5th Wisconsin

Fourth Brigade, Brig. Gen. Alexander Shaler (c); Col. Nelson Cross
65th New York
67th New York
122d New York
82d Pennsylvania (det)

Second Division, Brig. Gen. George W. Getty (w); Brig. Gen. Frank Wheaton; Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Neill

First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Frank Wheaton
62d New York
93d Pennsylvania
98th Pennsylvania
102d Pennsylvania
139th Pennsylvania

Second Brigade, Col. Lewis A. Grant
2d Vermont
3d Vermont
4th Vermont
5th Vermont
6th Vermont

Third Brigade, Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Neill; Col. Daniel D. Bidwell
7th Maine
43d New York
49th New York
77th New York
61st Pennsylvania

Fourth Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry L. Eustis
7th Massachusetts
10th Massachusetts
37th Massachusetts
2d Rhode Island

Third Division, Brig. Gen. James B. Ricketts

First Brigade, Brig. Gen. William H. Morris
14th New Jersey
106th New York
151st New York
87th Pennsylvania
10th Vermont

Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. Truman Seymour (c); Col. Benjamin F. Smith
6th Maryland
110th Maryland
122d Ohio

126th Ohio
67th Pennsylvania (Det)
138th Pennsylvania
Artillery Brigade (VI Corps), Col. Charles H. Tompkins
Maine Light, 4th Battery (D)
Massachusetts Light, 1st Battery (A)
New York Light, 1st Battery
New York Light, 3d Battery
4th New York Heavy, 1st Battalion
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery C
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery E
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery G
5th United States, Battery M

IX Corps

Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside

(This corps was under the direct orders of Lt. Gen. Grant until 24 May 1864, when it was assigned to the Army of the Potomac.)

Provost Guard: 8th United States Infantry
First Division, Brig. Gen. Thomas G. Stevenson
First Brigade, Col. Sumner Carruth
35th Massachusetts
56th Massachusetts
57th Massachusetts
59th Massachusetts
4th United States
10th United States
Second Brigade, Col. Daniel Leasure
3d Maryland
21st Massachusetts
100th Pennsylvania
Artillery (First Division)
2d Maine Light, Battery B
Massachusetts Light, 14th Battery
Second Division, Brig. Gen. Robert B. Potter
First Brigade, Col. Zenas R. Bliss
36th Massachusetts
58th Massachusetts
51st New York
45th Pennsylvania
48th Pennsylvania
7th Rhode Island

Second Brigade, Col. Simon G. Griffin
31st Maine
32d Maine
6th New Hampshire
9th New Hampshire
11th New Hampshire
17th Vermont
Artillery (Second Division)
Massachusetts Light, 11th Battery
New York Light, 19th Battery
Third Division, Brig. Gen. Orlando B. Willcox
First Brigade, Col. John F. Hartranft
2d Michigan
8th Michigan
17th Michigan
27th Michigan (1st and 2d Co Michigan Sharpshooters attached)
109th New York
51st Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. Benjamin C. Christ
1st Michigan Sharpshooters
20th Michigan
79th New York
60th Ohio (9th and 10th Co Ohio Sharpshooters attached)
50th Pennsylvania
Artillery (Third Division)
7th Maine Light, Battery G
New York Light, 34th Battery
Fourth Division, Brig. Gen. Edward Ferrero (This division was not available for battle during the Wilderness Campaign, but was restricted to guard detail.)
First Brigade, Col. Joshua K. Sigfried
27th United States Colored Troops
30th United States Colored Troops
39th United States Colored Troops
43d United States Colored Troops
Second Brigade, Col. Henry G. Thomas
30th Connecticut (Colored) (Det)
19th United States Colored Troops
23d United States Colored Troops
Artillery (Fourth Division)
Pennsylvania Light, Battery D
Vermont Light, 3d Battery

Cavalry (IX Corps)
- 3d New Jersey
- 22d New York
- 13th Pennsylvania

Reserve Artillery (IX Corps), Capt. John Edwards, Jr.
- New York Light, 27th Battery
- 1st Rhode Island Light, Battery D
- 1st Rhode Island Light, Battery H
- 2d United States, Battery E
- 3d United States, Battery G
- 3d United States, Batteries L and M

Provisional Brigade (IX Corps), Col. Elisha G. Marshall
- 24th New York Cavalry (dismounted)
- 14th New York Heavy Artillery
- 2d Pennsylvania Provisional Heavy Artillery

Cavalry Corps

Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan

Escort: 6th United States Cavalry

First Division, Brig. Gen. Alfred T.A. Torbert
- First Brigade, Brig. Gen. George A. Custer
  - 1st Michigan
  - 5th Michigan
  - 6th Michigan
  - 7th Michigan
- Second Brigade, Col. Thomas C. Devin
  - 4th New York (Detached, guarding trains)
  - 6th New York
  - 9th New York
  - 17th Pennsylvania
- Reserve Brigade, Brig. Gen. Wesley Merritt
  - 19th New York (1st Dragoons)
  - 6th Pennsylvania
  - 1st United States
  - 2d United States
  - 5th United States (Co B, F, and K escort to Lt. Gen. U.S. Grant)

Second Division, Brig. Gen. David McM. Gregg
- First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry D. Davies, Jr.
  - 1st Massachusetts
  - 1st New Jersey
  - 6th Ohio
  - 1st Pennsylvania

Second Brigade, Col. J. Irvin Gregg
1st Maine
10th New York
2d Pennsylvania
4th Pennsylvania
8th Pennsylvania
16th Pennsylvania
Third Division, Brig. Gen. James H. Wilson
Escort: 8th Illinois (Detachment)
First Brigade, Col. John B. McIntosh
1st Connecticut
2d New York
5th New York
18th Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. George H. Chapman
3d Indiana
8th New York
1st Vermont

2. Confederate Forces.

Commander, Army of Northern Virginia
Gen. Robert E. Lee

I Corps
Lt. Gen. James Longstreet (w); Maj. Gen. Richard H. Anderson
Kershaw's Division, Brig. Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw
Kershaw's Brigade, Col. John W. Henagan
2d South Carolina
3d South Carolina
7th South Carolina
8th South Carolina
15th South Carolina
3d South Carolina Battalion
Humphreys' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Benjamin G. Humphreys
13th Mississippi
17th Mississippi
18th Mississippi
21st Mississippi
Wofford's Brigade, Brig. Gen. William T. Wofford
16th Georgia
18th Georgia
24th Georgia

Cobb's (Georgia) Legion
Phillips (Georgia) Legion
3d Georgia Battalion Sharpshooters
Bryan's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Goode Bryan
10th Georgia
50th Georgia
51st Georgia
53d Georgia
Field's Division, Maj. Gen. Charles W. Field
Jenkins' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Micah Jenkins (k); Col. John Bratton
1st South Carolina
2d South Carolina
5th South Carolina
6th South Carolina
Palmetto (South Carolina) Sharpshooters
Anderson's Brigade, Brig. Gen. George T. Anderson
7th Georgia
8th Georgia
9th Georgia
11th Georgia
59th Georgia
Law's Brigade, Col. William F. Perry
4th Alabama
15th Alabama
44th Alabama
47th Alabama
48th Alabama
Gregg's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John Gregg
3d Arkansas
1st Texas
4th Texas
5th Texas
Benning's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry L. Benning
2d Georgia
15th Georgia
17th Georgia
20th Georgia
Artillery (I Corps), Brig. Gen. E. Porter Alexander
Huger's Battalion, Lt. Col. Frank Huger
Fickling's (South Carolina) Battery
Moody's (Louisiana) Battery

Parker's (Virginia) Battery
J.D. Smith's (Virginia) Battery
Taylor's (Virginia) Battery
Woolfolk's (Virginia) Battery
Haskell's Battalion, Maj. John C. Haskell
Flanner's (North Carolina) Battery
Garden's (South Carolina) Battery
Lamkin's (Virginia) Battery
Ramsay's (North Carolina) Battery
Cabell's Battalion, Col. Henry C. Cabell
Callaway's (Georgia) Battery
Carlton's (Georgia) Battery
McCarthy's (Virginia) Battery
Manly's (North Carolina) Battery

II Corps

Lt. Gen. Richard S. Ewell

Early's Division, Maj. Gen. Jubal A. Early
Hays' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Harry T. Hays
5th Louisiana
6th Louisiana
7th Louisiana
8th Louisiana
9th Louisiana
Pegram's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John Pegram
13th Virginia
31st Virginia
49th Virginia
52d Virginia
58th Virginia
Gordon's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John B. Gordon
13th Georgia
26th Georgia
31st Georgia
38th Georgia
60th Georgia
61st Georgia
Johnston's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Robert D. Johnston
5th North Carolina
12th North Carolina
20th North Carolina
23d North Carolina

Johnson's Division, Maj. Gen. Edward Johnson
- Stonewall Brigade, Brig. Gen. James A. Walker
  - 2d Virginia
  - 4th Virginia
  - 5th Virginia
  - 27th Virginia
  - 33d Virginia
- Steuart's Brigade, Brig. Gen. George H. Steuart
  - 1st North Carolina
  - 3d North Carolina
  - 10th Virginia
  - 23d Virginia
  - 37th Virginia
- Jones' Brigade, Brig. Gen. John M. Jones
  - 21st Virginia
  - 25th Virginia
  - 42d Virginia
  - 44th Virginia
  - 48th Virginia
  - 50th Virginia
- Stafford's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Leroy A. Stafford
  - 1st Louisiana
  - 2d Louisiana
  - 10th Louisiana
  - 14th Louisiana
  - 15th Louisiana

Rodes' Division, Maj. Gen. Robert E. Rodes
- Daniel's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Junius Daniel
  - 32d North Carolina
  - 43d North Carolina
  - 45th North Carolina
  - 53d North Carolina
  - 2d North Carolina Battalion
- Ramseur's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Stephen D. Ramseur
  - 2d North Carolina
  - 4th North Carolina
  - 14th North Carolina
  - 30th North Carolina
- Doles' Brigade, Brig. Gen. George Doles
  - 4th Georgia
  - 12th Georgia
  - 44th Georgia

Battle's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Cullen A. Battle
3d Alabama
5th Alabama
6th Alabama
12th Alabama
26th Alabama
Artillery (II Corps), Brig. Gen. Armistead L. Long
Hardaway's Battalion, Lt. Col. Robert A. Hardaway (Under special direction of Col. J. Thompson Brown)
Dance's (Virginia) Battery
Graham's (Virginia) Battery
C.B. Griffin's (Virginia) Battery
Jones' (Virginia) Battery
B.H. Smith's (Virginia) Battery
Nelson's Battalion, Lt. Col. William A. Nelson (Under special direction of Col. J. Thompson Brown)
Kirkpatrick's (Virginia) Battery
Massie's (Virginia) Battery
Milledge's (Georgia) Battery
Braxton's Battalion, Lt. Col. Carter M. Braxton (Under special direction of Col. J. Thompson Brown)
Carpenter's (Virginia) Battery
Cooper's (Virginia) Battery
Hardwicke's (Virginia) Battery
Cutshaw's Battalion, Maj. Wilfred E. Cutshaw (Under special direction of Col. Thomas H. Carter)
Carrington's (Virginia) Battery
A.W. Garber's (Virginia) Battery
Tanner's (Virginia) Battery
Page's Battalion, Maj. Richard C.M. Page (Under special direction of Col. Thomas H. Carter)
W.P. Carter's (Virginia) Battery
Fry's (Virginia) Battery
Page's (Virginia) Battery
Reese's (Alabama) Battery

III Corps

Lt. Gen. Ambrose P. Hill

Anderson's Division, Maj. Gen. Richard H. Anderson
Perrin's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Abner Perrin
8th Alabama
9th Alabama

10th Alabama
11th Alabama
14th Alabama
Mahone's Brigade, Brig. Gen. William Mahone
6th Virginia
12th Virginia
16th Virginia
41st Virginia
61st Virginia
Harris' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Nathaniel Harris
12th Mississippi
16th Mississippi
19th Mississippi
48th Mississippi
Wright's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Ambrose R. Wright
3d Georgia
22d Georgia
48th Georgia
2d Georgia Battalion
Perry's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Edward A. Perry
2d Florida
5th Florida
8th Florida
Heth's Division, Maj. Gen. Henry Heth
Davis' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Joseph R. Davis
2d Mississippi
11th Mississippi
42d Mississippi
55th North Carolina
Kirkland's Brigade, Brig. Gen. William W. Kirkland
11th North Carolina
26th North Carolina
44th North Carolina
47th North Carolina
52d North Carolina
Cooke's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John R. Cooke
15th North Carolina
27th North Carolina
46th North Carolina
48th North Carolina

Walker's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry H. Walker
40th Virginia
47th Virginia
55th Virginia
22d Virginia (Battalion)
Archer's Brigade, Brig. Gen. James J. Archer (Fought under Walker's Brigade)
13th Alabama
1st Tennessee (Provisional Army)
7th Tennessee
14th Tennessee
Wilcox's Division, Maj. Gen. Cadmus M. Wilcox
Lane's Brigade, Brig. Gen. James H. Lane
7th North Carolina
18th North Carolina
28th North Carolina
33d North Carolina
37th North Carolina
McGowan's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Samuel McGowan
1st South Carolina (Provisional Army)
12th South Carolina
13th South Carolina
14th South Carolina
1st South Carolina (Orr's Rifles)
Scales' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Alfred M. Scales
13th North Carolina
16th North Carolina
22d North Carolina
34th North Carolina
38th North Carolina
Thomas' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Edward L. Thomas
14th Georgia
35th Georgia
45th Georgia
49th Georgia
Artillery (III Corps), Col. R. Lindsay Walker
Poague's Battalion, Lt. Col. William T. Poague
Richard's (Mississippi) Battery
Utterback's (Virginia) Battery
William's (North Carolina) Battery
Wyatt's (Virginia) Battery

McIntosh's Battalion, Lt. Col. David G. McIntosh
Clutter's (Virginia) Battery
Donald's (Virginia) Battery
Hurt's (Alabama) Battery
Price's (Virginia) Battery
Pegram's Battalion, Lt. Col. William J. Pegram
Brander's (Virginia) Battery
Cayce's (Virginia) Battery
Ellett's (Virginia) Battery
Marye's (Virginia) Battery
Zimmerman's (South Carolina) Battery
Cutts' Battalion, Col. Allen S. Cutts
Patterson's (Georgia) Battery
Ross' (Georgia) Battery
Wingfield's (Georgia) Battery
Richardson's Battalion, Lt. Col. Charles Richardson
Grandy's (Virginia) Battery
Landry's (Louisiana) Battery
Moore's (Virginia) Battery
Penick's (Virginia) Battery

Cavalry Corps

Maj. Gen. James E.B. Stuart

Hampton's Division, Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton
Young's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Pierce M.B. Young
7th Georgia
Cobb's (Georgia) Legion
Phillip's (Georgia) Legion
20th Georgia Battalion
Jefferson Davis (Mississippi) Legion
Rosser's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Thomas L. Rosser
7th Virginia
11th Virginia
12th Virginia
35th Virginia Battalion
Fitzhugh Lee's Division, Maj. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee
Lomax's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Lunsford L. Lomax
5th Virginia
6th Virginia
15th Virginia
Wickham's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Williams C. Wickham
1st Virginia

2d Virginia
3d Virginia
4th Virginia
William H.F. Lee's Division, Maj. Gen. William H.F. Lee
Chambliss' Brigade, Brig. Gen. John R. Chambliss
9th Virginia
10th Virginia
13th Virginia
Gordon's Brigade, Brig. Gen. James B. Gordon
1st North Carolina
2d North Carolina
5th North Carolina
Horse Artillery, Maj. R. Preston Chew
Breathed's Battalion, Maj. James Breathed
Hart's (South Carolina) Battery
Johnston's (Virginia) Battery
McGregor's (Virginia) Battery
Shoemaker's (Virginia) Battery
Thomson's (Virginia) Battery

Appendix B

Order of Battle, Spotsylvania

1. Federal Forces.

Headquarters, Armies in the Field
Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant
Escort: B, F, and K Companies, 5th United States Cavalry

Commander, Army of the Potomac
Maj. Gen. George G. Meade

Guards and Orderlies
Independent Company Oneida (New York) Cavalry

Provost Guard
Brig. Gen. Marsena R. Patrick
1st Massachusetts Cavalry, C and D
80th New York Infantry (20th Militia)
3d Pennsylvania Cavalry
68th Pennsylvania Infantry
114th Pennsylvania Infantry

Volunteer Engineer Brigade
Brig. Gen. Henry W. Benham
50th New York Engineers*

*With the exception of 11 companies of the 50th New York, this command, with its commander, was at the Engineer Depot, Washington, DC.

Battalion US Engineers
Capt. George H. Mendell

Artillery Chief, Army of the Potomac
Brig. Gen. Henry J. Hunt

Reserve Artillery, Army of the Potomac
Col. Henry S. Burton

First Brigade (heavy artillery, fighting as infantry), Col. J. Howard Kitching
- 6th New York Heavy Artillery
- 15th New York Heavy Artillery

Second Brigade, Maj. John A. Tomkins
- 5th Maine, Battery E
- 1st New Jersey, Battery A
- 1st New Jersey, Battery B
- 5th New York Battery
- 12th New York Battery
- 1st New York, Battery B

Third Brigade, Maj. Robert H. Fitzhugh
9th Massachusetts Battery
15th New York Battery
1st New York Battery C
11th New York Battery
1st Ohio, Battery H
5th United States, Battery E
First Brigade Horse Artillery, Capt. James M. Robertson
6th New York Battery
2d United States, Batteries B and L
2d United States, Battery D
2d United States, Battery M
4th United States, Battery A
4th United States, Batteries C and E
Second Brigade Horse Artillery, Capt. Dunbar R. Ransom
1st United States, Batteries E and G
1st United States, Batteries H and I
1st United States, Battery K
2d United States, Battery A
2d United States, Battery G
3d United States, Batteries C, F, and K

II Corps

Maj. Gen. Winfield S. Hancock

Escort: 1st Vermont Cavalry, Company M
First Division, Brig. Gen. Francis C. Barlow
First Brigade, Col. Nelson A. Miles
26th Michigan
61st New York
81st Pennsylvania
140th Pennsylvania
183d Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. Thomas A. Smyth
28th Massachusetts
63d New York
69th New York
88th New York
116th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Col. Paul Frank (relieved); Col. Hiram L. Brown (c); Col. Clinton D. MacDougall
39th New York
52d New York

57th New York
111th New York
125th New York
126th New York
Fourth Brigade, Col. John R. Brooke
2d Delaware
64th New York
66th New York
53d Pennsylvania
145th Pennsylvania
148th Pennsylvania
Second Division, Brig. Gen. John Gibbon
Provost Guard: 2d Company Minnesota Sharpshooters
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Alexander S. Webb (w); Col. H. Boyd McKeen
19th Maine
1st Company (Sharpshooters)
15th Massachusetts
19th Massachusetts
20th Massachusetts
7th Michigan
42d New York
59th New York
82d New York (2d Militia)
Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. Joshua T. Owen
152d New York
69th Pennsylvania
71st Pennsylvania
72d Pennsylvania
106th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Col. Samuel S. Carroll (w); Col. Theodore G. Ellis; Col. Thomas A. Smyth
14th Connecticut
1st Delaware
14th Indiana
12th New Jersey
10th New York Battalion
108th New York
4th Ohio
8th Ohio
7th West Virginia
Fourth Brigade (arrived on 17 May), Col. Mathew Murphy (w); Col. James P. McIvor

155th New York
164th New York
170th New York
182d New York

Third Division, Maj. Gen. David B. Birney

First Brigade, Brig. Gen. J.H. Hobart Ward (relieved); Col. Thomas W. Egan

20th Indiana
3d Maine
40th New York
86th New York
124th New York
99th Pennsylvania
110th Pennsylvania
141st Pennsylvania
2d United States Sharpshooters

Second Brigade, Col. John S. Crocker; Col. Elijah Walker

4th Maine
17th Maine
3d Michigan
5th Michigan
93d New York
57th Pennsylvania
63d Pennsylvania
105th Pennsylvania
1st United States Sharpshooters

Fourth Division (incorporated into Birney's Third Division on 13 May), Brig. Gen. Gershom Mott

First Brigade, Col. Robert McAllister

1st Massachusetts
16th Massachusetts
5th New Jersey
6th New Jersey
7th New Jersey
8th New Jersey
11th New Jersey
26th Pennsylvania
115th Pennsylvania

Second Brigade, Col. William R. Brewster

11th Massachusetts
70th New York
71st New York

72d New York
73d New York
74th New York
120th New York
84th Pennsylvania
Artillery Brigade (II Corps), Col John C. Tidball
6th Maine Light, Battery F
Massachusetts Light, 10th Battery
New Hampshire Light, 1st Battery
1st New York Light, Battery G
4th New York Heavy, 3d Battalion
1st Pennsylvania Light, Battery F
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery A
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery B
4th United States, Battery K
5th United States, Batteries C and I

V Corps

Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren

Provost Guard: 12th New York Battalion
First Division, Brig. Gen. Charles Griffin
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Romeyn B. Ayres
140th New York
146th New York
91st Pennsylvania
155th Pennsylvania
2d United States, Companies B, C, F, H, I, and K
11th United States, Companies B, C, D, E, F, and G, 1st Battalion
12th United States, Companies A, B, C, D, and G, 1st Battalion
12th United States, Companies A, C, D, F, and H, 2d Battalion
14th United States, 1st Battalion
17th United States, Companies A, C, D, G, and H, 1st Battalion
17th United States, Companies A, B, and C, 2d Battalion
Second Brigade, Col. Jacob B. Sweitzer
9th Massachusetts
22d Massachusetts
32d Massachusetts
4th Michigan
62d Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Brig. Gen. Joseph J. Bartlett
20th Maine
18th Massachusetts

1st Michigan
16th Michigan
44th New York
83d Pennsylvania
118th Pennsylvania

Second Division (disbanded on 9 May—Lyle's brigade assigned to Cutler's division, Coulter's brigade assigned to Crawford's division, Denison's brigade assigned directly to corps), Brig. Gen. John C. Robinson (w); Col. Richard Coulter

First Brigade, Col. Peter Lyle
16th Maine
13th Massachusetts
39th Massachusetts
104th New York
90th Pennsylvania
107th Pennsylvania (arrived 16 May)

Second Brigade, Col. Richard Coulter; Col. James L. Bates
12th Massachusetts
83d New York
97th New York
11th Pennsylvania
88th Pennsylvania

Third Brigade, Col. Andrew W. Denison (w); Col. Charles E. Phelps (c); Col. Richard N. Bowerman
1st Maryland
4th Maryland
7th Maryland
8th Maryland

Third Division, Brig. Gen. Samuel W. Crawford

First Brigade, Col. William McCandless (w); Col. William C. Taley (c); Col. Wellington H. Ent
1st Pennsylvania Reserves
2d Pennsylvania Reserves
6th Pennsylvania Reserves
7th Pennsylvania Reserves
11th Pennsylvania Reserves
13th Pennsylvania Reserves

Third Brigade, Col. Joseph W. Fisher; Col. Silas M. Bailey
5th Pennsylvania Reserves
8th Pennsylvania Reserves
10th Pennsylvania Reserves
12th Pennsylvania Reserves

Fourth Division, Brig. Gen. Lysander Cutler
First Brigade, Col. William W. Robinson
7th Indiana
19th Indiana
24th Michigan
1st New York Battalion Sharpshooters
2d Wisconsin
6th Wisconsin
7th Wisconsin
Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. James C. Rice (k); Col. Edward B. Fowler
76th New York
84th New York
95th New York
147th New York
56th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Col. Edward S. Bragg
121st Pennsylvania
142d Pennsylvania
143d Pennsylvania
149th Pennsylvania
150th Pennsylvania
Artillery Brigade (V Corps), Col. Charles S. Wainwright
3d Massachusetts Light, Battery C
5th Massachusetts Light, Battery E
1st New York, Battery D
1st New York, Batteries E and L
1st New York, Battery H
4th New York Heavy, 2d Battalion
1st Pennsylvania, Battery B
4th United States, Battery B
5th United States, Battery D

VI Corps

Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick (k); Brig. Gen. Horatio G. Wright
Escort: 8th Pennsylvania Cavalry, Company A
First Division, Brig. Gen. Horatio G. Wright; Brig. Gen. David A. Russell
First Brigade, Col. Henry W. Brown
1st New Jersey
2d New Jersey
3d New Jersey
4th New Jersey
10th New Jersey

15th New Jersey
Second Brigade, Col. Emory Upton
5th Maine
121st New York
95th Pennsylvania
96th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Brig. Gen. David A. Russell; Brig. Gen. Henry L. Eustis
6th Maine
49th Pennsylvania
119th Pennsylvania
5th Wisconsin
Fourth Brigade, Col. Nelson Cross
65th New York
67th New York
122d New York
82d Pennsylvania
Second Division, Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Neill
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Frank Wheaton
62d New York
93d Pennsylvania
98th Pennsylvania
102d Pennsylvania
139th Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. Lewis A. Grant
1st Vermont (Heavy Artillery) (arrived 14 May)
2d Vermont
3d Vermont
4th Vermont
5th Vermont
6th Vermont
Third Brigade, Col. Daniel D. Bidwell
7th Maine
43d New York
49th New York
77th New York
61st Pennsylvania
Fourth Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry L. Eustis
7th Massachusetts
10th Massachusetts
37th Massachusetts
2d Rhode Island

Third Division, Brig. Gen. James B. Ricketts
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. William H. Morris (w); Col. John W. Schall; Col. William S. Truex
14th New Jersey
106th New York
151st New York
87th Pennsylvania
10th Vermont
Second Brigade, Col. Benjamin F. Smith
6th Maryland
110th Ohio
122d Ohio
126th Ohio
67th Pennsylvania
138th Pennsylvania
Artillery Brigade (VI Corps), Col. Charles H. Tompkins
4th Maine, Battery D
1st Massachusetts, Battery A
1st New York, Independent Battery
3d New York, Independent Battery
4th New York Heavy, 1st Battalion
1st Rhode Island, Battery C
1st Rhode Island, Battery E
1st Rhode Island, Battery G
5th United States, Battery M

IX Corps

Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside

(This corps was under the direct orders of Lt. Gen. Grant until 24 May 1864, when it was assigned to the Army of the Potomac.)

Provost Guard: 8th United States Infantry
First Division, Brig. Gen. Thomas G. Stevenson (k); Col. Daniel Leasure; Maj. Gen. Thomas L. Crittendon
First Brigade, Lt. Col. Stephen M. Weld, Jr.; Brig. Gen. James H. Ledlie
35th Massachusetts
56th Massachusetts
57th Massachusetts
59th Massachusetts
4th United States
10th United States
Second Brigade, Col. Daniel Leasure

3d Maryland
21st Massachusetts
100th Pennsylvania
Artillery (First Division)
2d Maine, Battery B
14th Massachusetts Battery
Second Division, Brig. Gen. Robert B. Potter
First Brigade, Col. Zenas R. Bliss (w); Col. John I. Curtin
36th Massachusetts
58th Massachusetts
51st New York
45th Pennsylvania
48th Pennsylvania
7th Rhode Island
Second Brigade, Col. Simon G. Griffin
31st Maine
32d Maine
6th New Hampshire
9th New Hampshire
11th New Hampshire
17th Vermont
Artillery (Second Division)
11th Massachusetts Battery
19th New York Battery
Third Division, Brig. Gen. Orlando B. Willcox
First Brigade, Col. John F. Hartranft
2d Michigan
8th Michigan
17th Michigan
27th Michigan
109th New York
51st Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. Benjamin C. Christ (w); Col. William Humphrey
1st Michigan Sharpshooters
20th Michigan
79th New York
60th Ohio
50th Pennsylvania
Artillery (Third Division)
7th Maine, Battery G
34th New York Battery

Fourth Division, Brig. Gen. Edward Ferrero
- First Brigade, Col. Joshua K. Sigfried
  - 27th United States Colored Troops
  - 30th United States Colored Troops
  - 39th United States Colored Troops
  - 43d United States Colored Troops
- Second Brigade, Col. Henry G. Thomas
  - 30th Connecticut (Colored)
  - 19th United States Colored Troops
  - 23d United States Colored Troops
- Artillery (Fourth Division)
  - Pennsylvania Independent Battery D
  - 3d Vermont Battery

Cavalry (IX Corps)
- 3d New Jersey
- 22d New York
- 2d Ohio
- 13th Pennsylvania

Artillery Reserve (IX Corps), Col. John Edwards, Jr.
- 27th New York Battery
- 1st Rhode Island, Battery D
- 1st Rhode Island, Battery H
- 2d United States, Battery E
- 3d United States, Battery G
- 3d United States, Batteries L and M

Provisional Brigade (IX Corps), Col. Elisha G. Marshall
- 2d New York Mounted Rifles (dismounted) (arrived 15 May)
- 14th New York Heavy Artillery
- 24th New York Cavalry (dismounted)
- 2d Pennsylvania Provisional Heavy Artillery

Cavalry Corps

Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan

Escort: 6th United States Cavalry

First Division, Brig. Gen. Wesley Merritt
- First Brigade, Brig. Gen. George A. Custer
  - 1st Michigan
  - 5th Michigan
  - 6th Michigan
  - 7th Michigan
- Second Brigade, Col. Thomas C. Devin
  - 4th New York

6th New York
9th New York
17th Pennsylvania
Reserve Brigade, Col. Alfred Gibbs
19th New York
6th Pennsylvania
1st United States
2d United States
5th United States
Second Division, Brig. Gen. David McM. Gregg
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry E. Davies, Jr.
1st Massachusetts
1st New Jersey
6th Ohio
1st Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. J. Irvin Gregg
1st Maine
10th New York
2d Pennsylvania
4th Pennsylvania
8th Pennsylvania
16th Pennsylvania
Third Division, Brig. Gen. James H. Wilson
First Brigade, Col. John B. McIntosh
1st Connecticut
2d New York
5th New York
18th Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. George H. Chapman
3d Indiana
8th New York
1st Vermont

2. Confederate Forces.

Commander, Army of Northern Virginia
Gen. Robert E. Lee

I Corps
Maj. Gen. Richard H. Anderson
Kershaw's Division, Brig. Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw
Kershaw's Brigade, Col. John W. Henagan
2d South Carolina
3d South Carolina

7th South Carolina
8th South Carolina
15th South Carolina
3d South Carolina Battalion
Wofford's Brigade, Brig. Gen. William T. Wofford
16th Georgia
18th Georgia
24th Georgia
Cobb's (Georgia) Legion
Phillip's (Georgia) Legion
3d Georgia Battalion Sharpshooters
Humphreys' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Benjamin G. Humphreys
13th Mississippi
17th Mississippi
18th Mississippi
21st Mississippi
Bryan's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Goode Bryan
10th Georgia
50th Georgia
51st Georgia
53d Georgia
Field's Division, Maj. Gen. Charles W. Field
Jenkin's Brigade, Col. John Bratton
1st South Carolina
2d South Carolina (Rifles)
5th South Carolina
6th South Carolina
Palmetto Sharpshooters
Anderson's Brigade, Brig. Gen. George T. Anderson
7th Georgia
8th Georgia
9th Georgia
11th Georgia
59th Georgia
Gregg's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John Gregg
3d Arkansas
1st Texas
4th Texas
5th Texas
Benning's Brigade, Col. Dudley M. DuBose
2d Georgia
15th Georgia

17th Georgia
20th Georgia
Law's Brigade, Col. William F. Perry
4th Alabama
15th Alabama
44th Alabama
47th Alabama
48th Alabama
Artillery (I Corps), Brig. Gen. E. Porter Alexander
Haskell's Battalion, Maj. John C. Haskell
Flanner's (North Carolina) Battery
Garden's (South Carolina) Battery
Lamkin's (Virginia) Battery
Ramsay's (North Carolina) Battery
Cabell's Battalion, Col. Henry C. Cabell
Callaway's (Georgia) Battery
Carlton's (Georgia) Battery
McCarthy's (Virginia) Battery
Manly's (North Carolina) Battery
Huger's Battalion, Lt. Col. Frank Huger
Fickling's (South Carolina) Battery
Moody's (Louisiana) Battery
Parker's (Virginia) Battery
J.D. Smith's (Virginia) Battery
Taylor's (Virginia) Battery
Woolfolk's (Virginia) Battery

II Corps

Lt. Gen. Richard S. Ewell

Early's Division, Maj. Gen. Jubal A. Early; Brig. Gen. John B. Gordon
Pegram's Brigade, Col. John S. Hoffman
13th Virginia
31st Virginia
49th Virginia
52d Virginia
58th Virginia
Gordon's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John B. Gordon; Col. Clement A. Evans
13th Georgia
26th Georgia
31st Georgia
38th Georgia
60th Georgia

61st Georgia

Johnston's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Robert D. Johnston (w); Col. Thomas F. Toon

5th North Carolina
12th North Carolina
20th North Carolina
23d North Carolina

Johnson's Division (after sustaining heavy casualties on 12 May, the division officially disbanded on 21 May: the Virginia regiments were consolidated into a brigade under Brig. Gen. William Terry and assigned to Early's [Gordon's] division, the Louisiana brigade was also transferred to Early's [Gordon's] division, and the North Carolina regiments were assigned to Ramseur's brigade in Rodes' division), Maj. Gen. Edward Johnson (c)

Stonewall Brigade, Brig. Gen. James A. Walker (w)

2d Virginia
4th Virginia
5th Virginia
27th Virginia
33d Virginia

Steuart's Brigade, Brig. Gen. George H. Steuart (c)

1st North Carolina
3d North Carolina
10th Virginia
23d Virginia
37th Virginia

Jones' Brigade, Col. William Witcher (w)

21st Virginia
25th Virginia
42d Virginia
44th Virginia
48th Virginia
50th Virginia

Louisiana Brigade (Consolidated), Brig. Gen. Harry T. Hays (w); Col. William Monagham

1st Louisiana
2d Louisiana
5th Louisiana
6th Louisiana
7th Louisiana
8th Louisiana

9th Louisiana
10th Louisiana
14th Louisiana
15th Louisiana
Rodes' Division, Maj. Gen. Robert E. Rodes
Daniel's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Junius Daniel (mw); Col. Bryan Grimes
32d North Carolina
43d North Carolina
45th North Carolina
53d North Carolina
2d North Carolina Battalion
Ramseur's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Stephen D. Ramseur (w)
2d North Carolina
4th North Carolina
14th North Carolina
30th North Carolina
Battle's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Cullen A. Battle (w)
3d Alabama
5th Alabama
6th Alabama
12th Alabama
26th Alabama
61st Alabama
Doles' Brigade, Brig. Gen. George Doles
4th Georgia
12th Georgia
44th Georgia
Artillery (II Corps), Brig. Gen. Armistead L. Long
Braxton's Battalion, Lt. Col. Carter M. Braxton
Carpenter's (Virginia) Battery
Cooper's (Virginia) Battery
Hardwicke's (Virginia) Battery
Nelson's Battalion, Lt. Col. William Nelson
Kirkpatrick's (Virginia) Battery
Massie's (Virginia) Battery
Milledge's (Georgia) Battery
Page's Battalion, Maj. Richard C.M. Page
W.P. Carter's (Virginia) Battery
Fry's (Virginia) Battery
Page's (Virginia) Battery
Reese's (Alabama) Battery

Hardaway's Battalion, Lt. Col. Robert A. Hardaway
Dance's (Virginia) Battery
Graham's (Virginia) Battery
C.B. Griffin's (Virginia) Battery
Jones' (Virginia) Battery
B.H. Smith's (Virginia) Battery
Cutshaw's Battalion, Maj. Wilfred E. Cutshaw
Carrington's (Virginia) Battery
A.W. Garber's (Virginia) Battery
Tanner's (Virginia) Battery

III Corps

Lt. Gen. Ambrose P. Hill (replaced on 8 May due to illness); Maj. Gen. Jubal A. Early

Anderson's (Mahone's) Division, Brig. Gen. William Mahone
Perrin's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Abner Perrin (k); Col. John C.C. Sanders
8th Alabama
9th Alabama
10th Alabama
11th Alabama
14th Alabama
Mahone's Brigade, Col. David A. Weisiger
6th Virginia
12th Virginia
16th Virginia
41st Virginia
61st Virginia
Harris' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Nathaniel H. Harris
12th Mississippi
16th Mississippi
19th Mississippi
48th Mississippi
Wright's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Ambrose R. Wright
3d Georgia
22d Georgia
48th Georgia
2d Georgia Battalion
10th Georgia Battalion
Perry's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Edward A. Perry
2d Florida
5th Florida
8th Florida

Heth's Division, Maj. Gen. Henry Heth
Davis' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Joseph R. Davis
2d Mississippi
11th Mississippi
26th Mississippi
42d Mississippi
55th North Carolina
Cooke's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John R. Cooke (w)
15th North Carolina
27th North Carolina
46th North Carolina
48th North Carolina
Walker's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry H. Walker (w); Col. Robert M. Mayo
40th Virginia
47th Virginia
55th Virginia
22d Virginia Battalion
Archer's Brigade, Brig. Gen. James J. Archer (working under Walker)
13th Alabama
1st Tennessee (Provisional)
7th Tennessee
14th Tennessee
Kirkland's Brigade, Brig. Gen. William W. Kirkland
11th North Carolina
26th North Carolina
44th North Carolina
47th North Carolina
52d North Carolina
Wilcox's Division, Maj. Gen. Cadmus M. Wilcox
Lane's Brigade, Brig. Gen. James H. Lane
7th North Carolina
18th North Carolina
28th North Carolina
33d North Carolina
37th North Carolina
McGowan's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Samuel McGowan (w); Col. Joseph N. Brown
1st South Carolina (Provisional)
12th South Carolina
13th South Carolina
14th South Carolina
1st South Carolina (Orr's Rifles)

Scale's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Alfred M. Scales
13th North Carolina
16th North Carolina
22d North Carolina
34th North Carolina
38th North Carolina
Thomas' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Edward L. Thomas
14th Georgia
35th Georgia
45th Georgia
49th Georgia
Artillery (III Corps), Col. R. Lindsay Walker
Poague's Battalion, Lt. Col. William T. Poague
Richard's (Mississippi) Battery
Utterback's (Virginia) Battery
Williams' (North Carolina) Battery
Wyatt's (Virginia) Battery
McIntosh's Battalion, Lt. Col. David G. McIntosh
Clutter's (Virginia) Battery
Donald's (Virginia) Battery
Hurt's (Alabama) Battery
Price's (Virginia) Battery
Pegram's Battalion, Lt. Col. William J. Pegram
Brander's (Virginia) Battery
Cayce's (Virginia) Battery
Ellett's (Virginia) Battery
Marye's (Virginia) Battery
Zimmerman's (South Carolina) Battery
Richardson's Battalion, Lt. Col. Charles Richardson
Grandy's (Virginia) Battery
Landry's (Louisiana) Battery
Moore's (Virginia) Battery
Penick's (Virginia) Battery
Cutts' Battalion, Col. Allen S. Cutts
Patterson's (Georgia) Battery
Ross' (Georgia) Battery
Wingfield's (Georgia) Battery

Cavalry Corps

Maj. Gen. James E.B. Stuart (mw)

(Stuart was mortally wounded at the battle of Yellow Tavern on 11 May; Lee did not formally appoint a replacement, but Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton became *de facto* cavalry corps commander.)

Hampton's Division, Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton
- Young's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Pierce M.B. Young
  - 7th Georgia
  - Cobb's (Georgia) Legion
  - Phillip's (Georgia) Legion
  - 20th Georgia Battalion
  - Jefferson Davis (Mississippi) Legion
- Rosser's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Thomas L. Rosser
  - 7th Virginia
  - 11th Virginia
  - 12th Virginia
  - 35th Virginia Battalion
- Fitzhugh Lee's Division, Maj. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee
- Lomax's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Lunsford L. Lomax
  - 5th Virginia
  - 6th Virginia
  - 15th Virginia
- Wickham's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Williams C. Wickham
  - 1st Virginia
  - 2d Virginia
  - 3d Virginia
  - 4th Virginia

William H.F. Lee's Division, Maj. Gen. William H.F. Lee
- Chambliss' Brigade, Brig. Gen. John R. Chambliss
  - 9th Virginia
  - 10th Virginia
  - 13th Virginia
- Gordon's Brigade, Brig. Gen. James B. Gordon
  - 1st North Carolina
  - 2d North Carolina
  - 5th North Carolina

Horse Artillery, Maj. R. Preston Chew
- Breathed's Battalion, Maj. James Breathed
  - Hart's (South Carolina) Battery
  - Johnston's (Virginia) Battery
  - McGregor's (Virginia) Battery
  - Shoemaker's (Virginia) Battery
  - Thomson's (Virginia) Battery

Appendix C

Order of Battle, Cold Harbor

1. Federal Forces.

Headquarters, Armies in the Field
Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant
Escort: B, F, and K Companies, 5th United States Cavalry

Commander, Army of the Potomac
Maj. Gen. George G. Meade

Guards and Orderlies
Independent Company Oneida (New York) Cavalry

Provost Guard
Brig. Gen. Marsena R. Patrick
1st Massachusetts Cavalry, C and D
80th New York Infantry (20th Militia)
3d Pennsylvania Cavalry
68th Pennsylvania Infantry
114th Pennsylvania Infantry

Volunteer Engineer Brigade
Brig. Gen. Henry W. Benham
50th New York Engineers*

*With the exception of 11 companies of the 50th New York, this command, with its commander, was at the Engineer Depot, Washington, DC.

Battalion US Engineers
Capt. George H. Mendell

Artillery Chief, Army of the Potomac*
Brig. Gen. Henry J. Hunt

*Between Spotsylvania and Cold Harbor, the Army of the Potomac's Artillery Reserve was disbanded and the batteries distributed to the subordinate corps.

Artillery Park, Army of the Potomac
15th New York Heavy, 2d Battalion

II Corps
Maj. Gen. Winfield S. Hancock

Escort: 1st Vermont Cavalry, Company M
First Division, Brig. Gen. Francis C. Barlow
First Brigade, Col. Nelson A. Miles
26th Michigan
5th New Hampshire (arrived 1 June)

2d New York Heavy Artillery
61st New York
81st Pennsylvania
140th Pennsylvania
183d Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. Richard Byrnes (k); Col. Patrick Kelly
28th Massachusetts
63d New York
69th New York
88th New York
116th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Col. Clinton D. MacDougall
39th New York
52d New York
57th New York
111th New York
125th New York
126th New York
Fourth Brigade, Col. John R. Brooke (w); Col. Orlando H. Morris (k); Col. Lewis O. Morris (k); Col. James A. Beaver
2d Delaware
7th New York Heavy Artillery
64th New York
66th New York
53d Pennsylvania
145th Pennsylvania
148th Pennsylvania
Second Division, Brig. Gen. John Gibbon
First Brigade, Col. H. Boyd McKeen (k); Col. Frank A. Haskell
19th Maine
1st Company Sharpshooters
15th Massachusetts
19th Massachusetts
20th Massachusetts
7th Michigan
42d New York
59th New York
82d New York (2d Militia)
184th Pennsylvania
36th Wisconsin
Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. Joshua T. Owen

152d New York
69th Pennsylvania
71st Pennsylvania
72d Pennsylvania
106th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Col. Thomas A. Smyth
14th Connecticut
1st Delaware
14th Indiana
12th New Jersey
10th New York Battalion
108th New York
4th Ohio
8th Ohio
7th West Virginia
Fourth Brigade, Brig. Gen. Robert O. Tyler (w); Col. James P. McIvor
8th New York Heavy Artillery
155th New York
164th New York
170th New York
182d New York
Third Division, Maj. Gen. David B. Birney
First Brigade, Col. Thomas W. Egan
20th Indiana
3d Maine
40th New York
86th New York
124th New York
99th Pennsylvania
110th Pennsylvania
141st Pennsylvania
2d United States Sharpshooters
Second Brigade, Col. Thomas R. Tannatt
4th Maine
17th Maine
1st Massachusetts Heavy Artillery
3d Michigan
5th Michigan
93d New York
57th Pennsylvania
63d Pennsylvania

105th Pennsylvania
1st United States Sharpshooters
Third Brigade, Brig. Gen. Gershom Mott
1st Maine Heavy Artillery
16th Massachusetts
5th New Jersey
6th New Jersey
7th New Jersey
8th New Jersey
11th New Jersey
26th Pennsylvania
115th Pennsylvania
Fourth Brigade, Col. William R. Brewster
11th Massachusetts
70th New York
71st New York
73d New York
74th New York
120th New York
84th Pennsylvania
Artillery Brigade (II Corps), Col. John C. Tidball
6th Maine Light, Battery F
Massachusetts Light, 10th Battery
New Hampshire Light, 1st Battery
1st New Jersey Light, Battery B
1st New York Light, Battery G
4th New York Heavy, 3d Battalion
New York Light, 11th Battery
New York Light, 12th Battery
1st Pennsylvania Light, Battery F
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery A
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery B
4th United States, Battery K
5th United States, Batteries C and I

V Corps

Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren

Provost Guard: 12th New York Battalion
First Division, Brig. Gen. Charles Griffin
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Romeyn B. Ayres
5th New York (arrived 1 June)
140th New York

146th New York
21st Pennsylvania Dismounted Cavalry (arrived 1 June)
91st Pennsylvania
155th Pennsylvania
2d United States, Companies B, C, F, H, I, and K
11th United States, Companies B, C, D, F, and G, 1st Battalion
12th United States, Companies A, B, C, D, and G, 1st Battalion
12th United States, Companies A, C, D, F, and H, 2d Battalion
14th United States, 1st Battalion
17th United States, Companies A, C, D, G, and H, 1st Battalion
17th United States, Companies A, B, and C, 2d Battalion

Second Brigade, Col. Jacob B. Sweitzer
9th Massachusetts
22d Massachusetts
32d Massachusetts
4th Michigan
62d Pennsylvania

Third Brigade, Brig. Gen. Joseph J. Bartlett
20th Maine
18th Massachusetts
29th Massachusetts
1st Michigan
16th Michigan
44th New York
83d Pennsylvania
118th Pennsylvania

Second Division, Brig. Gen. Henry H. Lockwood (relieved); Brig. Gen. Samuel W. Crawford

First Brigade, Col. Peter Lyle
16th Maine
13th Massachusetts
39th Massachusetts
94th New York
104th New York
90th Pennsylvania
107th Pennsylvania

Second Brigade, Col. James L. Bates
12th Massachusetts
83d New York
97th New York
11th Pennsylvania

88th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Col. Nathan T. Dushane
1st Maryland
4th Maryland
7th Maryland
8th Maryland
Purnell (Maryland) Legion
Third Division, Brig. Gen. Samuel W. Crawford (The Pennsylvania Reserves mustered out of service after the battle at Bethesda Church on 30 May.)
First Brigade, Col Martin D. Hardin
1st Pennsylvania Reserves
2d Pennsylvania Reserves
6th Pennsylvania Reserves
7th Pennsylvania Reserves
11th Pennsylvania Reserves
13th Pennsylvania Reserves
Third Brigade, Col. Joseph W. Fisher
5th Pennsylvania Reserves
10th Pennsylvania Reserves
12th Pennsylvania Reserves
Independent Brigade, Col. J. Howard Kitching
6th New York Heavy Artillery
15th New York Heavy Artillery
Fourth Division, Brig. Gen. Lysander Cutler
First Brigade, Col. William W. Robinson
7th Indiana
19th Indiana
24th Michigan
1st Battalion New York Sharpshooters
2d Wisconsin
6th Wisconsin
7th Wisconsin
Second Brigade, Col. J. William Hofmann
3d Delaware (arrived 1 June)
4th Delaware (arrived 1 June)
46th New York
76th New York
95th New York
147th New York
56th Pennsylvania

157th Pennsylvania (arrived 1 June)
Third Brigade, Col. Edward S. Bragg
121st Pennsylvania
142d Pennsylvania
143d Pennsylvania
149th Pennsylvania
150th Pennsylvania
Artillery Brigade (V Corps), Col. Charles S. Wainwright
3d Massachusetts Light, Battery C
5th Massachusetts Light, Battery E
Massachusetts Light, 9th Battery
1st New York Light, Battery B
1st New York Light, Battery C
1st New York Light, Battery D
1st New York Light, Batteries E and L
1st New York Light, Battery H
New York Light, 5th Battery
New York Light, 15th Battery
1st Pennsylvania Light, Battery B
4th United States, Battery B
5th United States, Battery D

VI Corps

Maj. Gen. Horatio G. Wright

Escort: 8th Pennsylvania Cavalry, Company A
First Brigade, Col. William H. Penrose
1st New Jersey
2d New Jersey
3d New Jersey
4th New Jersey
10th New Jersey
15th New Jersey
Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. Emory Upton
2d Connecticut Heavy Artillery
5th Maine
121st New York
95th Pennsylvania
96th Pennsylvania
Third Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry L. Eustis
6th Maine
49th Pennsylvania
119th Pennsylvania

5th Wisconsin
Fourth Brigade, Col. Nelson Cross
65th New York
67th New York
122d New York
23d Pennsylvania
82d Pennsylvania
Second Division, Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Neill
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Frank Wheaton
62d New York
93d Pennsylvania
98th Pennsylvania
102d Pennsylvania
139th Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. Lewis A. Grant
2d Vermont
3d Vermont
4th Vermont
5th Vermont
6th Vermont
11th Vermont (also called 1st Vermont Heavy Artillery)
Third Brigade, Col. Daniel D. Bidwell
7th Maine
43d New York
49th New York
77th New York
61st Pennsylvania
Fourth Brigade, Col. Oliver Edwards
7th Massachusetts
10th Massachusetts
37th Massachusetts
2d Rhode Island
Third Division, Brig. Gen. James B. Ricketts
First Brigade, Col. William S. Truex (w); Col. John W. Schall
14th New Jersey
106th New York
151st New York
87th Pennsylvania
10th Vermont
Second Brigade, Col. Benjamin F. Smith
6th Maryland

9th New York Heavy Artillery
110th Ohio
122d Ohio
126th Ohio
67th Pennsylvania
138th Pennsylvania
Artillery Brigade (VI Corps), Col. Charles H. Tompkins
4th Maine Light, Battery D
5th Maine Light, Battery E
1st Massachusetts Light, Battery A
1st New Jersey Light, Battery A
New York Light, 1st Battery
New York Light, 3d Battery
4th New York Heavy, 1st Battalion
1st Ohio Light, Battery H
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery C
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery E
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery G
5th United States, Battery E
5th United States, Battery M

IX Corps

Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside

Provost Guard: 8th United States Infantry
First Division, Maj. Gen. Thomas L. Crittenden
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. James H. Ledlie
56th Massachusetts
57th Massachusetts
59th Massachusetts
4th United States
10th United States
Second Brigade, Col. Joseph M. Sudsberg
3d Maryland
21st Massachusetts
100th Pennsylvania
Provisional Brigade, Col. Elisha G. Marshall
2d New York Mounted Rifles (Dismounted)
14th New York Heavy Artillery
24th New York Cavalry (Dismounted)
2d Pennsylvania Provisional Heavy Artillery
Acting Engineers
35th Massachusetts

Artillery (First Division)
2d Maine Light, Battery B
14th Massachusetts Light Battery
Second Division, Brig. Gen. Robert B. Potter
First Brigade, Col. John I. Curtin
36th Massachusetts
58th Massachusetts
45th Pennsylvania
48th Pennsylvania
7th Rhode Island
Second Brigade, Col. Simon G. Griffin
2d Maryland (Detachment)
31st Maine
32d Maine
6th New Hampshire
9th New Hampshire
11th New Hampshire
17th Vermont
Acting Engineers
51st New York
Artillery (Second Division)
11th Massachusetts Light Battery
19th New York Light Battery
Third Division, Brig. Gen. Orlando B. Willcox
First Brigade, Col. John F. Hartranft
2d Michigan
8th Michigan
27th Michigan
109th New York
51st Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. William Humphrey
1st Michigan Sharpshooters
20th Michigan
60th Ohio
50th Pennsylvania
Acting Engineers
17th Michigan
Artillery (Third Division)
Maine Light, 7th Battery (G)
New York Light, 34th Battery
Fourth Division, Brig. Gen. Edward Ferrero

First Brigade, Col. Joshua K. Sigfried
27th United States Colored Troops
30th United States Colored Troops
39th United States Colored Troops
43d United States Colored Troops
Second Brigade, Col. Henry G. Thomas
19th United States Colored Troops
23d United States Colored Troops
31st United States Colored Troops
Artillery (Fourth Division)
Pennsylvania Independent Battery D
3d Vermont Battery
Reserve Artillery (IX Corps)
New York Light, 27th Battery
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery D
1st Rhode Island Light, Battery H
2d United States, Battery E

Cavalry Corps

Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan

First Division, Brig. Gen. Alfred T.A. Torbert
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. George A. Custer
1st Michigan
5th Michigan
6th Michigan
7th Michigan
Second Brigade, Col. Thomas C. Devin
4th New York
6th New York
9th New York
17th Pennsylvania
Reserve Brigade, Brig. Gen. Wesley Merritt
19th New York (1st Dragoons)
6th Pennsylvania
1st United States
2d United States
5th United States
Second Division, Brig. Gen. David McM. Gregg
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry E. Davies, Jr.
1st Massachusetts
1st New Jersey
10th New York

6th Ohio
1st Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. J. Irvin Gregg
1st Maine
2d Pennsylvania
4th Pennsylvania
8th Pennsylvania
13th Pennsylvania
16th Pennsylvania
Third Division, Brig. Gen. James H. Wilson
First Brigade, Col. John B. McIntosh
1st Connecticut
3d New Jersey
2d New York
5th New York
2d Ohio
18th Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. George H. Chapman
3d Indiana
8th New York
1st Vermont
First Brigade Horse Artillery, Capt. James M. Robertson
New York Light, 6th Battery
2d United States, Batteries B and L
2d United States, Battery D
2d United States, Battery M
4th United States, Battery A
4th United States, Batteries C and E
Second Brigade Horse Artillery, Capt. Dunbar R. Ransom
1st United States, Batteries E and G
1st United States, Batteries H and I
1st United States, Battery K
2d United States, Battery A
2d United States, Battery G
3d United States, Batteries C, F, and K

XVIII Corps

Maj. Gen. William F. Smith

First Division, Brig. Gen. William T.H. Brooks
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Gilman Marston
81st New York
96th New York

98th New York
139th New York
Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. Hiram Burnham
8th Connecticut
10th New Hampshire
13th New Hampshire
118th New York
Third Brigade, Col. Guy V. Henry
21st Connecticut
40th Massachusetts
92d New York
58th Pennsylvania
188th Pennsylvania
Second Division, Brig. Gen. John H. Martindale
First Brigade, Brig. Gen. George J. Stannard
23d Massachusetts
25th Massachusetts
27th Massachusetts
9th New Jersey
89th New York
55th Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. Griffin A. Stedman, Jr.
11th Connecticut
8th Maine
2d New Hampshire
12th New Hampshire
148th New York
Third Division, Brig. Gen. Charles Devens, Jr.
First Brigade, Col. William B. Barton
47th New York
48th New York
115th New York
76th Pennsylvania
Second Brigade, Col. Jeremiah C. Drake (k); Col. Zina H. Robinson
13th Indiana
9th Maine
112th New York
169th New York
10th New York Heavy Artillery
Third Brigade, Brig. Gen. Adelbert Ames
4th New Hampshire

3d New York
117th New York
142d New York
97th Pennsylvania
Artillery Brigade (XVIII Corps), Capt. Samuel S. Elder
1st United States, Battery B
4th United States, Battery L
5th United States, Battery A

2. Confederate Forces.

Commander, Army of Northern Virginia
Gen. Robert E. Lee

I Corps
Lt. Gen. Richard H. Anderson
Kershaw's Division, Brig. Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw
Kershaw's Brigade, Col. John W. Henagan; Col. Lawrence M. Keitt (in command 31 May to 1 June)
2d South Carolina
3d South Carolina
3d South Carolina Battalion
7th South Carolina
8th South Carolina
15th South Carolina
20th South Carolina
Humphreys' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Benjamin G. Humphreys
13th Mississippi
17th Mississippi
18th Mississippi
21st Mississippi
Wofford's Brigade, Brig. Gen. William T. Wofford
16th Georgia
18th Georgia
24th Georgia
Cobb's (Georgia) Legion
Phillip's (Georgia) Legion
3d Georgia Battalion Sharpshooters
Bryan's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Goode Bryan
10th Georgia
50th Georgia
51st Georgia
53d Georgia

Pickett's Division, Maj. Gen. George E. Pickett
- Kemper's Brigade, Brig. Gen. William R. Terry
  - 1st Virginia
  - 3d Virginia
  - 7th Virginia
  - 11th Virginia
  - 24th Virginia
- Hunton's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Eppa Hunton
  - 8th Virginia
  - 19th Virginia
  - 25th Virginia Battalion
  - 56th Virginia
  - 24th Virginia Cavalry Battalion
  - 32d Virginia
- Barton's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Seth M. Barton
  - 9th Virginia
  - 14th Virginia
  - 38th Virginia
  - 53d Virginia
  - 57th Virginia
- Corse's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Montgomery D. Corse
  - 15th Virginia
  - 17th Virginia
  - 18th Virginia
  - 29th Virginia
  - 30th Virginia
- Hoke's Brigade, Lt. Col. William G. Lewis
  - 6th North Carolina
  - 21st North Carolina
  - 54th North Carolina
  - 57th North Carolina
  - 1st North Carolina Battalion

Field's Division, Maj. Gen. Charles W. Field
- Jenkin's Brigade, Col. John Bratton
  - 1st South Carolina
  - 2d South Carolina
  - 5th South Carolina
  - 6th South Carolina
  - Palmetto Sharpshooters
- Anderson's Brigade, Brig. Gen. George T. Anderson
  - 7th Georgia

8th Georgia
9th Georgia
11th Georgia
59th Georgia
Law's Brigade, Brig. Gen. E. McIver Law
4th Alabama
15th Alabama
44th Alabama
47th Alabama
48th Alabama
Gregg's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John Gregg
3d Arkansas
1st Texas
4th Texas
5th Texas
Benning's Brigade, Col. Dudley M. DuBose
2d Georgia
15th Georgia
17th Georgia
20th Georgia
Artillery (I Corps), Brig. Gen. E. Porter Alexander
Huger's Battalion, Lt. Col. Frank Huger
Fickling's (South Carolina) Battery
Moody's (Louisiana) Battery
Parker's (Virginia) Battery
J.D. Smith's (Virginia) Battery
Taylor's (Virginia) Battery
Woolfolk's (Virginia) Battery
Haskell's Battalion, Major John C. Haskell
Flanner's (North Carolina) Battery
Garden's (South Carolina) Battery
Lamkin's (Virginia) Battery
Ramsay's (North Carolina) Battery
Cabell's Battalion, Col. Henry C. Cabell
Callaway's (Georgia) Battery
Carlton's (Georgia) Battery
McCarthy's (Virginia) Battery
Manly's (North Carolina) Battery

II Corps

Lt. Gen. Jubal A. Early

Early's (Ramseur's) Division, Maj. Gen. Stephen D. Ramseur

Pegram's Brigade, Col. Edward Willis (mw); Col. John S. Hoffman
13th Virginia
31st Virginia
49th Virginia
52d Virginia
58th Virginia
Johnston's Brigade, Col. Thomas F. Toon
5th North Carolina
12th North Carolina
20th North Carolina
23d North Carolina
Gordon's Division, Maj. Gen. John B. Gordon
Gordon's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Clement A. Evans
13th Georgia
26th Georgia
31st Georgia
38th Georgia
60th Georgia
61st Georgia
12th Georgia Battalion
Terry's Brigade, Brig. Gen. William Terry
2d Virginia
4th Virginia
5th Virginia
10th Virginia
21st Virginia
23d Virginia
25th Virginia
27th Virginia
33d Virginia
37th Virginia
42d Virginia
44th Virginia
48th Virginia
50th Virginia
Louisiana Brigade, Col. Zebulon York
1st Louisiana
2d Louisiana
5th Louisiana
6th Louisiana
7th Louisiana

8th Louisiana
9th Louisiana
10th Louisiana
14th Louisiana
15th Louisiana
Rodes' Division, Maj. Gen. Robert Rodes
Daniel's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Bryan Grimes
32d North Carolina
43d North Carolina
45th North Carolina
53d North Carolina
2d North Carolina Battalion
Ramseur's Brigade, Col. Risden T. Bennett; Brig. Gen. William R. Cox
1st North Carolina
2d North Carolina
3d North Carolina
4th North Carolina
14th North Carolina
30th North Carolina
Doles' Brigade, Brig. Gen. George Doles (k); Col. Philip Cook
4th Georgia
12th Georgia
44th Georgia
Battle's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Cullen A. Battle
3d Alabama
5th Alabama
6th Alabama
12th Alabama
26th Alabama
61st Alabama
Artillery (II Corps), Brig. Gen. Armistead L. Long
Hardaway's Battalion, Lt. Col. Robert A. Hardaway
Dance's (Virginia) Battery
Graham's (Virginia) Battery
C.B. Griffin's (Virginia) Battery
B.H. Smith's (Virginia) Battery
Braxton's Battalion, Lt. Col. Carter M. Braxton
Carpenter's (Virginia) Battery
Cooper's (Virginia) Battery
Hardwicke's (Virginia) Battery
Nelson's Battalion, Lt. Col. William Nelson

Kirkpatrick's (Virginia) Battery
Massie's (Virginia) Battery
Milledge's (Georgia) Battery
Cutshaw's Battalion, Maj. Wilfred E. Cutshaw
Carrington's (Virginia) Battery
A.W. Garber's (Virginia) Battery
Tanner's (Virginia) Battery
Page's Battalion, Maj. Richard C.M. Page
W.P. Carter's (Virginia) Battery
Fry's (Virginia) Battery
Page's (Virginia) Battery
Reese's (Alabama) Battery

III Corps

Lt. Gen. Ambrose P. Hill

Mahone's Division, Maj. Gen. William Mahone
Perrin's (Sander's) Brigade, Col. John C.C. Sanders
8th Alabama
9th Alabama
10th Alabama
11th Alabama
14th Alabama
Mahone's Brigade, Brig. Gen. David A. Weisiger
6th Virginia
12th Virginia
16th Virginia
41st Virginia
61st Virginia
Harris' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Nathaniel H. Harris
12th Mississippi
16th Mississippi
19th Mississippi
48th Mississippi
Wright's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Ambrose R. Wright
3d Georgia
22d Georgia
48th Georgia
2d Georgia Battalion
10th Georgia Battalion
Finegan's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Joseph Finegan
2d Florida
5th Florida

8th Florida
9th Florida
10th Florida
11th Florida
Heth's Division, Maj. Gen. Henry Heth
Davis' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Joseph B. Davis
2d Mississippi
11th Mississippi
26th Mississippi
42d Mississippi
55th North Carolina
Kirkland's Brigade, Brig. Gen. William W. Kirkland (w); Col. George H. Faribault
11th North Carolina
26th North Carolina
44th North Carolina
47th North Carolina
52d North Carolina
Cooke's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John R. Cooke
15th North Carolina
27th North Carolina
46th North Carolina
48th North Carolina
Walker's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Birkett D. Fry
40th Virginia
47th Virginia
55th Virginia
22d Virginia Battalion
13th Alabama
1st Tennessee (Provisional)
7th Tennessee
14th Tennessee
Wilcox's Division, Maj. Gen. Cadmus M. Wilcox
Lane's Brigade, Brig. Gen. James H. Lane (w); Col. John D. Barry
7th North Carolina
18th North Carolina
28th North Carolina
33d North Carolina
37th North Carolina
McGowan's Brigade, Lt. Col. J. F. Hunt; Brig. Gen. James Conner (4 June)
1st Carolina (Provisional)
12th South Carolina

13th South Carolina
14th South Carolina
1st South Carolina (Orr's Rifles)

Scale's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Alfred M. Scales (ill); Col. William L Lowrance

13th North Carolina
16th North Carolina
22d North Carolina
34th North Carolina
38th North Carolina

Thomas' Brigade, Brig. Gen. Edward L. Thomas

14th Georgia
35th Georgia
45th Georgia
49th Georgia

Artillery (III Corps), Col. R. Lindsay Walker

Poague's Battalion, Lt. Col. William T. Poague

Richard's (Mississippi) Battery
Utterback's (Virginia) Battery
Williams' (North Carolina) Battery
Wyatt's (Virginia) Battery

McIntosh's Battalion, Lt. Col. David G. McIntosh

Clutter's (Virginia) Battery
Donald's (Virginia) Battery
Hurt's (Alabama) Battery
Price's (Virginia) Battery

Pegram's Battalion, Lt. Col. William J. Pegram

Brander's (Virginia) Battery
Cayce's (Virginia) Battery
Ellett's (Virginia) Battery
Marye's (Virginia) Battery
Zimmerman's (South Carolina) Battery

Cutts' Battalion, Col. Allen S. Cutts

Patterson's (Georgia) Battery
Ross' (Georgia) Battery
Wingfield's (Georgia) Battery

Richardson's Battalion, Lt. Col. Charles Richardson

Grandy's (Virginia) Battery
Landry's (Louisiana) Battery
Moore's (Virginia) Battery
Penick's (Virginia) Battery

Cavalry Corps
Army of Northern Virginia

(Although not formally assigned to corps command, Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton served as the *de facto* cavalry corps commander.)

Hampton's Division, Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton
- Young's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Pierce M.B. Young (w); Col. Gilbert J. Wright
  - 7th Georgia
  - Cobb's (Georgia) Legion
  - Phillip's (Georgia) Legion
  - 20th Georgia Battalion
  - Jefferson Davis (Mississippi) Legion
- Rosser's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Thomas L. Rosser
  - 7th Virginia
  - 11th Virginia
  - 12th Virginia
  - 35th Virginia Battalion
- Butler's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Matthew C. Butler
  - 4th South Carolina
  - 5th South Carolina
  - 6th South Carolina
  - 7th South Carolina

Fitzhugh Lee's Division, Maj. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee
- Lomax's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Lunsford L. Lomax
  - 5th Virginia
  - 6th Virginia
  - 15th Virginia
- Wickham's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Williams C. Wickham
  - 1st Virginia
  - 2d Virginia
  - 3d Virginia
  - 4th Virginia

William H.F. Lee's Division, Maj. Gen. William H.F. Lee
- Chambliss' Brigade, Brig. Gen. John R. Chambliss
  - 9th Virginia
  - 10th Virginia
  - 13th Virginia
- Gordon's Brigade, Col. John A. Baker
  - 1st North Carolina
  - 2d North Carolina
  - 3d North Carolina

5th North Carolina
Horse Artillery, Maj. R. Preston Chew
Breathed's Battalion, Maj. James Breathed
Hart's (South Carolina) Battery
Johnston's (Virginia) Battery
McGregor's (Virginia) Battery
Shoemaker's (Virginia) Battery
Thomson's (Virginia) Battery

Breckinridge's Division

Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge (Reported directly to Lee)

Echols' Brigade, Brig. Gen. John Echols; Col. George S. Patton
22d Virginia
23d Virginia Battalion
26th Virginia Battalion
Wharton's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Gabriel C. Wharton
30th Virginia Battalion
51st Virginia
62d Virginia (Mounted)
Maryland Line, Col. Bradley T. Johnson
2d Maryland
1st Maryland Cavalry (Detached to Lomax's Cavalry Brigade)
1st Maryland Battery
2d Maryland Battery
4th Maryland Battery
McLaughlin's Artillery Battalion, Major William McLaughlin
Chapman's (Virginia) Battery
Jackson's (Virginia) Battery

Hoke's Division

Maj. Gen. Robert F. Hoke (Reported directly to Lee)

Martin's Brigade, Brig. Gen. James G. Martin
17th North Carolina
42d North Carolina
66th North Carolina
Clingman's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Thomas Clingman
8th North Carolina
31st North Carolina
51st North Carolina
61st North Carolina
Hagood's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Johnson Hagood
7th South Carolina Battalion
11th South Carolina

21st South Carolina
25th South Carolina
27th South Carolina
Colquitt's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Colquitt
6th Georgia
19th Georgia
23d Georgia
27th Georgia
28th Georgia
Read's 38th Virginia Battalion Artillery, Maj. John P.W. Read
Blount's Battery
Caskie's (Virginia) Battery
Macon's Battery
Marshall's (Virginia) Battery

Appendix D
Biographies of Primary Participants

Library of Congress

Ulysses Simpson Grant. Grant was born on 27 April 1822 at Point Pleasant, Ohio, and given the name Hiram Ulysses Grant. He entered West Point in 1839, and, due to an administrative error, was enrolled as Ulysses Simpson. From that point on, his full name became Ulysses Simpson Grant. Grant was an excellent equestrian but a mediocre student, graduating 21st out of 39 in the class of 1843.

Grant joined the infantry and served in the Mexican War with the 4th Infantry Regiment. He participated in the campaigns of Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott in which he earned two brevets for valor, and also performed well as the regimental quartermaster. Soon after the war, Grant married Julia Dent, a devoted wife and great source of happiness and comfort to Grant. He next served in the Pacific Northwest, where he quickly became bored with peacetime garrison duty. This boredom and separation from his family led Grant to excessive drinking, which caused Grant to resign his commission in 1854. From 1854-61, Grant tried farming, real estate, local politics, and clerking at his brothers' store, all with little success.

When the Civil War broke out, Grant obtained command of the 21st Illinois Infantry Regiment and was given the rank of colonel. As Grant readied his regiment for combat, he was commissioned a brigadier general on 7 August 1861, in large part because of his connections with Illinois Representative Elihu B. Washburne. After a small skirmish at Belmont, Missouri, Grant's first major combat came when he led the army component of the joint force that seized Forts Henry and Donelson. These victories brought Grant to the favorable attention of the American public and the nickname "unconditional surrender" for the terms he demanded of the Confederate forces in Donelson. Grant's career faltered after he was surprised and almost defeated at the Battle of Shiloh. Reinforced on the first night of the battle, Grant drove the Confederates from the field, but in the coming days was given the largely ceremonial position of second in command to Major General Henry W. Halleck, commander of the combined Federal forces in the advance on Corinth, Mississippi.

When Halleck was named general in chief of the army and moved to Washington, Grant again assumed command of the Army of Tennessee and

from December 1862 to July 1863 campaigned to take Vicksburg. When Grant finally succeeded in besieging and capturing that city, he ensured that the Union gained control of the Mississippi River. After Major General William Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland was defeated at Chickamauga and besieged in Chattanooga, Grant became commander of all Federal forces in the western theater. Grant assembled relief forces to help the Army of the Cumberland, and he raised the siege of Chattanooga.

Grant's triumphs impressed President Lincoln, and he was promoted to lieutenant general and selected to be general in chief of the army. In this new position, Grant devised a plan that called for all Union armies to attack the Confederacy simultaneously in 1864. The new general in chief elected to command the Union armies from the field, rather than from Washington, and he accompanied Major General George Gordon Meade's Army of the Potomac for the rest of the war. Despite high casualties in the Overland Campaign and the long months of the siege at Petersburg, Grant's determination in 1864 and 1865 ensured success for the Union. Grant accepted the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia on 9 April 1865 at Appomattox, paving the way for the end of the war.

As a national hero, Grant was easily elected President of the United States in 1868. Unfortunately, his two terms as president were filled with corruption and scandal, although Grant remained honest and was not personally involved in the corruption. After leaving the presidency, Grant and Julia toured the world, but it was not long before the former president found himself out of money and ill. Grant died in 1885, but not before showing once again his will and determination by completing his memoirs while in severe pain. To this day, his book remains a classic of military literature.

Library of Congress

George Gordon Meade. Meade was born on 31 December 1815 in Cadiz, Spain, where his father was serving as an agent for the United States Navy. The elder Meade brought his family back to the United States and settled in Philadelphia. Young George obtained an appointment to West Point and graduated in 1835 ranking 19th in a class of 56. After some short service in Florida and Massachusetts, Meade resigned his commission in 1836 to seek a career in civil engineering. Six years later, however, Meade returned to the army and was appointed a second lieutenant in the Corps of Topographical Engineers.

Meade settled into his military engineering duties, working primarily in coastal regions on the construction of lighthouses and breakwaters. During the Mexican War, he served at Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, and Monterey, receiving a brevet to first lieutenant for his service. After the war, Meade returned to his engineering duties, eventually working on surveys of the Great Lakes. He had achieved the rank of captain by the outbreak of the Civil War, but was quickly made a brigadier general of volunteers at the request of Pennsylvania Governor Andrew G. Curtin. He took command of one of the three newly organized Pennsylvania brigades and joined the Army of the Potomac in time to participate in the Peninsula Campaign in June 1862. At Glendale, one of the Seven Days Battles, Meade received two severe wounds; however, he recovered quickly enough to rejoin his brigade and participate in the 2d Bull Run Campaign.

Promoted to division command, Meade was in the thick of the fighting at Antietam where he received temporary command of the Union I Corps after Major General Joseph Hooker was wounded. Meade returned to his division command prior to the battle of Fredericksburg and led his troops superbly, making the only significant Federal penetration of the Confederate lines in the battle. For his efforts, Meade received command of the V Corps, which he led at the battle of Chancellorsville in May 1863.

Much to his own surprise, Meade received command of the Army of the Potomac, just prior to the battle of Gettysburg, over several more senior officers. Under these difficult conditions, Meade performed capably and turned back the Confederate invasion at Gettysburg. In the following campaigns at Bristoe Station and Mine Run, Meade demonstrated a cautious nature and reluctance to force Lee into battle. These campaigns proved to be Meade's last opportunity to exercise true independent command. Grant's appointment as general in chief and his decision to accompany the Army of the Potomac in the Overland Campaign forced Meade to work in Grant's shadow for the remainder of the war. Meade worked professionally to support Grant's strategy, but in private, he poured out the frustrations of his position in letters to his wife and with vitriolic attacks on newspapermen. Despite the awkward command arrangement, Meade persevered through the tough fighting of the Overland and Petersburg Campaigns and was the Army of the Potomac's commander at the end of the war receiving the honor of leading his army in the victory parade in Washington after the Confederate surrender.

During Reconstruction, Meade was assigned to command departments in the east and south and eventually assumed command of the Military Division of the Atlantic with his headquarters in Philadelphia. He was still

serving in this position when he died of pneumonia on 6 November 1872.

Library of Congress

Winfield Scott Hancock. Hancock was born on 14 February 1824 in a small village near Norristown, Pennsylvania. Hancock's father practiced law, and his mother was a milliner. In 1840, Hancock was appointed to West Point; four years later, he graduated 18th in a class of 25. He then served for two years in the Indian Territory before fighting in the Mexican War. During the war, he served with the infantry and was brevetted to first lieutenant for gallantry at Contreras and Churubusco.

After the war, Hancock saw service in a wide variety of locations. He became a regimental quartermaster in garrison at Saint Louis, Missouri, then was promoted to an assistant quartermaster in the campaigns against the Seminoles in Florida, served in Kansas during the violence in 1857-58, and participated in the expedition against the Mormons in Utah. He was assigned as chief quartermaster in Los Angeles, California, at the outbreak of the Civil War.

On 13 September 1861, Hancock secured an appointment as brigadier general of volunteers and took command of a brigade in the Army of the Potomac. He served with distinction in the Peninsula and Antietam Campaigns, taking command of a division in the II Corps after the mortal wounding of Major General Israel B. Richardson. Hancock skillfully handled his division in the army's next two major battles at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. When the II Corps commander, Major General Darius N. Couch, resigned his command, Hancock found himself, a first-time corps commander, going into the Gettysburg Campaign. Nonetheless, Meade gave Hancock great discretionary powers on all three days of the battle, and the II Corps commander rewarded Meade with an outstanding performance before being severely wounded during the repulse of Pickett's charge. The wound would never completely heal; nevertheless, Hancock returned to command of the II Corps, which became the spearhead for many of the Army of the Potomac's major attacks in the Overland Campaign.

In the subsequent Petersburg Campaign, Hancock's corps continued to be the Union's strike force in many operations; but, decimated by casualties, the II Corps suffered defeat at the battle of Ream's Station. Both sides settled into their trenches for most of the winter of 1864; however, Hancock's wound worsened, and he left command to recruit injured soldiers for the Veteran Reserve Corps. Toward the end of the war,

he took a department command, a position he held when the Confederates surrendered.

After the war, Hancock served briefly as commander of Washington's defenses and then commander of the Department of Missouri in a campaign against the Plains Indians. In 1867, he assumed command of a military district conducting reconstruction in Texas and Louisiana. Because his policies clashed with the Johnson administration, he was transferred to the Division of the Atlantic in New York. He held this position (with one brief interlude in the Dakotas) until the end of his life. While still in command of this division, Hancock received the Democratic Nomination for President of the United States in 1880, but lost to James A. Garfield in one of the closest elections in American history. He died on 9 February 1886 at Governors Island, New York.

Library of Congress

Gouverneur Kemble Warren. Warren was born on 8 January 1830 in Cold Spring, New York. An energetic child and bright student, Warren secured an appointment to West Point at the age of 16. Warren continued to display his academic qualities when he graduated second in his class at the academy in 1850 and was commissioned in the Corps of Topographical Engineers. He spent several years surveying extensive sectors of the Mississippi River, assisted in a project that studied the best routes for railroads to expand to the Western United States, and won acclaim for his topographical report from an expedition to the Nebraska and Dakota territories. He then returned to the Military Academy as an instructor of mathematics, the position he held at the outbreak of the Civil War.

On 14 May 1861, Warren became lieutenant colonel of the 5th New York Regiment and soon saw action at the battle of Bethel Church. He was promoted to colonel and, while leading a brigade in the V Corps, was slightly wounded at the battle of Gaines Mill. Warren continued to see action in several more battles on the Peninsula. His brigade saw heavy action at the battle of Second Manassas, but was held in reserve at Antietam and Fredericksburg.

Warren was promoted to brigadier general of volunteers and became the Army of the Potomac's chief engineer prior to the battle of Chancellorsville. It was in this capacity that Warren earned his greatest fame by recognizing the importance of Little Round Top at Gettysburg and helping Union troops to secure that position. For several months after

the battle, Warren commanded the II Corps while Hancock recovered from his wounds. Warren then received permanent command of the V Corps prior to the Overland Campaign. Warren's performance in this campaign has been the subject of some controversy; he certainly made several errors, but his high-strung personality and constant criticism of superiors' orders probably magnified any mistakes.

In the subsequent Petersburg Campaign, Warren rendered capable service, but again clashed with Meade and Grant because of his prickly personality. Warren suffered a sad end to his Civil War career when Major General Philip Sheridan relieved Warren of command of the V Corps at the battle of Five Forks just a week prior to Lee's surrender at Appomattox. Warren had performed capably at Five Forks, but his constant clashes with his superiors and Sheridan's short temper led to his relief.

After the war, Warren stayed in the army and returned to engineering duties. Among his many engineering accomplishments was the design and construction of the Rock Island Bridge over the Mississippi River. Although a court of inquiry exonerated Warren for his performance at Five Forks, he died on 8 August 1882 before the court published its results.

Library of Congress

John Sedgwick. Born on 13 September 1813 at Cornwall Hollow, Connecticut, Sedgwick received his early education in local schools and then spent two years teaching. Just before turning 20, Sedgwick entered the United States Military Academy, and graduated in 1837 ranked 24th in his class. Sedgwick had a particularly active career prior to the Civil War. He served in the fighting against the Seminoles and in the movement of the Cherokees from Georgia to Oklahoma on the Trail of Tears. After several postings in garrison duties, he served in the major campaigns of both Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott during the war with Mexico, where he was brevetted to captain and then major.

In 1855, Sedgwick, who was originally an artillery officer, became major of the newly authorized 1st Cavalry Regiment. At the start of the war, Sedgwick briefly took command of the regiment before being commissioned a brigadier general of volunteers on 31 August 1861. While commanding a division in the II Corps in the Peninsula Campaign, Sedgwick was wounded at the battle of Glendale (or Frayser's Farm) in June 1862. After recovering from his wounds, Sedgwick returned to lead his division at Antietam where he was wounded three times and carried from the field unconscious.

After his recuperation (which caused him to miss the fight at Fredericksburg) and a brief period in command of the IX Corps, Sedgwick took command of the unit he would command until his death, the VI Corps. In the Chancellorsville Campaign, Hooker directed Sedgwick to take Mayre's Heights and come to Hooker's assistance when the bulk of the Army of the Potomac was heavily engaged at Chancellorsville. Sedgwick succeeded in taking the Heights, but when Hooker failed to maintain pressure on Lee's forces, Sedwick was forced to go over to the defense at Salem Church where he successfully withdrew his force across the Rappahannock River.

At Gettysburg, the VI Corps saw little action while acting as the army's reserve. In the Overland Campaign, Sedgwick's corps was surprised on its right flank by Gordon's Confederates in the Wilderness, but eventually managed to establish a new line. Three days later, Sedgwick was positioning his troops at Spotsylvania when he was struck by a Confederate marksman's bullet and died almost instantly.

Library of Congress

Horatio Gouverneur Wright. Wright was born in Clinton, Connecticut, on 6 March 1820, where he attended local schools before receiving an appointment to West Point in 1837. Four years later, he graduated second in his class and joined the Corps of Engineers. Aside from a two-year assignment as an instructor at West Point, Wright performed engineering duties prior to the Civil War. This included extensive service in Florida, which kept him from serving in the Mexican-American War, where he assisted in constructing Forts Taylor and Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas islands. In 1855, Wright was promoted to captain and became the assistant to the army's chief engineer in Washington, DC.

Soon after the outbreak of the war, Wright assisted in the Federal evacuation of the Norfolk Naval Yard where he was captured by Virginia State troops who held him for only four days. For a time, Wright continued to serve in engineer positions, first in construction of some of the Washington defenses, then as the chief engineer for Heintzelman's division at 1st Bull Run, and then as the chief engineer for the Federals in the Port Royal Expedition. Transferring to combat command, Wright was made a brigadier general of volunteers in September 1861 and led an expedition against the Florida coast in February 1862. He led a division in the Charleston Campaign before assuming command of the Department of Ohio, a position he held until May 1863.

Wright returned to division command in May 1863, leading a division

of Sedgwick's VI Corps at Gettysburg where it saw little action. Wright and his men played a more active role in the Battle at Rappahannock Station and Mine Run Campaign in November 1863. Wright was in command of this division through the early stages of the Overland Campaign. When Sedgwick was killed at Spotsylvania, Wright assumed command of the VI Corps. He led the corps through the rest of the Overland Campaign to include the bloody repulse at Cold Harbor.

The VI Corps continued to serve with the Army of the Potomac during the beginning of the siege at Petersburg until July 1864, when Jubal Early's Confederate raid on Washington prompted Grant to transfer Wright and his corps to the capital. The VI Corps joined other units in the area to form the Army of the Shenandoah under Philip Sheridan and drive Early south through the Valley, devastating the area as a source of supplies, and fighting successful battles at Winchester, Fisher's Hill, and Cedar Creek. Wright's corps returned to the Petersburg area, where it played a major role in breaching the Confederate fortifications and forcing Lee's army into retreat and surrender in April 1865.

After the war, Wright spent a year commanding the Department of Texas before resuming engineering duties. After reverting to his regular rank of lieutenant colonel, Wright worked his way to colonel and then brigadier general in 1879 when he became chief engineer of the army. Among his many projects after the war were various harbor improvements and construction of the Washington Monument. Wright retired in Washington, DC, where he died in 1899.

Library of Congress

A**mbrose Everett Burnside.** Burnside was born in Liberty, Indiana, on 23 May 1824. He received a primary school education before apprenticing to be a tailor. At the age of 19, Burnside was appointed to West Point; he graduated 18th in the class of 1847 and joined the army as a brevet second lieutenant in the artillery. Arriving in Mexico too late to participate in the fighting, he joined the American garrison occupying Mexico City. Not long after, he reported for duty on the southwestern frontier where he was slightly wounded in a skirmish with the Apache Indians.

In 1853, Burnside resigned his commission and started a gun manufacturing company in Rhode Island. Although the breech-loading rifle he invented was an excellent weapon, he failed to get a government contract and eventually sold his company. After taking a job with a railroad

company, Burnside became active in the Rhode Island militia, reaching the rank of major general with the state's home forces. At the start of the Civil War, Burnside organized a 90-day regiment, the 1st Rhode Island Infantry, and brought them to Washington. He commanded a brigade at 1st Bull Run and soon after was promoted to brigadier general of volunteers. He next commanded a successful expedition that seized a large strip of the North Carolina coast for the Union, earning him the rank of major general. A large part of Burnside's force (designated the IX Corps) was transferred to Virginia in July 1862 and fought at 2d Bull Run, although Burnside himself missed the battle while working to funnel newly arriving troops to the front.

After turning down two offers to command the Army of the Potomac prior to the battle of Antietam, Burnside resumed command of the IX Corps in McClellan's army for that battle. Despite some criticism for his performance at Antietam, Lincoln chose Burnside to replace McClellan, but the new army commander—after a promising start—led his forces to defeat at Fredericksburg. This defeat, coupled with undermining comments from some of his subordinates, led Lincoln to remove Burnside from command and place him in charge of the Department of Ohio. In the fall of 1863, returning to field command that included parts of his old IX Corps, Burnside successfully defended Knoxville against Longstreet's Confederates. Burnside and the IX Corps were transferred back to the eastern theater in the spring of 1864, where they began the Overland Campaign reporting to Grant (rather than being assigned to the Army of the Potomac) due to Burnside's seniority over Meade. The IX Corps saw action in all of the major engagements of the Overland Campaign in May and June 1864. During this time, Burnside was formally placed under Meade's command.

During the subsequent siege of Petersburg, Burnside's corps was repulsed in the disastrous Battle of the Crater. In fact, Burnside had energetically supported the operation, but the Union defeat was too much for Burnside's career to withstand. After a court of inquiry placed much of the blame for the crater on Burnside, he removed himself from command of the IX Corps and eventually resigned from the army in April 1865. Despite the disappointing end to his military career, the genial Burnside retained many friends who assisted him in gaining several business positions after the war. Burnside went on to serve as governor of Rhode Island for three terms and then as a United States Senator from his adopted state until his death in 1881.

Library of Congress

William Farrar Smith. Smith was born in St. Albans, Vermont, on 17 February 1824. He graduated from West Point in 1847 ranking fourth in a class of 41 students. At West Point, Smith attained the nickname "Baldy," which his friends would call him throughout his military career. Commissioned in the Corps of Engineers, Smith served in several survey and exploration duties before being assigned as a mathematics instructor at West Point. Later, he served in Florida, where he contracted malaria, and although he recovered, Smith had recurring bouts of weakness and depression from the disease for the rest of his life.

At the start of the Civil War, Smith became colonel of the 3d Vermont Regiment before joining McDowell's staff for the battle of 1st Bull Run. He was promoted to brigadier general of volunteers and commanded a division of the VI Corps on the Peninsula and in the Antietam Campaign. Smith then became commander of the VI Corps, which he led at Fredericksburg. In that campaign, he was one of the most vocal critics of Burnside, bordering on insubordination, which led to his removal from corps command and loss of promotion to major general. Smith then served in several minor positions before dramatically resurrecting his career by helping to restore the supply line to the Union forces under siege at Chattanooga in the fall of 1863, earning him back his major general's rank. Impressed with Smith's performance, Grant brought him east to command the XVIII Corps in Benjamin Butler's Army of the James. Smith did little to support Butler's efforts in the Bermuda Hundred Campaign, but found time to criticize his commander. His corps then joined the Army of the Potomac and fought tenaciously at Cold Harbor, but once again Smith criticized his superior officer—this time George Gordon Meade.

When Grant shifted the Union forces south of the James River, Smith's corps was given the task of taking a lightly defended Petersburg. Smith, who had witnessed the effectiveness of Confederate entrenchments at Cold Harbor, hesitated in front of Petersburg, spent most of the day conducting a reconnaissance, and failed to press home his late attack. The Confederates thus gained enough time to reinforce the city. Smith retained his command for about a month, but was relieved on 19 July 1864. He remained inactive for the remainder of the war and then returned to his regular rank of major in the engineers in 1865. He served for two more years before resigning from the army and becoming president of a cable telegraph company and then a commissioner with the New York City police. Later he worked on many government harbor

and river projects as a civilian engineer. He died in Philadelphia on 28 February 1903.

National Archives

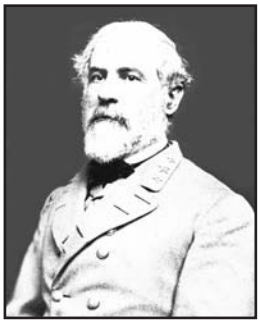
Philip Henry Sheridan. The circumstances and date of Sheridan's birth are murky, with much of the confusion resulting from Sheridan's own changing story. In any case, his memoirs put his birth at Albany, New York, on 6 March 1831. Soon after, Sheridan's family moved to Ohio where young Philip received a primary education and worked in a store prior to his appointment to West Point. He graduated in 1853, ranking 34th out of 49 cadets.

Sheridan was commissioned in the 4th Infantry Regiment and served in several frontier assignments until the opening of the Civil War. He started the war as a quartermaster and commissary officer and served as Henry Halleck's quartermaster in the Union advance on Corinth. In May 1862, Sheridan became colonel of the 2d Michigan Cavalry Regiment. Several months later, Sheridan was made a brigadier general of volunteers and rose to division command, fighting at Perryville and Stone's River where his division defended stubbornly against repeated Confederate attacks. At Chickamauga, Sheridan's division was caught in the maelstrom of Longstreet's successful breakthrough and driven from the field. Sheridan and his division redeemed their defeat when at Chattanooga—without orders—they joined in an attack on Missionary Ridge which routed Bragg's army. Grant was impressed by the fiery Sheridan and made him the chief of cavalry for the Army of the Potomac when the two came to the eastern theater in the spring of 1864.

Sheridan's cavalry performed indifferently in the opening of the Overland Campaign, and he soon found himself quarreling with Meade over the role of the army's cavalry. As a result of this argument, Grant allowed Sheridan to go on a raid toward Richmond that eventually led to the battle of Yellow Tavern and the death of Jeb Stuart. Returning to the Army of the Potomac just prior to the battle at Cold Harbor, Sheridan's cavalry again achieved mixed results while trying to conduct reconnaissance and screening missions for the army. Not long into the siege at Petersburg, Jubal Early's raid on Washington prompted Grant to send Sheridan to the capital with the mission of crushing Early and devastating the Shenandoah Valley so the Confederates could never use it as a supply source again. Sheridan took command of two infantry corps and three cavalry divisions, naming them the Army of the Shenandoah, and defeated Early at Winchester and Fisher's Hill before laying waste to the Valley. Sheridan placed his army in

camp at Cedar Creek in October 1864 and went to Washington, DC, to meet his superiors. Early launched an attack, which surprised the Union force, but Sheridan earned the adulation of the North by riding to the battlefield, rallying the Federal troops, and crushing Early's army. Sheridan received the rank of major general in the Regular Army and then rejoined the Union forces at Petersburg.

In April 1865, Sheridan led a mixed infantry and cavalry force that smashed George Pickett's Confederates at Five Forks leading to the Confederate withdrawal from Petersburg; one week later, he played a crucial role in bringing Lee to bay at Appomattox. Shortly after the end of the war, Sheridan commanded the Federal army on the border with Mexico that pressured Napoleon III to end his intervention in Mexico. Sheridan was less successful as a district commander in Louisiana and Texas during Reconstruction and was removed from that position for his overly stringent policies in 1867. Nonetheless, when Sherman replaced Grant as commanding general of the United States Army in 1869, Sheridan was promoted to lieutenant general. He served in a number of major commands during the Indian Wars and was the chief American observer during the Franco-Prussian War in 1870-71. In 1884, Sheridan assumed the duties of commanding general of the army, and in 1888, Sheridan was promoted to full general. He died in August 1888 at Nonquitt, Massachusetts.


Library of Congress

Robert Edward Lee. Born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, on 19 January 1807, Robert E. Lee was the fifth child of noted Revolutionary War general Henry "Light-Horse Harry" Lee. Henry Lee squandered his family's money forcing them to move to a small house in Alexandria, where Robert received his early education. In 1825, Lee received an appointment to West Point and graduated four years later second in his class. Remarkably, Lee did not receive a single demerit in his entire four years as a cadet. Upon graduation, Lee was commissioned in the Corps of Engineers.

Prior to the Mexican War, Lee performed his duties with distinction to include projects at Forts Pulaski, Monroe, and Hamilton, as well as superintending engineer for St. Louis harbor. In the Mexican War, Lee shone as one of the finest young officers in the army while serving on Winfield Scott's staff in the march on Mexico City. Lee was brevetted three times for his gallantry and distinguished conduct. After the war, he

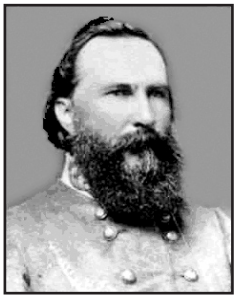
continued his outstanding service, first in construction of forts in Baltimore Harbor, then as superintendent of the Military Academy at West Point, and then as lieutenant colonel of the 2d Cavalry Regiment. Lee was on an extended leave at his home in Arlington at the time of John Brown's raid in October 1859. He was given command of the detachment of marines that captured Brown, after which he returned to duties in Texas.

When the South seceded, Scott recalled Lee from Texas and offered him command of the US Army (with the approval of Abraham Lincoln). Lee decided to go with his state, and he turned down Scott's offer, resigning his commission on 20 April 1861. After arriving in Richmond, Lee received command of Virginia's forces, and when these were incorporated into the Confederate Army, Lee received a Confederate commission, initially for brigadier general and soon after to the full rank of general. Lee's first campaign in the war was in the western counties of Virginia (later to become the state of West Virginia), where he was unsuccessful due in part to the pro-Union sentiments of the local population. After this campaign, Lee spent a brief time inspecting coastal fortifications before returning to Richmond to become the military advisor to President Jefferson Davis. Lee returned to field command in June 1862, when he replaced the wounded Joseph E. Johnston in command of Confederate forces (soon to be designated the Army of Northern Virginia) fighting against McClellan's Union army in the Peninsula. Lee wasted little time in seizing the initiative, and in the Seven Days Battles, he hammered McClellan's forces, forcing the Federals to retreat from the doorstep of Richmond. He followed up this victory with another triumph over John Pope's Federal army at 2d Bull Run. Based on these successes, Lee decided to invade the North, but a copy of Lee's orders fell into Union hands, and McClellan, reappointed to command, was able to force Lee out of Maryland after the bloody battle at Antietam.

Back in Virginia, Lee defeated Ambrose Burnside at Fredericksburg before achieving one of his most brilliant victories at Chancellorsville. In this campaign, Lee was heavily outnumbered, but he gambled—splitting his forces in the face of the enemy—and attacked Hooker's exposed right flank, forcing the Federals to retreat. After this victory, Lee again decided on an invasion of the North, but his effort ended in defeat at Gettysburg in July 1863. In the Overland Campaign, Lee skillfully parried Grant's attacks, but he found himself forced to rely increasingly on the defense, as his army was battered by the Federals' repeated attacks. Finally forced into a siege at Petersburg, Lee was compelled to stretch his lines to the breaking point from June 1864 to April 1865. During this time, Davis appointed Lee as general in chief of the Confederate armies, but it was

too late to have much practical effect on the war. Finally, in April 1865, Grant was able to penetrate Lee's Petersburg lines, force the Confederates to retreat, and trap Lee's troops at Appomattox, where the Confederate commander surrendered.

After the war, Lee conducted himself with the utmost dignity, urging reconciliation between the North and South. He became president of Washington College (later renamed Washington and Lee) in Lexington, Virginia, where he proved to be an able educator while continuing to set an example of high morale character for his students. Lee died on 12 October 1870 at Lexington.


Valentine History Center

James Longstreet. Born on 8 January 1821 in Edgefield District, South Carolina, Longstreet spent much of his youth in Augusta, Georgia. After his father's death, Longstreet and his mother moved to Somerville, Alabama, the state from which he was appointed to West Point. He graduated from West Point in 1842, ranking 54th in a class of 62 cadets. Commissioned as a second lieutenant, Longstreet served with the 4th Infantry Regiment in Missouri and Louisiana, and then in Florida with the 8th Infantry. He participated in the Mexican War with both Zachary Taylor's army on the border and then Winfield Scott's army in the march on Mexico City. Wounded at Chapultepec, Longstreet received two brevets for his gallantry during the war. Recovering from his wounds, Longstreet was promoted to captain in 1852, and then to major, as paymaster in New Mexico, in 1858.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Longstreet resigned his commission and traveled to Richmond to offer his services to the Confederacy. Longstreet soon received a brigadier general's commission and fought at the battle of 1st Bull Run. After that battle, he was promoted to major general and fought at the battle of Seven Pines (Fair Oaks) on the Peninsula. His performance at Seven Pines was lackluster, but his strong leadership and determination in the ensuing Seven Days Battles earned him the everlasting respect of the Army of Northern Virginia's new commander, Robert E. Lee. Longstreet and Stonewall Jackson became the army's two "wing" commanders (later formalized as corps), and in this role, Longstreet launched a devastating attack that routed John Pope's Federal force at 2d Bull Run. Longstreet and his corps then participated in the Maryland Campaign culminating in the battle of Antietam, after which he was promoted to lieutenant general.

In November 1862, Longstreet's corps repelled Ambrose Burnside's attacks on Marye's Heights at Fredericksburg, but he and his troops were on detached duties at Suffolk, Virginia, and thus missed the battle of Chancellorsville in May 1863. He rejoined Lee's army for the Gettysburg Campaign where he and Lee often disagreed over tactics at the famous battle. Despite the disagreements, Longstreet played a major role on the last two days of the battle. After the Confederate defeat at Gettysburg, Longstreet and his corps joined Braxton Bragg's army and were instrumental in defeating the Federals at Chickamauga.

In the following months, he was less successful as an independent commander at Knoxville, where he was unable to take the city from Burnside's Union forces. Longstreet's corps returned east just prior to the opening of the Overland Campaign, and although he played an important part in stopping the Federal attack in the Wilderness, Longstreet was severely wounded in that fight and would not rejoin the army until the end of the Petersburg siege. Once back with the army in April 1865, Longstreet was with Lee in the retreat from Petersburg and the surrender at Appomattox.

Although generally admired and respected by his fellow Southerners during the war, Longstreet became a controversial and, in some cases, reviled figure in the South after the war. He joined the Republican Party, and as a personal friend of Grant from the prewar days, Longstreet was appointed the US Minister to Turkey in 1880. Later, he was the commissioner of Pacific railroads under the McKinley and Roosevelt administrations. Longstreet also wrote his memoirs, which had several criticisms of Lee and other former Confederate leaders. His writings and Republican connections were certainly contributing factors to harsh attacks from Jubal Early and other Southern leaders (and writers) in the postwar period. He died on 2 January 1904, the last survivor of the Confederate high command.

Military History Institute

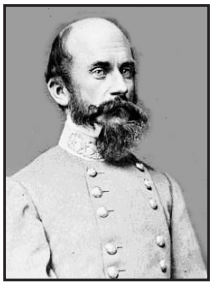
Richard H. Anderson. Grandson of a famous Revolutionary War general, Anderson was born on 7 October 1821 in Sumter County, South Carolina. Anderson received an appointment to West Point, and graduated in 1842 ranked 40th in a class of 56. After attending the cavalry school, he reported for duty with the 2d Dragoon Regiment on the western frontier. He served with the Dragoons in the Mexican War where he earned a brevet to first lieutenant

for gallantry. Anderson remained with the regiment, reaching the rank of captain before resigning his commission to join the Confederacy in 1861. He was present at the bombardment of Fort Sumter and succeeded P.G.T. Beauregard as commander at Charleston, receiving a promotion to brigadier general on 18 July 1861.

After a short period as Braxton Bragg's assistant in Pensacola, Florida, Anderson transferred to Virginia in early 1862, took command of a brigade in James Longstreet's division, and fought in the Peninsula Campaign at Seven Pines, Gaines Mill, and Malvern Hill. In July, he was promoted to major general and took command of a division under Longstreet, who now commanded a "wing" (later officially designated a corps). Anderson's division fought well at 2d Bull Run, Antietam, and Fredericksburg. While the bulk of Longstreet's corps was on detached duty, Anderson's division remained with Lee's army and contributed significantly to the Confederate victory at Chancellorsville. In the reorganization that took place after this battle, Lee created a new corps under A.P. Hill, and Anderson's division moved to this III Corps. His division was most heavily engaged on the second day at Gettysburg, where his troops joined with Longstreet's attack on the Union left flank and center, although Anderson received some criticism for not attacking promptly with his full force.

In May 1864, Anderson led his division competently in the Wilderness. After Longstreet was wounded, Lee selected Anderson to take over command of the Confederate I Corps. In what was probably Anderson's best performance of the war, the new corps commander force-marched his men to Spotsylvania, arriving prior to the Federals and saving the crucial crossroads for the Southerners. Anderson commanded I Corps for the remainder of the Overland Campaign and most of the ensuing siege at Petersburg. When Longstreet returned to command in 1865, Anderson took command of a segment of the Richmond defenses. In April, when the Federals broke Lee's Petersburg lines, Anderson and his Richmond troops joined in the Confederate retreat only to be routed and largely dispersed or captured at the battle of Saylor's Creek. Because he no longer had a command and the war was near its end, Lee relieved Anderson and allowed him to return home just prior to the surrender at Appomattox.

Anderson's postwar life was spent in poverty as he passed through several jobs before finally becoming South Carolina's phosphate agent. He died on 26 June 1879 in Beaufort, South Carolina.



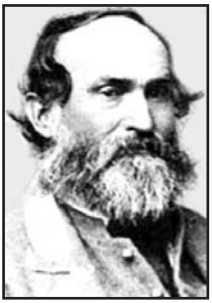
Library of Congress

Richard Stoddert Ewell. Ewell was born on 8 January 1817 in Georgetown, District of Columbia, where he lived until he was nine and his family moved to Prince William County, Virginia. He graduated 13th in the West Point class of 1840. Ewell won a brevet for gallantry for his performance in the Mexican War and then served with the dragoons on the southwestern frontier, reaching the rank of captain prior to the Civil War.

On 7 May 1861, Ewell resigned his commission and soon was promoted to brigadier general in the Confederate army. After commanding a brigade at 1st Bull Run, Ewell was promoted to major general and commanded a division under Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley Campaign. Ewell and his division were part of Jackson's force that joined Lee's army on the Peninsula and participated in the attacks on McClellan's Union army during the Seven Days Battles in June and July 1862. Ewell continued to command his division at Cedar Mountain, but was wounded at the battle of Groveton, and because of the wound, lost his leg. Ewell received a wooden leg, to which he seemed to adjust well, but his recovery kept him out of action for nearly ten months, missing Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville.

Ewell returned to duty at the time that Lee was reorganizing the Army of Northern Virginia after Jackson's death at Chancellorsville, and he was named Jackson's replacement in command of the Confederate II Corps. Ewell led his corps through the three-day battle at Gettysburg, but his performance in this battle has come under considerable criticism from some participants and historians, especially his decision not to attack Cemetery Hill on the evening of 1 July 1863. Nonetheless, he retained his command and performed credibly at the battle of the Wilderness. At Spotsylvania, however, Lee began losing confidence in Ewell, and the army commander was probably not overly concerned when Ewell took a leave of absence for his bad health at Cold Harbor.

Ewell returned to active duty late in the war and took command of the Richmond defenses. His garrison joined in the Confederate retreat after Grant's forces penetrated the Southern lines at Petersburg, but soon thereafter Ewell was captured in the Confederate disaster at Saylor's Creek in April 1865. He was briefly imprisoned at Fort Warren, Massachusetts, and then released in August 1865. Ewell moved to a farm in Spring Hill, Tennessee, where he died on 25 January 1872.



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Jubal Early. Born on 3 November 1816 in Franklin County, Virginia, Early was the son of a wealthy tobacco plantation owner. He attended local public and private academies in Lynchburg and Danville until securing an appointment to West Point. In 1837, Early graduated from the academy in the top third of his class. Upon graduation, he served for a year with the 3d Artillery Regiment in the campaigns against the Seminoles, but then resigned his commission to study law in Franklin County.

Early began his law practice in 1840 and was highly successful, rising to become the prosecuting attorney for Franklin and Floyd counties. During the Mexican War, Early left his law practice to serve as a major with the Virginia volunteers. After the war, Early practiced law until the start of the Civil War, while also serving for a time as a member of the state assembly. Early voted against secession at the Virginia Convention in April 1861, but did not hesitate to stay with his state after the Convention voted to join the Confederacy. He quickly entered the Southern army as a colonel and commanded the 24th Virginia Infantry Regiment at 1st Bull Run. After the battle, Early was promoted to brigadier general and commanded a brigade in the Peninsula, where he was slightly wounded at the battle of Williamsburg. He continued to lead the brigade at Cedar Mountain in the 2d Bull Run Campaign before succeeding the wounded Richard Ewell as division commander in September 1862. Early led the division at Antietam and Fredericksburg rising to major general. At Chancellorsville, Lee entrusted Early with a virtually independent role at Marye's Heights and Salem Church. Early and his division returned to subordinate command under a new corps commander, Ewell, after Stonewall Jackson's death, and he led the division at Gettysburg. Early had temporary command of Ewell's II Corps during parts of the Mine Run Campaign in November 1864, and he took temporary command of the III Corps for an ailing A.P. Hill at Spotsylvania in the Overland Campaign.

Early returned briefly to division command before assuming command of the II Corps from Ewell at Cold Harbor. This change later became permanent, and Early was promoted to lieutenant general. Lee detached Early's corps in June 1864 and sent them to operate in the Shenandoah Valley. Initially successful, Early drove Federal forces north through the valley and threatened Washington. However, Union reinforcements from Petersburg joined the troops in the capital area, and led by Philip Sheridan, the Federals defeated Early at Winchester, Fisher's Hill, and Cedar Creek, effectively ending Confederate use of the Shenandoah Valley. The remnants of Early's force were dispersed by Custer's Union cavalry at Waynesboro in March 1865.

After Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Early made his way to Mexico where he hoped to revive some sort of Confederate effort. Eventually, Early gave up this endeavor and returned to Lynchburg, Virginia, to practice law. Early became the first president of the Southern Historical Society and began writing numerous articles that did much to create the romantic image of the "lost cause" of the Confederacy. He also vigorously defended Robert E. Lee while launching vicious attacks on the reputation of James Longstreet. Later in life, Early supervised the drawings of the Louisiana Lottery before dying on 2 March 1894.

National Archives

Ambrose Powell Hill. Hill was born on 9 November 1825 in Culpeper, Virginia. In 1842, he received an appointment to West Point and was slotted to graduate with the famous class of 1846. However, Hill contracted an illness while on furlough during his junior year (there has been some conjecture that this was a venereal disease) and eventually graduated in 1847 ranked 15th in his class. Whatever the origins of his illness, Hill would have recurring health problems, especially in the later years of the Civil War. After graduation, Hill was commissioned in the artillery and sent to Mexico, but he arrived too late to see any fighting.

Returning to the United States, Hill fought against the Seminoles in Florida and worked for the office of the superintendent of the Coast Survey. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Hill resigned his commission and joined the Confederate army as colonel of the 13th Virginia Regiment. Hill, in reserve at 1st Bull Run, was promoted to brigadier general in February 1862 and then led his brigade into battle at Williamsburg in the Peninsula Campaign. Soon after, he was promoted to major general and received command of a division. Hill's division fought superbly during the Seven Days Battles, after which his newly named "Light Division" became a part of Stonewall Jackson's wing (corps) of the Army of Northern Virginia. Hill's division fought at Cedar Mountain in the 2d Bull Run Campaign, and at Antietam they arrived just in time to blunt Ambrose Burnside's attack, saving Lee's army from near certain disaster. Part of Hill's division was driven back at Fredericksburg, but the Confederates restored the line.

In May 1863, the Light Division participated in Jackson's famous flank attack at Chancellorsville, and Hill briefly commanded Jackson's corps after Jackson was wounded; however, Hill himself was wounded and turned command of the corps over to Jeb Stuart. Hill recovered from his wound, was promoted to lieutenant general, and received command

of the newly created III Corps in the reorganization of Lee's army after Chancellorsville. At Gettysburg, Hill, perhaps ill, performed indifferently on the first two days of the battle, and Lee gave Longstreet temporary command of two of Hill's divisions in Pickett's charge on the third day of the battle.

Hill was back in command of the III Corps at the start of the Overland Campaign in the Wilderness, but once again illness would plague him and he would have to give temporary command of the corps to Jubal Early during parts of the Spotsylvania and North Anna battles. Hill's health improved enough to allow him to command his corps for the majority of the Petersburg siege. Even so, Hill was bedridden on the morning of 2 April 1865 when the Union forces broke the thin Confederate lines at Petersburg. Once the breakthrough had occurred, Hill rose from bed, put on his uniform, and rode to the front to try to rally the troops. Two Federal soldiers saw Hill riding toward the front and killed the Confederate corps commander only one week before the surrender at Appomattox.

Library of Congress

James Ewell Brown (Jeb) Stuart. Born on 6 February 1833 in Patrick County, Virginia, Jeb Stuart was one of 11 children. Stuart's father was a prominent politician in Virginia, and his mother was a pious woman who instilled faith and strict morals in her children. Young Stuart chose to follow a military career and obtained an appointment to West Point. He graduated 13th out of a class of 46 in 1854 and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the cavalry. He spent the majority of his time prior to the Civil War with the 1st Cavalry Regiment on the Kansas frontier, but he gained his greatest prewar fame by capturing John Brown during the latter's raid on Harpers Ferry in 1859. Stuart was a subordinate to Robert E. Lee in this operation, and the two quickly established a lifelong friendship.

Stuart had just been promoted to captain when the Civil War broke out, and he resigned his commission to become a colonel in the Confederate army and commander of the 1st Virginia Cavalry Regiment. Early in the war, Stuart gained fame for his exploits while serving under Joseph Johnston in the Shenandoah Valley and aggressively leading his cavalry at 1st Bull Run. He was promoted to brigadier general in September 1861 and then further enhanced his reputation by providing Lee superb intelligence information for the Seven Days Battles while riding completely around the Union Army of the Potomac. In July 1862, Stuart was promoted to

major general and received command of the Army of Northern Virginia's cavalry forces (initially division-sized and eventually a corps by 1864). He rendered skillful service in the 2d Bull Run Campaign by leading a raid that disrupted Union commander John Pope's supply line and gained valuable intelligence. At Antietam and Fredericksburg, Stuart's horse artillery was positioned against the flank of the Union army and it harassed and helped disrupt the Federal attacks.

One of Stuart's best performances of the war occurred at Chancellorsville, where he temporarily took command of Jackson's infantry corps after Jackson was wounded. Stuart doggedly continued the Confederate attack that drove Joseph Hooker's Federals across the Rappahannock River. Stuart's performance in the following Gettysburg Campaign was less noteworthy. First, his cavalry was surprised at Brandy Station, and although the Confederates retained the battlefield, they had suffered a blow to their reputation. Second, Stuart attempted another grand raid around the Army of the Potomac in the week before Gettysburg, but he misjudged the time it took to complete the expedition and did not rejoin Lee's army until the second day of battle at Gettysburg. Stuart did a better job of keeping Lee informed in the Mine Run Campaign in the fall of 1863 and at the beginning of the Overland Campaign in 1864. After the battle of the Wilderness, Stuart and part of his cavalry force detached from Lee's army to pursue Philip Sheridan's Union cavalry that was conducting a raid toward Richmond. Stuart caught up with Sheridan's raiders at Yellow Tavern on 11 May 1864, but during the course of the battle, Stuart was mortally wounded and died the next day.

National Park Service

Wade Hampton III. Born in Charleston, South Carolina, on 28 March 1818, Hampton was the son of a wealthy planter who had earned fame while fighting with Andrew Jackson at New Orleans in the War of 1812. Young Wade received an extensive private education before attending South Carolina College (now the University of South Carolina), from which he graduated in 1836. Hampton had studied law, but he did not practice, instead devoting his time to managing his family's already extensive property. He was extremely successful and reputed to be the largest landholder in the South prior to the Civil War. In 1852, Hampton was elected as a representative to the South Carolina General Assembly, and six years later he became a state senator.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Hampton accepted a commission

as a colonel and proceeded to organize the Hampton Legion, which he equipped, to a large extent, at his own expense. (The "legion" was slightly larger than a regiment and consisted of infantry, cavalry, and even its own artillery.) Hampton brought the legion to Virginia and was wounded at 1st Bull Run. He then became an infantry brigade commander and participated in the Peninsula Campaign. In May 1862, he was promoted to brigadier general. Hampton was wounded again at Fair Oaks, and after his recovery, he took over a cavalry brigade in Jeb Stuart's cavalry division in July 1862. Hampton's brigade had a small role at 2d Bull Run, and then performed skillfully in covering the Confederate delaying action at South Mountain in the Antietam Campaign. During the Fredericksburg operations, Hampton led several raids behind the Union lines, capturing Union prisoners and providing valuable intelligence. Hampton and his troops missed Chancellorsville because they were on detached duties south of the James River. Returning in time to fight at Brandy Station, Hampton received a slight wound while repelling a Union attack. He was with Stuart during the Gettysburg Campaign, which left a large part of the Confederate cavalry out of contact with Lee's army.

After rejoining the army, his brigade then fought in the heavy, but inconclusive, cavalry action east of Pickett's charge on 3 July 1863. Hampton was severely wounded in this action, but he recovered, received a promotion to major general, and took over a division in the newly reorganized Confederate cavalry corps before the year was over. Hampton helped to screen Lee's movements at the start of the Overland Campaign, before joining with Stuart in pursuit of Philip Sheridan's Union cavalry that was conducting a raid on Richmond. Hampton's division fought in the battle against Sheridan at Yellow Tavern in which Stuart was fatally wounded. Hampton and Fitzhugh Lee were the leading contenders to take over the cavalry corps, but Robert E. Lee hesitated to appoint a replacement. Eventually, Hampton emerged as the most reliable commander, fighting skillfully at Haw's Shop and thwarting Union cavalry operations at Trevilian Station, and thus receiving formal appointment to command of the cavalry corps. During the Petersburg siege, Hampton gained further fame by leading the famous "Beefsteak Raid" behind Union lines and capturing the Federals' herd of cattle.

In January 1865, Hampton and part of his force were detached from Lee's army and sent to join Joe Johnston who was attempting to halt Sherman's advance through the Carolinas. Hampton was promoted to lieutenant general in February and commanded a corps under Johnston at the battle of Bentonville. At the war's end, Hampton returned to his home state and opposed the harsh Reconstruction policies of the radical

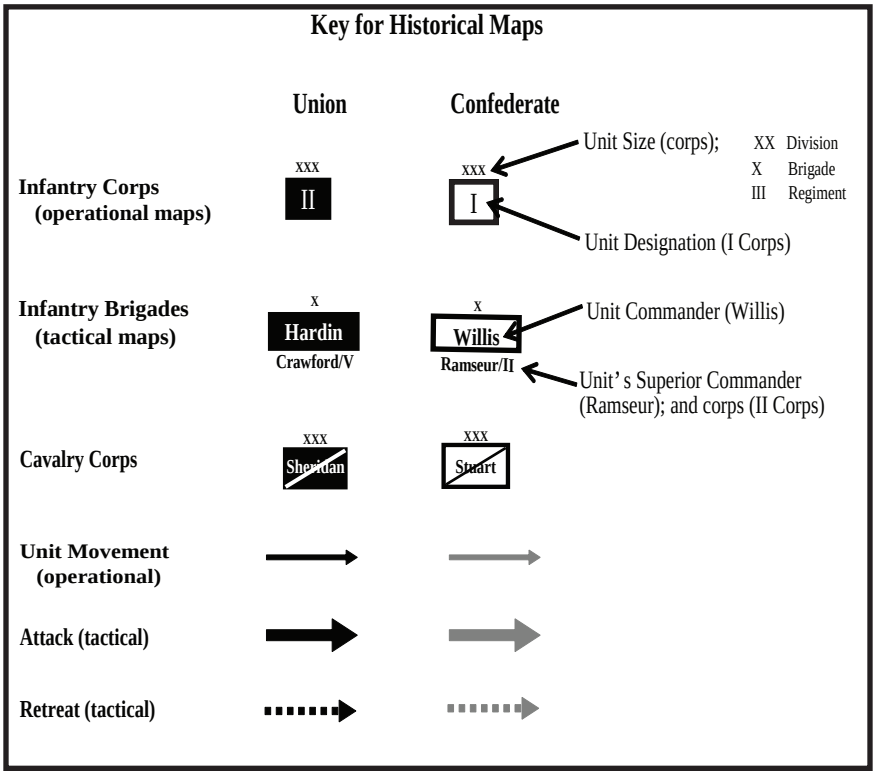
Republicans. He was elected governor of South Carolina in 1876 and served two terms before being elected a United States Senator in 1879. After serving his senate term, Hampton became commissioner of the Pacific Railways. He died at Columbia, South Carolina, on 11 April 1902.

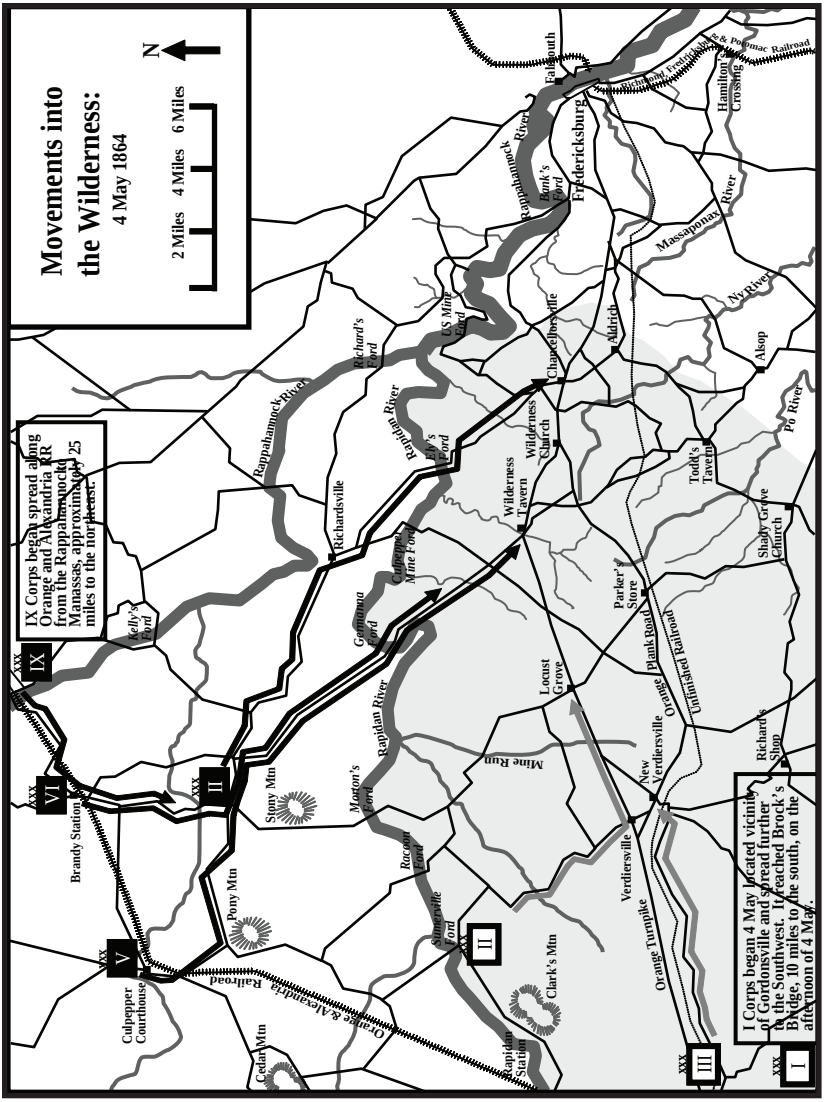
Appendix E

Historical Maps of the Area

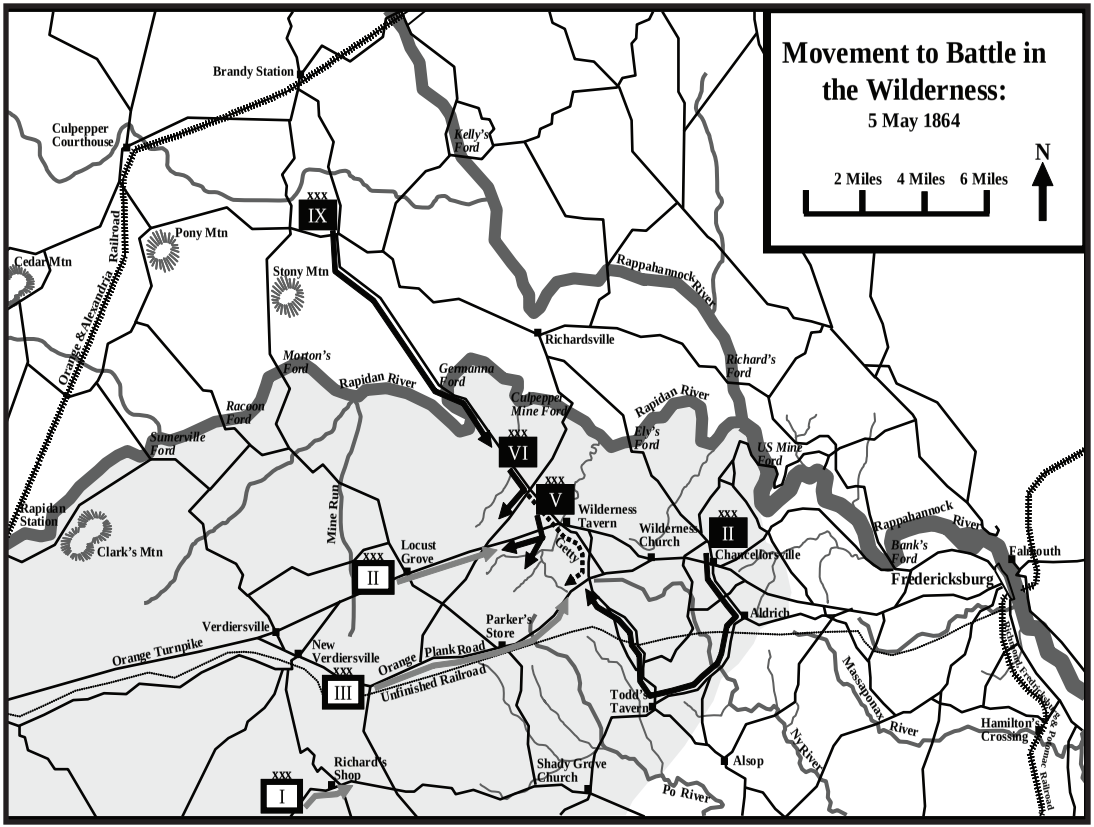
The maps in this appendix serve two major purposes. First, the maps should aid the staff ride leader in following the unit movements while reading the text. Second, the maps will help the staff ride leader to prepare visual aids to use during the field phase of the staff ride. It is recommended that in making visual aids from the maps, the staff ride leader expand the maps to about 20 by 30 inches, mount the maps, and cover the maps with plastic or acetate to waterproof them.

The maps are grouped into two sections. The operational maps show the major corps movements between the battles of the campaign. The tactical maps show the battles themselves, usually at brigade or division level. Within each of the sections, the maps are generally in chronological order.

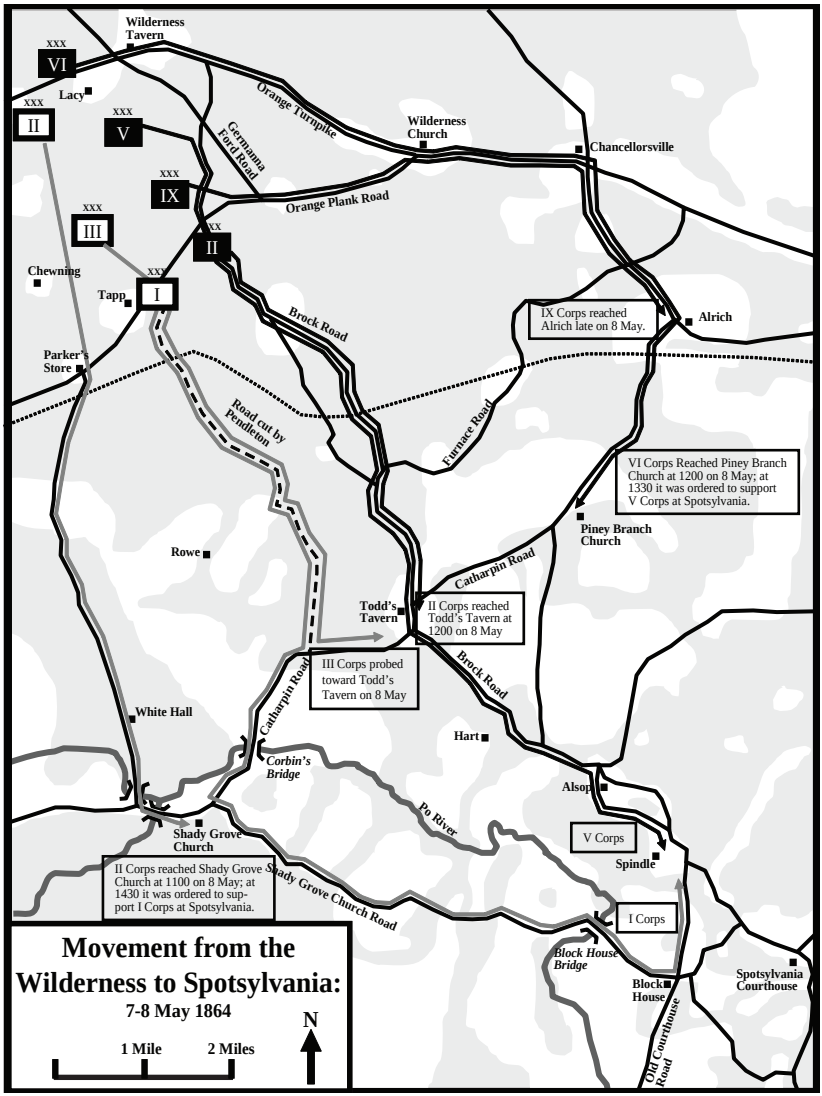



Movements into the Wilderness:
4 May 1864
2 Miles 4 Miles 6 Miles
N
IX Corps began spread along Orange and Alexandria RR from the Rappahannock to Manassas, approximately 25 miles to the northeast.
I Corps began 4 May located vicinity of Gordonsville and spread further to the Southwest. It reached Brock's Bridge, 10 miles to the south, on the afternoon of 4 May.
Kelly's Ford
Rappahannock River
Richardsville
Richard's Ford
Rapidan River
Ely's Ford
US Mine Ford
Germanna Ford
Culpeper Mine Ford
Morton's Ford
Racoon Ford
Somerville Ford
Stony Mtn
Pony Mtn
Cedar Mtn
Clark's Mtn
Brandy Station
Culpeper Courthouse
Orange & Alexandria Railroad
Rapidan Station
Mine Run
Locust Grove
Wilderness Tavern
Wilderness Church
Chancellorsville
Rank's Ford
Fredericksburg
Falmouth
Richmond Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad
Hamilton's Crossing
Massaponax River
Ny River
Aldrich
Todd's Tavern
Parker's Store
Plank Road
Orange Turnpike
Unfinished Railroad
Verdiersville
New Verdiersville
Richards Shop
Shady Grove Church
Alsop
Po River
XXX
IX
VI
V
II
III
I

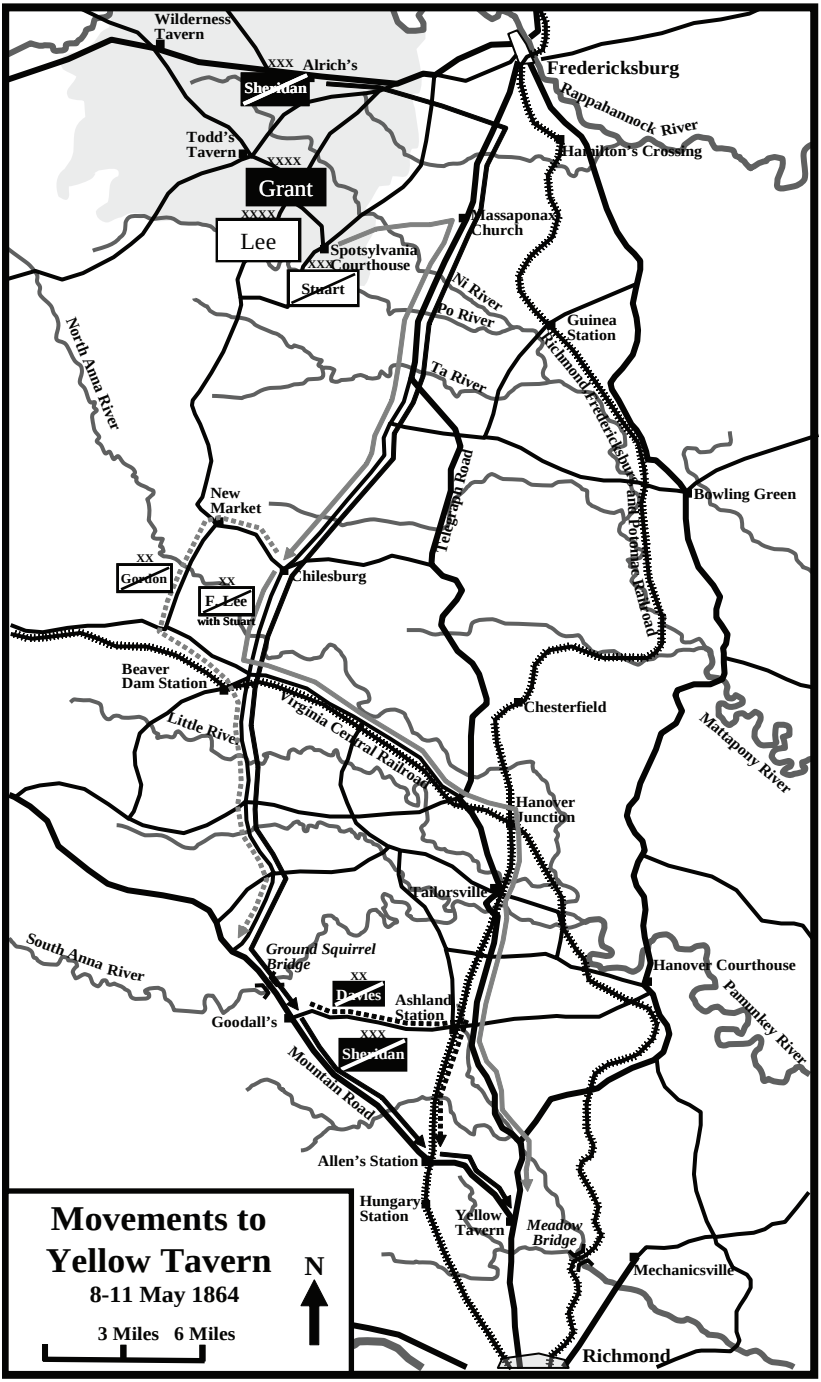
Map 64.


Movement to Battle in the Wilderness:
5 May 1864
N
2 Miles 4 Miles 6 Miles
Brandy Station
Culpepper Courthouse
Kelly's Ford
Pony Mtn
Cedar Mtn
Stony Mtn
Orange & Alexandria Railroad
Rappahannock River
Richardsville
Morton's Ford
Germanna Ford
Rapidan River
Richard's Ford
Culpepper Mine Ford
Racoon Ford
Somerville Ford
Fly's Ford
US Mine Ford
Rapidan Station
Clark's Mtn
Mine Run
Wilderness Tavern
Wilderness Church
Locust Grove
Chancellorsville
Bank's Ford
Falmouth
Fredericksburg
Aldrich
Verdiersville
Parker's Store
Orange Turnpike
New Verdiersville
Orange Plank Road
Unfinished Railroad
Todd's Tavern
Massaponax River
Ny River
Hamilton's Crossing
Richard's Shop
Shady Grove Church
Alsop
Po River
IX
VI
V
II
III
I

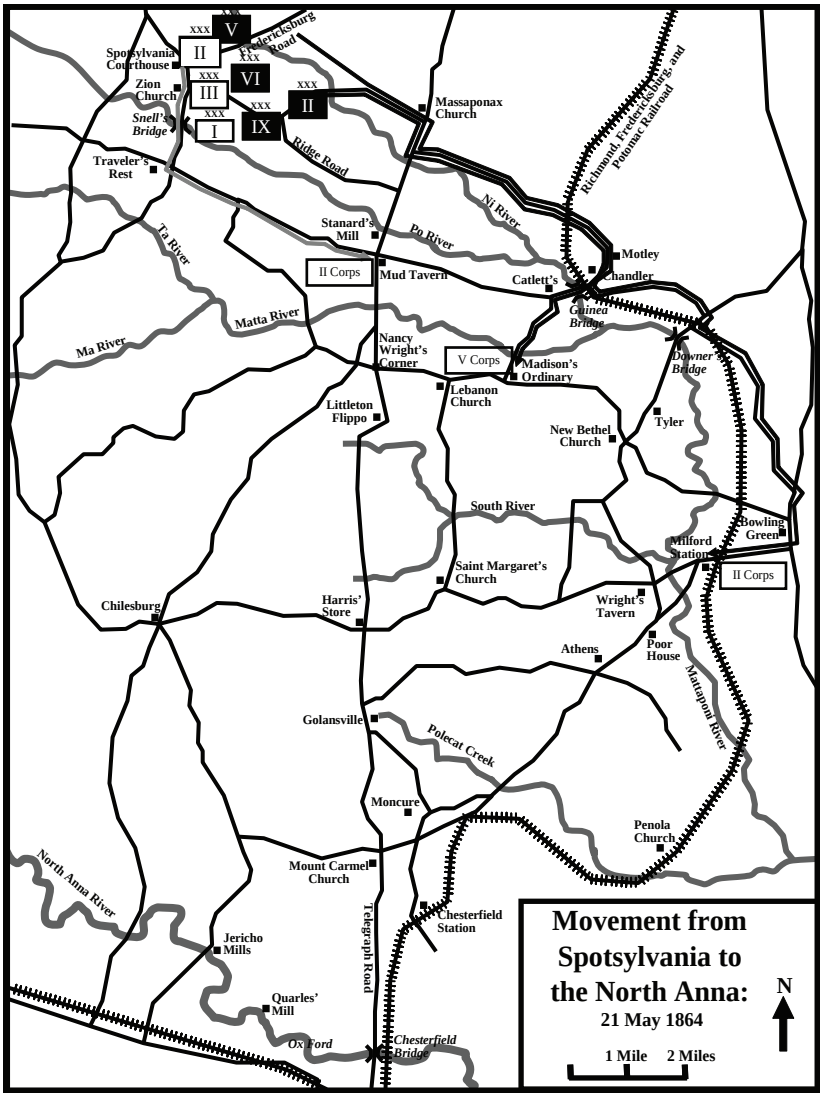
Map 65.


Movement from the Wilderness to Spotsylvania:
7-8 May 1864
1 Mile
2 Miles
N
Wilderness Tavern
Lacy
Orange Turnpike
Germanna Ford Road
Wilderness Church
Chancellorsville
Orange Plank Road
Chewning
Tapp
Brock Road
IX Corps reached Alrich late on 8 May.
Alrich
Parker's Store
Road cut by Pendleton
Furnace Road
VI Corps Reached Piney Branch Church at 1200 on 8 May; at 1330 it was ordered to support V Corps at Spotsylvania.
Piney Branch Church
Rowe
Catharpin Road
Todd's Tavern
II Corps reached Todd's Tavern at 1200 on 8 May
III Corps probed toward Todd's Tavern on 8 May
Brock Road
White Hall
Hart
Corbin's Bridge
Alsop
Po River
Shady Grove Church
V Corps
Spindle
II Corps reached Shady Grove Church at 1100 on 8 May; at 1430 it was ordered to support I Corps at Spotsylvania.
Shady Grove Church Road
I Corps
Block House Bridge
Block House
Spotsylvania Courthouse
Old Courthouse Road

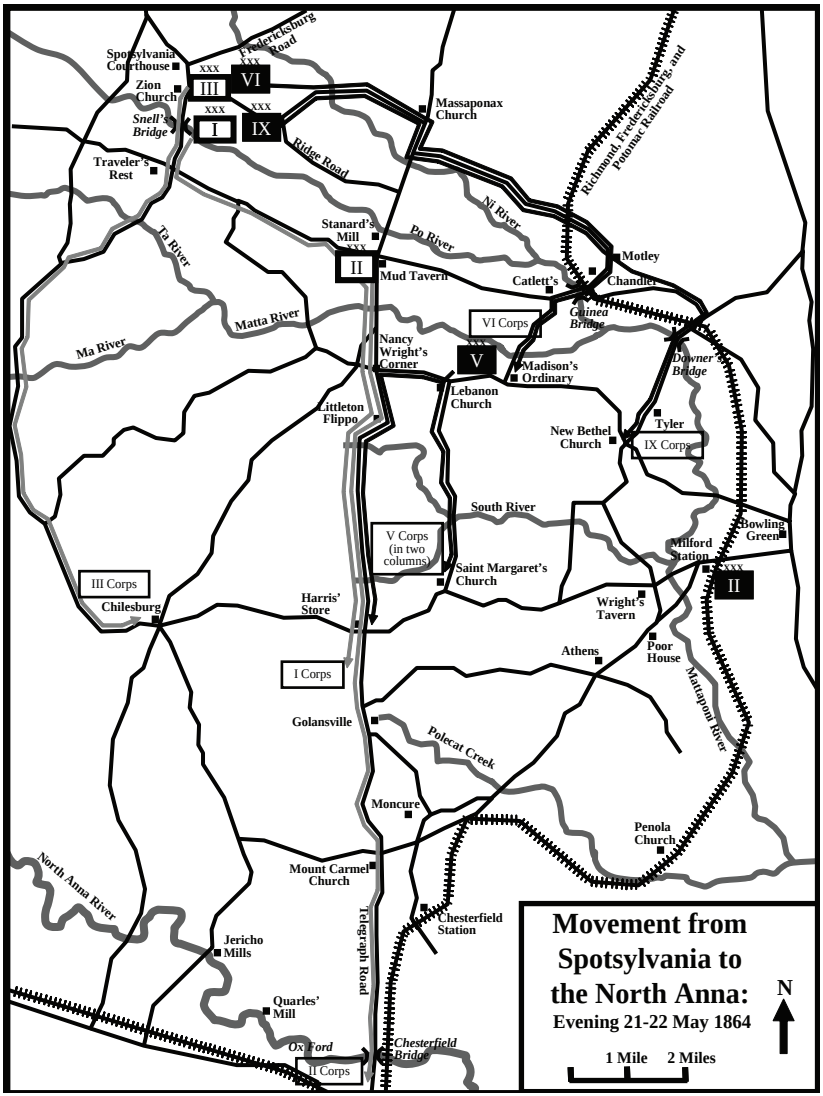
Map 66.


Movements to
Yellow Tavern
8-11 May 1864
N
3 Miles 6 Miles
Wilderness Tavern
Alrich's
Sheridan
Fredericksburg
Rappahannock River
Hamilton's Crossing
Todd's Tavern
Grant
Lee
Massaponax Church
Spotsylvania Courthouse
Stuart
Ni River
Po River
Guinea Station
North Anna River
Ta River
Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad
Telegraph Road
Bowling Green
New Market
Gordon
Chilesburg
E. Lee
with Stuart
Beaver Dam Station
Little River
Virginia Central Railroad
Chesterfield
Mattapony River
Hanover Junction
Taylorsville
South Anna River
Ground Squirrel Bridge
Davies
Ashland Station
Hanover Courthouse
Pamunkey River
Goodall's
Sheridan
Mountain Road
Allen's Station
Hungary Station
Yellow Tavern
Meadow Bridge
Mechanicsville
Richmond

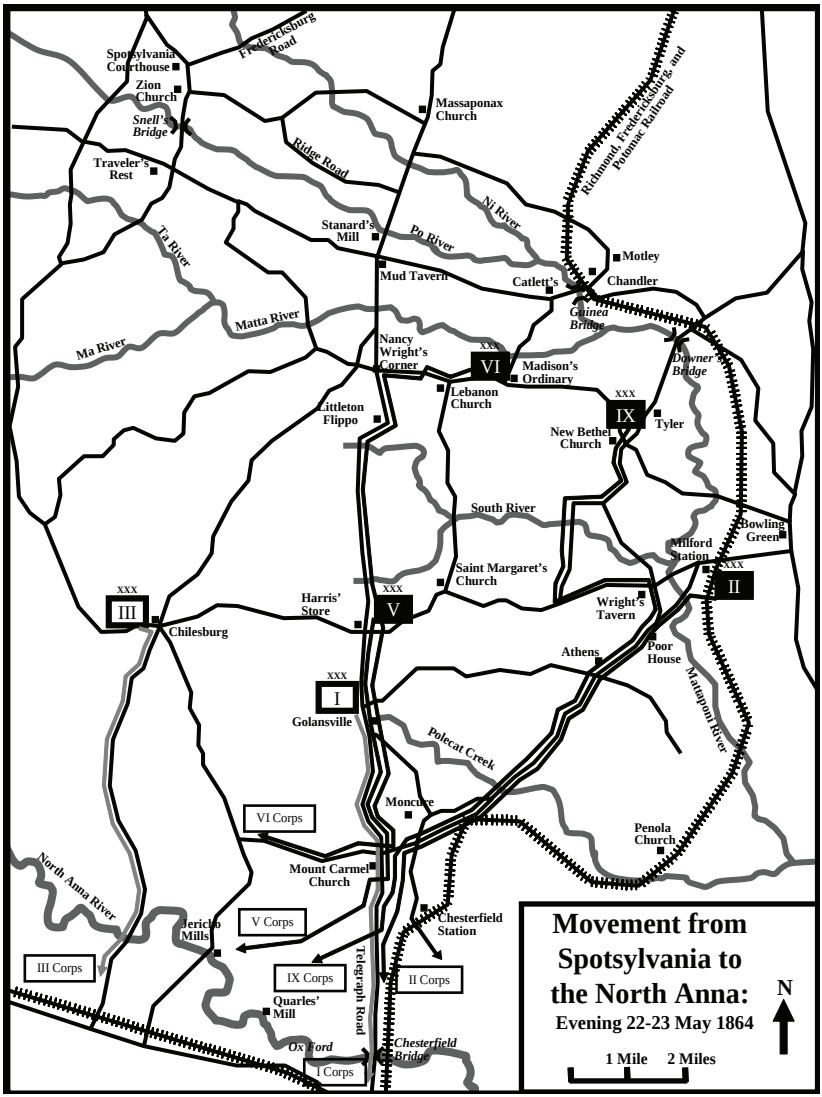
Map 67.


Movement from Spotsylvania to the North Anna:
21 May 1864
N
1 Mile
2 Miles
Spotsylvania Courthouse
Zion Church
Snell's Bridge
Traveler's Rest
Fredericksburg Road
Ridge Road
Massaponax Church
Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad
Ni River
Po River
Ta River
Stanard's Mill
Mud Tavern
II Corps
Catlett's
Motley
Chandler
Guinea Bridge
Matta River
Ma River
Nancy Wright's Corner
V Corps
Madison's Ordinary
Downer's Bridge
Lebanon Church
Littleton Flippo
New Bethel Church
Tyler
South River
Bowling Green
Milford Station
II Corps
Saint Margaret's Church
Chilesburg
Harris' Store
Wright's Tavern
Athens
Poor House
Mattaponi River
Golansville
Polecat Creek
Moncure
Penola Church
Mount Carmel Church
North Anna River
Telegraph Road
Chesterfield Station
Jericho Mills
Quarles' Mill
Ox Ford
Chesterfield Bridge

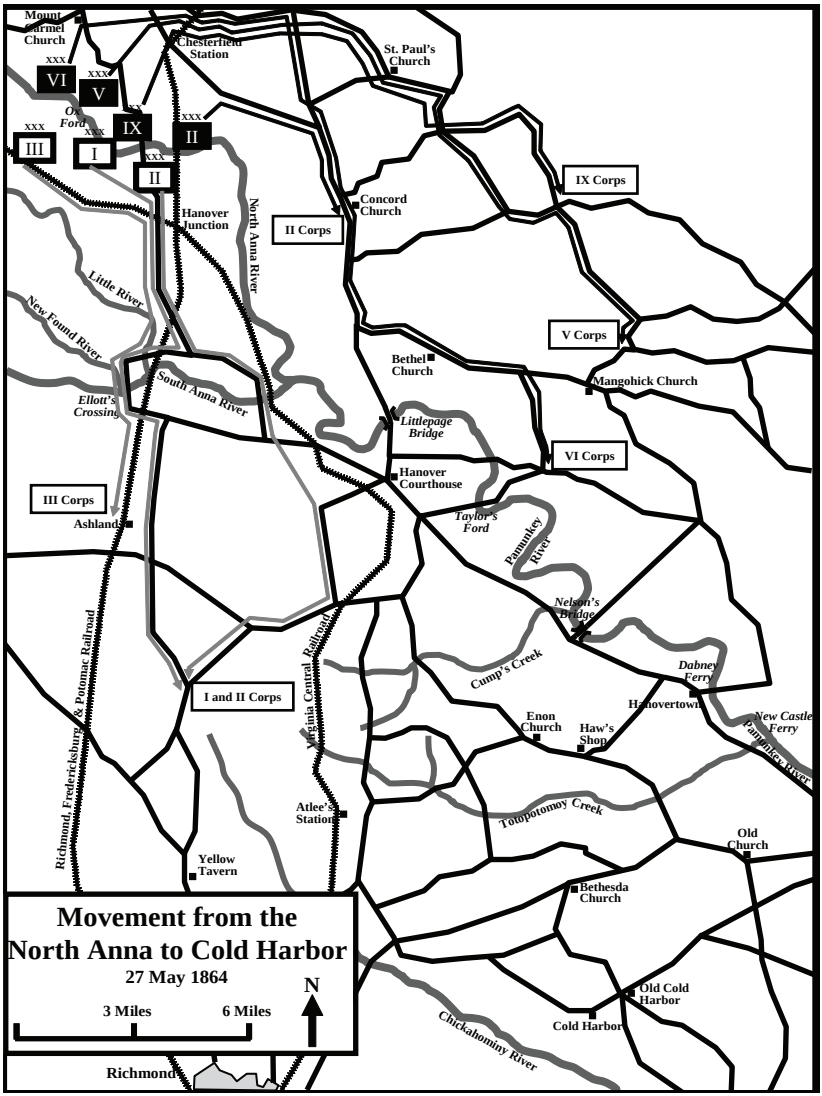
Map 68.


Movement from Spotsylvania to the North Anna:
Evening 21-22 May 1864
N
1 Mile
2 Miles
Spotsylvania Courthouse
Zion Church
Snell's Bridge
Fredericksburg Road
Ridge Road
Traveler's Rest
Massaponax Church
Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad
Ni River
Po River
Ta River
Stanard's Mill
Mud Tavern
Motley
Chandler
Catlett's
Guinea Bridge
Matta River
Ma River
VI Corps
Nancy Wright's Corner
Madison's Ordinary
Downer's Bridge
Lebanon Church
Littleton Flippo
New Bethel Church
Tyler
IX Corps
South River
V Corps (in two columns)
Saint Margaret's Church
Milford Station
Bowling Green
III Corps
Chilesburg
Harris' Store
Wright's Tavern
Athens
Poor House
I Corps
Mattaponi River
Golansville
Polecat Creek
Moncure
Penola Church
Mount Carmel Church
North Anna River
Chesterfield Station
Telegraph Road
Jericho Mills
Quarles' Mill
Ox Ford
Chesterfield Bridge
I Corps

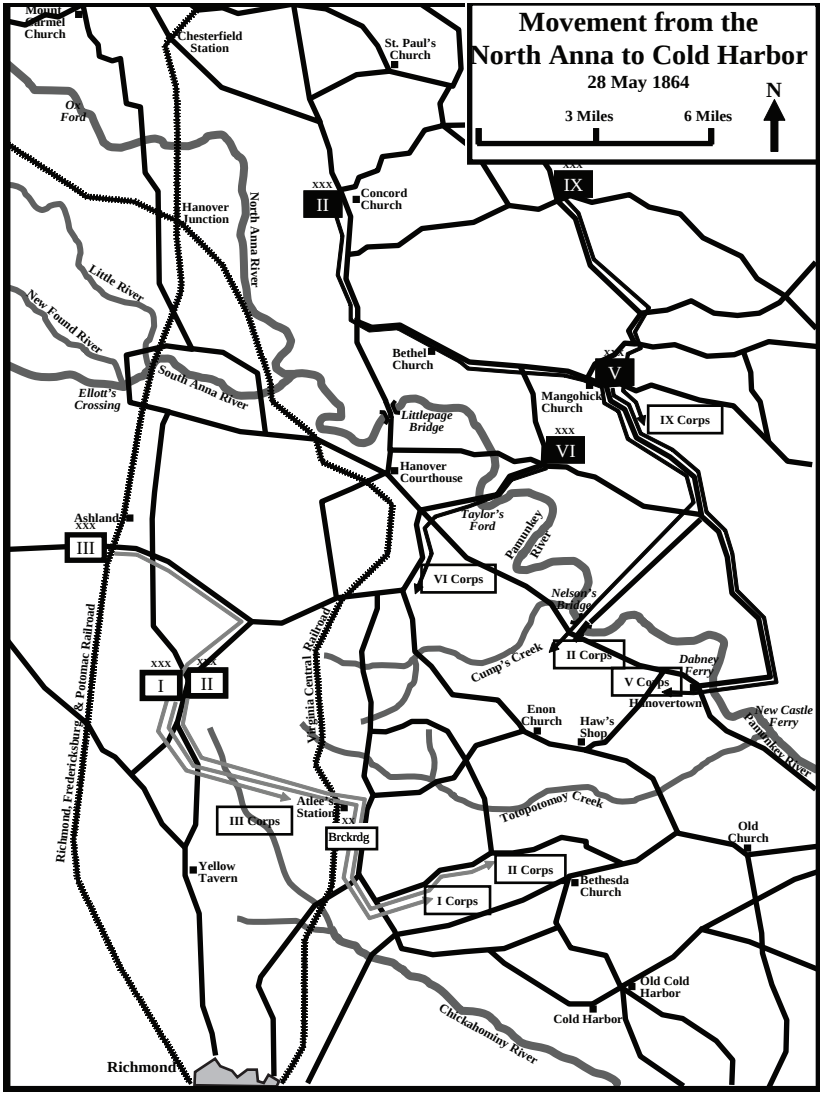
Map 69.


Movement from Spotsylvania to the North Anna:
Evening 22-23 May 1864
N
1 Mile
2 Miles
Spotsylvania Courthouse
Zion Church
Snell's Bridge
Traveler's Rest
Fredericksburg Road
Ridge Road
Massaponax Church
Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad
Ni River
Po River
Ta River
Stanard's Mill
Mud Tavern
Motley
Catlett's
Chandler
Guinea Bridge
Matta River
Ma River
Nancy Wright's Corner
VI
Madison's Ordinary
Downer's Bridge
Lebanon Church
Littleton Flippo
IX
Tyler
New Bethel Church
South River
Bowling Green
Milford Station
II
Saint Margaret's Church
Harris' Store
V
Wright's Tavern
III
Chilesburg
Athens
Poor House
Mattaponi River
I
Golansville
Polecat Creek
Moncure
VI Corps
Penola Church
Mount Carmel Church
North Anna River
Chesterfield Station
Jericho Mills
V Corps
III Corps
IX Corps
II Corps
Quarles' Mill
Telegraph Road
Ox Ford
Chesterfield Bridge
I Corps

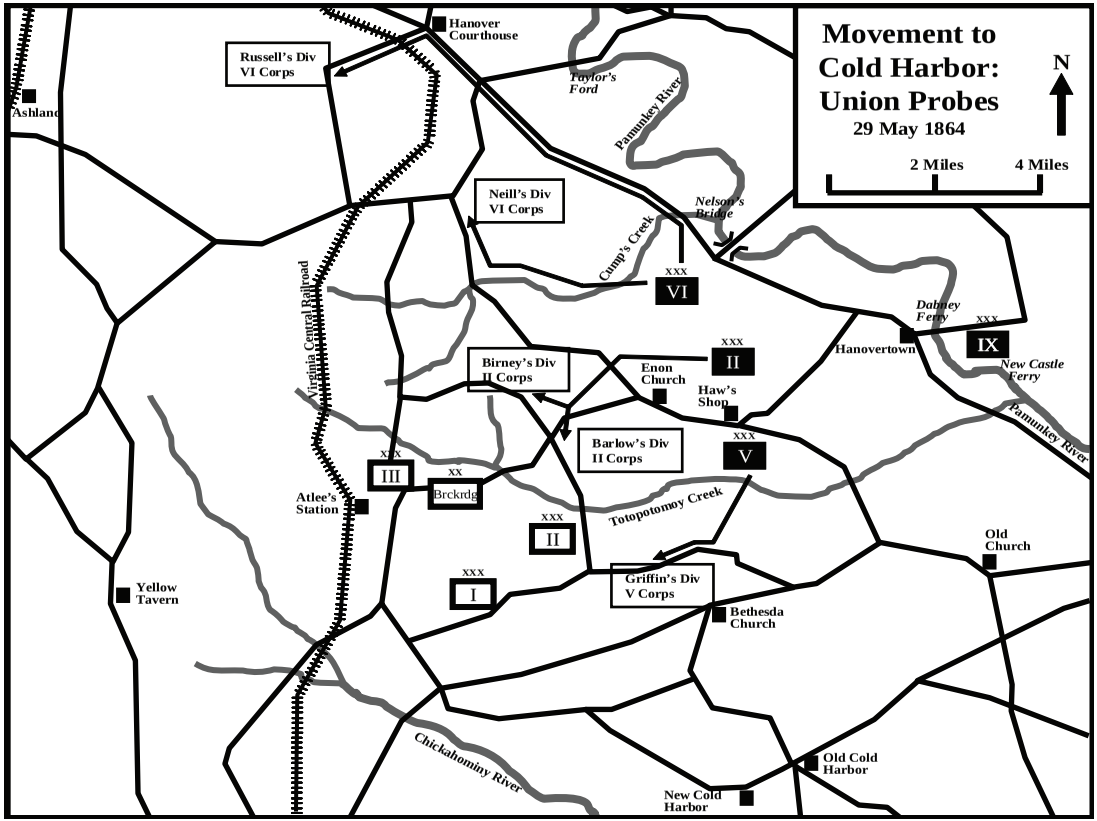
Map 70.


Movement from the
North Anna to Cold Harbor
27 May 1864
3 Miles
6 Miles
N
Mount Carmel Church
Chesterfield Station
St. Paul's Church
VI
V
IX
II
III
I
II
Ox Ford
Hanover Junction
North Anna River
Concord Church
II Corps
IX Corps
Little River
New Found River
South Anna River
Ellott's Crossing
V Corps
Bethel Church
Mangohick Church
Littlepage Bridge
VI Corps
Hanover Courthouse
III Corps
Ashland
Taylor's Ford
Pamunkey River
Nelson's Bridge
Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad
Virginia Central Railroad
Cump's Creek
Dabney Ferry
I and II Corps
Hanovertown
Enon Church
Haw's Shop
New Castle Ferry
Pamunkey River
Atlee's Station
Totopotomoy Creek
Old Church
Yellow Tavern
Bethesda Church
Old Cold Harbor
Cold Harbor
Chickahominy River
Richmond

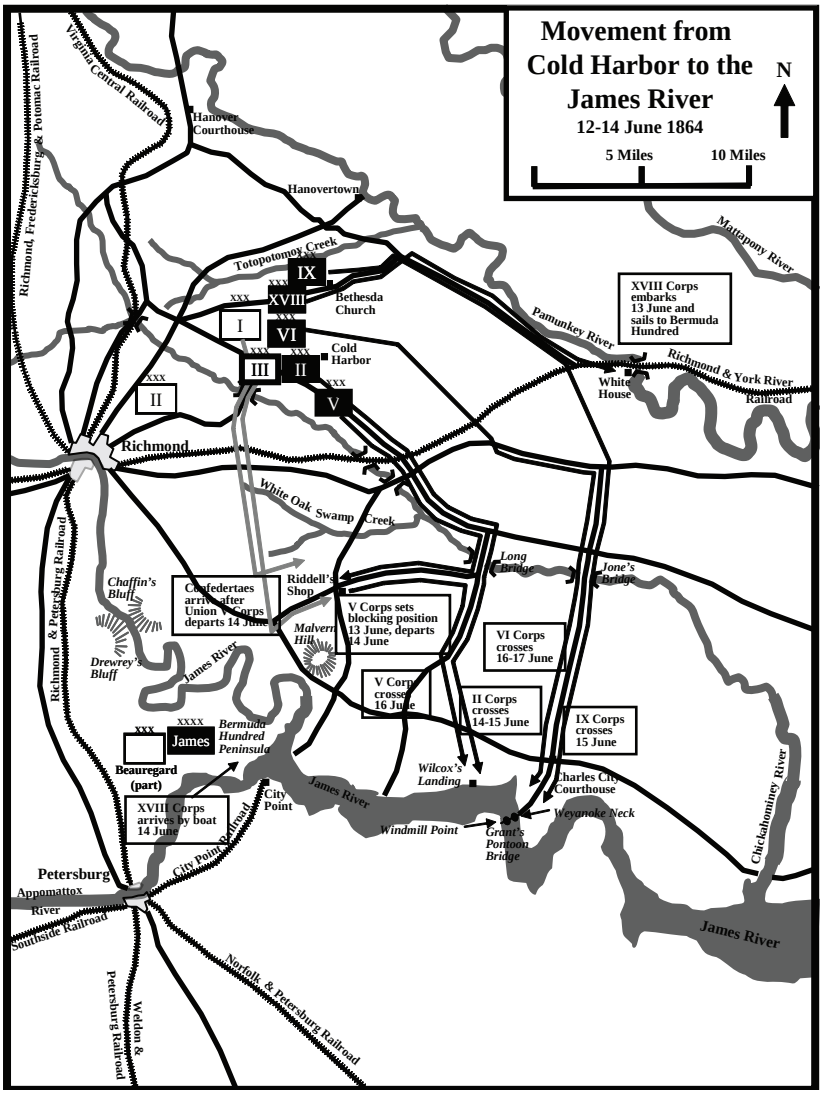
Map 71.


Movement from the
North Anna to Cold Harbor
28 May 1864
3 Miles
6 Miles
N
Mount Carmel Church
Chesterfield Station
St. Paul's Church
Ox Ford
Hanover Junction
North Anna River
Concord Church
II
IX
Little River
New Found River
Bethel Church
V
South Anna River
Ellott's Crossing
Littlepage Bridge
Mangohick Church
IX Corps
VI
Hanover Courthouse
Ashland
III
Taylor's Ford
Pamunkey River
VI Corps
Nelson's Bridge
Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad
Virginia Central Railroad
Cump's Creek
II Corps
Dabney Ferry
I
II
V Corps
Hanovertown
Enon Church
Haw's Shop
New Castle Ferry
Pamunkey River
Totopotomoy Creek
Atlee's Station
III Corps
Brckrdg
Old Church
Yellow Tavern
II Corps
Bethesda Church
I Corps
Old Cold Harbor
Cold Harbor
Chickahominy River
Richmond

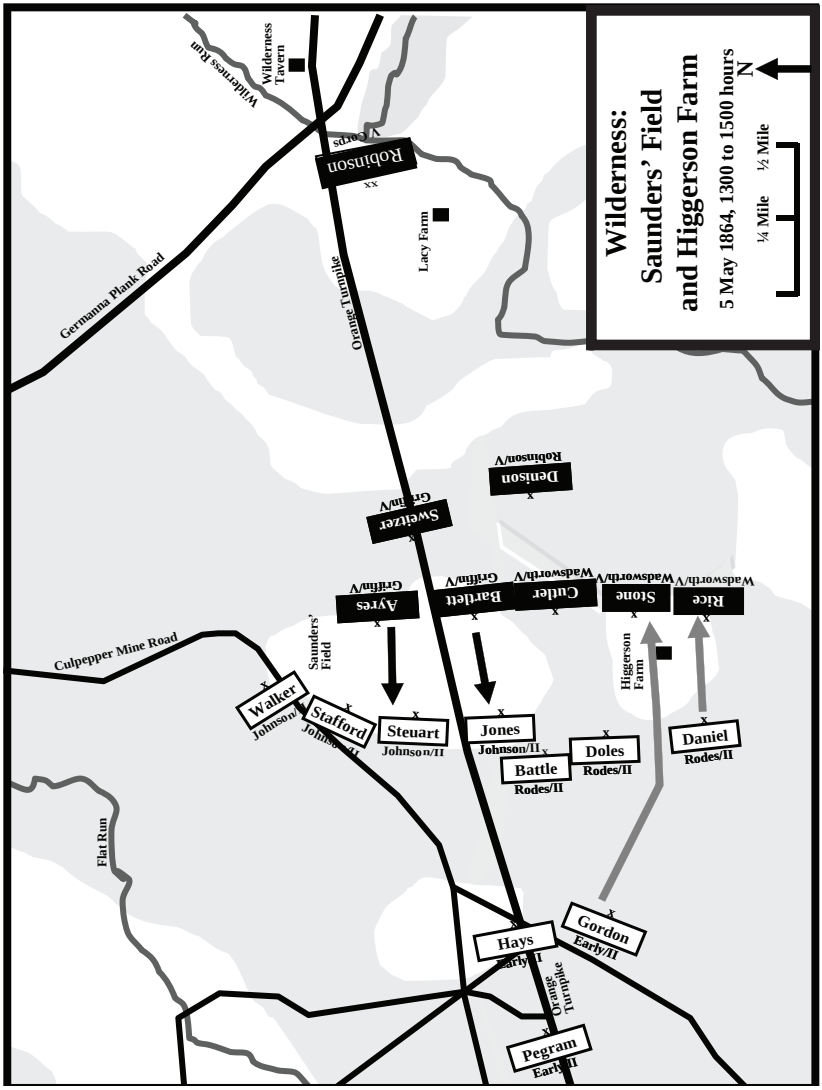
Map 72.


Movement to
Cold Harbor:
Union Probes
29 May 1864
N
2 Miles
4 Miles
Hanover
Courthouse
Russell's Div
VI Corps
Ashland
Taylor's
Ford
Pamunkey River
Neill's Div
VI Corps
Nelson's
Bridge
Cump's Creek
XXX
VI
Virginia Central Railroad
Dabney
Ferry
XXX
IX
Hanovertown
New Castle
Ferry
XXX
II
Birney's Div
II Corps
Enon
Church
Haw's
Shop
Pamunkey River
Barlow's Div
II Corps
XXX
V
XXX
III
XX
Brckrdg
Atlee's
Station
Totopotomoy Creek
XXX
II
Old
Church
XXX
I
Griffin's Div
V Corps
Yellow
Tavern
Bethesda
Church
Chickahominy River
Old Cold
Harbor
New Cold
Harbor

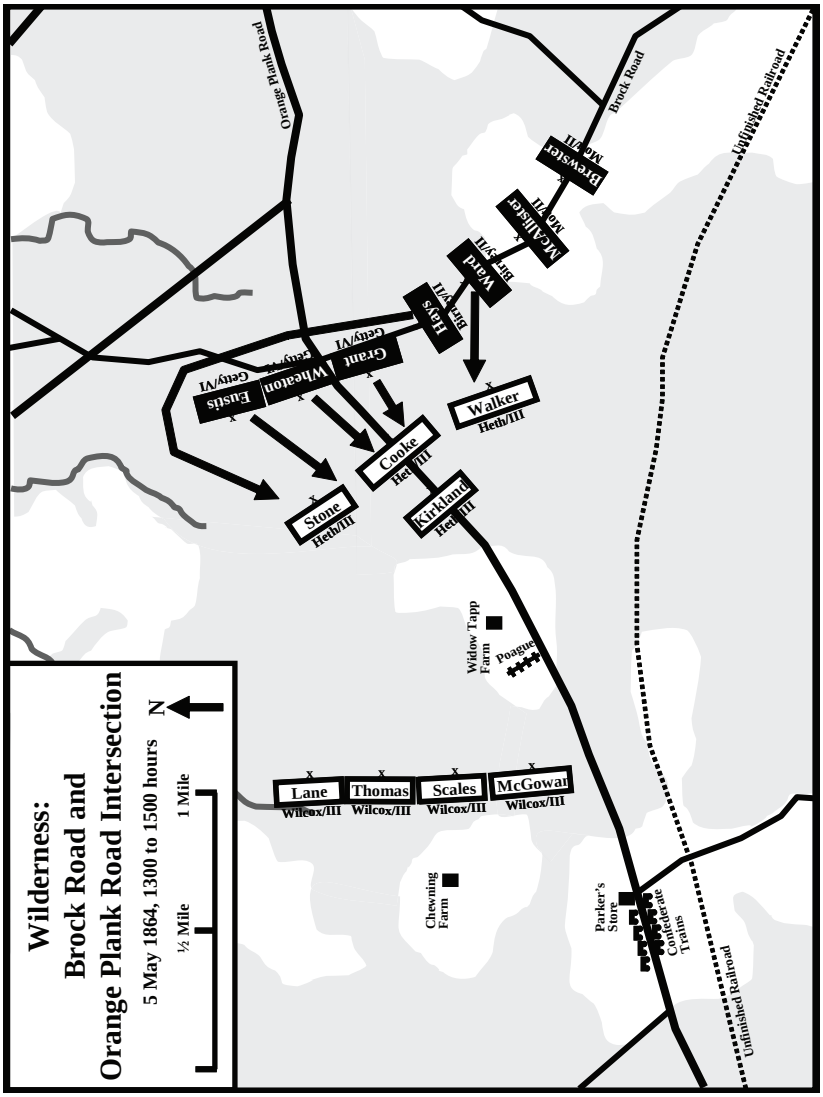
Map 73.


Movement from Cold Harbor to the James River
12-14 June 1864
N
5 Miles
10 Miles
Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad
Virginia Central Railroad
Hanover Courthouse
Hanovertown
Totopotomoy Creek
IX
XVIII
Bethesda Church
I
VI
Cold Harbor
III
II
V
II
Richmond
Pamunkey River
Mattapony River
XVIII Corps embarks 13 June and sails to Bermuda Hundred
White House
Richmond & York River Railroad
White Oak Swamp Creek
Richmond & Petersburg Railroad
Chaffin's Bluff
Confedertaes arrive after Union V Corps departs 14 June
Riddell's Shop
Long Bridge
Jone's Bridge
V Corps sets blocking position 13 June, departs 14 June
Malvern Hill
Drewrey's Bluff
James River
VI Corps crosses 16-17 June
V Corps crosses 16 June
II Corps crosses 14-15 June
IX Corps crosses 15 June
James
Bermuda Hundred Peninsula
Beauregard (part)
XVIII Corps arrives by boat 14 June
City Point
James River
Wilcox's Landing
Charles City Courthouse
Weyanoke Neck
Windmill Point
Grant's Pontoon Bridge
Chickahominy River
City Point Railroad
Petersburg
Appomattox River
Southside Railroad
James River
Norfolk & Petersburg Railroad
Weldon & Petersburg Railroad

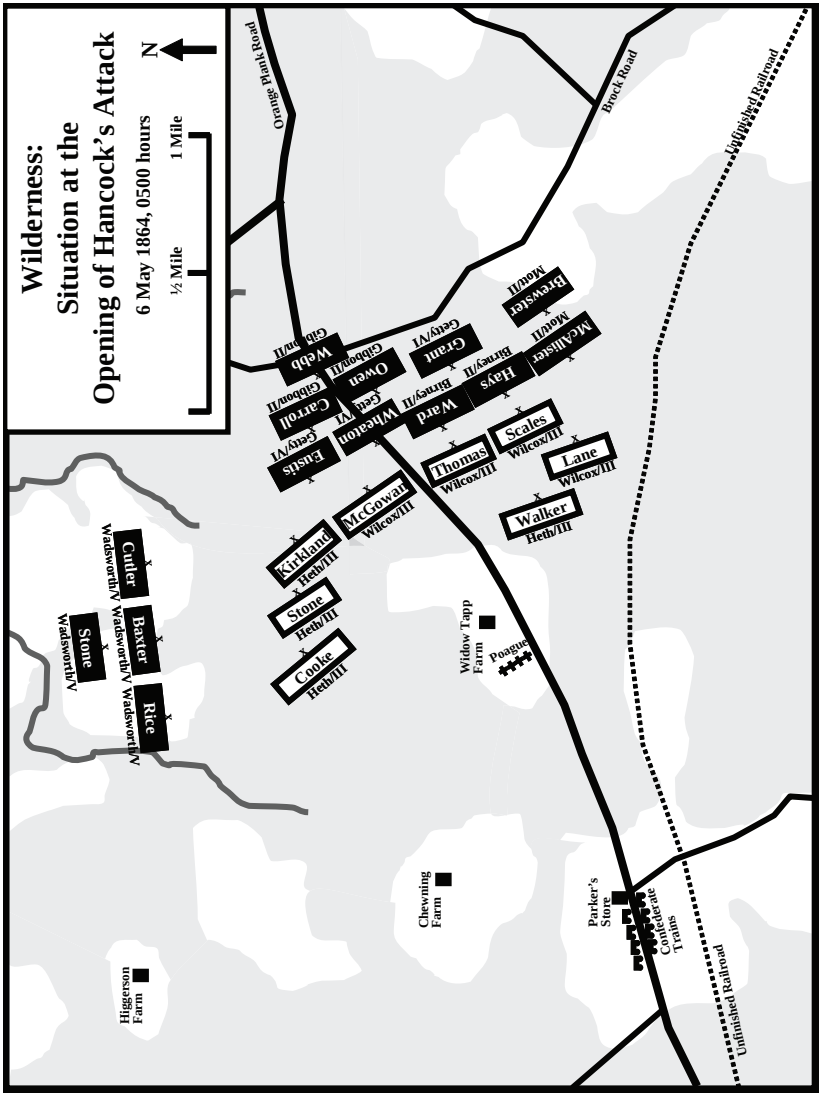
Map 74.


Wilderness: Saunders' Field and Higgerson Farm
5 May 1864, 1300 to 1500 hours
¼ Mile
½ Mile
N
Wilderness Run
Wilderness Tavern
Robinson
V Corps
Lacy Farm
Germania Plank Road
Orange Turnpike
Denison
Robinson/V
Sweitzer
Griffin/V
Ayres
Griffin/V
Bartlett
Griffin/V
Cutler
Wadsworth/V
Stone
Wadsworth/V
Rice
Wadsworth/V
Saunders' Field
Culpepper Mine Road
Higgerson Farm
Walker
Johnson/II
Stafford
Johnson/II
Steuart
Johnson/II
Jones
Johnson/II
Battle
Rodes/II
Doles
Rodes/II
Daniel
Rodes/II
Flat Run
Hays
Early/II
Gordon
Early/II
Orange Turnpike
Pegram
Early/II

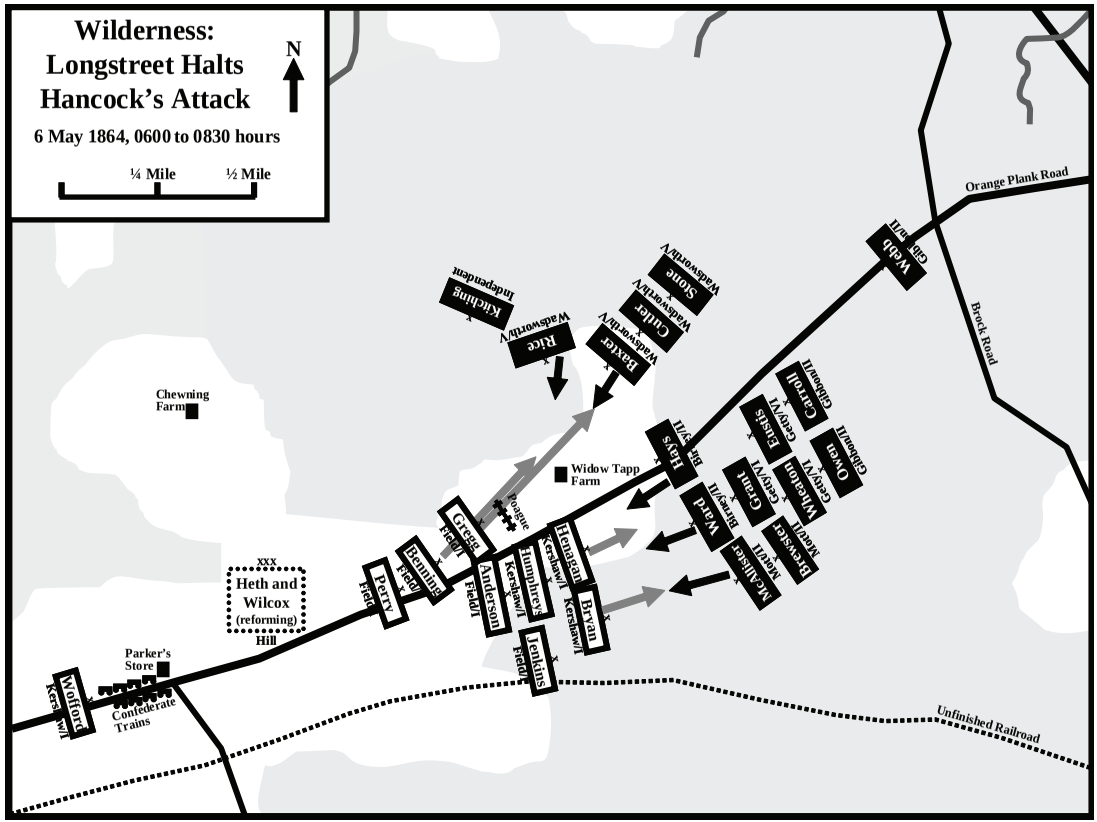
Map 75.


Wilderness:
Brock Road and
Orange Plank Road Intersection
5 May 1864, 1300 to 1500 hours
½ Mile
1 Mile
N
Orange Plank Road
Brock Road
Unfinished Railroad
Unfinished Railroad
Brewster
McAllister
Ward
Hays
Grant
Wheaton
Eustis
Walker
Cooke
Kirkland
Stone
Lane
Thomas
Scales
McGowan
Widow Tapp Farm
Poague
Chewning Farm
Parker's Store
Confederate Trains

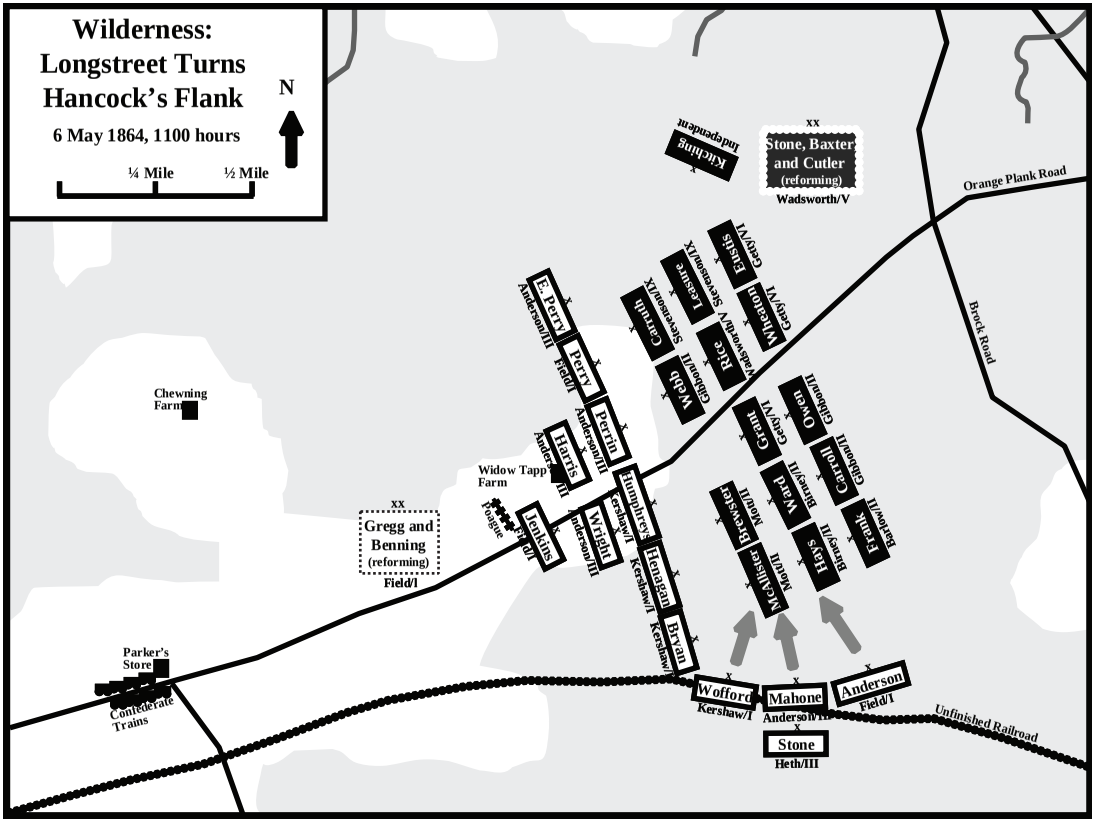
Map 76.


Wilderness:
Situation at the
Opening of Hancock's Attack
6 May 1864, 0500 hours
½ Mile
1 Mile
N
Orange Plank Road
Brock Road
Unfinished Railroad
Unfinished Railroad
Higgerson Farm
Chewning Farm
Widow Tapp Farm
Poague
Parker's Store
Confederate Trains
Cutler
Wadsworth/V
Baxter
Wadsworth/V
Rice
Wadsworth/V
Stone
Wadsworth/V
Kirkland
Heth/III
Stone
Heth/III
Cooke
Heth/III
McGowan
Wilcox/III
Eustis
Getty/VI
Carroll
Gibbon/II
Webb
Gibbon/II
Wheaton
Getty/VI
Owen
Gibbon/II
Ward
Birney/II
Grant
Getty/VI
Hays
Birney/II
McAllister
Mott/II
Brewster
Mott/II
Thomas
Wilcox/III
Scales
Wilcox/III
Lane
Wilcox/III
Walker
Heth/III

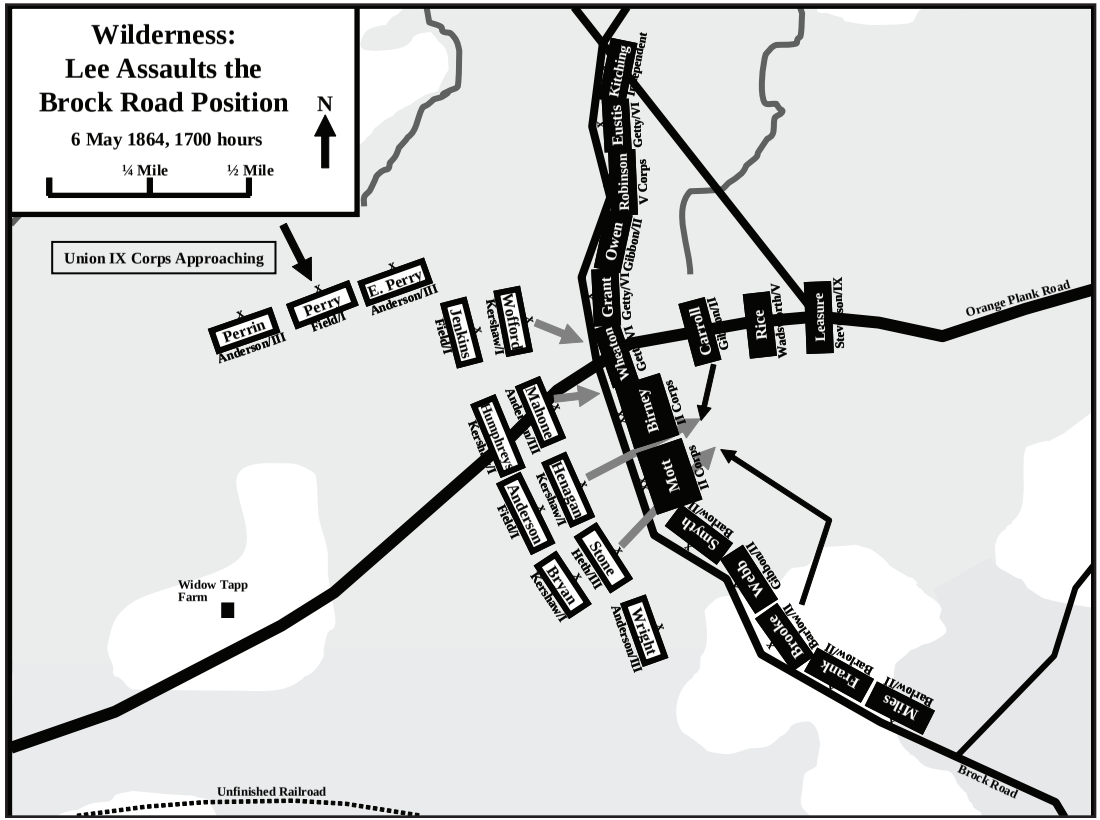
Map 77.


Wilderness:
Longstreet Halts
Hancock's Attack
6 May 1864, 0600 to 0830 hours
N
¼ Mile
½ Mile
Orange Plank Road
Brock Road
Unfinished Railroad
Chewning Farm
Widow Tapp Farm
Poague
Parker's Store
Confederate Trains
Heth and Wilcox (reforming)
Hill
Wolford
Perry
Benning
Grega
Anderson
Humphreys
Jenkins
Henagan
Bryan
Hays
Ward
McAllister
Brewster
Grant
Wheaton
Eustis
Owen
Carroll
Webb
Kitching
Independent
Rice
Baxter
Cutler
Stone
Wadsworth/V
Gibbon/II
Getty/VI
Birney/II
Mott/II
Kershaw/I
Field/I

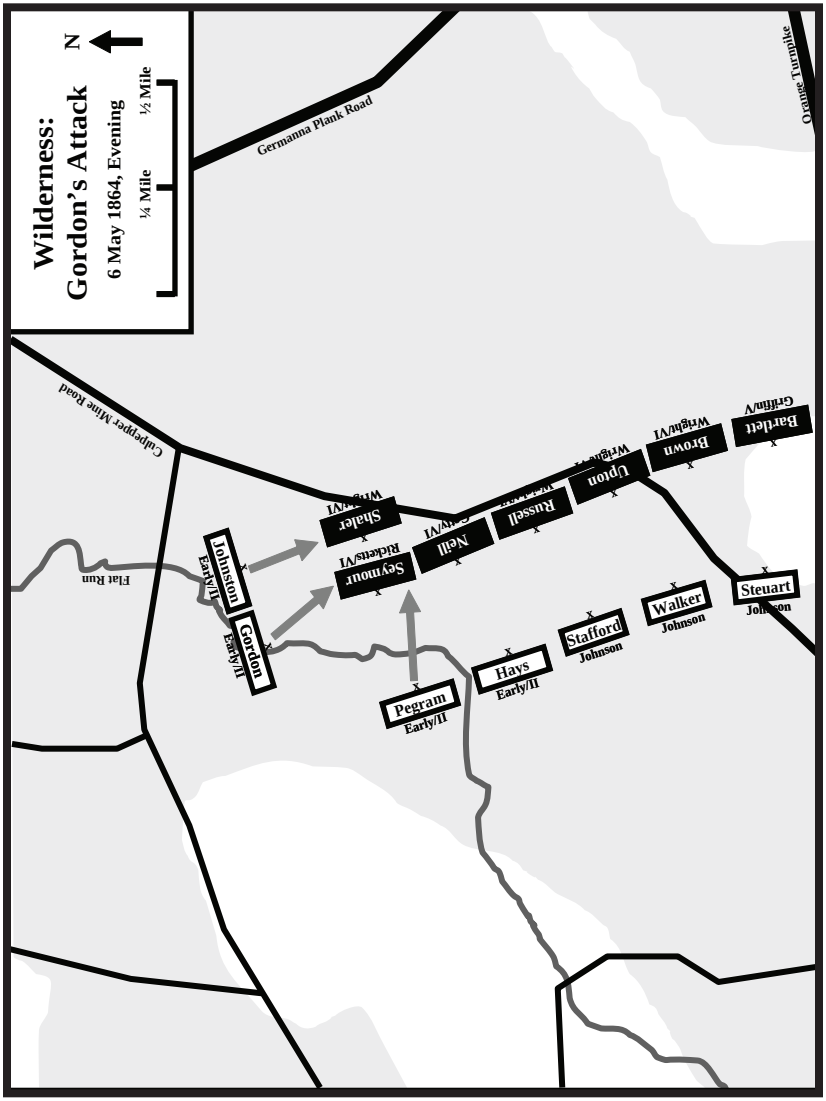
Map 78.


Wilderness:
Longstreet Turns
Hancock's Flank
6 May 1864, 1100 hours
N
¼ Mile
½ Mile
Kitching
Independent
Stone, Baxter and Cutler
(reforming)
Wadsworth/V
Orange Plank Road
Brock Road
Eustis
Getty/VI
Leasure
Stevenson/IX
Carruth
Stevenson/IX
Rice
Wadsworth/V
Wheaton
Getty/VI
Webb
Gibbon/II
E. Perry
Anderson/III
Perry
Field/I
Perrin
Anderson/III
Harris
Anderson/III
Chewning Farm
Widow Tapp Farm
Poague
Jenkins
Field/I
Wright
Anderson/III
Humphreys
Kershaw/I
Henagan
Kershaw/I
Bryan
Kershaw/I
Gregg and Benning
(reforming)
Field/I
Grant
Getty/VI
Owen
Gibbon/II
Carroll
Gibbon/II
Ward
Birney/II
Frank
Barlow/II
Brewster
Mott/II
McAllister
Mott/II
Hays
Birney/II
Parker's Store
Confederate Trains
Wofford
Kershaw/I
Mahone
Anderson/III
Anderson
Field/I
Stone
Heth/III
Unfinished Railroad

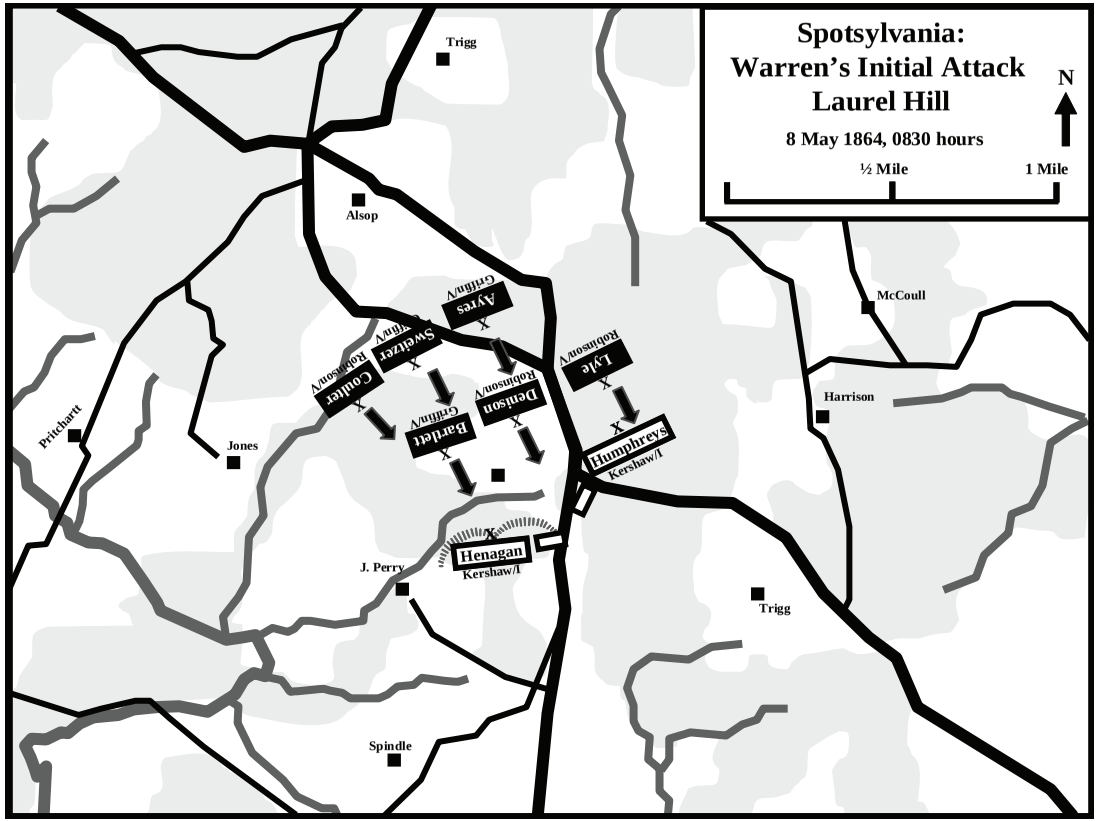
Map 79.


Wilderness:
Lee Assaults the
Brock Road Position
6 May 1864, 1700 hours
¼ Mile
½ Mile
N
Union IX Corps Approaching
Perrin
Anderson/III
Perry
Field/I
E. Perry
Anderson/III
Jenkins
Field/I
Wofford
Kershaw/I
Mahone
Anderson/III
Humphreys
Kershaw/I
Henagan
Kershaw/I
Anderson
Field/I
Stone
Heth/III
Bryan
Kershaw/I
Wright
Anderson/III
Wheaton
Getty/VI
Grant
Getty/VI
Owen
Gibbon/II
Robinson
V Corps
Eustis
Getty/VI
Kitching
Independent
Carroll
Gibbon/II
Rice
Wadsworth/V
Leasure
Stevenson/IX
Birney
II Corps
Mott
II Corps
Smyth
Barlow/II
Webb
Gibbon/II
Brooke
Barlow/II
Frank
Barlow/II
Miles
Barlow/II
Orange Plank Road
Brock Road
Widow Tapp
Farm
Unfinished Railroad

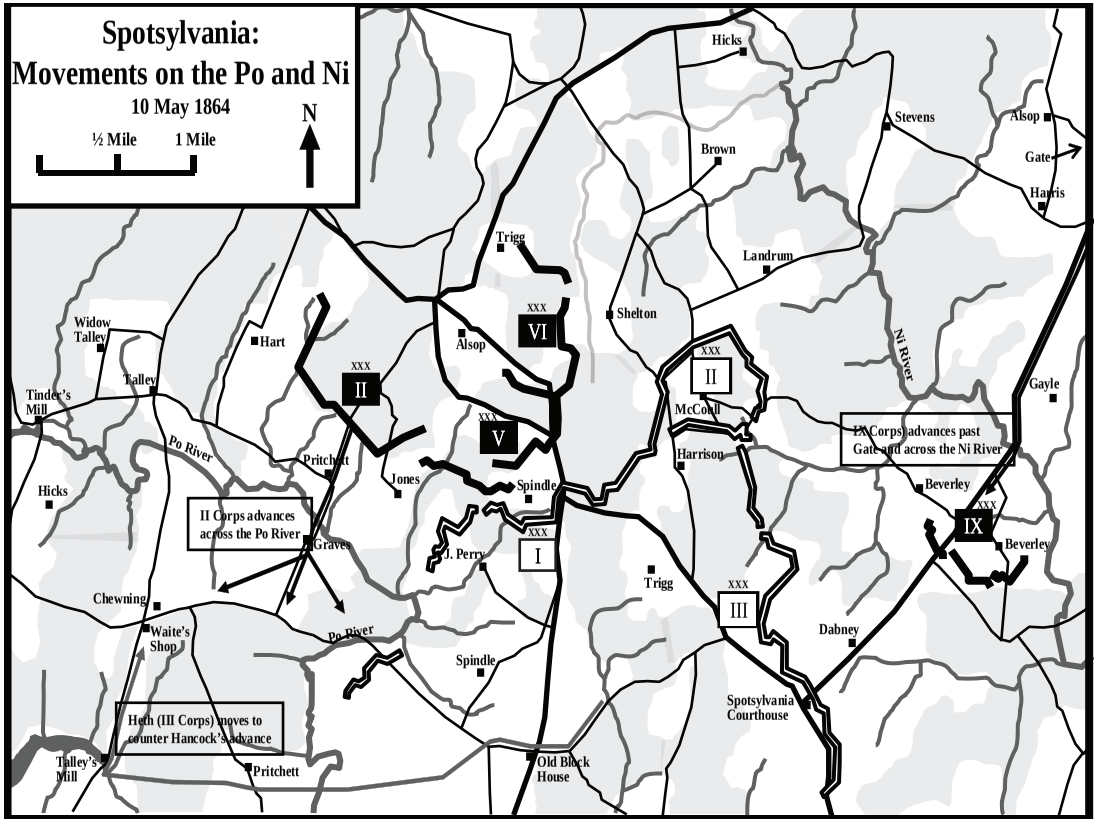
Map 80.


Wilderness:
Gordon's Attack
6 May 1864, Evening
¼ Mile
½ Mile
N
Germanna Plank Road
Orange Turnpike
Culpepper-Mine Road
Flat Run
Johnston
Early/II
Gordon
Early/II
Shaler
Seymour
Rickets/VI
Neill
Russell
Upton
Brown
Wright/VI
Bartlett
Griffin/V
Pegram
Early/II
Hays
Early/II
Stafford
Johnson
Walker
Johnson
Steuart
Johnson

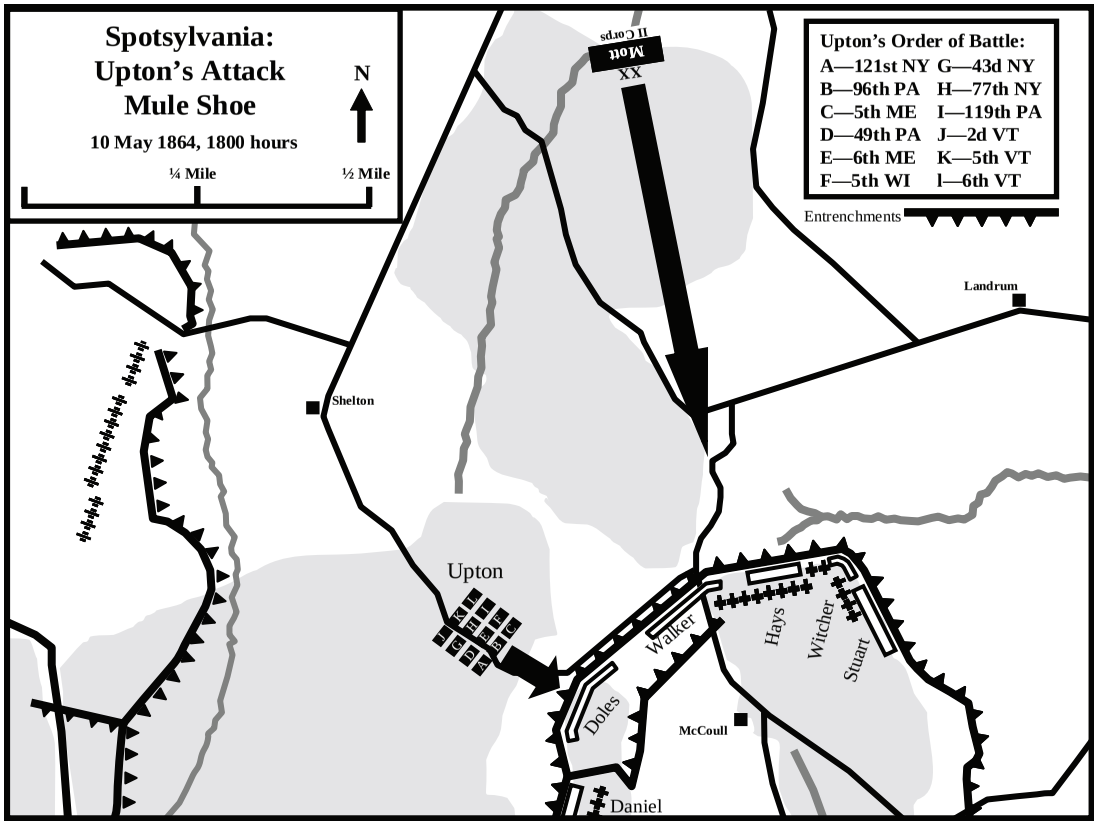
Map 81.


Spotsylvania:
Warren's Initial Attack
Laurel Hill
8 May 1864, 0830 hours
N
½ Mile
1 Mile
Trigg
Alsop
McCoull
Harrison
Pritchartt
Jones
J. Perry
Spindle
Trigg
Ayres
Griffin/V
Sweitzer
Griffin/V
Coulter
Robinson/V
Bartlett
Griffin/V
Denison
Robinson/V
Lyle
Robinson/V
Humphreys
Kershaw/I
Henagan
Kershaw/I

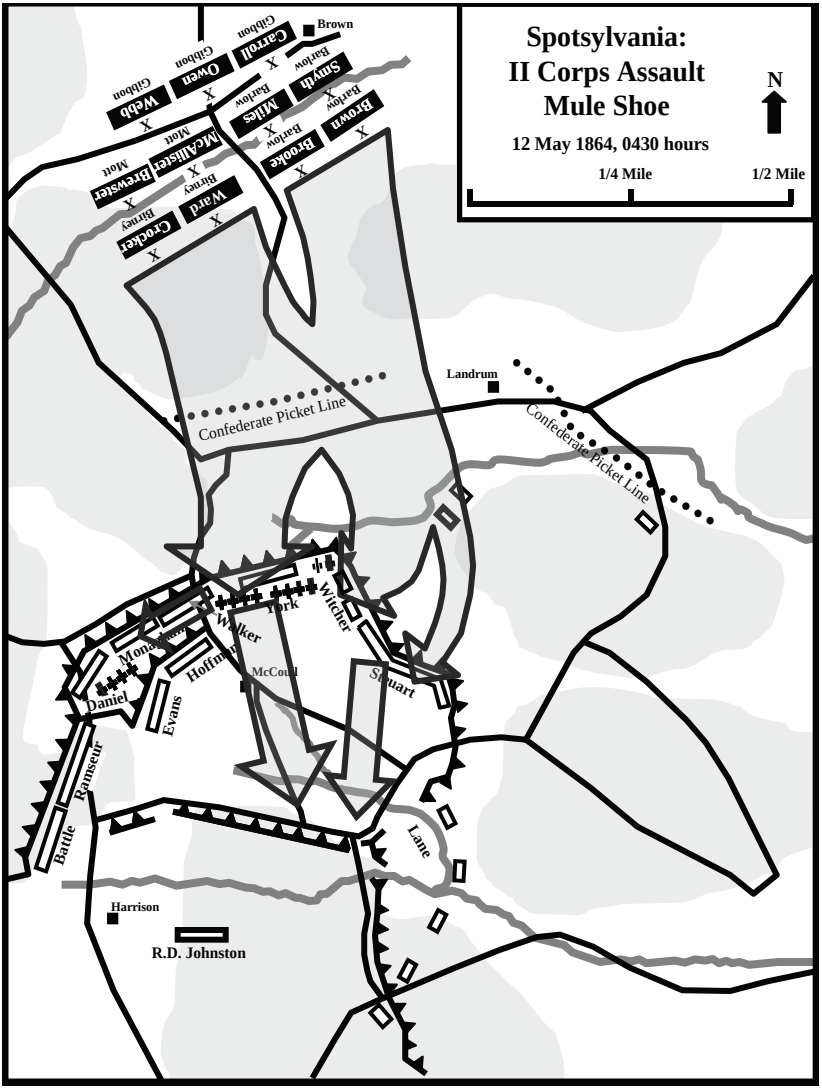
Map 82.


Spotsylvania:
Movements on the Po and Ni
10 May 1864
½ Mile
1 Mile
N
Hicks
Stevens
Alsop
Gate
Harris
Brown
Landrum
Trigg
Shelton
Ni River
Gayle
Widow Talley
Hart
Alsop
Talley
Tinder's Mill
Po River
Pritchett
Jones
Spindle
McCoull
Harrison
IX Corps advances past Gate and across the Ni River
Beverley
Hicks
II Corps advances across the Po River
Graves
J. Perry
Trigg
Beverley
Chewning
Waite's Shop
Po River
Spindle
Dabney
Spotsylvania Courthouse
Heth (III Corps) moves to counter Hancock's advance
Talley's Mill
Pritchett
Old Block House
XXX
VI
XXX
II
XXX
V
XXX
I
XXX
II
XXX
III
XXX
IX

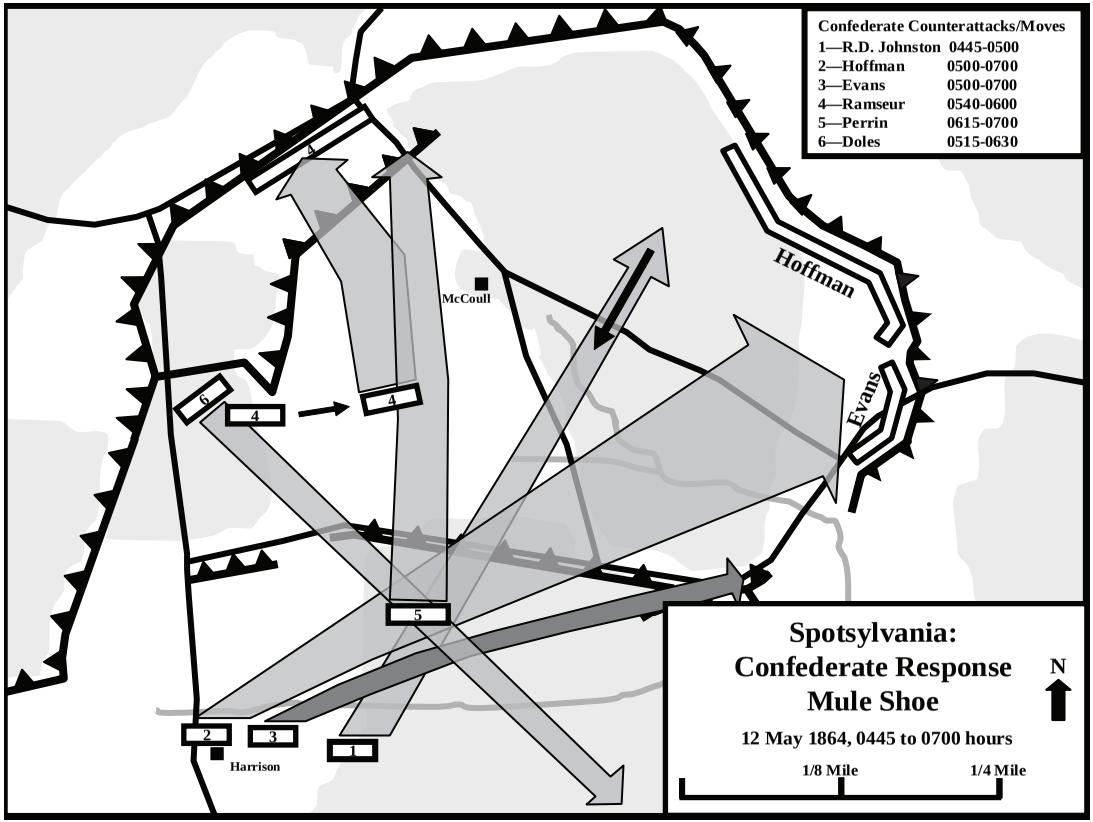
Map 83.


Spotsylvania:
Upton's Attack
Mule Shoe
10 May 1864, 1800 hours
N
¼ Mile
½ Mile
Upton's Order of Battle:
A—121st NY G—43d NY
B—96th PA H—77th NY
C—5th ME I—119th PA
D—49th PA J—2d VT
E—6th ME K—5th VT
F—5th WI l—6th VT
Entrenchments
Mott
II Corps
XX
Landrum
Shelton
Upton
Walker
Hays
Witcher
Stuart
Doles
McCoull
Daniel

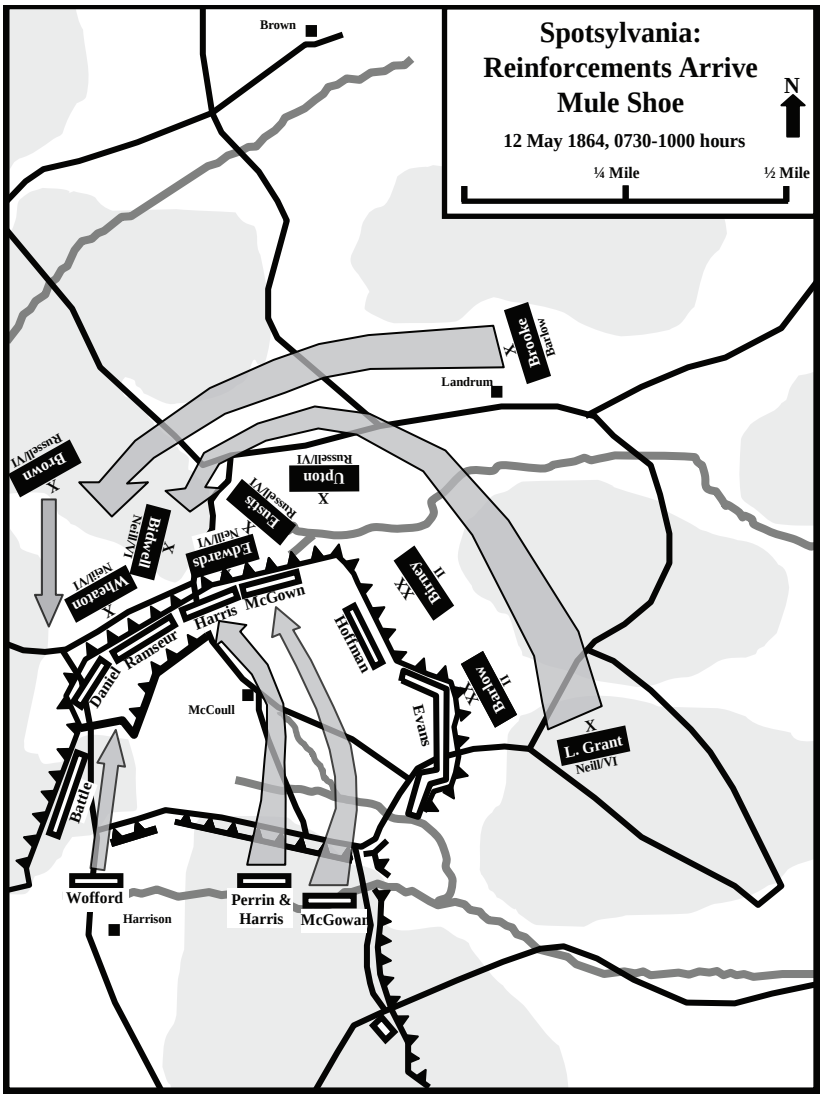
Map 84.


Spotsylvania:
II Corps Assault
Mule Shoe
12 May 1864, 0430 hours
N
1/4 Mile
1/2 Mile
Brown
Landrum
Confederate Picket Line
Confederate Picket Line
Harrison
R.D. Johnston
Battle
Ramseur
Daniel
Evans
Hoffman
Walker
York
Witcher
McCoull
Stuart
Lane
Gibbon
Gibbon
Gibbon
Webb
Owen
Carroll
Barlow
Barlow
Smyth
Barlow
Miles
Barlow
Brown
Mott
Mott
McAllister
Brewster
Birney
Birney
Ward
Crocker
Brooke

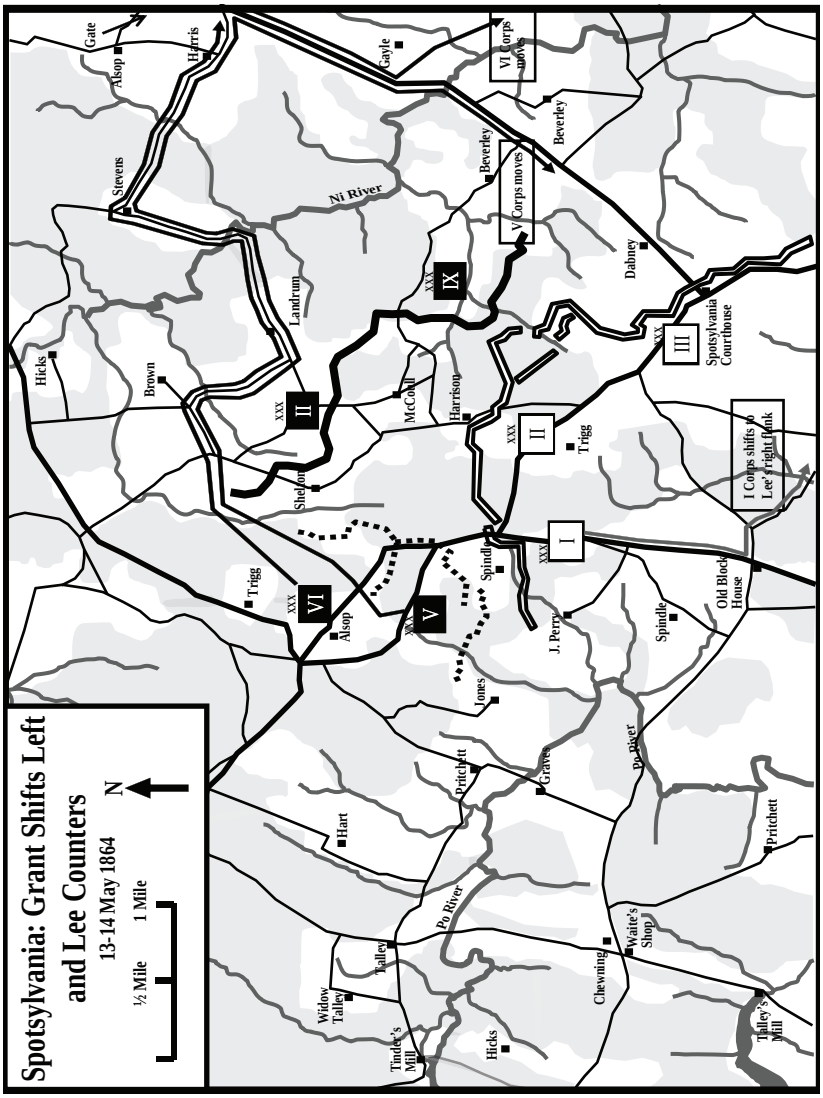
Map 85.


Confederate Counterattacks/Moves
1—R.D. Johnston 0445-0500
2—Hoffman 0500-0700
3—Evans 0500-0700
4—Ramseur 0540-0600
5—Perrin 0615-0700
6—Doles 0515-0630
Spotsylvania:
Confederate Response
Mule Shoe
12 May 1864, 0445 to 0700 hours
N
1/8 Mile
1/4 Mile
Hoffman
Evans
McCoull
Harrison
1
2
3
4
4
5
6

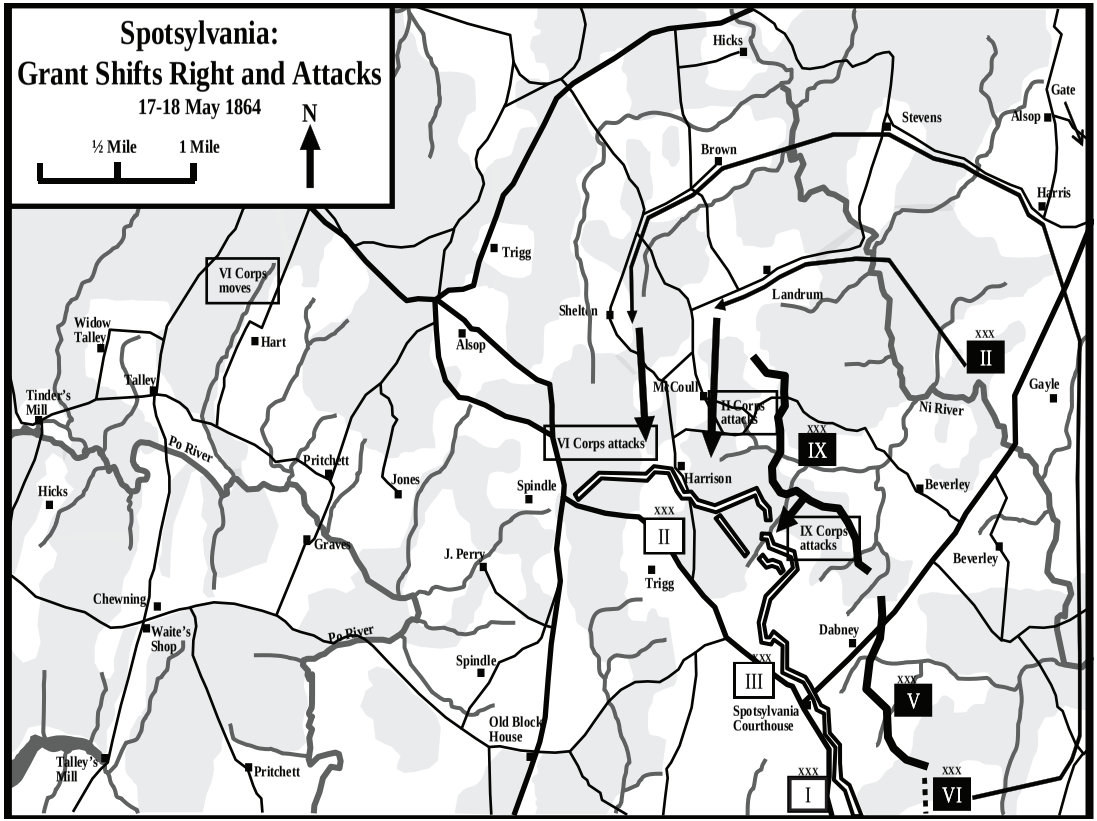
Map 86.


Spotsylvania:
Reinforcements Arrive
Mule Shoe
12 May 1864, 0730-1000 hours
N
¼ Mile
½ Mile
Brown
Landrum
Brooke
Barlow
Upton
Russell/VI
Brown
Russell/VI
Bidwell
Neill/VI
Wheaton
Neill/VI
Edwards
Neill/VI
Eustis
Russell/VI
Birney
Barlow
Harris
McGown
Ramseur
Daniel
Hoffman
Evans
McCoull
Battle
L. Grant
Neill/VI
Wofford
Harrison
Perrin &
Harris
McGowan

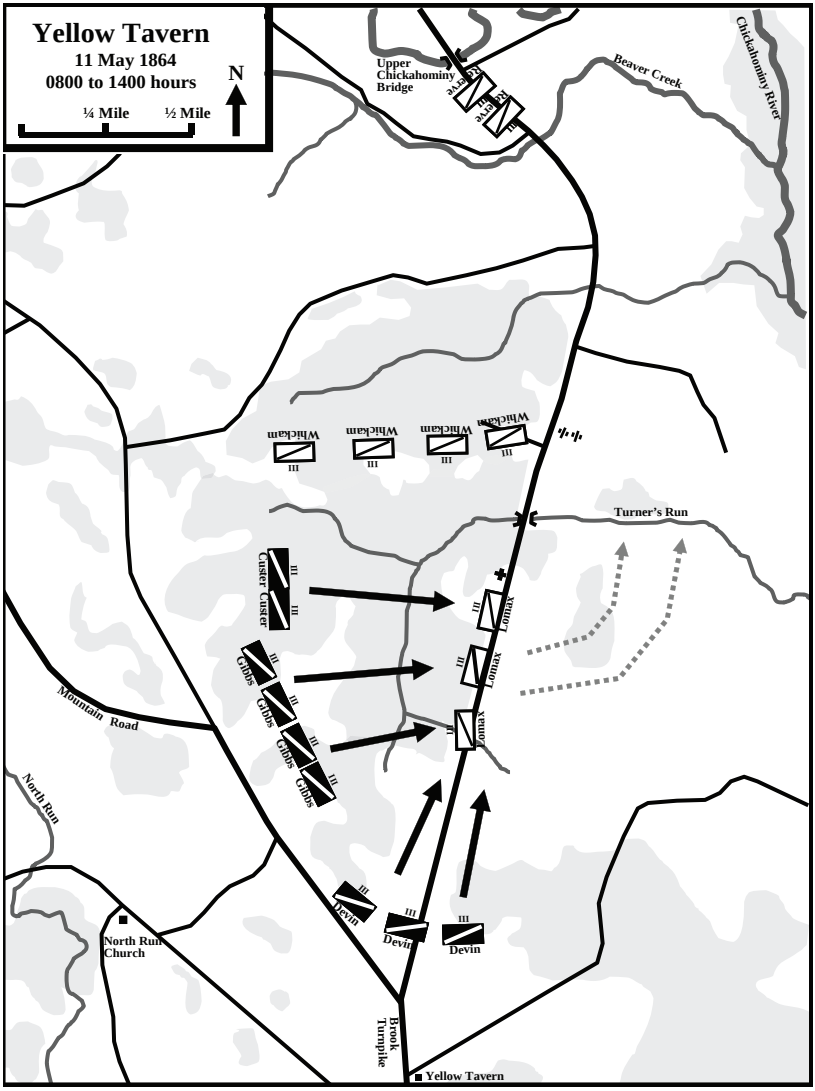
Map 87.


Spotsylvania: Grant Shifts Left and Lee Counters
13-14 May 1864
½ Mile
1 Mile
N
Gate
Alsop
Harris
Gayle
VI Corps moves
Beverley
Stevens
Ni River
V Corps moves
Dabney
Landrum
Hicks
Brown
McCoull
Harrison
Spotsylvania Courthouse
Trigg
I Corps shifts to Lee's right flank
Shelton
Spindle
Old Block House
J. Perry
Jones
Pritchett
Graves
Po River
Hart
Talley
Widow Talley
Tinder's Mill
Chewning
Waite's Shop
Talley's Mill
I
II
III
IX
V
VI
XXX

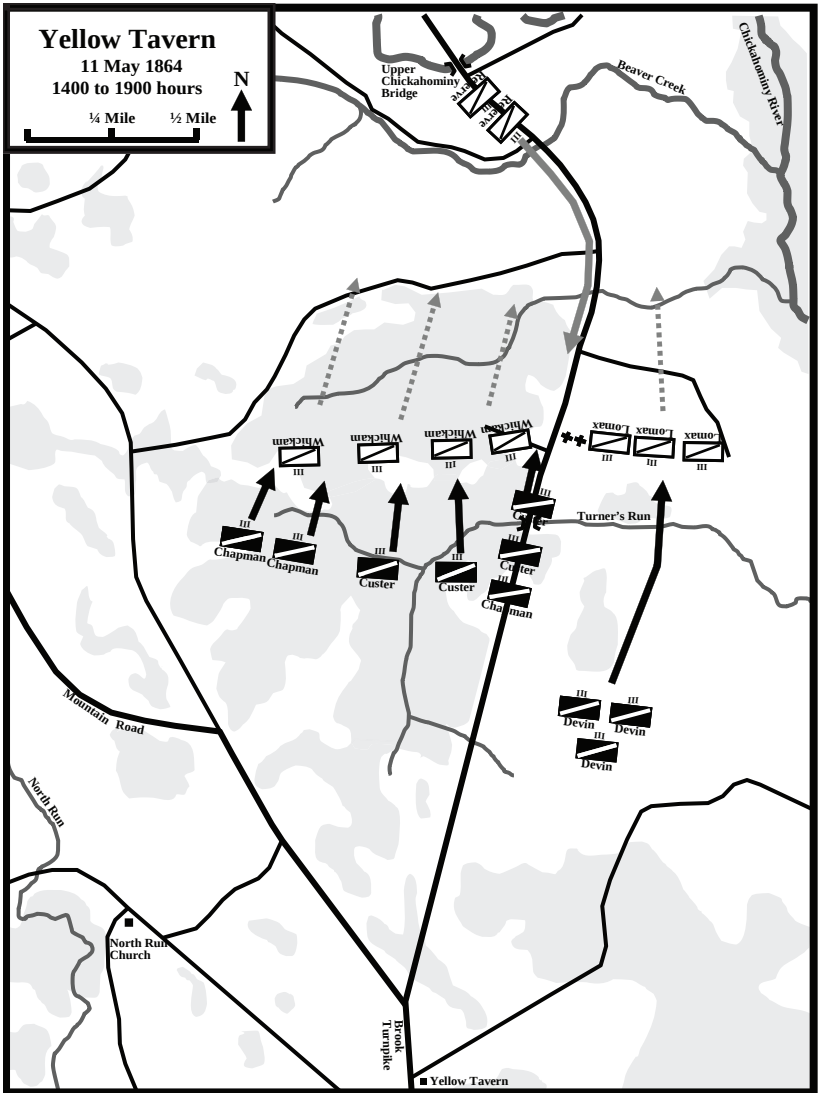
Map 88.


Spotsylvania:
Grant Shifts Right and Attacks
17-18 May 1864
½ Mile
1 Mile
N
Hicks
Gate
Alsop
Stevens
Brown
Harris
Trigg
VI Corps moves
Landrum
Shelton
Widow Talley
Hart
Alsop
XXX
II
Talley
Tinder's Mill
Mt Coul
II Corps attacks
Gayle
Ni River
Po River
VI Corps attacks
XXX
IX
Pritchett
Jones
Spindle
Harrison
Beverley
Hicks
XXX
II
IX Corps attacks
Grave
J. Perry
Trigg
Beverley
Chewning
Waite's Shop
Po River
Dabney
Spindle
XXX
III
XXX
V
Spotsylvania Courthouse
Old Block House
Talley's Mill
Pritchett
XXX
I
XXX
VI

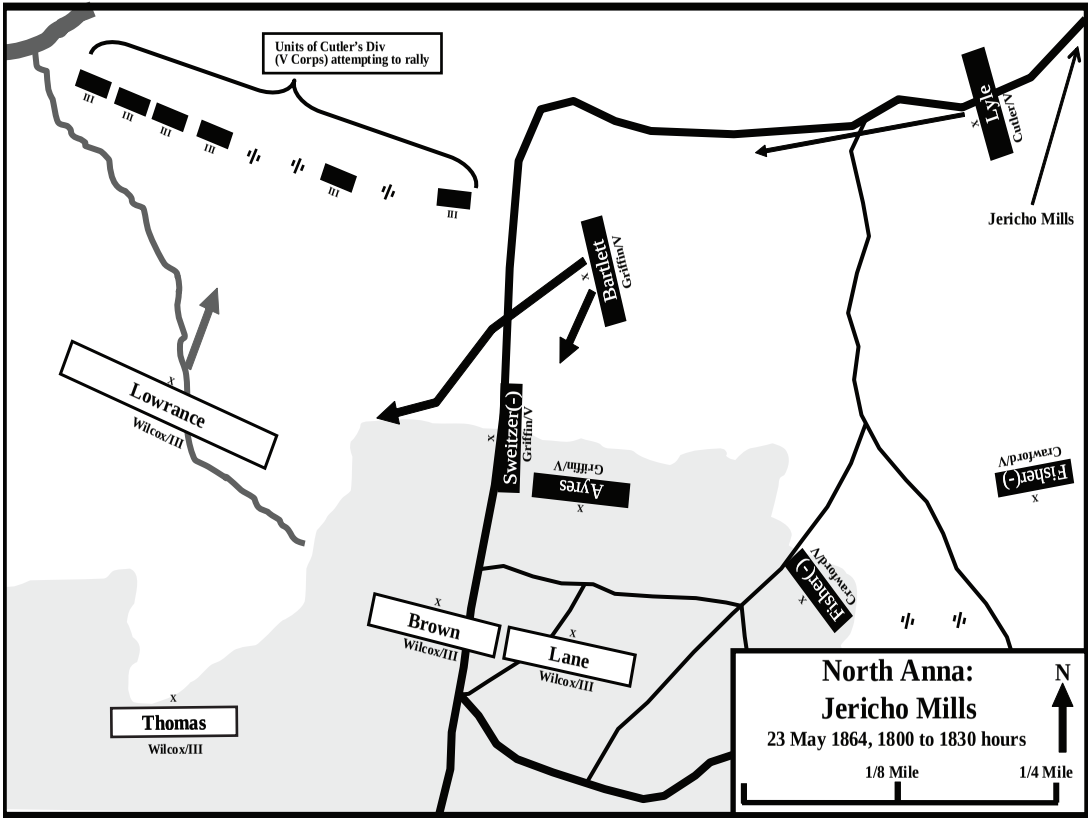
Map 89.


Yellow Tavern
11 May 1864
0800 to 1400 hours
N
¼ Mile
½ Mile
Upper Chickahominy Bridge
Beaver Creek
Chickahominy River
Turner's Run
Custer
Custer
Gibbs
Gibbs
Gibbs
Gibbs
Lomax
Lomax
Lomax
Wilcham
Wilcham
Wilcham
Wilcham
Devin
Devin
Devin
Mountain Road
North Run
North Run Church
Brook Turnpike
Yellow Tavern

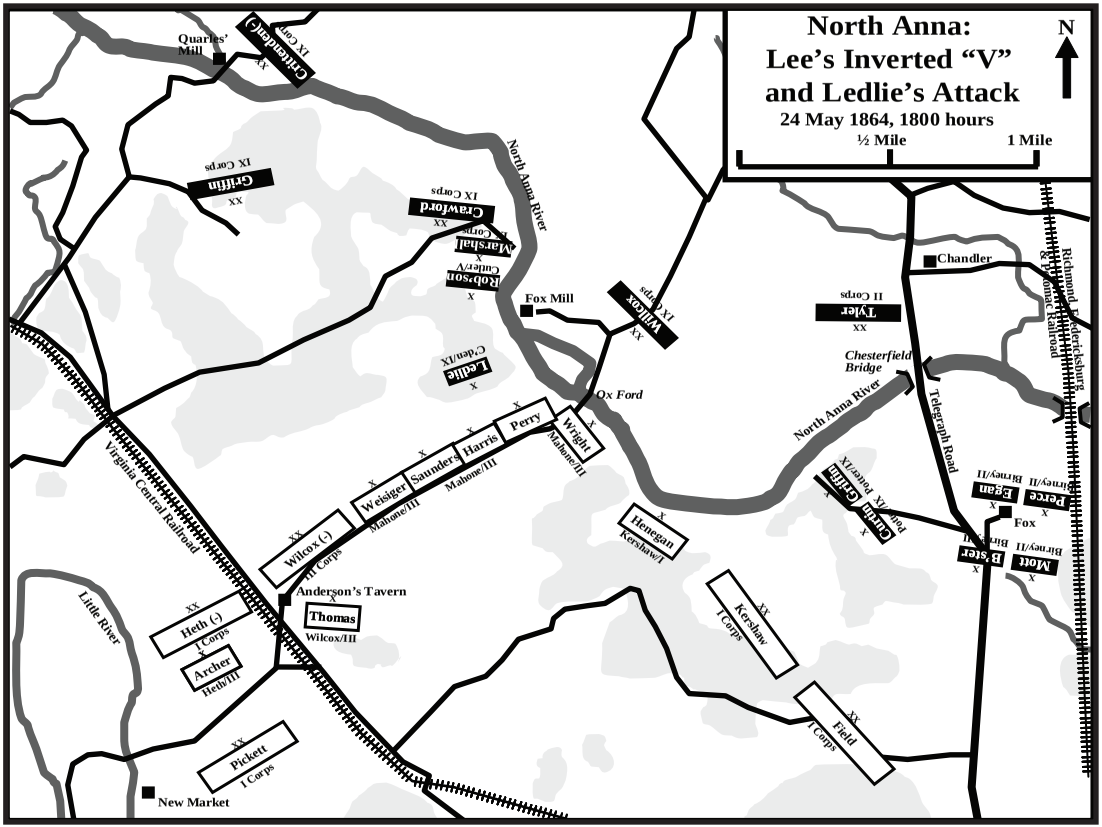
Map 90.


Yellow Tavern
11 May 1864
1400 to 1900 hours
N
¼ Mile
½ Mile
Upper Chickahominy Bridge
Reserve
Reserve
Beaver Creek
Chickahominy River
Wilcam
Wilcam
Wilcam
Wilcam
Lomax
Lomax
Lomax
Turner's Run
Chapman
Chapman
Custer
Custer
Custer
Chapman
Devin
Devin
Devin
Mountain Road
North Run
North Run Church
Brook Turnpike
Yellow Tavern

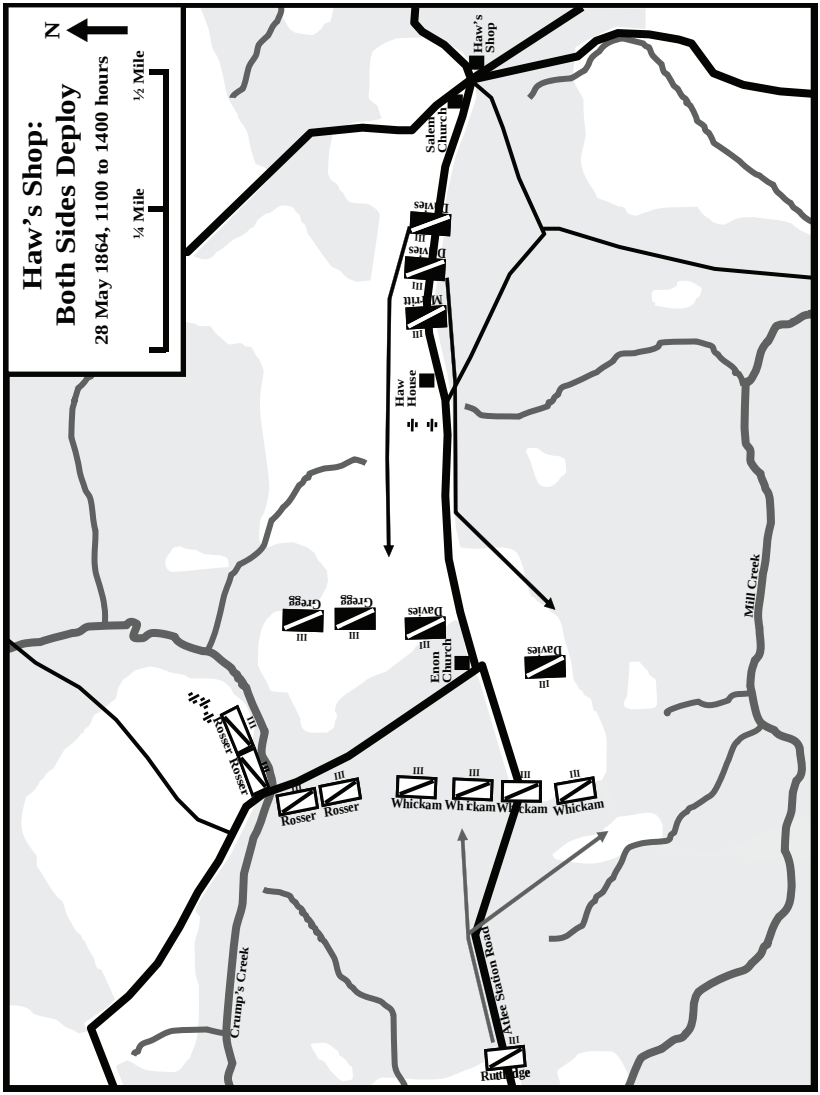
Map 91.


North Anna:
Jericho Mills
23 May 1864, 1800 to 1830 hours
N
1/8 Mile
1/4 Mile
Units of Cutler's Div
(V Corps) attempting to rally
Jericho Mills
Lyle
Cutler/V
Bartlett
Griffin/V
Sweitzer(-)
Griffin/V
Ayres
Griffin/V
Fisher(-)
Crawford/V
Fisher(-)
Crawford/V
Lowrance
Wilcox/III
Brown
Wilcox/III
Lane
Wilcox/III
Thomas
Wilcox/III

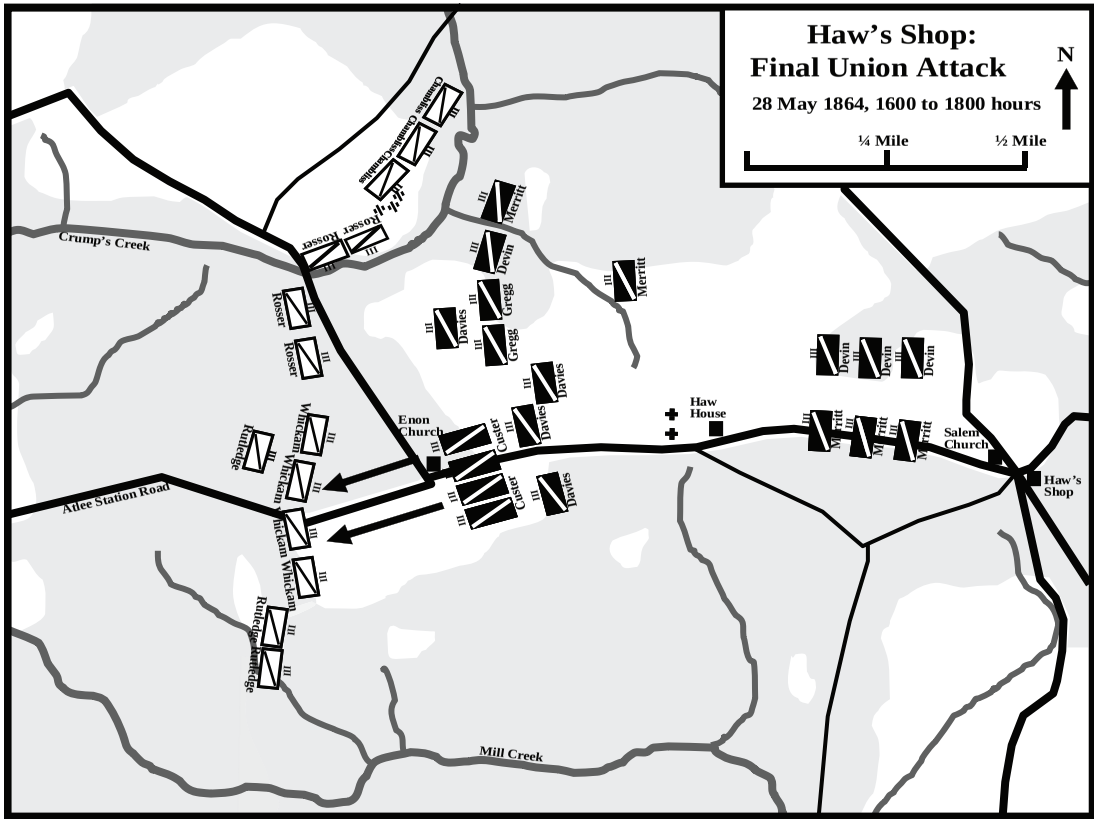
Map 92.


North Anna:
Lee's Inverted "V"
and Ledlie's Attack
24 May 1864, 1800 hours
½ Mile
1 Mile
N
Quarles' Mill
Crittenden(-)
IX Corps
Griffin
IX Corps
Crawford
IX Corps
Marshall
IX Corps
Robison
Cutler/V
Ledlie
C'den/IX
North Anna River
Fox Mill
Wilcox
IX Corps
Ox Ford
Chandler
Tyler
II Corps
Chesterfield Bridge
North Anna River
Telegraph Road
Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad
Perry
Wright
Mahone/III
Harris
Saunders
Weisiger
Mahone/III
Wilcox (-)
III Corps
Anderson's Tavern
Thomas
Wilcox/III
Henegan
Kershaw/I
Griffin
Potter/IX
Chrodin
Potter/IX
Egan
Birney/II
Perce
Birney/II
Fox
Birney/II
Mott
Birney/II
Kershaw
I Corps
Field
I Corps
Virginia Central Railroad
Little River
Heth (-)
I Corps
Archer
Heth/III
Pickett
I Corps
New Market

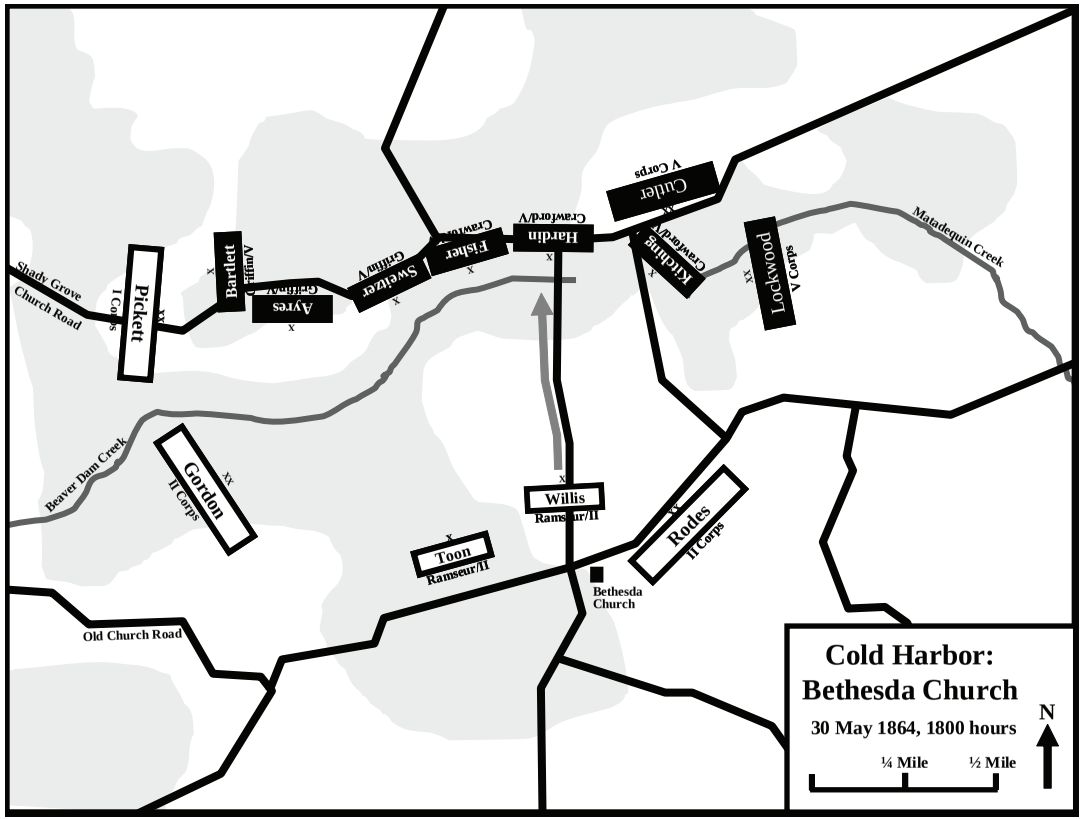
Map 93.


Haw's Shop:
Both Sides Deploy
28 May 1864, 1100 to 1400 hours
¼ Mile
½ Mile
N
Haw's Shop
Salem Church
Davies
Davies
Merritt
Haw House
Gregg
Gregg
Davies
Enon Church
Davies
Rosser
Rosser
Rosser
Rosser
Whickam
Whickam
Whickam
Whickam
Mill Creek
Crump's Creek
Atlee Station Road
Ruttledge

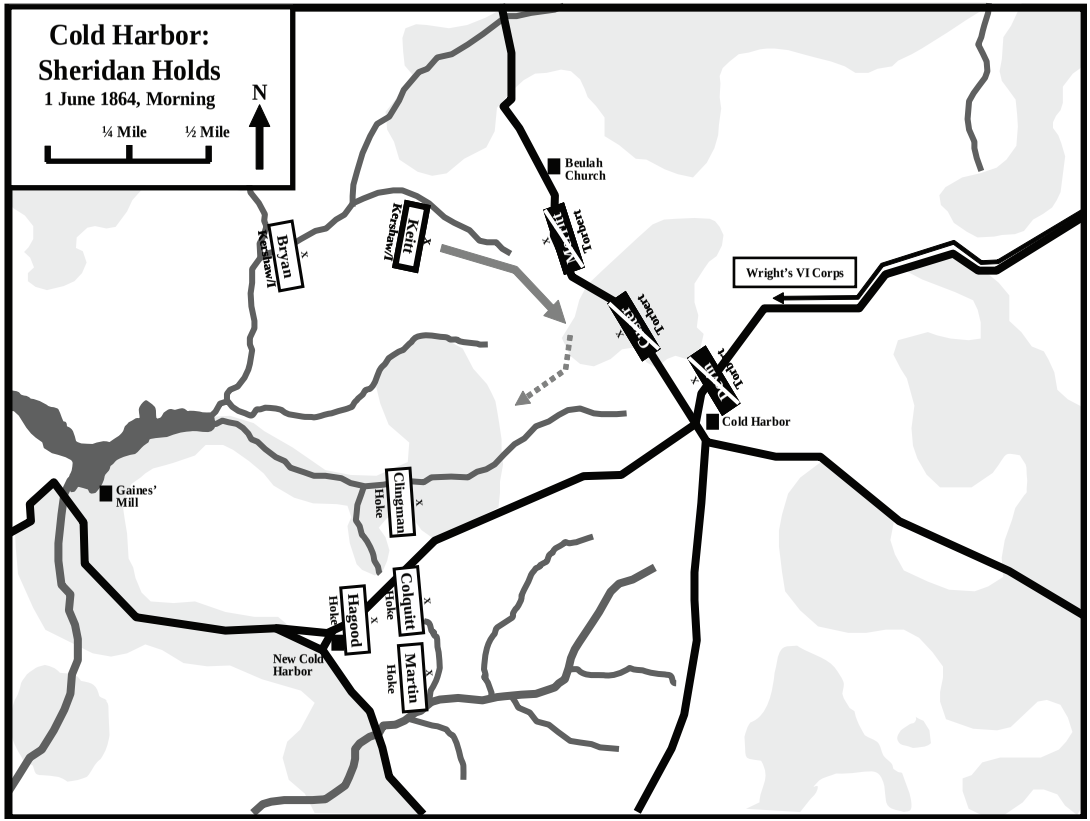
Map 94.


Haw's Shop:
Final Union Attack
28 May 1864, 1600 to 1800 hours
N
¼ Mile
½ Mile
Crump's Creek
Atlee Station Road
Mill Creek
Enon Church
Haw House
Salem Church
Haw's Shop
Merritt
Devin
Gregg
Davies
Custer
Rosser
Whickam
Rutledge
Cumbliss

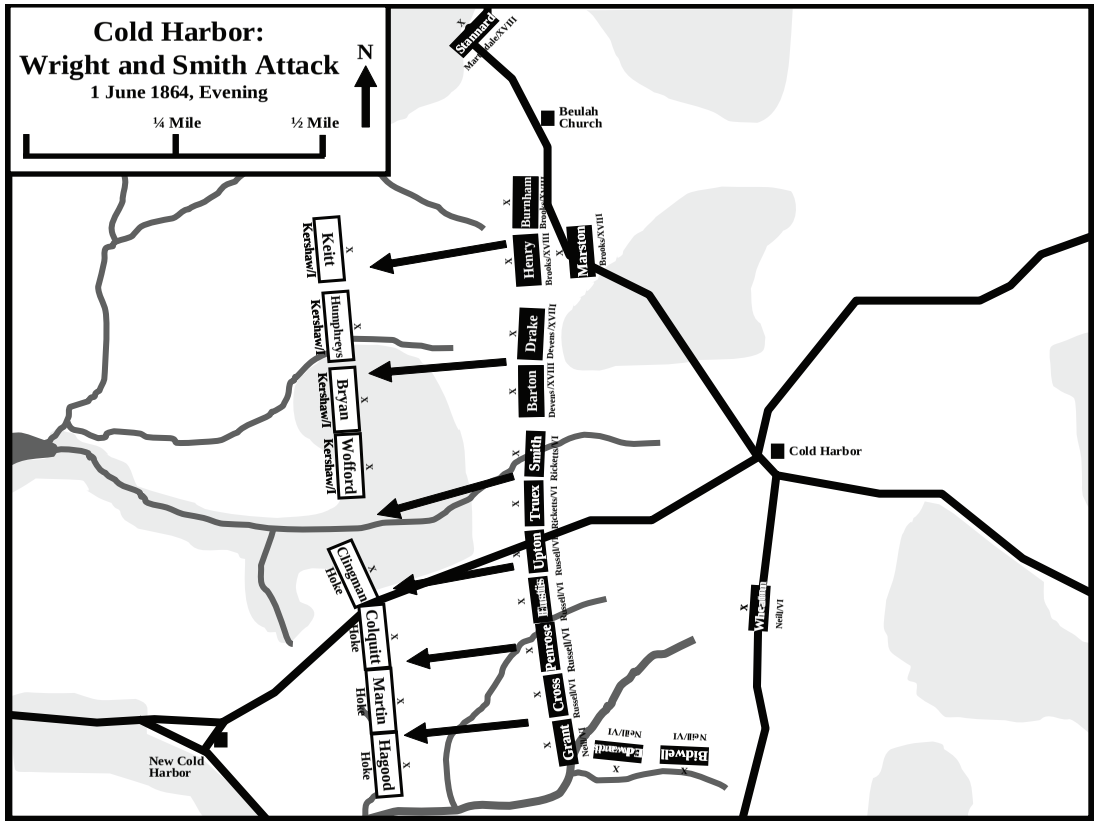
Map 95.


Cold Harbor:
Bethesda Church
30 May 1864, 1800 hours
¼ Mile
½ Mile
N
Shady Grove
Church Road
Pickett
I Corps
Bartlett
Griffin/V
Ayres
Griffin/V
Sweitzer
Griffin/V
Fisher
Crawford/V
Hardin
Crawford/V
Cutler
V Corps
Kitching
Crawford/V
Lockwood
V Corps
Matadequin Creek
Beaver Dam Creek
Gordon
II Corps
Willis
Ramseur/II
Toon
Ramseur/II
Rodes
II Corps
Bethesda
Church
Old Church Road

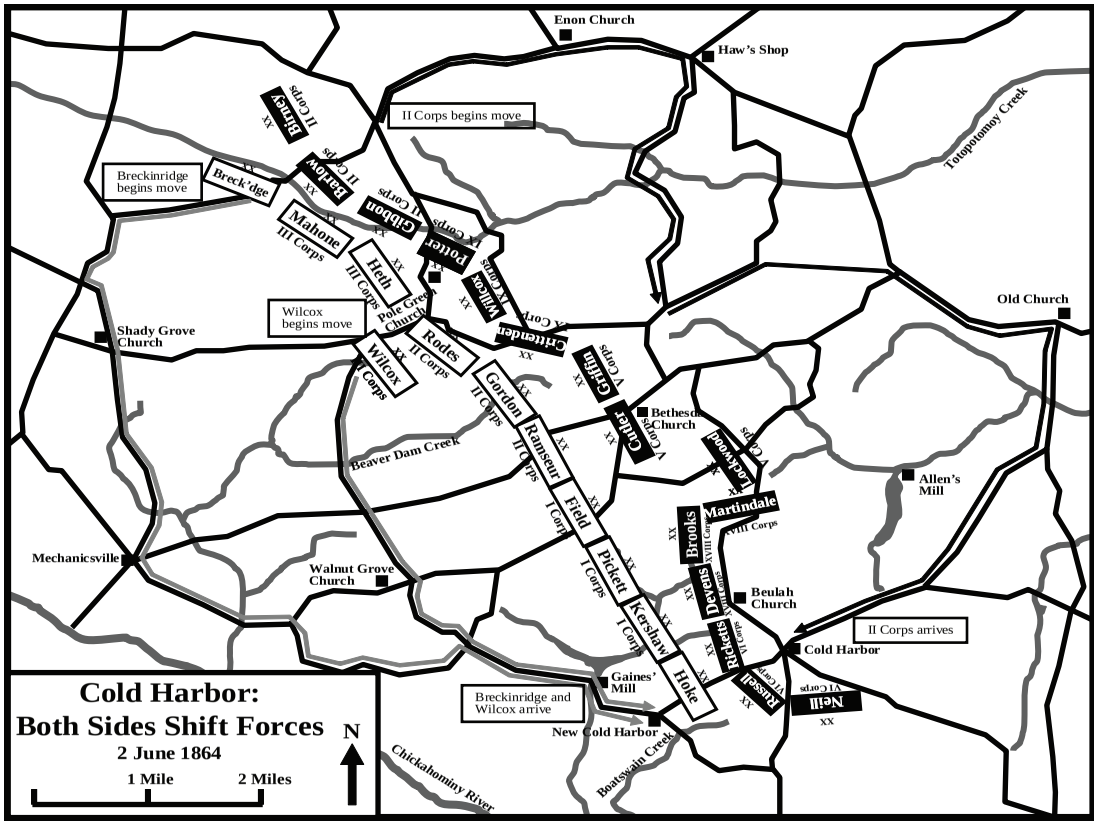
Map 96.


Cold Harbor:
Sheridan Holds
1 June 1864, Morning
N
¼ Mile
½ Mile
Beulah Church
Torbert
Wright's VI Corps
Cold Harbor
Bryan
Kershaw/I
Keitt
Kershaw/I
Gaines' Mill
Clingman
Hoke
Colquitt
Hoke
Hagood
Hoke
New Cold Harbor
Martin
Hoke

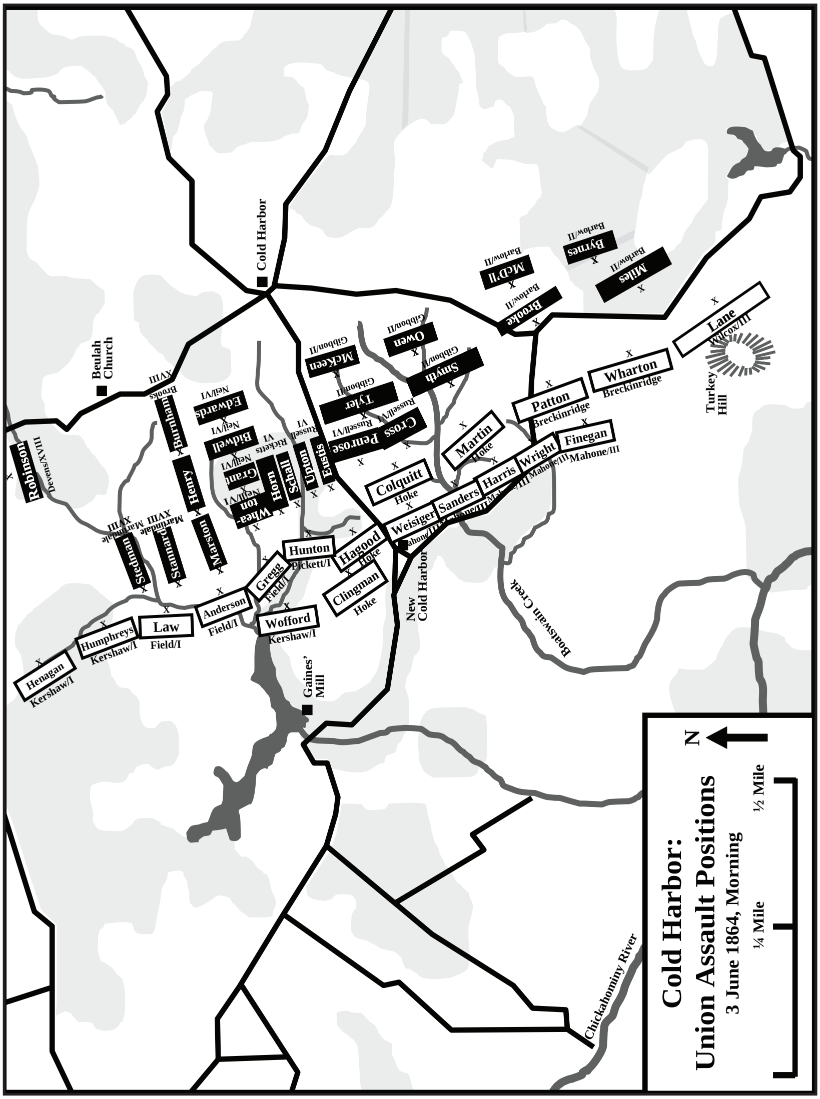
Map 97.


Cold Harbor:
Wright and Smith Attack
1 June 1864, Evening
N
¼ Mile
½ Mile
Beulah Church
Cold Harbor
New Cold Harbor
Stannard
Burnham
Henry
Marston
Keitt
Humphreys
Bryan
Wofford
Drake
Barton
Smith
Truex
Upton
Clingman
Colquitt
Martin
Hagood
Penrose
Cross
Grant
Edmandt
Bidwell
Wheaton

Map 98.


Cold Harbor:
Both Sides Shift Forces
2 June 1864
1 Mile
2 Miles
N
Enon Church
Haw's Shop
II Corps begins move
Breckinridge begins move
Wilcox begins move
Shady Grove Church
Mechanicsville
Walnut Grove Church
Beaver Dam Creek
Totopotomoy Creek
Old Church
Allen's Mill
Beulah Church
II Corps arrives
Cold Harbor
Gaines' Mill
Breckinridge and Wilcox arrive
New Cold Harbor
Boatswain Creek
Chickahominy River
Birney
Barlow
Gibbon
Potter
Wilcox
Crittenden
Griffin
Cutler
Lockwood
Martindale
Brooks
Devens
Ricketts
Russell
Neill
Mahone
Heth
Rodes
Gordon
Ramseur
Field
Pickett
Kershaw
Hoke
Breck'dge
Pole Green Church
Bethesda Church

Map 99.



Cold Harbor:
Union Assault Positions
3 June 1864, Morning
¼ Mile
½ Mile
N
Cold Harbor
Beulah Church
Gaines' Mill
New Cold Harbor
Boatswain Creek
Chickahominy River
Turkey Hill
Robinson
Devens/XVIII
Burnham
Brooks
XVIII
Henry
Marston
Stannard
Martindale
Stedman
Edwards
Neil/VI
Bidwell
Grant
Wheaton
Horn
Schall
Ricketts
VI
Upton
Eustis
Russell
Penrose
Cross
Tyler
McKeen
Gibbon/II
Owen
Smyth
Brooke
Barlow/II
McD'll
Byrnes
Miles
Lane
Wilcox/III
Wharton
Breckinridge
Patton
Finegan
Mahone/III
Wright
Harris
Sanders
Weisiger
Martin
Hoke
Colquitt
Hagood
Clingman
Hunton
Pickett/I
Gregg
Field/I
Anderson
Wofford
Kershaw/I
Law
Humphreys
Henagan

Map 100.

Bibliography

The following bibliography is not meant to be comprehensive; instead, it is meant to provide the staff ride leader a list of sources to aid in research, augment this handbook, and assist in the preparation of the staff ride.

Official Compilations. The *Official Records (OR)* is the primary source for almost any campaign history and staff ride of the Civil War.

The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. US War Department, Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1880-1901.

Campaign and Battle Studies. These studies include books that cover the entire Overland Campaign as well as individual battles. Of particular note are the works by Gordon Rhea that together form a multivolume history of the campaign in extensive depth with balanced judgment.

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